

17 HOME GUARDS, IN OVERTURNED LORRY

Driver Fined at Reepham

Criticism of Army drivers with little experience being given charge of vehicles loaded with passengers was made by the Reepham magistrates yesterday.

They had before them Driver George Richardson (24), R.A.S.C., with an address in Norwich, who, as a result of an accident involving 17 Norfolk Home Guards, was summoned for driving an Army truck without due care and attention.

It was stated that Richardson came to this country from Australia in order to join the Army, but had had only three months' experience as a driver. He was taking a party of Home Guards from the Bawdeswell district to Holkham on October 17th, when the covered truck, he was driving, skidded on a corner at Foxley and overturned in a cottage garden.

Eleven of the Home Guards were treated by a doctor for minor injuries and two were taken to hospital. One of them is suffering from an injury to the spine.

Richardson denied driving without due care and attention.

Stanley Allan Hale, a Foxley Home Guard, who was riding on the front of the truck, said before reaching the bend at Foxley War Memorial the speed of the vehicle was 30 miles per hour, and he warned Richardson of the corner.

Home Guard Sgt. Raffin Thomas Hudson, who was inside the truck, said most of the men had the impression that the truck somersaulted twice and finished with its wheels in the air.

Richardson made a statement to P.-c. Hales that he was travelling at 20 miles an hour when the truck skidded. He righted it but it skidded again, the accident being entirely due to the wet surface of the road.

An officer said the damage to the truck amounted to only £2 10s. These trucks had very heavy track tyres and there was a tendency to skid on wet roads.

Fining defendant £2, the Chairman (Mr. E. Stimpson) said the Bench felt it was unfortunate that a man so inexperienced in driving should have taken the Home Guards on this journey in a truck which was somewhat difficult to handle.

