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LIFE

EDITORS' NOTE

A Modern Thrust with a Roman Spear

The Emperor Hadrian, as we noted in Part V of our series on The Romans, was an inveterate traveler; he spent more than half his reign touring his empire and by his death had probably covered most of it. Now, 18 centuries later, Photographer Brian Brake has made the same tour. He did it at a pace the Emperor would have envied. By ear, train, plane and helicopter, he traveled all along the North African coast, through the Middle East to Istanbul, and to England, France and Spain. Even in this swift age, the job took Brake almost a year. His pictures, which appear in this issue (*pp. 58-75*), make up the final instalment of our series on Rome.

Brake set out to evoke the vanished empire's splendors; behind

him lay the advantages of a rigorous technical training in photography. The son of a New Zealander who ran a general store in Arthur's Pass, he took a job with a photographer named Spencer Digby who was a technical perfectionist. Brake, then 18. spent five years learning photography, developing, printing, retouching-his boss wouldn't even let him use a light meter. Then he joined New Zealand's small but prestigious National Film Board and became a cameraman working on documentary films. Here again he got a complete schooling-editing, splicing, directing. In 1950 the British Arts Council gave him a scholarship to study color cinematography,



BRAKE AT HADRIAN'S WALL

an assignment that took him to England, Europe, Canada, Hollywood and the Far East. Four years later Brian found himself looking for a job as a movie cameraman in London.

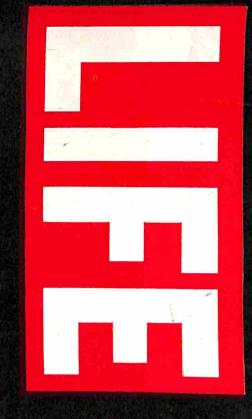
Brake could not, however, get admitted to the cameramen's union and this, as things turned out, was fortunate. Using an old Leica he had picked up in Singapore, he began wandering around the city taking pictures. Then, he recalls, "I brought some of my New Zealand photographs to LIFE's London bureau, and LIFE published my first story. Later that same year I showed some of my work to Henri Cartier-Bresson, then president of the Magnum picture agency. He was interested. I joined Magnum and I've been hopping around the world ever since." In 1959 Brake was the only Western photographer in Peking at the 10th anniversary of the Communist take-over (he recently published a superb book on Peking). In 1960 in India he spent a full year shooting his famous and eloquent essay "The Monsoon," which we published in September 1961.

Brake is a patient, soft-spoken, scholarly man. He has a fondness for the culture of the Far East, and this, translated into his work by his own fascination for form and design, gives his photographs a special distinction. Indeed, his sense of photographic structure enhances both the mood and the meaning of his subject. In photographing the famous Roman aqueduct (p. 69), he waited until the long stone piling and its own shadow converged in the distance like the thrust of a spear. This evoked the headlong purpose of the Romans and their civilization.

George P. Hum

GEORGE P. HUNT, Managing Editor

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THE BOMANS PART VII: THE ENDURING GLORIES

Advice to Lady Golfers Get Lost! By MARSHALL SMITH

AUNTIE MAME'S NEWEST EXPLOIT A MUSICAL SMASH

Flicking her stogie, ANGELA LANSBURY

whoops it up as Mame

JUNE 17 · 1966 · 35¢

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