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Gals Must Be Friendly to GIs, The British Rule Book Tells Them

ENGLAND—First America taught its GIs how to understand the British; then England taught the British how to understand the Americans.

Now, when an American soldier walks into a NAAFI canteen (British equivalent to the PX) and says, "Hi'ya baby!" to the nifty behind the counter, she smiles and says, "Okay, Yank old kid, whatcha buyin'?"

A year ago she would have accused the GI of being fresh. Now she thinks it's all right. The little booklet says "Hi'ya baby!" is legitimate. Titled "When You Meet the American," it says a lot of other things, too.

"Try not to appear shocked at some of their expressions," it reads, "Many of these may sound remarkably like swearing words to you, but in fact they are words in every day use in America."

It goes on to say that if a lad from back home asks for a hot dog he actually means "fried sausage in split rolls." A hamburger is "savory rissoles in split rolls or between slices of bread," molasses is "black treacle," checkers are "a game of draughts," a scallion is a "spring onion," French-fried potatoes are "chips," taffy is "toffee," and an automobile hood is a "bonnet."

Final instructions caution the girls against making fun of the American accent or vocabulary. Mention of gangsters "as if they represent 90 percent of the population in America" is forbidden, and the girls are urged to be a little more friendly to the GIs than they normally would.

—YANK, London Bureau