

# SOLDIER

9 FEBRUARY 1987

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**FRONT COVER – ASM Denis Cleary of the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. He is the Army's senior NCO. See interview on Pages 14 and 15.**

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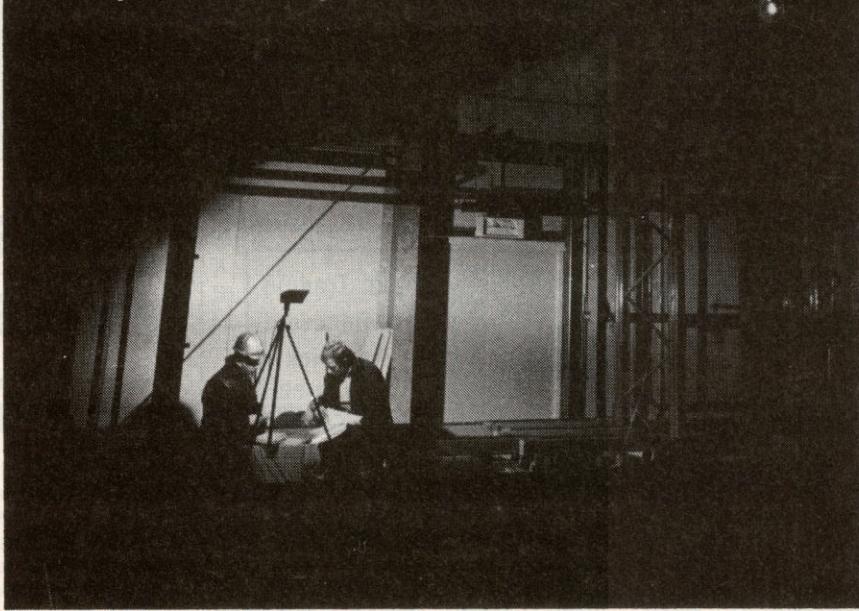
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# SOLDIER

**THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY**  
incorporating the Territorial Army magazine

## A LIGHT ON THE FUTURE

A glimmer of light in a cavern of darkness reveals workmen fitting out one of the immense sheds being completed at the RAOC's Central Depot at Donnington. Eventually ten such sheds will house 100,000 tons of stores in darkness. Only the robots will find their way around. See Page 25



# Omani army grew up fast

I enjoyed the interesting article on 5 Airborne Brigade's Exercise Swift Sword in SOLDIER (January 12). It brought back many old memories of Oman: jumping with 3 Para Group into the Wadi Jizzi in 1964, tours as a Brigade Major in Bait Al Falaj and Salalah in 1970-72, and commanding The Jebel Regiment in Nizwa and Sarfait in 1975-77.

It was good to read of the British and Omani forces working together again but I was slightly surprised at the comment that the Omanis "were very professional for an army which has only been going about ten years".

The Sultan's Armed Forces (SAF) may have been young during the Jebel Akhdar Campaign of 1958 but they grew up fast. By the time they and their British friends of the SAS, Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers had won the ten year Dhofar War in 1976 they had come of age the hard way.

As Kipling might have put it: "They are not so old as armies list, but they are not so young at their trade". Lt Col (Retd) E Ashley, 14 Brooklands, Chipping, New Preston.

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Latest winner in SOLDIER's HOAY competition (No 402) is J/Spr Sellers of 2 Troop, 66 Sqn, Junior Leaders Regt RE, at Old Park Barracks, Dover. A £50 cheque is on its way to the lucky sapper.

If you want a chance of winning £50 turn to page 39 of this issue and test your powers of observation.

## War medals

I was interested to read of a statement credited to Field Marshal Sir Edwin Bramall when he retired from the Army that when he left there would be no other soldier still serving who could sport a war medal.

I am still on a regular engagement, having signed on in Feb 45, and I have a war medal 1939-45. This would seem to belie his claim.

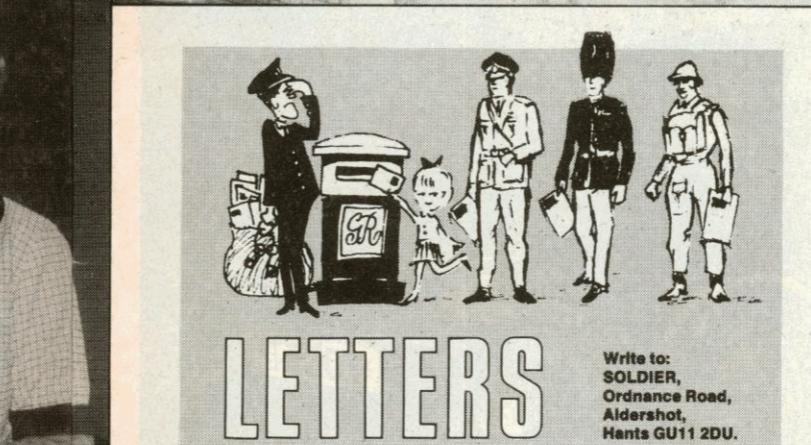
Can I, through your columns, find out if there are others who can make similar war medal claims. - Lt Col A Nesbitt RE, PLO 42 Survey Eng Group, Hermitage, Newbury, Berks RG16 9TP.

## OUR FAIR LADIES

Mr Wilmot's tongue-in-cheek opinion of Naafi ladies is not likely to pass unchallenged in these pages. SOLDIER photographer Paul Haley visited one of Aldershot's Naafi canteens to put Mr Wilmot's claims to the test. He failed to find a single 'tough old bird' but instead returned with pictures of three charming young ladies. - **Editor**



Right - Cath Bell  
Below - Denise Clarke  
Below left - Bridget Robinson



## Texas field rations left a bad taste!

Last June we had the pleasure of having C Squadron, The Lifeguards, at Fort Hood, Texas, for two weeks. They were attached to the 1st Bn 9th Cavalry, 1st Cav Div. Near the end of their two weeks the 9th Cavalry had a barbecue for them.

PS. The GIs are not too fond of them either and the MREs are being improved on. - John McCamley RSM (retd), 1401 Short Street, Copperas Cove, Texas 76522.

training were great, but they didn't like the field rations! I asked, "What was wrong with our MREs (Meals Ready to Eat)?" He stated: "After tasting them, we thought MRE stood for Meals Rejected by Ethiopia!"

I was talking to some of the NCOs from C Sqn, and asking them how they had liked their stay at Fort Hood. One replied that the tactics and weapons

Does anyone please remember how the commissioned officers were appointed to the pre-war battalions of the Malay Regiment. I believe the first battalion was formed in about 1931 or perhaps in 1933, and that two additional battalions had been formed by 1939.

Was this a case of commissioning directly into the

regiment (presumably from Sandhurst) or a matter of secondment from the British or Indian Army? Were there also native officers appointed and were European warrant officers, or even NCOs, ever included on the strength?

Also, one often hears that no British troops were stationed north of the Singapore Cause-

# Tone it down, lads!

**PRIZE LETTER**

I feel bound to write to the Letters page on a somewhat delicate subject, but one which, nevertheless, I feel needs airing.

I have been among the Army for 25 years - I grew up in various Army garrisons and married a soldier three years ago, so I am well used to the Army way of life.

However, I have found it increasingly difficult to turn a blind eye to the prolific use of a certain seven letter word spoken in normal everyday conversation by more than a few soldiers. The offending (and offensive) word begins with 'F', as I'm sure I do not need to mention.

Whether I am at a bus-stop, waiting in a queue at the Naafi, walking along the street or even talking to friends in the Army, I hear this particular word used persistently throughout general conversation.

When I am out with my husband, who readily admits to swearing with his workmates but never in front of me or any other woman, he constantly has to tell others of his kind to "watch their language" if I am in the immediate vicinity.

## Blues and greys

In SOLDIER (Jan 12) you stated that D Sqn QDG swapped grey berets for sky blue.

I would like to point out that the QDGs have never worn a grey beret, we have the standard dark blue. But the RSDGs (Grays) do have a grey beret. - Cpl Brian Jenkins, Home Headquarters, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, Maindy Barracks, Whitchurch Road, Cardiff CF4 3YE.

## REUNIONS

● 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards annual reunion dinner will take place on May 2 at the Banqueting Suite, Surrey Tavern, Kennington Oval, London. Tickets from the Regimental Secretary, Home Headquarters, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards, Maindy Barracks, Cardiff, tel Cardiff 27611 ext 213.

● Merseyside Military Medallists' Association 65th anniversary dinner, dance and cabaret at Weston and Weston Point Royal British Legion, Runcorn, Cheshire, on May 8 at 7.30pm. Details from Mr A E Heath, 24 Elmstead Road, Colchester, Essex CO4 3AA (tel 0206 864333).

● The Queen's Own Hussars' reunion dinner will take place on May 2 in the Baronial Hall, Mincing Lane, London. Tickets and details from Maj (Retd) J S Knight, Home Headquarters, The Queen's Own Hussars, 28 Jury Street, Widnes WA8 7HZ (tel 051-420 8546).

● The Parachute Regimental Association Airborne Forces Reunion Dinner Club (Past and Present) 10th annual reunion dinner STAG, April 4, Kessingland Beach Holiday Village, Lowestoft, Suffolk. Details from G Cole, 8 Orford Drive, Oulton Broad, Lowestoft, Suffolk NR32 3DJ (tel 0502-60374).

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# HIGH FLIER DIED ON DUTY

Cpl Ghandi P, one of the shortest serving but best loved members of the Corps of Royal Engineers, has died while on duty in Belize. He was seven years old.

Enlisted on April 1, 1980, he served with every RE squadron on rotation tour in Belize from that time.

A high flier, he took his appointment as



squadron bar watchkeeper and security officer very seriously and his ambition was rewarded on May 23, 1984 when he was promoted to lance corporal.

Never content to stay in one branch of duty, he became qualified in a variety of trades in order to spread his wings.

Cpl Ghandi gained good course results as a high diver, Army pilot, nuisance and marksman and ruffled a few feathers with his linguistic skills in colloquial Spanish and proficient obscenity.

Determined to claw his way to the top, he was promoted to corporal on January 11, 1985 and was due for further promotion when he died on the evening of December 2, 1986 during night flying operations.

Remembered as a strict disciplinarian able to crack many a tough nut, Cpl Ghandi was nevertheless a bit of a flapper.

A colourful character, he will be greatly missed by all officers and men of the Royal Engineers.

## UKMF role under scrutiny

BRITAIN is having discussions within Nato on its role of strengthening the land forces of the Baltic Approaches with the 15,000-strong United Kingdom Mobile Force (UKMF).

The force includes 8,000 men from 1 Infantry Brigade headquartered at Tidworth and has a high proportion – one in five – of TA soldiers. UKMF also has a 4,500-member Logistic Support Group of which 70 per cent is part time.

In support of both are RAF Chinook and Puma helicopters based at RAF Odiham.

Reference had been made in the House of Commons to the "disproportionately high level" of support units for the UKMF which had a large number of deployment and employment options.

An MoD spokesman affirmed: "We are discussing this within Nato to see whether this contribution represents a most effective use of these resources.

"We have naturally, kept the Danish authorities informed and details discussed are confidential but it has been stressed that the UK has no intention of making unilateral changes to its commitment to the region."

## Mystery blaze at Larkhill

A MYSTERY fire has destroyed a computer complex and its Portakabin home at the Royal School of Artillery's Air Defence Tactical Training Theatre (ADT 3) at Larkhill, causing £200,000 worth of damage.

It is thought an electrical fault in the air conditioning unit may have sparked off the blaze which was discovered an hour before course students were due to report for duty.



**FIRE** has swept through the former WRAC School of Instruction at Camberley destroying the chapel-cum-assembly hall. The Sandhurst-type military academy was opened in 1964 on the site of the Royal Albert Orphanage at a cost of more than £600,000.

The School trained all WRAC officer cadets and offered courses to both officers and non-commissioned officers until its closure in April 1984 when WRAC cadets were first admitted to Sandhurst.



## New WRAC Director

NEW Director Women's Royal Army Corps is Brig Shirley Nield (pictured left) who also takes up the appointment of aide de camp to the Queen.

Born in Oldham and educated at Chadderton Grammar School and Sheffield University, Brig Nield was a Manchester probation officer before joining the Army in 1961.

She has served in mainland Britain, Northern Ireland and Germany and was Commander WRAC at HQ UKLF, Wilton, before taking up her new appointment.

# Army mounts major mercy

SOLDIERS and Army vehicles were heavily involved in helping the civil community stricken by the worst weather in the country since 1961.

Men from **The Royal Wessex Yeomanry** provided Land-Rovers and personnel to run a meals-on-wheels service for the elderly in the Barnstaple area at the request of the WRVS and Salvation Army.

At Blandford more Land-Rovers and half a dozen soldiers responded to the request of the trustees of some alm houses for the elderly to clear snow. The same regiment fielded another 18 vehicles and drivers to report on utility supply problems in 21 houses at the request of the North Dorset District Council.

At Ashchurch, near Cheltenham, two BV202 Snowcats turned out to help

84-year-old Mrs Watts of Folly Farm, Hoo Lane, Tewkesbury, who was stranded without food supplies. Two more Snowcats were in action from the same source – the **Central Vehicle Depot** – to run supplies of blood and drugs from Cheltenham General Hospital to three outlying hospitals cut off by the snow.

Men of **9 Ordnance Battalion** at Corsham, Wiltshire, helped with a meals-on-wheels service and 11 soldiers from Warminster's Demonstration Battalion – **2 RGJ** – volunteered to dig out the entrance to an elderly lady's home in Backford Road.

In Eastern District men of **156 Provost Coy, RMP**, rushed oxygen by Land-Rover to a private house in a Suffolk village. Vehicles and men from **1 Sqn, RCT**, also

rushed much-needed oxygen to Clacton's hospital, the town having been cut off.

Five 4-tonne lorry loads of fuel pods containing 2,000 gallons of diesel were taken to the gas holder station at Shoeburyness.

A **TA General Field Hospital** was in action helping the Norwich Health Authority with the use of two vehicles.

The Grantham-based **CV HQ, RCT**, sent out 34 vehicles to help Lincolnshire County Council with its communication difficulties.

A Gazelle helicopter from **657 Sqn, AAC**, Oakington, flew Lincolnshire county councillors over the blanketed Wolds to see just how many communities were affected.

**60 Fd Support Sqn, RE**, had plant out

# mission as snow hits UK

in Essex helping the county council clear a stretch of road between Colchester and Braintree.

Men of **19 Field Ambulance, RAMC**, turned out to help Age Concern and, in particular, a 91-year-old retired major general who summoned help to his isolated home. Three soldiers and the ambulance-men dug him out of his misery.

Men from **8 Fd Workshop, REME**, had a recovery vehicle almost continuously on the road for three of the worst days. One of their tasks was to rescue four people in a car marooned near a reservoir.

Units in South East District were faced with a variety of tasks. **69 Gurkha Indep Fd Sqn** took a gynaecologist and urgently needed food and medical supplies to beleaguered Shepney hospitals.

**36 Engr Regt** in Maidstone moved oil drums to an old folks' home in Rochester, **220 Fd Amb (V)** helped people return home from hospital in the Maidstone area and **2 R Irish** helped transport health service personnel to old people's homes in Rochester.

**London District Provost Coy, RMP**, assisted civilian police in traffic control on main routes, some of which were cleared by **12 RSME Regt, RE**, and **36 Engr Regt**. **33 Engr Regt (EOD)** sent out a recce patrol in BV202 vehicles to the snowbound Isle of Grain.

In all, the Provost Coy was involved in the rescue of 311 civilians, the recovery of 703 vehicles, 12 urgent deliveries of blood, six mercy missions to hospitals, and provided assistance at 15 traffic accidents

caused by the severe conditions.

**43 Sqn RCT** were on hand to move nurses, cooks and meals-on-wheels personnel around Hythe and Folkestone, as were **3 Queens, 42 Survey Engr Grp, 8 Tng Regt, RMP**, and **160 Provost Coy, RMP**, in other areas. **41 Sqn, RCT**, helped out with the Salvation Army's work with old age pensioners and **5 Queens** and **1 DWR** were among units to have ambulances on standby and duty.

**44 Sqn, RCT**, helped the WRVS meals-on-wheels service in the Camberley area, and among a host of incidents an RAF Chinook lifted 32 soldiers from **5 Airborne Bde** based at Aldershot to Ashford where they were deployed in Land-Rover ambulances throughout Kent in support of the county ambulance service.

**24 Fd Sqn** made an abortive attempt to clear a British Rail snowplough stuck near Fawkham but when conditions became dangerous the operation was abandoned.

In Scotland members of **15 Para (V)** and **153 and 154 Regts, RCT, (V)** were active throughout the cold spell helping with the movement of urgently needed food, fuel and medical supplies.

## Leconfield's Snowcats in their element

ARMY personnel went to the assistance of snow-bound North Humberside where drifts blocked roads for up to four days and cut off villages and farms. Eight tracked BV202 Snowcats from the Army School of Mechanical Transport at Leconfield ploughed their way into the worst hit areas.

Instructors and students went on the mercy mission together combining help for the community with driver training under arctic conditions.

Snowcats were used to transport British Gas engineers to potentially dangerous gas leaks in the Wolds. Nine leaks were repaired in two days by fitters using Army transport.

Other Snowcats were used to deliver coal and food to an old people's home and deliver heart tablets to an elderly man whose supply had run out.

They also transported British Telecom engineers to repair lines in police stations, ambulance centres and telephone exchanges where faults had been reported and took 75 pints of milk, 50 loaves of bread and sacks of potatoes to residents in the tiny village of Halsham.

Two six-wheel Stalwart vehicles from the Army School of Mechanical Transport joined in the operation.

## ACE force moves out to Norway

TEMPERATURES as low as minus 40 degrees Centigrade are guaranteed for the men of the British contingent of the ACE (Allied Command Europe) Mobile Force based in Wiltshire who, this week, moved out to southern Norway for the annual Exercise Hardfall. The exercise lasts for six weeks.

Drawn from units at Bulford, Tidworth, Netheravon and Upavon, the British contingent comprises men of the 1st Bn, The Parachute Regiment, the Logistic Support Battalion and other supporting units plus artillery units from Larkhill and Poole.

The recce squadron in-put is supplied by the armoured cars of the 13th/18th Hussars based at Tidworth.

## Belize sappers warm to the job

FLASH floods and searing temperatures flexed to the full the skills of 48 Field Squadron (Construction) RE while building a Harrier hide in Belize.

Hardcore foundations disappeared during rainstorms and more than 250 cubic metres of concrete were needed to complete the concrete bays before work could begin on the blast walls.

Temperatures ranging from 95 to 110 degrees Fahrenheit dogged the squadron throughout their six months on site but their efforts were rewarded with celebrations at the opening ceremony.



WO Don Davidson's wedding to Michelle Potts was on time – thanks to a helicopter which delivered her to his snow-bound Howe Barracks at Canterbury, Kent



Men of the 5th Airborne Brigade arrive by Chinook helicopter at Ashford, Kent, before dispersing to help 11 remote ambulance stations isolated by snow

## Ammo dump shifted

TEN convoys plied the 30 mile route from Stanley to Mount Pleasant each day for five weeks during the movement of more than 4,000 tons of ammunition to a new storage dump on the Falkland Islands.

The move was prompted by the centralisation of resources at the new Mount Pleasant complex and because the old dump was slowly sinking into a peat bog on the outskirts of the islands' capital.

The mammoth exercise was completed without mishap though the route is not without its hazards as the picture of the crashed four-tonner illustrates.

The road – the only one that can properly be described as such on the



Falklands – is unmetalled and covered in grit which has caused several traffic accidents.

## Start made on Worthy Down computer centre

CONSTRUCTION has started on a new £4.7 million computer centre at Worthy Down for the RAPC which should be ready for occupation in May 1988.

At a foundation ceremony, the laying of the stone was carried out by the new Adjutant General, General Sir David Mostyn.

When the current computer centre was built in the late 1950s, it was one of the first five large computer centres in the UK, civilian or military. It had a planned life span of ten years but lasted a quarter of a century.

Now, it has outgrown itself. The new

building will, however, be much cheaper to run as the heating of the offices will be provided by the cooling of the computer equipment!

The RAPC Computer Centre at Worthy Down is responsible for maintaining pay, pension and personnel computer records of the British Army, both Regular and Territorial Army.

Using two large IBM computers and a series of smaller mini-computers it holds more than 300,000 pay records, 80,000 pension records and nearly half a million personnel records. It employs a staff of 340 of whom half are soldiers.

## Woolwich welcome for 1,000th recruit

CLOSE on three TA recruits a day clocked in with Oswestry Troop of 17 Training Regiment at Woolwich, home of the Royal Artillery, last year.

And when the 1,000th reported for duty, out marched Bdr Peter Stubbs to "book in" Gnr John Ball of the newly-formed 216 (The Bolton Artillery) AD Battery, for

his training with the London unit.

Completing the welcome committee were

Troop No. 1 Ssgt Ron Williams and Troop Commander Capt Richard Boddy. Labelled and

listed John then marched off for his first training session just like the other 999.



SSGT RON WILLIAMS, BDR PETER STUBBS, GNR JOHN BALL; CAPT RICHARD BODDY: booked

DROPPING in by helicopter to the tiny and isolated Ketchi Indian village of Jalacte, the Commander British Forces Belize, Brig David Webb Carter, brought the school children there a present of more than 100 new school books.

The village, which lies just inside the border with Guatemala, had been visited in early 1986 by Government minister Lord Trefgarne.

He discovered the village school's chronic shortage of books and organised, after returning to the United Kingdom, for a set to be sent to Belize.

It was these books the

brigadier presented to the delighted Indian children.

Brig Webb Carter was also saying farewell to the Belizeans as he handed over his command to new CBF Brig N G R Hepworth, after completing his third tour of duty in Belize, having previously served there as a company commander and battalion commander with the Irish Guards.

### Two of a kind

When LCpl Adrian Mills gets down to cleaning his TA kit, so does his wife Lorraine. They're both NCOs of the same rank with the 3rd (V) Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters based in Nottingham - their home town. They met when they joined the

unit, got married and four months ago Lorraine had a baby boy, David. But being a mother doesn't stop her attending parades in her role as unit medic and pay clerk, for her mum looks after baby David while Lorraine and Adrian get on with their TA lives.



## No more monkey tricks for Alf

ONE of Gibraltar's most popular figures, Sgt Alfred Holmes, the ape keeper, has retired after 31 years service with the Gibraltar Regiment.

Alfred joined the regiment in 1955 and got the job of ape keeper in 1966 when the regiment was made responsible for the famous Rock Apes.

Soon after assuming his post as ape keeper, Alfred, who was then a lance-corporal, achieved what has always been thought to be impossible.

Through careful persuasion and loving care he managed to stop the apes from roaming into

the town area. This enabled tourists to see the apes at a specific location and in their natural environment. It also stopped the obvious harassment and nuisance which roaming apes created to unsuspecting visitors.

His job as ape keeper made him into an international personality. His photograph has appeared in papers world-wide and he has hosted many personalities at the apes' den.

In June 1970 he was promoted to sergeant and in 1976 he was granted the BEM for his services as ape keeper. He also holds the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and the Queen's Silver Jubilee Medal.



SGT ALFRED HOLMES AND FRIEND: international acknowledgement

# JOIN NAAFI AND SEE THE WORLD

PROOF of Naafi's popularity with soldiers and that the Institute gives its employees a chance to see the world, comes with news of a Krefeld-based regiment's special tribute to Naafi club managers Colin and Brenda Eames who left the *Golden Axe* junior ranks club in Germany to take over a new club on Ascension Island.

Now the couple are based halfway to the Falklands, but before they went they were presented with a bronze miniature of the town's famous silk weaver by CO Lt Col C J Walters on behalf of 28 (BR) Signal Regiment.

Col Walters said Brenda and Colin had become firm favourites with the regiment and had made every effort to look after customers at the club.

"We shall all miss them because they made us feel very welcome and did such a great job running such a successful junior ranks club in what is an isolated part of the British community in Germany."

The couple had another reason to smile because they have also received Naafi's 1986 *Club of the Year* award beating 105 other junior ranks clubs in Germany for the title.

European service manager Peter Lucas who presented their award said the standard of management, atmosphere and effort fully justified the award and he wished the couple success in their new Ascension Island post.

But even though Colin and Brenda have gone to sunnier climes, the *Golden Axe* club will be kept in the family as Brenda's mum, Mrs Madge Shepherd, has now taken over as club manager.

## Thrifty wives raise £1,000

The Services occasionally find themselves on different wavelengths, but when the wives of Servicemen get together it's a different story. Like the Thrift Shop at Episkopi where 20 wives of Army, Navy and RAF men raised £1,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund. The cheque was handed to Brig A D Myrtle, CLF Cyprus, by Thrift Shop leader Mrs Margaret Charlton (above).



LT COL C J WALTERS, BRENDA AND COLIN EAMES: A special tribute before moving to Ascension

# PEOPLE

## NEWS

When Brig Anthony Denison-Smith, commander Hohne Garrison, visited 1 Regt AAC at Hildesheim, he tried out the TOW missile trainer and made a big hit when the result showed him bang on target.

## SPOT

## How Harry was saved by the old Desert Fox

When Col Harry Bailey (left) was captured in North Africa he was ill treated by his captors. He was on the receiving end of a battering when a senior German officer who subsequently turned out to be the old Desert Fox himself, Rommel, intervened.

Now, after more than 50 years in uniform, Col Harry has called it a day. His military links span from 1937 to just recently when he retired as an honorary colonel in the Staffordshire ACF. He was presented with a bronze statuette by Maj R W Stoddard, ACF commander Stoke-on-Trent area.



COL HARRY BAILEY, MAJ R W STODDARD: 50 years of military service

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# Monte Cassino veterans to meet

Calling old soldiers who were at the great battle of Monte Cassino in Italy during the Second World War!

It's another two years yet before the 45th anniversary of the assault on the hilltop monastery, but arrangements are already being made for events to mark the occasion.

At the request of the monks of the Benedictine monastery, the Dean of Bristol will chair a committee which will organise the making and installation, at the chapel of St Martin of Tours in the monastery, of seven stained glass windows depicting the seven pillars of wisdom. It was in the chapel that the Abbe and monks sheltered during the American bombing of the monastery on February 15, 1944.

At the same time there will be a drum head service in the British and Commonwealth cemetery which lies in the valley near the Rapido River, and another ceremony at the Polish cemetery at the base of Hill 593.

To help finance the events, there will be a world trade fair in Cassino and a festival around the area.

The Monte Cassino Veterans Association is helping with the arrangements and is anxious to contact any individuals and organisations, British and Commonwealth, who are part of the Cassino story. The man to contact is John Clarke, of 41 Aldermary Road, Manchester M21 2QW (tel: 061-882 4594).

Views expressed in **SOLDIER** are not necessarily those of the Army or the Ministry of Defence.

# SOLDIER to Soldier



**Cox's Cairn** helicopter landing site in Belize is named after Pte Shane Cox, 3 Queens, who is paralysed from the chest down after an accident during the clearing of the strip. The plaque pictured above has been placed at the site by 3 Troop 48 Field Squadron (Construction) RE who had been involved in the fund raising efforts to help Pte Cox's convalescence.

## Mystery photograph

FOUND between the pages of an old book was this stylised photograph which may be of interest to relatives. Printed on the back is the caption:

*"Michael Trotobqs, Middlesex Regt 1933. Le Capitaine Michel, Reseau Sylvestre, Lille area, Northern France. Killed by Gestapo, 27 November 1943."*

Perhaps an older reader might tell us why the photograph was taken in this form in the first place. We would be happy to pass it on to family.



## Top shelf publication

A reader looking for a copy of **SOLDIER** on the magazine shelves of an Aldershot bookstall couldn't find it listed with other military type publications. Eventually he found it - under the heading "Trade and Professional!" Where else for a professional magazine for "The Professionals"?

## Women soldiers

The equality of women marches on!

Following **SOLDIER**'s story (January 12) that Denmark is considering the possibility of women soldiers serving in combat units, comes news that the Canadian Armed Forces have opened to women a number of what were traditionally male roles.

They are NOT, emphasises the Canadian High Commission in London, front line combat roles. But are they dangerous? "Any role in the Canadian Armed Forces is dangerous at one time or another," said a spokesman.

## DIARY

- Charity gala flying display at RAF Henlow on June 1. Attractions include Red Arrows aerobatic team, Falcons free-fall parachutists and Royal Artillery motorcycle display team.

Organisers of events with Army participation are invited to send brief details to **SOLDIER** for publication in this column.

leading the way

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# 'Mr Average' sarn't He is certainly not



Another big parade at Sandhurst and ASM Cleary escorts the Queen Mother on a parade in 1981

TRADITIONS run deep with sergeant majors. Like taking a swig of port wine before a big parade.

"Not a big swig, but just enough to oil the larynx," said Academy Sergeant Major Denis Cleary of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

"I don't know whether it helps the voice or not, but it's a good tradition and all good sarn't majors stick to it," he said.

The most senior NCO in the Army, he says he has been introduced to the Queen and many other visiting heads of state "and that's good enough for me," he says, dismissing any other possible claimant to the title.

Mythology, too, has its place among the RSMs of this world. "For example it's a myth that the late RSM Ronald Brittain was at Sandhurst.

"He was never here, but at the Mons Officer Cadet Training Unit just down the road.

"It's a myth, too, that sergeant majors bawl and scream at people for the sake of it and are big, fat men with ear-shattering roars that can be heard a mile away.

"Not so. If I started hollering at the young chaps here they'd think I was crazy. They are dedicated professionals; here because they want to be.

"Mind you, I can still do a nose-to-nose job when necessary as I feel a little bit of fear never did anyone any harm. And I can shout if I feel the need for an instant response, like getting a group to move quickly.

ASM Denis Cleary, the Army's most senior NCO, talks to

*John  
Mangrots.*

"But the idea is to get people to work with you rather than for you and this can be achieved by respect and loyalty.

"As an introduction to this we all start – and finish – by addressing each other as 'Sir'. But of course I have to ensure students mean it when they address me!"

While the Blarney Stone was never mentioned he laughingly described himself as "Mr Average". Twelve stone in weight, 5ft 10in tall, a size 7½ in hats and a nine in boots.

He was born in Dublin 50 years ago, is married to Jackie with a son and daughter and just before Christmas became a grandfather.

But what takes him out of the "average" bracket is the fact that he is the Academy Sergeant Major (ASM) and the most senior NCO in the Army heading a team of 200 instructors representing just about every cap badge in the Service.

## major? that!

He is also the first Irish Guardsman to hold the post of ASM. Since 1960, when the post was redesignated from RSM, his predecessors have been ASM J C Lord, Grenadier Guards; ASM C H Phillips, Welsh Guards and ASM R P Huggins, Grenadier Guards.

"Of course old 'JC' was here before 1960, but that was when the title was changed. Altogether he did 16 years service here and became very well known.

"I'm only sorry I won't be able to match his time as I've done seven years with five to go, finishing in 1992."

Modestly he described his move to the job of ASM as "being in the right place at the right time.

"I suddenly became aware that I was moving in the right direction when I was RSM of the Irish Guards and to become ASM was a marvellous thing for me.

"I enjoy this job 100 per cent and intend staying to the end of my time when I'll be 55.

"And while the students are important – after all, that is what the place is all about – it is my staff of instructors who are the most important people to me.

"I have 200 here, 150 of whom are involved in teaching the 700 students who pass through here every year from as many as 60 different countries.

"That this is a prestigious place there is no doubt and it is recognised as being the only military academy in the

Picture  
by  
Paul  
Haley

world where NCOs are totally involved with the training of officers.

"This builds a rapport which is continued throughout their Army careers.

"The strength of the Army is in its customs and training and as long as this can be maintained it can only go from strength to strength.

"This enhances the regimental family system on which it is impossible to put a price. It will be a sad day should it ever be undermined."

"Not that he forecast this ever happening as he went on to talk of the high calibre of student at the RMAS.

"They are more professional today. Their dedication is unbelievable with

standards improving every year."

But to maintain and improve these standards takes not only a good deal of practical and theoretical instruction, it also takes up a lot of the ASM's time with paperwork.

"I've tried Alexander's theory of putting paper in the out tray. But it doesn't work. I found twice as much coming back. So a good deal of my time is spent in the office. This, too, is unlike the old-time RSM who probably spent most of his time on the square."

"How do I make myself heard with the Academy on parade?" he echoed.

"It's all a question of development," he said. "It's like some people can sing and some can't. You've either got it or you haven't."



ASM Denis Cleary – no shattering roar

# More than 100 years on . . .

# GUARDS KEEP BLANCO TRADITION ALIVE



The good soldier, 1907. From a Blanco advertisement. The cleaner was also recommended for use on tennis balls and whip thongs

Story  
by  
Mervyn  
Wynne  
Jones

DEVELOPMENTS in webbing design and ceremonial dress accoutrements herald a new look for the soldiers of the 1990s but Blanco – or its latter-day successor – seems set to stay. Some habits just will not die and to this day nothing less than a "blancoed" buff leather belt is deemed smart enough for a guardsman on parade. The Guards Division is the only one to maintain a tradition that has occupied generations of soldiers for more than a century.

When polyethylene belts were introduced throughout the Army in the early 1970s, the Guards Division decided to retain their buff leather belts for ceremonial duties.

There was a practical aspect to the decision according to Mr Jimmy Allan, head of Garment Development at the Colchester-based Clothing Research and Development Establishment.

It was found that the white polyethylene belts had a tendency to discolour and that they rubbed bald patches on the thick pile of the red tunics.

Guardsmen preferred their leather belts and, anyway, the 1960s had seen the decline of Blanco and the advent of new cleaning fluids which saved both time and effort.

So what is the story behind Blanco? It begins in 1875 when a young man named John Needham Pickering who was a volunteer – a Territorial of his day – decided that there could be some improvement on the raw pipeclay which soldiers used for whitening their accoutrements.

He put a suggestion to his superiors in the family firm of Joseph Pickering and Sons Ltd, which for 50 years had been manufacturing polishes of various sorts, and Blanco was born.

The Army, as was its habit, looked on this new-fangled stuff with suspicion but in time it was used to whiten nearly all

the buckskin equipment soldiers then wore.

Sales of Blanco were boosted in the early 1900s when white shoes and boots became fashionable street wear. There was also a steady market among sporting men and women as cricket and tennis became more popular.

Around 1900 the Army went into khaki and khaki Blanco was added to the white. In 1908 the Army adopted web equipment and five years later Blanco was officially approved as the Army's web cleaner.

Other colours were added, ranging from yellow-khaki to green. During the Second World War, No. 3, the mud-coloured khaki-green shade, sold in the biggest quantities.

About 30 million blocks of Blanco were supplied to the Services – mostly to the Army – during the Second World War. Production at the Pickering works fluctuated because of air raids and labour and materials shortages but continued throughout the war.

Suggestions that the labour could have been better used elsewhere were refuted. Never were more than 60 people directly engaged in making Blanco and most of them were girls under 18 and 'non-mobile' married women.

Controversy raged after the war over the alleged excessive use of Blanco in the Army, even attaining the eminence of questions in the House of Commons.



Modern rifles and modern fabrics – but the blancoed buff belt is here to stay – with the Guards Division

The way it was



Every last piece of webbing had to be spotless – a guardsman blankees his kit at the Guards Depot, Caterham, in 1948

range of Army dress was introduced including the polyethylene belts which only needed a wipe down to clean them.

The 1958 pattern webbing is to be replaced by the recently developed Personal Load Carrying Equipment (PLCE) with its detachable patrol packs incorporating many of the lessons learned in the Falklands campaign.

Introduction of the SA80 rifle has meant the design of a new bayonet frog which will be in buff leather for the Guards Division to prevent chafing of their red tunics and which will, of course, have to be 'blancoed' with the matt-white liquid shoe cleaner which has been in common use since the late 1960s.

Some things, it seems, will never change – at least not if the Guards Division have anything to do about it!

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# SICK OR INJURED THROUGH SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES?

A guide to War Pensions and Allowances

# THIS IS FOR YOU

THIS DHSS leaflet tells about pensions and allowances available to those injured or disabled in the Forces or during time of war.

You do not need to have served during wartime to get a pension. You may be able to get one if you were injured or disabled because of service in HM Armed Forces at any time; were a civilian or civil defence worker and were disabled as a result of the 1939-45 war; served as a merchant seaman and was disabled as a result of a wound or disease received during time of war, or due to

the effects of detention by the enemy; or you are the widow, widower or dependent relative of someone who has died as a result of such an injury or disablement.

Pensions for disablement or death arising solely from service in HM Forces between October 1, 1921 and September 2, 1939 are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence.

Those who consider they have a claim should write to the Officers, Soldiers and their Widows Dept., MoD Army Pensions Office, 103/109 Waterloo Street, Glasgow G2 7BN.

Those claiming should, when they write to the Glasgow office,

include their surname, first names and, where appropriate, maiden name, Service number, and rank, regiment or corps and dates of enlistment and discharge.

It doesn't matter if you can't supply all these details, give as much information as possible.

For war disablement pensioners there are a number of allowances which, with a little research, could well bring in some welcome additional income: dependency allowance, allowance for lowered standard of occupation, unemployability supplement, constant attendance allowance, comforts allowance, exceptionally severe disablement allowance, severe disablement occupational allowance, clothing allowance, age allowance, education allowance, mobility supplement and treatment allowance.

For full details on these possible benefits write to the Glasgow address asking for leaflets MPL 153 and 154.

According to this leaflet, those receiving a war disabled pension, are "given priority in a National Health Service hospital" when treatment is required for the disablement, providing there's room at the hospital. In certain circumstances it's possible to gain admittance to an MoD hospital.

Help with the funeral costs of a war pensioner is also available. Contact the local war pensioners' welfare office for details.

Similarly help is available for widows whose husbands died as a result of service in the Forces during the 1914-18 war or at any time after September 2, 1939.

Claimants should write to: War Pensions Branch, DHSS, Norcross, Blackpool FY5 3TA giving

Continued in col. 6

## Take cover against a law that can bite!

save a lot of bother. It is also possible to insure against a pet going sick. Veterinary bills can zoom at an alarming rate as about a third of all pet owners find to their cost each year.

And as Service families tend to move around more than most, putting a pet into quarantine is often necessary and costly. This, too, can be insured against and is worth looking into.

Of course an owner may already be insured, but be unaware of it. A check of a home policy could

not to mention the feathered variety - at competitive rates.

Companies offering pets' cover include the Dog Breeders' Insurance Company, part of the General Group, which offers cover for all dogs, including cross-bred mongrels, for £25 a year.

The Prudential's Prupet policy offers a package for cats, dogs and horses and has been updated to include claims and costs up to £1 million. Equine and Livestock offer a Petguard

policy for £19.50 which is similar to the Pru's.

It's a sensible move, if taking a pet overseas or acquiring one while there, to take out insurance cover or at least consider it. And don't forget your feathered friends - Cliverton Ltd of Melton Constable, Norfolk, specialise in birds.

One point worth remembering is that any pet bought or found and taken into the house is not of the endangered species as there are strict import regulations about bringing such animals back into the United Kingdom.

Continued in col. 6

## ALL CHANGE FOR BABY

### New maternity pay plan for mums-to-be

FROM April 6 there will be major changes governing all claims for maternity benefits as the current maternity grant scheme is being abolished.

Mums-to-be expecting on or after April 6 should read DHSS leaflet FB December 8 '86 Babies and Benefits. They should also read NI17A leaflet dated December '86 and called Maternity Grant and Maternity Allowance.

The transitional arrangements leading to abolition are: if the baby is born before April 6 the grant should be paid providing the claim is made before April 6. If the claim is made after April 5 it should be paid only if the baby has not been born at the time of the claim.

If the baby is due on or after April 6 there will no longer be a grant to claim unless the baby is born before April 6.

Those receiving supplementary benefit or family income supplement, housing benefit or adopting a baby, can claim to the social fund for babies due on or after April 6.

The present maternity allowance will also change on June 21. Until then current rules stand.

Then maternity allowance changes will apply to all women whose babies are expected on or after that date.

If a baby is due on or after that date claims for

maternity allowance should be made on the new form MA1.

A leaflet about statutory maternity pay and the new rules for maternity allowance, will be available from March.

If a baby is expected on or after June 21 then from April 6 most women who work for an employer and have earnings of not less than the lower limit for payment of National Insurance contributions at the standard or reduced rate, cannot claim maternity

allowance from DHSS. Instead they will get Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) from their employer.

Women who can't get SMP may be able to get maternity allowance from DHSS under a new scheme.

Details on how to claim maternity payment from the new social fund and maternity allowance when overseas or in Northern Ireland, and where leaflet MA1 will be available when abroad, will be explained in a later issue.

A SOLDIER about to leave the Army and hoping for a council house has a snowball in hell's chance of getting one.

Ten years or more on the list counts for nothing since the fact he is to receive a pension and a gratuity can cancel his name from the list. It can be a heartbreaking situation.

His chances of a house also decrease as more local authority houses are sold under the Right to Buy Scheme and not replaced - since to date more than a million have been sold.

On December 9 the council house waiting list for London was published. Horrendous news... The borough of Lewisham alone has 22,585 applicants waiting.

No wonder a soldier's widow (see SOLDIER December 15) had difficulty in another London borough where she was in competition with 18,496 others for a house.

Greenwich, too, another area with many Service families, has a list of 15,015 home waiters.

There are areas with less than 10,000 on their lists like Chelsea, Hammar-

smith and Fulham, but they're close to that figure.

Only three out of 33 London boroughs can show lists of less than 2,000; the City of London with 553, Sutton with 1,634 and Kingston 1,912.

These figures are indicative of the pattern throughout England and Wales with about 100,000 listed as homeless and Scotland with 25,000.

In the past some councils were more disposed to housing Servicemen. This

are remote indeed.

Indicating that parliament is concerned, *House of Commons* of December 9 tells how MP John Cartwright (SDP), asked Defence Secretary George Younger how many houses, flats and maisonettes are currently owned or leased by the MoD for use as married quarters, and how many were occupied up to July 31 last year?

The figures given make interesting reading with 5,030 undergoing repair -

This raises at least two questions: what happens after these 4,735 MQs are sold and how many of them will be offered to Servicemen and women through the Joint Services Married Quarters Sales Office (JSMQSO)?

If previous statistics are anything to go by very few will be offered to Servicemen, since only about half of the quarters disposed of actually get on the books of the JSMQSO. Seemingly the remainder are sold to

new higher limit of 70 per cent discount available to a council house tenant buying a house or flat.

This increase in itself spotlights the difference in discount offered to Servicemen which has stayed at 30 per cent off the price of a house bought through JSMQSO.

As I have said many times before, Servicemen with 22 or more years service wanting to buy through this system are on a far worse deal than a

council house buyer.

Action is needed now to help this group of house-buying Servicemen, not forgetting the single soldier who wants to own his own home.

## Snowball in hell's chance of a house

is not necessarily so in 1987.

Their first priority is housing the homeless and unless a soldier can show he and his family are without shelter after leaving a married quarter, his chances of getting a house

which shows what a state our Service MQ stock is in - with 842 being processed for disposal and 3,893 surplus to requirements, which in due course will be passed to the Property Services Agency (PSA) to sell.

This situation is highlighted even more now Housing Minister John Patten has announced a



### Guild get-together

CHARITIES supported by the Bordon branch of the Guild of St Helena shared £175 when Lady Jean Vincent, the new warden of the guild, attended a service at the branch to welcome six new members and receive the money on behalf of the Soldiers' Widows Home, Royal Soldiers' Daughters School and the Help and Holidays scheme for Service children with special needs.

Lady Jean (centre), received cheques from Mrs Carol Ward (left) for £125 raised by the branch, and from

branch secretary Mrs Jenny Pullen (right) for £50 raised at the garrison fete last year. For those interested, the guild comprises wives, daughters, and sisters of Service and ex-Service personnel.



Anne

HERE TO HELP

Armstrong  
WITH FAMILIES IN MIND

IN MY VIEW

## COLD COMFORT ON THE HOUSING LIST



# ON TARGET WITH THE INFANTRY SALES TEAM

Above - Meet the S Team! The Army's Infantry Sales Team on parade at Warminster, Wilts. Team leader Maj Neil Salisbury, A and SH, stands in the centre of demonstrators, weapons, outfits and vehicles. See back cover

Left - Cpl Steve Dean shows off the accessories available to the modern sniper. He is demonstrating the Special Forces suppressed version of the Accuracy International L96 rifle

THE British defence industry could have few better ambassadors of expertise in battlefield equipment for the infantryman than the 11 men comprising the Army's very own Infantry Sales Team based within the Infantry Trials and Development Unit (ITDU) at Warminster, Wilts.

Demonstrators in uniform, they flew 100,000 miles last year to more than a dozen countries.

As British soldiers, their word is their bond.

Led by its OC Maj Neil Salisbury, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, the team is tasked by the Defence Export Services Organisation or DESO. The globe-trotting squad is made up of an officer, a TSM, a colour sergeant, four corporals and four privates.

Set up in 1985 the Infantry Sales Team was not fully manned until last October and is likely to take on another "head-hunted" five members by the end of this year. It is the youngest of four British Army sales teams with a similar remit.

Maj Salisbury explained: "Our role is to supply expertise in support of the defence

industry's infantry equipment as we demonstrate small arms and simulators, supporting British defence sales both at home and abroad. We don't only support equipment which is already in service with the British Army but anything produced and not in service."

Last year, the sales team handled 74 different tasks including 28 photographic,

**A spokesman for the Defence Export Services Organisation in London said: "There is no doubt in our minds that using Army sales teams helps put our defence industry in a pretty good light with our overseas customers. Firms like having soldiers talk to other soldiers and potential users about the versatility of a bit of kit."**

14 promotional films and videos, 16 major demonstrations and three evaluations.

They took the team's specialists to countries such as Malaysia, the USA, Portugal, Germany, the Philippines, India, Singapore, France, Luxembourg, Indonesia, Jordan and Turkey.

not mean that it is still not an excellent bit of kit," said Maj Salisbury. "But we can quite legitimately support two rival systems such as, for example, a sniper rifle."

This year its representatives will travel to Japan, Thailand, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Pakistan.

Maj Salisbury stressed there was no capitation charge for the team's services in terms of its manpower. The sole costs firms had to meet were those of travel and hotel accommodation.

"In return for this we offer them a very good deal," he added.

"From their point of view it is obviously much more credible to have a British Army soldier in uniform holding up and talking about a particular system than it is to have a civilian representative doing the same thing.

"Only we can talk soldier-to-soldier and advise how we would use a piece of equipment.

"So far, we have only scratched the surface of the potential sales possibilities within the UK-based defence industry. Last year we dealt with 70 firms."

How do orders for representation of a firm's interests come in?

In theory, said Maj Salisbury, tasking came from DESO through the Director of

Infantry, the team's "filter".

"In practice, because so much of this business can depend on personal contact, about 90 per cent of firms come direct to us.

"We can provide virtually any facility or equipment whether it be transport, or weapon, or manpower, given sufficient time. Obviously zero notice will not produce tanks and helicopters.

"For a trip overseas we would need three months and we would need to be brought in at the initial planning stage.

"We have developed expertise and local knowledge and often know more than the firms about the problems they are going to face at first hand. So, the earlier we are brought in, the better."

Small video or photographic assignments for promotional purposes required about six weeks' notice.

Maj Salisbury pointed out: "We are not salesmen and we are not technicians. We say what we think as testers of the equipment as we demonstrate it to potential customers on behalf of the firm.

"It would be wrong to think that the

sales team work in cahoots with the firms. We stand well back from the intimate discussions on actual sales."

Honesty is the best policy according to CSgt John Lloyd, RGJ, who said: "We must never lie. If we did, we would lose our credibility. You highlight all the good points of a system on display and keep away from the weaker ones. But, if pressed, you must be truthful and honest."

So far, just two firms who called in the sales team have had their products returned as unsatisfactory and unworthy of promotion. One was thought to be "useless". The other so "unreliable" as to make any soldier using it "look like a Wally".

From their quiet Wiltshire base, with passports ever at the ready, Infantry Sales Team members have indirectly earned millions of pounds for Britain's defence industry.

Sale of the veteran 81mm mortar to the US Army and the US Marine Corps,

● Turn to Page 22

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WO1 (TSM) Warren Larnder shows off a weapons effects simulator rifle and a remote laser-controlled exploder system

## ***'Defence is a growth industry and we, as a team, must obviously grow with it . . .'***

● From Page 21

coupled with the tube-launched Merlin bomb, has started a trend. Merlin, once considered by the Ministry of Defence but not taken up, is now a Private Venture or PV as it is known in the defence industry trade.

"It will revolutionise the 81mm mortar and make it much more attractive to sell around the world. Several countries, including Luxembourg, are showing renewed interest based on the American purchase and news that Merlin is going on stream.

"We've convinced the Americans it is good and deliveries have already started," said Maj Salisbury.

New equipment about to enter British

Army service like LAW80 this autumn and items already in service like the S-10 respirator and the tracked APC, Warrior – formerly MCV80 – have attracted interest.

The S-10 face respirator gives better speech and breathing facilities and allows its wearer to drink his mug of tea without removing his headgear.

Warrior has been demonstrated in the Middle East. LAW80 has been bought by Jordan. The Belgians are interested in weapons effects systems, the Danes in thermal imaging devices.

Other vehicles catching the overseas eye have included the Land-Rover 90 and One-Ten variants. Jordan is buying them as well as the wheeled Saxon APC.

"We may be the smallest of the Army's four sales teams but we must surely cover the biggest mileage during our promotional travels," said Maj Salisbury.

"Defence is a growth industry and we, as a team, must obviously grow with it. We hope to have our establishment increased by another five men before the end of the year.

"We believe we are the only Nato country to have sales teams of this nature, except France who are jolly good at selling their hardware."

From laser grenades in a light shade of blue to the indispensable jerrycan, from sophisticated rifle-mounted weapons effects systems (WES) to remote laser-controlled exploder systems all in the continuing cause of enhanced battlefield realism, the Infantry Sales Team's tasks go on.

Such is the vitality of approach to their worldwide task that their alma mater, the ITDU, plans to hold an open day in July to show off the talents of its protégé to industry. It also plans to let industry show what it has on the shelves to the media.

"We are hoping it will become an annual event," said Maj Salisbury, adding, with a wry smile, "a sort of mini-BAEE".

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# **OUT OF THE FIRE INTO THE 21st CENTURY**

THE Donnington disaster of 1983, when stores and buildings worth close on £200 million went up in smoke and flames, is considered by many to have been a blessing in disguise.

Not that they would admit it publicly, but privately they say that, had it not been for that fire they would have been stuck with those pre-war storage sheds for ever and ever amen.

Now, because of that gigantic military bonfire, the RAOC have taken a huge step into the 21st century.

Like the phoenix, space-age style buildings have risen from the ashes of the old pre-war sheds to dominate the 400-acre site at the RAOC Central Depot near Birmingham.

Technology is the name of the game now, and they have adopted the latest storage system available at a cost approaching £25 million and known locally as Project B55.

Spread over 17 acres, ten huge sheds more than 70ft high will house 100,000 tons of stores and it will all be done by computers and robots.

They start loading the racks in about a year's time when the buildings are complete.

Then nobody will go inside the windowless structures except maintenance crews. Everything will be taken in and out by robots.

Little automatic vehicles will be loaded with one ton of spares, a button on the computer punched and off it goes on electronic guides into one of the sheds.

Inside, cranes reaching the roof and travelling on rails between the racks will collect the stores to be pigeon-holed and deliver them to the correct slot.

This will go on for 24 hours a day every day and Maj Jim Bolt, who is overseeing the project for the RAOC, reckons it will take two years of constant operation to get the ten sheds full of 40,000 stock items.

Everything will be done in total darkness; no windows, no lights and only a small amount of heat to beat the risk of condensation.

"Humans, apart from repair crews, just won't go near the place," said Maj Bolt. Listing some of the statistics he said



**Maj Jim Bolt, project officer for the new £25 million storage system at the RAOC Central Ordnance Depot at Donnington, describes how the new system will work with the aid of a £10,000 site model**

14 computers would be in use to control the system, 55,000 anti-fire sprinkler heads were sited throughout the ten sheds, each of which are more than 100 metres long and 20 metres high, and to supply the sprinklers should fire break out, are two 1.5 million gallon water supply tanks.

It was the fear of fire that led to the design of ten separate sheds and there is

no way they can have a practical demonstration of the efficacy of the 55,000 sprinklers.

"Of course we're confident of the design, but we can hardly turn on the system to try it out," said Maj Bolt. The fervent hope is, of course, it will never have to be used.

As with the fire precautions, so a number of fail-safe systems have been built in should there be a power failure. Huge batteries and generators are there to guarantee a smooth flow of current – all DC – to the computers to ensure they don't "lose" their little robot charges, the mere thought of which makes Jim Bolt wince.

Could this happen? "Most unlikely," he said. He looked thoughtful, obviously grappling with the appalling thought of locating a starter motor for a Land-Rover in any one of 100,000 thousand storage slots. Mind boggling.

But B55, as the site is designated, is looking good. It has a pleasing appearance of two-tone brown metal cladding and, if the model is anything to go by, will be surrounded by grass and trees.

"Should look good when all is finished by this time next year," said Jim, who leaves the Army a year or so after that.

Who will declare the place officially opened and working is not yet known, but rumours indicate that the Queen herself will press the button to send the first robot whizzing into the dark tunnels of the sheds with a load of nuts and bolts which may well never see the light of day again for a long time.

# THE LAST CHUNK!

## But it's enough for 81 more VCs

Jackie Brown, petite, 22 and unattached, lifted the lump of metal in the Small Arms Museum at Donnington and said: "I can pick this up quite easily. It weighs only 22½lb."

Jackie, a stores clerk in the Small Arms Store at the giant RAOC base, was in fact holding the last chunk of bronze from which VC medals are made.

The most valuable piece of military metal in the Army, the last bit was cut from it some years ago when 12 new VCs were struck by the London firm of Hancocks, court jewellers to the Queen Mother.

The remaining 22½lb is enough to make another 81 medals, but as so few are awarded, it's likely to last a good few years yet.

While the metal waits to be reduced in size still further, it stays in the charge of Lt Col John

Grainger, OC the sub-depot at Donnington which includes the RAOC's private small arms museum.

There, on a plinth supported by four upright century-old rifles, this priceless metal sits for visitors to view.

Dull yellow in colour, it resembles a bit of slightly mouldy Swiss cheese because of blow holes in the casting.

"Our last issue of metal from this cascable (the bit from the breech end of a cannon and by which it is towed) was in 1970," said Col Grainger. "Then 3lb was cut off and sent to the medal makers.

Originally there was 100lb of metal but, since the medal was introduced in 1856 more than 1,350 have been awarded and this is all that remains of the original cascable.

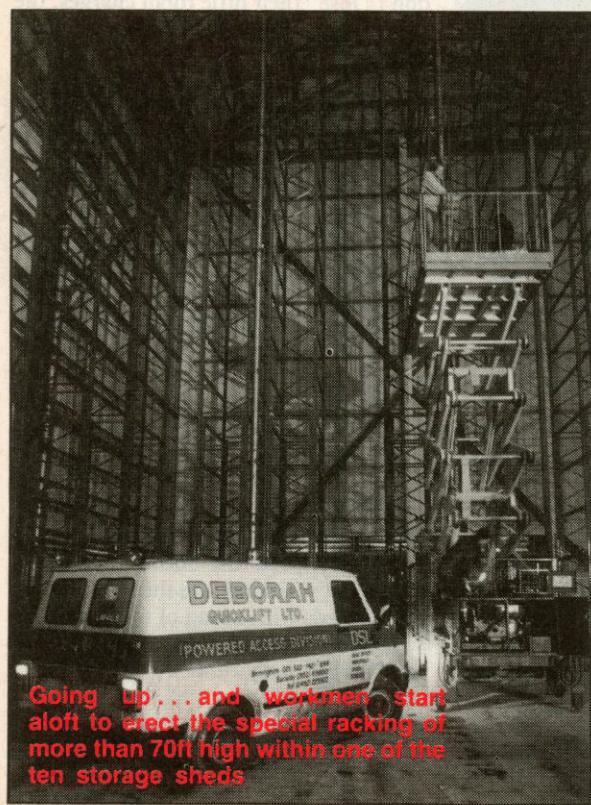
The monetary value placed on a VC is high. Some are sold, but holders and families tend to keep them. It is the rarity of the VC that collectors prize so much and the value escalates accordingly.

The last one sold at auction fetched £62,000.

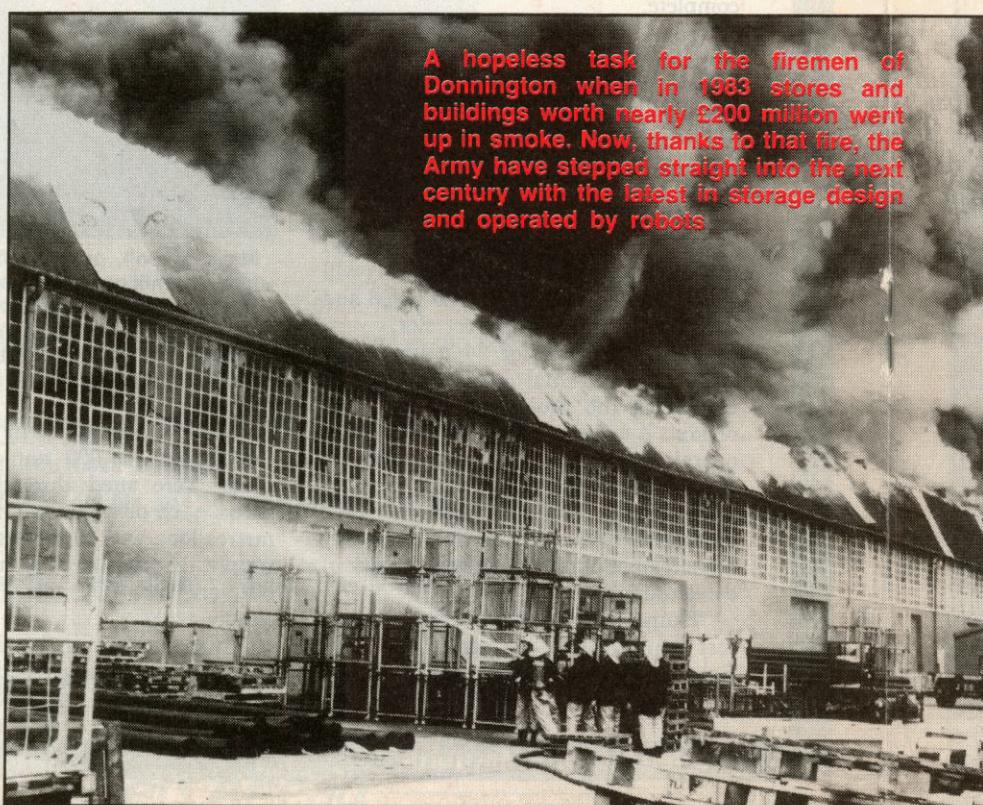


Jackie Brown and the bronze block from which VCs are made . . . 22½lb of the Army's most valuable metal.

## PHOENIX FROM THE ASHES . . .



Going up . . . and workmen start aloft to erect the special racking of more than 70ft high within one of the ten storage sheds



A hopeless task for the firemen of Donnington when in 1983 stores and buildings worth nearly £200 million went up in smoke. Now, thanks to that fire, the Army have stepped straight into the next century with the latest in storage design and operated by robots

ANY would-be author planning to write a 90,000-word book needs an understanding wife and family.

"And that's a fact," said Lt Col Peter Haden, CO 15 Battalion RAOC at Donnington, who has just had his first book published and is hopefully heading for the best-seller list.

But now the 265-page novel is on the bookstalls his wife, Mary, and teenage daughters are more than pleased that the man in their lives is something of a celebrity.

Called *The Angry Island* (Piatkus Books, £9.95), he had the idea for this fast-moving adventure story many years before making a start.

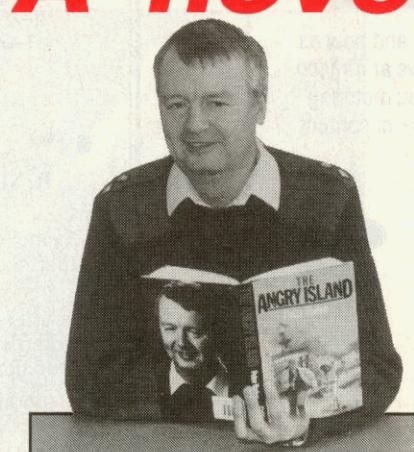
Even then it wasn't just a case of bashing away at a typewriter and producing 1,000 words before breakfast as some authors claim.

No. For Col Haden, it meant months of meticulous planning with every chapter set out in storyboard fashion.

Then, when it came to the actual writing, he spent every available spare moment planning every word in longhand, followed by rewriting, polishing and refining passages of dialogue before tackling the final proof reading stage.

"It took 20 months from start to finish and I decided that if I couldn't get it

## A novel way to success



With *The Angry Island* behind him – although good things could come of it with paperback and film rights – he is already halfway through his next book, a political thriller of about 100,000 words.

"I'm producing this one at a faster rate than the first one as I now have a word processor," he said.

But while that speeds up his output, he said he still had some trouble writing dialogue. "Extremely difficult to get that right," he said.

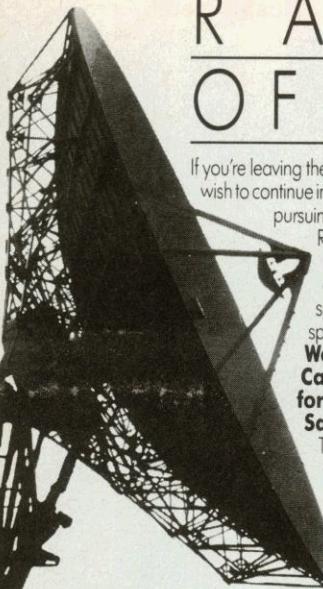
What if he hit the jackpot with *The Angry Island* or his new book, yet without a title? Would he take up full-time writing?

"Not a chance. I've proved to myself I can do it quite successfully and I look upon it as a lucrative hobby.

"My only regret is using my own name. In retrospect I think it would have been best to have called myself by another. But I can't change now as my first book is showing signs of success."

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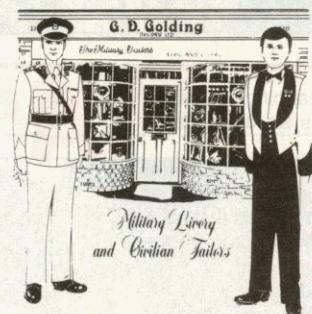
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# We are the PITS!

WHEN WO2 Keith Doughton called for volunteers to work over Christmas with the PITS he was overwhelmed by the response.

"I wanted eight to work over the holiday leave period and I got 12. I had to send four of them on leave," said Keith, the WO in charge of the Priority Issue Teams at the RAOC Central Ordnance Depot, Donnington.

They were known as "the pits" long before tennis star John McEnroe even heard of the phrase and derive a certain satisfaction from being known as such.

One of the eight holiday workers was 20-year-old Pte Fiona Fogarty. "My home is in Birmingham so I went home for Christmas dinner and came back in the afternoon," she said.



Pte Jim Murphy gives priority to a red star demand. "There's no hanging around here," he says. "It's all go and I like it. I hope to stay on when my tour is finished"

"I wanted to work over the holiday because I plan to go on holiday to Greece with my parents and boyfriend, Cpl Tony Robinson who is based at Corsham, Wilts.

"I enjoyed it, but then I enjoy the job anyway. We're always so busy and the change in shifts - we're a 24-hour unit - adds to the interest."

While others were whooping it up at festive parties, the PITS teams were keeping the Army supplied with MT and radio spares.

"Even on Christmas Eve we had 970 demands while over the following ten days we received only 561," said Keith Doughton.

"But someone has to meet those demands and a skeleton staff of my 40-strong team were here to answer calls."

Twelve of the 40 are girls and they do exactly the same work as the lads.

Fiona, with four months on the team, spoke in glowing terms of the job, but 19-year-old Paula McCann wasn't so positive as she had been there only four days and had yet to "find out what night work was like."

Keith Doughton supplied the answer: "Busy," he said. "We get more red star demands at night than at any other time and that calls for instant action."

"It means locating the parts required, which can be in any of a number of store sheds around the depot, collecting them and bringing them back here for despatch."

"Nothing is automated in this department at all. It's all done by hand."

The antithesis of the robot-controlled B55 Project with its 100,000-ton computerised storage and selective system, this is graft in its basic form; take a message, locate the requirement, pick it up, stick a label on it and get it on its way as quickly as possible.

"But I like it," said 19-year-old Pte Jim Murphy. "I think it's the best job at Donnington, I'll be here for a year and when that time is up I hope I will be allowed to stay on."

Beamed Keith Doughton: "You can't say fairer than that. I don't know how long it will be before we're taken over by B55, but until then we'll keep meeting the demands of our customers even if they do refer to us as 'the pits'."



Pte Fiona Fogarty: Christmas Day was a working day





Picture: Terry Champion

Designer Ian Stewart (left) shows the casting for the Normandy Campaign Commemorative Medal to its first recipient, Maj John Howard

# New medal for hero of Pegasus Bridge

D-DAY veteran Maj John Howard – holder of the DSO and the Croix de Guerre avec Palme – has been presented with the newly-cast Normandy Campaign Commemorative Medal by members of the Normandy Veterans Association, writes Lindsey Cleave.

The medal, appropriately carrying the mint number 1944, marks the daring

operation in which Maj Howard, a company commander with the 5th Parachute Brigade, led an assault on the two bridges across the Caen Canal and River Orne at the start of the campaign.

Details of the operation, during which glider-borne men of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry and the Royal En-

gineers secured both bridges in a surprise attack, were described at the presentation in Hindhead, Surrey, by Maj Howard's brigade commander, Gen Sir Nigel Poett.

A nostalgic note was sounded with the attendance at the veterans' reunion of Mrs Arlette Gondree Pritchett, whose family owned – and still do – the Cafe Gondree

near Pegasus Bridge which Howard's men liberated, the first on D-Day.

The Normandy Veterans Association was formed by men who took part in the action and the commemorative medal was commissioned by them as a special tribute. It was struck by the Royal Mint and designed by Mr Ian Stewart.

# THE YEAR OF THE SAPPER



Minister for the Armed Forces  
Mr John Stanley sees the  
sappers at work during a  
recent visit to Northern  
Ireland

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NEW forms of blast walls and protected accommodation for police stations in Northern Ireland were among work which has won high praise for Royal Engineers serving in the Province.

Armed Forces Minister Mr John Stanley has told the House of Commons that the IRA's tactic of intimidating building contractors had been countered by the use of the Royal Engineers, ably supported by the Royal Pioneer Corps.

A major programme of rebuilding and strengthening bases had been achieved.

The first engineer reinforcement squadron had been deployed to the Province in

October 1985, Mr Stanley told the House.

"The sappers set to with a will, and never let up.

"By the end of last year they had completely rebuilt two police stations; increased protection at 30 other police stations and Army bases; and erected new observation posts in south Armagh and improved existing ones.

"In addition, the Royal Engineers themselves designed new forms of blast walls, a new design of protected accommodation for police stations, and a new type of roof to overcome the effect of a mortar bomb."

He said that if any year in the Province deserved to be called

the "Year of the Sappers" it was 1986.

Protection provided by the Royal Engineers had saved lives and prevented injuries.

Mr Stanley congratulated the Royal Engineers on their 200th anniversary this year of the granting of their Royal Charter.

During the Army debate Mr Stanley revealed that security forces had killed four individuals engaged in terrorist activities, and 630 people had been charged with terrorist offences up to the end of November.

A total of 215 weapons, more than 5,000lb of explosives and 29,000 rounds of ammunition had been found.

The Armed Forces Minister



A "super sanger" at Strabane, Northern Ireland – typical of the observation posts being constructed by the Royal Engineers

also paid tribute to the "immense and selfless" contribution of the Royal Ulster Constabulary during the year.

He said the Regular Army had maintained two additional

battalions on four-month unaccompanied tours for the greater part of 1986, involving eight infantry battalions in short notice moves to Northern Ireland.

"Despite the regimental and personal family disruption that caused, the battalions involved responded extremely well and quickly became effective on the ground," said Mr Stanley.

"It is the infantry which is in the front line of the campaign, as is borne out by the fact that a total of 18 infantry battalions served in the Province during 1986."

## Victorian military history on show

**Piper James MacLachlan of the 1st Battalion the Scots Guards takes a break to look at exhibits on display at the Victorian Military Fair held in the Victory Services Club, London.**

**The exhibition, staged by the Victorian Military Society in association with the Corps of Drums Society, featured a wide range of historical material. The Corps of Drums was represented by The Honourable Artillery Company, 5 Queens (V), 5 R Anglian (V) and 7 R Anglian (V), and Army bands by the staff band of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps.**



Picture: Paul Haley

# A FIVE HOUR HERITAGE OF MILITARY MUSIC

## REGIMENTAL MUSIC OF THE BRITISH ARMY (Vol. 4)

Band of the Royal Corps of Signals  
Pipes and Drums of the 4th Royal Tank Regiment  
Conductor: Major G Turner  
Pipe Major: M Harden  
Droit Music DR 74

OVER the past couple of years I have enthused about the long-term project undertaken by Droit Music to record all the music of the British Army, to include the trumpet and bugle calls, regimental calls, regimental marches of every regiment as at the outbreak of the 1939-45 war, and where necessary the slow marches or other music of a regiment to avoid repetition; and for good measure the marches of regiments and corps formed since then.

The project is now complete and available. Imagine it – four LPs (or cassettes) and two cassettes lasting some five hours, of a heritage of military music unequalled by any other nation. A project of much labour, organisation, commitment and staying-power, not to say financial risk.

So it behoves all who claim a love of military music, all the "Disgusteds of

## Regimental Music of the British Army



Dorking", all correspondents to SOLDIER and RB, in fact all of you who in past years have complained at the lack of, or demanded to know the reason for the lack of interest in, and a multitude of moans about regimental music in general – to put your money where your pen was!

And of course in the process acquire a once-and-for-all collection which can become a family heirloom, for it almost certainly will never be undertaken again.

To remind you, the collection is a must for all organisations who may at some time need a regimental march at parades, dinners or functions where no band is available, and even more likely the need for calls such as Last Post and Reveille for memorial services.

No cracked notes here to embarrass the congregation. And the music is not merely a series of quick marches which would make monotonous listening but a well varied sequence of quick, very quick, slow and other rhythmic varieties of tune on band or pipes and drums.

The fourth and last volume includes the rarely heard marches of the SAS, the old ATS march, RMA Sandhurst, Army Legal Corps, Kneller Hall, and the UDR among twenty-five others.

Droit have made a special offer for those wishing to own the whole set. It is £18 for the four discs (or cassettes) of the Regimental Music, and £9 for the two cassettes of Trumpet and Bugle Calls of the Army, all package and posting free. £27 for the lot, and cheap at twice the price.

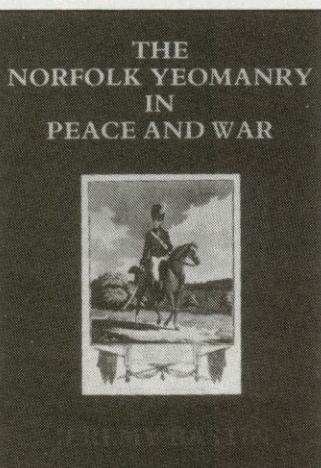
● From Droit Music, PO Box 19, Blandford, Dorset DT11 7XZ.

## Everything you ever wanted to know about

DESPITE a large number of books on the Yeomanry Cavalry published in recent years, there are remarkably few that give in-depth historical accounts of specific county yeomanry.

Jeremy Bastin has now filled the gap as far as the Norfolk Yeomanry is concerned, telling the story from the time of raising in 1782 until the present day when its lineage has merged with that of a neighbouring county yeomanry to form the 202 (Suffolk & Norfolk Yeomanry) Field Battery, 100th (Yeomanry) Field Regiment RA/V, based at Swaffham.

As the author says: "The county of Norfolk not only has a yeomanry rich in both history and tradition, it can also claim to have raised a regiment of the



Norfolk Yeomanry history is recounted in the first chapter, culminating in the Boer War service of Imperial Yeomanry, in this case The King's Own Regiment of Norfolk Imperial Yeomanry. The second chapter takes the story up to 1915 and

the early part of the First World War, with the 1/1st Norfolk Yeomanry in Palestine.

The Gallipoli campaign of 1915 was important to the regiment and suitably receives a separate chapter, as does the service in other parts of the Middle East and in France, culminating in disbandment in 1919.

Re-raising as the 108th (Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry) Field Brigade RA took place in 1923, the first of a succession of several role changes within the TA during the inter-war years.

The Second World War receives an understandably detailed treatment with no less than 14 chapters covering the period of engagements in France up to Dunkirk, Home

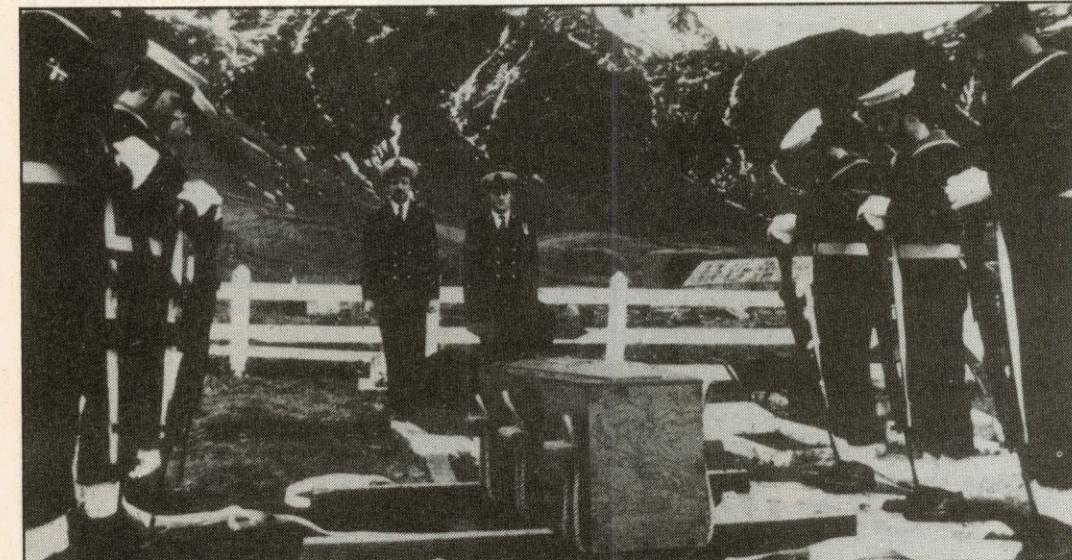
## How the weather nearly undermined SAS operation on South Georgia

THE confidence of the SAS in being able to cope with whatever a winter in South Georgia might throw at them proved worrying for the Commander Land Force Operation Paraquat, a Royal Marines major who was only too aware of the hazards of the Antarctic climate.

Sheridan is quoted as saying: "They had a job to do and I left it to them to find the best way of doing it. I did feel that they were underestimating the hazards of operating in an environment such as South Georgia's but, because so few of

us ever knew what the SAS were accustomed to doing, I could not identify the point at which they might be overreaching themselves."

Major Cedric Delves, the SAS commander, said: "Guy Sheridan was the Commander Land Force and I fully recognised him as such. At the same time, I was accustomed to working with a degree of latitude. I was the SAS adviser and I was the SAS commander.



A sad postscript to Operation Paraquat as the body of Felix Artuso, an Argentine submariner from the Santa Fe, is laid to rest in the whalers' cemetery at Grytviken. He was shot by a Royal Marine who thought, mistakenly, that he was trying to scuttle the submarine as it approached Grytviken jetty. HMS Antrim provided the guard, bugler and pall bearers

We prefer to be given a task with stated operating parameters – we ask them to be allowed to get on with it."

Nevertheless, the insertion of an SAS recce troop on the Fortuna Glacier nearly ended in disaster when appalling weather forced them to dig in overnight after advancing just half a mile across the exposed and bitterly cold ice-flow.

The remarkable feat of surviving a night in sub-zero temperatures and then two helicopter crashes during the subsequent rescue operation is one of the most enduring chapters of the book and it says much for the SAS training that only one man was found to be showing signs of frostbite at the end of it.

The weather, and the unreliability of the 40-horsepower engines on their Gemini assault boats, were to prove the main enemies of the SAS and SBS throughout the operation and the Argentinian invaders were only too happy, it seems, to haul up the white flag as the noose tightened around their base at Grytviken. – MWJ

● **Operation Paraquat: The Battle for South Georgia**, by Roger Perkins, published by Picton Publishing. Price £17.95.

## the Norfolk Yeomanry

Yeomanry in 1955. This is a chronology going back to 1569 when Queen Elizabeth I sent guns, powder and shot to Great Yarmouth for defence against the Spanish.

If a criticism is to be made of this book, it is that it contains few photographs. However, there is compensation in the goodly number of maps of the campaigns in which the regiment was engaged, from Gallipoli in 1915 to the Rhine Crossing in 1945.

The final chapter is concerned with post-Second World War regimental history, amalgamations as well as changes in designation and gunnery role.

Three appendices are devoted to prisoner-of-war memoirs of members of the Norfolk Yeomanry in the Second World War, and a fourth appendix comprises an interesting lineage, compiled by Major Barry Hastings, of the 284 (1st East Anglian) HAA Regiment RA (TA), amalgamated with the Norfolk

## Electric finger on the button?

THE elaborate chain of command on which the West's defence rests, from early warning satellites to the United States President deciding whether to press the action button, would be totally redundant should there ever be a Star Wars defence system, according to military history specialist and author Nigel Flynn.

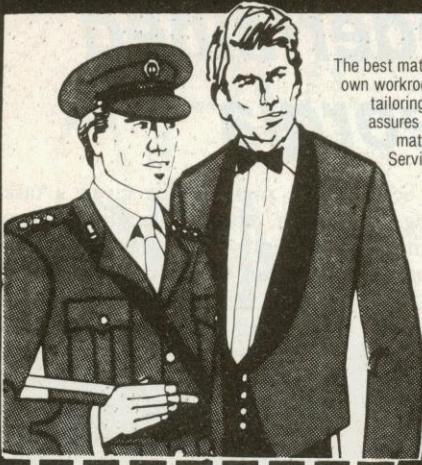
Because of the sheer speed with which the defence would have to be activated, the

decision could only be taken by an anonymous "intelligent" machine, rather than by the creaking process of political decision making, he says.

Author Flynn, a Lancaster University graduate, draws this conclusion in a book which looks comprehensively at space, the exploitation of it, the potential weapons of the future and their development and use.

● **War in Space**, by Nigel Flynn, published by Windward. Price £7.95.

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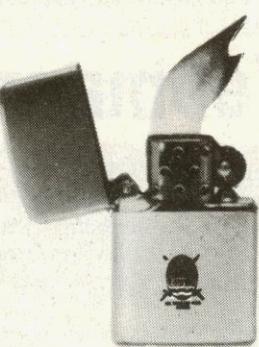


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# Lulworth rangers aim to stop the poachers

THE popular image of a poacher is of a pantomime yokel who goes around saying "oo ah", wears corduroys tied with string, has straw in his hat and a pocket-full of rabbits for his starving family.

Not so, says Maj Hugh Rose, leader of a six-strong team of part time deer rangers at Lulworth ranges, Dorset, with responsibility for the 450 deer roaming the MoD land.

It's a false image, he says. For the most part poachers belong to organised gangs of vicious criminals with no scruples how they kill the animals.

Armed with powerful spotlights, shotguns, clubs, knives and even sharpened screwdrivers, they blind the deer with the

by  
**John Margetts**

light before setting their dogs on to them and then finishing them off with their weapons.

"The shotgun is totally unsuitable for use on deer, even at close range, so a high percentage escape with fearful wounds.

"An additional tragedy is that poachers do not care about seasons so that female deer are frequently killed and their fawns left to die of starvation," says Maj Rose.

Writing in the MoD conservation magazine *Sanctuary*, he says deer poaching is increasing throughout the country, much of it on MoD land.

He suggests that penalties for poaching deer are too soft and says: "In many cases the poacher is still regarded as a downtrodden peasant pitting his wits and skill against the oppressive landowner. The odd deer he takes is allegedly killed by the most sporting means and is only to feed his starving children.

"In many cases little serious effort is made to bring poachers to justice and if they reach the courts sometimes derisory penalties have been imposed for acts of barbaric cruelty where large sums of money were involved."



**Maj Hugh Rose, leader of the part time deer rangers who patrol MoD land at Lulworth, Dorset**

those who have legal access to Ministry land," he says.

Even though he claims hard evidence has been available against the inside poachers, it has not yet been considered strong enough to hold up in court and secure a conviction.

But he points out that, should he and his team be successful in bringing a prosecution for deer poaching, the rustlers face fines of up to £1,000 or a prison sentence.

"The truth is that poachers are no better than burglars," he says. Describing one local technique used by poachers, he says they steal a car, knock out the windscreens to use the spotlight and guns, then dump it.

"Unless they are found in possession of the carcass, it's difficult to get a conviction. One way they work is to hide the carcass and get someone else to collect the following day," he says.

What can be done to combat this killing which can be worth between £500-£1,000 for a night's illegal work?

Answering his own question Maj Rose says anything suspicious should be reported to the police immediately. "Don't," he warns, "approach a gang in the act of poaching. Get away quickly and dial 999.

"The only way we can make protective legislation work is to catch and convict offenders. To get the necessary evidence we all need to help in the conservation business."

A lecturer at the RAC Tactical School at Bovington, Maj Rose spends his working day teaching students the finer points of co-operation between tanks and infantry.

But in his spare time and at weekends he and his team of six patrol the 7,000 acres of Lulworth ranges hunting the illegal hunters.

To give the impression they are alone in this protective role would be wrong, for Hugh and his team are just one of 30 such teams with more than 250 men nationwide who are determined to beat the menace of the deer killers.

"Who carries out these cruel acts? Rather embarrassingly we have discovered a great deal of evidence that much poaching

on MoD land may be an 'inside job'.

"Firearms and illegal means are being used to take deer by

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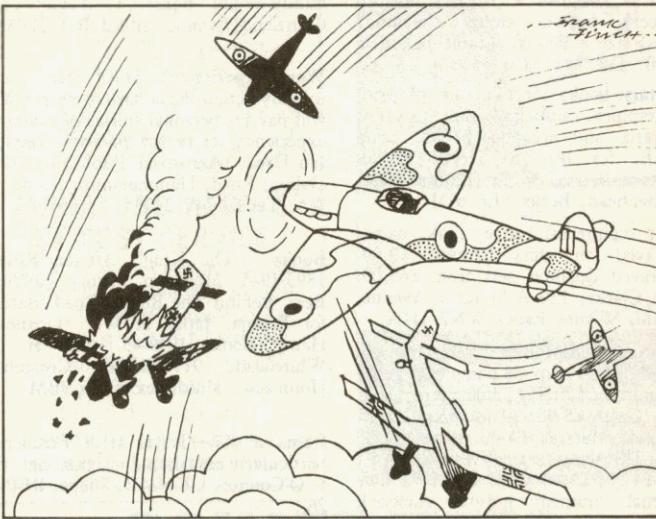
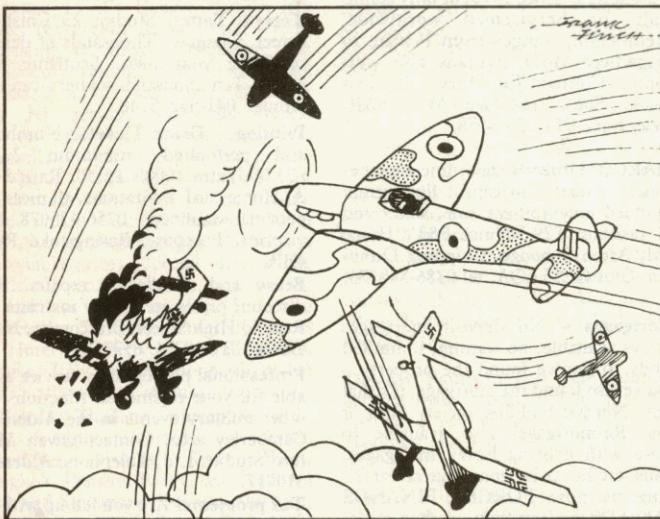
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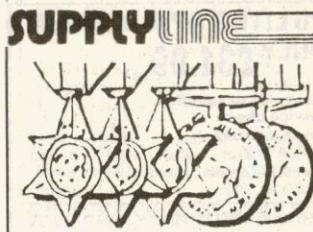
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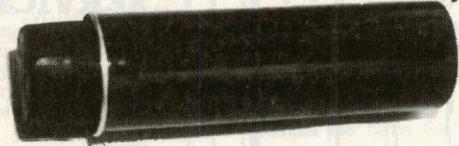
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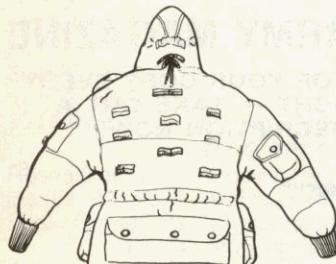
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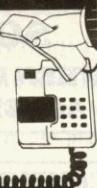
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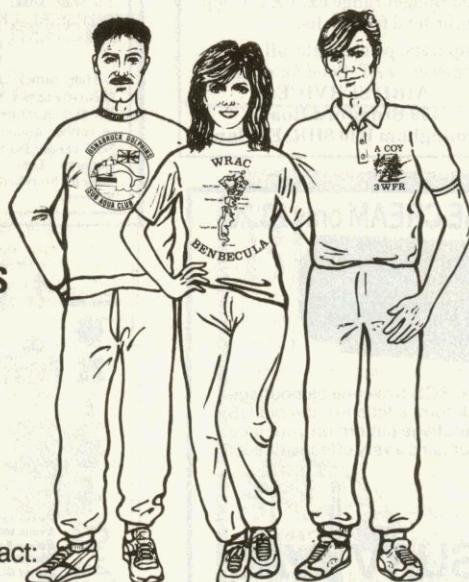
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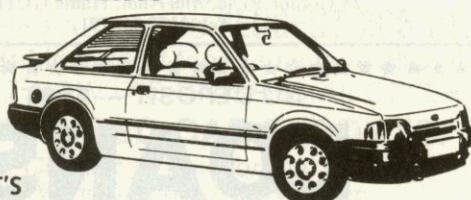
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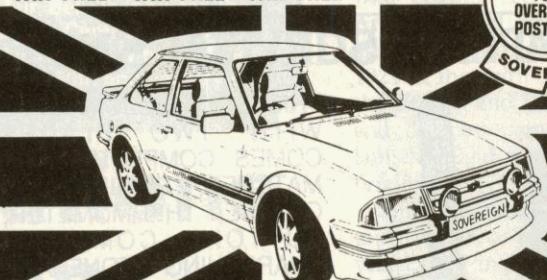


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# French pull out of Kentish Cup memorial competition

THE French Armed Forces have rocked Services football circles by withdrawing from the triangular Kentish Cup football competition – 66 years after it was launched to commemorate

the First World War comradeship between British, French and Belgian troops.

But the shock French retreat from the competition which they last won two seasons ago

does not mean the end of the Kentish Cup – for an invitation has now gone out to the Dutch Armed Forces football assoc-

iation to fill the vacant place.

In the letter giving their reasons for withdrawal the French cited the demands of the CISMA international military sports organisation upon their team – which comprises young French professional footballers doing their National Service.

Said Maj Alan Dobson, secretary of the Army Football Association: "It is very sad to hear of their departure after so long.

"But with the agreement of the Belgians the British have invited the Netherlands to join the competition and we are hoping they will accept and the matches will be played this season."

When the First World War ended one man was determined that there should be a permanent reminder of the comradeship of Belgian, British and French troops in the trenches.

He was Colonel (later Brigadier General) R J Kentish, who became secretary of the Army Football Association just after the Armistice. On May 7, 1921 he met with colonels from the French and Belgian armies and the new competition was launched and named after its originator.

Since that time the triangular tournament has been held every year except in 1928 and during the last war. The British have won it 15 times – but only three times since National Service ended. Bobby Charlton was one of many stars who represented the Army during National Service.

The most recent British win was in 1983-84 when QMSI Alfie Coulton, now a fulltime FA coach, moulded together a hard and determined team. He had been helped by a decision the year before to expand the British side to include players from the other two Services.

Brig Gen Kentish also has a far larger memorial – after leaving the Army he founded the National Playing Fields Association in 1925.



**Lt Col Richard Brooks (right), Commandant ASPT, receives the Arthur Bell Trophy for the school's contribution to sport in the community from Mr Nigel Hook of the Central Council of Physical Recreation. The Army School of Physical Training at Aldershot is the first winner of the trophy, which was presented to the Duke of Edinburgh in 1985 to mark the 50th anniversary of the CCPR**

## Services preparations hit by cancellations

FIRST fixture casualty of the Army soccer season was the South West Counties match against Sussex at Lancing. It has been rescheduled for March 9, writes Pat Massey.

More likely to affect preparations for the Kentish Cup and Inter-Service championships was the postponement of both the Combined Services matches due to be played in January.

There need not be any serious consequences as a result of these cancellations, provided the Army's South East Counties matches against Devon (Tiverton, January 27) and

Dorset (Aldershot, February 9) go ahead as planned.

Were these also to fall foul of the weather there would be problems in trying to agree dates which did not clash with unit commitments in the later stages of the Army Challenge Cup.

Matches in the Inter-Service championships are scheduled for March 11, 18 and 25 – the Army playing on the last two of these dates. By then, the Army UK Challenge Cup should have been decided at Aldershot on March 4, and, the Army Challenge Cup date of April 8 is

sufficiently far enough ahead to present no great problems.

The programme is light enough in late April/early May for any postponed matches not to interfere with the Jubilee Cup programme. The Army UK Cup Winners will entertain their RAF counterparts on April 29 and visit the RN cup winners on May 6.

With the closing of the current season, preparations can be put into top gear for the Army FA centenary next year and the major programme which is planned to mark this anniversary.

# Snow way to pick a team!

NO sooner had the Army senior rugby side's season got underway when down came the snow. Followers of Army rugby know that the season always starts in December with the trials, and any harsh weather, resulting in cancellations of fixtures, is a nightmare for the selectors trying to blend a team to take on the other two Services at Twickenham, writes John Quin.

The Army senior trial, held in Aldershot just before Christmas, produced enough material for the selectors to pick a team which overwhelmed the Territorial Army XV in pouring rain under the Aldershot stadium floodlights.

What was interesting in the Army XV was that with many established players missing, youngsters who had come through the Army's youth teams showed up well at senior level.

At least five of the senior players in that team were regular members of the Army U21 side; in fact two are still eligible this season.

First game in the New Year saw the Army entertain the



The Falkland Islands Joint Services Movement Staff marksmen who won the mini-minor units event and came second overall in the well contested Exercise Quick Kill shooting match. Members of the team, based at HQ BFFI, are (from left) RPO Mick Longhurst (RN), FS Dixie Dean (RAF), Sgt Dick Whittington, Mov Con RCT and Sgt Jasper Jarvis, Mov Con RCT, who was third overall in the SLR competition

Metropolitan Police side at Aldershot. With more new faces in the side, the Army could not repeat last year's victory at Imber Court and lost by 19 pts to 10. Then came the snow and vital games against Surrey and Hampshire were lost in the build up to March 7 and the Royal Navy game.

## UNDER-21

At under 21 level the prospects are looking good. The Army U21 side has had mixed fortunes this season, although the build up to the RAF game (February 15 at

Aldershot 2.15 ko) continues. With the Royal Navy producing an under 21 side this season for the first time ever, the Army lads will be keen to get their places in the Combined Services U21 squad for the big games against Scotland (Apr 1 at Murrayfield) and against Wales (Apr 15 at Aldershot).

Finally, back to the senior side. Weather permitting, the run up games to the Inter-Service championships were Feb 4, Cambridge University (Aldershot); Feb 18, Oxford University (Oxford); Feb 25,

Public School Wanderers (Aldershot); Mar 7, Royal Navy (Twickenham); Mar 11, Combined London Old Boys (Aldershot); Mar 21, Royal Air Force (Twickenham).

And don't forget the Army sevens at Aldershot on April 30 for a good day's rugby.

If you are still looking for a belated Christmas or birthday present, how about a copy of the *History Of Army Rugby*. There are still a few copies left, available from The Secretary ARB, ASCB Block M, Clayton Bks, Aldershot GU11 2BG. For you - only £12.

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# INVICTA EXPORT

## Army to have new sports centre in Aldershot

WORK is to start sometime during the next 18 months on a major new sports facility for the Army at Aldershot.

To be known as a physical and recreational training centre, it is to be constructed on the site of the old Mons running track off Queen's Avenue near the Aldershot Military Stadium, and will house a large sports hall, eight squash courts and a swimming pool.

It will be able to stage sports such as indoor hockey, indoor cricket, badminton, soccer and volleyball.

In conjunction with this ambitious project



TWO members of The King's Own Scottish Borderers 'tag' in the handover box during the 7.5km biathlon relay at the Famous Grouse infantry ski meeting based on the Tyrolean village of Axams.

More than 100 skiers in 15 teams from BAOR, Berlin and the United Kingdom took part in a variety of Alpine and Nordic events.

The 1st Battalion The Gordon Highlanders won both the team slalom and the team giant slalom, with Sgt Cooper, 1 WG, taking the individual giant slalom honours.

The Nordic programme was dominated by 1 Bn The King's Own Scottish Borderers who won the 5.5km biathlon relay and the 15km open team race, and took the 15km open individual race through LCpl Muirhead. The 10km novice event was won by 2nd Lt

Simon West, 1 Gordons.

Second overall in the meet were 3 Bn The Royal Green Jackets, who were consistently well placed, while the Glosters arrived in Axams with a minimum of training but entered every event with humour and determination.

## Hockey looks to artificial future

VARIOUS options are being looked at to give Army hockey the all-weather synthetic pitches it desperately needs to remain competitive at the highest club and county level.

Artificial surfaces have revolutionised the game in the United Kingdom, allowing stickwork and ball control skills to develop to a point where Great Britain is emerging as one of the world's leading hockey nations.

At present the Army has no artificial surface of its own and spends up to £1,500 a year hiring pitches, mostly at Bisham Abbey, for representative and Inter-Services games.

A big boost for Services hockey has come in the form of sponsorship by Armed Forces Financial Advisory Services (AFFAS), a subsidiary of Stewart Wrightson, long time supporters of Services rugby. AFFAS are to sponsor the Services tournament for the next three years, starting with the Army-hosted event on the University of Essex's synthetic pitch at Colchester on March 2 to 4.

Two synthetic pitch options are being considered at Aldershot, with cost the important factor. A basic facility would start at around £100,000, while a more comprehensive floodlit scheme could be four times as expensive (see story above).

Meanwhile, with all the Army's representative games now geared to preparation for the Inter-Services, the senior team beat Welwyn Garden City 2-1 through goals by Capt Ian Jolly and Cpl Jeff Day.

# RAF decision sets up big show-down

THE withdrawal of the Royal Air Force from this year's Inter-Services boxing championship means that the title will be decided in HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, on February 19 when the Army takes on the Royal Navy in what is likely to be a thunderous confrontation.

A combination of inclement weather, operational manpower requirements to keep runways clear, and a viral infection in their boxing squad caused the RAF to cancel their match against the Navy at Hereford on January 22, and the same reasons were given to the Army

camp who were preparing to entertain the airmen at Aldershot on February 5.

The RAF offered to put together a second string team to honour the Aldershot fixture, but the Army was already committed to a match at that level against London at Knightsbridge the following day.

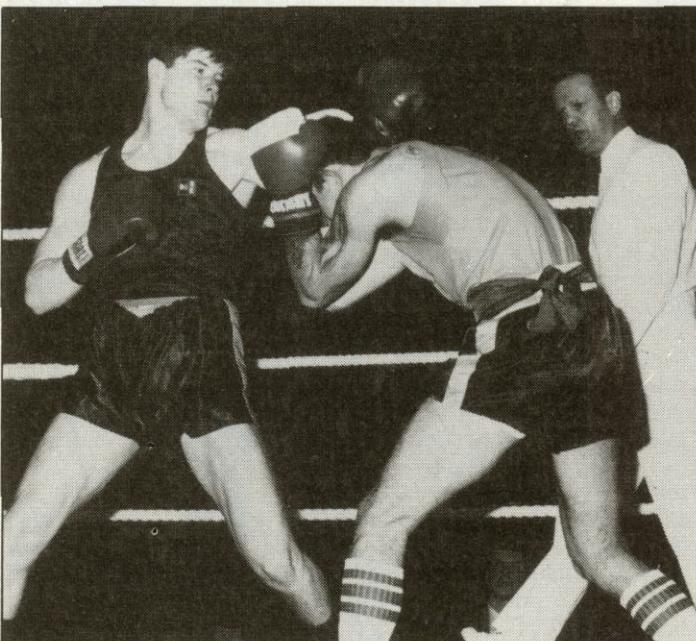
What the RAF's decision does do is clear the way for a tremendous night of action in

the Navy's Portsmouth stronghold.

"It'll be the evening of the year for Service boxing," says Army Boxing Association secretary Maj Jack Beasor.

"We've got one or two 'bankers', and so have the Navy. But there will be at least six bouts very much on the line."

The Army's target is a fourth consecutive Inter-Services team championship.



Pte Jim Stewart (left) of 1 Staffords on his way to victory over a Royal Engineer at light middleweight in a divisional elimination round of the BAOR novices inter-unit competition. 1 Staffords won through to the divisional final against The Royal Green Jackets.

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Para novices take to the ice

THE Parachute Regiment took the first three places in the Army novices bobsleigh competition at Winterberg, West Germany, and qualified along with a REME team for the Army championships taking place in St Moritz from January 31 to February 7.

A total of 28 Regular and seven TA soldiers under the direction of Maj Duncan Jones (chief instructor) and Maj Tony Wallington (Army bobsledding secretary) took part in the novice training week and championships.

Of the 35, 25 drove a two man bobsleigh from the half way start and 15 graduated to the top start with a gentle push off the summit of the mountain. By race day, 11 two man bobs were able to compete.

It appeared that a REME and a Royal Signals bobsleigh would be fastest, but in the end it was the paras who did best.

**Results were:** 1, Cpl Marden/Capt Smedley (Para); 2, Lt Crawley/Lt Snowball (Para); 3, Pte Connolly/LCpl Richardson (Para); 4, Cpl Bunce/Cpl Ellis (REME); 5, Pte Johnson/Pte Pettitt (Para); 6, Lt Simpson/Lt Harvey (16/5).

Meanwhile, Winter Olympics prospects Cpl Stan Tout and Gdsmn Dave Armstrong finished an impressive tenth in the world two man bobsleigh championships at St Moritz.

## There's still room on board

MORE than 300 soldiers and members of the WRAC have applied to sail on Australian Adventure '88, the Joint Services sail training expedition to Sydney to commemorate the 200th anniversary of European settlement in Australia.

Project co-ordinator WO2 Colin Garnham-Edge has received nearly 650 applications in all at the Joint Services Sailing Centre, Hornet, Gosport, Hants, but still has vacancies on a



number of legs.

The Australian end of the cruise is, however, already oversubscribed.

Last date for applications

is the end of February.

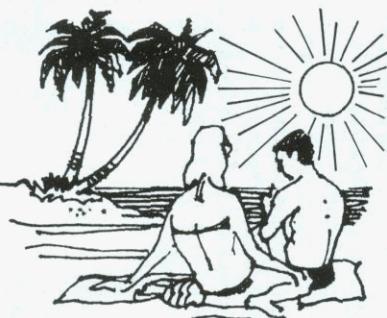
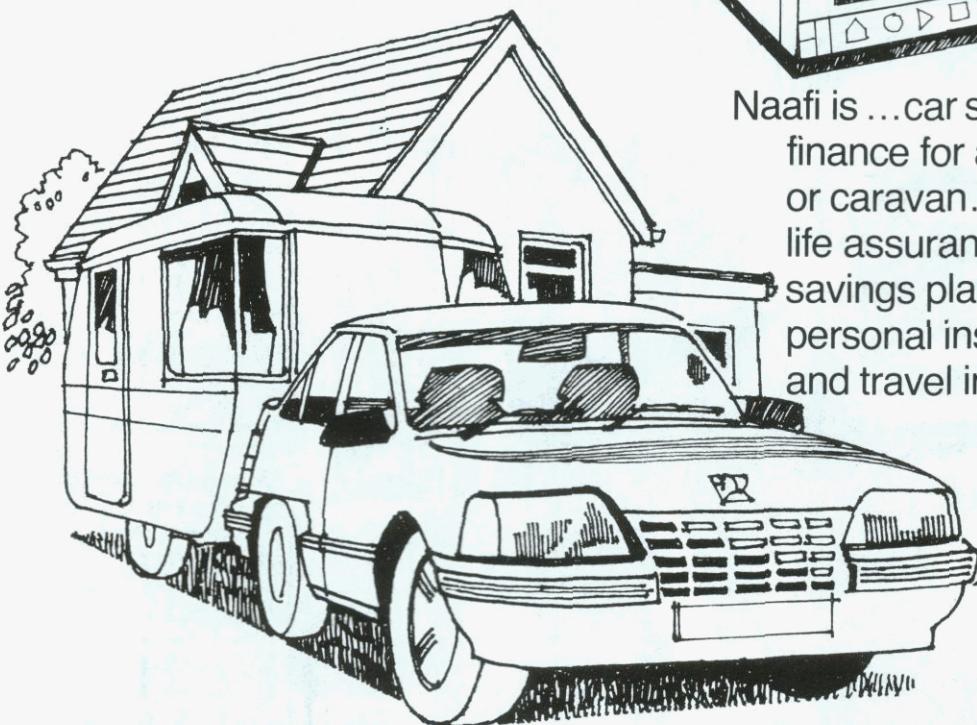
Legs on which vacancies exist are: Gosport to Gibraltar (departing July 1987); Gibraltar-Cyprus; Cyprus-Bombay; Bombay-Singapore via Colombo; and on the return journey Tahiti to Panama (April 1988); Panama to Annapolis via Antigua; Annapolis to the Azores via Bermuda; and the Azores to Gosport (returning July 1988). Length of each cruise varies from two to four weeks.

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The Infantry Sales Team lines up at Warminster, Wilts, with a selection of vehicles, weapons, clothing and equipment that its members will be demonstrating to potential buyers around the world. Team leader Maj Neil Salisbury, A and SH, is in the foreground. Story and more pictures in Pages 20 to 23.