

SOLDIER

OCTOBER 29 1990

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GULF BUILD-UP



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FRONT COVER: An infantryman of the 7th Armoured Brigade fires a GPMG from an armoured personnel carrier during a night demonstration for the media in Germany. No doubt he got his knuckles rapped for not wearing gloves!

Picture: Mike Weston

OCTOBER 29, 1990

VOL. 46/22

CONTENTS

- 5 33 Field Hospital
- 7 Gulf commanders
- 9 Bremerhaven's big move
- 12 Gulf people
- 14 Picture round-up
- 17 Newsline
- 19 SOLDIER to Soldier
- 20 Desert Rats' history
- 22 People
- 25 2 Infantry Division exercises
- 30 Kriss Akabusi
- 33 Anne Armstrong
- 34 Gulf Helpline
- 36 Letters
- 38 All in a Good Cause
- 39 HOAY competition
- 40 SOLDIER Mart
- 46 Classified advertisements
- 48 Sport



Members of 22 Field Hospital Group in Bahrain fly the flag. They have been working on the old RAF hospital at Muharraq, filled sandbags for defence and carried out NBC training. From left to right are (top) Capt Julie Attwood, Lt Linda Bamforth and Maj Kathy Bland, the matron; (middle) Lt Diane Leathwhite, Lt Helen Owen, Lt Tracy Bolam and Maj Gill Campbell; (front) Capt Sue Pratt, Lt Carol Lee, Capt Edwina Norton, Lt Bethan Davies, Capt Joanne Judd and Lt Alison Frater.

GULF MOVE

WITH much of his armour already at sea and bound for the Gulf, Brig Patrick Cordingley, Commander 7th Armoured Brigade, left for Saudi Arabia from RAF Gutersloh on October 11.

He was accompanied on board the RAF transport aircraft by staff officers and soldiers of the brigade's advance party. The main body of soldiers were due to follow several days later.

In overall command of the British presence in the area is Lt Gen Sir Peter de la Billière, British Forces Commander Middle East, who is already in the Gulf.

Men from the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, 9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's) and the Royal Corps of Transport were embarked on board the RFA Sir Galahad when she sailed for Saudi Arabia from Marchwood military port laden with supplies for 7 Armd Bde.

New cover available

SPECIAL cover for soldiers serving in the Gulf has been arranged by the brokers behind PAX, the personal accident scheme launched last year for Army and Royal Navy personnel.

Nearly 10,000 soldiers and sailors took out cover under PAX, which gives protection all over the world. Following the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, the Middle East zone was removed from the cover for new applicants.

Now a special scheme has been designed by AIU's New Hampshire Insurance Company and brokers Bain Clarkson to provide full cover for those serving in the Gulf,

● Turn to Page 5

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S/PX/2/44

From Page 3

ordered to go there, or likely to be sent to the region.

The new scheme, called PAXME, includes war risks (other than between the four major powers) and 24-hour cover for normal accidents. This policy is also valid outside the Middle East zone.

It varies from the original PAX in six respects:

- It is an annual policy with full premium payable up front;
- Maximum benefit is £100,000 (overall total with any existing PAX not to exceed £150,000);
- Premium per £10,000 unit is £142 for non-hazardous occupations, £184 for hazardous occupations;
- It is an individual policy and does not involve family cover;
- Three of the benefits have been reduced and one removed, but principal benefits remain the same;
- Because of the volatility of the Middle East situation, current premium rates for PAXME remain until October 27, after which they are subject to revision for new applicants at seven days notice.

Anyone who bought PAX before August 13 and continued to make monthly payments without a break has full war and zonal cover anyway. They are, however, entitled to buy more units for extra Gulf cover at the new premium.

Soldiers who feel they do not need war risks included can still buy the amended PAX, which is similar to the original version but excludes war and the Gulf area at the old monthly premium of £1.50 per unit for non-hazardous occupations and £2.57 for hazardous.

Arrangements have been made for an advance of pay for up to two units of cover (£284 non-hazardous, £368 hazardous) should personnel require it. Once paymasters have countersigned the application and accepted the premium, the cover is in force.

Those already in the Middle East may also take out PAXME cover.

Withdrawing to the front

FORTY soldiers were due to leave The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards either having completed their service or opted for premature voluntary retirement when they learned the regiment was ordered to the Gulf.

To a man they withdrew their papers and agreed to serve for a further period.



With an empty ward behind her, Q/Pte Joanne Bushell signs off at the CMH before taking up her war role as an enrolled nurse with 33 Field Hospital. She qualified last April and service in the Middle East will count as her second posting

Picture: Mike Perring

CMH team in Gulf move

MORE THAN 400 staff from the Army's best-known military hospital have deployed to the Gulf in support of 7th Armoured Brigade following the establishment of 33 Field Hospital, writes Laurie Manton.

Commander Medical South East District, Col Norman Quin, told SOLDIER that following the decision to dispatch the brigade to the region, it became apparent that more medical support, and particularly hospital beds, would be required.

"The role of Service hospitals in wartime is to provide support to British troops in the field, so we have selected the Cambridge Military Hospital at Aldershot to mobilise as a field hospital with a 400-bed strength.

"The Cambridge is particularly suitable for the task because staff regularly practise their wartime role, and its busy accident and emergency unit provides staff with a lot of experience of the sort of cases they could meet in the Gulf," he said.

The 261-bed hospital, which has served the Army for more than a century, will for the duration be run down to the level of a 50-bed low-care facility for Servicemen only. The adjacent Louise Margaret Maternity Wing, which handles more than 2,000 deliveries each year, will continue to provide a full maternity service.

Man in charge of 33 Field Hospital will be Col Ian Creamer MC. Matron in the field will be a male, Lt Col Eric Gruber-von-Arnée, who is of German descent.

Initial deployments by 22 Field Hospital to Bahrain and one of its field surgical teams to Dhahran will continue unchanged. Because staff from CMH were transferred to 22 Field when it left for the Gulf, some posts with 33 Field Hospital have been filled by personnel drawn from other medical units based in the UK.

Also affected is the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps Training Centre at Aldershot, where training has been suspended in preparation for possible deployment of staff

to the region. The QATC is making arrangements for the employment of those student nurses whose training has been affected.

The move of 33 Field Hospital will be the largest single deployment of Service-women to the area, for almost 70 per cent of the hospital's strength is female, including four members of the St John and Red Cross Service Hospital Welfare Department.

Dated look

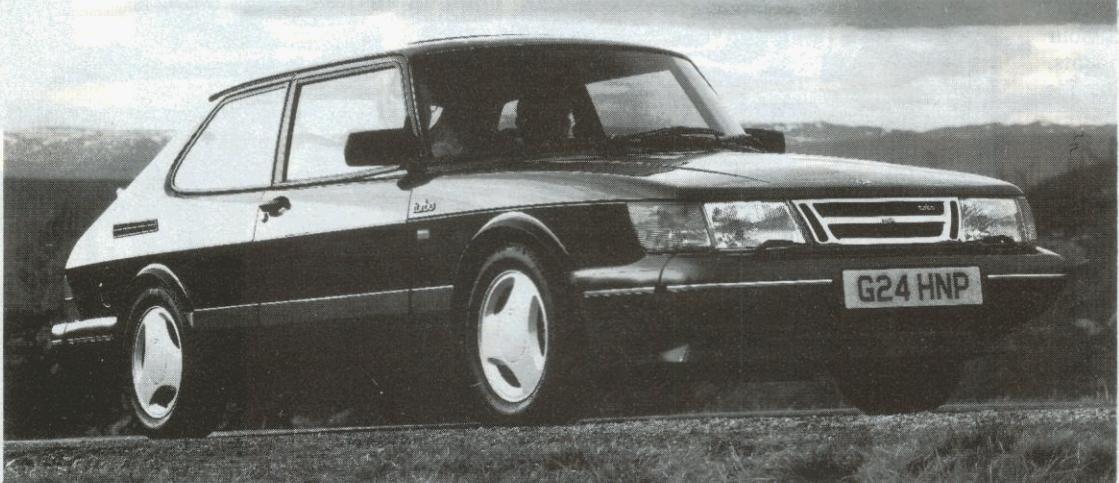
TROOPS first deployed to the Gulf found themselves issued with combat kit designed for wear in tropical climates.

This was because there was no requirement for stocks of desert-suitable clothing as the British Army had no commitment for service in the area.

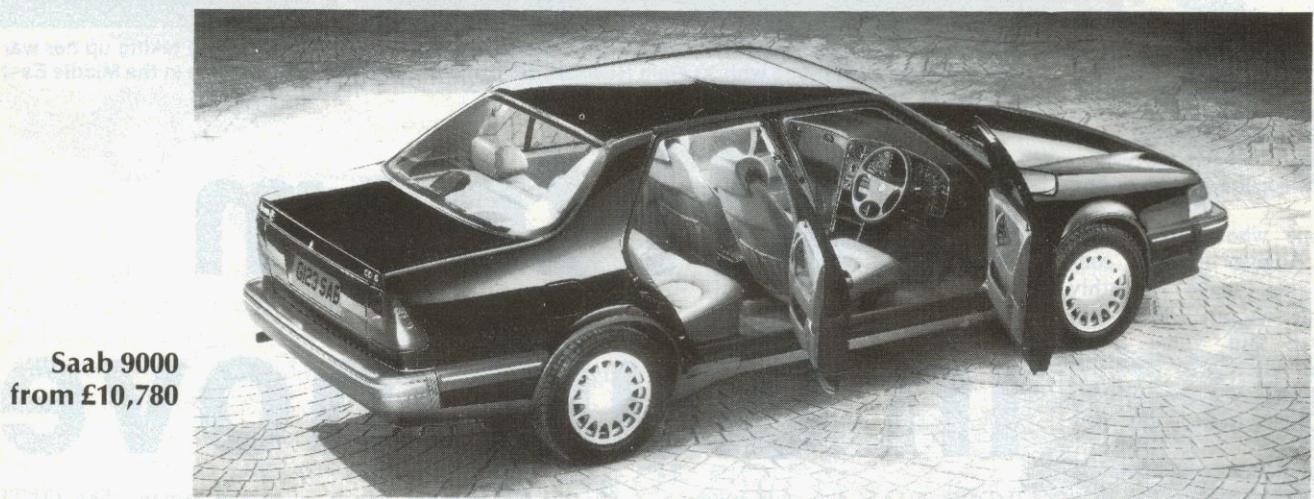
A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence told SOLDIER that desert uniforms are being procured and will be issued to troops serving with Gulf Land Forces in due course.

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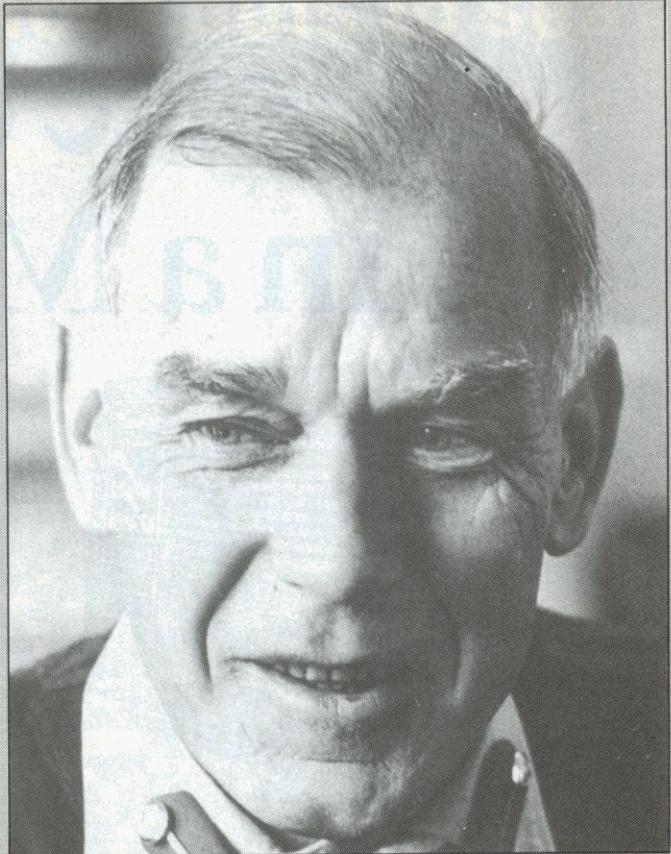
LT GEN Sir Peter de la Billière, former SAS officer and the Army's most decorated soldier, was just three months from retirement when he was appointed British Forces Commander Middle East and placed in charge of all British forces in the Gulf area.

Now the general, who describes himself in *Who's Who* as a down-market beekeeper, has shelved plans for retirement to "soldier on" in a region where he gained a DSO, MC and bar.

Fluent in Arabic, he has spent almost 20 years of his 38 years of Army service in the Middle East.

"I have no regrets in carrying on," said Gen de la Billière, "for I have always been a very difficult soldier to place in a job in the Army, never having served in BAOR, the MoD or Northern Ireland. There has been nothing suitable for me, until now."

The general, who was GOC South East District,



Lt Gen Sir Peter de la Billière
British Forces Commander Middle East

has considerable experience in working with the other Services, having been Commander British Forces Falkland Islands and, most recently, commander of the UK's Joint Force and Operations Staff which plans

for operations outside Nato.

His wife has taken news of the postponed retirement stoically, regarding the situation as "just like the old days when he used to go overseas at a moment's notice on operations with the SAS."



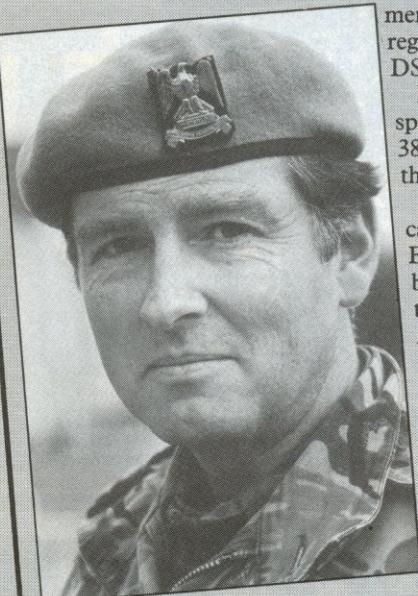
Lt Col Rory Clayton
CO 40 Field Regiment RA



Lt Col Charles Rogers,
CO 1st Bn, The Staffordshire Regiment



Brig Patrick Cordingley,
Commander 7th Armoured Brigade

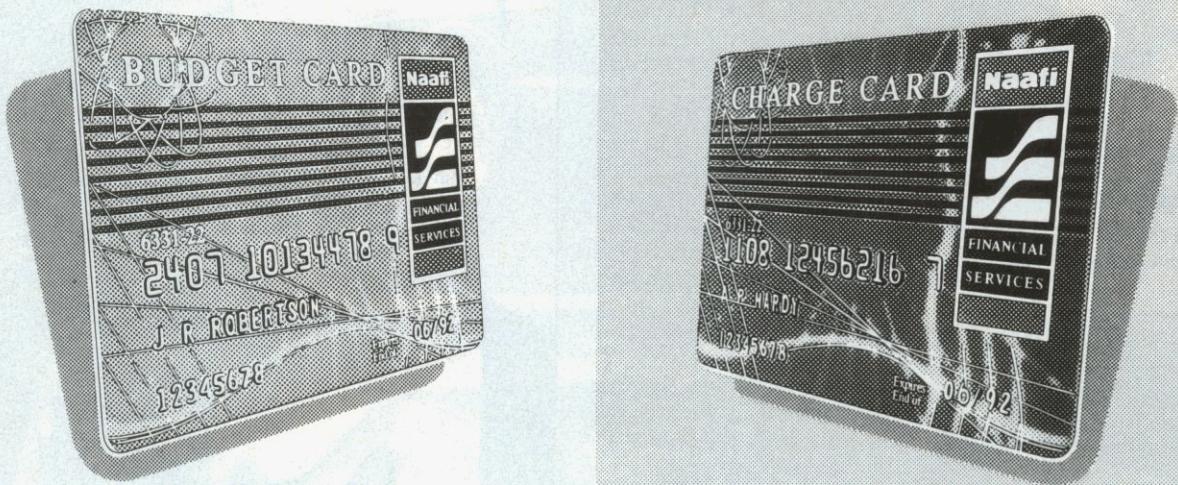


Lt Col John Sharples,
CO The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards



Lt Col Arthur Denaro,
CO The Queen's Royal Irish Hussars

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Desert Rats' armour puts to sea

THE BIG MOVE

THE DOCKS at Bremerhaven have never seen anything like it. Amid the bustling civilian traffic hundreds of vehicles of the 7th Armoured Brigade were being parked, moved, guarded, and loaded for the Gulf.

In one area dense columns of custard-coloured Challengers were facing scores of colourful "automobiles" being imported by US Servicemen in Germany.

A hundred yards away cranes were dealing with containers full of a German industrialist's export order.

For the thriving port on the Weser it was business as usual; for the British officer responsible for a different type of export order it was business with a difference.

Lt Col Christopher Froehlich, RCT, is Commander Transport and Movement,

British Communication Zone, and is based at Emblem, Belgium.

"Normally I'm concerned with the reception of reinforcements for BAOR and their onward movement from Antwerp, Zeebrugge, Ostende and the like, to bases in Germany," he told SOLDIER.

"Up here, I'm doing a similar job in reverse."

Lt Col Froehlich carried out his reconnaissance on September 20. All detachments were ready to accept the first imports six days later.

By then he had become Port Commandant for Bremerhaven and Emden, the other port being used.

For both, he had a port task group which at the last count included 14

Words:
Bill Moore
Pictures:
Mike Weston

on the Monday, and employed

Strange bedfellows at Bremerhaven. German lorries and American cars alongside the powerful M-109s of 40 Field Regiment RA and a mass of light armoured vehicles



Lt Col Christopher Froehlich

different cap badges and totalled more than 400 men.

Masterminding the docks operation were 30 members of 59 Movement Control Squadron commanded by Maj John Hay from 29 Regiment RCT based at South Cerney.

Some of them had had to jump very smartly indeed when the move began.

They were in Norway recovering Royal Marines from an exercise on a Sunday, back at South Cerney

at Bremerhaven on the Tuesday.

As the complexities of the move unfolded - each of three holding areas was estimated to be the size of six football pitches - welcome reinforcements were found from two TA units which fortuitously were beginning their annual camps.

From 288 Movement Control Sqn came Capt Bill Foulkes, a Manchester schoolmaster, and 20 other ranks; from 287 MC Sqn, WO2 Jim Harkins, a coal merchant in civilian life who was amused by the fact that among his right-hand men were a power worker and a man from a gas board (287 Sqn is sponsored by 59 Sqn).

The Bremerhaven operation saw the lessons learned in the Falklands conflict applied, so that a planned mix of vehicles and stores went aboard each ship (though sub-units were normally kept together).

Challengers arrived by transporter convoy and were met by a party from 617 Tank Transporter Squadron RCT

● Turn to next page

From Page 9

based at Hamm.

After being guided to the docks, the Challengers or Warriors were driven to assembly points and lined up.

Where there was no likelihood of them being loaded within a reasonable time the drivers were released to return to their units.

Government freight agents Hogg Robinson (at Bremerhaven, Capt Rob Whitehead, a marine surveyor, was parked alongside the quay) were responsible for the load plans.

Lt Col Froehlich: "We tell them what we've got to go and they tell us how it has to fit into the ship; they do the stowage."

Many of the vehicles were driven aboard by 28 vehicle specialists under Capt Tom Flowers from the Vehicle Transit Platoon of the RAOC Ordnance Depot Antwerp.

"They can drive up to 99.9 per cent of the Army's vehicles and they're having to do just that. They are vital to our operations," said Lt Col Froehlich.

One of the most familiar sights in the dock area was a white safety helmet with a Lion and Unicorn crest on the front.

It sat firmly on the head of WO1 Phil Skawski (son of a remarkable Second World War veteran who fought in the Polish and German armies).

WO1 Skawski came from the Düsseldorf staff of Brig Noel Muddiman, Comd Tpt and Mov BAOR.

With him he brought four of his five-man unit - 500 Mobile Movements Team RCT which normally handles the movement details of BOAR units exercising outside Germany.

All requests for assistance were channelled to the Man in the White Hat who either dealt with them on the spot or passed them up the chain of command.

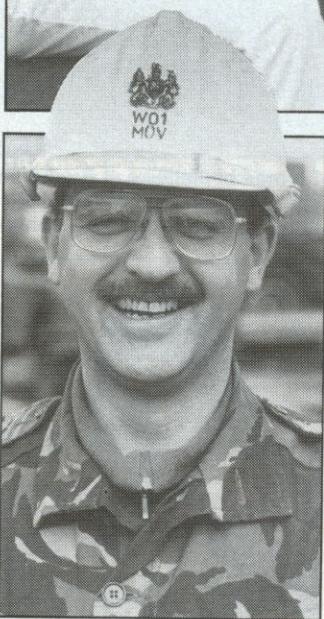
He seemed to be enjoying his role of Mr Fixit.

Even he, however, was unable to solve the problems of the RAMC detachment from 2 Armoured Ambulance.

In the first fortnight of the move the only casualty was a soldier who broke an arm while jogging and the medics didn't know whether to be pleased by the lack of custom.

Inevitably the REME were much in evidence, many from 1 BR Corps Tps Wksps.

Thanks to all the help of the German city and port author-



Trivial pursuits... men of 1 RS attract an audience in the ambulance train used as a dormitory

Royal Scots in role change

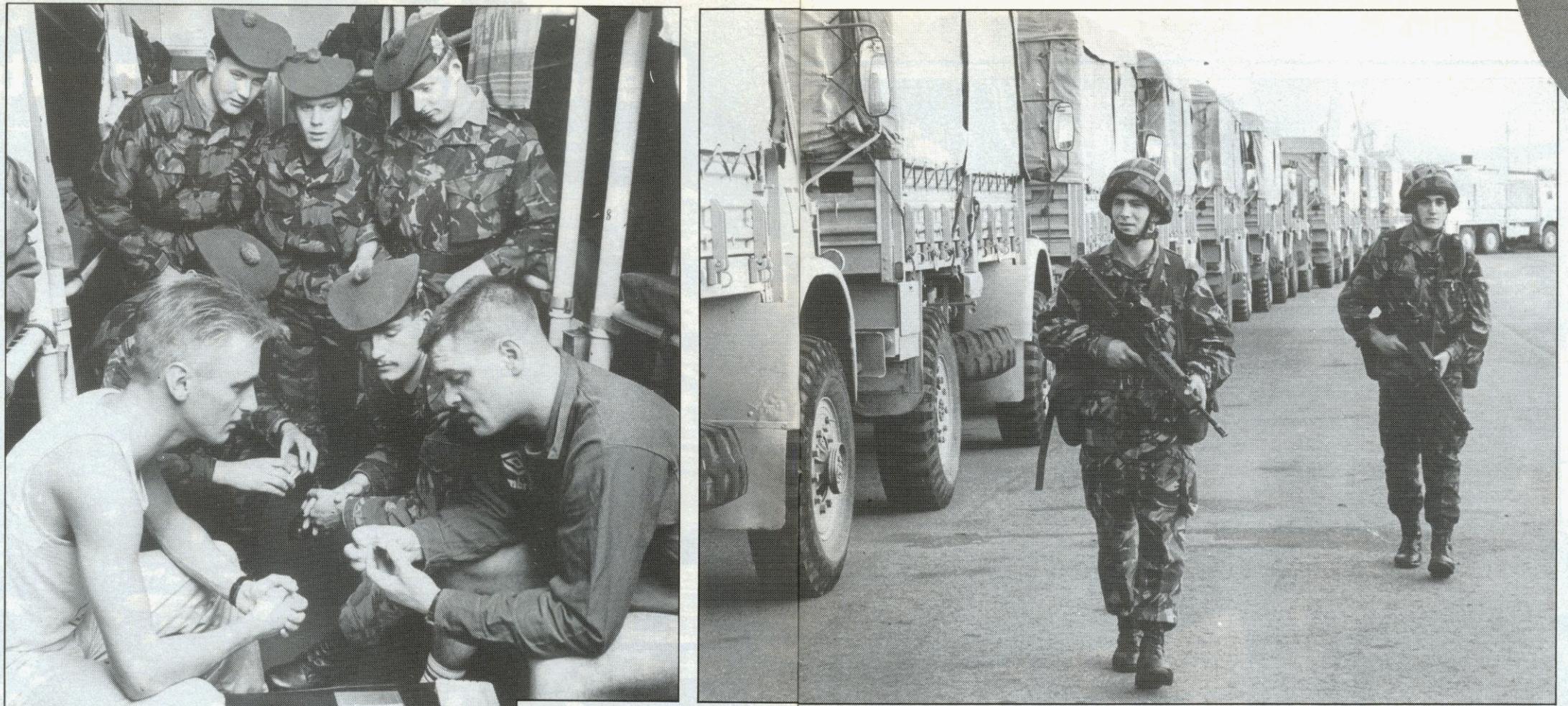
AS ONE observer put it, men of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots, "played a blinder" at Bremerhaven.

The Movers got a bonus when HQ and C Coy moved from Werle into the American-occupied Carl Schurz Barracks, adjacent to the docks complex at Bremerhaven, and B Coy and an admin group arrived at Emden.

It seemed a little cynical of someone to say: "That way they reap the consequences of any mistakes they made when loading them."

Originally 1 RS were intended for administration and guard duties, but their armoured infantry experience made them much more versatile.

Used to unshackling their



Men of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots, patrol the quayside at Bremerhaven



A power lift takes a lorry and trailer into an already packed hold

Warriors on the training areas, they were soon employed at the railhead within the docks removing chocks and chains.

Many of them were also working inside the ro-ro ferries, manhandling trailers into awkward corners and saving time which would otherwise have

been spent backing them in to allotted spaces.

With the CO of 1 RS, Lt Col Iain Johnstone, acting as OC Troops Bremerhaven, the British contingent quickly settled down to a familiar service routine.

Nor do you usually associate the Jocks with the Railway Children.

But there were differences.

It's not every day you see the guardroom of Her Majesty's senior line infantry regiment operating from an empty cargo container.

The charms of breakfast US-style did not last long with the Jocks, it must be admitted.

After a brief flirtation with waffles and syrup they went back to beans - no porridge being available.

"The Americans could not have done more for us," said Lt



A sure sign of intense military activity in the docks

Bill Sutherland. "They've given us laundry facilities and when they saw some of our troops ironing on table tops they produced ironing boards. They also opened the PX and recreation centres and extended the opening time of the library."

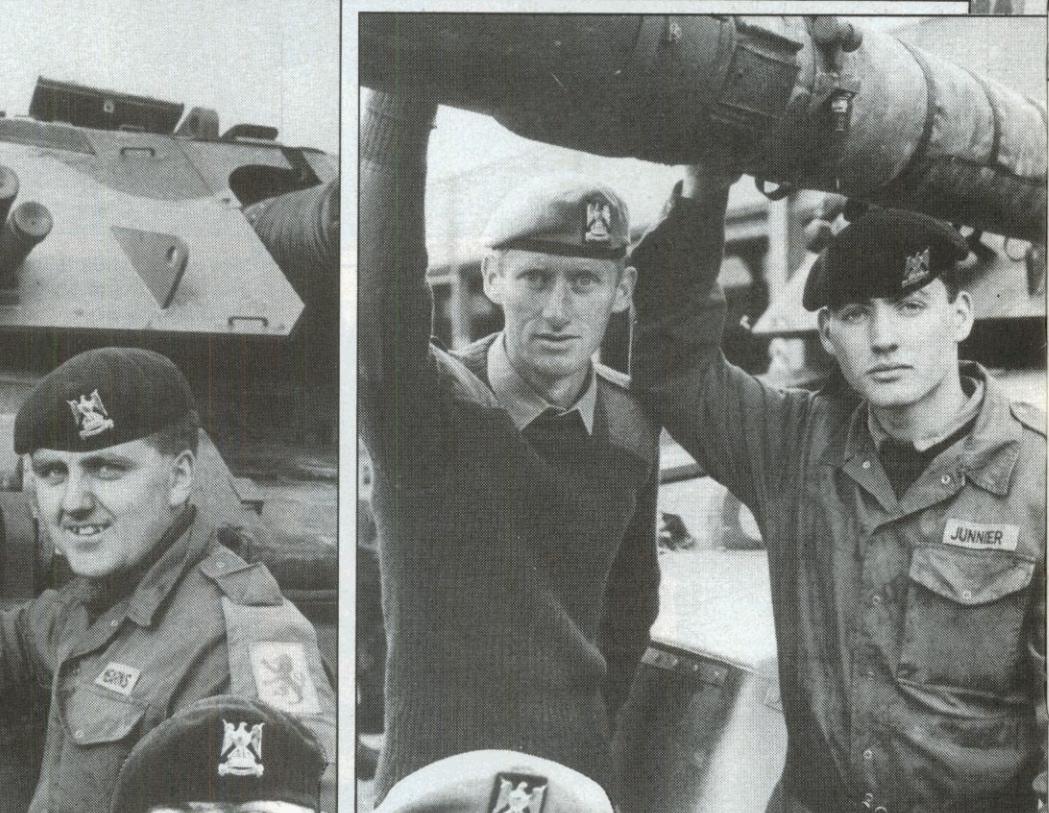
The US-Scottish friendships made in the docks at Bremerhaven are the sort that last.

Close-knit teams . . .

BROTHERS-IN-ARMS I: Bdr Chris Woods (right) is the No 1 on a M109 self-propelled 155mm howitzer of 40 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, while brother Brian is a gunner. They come from Spalding, Lincs.



BROTHERS-IN-ARMS II: With The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards are LCpl Edward Mearns (below right) and brother Tpr Kevin Mearns from Tollcross, Glasgow. The Scottish lion brassard on Edward's arm indicates he is a member of the crew of the CO's Challenger tank. He drives it.



Jeff's on his

way back

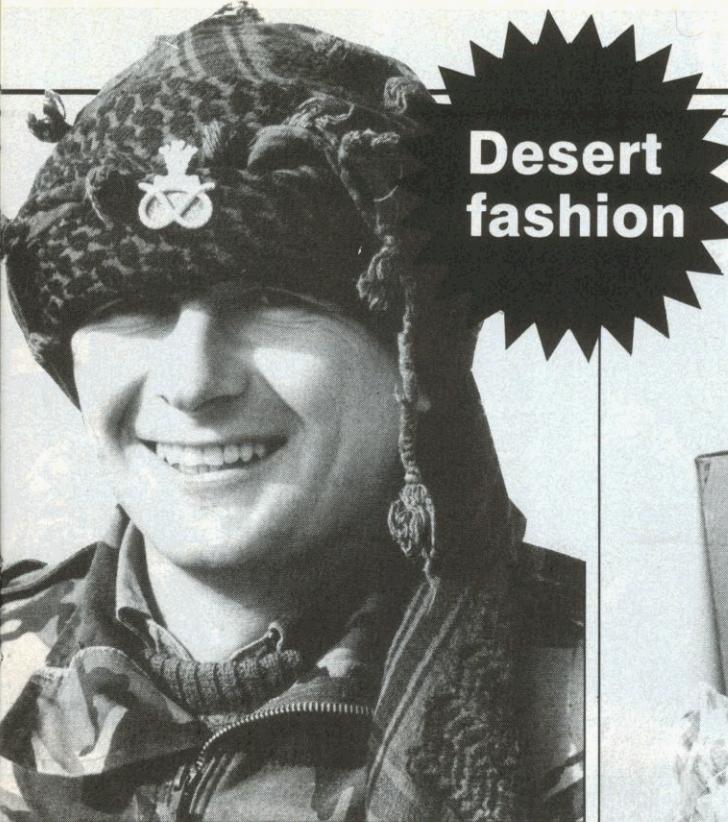
DOUBLE TAKE: ASM Jeffrey Standing, REME, knows Kuwait well. He was a member of the Army liaison team there until April. Now he is on his way back to the Gulf with 7 Armoured Workshops.



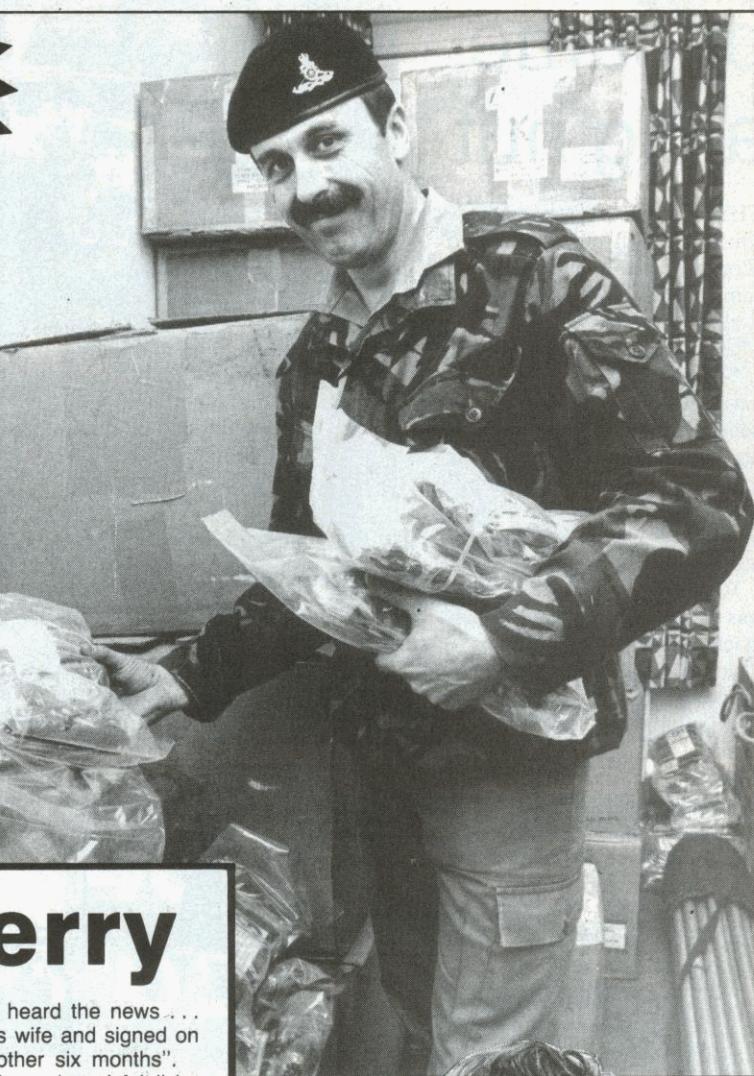
LIKE FATHER I: SSM Alec Junnier (above left) will be serving in the Gulf with B Squadron of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, while son Jason is a gunner in A Squadron. The family comes from Stirling.

Family doubles

LIKE FATHER II: Cpl Harry Campbell (front) will be doing his usual job as a provost corporal in the Scots DG while son Richard is serving as a driver in B Squadron



Desert fashion



NEW STYLE: Maj Richard Dennis, R Hamps, who will command the echelon in the 1st Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment, wears a traditional Arab headdress – a shemagh. With the help of the Staffords badge he seems to have tied himself in knots.

About turn, Terry

RQMS Terry Rowland (above right) did the quickest "as you were" in history when he learned that 40 Field Regiment RA was Gulf-bound. Leaving after 22 years' service, he had been dined out by his department (he had been TQMS), by his battery and by the sergeants' mess. He had made his farewell speech and been marched out of his quarter.

Then, on what should have been his last

day in the Army, he heard the news . . . talked it over with his wife and signed on "continuance for another six months".

"Old soldiers will know how I felt," he said as he checked the contents of a box of "smocks protective NBC" at the regiment's Hohne barracks. Friends helped the Rowlands move back into their quarter in quick time. Baby Alice can't have realised she had been away.



Married accompanied

Capt Vanessa England and Mike are both doctors serving with 1 Armoured Field Ambulance RAMC, based at Hohne and part of the 7th Armoured Brigade. Now the husband and wife are in the Gulf. They are pictured in one of the unit's armoured ambulances, which are named after winners of the Victoria Cross.



MONEY MAN: Sgt Jim Moore, RAPC, going to the Gulf as pay sergeant with the Queen's Dragoon Guards squadron, expects to be handling US dollars and local currency. He should have no qualms about the job – his father, WO2 Gordon Moore, was 24 years in the corps, and brother Tony is also serving in the RAPC.

Cog that became a big nut

THE HEAVY responsibility which will fall to 7 Armoured Workshops in the Gulf was summed up neatly by Lt Col Ron Croucher, REME, the commanding officer.

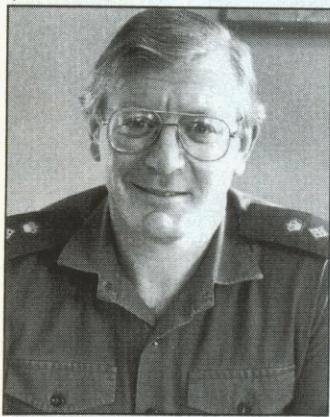
"In the past in BAOR we have always been able to rely on people behind us to do certain big jobs. In the Gulf we are the front shop and the back shop."

The Workshops have been brought up to a strength of nearly 600.

Whereas in 1 BR Corps it was a cog in the great repair machine, in the Gulf it is a scaled-down version of the machine itself.

Though light aid detachments will accompany the regiments as usual, if a tank breaks down Workshops' teams will go forward, change the power pack and bring back the dead one for repair.

"The biggest job we have had is working out what equipment we will have to



Lt Col Ron Croucher

support," said Lt Col Croucher before leaving Fallingbostel.

Then the resources had to be collected to fit out the equipment.

"It is not enough that vehicles motor. All the test equipment on it has to work."

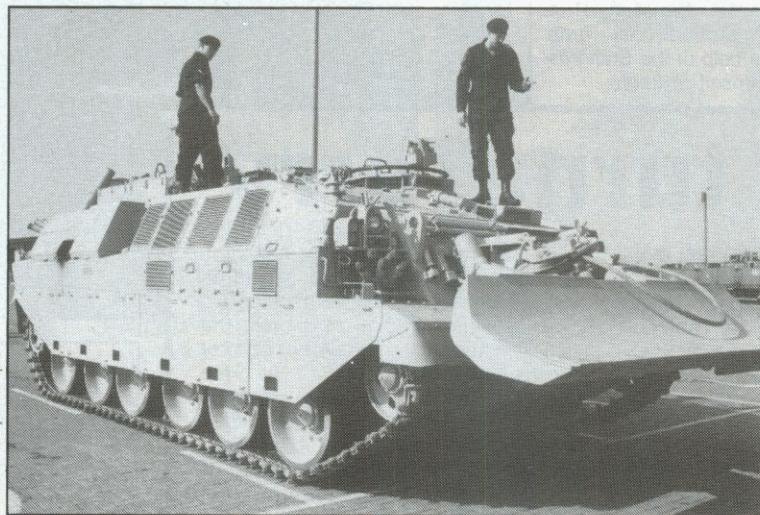
So while the armoured regiments were going through their test firing programme, the Workshops were checking their equipment - all cranes and winches on the recovery vehicles were load tested.

The Workshops will have to give the entire mechanical and electrical support available in BAOR so the checking was meticulous and required a sustained effort, day after day for nearly a fortnight.

"Not only was it a physical



Men of Prince of Wales's Company, 1st Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment pictured during range practice at Hohne. Third from left, kneeling, is Capt Jack Ferguson, the 2IC, and at the back left are men of 1 Gren Gds attached to 1 Staffords.



Picture: Terry Champion

Left - Faith, a Challenger armoured repair and recovery vehicle, about to be loaded on board the RFA Sir Tristram at Marchwood military port. Four CRARRVs were embarked for the three-week voyage to the Gulf where they will support 7 Armd Bde's two tank regiments. The other recovery vehicles were christened Hope, Charity and Big Geordie.

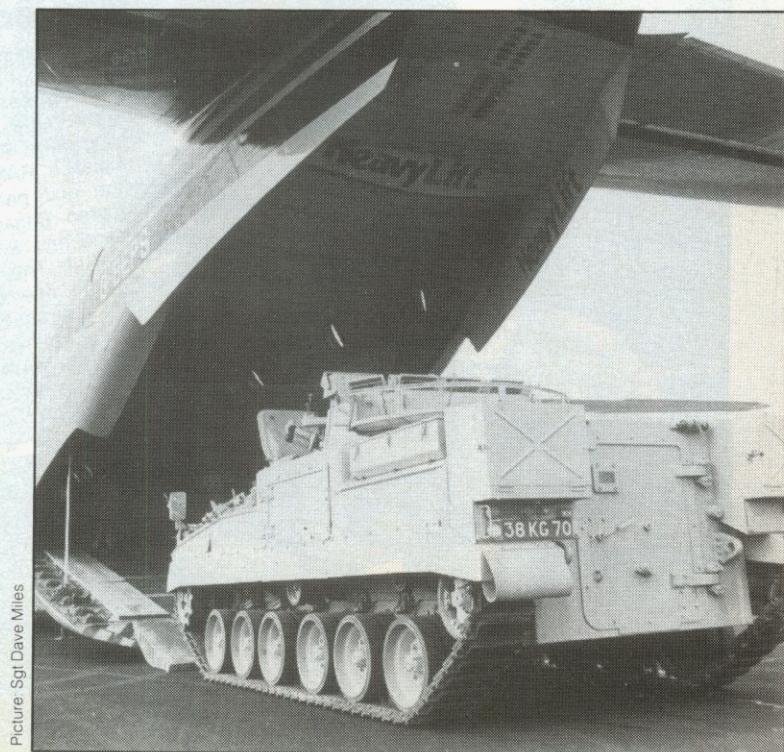
Below - A sand-coloured Warrior bound for the Gulf being loaded into a Belfast heavy-lift aircraft at RAF Brize Norton

Sure-shot

"I don't know why some people have made a fuss about the quality of our gunnery. I went on the ranges this morning with a gunner I'd never worked with before - he was firing for the first time since coming out of training. "We had 29 rounds to fire on a battle run and he missed only one target ... and he was firing on the move at a target 1.3 metres high 1,100 metres away."

- Sgt Michael Shearer, gunnery instructor, Queen's Royal Irish Hussars to Mr Tom King, Defence Secretary.

effort to carry out the immediate tasks but there was also the mental effort of preparing for the job that lay ahead," said Lt Col Croucher. "The men have worked extremely hard."



Picture: Sgt Dave Miles

The most popular guys in the Gulf!

THREE Royal Engineer posties are currently enjoying the limelight as the most popular Servicemen with the British detachment in the Gulf state of Bahrain.

Sgt John Bleasdale and LCpls Ian Pollit and Paul John share the task of providing a swift postal service for more than 900 men on base at Muharraq.

They are now handling an average of eight or nine sacks of incoming mail each day, with a record high on one day of 17.

The men, members of 20 PC Squadron based at South Cerney in Gloucestershire, flew to the Gulf with the advance party on August 26, and had a mail service up and running the following day.

They are now sending approximately 500 "blueys" and the same number of letters each day back to the UK and to Germany, from where many of the Bahrain forces were drawn. Mail is taking three to four days



Bahrain's sapper posties. From left are LCpl Paul John, Sgt John Bleasdale and LCpl Ian Pollit

to arrive via the Hercules re-supply flights leaving RAF Lyneham daily.

"We're certainly popular when the mail comes in," said Sgt Bleasdale. "Queues form each day when the re-supply flight arrives."



Sappers from 39 Engineer Regiment based at Waterbeach Barracks near Cambridge wave goodbye from one of their re-painted trucks as they depart for Saudi Arabia to build base facilities for the Desert Rats

OP Granby

40 Fd Regt's 'population explosion'

ONE OF the biggest unit expansions caused by Op Granby saw the strength of 40 Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, rise from 620 to more than 1,000 personnel.

The regiment had received a warning order on Thursday and the CO, Lt Col Rory Clayton, was at the meeting at the Jerboa Cinema, Fallingbostel, the next evening when the move to the Gulf was announced.

"By Monday morning all the additional manpower required to bring us up to war strength had been provided by regiments across BAOR," he said.

Much of it came from 1 RHA, his neighbours at Hohne.

The guiding principle for absorbing the newcomers was that they started living with the battery and detachment they were joining. Suitable accommodation was found for all.

"I learned something," Lt Col Clayton added. "I've always thought the British soldier was exceptionally good – but I know now that they are

also incredibly flexible.

"Everyone, including the regimental rascal (all regiments have one), put their backs into it.

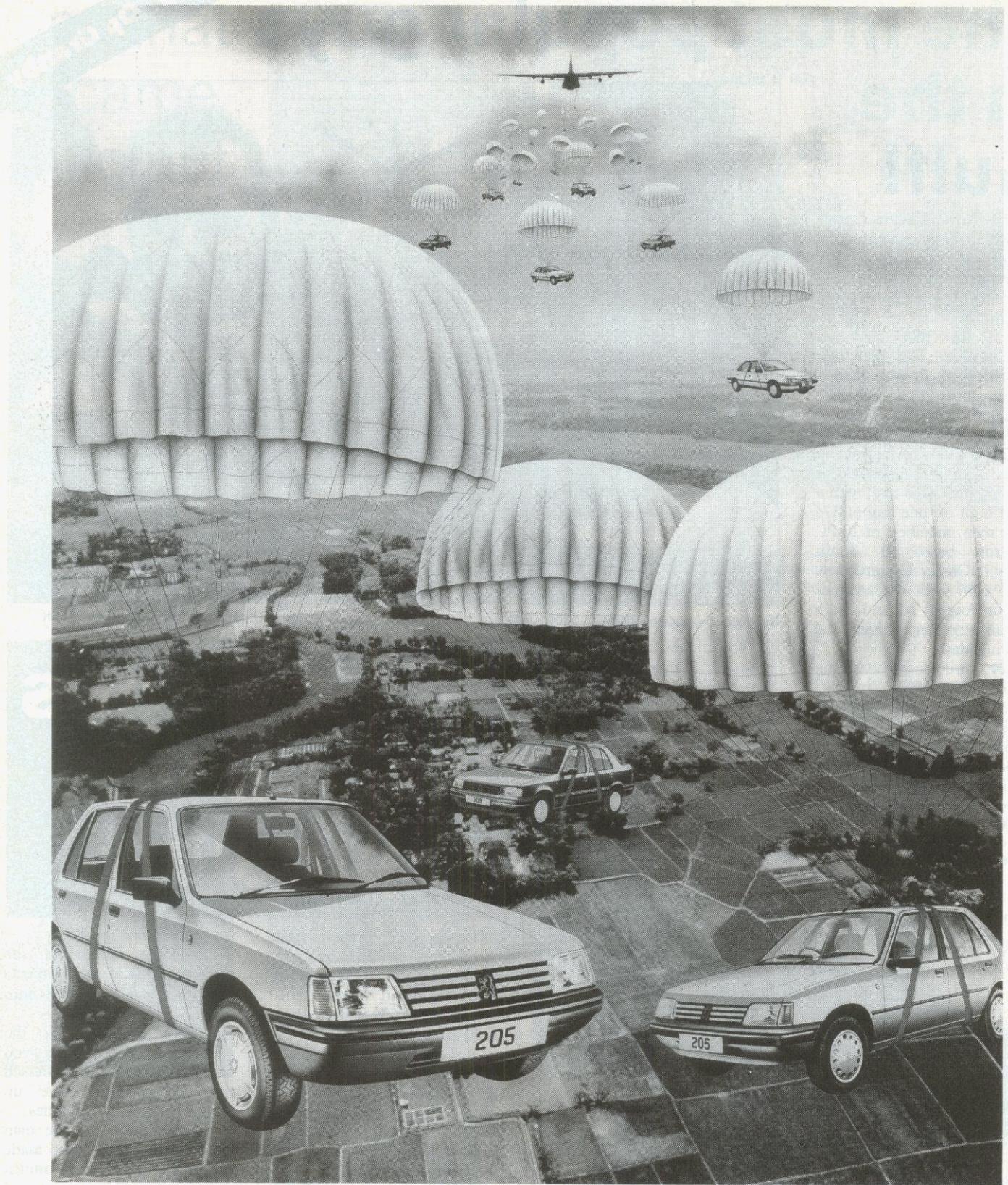
"If you'd looked at the problem in the abstract you would probably have guessed that you'd have come up against regimental loyalties.

"Not a bit of it. The men have arrived and been made welcome. I've got multi-regimental crews on some of the guns and they are working as teams. Morale is incredibly high."

The 24 M109s of 40 Field Regiment give 7 Armd Bde tremendous firepower.

Shells weigh 96lb – hence the need for extra manpower making up detachments from the peacetime six to a dozen men – and the guns have a range of 27 kilometres.

Before they left for loading at Bremerhaven all vehicles, including the large fleet of lorries, received a complete annual service, and the tracks of all the 109s were replaced.



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Berlin's sectors wind up

FORTY FIVE years of nominal Allied authority over Berlin came to an end at midnight on October 2 as East and West Germany were united. The British, French and American sectors ceased to exist and with them the need for the three Allied commanders.

October 2 was a day of ceremony and celebration as British GOC Maj Gen Robert Corbett and his French and American counterparts bade farewell to the city.

At a final session of the Allied Kommandantura documents suspending Allied occupation rights were signed and then delivered to the city's Governing Mayor and House of Representatives. After a parade the three generals attended a celebration at Berlin's Philharmonic Hall where the Governing Mayor gave formal thanks to the Allies for more than four decades of support and partnership.

Gen Corbett, who as a lieutenant in the Irish Guards watched the Wall being raised in 1961, said: "The Berlin which we leave will be whole and free. Tonight we shall share the joy of all Berliners and all Germany, and we wish this extraordinary city and its people every success in the future."



Picture: Mike Perring

Among the first WRAC members to be rebadged were these six officers, now of the Army Catering Corps. They received their new badges from the Commandant Colonel of the corps, Brig RK Hudson, at a ceremony in the ACC Officers' Mess at St Omer Barracks, Aldershot. From left to right (back) are 2nd Lt Ann Maynard, Capt Jane Wollacott and Maj Rosemary Archer; (front) Capt Elizabeth Ball, Capt Amanda Seward and 2nd Lt Bernadette Hawkins.

WRAC officers re-badge

NEARLY 200 officers of the Women's Royal Army Corps transferred into their employing corps to become fully integrated members from October 1. The corps involved in the re-badging were the Royal Engineers, Royal Signals, RCT, RAOC, REME, RMP, RAPC, RAEC, Intelligence Corps and ACC.

With the exception of medical, dental, veterinary, legal and nursing corps, women joining the Army until now have all been cap-badged WRAC. Women entering the

Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, on the next course will be commissioned directly into their employing corps.

The WRAC will become one option among the many open to them. Plans for cap-badging other ranks are being made.

The Director WRAC will retain responsibility for overseeing female terms of service and will act as the spokesman for all women irrespective of corps.

There are currently 559 WRAC officers serving in the British Army.

UKLF change of command

GEN Sir John Waters, who was Deputy Land Forces Commander during the Falklands campaign, has succeeded Gen Sir Charles Huxtable as Commander-in-Chief United Kingdom Land Forces.

He was commissioned into The Gloucestershire Regiment in 1955 while it was stationed in Aden and later saw service

in the Persian Gulf, Cyprus during the Eoka campaign, and West Germany.

He commanded 1 Glosters in the mid-Seventies.

Gen Waters was knighted in December 1988.

He has held a number of senior staff posts, including GOC 4th Armoured Division in BAOR, and Commandant of the Staff College.



An historic moment as Allied authority over Berlin came to an end. British GOC Maj Gen Robert Corbett (centre), with his American and French counterparts, Gen Raymond Haddock (left) and Maj Gen Francois Cann (right), receives a commemorative book from Berlin's Governing Mayor, Herr Momper, and a representative of the Senat during a farewell ceremony.

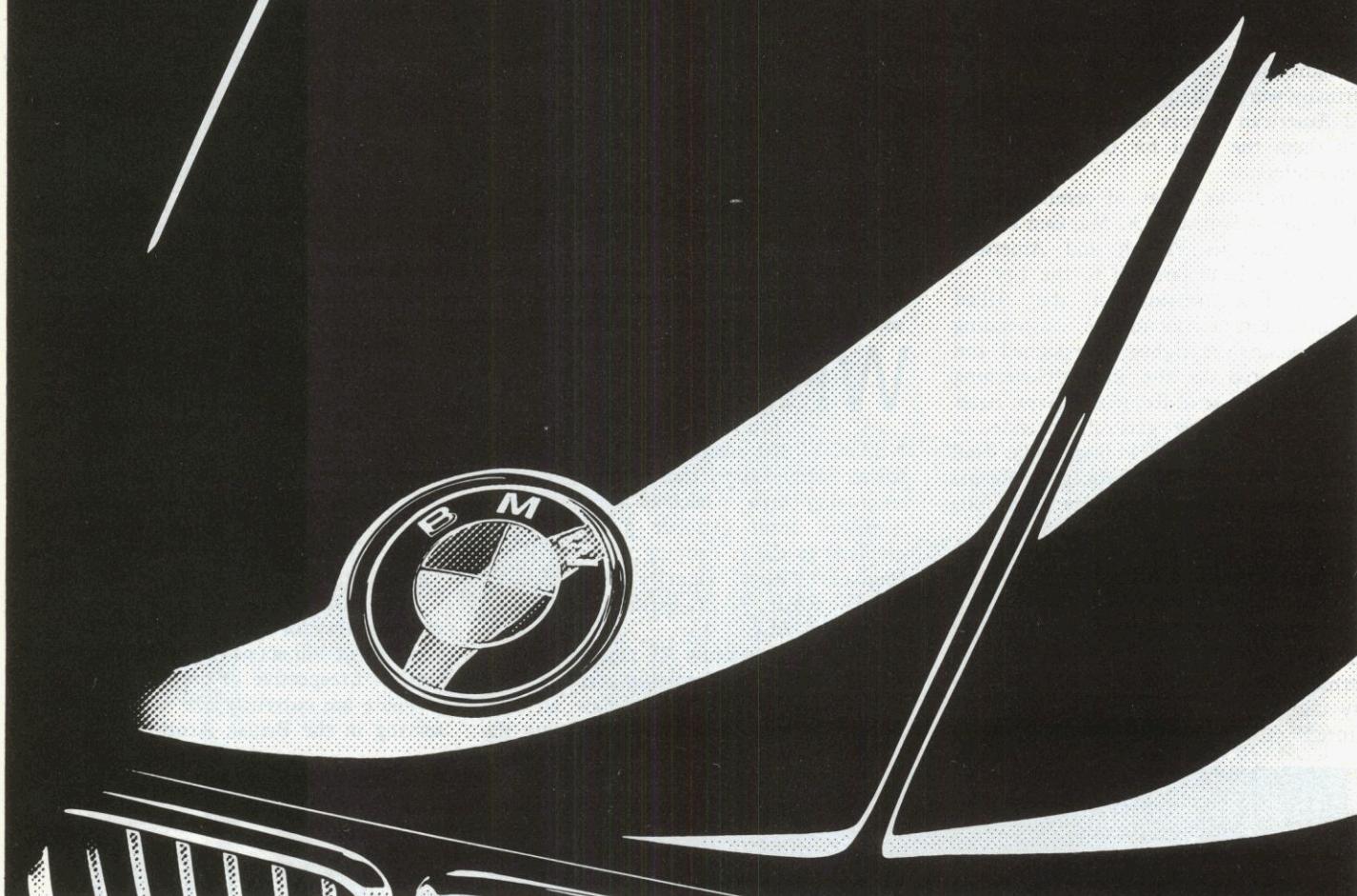
New Guidon for DLOY

THE QUEEN, in her capacity as Duke of Lancaster, was due to present a new Guidon to the Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry at a special regimental parade at Stonyhurst College, Hurst Green in Lancashire on October 18. The Queen is Colonel-in-Chief of the regiment. The new Guidon replaces one presented by the Queen in 1961. The DLOY is a light reconnaissance unit assigned to the home defence of the UK.



Gen Waters, C-in-C UKLF

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Late for dinner

A long-standing dinner engagement will have to wait until the Gulf crisis is over. An interesting story lies behind it.

After the Light Brigade charged at Balaclava the survivors of the 8th Hussars joined a party of the 17th Lancers and cut their way through a Russian squadron which tried to bar the way.

"Afterwards when the regiments served together they would call themselves the Old 25th - 8 + 17 = 25!" said Lt Col Arthur Denaro, CO of The Queen's Royal Irish Hussars, as his Challengers practised on Hohne ranges.

The friendship lasted and the Old 25th Dinner was due to take place this month until the crisis arose. It has been postponed, not cancelled.

Lt Col Denaro considers it most appropriate to have been reinforced by four formed troops of the 17th/21st.

The QRIH was formed in 1958 from two Balaclava regiments, the other being the 4th Hussars.

Up-to-date reading?

Fortune was smiling on publisher Lionel Leventhal when he decided to re-issue Maj Gen G L Verney's 1954 classic *The Desert Rats*, the story of the 7th Armoured Division at war.

No sooner was the book in the shops than it was announced that the Division's successors, the 7th Armoured Brigade, were to be sent back to the desert.

The timely re-publication, under the Greenhill Books imprint at £14.95, includes a new foreword by Gen Sir John Hackett, a former commander of the Division.

Tour running out of time

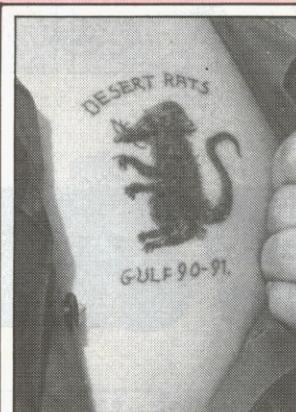
Men of the Hong Kong Garrison joined 20 veterans of the 1941 battle for Hong Kong on what could be one of the last battlefield tours to be held in that part of the world. Not only are the veterans getting older, but time is running out for the British administration.

SOLDIER to Soldier



Picture: Terry Champion

Restoring the trees ... Col Di Anderson and Mr Les Greaves



He got it right

Tale of two Rats

Two gunners were proudly displaying their chests after a visit to a German tattooist.

Both sported a Red Jerboa but it dawned on their friends that there was a difference in the words underneath.

One was a Desert Rat, the other ... a *Dessert* Rat.

Obviously it has a sweet tooth.

Since the mid-1970s Hong Kong battlefield tours have been held about every five years, organised by Col Oliver Lindsay, at present commandant of the Cadet Training Centre at Frimley, Surrey, and author of two books on the battle and its aftermath.

QA trees took a beating

Home for the QARANC Training Centre is the grounds of the former Royal Pavilion in Aldershot where Queen Victoria once lived. Its magnificent 8½ acre grounds were laid out by Albert, Prince Consort, using every known species of tree from the British Empire that could be grown in England.

Many of the old trees were brought down during savage storms last February, and now an appeal has been launched to restore the grounds to their former glory.

Announcing the QATC tree appeal, the Centre's Commandant, Col Di Anderson, told SOLDIER that they were seeking donations from individuals and units to purchase replacement trees. "All trees donated will be recorded in a memorial book to be housed in the QARANC Museum at the QATC," she said.

Standard trees cost £20 each and the replanting programme is being planned by Mr Les Greaves, of the PSA, who hopes to establish an arboretum effect in the cleared areas.

Application forms are available on request from the "QATC Tree Appeal" c/o QARANC Training Centre, Royal Pavilion, Farnborough Road, Aldershot, Hants.

Devil of a problem

The famous Red Devils parachute team, tipped to win next year's world skydiving championships, may be forced to pull out unless a new sponsor comes forward with £250,000.

The money buys their special parachutes and support vehicles. Eventually the team's distinctive red aircraft will need to be replaced at a cost of £500,000.

The Red Devils, recognised as important to Army recruiting, have been living off their savings since Coloroll, the group that sponsored them, folded earlier this year.

The 20 skydivers and support staff receive only normal pay, but are paid appearance fees. This year - its 26th - the team has put on nearly 200 displays at a wide variety of public events.

Maj Michael Nicholls, Parachute Regiment recruiting officer, said they were continuing their search for a sponsor. "The problem is at this time of the year firms have already committed their money and there is no spare cash available. Unless we find a sponsor soon we could find ourselves in a serious situation."

Well played, Royal Scots

The band of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots, scored a diplomatic success at a recent regimental dinner by playing the national anthem of the guest of honour, Col Norbert Vandenberg of the 3rd Belgian Artillery Battalion ... even though Bandmaster WO1 Tony Hodgetts had obtained the sheet music only a few hours earlier.

Their rendering was so good that the band provided all the music at the colonel's farewell parade the following week.

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

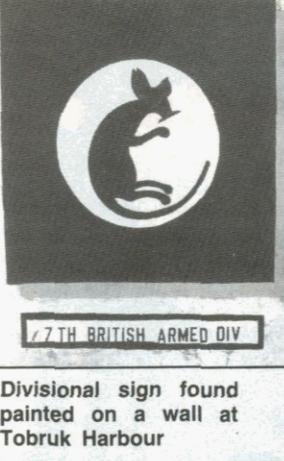
As the 7th Armoured Brigade deploys to the Gulf, memories of its famous predecessors, the Desert Rats of the Second World War, have been evoked. Laurie Manton has been delving into the SOLDIER archives.



Tanks of 1 RTR move across the desert sands



Light tank of 7th Queen's Own Hussars bivouacked during a sandstorm



Divisional sign found painted on a wall at Tobruk Harbour



Maj Gen GPB Roberts proposes a toast at one of the Division's last parties

Dear Desert Rats



‘May your glory ever shine’

— Winston Churchill

THE GENERAL had already made his farewell speech to the men; a fatigue party had been detailed to take down the headquarters' sign-board and the guard commander had been instructed to lower the divisional flag for the last time.

In the sergeants' mess at 7th Armoured Division headquarters, RSM Jack Allen, who had joined the division in the desert as a tank commander in 1941, raised his glass and called for a last toast: “Gentlemen, here's to 7th Armoured Division – the finest in the British Army.”

Sgt Albert Saunders unhooked a fire bucket from the wall, took out a handful of sand and spread it on the floor at his comrade's feet. It was a sentimental but fitting last gesture from one of the original Desert Rats to the memory of a division now disbanded, but which will live long in the memories of all who wore the famous red jerboa sign.

So said SOLDIER in a March 1948 report of the demise of the division and the transfer of its Red Rat symbol to 7th Armoured Brigade – forerunner of the BAOR-based brigade now on its way to the Gulf.

The division started life in 1938 as the 1st Mobile Division at Mersa Matruh – later the site of a battle – in the Egyptian desert. Maj Gen P C S Hobart, armoured fighting vehicle expert of the old Tank Brigade, was given the task of forming a new kind of fighting unit. He gathered about him the HQ Cairo Cavalry Brigade and Signals; 3 Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery; 7 Queen's Own Hussars; 8 King's Royal Irish Hussars; 11 (Prince Albert's Own) Hussars; and 1 Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment.

It was impressive in title only. The 3 RHA had 3.7in howitzers. The armour of 7 Hussars was two squadrons of light tanks with no .5in ammunition, while 8 Hussars

had Vickers guns mounted on 15-cwt trucks, and the “Cherrypickers” of 11 Hussars had armoured cars which were almost museum pieces.

Fifty-eight light tanks were the resources of 1 RTR – all the light tanks available when the unit left England in March 1938 – but their track mileage had all but expired and the few new tracks available in the desert would not fit.

Gen Hobart rolled his sleeves up and set to work. When war broke out the division had been strengthened in every respect by fighting men and machines.

It was not until June 1940, when Italy came into the war, that there was any action. Then 11 Hussars made the first of their brilliant reconnaissance moves and crossed the Libyan frontier to capture Sidi Omar. It was a bloodless victory, for the Italian garrison did not know war had been declared.

The first big offensive involving the division started in December 1940 with the battle of Sidi Barrani. “Acres of Italians” surrendered.

With the start of counter-attacks by Rommel's Afrika Korps in April 1941, desert warfare was to enter a long period of give and take.

Brig J C (“Jock”) Campbell, VC – who gave his name to the famous “Jock Columns” – took command in January 1942. General Jock was awarded one of three Victoria Crosses gained by the Division at Sidi Rezegh – the other two being posthumous awards to Lt Ward Gunn, 3 RHA and Rfn Beeley, 1 KRRC.

Soon afterwards, Campbell was killed in a vehicle accident.

Rommel launched his attack towards Cairo and there was apparently no stopping him. The 7th Armoured Division were always in the fight but had to give ground – ground which they knew well – all the way back to El Alamein.

There, in October, came the great and decisive battle which sent hopes rocketing at home. It was a turning point in the desert war.

The division was given the major role of holding the formidable 21st Panzer

Division and clearing minefields in the south. Rommel's carefully-prepared defence system was systematically wrecked and the long chase across the desert was under way.

Back over old familiar tracks and wadis, through Tobruk and dozens more sites of past engagements, the Desert Rats harried the fleeing Afrika Korps until, just before dawn on January 23, 1943 – exactly three months after El Alamein – the recce armour of 11 Hussars, followed by Divisional Tac HQ, entered Tripoli unopposed.

The half-way house had been reached.

Before the end of the month the division was moving west again as the spearhead of the Eighth Army's pursuit of Rommel.

An attempted German stand at Medenine, to the east of the Mareth Line, saw heavy and concentrated panzer attacks against the 131st (Queen's Royal Regiment) Brigade which had just joined the division as a lorried infantry brigade.

On D-Day, 7 Armoured Division was in front from the start, putting some of the first armour ashore on the Arromanches beaches on D plus 1 and 2.

The Desert Rats kept company with 11 Armoured Division and the Guards

Shermans from 1 RTR, the Queen's destroyed all the tanks which reached or penetrated their positions, and forced the rest to withdraw. In all 45 tanks were destroyed on the front in the 24-hour battle – a blow from which Rommel never recovered.

More scalps followed at Wadi Akarit, Sfax, Enfidaville, Medjez el Bab and finally Tunis where the irrepressible Cherrypickers were once more first past the post.

They chased the tattered remnants of the Afrika Korps into the city, where the enthusiastic reception from the French population was almost as embarrassing as the mass of prisoners who clamoured to surrender.

The 2,000-mile “swan” from El Alamein had been completed in six months almost to the day; the desert war was over and the Allies had chalked up their first big victory over the Axis powers.

Next came Italy where the division took a leading part in some of the most bitter fighting – including Anzio and the crossing of the Volturno – before being recalled to Britain to prepare for D-Day.

By this time there were many characteristics by which a Desert Rat might be identified without reference to the Jerboa divisional sign on his sleeve.

Apart from certain peculiarities in dress, not the least was a particular brand of slang which embraced many odd words of Arabic and Italian.

On D-Day, 7 Armoured Division was in front from the start, putting some of the first armour ashore on the Arromanches beaches on D plus 1 and 2.

The Desert Rats kept company with 11 Armoured Division and the Guards

Armoured Division in parallel thrusts across France. An average of 40 miles and 1,000 prisoners a day was maintained by the division until the Somme was crossed and the battle passed into Belgium, where the Desert Rats liberated Ghent.

Just before Christmas 1944, elements of the division took up positions inside the German border near Sittard. Fighting in the bitter winter weather, their thoughts must have turned longingly to burning North African days as they engaged the enemy at Echt and Schilburg and up to the River Roer.

They followed the assault troops over the Rhine on March 27, 1945 for the final encounter with the Wehrmacht in the classic defence position of the Teutoburger Wald, held by fanatical fighters of the German NCO School. But the opposition crumbled and the final “long swan” was under way.

Hamburg was the end. While the Division closed in on the city and the guns of 3 and 4 RHA pounded targets ahead of the armour closing in on the banks of the Elbe, a white flag party crossed into British lines to surrender.

The last chapter of the Desert Rats' glorious history of victory was written when the division was ordered to occupy the British occupational zone of Berlin.

“Dear Desert Rats,” Winston Churchill called them when the victory parade had passed and the dust of Berlin had settled again. “May your glory ever shine.”

“May your laurels never fade; may the memory of this glorious pilgrimage which you have made from El Alamein to Berlin never die . . .”

It is a record to be proud of and a shining example to the men of today's Desert Rats as their tanks reach the end of their marathon journey to the Gulf.

★★★★★
Red
Cross
girls
given
marching
orders

Serving with 33 Field Hospital RAMC in the Gulf are this happy trio from the St John and Red Cross Service Hospitals Welfare Department. From left to right are **Fiona O'Regan**, who should have been going to Rinteln in West Germany, **Linda Brown** from RAF Halton, and **Mary Richardson**, assistant director at headquarters. A fourth welfare officer, **Ruth Watts** from RAF Halton, joined them in the Gulf.



Wilton farewell

Gen Sir **Charles Huxtable**, Commander-in-Chief United Kingdom Land Forces, salutes in farewell during a surprise ceremony at his Wilton headquarters to mark his retirement.

Gen Huxtable, one of only two Army officers serving who fought in Korea, was driven in an open topped Land Rover from his headquarters, escorted by mounted troopers and preceded by the band of his own Duke of Wellington's Regiment.

As he neared the main gate, nine Army Air Corps helicopters flew overhead trailing the Union Flag and flags of the AAC and the Dukes.



SOLDIER puts AG in the picture

Original photographs from the first issue of **SOLDIER** in 1945 caught the eye of the Adjutant General, Gen Sir **Robert Pascoe**, when he visited the magazine's Aldershot offices. On hand to provide verbal captions was librarian **Bill Stroud**.

The Adjutant General, accom-

panied by his military assistant, Lt Col **David Richards**, RE, met many of the **SOLDIER** team, whom he described as "hard-working, enthusiastic and well-motivated".

Earlier, he toured the Worplesdon, Surrey, offices of RSB Typesetters, where the magazine

is prepared for the printer. Each issue – up to 56 pages – takes just eight working days to assemble from raw copy to final proof corrections.

"It was fascinating to see how the magazine is put together against such a tight schedule," said Gen Pascoe.



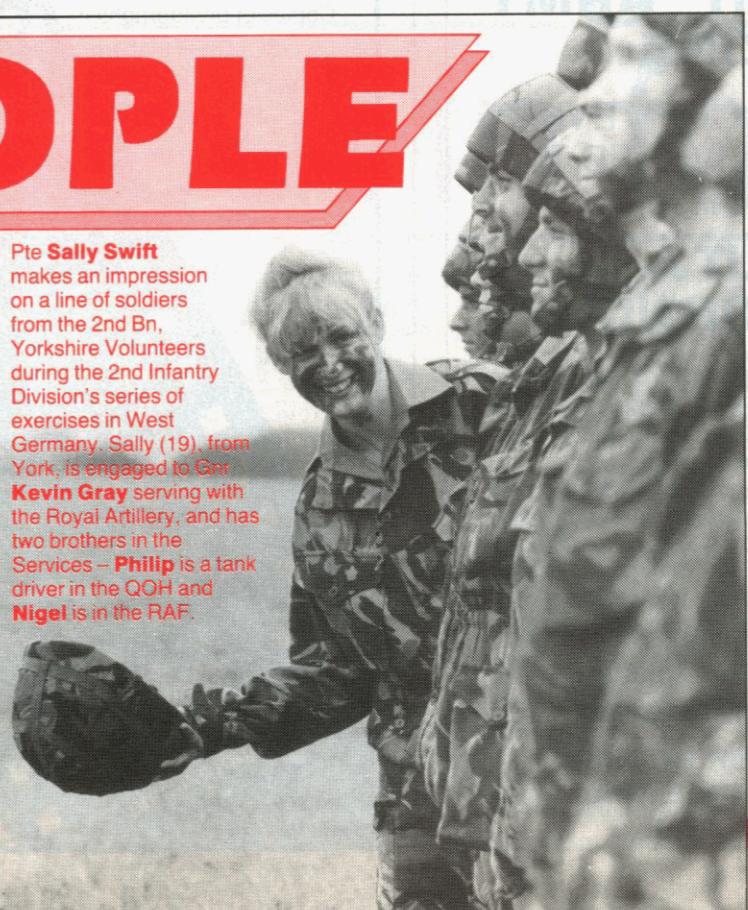
Where **Shaun Dowling** goes his wife follows. When he joined the Territorial Army, wife **Christine** also took up the challenge. The newlyweds – they were married earlier this year – both joined the 6th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. The Tyneside couple have just spent two weeks in West Germany on exercise.



PEOPLE

Medal marvels

The medals held aloft by these 18 members of 155 Regiment, RCT (V) represent 300 years of service. They were presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Somerset at the regiment's Taunton HQ. A splendid antique roll-top desk is one of the attractions in the Collier Room, opened in the Bishops Hull HQ by the Lord Lieutenant, Lt Col **G W F Luttrell**.



Lt **Tony O'Connor** of the Irish Guards in dense brush in northern Zimbabwe while leading a 160km trek on Operation Raleigh. Tony later led a conservation project at Binga on Lake Kariba, constructing a 45km electric fence to protect native crops from hungry elephants.

Tony was in charge of 12 volunteers aged from 17 to 25.



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Sgt Tony Lewin (centre) takes up a defensive position with colleagues from C Company of 7th (Durham) Battalion, The Light Infantry as a Lynx helicopter deploys troops to counter an enemy attack. The battalion is part of 15 Infantry Brigade, whose brigade concentration was code-named Exercise Merlin Rock

Terrier brigades out in force

NEARLY 8,000 Territorial Army soldiers from all over England took part in autumn training in West Germany. The two-week manoeuvres, code-named Exercise Fall Tide, were the highlight of the training year for the three TA brigades of the 2nd Infantry Division based at York.

The North Yorkshire-based 15 Infantry Brigade exercised on the 10,000 acres of Vogelsang training area, ten miles from the Belgian border – the first time a TA brigade has exercised in the rolling hills, wooded valleys and lakes of the Eifel district.

Taking part were the 6th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers from Northumberland; the 7th and 8th Battalions, The Light Infantry from Durham and South Yorkshire; and the 1st and 2nd Battalions, The Yorkshire Volunteers.

The Midlands-based 49

Infantry Brigade and York-based 29 Engineer Brigade exercised on the vast Sennelager training area.

Principal units were the 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers from Warwickshire and Lancashire; the 5th and 7th Battalions, The Royal Anglian Regiment; the 3rd Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment; the 8th Battalion, The Light Infantry from Shropshire and Herefordshire; and 73 Engineer Regiment from Nottingham, Hull, London and Chesterfield.

Throughout the two weeks the three brigades were well supported by 20 specialised Territorial and Regular Army units.

To make training as realistic

as possible, the soldiers had available RAF Harrier jump jets, RAF Chinook and Puma support helicopters, Army Air Corps Lynx and Gazelle helicopters, Challenger tanks and Warrior assault vehicles.

An added dimension to the hard graft of the exercise was an opportunity for soldiers to enjoy a range of adventure training pursuits, including abseiling, canoeing, parachuting and rock climbing.

Visitors included more than 50 directors and senior managers of UK companies under the auspices of the NELC campaign and the Duke of Kent, Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

● Turn to next page



Recce Sgt Anthony Bird of 129 (East Riding) Fd Sqn RE (V), who took part in Lion Rock, the 29 Engr Bde exercise at Sennelager



Pint-sized Alyson Keane from Cottingham near Hull made military history by becoming the first woman in the Armed Forces to qualify in specialist helicopter skills, only three months after she became the first female TA soldier to join the 2nd Battalion, Yorkshire Volunteers. During the two-week exercise she qualified

as a rigger marshaller, responsible for ground safety when Chinook helicopters collect and unload heavy military equipment, including vehicles. Alyson, a computer programmer in civilian life, is just 4ft 11in tall but didn't let the fierce down-draughts from the big Chinook helicopter bother her.



Brothers Stuart and Nigel Reasin team up during the big TA exercise in Germany. Both are serving with the 2nd Battalion, The Yorkshire Volunteers. The brothers come from Beverley and were on camp in Germany for the first time

Happy sappers

cope with the cuts

BRIG Barry Sanderson expressed quiet satisfaction with the outcome of Exercise Lion Rock. The 29 Engineer Brigade exercise had been co-located with 49 Infantry Brigade's Exercise Polar Rock at Sennelager.

FORCE

From Page 25

Among military VIPs were Lt Gen Robert Gauchie, Commander 1st Belgian Corps, Lt Gen Sir Charles Guthrie, Commander 1st British Corps and Lt Gen Michael Wilkes, Commander UK Field Army and Inspector General of the Territorial Army.

The two exercises, together with Exercise Merlin Rock held at Vogelsang, were the final result of the reduction in manpower and scope of the traditional autumn Exercise Keystone.

For 29 Engineer Brigade it meant a reduced brigade headquarters which deployed to Sennelager in command of 73 Engineer Regiment (Volunteers), 105 (Tyne Electrical Engineers) Plant Squadron RE (V) which supported 15 Brigade at Vogelsang.

Brig Sanderson said it had been his aim to achieve realistic and worthwhile training for the entire brigade wherever it was carried out. A broad spectrum of sapper work had taken place.

Combat engineers from 73 Engr Regt were given some hands-on experience with the Medium Girder Bridge pier span and junction set and with M2 amphibious bridging rigs thanks to 28 Regiment in Hameln.

This meant that 71 and 72 Engineer Regiment carried out their annual camps in the UK except for 72 Regt's 118 (Tyne

Jump to it!

Welsh Terriers from 157 Regiment, Royal Corps of Transport took the opportunity to complete a short parachute course at Sennelager during 29 Engineer Brigade's Exercise Lion Rock. RSM Peter James (front centre) was a wise man and just watched. The three girls on the course were LCpl Anne Davies and Ptes Sian Lewis and Tara Gilbertson



Scots Guards rendezvous. From left to right are Maj Mark Turner, Capt John France, LSgt John Taylor, Pte William McGeorge, Sgt Fred Taylor, Brig Anthony Leask, Lt Steve Major, LCpl Paul Rutherford, Sgt Joseph Moran, Pte Terence Gavin, and Sgt Alan Wilson

Electrical Engineers) Field Squadron RE (V) which supported 15 Brigade at Vogelsang.

anti-tank minefield which incorporated a 2,000 metre anti-tank ditch.

Two troops from 105 Plant Squadron constructed a three and a half kilometre access track using 1,000 tons of aggregate while the artisan troop of 117 Support Squadron refurbished barracks and range installations.

For its part 409 Independent Plant Troop refurbished ranges in Soltau – and at the same time pleased the local population by creating a nesting pond for the natterjack toad!

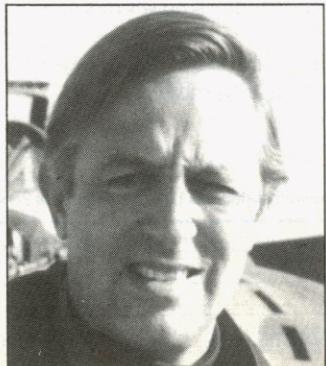
"All in all it was excellent training," said Brig Sanderson.

The green battlefield

GREEN was the theme as TA soldiers dug in for Fall Tide.

Germany's strict environmental laws meant that 49 Infantry Brigade's concentration, Exercise Polar Rock, involving more than 2,500 Regular and TA soldiers, took place entirely within the massive Sennelager and Haltern training areas.

Soldiers of 49 Inf Bde rehearsed battle drills ready for a series of major attacks. Said their Commander, Brig Johnny Walker: "They are looking good and working very hard. The main aim of this exercise is to develop the leadership qualities of our young officers and NCOs."



Brig Johnny Walker

Scots Guards 'reunion'

ELEVEN serving and former Scots Guardsmen involved in autumn manoeuvres in West Germany managed to meet briefly during a pause in the action.

They were among 3,000 troops, mostly from Territorial battalions in the north, taking part in Exercise Merlin Rock centred on Camp Vogelsang near the Belgian border.

They gathered round the exercise commander, Brig Anthony Leask, late of the Scots Guards, who now leads 15 Infantry Brigade based at Topcliffe in North Yorkshire.

Organiser of the gathering was Chief of Staff Maj Mark Turner, currently posted to the brigade and due to return to the 1st Battalion at Hohne in November.

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A Scout HC1 helicopter lands to confer with the commander of a scorpion tank and a patrol of the Parachute Regiment.

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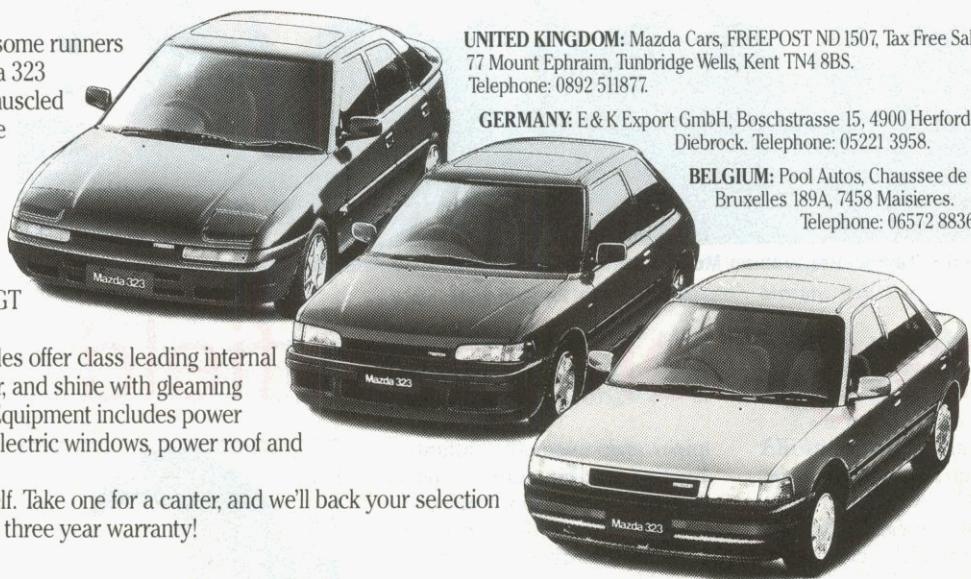
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THE Man With The Golden Medals

KRISS AKABUSI, Army warrant officer and superstar athlete, talks almost as rapidly as he runs. Inadequate shorthand is left far behind as ideas, answers and enthusiasm pour out in a quicksilver stream.

His brilliant 400m hurdles at the European Championships in Yugoslavia – the fastest ever run by a Briton – and the huge grin that greets every television camera, have given him Gazza-like status.

When SOLDIER interviewed him during a training session at Portsmouth everyone recognised him and wanted his autograph. Those who were too shy to ask shouldn't have been – Akabusi has a natural talent for putting people, even strangers, at ease.

He leaves the Army on November 19 after 15 years – half his lifetime – in uniform, and he is as upbeat about that period as he is about his somewhat uncertain future.

"I've had a great time in the Army. I joined as a boy (he was 16½ and had spent the previous ten years in a children's home in Enfield, north London) and I'll be leaving it as a man. And I'm certainly going to be self-sufficient. My Army career will stand me in good stead for whatever I do in later life."

Kriss and his wife Monika have two daughters, Ashanti (6) and Shakira (3). Now 31, he will be leaving his home near Southampton this winter to join close friend Roger Black – the European 400m champion – for training in California's warmer climate. He will be there to prepare

for next year's World Championships in Tokyo and the Europa Cup, and to develop a part of his life that has become increasingly important to him over the past four years.

"In my spare time, because you can't train all day, I'm hoping to go to Bible college to study theology and philosophy.

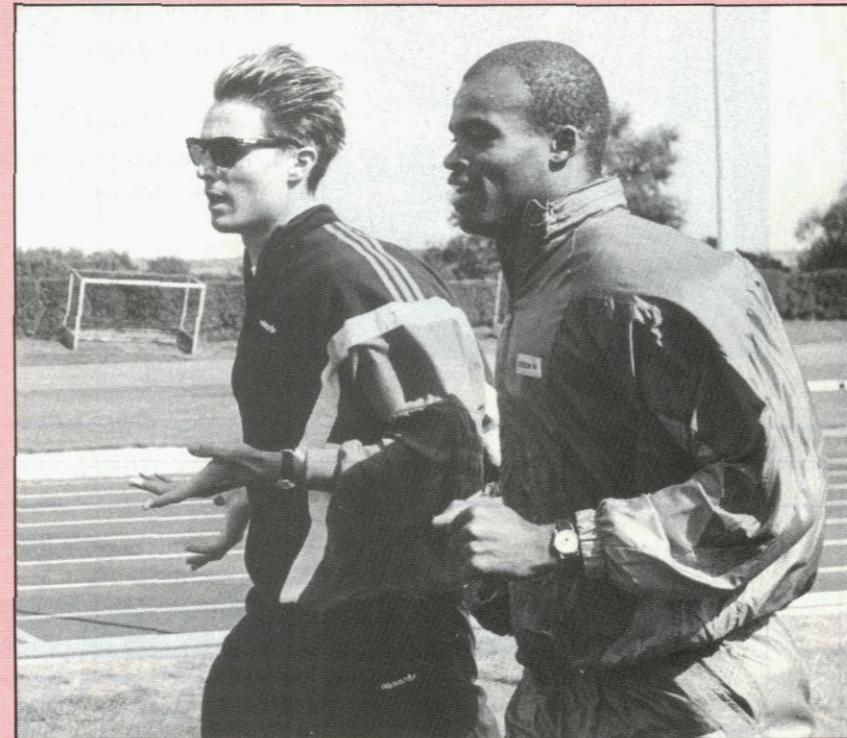
"I'm not leaving the Army for religion,

but because my time is up and I want to move on to pastures new. Primarily I'm going to be carrying on track and field because I'm now in a position to earn a good living from it to support my family.

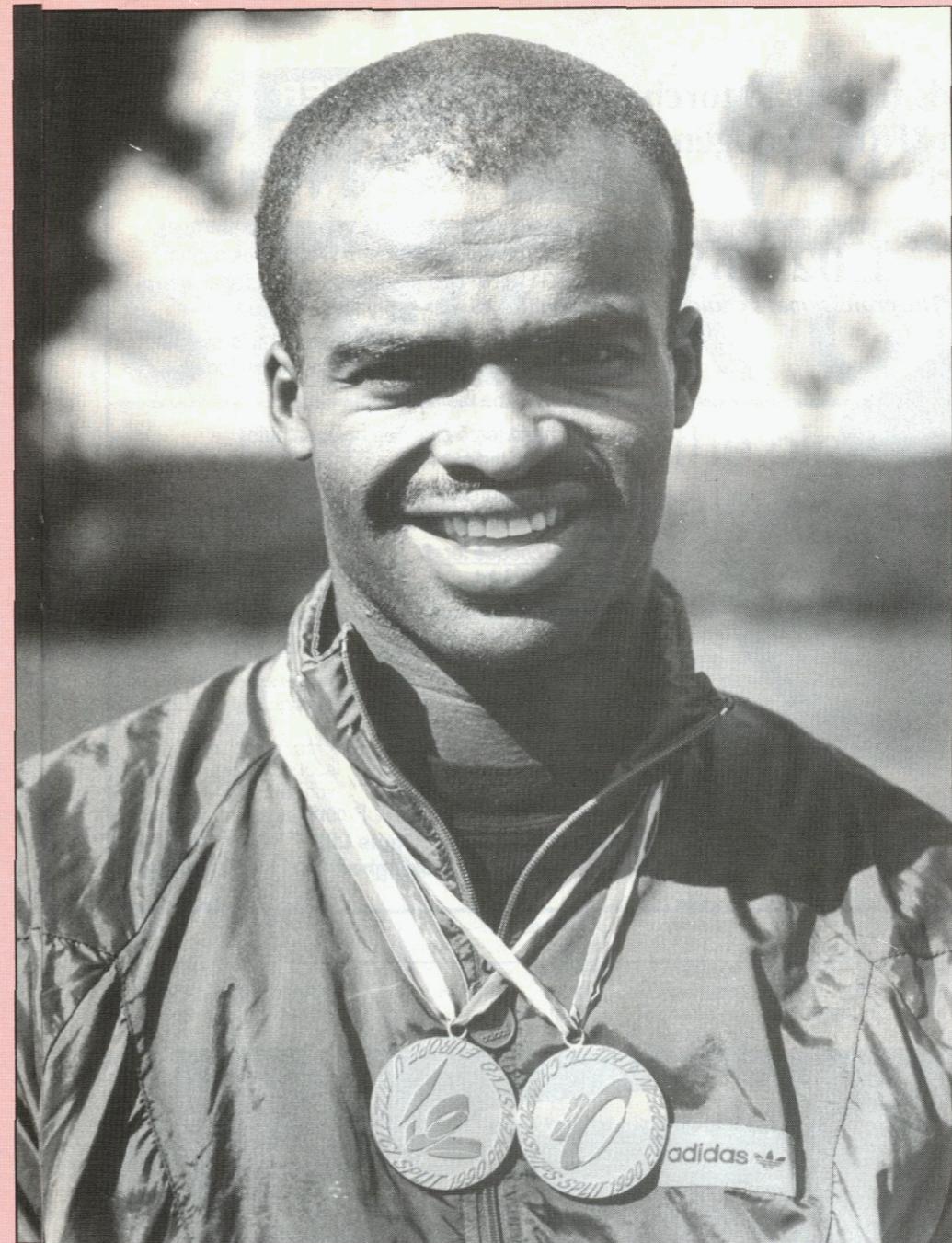
"I've got a brain in my head, I've got other interests and I want to develop them. I made a commitment to Christ in 1986 and since then it has permeated my whole being. It's the driving force in my life. It is my life."

And when the hurdling is over? The church full-time, perhaps?

"I really don't know. All the things in my life I've just found myself . . . in. Certainly I envisage being more active in church life, but not in a mainstream, ministerial sense."



Training with close friend and England colleague Roger Black



Kriss Akabusi with his European Games gold medals from Split

Born in Paddington in 1958, Akabusi was fostered at the age of three when his parents – in England on scholarships – returned to Nigeria. Civil war in that country made financial support difficult so Kriss and younger brother Riba, now an actor, were taken into a children's home in Enfield.

An Army recruiting campaign caught his eye at the age of 16.

"I'd been in an institution for ten or 12 years and I didn't really relish the prospect of a bedsit and living on my own."

The lure of a trade, sport and travel, and the security offered by the Service, had more to offer the young Akabusi than an apprenticeship as a mechanic or gas fitter. He joined the Royal Corps of Signals in September 1975, passing through the Junior Signal Squadron of 11 Signal Regiment at Catterick where he did his trade training.

A natural, all-round sportsman, he had already shown enough talent on the football field to catch the attention of scouts from Leyton Orient. At Catterick

his potential was recognised by Sgt Ian McKenzie, an Army athlete in his time and 2iC athletics at the school.

Football's loss was to be athletics' gain as Signalman Akabusi was pointed in the direction of the running track. Ian McKenzie's prediction of great things for his young charge proved prophetic.

Trained as a data telegraphist, Akabusi was posted to 22 Signal Regiment in Lippstadt, West Germany, where he was soon marked down as a "sports person".

Persuaded by QMSI Vic Bourgoise (now Director of Leisure in Guernsey) that his future lay in the Army Physical Training Corps, Akabusi moved into the gym and swapped cap badges in July 1981.

His attachment to the 1st Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment at Bulford was the next vital link in the chain. His athletics-minded commanding officer gave him the go-ahead to do his BFT and CFT (Basic and Combat Fitness Training) statistics in the morning so that he could spend the afternoons looking after the battalion athletics team and his

own training regime.

A year later, just a week after finishing second in the 1983 UK championships 400m in Edinburgh, Akabusi turned out in a Great Britain vest against the Soviet Union.

He finished fifth out of six, a result that in no way diminished his delight at winning international recognition, a delight shared by his commanding officer, Lt Col Peter Woolley (now Brig Woolley, chairman of the Army Athletics Association).

Under coach Mike Smith at Southampton, Akabusi went from strength to strength.

"The next big step was when I was given six months off prior to the 1984 Olympic Games in Los Angeles. I was posted to Marchwood, but the Royal Corps of

Transport allowed me to train full-time. That was a big help. Subsequently, because I did so well (a medal in the 4 × 400m relay) I was left at Marchwood."

His switch from the flat one-lap race to the hurdles version was inspired.

The Army's faith in their track star was underlined in

1986 when the APTC posted a junior sergeant in to run the Marchwood gym, giving Akabusi a free hand.

"For the past two years I've been given no post as such, no attachment to a unit. For administrative purposes I've been attached to the Army Physical Training School at Aldershot, but I've had no military responsibilities since 1988.

"Yes, the Army has really bent over backwards to be helpful."

WO2 (QMSI)
Kriss
Akabusi

The
SOLDIER
Interview

Akabusi has repaid the Service by becoming its most famous sporting son. As the medal tally mounted, so did his media profile, and with it his acknowledgement of the debt he owed the Army.

"There are a lot of pressures in athletics. If I hadn't been in the Army one of the pressures would have been to go out and earn a living. The Army gave me the stability to concentrate on the major championships as opposed to going on the circuit to earn money."

"It's good to know you have a secure foundation. More importantly, I wouldn't have done athletics if it hadn't been for the Army."

"When I joined I was predominantly a footballer and basketball player. People said I had some sort of talent and kept pushing me. It was only because I had the opportunity to run at Army junior levels, and at senior and Combined Services levels, that I progressed."

And what progress! Akabusi numbers in his medal collection three UK golds, two Commonwealth golds, three European golds, an Olympic silver, and World Championship silver and bronze.

And he beat David Hemery's 22-year-old British 400m hurdles record, the oldest track record on the books, by becoming the first UK athlete to break the 48-second "wall". Yet he has always been a loyal supporter of domestic competitions.

He turned down an international meeting to compete in the last Army championships and his list of ten Army 400m titles is unlikely to be bettered.

Akabusi believes there is enormous potential for sport in the Services.

"There is a need for the Army to identify that within sport there is a great forum for expression, for expressing the positive image of the Army. To do well in sport you have to be disciplined and want to achieve – qualities industry and the Army want."

"Maybe there is a question to be asked whether there should be some sort of sports company in the Army; a company for people who reach certain standards in track and field, football, rugby . . .

"You would do your military training like everyone else, but you would be specifically a sportsman and you would be expected to excel at your sport. Maybe there's room for that in the future."

Maybe there is. After all, Waterloo was said to have been won on someone's playing fields.

A group of sober-suited businessmen approached. Could Kriss please sign these cards for them? Their wives are fans of his. He does so, with a flourish and that big, wide grin. And he thanks them!

Then it's back to the track. WO2 (QMSI) Kriss Akabusi, British record holder, has work to do. He'll miss the Army.

The feeling will probably be mutual.



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STRUCK OFF

Dependants feel the pinch as hospital savings take effect

SERVICE dependants awaiting appointments with civilian consultants at the Queen Elizabeth Military Hospital, Woolwich, have been told to go back to their family GPs to find appointments elsewhere.

The move came as a complete surprise to local practices, which are now desperately trying to find slots on NHS consultants' lists. It is a bitter blow to families because 68 per cent of beds at the Queen Elizabeth are taken by civilians, including Service dependants.

In the past, commanding officers of military hospitals were authorised by the Ministry of Defence to "flex" unused money in

THIS is how dependants learned that they could no longer turn to the Queen Elizabeth Military Hospital:

Dear Sir/Madam,

Due to circumstances beyond our control we have to take cuts of civilian medical and other staff working at the Queen

their budgets so they could buy-in essential civilian staff.

In this way they would compensate for deficiencies in military specialist staff, including doctors, nurses, medical technicians and physiotherapists.

As a result of a directive to make savings, funds allocated to pay civilian medical staff in UK military hospitals are £500,000 less than the amount required to pay for those already employed.

Shortage of qualified military staff in hospital establishments is at the root of the problem. Before the added complications of Operation Granby there were 185 unfilled posts (representing an under-

Elizabeth Military Hospital. The result has been that we will in future no longer be able to accept many civilian patients whom it has been our privilege to treat previously.

We are thus very sorry to say that we will be unable to give you an appointment, or continue with the

spend of more than £2m in the military budget).

But now it is MoD policy to declare all unspent military funds as "savings" - savings that are no longer available to compensate for shortages of medical staff.

This, in a nutshell, means that all Service dependants listed to see consultants in the areas of gynaecology, rheumatology, neurosurgery, paediatrics, ENT, chiropody, dermatology and diabetics must go elsewhere.

The concession to help Service dependants has been withdrawn.

There is also a knock-on effect which, in the case of the Queen Elizabeth Military Hospital, could have

appointment you have had planned for the future. Please consult your family doctor for other arrangements to be made.

Believe me how much I regret this, and hope that you have found our past service to your satisfaction.

Group practice QEMH.

devastating consequences.

It will particularly affect all Service personnel normally referred to a hospital physiotherapist - treatment will be almost impossible at the QEMH.

Seventy per cent of all physiotherapists in Service hospitals are civilian, and there is an acute shortage at the Queen Elizabeth.

Servicemen requiring treatment at the excellent burns unit, or surgery, may find that no operation is possible because no follow-up physiotherapy is available.

If the Queen Elizabeth has to close its doors to more and more patients, training of doctors and nurses will suffer.

In my view ...

Join the queue...

SERVICE dependants "struck off" the Queen Elizabeth Military Hospital consultants' lists could be in for a long, and no doubt in some cases, painful wait.

There is currently a two-year waiting list for skin disorders at the NHS hospital in Greenwich, and a nine-month waiting list for ENT at Heathcote, Lewisham.

What happens if the family is posted abroad during that time? Will the posting be deferred?

Army wives are NOT asking for preferential treatment, but it could mean Service dependants travelling all over the country to find a consultant. The ending of this grace-and-favour facility will have serious implications.

Laugh lines

ARE you the classic Service wife? You can find out by reading *Gumboots and Pearls*, a new book written by two Army wives. Anne Musgrave and Catherine Jones are married to serving officers.

It is a light-hearted, extremely funny book, full of incidents ranging from Army beds and sex to anecdotes about the Naafi and mess life.

Almost every page had me thinking: "That's happened to me!"

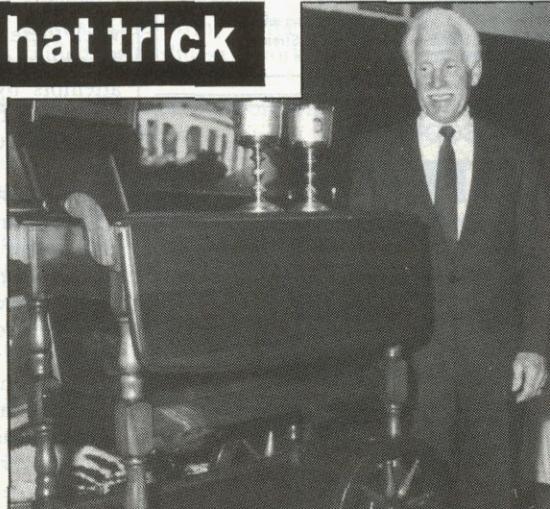
Ten per cent of the cover price goes to SSAFA, besides which it will make an excellent Christmas present to put in your husband's stocking.

***Gumboots and Pearls* by Annie Jones. Available from Owl Press, PO Box 315, Kingston-upon-Thames KT2 5UL and some bookshops. Price £3.95 incl p&p.**

George's hat trick

WAR pensioner George Ray (70), who suffers from deafness, achieved a double victory at the 34th war pensioners' national homecrafts and art exhibition held at the Victory Services Club in London.

Ray, who served in the Armoured Corps from 1941 to 1947, had a field day. He won the Skinners Challenge Cup for the third successive year and was presented with two trophies by Lord Henley, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Social Security (Lords), and Minister with special responsibility for war pensions.



Picture: Window DSS staff journal

Pensioner George Ray with his magnificent winning mahogany tea trolley. George received two trophies, one of which is his to keep

Research funded

A RESEARCH grant of £29,000 has been made by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to finance an independent study into access to post-Service housing for members of the Armed Forces.

The project, undertaken by housing consultant Judith Dugdale, will take a year to complete and will explore, for example, the destinations of those quitting the Service, and the availability of houses for them.

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation is the largest independent funder of social research in the country.

If you want to help the project you can contact Judith through me at SOLDIER.

Heartbreak of an Army wife

AN ARMY wife has spoken for the first time of the anguish she and others had to face in deciding whether to return to the safety of the United Kingdom or stay with their husbands trapped in the Gulf.

Mrs X, who cannot be named for security reasons, and her husband decided it would be in the best interests of their children if she returned.

She said: "It was the right thing for me to do. On the one hand I was reluctant to leave him, but I felt that if you had a chance to get out, you must take it. Food was getting low and I don't think it would have helped if I had stayed there."

Some wives back in the UK feel a deep sense of guilt. Mrs X explains: "My feelings are that at least our husbands know we are safe and it is one thing less for them to worry about."

She tells a harrowing story of being woken by gunfire when Kuwait was

invaded, seeing a bomb drop close to their home, and fears of being taken away by Iraqi soldiers.

She said that while they had been aware of a build-up of Iraqi troops, the invasion still came as a shock.

"It was a question of sitting and waiting in our houses as a heavy battle went on intermittently around us."

"Our bedrooms all faced outwards with quite low windows, and because of the danger of bullets ricocheting, we dragged the mattresses out and slept in the corridor."

"One day I went outside to comfort our maid who was hysterical. A plane flew over dropping a bomb nearby. It was terrifying. If fractured a sewage pipe, which made things unpleasant."

In the evenings the family sat in the dark, anxious not to draw attention to themselves. They passed their days playing chess, reading and completing crosswords.

During the first week there had been several unsuccessful attempts by British Embassy officials to get them out of the area.

Mrs X went on: "Then there was a ring on our bell and we thought the Iraqis had come for us. We froze, but when we looked through the peephole it was members of the embassy staff, who supervised our move into a house in a safer area."

Mrs X said that she remained in her temporary second



home for about four weeks.

"At night we could hear explosions caused by members of the Kuwaiti resistance."

"We also owe a number of local people a great debt of gratitude for keeping us supplied with food which we shared with other British families."

"Some days we would have no food, the next a tray of eggs or bread. Potatoes were a great luxury."

They supplemented their diet with dates and lemons picked from the garden. At first they were able to visit other British families living nearby, but as the number of roadblocks increased they stayed indoors and kept in touch by telephone.

Mrs X heard that their original home had been ransacked. "I suppose I felt sick for five minutes because our privacy had been invaded, but then you feel the actual possessions are not important."

"It was the theft of small things that hurt - the special items that remind you of a happening, such as presents the children

had made, or the jacket my husband's father had left him."

Mrs X had just a few hours'

groups in Britain, and there is this great cushion of support."

"I am convinced that our husbands will come home. It might take a long time, but I am convinced they will be all right. I feel I am very blessed in having that faith."

Mrs X and other Army and Royal Air Force families were the envy of returning families of civilians working in the Gulf. They saw at first-hand Army welfare - sometimes vilified for tardiness - working at its best.

Soon after the invasion a 24-hour Army Helpline swung into action, initially to keep families up to date with developments in the Gulf.

It was set up by Maj Rick Stocks, administrative officer to the military team in Kuwait, and his wife, Judy, who were out of Kuwait on leave at the time of the invasion. Helpline is part of the Directorate General of Personal Services (Army).

Helping are WO1 John Muirhead and his wife, Agnes, and WO1 Harry MacFayden, also on leave at the time. Their great advantage is that they know personally all the families involved.

When the families stepped on to the airport tarmac, many reduced to the possessions they could carry, Helpline

The friendly faces at the end of the Helpline are, from the left, WO1 Harry MacFayden, Maj Rick Stocks and his wife, Judy, Mrs Agnes Muirhead and her husband, WO1 John Muirhead

members were there to direct them to a range of facilities set up by the Army at the airport to help ease them back into the UK.

Immediately available was a cash grant, a married quarter in an area of their choice, and travel to any destination if there was no relative to meet them.

Experts were on hand to advise on a wide range of subjects, including the Community Charge, completely new to many expatriates, and money problems.

The Army Benevolent Fund has given each wife £500 and is prepared to advance a substantial loan. Practical welfare is looked after at district level with, for instance, the Family Housing and Welfare Services ensuring they have all they need and are visited regularly.

Helpline continues its support by ringing wives regularly and keeping soldiers' parents up to date with news of the Gulf.

Maj Stocks said: "It means that every wife knows personally the people working on her behalf in the MoD. We are so often accused of being an uncaring, faceless bureaucracy, and it is a great boost for wives to deal with someone they know and who understands life in the Gulf."

All the families were invited to the Royal Army Chaplains' Department at Bagshot Park, Surrey, where a range of counsellors and advisers were available to help unresolved problems.

Wives were able to air their views and the meeting was considered a success.

Maj Stocks said Helpline would continue as long as it was needed. "Though wives are still feeling devastated, they are putting their lives together again on the understanding they have got to get it right for when their husbands come home."

"The children seem to be resilient. They are enjoying getting new clothes and toys."

Most wives are settling in married quarters and many are buying a car under the friendly guidance of warrant officers from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in their district, ensuring they get a good deal.

Maj Stocks said that though he had been in the Army for 27 years, he had no idea until now just how much the Army welfare system could offer.

"There is so much done at every level in a very caring way. People in the different departments may not be able to give you everything you want, but they make sure that at every step along the way something is offered. It is very reassuring."

Helpline keeps its team very busy. "Though the work is extremely satisfying, you can finish the day emotionally drained. But it is all worthwhile when you find families so appreciative," he added.

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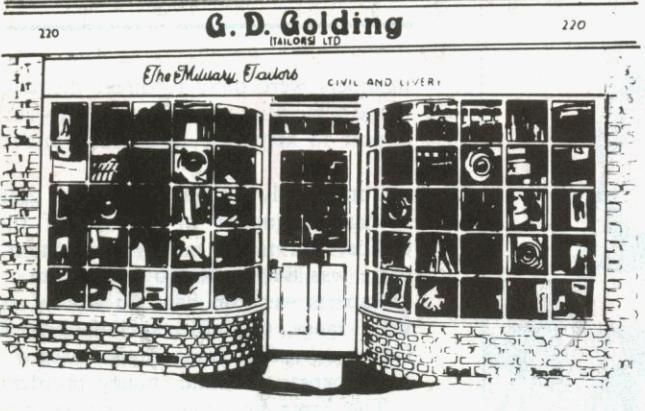
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Way to keep the old titles

THE idea of retaining regimental titles, customs and traditions with each company representing a battalion of present service (Letters, September 3) is the most sensible method of reducing the size of the Army.

It would achieve the result without once again losing units which have existed for centuries and having to make up such titles as the Queen's and Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

After the First World War the German Army, reduced by treaty to 100,000 men, reorganised by this method – the

companies each representing a battalion in the old Imperial Army, including corps units.

The old badges, colours and traditions continued and in 1933 Hitler was able to expand the Army with very little trouble due to its firm traditional base.

This method of reduction would at the same time allow those regiments lost in amalgamations to revive their former titles on reaching company strength with very little cost to the public purse. – Edward A G Croucher, Diss, Norfolk.

Company of regiments

TO SOLVE the disbandment and amalgamation problem forced on the regiments by unfeeling politicians and base wallahs, the following should be considered.

Not counting Guards, Gurkhas, Paras, SAS and AAC there are 38 Infantry regiments made up of amalgamated regiments. In terms of manpower this adds up to 152 companies.

My plan would be to recall each regiment and retrain at company strength as independent companies, forming into battalions such as these:

1st Battalion – 1st Indep Coy

The Royal Scots, A Company; 21st Indep Coy The Royal Scots Fusiliers, B Company; 25th Indep Coy The King's Own Scottish Borderers, C Company; 26th Indep Coy The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), HQ Company.

Each infantry company would take the identity and wear the badge of its regiment and be held at company strength until any future hostilities forced their expansion to battalion strength. – S E Buckmaster (ex-CSgt 1st York and Lancaster Regt, 15 Bde, 5th Infantry Div), Queensland, Australia.

Original Rats return

HAVING read your article (Return of the Desert Rats, Vol 46/20), I feel I must rectify a mistake your magazine has made. Like so much of the National Press, you say a squadron from 25 Engineer Regiment will form part of the Desert Rats deploying to the Gulf.

I must point out that 25 Engineer Regiment has never

been tasked to send units to the Gulf, and that it is 21 Engineer Regiment from Nienburg that is deploying.

More important, in my view, is the fact that 4 Field Squadron (who will be accompanying 7 Armd Bde) survives from the Desert Rats of the Second World War. – SSgt, 4 Fd Sqn, 21 Engr Regt (name supplied).



Members of the Flying Dragons, the sky-diving team of The Queen's Regiment, pictured in training over Cranfield. The team won two silver medals at the Army championships in August having become British champions for canopy relative work earlier in the summer. An attempt this month by the Flying Dragons to beat the world canopy stacking record, currently held by the Royal Marines, was called off because of bad weather and postponed until next year

Unknown Paddys

IN OCTOBER 1940 I was with the 70th Buffs on Hawkinge airfield, high on the Downs two miles north of Folkestone and the nearest fighter station to the French coast.

Since mid-August we had been bombed, machine-gunned and shelled and we were all very jumpy and tired as the Battle of Britain dragged on.

During a rare quiet spell one evening, one of my platoon mates, Paddy Nash, aged 18, from Londonderry and, like all of us, a volunteer, confided to me: "Curly, in 50 years time this battle will live on in memory but I shall be gone, dead and forgotten – no medals, nothing."

"Paddy," I teased, "if you do cop a packet before this ends I will make certain that you are remembered in half a century from now – if I'm here myself!"

A few days later he was dead.

He now rests in Plot O, Grave 32, Folkestone New Cemetery, Hawkinge.

As he forecast, Paddy is now forgotten by the nation, though the Commonwealth War Graves Commission tend his grave with care and I feel sure that the lads who served with him will never forget.

Strangely, the pilot officer in the next grave, a Canadian killed a month before Paddy, will be remembered as one of The Few – and rightly so. Yet both men fought the same enemy, in the same battle, for the same cause, and both were volunteers.

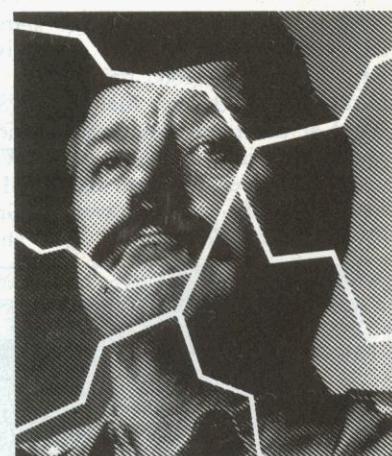
They both gave their all. It is sad that one lies forgotten while the other will be remembered.

May I ask SOLDIER to help me keep a promise by making sure that Paddy – and all other Unknown Warriors – are remembered at this time, the

year we commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain, 1940. – H V Cossons, Wincanton, Somerset.

COMBAT STRESS

'Perhaps the bravest man I ever knew... and now, he cannot bear to turn a corner'



Six-foot-four Sergeant 'Tiny' Gittins, DCM, was perhaps the bravest man his Colonel ever knew.

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Reunions

● **208th Field Company Royal Engineers (TA):** 45th annual dinner will be held in Eastbourne followed by a memorial service on Sunday November 4. Details from Mr L Collin, 61 Willowfield Road, Eastbourne BN22 8AP.

● **Royal Signals Old Comrades reunion:** Friday November 9 at Fulham House, 87 Fulham High Street, for those who served in units based there. Enquiries to Maj Cocke (tel: 081-946 4618) or Rodney Perry (tel: 081-393 5977).

Searchline

● **Conqueror tank:** Comments and photographs (returnable) sought from all levels by author, Mr R Griffin (ex-4/7 RDG), 63 Redwell Road, Matson, Gloucester GL4 9JL.

● **No 4 Coy 3 Bn Coldstream Guards:** Anyone serving between 1950 and 1955 who wishes to attend reunion in the near future contact Harry Westgarth, 49 Rokey Park, Hull HU4 7QE (tel: 0482-503649).

● **36 Army Tpt Coy RASC, Porz-Urbach, 1945-48:** LCpl Turner, of Coventry, Sgt Hayes, and LCpl George Bolton, of London and others who knew him are asked to contact Heinz Lentz, Trachtenbrodstr 26, Berlin 1055.

Tankies top the Matterhorn

THREE members of 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, Catterick followed in the footsteps of history to raise £4,000 for the Royal Marsden Hospital Cancer Appeal Fund.

They climbed the Matterhorn to commemorate the first ascent 125 years ago.

Taking part were Capt Chance Wilson, Cpl Ian Halihan and LCpl Paul Whatley.

Meanwhile 3 Field Workshop, Tidworth, have raised more than £400 for the same charity. They were seventh out of 225 teams – but the first military team home – in the MaST relay marathon.

In the team were Maj Keith McQuilton, SSgt Graham Paton, Mr McQuilton, Dvr Paget, LCpl Wayne Smith, LCpl Jackson, Pte Jock Campbell, Cfn Austin, Cpl Michael McGaun, Sgt Nigel Nettlefield and Cfn Jock Dowd.

★ ★ ★

Miss Lisa Cole presented a television set on behalf of Farleys, the baby food manufacturer, to Queen Mary's Ward at the Louise Margaret Maternity Wing, Aldershot. A video was given by Cow and Gate. The gifts were received by SSgt Carol Kearney.



★ ★ ★

Exhausted, but delighted, were eight cricketers from the 1st Battalion, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment whose cricket marathon made £1,050 for the Primary Club, which raises money to buy sports facilities for visually handicapped children.

The Woofers took time off from their busy operational schedule in Omagh for the 24-hour game. By the end they had bowled nearly 600 overs – more than are completed in a full five-day Test match.

The cricketers were Cpl "Spanner" Spencer, Pte Patrick Legge, Pte Gary Burgess, WO1 (RSM) Tony Hodgetts, SI Garry Roderick, Lt Nick Gregory, Maj Mark Jackson and 2nd Lt Charlie Dobson.



Sgt John Lawrence, HQ Battery, 104 AD Regiment RA (V), abseiling off the roof of Cardiff Hospital to publicise National Speak Week

★ ★ ★

The ambitious RAOC Children 90 project during the summer has resulted in cheques totalling Dm28,000 being handed over to four charities.

Eight walkers completed the 1,000km trek between Ordnance Depot Antwerp and Ordnance Services Berlin in May, and the money has now been gathered in. The cheques were handed over at Inventory Control Point RAOC, Viersen by the CO, Lt Col Richard Bird, to Aktion Sorgenkind, ACROSS Trust (BAOR), the Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (UK), and children's wards of BFG hospitals.

Queensmen rope in the cash

Braving daytime heat and overnight storms, members of D (Tangier) Company 6/7 Queens (V) abseiled their way into the record books for the cause of charity.

Exercise Quadrant Seil was designed to encourage local people of all ages to abseil down the 100ft high Quadrant House in Sutton, Surrey. So supportive were the people of Sutton that more than 1,000 descents were made and the company raised about £30,000 which is to be shared between the RNLI, the Army Benevolent Fund and the Queen Elizabeth Foundation for the Disabled.

Soldiers from the Newport-based Headquarters Battery, 104 Air Defence Regiment, abseiled down the side of Cardiff Hospital to publicise National Speak Week.

★ ★ ★

Ann Birtwistle, wife of the Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment, and Lorraine Ivison, wife of the CSM of Headquarters Company, took to the air in a sponsored micro-light flight and raised £780 for equipment for the children's ward of the Royal Victoria Hospital, Blackpool.



The annual raft race held by HQ Catering Group, St Omer Barracks, Aldershot, raised more than £2,500 for local charities. Among the beneficiaries is Cherrytrees Respite Home for Handicapped Children. In the picture Col Jack Bannister presents a £1,100 cheque to staff member Christine Reese, with Capt Chris Oldfield and Gina Baker looking on

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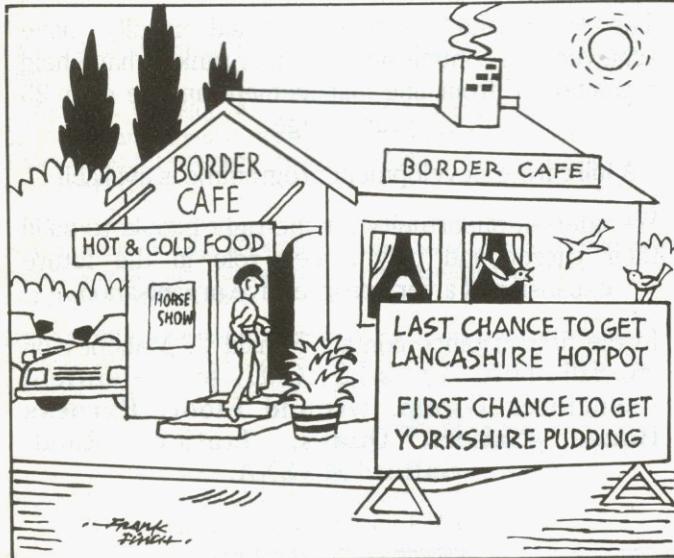
The first correct entries drawn will be the winners. No correspondence can be entered into.

The names of the winner of the £50 first prize and two runners-up will be announced in the December 10 issue.

Congratulations to Lt (QGO) Bhakta B Rai, of 69 Gurkha Indep Fd Sqn, Kitchener Barracks, Chatham, who wins £50 in HOAY competition No 496. Runner-up book prizes go to Sgt Booth, of Fareham, and Mr L Knight, of Evesham, Worcs.

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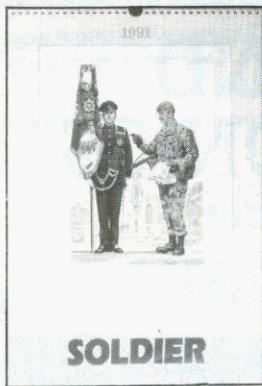
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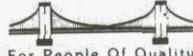
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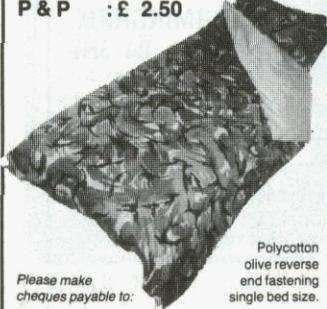
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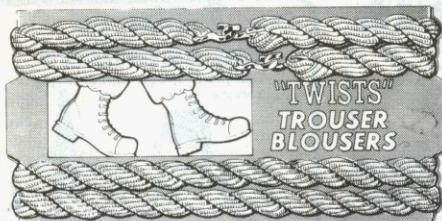
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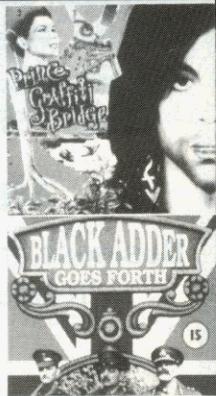
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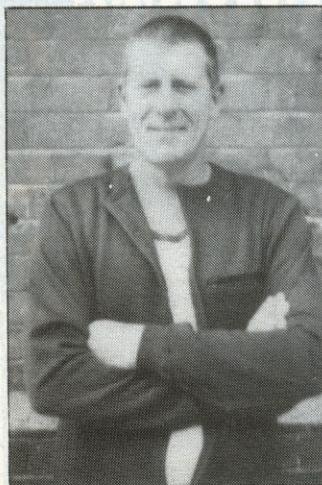
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Brecon jinx strikes again

"I'M sorry for the TA . . . it happens every time!" With a wry grin Army HQ Wales Chief of Staff, Lt Col John Hunt was referring to the monsoon which hit the last weekend of Cambrian Patrol 1990.

The colonel, who was exercise director, added: "The Regulars had brilliant weather during the week when they were taking part. But at the weekend, when it was the TA's turn, the weather yet again turned nasty just as in previous years."

But in spite of high winds and a constant downpour which soaked the soldiers and added gruelling pounds of weight to their kit, the TA men battled their way across the centre of Wales over two days and nights to compete for medals.

Yet again the Brecon Beacons' weather proved how unpredictable it can be.

Carrying full packs and weapons the eight-man patrols marched and navigated themselves from just outside Bridgend to the Sennybridge training area. On their way they encountered many obstacles, real and created.

They ended their 48-hour slog by fighting their way from house to house on the new FIBUA (Fighting in Built-up



Lt Gen Mike Wilkes abseils in. He took part in a night yomp

Area) village on the Sennybridge range.

The Regulars take three days to cover a slightly longer course than part-time soldiers.

The Commander of the United Kingdom Field Army and Inspector General of the Territorial Army, Lt Gen Mike Wilkes, visited the Cambrian Patrol and spent part of the night "yomping" with one of the teams.

The 50-year-old general also showed his expertise at abseiling 100ft down the face of a quarry.

The Patrol is now acknowledged internationally as one of the toughest infantry tests in Nato. Over recent years many foreign armies have competed.

Last year there were teams from the Netherlands Marines and Australian Infantry.

This year the foreign element was represented by a team from the famous Italian Alpini Regiment.

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Wyvern turns out a rising star

"BRAKES locked – cable on. Take up slack!" I wait for six tense seconds and then with a sudden lurch the glider is catapulted into the air, writes Lynn Pegler.

Sheer terror is the only word to describe the emotion of that first winch launch as pupil and instructor encased in a small flimsy aeroplane are hurled into the sky.

But as we level out and the heartbeat steadies from presto to a more stately adagio, I start to register my surroundings. The views across Wiltshire's rolling landscape are magnificent.

The absence of any mechanised power brings a sense of stillness and peace to the cockpit and the feeling of three dimensional freedom is positively addictive.

Ever since a flight in a Jet Provost, I have always wanted to learn to fly.

Helping me to fulfil this ambition was the Army Gliding Association. Along with six soldiers and a retired officer I had enrolled on one of the Army's excellent five-day glid-



Lynn Pegler, a member of the P Info staff at HQ North West District, prepares for her big moment. Instructor Colin Arch is on the left

ing courses run by the Wyvern Gliding Club at RAF Upavon in Wiltshire.

A private pilot's licence costs upwards of £3,000, but gliding

tuition with the Army Gliding Association can get you solo for as little as £60.

AGA courses secretary Maj Pat Farrelly explained: "If

somebody is interested in flying, this is a very inexpensive and fun way to start. It is a challenge not only to learn to fly the glider but later it is your skill against the elements that actually keeps you up in the air."

For corporals aged 25 and below, there is even an opportunity to apply for a £200 grant under the Malcolm Award Scheme which can take you all the way to the bronze award level. This requires a pilot to undertake two half-hour solo flights and a written exam, and is the first stage in a series of awards leading to gold.

Most of my fellow students had volunteered for the five-day course as one of their adventure training options. Some had had boyhood



McManners in for GB

CAPT Peter McManners (left) of 42 Survey Engineer Group and Royal Marine Chris Ray competed for the British team in the world triathlon championships staged in and around Disney World in Florida.

It was the climax to a tremendous season for McManners, who was a member of the Army team that won the British long course triathlon championships and took the Inter-Service title from the Marines-

Gnr Neil Young prepares for take off with Army Gliding Association course secretary and instructor Maj Pat Farrelly.

ambitions to learn to fly, two had tried it before and Bdr John Hotten (RA) explained the idea had come to him after watching TA action girl Anneka Rice soaring and diving on a similar sort of course.

Cpl Steve Parkes, from The Royal Hampshire Regiment, like most of the would-be pilots, admitted he had been scared stiff at the beginning of the week.

"I have never been so nervous and less confident. It has brought it all out and now I have really gained in self-confidence."

Gunner Jon Dodds, who is serving with the Artillery Survey at Larkhill, was the same. "The fears will always be there but I know something about myself now – that I would actually do something even though I was terrified. I wouldn't just back out."

Wyvern has a particularly convivial and informal atmosphere and course organisers are keen that at the end of the week the students continue with their gliding and become full members of the club.

"The majors and warrant officers mixed in with the lads. There was no rank structure. You can sit there and have a few beers with them and have a laugh about how scared you are," said Gnr Dodds. "It was an excellent week."

Anyone wishing to know more about the Army Association Gliding Courses or the Malcolm Awards should contact AGA secretary Lt Col John Hawkins on 071-921 6440.

dominated Royal Navy team for the first time.

The world championships were held over a mile-long swim in the swampy waters of Seven Seas Lagoon, a 40km cycle ride and a 10km run. Australia dominated the event, taking the top three individual places, and McManners and Ray finished just outside the top 200 with times of 2hr 13min 31sec and 2hr 13min 56sec respectively.

GUNNER GALA

Super 7 RHA take full marks

AN all-conquering performance by the 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery won them the Army six-a-side football championship and all the trophies on offer, writes **Pat Massey**.

The Aldershot-based 7 RHA footballers won nine out of nine matches, and the day turned into a South East District Gunner gala, with the district providing both finalists and the Royal Artillery all four semi-finalists.

Split into two groups, 16 sides battled through a rain-soaked morning before the gunner sides began to impose their dominance. 7 RHA rattled in 16 goals, conceding only one, in beating 3 RHA (2-0), 94 Log Regt RA (2-0), and then in overdrive, Scottish Div Dep B (7-0) and Junior Inf Bn Ouston (5-1) to streak clear of their group before lunch.

In the other half of the draw, 47 Fd Regt RA enjoyed an unbeaten run, disposing of 9/12 Lancers (2-0), 2 LI (3-1) and last year's winners 38 Engr Regt RE (1-0). They did, however, drop a point to the Scottish Div Depot A side in a 1-1 draw.

Both sides won a maximum six points from their three afternoon games, with 7 RHA beating London District champions PCD RE A (4-1), 15 Bn RAOC (5-1) and 7/10 UDR (3-1) in Group B.

In the other group 47 Fd Regt RA beat 17 Fd Regt RA (3-1), 1 DWR (2-1) – a hard-fought game they might easily have lost – and 2 UDR (3-1). 3 RHA and 17 Trg Regt RA were the runners-up to the



LBdr David Band of 7 RHA (white shirt) is stopped in his tracks by Bdr Stephen Howe of 47 Fd Regt during the Army six-a-side final. The referee is Sgt Steve Dale, R Signals

group winners, ensuring themselves a place in the semi-finals.

The 29-goal tally by 7 RHA, in the course of winning Group B, won them the Brigadier Bob Thorpe Trophy and the medals awarded to the team scoring the greatest number of goals in the group matches.

47 Fd Regt RA scored a penalty kick early in their

semi-final tie with 3 RHA. It was not, however, until the last five minutes, in the course of which they scored twice, that they made sure of a place in the final.

In fact, 3 RHA, the gunners' 6-a-side champions of their September competition, and late substitutes for Eastern District qualifiers 19 Fd Amb

RAMC (who have been called for duty in what may prove to be a bigger engagement), might easily have won the tie.

They created the better chances which only called for greater calm and concentration in front of goal to convert.

In the second semi-final, 7 RHA confirmed their superiority by beating 17 Trg Regt RA by four goals to one.

The final was a very close affair, in the course of which 47 Fd Regt RA created the better chances but were foiled by some dogged defending and brave goalkeeping. Some of their second-half misses defied description.

The Horse Gunners scored a goal in each half, but it was injury time before the Woolwich-based gunners replied and 7 RHA won by two goals to one, their tightest margin of victory of the day.

No goals at Windsor

Windsor and Eton 0, Army 0

THE Army senior squad opened its representative programme with an away game against Windsor and Eton of the Vauxhall Premier League.

The soldiers enjoyed slightly the better of the first half exchanges. Sig Paul Brown (R Signals) ran the defence ragged down the Army left flank but

the visitors could not convert this good approach work into goals.

Windsor and Eton went close on a couple of occasions, but SI Nigel Wiscombe (APTC) in the Army goal was in fine form.

The Army's back four, though a little short of height, were seldom in trouble and LBdr Steve Bates (RHA) had an outstanding game.



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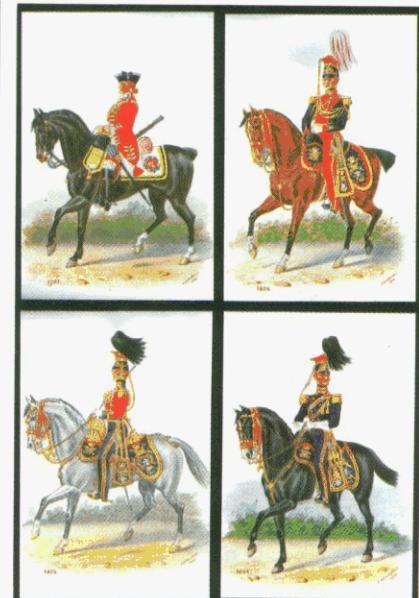
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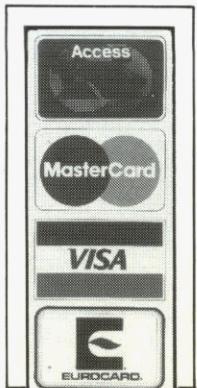
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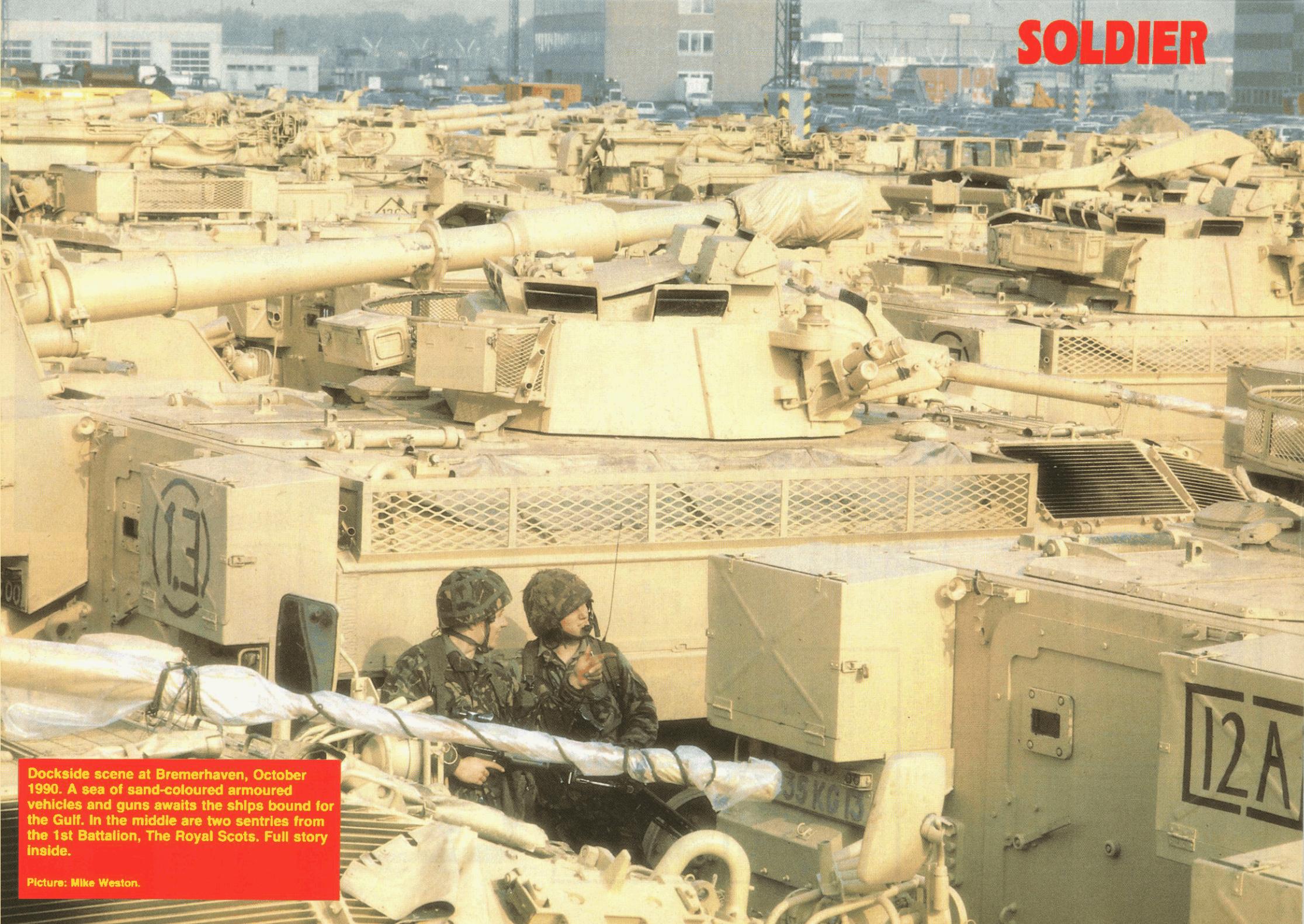
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Dockside scene at Bremerhaven, October 1990. A sea of sand-coloured armoured vehicles and guns awaits the ships bound for the Gulf. In the middle are two sentries from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots. Full story inside.

Picture: Mike Weston.