

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY • 25 PENCE • 8-21 FEBRUARY 1982

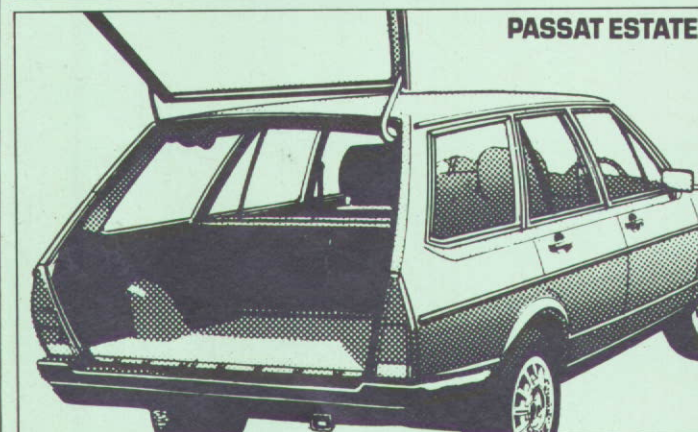
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CONTENTS

- 5 News Lines
- 8 News View
- 11 Soldiers Talking
- 12 Your cap badge
- 13 Gunners on target
- 14 Hooking up Chinook
- 16 How Observant Are You?
- 17 Profile: Ian Kaye
- 20 Humour
- 21 Home from Home: Bulford
- 22 All in the family
- 25 Junior Leaders' RSM
- 26 US Army girls
- 29 Last cavalry charge
- 30 Book reviews
- 31 Prize competition
- 32 Mail Drop
- 34 Pen Pals
- 35 Corps of Commissionaires
- 43 Sport

FRONT COVER

Aided by the laser range finder on their AFV command vehicle, Royal Artillery crewmen pinpoint targets during a live firing exercise at Suffield in Canada.

Picture by Doug Pratt

BACK COVER

Breakfast in Belize. Army cooks have to be versatile, able to produce 'haute cuisine' for a mess banquet or — as here — rustle up a satisfying meal for hungry soldiers on exercise. On page 11 some of them talk about their job and the problems they face.

Picture by Paul Haley

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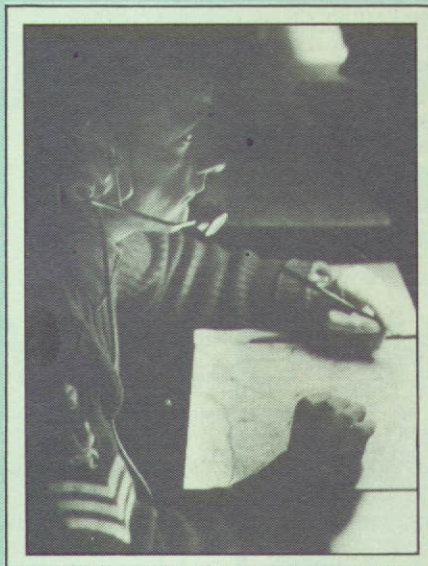
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SOLDIER

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY



How gunnery students learn to hit the target without firing a single live round — page 13

Why female recruits to the United States army are blazing new trails in sex equality — page 26



What the cooks think of their customers — page 11



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SOLDIER to Soldier

OLD STEREOTYPES and popular myths can be a long time dying. They feed our prejudices, blinker our judgement, yet we cling to them like worn, familiar childhood toys.

Perhaps because the military world remains something of a mystery to the world at large, some Army stereotypes have lingered longer than most. Cartoons are regularly submitted to SOLDIER depicting bullet headed, bellowing sergeant majors tongue-lashing brainless recruits on an endless regime of square-bashing and bull. And we still see the old cookhouse joke in which some luckless squaddie, potato peeler in hand, is working his way through a veritable Everest of spuds.

The ubiquitous potato has not disappeared from the Army messing scene of course. Heaven forbid that it ever should. But any 'old sweat' with grim memories of the watery stews and lumpy custards that provided the staple soldier's fare of his day, would be astonished at the variety and excellence of the food to be found on the plates of today's Professionals.

Just how good Army cooking can be was brought home again vividly at this year's Hotel Olympia where Army Catering Corps members scooped up a staggering clutch of gold, silver and bronze for their culinary skills. In one category, they were shaded only by the man from the Dorchester — which is like coming a close second to Yehudi Menuhin in a violin contest.

Particularly impressive was the Corps' success in the practical classes, cooking on site under the eagle-eyed scrutiny of the judges. Pressure indeed — but the chefs came through with flying colours to show they can more than stand up to the heat of competition.

Soldiers still grumble about their grub — even when there are eight or nine dishes to choose from. And palates conditioned by years of junk food may sometimes be slow to appreciate new, more subtle flavours. So cooking in the Army will never be an easy job.

But Army catering has made enormous strides over the past 40 years and few impartial observers can doubt that British soldiers have ever eaten better than they do today. Another myth has firmly bitten the dust.



Proud smiles from the Army's three triple gold winners.

ARMY COOKS' GOLD TRAIL

BRITISH ARMY COOKS have proved that they are among the best in the world. In the biennial Hotel Olympia international exhibition they took a total of 96 awards — including three triple gold medals. The grand tally for golds was 20 and in one class the Army entrant was a close-run second to the man from the Dorchester.

Altogether 131 juniors and seniors from the Army Catering Corps took part.

Among the seniors Sgt Stephen Miller, superintendent instructor Mr Brian Taylor and civilian instructor Mr Martyn Flowers took three gold awards each. On top of that there were 13 silver awards, 13 bronze and eight certificates of merit.

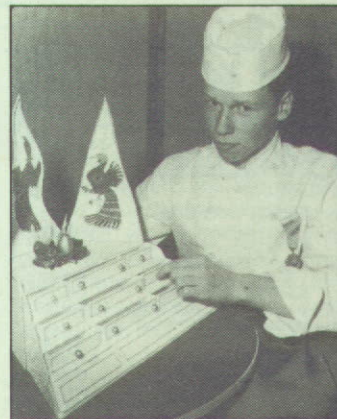
The juniors clocked up 11 golds, 11 silvers, seven bronze, five special merits and no less than 19 certificates of merit. And for Pte Stephen Wright from 2 Armd Div Field Ambulance, there was a special award of virtue for "an outstanding piece of craftsmanship".

For one of the gold medallists, Cpl Kenneth Jamieson, it was a particularly special prize — he entered the competition at three days notice and still walked off with the premier award for his Mousse in Aspic. Normally he helps to feed the men of 4 Armd Div HQ and Signal Regt.

Asked after his victory if he usually got many complaints he said: "No. I am too small. I think they are all too frightened to hit me!"

But apart from the jokes, the Army Catering Corps was pleased. "Our job is to feed the Army," a spokesman told SOLDIER. "Of course we are pleased. It is an excellent result and it reflects the standard, dedicated enthusiasm and sheer hard work of both the seniors and the juniors."

"We are especially proud of



One survivor was App Nigel Fitz-Avon's 'Phoenix' trinket box.

our success in the practical classes, prepared on the spot at the exhibition".

But there was a minor tragedy at the end for few of the wonderful creations survived the return to Aldershot for the planned display. A combination of the probing fingers of visitors to the exhibition and the road journey from London proved too much for most of them.

Countenances were a bright shade of crimson when we realised that our article on the new museum of the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment, which appeared in our last issue, substituted royal son for royal father in describing the Colonel in Chief of the Regiment as ... HRH the Prince of Wales. Apologies to all concerned.

Clean-up follows freeze-up

AFTER THE GREAT freeze-up came the great clean up for soldiers of 66 Sqn Royal Corps of Signals who drove nearly 80,000 miles in five days in appalling conditions to deliver salt to beleaguered Bristol and South Wales.

A total of 160 drivers from the Regular Army and TA took part in the operation in which 3200 tons of salt were moved. They were plagued with extreme cold which froze radiators, waxed diesel fuel and even blocked fuel lines. Worse still, they frequently faced zero visibility in persistent freezing fog.

Drivers were on the road for a minimum of 16 hours a day, working two to a lorry and in some cases they kept going for 24 hours.

When it was over one big problem was the threat of corrosion to the trucks but now they are all going through a thorough programme of steam cleaning.

Appeal reaches £85,000

THE MOUNTBATTEN Statue Appeal, launched by the Prime Minister in July, now stands at £85,000. This sum has been raised in the 40 countries through a very large number of donations from the public, Servicemen, former Servicemen and ex-Service organisations, Members of Parliament, commerce, banking, industry and the news media.

Sculptors invited to submit designs for the statue are Franta Belsky, John Doubleday, Dame Elisabeth Frink, Oscar Nemon, Ivor Roberts-Jones, John Wragg and David Wynne.

A selection committee representing the Mountbatten family, artistic interests, the Department of the Environment and the Armed Forces will choose the design in the early summer. It is proposed that the statue should be erected on the Foreign Office Green overlooking Horse Guards Parade and is expected to be unveiled in the summer of 1983.

The Appeal remains open for donations which should be sent to Maj Gen J M Palmer, Room NC7, Old Admiralty Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2BE.

Any surplus monies subscribed will go to the Mountbatten Memorial Trust.



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Army saved climber

A PARTY OF FIVE Army climbers — two of them Alpine novices — who were involved in the rescue of an injured Austrian climber on the lofty Jungfrau in Switzerland have been commended by the GOC South-East District, Lt-Gen Sir Paul Travers for their "steadiness, skill and disciplined teamwork".

They are Sgt Nicholas Challinor, a PTI at the Princess Marina College, Arborfield, Craftsman Michael Smith, a TA soldier, Trooper Harold Taylor, Apprentice Tradesman Lance Corporal Stephen Spencer and Apprentice Tradesman David Willis.

Climbing the Jungfrau, the Army team saw what they took for a body and then heard cries for help. Sgt Challinor decided to try a rescue and led the party to a position above the body.

Cfn Smith fixed an anchor and Tpr Taylor abseiled down to find not only the injured climber but three frozen corpses. The injured man, in a weakened condition, was suffering from exposure and minor injuries.

Smith, Spencer and Willis were sent off to alert the Swiss authorities. Their route lay over potentially dangerous terrain. It was vital they moved with the utmost care to avoid a further accident.

The citation says: "This they did with steadiness and competence in psychological and technical circumstances which were particularly demanding for soldiers of their youth and comparative inexperience."

"Regardless of the harrowing circumstances and the increased risk to themselves, each member of the party, according to his skill and experience, played an important part in rescuing and almost certainly saving the life of the injured climber."



Cpl Kenny Campbell, the team cameraman, showing off his latest piece of kit and the sponsorship logos.

DEVILS HUNT FOR SPONSOR

THE ARMY's Aldershot-based freefall parachute display team, The Red Devils, are looking for an enterprising, publicity-seeking sponsor to support them with a "minimum £25,000" annually. Their current sponsors, Lucas (UK) have had to withdraw, with regret, because of the recession.

Captain Mickey Munn, the Red Devils leader and his team — it was founded as a self-supporting venture in 1964 by The Parachute Regiment — appear at more than 200 shows each year nationwide and, on average, make some 5000 freefall descents during their season.

The cash injection is needed mainly for the running of the team's fleet of four vehicles and their associated costs of tax, insurance and maintenance which takes the 24-strong sky-diving entourage to shows.

The two engines of the team's venerable, red Islander aircraft — call-sign Delta Hotel — become time-expired this summer, too.

Mickey, who has logged up 800 hours as pilot on the 12-year-old aircraft, told SOL-

DIER: "These engines, alone, will cost £14,000 to replace. It would take us donkeys' years to save up for them."

"Our situation is not really of a 'cash crisis' which has been quoted in the local newspaper. That was a little bit dramatic. But we do need the sponsorship for our two hundred shows a year in which we can offer valuable publicity. The sponsors' names would appear on our track suits, our parachutes, other team accessories and, of course, on the vehicles."

He added: "The backers would also get private use of the team for any promotional work they might have of their own. The team will not be in any trouble this year but there could be difficulties towards the end of next. There are many schemes in which we can increase the amount of publicity for a sponsor. We go abroad, too, this year to Germany and France. The money we earn goes into the aeroplane and parachutes. Any sponsor would make a lot of money out of us in sheer advertising value".

Aldershot medal

The recently formed Aldershot Military Historical Trust has had a special medal struck as part of its campaign to raise £400,000 for a visitors' centre and museum. The medals sell at £5 and show Wellington on one side and the Aldershot military badge on the other.

Briefly

A spark from a welder's torch is thought to have been responsible for a major fire at the Royal Army Ordnance Corps depot at Moreton-on-Lugg, near Hereford. Damage was estimated at £3 million.

A team of climbers from the 14/20 King's Hussars is to attempt the 17,058 ft Mount Kenya. They also hope to erect a marble memorial at 16,000 ft to three members of the regiment who died there in a rock fall in 1965.

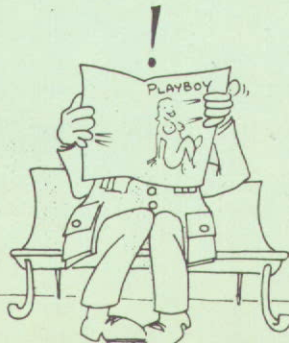
Royal Engineers Junior Leaders from Old Park Barracks, Dover, are to present five wheel-chairs to a local hospital. They have been paid for by the £865 raised at the Leaders' open day.

Prince Charles, who is Colonel-in-Chief of the Royal Regiment of Wales is to visit the 1st Battalion at Aldershot in June.

As part of its silver jubilee celebrations the Army Air Corps is to stage a three-day extravaganza at its headquarters at Middle Wallop, Hants, from 23-25 July. It will include an international helicopter rally, the 1982 British Helicopter Championships, flying displays and arena demonstrations.

After 40 miles of sponsored forced marching along the Ridgeway Walk and hours of sponsored 'no smoking' in the communications centre at HQ UKLF 10 girls of 1 squadron, 10 Signal Regiment have raised £83 for cancer research.

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NEWS VIEW



◀ Sally Bach

Not so little drummer girl Sally Douglas-Williams, 21, the reigning Miss Wales and Miss RRW, brought a touch of extra sparkle to the occasion when the Regiment's 1st Battalion celebrated the famous Rorke's Drift action against the Zulus. She made quite a hit and many a heart missed a beat.

Hi Baby ▶

Little Joanne Shareg Shand really is a high baby. She was born at 1000 feet, somewhat ahead of time, while her mother was being rushed to hospital in Cyprus by RAF helicopter. After she left hospital proud mum Eve, and Cpl Dave Shand who both work for UNFICYP, took her back to meet the crew.



◀ Heave Ho

These four landlubbers were literally shown the ropes when they paid a visit to HMS Onslaught at the Gosport submarine base. The trip was arranged last year when members of the ship's company visited the ATDU at Bovington.

Tree Service ▶

The traditional tree-burning ceremony, representing the fire lit by the shepherds, launched the celebration of the Serbian Christmas Eve by members of the Mixed Service Organisation at Joint Headquarters Rheindahlen.



◀ Thumbs Up

A very happy nine-year-old Peter Ehlert shows his approval of a trip in a Fox ARV with Sgt Andy Twell of 3 Bn Royal Anglian Regiment. The trip was part of a day out with the Battalion after Peter's grandmother had written to the CO.

War Games ▶

Explaining some of the finer points of a war games scenario to the Adjutant General, Gen Sir George Cooper, is Cpl 'Bo' Cattel of 28 Signal Regiment at Krefeld. The Regiment's small but thriving club has about 15 members.





◀ Skirl

The skirl of the pipes echoed across Aldershot when preparations for this year's Aldershot Military Display got under way. Left to right are Pipe Majors Maharman Tsmang (7 GR), Norman Dodds (R Irish) and James Ridell (2 SG). Their three pipe bands will feature in the display from 24-27 June.

Arctic ▶

It may look like Norway but in fact it was near Bulford. Britain's tough weather gave men of the PWO the chance to get in some practice before the annual ACE Mobile Force Winter Exercise.



◀ TA Boss

Col Edward Wilkinson who has been appointed Brigadier Territorial Army at UKLF. He is the first incumbent of the TA's only substantive Brigadier post and in civil life is a director of a Midlands firm.



◀ Frog Eyes

Old Frog Eyes, the circa 1964 Bedford coach, has been saved from the scrapheap, thanks to a few enthusiasts at 636 Mobile Civilian Transport Group at Werl. Now she is to take her place in the RCT Museum at Leconfield but although she is a 'runner' she had to make the trip by low-loader because she had already been written-off and could not be driven on the roads.

Call-In ▲

Mum's the word or, rather, call sign. Brig Ian Sprackley, Commander Training Group, R Signals, chats to Apprentice Tradesmen Lance Corporals Karl Liddle and Sean Morgan during his first visit and tour of the Army Apprentices College, Harrogate. The two Clansman VRC 321 sets, worth an estimated £20,000 were tuned to the USA.

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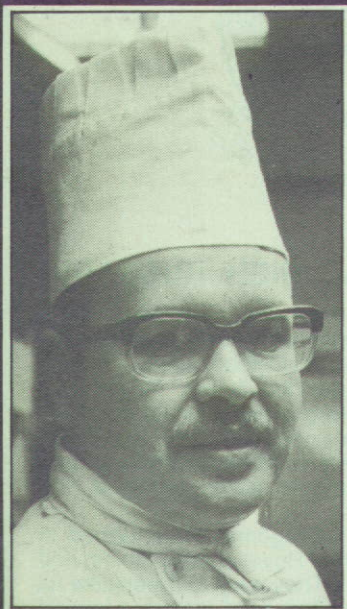
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STRAIGHT FROM THE HOTPLATE

Our *Soldiers Talking* feature 'Food for Thought' (14 Dec) in which we asked Gordon Highlanders for a consumers'-eye view of Army grub brought an angry reaction from some members of the Army Catering Corps who felt the comments were unbalanced — among them Lance Corporal Saetta from Soest whose letter we carried in our last issue. We never pretended of course that the Gordons' comments reflected all shades of opinion on Army catering. But we liked Lance Corporal Saetta's suggestion that we should ask some cooks for their views too. So here are seven opinions from the other side of the cookhouse counter . . .



Corporal 'Dinger' Bell. Cook with the Junior Leaders' Regiment RAC at Bovington:

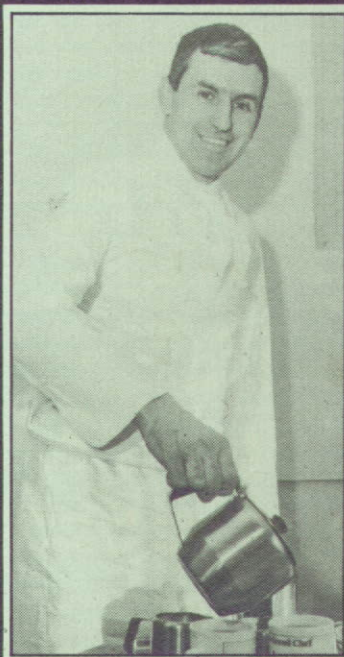
"I think the food is very good and reflects the hours we put in. If they go down to Joe's Cafe they won't get the amount of food for what they pay every day. But a lot of them go to the Naafi and it's a wasted job then.

"I've been in the Army for 12

years and I have not been to a place yet where the food has been bad. The demand does vary from place to place. I'm a Jock myself but I don't like mince and tatties.

"Some soldiers do heavier jobs and want something more substantial — egg and chips is no use to them. I have been in places where it was hard to get rations — especially St Kilda.

"On one occasion we asked for a box of eggs and it was parachuted in. I won't say what happened to them but we had scrambled eggs for a week! The Junior Leaders here would eat pies all the time if you offered them. It depends on where they come from — some of them are offered steaks and they don't even know what they are! We don't get many complaints — after all they don't get offered six choices at home."



Private John Mulhall. Cook at the AAC Centre, Middle Wallop:

"The only problems we have are that sometimes we are short staffed and have to change the menus because of the number of cooks working. Most of the customers are very pleased but you can't please everyone. We do have to do a lot of improvisation of dishes.

"But it costs them only £1.31 a day for a full breakfast, a lunch with as much as they can eat and a dinner with as much as they can eat — you would never get that anywhere else.

"You just can't live on pies in the Naafi for your whole Army career but I've noticed that junk food seems to be the in thing. You put chips out and they all go for them but you put boiled or roast potatoes and they don't touch them."

The way in which SOLDIER has gone about this interview makes all cooks out to be criminals and suggests that they are only in that profession because they can't do anything else. This is not so, and I would like to see an interview done about what the chefs think and the way they conduct their daily tasks. That would open a few eyes. — L/Cpl Saetta ACC, 1 Sqn, Yankee Tp, 3 Armd Div, HQ & Sig Regt, Salamanca Bks, BFPO 106.

Sergeant Mike May. Cook with 1 RRW in Aldershot:

"The main problem is that you can never please everybody but your aim is to do your best. The chances are that at one mess meeting they will want more roasts and less steaks and at the next it might be the other way round.

"On the whole this is a happy unit and they never really complain. They have seven or eight choices for each meal after all and we spend a lot of time and effort to make it presentable.

"I have been on the other side of the hotplate because I transferred into the Corps from the Royal Horse Artillery. I can go back to when we only had ham and egg for tea and breakfast might be only one sausage or piece of bacon.

"I don't think people complain too much after they have done a year or two. I agree that sometime presentation is not as good as it might be but you have to consider that a cook might like to decorate a dish up and then finds that the materials he needs are not available that day."

"The quality may vary from unit to unit and so will the kitchen facilities. But we try to do everything we can to please."



Sergeant Phil Birnie. Cook with 1 Bn, The Royal Green Jackets in West Belfast:

"It's difficult to please everyone all the time and I've found that the older the guys in the company the better they are to feed. It's the married men who moan most. I think we've gone too far with the standard of catering but food does keep up morale and we do have the odd time when people say it was nice!

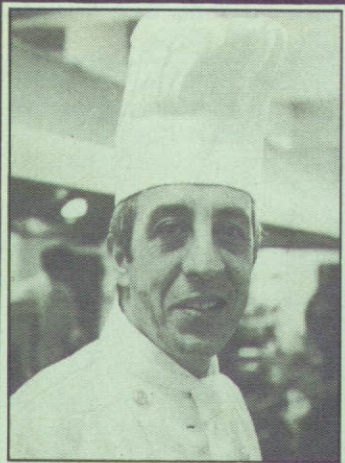
"The support boys here are the ones who are the big eaters and it is quantity rather than quality for them. They have such a demanding job here in Ireland that they are sometimes half asleep when they come for food and it's best if they don't have to think about a choice.

"You've got to be understanding, especially here — but I do have trouble controlling my temper sometimes!"



continued on page 12

WOII Anthony Handley. Master Chef with 2 Bn, The Royal Green Jackets in West Belfast: "There are only two things that soldiers can complain about: food and pay. I think standards are too high in the Catering Corps. Lots of kids are brought up on convenience foods now and don't appreciate proper meals. It's difficult to change them but I think we're winning slowly. They tell me if they're pleased



with it as well as when they aren't!

"Food has got to be of a good standard otherwise morale goes downhill. If someone comes in after he's had a hard day, he'll take it out on the cooks. Here in Northern Ireland the only thing they have to look forward to is the food and when a chap comes up to the hotplate and goes off grunting when there are five or six choices, we know we have to handle him gently. We do all the duties as well as cooking here so we can understand how they feel.

"I transferred into the Catering Corps and I used to complain when I was in the infantry — But that was in the old days when they issued rations..."

Staff-Sergeant Frank Hopkinson. Master Chef at the AAC Centre, Middle Wallop:

"Of course locations differ greatly. The kitchens can vary and the standards of the master chef may also be different. It's like any restaurant — if you find a particularly good restaurant you will use it regularly.

"At the moment we are feeding 280 people and that's 280 different attitudes to eating and you have to remember that the average soldier does not take long over his meal — the average is 12 minutes. He wants to get back to his room or his job.

"We only get minor complaints at our mess meetings — things like the baked beans not being hot enough or a request for coffee or fresh milk with every meal.

"Cooks in the Army have always taken a lot of stick and if you can't take stick it's time you

transferred from the Catering Corps. You've got to have a thick skin.

"Out in the field the cook works very long hours. A typical

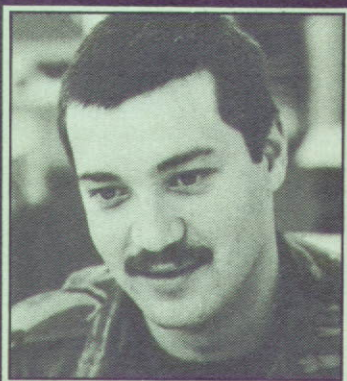


exercise would see him up at four starting his burners and hot water for reveille at 5.45. He would then work through breakfast, probably move to another location, prepare lunch and then dinner. He could still be working at midnight and might even have to provide late meals after that. And he would be up at four the next morning.

"Here the day starts at eight am and they work until about 6.30 or 6.45. On top of that they have to fulfil all their military duties and do an element of sport. For instance this weekend is a complete working weekend for cooks to sort out stores and equipment. It all has to be done in their own time. They have to accept that they don't get as much time off as other soldiers."

Private Kevin Jane. Cook with 2 Bn, The Royal Green Jackets in West Belfast.

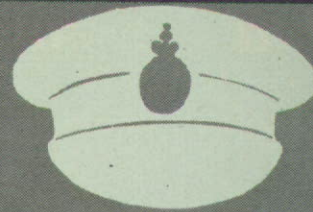
"You've got to work with the battalion that you're with. These are 99 per cent from London and



they all eat steak and kidney pie and mushy peas. I was with the Duke of Wellington's before and they wanted Yorkshire pudding with everything.

"If the lads get called out and miss their meal, we cook something for them when they get back. They sometimes moan because they have to wait but we don't get upset — it's only to be expected really."

Your Cap Badge



No 9

THE QUEEN'S ROYAL IRISH HUSSARS

THE BADGE WHICH currently adorns the head-dress of this regiment is a happy blend of the two badges formerly worn by the regiments that combined on 24th October 1958 — the 4th Queen's Own Hussars and the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars. It features The Irish Harp within a circlet inscribed *Queen's Royal Irish Hussars*, ensigned with the Royal Crest. A scroll below is inscribed *Mente et Manu* (With heart and hand). The harp and scroll are in silver anodised, the remainder in gold anodised.

Princess Anne of Denmark's Dragoons were formed in 1685, being eight troops of men of Royalist sympathies, and saw their first action in Scotland. They went to Steenkirke as Fitzhardinge's Dragoons for their first, hard, lesson in foreign warfare, going on to Portugal in 1707. They returned to Scotland to serve as Evans Dragoons at Sheriffmuir, and in subsequent years went on to fight at such places as Dettingen, Laffeldt, Busaco and Los Santos. While these names are not to be found among their Battle Honours other, more familiar, ones are — among them Peninsula, Albuhera, Balaclava and Sevastopol. As the 4th (Queen's Own) Light Dragoons they rode to glory in the Light Brigade's famous Charge. And becoming Hussars in 1861, they soldiered on with honour until 1958 as the 4th Queen's Own Hussars.

The cap badge was originally the Victorian crown surmounting a circlet inscribed *Queen's Own Hussars* with a spray of laurel at the bottom centre. In the centre were the Roman numerals 'IV' in ornamental characters, the numerals in white metal, the remainder in gilding metal. In 1901 the Imperial crown replaced the Victorian and the motto granted in 1906, was added to the design on a scroll below the circlet in white metal. This last version, bearing the St Edward's crown, was sealed on 23rd September 1954 in metals, the anodised version following for a brief spell.

The other party to the amalgamation, the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars, were formed two years before the 4th, from Irish Protestants, as Cunningham's Regiment of Dragoons. Their foreign service commenced in 1704 and in one early engagement they encountered a body of Irish Dragoons in the French service, routing the entire force. Shortly afterwards they received a message from the commander of the Franco-Irish pleading not to be despised for the defeat as they had been badly let down by the French, who could not be persuaded to stand and fight! Numbered 8th Dragoons in 1751, they underwent a number of small changes in title before finally becoming the 8th King's Royal Irish Hussars in 1920 — a name they kept for the next 38 years. Their first cap badge was the Irish Harp surmounted by the Victorian crown. With below, a scroll inscribed *8th King's Royal Irish Hussars*. The harp was in white metal, the remainder in gilding metal, and in 1904 the Imperial crown replaced the Victorian.

Arthur L Kipling and Hugh L King

Next issue: 9th/12th Royal Lancers

SOLDIER looks at Invertron, an electronic aid to artillery practice

SPACE INVADERS are alive and well and living in Farnborough.

In a converted indoor firing range soldiers sit in a warm and comfortable room practising their gunnery skills on simulated targets projected onto a panoramic, full-technicolour screen. Using only the aids he would have in the field such as a pair of binoculars, a radio, a map and a protractor, the soldier plays God — electronically obliterating 'enemy' tanks, machine guns and helicopters.

This sophisticated equipment is Invertron, a digital computer based training simulator for artillery and mortar fire control. It has already proved its value in various Rhine Army locations and places such as Larkhill and Colchester. This one, the ninth to be bought for the Army, is for the use of South East District units and administered by 4 Field Regiment RA at Lille Barracks.

Invertron is designed for use by up to 30 students at a time. By means of slide projection any operational or exercise area can be selected as the impact zone. The instructor then decides on the disposition of various targets, such as tanks, and the operator feeds the information into the computer.

The students' task is to locate the exact position of 'enemy' vehicles, identify the correct grid reference and bearing and instruct the operator to fire. A three-way radio provides the communication between these three positions. Stunning audio and visual aids, namely flashes and bangs, add further realism and indicate where the rounds land and how much correction is needed at the next attempt.

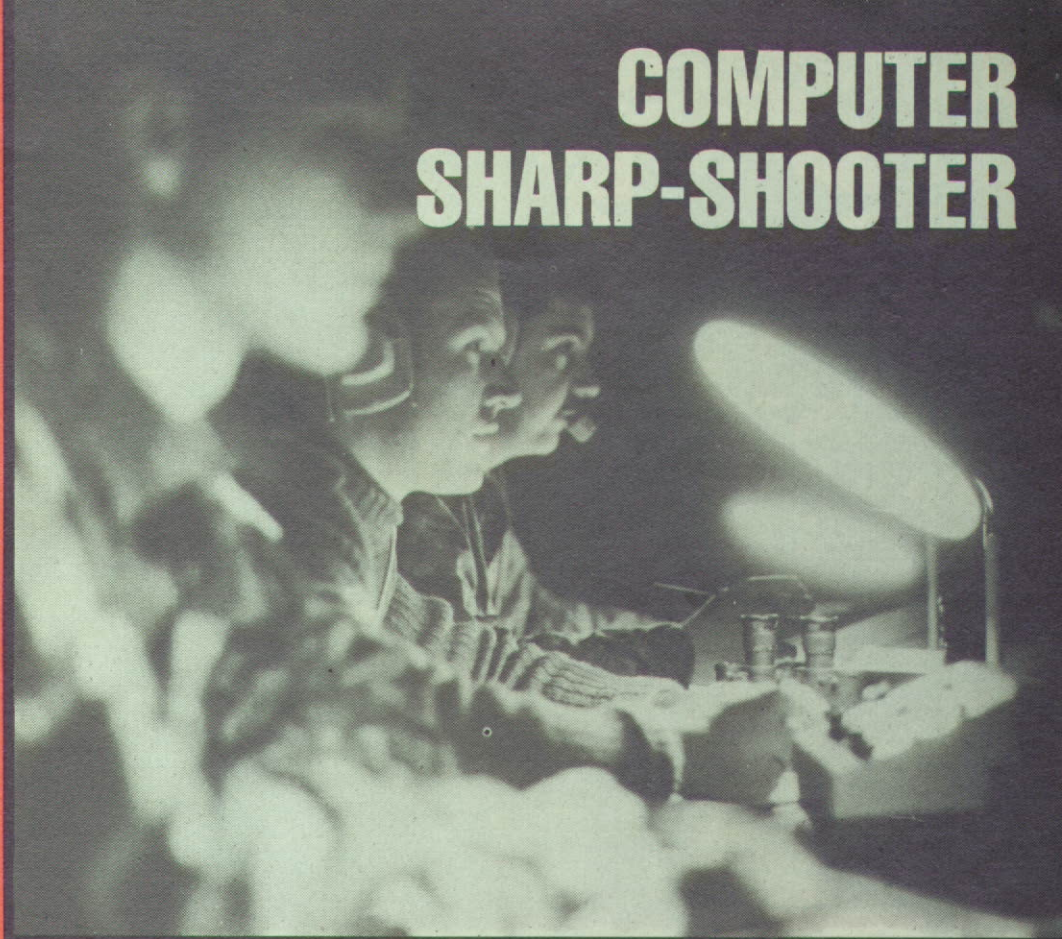
The computer sees the landscape projection in 3-D so that if a round lands in a clump of trees or behind a wall, only smoke is indicated on the screen instead of an explosion. "That's the cleverness of the

computer," explained Captain John Russell RA, the Unit Training Officer. "Even if it lands in a valley, you can judge how far out you are and compensate accordingly. We have a lot of rounds landing in valleys!"

The object of the trainer of course is to practise gunnery skills without using real ammunition. "The real advantage of Invertron is the money you save," pointed out Captain Russell. "After using it a guy knows what to expect in the field and won't waste shells on making silly mistakes. Also, once he is well-versed in skills and procedures, he is quite confident when it comes to using real ammunition."

Invertron is a lot more accurate than the old system of gunner training using a map overlaid on hessian with smoke blown up through tubes to indicate hits. "Too accu-

COMPUTER SHARP-SHOOTER



Gunnery students pin-point screen targets.

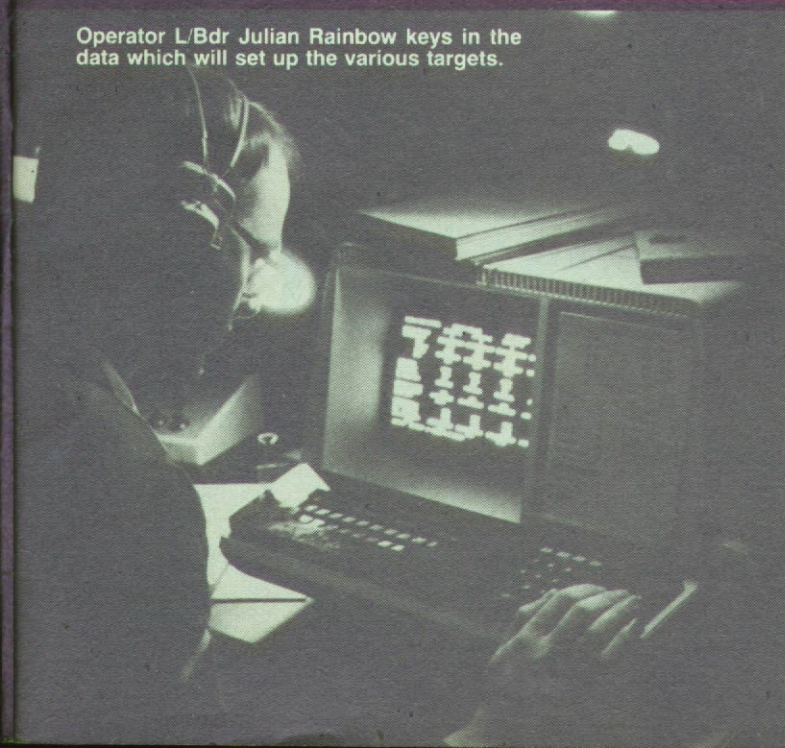
rate sometimes," said Captain Russell, "a proficient student ends up getting a coconut every time!"

Landscapes and targets are varied according to the job in hand and the skills of each unit using Invertron. Extra refinements include a laser range finder and the facility of simulating night illumination techniques.

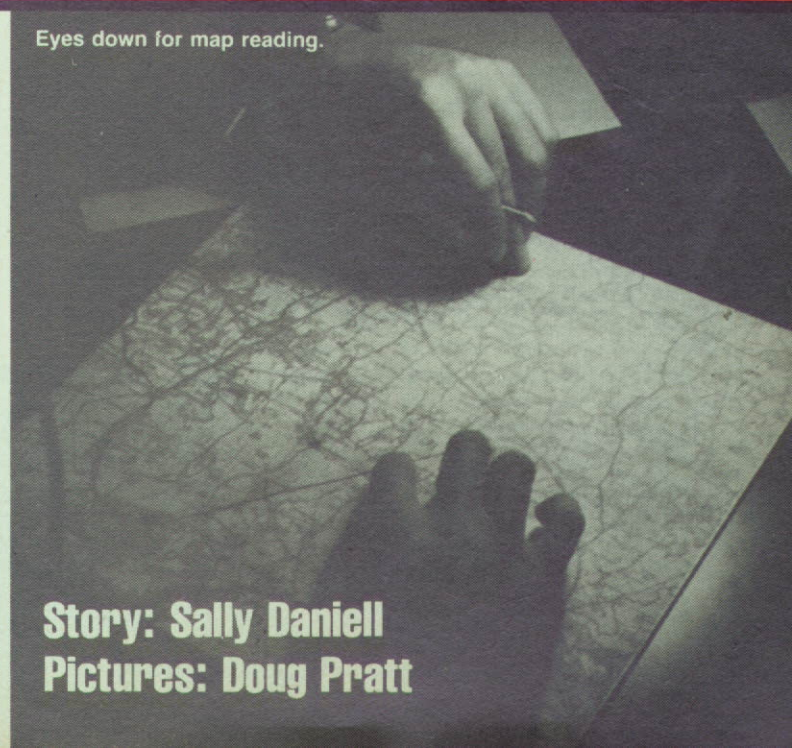
Built-in conditions of wind speed and direction are highlighted when devices like smokescreens and flares are simulated.

SOLDIER saw the trainer in action with 656 Squadron, Army Air Corps. Lance Corporal Steve Chollerton enthused about the machine and said "It's very useful and very near to the real thing. It's good practice in relating the maps to your targets. It does the job ideally." ■

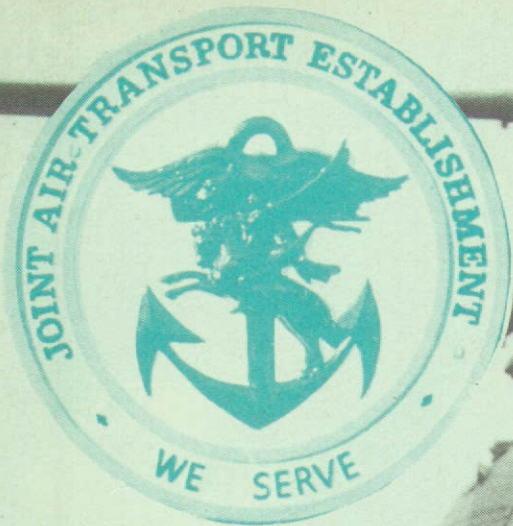
Operator L/Bdr Julian Rainbow keys in the data which will set up the various targets.



Eyes down for map reading.

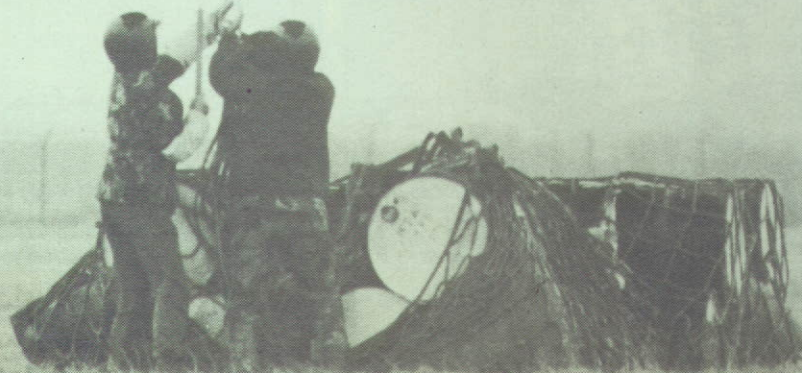


Story: Sally Daniell
Pictures: Doug Pratt



**SOLDIER visits
a new
Army-RAF team
— the Joint
Helicopter
Support Unit**

**HOOKING
UP
CHINOOK**



IN A QUIET corner of a huge RAF airfield in Oxfordshire, there is a joint Army/RAF unit in training just now who would not take it amiss if they were asked to "sling their hooks". They would do it readily and proficiently!

For this rather special 100-strong unit is the fledgling Joint Helicopter Support Unit, currently training at RAF Brize Norton, which must be ready to deploy next month to RAF Gütersloh, 80 miles from the Inner German Border, where it will work closely with 18 Squadron, the RAF's first Chinook Medium Lift Helicopter (MLH) unit.

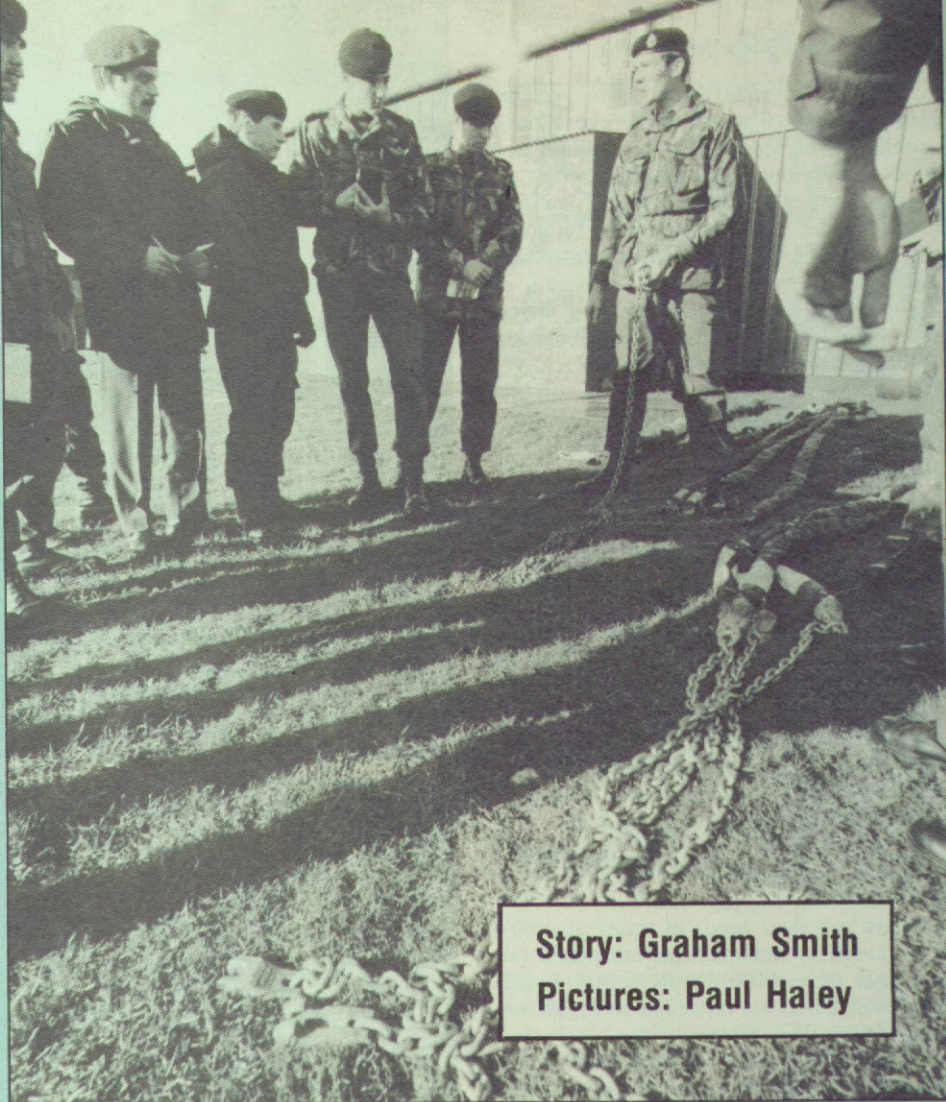
In Germany, part of the JHSU's challenging task of the early Eighties will involve spreading the word to BAOR units about the virtues — and some of the minor vices — of the battlefield potential of the British version of the CH-47D Chinook HC Mk I with its external and internal loads.

The RAF has bought 33 of the tandem-rotored type and 18 Squadron will be BAOR's first operational squadron.

JHSU's primary roles over the North German Plain during exercises will include out-loading, re-supply and casualty evacuation.

Handlers attend week-long courses which average 14 men per intake. Their syllabus on the courses, run by JHSU specialist instructors, includes flight safety, documentation, marshalling procedures and rope drills, trooping drills, preparation and lay-out — by day or night — of landing points, storage and maintenance of slung loads and practical flying experience with such loads.

The unit works alongside the long-



**Story: Graham Smith
Pictures: Paul Haley**

Handlers practise hook-up drill.▼



JHSU instructor briefs course members.▲

established Joint Air Transport Establishment (JATE) which moved across Oxfordshire from Abingdon to Brize Norton a few years ago.

The current command and administration of JHSU is carried out by the Aldershot-based 27 Logistic Support Group Regiment, RCT. In BAOR, the Chinook 'chopper' handlers will come under the aegis of the Air Support Operations Centre.

JATE, per se, is responsible for trials involving the carriage of internal and external loads in all Service transport aircraft including battlefield support helicopters, plus the specialist training of Royal Corps of Transport Air Despatchers and Ground Handlers.

And most of the JHSU's men have been chosen from those who have had prior air transport, air movements and re-supply experience.

This, the newest joint-Service unit will be split into the BAOR Ground Handling unit at Gütersloh and a United Kingdom Mobile Force (UKMF) unit which becomes operational in June under Captain Pat O'Brien, RCT, at RAF Odiham, near Basingstoke, home of Strike Command's battlefield support helicopters, including the versatile Puma.

In BAOR, the unit will work hand-in-hand with the Mobile Air Operations Teams and some of the JHSU teams, for instance, will be commanded by RAF corporals.

Captain Mike Lanham, OC-designate of the BAOR-based unit and himself a former Air Despatcher, told SOLDIER: "Our aim,

Preparing Land-Rover for lift off.▶

once we get into Germany, is to become really professional in helicopter operations, especially at night, which is something I feel could be developed. Secondly, we want to spread the word about the introduction into service of the Chinook and point out the difference in sheer volume of materials which can be lifted."

This latter view was endorsed by Major John Hordern, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, a pilot of some 1000 hours' experience on Sioux helicopters and OC of the JATE training section: "Chinook in service is going to be a superb enhancement. Previously, aircraft have lifted two-and-a-half tonnes. In future, the Chinook will take up nearly ten tonnes over a 100-kilometre radius of action — which is a considerable increase."

The Chinook does, indeed, have an impressive capability. It can carry up to 9.5 tonnes of stores and loads such as the FH 70 field gun and 105mm Light Gun with towing vehicle can be fitted with ease.

To maintain continuously flexible operations Chinook's maximum loads are 30 troops and 12 stretcher cases with permutations of internal and external loads.

Flying Officer Neil Cromarty, the second-in-command of the BAOR unit, said: "Chinook will give flexibility to commanders and their needs in terms of problems caused by mass refugee movement on the roads when main supply routes would have been taken out and road transport no longer viable.

"The RAF version of Chinook has updated features including large, carbon fibre blades, a pressure refuelling system and new avionics fit. The new slinging equipment has been specifically designed for our use."

Colonel David Whitten, JATE's Commandant said he hoped the JHSU men would visit units in Germany carrying the word about Chinook and its versatility.

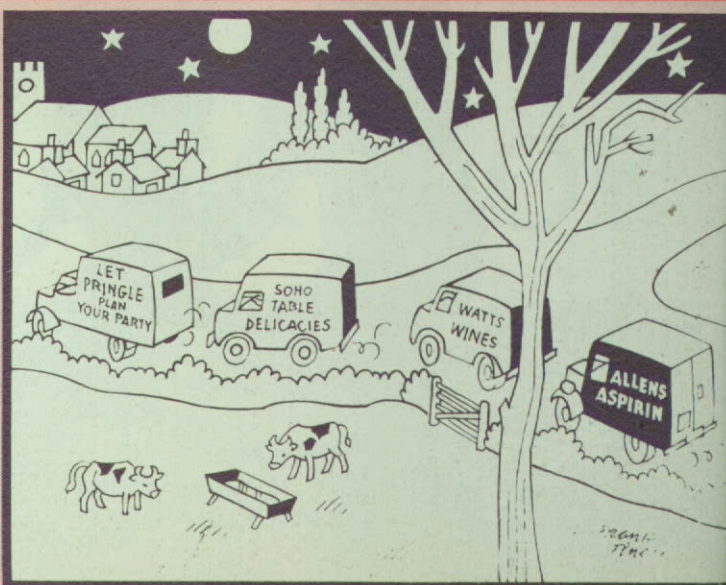
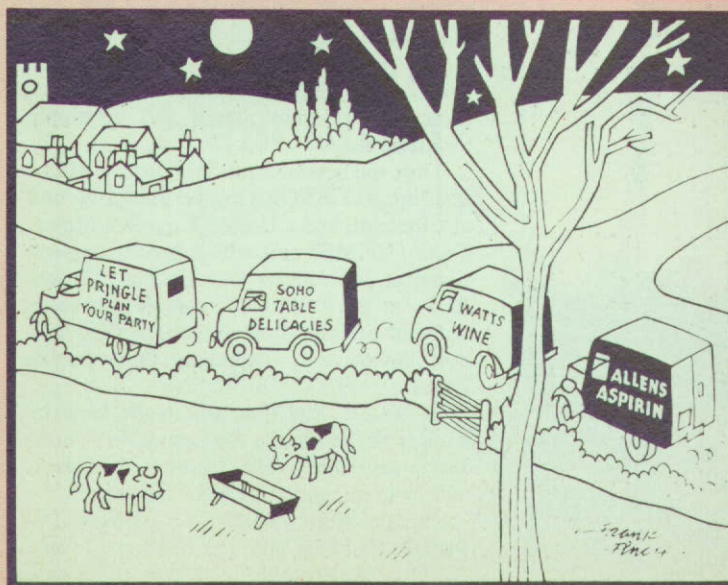
But the last word came from Major Hordern who said: "What we are doing here with Chinook is quite good; what we are going to try to do with it in BAOR is going to be incredible!"



Hessian prevents chains damaging loads. ▶

How observant are you?

These two pictures look alike but they differ in ten details. Look at them carefully. If you cannot spot the differences turn to page 33.



THE PICK AND SHOVEL POET



ONCE UPON A TIME in the streets of a grimy Lancashire cotton town a small boy dreamed of being a Scottish soldier. At the age of eight he ran away to join up and returned shortly afterwards in the hands of a policeman. Six years later he tried again with the same results.

But as soon as he was old enough Ian Kaye enlisted — and spent 22 happy years with Highland regiments, 17 of them with the Black Watch and the rest with the Argylls. And today, living in the Scottish Highlands, his voice betrays little of his Lancashire origins — after 38 years the Scottish overlay is almost total.

Ian Kaye at 55 is only one of many thousands of ex-Scottish soldiers living all over the world. But he is an ex-sergeant with a difference. For, by his own efforts, he has left a legacy which he hopes will be remembered long after he is dead.

In 1950, stationed in Hong Kong, Ian Kaye began to write a bit of poetry for his own amusement. "As you can imagine if you wrote poetry in the Highland Brigade it did not do to brag about it." Nevertheless, word gradually got round and fellow soldiers began to suggest that he should get the poems published.

This proved easier said than done. "I took them round to publishers all over Scotland and in England and nobody wanted to know." So Ian, known as 'Danny' to his Army mates, decided he would have to do the job himself.

While serving in Cyprus in 1960 he paid for 2500 copies of his *Pick and Shovel Poems* to be printed. It cost him £380, which was a fortune on a corporal's pay of those days, and he then had to begin the hard job of selling them.

There's a lock of golden hair,
pressed in my Pay-book,
And a faded picture pinned upon
the wall.

The Cross and chain you wore,
hangs on my locker door.

They're just memories of a Love
beyond recall.

— 'Memories' by Ian Kaye

But eventually all of the copies were sold and they have since turned up all over the world. And recently the book has been re-published and sales are starting all over again.

Ian has been out of the Army for 15 years at least in a physical sense. But his home at Kingussie abounds in military memorabilia and it is clear that he has never left the Army in spirit.

"I'm not knocking the Army of today but it is totally different. We were brought up to believe that the Regiment came first. When they first brought out pyjamas all of the old sweats did their nut — they thought the Army was going effeminate. And as for bedside lamps and sheets . . ."

His poems reflect the old soldier. 'Pick and Shovel' were chosen as representing tools that could save a soldier's life. And the subjects range over all the places and sights he saw during his Army career as well as others which go back to bygone days.

Indeed one or two of the poems would fall foul of today's climate on race relations. One which begins 'Oh for the days when a wog was a wog' he defends by pointing out that it

was written long before the Race Relations Act was even thought of. And he points out that there is no obscenity to be found in the pages of his book.

Some of the poems have a distinctly Kiplingesque flavour and Ian is convinced that this is no coincidence. "Sometimes it is as clear as a telephone message. That's why I think it comes from a psychic source. I have written about things I could never have learned from my normal way of living. I believe that in a lot of my work I am being influenced by the spirit of Rudyard Kipling at my elbow."

As Ian came out of the Army his son, also Ian, was enlisting. He is now a Warrant Officer 2 with the Scots Guards. Meanwhile his father is a foreman in charge of the local sewage works and dreams of the day when his poems will get full recognition.

"I find myself in a situation where I know once I can break through I can throw away my dungarees and Wellington boots for good."

That recognition may still be a long way off. But Ian Kaye is something of a minor celebrity among the people in the Kingussie area as well as among past and present members of his two Army regiments.

And the Highland life with its clear air and beautiful views certainly agrees with the ex-Lancashire man. "I would never go back there," he says.

In the garden of the house he shares with his wife and two pet dogs, Ian Kaye has two foxes which he reared from cubs. And near by stands a stone — a relic from the old Black Watch depot in Perth, which was demolished years ago. All are part of the lifestyle of a man who describes himself as "the oddest poet you will ever meet. I am all for short hairstyles and discipline."

'Pick and Shovel Poems' is available from Arthur H Stockwell Ltd, Elms Court, Ilfracombe, Devon. £3.50 plus 50p p&p.

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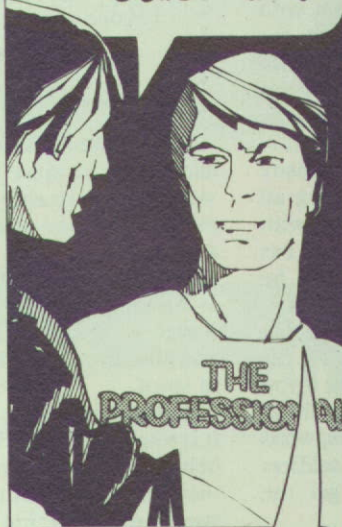
These men and women have given their minds to their Country. If we are to help them, we must have funds. Do please help us with a donation, and with a legacy too, perhaps. The debt is owed by all of us.

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TE	£ 7.00	£ 8.05	Dhofar GSM	£ 9.25	£10.64
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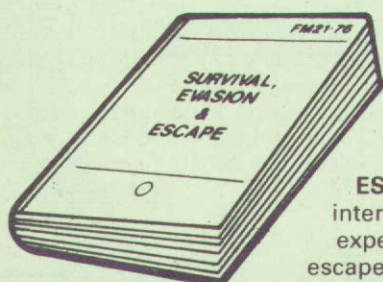
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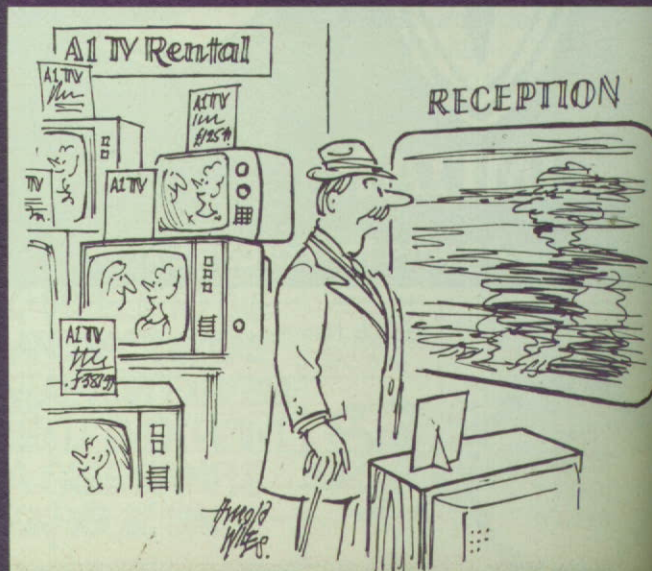
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'TIN TOWN' GETS A SILVER LINING



IF A WILLINGNESS to return for a second posting is any yardstick, Bulford has much to recommend it. Certainly there are no complaints from Corporal Steve Allen and his family who find themselves back at Bulford after ten years, three of them at Suffield in Canada.

"I'd rather be here any day than in any other garrison community in the UK — and that includes not only Colchester and Catterick but even Tidworth just down the road from here", said Steve, a tank transporter driver who has spent 19 years in the Army and seen service in Libya, Cyprus and BAOR.

"It's handy for Salisbury and Amesbury for shopping if you've got a car. And even if you haven't, the local shopping precinct is pretty good. You are within easy reach of anywhere — Swindon, Southampton, Bournemouth and the New Forest."

Wife Joan agreed. "There are active wives' clubs and several good schools within reach. Army life is what you make it. We all have our ups and downs. I think the younger wives find it a bit lonely at first and seem to have difficulty in mixing. They usually go home when their husbands are away. Part-time work for the wives is difficult to get because most of it is on contract nowadays. I used to work in one of the messes.

"I definitely like it here. We've got lots of friends. When we were here last it used to be called 'tin town' but things have improved tremendously since then. I think the married quarters are good, too."

Less than a mile off the busy A303, and 'sister' garrison to Tidworth, Bulford comprises five barracks and houses HQ South-West District — the second largest District in the country with responsibilities spanning seven counties and some 18,000 Regular troops and a like number of TA soldiers and cadets.

The garrison is currently home to such units as the 1st Battalion, the Prince of Wales' Own Regiment of Yorkshire, 32 Guided

Weapons Regiment Royal Artillery, the Logistic Support Battalion (AMF (L)), 249 Signal Squadron (AMF (L)), 49 Squadron, Royal Corps of Transport and 158 Provost Company, Royal Military Police.

And Bulford provides a wide range of

'I'd rather be here
any day than in
any other garrison
community in the
UK'

facilities for its soldiers and families spread over a location where, during the First World War, acres of white bell tents stood like mushrooms the length of Bulford Fields.

Amenities of the Eighties include a Naafi shopping centre, post office, at least two social clubs, a bingo hall, two local cinemas (one in Amesbury), adult education classes, a 55,000-book library, a choice of 10 primary, secondary and grammar schools in the area, soccer, rugby, hockey and cricket pitches, four squash courts and five tennis courts for family use. There is a heated swimming pool, a dry ski slope, facilities for badminton, wives' keep-fit, fishing, riding and game shooting, and — for the armchair sportsman — even a licensed betting office!

The youth of the military residents are catered for by Boy Scouts and Girl Guide units, a youth club, a Bulford Families club, two play groups and a nursery unit, a Thrift Shop, an Army Cadet Force contingent and a Teddy Bears club — for mothers with babies and children under school age.

Membership of the last club is 25 pence and a charge of ten pence is made per session.

The garrison's connection with the Regular Army goes back to 1897 with the

The tank at Ward Barracks — a familiar landmark.

purchase of 750 acres of land at a modest £10 an acre. Despite opposition from the military hierarchy of the time who considered the Plain should be reserved for cavalry manoeuvres, a committee set up by Lord Lansdowne, Secretary for War, built musketry ranges in 1898 and a year later brought Larkhill's impact area into use.

By 1902 about 42,000 acres had been bought for £550,000 with the aim of housing all the troops in tented camps.

Adjutant of the garrison and BATAU (Bulford and Tidworth Administration Unit), Lieutenant-Colonel Peter Herring, who is retired, said: "It's one of the most lovely parts of the world. And I don't say that in any smug sense. If you've got a car you can get around. Salisbury is a lovely town. Bulford is a self-contained cantonment and if a married chap is posted in he will get a married quarter almost straight away."

Single soldier Private Bill Sloat, 20, of the Royal Army Ordnance Corps who is serving with 263 Field Cash Offices and has been in the Army for about a year, said: "It's better than the last place I was — Devizes. The accommodation here is not perfect and it could be re-decorated, the paint is falling off the walls, but it's much better than Devizes where the wind blows through the walls. I can't really say anything bad about Bulford."

"There are discos in the towns but we tend to avoid them because they are known for squaddie-bashing by the skinheads. I go out for the occasional drink myself, watch TV and go home to Strood in Kent at the weekends. It's certainly more relaxed here than at Devizes for a soldier. I had parades every morning there."

Relaxed it certainly seems to be, as Corporal Allen endorsed: "There are fewer units here than, say, Tidworth. It's more compact and more like a family atmosphere. It's certainly different from the 'tin town' image when I was last here in 1969." ■

ANNE ARMSTRONG



THIS WEEK I WANT to tell you a little about diamonds. I spent Christmas with my brother in South Africa where many of the stones that are forever a girl's best friend are mined, and was fascinated by my visit to a diamond mine.

It was 1905 when the 3025 carat Cullinan Diamond was found at the Premier Diamond Mine in Natal, a few miles from Pretoria. As I stood at the edge of the 'Big hole' at the mine I was rather disappointed that there was no evidence of the sparkling stones.

Tons of rocks are brought to the surface in the diamond mining process and huge crushing machines, graders and sifters work day and night to extract the precious gems and industrial diamonds from the rubble. The closest that visitors to the mine get to seeing a real diamond in its uncut state is through heavy steel mesh as the washing process leaves the stones trapped in an oil-bedded belt, so near and yet so far.

Security is tight but trust and honesty pay the greatest dividends. One miner who handed in a diamond that he had found was well rewarded with compensation of 11,000 Rand (about £5,500). Visitors are forbidden to pick up any rocks or small pebbles when they visit the site.

Men have succumbed to the lure of the glitter and sparkle of the precious gems and, for some, no price has been too high to pay. Fortunes and futures have been staked on the whisper of a 'find'.

Some diamond hunters though, so the stories go, have been almost unbelievably lucky. One prospector was so successful at finding diamonds on his land that after his death, two persistent prospectors bought the land from his daughter. Sure enough, their gamble paid off and they found diamonds on what is now the site of the Cullinan mine.

The trip was a wonderful experience and education and I came back rested and ready to tackle the postbag that had piled up while I was away.

How many of you spotted the typographical error in the answer to our reader's letter on vasectomy (SOLDIER 30 Nov-13 Dec issue)?

The percentage mentioned in the penultimate paragraph should have read "one in 210 of the population" not "one in 20".

Now, having put the record straight, some more of your letters — something of a mixed bag this week.

We have been stationed in Germany since 1975, during which time I have worked on the German net and regularly paid the German tax, insurance, hospital insurance etc, for four years.

We are due to return to UK later this year and I have been told that I shall not be able to claim unemployment benefit because my German earnings have not been declared on my husband's tax return. I did not realise that my German earnings had to be declared and I am worried that we shall be in trouble with the tax people in UK if I claim the unemployment benefit to which I thought I was entitled.

Mrs T, BFPO 47

Since you have worked for over three years on the German net you are quite right in thinking that you should be entitled to unemployment benefit when you return to UK.

However, all your German income should have been declared on your husband's income tax return for you to claim that benefit. It might seem as if you have to pay double tax but in fact, if your German tax liability is higher than your UK rate, then you will not be charged. If it is less, then you will have to pay the difference between the two rates.

I would advise you to write to the tax office in Cardiff and explain the problem. Their address is PD5, Tyglass Road, Llanishen, Cardiff CF4 5YE.

Once your tax position has been cleared up, you can claim the unemployment benefit. You must sign off at the German Arbeitsamt and then sign on at a UK unemployment office within seven days of your arrival in UK.

Could you please help me find people in and around the Herford Garrison who suffer from

any sort of phobia — for example, claustrophobia or agoraphobia — who would like to join a group to help each other.

I am in touch with the Toni Elliot group in Nottingham but think it would be a good idea to form a local group. I have the support of the Families Officer, Captain Wisden, who has offered a room for our meetings.

If you would be interested, please leave your name, address and telephone number with the Families Officer, 4 Div HQ and Sig Regt, BFPO 15, Tel: Herford Military (89) 2358 and I will contact you.

Mrs L Kershaw, BFPO 15.

I'm sure a local group would be a great help to sufferers of all kinds of phobias, Mrs Kershaw, and hope it will be very successful.

ASK ANNE

I am currently in the second year of a four-year sandwich degree course at Aston University reading Business Administration with German. The sandwich part of the course occurs in the third year when I have to be employed for 12 months in Germany to gain work experience.

The task of finding suitable German employers used to be the responsibility of the University Industrial Placement Officer, but this appointment has been one of the victims of the severe financial cutbacks which have been imposed on English universities. Students in my position have now to find a suitable position for themselves.

To gain most from the year, I would need a job which offered, ideally, administrative and managerial experience at an appropriate level, where I could live wholly in a German envi-

ronment and perfect my command of the language. Peter Johnson.

I suggest you contact the British Embassy in Bonn (BFPO 19) and the German Embassy at 23 Belgrave Square, London SW1 Tel: 01-235 5033. They will know the best ways of finding employment.

They may ask for details about whether you will be sponsored by your university, whether you will be self-supporting or need a high salary, and whether you will need accommodation, so have answers ready for them. Remember too, that there is an unemployment problem in Germany too and this might cause extra problems in finding you a job even for a year.

A great deal of publicity has been given to the blind ex-Serviceman, William Richards who was awarded £100 as a Christmas gift by his regimental association and then told that he was not entitled to his usual £28.40 weekly supplementary benefit.

I thought readers might be interested in the Ssafa view expressed by Lieutenant-Colonel Norman, Director Welfare and Training at Ssafa in the Daily Telegraph:

"The case of the ex-Serviceman Mr William Richards and his dispute with the Department of Health and Social Security over the subject of the gift from his regimental fund raises some interesting points.

"First, Ssafa disbursed nearly £1 million last year in grants, mostly from Service and regimental funds. The recipients were ex-Service families and dependants and, in most instances, state benefits were insufficient to cover their individual misfortunes. However, they were the lucky ones, having the generous backing of Service charitable funds.

"Unfortunately, ambiguity existed in the Resource Regulations, brought in under the Social Security Act 1980, which deal with rulings made by benefit officers in determining the status of charitable grants.

"My Association immediately challenged the DHSS regarding a case of an ex-Serviceman in desperate need of clothing, who received a grant which was almost totally clawed-back from his supplementary benefit the following week.

"As a result of our challenge, the Chief Supplementary Benefit Officer has advised officials to allow singular charitable grants to be treated as capital and not income, thereby not affecting eligibility for supplementary benefit.

"The fact that the DHSS officials have had a change of heart in the case of Mr Richards reflects this new guidance."

DID YOU KNOW?

ALL UPHOLSTERED furniture has a warning triangular swing ticket attached to it if tests have shown that it could catch fire from cigarettes or matches. Each piece of furniture with the swing ticket will also have a more permanent reminder of the danger on a rectangular label on the underside or under a cushion.

Over 2,000 fires a year are started in upholstered furniture and about half are caused by smokers' materials. The death toll in these fires is around 800 with 400 casualties. Take heed of the warning triangle and make sure that people who smoke are extra careful with their cigarettes and matches.

Anne Armstrong



▲ Teresa unwisely accepts sweets from a stranger.



▲ Teresa has been persuaded into the stranger's car.

THE CENTRAL OFFICE of Information has been using electronic voices to put across a vital warning to children in a new film, 'Say NO to Strangers'.

The 15-minute film is a remake of the 1971 'Never go with Strangers' film, and has been produced for the Home Office to warn children of the dangers of speaking to strangers.

Kidnap, rape, violence and murder are all too grim realities. Those children who are spared physical harm may well suffer severe and lasting psychological damage. And it often comes as a result of saying 'Yes' instead of 'No'.

The film shows how easily situations can develop and how

a seemingly casual invitation can spell disaster. It uses an electronic voice in a Space Invaders idiom at the end of each sequence to warn children of the dangers of talking to strangers. I believe that it succeeds in putting across a vital and alarming message without explicit or violent scenes and without the danger of destroying a child's trust in all adults.

Children who have been brought up in the relatively

sheltered environment and surroundings of Service life overseas could be at particular risk when they return to UK. They will no longer be able to trust every adult with whom they come into contact and parents have a responsibility to make sure that they learn to say 'No' to strangers.

There is already a great demand for this film in UK and those of you with BFPO addresses should complete the special

Her distraught parents wait for news.



application form available through SKC so that arrangements can be made for the loan of the video cassette or 16mm film versions.

Further information can be obtained from the Central Film Library, Chalfont Grove, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 8TN.

GIVE YOUTH A CHANCE

THE MANPOWER SERVICES COMMISSION passed another milestone on the Youth Opportunities Programme road this month with the launch of pilot schemes in Rheindahlen and Gutersloh, which will give up to 60 young unemployed people a chance at training and gaining work experience.

Mr Geoffrey Holland, the Director of MSC, was hopeful that, if the pilot schemes in Germany proved to be a success, the scheme could be extended to other overseas stations. He sees the scheme as very valuable since it gives the young people a "chance to contribute to society, a chance to come to terms with the realities of what often seems a very harsh world and, above all, a chance to gain a reference."

Until February 1st this year, youngsters wishing to join a YOPs scheme have had to make arrangements to join a UK scheme. An enormous amount of groundwork has been done by MOD, the careers service and Joan Trenor of the MSC Special Programmes Division (with a little help from their friends, of course) to launch the BFG schemes, but it will be up to the youngsters themselves to make a success of them.

The Commission and the Government are keen to see the Youth Opportunities Programme developed into a programme of good quality training for the young unemployed. Anything that cannot be offered in BFG but is possible in UK will still be open to a young person which makes for a wide

choice of training subjects. The aim is to build the Programme and Geoffrey Holland emphasises the need to give it a chance.

"This will not be done by pulling YOP up by the roots just when it is most needed by young people. It will be done by transforming what we have to a programme which guarantees to each young person an introduction to the world of work, a period of assessment, a chance to acquire core skills including numeracy and literacy, communication, decision making, problem solving and practical skills with occupationally based training, and practical, on-the-job experience."

Anyone wishing to have further information on YOP should contact their careers officer in BFG or UK.



Marie-Therese Payne is one of the fortunate youngsters who have been helped to a future by the Youth Opportunities Programme.

She left Kings School, Gutersloh last April and has been trying to find employment locally since then. Now, however, she has started a six-month YOP course in Glasgow, training to be a dog handler with Securicor.

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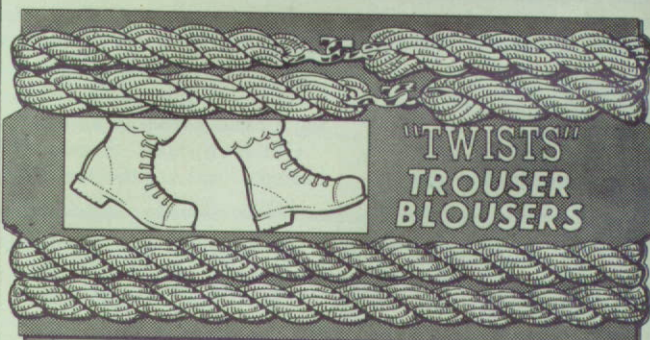
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**Junior RSM Tim Cargill
is a young man with
big responsibilities**

LEADING THE LEADERS

WHEN TIM CARGILL joined the Junior Leaders' Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps, a little more than a year ago he hardly dreamed that he would now be the Junior Regimental Sergeant-Major — the top position available to any youngster during his four terms at Bovington.

"I didn't think I would ever make that position although of course I hoped to — as everyone did. When I first came here the Junior RSM seemed way above us and far superior. He seemed more like one of the sergeants or permanent staff and was really respected."

Now Tim at 17 is the recipient of that respect himself. And at the time he took over the role he was on a mountain climbing expedition in the Pyrenees.

"I was in the Pyrenees when the cane was due to be given to me at a pass off parade. But at the exact time they stopped and held a parade to appoint me. It was just messing about in the snow really — we marched past and an officer presented me with an ice axe."

Yorkshire born Tim, comes from a family with strong Service connections — his uncle,

was in the Army, his father in the Fleet Air Arm and another uncle in the Navy. And at the age of 15 he decided that he wanted to follow his uncle into the Royal Tank Regiment.

Now he is busy preparing for the highlight of his term in office — the pass off parade at the end of it. He is also chairman of the Naafi Centurion Club, responsible for general discipline throughout the camp and organising various functions.

"My own NCOs below me do their own inspections on Saturday afternoons and I sometimes go round with the permanent staff RSM and inspect various areas of the camp. I also inspect the duties in the morning and the transit people who are leaving.

"It's very hard work because you have to do all this as well as learn your trade of gunnery but I enjoy it very much. You know at the end of the term you'll be taking the parade and your parents will be watching. They will be very proud."

As someone who has done well as a Junior Leader he feels that he has great advantages over his school chums left back in Yorkshire. "There is such an immense variety of

things you can do. When you are in civilian life just one of these sports would be the highlight of a week, but here you can go to Dartmoor, sailing, canoeing, abseiling, potholing or climbing. Any sport you can name, you can do."

But at the end of this term Tim Cargill knows that he will enter adult service and that, while his spell as Junior RSM will obviously stand him in good stead in his Army career, he will begin at the same level as anyone else.

"I think one of the hardest things will be adjusting to having to share a room with other people again. I have always slept in my own room since the end of the first term when I was promoted.

"If you do as well in your regiment as you have done here then being Junior RSM will be good backing for you. But what you haven't got to do is go around mouthing off about having been Junior RSM — because that will give you a bad name. It's nothing to do with anybody else."

Story: John Walton

DEADLIER THAN THE MALE?

By 1984 twelve per cent of America's regular army will be women — ready to undertake tasks on or near the front line. Female recruits to the US army not only get the same training as men, they actually train alongside them. Keith Bernstein spent two weeks photographing and talking to some of them at Fort McClellan, Alabama. His account provides a fascinating look at the changing shape of our most powerful ally.



ON A REMOTE wooded hillside of north-east Alabama, a cluster of wooden cabins nestle innocently amongst the dense pines. A group of teenagers pull gas masks over their heads, adjust them nervously, and file hesitantly into one of the cabins.

A tall man in his early thirties steps casually out of a jeep, pocketing his sunglasses. He throws a canister into the cabin, and the room immediately fills with tear gas. The teenagers breathe deeply through their masks, counting up to thirty. Then they rip the masks off, shout out their name, rank and number and rush outside.

Some panic and leave the cabin before they have finished. They are rounded up and sent back to do it again. Outside, the teenagers collapse under the pine trees, gas masks dropped casually on the grass. One quarter of them are women with crafted hair-do's, the rest newly shorn crew-cut males. All are soldiers in the American Army, undergoing their first six weeks of basic training.

This scene is acted out every week at Fort McClellan army training base in Alabama. The base paradoxically adjoins one of the most popular and best known of the national parks; it is also in the middle of some of the poorest and most depressed towns in America.

It covers an area equal to Birmingham's,

Graduation day. Drill sergeants lead the march past of female recruits.

and has all the facilities of a small town — three churches, a hospital, bank, post office and shops. Through its gates have passed many of the forty-five thousand women who have enlisted in the American Army in the last seven years to receive equal military training with men.

The integration and acceptance of women soldiers is a recent innovation, provoked by 'chronic shortfalls in recruitment.' Policies that previously barred women from direct involvement in combat have been whittled down. Prompted by the Defence Department the military are drastically re-casting their rules to prepare massive and increasing numbers of women for roles on or near the front lines.

Until 1972, only two percent of the Army were women, 16,300 in all. By 1980 that figure had risen to 61,000 or eight percent. By 1984 it is expected to be twelve percent of the force, 97,000 women, roughly the population of a city like Exeter.

In 1977, then Secretary of the Army, Clifford Alexander, under direction from President Carter, ordered a review of all military occupations.

Traditionally, those that were combat related were barred to women. The review changed all that. It made a fine distinction:

'All units which aim weapons by line of sight at the enemy are combat units. All others are not.'

Translated, this meant that only the infantry, and a small part of the artillery forces would remain barred to women; every other branch of the military would now accept women for equal training.

The change in policy left only twenty-four out of three hundred and five military specialities still closed to women.

Other changes, no less revolutionary, followed as the seventies drew to a close. These included admitting women to West Point Military Academy, ending one hundred and seventy years of male exclusivity; and the disbandment of the Womens Army Corps.

New female recruits to the Army also take advantage of 'revised' entry requirements, such as lower minimum height standards, and, since 1980, the dropping of the rule that women must have finished high school before enlisting — a rule which never applied to men at any time.

A quarter of the new recruits who now arrive by chartered bus at Fort McClellan's 'reception centre' are women. Both male and female recruits who are tired or have had a long journey, relax here for a day or two, amongst the sports facilities, games room, and sweet and drink dispensers.

Those few days allow time for the women to be pregnancy tested. In the words of the Fort's reception centre director, Major Douglas Nichols; "If they're found to be pregnant we wrap 'em up and send 'em home. Simple as that."

Simple or not, the Army has recently altered its rules on pregnancy. Previously 'grounds for immediate discharge' pregnancy is now defined as 'a temporary medical disability' with an entitlement to six weeks paid maternity leave.

At five o'clock on a Monday morning at Fort McClellan, the sun has not yet risen behind the Appalachian foothills fringing the base. The camp is dark and deserted except for an occasional jogger on the roads around the married quarters.

The recruits' barracks are set in a small valley, illuminated by harsh fluorescent lighting. Endless rows of figures, all in uniform green fatigues and white tee-shirts are doing push-ups. After a time, they stand up, divide off into units and head off at a brisk run into the creeping dawn. As they run they begin to sing the company song; "We like it here, We like it here, We finally found a home, A home away from home."

In fifteen minutes or so, having completed a two mile circuit, they will be back, queueing for breakfast. For many of them it

is the first day of six weeks 'basic training.' Memories of the reception centre fade fast; the real army starts here.

By the time they are back from their run, the sun is rising fast, pushing the temperature into the low seventies. It is six o'clock. There are forty-five minutes in which the new recruits can catch their breath, swap hard-luck stories, eat breakfast and collect their rifles before the day's training starts in earnest.

As they queue in the breakfast 'chow' line, a female drill sergeant singles out one new recruit. He woke up late, and omitted to shave before starting his physical exercise at five a.m.

The drill sergeants, male and female, are distinctive in 'Aussie' style hats; they all have the strut of lower echelon command. The unshaven recruit stands immobile, perfectly erect with an unflinching stare as the drill sergeant rips through him verbally, then sends him back to quarters with orders to dry-shave before trying to re-join the breakfast queue.

All around the incident other new soldiers carefully look away or shift slightly aside, giving themselves a little safety through distance.

At breakfast the new recruits sit in small groups and talk quietly amongst themselves. Many told me that the Army was their first job, and almost as many that it was in fact their first time away from home.

Those in their first week of basic training had a wary apprehension of what lay ahead; in little more than a month they will have become soldiers as to the manner born, effortless and unselfconscious in everything that soldiers do. On graduation day many will march past parents who at first will not recognise them in their new identities.

The numbers of women volunteers during the seventies and early eighties has been so great that the Army says it is 'pausing momentarily' in its recruitment of women 'to take a good hard look at just where we're at.' Privately, Army brass say that the numbers have become 'momentarily' overwhelming.

A female sergeant told me that the Army are taking a "long look at just how many women they really want. They're gonna think very hard about a properly integrated

Army. We're becoming for the Army now what blacks were in the early sixties, and I think they're gonna dwell on that a while."

She and others at Fort McClellan pointed out that the Army had to recruit large numbers of women in order to maintain its quotas. Male enlistment fell so drastically during the seventies that the Army ended the decade 44,000 short of expectations.

Whatever the reasons for the temporary pause, the scale of female recruitment has created many practical problems. Female recruits at Fort McClellan could be seen hobbling on crutches or, more frequently, wearing tennis shoes because until recently the only boots available for them were those designed for nurses in World War Two.

Women doing road marches or heavy training in boots designed for men had often ended up with hairline fractures of the feet; now a re-modelled boot is just one sign of change.

A 'unisex gas mask' is another, designed, so it is said to safely fit 'women's tighter faces'; and a new kit pack has been issued with straps that do not cross over the breast area.

The Army pays basic training recruits 501 dollars and thirty cents a month (about £270) but very few of the recruits I spoke to mentioned money.

Within earshot of their drill sergeants, the female recruits give fairly traditional reasons for enlisting — security, the chance to learn a skill, or travel. A few mention regular pay.

Out of earshot of their superiors, their reasons appear more realistic. Many of them come from towns in neighbouring states; nearly all complain of the intolerable dullness of civilian lives in small towns in the mid-west and south.

"All I wanted" says one recruit "was a way out. Out of home, out of my parents grasp, and out of the 7-Eleven (fast food chain.) You don't really think I wanted to work in the 7-Eleven all my life, do y'a?"

Another says she left home (Loretto, Tennessee) for the first time in her life when she joined the Army. She had worked as a cook in the Waffle house, and says "the most exciting thing that happened to me in eighteen years was a hurricane that missed the town by three miles."

A drill sergeant I spoke to says that when



Girl recruit on the assault course. Men behind watch and wait their turn.

she enlisted in 1977 "mother cried; my family said 'jeez, you can do better than that', and my friends freaked out. Now when I go home I'm sort of a hometown hero, although my mother always asks if they can't move me somewhere a little nearer home."

One recruit says she quit high school to enlist; the reactions of her friends almost made her change her mind; the men in her school class suggested she must be a lesbian so the Army was the best place for her; her girl friends just formed into a huddle ("like a six back monster") everytime she walked past.

As we talk, a female recruit is pulled out of the lunch queue, ordered into a clearing in front of the mess tent, and made to do ten push-ups, instant retribution for a word out of turn.

The other recruits studiously ignore her, as she sweats away at her punishment; there are no cat calls or cries of derision as there would have been if it happened a few weeks before at school or on the shop floor. But here, punishment for new recruits is a contagious disease; to show involvement in someone else's misfortune courts personal disaster.

There are no clowns in the units I saw, no court jesters living dangerously on a certain licence from their drill sergeants. The limelight is systematically, and largely successfully, shunned.

At breakfast one morning, a group of recruits in their last week of basic training talk about discrimination and sexual harassment. All of them had heard stories — notably from bases other than Fort McClellan. But all are mildly defiant and confident — shadows of the quiet recruits who had crept timorously in a month ago.

One black girl asks me if I think it is any better being a woman "out there", gesturing with her thumb to indicate the civilian world. Another says that you just have to "play your own game" in the Army: "The way men are in the Army, if you brush them off, you're, y'know, funny; and if you go out you're messing around, you've got a reputation. So you can't win; you've just got to do what you want."

Everywhere I go at Fort McClellan, male soldiers tell me, unprompted, of something in the Army, some strenuous activity, some hazardous duty, that they just *know* women

continued on page 28

◀ Girl recruit does ten punishment press-ups — the men file by without batting an eye.



won't be able to handle.

They have seen women match them at every step of basic training; they have often seen them get higher scores on rifle ranges; they have seen women pick up more merit awards than men at graduation day; but they just know there is somewhere a vital duty that women won't be able to handle.

But the only specific they can cite is infantry training — which is still exclusively male; they are sure women can't handle a "twelve mile road march carrying seventy pound kit."

This constant consciousness of competing with the opposite sex is however exclusively a male obsession. No woman at Fort McClellan ever made a serious reference to competing with men in daily training.

Obsessional fear of being "shown up" in the classroom, on the sports field, and more particularly in the Army, was a singularly male preoccupation. Female recruits derided the whole idea; they had joined the Army for their own reasons, for their own ambitions, and not to prove themselves better than anyone else; to better themselves was all they wanted to do.

On the rifle range in a flat and barren corner of Fort McClellan, a class from Delta company is making slow progress. Toting Armalite rifles that reach literally from their heads to their knees, the new, smaller, recruits of '81 spend all morning in foxholes that come up to the armpits.

The sun is directly overhead, the temperature into the mid-nineties. The silhouetted rifle targets, always a long way away, are now even harder to see sharply through the heat haze.

Drill sergeants strut backwards and forwards behind the group of recruits in their command. Only when their drill sergeants raise their arms can the action begin.

There are interminable delays. Only when driven to total exasperation do drill sergeants speak directly to a recruit sweating in a foxhole; at all other times, commands, insults and goading asides issue from the corner of the mouth while Polaroid covered eyes stare moodily off into the distance.

"What you doin' Private? I ain't seen nobody sight a target like that since John Wayne."

The drill sergeants are the world's weariest of soldiers; and now, goddamit, they have to teach girls no bigger than their "kid sisters". "Soldier, the enemy gonna die laughin' you try'n shoot him with the safety on."

In public they play their roles like big stars; in private, many of them say they prefer teaching women; they listen more, ask more questions, and retain information better.

On the rifle range one drill sergeant says all the male recruits have handled a gun at some time in their civilian lives, without any proper instruction; all think they "can shoot like Dirty Harry" and he imitated the classic film pose, arms outstretched, hands together on the pistol butt.

The women he says, have generally never handled a gun before; they listen to everything they are told.

The privates from Delta company are finishing rifle practice; but their day's work is only half over. After dinner they will be out practising night manoeuvres, being strafed by helicopters in clearings in the forest; when they reach their beds, sometimes after midnight, they will fall asleep

thinking already of the five a.m. wake-up call.

Before they leave I ask them how they feel about going into combat. One girl says: "For myself I couldn't handle it. I know it sounds bad to want to come in and work next to a guy, then, when it comes down to fighting to chicken out, but I don't think I could handle it. My mind wouldn't allow me to do that."

Her friend standing close by says that she has "no doubts about her mental ability" to handle combat. But she is not in favour of anyone, male or female, being sent to the front lines; "I'm starting to realise" she says "that combat is not really a game."

The drill sergeant in charge of this unit has a different view; she starts to form the privates into formation, and watches as they march back to barracks. She turns and says: "If a woman is capable of doing a job she should be allowed to do it. If I was in charge of a unit that was deployed to war, I would take these women with me."

"They chose to come in (to the Army) and by God they're going to do their job. But I just don't think that society, with its morals, its views and its prejudices is ready to make a woman an infantryman. I just don't believe they're ready for that."



Female ambush unit waits to pounce.

Putting on kit ready for road march.



For an old cavalryman a painting brings back memories of *THE FINAL CHARGE*



MORE THAN 64 YEARS after the event Mr C. H. 'Perk' Perkins gazed at the picture and commented: "It is a very good representation of the scene. There are no heroics. It is just very factual."

The picture in question is one in which he figures prominently. It shows the Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Dorset Yeomanry Brigade (6th Mounted Brigade) in full gallop as they made the last major cavalry charge carried out by the British Army.

It was part of the battle for the villages of Qatra and El Maghar in November 1917 during the Egyptian Expeditionary Force's march on Jerusalem under the command of General Sir Edmund Allenby. And it sent 1000 Turkish troops scurrying from their positions.

"They should have stayed in their trenches," said Mr Perkins, as he identified himself in the foreground.

The picture, painted in 1921 from the descriptions of survivors, originally hung in the United Services Club as the cavalry contribution to a representative collection of First World War studies. Now it has a place of honour in the dining room at the Army Staff College, Camberley.

A spritely 85, Mr Perkins had asked to see the painting again and to have a photograph of it for his 10-year-old grandson, Harry.

Pointing to the 21-year-old pith helmeted Royal Buckinghamshire Hussars lieutenant, sabre in hand and astride a black mare, he said: "That's me. The mare was blown when we got to the top of the ridge."

Until someone else pointed it out, he did not bother to mention that before the charge began he had been sent forward to reconnoitre the Wadi Shellal el Ghor. "Oh yes," he said, "I took a corporal with me."

But the official history records how he "cantered up and down under a hail of machine-gun fire which in the words of an eye-witness, 'followed him as the spotlight follows a dancer on stage', seeming to bear a charmed life, and returned in safety to report that there was good cover for the machine-gun squadron to support the attack".

The safety in question was the shelter of the Wadi Jamus which, Mr Perkins recalled, provided cover for the assembly. It was some two miles from their objective, the El Maghar Ridge.

At 3pm they scrambled up the steep bank

of the wadi and began their advance at the trot, immediately drawing Turkish artillery fire. After a little over a mile they came under heavy machine-gun fire and the pace was quickened to a gallop.

As the charge reached the summit most of the Turks fled, although some stayed to open fire from the flanks. The issue was decided by the supporting squadrons.

British casualties were about 50 per cent and there were 265 casualties among the horses.

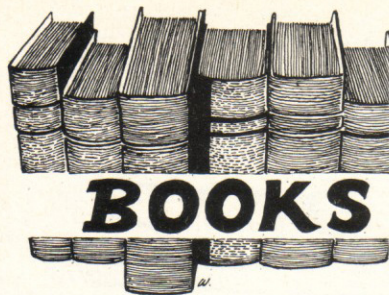
But Mr Perkins recalled that the confusion among the retreating Turks was such that a lone corporal captured 200 of them.

The charge had played its part and together with other actions helped to shatter the Turkish XXII Corps. Over 1000 prisoners were taken in all and over four hundred enemy dead were found.

In 1918 Mr Perkins and his surviving colleagues returned to Europe to become the 101st Machine-Gun Battalion and spent the rest of the war on the Western Front.

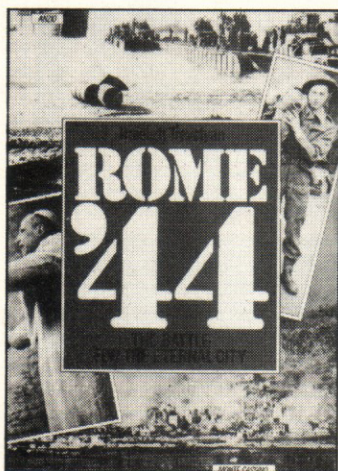
Then it was back to Cambridge to take a degree in geology. ■

Story: Gordon Williams



Rome '44: Raleigh Trevelyan

This story covers a much wider canvas than the title suggests. It includes the struggle for, and the eventual destruction of, Cassino and the Allied landings at Anzio, accomplished so easily but which took so many months to exploit. The author, left behind sick in North Africa, eventually caught up with the fighting and was for three months a 20-year-old platoon commander in the slit-trenches and dug-outs of the Anzio beachhead, where he was wounded. He was to reach Rome in October 1944 and stayed there for two years with a military mission. He therefore has some first-hand knowledge of the conditions and fighting and has augmented this by intensive research, including the gathering of 'on-the-spot' accounts from many of the participants, Allied, Italian and German.



The result is a graphic and dramatic record of the Italian conflict from the landings at Anzio on 22 January 1944 to the entry into Rome on June 4. The difficulties of the terrain, the tenacity of the German defenders, the guiding hand of Churchill, and the controlling orders of Hitler, the frustrations of the generals and the difficulties of Alexander in command of the Allied forces of British, American, Canadian, New Zealand, Gurkha, Indian, Polish and French Colonial troops, all make excellent reading. And to savour it are the observations of individual Tommies and German soldiers and many of the civilians of Rome.

The Underground was very active and so were the counter-measures which exacted, for instance, 335 executions for 33 German police killed by a dustcart bomb as they marched through a Rome street. Hitler's direct control throughout World War Two is exemplified here when he ordered that 20 officers of all ranks should report to him at Berchtesgaden to explain personally

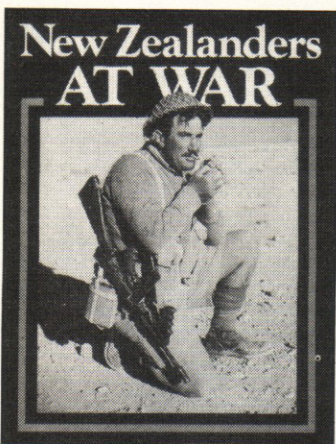
their failure to dislodge the Anzio beachhead. He grilled them for two days.

The efforts, sufferings, ambitions, agonies, cruel torturings and courage of individuals show through in this book to emphasise that while many historians and wargamers may look on war as a game of moves and countermoves, each one of the thousands of pawns has a mind and a heart and a body to be tested and broken.

Secker and Warburg, 54 Poland Street, London W1V 3DF — £8.95. GRH

New Zealanders at War: Michael King

It may come as something of a surprise to those of us accustomed to thinking of New Zealand as a comparatively recent ex-Colony to learn



that it has a long and dramatic history; much of it, sadly, spent at war. Inter-tribal conflict was common amongst the original inhabitants of the islands — the Maoris — and this intensified with the arrival of European settlers at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

This book is not so much a comprehensive account of every action in which New Zealanders have fought, at home and abroad, as an impression of what that fighting meant to the people actually caught up in it. Michael King has taken a mass of eyewitness descriptions, from the earliest tales of white sailors right up to the present day, and linked them with an intelligent text and a copious supply of photographs.

His story starts in pre-Colonial times, and paints a vivid picture of the Maoris' lifestyle, the motives which encouraged them to wage war, and the way in which they did it. There is a particularly fascinating section on the British wars against the Maoris, a long and now largely forgotten series of campaigns which brought the country under European influence. Then we are on familiar ground again, with the New Zealand contribution to the war effort in South Africa and World War One — not only Gallipoli, but the Western Front and Palestine as well. Then it's the Second World War, Korea, Malaya, and so on up to Vietnam. The experience includes not only the actual fighting, but the efforts of those at home, whether working to support the war or campaigning for peace.

Michael King's book does not glorify war; the suffering is there in the photographs of shell-shocked

faces at Gallipoli, the huddled bodies in Boer War trenches, the rows of crosses on Western Front cemeteries, and the tears of Maori women waiting for sons who did not return. It is, however, a moving tribute to the sacrifice of thousands of New Zealanders over the years, as well as a fascinating cross-section of recent history.

Well written, superbly illustrated and thoroughly recommended!

Heinemann Publishers, The Windmill Press, Kingsworth, Tadworth, Surrey KT20 6TG — £18.00 IJK

Adventures in the Rifle Brigade; Random Shots from a Rifleman: Capt Sir John Kincaid

It is hardly possible to read any modern work on the British Army of the Napoleonic era, or any account of Wellington's Peninsular campaign, without finding a few quotations from Kincaid. He is one of the historians' favourite sources, full of good passages describing life in the field, personages high and low, and action a-plenty, recorded by a perceptive young officer. Here, in facsimile reproduction of the 1909 edition, is a chance to read the original, and an informative and often entertaining exercise it is.

So it is a surprise to find that as well as being full of good quotable stuff — descriptions, anecdotes, comments — Kincaid can also at times be a bore. His humour, often witty, can be leaden; some of his descriptive passages and comments merely wordy space-fillers. This is mostly so in the second book (mercifully, perhaps, abridged) which rehashes the campaigns described in the first as a vehicle for anecdotes and reflections of uneven quality.

Yet there is so much to enjoy and think about in his work that he must be forgiven his lapses.

Kincaid, a merchant and 'army barmy', found his way via the militia to a regular commission in the 95th Rifles, which he joined in 1809. He picked up the ague in Walcheren, and it was to trouble him for years, but in the Peninsula he bore a charmed life — his worst fate was to be knocked unconscious for a while by a musket ball. He stood behind a fir tree while French musket balls rapped into it or whistled past on either side of his body, and recommended the experience as a method of teaching recruits to stand to attention.

At Waterloo, his horse was wounded three times before someone told him it had been hit, and it was shot twice more before succumbing. Waterloo, he avers, was "the last, the greatest and the most uncomfortable heap of glory I ever had a hand in". *Richard Drew, 20 Park Circus, Glasgow G3 6BE — £9.50. RLE*

Light-Horse Harry Lee: Charles Royster

This is the story of one man, Henry Lee, and the effect of the American Revolutionary War on his character and career, but it also reflects the feelings of a nation. For 40 years between 1776 and 1815 he was closely connected with many major

events as soldier, politician, inventor and historian.

The author endeavours to describe his career and discusses his ambitions, beliefs, his gains and losses. The successes and the heartbreaks were similar to those of many Americans at that time, but Henry Lee played his part to the full. He was father to that other Lee, Robert E., who led the South in the Civil War. *Alfred A Knopf, 201 East 50th Street, New York 10022, \$15.00.*

The Little Field-Marshal — Sir John French: Richard Holmes

Sir John French's career was, to say the least, colourful. As a young cavalry commander he played a prominent part in the battle of Elandslaagte, one of the few real cavalry charges in the Boer War. He was a great champion of heavy cavalry tactics and many of his contemporaries considered him the most distinguished cavalry commander since Cromwell, yet today he is chiefly associated with the enormous casualties suffered by the British Expeditionary Force at the battle of Loos at the beginning of the First World War.

His personality, too, was controversial. Churchill considered him unrivalled as a leader, and Lloyd George commended his breadth of outlook. Yet Sir Douglas Haig, one



of French's earliest friends and his successor as commander of the BEF, spoke contemptuously of his "unreasoning brain", and one fellow cavalry general dismissed him as "A silly little fool".

Richard Holmes goes some way towards explaining these contradictions. In a sympathetic but not uncritical manner, he takes us through the ups and downs of French's life, and explores his relationships with the political and military figures of his day, revealing with insight the strong character which brought such mixed reactions from those who met him. He attempts to come to grips, too, with the question of French's culpability in the Loos debacle and shows the popular image of him — a man wine and dining in safety behind the lines whilst his men suffered appalling hardships at the front — to be a grotesque distortion. In Mr Holmes' view, French was a competent old-style general who could neither understand the extraordinary conditions of the Western Front, nor admit his inability to cope with them. In that, surely, he was not alone.

Jonathan Cape, 30 Bedford Square, London — £12.50. IJK

COMPETITION 285

[illegible]

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S3/82





MAIL DROP

Got something to say, a point to make or a story to tell? This is your page to exchange your news, views, comments and opinions. We're offering £5 for the best letter we publish every fortnight. All we ask is that you keep it brief and include your full name and address. Write to: **Mail Drop, SOLDIER, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU.**

BATTLE ERROR

Your article on Waterloo (11 Jan) will, no doubt, give French apologists for Napoleon, further excuses for their hero's failure.

Up to now the most prevalent excuse has been that 'Boney' had a bad attack of 'piles' and that he was not able to keep his mind on the job in hand! But what have you done? They now know that the main reason was that the battle was fought on the wrong day!

Furthermore, those perfidious Prussians while seemingly attacking from the East were in fact attacking from the West. The poor English troops who received the first cannonades from the Prussians by mistake, must have marvelled at the range of their guns!

I prefer the excuse given by Victor Hugo when explaining the French debacle: 'Those terrible English Infantry!' — **P A Newmarch, Bargoed Mill, Drefach Velindre, Handysal, Dyfed, SA44 5UU.**

Now you know why the author, Smith Minor, failed all his history exams! A number of readers wrote pointing out that the Battle of Waterloo was 18 not 15 June — but Mr Newmarch wins our £5 prize for rubbing salt into our wounds so gently. — *Ed.*

HONOUR DESERVED

I write to say how delighted Mrs Sheppard, 'Shep' and his family were with the special 'Profile' article on him (14 Dec). It has given them and I much pleasure so please accept, and convey to your colleagues, our warmest thanks for such an excellent article. It will be something his family, especially grandchildren, will treasure in years to come.

With the New Year's Honours List just announced it seems to me such a pity that someone who is almost certainly the oldest surviving ex-serviceman at 104 could not be given some recognition for his many years of service under four monarchs, five if one counts his continued service as Wilts HQ Devizes Police tailor until 1959. He is a man who greatly loves his country, his

Sovereign and the Army units in which he served so loyally and long.

How proud and happy he would be to wear the medals of five Sovereigns although I hasten to add I am expressing my thoughts and feelings on the matter. He has said nothing.

How one would go about bringing the record of service of this grand old soldier to the appropriate authority I do not know and he cannot live for ever. Perhaps your excellent article will be seen by someone in authority with imagination and the will to honour, before it is too late, this grand old soldier. — **Percy S Pearson, 182 Middleton Road, Gorleston-on-Sea, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR31 7PX.**

FIVO CLUB

From time to time in your columns mention has been made of the Guards Armoured Division. This formation was created and disbanded during the span of the last war, having performed with no mean distinction. Originally, I served with the Guards Support Group before being transferred to HQ 5th Guards Armoured Brigade. The vehicle markings consisted of the Divisional 'Eye' and the number 50 (white on red).

Whilst on occupation duties and stationed in Schloss Carstanjejn in Bad Godesberg, it was decided that to further the comradeship which had always been a feature of the HQ, some sort of club should be created. This would enable members to meet annually when once demobbed. The original meeting was rather poorly attended but the idea became a reality and eventually The Fivo Club was born. Following the first four reunions, venues became difficult to secure and for three or four years nothing could be arranged.

In 1954 I was asked to take over as Secretary/Treasurer and, with some wonderful support from officer-members, we have actually met every year since. In fact, since 1977, reunions have been held twice a year in London and Grantham. This year is rather special. In May we shall be meeting in the Blackpool Guards Club for our 39th reunion to be followed by the 40th in London at the beginning of October.

It will be realised that we have no source for new members but as we lose members when they are 'called Home' it is a unique fact that they are replaced by others who have been 'lost' to us for such a long time.

It could be that there are readers of **SOLDIER** who may have been connected with the old HQ and would welcome meeting old friends. They are invited to contact **George Hulse, 149 Mossway, Alkington, Middleton, Manchester, M24 1WT.**

ANAEMIC

I have just received the 2-15 Nov edition of **SOLDIER**. I congratulate you on its contents and the very splendid cover picture of Pte Kathryn Harpham of the QARANC (which I'm sure will become a pin-up in many a barrack room!).

My only criticism is that I think your letters to the Editor are pretty

anaemic, and lack any significance. Clearly in your subservience to MOD, you hesitate to print anything that is in the least controversial, such as conditions of service, pay, promotion, etc.

Another improvement I would like to see is in your book section. Very often we read of mouth-watering military-style books, at prices ranging from £6 to £10, but never when they are published as paperbacks at a price we can more afford. — **Major L H Morrison, Venizelos 99, Nea Smyrna, Athens, Greece.**

Sorry you don't like our letters, Major Morrison, but we emphatically deny your suggestion that we are suppressing controversial views. Readers are welcome to make any points they wish on any subjects of their choice and we try and publish as many as we can.

Good point about the books. We will publish paperback prices as we receive them. Often though books are only published in paperback if they have sold well in hardback. By this time publishers are no longer interested in the reviews. — *Ed.*

MODEL SOLDIERS

May I use your columns to welcome service personnel who are stationed in this area and who are keen military modellers, to come along to the meetings of the local branch of The British Model Soldier Society. We meet on the third Thursday of each month, 8-10pm, in Aldershot Library Exhibition Room. — **Brian E Ballard, 68 Belle Vue Road, Aldershot, GU12 4RZ.**

COMMENDATION

I refer to your news item (16 Nov) about the extreme cool courage of Captain Alastair Goulden of 1st Bn The Queen's Regiment when picking up a live grenade dropped by a soldier on a grenade range.

As an ex-instructor in the Small Arms School Corps, I was most disturbed that such a foolish act was carried out by a regular officer, that it should receive a GOC's commendation and that it should then receive such publicity in your magazine.

Although I have been out of the Army for five years, I feel sure that training manuals do not permit such foolish and dangerous practice. It was certainly the rule that, if a grenade was dropped, it would be left where it fell and the safety supervisor would make the speediest action to clear the bay of all personnel, himself last. Would it be pertinent to ask what an officer was doing in the throwing bay in the first place? Normally, such duties are allocated to qualified NCOs. The officer's place is usually in the control tower.

Rather than a commendation, there should have been an inquiry resulting in the officer receiving a reprimand for dangerous practice. I shudder to think what is likely to happen on any future occasion if another instructor uses this example and is killed in the attempt. The time fuse in a grenade is too fine to allow for any so-called 'heroics', so please encourage live cowards rather than dead heroes. — **Yeoman Warder**

Brian Harrison, The Middle Tower, HM Tower of London, EC3N 4AB.

We understand that according to the SASC training manual, in procedural terms the officer was not specifically wrong in doing what he did, but that other courses of action are usually recommended. However, these were not 'textbook' conditions and the incident happened in a field firing area, not on a grenade range as previously reported in **SOLDIER**. Under these circumstances Captain Goulden adopted what he thought to be the safest and most expedient course of action. — *Ed.*

SQUADDY SONG

May I add my little bit to the article and reader's letter on 'squaddy' (14 Dec)? A long time ago when I was a young soldier we used to sing a song on the march (route) called 'I've got six pence', part of which went like this:

"Happy is the day when the squaddy gets his pay and he's rolling rolling rolling home." (Prewar). — **Mr A Burrows, 83 Clifford Court, Chorlton Road, Old Trafford, Lancs, M15 4AT.**

POOR RECORD

I would be interested to know if other readers suffer from lack of response when sending for military band records as mentioned in **SOLDIER**. I have just 'stopped' my sixth cheque after waiting an average of seven weeks for delivery.

I fully understand that those concerned may be tied up with exercises, leave and other military duties, but six 'misses' does seem a bad average. I have now reached the stage of hesitation before sending for further records.

Any other readers in the same boat? — **G W Seatter, 9 Lorne Road, Wealdstone, Harrow, Middx, HA3 7NH.**

SOLDIER reviews records as a service to readers but has no control over sales or marketing. Even so we feel this letter highlights a most unbusinesslike approach and we hope any regiments selling records will take note. — *Ed.*

RU JOKING?

On a training exercise in India we had made a difficult river crossing and finally toiled in the heat of the sun to reach the summit of our objective. The lieutenant flashed a message by heliograph to our CO in the valley below — "Hill 160 taken".

The CO's reply got as far as "U R . . ." before a cloud obscured the sun, temporarily rendering the CO's heliograph useless and holding up further transmission.

As we waited, we attempted to guess the rest of the message. It would surely be "U R 2 B congratulated", or at worst "U R behind schedule".

How wrong we were! When the sun shone again the CO's message continued — "U R on the wrong bloody hill!" — **Dudley Clarke, 20 Lindsay Road, Worcester Park, Surrey, KT4 8LE.**

Can You Help?

I am an ex-soldier and would like to contact anyone who was in the 4th Queen's Regiment stationed at Warminster '68-'69 especially Cpl John Beadles. I was Pte M Bird, B Coy (nickname Dicky). Also, does anyone remember me from Howe Bks, Canterbury, Kent? — **Mick Bird, 25 Aberporth Drive, Birchwood, Lincoln.**

I wonder if any SOLDIER readers can help. My local ACF unit is not receiving its quota of exercises, so I wondered if any unit would be interested in taking on a keen bunch of lads in the Oxford area. If so, please contact: **Cadet Cpl S Wilcox, 3 Eastfields, Blewbury, Oxon, OX11 9NR.**

I am rebuilding a 1943 Humber Light Reconnaissance Car Mk III and I would be grateful if any reader can help me locate the Installation/fitting Instruction Manual (not the operating manual) for the No 19 Wireless set into this vehicle please? I have searched for three years all the military museums and other sources where one might expect to find this manual, but to no avail. It is, I believe, a wartime ZA Series manual not an EMER. Any help on a possible source would be much appreciated. — **E H Thomas, 20 Dollis Hill Lane, Gladstone Park, London NW2.**

Can any reader tell me exactly what happened to 49th Battery, 48 Light AA Regt, Royal Artillery starting from UK late 1941 and ending February 1942 in Java. I say ending because I do not think any regiments/troops were evacuated from Java. — **Mr D Galvin, 30 Clivedon Road, Highams Park, London, E4 9RN.**

The 14 OAC, 2 BAD Old Comrades Association, Groenendale, Belgium, was formed in Dec 1945. We had three reunions 46, 47, 48 but after that because of falling numbers it was disbanded. As I have been ill with time on my hands, I decided it was time the association was reformed. Over the last 30 years I have kept in touch with four of the lads and after many weeks work have now found 10 more. Our numbers now stand at 17. I'm hoping there are a lot more. We would be pleased to hear from any of our officers, Capt Griffith, Lt Steele, Major Cherry. If anyone reading this can help, I will be pleased to hear from them, their wives or families. — **W Adams, 59 Mannamead Road, Plymouth, Devon.**

I was wondering if through your column I might be able to trace some old friends of my WRAF days in Aden. Their names are Byron and Dot Harding and the last address I had was E Bty, 1 RHA, BFPO 41 about 10 years ago. Dot was in the WRAF like me and met Byron while in Aden. It would be so nice to hear from them again, if anybody knows of where they are. — **Mrs P M Kemp (nee Railton), 69 Reldene Drive, Wilberby Road, Hull, HU5 5HS.**

Can anyone assist me by confirming the existence of a music book or recording of "Bugle-calls (including Light Infantry/Rifles calls) and Trumpet-calls of the British Army?" I am interested in purchasing the above and would be grateful for any information assisting me to that end. — **Peter R Moore, 63 The Crescent, Midland 6056, Western Australia.**

Collectors' Corner

J Beasley, 6 Finney Drive, Chorlton cum Hardy, Manchester, M21 1DS. Offers *The Tanks, The History of the RTR, MGC Heavy Branch, Tank Corps and RTC 1914-1945* by Capt B H Liddell Hart. 2 Vol. 1st Ed. Mint with dust jackets. Best offer nearest £60. Offers with SAE will be answered.

Harry B Brand, 30 Salmons Road, Edmonton, N9 7JT. Offers 'The Great War' volumes 5, 6, 7, 8, covering the period 1916 onwards. Published as magazines while the war was in progress and bound into volumes. Full of contemporary articles and hundreds of photographs and illustrations. No charge — first letter from someone who can arrange collection.

Bjorn Martensson, Skravlingsvagen 27, 852 54 Sundsvall, Sweden. Seeks regimental magazines: *The King's Regiment, The Royal Irish Rangers, The Royal Regiment of Wales and The Light Infantry*. Also wants any copy of *SOLDIER 1945-1947, 1948 Jan, Feb, Mar, 1949 Dec, 1952 Mar, July*.

Sgt Skawski, 43 Tpt & Mov Sqn RCT, RASC Lines, Shorncliffe, Folkestone, Kent, CT20 3EZ. Wishes to exchange complete unbound *Weapons and Warfare* for metal/staybright cap badges. Cloth badges and div patches. Also wants early *Leicestershire/ Derbyshire/ Nottinghamshire* badges, willing to swap from extensive general collection or purchase.

Dennis L Kennedy, PO Box 51, Logan, Ut 84321, USA. Wishes to trade or correspond with other collectors of elite insignia, como kit, counter-terrorism memorabilia, posters and books.

Dale E Johnson, VS-24 Air Crew, USS Nimitz, FPO New York 09501, USA. Wants anti-submarine squadron patches, patrol squadron patches and VQ squadron patches.

Mr K W Jarmin, 1 Ash St, Boxford, Colchester, Essex CO6 5HJ. Offers 'Military "Sweetheart" Brooches', a 32-page collectors' guide book which includes 12 colour plates showing over 200 brooches in colour with prices. Price £2.20 including postage.

M P Dewing, The Gurkha Museum, Queen Elizabeth Bks, Church Crookham, Aldershot, Hants, GU13 0RJ. Offers for sale regimental badges of the brigade of Gurkhas. SAE for details.

A St H Aubrey, Thornwick, Main Road, Cutthorpe, Chesterfield, S42 7AG. Wishes to obtain *Parts IV and VII, 'Celebrities of the Army'*, edited by Commander C N Robinson RN, published by George Newnes Ltd, after the South African War.

J B Stephenson, 29 Rectory Row, Sedgefield, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, TS21 2AF. Offers for sale British military buttons from early 1800 to present day. Please send large SAE for lists.

A F Clarke, 341 Muirfield Road, South Oxhey, Herts, WD1 6JZ. Wishes to buy a copy of 'Lion with Blue Wings' by Ronald Seth and 'Armhem Lift' by Louise Hagen.

C Williams, 34 Canberra Ave, Forrest, ACT 2603, Australia. Seeks military dinky toys in mint or good condition. Will pay good price or exchange for Australian militaria.

K Mason, 57 Forest Range, Levenshulme, Manchester, M19 2ES. Wishes to purchase books on the Parachute Regiment and Airborne Forces (both British and foreign).

B Johnston, 24 Carlton Place, Clitheroe, Lancs. Offers QVC and WWI and WWII plastic military badges for Army Lightweight trousers size B8W leg 32", and Army DPM Combat jacket size 42" chest, both must be good condition.

Mike Johnson, 554th Military Police Company, HQ US European Command, APO New York 09131, USA. Seeks information on following units: 895th MP Co, 554th MP Co, 554th MP Co (Escort and Guard), 728th MP Bn, 519th MP Bn, 7th PSYOP Gp and BV&A Pacific, 18th PSYOP Co (Abn, Adv & Supt), 14th PSYOP Bn, 44th Coast Artillery, 293rd MP Co and 524th MP Co. Will copy info and return within 10 days of receipt.

W Barrington, 2 Thrush House, Marlow Drive, Salford 6, Lancs. Requires the following Loyal North Lancashire Regiment items: officers' and other ranks' helmet plates, 1st Vol Bn; other ranks' Glengarry, 1st Vol Bn; other ranks' cap badge, 2nd Vol Bn — King's Crown South Africa Scroll. Many exchanges available eg officer's WBC 108 Madras Infantry. Will purchase. High prices paid.

Reunions

The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders' Malaya 1941 reunion will be held this year at Stirling Castle on Saturday and Sunday 27th and 28th March. All ranks who served in the 2nd Battalion in Malaya from 7th December onwards are invited to

attend; wives will be welcome. Accommodation can be booked through the Regiment. Details from RHQ Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, The Castle, Stirling.

Tank Museum

Owing to severe reductions in Civil Service overtime the Tank Museum at Bovington Camp, Dorset has been forced to close on Sundays. This closure is very much regretted but unavoidable. It is hoped that normal opening will be resumed from Easter onwards but this will depend on future developments. The Museum will still be open every weekday from 10 am to 12.30 pm and 2 pm to 4.45 pm. Also every Saturday from 10 am to 12.30 pm and 2 pm to 4 pm.

Competition

Competition No 281, Vegetable Soup, got nobody in a stew! Judging from the number of entries we received this puzzle was too easy — again, 100 per cent correct entries. The title of the famous book and film we were looking for was of course *A Bridge Too Far*. Prizewinners were: 1st Brig JDG Pank, 14 Newbury St, Whitechurch, nr Andover, Hants. 2nd Sgt. Davies, ACIO, 17 Castle St. Swansea, West Glam. 3rd Mr H Brunby, 27 Woodcross Ave, Cantley Manor, Doncaster, S Yorks. 4th Mr N F Fry, 43 Alder Walk, Derby, DE3 8ED. 5th Capt C E R Hoe, DSCS Bicester, Oxon.

How Observant Are You?

(see page 16)

1 Chimney pots of left house; 2 Rear window of leading van; 3 Rear mud-guard of leading van; 4 Front bumper of second van; 5 Star second from right; 6 Spelling of WINES; 7 Rear bumper of Allens Van; 8 Left cow's left ear; 9 Width of nearest road; 10 Right cow's tail.

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- * Profile: Junior Forces minister
- * The squad from Coronation Street

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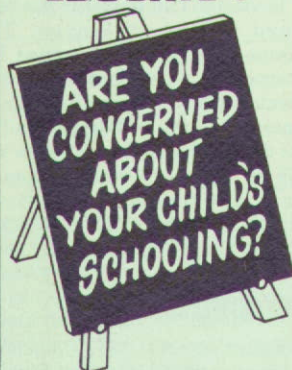
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My name is Tracy Reed. I am 17, slim with blond hair and blue eyes. I enjoy most types of music especially rock. I also enjoy riding motorbikes. I am rather shy and work in a bank. — *Miss Tracy Reed, 23 Hazelgrove Road, Haywards Heath, W Sussex.*

My name is Michele. I am 16½ and would like to write to a soldier, preferably between the ages of 16½-20. I enjoy most music and hope to join the Forces when I am 18. I will answer any letters, photos appreciated. — *Miss Michele Martin, 178c Petersfield Avenue, Harold Hill, Romford, Essex.*

My name is Anna. I would like to write to a soldier in the 25-40 age range. My hobbies are walking, cooking, seeing films, writing letters and meeting people. — *Miss Anna Pappas, 135 Archer Road, Millhouses, Sheffield 8.*

My name is Kathie. I am 19 years old, 5'5" tall and have brown hair and brown eyes. My interests are travelling, walking, listening to music, meeting people, dancing, writing and talking. I also like animals and sports, have a zany sense of humour and am interested in photography. I am a Christian and would like to write to other Christians in the Army in any part of the world — preferably under 25. — *Kathie Winstanley, 53 Cambridge Road, Droylsden, Tameside.*

I am 16 years old with brown hair and blue eyes and I would like a soldier pen pal. I like 50s and early 60s music and almost all chart music. — *Miss Karen Anderson, 51 Pendennis House, Pepys Estate, Deptford, London, SE8 5RZ.*

My name is Kay and I am 17 years old. I would like to write to someone in the Army. My interests are gardening, cooking and listening to music. — *Kay Ward, 33 Theydon Gardens, Newtons Corner, Rainham, Essex, RM13 7UX.*

I am a 27 year old divorced parent of two small children and am 5ft 6ins tall, slim with brown hair and green eyes. I am a quiet person and my interests include reading, writing, music, homelife etc. I would like to write to someone in the Army, possibly a single or divorced man who is lonely. — *Lorraine Tompson, 64 Chaucer Road, Newtown, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk.*

PEN PALS WANTED

My name is Sylvia and I am 18 years old. My hobbies are listening to pop music, reading and going to discos and I would like a soldier pen pal. — *Miss Sylvia Gibbons, 12a Southway, Porton Down, Near Salisbury, Wilts, SP4 0JL.*

I am a 28 year old divorced ex-Army wife with a six-year-old boy. I would like to write to a soldier of about my own age. — *Glenys Collins, c/o 18 Manor Road, King's Bromley, Near Burton-on-Trent, Staffs, DE13 7HZ.*

My name is Donna and I am 18 years old. I am 5ft 7ins, and have brown hair and blue eyes. I work in a children's nursery, and I like dancing and helping people with special difficulties. I would like to write to a soldier between the ages of 18 and 25. — *Donna Hunt, 38 Ashmead, Trowbridge, Wiltshire.*

I am 20 years old and my interests are CB radio, sport, reading, writing, psychology, the supernatural and meeting people. I would like to hear from a soldier interested in corresponding. — *Claire Allaway, 268 Fencepiece Road, Hainault, Ilford, Essex, IG6 2ST.*

I am 44 years old, separated, 5ft 2ins tall with brunette hair and I would like a pen pal in the Army. Photo available if required. — *Thelma Heavens, 32 Edinburgh Drive, Didcot, Oxon, OX11 7HT.*

I am 30 years old, separated, 5ft 7ins tall with dark brown hair. I work as a clerk in Slough and my interests are cooking, reading, badminton and looking after my two small children. I would like to write to a genuine person serving either in Germany or Ireland who is 33+. — *H Cayley, 8 Dart Close, Langley, Berks.*

My name is Gillian and I am 16 years old. I am a skinhead and would like to write to someone in the Army. — *G Newbury, 86 Stepney Green, Stepney, London E1.*

We are two girls who work in London for a shipping company and we would like penpals in the Army. Stella is 21 years old, and her interests are cooking, pop music, dancing and travel. She would like to write to anyone between the ages of 21 and 30. Karen is 24 years old and her interests are cats, travel and collecting records. She would like to write to anyone between the ages of 24 and 34. — *Stella Richards, 37 Standfield Road, Dagenham, Essex; Karen Daniels, 34 Hedgemans Road, Dagenham, Essex.*

My name is Michelle and I am 16 years old. I have blond hair with blue/grey eyes. I like most kinds of music, especially Elvis Presley, and I love animals. I would like to write to a soldier, preferably an Elvis fan. — *Michelle Perkins, 10 Newtons Close, Rainham, Essex.*

I am 22 years old and my hobbies are keep-fit, squash, dancing and travelling abroad. Any Greek or Italian



soldiers interested? — *S Plumb, 26 Boundary Drive, Hutton, Brentwood, Essex.*

Are there any lonely fellas out there who want to write to a lonely lady? If you enclose a photo, and are aged between 19-26 and under 5ft 9ins, then you can be sure of a reply. Write soon! — *Dawn Webster, 179 Silkstone Road, Scowerton's Farm Estate, Hackenthorpe, Sheffield, S12 4RQ.*

My name is Jackie and I am 21 years old, a divorcee with a little girl. I am 5ft 1ins tall with short brown hair and hazel eyes and I come from an Army background. I enjoy sports, music, reading, travelling etc. We are both easy to get on with and I would like to write to someone the same. — *Jackie Kemp, 4 Bidwell Crescent, Gotham, Nottingham, NG11 0HD.*

I am 22 years old and would like to write to someone in the Army, male or female, between the ages of 18 and 26. Please send photos if possible. — *David Robinson, 5 Marshside, Brancaster, Norfolk.*



My name is Karen and I am 19 years old. I am 5ft 6ins tall, with brown hair and green eyes. I am a civil servant and I enjoy music and going to discos. I would like to write to a soldier aged between 20 and 25. — *Karen Mills, 13 Sylvan Ave, Whalley Range, Manchester, M16 8AN.*

We are three nurses, living away from home, who are looking for pen-friends to write to. Terri is 21 years old, 5ft 1ins with blonde hair and blue eyes. Her hobbies are dressmaking, sports, and cooking. Her room number is Room 27. Wendy is 19 years old, 5ft 5ins, with brown hair and blue eyes. She likes playing badminton, various kinds of music and anything else that is interesting. Her room number is Room 49. Kim is also 19 years old, 5ft 2ins, with fair hair and blue eyes. She likes listening to music, swimming and anything else she can do sitting down. Her room number is Room 50. *Nurses Home, Cefn Coed Hospital, Cockett, Swansea, Glam, S Wales.*



PRIVATE ARMY IN THE PUBLIC EYE

THE HOUSEHOLD CAVALRY and Brigade of Guards may lend an unrivalled splash of pomp and pageantry to London's cosmopolitan streets. But as anyone familiar with the capital — or any other major city — will appreciate, the Army has no monopoly on men in immaculate uniforms with gleaming buttons and medals. Visitors to our more prestigious hotels, offices and department stores are used to being greeted with a seasoned salute and a cheery smile by members of a much smaller militia — the Corps of Commissionaires — three quarters of whom are former soldiers.

Founded in 1859 with just seven wounded

Crimean War and Indian Mutiny veterans and one sailor, each of whom had lost a limb, the Corps today can boast a nominal roll of 3100 ex-Servicemen proud to wear its distinctive black cross-belt with badge.

A cutting from The Times in November 1881 records: "In consequence of the armed robbery of diamonds in Hatton Gardens, officials of the Postmaster-General have engaged the services of a large number of commissionaires to act as guards at various sub-post offices at present in charge of young women."

And since its establishment more than a century ago the London-based Corps, with its head office lying off bustling Fleet Street and boasting nine UK city branch offices, has filled nearly 50,000 such security vacancies on behalf of grateful employers.

George Weaver runs the 'race gang'. ▲

On average, 500 commissionaires a year have been found jobs over the past five or six years to fill posts either in uniform or in 'civvies' as hall porters, receptionists, clerks, chauffeurs, security men, warehousemen and bank messengers.

Colonel Geoffrey Pring, 65, formerly with the Royal Artillery and the Indian Army is the Corps Commandant while the OC London Division is Colonel Alastair Thorburn, once with the King's Own Scottish Borderers, who retired from the Army in 1975 as Commandant of the Cadet Training Centre at Frimley Park.

Colonel Pring, who left the Army in 1971, told SOLDIER: "The Corps was founded by Captain Edward Walter, retired from the

continued on page 36

◀ Colin Pearce: "You get lots of respect".

The Corps' founder members — 1859. ▼



8th Hussars, in 1859 at a time when the position and prospects of time-expired soldiers and sailors was quite grim. The Government of the day did nothing for them. The public fought shy of them and, too often, they found themselves stranded with a small pension and that most demoralising want of all — employment.

"He was determined to break the prejudice against old soldiers by a demonstration of the qualities of loyalty and discipline



Stan Pearce on Fleet Street duty.

the men had acquired in the Service. What the men really needed was a regiment to go back to. Captain Walter's attitude to his men, if paternal, was stern and essentially businesslike."

The early years logged in the Corps chronicles were not easy ones and some soldiers had to be discharged through "intemperance and indolence". But by 1864 the organisation had 33 men and sixteen years later could boast a thousand.

Today, the call-over of companies employing members of the Corps, reads like a blue-chip guide to British industry with names like Burmah Oil, Triplex, Courage, House of Fraser, BP, Vernons, British Steel, The Daily Mail, Littlewoods, Dunlop, British Gas, Dewar's Whisky, The Daily Telegraph, Burberry's, Spillers, Tate & Lyle, IBM and Rolls-Royce.

Such firms are not charged a fee because the Corps is largely non-profit making but they are invoiced for the cost of two uniforms yearly with which each commissioner is kitted out. One of the two uniforms is replaced each year.

Employers negotiate the salary they will pay to permanent commissioners in consultation with the Corps. The going rate in London just now is in the region of £4500 to £5000 a year and many firms also pay the £6 annual membership fee subscription.

Security work, by its very nature, can always engender an element of danger. In Ulster throughout the strife on its streets and in its towns more than 100 commissioners have been on continuous duty helping to give extra protection at government offices, commercial premises and on industrial estates.

Back on the UK mainland, more than 300 commissioners were engaged on special duties by major departmental and chain stores over the Christmas period.

Colonel Pring endorsed the community value of the Corps of Commissioners thus:

"Shop managers know that the presence of a uniformed sergeant, with battle ribbons on his chest, can often do more than any other single factor to deter shoplifters. But our men have another, equally important role to play. Shoppers, particularly the elderly, take comfort from seeing a man in uniform. They regard him as someone they can go to for advice and help such as directions or even for train times."

Standards have always been high and exacting. Each commissioner, before acceptance into the Corps, has to pass an interview at one of the recruiting centres in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Belfast, Newcastle, Leeds, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol or London.

Each aspirant has to have a clean character record either from his former CO or his last employer. Nearly half of all those who apply are rejected and the Corps' insistence on taking on only the best ex-servicemen has paid dividends. Complaints against its commissioners are rare.

The very term 'commissionaire' is a French word for "someone who can be trusted with a message, money or post of responsibility."

And there could be no better proof of public confidence in the Corps' ability to live up to its name than the nomination of one of its members, Colour Sergeant Edward White, for the high honour of Freeman of the City of London following 25 years' service with a stockbroker firm.

Supporting the nomination, Mr Nicholas Goodison, chairman of the Stock Exchange, wrote: "Colour Sergeant White is one of the most loyal servants any company could have. Efficient. Courteous. Reliable. His Army service taught him the importance of self-discipline and he combines this with a sense of humour. He is the kind of man who makes the uniform of the Corps something of which he and all his colleagues can be proud."

Another unique character is Leonard Saxon who returned to the UK from overseas for commissioner duties. Based at one of Tesco's larger supermarkets he had, just weeks before, been wearing the robes and regalia as Mayor of Bulawayo, the second city of the former Rhodesia.

In Glasgow, an ex-Royal Marine-cum-commissionaire has a street named after him in the German village of Breinig — Danny Isdale Strasse — as a token thanks for his spare-time work in organising exchange visits between Scottish youth soccer teams to towns and villages in West Germany.

Not all Corps members are employed on permanent duties. Many work on a temporary basis. Most are over 65.

Hundreds of sporting events in the yearly calendar would not quite be the same without the uniformed presence of a commissioner.

The Cup Final at Wembley, for instance, involves 200 of them in crowd control, while at Wimbledon, more than 80 commissioners have been on duty during the lawn tennis championships for the past quarter-century.

Even former heavyweight champion Muhammad Ali has been "minded" by members of the Corps as protection against mobbing. 'The Greatest' eulogised afterwards: "I may be able to defend myself in the ring but, outside it, you fellas did a much better job."

Contrary to popular belief, the Corps is not an exclusively male bastion — as Colonel Pring is quick to point out.

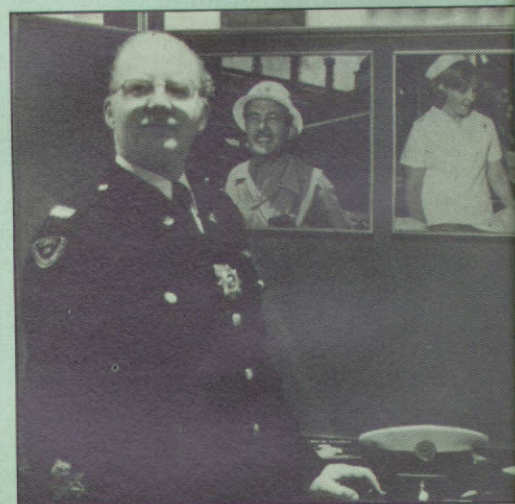
"There is no reason why ex-servicewomen should not apply. The Corps would very much like to increase the number of lady members and given more such applicants would, perhaps, be better able to persuade employers that they, too, can offer a very real service to modern industry. In fact, our last lady member worked in Belfast but, sadly, she died in November."

Despite the recession, Colonel Pring reckons that the Corps can always find a job for good men — or women — particularly long service ex-soldiers.

"Our men are usually of high morale and have maximum enthusiasm for their work. In turn, we try to find the employer a man who has a first class record for integrity and loyalty. The Corps has no age limits, young or old, for those to whom it offers membership. In practice, young men have not always found such employment entirely satisfactory simply because the type of work we offer tends to lack promotion prospects."

SOLDIER spoke to four commissioners — two of them of recent Army vintage and two who joined the Corps more than 20 years ago.

Colour Sergeant Eddie Speakman, 74, who joined the Corps in 1953, formerly served with The Suffolk Regiment, the Parachute Regiment and the Military Provost Staff Corps. Now a part-timer, he said: "The Corps means a lot to me. It keeps me fit and active and I've done every kind of job from exhibitions to Royal occasions, at St



Geoff Broom: "We don't mess about".

James's Palace. If it was not for the Corps I'd probably be under the ground. It was either that or sitting indoors, watching television. With the Corps it always gives you something to do with your mind and it retains your sense of cleanliness taught in the Army."

Eddie was one of a team of commissioners who cleared a London exhibition two years ago in just 12 minutes in a bomb blast incident. He says he lost the hearing in one of his ears as a result.

Nowadays he does a variety of jobs and helps in crowd control at football matches.

"It does not matter if you do a job at a football match where there are skinheads because they respect us when they see the uniform and they may take more notice of us than they do of the police. We use our own discretion in such matters," said Eddie.

Nodding his agreement was another

Corps veteran, Staff Sergeant Major George Weaver, who joined the Corps in 1961 after service with The King's Royal Rifles Corps and the Royal Engineers.

Also aged 74, George is in charge of the "race gang" — commissionaires who carry out duties at the nation's horse-racing courses. He says they need to be "able to converse with the intellectuals, on the one hand, and East End scrubbers on the other."

Sergeant Major 'Geoff' Broom, 44, is a receptionist with the Zambian Industrial Mining Corporation — Zimco — in the City.

He left the Army last year as principal cornet player and Assistant Band Sergeant-Major of the Regimental Band of the Irish Guards. It was work which took him to South America, Europe, North America, Hong Kong and Japan but he has no regrets about leaving the Army and still manages to play in his spare time with the Honourable Artillery Company at a barracks just 100 yards away as well as being bandmaster of the Essex County Police band.

"Being a commissionaire is not just standing at the door or sitting at a desk," he explained. "There's a lot more to it than meets the eye. We are reliable and responsible. We can do anything that is asked straight away. We don't mess about. I have found that civvies are not so quick. The

Princess Anne stops to chat with Reg Carter at a London first night — one of more than 10,000 royal occasions covered by the Corps since 1859. ▶

ex-Army chap will do it much quicker.

"People who come in here — and I know 150 of the staff here — want to be greeted with a pleasant smile. They don't want a bloke that's a bit miserable. They want a happy face all the time."

Commissionaire Colin Pearce, 38 — formerly Trooper Pearce of the 5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards from 1966 to 1978 — is another man proud of his new role in life in charge of reception and security duties at a North London video film recording studio patronised by the likes of David Bowie, David Essex and Kim Wilde.

Colin had tried his hand at mini cab driving before hearing of the Corps of Commissionaires while on a run to the Danish Embassy.

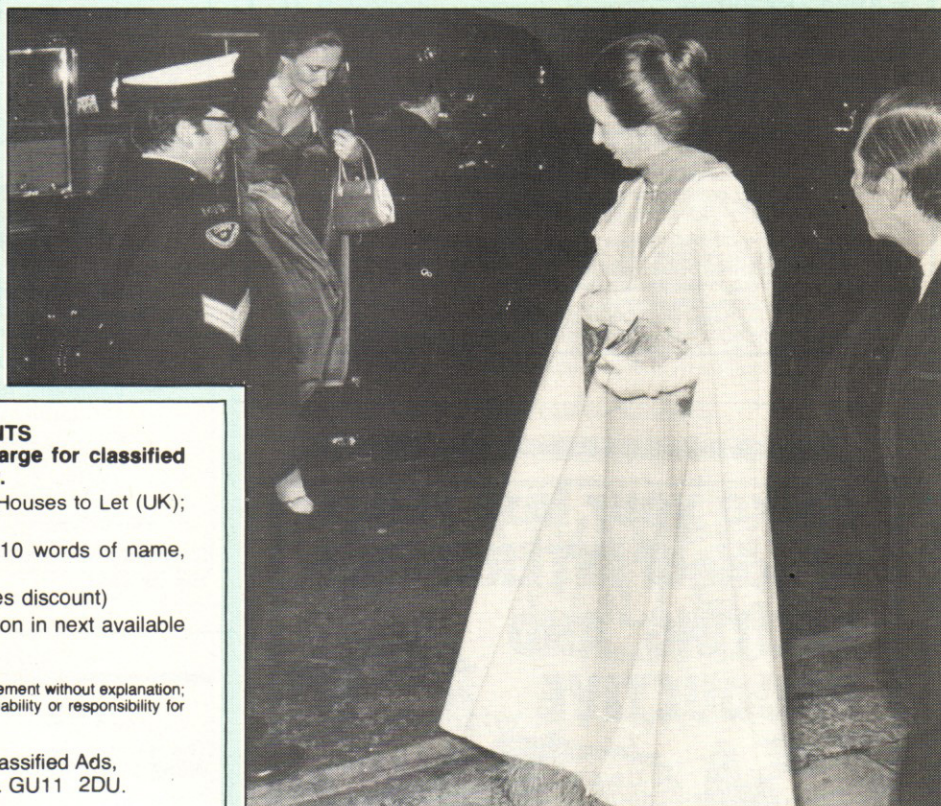
"I've been here for seven months now and never looked back. It was nothing like I thought it would be," said the well-travelled ex-trooper. "It's an enjoyable job and it's

fantastic. You get lots of respect from people, too.

"People tend to think of the Corps standing at Wembley or telling people where to go. Everybody thinks they are mostly retired people. This is not so. I'm lucky I'm in the TA and can make sergeant with the Corps within a year. Army discipline comes in particularly well here. It's definitely not an old man's job."

Colonel Pring summed up: "We have two tasks. To serve the public and to serve those who have served their country. Thanks to the co-operation of businessmen and others, there has seldom been a shortage of either jobs or men throughout the 123 years of our existence. ■

**Story: Graham Smith
Pictures: Paul Haley**



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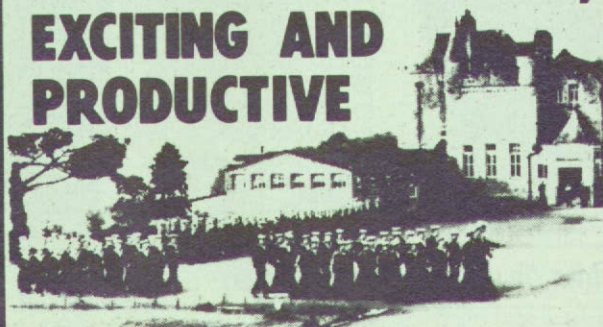
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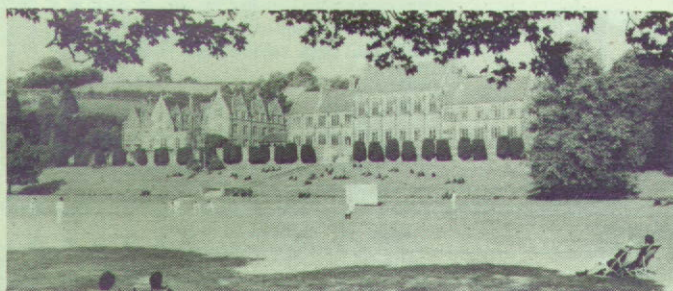
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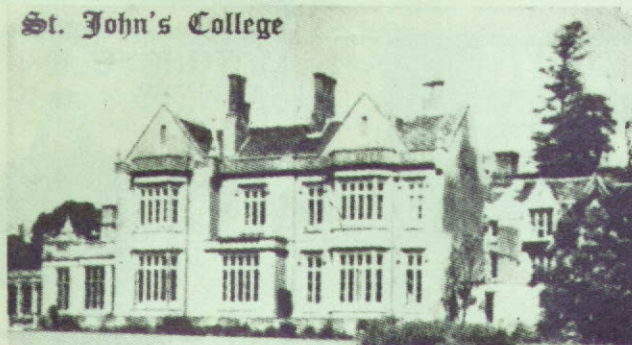
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Kerry Stephenson 01-439 3611/2.

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Rackets revival — and back comes Real Tennis

IN THE PLUSH environs of West London's Queen's Club Service officers spent six days battling for supremacy in two ancient and esoteric sports — one formerly the pursuit of monks and monarchs, the other started by inmates of a debtor's prison.

The occasion was the annual Army and Combined Services Rackets Championships which was combined this year with championships for Real Tennis — the forerunner of Lawn Tennis. It was the first time that Army and Combined Services events had been held in Real Tennis and many of the entrants had never played it before.

Nevertheless the entry of 31 was beyond expectations and later this year the Army Rackets Association will probably extend its title and role to encompass Real Tennis.

Real Tennis does not get its name from any suggestion that Lawn Tennis is somehow spurious. It is believed to be a corruption of 'Royal' Tennis and the courts at Queen's Club bear that title.

Man behind its introduction to the championships is Royal Army Educational Corps major, Paul Watts, who is stationed just down the road at MOD's Empress State Building. A keen Real Tennis player he conceived the idea to give an extra fillip to the Rackets week.

"One of the problems last year was that some people were knocked out of the rackets very early and their interest was soon over. Others might get a game on Monday and then not play again until Wednesday and then not until Friday."

Sending out a letter to all of the players on the rackets mailing list produced some 40 favourable replies and 31 actually arrived. A number had never played Real Tennis at all and might only have

gleaned some knowledge of it from a scene in the current hit film *The French Lieutenant's Woman*.

The origins of tennis are very obscure and it probably derived from handball games going back to the earliest days of recorded history. Certainly it was played by monks in early times and the court is probably derived from the monastery layout. Kings too, played. One French monarch died from a chill caught while playing and Henry VIII is reputed to have been the 'Superbrat' of his day — but with the power to change rules he didn't like.

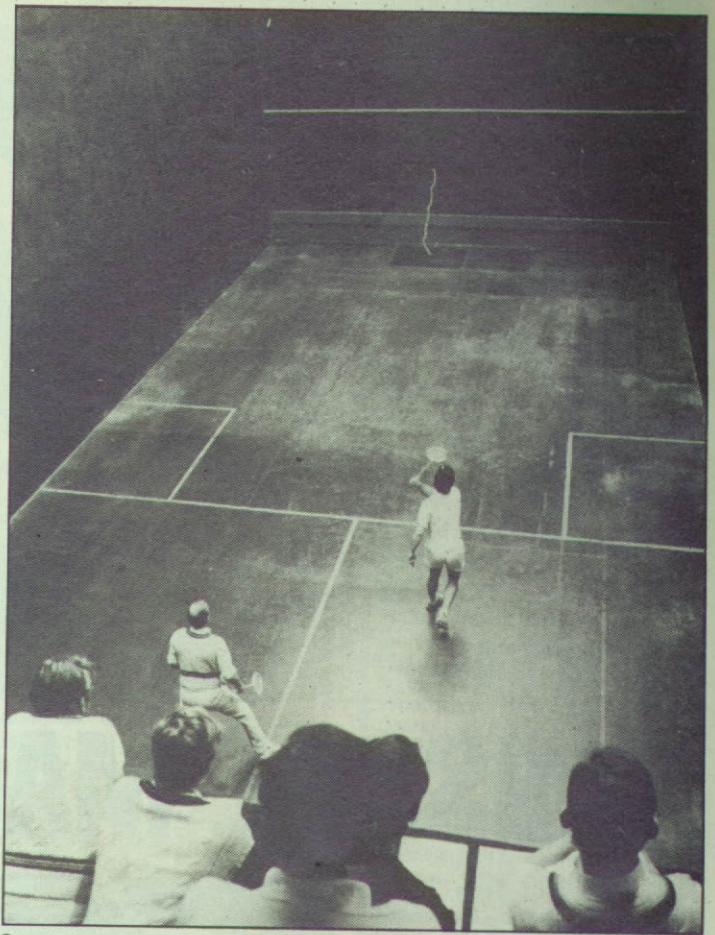
"Don't try to explain the rules of the game — you will need several pages," said the Army aficionados. Scoring is complicated and you need a knowledgeable official in charge.

The game is the only one where players face each other across a centre line without a mirror image on the other side. Serving is via a low roof on the side of the court and players return when the ball rebounds off the concrete wall behind them.

The ball looks much like an ordinary tennis ball but is actually half an ounce heavier and bounces less. By the net is a gully in which the balls gather until the players push them into a waiting basket.

Seeded to reach the final was 2nd Lieutenant Mike Joynson of the Scots Guards, who had played Real Tennis at Oxford. He had made an early exit from the Rackets singles, thus proving that different skills were required for the two games.

"With the Real Tennis ball although you hit it hard it doesn't



Spectators crowd to watch a fast game of rackets.

bounce so much and it is harder to control the ball properly. But it's a super game," he said.

But Paul Watts believes that rackets players take better to the game than anyone else even lawn tennis players. The technique is nearest to rackets which in his view makes it all the more natural to hold the two championships in tandem.

"It's super that so many people who have not played before have been willing to give it a go. I was astonished at how good the standard was and some of those who had not played before have provided really excellent rallies."

Favourite for the first Army Real Tennis singles title was Captain Mark Nicholls of the 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards. A Cambridge Real Tennis Blue he had also won the Army Rackets title for three out of the last four years and was hoping for a double.

Rackets secretary is Major Barry Aitken, whose recent efforts on behalf of the sport were rewarded with what was thought to be the highest entry since the war.

Rackets is said to have developed in the Fleet debtors' prison in London. When the gentlemen debtors finally emerged — often to make their fortunes — they took the game with them and it was introduced at many of the major public schools.

The ball is small, hard and covered with white tape to play off the black court with its concrete floor. World class players

are reckoned to hit at speeds approaching 200 miles an hour.

"It is the fastest racket and ball game in the world," explains Major Aitken. "The only thing which touches it for speed is pelota." The racket is the same shape as for squash but longer and with a far stronger frame and stringing.

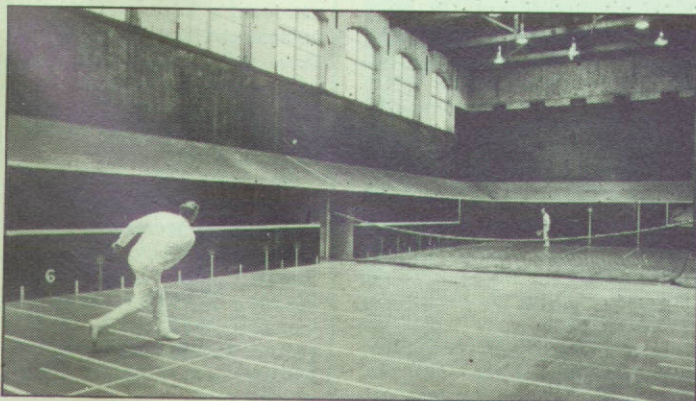
Rackets went into a decline after the last war but recent times have seen a revival and the Army too has shown a growing interest. But both sports are basically officer oriented — a state of affairs which is unlikely to change much.

"These games do have a tradition of elitism attached to them," admits Major Watts. "The only reason they won't become generally popular is that the facilities are not available."

Outside the public schools there are few rackets courts and there are only about 20 real tennis courts in the whole country, leaving few opportunities for people to take the game up.

But Major Aitken stresses that soldier players would be welcome and cites the example of a company sergeant major in the Guards who took rackets up with some success in recent years.

"If you are a squash player you will enjoy it. It goes so fast you cannot stop the adrenalin. But to play well you would probably need to go to a professional at one of the schools where it is played."



Serving off the roof or penthouse at Real Tennis.



50 Missile Regt pull to victory in the 640 kilo event.

MISSILE MACHINE

THE KINGS of Army Tug of War, 50 Missile Regiment, Royal Artillery, once again scythed through the opposition at the Army's Indoor Inter-Unit championships at Aldershot. Without conceding a single pull they notched up victories in both the 560 and 640 kilo events for the third year in a row. They are also outdoor champions.

The squad, coached by Warrant Officer 2 (AQMS) Vince Zammit, had been training hard for the championships since October. And they were confident from the beginning of notching up a hat-trick of wins in each weight section.

Said team manager, Warrant Officer 2 Bob Dormedy: "Since late October we have been training for an hour or so every morning and every afternoon in our own time. This year we have four or five new members but the nucleus of the squad is the same."

Dormedy added: "The driving force behind the team is our coach. He teaches them the training and pulling techniques and tells them what weight he wants them at. If they do not conform they get binned. This is how we find the really dedicated chaps."

Making a comeback after three years out of the competition were former Army and Combined Services champions, Military Corrective Training Centre, Colchester. Under the same coach who took them to past triumphs, the security men succeeded in reaching the final of the heavier weight contest only to go under to the 50 Missile machine.

The MCTC coach, Sergeant Les Charlton, was well pleased



Showing the strain — 7 Armd Wksp REME.

with the performance of his men as they included only one member of the old championship team and had only been training for a fortnight.

And Tug of War officer, Major Peter Andrews, recalled a fortnight's hectic activity getting together people who were working different shifts. "Some of them have come off after 12 hours night duty straight on to pulling a rope. But they have done as they have been told — not drunk the night before and starved themselves to get to the right weight."

The fierce chanting (usually of 'push left') of the competing teams added to those of the spectators created a noisy and exciting atmosphere in Aldershot's Maida Gymnasium.

Most people think of brawny blacksmiths stripped to the waist on the village green when they think of tug of war. But the Army's top exponents know that sheer strength is not the only factor — style, balance and rhythm play a big part. During some of the many pulls during the day a team would be almost home and dry only to lose its rhythm and find themselves tumbling.

Entries were up this year at 13 in the 560 kgs and 14 for the 640. A late withdrawal by last year's outdoor UKLF champions, 40 Field Regiment RA, prevented the field from being even stronger.

Beaten finalists in the lighter weight event were the School of Electronic Engineering, Arborfield.

Boxers lose in luxury

THE FIRST OF this year's Inter-Service boxing matches, against the Royal Navy, saw the Army narrowly defeated by six bouts to four. The event was held for the first time in the luxurious surroundings of Manchester's Piccadilly Hotel watched by 500 members of the Anglo-American Sporting Club.

Private Carl Crook, of 1 Para, notched up the first Army win of the evening with a majority points decision over ROM McGlyn. But his brother Pete at welter weight did not fare so well — the referee stopped his contest in the second round to give victory to A/B Green.

The Army's heavyweight hope, Rifleman Horace Miles of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets, avenged last year's defeat by L/SA Greenacre. Last year Miles was knocked out but this time he cruised to a unanimous points decision.

OTHER RESULTS: Bantam - L/Cpl Shanley (Green Howards) lost to A/B Evans (referee stopped contest); Fly-Pte M Priestley (2 LI) beat ROS Haldane (points); Feather-Pte Ian Birnie (1 Para) lost to A/SS Gill (points); light-welter — Ranger 'Peppy' Muir (2 Royal Irish) beat JWEM Mandley (points); Light-middle — Kingsman 'Harry' Harrison (1 Kings) lost to ROM Lescott (points); Middle-Gdsm Sangster (2 Scots Gds) lost to ASN Croombes (points); Light-heavy — Gdsm Bailey (1 Irish Gds) lost to Seaman Shumacher (points).

Three days of bowling

THE 15TH ARMY Tenpin Bowling Championships are to be held at the Charrington Bowl, Tolworth, from Friday 2nd to Sunday 4th April. Last year the tournament attracted a huge increase in entries and to cope with this there will be three full days of bowling this year.

The tournament is open to all serving members of the Regular Army.

For rules, information and entry forms contact the tournament secretary, S/Sgt D Bowman RAPC, F9 (AD), Room 726 Lansdowne House, Berkeley Square, London W1X 6AA. Telephone Lansdowne House Military ext 7323 or STD 01-409 7323.

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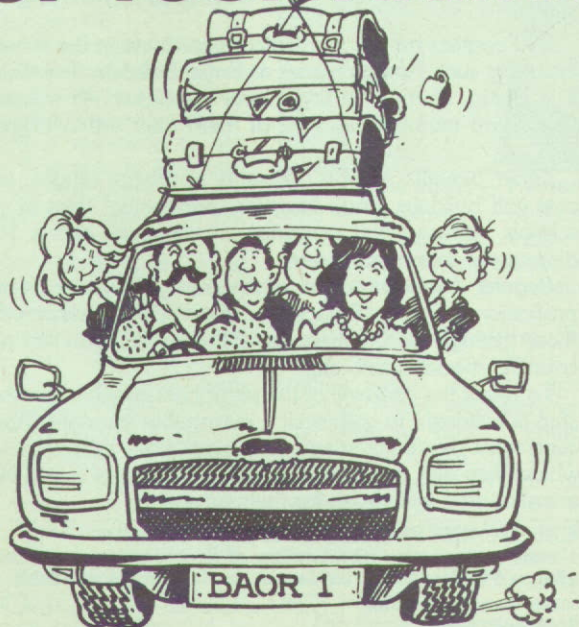
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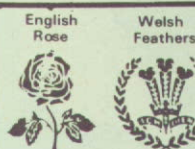
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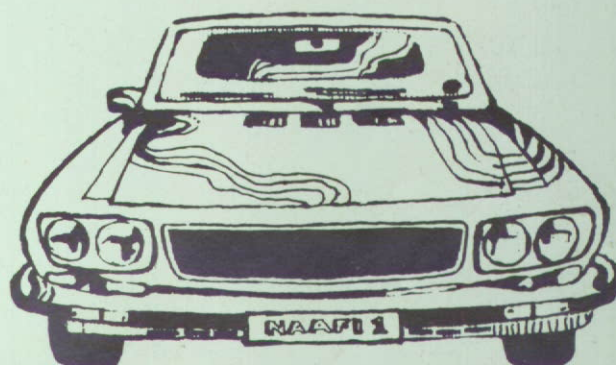
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