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NATOCARS
OF BRIDGWATER

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FRONT COVER

Sgt Bill McCowan of 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery, takes a bearing before deployment of the 105 mm light gun during a recent winter warfare exercise in Norway.
Story — page 8
Picture by Doug Pratt



REGULAR FEATURES

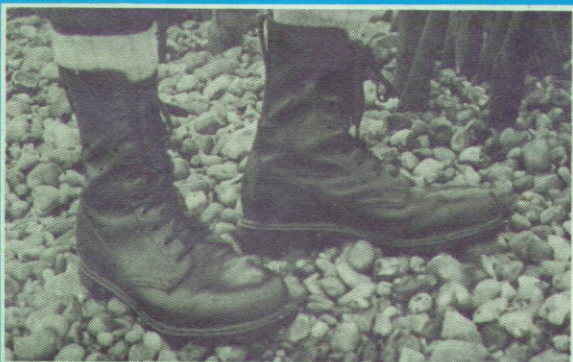
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BACK COVER

L/Sgt Horrigan, 1st Battalion Irish Guards, throws a right on his way to victory over Fusilier Ryan, 2nd Battalion The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, in the UKLF inter-unit novices finals.
Picture by Doug Pratt



26 Trying out the new combat boot



22 Close-up on Nato's smallest army



Subscription (13 issues): UK/BFPO £5.15, Elsewhere £6.10.
SOLDIER News subscription (26 issues); UK/BFPO £5.60, Elsewhere £6.00.
Send UK cheque, UK postal order or international money order **expressed in sterling** and state when subscription is to start and to whom to be addressed. Payments to be sent to SOLDIER and made payable to Command Cashier UKLF.

Editorial, photographic, advertising and circulation enquiries should be addressed to SOLDIER, Ordnance Road, ALDERSHOT, Hants, GU11 2DU (phone GPO Aldershot 24431, military network Aldershot Military).

SOLDIER is published by the Ministry of Defence and printed by Eden Fisher (Southend) Ltd, 555 Sutton Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex. Crown copyright 1981.

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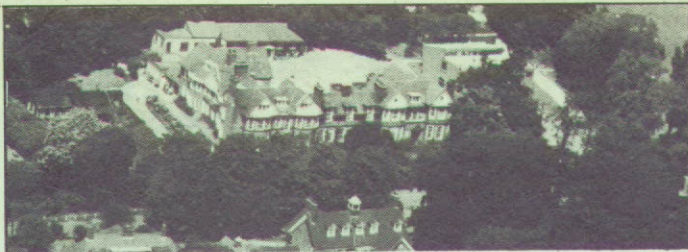
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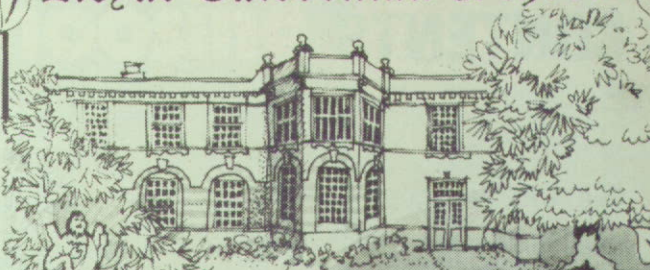
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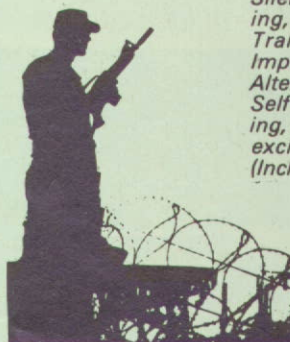
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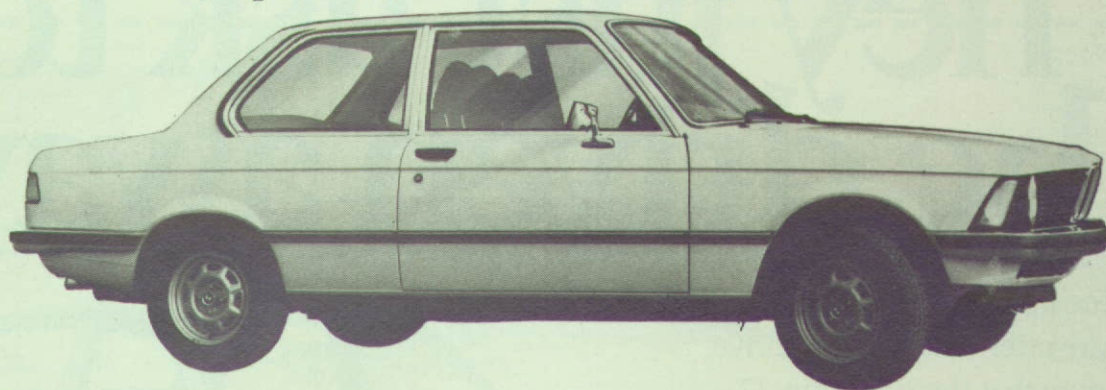
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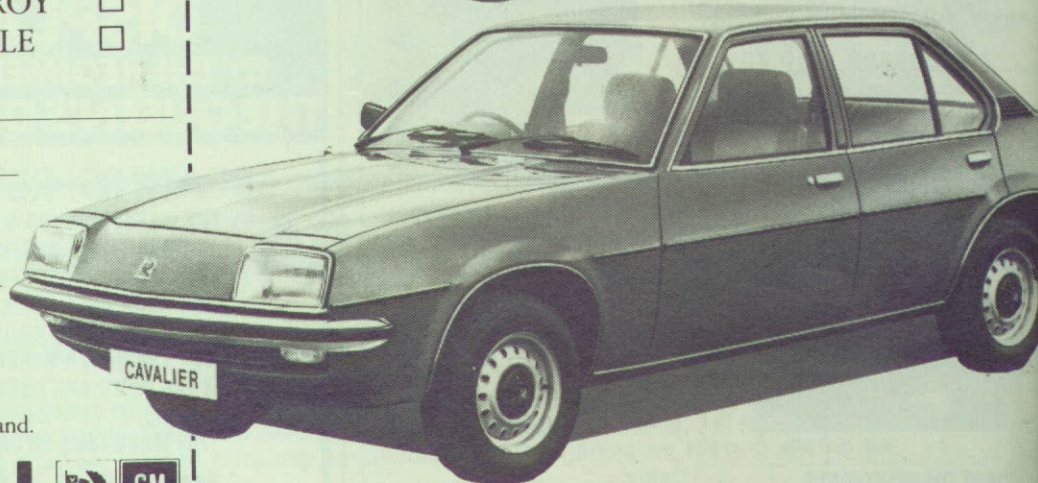
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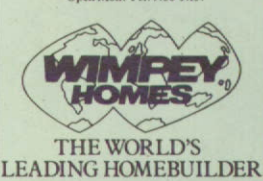
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| □ Leeds, Crossgates | £19,895 |
| □ Crossgates (B) | £19,395 |
| □ Leeds, Stourton | £17,850 |
| □ Leeds, Whinmoor | £19,150 |
| □ Whinmoor (B) | £17,995 |
| □ Sheffield, Dinnington | £11,550 |
| □ Dinnington* | £11,450 |
| □ Dinnington (B) | £1 |
| □ Sheffield, Thorpe Hesley | £17,995 |
| □ Thorpe Hesley (B) | £16,450 |
| EAST SCOTLAND | |
| □ Blackburn, Nr. Aberdeen | £23,995 |
| □ Bridge of Don, Nr. Aberdeen | £23,995 |
| □ Bridge of Don* | £18,495 |
| □ Bridge of Don (B) | £1 |
| □ Dalgety Bay | £19,750 |
| □ Dalgety Bay | £20,495 |
| □ East Calder | £17,995 |
| □ Edinburgh | £22,450 |
| □ Edinburgh | £18,995 |
| □ Inverness | £18,750 |
| □ Kinross | £17,750 |
| □ Kinross (B) | £16,595 |
| □ Linlithgow | £19,650 |
| □ Linlithgow* | £18,495 |
| □ Linlithgow (B) | £1 |
| □ Penicuik | £19,650 |
| □ Peterhead | £19,895 |
| □ Stirling | £28,995 |
| WEST SCOTLAND | |
| □ Ayr | £38,750 |
| □ Ayr (B) | £32,750 |
| □ Bishopbriggs | £22,500 |
| □ Bishopbriggs (B) | £1 |
| □ Bishopbriggs (M) | £19,495 |
| □ Carlisle | £1 |
| □ Carlisle (B) | £1 |
| □ Cumbernauld | £20,250 |
| □ Cumbernauld* | £17,750 |
| □ Dumfries | £16,250 |
| □ Dumfries* | £13,495 |
| □ East Kilbride | £25,500 |
| □ East Kilbride* | £17,150 |
| □ East Kilbride (M) | £17,350 |
| □ Glasgow | £20,895 |
| □ Glasgow (M) | £16,995 |
| □ Hamilton | £20,495 |
| □ Hamilton (B) | £1 |
| □ Hamilton (M) | £16,250 |
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* 1 bed houses. (B) Bungalows. (M) Maisonnettes.
(F) Flats. Δ Future development.
† Currently sold out, next phase awaited.
These are the lowest prices on each development and may vary as the houses available are sold. If you are in London, drop in and get the facts from the Private Housing Enquiry Office, Hammersmith Grove, London, W6. Open Mon.-Fri. 9.30-5.15.



Every winter Britain's Commando Forces string out across Norway training to defend the vital northern flank of Nato against attack from the East in conditions which would stretch the ability and endurance of any man or machine. Among them are Army personnel, gunners and sappers, all wearing the Green Beret. SOLDIER visited both units, 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery and 59 Independent Squadron, Royal Engineers, as they practised their particular roles in

THE WHITE OUT WAR



Stories: John Walton
Pictures: Doug Pratt

A THIN SUN shone across the Christmas card landscape, its beams reflected in a million places from the carpet of snow and ice. It also shone on teams of gunners erecting tents and digging pits for their 105 mm light guns.

And while those rays of sunshine brought little warmth to the labouring soldiers they also brought little cheer to the hearts of their instructors. For this was sub-Arctic Norway in winter and the benign weather was no help in what they were trying to teach — how to survive and operate effectively as soldiers in temperatures perhaps 40 or 50 degrees Fahrenheit below the freezing point at which the thermometer was currently hovering.

What they feared most was that the novices at winter warfare, having had an easy passage, would not fully appreciate the difficulties which they would be likely to encounter in a real war in wintertime Norway. Problems like never touching a piece of metal with the bare hand, quite possible on this day as the men of 8 Alma Commando Battery, Royal Artillery — 'Black 8' — prepared for the arrival of their guns already visible on the distant snowline towed by Volvo Snowcats and fitted with ski-type runners.

The battery — it got its name from the black faces of the gunners after the heavy barrage it supplied at the battle of Alma — was going through its first dry artillery practice since its arrival in Norway as part of 29 Commando Regiment RA. And supplementing its numbers were men from its sister battery, 79 Kirkee Commando Battery. Soon they are to exchange roles. 79 will become an Arctic unit while 8 becomes what is known in the Regiment as 'the sunshine battery' — destined for duty in far hotter climes.

Those three weeks had seen a lot of what passes for warm weather in the Norwegian winter. Sergeant Paul Monk, on his fourth winter in Norway and 11 years with the battery, tried to look on the bright side. Including those from 79 Battery something like three-quarters of the men were on their first visit and the mild conditions could help them learn the early stages of working with a gun in the cold.

The Snowcats moved off to the nearby wooded areas to camouflage up. Meanwhile the white camouflage nets also went up around the gun positions. Earlier the positions had been carefully measured out to give the right arcs of fire for the targets. And a vehicle had made a track around which all the Snowcats had to pass — as little snow should be disturbed as possible.

Lieutenant Mark Waring, the battery's gun position officer, explained that the dry training was in preparation for a move to the grim and barren Hjerkind ranges for actual live firing. Techniques were different for the Arctic — among other things they had to use a lot of air burst because snow tended to absorb shells.

Some 330 men from 29 Commando Regiment were to spend two months in Norway in their role as the artillery support for Commando Forces. This was practically the entire regiment apart from the residue of the current sunshine battery.

The regiment first came into existence in



1962 and every man in it goes through pre-training with the regiment as well as taking part in the all-arms commando course at Lympstone (see SOLDIER March issue).

Their base is at the Citadel in Plymouth. But one battery, 7 Sphinx, is based at Arbroath with 45 Commando Force. They were originally the Arctic specialists but now there is involvement at Commando Brigade level in the winter exercises in Norway.

There is also a Forward Observation Battery, based at Poole, and tasked with the job of providing parties to direct the fire of naval guns. Two parties of five of these specialists were based with the regiment and others were deployed with the AMF(L) forces.

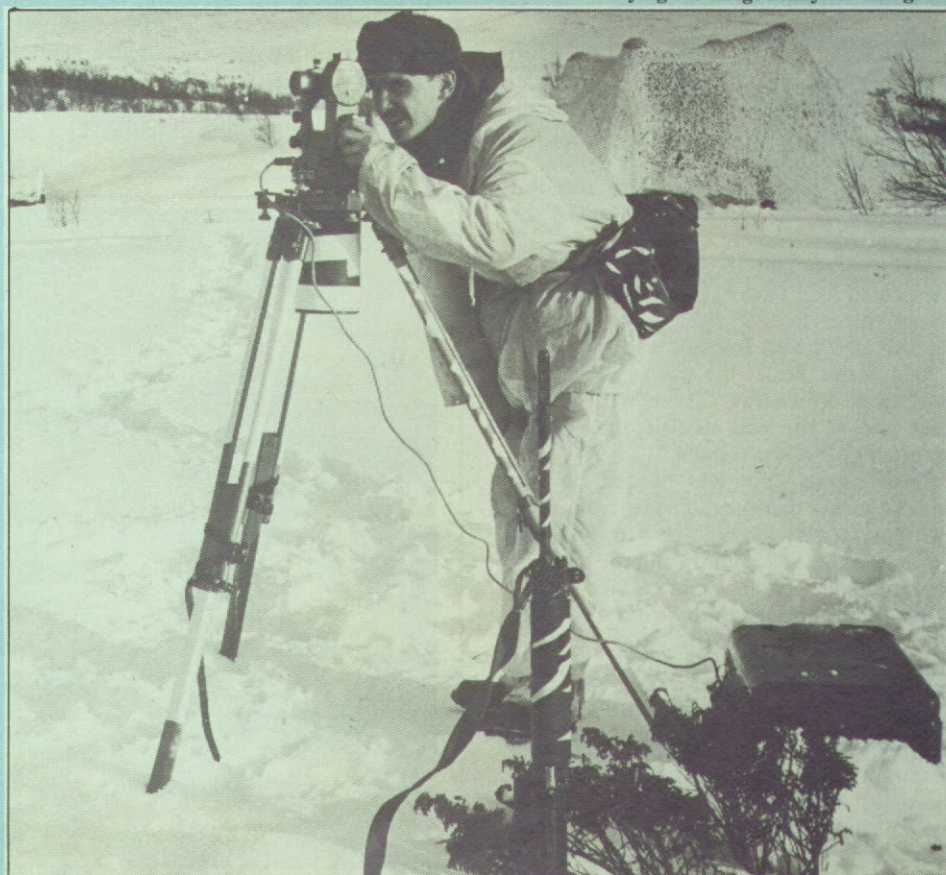
Those first three weeks in Norway had

Above: Arab headdress helps brave Arctic frost. been spent in basic Arctic warfare training under the overall supervision of two Royal Marine mountain leaders as well as the regiment's own instructors.

Major Richard Holl, second-in-command of the regiment, was not alone in bemoaning the mild winter. He told SOLDIER: "We would have preferred it colder. It's fine for people to stand around and watch demonstrations but they tend to learn false lessons. One does not start to really appreciate the really good Arctic kit we have got until it starts to get more than 15 below. And if snow is cold it brushes off and you stay dry while if it is warm it melts on your clothes and you get wet, which can be dangerous."

continued over

Below: Surveying the range ready for firing.



Left: Men of 79 Commando Battery RA, soon to take an Arctic role, camouflage the 105 light gun.



Above: The Volvo Snowcat — 'a great bit of kit.'

To get the Arctic warfare qualification you must become a proficient skier. Something like 100 men had not been to Norway before, although some had skied in Germany, so it was surprising to learn that there had been only one serious skiing injury plus a few sprains and bruises during the whole training period. The commando gunners attribute this to their supreme physical fitness compared to the novice holidaymakers, who tend to collect a bigger crop of injuries.

The gunners were based for the second year running at a summer holiday camp at Stugudal, close to the Swedish border. The chalets provided them with excellent accommodation, although the numbers of soldiers housed there meant that they were somewhat more crowded than the tourists who stay during the short Norwegian summer.

Major Richard Beale, community relations officer for the regiment, said that going to the same place two years running was a great advantage as any initial suspicions from the surrounding valley folk — mostly foresters — had been abated in 1980.

Both years an article had been placed in the local paper explaining what was going to happen. And soccer mad Norwegian schoolchildren from the area (they know all the British clubs and stars as British football is shown on Norwegian television) received instruction on the game from three of the regiment's best players.

Major Beale and the assistant adjutant, Lieutenant Ann Taylor, also visited the local school three times a week to talk to the English class about England and English.

Said Major Beale: "It was as though we had never been away. There were all the same faces — the local officials, the cleaners at the camp, the tradesmen."

Extra special care was needed by the soldiers as any damages to come from their own pocket were likely to be hefty — Norway is an expensive country and the bill for a broken table or chair would be high.

But the camp manageress paid a fulsome tribute when she said that after the 1980 visit the camp had been left in better condition by the 300 troops than after the usual tourist season.

The men of 79 Battery were continuing a 12 month clothing trial which had begun in the sticky heat of Belize. The aim of Exercise Custom Tailor is to see if a rationalised range of combat clothing can be produced for different climates.

The tropical lightweight disruptive pattern clothing issued to the battery in Belize was also being used in Norway. Major Ian Durie, battery commander, said the trousers appeared to be finding favour in the sub-Arctic conditions. A jacket to the same design as the windproof smock also appeared to be very suitable for the area. And disruptive pattern waterproofs were being tested.

In addition to the ordinary No 2 dress shirt and the KF shirt, the battery had been issued with the 'stone's shirt' normally worn by the RAF and Royal Marines. This, too, appeared to be preferred for wearing in barracks although this might be due to its novelty value. Major Durie said the shirt had also been worn in Belize where it had been found to be slightly less sweaty.

Another item on issue was the Norwegian Army shirt, slightly woolly with a roll neck and zip fastener. That has also been worn in the United Kingdom as part of the trial.

Arctic socks had been worn in Belize with amazing success. Said Major Durie: "They were less hot and very comfortable when they got wet. We had to put in an interim report when we got back from Belize and the one thing everybody agreed on was how good the Arctic sock was. And it is very hard wearing — after nearly a year there are no holes."



There was a snowy setting for three of the regiment's senior NCOs when they received their long service and good conduct medals in Norway. Sgt Ronald Smith, WO 2 Michael McDean and WO 2 John Francis had all notched up 15 years service. The presentation was made by Major-General Arthur Stewart Cox, Colonel Commandant of the Regiment and a former CO. He said he was delighted to be visiting them after a 12 year absence "and to see everything in such great nick".

79 Battery was chosen for the exercise because it would be serving in the tropics, the Arctic and the United Kingdom within 12 months. The trial continues until the summer.

The following week the gunners were moving out to the grim and desolate Hjer-kinn ranges for actual live firing. After that they were off to Northern Norway to join up with the rest of the Commando Forces for 'Exercise Cold Winter' — when they would be in opposition to Canadian, US and Norwegian troops.

"It will be straight into the snow for us with no barracks", said Major Holl. And that was likely to provide the real test for what the gunners had been taught about how to survive and fight in the inhospitable Norwegian winter.

Four WRAC girls went on Arctic exercise with the Commando Gunners for the first time this year. The regiment's assistant adjutant has been a WRAC officer for several years and she has always accompanied the men to Norway.

But this year the four clerks also went along. And the experiment was a great success. Said Private Susan Burnett (19): "We are getting to know the men in the regiment better. And we have been learning to ski — which is fantastic."

And Private Diane Stewart (20) added: "We were worried about the cold but it has been very nice."

Assistant Adjutant, Lieutenant Anna Taylor summed up: "They all now feel they are actually part of the regiment. The lads are actually sitting next to them at dinner time instead of keeping well clear."

Pictured are Pte Diane Stewart, Pte Carol Burlinson (standing) and Pte Susan Burnett.



Left: Snow and dirt flying high as sappers blast. Above: Sappers took heart from ski-ing victory.

FOR THE SECOND YEAR running the 161 men of 59 Independent Commando Squadron, Royal Engineers, were based at an infantry training camp on the edge of the small town of Steinkjer and as the sappers attempted to master the art of ski-ing they were able to watch Norwegian Army recruits doing the same thing.

Said the squadron second-in-command, Captain Nigel Forrestal: "It was very good for morale to see that Norwegians are not all born with skis on their feet."

An even greater morale boost came when a team of squadron ski instructors took on the Norwegian instructors in a 20 kilometre cross-country ski race. Last year the Britons had been comprehensively beaten but this year there was an upset.

Corporal Tony Swierzgy came second out of the 16 competitors — only 50 seconds behind the Norwegian camp champion. And the eight man British team finished with an overall time six minutes better than the home side.

Said Captain Forrestal: "It came as a bolt

out of the blue for the Norwegians. Because we are a commando squadron we are much fitter than they are so it was a question of fitness triumphing over technique."

Like the gunners, the sapper squadron began their Norwegian winter with three weeks Arctic warfare training for all newcomers and one week's continuation training for those who had been before. There was also a one week survival course for headquarters people like clerks and pay sergeants who could not be spared for three weeks.

A general survival test was the culmination of the training. With no rucksacks, sleeping bags or special Arctic clothing, just whatever they happened to be wearing, they had to survive for 24 hours.

Reported Captain Forrestal afterwards: "We had to make whatever shelter we could, get a fire going and live on what rations we had at the time, which for most people was just two or three bars of chocolate."

"We had an inkling it was going to happen but not that night. In our group we were

all in ordinary jackets and smocks. Some had sweaters, some did not. We had one machete between six. We had to build a shelter big enough for six men and try to make a hot drink. We melted snow and heated it with powdered chocolate and Oxo."

In a longer survival phase the troops would be expected to hunt and fish — although wild life is quite hard to find in the middle of an Arctic winter.

The squadron is based at Plymouth with the exception of Condor Troop, part of 45 Commando at Arbroath. Unlike the commando gunners the sappers only spend three years with the squadron before moving on — although they do like to return for a second tour if they can. All except four of the 250-strong squadron are green beret trained.

After their Arctic warfare training the men moved on to specific Royal Engineers' tasks. Most of these pose particular problems in Arctic conditions and each winter the squadron works on perfecting its best equipment and techniques to cope with them.

The sun was shining on the nearby hills one morning but it had yet to penetrate the valley where Lieutenant Clive Livingstone, Staff Sergeant Peter Thorpe and their team of minelayers were practising in 12 degrees Centigrade of frost.

This year they were trialling, for the first time, a very old fashioned method of laying mines — by hand. Using a kind of sledge called a polk, the six man team measured the distance between mines with a length of rope and used tripod markers so as not to lose them in the snow. All very basic, but Lieutenant Livingstone explained that in rough, snowy terrain there were areas that Volvo Snowcats carrying bar minelayers

continued on page 12



Above: Carrying one of the floats for Class 16 bridge and (right) assembling it in the bay.
Below: Trialling minelaying by means of chute.



would not be able to reach.

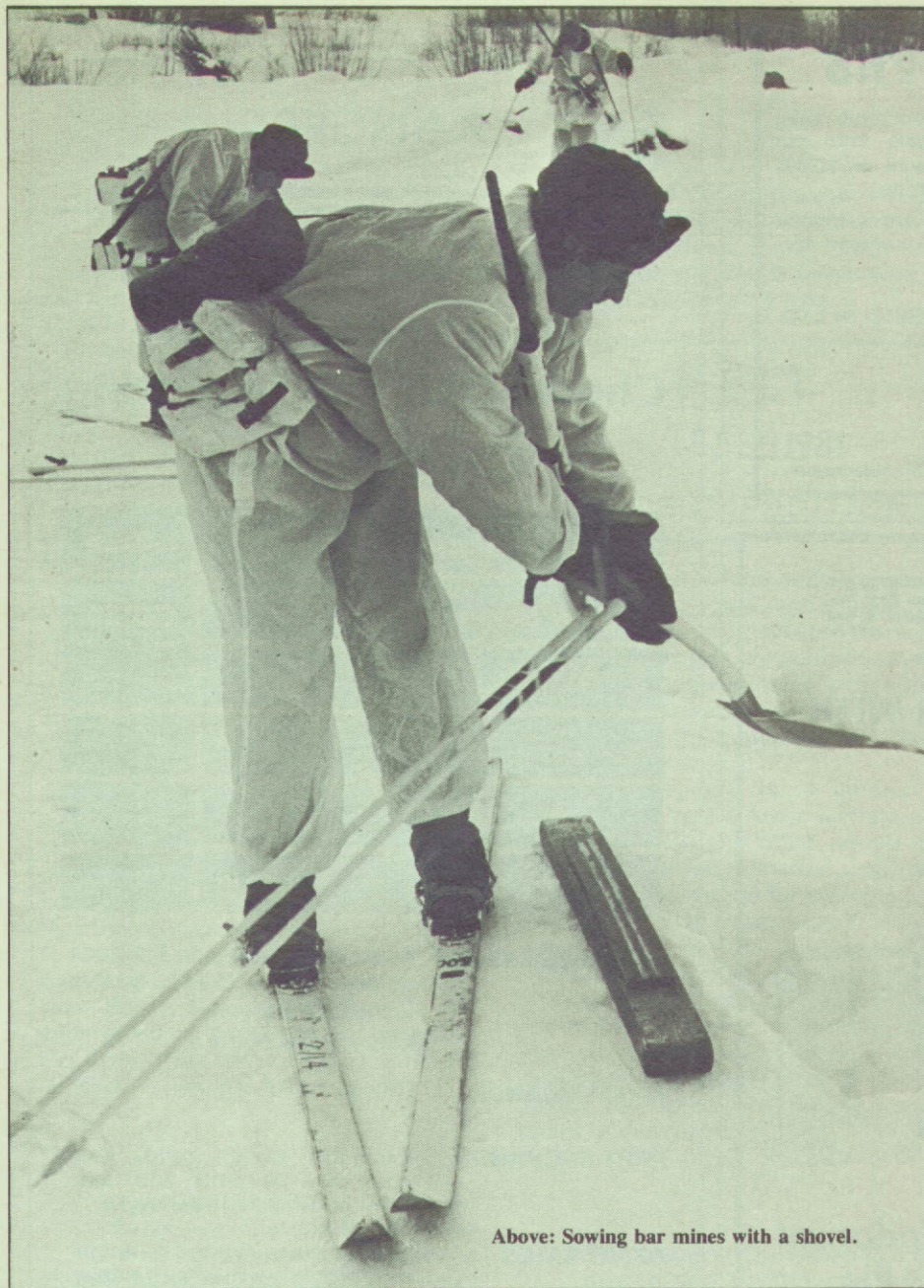
The bar minelayer itself is of course also being used in Norway and a third idea being trialled is a chute attached to the rear of a vehicle with a man following up to camouflage the mines with snow.

The squadron was also running its annual course for Volvo Snowcat drivers — an item of which they were soon to have twice as many. And for Norway the driver has to learn not just how to drive and service his

vehicle but such things as how to overcome snow and mountain obstacles, what to do if the vehicle throws a track and how to recover the vehicle from snow by its own means using a winch attached to a tree or some other feature.

Down in Steinkjer Bay another group were assembling the Class 16 airportable bridge. 59 is the only Royal Engineers squadron to have the bridge as part of its permanent equipment and this winter was





Above: Sowing bar mines with a shovel.

the first time they had been able to use it in Norway. The bridge has 20 floats and can be used as a raft.

Up on the Giskas ranges, thirty kilometres away in the hills, more of the squadron were practising their role of route denial. This involves blasting in order to crater roads or cause avalanches.

Staff Sergeant Trevor Collins took time off from the blasting to explain that the object was to find the quickest method of putting up obstacles in frozen conditions. There were a lot of problems — the detonator cord became brittle, the explosive had to be warmed and the permafrost had to be penetrated before they could get any results. This could be done by a drill and by laying small explosive charges on the surface to shift the permafrost.

The plant section of the support troop were also at Giskas complete with nine six-medium-wheel tractors, a grader and a D6 bulldozer — the latter out in Norway for the first time.

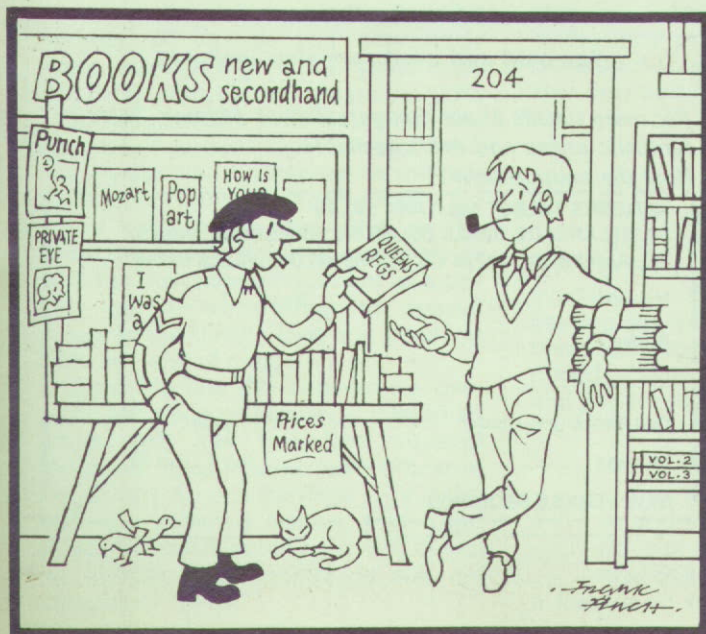
They helped the Norwegian range staff to clear and widen tracks, make a helipad and construct a new track to one of the ranges. But a more immediate task was to clear tracks through the snow for the field troops who would be doing Arctic trials on the ranges.

The range was blanketed with snow and although tracks are marked by sticks in some areas the snow was so deep they were covered over. Said Sergeant 'Smiler' Millward: "Fortunately most of my lads had been here last year and had a rough idea of where the tracks were. But the more snow clearing we do, the better it is for the lads to pick up tips on how to do it easier."

All of the machines had been winterised and there were no problems encountered during the mainly mild (for Norway) weather. The main test of men, machines and techniques was to come in the far north of Norway when the commando sappers would be in the thick of the final phase of this year's Arctic warfare training — 'Exercise Cold Winter'. ●

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, see page 53.





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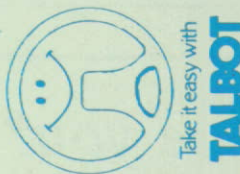
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NEW VEHICLE REQUIRED:

S11

SOLDIER to Soldier

Early reaction to the announcement that SOLDIER is to go fortnightly after September has been very encouraging and we have received a number of messages wishing the new venture well.

Planning the new magazine is now proceeding apace and we already have some interesting ideas in the pipeline which we're sure will expand and improve our coverage of the Army scene. Remember though, we want to hear your views. So drop us a line or give us a ring and tell us what you'd like to see featured in the new SOLDIER.

As explained last month, we cannot announce the cover price of the fortnightly magazine until a new printing contract has been awarded, so — for the time being — we shall continue to accept annual subscriptions for both SOLDIER and SOLDIER NEWS at the current rates. **This will not commit current subscribers to taking the new magazine.** When SOLDIER goes fortnightly, existing subscribers will be offered a credit against a new subscription based on the number of months that their present subscription still has to run. And they will be able to take up their new subscription at a preferential rate. But, if they decide they do not wish to go on receiving the magazine regularly, they will be given a refund instead.



Congratulations to John Jesse who chalks up his 100th military museums article this month (page 35) with his visit to the Mayfair home of the 4th Royal Green Jackets (TA).

John's peripatetic pursuit of military memorabilia started in January 1973 with a piece on the Durham Light Infantry museum, but he first set foot on the journalistic ladder more than fifty years ago as a £3-a-week sub-editor with Reuters. He subsequently held a number of agency and newspaper posts culminating in six years with SOLDIER until his retirement in 1974.

Soft-spoken and mild-mannered, the epitome of modesty and courtesy, John has always had an interest in military matters, particularly military history. He writes with inside knowledge of the Army too, having begun his war service with the Devonshire Regiment as a private before transferring to special duties in the Middle East and finishing with the rank of major.

Since his first museum article over eight years ago he has never missed an issue and has travelled several thousand miles to seek out the best of the British Army's heritage — a painstakingly polished century that Geoff Boycott himself would be proud of and an innings that, happily, is still not completed.

'We've been through hell' is an oft-quoted complaint when soldiers return from exercise. But for our troops in Norway this winter it literally came true.



Hell, a small village near Trondheim, does a roaring trade with tourists who wish to say they have visited there. You can buy postcards showing the station against an appropriately red sunset, have your passport specially stamped and get a complimentary train ticket — return to Hell.

Word soon got round among the units on this year's Arctic warfare exercise — posties and other people passing that way were loaded down with bundles of passports for stamping.

'Yours till Hell freezes over' is sometimes used by the mythical Denis Thatcher in his letters to his friend Bill in the satirical magazine *Private Eye*. Any letter from a soldier in Norway signed that way would hardly have a ring of fidelity — the temperature at this particular Hell rarely goes above freezing point in the winter.



The hazards of Territorial Army soldiering and adventurous training in the Trough of Bowland, that famous Lancashire beauty spot, were brought home to the Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry when they were forced to spend the night in Gisburn Forest by a swollen stream amid a heavy snowstorm. But it was difficult to convince them of the normal accuracy of the local press when, the next day, the *Manchester Evening News* reported that they had faced "a raging lizzard".



Areminder from our Reader Services department that bound volumes of SOLDIER 1980 are now available. In red Balacron with gilt title bearing the year and volume number, these attractive collectors' items are priced at £16.40 for UK/BFPO readers and £17 for those elsewhere.



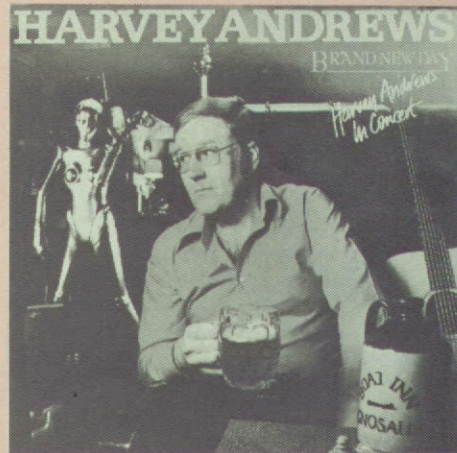
Are you interested in falconry? Or do you know any soldiers who are? SOLDIER is keen to research a feature on this oldest of sports and

would like to hear from any Serviceman who has falcons. We'd also like to hear from any other soldiers with unusual hobbies or pursuits — preferably, but not necessarily, with a military connection.



One of the Army's biggest friends in show business is leading folk singer/composer Harvey Andrews. Every year he travels thousands of miles to entertain troops with Combined Services Entertainment.

In 1972 he wrote his never-to-be-forgotten song *Soldier* describing the heroic death of a soldier in Northern Ireland. It was regarded as controversial in some quarters but the troops never stopped clamouring for it whenever Harvey appeared.



Soldier naturally enough winds up his new live LP — *Brand New Day — Harvey Andrews in Concert*, which is now available to SOLDIER and SOLDIER NEWS readers. But a number of other old favourites as well as newer songs are included in the record which was recorded at the 'Hare and Hounds' in King's Heath, Birmingham.

Because of its live nature the recording quality is not always as good as on some of Harvey's previous albums. But balanced against that is the atmosphere and repartee which go to make up the good folk club performance.

Friends of Mine, Lullaby, Boothferry Bridge, Gift of a Brand New Day are among the better known numbers while he also includes the haunting *Margarita*, the jolly *Volendam* and his caustic view of some aspects of the Midlands capital — *We in Berning'm*.

By special arrangement with Harvey we are able to offer the record to our readers by post at a cost of £5.50. Just fill in the form and mail it direct to him (not to SOLDIER) together with your remittance.

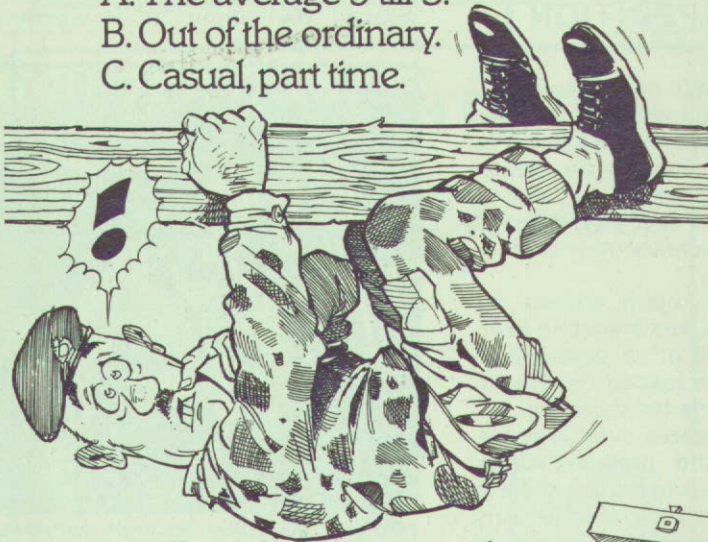
To Harvey Andrews, c/o Beeswing Records, 68 Limes Road, Tettenhall, Wolverhampton, WV6 8RB. Please send me the SOLDIER offer of your new album *In Concert*. I enclose my remittance of £5.50 to cover cost and postage to me at the address below.

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How do you score with money?

1. Do you consider your job to be:

- A. The average 9 till 5.
- B. Out of the ordinary.
- C. Casual, part time.



2. When do you remember to pay the TV rental?

- A. In the middle of an assault course.
- B. When they come to take it away.
- C. Never. I've issued NatWest with a Standing Order and they remember for me.

3. How do you ensure that your wife gets her housekeeping?

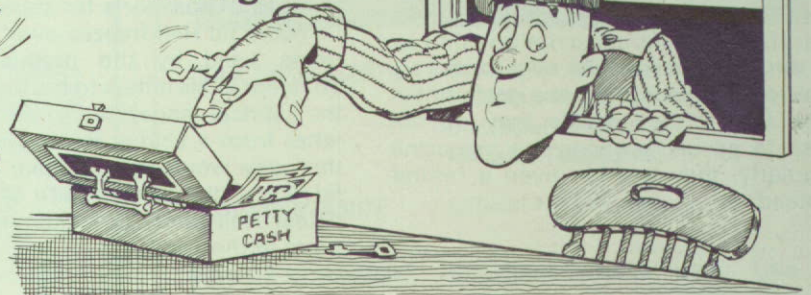
- A. Don't bother—she'll manage somehow.
- B. Give it to mother to pass on.
- C. Open a joint account at NatWest so that she can get her housekeeping when she needs it.



4. The electricity bill has come as a shock. Watt are you going to do?

- A. Run and hide in the mess.
- B. Nothing. I have a Budget Account at NatWest so I can spread the cost of my large bills over 12 equal payments.
- C. Freeze.

5. Where's the best place to get cash at midnight?



- A. From the petty cash box in the C.O.'s office.
- B. Borrow it again.
- C. From a NatWest Servicetill.

Scores: 1. A1, B2, C0. 2. A1, B0, C2.

3. A0, B1, C2. 4. A0, B2, C0. 5. A0, B0, C2.

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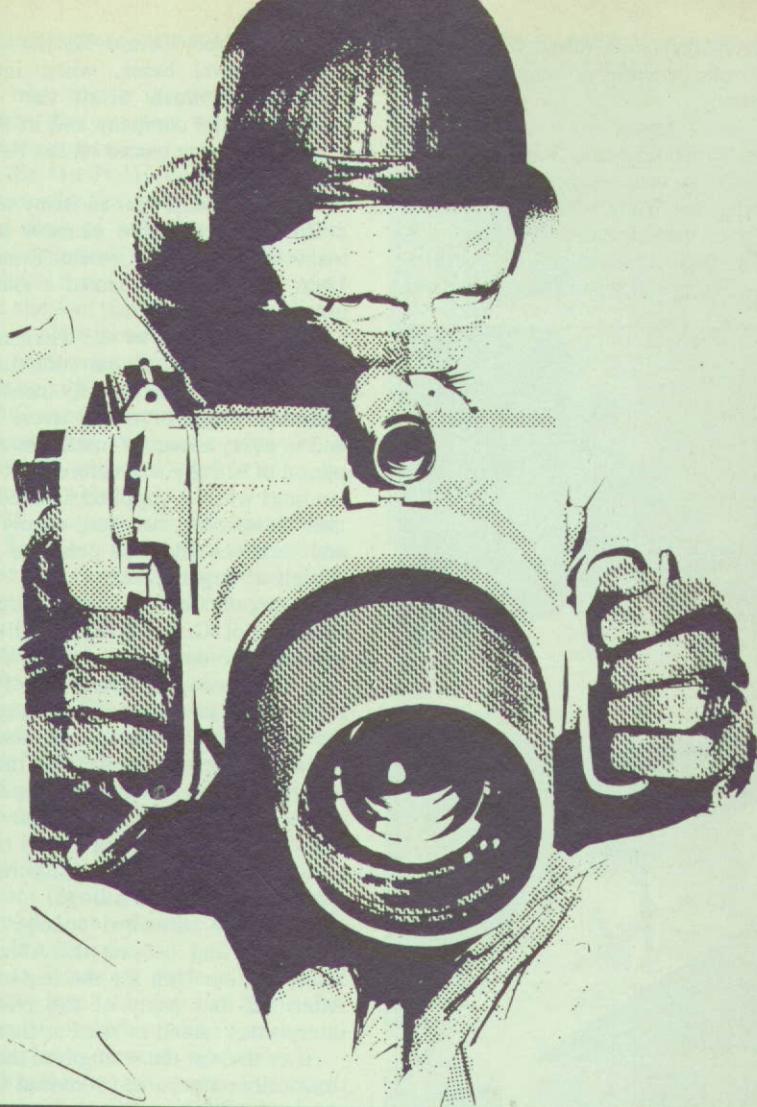
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ALMOST A CENTURY AGO a Royal Engineers officer, Major H Elsdale, made an experimental attempt at aerial photography. Tethering two cameras to balloons and operating their shutters by an ingenious clockwork mechanism, he obtained a photograph of the Citadel in Halifax, Nova Scotia, from 1450 feet and took a number of other pictures at up to 3000 feet.

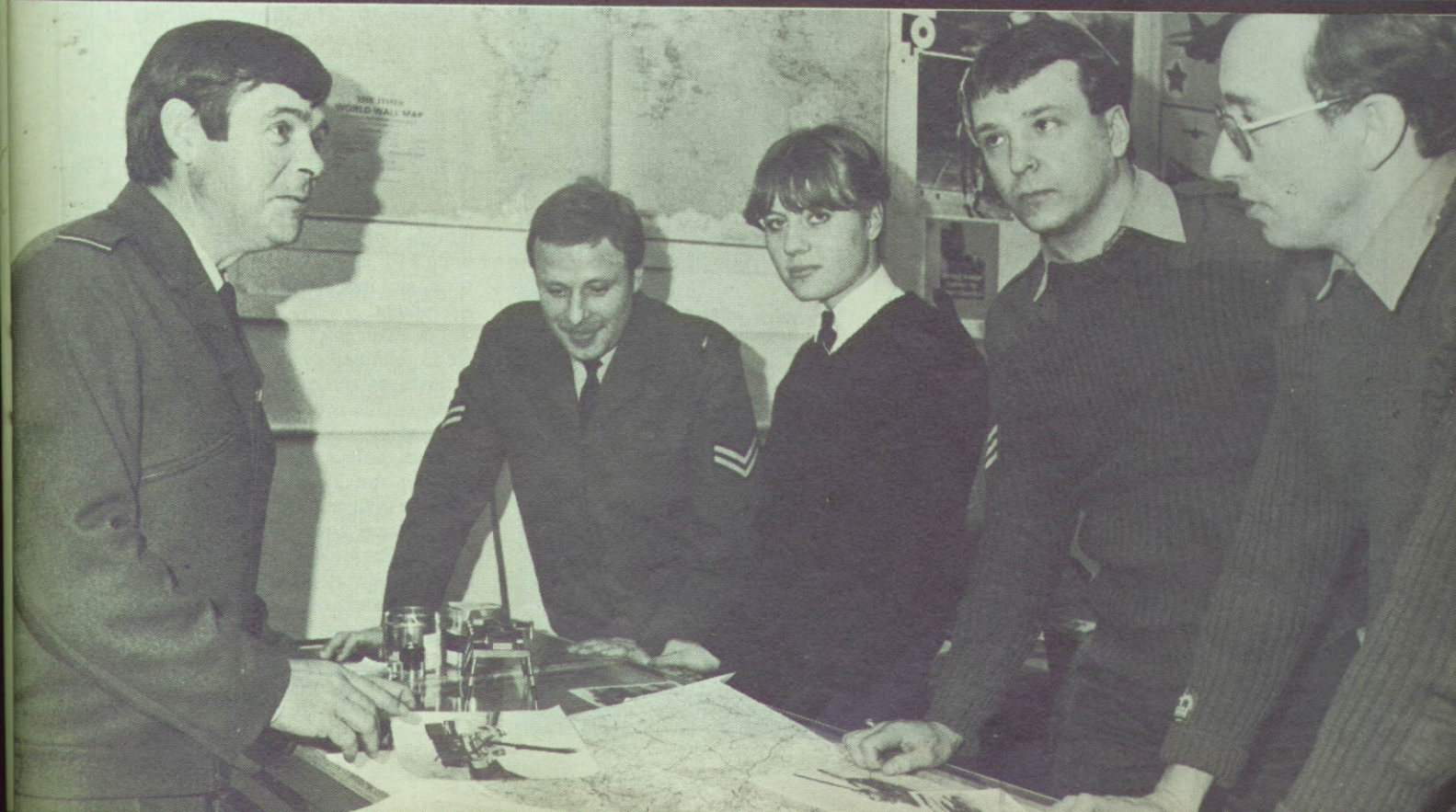
Today, the taking of photographs from the air is a very sophisticated business, and for the British Services the main centre of expertise is a small section at RAF Brampton — The Joint Air Reconnaissance Intelligence Centre — which last summer celebrated its 40th anniversary.

continued on page 18

Left: Artist's study of pre-WW2 aerial camera.

Below: Flying officer Geoff Bibby discusses identification drill with some of his tri-service staff.

LYNX EYED JARIC SEES ALL



Aerial photography for military purposes really got under way in the First World War and it was another Army officer, a gunner this time, who helped it 'take off'.

Lieutenant Charles Curtis Darley, a Royal Artillery officer serving with the Royal Flying Corps, collected together photographs taken of the German lines and painstakingly built up a mosaic on which he marked all the points of interest. So impressed were Corps

headquarters that soon other RFC squadrons were taking aerial photographs of the enemy lines.

JARIC itself traces its origins back to 1940 after Winston Churchill had urged the Air Ministry to form a specialised unit to gain intelligence from aerial photography. Earlier, a civilian aerial survey firm had interpreted high altitude pictures covertly obtained by the freelance aerial photo-

grapher, Sydney Cotton. His photographs of German naval bases, when interpreted, revealed so much detail that Churchill insisted on the company and its specialised equipment being placed on the RAF establishment.

Later that same year an Army section and a Royal Navy liaison element joined the team to form the Central Interpretation Unit. And it has remained a joint Service unit ever since.

The unit, based by the Thames at Medmenham, played a vital role during 'the secret war' — it was directly involved in the planning stages of nearly every operation and in every aspect of intelligence. Its peak period of activity was before the Normandy landings when it supplied detailed information on terrain, beaches, enemy defences and locations and also prepared landscape models of target areas.

Among the unit's successes were the identification of German radar and electronic systems, the detection of Nazi V1 and V2 secret weapons, the planning of bombing raids and assessment of bombing damage, the selection of dropping and pick up zones for secret agents, monitoring the German Navy, assessing production capabilities of enemy industry, identifying the first German jet planes, checking enemy transportation systems and providing information for raids on the coast of Europe.

In 1944 it absorbed a large American contingent and became the Allied Central Interpretation Unit for the rest of the war. After VE day many of the photographic interpreters served in the Far East.

After the war the strength of the CIU was drastically reduced and it moved to Oxfordshire. In 1953 it took its present name and four years later moved to its present home.

Today the main role of JARIC remains essentially unchanged — the exploitation and reproduction of aerial imagery for the three Services and for various civilian bodies.

It is predominantly RAF manned but the other two Services are represented — with the Army providing about 12-15 per cent of the strength. The imagery analysts of the Intelligence Corps constitute the bulk of the Army personnel, but there are RAOC men in the printing area, plus some WRAC imagery analysts and Royal Engineers in the photogrammetry field — who measure objects of interest to the photointerpreters.

JARIC provides recognition aids for all three Services. These include topographical models, which can be used to familiarise units with areas in which they are going to train, and models of Nato and Warsaw Pact equipment.

The main roles of the Centre, of course, are in the intelligence field but it also holds archives of aerial photographs from many parts of the world, some going back to pre-war days. Many are stored on a computer and, unless classified, can be supplied through the Department of the Environment to civilian concerns — archaeologists, for instance, about to make a dig.

Old films are not consulted every day, but they can be very useful. When some unidentified canisters were unearthed in Germany, a check was made on wartime photographs



Above: S/Sgt Armstrong checks an identification.

Below: RAOC staff at work in printing area.



**Story: John Walton
Pictures: Doug Pratt**

to see just what was on the site at that time and whether the canisters were likely to contain toxic substances.

During the Moors Murders investigation the unit were asked to examine aerial photographs for signs of soil disturbance. And they have also assessed the impact of floods.

Some three times in the last 20 years JARIC has checked pictures allegedly showing the Loch Ness monster. The one which seemed to point most firmly towards there actually being a 'Nessie' was taken in 1963 when JARIC experts reported that the film showed something swimming away at a speed of 10mph and concluded 'it is probably an animate object'.

The 1967 pictures showed something moving at 5mph but in the most recent ones — provided by a national newspaper in 1978 — the mystery object moved no more than two feet during the filming.

'The object rises and descends vertically through the water three times during the filmed sequence. The swell and wave action do not appear to change noticeably during that period. The object is heavy and mostly submerged', says the report, which does not offer any conclusions about whether it is the Monster.

Like most Intelligence Corps interpreters, Staff-Sergeant David Armstrong can expect to spend more than one tour with JARIC during his Army career.

"As far as I can see there is no inter-Service rivalry here — in fact I've found the RAF extremely helpful. And it makes a change to get away from an all-Army environment. Except for two years I've been solely with the Army ever since I joined up in 1966."

On an exchange tour from the US Army Intelligence Corps, Capt Casey Beard told SOLDIER: "I'm having a super time. Within a few weeks I felt totally at home and

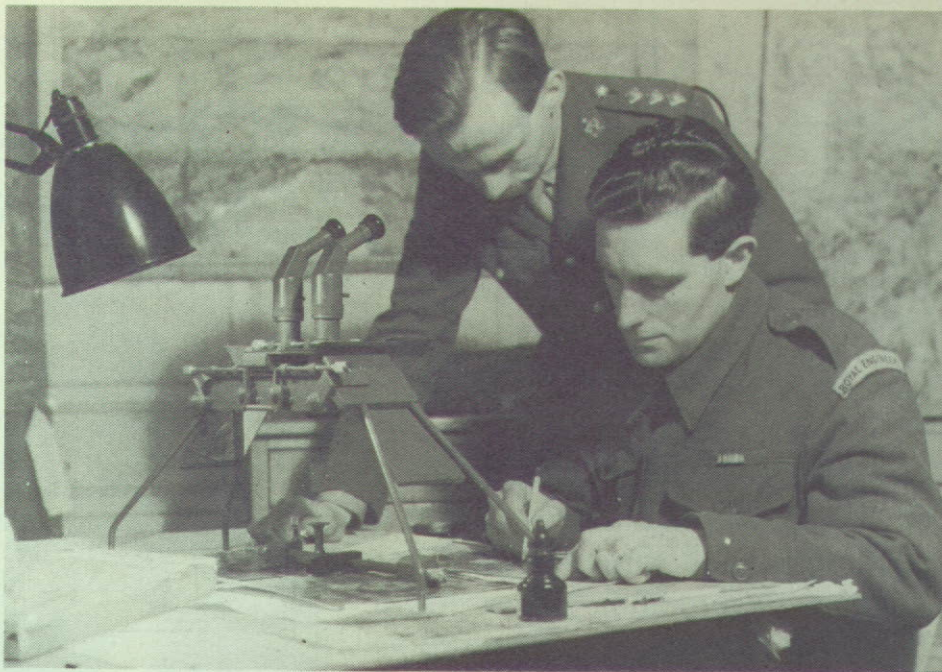
Some names which have later become famous have served with JARIC over the years — among them, during the war, Dirk Bogarde and the Prime Minister's daughter, Sarah Churchill.

Others to pass through the Centre have included the Very Reverend Antony Bridge, now Dean of Guildford, Pam Ayres, Des O'Connor and Glyn Worsnip.

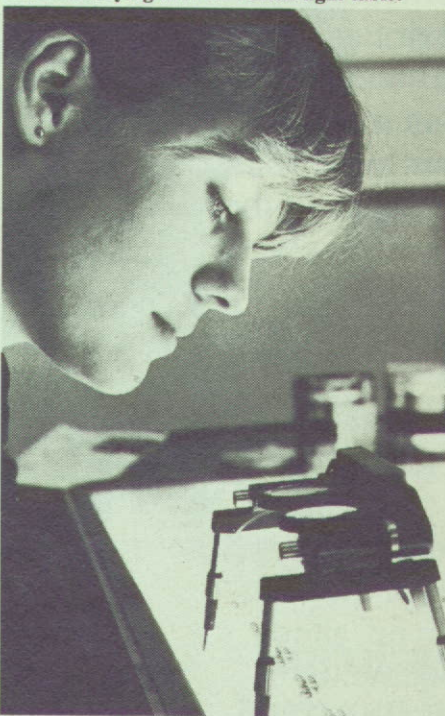
Worsnip in fact followed his father as a photo interpreter with JARIC. And last September he presented JARIC with the RAF cap which both of them wore — as well as telling them a funny story about it.

When Glyn joined JARIC as a National Service Flying Officer in 1957 he inherited the cap worn by his father, Flying Officer Jack Worsnip, at Medmenham in 1944.

Unfortunately, his father's head was larger. So Glyn used paper padding to make it fit. 'During the Queen's Birthday Parade, while giving three cheers for Her Majesty, the padding fell out of the cap — giving him several extra orderly officer duties' says the inscription under the cap — now in a glass case at JARIC.



Below: Studying film on Vinten light table.



Below: Plotting aerial photos on OS map.



could just as easily have been back in the US doing the same thing. But my parent organisation is exclusively Army so this is a unique opportunity for me to see not only the British Army but all three Services."

Lieutenant-Colonel Brian Terry, who as senior Army officer is also Deputy Commanding Officer, attributes the inter-Service cohesion to the fact that imagery analysis is a busy, interesting and important job.

Some months ago JARIC dropped the initials 'UK' which used to be bracketed after its name, because similar units in Cyprus and Hong Kong have now closed down.

TA photographic interpreters also go to JARIC at weekends where, unlike most part-time soldiers, they actually work on operations rather than on exercises. And this, of course, is what differentiates JARIC from most Service units — the work it does is for real rather than practising for an eventuality which everybody hopes will never materialise.

The job of JARIC is neatly summed up by the Latin inscription below its badge of a Lynx head. It reads *Nil Lyncea Latebit*. Or 'nothing shall be hidden from the Lynx'. ●

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Above: Patrol on exercise in Germany.
Below: MAG 7.62 in. anti-helicopter role.

NATO's MOUSE IS READY TO ROAR

THE GRAND DUCHY of Luxembourg fields Nato's smallest army with less than 650 men. And there is not a tank or tracked AFV in sight on its fertile landscape where, 36 years ago, German tanks thrust eastwards bound for neighbouring Belgium's Bastogne which immortalised the Battle of the Bulge.

Although land-locked Luxembourg is only slightly bigger than Dorset with a smaller population than Belfast, its military effort — it has no air force — makes it a 'mouse' with quite a



Story: Graham Smith
Pictures: Paul Haley

sizeable 'roar'. It takes its motorised light infantry battalion commitment to the seven-nation Allied Command Europe Mobile Force 'fire brigade' — AMF(L) — very seriously with responsibilities for northern flank reinforcement even though such deployment would leave few troops for the defence of the homeland.

Luxembourg, neutral in both wars but an enthusiastic Nato team member as an original signatory 32 years ago, knows it could not go it alone in the defence of its national ground without the help of strong colleagues.

It is aware that the security of the border to the east is beneficially buffered not only by its friendly 'big brother', West Germany, but by the Allied 'muscle power' stationed there.

Not surprisingly, Luxembourg's pint-sized army is a rich source of interesting data for the fact hungry.

Ten per cent of its total manpower is of musical bias — they are all bandmen. Another ten per cent is said to have Italian ancestry due to accumulated bygone immigration from south of the Alps.

The Chief of the army is a 51-year-old colonel.

Grand Duke Jean of Luxembourg served in the ranks with the Irish Guards from November 1942 until July 1943 when he was commissioned and served in north-west Europe with the regiment. His sons, the recently-wed heir to the throne, Prince Henri and younger brother, Prince Jean, attended the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1975 and 1977 respectively. Both hold the rank of captain in the Luxembourg Army.

Any man in The Duchy seeking a permanent career as a prison officer, policeman, post office employee, customs official, fores-

try commission worker, or as one of the para-military gendarmerie (Luxembourg has 430 of them, including women) must first undergo the disciplines of three years' army service.

Home for the Duchy's all-volunteer army is Herrenberg Barracks, near Diekirch, sitting among 1300-foot-high rolling hills about 20 miles almost due north of the country's capital — seat of the European Parliament. The barracks, built nearly 30 years ago to house 3000 men, is now the home of the Centre d'Instruction Militaire (CIM) which is subscribed by four annual intakes, averaging 40 men each.

The Luxembourg Army's development from the latter part of 1945 — the country had previously been neutral — was modelled on British Army lines. The Luxembourg government decided to build up its forces by national service. This ended in 1967.

Today's terms of engagement for non-senior NCOs and officers are open to those aged from 17 to 24 over a three-year period with an option of yearly extensions up to a maximum of seven years. Career officers and SNCOs usually stay until retirement at the age of 55.

Of the intakes, only two or three volunteers will usually drop out during the initial fortnight's training and perhaps the same number will leave after three months. There is no question of them having to buy themselves out.

The Duchy's army — clad in British inspired Service dress, Dutch combat boots or American fatigues — has an establishment for 30 officers, 100 SNCOs, 430 soldiers, 100 civilians as back-up and, of course, 61 bandmen.

A private on a three-year engagement is paid about £140 a month and gets 25 days' annual leave. A lance corporal earns about £230 monthly, an SNCO about £6000 a

year and a major with 16 years' service, just over £11,000 a year at current exchange rates. Most soldiers run cars.

Nominal rents are paid for married quarters although it is estimated that only a small percentage of the army is married.

During their service, men aged between 17 and 21 compulsorily put half of their wages into the bank. And at the end of his three years each volunteer gets a £2000 gratuity.

Luxembourg's contribution to the AMF(L) amounts to 368 officers and men with 174 vehicles and trailers. But troops and transport are only activated during field training exercises in preparation for what is hoped will never happen, the 'real situation'.

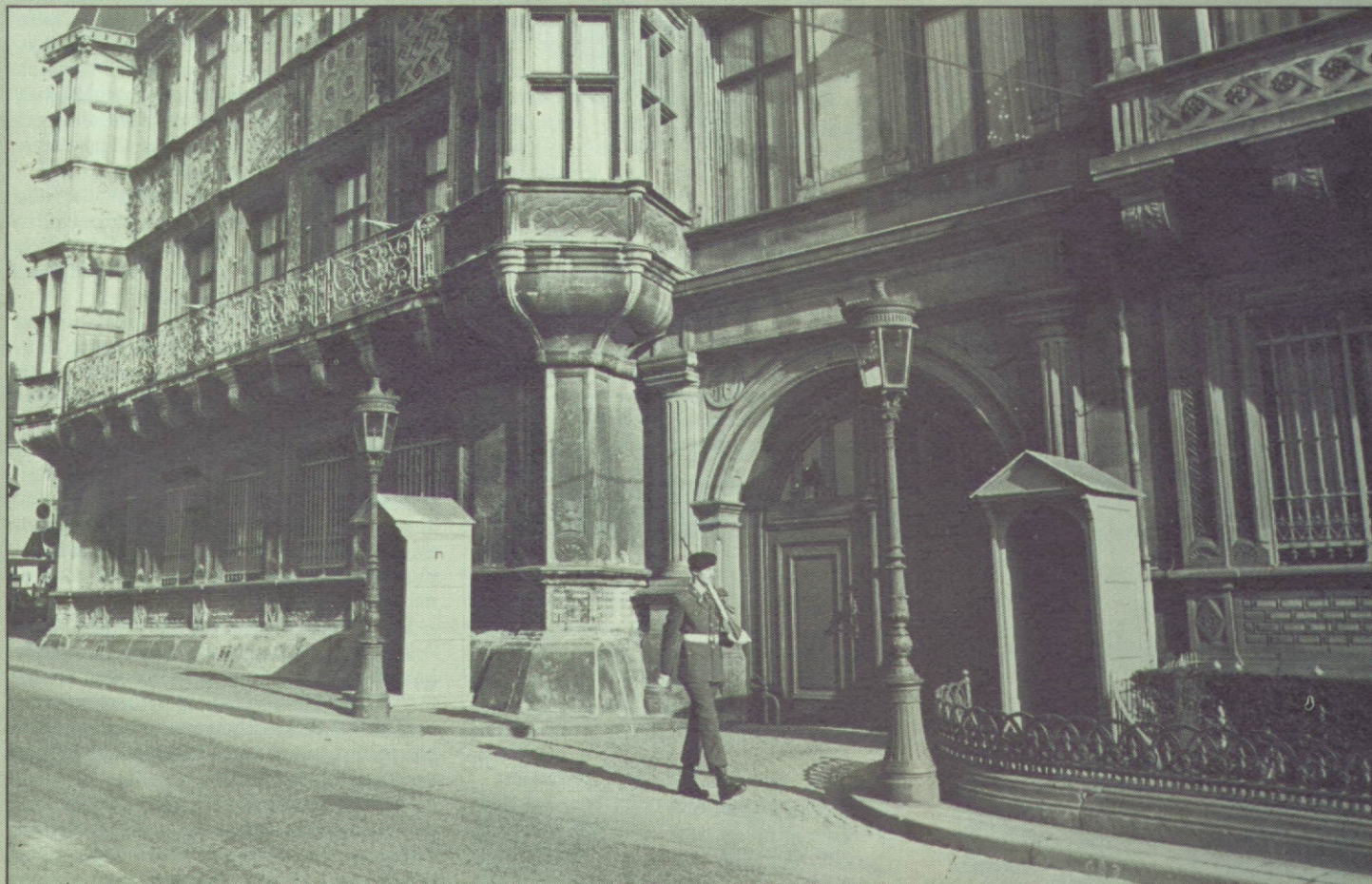
The current Luxembourg defence budget is 571 million francs (£7,344,051) which is about 0.9 per cent of the GNP.

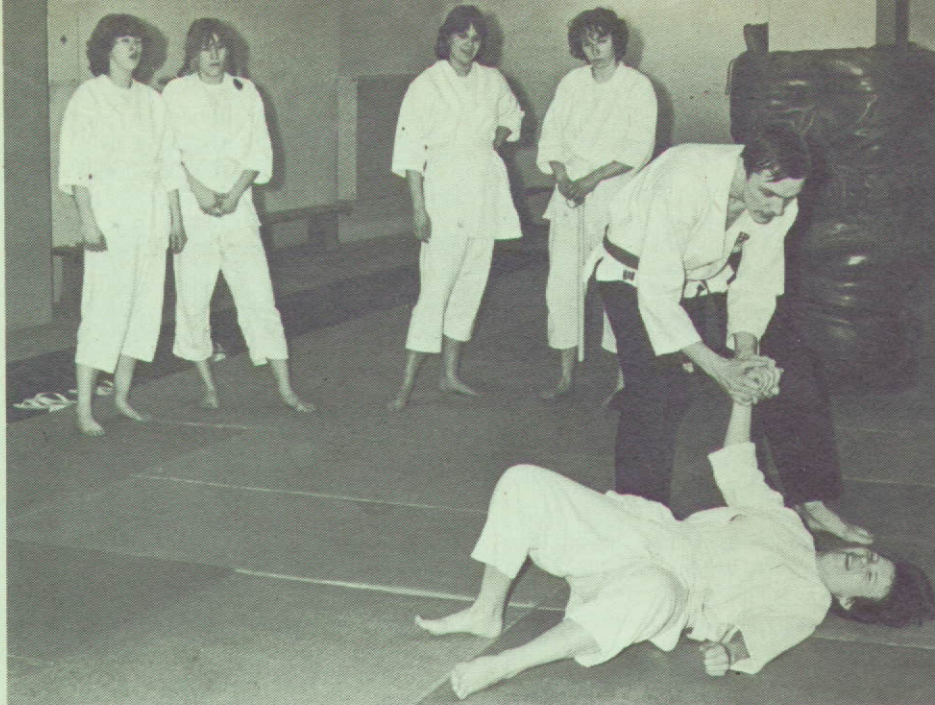
Field hardware used by the joint defenders of the Duchy and Nato's northern flank include anti-personnel and anti-tank grenade-launching rifles, Belgian FAL and MAG 7.62mm general purpose machine guns, Browning 9mm pistols, American M.72 Light Anti-Tank Weapons (LAWs), Israeli 9mm Uzi sub-machine guns, and American TOW wire-guided anti-tank missile systems.

For communications the army uses seven types of radio and is to acquire replacements. Cover at battalion and company level has been described as 'adequate' but 'impaired' at squad stage.

Rapid deployment to 'points sensibles' (key points) or even to the border with Germany, just six miles from Diekirch, would be by an assortment of 222 British, German and American wheeled vehicles including jeeps, Land Rovers and 16-year-old 2½-ton Chrysler lorries.

continued on page 24





Left: Some mat finishes for girl gendarmes.

The vehicles, with planned lifespans until the end of the century, average 15,000 miles a year and the fleet has a back-up stores manifest of some 44,000 items. Re-conditioned engines are 'road' tested statically in a workshop.

On order, too, are five V-150 wheeled armoured reconnaissance vehicles, the first delivery expected this year.

One of the reasons, it is suggested, for adopting the motorised as opposed to mechanised infantry role is that tracked vehicles on exercise would present hefty land and crop compensation bills for the already economy-conscious army.

"After all, we only need wheeled vehicles in our role to get somewhere fast enough to dismount and fight on foot," said a veteran AMF(L) officer.

Luxembourg is confident about any tactical performance it might be called upon to enact in the future.

Major Guido Shiltz, 37, G Ops, who has served on attachment with 4 Royal Green Jackets (TA), says: "I am convinced we are equal to other Alliance members. We have eleven years of AMF experience by our officers and SNCOs who have taken part in at least half a dozen field exercises.

"In general, the Luxembourg soldier is disciplined, well-trained, well-equipped and takes himself seriously. Linguistically, he speaks French, German and his native Luxemburgisch and this background of language is invaluable in rapid communications when operating with Nato soldiers from Belgium, Holland and Germany. Also, about 20 per cent of our soldiers speak English."

He added: "Our soldiers, whose average age is 19, are in very good condition. They are well prepared morally and tactically to use the equipment which, we feel, is sufficient to the task required. Our soldiers like to go on exercise — it's preferable to barrack life for them. After six months' training they get two years' education by military instructors and then a final year of formal academic training."

Similar affirmations of faith in the Luxembourg soldier — past and present — have been given by the former SACEUR, General Haig and by current COMAMF(L), Major General Mike Reynolds.

During SOLDIER's visit to a snow-covered company exercise in Germany with the Luxembourg Army it was noticeable, in comparison with British soldiers in a similar environment, that there was very little swearing in the field but the same seriousness in purpose towards 'scoff' served from field kitchens.

But if his behaviour in the field is good, the Luxembourg soldier's teeth are, according to the resident lieutenant-colonel dentist, "fairly bad".

By the time they reach the Luxembourg Army, two per cent of volunteers already have full sets of dentures. A dozen volunteers a year are rejected for military service.

SOLDIER was shown a record card for one soldier who had 13 bad teeth and three missing. He was just 21.

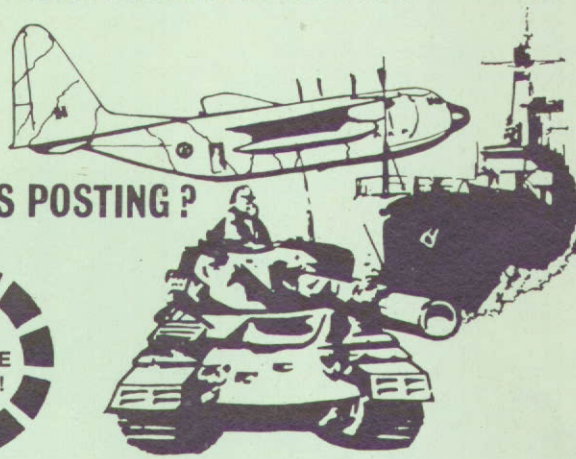
"It's a problem among our young people but perhaps no worse than among British soldiers," the dentist offered. "Too many sweets, soft drinks and not enough care

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Above: TOW in snow-bound AMF scenario.

account for our problems here."

The differing standard of subalterns also provoked comment.

Captain Leandre Mignon, 36, a company commander, who once spent two months at Weeton on attachment with Burma Company of the King's Own Royal Border Regiment and trained in Wales and the Lake District, said: "I think our young officers are more mature than yours. By the time they join their companies at the age of 23 or 25 they have already completed valuable time at a military academy. Your subalterns seem to complete a much lesser time in academic and military training before joining their units, thus making for a difference in military mentality."

Since 1969, the Duchy's AMF contingent has exercised in Denmark five times — it goes again this year — and Turkey and Norway once. Next year, for the first time, it will send a platoon on exercise to Norway in the winter.

As a prelude to this, an eight-man detachment spent spring this year during Exercise Hardfall observing tactics and survival techniques in Norway.

The cross-fertilisation of training techniques for the Luxembourgers is further enhanced by exchange schemes and invitations to battle training facilities outside the country.

For example, ten courses a year are held embracing TOW training with the American Army's 1/39 Infantry Regiment at Baumholder, in West Germany.

Further field training is done with a sister French unit, the 151st Mechanised Infantry Regiment at Metz, or 262 Para Battalion at Merzig, in West Germany or with the Troisième Chasseurs Ardennais in Belgium.

Officers can spend 4½ years at the Brussels Military Academy and six months at the Infantry School at Montpellier in the French Camargue.

Every so often, the Luxembourg battalion with its five infantry companies takes advantage of helicopter training tips from visiting Nato units during hosted exercises.

Economy in effort, as with any nation within the Alliance, is a requisite of the training and two 600-hectare areas have been leased near Diekirch and the Bleses Valley for all-year-round facilities in the rolling country wedged between Germany, Belgium and France.

But there are two declared 'close' seasons from 1st June to 15th July and 1st September to 15th October when live firing on national ground is curtailed out of deference to hunting requirements. Some training is then switched to Vogelsang, Germany and Maellet, near Reims, in France.

Captain Mignon explained: "We have discussions with the hunters because we would be going through their forests and the deer would go away. We avoid problems and clashes with the hunters."

Still with the accent on economy, the Luxembourg Army would like each of its half-dozen TOW launchers to loose off one missile per year. Instead, they suffice with one between two launchers.

Major Guido Shiltz commented: "TOW was bought by us purely for AMF use on the northern flanks. If called into use on Luxembourg soil I think the missile would, in my opinion, lose its effectiveness over the contours of our terrain where possibly an American or Belgian artillery barrage would be more effective. We have no field guns except American 105s mounted on 25-lb chassis for ceremonial purposes."

Another officer agreed: "For Luxembourg, per se, TOW is probably not the best weapon for the job but our role with AMF(L) in a crisis is to deploy to Norway or Denmark. Orders, incidentally, on TOW in the field are given in English because we may some day be under the command of an American sergeant during operation of the system."

Their international harmonisation is reflected too in the Luxembourg Army's uniform insignia. Officer badges of rank adopt a British style while NCO chevrons and flashes show an American slant.

Women also figure in the daily scene around Diekirch — but they are only attached to the army. The girls spend three years at the CIM in their quest to join the police force or the gendarmerie during which they undergo weapon training and, rather disarmingly for the men, unarmed combat up to orange belt standard.

The Luxembourg Army, in short, likes to be a part of Nato and measures up well in keen spirit towards the concept of collective defence.

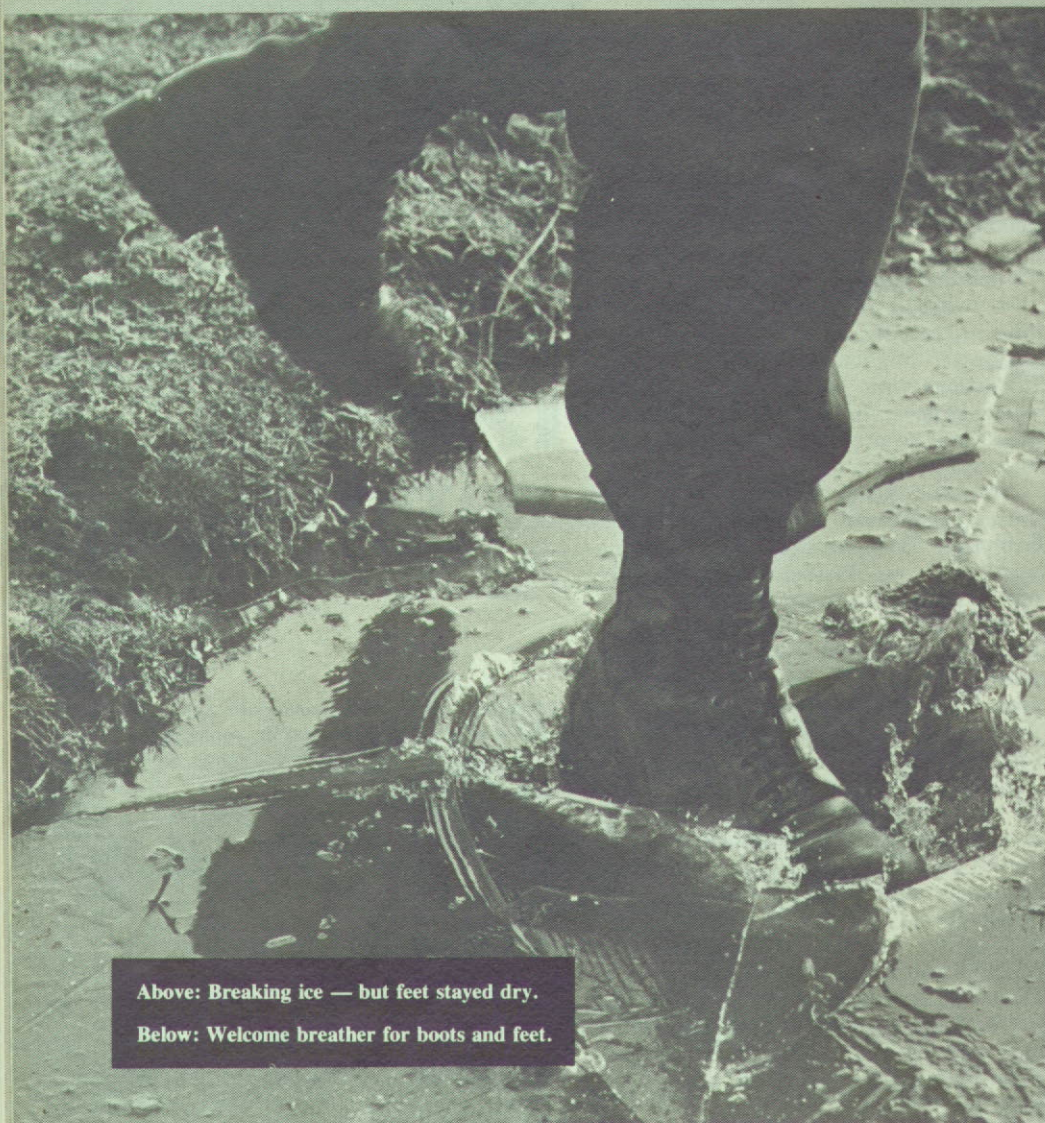
As a 25-year-old subaltern confided: "Without wishing to seem subservient my respect for Nato is constant because it helps us to remain Luxembourgers without the fear of outside aggression." ●



Above: Trainee girl gendarme with 9mm Uzi.
Below: Drill parade pointers for young recruit.



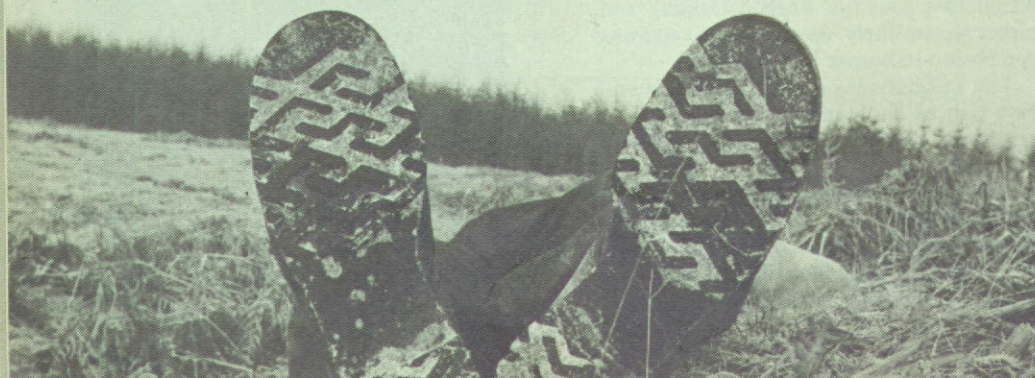
As last month's article on SCRDE explained, a new Combat High Boot will soon be stepping out in the British Army. 'Action Man' Stuart Reed teamed up with the Advanced Para course in Wales to put a pair through their paces. Here he describes the course and now his new footwear stood up to it . . .



Above: Breaking ice — but feet stayed dry.

Below: Welcome breather for boots and feet.

STICKING THE BOOT IN



MILITARY HISTORY IS LITTERED with examples of the soldier's kit letting him down. Napoleon's troops near Moscow could have done with thermal underwear and parkas, the English Army at Bannockburn needed thistle proof socks and camouflage may well have given the British a better chance in the early stages of the Boer War.

The footwear research team of The Stores and Clothing Research and Development Establishment, Colchester, know a thing or two about boots. They work closely with the Shoe and Allied Trades Research Association and can talk for hours about moulded soles, water resistance of leather, lace holes, ski loops, ski hooks, welts, uppers, comfort and style.

It takes five square feet of leather to make one pair of boots and with the Services needing a quarter of a million pairs every year unit costs must be kept as low as possible.

The laboratories at SCRDE are filled with boots of all kinds. Some are brand new, others are badly scuffed and battered or heavily mud caked. They bear intriguing tags such as:—'Sgt Smith, Isle of Skye', 'Staff Sgt Jones, Dee Estuary' (did Jones survive along with the boots?) and so forth.

Three thousand pairs of the Combat High Boot have been issued to selected soldiers for a trial period of one year and now the results are being studied. Written reports tell of soldiers being three days 'on the plain' (Salisbury) in winter and emerging with dry feet.

The new Combat High Boot will replace the DMS (Direct Moulded Sole) Ankle Boot doing away with the gaiter and the time consuming puttee which recruits especially find so difficult to do up and keep tidy. Being calf length, it should give better protection in moorland conditions, scrub and rock strewn countryside.

SCRDE has done its homework and, though there may be one or two minor modifications to the current design, the boot is ready to be stuck in.

Whilst at SCRDE I was fitted for a pair of the new boots. Sizes are measured in the Mondo point system which takes length and breadth of foot into account. In the days ahead those boots were to occupy my thoughts a great deal. . . .

The man who coined the phrase 'tough as old boots' was way off beam. Old boots generally caress the feet with an easy gentleness stemming from long association. New boots are the tough ones. Fortunately, every barrack room has its resident boot expert and I asked around for recommended breaking-in techniques. Here are some:

- *Have a bath wearing the new boots — Royal Marine.* As this idea comes from the Marines, predictably, it's concerned with water. But the plan is not as kinky as it sounds and it does work.
- *Rub the insides with cooking oil, fat or lard — Army Catering Corps.* This sounds like a recipe for Kentucky fried feet but the scheme has some merit.
- *Turn the sock inside out, rub with soap, dampen the feet and march until bubbles emerge from lace holes — Retired soldier now in MOD.* A very sound idea which has stood the test of time but it does tend to tint the feet black.

Because the new Combat High Boot is

Pictures: Andy Burrige

made of stout, good quality leather, perhaps it takes a little more breaking-in than most, whichever method is used. It can chafe the front of the calf and its sturdily reinforced heel can easily raise a blister or two at the first few wearings.

I was to put my boots through their paces in the wild, wet Brecon beacons over four days hard labour alongside lads of the Parachute Regiment as they strove to complete their Advanced Para course.

Field Test

Six Section, commanded by Corporal Francis had been flown by RAF Wessex helicopter into the Sennybridge Training Area near Brecon in Wales. After victoriously routing the enemy in a section attack they joined up with the platoon for more close engagements.

Less than three months ago these young soldiers of the Parachute Regiment were civilians. They passed the gruelling Pre Parachute Selection course and after completing Advanced Para, Wales they will go on to RAF Brize Norton to jump out of balloons and Hercules aircraft to earn the right to wear their 'wings'.

Advanced Para, Wales, is all about soldiering — how to stay alive and outsmart the enemy. As I joined the 'baby Paras' in the

Below: Today's boot (left) and tomorrow's.



field I knew the exercise was going to be uncomfortably realistic. Each man was wearing CEFO (Complete Equipment Fighting Order — webbing and pouches) and helmet.

Corporal Francis was armed with a sub-machine gun; all the rest carried self loading rifles except Private 'Clarkie' (Clark) who had the 'Jimpie' (general purpose machine gun). Private 'Simmo' (Simmonds) had the heavy radio set and spare batteries in his Bergen. After a short tab (speed march) from the scene of the section attack we went to the edge of a forest block to join the 60 strong platoon for the main attack of the day.

The day was fine and sunny but a chill wind blew across the tops of the Brecon Beacons. The high ground was frozen solid and the rough bracken crackled as we spread out to slip across the sky line. Once over the ridge we moved cautiously down the valley sides through sheep pastures to where more enemy forces lay in wait.

As we approached a thorny thicket the enemy opened up with a spectacular barrage

of thunderflashes, Schermuly flares and SLR fire. We surged forward firing and yelling and soon the enemy position was overrun. The valley bottom was marshy. The mud came to our boot tops but the stream was only ankle deep.

We splashed through and reorganised on the far side. Six men were sent back. Working in pairs they searched the enemy 'dead', one man covering as the other checked for signs of life or booty traps.

Soon we were tabbing again along the valley side and on to the high ground where the RAF had dropped our Bergens. Lieutenant Hibbert, the platoon commander, had planned the defensive position and determined where the trenches should be dug. Without delay we took off our packs and webbing and started digging.

We followed the splitlock trench drill to the letter: removing the turf and placing it grass to grass so that it could be replaced later over the excavated soil to form an unobtrusive mound all round the trench. This forms a bullet stop over which only the gun barrels and the tops of the soldiers' heads can be seen.

For those on the flanks of the defensive position the digging was not too bad. The top soil was three feet deep giving way to the more solid clay.

Others were less fortunate. They hit Welsh slate at ankle depth. Picks and shovels were no use then and the young soldiers used their clasp knives to etch the stone out slab by slab. Those who left off their gloves suffered from cracked finger ends in the days to follow.

We dug all afternoon. Some trenches filled up with water and had to be resited. From time to time Divisional Sergeant Major Davies called in to keep the lads working and in avuncular tones gave all sorts of advice on how to ease the rigours of living outdoors in a cold climate.

Already we were looking battle soiled — smocks and trousers were smudged with mud and clay building up on our boots. My new boots had good mud-shedding qualities. A thick cake built up but could be stamped off without even thinking about it.

Just before dusk there were shouts of 'Stand To'. We ran for cover just as two fighter aircraft roared over the defensive position, heading towards the Impact Area. Loud explosions followed as their rockets blasted some unseen target over the hill.

After what seemed an age we were stood down and continued digging in by bright



Above: Dawn run in NBC kit tested footwear.

moonlight. I shared the gun trench with Privates Clark and Eversly. 'Clarkie' who used to be a builder showed us how to dig, telling us proudly of a 40 feet deep cess pit he once dug back home in Rutland.

As the temperature dropped to below zero a thick hoar-frost covered the ground. As we toiled away Private Lewin Eversly, Section 2IC, entertained us with stories of sunny Barbados where his father hails from. It sounded like paradise.

A stag roster of sentry duties was drawn up and each man in the section had to take a turn in going down the hill and over the marsh to lie freezing in the long grass and watch out for the enemy. Every minute felt like an hour and my feet felt frozen despite the thick socks.

The trench diggers were flagging as the night wore on. Just before first light our 'L' shaped gun trench was complete except for the sleeping bay. At about 5.30 a 'Stand To' was ordered to be ready for a dawn attack by the enemy.

No attack came and we stood staring bleary eyed across the rolling landscape of Brecon as the sun rose centimetre by centimetre over the horizon. The sun slowly warmed the land and we gradually wore off the stiffness and fatigue of the night's digging.

Our wrists were becoming swollen with

continued on page 28



Above: Warming cuppa to sooth away the chill.

the jarring of the picks and shovels. Some had to loosen their watch straps or take them off. The early morning sun faded and a fine misty rain settled over us as we brewed a mug of tea in the bottom of the trench. Ready cooked food had been withdrawn by now and we had been issued with 24 hour ration packs to last for the remaining three days.

The rest of the day was spent digging the sleeping bay and covering it with logs and a layer of packed earth to withstand mortar attacks. After the first twenty-four hours my feet were cold but dry and I had no blisters.

Below: Tapping was tough for radio operators.



The boots were doing well.

Towards evening DSM Davies popped into the trenches to keep our spirits up with a bit of banter and old campaigner's advice. He was the only one wearing the coveted red beret and its silver winged badge shone out like a beacon. You could see the 'baby Paras' eyeing it with pride.

We couldn't understand how he managed to stay so smart. The rest of us were beginning to resemble extras from a remake of 'Stalingrad'.

That night we rehearsed our drill for the recce patrol planned to go out that night. The objective was to discover the size of a stream running between the enemy and ourselves several kilometres away. We practised all round defence, lying on the cold saturated grass and moving silently in response to hand signals by Corporal Francis.

There was just time for a quick brew and we were off on the patrol in earnest. We had had almost no sleep for a day and a half and the cross country march made us feel more alert than we really were.

As we climbed down the sides of a steep valley we saw the enemy position, a dull wavering light across the stream. We crawled forward on hands and knees through wet tufted grass and across slopes seeping with water to look down on the enemy. One man fell asleep in the firing position. He was roughly awakened by Corporal Francis and threatened with drastic treatment for further lapses.

On our way back to the defensive position we lay flat in the frosty tufted grass while another patrol passed us by merely yards away, their feet crackling through patches of

bracken. Once back at the position we were actually allowed to sleep. Those not on stag duty crawled gratefully into their 'doss bags'. Some were curled up at the bottom of the trench with poncho capes over them. Others inched their way into the sleeping bays like tired rodents.

In no time at all we were roused again to 'Stand To' to fend off any surprise dawn attack. Again nothing happened and there was more digging to follow. But there was time for a brew of tea and some apple and apricot flakes from our ration packs. To our famished stomachs it tasted superb.

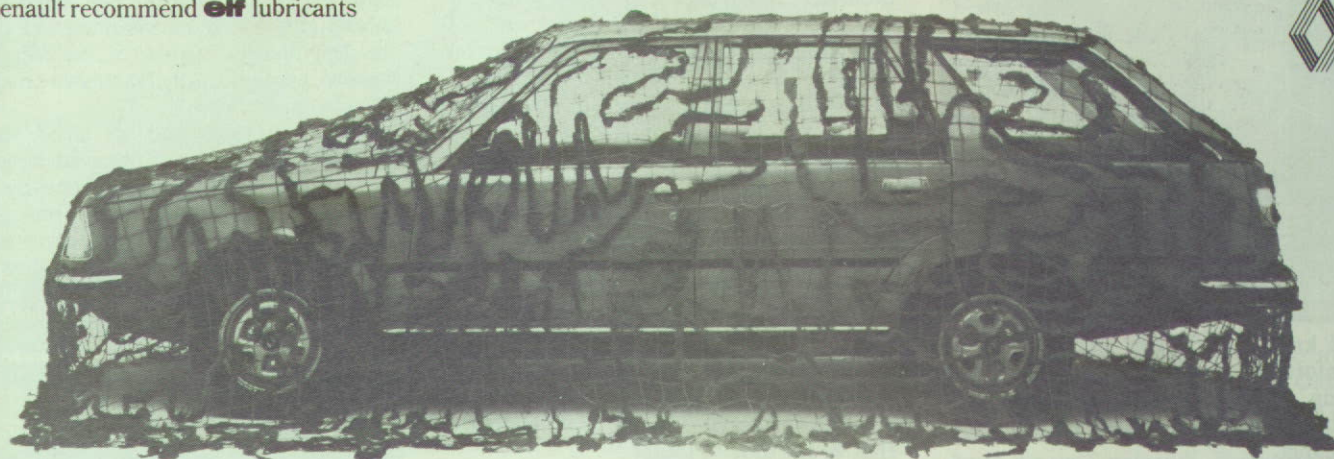
A practical demonstration of minelaying was laid on for us by kindly Corporal Gosman. We learned about anti-personnel mines such as the ELSIE and the DINGBAT and anti-tank mines like the Mark Seven and the Bar mine.

We laid out a small minefield across the marshy ground below the defensive position. One man carefully cut back the turf, slid in the mine and then stamped on the turf to tamp it down. Kindly Corporal Gosman was speechless at the man's stupidity.

Another man fell asleep where he stood and dropped his rifle. He was made to double away to the top of a nearby hill and back.

Next, lofty Corporal Harrison briefed us about barbed wire. Since the Boer War it has slowed down enemy advances and channelled troops into gaps where they can be mown down by concentrated fire. It is a simple but dislikeable piece of kit but eventually, using stakes, we strung it out along one side of the defensive position and camouflaged it with bracken.

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After nightfall we were mustered and briefed for the platoon attack. A quick rehearsal of the signals and tactics and then we set off in the darkness to take an enemy position. We reached the same point as the night before but this time skirted round a spur of high ground and crossed the stream, the water gurgling round our ankles.

Suddenly, a bright orange flare went up. At once the 'Jimpie' opened up on the right flank sweeping the enemy position with murderous bursts of fire.

We surged forward in a skirmish attack to overrun the enemy position. A Schermuly flare with a faulty parachute whirled round like a catherine wheel scaring the life out of the man who launched it.

In a matter of seconds the position was overrun and we reorganised on the far side. After checking the enemy dead we headed off back to camp in the same silent manner as we came.

Regaining the high ground we saw that a fantastic war was raging in the Impact Area. A dozen flares slowly trickled down the sky and a colossal barrage of weapons got going. Tracer bullets whizzed across the eastern sky.

Back at the defensive position I gave my feet a quick inspection. They were dry and warm after the patrols. The support given to my ankles by the boots made tabbing over rough ground a piece of cake.

We snatched a couple of hours sleep before 'Stand To' on the fourth day. The predicted dawn attack came at last. Suddenly there were shouts of 'Gas, Gas, Gas!' and we slipped on our respirators banging mess tins to warn other trenches of what seemed to be a mixture of smoke and CS gas.

A man in the next trench dropped his gas mask and was suddenly doubled up by the choking gas. His eyes and mouth were streaming with water as he rolled about in a coughing fit.

Suddenly there was firing and yells in a foreign language. The Gurkhas and the Demonstration Platoon were attacking. Thunderflashes roared and flares shot through the smoke filled air. Half a dozen soldiers rushed past the trench jabbering excitedly in Gurkhali. Everyone was firing and shouting in the smoke. Slowly it drifted away and peace returned.

For us there was no let up. Soon we were packing our gear and filling in the trenches, carefully replacing the turf so it looked as though we had never been.

We were all lined up in complete equipment marching order (Bergen, webbing, helmet and weapon) and set off on a five

Above: Recruits watch and wait for dawn raid.

kilometre run. The slow erosion of our stamina over the last few days began to tell and after one or two kilometres most soldiers were feeling the pace over the hilly terrain. The metallised road jarred our knees and the straps of our packs cut unmercifully into our shoulders.

There was ice on the road and one soldier crashed to the ground with a curse; the others tumbling over him. The corporals raged like demons getting everyone to their feet and spurring them on.

The radio operators, who carry a heavier load than most, found the going especially tough. So did the 'Jimpie' gunners. Those who could manage to give them a spell and help with their loads did so. The steep gradients soon strung the column out and we could hear the corporals at the back threatening dire retribution for those who slackened their pace.

Most of us were sweating buckets as we charged down the hill to rendezvous with our transport. But when we arrived, gasping and sweating, it had not materialised. DSM Davies, who had been doing it all with the rest of us, arrived looking as spruce as ever. He said there was time for an unexpected 'perk' — a log race between the sections. The shattered soldiers rolled their eyes up to the sky in disbelief.

We were made to select eight-foot pine logs from a nearby pile cut by the Forestry Commission and we lined up to start the run over a 400 metre circular course. Once the race got underway we forgot our tiredness and, carried along by the occasion, began cheering and yelling. A case of beer was wagered as the prize — just enough to get us going.

The winning section jumped in the air with joy and just as the hubbub was dying down a brace of four-ton trucks came round the corner to take us back to the School of Infantry, Brecon.

By now my boots were well and truly broken in and a pleasure to wear. My feet were still in good shape too despite spending four days in soaking wet terrain and having to march in full kit over rough terrain. The new boots had kept them dry if not always warm and the five-kilometre run in full kit had only caused slight blistering on the front of the left ankle.

Some other members of the platoon had also been wearing the new boots, with minor modifications. Their feet too, were dry, but most soldiers shod in the DMS boot had got theirs wet. As far as they were concerned the sooner the new boot came into general service the better.



"Well, did he agree the custard was lumpy?"

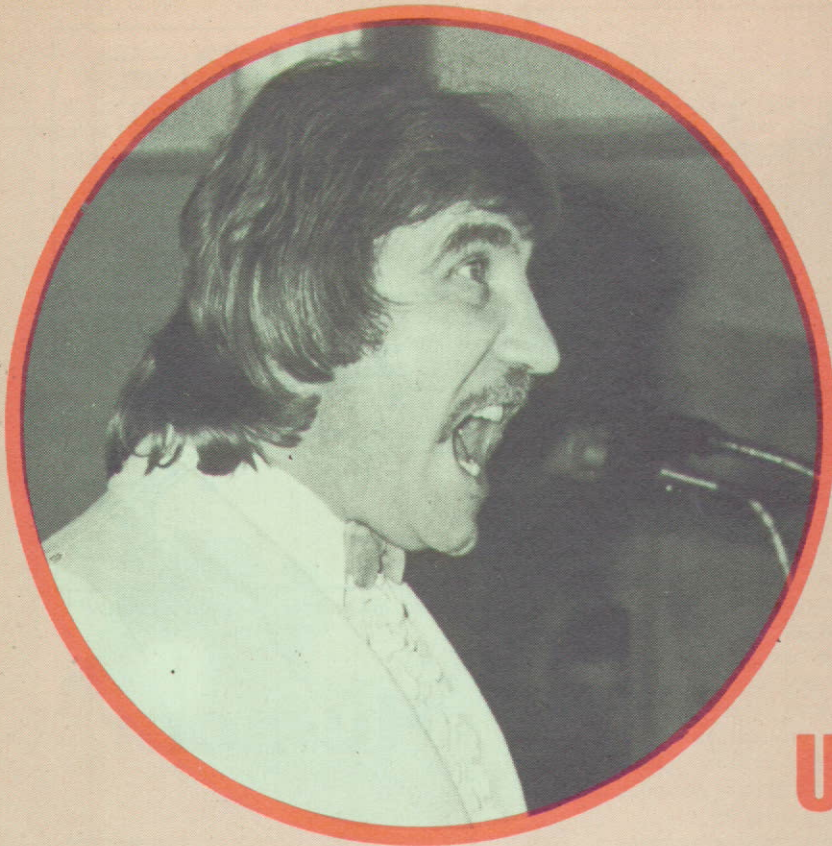
Humour



"Where the devil have you been?"



"No, I haven't started peeling yet, sarge — I'm only just beginning to get a bit brown"



For 35 years Combined Services Entertainment has been spreading sunshine to British troops all over the world.

Ann Beecham followed a recent tour to Northern Ireland.

KNIGHTS OF LAUGHTER LIGHT UP ULSTER GLOOM

IT WASN'T EXACTLY the Talk of the Town, there was no stage and the conditions were cramped in the extreme. In fact, it was a hastily converted canteen at Bessbrook Mill in Northern Ireland, but that minor detail did not pose a serious problem to either the organisers or the performers in the Combined Services Entertainment production planned for that evening.

To seasoned CSE performers, used to appearing in jungle clearings, huts and aircraft hangars, a canteen was quite a civilised venue. And it was the best that Bessbrook could offer. Nearly 300 residents packed into

the room, filling every available inch of space and almost swinging from the ceiling to make sure that they didn't miss the latest show in town.

They were not disappointed. With consummate skill, CSE had put together yet another winning package with just the right blend of light to dark blue humour, leggy dancers and straightforward entertainment featuring the Barron Knights, supported by Peter Karrie and Focus 2 and introduced by comedian Bob Curtiss.

Behind every successful CSE tour is a lot of organisation and hard work by a small

team of four, headed by Derek Agutter, father of actress Jenny. They operate from offices in Kings Buildings in London, nestling under the umbrella of the Ministry of Defence and British Forces Broadcasting Service but operating independently.

CSE is the offspring of the wartime ENSA legend. In 1946, after the end of World War Two, CSE was formed to continue the tradition of entertainment for the troops. It was regarded as an Army commitment.

Its first organisers, Richard Stone, George Brightwell and Ifor Watson, had all had connections with ENSA, which smoothed the transition. Under their direction, CSE took tours to troops in trouble spots like Korea, Suez, Malaya, Cyprus and Aden.

In 1969, Derek inherited CSE. He had been a tankie for nine years and was commissioned during the war into the then RASC, today's RCT. "CSE was rather worried because I was a soldier and a sportsman but I do know what's required. I'm a punter and I've been a soldier myself so I know what they need." He has certainly proved that by the continuing success of the shows that CSE puts on.

It is a long hard road to stardom and there is a lot of luck involved in being discovered. Derek, with Basil Elms who used to be in showbiz himself as part of the Sounds Incorporated group in the 'sixties, bears the brunt of the talent spotting. "I think it comes naturally," said Derek reflectively.

CSE holds its own auditions for stage-struck hopefuls who apply to it directly. Preliminary auditions are held every two months and about half the acts, an average of 15 or 16, are invited back to perform before a live audience. If they are well received, they may be added to the card index which is the



Top: Duke says a big hello to Bessbrook.

Left: "And what's your doggie's name?"

Even the group's drummer has a voice to add.



nerve-centre of the CSE organisation. Only about ten per cent of the starters finally make the grade.

The coming of video has made Derek's life a lot easier for he can now record TV talent programmes such as *Rising Stars* and *Opportunity Knocks*. He never fails to watch these shows and they have yielded him several future stars such as Iris Williams, Isla St Clair and Jim Davidson.

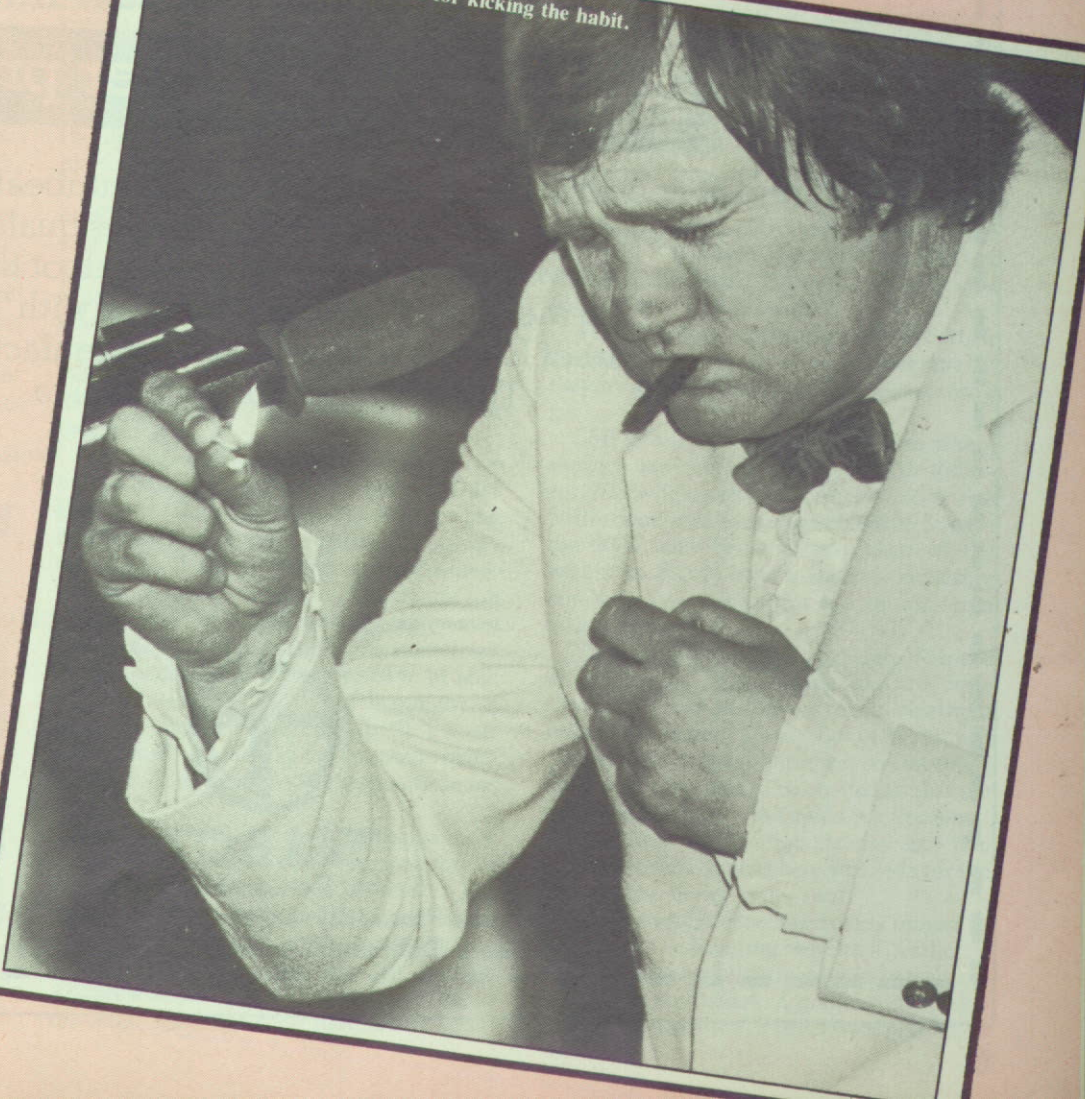
Any likely artists are invited to CSE for audition and, again, an experienced eye for talent is essential. "It is difficult to put across singers, especially girls, without studio conditions. They have to have personality 'live' too," Derek explained.

Giving a good performance is obviously essential but there are other, equally important, criteria for CSE artists. "When we are putting a show together, we look for good musicians who can cope with the demands we make. It is essential to have people who are nice as there can be a lot of clashes living together as we have to. There is another side to it as well — the complete PR side. It is all part of it for soldiers to chat to the girls in the show."

Entertaining the troops is as important now as ever. Basil Elms deals with most of the practical details of putting the shows on the road. A musician himself, he understands how artists need to be looked after, when they will want to eat and how much time they

continued on page 33

Butch is a great advert for kicking the habit.



Pictures: Paul Haley



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need to prepare for each performance.

Personal contact is very important in getting the best from hotels, transport and the other basics that go to make a good tour. A well-run tour makes for happy performers and good shows, and with the vast amount of travelling involved in reaching troops worldwide, Derek and Basil need to have the organisation at their fingertips — or almost.

"There is a schedule of tours laid down and we just juggle them around to get them all in," explained Basil. "We have to watch the budget all the time of course as we are funded by the Army. We do our publicity through BFBS and just play wherever we can, particularly when we are in Northern Ireland."

Besides regular tours to Cyprus, BAOR, Gibraltar and Belize, CSE has now started providing entertainment for the larger exercises like Crusader and the big Arctic series in Norway. But most valuable of all are the 20 trips it makes each year to Northern Ireland. For troops on active service, the shows breeze into their tight, self-contained communities like a breath of fresh air from the outside world.

Bessbrook in South Armagh has to rank among the most inhospitable locations in Northern Ireland and the opportunities for escaping the dreariness are few and far between.

The 1st Battalion, The Queens Lancashire Regiment were in residence at Bessbrook when the CSE team moved in. The battalion was coming to the end of their tour and the show meant a welcome break from routine. They had had, on average, one show a month since coming to Northern Ireland but this one was a bit special because of the Barron Knights.

The Adjutant, Captain John Fairhurst, explained: "The lads love it and there's nothing else. The difference it makes to morale is tremendous. You can even see it in the way they walk about the day after. They've got something to talk about other than Ireland."

"It's no good without women though," he added. "After three months that's what they want to see." A sentiment echoed by the soldiers themselves after having been treated to Peter Karrie and Focus 2 who came on 'stage' to tremendous applause.

Said Private George Reilly: "We've got 30 days left to do and they remind us what women look like!"

The lads were all enjoying the show and

Below: Basil Elms sorts out another problem.



agreed with Private Bert Erwin, "We could do with more shows like this." Private Adrian Brown said afterwards: "I really enjoyed it, the Barron Knights best of all. In fact I was surprised at the sound they got in there. These shows are a real morale-booster. They make everyone laugh, cheer them up and make them feel better for a few days."

There is no doubt that the audiences appreciate the big names. Artists like the Barron Knights are indispensable to CSE but stars of their calibre are the most difficult to add to the card index.

"We can't compete against commercialism. There is not much money so we try to give them something else as well — the trips abroad and the experiences they wouldn't normally get," explained Derek.

The 'old boy' network in showbiz pays dividends in persuading the big names to do a CSE tour. "It is essential that we use personal contact to get people to come out for us," said Derek. "I'm lucky in some ways because my daughter is well-known in the business and this opens doors which otherwise would not open so easily."

Some artists, alas, have turned their backs on CSE when they have finally hit the big time. "Money is a great changer," sighed Derek. But there are others, such as Harry Secombe, Frankie Howerd and Matt Monro who remain faithful. They join CSE tours through a bond of friendship, a flicker of old-fashioned patriotism and a memory of the enjoyment they had from the last tour they did.

It is for reasons such as these that the five Barron Knights — Barron Antony, Dave Ballinger, Duke D'Mond, Butch Baker and Peter Langford — are a regular CSE attraction. Their manager, Toni Avern, explained: "Money is not all-important. We do our job and it is good to go and see our countrymen living away from home and living sometimes in bad conditions. It's good for us to be able to bring a certain amount of happiness to them." Drummer Dave added: "It's great doing something for the lads out here especially. Some of them haven't seen outside for weeks."

The appeal of the Barron Knights is almost universal. They have been together for an incredible 20 years and their friendship has survived all the trauma and stress of a life in showbusiness. The group was formed on the forecourt of the garage run by Barron Antony's father where Toni was working at the time. They had their hard times, when

they were travelling, living and sleeping in an old coach, but weathered the storms to become one of the most popular and sought after groups in the country.

"We are a complete working unit. We're just partners and we share everything," said Toni. His loyalty extends to accompanying the lads on some tours. "I don't feel I can ask the boys to go to a troubled area unless I'm prepared to do it myself."

From a secure financial position, created according to Toni by keeping fees relatively low so that everyone made money in the early days, the group can afford to be philosophical about their business and can work to please themselves.

"We seem to have had an affiliation with the Forces since the early days of our first hit in 1964, *Call up the Forces*. Barron was in the RAF during National Service and we spent a lot of our early days playing at RAF stations," commented Dave.

Perhaps it was this element of nostalgia that lay behind the group's obvious enjoyment of the trip. They included plenty of topical and pertinent jokes in their repertoire and one about the Royal Green Jackets sleeping through night patrol went down particularly well. "It wasn't like work" said Barron after the first show. "If tomorrow's show is as good, I'll be well pleased."

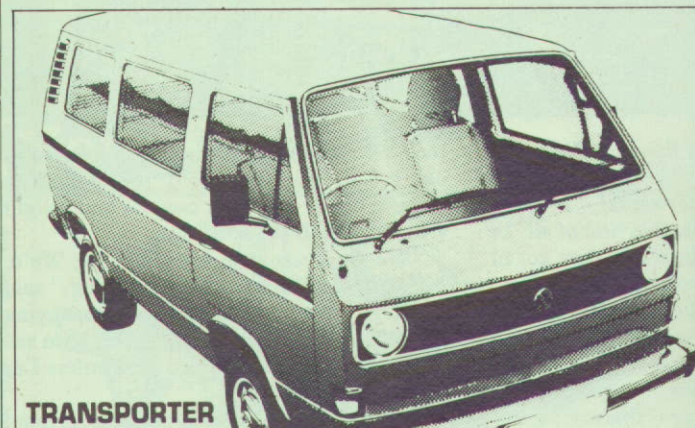
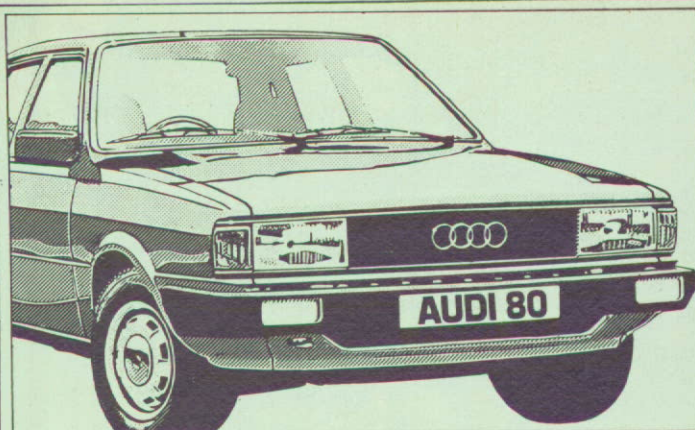
The girls too were delighted with their reception. "It's a great turn-on knowing that they are appreciating you," said Jackie with a grin.

CSE usually puts on two, or even three, shows a day but this time was a little different. The whole party had been invited to do a 'walkabout', meeting people from 26 Squadron RCT and being shown some of the 'sights' of HQ Northern Ireland, including bomb disposal equipment and an armoured saloon car.

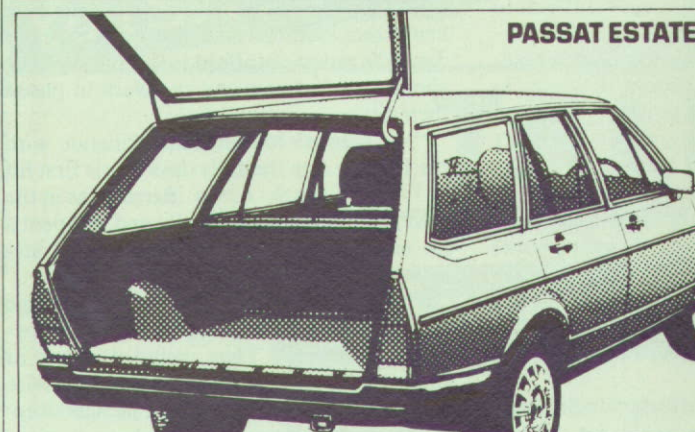
The next concert posed problems of a quite different sort; from having had too little space, there was now far too much! Northern Ireland Roulement Workshops in Belfast had cleared their canteen but it was so vast that a makeshift stage had to be erected so that the people in the back rows could see the show.

The 'stars' did the job themselves: "No room for prima donnas here when it's for the good of the show," said Toni.

Again, the audience loved every minute of it, despite the sobering news that, earlier, a fusilier had been slightly injured in a shooting incident in Belfast. A graphic illustration of CSE's *raison d'être*, if proof were needed. ●



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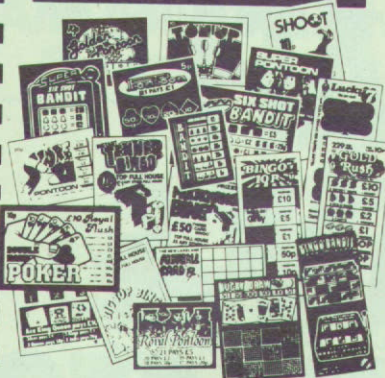
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MILITARY MUSEUMS

4TH ROYAL GREEN JACKETS (TA)

TWO ADJOINING HOUSES in the heart of London's Mayfair have been the headquarters of the 4th Battalion Royal Green Jackets (TA) for many years and in one of the rooms in these exclusive surroundings is the regimental museum. The site of 52-56 Davies Street was presented to the regiment in 1888 by the Duke of Westminster and a building was erected thereon at a cost of £16,000. Destroyed by German bombs in 1941, it was rebuilt in 1952 and as a military building it is second to none in its style, facilities and location.

Exhibits and documents in the museum go back to 1794 with the founding of the Duke of Cumberland's Sharpshooters — later to become Queen Victoria's Rifles and finally the Royal Green Jackets (TA). Some good examples of dress include a QVR 1856 officer's dress jacket and patrol uniform and a cock's-plumed kepi complete with pom-pom and metal travelling case. Other items of apparel are a QVR bugle-major's jacket and a corporal's review tunic as worn in 1880, an officer's mess kit (1902) and two complete outfits — one patrol dress and the other full dress with its distinctive heavy red silk sash. A set of prints illustrates the uniforms of units drawn from various London parishes to meet the Napoleonic threat. Typical of this interesting collection are the Wandsworth Volunteers and St Catherine's Association.

The medals include a group, mostly for shooting, belonging to John Thomas Barber-Beaumont who raised the Duke of Cumberland's Sharpshooters and is thus the founder of the QVRs. An unusual decoration is the Chinese Order of the Painted Tiger awarded to Colonel Woodruff-Cox in 1919. Nearby can be seen the silver pieces, including the distinctive badge, worn with a QVR officer's cross belt.

Reminders of the South African War range from a water colour of the QVR in camp at Wineberg to a blood-stained flag. Among several souvenirs of World War One are two German helmets picked up by Captain G. H. Woolley, who won the first Victoria Cross to be awarded to a Territorial soldier, and a panoramic photograph of the trench systems at Hill 60 taken shortly after the battle.

World War Two mementoes are mostly connected with the QVR's heroic defence of Calais. In this memorable battle the Green Jacket Brigade fought to extinction in an action which succeeded in diverting German armour away from Dunkirk thus materially assisting in the evacuation of the BEF and,

in the words of Sir Winston Churchill, "added another page to the glories of the Light Division." There is also a commendation from King George VI and a scrapbook with relevant newspaper cuttings and photographs. Other Second World War relics include diaries written by survivors of the Calais action who were taken prisoner and a set of Nazi daggers including a Brown Shirt dirk and a fine example of a Luftwaffe officer's full dress dirk.

There are tea sets and crested egg cups while mess silver includes two handsome candelabra, several personalised silver beer mugs and a cigar box commemorating the QVR's defence of Calais. Not to be overlooked are the 1803 Muster Roll of the St George's Volunteers giving not only the names of members but also their addresses and occupations, and a coloured wood panel outlining the career in the Bloomsbury Rifles of E. C. Andrews from 2nd lieutenant to his promotion to captain in 1891. It was the custom for officers in this regiment to have their own individual promotion panel.

On 26 and 28 October 1803 George III held a review in Hyde Park of all the Volunteer regiments. There were 12,401 men on parade on the 26th and 14,676 on the 28th, and the original draft of the list of Volunteer corps taking part can be seen in the museum.

There is a Royal Victoria Rifles book of minutes covering the period 1848 to 1853 and an early QVR scrap-book entitled 'Scrap Book of the Vics' containing all kinds of regimental odds and ends from photographs and paintings to caricatures and menus.

A useful selection of books dealing with the history of all those regiments connected with Queen Victoria's Rifles, later to become the 4th Royal Green Jackets (TA), is available for consultation.

John Jesse

John Jesse chalks up a century — see page 15.

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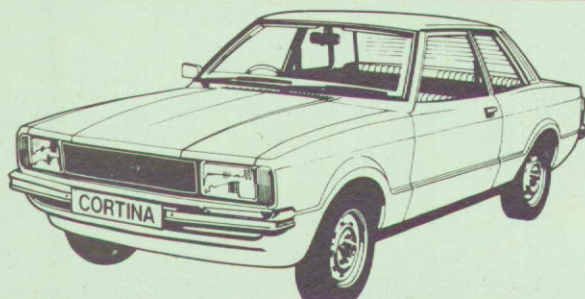


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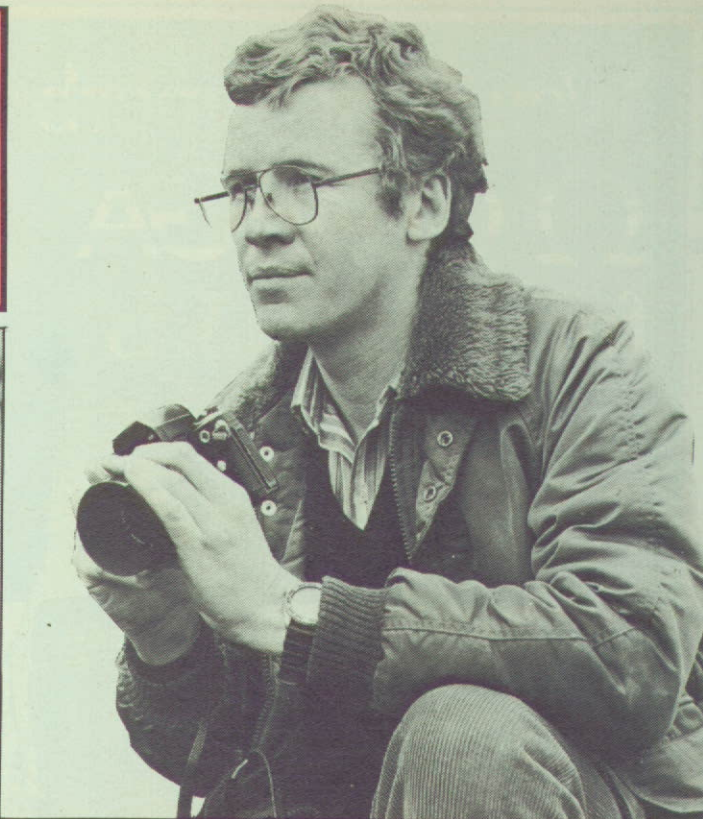
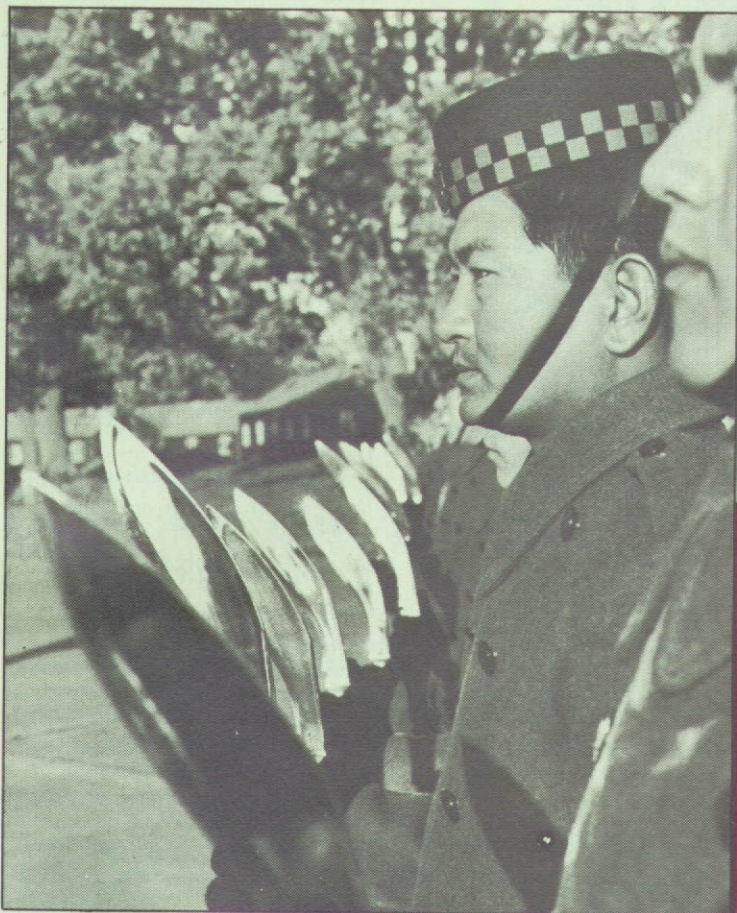


Clockwise from top left: Last firing of 5.5" gun at Sennybridge; Gurkhas get ready for King of Nepal's visit; The man behind the camera; Paratrooper in NBC kit on dawn 'tab' at Sennybridge; On the Porton Down battle run; Troops preparing for possible firemen's strike.



TOP OF THE PHOTOS!

SOLDIER's Andy is Army Photographer of the Year



SOLDIER photographer Andy Burridge has been chosen 'Army Photographer of 1981' in this year's Army Photographic Competition. His winning portfolio of five black and white pictures, reproduced here, earned him a silver cup, an engraved tankard and scroll and a Nikon camera.

He also won a second tankard and Ilford photographic equipment for the best colour picture — a dramatic study of a soldier in NBC kit that appeared on our August 1980 cover.

The Army Photographic Competition is open to all regular British Army and TA personnel as well as civilian photographers employed on Army public relations duties. This year's is the seventh to be held. In the past SOLDIER photographers have scooped many of the prizes for individual categories, but Andy is our first to take the Photographer of the Year title.

Prize for the best single Army Photograph of the Year was won by Lance Sergeant Anthony Jones of the 2nd Grenadier Guards for his black and white close-up of a tank driver.



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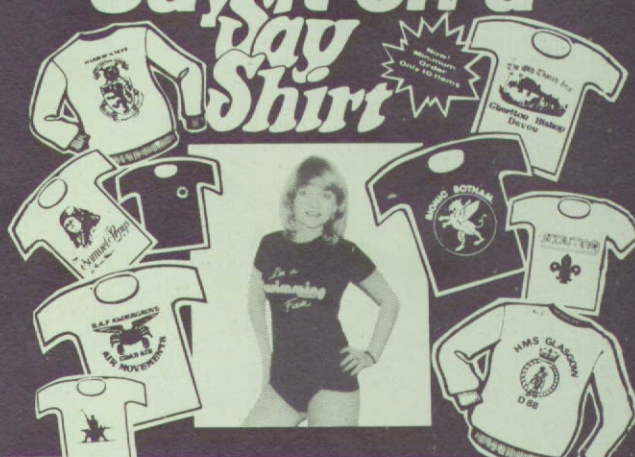
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(1884-1981)

FIELD MARSHAL SIR CLAUDE AUCHINLECK ('The Auk') who has just died at the age of 96 was the last surviving member of the British military leaders of the Second World War. He is best remembered for his sacking by Churchill at the height of the tussle in the Western Desert but his military career spanned some 45 years from the turn of the century right up to the Independence of India.

Auchinleck was born, appropriately enough, in Aldershot in 1884 — the son of an Army colonel and of Ulster settler stock. He went to Wellington and Sandhurst and joined the Indian Army as a second lieutenant in 1903.

In the First World War he fought in Egypt, Aden and Mesopotamia with great distinction. He emerged with the rank of brevet lieutenant-colonel and with the DSO and OBE.

In the years between the two world wars he served again in India, rising to the rank of major-general in 1935 and becoming Deputy Chief of the General Staff in India the following year.

After World War Two broke out Auchinleck was summoned home to raise, train and command IV Corps. After British troops had landed in the Narvik area of Norway he was sent out to take charge. Eventually the troops had to be evacuated and Auchinleck

continued over



Above: Chatting to Gurkha at Sandhurst, 1967.

Below: Checking Western Desert positions, 1942.



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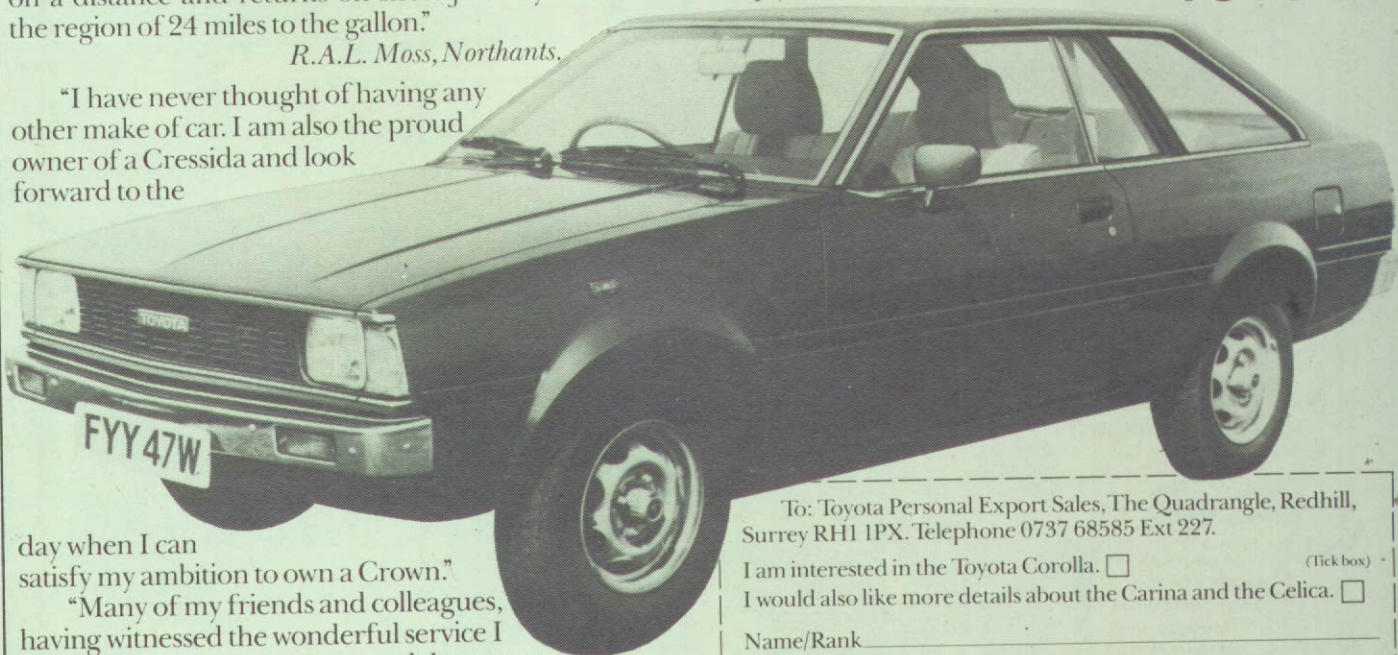
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concluded: "To commit troops to a campaign in which they cannot be provided with adequate air support is to court disaster."

In 1941, with the rank of general, he became Commander-in-Chief India. That summer he exchanged posts with Wavell and moved to take charge of Western Desert operations. He evicted Rommel from Cyrenaica and as the battle swung backwards and forwards he was being constantly urged into action by Churchill.

In May 1942 Tobruk was lost and Auchinleck retreated to El Alamein where his forces held the line. Churchill was again pressing for an attack and Auchinleck was not ready. But he had already laid the foundations for Montgomery, sent by Churchill to replace him, to score the resounding victory that was to turn the whole course of the war. Auchinleck returned to India and the following summer once again became C-in-C India. He retained this post right up until independence and partition.

During the tumultuous pre-Independence days Auchinleck successfully managed to hold the Indian Army together and prepare it for the transition. At the end of 1947 he finally left the Army which he had joined as a young man almost 45 years earlier.

In their letters to him leading figures expressed their gratitude for his efforts. Lord Mountbatten, as Governor-General of India, said: "... you have the consolation of knowing that no man could possibly have done more, indeed none so much as you did; that all who served with you and under you realise this and regard you with admiration and affection; and that the Indian Army under your command reached, in the late

war, its highest point of fame and reputation and efficiency."

While Prime Minister Clement Attlee told him: "You may feel that your job ended in little but frustration; but the fact that the Army held together as well as it did, that reconstitution went through so smoothly, and that both India and Pakistan now have disciplined Armed Forces at their command, is clear proof of the real and lasting success of the work you did."

After he retired from the Army Auchinleck led a busy life, commuting between Britain and India. In 1967 he retired altogether and spent his last years quietly in Morocco. He was married and later divorced but had no children.

More Desert memories. Right: a pep talk for the troops. Below: A word for an Indian sentry.



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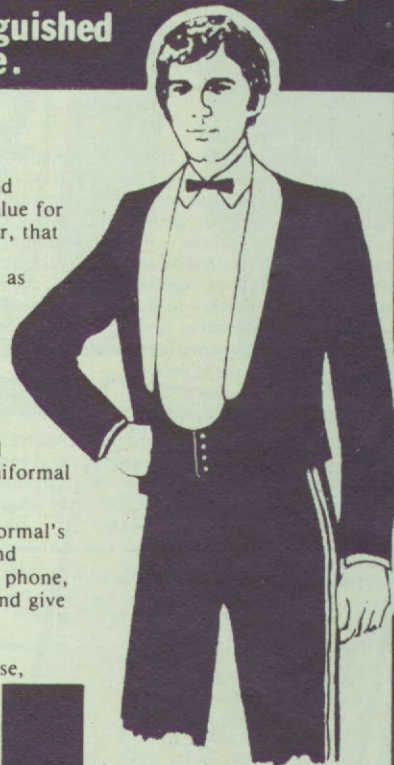
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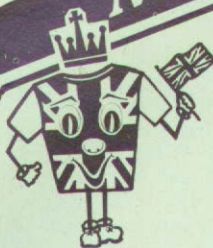
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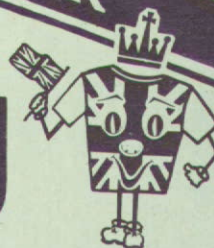


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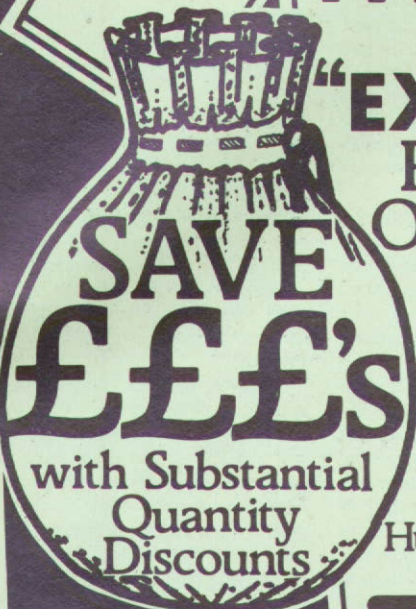
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Originally published in German in 1896, this was the first book to present a history of the military uniforms of the nations of Europe. Now revised and brought up to date to cover uniforms up to 1937, it is the only reference work of its kind, giving complete descriptions — in some cases even detailing regulations regarding underwear — of the development of uniforms in peace and war.

The dress of the armies of Marlborough, Frederick the Great, Napoleon and Wellington — to name but a few — are reviewed while the present enlarged edition includes chapters on the military clothing of World War One, the United States armed forces and the dress of the armies of South America and Asia.

The authors being German it is perhaps understandable that the section dealing with Teutonic uniforms is the largest and most thorough in the whole volume. The armies of some 30 petty 'kingdoms' and duchies of pre-unified Germany may have been comparatively modest numerically but their uniforms were rich and grandiose. British uniforms from 1700 onwards are painstakingly analysed, from regimental buttons and badges to service and full dress, while short, informative articles on navies and air forces bring this classic to a conclusion.

Arms and Armour Press, 2-6 Hampstead High Street, London NW3 1QQ — £14.95

JFPJ

Guilty men

'Damn the Dardanelles! The Story of Gallipoli' (John Laffin)

In his introduction, John Laffin says 'The purpose of this book is to explain the defeat, to apportion the blame, and to let the soldiers speak'. The Gallipoli campaign of 1915 is no stranger to blame. It was conceived by Winston Churchill and intended to knock Turkey out of the First World War by capturing Constan-

tinople, thereby opening a supply route to the sorely pressed Russians. Whether it was a strategic masterstroke ruined by incompetence on the spot, or a blunder misconceived from the start, it cost the lives of thousands of British, Australians, New Zealanders, French and Turks.

Mr Laffin believes that the campaign was 'possibly the only original idea of the war', but that it was so poorly conceived and executed in practical terms that it was a hopeless waste of life. He presents a horrifying picture of muddle; of petty jealousies within the High Command which led to generals actively trying to frustrate each other's plans, of non-existent intelligence work, bad administration and the lack of crucial supplies. Whilst poor co-operation between Britain and France stifled political support for the campaign, a lack of imagination in the field resulted in costly and repetitive frontal assaults on Turkish trenches.

The day-to-day running of the campaign, where close proximity to the beachheads prevented the troops from obtaining any respite from the fighting, is vividly evoked. It was a constant round of weariness, of sniping, of raid and counter raid, where the trenches were so close that the combatants lobbed grenades from one to another — when, that is, the paltry supplies of Allied grenades did actually reach the frontline. In the summer there was stifling heat which brought with it flies and dysentery; in winter, biting cold and frostbite.

In the final chapter, Mr Laffin points the finger at 'the guilty men', analysing the role played by the Allied leaders. His comments are generally sympathetic, intelligent and valid; nevertheless, his clear-headed criticisms have the benefit of hindsight denied to his subjects at the time.

Mr Laffin's knowledge of the ground, his experience as a writer, the reminiscences of Gallipoli veterans and many previously unpublished photographs have combined to make a powerful book — a study,

like so many on the First World War, of courage and incompetence.

Osprey Publishing Limited, 12-14 Long Acre, London WC2E 9LP. £9.95.

IJK

Fearsome feats

'The Mongols' (S R Turnbull); 'Napoleon's German Allies (4): Bavaria' (Otto von Pivka)

Two more in the *Men at Arms* series, Nos 105 and 106. The text in these books is concise and yet amply covers the subject. The photographs and sketches are clear and full of detail and historical accuracy. These two volumes cover vastly different periods yet integrate easily into the series.

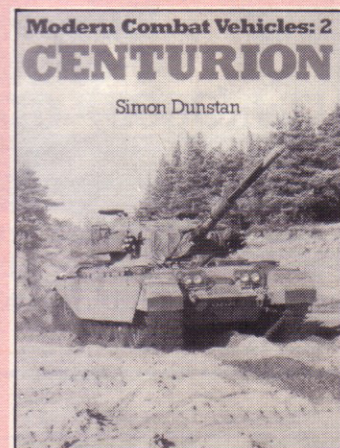
Book number 105 features The Mongols who, under Genghis Khan and his successors, conquered more of the world than the great Alexander, rampaging through Europe, Russia, Japan, Persia, Palestine, India, Burma, Vietnam and China in the 13th century. They were loathed and feared, they murdered wholesale and laid waste the lands they passed through, they were lice-ridden and they stank abominably, yet their hordes outmatched civilised armies and they performed incredible feats of marching and manoeuvring.

Book number 106 deals with the Bavarian troops who although mobilised in 1792 to fight against the French found themselves allied with Napoleon against Austria in 1805. In succeeding campaigns they gained territorially by this alliance. In 1812 a Bavarian corps aided the French against Russia but the following year the Bavarians fought the retreating French army at Hanau. This volume gives much detail of the organisation of the Bavarian army, a summary of their combat involvement from 1800-1815, the order of battle arms, equipment, uniforms, colours, badges of rank and other distinctions.

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Vade mecum



'Modern Combat Vehicles: Centurion' (Simon Dunstan)

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more modern and supposedly more powerful opponents. Up-gunned twice and up-armoured twice to give greater protection and increased range, and all achieved with only marginal increases in weight and complexity, the Centurion has much to be proud of.

This detailed work traces the story of a hugely successful tank — its development, evolution and service in action. A short but none the less interesting section deals with Centurion production while another concentrates on the duties of the crew. All the different roles of the Centurion are thoroughly examined from recovery vehicle to fighting tank while the many illustrations and diagrams help to make this the *vade mecum* of one of Britain's greatest battle tanks.

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JFPJ

Pack palsy

'British Infantry Equipments 1808-1908'; 'British Infantry Equipments 1908-80' (both by Mike Chapell)

Numbered 107 and 108 in the *Men at Arms* series, each of the volumes has the usual highly detailed photographs and sketches supplementing the text as well as contemporary photographs and artists' impressions illustrating men in action or going about their duties. There are also the normal eight pages of colour with the notes in French and German as well as English.

Today's veterans will recognise with little affection the 1908 pattern marching order of web equipment, but will also feel sympathy for their predecessors of the early years of the 19th century who were destined to wear a rigid knapsack invented by a Mr Trotter of Soho. Made from black lacquered canvas with reinforced hard corners it was most uncomfortable, and was further strengthened inside with sharp rectangles of board at the sides, bottom and top. It produced a medical condition known as 'pack palsy' and yet it survived against all complaints for 70 years. Let the men of today take note — and may 'authority' listen to any justifiable murmurings about the '58 pattern and any future developments.

Osprey Publishing Ltd, 12-14 Long Acre, London WC2E 9LP. £2.95

GRH

Traumatic days

'The D Day Landings' (Philip Warner) Strategy and high level planning have tended to be the main theme of previous books on D Day but the scenario for this one is set in the very front of the invasion and tells the story in a collection of unique and peculiarly personal accounts of what happened in the traumatic days of the landings.

A combination of poor weather, bad luck and sheer disaster all but ruined the greatest of all seaborne invasions and it was only the desperate determination of the men on the beachheads to win through that secured the vital foothold. The cost was high, thousands were killed, everyone faced the same dangers and these letters coming as they do from all ranks from private to brigadier tell of the

THE D DAY LANDINGS



excitement and fear, elation and disappointment of the men in the front line.

Some of the events described are extraordinary such as the day when an elegant young French woman suddenly appeared and walked down a road during a brisk exchange of fire, or the seven-year-old girl who was rescued from another battle by a British tank crew who had to fight for several hours with the child on board before they could hand her over to the Red Cross.

The letters are divided into chapters, each of which is introduced with a concise explanation of the action involved. Every page has its story of calm courage, high adventure and, above all, the simple, driving urge to see the thing through.

William Kimber & Co Ltd, Godolphin House, 22a Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AE — £9.95 JFPJ

Expert witnesses

'The South African War' (General editor: Peter Warwick)

The Boer War (or, as it has become fashionable to call it, the Anglo-Boer War) has fascinated military writers since the beginning of the century, yet autumn 1980 might prove to have been a watershed in the studies of this most important of late Victorian campaigns. Thomas Pakenham produced his controversial but stimulating account *The Boer War*, and the Australians came up with an excellent feature-film, *Breaker Morant*. This latest book, too, has a great deal to offer, basically comprising a resumé of the current state of knowledge in academic circles.

The Boer War erupted in 1899. It was the culmination of a British/Afrikaaner antipathy which was as old in South Africa as the colony itself, and was sparked off by the discovery of gold in the Transvaal, which altered the political and economic balance. The fighting began badly for the British, with a series of grim defeats which illuminated desperate weaknesses in the army of the time, yet within a year the Boer capital of Pretoria was occupied. Resistance did not cease, however, since the Boers turned to a particularly bitter style of guerilla warfare. The British attempts to deal with this, and the political settlement which followed the war, have left a legacy which still colours the political climate in South Africa today.

This book takes the form of seventeen essays, each written by a historian, British and South African alike, with a specialist knowledge of his subject. Broadly, it covers the cause of the war, its execution and its aftermath. Individual essays consider the military history of the war, what it was like to be a Boer 'on commando' or a British Tommy on active service. There are chapters on women and the war — the British use of concentration camps as a means of administering the civilian population of the front line areas is one of the most emotive aspects of the campaign — the effect on black African tribesmen, as well as unusual items such as the poetry inspired by the conflict.

In all, the studies present an excellent thematic look at an important part of British military history. Expertly presented and profusely illustrated with well chosen photographs and contemporary engravings, it will appeal to those new to the subject and offer a great deal to the well-read student.

Longmans, 5 Bentineck Street, London W1M 5RN £12.50 IJK

At the deep end

'UK and Commonwealth FALs' (R Blake Stevens)

This is the second volume in the series considering the Belgian FAL rifle. The first volume examined the FAL experience in the North American continent; this volume details the story from the rifle's wartime infancy in England to its present day status as the Nato-calibre issue service rifle of Britain and the Commonwealth.

This book is not for the casual reader. With such details as the trials of the Trilux sights, the Maranyl furniture and FAL performance in sandy conditions, it is obviously a technical handbook. It includes specifications and test reports on the various prototypes, and extremely detailed photographs and drawings of the mechanisms. There are copious notes and statistics on ammunition types, and meticulous consideration is given to the variants in use by Commonwealth countries such as India, Australia and New Guinea. In all, it illustrates 28 different FAL types and seven different rounds of ammunition. There are over 231 illustrations.

No doubt it will prove invaluable to police and military establishments and serious collectors and students of today's armies. The rest of us might be excused, perhaps, if we find ourselves out of our depth.

Collector Grade Publications, PO Box 250 Stn. E, Toronto, M6H 4E2, Canada. \$30.00 IJK

Iron fence

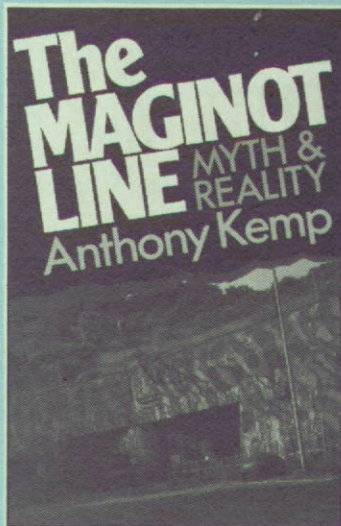
'The Maginot Line — Myth and Reality' (Anthony Kemp)

When you have read Mr Kemp, you can conclude that the Maginot Line, that much-derided monster of military engineering, might well have been a very good thing — if it had not induced what became known as the Maginot mentality.

It was a wise precaution for France, short of manpower, to block off as much as possible of the frontier with

Germany. But this did hand the initiative to the Germans by making them seek another way in.

That wise soldier, Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke, wrote at the beginning of 1940, the "most dangerous aspect is the psychological one; a false sense of security is engendered, a feeling of sitting behind an impregnable iron fence . . ."



And they sat. In September 1939 when the Germans were engaged in Poland, 67 French divisions faced a skeleton force of 19 weak German divisions without armour and did nothing beyond a small, ineffectual advance into the Saarland. At that time, says the author, the Maginot Line could have been used as a firm base for a vigorous offensive into the Rhineland; similarly, in May 1940, it could have backed a counter-attack against the German columns moving through Luxembourg.

In the event, the Line's troops acquitted themselves well in such fighting as they did see. Their morale remained high when the rest of France was collapsing. After the surrender, they marched out smartly and received the honours of war. Today, some parts of the Line have been restored, in one place as a monument, elsewhere as a tourist attraction.

Informed literature in English on the Line is non-existent, says Mr Kemp. His interesting book makes up for that deficiency. Frederick Warne, 40 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HE — £7.95 RLE

Japanese Sequel

'At The Going Down of the Sun' (Oliver Lindsay)

Lt Col Lindsay's first book *The Lasting Honour* told the story of the Japanese conquest of Hong Kong. His second book takes the story from the surrender of Hong Kong on Christmas Day 1941 to its liberation by Admiral Harcourt, and the war crimes trials which dealt with those on both sides whose conduct merited the attention of the law.

The scope of the book is huge. It covers British, Canadian, Indian and HKVDC prisoners of war in Shamshuipo, Argyle Street, Formosa, China and Japan. It describes the Stanley internment camp, its internal feudings and social problems. The British Army Aid Group is fully recorded, as is the International Red Cross and its near futile attempts to supervise POW and internee stan-

dards. Japanese customs and attitudes are also noted and given objective commentary, especially in relation to the disciplinary code applied to prisoners.

At the *Going Down of the Sun* deserves to be successful because of the ground it covers and the meticulous care with which it has been researched. The style, moreover, is easy and unpedantic and the text uncluttered with footnotes, though there is a full list of references and a good index. Colonel Lindsay has prepared an authoritative history which should put paid to much speculation and many false conceptions about the four hidden years between 1941 and 1945. He draws few conclusions; these are for us, the readers, to draw, and the younger among us may come to understand, after reading his book, why our parents and grandparents are sometimes a little touchy about Japanese goods.

Hamish Hamilton — £9.50 DRB

Guns galore

'Guns Illustrated 1981' (Edited by Harold A Murtz)

Pistols and revolvers, rifles, shotguns, muskets, air guns and long guns and the ammunition to feed them — all are listed, illustrated and described in this completely new edition of *Guns*. Even the price of individual weapons is given.

The book opens with a review of the formidable hand armoury carried by the Canadian Red Devils. Other sections concentrate on gun collecting and big game hunting to mention but two of the 19 chapters, each dealing with a different aspect of light weaponry.

Despite being an American publication with a natural tendency to concentrate on trans-Atlantic firearms and concluding with a useful directory of US arms traders, there is nevertheless plenty to interest the British enthusiast.

Arms and Armour Press, 2-6 Hampstead High Street, London, NW3 1PR (Sole UK distributors) — £4.50 JFPJ

Dashing marines

'The Royal Marines, 1919-1980' (James D Ladd)

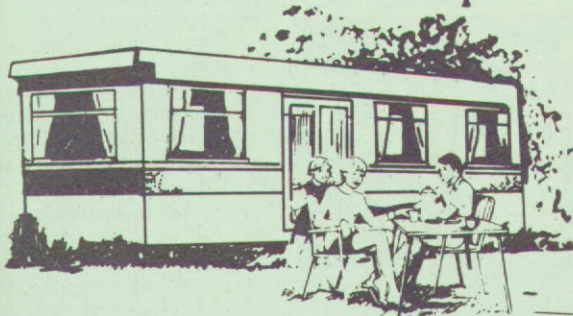
In the past 60 years, the Royal Marines have served in so many different roles and in so many places, often simultaneously, that it is difficult to think of them as a single corps with a single history.

In 1919 they were fighting in Northern Russia and, to the extent that they are now back in the snows of Norway training to guard Nato's northern flank, their history has come full circle. Meanwhile, they have been nearly everywhere the Army has seen service — China, Malaya, Palestine, Aden, Suez, Korea, Cyprus, Borneo and Northern Ireland, as well as major and minor campaigns of World War Two — and sailed the seven seas in their traditional roles with the Royal Navy.

They manned heavy cross-Channel guns in World War Two and just about every other sort of firearm down to pistol; they fought as infantry and commandos and also mobile gunners when they took Centaur tanks to Normandy; they manned landing

continued on page 49

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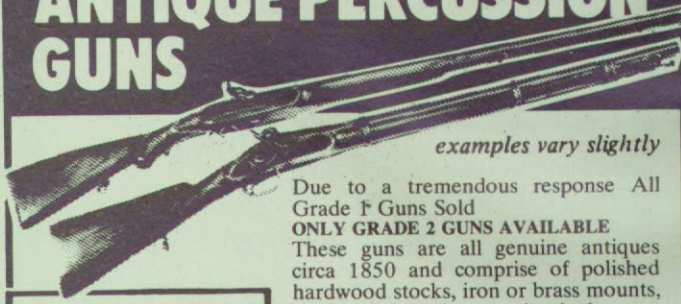
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craft and piloted aeroplanes; and they served underwater as divers.

It is astonishing, given their versatility and tradition, that they came to what Mr Ladd describes as "the verge of extinction" in 1943 when the Royal Marine Division did not seem to fit in anywhere. Earl Mountbatten piloted the Corps to new roles in Combined Operations.

Post-war adventures have ranged from a seven-and-a-half years stint in Aden to the quick, exciting rescue of British hostages at Limbang in Borneo in 1962 in the tradition of 19th century colonial campaigning.

It would be difficult, from such diverse material, to produce a flowing history and Mr Ladd's book comes out rather as a reference work which can provide hours of worthwhile 'dipping'. His restrained and balanced style inspires confidence. His painstaking appendices, which summarise unit histories and go into details of uniforms and badges and bands, will satisfy specialists.

Jane's, 238 City Road, London EC1V 2PU — £15 RLE

Troop Carrier

'In Time of War' (Alex Aiken)

This is the story told in some detail of the Glen Line and of one ship in particular, the *Glennearn*, and her service from convoy escort to troop carrier during the war.

In following the life of *Glennearn* we sail into many waters alongside a variety of other vessels and the men who served in them. Here is a book with a special appeal for all those who served in this particular sphere of naval activity and for the military reader there are pages on the D-Day landings and other operations, all meticulously annotated.

Photographs and charts round off a remarkable contribution to World War Two literature, notable for its painstaking accuracy and eye for detail.

Alex Aiken, 48 Merrycrest Avenue, Giffnock, Glasgow — £12.50 JFPJ

Yank tanks

'1939-45 Portfolio: American Armour' (Simon Forty)

Britain owed a lot to American tanks in World War Two. First there were the M3 and M5 light Honeys, followed by the stop-gap M3 Lees and Grants, with the main gun in a sponson, all of which did good work in the Western Desert and later Burma. The M4 Sherman arrived just in time for Alamein and fought on to the end of the war. More than 44,000 Shermans were built and used by many nationalities. They were outclassed by the end of 1944 and the Americans introduced the heavy M26 Pershing.

Mr Forty's 'portfolio' contains some excellent pictures, mostly from the Imperial War Museum, of these tanks and of armoured cars and half-tracks in use. There are handy 'data files' on the vehicles, a neat introduction to the subject, and some unit organisation tables.

Ian Allan, Terminal House, Shepperton, Middlesex, TW17 8AS — £3.95 RLE

on record

Janners in Concert (Band of the Devonshire and Dorset Regiment) (Conductor: Bandmaster Paul Judson) (Music Masters MM 0571)

The first from the Regiment in its amalgamated or original form that I recall, so as with other county regiment bands I wish they had made their debut with music of regional associations. There is so much of it from Devon and Dorset. When you hear the band giving voice in a medley of *West Country Songs* you beg for more in the same vein; three songs, *Teddy Oggy*, *The Blackbird Song* (bugger if oi won't 'ave ee) and of course *Widdicombe Fair* are nicely characterised with few concessions to sensitive ears in language; not knowing sugar from tissue-paper is one way of putting it I suppose.

Janner, the sleeve tells me, is a local word for the Regiment's ordinary soldier, the officers perhaps answering to other Wessex colloquialisms. Janners, or whatever, should all be proud of their band on this evidence, for it seems in very good shape at the moment and gives a varied programme which displays



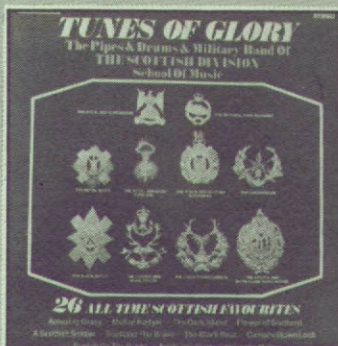
versatility and no little skill by the members. Even if there is nothing for the more serious minded (is there ever these days?) the *Chorals and Rock-Out* by Ted Huggens is an attractive pastiche in the style of Bach, and Rimsky-Korsakov's *Procession of the Nobles*, if a little lethargic here, is an operatic excerpt.

On the really light side, with electronic help where suitable, we have a trombone trio *Desafinado*, a cornet trio *The Three Jets*, and one of the finer modern pops in *A Whiter Shade of Pale*. Mr Judson supplies a march, *Marabout*, an honour which appears on the cap-badge, the corps of drums a *Victory Beating*, and all ends with the *Regimental March*.

Incidentally, someone's sense of probity has caused the aforementioned Ted Huggens to appear on the sleeve as E. Huggens. What's wrong with Ted? And since his real name is Henk van Lindschueten (as near as I can remember) and a fine linguist I'm sure he will be even more bewildered than formerly by 'us lor'.

From PRI, D&D, Roman Bks, Colchester. £4 plus P&P. RB

Tunes of Glory (Pipes & Drums and Military Band of The Scottish Division School of Music) (Conductor: Bandmaster D F Wall; Pipe Major: I M Morrison; Drum Major: E Park) (Parade Records PRD 2014)



The title has been used before unfortunately, on film and two discs, but this time the glory belongs to the young lads who played them as much as to the tunes themselves. And to Mr Wall who must have nourished, cajoled, threatened, probably bribed, but throughout inspired the little blighters into making a success of the venture. And a success it is, with inexperienced players in their initial instruction period before joining their regiments.

It is what making a record is all about — producing the best possible result with whatever is available, using all the resources of performers, music, and studio facilities. A commercial record can never be about raising funds, raising morale, or pleasing mums and dads; the record must be an attractive commodity likely to make a profit for the vendor. I have just listened to the programme a second time, a thing I can rarely suffer, to make sure I heard right the first time. I did, and at the bargain price of £2.75 plus P&P it should be the one Scottish disc every household needs when a good weep into your whisky is called for, or in place of what TV and radio fondly imagine is good New Year's Eve entertainment.

In most of the tracks the military band accompanies the pipes and drums to excellent effect in all the tunes you would expect considering the title. A rousing start with a medley of *Scotland the Brave*, *Highland Laddie*, and that blockbuster *The Black Bear*. Other nicely presented items are *Highland Cradle Song*, *Wi' a Hundred Pipers*, a pop medley of *Mull of Kintyre* and *Amazing Grace*, a flute solo of *My Love is like a Red Red Rose* which will make at least one mum proud, and a finale of *Now is the Hour* and *Auld Lang Syne*. The pipes and drums give two medleys of varied retreat tunes, strathspey and reel for good measure, making in all that most desirable commodity I was talking about.

Other music: *Scotch on the Rocks*,

Flower of Scotland, *Piper o' Dundee*, *Dark Island*, *Skye Boat Song*, *A Scottish Soldier*, *The Battle is O'er*, *Ode to Joy*, *Bluebells of Scotland*, *Blue Bonnets o'er the Border*, *Bob o' Fettercairn*, *Donald MacLeod*, *My Love she's but a lassie yet*.

Disc or cassette from PRI Scottish Infantry Depot, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen, or from record shops. RB

The Guards in Concert (Bands of the Coldstream, Irish and Welsh Guards) (Conductors: Lt-Col R A Ridings, Major M G Lane, Major D N Taylor) (DR Orchestral & Recording Services DR 30)

An unusual programme for these days in that it contains a 'serious' overture of some difficulty and other works you won't hear many bands attempt. It is a recording of a concert given in the Royal Festival Hall in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund, which drew a large and appreciative audience.

The overture is an arrangement of part of the music Vaughan Williams wrote for Aristophanes' *The Wasps*. With its buzzing effects, martial rhythms, and sweeping melodies it comes off very well on wind band and is given a virtuoso performance. Another old favourite from the days of wine and roses, grand hotels, and bands on pier-heads, is Ponchielli's *Dance of the Hours*, which can just about survive the ridiculous words put to its best tune in a 1960s pop version. *Wappavekka* is a tone picture by American composer Alfred



Reed, who tends to give not very distinguished music a veneer of profundity by means of effective scoring and shapely padding. Folksy, in a word, but I think Louis Ganne in his *Marche Lorraine*, Theodorakis in *Zorba's Dance*, and Marie Cowen in *Waltzing Matilda* (here in Laurie Johnson's arrangement) used folksy material to more lasting effect. *Don't Cry for Me Argentina* cheek by jowl with the finale of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* is quite an honour for Mr Andrew Lloyd Webber but scarcely compensates the loss of the other three movements.

It is always a problem to record, especially a large massed band, in a concert hall lacking a studio's facilities. Here Herbert Iredell as usual makes a silk purse out of what could so easily have been a sow's ear. He has been rescuing sows' ears from the brawn factory for many years now with his portable equipment, on many a draughty tattoo arena and in many an echoing barn. I for one have been saved hours of unrewarding listening by his skill. RB

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*In the May 1980 issue of their magazine 'Motorwelt' ADAC (the W. German equivalent of our own AA/RAC service) showed Colt cars top of the reliability table with only 3.9 breakdowns per 1,000 registrations for cars up to 2 years old.

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of cars up to 2 years old

| | | |
|----|-----------------|------|
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| 2 | Honda | 5.4 |
| 3 | Mercedes-Benz | 5.6 |
| 4 | Mazda | 6.7 |
| 5 | Toyota | 7.3 |
| 6 | Datsun | 7.5 |
| 7 | VW | 8.6 |
| 8 | Opel | 9.6 |
| 9 | Ford | 10.1 |
| 10 | Audi | 10.2 |
| 11 | BMW | 10.6 |
| 12 | Renault | 11.4 |
| 13 | Fiat | 13.8 |
| 14 | Talbot | 14.9 |
| 15 | Volvo | 16.7 |
| 16 | Peugeot | 17.7 |
| 17 | Citröen | 17.9 |
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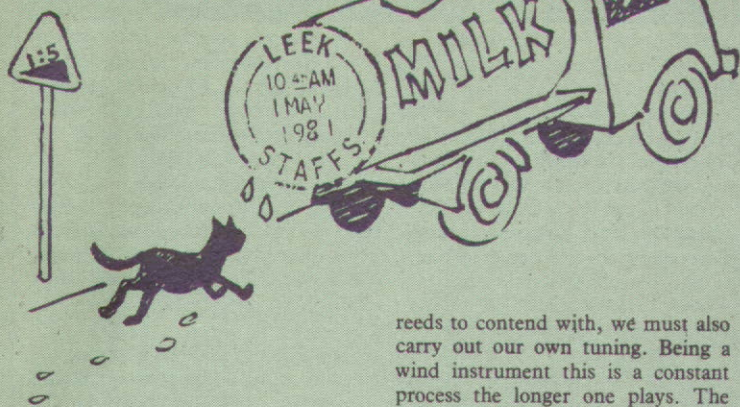
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LETTERS



Piper's lament

In your February issue my attention was drawn to the record review on the recent recording entitled *Cabar Feidh* by the 1st Battalion Queen's Own Highlanders pipes and drums. The report was written by someone who hides behind the initials RB but to anyone in the music world he is a fairly well known retired Brigade of Guards Director of Music.

He opens his review by admitting his ignorance of the bagpipe and its music and then proceeds to vilify it. Something wrong here; if he knows nothing about the instrument and its music, why is he so presumptuous as to write the review?

His utterances are, of course, typical of a certain type of musician who, when faced with something he does not understand, immediately considers it to be inferior and therefore to be denigrated. He writes blandly about why a pipe band should introduce *ritardando*, *accelerando*, *diminuendo*, *crescendo*, *pianissimo* and *fortissimo* to its music. (Foreign jargon for slowing-down, speeding-up, become softer, become louder, very soft and very loud, to those of you not in the know.) This arrant nonsense only serves to underline his ignorance of the instrument as even the most inexperienced piper will tell him. Tell us RB, apart from *ritardando* and *accelerando* which are occasionally used, how can we introduce the other effects to our music when the instrument itself has a constant and fixed volume of sound, and if we ease off on the pressure to lessen the volume, the chanter will cease to sound and if we do the opposite to increase the volume the result would be horrendous to the ear? The drum is entirely different and if he cares to listen more carefully he will hear the constant fluctuation between *pianissimo* and *fortissimo* taking place. Methinks RB's experience of pipe bands must have been limited to the Dagenham Girl Pipers. (Sorry girls, I really mean you no harm.)

The bagpipe is not like the drum, trumpet or guitar. It cannot provide instant music at the tap of a stick or flick of a finger and its volume of sound cannot be increased or decreased at will unless one increases or decreases the numbers actually playing, a technique which holds no favour with pipers. However, let me assure RB that it is one of the most difficult of instruments in the world to master. Not only do we have four

reeds to contend with, we must also carry out our own tuning. Being a wind instrument this is a constant process the longer one plays. The intricacies of fingerwork involved in producing the music would leave him gasping like a trout on the hook. The piper must also memorise his music, a considerable feat I am sure even he will admit. No easy way out for the piper like having a card stuck conveniently in front of his eyes, no conductor either — nor do we need one.

The bagpipe is essentially a martial instrument, but it can also provide the light and shade, the pathos and the joy with its own highly developed music which contains all the variety one could wish for. This record by the 1st Battalion Queen's Own Highlanders is an excellent volume, full of variety with its slow airs, quick marches, strathspeys, reels, jigs and hornpipes. No gimmicks to bring it to the attention of the aficionados of *Top of the Pops* for sure, but then, that is not everything. Pipers are not too keen on the 'fast buck' merchants who would use our instrument in despicable fashion in order to earn a bit of 'siller'. We would rather drink our Scotch on the Rocks than play it!!

No RB you are way out of order with this review and it is suggested that you gently (I am not unkind) place a piccolo where it hurts and grunt, groan, whine and whimper your way out of reviewing pipe band records from here on. Honest criticism is one thing but please do not insult our instrument or our race. — Captain A Pitkeathly, Director of Army Bagpipe Music, The Army School of Piping, Edinburgh Castle. RB replies:

For ten years now I have been trying to get a peep out of a piper in response to several digs at their recording technique (see my ill-informed reviews in *SOLDIER* of May '74, May and August '76, May and September '77 and others) but never thought to hook such a big fish as the *de'il* himself, the good Captain.

Who is RB? A wand'ring minstrel I, sir, of no fixed abode but certain fixed ideas of what constitutes a good record. I am also fully acquainted with the idiosyncrasies of piping, have written pipe music, and own a set of pipes. Only my native modesty and an attractive coyness cause me to disclaim expertise in the subject. I have 'picked the winner' at several Highland games.

No. I criticise, coyly of course, only the production of piping records; the piping I always admit to being adequate, though often it is not. And I referred specifically to the pipe band in that foreign jargon of mine, not individual pipers, although even a lone piper can, by twiddling with a little knob on the engineer's panel, be made to play louder

or softer. By imaginative use of the material available (pipes singly or in series, three kinds of drums, and the engineer's knobs) an awful lot could and should be done to create variety of presentation on record. Damn the parade ground.

Military bands have willingly and successfully adapted their natural animal instincts to the demands of the recording studio, so any piping record that is sent to me for review can expect to be judged on commercial terms. To expand on the principles of reviewing would need several pages of this magazine.

A few points. The bagpipes are as difficult to master as any other instrument; they are as easy to 'play' as any other instrument. Melodies are as easy to remember as the alphabet, or are pipers a super-race of musician? Finger work on the flute, oboe and clarinet is intricate too... Kettle-drums, trombones, tubas et al, are martial instruments, but can roar you as gently as any dove when asked.

The fast buck now, that's something pipers do appreciate. Before the advent of 'Amazing Grace' (earlier really) the expiring grunt of bagpipes ceasing to play, the upward whinny of bagpipes starting to play, the inability to slow down, speed up, change pitch, follow the conductor's beat, play *con amore* or *con malizia*, and several other now accepted possibilities, were suffered by we gullible Sassenachs as the gospel according to St Giles. How 'Amazing Grace' changed all that. Suddenly, for a fast buck, almost anything was possible. The race to the recording studio was on, with pipers clamouring at the doors to get on the bandwagon. Now they are there they should develop a technique. That amazingly fruitful grace has a lot to answer for, all those fast bucks changing entrenched views on what is and is not possible faster than a dram disappears down a pipe-major's gullet.

But *ars longa* and *vita being much too brevis* I confirm my love and admiration of all things Scottish, including pipers good and bad, pipe majors and captains of that ilk, pibrochs, porridge, and noble Sir Haggis. But from monotonous pipe records may the good Lord deliver me and my readers, for ever and ever, ach mon.

(All further correspondence on the subject direct to R Burns VII, c/o Caledonian Club, 664 Lake Drive, Chicago, Ill. Not to me. — Ed.)

SAS volunteers

I should like to correct some mistaken impressions about joining 21 SAS, the Territorial SAS Regiment based at Chelsea, which have arisen in media comment since we advertised in the London Evening Standard. I should not like serving Regular and TA soldiers to be misled.

● 21 SAS is a part of the Territorial Army, a back-up to the Regular Army in the event of general war. Hence our role is 'raiding and reconnaissance' behind the enemy's lines. We train for general war on the lines of our 2nd World War predecessors. We do not have a counter-terrorist role.

● That role demands the strongest sense of security amongst our soldiers which is why we, like the Regular 22 SAS Regiment and our North of England TA Regiment 23 SAS, with its HQ in Birmingham, adopt a 'low profile'. We are not being melodramatic. Security must be an attitude of

mind with us. We do entrust our soldiers with classified information.

● The initial test prior to enlistment of running three miles in 30 minutes is not our selection course, it is merely to ensure that a man has legs and lungs which he can use on the demanding recruit training which will follow. After seven weekends and 14 evenings of instruction, spread over a three month period, he must then undergo a two week selection course on the mountains. This is the real test. At the end of this our average pass rate is one man in ten.

● There then follows specialist training, spread over weekends (usually two a month) and evenings, and further continuous periods of up to two weeks, at the end of which a man can then claim to be a trained SAS TA soldier. Passing the selection course only proves that the man has potential for further, specialist training.

For many men who responded to the advertisement, our demands on their time and effort came as something of a shock. But surely nobody can really expect anything less.

It is a long, arduous and demanding commitment. We enjoyed a magnificent response to our advert in the Evening Standard and to tapes on the LBC; but we suffered a good deal of mis-informed comment from the rest of the media as a result. — Commanding Officer 21 SAS (Artists) (V), B Block, Duke of York's HQ, King's Road, London SW3 4SE.

An article on the 23 SAS TA selection course will be appearing in next month's issue. — Ed.

Worth paying for

Does Mr Mountain of Bracknell (Letters, March) think the Army has nothing better to do than put on endless displays throughout the year? Having two sons in the Army and a husband too, and having been in the ATS myself during the last war, I can imagine all the toil and tribulation that goes into just one display.

Maybe it is the free entertainment that appeals? On that subject, wouldn't it be better to charge a reasonable fee? I could weep with mortification when I see the lads come out with their begging bowls (bins) and scream with frustration when I see the mean public who have laughed at, cheered and encouraged the lone soldier, throw in coppers or walk on by with head averted.

At £1 for an adult and 50p a child it would be exceedingly cheap for this day and age and maybe make more than those bins do. — Mrs Joan Sheppard, 7 Stocks Meadow, Niffeld, Battle, Sussex.

Healthy change

I was interested in your item last December about the Remedial Gymnastics School at Woolwich.

After being seriously ill in the old Royal Herbert Hospital in Woolwich during World War Two, I was sent to the hotted convalescent camp in Richmond Park, Surrey. As a cure for all ills the PTIs there had just one idea — PT and more PT. Indeed, in the gymnasium one day, the Sgt PTI ordered me into the boxing ring for a

continued on page 52

MORE LETTERS

spar up. I said: "I'm wearing glasses, Sarge." His reply was "Don't argue with me laddie — put them on the window sill and get in there!"

I found this was the general type of attitude apart from one or two of the staff, who included Sgt Arthur Danahar the boxer. Even on the weekly grading exam, the MO and his orderly gave the impression that they thought you were trying it on. After my first week when he asked me if I was ready for grade 1 and I replied: "I don't think so, sir," he grudgingly gave me another week in grade 2. I don't know how many grades there were, but each one I am sure meant bags of PT.

Your article shows just how much the Army's attitude to sickness and injury has changed. Once upon a time the PTI had only to be fit himself, now he needs to be fit with 'O' levels at least, and the ability to take on a challenge with compassion. — **A W Cregan, 175 Humberstone Road, Plaistow, London, E13 9NQ.**

Mutt and Jeff

Eric Williams's letter (February) prompted me to check on the medals in my possession, including those of World War One — 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred'. Pip — the 1914/15 Star has my father's name, rank, number and regiment stamped on the reverse. Squeak and Wilfred (General Service and Victory medals) have the same details round the edge.

I also have a set of six medals awarded to a regular soldier of the Essex Regt comprising India General Service with NW Frontier Clasp, 1939/45 Star, Italy Star, 'Mutt and Jeff' (WW2 General Service and Victory) and Long Service and Good Conduct Regular Army. Of these the India General Service and the Long Service and Good Conduct are both marked round the edge with the recipients name, rank and regiment.

My own World War Two medals — Mutt and Jeff — are not marked in any way. So it would appear that right up to the Second World War medals were marked with the personal details of the recipient, and it is a pity that this pleasant and rewarding custom ceased. I know that the 1939/45 Star was originally titled '1939/43' and a number of my contemporaries put up the ribbon, but I believe they did not receive the actual medal until after the war. Indeed, my own were sent through the post at some time after November 1947 and one might have hoped that, during that time, means could have been devised of marking the medals. Possibly the change of government had some bearing on the decision — the prevailing mood of the day, one recalls, was somewhat anti-military.

Finally, would Eric Williams care to be more specific over the unofficial medal for Dunkirk? There is, as far as I can trace, no such thing, and no soldier, regular or wartime, would care — or dare(?) — to sport any unofficial ribbon. I have seen it on record that enterprising hawkers were selling 'Dunkirk' flashes to returned soldiers within days of the event — but these were taken down

as soon as Authority saw them. But medals? Tell us more please. — **Peter G Redman, 46 Sunningdale Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2NH.**

Hard riding

I read with interest the article on the King's Troop in your January issue. In 1935 I was in the old Riding Troop, its predecessor, or more correctly The Riding Establishment of His Majesty's Ordnance.

I was interested to learn that the Troop still names its remounts using the initial of the Commanding Officer. This was so in my days too when the Troop was stationed at the RA Depot at Woolwich. Even in those days the Troop insisted on a standard of turnout that was unknown in any other branch of the Army. When Reveille was sounding in the depot, the Troop would be filing out to water with the stables already mucked out and each square of bedding in a neat oblong outside. Each side of each oblong had to be of a certain and uniform height, harness was hung behind each horse and inspected every night at 9.30pm. If so much as a back of a buckle lacked sparkle or burnish it was skeleton order for a week — everything laid out on a blanket on the square at Reveille.

On Easter Monday we had 'mounted sports' and everyone had to take part. There was mounted wrestling and VC Races (in which you galloped down the school bare-back over two jumps, picked up a pillion and returned the same way). Single horse jumping was too easy — we did pair horse jumping where you rode one, led the other and took all the standard show jumps. Wembley would have been kids stuff after that lot.

— **C B J Stewart, 178 Chase Cross Road, Collier Row, Romford, Essex.**

Don't forget us

Your February article 'Queen's in Belize' failed to mention one of the key units which make up Force troops there — 404 Troop RCT.

Without my unit all the VIP, PR team and News team visitors would have to walk around, and the rest of British Forces Belize would dip out on a lot of things such as rations, beer and Naafi stores, so we think we do enough to get a mention. — **The Lads of 404 Tp RCT, HQ British Forces, BFPO 12.**

Sorry 404 Troop, no offence meant. Keep those wheels rolling! — Ed.

Past glories

Although still finding SOLDIER interesting I tend, like most people getting on in years, to live in the past, especially as regards the history and traditions of the Army. So I for one, would like to see another series such as 'Hours of Glory' and 'This is your Regiment', if possible. — **Mr C G Andrews, 16 Blossom Way, Heston, Hounslow, TW5 9HD.**

What new series would other readers like to see? — Ed

Reunions

The Middlesex Regimental Association. Annual Albuhera Service of

CAN YOU HELP?

The Canadian War Museum has just completed a series of commemorative programmes to mark its 100th anniversary. During 1981 we are making a special plea for information concerning the location of the military artefacts of the various senior officers of the Royal Canadian Navy, Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Air Force and Canadian Forces. Decorations, medals and military memorabilia of Canadian military combat heroes are also solicited.

Also being sought are the uniforms and musical instruments of Canadian Forces bandmen, uniforms and equipment for military cadets, university and forces college officer training candidates, militia personnel between the First and Second World Wars, and special military groups such as doctors, nurses, dentists and padres. — **Lee Murray, Chief Curator, Canadian War Museum, 330 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1A 0M8.**

As a former member of the Reconnaissance Corps I should be grateful for any information concerning the availability of: a Reconnaissance Corps tie; a recording of the regimental march *Over the Mountain Brow*; a regimental history, if one has ever been written. — **F P Glover, 31 Barcheston Road, Knowle, Solihull.**

I am wondering if any of the older readers could help me in my research on the following military bands up to 1939: Queen's Own Yorkshire Dragoons, The Yorkshire Hussars, The Hallamshire Rifles, The Sheffield Engineers, The Sheffield Artillery, and one brass band, The Danemora Steelworks Band. I wish to borrow — for copying — photographs, newspaper cuttings, musical programmes and anything else of interest. — **Jack Greaves, 20 Cambray Road, Blackpool, Lancs, FY1 2LX.**

I would like to hear from anyone who served with the 3rd Battalion, The Grenadier Guards from 1933-37 and from any World War Two members of the Military Provost Staff Corps, 1939-46. — **A J Rea, 8151 Dufferin St N, PO Box 60, Concord, Ontario, Canada, L4K 1B2.**

Remembrance, St Paul's Cathedral, Sat 16 May at 2.30pm. Annual reunion at TA Centre, Deansbrook Road, Edgware, Middx, at 7pm same day. Details from Major A E F Waldron MBE, Lynsore Bungalow, Upper Hardres, Canterbury, Kent, CT4 6EE.

The Light Infantry. Regimental Association reunion at the LI Depot, Shrewsbury, Sat 25 and Sun 26 July. Details from RHQ LI, Sir John Moore Barracks, Shrewsbury, SY3 8LZ.

The Somerset Light Infantry (PA). Annual reunion 8pm Sat 2 May at Royal British Legion Club, Street. Details from Regimental Secretary, 14 Mount St, Taunton, TA1 3QE.

I have in my possession a silver cup with the inscription *The Black Horse Shooting Club, 23rd Annual Meeting. Highest score by Corporal or Private in Marksmen Practice. Won by Pte E Jordan, Cairo, April 1909.* It belonged to my Uncle Edward who served with the 4th Dragoon Guards. Do any readers know anything about this shoot? — **P F Jordan, 17 Durndale Lane, Northfleet, Kent, DA11 8PE.**

I am trying to find out if anyone has details of the action in which SQMS Frederick Clark (or Clarke) of The 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards met his death in the Khyber Pass in 1899 or 1900. I should like to find out if the place of burial is known. — **Major R E Evans, 90 St Mary's Drive, East Preston, Littlehampton, Sussex BN16 1JB.**

This year the Mercury Theatre Group of 9 Signal Regiment, in Cyprus, is celebrating 25 successive years of drama at Ayios Nikolaos. We are compiling a history of the group, with a view to publishing a commemorative booklet, and we would like to hear from all past members, particularly people who were members of MTG in its earliest years. Also, we desperately need old programmes, photos, tickets etc, either on loan or as donations to our archives. Loaned items will be photographed and returned with care. — **Cpl Dave Morgan (Silver Jubilee Committee MTG), 3 Sqn, 9 Sig Regt, BFPO 58.**

My husband, formerly Gunner H Boothroyd 880175 served with 105/119 battery, 31st Field Regiment RA, 4th Indian Division from 1939-43. He received multiple gun shot wounds and was sent to transit camp in 1943 prior to returning home in 1944. He is now in a wheelchair and would like to hear from anyone who cares to write, particularly old comrades. Among the names he remembers serving with are Gunner J S Dolan of Sunderland, Sergeants Rogers and Batey and Bob Gunning. — **Mrs A Boothroyd, 6 Cavalier Court, Ingleside Drive, Stevenage, Herts SG1 4RD.**

23 Parachute Field Ambulance RAMC. Reunion for ex-members of 23 PFA is proposed for the evening of 3 July 1981, the Friday preceding Airborne Forces Day. Anyone interested in attending should contact: S/Sgt Newton, Parachute Clearing Troop, 6 Field Force Ambulance, Mons Bks, Aldershot, Hants, GU11 2LF.

14th/20th King's Hussars. Annual reunion Sat 2 May, Mount Royal Hotel, London — 7 for 8pm. Details from Home HQ, TA Centre, Clifton, Manchester, M27 2PU.

All RA units; Hong Kong, Singapore, Ceylon Stations and the Pack Brigades: REME, S/R & AER.

continued on page 53

Combined reunion Sat 26 Sep in Eastbourne. Details from D A Knight, 7 Jutland House, Prospect Vale, Woolwich, SE18 5HZ. (01-854 7376).

How observant are you?

The two pictures differ in the following respects: 1 Number of books on top shelf inside shop; 2 'G' in 'REGS'; 3 Book-seller's right forefinger; 4 Top book under bookseller's elbow; 5 Volume number on bottom right shelf; 6 Width of picture on Private Eye cover; 7 Beak of left bird; 8 Cat's eye; 9 Right wing of bookseller's collar; 10 Bookseller's right toe-cap.

Competition

Our January competition (270) 'Every which way' attracted a slightly smaller entry than usual. Most people found three battles on the grid (there were five in all) but some made mistakes in answering the clues, eg the answer to 17 was 'policies' not 'promises' and to 23 'pyres' and not 'piles'. The battles were Aart, Anzio, Ava, Talavera and Ypres. Prizewinners were: 1 — W Duggan, 21 Essex Walk, Walcot, Swindon; 2 — D Edwards, 'Cornerbays', Clos Ffordd Isa, Prestatyn; 3 — Lt Col P Lon-

non, 'Ponderosa', Park Road, Ash-tead; 4 — G Bennett, 10 Stockton, Nr Warminster; 5 — R Travers-Bogusz, 77 St Thomas's Road, Hardway, Gosport; 6 — A Caulkett, 'A' Coy 5 Queen's (V), Snadfield Terrace, Guildford; 7 — Maj A Charlton, 6 Ashdown Drive, Firwood Fold, Bolton; 8 — P Dight, 55 Corbett Road, Hollywood, Nr Birmingham.

Collectors' corner

Mr D MacBride, 134 Kniltworth Cres, Greenock, Strathclyde, PR16 9DY. Seeks 'Regimental Marches of the British Army, Vol 2', record or cassette.

Mr A J McKechnie, Kings Arms Cottage, Fore St, Chulmleigh, N Devon. Wishes to exchange military modelling magazines 1971 to 1977 for pre 1955 SOLDIER Magazines. Send SAE for list.

R J C Darley, 39 College Court, Hayle Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6PB. Still searching: Has anyone the two Royal Military School cap badges with Edward VII and Victoria cyphers for sale?

Mr T Bate, 5 Church St, Wymes-wold, Leicestershire, LE12 6TX. Wants USMC Para wings, US Air Assault wings, US Para & Glider wings, USN & USAAF pilot/aircrew

wings, WWII USAAF shoulder patches, US Airborne shoulder patches. Will exchange for equivalent UK/ commonwealth/foreign insignia.

P Spencer, 18 Shelton Fields, The Mount, Shrewsbury, Salop. Wishes to purchase any meerschaum, antique, oriental or unusual pipes, or smoking paraphernalia.

D Smart, 172 Club Avenue, Ashlea Gardens, 0181 Pretoria, South Africa. Wants manuals and books on military law, court-martials etc. Particular titles sought — Sir Charles Napier's 'Remarks on Military Law' and T S Simmons 'The Constitution and Practice of Court-Martials.' Will pay fair prices and answer all letters.

Gen Natale Dodoli, Accademia Militare, Modena, Italy. Requires naval wall crests, especially of fighting ships. Will purchase or trade with Italian Army wall crests, enamelled coloured.

M J Laker, 36 Oatlands Drive, Otley, Yorks, LS21 2AY. Wishes to purchase cloth/metal badges of wartime Polish, Czech, Belgian forces.

D J Barnes, 21 Bury New Road, Ramsbottom, Greater Manchester, BL0 0BT. Seeks photos of members of British Armed Forces 1850s to date. Anything reasonably priced considered.

D M Whitecross, 179 Wyoming Ave, Berario, 2195 Johannesburg, South

Africa. Wants British buttons and metal shoulder titles. Has similar South African and some British items to swap.

R Knight, 14 St James St, Clitheroe, Lancs. Wants combat knives etc. books on Northern Ireland and combat (DPM) trousers (size 40W, 32L) as new. Will offer badges of QVC, KC and many Nazi items.

M Harvey, Higher Sutton, South Milton, Nr Kingsbridge, Devon. Wishes to buy 'Para' wings of any country. Please state price, or trade for other badges, mags, and items of general militaria.

Mrs I Stephen, 12 Wannock Close, Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, TN40 2SQ. Seeks books 'Freely I served,' by S Sosabowski and 'Men of Arnhem' by Tom Angus.

J Corbin, 4 Wynd Close, West Stafford, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 8AJ. Has for sale 100-plus military Div and Corps flashes of different countries. £50 o.n.o.

Malcolm Scott, 13 Crawley Avenue, Hebburn, Tyne & Wear, NE31 2LU. Is interested in obtaining foreign banknotes old and new in good to perfect condition to start collection. Funds limited. Has small quantity of Army staybrights in mint condition and a few buttons to offer in exchange for reasonable quantities of notes.

See-the-Army

DIARY

Additions and amendments to last month's list are in bold type. Please remember though that events are sometimes altered, postponed or cancelled so always check before setting out. We hope too that organisers will advise us of any changes so that we can keep readers fully in the picture. Dates for September will be featured next month

MAY 1981

- 4 Lydiard Park.
- 16 Hinckley Tattoo, Leics (16-17 May).
- 16 General Assembly Church of Scotland, Edinburgh (1 Para Band CD) (16-22 May).
- 20 West Midlands Agricultural Show, Shrewsbury (20-21 May) (1st Queen's Lanes Band and Drums, LI School of Music Band; White Helmets, Flying Bugles, RGJ Freefall).
- 23 International Clan Gathering, Edinburgh (1 Gordons Band) (23-30 May).
- 24 Loughborough Tattoo, Leics (24-25 May).
- 25 Derby County Show.
- 25 Herts County Day, Hertford.
- 27 Suffolk Show, Ipswich (1, 2 and 3 R Anglian Bands) (27-28 May).
- 30 St Neots Riverside Festival, Cambs (30-31 May) (White Helmets).
- 30 1st rehearsal for Queen's Birthday Parade (Massed Bands, Pipes & Drums Household Division).

JUNE 1981

- 2 Beating Retreat, Horse Guards (Massed Bands, Pipes & Drums Household Division) (2-4 June).
- 5 Ripon Weekend (RE Band) (5-7 June).
- 6 Sutton Coldfield RSC Open Day (JLRR Band; RA para team, JLRR Gymnastics).
- 6 2nd rehearsal The Queen's Birthday Parade (Massed Bands, Pipes & Drums Household Division).
- 8 Beating Retreat, Horse Guards (Irish Regiments Massed Bands).
- 11 South of England Show (Queen's Division Band) (11-13 June).
- 12 Essex Show, Chelmsford (3 R Anglian Band) (12-13 June).
- 13 Water Spectacular, Nottingham (13-14 June).
- 13 The Queen's Birthday Parade (Massed Bands, Pipes & Drums

Household Division).

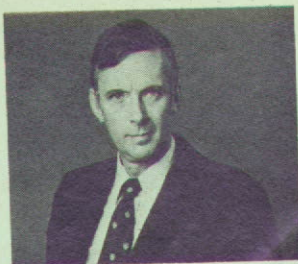
- 14 Glencorse Open Day (Scottish Infantry Depot).
- 20 Ashford Extravaganza (1 Queen's Band) (20-21 June).
- 20 City of Leicester Tattoo.
- 23 Royal Highland Show, Edinburgh (23-26 June).
- 24 Lincs Agricultural Show, Lincoln (24-25 June).
- 26 International Air Tattoo, Greenham Common (Lt Div Band; Red Devils) (26-28 June).
- 27 Wembley Military Musical Pageant (40 bands, Corps of Drums, Pipes & Drums) (27 evening-28 afternoon June).
- 27 Royal Signals 'At Home' Catterick (R Signals Band; Jnr Regt Royal Signals Display Team).

JULY 1981

- 1 Royal Norfolk Show, Norwich (1-2 July).
- 4 Army Open Day, RPC TRG Centre, Northampton (3 R Anglian Band).
- 7 Basingstoke Carnival (Red Devils) (7-11 July).
- 10 Southampton Show (POW Div Band; RGJ Freefall) (10-12 July).
- 11 RCT Corps weekend 'At Home' Aldershot (RCT (Northumbrian) Band).
- 11 Corby Highland Games, Northants (11-12 July).
- 11 Royal British Legion, Scotland, Royal Review, Holyrood Park, Edinburgh (1 Gordons Band, 1 Para Band).
- 15 The Royal Tournament, Earls Court (Massed Bands of Royal Marines, Royal Signals Band, Netherlands Marine Corps Band; Display Teams: Field Guns, King's Troop, White Helmets, RAF Queen's Colour Squadron) (15 July-1 August).
- 14 Great Yorkshire Show, Harrogate (14 DWR Band) (14-16 July).
- 15 Army Expo for Schools, Basingstoun, Cambs. (Queen's Div Jnr School of Music Band; Red Devils, R Sigs Jnr Display Team) (15-17 July).
- 18 Bournemouth Air Pageant (R Signals Band; Red Devils) (18-19 July).
- 21 East of England Show, Peterborough, Cambs (21-23 July).
- 23 Nottingham Army Display (RA Motorcycles) (23-25 July).
- 24 Northampton Show (24-26 July).
- 30 Folkstone Tattoo (Queen's Div, Para Regt Bands) (30-31 July).

AUGUST 1981

- 5 Cardiff Searchlight Tattoo (WG, RCT and Drums, WRAC, QDG, 1 RRV and Drums, 1 R Irish, 1 DWR, 1 R Hamps and Drums, 1 6/5 L) (5-15 August).
- 5 North Devon Show (1 Devon & Dorsets, Corps of Drums; Red Devils).
- 12 Edinburgh Military Tattoo (Regimental Band Scots Guards, 2 Scot Div, 1 Para) (Bands of Scots Guards, Royal Highland Fusiliers, Black Watch, Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, 1 Para) (12-August-5 September).
- 14 Reading Show (14-15 August).
- 14 Shrewsbury Flower Show (14-15 Aug). (Bands of Blues and Royals, Coldstream Gds, RAOC and 1st Queen's Lanes).
- 29 Expo Steam, Peterborough, Cambs (REME Band) (29-31 August).
- 30 Uffington White Horse Show (Lt Div Band; RGJ Freefall) (30-31 August).
- 30 QUEXPO (1 Queen's Band) (30-31 August).



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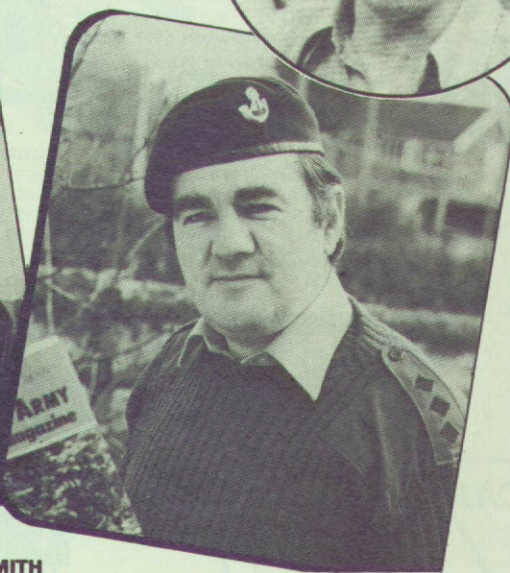
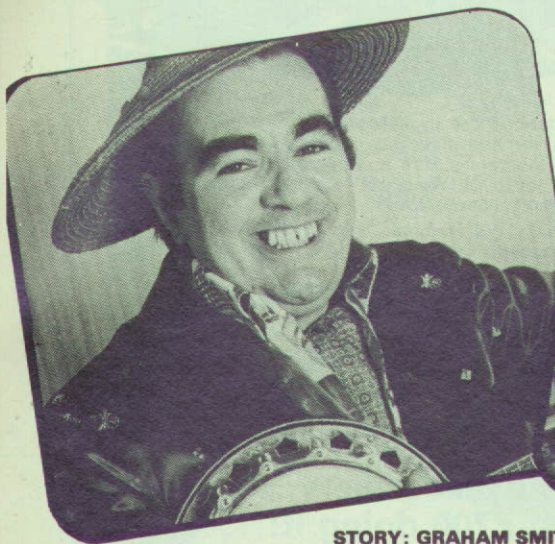
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Formby's legend lives on—thanks to TA's Gerry



STORY: GRAHAM SMITH

CAPTAIN GERRY NICHOLAS of the Territorial Army — with four famous false teeth insured for £250 each — has been a devotee and subsequent unswerving impersonator of the late ukelele-playing George Formby since the age of three.

He puts it all down to wartime cinema visits with his mum, brothers and sisters who regularly patronised the picture palaces to avoid the air raids by Goering's marauding Luftwaffe.

Gerry, a 42-year-old freelance publicity consultant, Lancashire-reared but living in Taunton, is one of a dozen-strong United Kingdom Land Forces 'pool' of part-time Territorial Army public relations officers. He is attached to the 6th Battalion, The Light Infantry (Volunteers) and has been with the TA since November 1962, joining the UKLF squad of public image-builders last November.

He still recalls his war-time cinema excursions: "My mother thought going to the pictures was the ideal way of dodging the air raids and we would have a better chance to survive them. I used to go nearly every day and I soon became enamoured with the characters Formby used to portray in his films. I remember them vividly because I have got perfect recall. I'd seen all 22 of his films by the time I was nine."

So badly bitten was he by the Formby bug that today he not only has half-a-dozen banjo-ukeles — banjeleles — in his totally Thirties-decorated terrace house but is now on his fourth set of specially-sculpted 'buck' teeth. And his adulation shows no sign of abating as he strives to recreate the golden moments of his idol's career during what he affectionately terms "the days of wind-up grams and bread queues".

But while Formby in his screen roles always got the girl in the end, bachelor Gerry says he is still waiting.

A journalist by belated profession — he was first taken on as a "seasoned trainee" at 26 on Lancashire's *Ashton-Under-Lyne Reporter* on the strength of his TA bulletin

compilation — Gerry has been "messaging about" with ukeles since the age of five.

"Some people think it's crazy what I do, singing Formby at clubs and parties but, at the risk of appearing certifiable, I think it's all worth it," says Gerry who acquired his original toothsome foursome of dentures plus plate with the help of access to dental mechanic files on his Wigan-born idol.

"I had to have four teeth out anyway," Gerry maintains, "and the dentures were installed after studying literally hundreds of photographs, obtained from places like the British Film Institute, showing Formby sideways on, straight on and, indeed, from every aspect showing off his teeth."

"I was deeply broken up when Formby died"

"My idea was to get my impersonation of Formby perfect or, as near as I could get to it. Over the years when I was a kid, I used to practise his grin but I couldn't get it right with my naturally small teeth. Never have I claimed to look like Formby. My jaw bone construction is quite different. Formby, for instance, had a pod-shaped mouth. And his teeth, incidentally, were all his own."

Gerry wanted to meet Formby the man and freely admits that, as a teenager, he hounded the star while he was playing various theatres. On one particular week he sat in the same seat in the same row every night simply studying his style!

"I was immature and very naïve then. I used to spend all my money following him round the country," says Gerry. "I liked what I saw. He was the archetypal English working man, epitomising all the aspirations of the under-privileged and disadvantaged sections of society. He lifted the gloom of the mills away. Leeds and Bradford, by comparison today, are like miniature Dusseldorfs."

And his verdict on Formby, with whom he managed to snatch 15 minutes one rain-

sodden night outside the Manchester Opera House?

"He was very like the characters he played on the stage, a child-like character in the nicest sense of the word," says Gerry with sincere reverence. "He was not so much naïve as incapable of lying when human relationships were concerned. He was incredibly honest. Almost tactless. Absolutely innocent."

Gerry had met his idol in 1958. The star, then 53, was "haggard, distraught, highly-strung, extremely morose, with more lines on his face than a map of Europe."

Formby was to die three years later on March 6, 1961, in a Preston hospital only 12 days after admission following a heart attack.

Yet just a fortnight before, Gerry had given him his own personal collection of 280 Formby records which were gratefully acknowledged by the man at his St Annes-on-Sea home.

"I was deeply broken up when Formby died, primarily because I had fought a one-man campaign to get him back into the position he was in the 30s and 40s. I was derided in this by no less a person than Formby himself," Gerry recalls.

He had rung the star at his St Anne's home offering encouragement to an obviously depressed entertainer who said he was 'finished and had it.'

Gerry, at that moment, was doing a two-on-two-off guard duty at RAF North Coates near Grimsby as 3526431 SAC Nicholas G.V.F.

Eight times on television — twice on *Nationwide* — Gerry's repertoire of impersonations also includes such great names as Max Miller, Maurice Chevalier, Al Jolson, Frank Randle (a particular favourite), Rob Wilton, Old Mother Riley, and Laurel and Hardy. But Formby is his great love that time has done nothing to diminish.

For Gerry Nicholas his death, 20 years ago, was a personal thing. "The tragedy for me was that I had just got to know him properly. Secondly, I was deeply upset to visit his St Anne's home to see it thrown open to the maudlin curious who had come to view the sale of his most treasured and private possessions — right down to his vest and underpants!"

He added: "I would like to see the revival of provincial theatre variety. I think people are too sophisticated today. Formby was a legend in his own lifetime. If there was one word which would sum him up it would have to be 'simplicity'. All imitation of him is a tribute to the man."

Gerry, who gives a one-man, two-hour show of former variety playhouse favourites, is prepared to give his services free to any Service unit — especially Northern Ireland — in return for his fare, accommodation and loan of stage equipment.

If Formby for him was a "compelling theatrical fantasy" what, then, of the military Mr Nicholas who joined the TA as an officer cadet with the 9th Battalion, The Manchester Regiment at Ashton-Under-Lyne in November 1962?

"In my day-to-day journalistic work, my TA duties with the 6th Battalion, The Light Infantry and other matters I'm a very business-like operator with no time for fantasy or ideas of being anybody else. I'm simply Gerry Nicholas" . . . says Gerry Nicholas. ●

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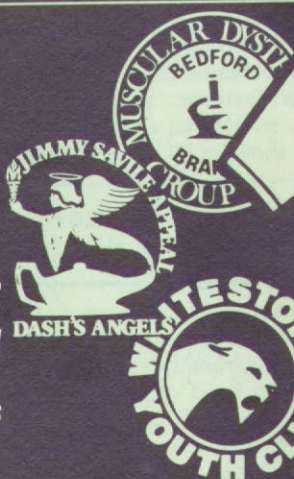
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He was lucky to be able to discard the

letter Y and Z from his coded alphabet. To test his system he first sent four well known tunes associated with his unit to London. What were the titles of these four tunes and what unit did Sergeant Crotchet belong to?

The competition is open to all readers at home or overseas and the closing date is Monday 6 July. The answer and winners' names will appear in the September issue of SOLDIER. More than one entry can be submitted but each must be accompanied by a 'Competition 274' label. Winners will be drawn by lots from correct entries. Entries using OHMS envelopes or pre-paid labels will be disqualified.

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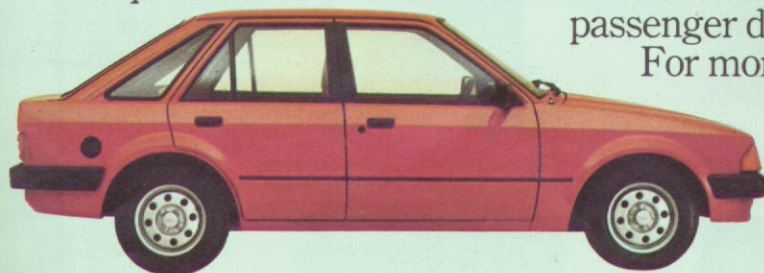
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