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CONTENTS

- 5 The road north
- 7 Helpline numbers
- 8 Gulf people
- 11 SOLDIER to Soldier
- 13 Force Maintenance Area
- 14 4 Regt AAC
- 17 6 Ord Bn Gp
- 20 Print Train in service
- 21 Tk Tpt tribute
- 22 22 Fd Hosp
- 24 3 Amph Assault Bn USMC
- 26 TAPIO pool
- 27 Gulf colour section
- 31 40 Fd Regt RA
- 32 People
- 34 56 MT Sqn
- 36 Anne Armstrong
- 38 Record and book reviews
- 40 Royal Baggage Train
- 42 Letters
- 43 HOAY competition
- 44 SOLDIER Mart
- 52 Classified advertisements
- 54 Sport

FRONT COVER – Main picture: Bdr Taff Thomas (left) passes a 155mm shell to Gnr Eddie Edwards inside a M109A2 gun of 40 Field Regiment Royal Artillery during live-firing in the Saudi Arabian desert (Picture: Mike Weston). **Inset photographs** show the Prime Minister, Mr John Major, addressing troops at Al Jubail during his visit to Saudi Arabia early in January (Picture: Terry Champion), and a M109A2 self-propelled howitzer of 40 Field Regiment RA (Picture: Laurie Manton).

SOLDIER

Incorporating the Territorial Army magazine. Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU. Telephone: 0252 24431, or Aldershot Military network. Fax 0252 347358 or Ext 2358. SOLDIER is published by the Ministry of Defence and printed in the UK for HMSO. Phototypeset by RSB Typesetters, Worpledon, Surrey.

Crown copyright 1991.

The night the battle began

This report was filed by **Bill Moore** in Saudi Arabia as the first Allied air strikes were being completed on January 17:

EVERYONE had known it might come at any time. Only the High Command knew when.

For the SOLDIER team in the Gulf, the first hint came when an officer coming off duty just before 1am said it had been reported that US troops had been ordered to take their NAPs tablets – the nerve agent pre-treatment tablets all soldiers carry in their respirator cases.

The officer went to bed. Other occupants in the room remained in their sleeping bags . . . wondering!

About an hour later, the door of the billet opened and a fully-equipped and armed soldier aroused Maj Philip Mould, the NBC adviser to HQ Force Maintenance Area, and said he was wanted immediately in the ops room.

"The Americans have launched an airstrike," said the soldier in a matter-of-fact way.

It seemed a good time to start dressing.

At 0256, a message to "All

Reports from Saudi Arabia appearing in this issue were filed by **Bill Moore, Laurie Manton and Jennifer Griffiths**. The photographs were taken by **Mike Weston and Terry Champion**.

Much of the material was compiled and processed before the outbreak of hostilities. On the night of January 16 Moore and Champion were with troops at the Force Maintenance Area. A dispatch received early the following morning appears on this page.

They are now attached to the Command Information Team (as will be successive SOLDIER teams), and have been tasked with producing an archival record of the British Army at war to liberate Kuwait.

personnel . . . all personnel" came over the public address system: "Half an hour ago, the US launched an attack with 100 missiles and aircraft on targets in Iraq and Kuwait."

Not a sound of this could be heard. Air raid state yellow was announced, closely followed by red.

The words "Scuds laun-

ched" came over clearly. Supplied to Iraq by Russia, Scuds have a range of 500 miles. HQ FMA was well within this distance.

The camp sergeant major, WO1 Billy Nelson of the Royal Pioneer Corps, a brisk and imperturbable Scot, put his head in the room and checked politely that everyone was suitably equipped and putting on their NBC boots.

The occupants of the barrack room block trooped into what appears to be a day room and laced up their boots there, always a time-consuming business.

According to instructions, they lined the outside walls. A young major calmly started removing the slotted windows as a precaution against flying glass. After ten minutes the alert state was reduced.

People went back to either their duty stations or their rooms, where they lay on their beds.

More Scuds were announced, and the day room and corridor were re-occupied. This alert was also reduced – the Scuds seem to have been Tomahawk missiles finding their mark in Iraq.

At 5am, people were listening to personal radios relaying President Bush's speech to their comrades and describing the turmoil reported in Baghdad.

Over HQ FMA and the port of entry through which so much Allied material – US and British – has passed, the skies were clear.

Then a familiar sound drifted through the glassless windows – a local Muslim priest was intoning prayers in a pure clear voice.

At 0730, someone asked Maj Cliff Noons, the catering adviser, if there was likely to be a cup of tea.

"Tea!" he snorted. "We're

● Turn to Page 5



Picture: Sgt Steve Dock

There was a surprise in store for the Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir John Chapple (right) at the end of his tour of Army positions in the Gulf. Gen Chapple was presented with a Black Rat arm badge, a brigade plaque and a 4th Armoured Brigade sticker bearing the brigade's new motto – *Hell for leather* – by the Brigade Commander, Brig Christopher Hammerbeck.

Managing Editor Chris Horrocks (Ext 2355) • Editor John Elliott (2356) • Assistant Editors Bill Moore (2361), Laurie Manton (2362), Jennifer Griffiths (2360) • Picture Editor: Terry Champion (2357) • Photographers: Mike Weston, Mike Perring (2357) • Families: Anne Armstrong (2169) • Librarian: Bill Stroud (2351) • Advertising/Promotions: Dawn Homewood (2352 or 0252 347352) • Accounts/Distribution: Seela McIntosh (2353)

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Annual (25 issues) UK £16.55
..... BFPO £10
..... Other £21.15

Send UK postal order or international money order expressed in sterling and made payable to Command Cashier UKLF. Views expressed in SOLDIER are not necessarily those of the Army or the Ministry of Defence.

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THE ROAD NORTH

THE MAIN supply route (MSR) used by ground forces moving to the front is a narrow highway across hundreds of kilometres of open desert.

The road was swept by rain the weekend before the devastating man-made Desert Storm was launched, stretches being flooded, verges made treacherous.

A number of civilian petrol tankers driven by local contractors came to grief but the military convoys rolled relentlessly on, guarded by US Marine military police in HumVee cross-country vehicles. British RMP posts were established along the route.

At one point there was the

magnificent sight of more than 100 Scammell Commanders of 7 Tank Transporter Regiment lined up off the road. They had completed one heavy lift and were preparing for the next.

The regiment has an enviable reputation.

At a strategic point the Happy Eater sign, identical with the familiar UK motorway chain, indicated the whereabouts of the Admin Harbour Area (AHA).

Over this flies the Silver Sphinx of 17 Squadron RCT.

Besides doing a major transport job the squadron (with elements of 7, 9 and 38 Squadrons RCT under command) is responsible for

providing meals, toilet and washing facilities, fuel and, through its REME detachment, repairs for every British convoy using the MSR.

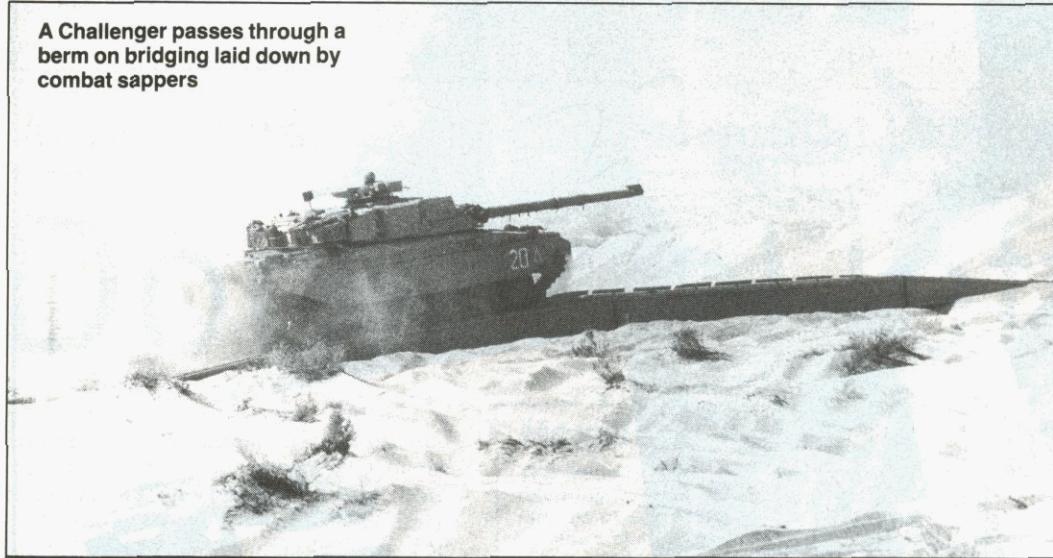
The great storm turned the area into a swamp but the AHA continued to provide a 24-hour service.

More than 50 nurses from a field hospital sheltered when their bus broke down.

The rains wrecked what had been a "neat little eating area" - walled in by boxes of bottled water. The cardboard cartons disintegrated in the deluge.

"We used to call it The Alamo - now it's more like the Walls of Jericho," said a soldier.

A Challenger passes through a berm on bridging laid down by combat sappers



FFMA pushes on

A MAJOR British logistic base had been established discreetly behind the front line and ahead of many teeth arm units before the outbreak of war.

The Forward Force Maintenance Area pushed forward in anticipation of the advance of the 1st Armoured Division.

On what was a desolate stretch of desert, solid earth "berms" have been bulldozed into position to enclose the HQ and dispersed sub-units.

Though bedrock is reached at a depth of 12 or 15 feet, wedges have been cut out of the surface so vehicles can be backed down a slope and remain protected from blast in the case of air or artillery bombardment.

Even the map store has gone underground.

Sappers of 3 Squadron RE - far from their Tidworth home

but working in biting wind and squalls which could have come from Salisbury Plain - have done much of the work and installed personnel shelters using metal frames assembled in deep trenches then covered with fabric and buried in earth.

Forty-eight hours before the UN deadline expired the possibility of a pre-emptive Iraqi strike through the troops covering the front led to every man and women in the HQ complex manning its defences. With LAW 80 and 66mm anti-tank weapons among others.

"Any intruders would have had a hot reception," said WO1 Chris Dunning, RAOC, in charge of admin at the HQ. He was RSM of 1 Ordnance Battalion at Verden before the Gulf crisis.

Lt Col Chris Bradley, CO 9

Ordnance Battalion RAOC, commander of the FFMA, said it had been pushed forward to reduce the 1st Armoured Division's re-supply route during operations.

"We've brought forward a selection of ammunition, fuel, material and reserve vehicles," he said. "The amount has been calculated to represent a certain period of battle usage. These can be pushed further forward but there will still be stocks further back."

A unique feature of the location is the area it covers.

"Usually we'd be looking for camouflage and concealment using existing buildings, woodlands, or quarries," said Lt Col Bradley, "but here there is absolutely nothing."

The gravel plain is as flat as a table top.

● Turn to Page 7

Diary of war

DAY 1 - January 17

0210 local time: Operation Desert Storm, the liberation of Kuwait, begins as Allied forces launch air strikes and Tomahawk cruise missiles at strategic targets in Iraq and Kuwait.

1st Armoured Division takes up battle positions nearer Kuwaiti border. Heathrow Airport guarded against terrorist attack by elements of The Blues and Royals and 7 Parachute Regiment RHA.

DAY 2

Iraq launches Scud missiles against targets in Israel and eastern Saudi Arabia. Dhahran-bound Scud intercepted by US Patriot missile. Intensive Allied air strikes continue.

MoD announces 1st Battalion Coldstream Guards is to deploy to the Gulf as the first contingent of a force with "prisoner-guarding" responsibilities.

Elements of The Life Guards and the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, deploy to Gatwick Airport to guard against possible terrorist attack.

DAY 3

Allied air and cruise missile raids on Kuwait and Iraq continue. Scud missiles explode in Israel.

DAY 4

Scud missiles aimed at Dhahran and Riyadh intercepted by Patriot batteries. Allied air strikes continue.

DAY 5

1 RHF and KOSB on stand-by for POW duties. Elements of 47 Fd Regt RA deployed to reinforce other RA regiments.

Battle

● From Page 3
already serving breakfast." And they were. Sausages, eggs, beans and fried bread, the cooks still in their NBC trousers and boots.

No air of excitement in the cookhouse, which is shared by all ranks. No unusual noise. No raised voices. Typical British phlegm.

Another red alert about 8am had helmeted figures scurrying into cover, but there were some laggards, it seems. After a time the public address officer showed his irritation. He repeated the red warning.

"This means you should be under cover and not wandering around in the open."

The camp looked deserted. In the day room and corridor, a row of soldiers stretched out along the walls began to doze. When the alert was finally over someone complained they never got a decent night's sleep.

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S/JUL/4/2

The laugh's on us...

Children's television entertainer Andrew O'Connor (back row, centre) welcomes the wives and children of Aldershot-based soldiers serving in the Gulf to the pantomime *Aladdin* at Guildford Civic Hall.

The theatre donated several hundred tickets to the panto, starring Wayne Sleep and Andrew, to families in the Aldershot and Bordon areas.

The gesture was typical of the generosity extended to the Army and its families as war in the Gulf drew nearer.



Anne Armstrong tells distraught loved ones...

Don't feel left out

ANXIOUS relatives and friends of Servicemen and women in the Gulf will find there are many people on the end of the telephone waiting to help and advise them.

My own telephone has been extraordinarily busy with incoming offers of help and support for families and I apologise for any calls left on my answerphone which have not been returned promptly.

One caller, for example, rang in to say that Brownie packs would love to help, while the mother of a 17-year-old son due to report for training offered to "adopt" any other 17-year-old who does not have a mum.

Then there are the newly-weds who are finding it rather lonely and want a chat, or the reservists' wives and girlfriends who feel a little left out.

There are many helplines and local support groups. The three Services have a

Helplines

THE Ministry of Defence has issued the following telephone numbers for the families of Servicemen in the Gulf to call for news of their loved ones:

Army 0345 717200. Royal Navy 0345 414544. Royal Air Force 0345 800900. Royal Fleet Auxiliary 071 386 0373. Civilians 071 839 5656 and 071 839 5492.

support network in operation and the Federation of Army Wives is making contact with reservists' wives. No one should feel left out at this time.

Remember your unit name, address and contact number, and if you move away from your quarter, tell the unit where you are. It is very important that you can be contacted quickly.

● See Pages 36 and 37.

FFMA pushes on

● From Page 5

"The most we can hope for is an element of camouflage so that prying eyes cannot see exactly what we've got. When I went round asking them how they were going to plan their location they replied:

"We're going to plan it the way we were told we would never, never be able to. At the School of Ordnance they say we would never actually have unlimited space but if we ever did the way to use it was such and such... and that's the way we're doing it."

Lt Col Bradley, pointing to the earth berms surrounding his HQ, said that though they were very good at giving blast protection they had other uses.

They also helped with "light security". In the wide open flat spaces light can be seen at a considerable distance and if anyone used a torch incorrectly (though discipline is strict) the berm would cut it out.

Berms also gave cover from view – anyone driving past would be unable to see what was going on beyond the earthworks.

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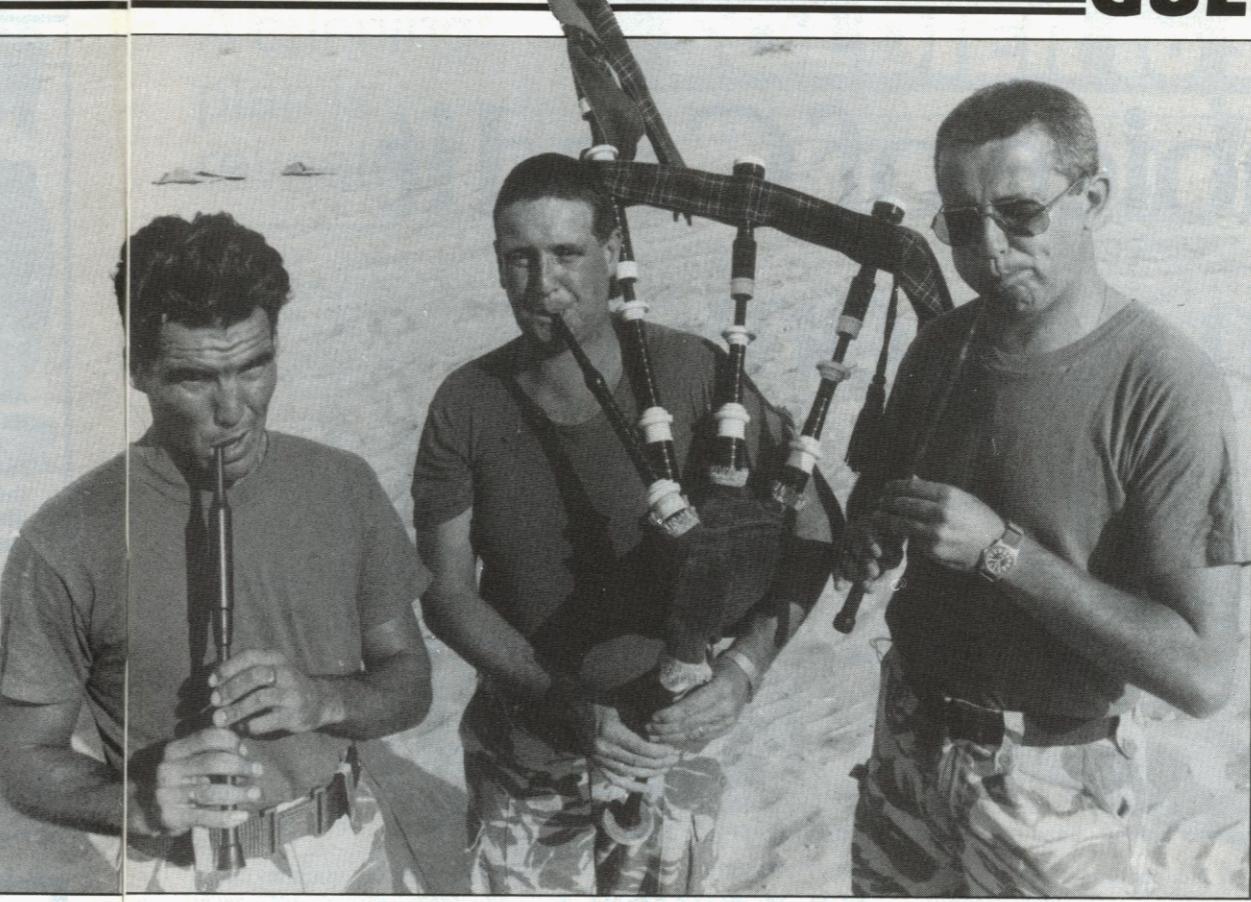
Pipe up in the back row!

PIPE MAJOR John Bruce of The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards could find himself with some new recruits to the Pipes and Drums Band when the regiment returns to Germany.

He offered bagpipe lessons and his first two pupils, Cpl Wullis Bough and Tpr Paul Daley, have been sounding out on the chanter before progressing to the bagpipes.

Cpl Bough took it up "because I am Scottish and to pass the time." Within ten days he could manage *Amazing Grace*. Tpr Daley is finding the art more difficult, "but practice makes perfect, and I am hopeful."

And the expert's opinion? Pipe Major Bruce said: "They are both very enthusiastic."



Desert sounds: Cpl Wullis Bough, Pipe Major Bruce (centre) and Tpr Paul Daley in their bagpipe classroom



The drinks are on us. Pte "TJ" Brooker and Pte Nigel Driscoll of 91 Coy, 6 Ordnance Battalion Group with a mountain of the ubiquitous plastic water bottles



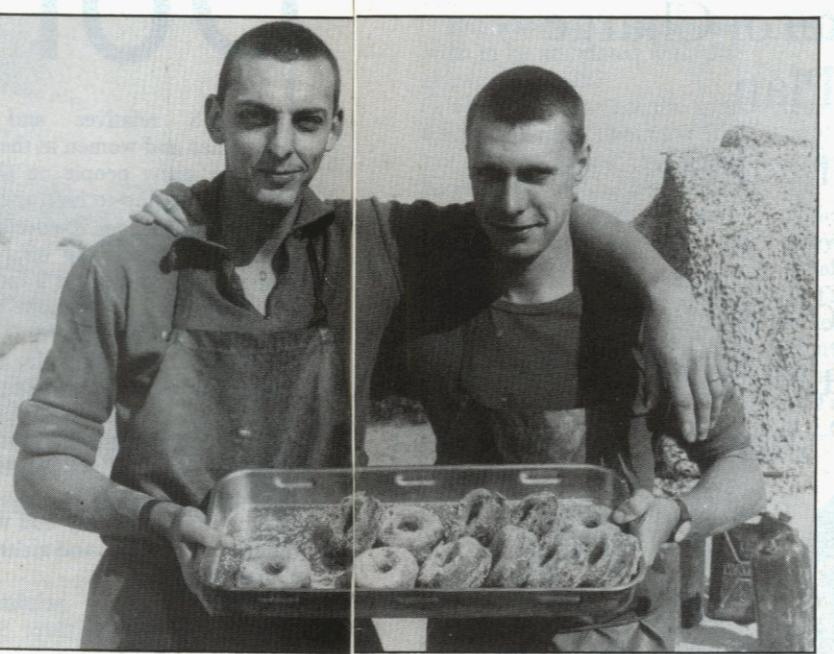
They've got some cool customers

Essential for 84 Field Medical Equipment Depot's role in supplying blood for the whole of the force deployed in Saudi Arabia is a plentiful supply of ice, and two ice-making machines were bought locally to ensure a constant stock.

It turned out that the 1,000lb a day they produced were more than adequate

for their needs, so the depot is now providing an additional free service for other units - ice to cool their drinks.

For themselves it is a quick and easy kettle filler, and getting ready for a brew are (from left) Sgt Ann Simpson, QARANC, Sgt Linda Walker, RAF and SSgt Niels Rampton.



Working conditions in the desert are especially unpleasant for Army chefs, but it seems nothing can spoil the good humour of LCpl Andrew Henderson (left) and LCpl David Tiley, whose cross-banter makes them into something of a double act at Forward Repair Group 7 Armoured Workshop REME. Each week as a special treat they cook hundreds of doughnuts, both spicy and plain, from their own secret recipe. The doughnuts go down a treat.

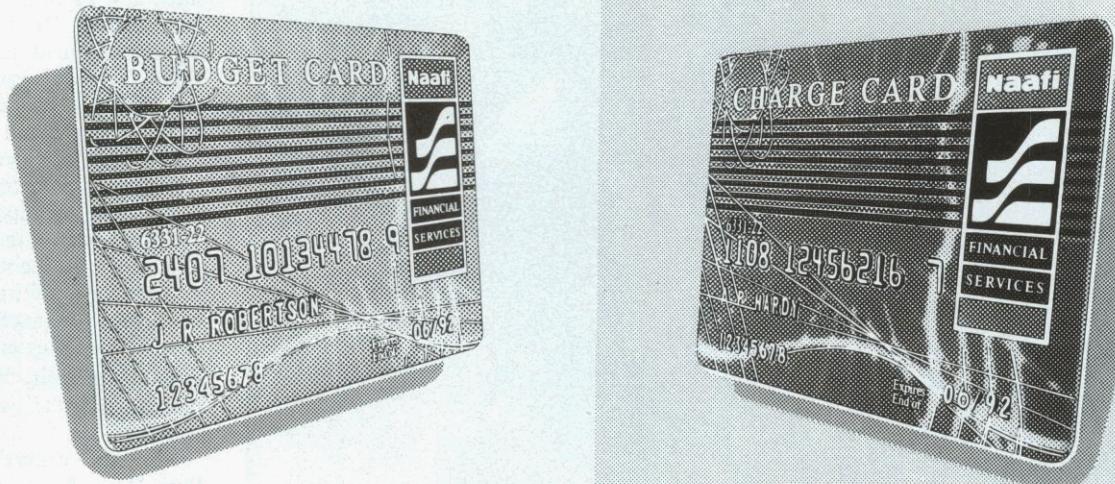


Soldiers of 52 Port Squadron RCT take a brief break from work "between ships" at Al Jubail. They have been involved in a massive movement of armour and equipment to Saudi Arabia

EDITORIAL DECISION

"Never mind the blueys, write me some copy," pleads Squadron Leader Pat McKinlay, the editor of the tri-Service Gulf newspaper, *The Sandy Times*. Putting pen to paper are (from the left): Pte Steve Halliday, LCpl Andy Kane and Cpl Steve Graham

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A cunning plan is revealed

When the history of Op Granby is written it will be interesting to see whether, after the great events have been recorded, any mention can be found of Miss Anna White.

For that young lady, in her own small way, made a stimulating contribution to the atmosphere which developed in the early days.

In a letter to her father she asked if he really did have a "cunning plan"?

This catchphrase from the TV series *Blackadder* so appealed to Col (now Brig) Martin White's sense of humour that he followed up his daughter's lead and christened the celebrated tent city Baldrick Lines.

It certainly raised smiles when the notice went up outside the entrances to the camp.

But why should any soldier wish to be associated with that shower Baldrick?

The answer is that the most interesting thing about Pte B is not his appearance or dubious habits but his resilience and irrepressible optimism regardless of the elements.

Fortunately there is no shortage of optimists in the Gulf forces.

A second tented camp has now been christened Blackadder.

SOLDIER to Soldier



Art of war: Maj Robin Watt sketches in the sand. Behind him is a Challenger tank

Drawing on experience

Puzzled looks from observers at the Scots DG tank gunnery range in Saudi Arabia greeted the sight of a Royal Hussars officer kneeling seemingly in prayer beside the massive Challenger main battle tanks.

The crouching figure was the noted wildlife artist, Maj Robin Watt, engaged in producing a series of field studies of men and equipment serving with the

7th Armoured Brigade and its support elements.

His aim is to produce a series of prints to raise money for the Army Benevolent Fund.

Maj Watt is no stranger to fund-raising. His book *Falklands Summer* (SOLDIER May 29, 1989) benefited the injured veterans of the Falklands and Northern Ireland.

His work with the tanks had its problems. Each time the guns fired, he and his sketch book were showered with sand.

Upheld in prayer

Men and women serving in the Gulf can take comfort from the fact that millions of people back at home in Germany and the UK are saying prayers on their behalf.

Typical among these are thousands of members of the Mothers' Union of Great Britain, who stop what they are doing at noon each day to offer prayers. Special prayers are also said at their weekly meetings.

"This is a great support for our chaplains and men and women, as well as the parents, wives and children who wait at home," said the Ven Graham Roblin, the Deputy Chaplain General.

"Why don't we join them for a moment at noon as well as at other times."

Easier on the dial

The installation of 40 card 'phones on a British Army camp in the Gulf was a major boost for soldiers who previously had to dial home using a roll of local riyals.

Some soldiers had to make a 20-minute drive from other camps and faced massive queues, only to find the 'phone unusable because it was full of coins.

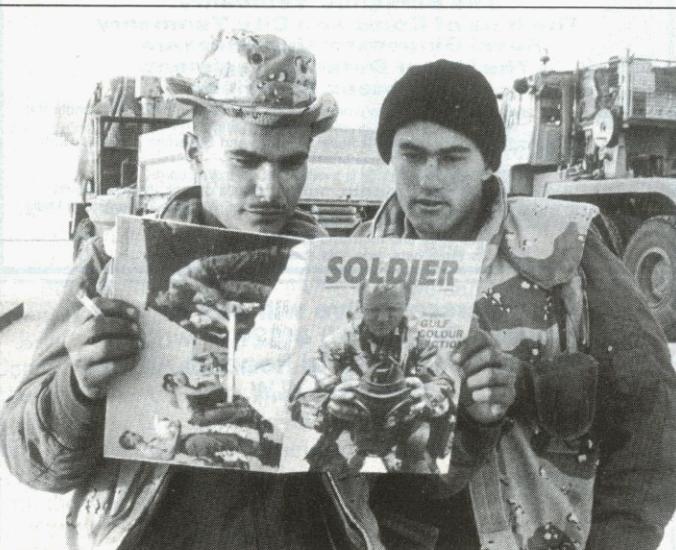
The new card phones (see centre pages) were installed by 207 Sqn, R Signals. Mark Stratford, of Mercury Communications, said they were the company's first payphones abroad.

Cpl Keith Brodie, R Signals, said: "The new ones are a Godsend."

Cpl Robert Bruce, R Signals, said: "The lads will really appreciate these. The quality of sound is good."

Previously, soldiers bought rolls of 25 riyals for £3.50 in the Pay Office. The new cards, costing the equivalent of about £4, will last three to four minutes.

Sgt Mike Woodward, Royal Pioneer Corps, said it was a joy to make a call without the constant interruption of feeding coins into a box. Pte Dennis Paine agreed: "It is just what we need."



Army commanders in the Gulf have been quick to praise SOLDIER's coverage of the crisis. Now the Americans, too, are learning to appreciate the British Army's own magazine, and regularly flag down the SOLDIER team to ask for copies. Some confused it with the more Ramboesque *Soldiers of Fortune* magazine!



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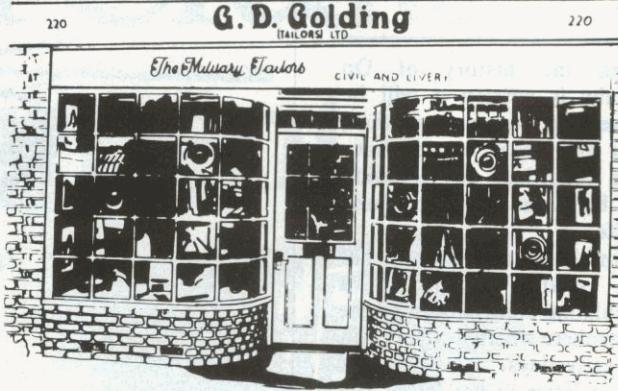
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armour. Challenger main battle tanks in the region, whose Chobham armour is reckoned to be the best in the world, have also been up-armoured.

American M2A2 Bradley infantry vehicles have also been

covered with additional bolt-on armour, and the US Marine Corps M60A1 tanks have been fitted with external reactive armour plates that explode outwards to diffuse hits by enemy munitions.

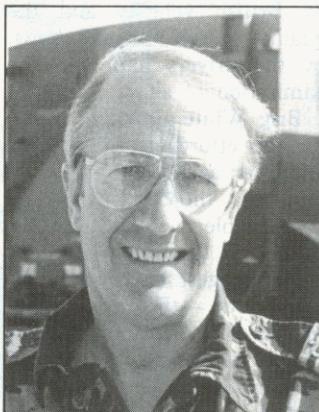
Land of the Loggies

ONE of the most commonly used sets of military abbreviations in Gulf Speak is "F-M-A" . . . standing for Force Maintenance Area, otherwise the Land of the Loggies, the logistics units without which modern armies cannot function.

Any newcomer driving round its far-flung workshops, hospitals, storage depots and camps today will find it hard to believe that in mid-September all this was represented by a single officer sitting on his kitbag on the quayside of an Eastern Province port with only a Brahma telephone for company.

Brig Patrick Cordingley, Comd 7 Armd Brigade, and Col Martin White, Comd designate of the FMA, had arrived with him to recce the port. They spent the day there, then left with the words: "We'll be back on October 8. Sort it out, will you?"

"Leaving Lt Col Barry Aitken behind was about the best thing we did," said Brig White (he has since been promoted). "It was around him



Brig Martin White

that we subsequently built the whole structure."

Brig White himself occupied the post of Colonel Logistics Plans at HQ BAOR and was absorbed with the problems of troop reductions in Germany and the Options For Change programme when the Gulf crisis developed.

He returned from three weeks leave at his home in the Isle of Wight at the end of August and was told to study the preparations for supporting operations in the Gulf.

As a previous Commander Logistics of the United Kingdom Mobile Force he was familiar with the concept of deploying forces overseas – albeit in Denmark.

Immediately he set out to create a headquarters to command and control the logistic support for what was then one brigade . . . hence his September recce with Brig Cordingley.

When he returned with the pre-advance party in October, 39 Engineer Regiment had started building Tent City on a container park and the vital Local Resources Section under Lt Tom Lishman RAOC was in business. There was still very little in the port, however.

Brig White: "We didn't even know where we were going to sleep or where the next meal was coming from. We relied on the US Marines to provide everything."

A hard slog improved things steadily.

"We built a reception area for a brigade in one of the warehouses on the quayside

(the famous Shed 4) and we organised meals for incoming troops.

"Then the Port Squadron arrived, and the Movers and we were able to receive our own aircraft at the airfield (an airfield some distance from the port)."

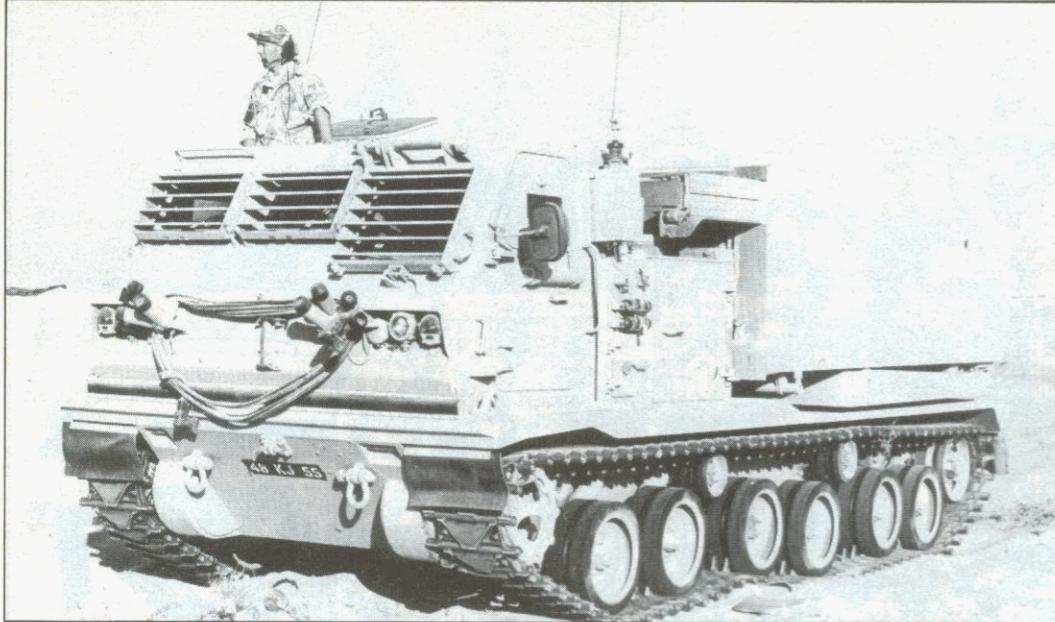
Initially all British personnel lived in the port area, but as numbers increased accommodation had to be found outside it.

Brig White: "I think one of the success stories was 6 Ordnance Battalion's organisation of the cold store . . . it was a major advance.

"Then there was the saga of The Factory. The building looked ideal for 33 Field Hospital but it took negotiations between Whitehall and high-level Saudi officials until costs were agreed. Now it has been up and running for some time and providing an excellent service."

There were many similar stories, but credit was also due not only to the early arrivals but

● Turn to next page



MLRS in desert debut

The British Army's Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) is deployed in the Saudi Arabian desert for the first time. Two batteries of MLRS belonging to Paderborn-based 39 Heavy Regiment Royal Artillery are serving in the region.

The highly mobile launch system carries 12 227mm ballistic rockets and is the longest range British artillery in service in the Gulf region. It can devastate an area the size of six football pitches up to 25 miles away. MLRS can fire its lethal load and move on before an enemy can retaliate. With the M109 and M110 howitzers of 32 Heavy Regiment RA, the gunners provide the 1st Armoured Division with a massive punch.

FMA makes it work

From Page 13

"those who came subsequently and made things work, sometimes against great odds."

Though the FMA had a lot of American help "it was the ingenuity and flexibility of officers and soldiers which counted."

There were few "moaners" because they knew why they were there and because they were doing the job for which they had joined the Army. The level of motivation was high.

At the end of November when all the committed ships had arrived and been unloaded and people were looking for a breather at the end of Op Granby 1, the Government

announced what has sometimes been called Op Granby 1.5. The 4th Armoured Brigade and HQ 1st Armoured Division began to move to Saudi Arabia.

In some ways the reception was easier because the infrastructure already existed, but because of the numbers involved the close-knit society atmosphere was diluted.

Nevertheless, as January 1991 began the FMA was fully committed to supporting the training of 1 Armd Div and receiving personnel through the airhead.

A major redeployment demanded all its resources. It was estimated that by the time it was finished most of the

CZECH MATES

ONE sign of the multi-national nature of the UN forces in the Gulf is the presence of a Czech chemical defence unit.

Maj Peter Everson, NBC adviser to the 1st Armoured Division, spotted one of its vehicles during a study period at King Khaled Military City.

As a result he was invited by a Czech company commander, a Maj Popov, to inspect the equipment - something which would have been unheard of

even 18 months ago.

"There was a lot of friendly banter about what we knew about each other's equipment," said Maj Everson. "And we also had a very cheerful discussion about the qualities of the Good Soldier Schweik (hero of possibly the funniest novel to come out of the First World War).

Companies of Czech chemical troops are deployed in the field with the Saudi Forces.

Tank-busters in the pink

LATEST additions to the 1st Armoured Division force are men and aircraft of 4th Regiment Army Air Corps who worked up at a base in eastern Saudi Arabia.

The regiment consists of a headquarters squadron and three flying squadrons - 654, 659 and 661 - equipped with Lynx and Gazelle helicopters. The regiment has an anti-tank role and the Lynx Mk 7 aircraft, fitted with much up-rated engine, is armed with TOW missiles.

"The missiles have a range of 3,750 metres," said the OC 659 Squadron, Maj Richard Folkes. "It took me 45 minutes to walk that distance recently, but it only takes 22 seconds for TOW to hit its target."

The strange observation bump above the Lynx's windscreens turned out to be the TOW sight, which is slaved electronically to the missile.

"All you have to do is keep the cross-hairs on the target and the missile flies itself on to the target," he said.

"The reason it is on the top is that we can hide the main body of the helicopter behind trees in North West Europe with just the rotar blades exposed. Here, of course, we have no cover so we use different tactics."

Aircraft colour schemes have been subjected to much change since the first notification that the squadron was to be deployed. First, it was a mix of sand and green paint. Then, while the helicopters were being modified, they were painted a sand colour.

Despite all attempts to persuade him to move he sticks to a basement room in a local fire station where his neighbours are two US senior officers.



Army Air Corps groundcrew spray down a Lynx helicopter following a desert mission. Note the bulbous TOW missile sight above the windscreens

them. We have done intervisibility trials and found we could not be seen from 1,000 metres. The only giveaway is the odd glint from the bubble."

Navigation is vastly different to that carried out in BAOR where there are thousands of roads and many bridges for reference. But some aspects of desert navigation are easier.

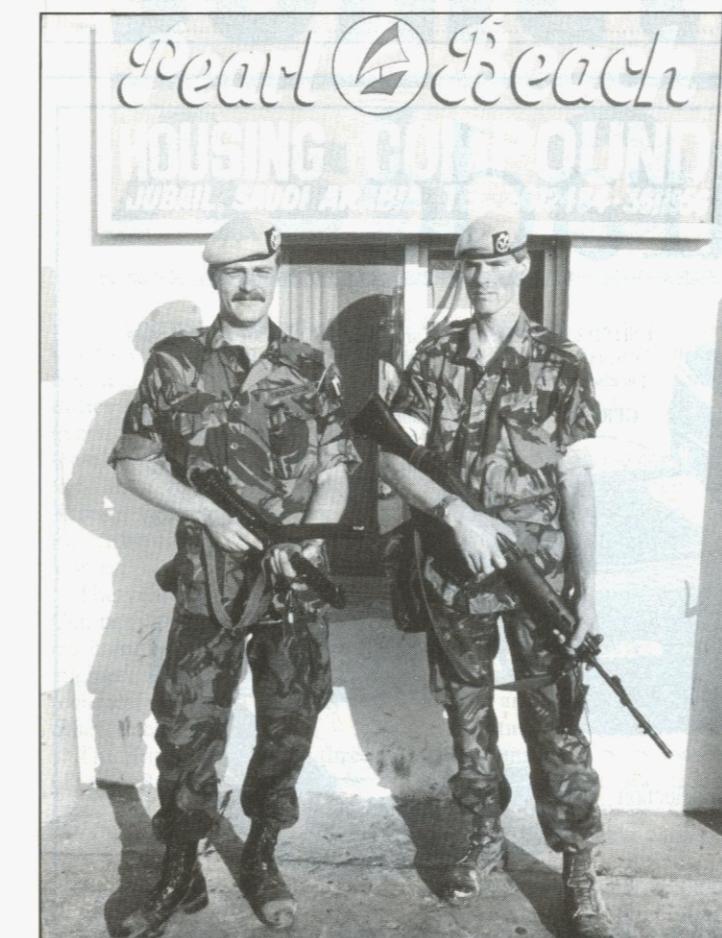
"For example, if you look at the map and there is only one road marked in a 100 miles, then you know that when you hit that road it is the right one.

"It is far more difficult at night because there are absolutely no lights and nothing to guide you, so we are being equipped with a global positioning system that will give us a position read-out to within 10 metres of where we will be."

SOLDIER's visit concluded with an invitation to return after dark and fly as passenger during a night time low-flying operation.

The aircrew rate the experience of bucketing through the air at night just 50 feet above the ground as "adrenalin-burning" . . .

"I would ask just one thing of you," said Capt Jim Layton of 661 Squadron, "Please don't scream out in terror. It tends to



Despite the notice, life is not as glamourous as it seems for Cpl Tim Crookston (left) and LCpl Pete Tickle of 659 Squadron AAC Signal Troop who stand regular guard duties with 4 Regiment AAC

was particularly successful.

As a result, the Army Air Corps decided to "pink" the green out.

"The resulting combination of pink and sand is quite remarkable," said Maj Folkes. It is amazingly difficult to see

put the pilot off!"

Aircraft captain was American cavalry officer Capt Paul Avery who is doing a two-year exchange tour with 654 Squadron, and who is becoming a big fan of the Mk 7 Lynx. Third in a gaggle of three helicopters, he followed the others into the desert where all navigation lights were extinguished.

The aircraft's number two, SSgt Dave Whittle, removed his night vision goggles and handed them to the grateful writer.

All became clear, for the goggles turned night into day and all the previously indistinguishable obstacles such as power lines became distinct.

Landing and take-offs were frequently rehearsed before the final low-level exercise took place, and the three helos descended to a height of 50 feet. The ground seemed to flash by at breakneck speed, as did a Bedouin camp and a startled herd of camels.

The regiment completed its desert operating familiarisation exercises soon afterwards and all the squadrons had deployed to forward positions in support of 1st Armoured Division. The "tank busters" were ready for action.

COMBAT STRESS

'Perhaps the bravest man I ever knew...'

and now, he cannot bear to turn a corner

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

But now, after seeing service in Aden, after being booby-trapped and ambushed in Northern Ireland, Sergeant 'Tiny' cannot bear to turn a corner. For fear of what is on the other side.

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"They've given more than they could – please give as much as you can."

To protect those concerned, this is an amalgam of several such case histories of Patients in our care.



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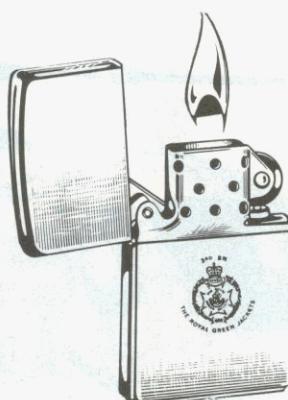
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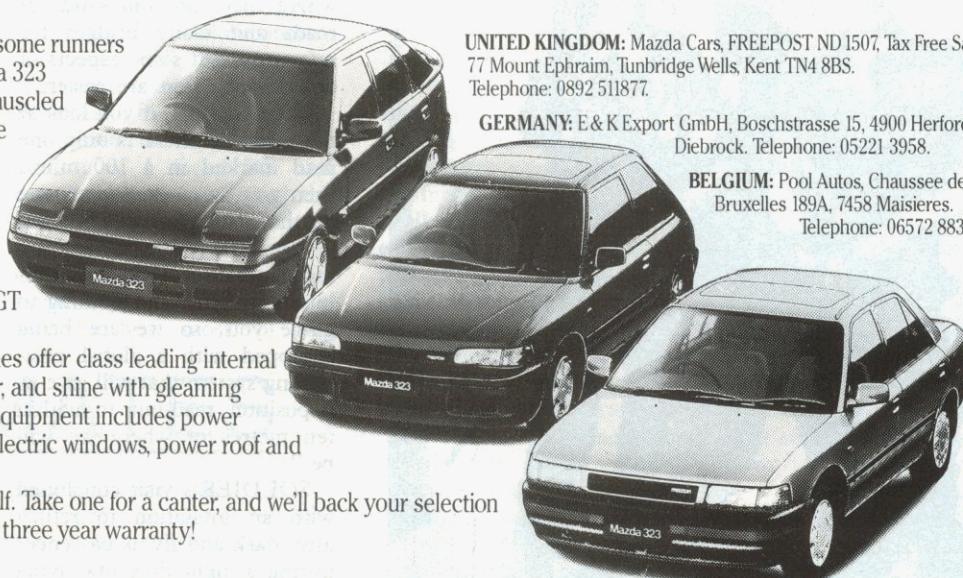
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Want something? Ask Ord

THE expertise of soldiers of 6 Ordnance Battalion Group is reflected in the diversity of duties they are turning their hands to in the Gulf - some have even been trained to drive the massive 47-ton Rough Terrain Container Handler by neighbouring American Forces.

The vehicles are used by 62 Company to move Iso containers holding third line stocks of engines, major assemblies, technical items and a variety of other lines.

The British Army owns three of the British-made monster cargo holders, normally used by 17 Port Regiment RCT at Marchwood. All three are now doing duty in the Gulf.

Living next door to 62 Coy are American Marines, part of the Landing Logistic Support Battalion, and it is thanks to them that three RAOC soldiers are now trained and used in a role usually associated with the RCT.

Maj Eddie Weeks, OC 62

Coy, said the company has a fourth vehicle on hire and its Filipino driver has very much taken to the British Army way of life.

"He lives in an Iso container, sleeps on an Army camp bed, wears a Company T-shirt, calls me 'Boss' and is very much part of the company."

Their location could aptly be re-named *Iso City* - every container that arrives in the Gulf passes through it for receipt and issue.

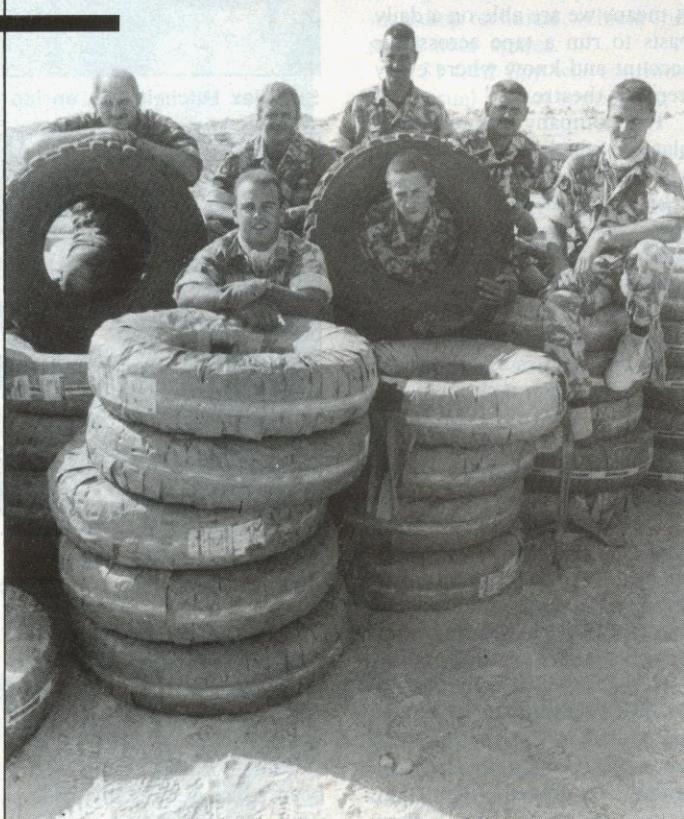
An immense range of items include nuts and bolts, barbed wire, tank barrels and track.

Plastic, throwaway cutlery and crockery is being used as a more hygienic option to washing conventional crockery and cutlery. The plastic alternatives are stored and issued in their thousands.

At one time there was a particularly sweet-smelling seasonal reminder of home in one container - it housed 50 real Christmas trees donated by

● Turn to next page

Iso City at Al Jubail, the kingdom of 65 Ordnance Company Group. In the foreground is a Rough Terrain Container Handler



Pictured at 7 Armd Bde RV is RAOC Conductor Marvin Walden (second from right) and his team with a selection of tyres

ASK ORD

• From Page 17

Interflora and awaiting distribution to the front line.

The location is a busy one. Each evening lorry-loads of air freight arrive to be sorted out and given priority for distribution the next day. Staff use two accounting methods, one manual with about 2,000 item headings, the other a computer account featuring around 38,000 – a system which Maj Weeks takes a special delight in describing.

“Although we hold the bulk of stores here for Forward Ordnance Companies, we are able via the computer to offer ‘theatre visibility’.

“At COD Bicester there is a mainframe computer which has all the stores history of all the RAOC units in the world. We are able by direct data to link back to the UK and interrogate it.

“This means we can place at the press of a button all the priority demands we can not meet here. We can get a reply on whether they are available and when they will be issued.

“As well as being able to interrogate the system at Bicester, we can also trace every single item we have issued to another RAOC unit. It means we are able on a daily basis to run a tape across our account and know where every item in theatre is.”

The company has a vehicle platoon which holds the War Maintenance Reserve of B vehicles and some light A vehicles. Also under RAOC command and peculiar to the Gulf is an Armoured Delivery Squadron. In Germany it would normally come under its own command as a regiment in its own right.

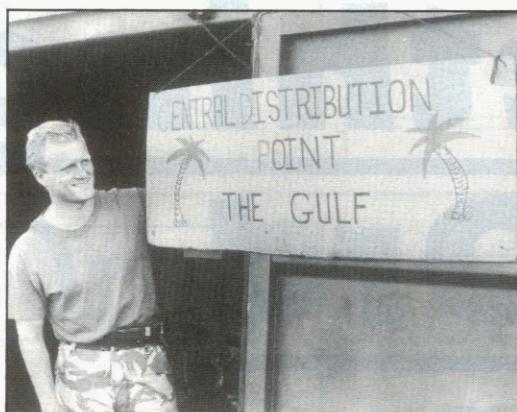
Anglo-American co-operation is very evident at 53 Coy, which supplies bulk ammunition. It is moved forward to the artillery by the RCT.

One of two Ammunition Supply Points is run by the Americans with a platoon of British soldiers under its wing.

Here Company 2iC, Capt David Towndrow, said: “It was quite evident to the original recce party that if the two armies combined their resources we would get a very flexible system and the best of both sets of assets.”



Pte “Sads” Saddington opens a valve on a portable fabric bulk storage fuel tank. In the background is LCpl Eric Sykes



Sgt Alex Mitchell with an Iso City sign



Sgt Kev Tippen checks off Challenger modifications kits

“So we have a platoon of American Marines closely integrated with our company and we have the best of both worlds.”

Two portable cabins have been purchased locally. One is used as an operations room, where British and US soldiers work alongside each other. The

Petrol is stored in large, portable, collapsible fabric

second is used as a shared rest area.

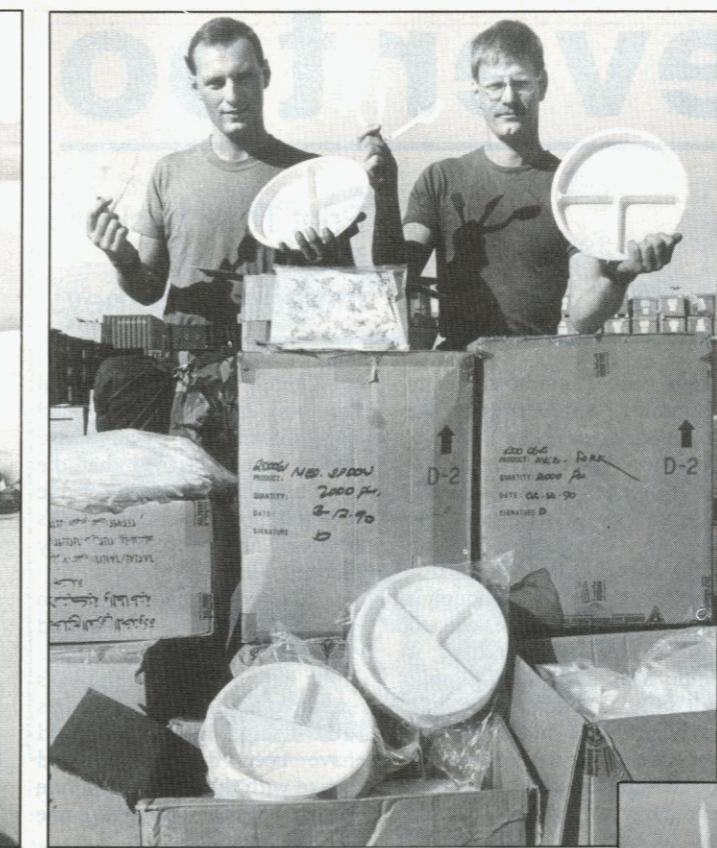
Supplying bulk petrol, oils and lubricants originating from Saudi Arabian refineries is the job of 51 Coy. The RCT is responsible for conveying fuel to units.

Petrol is stored in large, portable, collapsible fabric

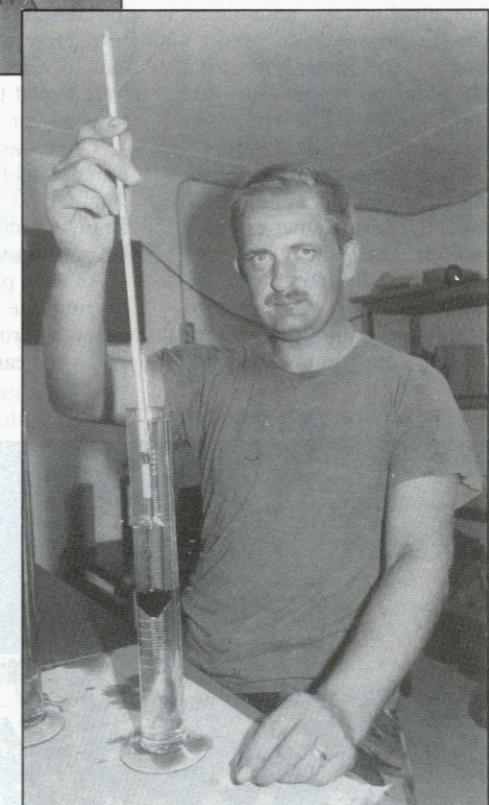
tanks. Quality control is strictly monitored by RAOC chemical laboratory technicians.

Bulk food, and the theatre reserve of compo rations, are held by 91 Coy. Rations, including the ubiquitous plastic bottles of water, are issued to units.

The OC, Maj Jim Wilber-



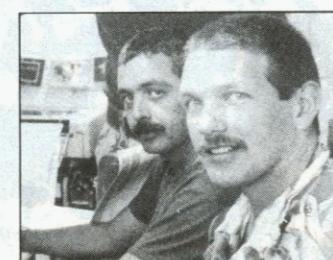
LCpl Gavin Barker (left) and LCpl Steven Walker of 62 Coy with hygienic plastic cutlery



Above: Cpl Jon Chapman, a 51 Coy chemical laboratory assistant, checks the quality of a batch of fuel

Left: More barrels of oil in the desert for Pte Paul Maile of 51 Coy

Below: Sgt Mark Woolf and Sgt Simm England of 11 Ord Coy in a vehicle containing accounting computers



force, said all the food was bought locally. “We aim to provide as many fresh rations as possible. It is very much appreciated by soldiers.”

The statistics are mind-boggling. If all the plastic water bottles were stacked one on top of the other, they would reach 18,000 ft into the sky.

Volunteers joined up at double

THERE was no shortage of volunteers to serve with 3 Ordnance Battalion in the Gulf on Op Granby. In fact, they had to turn people away.

The battalion was formed from 11 Ordnance Company, based in Soltau, 31 Ordnance Company from Munster, and 43 Ordnance Company in Minden.

There is, for instance, Capt

Doug McCarthy, a Canadian officer on exchange. He was originally with 41 Ordnance Company, but managed to get himself cross-posted to 43 Ordnance Company so he could go on Op Granby.

Capt Ben Blackwood, adjutant of 3 Ordnance Battalion, explained: “When there was a shortage of manpower a number of people cross-posted or volunteered and we had no problem filling the vacancies.

“We had a lot of soldiers phoning up wanting to join the battalion, but we could not find spaces for all of them. We have soldiers here from 15 or 16 different RAOC depots.”

The headquarters of 3 Ordnance Battalion looks after 7 Armoured Brigade Administration Area, which is not their usual war role. They are normally in the Divisional Administration Area and expect to move when that gets up and running.

• 11 Ordnance Company normally supports 7 Armoured Brigade and are giving integral support to it, including technical, vehicle and small item spares.

• 31 Ordnance Company will continue their usual role of supporting 4 Armoured Brigade.

• 43 Ordnance Company are a rear company, forming divisional supply areas, carrying ammunition, rations, petroleum and heavy material items, such as tanks, road wheels, gun barrels and tyres.

They also have with them – in support and not under command – a platoon from 51 Ordnance Company.

When soldiers from units arrive to collect items, there is always a particular welcome from 11 Ordnance Company.

Capt Gary Sumner 2iC, said: “They have often been driving across the desert for a couple of hours, so we provide facilities for them to have a rest, a chat with the lads, and hot and cold drinks. They can relax while we do all the running around for them. We hope to send them on their long journey back feeling happy.”

“We simply try to give them some of the home comforts.”

You're never too old . . .

TWO unique vehicles which had been written off as museum pieces by many people – and described as such by SOLDIER in an article last spring – made their stately way into the desert on January 11.

The last remaining elements of the celebrated Print Train were completing The Incredible Journey.

Once there were five of them

Bahrain link-up

Several hundred British troops travelled to Bahrain to take part in a live link-up between the Royal Air Force base on the island and garrison churches at Aldershot and Farnborough.

The BBC's *Christmas in the Gulf* carol concert was watched by a television audience of millions. Major units represented included the Scots DG, 1 Staffords, 30 Signal Regiment and nurses and doctors from 22 and 33 Field Hospitals.

– giant box bodies with extending sides – housing everything a mapmaker requires.

Custom-built for operations in North West Europe, the amount of road space they occupied while moving on exercise brought grey hairs to the head of many a staff officer.

Their production capacity in the hands of 14 Topographical Squadron was unbeatable, but there were sighs of relief when the introduction of less bulky equipment was announced. The Train was lined up in a hanger at Rattenberg, near Düsseldorf, home of "14 Topo" and used in situ while waiting to be phased out.

Then came the Gulf crisis, and though 14 Topo coped manfully with demands made upon them when the 7th Armoured Brigade was deployed initially, the requirements (including many from the US Marines), grew and grew.

Two survivors of the Print

Train were summoned – one containing printing presses, the other used for plate making. Together they could print the largest maps by the thousand.

But . . . how were they to be moved? The original ten-ton AEC tractors had been disposed of years before, though it was known that one existed with a TA unit. Perhaps it would have to be "called up".

REME Technical Services were consulted and one other type of civilian tractor suitable for the job was identified. The rear party of 14 Topo turned out to cheer as the veterans were towed from Roy Barracks to head for the docks.

There was also news that two other suitable tractors had been located at RAOC Vehicle Depot, Ashchurch, and were being dispatched to the Gulf.

As days passed and the ship bearing the Print Train drew near, a problem crossed the desks of nearly every branch of the Force Maintenance Area HQ.

Print Train back in service after Incredible Journey

Where were the essential tractors? Computers searched for information everywhere before it was learned that the ship carrying them was not due to dock until about three weeks after the arrival of the urgently needed Train.

All of which added spice to the life of Sgt Steve Raymond RE, 14 Topo's MT sergeant.

"I had no idea how I was going to get the Train vehicles off the ship," he said. "It could have been that they would arrive with their tractors beside them; that there had been some misunderstanding."

He contacted the cargo vessel and was told not to worry by one of the officers. There were tanks aboard. They would haul the Train ashore with them.

Sgt Raymond hastily explained that these were delicate creatures which needed special handling. Otherwise they might be ruined.

By consulting various manuals he had discovered that the train vehicles could be towed



Tank movers' tribute

At the height of the 1st Armoured Division's deployment into the desert, the vehicles of 7 Tank Transporter Regiment RCT were moving more than "200 metres" of armour per day. Tragically, Cpl Geordie Bolam of 16 Tank Transporter Sqn was killed in a loading accident on New Year's Eve.

Some days later, the men of his regiment held a memorial service in the desert to honour his memory. Twelve mighty Scammel Commanders were drawn up to form a square around which were massed the ranks of his comrades.

The service was taken by the Rev Ken Pillar, RACD, and accompanied by the RCT Staff Band under Director of Music, Capt Ray Maycock. The Commander of 7 Armoured Brigade, Brig Patrick Cordingley, attended.

RCT boosted by mystery parcel

HQ 'hangs' children's pictures

wrote to them at Christmas. It was so perky they felt they ought to.

"We didn't have much to send the lad so we popped in a Desert Rat flash," said LCpl Shaw.

What they didn't know was that Gary suffers from dyslexia and according to a letter from his mum, Mrs Val Poulson, their letter had encouraged him to write more.

"He was thrilled with it," wrote Mrs Poulson.

For some reason the soldiers' letter also inspired the other pupils at Granham School to reach for their paintbrushes. Hence the parcel.

Inevitably there were "Desert Turtles" among the contributions and some of the strangest camels ever seen. Some of the comments were interesting too – "I collect mice so I like rats . . . and I don't forget cats".

One, however, was very much to the point – "You've got to fight for what is right."

The US-Iraqi talks had just broken down when the little parcel arrived and the men of 10 Regiment RCT were very busy in a drab and dusty desert base. One corner at least, however, was brightened by the works of the kids at home.



AN art exhibition was being prepared in the Technical Quartermaster's department when SOLDIER called on 10 Regiment RCT's bustling headquarters.

After examining more than a score he found two possibilities . . . an elderly Mercedes and a Volvo.

The individuals doing the "hanging" were not quite as expert as those who do the job for the Royal Academy, but they "knew what they liked".

SSgt Mick Meehan, Sgt Ken Lane and LCpl Harry Fowler generally deal in oils of a different nature . . . as does Maj Dave Winkle, the QM (Tech).

Experts or otherwise, they were full of advice for LCpl George Shaw as he pinned up the budding masterpieces produced by pupils at Engayne Junior School, Upminster,

route to the forward area. The long-suffering RMP shook their heads but found one.

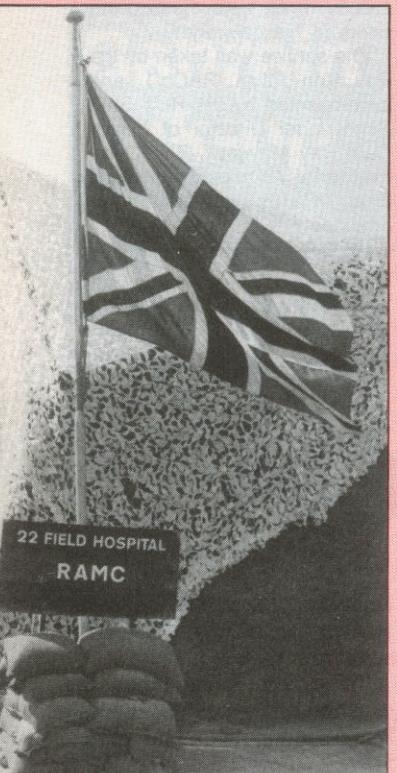
The Print Train was in business within hours of arriving in the desert. SSgt Dave Watts RE, a combat surveyor, had never expected to see the Train in action again. He recalled:

"It was so slow (25 mph) we had to book the autobahn in advance and the police used to close off sections for it.

"Still, there was a great team spirit."

"Just as there is today.

They really did scrub for action



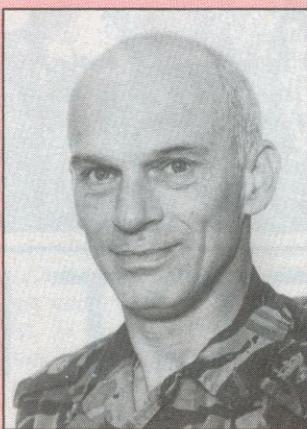
STAFF at 22 Field Hospital Group could have ended up with housemaid's knee after rolling up their sleeves and getting down to some serious scrubbing when they arrived in the Gulf.

Their brief was to take over a disused former Royal Air Force hospital and convert it into a 100-bedded hospital.

The site had been vacated in 1971 and taken over by the local Department of Health, part of it still being used as a local maternity unit.

Lt Col Chris Town, CO, said the first problem was getting the buildings into a usable condition. "The first stage was scrubbing, washing and cleaning. We needed lots of water so we turned on the fire hoses, only to find another major problem - the drains were not working.

"The plumbing system was remarkably suspect - you turned on the taps and nothing



Lt Col Chris Town

came out. Much of the power system was old wiring in a bad state, and the ground needed clearing, grading and flattening before we could start.

"We also had to remove a lot of old equipment that had been stored. It was back to basics.

"We had a shell - and a very dirty one at that - and contractors were brought in to



Ward A and Resuscitation is housed in a sprung steel bubble tent with room for 35 patients. It is the setting for a demonstration by Capt Bob Darby of passing an airway. Onlookers are (from the left) Pte Carol Tyrrell, Lt Alison Hussey and Pte Karen Mann, all QARANC, LCpl Kevin Campbell and LCpl James Dean

COLPRO leads the way

TWO British field hospitals - 22 Fd Hosp and 33 Fd Hosp - each have a world-beating NBC facility operating in the Gulf. It is called COLPRO.

Col Town said: "We have all the normal facilities you would expect in a general hospital in the United Kingdom, although we have not got the major sophistications.

"But we have a good general capability for the injuries and illnesses that you would expect to treat. At the moment we are treating routine problems. Our very first patient came in with 'Bahrain tummy' and we have had a patient suffering from chicken pox.

"Air conditioning has brought a minor spate of throat complaints, and fortunately the accident rate has been very low."

He added that they enjoyed a very good professional rapport with the staff at the neighbouring maternity unit. This was at an administrative level with no direct clinical interface.

This is the British Army's Collective Protection facility, which provides a vapour-free area for staff to treat casualties during a nerve agent or blister agent attack.

In the event of casualties arriving at the COLPRO front door they would be checked by a chemical decontamination team. When judged safe, casualties would then enter an air lock.

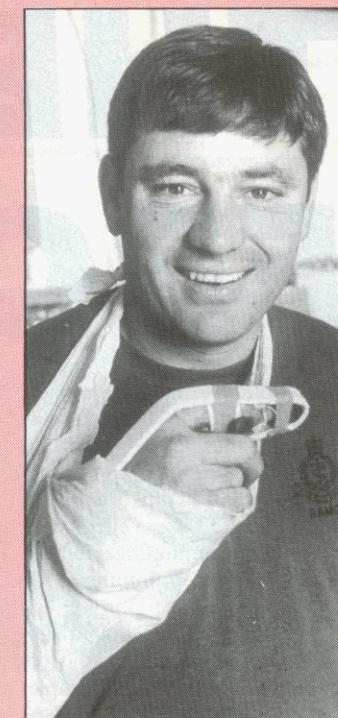
The air in the lock would be changed, and the casualty again monitored before entering theatre.

Inside COLPRO, staff are not encumbered by their Individual Protection Equipment. Facilities are exactly the same as those in a conventional hospital.



SSgt Terry Murphy wearing full NBC kit comes out of the air bubble in the Collective Protection (COLPRO) facility

Busy with the paperwork at 84 Field Medical Equipment Depot are Sgt Jane Swindells (left) and LCpl Julie Delaney



Capt Kevin Griffin

Adjutant scores own goal

THERE was maximum embarrassment for Capt Kevin Griffin, adjutant of 22 Field Hospital Group, when he became an outpatient in his own unit!

He had been playing in a rugby match between the hospital and Bahrain RFC when he caught the ball awkwardly, dislocating his right index finger.

Happily, there was on-the-spot treatment available, not only from team colleagues, but colleagues playing for the opposition to make up a scratch side, and staff among the 60 or so spectators.

Despite the injury, 22 Fd Hosp went on to win 28-3.

It is now a unit joke that surgeon, Maj Nigel Hobbs, theatre sister, Capt Jo Judd, and theatre technician, Cpl 'Sammo' Samra, are his personal, travelling surgical team.

The next day the irrepressible captain was back at his desk, a Nelson-like figure with his arm in a sling. He said: "It is very painful, but has not put me off the game."

When the time came for the dressing to be changed by Lt Jeff Lubbock, a surprising number of staff turned up to watch, some amazed that the adjutant's blood was red rather than blue!

THE BOYS FROM HAWAII

**3rd Amphibious
Assault
Battalion USMC**

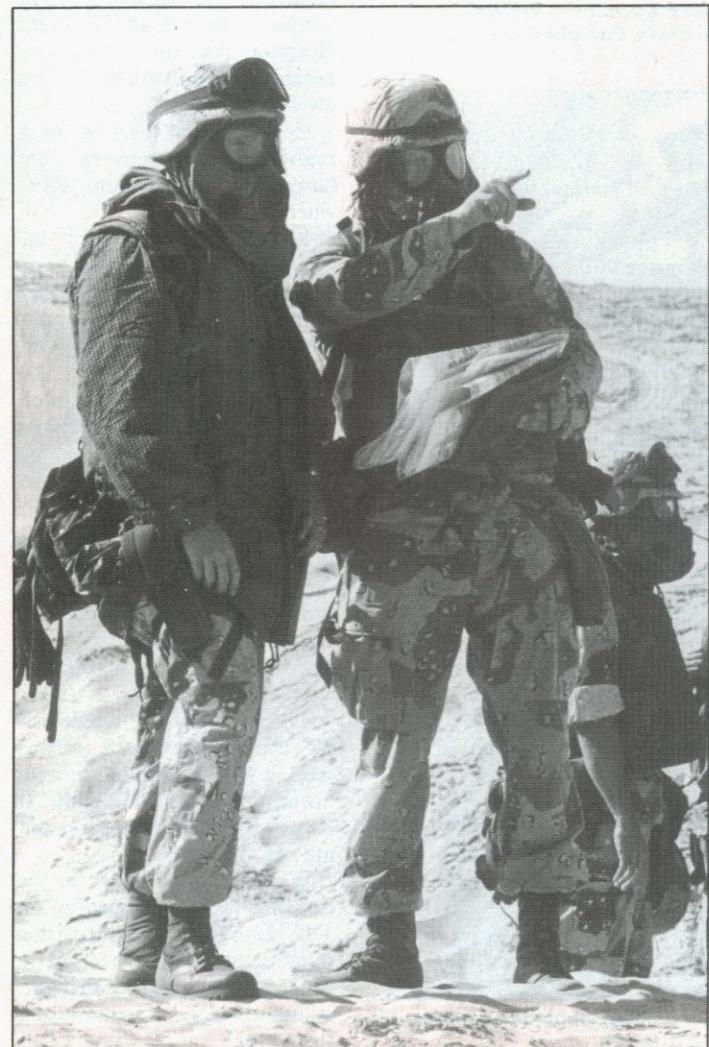
"HUH!" grunted the giant United States Marine Corps sergeant tasked to get the SOLDIER team and its vehicle under cover. "This here's a cammy net. Take your truck over there, camouflage it and report back in 30 minutes," he ordered.

Fortunately, the camouflage system came bagged ready for use and contained a simple instruction manual.

Unfortunately, something seemed not quite right . . . They had been issued with camouflage woodland (spring and summer). In the sand before their very eyes lay a small area of German forest!

Their guide at the Command Operations Centre (COC) of the 3rd Amphibious Assault Battalion USMC was Cpl Mike Housewright, USMC.

The battalion is equipped



Left - NBC-clad marines plot their next course of action on exercise

with massive armoured amphibious assault vehicles known as Amtracs (Amphibious tractors), which come in two versions - Landing Vehicle Tracked Personnel (LVTP) Personnel 7 and the LVTP Command 7.

The C7 mobile command unit version carries 14 troops, four crew and ten radio operators. Normally armed with a Browning .50 calibre machine gun, the Amtrac has a speed of around 12 knots in water and a maximum road speed of more than 60km/h. It has been in service since the early 1970s and the up-gunned version carries an additional 40mm grenade launcher.

Recently the vehicle has been up-armoured by adding two layers of stamped steel mesh to deflect small arms ammunition. These mesh armour appliques



Cobra attack helicopters stand by to escort the battalion

protect the occupants from rounds fired by weapons up to .50 calibre.

Like the British Army, the Marines take a keen interest in NBC training and the man in charge of the battalion's Decon Team is SSgt Everett Stripling.

"When we get the call we go out to the decon site and decontaminate equipment and personnel hit by chemical agent. Our job is to carry out decon either in 'hasty' - the quick decon - or 'deliberate' decon which is detailed and get those individuals back on the front line where they can continue the fight."

Capt Kent Bradford said the battalion was the division reserve and the last in a tier of defensive positions.

"We are normally based at Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii and have an operational commitment to the Western Pacific from the Aleutian Islands extending all the way south to the Philippines and the Polynesians. Although we normally practise twice a year, we don't normally have a desert mission. Mostly it's cold climates or jungle climates."

The unit forms part of the US Marines' pre-position force (MPF) and as such is supported by equipment loaded on MPF shipping - large civilian

container vessels.

"The ships are permanently pre-loaded with brand-new untouched equipment - an entire regiment's worth in each one. Of course, a lot of that is getting some pretty serious use at the moment. After this deployment is over, it is going to take a long time to backload and replenish the MPF ships," he said.

Life at the regimental aid station and signals section was not dissimilar to the British Army way of doing things but it was still a surprise to find two men playing darts. Their enthusiasm for the sport was not matched by their accuracy.

American rations are very different to those used by the British Army. Cooking is done at one central point and units in the field send a vehicle back to collect food stored in heat-retaining canisters.

Compressed white rice and minced beef was on the menu, followed by fresh fruit salad or cake. There was also bread on offer, small packs of raisins and as much coffee as you can drink.

The American MREs (Meals, Ready to Eat) have not enjoyed a very good press, but our team were fortunate, receiving packs of chicken à la king complete with fruit cake and a tasty cheese spread with crackers.

In a HumVee parked on a hilltop overlooking the batta-

Cpl Mike O'Connell with a tank-busting TOW missile launcher mounted on a HumVee vehicle

lion position sat two men intently studying a television screen. They were monitoring pictures beamed down by a remotely-piloted vehicle (RPV) overflying troop positions in the desert.

RPV is an unmanned radio controlled aircraft, with a wingspan of 18ft, fitted with thermal-imaging cameras that transmit TV pictures of astonishing clarity.

Stealth-technology means the aircraft is radar-invisible. It can be heard, but not seen. The

high altitude OP is known to US troops as the "Eye in the Sky".

Another part of the regimental reserve, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines were conducting static defence exercises.

Mobility is a key word for this battalion - by foot, vehicle or helicopter - depending on the transportation method it employs. An NBC exercise was under way, but in a "contamination-free" environment.

Sgt Bennie Benson was instructing a class of Marines in

the use of the Mk 19 grenade launcher.

"These 40mm grenades, which can be fired in automatic, blow to a casualty radius of five metres," he explained.

Later a heli-mobile raiding party lifted from the scorching sands. It was an impressive sight as a large force of CH53 Sea Stallion heavy-lift helicopters protected by an escort of Cobra armed attack and Huey gun ship helicopters, flew in to pick up the Marines.

The operation ran smoothly and in a short space of time, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marines was airborne and on its way to land and block an enemy breakthrough.

Similarities between this operation and those carried out by Britain's 24 Airmobile Brigade were obvious.

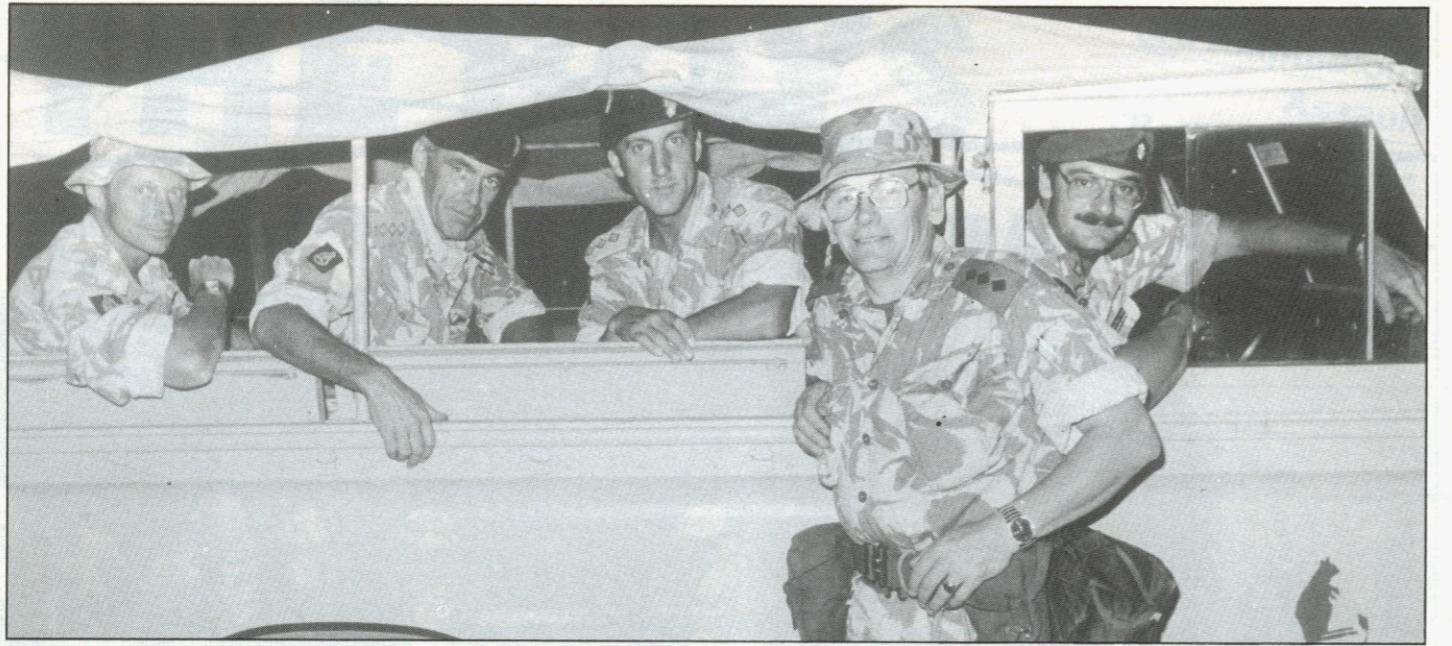
The whole is termed a MAGTF - Marine Air-Ground Task Force.

As one impressed spectator so aptly described it, the force was "awesome!"

A heli-mobile raiding party of the Marine Air-Ground Task Force prepares to board a CH53 Sea Stallion helicopter



Two forms of American Marines transportation. On the left is an amphibious Amtrac, on the right a HumVee armed with TOW



Among the first Territorial Army soldiers to serve in the Gulf were these TAPIOs. From left are Captains Richard Huxford, Peter Williams, Mervyn Wynne Jones, Peter Griffiths and Anthony Fairbanks-Weston

TAPIOs take the lead

TAPIOs – Territorial Army Public Information Officers – the first volunteer soldiers to serve in the Gulf, are more commonly known by the international Press whom they look after as "minders".

Five of them have been kept very busy since their mid-October arrival organising facilities, including visits to the front, for the media. By the end of the year they had organised more than 60 major facilities.

They also generate information, stories and photographic opportunities.

All have the rank of captain on Short Service Voluntary Commissions with 7 Armoured Brigade.

They are Peter Griffiths, ex-RAOC photographer and now a postmaster; Mervyn Wynne Jones, Government information officer; Anthony Fairbanks-Weston, the grandson of Douglas Fairbanks Jnr,

and SO3 P Info, Eastern District; Peter Williams, ex-RCT and now a translator at the Headquarters of Allied Forces Central Europe; and Richard Huxford, ex-Int Corps and now working for Naafi Financial Services.

Capt Griffiths said: "Some of the facilities have been set up at very short notice. It is very much a question of thinking on your feet and making instant decisions."

"In general, despite their reputation to the contrary, the representatives of the media have behaved extremely well. We now have a very good working relationship and mutual professional respect.

"We are the first TA officers to come out and we are very proud to be its first representatives to serve with the Desert Rats. It has meant putting our civilian jobs on ice, which has not always been easy."



A tri-Service team of experts helps install, gives advice and trains soldiers in the use of a computer specially designed for the British Army in the Gulf.

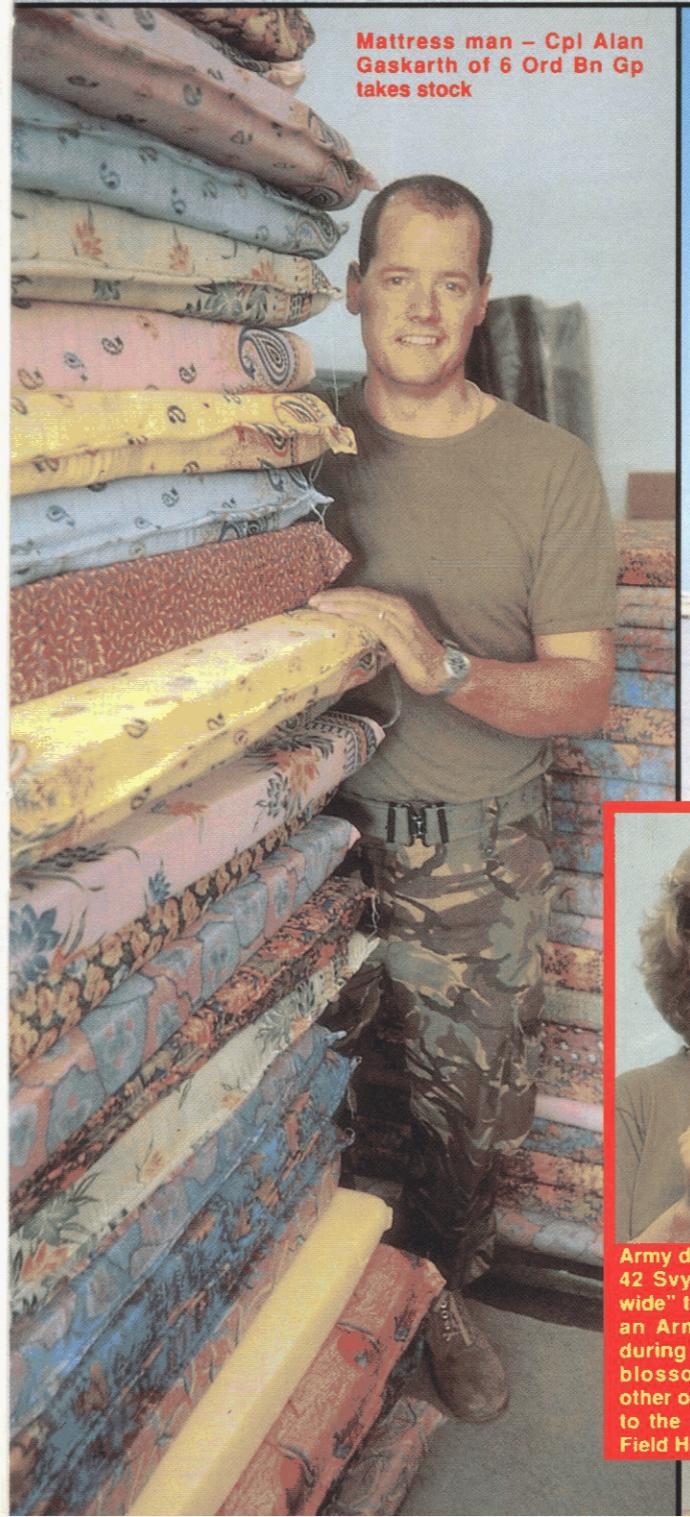
The system keeps track of crucial assets and provides general word processing in the production of all the reports and returns that have to pass up the chain from the front.

The team of trainers is from the Tri-Service Defence Automatic Data Processing Centre, Blandford, where the system was developed and is constantly being enhanced. The team regularly travels into the desert to pass on its skills. Team members are (from left) Maj Steve Crane, R Signals, Sqn Ldr Keith Spencer, Flight Lt Phil Reed and Lt Dave Macaskill, RN.

Ray flies the KOSB colours

WHEN Cpl Ray Johnson volunteered to work in the Gulf he found he was the only soldier in theatre from the 1st Battalion, The King's Own Scottish Borderers. Normally a Headquarters Company clerk in Edinburgh, he is now working in Field Records at Baldrick Lines. Then Capt Greville Ramsay, from the same regiment, arrived.

Cpl Johnson, however, insists the status quo remains. He explained: "Capt Ramsay was posted in as ops officer to the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Own Highlanders. So I maintain I am the only one here."



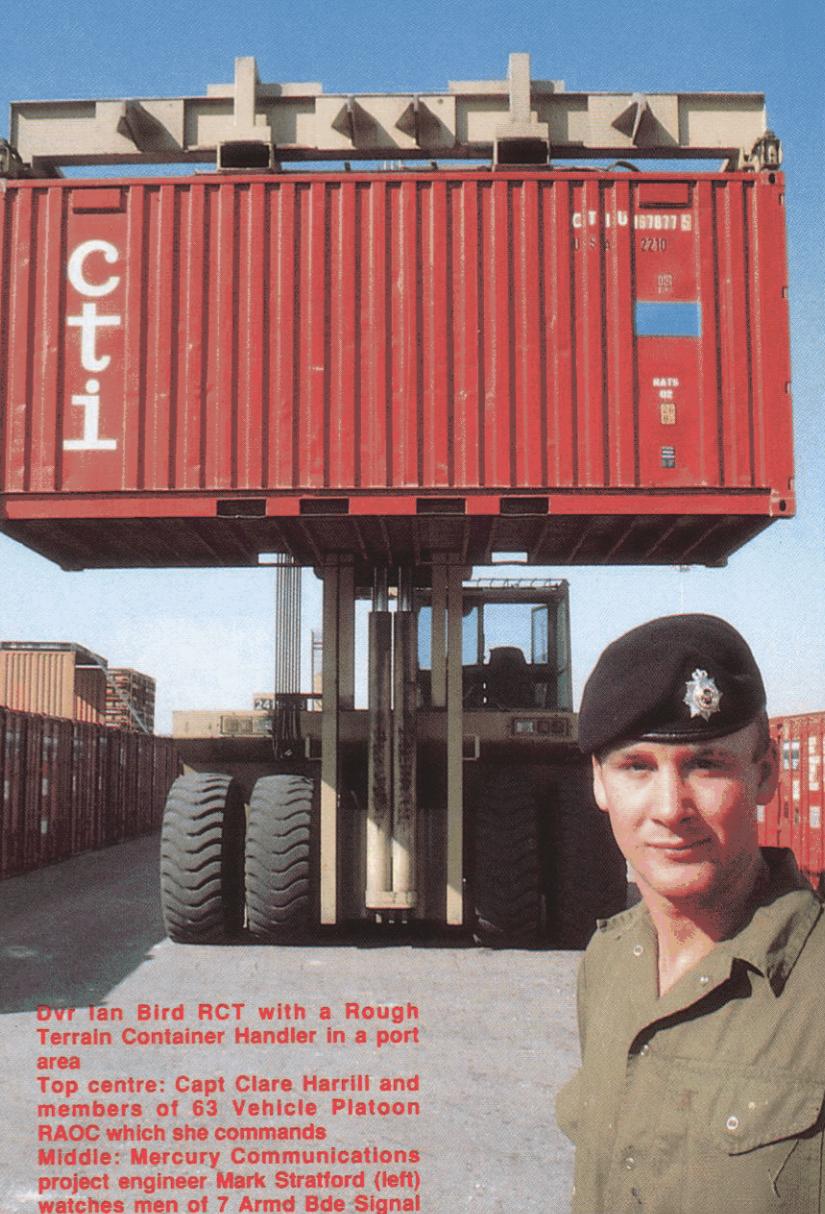
Mattress man – Cpl Alan Gaskarth of 6 Ord Bn Gp takes stock



Army dentist Maj Julie Aldridge RADC, from 42 Svy Engr Gp, Hermitage, says "open wide" to fiance Capt Bryan Timmins RAMC, an Army psychiatrist. They met briefly during NBC training at Tidworth and love blossomed when they sat next to each other on the long Hercules transporter flight to the Gulf. Both are now serving with 22 Field Hospital Group.



One way to spend off-duty hours. A skateboarder makes use of an improvised runway in Baldrick Lines



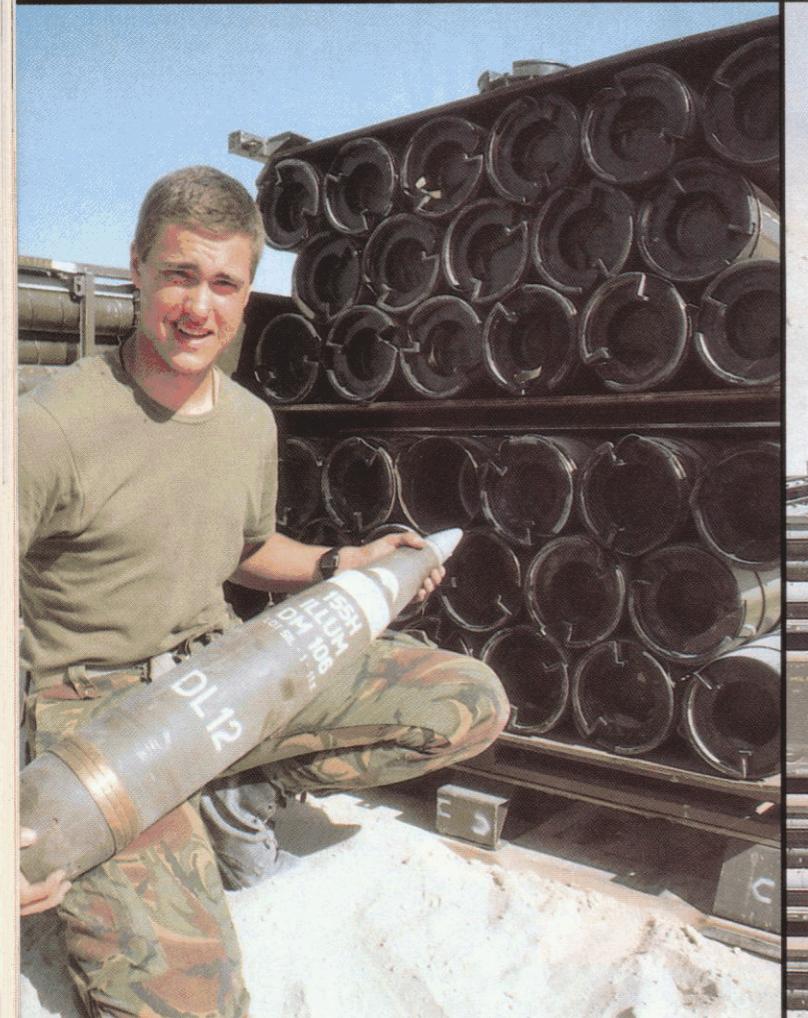
Dvr Ian Bird RCT with a Rough Terrain Container Handler in a port area

Top centre: Capt Clare Harrill and members of 63 Vehicle Platoon RAOC which she commands

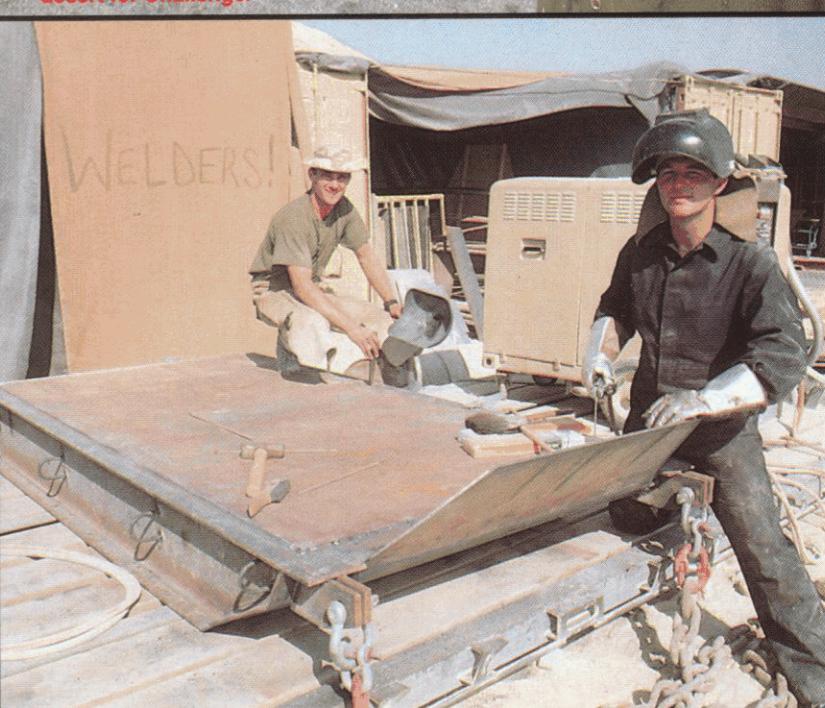
Middle: Mercury Communications project engineer Mark Stratford (left) watches men of 7 Armd Bde Signal Squadron install new telephones in a camp near Al Jubail

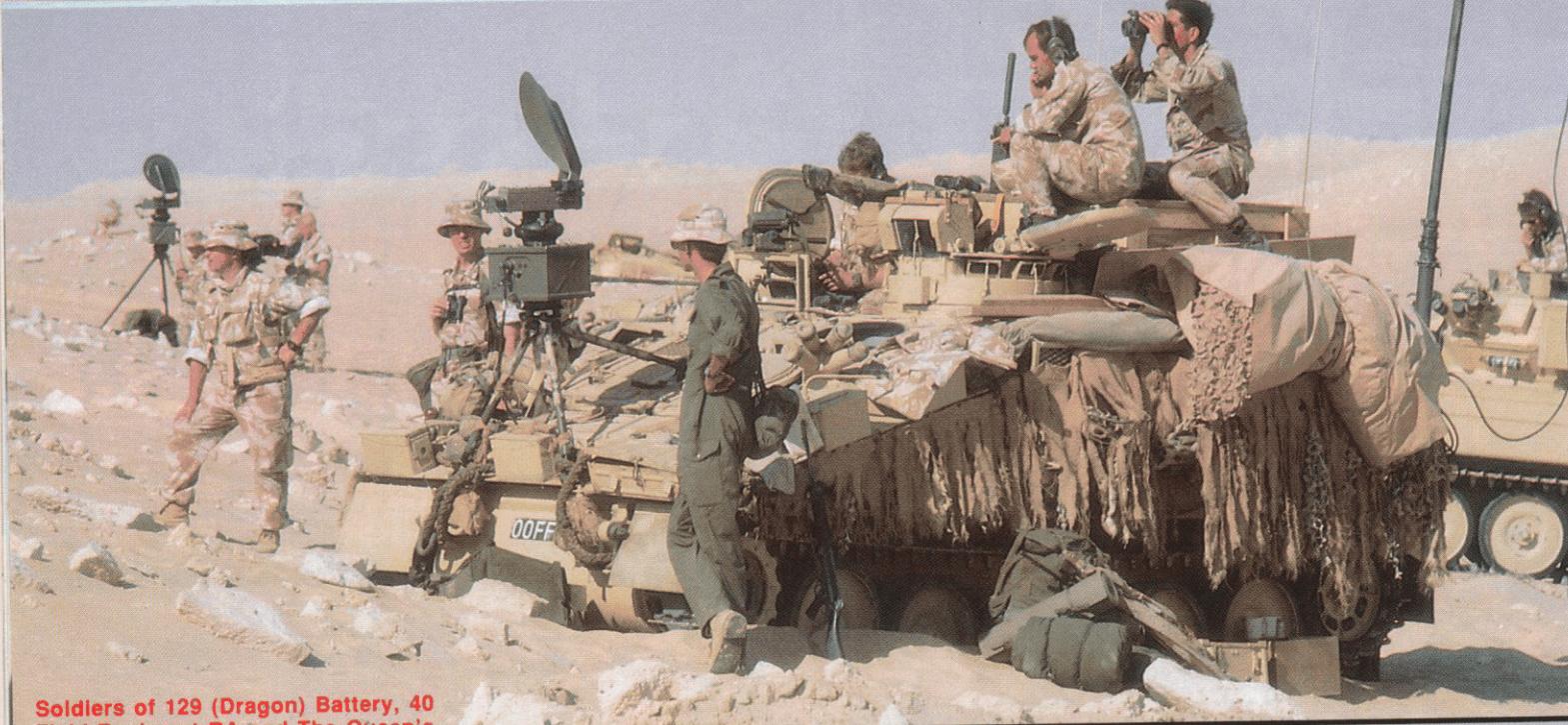
Left: Capt David Townrow RAOC at one of the ammunition dumps that stretch endlessly into the desert

Below: LCpl Jim Hendrickson (left) and welder Cpl Trev Dale of 45 Field Support Squadron RE construct a sledge for towing additional munitions behind armoured vehicles. This is a smaller version of a prototype designed and built in the desert for Challenger



Above: Issuing ammo at an ammunition supply point in the desert are Pte Nicola Culpin (left) and Pte Lisa Jeffrey who are working with 6 Ord Bn Gp
Left: LCpl Steve Gray checks 155mm illuminating shells destined for use by 40 Field Regiment RA





Soldiers of 129 (Dragon) Battery, 40 Field Regiment RA and The Queen's Dragoon Guards at an observation post direct fire for the battery's M109 guns (below). Note the shredded hessian camouflage on the command vehicle. Inset: Gnr Bernie Matthews with the artillery observer sighting system.



Scimitars of The Queen's Dragoon Guards pictured on a recce in a forward area



Still a force to be reckoned with after 25 years of service with the British Army, these M109A2 155mm self-propelled howitzers can lob a shell on to enemy positions more than 18,000 metres forward of their position

Gunners make their mark on the desert

AMONG the first units in the Gulf to receive a visit from the Commander of the 1st Armoured Division were the Lowland Gunners - 40 Field Regiment Royal Artillery, who were celebrating the successful conclusion of their bombardiers' cadre course held, unusually, in the desert.

Maj Gen Rupert Smith saw for himself the extraordinarily high regimental spirit of the gunners, who pride themselves on the accuracy of their giant M109 self-propelled howitzers.

After an inspection and a march-past, Gen Smith called on the junior NCOs to break ranks and gather round him. This achieved, he addressed them on their new responsibilities and their expected conduct in the event of hostilities.

He then took up his position on the dais and watched members of the regiment take part in what can only be described as an Army equivalent of the annual field gun competitions at the Royal

Tournament. Two teams wrestled vehicle trailers loaded with jerrycans of water across an obstacle course and back.

The M109 provides close artillery support with nuclear capability for the British Army. It can lob a 95lb high explosive shell up to 18,000 metres and also fires smoke, illuminating,

minelet or bomblet and rocket-assisted ammunition.

Entering service in 1965, it was equipped with a short 23.4-calibre barrel. By the late 1970s, these had mostly been replaced by the longer 39-calibre barrel. The regiment is now equipped with M109A2 and A3.

Aircraft pilots flying overhead at the time might have been puzzled by the sight of a giant XL laid out on the desert. It represented the Roman numeral for 40 (the regiment's number) and was composed of every armoured vehicle employed by the Lowland Gunners.



Gnr More Goodings passes 155mm shells along a chain to the guns



Red Rum stretches his legs in Hyde Park, attended by head lad Ken Critchley and Life Guard troopers Richard Negus (left) on Oak and Craig Walker on Milton

Doris's day arrives



Mrs Doris Brockley has retired from the surgical outpatients department at Cambridge Military Hospital, Aldershot after almost 50 years of service to the British Army.

Doris, pictured above with Brig Lionel Lees, commanding officer of the Cambridge, consultant Lt Col Carl Griffiths, for whom she worked, and Pipe Major Roger Huth, SG, attached to the ACC, started working for the Army as a typist in July 1940, based at the Royal Army Service Corps Officers School in Bulver Barracks.

She moved to the Cambridge 25 years ago and would have been allowed a third extension to her long career but for the situation at CMH created by the Gulf crisis.

Drilled to a turn by the ACC

STANDING in a room full of CS gas, the last thing you feel like doing is taking off your respirator. But that was precisely what the instructor ordered members of a SOLDIER team to do.

Anybody deploying in support of 7 Armoured Brigade has to be trained to survive in an NBC environment. There are no exceptions.

That's why our team reported to the Training Battalion, Depot Army Catering Corps at St Omer Barracks, Aldershot, which has acquired a fine reputation for the quality of its NBC training.

OC Training Coy Capt Stuart Amis has a trio of NBC instructors, Sgt Andy Gulliver

Star treatment

Nothing but the best is good enough for Red Rum, one of Britain's most famous race horses. Which is why the Grand National hero took advantage of rather superior equine "b & b" facilities at Knightsbridge Barracks, home of the Household Cavalry, during a visit to London from his Lancashire home.

"We do not stable civilian horses as a point of rule," said Lt Jonathan Lydiard-Wilson. "But when it comes to the greatest race horse in the country we have to make an exception."



Capt Charles Goodson-Wickes MP (left) reports for duty at the RAMC's Keogh Barracks. The Member for Wimbledon was joining a medical team in the Gulf. Dr Goodson-Wickes resigned his commission in 1977 to stand for Parliament.



THE 'REAL' AEROMEDS TAKE A BOW

Meet members of 24 (Airmobile) Field Ambulance Collecting Troop serving in Saudi Arabia. Our back cover picture (Jan 7) incorrectly identified personnel of 33 and 230 Squadrons RAF as including men of the Army's airmobile medic unit, which works closely with RAF Puma helicopter crews in the Support Helicopter Force. Sorry lads, this is the real you!

Liz breaks the men-only ranks



Sgt Liz Forrai (above) is the Regular Army's first female combat medical technician. Now, after just a few months in the Army, she is serving in the Gulf with Munster-based 5 Armoured Field Ambulance. Until now the trade of combat medic was limited to men in the Regulars, unlike the Territorial Army where the trade was open to women. After five years in the TA with the QARANC, Liz has signed up for a limited period on a Type S engagement.



Laurie Manton (left) discusses the S 10 respirator with Cpl Barry Briggs

and Cpls Barry Briggs and Gary McLaughlin.

"Providing the training of our own students does not suffer, we are quite willing to provide NBC training assistance to any unit deploying on operations. Just contact us and we will do all we can to help."

Writer Laurie Manton and photographer Mike Weston were introduced to the art of donning their NBC suits by Cpl Briggs.

Theory turned to practice in a gas chamber.

"Deep breath, hold it and remove respirator," ordered Cpl Briggs.

Manton took his deep breath

after removing the respirator. This resulted in his rapid departure from the chamber with nose and eyes streaming.

"A bit like pouring vinegar into your eyes and sucking a lemon at the same time," he remarked later.



Howdy there, Uncle! WO2 Bob Small, RAOC (left) meets his nephew, Petty Officer Larry Lewis, US Navy, on board the USS Goldsborough in Hong Kong. Bob is serving in HQ British Forces, Hong Kong. The American warship had recently completed a tour of duty in the Gulf.



... and they haven't stopped

The 'phone hasn't stopped ringing in the new BAOR Army Careers Office at Hammersmith Barracks in Herford since the centre opened in December.

"We're getting enquiries from expatriates all over Germany, many of them wanting to re-enlist," said Maj (Retd) Bob

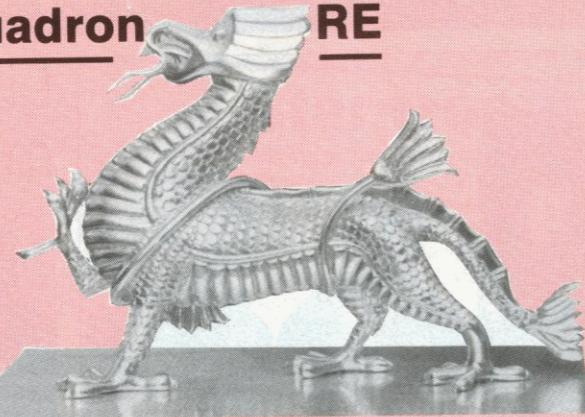
BAOR office's first signing . . .



Crabtree, who leads a team of three recruiters. Maj Crabtree, a gunner, was delighted that his first recruit was for the Royal Artillery. Bob (left) is pictured presenting a Guaranteed Vacancy Certificate to Robert Wynn, son of Bdr Ron Wynn (right) of 27 Fd Regt RA.

Year of the Dragon

The striking silver dragon presented to 56 (MT) Sqn by former military and civilian staff



WHAT has the horns of a stag, head of a camel, eyes of a demon, ears of a bull, body of a crocodile, belly of a clam, pads of a tiger, claws of an eagle and scales of a carp... and belongs to the Army?

The answer is a Chinese dragon, said to sit outside the emperor's palace, defending it from intruders.

Legend says that once the Chinese have conquered Po-Shan - the world - it will be grasped in the dragon's right-hand claw.

Not a lot of people know that... but you can be sure the story has done the rounds at 56 (MT) Training Squadron Royal Engineers, where serving and ex-soldiers and civilians have clubbed together to buy a magnificent £10,000 silver centre-piece.

It depicts the mythical hybrid dragon and has been bought to mark the squadron's 90th birthday last year. The base features engravings illustrating the squadron's changing

role over the years.

Maj Jeff Snee, the officer commanding, said: "We wanted a piece that was outstanding and memorable, yet appropriate. The dragon fitted the bill perfectly."

The original 56th (Field) Company RE was formed on May 1, 1900 to help fill a gap in the British Army left by units posted to take part in the South African War.

In 1927 the company became part of the Shanghai Defence Force and was the first British sapper unit to set foot in China since the Second Chinese War in 1866.

It returned to the UK in December 1928. To commemorate its service in the Orient, the company was permitted to emblazon the Chinese dragon on the company flag.

It underwent a number of changes and since 1959, 56 (MT) Tg Sqn has carried out all basic driver training for RE recruits as well as advanced driver training for the corps.



Maj Jeff Snee, the officer commanding

Maj Snee explained the difference between the squadron's role and that of the Army School of Mechanical Transport (featured in SOLDIER, August 6) as: "We are a small family unit which concentrates on RE specialist equipment, whereas ASMT has a much wider Army commitment."

The squadron offers seven

courses for both Regular and part-time soldiers. About 1,400 students pass through each year.

Basic Driver Troop is manned by four permanent military staff and 46 civilian instructional officers who train soldiers for Heavy Goods Vehicle licences. Driving licence training is by civilian contractor.

Maj Snee pointed out that young soldiers have a unique opportunity to learn a specialist skill at an early age.

"In civilian life you have to be 21 before you start to train for a HGV licence. But a government dispensation allows the Army to train soldiers from 17½ for driving military vehicles only."

"It stands them in good stead for the opportunities they may have to compete for later in civilian life."

An innovation at Church Crookham has been the introduction of Packaged Goods Regulations training to bring soldiers up to date with new legislation. There is also a classroom section.

The Advanced Driving

Troop (ADT), with three military personnel and 17 civilian instructors, trains drivers on up-grading courses and specialist driving, and competition for places is keen.

The course covers work up to the 35 tonne Scammell and low loader trailer, used for moving heavy plant machinery.

The Squadron is the only unit giving specialist training on the operating and servicing of the Crane Field Medium 315. The course is also open to soldiers from REME and the RAOC.

Vehicles are serviced and repaired by the regimental REME workshops.

ADT trains MT-based junior non-commissioned officers on MT corporals' courses over an intensive month, preparing them for eventual promotion to MT sergeant.

Maj Snee said that training facilities at the nearby Long Valley and Eelmore were excellent. Night driving training, including convoy work on public roads, was carefully monitored.

"Because of the high volume of traffic on the roads we are



Behind the scenes are (from left) unit typist Jo Lennon; licensing clerk Jean Watkins (seated); co-ordinating clerk Janice Langley; chief clerk Clare Fitzpatrick; and Spr Jeremy Manship, who was on course for his DLV trade qualification

able to give high quality training on the doorstep. And the quality of student is also very high. A youngster with nine GCSEs and two A Levels is quite common.

"Most of the civilians are ex-military and we enjoy an excellent rapport with them. The work is very satisfying for everyone, especially when you

Squadron pride in Victoria Crosses

56 (MT) Training Squadron is especially proud of its two Victoria Cross recipients - Capt Theodore Wright and Lt Cyril Gordon Martin.

Capt Wright received his for gallantry at Mons on August 23, 1914, while attempting to connect a lead and demolish a bridge under heavy fire. He was helping the passage of the 5th Cavalry Brigade over the pontoon bridge at Vailly on September 14 and was himself mortally wounded while helping wounded men to shelter.

Lt Martin went on to become ADC to King George VI, two years before he retired in 1947. He died in 1980.

His medal was awarded for "most conspicuous bravery" at Spanbroek Molen on March 12, 1915 when in command of a grenade-throwing party. Although wounded, he led his men into enemy trenches, holding back their reinforcements for nearly two-and-a-half hours until the evacuation of the trench was ordered. The seven sappers with him were awarded the DCM.



Instructor Dennis Lawrence (right) overcame the language barrier with Gurkha soldiers... by learning to speak Nepalese fluently



LCpl Geordie Bell (left) and LCpl Shaun Watson hammer in anchorage points to assist in a vehicle recovery



Convoy drills are put to the test on the cross country circuit

Date set for wheelchair games

THE Royal British Legion is, in association with its British Ex-Service Wheelchair Sports Association (BEWSA) Branch, hosting the first international ex-Service wheelchair games at Stoke Mandeville in August.

BEWSA was formed in 1987 and has already gained much experience in this rapidly-growing form of sport, having competed successfully at the annual American Paralysed Veterans' Games and at the Florida Sunshine Games.

Veterans' organisations from 61 countries, including the USA, Soviet Union and China, have been invited to send either a team or individual competitors. Athletic prowess will not be essential to take part in the Legion's games.

Date of the ambitious event is August 24 to 30.

There will be three classes for competitors –

House hopes fell so flat

A MOTHER has written highlighting problems Servicemen face trying to buy a home and avoid eviction from a married quarter at the end of their service.

For some, promotion and higher pay to meet today's high mortgage repayments will not be possible, but many do step into the private housing sector while serving and some have found the going hard.

A corporal I know of bought a one-bedroom flat with a mortgage of £511 a month. His income is £889. Unlike many civilians he is unable to take a second job to help cover his monthly outgoings of £1,032.

The sad lesson for him is that the Army pay doesn't even allow him to own a tiny flat, yet his trade qualifications would

get him a much higher income as a civilian.

His hope is that when he leaves the Army a local authority will offer accommodation.

But even that has problems. A chief housing officer of a garrison

In my view...

VACANCIES IN HAIG HOMES

town explained: "We offered 28 Servicemen places on a shared ownership scheme, but their finances showed only one could afford to accept the offer.

"I had no idea soldiers received such low wages."

The prospect facing the others would be eviction from their MQs and the offer of bed and breakfast, sub-standard or homeless hostel accommodation.

If you are due out over the next six months and are house-hunting then you might consider putting your name on their waiting list for a house in the following

Loans and grants

TO those students who wrote requesting information on loans and grants, there are two new free booklets called "Loans for Students" and "Grants for Students". They are available from local authorities or the Dept. of Education and Science Publications Despatch Centre, Honeypot Lane, Canons Park, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 1AZ.



Keep those photographs coming! Aldershot-based wives of men serving with 22 Field Hospital in Saudi Arabia enjoy the latest snapshots from their husbands. From left to right are Sheila Woodcock, Bronwen Burtt, Maria Whitehouse, Carolyn Whitfield and Sheila Thompson with children Harriet Starkey and Sarah and Matthew Whitehouse

Sales time lag

TIME lag between the alienation of a married quarter and its actual sale might result in the property being empty – and conse-

quently open to vandalism and deterioration – for a number of years.

Can anything be done to keep MQs occupied for

longer? That was a question I put to Chris Furlong at Defence Lands, among a number of queries I raised on the Joint Service Discounted Housing Scheme.

He replied: "In principle I have no objection to advertising MQs for sale in the bulletin while they are still occupied by Service families.

"But I understand that the Service Personnel Directories take the view that families should not be inconvenienced by DL agents valuing and preparing descriptions of their homes and by prospective purchasers wishing to view the property.

"In addition, the view was taken that property must be readily available for viewing by potential bidders, who might be serving overseas. This could not be guaranteed if they were occupied."

Anne



Home telephone: Camberley (0276) 29653

Armstrong

All mod-cons

Break out the bubbly for new Deepcut quarters

window locks.

The upstairs of the house is fully carpeted and the full central heating is on an energy-saving system.

Have no doubt these houses would pass muster on any expensive civilian estate and end for all time the sneer reserved for Army MQs.

They were built by the firm of Hall and Towse nine weeks ahead of schedule. Peter and Tina were handed the key, the bubbly and the bouquet by managing director Bob Gliberry, who in turn was congratulated by Brig John Hathaway for the high standard of building.

Brig Hathaway said that there were now 12,000 fully-modernised MQs in the UK out of 35,000 long-term stock. In 1990, 800 were either built or modernised despite the cutback and a £15.7m project is now under way at Bulford by Hall and Towse.

This year projects are planned for Bovington, Bulford, Catterick, Hereford, Kirton, Lindsey and Leconfield with new builds at Ramillies in Aldershot, Catterick and Colchester.

With £35m spent in 1990 and a hoped-for increase of £1m this year, Brig Hath-

away emphasised that the Army is committed to housing all families properly in decent quality MQs.

Asked about garages for the new modern homes, he said he would be pleased to receive comments whether garage charges should be included in the rent and not charged separately.

This has long been a sore point as many feel that garages have been paid for many times over and with the increasing number of car-owners, plus the problem of security, garages should be included in future plans.

If you have thoughts on this drop me a line at SOLDIER.

● A year ago 94 flat-roofed MQs were demolished at Beech Grove and Coopers Hill, Pirbright. Now 27 new homes have been completed with another 20 to come. Phase 2 of the development starts this month with the demolition of the remaining old houses in Beech Grove. This part of the site will become a playing area.

Blueys run out

The Gulf crisis has created a massive run on "Blueys", the Forces aerogramme letter forms.

They are free to Servicemen and families in the UK, BAOR, and the South Atlantic, but wives have reported that some post offices in Britain had run out.

The forms are printed by the MoD, not the Post Office as many people think, and COD Donnington has been working around the clock to meet demand. If you can't get hold of a "Bluey" let me know.

Just a warning. If your husband's unit is redeployed, his BFPO number may change, causing a delay, but it will get through in the end.



5,000th House

KEY EVENT: Cpl Peter Clarke clutches his little daughter Ashleigh while his wife Tina holds the champagne and the key to their new home at Deepcut.

Gosport quarters for sale

THERE is a chance for soldiers to become house-owners at reasonable cost – in Gosport, Hants.

For families leaving the Army within the next six months the two and three-bedroom houses at

the naval Rowner Estate could be a chance for a starter home. Discount prices start at £26,950.

The houses are available to Army bidders because, says Defence Lands, the Royal Navy already has the most house-owners and bids for these properties from their people are down. This has opened the door to potential house-buyers in the Army and RAF. Closing date for applications is February 1.

A Guards treat for the new collector

March Spectacular
Bands of the Grenadier, Coldstream and Irish Guards

NEW collectors could do no better than obtain March Spectacular, a very generous offering from Bandleader of 29 marches played by the Grenadier, Coldstream and Irish Guards bands.

Since it is a compilation from previous recordings old collectors will probably have them.

The regimental slow and quick marches of the three

Guards start the programme, and after that I would say a dozen are accepted as great, including *Thro' Bolts and Bars*, *Dunedin, Bond of Friendship*, *Imperial Echoes*, *Wellington*, *San Lorenzo*, and *Sons of the Brave*. One Alford, no Sousa.

Zehle has two of his least known, *Army and Marine* and *Trafalgar*, and here's a chance to collect Hitler's favourite – the thumping *Badenviller* of SS infamy, but great all the same.

Rarities on record are R B Hall's *Red Men's March* and

Independentia, Fucik's *Furchtlos und Treu*, Winston's *Carry On*, and Blankenburg's *Admiral of the Air*.

Previously unknown to me, though much played by the Guards for obvious reasons, are Dick Ridings' *Pioneer Spirit*, the late Mick Lane's *Star of St Patrick*, and Derek Kimberley's *King's Troop*. The others are *Nijmegen*, *Frensham*, and *Quis Separabit*, plus Ron Goodwin's *Luftwaffe March*.

● **Bandleader CD BNA 5040, 80 mins, CD only.**

CLASSIC GRENADIERS

Marching with the Grenadier Guards
Conductor: Maj S A Watts

AND if it is Sousa you want then you'll find two on this disc, with one of Alford's. They are *Hands Across the Sea*, *The Liberty Bell*, and *Colonel Bogey*.

My favourite marching band, of course, and in very good form, they give a real Grenadier thump to such greats as Beethoven's great *Zapfenstreich* (Tattoo) No.1, *Old Comrades* (in a new arrangement by Ray Steadman Allen), and especially *Liberty Bell*; and so they should since they, and I, made the recording used for

the *Monty Python's Flying Circus* series.

And I see my suggestion that a great march called *Europe United* was lying idle in most band libraries has been taken up by Maj Watts; one of Zehle's very best.

Another little-played classic is *Coronation Bells*, here given a rousing performance with full campanology!

There are all the Grenadier marches, plus *Imperial Echoes*, *Blaze Away*, *Les Huguenots*, *The Purple Pageant* (Karl King), *Radetzky*, *New Colonial*, and *Marche Lorraine*.

To make the disc really worth buying, if that were necessary, there is Sousa's

"EVERY parachutist is a pioneer. That first jump . . . ! It is a jump into the unknown."

"It is a leap or a drop or a stumbling step – or even a push into a new world. It is a world for which nature did not equip us and for which no description or simulation can prepare our senses. The first time jumper is an explorer, not only of this strange new world that he now enters, but of himself. Leaping into space is against all human instinct. Bad dreams are made of it."

In these few words Group Capt Peter Hearn describes in *The Sky People* all you need to know about the first jump.

When your reviewer made his first jump in 1943 from a Hudson aircraft, which was totally unsuitable for parachuting on a static line, unbeknown to him the officer in front of him went into a roll, became entangled with his parachute and plunged to his death – which caused a certain amount of anxiety on your reviewer's second jump.

Compared with this experience the dangers which the early pioneers faced were incomparable.

Group Capt Hearn, who was an RAF parachute jumping instructor, commanded No 1 Parachute Training School and represented Great Britain in the world freefall championships, has done a remarkable job in researching the development of parachuting and has made a fascinating book which I recommend.

In spite of a few "regulars" on disc I highly recommend this programme to all, with no nepotism involved.

● **From EMI and dealers, CD or cassettes £7.99 plus postage, or try the Grenadiers at Wellington Bks, SW1E 6HQ.**

FROM THE PROFESSIONALS

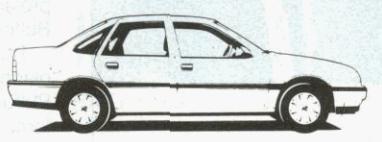
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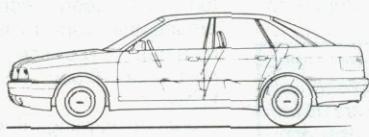
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Jumping into the unknown

early pioneers who were mostly "show-jumpers" jumping from balloons playing on the crowd-drawing drama of "will-it-won't-it open". Sadly for many of these pioneers it did not.

The first operational jump from an aircraft was performed in 1918 by Capt Alessandro Tandura, who was an Italian spy dropped behind the Austrian lines in the Piave. I will not spoil readers' anticipation by recounting his method of dispatch but suffice to say it is worth getting the book solely to read about it – he was awarded the Gold Medal for Valour and surely deserved it.

Not is parachuting only for the young. The late Archie McFarlane made his first jump at the age of 75 and his last when he was 89, dying a few weeks later while trekking in the Cambrian Mountains – there is hope for us all yet!

As aviation's philosopher Antoine de Saint observed in his book *The Wisdom of the Sands*: "The acceptance of the risk of death is the acceptance of life, and love of danger is love of life." – PSN

The Sky People – A History of Parachuting by Peter Hearn. Published by Airlife Publishing Ltd, 101 Longden Road, Shrewsbury SY3 9EB.

Despite a gung-ho attitude to the war when declared, for some months he had to be content with life at his Oxford College and with the Home

other in order for Sealion to become what he wanted it to be: merely a threat."

What a comfort that would have been to British forces and civilians in 1940, standing alone against what was considered the invincible might of Germany, had they been able to share the view expressed in *Invasion of England 1940: The Planning of Operation Sealion* by the German military researcher Peter Schenck.

Written from the German viewpoint, the book is a highly-detailed analysis of the preparations for the invasion that was not to be.

Sealion was a long time in

STUDENT AT WAR

LIKE cameras, personal diaries were not officially permitted on active service in the Second World War, but what a good thing that some disobeyed orders. There would otherwise be many gaps in our knowledge of the day-to-day lives of Servicemen in that era.

Michael Halsted was a young second lieutenant in The Queen's Bays serving in the Western Desert from November 1941, a time that culminated with the Battle of Gazala in May 1942 during which he sustained severe head and facial wounds.

The diary he kept forms the greater part of the recently-published *Shots in the Sand*, an autobiographical account of his wartime experiences.

Michael Halsted was not really a typical soldier. His father was Alexander's Major General of Administration at Southern Command in the UK and his upbringing was one of undeniable privilege.

He was self-taught in the art of sporting gunnery well before the war and possessed a veritable arsenal of weapons.

Despite a gung-ho attitude to the war when declared, for some months he had to be content with life at his Oxford College and with the Home

BOOK REVIEWS

Tapestry from coastal China

THE research undertaken by Maj Alan Harfield for *British and Indian Armies on the China Coast 1785-1985* is daunting and it is fortunate for posterity that he was stationed in Hong Kong in 1949 where his interest was aroused and his study started, otherwise this monumental work would never have begun.

That it has seen the light of day is due not only to his own perseverance and the encouragement he received from Gen Sir John Chapple, who wrote the foreword and contributed valuable photographic evidence from his own remarkable collection of badges, but also to his wife, who assisted him on research "holidays" in the Far East.

Like the development of so much of the British Empire, occupation of territory was often due to protection of trade and the coast of China, in particular Hong Kong, was no exception: in this case the booming business in tea, which led to conflict with China and three wars, all being with one or more allied trading partners such as France and Germany.

Hong Kong became the supply base for British/Indian forces but it also became the grave of many of them, mainly from malaria, although initially the connection with mosquitoes was not understood and it was believed the fever was caused from disintegrated granite.

Harfield has enlivened the mass of detail of engagements, unit casualties, medals, barracks and so on with personal tales of life in peace and war.

This remarkable book will not only be invaluable to the military historian, medal collector and uniform expert, but also to the general public for the very human story he has told. – PSN

British and Indian Armies on the China Coast 1785-1985 by Alan Harfield. Published by A and J Partnership. Produced by Signlands Ltd, Farnham. Limited edition of 250, available from Plum Tree Cottage, Royston Place, Barton-on-Sea, Hampshire BH25 7AJ. Price £43.45 (UK incl. postage).

Invasion that never was

"IN 1973 the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst conducted joint British-German war games to determine the outcome of Operation Sealion as it had been planned in autumn 1940.

"It was based on the premise that Hitler had set D Day for September 22. The outcome of the games was that the Royal Navy would have foiled the invasion by September 25 by cutting off the German supply lines.

"But the premise of the games was unfounded, since Sealion was never planned to be implemented. Hitler was clever enough to play off the three armed services against each

other in order for Sealion to become what he wanted it to be: merely a threat."

What a comfort that would have been to British forces and civilians in 1940, standing alone against what was considered the invincible might of Germany, had they been able to share the view expressed in *Invasion of England 1940: The Planning of Operation Sealion* by the German military researcher Peter Schenck.

Written from the German viewpoint, the book is a highly-detailed analysis of the preparations for the invasion that was not to be.

Sealion was a long time in

When is a train not a train?

HER MAJESTY's Baggage Train, which forms part of B Troop of 20 Squadron, Royal Corps of Transport, is something of a misnomer – it comprises eight two-ton vans!

The "train" is used to carry royal luggage and that of visiting heads of state. When not required for VIP duties, the vehicles undertake other military roles in London.

The drivers are young, second-tour soldiers selected from the RCT and the Women's Royal Army Corps.

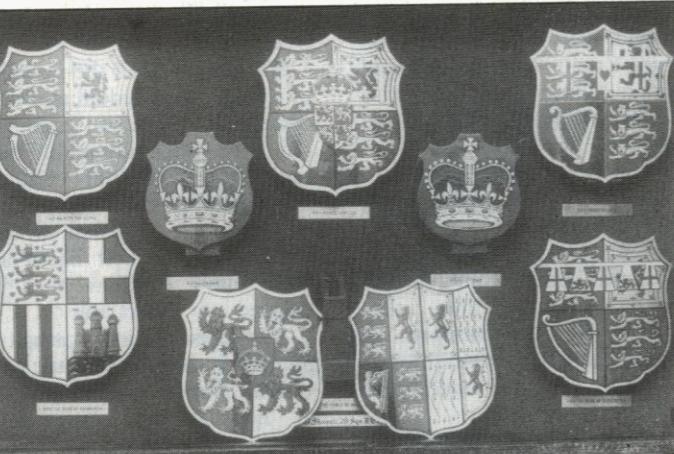
They and their vehicles are tasked from the Royal Mews. At Buckingham Palace, Royal Household staff help them load the luggage.

Sometimes a member of the Household staff will accompany the baggage, which may also have a police escort. At its destination – be it sea or airport or a royal home – the baggage will be received by another member of the Royal Household staff.

On state visits, drivers have a ceremonial duty to perform – they parade with the Royal Air Force Regiment on the VIP's arrival. Once the reception is over, it is back on the road with deliveries.

There are always vehicles on standby in case a flight is re-directed.

Squadron OC, Maj Neil Campbell, said: "We provide a vital, behind-the-scenes service with well-dressed soldiers in clean, highly-polished vehicles."



When B Troop provides a limousine for a royal passenger, the appropriate heraldic shield is placed above the windscreen



LCpl Tracey Lucas, one of the unit drivers

When it's the Queen's Baggage Train

three-year-old Michelle Bennett, daughter of WO2 (SSM) Mel Bennett and his wife, Susan.

On view was a K2 ambulance, similar to the one driven by the Queen during the Second World War. She said it brought back fond memories.

The Queen also saw montages of vehicles of the 1940s and present day, and LCpl Debbie Davies dressed in an ATS uniform presented the royal visitor with a picture of herself similarly dressed.

Though the Queen had arrived in her own car, she left in a squadron limousine driven by Sgt Alan Greenwood, who chauffeurs most of the Royal Family and heads of state – another service provided by the squadron.

He always makes a recce of the route to ensure it is free of roadworks, to time it, and to familiarise himself with the area.

"I consider it an honour to do such a prestigious job. I enjoy my work very much," he said.

The commission of the Army Service Corps Company stationed in London to carry baggage for the Royal Household can be traced with certainty to 1916. It is known, for instance, that in 1917 vehicles were sent from 882 Company Army Service Corps stationed in Kensington Palace Barracks for King George V's visit in Scotland.

There is well documented proof of details carried out between June 1916 and December 1935 with copies of letters and telegrams between

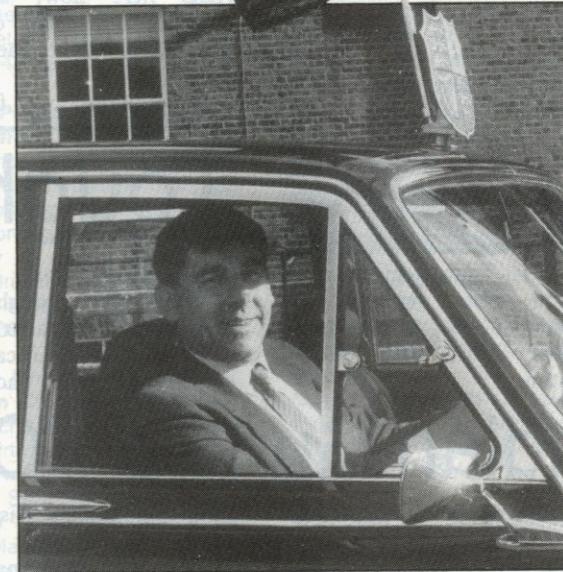
Left – B Troop's new Leyland Daf replaces the Renault Dodge (right) in the Queen's Baggage Train. The drivers are LCpl Tracey Lucas and Cpl Rob Stevenson



The Queen meets families of 20 Sqn RCT during her visit to Regent's Park Barracks in London



Cpl Rob Stevenson and duster ensure there are no blemishes on this vehicle



Sgt Alan Greenwood, chauffeur to the Royal Family

the Royal Mews and the War Office.

The first of these, from June 1918, gives details of three lorries which were to be at the Royal Pavilion, Aldershot, calling for the King's baggage. There is another showing a carrier meeting the King's Special Train at St Pancras to

convey his luggage to Buckingham Palace.

The company later became 20 Company of the Royal Army Service Corps, which in 1965 took the title 20 Squadron RCT.

Maj Campbell added: "There is an excellent working relationship between the Royal

Mews and 20 Squadron."

The Queen's Baggage Train is part of B Troop, which also provides a coach service and pantechicons for moving stores and equipment.

The squadron has three other troops – A Troop drives ministers and high-ranking military officers; C Troop is

Words:
Jennifer Griffiths
Pictures:
Mike Weston

LETTERS

Write to:
SOLDIER,
Ordnance Road,
Aldershot,
Hants GU11 2DU.

Mr Lord's favourite tune

COMMENT by PSN (Books, November 26) about *Sussex by the Sea* brought back memories of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, and that wonderful man, ASM J C Lord.

On my first day at Sandhurst I accidentally hit the toecap of Mr Lord while adjusting my chair.

"Your name, Sir?" he asked.

It was day one of the new intake and he was to remember me for the next 18 months. Saturday morning Academy parades with the band were conducted by him and we frequently had *Sussex by the Sea*.

He would stop the parade and ask: "What is the name of that tune, Mr Barrett?"

Regardless of the music

being played, the answer was: *Sussex by the Sea - Sir.*"

"And why is it being played?"

"Because it is the Academy Sergeant Major's favourite tune - Sir."

I am glad I never said it was the Regimental March of the Royal Sussex Regiment. - B L Barrett, Wegberg-Klinkum.

Good luck to Desert Rats

LIKE J Ellison (December 10) I too wish good luck to the 7th Armoured Brigade - and also to the 4th Armoured Brigade, since deployed to the Gulf. I served with the latter in the Second World War.

Two points come to mind. Mr Ellison states he served with 43rd Royal Tank Regiment and that he is a former member of the Desert Rats.

As he mentions no other unit, I presume he served only with the 43rd Royal Tank Regiment - and yet to the best of my knowledge, they did not leave the United Kingdom until either just before or at the end of the war in Europe, when they set sail for India.

My second point: "Fear Naught" is solely the motto of the Royal Tank Regiment and of no other regiment or brigade. - S A Leonard, ex-41st and 44th RTR, Preston.

Let's get job done

ON reading your letters page I am constantly faced with Gulf personnel complaining about who was here first, who worked with the Americans first, and so on.

Does it really matter who was here first? The fact is, we're ALL here now, and the moaners should be directing their attention to the job at hand.

As I write, we face the

possibility of conflict and it would be reassuring to know that these people are ready, as are the Staffords, instead of making a fuss over nothing.

Any Paras or Marines who served in the Falklands must be wondering what on earth is going on.

Come on, lads, let's shut up, get the job done and get home.

- Cpl D Saunders, 8 Plt, C Coy, 1 Staffords, BFP 644.

Tough old Rock

THE letter from Suevzet (October 29) brought back memories of Gibraltar.

We were living in casemates and every Tuesday and Friday

a high-ranking officer inspected our beds and mattresses for bugs. Should any be found we were charged (252) under King's Regulations.

All metal beds stood in "50 free-issue" cigarette tins full of creosote, one tin to a leg, and the wooden three-tier bunks were painted with creosote.

Every day the billet orderlies swept out the casemates with 3ft brooms and by the time they reached the doorway or balcony there was a heaving mass of bugs which were disposed of with a blowlamp.

I feel sure that anyone who served in Gibraltar during the war years will have some grim memories. - P T Beaton (ex-RE), Clacton-on-Sea, Essex.

Indian Gurkha VCs

WITH reference to the article on Gurkha VCs (Nov 26), during the Second World War the Indian Army won 31 VCs.

Twelve were awarded to Gurkha regiments, the following five posthumously:

Maj Frank Gerald Blaker MC, 3/9 Gurkha Rifles of Mpwapwa, Tanganyika, East Africa. July 1944, Taunghi, Burma.

Rfn Sherbahadur Thapa, 1/9 Gurkha Rifles. September 1944, San Marino, Italy.

Rfn Thaman Gurung, 1/5 Royal Gurkha Rifles. November 1944, Monte San Bartolo, Italy. - Carlyle A Pushong, ex-WO1 RASC.

Subadar Netrabahadur Thapa, 2/5 Royal Gurkha Rifles.

Rhino's rampant

I WAS delighted to see in the article about Ptarmigan (January 7) that our old divisional sign - the Rhino Rampant - is still in use by the 1st Armd Div.

The 2nd Armoured Brigade, comprising the 10th Royal Hussars, 9th Lancers and Queen's Bays, carried that sign throughout the Second World War and fought in some famous battles with great honour - especially the campaign in the Western Desert.

May I through your letters page send my very best wishes to all personnel serving in the Gulf, Allied and British - but particularly the 1st British Armd Div. Keep that rhino charging. - H H Havard, ex-RHQ 10th Royal Hussars 1938-46, Wirral.

Well done, sappers

WORK in the Gulf continues the magnificent service of The Corps of Royal Engineers, including El Alamein, Normandy and the Falklands.

Such duties have been performed with quiet devotion throughout their service - "Everywhere". - A R Blake, Northfleet, Kent.

Green rat

YOUR story "Getting the Rat Right" (January 7) aroused my interest. I served in the 7th Armoured Brigade in Italy in the Second World War when we wore the "green" rat and on both sleeves of the tunic it always faced the front - Lt Col (Retd) Geoffrey Davis R Sigs, Harpenden, Herts.

CATTERICK REMEMBERS

IN Book Reviews (December 10) the author of *Plumer: The Soldier's General* is quoted as saying that Plumer's name is "forgotten in his own country".

Not so - in 1925 the barracks in Catterick Garrison were named after battles and the roads after personalities. Messines Lines and Plumer Road

HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

WIN £50
COMPETITION 505

The pictures below differ in ten details. Find them and you could be £50 richer or win a new book. Just circle the differences in the right hand picture, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send to HOAY 505, SOLDIER, Ordnance Road, Aldershot GU11 2DU by Feb 22. Do not include anything else in your envelope.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted.

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

The names of the winner of the £50 first prize and two runners-up will be announced in the March 18 issue.

Name: (Give rank or title)

Address:



Competition No 505: The £50 winner is Maj J E N Rogers, RHQ RE, Brompton Barracks, Chatham. Book prizes go to runners-up Mrs B Martin, of Saltash, Cornwall, and Mr T Pugh, of Newark, Notts.

Plymouth. Details from Capt A G Gilbert RE, 59 Indep Cdo Sqn RE, Seaton Barracks, Tavistock Road, Plymouth PL6 5DL (tel: 0752 772312 ext 276).

● 361 (Gateshead) Sqn ATC reunion to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Air Training Corps will be held at the RAFA Club, Gateshead, on February 5, 1991. Details from Ray Stokes (tel: 091-477 2070 evenings).

● 138th (City of London) Field Regiment RA Association annual reunion will be held on Monday April 29 at the Victory Services Club, 63-79 Seymour Street, London W2. Details from Frank H Flack, 22 Camborne Way, Heston, Hounslow, Middx TW5 0PW (tel: 081-570 5267).

Searchline

● 17/21 Lancers, Greece, 1944: Ex-Cpl F Miles RTR is compiling a detailed family military history which includes limited attachment to the 17/21st. Contact sought with any ex-RTR and 17/21st by A H Andrews, 22 West Town Grove, Brislington, Bristol, Avon BS4 5EQ.

● Legion of Frontiersmen: Information and possible loan of material sought for history of this organisation being prepared by Allan S Razey, 4 Spring Street, Kingston upon Hull HU2 8RB.

● Guards Regiments: Information about the weapons issued to Guards regiments immediately after Dunkirk in the defence of UK, sought by researcher Douglas Smith, late WO2 69th Mid Regt RA, of 4 Mill Street, Bradenham, Thetford, Norfolk IP25 7QN.

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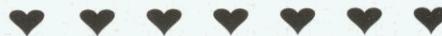
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(Please deduct £1.00 if you are presently serving in the Gulf)

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JOY'S ROSES

SOLDIER would like to draw attention to the price supplement on Joy's Roses for the period 4-14 February which was unfortunately omitted from the 7 January issue of SOLDIER.

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and three piglets	Pale Pink	10" & 7" long
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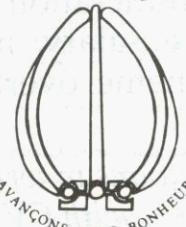
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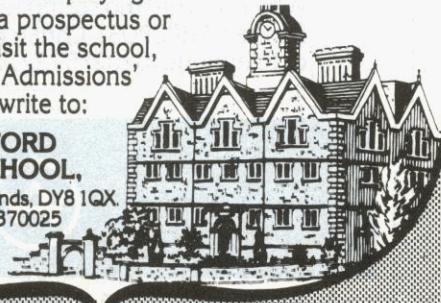
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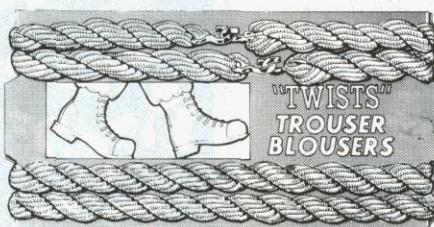
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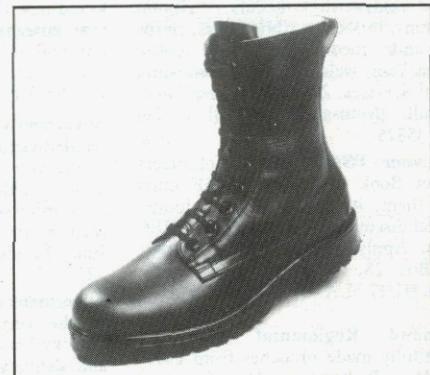
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There were several winners in the Duke of Wellington's Regiment canoe team which took part in the UKLF white water championships on the North Tyne at Hexham, Northumberland. From left to right are WO2 Brian Thomas, who won the individual slalom class, Cpl Eric Innes, Cpl Vic Falcus, Lt Fergus Murray, Cpl Harry Harrison, ex-Sgt John Cockshott, Cpl Doug Ward and Cpl Russ Peel. The Dukes finished first and second in the team slalom competition, contested by 19 teams.

Services boxing called off

THE Army-Royal Air Force boxing match, due to take place at Aldershot on January 17, was called off by the airmen because of their Op Granby commitments.

As SOLDIER went to press the Royal Navy-Army fixture at HMS Nelson on January 31 was still on.

Despite the outbreak of war in the Gulf, Army sports fixtures in the United Kingdom are expected to go ahead wherever possible.

RWF kept waiting

SO HERE we are again. The Army Major Units Cup in the UK has reached the semi-final stage and it has a very familiar ring about it, writes John Quin.

Troops Hereford, unfortunately, had to pull out of the competition (guess why?) before they had another chance to topple the Dukes, leaving the Yorkshiremen with a bye to the semis, where they now host the sappers from Minley, 1 and 3 Training Regiments RE.

Meanwhile, down in Hampshire those old cup war horses, SEME, host the Airborne Gunners, 7 Para RHA. Is it to be yet another UK final between the Dukes and 7 RHA or will the sappers or REME go for the right to meet 1 RWF, the BAOR Cup champions, for the greatest prize in Army

rugby, the Army Challenge Cup, due to be played in Aldershot at the Military Stadium on Thursday April 11?

The UK final is due to be played, by the way, on the same ground, on Thursday, February 28. More news on this competition and on the Minor Units later.

What, by some, has been claimed to have been the Cavalry Cup Final, certainly as far as BAOR is concerned, was played recently, not on the plains of Germany, but in the Gulf. We told you before Christmas how the 1st Queen's Dragoon Guards had taken on the American Service rugby champions, the 9th Communications Battalion.

Well, another 'bluey' from the front landed on my desk the other day, courtesy of SSgt

George Clegg, relating the game between the 1 QDG and The Queen's Royal Irish Hussars, played on a grass rugby pitch at the Al-Jubayl recreation centre.

Several hundred partisan and very vocal supporters were treated to a thriller, and at half time the only thing separating the two sides was a penalty by the QDG scrum half, LCpl Fido Ridley.

With both teams resuming at the same frantic pace on the restart, the Hussars levelling the score through another penalty, this time by Cpl Tim Waddell.

Further scores by both sides saw Capts Philip Marques (QDG) and Robert Hutton (QRIH) go over for a converted try apiece, which levelled the scores at nine points each, and that's how it finished. By all accounts everyone felt that it was a fair result.

The ball used in the game was given to A Sqn QDG by civilian club Barry RFC, to whom many thanks from all the boys concerned.

It is not too early to remind you again of the 75th Army-Navy game at Twickenham on March 23rd, the first game between the two Services being played in 1878. Since then honours have been more or less even, with the Army having won the last three in a row.

Of course, those of you who

have been there know that it is not just about a game. It is about the "Day". The West and North Car Parks on Army-Navy day start to fill up as soon as the gates are open, about 1100.

Out come the tents and barbecues and car boot bars and by midday, three hours before kick-off, all you can see beneath the charcoal haze are thousands, from all walks of Service life, renewing old friendships and looking forward to another great encounter on the park.

AFAS, the game's sponsors, have awarded a trophy for the most enterprising unit entertainment area at Twickenham on the day, so why not come along with all your friends and families, enjoy yourselves and see if you can win the trophy.

Family tickets will be on sale again by arrangement with the RFU, whereby two adults and three school-aged children get seats in the East stand - the sunny side - for the cost of two adult tickets.

School and cadet party tickets are also available at £1 per head and both these offers can be obtained from the RFU Ticket Office up to March 18.

See you at HQ!

● The Army beat Hampshire 18-9 at Aldershot Military stadium in their first build-up match to Twickenham.

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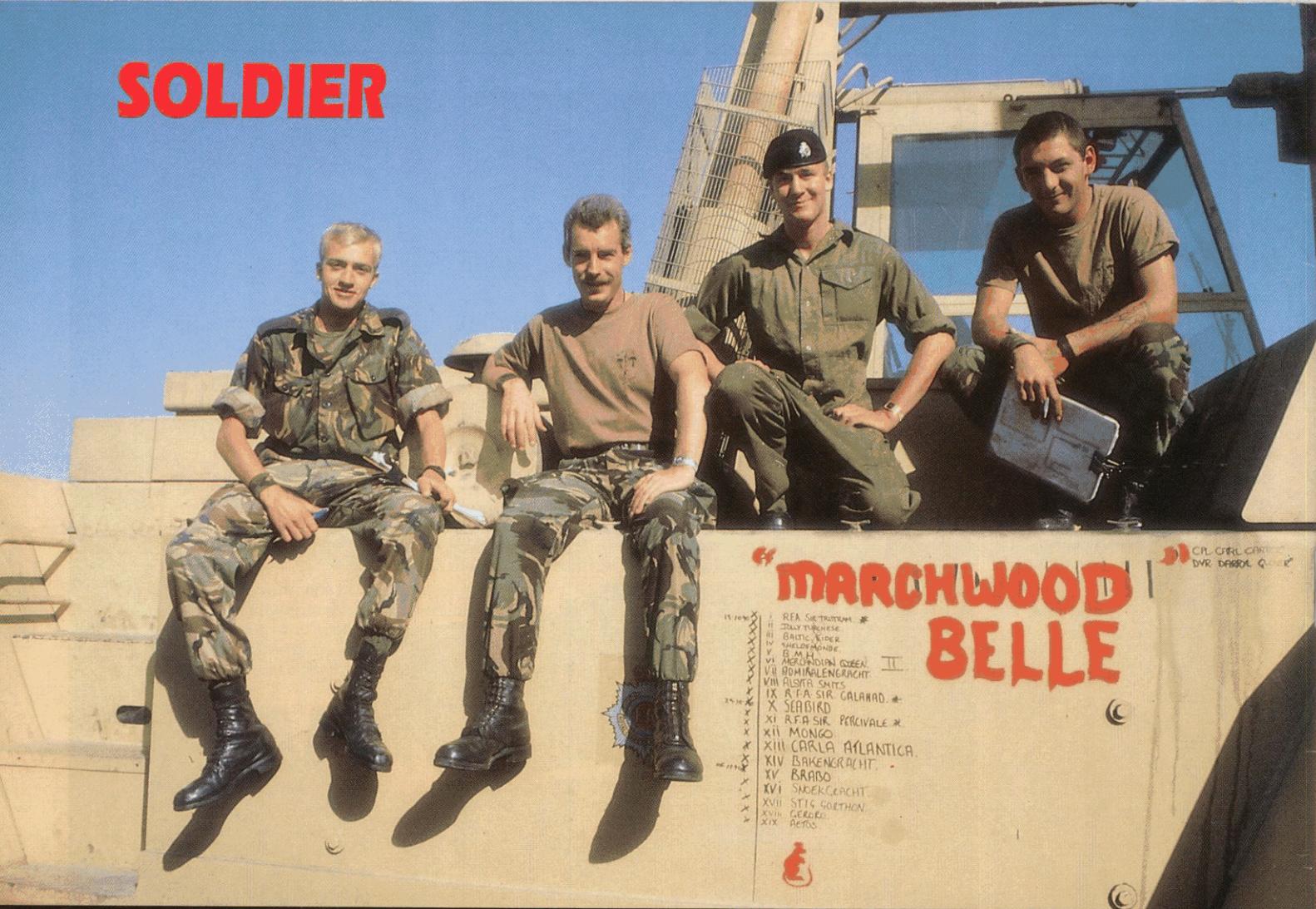
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SOLDIER



Top picture: Perched on a massive Rough Terrain Container Handler are three RAOC soldiers who have been instructed in the operation of the 47-ton monster. With them is Dvr Ian Bird RCT (second from right). From left are LCpl Neil Crawford, Sgt John Dempsey and LCpl John Maskell of 6 Ord Bn Gp. The Marchwood Belle is being used in a port area

to move stores arriving in Saudi Arabia by sea. Story inside.

Above: Lights blazing in the evening gloom, Scammel Commanders of 16 Tank Transporter Squadron move armoured vehicles of The Queen's Dragoon Guards between desert locations.

Pictures: Mike Weston