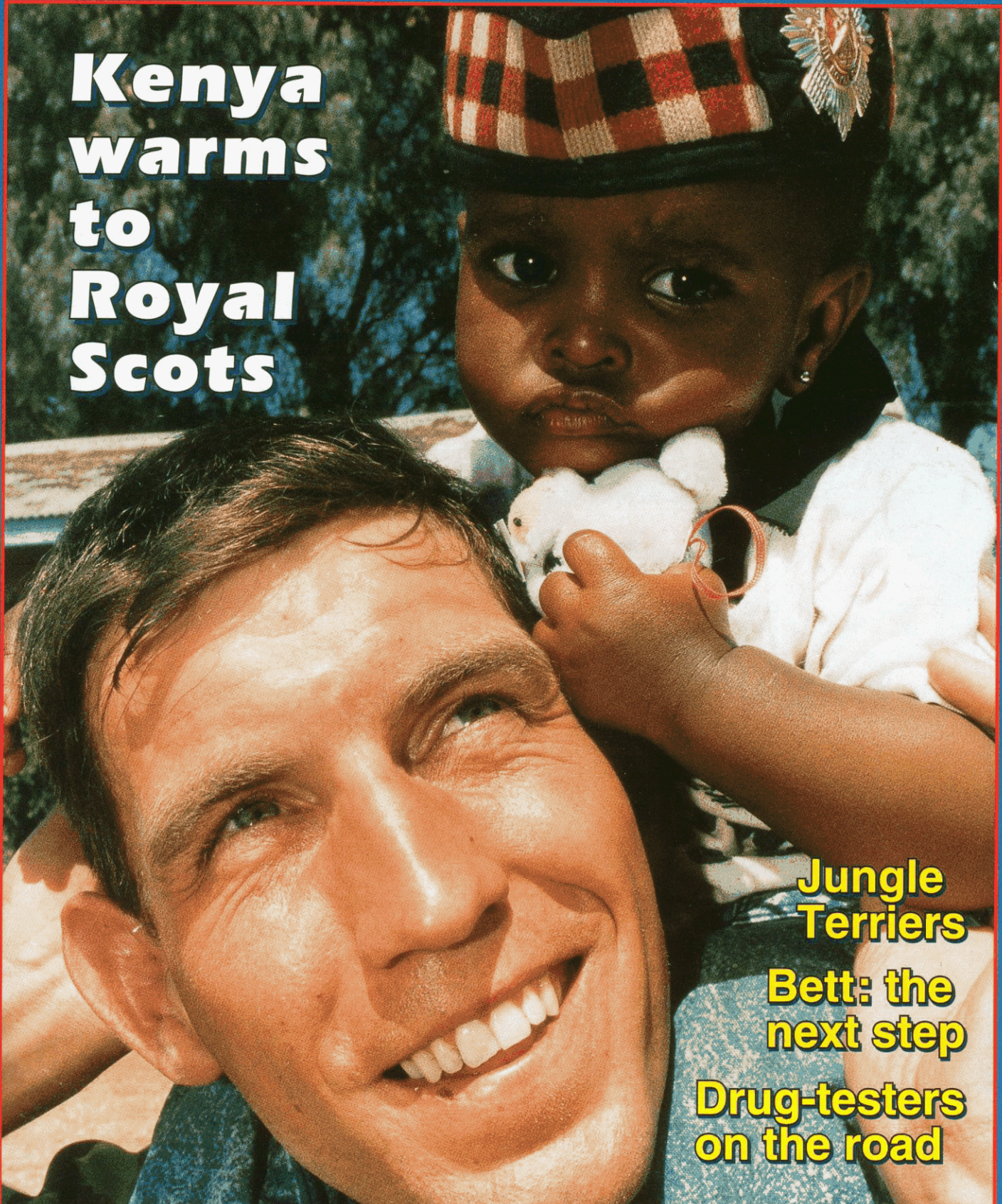


SOLDIER

FORTNIGHTLY MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

MARCH 17 1997

80p



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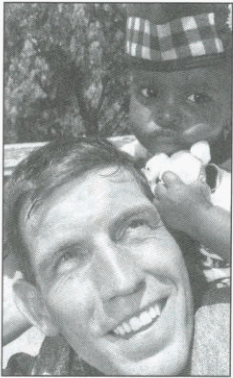
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March 17, 1997 Vol 53/6

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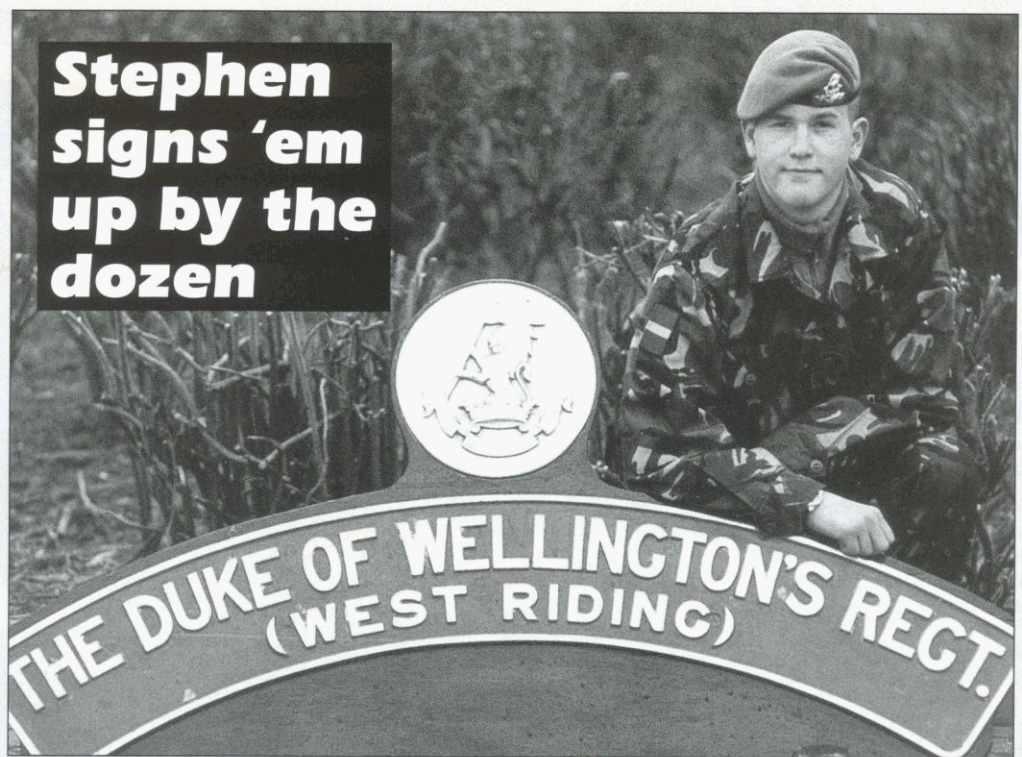


Picture: Chris Fletcher

High there: Pte Brian McPhillips makes friends with a child at Nanyuki Orphanage, where the Royal Scots spent much of their spare time

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Stephen signs 'em up by the dozen



Former printer's apprentice Pte Stephen Lynch . . . joining the Dukes was his best decision

Duke's one-man recruiting drive

PRIVATE Stephen Lynch (18) recognised a good thing when he saw it. Sign up a mate and make yourself £250, said the Armed Forces Minister.

So the enterprising young soldier talked TWELVE of his friends into joining the Army. They will soon be serving alongside him in the 1st Battalion, The Duke of Wellington's Regiment, stationed at Weeton Barracks near Blackpool.

All 12 are well into their initial training, and Stephen, who enlisted just over seven months ago, looks set to make a tidy profit. His gain will not be entirely financial, however, because he also stands to win weeks of extra leave for his one-man recruiting drive.

Four of the 12 were signed

up under the MoD's Satisfied Soldier bounty card scheme, worth £1,000 in all to Pte Lynch. The other eight were recruited under the regiment's own "red card" incentive, for which he receives a long weekend when the potential recruit completes Phase 2 training, and a full week when he joins the regiment.

HOLIDAY

That adds up to a lot of time off . . . and it might be a bit of a squeeze for Pte Lynch to fit it all in. With a six-week deployment in Belize behind him, a current one to Gibraltar and the prospect of an exercise in Canada, the young DWR soldier has a busy schedule.

"Before I enlisted I was a

printer's apprentice," said Pte Lynch. "But I soon got bored and decided I needed a job that offered a career, excitement, travel and fulfilment."

The Dukes provided it. After basic training at Army Training Regiment Glencorse, Stephen went to the Infantry Training Centre at Catterick, where he passed out as the most improved student on the course.

Pte Lynch, who comes from Halifax and had cricket trials for Yorkshire before enlisting, "got the bug" when he spent a few days in the town's Army recruiting office. "Joining the Dukes was the best decision I ever made," he said.

His four younger brothers know what to expect . . .

Airborne battalions promised more men

AS CHANGES to enhance the Army's capability to deploy rapidly were announced, **The Parachute Regiment** was boosted by news that two of its battalions are to be enlarged.

And in a further endorsement of the importance of airborne forces, the elite **Pathfinder** recce platoon has been formally added to the order of battle. More details appear in Page 5.

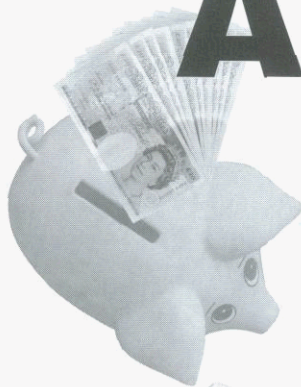
Other developments that affect the Regular

Army include the publication of a **personnel strategy document** based on deliberations following the report of the Bett Independent Review into pay and conditions of service (see Pages 7 and 10-11); and the creation of a privately financed **Army Foundation College** for school leavers. And **Gurkha** soldiers serving in the United Kingdom will be allowed accompanied service under a comprehensive new welfare package (see Page 11).

How To Buy A



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History in the making: Capt Ian Strong (left) presents oakleaves to LCpl Ian Woods (centre) and Pte Chris Thorpe as soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Cheshire Regiment honour a 250-year-old tradition at their base in Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

They were commemorating the Battle of Meeanee by parading the regimental Colours and wearing two oakleaves beside their cap badge.

King George II first presented the oakleaf to the regiment in 1743 at the Battle of Dettingen, but its soldiers wear the oakleaves only in the presence of royalty and to mark the Battle of Meeanee, fought in India in 1843.

Paras will benefit from rapid switch

TWO Parachute Regiment battalions, the 1st and 2nd, are to be beefed up as the Army moves towards an even greater capability for rapid worldwide deployment.

Under changes announced by Defence Secretary Michael Portillo, the strengths of the two battalions, roled to the Joint Rapid Deployment Force (JRDF), will be increased by 60 posts. The under-manned Paras are currently enhanced by Gurkha Reinforcement Companies, a measure which will end in three years' time.

When the changes are complete in 2000, the 1st and 2nd Battalions will have manning levels of around 700 instead of their current 636.

In a further boost of airborne

assets, the Pathfinders – 5 Airborne Brigade's reconnaissance platoon – will be formally established on April 1 with a strength of 40 soldiers. Until now it has existed as a "phantom" unit.

Overall, 600 posts will be shed from the Regular Army establishment of 104,000, mainly by transferring a Royal Artillery Multiple-Launch Rocket System (MLRS) regiment, as yet unidentified, to the Territorial Army.

The three MLRS units are 5, 32 and 39 Regiments RA.

While manning levels of two MLRS regiments will be boosted by 100 posts each – enabling them to deploy without reinforcement – the third regiment, not required for

short-notice operations, will be transferred to the Territorials to replace one of two FH-70 155mm-equipped howitzer regiments. It would be expected to deploy only in a major conflict.

With artillery support still required in operations such as Bosnia, but not on the scale demanded by major conflict, guns of the fourth batteries of the Regular Army's two UK-based AS90 regiments are to be placed in storage.

Day-to-day strength of the Territorial Army is to fall by 3,000 to 54,000.

Mr Portillo said that it had been decided to shift the balance of investment in the Army further towards units kept at higher operational readiness.

Around the Houses

A summary of Defence topics from Westminster

Tri-Service pay agency to be set up

PAY, pensions and personnel matters for all three Services will eventually be dealt with by an agency to be formed on April 1.

Aim of the Armed Forces Personnel Administration Agency (AFPPA) is to provide cost-effective data and systems for the payment of military personnel.

It will also support personnel management in peace and war, Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames said in a written answer on February 20.

On formation the agency will have 1,000 civilian and 200 military staff and among other units will include the Directorate of Administrative Information Systems (Army) at Worthy Down, near Winchester. Initially it will have a small headquarters at RAF Innsworth, Gloucestershire.

Later it is intended that the agency will include the pay, pensions and personnel admin elements of the recently-formed Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow. Under a financial partnership scheme, a private contractor will be engaged to deliver the agency's services and develop and operate a tri-Service computer system.

□ □ □

The MoD has exceeded its target for the disposal of empty Service homes by more than 25 per cent, Defence minister Earl Howe told the Lords.

Targets for disposal were 1,500 by April 1996 and a further 2,500 by the end of last summer. The total number in fact reached 5,348.

□ □ □

Suicides in the Army fell from 22 in 1991 to only three last year, the Armed Forces Minister said in a written reply. Total for all three Services was 42 in 1990 and only five in 1996.

□ □ □

Costs of recruitment campaigns for all Services in 1996-97 are expected to total £33.51 million, with £21.59 million being spent by the Army, said Mr Soames.



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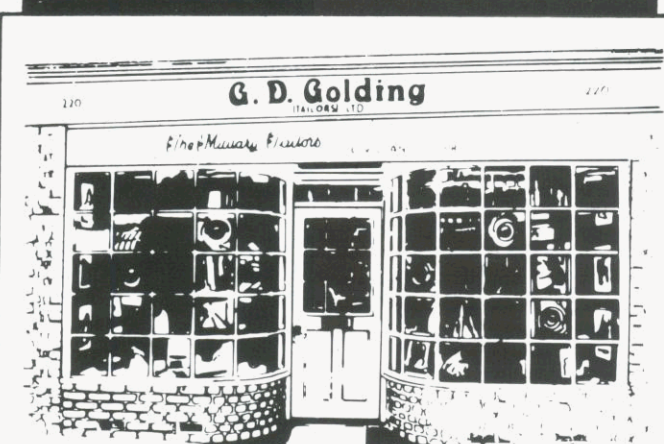
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Officer swam in darkness to save Gurkhas

A PLATOON commander and a Gurkha corporal have received Commander-in-Chief's Commendations for saving colleagues from drowning during a night beach landing in Brunei.

First man to disembark into the water from a Royal Brunei Armed Forces Ramp Powered

Lighter (RPL) at Binturan Range was 2nd Lt Anthony Rolfe-Smith of the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles.

Out of his depth and with his equipment becoming waterlogged, he swam for the shore.

He pulled two soldiers out with him but realised that several others were in danger of drowning. With another strong swimmer, Cpl Yubahadur Gurung, 2nd Lt Rolfe-Smith swam out to other soldiers still struggling in the sea.

Using the RPL's spotlight and whistle blasts from men in the water they located several soldiers.

When the landing craft had to move away because it was swinging wildly, 2nd Lt Rolfe-Smith returned to the water in complete darkness and rescued another group of men.

After 30 minutes in the water the two rescuers, realising they were tiring and in danger of becoming casualties themselves, returned to the beach where they organised a search of the surf line.

The citation praises 2nd Lt Rolfe-Smith for his calm and mature handling of a situation described as "potentially catastrophic."

Going north

NEARLY 500 soldiers of the Dover-based 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment have completed initial training in central Norway before taking part in Adventure Express, a tri-Service NATO exercise in the Arctic Circle between Tromsø and Narvik.

Back to school with the Army

AN ARMY foundation college is to open in September next year, possibly on the site of the former Army Apprentices College at Harrogate.

Aimed at attracting school leavers of 16 or over by offering high-level qualifications and guaranteed employment, the privately-funded college will have places for 1,300 students.

It will offer a 42-week course for young soldiers destined for front-line roles, effectively replacing the recently abandoned Junior Leaders scheme.

Students will be able to develop skills in numeracy, communications, information technology and personal skills which will lead to National Vocational and Scottish Vocational Qualifications at levels two and three.

Announcing the initiative, Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames said graduates from the Army Foundation College would contribute significantly to resolving the Service's manning difficulties.

Wulfen depot to close

AMMUNITION stocks at BAD Wulfen are to be run down so that the depot can close in March 1999.

Base Ammunition Depot Wulfen, on Muna Strasse, dates back to 1938 when the German Army started building there. The site of the secret project, to assemble and store ammunition, was known to local people as "Muna".

The depot was taken over by

Kent soldiers in lightning strike

PART-time soldiers from the 5th Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, based at Canterbury, and members of 220 Field Ambulance were involved in a major exercise on Salisbury Plain.

The Kent Terriers captured an airfield in an operation

against rebel forces during Exercise Lightning Strike. Support was provided by 6/7 PWRR, from Horsham, East Sussex, and Brighton-based 163 Provo Company (RMP).

An armoured element was added by the Royal Dragoon Guards, and the Royal Air

Force provided seven Hercules aircraft. Puma and Gazelle helicopters were used to fly the TA soldiers on to the Plain.

Visitors included Lt Gen Sir Hew Pike, Deputy C-in-C Land, and Brig David Godsall, Commander 2 (South East) Brigade at Shorncliffe.



Picture: Terry Champion

Bdr Taff Newcombe (left) and LCpl John Knight, both serving at the Recruit Selection Centre, Pirbright, pack surplus clothing for homeless ex-Servicemen in London. See Cari Roberts's column in next page

Way ahead signals fair deal for singles

A BLUEPRINT for military career structures, allowances, pay and pensions into the next century has been unveiled by the Ministry of Defence.

Copies of the document, entitled "The Armed Forces of the Future - A Personnel Strategy", will be sent to every unit in the Army.

A feature of the strategy, which follows the Bett Independent Review published in 1995, is the recognition of the need for a fairer deal for single Servicemen and women. For the first time they will benefit from separation allowances while on operational duty.

Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames said: "Our personnel policy must recognise and reflect the unique demands of Service life, while at the same time taking account of the terms and conditions of service applicable to relevant civilian groups."

A move to more flexible pay arrangements, announced a year ago, will feature pay ranges based on job evaluation, experience and qualifications.

Allowances will be targeted more efficiently to assist recruitment and retention, and to compensate for the extra costs and disadvantages of Ser-

vice life. Several new allowances, outlined in the Armed Forces Pay Review Body report (see *Soldier*, March 3), have been adopted, greatly simplifying the current complicated arrangements for separation, travel and additional pay.

Main offset of the proposals will be the withdrawal, from April 1 next year, of most leave travel warrants now issued to all personnel. Only those in their first three years of Service will keep the current entitlement. Beyond that, all single soldiers will retain one leave warrant until they complete nine years of service.

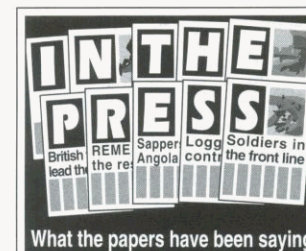
Performance-related pay, proposed in Sir Michael Bett's independent review, has been rejected.

The new pay system is expected to be in place by the year 2000.

Medics' mission to Bangladesh

SIX Territorial Army medics flew to Bangladesh last month to teach modern nursing methods and field-based care techniques.

All members of 243 (The Wessex) Field Hospital, which has its headquarters at Keynsham, near Bristol, the team was led by Lt Col Marjorie Bandy, who works in a special care baby unit in Dorset.



What the papers have been saying

Cyprus hopes on new force

HOPES of an end to years of violence in Cyprus are being pinned on a British proposal to send a 5,000-strong multinational peacekeeping force to the divided island. It would involve a British commitment to send 600 troops to Cyprus under a plan to reunite the island. - *Sunday Times*

□ The BBC has "lost" the Royal Tournament to ITV after 40 years. Organisers claimed last year's coverage was "stale and disappointing". - *Daily Mail*

□ Film maker Steven Spielberg is recruiting British troops for a war blockbuster. He wants 1,000 soldiers to recreate the D-Day landings. - *Daily Express*

□ Ten young offenders got a taste of military discipline when they began the last months of their sentences at a unit at the Military Corrective Training Centre in Colchester. - *Times*

□ Thousands of British Servicemen are planning to set up their own trade union - to be known as The Colours - to campaign for better working conditions in the Armed Forces. They are planning to apply for membership of the Trades Union Congress. - *Sunday Times*

□ The Colours, a Services lobby group, is taking up welfare cases on behalf of soldiers and their families. The association denies that it is a trade union and says it was turned down by the TUC. - *Daily Telegraph*

□ The SAS is testing a French supergun, the Hecate rifle, which is accurate up to a mile and powerful enough to stop a vehicle or helicopter. - *Daily Mail*

Dartmoor rescue

HURRICANE force winds and rain on Dartmoor caused problems for six soldiers from The King's Troop, RHA on a navigation and leadership exercise. Civilian rescue teams joined police and Royal Marines to find the six, who were suffering from hypothermia.

The invisible people who need our help

I MET Hugh O'Brian only a few times but he was one of those people who made an instant impression. News of his death saddened everyone who knew him. Aged 70, the ex-Irish Army warrant officer devoted much of his life to helping the homeless on the streets of London. He worked with SSAFA Forces Help's Homeless Division and appeared on a couple of *Counterpoint* programmes on BFBS, where his appeals for help were met with a generous response.

Hugh took a practical approach to the plight of the homeless. He was not one of those dewy-eyed do-gooders who have nothing to offer but their sympathy. But even he was overwhelmed by the scale of the problem.

MIXED RESPONSE

Some time ago one charity, CRISIS, published research which indicated that 25 per cent of the homeless in London had served in the Forces. The research was greeted with a mixed response. However, the fact remains that a significant proportion of the homeless have served in the Armed Forces – and that should prick the conscience of all of us.

Do regiments and corps care about the fate of their former colleagues? Of course they do. Service charities, once they are aware of a problem, can pass the information to the various associations and help can be offered.

The problem is that the person in need of assistance is almost invisible.

It is very difficult to track down people who might need help – or even to get the message across that such help is on offer.

Ex-Service personnel are proud and unlikely to go seeking help from a charity until need drives them to extreme measures. Even then, many will feel it is demeaning to ask. I don't think this is a reason for ignoring them and hoping that they'll sort themselves out.

IMPOSSIBLE TASK

Hugh O'Brian tried to deal with about 30 charities, making them aware of the help that was available to ex-Service clients but, as his health began to fail, he found it increasingly difficult to keep up the contact. I think it would have been an almost impossible task even for a fit, young individual.

How much easier his job would have been if there had been some sort of organised contact with the Forces. He would have had an easier time of it if more people had volunteered to help.

One man who met Mr O'Brian and felt this very keenly is Maj Jeremy Oliver. He came into contact with Mr O'Brian through charitable work and was touched by his devotion to a duty for which he had volunteered.

HUMANITARIAN

Since that first encounter, Maj Oliver has been mulling over various ideas which may prove helpful. After talking to him at some length I think he might be on to something.

He wonders if the Army – both Regular and TA – might be



Cari's column

involved in an humanitarian project on the home front.

He suggests that the UK Field Army might sponsor individual day and night centres throughout the UK. The problem of the homeless is often portrayed through metropolitan eyes, but there is an increasing problem in rural areas of the UK as well as in cities.

If a unit took a special interest in the nearest night shelter or project for the homeless it might be able to provide someone, a volunteer, to visit the centre and talk to its clients. It would need only a couple of hours a week to make a whole lot of difference.

Taking the idea further, it might be possible to incorporate such volunteer work into an NVQ, as part of the on-going commitment to training as part of Service life and as part of the resettlement process.

It occurs to me that such a volunteer would make an even bigger impression if he or she attended in uniform. This would mean that an ex-Army client would immediately identify the helper as a fellow and might be less reticent about asking for help.

The major Service welfare charities are doing outstanding work helping homeless ex-Service people – but they cannot help them if they don't know where they are.

Both SSAFA Forces Help and

The Royal British Legion run excellent training courses for their workers, and they would be the right people to train any potential volunteers in working with those most in need. The problem is that finding ex-Service personnel in need takes time and effort.

That is why Maj Oliver's suggestion of sending people into local shelters is an effective one: it is taking the workers to the people who need them. This is being done, but it is labour-intensive work, and involving the Army would provide a much-needed boost to the numbers of people working in the field.

ADVANTAGES

Apart from being a suggestion that will not involve a great deal of expense and further pressure on an increasingly stretched Army, it also has two distinct advantages. First, it offers a chance for Service people to extend training opportunities which will help those working in a job which involves caring for their fellow soldiers and their families – and for those who want to go into caring work after leaving the Forces.

The proposal also has a big PR potential: serving soldiers doing work in their local community can only benefit the Service. It would demonstrate the humanitarian aspect of Army life in a practical way, at home as well as overseas. It also consolidates the image of the Army as an employer that cares about the fate of its employees.

Hugh O'Brian was one of many unsung heroes. Across the UK there are men and women exhausting themselves looking after ex-Service people.

There is a great deal that can be done to help.

Ex-Service personnel in the UK could offer to help out at their local SSAFA Forces Help or RBL office. They could suggest that they spend a few hours going into shelters or centres nearby and talking to clients. Even something as simple as a poster advertising the work of both organisations where there hasn't been one before would make a difference.

Next time you get off a train in a big city and you see a thin, dishevelled figure, ask yourself what your next move would be if you found out that he had served in a unit you knew.

Would you be quite so quick to judge him or to dismiss him?

● Cari Roberts presents *Counterpoint* on BFBS radio. Write to her at BFBS, BFPO 786; c/o Soldier.

Final deliveries for BMH Rinteln

THERE are more than 40,000 British people in the world who can claim: "I was born in BMH Rinteln".

But the recent births of Benjamin Westgate and Lucy Gill marked the end of an epoch lasting more than 40 years.

Opened in 1953, BMH Rinteln – last of the British military hospitals in Germany, and scheduled for closure shortly – has built up a reputation for the excellence of its care and medical services.

The hospital's maternity ward has always been one of its busiest departments, at one point a total of 28 midwives delivering babies at the rate of 100 a month.

However, last year, in accordance with the terms of the Health Alliance Scheme, plans were put in train to send expectant mothers to the respective German hospitals for delivery.

As a result, combined with the effects of draw-down, births at BMH dropped to 475 in 1996 and the team of midwives was reduced



Brig Ivan Houghton, CO BMH Rinteln, chats to Christine and Robert Gill with new daughter Lucy. Her brother Ryan seems to be more interested in his book

to six. By the end of last year, only prospective mothers from Hameln were being admitted. Since the end of January, they have been going to the Gilead Krankenhaus in Bielefeld.

Lucy and Benjamin's place in history is assured, as the last two babies to be born at BMH Rinteln –

delivered by Capt Keeley Wright and Capt Helen Rogerson respectively.

Parents Graham and Alan Westgate (35 Engineer Regiment) and Christine and Robert Gill (28 Engineer Regiment) from Hameln were naturally delighted, but the occasion was one of mixed emo-

tions for Superintendent Midwife Anna Brock-Mecziens and her team.

Brig Ivan Houghton, Commanding Officer of BMH Rinteln, found the time to visit the mothers, and present each baby with a silver spoon to commemorate their niche in British Army annals.

Place yourselves on the MAP, Gulf veterans urged

MORE THAN 1,000 Gulf veterans concerned about their health have so far gone through the medical assessment programme (MAP) set up by the Ministry of Defence nearly three and a half years ago.

In all, 1,250 Service personnel had put themselves forward for diagnosis by the middle of last month, and 1,070 had been assessed.

Now the MoD is strongly urging other Gulf veterans worried by health problems to take advantage of the programme.

Introduced in October 1993, the MAP aims to give those who served in the Gulf War a diagnosis of their conditions and to recommend appropriate treatment. Individuals have to be referred by their own doctor.

Veterans who attend the assessment in central London undergo a medical examination by a consultant physician and are asked to give details of their medical history.

Some tests are carried out at the nearby Middlesex Hospital.

When the results become available, usually about two months later, the individual is invited back. Even if this is not convenient, a report is sent in any case to his or her doctor, with recommendations

for treatment. Further appointments can be made with the MAP if required, and follow-up reports are sought from an individual's doctor.

Anyone still in uniform who served in the Gulf can be referred to the assessment programme by their medical officer, while former Service personnel and civilians need to ask their GP to write to the Medical Officer-in-Charge, Gulf War Medical Assessment Programme, RAF Central Medical Establishment, Kelvin House, 32-34 Cleveland House, London W1P 6AU.

There is a waiting list of about 12 weeks.

Attendance at the MAP is regarded as duty for serving personnel, so travel and accommodation arrangements, and reimbursement of expenses, should follow normal procedures. Help can also be provided by the MoD for those no longer serving.

An information leaflet is available by calling the Gulf Helpline on 0171-807 8778 or writing to Medical (Finance and Secretariat) 2b, MoD, Main Building, Whitehall, London SW1A 2HW.

Garrison under new management

A PRIVATE consortium has won a £200m contract to manage non-military operations and work services in Aldershot Garrison. The deal will save the Army £34m over seven years.

Primary Management, the facilities management arm of Gardner Merchant, has been awarded the contract in a competition involving two other bids, including an in-house team.

The contractors will provide services encompassing accommodation, stores management, transport, catering services and mess management, cleaning,

waste management, grounds maintenance, infrastructure support, laundry, dry cleaning, tailoring, footwear repair, primary health care and works services.

They will also be responsible for Aldershot Garrison's power station, energy management and environmental health, as well as supplying clerical and secretarial services.

Implementation of the new management regime is to be phased in, with the consortium taking full responsibility in October.

Dropping daddy a line...

THE Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, based in Fallingbowl, have come up with a clever solution to a problem which hits families when dad is serving away for six months or longer, writes Rosalind Thackeray.

Called the 'Dear Dad' Club, it gets the children to write regular blueys to their fathers.

Every Saturday, between 12 and 1.30 pm, Scots DG youngsters go along and write the letters while their mums drink coffee and catch up on the latest news.

The Dear Dad name was thought up by Jacqui Clapperton, who now runs the club with Martine Hayes.

"It should really be called the 'Dad and Mum' Club, because there are mums out there too, but the name isn't as snappy," laughed Jacqui.

With the Scots DGs not due back in Germany until the end of June, for a parent in Bosnia the regular flow of letters from their children has already had a marked effect on morale.

"My daughter Sarah is only 15

Safeguard your vote

SOLDIERS and their spouses who find they are not on the new voting register but should be – because they lived in the area before October 10 last year – should go to their unit admin offices.

Provided the signature of the applicant on the special form (F VOTE 33 or F VOTE 34 for spouses) is backdated to before that date, and the form is received by the local council before April 1, claims to be added to the register should be accepted, according to former lieutenant colonel Tony Vickers, who hopes to represent Devizes constituency as an MP.

Naafi's new divisions

Naafi has announced the formation of two new business divisions for retail and leisure – first phase in the organisation's restructuring process.

The divisions, to be headed by new appointments Richard Burton and John Bingham, underpin the successful trial of partnerships with leading convenience stores and breweries undertaken by Naafi over the last year.

months old, but my husband was over the moon when he received her scribble on a bluey," Jacqui said.

Benefits of the club extend to all members of the family. "The spouse left at home can go shopping or stay and talk, and the children get to write their blueys while chatting with other children in the same boat," said co-founder Martine Hayes.

"It makes them feel involved as well. I think sometimes we just think in terms of separation of husbands and wives, but it has a big effect on children too."

Meeting people regularly is also a big draw: as one of the mothers, Val McAndrew puts it, "I like the company. I feel that I am keeping in touch with what's going on."

Martine's tip for any would-be organisers is to keep it flexible.

"You can't just have it for a specific age group – children of all ages can contribute to something, from a baby's scribble to quite sophisticated letters written by teenagers. And dads really appreciate it!"



"Wish you were here?": Val McAndrew gives son John a few ideas on what to write to his dad

Fair deal for all: the blueprint

CAREER STRUCTURES



THE Directorate of Manning has proposed a number of changes to officer and soldier career structures to ensure that they satisfy the Army's future requirements. Key elements of these changes are:

Soldiers: High turnover of manpower continues to demand a number of exit points. It is intended to retain several contracted periods of about four years' duration over the 22-year career, underpinned by appropriate terms of service. It is envisaged that these changes will be introduced

with the new pay system, planned for the year 2000.

Officers: Three types of commission will continue to run concurrently, although in future fewer officers will be offered Regular Commissions on joining. More use will be made of the medium-career special Regular Commission than at present.

The Army has also conducted an in-depth study into trades and trade groups, and the results of this will help with further work on career structures.

ALLOWANCES AND CHARGES

CHANGES to allowances and charges are being made to reflect changing requirements. There has been a wish to preserve and support accompanied service in the Army, because it is an important component of operational effectiveness and because it is what the majority of married personnel and their families want.

Those who choose to be unaccompanied should be given greater assistance with the cost of travel between their place of work and their family home, while those who are obliged to be unaccompanied for service

reasons should be given additional benefits.

Some important details remain to be confirmed. For example, regulations for allowances have yet to be agreed, and the transitional arrangements for their introduction are still being developed. It is expected this work will be complete by the summer, when a leaflet will be distributed to all personnel outlining the new regulations, together with the rates for allowances and charges, as set by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB).

The main changes are:



ARMED FORCES PENSION SCHEME

The Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS) reflects the unique requirements and nature of the Services, and there will be no change for the time being. The future of the scheme for new entrants remains subject to review. Personnel currently serving, and those who will join before the introduction of any future pension scheme, will have full rights to the current AFPS. They will not be required to change unless they wish to.

RANK STRUCTURES

The current rank structure, based on the command requirement in battle and proved in peace and war, will be retained. The rank of field marshal will be suspended in peacetime; in future, the Chief of the General Staff will not be promoted on his last day in office, nor will the Chief of the Defence Staff hold five-star rank.

LEAVE POLICIES

The aim has been to standardise leave for all personnel so that everyone, regardless of rank or where they are serving, is eligible to 30 "working days" (six weeks) a year. It is hoped this increase will be introduced by April 1, 1999. In the meantime everything must be done to ensure that, wherever possible, soldiers get their full allocation of leave.

Separated Service Allowances

Two new allowances will replace Separation Allowance (SEPAL) and separation warrants. The Longer Separated Service Allowance (LSSA) will in future be paid to personnel who are detached or deployed away from their home or duty station, and who are unable to return for service reasons.

Alternatively, the Get You Home (GYH) allowance will be paid to personnel who, when detached or deployed, are able to return on a regular basis. Unlike the current arrangements, under which both SEPAL and separation warrants are sometimes paid together, these will be paid on an either-or basis.

Longer Separated Service Allowance

LSSA will be paid to married and single personnel who have completed three or more years' service, and who are separated or deployed for service reasons for more than ten days at a time.

There will be three rates of LSSA, allowing for higher payments to those who experience the most separation. Rates will be set by the AFPRB. Married personnel currently eligible for SEPAL, but who have not completed three years' service, will have reserved rights until eligible for the new allowance.

LSSA is primarily intended to compensate for separation as a result of operational and exercise deployments, although certain other

PAY STRUCTURES

The current pay structure is more than 25 years old and in need of change. It is intended to introduce a more flexible pay system based on pay ranges for all ranks. Each pay range will usually consist of incremental pay points, through which individuals will progress, subject to meeting criteria in terms of experience, qualification, and performance.

Some pay ranges may overlap, acknowledging that the most experienced in one rank may merit more pay than the least experienced in the next rank. But there will always be a pay rise on promotion. Performance-related pay will not be introduced.

Work has focused on pay structures for soldiers and senior officers, and a job eval-

uation exercise has been carried out to determine the number of pay ranges required. Soldiers will in future have an incremental pay system similar to that which exists for officers below the rank of brigadier, by which periodic increases are awarded. This is a more flexible and fairer pay system for all ranks.

Consideration was also given to whether additional pay should be subsumed into basic pay, but it has been decided to preserve the distinction. But changes will be introduced to simplify the current arrangements and introduce greater flexibility to respond better to recruiting and retention needs in particular skill groups.

detachments will also apply. The key factor in eligibility is that the individual is unable to get home on a regular basis.

Get You Home



The current system of separation warrants is to be replaced by a Get You Home allowance payable to both married and single personnel, and designed to assist with the cost of travel in circumstances where LSSA would be inappropriate (ie, where regular journeys home are possible).

It will be paid to married personnel serving away from home and single personnel who are away from their duty station. In the UK and within overseas theatres, the allowance will be based broadly on the cost of two return journeys a month for married personnel, and one return journey a month for single personnel.

Where separation is further afield (ie, between theatres) and for service reasons, LSSA will be admissible. Slightly different arrangements are being devised for married personnel who are voluntarily unaccompanied overseas, and for all personnel serving overseas who do not qualify for LSSA (due to limited service).

This will ensure that these groups are remunerated fairly in comparison with their UK counterparts who qualify for the Get You Home allowance. More details will be announced in the summer.

Accompanied Service

The concept of accompanied service remains an important cornerstone of the Army's personnel strategy and for this reason the package will continue to support this policy in much the same way as the current arrangements.

Most significant among these is **Boarding School Allowance**, payable to married personnel who are mobile and who wish to provide continuity of education for their children. While the eligibility rules are being tightened by the introduction of a system of certification, this will not affect those married personnel who are accompanied, those who are unaccompanied in MoD London and prepared to be accompanied

in their next posting, and those who are unaccompanied for Service reasons.

It has been agreed that claims will be allowed for daily attendance at schools where a child has previously been boarding (and for which BSA is being claimed), subject to certain criteria. A proposal to calculate BSA rates by basing them on the Headmasters' Conference average remains under review. Special cases which fall outside the specific rules for BSA will continue to be considered.

Unaccompanied Service

Married personnel under 37 who choose to be unaccompanied will continue to pay accommodation charges at their duty station but will benefit from the Get You Home package.

For those over 37, for whom the requirement to settle their family becomes more important, and for married personnel who are unaccompanied for service reasons, free accommodation at their duty station will continue to be provided, in addition to the new Get You Home package.

Travel to Work



Some changes are being made to Travel to Work contributions, although these will continue to be set below the national civilian averages. The contribution to travel from private accommodation will, for those who are entitled, equate to the cost of the first nine miles each way (currently seven miles).

For those living in service accommodation, claims for the first three miles each way will not be admissible (they currently are if the journey is more than three miles each way), but claims for the remainder of the journey will be.

Northern Ireland Pay

Some changes will be made in respect of NI Pay. For resident troops (including the Royal Irish Home Service) the Northern Ireland Resident Supplement (NIRS) will replace NI Pay, while for roulement troops NI Pay will be gradually phased out to reflect the introduction of LSSA.

Comprehensive transitional arrangements will be put in place to protect those who might

Developments in administrative procedures and information systems are taking place, and it is unlikely that new pay structures will be introduced until these are complete. The Army Personnel Centre will be fully up and running this year, but the Armed Forces Pay and Administration Agency, which will be responsible for pay delivery throughout the Services, will not be fully established before the year 2000.

When changes to pay structures are introduced, probably in the next three to four years, they will be accompanied by a series of transitional arrangements designed to safeguard serving personnel, ensuring that no one suffers a reduction in pay.

otherwise be disadvantaged, and overall the new arrangements will be better for the Army.

London Pay



Both the Basic and Additional (Housing) Rates of London Pay will be phased out and replaced with a better focused Recruiting and Retention Allowance (London). This is in recognition of the recruiting and retention problems associated with service in London. Arrangements will be in place to protect the financial position of those currently serving in London.

UK Leave Travel



Some changes will be made to UK leave travel so resources can be better targeted, but a balanced package is being preserved which recognises the particular requirements of those in their first few years of service and the needs of single men.

Specifically, leave travel at today's levels will remain for all personnel in the first three years of service (regardless of their age on joining), dovetailing with entitlement for LSSA which starts at the three-year point.

Married personnel will lose their entitlement at this stage, but single personnel will continue to receive one warrant a year until they have completed nine years' service. Although this is a reduction over current conditions of service, it must be viewed in the context of other changes which are clearly beneficial – in particular, the introduction of LSSA and Get You Home.

Overseas Leave Travel



There may be some adjustments to the Overseas Leave Travel schemes, as these are directly linked to the value of the UK scheme. A review will be conducted this year, with no changes being introduced before April 1998. Special leave travel arrangements for Northern Ireland and the Scottish Islands will also be reviewed.

Introduction of the new allowances and charges package will begin in the autumn, although the current leave travel entitlements will remain in place until April 1998. Arrangements are being devised to ensure that these changes are introduced fairly.

New terms for Gurkhas in Britain

GURKHA soldiers will be allowed to bring their wives and families to Britain under new terms and conditions to be introduced in July.

The package, described by Armed Forces Minister Nicholas Soames as "a significant improvement over current arrangements" follows the relocation of most of the Brigade of Gurkhas in the United Kingdom following the drawdown in Hong Kong.

Basic pay will continue to be set in accordance with the Indian Army Pay Code to comply with the tripartite agreement between the UK, India and Nepal.

A universal addition to basic pay in place of the current system of allowances will standardise Gurkha pay across different geographical areas, and bring Gurkha pay broadly into line with that of British soldiers.

As far as Gurkhas stationed in the UK are concerned, no soldier will suffer a pay reduction, and many will gain.

In Brunei and Nepal, the majority – those who are married unaccompanied ranks – will benefit from the changes. Gurkha married accompanied service personnel in Brunei and Nepal will suffer a reduction in their take-home pay, which has been significantly higher than that of other members of the brigade.



In keeping with the agreement, which requires the UK to provide 25 per cent of Gurkha officers and soldiers with family accommodation, sergeants and below will be granted one three-year accompanied tour, while more senior ranks will be permanently accompanied.

Up to 450 married quarters will be made available in the UK, where about 2,000 Gurkhas will be based. It is anticipated that 900 dependants, wives and children will join take advantage of the new regulations to join their menfolk in Britain.

Gurkha parents will have the option of sending their children to school in the UK or taking advantage of a new Gurkha Education Allowance to remain within the Nepali education system.

There will also be an entitlement of one free flight a year to enable children to join their parents in the UK during the long Nepali school holidays.

Current entitlement of Gurkha soldiers to long leave every three years will remain, but the duration will be reduced from six to five months to take account of improved internal communications in Nepal.

It is intended to transfer resettlement training from Nepal to the UK, and to retain the Queen's Gurkha Officer Commission for the majority of officers in Gurkha units. A new Gurkha Short Service Commission for a limited number of high quality candidates will be introduced to allow them to be used more widely within the British Army.

Joe jumps into action



Picture: Gareth Griffiths

Chilwell-based TA unit 350 Field Squadron, 73 Engineer Regiment, now has a Harrier jump-jet, which has reached the end of its flying life, as its gate guardian – thanks to the opportunism of quartermaster Capt **Joe Middleton**.

Renowned for his ability to keep his soldiers well-provisioned, even his greatest fans doubted that Joe would ever "acquire" one of the planes.

"I simply went to the top," he said. "I asked our Honorary Colonel if he could possibly get us one – and he has done. That's the sort of chap he is."

The man in question, Air Chief Marshal Sir **Richard Johns**, commented: "Nothing could be more appropriate: the squadron is part of the only Territorial Army engineer regiment responsible for supporting the RAF's Harrier force overseas. I was delighted to help out."

Fighting fit in Cyprus

LCpl **Louise Wylie QARANC** takes part in a combat fitness test, undertaken for the first time by the Army element of the Princess Mary's Hospital, RAF Akrotiri, bringing to an end an eight-week period of training co-ordinated by SSgt **Chris Gregory** and Cpl **Jules Isaac**.



Brigadier's 'cell by' date!

It isn't every day that a Deputy Constable is put behind bars, but that is what happened to Brig **David Godsal**, who holds that title at Dover Castle, as well as being Commander of 2 (South East) Brigade at Shorncliffe.

He and six other local dignitaries and business people from the Dover area were "arrested" in the early morning and placed in convicts' suits and handcuffs before being transported to the local gaol.

Incarcerated in a cell until noon with just a mobile phone for company, the brigadier was only allowed to be released and swap his attire for a more familiar uniform once he had persuaded friends and colleagues to part with more than £500 "bail" for the Royal National Institute for the Blind...

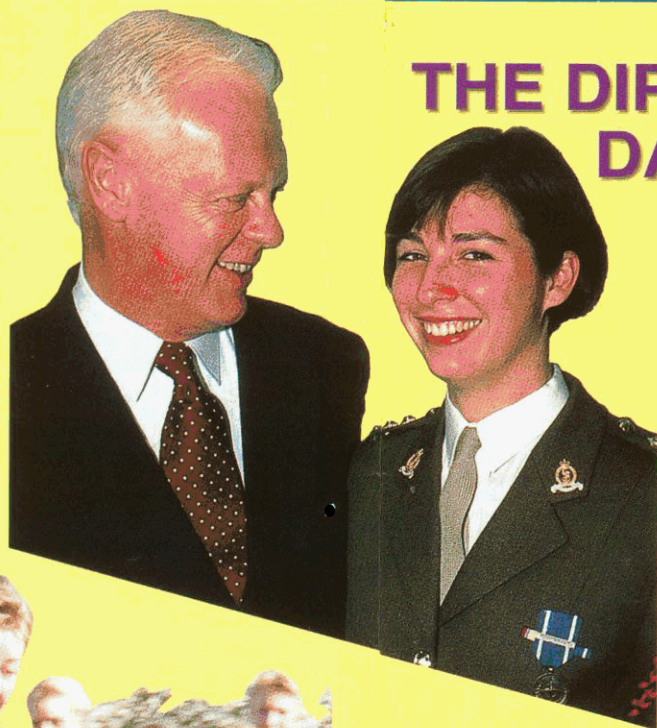
Reuter writer

Patience has paid off for Maj Gen **Tony Rogers**, Directorate of Army Legal Services, who has been jointly awarded the 1996 Paul Reuter prize of the International Red Cross for his book *Law on the Battlefield*, which, he says, took him five years to write in his spare time.

The 2,000 Swiss francs prize – for a major work in the sphere of international humanitarian law – has been awarded only four times since its inception in 1985.



THE DIPLOMAT'S DAUGHTER



"That's my girl," says **David Ridgway**, taking rare time off from his duties as British Ambassador in La Paz to see his daughter **Alex** receive her IFOR medal from Gen Sir **Hew Pike**, Inspector General, Territorial Army.

A TA captain, Alex served in Split last year as an administrator for the 1,000 TA volunteers who were in Bosnia as part of IFOR.

Normally attached to the Central Volunteer Headquarters at Woolwich, she has been working at HQ Land Command in Wilton for the Adjutant General's Corps.

Bar number two for Bill

Grandfather of eight, Maj **Bill Williams**, has become the first soldier to win his regiment's most coveted award.

Bill, who retired from the Army in January after notching up 48 years' continuous service with the King's Royal Hussars, received a second bar to his silver regimental medal in recognition of his "outstanding contribution" to the regiment.



Which is which Steer?

If identical twins **Sonia** (left) and **Lena Steer** are causing puzzlement for Sgt **David Falconer** of Portsmouth Recruiting Office, imagine what will happen when they **both** join the REME, in which they have enlisted as electrical technicians.

Believed to be the first identical twins to join the Army since the abolition of National Service (unless you know better), the girls, from the Isle of Wight, have had a long-standing ambition to join the Army.



Picture: The News Portsmouth

PEOPLE

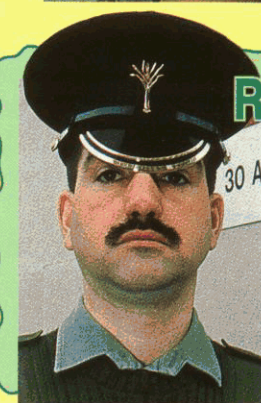


Picture: Mike Weston

Burma's best

Winner of the trophy for best recruit of Burma Platoon as he passed out from ATR Pirbright was Cfn **Jaspaul Bal**, seen here surrounded by his proud father, uncle, younger brother and mother, who travelled from Liverpool for the big day.

Rodney's not so green



Serious moment for LSgt **Rodney Crisp**, who administers the servicing of 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards' green fleet at London's Wellington Barracks, as he received the National Vocational Qualification (Level 3) Management certificate presented to him at Chelsea Barracks.

He is the first soldier in London District to qualify for an NVQ.

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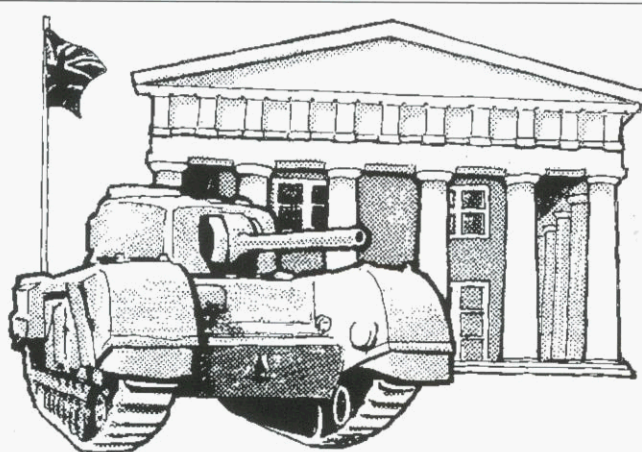
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Open: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday & Saturday 09.30 - 16.30.

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LONDON



Apsley House

The Wellington Museum

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Tel: 0171 499 5676

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SUFFOLK



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Open 22 March - 5 November 1997, 1000-1730 Admission: Adults £1.80, family ticket (2+2) £5.00, under 16/over 60s £1.05

For further information phone Major P J Timmons 0171 414 8782.

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THE QUEEN'S OWN HUSSARS MUSEUM

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Tel: 01926 492035

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(Closed Mondays and Christmas Day)

Admission: Adults £2.50, OAPs & students £1.75 & children £1.25
For further information phone: Major P J Timmons 0171 414 8782

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Mar: Nov: Mon to Sat
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Admission charge.

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A private collection of uniforms, equipment, badges, formation signs, trade badges, photographs of the Navy, WRNS, Army, WRAF, Land Army, Red Cross, ARP and civil defence from 1900 to present day.

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SOLDIER - THE place to advertise

Sampling life in Africa

HOSTILE climates, rough travel – and elephants – are just some of the hazards facing the men and women who carry out the British Army's compulsory drug testing (CDT) programme. They are equipped to go anywhere soldiers are deployed, writes John Elliott.

Take last month for example: while one team of testers was bouncing around on Kenyan bush roads, another flew to the United States to take samples from troops on a Trumpet Dance exercise at Fort Lewis.

Closer to home, a winter destination for the unannounced visitors was Bavaria, where soldiers involved in Snow Queen ski training were the target.

Introduced two years ago, the CDT programme began in the major troop locations – the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, Germany, Cyprus and the Falklands. Now it is spreading its wings to more out-of-the-way places such as Brunei, Bosnia and Kenya.

At the rate the tests are being completed, virtually everyone in the Field Army will be "called up" in the course of a year.

At every venue, procedure follows the same precise routine: meticulously-gathered samples are crated for rapid delivery to the Laboratory of the Government Chemist at Teddington in Middlesex.

Maj Tim Saunders, D and D, Upavon-based Staff Officer (Drugs), joined WO1 John Ferry's team for a week-long trip to Kenya during which more than 800 samples were collected, mostly from soldiers deployed with the Royal Scots battle group involved in Exercise Grand Prix 2.

The team included Royal Navy warrant officer Keith Laycock, who was learning the ropes in anticipation of the Senior Service's introduction of CDT on April 1. Others involved in the Grand Prix visit were WO2s Nerys Davies QA, Sue McCallion RLC and Sandy Sanderson, R Signals, and CSgt Bob McGowan, D and D.

Accompanied by an SSVC camera crew – all part of the publicity drive to ensure no soldier is unaware of the Army's drug prevention programme – the CDT personnel flew civvy air to Nairobi. There they were



On the Equator: From left are John Randle from SSVC, Maj Tim Saunders, WO2 Nerys Davies and WO2 Sandy Sanderson, and WO Keith Laycock

met by quartermaster Maj Jim Bain, A and SH, from the British Army Training and Liaison Staff (BATLSK), who provided vehicles and support.

Getting the team's equipment



On the box: Maj Tim Saunders prepares for a drug testing session on a roadside in the Kenyan bush

through Kenyan customs was just one of many local challenges overcome by WO1 Ferry.

First stop was Kahwa Barracks on the outskirts of Nairobi, where the liaison staff were among the first to be tested. With them were 50 sappers from 9 Parachute Squadron RE, who broke off from working on a school for Kenyan Army children to provide their samples.

"We got the batch away to the airport as soon as possible, because the heat makes the presence of urine samples and testing slightly unpleasant," said Maj Saunders. "The bottles go into a transit pouch and are sent back, preferably on a military flight, to the Government Chemist."

Next on the agenda was a dusty three-hour drive to Nanuki, where team members were accommodated in the faded Edwardian splendour of the Nanuki Sports Club, close to the show grounds where some Royal Scots were based.

Twenty minutes further up the road, the testers called at Timau, where the 9 Para Sqn RE tented camp was pitched against the spectacular backdrop of Mount Kenya. Their

visits to engineering projects in the bush to test sappers on site gave team members a wonderful opportunity to see elephant, impala, giraffe and gazelles at close hand.

One open-air session conducted by Maj Saunders was enlivened when two elephants lumbered past.

CDT visits are very much "luck of the draw", which means some units have been tested more often than others. For the engineers of 9 Sqn it was a first, while some 1 RS soldiers were being tested for the fourth or fifth time.

"Some units are beginning to wonder if they are being targeted," said Maj Saunders, "but that is not the case. The Royal Scots just got on with it despite four previous tests, and the sappers were very helpful."

Other elements of the battle group – loggies, gunners, airmen – were equally obliging when the team caught up with them.

Last call in Kenya was to the Movement Control Checkpoint back at Kahwa Barracks... "in case there was any temptation at the end of the exercise." By then the last of more than 800 samples were on the way to Teddington.

The test equipment, including delicate computers, is packed into specially designed boxes and survived the Kenyan bush intact. The human element is rather more fragile. Maj Saunders explained that because there is no leeway for error, it is crucial for those involved in CDT procedures to be up to the mark at all times.

Several thousand miles to the west, other testers were roaming the wide open spaces of Fort Lewis, where a Royal Regiment of Wales battle group was being put through its paces on a Trumpet Dance exercise. Careful to fit in with the group's training programme, the CDT



On the road: Royal Navy warrant officer Keith Laycock tests two members of 9 Para Squadron RE who were working on upgrading roads in the Lewa Downs game reserve in Kenya

team also tested control staff from British Army Training Support Unit Wainwright. Eight hundred more samples were soon on their way to the labs.

Spot checks also went on at airheads in the United Kingdom, testers making random calls at Brize Norton and Lyneham as troops came off exercise aircraft.

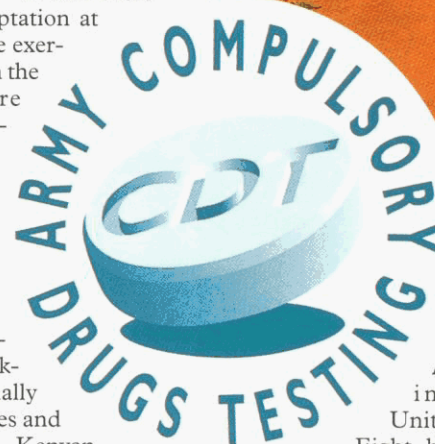
CDT is already seen as an effective deterrent. Numbers of detected users are said to have fallen sharply since the first tests in January 1995, and the regime has been widely welcomed for punching home the message that drugs are unacceptable in the

British Army. Of the 18,000 soldiers who provided samples in 1995, just over one per cent proved positive. Last year, despite a sizeable increase in clients, only 0.7 per cent failed, in sharp contrast to the national failure rate of six per cent and rising.

From next month Army testers will be assisting the Royal Navy and Royal Marines to run their CDT programmes. And that could introduce a new dimension to their experience of rough travel... one that could have them packing sea-sickness tablets.

● *The CDT Story*, which included film shot on location in Kenya, has been shown on SSVC's Scene Here programme.

● Royal Scots battle group in Kenya – Pages 22-23



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ACID
TEST

SPEED
TRAP

Generosity of Korean nation to veterans is 'unique'

EX-TROOP Sgt Mallins registered his "disgust" (March 3) about the cost of return visits to Korea.

As a founder member of the British Korean Veterans' Association, formed in 1977, I must protest in the strongest terms.

For the past 20 years the BKVA has arranged annual group return visits to the Republic of Korea, all of which have been heavily subsidised by the authorities in Seoul.

As a result, the average cost has been kept to around £600, inclusive of everything except personal spending money. I can vouch for this, as I was for a time heavily involved in making the arrangements.

Furthermore, this concession is available to one close family member travelling with the war veteran. The party was, and is always, greeted by the Koreans with the utmost warmth and overwhelming generosity.

As if this were not enough, Samsung of Korea donated £100,000 to the BKVA Welfare Fund, and a further £500,000 to the Royal British Legion to fund scholarships for members of families of those who served in the Korean War.

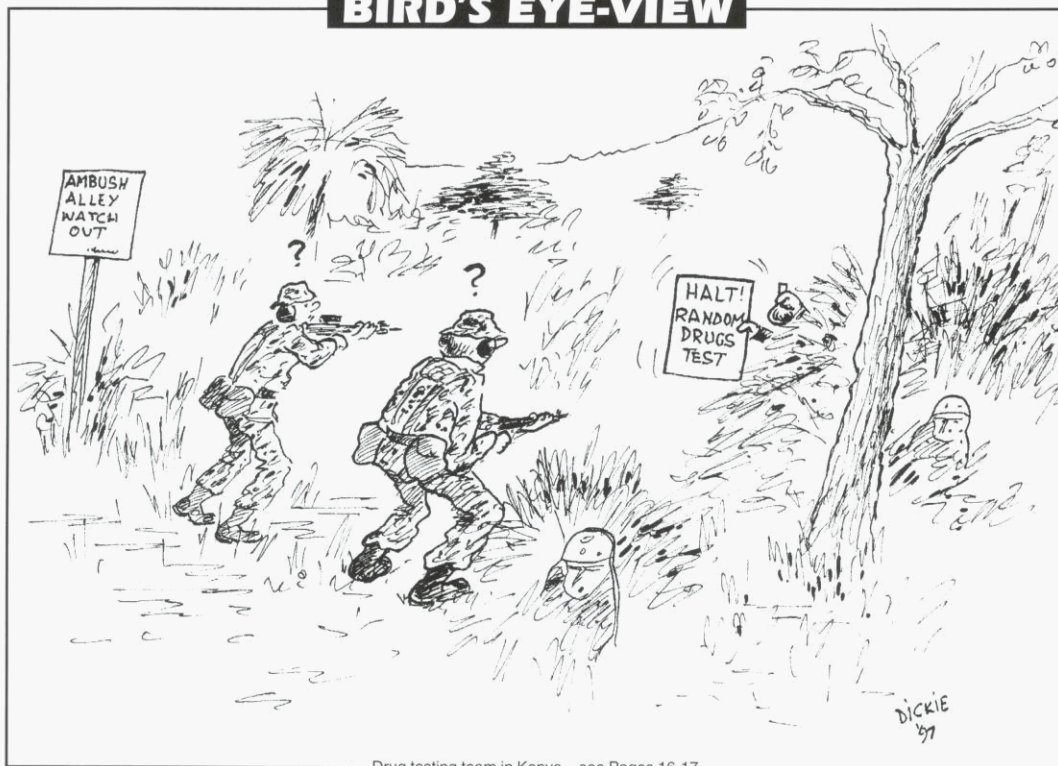
I think such generosity is unique among the nations to which the United Kingdom sent armed forces. — **J Tansley-Harris, Hon Life Member, BKVA, Brighton, Sussex.**

Museum is a sad loss

IT WAS sad to read in *Soldier* (Newline, Feb 17) that the Museum of Army Transport in Beverley is to close. I visited it many times and the staff were always helpful and polite.

The Government can find £60 million for a new Royal Yacht which will not benefit the ordinary man in the street, but no cash to keep the museum open, which would. If it had been a sports centre it could have applied for Lottery funds. — **Colin Booth, Suez veteran, ex-3 RHA, Wakefield, Yorks.**

BIRD'S EYE-VIEW



Drug testing team in Kenya — see Pages 16-17

Hit video price prompts Naafi to think again

I AM serving in Northern Ireland and therefore confined to base.

I have no other choice but to purchase goods from the Naafi shop where prices seem a bit more expensive than anywhere else.

Take for example the new video, *Independence Day*, which sells for £12.99 in most civilian outlets.

Naafi sells it for £15.99.

Razor blades, shaving foam and so on are also dearer than everywhere else. Are the soldiers being exploited by the non-profit making Naafi? Per-

haps Naafi would care to reply? — **Cpl D W Rowlands, 2 Para, BFPO 811.**

● Naafi says: "Our stores provide a range of goods on site and at hours which are convenient to Service personnel. While we always aim to offer competitive prices, the flexibility of our services sometimes means we cannot provide special offers which high street stores can with their bulk-ordering, multi-outlet chains. The £15.99 being charged for *Independence Day* was the recommended retail price, but Naafi is looking to see if it can reduce it. We are in the process of upgrading our stores and welcome comments from customers."

Jab in the pocket book

HAVING served in Iraq 1943-46, I read with interest the item "Units told to search for Gulf War jab records" (Newline, Feb 17). To this day I have only to refer to my old Army Book 64 Part 1, which was carried on one's person at all

times, to find the exact date and details of my jabs.

Perhaps a similar document, with a personal photograph incorporated, should now be designed for today's soldiers to carry at all times. — **A W Reeve, Rochester, Kent.**

Soldier welcomes letters for publication from all readers, whatever their status. Letters must be brief, typed or written clearly and include the correspondent's name and address in block capitals, not necessarily for publication. Anonymous letters will not be considered. Acceptance or rejection of letters is the decision of the Editor, who reserves the right to edit for length, clarity and style.



Turn for the worse ...

We're beret sorry!

EUROSCEPTICS like me will have been horrified by the photograph of 1 WFR soldiers (Feb 3, Page 17), especially those of us with regimental links (number two son, ex-WO2 Band Sgt Maj).

Is the mode of beret-wearing a prerequisite (Gallic plot) of British Army participation in the ARRC? Or am I just an ageing nit-picker? — **C T Wareing (ex-Sgt RE, ex-RSM HG 1952-56, ex-Lt Worcestershire ACF), Redditch, Worcs.**

● You're certainly no nit-picker, but well spotted all the same, Mr Wareing. The photograph was inadvertently reversed in the production process. Apologies to the regiment and thanks to the many readers who have phoned. — **Editor**

Life without paper

A PAPER-LESS documents office is a bit like an army without troops . . . a contradiction in terms, even in this increasingly electronic age.

And it is certainly unusual in a Service office that processes the career, pay and policy files of hundreds of thousands of soldiers.

Yet the registry at the Directorate of Manning (Army) – DM(A) for short – at Upavon has effectively banished the paper mountain under which, according to a member of the team, it was being crushed to death.

When Army records are required, they are usually needed in a hurry. But the paper “docs” on 120,000-plus personnel would just about fit on ten miles of shelving. Big problem.

Fortunately, there was a small solution . . . automate the whole process so that all those miles of shelves effectively “disappeared” into a few desktop computers. It was a huge break from traditional document-handling methods under which only one person at a time could read a file.

The old system also relied on experienced staff who knew where to find everything. Because career details and correspondence had to be held in secure cabinets, it was not always possible to access it quickly. If the desk officer had locked his files while he was on leave, the query had to await his return.

Maj Martin Abbott AGC, who was tasked with finding a solution, said: “The Army wanted to reduce dramatically the amount of paper in circulation, speed administrative processes, provide wider services and reduce cost.”

His specification demanded that the system be capable of scanning incoming documents, handwritten letters and forms, photographs and signatures. It had to provide immediate access to documents without reducing the security of the information in them. Signatures had to be verifiable, with anti-tampering facilities and audit trails to identify who did what and when.

ICL's image-based document management system, InsideStory, was selected to form the heart of the automated project, and the company joined Maj Abbott and his team in a collaborative venture to put

Automation revolutionises the way Directorate of Manning (Army) processes soldiers' documents



WO2 Paul Lambert, manager of what has now become a paperless registry at Upavon. In the background are LCpl Woody Woodworth and LCpl Lewy Lewis. Inset – No more piles of paper. Maj Martin Abbott explains the advantages of the new system

the whole thing together in a pilot system. As the users identified what they wanted, ICL implemented it.

DM(A) management was so taken with what they saw that the system was installed to run its registry operations at the department's new premises in the Adjutant General's Headquarters at Upavon, Wiltshire.

Incoming documents are now scanned in and indexed by registry clerks. Once verified, the information is stored on optical discs from which it can be accessed immediately and displayed on computer screens.

The work-flow segment of the system automates much of the registry's effort,

allocating tasks to appropriate officers, setting time limits for completion, monitoring progress and activating

WO2 Paul Lambert, who manages the registry, says the system provides an improved service and greater control of work.

“It could take up to three days for mail to reach an officer's in-tray when more than one person needed to see it,” he said. “Today they're all getting the mail simultaneously within an hour of it arriving.”

“Telephone enquiries can be settled there and then. It is also easier to find out how far a task has got and whether there are any problems. It puts us in control.”

DM(A) can boast that it did more than just paper over the cracks when its systems were starting to bulge under the pressure . . . it got rid of the cracks and the paper.

London's pride up the jungle

TERRITORIAL ARMY soldiers broke new ground last month with their first deployment on exercise for jungle warfare training in Belize.

Three hundred members from three London-based TA units went on Exercise Native Trail during three two-week deployments. Troops from the 10th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, the 4th Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets and the Honourable Artillery Company underwent an intense programme condensed from the usual six-week Regular Army exercise.

The aim of the training was to familiarise the Terriers with infantry skills in the jungle with a package covering a range of activities including navigation, patrols, ambushes, camp attacks, river crossings and close-quarter battle.

"We were delighted to be offered the opportunity of jungle warfare training in Belize as it provides new challenges and invaluable experiences to the young soldier," said Lt Colonel Tony Malkin, CO 10 Para, who administered the exercise.

"The training means that they are better equipped to accept the new responsibilities which the TA is being asked to take on."

As well as the new angle to infantry training, the jungle brought with it two other challenges: working in extreme conditions and overcoming the fear of what lurks inside its damp and inhospitable interior.

Location for the exercise was Guacamollo Bridge, a camp in thick vegetation on the steep slopes of the Western Maya mountains, a hazardous terrain even for the fittest soldier and described by Sgt Maj Mark Humphreys, 10 Para, as "a bit like Brecon, with jungle added..."

The soldiers deployed to Belize knowing that they would be working in extremely harsh conditions. "We are all pretty fit, and the training we do is often physically demanding," said CSM David Tourlmain, 4 RGJ, "but the jungle is unique: its

geography, the heat, the poisonous reptiles and dense vegetation will make this an exercise to remember."

To help the soldiers overcome their anxiety about the jungle, and to show them how to survive in it, 10 Para brought in George and Winston, two Mayan trackers.

They were able to find food and water in deepest jungle, and demonstrated their skills in using plants for culinary and medicinal purposes. They also taught the soldiers to build shelters, set traps and to fish.

"The two Mayans have a fabulous wealth of knowledge which has been passed on to them through generations, and which they shared willingly with the soldiers," said Maj Alan Flavell, OC Exercise Native Trail 6 and also 10 Para's training major.

"Their enthusiasm to teach about the jungle inspired everyone to learn and to have confidence in using it, instead of seeing it as an obstacle."

After two or three nights, soldiers began to get used to the surroundings.

"Once you know where the dangers lie, you are able to avoid them... most of the time. We all experienced anxiety during the first night out but you learn to work with it and understand it," said Sgt Mark Soley of the HAC.

But was it really that different from Salisbury Plain?

"Once you get used to sleeping in a hammock, not being able to see or hear anything more than a few metres away, hearing noises during the night and learning to ignore them, and making sure that you are drinking enough water every day, you have come some way to accepting life in the jungle," said Capt John Merylees, 2iC of the exercise.

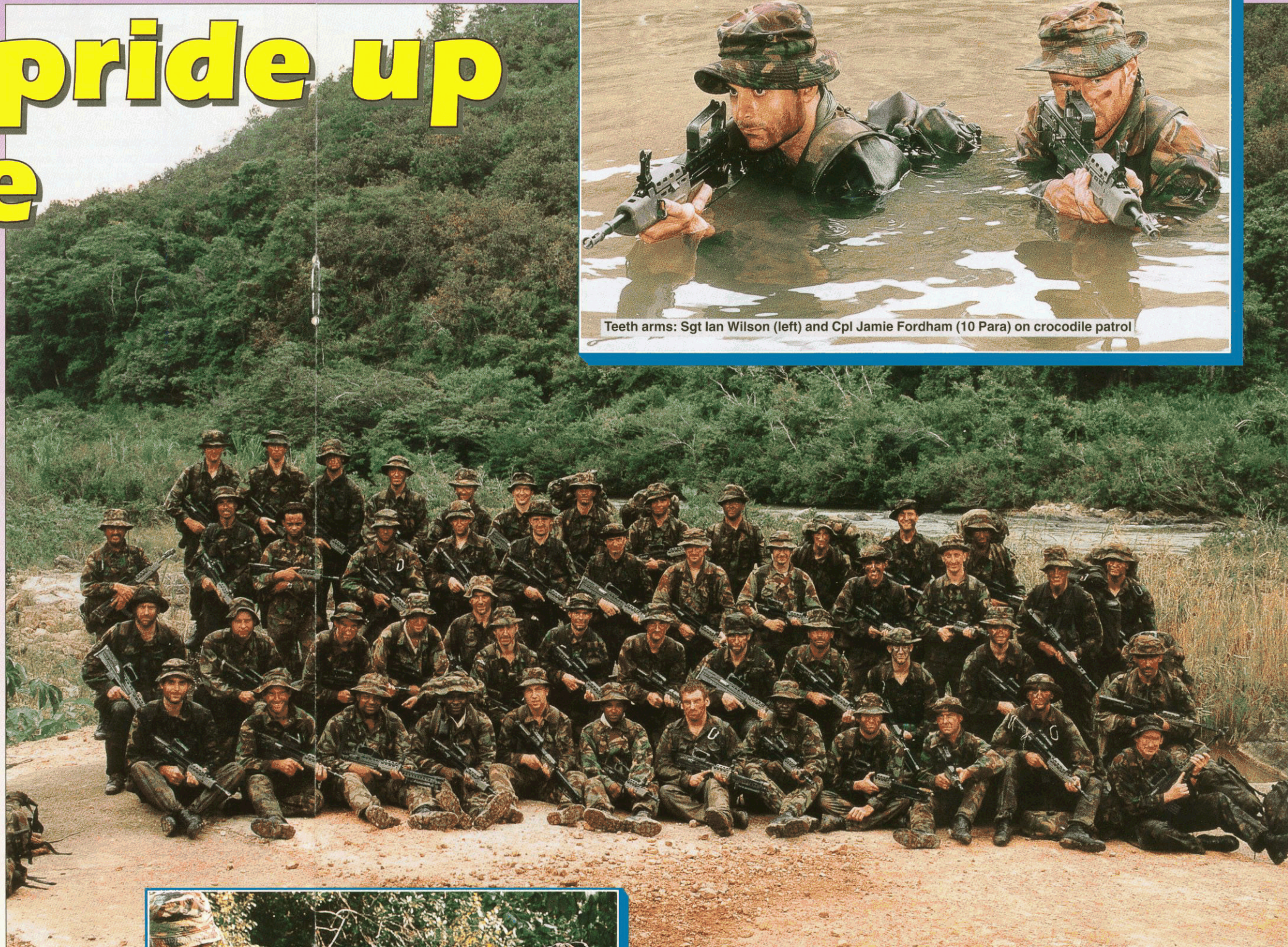
During the time in the jungle, sections began to come together, individuals learning to rely on each other.

"The jungle teaches you to get your personal admin exactly right: you have to be very organised, and work closely with the

**Report: Capt Anita Newcourt
Pictures: Sgt Ian Liptrot**



Grub's up: Mayan tracker Winston prepares to cook breakfast



Above - Team shot: Soldiers from 10 Para, the HAC and 4 RGJ line up for the camera after Exercise Native Trail

Right - General update: Lt Gen Sir Hew Pike, Inspector General TA, discusses training issues with Maj Alan Flavell, OC exercise



rest of the team," said Cpl Mark Wright of 2 Para, one of the team of instructors based at Guacamollo Bridge. "The lessons learnt here can be put to good use back in the UK, and sharpening up the soldiers'

infantry skills through jungle training builds their confidence, and binds them into a more professional unit."

A whole day's training was dedicated to navigation in the jungle, which is very



Teeth arms: Sgt Ian Wilson (left) and Cpl Jamie Fordham (10 Para) on crocodile patrol

unlike navigation in the UK... maps are inaccurate, tracks hardly exist, visibility is nil and contour lines are spaced differently.

Patrolling, too, took on another angle, as movement through the vegetation was restricted to a slow tortuous pace (sometimes just 2km a day), and silent progress was almost impossible.

Special skills had to be learnt for target recognition and close-quarter battle, because of the confined areas and restricted visibility. Even river crossing skills were sharpened as the ability to ford wide, fast-flowing rivers had to be practised.

The intense training culminated in a 24-hour field training exercise, with the Belize Defence Force acting as enemy.

On returning to Airport Camp, the exercise was deemed a great success by the participants,

the jungle warfare instructors and the unit commanders themselves.

"We were particularly fortunate to have a superb team of instructors, based on the permanent staff from the Honourable Artillery Company," said Lt James Greengrass, 4 RGJ. "The training was pitched at exactly the right level, the exercises became progressively more challenging, being designed to sharpen the skills taught. All my troops found it an enriching and rewarding experience."

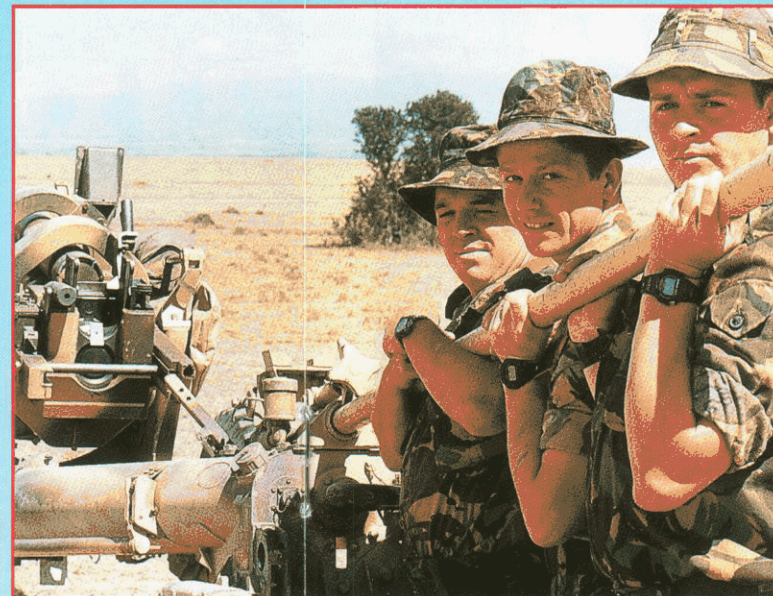
It remains to be seen whether other TA units will now be offered the opportunity of jungle training, but judging by the enthusiasm and professionalism demonstrated during the exercise, the experience was invaluable training for the London Infantry TA units.



Left – Camel corps: Ptes Archie Hunter (in saddle) and Craig Poole sample one of Kenya's more exotic forms of transport

Right – Called to the bar: Manoeuvring their 105mm light gun on the ranges at Ol Pejeta are (from left) Bdrs Andy Thompson, Robert Woods and Jason Hind, all from 25/170 (Imjin) Battery, 19 Regiment RA

Below – Peak practice: Pte Matt Hoines shared his lofty perch with a colony of rock hyrax, rabbit-like rodents which inhabit the outcrops. Pte Hoines serves with Colchester-based 19 Field Ambulance RAMC, part of the 1 RS battle group



Bush watch: Gurkhas from B Company (Gurkha Reinforcement Company), 1 RS, during an assault on the Mpala Farm ranges

Go-anywhere Jocks take Africa in their stride

TRAVEL TO any part of the world and you will find a Scot already in residence, or so says legend. If you had been in Kenya recently you might have bumped into 700 of them.

Exercise Grand Prix II gave the 1st Battalion, The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment) Battle Group an opportunity to deploy to Kenya for six weeks of intense exercising and exhilarating adventurous training.

"Skills and drills" was a term that commanding officer Lt Col Robbie Scott-Bowden used several times. He was due to take up a new appointment on his return to the UK, so this exercise was his swansong, but it was evident from the outset that there was to be no emphasis on the word "swan".

Each of the battalion's companies spent a week honing their live-firing skills, learning jungle fighting and survival techniques, and completing an adventurous training package, in itself a major undertaking.

Soldiers could choose from an extensive list of activities including paragliding,

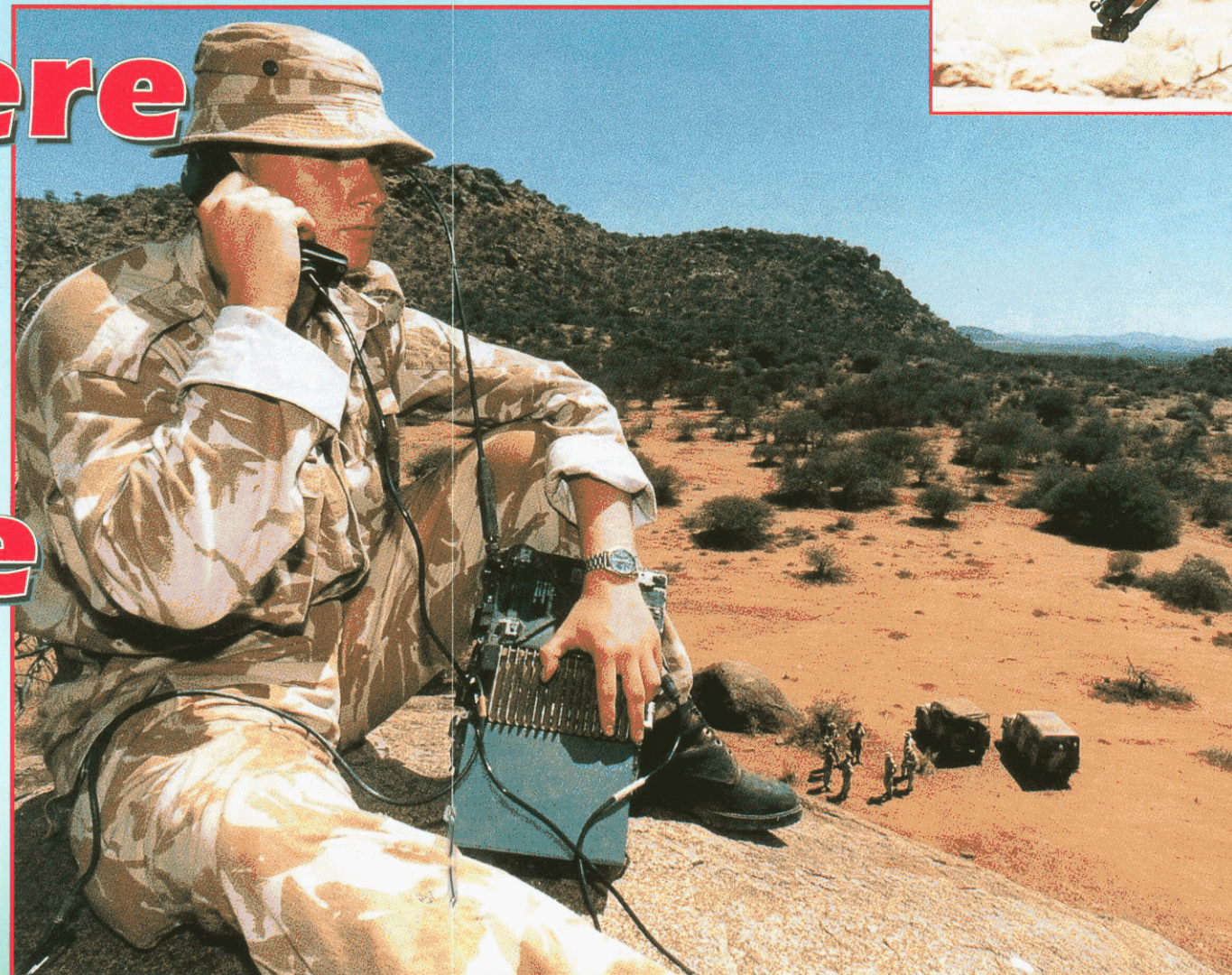
scuba-diving in the Indian Ocean, white water rafting on the Tana river, game drives and even a camel safari.

The live-firing package, under the supervision of Capt Billy Thompson, took place at Mpala Farm, which offers some of the most inhospitable terrain in which British troops can expect to operate. The area, festooned with the aptly named "bastard thorn" bearing 3in spikes which can pierce to the bone, is 7,000ft above sea level. With temperatures rising above 110F, it is a stern test of stamina and endurance.

In these conditions, lungs are soon gasping for air and sweat quickly soaks clothing . . . obstacles easily overcome by the men of B Company (Gurkha Reinforcement Company) who had only recently joined the battalion.

It soon became clear that the Gurkhas were well suited to the climate, an advantage to which their performance in the attacks bore testimony.

In stark contrast was the jungle fighting and survival training, set in steamy undergrowth at Kathendini at the foot of Mount



Kenya. Jocks learned how to build shelters, squeeze water from vines and protect themselves from Africa's night-time predators. Once again, the Gurkhas led the way. One Jock was heard to say: "Only they could come out of the jungle with more scoff than they went in."

Despite a few head-to-heads with elephants, and the ever-present and inquisitive jungle rats which popped out at night, every soldier took the instruction to heart . . . and so managed to survive.

During the Grand Prix season British Army battalions look to help the local Kenyan community. The Royal Scots chose Nanyuki Orphanage, situated close to their main base camp.

The orphanage cares for more than 150 children in primitive conditions. The battalion was given a grant of £2,000 to spend on the project and, with a great deal of assistance from 11 Field Squadron RE – the battle group's Royal Engineer element – the orphanage benefited from rewiring, a new

roof and a new lavatory block complete with proper sanitation.

Many of the Jocks spent their spare time playing with the children, and the smiles on the faces of the orphans as they tucked into the hand-outs of sweets and biscuits from the soldiers' ration packs spoke volumes.

Summing up the six-week adventure Lt Col Scott-Bowden said: "These are the best training grounds in the world. It is challenging and demanding at these altitudes, and the requirement for commanders to make



Stand by for lift-off: Lt Chris Stewart inflates his paraglider during adventurous training in the hills around Mairana Farm

the right decision instantly is tested to the full."

As the chequered flag fell on this Grand Prix, signalling the end of office for the battalion's CO, he moved on with the knowledge that the men he commanded are capable of taking on a deployment anywhere in the world. But then, that's the Scots for you.

Indeed, they will be asked to prove it again next year when 1 RS moves to Seattle, USA for another six-week exercise.



A-hunting we will go: riders head for Salisbury Plain Training Area

Tally-ho... and mind the shell holes

ALL THE glamour and excitement of a traditional country hunt was to be seen on the edge of Salisbury Plain Training Area when 30 members of the Royal Artillery Hunt gathered in the village of Orcheston.

Their meeting followed an invitation from local landowners Maj Sarah Shepherd, R Signals, and Maj Fred Southey REME, who told the hunt that he had lived in the area for four years, during which he had lost many ducks to foxes.

"Hunting on the Plain is fast, and you need a good horse to keep up," said former Master Lt Col John Jago. "You also need a horse that is capable of avoiding all the shell holes, which can make hunting with the RA quite exciting."

The 90,000 acres of the training area is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and provides a wonderful wildlife habitat.

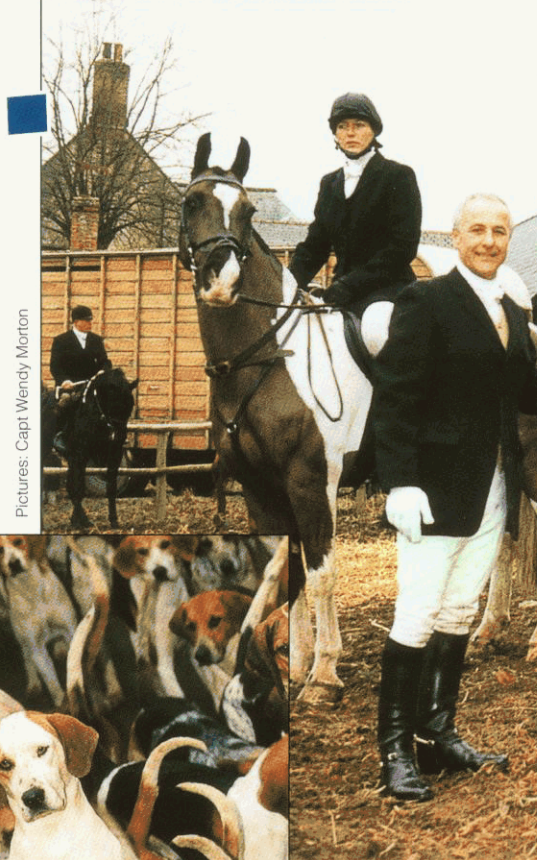
Maj Jonathan Seed, the Master of the Hunt, said: "Ten years ago, when hunting was suspended in the artillery impact area, local farmers and residents demanded that hunting be reinstated as the fox was using the impact area as a safe haven and becom-

ing a real problem to the surrounding area.

"We are sometimes asked to places where people have been feeding foxes, which creates an even worse problem for poultry keepers because, the night they are not fed is the night they start taking poultry. In this situation I have to cull the rogue foxes.

"Generally, my aim is not to kill every fox but to keep the population to a healthy and acceptable level."

Before setting off, the riders enjoyed the customary stirrup cup, a glass of port designed to set everyone up to jump the four fences leading out on to the Plain. As in all good military operations, this was preceded by an "O" group at which the Master told the field what ground he was expecting to cover during the day. He also



Pictures: Capt Wendy Morton



Above – Cheers: Maj Fred Southey offers a stirrup cup to Maj Jonathan Seed, the Master of the Hunt

Left – Showing off: Lantern, the top dog, reveals her best side

gave a range safety brief as guns were live-firing in some areas on the same day.

The RA Hunt's Master and two whippers-in, Bdr Stuart Sharp and Michael Stokes, wear green coats in recognition of the fact that the hunt was founded as a harrier hunt after hares. The Field Master wears a red coat while most of the subscribers don black coats. Tweed jackets

Right – Enjoying the traditional stirrup cup: from left to right are three retired Royal Artillery officers, Lt Cols Rob Stewart, John Avery and Nick Hornby



are also quite acceptable. The Field Master, who is responsible for looking after the field, is likely to send off to point or road safety duty anyone chatting too loudly at a crucial time.

A typical day's hunting goes on until after dusk, five or six hours after the meet. If, before then, a rider – or horse – becomes too tired to continue, it is considered good etiquette to bid the Master goodnight before retiring. This is often more simply said than done: if the hounds are still on the scent it can be difficult to catch up with the Master long enough to speak to him.

The RA Hunt is run by members of the military in their spare time. It dates from the turn of the century, when a pack of harriers was given to the officers of the Royal

"The Royal Artillery Hunt goes out of its way to encourage people to get out for a day's hunting," said Lt Col Nick Hornby, the honorary secretary. "If anyone would like to find out more about it I can be contacted in my office on 01985 2223228."

Artillery at Bulford. During the Second World War the hunt turned from harriers to foxhounds. It celebrated its 50th year of fox-hunting last year.

The kennels in Bulford, erected by private subscription in 1937, are maintained entirely at private expense. In those days most of the Army's guns were pulled by horses.

Hunting still provides a change of scene for the Army's ceremonial horses and its soldiers, a fact recognised by all the mounted units, and especially the King's Troop RHA, whose horses and men are often seen out with the RA Hunt.

It meets twice a week on Wednesdays and Saturdays throughout the season, which lasts from September to March.

POINTS IN QUESTION

Correspondents' queries answered by fellow readers

TA Efficiency Medal

Q: Can anyone explain the qualifications for the Efficiency Medal (Territorial)? (F O'Toole, Feb 3).

A: THE Efficiency Medal replaced the earlier Volunteer Long Service Medal, the Colonial Auxiliary Forces Medal, the Militia and Special Reserve Long Service Medals, and the Territorial Efficiency Medal.

The medal was awarded to officers and other ranks of the Territorial Army who were on the active list of that force on September 2, 1939 and who had completed 12 years' service. Clasps on the ribbon were awarded for 18 and 24 years' service.

As the Second World War lasted nearly six years, and war service was reckoned as double, almost everyone in the Territorial Army on September 2, 1939 and still serving when the war ended was eligible for the medal. – **Brian Jewell, Harrogate, N Yorks.**

PERHAPS like Mr O'Toole, I served with a TA regiment during the Second World War but I did not serve in the TA, for which technically it was not possible to serve – it had been embodied on September 3, 1939 with the Regular Forces.

Qualification for war service to count double was that "the individual had to be serving on September 2, 1939 and embodied or called out for service after that date, may reckon such from September 3, 1939 or such later date, until the last day of release leave allowed under Demobilisation Regulations 1945 at double qualifying service towards TD/TEM and clasps".

For those who earned their entitlement through six hard years of constant war in France, Africa, Burma, Italy, NW Europe and Far East I have nothing but praise – they are survivors who can be proud, remembering also those who never returned.

It was not possible to enlist in the TA after September 3, 1939. We volunteered or were conscripted into the Regular Forces for wartime, not the TA.

The TA was re-formed and re-started in the UK on April 1, 1947, for which 12 years' voluntary, efficient and continuous service was needed to qualify, with bars for each additional six years after the initial award. – **A F Brocklehurst, Penarth, Glamorgan.**

Evacuation vessels

M P Cocker (Feb 3) states that members of the Merchant Navy are refused membership of the Royal British Legion. This is incorrect: MN men and women are most welcome.

With regard to casualties, he should have mentioned the losses of gunners on defensively-equipped merchant ships (DEMS) – RN gunners 2,713, Maritime RA 1,222. – **E J Craske (ex-DEMS gunner), Peterborough, Northants.**

Service numbers

FURTHER to other replies on the subject of Army numbering, in National Service days when the system was changed to 2000xxxx

● Turn to Page 33

Normandy heroes 'sign up' old Gurkha

OUR story (Sept 30) about an "Adopt-a-Gurkha" appeal struck a chord with members of West Sussex branch of the Normandy Veterans' Association. A case of one bunch of old heroes supporting another...

They responded by sending off a cheque for £120, and pledging to do so "each year as long as we can." All the West Sussex veterans are in their seventies.

Now they have a photograph of the man whose family will benefit from their generosity.

Ex-Rfn Chandrabahadur Pun, also in his seventies, enlisted in the 2nd Gurkhas in 1941, served throughout the Second World War and was discharged in 1947.

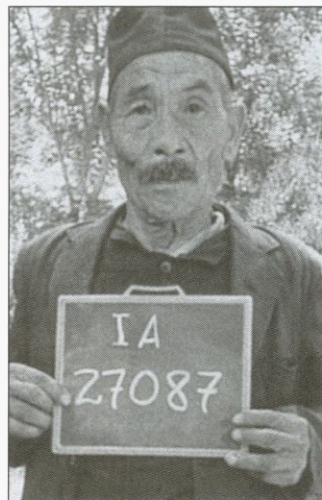
A widower with two sons and a daughter, he is no longer able to support himself or his family and for the past six years has depended on the Gurkha Welfare Trust for a small income.

Last year the trust appealed for individuals and units to support its sponsored pensions scheme for the thousands of destitute Gurkha ex-Servicemen and widows living in Nepal.

By covenanting £10 a month, the trust can ensure a welfare pension is paid to a named individual on a sponsor's behalf.

Jim Tomsett, fundraising director of the Gurkha Welfare Trust, said 1,000 of the 10,900 ex-soldiers and widows who the trust supports have so far been "adopted" by units or individuals, many of them in the same age group as the Normandy veterans.

Further details and sponsorship and deed of covenant forms are available from the Gurkha Welfare Trust, Third Floor, 88 Baker Street, London W1M 2AX (tel 0171-707 1925; fax 0171-707 1929).



Chandrabahadur Pun, with his Army Service number. Because many Nepalis have the same or similar names, the Gurkha Welfare Trust uses the prized Army numbers to ensure pensions are paid to the right person

Mappers on track to celebrate

MILITARY Survey, the branch of the Royal Engineers responsible for providing geographic support to the Armed Forces, will be celebrating its 250th anniversary throughout the latter half of this year.

Main celebrations are launched in early July when the historic Hounslow Baseline will be re-measured by soldiers using the satellite-aided Global Positioning System (GPS). The baseline,

which stretches roughly between Hampton and Heathrow, created great excitement when it was drawn in 1791, forming the basis for the first scientific survey of Britain.

Other events planned include a high-altitude climbing expedition in the Andes, and an anniversary weekend at Hermitage, near Newbury, over the weekend of September 13-15.

The celebratory momentum continues throughout the autumn, climaxing in an evening at the Royal Geographical Society on December 3.

Biggest party of the year is certain to be the weekend event at Hermitage, which will culminate in the Corps of Royal Engineers being awarded the Freedom of Newbury.

Admission to the party is strictly by invitation. If you served in Military Survey and you have not yet heard from the Director, contact the anniversary project managers through Gordon Wood Associates, 1 Majorca Avenue, Andover, Hants SP10 1JW.

Souvenirs of the occasion will include reprints of some of Military Survey's rare and historic maps.

❑ **Military vintage vehicle enthusiasts who have enjoyed the annual Overlord exhibition at Southsea should note that the show is moving a few miles north, to a new site just off the A3 at Longmoor Camp near Liphook.**

Dates of the 1997 show are May 24-26. General enquiries to the Military Vehicle Trust's Chris Davies on 01705 241911.

Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds on December 29.

The Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress) looks after 4,000 casualties of the Second World War and all the campaigns since, including the Gulf and Bosnia.

The Royal Armouries has three establishments – the Royal Armouries, HM Tower of London (Tower history), Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds (arms and armour) and Royal Armouries, Fort Nelson, near Portsmouth (artillery).

Its Leeds museum, opened by the Queen a year ago, is already proving to be one of the most popular paying museums outside London.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, March 1947

SMALL TALK

The *Daily Mirror* has been trying to find out who made the longest telephone call. Record is claimed by a Gunner Rogers, of Chapel-en-le-Frith, who says that while on a gun-site he talked from 7pm to 8am on a private line to a telephonist on an adjoining site, thus helping to keep both of them awake.

25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, March 1972

CLEANING THE CREST

As a farewell gesture to Hong Kong on leaving to join the reformed 2nd Battalion in Edinburgh, F Coy, Scots Guards has refurbished its crest carved on the hillside a few hundred yards from the border of the New Territories with the Chinese mainland. The 2nd Battalion carved its name and regimental star 44 years ago to make a landmark which inspired the local name of Crest Hill.

Badge set is MoD Police brainwave

FOUR charities are to benefit from sales of a set of historic MoD cap badge tie-tacs which the Police Insignia Collectors' Association in Northern Ireland has put together.

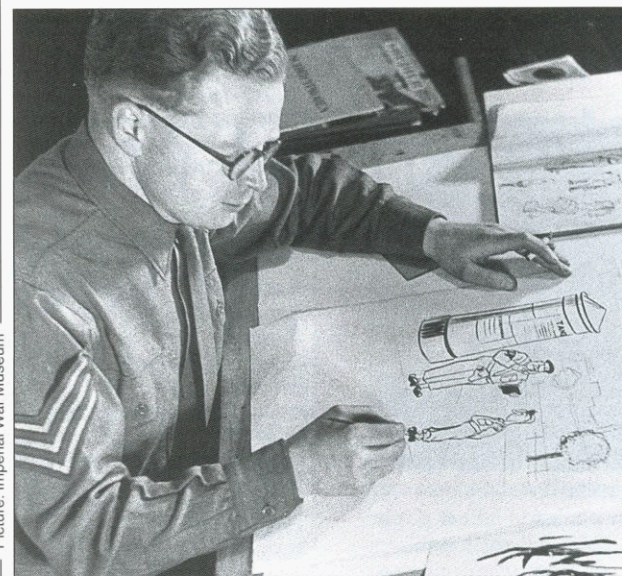
Every penny from proceeds of the £12 sets will go to good causes, including Brainwave, the charity for the treatment of brain tumours.

For information about the tie-tac badges, which include the insignia of the modern MoD Police and the long-gone Admiralty Civil Police; the Royal Marine Police; the War Department Constabulary and Army Department Constabulary; and the Air Constabulary and the Air Force Department Constabulary, contact Const Roy Davidson, MoD Police, HMS Caroline, BFPO 806 (tel 01232 739880 ext 245).

❑ Former members of the 12th Battalion, The Devonshire Regiment (6th Airborne Landing Brigade) and their families are being sought for an eight-day trip to the unit's battle grounds in north Germany during the final stages of the Second World War.

The pilgrimage starts from Ham-minkeln, site of the battalion's glider-borne landing, and ends at Wismar on the Baltic coast.

Details from Ada Follett, Rosemount, Exmouth Road, Exton, nr Exeter, Devon EX3 0PQ (tel 01392 874596).



Jimmy Friell working on an illustration for *Soldier* in 1945



This is a fine time to be showing off!... Smudger, a cartoon character created by Friell

Gabriel's Last Post

TO THE readers of the *Daily Worker* and the *Evening Standard*, as well as to his friends, he was known as Gabriel.

To the Army and readers of *Soldier* he was the genial and popular Sgt Jimmy Friell, creator of the squaddie cartoon character Smudger in the early, end-of-war days of the magazine.

Jimmy, who died aged 84 on February 4, rose from the impoverished surroundings of his Glasgow birthplace to

become one of the foremost political cartoonists of his time, in the same league as Low and Vicky.

Though not party-minded, his cartoons were a devastatingly effective weapon in a working-class crusade and he adopted the name Gabriel "as one blowing the last trumpet on a dying capitalist world".

Towards the end of his wartime Army service, when pre-demob men with the appropriate skills were recruit-

ed to staff the new *Soldier*, Jimmy's talents were harnessed to join a team of artists which included SSgt Frank Finch, still contributing to the magazine to this day.

After the war Jimmy returned to the *Worker*, which he had originally joined in 1936, but he left with others similarly disillusioned by the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956.

He later spent five years with the *Standard*.

REUNIONS

RGJ Association (West Midlands Branch): Social and games evening planned on April 18. Former and present RGJ personnel welcome. Details from P J Knight on 0121 427 7758.

38th (City of London) Field Regiment RA Association: Reunion on April 28 at Victory Services Club, London. Details: Frank Flack, 22 Camborne Way, Hounslow, Middx TW5 0PW (tel 0181 570-5267). News from members welcome.

Battersea Army Cadets (1942-97): Reunion planned for May 17 at the Drill Hall. Details: John McNeil, Army Cadet League, 27 St John's Hill, Clapham Junction, London SW11 1TT.

Royal Engineers Association veterans weekend, June 13-15, Ripon, N Yorkshire. Details: Bill Rudd, Flat 1, Dengarth, 8 Springfield Avenue, Harrogate, N Yorks HG1 2HR (01423 536191).

Combined Ex-Services Association of Bridlington: Reunion and conference takes place at Bridlington on June 13-15. Contact Margaret Whittlesea, 6 Springfield

Avenue, Bridlington YO15 3AA.

3 RSME Regiment: Reunion for past training NCOs who served within training regiments at Gibraltar Barracks planned for July 3-5. Contact WO1 (RSM) N J Burke RE, 3 RSME Regt, Gibraltar Barracks, Blackwater, Camberley, Surrey GU17 9LP (tel Hawley Mill (726) 3271 or civil 01252 863271).

Hong Kong: To mark the handover to China, a tri-Service buffet-dinner reunion for anyone who served in Hong Kong in recent years is planned for July 5 at the Royal Sailors' Home Club,

Queen Street, Portsmouth. Cheques (£12 a head) payable to M L Rutley, 36 Albermarle Avenue, Elson, Gosport, Hants PO12 4HU by March 20. Details on 01705 501083.

RE Darland Association 1939-41: 17th reunion on Sept 5 at King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent. Details: Jim Winchester, 8 Durham Road, Luton LU2 0RB.

26 EFTS Guinea Fowl, Southern Rhodesia: 14th reunion weekend at the Falcon Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon, Sept 26-28. Details: Chas Price, 200 Roundhills,

DATES

APRIL

26: British Model Soldier Society annual show, New Connaught Rooms, Great Queen Street, Holborn, London.

MAY

24-26: Overlord historic military vehicle show, Longmoor Camp, Liphook, Hants.

JUNE

4-5: Floodlit Beating Retreat by Massed Bands of Household Division, Horse Guards, 9.30pm. Tickets on 0171 839-5323.

14: Queen's Birthday Parade, Horse Guards (Major General's Review, May 31; Colonel's Review, June 7).

21: Sherborne Military Tattoo, Sherborne Castle, Dorset, in aid of Poppy Appeal and Army Benevolent Fund. Includes displays by White Helmets, PWRR freefall parachute team, D and D Band, QGR Pipes and Drums, 9 Para Sqn RE, and AAC helicopters.

JULY

15-27: Royal Tournament, Earls Court. Ticket information on 0171 244-0244.

SEPTEMBER

6-7: Berwick Military Tattoo, The Barracks, Berwick-upon-Tweed, 8pm. Proceeds to Service charities.

13-15: Military Survey 250th anniversary weekend, Hermitage, and Newbury Freedom.

OCTOBER

24: Royal British Legion Isle of Thanet Festival of Remembrance. Tickets: 01843 292882.

● To include public events in this diary, contact the Editor.

Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 1UN.

56 Signal Squadron (V): Reunion dinner at Eastbourne on Oct 4. Details: PSAO, TA Centre, Seaside, Eastbourne, E Sussex BN22 7NL (tel 01323 728116).

Infantry Boys/Junior Leaders' Battalion: Third annual reunion dinner, Oct 18, at 5 RGJ Training Centre, Milton Keynes, for former boys/junior leaders who served at Tuxford, Harrogate, Plymouth and Oswestry. For details send sae to Howard Johnson, 35 Maes-y-Sarn Pentrych, Cardiff CF4 8QQ or tel 01222 891274.

Bristol which meets monthly. Details from Jack Spackman, 34 Lydiard Croft, Hanham, Bristol BS15 3LT (tel 0117 9613121).

London Irish Rifles Regimental Association seeks ex-soldiers from the 3rd Battalion to swell its numbers. Write to A J Batchelor, Membership Secretary, London Irish Rifles Regimental Association, Duke of York's HQ, King's Road, Chelsea, London SW3 4SA.

IT DOESN'T have to be *War and Peace* (it must be considerably shorter, for a start) but an original work of fact or fiction could win a *Soldier* reader £1,000.

The Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society and the Royal Armouries are sponsoring a short story competition, fiction or non-fiction, on one of the following three themes: Military Life, Wartime, Peace.

It is open to all (not just *Soldier* readers) and entries, which must be no longer than 1,000 words, should be sent to: Competition Secretary, Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society, Broadway House, The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1RL.

The entries should arrive there

Write on! £1,000 for best story

by November 28 at the latest and be accompanied by a £5 entry fee (£4 donation and £1 to cover administration).

A panel of distinguished judges will select the best entry, which will be advertised in the *Daily Telegraph* on Christmas Eve. Winning author and family will be invited to a prize-giving at the

Brigade turned frightened boys into clear-eyed men

THE combined efforts of LCpl Paul Keetley and Peter Caddick-Adams have produced a comprehensive and illuminating history of 143rd Infantry Brigade.

Three years of spare-time research by LCpl Keetley formed the basis from which Peter Caddick-Adams has produced a history of essential reading for all who have an interest in 143 Brigade in particular and the Territorial Army in general. Indeed it is an important link in the history of the Army in the 20th century.

An account of an Army unit could so easily end up as a list of events, people and dates but in this book, the extensive use of quotes from personal letters home and war diaries brings it to life in a most vivid way.

An enjoyable read as well as an important historical document, it is well illustrated with more than 70 photographs,

By God They Can Fight! A History of the 143rd Infantry Brigade 1908-1995 by Peter Caddick-Adams. Published by 143 (West Midlands) Brigade. Copies available, price £10 (inc p&p), from Capt (Retd) Ben Parry, G1/G4, HQ 143 (WM) Brigade, Copthorne Barracks, Shrewsbury, SY3 8LZ. All proceeds to the Army Benevolent Fund and other charities.

drawings and maps. The book is unusual in that it is the history of a brigade rather than a division or regiment. To the average soldier, the brigade has been the haziest level of command – it doesn't provide food or bullets; strategy and war orders come from division, so what does the brigade do? *By God They Can Fight!* illustrates well the vital role of the brigade throughout its history.

It also provides an insight to the development of Britain's social history.

Today there is concern about the physical condition of recruits. In 1910 52.2 per cent of Regular Army recruits were rejected on medical grounds. In 1900, the minimum height requirement had to be reduced from 5ft 3in to 5ft "because of the declining health of the working classes".

As one brigade officer put it: "The skinny, sallow, shambling, frightened boys were unrecognisable after six months of good food, fresh air and physical training... they put on an average of one inch in height and one stone in weight, becoming handsome clear-eyed young men."

By God They Can Fight! is a thoroughly readable history of a largely TA-based brigade illustrating the vital role played by the Territorials in two world wars and their continued major contribution to today's Army. – JRCG

IN BRIEF

World Radio TV Handbook 1997 edited by Andrew G Sennitt. Re-designed, 560-page edition of the radio enthusiasts' "bible" includes hour-by-hour guide to 1,000 broadcasts in English. Billboard Books, £19.95.

Napoleon's Line Cavalry Recreated in Colour Photographs by Stephen E Maughan. Enlightening historical text, enhanced by 180 colour photographs taken during four seasons of re-enactment events all over Europe, add up to a handsome 96-page volume. *European Militaria Special No 10*, published by Windrow & Greene, £12.95.

The Imperial War Museum Book of the War at Sea 1939-45 by Julian Thompson. Excellent history, strong on eye-witness accounts and written with museum backing by the man who commanded 3 Cdo Bde in the Falklands. Sidgwick & Jackson, £15.99.

War Beneath the Sea by Peter Padfield. Submarine conflict, 1939-45, by one of our foremost naval historians. Pimlico, £14.

Class warfare . . . and how to win it

MONTY wore battle dress tailored in finer wool than the standard issue, two cap badges, and a gold chain draped between the pockets of his blouse.

Earl Mountbatten of Burma wore lead weights in the right inside pocket of his tailcoat to counter-balance the decorations on his left breast. His waistcoats were designed so that he could pull them on over his head and he was among the first to have his trouser fly zipped instead of buttoned.

In the Gulf, Gen "Stormin' Norman" Schwarzkopf wore a



Two cap badges: Montgomery watch on each wrist, one presumably showing Washington time.

These examples of top brass demonstrating quirks of individuality are among many military references made by ex-soldier Christopher Egerton-Thomas in the amusing and instructive *Class . . . And How To Get It*.

With 14 books and many TV



Two watches: Stormin' Norman and radio appearances to his name his writing has a stylish, authoritative ring which lends weight to his views on class at every level.

Egerton-Thomas offers 15 chapters on how to achieve distinction and success, and seekers of a higher social status will find in his book a splendid mix of wit and wisdom.

So far as the Army and the



Too heavy: Mountbatten

other Services are concerned, it could well be listed as essential reading for those aspiring to become officers – or even NCOs.

The book is a breezily-written series of do's and don'ts – from the rules on smoking, drinking, chewing gum and sex (not all at once, of course) to holding your knife and fork correctly.

To quote again from the chapter on men's dress – the author is red hot on uniforms and formality – he tells how Prince Charles was once sent by his father (also a stickler for dress etiquette) to change his shoes. The Prince, in Army uniform, was wearing naval-style footwear.

"To the trained eye these things glare," writes Egerton-Thomas, who has earnest messages to impart. Bad habits and behaviour which are obvious (to others) are flagged-up through the book as "SIK" – spontaneous interest killers.

Despite its serious themes, the book is a hoot and a joy to read. Take the case of the OC

Class . . . And How to Get It by Christopher Egerton-Thomas. Brighton Publishing, paperback, £9.99.

Palace Guard who, invited to dine with the Queen and Duke, arrived wearing an ordinary shirt with his mess jacket.

Said the Duke: "Aren't you supposed to wear a winged collar with that rig?"

"Only on special occasions, Sir," the man replied.

One last tip – and there are hundreds – is never to wear a flower in your lapel after 6 pm unless you're in evening dress . . .

In his Army days Egerton-Thomas once gave two young sergeants elocution lessons. An unlikely scenario? Not necessarily.

His two pupils are now both majors.

Seeing beauty in the beasts

OLD British Army truckies who worked with those mighty beasts, the Pioneers, Explorers and Constructors in the Forties and Fifties should prepare for a surprise.

Lizzie and Pat Ware have given them the pin-up treatment in their new photo-book, *The Military Scammell Illustrated* (see picture).

Starting from the premise that, at least in their eyes, the classic Scammell "is an extremely photogenic truck" they decided to publish a set of photographs of restored and unrestored military vehicles to satisfy an increasing demand for more published material on the old "heavies".

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And, as if plugging the latest release by a film icon or pop band, they add: "This is a must for all Scammell fans."



In 96 square-format pages the book features 158 colour pictures of more than 50 vehicles seen at rallies and vehicle gatherings in Britain and mainland Europe over the past decade. There is also a 12-

page potted history of the models, with mono pictures.

The book is available from Warehouse Publications, Croydon, CR0 1BT at £13.50 (£14 overseas), including p & p (tel: 0181-681 3031).

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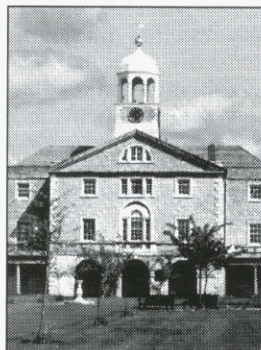
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COMPETITION 657

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These pictures are from our Frank Finch cartoon archives. Find ten differences in detail and you could be £50 richer or win a new book. Circle the differences in the bottom picture, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send to HOAY 657, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot GU11 2DU by April 4. 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 of any kind can be entered into.

The names of the winner of the £50 first prize and two runners-up (awarded book prizes) will be announced in the April 28 issue.

Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

Competition No 654 (Feb 3 issue): First correct entry drawn was from Mr A E Barlow, of Brigg, N Lincs, who wins £50. Book prizes go to Mr Ronald Willis, of Ipswich, Suffolk, and Mr E F Oldfield, of Cowes, IOW. The ten differences were: lines trailing BL 11; BL 11's aileron, front nearside axle, driver's helmet; smoke pattern, left of centre; flame pattern, lower left; left-hand and right-hand wheels, car 5; front of shadow below car 5; M on lower aileron.



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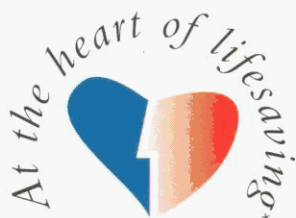
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A 13-part postcard series on the new regiments and corps of the British Army of the 1990s

THE HIGHLANDERS (Seaforth, Gordons and Camerons)

SCOTLAND'S newest infantry regiment, The Highlanders, was formed on September 17, 1994 on the amalgamation of the Queen's Own Highlanders (Seaforth and Camerons) and The Gordon Highlanders.

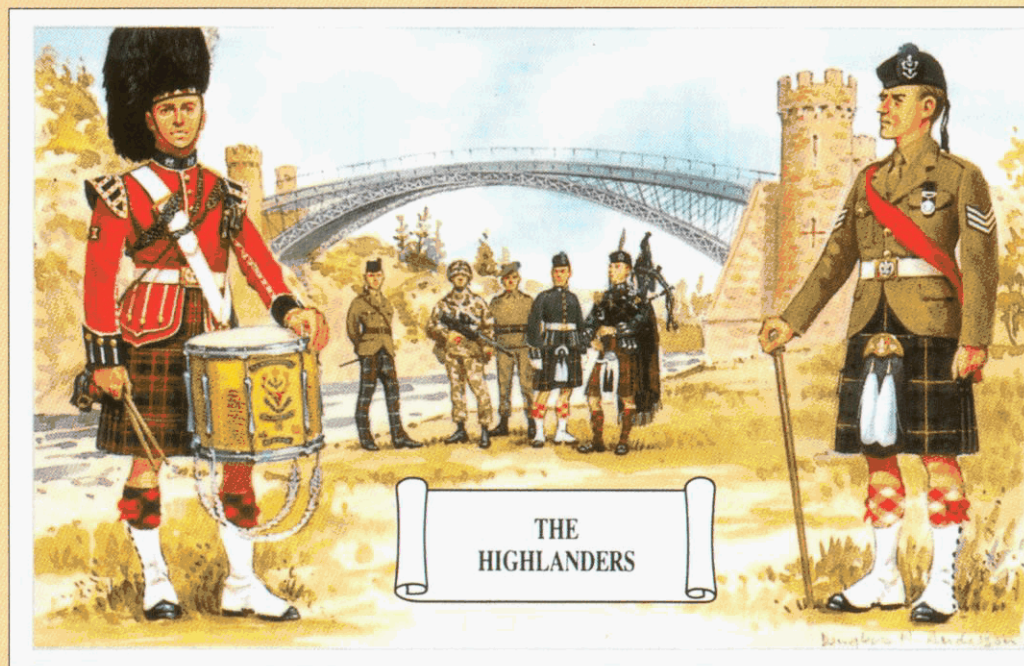
Raised in the late 18th Century, The Queen's Own Highlanders were the descendants of three Highland regiments: The 72nd Highlanders, The 78th Highlanders (Ross-shire Buffs) and The 79th Cameron Highlanders.

The Gordon Highlanders descended from two regiments raised in the same century: The 75th Regiment and The 92nd Gordon Highlanders.

The Highlanders vigorously support the one-regiment concept of each battalion being dependent on each other: Regular, Territorial Army and cadet battalions have strong links and contacts.

The postcard illustrated here was reproduced from a watercolour painting by Douglas N Anderson. It shows:

- Drummer: Full dress.
- Sergeant: No 2 dress.



● Different forms of regimental dress.

● Background: Telford's Bridge over the River Spey at Craigellachie.

The drummer is in scarlet doublet with drummer's lace; his kilt is Cameron of Erracht tartan. He wears the Gordon

Highlanders' waist belt buckle and, though not shown, the Gordon Highlanders' dress sporran.

The sergeant's No 2 Dress includes a Gordon tartan kilt. He wears a Queen's Own Highlanders waist belt buckle and staff pattern sporran.

The background figures shown are: officer in musketry order trews (2B); Highlander in combat fighting order; Highlander in barrack fatigue dress; Highlander in No 1 dress ceremonial; and piper in No 1 dress ceremonial (non-parade).

For details of this and other postcards depicting regiments and corps of the British Army, send SAE to: Geoff White Ltd., 19, Rushmoor Lane, Backwell, Bristol, BS19 3JA.

● From Page 25

onwards, NS and Regulars were separated in blocks by using the third and fourth digits.

As an orderly room clerk working with soldiers' documents on a daily basis it was possible to tell from a man's number whether he was a Regular.

When was the present numbering system introduced and at what number? — **W G A Deeley, Quinton, Birmingham.**

I VOLUNTEERED for a Regular Engagement (seven years Colours, five Reserve) in March 1945 and was allocated the number 14463322. I was enlisted at Coventry recruiting office and allocated to the RASC, despite asking for my county regiment, the Warwicks. Could the location of joining and choice of regiment have any bearing on the mystery? — **F W Rose, Portland, Dorset.**

WHEN I volunteered for the Royal Engineers as an MT driver in 1939 (18 months under-age), enlisting in Burton-on-Trent, I was given the number 1950652, which I kept until demob in 1946. — **L R Swindale, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs.**

MR STONE (Feb 3) asked why his was a "dead man's number". I heard the expression myself and think I can explain.

Mr Stone's number was not officially allocated in September 1943, when the 14-15 million block of numbers commenced, so in theory it did not exist.

The first block of numbers, allocated to the Lowland regi-

DEAD MAN'S NUMBER

ments, ran from 14,000,001 to 14,002,500. The second block, allocated to the Highland regiments, ran from 14,002,501 to 14,005,000. The third block, allocated to the General Service Corps, started at 14,200,001 and ran to 15,000,000.

This left between the second

and third blocks 195,000 numbers that were never "officially" allocated at the time (nor have they appeared on any official list since). Mr Stone's Army number falls into this block.

My source is *British Army Uniforms and Insignia WW2 - Part VI, Appendix 3, Army Numbers. - Pete-de Wood, Dulkenerstrasse 61, Germany.*

For the record

Miss Sandes' Homes

IN RESPONSE to the interest shown in *Soldier* (Dec 9, Jan 6) about the Sandes Soldiers' Home at Ballykinler, the following may be of general interest to readers.

In 1852, in response to a lack of welfare facilities for troops stationed in Ireland, Miss Elsie Sandes from Tralee, Co Kerry, opened rooms in which men could meet for prayer and Bible readings. Her intention was to draw them away from the public houses.

There was to be no charge for these facilities — all she wanted it to be was "a home full of light, a home where they would hear of the only one who could free them from sin,

and make their lives glad, and useful and victorious". By 1898 her homes had spread to 11 stations in Ireland and four in India.

Lord Wolsey, appointed C-in-C in Ireland in 1890, encouraged Miss Sandes in her work and in 1903 she was offered a site in the Curragh Camp in Co Kildare.

Sandes Soldiers' Home was officially opened in 1911. The camp had been established for 10,000 men in 1855 at the same time as Aldershot, which was designed for 20,000.

Miss Sandes also established tented homes in South Africa during the Boer War and by 1910 there were 31 Sandes Homes in Ireland

and India. The final total in Ireland was 22.

When Ireland gained independence in 1922, 13 of the 16 homes in Southern Ireland were closed.

At the request of the new C-in-C of the Irish Army, Gen Michael Collins, the Sandes Soldiers' Home in the Curragh Camp remained open. For one night in 1922 this Home was shared by soldiers of both the British and Irish armies.

The Curragh Camp home finally closed its doors in 1986. It is now used as a gymnasium by one of the units stationed in the camp. — **Capt Declan Power, School of Military Engineering, McDermott Barracks, Curragh Camp, Co Kildare.**

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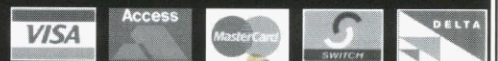
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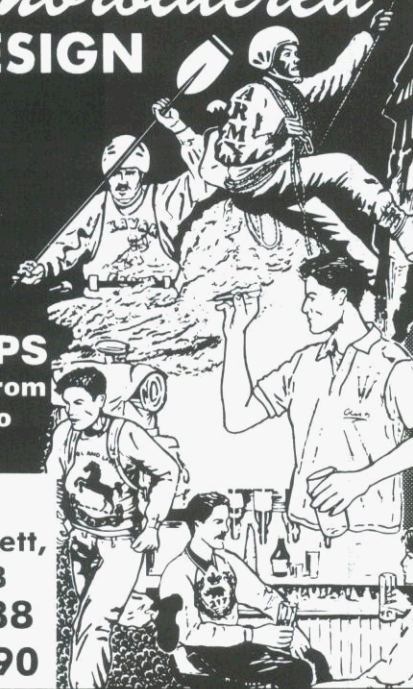


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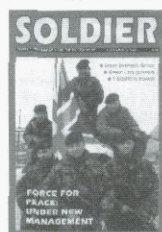
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FEBRUARY 22, 1997

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Army's red vests to the fore at Blackdown

THE Army Inter-Corps cross country championships were held at the Training Regiment and Depot RLC on a course which many athletes familiar with the Blackdown terrain thought would be impossible to set, **writes Steve Lonnen.**

A shorter, fast and flat route was selected as a "sharpener" for athletes selected to represent the Army in the following week's Inter-Service championships.

In the senior men's race, new Army champion Cpl Andy Arrand (RLC) and Spr Stuart Rankin (RE) set a ferocious pace. WO2 Ray Keeney (RLC), nursing a niggling knee injury, hung on gamely as the trio broke away from the field.

Arrand and Rankin forged ahead of Keeney on the second circuit and, with two miles remaining, Arrand made his move, winning by a decisive 42-second margin.

Keeney finished in third place, followed in quick succession by fellow RLC athletes LCpl Paul Harwood (10th); Pte Steve Chapman (13th); Cpl Martin Kilbey (14th); Maj Tony Marshall (16th); Cpl Paul Aston (17th); and Maj Robert Herring (20th) to complete an emphatic team victory (93 pts) ahead of the Royal Engineers (190 pts) and the Royal Signals (206 Pts).

In the women's event over a three-mile circuit, Capt Lynn Higgs and Sgt Sue Sharp (both APTC), renewed their rivalry from the previous week's Army championships.

Individual title went to Army champion Higgs by the narrowest of margins, with a gutsy performance in third place by Capt Rachel Quinn (AGC) confirming her arrival among the top echelon of the Army cross-country runners.

The team competition was the closest in the history of the event, with only two points separating the first three teams. Victory went to the RLC, who tied with the APTC on 35 points, but were awarded victory because their fourth and final scorer finished higher than the APTC's. The Royal Signals, led home by Sig Sophie Morris in fourth place, completed the first three teams.

INTER-SERVICES

Nine days later, in cool and drizzly conditions, the Inter-Service championships were held on a testing circuit at the same venue. The first event saw the junior men (under 20) tackling four hills around the four-mile course.

Cfn Ben Fisher, absent from the Army and Inter-Corps championships, showed that his selection for the team was a sound decision. He took the lead on the first hill and was never headed throughout the race.

He was supported strongly by his slightly younger teammates, who packed tightly in 4th, 5th and 6th positions to earn a convincing margin of victory over the Royal Navy.

Worthy of note was the Army team's total change of runners from the victorious 1996 team. It is to be hoped that Cfn Jez Luckitt, App Barry Webb, Cfn Tony Hardy and Sig Ash Beardsley – all just 18 years of age – will be challenging for more honours next season, alongside 19-year-olds Fisher and Ranger Mark Taylor.

The veterans' (over 40) race proved to be the closest event of these championships. LCpl Sean Malone (43), team captain, Army vet champion and sole survivor from last season's



Picture: Mike Weston

A tight field sets off in the men's race at the Army Inter-Corps cross country championships at Blackdown

event, battled gamely from the start but could not quite get on terms with the two RAF and RN athletes ahead of him.

Fine packing by Malone (4th), Lt Col Glen Grant (5th) and Great Britain orienteering International athlete Capt Colin Dickson (6th), backed up by a dogged performance from Capt Jim Wood (10th), brought the Army team 20 points closer than last year to



Picture: Ian Andrews

Army Inter-Corps and Inter-Service champion Capt Lynn Higgs in full stride for the APTC

the RAF – but a tantalising three points from victory.

The women's race was completely dominated by the red vests of the Army. Capt Lynn Higgs confirmed her status as the Army's leading cross-country runner of the season.

She hit the front within 800 metres and went on to win by a huge margin of 32 seconds. Four of the next five places were filled by Sig Sophie Morris, Sgt Sue Sharp and LCpl Sonia Hurst, with non-scorer Capt Rachel Quinn (6th) beaten by only one athlete other than her own team members.

SSgt Mel Bradley was forced to pull out of the race with a bad foot injury.

JUDO TROPHY BACK IN ARMY HANDS

SHEER determination to recover their lost pride from the previous year paid off for the Army in the Inter-Services judo team championships fought out at RAF Cosford, **writes Tony Allen.**

This was always going to be a tough competition, since the Royal Navy were keen to retain the title, having wrested it from the Army for the first time this

The senior men's championships are steeped in tradition, bringing together over the years Olympic and world championship athletes.

Even the non-scoring members of the teams have at least represented their counties. The Army went into the race quietly confident.

From the start, GB international athlete Cpl Mark Flint (RAF) and Cpl Mark Croasdale (RN) set off at an impossible pace, opening up a gap of 50m on the rest of the field in the first 800 metres. The Army athletes, led by Cpl Andy Arrand, set off more conservatively in deference to the demanding course.

At the end of the first 5km

circuit, Flint led comfortably from Croasdale, with Arrand, 50m behind, totally focused on the back of his rival's vest.

With six runners from each team to count, and all of the Army scorers in the top ten, victory seemed assured. Coming into the finishing straight, a sea of Army red vests supported Cpl Arrand's magnificent second place finish. Superb performances contributed to only the second Army team victory in the event's history.

Once again, there were four debutants in the team (Arrand, Mayo, Hale and Jackson) with the first reserve, ATpr Ben Reiper (AAC), himself a GB junior international steeplechaser, watching from the sidelines.

decade the previous year. In the Navy-Army match, Spr John Spencer won the over 95kg category, while LCpl Kev Clerk lost at under 95kg to AB Dave Audley.

With a minute to go, an attempted foot sweep from Clerk took Audley across the knee, resulting in an injury which was to put the sailor out of the individual fights the fol-

lowing day. At under 86kg, LCpl Steve Morrison dismissed his opponent after just ten seconds, while at under 78kg, LCpl Paul Edmonson beat Mne Andy Moody to put the Army 3-1 ahead.

At under 71kg, Highlander Mac MacDonald lost to Mne Jason Bradbury, before QMSI John Morton, competing at under 65 kilos, ensured victory

Shannon on course for Navy finale

Army 4, Dorset 1

A FINE individual goal, and a large part in another, made LCpl Eugene Shannon one of the key figures in the Army's victory over Dorset in the South West Counties championship at Aldershot.

Playing their best football for some time, the Army confirmed their second place in their group, leaving the leaders, the Royal Navy, with no room for error in their final game, **writes Derrick Bly.**

Cpl Alfie Alford hammered home a right-foot drive from the edge of the area after a corner was not cleared by the Dorset defence, and the Army scored again before the interval. In the 51st minute a corner was headed on by Pte Simon Bird for LBdr Lee Bluck, back in the side after a lengthy absence, to add a third.

Shannon capped a fine performance by slotting the fourth in the 80th minute.

Almost immediately Dorset scored a consolation goal.

On a night when the whole team played well, Bluck, Shannon and Cpl Lee Innes were outstanding.

Army 0, Civil Service 4

A useful Civil Service squad carried off the Civil Service Trophy, although the 4-0 scoreline was hardly a fair reflection on the balance of play.

Civil Service got their noses in front on the half hour and, seven minutes later, Elliott

misjudged a high ball which resulted in a second goal.

The Army had a bigger share of possession after the break, but the Civil Service scored twice more before receiving the trophy from Brig Alan Thompson, Vice-Chairman of the Army Football Association.

Army women 0, Sussex 3

A three-goal defeat by group winners Sussex brought to an end the first season in the South West Counties Championship of the Army women's football team.

But this venture into county-level competition will serve the players well and coach QMSI Joey Roach can feel pleased with the overall improvements made by the women's squad in the past two winters.

Combined Services 3, Belgian Armed Forces 3

Opening their defence of the Kentish Cup at RAF Uxbridge, Combined Services were denied victory by conceding two late, late goals in a game which marked the 75th anniversary year of the formation of the Combined Services Football Association.

Services went ahead 15 minutes from the break when Higgins (Army) found McGuire and his cross was tucked away by Flint.

The final ten minutes plus injury time produced a flurry of goals, starting with Thwaites, who hammered home a stunning left-foot shot from fully 25 yards. Play switched to the other end and Despriet pushed the loose ball past White for 2-1.

Thwaites ran half the length of the pitch before slipping the ball to the unmarked substitute Cpl Lee Innes (Army), who tapped home.

Well into injury time, the Belgians pulled a goal back, then immediately streamed back down the field for a final push, substitute Van Der Sluys getting the final touch for a cruel equaliser.

Skiing gunners scoop the silver

THIS anniversary year for Army skiing has been a very successful one for the Royal Artillery's Alpine teams.

Twenty-one gunner skiers, representing four Royal Artillery regiments (5 Regt, from Catterick, 16 Regt, from Woolwich, Colchester-based 19 Regt and 40 Regt, from Hühne), assembled in the French Alps for some rigorous training at Alpe d'Huez, home of the gunner Alpine training scheme for the past four seasons.

The RA championships incorporated slalom, giant slalom and Super G team and individual events. Results were evenly split, with team trophies going to 40 Regt for the giant slalom and Super G, and to 5 Regt for the slalom and team combination.

Bdr Pearson from 19 Regt swept the board by taking all the individual prizes. The high standard of skiing continued throughout the divisional championships, with many of the gunner teams taking home



Gnr Alpine skiers attending the training scheme pause for a photograph at the top of Pic Blanc (3600m), where much of their training is carried out

more silver, and all of them qualifying for the Army championships . . . a rare achievement.

Among the many admirable results which the gunners achieved at the championships in St Moritz was a first place in the Inter-Corps team slalom.

Senior XV gives Oxford the Blues

Oxford University, 25 Army 47

THE Army senior XV opened the season positively against an Oxford University team containing eight Blues, **writes Roger Thompson.**

On a damp, blustery afternoon the Army brought their backs into action at every opportunity and, with a late surge, beat the students by 22 points. The score could have been even greater had attacks not withered due to over-complication or taking options which definitely seemed less than favourable from the grandstand. That minor criticism apart, one thing is clear: the 1997 Army backs have got "fizz".

Capt Simon Pinder (DWR) at scrum half showed pace and deception, while Capt Paul Knowles, in his third season in the number 10 shirt, provided a stable hinge around which the ever-present Howard Graham (22 Regt RA) and Gnr Rory Jones (7 RHA), in his first season, could profit.

Graham's attacking skills are well known, while Jones provides an extra edge of pace which should allow Lt Brian Johnson and Cpl Steve Bartliff (both R Signals) to take the ball in top gear.

Capt Rob Abernethy (RGR)

has shown a consistent ability to unlock a well-prepared defence. His vision and confidence, however, must not be compromised by the occasional myopic view of the try-line while Johnson and Bartliff are poised, foot hovering over the throttle, ready to finish the job.

An experimental pack more than held its own against some very mature students and had gained domination by half time. The back row of Bdr Andy Dawling (7), Sig Lee Denham (6) and Sgt Pete Curtis (8) played well individually and as a unit.

This year's front five is not a pretty sight. Even youngster Sig Lee Francis (2 Sig Regt) has that mangled look and more than once, in his first red shirt, he felt confident enough to "put it about".

When the Army realises that in Bartliff and Johnson they have two rockets, essential width and penetration will be added to an already competent attack. Against Oxford the rocket-firing mechanism was too complex for the class of opposition and it cost points.

They must remember that on April 12 against the Royal Navy, everything matters and all opportunities must be converted into points.

All downhill for Land Command

SKIERS – all 147 of them – representing 31 unit teams from the 2nd, 3rd and 5th Divisions gathered in the sun and snow of Monetier for the Land Command (UK) skiing championships.

After three days, the weather changed to heavy snow for two days, followed by three days of rain and fog, reverting to sunshine and hard pistes for the sixth and final race, the downhill.

Conditions changed so much that Tpr Skidmore won the race in almost eight seconds faster than his timed run the previous day.

The old man of the mountain, SSgt Geordie Dryden, applied sufficient pressure in the downhill to squeeze Bdr Pearson out of the overall combination prize and provided an exciting finish to the programme.

Major prizes went to form, with the three Army team skiers, SSgt Dryden, Bdr Al Pearson and Tpr Skiddy Skidmore collecting all the individual trophies between them, with the exception of the bronze medal in the Super G: LCpl Andy Wharmby RDG took that honour.

The RAC were prominent in the team races, with only 5 Regt RA intruding at the prize-giving. A strong QRH team collected all four team trophies, with the HCR and RDG dividing the remainder between them.

Fiercest competition was in the middle order, where the University Officer Training Corps provided a refreshingly strong entry.

Thirty-two racers were selected to go forward to the Army championships in St Moritz.



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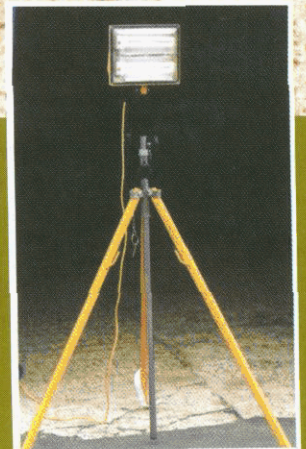
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On stream: SSgt John Baker (front left) leads a patrol of London-based Territorial Army soldiers on a river crossing in Belize. See story and pictures in Pages 20-21

Picture: Sgt Ian Liptrot



SOLDIER