

THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY • 25 PENCE • 17 DECEMBER 1984

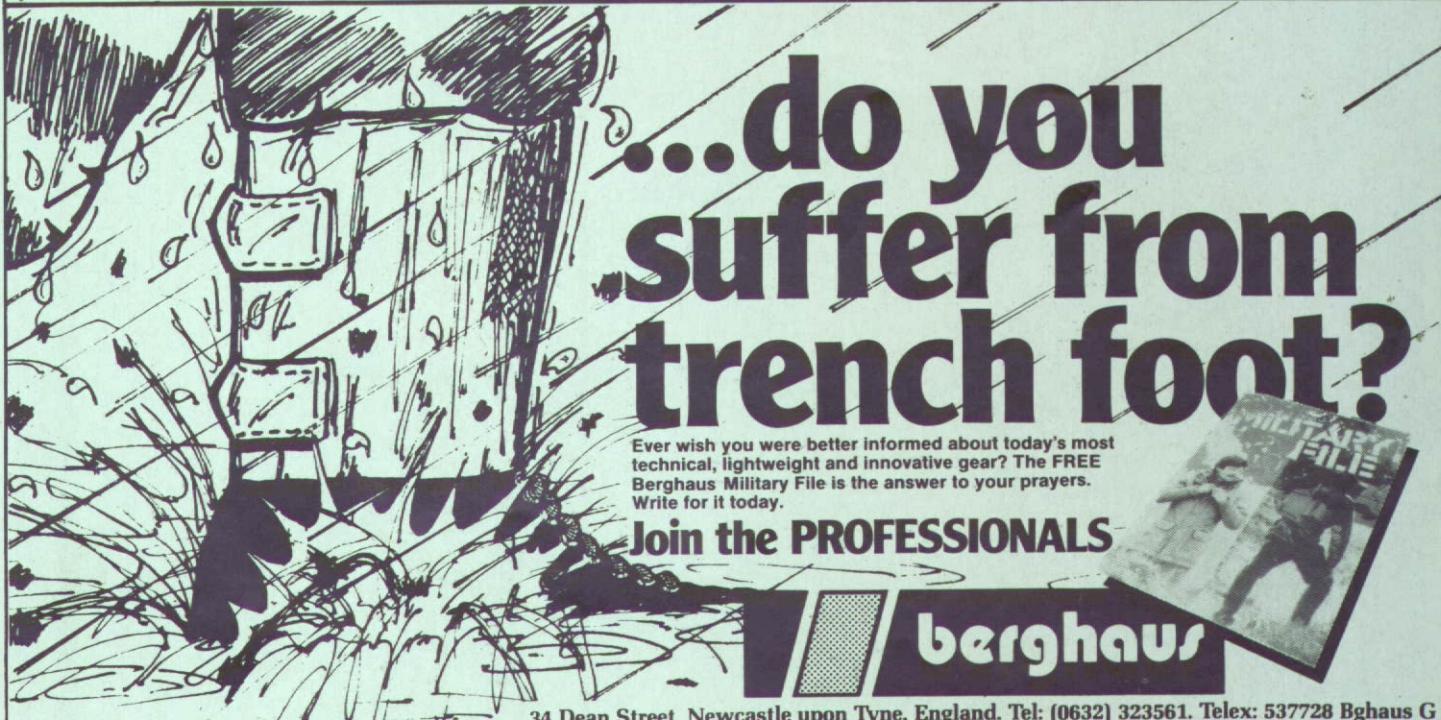
# SOLDIER



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## CONTENTS

- 6 News
- 8 People
- 10 TA Topics
- 11 How Observant Are You?
- 13 SOLDIER to Soldier
- 14 Christmas Humour
- 16 Rare Award
- 17 Still Going Strong...
- 20 Christmas '84 — Readers Recollections
- 23 All In The Family
- 25 SOLDIER IN HONG KONG — 5 Page Special
- 30 Christmas '84 — The Truce
- 32 Looking at Books
- 37 Your Cap Badge
- 38 Mail Drop
- 39 Competition
- 40 Stars of Orienteering
- 49 Sport

FRONT COVER: 'Joy To The World'. A picture to sum up the spirit of Christmas. From left: Lance Corporal Karen Normington, Lieutenant Sally Slade and Private Fleur Rickford, QARANC, sing carols in Aldershot's C of E Garrison Church.

Picture: Doug Pratt

BACK COVER: Men of The Cheshire Regiment on patrol near Hong Kong's Man Kam To border crossing point. Note the BMX bikes! See also page 26.

Picture: Paul Haley

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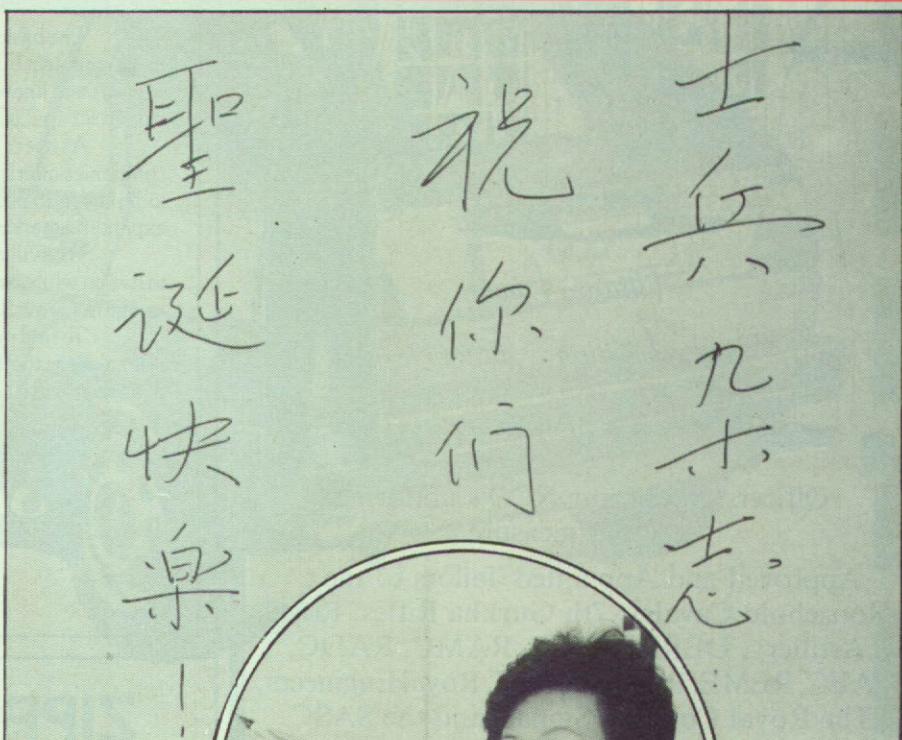
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# SOLDIER

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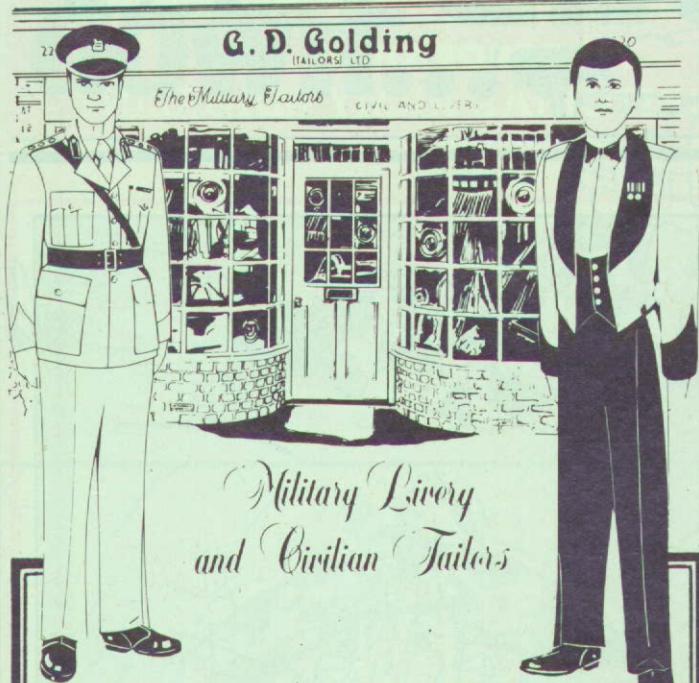


SOLDIER MAGAZINE WISHES YOU ALL A

**Merry  
Christmas**

**Well, this is a different way of passing on the traditional greeting... and is done with the aid of Mrs Chen Shu Fong, of the MoD Chinese Language School in Hong Kong. Special feature on the world-famous school — see page 28.**

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# BRAVERY AWARD FOR MEDICAL OFFICER



Smiling through the sadness. From left: Band Sergeant Major David Coverdale, Captain Phil Evans (Aldershot), Major Laurie Dunn (the original Director of Music), Major Don Pryce, Band Sergeant Major Mervyn Andrew (Chatham).

## ANOTHER BAND BIDS SAD FAREWELLS

**H**E ROYAL Engineers Band Aldershot has passed into history — and received praise for skill and dedication at a concert with the Chatham Band before an enthusiastic audience at the packed Princes Hall.

There has been a Royal Engineers band at Aldershot since 1903, but it was only in 1949 that it was officially established with full time musicians. Previously the bandsmen were ordinary Sappers doing volunteer duty.

Since 1949 it has had the services of some distinguished musicians: notably two of the three most senior officers in Army music — Lieutenant Colonel Dick Ridings, at present the senior director of music in the Guards Division, and Lieutenant Colonel Stan Patch, Director of Music, Royal Artillery, Woolwich. But were previously in charge of the Aldershot band.

Captain Phil Evans took over two and a half years ago at the time of the announcement of the disbandment. It wasn't the best time to take on the job, but whatever effect the news had on the musicians' feelings it did not upset their playing.

"In fact the morale has been superb," said Captain Evans just before the farewell concert. "The pride is still there."

The amalgamation with the Chatham band means that 10 Aldershot musicians will retire from military music. Three will transfer to non-musical duties within the Corps of Engineers, seven are looking for jobs.

"Some of the boys have been in the band for 20 years or so," he said. "This is all they know and suddenly their whole world has collapsed."

Sergeant Chris Armstrong, who is looking for civilian employment after 16 years playing a cornet with

the band, agreed. It was a very sad occasion.

Captain Evans goes to a new job and a new corps. He is to take over the Royal Artillery band at Dortmund.

He leaves behind what he described as a great debate on whether the one remaining Engineers' band should be stationed at the Sappers' historic home in Chatham or with the training regiments in Aldershot.

"We've had two bands full time chasing their tails. So one band is really going to be very, very busy. With the best will in the world it won't be able to cover the Corps musically," said Captain Evans.

The RE Aldershot band has played at many venues in a relatively short but crowded life including Royal Tournaments, the forecourt of Buckingham Palace on the first occasion the Engineers did Public Duties, and the Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

THE Medical Officer of the Queen's Royal Irish Hussars, who ignored a fire risk and his own injuries in a helicopter crash to treat the crew, has been awarded the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct.

Major Simon Thompson crashed in bad weather during training in Canada while flying to attend another helicopter casualty on 22 June. Despite his own severe contusions and shock he managed to extricate himself and immediately returned to the upside down wreck and managed to ease clear the semi-conscious crewman.

With the help of soldiers, Major Thompson crawled back into the shattered cockpit, regardless of the risk from spilt fuel, and managed to release the severely injured pilot. He then set off in another helicopter with the two injured men but was forced to divert because of the appalling weather.

On landing Major Thompson handed over the seriously ill pilot to a civilian doctor who took him to hospital by road. He then insisted on remaining on duty in the Medical Centre for several hours until the original casualty on the prairie and his co-pilot had been brought in and he was satisfied that they had received the best possible attention.

Congratulating him on his exceptional physical and moral courage, General Sir Nigel Bagnall, Commander in Chief of BAOR, added that he showed a coolness and devotion to duty in spite of considerable pain and shock from which he took some days to recover, conduct in the finest traditions of the Royal Medical Corps.

### PLAYSCHEME

IN OUR last issue (3 December) Anne Armstrong raised the problems of saving the Cambridge Military Hospital's children's playscheme and asked for those interested in helping to send contributions to the hospital in Aldershot.

There is now a change to this arrangement and anyone who can help is asked to send contributions to: Cambridge Hospital Children's Welfare Fund, c/o National Westminster Bank, Wellington Street, Aldershot, Hampshire.

### MUSEUM

THE A to Z guide of Army museums on page 35 of our last issue listed the address, phone number and opening hours of the REME museum at Arborfield, near Reading, Berks. The museum is now in the process of moving accommodation to Isaac Newton Road, Arborfield and will reopen next March.

If any museum still to be featured in our A-Z has any change to opening hours or other information, SOLDIER would like to hear.

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# Army's part in Ethiopian Airlift

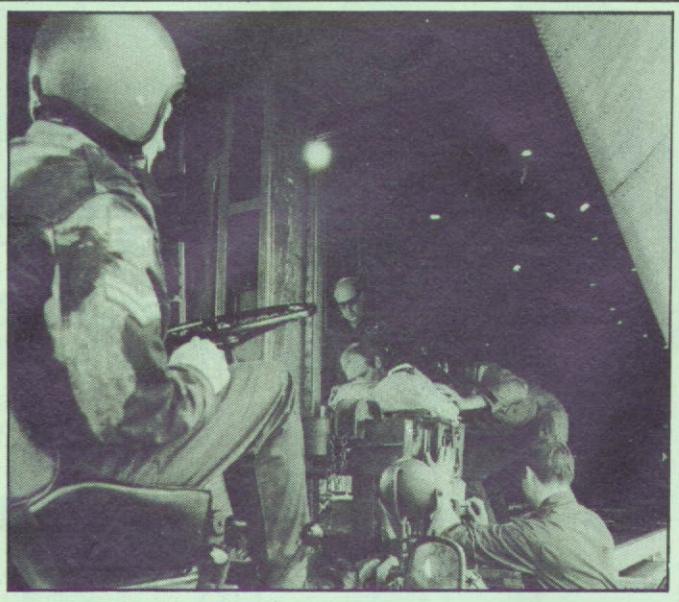
AS SOLDIER went to press, the Army had six personnel involved in the round-the-clock airborne famine relief operation in drought-stricken Ethiopia, an operation involving 50 aircraft from several nations and including two RAF Hercules, writes Graham Smith.

Lyneham-based 47 Air Despatch Squadron, RCT, part of 29 Transport and Movements Regiment based at South Cerney has two air despatchers — a warrant officer and a staff sergeant working with the RAF Hercules crews. Other Army input is supplied by two sappers from 9 Para Squadron, RE (they have helped with water purification plant tasks) and two signallers

from 29 Transport and Movements Regiment, who have been helping with ground-air comms during the airlift of vital supplies.

In three weeks, the joint RAF/Army task force had air-landed a total of 1,350 tonnes of supplies.

This was made up of 1,163.8 tonnes of grain, 47.1 tonnes of blankets, 30.5



## EARLY CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR POMPEY



Lord Mayor ... Major Craib ... safe bomb!

tonnes of vehicles including Land Rovers, 17.9 tonnes of biscuits, 65 tonnes of flour and 25.7 tonnes of other vital goods including medical supplies.

In all the Hercules aircraft flew a total of 208 sorties in the same period.

Because of fuel distribution problems associated with the samaritan missions to the distribution point at Assad, each working day for the air despatchers began with a 60-minute-plus flight out of the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, a total of 380 miles 'dead flying' due east.

Daily sorties over, the RAF and Army crews had to return to their accommodation the same way!

The air despatchers came into their professional own when one aircraft became unserviceable on the Makale strip, 400 miles east of Assad, the assembly point, up in the mountains and about 600 miles from Addis Ababa. The despatchers managed to solve a mechanical problem in getting the aircraft off the strip using improvised methods.

As Squadron OC, Major Terry Lewis told me: "They were able to use their air despatch training by laying landing lights on a makeshift runway. The remoteness of some runways is posing something of a problem with reports of single-aircraft capacity and

**Men of 47 Air Despatch Squadron, RCT, pictured here in typical role loading supplies aboard a Lyneham-based Hercules with the aid of an Eager Beaver forklift truck.**

others overhead having to circle before air-landing the supplies. This is particularly difficult if an aircraft goes u/s on the deck."

It is understood that the Ethiopian Government is still considering the options of air-dropping or free dropping the supplies at 50 feet from over the tail ramp.

Oxfam and Save the Children organisers have been approaching the RAF/Army co-ordinated operation to seek the best and quickest ways of getting the vital victuals to the starving thousands.

They favour air dropping techniques such as on the scale of Khana Cascade in Nepal in the spring of 1973 when thousands of tons of grain were distributed in this way.

Major Lewis said: "We are ready if the call comes to do this."

## New Look for Marchwood

PLANS for the redevelopment of Marchwood port near Southampton are well under way.

Work on the £17 million modernisation scheme is expected to start next year and will include a new jetty with roll-on roll-off facilities for military vehicles.

The existing port was built in 1943-44 for the Mulberry Harbour scheme used in the D-Day landings, but the existing buildings and equipment are now obsolete.

IT MAY have defeated Bob Hope's plans for a gala Guildhall evening concert in the seaport city recently yet it did not make the stoic people of Portsmouth yield 43 years ago. And the Army has been well praised, too.

Now, what has been described as a part of Portsmouth's 'history and heritage' — a defused 250-kilo German wartime bomb — has been handed to the seafaring city by the Army's bomb disposal experts.

It will take pride of place in the recently-opened D-Day Museum.

Dormant for more than four decades the bomb was discovered near the Hippodrome Theatre where the octogenarian comic, Bob Hope was due to put on a show. The alarm was raised at 11 am.

A team of ten bomb disposal experts led by Major Alistair Craib from 33 Engineer Regiment (EOD) Royal Engineers, based at Chattenden, Kent, sped down to the south coast's city with its ancient mariner connections.

The bomb, judged to have fallen earthwards in 1941 from a Luftwaffe marauder, was found to have buried in concrete, with just its fin protruding.

The EOD squad's expertise rendered the bomb safe in eight hours. The City's Elders asked if the relic could be returned at a later date as a keepsake. The Army obliged.

Major Craib, the Ops Major, who has dealt with seven bombs this year — four of them in the Falklands —

who arrived with his team in four hours to deal with the unwelcome souvenir, said: "The main problem was that part of it was encased in concrete which someone had previously poured over it years ago on the old Hippodrome site.

"It was not dangerous but all bombs have to be treated with care. We chipped away at the concrete until we found the fuse. All bombs are risky until you get the explosives out."

A grateful and beaming Lord Mayor, John Marshall, told Major Craib: "It's a part of our history and heritage. Portsmouth suffered a great deal during the war. We don't mind having it back again on this second occasion and we will look after it. It will serve as a very useful reminder of a pretty difficult period in our history."

**● PAYNOTE: NO ARMY** bomb disposal experts, currently in Band Seven of the pay scales, will take a drop in pay as a result of re-evaluation of pay, says the ministry of Defence.

Press reports suggested their pay would be frozen.

An MOD spokesman said: "There is a recommendation under consideration within the Ministry for the continuation of Band Seven as a case has been put forward for its retention. Individuals will retain old Band Seven rates until comparable Band Six catches up."

# MOUTH-WATERING

## That's David's dishes

PRAISE has been so high and consistent for ACC cook Lance Corporal David Turner that when he left Northern Ireland he took with him a Commendation from the GOC Northern Ireland, Lieutenant General Sir Robert Richardson.

During the past 14 months of his three years' service in the Army Catering Corps, David has often served as the only cook for platoon-sized units in Londonderry. The citation which led to

the Commendation refers in glowing terms to his resourcefulness and standards.

David has been promoted to lance corporal since the drafting of the citation, which says: "Private Turner's cheerful professionalism and the excellence of his cooking have contributed greatly to the high morale of the platoons he has served. In the cramped and crowded conditions

in which he has to work he spent countless hours preparing meals of the best quality, and nothing has ever been too much trouble.

"His fine example and contribution to the high morale of the soldiers on operations have been every bit as important in the fight against terrorism as the acts of courage and gallantry which make the headlines."

David believes the reason for his mouth-watering success is that he sees the soldiers he feeds as his customers.

After Christmas he is off to Germany where he will lavish his haute cuisine on the lucky members of 12th Air Defence Regiment at Dortmund.



Lance Corporal David Turner, Privates Reg Baker (1 R. Anglian), Paul Fairbrother, 'Buck' Rogers and 'Puddle' Pudwell (2 Queen's): tasting time.

### ROUND AND ABOUT

A plea for funds for an anti-cancer machine had four brave ladies from Hamelin Garrison parachuting for the first—and for some the last—time. Shirley Gayford, Roseanne Ferguson, Anne Moffat and Jackie Bell had sponsors for DM2,500 and, following a one-day course at the Sennerley Parachute Club and a week of nervous waiting, they hurtled downwards, to a collection for London's Westminster Hospital. They also threw in about £40 each to help boost the takings.

Moving from Celle to Dortmund in the New Year with a new name

will be 94th Locating Regiment, RA, which will be known as Q (Sanna's Post) Locating Battery, RA, 5th Heavy Regiment, RA. Operational date is January 31.

★ ★ ★

The RA Mounted Band, formed in 1886 is no more. Four previous Directors, 42 old comrades and 39 serving members drank a last toast at a reunion dinner at Larkhill. Among those present was 95-year-old Ernie Longhove who served from 1921-45. Said Ernie: "We must have another reunion soon, but not next weekend as I've already got something on."

### Big day for Pat and Colin

Flowers for Patricia, a medal for her husband, WO2 Colin Smith, and a big smile from Colonel J D Redding, Commander Rheindahlen Garrison, BAOR. The occasion was the presentation of the Meritorious Service Medal to WO Smith for 27 years of exemplary service. The CSM of C Company, Grenadier Guards, Colin has had postings in Egypt, Kenya, Libya, Hong Kong and Belize in his 30 years Army service.



COLONEL J D REDDING, MRS PAT SMITH, WO2 COLIN SMITH: exemplary occasion.



Colonel Doug Swanson, Corporal Derek Young: stamped and delivered

### Posties stamp their mark

Hard to see from the photo, but Corporal Derek Young (right centre) is receiving a framed example of the philatelic cover he designed for Exercise Lionheart. The presenter is Lieutenant Colonel Doug Swanson, CO 1 Postal and Courier Regiment RE,

who handed out congratulations to the 'posties' who handled the cover. Officially commissioned by 1 (BR) Corps most have been sold, but if collectors look sharp they might find a few at some Forces Post Offices.



## Cheshire's call crowns reign of Miss World '83

Sarah Jane Hutt is not this year's Miss World winner, but who cares? Clearly Privates Paul Taylor, Simon Humphries and Mark Egan don't. All they know is she's the 1983 title holder and that it's a crowning moment for them. Sarah Jane was carrying out one of her last official duties as Miss World and called on the Cheshire's who are on border patrol in the New Territories. See Page 26.

### QUICK

Lieutenant Colonel W B Stevens has taken over command of 22 AD Regiment RA, BAOR, from outgoing CO Lieutenant Colonel L A Wilkes.

### SPOT

# PEOPLE

## FACES and PLACES

### 'DO YOU REMEMBER...?'

#### First-time meet for D-Day youngsters

IT wasn't a reunion because they had never met, but when old soldiers Bernard Cuttiford (left) and Jim Coupland did meet they found they had a lot in common.

Jim contacted SOLDIER after reading of Bernard's experiences in Normandy in our D-Day Supplement.

Mr Coupland wrote: "Jim says he is one of the few D-Day veterans still under the age of 60. So am I."

As it happens both men live not far from each other — Bernard in Coventry and Jim in Nuneaton. So, with the help of SOLDIER, a meeting was arranged.

After their get-together Bernard reported to us: "It turned out that Jim and I are the same age, our birthdays being within six days of each other.

"We both enlisted in February 1943 at the same recruiting office in Coventry. Jim joined the Royal Warwickshire Regiment and I the 13/18 Royal Hussars (Queen Mary's Own) and then the Staffordshire Yeomanry (Queen's Own Royal Regiment).

"We were both trained in the same areas as the 27th Armoured Brigade and the 185th Infantry Brigade were destined for the same landing on Queen White, Sword Beach.

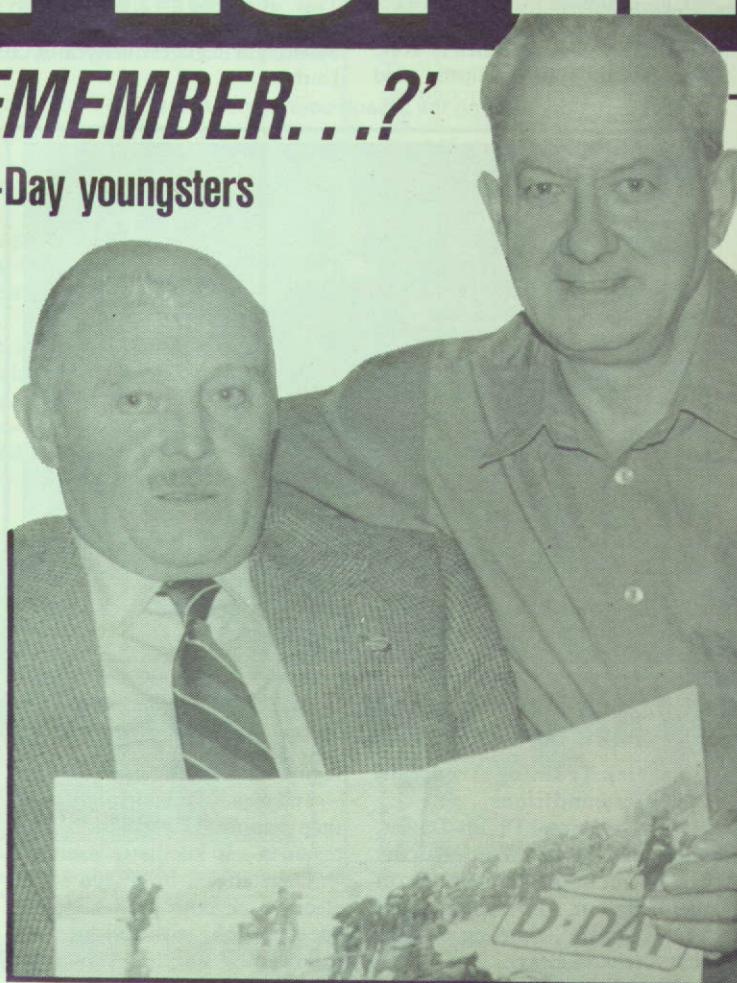
"We both landed with the assault force on D-Day morning — the 13/18 Hussars, the East Riding Yeomanry and the Staffordshire Yeomanry supported by the 2nd Warwicks, the 1st Norfolks and the 2nd King's Scottish Light Infantry.

"We went over the same ground. Jim even knew the anti-tank ditch where my tank commander was killed.

"Jim was wounded twice and returned to action: I, fortunately got through without a scratch.

"We both rose to the dizzy height of corporal during our service and we were both demobbed in January 1946. Subsequently we both joined the TA and reached the rank of sergeant."

And if all that wasn't coincidence enough, Bernard added that Jim had been born in Victoria Road, Chapel End, the place where his (Bernard's) wife Rosemary had been living when he first met her.



BERNARD CUTTIFORD, JIM COUPLAND: D-Day teenage soldiers

## Hotel honours VC who caught Hitler

THE exploits of a VC hero who in 1918 captured Adolf Hitler — he escaped soon after being taken prisoner — and 36 other enemy soldiers after leading a bayonet charge, have been recalled at a Leamington Spa hotel.

Private Henry Tandey, known as 'Napper' and said to be the most decorated private soldier of the 1914-18 war, was a stoker at the Regent Hotel before joining the Green Howards and transferring to the 5th Battalion West Riding Regiment.

In the six weeks he was with the battalion in the later stages of the war, he was five times mentioned in

dispatches and awarded the DCM, the MM and the VC.

Now photographs of paintings of his VC action and that of fellow VC holder Colonel John Barrett, cousin of the present chairman of the hotel, have been unveiled in the hotel's newly-named Victoria Cross Lounge.

The pictures were unveiled by Rear Admiral B C G Place, himself a VC holder and chairman of the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association.

Naming the lounge of the

old hotel the Victoria Cross Lounge, he introduced the widows of the two heroes to guests from the Green Howards, and the Leicestershire.

Wearing their husbands' awards, Mrs Anni Tandey and Mrs Augustine Barrett mingled with old friends and met Earl Spencer, father of the Princess of Wales, who was there to unveil a list of kings, queens, tsars, heads of state, MPs, and actors who have signed the hotel's visitors' book.

A 16-strong squad of soldiers brought a touch of Christmas cheer to thousands of shoppers in Herford. Taking turns to make up a four-man team the soldiers, all electrical experts, helped to fix more than 2,000 coloured lights in the shopping centre of the German town. The lads, serving with 4th Armoured Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment based at Wentworth Barracks, were led by telecom ace Lance Corporal George Henry, 27, assisted by Lance Corporals Alan Wiggins and Haroun Khan and Signaller Chris Davis. "The job took four days, but the biggest problem was the frosty weather," said George.

The second Falklands march and shoot competition has been won by 652 Sqn AAC. The ten-man team, led by Lt Nick Hopkins, beat 11 other teams to win the trophy for the best team in a three-part event. The 652 team lost no marks for part one — the initial inspection — but came fourth in the eight-mile course (part two) from Pony Pass Quarry along the Stanley water front to end at Lookout Rocks range, in one hour 11 minutes and 45 seconds. They won the shooting to win overall.

Speed and accuracy has won Jean Frazer her third Comstar silver award in two years. The award was presented by Brigadier John Bettridge, Commandant of The Royal School of Artillery, Larkhill. Jean, who also collected a bottle of champagne, is Supervisor of the Army Communications Centre, Larkhill.



# NEVER MIND THE WEATHER!

**TERRITORIAL** Army soldiers who recently demonstrated their ability to reinforce the Regular Army in Germany during the big Exercise Lionheart were given another tough test of their military skills, and stamina — during two days of continuous rain.

More than 1,000 men from units of 15 Infantry Brigade took part in a competition code-named 'Marshall Merlin'.

The 10 and 15-man teams from bases throughout Northumberland, Tyne and Wear, County Durham, Cleveland, Yorkshire and Humberside battled for points in such competitions as:

**Shooting:** including a night shoot during which Land Rover headlights were used to simulate flares illuminating an ambush situation.

**Forced March:** of nearly four miles, the last mile in NBC protective clothing.

**Assault Course:** over which teams had to carry a form of stretcher-like 'burden'.

**First Aid:** in which teams were quizzed on basic techniques and had to demonstrate mouth-to-mouth resuscitation on a dummy.

**Recognition:** during which teams were required to identify photographs of armoured fighting vehicles and aircraft.

**Nuclear Warfare:** when teams were tested on the fitting of their

protective clothing and the speed they could put on their respirators in case of a gas attack.

Among visitors to the competition were Major General Peter Inge, General Officer Commanding the Army's North East District and Commander 2nd Infantry Division, who was accompanied by Brigadier Michael Aris, Commander 15 Infantry Brigade.

#### RESULTS

**Champion Infantry Unit:** Headquarters Company 2nd Battalion Yorkshire Volunteers, based in York. Runners up: 'A' Company 2nd

204 Field Battery tackling the assault course.



Battalion Yorkshire Volunteers, York.

**Winning Infantry Team:** Headquarters Company 2nd Battalion Yorkshire Volunteers, York. Runners up: 'A' Company 2nd Battalion Yorkshire Volunteers, York.

**Winning Other Arms Team:** 217 Squadron, Royal Corps of Transport, of Leeds. Runners up: 269 Battery, Royal Artillery, of Leeds.

**Winning Services Team:** 252 Provost Company, of Stockton-on-Tees. Runners up: 124 Recovery Company, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, of Aycliffe, Co Durham.

## HERO MEETS OLD PALS

THE MOST decorated war veteran in Belgium has been meeting his many friends in the 40th (Ulster) Signal Regiment (Volunteers).

Jef Mooris, whose mother was British, was a leading resistance fighter in Belgium during the World War 2 and when British forces fought inch by inch to Germany, Jef showed his British passport and enlisted in The Rifle Brigade.

On a patrol he was wounded, the Germans took him to a field hospital, and his horrific memories of crude hospitalisation and amputation of a leg without anaesthetic barely match the treatment handed out by interrogators.

Now, Jef, awarded the MBE, always looks forward to renewing his friendships with the regiment.

The links were established in 1980 during Crusader; they were reinforced during Lionheart. "Jef is a marvellous man who has become almost an honorary member of this regiment," said the volunteer quartermaster.

## AND LANCASHIRE LADS DEFY RAIN

**IN THEIR** first major weekend exercise since return from Lionheart, the men of the 4th (Volunteer) Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment whose 'patch' runs from Blackpool to Ashton-under-Lyne — with headquarters in Preston — held their ARU and Tameside Trophy competition on the

Catterick Training Area... in very wet conditions.

Major General Philip Davies, GOC of North West District carried out his ARU inspection of the Battalion, also visiting their 'recruits cadre', 30 strong, on their first weekend away.

The Saturday training was 'county fair' tests of the section

teams for the Tameside Trophy — and on a very damp night, their map reading and patrol skills were tested in a 10 kilometre 'exercise'.

Then after a brief (too brief!) sleep, back onto a 15 kilometre speed march, with full kit to be followed by a section shoot with SLRs and LMGs.

Overall winners of the Trophy,

and the speedmarch, were Burnley's A Company No 1 team, led by Cpl Nick Murray with Blackpool's B 1. team runners up.

The Battalion CO, Lieutenant Colonel Roger Brooks' summary of the weekend: "I'm proud of you all, and this exercise once again demonstrates the difficult job of the section commander."



Lieutenant Colonel Brooks presents a damp trophy to Corporal Murray



The Burnley men keep going and ignore the rain. Team 3 from A company in action.

*Pictures: John Duckworth*

# SAPPERS HELP OIL SPILLAGE TESTS

Territorial soldiers of 108 Field Squadron Royal Engineers from Swansea laid Class 30 trackway at Pembray to assist the Warren Springs Laboratory's recent project into oil pollution clearance.

Some twelve soldiers from 1

Troop based at Richardson Street laid twelve rolls of trackway covering quarter of a mile of beach over the last weekend.

The oil pollution clearance tests are being conducted on behalf of Department of Industry and Transport.



## Honoured in the field...

IN GERMANY, Major George Dance was presented with the Territorial Decoration.

Major Dance has been a member of the Territorial Army for 38 years, and spent 26 years working his way up through the ranks.

George, in the Royal Engineers (V), has four children — three sons and a daughter. Only one of his sons has followed him into the Territorial Army.

Major Dance has served at a staggering 34 camps during his 38 year Army career. Being awarded an honour in the field is a very unusual occurrence, but it was felt that George, whose record is excellent, deserved the honour.

The award was made in Bracht, at 3 Base Ammunition Depot, on the same day as a new stretch of military railway track on which George had been working was declared open.



## TOP SHOTS

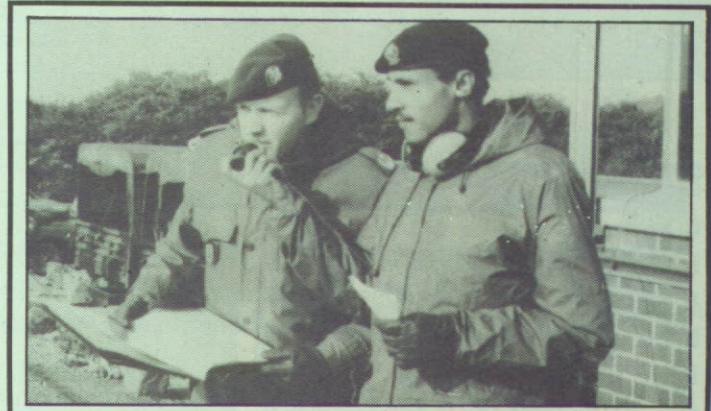
MEN of the 6th/7th (V) Battalion The Queen's Regiment were given the opportunity of competing for the German Army Shooting Badge when they were hosts to a party of officers and NCOs from the German Army Office in Cologne.

Led by Lt Col (Oberstleutnant) Ulrich Feldman, the Germans were anxious to see the shooting standards of a TA infantry battalion. Said Major Karl Du Mont: "We were very impressed with the shooting team of 6/7 Queens when they did so well in our international competition last autumn (the unit achieved two

second positions). We wanted to see if they were as good in England".

During their stay the Germans fired the British Army Personal Test Weapon (APWT) visited Queen's Division Depot at Bas- singbourn, and toured the sights of London.

The TA men showed the visitors what marksmen they are, Captain John Day (shooting team captain) and Cpl Hoffman gaining the Cold Shooting Badge award and nine others obtaining silver and bronze awards including Cpl Springall from B Company who won a silver.



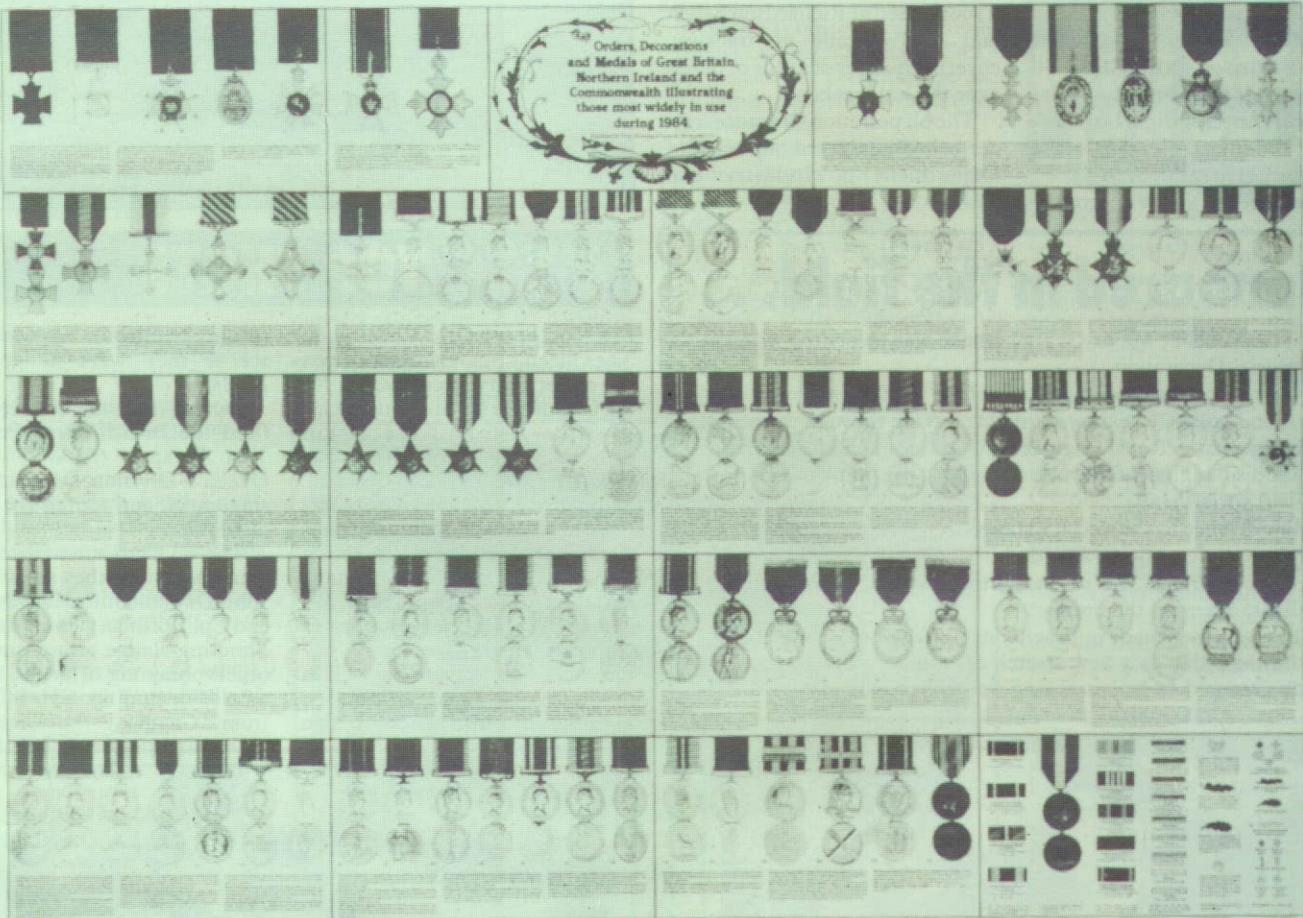
## How observant are you?

These two pictures look alike but they differ in ten details. Look at them carefully. If you cannot spot the differences turn to page 38.



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# SOLDIER to Soldier

## C

CHRISTMAS is a marvellous time for most people — particularly those with families.

Yet a fair number of Servicemen and women will either celebrate Yuletide early, or late because of essential duties at Christmas.

In wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, SOLDIER staff send especially warm greetings to those for whom duty must come first.

So, whether you are on patrol in Northern Ireland, doing a stint as duty officer, or nursing in a British Military Hospital our thoughts are with you.

And at this particular season, the main wish for 1985 — a peaceful year.

★ ★ ★

EARLY in the New Year (17 January) there will be a spectacular 300th Anniversary Tribute to Great British Regiments presented by the Royal Tournament at the Royal Albert Hall, London.

With the band of the Grenadier Guards this will be a once-only pageant featuring the glory, the ceremony and the massed bands of the regiments founded in 1685.

Seats will be limited and priced at £5, £8 and £10 with proceeds in aid of regimental charities.

You can obtain information by ringing 01-930-7148 or send an SAE and cheque/postal order (payable to '300th Anniversary Tribute') to:

The 300th Anniversary Tribute, The Royal Tournament, Horse Guards, Whitehall, London SW1A 2AX.

Make sure you include your name, address and daytime telephone number.

★ ★ ★

THANKS to the generosity of the Gilpin Trust who are providing prizes, the National Army Museum will again run an art competition, this time for a military Christmas card or gift.

The young artists may draw their inspiration from a display of Victorian military Christmas cards, in the new accessions case from Monday 10 December to Sunday 6 January 1985.

Or they may find ideas in the other relevant Christmas items on show in the museum: gift boxes given to soldiers in the Boer War and the First World War by members of the Royal Family, or the small souvenirs made by soldiers in their spare time as gifts for their loved ones.

Competition details are available from the Department of Education, (01-730-0717 extension 28).

★ ★ ★

NAAFI customers are getting a Christmas bonus as the corporation pegs the cost of more than 40 items in UK families shops to at least 10 per cent below normal retail prices.

It's all part of a Reach For The Stars campaign to demonstrate to customers that NAAFI is a worthwhile place to shop.

"If our customers give us their support, we will be able to hold these new, low prices, for a long time to come" promised Bernard Barton, NAAFI's marketing manager. "I'm convinced it will work."

Among the best buys: a 250g packet of New Zealand Anchor Butter down from 51p to 46p; 250g Devon Butter, down from 53p to

47p; 11oz Corned Beef Loaf, down from 71p to 64p; and Bold (E3) Automatic down from £1 to 90p.

The Reach For The Stars bargains, which will be highlighted on families shop shelves by big red stars, will add to the savings customers receive on Deep Cut offers which change each month. In addition, NAAFI families shops are selling German Qualitätswein and Spätlese wines at substantial discounts.

★ ★ ★

THE Gunnersbury Park Museum is staging an exhibition: 'The Victorian Soldier: Life in the British Army 1837-1901', to 2 January 1985.

This travelling exhibition has been prepared by the National Army Museum for circulation by the Area Museums Service for South Eastern England. It looks at the effects of such factors as food, discipline, daily life and active service on the 'average' Victorian soldier.

There are illustrations of the motley band of recruits, mainly from the working classes (labourers, servants, factory workers, and even boys), undergoing medical examinations and selection. Pictures and artefacts show life in the recruit's new home, the regiment, with its monotonous pattern of parades, meals, polishing equipment and fatigues. Active service meant that the average soldier was often posted to defend the many colonies and particularly India.

The exhibition considers the effects of poor quality and low quantity food and low pay. Corporal punishment was common and the Museum will be supplementing this exhibition with part of the tombstone and the story of Private White, reputedly the last soldier to die of a flogging in Britain in 1846. This tragic event occurred at Hounslow barracks and White was buried in Heston churchyard. Other items from the Museum's collections will include Middlesex Regiment militaria and equipment.

There will also be a display of figures and dioramas by members of the Ealing Branch of the British Model Soldier Society. Particular emphasis will be on figures representing Victorian and later regiments made by the toymaker William Britain.

The Museum is always interested to hear from people with information and material relating to the Victorian soldier and military activity in the West London area during all periods. In particular, details of the effects of World War Two on West London would be appreciated. For further details or to give information contact: Curator 01-992 1612.

ACCESS: Vehicles: entrance Popes Lane. Underground: Acton Town.

British Rail: Gunnersbury.

Pedestrians: various entries around the park.

Bus: E3 (daily), No. 7 (Sundays).

OPENING HOURS: Monday-Friday 1-4 pm. Saturdays, Sundays & Bank Holidays 2-4 pm. Closed Christmas and Boxing Days.

★ ★ ★

A SLIGHTLY scientific, professional approach to gardening was an important factor for the winner of this year's Rheindahlen Garrison Garden Competition.

When Lieutenant Colonel Bob Thompson (retired) and his wife Magdalena moved into

their quarter 18 months ago the garden was in reasonable condition but Magdalena, who spends a great deal of time in the garden, has brought it to competition winning standard.

Magdalena's professional approach includes testing the soil for acidity or alkalinity, and adjusting it to suit different plants.

Although the end of November is not the best time to photograph a garden, it is quite obvious it is well cared for all the year.

The photograph shows (left to right) Lieutenant Colonel Dennis Lloyd (Admin Officer) Mr Stan Fleming from the Rheindahlen Garden Centre, Mrs Magdalena Thompson, Lieutenant Colonel Bob Thompson being presented with his trophy by Garrison Commander, Colonel J D Redding, and the Garrison Adjutant, Major Tony Farrell.

In order to keep the garden looking good for next year's competition, Mr Stan Fleming presented the Thompsons with a Rheindahlen Garden Centre voucher worth DM50.



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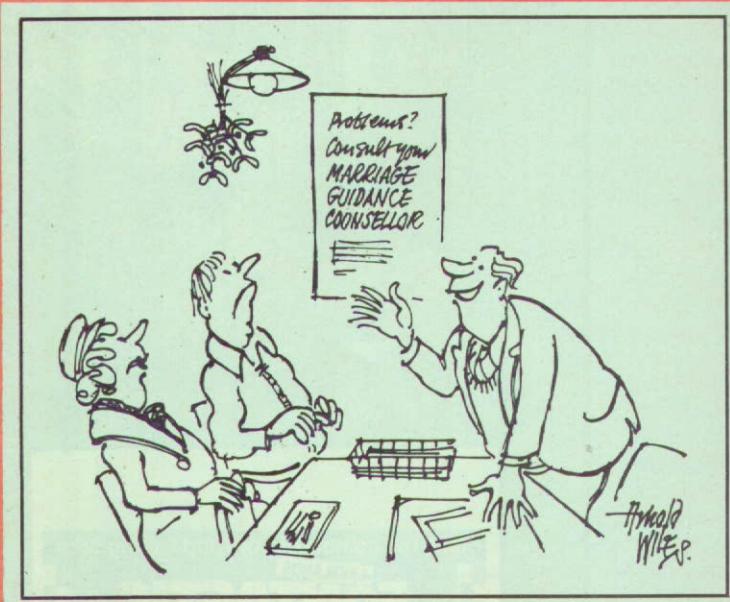
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*"I do wish they wouldn't flaunt their electricity bills at us."*



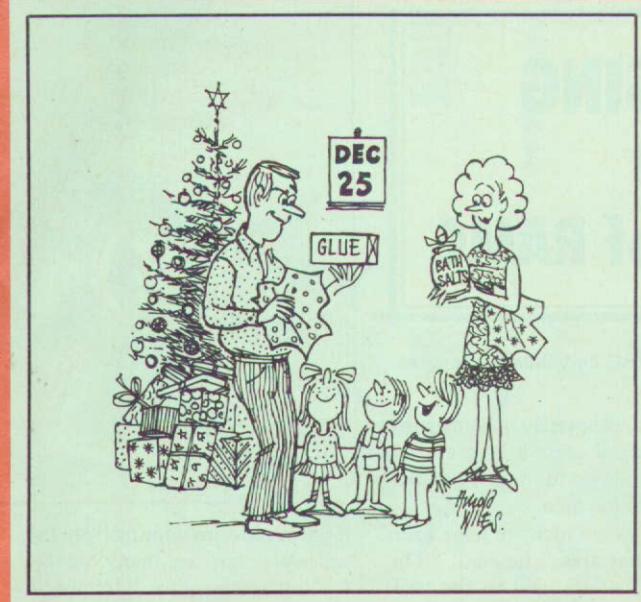
*"It's Christmas, Mr and Mrs Marples: the time of peace and goodwill. Why don't you bury the hatchet for a day or two?"*



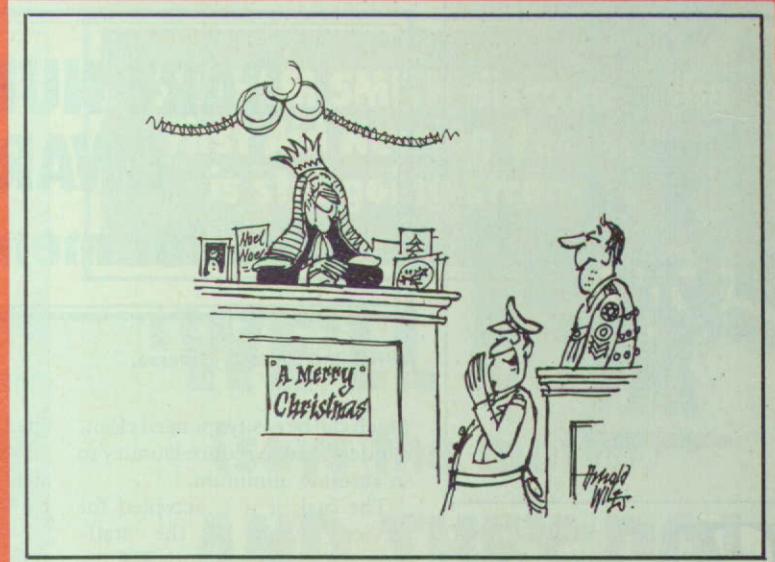
*"Well, we all indulge in a little moonlighting these days..."*



*"And, to keep abreast of inflation, there are four 50-pence pieces in the pudding."*

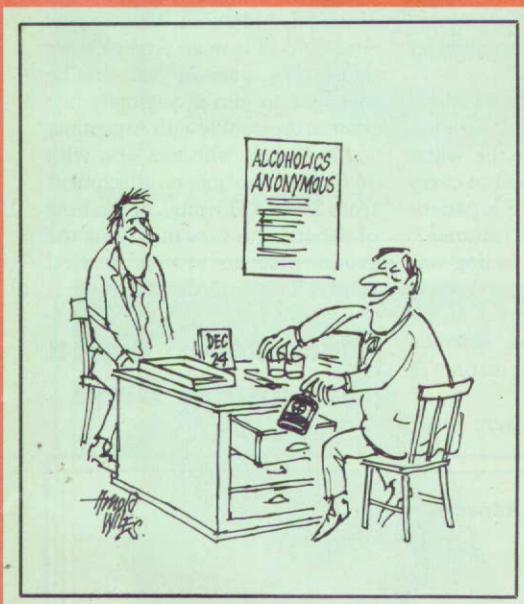


"We know you'll want to mend our broken toys tomorrow, Dad!"

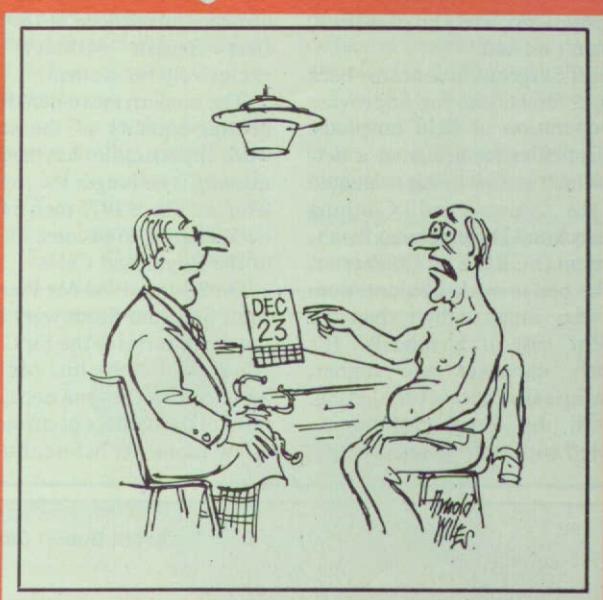


"For 364 days a year he is known as the 'hanging judge', but its common knowledge he is a sucker for Christmas."

*A happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year  
from all at Soldier Magazine*



"What the hell, Mr McGinty. You know and I know you're not going to be killed in a fortnight, so as its Christmas..."



"Watch my diet ... stop smoking ... lay off the wine, women and song — do you realise what the date is, doctor?"

"I think we've caught him in a good mood."





## RARE NURSING AWARD

### ARRC for men of RAMC

ARRC 2nd Class — obverse.

ARRC 2nd Class — reverse.



**S**TAFF SERGEANT Robert Stout, RAMC, spent most of his Army career as a male nurse in the comparative calm of various medical centres. That was until the Falklands campaign when he found himself, at one stage, in the mayhem that followed the Argentinian attack on the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Sir Galahad.

It was quite a change of scene for someone who describes himself as 'basically a base wallah'. While the experience was a bit of a shock, it wasn't wasted.

Staff Sergeant Stout came back with several ideas for improving the operation of field hospitals. In particular he designed a new bed which is now being evaluated by the Stores and Clothing Research and Development Establishment (SCRDE) at Colchester.

The bed is made of aluminium and very much lighter than the current cast iron models. It's slightly narrower and higher, allowing easier access for nursing.

And, by employing quilts covered with waterproof sheeting

which can be easily sponged clean, it is designed to reduce laundry to an absolute minimum.

The bed, if it is accepted for service, won't be the staff sergeant's only memorial of the Falklands war. Recently he was at a Buckingham Palace investiture, along with Warrant Officer 2 Adrian Pierce, who was also in the Sir Galahad at the time of the attack, to receive one of the country's highest nursing awards.

Both now join a small but select group of men who are able to put the initials ARRC (for Associate of the Royal Red Cross) after their names. This is the Second Class of an order introduced in 1883 as the first British Military award exclusively for women.

The modern movement towards greater equality of the sexes in work opportunities has meant that nursing is no longer the reserve of women. Since 1977 men have also been eligible to become members of the Royal Red Cross.

On 8 June, 1982 Mr Pierce and Staff Sergeant Stout were both in the dormitories of the Sir Galahad when the bombs hit. Mr Pierce had been on the tank deck, where most of the damage occurred, until a few moments before, but there

had been some delay in getting the first medical party ashore and he had gone down to the dormitories to inform his men.

"I was very lucky to have been out of that area," he said. "The dormitories are next to the tank deck and we could hear the noise of the people who had been hurt.

"We tried to find a way out to them but there was no way we could use most entrances as there were flames and everything coming through.

"When we eventually got through we saw horrific injuries. We got on to the top deck where we were formed up as the medical team with the RSM of 16 Field Ambulance and we started treating as best we could the casualties as they were coming out."

Staff Sergeant Stout recalled: "Probably the burns and the smell of burning flesh were the worst things. But you just had to carry on. I mean, a patient is a patient regardless of your own traumas."

"I think my initial feeling was — 'Is this it? Is it the end?'" said Mr Pierce. "Then a sort of numb feeling. But when we saw the casualties I suppose the instinct of training took over.

"I don't think we were aware

of the explosions coming from the hull. We saw so many people needing treatment we didn't worry about what was happening elsewhere."

The difficulty was actually treating patients, many of whom were suffering from appalling injuries. All the medics had were morphine syringes and battle dressings which they had collected from unwounded Welsh Guardsmen.

After the Falklands Staff Sergeant Stout went back to 2 Field Hospital, Aldershot. This was his first field unit in an Army career which now spans 21 years and he managed to join it originally just prior to the trouble with Argentina.

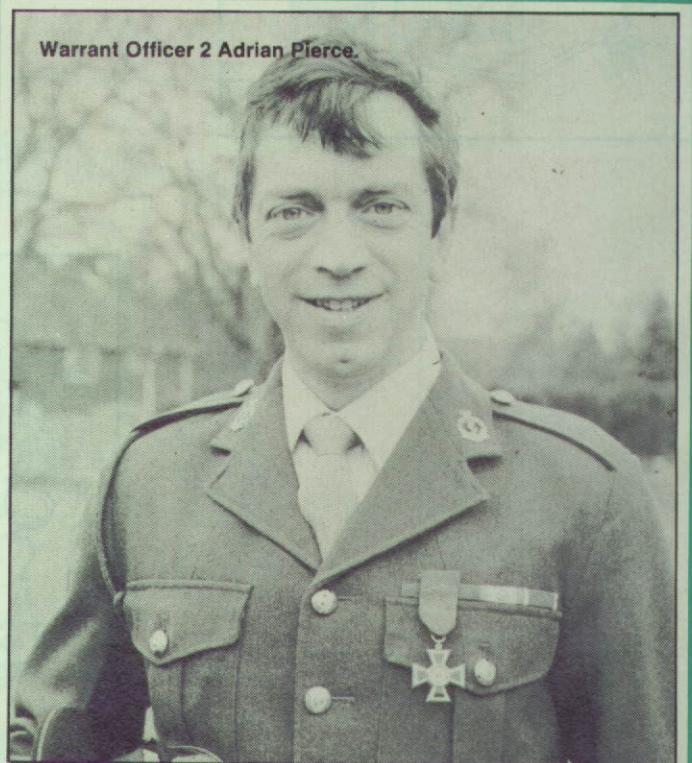
Mr Pierce, who was also with 16 Field Ambulance on attachment from 2 Field Hospital, at the time of the crisis, is now managing the group practice at the medical centre, Tidworth Garrison.

**Story: Robert Higson**  
**Pictures: Les Wiggs**

Staff Sergeant Robert Stout.



Warrant Officer 2 Adrian Pierce.





Wartime ATS change a tyre.

**GRAHAM SMITH** discovers the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry is still going strong . . .

## 'WE'LL COPE' (says the motto) - AND THEY DO!

**T**HE ORIGINAL concept of their being came to a wounded cavalry sergeant-major as he lay in a tent on a fly-molested camp bed during Britain's 1898 military adventure in the Sudan.

Sergeant Major Edward Baker — later Captain Baker — had visualised the setting up of horse-mounted nurses who could reach and attend battlefield casualties quickly before the arrival of the horse ambulances.

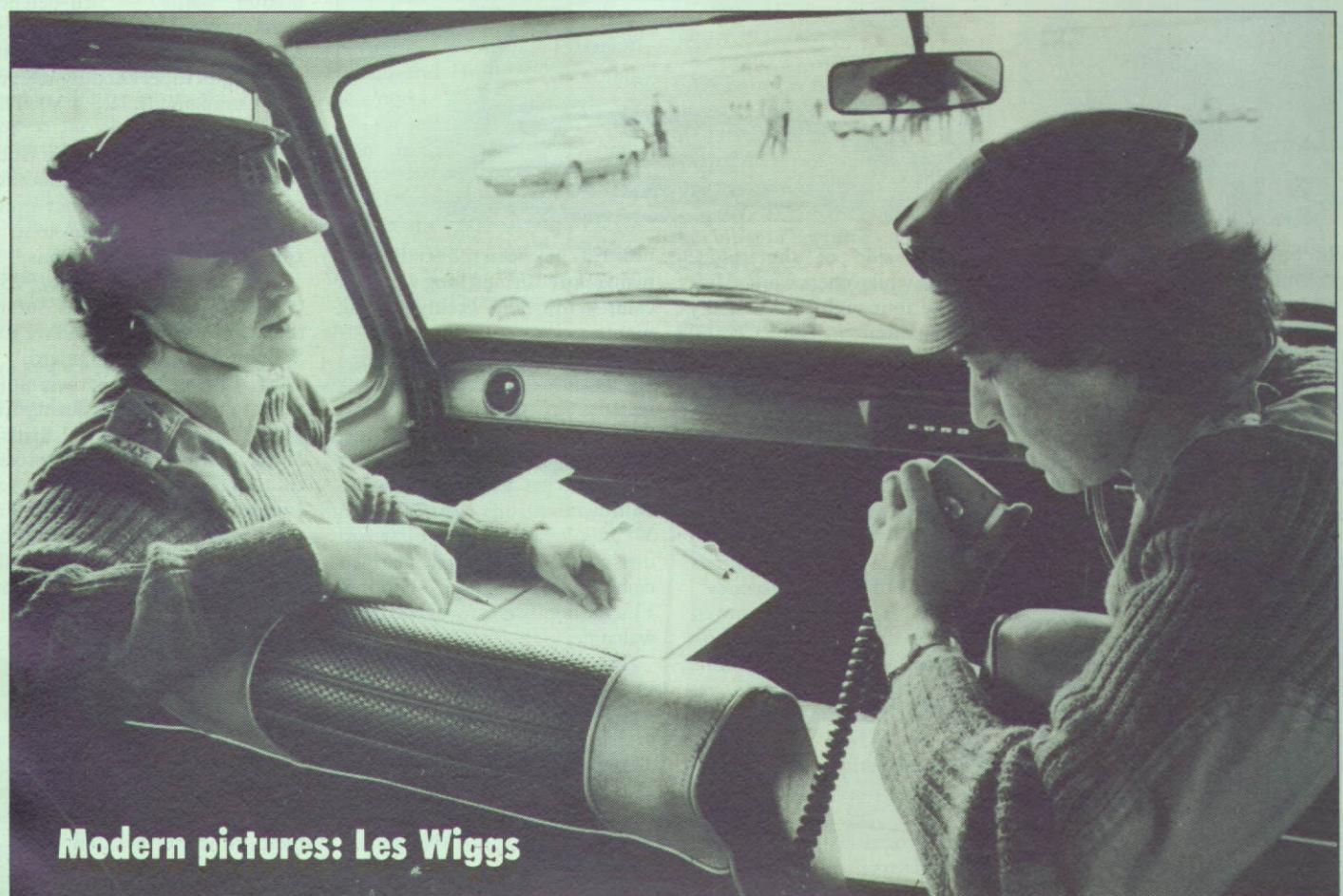
It never came to that but since its formation in 1907 with 17 girls, the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry — FANY — has served with distinction in France and Belgium during World War I and with

bravery and undenial heroism as 1,700 cloak-and-dagger code-passing girls with the SOE (Special Operations Executive) during World War 2.

Additionally, some 450 of their number served with the Polish Army during the '40s and no less than 8,000 more were with FANY/ATS carrying out a multitude of staff and driving duties in support of the Army's war effort in Britain and in Europe.

The WTS (FANY) — Women's Transport Service — as it is known today, is still going strong and masterminded quietly from venerate

**Modern day FANY members in action on radio comms for charity horse show.**



Modern pictures: Les Wiggs

Cavalry Sergeant Major Baker, the architect of the FANY movement.



able but austere barrack block accommodation at the Duke of York's Headquarters in Chelsea, home to the Greater London TA and some of its affiliated units.

There are still some 700 FANY members spread around the world although only about 120 are active. Six of them are in their 90s and three of these are Military Medal holders.

More than 100 of them are serving in London with the stipulation they must be within a 45-minute train, tube or bus ride from Sloane Square and the nearby HQ for their main role as a mobile communications unit in support of the City of London Police at the time of any major aircraft, rail or fire disaster.

Their last major involvement was during the Moorgate tube train crash in February 1975 when they helped with radio communications and casualty documentation.

Then, a dozen FANYs manned

the R/T side of the rescue operation while others worked five days and four nights on casualty documentation in the Central Casualty Bureau at Bishopsgate on eight-hour shifts.

Last Christmas, FANYs rang into their Duke of York's HQ control to see if they were needed in the aftermath of the Harrods bomb incident. They were not.

Another commitment is to augment Army communications centres in a national emergency.

The FANY organisation moved to its current location in 1968 on a grace-and-favour basis at a time when the number of women was being reduced in the TA, though FANY forms no part of that organisation and is completely independent.

It is, in fact, Britain's first women's voluntary corps beating the Red Cross by a short head.

Until two years ago they used to spend 10 days in annual camp but

now this has been reduced to one main effort during a long weekend camp in May plus weekly training nights.

FANY HQ has recently carried out its annual advertising for new recruits in the national press seeking up to three dozen potential FANYs aged 18 to 40. The lucky ones will get a course in radio communications (initially on Wednesday evenings), First Aid instruction, map reading, unarmed combat lessons and shooting. Fluent linguists are particularly welcome.

The FANYs, in proof of the same dedication of purpose as their wartime predecessors, must be prepared to be called out any time of the day or night, weather no exception.

Corps Commander Sheila Parkinson, said: "A FANY should be competent and versatile. The girls should be able to go out on assignments and come back having

The FANY girls are remembered by a neatly tended war memorial.

It's World War 1 and FANY girls carry out First Aid training.

done them. We don't care how the results are achieved provided they have not been acquired illegally."

She added: "Don't forget the FANYs were probably part of the best resistance group in wartime Europe and each of the girls who was involved with SOE had her poison pill which she could swallow if we were over-run because she had valuable communications knowledge. This is not generally known."

But there are no poison pills on issue nowadays.

Various skills are taught the girls at the Duke of York's HQ by the resident TA units. CQB — close quarter battle — self-defence techniques are imparted by the 21st Special Air Service Regiment; shooting is supervised by men of 'D' Company (LIR) 4(V) The Royal Irish Rangers.

Not only do the girls fire rifles — they also take part in shooting competitions against other units — but they are taught how to strip and re-assemble the weapons.

On the medical side, 257 (General Hospital) RAMC tutors them on First Aid 'well above the St John Ambulance standard.'

FANY members put their radio skills to plenty of use during the year. They turn out for 11 British Horse Society shows, of cross-country nature, within 50 miles of London. For the past seven years they have been involved in the Courage Trophy, an annual skill-at-arms competition for London based TA units, where radio communications have been called for and the final results posted-up.

The FANYs attend three exercises of major size annually and they go out, once a quarter, on navigation and R/T exercises. The world of nuclear, biological and chemical warfare is not beyond them, either, as they don 'Noddy' suits from time to time.

The organisation is proud of its equipment with which it has



**FANY girls break for a welcome cuppa as ambulance drivers.**

proved it can establish communications over 11 counties, a distance of 120 miles.

The Commandant-in-Chief is Princess Anne and recently members gave a two-hour demonstration involving 50 girls designed to give a realistic display of all the differing aspects involved in their commitment to the City of London Police in case of a major incident within their boundaries.

Motives for the girls joining the FANYs seem to share one common theme.

Sheila Parkinson, the Corps Commander since 1968 who started her own FANY career in Kenya before the war, said: "The girls come here from a mixture of professions within Greater London. They probably think there is possibly going to be a war in my lifetime. I had better learn something. Learn something and still live my life."

"They feel a need to have some skills which can be applied militarily knowing there is going to be little time for training if the balloon goes up. Their attitude of

**Two years before the outbreak of World War 1; an ambulance train at Bourne End, Bucks.**



mind goes completely across the board with them all. They come here and they are good for each other."

Professions within the organisation are indeed varied. A diamond cutter from De Beers, a finger print expert at New Scotland Yard, lots of secretaries and receptionists, a London borough council planner, a graphic designer, interior decorator, a dietician-cum-self-employed jobbing gardener, statistical analyst, a top model and a ballerina to cite but a few.

The FANYs are proud — as in the last war — of their linguistic abilities. Speakers of Russian, Polish, Hungarian, Italian, Spanish, South American Spanish, Portuguese, Czech, German, French and Hindi serve among their ranks.

Their services have been called upon in a variety of non-commercial ways ranging from an international table tennis tournament to a 1,500-strong Reserve Officers' Association conference involving NATO personnel to an international Parliamentary Union meeting.

**Casualty documentation duties with the City of London Police.**

Corps Commander Sheila Parkinson who learned to shoot, carry out basic vehicle mechanics, to drive and how to skin a sheep in Kenya from 1937-39 as a FANY said of the organisation: "Communications is the name of our game. We have always done things in small numbers, small groups of highly-motivated people, for the good of the whole. We are not inward looking and we are not a social club."

They were similarly highly-motivated FANYs refreshed after their summer camp who went unhesitatingly to Belgium and France just 24 hours after the declaration of war in August 1914.

Three months later they had set up a 100-bed hospital in Calais but by the end of summer the following year the hospital had no transport. For the first time in British Army history FANYs became the first women to drive during the war.

Not only did they receive 95 decorations — including 16 Military Medals and 30 Croix de Guerre — for valour, but the FANYs were mentioned in despatches on 15 occasions.

In 1972, a baker's dozen of them attended a reunion for World War 1 FANYs. There has not been one since for them.

In the last war, 1,700 FANYs, many university trained and linguists, served with the SOE for special training as parachutists and cypher clerks in covert operations. Dropped into France, they joined with the Resistance movement and 11 of them were to die later — mostly in concentration camps.

Overall, in World War 2 the FANYs were honoured with 82 awards, including two George Medals and three George Crosses (two of these posthumously), with 36 mentions in despatches.

Sadly, 51 of them died during the course of hostilities, 11 of them in East Africa.

Their motto now, as always with

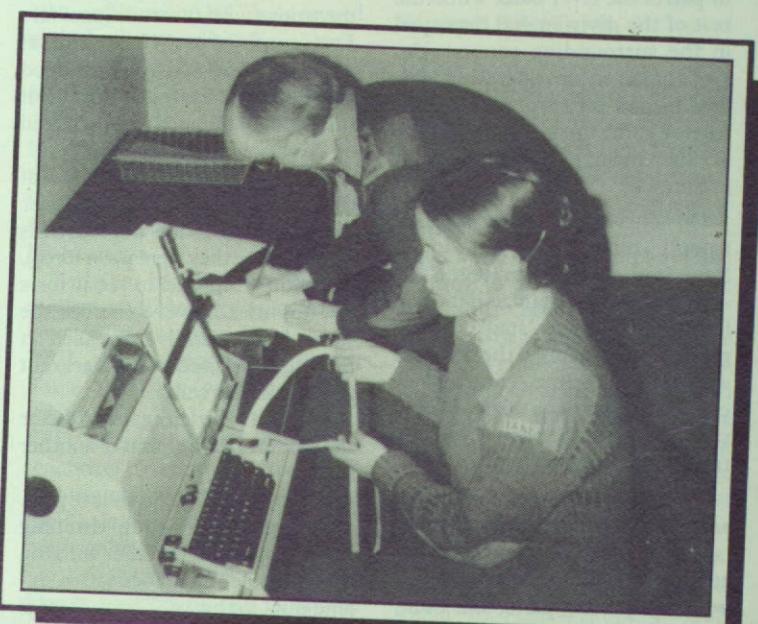


**Radio comms links still play a vital part in today's FANY operations.**

previous generations of dedicated FANYs, still holds good, an understatement perhaps, of their wartime exploits: "We'll Cope."



**Sponsored horse ride at Hampton Farm — and more communications links.**



# THE BEST CHRISTMAS OF THE WAR

**C**HRISTMAS 1944, the last Christmas of World War 2. The Germans make their last desperate offensive by counter-attacking in the Ardennes. Civil war breaks out in Athens which has been occupied by the British, Budapest is encircled by the Russians, the Americans continue their island-hopping advances in the Far East where the British also push the Japanese back.

Despite the battles still raging, it was for many British soldiers, it seems, the best Christmas of their war service. Perhaps because, as one Major puts it, they were coming 'out of the shadows of war into the dawn of peace'.

Some soldiers celebrated under shelling, under air attack, some wounded in hospital, some sheltering in schools, in cellars, the more fortunate in the friendly warmth of local homes. One even extended the hand of Christmas hospitality



to a German prisoner-of-war.

The more lucky ones ate turkey and Christmas pudding — but traditional Christmas fare could not reach everyone. The substitutes were sauerkraut, cheese sandwiches, curry, bamboo shoots and the inevitable 'bully' and biscuits,

sometimes washed down with a few bottles of local wine, captured Wehrmacht brandy or sugar beet rum.

SOLDIER asked the soldiers of yesteryear how they spent that Christmas of 40 years ago. This is how they responded...

with the Stump family and I have no idea what happened to them. Theirs was a story worth telling.

— **Sgt H W G Drake, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, Glos.**

## School dinners

Holding the Maas River Line 253 Field Company RE, 3rd British Infantry Division, spent Christmas in the village of Venruij, battered by British and German armour. My section found a room with four walls still standing.

I found a frozen cot mattress and covered it with my gas cape to sleep on. We slept in our clothes only taking off our boots.

Corporal Taylor made some Christmas cards out of cardboard for us to send home. Christmas morning was heavy frost and very quiet. We had our Christmas dinner in the wooden school which had not been damaged.

We had NAAFI beer and a good meal. The OC said "I want to see everyone happy but not worse for drink." He then took over the wireless operator's job to allow him to have his dinner. It was New Year's Eve before the Germans started shelling us again. — **Sgt A E Smith, Begbroke, Oxon.**

## Goodies at bakery

Christmas 1944 was made very

festive indeed thanks to the German Ardennes offensive.

I was a Gunner Artificer with 89 Battery 13 Medium Regiment RA, not particularly enjoying the delights of a wet muddy turnip field just opposite Venlo in Holland.

When the Ardennes offensive started and it became clear that the objective was Antwerp, we were ordered south to help block their drive.

This was about 21 December and as we drove south the snow started. At the end of the day we arrived in the village of Wespelaar between Brussels and Louvain where we spent the night in the village hall.

The next day a Belgian girl came up to me and asked me in good English if I would like to come with her to her house for coffee and cakes.

Not being slow to get my feet under the table, off I went to end up in the village baker's house where I was made most welcome by the family and was amazed at the amount of goodies.

After this unexpected tuck-in I was shown into a bedroom with a large double bed and was told it was mine as long as I was in the village. I said I would have to get my troop officer's permission (which was readily given) and asked if I could bring a friend with me as there was more than room for two in that size bed.

The family agreed so Jock Joyce and myself made off to our luxury billet.

We stayed in Wespelaar for about a week and that took us over the Christmas period. How festive that was.

A super dance was arranged on Christmas Eve in the village hall, someone somehow conjured up some ATS girls from Brussels or Antwerp. It caused some difficulties owing to the mixed sex toilet, a guard having to be placed allowing troops and ATS in at intervals.

Christmas Day started for me with a super breakfast in the baker's house and an embarrassment. As I was sat on the loo, Belgian type, outside with no door, the lady of the house walked in, said 'Good morning', picked up her yard broom and started to sweep the snow away!

Dinner was in the hall with all the trimmings and then back to the bakers for a really memorable Christmas tea and evening. I've always considered that the best Christmas I've ever had.

Helena, the girl who invited me to her house, eventually married a British soldier and when I last saw her in 1959 had a shop in Wespelaar. — **Gnr Artificer Roger Driscoll, Higham, Rochester, Kent.**

## SAUERKRAUT IN THE CELLAR

The town of Huy in southern Belgium lies on the River Meuse and its bridge was one of the objectives of the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge in December 1944. The north bank of the river is protected by steep cliffs and hills.

When General Horrocks' 30 Corps was diverted from Holland to protect the northern flank of the bulge, 43 Reconnaissance Regiment was dispatched to Huy to patrol the river bank while the rest of the division was deployed in the surrounding countryside. Our squadron was operating with two troops forward and one in reserve at the top of a steep hill out of the town, in a convenient estaminet.

On Christmas Day it was our troop's turn — I was in C Squadron, 43rd Recce Regt RAC — to be in reserve and as darkness fell I went to do my 'stag' with my gunner, who manned the rear link wireless from the comparative comfort of the back of a carrier. I stomped about the parked vehicles trying to keep warm.

It was bitterly cold and I was wearing the appropriate gear — tank suit, greatcoat, leather jerkin and balaclava. I was also draped with equipment, pistol and Sten, with a Bren on top of the carrier.

## In hospital

I spent Christmas 1944 in a military hospital in Ostend after being evacuated from Mechelen in Belgium due to the Ardennes attack.

On the top floor were all Germans who had been wounded. We were a mixed bunch of English, Canadians, Poles, Czechs, Dutch, Belgians — all with a different story.

The Canadians broke every rule of the hospital and drove the matron and her staff round the bend. They got drunk and had fights amongst themselves and were always grabbing the nurses.

On Christmas Day we had the usual festivities and after dinner the Canadians produced several large postal sacks and invited the staff to take a 'Lucky Dip'. The matron dipped and brought out her parcel and was told to wait until all the staff had their parcels before she opened hers.

On opening hers she had a bed pan, and of course there were plenty of bottles etc and plenty of laughter. All the aforementioned articles were later replaced by decent presents.

During my stay in hospital in Ostend harbour a lot of Corvettes blew up and smashed the windows of the hospital. While the explosions were taking place the nurses made us get under the tables for protection, whilst they were running around dealing with the wounded from the Corvettes. They were very brave girls. — **Sapper P T Beaton (R Engineers), Clacton-on-Sea, Essex.**

## Light from the neighbours

I was a REME technician attached to D Troop, 323 HAA Battery of 103 HAA Regiment RA, which had been in NW Europe since D-Day.

I had joined in Belgium during October 1944, to service and maintain their new American radar and electronic predictor recently issued, after the success of this anti-aircraft equipment against the V1 flying bombs in England.

The Regiment was stationed at Rixensout, about 20 miles south east of Brussels and having already been stationed here for three weeks was anticipating being in this village over Christmas.

Unfortunately for our plans and Christmas preparations, the Regiment was ordered to leave Rixensout on 15 December and after two further moves, D Troop arrived in Knocke/Zoute, on the Belgian coast on 23 December.

Most of the troop were in tents, but a large house across the road from the gun site was taken over for cookhouse/Sergeants' Mess etc.

The troop commander, Capt F C Conyers, asked me if I could possibly do anything to overcome this serious problem.

We did have our own electric generator for the radar and other electrical equipment but there was no cable to cover the long distance between it and the house.

Fortunately, the house next door was occupied by a Belgian family and their electric supply was on. After asking their permission, we were able to run a cable from one of their power sockets into the house we had taken over.

As most of the internal wiring was suspect it was necessary to run separate cables to most of the

hoarded for Christmas and New Year, and it looked now as if the effort had been in vain, but on 24 December we were at Maastricht.

Major Ian Campbell of Arduaine, my company commander, decided that we'd celebrate Christmas Day on the day, fully knowing that yet another order to move would result in us throwing away partly cooked food and even worse, partly consumed booze!

The latter was an important consideration, because alcohol in Holland and Belgium in the winter of 1944 in an infantry battalion didn't go much further than a tot of rum (a metal Oxo tin was the measure).



rooms (kindly supplied by Signals Section).

The cooks worked through the night of the 23rd and 24th and due to them we were able to have a most enjoyable Christmas.

This had been my third Christmas in the Army, but it was by far the best, due to the enthusiasm and hard work of all concerned.

We stayed until 31 December when we moved a few miles to Heyst.

I am still wondering if our Belgian neighbour had to pay for all the electricity used over the Christmas period! — **Cfn D G James, Swansea.**

## Wehrmacht brandy

In December 1944 I was a platoon commander with 7th Battalion The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and snug in a seminary in St Michiels-Gilstel near 's-Hertogenbosch, concentrated under one roof for the first time since June, when we left UK for Normandy.

On 19 December we enjoyed a visit from an ENSA show, the first ever to get down to battalion level, as far as we were concerned.

At the end of the show, the CO, Angus Mackinnon, called us all together and announced that we were ready to move in one hour! We set off south through a wintry night, to meet the German attack in the Ardennes.

Considerable 'goodies' had been

hoarded for Christmas and New Year, and it looked now as if the effort had been in vain, but on 24 December we were at Maastricht.

soldiering — homeland, comrades and pride of unit.

As soon as we had eaten and drunk our fill the word came to move again, this time to Liege, leading to New Year at Huy — but that's another story. — **Lt Col G P Wood MC, The Castle, Stirling.**

## Sugar beet rum

I spent Christmas 1944 with the 5th Bn Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry, part of 43rd Wessex Division which had moved into a long-stop position when the anticipated breakthrough of the German Army in the Ardennes threatened the British lines of communication and the port of Antwerp.

A series of defensive positions had been prepared and No 7 Platoon occupied a group of farm buildings at Bilsen in East Belgium, ready to move forward at very short notice if required to counter attack. The weather was cold, wet and foggy.

All was quiet on Christmas Day and the cooks produced a very acceptable dinner of chicken and tinned 'duff' which was augmented by a liberated pig killed and dressed by a young butcher from Southampton.



**Sergeant Peter Fowle**

One bottle of beer was issued per man including a few that appeared on the parade strength for ration purposes but in reality had been missing for some time.

We also possessed a barrel of German Army rum made from sugar beet, which would have had nothing to commend it in Civvy street, but tasted like nectar.

We did have some music because an ex-AA gunner, drafted into the infantry much to his delight, played an old piano he had found in the farmhouse. We sang all the wrong words to all the right hymn tunes, and a few songs that proved that the saviour was a rugby enthusiast as well.

The nearest we got to dancing girls were a couple of confused

*continued on page 22*

Belgian farm women of indeterminate age and built like Sherman tanks. I don't think they were quite sure which army we were.

The platoon still contained a few of the original Cornish Territorials after six months of intense aggressive fighting, and as mostly they didn't drink, they were easily persuaded by a whip round to act as sentries while the rest of us finished off the rum.

We awoke next morning with monumental hangovers, covered with the straw and dust.

In the distance we heard our own divisional artillery cough and thud, accompanied by the steady beat of the 8th Middlesex MMGs, and we realised that on this rather special day in the Christian calendar, Hebrews 13:8 in the Bible was right — 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and tomorrow!'

— **Sgt Peter Fowle, Hartley Vale, Plymouth.**

## Cheese and corned beef

At Christmas 1944 I was serving with the 1st Bn The Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry as part of the 53rd (Welsh) Division.

Just before Christmas the Division was preparing for the Reichwald Forest drive which, subsequently, had to be postponed.

Von Rundstedt had commenced his drive through the Ardennes in the hope of regaining some lost ground. For reasons best known



to the commanders, it was necessary to reinforce the American forces.

By now we had moved to an area close to Waterloo where we had hoped to spend Christmas. Arrangements with local families were well in hand.

The dreaded word came that the Regiment would move off in Kangaroos (infantry carrying Sherman-type tanks with turrets removed) to the Ardennes.

Christmas 'dinner' was served at breakfast on 25 December 1944 — one cheese and one corned beef sandwich. Needless to say, the journey was far from comfortable since there was heavy snow.

Arrival at Namur was a historical occasion for the regiment because forces from our 2nd Battalion (part of the Airborne Division) had also arrived to ease the pressure off the Yanks.

Yes, a few of us managed to make the period festive — we found an American Headquarters having a whale of a party with all the goodies that go to make Christmas, including turkey and nuts. They made us most welcome in spite of the smell of sweat and fumes.

After the ball was over, it was time to take over at the sharp end at a small village overlooking a town called Marche. It was to be a foxhole home but with buildings back at the village where troops could bathe, catch up with mail, and change their socks. Frostbite was another enemy with which we had to contend.

After a couple of months, with Christmas 1944 a memory not to be treasured, we moved back to get on with the Reichwald Forest job.

Ah, they were happy days — the good old days. — **Major A H Morley, Chapman's Slade, Westbury, Wilts.**

## Casualties

I was serving with the 33rd Field Surgical Unit RAMC as an operating theatre assistant. Our small unit was out of the field resting at a Dutch school in Helmond, Holland.

On that Christmas morning we had all gathered at the billet of our surgeon, Major Denley-Clarke, to exchange greeting cards and gifts and have a Christmas drink with the Dutch family with whom he was billeted.

At about 10.30, some German fighter-bombers swept low over the town dropping bombs and machine gunning the streets. It must have lasted only a short while.

Then all our anti-aircraft guns round about plus anything else that could fire opened up (too late).

Our Major said: "Come on, we shall be wanted" and away we all dashed along the road to the local hospital (which I believe was called Nazareth House).

The hospital was run by the Sisters of Mercy who were very pleased to see us, for by this time casualties were arriving, mostly civilians including women and children who had been hurt. In short, we started operating in their theatre dealing with the serious cases, and all thoughts of Christmas were pushed aside. — **Pte Patrick Brown, Barnes, London.**

## White Christmas

I served with the 5th London Corps Signals, a TA unit, a fine unit, mostly all Londoners from Fulham.

Being with 5 Corps HQ we went through the North African campaign with the First Army.

Then on to Italy in 1943, by Christmas 1944 having reached North Italy towards the Austrian

Border, finally finishing in Vellach, Austria 1945.

Christmas 1944 in North Italy... weather, snowing... Germans still shelling on Christmas Day. Operational in action.

With some sections always detached from Corps HQ, those responsible — OC section and section sergeants — always do their best for entertainment at Christmas for the lads. Always visited by CO, RSM, Company Commander and CSM.

Christmas fare as per NAAFI issue, two bottles of beer per man.

Warrant Officers' and Sergeants' Mess decided to have a photograph taken as this could be the last one together. Christmas dinner 1944, was held on Boxing Day. — **WO2 S E J Chambers (Royal Corps of Signals), Gillingham, Kent.**

## POW as a guest

Christmas 1944 found me in 22nd General Hospital in Taranto, Italy, suffering from a perforated ear drum caused by shell blast at



Near the Dutch-German border, a British soldier in winter gear escorts two aging civilians.

Ospedaletto in September.

22nd General was, I believe, a pre-war Liverpool Territorial Field Ambulance and most of the staff were from Liverpool and had carried out exercises with the TA battalions of my regiment.

I was classified as an 'up patient' and as a Sergeant was put in charge of the ward kitchen. This was a pleasant duty and involved drawing the meals from the main kitchen, preparing tea and sandwiches for the doctors and sisters of the ward and making and distributing the evening Ovaltine.

I was helped in this by a Fusilier Coomber of the 2nd Royal Northumberland Fusiliers and an Austrian from the POW ward. He was the same age as myself, 20, and was very hardworking and polite.

He was also very worried when we showed him the maps in the Eighth Army News showing the Russian advances in the East, with the arrows getting closer to his home.

prisoners for looking after Hans.

There may not have been peace on earth that Christmas, but there was at least a little goodwill. — **Sgt A J Moore, (2nd Bn The King's Regiment Liverpool), Waterloo, Liverpool.**

## Halt at Basra

The Royal Sussex Band was fortunate to be attached to RAF Basra for Christmas 1944. The band had been travelling from Teheran to Egypt doing one night and two night concerts, then moving on across the desert.

I think we had covered 86,000 miles by the time we came home in 1947.

Yes we were certainly glad to be at Basra for Christmas 1944. Needless to say we gave a concert at 8pm Christmas Day.

I still have the menu, with all the signatures of the band on the back. — **Band Sgt G J Hyde, Wilingdon Trees, Eastbourne, East Sussex.**

## Anne Armstrong reviews FAWC meeting

THE FEDERATION of Army Wives Clubs' second AGM took place at Blackdown Camp, hosted by SE District. Mrs Eileen Parker, in the chair, welcomed representatives from all over the UK, especially welcoming the new affiliated members from Northern Ireland.

They came together, not only to hear how the Federation had grown in strength, size and involvement with the Army but to hear guest speaker, Baroness Phillips, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Greater London, who as President of the National Association of Women's Clubs, gave a talk on how wives and mothers can play an important part in their community.

She said involvement of all kinds can help the shy person, increase confidence and widen horizons, and stressed voluntary work is as important as ever. She illustrated the talk with many amusing stories.

Baroness Phillips stayed to lunch and met many wives.

Lady Kitson was confirmed as Chairman until mid-85, when she will become President.

Lady Huxtable was appointed Chairman designate, with Vice-Chairman Lady Akehurst.

Reports were circulated by the sub-committee chairmen. Julia Payne, Army Wives Concern Chairman dealt with a wide variety of topics raised by the districts, from initiating a survey on wives' employment to voluntary work, and handicapped children.

On the Education Committee, Valerie Menzies has undertaken a number of visits to MOD and civilian centres, covered the Open University and TOPS courses. Valerie also made the point that with our huge population of under-sevens these children need more than educational and pastoral care, whether in UK or overseas.

Julie Davis, who has specific responsibility link with the PPA, summed up her report: "In the short time that I have been doing this job it has become apparent that there is a great need for co-ordination and support to the many hardworking people providing playgroup facilities for the under-fives within Service communities."

Monica Jackson (Furniture and Furnishing), and Jenny Scott (Quartering) both have 'hot potatoes' to deal with and can't please everyone.

Carpets, curtains and get-you-in packs, were a few of the subjects covered. On carpets, Monica said it will now be mandatory to have the date the carpet was issued on the MQ inventory.

Jenny reported that she and other district quartering representatives have now been included in both the planning stages of quarters and modernisation programmes.

Overall, many more invitations were received in districts to view and comment on new housing and modernisation projects.

## BARONESS GIVES WIVES A BIG BOOST



Baroness Phillips, right, and Libby Knight admiring clowns made by members of the Kneller Hall Wives Club. Picture: Paul Haley.

One district furnishing and quarters representative, Mrs Pyrah, improved safety catches fitted to bedroom windows.

"I keep an on-going list of queries from district committee meetings and letters but we still have two fundamental problems in quartering.

"Occupants' expectations are generally much higher than the funds available and apathy is very apparent in some areas. When 165 survey forms on heating costs were sent out, only six of the anonymous forms were returned. We still have a long way to go," said Jenny.

Jennifer Swabey, a one-time critic of NAAFI found herself in the position of having to justify her criticism, so the NAAFI representative has concentrated this year on educating herself about the workings of NAAFI from the HQ London to the shops.

The keenness of NAAFI HQ to help was shown when the Managing Director of NAAFI invited all FAWC NAAFI representatives to a meeting in London to 'see NAAFI.'

Despite the geographical spread of wives clubs, many meetings were held and an excellent two-way communications between the military organisations and the wives

has been established. The highlight must be the invitation from the Adjutant General to the FAWC to attend his seminar.

## CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

FOUR years ago the first Wives Seminar was held at Bagshot Park. That seminar was a test to see if such a gathering would be beneficial, both for the wives as much as for MOD. Would such a gathering undermine the chain of command?

Four years on these initial fears have been dispelled, for it proved to be a constructive and worthwhile annual meeting.

The change of format was welcomed as a constructive way of formulating wives' ideas, suggestions and so on.

Each syndicate had 10 wives who, with the appropriate civilian and military experts and advisers, produced constructive reports on DHSS benefits, education, NAAFI, wives' employment, resettlement and housing.

The reports will be distributed to all districts and where necessary further decision and comment will take place with the wives.

It was found that not only did it air the subject, but the wives, civilian and



## OPINION

ALL new organisations are viewed by some with scepticism and cynicism and the Federation was no exception.

Wives' involvement with the Army was at first viewed with much concern.

"The chain of command in jeopardy" and "what can 'they' offer" were among the points made.

However, in just two years these and many other fears were swept aside, and we hope that those who had reservations about the Federation can see the contribution which the member wives clubs have made by reading the reports on the AGM and seminar.

This was summed up by the Adjutant General, General Sir Roland Guy, during his address to the representatives at the UKLF Seminar, when he both encouraged and welcomed the contribution wives can give.

"Good luck" he said. We all echo his words as the Federation looks forward to a challenging 1985.

Best wishes to everyone for a Happy Christmas and New Year.

military, found they learned a lot about the special difficulties which surrounded each topic. They also appreciated this opportunity to meet, discuss and explain their own particular field.

The highlight of the day was the address given by General Sir Roland Guy, the Adjutant General.

He gave a masterful talk on the importance of wives in the Service family community, stressing that a content and happy soldier is a good soldier.

He placed great importance on communication in all the many strands which are involved with service life.

His talk was far-reaching but he did emphasise the important part the Federation of Army Wives Clubs could play in Service life, and congratulated the wives on the progress they had made and he concluded: "I do congratulate you all on what you have achieved and you can be assured of my full support for all you are attempting to do. Good Luck."

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SOLDIER

in  
Hong Kong

Writer Graham Smith and photographer Paul Haley continue their Far Eastern journey on this and the following four pages. They begin with a surprise...

## STRONG BRITISH ARM IS HANDY WITH CROSSBOW

THE TRADITIONAL Swiss crossbow once beloved by folk hero William Tell and his doting son is still unerring in targettied flight in a part of the world more associated with the martial arts like kung fu — the Colony of Hong Kong.

Every year since 1971 the weapon has been a focal ingredient of Operation Mercury, a skill-at-arms contest involving The Queen's Gurkha Signals.

The idea is part of the testing in weapon proficiency of the resident 65-strong Swiss Rifle Association, all working in Hong Kong in various businesses and still liable for Swiss militia reserve service.

Not only does the crossbow figure in a shootout but also the Swiss-made assault weapon the Sturmgewehr 57 and the Karbine 33.

Firing distance for the crossbow events, in which the British have tried their hand, is 30 metres measured from the archer's shoetip to the target.

This year the contest was between VIPs and a team of five archers. Bolts were released — three trial shots and six more to score — from the kneeling position. All are fired in the same sequence against a Swiss-supplied target.

Maximum score for the six shots at a 10-point target was 60 points.

Organisers of the event are The Queen's Gurkha Signals and the Swiss Signals Officer-in-Chief.

In addition to the crossbow event, competitions are also held in rifle and pistol skills. The rifle event, held over 300 metres, involved 26 rounds attracting a total maximum of 108 points.

Hermann Gamper, the 34-year-old managing director of a forwarding company based in Hong Kong and a member of his native country's 31st Infantry Regiment's Schützenbataillon scored 84, the fourth highest total of the day with nobody taking the maximum tally.

Major Rick Brown, Officer Commanding of 248 Gurkha Signal Squadron, said: "Like many traditions in armies throughout the world, Operation Mercury was planned at a social gathering.

"In 1970 General Honneger and a number of Swiss Army Signal Corps officers visited Hong Kong on their way to the World Trade Fair in Osaka, Japan. They were hosted by Queen's Gurkha Signals and 27 Signal Regiment and, as a token of appreciation, they presented a crossbow.

"In 1971 the first of the series



Major Brown, left, & Herr Gamper.

of international shooting matches was held between Hong Kong and the Swiss Army Signal Corps.

"Two years later the crossbow competitors were joined by the Swiss 57 assault rifle competitors.

"In 1977 this weapon was supplanted by the Sig 9 mm pistol but this year the assault rifle 57 has been re-introduced in addition to the pistol."

The Hong Kong-based Swiss Rifle Association is one of 45 worldwide.

Herr Gamper said: "It is a tradition wherever you have Swiss living abroad, and they are members of the militia with reserve liability, then they must try to do

their shooting. If you are not living in Switzerland you have to fulfil compulsory shooting exercises like these every year and — to fulfil minimum points — usually at the nearest barracks.

"We manage to train four or five times a year for the one-day shooting match such as Operation Mercury. I have got one or two shooting medals.

"There are 65 of us in Hong Kong who are members of the Association although there are probably about 850 Swiss living and working over here.

"Operation Mercury is a three-way contest between the Swiss Army back home, two Swiss signals regiments, and the Gurkha Signals Regiment in Hong Kong. We have to have permits to bring our rifles from Europe, plus 40,000 rounds of ammunition."

Major Brown summed up: "I think the general standard of their shooting is pretty impressive considering they don't appear on the ranges as often as we do. The crossbows even go back to Switzerland for servicing at £100 a time."

"Ironically, the British tend to be better than the Swiss on the crossbow possibly due to greater upper arm strength."

One of the British with those qualities is WO2 (Yeoman of Signals) Mervyn Foster who said: "It's quite accurate. I've fired it three times returning reasonable scores each time. It's fun to fire and it's certainly different."

Hermann Gamper, right, with WO2 Mervyn Foster.



SOLDIER

in Hong Kong

The river marks the border; the vessel is Chinese. Behind it, the new Special Economic Zone, the start point for fence attempts.

EVERY TIME the infantry men of the 1st Battalion, The 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment go out on day or night patrol on Hong Kong's border with China the preliminary order is a simple one: "On your bikes, lads!"

In the Colony since February, the Cheshire are involved in maintaining the integrity of the 26-mile-long Anglo-Sino land frontier with China, demarcated by a 12-foot-high electronically-sensored wire fence through which numbers of Chinese still make bids to enter affluent Hong Kong illegally. They are known as IIs.

The Cheshire mounted patrols for up to 10 weeks annually on the metalled roads snaking alongside the perimeter fence on 'grandad' or sit-up-and-beg bikes.

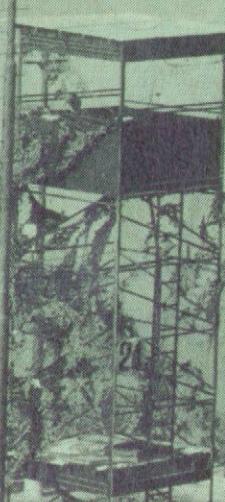
Up until now, that is. For they have started to take on a new breed of velocipede beloved of schoolboys all over the UK and renowned for their 'wheelies' capabilities... 80 BMX type bikes!

This form of exhilarating rubber-wheeled patrolling in addition to more conventional techniques will be used by successive infantry regiments.

The II-detecting duties on the border, with its flooded rice paddy fields and many duck farms produce rearing for the table, are carried out in support of the Royal Hong Kong Police.

Many refugees try to reach the border fence in flimsy rafts, with a change of civilian clothing after lying low for 24 hours.

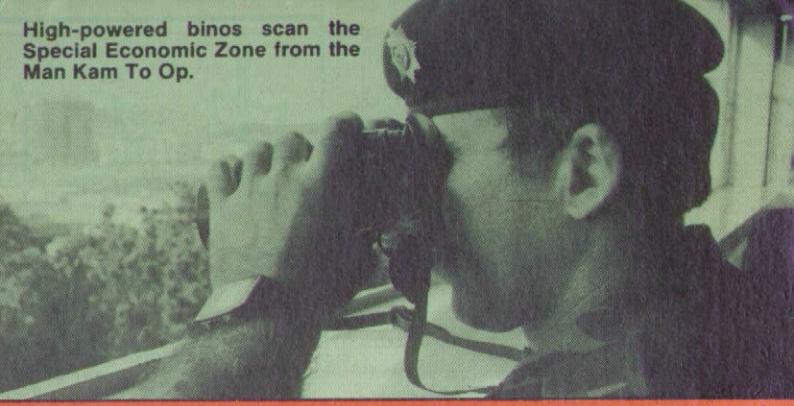
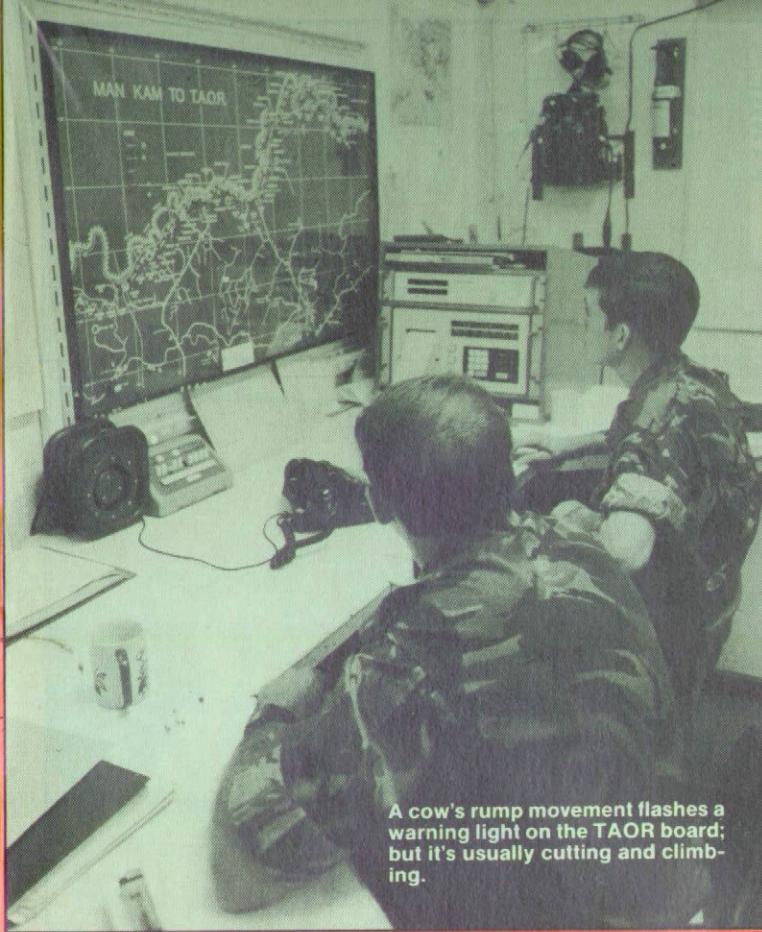
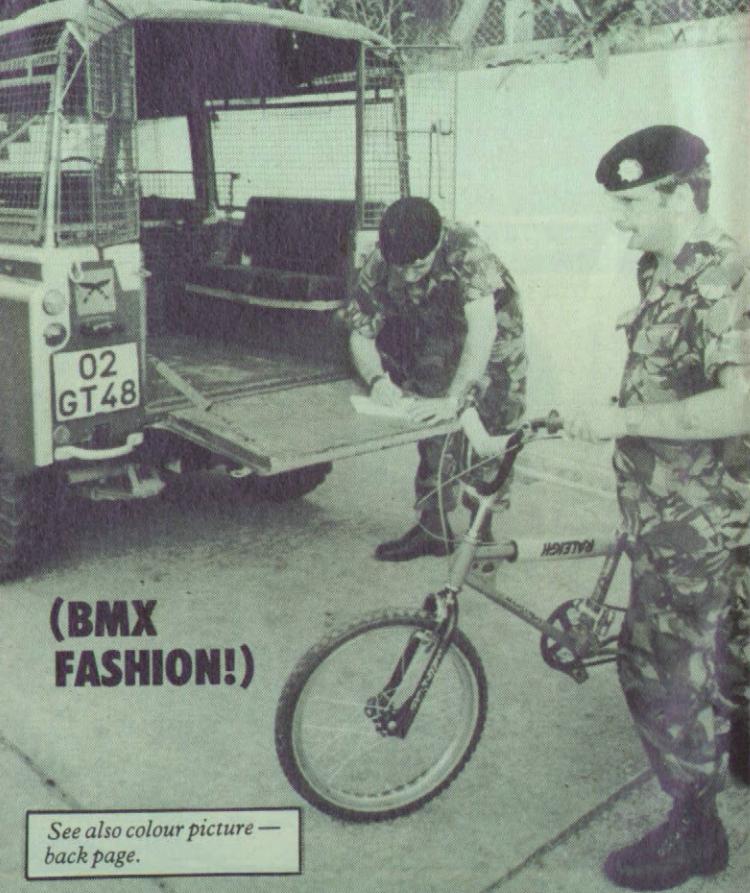
Apart from their responsibilities on the border the battalion is also



## Where Cheshire's border patrol is aided by call...

The bikes are 'de-bussed' ... and signed for!

### 'ON YOUR BIKES'



likened to North Wales or the Lake District and their remit extends from an area at Deep Bay writhing its way towards Starling Inlet, about 26 miles long.

Running along its path, the 12-foot-high fence which must have signalled lucrative business for the hardware stores of the mainland to its north judging by the collection of pliers and other improvised wire cutters confiscated from the unsuccessful fugitives.

In 1979 the border hoppers were coming over in their thousands. The numbers have tailed off significantly since those high incursion days but vigilance is never relaxed.

The Cheshire do approximately 10 weeks on border duties a year, two tours of four and six weeks, sharing the task with four other infantry battalions, these from the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Also busy on the border are men of the Hong Kong Military Service Corps (see SOLDIER 3 December).

Major Huntress said: "The

majority of IIs are captured. They just want to work in Hong Kong and make money to send home. Most are aged from 18 to 26, some are 30. Sometimes we get people who are older."

He added: "We don't know how many we capture percentage-wise. You never get to know the starting figure so you never get the finishing figure. We do know that some of them have been on the roads for up to three weeks before they reach the land frontier here at the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and the town of Shenzhen, which is being developed for tourists. Ten years ago it was just a series of paddy fields."

Back to the control room TAOR board it is not unusual for them to have 120 warnings a day of some contact by someone or something along a 10-mile stretch of fence.

But one thing is sure. The advent of the BMX has put a whole new interesting and rejuvenating vitality into patrolling Hong Kong's land frontier with her Chinese neighbour to the north.



Away from it all...  
Hong Kong is just not high-rise blocks. It has beaches, too, for recreation like this one near Repulse Bay.

THE AMERICANS are so impressed they think it is among the best there is. The Australians and the New Zealanders, too. Germany, Pakistan and Sweden have sent their diplomats there. All give a glowing seal of approval.

All are enthusing about the Ministry of Defence Chinese Language School (MOD CLS) tucked away in a section of Hong Kong's Kowloon peninsula under its commandant Major Richard Booker and Chief Instructor, Captain Mick Roberts both of the Royal Army Educational Corps and fluent in Mandarin and Cantonese respectively.

For the intensity and level of the two-year courses they and their dozen full and part-time staff run at the school, anyone in the UK, paying commercially, could expect to pay £15,000 over the same period in private tuition.

Currently there are 23 students enrolled for a variety of courses including Army personnel who have distinct needs for differing duties.

The charter of the school is to give primary courses in written Chinese with spoken Mandarin or Cantonese, the former being the norm as the Chinese authorities are insisting on its propagation throughout their nation with a third or fourth revision of orthography.

The course for military interpreter in Hong Kong, for instance lasts for two years and, at the end of it, students sit the Civil Service (UK) Interpreter Examination.

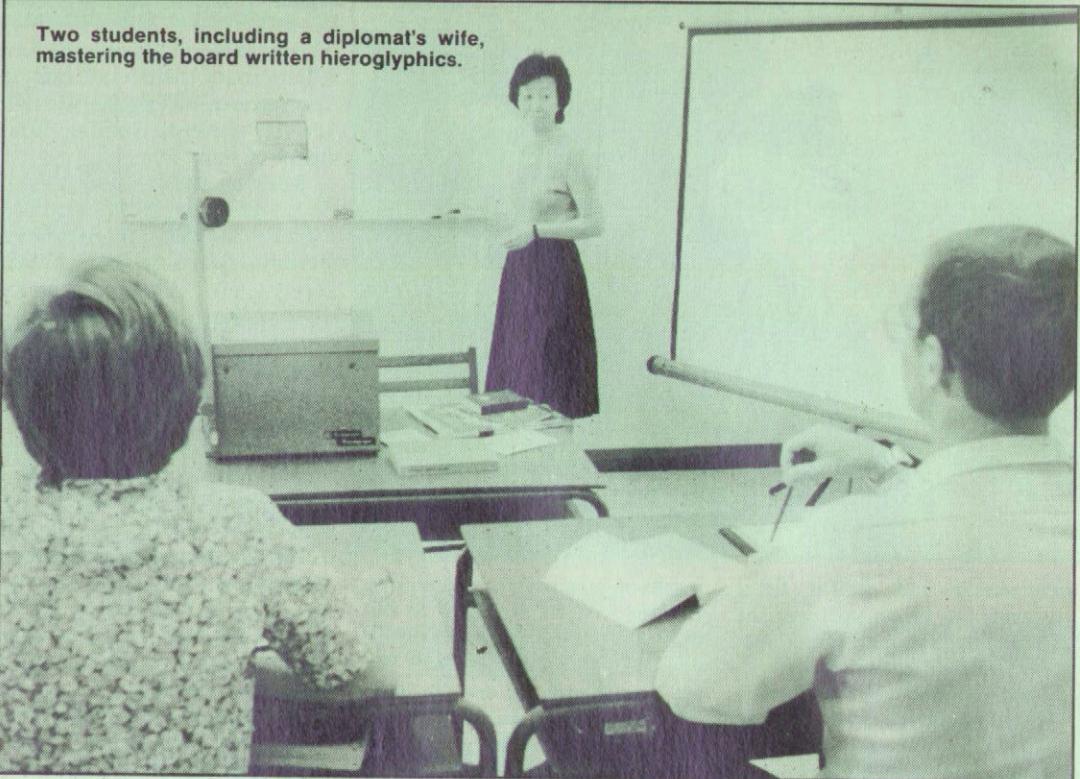
During its teaching the course comprises four six-month phases each of which contain at least 20 training weeks, a total of 80 weeks study.

"On top of these sessions students are expected to study further at home in the afternoon and at night for at least another four hours," said Major Booker. "This consolidates what they have learnt that particular day and helps them prepare material for the following day. Internal evaluations are held regularly throughout each of the four phases."

Other courses available at the school which moved from Lyenum Barracks on Hong Kong Island to its present temporary accommodation in Osborn Barracks serve diplomats, special courses in Mandarin for United States

# 中文儘是方塊字 一 一共七千五百個

Two students, including a diplomat's wife, mastering the board written hieroglyphics.



## ALL CHINESE TO STUDENTS IN 'TOP FORM' SCHOOL

Foreign Area Officers (FAOs) and secondary courses to linguist level, again qualified by Civil Service Commission exams, in Cantonese and Mandarin.

A language lab, tape-recorders, film and slide projectors and video TV equipment help the process of language acquisition.

Captain Roberts, who served in the Intelligence Corps for 19 years before re-mustering into the RAEC in 1980, has been at the school since last year and is on his fourth tour in Hong Kong.

He said: "Material is constantly being produced and up-dated and most of the texts used for military lessons, newspaper lessons and situational interpreting material are produced from within the school."

★ Rough translation: Chinese is a language full of characters

— all 7,500 of them!

For the purists: Chinese is nothing but Chinese characters

— in total, 7,500

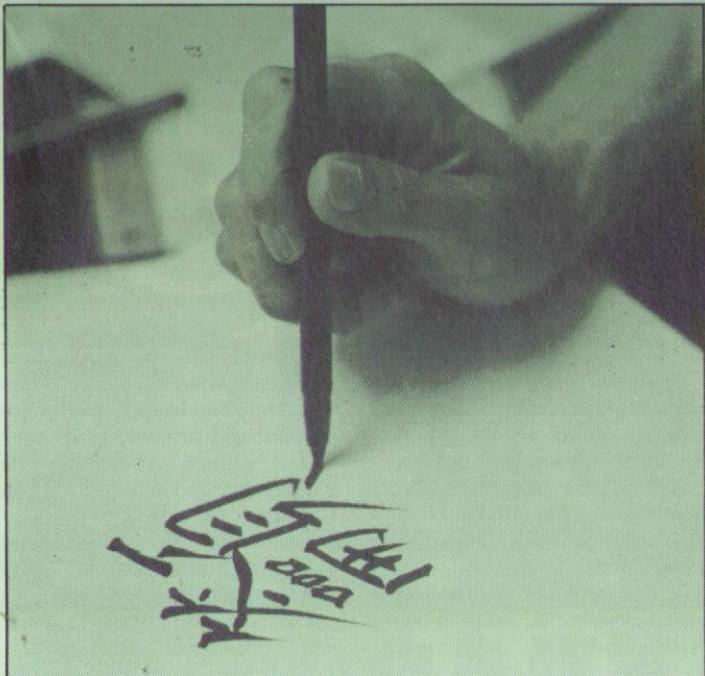
Yet not all volunteers who wish to master Mandarin or conquer Cantonese manage to do so and the staff, scrupulously fair, tell them. The pupil-teacher continuation ends there.

"You have to have a good voice, a good ear to succeed in Chinese," said Major Booker. "One written word can have 32 characters but such words are now being modified to just six characters. It is also tiring on the eyes. I bought myself a magnifying glass straight away."

"The Chinese language has about 7,500 characters, and it is said that a 2,400-word vocabulary will give you a 97 per cent working knowledge for Chinese literature. We teach 3,500 words over a two-year period."

The direction of reading can be confusing at times.

Captain Roberts said: "It is normally left to right but newspapers go from top to bottom depending on the lay-out of the pages. The trick there is to find out where the story starts."



It's not easy. Brush work on the words 'to implore' (left). This one (above) is even longer. It means 'depression'.

We teach Cantonese here for those who might be involved in duties with such formations as the Hong Kong Military Service Corps (HKMSC) or with the Hong Kong government.

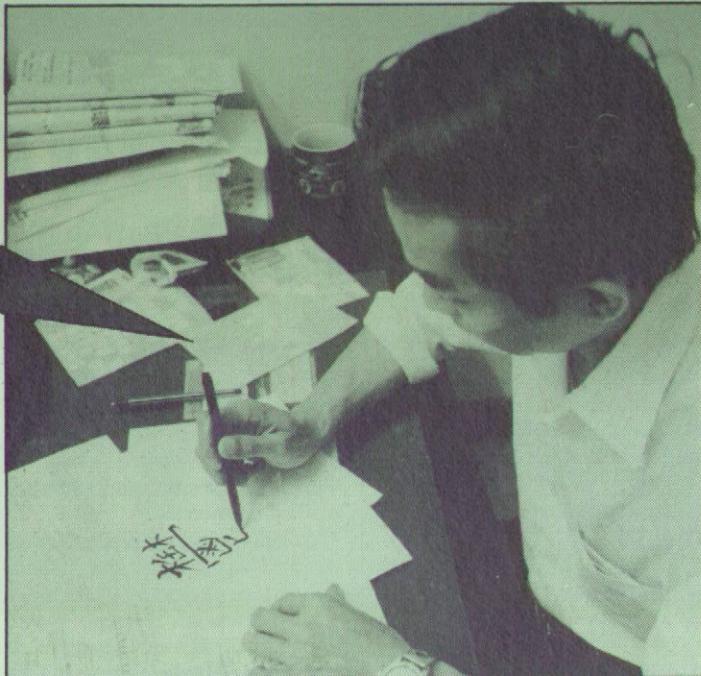
The first eight weeks are purely oral with the pinyin or romanisation phase starting in week nine. Mandarin has four tones; Cantonese has nine of them."

Among the students is the Defence Attaché designate for Peking next autumn. Wives, too, are taught "social vocabulary".

Mandarin and Cantonese are the same when written, say the tutors, it is only the spoken versions which make them different.

Exams are tough and demanding. A 45-minute, four-part oral section and a three-hour written paper for Servicemen.

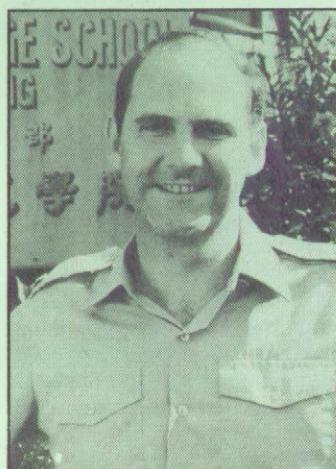
Those under test are relaxed with innocuous daily conversation then the real interpreting starts; passages into and from Chinese and English, a situation setting where a Chinese might be visiting a NATO exercise or firm and needs things explaining; more tests of written and oral expression on tri-Service word-power; instant comprehension of newspaper pieces in the same fashion; tests on incisive or joined-up writing.



Major Booker, one of only a handful of Chinese speakers within the RAEC, said: "We could fill this school with diplomats if it were a private concern. We have as high a reputation as they have seen anywhere for teaching Chinese."

"In the UK the going rate for private tuition is about £8 an hour. All of our students before they come here have to take an aptitude test".

Another testament came from Lieutenant Colonel Mike Byrnes, US Army, who is attached to the Hong Kong-based American consulate who said: "We consider your

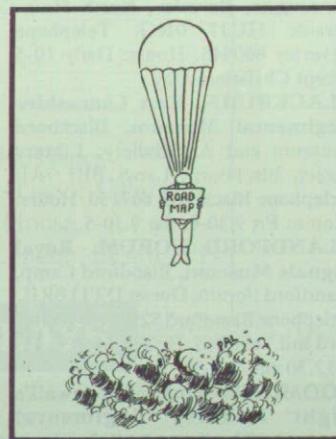


Major Richard Booker, RAEC, School Commandant: "You need a good voice and ear to succeed in Chinese."

MOD School of Chinese to be superior to those run by the Americans in Taiwan and Monterey in California which has the Defense Language Institute.

"This school in Hong Kong has a very good reputation and must be one of the best of its kind in the world. We are developing American programmes on methods of teaching used here to meet our needs."

Captain Mick Roberts, RAEC, a Cantonese expert, seen here in language lab classroom.



# The first Christmas of World War 1

## THE TRUTH BEHIND FAMOUS TRUCE

by William Moore

**T**HAD become such a lovely war, snipers happy and the infantry taking an intelligent interest in whizz-bangs, when some clever-clogs in field grey showed off his English by shouting Christmas greetings across the lines.

Before you could say Jack Johnson, 303 Private Atkins, T. replied '... wot nice carols you sung last night Fritz,' and everything went to pot.

It is fascinating to speculate just who was the first soldier to climb unarmed into no-man's land on Friday, 25 December, 1914.

British or German? Recklessly or warily? Did it really happen? Everywhere?

The truth? The famous truce was spontaneous in origin but local in application.

Opposite a battalion of the London Regiment of Messines on Christmas Eve the Germans hoisted and lit up a pine tree. At 11pm (midnight in Berlin) they gave three cheers and an astonished British wiring party listened to a 'Stille Nacht' baritone solo.

Peacefully between the trenches the next day scores of Londoners met the enemy... small, be-

spectacled Saxons who resented the presence of hefty Prussian snipers based permanently in the sector.

An officer noted that no Germans wore pickelhaubes (spiked helmets).

At Houplines, seasonal greetings were held up on notice boards above both parapets.

Two men of the 2nd Royal Welsh Fusiliers, minus equipment and rifles, left their trench. Two Germans responded.

Handshakes were a signal for a general exodus. The British company commander gave up trying to stop his men and joined them.

From his counterpart he accepted two barrels of beer — trundled over the shell torn ground — and gave a plum pudding in return.

Schnapses were produced — on a tray with glasses — and healths drunk. Silence fell when the trenches were re-occupied and the RWF were relieved late on Boxing Day without incident.

Near Plugstreet Wood, the 1st Royal Fusiliers and the opposition took only one day off — both using it to dig new trenches undisturbed. It was easier than mucking out the

old ones.

According to one report the truce lasted in places until the New Year (such as on the London Regiment's front).

There were said to be soccer matches and the Official History mentions even the signing of Auld Lang Syne.

This goodwill (though it materialised even on the Russian front) was not universal.

A bitter battle was raging near Festubert where the South Wales Borderers had lost 220 men when relied on Christmas Eve.

The French attacked in the Champagne and in the Vosges on Christmas Day.

The 'truce' shocked our Allies and some commanders. There was no repetition in 1915.

By then no-one was saying '... it will all be over by Christmas'.

"you didn't HAVE to head it!"



### YOUR GUIDE TO ARMY MUSEUMS - 2

Want somewhere interesting to take your family during the Christmas holiday period? Then why not consider a visit to one — or more! — of the many interesting military museums? We began a guide in the last issue more for your consideration...

**BEVERLEY.** East Yorkshire (The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire) Regiment Museum, 11 Butcher Row, Beverley, North Humberside HU17 0AA. Telephone Beverley 882157. Hours: Tues to Fri 2-4, organised parties by appointment Mon to Fri 9-12 and 2-4.30. Closed Sat, Sun and Bank Hols.

**Museum of Army Transport**, Flemingate, Beverley, North Humberside HU17 0NG. Telephone Beverley 860445. Hours: Daily 10-5 except Christmas Day.

**BLACKBURN. East Lancashire Regimental Museum**, Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery, Library Street, Blackburn, Lancs BB1 7AJ. Telephone Blackburn 667130. Hours: Mon to Fri 9.30-6, Sat 9.30-5.

**BLANDFORD FORUM. Royal Signals Museum**, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 8RH. Telephone Blandford 52581 (or Blandford mil.) ext 248. Hours: Mon to Fri 9-12.30 and 2-4.30.

**BODMIN. The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry Regimental Museum**, The Keep, Bodmin, Corn-

Academy, Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey. Telephone Camberley 63344. Hours: by appointment only.

**Staff College Museum**, Camberley, Surrey. Tel: Camberley 63344. Hours: by appointment only.

**Royal Army Ordnance Corps Museum**, RAOC Training Centre, Blackdown Barracks, Deepcut, Camberley, Surrey. Telephone Aldershot 24431 (or Aldershot mil) ext Blackdown 516. Hours: Mon to Fri 8.30-12.30 and 1.30-4.30.

**CANTERBURY. The Buffs Regimental Museum**, The Royal Museum, High Street, Canterbury, Kent CT1 2JF. Telephone Canterbury 52747. Hours: Mon to Sat 10-5.

**The Queens Regimental Museum**, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JY. Telephone 57411 (or Canterbury mil) ext 253. Hours: 9.30-12.30 and 2-4.30, closed Bank hols.

**CARLISLE. The Border Regiment and King's Own Royal Border Regiment Museum**, Queen Mary's Tower, The Castle, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 8UR. Telephone Carlisle 32774. Hours: 15 March to 15 October 9.30-6.30 daily, 16 October to 14 March 9.30-4, Sun 2-4.

**CHATHAM. Museum of the Royal Corps of Engineers**, Brompton

Barracks, Chatham, Kent ME4 4UG. Telephone Medway 44555 ext 312. Hours: Mon to Fri 9-4, weekends by appointment.

**CHELMSFORD. Chelmsford and Essex Museum (The Essex Regiment)**, Oaklands Park, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 9AQ. Telephone Chelmsford 260614. Hours: Mon to Sat 10-5, Sun 2-5.

**CHESTER. Chester Military Museum** (5th Royal Inniskilling Dragoon Guards, 3rd Carabiniers, The Cheshire Yeomanry, The 22nd [Cheshire] Regiment), The Castle, Chester CH1 2DN. Telephone Chester 27617. Hours: daily 9-5.

**COLNE. British in India Museum**, Sun Street, Colne, Lancs BB8 0JJ. Telephone Burley 63129. Hours: May to Sept Sat and Sun 2-5.

**DERBY. Regimental Museum of the 9th/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's)**, Derby City Museums and Art Gallery, The Strand, Derby DE1 1BS. Telephone Derby 31111 ext 782. Hours: Tues to Sat 10-5.

**DONCASTER. Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery** (local Yeomanry, Militia, Volunteer and Territorial units) Chequer Lane, Doncaster, S. Yorks. Telephone Doncaster 62095. Hours: weekdays 10-5, closed Fri, Sun 2-5.

● TO BE CONTINUED

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**BARCLAYS**

# Hitler Fails In Last Land Attack

**FORTY YEARS** ago, there was little Christmas spirit in that beautiful forest region of Belgium known as the Ardennes. It was there Hitler tried his last, desperate land attack westward.

What we now know as the Battle of the Bulge gave the Allies a little fright but the surprise German offensive, which began brilliantly, failed to maintain momentum. The Germans suffered 120,000 casualties, lost over 600 armoured vehicles and, it might be said, delayed their inevitable defeat by about six weeks.

If this particular engagement of World War 2 provides special interest for you, then you will enjoy *Battle of the Bulge — Then and Now* a weighty tome to mark the 40th anniversary.

Frankly, you will need to be an enthusiast for even in these days of accepting £10-plus prices the cost will certainly deter the casual readers. Even the person who has the money to spend had better ensure he is fit enough to pick it up; and has an extra-strong coffee table before putting it down!

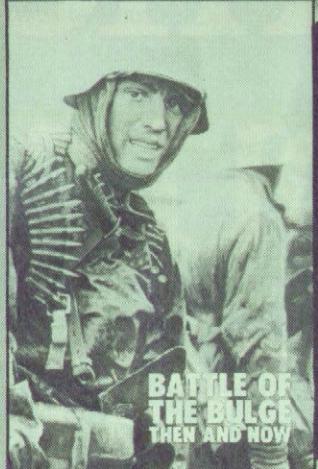
## Diligence

The publishers have specialised, and made a name for themselves, with their format — contemporary photos alongside shots of the scene revisited. There are many such comparisons in over 500 pages of a book well printed, on quality paper.

Author Jean Paul Pallud is a Frenchman who spent five years working on the research which reveals a lot of diligence and the text supporting over 1,200 illustrations goes into infinite detail. Wrong captions on war-time photos have been corrected. Photographers doing their best in the fog of battle, when there were no road signs — or misplaced ones — can be forgiven for giving locations the wrong titles.

This book certainly puts right some such misconceptions but whether, overall, it says anything new about the battle is a matter for the trained historian.

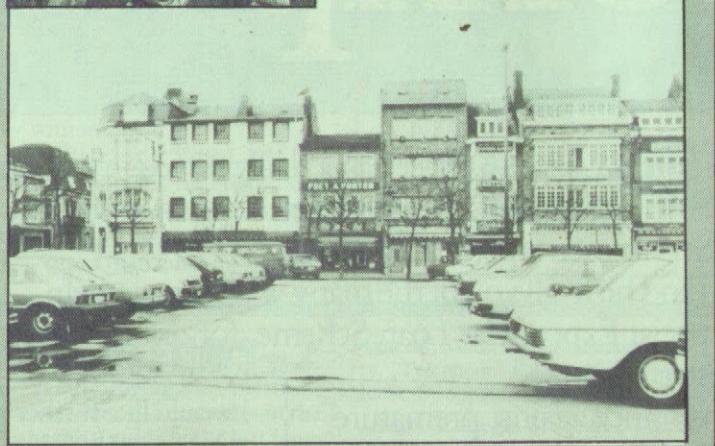
**It will certainly be welcomed by the war-gamers, model-makers and others who are very particular about detail. Should you consider buying it as a present for a loved one (if you can afford it) the one benefit is guaranteed... the recipient will be quiet for a long time. There's**



THEN...

**Shelled, bombed and besieged — Bastogne was isolated on 21 December by the German push for the River Meuse. The 101st Airborne Division — the Screaming Eagles — and elements of the 10th Armored held out until tanks of Patton's 4th Armored Division finally broke through the German ring around the town on 26 December. After the war Bastogne's Place Carre was renamed in honour of the 101st Airborne's commander Place McAuliffe.**

...NOW



*Pictures taken from 'Battle of the Bulge — Then and Now', an After the Battle publication.*

## a lot of reading!

*The Battle of the Bulge — Then and Now*, by Jean Paul Pallud. (Battle of Britain Prints International Ltd, 3 New Plaistow Road, London E15 3JA). £29.95. — PMH.

• ANOTHER book on this subject (*The Battle of the Bulge*) is by American Charles B MacDonald. Unfortunately we have not had time to review this but a glance through it suggests it is written from a different angle than Pallud.

## Works of reference... New titles

**British Cavalry Uniforms since 1660** by Michael Barthop and illustrated by Pierre Turner. Published by Blandford Press, price £10.50.

**The VCs of Wales and the Welsh Regiments** by W Alistair Williams. Limited edition published by Bridge Books, 15 Vicarage Hill, Wrexham, Clwyd LL13 7HW. Price £10.20.

**Inside the Commandos** (A pictorial history from World War Two to the present) by James D Ladd. Published by Arms & Armour Press, price £11.95.

**The Ordnance Survey Complete Guide to the Battlefields of Britain** by David Smurthwaite. Published by Webb & Bower, price £12.95.

# LOOKING AT BOOKS

# PANACHE AND ELITISM

In 10 years' time one of the most celebrated branches of the Territorial Army will mark its 200th birthday. But Major Patrick Mileham and his publishers aren't prepared to wait that long.

Next year, in March, they will have on sale what is being claimed as the first comprehensive history of the Yeomanry Regiments of Britain. It will trace the development of this diverse, colourful, sometimes controversial but generally respected body of volunteer soldiers from the time they were raised to counter the threat of a French invasion to the present when they supply the Territorial component of the Royal Armoured Corps.

Major Mileham, a Royal Tank Regiment regular who currently works for the Logistics Executive in Andover, got the Yeomanry bug when he spent two years as adjutant of the Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Squadron based in Croydon.

He had ambitions to become a writer and the somewhat neglected story of the Yeomanry cavalry seemed an ideal starting point.

## Colourful

"The cavalry always had a certain edge of elitism and panache," he explains. "Really I suppose it was an interesting and colourful subject, plus the fact that there wasn't much study on the Yeomanry as such. This got me going as a writer and as an apprentice historian."

There was also the fascination of the Yeoman tradition in British life with its implication of dependability and service.

"A Yeoman actually means somebody of some independence and standing in society and the word goes back quite a long way," Major Mileham says. "The idea of forming what was called the Gentlemen and Yeoman Cavalry was that you were drawing from a class of people who either owned their own land or who were intimately connected with the land and who were deemed to be the most dependable subjects of the Crown."

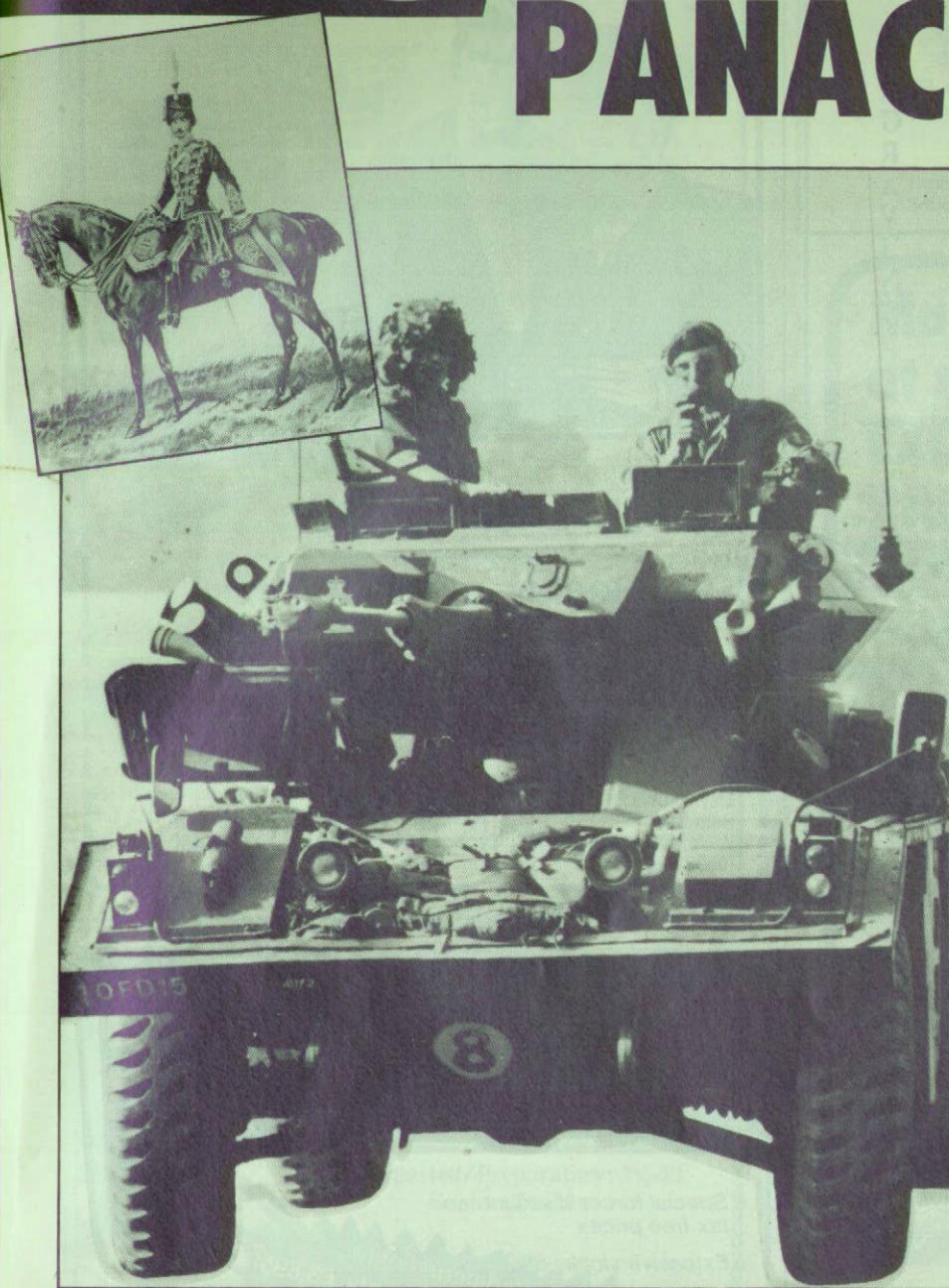
In the 19th Century, when social structure changed very slowly, the Yeomanry maintained an enormous prestige in society. Although as the enforcers of law and order in the time before the establishment of modern police forces they were sometimes seen as oppressors of the poor.

"During this century, of course, society has changed enormously — almost out of recognition. But even as late as the 1930s and into the Second World War, to serve in the Yeomanry one had to be considered a pretty dependable sort of person while officers were expected to be landowners or men of real substance.

## Cachet

"There has always been, and still is, to some extent, a certain cachet about serving in the Yeomanry."

Major Mileham's progress towards the publication of his first book was side-tracked slightly by the requirement to produce a couple of pamphlets — one a brief precis of the history and the other a recruiting tract for Yeomanry officers. These he wrote on the suggestion of Colonel M St J V Gibbs, the then Colonel Commandant of the Yeomanry.



Two views of the Royal Yeomanry: today's squadrons are equipped with Fox armoured cars but the elegantly dressed 19th century officer relied on his charger to carry him around. Pictures from the Central Office of Information.

The Major's researches took him as far north as Perthshire, as far west as Pembrokeshire and to about 30 different locations throughout the UK.

The results will appear in a profusely illustrated book which will have a good claim to be the best reference to a unique arm of the service from its formation, nearly two centuries ago.

In 1794 — in the aftermath of the French Revolution — there were great fears that the French might invade and ferment an uprising among a population that wasn't always in accord with its own Government.

The Regular Army was quite small and much of it was overseas. The usual reserve, the Militia, was not considered the most reliable defensive force. Its members were balloted for service and those who could usually bribe someone to take their place, with the inevitable result that its ranks often included the more disreputable members of society.

So the Pitt Government decided to raise a force of dependable volunteers. In this manner the Yeomanry Cavalry became part of British history.

There were many invasion scares during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars and the Yeomanry and Volunteer infantry units were

went in to seize the ring leaders and, of course, there was a massive stampede, and that's when people got killed — more from the stampeding than actually being hit by swords."

The development of the police ended the Yeomanry's involvement with civil disorder. But it wasn't until the end of the century, the time of the Boer War, that they saw service against a foreign foe.

Three disastrous defeats of British regulars in late 1899 led to a massive call for people who could ride and shoot and take on the enemy in a type of warfare never encountered before by British troops on that scale.

Fighting in regiments the Yeomanry were well represented in both World Wars. In 1914-18 they were often dismounted to take their turn in the trenches. But they did fight as cavalry, most notably in the Middle East.

"In the Second World War there were a large number of Yeomanry units, some of which were armoured recce or tank regiments," says Major Mileham. "Others had already converted to gunner regiments."

## Mounted

The last time they actually fought as cavalry was in Syria in 1941. I think six regiments went to the Middle East as part of the 1st Cavalry Division. The last mounted actions were in the River Litani area when the Cheshire Yeomanry formed up with others to capture a strongly held bridge. Actually the last mounted regiment on operations was the Yorkshire Dragoons, but by 1942 all had converted to either tanks, or artillery or whatever."

Since the war the Yeomanry have not been spared the continual amalgamations, disbandments, reductions, expansions, re-organisations et alia which have affected the whole TA. Nevertheless 36 old county yeomanry titles live on as present day units.

The Royal Armoured Corps TA has five regiments all of which are assigned to reconnaissance, a traditional cavalry role. Two of them, the Royal Yeomanry and the Queen's Own Yeomanry, will go to Germany in time of war. The others, the Queen's Own Mercian, the Royal Wessex and the Duke of Lancaster's, are earmarked for home defence.

The Royal Wiltshire Yeomanry (Prince of Wales's Own), the senior formation, supplies sabre squadrons to two of the regiments. But most, like Major Mileham's old unit, Kent and Sharpshooters, are of single squadron strength.

The Inns of Court and City Yeomanry provide a band for the Royal Yeomanry and also a signal squadron for the 17 Yeomanry Signal Regiment. Incidentally this unit can claim antecedents that go back far beyond the late 18th century. Before a comparatively recent amalgamation and entry into the Yeomanry, there was an independent Inns of Court Regiment that was established in 1585.

In addition to the RAC TA there are Yeomanry gunners — the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Yeomanry, and the Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry provide a couple of batteries.

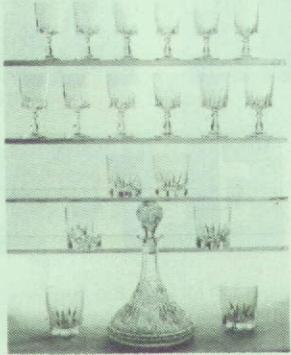
The Berkshire Yeomanry are a signals squadron, and the Leicestershire and Derbyshire Yeomanry are infantrymen. While up in Scotland there is one sole transport squadron — the Queen's Own Lowland Yeomanry. — RH

**'The Yeomanry Regiments — A Pictorial History'**, by Patrick Mileham, to be published by Spellmount Ltd, Tunbridge Wells.

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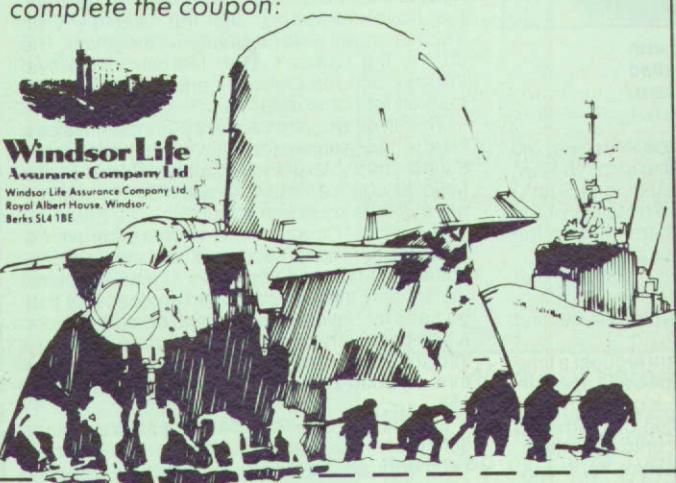
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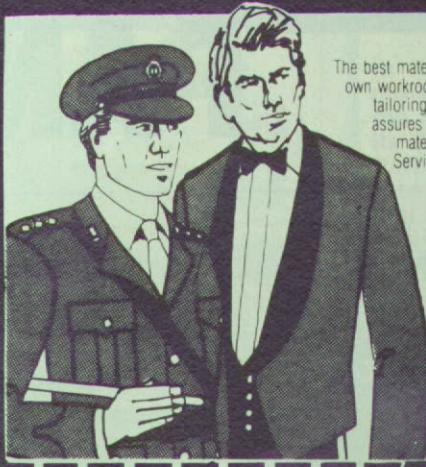
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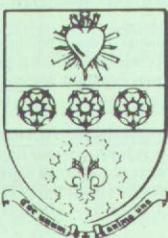
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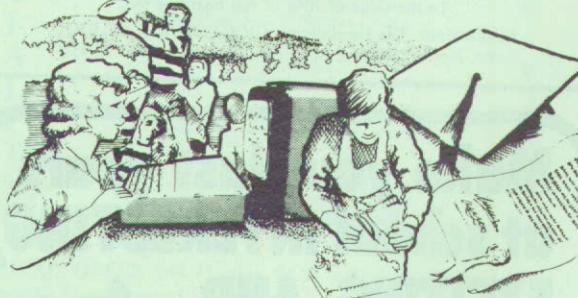
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No. 69

## THE CORPS OF ROYAL ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

Although the formation of the REME dates from 19 May 1942 it came into being on the 'ruling date' of 1 October 1942.

However, the roots of the Corps reach far back in history. The Assize of Arms of 1181 seems to have been the first attempt to legislate for the good condition of Army equipment and forbade a soldier to sell or pawn his arms.

More recently the Board of Ordnance took care of the technical arms of the Army and, with the Royal Engineers, the RAOC and Royal Artillery were the forbears of the REME.

The requirements of 1939 found the Army insufficiently equipped minded to handle the large quantities of powerful and costly equipment and vehicles it needed and with which it was provided.

A committee appointed to investigate made some suggestions including one that required the RE, RASC and the RAOC to integrate more closely their base workshops.

Due to the withdrawal from France, changes were delayed.

Two further committees deliberated and made valuable recommendations until finally REME was born, its principal duty being the repair of the whole of the British Army's technical equipment, with certain exceptions that in the post-war years have been eliminated.

The current head-dress badge bearing the St Edward's crown was Sealed on 9 June 1954, being preceded by a similar design ensigned with the Imperial crown of King George VI.

It is described thus 'Upon a lightning flash, a horse forcene gorged with a coronet of four fleur de lys, a chain reflexed on its back and standing on a globe. Above, a crown upon a scroll bearing the letters REME.'

The horse, coronet, chain and globe in silver, remainder

in gilt.

It was Sealed in anodised aluminium for wear by the soldiers on 25 September 1963.

The horse and its chain are symbolic of power under control and the lighting flash, of electrical engineering.

They are intended to mark the relationship between engineers in the Army and civil life.

The original design of the Corps badge, Sealed 22 June 1942, consisted of four shields each bearing one of the initials of the Corps placed upon a laurel wreath in the form of a cross with a pair of calipers in the centre.

The whole ensigned with the Imperial crown and in gilding metal, gilt for officers, but, being introduced in wartime, there were a number of locally made variations and some slight differences in design, plastic or bakelite being used for the early issues.

HUGH L KING



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# Mail Drop

GOT something to say, a point to make or a story to tell? This is your page to exchange your news, views, comments and opinions. All we ask is that you keep it brief and include your name and address, although anonymity will be preserved where requested. Write to Mail Drop, SOLDIER, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU.

This issue, instead of your usual letters, we are publishing some more of your Christmas 1944 memories continued from pages 20-22. Normal service resumed next year!

## CHRISTMAS DANCE ROMANCE

I was in the ATS at Didcot at Christmas and I enjoyed it very much. I went to breakfast at 8 o'clock with my buttons all polished and my enamel mug and knife, fork and spoon.

The mess was decorated beautifully, and the officers and men waited on us. We had a very nice breakfast, served marvellously.

There were cigarettes at each place, eggs and bacon (not porridge). Being Christmas Day it was the best day of my life.

After breakfast, I went back to barracks and waited for dinner. There was beer on the tables, cigarettes and

crackers and streamers. Dinner was served by the officers and included turkey, stuffing and Christmas pudding — as much as you could eat.

Then came teatime with plenty of iced cake and drinks. At the end of the day, I went to a dance in the Sergeants mess at Didcot where I met my husband to be. We went out together for six months and got married on VE Day, 12 May 1945. He was Sgt Griffin (13018162), 309 Pioneer Corps.

Unfortunately my husband collapsed and died while I was on holiday in 1974. — Mrs E Griffin (nee Bruce), Freshbrook, Swindon, Wilts.

## NOT TO BE FORGOTTEN

I was RSM of an Engineer formation known as 18 GHQ Troops, having also under our command three field squadrons and a field park squadron, and we were stationed at a small village with the unlikely name of Oss just outside Nijmegen in Holland.

The role originally planned for our formation was to be that of follow-up troops to take over the Arnhem bridges once the Arnhem campaign was successfully accomplished; this of course turned out not to be so, but the bridge at Nijmegen was captured though badly damaged. Our task then was to take over the bridge, repair and maintain it and construct two Bailey bridges alongside.

So as Christmas 1944 approached there we were at Oss, where we had been welcomed with open arms by the local population.

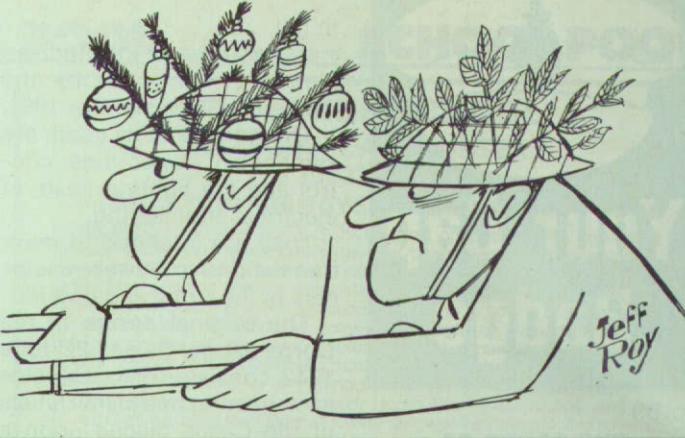
Looking back, I honestly think that Christmas was the best I spent during the whole time of my service in the Army; not because we were able to

have a real jollification — our meagre compro rations supplemented by the odd turkey and tinned Christmas pud saw to that, together with NAAFI bottled beer and the local brew.

In any case, our priority was to provide a Christmas Dinner for the troops, and accordingly we took over the local school assembly hall for the purpose. We would have much liked to invite the locals to join us, but in the circumstances this was impossible, as they themselves knew, but this did not prevent them helping in any way they could to decorate the premises.

So we had our Christmas treat — not a high-powered event by any flight of imagination, and yet one I have never forgotten while all others have faded.

Why should this be? Because, I think, we celebrated as we came out of the shadows of war and hopefully into the dawn of peace, and material things take second place compared with the liberation of the spirit. — Major H E Harrison, Portsmouth, Hants.



## A SUMPTUOUS BILL OF FARE

Christmas 1944 found me, an RASC corporal serving with the West African ASC in the Kaladan Valley of the Arakan in Burma. We were part of 6 Brigade in 81st (WA) Division.

Of all the Christmases spent with the Army (pre, during and post Second World War) 1944 was not only the last one of the war but the most memorable.

Our composite platoon, a small independent unit of some seven Europeans and 24 Africans, was establishing dropping zones. During two campaigns in the Kaldan of which Christmas 1944 was part, we were totally maintained by air.

We had been existing for some considerable time on light scale rations which consisted of one pack per man

per day. But a few days before Christmas we received a para drop and found to our delight that the powers that be had supplied quite a sumptuous bill of Christmas fare which included among other things, tinned ham, soup and fruit.

The Brigaade REME was based on the neighbouring undergrowth and we agreed to pool our rations and have a big 'do'. We duly got cracking on the meal and I think if we had had comic hats we would most certainly have worn them.

Halfway through, however, Johnny Jap decided to celebrate Christmas with a few mortar bombs and I think the meal was finished under cover in individual slit trenches! — D R Hordle, Northwich, Cheshire.

## Competition

Well! Competition 349, 'Soldiers' Square' was almost impossible to mark! We had not realised that there were so many possible solutions. This, we discovered later, was because we set too few conditions to satisfy a simple magic square.

Of course, most of you who entered had spotted the printing error (AFGC should have read AFGD) but we apologise to those who were put off entering as a result.

Since there was no single solution to the puzzle and, since also no two correct entries were alike, we felt we could not pick our winner in the usual way of drawing lots. Instead, we awarded the prize of a Kodak Disc 4000 camera to Colonel M H Daly from BMH Iserlohn for sheer hard work. The hours he

must have spent working out, providing us with no less than eight solutions all satisfying the conditions we laid down. And his eight were by no means exhaustive. We counted 21 solutions from the entries received and who is to say this is not just the tip of the iceberg.

For those of you who lost patience, we will try to keep the competition puzzles as simple as we can in future!

## How Observant Are You?

1 "E" in "CONIFER"; 2 Rear wheel of left lorry; 3 Registration number plate of left lorry; 4 Left thumb of man in road; 5 Right window of right building; 6 Right arm of driver of right lorry; 7 Top right corner of arched notice; 8 Front wheel hub of right lorry; 9 Nearside headlamp of left lorry; 10 Rear mudflap of right lorry.

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SOLDIER has its own special type of letter boxes for you in this issue's competition, and

we would like you to use them as much as you possibly can. Because the more entries to our competition that you post to us, the more you are likely to win £50.

Just study the clues on the left, work out the solutions, and 'post' your letters in the appropriate boxes. Send your entry or entries

## COMPETITION 353

### CLUES:

1 They end up with bad habits to defend.

2 Len backs into almost sharp fragments.

3 Reel it in for me — it might explode!

4 I see no gap to make furtive observation.

5 Saint appears in a flash.

6 Riot trailer for the Army?

7 A foreign body in a lion for example.

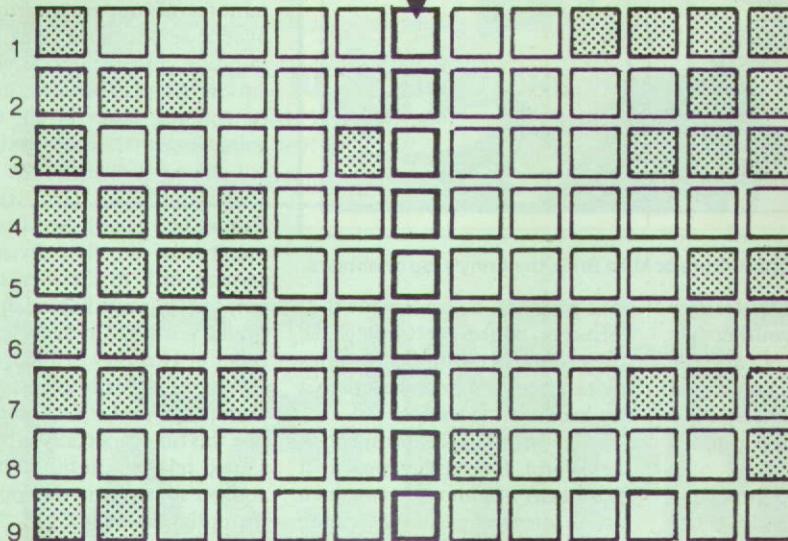
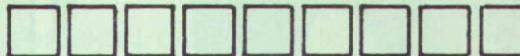
8 Anti-personnel device with a tidy blast ...

9 Steel bar tap as worn by the Horse Guards.

### LETTER BOXES

Resolve the anagram and enter the solution downwards into the bold boxes — The last letter of each answer (including the anagram) begins the next answer

PAN'S MAGIC



Devised by Tom Williams

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S25/84

**T**WILL BE something of an upset if the Army doesn't have at least two representatives in the British team competing in the Orienteering World Championships in Australia next year.

Final selections will not be made until July, but if current ratings are anything to go by, Captain Chris Hirst, Royal Tank Regiment, and Gunner Mike Brett, Royal Artillery, ought to be reasonably certain of their places.

A comparative newcomer to Army sport, orienteering only recently received what might be described as the Director of Army Training's seal of approval with the acknowledgement that, like shooting, it combines sport with useful military skills.

Its enthusiasts like to describe it as 'cunning running' — a test of physical and mental ability. Ideally you need a cross-country runner's stamina, a navigator's skill, a tactician's flair for making the right decision at a moment's notice, and a born leader's assurance in the face of adversity.

With Captain Hirst and Gunner Brett Army Orienteering has received another substantial boost. For in Hirst, three times British champion, and Brett, who is only just 21, current British junior champion, the Army has the services of two of the best orienteers in the country.

Both have recently returned from Australia where they have been testing the ground, so to speak, for next year's World Championships. As a measure of the motivation and effort needed to take this sport seriously, it is worthy of note that Brett reckons the trip cost him £900 out of his own pocket.

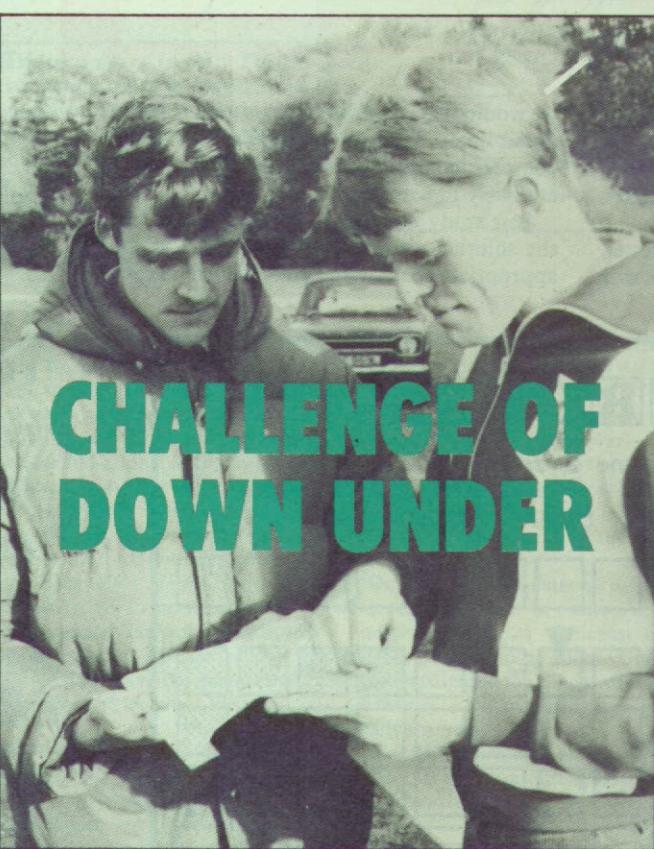
**SOLDIER** caught up with them both in the New Forest just after Brett had helped the Royal Artillery 'A' team to a convincing win in the inter Corps Championship, and Hirst had won the Southampton Orienteering Club's November Classic.

In Australia they competed in the Victoria championships and took part in some events in the forest around Albury-Wodonga on the Victoria-New South Wales border using maps similar to those to be issued for the World contest. Then they went on to the Australian National Championships in rugged country 50 kilometres south of Canberra, and finally entered a two day event in the scenic Blue Mountains, west of Sydney.

Hirst was absent from this last competition having twisted his ankle just before the national championships. Brett won on the second day after a particularly frustrating first day.

"They marked the course in the wrong place on my map only," he

## Robert Higson looks at orienteering, where the Army boasts two national stars...



Captain Chris Hirst (left) and Gunner Mike Brett, the Army's top orienteers.

said. "Orienteering in Australia is harder under foot. I wouldn't say it was rougher terrain, not as far as thicker bushes are concerned anyway. But it is definitely solid under foot whereas this country can be quite marshy."

Hirst found the Antipodean vegetation could provide a few surprises.

"You try running through something and you find it's the Australian version of the stinging nettle or something like that," he said. "I remember I ran through a cactus which looked just like a normal bush. I carried on reading my map when all of a sudden ... ohhoo ... !

"The countryside is rugged in that it is granite and that means the terrain is covered with huge boulder fields, with boulders varying from a metre high to 10 metres. There are also lots of cliffs and crags and things which make it very rocky under foot and it's quite hilly as well.

"But the forest is predominately eucalypt with huge trees and it can be incredibly fast to run because there is nothing to impede Gunner Mike Brett gets to another control deep in the New Forest. He's ready to mark his card with the individually patterned punch to show the scrutineers that he has actually been here.

with 22 Locating Battery, 32 Guided Weapons Regiment, at Larkhill).

"Quite a lot of distance and technical training. It means taking a map out whenever you go running because you've got to be able to read your map while running fairly fast."

For Hirst the winter is the time to concentrate on the physical side with lots of distance running, hill training and practice over rough terrain. But, of course, that is only half the battle. Towards early Spring it is time to get to work on technique.

"On the technique side you have got to analyse your weaknesses and strengths and work out what type of technique is best for you," he said. "It is certainly a lot harder than physical training because anyone can go out and do a 10 mile run, but it's a bit more difficult to get to a decent forest and work out a proper orienteering session on your own.

"If you train, say 100 miles a week, you might knock two minutes off your 10 miles time and therefore, perhaps, three minutes off your orienteering time over a set distance. But if you improve your technique you can cut out six or seven minutes, not by running faster at all, but by going through the controls slicker."

Looking forward to the World Championships, Hirst said that Britain had established itself as a member of the first division by coming fifth in the men's relay, only four minutes behind the Gold Medal position, in the last World event in Hungary in 1983.

"So we've really got a foothold there," he said. "Obviously our task this time is not only to produce a good relay result but also to try and get someone in the top ten of the individual race."

No doubt that would be a boost for Army Orienteering if either Hirst or Brett, the current Army champion incidentally, or both together achieve that distinction for their country and their service.



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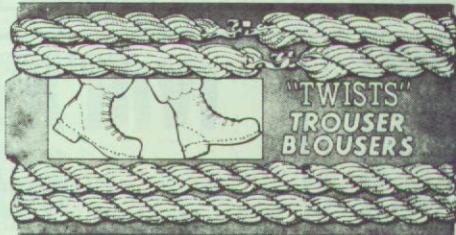
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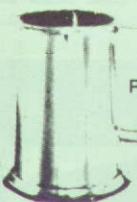
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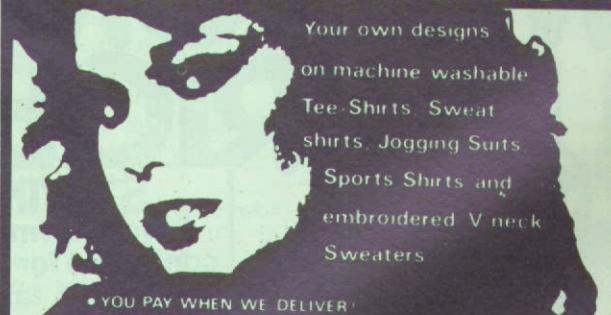
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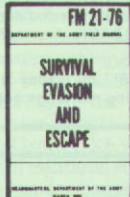
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## NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

AS FROM the issue of SOLDIER dated 14 January 1985, there will be new conditions for the insertion of Classified Advertisements in the magazine.

For some considerable time, SOLDIER has charged only 5p per word — with a minimum charge of 50p — for commercial Classified Advertisements; those from private advertisers have been printed at no charge.

To simplify the conditions, **ALL Classified Advertisements** will in future be charged at the same price of **5p per word, with a 50p minimum**. There will be **no** free advertisements for private individuals, and the series discount for commercial advertisers will be withdrawn.

But SOLDIER will in future publish FREE of charge conventionally worded birth, engagement, marriage and death notices involving Service or ex-Service personnel, and it will continue the FREE publication of reunion and 'Can you help?' notices. All of these personal notices must be signed by a close relative or, where appropriate, one of the parties involved. A full address must also be given, although not necessarily for publication.

The new conditions apply to advertisements and notices received for the 14 January and later issues, but where advertisements have already been received by SOLDIER the old rates will be honoured.

**All advertisements must be prepaid** and submitted on the Classified Advertisement form printed frequently in SOLDIER (see page 48)

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**Cost** 5p per word; minimum 10 words; up to 10 words of name, address and telephone number for 25p.

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**Personal Announcements** Birth, Engagement, Marriage and Death notices: free of charge. Booking to be signed by subject or close relative.

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**SOLDIER** 1) reserves the right to decline or cancel any advertisement without explanation; 2) accepts no responsibility for printers errors; 3) accepts no liability or responsibility for contents of advertisement.

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# FIXTURE HEADACHE



**THE Army Football Association always takes a bit of a risk when it schedules the game against Oxford University in the week allocated to the Corps Quadrangular Tournament.**

The Quadrangular — the annual battle for soccer supremacy between the Royal Artillery, the Royal Engineers, the Royal Signals, and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers — takes precedence over all other fixtures. Consequently the Army is deprived of almost its entire first team squad.

For the past 20 years the gamble with the timing of the fixture against Oxford has paid off — the University has won just one game. But this year the scratch Army XI was unlucky enough to meet the best Dark Blue side for a very long time.

**Gunners on the attack in the dying minutes of the crucial match with the Sappers.**

Scoring twice in the first three minutes Oxford set their seal on the match to emerge comfortable winners 5-2.

Meanwhile the Royal Engineers carried off the Quadrangular for the second year in succession. During the week of competition they beat the Signals 3-1, REME 4-3, and drew with the Artillery 2-2 to take the title.

The Gunners had to be content with second place. They have, as a matter of interest, never won this title although the Quadrangular itself developed some 12 years ago out of the annual match they traditionally played with the Engineers.

## TERRIERS TRIUMPH

**THE TA ladies team defeated their Regular Army counterparts in the representative match held in conjunction with the Inter Corps Orienteering event in the New Forest (see feature page 38).**

The competition comprised a night leg on Canford Heath, with one team to count, and a day event at Lyndhurst in which all three contributed to the score.

Led by Lieutenant Jean Payne of 35 Signal Regiment (V), the TA girls established a commanding lead in the night section following the disqualification of top Regular Army runner,

Lieutenant Carol Onians of 8 Signal Regiment. Although the Regulars came back to lead in the day leg, the margin was not enough to recover their overnight deficit.

Lieutenant Payne, showing great consistency in both events, also won the individual WRAC prize. Her sub 80 minute times in both legs made a real captain's contribution to the team result.

The TA men were edged out of third place by the REME 'A' by a mere seven minutes in their grand total of 791 minutes. This is the best position they have ever achieved and it reflects the rising standard of TA orienteering.

Ironically the men's team could not call upon the services of one of the best TA orienteers. Captain John Dowty, 100 Yeomanry Field Regiment, Royal Artillery, was present at the meeting but as a member of the Royal Artillery 'A' team, which he helped to a winning place in the Inter Corps Competition by winning the 8 kilometre night event.

## GOLFING GLORY

**THE first ever Combined Services golf tour of Hong Kong ended with the UK visitors halving a match against the Hong Kong Golf Association, but being beaten 6-3 by Combined Services Hong Kong.**

While in Hong Kong the whole team took part in the Hong Kong Open Amateur Championship at Discovery Bay — and Sergeant Ian Gray wound up sharing the honour.

For the former three-times Army champion it was a close-run thing, the RAOC man's 72-hole total of 313 tied with scores by local player Dominique Boulet and H S Kim (Korea).

With an average of 80 for the first three rounds on the Discovery Bay course, Gray set a hot pace over the last 18 finishing with 73 to equal the best round of the tournament.

A local report suggested Gray's finishing round was somewhat 'strange' in that he birdied some of the most difficult holes on the course, but frittered away shots on the easier ones.

But there was nothing 'strange' about his birdies at the third and fifth holes, putting him two under par.

And it could only have been misfortune that he dropped shots at the sixth, eighth, ninth and tenth, which set him back a bit.

Then two more birdies at the 11th and 15th saw him back on level par before he dropped another shot at the easy 16th.

A par at the last saw him home with a one over 73, two shots clear of local man Boulet's 75, and another title was his.

## IN BRIEF

A STAGGERING total of 50 soldiers made international sporting appearances this year, the Army Sport Control Board has discovered after carrying out a survey among its affiliated sporting organisations.

Says the Sport Board's Lieutenant Colonel Roy Brennan, who carried out the survey: "I was amazed. I had no idea we would come up with so many names. It was interesting to note that all of the internationals were in sports which are still striving to remain amateur."

Among the sports in which the Army were represented were athletics, hockey, boxing, canoeing, pentathlon, squash, judo, skiing, orienteering, biathlon, orienteering and shooting. The Royal Navy and Royal Air Force had 20 internationals between them — making a total of 70.

THE ARMY is to stage an international cricket match at Aldershot next Summer — for the first time in ten years. Meeting the Combined Services on Friday 14 June will be the touring team from Zimbabwe, World Cup finalists and bidding for full Test status.

CAPTAIN Robbie Robinson RAOC serving with 1 (BR) Corps Troops Workshops, Bielefeld retained his Combined Services squash champion title when he won the NATOCARS Challenge Trophy by beating Lieutenant Norman Ingledean RN, at the Waverley Club, Farnham. They first met last season in the Inter Services Championships, and although the 3-0 result was the same, Ingledean took Robinson to 10-8 in the first game and deserved to have won at least one of the games.

SERGEANT Billy Richards (16 Bn RAOC Bicester) won the Army Angling Individual Championship fished on the River Lippe near Hamm in West Germany. He is enjoying a magnificent spell, having taken the UKLIF individual title earlier.

Result: 1 Sgt W Richards (16 Bn RAOC) 23lb 5oz; 2 Sgt A Gregory (Depot Regt RE) 21lb 9oz; 3 Sgt I Turner (2 Para) 21lb 2oz; 4 Cpl P Moule (32 Armd Eng Regt) 19lb; 5 Cpl M

Stafford (13 Ord Coy Hereford) 18lb 15oz; 6 L Cpl S Mason (17/21 Lancers) 18lb 11oz.

The Inter-Service Boat Angling Championship was fished in the Nab Tower area off the Isle of Wight in very rough conditions. The RAF won with 54 points, followed by the Army (43) and the Royal Navy (39).

BLIZZARD conditions failed to daunt competitors (39 teams — 19 of them German) in the third annual Verden Garrison Saddle Club cross country event. Winning team was Weser Vale C, led by Captain Charles Bucknall (Blues and Royals).

After two consecutive wins by the RAF, the Army won the Grant's Whisky Regatta at the Kiel British Yachting Club in West Germany. Petrel won, crewed by Lieutenant Colonel Mike Brown, RA, skipper, Major William Cook, RA, Warrant Officer 2 Malcolm Strickland, REME and Corporal Theo Caderius van Veen, REME.

In the BAOR Motor Cycle Championships held at Nienburg the team title was taken by 4 Armoured Division Transport Regiment RCT and Corporal Buckley collected the best individual award.

REME Corps rugby and basketball player Craftsman Martin Toney is the new School of Electronic Engineering 'Superstar' at Aborfield, collecting 102 points (maximum 150) from the 10-event, two-day competition. His nearest rival was 20 points behind.

PRINCESS Marina College Arbarfield became Army Junior Major Units relay winners for the first time at Rushmoor and emphasised their strength by having four runners in the top fastest times of the day.

Army Apprentices College Chepstow were second and the Minor Units event was won by The Parachute Regiment Juniors followed by the Royal Army Pay Corps Apprentices College.

THE Royal Army Medical Corps has won the Inter Corps Badminton trophy for the first time. They beat the REME to take the title following a six-Corps knock-out.

Corps represented were the Royal Engineers, the Royal Army Ordnance Corps, the Royal Army Pay Corps, the Royal Corps of Transport and the finalists.

## WINGING THEIR WAY



**Army School of Mechanical Transport girls on the attack against 13 Signal Regiment in the inter-unit volleyball championships held at Aldershot.**

**WRAC Wing, RMA Sandhurst, has won the first Army Women's Inter-unit volleyball championship.**

Women's volleyball became an Army sponsored sport only last year so all teams were relative beginners — though none more so than WRAC Wing, Sandhurst, a unit that wasn't established until early this year.

Considering the general lack of

experience the standard of play was extremely high. Eight district teams took part and as each played all seven opponents, there were a couple of very busy days at the championship venue, St Omer Barracks, Aldershot.

After a series of hard fought battles 13 Signal Regiment (BAOR) emerged as runners-up behind Sandhurst with WRAC Detachment, Benbecula (Scotland) in third place.

**L**IUTENANT Colonel Roger Christie recently had one of the most unusual resettlement courses on record — he spent a month in Spain and the United States watching top tennis coaches!

For Colonel Christie, after 26 years in the Royal Engineers, has now become a full-time professional tennis coach — offering his services to soldiers and civilians alike in the garrison town of Aldershot.

Despite a long and illustrious tennis career in the Army he never won the Army championship. But in 1956 he captained the Sandhurst team which beat the then Army side.

"I might have been good enough when I was a youngster but I was out of the country quite a lot over the years and took part in few championships. I might have gone for three years without hitting a tennis ball but it didn't upset me because I played other games."

This summer he had some consolation when he won the Army Veteran Singles Tennis Cup. Soon afterwards he was off on his resettlement course.

"Usually they are in the United Kingdom but I had already reached the highest qualification in this country and thus asked if I could go to America. This was very exceptional but it was agreed. I had to find my own way there and back and within America and I was given the UK allowances.

His time was well spent. He visited Dennis van der Meer, voted this year's world-best coach, in South Carolina, and then spent a week with the legendary Harry Hopman at his International Tennis Academy in Florida.

Tennis is well and truly established in the Christie family — his four children all play tennis and his wife, Gabbi, manages the Indoor Tennis Centre owned by the Army in Aldershot.

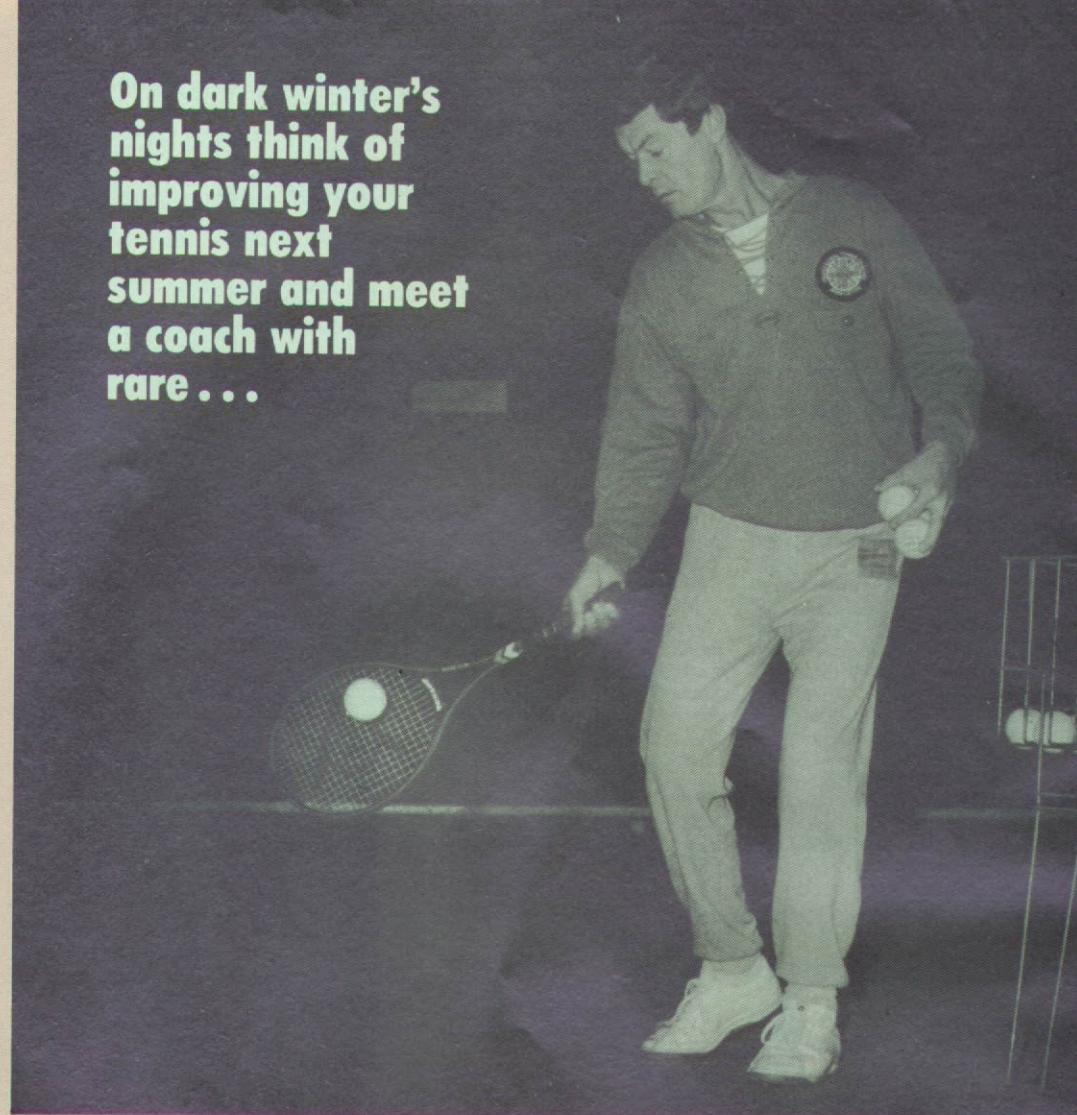
Colonel Christie does his coaching at the centre during dark evenings and in inclement weather. He feels that in recent years the tide has turned and tennis is no longer the officers' sport it once was.

"It is starting to become like squash whereas formerly it was mandatory to have one soldier in a team and now you may only have one officer. The Army Tennis Championship used to be an Officers' Club meeting but that is no longer the case."

Indoor centres like the one in Aldershot are helping to make tennis an all year round game and he sees a rosy future for the Army.

"Our coaching programme has paid off. We won the Inter-Services championships in 1982 and 1983 after 19 years of coming second to the RAF. That is some

**On dark winter's nights think of improving your tennis next summer and meet a coach with rare . . .**



## RESETTLEMENT QUALIFICATIONS!

measure of the overall improvement which could be resultant from our coaching expansion over the last few years."

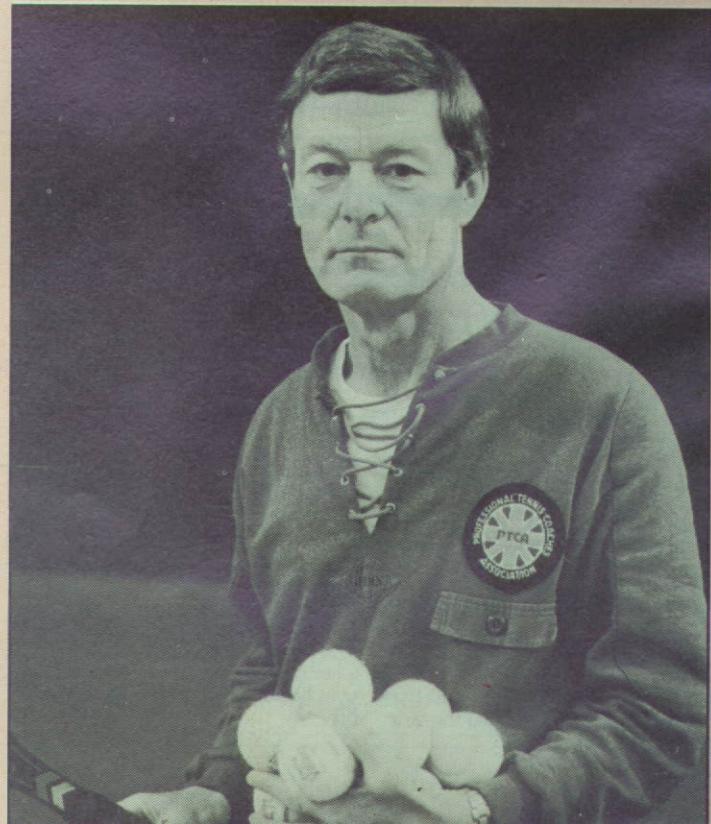
Colonel Christie is no longer the Army coach but he plans to run a number of sessions with the Army squad next summer.

Of his new career he says: "I did not take it up to make a lot of money but because I wanted to be active and have a little bit more independence.

"Now I can eliminate Mondays from my life if I want to. I might even eliminate the British winter and go off and coach in Spain. I am doing what I like to do."

The life certainly agrees with him. Since he left the Army in the summer he has shed a stone in weight.

"I boxed middleweight for Sandhurst and now I am back at that weight again. I am leaner because I am always on my feet and rushing around."



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76