

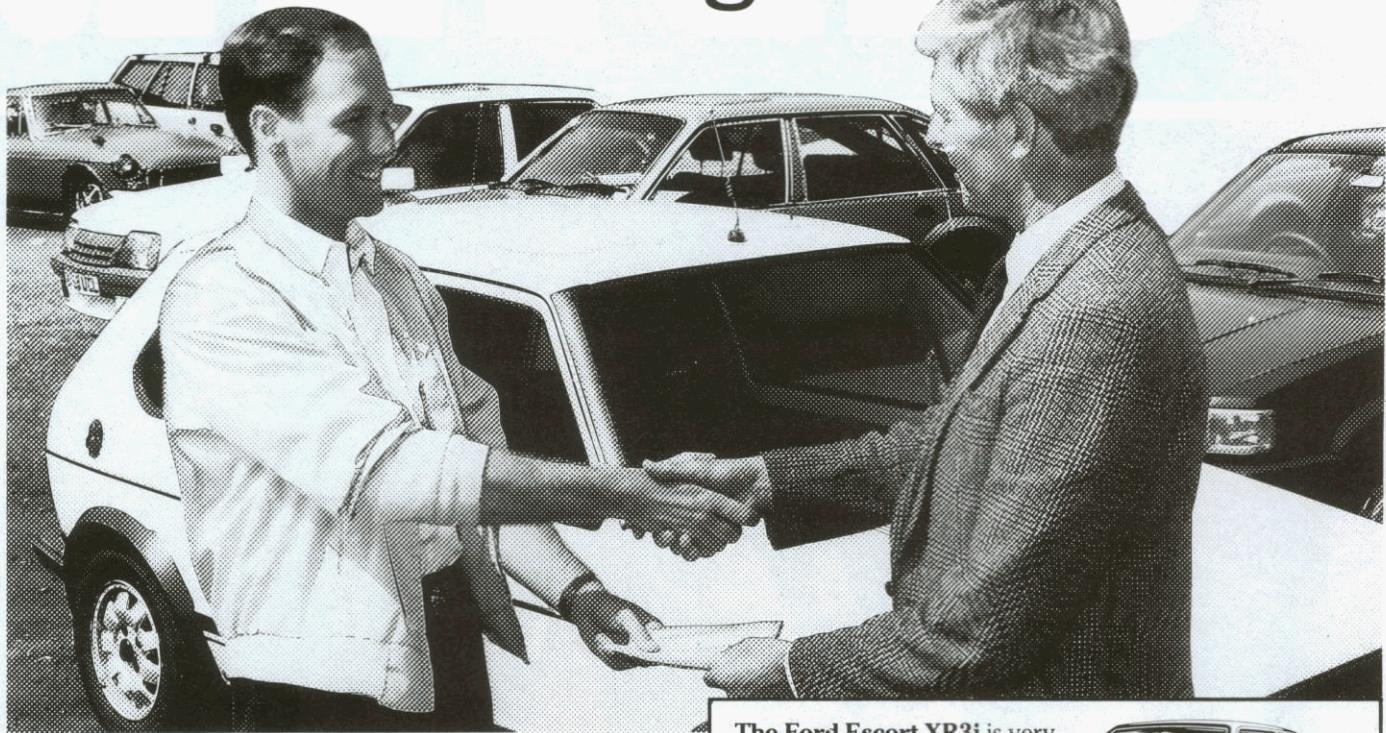
THE MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY • 35 PENCE • 7 APRIL 1986

SOLDIER



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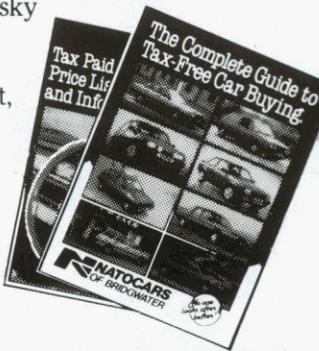
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SOLDIER

INCORPORATING
THE TERRITORIAL ARMY MAGAZINE

FRONT COVER: Up go the Army, but sadly they did not rise to new heights in their Twickenham match against the Royal Navy. Report on page 32.
Picture: Paul Haley

BACK COVER: Corporal Richard Bowden works on one of the last jobs to be carried out by military tailors at Pirbright. Story page 33.
Picture: Terry Champion

Managing Editor
Roland Thick (Ext 2585)

Editor (Ext 2593)

Assistant Editors

Graham Smith (Ext 2589)

John Margetts (Ext 2588)

Robert Higson (Ext 2591)

Art Editor
John Rushworth (Ext 2589)

Picture Editor
Leslie Wiggs (Ext 2584)

Photographers (Ext 2584)

Terry Champion

Paul R G Haley

Librarian (Ext 2577)

Bill Stroud

Advertising/Circulation/Distribution
Mrs Andrea Seager (Ext 2583)



WATCH ON THE BORDER

On NATO's northern border a Norwegian soldier peers through his binoculars across into Russia. Writer Robert Higson has spent a week with a Norwegian Army battalion on exercise in the border area; his report appears in SOLDIER's next issue.

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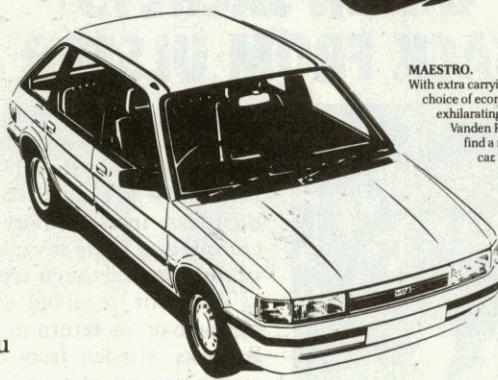
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From the expressions on their faces, these soldiers of The Royal Regiment of Wales are not exactly relishing eating the traditional leek on St David's Day. Perhaps they were happier with the goblet of beer that followed, with which to toast St David.

The leek and beer ceremony is a tradition of the regiment, currently based in Lemgo, and must be endured by each man — even those English, Scots and Irish attached to the regiment — at least once in their career.

According to the regiment, the event is given a competitive flavour with each leek eater attempting to be the first to finish, while the drums increased the tempo and the competitors are cheered on by their colleagues. The leeks are



invariably huge and have the effect of putting the participants off leeks for life.

Some consolation for the soldiers, perhaps, is the fact that members of the Officers' Mess also

have to eat a leek at their celebratory dinner — and sing a song too.

GREEN JACKETS BACK FROM ULSTER



BAOR's longest serving mechanised battalion — the Second Battalion The Royal Green Jackets — are much back in business in Germany after completing their seventh tour of duty in Northern Ireland.

The unit received a warm welcome on its return to Clifton Barracks Minden from a four-month roulement tour based in Springfield Road Barracks, Belfast. It was their second security stint in the city in six years.

Every man in the 670-strong battalion is back safe and well. One gunshot victim, Rifleman Christopher Peterson, who was on the receiving end of a shotgun blast in January, is now back on duty. His verdict: "Quiet tour, no problem!"

"That's just the way we wanted it," added Lieutenant Colonel Vere Hayes, the Commanding Officer.

Bugle Major Dennis Robinson receives a word of appreciation for the band's musical welcome from Lt Col Vere Hayes (centre) and the RSM, WO1 Don Duncan

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PENGUIN RUNS DRY

PENGUIN Beer, the amber nectar calculated to titillate the palates of thousands of Service men in the Falklands, is no more.

The enterprising brewery, Everards, which came up with the idea has gone out of business.

The brewery opened the first real ale brewery in the Falklands with enough capacity to serve not only the Services, civilians and contractors there but also the local community's three pubs.

ARMY DISPLAY OFF

The Ministry of Defence has decided that this year's Aldershot Army Display, which was due to take place in June, will be cancelled.

The biennial event has attracted crowds of up to 300,000 and is a favourite with soldiers and spectators alike.

The display, in the 35-acre Rushmoor Arena, was held annually from 1963 until 1978 and then every other year.

It is both expensive and time consuming to stage, pressures on manpower as a result of worldwide operational commitments, and training for those commitments, are imposing an increasing 'over-stretch' on all units, and against this background, and the costs of putting on the display, the decision was taken to cancel.

It is too early to say if it will be possible for the display to be reintroduced in future years, according to the Ministry of Defence.

MEDALS FOR THREE

THREE 4th Armoured Division soldiers who had between them notched up almost 50 years of service have been rewarded with Long Service and Good Conduct medals.

RAOC soldiers Staff Sergeant Graham Ford, Company Quartermaster Sergeant of 43 Ordnance Company at Hanover and Sgt Steve Slater, Public Information photographer of HQ 4 Armd Div received their honours from Divisional Commander Major General Michael Hobbs, and Royal Engineer Corporal Frank Moore was presented with his at a separate ceremony by Commander Engineers Colonel Richard Luxton.

Sgt Slater is BAOR freefall parachuting champion.

A Fistful of ATOS

SOME 60 Ammunition Technicians (ATOs) were brought into action when BAOR staged a five-day exercise, codenamed Hard Fist, considered to be one of the most important manoeuvres held on West German soil for almost 20 years.

The RAOC ATOS, ranging in rank from sergeant to captain, are thought to be the biggest number to have assembled within a prescribed area, and were called on to provide vital on-site support to units by undertaking a whole range of supervisory and safety tasks.

Hard Fist, run by 1st British Corps, was a three-phase exercise designed to test the tightly controlled procedures involved in the drawing of stocks from stores depots, and the subsequent practise of road movement drills on a network of roads.

Taking part were some 35,000 soldiers of BAOR, massively supported by 11,000 tracked and wheeled vehicles.

The exercise procedures were last tested on a comparable scale

THE toast is to Lance Corporal Paul Burns after he made his first official jump with the famous Red Devils free-fall parachute team six years after losing his leg in the Warrenpoint massacre in Northern Ireland.

Paul has been working as a rigger with the team, but eagerly waiting for the chance to become a fully fledged member, despite his disability. His official debut was fixed time after time, but on each occasion the weather intervened to cause another postponement.

But now Paul has at last made it into the 26-strong team and was welcomed by Captain Micky Munn, the Red Devils leader (second from left in picture) and the other Red Devils aces.

in 1968.

The initial elements concentrated on a vast spectrum of alert drills and emergency call-out procedures with the follow-up stage focussing on outloading storage depots, and stocking up vehicles with items of replenishment such as first line supplies of fuel and ammunition.

Hard Fist's final phase concentrated on practising movement along carefully selected routes with particular emphasis placed on the precise time taken by convoys to complete specific distances.

PAUL'S A RED DEVIL NOW!



Chieftain tanks crossing an M2 bridge near Hameln during Exercise Hard Fist.

HUSSARS LINK ENDS

WHEN Captain Edward Widdery (right) took over from Major Stamford Cartwright as Officer Commanding 67 Signal Squadron, a Midland Territorial Army unit, it marked the end of a link between the squadron and the former Queen's Own Worcestershire Hussars, one of Britain's foremost TA armoured units.

Major Cartwright is the last of the squadron's officers to have

served in the armoured cars of the Queen's Own Worcestershire Hussars which amalgamated with the Warwickshire Yeomanry to be a Royal Signals unit.

The two officers are pictured on Maj Cartwright's final exercise as Squadron Leader at Lord Aylesford's estate, near Coleshill. 67 (QOWWY) Signal Squadron traces its origins to the raising of the Warwickshire Yeomanry by an earlier Lord Aylesford, in 1794.



ONCE, TWICE, SMASH!



IT was a case of third time lucky when Chay Blyth attempted to commission the Infantry Sailing Association's new yacht Bold Warrior at the Joint Services Sailing Centre at Gosport.

Twice the bottle of champagne refused to smash on the special metal edge which had been fitted to the yacht to ensure that it did. For the third attempt, the yachtsman tried the bottle against the bow instead, and this time he was successful.

The yacht, a Sadler 34 made at Poole and costing about £40,000, has been financed by the sale of the Infantry's previous yacht Infantryman plus a grant from Army funds specifically set aside for adventurous training activities.

The Infantry Sailing Association are the first Service yacht club to buy a Sadler 34, which has now been approved by the Army Sailing Association to be the next generation of Army yacht.

Bold Warrior will be used for adventurous training and charter work.

Debbie delights the aviators

'Game For a Laugh' girl Debbie Rix put a smile on 655 Squadron's face when she visited the Army Air Corps in Northern Ireland.

The lads in Ballykelly were delighted to see the former BBC Breakfast Time presenter who now works for London Weekend Television, and is the squadron's pin-up girl.

The flying visit was arranged by Gordon Page, Rolls-Royce's Helicopter Engines Director, who was on a follow-up visit to Ballykelly after presenting the Rolls-Royce Engineering Efficiency Trophy to 655 squadron last year.

The squadron has been based at Ballykelly near Londonderry since 1982 and operates Gem-powered Lynx and Astazou-powered Gazelle helicopters.

Lynx aircraft are used for casualty transportation and monitoring large crowds. Some Lynx are fitted with the hele-tele system which allows the Army to video



Debbie, squadron pin-up

events from the sky. Gazelles in the province are mainly for observation, reconnaissance and command and control tasks.

Debbie talked to the men in the hangars working on the helicopters,

and also met the squadron's three-legged black and white cat!

Then she was whisked away in a Gazelle helicopter to visit another 655 squadron detachment at Omagh.

Duchess visits WRAC

The Duchess of Kent has paid a visit to HQ British Forces Hong Kong, taking luncheon in the Joint Services Senior Rates Mess where she was introduced to members of the ACC and WRAC.

The Duchess is Colonel-in-Chief of the Army Catering Corps and Controller Commandant of the Women's Royal Army Corps.

Photograph shows the Duchess being introduced to Warrant Officer Class 2 Marie Dennis. Also in the picture (left to right): Captain Chantal Bailey, Captain Helen Merrington-Rust and Captain Rachael O'Meara.



More troops for N Ireland

TROOP levels in Northern Ireland have now increased to more than 10,000 since the start of the year including two battalions inserted to help in border duties and guarding isolated RUC stations.

Sadly, the first regular Army casualty was a 20-year-old rifleman with The 1st Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets — Rfn David Mulley — who was killed during one of his initial patrols after just four days in the province.

A terrorist booby-trapped device killed him at Castlewellan, Co Down. It had been lurking in a derelict public house and was detonated by remote control. Another soldier was treated for shock.

More than 380 Army personnel have been killed since the start of the troubles in 1969.

The Ministry of Defence has dismissed press reports that a further battalion was due to fly out to Northern Ireland as "having no substance."

BIRTHDAY SURPRISE FOR MARK

Surprise Surprise it's Cilla — and Blackpool lad Sapper Mark Searle really got the surprise of his life when the Liverpool singer turned up at 32 Postal Courier Squadron RE where he works to wish him a happy birthday.

It was a special birthday for the Army postie who is currently based at Rheindahlen in Germany — he was 21 years old! So Cilla and her TV crew from London Weekend Television visited to make a special film for her popular family show 'Surprise Surprise'.

Mark, who joined the Army four years ago, has been in Germany for two and a half years — he spent time at Dusseldorf and Duisburg before his tour with 32 Postal Courier Squadron RE at Rheindahlen.

Mark and Cilla, for Sunday TV



Brothers in arms

The Betteridge brothers are all four in uniform — four different uniforms!

The eldest, Lieutenant Jeremy T, with the Royal Navy;

The second eldest, Captain Mark J, in the Royal Regiment of Wales;

The next in age, Flying Officer

Philip A, is with the Royal Air Force;

And the youngest, Simon J, is also in uniform, but not with the Armed Forces. He is a police constable with the Metropolitan Police.

And two of them are married to sisters.

Their careers obviously take them to all parts of the world and these days they seldom get together, but this year they did meet for a reunion, at St David's Day.

Simon, Philip, Mark and Jeremy, infrequent reunion



COMPUTER HELPS THE COOKS



Major John Henwood, operating the CATPAC computer. He is CATPAC project team manager, based at Catterick



A camp kettle full of steaming stew, carefully prepared by Private Christopher Davies and Corporal Garry Brain, won them top prize in the field cookery competition

USING the new CATPAC (Catering Planning Accounting and Control) microcomputer, results of a cookery competition held by No. 2 Catering Region, (Wales and Western District), were instantly available.

CATPAC is designed to give the Catering Manager up-to-date information on recipes, costing, stock control, feeding locations, suppliers and all information required for operations under his control.

The first CATPAC is scheduled to enter service in March 1987, with No. 2 Catering Region receiving their official issue by February the following year.

The cookery competition, held at Nesscliff Training Camp near Shrewsbury, was a test of the cooks' full military skills.

A navigational match had them warmed up for an assault course followed by a falling plate competition on the 30m range, then an NBC Test and first aid practical tests.

The next day tested their culinary prowess, with a buffet class to see their presentational

skills and a field cooking competition to demonstrate just what they could prepare in a given time in the field.

Top marks in the field phase went to the NCOs' Tactical Wing, School of Infantry, Brecon, with the Prince of Wales's Division Depot, Lichfield, and the 22 SAS team from Hereford gaining equal points for second place.

The cold buffet competition was won by the Army Apprentices



College, Chepstow, with 15 Bn RAOC, Donnington second and The Junior Leaders' Regiment, Royal Artillery, one point behind, in third place.

Contrasting the old and the new, a Second World War type of field oven was built at Nesscliff; fired by coal, coke, wood or peat it could bake, cook, fry or simmer, and was used extensively by the Army all over the world.

Modern equipment was demonstrated by a well-known cookery equipment manufacturer who had

Judges of the cold buffet class, retired Major Ray Jenner (right) and Captain Stan Graham, took a close look at all the entries

College, Chepstow, with 15 Bn RAOC, Donnington second and The Junior Leaders' Regiment, Royal Artillery, one point behind, in third place.

their latest range of gas and electric equipment on display, including a new steam pressure oven which drastically reduces cooking time. But for the field cookery competition the well-proven, soldier-proof 'Cookers portable No. 1', known throughout the Army as the No. 1 Burner, with the camp kettle, frying pan and insulated containers, were the standard equipment.





The British Army way... macho

MUSICALLY speaking, the Army has hit some low notes during the last couple of years (the reduction of bands policy) and just one high note in the past few months (the three-year reprieve of Kneller Hall).

Notwithstanding, the Service's dwindling number of musicians — 78 bands with 2,500 musicians two years ago — will continue to step out smartly in syncopated style to delight thousands of people of all ages whenever they are called upon to do so.

Marching bands are, in fact, to improve their image under current proposals. In particular, the image of the marching bands' figurehead

By Graham Smith

musical vanguard... the venerable Drum Major.

For years these maestros of the minim, the precision keepers of crochets and quavers — the rank of Drum Major in the infantry dates from 1810 — have kept that British stiff upper lip and ramrod back as the instrumentalist music-makers in their wake have marched and counter-marched in stirring style. Ever melodious ambassadors with that patriotic pulsating panache in some foreign land.

The pride of many a Director of Music. Immaculate in turn-out as they wielded their ornate five-feet-two-inch Malacca cane Drum Majors' staffs or maces.

Now the Army's mandarins of music are calling for a change of tune and literally a change of pace — they were meeting on April 1 to make a decision — thus keeping in

step with some of our Nato allies, such as the eye-catching Italians, involved in public musical spectacle.

After all, it was a long association with continental troops many years ago that influenced our own Corps of Drums, the habit of parading the Corps of Drums — of Line Regiments — in front of the band being copied from the French.

The shift is, however, minor not major in musical terms and drill movements, they say. It will affect only Drum Majors.

The proposal, which could be implemented at the sweep of a baton, is one whereby the Drum Major marches... with left hand on hip. Four fingers straight and forward and the thumb to the rear of the joint "forming a horizontal line to the fingers."

Early inquiries, however, show the suggestion is already viewed with deep reservations by the kilted Scottish Division, the bearskin-topped Guards Division and others. The fast-paced Light Division are definitely not happy about the added flair to performance.

Certain leeway will still be allowed the flamboyant Drum Major six paces ahead of his moving, musical body of men. Staff throwing and twirling will still be allowed... if he can manage it. But still not the Guards Division.

Tours... Beating Retreat... Troops... village fetes on the green... and ambitious tattoos like those of Cardiff, Edinburgh, Berlin, Hong Kong, and the Royal Tournament would seem to have a new image to present to the band-loving public.

WO2 Peregrine Sweetleigh, said: "I've tried out the new drill

HAND ON HIP MARCHING HITS SOUR NOTE

during band nights but find it difficult avoiding the natural swing of the upper and lower arm to and fro, pivoted that way by having the hand anchored on the hip. I don't know how left-handed guys are going to cope. I don't honestly see it working for British Army bands with our traditionally macho, fighting-man image. We are, after all, soldiers first and musicians second. Perhaps female drum majors could get away with it. It would suit them."

Fellow musician WO2 Darby Green said: "The hazard, as I see it, is the danger of mincing instead of maintaining the marching impetus. My wife and kids have already given me quite a bit of stick about it. Even my married quarter neighbours have given me some funny looks when I've been practising along the length of my garden to music from my favourite band records on the CD player in the lounge.

"It also feels weird making a counter-march turn. I don't think the idea will catch on either and there should be a big re-think."

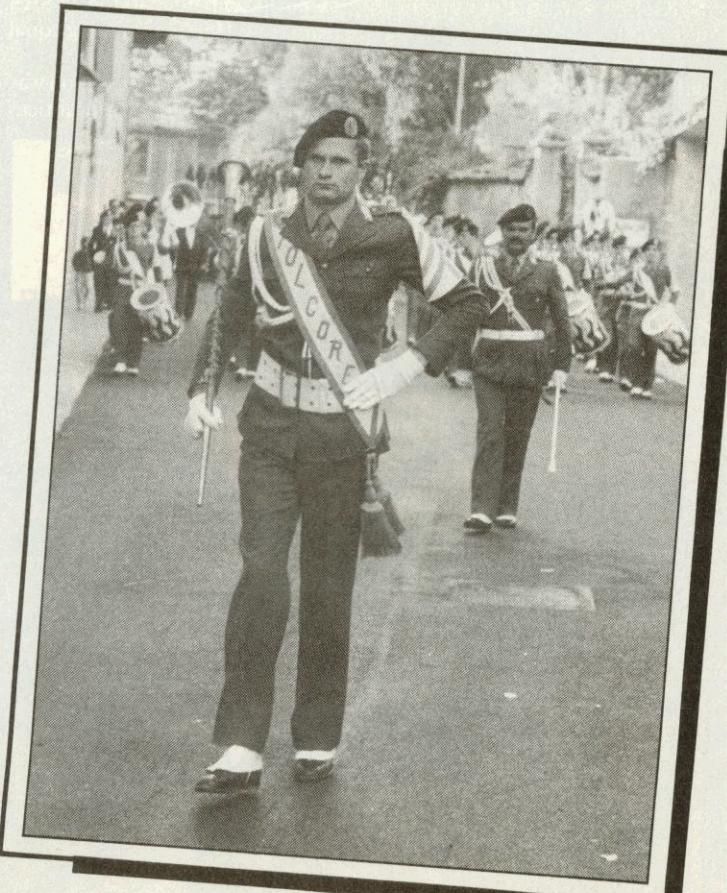
Bandsman Neil Tremblah, a side drummer, who would be following

almost in the direct footsteps of the new-look Drum Major said: "I've done several band tours overseas and from the spectator viewpoint the hand-on-hip approach does, I suppose, fit in with certain foreign bands. Personally, though, I think I would find it difficult to keep a straight face when viewing the action from the rear. But, then again, if it does go ahead I suppose we would all get used to it."

But as a certain drum manual spells out: "The Drum Major in his position at the forefront of the Corps of Drums and Band is the figure who stands out in the public eye. His style, flourish and panache enhance the performance of the band and along with the colourful uniforms and music, add much to the eye-catching splendour that appeals to the general public and improves the spectacle and pageantry of a military parade."

So, perhaps a small gesture such as the nonchalant but disciplined hand planted on the hip could give the Drum Major's image yet another dimension. This one, in keeping with our Nato allies.

The new look... eye catching

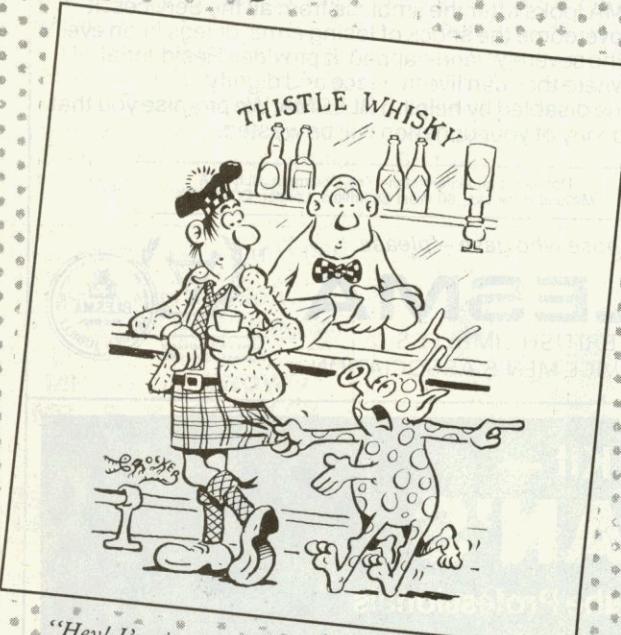




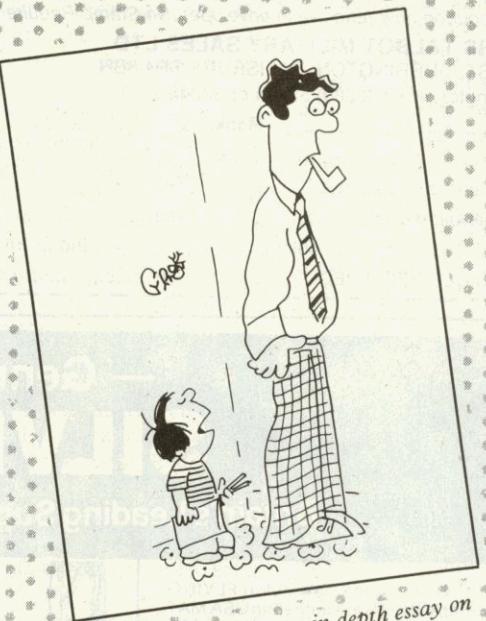
"I don't need to look it up. I know it's against Queen's Regulations."



"You've got him worried — he didn't think it would go into the second round!"

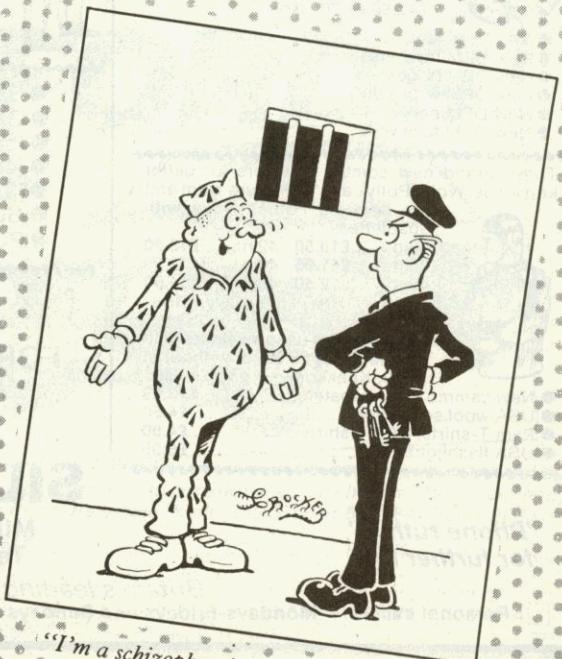
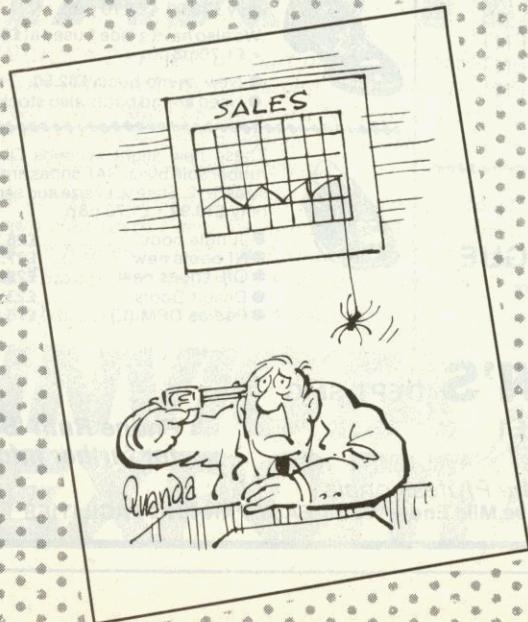


"Hey! I've just seen the Loch Ness monster."



"We've got to write an in depth essay on our parents. How do you spell incompatible?"

Humour



"I'm a schizophrenic — how can you put me in solitary confinement?"

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- New DPM w/proofs
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SOLDIER to Soldier

THE interest in militaria almost knows no bounds these days; SOLDIER's classified advertising pages bear witness to the enthusiasm for collecting badges, medals, uniforms, books and postcards etc.

This has resulted in Sotheby's, the famous auctioneers, including for the first time in one of its auctions a section on posters from the First World War, many of them used to encourage recruiting. They make interesting and nostalgic reading today.

The inhabitants of Alford (presumably Alford, Lincs) were, for instance, exhorted to attend a meeting "in order to assist in obtaining recruits, and repelling The Mad Dog of Europe", an

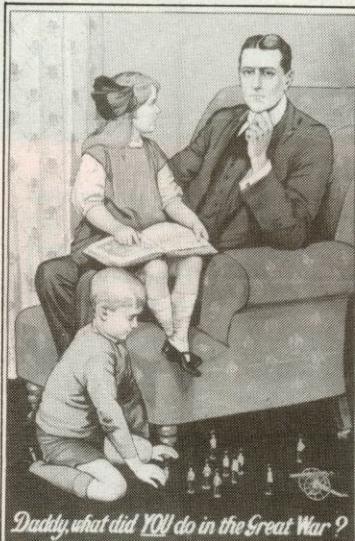
exhortation which would have been equally appropriate, though perhaps couched in somewhat old fashioned terms, 25 years later.

"Women ... bring your men, girls ... bring your best boys", the poster appealed.

Published by the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee, another depicted St George slaying the dragon and declared "Britain Needs You at Once".

And, one of the best remembered of phrases from that time "Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?", asked of a pensive father with a young daughter seated demurely on his knee and young son playing with toy soldiers and a field gun.

The poster collections were



variously expected to fetch between £50 and £750, but prices were generally higher than the auctioneers expected. Four coloured lithographs, for instance, which included the "Daddy, what did you do ..." poster, were sold for £300, almost double what was anticipated.

Another collection, expected to raise £125-£175, realised a net price of £500.

The posters came from different sources and were knocked down to various buyers, one enthusiast snapping up several lots in telephone bids.

Said a Sotheby's spokeswoman afterwards: "It was a big success".

ONLY three months before some 300,000 people were due to flock to Rushmoor Arena in Hampshire for the biennial Aldershot Army Display, the show is off, a victim of today's compressed Army and the ever-present financial squeeze.

"A very, very sad day for Aldershot" the local mayor reportedly said. Indeed. And a very sad day for the Army too.

The mayor, who ironically had chosen co-operation between the military and civilian communities as the theme for his mayoral year, said that Aldershot was now losing part of its history and heritage.

The Ministry of Defence was not able to say yet whether it would be possible for the display to be reintroduced in future years.

The display was a great occasion in the Army calendar. It entailed a great deal of work, raised a lot of money for the Army Benevolent Fund, but most important of all it gave an opportunity for the Army and public to get together in considerable numbers and to great effect.

One very small part of the vast get-together was that SOLDIER magazine was able to meet its

readers, hundreds of whom called at the SOLDIER stand, many of them from overseas.

A small part, but an important event for SOLDIER. We will miss not meeting you this year. Here's to the future.

BRITAIN'S largest hospital for disabled ex-Servicemen faces a serious problem in providing for the needs of the increasing number of men and women who will need care in the next century.

"A start must be made now to provide accommodation, medical, and nursing care for these people," Sir Eric Yarrow, chairman of Erskine Hospital at Bishopton, near Glasgow," has said.

Two-thirds of the country's young men became Servicemen in the Second World War. They are now between 60 and 70 and many will be looking towards Erskine for help.

The hospital costs well over £3m a year to run and is outside the National Health Service. Most of its money comes from the generous Scottish public, which includes many Service and ex-Service organisations.

Anyone who has served in the Armed Forces or the merchant navy is eligible for admission, if there is room.

Erskine has 360 patients, 45 of whom served in the 1914-18 war, 174 in the 1939-45 war, and 35 of whom were injured in various countries, including Northern Ireland, since 1945.

The oldest is 100-year-old Edwin Turner, a former Royal Army Medical Corps sergeant, and the youngest 27-year-old Douglas Moir, who was injured in Germany last year.

The views expressed in SOLDIER are not necessarily those of the Army or the Ministry of Defence.

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S7

THE SON of a world-famous British wartime general is paying a nostalgic visit to inspect the spartan armoured mobile battlefield "office" of late 'Desert Rat' father, Field Marshal Sir Bernard Montgomery. His personal 26-ton tank!

Second Viscount David Montgomery of Alamein, 57, has been invited to the Army's Ludgershall Armoured Vehicle Sub Depot, near Andover, Hants, to see his father's personal tank; a weather-beaten veteran of both the North African and Italian campaigns.

The tank, aptly named 'Monty' is currently under caring spare-time refurbishment ready for its eventual pride of place position in London's Imperial War Museum.

A Grant M3A5, it is one of only 951 of that type built by the Americans for the British between January and November 1942. It was General Montgomery's personal command tank. His "charger".

It is thought that 'Monty' was number 506 in the special production line run. The variation for this range of model was a riveted hull and twin diesel engines.

Its arrival in the nick of time for the vital North African campaign in the Western Desert of four decades ago had an interesting prelude.

The withdrawal from Dunkirk in 1940 left the British Army with only 150 tanks, most of these obsolete.

The need for tanks was desperate and a British Tank Commission was sent to America in June 1940 with the specific task of arranging contracts with American firms to build tanks for Britain.

Originally, the idea was to have tanks built in America to existing British designs. The US Government, however, refused to allow a dispersion of effort at a time when America was also desperately short of tanks. The British Commission was given a curt ultimatum.

It was: American designs or nothing! And these were a choice of the M3 Medium or M3 Light.

Britain opted for both types on a

"cash and carry" basis.

The original American version of the M3 was known as the General Lee. Then, there followed an M3 with a British-designed turret and this was known as the General Grant.

A contract was placed in October 1940 by the British Commission for 3,000 of the M3 tanks, on contract number 5/M 1010 and War Department numbers were allotted T.23504 to T. 26503. The

production series for the M3 medium ranged from M3 to the M3A5 — 6,258 vehicles were procured — and they were built by various American heavy engineering works.

The M3A5 was built by the Baldwin Locomotive Works of Philadelphia.

Thus, for the past 18 months, to bring the story of 'Monty' up to date, this venerable tank — T24027 — has been undergoing painstaking restoration by the Ludgershall sub-depot's Vehicle Maintenance Section under the eagle eye and avid keenness of Mr Eric Richards and a handful of enthusiasts from his 26-strong workforce.

Now, it is under cover spared the fickle ravages of the elements. But for about a dozen years until 1960 the former illustrious battlefield "nerve centre", the front of inspirational assaults, had been standing as a solid sentinel on display outside the Depot of The Royal Warwickshire Regiment — Monty's old regiment — at Budbrooke Barracks, Warwick

'Monty' the tank undergoes a face-lift, in slow time, at Ludgershall



'Monty' pictured by his personal "charger", his Grant tank



put in. This had been adapted from a headlight reflector and was positioned over the map table.

The lads at Ludgershall soon found they had their spare-time work demanding high effort. Some 24 years of prior neglect had taken their toll. There appeared to have been scant maintenance save for exterior painting to appease the gazing public eye.



Mr Eric Richards with unique "finds". Chisel, screwdriver and spanner



THIS WAS MONTY'S 'OFFICE'

'Monty' the tank, pictured at Catolica, near Rimini, September 1944

before its final move to the HQ, The Queen's Division Depot at Bassingbourn, Cambs. It came in from the cold in September 1984.

Its first postwar permanent home, standing sturdily on a plinth, had come about after an edict by the former Eighth Army Commander himself: "Find my tank!"

'Monty' the tank's third move within the UK was to its latest host unit in Hampshire. And since that move there has been no shortage of renovation volunteers. They set about paint stripping with a zeal. They worked with a will to free the seized-up components. Then, work centred on the engine compartment. Next, it was the upper fighting compartment, then the lower compartment.

Last, but not least, will be the exterior.

Detailed examination of 'Monty's' upper turret revealed the removal of the 37mm turret main gun and its mounting (a wooden gun was substituted!) and the deletion of the gunner's seat and



Mr Allan Davies touches up the paintwork on 'Monty'

some 37mm lower-sited ammunition racking.

Wooden struts were fitted, these thought to be map table supports. Fittings were installed for a high-power radio and an additional light

continued on page 16

sitrep of 18 months ago.

"The tank's exterior was found to have a good crust of paint and most of the hatches were seized up. The weather had penetrated in places and, consequently, parts of the interior were badly rusted.

"In general, 'Monty' was found to be remarkably complete and the fact that it was powered by diesel engines made it highly possible that it could again be made a runner."

As work continues on 'Monty's' fastidious facelift, Mr Richards added: "Our main problem is going to be the upper turret; rust mainly. The main area of the tank is in pretty good nick. Some of the instruments could also be a bit of a problem but the Tank Museum at Bovington has been a great help to us. We've still got at least a year's work on it yet.

"There are marks on its exterior which could be battle scars and I'm confident we are going to make it into a runner even though it is going to be on internal static display

in the Imperial War Museum eventually."

Interesting memorabilia found inside the hull when the team of titillators took over included two red fire extinguishers still containing CO₂ made by the Walter Kidde Company of New Jersey.

They also found a heavily-rusted, open-jaw, double-headed spanner, a cold chisel of the era, a wooden-handled "new perfect screwdriver", a couple of turret ball bearings and a live .45mm calibre Thompson sub-machine gun round.

'Monty' remained as General Montgomery's "charger" and part of the 8th Army's TAC HQ from October 1942 until January 1943.

It had been delivered to him on October 13, 1942 and was finished in green over desert pink.

On its front left mudguard was the 8th Army logo, and the name 'Monty' was also prominent on the front of the tank in Gothic style print of black-on-white.

On the aerials of four decades ago fluttered the standard recogni-

tion pennants and General Montgomery's own personal flag of red-black-red.

His crew was made up of Major John Poston, 11th Hussars, his ADC who was tragically killed in Germany just days before the end of the war; Lieutenant J Mouldon, 6 RTR, the radio operator; Sgt Paddy Kennedy, 6 RTR, main gunner; Trooper Fegan, 6 RTR, the loader; and Cpl J. Fraser, 6 RTR, the driver.

Captain Mouldon and Cpl Fraser were awarded the MC and MM respectively.

It was this dedicated crew who presented him with his first black beret, the 'Tankies' beret. It is thought it was handed over by Sgt Kennedy.

GRANT TANK

technical specification

American designation: M3A5; British designation: Grant Mk 2; Length: 18 ft 6 inches; Width: 8 ft 11 inches; Weight: 26 tons; Engines: twin, General Motors diesel 6-71; Armament: 75 mm gun. M.2 Short barrel with counterweight 37 mm gun. M.5.30 cal machine gun, cupola-mounted 30 cal machine gun, mounted in 37 mm mantlet Thompson sub-machine gun, 45 mm calibre; Ammunition storage: 75mm - 178 rounds; .30 cal - 1,200 rounds; .45 cal - 9,200 rounds.

Story: Graham Smith

Pictures: Paul Haley and IWM

A FATAL SHORT CUT

MAJOR JOHN POSTON, 11th Hussars, 'Monty's' ADC died just days before the German surrender while taking a chance; an unsafe short cut!

Poston, 25, had known the Eighth Army Commander for 30 months, the 'Desert Rat' General interviewing him as a potential ADC in Cairo. Together, they had campaigned in ten countries.

'Monty' led the funeral procession on the afternoon of that bright spring day. Poston was accorded full military honours. Gun carriage... coffin draped by the Union Jack... the firing party.

As usual the faithful Poston was returning from a mission on behalf of the commander. He was in his jeep.

It was said that the young officer was in the habit of discovering short-cuts back to TAC HQ along non-recced roads.

That fatal day in the last week of the war he ran into an ambush mounted by a small group of German boys frantically firing their nation's parting shots of the 1939-45 conflict.

Poston steered his jeep straight at his attackers as they loosed off their rounds. He was hit. Though wounded he exchanged fire from a ditch but died.

'Monty' sent out a party to recover the body of the lifeless Poston.

The general was so moved he wrote a letter to The Times. It said: "There can be few officers who have seen this war from the inside as did John Poston."

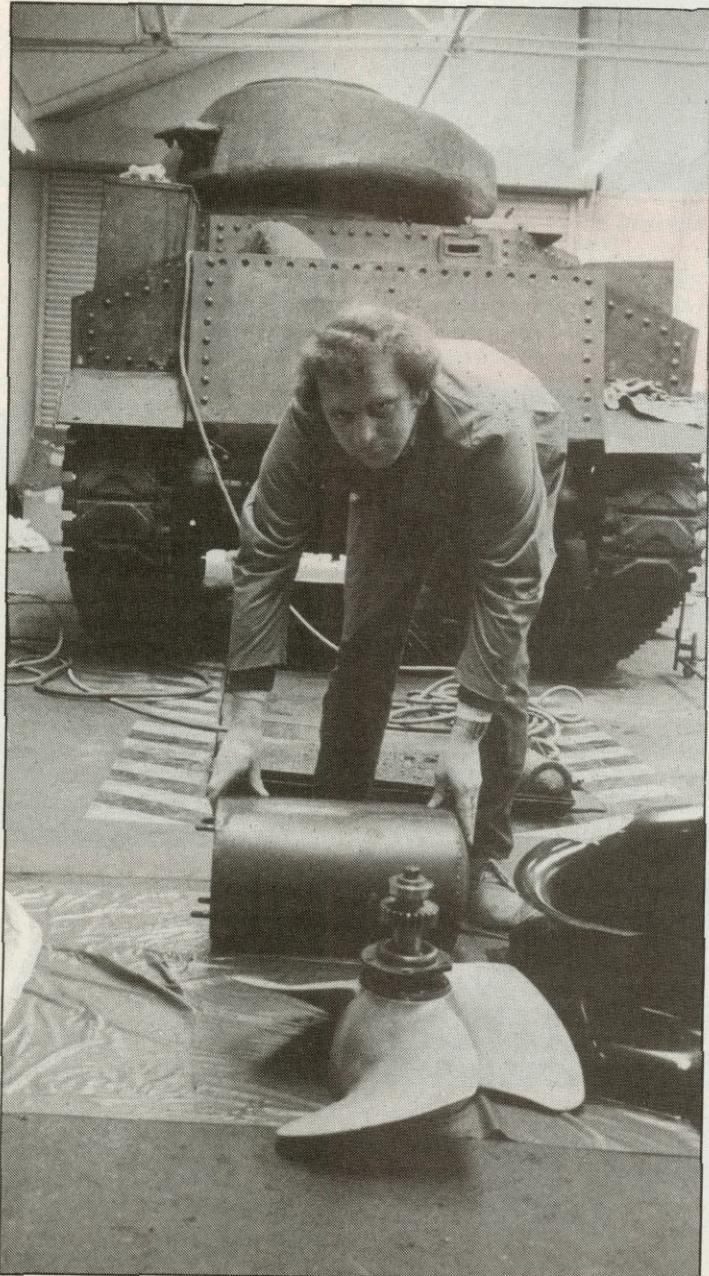
"He knew everything that was going on and was in possession of much information that is secret and must remain secret for all time. We trod the path together from the Alamein to the Elbe."

"I gave him my complete trust and confidence and he would come to me with his own personal troubles. He had been through this war from the beginning and he saw the end approaching. The Promised Land was not so very far away and he gave his life that others might enjoy it."

"I was completely devoted to him and I feel very sad."

After that funeral of one of his liaison officers later described in his memoirs as officers of "character, initiative and courage" the Commander went up to the hill-top outside Lüneburg to receive the surrender from the German commanders.

Young Poston, as he described all of his aides in his memoirs, had been one of his "gallant band of knights."



Mr Paul Gibbs pictured with silencer, part of the kit to be re-assembled

An assassination attempt on an oil-rich sheikh has been foiled by the quick reactions of Territorial Army soldiers at an Army camp in the Midlands.

The soldiers, all Royal Military Policemen serving with 116 Provost Company Royal Military Police (Volunteers), were nearing the end of a ten-day training period when they received a warning of the arrival of Sheikh Mukarram Syed who was flying to the UK to purchase military arms.

With only 24 hours notice they had to prepare a plan to collect the Sheikh from RAF Cosford near Wolverhampton and escort him to a safe house for talks with a top level Ministry of Defence sales executive.

After the meeting the Sheikh was to be taken to a secret Army range and shown a variety of weapons which he had expressed an interest in buying.

Just before the Sheikh was due to arrive at the secret location, two armed infiltrators were discovered by the RMPs guarding the camp. They were captured and rushed into the guardroom for interrogation seconds before the Sheikh's official car drove through the gates.

It was just as well that the infiltrators were caught, otherwise the RMPs would have failed the test — and test it was — all part of Exercise Ratio Topi designed to

RMPs STIRRED BUT NOT SHEIKHEN!



put the 55 men of 116 Provost Company through demanding military tasks at short notice.

116 Provost Company (V) is the largest RMP Territorial Army company. It is commanded by

Major Roger Brumhill, a merchant banker from Birmingham, and has its headquarters in West Bromwich with platoons in Manchester, Cardiff and Coventry.

Exercise Ratio Topi tested the

organisation, planning, initiative and provost skills of the company's part-time soldiers who come from all walks of civilian life.



Inside the safe house the Sheikh talks about arms sales with Major Roger Brumhill, Officer Commanding 116 Provost Company



NBC equipment was on the Sheikh's shopping list. Sergeant Peter Hewitt from Manchester detachment of 116 Provost Company explains the technique used by soldiers to take a drink when dressed in NBC equipment



Sheikh Mukarram Syed, in reality Corporal Les Cooper, a regular soldier of 165 Provost Company RMP based at Donnington, leaves the headquarters at RAF Cosford at the start of his flying visit to the UK. Looking after him is Captain Julian Grubb, the second-in-command

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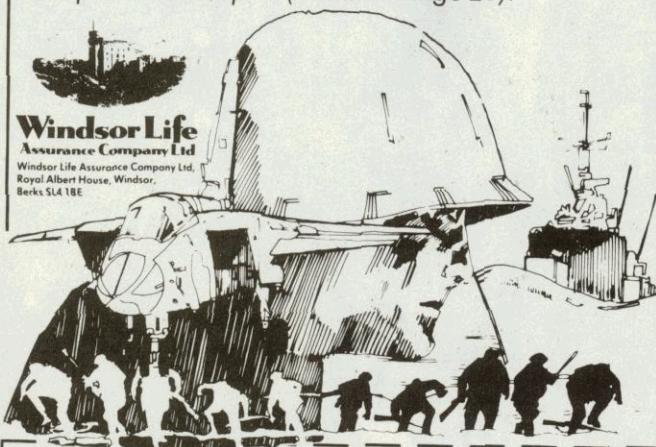
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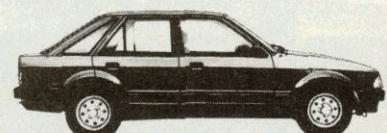
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Young brigadier, canine and drive's staff vehicle...



... later, Medium Wheeled Tractor (MWT), dubbed 'Jaws', drops crushed car into dumper

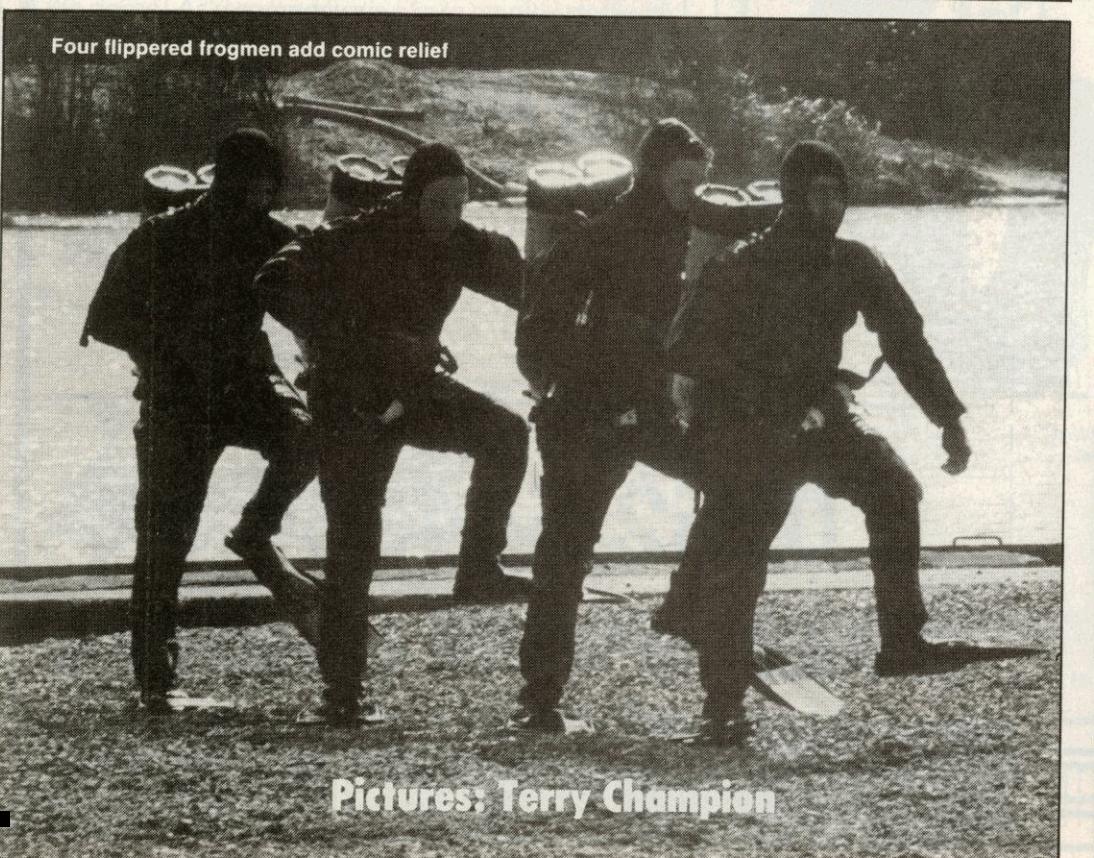


Three giant stacks of plastic tube fascines on a new trailer



SAPPERS' SUPPORT ON SHOW

Four flippered frogmen add comic relief



Pictures: Terry Champion

MORE THAN 100 Camberley Staff College students gazed in sudden disbelief when, during the middle of a sapper skills demonstration involving explosives, an excavator bucket-toting Medium Wheeled Tractor (MWT) approached a brigadier's staff car, scooped it up, crushed it and then dropped it into a departing dump truck. The young-looking brigadier, his dog and personal driver had left the vehicle just minutes earlier, write Graham Smith.

It was, of course, a humorous stunt, one of many injected into a 3½-hour Royal Engineers' demonstration at Hawley, near Aldershot, the sappers' equivalent of the Royal Artillery's Larkhill Day but without the general public.

The spectacle incorporated three phases — operations in the combat zone, reserved demolition work and amphibious capabilities.

There were plenty of nerve-jarring bangs for the inattentive. Plenty of action. The aim of the demo was to show RE support to

the air/land battle with particular stress on operations in the Central Region.

The programme had been arranged by the resident 3 Training Regiment, RE. The demo squadron was laid on by 9 Parachute Squadron, RE, based at Aldershot, forming part of the engineer regiment supporting 5 Airborne Brigade.

Airfield Damage Repair and sappers repairing a severed high voltage electrical cable and installing Emergency Fuel Handling Equipment (EFHE) were two highlights of the static display with its associated wheeled tractors, graders, excavators and dump trucks.

On active show was the latest 16-ton Scammell driver-only operated dump truck with its ten cubic-yard capacity, the replacement for the Aveling Barford dump truck.

The demo was slick showing the versatility of a Corps which celebrates its 270th anniversary this year, the Royal Warrant having been granted in 1716, the same year as the Royal Artillery.

Aspects of mine warfare (laying

and clearing parties), land demolitions and one of a steel bridge on a lake (that masterminded by one 'Captain Tony Flashman' with two sprigs of pulsating light bulb 'pip' epaulettes) all went down well.

Massive armoured engineer equipment manœuvred to good effect within the arena. Bridging equipment looked purposeful spanning improvised ravines. Trackways laid down fit for tanks. Giant fascines, too, were put on show during the initial phase at Hawley Hill.

The demo was liberally seasoned with humour as points were interestingly made. The human components of a Field Troop, for instance, two dozen men in left-to-right line-out held up a ladle, giant spanner, horse shoe, trowel, saw, huge paint brush and even a toilet seat (he was the plumber!).

The commentator poured out, with pride, vital statistics and performance details of the kit in action in front of the stands and their seated guests of varying cap badges.

Kit like the light mobile digger capable of excavating a fire trench

in four minutes. The amphibious 17-tonne Combat Engineer Tractor (CET), the FV 180, capable of digging a tank slot for a hulking Chieftain main battle tank in just 20 minutes giving it a low profile.

The virtues of the Barmenlayer with its single or double impulse fuzes and the news of add-on fuze variations in two years.

Naturally, the veteran MGB — Medium Girder Bridge — now in service for 15 years designed to span 30-metre gaps was on show. A success story, listeners were told, that had been exported to 32 countries. One nine-man team assembled a five-bay version in just 14 minutes.

Its successor, officers were told, is known as the "Christchurch project".

Reserve demolition — special control procedures to ensure destruction of an objective at the right time — was noisy but a fun even for the onlookers.

A spume of water grabbed their attention near their MGB-cum-spectator stand. A steel bridge would-be saboteur was hurled into the lake. While the well-elocuted 'Captain Flashman' and his

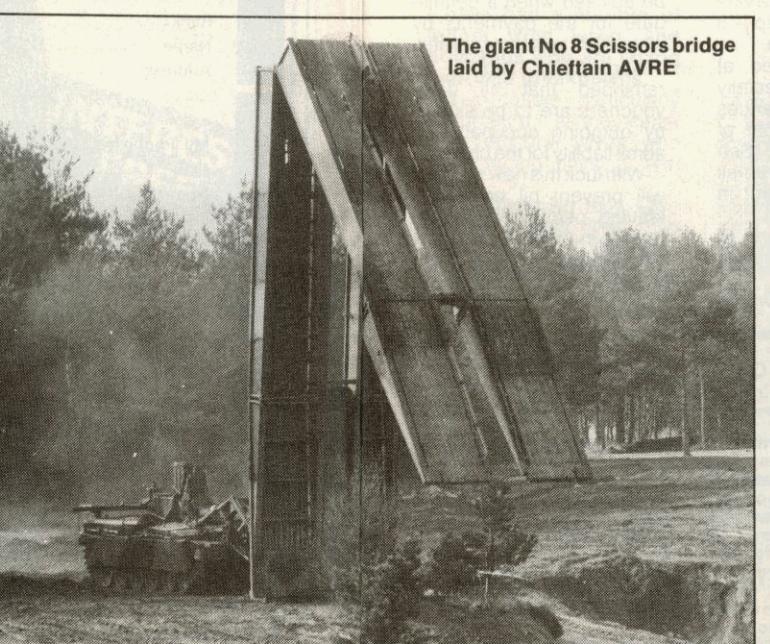
stooge liaison officer, 'Captain James Laidback' were word perfect, the bridge did as it was bid... it collapsed!

Wet bridging equipment, Mk 5 assault boat lakeside landings, the 23-knot Combat Support Boat (of Falklands achievement), a Class 16 cushion-fringed ferry and other craft put in the lively third and final phase of the planned sapper scenario for the day.

An interesting amphibious aspect to sapper life. Wet-suited, flippered frogmen, four in number, added their comic march-past-dais relief and the luckless staff-car brigadier turned up again. This time, on a high-speed pair of water skis!

Complementing the action was another static display incorporating EOD (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) techniques, diving equipment, the world of survey, a brigade water point, construction engineering, movement light (they have searchlights) and the ubiquitous field post office set up.

The sappers had certainly made their point to the ladies and gentlemen of the visiting Staff College.



HOW TO AVOID A NIL PAY SLIP

MOVING HOUSE is a costly business. Families switching to a posting within the UK or to and from overseas are only too aware of the costs involved.

I know of nobody who can manage within the disturbance allowance. But if there is such a person or family, then please let me know. I'd love to know how they do it!

For the fact is the month either side of the actual move date drains the family budget to its limit, settling up on leaving and facing new expenses on moving in.

On top of that there are debit vouchers deducted at pay source without recourse to the individual who has no chance either to warn his bank or adjust his income to take account of any unexpected debit on march-out.

But a worse shock than that is to get a NIL pay slip on arrival at a new duty station.

No money to live on just because your P1956, along with other charges, is stopped without warning.

For you relinquished the right when signing on the dotted line at handover before dashing for the boat or plane.

Unlike the excess baggage form you cannot, at present, elect to pay in instalments to ease the burden, for your P1956 debt is immediately deducted from your next pay be it £10, £20, £50, £100, £150 or more.

In the case of Cpl X he was refunded more than £80 but it put him into debit at the bank as he was overcharged on his P1956.

I might add it took more than six months for the corporal to get his money, plus the startling fact that on arrival at his new unit he was faced with a 'nil' pay slip — it can and does happen.

Going into the red at posting time is especially tough as current allowances do not cover the cost of moving at 1986 rates. (See what Field Marshal Bramall said about this subject in *SOLDIER* January 27).

So what can be done to help ease this worry over a very real problem? Going some way towards

YOU
WRITE



IDEAL HOMES? but housing has its problems

Housing non-starter's problems

A member of my staff has deliberately sold his house and will purchase a surplus quarter using the scheme at his convenience.

He has more than 35 years service and could afford a very high cost purchase.

Another, a staff sergeant with 23 years service, has tried to purchase, as a first-time buyer, and has not been lucky. He has lived in quarters for at least 20 years.

Originally he opted to buy prior to the discount scheme and was offered a house in Rainham, Kent.

It seems to me that unfair advantage is being taken by a number of people applying to buy surplus married quarters under the Discounted Scheme when they already own a house.

For the rules of the scheme state that applicants must not be house owners, but the application form does not ask the

He was advised to wait as the scheme (including that house) would include the discount.

He waited and lost the house as he was beaten to the post on years of service. The original concept of qualifying for the scheme by having lived in quarters for ten years plus, excluded those who sell for personal gain using the current scheme.

I have applied for houses in several of the bulletins to no avail. I have 22 years service and have never been a house owner. So far I have reached the dizzy heights of number 21 on

question.

So to avoid awkward questions at a later stage of negotiations, houseowning applicants are switching ownership of houses to sons and daughters.

This way they don't break any rules, but actions of this type are to be deplored since it is a sharp practice and can deprive others of a home as the

letter above indicates.

Another weakness in the rules of the scheme is the fact that developers who buy up entire estates to sell off, are not compelled first to offer a percentage of the houses to Servicemen before putting them on the open market.

Other groups have schemes embracing this concept. Why don't we?

HARROW SCHOOL SCHOLARS

Calling all sixth-formers ... here's a chance to go to Harrow, one of Britain's top schools. They are offering three types of scholarship at half fee. They are: the Winston Churchill for boys who live in the borough of Harrow; the Sir Arthur Bryant for boys who wish to study 'A' level history; the Fares Foundation; preference given to those with extramural interests, activities and achievements in art, music, drama, sport, technology, community work or any other activity.

Apply to: The Secretary, Harrow School, Harrow-on-the-Hill, HA1 3MW by April 30.

St Helena — a helping hand for everybody

The Guild of St Helena's new eye-catching blue and gold leaflet is now available from the Guild office of your local Guild member or padre.

Maybe you've heard of it, but for those who haven't here is a little information.

There are about 50 St Helena branches in all parts of the world, open to anyone of any Christian denomination.

But one thing they stress is that it is not just a club for officers and their families — it encompasses all ranks.

One of its main aims is to help Service families with handicapped children. So if you need help in this direction, why not write to them at their London HQ at Chelsea Barracks, London SW1 8RF (tel: 01-930-4466 ext 258).

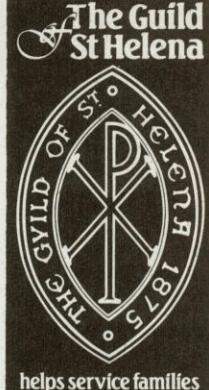
Each year they sponsor a holiday for children with special educational needs. This year up to 20 children will holiday at St Martin's Plain Camp, near Folkstone, Kent.

The organisers are the Service Children's Educational Authority (SCEA) and the children they will be taking on holiday are drawn from all three Services.

Ideally children attending the holiday should be be-

ween 7-13 and should not require specialist medical attention on a daily basis, although nursing cover is provided.

If you have a child (UK or BAOR) with special needs and would like more details, phone Major G Bradbury RAEC on Eltham Military 263, 282 or 285. Alternatively write to him at MoD SCEA, Court Road, Eltham, London, SE9 5NR before May 16.



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TO
HELP



Anne Armstrong

WHEN A SINGLE MAN GOES HOUSE HUNTING

IN MY VIEW

Single soldiers have housing problems, too. Setting up a home is not confined to married people. A QARANC officer highlighted this in *SOLDIER* recently, now a single staff sergeant writes:

"I am just starting my last year of 22 years' service. As part of my preparation for civilian life I have bought a house within commuting distance of my present station.

"Because of this I applied for 'residence to place of duty' allowance. This was turned down because I am single.

"I feel this is unfair as the need to set up a home is as important to a single man as it is to someone married."

It is a fact that two soldiers, both in their last year of service and living next door to each other and of the same rank, the only dif-

ference being that one is married and the other single, could find themselves unequal in the housing stakes.

For the married man will

get motor mileage allowance (MMA) to his place of duty, while the single soldier will have to pay out of his own pocket.

And the single man's

problems may not end there,

for if he lets his house under

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the 1980 Housing Act, there is a good chance he will face trouble in getting his tenants out and his house back.

It means he will be out of pocket on his travelling plans, plus the costs involved in letting his house. Not to mention the aggro.

But on the face of it a single man with his own house is fortunate compared

as MMA.

He writes that the firm charged him the extra for postage as it exceeded their weight and value per order.

He adds their cata-

logue mentions nothing about this.

The firm says: "We have a standard charge of £5 for all BFPO parcels. This has been our policy for some years. It is to cover additional administration on our part. We sincerely hope this does not deter Forces' families from shopping with us."

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But said the corporal: "Have you any idea what extra work and insurance is needed for a BFPO parcel compared to a UK mainland parcel, since every BFPO parcel goes to Mill Hill, London, and into the Services' postal system?"

Do other mail order firms levy a charge? Let's hear from you.

Mail
order
under
fire

A mail order firm are under fire for charging their Service customers an extra fiver for all BFPO parcels.

A Berlin-based corporal complained when asked to pay the extra money.

He writes that the firm charged him the extra for postage as it exceeded their weight and value per order. He adds their catalogue mentions nothing about this.

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SOLDIERS FROM THE SKY, Bandleader
BND 1020. Band of the Parachute Regiment, Corps of Drums 3rd Bn Parachute Regiment, Conductor: Bandmaster L. Tyler

The recently re-formed band for the Parachute Regiment comes up with a programme of marches about half of which are in one way or another slanted towards airborne activities.

In these, and in half a dozen repertory marches, I found the band somewhat lacking in dynamism (and dynamics) for the reputation of the regiment as a whole. All very "nicely" played and perfectly acceptable from a possibly young group of players a bit shy in front of the microphone, especially the percussion section.

The airborne marches are *Ride of the Valkyries*, the Regimental March, *Soldiers from the Skies* and *Queen's Avenue* by Mr Tyler himself, the latter of course named after the thoroughfare down which thousands of bands have marched in front of their regiments after an Aldershot church parade. *Arnhem* is a fine and popular march by the composer of *Arrromanches*, A.E. Kelly, *Screaming Eagles* the march of the 101st U.S. Airborne Division, *The Flying Horse* an attractive concoction on tunes from Auber's opera *The Bronze Horse*, and finally the *Army Air Corps Slow March*.

Three of Sousa's — *El Capitan*, *The Thunderer*,

On the Record

with Rodney Bashford



and *Liberty Bell* — most lack the spirit of adventure required for their ideal performance, as does that masterpiece of dynamic fun *El Abanico*. Jimmy Howe's *Pentland Hills*, R.B. Hall's *The New Colonial*, and Harold Scull's *Trombones to the Fore* complete the list, with a *Victory Drum* beating from the corps to start side two.

An attractive if, as I said, restrained programme, available on disc and cassette as are all Bandleader issues, price £5.65 inclusive.

* * *

CALL FOR THE GUNS, Bandleader BND1021. The Royal Artillery Band, Conductor: Major F. Renton.

To justify the title for a programme otherwise in no way artillery oriented Cy Payne has written an attractive march of that title, using the musical phrase from a regimental song *Screw Guns* I associate (not having the words to hand) with "make fast the dinghy".

A rare performance on record of what used to be an old war-horse of an overture, that to Verdi's opera *The Force of Destiny*, will evoke pleasant memories for equally old band buffs, as will Abe Holzmann's classic march *Blaze Away*.

They might be surprised, even shocked or disgusted ("why oh why!") at the remainder of side one, for three old favourites 1980s treatment so unacceptable to certain of our brethren.

I'm all for it when it works, and deal old *Lucy Long* — here played in virtuoso fashion — was long

overdue for a new bra and panties.

Sousa too is a sitting duck for an artillery barrage, his *Washington Post* getting its comeuppance in no uncertain manner; let them not try it on our own Kenneth Alford though, for he would (to mix our metaphors) pick up the grenade and pitch it back where it came from.

I'm not so sure about John Field's famous *Nocturne*; it needed knocking about a little more to make the effect rewarding enough. Here the harmony is too near Field, and that was not his strong point.

Shostakovich's *Festive Overture* is one of the few modern works played by bands which is acceptable and popular with all comers, even the disinterested, probably because once it gets going it keeps going to brilliant effect.

On the other hand Satie's odd and oddly named *Gymnopedie* never succeeds in making a move, owing its popularity to a pop group and a TV jingle, and of course a pleasant inconsequential tune. Its static mood is broken by fellow Frenchman Louis Ganne, equally skilful if of less ambitious intent, whose dynamic march *Le Pere la Victoire* receives an equally dynamic performance.

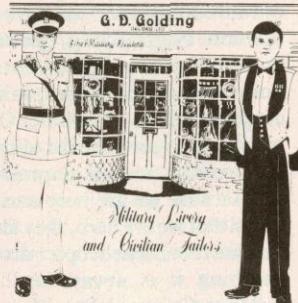
No march should be asked to "follow that", but Cy Grant's second on this disc called *Rapier* does its best, and of course its title (I have just realised) does have a Gunner association.

A selection from *Barnum* and the *Regimental Marches* wraps up a fine programme beautifully played as usual by all at London SE 18.

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rees are an obvious and well recognised hazard to low flying helicopters. What doesn't seem to have been quite so well understood is the hazard that low flying helicopters present to trees.

Under war conditions it wouldn't be much of a problem, but in peacetime West Germany, where public concern for the welfare of forests is increasingly a matter of great political importance, it is yet another matter for the Army pilots to consider.

"I don't think that any of us appreciated before how much damage a helicopter can do to a tree," said Lieutenant Colonel Mike Orwin, Army Air Corps. "But an awful lot of harm can be done hovering over trees, especially when they are heavy with rainwater and covered with new growth.

"We had a particularly wet spring and summer last year but fortunately we got the warning in good time because a local friendly farmer, who had actually seen helicopters hovering close to trees, passed the word to us."

Colonel Orwin was speaking at his RHQ in Hildesheim in the last few days of his tour as CO of 1 Regiment, AAC. Like the other two Air Corps regiments in BAOR, the unit has the job of providing not only reconnaissance for the troops on the ground, but also of supplying a tank busting force of Lynx helicopters.

To be able to launch their TOW missiles with any degree of effectiveness the Lynx pilots need to be adept at using every available inch of cover to sneak into their fire

positions.

"Our protection is very much our flying ability," said Captain Jonathan Parish, the commander of the Lynx Flight in 652 Squadron, one of the regiment's two anti-tank squadrons.

"Helicopters are very easily shot down. We have no self defence. We have to try to make sure that we remain safe purely with our own stealth of flying.

"You have to know your aircraft intimately — to know how close you can put yourself to a tree, under which wires you can fly and over which you must fly."

Stealth, with a machine quite as noisy as a Lynx, may seem difficult to achieve, but in fact helicopters can be quite hard to spot from a distance as long as they can keep low and not kick up too much snow or dust in the process.

Sergeant Mike Button and Corporal Stephen Currie, REME LAD, regulating the tail rotor and changing the cooling fan on a Lynx ▶

The tactical procedures are well established. Going into action the Lynx Flight would meet up with Gazelles of the squadron's reconnaissance flight at a designated RV and then be led into the fire position. Ideally this would be behind a screen of trees which would enable the observer to range in on the target through the periscope sight without giving the position away.

Training for the high degree of skill required for all this has somehow to achieve realism without offending very sensitive local opinion. Night flying, operations on Sundays or religious festivals, noise, flying near houses, animals, crops and now, as Colonel Orwin mentioned, trees: the list of potential problem areas is impressive.

"Because we are here and they know that we are here, they always assume that if a helicopter disrupts anything it is always us," said Colonel Orwin. "But of course German helicopters, US, Dutch,

Belgian and so on are always flying in this area. Because we live here and are usually very careful it is usually not us, it is someone else. But one always has to go through the process of finding out."

On the whole, relations with local people were very good, the CO added, and the regiment did its best to reduce nuisance whenever it could. For example, attempts were made to concentrate pilots' night flying requirements (they need a certain number of hours annually to keep their licences current) in the winter months when operations could be over by early evening.

Crews were being continually reminded of their responsibilities.

"A very high proportion of flying training is done at very low level indeed," Colonel Orwin said, "and that makes it all the more important

tank squadrons, one reconnaissance squadron, the REME LAD (light aid detachment), and an HQ squadron.

that the crews are always aware of the danger to animals and potential damage that can be caused to trees and crops."

"At times it can be inhibiting," said Captain Parish, "but I don't think we can say at any time we have been prevented by the locals from doing our job."

When Captain Parish and other pilots are out practising a tactical approach to a fire position they have to bear in mind a lot more than the simple requirements of training. They must remember such things as not flying too low over an autobahn to avoid the obvious danger of having the attention of motorists distracted by helicopters coming into view at eye level.

It all adds to a very considerable work load for not only do the aircrews have to keep in training for their demanding tactical role, they are on call to provide aerial reconnaissance and support for exercises and to fulfil many other tasks within 1 Armoured Division.

On top of this they have all the normal soldierly duties of personal weapon training, NBC, first aid and so forth, plus a few rather more specialised subjects like map-reading and recognition for the important business of being able to distinguish friend from foe.

The high work load spreads across the whole regiment. There is no escape from military training even for those who are fully stretched keeping such complex and difficult machines as Lynx helicopters operational.

In all, 1 Regiment has 340 men with 18 Lynx and 18 Gazelle light helicopters spread across two anti-

There was also a great deal more time involved. While the old Scout helicopters could be repaired overnight, the much more sophisticated and complicated Lynx might require days.

The scale and complexity of the support needed to keep a unit like 1 Regiment, AAC, airborne is reflected in the fact that it now has two quartermasters — one for everything that is worn (as in clothing), eaten or lived in, and the other for everything that is operational.

Captain Bill McLachlan, the present QM (Tech.), reckoned, on a very vague estimation, that he would be responsible for something like £127 million worth of aircraft, vehicles, equipment to test and handle, stores and weapons.

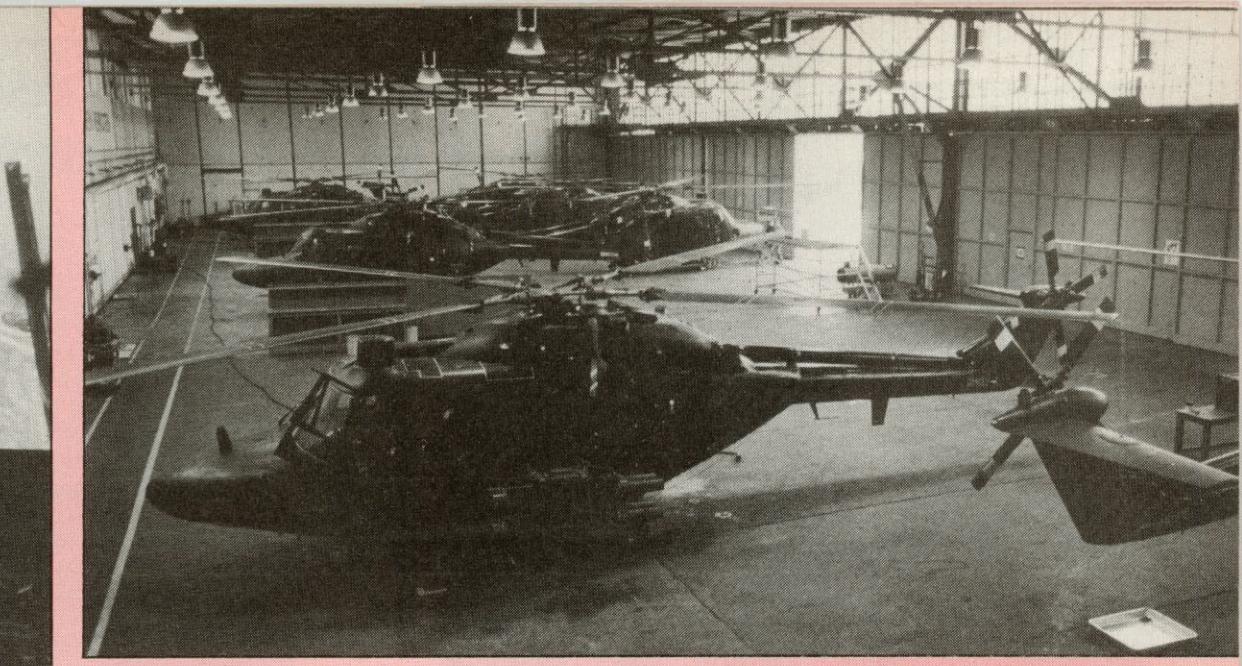
It is a big task and a big responsibility for all concerned, but like many demanding occupations it has the advantage of producing a high degree of motivation.

The three flying squadrons are peppered with cap badges of other corps and regiments, many of which represent a personal ambition to establish a career flying for the Army.

They, and all the others from within the AAC itself who fancy themselves in the pilot's seat, face a very tough selection process. For non-commissioned ranks especially

continued on page 28

Conscious of the Countryside



Lynx at rest inside the 652 Squadron hangar

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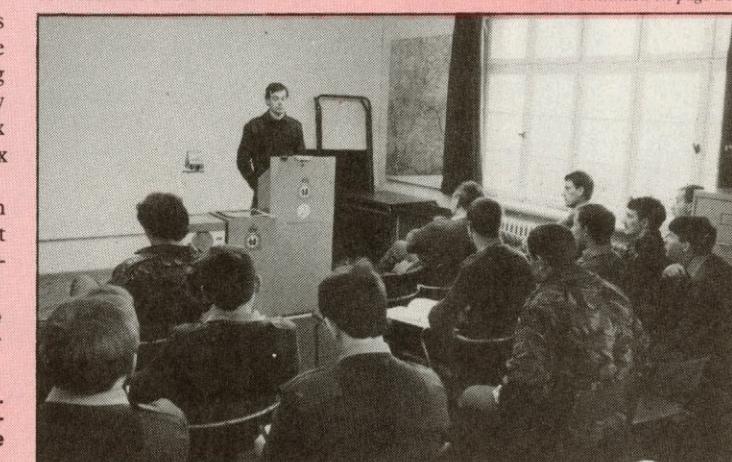
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The high work load spreads across the whole regiment. There is no escape from military training even for those who are fully stretched keeping such complex and difficult machines as Lynx helicopters operational.

In all, 1 Regiment has 340 men with 18 Lynx and 18 Gazelle light helicopters spread across two anti-



Captain Jonathan Parish at the morning briefing for 652 Squadron's Lynx Flight ▶

In the control tower at Hildesheim. An average of 40 aircraft movements a day; during Exercise Lionheart there were 365



Sergeant Kyle Webster, a Gazelle pilot, checks the NOTAMS (notification to airmen on anything that might affect a particular route) in the Flight Operations Room ▲

A tractor tows a Lynx mounted on the custom built electrically powered, hydraulically operated ML Handler, essential for moving the aircraft on the ground ▼

RUSSIAN COLOURS ON TRIAL

Army helicopters in Germany may soon be getting another aid towards less conspicuous flying — disruptive pattern camouflage, Soviet style.

The Ministry of Defence in London said that four aircraft of 3 Regiment, AAC, at Soest, were being trialled with a pale green-grey colour scheme as the existing dark green and black is "increasingly felt to be insufficient camouflage for the north-west European environment."

The colours are the same the Russians use for their helicopters which ought to add a little extra to NATO exercises as well as bringing another point for consideration in recognition training.

As for the Russians stealing a march on the West, one newspaper reports the theory that while the Soviets must have spent countless man hours and a lot of money reaching the ideal mix of colours, we the British can get them for no more than the cost of the paint.

the road is a long one — a pilot selection course with the RAF at Biggin Hill, an observer's course with the AAC at Middle Wallop, several years working as an observer improving knowledge of aviation and of the Army, and then, all being well, at last a pilot's course.

Naturally not everyone makes it. As Captain Parish said: "Some very disappointed people come

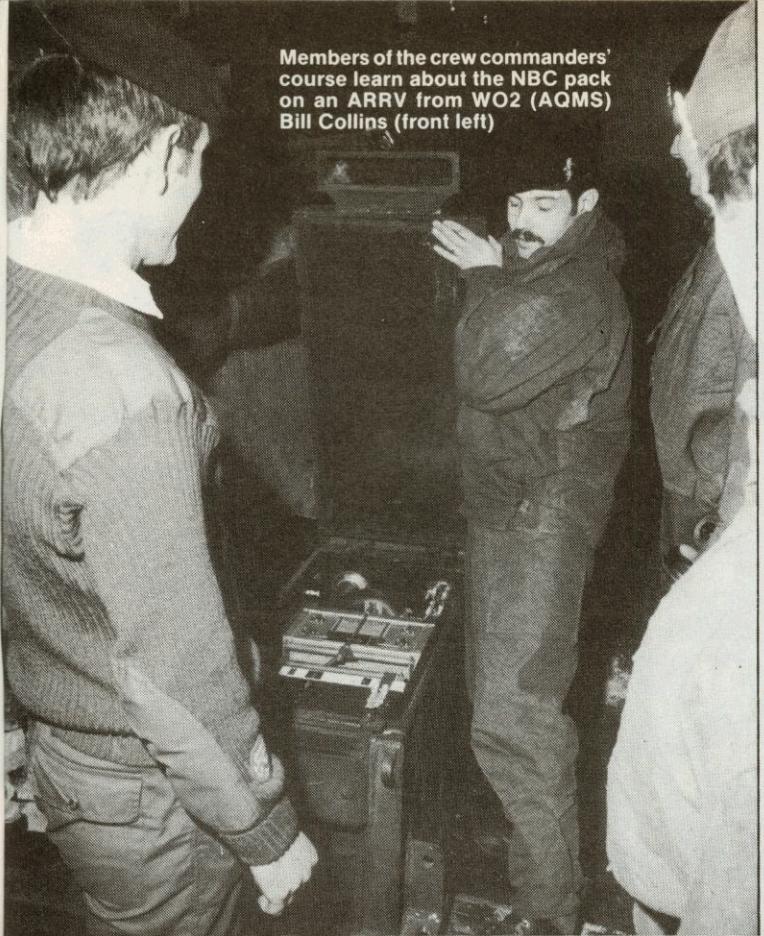
back having failed pilot selection right at the beginning."

But those who do eventually get their wings have the opportunity of practising an exhilarating if testing form of flying. There are dangers, of course, and restrictions, plenty of them, but few forms of transport can quite match the sensation of flying low with perfect confidence over the countryside.

Photographs: Les Wiggs



Members of the crew commanders' course learn about the NBC pack on an ARRV from WO2 (AQMS) Bill Collins (front left)



THE introduction of a major new piece of equipment like the Challenger main battle tank has an obvious knock on effect. It means, for one thing, that the repair and recovery teams of 7 Armoured Workshop, REME, at Fallingbostel, now have a much closer involvement in operating heavy armour themselves.

Being a lot faster, heavier and more powerful than its predecessor, Challenger requires a bit more muscle from those who come to its assistance. The modified AFV 434s which are able to take on board the power pack of a Chieftain are inadequate to deal with the six-tonne Challenger pack (engine, cooling system and gear box).

So enter the ARRV (armoured repair and recovery vehicle). It is essentially a Chieftain chassis equipped with a powerful winch and a hydraulic crane capable of lifting the Challenger pack.

As the unit providing second line repair and recovery support to 1 Armoured Division, 7 Armoured Workshop has had within its manor, so to speak, the first two regiments to be equipped with the new MBT — the Royal Hussars and 2nd Royal Tank Regiment.

With more Challengers to look after than anyone else, 7 Armoured Workshop has to run more ARRVs.

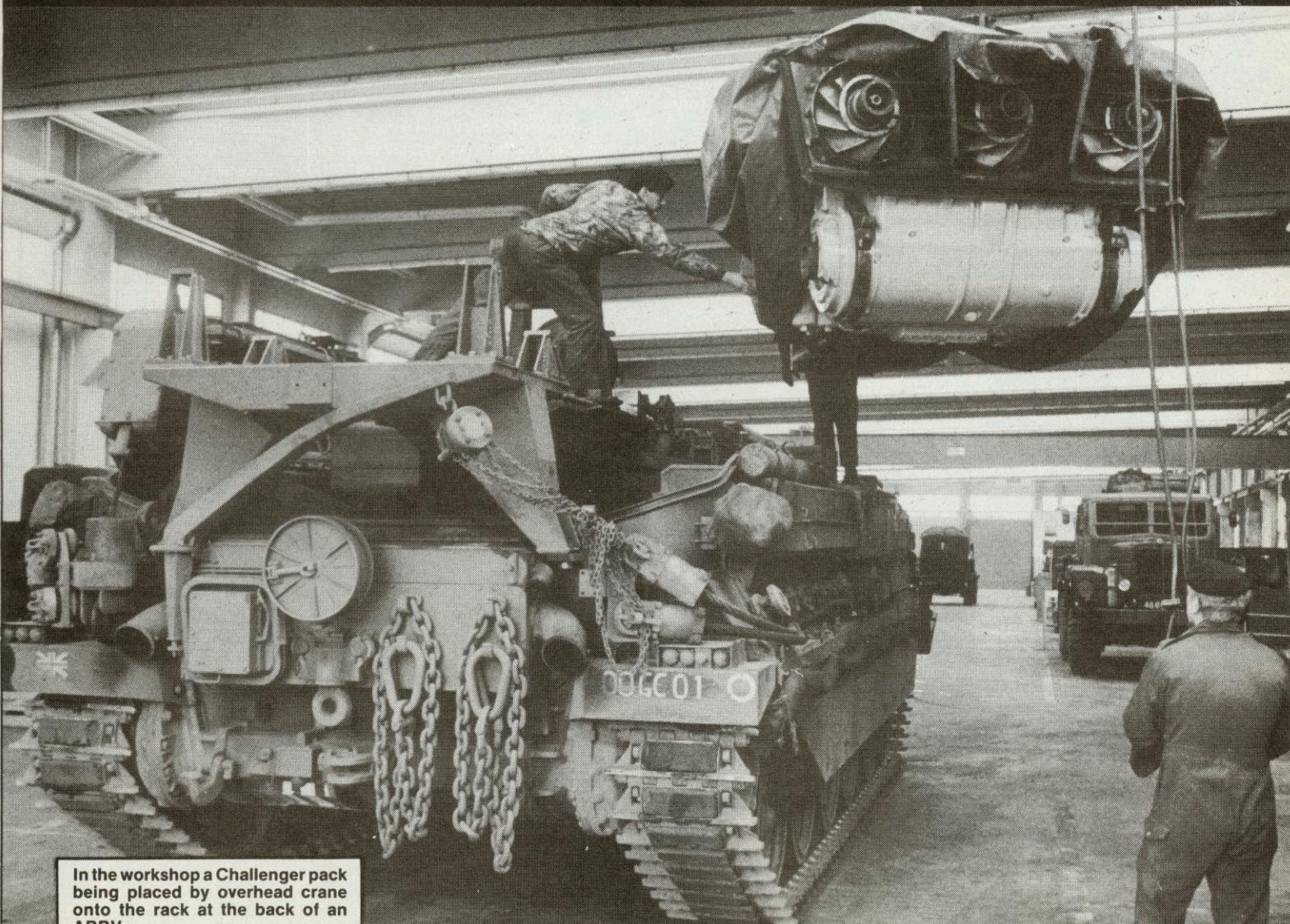
As Lieutenant Colonel Philip Corp, the CO, explained: "This

generates a large demand for competent soldiers who are not just crewmen but tradesmen as well. Our circumstances are a bit special at the moment because the vehicle we are using is bigger and more complex than the ones which are used to support Chieftain.

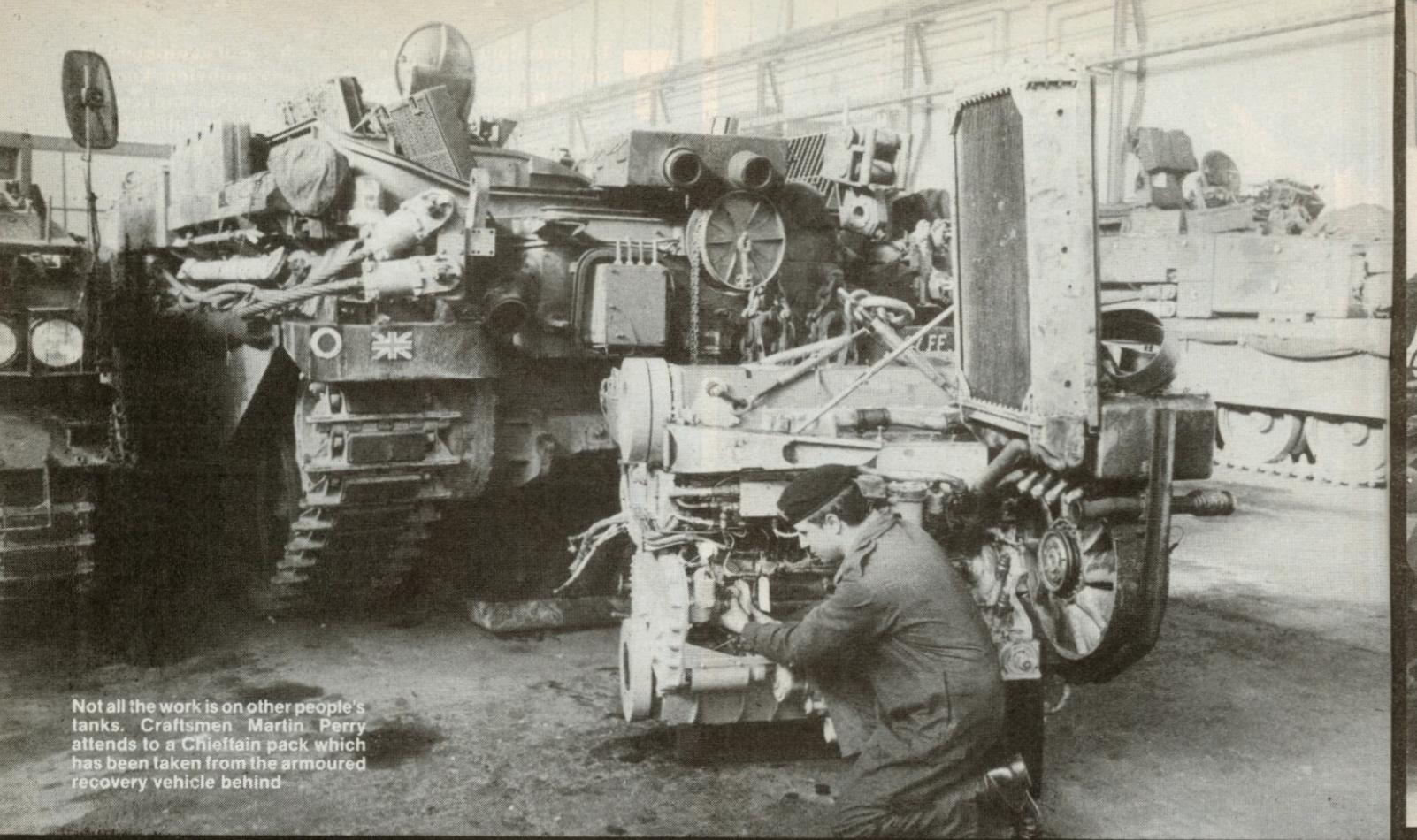
"So we've devised a crew commanders' course of our own to cater for this need. Some of what they require is already covered in military training, but they need a greater level of expertise. Reading a map from the top of a tank is rather different than reading it in a Land Rover or on foot. And moving 50 tonnes of vehicles from A to B tactically is a thing they

Continued on page 30

THE CHALLENGE OF CHALLENGER



In the workshop a Challenger pack being placed by overhead crane onto the rack at the back of an ARRV



Not all the work is on other people's tanks. Craftsmen Martin Perry attends to a Chieftain pack which has been taken from the armoured recovery vehicle behind

Continued from page 29

don't normally learn."

It was important, the colonel added, not to let the side down by revealing a squadron's position as the result of driving in a tactically stupid way, or failing to recognise a minefield, or not using radios properly.

Down on the small arms range the dozen or so members of the crew commanders' course were practising firing dismounted general purpose machine guns, the ARRV's only weapon of defence. The student were all either

recovery or vehicle mechanics and much of what they were learning, said Lance Corporal John Sibley, was a refresher of basic skills from recovery training.

But there was also a lot of attention to such things as reading maps, especially bridge maps — "so we don't go over one tonne bridges in 50 tonne tanks!"

Later the students attended a lecture on NBC procedures for the ARRV from WO2 (AQMS) Bill Collins, who afterwards made a few points on the care needed to drive the vehicle, especially with a

Challenger power pack on board. As the pack had to sit on a rack on top — unlike the AFV 434 where it was contained within the body — it gave an unusually high profile which, apart from the difficulties caused by restricted rear vision, meant special attention to low bridges.

Lieutenant Steve Taylor, commander of the recovery platoon and officer in charge of the course, commented: "Up to now we have tended to appoint a guy as commander, put him on the vehicle and with the very bare minimum

of training let him learn by experience."

The idea of the two week course, he added, was to help make the REME commander as aware as his Royal Armoured Corps counterpart of a whole range of important skills — map reading, voice procedure, camouflage, hide routine, the use of ground for movement and so on.

Of course the coming of Challenger hasn't only affected the job of the repair and recovery crews. Across the spectrum of 7 Armoured Workshop the new tank



The ARRV with Atlas crane capable of hoisting a Challenger power pack ▲

Chieftain chassis to ARRVs has produced a shortage of heavy recovery vehicles. This has brought old Centurion chassis back into service for the job of winching in stranded tanks.

"We are dealing with a wide range of technology," said Colonel Corp, "from the newest thermal imaging right back to keeping old equipment like Centurion in service."

On the electronics and optronics side the workshop had to deal with laser technology for range finders and target markers, with image intensification for sights and surveillance devices, and with thermal imaging on sights for tanks and the Swing Fire anti-tank guided weapon system.

"These technologies are getting more and more closely intermingled," the CO added, "particularly on Challenger itself. The technicians have got to be capable of handling a wide range of things and be capable of diagnosing faults. In a lot of cases diagnosis is a lot harder than fixing the fault."

"It is making the whole thing a much bigger part of our role, because electronics are finding their way into what were previously, perhaps, purely mechanical automotive equipments. Far more now are becoming dependent

on electronic sub-systems."

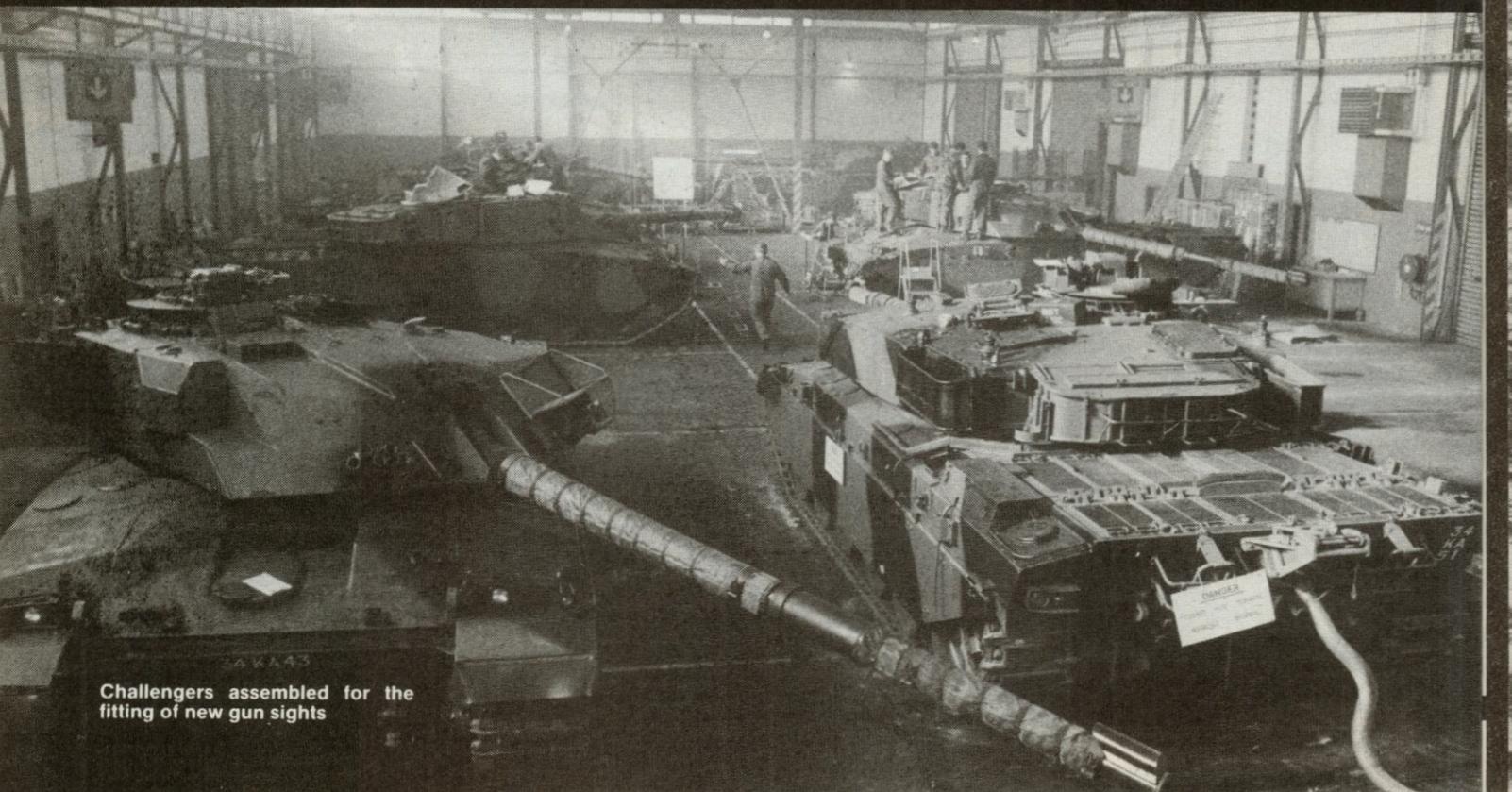
At the time he was speaking the Workshop had just received a new addition to its daunting array of test equipment. This was CUED, only one of two such systems in the entire British Army, installed in a box body on the back of a four tonne truck.

Its job is to test all the black boxes which contain the complicated electronics to run a Challenger tank, sighting and charging systems, gear box controls and the rest. A built-in computer is designed to indicate what circuits are at fault and need replacing.

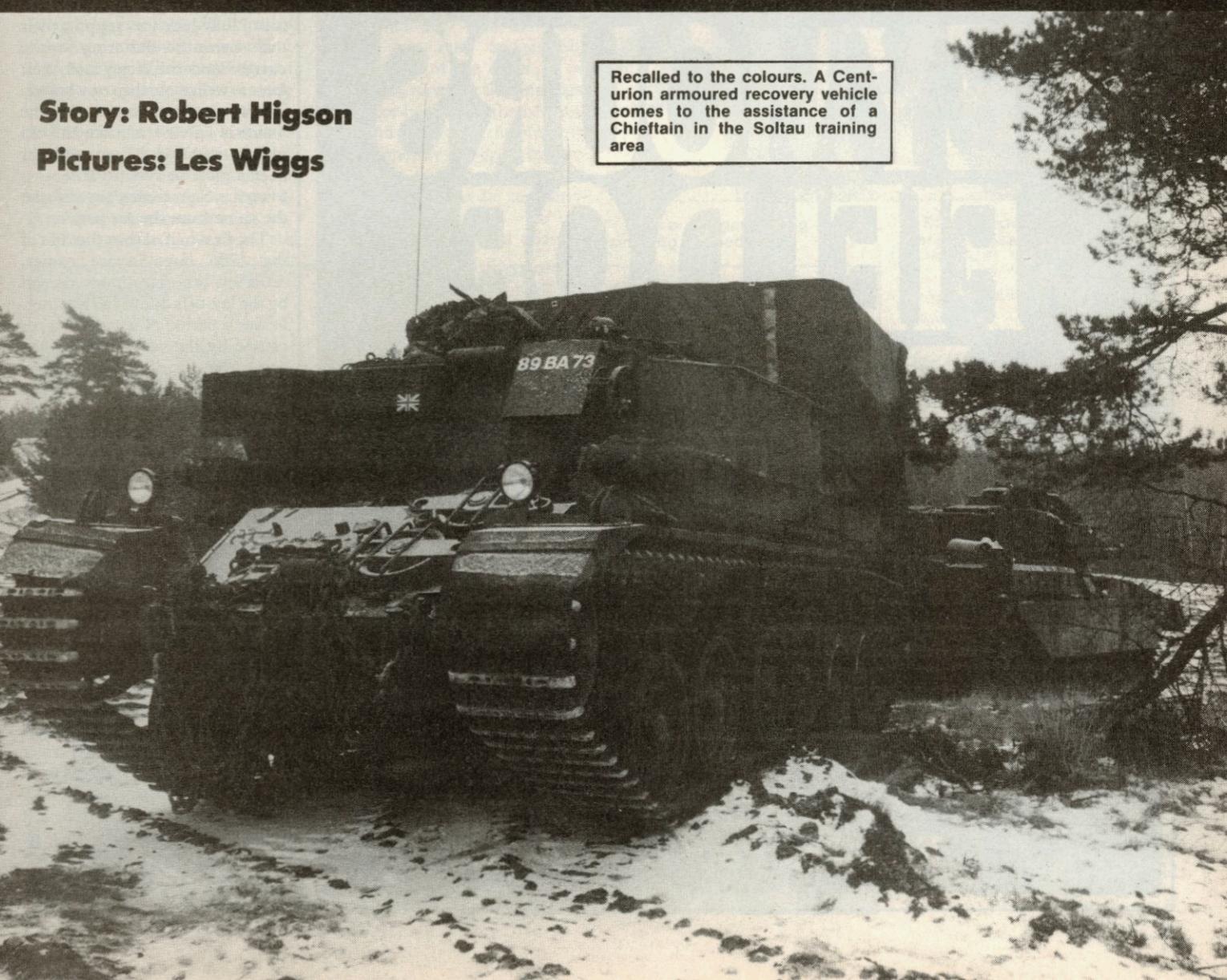
Quite apart from the operation of the system there is the inevitable question of maintenance, and Sergeant John Tribe, a control equipment technician, said he was due to go off on a course to learn how to look after the thing.

It is, of course, only a part of the great advances that are continually being made in the field of electronics. All very impressive but sometimes it is hard not to sympathise with those who hanker after the less complicated good old days.

As one of the students on the crew commanders course put it: "The Centurion's more reliable really. Less goes wrong with it and if something does go wrong it isn't a big job putting it right."



Challengers assembled for the fitting of new gun sights



Recalled to the colours. A Centurion armoured recovery vehicle comes to the assistance of a Chieftain in the Soltau training area

Story: Robert Higson

Pictures: Les Wiggs

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by
Matelots**



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BOTH the Army and the Royal Navy players and administrators had a frustrating build up to this year's rugby clash for the Stewart Wrightson Trophy. The weather, as it had done with most outdoor sports in the UK, took an awful toll.

The Army side in fact went into this year's Twickenham clash having not played for four weeks when they had a good win over the Civil Service; the matelots had not fared much better.

Apart from one or two heart flutters, the game went ahead and all the trimmings were there. The sun shone, the west car park was full of Jolly Jack Tars supping their tots beneath fluttering white ensigns and the Army had their tents as well, more than ever before. The west car park scene before the match is a great tradition; and old players and friends get together over a glass or two (or three) — some it is claimed don't even make the game from the car park!

The first half of this, the first of the 1986 inter-Service games, reflected the disruptions caused by the lay-offs due to the weather. It was a period of usual mistakes caused by the very nature of the game, the lack of match practise, and a turn around score of 3-3 (2 penalties) reflected the game.

Lieutenant Chris Alcock, the Navy captain and probably man of the match, harangued his team, overcoming the heavier Army pack and started to drive forwards which allowed the matelots to set up a try for their lock forward Woodcock. This started the beginning of the Navy's superiority and despite hard work from the Army forwards in general, the Navy eventually ran out winners by one try, two penalties and a drop goal (13) to a penalty by the Army full back (3).

For the Army it was disappointing in that the side probably never played to its full potential. However, having beaten the Navy for the previous four seasons, it couldn't really be argued that the Royal Navy boys well deserved their win.

More sport on page 50.

Graham Smith talks to the Pirbright military tailors for whom there was...

THIS MONTH has marked the end of a military-run era of sartorial elegance expertise at the Guards Depot, Pirbright. In its place, a new civilianised epoch in prospect of needle-and-thread output.

For the military staffed Tailor's Shop behind the Guard Room is no more as such. Sadly, for the traditionalists, the six-strong stitch-always-in-time squad has been disbursed to make way for a civilian contract arrangement at the famed Depot — it moved there from Caterham in April 1960 — home to 1,600 recruit guardsmen and Junior Parachute Regiment men. And 32 members of the WRAC, as well!

The civilianisation of the Tailor's Shop daily operation is part of a new trend and the concept, itself appears to be viewed with mixed feelings.

It is fair to say that the new incumbent is former Grenadier Guards Master Tailor Mr Rodney 'Niffy' Hill who comes well recommended.

As far as is known the Guards Depot as an institution has always had its military Tailor's Shop since about 1830, though exact history and developments over the years seem to be rather hazy.

The last incumbents in post at Pirbright headed by Master Tailor Colour Sergeant Philip 'Tug' Wilson, Coldstream Guards, also included former military tailor and Welsh Guardsman, Mr Max 'Badger' Ayton and a lady member of the stitch-and-sew staff.

Colour Sgt Wilson, at Pirbright for three years and formerly second-in-command of the shop there between 1973-77, estimates that up to 200 uniforms a week passed through the busy shop for various additions, repairs, embellishments and alterations.

The practised eyes of the

outfitters to all of the 1,600 recruits who passed yearly through the shop at various stages of training had their outfitting art off to the closest centimetre and the minute millimetre.

They had to be when lanky youths embarking on training — average height six-feet-one — on careers into any of the Household Division regiments can permanently swell a 32-inch chest by eight more inches at the end of their 22 weeks' prescribed training.

"Three meals a day can be a nightmare for the tailor's shop when these lads come back for further fittings," said Colour Sgt Wilson.

But then the talented tailors of Pirbright were adept at their trade, coping not only with uniforms, medals and rank badges but maintenance of the dozen or so depot flags, repairing sleeping bags, caring for bearskins (their hooks, rings and pockets for the plumes), three-tonne lorry canopies, tentage, combat kit, forage caps and so on.

"Anything a needle can penetrate — and more — we can repair", was the proud boast of

ONE CUT TOO MANY



Colour Sergeant 'Tug' Wilson, marking for medals ▼

▲ Parade ground checks by Lance Sergeant Paul Salt, tailor's chalk at the ready

Colour Sgt Wilson, a Master Tailor since 1978.

He was firstly Master Tailor to the Coldstream Guards Regimental HQ in London, then held the same post with the 1st Battalion, moved to the Guards Depot three years ago and is now back in London as Master Tailor to the 2nd Battalion, Coldstream Guards in Wellington Barracks.

"I believe I have served everywhere possible for a Master Tailor to serve within a regimental environment," he said.

And that experience has stood the test of time at Pirbright with its 54 available sizes to fit the quirks of differing physiques.

One rule he has insisted on maintaining is one where the military under his command wear uniform when on duty behind any of the half-dozen Japan-made Singer sewing machines or in the adjacent pressing room.

He explained: "If we were not in uniform then people would



Continued on page 34

simply refer to us as those civvies in the bloody tailor's shop.' That's just not on."

An instant-glance chart had been meticulously devised to size-up within seconds the initially gangling or otherwise youngsters waiting for their first fittings.... often up to 150 at a time. A clothing manoeuvre which could take up to five hours.

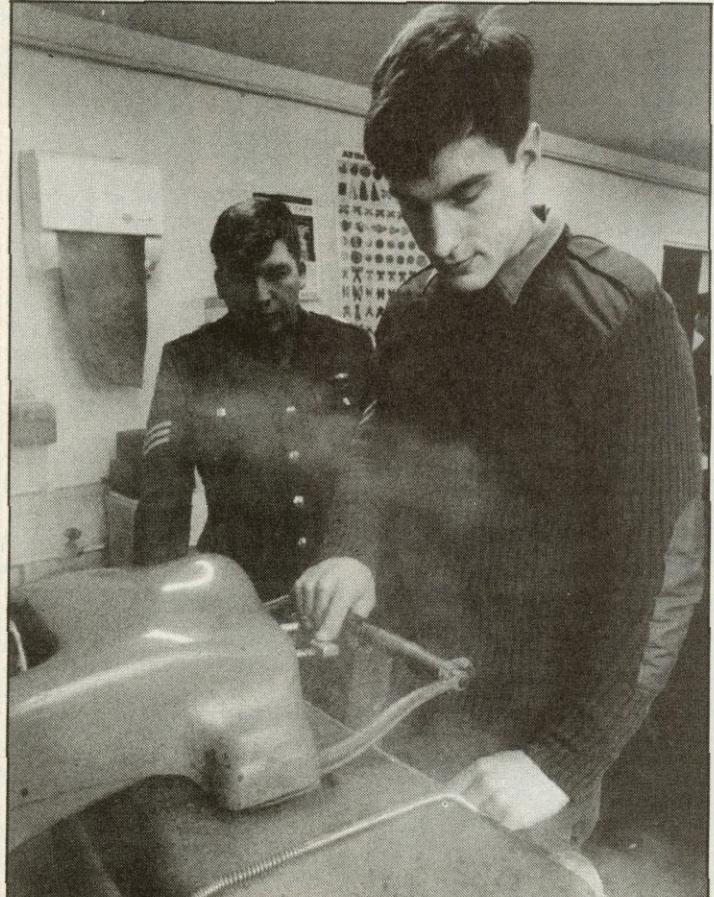
Scanning a line to outfit a tall teenage guardsmen of 188 cm, for instance, the tale of the typed-out tape reveals he should have a 112 cm chest, 96 cm waist, size 98 No. 2 Dress, size 31 barracks dress, size 21 lightweight, size 8 combat suit, size six wet-proofs, size four cold weather lining, size three cold weather vest, size three cold weather dress and size 03 jacket, Highland Regiment.

The shop was always ready to help. Particularly on queries relating to medals. Many of the lads, for instance, had wanted to know more about distant forbears' battle honour awards such as those in the Sudan of 1898.

One former candidate of the All Arms Junior NCOs' Course turned up at the shop on his senior course trying to trace a Cyprus medal and the conditions of its issue ten years after the event. The shop rummaged round and found one. It was that same Senior NCO's personal award! It had lain undisturbed in the shop for a decade.

Most queries are usually re-

A press makes perfect, from Lance Corporal Luke Stevens



Pictures by Terry Champion



**Max 'Badger' Ayton,
ex-Welsh Guardsman**



'Wicked' knows her drill

AT THE Guards Depot, Pirbright there's a dog that not only understands words of command in Swahili...but salutes, too!

Such is the talent of Mkora — "wicked" — the pride and parade ground joy of platoon commander, Captain Mark Coreth, Blues and Royals.

Mkora has become something of an unofficial canine star complete with her own combat jacket and beret.

"She knows lots and lots of words in Swahili", said Captain Coreth, an officer with keen East African interests. "She

also understands the soldiers' vernacular expressions of requests to leave one's presence."

Mkora was fitted out with her personalised combat kit courtesy of the Depot Tailor's Shop. Her dark beret was hand-made.

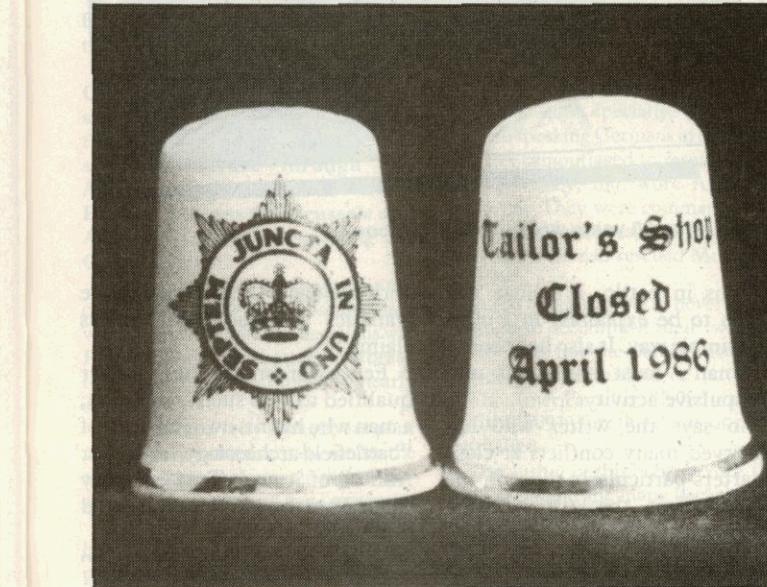
The Staffordshire Bull Terrier apparently lives up to her name according to her doting owner. "She is desperately wicked," he enthused.

The sartorial talents of the Tailor's Shop were called in when officer Coreth was due a stint of battlefield training on the Stanford Principal Training

Area. The dog, too, just had to be kitted out like her master.

During SOLDIER's visit when an obedient, doe-eyed yet attentive Mkora was being put through her paces, the canine was on an off-day. Some stiffness in one of her back legs. Still she obliged, haunches squared to the pavement.

If not for the master, the honour of the regiment had to be upheld during the saluting photo-call. Just another day in a VIP — Very Import Pooch — dog's life at the depot.



Commemorative thimbles, to mark a milestone



Serviceman's wife Mrs Dianne Gant shows Corporal Richard Bowden her work



Author John Laffin, who has just produced his 100th book, tells Graham Smith

WAR IS NORMAL

A PRE-DESTINED association with the turmoil of war, on active service and in peace-time, seems to have become the indelible hallmark of commonality to an Australian family with a famous son over the past seven decades.

Namely, the Laffin family and, particularly, the life of distinguished historical author, journalist and lecturer, Dr John Laffin, UK-domiciled for the past 30 years, who has just turned out his 100th book... more are in the firmly promised offing.

The significant 100th 'Brassey's Battles, 3,500 Years of Conflict, Campaigns and Wars from A to Z,' totalling 496 pages with 80 diagram maps and costing £22.50.

Twenty years in its painstaking compilation by the Australian-born author, this encyclopaedic volume is said to be "the most comprehensive of its type ever published." In it, Dr Laffin — MA, D Litt — has assembled more than 7,000 entries covering armed conflict since the beginnings of recorded history (the battle of Megiddo of 1469 BC, for instance) to the latest like the Falklands and the Lebanon.

His staggering century of illustrious book titles coincides with the 100th anniversary of Brassey's Defence Publishers, part of the Pergamon Press group.

A far cry of success from his "down under" world of 55 years

ago when history teachers would call him to the front of the class to tell them a war story, more often than not those involving a night raid or similar escapade.

For John Laffin had what he terms as an "early exposure" to the world of war, being greatly influenced by his parents both of whom had seen action in the First World War.

His father, Charles, was an infantry officer while his mother, Nellie, was an Army nursing sister at Gallipoli during the tragic happenings there to his countrymen.

Laffin junior himself volunteered for the 2nd Australian Imperial Infantry and war service which would involve him in a "particularly awful" jungle campaign in Papua — New Guinea (The Kokoda Trail) when he lost 6½ stones in weight.

He was later a commando instructor and it was while recuperating from his jungle ordeals that he met wife, Hazelle, a Red Cross worker and now his typist-secretary-production factotum at their Powys, Wales home... and his "secret weapon".

Over the years, millions of words have poured through the typewriter keys onto paper. Often, he is working on three books at a time, all at differing stages of production and all thanks to his early background in the "tough school" of Australian journalism.

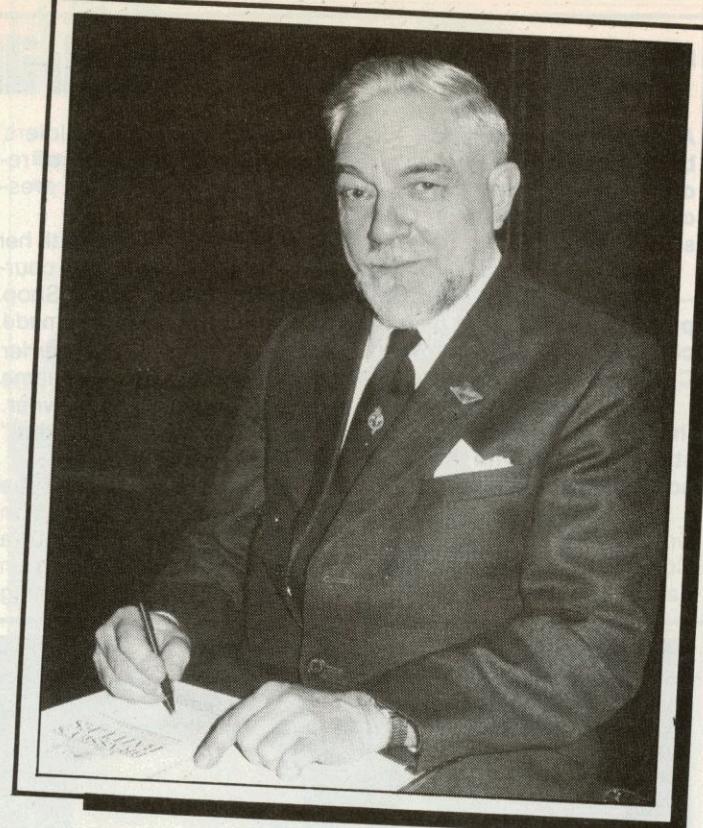
He once wrote a book in four days and four nights. "The publisher wanted a book and I needed the money", he says.

Dr Laffin never uses the services of researchers when working from his home with its 10,000-strong reference book library and extensive picture referral service.

He prefers to do it himself coupled with the help of his enthusiastic wife who reads and checks everything for clarity by way of explanation. Help which often results in margin notes.

Dr Laffin is quite clear about his view of war. "War, in fact, is normal. It may not be desirable but it is normal for the time in which we live. That's as far as man's brain has evolved.

"I'm interested in the leadership and behaviour of men of various



John Laffin, 20 years work in his 100th book

nations in battle. I believe war needs to be explained in a clear and simple way. It also happens to be man's most consistent and compulsive activity."

So says the writer who has observed many conflicts at close quarters particularly those in the Middle East, the last providing the themes for 14 of this book titles.

His book, "Fight for the Falklands", was he says, the first book in paperback to be published on the conflict. It sold 85,000 copies, say the publishers.

With 100 books behind him, Dr Laffin has no intention of slowing down. Of the grand total about 40 concern war and military history. One book he would very much like to compile is that concerning what he calls the "butchers and bunglers" of the First World War, be they German or British.

But of his latest 'Brassey's Battles', he said: "Its preparation had two main difficulties — verification of traditional facts and figures and decisions on precisely what degree of conflict constitutes a 'battle'. Wartime statistics are notoriously suspect.

"Each side minimizes its own casualties and other losses while exaggerating those it inflicts on the enemy. Opposing 'facts' of a battle can be startlingly different.

"Later historians often fail to do their own research and perpetuate the errors of earlier ones. Ancient recorders speak of millions of men being involved in certain combats with casualties in the hundreds of thousands. We know that in many cases these figures are grossly incorrect and where

verification is not possible I quote statistics as traditional or as claims."

Few wordsmiths are better qualified to pass such an opinion; a man who has his own museum of "battlefield archaeology" artefacts. And all of it new. Turned up by spade after years of soil-embalmed obscurity.

As details of his latest "launch" were being announced, he already has number 101 in the pipeline, an up-dated re-write of his earlier work 'Digger' first written in 1958.

Dr Laffin is proud of his own 'Digger' background and the men of 2 AIF, the volunteers, and thus the strength and elite of the unit.

The jungle had not only seen the indomitable Laffin in action but also the five-week Syrian campaign of 1941.

He will not give up writing... ever.

Dr Laffin explains why. "I am writing because I must. It is a biological necessity. I am a man of creativity. I'm also a great advocate of the British soldier. I believe in him and the British Army, though I am not always in agreement with the leadership of the First World War.

"I feel I'm bequeathing knowledge to the nation and the world. Especially about the common soldier. I want to leave a memorial for him."

Who could do it better and with such dedication? Those school-teachers of yesteryear would be really proud of their young protégé raconteur turned world-famous author.



Hazelle Laffin, his "secret weapon"

BOOK

REVIEWS

HITLER'S LAST DESPERATE ATTEMPT

THE best kept secret of surprise attack on land in the Second World War was undoubtedly the German build-up and lightning advance in the Ardennes in December 1944.

A week before Christmas, 600,000 Germans who had assembled secretly over many weeks with all their armour and logistic tail, suddenly thrust through the American lines and headed in two Panzer columns for Brussels and Antwerp, intent on reaching the Channel coast.

Allied information services were completely hoodwinked. Eisenhower's whole command was stunned. This was Hitler's last desperate attempt to break the Allied forces and it nearly succeeded.

That it was a fully thought out plan to regain the initiative is shown by the elaborate thoroughness that incorporated a "fear campaign" in its structure.

This included a small parachute drop behind the Allied lines and the penetration of about a dozen long range Jeep teams. All were dressed in American uniforms, spoke English and set out to cause havoc through sabotage and a spy scare.

They succeeded only too well. Americans distrusted every GI stranger, arresting many, even a general.

Eisenhower was confined to his headquarters compound at Versailles and escorted everywhere within it, being under threat of assassination.

Nobody was trusted; orders were

Tanks of the "last desperate attempt" which came to an abrupt halt



questioned; requests (for ammunition and reinforcements, for instance) were queried or refused.

The scare even crossed the Channel, it being said that prisoners of war in England were concerned in an elaborate plot to break out and seize arsenals and keypoints, and were to be assisted by air.

The advance guard of the Panzers included 200 specially assembled English speaking Germans in tanks and vehicles camouflaged to resemble US armour. They, too, wore American uniforms. They were commanded by the notorious but brave SS giant Otto Skorzeny who had rescued Mussolini in Italy.

In the event this party never broke through to accomplish their 'wooden horse' role, but the parachutists and the jeeps created real havoc.

The Americans lost 77,000 and the British 1,500 before this dramatic push was halted.

The author of this book records the main story and the many background incidents vividly.

Ardennes: The Secret War by Charles Whiting. Published by Century Publishing Co Ltd. Price £10.95. —GRH

CHURCHILL COMMANDED "SET EUROPE ABLAZE"

WAR is a conflict between the armies of nations, but writers still record each historic struggle as a series of separate battles, sieges or stalemate situations (as in Flanders in the First World War). Strategy and tactics play their parts, and politics a greater or lesser role. But no war is simple

and straightforward, and the Second World War was much more complicated than any previous conflict.

Commanders still controlled divisions, brigades, battalions. Artillery, engineers, infantry each had their traditional parts to play, but interwoven with them all were a host of smaller units with specialist tasks to perform. Each was secret to some extent and some absolutely so.

Because of their secrecy the records of most are sparse, some non-existent and the facts of their existence at all have only slowly come to light as information has been released piecemeal.

After Dunkirk Churchill ordered the formation of small Commando units. He wanted 20,000 'storm troops' in small parties ready to "spring at the throats" of enemy landing in Britain by sea or air.

Instead they were sent forth to make pin-prick attacks in many parts of Axis-held territory when Churchill ordered "Set Europe Ablaze!" Parachute troops, too, began training and operating in secret, but developed into a huge airborne force.

There was eventually an extraordinarily large number of small units criss-crossing the main armies and performing all kinds of specialist tasks. Among them the Long Range Desert Group in Africa and Italy, the Long Range Penetration Group in Burma, Popski's Private Army, Merrill's Marauders, Wingate's Chindits, the 'Cockleshell Heroes' (canoeists) and others, whose task was to penetrate and seek information or to sabotage.

There was the SAS and the SBS. The SOE, Special Operations Executive, went into Europe in tiny parties and expanded to 10,000 (maybe 20,000, no one knows) and really "set Europe ablaze" by aiding and leading underground movements.

There was the Twenty, or XX, Committee (ie the Double Cross) which turned large numbers of spies and used them effectively.

There were secret teams intercepting messages, both in active operations in the field and in higher echelons. The successful British Ultra decoding machine (the existence of which was not disclosed until 1974) which beat the sophisticated German Enigma, required many small teams for reception and decoding, and other liaison teams for recoding and delivering to commanders vitally concerned.

There was also Magic which broke the Japanese codes, the Y Service, the J Service and others. Deception and camouflage teams set up mock vehicles

Raiding party of the Long Range Desert Group

and trucks, even a mock harbour which was, indeed, bombed instead of Alexandria in Egypt.

They even produced a mock army with armour and artillery and full radio traffic in South East England which utterly deceived the Germans into withholding troops from Normandy.

These now make fascinating stories enhanced by the personalities of their 'Mad Jack' leaders and brilliant personnel. They were often a pain in the neck to orthodox commanders and they did make for a complicated war — but they accomplished magnificent work and the tales about them are thrilling.

The Secret Forces of World War II by Philip Warner. Published by Granada Publishing Ltd. Price £9.95 —GRH

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Sharpe's Regiment, by Bernard Cornwell, published by Collins. Another in the series of Sharpe books, this one a fictional account of Major Richard Sharpe and the invasion of France in 1813, following the hero through his adventures to find the missing Second Battalion of the South Essex Regiment and return with them to fight the enemy. Price £9.95.

The Tunnellers, by Raymond Hitchcock, published by Constable Publishers. Novel about two young sappers whose perilous task is to prepare to blow the Germans sky high from the maze of galleries and passages under the sodden trenches and dugouts of the Western Front during the First World War. Price £7.95.

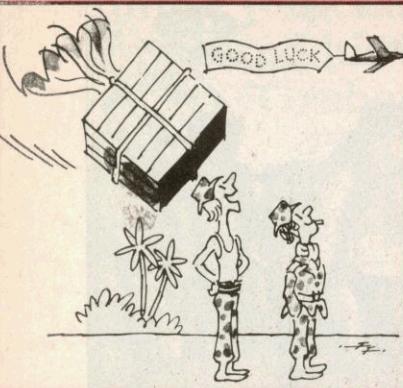
Mission with Mountbatten, by Alan Campbell-Johnson, published by Hamish Hamilton. Re-issue in paperback of an account by Lord Mountbatten's Press Attaché in India of the transfer of power there. Price £5.95.

Journal of the Waterloo Campaign, by General Cavalier Mercer, re-publication by Greenhill books. The story follows Mercer and G Troop Royal Horse Artillery from their landing on the Belgian coast to their entry into Paris after Waterloo. Price £14.95.

Napoleon's Campaigns in Miniature, by Bruce Quarrie, published by Patrick Stephens. Paperback guide to the Napoleonic Wars 1796-1815. Price £5.99.

Rainbow Soldiers, by Walter Winward, published by Hamish Hamilton. Novel based on a fictitious battalion in the Falklands. Price £8.95.





MAIL DROP

approved of by RAF HQs Air Marshal Bennet. A miniature of that medal is also struck.

Last year the American Forces who served during the short lived Grenada insurrection were awarded a service medal and some decorations.

Discontent was caused by the non-issue of a general service medal for the post-war years of active service in the Suez Canal Zone which cost many British lives during the same period that the Army General Service medal was awarded for service in any district of Malaya.

The omission of a GSM award for Canal Zone active service was accepted by the garrison as blatant appeasement to the then hostile Egyptian government and had a demoralising effect on British Forces. — **R Rimmer GC, 27 St George's, Chester, CH1 3HG.**

WORTHWHILE COURSE

With this letter I hope to bring attention to a group whose work, I feel, goes largely unrecognised.

Having completed nine years' service with The Life Guards, I had the good fortune to attend the Police Service course at No 2 Resettlement Centre in Aldershot. I have since then successfully applied to join the Sussex Police Force, and I would like to thank all the staff in the General Studies Wing for their invaluable advice and experience.

Particular praise must go to Major (retd) George Beaumont who oversees the day-to-day running of that particular course. His dry, down-to-earth and sometimes hilarious presentation of the facts of life involved in joining the Police, made it one of the most interesting and useful courses I have attended.

To conclude, I must say to anyone leaving the Services, and who is entitled to a resettlement course, TAKE IT, you'll not regret it. — **LCOH Alex Nicholson, The Household Cavalry Regiment, Hyde Park Barracks, London SW7.**

ASSAYE

Mr Preston suggests (SOLDIER March 10) that the title Assaye given to certain regiments, would make 'interesting reading'. Wellesley (later Duke of Wellington) defeated the Maratha at Assaye in Sept 1803.

The East India Co presented an honorary guidon to the 19th Light Dragoons and honorary Colours to the 74th and 78th Foot (now the 15/19th Hussars, RHF and QO Highlanders respectively) in recognition of their service. The elephant was part of the presentation.

In 1808 the 76th Foot (now Duke of Wellington's) were presented with the elephant for services to the East India Co.

The numerous battle honours of the Royal Artillery are combined in one word 'Ubique'.

In about 1925 the batteries of the RA added chosen battles to their numbers. The 10th chose Assaye.

Their forebears were there too! — **G Percival, East Dean, Old Damson Lane, Solihull, West Midlands, B92 9ED.**

NAME THEM ALL

With respect to all who write to you on the subject of the names of the fallen on war memorials in towns and cities; much has been said through the letters pages of SOLDIER over the years, including letters from myself.

I have attended parades and services at many towns over SE England and find the majority of war memorials do NOT have names of the fallen in the 1939-45 war on them.

In most cases the names of the 1914-18 war are there, followed by a citation to include those who gave their lives during 1939-45.

Except for villages and the small towns, the policy of naming individuals has not been fully carried out.

The point made in SOLDIER (March 10) is correct. All names should be included up to the present time, because all have made the same sacrifice.

Yet who can we blame, especially these days when the answer would be the cost financially.

Recently the town of Sevenoaks in Kent has refurbished its war memorial and had all the names of those who gave their lives up to the present time.

So very many of us do appreciate such thoughtfulness. Devotion is rewarded by devotion being acknowledged. Trouble is so many people have this opposition to anything relating to war that they fail to understand what has been done for Right, Freedom and Justice, by those who also did not want war. — **A R Blake, 17 Shears Green Court, Haynes Road, Northfleet, Kent DA11 7JR.**

RARE REGIMENT

Referring to SOLDIER (March 10), this may interest the older readers.

In 1935 the 1st Hampshire (now Royal) gained the Indian General Service Medal with clasp "NW Frontier 1935" and the next year the new 1936 IGS medal with clasp "NW Frontier 1936-37".

This gave the regiment the distinction, rare among British units, of having the last of the famous old 1907 IGS medals and the first of its 1936 successor.

Only one other British Regt achieved the two campaign medals in successive years, The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who served alongside the 1st Hampshire in Rawalpindi.

I left the Army after 26 years' service in 1948. I have bought SOLDIER since 1948 and am nearly 78. — **Tom Parrott, Wallace Court, Newport, Isle of Wight, PO30 2DF.**

WHY NO DIARY?

As a regular reader of SOLDIER magazine I wonder why you no longer include a diary of events like tattoos etc. I found that it was very helpful having knowledge of events and dates etc. Why do you no longer include this facility? — **John Lomas, 12 Skiers View Road, Royland Common, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S4 0BD.**

Sorry Mr Lomas, and others. Compiling the diary dates is a very time consuming task which shortage of staff has compelled SOLDIER to abandon recently. Ed.

CALCUTTA RIFLES

I refer to Mr A W J Watson's letter (SOLDIER March 10). The Calcutta Mounted Rifles was (I think) a predecessor to the Calcutta Light Horse, which was part of the Auxiliary Force, India — a territorial force composed of Europeans.

The CLH — at least some of its members — took part in a raid on a German vessel of the Goanese Coast during WW2. A book was written about the event as well as a film being made; the title I've forgotten.

There were various AFI units throughout India — but I do not think that they were actually embodied for active service. As far as I recall they were mounted. Other units were the Bombay Light Horse, Assam Valley Light Horse etc. — **H G Bowyer Major (Retd), Forge Cottage, Bradley, Alresford, Hants, SO24 9SA.**

Reunions

1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards hold their Old Comrades Association annual dinner on May 3 at the Surrey Tavern, Kennington Oval, London. Tickets at £9 each can be obtained from Regimental Secretary, Home HQ QDG, Maindy Barracks, Cardiff. Tel: 0222 27611 213. The Combined Cavalry OCA Parade will take place at 1100 hrs on May 4 in Hyde Park. RAMC/RADC WOs and Sgts Past and Present Dinner Club annual dinner and reunion is to be held on May 10 at the RAMC Training Group. Details from RSM, RAMC Training Group, Keogh Barracks, Ash Vale, Aldershot, Hants GU11 5RQ.

A combined 15th/16th The King's Royal Hussars and the Northumberland Hussars Squadron Queen's Own Yeomanry regimental parade to exercise the Freedom Rights of the City of Newcastle in the presence of Princess Margaret, Colonel in Chief 15th/19th The King's Royal Hussars, is to be held on May 10 at 11.15 am followed by a dinner dance in the Banqueting Suite, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne at 7 pm. Tickets and further information from Major B O Simmonds, Home Headquarters, 15th/19th The King's Royal Hussars, Fenham Barracks, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 4NP. Tel: Newcastle (0632) 329855.

The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) the 57th annual reunion, dinner/dance will be held at the Masonic Hall, Saul Street, Preston on June 7. Tickets available from the Secretary, The Loyal Regiment (NL) Association Fulwood Bks, Preston PR2 4AA. Tel: Preston (0772) 716543 ext 362.

Fiddlers Club. The annual reunion of the pre-1939 trumpeters RA will be held on August 1-2 in the RA Mess, Larkhill. Details from Major J J Dobbs, 5 Glynswood, Camberley, Surrey GU15 1HU.

Competition Result

The latest £50 to be awarded in SOLDIER's HOAY competition goes to a soldier, Lance Corporal Potts of 'A' Coy, 16 Bn RAOC, Bicester, in Oxfordshire. Congratulations, Corporal Potts.

MEDALS EVERYWHERE

We have been reading quite a lot in SOLDIER recently about medals. Why is it that most places a soldier goes to nowadays he gets a medal for it?

Myself and thousands more troops were in Egypt in the Canal Zone in the early 1950s when the trouble started. I am sure it was quite as dangerous as being in N Ireland.

I first started reading SOLDIER when I was in Germany at the beginning of 1947 at 175 TVP RAOC, just outside Hamburg. — **Dick Pilgrim, 1 Main Road, North Burlingham, Norwich.**

NO POW AWARD

Your correspondent J J Stokes claims that POWs taken at Singapore without firing a shot were awarded the Burma Star. This is not so! Most of these men were imprisoned in camps in Malaya and nowhere were they qualified for the Burma Star.

This medal was awarded only to people who served at least six months in the Burma theatre of operations or, as in the case of the Royal Navy or Royal Air Force, were engaged in operations in, over or around Burma during or over a six months period.

I do think though that a special medal should have been struck and awarded for all these brave men who endured the horrors and privation of prisoner of war camps wherever they were. They suffered more than the actual combat troops almost without exception. We have a medal to show we were there. What have they? Life long suffering in most cases. — **B J Harris, 1 St Ann's Court, Eastbourne Road Pevensey Bay, East Sussex BN24 6HN.**

APPEASEMENT

Letters of Messers Stokes and Buckley (SOLDIER Feb 24) express the opinions of most ex-Servicemen regarding the paucity of British medal awards for dangerous active service.

Last year a medal was struck for 'Multinational Force Observers' for six months service in the Sinai Desert.

British recipients were informed it could not be worn but could be retained as a souvenir.

However, last June I noted at an official RAOC parade that a British officer wore that 'Multinational Force Observers' medal on his service dress with official British medals.

This year it has been announced in RAF NEWS that a medal will be struck for issue to air and ground crews of Bomber Command who served during the 1939-45 war. That award is

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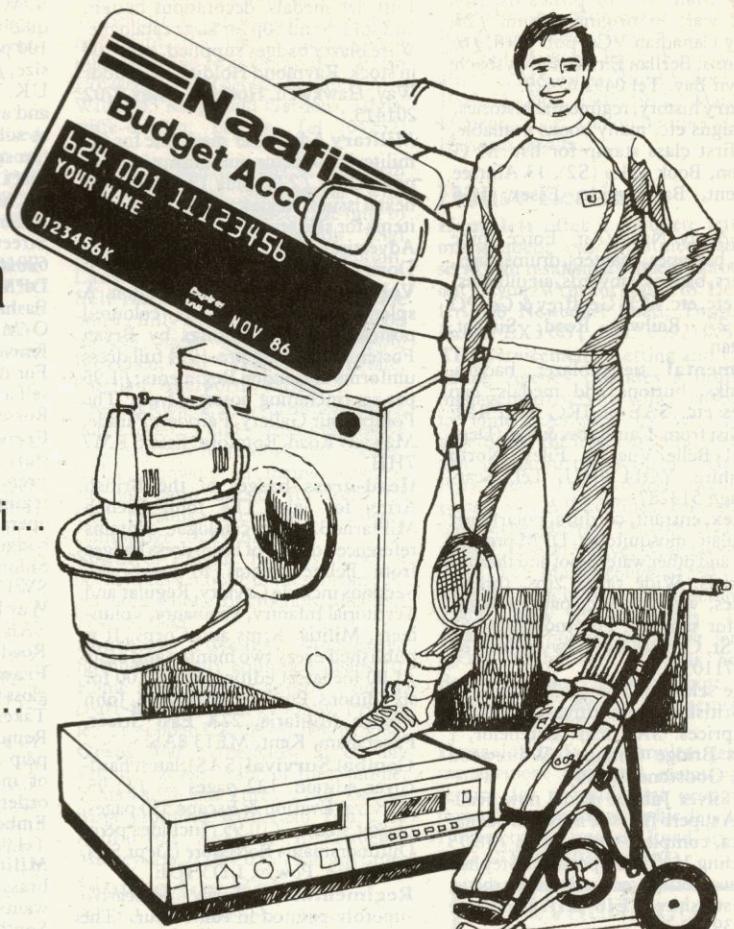


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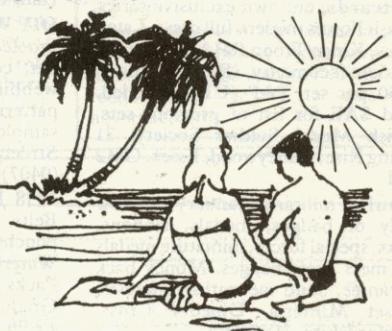
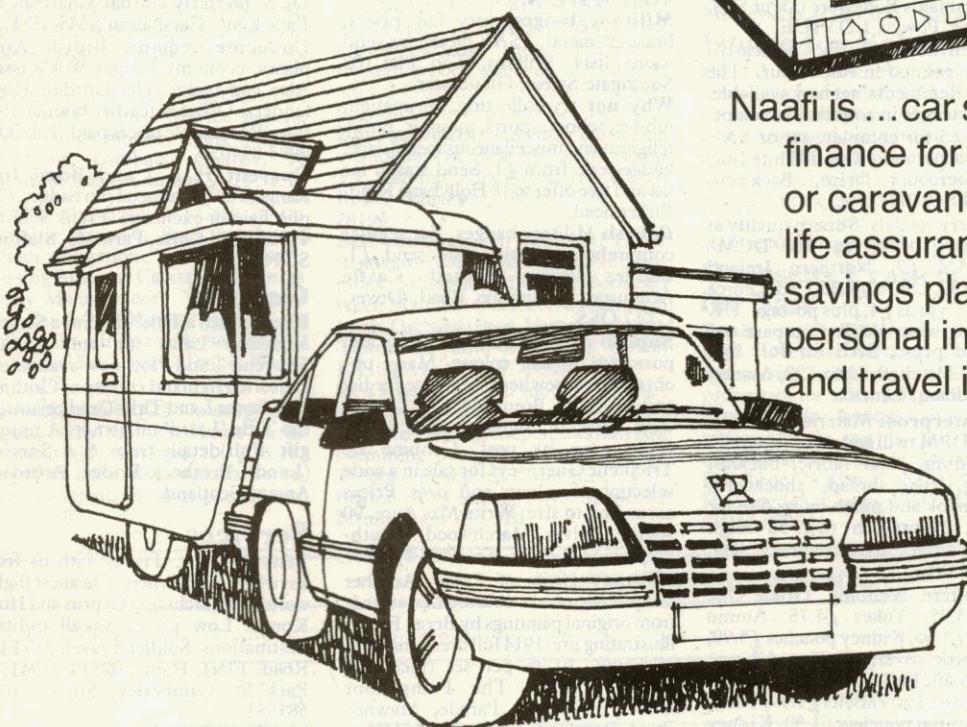
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Obituary

Cpl Donald McKenzie, ex-3 Para Bandsman, died January 27th 1986. Worked Midland Bank. Funeral was 4th Feb, Aldershot. Royal Scots 1941-1947, 3 Para 1947-1972. Maureen Dimech, 'Lily', Canon Bonnici Street, Hamrun, Malta.

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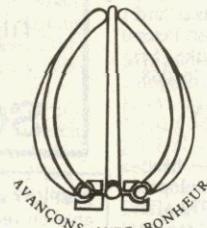
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Telephone: 0262 72593
(Head: Mr. G. Howarth, MA).

SOUTH HUMBERSIDE: SIR JOHN NELTHORPE SCHOOL,
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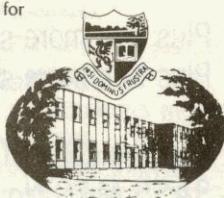
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Intrepid Army skiers braved blizzards and gales of up to 90 mph on at least two days of the six-day Army Ski Championships held at Aviemore, Scotland.

More than 400 competitors and 85 teams took part in the championships, the largest downhill ski event ever held by the Army.

Every rank from lieutenant general to private, with the exception of major general, was represented among the contestants. A trio of three-star generals, led by GOC Scotland Lieutenant General Sir Norman Arthur, set an example by joining in the thrills — and occasional spills!

The individual giant slalom was

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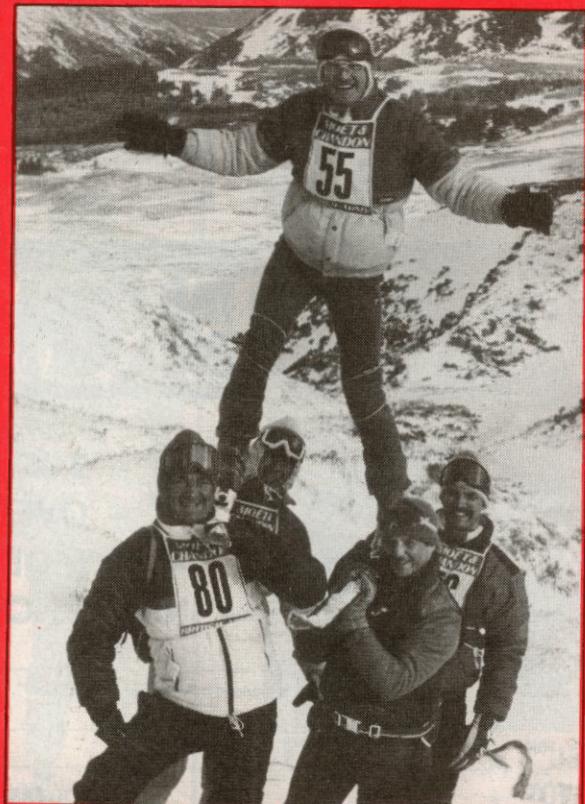
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Trying out a different kind of ski lift, Sergeant Ian Ramsden of the Military Works Force. The lift comes from (l to r) Capt Len Oldridge (MWF team captain), Lance Corporal Jim Gibb (42 Survey Engineer Group team captain) Corporals Colin Bell and Alan Platte (both MWF)

MARY IS TT CHAMP



DESPITE losses to the sport through retirement, injury and those leaving the Army, the Army Ladies table tennis finals held at Aldershot still had plenty to offer in excitement.

Winner of the ladies' singles was Sgt Mary Willard, of RMS Sandhurst who beat L Cpl McKibben of 3 UDR.

The Open Doubles was won by Staff Sgt Smart of the Family Housing and Welfare Services, Western District and Sgt Willard. Winner of the Plate Competition was L Cpl Colley of 29 Cdo Regt, RA, Plymouth. The Zone Championships were won by BAOR.

Colonel Frances Hutley, Colonel Director WRAC presented the prizes. Picture shows Sgt Willard receiving her prizes with Sgt Marian Zycinski, assistant PTI table tennis of 10 Coy, WRAC, looking on.

won by Captain Peter Koch de Gooreynd, 2 Grenadier Guards, in what Army Ski Association Scottish committee chairman Brigadier Alan Alstead described as "appalling conditions."

"Had this been a civilian contest," added Brigadier Alstead, "it would almost certainly have been cancelled."

Out of 250 competitors set to take part in the slalom, only the

top 140 seeds were able to start before officials called it a day, while 111 finished. Contestants had been further hampered by a complete breakdown of ski lifts and tows. Several of the lower seeds who had trudged to the top of the Aonach despite this were disappointed to be told that conditions had become too dangerous for the contest to continue.

On the final day the Cairngorm gales were if anything worse, with the lifts and tows again out of action, but nonetheless a number of important competitions were decided, using considerably curtailed runs further down the mountain.

"It would have been so bad on the main slopes," ventured committee member Captain Jamie Campbell of the Queen's Own Highlanders, "that people would have been unable to stand up."

Overall Army individual champion was Lieutenant Tom Riall, 15/19 Hussars, currently studying at Durham University and attached to Northumbrian Universities OTC.

The overall winning team came from 2 Grenadier Guards, currently stationed in Ulster and led by Captain Koch de Gooreynd.

Top Territorial individual champion was 19-year old Officer Cadet Mike Johnston, from Glasgow, a student in London and a member of London University OTC. The winning TA team was the Queen's Own Yeomanry "A" team.

Members of the Queen's Own Highlanders, at present stationed in nearby Fort George, carried out many of the administration and signalling tasks.

First time win for TA women



THEY'RE off! And 71 women from the regular Army and TA jostle for position as the women's event in the TA

national cross country championships and annual match against the regulars gets under way at Deepcut, Surrey.

PIONEERS STRIKE AGAIN

IT was an all-UKLF final to the Army inter-unit team judo championships held at the BAOR School of Physical Training; in fact it was almost a repeat of last year's final — except that this time the winners were 23 Group Royal Pioneer Corps.

The Pioneers, UKLF champions, were drawn against 13 Signals, BAOR runners-up, in one of the semi-finals, but unfortunately the Signallers were forced to withdraw through injury allowing the Pioneers through into the final.

In the other semi-final 26 Field Regiment, UKLF runners-up, narrowly defeated BAOR champions I Devon and Dorsets in a very close match.

The Pioneers took three straight wins in the final — from Corporal Travis, Lance Corporal Lee and from Private Blaylock whose opponent was forced to retire through injury.

In the lightweight bouts, Private Martin (Pioneers) lost to a very experienced combined Services opponent, and his colleague Lance Corporal Hindmarsh took his opponent to a draw.

The Pioneers were again on top in a friendly match between the Army champions and RAF Germany, the experienced RAF team being beaten by four bouts to one. The RAF's 'B' team were also beaten by a mixed Army team of four Pioneers and one from the Devon and Dorsets.

SIX ON THE WEMBLEY ROAD

SIX of the Army boxing squad have lifted Combined Services titles this year and will set out on the road to Wembley by fighting for the Services against Western Counties in the English ABA quarter finals at RAF St Athan.

Driver Neil McCallum (RCT) notched up the first Combined Services Individual title when he outpointed Royal Navy flyweight hope, AB(M) Andy Martin in a closely fought bout.

The fierce punching Fusilier Erroll Holder (1 RRF) took only a minute to dispose of the RAF's welterweight, SAC M Shepherd, with hard hooks to the head.

Rifleman Tony Velinor at light-middle displayed his boxing class in a comfortable points victory over MEM A Westwood (Navy). Surprise winner at middleweight

was Private Ian Strudwick (3 Royal Anglian) who boxed well to take a points verdict over the experienced Services boxer, Junior Technician R Morley (RAF).

Fusilier Danny Coyle (1 RWF) had a second round win at light-heavyweight when opponent SAC D Smith (RAF) suffered a cut eye.

And the sixth champion is veteran Corporal Horace Miles (Light Infantry Depot), who moved up to super-heavyweight but had a walkover as neither of the other Services could field anyone heavy enough.

There were defeats for Rifleman Alan Lesbirel (2 RGJ) who had to retire with a cut head in the second round of his featherweight bout, and heavyweight Sergeant Paul Davies, Army Physical Training Corps, who lost on points.

It was the first time that regular and TA women runners have competed as teams overall, and the TA women won the cup. But the regulars had their revenge in the men's match.

Other results were: Men's team, HQ Coy 3 Yorks; women's team, Exeter University OTC; men's

individual, Sergeant Instructor Geoff Wade, APTC attached 1 PWO; TA men's individual, Private Hawkins, HQ Coy 3 Yorks; women's individual, Sergeant Maggie Smith, QARANC Training Centre; TA men's individual, Officer Cadet K Chambers, 285 MC Sqn RCT.

ARMY START WITH A WIN

ARMY support for the representative side trooped to RAF Uxbridge, for the opening game in this year's Inter Service Championships, against the RAF, not knowing quite what to expect of their favourites.

Their form throughout the current season has been inconsistent and given to indifferent performances when better was expected of them.

They need not have worried on this occasion, however, for the Army opened briskly, played well throughout, and fully deserved their eventual win by 3-2.

The Army settled more quickly and looked sharper on the ball from the outset. They pressed forward and had the home defence at full stretch to contain them. In the tenth minute, Greenwood was fouled on the edge of the penalty area and full-back Sharpe stepped up to take the kick and curved a real fizz wide of Tonner.

Play swung from end to end and neither side was able to control the game sufficiently to give them the upper hand. Just before the break, the Army won a corner kick

on the left flank. Roach fired in a low cross which rapped the face of the near post before bouncing clear, and, the ball was cleared to the other end where Bartley, drifting right, popped the ball over an advancing Lomas only to watch it bounce on to the cross bar and go over.

Five minutes into the second half, the Army got the breathing space they so badly needed, from a corner kick on the left, Sharpe fired over a low hard cross, the ball ran across the face of the goalmouth and eventually to McGregor who dispatched it with great delight.

Ten minutes later, the RAF were back in contention. They forced a throw-in and Evans, plumb in front of goal and completely unmarked, headed home.

With time running out, the Army attacked down the right flank and a harassed defender put the ball behind for a corner kick. Richardson rose majestically to head home the long high cross.

Deep into injury time the Army conceded an indirect free kick on their own penalty spot and the kick was charged down before McDermott poked it home.

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