

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

February 2001 £2

SOLDIER

**SIERRA LEONE:
WE'RE TIPPING
THE BALANCE**



**Ten years on:
Kate Adie on
the Gulf War**



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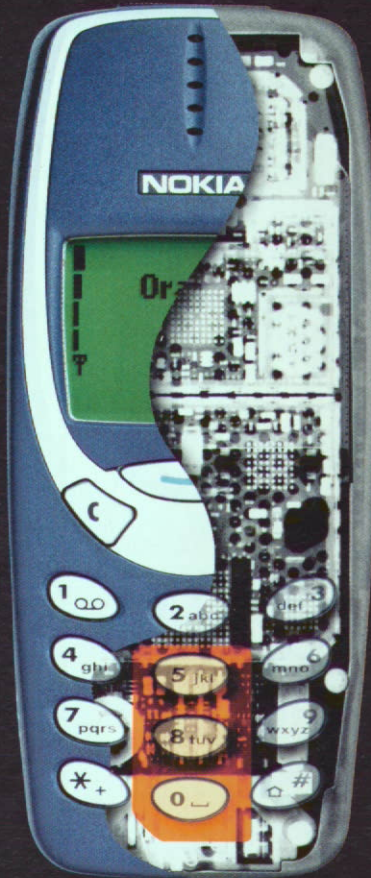
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Contact list: Page 74



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... of your award-winning magazine



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Caring: Media Ops officer Maj Debbie Noble comforts a youngster at the camp for amputees and war-wounded in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Picture: Graeme Main

61 I dug the smallest trench you ever saw and told everybody I was going to crouch in it. The colonel told me it was pathetic, then offered me an incentive – no trench, no lunch ...



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British soldiers in Sierra Leone have their say

Tipping the balance

British soldiers are rapidly turning the Sierra Leone Army into an effective fighting force

Report: Anthony Stone
Pictures: Graeme Main

THE task is immense. In a training camp 25 miles south-east of Freetown, British soldiers are transforming poorly-trained and badly-equipped men and women into an effective fighting force. Success will mean the defeat of the Revolutionary United Front and the prospect of lasting peace for this troubled West African country.

The military expertise has been provided by a succession of short-term training teams which deployed after the Royal Marines withdrew at the end of Operation Palliser, last-year's Parachute Regiment-led mission to extract British nationals.

The six-week training packages have been run by the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment; the 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment; and the 1st Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire. Currently, soldiers of the

2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles are conducting STTT 5.

WO2 Sori Koroma, of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA), is one of the soldiers to benefit. "The British Army training has already made a big difference to the basic standard of living and quality of life of the people in Sierra Leone," he said. "Things are more stable now and people no longer fear the Revolutionary United Front."

His colleague, SSgt Paul Marah, said: "Before, we were fighting in an inexperienced way, but the British have helped us learn from our mistakes."

For the SLA, mistakes were very costly. During firefights it was not uncommon for combatants to shoot soldiers on their own side by mistake. Ground was often lost as quickly as it was won.

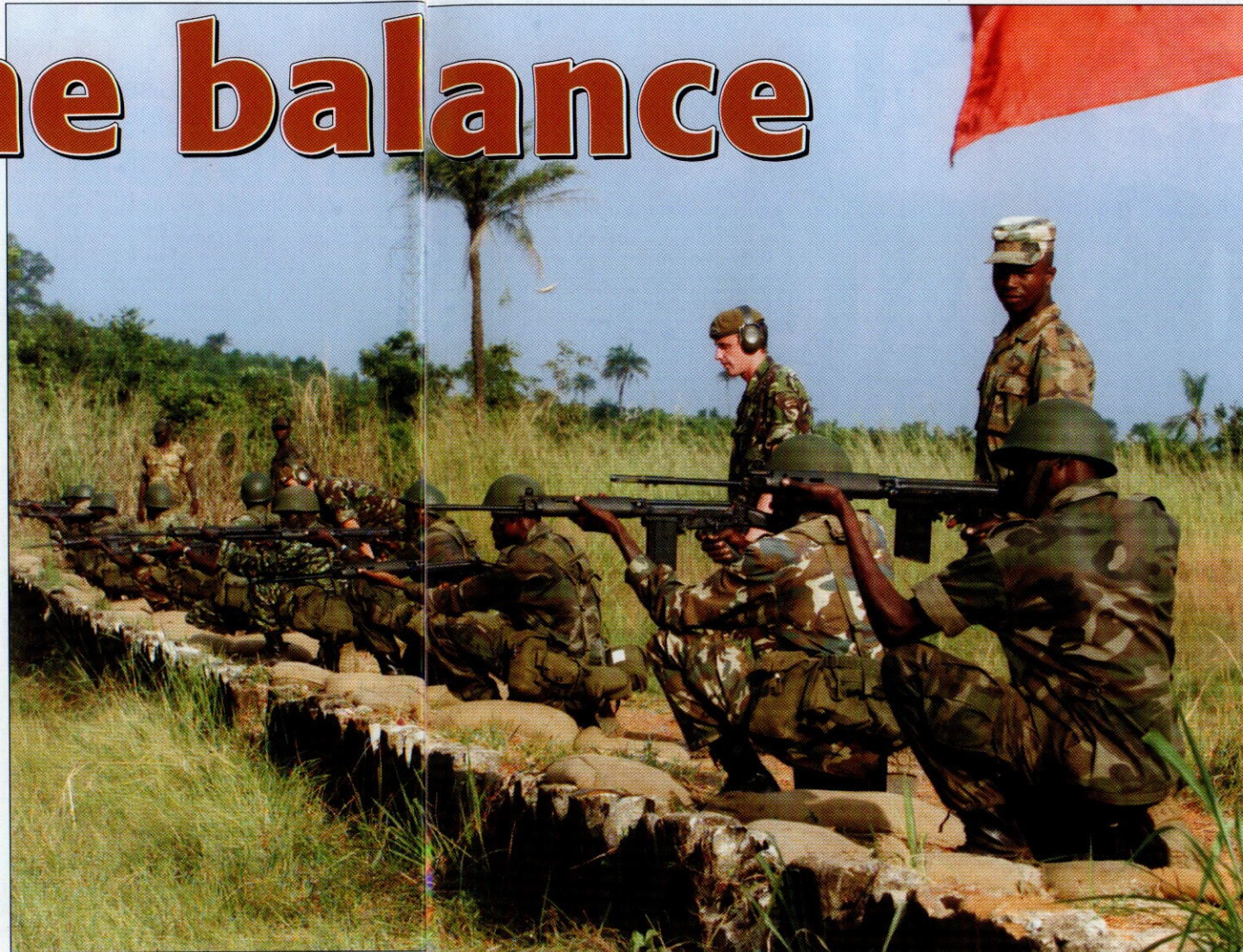
Despite such morale-sapping episodes, the SLA comprises experienced, battle-hardened soldiers. British trainers have built upon this knowledge and added improved discipline, fitness, fieldcraft, tactics and skill-at-arms.

Brig Jonathon Riley, the commander of British Forces in Sierra Leone, said: "Had you been here only six months ago you would have seen an army that was not an army at all, it was a rabble. We are creating an army out of nothing. We are not there yet."

"What we are creating, between now and the middle of this year, is a fighting force of about divisional size. But that is not the same thing as creating an army. Creating an army will take three or four years more than that."

To co-ordinate tasks the 100-strong HQ and support staff of 1 Mechanised Brigade moved from Tidworth to Freetown for six months to command the 550 British personnel in country.

A British-led international military advisory and training team is also looking at the whole Sierra Leone Army package, including its structure, finance, adminis-



All fired up: Soldiers of the Sierra Leone Army practise marksmanship at Benguema Training Camp using self-loading rifles donated by Britain

tration, career management, welfare and terms of service. Creating an army involves more than training, weapons, food and pay. Not all the atrocities in this country's bloody civil war were carried out by rebels. Sierra Leone's soldiers are also learning about the moral component of a fighting power.

Brig Riley said: "The moral component is that aspect of the training that seeks to inculcate into people why they fight, on what

moral basis they belong to an army, and the moral basis on which an army operates in a civilised society by the rule of law.

"The rule of law has not existed in Sierra Leone previously. It does now, certainly in the government-controlled areas, and it is vital to maintain that."

A private with the 1 PWO training team put it more directly: "We tell them why it's wrong to chop off babies' arms and kill prisoners."



Creating: Brig Jonathon Riley

'The British Army brings with it a formidable reputation for providing training ... every soldier of every rank offers something to the SLA'

Maj Paul McNicholas, PWO, officer commanding the training company of STTT4, used the phrase "tipping the balance" to describe how the British were making a difference.

"We see them at the start and we see them at the end," he said. "The contrast is quite visible and obvious, not just the way they look but in the way they behave."

Brig Riley was equally unequivocal. "The Sierra Leone Army is going to win this war or assist the UN in terminating it on terms that are favourable to the government."

"The stronger and more capable it gets the more certain and the sooner that outcome will be reached. But it is inevitable."

"The short term training team was put in to fight the immediate fire and to start creating a war-fighting divisional-size formation because something had to be done rapidly."

"We are now concentrating on developing the STTT into a whole-army training strategy. We are well on the way to doing that. We will have achieved it by the time we leave."

The British Army brings with it a for-

midable reputation for providing training, which means every soldier of every rank offers something to the SLA. "There's no doubt that's where a small professional army scores over a big professional army because there's more investment in the individual."

The reception the British soldiers have received from the local population is not unlike that given to pop stars and royalty.

"One can become accustomed in one's military service to a situation whereby the best you could hope for from the local population is indifference," Brig Riley said.

"It's not like that here. We have received an absolutely rapturous welcome."

"What in my experience makes soldiers fed-up is not going on operations, it is commuting to the same patch year after year after year, back and forth to Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo. But introduce some variety and mix it up a bit and people are really happy."

"I have not met anybody since I have been here who regrets coming on this mission."

See also Page 17-19 and Page 74

The trainers' view ...

WO2 Simon Paxton,
CSM SP (Trg) Coy, 1 PWO

"AGE is irrelevant. If someone in the troop does something wrong, everyone else shouts at them."

"We are re-training soldiers who have been to the front and have been to war. We are giving them continuation training so that they will go back to the front. You are not getting them straight from the mother's womb, as we would at Catterick. Some of these guys have already been at war for two years. You can't equate this to the UK."

"They are fascinated at how well we can shoot. I will get ten out of ten with an SLR or SA80. They are happy with five rounds on target."

"We have carried out a coaching course so that after we have gone they still know how to coach and it does not all fall down like a pack of cards."

WO2 (QMSI) Tony Winterbottom,
APTC attached to 1 PWO

"WE teach the staff and they teach the soldiers. We are preparing them for the activities ahead, be that war or sport."

"We are teaching diet, heat stress, first aid, different types of endurance and strength training. We are furthering their knowledge, re-educating them and they are applying it to the soldiers. It's one of the key components of winning the fight."

CSgt Ian Smith, Recce Platoon, 1 PWO

"OUR primary role is to train the SLA Defence Forces. Within that we have selected what we consider the best of the bunch and taken them to one side for two weeks' intensive recce training - observation work, contact drills, basic patrol techniques and a range package."

"They are extraordinarily keen to learn. They absorb it very well."

Maj Paul McNicholas,
1 PWO, officer commanding
training company, STTT4

"WE did not know the standard to expect when we got out here. They are hugely enthusiastic and willing to learn but were at quite a low start point."

"We had ten days' acclimatisation before rigorous training. It's been difficult, with very long days. Activity is continuous and they come back physically drained."

"The training team of 58 are all PWO, including five officers and four WO2s. We have trained 1,350 SLA - 1,000 are infantry, the others are engineers, medics, signallers, supply people and drivers."

"Members of my training team are benefiting from the learning experience as much as the SLA are."



Units in Sierra Leone

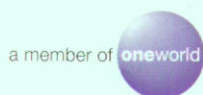
Latest available information

JFFHQ (Staff Officers)	HQ 1 Mech Bde & Sig Sqn (215) based in Tidworth
Signals	30 Sig Regt in Bramcote and 14 Sig Regt from Brawdy
Movement Control	50 Sqn, 29 Regt RLC, South Cerney
Postal	80 Sqn, 29 RLC, South Cerney
Local Resources Section	6 Regt RLC, Hullavington
Provost	Elements of 158, 160 and 174 Provo Coy AGC(RMP)
Legal	Directorate of Army Legal Services, Upavon
Medics	3 Close Support Medical Regt RAMC Catterick
Engineers	22 Engr Regt, Perham Down, Tidworth
REME	All attached tradesmen from 1 PWO, LAD in Yorkshire and 215 Sig Sqn LAD in Tidworth
Intelligence	2 Military Intelligence Battalion, Netheravon
EOD	49 EOD Sqn, 11 Regt RLC, Didcot

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In the nick of time: Maj Malcolm Russell, helicopter rescuer

Picture: Steve Dock

Flying doctor stays ice-cool

AN Army doctor made a daring rescue to save a small boy who had fallen through thin ice covering a large frozen pond in London.

Maj Malcolm Russell, who is on a six-month secondment to the Helicopter Emergency Medical Service based at the Royal London Hospital in Whitechapel, needed both hands to pluck ten-year-old Sam Munden from the icy waters of a pond in Wanstead Park, East London.

To reach the boy he had to slip out of his harness and stand on the helicopter's skids as paramedic John Warwick stretched out of the hovering MD Explorer 902 to grip his collar.

He was quick to point out that the rescue was only possible because of the expert flying skills of pilots Jonathan Salt and Richard Shuttleworth.

"We picked the boy up and got him into the accident and emergency unit just 29 minutes after the 999 call," said Maj Russell.

"He was struggling in the water and it was a group decision that he wouldn't

survive long enough for two fireman at the scene in dry suits to rescue him.

"We flew down to the hover, almost on the surface of the ice. I slid the side door open, climbed on to the skids and got the paramedic to hold my collar, as I had to use both hands to grab the victim's shoulders.

"He was hypothermic so I cut his wet clothes off and gave him my shirt and a hat and we flew straight back to the hospital, where he made a full recovery."

Maj Russell, who joined the Army in 1993, qualified as a doctor in 1992 at Aberdeen University.

"This field of medicine, dealing with trauma patients outside hospital, has been an interest of mine and this job offers the best training available.

"In the few months I've been here I've probably seen more gunshot wounds from the streets of London than in seven years in the Army."

The helicopter service is usually in the air within three minutes of being activated and can be at any point inside the M25 within ten minutes.



George Medal team: Capt Justin Priestley, left, and Capt Richard Baker, from 11 EOD Regt RLC

Harwell pair win George Medals

A TWO-line entry in the miscellaneous section of the operational awards published in December's *Soldier* noted that Capt J M Priestley and Capt R A Baker, both of the Royal Logistic Corps, were to receive the George Medal.

Now a few tantalisingly brief details, pieced together from a citation released by their unit, Didcot-based 11 EOD Regiment RLC, begin to paint a picture of an amazing episode.

Cpts Justin Priestley and Richard Baker risked their lives to make safe what is described as "an unstable explosive compound" thought to have built up within a laboratory complex at the UK Atomic Energy Authority Plant at Harwell.

They worked together for 36 hours on top of the compound, in which the primary explosive was sensitive and "liable to spontaneously detonate or explode if subjected to movement of any kind". Unusually, two EOD operators were needed "to improve the likelihood of a successful outcome".

Because they had to work on top of the dangerous compound, the two officers were in very real jeopardy during high-risk phases of the operation.

The citation says they completed the job with "great nerve, courage and total professionalism". They will receive their medals later this month.

The Harwell incident is being investigated by the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate.

Geared up for the kids

INSTRUCTORS at the Army School of Ammunition in Kineton donned full bomb disposal pro-

tective suits and helmets to make a 100-mile walk in 24 hours. But there was method in their

apparent madness, because they raised about £3,000 for the BBC's *Children in Need* appeal.

DEPLETED URANIUM

Science points to low risk

What we think of DU shells

Cpl Tony Whittaker, KRH

(Gulf War veteran)

The first time I saw DU rounds was in the Gulf. I am not concerned about health risks. DU is the best thing to take out modern armour. If we are in a dangerous situation we want the best.



Capt Ian Hardbatle, Regimental Training Officer, KRH

(Gulf War veteran)

I know of some units who came up against the Iraqi Republican Guard equipped with T72s and who used DU rounds. There is a debate as to whether tungsten carbide would have defeated that armour.



Tpr Sam Watchorn, KRH

I am not concerned, but I think they should carry on testing and screening to get to the facts.



Top medic says it is 'exceedingly difficult' to acquire sufficient dose of DU to cause ill health

SOLDIERS who have served in the Gulf, Bosnia or Kosovo face an "exceedingly low risk" of becoming ill because of depleted uranium poisoning, according to the Services' chief medical expert.

Lt Gen Bob Menzies, Surgeon General, told *Soldier*: "As far as we know, it is exceedingly difficult to acquire a dose of DU sufficient to cause any damage to health at all."

He said the MoD had been aware from the beginning that DU posed a very low level hazard and had published guidelines to minimise the risks.

"I have visited Bosnia on numerous occasions, and I have been to Kosovo, and I am not aware that I have been exposed to DU," he said, adding that he was not concerned about any risk to himself and did not intend to be screened for DU.

"There are studies of people who have been exposed to DU, studies conducted in the US, which have failed to establish any link at all between DU and illness, including cancer in human beings."

"One particularly interesting group, some of whom have DU shrapnel embedded in their bodies from the Gulf War, have been studied. But so far there is no evidence of medical problems linked to DU."

"UK forces in the Gulf or the Balkans have not had anything like the DU exposure of that particular group."

Lt Gen Menzies said that if people became ill and thought the symptoms might be related to DU, they should seek medical advice.

"We have notified not only Service medical officers, but also civilian GPs, and they will be able to advise people appropriately and refer them if necessary to hospital consultants. If



Lt Gen Menzies

DU is a candidate for causing any illness it will be investigated."

The Surgeon General said studies published recently showed no difference in death rates between Gulf veterans and those who had not been to the Middle East. Medical risks centred on soldiers' exposure to the dust found in vehicles which had been damaged or destroyed by DU ammunition.

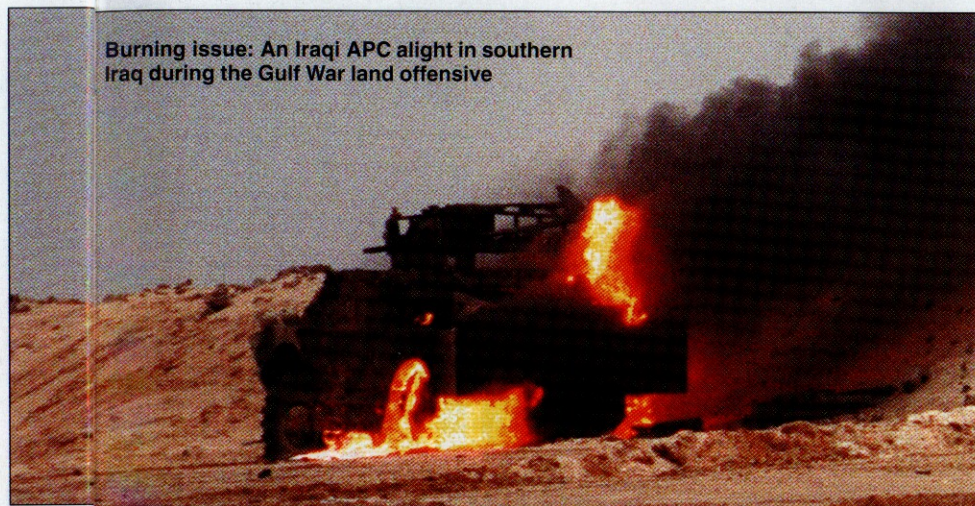
DU forms a very fine dust after it hits a hard target and can enter the body in three ways – by inhalation, ingestion or breaches in the skin.

Guidelines issued as far back as the Gulf advised soldiers coming into contact with tank hulks to take appropriate precautions.

Out of the tens of thousands of Nato troops who have served in the Balkans, the deaths of six Italians, four French, two Dutch and one Portuguese Servicemen from cancer and leukaemia have been widely reported, fuelling health concerns.

Lt Gen Menzies said: "Cancer related to radiation normally takes rather a long time to develop. It would be very unusual for cancer to develop in such a short time, as we have seen in these cases."

"On all of the evidence that we have at present, and I believe very strongly that we must base our comments on scientific evidence, I believe the risk is exceedingly low."



Burning issue: An Iraqi APC alight in southern Iraq during the Gulf War land offensive

Picture: Mike Weston

DU remains in Army arsenal

ARMED Forces Minister John Spellar set out the Government's position on DU in a Commons statement last month. This is a summary of the main points.

● DU will remain part of the UK arsenal for the foreseeable future. DU ammunition provides a battle-winning military capability and to deny UK troops would be wrong.

● Handled in accordance with regulations, DU shells present no hazard to UK forces.

● In 1993 and 1999 the MoD published details of hazards from DU and estimates of the risk posed to troops in the Gulf. Currently there is no evidence of a higher rate of cancer among

Gulf veterans compared with a control group. There is no evidence linking DU to cancers or to the more general ill health experienced by some Gulf veterans.

● Testing of Gulf and Balkans veterans for uranium in the US, Canada and Belgium has failed to show any of them excreting higher than background levels unless they have embedded shrapnel.

● DU was fired by Nato forces on operations in Bosnia in 1994 and 1995, and in Kosovo in 1999. Compared with 300 tonnes fired in the Gulf, only three tonnes were fired in Bosnia and nine tonnes in Kosovo, very little of it in the British sector.

● The MoD is aware of no evidence of unusual ill health among UK Balkans peacekeepers. A study which examined 4,000 Bosnia peacekeepers found no difference in the level of symptoms between them and troops who had been deployed to the Gulf or to Bosnia.

● DU has been test-fired on UK ranges. Apart from a small amount of contained firing at Foulness and Aldermaston, it has been concentrated in ranges at Kirkcudbright on the Solway Firth and at Eskmeals, Cumbria. An independent review of the environmental impact concluded the radiation risks to the public and the environment were

extremely low.

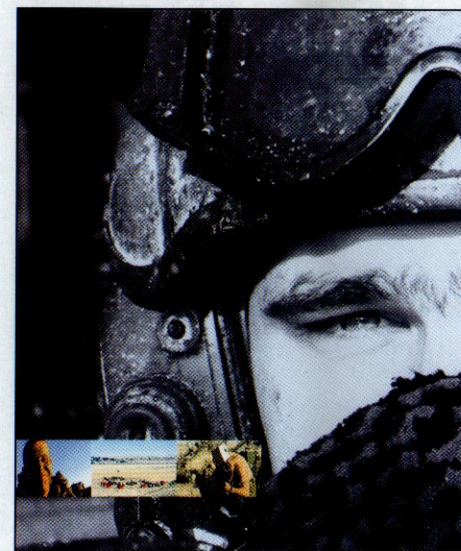
● A voluntary screening programme for Service personnel and civilians who have served in the Balkans will be set up. Testing will be done on the basis of the best available science and in consultation with national bodies.

● MoD will co-ordinate with Nato allies and pool data on the risks to health in the Balkans.

● Anyone who thinks their health has been affected by service in the Balkans should seek medical advice. If their doctor considers there is evidence that DU might have contributed, tests for uranium levels will be carried out.

See Home Truths – Page 69

Charlie Charlie One



YOU no longer have to rely on someone else to show you a copy of the Army's regular *Charlie Charlie One* video diary updates. Thanks to the wonders of video streaming, the winter 2000 edition is now live on the Army website at www.army.mod.uk/cc1

Comments on the latest production, which features Exercise Iron Eagle at BATUS, the Sierra Leone hostage rescue and a round-up of Army sport and news, would be gratefully received by Maj Anna Kimber at dccastaff-mod.uk@btinternet.com

Charlie, two



Blooming lovely: **Charlie Dimmock**, a star of BBC TV's *Ground Force* gardening team, gets down and dirty while filming a pilot for the *Omnibus* programme at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst. It is due to be transmitted in September. Charlie was put through her paces on the assault course by **SSgt Jude Shenton**, spent time on general activities with Waterloo Company and was coached in the gym by **Sgt Dave Cox** and **Sgt Steve Chappell**.

Picture: Graeme Main



Honour observed

Unique honour: Maj Karen Daly, AGC(SPS), the first, and currently the only, female military observer to serve with the mission, receives her United Nations Iraq Kuwait Observation Mission Medal from Maj Gen John Vize, Irish Army, the force commander.

Maj Daly is part of an 11-strong military contingent which includes personnel from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.

UNIKOM's mandate is to monitor the 15km-wide demilitarised zone which runs along the 250km-long Iraq-Kuwait border.

IN BRIEF

● A milestone was reached by the Royal Engineers last month when the corps promoted its first female lieutenant colonel. **Lt Col Jenny Pride**, pictured, a reserve officer with the Royal Monmouthshire Royal Engineers (Militia), is taking up an appointment with HQ



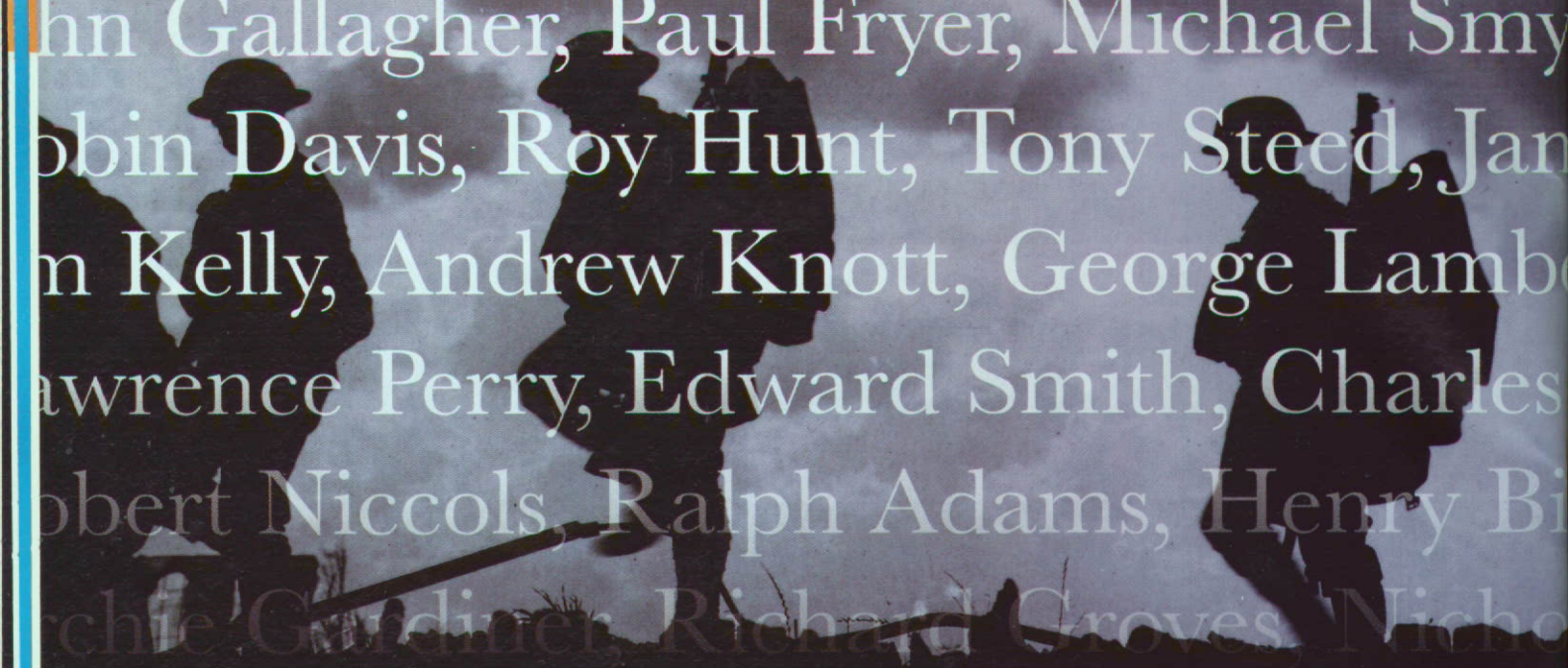
Royal Engineers Territorial Army in Buller Barracks, Aldershot. Her husband, **David**, commands 100 Field Squadron (Militia) based in Cwmbran. Her last appointment was on the staff of HQ 160 (Wales) Brigade.

● **SSgt Malcolm Miller**, pictured right, of 22 Regiment RA, based at Kirton in Lindsey, has been presented with the



Goshen Medal for exceptional services in recruiting and community work and for saving the life of a child. He received the medal from **Fd Marshal Lord Vincent**, Master Gunner St James's Park.

● A campaign to promote the partnership between West Midlands employers and the Reserve Forces has been launched.



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THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION





Picture: Graeme Main

'Ammering 'Enry: SSgt Dean Smith of the APTC's Edwardian display team squares up to guest-of-honour Henry Cooper during a passing-out parade at the Army School of Physical Training, Aldershot. During his National Service days Henry was the star of the boxing team, winning Army and Inter-Service titles at heavyweight. He went on to win three Lonsdale belts as a professional and almost knocked out the great Muhammad Ali at Wembley in 1963.

Reserve transfers made a lot easier

MEASURES introduced to make it easier for Territorial Army soldiers to transfer to the Regulars for service in the Balkans have resulted in a virtually seamless transition process.

Changes to the system followed complaints by members of the Reserve Forces that the transfer procedure was so bureaucratic and long-winded that TA soldiers were being discouraged from signing-on for service in Kosovo.

Delays in the processing of applications have been slashed by a new administration regime while the Reserves Training and Mobilisation Centre (RTMC) at Chilwell is providing better management of part-time soldiers applying to switch to the Regular Army.

Feedback from individuals, comman-

ders in the Balkans and the RTMC has indicated that the new system is working well. Under it, applications from mobilised reservists are processed so as to avoid a break between leaving the TA and joining the Regulars.

Of the 102 reservists who expressed an interest in joining up full-time between April 1 and December 15, 31 enlisted. Of the remainder, 29 withdrew their applications, two were ineligible and 40 are still being processed. Of the 29 withdrawals, only three expressed dissatisfaction with the system.

And of the 40 being processed, only two are said to be outside the time-frame laid down. Both have applied to join the Intelligence Corps and are waiting to go on specialist courses.

FRIEND or foe? A £100 million contract has been placed with Raytheon Systems Ltd for new technology to allow the UK Armed Forces to distinguish between friendly and hostile forces. Successor Identification Friend or Foe (SIFF) equipment will be used by all three Services.

Suffolk airmen lay on big day for Sam

ARMY Air Corps personnel serving at Wattisham Airfield, Suffolk, made sure nine-year-old Sam Broadbent, who suffers from leukaemia, had a day to treasure. He was given a flight in a Gazelle

helicopter over Portman Road, home of his favourite football team, Ipswich Town. Sam was also shown around the air base, had lunch in the sergeants' mess and tried his hand in a Lynx simulator.

New Year honours

KCB

Lt Gen T J Granville-Chapman, CBE, Late RA.

CB

Maj Gen C G Callow, OBE, late RAMC; Maj Gen A P Ridgway, CBE, late RTR; Maj Gen T J Sullivan, CBE, late RHG/D.

CBE

Col M J Dent, MBE, late R Signals; Brig C M Steirn, late RLC.

OBE

Lt Col J H Clough, RLC; Lt Col C E Comport TD, RA TA; Lt Col D E Cook, RLC; Lt Col M C Frostick, REME; Lt Col R L Hall MBE, RGBW; Col J R Hennessy, late RE, TA; Col C J Kitchener, late AGC(SPS); Lt Col A D Mason, Para; Col P D McEvoy, late AGC(ALS); Lt Col J A Ris, RE; Lt Col D I A Spackman, RRF; Lt Col R W H Sutcliffe, RY TA; Lt Col P M Outerbridge ED, The Bermuda Regiment.

MBE

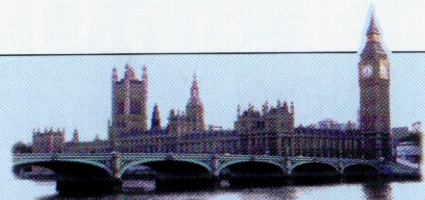
WO1 E J Adams, PWRR; Maj R A F Baker, RAMC; Maj P R Barron, R Signals; WO1 I T Bell, RAVC; Acting Maj B Blackley, Queen's Own Highland Bn ACF; Maj D J H Boxhall, R Signals; Lt Col M P A Bullen, Scots DG; Maj D J Chapman, RLC; Maj C G Chick, AAC; Maj G Clark BEM, Para; Lt Col J P Clover, RRF; Maj P M Copeland, SG; Cpl E A Crooks, R Irish, TA; SSgt E P Devine, AGC(SPS); Capt R M Dobson, AGC(SPS), TA; WO1 D E Dowdall, DWR; Sgt J Doyle, Para; WO2 J G Farrell, SG; Maj M A Fenn, RE.

WO2 M Fish, QLR; Maj N O Fitzgerald, RA; Maj J A B Floyd, R Signals; WO2 G French, REME; Capt (Queen's Gurkha Officer) H Gurung, RGR; WO2 P A Hayes, Tyne Tees Regt, TA; WO1 J Hilton, RLC; SSgt R D Inglesant BEM, R Signals; WO2 M Jethwa, AGC(SPS), TA; WO2 M E W Kingston, LG; WO1 J R Knight, R Signals; WO2 S A Lavis, RA; Maj J C Lawrence, RGR; WO2 J W Legge, LI; WO1 N J Lemon, Int Corps; Acting Maj E P Lewis, AGC(SPS); Maj P W Merriman, RRF.

WO1 G J Morgan, AGC(SPS); Acting Lt Col N J Mussett, Giggleswick School CCF; Maj D M Nield, RWF; WO2 L P Panter, RLC; Maj J P B Perks, GH; LCpl C Rees, R Signals; Lt Col P S Robertshaw, REME; Sgt L J Robinson, R Signals; Maj C A Robson, RA; WO2 P E Scott, RAMC; Maj H E Shields, LI; WO2 A J Stevens, REME; Maj J S Strachan TD, RLC, TA; Sgt R C Stuart, RE; SSgt M W Taylor, RE; SSgt M J Thomas, RE; Maj C L Tickell, RE; WO2 N A Villiers, RE; WO1 G K Waller, AGC(SPS); Maj N Welch, RGBW; Maj J F Wiggell, RLC; Capt D A Wright, R Signals.

QVRM

WO2 I B Caris, REME, TA; Lt Col J E Davis TD, QARANC, TA; Sgt J M Dennehy, R Signals, TA; Col N P Easton, late The London Regiment, TA; Col J P Wright TD, late RHF, TA.



Under Big Ben

A digest of what's being said on Army matters in Parliament

MoD looks at blast devices

BRITISH soldiers may be equipped with weapons based on heat and pressure technology rather than explosives in the future.

Defence Under-Secretary Dr Lewis Moonie assured MPs on January 16 that the Ministry of Defence does not have such weapons – known as thermobaric – in its inventory at the moment.

"However, such weapons exist and it would therefore be irresponsible not to keep developments in this field under review, not least to develop protective measures for our personnel."

"We have asked industry to consider how best to provide an anti-structure capability for use by the infantry in the urban environment. It is possible this solution may involve using blast rather than fragmentation effects."

"Should we decide to acquire such a weapon, we would ensure that this was fully in accordance with international law and our treaty obligations."

It had been reported on BBC Radio that the weapon, used by the Russians in Chechnya, was already being developed by the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency in Kent.

Porton on-line: A website set up by the Ministry of Defence specifically for Porton Down volunteers will contain details of the Government's offer of a thorough medical assessment. An advice leaflet first produced two years ago is being updated

Disabled people: The Ministry of Defence employs more than 5,900 people with disabilities – about six per cent of the civilian workforce, said Dr Moonie. This percentage is broadly in line with the estimated number of "economically active" disabled people in the working population as a whole.

Army strength: Full-time trained strength of the Army in mid-January was 100,442, against a requirement of 106,133. Strength of the Territorial Army was recorded as 41,671.

Meanwhile, the number of soldiers committed to operations fell to 21 per cent by mid-January, Armed Forces Minister John Spellar told MPs.

● Examination of personal records has revealed that 12,853 persons serving in the Army are "from Scotland".

Surplus ammo sparks weapon search on range

SOLDIERS from C Squadron, 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards serving in Bosnia came up with a cache of illegal weapons and ammunition while monitoring local Federation forces under training.

The QDG, which is equipped with Scimitar and Spartan vehicles, is providing an armoured reconnaissance capability for the 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment battle-group in Bosnia. It has bases at Banja Luka, Gradiska and Prnjavor.

While watching recruits firing at Vrbanja range, the recce troops discovered that four times more ammunition than allowed under the peace accord had been produced. The exercise was stopped and the recruits returned to barracks.

A search of vehicles and range buildings unearthed 11 unregistered rifles in a tower in addition to a variety of ammunition. An EOD detachment was summoned when a primed hand grenade and a 20mm round were uncovered.

Later, while discussions were being held with a Bosnian liaison officer sent to explain the unaccounted weapons, another cache of rifles and ammunition buried under old targets in a hangar was found.

When an M79 HEAT grenade was discovered, the search was stopped by the EOD officers and the area placed under guard until the following day. After the M79 had been destroyed further searches were carried out, but no more weapons were found.

Because of the need to build good relations with local military forces, the confiscated rifles and ammunition will eventually be returned as a goodwill gesture.

● Command of Nato's Kosovo Force (KFOR) transferred from Supreme Allied Headquarters Europe (SHAPE) to Allied Forces Southern Europe (AFSOUTH) in Naples last month. Command of SFOR, the stabilisation force in Bosnia-Herzegovina, is also to be moved to Naples.

Sky-diver killed in Spain

LSGT Carl Henly, who was serving with the Aldershot-based Welsh Guards, was killed in an off-duty sky-diving accident in northern Spain.

Military posting

ARMED Forces Minister John Spellar applauded the hard work of the British Forces Post Office (BFPO), the Defence Mail Service and the Defence Courier Service during a visit to the London sorting office.

Falklands, Cyprus benefit from extension to pets' passport scheme

SERVICE personnel and their families are among those who will benefit most from the latest extension of the pets' passport scheme to rabies-free islands, including Cyprus, the Falklands and Ascension Island.

The concessions, which came into effect on January 31, allow cats and dogs from the islands to be taken into the United Kingdom without

being subjected to six months in quarantine.

All pets have to pass a strict veterinary programme before they arrive in the UK. This includes a full vaccination record and an electronic identity "tag" under the skin.

As reported in *Soldier* (Aug), the Army veterinary unit in Cyprus has been working with families to pave the way for the new rules.

IN BRIEF

● Paymaster, a division of Hogg Robinson plc, has won the contract for the administration and payment of Armed Forces retired pay and pensions, involving payments to more than 340,000 retired personnel and 125,000 soldiers.

● Naafi has appointed Neil McCausland

as its new chief executive. He will take over from Geoffrey Dart on March 1. Mr Dart is to become Naafi chairman.

● A team of soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The King's Own Scottish Borderers traversed large sections of the High Tetra ridge and scaled Mount Rysy (2,499m), the



It's showtime: Cpl Colin Eastham, right, of the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment, joined forces with Service colleagues at the London Boat Show to look after model Liz Cass, left, the "face that launched 1,000 ships".

Liz's image will be used on all publicity

material for the International Festival of the Sea 2001 at Portsmouth from August 24-27. The festival is the major tri-Service event of the year, replacing the discontinued Royal Tournament. The Royal Air Force will host the pageant next year with the Army leading in 2003.

New battalion to run HQ Northern Ireland

A NEW battalion has been formed to run the Army's headquarters in Northern Ireland.

The 500-strong unit, which came into existence on January 10, will streamline the infrastructure of the Army's biggest base in the Province, at Thiepval Barracks in Lisburn.

HQNI Support Battalion is made up of the former Lisburn Station Administration Unit and other elements.

Its role will be to provide a range of services, including security, pay, transport, quartermaster, budgetary control and personnel support for civilian staff.

Lt Col Bill Sharpe, D and D, first commanding officer of the battalion, said: "A major headquarters such as HQNI, with its range of force troops, has a great diversity of capabilities. This new battalion will provide the support to enable it to operate more effectively."

More patrol bases to be demolished

DEMOLITION of the Army's three remaining border patrol bases in Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, has started. Civilian contractors are expected to complete the work at Annaghtmartin, Clonatty Bridge and Mullan Bridge by

the end of May, after which the land will be prepared for return to its original owners. Former patrol bases on the Fermanagh border at Killyvilly, Ross-corr Bridge and Wattle Bridge have already been taken down and cleared.

One-call info stop



Fresh look: Yetti Dutton, right, director of HIVE (Help Information Volunteer Exchange) unveils the organisation's new logo for Marie Griffiths, left, HIVE organiser, Warminster. Also pictured are Julia Abbott, second left, UK southern regional co-ordinator; and Maria Whitmore, GB central office manager.

The new logo reflects the emphasis the HIVES are placing on their role as providers of information to the Service community around the world.

Introduction of the internet to all HIVES has made it possible for the organisation to offer a comprehensive, up-to-date service, which is of particular value when Service personnel and families are on the move between postings. You can find out where your nearest office is by contacting HIVE GB central office on 01722 436498.

Road runners



Running is good for you: Pte Andy Bromley, left, and Pte Kev Booth, right, of the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment, pictured with a patient at St Teresa's Hospice in Darlington. The two soldiers were among a team of 1 QLR runners, led by Maj Simon Downey, who presented a cheque for £2,000 to the hospice after completing a charity run from Preston to Darlington.

country's highest mountain, during a three-week climbing expedition in Poland.

● Maj Gen Reddy Watt, pictured, late Welsh Guards, has succeeded Maj Gen Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter as GOC London District and Major General Commanding the Household Division. Gen

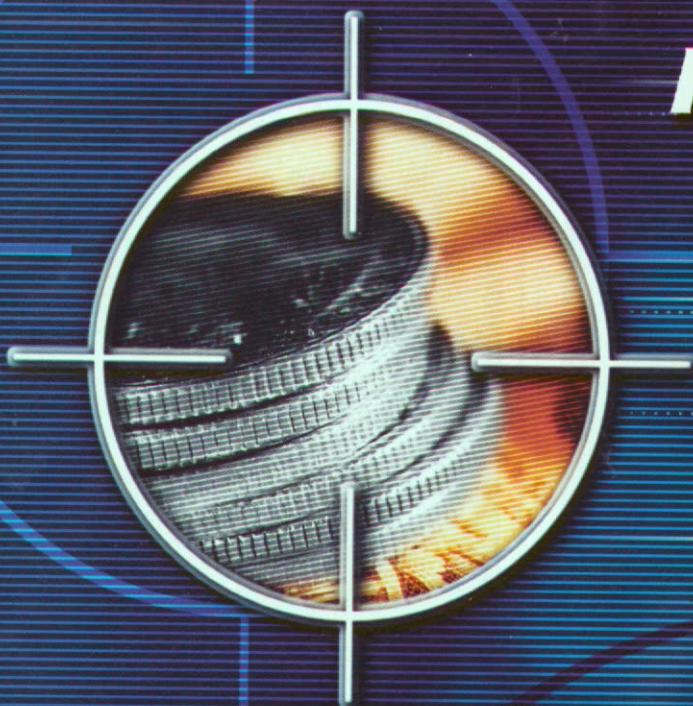


Watt's last appointment was command of the 1st Armoured Division based at Herford in Germany. Gen Webb-Carter has retired.

● Swansea-based 223 Transport Squadron RLC

(V) has received a gold award for catering excellence from the Lord Mayor of Swansea.

● Cousins Memorial Parchment certificates were awarded to 26 candidates – a third of those in training – who gained 80 per cent or more in their final instrumental exams at the Royal Military School of Music last year.



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MEMBERS of 29 (Multinational) Engineer Brigade joined forces with sappers from all over Europe during an exercise hosted by the Hellenic Army at its engineer school in the resort town of Loutraki. The Chief Engineer Allied Rapid Reaction

Greeks host gathering of Nato

Corps study period was held at the same time as Exercise Acrobatic Sapper 2000. Representatives from the UK, Greece, Denmark, Norway, Germany, Poland, Italy, Turkey and the Netherlands took part.



Picture: Chris Barker

Ready for the off: Army medics from 34 Field Hospital in York prepare for their deployment to Sierra Leone. Picture from left, back row, are Maj John Langley, Cpl Elizabeth Holder and Capt Geoff Hall; front, Sgt John Watson, Pte Linda Mansergh, Cpl Kevin Godfrey, Lt Jo D'Arcy and Cpl David Hornsby. Taking it easy on the stretcher is Pte Rhian Humphreys. The unit is setting up a ten-bed field hospital for soldiers deployed there. Sierra Leone – Pages 17-19

New E-bluey is better than ever

SENDING and receiving blueys to and from operational areas by e-mail has become quicker and easier following the signing of a new contract by the British Forces Post Office (BFPO).

BFPO has been using a website supplied by the Royal Mail, but a new site from Superletter should provide soldiers and their families with an improved service and allow for two-way communication via the internet.

Since the revamped service went online last month, users have been able to send

and receive messages up to four pages long. To access the site, simply go to the BFPO website at www.bfpo.org.uk and click on the "e-bluey" button.

All British Servicemen and women deployed on operations are entitled to free air-mail letter forms, known as blueys, obtained through civil or Forces post offices. BFPO, working with the Relay One Service of the Post Office, pioneered an electronic form of the bluey in 1999. So far more than 35,000 have been delivered, many the following day.

You can tell me how I'm driving

ARMY vehicles in Hampshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire are to carry stickers encouraging road-users to keep an eye on how soldiers are driving. A similar initiative in the south-east reduced accidents involving military vehicles by a third. The public can report bad driving via a freephone number.

Safe: Pte Demelza Smith of 27 (Tpt) Regt RLC

Picture: Chris Fletcher



Paper talk

What the Press has been saying

● A Royal Navy rating has used new human rights laws to overturn a sentence of detention for smoking cannabis. – *Daily Telegraph*

● MoD officials were reviewing an Army website that advertises for new recruits to the Territorial Army Special Air Service. – *The Times*

● A non-lethal artillery shell designed to disable the enemy's electronic equipment without killing anybody has been developed at a secret site in south-west England. Following revelations that Russia was well ahead of the West in the development of an E-bomb, Matra Bae Dynamics has persuaded the MoD that its version is feasible. – *Daily Telegraph*

● Frauleins can finally serve in the front line after the German army opened up its combat units to women. – *Daily Express*

See Vox pop (Page 74); Mail (Page 72)

● Ex-Servicemen are campaigning to change the working of their pension system, which has left many of them thousands of pounds a year worse off than contemporaries. About 25,000 personnel are affected by the two worst years for retiring, 1977 and 1991. – *Daily Telegraph*

See Mail (Page 70)

● Nearly £160 million will be paid out in February to former British prisoners of the Japanese. More than 15,800 cheques for £10,000 will be sent out in recognition of the sacrifice made by Servicemen. The Government said it was delighted so many former PoWs had made claims for the one-off payment. – *Mirror*

● Fifteen soldiers of The Light Dragoons, based at Swanton Morley, Norfolk, face dismissal after failing drug tests. – *The Times*

● Women's panties – 140 pairs of them – sent to Venezuela's army chiefs, apparently to suggest "servility" to the President, angered feminists who said the army had equated them with "weakness and cowardice". – *Independent*

● Baroness Symons, the Defence Procurement Minister, has forecast that women will outnumber men in the military. In a magazine interview she says she hopes that within 30 years there will be a woman Chief of the Defence Staff. She expects the Services could by then consist of "51 per cent" women". – *Sunday Times*

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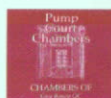
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British soldiers aid victims of civil war

When there is nothing left and nowhere to go, refugees end up at the camp for amputees and war wounded in the capital, Freetown

Reports: Anthony Stone
Pictures: Graeme Main

Mother's pride: Mariatu and her child, right

MARIATU Kamara was 14 and pregnant when the rebels came. After murdering her husband, they held her down and severed her hands with a machete. The "soldier" who did the cutting was 11 years old.

Last year Mariatu gave birth to a beautiful baby boy. For most mothers this would be a time of joy. But when her baby cries, Mariatu cannot pick him up. Like all double amputees in Sierra Leone, she is totally dependent on her family for help. Without them she cannot, eat, wash or go to the toilet.

Mariatu shares a dark room, the size of a garden shed, with nine relatives. Inside, the air is suffocatingly thick and choking.

About 250 refugees live with Mariatu in Freetown's camp for amputees and war wounded . . . a sprawling collection of flimsy huts, built from corrugated iron and rubbish.

For anyone unsure why the British Army is in Sierra Leone, the amputee camp supplies hundreds of answers.

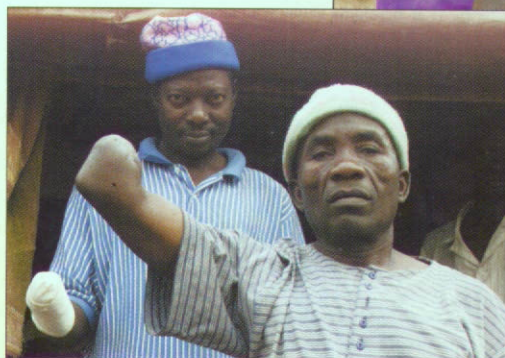
One-armed Gebrill Sesay, chairman of the amputees, showed us around the camp. Nothing prepares the visitor for meeting mutilated children. Barbarity beyond understanding.

The Rev Tyrone Hillary, the Forces chaplain, visited the camp and said afterwards: "The thing that disturbed me the most was the ears, not the hands. The fact that people had had their ears cut off as well as their hands – that was purely cosmetic. There was a really vicious, wild streak to what went on." Sil-ladee Turay of the Lutheran World Foundation, one of the aid agencies helping the amputees come to terms with their trauma, said: "They must understand that their limbs will not come back. They must accept."

In their free time, British soldiers are frequent visitors to the camp. Some take

'For anyone unsure why the British Army is in Sierra Leone, the amputee camp supplies hundreds of answers'

Scar issues: Mutilated refugees, below, in Freetown



with them clothes or money. Others give time and practical help in whatever way they can. Each in their own way trying to make things a little better.

By the nature of their jobs, most soldiers have seen humanitarian disasters before. Nothing, though, compares with this man-made misery.

The short tour was almost at an end. But not before Gebrill took us into a hut to

meet one of the war-wounded. We were minutes too late. His emaciated corpse lay in the middle of the squalid hut. With eyes that burned with something beyond anger, Gebrill said: "Two or three people die like this every week."

Some British soldiers who were visiting that day heard about the man's death. When they learned he had no family or money, they paid for his burial and asked for prayers to be said.

A small group gathered to discuss funeral arrangements, while elsewhere in the camp life went on. Mariatu stood distractedly outside her ramshackle shelter while her sisters washed their clothes in a tin bucket.

She turned her head instinctively towards a sound coming from the hut. Her baby was crying for his mother.

● On patrol with PWO – see over



Wash and go: Soldiers carry their weapons with them at all times at the training camp

Life at Benguema

For six weeks at a time, Army training teams are based at a tented camp in the bush

IT had been a good day at Benguema Training Camp. To celebrate, the Sierra Leone soldiers were given permission to sing as they jogged back, and their voices carried far ahead of them into the African dusk.

It had been another long, hot day and the soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment were also on their way back to camp for showers, scoff and sleep.

Once the sun goes down the temperature in the bush drops and it can get quite chilly in the early hours. The training camp is spartan and manages without many of the welfare amenities commonplace in other theatres. The guys stay in touch with a 20-minute free phone call home each week.

Beguema is dry; beverages are limited to tea, coffee and bottled water. But after a day in the field the guys are tired and despite the buzz of mosquitoes, sleep comes easily.

A mosque situated just outside the perimeter summons the local faithful to prayer at dawn. Usually the infantrymen turn over and go back to sleep until another, more persistent, alarm becomes impossible to ignore.

Every morning, soon after first light, a locally-employed civilian lets rip with a



Wake-up call: Mosquitoes get zapped in the morning

machine that sounds like a chainsaw and does an impression of a dry-ice machine. He covers the camp with a cloud of insect repellent which settles above the grass like mist on the Yorkshire Moors.

The 1st Battalion has made a big impact on the locals. On the streets of Freetown, the current must-have fashion item is a Prince of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment T-shirt, run-off on backstreet presses.

For six weeks, Sierra Leone fell in love with all things Yorkshire. But despite their enthusiastic support, it was impossible to find anyone who rated Bradford City's chances of staying up.

On patrol with PWO

Patrols provided security and reassurance while in the training camp instructors taught basic infantry skills

ORANGE dust thrown up from the dirt track caked the patrol from head-to-boot like badly applied cam-cream. Beads of sweat ran down the soldiers' faces leaving track marks where it cut through the grime.

Street savvy skills, honed on patrols in Northern Ireland, were now tested under the merciless African sun.

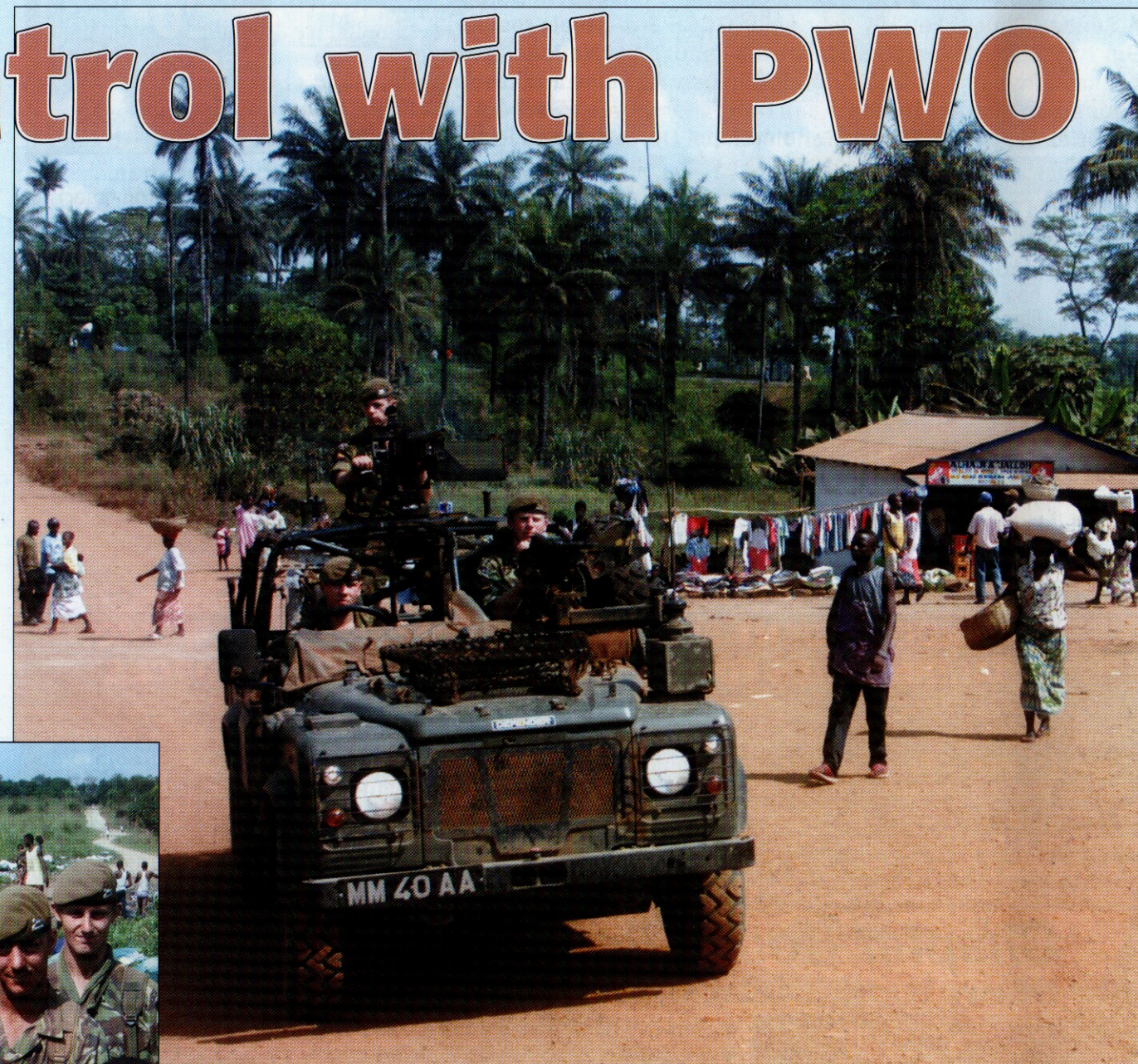
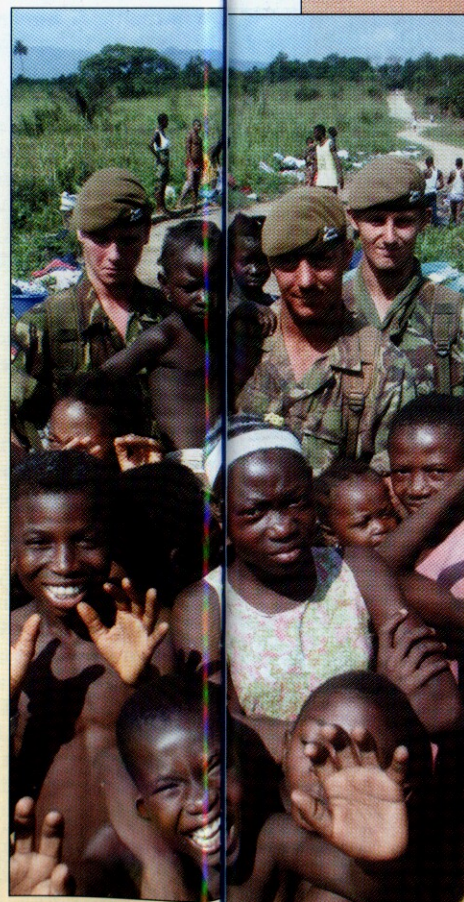
It was the end of the 30-day ceasefire and the two-vehicle patrol was heading 20km south-east from Benguema Training Camp, meeting and greeting, showing the flag, offering a reassuring presence.

In the lead vehicle Lt Ben Richards scanned the bush on either side, prepared for whatever lay on the road ahead.

Pte Bryan Greenham, who had recently joined the Army straight from school, was manning the 50mm machine gun on the WIMIK (Weapon Mounted Installation Kit) Land Rover.

Every couple of kilometres, the patrol passed United Nations checkpoints as traffic slowed and snaked around the sandbagged gun emplacements. A wave, sometimes a salute, from the sentries, and the patrol moved on.

The further out from Freetown, the more sporadic the villages became. But, as elsewhere, the locals reacted enthusiastically when they saw the soldiers. The PWO were given



Patrolling presence: The short-term training team of 1 PWO comprised 58 trainers plus about another 200 men whose jobs were to guard, feed and provide a secure environment in which the team could successfully operate. Left, LCpl Rob Harper, Pte Anthony Rhodes and Pte Wayne Worth of 1 PWO make some new friends while on patrol

6 Street savvy skills, honed on patrols in Northern Ireland, were now tested under the merciless African sun

rolled by. Some misdirected people, possibly from the many charities and Non Governmental Organisations in the country, had been giving out confectionery. It salved their consciences, but was potentially dangerous because it encouraged children to run out into the roads. British soldiers had been instructed not to throw out sweets from vehicles.

Further up the road the patrol dismounted at a checkpoint manned by local militia. Smiles and good humour were again in evidence. The Civil Defence Force was heavily armed with machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and AK-47s. Other weapons looked Second World War vintage.

In Sierra Leone guns, grenades and machetes are carried like fashion acces-

sories. Sawn-off shotguns, and even sawn-off SLRs, were not uncommon.

Down another dirt road, the patrol came across Commander Snake, a local leader. His normal attire was paramilitary uniform, customized with mirrors and braids of pubic hair woven as a talisman to ward off bullets. But today, being Sunday, he was dressed more conservatively as befits a village head on his way to market.

As Lt Richards chatted with Snake, probing for any useful information, the eyes of the patrol surveyed the village, moving from hut to bush and back again. Just in case.

Two hours after leaving camp, the vehicles returned in a cloud of dust, mission accomplished.

the sort of reception cup winners receive when they parade the silverware. Children shouted "sweets, sweets" as the vehicles

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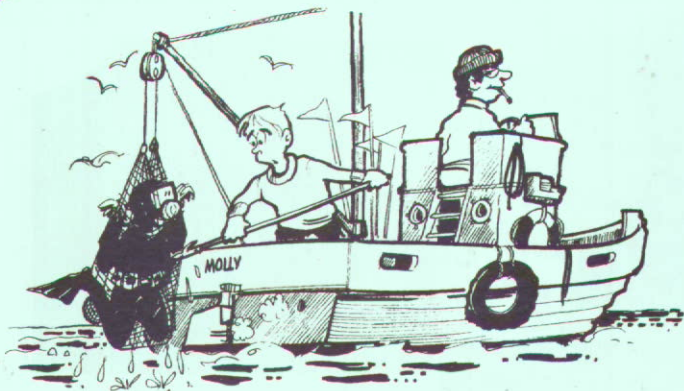


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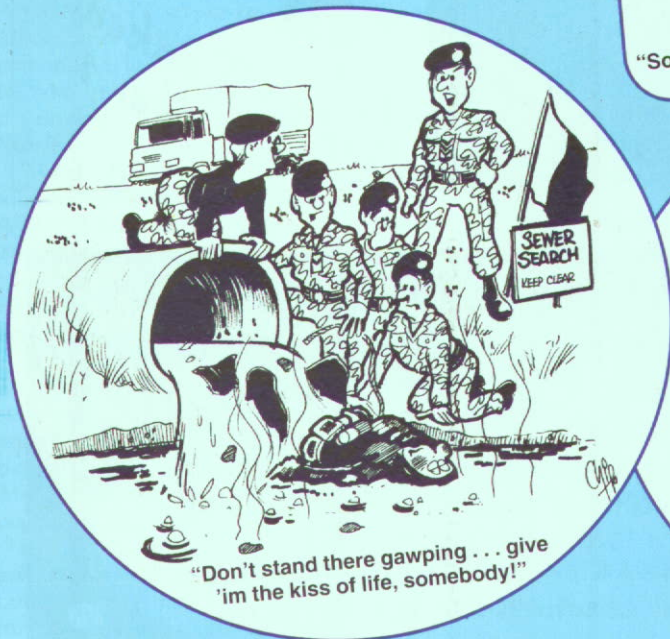
"It doesn't matter what it looks like, boy ... just gut and fillet the damn thing!"

Chuckle with Chip

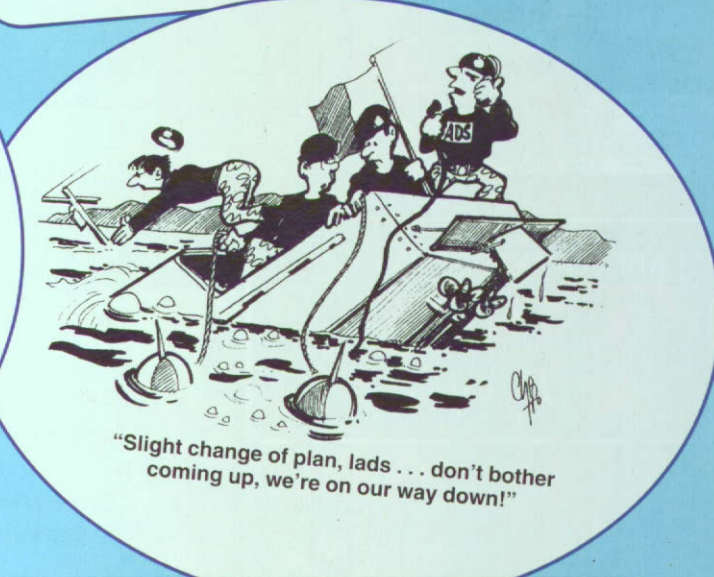
Water way to earn a living!



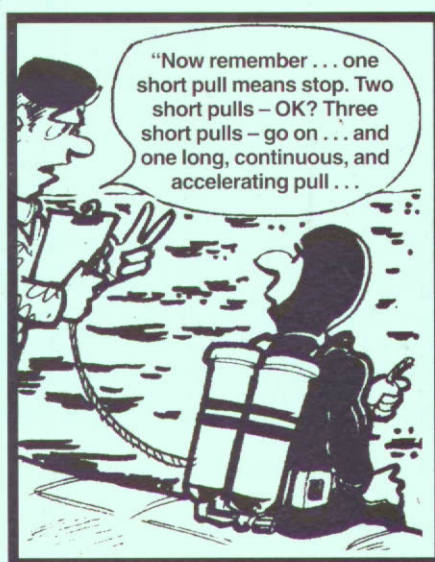
"So I said ... if you don't believe me, poke your head in there and see!"



"Don't stand there gawping ... give 'im the kiss of life, somebody!"



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Up for a challenge

Opportunities exist for soldiers to lead young people on educational trips around the world

A COMPANY set up by a former Army officer and staffed by many ex-military personnel is looking for expedition leaders to take groups of young people to the developing world, writes **Anthony Stone**.

World Challenge Expeditions was founded by Charles Rigby when he left the 9/12th Royal Lancers (Prince of Wales's) 14 years ago. Since then more than 10,000 young people from 500 schools have visited 40 countries in Central and South America, Africa and South-east Asia.

The company president is Lt Col (Retd) Tony Streater, one of Britain's most successful post-war British mountaineers and a guiding light behind the Army Mountaineering Association.

In the 1950s his achievements were second to none, including the first ascent of Tirich Mir, the second ascent of Kangchenjunga and the first ascent of Malubuitang East. He led the Army expedition to Everest in 1976, which succeeded in putting two soldiers, Bronco Lane and Brummie Stokes, on the top of the world.

Lt Col Streater explained the ethos behind the company. "We are not an adventurous training organisation or travel agent. We are an educational organisation and the expeditions are a vehicle for learning – in the broadest extra-curricular sense – learning about teamwork, leadership, about getting on with people.

"When we go to third-world countries we see how the other half lives and it makes the Chal-



Driving force:
Lt Col (Retd)
Tony Streater

Serving soldiers can find out more about World Challenge Expeditions from DCI 107 or by contacting Pauline Crossley on 01298 767900 or via the internet pcrossley@worldchallenge.co.uk



Ups and downs: Trekking in Bolivia. Expeditions like this teach teamwork and leadership

lengers realise how lucky they are." The qualities the expeditions strive to bring out in the participants are the same as those of a successful soldier: leadership, teamwork, organisation, time-management, communication, responsibility and planning.

With the support of his unit, HQ 29 (Corps Support) Engineer Brigade, SSgt Colin Smith, RE, has led three expeditions. "I have been to Madagascar, Costa Rica, and Peru and I am hoping to go to Vietnam this summer," he said.

"Each time we go away it is normally for about 32 days. This year I am taking a small group and, as well as trekking, we are looking to do a community project working with a chil-

dren's charity." Other community projects which expeditions have helped include school renovations in Zambia, decorating orphanages in Ecuador and working with street children in Outer Mongolia.

"From the Army's point of view it gets a much more confident individual," said SSgt Smith. "The expeditions have developed me and I am a better leader as a result. As an individual I have

found it a tremendous learning experience."

Expedition leaders are selected on their leadership, teaching and personal skills combined with their previous experience, training and qualifications. Minimum requirements include first-aid training and jungle and mountain experience.



Exped leader: SSgt Colin Smith

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Homes **SWEET** homes

A brave new world of family quarters was promised when the Defence estate was sold off four years ago. Is it being delivered?

Report: John Elliott
Pictures: Steve Dock

A YEAR ago the Army Families Federation published a compilation of concerns and issues brought to its attention during the previous eight months. To no one's surprise, housing ranked high on the list, second only to spouse-employment and ahead of education, health and marriage breakdown.

There was major disquiet among families that funding for the Defence Housing Executive was about to be slashed, seriously affecting the upgrade programme and jeopardising the Government's promise that it would be completed by 2003.

So what's happened since? According to the DHE, its performance has improved immeasurably since it took over the running of the Defence housing estate four years ago. Teething problems associated with setting up a large operation have been addressed and the organisation believes it is now much more customer-based. In the DHE's case, its customer is both Service families and the chain of command.

In the past four years it has upgraded about 12,000 properties to Standard 1

The organisation believes it is now much more customer-based

condition, and now reckons it will complete the programme by November 2005. By next month, more than 17,000 properties will be graded as Standard 1.

A large demolition and rebuild project is under way on Tidworth's Mathew Avon estate and another is about to begin at Middle Wallop. The DHE has also built 1,500 properties under initiatives involving the MoD and private industry. Examples include projects at Paisley and Glasgow.

On repairs – a constant source of unhappiness as logged by the AFF survey – DHE says it has set, and is meeting, demanding targets for all repairs classed **immediate** (95 per cent within 24 hours) and **routine** (90 per cent within two months).

It acknowledges that it missed its target for **urgent** repairs (90 per cent within five days), but says it expects to rectify this soon.

By way of making life easier for its occupants, the DHE has introduced a march-out contract cleaning

scheme in the UK – featured in *Soldier* (Oct) – and is running a trial to give increased notice of address on moving in, which should allow families more time to make plans for schooling and other issues.

Behind the scenes, DHE is getting rid of surplus quarters to reduce the overall level of its long-term empty properties, so releasing funds for crucial upgrade work.

With the sale of MoD housing leading inevitably to the creation of mixed estates, on which Service families will live cheek-by-jowl with civilian households, DHE has appointed a coordinator to establish best practice so all families can benefit from the new arrangements.

Can Army families do anything to ensure they get a better service from their housing executive? Yes, says DHE. It wants a proactive, positive response from its occupants, it wants families to let estate managers know what they are doing well or badly, and it wants its customer satisfaction slips and questionnaires completed. Over to you.



The good: All mod-cons in standard 1, four-bedroom accommodation just completed for other ranks at Salamanca Park in Aldershot. The houses are awaiting their first occupants



FACTFILE

DHE...

- was formed in April 1995 and assumed responsibility for the housing estate in England, Wales and Scotland a year later.

- is the MoD's focal point for business relations with Annington Homes, the private company which bought the majority of married quarter estates in England and Wales in November 1996.

- became an agency of the MoD on April 1, 1999, managing 61,000 properties for the three Services and handling around 22,000 family moves a year.

- manages accommodation occupied by about 21,000 Army families.



The bad: A house at Guillemont Fields, near Farnborough, awaiting demolition. The site will be redeveloped to Salamanca Park standards

Ray of inspiration

Badly wounded and blinded, not knowing if it's night or day. How do you learn to live again?

Report: Anthony Stone
Pictures: Graeme Main

SOMEHOW the bombers managed to intercept the parcel. They opened it, put explosives inside and then posted it to the Army base in Londonderry.

Their deadly patience paid off. A short time later, Capt Ray Hazan was holding the parcel in the operations room when it exploded.

"I remember a vague click as if someone had turned off the light. Then it went quiet and black," said Ray, remembering the October day in 1973 when 2nd Lt Lindsay Dobbie, RAOC, was killed and he lost his sight, part of his hearing, his right hand and the top of a finger from his left hand.

When Ray woke up in hospital, he felt for his shattered hand and assumed it was covered in bandages. At his bedside, his pregnant wife told him the extent of his injuries.

"You can close your eyes for minutes, hours or even days," said Ray. "But then you can open them again. We can never take the blindfold off."

Blindness, terrible though it is, is not the worst of it. For some, the loss of independence is the heaviest load to bear. The blind must re-learn how to live.

Ray had been the 2ic of an infantry company in the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment. A very independent man. Now he had to be shown where the toilet was.

Six weeks after the blast, he met some former soldiers from a place called St Dunstan's. "I heard laughter and chatter and wondered what they were on about," he said.

This was his first experience of St Dunstaners. Former prisoner-of-war Bill Slade survived a German firing squad. When an officer noticed he was still alive, he drew his pistol and shot Bill in the face. That's what blinded him.

"I was 28 and these men had been blind for 30 years," Ray said. "It was a total reversal of hope. That's when the tables began to turn. Thank God for St Dun-



Touch type: IT trainer Paul Roden, right, tutors former pilot officer Paul Francis. Computers have transformed opportunities by reading out loud what is on the screen. The software is excellent, but expensive at around £700

A vision thing

ST DUNSTAN'S was founded by Sir Arthur Pearson, a blind man with a vision. He was the publisher of the *Daily Express* and lost his sight in 1913. He believed the blind should lead independent, useful and satisfying lives. That was radical thinking. Before the First World War, people's attitude to the blind was sympathetic but blinkered.

If you lost your sight, it was terrible, but let's face it, you're probably not much good for anything, so best to stay hidden away.

But the numbers coming back from the trenches, blinded by gas and bombs, began to change the way people thought.

In March 1915 the first 16 blinded soldiers and sailors moved into St Dunstan's Villa in London's Regent's Park. By the time the First World War ended three years later, 1,500 war-blinded had passed through. They were trained in trades and skills and went on to pursue occupations such as massage, boot-repairing, poultry-farming, telephone switchboard operators and joinery. Others became civil servants, lawyers and academics.

stan's." Since its foundation, the organisation has helped some 7,000 blinded men and women. Many have also lost limbs or other senses and in some cases they have sustained crippling brain damage.

Eighteen people live permanently at St Dunstan's and current building work will provide another dozen beds. All of which



Sepia toned: Billy Baxter puts the finishing touches to a picture frame he crafted at the Ovingdean workshop. The photo shows his wife's great-great grandfather, who, like him, was in the Royal Horse Artillery

costs a great deal of money. St Dunstan's is a charity and has to raise every penny itself. That's £12 million a year or £50,000 a day – a hell of a lot of pennies. It gets nothing from the National Lottery, which turned down its application.

The need for such care is as acute today as it has been in the past. Three years ago,



One-third of St Dunstaners have lost their sight and suffered other injuries as a result of incidents since 1945. To continue with their work, the charity relies on donations (cheques can be made out to St Dunstan's). For further information contact Ray Hazan 020 7723 5021 or ray.hazan@st-dunstan.co.uk

Sea view: Ovingdean stands proud on the Sussex Downs. The sound of surf and seagulls mean visitors and residents don't have to be sighted to enjoy the location. Ray Hazan, inset, head of public relations for St Dunstan's, works to give the charity a high public profile

SSgt Billy Baxter, 1 RHA, was on a tour in Bosnia when he began to have problems with his right eye. Within a short time he had gone blind and was medically discharged. Even now the doctors are not sure what caused it.

"At the time I had no idea what St Dunstan's was," Billy said. "I thought it was the blue-rinse brigade offering tea and sympathy. But it was nothing like that, very different from what I was expecting. The kindness of all the staff was choking."

Learning to live again begins at St Dunstan's, Ovingdean – a purpose-built

centre near Brighton which offers training, rehabilitation, nursing, residential and holiday facilities.

Sport plays an important role in rehabilitation and also for the sheer fun of it. St Dunstaners take part in rock-climbing,

It was a total reversal of hope. Thank God for St Dunstan's

golf, archery, free-fall parachuting and athletics – there seem to be no limits. Billy, the former Royal Horse Artillery gunner, still enjoys a gallop along the

Sussex Downs. He is convinced the horse knows he is blind and looks out for him.

St Dunstaners live throughout the United Kingdom. Each area has its own welfare officer to look after their needs and those of their spouses, widows and widowers. There is a life-long commitment to care.

There's something else about St Dunstan's which can be felt as plainly as the handrails, braille and textured floor coverings at Ovingdean. This place is special. Anyone can see that.

● St Dunstaner PoW weds – Page 63

February 2001 **SOLDIER**

Keep it down . . .

Big guns make loud noises. On Salisbury Plain the Army is taking steps to make sure the neighbours are not disturbed

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

IT'S a lovely summer afternoon. Lunch has gone down particularly well and you are dozing off in the garden when the neighbours turn up their sound system.

Several of their friends arrive and what little remains of your tranquillity is shredded by shouting and laughter. Infuriating, isn't it? But suppose those neighbours had a battery of AS90s rather than an over-worked CD player.

Down on Salisbury Plain it is the Army who are the noisy neighbours. Ever mindful of its civic duty, however, steps are being taken to keep noise to a minimum. Lt Col Mike Comben RA, range safety officer at West-down Camp on Salisbury Plain Training Area, is the man on the hot spot.

His parish, spread over 94,000 acres and supporting 400,000 man-training days a year, is the largest, busiest, most diverse, and almost certainly the noisiest training area in the UK. Anyone who goes on to it – military or civilian – has to understand the rules and know where they can and can't go. Set up your picnic at the wrong spot on the wrong day and you could end up in the middle of a war.

"It is a beautiful area and it is right that people should want to come to the Plain. But they cannot be allowed free access," Lt Col Comben told *Soldier*.

As well as safety, he has to "manage" gunfire noise emanating from the Plain.

"This is, for want of a better term, a heavy weapons range, with AS90, mortars, explosives, rockets and aircraft in constant use.

"I can't make the guns any quieter. That is a fact of life." But Lt Col Comben acknowledges that the effect of gunfire noise on civilians living close to the training area is an ongoing problem and an emotive issue. So, by using computer technology, range controllers restrict the noise to an MoD-agreed limit of 130

decibels (dB). Beyond that the thunder of the guns may not go. To be able to prove that this level has not been breached, the controllers rely on a device called the Gunfire Noise Analysis Tool (GNAT).

GNAT is a CD ROM computer-based program which holds data for AS90s. When fully developed it will have profiles for explosives and mortars, MLRS and all the other things that make big bangs.

At the start of each training day the controllers switch on GNAT, enter the firing positions of the guns, the target area, the type of ammunition in use, and current weather data (updated every two hours).

The programme, which includes a digital map of the training area, produces a print-out of noise contours. These "sound maps" can be used as evidence to show precisely the noise levels on a given day.

GNAT allows the controllers to sample firing and detonation positions so they can anticipate a problem. If they identify an infringement, they stop the guns.

"We monitor throughout the day and are getting fewer complaints than we used to," said Lt Col Comben.

Every call is treated seriously. "People are reasonable if you explain things but some can be confrontational. We always try to remain polite."

A dedicated complaints line ensures the

public always gets a response, even after hours. Staff carry hand-held noise monitors in case they receive complaints from a particular hot-spot.

But let's not forget the range controllers have to meet units' training needs, which are usually planned months in advance. Last year more than 75,000 firings took place, so it's also an expensive business.

"Unless we are breaking the rules I am not going to stop firing on the strength of one phone call," said Lt Col Comben. I believe that when GNAT is fully developed complaints will continue to reduce significantly."

A murmur of guns, perhaps, rather than a roar. So enjoy that post-lunch nap.



Getting the picture: Lt Col Mike Comben checks out the noise contour lines prior to another day's firing on Salisbury Plain



Monitor: WO2 Les Fortey checks noise levels with a hand-held sound level meter



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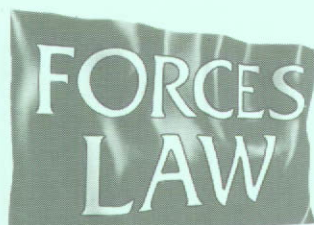
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Desert Storm: A Challenger 1 tank of The Queen's Royal Irish Hussars speeds over the arid terrain in preparation for the attack, while an MLRS missile launched by 39 Regiment RA soars into the sky

Recalling the Storm



It is ten years since Saddam Hussein promised the West the Mother of all Battles. Allied victory in the Gulf was finally achieved during 100 crowded hours of ground-force combat

**Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston
and Terry Champion**

ON August 2, 1990 the Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein ordered the invasion of Kuwait, a mission accomplished in just 24 hours with the loss of 200 Kuwaiti soldiers.

Saddam's battle-hardened army, which outnumbered Kuwait's by 50 to one, was soon on the border of neighbouring Saudi Arabia.

As the scale of the threat to this oil-rich state, so important to the industrialised West, became apparent, the USA and USSR, in an unprecedented show of

unity, joined the UN in condemning the invasion. Within days, President George Bush declared that US forces would deploy.

Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher was quick to lend Britain's support and by September 14 the Government had committed ground forces to the Coalition for Operation Granby. At very short notice, 7th Armoured Brigade left its home at Fallingbowl for Saudi Arabia.

By the start of the ground war in February, 42,000 British Service personnel were in place, with the Army element – the 1st (British) Armoured Division – under the command of Maj Gen Rupert

● **Turn to next page**

August

2: Iraqi forces invade Kuwait. UN Security Council passes Resolution 660 condemning the attack

3: Arab League condemns Iraq; 200 Egyptian soldiers go to Saudi Arabia's aid.

6: Sanctions imposed on Iraq; President Bush orders soldiers and aircraft to Saudi Arabia.

14: Saddam makes peace with Iran

21: Syria sends 1,200 soldiers to Saudi Arabia.

September

9: Bush and Gorbachev condemn Iraq and call for withdrawal.

October

21: Edward Heath negoti-

Diary of conflict

ates the release of 38 British hostages in Baghdad.

November

8: Bush announces the number of US troops in the Gulf is to be doubled to 430,000.

28: John Major becomes PM.

1991**January**

16-17: After weeks of negotiations, Operation Desert Storm begins with air attacks in Iraq.

29: Iraqi forces capture Khafji, a border town. It is liberated the following day.

February

24: Following more stalled talks, Operation Desert Sabre – the liberation of Kuwait and invasion of Iraq – begins.

25: Saddam orders his troops out of Kuwait after accepting a Soviet peace plan.

26: Peace plan rejected by Bush. Iraqi troops attacked by Coalition air strikes.

27: Allied soldiers take control of Kuwait City. Bush orders ceasefire after Iraq accepts UN resolutions regarding its invasion of Kuwait.

Recalling the Storm

● From Page 31

Smith. The supporting logistical exercise was remarkable, with RLC troops leading the way as hundreds of thousands of tons of stores, more than 100,000 tons of ammunition and 17,000 vehicles were moved into theatre.

On February 23, five weeks after Coalition air strikes against Iraq had

begun, the allied air forces mounted a huge attack on enemy ground assets. The following morning, at 0400, the ground war exploded.

Saddam had 42 divisions in Kuwait and estimates put his strength in theatre, including an adjoining area of Iraq, at half a million men.

Coalition armoured forces, with the 1st Armoured Division in the vanguard, sliced through a 10,000-strong Iraqi division and more than 40 tanks before joining the thrust to cut off the Republican Guard north of Kuwait.

Three hours ahead of schedule and in heavy rain, the 7th and 4th Armoured Brigades outflanked the Iraqi mechanised division west of Wadi al-Batin on the Iraq-Kuwait border.

The Staffords took 300 prisoners as they attacked Iraqi dugouts. The Royal Scots overran an artillery battery, capturing all its equipment. The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards took out two companies of tanks. Challenger tanks,



Capture: Iraqi prisoners are checked by soldiers from the Coldstream Guards before being transferred to a PoW camp

Into the breach

Soldier writer Bill Moore filed this report published in March 1991. It reflects the courage and dignity of British soldiers sent to the Gulf. Sadly, Bill died a few weeks later

From Bill Moore, in southern Iraq with 32 Armoured Engineer Regiment

I AM writing this in the crew compartment of the 432 of the regimental sergeant major of 32 Armoured Engineer Regiment. REME craftsmen are repairing the engine, so there is time to record the events of the past couple of days. The fall of Kuwait City is being reported and people are crowding round the transistor radio in the next vehicle.

The crump of heavy artillery indicates the gunners are not taking much notice of the rumour that peace is breaking out.

By the time this is printed, history will be taking a new path. As far as the British Army is concerned, little sign of its passage will remain on the surface of the desert.

True to its environmental conduct in Germany, litter is being automatically disposed of – a habit which does not seem to have caught on with some Allied units.

The BAOR way of life makes an impression. A captured Iraqi lieutenant stares at a fully-equipped and armed sapper carefully dropping a wrapper from a Mars bar into a rubbish pit and kicking sand over it.

He is clearly baffled by an army in which young troops show great discipline yet remain on good terms with NCOs and officers.

The lieutenant was the first of many prisoners we were to see, and in the eyes of all of them was the dark look of defeat, of misery, of being let down. They were wretchedly clothed and hungry... and Tom felt sorry for them.

"Here, have a fag," is his standard greeting.

Any Briton who has watched could feel only a deep pride in the behaviour of our soldiers. Personally there was a feeling of relief that they had been spared the blood-bath so many had forecast.

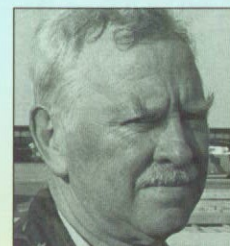
In retrospect, of course, the pundits will



Wagons roll: The move towards the dispersal point before crossing into Iraq as Coalition ground troops begin the big – and final – push

say it was obvious from the start that Saddam would crack. It wasn't a view shared by everyone.

It had rained during the night and the clouds were still low, and threatening. A student of military history could be excused for thinking of Flanders fields. At breakfast, though little was said as bacon grill and beans were consumed – "It's vehicle cooking from now on" – most people had "The Breach" in mind.



Bill Moore: swansong

That was what we were going to pass through to get into Iraq. A hole was to be made in the border defences and no one could really visualise what the defences would "really be like".

If anyone was going to find out it would be the Route Development Battle Group with its AVREs and their 165mm demolition guns, its Aardvark flails and Giant Vipers designed to blast a way through the minefields, and the bridgelayers with the ploughs to sweep the menace away.

No one was under any misapprehension about what might happen to them. Young

soldiers are supposed to believe it will only happen to their comrades, but the issue of morphine concentrates the mind remarkably.

First out of our location was "Reconnaissance" to establish the new position the regiment was to take up. Nineteen tracked vehicles, followed by fuel tankers, moved out in arrow formation.

It was 8.37am.

'The lieutenant was the first of many prisoners we were to see; in the eyes of all of them was the dark look of defeat'

In Lima One Two Bravo, the lead vehicle, the voice of RSM Bob Lisle, a Falklands veteran, came clear over the intercom as he gave orders to Cpl Matt Town, 19, an Oxford lad, who has lived in Wales for years. In "the back" was Sgt George Johnson, as good a Yorkshireman as ever came out of Sheffield, wearing his headset and cleaning his SMG while making predictions about the time Saddam would commit what was left of his air force.

G-Day, in a way, became a sort of George Day.

At 1010 the RSM announces that we have crossed into the disputed zone between Saudi and Iraq. George gives a mock scream of terror.

From the rear window I watch Spr Anthony Clifton-Brown bumping stiff-legged on his motor cycle. The desert despatch riders are a breed apart.

"I've only fallen into one trench today," he said during a pause.

The rain had ceased when we came to a halt and we found ourselves in rolling dunes with the recce vehicles of the 16th/5th Lancers on the ridge immediately ahead. Long columns of vehicles were motionless in the hazy sunshine.

Lorries began moving back on a parallel track. Someone said we were going to have to "bug out" quickly. Things had gone wrong. Had Saddam used his chemicals? There was a churning motion in at least one stomach.

Two huge hired container lorries appeared under US escort and rolled on forward. The RSM produced a bluey, sealed and addressed, which he had found in the middle of the desert and said he would post it... "when we get there".

● Turn to Page 35

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Just like the M25

● From Page 33

Where was "there"? Where the crumps were shaking the ground?

The RSM consults the RMP and announces that US troops are well inside Iraq. Our Arab Allies are advancing on Kuwait City and the Marines are too. Everything is being speeded up two hours. Move!

At noon Lima One Two Bravo halts and the Reconnaissance commanders confer. The RSM quotes a military policeman . . . "By the time you go through the breach it will be tarmacked with a McDonald's halfway along it."

That may be so, but why is the MLRS battery on our right blazing away?

The Recon commanders mark out the positions to be taken up by the squadrons of the regiment when they arrive, and the Ops officer, Maj Bob Tonkins, arrives and draws a situation map in the sand.

Instead of moving soon after 5am next morning we were at 15 minutes' notice.

During the afternoon the regiment's vehicles arrive, refuelling as they do so. The gun AVREs and the bridgelayers make a magnificent sight in the setting sun.

At 8pm WO2 Jack Frost of 31 Squadron reports 400 prisoners rounded up nearby, held temporarily in the confines of an earth berm and given enough UN Meals Ready to Eat to last them until morning.

There were problems, too. The hired transporters carrying the Flail Troop were stuck at the bottom of a hill, holding up the advance of part of 4th Armoured Brigade. The RSM visits the scene and finds Cpl Bob Alsopp towing up the laggards with his AVRE Centurion. Five had been moved and he was about to deal with the others.

The traffic speeds up, rear red lights snaking into the darkness.

"Like the M25 on a Friday night," says WO2 Don Peplow of MT.

Fearful crumps disturbed the night. The regiment slept in or beside its vehicles with strong winds rising. Incredible but true, the RSM pushes three mugs of tea into our tent at daybreak. He has already been up and about. George produces breakfast of a bacon roll and beans and points out that a Patriot battery has taken up a position covering the massive concentration of vehicles.

Ahead lay the breach with all its mysteries. At some point we put on our NBC suits and masks. More butterflies in our stomachs.

Weightlifter: A Sea Stallion helicopter, right, carries a CVRT from the QDG's exercising as part of the Coalition forces' deception plan

Breathing drill: Sgt Dave Chambers, below, dons a respirator during NBC drills with 7th Armoured Brigade



We advanced and made contact with a line of Challengers of the 14th/20th Hussars. At 1215 an "armour threat" is reported and Recon moves back to the regimental headquarters. Grenades are issued and we return to the line of tanks.

LCpl Town confirms that extra ammunition for the GPMG is on the roof and custard cream biscuits are handed round by the RSM. The 14th/20th Squadron moves purposefully over the hill and another takes its place, followed by recovery vehicles, massive machines that look like galleons without sails. We follow them into "The Breach".

We entered a gap in the frontier at about 2.45 and rattled steadily across an unrelieved plain. At one point it was reamed with shallow trenches and pockmarked with bomber holes. A wheelbarrow full of abandoned equipment stood on the side of the road. Otherwise, apart from one or two US vehicles, a rocket launcher ready to fire and a

Challenger guard tank, nothing.

As SSM Davy Quinn said in his clipped Scottish way afterwards: "What an anticlimax."

He was, of course, entitled to his opinion.

The Recon reports enable the wheeled vehicles to advance at speed and the regiment concentrated on Iraq for the first time to the sound of bomb and gunfire and with the horizon lit by flashes.

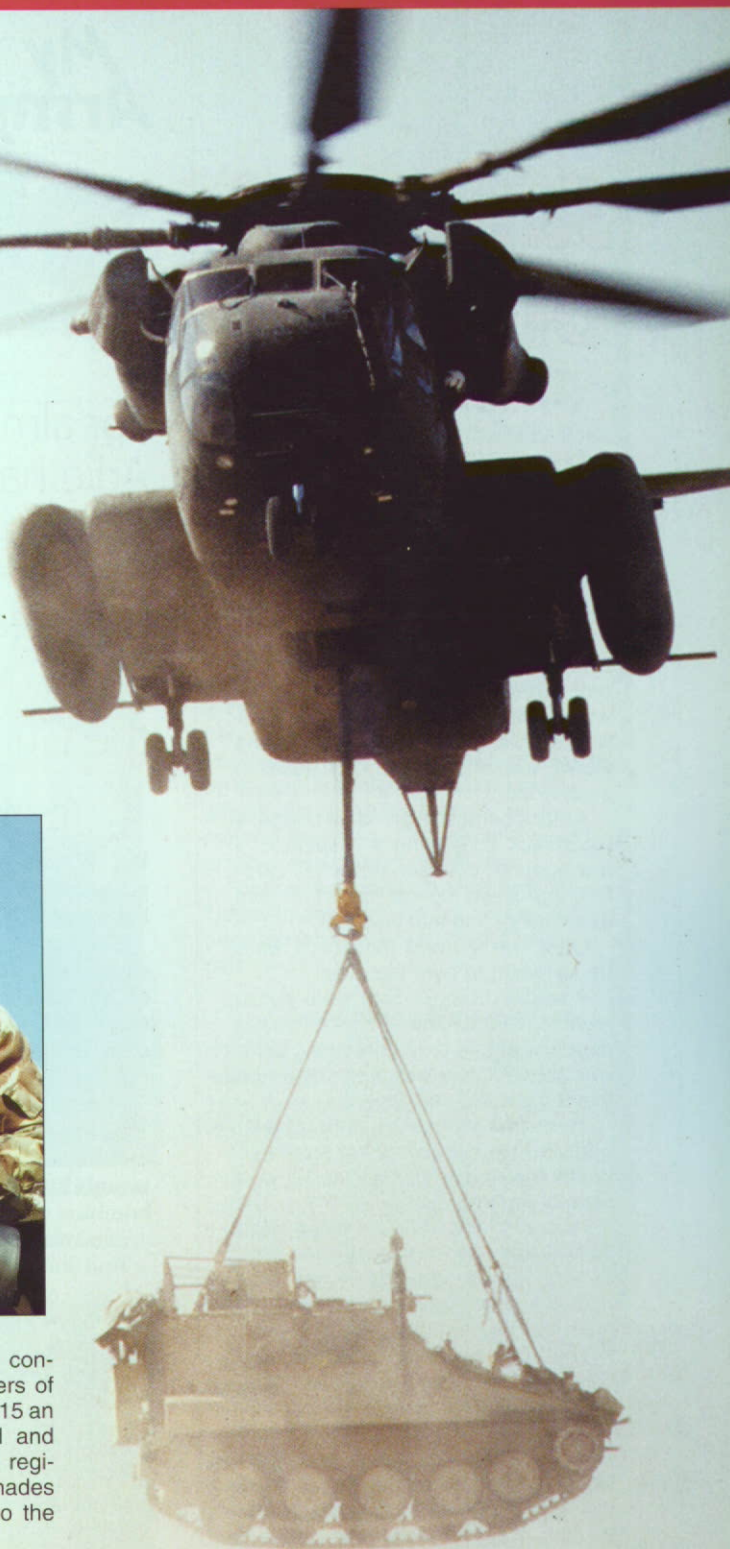
It rains heavily.

"It's getting good here," said George, crawling into the tent.

We saw the first Iraqi dead the next morning as we moved through a battered position. There were half a dozen bodies mangled by bomblets, with plenty of unexploded bomblets around them.

Later Sgt Dixie Dixon of 77 Sqn drove

● Turn to next page



Jam and biscuits

● From Page 35

back to check out the position and swung his GPMG to cover the area. It was then that the Iraqi lieutenant leapt up with his raised hands.

He was taken to SSM Ron Wrega's 432 for questioning, and earned a certain amount of admiration for devouring a tin of jam with a fork.

Given a seat on the engine louveres to thaw him out, he was brought to the regimental aid post 432, where he was examined before being thoroughly searched by SSM Alan Loy, of the REME workshops, who specialises in such work.

A black beret with an eagle badge, a haversack containing a respirator, a few hundred dinars in notes (all carefully parcelled up for return to him eventually), and that was that.

Later, we learned that there were Iraqis hiding all over the area.

A soldier from 37 Sqn went out at night to relieve himself, walked past a dugout and saw ten Iraqis sitting there who immediately put their hands on their heads. He sent for help.

Three more remained in an undamaged T-55 in full view of the squadron in the area until they decided it was safe to emerge.

I saw the tank when I accompanied SSM Quinn on a sweep which took us through Iraqi positions including dugouts, a radio mast and what must have been a barracks.

The bombers had done their work well. The buildings were wrecked, Russian armoured personnel carriers standing abandoned and pierced with splinters. The turret had been blown from one, which had burned out. But there were no signs of any bodies.

A lot of dead had been reported when the first troops went through, but they'd obviously been shamming.

Three of them were collected by the RSM and George the next day. They were carrying bags of what looked like acorns.

A prisoner-of-war cage was improvised with minefield marker poles and tapes. The occupants sat and munched Army biscuits quite happily while their transit was arranged.

From a distance came the noise of T-55s being blown up. For them, like the prisoners, the war was over.

Two days later the whole of 1st Armoured Division was north of Kuwait City and 32 Armd Engr Regt was tasked with clearing the massive amounts of battle debris.

My Army KATE ADIE

The time of my life

For almost 20 years, Kate Adie has been a familiar face on the BBC TV News, reporting from conflicts around the globe. Now she recalls the Gulf and other wars



Picture: Steve Dock

Interview: Ray Routledge

KATE Adie is one of the toughest, most forthright, experienced and certainly best-known reporters in British television news.

But beneath that no-nonsense, north-eastern exterior, there is a sparkling sense of humour, albeit black at times. And maybe that's just as well when you consider the trouble-spots she has visited and the carnage she has witnessed.

She reported on the bloodbath in Tiananmen Square, the tragedy of the Dunblane massacre, helped a sniper victim in Pristina, told of the Libyan bombing raid of 1986, the Bosnian war... and the conflict in the Gulf.

And she's seen the way the British mili-

tary deals with the media, starting from its low point during the Falklands War.

"Since then things have improved hugely," she said when she visited the *Soldier* offices.

"The Falklands were rock bottom when it came to media operations. The MoD's attitudes to the press, combined with the old-fashioned outlook of some of the military, and the political stance of Mrs Thatcher who had no intention of allowing modern communications to be used, made it a disaster for the media.

It was clear that someone was going to have to look after media-military relations.

"In the subsequent years a lot of good solid work was done so that by the time we came to the Gulf people had worked out how we were going to report it."

Yet despite the improvements in media relations, Kate recalled some problems.

"There was the usual tension about who was going to be in charge – MoD London or the people in the field. It took weeks to sort it out but eventually we had a group of 13 or 14 journalists in each brigade."

She remembers the time before the ground war with fondness.

"I had the time of my life. I never laughed so much. I think it was because the threat of chemical attack was very serious and concentrated the mind. We worked incredibly hard but life was terribly funny."

On the practical side Kate admits she had some problems. "I was handed a shovel by Col John King and expected to dig a trench in this hard, stony, gravelly ground. I dug the smallest trench you ever saw and I told everybody that I was going to crouch in it. The colonel told me the trench was pathetic, then offered an incentive – no trench, no lunch."

When the ground war started, Kate and her crew entered the fray in their TV truck



Picture: Mike Weston

Digging for victory: Kate works on her trench a few days before the big push into Kuwait

complete with its enormous satellite dish and although they were due to rendezvous with other wheeled vehicles, found themselves through the lines with "an enormous bloody tank" alongside.

"We just hurtled in. I remember the Iraqis kept trying to surrender to us and we kept shunting them on to unsuspecting people behind. We were moving forward just behind the tanks. And we went

‘My cameraman and I went into Kuwait with Gen Rupert Smith so we were one of the first crews in’

live on the satellite dish, which was a huge first for us because we were inside Iraq. The Americans didn't – they had no dish. CNN was nowhere.

"I then picked up a helicopter with my cameraman and went into Kuwait with Gen Rupert Smith, so we were one of the first crews in."

The ground war had lasted just 100 hours and many people at home were calling for it to continue on to Baghdad. Kate has her own views.

"In hindsight there was a feeling of

maybe continuing for one or two more days.

"But the suggestion that we should have gone on to Baghdad was unrealistic. We'd blown up most of the bridges and roads and we hadn't tackled Saddam Hussein's elite Revolutionary Guard. That would have resulted in high casualties and the Americans got cold feet at the thought of their boys in body bags. Added to that the Arab allies were already skittering away and finally there were political considerations.

"Yet there was a feeling that we should have done a bit more to blunt Saddam Hussein's military capability. To have cut him down to size."

Kate has been back to Kuwait several times and says it now has a different feel to it.

"It is a much more nervous society; the war destabilised it a lot. The Iraqi army still frightens the Kuwaitis and they still ask whether the British public will be in support when the British Army comes to defend them again. That is a big assumption, but we did it ten years ago."

She feels proud to have been part of the war.

"Fellow reporter Martin Bell and I both felt very privileged to be a part of it. It was an extraordinary time."

Kate recalls...

The Balkans

"It was a really nasty war and it was terrifying to see tanks and artillery in action in Europe.

"When the UN came along, the varying ability among the military forces was scandalously staggering.

"Later, with Nato, things evened out. It was a much more organised force, but even then the difference between the abilities of the various component forces was stark and the British beat most of them at it. The British knew what they were doing. They had the experience of Northern Ireland, they knew about the difficulties of dealing with a civilian population. And the ordinary soldier was much more confident. The corporals would deal with problems on the ground without referring to an officer. 'More trouble than it's worth, ma'am,' they'd say. There really wasn't another army that could do that.

"We have a thorough army and I'm hugely impressed. It's not perfect but it does the job better than most I have ever seen."

Tiananmen Square

"It is the only time I have ever seen the military move against its own people. They were unarmed and offering no resistance or confrontation.

"The military had been told there was a revolution going on and ordered to suppress it. They slaughtered people – it was terrible.

"I went into a hospital that night. It's the only time I have seen a room in which people were wading in blood.

They were flinging bodies off the tables because they reckoned they couldn't deal with them. Most had gunshot wounds and the medical staff were just trying to save some. There were heaps of bodies. Terrible."

Sierra Leone

"YOU are not dealing with a conventional army – you may be confronted by ten-year-olds with guns, who are high on cocoa paste or heroin or gin. That is not nice to face.

"And you are sometimes facing people who have been convinced by others that they cannot be killed, that they are invincible. It is something you have to learn to cope with and it is not easy for young soldiers.

"On one hand you have a local population in Freetown which is absolutely in awe of the British. Next to them you have a UN force – enough said."

The Army and the Media: "What is different now is that with the senior officers, very few of them are not clued up about the media. They know its importance, how it operates and what it's about. They do not muck around now. We have moved a long way in ten years."

Kate recalls...

Northern Ireland

"I WENT to Northern Ireland in the mid-70s with the BBC where I first saw the Army in action. We saw the Army as part of what was going on, just one part of it, and you didn't get close to it.

"Except I remember one occasion. There was a major wingding one night in which a lot of petrol bombs were coming over and the cameraman and I ended up lying in a gutter in a huge pool of water – it was raining – and a number of the locals were coming towards us. Suddenly I heard some shuffling behind me. There was someone in a beret lying next to me and in a completely cut-glass voice he said in the middle of this riot: 'Are you doing anything next Tuesday – we've got a bit of a do on at the mess.' I didn't think I was going to live until next Tuesday. 'If you can we'd be jolly pleased to see you.' He then shuffled off down the road and launched into an attack on the rioters.

"The Army is a very odd animal... and I never got to the do."

Two into one DOES go

We followed two recruits who made the transition from civilian to soldier as part of a radical training initiative at Catterick

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock
and Graham Crossland

NOW here's a daunting prospect. Facing you are 24 weeks of rather intense infantry training designed to turn you from a civilian into a professional soldier.

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Cautious optimist:
Maj Simon Ross

What's different is, with any luck, a seamless merging of phase one and two infantry soldier training in a new course designed to ensure a logical, progressive sequence of training.

"The two-phase system of infantry soldier training at an Army training regiment and the Infantry Training Centre historically resulted in wastage of trainees, sometimes as high as 40 per cent," said Maj Simon Ross, RGBW, from Catterick ITC.

"To counter this, we've developed the Combat Infantryman's Course (Single) - (CIC(S)) - to take potential

The course

Weeks 1-6 Teaching and developing individual skills including fieldcraft, fitness, drill and weapons

Weeks 7-21 Team and section skills, longer runs, heavier weights, patrols, recce, always pushing further and harder

Weeks 22-24 Battle Camp at Sennybridge and live firing

Pte Stiley said: "I wanted to join from school but never got around to it. After talking to the Army Careers Office in my home town of Bristol I signed on for four years. The trainers seemed to feel the course was successful and my parents think it's great."

He finished the course as winner of the

physical training trophy and particularly enjoyed the exercise phase at Sennybridge in Wales.

"The weather held up for us during the exercise and the live firing was excellent," he said.

Pte Apperley also thought the live-firing attack at Sennybridge was the highlight. "It was the best thing I have ever done in my life," he said.

Involvement by parents was a key element of the course and a great deal of effort went into showing them that the infantry offers their sons a good career. Mums and dads were given regular updates on their offspring's progress and a month into the course 350 family and friends attended an open day.

Many also turned out for the passing-out parade.

Mrs Linda Stiley, accompanied by husband Trevor, watched her son passing out. "I was so chuffed," she said.

"The concept

of the open days on the course is excellent, and helps the lads keep in touch with their families and friends. I was confident Ben would get through the course because he is level-headed and strong-minded and he loves the Army life."

As well as infantry training, the course offered recruits the chance to pick up additional qualifications. Ptes Stiley and Apperley earned the workplace development certificate, with Pte Apperley also gaining computer literacy and information technology qualifications and his colleague a key skills competence.

Maj Ross is cautiously optimistic. "Although it is unwise to draw conclusions so early in the trials, the CIC(S) appears to represent an improved method of training infantry soldiers, resulting in less wastage while continuing to send well-trained and motivated soldiers to regiments," he said.

A second trial course is now under way.



Chuffed to bits: Linda Stiley, centre, and the rest of the family travelled to Catterick to see Ben pass out as a soldier. She approved of the open days concept

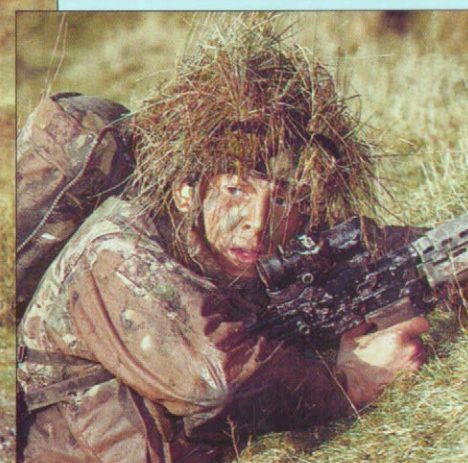


Action men: Ptes Apperley, centre, above, and Stiley, right, advance to contact during the live-firing exercise at Sennybridge

Family affair: Pte Alex Apperley is joined by his family, left, after the passing-out parade



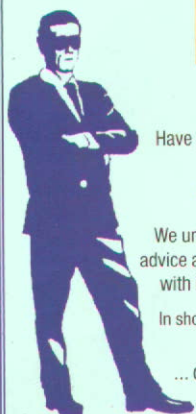
Sharp end: Ptes Apperley, above left, and Stiley, who were successful on the new Combat Infantryman's Course



Listen in: Pte Stiley, above, receives orders from his section commander during the Sennybridge exercise phase



For inspection: WO2 (CSM) Josh Giddins clears Pte Apperley's LSW



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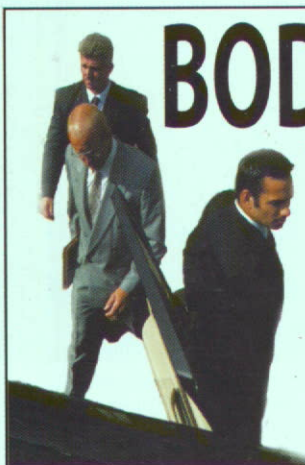
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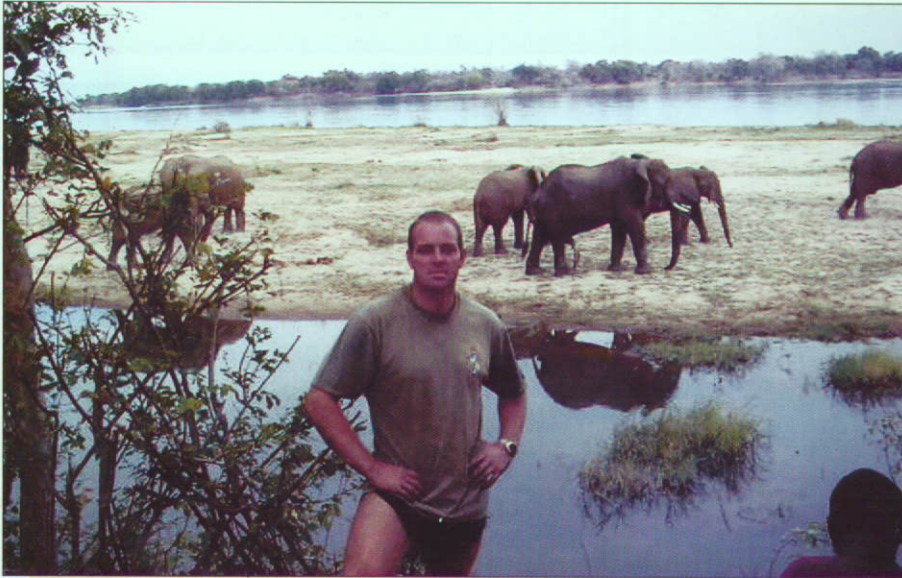
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Elephant man: WO2 Stuart Olden, pictured above, was among 15 Cyprus-based soldiers and airmen who flew to Africa to help the Zambian Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) in its battle against poaching.

Technicians from the Cyprus Engineering Unit spent two weeks repair-

ing 38 clapped-out and broken vehicles, two boats, 20 radios, 36 weapons and a vast amount of auxiliary equipment used by the wildlife authority, saving them a garage bill estimated at £100,000. That money will go towards saving elephant, black rhino, lion and leopard.

One "gang" spent hours clearing a ZAWA workshop at Chilanga of captured weapons, ivory, horns and skins before they could begin their task, while another group repaired vehicles in Mufuwe Nation Park, sharing their "garage" with more than 250 confiscated rhino skulls.

Catterick speedsters break world records

SOLDIERS from the **Infantry Training Centre Catterick** bettered the world military speed marching record while taking part in the Great North Run to raise money for the Guide Dogs for the Blind charity.

Carrying 40lb packs, four of the eight-man team broke away at the nine-mile point to set a time of 1hr 57min 12sec over the 13-mile course. The record-breakers were Cpl John West, Cpl John Dolman and Cpl Ian Bloomfield of The Parachute Regiment and Cpl Will McClelland, Hldrs.

The eighth man crossed the finish line in 2hr 8min 31sec to set a team world record. Their efforts pulled in £1,500, enough to train two dogs.

A year ago 50 soldiers from **The Royal Dragoon Guards** gave blood and put themselves on the Anthony Nolan Bone Marrow Register following a plea for help from the family of Nicola Coates, a York girl diagnosed with leukaemia.

The regiment moved from Tidworth to Münster, but kept in touch with Nicola and promised her a ride in a tank when she was better.

A match was found for her in America and, following a transplant last year, Nicola has made a promising recovery. She was well enough to spend four days as the guest of

the Münster-based regiment at their gunnery camp at Hohn.

Four members of **5th Regiment RA**, led by Sgt Mark Keller, collected £1,860 in towns in the North-East towards the £2.2 million Memorial Gates appeal to celebrate the contribution of soldiers from the Indian sub-continent, Africa and the Caribbean in two world wars. So far £1.8 million has been raised, planning permission for the gates on Constitution Hill, London, has been approved, and the project is on schedule to be completed by November.

To contact the appeal, ring Sophie Renton on 020 72409987.

Soldiers from the **9th Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment** ran from John o'Groat's to Land's End to raise £6,000 for charities in Lisburn, Antrim and Carrickfergus.



Tank girl: Nicola

Engineering Support Branch, HQ BRITFOR at Banja Luka challenged the rest of **1 Bn REME** deployed in Bosnia and the rear party in Osnabruck to row 100,000 metres in the shortest possible time for charity. The proceeds were split between Children in Need and local charities. ES Branch helped out a Banja Luka girl who needs constant medical care.

Flying high

The first in an occasional series looking at the unusual occupations of former soldiers. Trish Watkins is a commercial balloon pilot



WHEN it comes to man-made forms of transport, hot air balloons take some beating. They drift across the countryside with the grace and gentility of a bygone age.

One of Britain's most experienced balloon pilots is former Army captain Trish Watkins, writes Ray Routledge.

A freelance pilot, Trish works almost exclusively for Flying Pictures, the world's leading operator with more than 50 balloons based at Fairoaks Airfield, Chobham, Surrey.

She never imagined she would become a pilot in what is a male-dominated profession.

"I joined the Women's Royal Army Corps in 1977 on a short-service commission for three years . . . and stayed for eight," she recalled. Postings included the Queen's Division at Bassingbourn, HQ South East District at Aldershot, and Ayios Nicolaos in Cyprus.

On leaving she joined a ski tour operation before turning to ballooning. "I started in the crew, the person on the ground who helps to put it up and chase after it and pack it away. I did that for a year before starting to fly."

Trish, who lives in Wiltshire, qualified as a pilot, a process similar to that for fixed-wing aircraft, after taking exams in air law, physiology, navigation and meteorology.

She learned the business in a second-hand balloon that cost her £3,500 – a far cry from the distinctive corporate balloons she pilots today. They can cost as much as £70,000.

Although most of her work is in the UK, she has travelled all over Europe and parts of the Far East. She flies about 100 days a year.

Her work is seasonal, not because of the weather but because the events she covers, such as agricultural shows, take place in the summer.

"There is a lot more to corporate flying than meets the eye," she said. "We fly the press, photographers, and corporate customers and at big events we generate a lot of TV coverage."

Stunt flying is also an option and Trish's reputation for precision means her skills are in demand, not least by a stuntman whose daredevil exploits include tightrope-walking from balloon to balloon at several thousand feet.

"This is completely different from being in the Army," she says. "If you can imagine the regimentation of HM Forces . . . well, this is the opposite."

Picture courtesy of Flying Pictures

INTERVIEW: WO1 ALAN HIGGINS



Picture: Graeme Main

Life on the sidelines . . .

New coach gets to grips with football Army-style

By Andy Simms

"MANCHESTER United will stroll to the Premiership title this year.

"They are the best team in the world, they play the best football and have the best players. They get the ball, keep the ball and score goals."

Talking football with WO1 Alan Higgins (Royal Signals) is something of a one-way conversation. A season ticket-holder at Old Trafford, Higgins discusses the race for the Premiership title with an arrogance fuelled by a decade of success.

His taste-buds are seasoned by the sweet taste of victory and he expects nothing less – which is perhaps why he has been appointed Army football coach.

After spending two years as an assistant to WO1 Steve Cotter, 39-year-old Higgins took his place in the hotseat at the

start of the season and has lost just two games during his reign as number one.

True to his beloved Manchester United, there has also been no shortage of silverware. This season has already seen the Army regain the Grenadier Cup and Civil Service Cup – trophies that have been out of Army hands for two years.

And like his mentor Alex Ferguson, Higgins has his own treble in sight with the Inter-Services championship high on his hit list.

"Over a 15-year period I've played something like 148 games for the Army and so this job just seems like a natural progression," explained Higgins.

"Unfortunately the Army FA does not allow you to become a player-manager, you have to be either a player or staff. There is nothing like playing but this is the next best thing."

From making tackles to talking tactics has been a fairly easy transition for the experienced midfielder. "I have played Services football for so long that I know almost everyone there is to know in the game," he told *Soldier*.

"You can run any name past me and the chances are I've either played with them or against them at some point in my career. Picking my squad has been fairly straightforward."

As RSM of 30 Signal Regiment, Higgins is accustomed to issuing orders and concedes that he is also an autocratic leader when it comes to football.

"I do not have enough time with the players for anyone not to listen to my instructions."

"That said, I am fairly restrained on the touchline, which is something that I never thought I would be. I sometimes lose my rag at half-time but I'm not known for

I sometimes lose my rag at half-time but I'm not known for throwing tea-cups

throwing tea-cups. However, there have been times when if there had been one around I would have done.

"As a coach I would compare myself to Gordon Strachan of Coventry City – except he gets more agitated on the sideline than I do. If I get wound up I do it behind closed doors."

But despite his dream start to life in the dug-out, Higgins is finding that being Army coach is no bed of roses.

"It can be a frustrating job because of operations such as Kosovo, Bosnia and Sierra Leone," he said.

"I can have a good side available one week and in a fortnight's time it can be decimated due to operational commitments."

"You can't complain, you just have to make do with what is left. This is the reason why the Army cannot follow in the footsteps of organisations such as the Metropolitan Police and play in an organised league and national cup competitions."

FOOTBALL

BASKETBALL

Eye of the Tigers

Professionals aid Army's Warriors

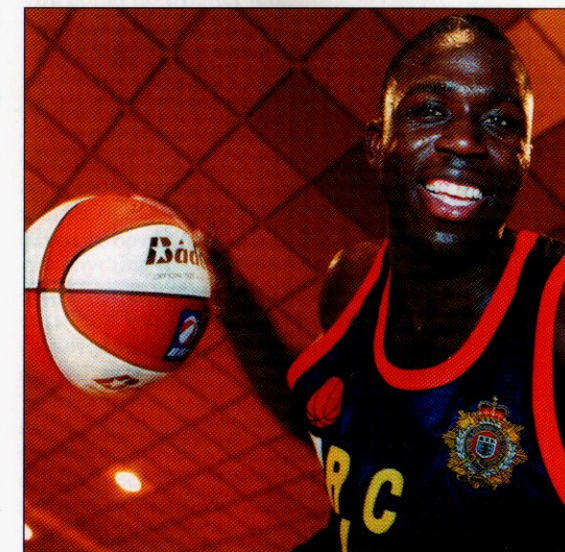
IN order to improve their chances of victory at next month's Inter-Services basketball championships the Army have enlisted the help of top British Basketball League outfit the Thames Valley Tigers.

Last year only the women's team returned from the Inter-Services bearing silverware as the Army's senior side – nicknamed the Warriors – and under 23s both losing out to the Royal Air Force.

Determined to ensure a clean sweep this time around, Army trainers Maj Tim Brown (RLC) and WO2 Johnno Johnston (APTC) have recruited the services of Tigers' coach Paul James.

The coaching trio will be putting the squads through rigorous training sessions prior to the competition, held on March 2-3 at HMS Drake, and Brown and Johnston will be hoping that James can apply the same Midas touch that has seen an upturn in the Tigers' form this season.

The Tigers, who play their home games at the Bracknell Sports and Leisure Centre but train at the Army's Maida Gymnasium in Aldershot, are currently



One to watch: New to the team this season, Pte Stedroy Perkins (7 Tpt Regt, RLC) will be hoping to make a big impression at the Inter-Services championships

flying high in the league and are through to the quarter-finals of the Uniball Trophy.

■ Anyone interested in following the progress of the Tigers this season can catch up with the club's latest news by visiting www.tvtigers.co.uk

Slammin' prizes

Your chance to see the Tigers in action

SOLDIER has joined forces with the Thames Valley Tigers to offer readers a fantastic give-away.

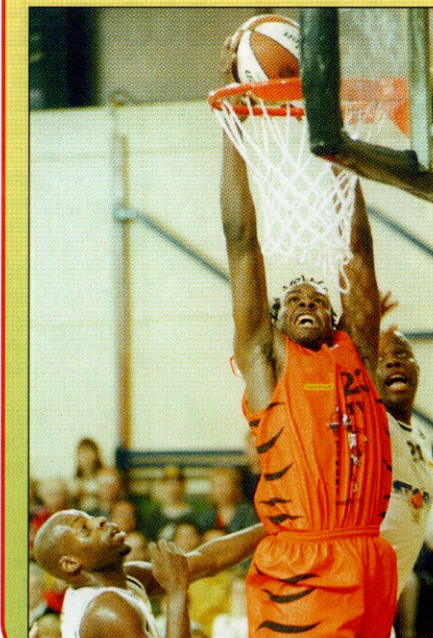
For your chance to win a family ticket to a Tigers game of your choice, plus a signed club vest and scarf, simply answer the following question:

Which venue is the home of the Thames Valley Tigers Basketball Club?

- a) Maida Gymnasium
- b) Bracknell Sports and Leisure Centre
- c) The London Arena

Send your answers on a postcard to Tigers Competition, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU.

The winner will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by March 1. Usual rules apply.



RUGBY LEAGUE

Britain's emerging stars

World Cup success for Army's top duo

AMATEUR players Cpl Lee Innes (RE) and Cpl Darrell Cooper, serving at SHAPE, will be hard-pushed to eclipse what they have already achieved in rugby league.

In the space of six months the pair progressed from playing rugby for the Army to lifting the Emerging Nations Rugby League World Cup with Great Britain and Ireland.

Their road to World Cup glory began when they were selected from Service players across the UK and Germany to represent the Naafi-sponsored Combined Services team.

Strong performances for the representative side did not go unnoticed and both Innes and Darrell were swiftly drafted into Great Britain and Ireland's World Cup squad.

The chosen two did not disappoint, giving their all throughout each of the preliminary games with Morocco and Japan and helping their side to a show-down with tournament favourites Italy in the final. Innes was not selected for the final itself but the consummate tackling of Cooper out on the wing was instrumental in the side's 20-14 victory.



World beaters: Cpl Lee Innes (RE), left, and Cpl Darrell Cooper hold aloft the World Cup

Cooper, who only recently made the switch from rugby union to rugby league, said: "I am absolutely delighted with our win and have thoroughly enjoyed playing in each game."

"I was surprised to have been chosen and it has been an exciting opportunity for me."

Combined Services rugby league secre-

tary Martin Coyd said: "I think this World Cup has more than proved that our amateur players are capable of holding their own against some of the best players in the world."

"It fully justifies the British Amateur Rugby League Association decision to open up selection to amateur players across the UK and Ireland."

Picture: Martin Coyd

KARATE



I'll be back: Gnr Collette Glynn (RA) intends to trade her bronze for a gold next time round

European defeat for top gunner

BRITISH karate champion Gnr Collette Glynn (103 Regiment, Royal Artillery (V)) has vowed to win back her European title after finishing third at the Shotokan championships in Switzerland.

Ranked number three in the world, the 29-year-old failed to emulate the form

that saw her crowned European champion last year and had to settle for bronze.

"I lost to the eventual champion, Belgian's number one," said Glynn. "All of the fights were very hard but I certainly learned some lessons and am determined to win back my title."

RESULTS SERVICE

CROSS-COUNTRY: A strong run from Great Britain international Sgt Alan Shepherd was not enough to secure 3 (CS) Medical Regiment the Major Unit title at the Army relay championships.

With a time of 13min 15sec, Shepherd was the first of the 258 competitors past the finish line but was denied team victory by 3 (CS) Regiment RLC. ASPT won the Minor Unit title.

FOOTBALL: The Combined Services began their season with the scalp of Ryman Premier League giants Aldershot Town.

A goal either side of half-time from CPO Nigel Thwaites (Royal Navy) and Cfn Craig Wall (Army) gave the Services a two-goal lead over the club hotly tipped for a return to the Football League.

Aldershot's Stafford Browne headed home on 85 minutes but his late effort proved nothing more than a consolation goal.

The Army continued in their rich vein of form with a 4-1 victory over the Civil Service at the Military Stadium. A brace from Sig Wes O'Connor and a goal apiece for Wall and LCpl Atkins gave the Army an unassailable lead.

ORIENTEERING: More than 25 teams battled for honours in 2000 Army Inter-Unit night ori-

enteering championships. Only 21 minutes separated the top five teams in the Major Unit category, with SEME just beating SEAE to the line for first place in a time of 3hr 11min 11sec. DMSTC hit form to take the Minor Unit title, finishing five minutes ahead of second-place JSCSC.

The women's competition was a close affair, with nine seconds the difference between winners AGCC and runners-up RMCS.

SQUASH: For the seventh consecutive year the RLC "A" team were crowned Inter-Corps squash champions. The loggies' route to the title included a crushing 135-9 victory against APTC "A".

Div one - 1, RLC A 95pts (champions); 2, REME A 73pts; 3, RE A 71pts; 4, APTC A 40pts; 5, AAC 31pts; 6, R Signals 28pts (relegated).

Div two - 1, Infantry A 103pts (promoted); 2, AGC A 103pts; 3, RLC B 102pts; 4, RA 66pts; 5, APTC B 53pts; 6, RE B 35pts (relegated); AMS withdrew (relegated).

Div three - 1, REME B 90pts (promoted); 2, RAC 67pts (promoted); 3, AGC B 63pts; 4, Infantry B 61pts; 5, Int Corps 32pts; 6, AWS 3pts.

SHORTS

Whistle while you work

EVER criticised a referee for a bad decision? Now is your chance to prove that you could do a better job.

A football referees' course for all serving personnel and dependants age 14 and over is being held in the Camberley area between February 26 and March 1.

For more information ring Mil 94240 2408.

Young guns triumphant

IF recent performances by the U21s side are anything to go by the future of Army rugby union looks to be in safe hands.

A 70-6 thrashing of the Royal Navy, followed by a 38-13 win over the Royal Air Force, ensured Army victory in the Inter-Services U21 championships.

Celebrations on ice

WELSH soldiers from 1st Battalion, Royal Regiment of Wales and The Queen's Dragoon Guards took first and third places at the Army novice bobsleigh championships in Winterberg, Germany.

Pte Richard Brock (1 RRW) and Tpr Martin Skinner (QDG) collected the champions trophy and 1 RRW's Lt Kevin Taffe and Pte Matthew Morris picked up the bronze medal.

Lt Richard Oakes and LCpl Steven O'Connell, both 1 KORBR, finished second.

The skeleton bob competition was won by LCpl Stu Hayden (17 Port and Maritime Regiment) and the luge title was captured by Fus Robert Gillon (RHF).

Air Corps in full flight

DEFENDING champions 8 R Irish were denied their second successive victory in the Northern Ireland Hockey Cup by 5 Regt AAC.

The airmen secured the provincial trophy and a place in the Army Cup UK with a 3-2 victory.

CONTACT US

WITH Wembley awaiting a much-needed face-lift, do you think that Cardiff's Millennium Stadium is the right choice of venue for this year's FA Cup final and Football League play-off's?

Soldier's sports desk welcomes your sports stories, results and opinions.

Write to: Andy Simms, Sports Editor, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU or e-mail him at asimms@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Acceptance or rejection of copy is the decision of the Sports Editor, who reserves the right to amend for length, clarity or style.

SAILING

Anchor up - next stop Buenos Aires



EXPERIENCED yachtsman Maj Nick Fenton has successfully completed the first leg of the BT Global Challenge.

Fenton, who is skippering the *Save the Children* yacht in the 30,000-mile race, arrived in Boston, left, with his crew and yacht unscathed despite severe weather conditions.

The 11 Global Challenge yachts all encountered fierce storms in an area off Newfoundland known as the Grand Banks, which provided the setting for last year's hit film, *The Perfect Storm*.

Winds of up to 77 knots battered the fleet and *Save the Children* - nicknamed Kids - was lucky to escape with knotted sails. Other crews were not so fortunate, with three knock-downs, two ripped sails and a dented dome reported.

During the leg, Kids recorded a maximum speed of 25.6 knots and, although hampered by conditions, remains with the leading pack going into the next stage - a 6,000 mile trip south to Buenos Aires.

Picture: Mark Pepper (Marinepics Ltd)

IN OFF THE POST ...

Women's right to fight sparks a war of words

AS a journalist who has made a special study of women's sports and achievements over the past 30 years, in particular boxing, I am writing to corroborate Jane Couch's comments in December's issue of *Soldier*.

In recent years there has been a world revolution in women's boxing, both at amateur and professional level, and it is now being canvassed as a possible Olympic event.

As well as Jane, Britain has another world professional women's champion in Michelle Sutcliffe. The very pretty, petite blond from Leeds is a skilled and courageous fighter.

As a mother of two, Michelle is an icon for the future and it is interesting to note that when she won her World

Maloney is an old stick-in-the-mud

Boxing Federation flyweight title last year, the two British Boxing Board of Control officials presiding said that her fight was the best of an otherwise all-male card.

Frank Maloney's negative comments on the issue prove that he is an old stick-in-the-mud. He should know that there are already three separate women's world sanctioning bodies for professional boxing, namely the Women's International Boxing Federation, the International Female Boxers' Association and the International Women's Boxing Federation.

Michele Aboro, the WIBF world junior flyweight champion, is joining up with Frank's brother Eugene Maloney. Being anti-women's boxing clearly does not run in the Maloney family.

I do not think that a serious injury to a woman boxer will set back the sport's progress any more than the tragic affair of Paul Ingle is likely to.

We were told that when female bodybags came back from the Gulf War that it would finish women's military service but that did not prove to be the case.

Modern society is sufficiently sophisticated to see these things in the correct perspective. Women are no longer to be treated as men's chattels, but as strong people in their own right. They now make their own choices. — **John Wilson, 1 Shenley Hill, Radlett, Herts, WD7 7AS.**

BOXING

Four-midable opponents

Army boxing team are simply the best

MODESTY is not a term often associated with champions of the ring, writes **Andy Simms**.

Indeed, there is a distinct lack of the virtue within boxing. The likes of Lennox Lewis, Naseem Hamed and the sport's greatest-ever talker, Muhammad Ali, have always told anyone willing to listen how theirs is a God-given talent and one that will make them a legend.

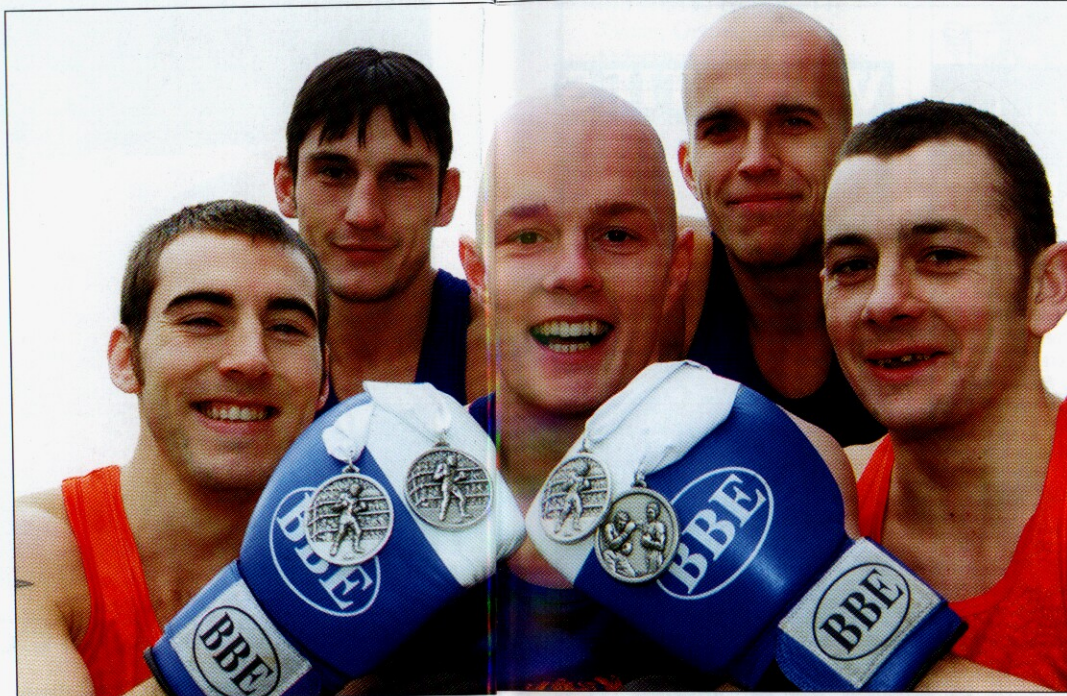
And when boxers do pause to catch breath their promoters — as prone to verbal diarrhoea as their stable of fighters — usually take over.

Such behaviour is not exclusive to the professional ranks. As the Army boxing coach, SSgt Neil McCallum, has made it his job to broadcast the talents of his team.

McCallum may lack the poetic prose of Ali and the eccentricity of Don King but his message is the same: "We are the best."

And like the aforementioned kings of the ring, McCallum's bravado is not unfounded — the Army team don't just talk the talk, they walk the walk.

With four of McCallum's six ABA



Don't medal with us: ABA Novice National finalists, left to right, Pte Aaron Bonnamy, LCpl Lee Morris, Gnr Alastair Morrison, LCpl Ian Dilkes and Pte Nigel Brett display the team's silverware

Novice National championship finalists picking up titles at Knottingley, the Army, on current form, are officially the best amateur boxing club in the country.

Bantamweight Pte Aaron Bonnamy (1 Para) began the team's title haul with victory over gritty Moss Side fighter Michael Rashid. Despite getting off to a slow start,

Bonnamy secured the first championship of his career with a unanimous points decision.

Emulating his team-mates success, Pte Nigel Brett (1 Para) cruised to the lightweight title, beating Dale Youth ABC's Kevin Elias 10-4.

Light-middleweight Gnr Alastair Morrison (29 Cdo RA) took the Army tally to three by demolishing Doncaster-based fighter Chris Farrow 18-4.

Cpl Jessie James (RE) disposed of his cruiserweight opponent in similar fashion, beating experienced southpaw Bruce Mankee 20-4.

Hopes of an Army clean-sweep evaporated when LCpl Ian Dilkes (RE) lost his light-heavyweight contest 6-3 and LCpl Lee Morris (RRF) lost the light-welterweight title by just one point.

"You have got to be delighted with four champions, especially when no other club in the country can boast anywhere near that," said McCallum.

"In truth, I probably expected all six of my men to become champions but anything can happen on the day — that is the nature of boxing."

'Leave boxing alone...'



Strong defence: Army boxing coach SSgt Neil McCallum (APTC) believes that boxing should remain unchanged despite the injuries sustained by his former England team-mate Paul Ingle

BOXING has found itself drinking in the last-chance saloon after featherweight Paul Ingle became the sport's seventh major casualty in the past ten years.

The Scarborough fighter collapsed in the Sheffield Arena ring last December seconds after the final bell of his IBF featherweight title clash with South Africa's Mbulelo Botile.

Ingle's injuries have prompted new calls for tighter controls on boxing but Army boxing coach SSgt Neil McCallum, who fought alongside Ingle for England during the early 1990s, is determined to fight his sport's corner.

"Since Michael Watson's accident in 1990 there have been stringent changes to boxing," he said. "All the necessary precautions are now taken and medical back-up is always on the scene. The sport has learned from past mistakes. If it hadn't

then the paramedics who saved Paul's life would not have even been at ringside.

"Talk of stopping punches to the head is ridiculous. Heading a football travelling at 80mph can be just as dangerous — what do you do if someone collapses in football... ban heading?"

"Over the past year there have been five fatalities from equestrian events and countless injuries in motor racing and yet nobody ever mentions introducing tighter controls on those sports.

"Paul is a lovely guy and one of the best boxers I've ever trained with. He is a dedicated professional and would agree with me when he does recover in saying that the sport should not be held to ransom because of this one tragic accident."

■ Ingle is reported to be making good progress at Sheffield's Royal Hallamshire Hospital.



Long road to recovery: Paul Ingle faces the biggest fight of his life after having a blood clot removed from his brain following his IBF featherweight title fight with South Africa's Mbulelo Botile

Picture: Graeme Main

FIXTURES

Your sporting guide to February ...

ATHLETICS: 24-25 — National cross-country championships (Durham).

BADMINTON: 19-23 — Army badminton championships.

BASKETBALL: 1 — 4 Div Inter-Unit basketball championships.

BOBSLEIGH: 1-4 — Army championships (Igls, Austria); 5-10 — Inter-Services championships (Igls, Austria).

BOXING: 8 — British Army (Germany) Minor Unit team finals.

CANOEING: 8-13 — Inter-Services championships (Dumfries).

EQUITATION: 10 — United Services point-to-point (Larkhill); 15 — RA Gold Cup (Sandown Park); 25 — RMAS hunter trial (Barossa).

FOOTBALL: 3 — Army v Cornwall (Away); 7 — Combined Services v Ryman (Aldershot); 10 — Youth v Somerset (Away); 14 — Women v Sussex (Away); 16 — Army v Met Police (Aldershot); 18 — Youth v Royal Navy (Aldershot); 21 — REME (Bordon); 20 — Army v Somerset (Aldershot); 21 — U21 v Hampshire (Away); 25 — Combined Services Youth v FA Colts (Aldershot); 28 — U21 v Wiltshire (Aldershot).

HOCKEY: 6 — Army v RMAS (Camberley); 13 — Army v Oxford University (Oxford); 21 — Army v Cambridge University (Milton Keynes); 24-24 — Army U23 v Wales U18 (Hermitage).

LAWN TENNIS: 2-4 — Army indoor championships (Aldershot); 10 — Army v Manydown (Aldershot); 24 — Combined Services v ICGB (TBC).

LUGE: 1-4 — Army championships (Igls, Austria).

MODERN PENTATHLON: 17-18 — Winter pentathlon series (RMAS); 24-25 — National tetrathlon championships (TBC).

ROWING: 3 — Henley fours head (London); 24 — Reading head (Reading).

RUGBY UNION: 7 — Army v Cambridge (Cambridge); 21 — Army v TBC (Aldershot).

SNOWBOARDING: 3-10 — Inter-Services championships (Megève, France).

SQUASH: 1-3 — Inter-Services championships (RAF); 8 — Army v Cannons Farnham (Aldershot), Cannon Trophy (Aldershot); 12 — Vets v Datchet 1 (Aldershot); 22 — Army v Camberley 1 (Away); 26 — Vets v Greenacre 2 (Away); 28 — Army A v RAF B (RAF Halton).

TARGET SHOOTING: 9-10 — British air-rifle championships (Aldersley); 16-18 — British air-pistol championships (Aldersley).

TENNIS & RACKETS: 4 — Army v Cranford (Away); 14-18 — Combined Services championships (Queen's).

WINTER SPORTS: 1-8 — Alpine Army championships (Serre Chevalier, France), Nordic Army/National/Inter-Services championships (Ruhpolding, Germany); 1 — Cresta Inter-Services championships (St Moritz, France); 3-10 — Alpine Inter-Services championships (Megève, France); 3-4 — Ski-bike Inter-Services championships and British National championships (Klingenthal, Germany); 25-Mar 3 — Alpine Army Scottish championships (Cairngorms).

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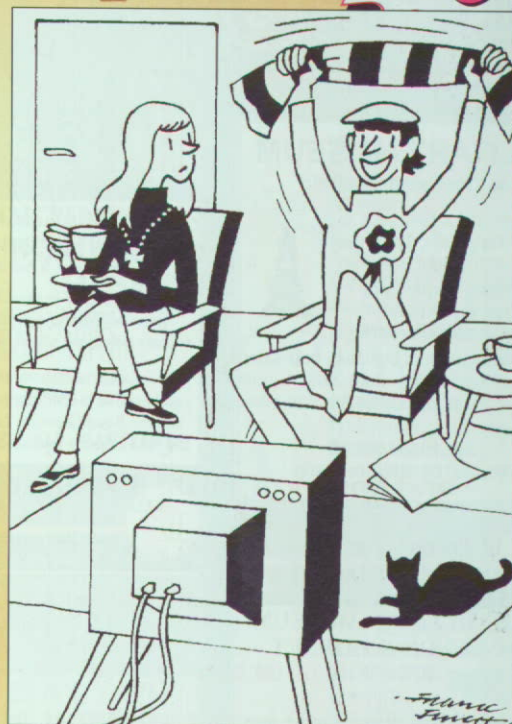
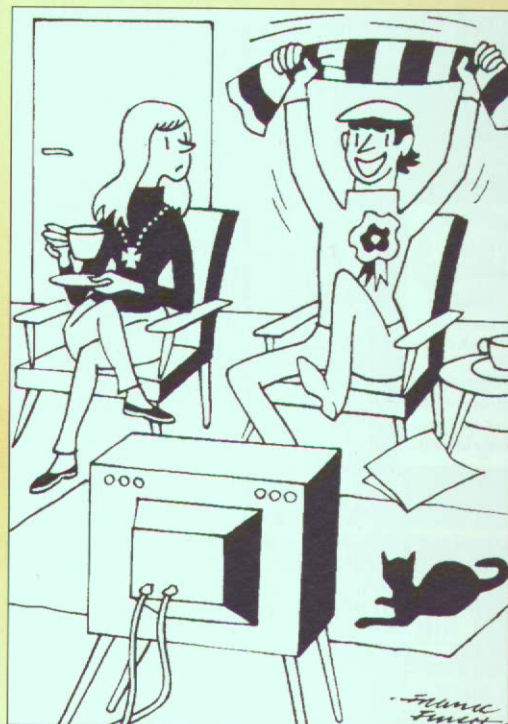
Frank Finch has made ten changes in detail to one of his drawings taken from our archive. Circle the differences in the lower image, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send to HOAY 711, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2DU by March 2.

A photocopy is acceptable, but only one entry per person may be submitted.

Do not include anything else in your envelope.

First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £10 gift vouchers. No correspondence of any kind can be entered into.

The names of the winner and runners-up will be announced in the April issue.



Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

December 2001 (No 709): First correct entry drawn was from Mr D Barton, of Edinburgh, who wins £100. Runners-up Sgt P L Speake, RLC, Cawdor Barracks, Haverfordwest and Mr D O'Brien, of Church Crookham, Hants, each receive a £10 voucher. The ten differences were: Hood on light; snow plough; chassis under driver; coal; carriage coupling; wheel; waving hand; cow's tail and markings; road under viaduct.



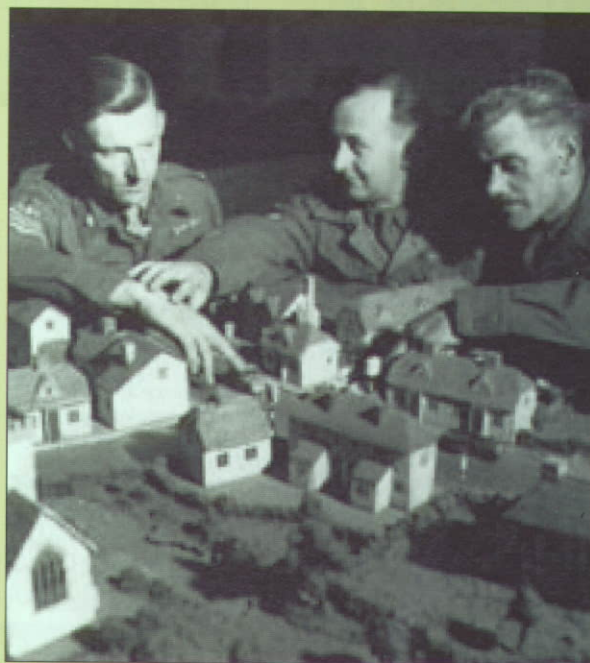
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"I'm as hetero as the next bloke, Sarge, but has anyone told you that you've got lovely soft skin"

Write your own funny caption for the photograph, right, first published in *Soldier* in August 1950. The best, in the opinion of the Editor, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply and entries should reach us by March 1.

Winner of the December competition (right) is WO2 G Bates, 216 T/T Tpt Sqn RLC, Tynemouth, with "You put your left arm in, your left arm out, do the Hokey Cokey and turn about".

There were good tries from LCpl Sarah Gartell, 35 HQ Sqn, 3 CS Regt RLC ("On your marks...") and Julie Boyd of Old Windsor, Berks ("We seem to have a blanket finish here at Royal Ascot in the fillies' race").



Regimental museum guide 2001



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The Essex Regiment Museum

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Email: pompadour@chelmsfordbc.gov.uk

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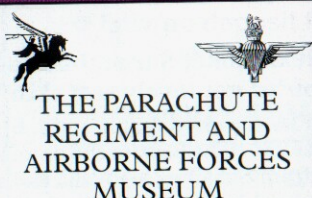
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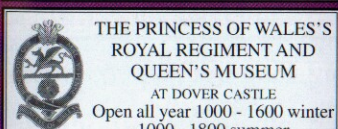


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Sussex Combined Services Museum, The Redoubt Fort, Royal Parade, Eastbourne BN22 7AQ Tel: 01323 410300

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For further information phone: Major P J Timmons 020 7414 8782 Website: www.eastbournemuseums.co.uk



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1 NOV - 30 NOV Mon-Fri: 10am-4.30pm (Sat & Sun closed).

Open at other times by appointment. Closed 1 DEC - 31 JAN

See our regular feature - Page 63



Cornwall:
Military Museum, at The Keep, Bodmin



Dorset:
The Military Museum of Devon & Dorset



Essex:
The Essex Regiment Museum



Channel Islands:
Museum of the Royal Guernsey Militia



Hampshire:
Winchester's 5 Military Museums: The King's Royal Hussars, The Light Infantry, The Gurkha Museum, The Royal Green Jackets & The Royal Hampshire Regiment.

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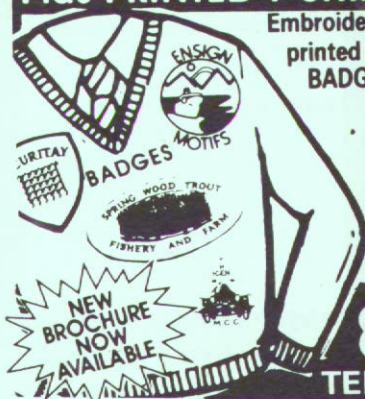
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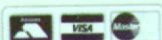
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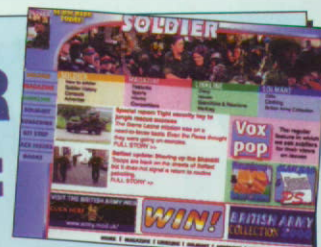


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Linda, 33-year-old, 5'10", slim build with long brown hair. Enjoys going to concerts, cinema, eating out, clubbing and pubs. Seeking pen pals 25-35. P820

Karen, 33-year-old, 5'5", blue eyes, medium build. Likes going to pubs and the cinema and enjoys watching football, walking her dog, music, reading and having fun. Would like to hear from anyone with similar interests, 27-40. P821

Paulette, 5'4" slim blonde, hobbies include DIY, gardening and dancing. Enjoys holidays in Greece, swimming, TV and pop music. Would like to write to 5'10" pen pals, 30-40. P822

Jill, 30-year-old, 5ft, with brown eyes. Enjoys walking, reading, watching videos, cinema and a fun night out. Seeking pen pals 25-35. P823

Mike, 24-year-old, tall, dark hair with brown eyes and a medium build. Enjoys the outdoors, going to the cinema, nights on the town and eating out or quite nights in. GSOH, looking to broaden his horizons. Would love to correspond with someone interesting with a sense of humour and a heartbeat, 22-27. P824

Shirley, 46-year-old, petite with light brown hair. Enjoys the theatre and cinema, writing, walking dogs, eating out and crosswords. Genuine replies only, 40-50. P825

Frank, 32-year-old, 6'1", very fit, ex-army, GSOH. Enjoys rugby, hiking, bodybuilding, drinking and laughs. Would like to correspond with male pen pals, 21-35. P826

Berkeley, 33-year-old male, who enjoys cooking, clubbing, friends and the gym. Would like to correspond with male pen pals. P827

Angela, 29-year-old, 5'2", brown eyes, short dark hair with a medium build. Hobbies include listening to music, going to the gym, reading, going out with friends, clubbing, cinema and watching telly. She is currently a student nurse and has a degree in psychology, but don't let that put you off Seeking pen pals. P828

Denise, 45-year-old, 5ft, blue eyes with light brown hair. Enjoys horse riding, archery, the gym and ten mile walks. Interests include watching motorcycling, Formula 1 and football. Seeking honest pen pals, similar interests with GSOH, who are fun to be with. P829

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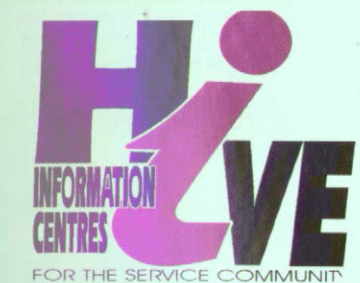
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ARMY SPORTS LOTTERY RESULTS

DECEMBER 16, 2000

6-way tie for first prize (22 goals, £2,133.33 each): Fus AM Dunt, 1 RWF, Tern Hill; LCpl TTD Frew, 4 GS Med Regt, Aldershot; WO2 D McGuckin, 8 R Irish, Armagh; Spr GJ Porter, 42 Svy Engr GP, Hermitage; WO2 JR Thomas, Royal School of Signals, Blandford; LCpl I Young, 2 RRF, Cell.

Note: Only 6 prizes this week. Rule 9 applies.

DECEMBER 23, 2000

5-way tie for first prize (20 goals, £2,200 each): SSgt LM Camley, ITC Catterick; Tpr JK Charles, QDG, Catterick; Sgt SM Crowhurst, 14 Indep Topo Sqn RE, Mönchengladbach; Cpl JA Grouse, Falkland Islands Log Unit; WO2 AC Stewart, RM Plymouth.

40-way tie for sixth prize (19 goals, £45 each): Capt KL Atkinson, 13 Cadet Trg Team, Grantham; LCpl RB Newman, 2 CS Regt RLC, Gütersloh; WO2 DJ Barbour, 24 Regt RA, Larkhill; WO2 PP O'Donnell, QDG, Catterick; Capt TJ Bateman, SCOTS DG, Fallingb.; Sgt AD Quinn, 1 CS Med Regt, Münster; SSgt AJ Bone, 32 Engr Regt, Hohn; SSgt J Richardson, 6 Sup Regt RLC, Dülmen; Cpl W Bragger, RAC Centre, Bovington; Capt CF Rolfe, 33 Eng Regt (EOD), Wimbish; Maj TA Dean, 21 Signal Regt (AS), Colerme; SSgt A

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LCpl PJ Upfold, 2 PWRR, Aldershot; Cpl JD Hunter, 2 RTR, Fallingb.; Gdfsm A Vakacokovanwa, 1 SG, London; SSgt CT Ireland, APC, Glasgow; Sgt AJ Wicks, MPGS, Didcot; Maj TN Jobbins, DPA, Abbey Wood; LCpl C Williams, 1 RWF, Tern Hill; SSgt GA Kristensen, SEAE, Arborfield; Pte A Williams, 1 GS Regt RLC, Gütersloh; Sgt C Magin, MOD, London; Sgt KR Woodray, COMMCEEN Osnabrück; Cpl CD Maw, QRRH, Sennelager; Capt PB Youngman, HQ 1 (UK) Armd Div, Herford; Cpl MP McChesney, HQ Brunel Garrison; Sgt RW McTavish, 51 Highland Regt, Peterhead.

DECEMBER 30, 2000

9-way tie for first prize (23 goals, £1,422.22 each): Gnr M Clark, 22 Regt RA, Kirtom in Lindsey; Sgt I Coles, QDG, Catterick; WO2 MJ Davey, SEAE, Arborfield; Capt AG Grinonneau, HQ Inf, Warminster; Sgt IT Heeney, LD, Swanton Morley; WO2 D Macdonald, 1 Regt AAC, Gütersloh; LCpl JC Mann, 1 Cheshire, Dhekelia; Gdsm SR Stuart, 1 Coldm Gds, Windsor; Pte GD Wakefield, 3 CS Regt RLC, Abingdon.

Note: Only 9 prizes this week. Rule 9 applies.

January 6, 2000

2-way tie for first prize (24 goals, £3,550 each): Cpl BJ Darbyshire, 3 RHA, Hohn; Cpl T Meek, 1 BW, Fallingb.

8-way tie for third prize (23 goals, £762.50 each): Sgt A Barratt, 1 DWR, Osnabrück; Sgt I Bricheno, AFOC Exeter; Sgt SJ Carroll, Lisburn Station LAD; Capt AN Field, 2 LI, Bulford; WO2 PJ Linehan, DLO Andover; Cpl DM Matthews, 1 RWF, Tern Hill; LBdr WT Ramshaw, 16 Regt RA, Woolwich; Tregower, HQ Land, Wilton.

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MUSIC/Gordon Turner

At long last, a Kneller concert on disc



DESPITE the excellent schools of music run by the Royal Marines and the Royal Air Force, Kneller Hall is universally considered the home of British military music. Soon after it was established in 1857, public concerts began there and for more than 100 years there has been a summer concert season.

Surprisingly, although there have been occasional televised performances, the concerts have never been recorded on disc.

This omission has now been rectified, and the final concert of the 2000 summer season, at which the Band of the Royal Regiment of Artillery and the Band of the Army Air Corps massed with the School of Music Band, is available on the

Soundline label – **Kneller Hall Live** (SLB 4004).

The programme includes *The Thieving Magpie Overture*, a *My Fair Lady* selection, *Rhapsody in Blue*, *Helter Skelter* (xylophone), *Old Comrades* and the *1812 Overture*, the latter complete with pyrotechnics. The sound quality is commendable, but this is still an outdoor recording and a compromise between atmosphere and sound is inevitable. Available from the PRI, RMSM, Kneller Hall, Twickenham, Middx TW2 7DU, price £12.

The Army Air Corps Band has recorded a collection of marches, most of which are extremely well known although the titles may not always be so familiar.

Included are three Sousa marches, together with the ubiquitous *Those Magnificent Men in their Flying Machines*, *Sons of the Brave* (march of The Duke of York's School), *Marche des Parachutistes Belges* (the official SAS march), *Century of Progress*, *Out of the Blue* (the old *Sports Report* signature), *Westland* (composed by Capt Peter Clark, Director of Music) and several others. **Marching With The Army Air Corps** is available on AVID Records (AVC 699).

The Band of the Corps of Royal Engineers has chosen a slightly unusual programme for its latest CD. There are two fine marches by the late Major Alf Young (better known as Earl Brigham), Fenby's overture *Rossini on Ilkla Moor*, tributes to Abba, Count Basie and Elton John and that wonderful tune poem *Finlandia*. The solo items are *The Flower Duet* (flutes), *Tubadour* (tuba), *Slaughter on Tenth Avenue* (piano) and *Theme from Schindler's List* (violin). **Bandstand Favourites** (TRCD 203) is available from DROIT Music Ltd, PO Box 2638, Eastbourne, BN20 7HJ. Price £12 includes p&p.

If you have difficulty obtaining recordings or any queries on military music, please write to me c/o *Soldier*.

You can help the victims of crime

'After the assault I just wanted to hide away. I spent more and more time behind closed doors'

'After the Victim Support people contacted me I felt a lot better. It really mattered that someone took it seriously'

SSAFA Forces Help needs volunteers for a scheme which offers support, information and help to victims of crime in Western Europe.

The free, confidential and non-military Victim Support service, which is affiliated to similar UK schemes, was set up following an approach by the Royal Military Police. Referrals are made by the RMP or RAF Police while visiting individuals or families affected by crime.

Twenty-six trained volunteers – many of them Service dependants – man a central

telephone line. Regular training courses at JHQ Germany cover the impact of crime, domestic violence, visiting and confidentiality. Slightly more advanced training, also at the headquarters, takes in harassment, discrimination, bullying and going to court.

If you want to know more about the scheme, contact Janice Lightowler, the Victim Support and Witness Service Co-ordinator at HQ SSAFA Forces Help WE, BFPO 140 or tel 0049 2161 47 2272 from outside Germany, or 02161 47 2272 in Germany.

SEARCHLINE

To help former gunners reunite, Peter Walduck and Phil Large (ex-129 Bty, 49 Regt RA) have started the **Friends List of the Royal Artillery and 129 (Dragon) Battery Old Comrades Association**. More details from Peter at 21 Ashfield Grove, Bletchley MK2 2RG (please enclose sae).

Old mates of former Cpl **Ronald Marriott, Royal Sussex Regt**, Minden, Germany (1954-56), particularly **Joe Borda**, sought. Contact Chris Sims 01323 738824.

Ex-students and staff of **St George's British Forces School, Hong Kong**, which closed in 1996, are invited to track down old friends or colleagues, swap memories on the website at www.saintgeorges-hk.com

HQ 7th Armoured Brigade is planning a tour of battlefields in the Hohn area over the period April 2-6 and wishes to hear from veterans of 11 and 7 Armd Divs and 15 (Scottish) Div, particularly those who fought at **Winsen Aller**, **Ostenholz** and **Soltau/Fallingbommel** toward the end of the

TA sergeant serving with 116 Provost Company RMP (V) seeks funny stories, personal anecdotes of Army life to include in book of military humour. E-mails to gelund247@aol.com

war. It is hoped they will take part in the tour and recount experiences. Contact Capt. S J Thomas, Int Corps, HQ 7 Armd Bde, BFPO 30.

Former RMP is searching for **ex-PoWs** captured at fall of **Hong Kong** and used as **slave labour** in Japan, particularly anyone who has information about his father, **LCpl Harold Bushell**, who ended up at **Osaka** working in a mine. Also would like to hear of any records or accounts of Hong Kong PoWs. Contact Tony Bushell, Broadgate, Hillside Road, Leighton Buzzard, LU7 8BU.

Tony Reedman, who was on board, would like to hear from anyone else with memories of the remarkable voyage of **HMT Empire Test to Mombasa** (Nov 1949). Ring 01562 822110 or e-mail Tonyreedman@btinternet.com

Fusiliers' Museum, Bury seeks **Second World War** material about **Salford Battalions** of Lancashire Fusiliers. Photos, postcards and documents will be photocopied and returned. Contact Roger Dowson or Neil Drum, c/o RRF (Lancs) Museum Archive, Wellington Barracks, Bury BL8 2PL.

Useful numbers

Army Benevolent Fund 020 7591 2000
Army Families Advice Bureau 01722 436569
Army Welfare Service 01722 436565
Army Families Federation 01980 615525
British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association 020 8590 1124
Confidential support lines:
 UK 0800 731 4880
 Germany 0800 1827 395
 Cyprus 080 91065
 Bosnia 0800 731 4880
 Others UK 1980 630854

Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress) 020 8543 6333
Family Escort Service UK 020 7463 9249; Germany JHQ Mil 2272 or 02161 472272
Gulf Families Association 0121 711 3028
Gulf Veterans Association 0191 230 1065
Joint Service Housing Advice Office 01722 436575
National Gulf Veterans and Families Association 01482 833812
Regular Forces Employment Association 0207 321 2011
RBL's Legionline 0345 725 725

A legend in his own lunchtime

Sgt Jimmy Maley, probably the longest-serving chef in the British Army, has had a military mess named in his honour to mark his 43 years with the same sub-unit.

Jimmy, who retired from the Territorial Army in October at the age of 63, joined 530 Company RASC as a cook on September 4, 1958. He witnessed the re-badging of the RASC to the Royal Corps of Transport with 530 Squadron, and remained with Glasgow-based 221 Transport Squadron when the RCT became the Royal Logistic Corps in 1992.

An immensely hard-working and popular character, Jimmy's reputation will be perpetuated by the Maley's Mess bronze plaque unveiled in the junior ranks' mess by 51 Highland Brigade commander Brig Simon Allen.

Once asked by a visiting dignitary what sort of cheese he had used in preparing a



particularly tasty dish, Jimmy responded with "grated", an answer that went down in squadron folklore.

He was not able, however, to fulfil one ambition. Due to current policy on over-age re-engagements, Sgt Maley failed to record his burning ambition to become the first TA soldier to be in possession of

an MoD 90 and the concessionary bus pass given to old age pensioners.

After being dined out in style, he was towed through the squadron in a 1954 Austin Champ.

Jimmy's son, LCpl Charlie Maley, is following in his father's footsteps by training with 221 Squadron.

REUNIONS

APTC Association SW Branch: Reunion to be held Feb 2 at The Gables, Falfield, Gloucestershire. All association members and guests invited. Details from Bob Marshall on 01747 860207.

39 Armoured Engineer Squadron is holding a reformation parade on Feb 8. Ex-members welcome at parade and informal function to follow; accommodation provided. Details and application forms from WO2 (SSM) Eddie Thompson, 39 Armd Engr Sqn, 32 Engr Regt, BFPO 30 (Hohne Mil (94877) 2789).

Nil Desperandum 2001 – 5 Field Squadron RE: Reunion for serving and non-serving former members to be held March 10 at Swinton Barracks, Perham Down. Proformas from WO2 (SSM) G Irvine RE, 5 Fd Sqn RE, 22 Engr Regt, Swinton Bks, Perham Down, Tidworth, Hants, SP11 9QL (01980 603552; mil: 94342 3552).

REME metalsmiths: A reunion is to take place for all true artisans on Mar 10 at the SEME Sergeants' Mess. All SNCOs, past and present are invited to attend. Contact SSgt Carl Jones on (civ) 01420 485626 or (mil) 94291 5626.

Queen's Own Yeomanry: 30th anniversary April 1. All ranks past and present dinner night hosted by D Sqn (Northumberland Hussars) on March 31 at RHQ, Fenham Barracks, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Details from WO2 (SSMV) Len Harbottle on 0191 2342294 (pm), e-mail harbottle@tinyworld.co.uk, or at the TAC Tuesday evenings and most weekends on 0191 2393127.

260 Signal Squadron SAM: Royal Signals Association reunion April 27-28 at County Hotel, Southend. Contact RF Andrews, 7 The Heath, South Tankerton, Whitstable, Kent CT5 3HJ (01227 264551).

1, 4 and 7 Royal Tank Regiment: Annual reunion at St John's Swallow Hotel, Solihull, May 4-6. Former RTR, REME or attached

personnel welcome. Contact Roger Rathmell on 01752 893495 or Geoff Bourne on 01752 880527.

12/15/18 Air Formation Signal Regiments Association: Reunion May 12 at Stoke-on-Trent. Past members of these and sister AF units and CASFO staff who served in UK, Europe or Middle East welcome. Membership and other details from Colin Morgan on 01554 774638.

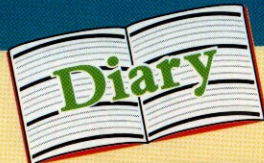
Combined Ex-Services Association: 20th annual reunion weekend, June 15-17, in Bridlington. Ring 01262 673101. Standard bearers welcome.

43 Battery (Lloyds Company) RA: Ex-members invited to reunion weekend June 15-17 at Thorney Island, near Portsmouth. Contact WO2 (BSM) Tim Mayers on 01243 38 8227 or Sgt Fred Perry on 079 804 37649.

Intake 3/78 Army Apprentices College (1978-80): Reunion planned for on or around Sept 12. Past and present members of intake should contact WO1 Ian Cheeseman, DCWO, Log Sp Br, HQ Armd Div, BFPO 15 (Mil: 94882 3262; civ: 0049 05221 289829) or WO1 Steve Gooder FSWO(S), Log Sp Br, HQ 145 (HC) Bde, Cavans Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2LQ (Mil: 94222 2720; civ 01252 347720).

Infantry Boys/Junior Leaders' Bn: Annual reunion Oct 13 at Royal Rifle Volunteers Trg Centre, Milton Keynes. Former boys/junior leaders who served at **Tuxford**, **Harrogate**, **Plymouth**, **Oswestry** or **Shorncliffe** early 1950s-late 1970s. Contact Howard Johnson, 35 Maes-y-Sarn, Pentyrch, Cardiff CF15 (with sae) or tel 029 20 891274.

P Battery (The Dragon Troop) RA: Past, present, serving, retired members invited to forward contact details for membership database for future reunions, events. Details to Sgt Kevin Tomlin, P Battery RA, Marne Barracks, Catterick, North Yorkshire DL10 7NP (01748 875630).



Dip into the pages of the Skins' Sprig

TRUSTEES of The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers have produced a 96-page millennium commemorative edition of *The Sprig of Shillelagh*, the Skins' journal, which was first published in 1890 and passed into history in 1968.

"Sprig" enthusiast Lt Col (Retd) Jim Condon gleaned from its pages the story of the publication and an insight into the history of the regiment.

It is available from the Curator, The Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers Regimental Museum, The Castle, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh BT74 7HL. Enclose cheque for £6 (including p&p) payable to museum.

DATES

MARCH

22: Evening lecture on Aden by Col David Parker, Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot (01252 349619).

31: National TA Day.

APRIL

29: Victorian Military Fair, Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, London W2, 1000-1630.

MAY

30: Summer concert, Kneller Hall, starts 2000.

13: Combined Cavalry Old Comrades parade and memorial service, Hyde Park.

JUNE

2: Major General's Review (Trooping the Colour).

6-7: Household Division Beating Retreat, Horse Guards Parade.

9: Colonel's Review (Trooping the Colour).

13: Summer concert, Kneller Hall, 2000.

16: Queen's Birthday Parade, Horse Guards.

27: Summer concert, Kneller Hall, 2000.

JULY

7-8: Flying Legends Air Show, Imperial War Museum, Duxford. Booking line: 01223 499353.

11: Summer concert, Kneller Hall, 2000.

17-21: Music of the Night.

Massed bands of Royal Artillery. Front Parade, Woolwich.

18-22: Invicta Military Vehicle Preservation Society five-day War and Peace Show. Beltring Hop Farm Country Park, Kent. Enquiries: 01304 813128.

25: Summer concert, Kneller Hall, 2000.

AUGUST

8: Summer concert, Kneller Hall, 2000.

SEPTEMBER

8-9: Duxford 2001 Air Show.

OCTOBER

14: Duxford Autumn Air Show.

Mystery lady of Ebrington

IT appears to have taken members of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment the best part of three tours in Ebrington Barracks, Londonderry to discover they have a link with one of the camp's most famous residents.

On a recent walkabout of the barracks, Lt Col Richard Kemp, the CO, noticed that the ship's figurehead near the armoury came from HMS *Sybil*, a Royal Navy warship most famous for its part in the battle of the Taku Forts during the China War of 1858.

There is a connection between the ship and the 44th (Essex) Regiment, from which it is possible to trace a direct lineage to 1 R Anglian's C (Essex) Company.

The Essex Regiment won two VCs while storming the heavily-fortified Chinese strongholds, an action for which it was awarded the battle honour "Taku Forts" (which can be seen on the Regimental Colour of the 1st Battalion, inset right).

Members of the Essex Regiment were awarded the China Medal, as was the crew of the *Sybil*, which had bombarded the forts.

So how did the ship's figurehead end up in Ebrington Barracks? No direct link has been made between ship and shore, although Londonderry has strong naval links. Ebrington Barracks was a Royal Navy base known as HMS *Ferret* during the Second World War, renamed HMS *Sea Eagle* in 1947 and handed over to the Army in 1970.

That still doesn't explain why the well-kept old lady from the second *Sybil*, a 36-gun, 5th-rate warship broken up eight years after the China War, came to put her feet up in the camp. It is thought unlikely the ship ever docked there. Not that the Royal Anglians are worried...

...they are just happy to make her acquaintance after such a long time.



Join the jet set: Free tickets to the National Lottery Jet Set programme hosted by Eamonn Holmes are available from BBC Audience Services. Recordings take place at the BBC Television Centre, London, every Saturday until April 21 (doors open 1900). Call 020 8576 1227 for up to eight tickets. Groups of 15 to 54 also considered. No one under the age of 16 will be admitted.

Gate guard: A Ferret Mk 2 scout car is to become a permanent fixture outside Middleton Barracks in Calvert Lane, Hull, home of the city-based 150 Transport Regiment (Volunteers). The Ferret was refurbished by members of 150's 288 Squadron REME Workshop.

Open for business: The Prince of Wales has officially opened City Soldiers, the new galleries which display The King's Regiment collection at the Museum of Liverpool Life. The project is the first phase of an ambitious improvement programme across three city museums, funded with the help of a £24 million grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Birthday Parade ballot

BIDS for tickets to the Queen's Birthday Parade (£15), Colonel's (£7.50) and Major General's (no charge) Parades on Horse Guards (see Dates) should be in by February 28. Send an sae (but no money) to HQ Household Division, Horse Guards, London SW1A 2AX. Successful bidders will be notified in April following a ballot. There is a limit of three tickets for the Birthday Parade itself.

Convent cadets fall in



On target: Cadet Laura Frazer takes aim as the 236 (Convent of Jesus and Mary) Harlesden Cadet Detachment – believed to be the first all-girl Army Cadet Force unit – shapes up. Under Lt Donna Boak, the detachment at the convent in Crown Hill Road, Harlesden, has 18 cadets. Its formation followed an approach to Middlesex and NW London ACF by former head Mary Richardson Michal.

All 18 have uniforms apart from the traditional Irish caubeen, which will be presented to them when they complete recruit training. They have their own detachment hut, paid for by the convent, and enjoyed a map-reading day at Box Hill in Surrey and a weekend camp at Folkestone. In November the girls took part in the Remembrance Day parade at the London headquarters of the London Irish Rifles. A second batch of recruits is expected to join next month.

Picture: Gareth Beard, Harrow Observer Newspapers

Legion to lead pilgrimage to Rheindahlen, Cologne

WIDOWS who lost their husbands in the Rheindahlen and Cologne areas may be interested in a six-day trip organised by the Royal British Legion in addition to its normal programme of pilgrimages to war cemeteries and memorials around the world.

Those whose husbands died in military service in the area up until 1967, who were not present at their funeral and have not visited the grave before, may be eligible for the Government's grant-in-aid scheme to help with the cost of travel.

The trip begins on July 4 and will include a remembrance services at Rheindahlen Military Cemetery and Cologne Southern War Cemetery and a cruise on the Rhine. It will be fully escorted, with medical support. To find out more, contact Pete Richardson, secretary of the RBL's Rheindahlen Branch on 0049 2161 558037 or by e-mail to RBLRheind@aol.com.

Staffords mark Gulf conflict

TO mark the tenth anniversary of the Gulf War, the Museum of The Staffordshire Regiment has a "Return of the Desert Rats" exhibition open until March 12. It features memorabilia collected by John Hollins, including uniforms, badges, insignia, weapons and maps. The museum, located on the A51 Lichfield/Tamworth road next door to Whittington Barracks, is open Tuesday to Friday from 1000 to 1600.

Don't throw that spear...

WATCH out for The Zulu Wars from military video specialist DD Video. Covering also the rise of the Zulu nation and the warrior king Shaka Zulu, the story is told through authentic reconstructions of key events and battles filmed on location in South Africa. British involvement, culminating in the battles at Isandhlwana, Rorke's Drift and Ulundi, play a major part in the 156-minute film, available after February 5 from DD Video Unit 1, Pool Bank Business Park, High Street, Tarvin, Chester CH3 8JH, price £19.99 (plus £2.75 p&p) or ring 01829 741490.



Picture: Graeme Main

Ted finds his true love, at long last

Love at second sight: Former Royal Northumberland Fusilier Ted Yeaman and childhood sweetheart Elsie Slater toast each other after their wedding at Alnwick Register Office... 61 years later than he intended.

Ted, 79, was posted "missing, presumed dead" after being taken prisoner by the Japanese during the Second World War.

On his way home after the war he wrote to Elsie, proposing they tie the knot if nothing had changed, but he was too late.

Elsie had married someone else. Ted, who

also married, became a St Dunstan in 1992 after his sight failed as a result of mistreatment and malnutrition suffered at the hands of the Japanese.

He moved into the home near Brighton as a permanent resident in 1998.

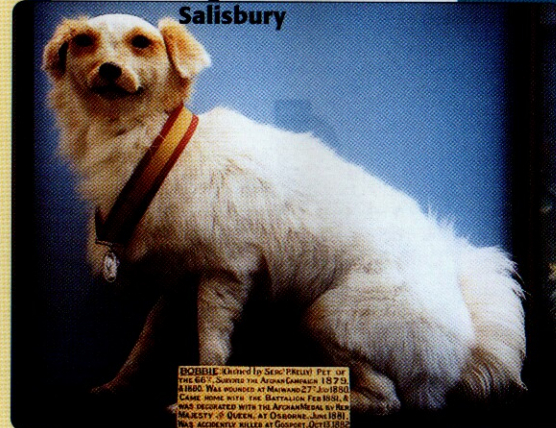
Three months ago Ted travelled to Alnwick in Northumberland to visit family and friends. While there he contacted Elsie and four days later rang her from St Dunstan's to propose.

"I remember at school she used to be able to sit on her hair. It's a bit shorter now," said Ted, "but she is just as bubbly."

Legends of the regiments and corps

20

Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment Museum, Salisbury



Lucky dog: Bobbie, 66th's mascot, who survived the battle of Maiwand

Berkshires' Bobbie: battle hero

WHEN the 66th Foot (The Berkshires) left Baluchistan (now part of Pakistan) for Kandahar in the spring of 1880, its mascot, Bobbie, a rough-haired terrier, embarked on a great adventure.

Britain and Afghanistan were at war and the British Mission had been massacred at Kabul.

Ordered to cut off a large Afghan army moving on Kandahar, the 66th were overwhelmed at Maiwand. Outnumbered ten to one, the regiment withdrew until only 11 remained, Bobbie barking his defiance at their feet.

FOUGHT TO THE LAST

They fought to the last man in an action immortalised in Frank Feller's painting "The Last Eleven at Maiwand", the little dog depicted in the foreground. Bobbie was lost, it was thought, for ever.

Covered in blood from a bullet wound, he made his way across 50 miles of desert to Kandahar, where he and the remnants of the 66th survived a siege until relieved by Gen Roberts.

They returned to Portsmouth in February 1881, crossing the Solent to the Isle of Wight to be received by Queen Victoria, who tied the Afghan Medal to Bobbie's collar.

She took a great interest in the dog until his untimely death under the wheels of a cab in Gosport.

The museum, in the shadow of Salisbury Cathedral, is open 1000 to 1700, every day April to Oct. Closed on Mondays in Feb, March and Nov. Closed Dec and Jan. Tel 01722 414536

Dream on . . .

Sony's sell-out is this year's most wanted

WITH more advanced sales than a West Life single, Sony's PlayStation 2 (PS2) looks set to be the most sought-after product of 2001.

The games console's official launch in June last year saw unprecedented demand on the streets of Tokyo with more than two million units being sold in just 82 days.

Similar scenes greeted the machine's arrival on European shores last November with units leaving stores quicker than they could be put on shelves. By Christmas not even Santa Claus could lay his hands on Sony's latest offering to the gaming world.

And those not among the lucky minority could be in for a long wait. With shops not expecting delivery until the end of March and thousands of names already on waiting lists it could be months before the PS2 becomes available to the masses. So what exactly is all the fuss about?

In terms of computer gaming the PS2 represents the undisputed king, overshadowing the capabilities of the hugely popular PlayStation, Nintendo's N64 and Sega's Dreamcast.

Its 128-bit processor is designed to be roughly three times more powerful than an average PC, meaning that games should be

faster, better-looking and more realistic than before. There are more than 40 software titles already available and more than 400 under development worldwide.

Owners of Sony's previous offering will also welcome the news that the PS2 supports

the 800-strong catalogue of PlayStation titles.

But perhaps the PS2's biggest selling point is that it supports audio CDs and doubles as a DVD-Video player.

① Great value at £299 and a must buy . . . if you can find one.

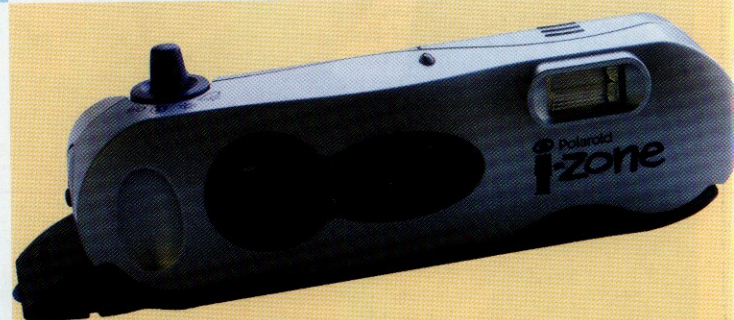


ON THE BOX

"CHANGING Rooms" addicts will love Hitachi's latest 32in wide-screen TV – not only is it at the cutting edge of technology but it also looks good with it.

Aimed at the lifestylers, it comes in a natty mint finish and features a flat wide-screen, twin SCART and front AV Sockets, NTSC playback and NICAM stereo sound.

① Around £1,200.



VIDEO HIGHLIGHT

HITACHI is to launch the world's first DVD-RAM camcorder this month.

Using 8cm disks with 2.92GB of memory, the camcorder provides a full range of DVD features such as random access and high read and write speeds.

Unlike a tape-based camcorder, there is no need to rewind the tape to see what you have recorded. Any part of any recording can be played virtually instantaneously.

Disk navigation screens enable rapid



selection and playback of specific recordings. The camera creates an electronic album where access to all recordings is at the touch of a button via a thumb-nail picture on screen.

① Around £1,700.

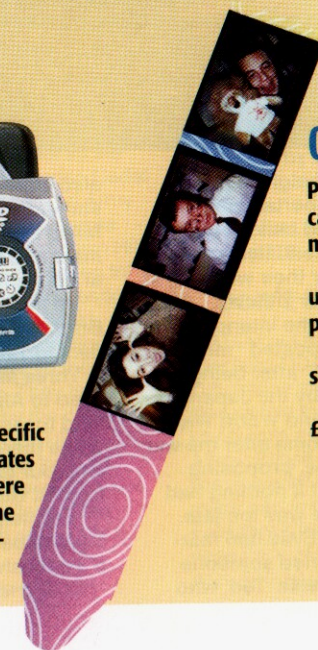
CANDID CAMERA

POLAROID'S i-zone instant pocket camera is ideal for people on the move.

Small and lightweight, the camera uses a sticky film which produces mini pictures in an instant.

Available in blue, purple, cream, silver and translucent.

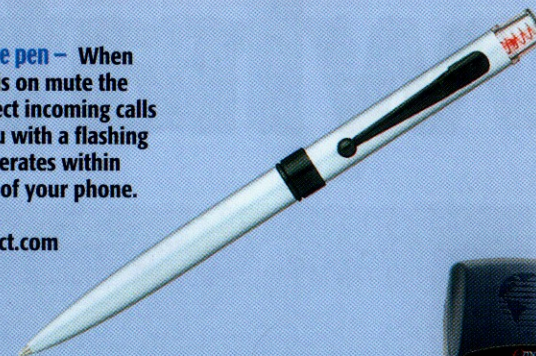
① i-zone – £17.99; sticky film – £4.99; non-sticky film – £3.99.



Switched on . . .

Mobile phone pen – When your phone is on mute the pen will detect incoming calls and alert you with a flashing red light. Operates within 50cm radius of your phone.

① £8, from presentsdirect.com



E-Clock – Wake up to sounds you have downloaded from the internet. The E-Clock comes with a CD Rom that allows you to download anything from music to movie clips.

① £24.95, from gadgetshop.com



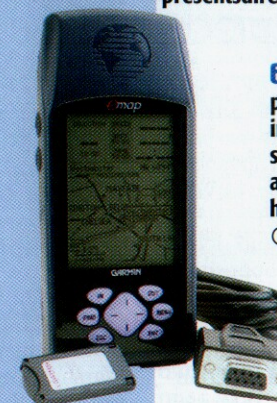
Self-powered radio – A clockwork mechanism means that batteries and plugs are a thing of the past. When placed in direct sunlight the radio can also run from solar power.

① £59.00, from presentsdirect.com



E-Map – Small enough for a pocket or purse, the Garmin E-Map uses its built-in antenna to pick up your location and show it on a map display while an arrow points to the direction you are heading on the compass.

① £299.95, from gadgetshop.com

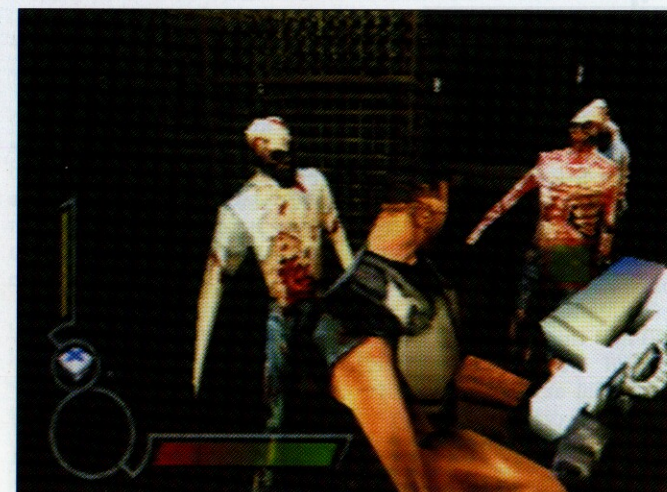


Park-zone – An ultrasonic sensor with a 0.5 - 16ft range detects how far you are away from obstacles and displays a green, amber or red light to guide you.

① £39.95, gadgetshop.com



Game on . . .



BLADE, PLAYSTATION

OUT NOW

MARVEL Comics' vampire hunter Blade makes his debut on the Playstation in this third person action/adventure game.

Players take on the role of Blade – the character played by Wesley Snipes in the blockbuster movie of the same name – as they attempt to save humanity from the creatures of the night.

Set over 21 levels, the action is fast and furious, with more than 30 different enemies to skirmish

with. Luckily, in true comic-book style, Blade has an arsenal of weapons available to him that would make even the American Army turn green with envy.

Things can get hectic but the game's auto-aim system ensures that combat is focused on reactions and weapon selection rather than pinpoint accuracy.

VERDICT: Tomb Raider with swords and vampires – a thinking man's shoot-em-up. 7/10

LE MANS 24, DREAMCAST

OUT NOW

BOASTING 60 frames of animation per second, Le Mans 24 for the Dreamcast brings 200mph racing action into your living room.

The game features realistic physics and real-time weather and surface effects that will prove a challenge to even the most experienced gamers.

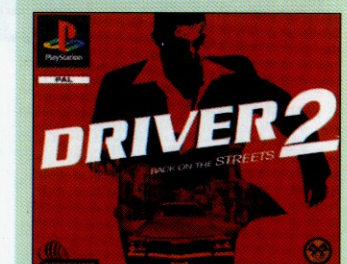
Staying true to the real event, and thanks to the game's use of time compression, players even have the option to compete in a full 24-hour day/night rally.



VERDICT: Fans of high-speed action need look no further, Le Mans 24 will keep you captivated for much longer than just one day. 8/10

DRIVER 2, PLAYSTATION

OUT NOW



THROW away that highway code – to get anywhere in Driver 2 you need to adopt a similar attitude to Balkans motorists.

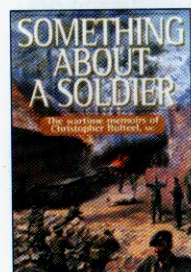
Disregard for the speed limit and a lack of consideration for the safety of pedestrians and other drivers is the call-of-the-day in this follow-up to the hugely successful Driver.

Fans of the first game will not be disappointed – the good has just got better, with more realistic road layouts and greater interaction being just two of the countless improvements.

VERDICT: Driver 2 dispels the myth that sequels are never as good as the original. With four new cities to explore and 40 missions to pit your driving skills against, this is another winner from Infogrames. 9/10

At last - memoirs you can't put down

WARTIME memoirs are rarely so well written as **Something About a Soldier** (Airlife, £19.95). The Second World War story of the

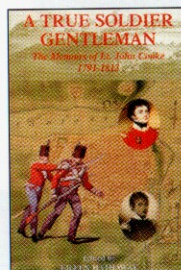


late Christopher Bulteel, MC, who served with the Coldstream Guards in north Africa and Italy, is told with a page-turning flair usually only found in the best thrillers. Not surprising, perhaps, from the man who became a highly respected history teacher at

Wellington College and headmaster of Ardingly College. Bulteel's wartime experiences took him on a spiritual journey which led him to become a Franciscan friar.

Promotion was quick in 43rd Regiment

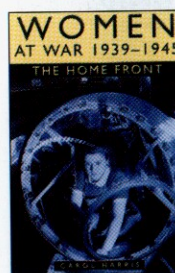
DURING the Peninsular War the 43rd Light Infantry was renowned for both courage and quick promotion and the connection



between the two is not difficult to make. John Cooke joined as an ensign in 1809 but fought most of the war as a lieutenant. Later as a retired captain he wrote three vivid volumes of memoirs covering 1791 to 1813, which Eileen Hathaway has edited into the excellent **A True Soldier Gentleman** (Shinglepinner Publications, paperback, £7.99), which follows on from her successful treatment of the autobiographies of two Dorset soldiers.

From rat-catchers to railway workers

THOUGH the aspiration is there, Britain still has no memorial to the women who made such a crucial contribution to the Second World War effort. Meanwhile books like



Women at War 1939-1945: The Home Front (Sutton, paperback, £10.99) serve as a written tribute. Author Carol Harris's stories of the female rat-catchers, engineers, carters, railway workers and barges, as well as land girls, ambulance drivers, salvage collectors and munitions workers – often as single parents while their husbands were away fighting – may come as an eye-opener to many readers.

Oh, what a grisly war

But this catalogue of horror is a masterpiece of description

THE Third Battle of Ypres, that benchmark of unsurpassed horror, began on June 7, 1917 as the Allied advanced to take the main ridge of West Flanders.

Unrelenting rain and determined German opposition thwarted the objective until November 6. Then, at last, the 1st and 2nd Canadian Divisions, brought in as reinforcements, carried the ridge whose name became synonymous with everything abhorrent about the First World War... Passchendaele.

Nigel Steele is an archivist in the Department of Documents at the Imperial War Museum and Peter Hart the Museum's Oral Historian. Their book is a masterpiece of concise and clear description, drawing material from letters, diaries and memoirs of infantrymen, medics, gunners, sappers, padres and airmen, both allied and German, officers and men.

The result is a cocktail saga of humanity and callous inhumanity against a background set by the War Cabinet in London, and the strategy of the BEF's High Command,

Passchendaele: The Sacrificial Ground by Nigel Steele and Peter Hart (Cassell, £12).

Review: Brian Jewell

targeted by the authors for criticism: "Gough (Gen Sir Hubert) must bear much of the responsibility for the debacle that ensued. But Haig (Fd Marshal Sir Douglas) could, and should, have stopped him."

For the soldiers it was "Horrible, horrible". Apart from the bloody, close-contact fighting and shattering artillery bombardments, there was the weather. If we think the rainfall during the year 2000 was exceptional, it is sobering to consider that in

A cocktail saga of humanity and callous inhumanity

1917 the heavy rain in Flanders started on July 31 and continued through August on all but three days.

As the authors observe: "This deluge had an immediate effect on the battlefield and provoked a 'Flood' of almost biblical proportions."

The thousands of men named on the Menin Gate memorial at Ypres who have no grave were not all blown to



Fighting to stand: Stretcher-bearers struggle through the deadly, cloying mud of Passchendaele in August, 1917

pieces; many had fallen off the duckboard trackways behind the front line and drowned in mud that sucked them down.

The trouble with books like this, so full of oral history, is that the impact of horror begins to wane just as the sensitivities of those who were there must have been dulled in order to survive. Of course, many were not blessed with this resistance and simply broke down, mentally and physically, or the unimagin-

able hell remained with them for the rest of their lives.

There is a good description of the mining operations that marked the opening of the battle – not the anti-tank or anti-personnel mines we know today, but full underground tunnelling to plant great high-explosive charges.

On June 7, 19 mines were blown beneath the German lines, which must have seemed like a nuclear explosion, crowning a ten-day

artillery bombardment. An Australian sapper wrote: "We thought the war was over", but this was not to be, as this stage of the battle proved to be only a limited tactical Allied victory.

Mines, tanks and gas were battlefield novelties used in the Third Battle of Ypres. So, too, were the so-called "Chinese Attacks", one of the bright ideas thought up in London. Dummy infantrymen were carried into No

Soldier ordering service

All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free booksearch; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Postal address: Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, UK. Tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 1315. E-mail: books@helion.co.uk Website: <http://www.helion.co.uk>

Man's Land at night by men of the cyclist battalions (without their bicycles). The dummies were made to move by pulling wires and some cyclists had to stay with them to activate the deception. An unenviable task.

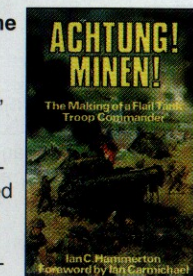
The now-maligned cigarette served the soldiers well. Apart from calming the nerves, smoking was believed by some to counter the effects of poison gas. It certainly made the ever-pervading stench of death more tolerable.

We can have nothing but admiration and sympathy for the men at the sharp end in the Great War. It is, of course, now too late to say that if you meet a man from Passchendaele you should at least buy him a drink.

But it is not too late to suggest that those of us who complain of life today should read of what soldiers in battle endured little more than 80 years ago.

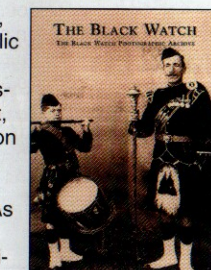
Clearing the path with 22nd Dragoons

FROM the landings on the Normandy beaches to the fight into the heart of Europe, **Achtung! Minen! The Making of a Flail Tank Troop Commander** (Book Guild, £5.50) tells the story as it happened and follows the 22nd Dragoons as they headed the set-piece attacks and cleared paths through enemy minefields. Copies of this second edition may be ordered from the author, Ian C Hammetton, Tanglewood, 65 Norfield Road, Wilmington, Dartford, Kent, DA2 7NY. Second-class postage is £1.52 per copy. Include cheques/postal orders for the total, payable to Ian Hammetton.



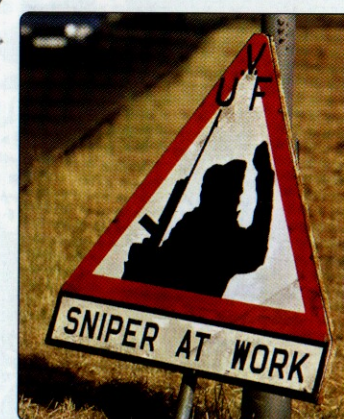
The Black Watch in black and white

MOST of the treasures unearthed in **The Black Watch Photographic Archive** (Tempus, £9.99) are previously unpublished and are held in the regiment's keeping, unavailable for public viewing. This is not intended to be a history of the regiment, but rather a selection of black-and-white pictures in chronological sequence. As many heroes and characters as possible are portrayed with the briefest resumé of their careers. The earliest print dates from 1852, a little over 100 years since the regiment first paraded on the banks of the Tay in 1740.



Sting in the tale of desert Kiwis

AUTHOR Brendan O'Carroll uses diaries and personal recollections of the few surviving veterans for the history of **The Kiwi Scorpions – The Story of the New Zealanders in the Long Range Desert Group** (Token, £24.95). This élite band fought behind enemy lines in North Africa and the Mediterranean in some of the most inhospitable conditions known to man. The book, illustrated with more than 200 photographs, includes a roll of all the New Zealanders who served with the unit until its disbandment in August 1945.



Frank Spooner Pictures Ltd

Sign of the times

This menacing warning, with variations and additions such as "On hold" and "I'll be back", could be seen from time to time around Northern Ireland during the Troubles. Peter Brookesmith, in whose book, **Sniper**, the picture appears, adds that the weapons most feared were the two Barrett "Light Fifty" rifles known to be in

the hands of the IRA. This introduction to the lethal marksman's world, subtitled **Training, Techniques and Weapons**, includes a historical survey – from the arrow that killed King Harold to the bullet that shot John F Kennedy. Containing 120 colour and black-and-white photographs and maps, the book is published by Spellmount at £18.99.

IN BRIEF

Two additions to Penguin's Classic Military History paperback series are **Redcoats and Rebels: The War for America 1770-1781** by Christopher Hibbert, first published in 1990, and **The Peninsular War 1807-1814: A Concise Military History** by Michael Glover, first published in 1974. Both are priced at £5.99.

The East Lancashire Regiment 1855-1958. Photographic history of one of the great county regiments, compiled by Lt Col John

Downham, Regimental Secretary for the Images of England series. (Tempus, paperback, £9.99.)

The Blood Tub: General Gough and the Battle of Bullecourt, 1917 by Jonathan Walker. Paperback reissue of the controversial 1998 account of one of the most horrific episodes of the First World War. (Spellmount, £14.99.)

War: Past, Present and Future by Jeremy Black. Leading mili-

tary historian sets out to debunk many preconceived notions and predicts that despite advances in technology, future warfare will be... well, unpredictable. (Sutton, £20.)

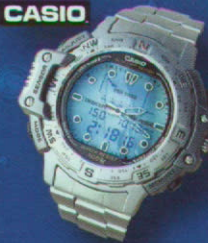
Russia's Civil War by Geoffrey Swain. First history of this conflict since the fall of the Soviet Union argues that the Bolsheviks' conflict, which officially ended 80 years ago, was as much with the Russian people as with the Tsarist generals. (Tempus, paperback, £16.99.)



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More heat than light blurs facts

WHAT and who do you believe about depleted uranium? The story seems to have generated rather more heat than light in the past few weeks.

DU is used by the Army because it is the best weapon for piercing modern armour. The "exceedingly low" risks associated with it have long been known to the Armed Forces.

The scientist's lot must be frustrating. Some of the best brains in the business declare their confidence in their findings, which are then widely ignored in an increasingly emotive debate.

♦ ♦ ♦

On Pages 8 and 9 we pass on the advice given to us by the Services' top physician, who has himself served in the Balkans. It should be of comfort to soldiers and families that he says he believes the risk of falling ill to DU poisoning is remote.

Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon pointed out that DU is 40 per cent less radioactive than the natural uranium which exists in very large quantities in the earth's crust.

By all current measurable scientific tests, DU is not dangerous if due care is exercised in its presence.

OUR BOYS IN AFRICA

Britain has made a commitment to the people of **Sierra Leone** to bring stability and peace to that war-shattered country.

A succession of British short-term training teams are already transforming the West African nation's army into a properly disciplined and motivated fighting force (see Pages 4-5 and 17-19).

But welfare packages for troops fall behind those in other operational theatres. A few more television sets and videos (anything but *It Ain't 'Alf Hot Mum*), sat phones, internet access and an EFI "shop" would make life for our teams in Sierra Leone a little more comfortable.

Home truths

Sue Bonney

Our families need a few DU home facts right now

HOME truths? We could do with some at the moment, as this issue of *Soldier* goes to press. Or some home facts, at any rate.

As a member of the Army Families Federation staff said to me: "I thought they'd have told us something by now, or told us what not to take notice of...".

I'll give you three guesses as to what she was talking about. Her husband returned from Kosovo just before Christmas and has already been warned of his next tour there in 2002. She is not the panicky or worrying kind, and she has been around the Army long enough to know that you don't believe everything you read, see or hear in the media. But she is concerned.

There are a lot like her in AFF, many of whom have soldiers who have been, are in, or are going to Kosovo and Bosnia. It is an ongoing commitment for the British Army. And there's the difference.

While the politicians and media react – and no doubt overreact to those two little letters DU – soldiers and their families live with the reality of what depleted uranium might or might not mean to their long-term health. Operational tours are demanding enough on a soldier's family without them trying to cope with the multitude of information being thrown at them from all corners of the media.

Armed Forces Minister John Spellar said in

FAMILY concerns are not just about DU or Gulf War Syndrome, they're also about ordinary welfare. Take the Services Cotswold Centre, the existence of which has been under threat for some time.

The centre provides excellent accommodation for Service families in



Sue Bonney is Editor of the AFF Families Journal

Parliament he "recognized the need to reassure our people". Hear, hear. But what they need is some direct reassurance – not via the press or Parliament, or even on routine orders.

They need to be told all the facts as they are currently understood – and they need to be told that all precautions will be taken and health concerns checked and not left standing on the sidelines watching a war of words between people who

are risking nothing.

As long as we are sending troops to Kosovo and Bosnia on a regular basis, they and their families will from now on be concerned about depleted uranium. That concern should be addressed directly in an open, straightforward and honest way with clear information and advice, aimed at the families as well as the soldiers.

Perception is everything. If, through its actions or omissions, the MoD is perceived to be an uncaring employer, apparently ready to deny concerns rather than consider the possibilities, retention and recruitment will suffer.

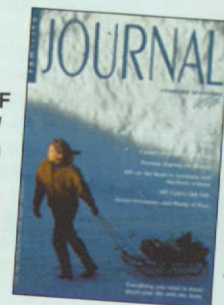
'Operational tours are demanding enough without the multitude of information being thrown at them from all corners of the media'

transit or temporarily homeless between postings. It has made life easier for countless children and parents with nowhere else to go. That's it. A nice place providing a good service.

But, guess what? It costs money. Families pay a small daily charge to stay there, but the

centre is mainly financed by the MoD. Something to be proud of, you might think. But not, of course, cost-effective, unless you measure the benefit to families in £s. Sadly, the centre may close if the financial arguments win. How will families perceive that as a demonstration of a caring employer?

The Winter 2001 edition of the AFF Families Journal is out this month and should be available from a unit near you. Ask for your free copy now.





Compassion rules don't apply to all

I ASSUMED compassionate leave for siblings (*Soldier to Soldier*, Dec) applied to all soldiers and their wives. This is not the case.

Siblings living abroad do not come under the scheme, which means all brothers, sisters and spouses' parents are not covered. Furthermore, if you are married to a foreign national, it does not apply to her immediate next-of-kin.

The scheme is in recognition of the need for a bereaved soldier or spouse to have family support. Compassionate leave and travel can be granted for the family (including children of 16 and under) to return to the UK on the death of a parent or parent-in-law.

I have never had a need to apply for compassionate leave but would be extremely perturbed if I was on tour away from my parent unit and found no support was forthcoming to my spouse in her hour of need.

The policy adopted should be for one and all, regardless of location. I have no idea how many soldiers have in-laws or siblings living abroad, but all have rights. I assume the current scheme would be deemed inadequate under the new human rights legislation. — **WO1 (SSM) Gary Jenkins, Tank Systems Support IPT, Directorate General Equipment Support (Land), Andover.**

▲ *Personal Services (Army) tells us WO1 Jenkins is correct in stating that the current compassionate travel scheme is designed to provide publicly-funded travel only to the UK. This is to ensure those overseas are not disadvantaged. While there is clear justification for returning to the UK personnel who have been moved abroad by the Services, there is not the same justification for providing publicly-funded travel for personnel within the UK, or to visit an "in-scope" relative living abroad.*

PS(A) is acutely aware of the apparent anomaly whereby foreign-born spouses living in the UK are not entitled to publicly-funded compassionate travel back to their country of origin, unlike UK-born spouses serving abroad. A case for an extension to the current arrangements is being forwarded to the MoD for consideration and discussion with the Treasury. — Editor

Poor quarters top my hate list

I WAS pleased to note that Armed Forces Minister John Spellar thinks single living accommodation (SLA) is "appalling" (*Soldier*, Dec). Perhaps you could run a feature explaining some of the points that arose. My key queries are:

What percentage of the 75 per cent of the SLA classified as sub-standard is represented by the 12,000 bed-spaces that are to be refurbished by 2005?

What exactly does the MoD mean by "bed-spaces"? Does it mean bed-spaces in a barrack room, or does the phrase also include the single rooms that most junior NCOs, and certainly all senior NCOs and WOs would expect to occupy?

Have specifications for SLA changed since the Crimean War? It is all very well claiming accommodation is up to standard, but if that represents the expectations of a recruit who has left a hovel in

which he shared a bed with 12 brothers and sisters, the MoD needs to re-think.

What is meant by refurbishment? I hope it is not a lick of paint and badly-laid carpets, as I have experienced.

Could you publish a list of barracks and garrisons undergoing this refurbishment?

I might be classified as a professional whingeing single, but my sole constant criticism of the system during my 16 years' Army service has been the consistently poor quality of SLA.

Younger soldiers might be happy to pay reduced rates for poor accommodation (it's extra beer money), but I expect a standard of living comparable to my married peers.

As identified by MoD survey, the quality of Service accommodation is a major factor in the issue of retention. — **WO2 H J Carter, Int Corps, Command and Staff Trainer (North), Catterick.**

Prize letter

▲ *Estates staff at HQ Land Command reply:*

The article to which WO2 Carter refers was principally about Service Families Accommodation (SFA), with reference to Single Living Accommodation (SLA). However, she asks some valid questions about SLA.

She may have confused some SFA and SLA statistics, so her first question is difficult to answer. The most recent survey assessed 63 per cent of SLA as good or satisfactory.

The 12,000 bed-spaces to be built or refurbished by 2005 represent about 60 per cent of the remaining SLA graded as unsatisfactory. Much of the improved accommodation will be built as, or converted to, Type Z, which consists of single rooms with en suite ablutions.

We use the term "bed-spaces" to describe living-in accommodation for all ranks, so a room designed to be occupied by four people counts as four bed-spaces, while a single en suite room is one.

Scales for SLA have been constantly revised and will continue to change. Changes are reflected in Joint Service Publication (JSP) 315 (Ser-

vice Accommodation Scales), which has shown continuous improvement in space and facilities, and now includes Type Z accommodation for all trained soldiers.

The Executive Committee of the Army Board endorsed this particular scale in October. How quickly we move to Type Z accommodation across the Army depends on the need for new builds and the feasibility of barrack block conversions. It will be a long-term programme spread over many years.

Our refurbishment plans will be extensive and long-term and based on upgrading all bed spaces to a high standard, Type Z where possible. Not all bed spaces are in the same poor state and less work is required on some than on others. Where a particular barrack block cannot be converted to Type Z, its bed spaces will remain at a lesser scale but will still be improved significantly.

As soon as funding is agreed we will be able to publish details of the refurbishment and new-build programmes for the Army as a whole, both short- and long-term.

Officers' Pensions Society keeps the pressure on those 'troughs'

YOUR readers will have read articles in the national press covering an anomaly peculiar to pensions of people like them.

There is no need to go into detail here, although anyone who wants to know more need only contact our membership secretary. It is important to underline that those veterans who are disadvantaged by being in one of these pension troughs are not just those who retired in the 1970s, having served through the war. People who retired in the 1990s, when pay

restraint meant more often than not that pay awards were staged, have as a result also gone on to a pension rate that is less than they deserve. Today's Servicemen and women are tomorrow's veterans.

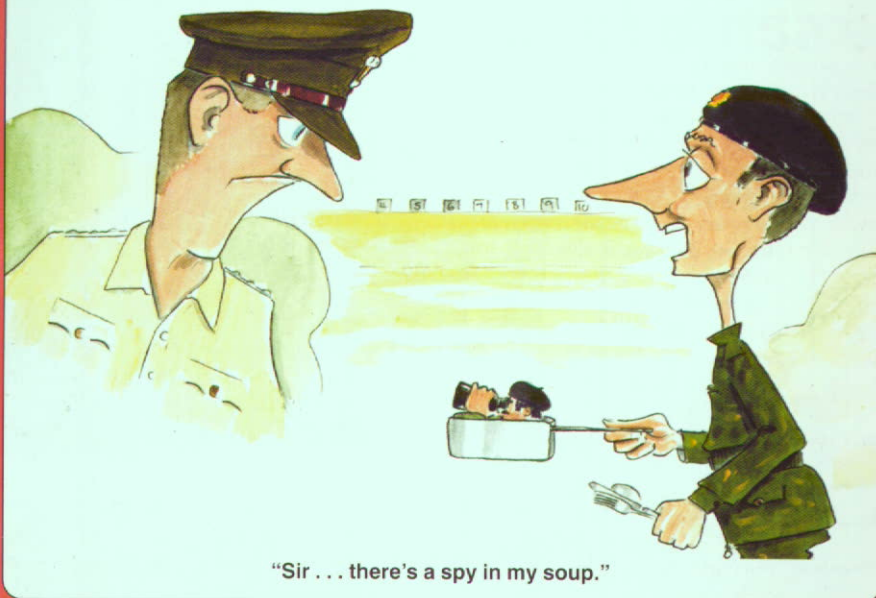
This is why the Officers' Pensions Society has kept the pressure on, by as many means as possible, seeking to put right this anomaly and also others that affect, particularly, widows of retired Servicemen.

The Armed Forces Pension Scheme is currently the subject of

a long-running internal MoD review. This society has given its input, pointing out where the AFPS, very good at its inception in 1970, has fallen behind modern best practice.

To formalise the society's efforts on behalf of all Service personnel, it is in the process of reviewing its membership policy with a view to opening up full membership to all ranks. — Maj Gen James Gordon, Gen Sec, Officers' Pensions Society, 68 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London SW8 1RL (020 7820 9988).

PISCATOR



"Sir... there's a spy in my soup."

Question time: The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers has a mascot called Bobby. What is he?

A) African water-buck; B) Indian black-buck; C) Thomson's Gazelle.

Answers on a postcard please to ABF Soldier Competition, 41 Queen's Gate, South Kensington, London SW7 5HR. First ten correct entries picked out of the hat will win a Piscator Bugler Boy keyring and a Tommy Atkins fridge magnet (no name and address, no prize). All entries will be placed in the ABF Grand Prize Draw.



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On the advance

MAJ Dunne ("Sailors get earlier crack at housing incentive", Jan), is right when he points out that Royal Navy personnel are able to take advantage of the Long Service Advance of Pay (LSAP) scheme earlier than their Army and RAF counterparts.

He has, however, been badly advised over the reason for this. The Army originally introduced LSAP as a replacement for the Assisted House Purchase Scheme withdrawn in 1996. The age limit imposed on both the Army and Royal Air Force (the RN already had the system in place) was a matter of affordability.

LSAP has been one of our most popular

incentive schemes and is being reviewed this year. As part of that review, we are examining the options of lowering the age or length of service to obtain an LSAP advance along with widening the scope for eligible properties.

Since its introduction we have already gained considerable concessions, including recognition of unmarried partners and fewer restrictions on transferring advances to partners. As a matter of course all differences between Services are being examined with a view to gaining harmonisation, and much of the work has been completed.

— Maj Nigel Benwell, MoD.

OFFICER or other rank; serving or civvy... *Soldier* welcomes your letters. Please keep them brief and to the point. We'd prefer them to be typed but if they are handwritten, put names, addresses and in block capitals (not necessarily for publication). A prize from the our gift collection will be awarded each month if we judge that a letter, serious or humorous, merits it. Acceptance or rejection of letters is the decision of the Editor, who reserves the right to amend for length, clarity or style. Anonymous letters will not be considered.

**Mail
us!**

PS...

Confused identity

I WAS confused at the terminology used in your article on Fijians joining The Royal Irish Regiment (Jan, Page 27). As a former officer in the Ulster Defence Regiment, I and my soldiers were told the Irish Rangers and the UDR were to be amalgamated into the Royal Irish Regiment. You can imagine my concern when terms such as "Ranger" and "Irish Rangers" were used to describe Regular soldiers in the Royal Irish. — R H Weir (e-mail).

▲ The confusion extended to the recruits interviewed, who, to a man, described themselves to our reporter as "Rangers". They are privates, of course, and we should have known better. — Editor

Not so well spoken

THE saddest thing in your excellent piece on the allegiance forged in Kosovo between British soldiers and marines and soldiers from Finland and Sweden (Kosovo report, Jan) was the affirmation that the British, far from speaking a foreign language, are unable to communicate in English. What price a "hi-tech generation" that can converse only in idiom, slang and monosyllables? Come back the RAEC, all is forgiven. — Iain Leggatt, ex-WO1 RAOC, Angus, Scotland.

Call them British

I REFER to the description of Maj Beaver and Mr Feltham (Legends of the regiments and corps, Dec). We are accustomed to hearing the BBC referring to men such as these as Japanese prisoners-of-war, but one expects better things from *Soldier*. They were British PoWs. Nobody refers to Allied soldiers captured in Europe or North Africa as German or Italian prisoners. — C J Allen, Wakefield.

Happy Kenyan days

I WAS interested to read in the December issue the article about the new British Army Training Team in Kenya but I was surprised to read that it had been re-established after an absence of 30 years.

I was part of a four-man BATTEN 3 team in 1986-87 and believe the team did not close until late in 1989. We were based on the outskirts of Nairobi, where we lived in Kenyan Police married quarters with our families. My children went to a local school.

The team consisted of Maj Adrian Hughes RRF, Capt Mike Balding RCT, WO2 Tony Farrow, Queens, and myself, then a WO1 (ASM). We helped the General Service Unit of the Kenyan Police in two areas, transport/workshop and infantry skills.

My wife and I still look back fondly at our time in Kenya and I hope the current team enjoys its time there as much as we did. — Maj Ian Ward REME, ES Cell, HQ BATUS, Canada.



WOMEN IN THE FRONT LINE: YOUR VIEWS

Danger would be same for all

SGT Stevenson (Vox pop, Nov) said females who are captured would "be in extreme physical danger". As an instructor on conduct after capture, let me assure you we'd all probably be in the same danger. As for being demoralised, in my opinion it would be the same for all if a soldier was unlucky enough to be captured.

Don't let the "female thing" distract from fact. The SOE agent Violette Szabo went to her death in Ravensbruck concentration camp after torture by the Gestapo having revealed absolutely nothing. Could many Servicemen (myself included) do the same? – **WO2 M R Stansfield, 129 (Dragon) Bty, 40 Regt RA, N Yorks.**

If women are to serve alongside men, the issue (some say discrimination against men) of women having more time to complete fitness assessments, do fewer press-ups and carry less weight on the combat fitness test, will presumably be addressed.

*If there is so much concern about equality of the sexes, why do we not hear about a campaign to do away with single-sex sports? – **M T Clarke, OC, Falkland Islands Defence Force, Stanley.***



Female prison officers were highly capable in situations of violence

I WAS a lance corporal from 1984 to 1991 and, while never serving alongside women, thought my experience in the Prison Service might help put to rest fears regarding women in action.

From 1992 to 1995 I was an officer at a maximum security prison and, as one can imagine in such an environment, violence was never very far away.

Male and female officers worked side-by-side and, while I had the same initial reservations as those expressed in your Vox pop columns (Nov) – physical ability to cope, privacy, male protectiveness in the event of injury or rape – I found that when anything "kicked off" female staff were more than capable of defending themselves and fighting at the side of male officers.

One of my enduring memories is of a slightly-built woman officer in her early twenties being the first to help a fellow officer being attacked by an inmate, while a number of male officers (many of whom were ex-Servicemen) made themselves scarce.

If women can meet the physical requirements, they should be allowed to serve in the front line.

The arguments against the presence of females are, to be brutally frank, problems that men will have to resolve. One person's prejudice, ignorance and fear cannot be used to justify the restriction of opportunities to another. – **J D Ellis, Stonehouse, Glos.**

Effectiveness has to be bottom line

AS a serving NCO with experience of operating and training in various parts of the world, I would like to add to the debate on whether women should fight in the front line.

Operational effectiveness of the front-line soldier is determined by the ability of that soldier – male or female – to put themselves in a position to use personal and other weapon systems timely and effectively.

This requires the appropriate physical and mental robustness to enable equipment, time and information to be efficiently and correctly managed in a stressful, hostile environment. Demanding methods of insertion by air and from boats and armoured vehicles may be necessary, often under extreme climatic conditions and perhaps under enemy fire.

I have experienced this first-hand and there is more to it than the ability to simply "hold a rifle".

Many individuals are capable of these tasks, some of whom are women (look at the mixed teams in adventure racing events such as the Eco-Challenge). Sadly, they are not always the same women as those currently serving with and being attracted to life in the UK Armed Forces.

I would not discourage any potential female soldier from attempting to join up and I support equal opportunities in all areas of life.

However, I believe that opening up this role for the majority of female soldiers would prove disastrous for the forces and a costly mistake for many. – **Sgt (name supplied), HQ 1 (UK) Armcd Div, Herford.**

How women waged war in Balkans

NOT a single person expressing an opinion in your debate on female infantry has fought in a battle alongside female soldiers, and most have not seen a shot fired in anger.

In the large-scale offensives of the Croatian and Bosnian wars, women with little previous military training fought as well as, and sometimes better, than their male comrades-in-arms. During those times the gender issue

became irrelevant.

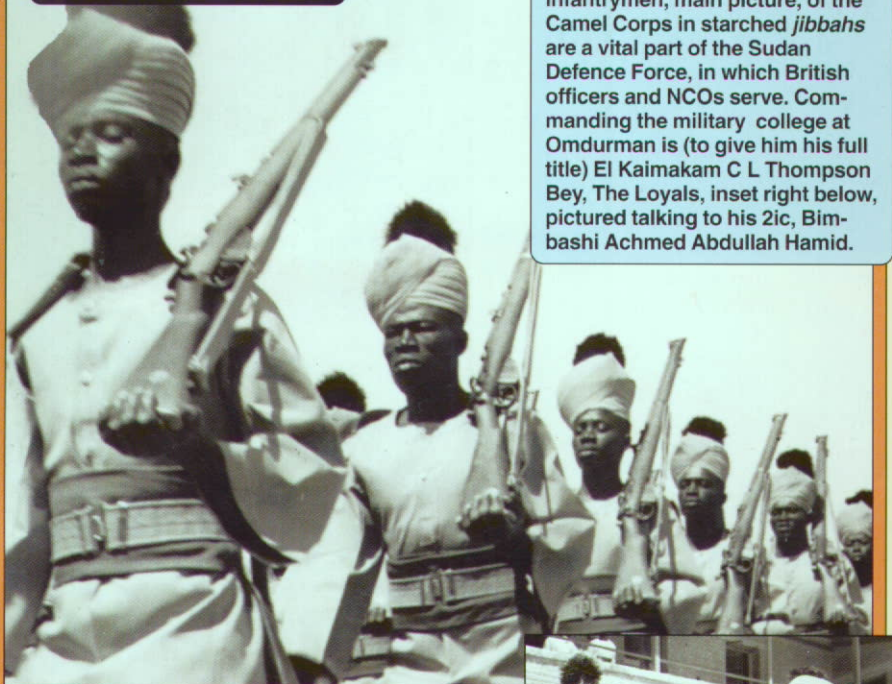
In a prolonged battle, infantrywomen seem to have a higher stress tolerance than ordinary infantrymen. I have known and fought with several female platoon commanders and NCOs and they were among the best I have worked with in any army.

But don't take my word for it. The Soviets employed thousands of women in front-line roles during the Second World

War and the bravery decorations speak for themselves.

Not every woman is cut out for front-line duties; neither is every man. As long as the tests and the training for both sexes are exactly the same there should be no problem in identifying the most suitable combat soldiers, regardless of gender. – Daniel Kington, Secretary, Croatian Forces International Volunteers Association, Surrey.

THEN AND THEN



50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, Feb 1951: Nuba infantrymen, main picture, of the Camel Corps in starched *jibbahs* are a vital part of the Sudan Defence Force, in which British officers and NCOs serve. Commanding the military college at Omdurman is (to give him his full title) El Kaimakam C L Thompson Bey, The Loyals, inset right below, pictured talking to his 2ic, Bimbashi Achmed Abdullah Hamid.

From *Soldier*, Feb 1976:

25 YEARS AGO

More Rapier

sales – The Iranian Government has entered into an agreement with the British Aircraft Corporation to buy the tracked version of the Rapier low-level air-defence system. It will complement the standard Rapier equipment already in service with the Imperial Iranian Air Force.



My motor-cycle course failed Army's grant test

RECENTLY I applied for the £175 educational grant to which every officer and soldier is entitled. I wanted to do a motor-cycle course while on Christmas leave and thought I could use the annual grant to help pay for it.

But the application was not approved on the grounds that it "does not match DCI JS 48/00 para 4A (substantial development value)". I thought my application would fall within the meaning of this very broad category as approval would mean I could gain another driving licence, enhancing my employability.

I then asked if I could use the entitlement to purchase the NVQs I am entitled to through my job training, to which the response was no.

When I asked what I could use it for, I was told anything that educates and uses the brain, for example a college course. With operations, detachments, exercises and guard duties to fit in, it's a good year if I can tell my family what I'm doing in two months' time, let alone turn up at

college on a regular basis. – ATpr A McDonnell, 663 Sqn, 3 Regt AAC, Wattisham Airfield, Ipswich.

▲ Driving courses are specifically excluded from the Standard Learning Credit scheme, so the unit was right not to approve the application, *Soldier* has been told. DCI JS 48/00 gives chapter and verse on eligibility for SLC claims. ATpr McDonnell may be entitled to claim a rebate towards the cost of NVQs.

These are the rules: a) Register your intention to claim SLC in advance with your Army Education Centre; b) You may not claim SLC for an NVQ gained through witness testimony only. There must be evidence of original individual work, preferably in written format, leading to completion of a portfolio of evidence. Work undertaken entirely as part of branch or trade training is not admissible.

If you can't attend college regularly, try distance learning. Your education officer can give you details of courses available through the Open University and the Forces Distance Learning Scheme. You can even take your books with you on operational tours, as do many soldiers in Kosovo and Bosnia. Some courses are available via the internet.

PS...

National Servicemen deserved recognition

NO ONE begrudges the award of the Volunteer Service Medal to the Territorial Army (Mail, Dec) ... it's just that it contrasts with the failure to recognise National Service with a certificate of merit, let alone a medal.

Most post Second World War National Servicemen served two years full-time, followed by 3½ years in the TA, on completion of which they were placed on reserve until the age of 45. All that with nothing to show they had served their country. The sacrifices that National Servicemen made were compulsory, whereas those who volunteered for the TA must have done so because it suited them. – Cyril Blackburn, London.

THE disgrace referred to by Lt Col Hamilton ("Reserve medal is insult to National Servicemen", Oct) is not that of the award of the VRSM but the fact that National Service went without recognition, not even a thank-you. Even the demob suit was not worth collecting.

I feel any form of sustained military service deserves some form of official recognition. – Lt Col A J Ley, Deputy Commandant, Devon ACF.

THE biggest insult to National Servicemen is the lack of awards for those who served in the Middle East during the 1950s, caused solely by governments trying to wipe this period from the history books because they made such a mess of the Suez situation.

Thousands of National Servicemen in the Middle East (even the ones who died or were invalidated out) got no recognition. Politicians would love to have this episode erased, but they will have to wait a while ... not all the 70-plus wrinklies are dead yet, which is what is needed before they succeed. Without volunteers, conscripts and reservists, Britain would not have survived two world wars. – W Occleston, Manchester.

Suez call to arms

DESPITE transport and health problems, ten Suez old sweats held court at Westminster before Christmas to discuss tactics on how the campaign to get a medal should progress. To this end we want Suezvets in the constituencies of Government ministers to beard them in their lairs and put over our case. – Robin Thorne, 18 Primrose Acre, Deanland Wood Park, Hailsham, E Sussex BN27 3SD.

Vox pop

The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

Being there

Debate over the wisdom of sending troops to train the hard-pressed Sierra Leone Army continue in Parliament and the media. But British soldiers on the ground are certain they are making a difference

Maj Paul McNicholas, 1 PWO, OC Trg Coy STTT4

The phrase 'tipping the balance' springs to mind. We have a clearly-defined programme. We see them at the beginning and we see them at the end and the difference is quite obvious.



Cpl Lee Kitchingman, 1 PWO

We have definitely made a difference. The reception we have been given has been unbelievable. Our presence on the ground has given them a sense of security.

Pte Kevin Field, 1 PWO

The locals are not so scared as they were. That's what they tell us when we go on patrol. We get the sense that they want us to stay on. There's nowhere I have been with the British Army where it has been so friendly.



WO2 Simon Paxton, 1 PWO

The Sierra Leoneans want to be at Bengue-ma, they want to be trained, and they want us to do the training.



Pte Adrian Shillito, 1 PWO

The soldiers seem to know their jobs much better now. I think we have made a real difference.



Cpl Craig Liversidge, 1 PWO

It is making a difference. Before, the Sierra Leone Army were killing and run-

ning away. We are teaching them the British way to gain ground and keep it.

Pte Danny Scott, 1 PWO

The Sierra Leoneans are happy that we are here and they want us to stay. They always give us the thumbs-up and wave wherever we go.



Cpl Paul Weldrand, 1 PWO

On the training side we could do with more instructors and more continuous training. There's a lot of pressure on instructors to get things done.



Pte Paul Mahoney, 1 PWO

It feels good when a child with no hands comes up to you and says: "It's now the RUF that feels scared."



Pte Ricky Beetham, 1 PWO

The Sierra Leone Army was very ragged when we first came. Now they are looking much more professional. The locals feel secure when we are around and they don't seem as vulnerable.

Interviews: Anthony Stone Pictures: Graeme Main



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