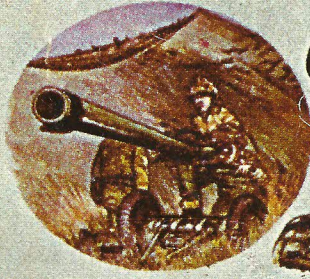


INVICTA



THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT



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THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

2nd BATTALION

THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

NORTH ARMAGH—COUNTY TYRONE

APRIL—AUGUST 1980

FOREWORD

by
**THE COMMANDER,
3rd INFANTRY BRIGADE.**

BRIGADIER C J WATERS, OBE

I am very grateful to the Commanding Officer for his invitation to write a short Foreword to "Invicta".

My message is very simple. It is "Thank You". For many of you this has been your first tour in the Province, others have completed many many more. But for everyone, novice or old hand, the challenge is the same—and it is an exceedingly demanding one. It is to maintain the highest standards of vigilance and soldiering skills so that the ruthless, experienced and completely immoral terrorists have the minimum opportunity to prey on the community. And the maintenance of these standards has to be combined with impeccable behaviour so that the ordinary law abiding decent citizens—the vast majority—draw comfort from the presence of the Army in their midst. This combination of skills and qualities requires the greatest judgement. But the yardstick of the success for which we are all striving is a quiet tour in which "nothing happened."

So to those of you who may be wondering if your tour in the Province was really necessary I can give you a very clear answer. It is yes, and the measure of your success is how quiet you have managed to keep



your patch. So again my sincere thanks to all ranks, and enjoy your well earned leave.

EDITORIAL

This special edition of 'Invicta' (the name given to the magazine of our predecessors—THE QUEEN'S OWN BUFFS) commemorates the 1980 tour in Northern Ireland. A sense of humour always helps a tour of this nature and the keen wit of our soldiers has been very much in evidence in our bases and hopefully is reflected here in 'Invicta'. As editor it has been enormous fun for me putting the magazine together. Much to the disgust of many 'young' officers I have been handy with my red pen—for a

small fee spelling mistakes, bad grammar and the 'stronger stuff' are available to the connoisseur.....

Many thanks to all the writers, photographers and cartoonists—without whom there would be no magazine. In particular I must mention all our 'Brownies'—photographers for the unenlightened. Not only have their results been excellent but they have always cheerfully and willingly coped with my PR demands as well as their primary intelligence tasks.

FRONT COVER

The special edition of Battalion stamps for use on the free Forces Air Letter Form—an idea of the Commanding Officer and Captain Bill Knight-Hughes. The stamps took the philatelist world by storm and were widely published in national, provisional and service newspapers.

BACK COVER

'YOUR SAFETY IS OUR CONCERN'—a copy of the card that was given to all vehicles passing through our vehicle check points and numerous pedestrians by our Foot Patrols. The proof of the pudding . . . LCPL KEN MANKELOW of 10 PI C Coy helping an elderly lady to safety following the car bomb attack on the Charlemont Hotel on 15th April in Armagh.

NORTH ARMAGH—CO. TYRONE

APRIL-AUGUST, 1980

The 1980 tour of Ulster really began in January with the commencement of the specialised Northern Ireland training starting with individual skills—the urban and rural range work at Lydd and finally a test exercise at Stanford in early March.

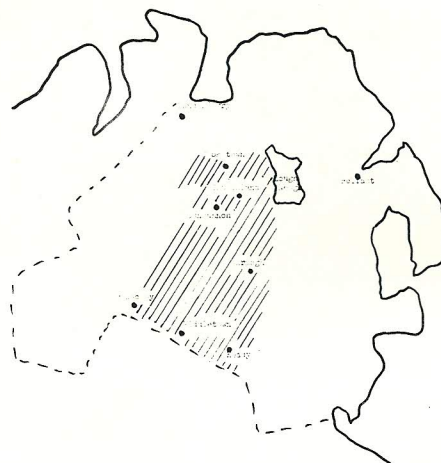
1200 hours on the 1st April saw the Battalion assuming responsibility for about 460 square miles of North Armagh-County Tyrone. The TAOR (Tactical Area of Responsibility) was bordered in the North by County Londonderry, to the East by Lough Neagh and to the South and West by the border with Eire.

A mainly rural area with three centres of communication—the city of Armagh and the towns of Dungannon and Cookstown. The countryside consisted of rolling farmland—narrow lanes, thick hedges and numerous small villages.

Operations were based on Armagh—although a city and boasting two cathedrals—one protestant and one catholic within 600 yards of each other—it is only a third the size of Canterbury.

The government policy—'The way ahead'—sees the responsibility for security gradually returning to the Royal Ulster Constabulary, with the Army assuming a supporting role. However the area still has to be patrolled—troops on the ground act as a deterrent against the terrorist and prevent him from moving his 'war' supplies with the emphasis on foot patrolling. Military vehicles are obvious and become easy targets for the terrorists so no patrolling by military vehicles takes place except in the city or town areas. The movement of patrols from base location to patrol area is done by helicopter or civilian van both day and night.

The original deployment was Bn HQ, C Coy and Echelon in Drumadd Barracks Armagh—A Coy less 3 PI at Cookstown—B Coy at Middletown with 6 PI in Keady—D Coy at Dungannon with 3 PI of A Coy under command in Coalisland. The Milan PI of



the Grenadier Guards were under command at Aughnacloy. Sunday 6 July saw a change in operational boundaries, and with the departure of the Grenadier Guards on 11 July C Coy took under command 6 PI at Keady and B Coy took under command the Aughnacloy location made up from a PI of C Coy with periodic reinforcement from A Coy.

Each company has been involved in one or more major incident—a selection is:

- 5 April B Coy had to deal with a 650 lb. culvert bomb.
- 15 April C Coy involved with a car bomb attack in Armagh which severely damaged business premises.
- 23 April D Coy had to contend with a blast incendiary device attack in Dungannon.
- 24 April A Coy involved in follow up operation to a blast bomb attack in Cookstown.
- 29 April A Coy faced with the problem of disposing with a 900 lb. culvert bomb.
- 14 May B Coy had an unpleasant awakening at Middletown. Just after midnight a man rushed in saying that he had been hijacked in the South and forced to put a bomb in the boot of his car and that it was parked outside. On investigating the car B Coy had about 200 rounds fired at them—they returned almost 400 rounds at the gunmen. No casualties were sustained by B Coy—whether any of the terrorists were hit remains to be seen—the shots came from across the border at a range of 700 metres on a very dark night.
- 3 June A and D Coy involved with blast incendiary attacks on two public houses. An ATO—bomb disposal expert—was seriously injured in attempting to deal with an unexploded device at the D Coy pub.
- 19 June D Coy called to support the RUC in an operation that netted 1200 lbs. of homemade explosive packed into milk churns and hidden under soil on the back of a lorry.
- 21 June 3 PI found two shotguns in a carefully constructed hide at Coalisland.
- 3 July C Coy assisted RUC in Armagh after a police constable was injured in a booby trap car bomb.

EDITORS NOTE:

At the time of going to press—11 July—no further major incidents had occurred and hopefully it will remain so until the Battalion is relieved by 1 RHF on 1st August, 1980.



Pte's Colin London (LCpl from 1st July), Mick Southern and Steve Yeomens of B Coy return to Middletown by Lynx after an operation in border country.

THE A COY LETTERS

A Company
2 Queens
BFPO 803
Saturday, 19 April

Dear Uncle Ned,

Glad to hear that your parole came up early and that you're back with the boys. Thought I'd drop you a line and let you know what's been up since I last visited.

After I left you I popped back home to slip the bird (you remember, the one the lads call Wombat) a little something to keep her going, then up to Colchester—wasn't too late, but felt lousy on account that she'd run out of booze and was using cleaning fluid that she'd liberated from the office to mix the drinks. Journey over here was bloody awful—you'd think that they'd find a better way to move the PBI around. It was like the bleeding Crimea—I tell you, if they moved horses like that they'd have the RSPCA onto them.

When we got here they shoved us straight out on patrol—escorting the Gunners back to Belfast—that's insult onto injury, watching that lot get their freedom and us with a month's stir ahead of us—April Fools!

The tour started with a bang, at least it did in Keady—some berk put one warmer into the bank at the clearing bay. Up here nothing happened apart from 1 PI doing their own version of the Northern Ireland Rally. You wouldn't believe it—half the Army looking for explosives, the other half driving around the 6 Counties touting a couple of tons of the stuff. We'll never know how they eventually got to the right place—at one time even the chopper couldn't find them. For an encore, the next day they ran a demolition Derby around the school grounds! At the final count they had four landrovers off the road.

The Int cell had a bad time to start with—Duffield got leaned on because he wasn't saying enough each night and then got verbal, or rather, written diarrhoea, then Moran nearly had the squits when the M.O. bird tried to inspect him in the shower. The rest of us don't think he was in much danger! The Int tell us that there have been several goes at the lads in South Armagh, mainly to do with cars—the word's out that we should go at cars from the front—doesn't make too much sense, though the bomb might not get you, but you'd look pretty stupid with an engine block instead of a belly.

We had a bit of luck in picking up one of the number one gunmen on our first Saturday—pity about the boat-race (I mean Oxford against Cambridge, not the gunman's) most of us missed it. Of course, now the fellow has been picked up, everyone's claiming that they took him single handed. It wasn't like that I



Milk Churns—a favourite container for ANFO—homemade explosive. These churns contain about 900 lbs and were found in A Coys area.

done it. 'Bout the same time B Coy found a culvert bomb down near Middletown—600 lbs.—in fact, they didn't find it, the Rucksack did. One bloody fool even went into the drain to take pictures.....lucky he wasn't vapourised, his brain must be! The PIRA are having a bad time lately—just before I arrived a couple of them got nabbed and one got shot close to Coalisland.

Here Aunt Lil's up the spout again—you didn't waste any time? 3 weeks is a bit quick even for you, isn't it? (Nudge, nudge, wink, wink). Keep an eye on Wombat for me will you? Don't want some punker turning her on to automatic while I'm away—it would cost more than two weeks pay if someone has a negligent discharge with her. By the way, do you remember Currie—the Lions fan? He's got himself caught having a negligent with some WRAC . . . Bet that'll turn out to be the most expensive night of his life.

Had a few finds ourselves . . . One of the officers found a toy pistol (it's about his mark) and a bunch of lads found a 2 lb. trout that some Paddy had left by a river bank—they seem to think we'd run 'em in for poaching if we caught them at it.....

It's like Vietnam for rabbits out there, especially at nights, but you'll never find a farmer who's heard a shot or ever even seen a shotgun. Talking about catching people at it, rumour has it that Garrick caught a couple in a car the other night and the QRF had to make a special run to get a video film before he'd believe that the bird wasn't attacking her boyfriend. Mind you, better than the couple in a transit in the Ardboe when the Gunners were here—this fellow stopped by the side of the road for a piss one night—when he got back in the van he found 8 soldiers had jumped into it!

Got a bit busy a couple of days back—C Coy had a beaut of a car bomb in Armagh that blew up more IRA shops than anything else—they also had a good fire last night. D

Coy have had dozens (or it seems like it) of suspect cars, bombs, ambushes but none of them have turned into anything—I reckon they've got the wind up down there, or else they're trying to get an MBE, or something. All we got was a few piddling hoaxes and a tip from Rucksack that there was a 'suspicious object' in the school—it turned out to be a plastic ball-cock.

I'll write you again soon—settling in here isn't so bad, now we've got used to living in a Police Station (seemed funny at first, seeing them all the time and not having to get out of their way, you know what I mean . . .) food's not bad apart from some black stuff that looks like sliced donkey droppings on Margate beach—OC says that there's an eel fishing industry here and they do jellied ones, so Mick's can't be all that bad. Give my love to Aunt Lil and tell her I wish her luck with number five—look on the bright side, the family allowance will be even better—and blow the Wombat a kiss if you see her, but keep your finger off the trigger, you might get caught in the back blast.

Yours,

SID

PS—You can write back—postage is free here.

McGregor's lament

My lemonade's run out again,
My drawer's been ravaged, what a pain,
The space-invader's on the blink,
A 5p piece dropped down the sink.
There's breakthrough on the Company
net.

And no relief for a long time yet

ANON.

A Company,
2 Queens
BFPO 803.
Saturday, 28 June.

Dear Uncle Ned,

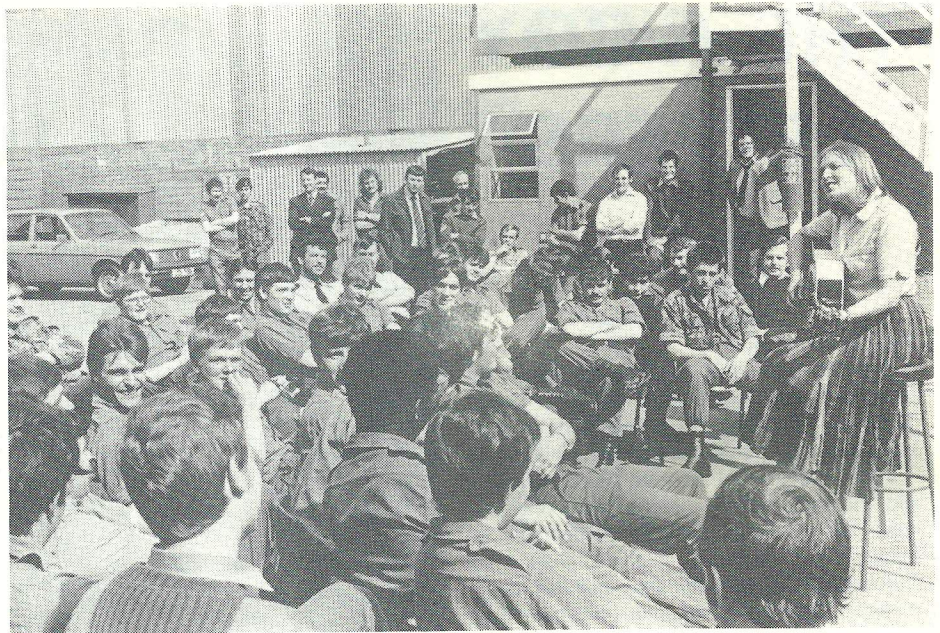
Seems like a long time since I last wrote—sorry I missed you on R & R, but I had my hands full with Wombat, if you know what I mean, and didn't have time to come all the way down to Parkhurst... You really do need your head examined you know—your parole had nowhere near run out and even you should know that everyone asks to see their birth certificates first nowadays!

Talking of R & R, you know it really is more trouble than it's worth. You spend the first half persuading the old dog to eat the 'Dear John' she wrote in the first month then the second half fighting off the skinheads and punks who seem to think they've got some kind of rights. And when you get back the people here seem to think that they can double-up on the patrols because you've been having a bit of a rest, or something. I tell you, I was absolutely knackered by the time I got back... good to have a few jars, though. (By the way, I've already had another 'Dear John' from Wombat—stuck it on the Coy notice board with the rest of them—they're not very original birds, are they? Apart from the names, the letters are all the same!)

A hell of a lot has happened here since April and the way we work has changed, too. Most of us have stopped using Landrovers (there weren't many of them left anyway); the new game is seeing how many civvie cars you can blow up in one week. We think D Coy holds the record. What you do is find a parked car that isn't locked, then tell the owner that it looks suspicious and ask him to move it. For some of them that's enough—they won't go near it. Some of them suspect straight away that there could be a new car in it for them... two days later... BOOM! It's much better than straight road accidents, the glass goes everywhere and sometimes the doors and roof peel right off. By the way, don't ever nick a Fiat—they've got no strength, it only takes a tiny charge to open them up like an old can of beans.

B Company managed to stay in the news with a gun-battle one night—or at least that's what they called it. They certainly put a hell of a lot of ammo down range and kept everybody awake all night. Next morning they found that all they'd managed to shoot was a couple of cows (and even they weren't clean kills)! I heard that the Officers' Mess is going to have a barbecue when we get back to Colchester and B Company's been invited to provide the steaks! They said, just to make sure, they're going to tether the cow to the unloading bay and give each of them a GPMG and two hundred rounds with tracer, in case the light's bad...

Charlie Company has been very quiet—suspicious that, really, until you realise that the poor blighters spend all their time area-cleaning down at Armagh... the OC thought they'd pushed off back to Colchester early, but I



A J Webber—visiting CSE folk singer—entertains A Coy at Cookstown.

checked on my way through on R & R, they're still there.

D Company have been busiest... at least, they're always on the radio. But when you stop and think about it they're mostly two day exercises that sort of fizzle out after a couple of days. They did have one good one though, they picked a load of explosives off the back of a truck. Story goes that their Sergeant-Major climbed onto the truck with their search dog (you'd have thought that the pooch would have had more sense), but when he realised what he was sitting on he made the Olympic qualifying time for the two hundred metres. In fact he had a crack at a few distance records too, he'd made it to Aldergrove airport by six the next morning. Old 3 Platoon tucked away for the duration in Coalisland had a bit of luck the other day—they found a couple of shotguns hidden in a wood. They're supposed to be stolen property—that would figure, if anyone's going to get caught handling stolen property it's bound to be that lot!

The real action has been up here with blast bombs, culvert bombs, car hijackings and even an attempted shooting. PIRA have had several goes at the local shops and hotels—nothing that you could call a raging inferno, exactly, but good for a giggle anyway. Most of them have been cock-ups—a couple of them were pointing the wrong way and they even forgot to take the arming pin out of one. In fact, as far as fires go, you did better that time you put meths instead of brandy on the Christmas pudding and Aunt Lil's hair caught fire. We also had a shooting, but the gunman wasn't much cop—he even missed the car with one round and we think that he had a stoppage after the second. With weapon-handling like that, he'd be a cert for 2 Platoon.

The biggest excitement came when the UDR found a culvert bomb out in the country and we had to clear it. (We think that 1 Platoon had actually found it the day

before, but left it for a day so that they would be off patrol platoon and wouldn't have to provide the cordon.) Of course, everyman and his dog wanted a piece of the action, but the star of the piece must have been the CSM, he'd left his torch behind and was trying to manoeuvre a chopper around so he could get Nitesun to shine down the culvert!

Of course there have been lots of little excitements, like 2 Platoon's eel-fishing, 1 Platoon problems shifting explosives by helicopter (they thought it would be easier on the map-reading than taking it by road, but it wasn't—one account had it that they finished up with the explosives in the Lynx, the Air Reaction Force in the Wessex and the RUC Constable underslung) and some of the cover-ups in the Ops Room make Watergate look like Andy Pandy's tea-party, but, thank God and bad comms, nobody knows about them.

Give my love to Aunt Lil if she visits, although I don't suppose she's getting about too much these days—it's a bit difficult when you have to use a forklift truck to get on and off a bus! Give my regards to the lads in Parkhurst and tell 'em I'm sorry I've lost touch for a while, but you know how it is....

Yours,
SID

Another poem

Embarrassed geographically,
Disorient'd navigation'ly,
Frustrated communications-wise,
Marooned where no helicopter flies.
Callsign one/two needs thirty late teas.

ANON
(From an idea by Cpl Sands)

B COY NOTES

INTRODUCTION

B Company were responsible for the main stretch of Border in the Battalion's TAOR in North Armagh. Company HQ, 5 and 7 Platoon being based in the border village of Middletown (300m from the border) and 6 Platoon who ran the small border town of Keady. 6 Platoon have led a mainly urban life keeping Keady (pop. 3000) stable and peaceful. 5 and 7 Platoon took it in turns to patrol a border ranging from wealthy Protestant estates in the North to high moorland with small Catholic farmsteads in the South. The platoons soon became used to 48 hr. patrols and the art of the long lurk. It was perhaps a sign of success that reports of illegal VCP's and hoaxes were soon non-existent. The PIRA knew we were about, but not where or when.

The company had two main incidents. The first was the finding and cordoning of a 650lb. culvert mine which was successfully dealt with by Felix. The second was a night gun battle at the Middletown base which was initiated by a hoax bomb being driven to the front of the camp in the middle of the night. Two groups of about four gunmen opened fire from 700m across the border and there ensued a twenty minute gun battle in which no side claimed hits. However the house near which one group of gunmen were firing from was well riddled by our fire. Rumours that the Battalion were going to adopt the B Company Sweat Shirts are untrue; or in the word of the CSM 'Rock on Tommy'.

COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

At the time of writing the tour is nearly over, and the majority of Coy HQ have had their R & R, with the exception of Cpl Hodges who has been labouring under the impression that the tour didn't finish until the 1st September and planned his R & R accordingly.

Pte Musgrove still hasn't quite got over the night the camp was fired upon. In the midst of the attack he was called upon to oil the Ops Room door which was squeaking. He can still be seen wandering around muttering to himself and shaking his head in bewilderment. Pte Cooper (who hails from that same mysterious organisation as Musgrove) is still awaiting delivery of a typewriter that can spell.

LCpl Routledge, our MT Rep, can often be seen emptying each tea urn into his rather large mug as soon as our two harrassed, but occasionally keen cooks—Cpl Rowe and LCpl Payne put one out.

LCpl Green and Cpl Bence are still entrenched in their stores, but much can't be said about them as Cpl Bence wouldn't give me any information without a signature.

Cpl Grieve and LCpl Hone (the Signal Detachment) have treated the tour with their usual detached calm and now find it possible to prepare for a PRE, answer a radio check, log 21G's security errors, say good morning to Capt Flynn, and make the OC a cup of coffee, all whilst answering the telephone. The CSM and Pte Montague are still engaged in their personal battle of wits. We think the CSM is winning as Montague is seen in uniform more often these days.

5 PLATOON

Although our tour has been quiet 5 Pl played the starring role in the only shooting incident in B Coy to date, the total score being two cows and a wounded chimney stack.

We have, however, had a fair share of injuries such as Pte Pudwell, who is now in Colchester with a broken foot caused by playing football on the heli pad (that's not what he tells his friends at home though).

Pte Davison must be near a record for receiving 193 letters to date and about 700 telephone hours.

Pte London was our only casualty in action, however, he prefers to keep his injury quiet but one of his pals did give him a soft toilet roll as a get well present.

Pte Smith 62 gets our bravery award for protecting Pte Bailey 35 from a herd of cows, both not knowing the difference between a cow and a bull.

Pte Kitson, the longest surviving Comd of 21B (Pte London having been wounded in battle) entered into competition with Miss A P Webber, a visiting singer, winning by a narrow majority with his hit single 'Puff the Magic Dragon'.

Finally our thanks to Pte Batcock, RAMC (attached to whoever's on Guard) for keeping most of 5 Pl on the road during a difficult and action packed tour.

6 PLATOON

6 Platoon, B Company, C/S 22 were located in the small market town of Keady. This has a population of over 3000 and supports the local farming/smuggling community and many OTR's. It is known by the RUC as the Thermometer for North Armagh, but we have not found where they put it to get an accurate reading.

As the tour progressed we came up to full strength. The local population were more friendly than we had been led to believe and as our knowledge of the locals increased they became reasonably well disposed to us. Apart from looking after Keady, which has been incident free, we had an area of countryside in which is the village of Darkly. This seems to be a Coronation Street which lost its way and ended up on the side of a bog.

Being an independent command brought its trials and tribulations which ranged from the Battalion Hierarchy to the Bde Comd. Sgt 'Buffalo' Prangnell (he's got a sister in the WRAC Provost) had most of the administration taken off his hands by Sgt (I'm always fixing it) or (Jimmy Savile isn't a patch on me) Knowles. CSgt Whittal staked his claim as the Keady Acorn in preparation for taking over CQMS B on return to Colchester.

Our attached personnel provided us with a welcome respite. Sig Scott was beamed back to UK mid tour and replaced by this 'Canny bag of Tudor' Gray (North of the Thames), renowned as the only man the girls at Coleraine had to put the phone down on as he is unintelligible. LCpl Bollington our resident MASH has led our assault on the Multi Gym, while LCpl Durrant and Pte Walker, our cooks, have managed to keep our weights up.



The B Coy (Middletown) picture as organised by the CSM.

The 6 PI Search Team in civvies awaiting transport greeted the latest arrival:

Pte R (Anon) Where are you going? (just arrived from the Depot and NIRTT).

Pte Thomas. Downtown for Fish and Chips, then on to Merries to see the bird.

Pte R. Is that allowed?

Pte T. 'Oh yes, Mr. Turk always lets a few guys out every night—as long as they aren't in uniform'.

Pte R. Any chance of me coming?

Later on in the Ops Room the PI Comd was highly impressed with Pte R's keenness to get out—Clarabell goes off. The Chopper screams in low over the base, lands and spews out members of 22H, 22I and a lot of hydraulic fluid. There was normally something to break the tedium!



The B Coy (Keady PI) picture—Nice try Sgt 'P'—you might just make CSM!

7 PLATOON

The Northern Ireland Tour started off in a brisk manner for the Platoon when we were pulled out of a 48 hour lurk to a cordon a 650 lb landmine on the main Middletown/Armagh Road. Here LCpl Nevill established his fetish for radio checks and we promise we will never forget him. The Platoon has specialised in the art of the 'long lurk' and even the 'old sweats' brick of Yeomans, Southen and London have had to brush up on their map reading.

Sgt Giles, when not in the prone position, has continued his search for food. You can imagine his joy when on sitting on some straw he found a large consignment of illegal Kerrygold butter. LCpl Harrison, Ptes Bailey and Lockwood have been involved in a number of Company Search Operations although with no success. However in the first search, in Armagh City, they found a false wall which the owners supposedly didn't know about.

Several members of the Platoon have got themselves a reputation for letter writing for different reasons. Pte Dillon is presumably on the road to married bliss, or else he has a share in the profits of the Post Office. Recently, Pte Hoade, who, in his bid to remain pure by using Dettol, received a letter from the firm offering him 30 cwt of Dettol at 50% reduction. Surprisingly the Dettol firm make the same spelling mistakes as our Int Cell.

THOUGHTS ON THE INT CELL

Tac Int—No comment.

Coy Int Sgt—Drinks coffee and watches television.

Collators—Try to drink coffee and watch television.

JUST C COY

THE VIIIth BOOK OF INVICTA

- i. And it came to pass at that time that the men of Sek-Batt, who were part of the host of Brit, did return from Calpe to Camulodunum in their own land of Uk.
- ii. And they did bring with them their goods and chattels, their wives and children.
- iii. But the Lord MOD to whom the men of all the host of Brit did give their allegiance, spoke thus:
- iv. "You shall winter in Camulodunum, but it has become needful for thee to depart once more to the land of the Hibernians.
- v. One hundred and twenty two days and nights shall be your appointed time among the heather; and for this time shall you bend them to the will of MOD".
- vi. And the men of Sek-Batt did cut their hair (for this was the badge of the host of Brit) and gird their loins. They did look to their weapons and their chariots, and travelled the land of UK to practice the art of war against the rebel Hibernians.
- vii. And in the spring they were ready and did depart for the land of the Hibernians amid the weeping and wailing of the women.
- viii. Now the men of Sek-Batt were divided into five centuries. Four of these did fight, while the fifth did give aid and sustenance to the others in matters of supplies, weapons, chariots and the passing of messages. And over all the men of Sek-Batt did rule their leader; and his name was called, Bar-Ow.
- ix. And Bar-Ow spoke to the men of Sek-Batt, and bid them go forth among the heathen to their appointed regions. And the men of the first century did invest the north, the second the frontier to the south, the third the major city of the southern region, and the fourth the major city to the north. Yea, and the men of the fifth did plant the sacred totem called Tak with the men of the third century, and did live also in the major city of the south.
- x. But the men of Sek-Batt were surprised, for much had changed since their last visit to Hibernia. And the heathen were much pacified, and only rarely did the rebels foray against the men of Sek-Batt and the loyal Hibernian tribes who also owed allegiance to the Lord MOD.
- xi. And Bar-Ow spoke to the centurions, who spoke in turn to the men of Sek-Batt thus: "Beware the cunning of the Hibernian rebel, and be alert to the danger, for though his forays may be fewer, verily are they more dangerous.

- xii. And the men of Sek-Batt did set about their task, and did all in their power to frustrate the rebels. Although it came to pass that the men of the second century were attacked, and the rebels did attempt to bring fire to the cities of the north and south, their attempts did fail.
- xiii. The men of Sek-Batt did rejoice, for they had kept the peace in the troubled land, and the Lord MOD looked kindly upon them. Yea, and after one hundred and twenty two days and nights the men of Sek-Batt did return to Camulodunum and did rejoice.
- xiv. For the Lord MOD has said to them that for a thousand days they should not return among the Hibernians. Instead they would have sojourns in the land of Germ and the New World, and that they would visit also Aphrodite's Isle in the Inner Sea.
- xv. Thus endeth the viiith Book of Invicta.



Pte Tim Rogers of 9 Pl C Coy on patrol in border country.

THOUGHTS FROM KESTREL C/S P3

- OC—Instigator of much chaos and confusion.
- Ops Offr—Director of much chaos and confusion.
- Pl Comd—Target of much chaos and confusion.
- CSM—A man who would like to say something constructive but there is always too much chaos and confusion.
- CQMS—Sometimes involved in the Coy chaos and confusion but generally is involved with the Bn chaos and confusion.
- Pl Sgt—Nothing is ever right and if there isn't a problem then one can always be created.
- Brick Comd—Loves mobile patrols and tries to avoid foot patrols.
- Pte—Untroubled by the complexities created by his seniors.
- Storeman—Either in the television room or the choggie shop.
- Coy MT Rep—Hasn't learnt to drive yet but can fill out a work ticket.
- Sigs Det—Slightly deaf and resigned to the chaos and confusion.
- Coy Clerk—Only man who knows what is going on.

THOUGHTS ON TAC HQ FROM C/S P3

- Kestrel—Would be lost without his helicopter to juggle with.
- Seagull—Never quite sure who is actually in C Coy.
- Pronto—Can't use the intercom properly.
- RSM—Enjoys talking to C/S 2 + 44 on the Bn net.
- CSgt BRITTON—Spent 4 months dreaming of winning the British Open Golf Championship.
- CSgt WILD—Believes everybody breaks the radios deliberately

AN 11 PL SONG

Chorus (to the tune of We're Sailing)
We're patrolling, we're patrolling
across the grid squares on the map.

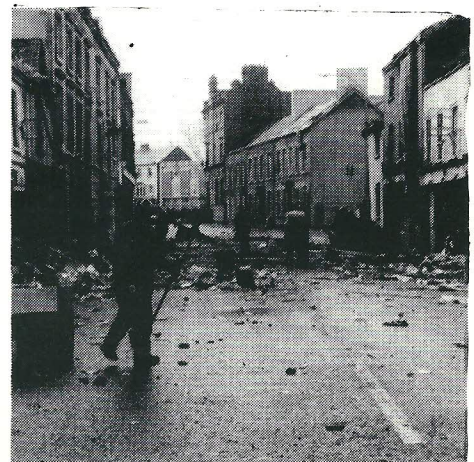
- 9 Pl 31's lurking
White is burping
keep the noise down
and stay awake
come tomorrow routin
changes.
bet a fiver we get back late.
Chorus.
- 10 Pl 32's
there out rat-trapping
for 15 minutes in every hour
found a body deploy the
Company
how long we're out here for
we just don't know.
Chorus.
- 11 Pl 33's staggung
the guard is flagging
15 privates 2 NCO's
4 fatigue men
to the cookhouse
how we manage
we just don't know.
Chorus.

- Ops Room In the Ops room
maps and wall charts
cigarette smoke fills the air
Stop complaining
It's only raining
the RAF are in the air
with Op's room locating
remove our clothing
slide our pinkies
into sheets again.
Chorus.

THE OPS ROOM POEM

Car mean's out
get the tea
stuff the troops
there's a film on at three.

We've found a dog
let's clear the air
we'll call is Charlie
that seems fair.
Capt HARPER's on
stag today
his voice procedure
will show us the way.
The Patrols return
they've done their work
How the Op's Room have
the nerve to shirk.
They've gone to bed
'Do not disturb'
Pass their room
without a word.



2Lt Phillip Lenanton at Ground Zero.

THE END.

D COY IN DUNGANNON

AN OFFICERS DAY

1230: I receive my early call and get ready to face the dangers of being a soldier in Northern Ireland (starting with the lunch meal).

1330: Time to call in and see the man with his finger on the pulse (holder of the D Company account) Captain A J Roberts. He will task me with a highly important mission, such as emptying one of the sixteen fruit machines in the company. Or if he has time (he is a very busy man) he may give me a combat mission. Some rather unkind people in the company say that due to his lack of 'on the ground' experience his tasks are a waste of time. I just can't agree with this: tonight I have been told to lurk the railway station, always a prime PIRA target. Admittedly there hasn't been a railway in Dungannon since 1908 but the Ops Officer is always right, though sometimes his grid references can be a little bit out. If he keeps sending us into Southern Ireland to set up VCPs we'll create a pattern.

1400-1630: Drums Platoon Orders.

1630: The OC's conference starts. The OC is a strange man who tends to stay in his office counting the money in the company account. To help the company funds he works for the char wallah's in the evening making cheeseburgers. But considering he is on loan from one of our TA battalions he is doing very well. He does seem to live in fear of visits from the man they call Niner. I have never met Niner, subalterns are a rare sight when Niner visits (almost as rare as a C Company Incident Report).

Anyway this conference should be a short one, the Ops Officer only having 127 points to bring up. It is interesting to note he is wearing his urban patrol boots and gloves (I suppose he will have to wear them, in somehow). Half way through the conference OC anti tank platoon falls to the floor asleep, though nobody appears to notice. When it eventually comes to the subalterns' turn to speak only OC Drums has anything to say. It appears another five of his Platoon (including the Drum Major) have gone absent into the town. Fortunately the CSM says Company HQ can fill in.

1700-1730: I do my stag in the rear sangaar. Unfortunately she is still on holiday so I let a soldier take over.

1730: I call into see IO North. IO North is a figure of great respect amongst the subalterns, this is due to the high office he is to become, SEAGULL MAJOR! Though in NI he is very casual with the subalterns and we are allowed to talk to him, he is known (for reasons of security) only by his codename FMT 3.



Pte Vince Brown and others from D Coy deploy onto the M1 (Northern Ireland) motorway.

There is a strong rumour that he is to be decorated at the end of the tour. Apparently whilst travelling in his covert patrol vehicle he kept some schoolgirls under surveillance. At the same time a lorry driven by a terrorist attempted to run these girls over. Fortunately IO North managed to ram the back of the lorry saving these girls (of course the other reason he must remain anonymous is so he can continue to claim vast sums of money from the army).

1745: ERIC (IO North's link man with the secret seven) rushes into the office with a hot tip. ERIC, though only a LCpl in the Pioneer Corps, commands great respect throughout the INT CELL (how does he grow his hair so long?). Apparently a female impersonator is to appear at the Feather Club this evening. IO North immediately reaches for his INTSUM.

1800: I stop to talk to some of the COP in the Comcen. They turn out to be civilian workers.

1805: I make the seventy-third amendment to NISOPs. 'Bidding for Squash Courts'. This is done using the shredding machine.

2100: I start watchkeeping duties in the 'nerve centre'. D Company Ops Room. As part of this article I wanted a definition of watchkeeping so I asked the Operations Officer. He replied 'what's watchkeeping?'

2330: The 'hot' line to Captain Kestrel (Chief knife fighter) rings. We have been allocated 600 vacancies for the Harry Secombe show in Armagh. It is unfortunate that we cannot take up this offer. Fortunately A Company have a day off from the squash league so they can help us out. This is arranged via the lemonade line to Cookstown.

0005: The town centre is destroyed by blast incendiaries, we don't react—probably a come on.

0100: We receive our INT Brief for tonight's patrol from IO North designate

(alias 2IC A/Tk PI). Then straight off into the streets of danger.

0120: At last a victim drives into our VCP so I ask him the standard 3 questions. Is it his car? Would he like his car completely dismantled? Or would he prefer to buy a set of Queen's Regt stamps. We have to take his car to bits. Well only another two months or 20,000 sets of stamps to go, which ever comes last. Luckily I am a regular officer.

By the Ex-OC Mortar PI.

OPS ROOM OR BUST

'OK' they said, 'you can go up to Dungannon for a holiday', this was received with much glee and happiness, then we arrived!

Given a guided tour by the then present occupants, we were led to believe that the 'Comcen' doubled up as a broom cupboard, and TV room for the Bald Eagle alias the Ops Offr or even Sir to his close friends.

"Don't worry", they assured us, "you'll get used to it, eventually". "Where is the Ops room", I wondered, "oh it's through there", they answered, "but that's not important".

On moving into the Ops room we were surprised to find at least half the contents in working order, well, at least we could talk to people.

After explaining, in intricate detail, the various talk through and 'interfaces' and the dreaded 'Victor' machine' 16 AD left us to our own devices. Thus it was that, amidst hums and buzzes we settled down to the routine of, 'Hello 4 this is 41L car check. . . .'

During the various problems that arose, there was always a chance to smile, when, whilst listening in to the UDR net, a sweet but soprano pitched voice say; 'OK over' in reply to our repeated radio checks.

On occasions things did all happen right, including the night when a voice was heard to say; 'Hello 4 this is ?"Q"?! contact, (pause), Cancel out'. As people climbed down from the ceiling, it was realised that some sort of system was required.

Meanwhile in the Communication Centre the Bleeps, (oops sorry R. Signals), were by now into their second teleprinter, the second of many. On many an evening verbal abuse aimed at the stupid machine, could be heard drifting off towards Lough Neagh, which incidently, was also the setting for many a romantic sunrise, which melted the heart of even the hardest Radio Operator.

The biggest problem appears to be the continuous ticker tape, produced by almost continuous interruptions of sleep by Brigade sending endless NIREP after NIREP.

The inevitable radio checks and continuing stream of coffee did much to enhance the drag stag, and cause brief pauses during daily chatter.

Just as the routine settled, someone said 'Right, we'll build a new Ops room to share with the UDR', and they did.

For several weeks transmissions were interrupted by loud hammerings, and on occasions the Kestrel would disappear to help knock down a wall or two.

"When will it be ready?" we all asked, "3 weeks maybe 4, don't worry", they promised us, "you'll get in!"

The day to day life was sometimes disturbed by long-haired visitors, who stayed for varying lengths of time. Nobody was really sure who they were, but rumour control had it that they only smoked Embassy's.

About a month after the banging started (and another Kestrel was sunning himself in England), a large group of people arrived, bearing toolbags of varying shapes and sizes. Their chief, in a manner similar to a judge pronouncing the death sentence, said, "We're come to move your



Pte Ernie Fuller or Brownie gets a close look at the lorry which contained 1000 lbs. of explosives packed into milk churns and hidden under loose soil.

Ops room". But we didn't want to move. "The workmen are nowhere near finished", we said. "Well", said the voice, "You're moving". And we did.

Within the hour C/S 4 was reduced to using a pocket radio, and vehicle station, being operated whilst walking between old and new Ops rooms, transferring Maps and Operational notes.

Meanwhile the Comcen had been stripped, and the Bleeps, now looking aimless and lost, were reduced to stripping out power points, and carting box after box of paper roll to their new home.

So now as we settle into our new home, midst alterations, more hammering and constant radio problems, we have the new problem of persuading Greenfinches to make coffee, a task which proves to be very long and very arduous. . . .

CORPS OF DRUMS

Since leaving Gibraltar the Corps of Drums have gone through some changes at the top. We said farewell but not goodbye to WO2 B LIVELY, and congratulations on his promotion to WO1—we are sure that 6/7 Queen's will gain from his vast knowledge and experience as their RSM. Sgt R WARD has returned from a long rest at the Depot and taken up the appointment of Drum Major.

After some minor hiccups and getting used to English weather, we settled into the Colchester way of life. Our tatty scarlets were given a rest and put into cold storage after two years' constant use in Gib. We changed into our role as GRAVEBELLIES proving once again that the word FLEXIBILITY originated from the Corp of Drums. 2Lt NOAKES, RAOC, joined us as platoon commander for our tour of N. Ireland, and it soon came to light that a 2Lt does not get paid very much, always pleading poverty.

We packed, unpacked and packed again, and after a few hard night's work, earning a living for the local pub owners, off we all went to Lydd and Hythe for a stay at the seaside and perhaps a bit of training. Once again the word hiccups comes in as we were constantly suffering from them, what with drummers taking unofficial holidays and wives expecting their first additions, we all lived in fear of what was going to happen next. At the end of our training, with lots of hard work done by all, we were all looking forward to our two weeks' leave. With the blink of an eye we were at the end of our leave, and on the boat for our three day cruise to the Emerald Isle. Most of us managed to keep all our kit in order, and not many kit checks were recorded, the crossing was quite calm. On arrival at Belfast a lot of happy faces were there to meet us, we were treated like royalty, everyone was very nice, soldiers were waving and ushering us on coaches, unloading our baggage from the ship, we were whisked away to our company locations, and onto the street face to face with the real thing.

As soon as one of the seats was emptied on the coach one of the Artillery filled it, we couldn't understand the rush! Anyway we soon, with some help from the rest of the Company, had Dungannon and the surrounding countryside under full control.

We would like to thank the Bn Band for the great show they put on when they visited us (Cpl Tim Stankus, should see a doctor about them things growing on his chest) and look forward to some hard work together on our return.

ROGER SO FAR OVER? THAT'S ALL FOR NOW OUT.

COALISLAND PLATOON

Three months ago, 3 Platoon arrived by helicopter in the sleepy township of Coalisland to replace the battle weary troop of H Troop 16 AD Regiment.

Coalisland SF Base, a platoon position, is co-located with a RUC station. The camp is very small and cramped, the accommodation being split between two portakabins, an enlarged cupboard and an attic.

Duties are on a 48 hr rotation, the two sections either patrolling or guarding the camp in either "the box" or "the cell" (the two sangars).

The platoon is split into two sections and an HQ element.

13A is headed by Cpl Steve Dunstan who never gets "geographically embarrassed". His trusty band of men includes Ptes Phil (Cpl) Callow who is sourced as being after a tape, Pete Evans, who spends his time answering Visor penpals ads, Radar Sargent who likes leaping under beds when loud bangs are heard, and Mark (Des) O'Connor who fixes the platoons TVs when they are broken.

13B is led by LCpl Dave Thorne and includes Ptes Wayne 'Sniper' Griffin, John Berrill, the right Scotsman, Ash Hollick, who decided to see what convicted terrorists are subjected to inside HM Prisons during his R and R and Dave Mayers who destroys GPMGs.

LCpl Jim (Fat Belly) Duncan is the leader of 13C and the platoon search team and is hero worshipped by Ptes Andy 'Big Foot' Anderson, Pete 'Busby' Brickman who lives in the telephone kiosk, 'Larry' Lloyd who loves being gunner, and 'Pat' Pattison who is busy planning a honeymoon in a trench in Germany.

The unflappable LCpl 'Chalky' Mendes (Nigger to his friends) heads 13D. He is renowned for his friendly attitude towards surly locals!! His brick consists of Ptes 'Kelloggs' Pedder, who leaves his GPMG ammunition dangling on barbed wire fences, Deve 'Mork' Maund who never complains, Andy Sandy who has just joined the platoon, and Paul 'Jap' Spearman whose ambition is to be a civilian.

Platoon HQ includes Sgt Dave Haynes, a NAAFI salesman. LCpl Terry Mitchell the Int

wallah who sits awaiting his retirement on 8 August (a sad loss to army golfing), LCpl Andy Love, and the platoons own David Bailey, LCpl Gary Cleaver who so far hasn't poisoned anyone, Pte Nigel Tyler who is also mentally preparing himself for the tribulations of civilian life, and Dave 'Nurse' Kemsley who sells exempt shaving chits at low rates.

The platoon has been quite busy over the last months. All bricks have carried out the usual urban and rural patrol tasks, including VCPs, Lurks, Pub Checks, Searches, farmers daughters and trawls.

We have also helped the RUC in numerous lifts, attended a number of incidents, including a bomb at Derryvale, helped D Coy in planned searches, and found two shotguns, four gloves and a mask.

The patrols have adopted a hard targeting approach to patrolling in the town due to the number of shootings there in the past. The closest so far to the real thing has been a car back-firing in the centre, which had the sangar sentries looking

D Company has been our parent company, and we have welcomed elements of the mortar and anti tank platoons to the 'front line' for retraining. A new video recorder in the Ops room will be able to debrief these patrols more fully on their patrolling techniques!! Special mention must be made of Captain Roberts for his guidance and enthusiasm between 1200 and 1800 every day.

The platoon has had a reasonably interesting time out on a limb. Being able to do your own thing has probably meant that it was more enjoyable, though the platoon is looking forward to getting back to cleaning barrack blocks in Colchester instead of cleaning the corridors and outside areas of Coalisland.



Pte's Paul Spearman and Paul Lloyd with the two sawn-off shotguns they found in a search near Coalisland.



Stage 1—Start a game of football outside a cordon—small boys soon gather.



Stage 2—Having knocked the ball about—a few friendly words with the children. Not a Sergeant Majors nightmare—its Int at work.

A WALK ON THE WILD SIDE WITH INT CONTINUITY CELL NORTH

A telephone rings in the office, he drags himself away from his backroom and picks up the receiver. He listens patiently the victim of all forms of ridiculous requests from FINCO and SB, he shows interest and

finally pulls a stubby pencil from behind his ear.

'You say there's an unattended invalid carriage in the Rugby Club', he manages to keep the excitement out of his voice.

Half an hour later, his conscience worrying him, he buzzed Sgt J, the office manager, on the intercom.

'We've just had an anonymous telephone call, sergeant'.

'Not black death again?'

'No, it might be important, shall I tell Ops?'

'Good Lord No, they never tell us anything, I'll be right across in a minute'.

Sgt J alerts the rest of the Int Cell who arrive one by one.

Capt W arrived sober, it's a Sunday and special Branch only go out drinking when they can claim overtime.

'I wonder if I can have a word with you, sir', says Sgt J.

'Not more R & R?'

Sgt J looks hurt but puts the IO(N) in the picture. The IO(N) sits behind his desk and drums his fingers.

'I want this one checked out', says Capt W! 'Then I can predict that the Rugby Club will get blown up and be right for the first time on the tour'.

'I've still got the Intsum to do', says Sgt J.

'I told RIC I'd be up there in 45 minutes' says Sgt F.

'Since Acorn Minor has gone OTR, it looks like you and I Sgt F'.

'Why do both of us have to die, boss?'

'We all have to make sacrifices, I have to work with D Coy', he continues! 'This is what we'll do—I'll dress up in Rugby kit and Sgt F will go in drag. The Doctor's here doing sick parade—she can lend me the Rugby kit'.

Sgt F by now, has got into the spirit of the thing.

'Do you think we'll get a chance to shoot anybody, boss?'

Capt W looks worried and thinks 'The guy's a burke'. He throws a cushion onto the driver's seat of the covert car so that he can see over the buckled bonnet on the modified, shortened version of the Chrysler 180 and turns the key.

10 minutes later with collators pushing the car past the guard room Sgt F jumps in, Capt W crunches it into gear and they kangaroo down the hill past the police barrier. It finally starts at the roundabout.

'So far so good', says Capt W. 'I don't think anybody noticed'.

They ignore the woman in the Thomas Street Barrier who blows kisses and the policeman who flicks a jocular 'V' sign.

The Rugby Club is deserted.

'Well this is going to be about as covert as wearing an orange wimpey jacket,' thinks Capt W.

Capt W starts to dribble the Rugby ball across the car park towards the stationary invalid carriage, gets in and reverses over the rugby ball. The engine on the Chrysler dies as it runs out of petrol and the two start to walk back up the hill to base.

'And they want to know why I'm transferring to the Staffords', thinks Sgt F.

INTERMISSION



Quotations at Cookstown

'There is only one good driver
in 1 Platoon (OC 1 Platoon,
'I didn't put my foot through
his ceiling. Well, not
exactly . . . ' (LCpl Moran)
'I know it says that in Bn SOPs, but they're
being amended . . . ' (Bn Ops Offr)
'Nobody's taking my Q-car' (Bn 21C)
'There's no noticeable damage—we don't
need to do an FMT 3.' (LCpl Croucher)
'Doesn't anybody know the tune
to Hymn 37?' (Padre)
'When will it be convenient for your
platoon to visit the dentist,
Sir?' (LCpl Bennett)

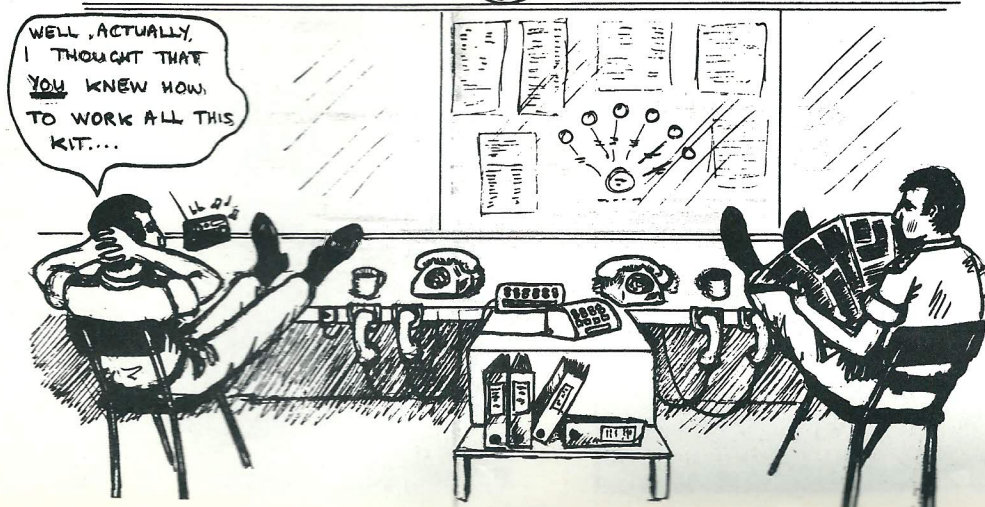
'There's a lot of crap talked about
Stilton cheese . . . ' (Bn 21C)
'Up, down, up, down, I—like—P—T,
1—2—3—4 . . . ' (Pte Howes)
'They found the eels walking along
Battery Road.' (OC 2 Platoon)
'Has my relief booked his
early meal?' (Coy 21C)
'British Rail gave me the wrong time/train/
platform/station.' (Various soldiers
late back from R & R)
'I thought it was Monday we had
to be back.' (Various soldiers
early back from R & R)
'No Sir, it should have been
Paraman/Watts this morning .
(Watts/Paraman)

'I didn't touch the alarm button—it
just went off.' (Various front
sanga sentries)
'Some soldiers in Q-vehicles look more
suspicious in their civilian clothes than
they would in uniform . . . ' (CO)
'There's a lot of crap talked by the
21C about Stilton Cheese.' (Adj)

A POEM

Clutches that burn,
Backwheels that churn,
Macrolon's diseased,
Gearbox has seized.
Callsign one/one may never return.

ANON.



DUTY CALLS

However C Coy always seem to be eating sandwiches!





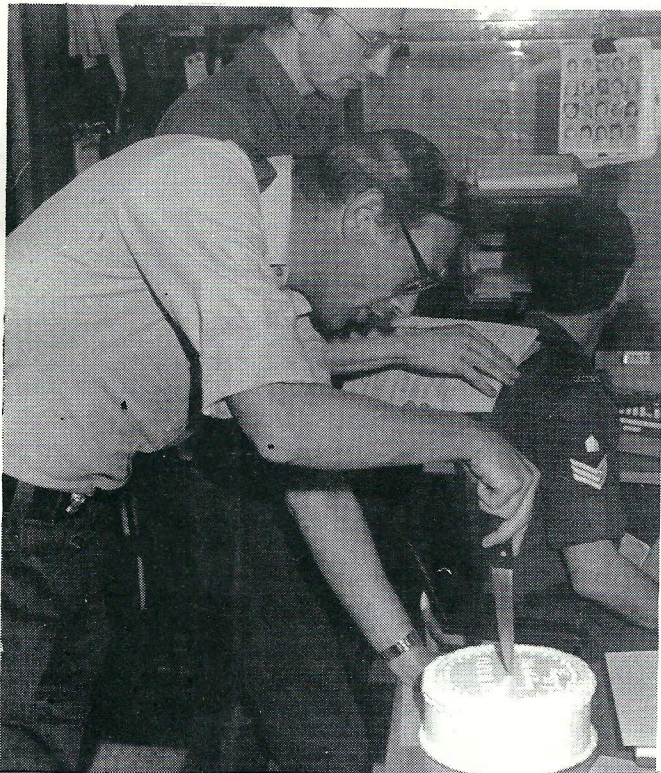
LIGHTER MOMENTS FROM OUR LEADERS



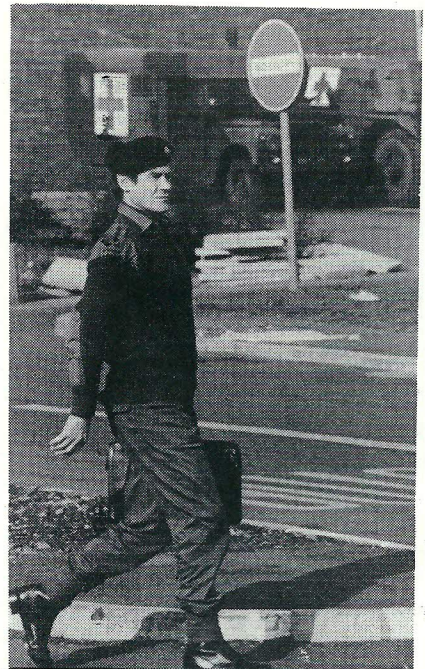
I always come up smelling of roses.



Nearer my God to thee—actually I wanted my photograph taken with the GOC Northern Ireland.....Ah well.....



No Colonel—SOPs clearly state the knife should be inclined at 45 degrees.....My boy, when you've cut as many birthday cakes as I have.....



Hi ho, hi ho, it's off to work I go—should get a 'Black Bag' appointment if I can keep this image up.'



Eagled Eyed—Lantern Jawed—a 5 o'clock shadow—a French cigarette (trying to copy his leader)—without a doubt a man from Mothercare!



Of course, being a TA Officer, I'm quite used to this.



You're looking tired CSM—been out on patrol or something.



Now come on chaps—it's a nice sunny day—please stop cluttering up the courtyard and go out on patrol.



OC B Coy welcoming the President of the Methodist Conference for the 'Blessing of the lettuce' ceremony at Middletown.



Why does the 2IC have to turn every operation into a 'Point to Point'?



Intelligence here—where the hell do I hang the microphone—I never had any trouble with the telephone in my previous job.



Things are different in A Coy.

TAC HQ

KESTREL

The Bn Ops Offr is far too busy issuing amendments to SOPs to have time to write anything for 'INVICTA'.

PHOTOGRAPHIC SECTION

Thanks to the Companies sending plenty of film in, we nocturnals of the Photo Cell have a good idea of what the outside world looks like. Just lately we have put in a rehabilitation plan so we may slowly adjust to light and sudden bodily movements, this incorporates 3 or 4 circuits running around Armagh Camp under the supervision of one ruthless Sgt Dennis Delaney.

We have been very fortunate in having Major Bishop as PRO, who apart from having had 2 years previous experience in PR work has kept our morale at a high pitch with his good humour and cheerfulness. Unfortunately we will soon be saying good-bye to Pte Gary Priddey alias David Bailey as he has decided to take up photography as a full time career with the Ordnance Corps. I have a sneaky suspicion that our re-habilitation programme has been the cause of his sudden wish for departure.

Not to forget little Ernie Fuller who is our man in Dungannon who not only has been kept busy with Int Stags but has kept up his normal standard of good photography throughout our tour of duty. To summarize in general the standard of photography down to brick level has progressively improved through the tour. To whom it may concern, all compromising pictures have been destroyed.



A search team get to the bottom of a problem.

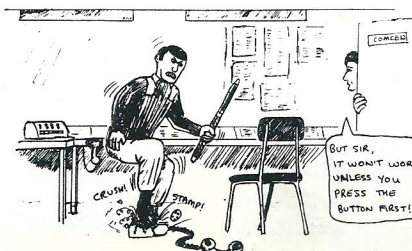
TAC INT AND SOUTH (PERHAPS)

The swelled ranks of the Intelligence organisation arrived in Armagh up to three weeks before the rest of the Battalion. These stalwart young men, the advance guard of the war machine that was to follow, bravely turned their faces to the wind, and let their flowing locks trail behind them as they bore the war of brains to the province.

Everyone soon went about getting to grips with the terrorists. Meanwhile raincoats, trilby hats and black glasses were drawn from the QM. Then we sat back and waited . . . and waited . . . and waited . . . This was obviously going to be a battle of nerves. Who would break first? It didn't take long before we found out. The not-so-dulcet tones of the RSM soon informed everyone that, whatever the threat, this Battalion would not entertain 'bloody crows' in its ranks. After checking our list of appointed titles it was assessed that this term referred to the Int personnel and the lengths of their hair. We had lost the first battle, but the war was still on.

The peace and tranquility was hardly disturbed until that fateful day. The 2IC's Training Programme landed on the table with an enormous thud. Everyone awoke instantly. This tome (big book) struck fear into the hardest of our number. One of our corporals insisted it couldn't be done. We explained what we were talking about, at which point he became confused and returned to contemplating the size of his stomach. With the kind of voice that had once given us an empire, the IO cried 'Early morning runs!' 'It can't be done!' screamed our portly corporal as tear gripped his loins. But it was and may this be the epitaph of our Int tour:

'Never has so much weight been gained by so many and lost by so few.'



IT'S A FAIR COP OR SOCIETY'S TO BLAME

The Close Observation Platoon, COP for short, is sure to be a new term to some.

The COP is the odd piece of jigsaw, as there is no establishment for such an organisation. So the 'standard' was raised in Gibraltar where a selection cadre was run. It was important that the platoon should consist of the better soldiers in the Battalion, and it was hoped that we found a good number of them.

The main task of the Platoon in Northern Ireland was, as the title suggests, close observation of selected targets. This involves several skills not covered in normal infantry training, not least the use of SLR Cameras. Individual skills had to be brought up to a high standard, as living under a bush for five days, without being detected, requires extremely good personal fieldcraft and willpower. The NCO's, due to the complexity of the operations, spent many long hours preparing and delivering long sets of detailed orders.

Most of the training took place in Colchester although the final polishing was done on courses run by NITAT at Lydd. The COP moved to NI with the pre-advance party of the Bn and had their final testing at Ballykinler, with members of the Second Battalion The Parachute Regiment. The 2 PARA gym staff tried to give everyone blisters by running over the sand dunes, adjoining the beach (pleasant scenery, best seen walking the dog on a Sunday afternoon). Still the range work and practice of drills was very valuable.

We arrived at our new home Armagh on the 25th March, to be welcomed with open arms by our counter parts from 16 AD Regt RA. The main body of the Bn was due to arrive a week later, so we spent our time driving around our TAOR and patrolling some of the main towns, in keen anticipation of carrying out our first operation.

The first four weeks, were very disappointing, work was not forthcoming. So rather than having local leave and guards we spent most of our time on Patrols on the border (not nature rambles as some thought). We had some fine weather and I'm now convinced that everyone knows why cows need minerals!—after a friendly farmer took it upon himself to educate us! It was also discovered that the term Farmer's Daughters patrol (chatting up farmers and their families) is wrong, because we didn't find any daughters!!

At the quarter point of the tour, we hadn't shot anyone, crashed any vehicles, or run over any old ladies, but work started to trickle in. It's amazing how easy it is to build up trust with the intelligence agencies. Since that time we were kept relatively busy and have been quite successful.

We did try to civilianise ourselves, although after a period the Regimental Sergeant Major in the end persuaded us that civilians do have short hair! R & R



Our 'Steely Eyed' Adjutant and the Orderly Room Beavers.

came and passed, I admit the soldiers returned more tired than when they left! The Platoon CSgt had the bonus of going to Germany to help the RHF train, although it turned sour when no one could discover when he was due to return. But he did—clutching his duty free—and soon got back down to work.

Whilst 'ON PATROL' we realised that most of the countryside although very picturesque is also very wet! On many occasions a young lad had to be extricated from a peat bog only to be put at the rear of the formation—down wind. At the end of such operations we were welcomed back to our accommodation by our Admin. NCO who resembles a villain from a Victorian Melodrama.

At this point the Motor Transport Dept. must be mentioned. We know that at times we were a pain, but their efforts were appreciated, although it was a shame that we didn't get the cigar lighter in the van! Also talking of our van the QM took a large interest and we were touched by his concern. Of course we had a platoon pin-up, and were very lucky in the fact that she was constantly with us—caring for us—yes it was our MO—who adorned our Ops room captured on Kodacroma—whilst playing football at Lydd. We had to do these zany things in the quieter periods, and I extend the Platoon thanks to the old lady from East Grinstead who kept us supplied with a quantity of balaclavas and tins of plum cake.

Enough of this nonsense—All in all a successful tour, but we would have liked to have been a little busier than we were. But of course this is a reflection of Northern Ireland which is a good thing.

THE ORDERLY ROOM REPORT FROM 'THE FRONT'

Contrary to popular belief the Battalion Orderly room has been heavily engaged in the war. It has been a campaign highlighted by insidious infiltration by a highly trained, well motivated enemy pressing home their attacks on all flanks.

There was considerable fifth column activity even before the first shot was fired in anger. They took casualties to Int losing Sgt Les Jordan, Cpl Pete Rogers and Pte Val Gates, all to a cunning attack of long hair; until the RSM fired a few shots for freedom. This left a small but dedicated band of fighters (or is it beavers) to resist.

On arrival the enemy were quick to press home their attacks with sneak raids by Seniority Roll, Telephone Directories, Passports, NOK Cards from within and Railcards from without. They were cut off from the outside world save for the occasional sally forth by 'Bugsy' our modern day version of Wells Fargo. Not unnaturally further casualties were taken. Pte Bam Bam Barker had to be carried out of the squash courts on a stretcher and Cpl Henry drew blood trying to get fit when he fell over on the road with surprise at managing to get up at 0630 for a run.

Despite these cruel attacks the heavy clatter of typewriters, the crump of duplicators and the smell of correctine are still coming from the BOR who remain as ever INVICTA.

SHITEHAWK.

SIGNAL PLATOON

'Sir, Cpl Grieve says he's being given a hard time,' who is Cpl Grieve and where is he based? 'Sir, Cpl Love says comms have gone again,' who the *@*@! hell is Cpl

Love?!! That's just one of the problems of taking over a signal platoon which is already deployed in Northern Ireland.

On the whole communications have gone extremely well up to now, despite what CSgt 'Oscar' Wild says (I'm afraid even Cpl Loveridge's placid nature won't stop the bouncing around of the stores telephone).

There is no truth in the rumour that LCpl Lovell is taking over from Sid Vicious on the guitar, at least that's what the Exchange operators tell us but who knows? We have received a complaint from the Teleprinter/Comcen team: 'Why can't we flog the cups of coffee to the Ops Room Staff!' The amount they get through we could make a fortune! (Acott will never learn).

All the Signal Platoon are now of course looking forward to the return to Colchester when BFT's await them—and of course the chance of real signalling on Exercise CRUSADER. Can you imagine our ARSO WO2 'Bill' Jones and Cpl 'Mick' Fallows as No 1 and 2 on a line party?

SEARCH CELL

Way back in December, 1979, the Bn Search Teams had been picked and the USA's (Unit Search Advisors) arrived at a Royal Engineer Barracks in the South of England to start the searching with a two-week course. A good course but bad weather was our companion. The final approach man clad in body armour, approaching a suspect explosive device with rain beating down is not what one really had in mind about search but the course was very essential.

It was early February '80 that saw the USAs back at the RE Bks. but this time with our Search Teams. A total of 58 QUEENSMEN systematically searching the South of England is a sight to behold. We are sure the RE's were glad to see the back of us. Our training continued back in Colchester, at Lydd and Hythe and at Stanford. Now we were ready for NI.

Four months and some 100 plus planned searches later we can say that our teams have met with some success, but as always we were never satisfied. Over the four-month period we either found, or were connected with finding, at least one of every type of item that search teams look for—ammo, shotguns, rifles, explosives, timing devices, incendiary bombs, culvert bombs (to the tune of 1,550 lbs.) and our full share of hoaxes.

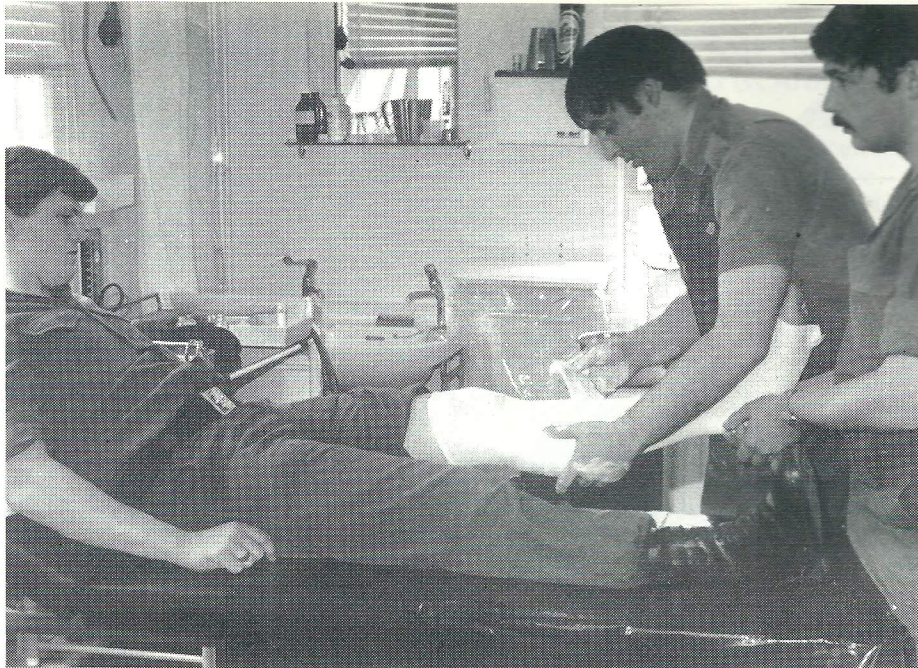
Of course the tour was not without humour. Early in the tour it was decided by D Coy to search an island on the Lough in their area. So far no problem but how do you get a six-man search team plus their equipment over to an island in a 7-foot rubber boat? With great difficulty, came the cry from the search team, all pointing to Cpl Brazier, all \$&+! stone of him. Their troubles increased as they found out half way to the island that the boat had a slow puncture, but slow enough to get them across without sinking.

Not to be outdone C Coy decided to do some potholing and the only person who had done any of that type of work was the Bn USA (CSgt F). Loaded with torches and the magic light polestar, off they went in search of big holes in the ground. After setting up the ICP in the mouth of the cave all that was found was mud and fox & \$ + !. Moral: 'If you don't like this hole find your own'.

Area search A Coy in D Coys farmland area—while searching a field full of cows it was overheard if you leave the cows alone they will leave you alone—this was said while the cows were at full gallop. Result: two search team members each making their own path through a blackthorn hedgerow. One stuck on top and the other lying on his back looking up at a milk laden cow muttering "I'll never touch another drop!"

B Coy Search Team—rubber boat job—cordon supplied by the Guards—target Old Fish Farm now converted into a swamp full of pike—boat supplied by Royal Engineers (no slow puncture this time). A good day was had by all. Packed lunch—fine weather—morale high. Then it started to rain so with water below and above the searchers really got wet. Morale still high. A searching pair with thigh waders arrived at the ICP after searching the swamp bank. A chance remark from the cordon 'At least your feet are dry', you must be %& + ! joking, the boots leak.

To supplement our diet a sharp eye was kept out for local produce and during our tour our tables have been graced with stuffed pike, rabbit and trout. All items were donated not stolen!!



I know the hospital said it wasn't broken—but I need the practice.

ECHELON JOTTINGS

Although not always in the 'front-line' of things in the same way as the Companies Echelon has continued to support the remainder of the Battalion and attached units in its usual cheerful and efficient manner. A very sincere thank you from your 'stand in' commander—yes—Major Thompson returns for CRUSADER—for all the hard work and long hours that you have put in ensuring that everyone was clothed, fed, paid, documented, doctored, etc., etc. . . . I believe there is nothing else for me to say—the different department notes and pictures speak for themselves.

THE QUARTERMASTER

We were tasked to provide up to four paragraphs for this current project of our Public Relations Officer. Not unduly difficult you may think, but then you do not perhaps realise that all of our work is noteworthy and to find four particular incidents of interest caused some concern.

The Defence Auditor's, watchdog of the public purse—visit caused some palpitations and various personalities—the TQMS, Sgt Bob Morrison and LCpl McLeod among others—started to get chilled from high altitude flying. The QM, SQMS and Sgt Knott, whilst not getting cold, got noticeably greyer and the Doctor complained yet again, about the reduction of her daily portion of fruit. Is she now getting enough?

The messing staff, normally reticent about their achievements, have, in order to dispel any rumours concerning their activities to point out that they have used vast amounts of food in preparing some of their exotic offerings to the Bn gourmets. Among some of the figures they quote as having been used over the last four months are:

56,000 lbs. of various meats, 256,000 slices of bacon, 202,000 lbs. of potato (all peeled!) and a quarter of a million eggs. The Second-in-Command, others might wish to know, is believed to have consumed 150 lbs. of Stilton. The amount of bananas dispatched to Cookstown in mint condition is unbelievable. LCpl Armstrong and Pte Lowther do not agree—they never do!—with these statistics but then they have to lift the goods. Lowther maintains that he does it alone.

HANDS HAULAGE, suffered a minor disaster a few weeks ago when parts of it's one and only truck parted company along the road. Cpl Hands, the Haulage Company's only driver, was not amused by



Of course we're good at our job—the messing officer is 'Living Proof!.....Alright—so he has to have a rest between the QMs and the mess.

some of the comments made regarding ability.

Finally, two quotes—with thanks, and apologies, to the original authors—that the Hawks of the Bn should bear in mind.

"Before the fighting proper, the battle is fought and decided by the Quartermaster (and his Staff). The bravest man can do nothing without arms, and weapons are useless without ammunition.

AND

"The objective of all dedicated Quartermasters should be to analyse thoroughly all situations, anticipate all problems prior to their occurrence, have answers for these problems and move swiftly to solve these problems when called upon . . . However when you are up to your A&+! in crocodiles it is difficult to remind yourself that your initial objective was to drain the swamp.

THE PADRE—MORE BRIMSTONE THAN FIRE

The Padre arrived in Northern Ireland fresh from Sandhurst and ready to take on the world, (well a small part of it anyway!!). Everything was arranged, on arrival at Belfast Docks his MOD number plates were to be removed and replaced by Northern Ireland ones so that his Ford Escort would look like an ordinary civilian one. Problem number one—HQ NI failed to arrive with the number plates, so with the Adjutant and the RSM riding shotgun in another car we set off for Armagh.

From there on the Padre's tour consisted mainly of getting around the locations as much as possible.

Driver: Hello Armagh I am carless now but will be returning to your location with Brimstone.

Armagh: Who the %&+! is Brimstone.

Driver: Now there steady on that's the code name for the Padre.

Armagh: OK see you when you get here if you get here with his driving!!

What with an official codename like Brimstone and being asked to spend one night in the Ops Room experiencing what is commonly called the Doomwatch one would have thought that the Padre's job was simply to spread gloom and dismay among the Battalion. This hopefully was not so and in fact the tour had many lighter moments, such as singing hymns unaccompanied and changing both tune and key halfway through, or being taught how to play squash and taking enormous swings at fresh air while the ball bounced gently to the back of the court.

For the most part though, the tour consisted of being available when men wanted someone to talk to. All in all the tour went well despite the problem of not having a car for a part of it. Finally the Padre preached in the Local Presbyterian Church in Armagh on the last Sunday of the tour in that way, hopefully, helping to share in the work of reconciliation in the community.



Mafia Inc—Our 'Goldfingers'.

MAFIA INC or THE UNIT PAY TEAM with

CAPTAIN MIKE CROSBY, RAPC. as THE GODFATHER

"Excuse me SSgt McMurray but I have just lost my last 5p in the welfare telephone, can I have a casual?"

"Hmm, sign here. Anything else?"

"Not really, apart from the unpaid gas, electricity and NAAFI bills I have left my wife with."

"Don't worry, the paymaster will send them cheques—sign here. That it, then?"

"Yes, apart from wanting to change my R & R dates, airport and railway warrant."

"No trouble, sign here. Sgt Singers will sort it out when he gets back from Aldergrove. Anything else?"

"No, unless you can cancel my newspaper order."

"Cpl Wood will do that for you when he gets back from visiting locations with the Paymaster, just sign here. Finished?"

"Yes, though I feel guilty at those bills—can I send my wife some flowers?"

"No problem, complete and sign this form and LCpl Perry will fix it up when he comes off sangar sentry."

"Thank you Staff, that's all for now."

"Any pay queries you want to talk over whilst you are here?"

"Good heavens no. My pay account is

no trouble at all. I really don't see what the pay staff find to do all day!!"

SOME INTERESTING PAY OFFICE TOUR FACTS AND FIGURES

84,000 5p coins counted from Drumadd Bks seven welfare telephones.

9,600 newspapers ordered and distributed.

£240,000 in cheques written by the paymaster.

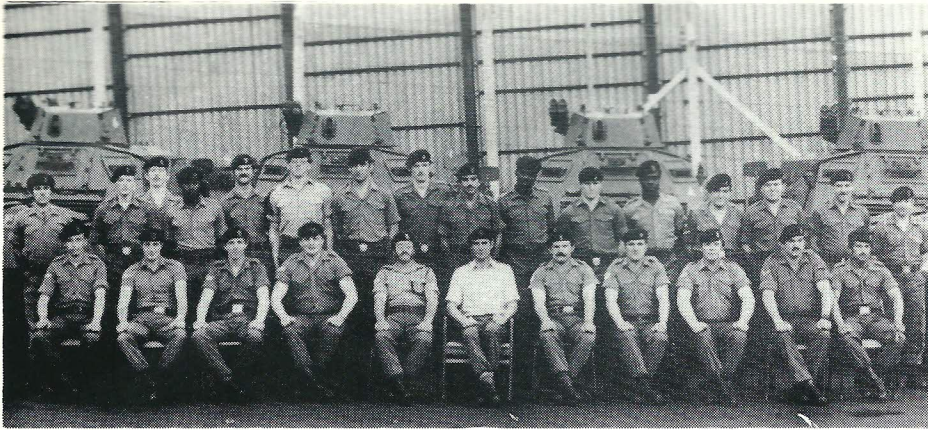
574 flights booked to 12 airports for R & R leave. 1,005 railway warrants issued.

Bullock's taxis

THE MT PLATOON

The MT Platoon have travelled extensively during this four month tour of duty, doing a total of 81,424 miles—658 miles per day of which most have been covered in covert cars/vans. Also the driving standard has been high with this department having only one accident in the complete tour.

Each Coy has had an MT NCO & REME Fitter attached for the tour. Cpl Keith



MT Platoon.

Croucher (Congratulations on your Cpl's stripe) and Cpl Bob West at Cookstown with A Coy. LCpl 'Horse' Routledge and LCpl Pud Sandham REME, have kept B Coy on the move. Good luck to 'Horse' on his tour in Belize. LCpl Pip Ayres has enjoyed his tour with the City Coy in Armagh, we have a feeling in the central MT that he keeps 'his' secret MT Stores topped up by means of his daily visits to us. LCpl Pat Byrne ably supported by Cpl John Crouch and Cfn Jimmy Cowen REME, who have worked well as a team with D Coy at Dungannon. They reckon they deserve Signals Flags, after doing so many Op stags, Sgt Cliff Wheeler who is detached from the PI to Aghnacloy with 2 Grenadier Guards as their Admin Sgt (which is another story) has knuckled under and worked hard at his new job.

In Armagh, Cpl Eric Thorne (good luck on posting as MT Sgt to Warminster) has slept with his telephone for four months and must be congratulated on always completing the daily details in many cases robbing Peter to feed Paul! Even the MTO could not understand how it was possible with everything off the road.

CSgt Brian Older (congrats on obtaining Pay of Higher Rank of WO2) has been kept busy processing the 16 traffic accidents; supervising road taxing of the car/vans and collection of replacement vehicles and has been responsible for the smooth running and testing of the HGV Cadres, which we managed to get through, and the smooth running of the PI, but he still can't beat the MTO on the squash court.

Cpl Simon Boddie, the servicing and inspection king, had the inevitable task of making sure vehicles were serviced on time, 'Well done' on a good PRE Team Report. Cpl Les Vinnicombe was the HGV Dvr Instructor for the three cadres we ran, and is to be congratulated on a high standard of students, but was heard complaining bitterly that the four-tonner was the most unlikely uncovert vehicle in the Province (colour Blue). Good luck Cpl Vinnicombe on his next posting to the RIT at Maidstone.

LCpl Andy Anderson has spent many hours in his little office at the POL Point and done a good job including a good

Audit report. We wish him well on his return to Civvy Street. 'Watch out America' here he comes.

Pte's Ginge Madder, Carl Cox, Lighting Gordon, Taff Evans, Junkie Lamptey, LCpl Pitchers (a late addition to the PI from the RP Staff, welcome) have all worked long and hard at their jobs with never a complaint. Well done all of you.

LCpl Ian Ratcliffe has driven the Commanding Officer over 10,000 miles in this tour, it is rumoured that he has got to re-sit his L/Rover and Bedford driving tests again, as he has forgotten how to drive them! Pte Emmanuel Dacosta has been the Bn 2IC's driver (car). He has run, polished and driven himself silly for the last four months. Last but not least Pte Jim Ford, the PI Clerk, who returned from R & R with a big cheesy grin, ??? but with the very unusual haircut. He leaves the PI after the tour, having at last passed his driving test, Well done and good luck on your next post.

ACROSS THE ROAD IN ARMAGH, YES THE LAD

The L.A.D. have struggled hard during this tour either getting up in the morning or sweeping up in the afternoon neither of which are pleasant tasks.

The chief slave driver being Sgt Pete (have you heard this one) Stockdale with his two electricians and five VM's or grease-monkeys, the electrician being LCpl Geordie Clark who still can't understand why he gets dirty doing a gearbox change, and Cfn Sid Bignold who still hasn't learnt to play the guitar, but manages to upset the office staff next door while practising. Among the cotton waste and oil drums if you look hard enough you may come across Cfn 'Monster' Whyte, who, if he's not servicing vehicles, is trying to get off guard (or is it on guard) good luck for his next four months on tour with the Scots Guards in Belfast.

LCpl Dave Provins, is the two eye see (2IC) or so he says, we only wish he wouldn't wear his mask all day (or is it a mask?). Thanks for all your help and the best of luck when you return to the RA.

Cfn Mick Vickers has managed to survive the tour but is definitely going to the 'dogs.' We all hope you get on and enjoy your dog handlers course, and give our best wishes to the dog. Cfn Tony (I can drive a truck) Phillips has gained his second class trade while being here and also passed his HGV driving test, well done, pity about the coffee, but I'm sure he'll improve with practice; last but by no means least Cfn Dave Madill who'll sit quietly reading his book and only mutter 'I don't drink the stuff, why should I make it?' thanks for coming at short notice, we've all appreciated it.

In closing we would like to thank all the drivers especially Charlie Coy who have ensured we had a constant supply of work. We just hope they get the hang of the driving lark before we go to Germany!

ARMAGH MINI MASH OR WAS IT 'SMUT'

We thought the MASH image was far too tame for our elite group. After all, the intensity of preparation that we carried out in our NITAT training (even to the extent of falling out of cars (enthusiasts take note) should not go un-noticed. So, in the footsteps of the 'Specials' (Air service, Boat service, Patrol groups etc.) we became S.M.U.T. . . . the Specials Medical Underground Team.

So how did we spend our time? Did we really merit the title S.M.U.T.? Yes, very much so. And nothing to do with the Playboys and Mayfairs decorating the Med Centre ablutions. Purely anatomical instruction those. Day to day care occupied much of our time, both in Drumadd and in visiting the locations. This was peppered with the infrequent 'urgent' call out, but no case was ever desperately serious.



Armagh Mini M.A.S.H.

THE BAND They came—They played—They went

. . . . leaving behind them numerous photographs adorning walls in each of the locations with scenes from their hilarious home-produced cabaret show. It provided a welcome spot of light relief.

In addition they played for schools, hospitals, old people's homes and provided open air concerts for the people of North Armagh.

Bugsey also got to play the cymbals.



We did volunteer for this.....



Happiness is a raincoat.

They also served

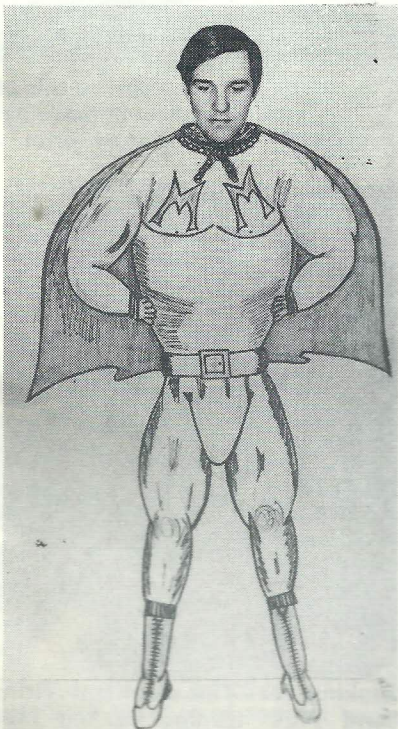
For three parts of the tour we had under command the Aughnacloy Based Anti-Tank Platoon of 2nd Battalion The Grenadier Guards, commanded by CSgt Kevin Fairchild. Captain Mark Sewell was actually the location-commander but the CSgt did all the work. The PI returned to Munster on July 14 having been relieved by 10 PI C Coy and small numbers from A Coy. A well done and thank you for the

way you never let us forget that you were Guardsmen (or is it Grenadiers?)

It would be unkind to move from the sublime to the but Border Troop 6 Arty Sp Sqn RCT—part of 3rd Armd Div Tpt Regt commanded by Lt Jerry Pettet (sorry I had to leave your article out Jerry—we ran out of cash) also supported us by providing our armoured taxis.

Even though the Saracens (cans) are

really only used in emergencies the Armagh section were always busy—the ageing cans needing much love and care to keep them on the road—Also Border Tp has the problem of 46 men in nine different locations—two of which can only be reached by helicopter—To you as well—a very well done and our sincere thanks—Have you paid for the mattresses yet?

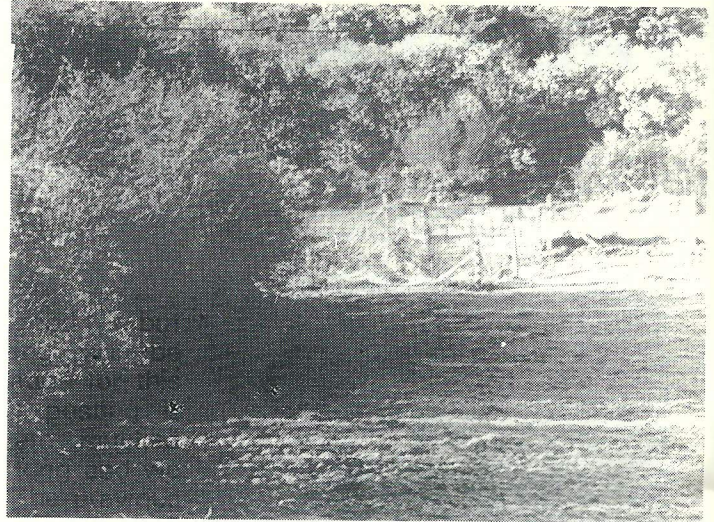


Captain Mark Sewell Grenadier Guards in Stockbroker attire.

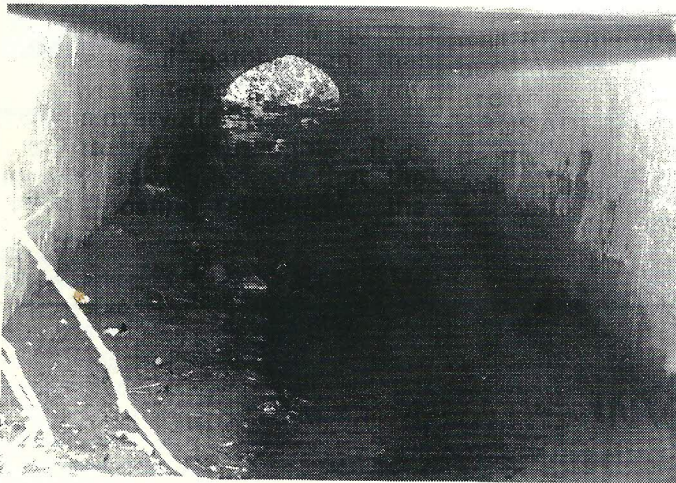


They also served.....Members of Border Tp 6 Arty Sp Sqn—our 'can' drivers.

WHAT WAS THE THREAT?



The peaceful sunlit countryside of North Armagh.



A typical example of the many culverts that abound throughout the area.



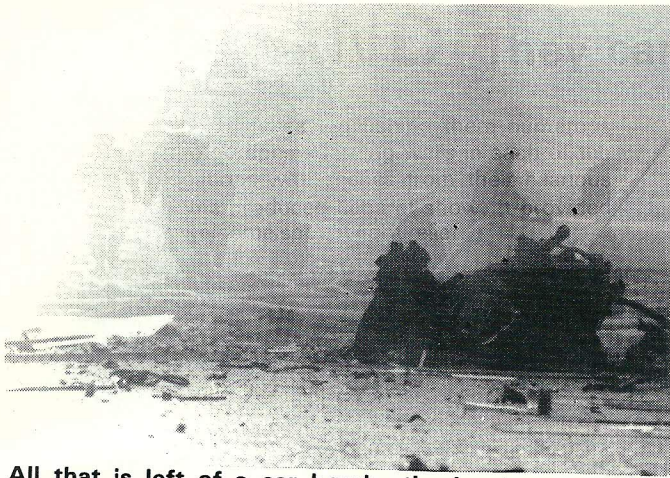
Milk churns full of ANFO—homemade explosive—this 650 pounder was found in B Coys area—it has been made safe and moved from the culvert onto the road prior to destruction.



This is ANFO—the explosives is made by using farm fertilizer with an Ammonium Nitrate content in excess of about 30% and possibly mixed with diesel oil.



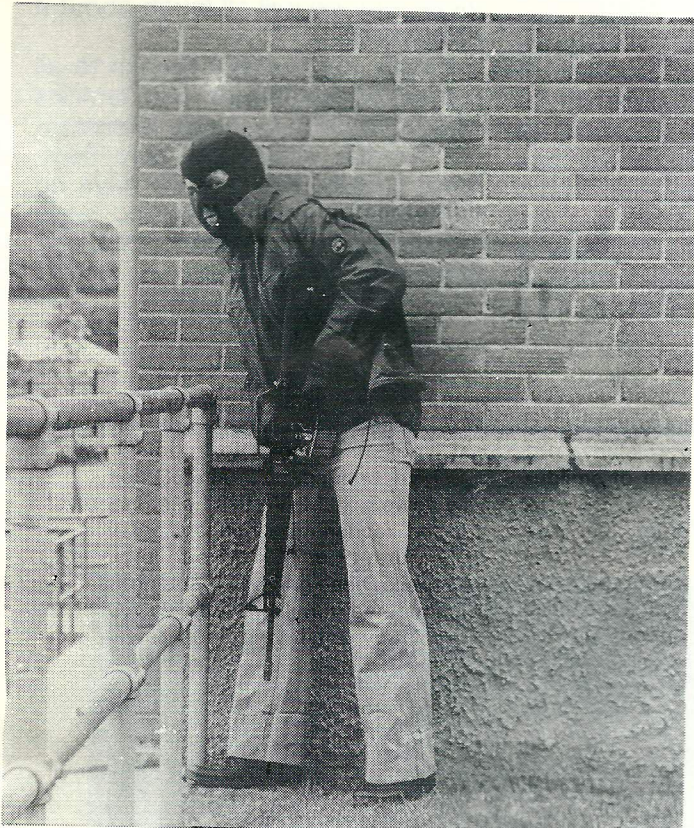
This is what you are looking for—The electrical 'Firing Point' with a 'Command Wire' leading to the milk churns—could just as easy be a 'Radio Controlled' device in which case look for an Aerial.



All that is left of a car bomb—the boot was probably packed with explosive.



Crowds and protest marches are rapidly becoming a rare event—however, C Coy have had to face stone throwers in Armagh on more than one occasion.



The 'Gunman'—his favourite weapon is still the Armalite rifle which can fire automatic as well as single shots—as this member of COP will verify!



A simple 'Booby Trap' device consisting of a magnet and a small amount of explosive can quickly be placed underneath a vehicle—An RUC Constable received serious injuries to his legs in this attack.



The weapon most used against business premises is the 'Blast Incendiary Device'—normally explosives and an inflammable liquid combined—the results can be devastating.



Apart from the drivers seat area very little damage is suffered by the remainder of the vehicle.

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

LIEUT. COLONEL P de S BARROW

It is inevitable that people will ask us what we did during our tour in Northern Ireland. It is hoped that this magazine will produce some of the answers as well as reminding us of some of the lighter more humorous aspects that always occur, even in moments of great danger. We have done our task with dedication, professional expertise, and, have been noted for our charm and politeness at the same time. It is a measure of our success that we leave a quieter more peaceful patch than that which we entered—for this my thanks to everyone.

Now to other thoughts. It is generally acknowledged that the present posting is lousy, the

previous posting was good fun but that the next posting will be fabulous. The explanation for this is easy. The present posting is lousy because we are mucked about, the hours are long and we have little free time. The previous posting was good because we only remember the happy times and even distort the unhappy moments. The next posting is fabulous because we are full of hope and anticipation. It will be as well to remember this as we face our next, and probably more arduous test, during Ex CRUSADER. It won't necessarily be the fun time we anticipate and will require a great deal of hard



work, but we will all laugh about it afterwards.

Finally my grateful thanks to all the wives, girlfriends and families who have done so much to sustain our morale whilst we have been here. I hope that you all have an enjoyable and well deserved leave before losing us again to play our games in Germany.

INVICTA

INVICTA



LCpl 'Bob' Nevill and Pte 'Vince' Lockwood of B Coy.

With the compliments of



2nd Bn The Queen's Regiment

YOUR SAFETY IS OUR CONCERN

If you need help or think you can help us
please ring any of the following numbers:

Armagh 523821 Ext 263
Caledon 441
Keady 306
Dungannon 25047 Ext 33
Coalisland 40923
Aughnacloy 219
Cookstown 63290

