

prove it. It was as well that the period of jumping and field training had finished for the squadron were caught on the DZ by a tremendous thunderstorm/cloudburst. This gave everyone a well deserved bath and clothes wash but produced a bit of a poser on whether OC Wksps. had succeeded in hitting water for his fourth consecutive jump—as there was money involved, this went to arbitration (OC's beer fund!).

From the field location, the squadron returned with 4 Coy. on Tuesday, 24th June, to Winkelmann Kaserne at Iserlohn. There was a minor diversion en route for certain necessities of life (duty free of course) to the Bielefeld area where 14 Sqn. RCT again came to the rescue.

Wednesday and Thursday 25th/26th June were given completely to competing for the Abzeichen im Leistungen im Truppendienst (roughly translated as the German Military Prowess Award) which encompasses First Aid, Shooting, Swimming, Marching with equipment, running 5000 metres and 100 metres, and other athletic pursuits. This is not an easily obtained award particularly when an individual progresses from the Bronze to the Silver or Gold stages. Much sweating and toiling produced an end

tally for the squadron of 1 Gold, 1 Silver and 20 Bronze awards. No prize was awarded to the organising officer whose 25 km. timed march turned out to be 27 km. (Except that as an unfortunate participant, the OC suspects a certain connivance between that officer and some members of A Troop!)

At 1530 hrs. on Thursday, 26th June, the squadron paraded with 271 Bn. in front of the Bn. Comd., when, after several awards to other members of the battalion, Lt.-Col. Offer presented the Leistungsten Abzeichen to those members of the squadron who had won it. The battalion had stood down for 72 hours and the squadron took the opportunity of their first free day in the two weeks to visit selected shops in Iserlohn. This was after a very festive Thursday night which concluded our stay with 4 Coy.—and on that occasion the squadron would concede a draw!

A weary 562 Squadron party moved from Iserlohn on Saturday 28th June, via Emblem Camp to Zeebrugge and the civil Channel Ferry for Dover. Never was there a more welcome sight at 0100 hrs. on Sunday morning in the Dover area than Sgt. Allan with the transport for Southall where the party eventually dispersed home at 0600 hrs.

6/7 QUEEN'S JOIN CENTAG

By Cpl. A. C. Gregory, 'B' Coy. 6/7 Queen's

A slightly anxious "On Rapell!" acknowledged by a distant "On Belay!" were the cries heard reverberating around the Oden Wald in Southern Germany in July this year. The cries came from both American and British infantrymen practising rapelling (abseiling) down 24–30m. (80–100 ft) sheer cliffs during a mountain warfare training exercise. The American troops came from the United States 7th Army and the British troops came from the 6/7th Bn. The Queen's Regt., and the latter's sudden presence in the CENTAG area of Germany was as a result of the close liaison which now exists between 6/7 Queen's and the US Army's 97th Signals Bn.

The relationship between those two units was initiated in 1973 when a small party from the US Army's 5/82nd Transportation Bn. trained with the present "B" Coy. 6/7 Queen's (formerly "D" Coy., 5 Queen's) during their annual camp. This was followed in 1974 by a similar visit by a larger detachment, this time from the 97th Signals Bn. (the 5/82nd being unable to attend). The success of this visit was such that it cemented the relationship between the two units and this year it was the US Army's turn to play host to a ten-man representative squad from 6/7 Queen's which went Mannheim on detachment with the 97th Signals Bn. from 13th–26th July, 1975.

The detachment, comprising Cpl. Gregory, L/Cpl. Blockley, Ptes. Parker (the instigator behind the original visit), Bailey, Rouchy, Macdonagh, Fry,

Peasey, MacClung and Norman; commenced their journey by "Hovering" across the Channel and then drove in "B" Coy.'s Mini Bus through France, Belgium and the Netherlands to JHQ BAOR at Rheindahlen on the outskirts of Munchen Gladbach in Northern Germany. From Rheindahlen we were transported by US army vehicles to the Wilson D Coleman Barracks in Mannheim where the 97th are stationed. Our first days with the 97th were spent in familiarising ourselves with Coleman Barracks, which actually form a vast military complex, housing in addition to the 97th, an Armoured Cavalry (reconnaissance) regiment, an Army Aviation battalion, a Brigade HQ and the 2/13th Infantry Bn. Equally diverse was the variety of vehicles etc, to be seen, which ranged from ubiquitous Jeeps and "Deuce and-a-Halves" to M578 ARVs, M113 APCs and CH 47 Chinook heavy-lift helicopters. During this period the opportunity was taken to renew old relationships with some of the personnel from the 97th including Lt. Paterson, Sgt. Wilson and Sgt. King.

For the remainder of the first week we were occupied with a "field problem" called exercise "Count Jersey". During this exercise, detachments of the 97th were deployed in wartime locations situated in various distant parts of Southern Germany and provided communications between CENTAG Headquarters and its various subordinate American and German Army Corps. Our time with these

various detachments was both highly informative and enjoyable, as the 97th are adherents to the philosophy of "train hard and play hard", both of which activities took place to varying degrees dependent upon the area, the work required to be done and the ingenuity of the personnel at each of the locations. On the purely military aspects which, of course, took priority over all others, the performance of the 97th was extremely impressive and, with some 6/7 Queen's assistance (!!) they managed to maintain excellent communications over the whole of the CENTAG area of responsibility; an achievement of no mean significance.

After some much needed R & R spent over the weekend in the Mannheim and Heidelberg areas we, and a squad from the 97th, were attached to the 2/13th Infantry Bn. in order to take part in exercise "40 Rounds Adventure". (For the uninitiated, "40 Rounds" is the traditional phrase used by members of 2/13th when greeting each other and apparently refers to a rifleman's basic ammunition load.) This exercise was designed to teach the rifle squads of the 2/13th the basic principles of mountain warfare and to prepare them for their annual qualifications tests later in the year. The exercise took place entirely in a large mountainous forest area known as the Oden Wald which is situated to the north of the city of Heidelberg.

Our time in the Oden Wald was mainly occupied with instruction in basic mountaineering techniques, including rappelling as mentioned earlier, and patrolling. In the course of the patrolling phase we conducted two successful night patrols during which,

armed with M16A1 automatic rifles, we both achieved our objectives and tactically avoided all contact with the numerous "aggressors" that were sent out to ambush us. This in itself was apparently no mean feat if the repeated fire-fights between 2/13th Squads and the aggressors heard throughout the night were anything to judge by, and also considering that to "get myself a Brit" was foremost on many an aggressor's mind!

The second of these two night patrols was particularly interesting for us because, it commenced with the airmobile insertion of the patrols by UH 1B helicopters. During the flight we were escorted by a "hedge hopping" OH 58 reconnaissance helicopter and two heavily armed AH 1G gunship helicopters both of which were appropriately adorned with large sharks teeth markings. The combined use of these various helicopters tended to make the whole operation very reminiscent of similar ones that must have been conducted on numerous occasions in South East Asia in the not too distant past.

Upon the completion of the exercise "40 Rounds Adventure" we returned to Coleman Barracks and regretfully made preparations for our return to England.

Before we left for Rheindahlen to rejoin our transport, however, a final parade was held at which Lt.-Col. J. F. Hoffman the Commanding Officer of the 97th was presented with a Queen's Regiment Plaque and we in turn received individual certificates of Achievement to commemorate our period of training with the US Army.

DAY-AND-NIGHT WAR FOR VOLUNTEERS

700 in Salisbury Plain exercise

SEVEN hundred Territorial Army soldiers from various parts of South-West England assembled on Salisbury Plain for a day-and-night exercise during the weekend of September 27th and 28th.

The largest unit taking part was the 1st Bn. The Wessex Regt. (Rifle Volunteers), which has Headquarters in Devizes and companies in Gloucestershire, Dorset, Devon, Hampshire and Berkshire. The battalion is commanded by Lt.-Col. Colin Tremellen.

Gunner observation post parties were provided by 266 (Gloucestershire Volunteer Artillery) Bty. R.A. from Bristol.

The exercise, nicknamed "High Flyer" had a European setting and it was to be imagined at the outset that the troops had flown in from England. For this purpose Westdown Camp at Tilshead, on the Devizes-Salisbury road, became an "arrival

airfield" from which the companies deployed to tactical positions on the western end of the Plain.

The exercise gave practice in various aspects of battle-craft as well as testing communications, intelligence systems and administration in the field and it lasted for 24 hours from 10.00 a.m. on the Saturday.

"Enemy" troops were detachments of other Territorial Army units from various parts of the South of England.

Air support was given by an Army Alouette helicopter from Netheravon and two R.A.F. Pumas from Odiham. Fuel for these was carried in vehicles of 155 (Wessex) Regt., Royal Corps of Transport (V).

Another Territorial unit taking part was 219 (Wessex) General Hospital RAMC (V) from Keynsham, Bristol, who had medical orderlies deployed with the fighting troops.