



BRAGANZA



1st BATTALION THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT

ISSUE 1 AUGUST

LONDONDERRY (QUARTER FINAL EDITION) 1976





A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

LT COL J. G. W. DAVIDSON

The first edition of "BRAGANZA 1976" comes to you at a time when we are all very busy. The IRA has stepped up its senseless campaign of violence and harassment. They have destroyed a large number of commercial premises in the city, putting many people out of work and inconveniencing many more. They have abused and harassed us as we try to track down and arrest the thugs, gunmen and bombers. Despite this campaign, the long hours of difficult work, particularly by those on foot patrol, have paid off. We have already been very successful in increasing the population of our old friend, the Crumlin Road Gaol, by four wanted men. We have also had an excellent find of a rifle and telescopic sight in immaculate condition.

Sadly, we have also had our casualties. LCpl Friend is well on the way to recovery, and by the time you read this he will be enjoying "sick leave"; Pte Scarff is progressing well in Musgrave Park, and LCpl Britten has just been moved from Altnagelvin Hospital, where he had immediate surgery, to Musgrave Park, and soon he will be able to enjoy the regular company of his fiancée from Tiger Bay. I know I join with all members of the Battalion and all our families in wishing them a speedy recovery.

I hope all our readers enjoy our magazine which is being edited by the Paymaster, ably (?) assisted by "Mick the Vic." It is not intended to be a catalogue of events (a SITREP in Army language) although it will of course touch on events. Our main intention is to capture and portray the lighter side of life. This is important because, despite the exceptionally long and exhausting work, I want those at home to know that the boys remain remarkably cheerful.

FINDS AND ARRESTS

(Compiled by Acorn and Correct to 4th August)

In "A" Company area:

- 2 x stopwatches doctored For
- 3 x wristwatches bomb making
- 1 x soldering iron
- 1 x battery
- 1 x circuit tester

Found by OC "A" Coy at the second attempt behind a fish and chip shop. (Assistance also given to "C" Company).

In "B" Company area:

Finds NTR (But see Stop Press—Ed.)

In "C" Company area:

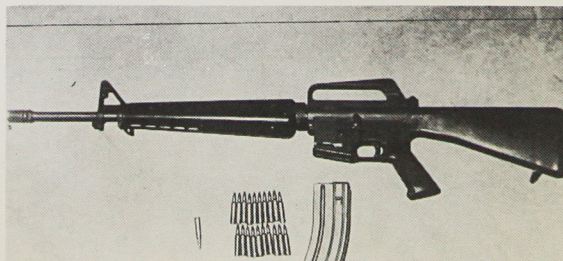
- 1 x Remington 760 carbine calibre .3006
- 1 x telescopic sight
- 1 x empty magazine
- 2 x .3006 armour-piercing rounds
(owner arrested)
- (Assistance given by "B" Coy Search Team)
- 1 x S6 respirator
- 1 x Army torch
- 2 x switches
- 1 x tripswitch
- Copper wire
- Assorted wire
- 2 x 42 batteries taped together
(Owner arrested)
- 1 x Armalite rifle
(As result of the chase of two gunmen
into a church—Assistance given by "A" Coy)

Arrests:

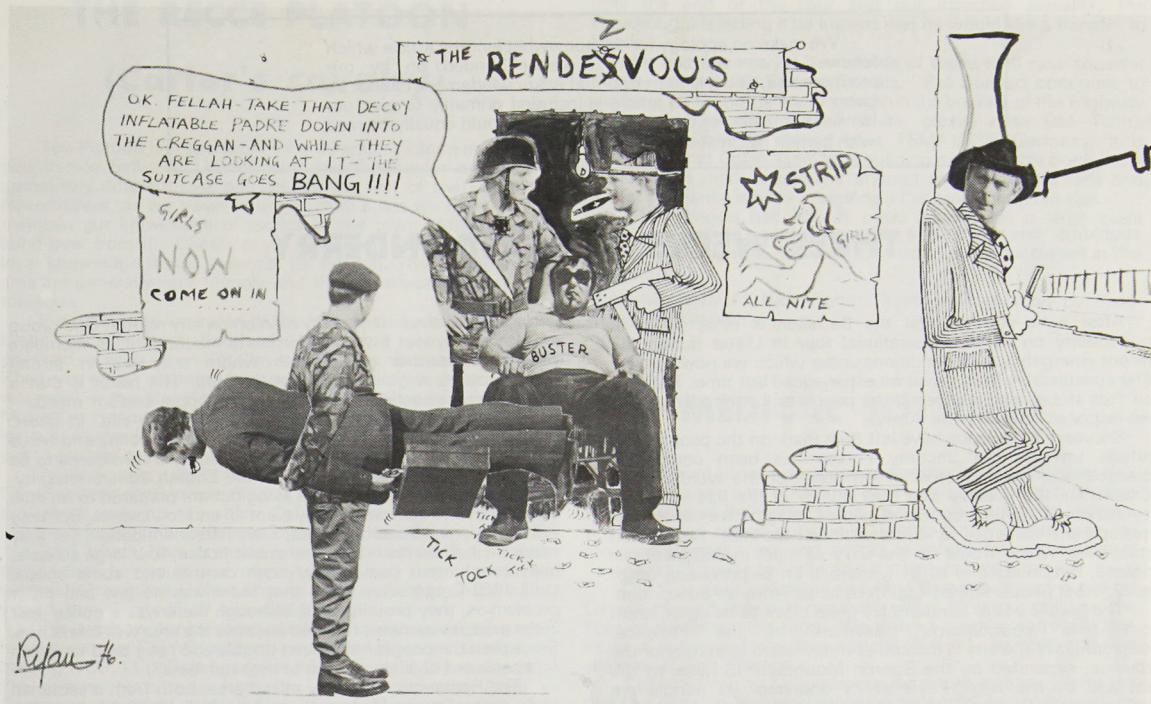
- Many for not giving names or opening coats!!
- 3 in a car which had contained explosive
- 2 for Armalite at St. Mary's roundabout
- 1 for Remington in High Park
- 2 for Chip Shop explosive
- 1 for Cromore bomb kit
- 2 for admitting membership of PIRA



The find by "B" Coy Search Team whilst attached to "C" Coy, at 25 High Park, 27 July 1976.



Found in car by Callsign 12 whilst attached to "C" Coy, 3 August 1976.



EDITORIAL

We welcome the Commanding Officer's introduction to this, the first edition of "BRAGANZA" ON THE CURRENT Londonderry tour. He was (and is) extremely busy when we asked for his contribution and his time is appreciated.

For the uninitiated, this news sheet does not set itself out to be a professional one. Were this the case I should not be cashing your cheques, but sitting at a large desk, cigar in mouth, selecting models for the page three spread. "BRAGANZA" does, however, present a rare opportunity to publish at little expense a paper by the Battalion, of the Battalion, and for the Battalion. For this reason the editorial staff admit that the delegation of publication to them was accepted with reluctance, but now that we've got it, we'll get on with it.

The cartoon you see above is the perfect example of what we are aiming at, namely to take a difficult situation and extract some humour from it. The picture started as a routine affair of a visiting VIP being introduced to the Padre. Notice the transformation.

"BRAGANZA" is aimed at two sectors of the Battalion community. Firstly, all ranks of 1 QUEENS (whether in Londonderry or Werl is immaterial because without the latter the former could not function) and, in the second to our families, God bless'em, without whose loyalty and support we would indeed be in dire straits.

We hope for contributions from all sectors by way of photos, articles, poems, puzzles, stories or whatever. Each month we shall offer a cash prize of £10 for the best written article, poem or story, £10 for the best cartoon and £5 for the best photo. We also hope for a couple of pages from Les Girls for the next three editions. This is not to say that we are trying to outdo "Frustrations" which was a great morale booster this side of the Irish Sea on the last tour, and now we hope that their excellent cartoonists has not been posted and will carry on the good work.

The first "Braganza" this scribe can recall was a roneoed sheet in that p xhole to beat all p xholes, Bahrain. It is amusing to recollect that the Editor's first contribution in 1968 was refused initially on grounds of obscenity, but subsequently rescued and ordered to be published on grounds of literary ability by the then 1IC. By today's moral standards the article could stand publication in the "Missionary Monthly".

Finally, a word to our critics, of which there will be many. If you think you can do better, then come and ruddy well do it. If you are of the minority who have contributed or who are prepared to do so, put your criticism on paper and have it published and answered in the next edition. To the majority who will criticise but offer nothing, the message is clear and simple—Get knotted!

DID YOU KNOW?

That the phrase "English as she is spoke," is the actual title of a Portugese-English conversational guide!

Acorn to Molar: Why are you wearing a pullover?

Molar to Acorn: Because I am cold.

Acorn to Molar: The RSM has said pullovers are not to be worn yet.

Molar to Acorn: When I was RSM I controlled the weather.

We make no apology for the somewhat lengthy article which follows. It is extracted from a paper handed on by our predecessors, and it is regretted that acknowledgment cannot be given to its author. The article is included primarily to give our families some idea of the local scenario, but could equally be read with benefit by most of us here in Ulster:

THREE WEEKS IN LONDONDERRY

After a six-year interval the Battalion is once again in Londonderry on its fifth operational tour in Ulster during the present emergency. The conditions under which we now operate differ considerably from those we experienced last time. Then we had "tea stops" and, above all, the people of Londonderry were well-disposed towards the Army.

Six years of violence have left their mark on the people. The attitude towards the Security Forces has been completely polarised, and law and order in any sense of the word is non-existent. On the positive side their quality of life has improved beyond all recognition. Industrial estates, imaginative housing redevelopment schemes and recreational facilities have been established, which would be the envy of most municipalities in England, but, in spite of all that, there is an all-pervading air of decay. Most people still look upon us as an Army of occupation.

The people of Londonderry lay great claim to being different from their counterparts elsewhere in the Province. Geographically the city is located at the western extremity of the Province, separated by the Sperrin Mountains 15 miles to the east and by the River Foyle at its doorstep. Its people are predominantly Roman Catholic, and so, unlike Belfast, there is little sectarian problem. There is now some scope to conduct a hearts and minds campaign to win over the community to law and order and drive a wedge between the terrorist and his supporters, for the majority appear to be thoroughly tired of violence and the hooliganism which has beset their lives these past six years. To achieve this requires an unfamiliar degree of forbearance on the part of the soldier in his everyday dealings with the community, unparalleled anywhere else in the Province, which at times is extremely difficult, subjected as they are to verbal abuse, stoning, petrol bombing and sniping, added as they are to the more indiscriminate mortar and shooting attacks. Although our soldiers show remarkable tolerance only time will tell whether stability will ever return to these terrorist enclaves.

To put our daily life in Londonderry into perspective we all need to bear in mind a little homily about the Irish written a long time ago by Honor Tracy:

... the charitable might say that the Irish tend not to minimise their sufferings; the candid that they are shaking old cry babies. If anyone lays a finger on them the whole world must hear of it with embellishment, and like children, they believe their own fantasies. ... furthermore, nothing that happens, no action of troops or police relates in any way to anything done to themselves. Nothing is ever their fault, nor do they ever do wrong

Based on the west bank of the Foyle, we are split between two locations, Creggan Camp with "A" and "C" Companies plus Tac HQ, and, two miles away, "B" and SP Companies with Echelon at Fort George. "A" Company are responsible for Rosemount and North Ward, SP Company for the Enclave, "B" Company for the Shantallow and Carnhill Estates, and "C" Company for the Creggan. We shall look at the character of each in turn, concentrating on the Creggan, which is the hardest area of all, and which symbolises all the problems that confront the Security Forces.

The Creggan is a small estate completed in 1954 comprising almost 3,000 houses enclosed in an area measuring 1,000 metres by 600 metres. At the last census over 15,000 people lived within the estate, and large families are not an unusual feature, often between eight and 12 children. Most families are almost certainly inter-related and would be extremely reluctant to give evidence against each other, quite apart from the intimidation that exists. A large proportion of the houses, although pleasant, amply spaced and well-planned, are reduced inside and out to near slum conditions.

The families were, for the most part, resettled from the Bogside where there is, apparently, a fairly united community. However, the people of the Creggan, grouped by family political ideals, have little cohesion. The result is chaos. Groups of people are constantly clashing with each other, trust is lacking and it is

impossible to obtain a majority opinion on any matter. One group will frequently not attend community meetings if its members hear that another group with whom they are in strong disagreement, is going to be represented. The result is that a genuine cross-section of the Creggan people seldom meets.

Intimidation between and within groups is rife. In short, within the Creggan there is a mixture of irresponsibility and fierce tribal loyalty. This loyalty, however misplaced, is considered to be a virtue in much the same way as the English admire integrity. They want a better standard of living but are prepared to do little constructive to achieve it. They want an end to violence, but they will not help the Security Forces. They hate intimidation, yet they condone it. The area boasts one public house, four large schools, one church, two community/youth centres and some shops. Until 1969 Cregganites claim that there was no law and order problem as, they proudly state, although there was a police post in the area, it was never manned because the area was crime free. Since then the people have given trouble and have bred terrorism on a scale out of all proportion to their numbers.

The Rosemount is a very mixed area, both from a sectarian and a "class" point of view. It can be sub-divided into a number of smaller areas ranging from the slums of the "Nassaus" to the seclusion of the well-to-do in the Templemore, Glenview and Argyles. The area is dominated by the R.U.C. station, manned by only one constable, which is permanently guarded by one platoon and, unlike the Creggan, the area is normally friendly to patrols, except for the occasional barrage of abuse and stones from the younger element.

The Shantallow, controlled by "B" Company, is the largest of the three "urban" company areas, and contains almost half the population of Londonderry. Imaginatively planned housing estates have mushroomed since 1965 and the building programme still continues at such a pace that we have to update our maps every week. There are also a number of large and comfortable houses owned by the professional classes and local businessmen. The residents have moved into "B" Company's area from other parts of the city, are seen to have made good, and the older person is less inclined to abuse patrols than his counterpart in Creggan. However, their youth still cause problems just as they do elsewhere in the city.

Finally, the Enclave. This area covers some 50 square kms of mostly farmland with isolated farms and cottages for which SP Company, with the Recce Platoon under command, are responsible. On its western boundary is 20 kms of border which is unmarked on the ground except where it is crossed by roads or tracks. Two of the four main roads which cross the border are controlled by permanently-manned Vehicle Control Points. There are three small housing estates which have caused little trouble in the past. The Company has an often unexciting but important role to play, enlivened occasionally by helicopter surveillance tasks and boat patrols up and down the Foyle.

The month's prizes

The best article: 9 Platoon "C" Company—£10; The best cartoon: CSgt Paddy Ryan (but handicap applies)—£5; Pte Quinn of Tangier (for effort)—£5; The best photograph: None of sufficient originality (Snowball £5 carried forward to next edition).

Prizes may be collected from Editor

Who will get writing, drawing or snapping for next edition?

THE RECCE PLATOON

(Carter's cavalry)

The Platoon is responsible for a 40 square kilometre area of countryside between Londonderry and the border and has a completely different task and role to the rest of the Battalion. Nevertheless, as we travel through urban areas we have had to maintain our knowledge of tactics in the town. After a good hand-over from the Cheshires we have been busy acquiring the local knowledge that is essential for our job. The people in the area are generally very friendly and the countryside is very picturesque.

It is difficult to keep alert to the fact that we are in strife-torn Ulster and not sleepy Scotland. However, it was brutally emphasised recently when Sgt Clay's patrol was shot at in the Foyle Road area whilst returning from a patrol. LCpl Friend was slightly wounded in the hip. He is now well on the way to recovery in Musgrave Hospital, Belfast, and looking forward to some sick leave in England. The CO arranged for Mrs. Friend to be flown out to see him a couple of days after the event.

A week later, almost exactly to the minute, the Platoon Commander's section was fired at in similar circumstances. This time there were no casualties. Cpl Wakeman led the follow-up and the firing point was located, but the gunman escaped.

Was it luck, fate, or inside information that made Lt Carter decide that he would not come out on that patrol, only the second he has missed? Next time he misses one the section have vowed that they will all take GPMGs.

We have now consolidated our Orbat into three sections and have given up Cpl Woodward to the Intelligence Section as briefing NCO. LCpl Dale has taken his place as Sgt Leach's 2IC. Pte Harvey, new to us from the AAC, is now the Platoon Commander's driver, and is busy learning how to switch the lights to convoy, double de-clutch and put the windscreen down (all at the same time!). Air Tpr Martin, an attachment to us for two months from 660 Sqn AAC, has asked to extend his time

until the end of the tour and our attached signaller, Pte Greenlough, is letting it be known that he would like a transfer to Recce.

No mention has yet been made of those who now consider themselves as "Old Recce Sweats." Pte Stewart continues to terrify his section by his driving (within the bounds of the Highway Code and prevailing speed limits, please note QM Tech), "Festers" White is writing to a FEMALE in Germany, it is rumoured that Cpl Wakeman is building a shop in his bunk, LCpl Hagarty has made a genuine attempt to write to his wife and C/Sgt Lawrance is busy designing a flak-jacket with ten zips.

The Platoon has already been involved in a large scale operation and is continuing with a detailed and ambitious patrolling programme. We look forward to some successes in the near future.

(Subscribed by Lt Nick Carter, from an inspiration by Field-Marshal Rommel).

MEDICAL JOTTINGS

Our arrival all seemed chaos and confusion but we have now settled into some sort of routine. Pte Hopkins departed in the first week to train at Ballykinler but is now back as a trained veteran. We have now sorted out our RCT ambulance drivers who are prepared to make tea and coffee in return for a mention in "Braganza," having failed to earn a mention in their paper.

Our first crash call came early one Saturday morning to Fort George where a lady was reputedly giving birth to a child on the floor of the screening room. We arrived quickly, surprising en-route a car-bound courting couple (4 a.m.), an owl, and the sentries at Fort George.

Call turns out to be a hoax so we return to base where we find Dvr Geordie Thornton requiring four stitches in his head, so Starlight wasn't roused for nothing.

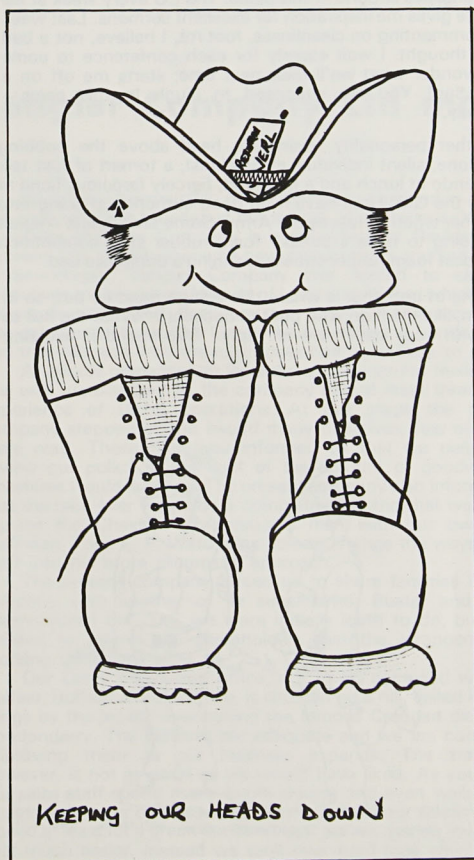
The doctor has stopped smoking and put himself on a diet so he is like a bear with a sore head first thing in the morning. Malingerers beware!

Lucy, his daughter, will certainly have to practice her ironing as she gets older. His 1IC, Cpl Penter, RAMC, is heard shouting: "Anyone seen my beret?" whenever crash-outs are called, and the beret turns up in some peculiar places.

Sometimes we have the pleasure of the company of a teeny-weeny airways spotter or two. They divide their time equally between womanising, the medical centre and putting their hair in place. We have yet to persuade them to make the coffee.

With true professionalism Cpl Penter managed to insert seven stitches into a cut on Lt Riley's leg where three would have sufficed. There is no truth in the rumour that they are to share the compensation.

It is hoped that the rear party are coping without the four bandsmen who volunteered for medical duties here. Bandsman Poore has not been seen since arrival but rumour once again has it that he is setting up a rebel practice in the Border area.



PADRE'S DIARY

I was one of the last to arrive. We travelled over in a Hercules, a journey which taught me more about prayer than any other expedition. Above my seat was the RAF crest and the words "United in Effort." I remember sitting back turning over those words in my mind "United in Effort."

The way the blades of the propellers clattered at my side, I was sure we weren't going to see Aldergrove. We did though, and what a change in the weather, from sweltering Germany we stepped into the cool, moist, Irish summer.

"Have you anything to declare, Sir," asked the Customs man. By the time he'd gone through the question list, he'd reminded me of what I'd left behind, like my alarm clock and pyjamas. (Not forgetting your razor—Ed.)

The bus trip to Londonderry was passed in silence, as we gazed glumly at the rolling scenery. Then we rounded a corner and there it was, the River Foyle cutting the drab, dreary huddled city in two, and the Craigavon Bridge reaching across as if someone had built it out of Meccano, a road above and a road underneath.

We were given a friendly Derry wave from some of the locals as they did their Saturday shopping, a kind of salute and a snarl from cheek to cheek. We nodded our replies, promising to see more of them in the forthcoming weeks.

I was to be based in Fort George. My innocent adolescent mind had conjured up a stockade-type American Cavalry Fort, but like all small boy dreams, usually shattered, I could see how sprawlingly unlike a fort it was. One end loses itself in the Foyle where the Marine Commandos addle with their patrols, whilst three sides are sheet and metal covered. I was surprised to see such good accommodation and the soldiers certainly feel they've arrived at Costa del Foyle.

Creggan Camp, on the other hand, is the poor relation. I'll get stuck for this, but the truth will stand. There is no comparison. Creggan Camp is tight, tiny, stands on a hill and is draughty. The

Colonel and all his G-men are here; the hub of the activity, whilst in Fort George the efficient, well-oiled wheels of machinery turn efficiently into motion, helped of course by the Savoy-like surroundings and French cuisine.

A Padre's day in Derry is never dull. I've all-of-a-sudden become a collector of titles. I started off the tour as CRO Fort George, moved on to CCTV gathering momentum with "Local Boy Stories" and finishing with BFBS. Besides these minor tasks I take photographs, deal with flower arrangements (not the vase type—I leave those to the ladies) shop for hair cream, birthday cards and plugs and pay endless calls on a distinctly sordid, sinister establishment in Belfast on behalf of the QM, for an item which he says will give hom good com's; a task I am beginning to grow doubtful over each trip.

When I've done all this I resort to being a Padre. On Sundays we really do compete with the local mass hordes of worshipping, devout Christians. Thanks to the QM I have my very own church, lovingly built to the Chief Archangel's specifications, a place where the lonely soul, the questioning spirit or the parched body can rest and renew his cells. My Sunday begins with 16 Light Regiment RA at the city centre; then out to Ballykelly, back to Creggan and then finally Fort George. I almost forgot, I'm also films manager snowballed into organising films for Fort George and Creggan. I'll get a job anywhere after this tour. Funny how things have snowballed during the past three weeks.

We are two hours from Belfast (one when LCpl Allum is driving) and in the short time I've been here, I've certainly covered the miles. The two lads in Musgrave are certainly doing well, surrounded by gorgeous nurses and the best facilities going.

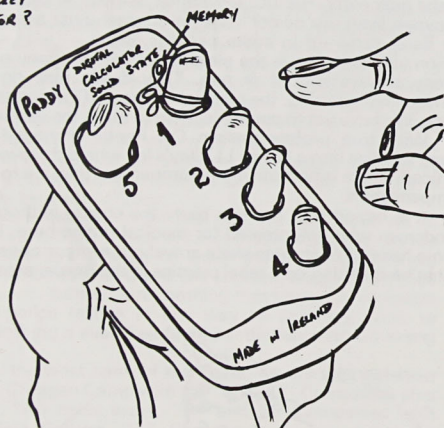
I don't get involved obviously with the tactical side, but there's never a dull moment on that level, as is borne out by plenty of humorous stories from the lads.

Personalities abound in this place. The CO every week at his conference gives me inspiration for excellent sermons. Last week he was commenting on cleanliness, foot rot, I believe, not a bad sermon I thought. I wait eagerly for each conference to come along. I wonder what we'll raise next time; starts me off on a good footing! You are supposed to laugh in this place—occasionally.

Another personality raising his head above the bobbing Foyle, a lone, silent individual at breakfast, a torrent of fast talk and innuendo at lunch and a firebrand, fiercely ferocious fiend at dinner, is the QM. He, I have it on good authority, is going into foam rubber when he leaves the Army. Some time in late August we are going to have a streaky foam rubber strip competition with the best foam rubber stalker winning a dunlopillo bed.

Talking of bed, that is where this edition must be put, so in conclusion, like the man who put the question: "What the hell to you do with your day?" we all reply: "We spend it avoiding ridicule."

IRISH ROCKET
CALCULATOR?



WASH HANDS
TO CLEAR

SOME QUOTES BY ACORN CELL

Callsign 1: Why do you want to lift S----- McS-----?

Acorn: We think he's a Provo.

Callsign 1: Well, he's only four years old!

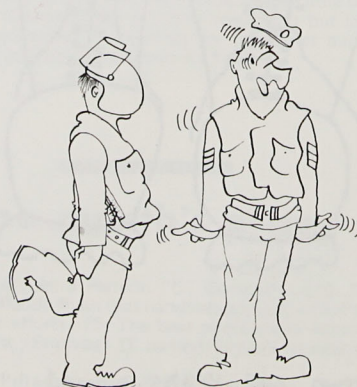
Acorn: Oh dear!

From a patrol report

"... reference wrecked car in Glen Road, I called at 3 Glen Road, but the occupants were either out or not in . . ."

Heard on the Company net . . .

"... Hello all stations this is I have finished with coffee Pot. Anyone who wants her through me, out."



Rigby

I DON'T RECKON MUCH ON THESE NEW HELMETS SARGE!



The firm's outing, July '76

Tangier Company Ltd monthly report to the shareholders

Since the chairmanship of the Company changed in April of this year, we have broadened our sphere of operations. You will remember that the Company is a subsidiary of Davidson Enterprises Ltd., which opened a new management training school in Sennelager. Tangier Company was forced to send its executives to this school instead of Lydd and Hythe, which it had previously patronised. Rumours then started that the company was going to take over the Cheshire Corporation in Londonderry, and that this was why the executives had gone back to school.

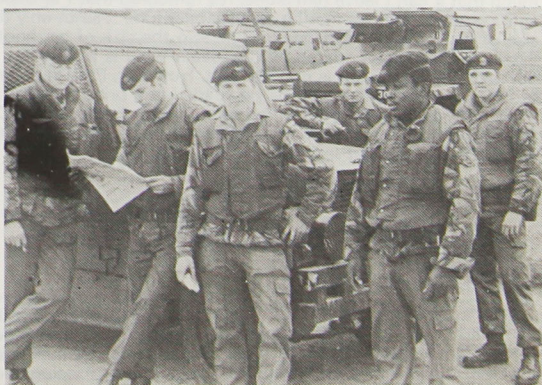
At middle management level there was a strong feeling that this was unnecessary as the company had at least three years experience of Ulster operations. At this stage the parent company stepped in and issued many directives, few of which were read. These directives informed us that we needed to review our policy in the light of the amount of goodwill the Cheshires would leave us. The present company also informed us that the take-over would be a complete one, and that we would replace the Cheshire Corporation's men with our own, our chairman, Tony F. F. Ward, was able to change the ways of his staff into his more pragmatic approach.

The present company forced us to share facilities in Londonderry with another of its subsidiaries, Buster and Swan (Demolitions) Ltd. This we were initially loath to do, but I am pleased to inform the shareholders that the arrangement is working quite well after all.

Our Derry Registered office, not to be confused with our Belfast, Bulford or Werl office, is situated on a hill, called Piggery Ridge by the locals, overlooking the famous Creggan district of Londonderry. The facilities are adequate and we are constantly improving them as our business expands. The transport, however, is not as good as we would have liked. As you know our sales staff spend many hours driving and even walking the streets selling our products, and the majority of our salesmen had hoped at least for a green convertible, it makes getting in and out that much easier. Instead we took over hard-tops which don't even keep the rain out.

We have three main outlets in our area which is the Rosemount section of Derry. The name conjures up beautiful scenery with roses everywhere. This is not untrue as there is a "Desert Rose" perfume on every street corner. Our main problem, however, is that because we have three main outlets, one at Piggery Ridge, one in Rosemount, and one just outside Derry on the Letterkenny Road, controlling the various aspects of the business involves the chairman in a great deal of travelling time.

Our warehouse manager, Bas Rawlings, has his problems too. The main supply depot is at a place called Fort George. It sounds very military but I can assure you that it has nothing to do with the Army if it can help it.



Some of our salesmen about to hit the road.



The wild bunch.

Just to add to the confusion, we rotate our sales staff every four days between our main sale outlets. This coupled with the heavy sales programme, can lead to certain complications in movement. However, our Managing Director, Alan Carter, Produces a timetable for the sales staff. It reads very much like a British Rail timetable, not only do things run late, never arrive at all, or all come at once, there are no trains either.

Finally, let me say that our chairman is alive and well as those of us who are not deaf can verify. He has his sights set firmly on a brilliant future not just for the company but for himself as well. His bedtime reading at the moment is a book called "How to become a MP." The book says, quote: "There is no earthly reason why you should not become a MP. As long as you are 21 and not insane. Nothing else matters." No one has the nerve yet to point out that he is not 21.

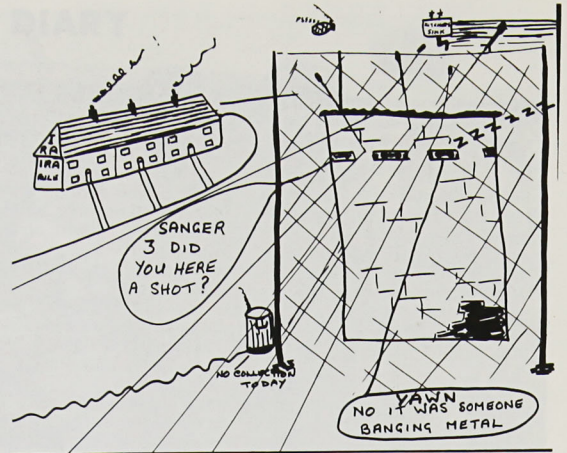
REPORTS FROM THE SALES TEAMS

England's senior infantry platoon arrived in Derry with a flourish, led by one of England's most junior infantry subalterns, assisted by the now famous or infamous Sgt Delaney. The first notable event happened two minutes after the lads arrived when Pte Beim came up and said: "This is boring, Sir; we've already been here two hours and I haven't been shot at or bombed yet." Needless to say he was put in the picture by the Creggan boys.

The Platoon (Number One of course) has suffered the normal mortal problems of sore feet and bed sores. Pte Teague arrived in the Province with a very worrying problem which even the lovely sister of a member of the Platoon was unable to solve. For a short time Pte Harvey suspected that he had measles, but it was found that he picked up a little biting friend who loves him so much that it can't leave him alone. It's rumoured that Pte Shade eats in such quantities that he needs a pitchfork. It's not only the size of his mouth, I understand, but also the size of his boots. Finally, it may be wondered by the reader what is happening to our love life out here. It is non-existent. However, Pte West, one of our newer members, can be persuaded at a price to share in the sports page of the perfumed letter which he receives. Cpl Alfred is very mean and refuses to allow anyone to share any part of his 28 (or is it 29) letters.

Number two sales team

The once hairy heads of Cpl Mick Yoa, LCpl Dobbin, Spike Eldred and "Banger" McKatherine all now appear more like suede brushes. Once Noddy Bamford took things too far by having a total head shave. The blades from the Clippers went missing and the hairy Jim Ball is seen to sleep with a knowing smile on his face.



Cartoons on this page by Quinn of Tangier.

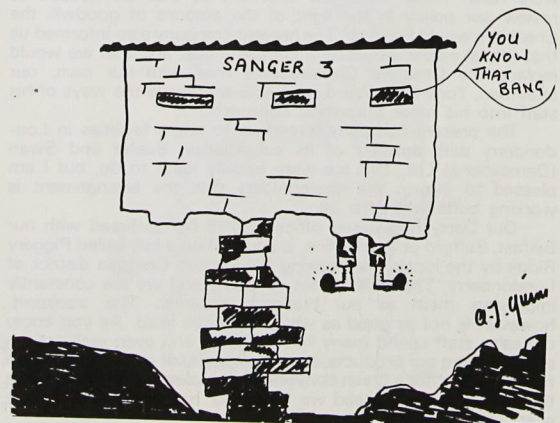
Last week heralded the arrival of Cpl "Bud" Taylor, Ptes Nichol and Lewis. They are a most welcome addition to our number though the somewhat dubious activities of Cpl Taylor at the VCP have taken some getting used to. It is difficult to envisage this heart of the law, waving and smiling at the natives when he orders them out of the car in the pouring rain to "make sure you have a safe drive with no nasty bangs."

Whilst all about are taking on the Irish, Sgt "Bluey" Hedges is fighting us in his efforts to keep the place tidy. It is believed by many that the streets of Derry will soon be as clean as Albuhera Barracks, and if the CSM has his way they will be painted blue as well, in the Queen's shade, of course.

Number three sales team

Unlike Sobraon Company, who are confined to the Creggan, we have a variety of tasks. We do the VCP at Letterkenny (rural setting), Rosemount Police Station guard (West Side Storey), and finally patrolling of Rosemount itself is quite quiet so far compared with the surrounding area, but the city is so small that all incidents find us on the ground and hot pursuing. The R Group go to Hollywood for post NI leave to chase cars . . . where did that Red Avenger go?

Meanwhile in the Ops Room at Rosemount we are reduced to playing chase -a-car with the magnets on the map (Move straight to RUC station and so not pass go). As usual it's a section commander's war.





"Oose knicked me bleedin' shirt?"

ROSEMOUNT BLUES

Our leader raised his finger,
 "To Rosemount will you go?"
 To which the OC Kirke's replied:
 "Oh Colonel, please Sir, No!"

Alas his pleas to no avail
 So Tangier has the spot,
 And all agree with Tony's view
 That place it is a grot.

No films, no games, no sauna,
 No Golly Shop, no squash;
 In fact to tell the honest truth
 It makes Brown's Square look posh.

Poor OC Kirkes he squirms and turns,
 In sweat he really soaks;
 "Gosh, golly gumdrops!" cries the Boss,
 "How can I help my blokes?"

"More papers," cries he happily,
 And quickly rings two-eight;
 But Goldfinger's a fiver lost
 And answers: "Sorry mate."

At Sunray's meeting following day
 Midst talk of Ops/CR,
 Our tone to Big Al lays the charge:
 "Inflexible you are!"

At this Big Al looks really hurt
 And pockets calculator,
 Cos he and Tone are daggers drawn
 He mutters: "See you later."

To Mess goes Al and with a gin
 With which to slake his thirst:
 Thinks: Four Op. Banners done, alas
 "This youth does but his first."

But Molar is a diplomat
 And never dilatory,
 To Tone he says: "To Mess you go
 "And tell big Al you're sorry."

In Mess stands Al, all sad and low,
 Then in comes Les and Tone;
 "Come Al," says Tone, "and have a drink,
 "You shall not quaff alone."

Al takes a sip then has it off
 To see what he can cadge,
 Then brings back loads of magazines
 The unclad maid their badge.

"Here Tone," he cries most heartily,
 "This should do the trick;
 "Put these out at Rosemount place,"
 But Callsign two is sick.

"What's this?" cries he of Holland rule,
 "This will never do,
 "Half the books to Callsign one,
 "The rest to Callsign two!"

The moral of this story is
 Quite simple for you to see,
 Grotty books will not be found
 At Callsigns five and three!

A postscript by three platoon

We would like the wives in Werl to keep a look out for the Company Colour Sergeant and the Company Int Team. We think they were left on rear party by mistake.

Major (Monty) Ward has qualified for his second cap badge but it would be better if he took a chopper up and not the R Group.



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3

BRAGANZA CAPTION COMPETITION

On the left are shown three pictures, all taken during the current Northern Ireland tour. If you think you can put an appropriate caption title to one or more of the pictures, fill in the coupon provided and send it to the Editor (c/o Unit Paymaster). The best caption received for each picture will earn its compiler a prize of £1. Prizewinners to be announced in the semi-final (next) edition. Incidentally, all our competitions, not forgetting the best article/poem/story, cartoon and photograph, are open to ALL our readers, not forgetting the ladies of 1 QUEENS.

To the Editor, "BRAGANZA"
Caption Competition Number 1

Photo1

Photo 2

Photo 3

Rank.....Name

Platoon.....Company

Signature

Incidentally, photograph number three is of historical significance (if of photographic insignificance!). This represented the handover of the "Golden Bullet" from Lt Col K. Prosser, Commanding Officer of The 22nd (Cheshire) Regiment to Lt. Col J. G. W. Davidson, Commanding Officer of 1st Battalion The Queen's Regiment, on 9th July, 1976 The "Emblem" was found by SOBRAON Company 1 QUEEN'S on the morning of the hand over.

Whilst appreciating the temptations that may befall wouldbe competitors in the compilation of a caption for this photograph, editorial advice is—"Don't Bother"—we share your thoughts but are unable to publish.

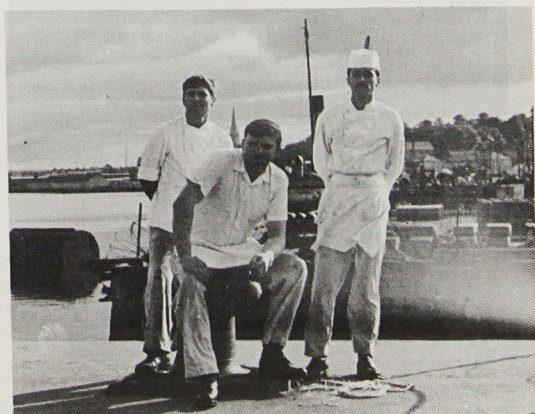
(PADDY RYAN IS INELIGIBLE TO ENTER—ED.)



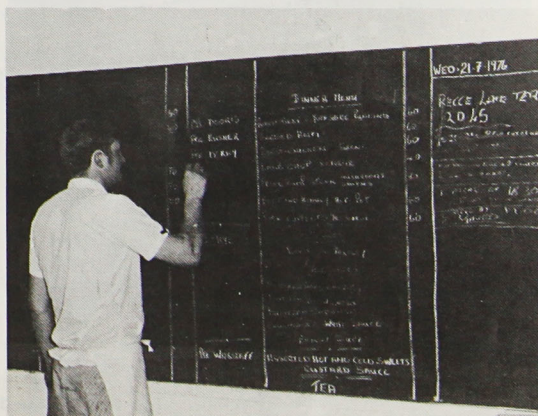
Pte Hawes
of Sobraon
Company caught
day-dreaming.



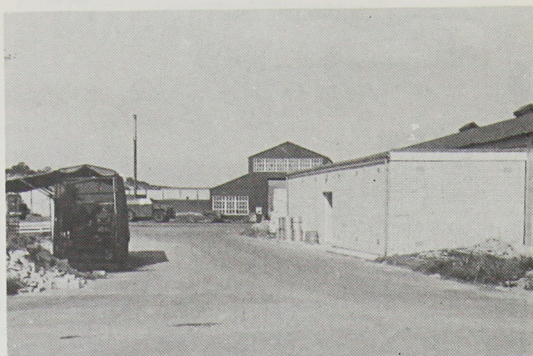
Most of the LAD
lucky enough to
join us in Ulster.



Some of the Caterers relaxing at the "Costa-del-Foyle.



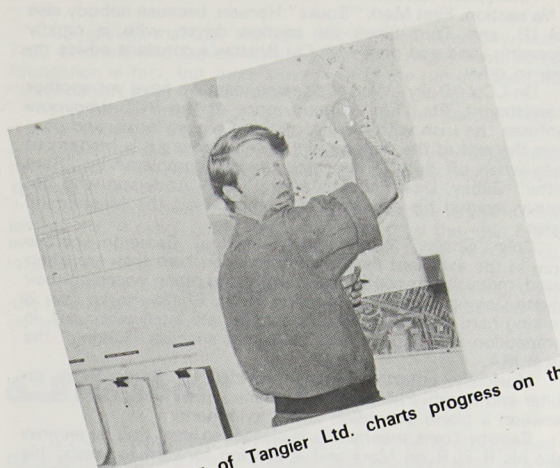
The menu can't be bad!



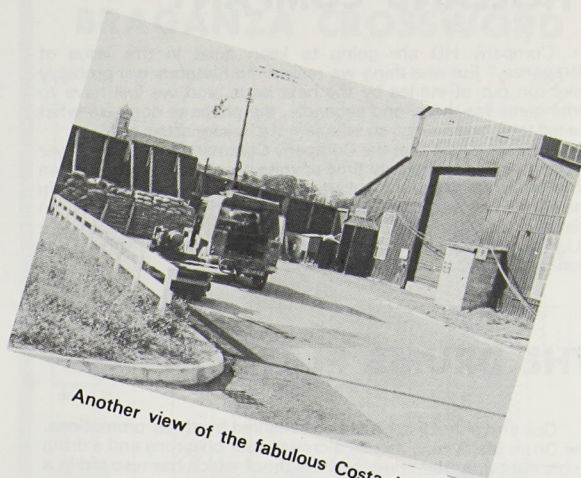
Top left: Check point check-out. Top right: Costa-del-Foyle (Alias Fort George). Centre: Boxell/Spencer Bookie Shop.

Bottom left: Pte Clarke of 10 Pl on checkpoint duty.

Bottom right: "Anyone for the Mystery Tour," with LCpl Tabas, Quebec Coy.



Managing Director of Tangier Ltd. charts progress on the ground.



Another view of the fabulous Costa-del-Foye.



LCpl Friend of the Recce Pl recovering in Musgrave Park Hospital, encouraged by his wife, who was flown out by the Battalion.



Sobraon Company scribe in cheerful mood.



A country walk.

HOLLAND COMPANY

Company HQ are going to keep quiet in this issue of "Braganza." For one thing we realise the Platoons will probably have run out of stories by the next issue, and we will have to write some for them, and secondly, the platoons don't do what we tell them to anyway, so what are we headquarters of?

It doesn't help that the Company Commander has gone over to the other side. The only time anyone sees him he has a civilian "friend" from the patch called Mickey Roots, or something, in the back of his vehicle. The Sergeant Major has always been on the other side. So—wait for the next exciting instalment entitled: "Lightning never strikes in the same place twice," or "Move Over Darling."

THE DRUMS PLATOON

Our arrival in Ulster has been marked by three promotions. The Drum Major now carries a crown, four chevrons and a drum on his right arm, the combined weight of which has resulted in a distinct list to starboard, which he is trying to correct by drinking pints left-handed.

Next is LCpl Wilmot, who is the Drum Major's second-in-command, and we are still awaiting Cpl Bristow's reaction to his promotion. He was struck dumb on being told, and ever since has been sitting in a corner, grinning and writing letter after letter back home.

Ben's Section also has the dubious distinction of having two re-enlistments, George Harmer, ex-Recce Platoon of Berlin Days, and now Master Spy of the Shanty Pub and "Baron" Hoffman, who has found that playing a flute is preferable to civvy street after all.

Finally, Ben has asked me to mention two itinerant members of his section. First Mark "Socks" Hansen, because nobody else will (?), and Tom Sivell the section driver, who is rapidly becoming lined and grey with Cpl Bristow's constant advice on how to drive.

On LCpl "Dolly" Walker's search team we have yet another re-enlistment, Pte "Phil" Cheng, once of the RCT who now confuses the Irish with his inscrutable Chinese looks, and confuses the rest of the Platoon with exactly where it is he goes to sleep when off duty. The search team is completed by "Gary Glitter" Gilbey, Dick Richards and "P Nut" Anderson who obviously learned his questioning technique off the Mastermind series.

Cpls "Chalky" White and "Sunshine" Cameron share a room in the excellent new accommodation here they are often found, magazine in one hand, coffee in the other, watching their private Colour TV (war is absolute hell!). Chalky, to be fair, is working hard at establishing his own private intelligence cell, in competition with Acorn, and has great success "lurking" the Local IRA.

Musically, entertainment is provided by Bruce Berry on guitar and Bambi Phillips on a machine which looks like a cross between a piano accordion and a xylophone.

Sammy Trent, meanwhile, is pleased to learn that he can now take his R & R on Mars and is looking forward to seeing his parents again. R & R has of course already begun and Pte Chico Jansco from my own section was the first to head for the delights of London, where we expect he is drinking free on his stocks of war stories gleaned from the older members of the platoon before he left. Drummer White turned up just in time to make up the loss and is the latest addition to the Corps of Drums.

Another of our new additions is "Fristy" Wilson, who, first time in Ireland, blushes constantly at the expressions of the local population which unfortunately we can't print here, but no doubt we'll tell you about them when we return on R & R and, finally, in three months time.



5 Platoon

Complaints that 22A and 22C (Mick, Snick, Harmony, Gus, Fish, Womble and Dave) work nights only, might have some foundation in fact, but there is no truth in the rumour that the "mole patrol" have to wear dark glasses during daylight!

Jeff Brown intends to award a prize for the Section Commander with the most bed sores.

The Corporals have replied by saying that they sleep with macralon screens round their bed spaces because this is where they do most of their patrolling.

Our two egg-heads, Snick and Fish, are known to all the Irish kids as the "Kojak" patrol, and are plagued by the little brats every time they go on the streets. Luckily they don't suck lollipops as well.

"Porky" Frost no longer tells the story of his encounter with the "Cornhill Cowboy" and is convinced no one will believe him on his return to UK.

6 Platoon

T23 arrived intact at Fort George and within two hours had taken over the guard. Since then the pace has been kept up and time is passing quickly. Already the first lads have taken R & R.

Frankie arrived at Fort George as an attached drummer only to find he had been transferred to 6 Platoon (much to his relief). Blue has now stopped being spoon-fed, and joined the rest of the platoon two weeks ago. Mac has been busy composing (?) ditties about 1660 (it's time they were put in separate rooms) and our two self-styled Dogs of War have been completely defeated by a patrol commander who doesn't know his left from right.

The Search Team has been kept busy. They are now quite used to knocking up people at the crack of dawn and burrowing in hedges and streams. When they were called into the Creggan, they found a Remington rifle, telescopic sights and two armour-piercing rounds. And so Les, Chris, Duck and Stockers have now started "Rent-a-search," with special discount rates to Sobraon Company.

ACORN'S ODES

We work all day to give you a bit of useful int,

To help you recover a weapon on your stint.

Of course we can't work miracles, or even want to try,

But want to do our best for you with something to go by.

It isn't our intention to fill you all with grief,

But we can only give out to you info we receive.

So when on your duty round the town we love so well,

Any information you can get to us you ought to tell.

And if a friendly person to you should have a chat,

Remember all the points to tell us when you're back.

Without the soldier on the ground to help us in our task.

The answer to your questions is a waste of time to ask.

Just one thing to tell you before you really go,

All the information is **STRICTLY NEED TO KNOW**.

B COMPANY STOP PRESS

During a search on the morning of 6th August, the Drums Platoon of "B" Company were successful in finding the following:

15-20 lbs of Homemix

4 Timing Mechanisms

A bag of Steel Balls

A beer keg and two lids

Approx 200 rounds of mixed SA ammo (inc Armalite)

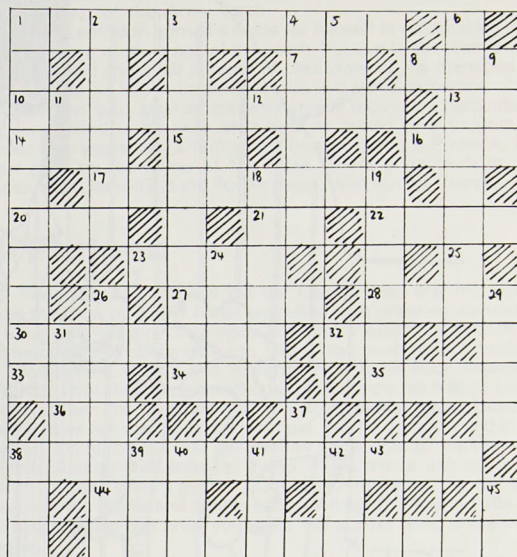
One fired bullet

Approx 500m cable

Tape

Well done the Drums. There is absolutely no truth in the rumour that Lt Andrew Barratt has asked for a week's sleep as a reward.

BRAGANZA CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS

1. 10 Feb—a Battalion event (7, 3)
7. Capone's forename
8. A piece for horses
10. The guard will give you these (5, 5)
13. Northern Ireland initially
14. Best part of the tour
15. Negative
16. Single
17. Never forget this one!
20. Yours and mine
21. Our task initially (1, 1)
22. The Padre has the last word
23. German fighter of World War I or digging implement less last letter
25. First person singular
27. Dry and dusty
28. Not any
30. Sobraon Company area
31. Rightguard will solve this (1, 1)
33. Hearing aid
35. . . . till the stars lose their glory
36. Gallantry award (1, 1)
38. The brain behind Moon Shot (5, 7)
44. At this time
46. Recce Platoon term for covert patrol (6, 5)

CLUES DOWN

1. Found under a blanket of snow (5, 2, 3)
2. Where Ulster and Eire meet
3. In my book, can be turned over at random (3, 3, 4)
4. Where John Kennedy died
5. Everv
6. Ourselves alone, Gaelic style (4, 4)
9. Worn around neck
11. Article before vowel
12. Catch, police style
18. Avoiding discovery
19. Loudspeaker system
24. You'll need this to wipe your dip-stick (1, 3)
26. In the kiddie comics they're Huns
29. Gain, moneywise
31. Sleeping 12
37. Hope you are switched this for patrol
38. Address the RSM likewise!
39. A trick to gain money
40. Female sheep
41. Tree
42. Name tape
43. Deep hole

"OOPS SORRY GUV - THEY'VE GIVEN US ANOTHER WRONG ADDRESS!!"



A JOKE FOR AFTER DINNER

Pte Wilkinson looked at Company detail and found himself down to do night guard for the third night in succession. He asked for an interview with the CSM to whom he explained the situation.

"Worry no more, Wilkinson," said the CSM. "The roster will be sorted out, but do your guard anyway and I'll adjust next time round."

Wearily the following morning he came off guard, looked at Company detail, and again found himself detailed off for guard that night. He asked for, and was granted an interview with the Company Commander, who repeated almost verbatim the words of the CSM.

Having done the good soldier bit and completed the night guard for the fourth night on the trot and with his eyes gugged up with weariness he examined Company detail to discover—you guessed it!—his name down yet again for night guard. In desperation he asked for an interview with the Commanding Officer.

"Lif-rite lif-rite lif" said the RSM, and the diminutive but determined figure of Pte Wilkinson stood before the Commanding Officer to whom the situation was explained.

The CO sat back in his chair, thumbs inserted into breast pocket, and thought deeply for a few moments. Finally he sat alert and dismissed the Company Commander and RSM. He invited Wilkinson to sit down.

"I'll tell you what I'll do Wilkinson, doncherno," he said. "Tell me a good story and I'll excuse you guards for the rest of your service."

It was Wilkinson's turn to think. Finally his eyes lit up at the challenge offered by the CO. "Very well Sir," he said, "it happened like this . . .

" . . . In a country in or around Arabia there chanced to be a very wealthy potentate who was all-powerful in the land save for one thing. He was possessed of a most beautiful daughter, equipped with all the attributes of feminine attraction but whom

the potentate couldn't marry off because she was possessed of a most embarrassing physical complaint. Many of the potentate's physicians had lost their heads because of their failure to cure this beautiful girl of her debility, and equally many wealthy, handsome young Arabs who had pursued their suit with alacrity had soon found excuse to have it off to (at) another oasis.

The potentate was desperate. A position of stalemate was reached. Fearing that in due course, the beauty and envious physical attractions of his daughter would fade, he offered half the wealth of his kingdom plus the hand of his daughter in marriage to the man who would administer the cure.

It so happened that a young Yorkshireman was travelling in the area and heard of the potentate's plight. He rushed to the court, sought interview with the girl's father, and offered his services. The potentate was dubious of this little Yorkshireman's ability to cure his daughter after the failure of his grand physicians, but in desperation he agreed that an attempt should be made.

In the presence of the entire court the Yorkshireman caused a large pit to be dug, positioned the daughter astride it and himself at the bottom thereof, then shouted up, "Righto." There was a loud explosion accompanied by loud acclamation from the gathered crowd. The Yorkshireman clambered out of the pit to the congratulations of the potentate who lived up to his promise, handing over half his wealth and his daughter's hand in marriage . . .

. . . Wilkinson paused. "Go on man, go on dammit," said the Commanding Officer impatiently. "How did the mastermind of a Yorkshireman do it?"

"There's not much more to tell," said Wilkinson, wearily. "The Yorkshireman's name was Wilkinson, the potentate's daughter suffered from constipation, and it must be common knowledge world-wide by now that EVERYBODY SH-TS ON WILKINSON."



There are 40,000 Yarpis in the Old Transvaal, but they can't put the blame on me!

SOBRAON COMPANY

"We also serve" is the motto of the d' for Coy HQ—even if we do spend 25 hours a day in bed and suffer from bed sores. On rare occasions the OC's crash crew has been seen to leave Creggan Camp on safari to the exotic wastes 300 metres down the road. These fearless men tread where no man has trod before, led by that BIG White Hunter, "Buster," who can be seen urging on the rest of the team in his normal calm and collected manner.

Before him goes his trusty scout, "Archie," a henchman and backwoodsman if ever there was one, and in rear is "our Martin" with that look of lust in his eyes and the ever-ready elephant gun. With him in the rear is "Dave P." who is ever on the search for more hooks for his belt. No sooner than the first group move out of sight than a second one appears, hell-bent on adventure. Here we have a little-known man with an inscrutable smile being guided by "Tich," the other tracker. With them they have two specialist operators, the witch doctor, better known as "Jumbo" and "Muskev," the one with the automatic bongo-drums.

The back-up for our intrepid explorers is just as impressive a list with "Sandbag" controlling the rear bongos, under the direction of our ever-watchful Kestrel, who hovers overhead. Our "Paddy" and "Action Man" re-supply them from base camp using the wheels of Colin's mobile taxi service along with the late great Earp wagons. The latest achievement of this well-drilled team has been the long safari to both of the jungles in the same day and making it back to base camp.

What will the next month bring? Can you wait for the next exciting instalment when our intrepid explorers make preparations for a journey to other, little known, places. Don't miss it—this page—next month!!!

7 platoon

The first three weeks of the tour have been pretty hectic, but fortunately we've been able to see the lighter side of things as well.

"Mints" Murray's mother (a somewhat formidable lady who has a shop in Beachwood Avenue) received a rude shock when Cpl Hail entered her premises to demand two pints of milk then sat back to watch the reaction. She got over the shock remarkably well and swung into the offensive, giving McGinty a comprehensive lesson in abuse and to put it politely (which is wasn't) forcibly ejected Cpl Hail from the shop. Not to be outdone Cpl Hail threatens that his mother-in-law will be coming out from Glasgow to sort her out.

3IC broke the monotony of NTR searches with the help of a very insistent wagtail, which took a lot of interest in a bag of 5-6 lbs. of white powdery substance which was hidden in a wardrobe. The Ops Room got excited, Buster had a smile on his face and stopped swearing, and the Platoon started chalking up their

victory over the other two. Diffs duly examined it and after a tense silence pronounced it to be flour, only in this case deflating rather than self-raising. Since then they have found equipment which was in the process of being made into a booby-trap, the old chestnut of the Army torch.

LCpl Leefmans earned a name for himself in recognising and cornering our number one of the patch, but due to the reaction of a large crowd and a fair amount of ultra violence, he managed to escape, and we had to be content with two stone-throwers.

One man who shall remain anonymous received a particularly vicious wound to his nose after a stone hurled by a toughie of about four years struck him whilst he was doing a P-check. He now goes by the name of Mr. Nose. There is no truth in the rumour that he will get the Purple Heart. Wait out for Casrep.

8 Platoon

"Good'ere, in it?!" we tell the Cregganites, and the reply takes the form of a milk bottle propelled with unerring accuracy by a five-year-old girl. Once again Loveland's smooth approach is confounded and off he walks to find a new bush to look under.

Meanwhile, the big one, with the mark on his neck, explains to Paddy (Not the colour bundle) who's just had his billiard balls pushed down the pouches during a hot pursuit of the Telstar, that he does not want a game just now, but he does know that if you put 10p in the slot you get another game. Paddy, undeterred by this blinding with science, thinks: "This man's a fool," and replies: "I don't want a game, I want 10p for my balls." So the big one turns the tables and comes back: "All right; if you put 10p in the slot and pull this lever your balls will appear here, and away we go."

Paddy gets flustered and answers in some foreign language, or so it seems (quite rude probably) and his fellows at the bar dissolve into peals of laughter. This is probably the first time a British soldier has gone into the Telstar and actually got a laugh out of the inmates.

At this stage all the other "leaders" in the Telstar come up to Sgt Basham with Sitreps and disappear again. Seeing this, one Paddy turns to another and whispers: "I think he's de major." They all go silent and when the Brigadier says: "I'm off now; what's the best route away from here?" they say with conviction: "Oh, he is de Major." Quite a day that was.

There have been good times and bad times—both exciting and boringly tedious. Even after only one month the patch seems small. Paddy with his uncanny logic tries to make it even smaller by blocking roads, but only achieves inconvenience for the vast majority, deprived of their bus service for a while because the bus company do not want another bus burned.

Then there was the day a section was shot at and Hossack, guilty of the world-famous British weakness for understatement, coolly turned to his Section Commander and said: "Oh, I thought all that black stuff in the air (referring to chips off the wall made by the bullet strikes) was some kid letting off firecrackers to frighten us!"

A day in sangars produced the most extraordinary sighting. LCpl Hayes received a report of an unidentified orange moving along Creggan Heights, which passed into view along Bligh's Lane. Sangars were galvanised into action with donkey's ears, IWS and binoculars being operated to spot this elusive FNU SNU. Williams was tasked to watch the back gate like a hawk for any associates of the FNU SNU. In Sangar 2 Dean thought he saw it taking a quick peep at him from the back garden of 88, Creggan Heights, but this could not be confirmed. 7 Platoon were on the ground but it was thought they might mistake the FNU SNU for Kevin Quigley.

On the chance appearance of Captain Swanson, who had just dropped in from chatting level with Hawkeye, LCpl Hayes earnestly informed him of the wandering possible terrorist and received a quick "Huh! You're having me on." But the orange is still there; read the continuing saga in the next issue.

9 Platoon

Now that I have at last diverted your eyes from the previous passage, I feel that our recently-formed club "The Lethargy League," should at least gain a small mention. Remember if you will the general guidelines laid down by the founder member "Ted the Heap" Simpson on the opening night.

The "Lethargy League" has been formed in order to allow all the aspiring sandbags to come into force, and unite in a concentrated effort in an attempt to abolish all forms of enthusiasm that continuously haunt us during our repose in the plughole of the North Atlantic, the Creggan Estate, Londonderry.

Before reeling out many deserved credits, I must first strike a sombre note, for in our midst there are one or two who have shown a flicker of keenness. Since membership necessitates whole-hearted participation, I feel that those who have, perhaps, fallen by the wayside, should be used as an example so that the newer members can see where the pitfalls lie and learn by past mistakes.

It was with deep regret that I noticed upon entering our worthy sergeant's bunk that he was bent double and engaged in a somewhat jerky activity. Upon realising my presence by his side he attempted to conceal an object behind his back; upon further examination it appeared to be a boot brush covered with a liberal layer of polish. My eyes fell on the boots DMS and the sight of them made me take a step back in revulsion. Oh the horror of it! His boots were black and shiny, and no longer the regulation, muddy, off-white colour.

Again, two baton gunners, "Cropper" Allen and "Legs" Carroll, who, when forced to fire their unwieldy weapons in the pursuit of self-preservation, managed by some extraordinary fluke to hit their target, were subsequently seen to jump around and around in ever decreasing circles and clap their hands, and in the case of "Cropper" Allen, actually attempted to reload his weapon. To finalise the bad points, two characters, "Para" Gorman and "Prudence," whose bottoms seem to glow a perpetual cherry red, saw fit to disturb our Sunray Petal when he was engaged in a gruelling period of Egyptian PT; they then had the nerve to ask for the rank of baton gunner since they firmly believed that at a pinch they could hit somebody.

Special credit must go to the following Privates: "Wamble," "Nance" Burton, "Sandbag" Sock, "Les," "Hulk," and "Assassin" Grieg, who have steadfastly refused to put an oily rag anywhere near their rifles which, incidentally, have turned a rather deep sunset orange. Well done, lads, keep it up!

Having fallen into the routine of things it is now merely a question of impressing this need for no enthusiasm on our Irish neighbours, the Cregganites, who for some unexplicable reason, seem hell-bent on making life distressingly eventful.

SOBRAON SALLIES

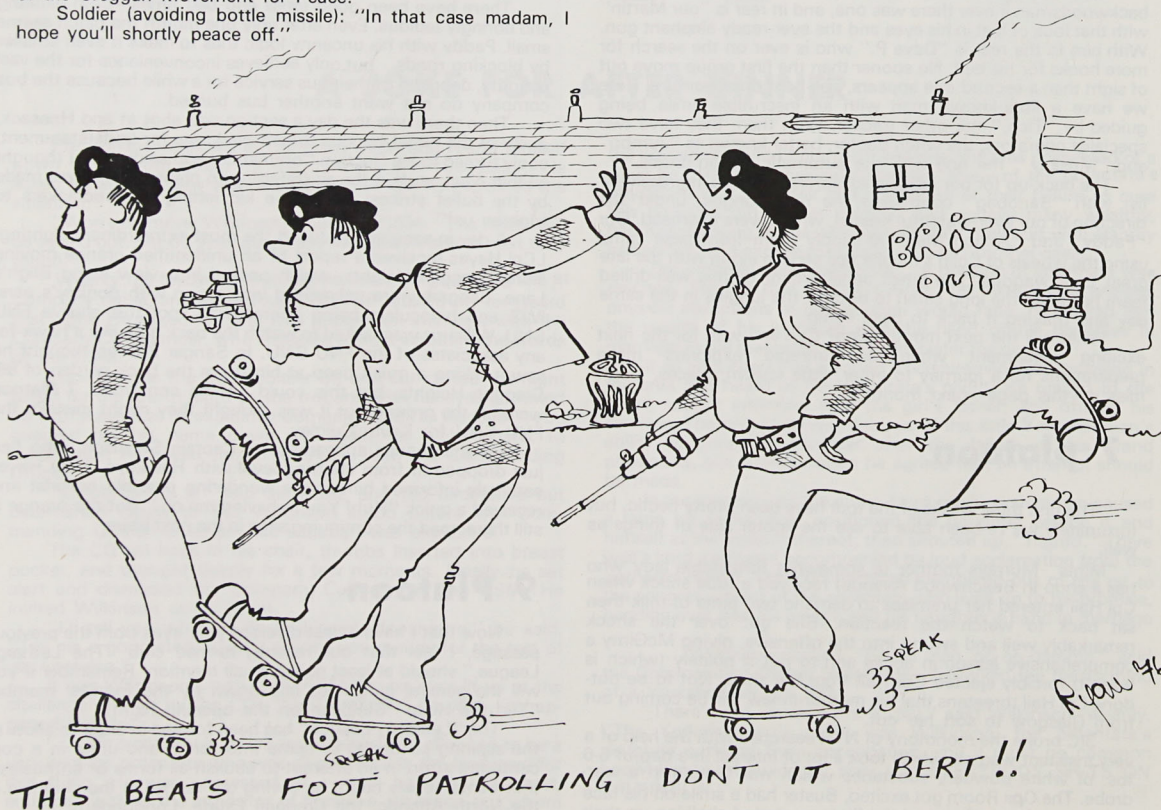
"C" Company soldier engaged in by now routine encounter with Cregganite yobboes, is tapped on shoulder by large, aggressive Irish lady.

Irish lady: "I want to talk to youse, because I am a member of the Creggan Movement for Peace."

Soldier (avoiding bottle missile): "In that case madam, I hope you'll shortly peace off."



2023 'CORPORAL & CREACH' by SPL



THIS BEATS FOOT PATROLLING DONT IT BERT!!

FOR THE LADIES

THE MONTH'S SHORT STORY

REST AND RECUPERATION

He entered the airport reception centre. The journey from Aldergrove had been quick, his system scarcely getting time to re-adjust from the Ulster scenario to the normality and bustle of a major international airport.

She was waiting for him and as they met there was the embarrassed greeting of two people who have lived intimately together for many years yet who after two months separation preferred to defer their demonstration of mutual love and affection for the privacy of the home.

She was a neatly dressed woman in her early forties who had obviously come straight from the hairdresser. Her face had acquired the lines of worry associated with long periods of looking after young children without her husband's presence, with innumerable moves to and from army quarters and with successful attempts to balance the household budget on limited resources. She was obviously very thrilled to be re-united with her husband and if her feelings were tinged with regret that they could only be together for a couple of days before he returned to Ulster, the pleasure in her eyes failed to reflect the thought.

He collected his small piece of baggage and they moved to the car park. He took the driving seat of their car and appreciated the comfortable feel of the seat and the luxury fittings, a pleasant change from the functional, spartan vehicles that had been his mode of transport for the past two months. It was clear that an attempt had been made to clean both exterior and interior of the car. He noted the fact with gratitude, wondering where his wife had found the time amongst her many chores.

They joined the stream of traffic leaving the airport and, as he changed gear, their hands brushed. Their conversation as they drove along the motorway was limited to conventional discussion about the state of her mother's failing health, the progress of the children at school and the restrictions of army life in Northern Ireland.

The drive home was a long one and after an hour's driving had passed they pulled off of the motorway and drove into a hotel park place to take lunch.

The lingered over coffee accompanied by a liqueur in honour of the special occasion. As he drew on his cigarette he pondered the chances of their repeating the experience of being totally alone during the next four days whilst children, parents, relatives and friends would occupy their precious time together.

Acting on a sudden impulse he asked his wife to wait for him. He sought out the hotel manager and had a few, quiet words with him. A five pound note exchanged hands. He returned to their table with a key and whispered softly in to his wife's ear. For a moment she remained still, apparently startled by his suggestion, then collected her handbag, straightened her hair and slipped her hand in to his as they moved to the residential part of the hotel.

An hour later they were back in the car and on their way home. His wife's hair did not now look so neat. But her eyes held a sparkle and—was it entirely the stimulation of physical love-making?—nine or ten years seemed to have slipped from the lines of her face. She studied her husband as he concentrated on his driving. She had been surprised by his sudden impulse—he was ever a conventional man—and equally surprised by the tenderness and depth of feeling he had displayed as they made love in the hotel room. Perhaps a brief period of separation at their time of life had its compensations after all....

He sensed her scrutiny and turned briefly, his own eyes reflecting the remembrance and enjoyment of their recent experience. He took his hand from the wheel for a moment, grasped hers and smiled gently as he said "Let's go and find the children."

APOLOGIES

To Sunray Minor, also part-time PR/CR 'delegate' to Bn HQ for failure to include some of the excellent art work of which he is the subject currently on display. Hopefully some of the prints can be modified for the next edition. Wait (weight?) out.

REMEMBERING YOU

"I thought of you", I heard her say
When they played 'our tune' the other day.
They smiled at each other as they went out
And I stood up wanting to shout,
"You think of him when they play 'your tune',
A nostalgic moment over so soon?
I have a lover—now so far away
And I think of him, not every day,
Not just when an orchestra plays 'our tune'
Not every night when I search for the moon,
Wondering if he is watching it too
From his Army Post with a different view.
No, I think of him as I wald down the street,
In the Winter fog, in the Summer heat,
Whilst I am making the bed, cleaning my shoes,
Washing my hair or watching the news.
If I could think of him only when they played
'Our tune', I would then know that
He's not in my thoughts every day for 24 hours,
And I could safely say "The worst
Is over, the 4 months has passed,
He's coming home at last."

(Mrs Alfred)

FOR SALE

Sporting rifle with telescopic sight and all extras at reasonable price. Would consider swapping for large Chest Freezer. Apply 2IC.

The Grand Draw

The opportunity cannot be resisted to remind everyone that tickets are now on sale, at 10p each, for the Grand Draw to be held in Londonderry before the Battalion returns to BAOR. Tickets are on sale at Colour Sergeants' Stores, Messes and at Unit Pay Office, let alone PRI and Wives' Club back in Werl. Prizes include:

PORTABLE TELEVISION
RADIO/CASSETTE PLAYER
TWO ELECTRONIC DIGITAL DISPLAY WATCHES
POCKET CALCULATOR
CAMERA
BINOCULARS
TWO GIANT SIZE TEDDY BEARS

The proceeds of this Draw are to be used exclusively to raise money for a stained glass window to be put in St. Matthew's Church, at Albuhera Barracks, Werl, after our return. It is the Commanding Officer's wish that all ranks and their families get the opportunity to contribute to this worthwhile cause, and what better way than buying a few tickets, and at the same time having a good chance of winning a prize in the draw.



QUEBEC MARAUDERS

The task of Company Operations Officer, amongst many others, is to write these notes for the Company. We have a rather different task to the remainder of the Battalion in that we have a great deal of 'real estate', looked after by the Recce Platoon. At the time of writing they have had two contacts accompanied by the unfortunate injury of L Cpl Friend. We all hope that he returns to the field as soon as possible and that he soon recovers. We were also glad to hear that his wife was able to get out to see him.

The other two platoons man the Victors. These are two permanent VCPs on two major routes into Londonderry. With some patrolling thrown in we have quite a varied life. Two points that are worth some note as I close are that Sunray, Major Roddy (Gin Sling) Mellotte is still trying to find out how to tune a pocket phone! Smith 55's jokes seem to get worse and worse. I have managed to rope in the platoon Commanders to add a few lines. Wonders will never cease.



Changeover of Night Stag

ANTI-TANK PLATOON

I suppose every platoon has started by saying "We arrived safely in Derry and were soon settled in" so I'll go along with it; we did too.

Just before the tour started we were joined by 'Dutch' ("The Paras didn't do it like this") Holland? Our VCP wouldn't be the same without the sound of him and L Cpl 'Hulk' Chapman quietly chuntering in the background.

We nearly lost two members of the platoon before the tour started. Pte Norris ('Speedy') who had broken his ankle whilst on Snow Queen waved us goodbye with cheerful remarks like "Don't work too hard" and "I'll be thinking of you whilst I'm watching the Olympics." Sad to relate he had another unforeseen occurrence; his ankle mended and he joined us six days later. "Boots" Kent only just joined the Platoon in time after being late back from leave; he had British Legal Fraternity. Having seen the pressure of work here he now wishes he'd accepted their alternative offer of free board and lodging.

The search team led by 'Punchy' Greenwood and 'Fishface' Anglin have had no success to date but are leaving no stone unturned.

Our muggers, 'Johnny' Lumb and 'Dilly' De Lara have been experimenting with large black cloaks and various false moustaches but haven't yet come up with the right combination. They would welcome any advice on how to disappear from view, other than the physically impossible suggestions which are currently being propounded by the platoon.



Checking out a car at Victor 3

10 platoon

Well, after the homilies by other platoons in the Company it is obviously about time that the members of a Platoon were able to give their own 'perfectly frank and honest' (to quote a former Prime Minister) opinions of themselves (their comments on other platoons are unprintable!)

The opinions were freely given with no hint of coercion (except that it is recommendation time for promotion etc.)

"A lot of rejects and throwouts." "Not just a lot of throwouts and rejects." "After a few teething troubles the Platoon has settled down and all are working very well together." We are the best 'cos we was hand picked from the RAOC." Could be even better." "Our record shows we can work as well as any platoon." Which just goes to show what diversity leads to!

Well Emily keeps on losing his Queen's beret and finding it again, this being in direct proportion to the number of women he is allowed to chat to, and whether or not he gets a Dolly Mixture given to him each day. Taffy has succeeded in locking himself in plasticuffs and putting his personalized hand print on all car upholstery. To his great chagrin he was on sangar duty when the Rolls Royce came through. A certain Geordie is well on the way to being strangled if he acts the comedian, when everyone is trying to have a good moan. Enough of this, the first instalment. For some reason (at the last count) four people/nuts/lizards are about to transfer to the Battalion. However there is an underground movement which believes in "No surrender—UDI for 10 Platoon!"



Inside Victor 2 with 'Coffee Pot'

MORTAR PLATOON

At the time of writing we are just about settling down. The moans and groans are gradually being sorted out.

The P. platoon was cursing the Victors when we first arrived but now, after a four day patrol programme, the blokes really look forward to getting back on them.

Things are progressing well at the Victors now that we have ironed out a few problems. Our very capable mugger 'Toucher' Taylor is getting a lot of assistance from Acorn Minor, 'Skin' Lightfoot who has plenty of the 'old chat'. Our manning problem is not helped when 'Killer' takes over on the radio calling out car numbers. He needs someone standing next to him to tell him the numbers ('killer' does not see all that well). Good MFC?

After 55 had deserted the Platoon that had mothered him so long (into a cushy number) we now find we have another character in 'Cherryboy' Mortimer. Mort is currently under suspicion of drawing a moustache on the photo in someone's driving licence. We get the assistance of Watchbirds at weekends and the smell of perfume in the Control Room makes a pleasant change. The smooching sound heard at Victor Three last Saturday was believed to be Pte Harding's lips.

We are all looking forward to the start of R & R and some more duty free.



STATISTICS SECURICOY

(Frontier Force)

Although the author of page 2 did not see fit to include finds in our area we would like to claim the following 'stuff':-

60 lbs of co-op. 17 lbs of commercial explosive. 20ft of cortex. 1 x .22 rifle. 10 rounds of ammo.

If this does not seem to be much, it needs only to be said that we have otherwise spent our time:

Stopping and checking 140, 291 cars. Searching 9,730 cars. (And how many Cocktail Parties? Ed.)



The not-so-charming exterior vista of Victor 2

But what if it's

BATTALION PHOTOGRAPHERS PLEASE NOTE !!



AND THE LAST WORD





With acknowledgement to SUN Newspapers and Cpl Millsom, Signal Pl.

