

THE LEEK

1st Battalion Welsh Guards



West Belfast March 1986

Edition No. 1

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER



LT. COL. C. F. DREWRY

I am delighted to be able to announce with this first edition of The Leek the resurrection of the Battalion journal. The Leek has always flourished when the Battalion is away on operations as a means of bringing together people, news and good stories and I am sure that it will achieve that purpose again during our present tour of Northern Ireland.

Already time seems to be flashing by and it is difficult to believe, as I write these notes, that the first fortnight in Belfast has gone. Memories of arctic conditions in Hohna and Sennelager during February are fading fast and we have settled quickly into the routine of patrolling in Belfast in support of the police.

Much of the anticipation and natural apprehension felt by those who had not been here before has also been dispelled. Outwardly the place looks like any other British towns except that it is a good deal dirtier and the local dogs on the housing estates belong to a bigger and much more vicious breed. Beneath the air of normality of course lies tension and deep-seated conflict which has been passed on from generation to generation — a problem which is not amenable to quick solutions but one which can at least be softened by a liberal application of jovial Welsh humour. And there is of course the small minority of evil but frightened men and women plotting to take their chance, should the occasion arise.

Against this background it is reassuring to see Welsh Guardsmen and those who have joined us from other regiments rising to the challenge, reacting with confidence, taking a pride in doing something for real and doing it well.

To our wives and families at home we send all our love and we look forward to receiving the first copies of their rival paper, the Spring Onion.

C. F. Drewry





The Prince of Wales's Company Fort Whiterock

Editorial Note

Already the Battalion has spent many hours on patrol in West Belfast as the first three weeks have passed by. The initial period of "settling in" is over and we now know the routine. Our area of responsibility is West Belfast which covers some of the hard Republican estates.

Much has changed since we were last in Northern Ireland and in particular Belfast. The RUC have primacy and the Military operate only in support of them. No patrol, except for mobiles, go out without an RUC constable. Each constable is supported by about twenty Guardsmen, perhaps by a mobile patrol and a helicopter as 'top cover'. This enables the policeman to carry out his normal duties on the beat whilst affording him protection.

The Battalion warmly welcomes in its ranks for this tour men from 50 Missile Regiment, Royal Artillery, 1 RHA, 4 RTR, RCT, RAMC and 4 WRAC cooks.

In this our first Leek of the tour we hope to keep everyone in the Battalion, the families and anyone else connected with it in touch. It is intended that we produce one a month.

In the meantime we look forward to the start of the R & R period which is fast approaching.

The first elements of the Prince of Wales's Company arrived in Ulster to be welcomed by the most glorious weather. A really bright, mild day was a pleasant contrast to the sub-zero "Ice Station Zebra" conditions of RAF Gutersloh. The take off, of the first flight was delayed by the plunging temperatures which froze the aeroplane completely. The experienced RAF ground crew hosed down the unfortunate VC 10 with a sophisticated anti-freeze mixture, but to no avail. The mix was incorrect and the anti-freeze itself froze. (Does that make sense).

The Royal Green Jackets welcomed the incoming troops with open arms. The advance party was shown around the Company area to get the idea of the lie of the land before the arrival of the main body. The Green Jackets looked after us excellently during the brief period that our tours overlapped. Every inch of the streets were pointed out in great detail and we were summarily introduced to all the more colourful members of the local population. The Company area is varied in character. It ranges from filthy areas with all kinds of litter strewn across the streets to rows of well kept houses, detached and with beautifully attended gardens. The reception of the locals is equally variable. A lot of the inhabitants are more than happy to talk to the Welsh Guardsmen and pass the time of day — the natural Welsh charms always wins through even the thickest skins. However, it is the womenfolk who display the widest range of expressive vocabulary!

Fort Whiterock itself is a purpose built camp and by comparison to others is quite big and spacious. The large vehicle park and general layout provides space for exercise. There are also sporting facilities such as the multigym, badminton or volley ball court and a squash court. The sauna is also very popular. We could do with a jacuzzi and a resident masseuse. Perhaps the all-providing CQMS has these items on his charge and has neglected to tell anybody?



Down to the wood — Sgt. Williams 54



Lt. Bulbeck and brick

There is a large number of people in Fort Whiterock. This fine body of men consists of The Prince of Wales's Company plus the MILAN Platoon and in addition there is a REME detachment, an RCT section, a medical section, a dog section, a CONCO section and last but certainly not least — The Chogs! The Guardsmen are in eight man rooms, which have been decorated in the usual manner! Most rooms have managed to hire a television at a reasonable rate. Conditions are certainly not as cramped as the last tour!

Meals are served in a large cookhouse. Diners can relish the pleasant surroundings and congenial atmosphere safe in the knowledge that the roof is entirely mortar proof! The cooks have worked hard to produce several choices at mealtimes. For instance the selection for lunch today ranged from beef burgers to toasted cheese and ham sandwiches,

mince pies, omelettes and fish fingers. To accompany this we could have chips, chips and chips, muuuuuushy peas and a good variety of salads. Nobody is starving anyway!

If there are not enough chips in the cookhouse the "Choggy shop" is just next door. A selection of cultured Asian gentlemen run a very colourful bazaar. There you can escape from the rigours of Northern Ireland and enter a world of exotic Persian carpets, rich oriental spices and beef burgers with cheese, beef burgers with tomato, beef burger specials all provided by the manager Anwar Afzal Esq.

The Company has settled into Fort Whiterock and morale is high. We hope that everyone is getting enough phonecalls!!

Number 2 Platoon

No. 2 Platoon wishes to introduce for this edition of the Leek a few of its characters. There is ace darts player and man about town L.Sgt. Hartnell known as "Spider" to his friends. In addition there is L.Cpl. Terry Jones 71 (known as "Meat"), Gdsm Littler whose chat up technique is said to be second only to that of David Frost, Gdsm Jones 21 ("Spike"), Gdsm Davies 97 ("Big G"), Gdsm Griffiths ("Bagpus") who works well in coveralls under close supervision and finally Gdsm Mathews ("Rawhide") whose A to H (description technique) on two cows could win him a position as an auctioneer at Hereford cattle market.

*The Jam Boys are in Belfast
Their rifles in their hands
With panic on their faces
As the plane came in to land
Then it's into crowded Piglets
For Whiterock they are bound
Nobody is smiling
And no one makes a sound
Before the dust has settled
The boys are on the streets
With fear and apprehension
The Terrorists must be beat
The job is long and tiresome
Getting harder by the day
But they'll all come through with
honours
For the Dragon leads the way
Then when the Tour is over
And all patrolling's done
The PIRA will remember
That One Welsh Guards have won.*

Spider Hartnell

Number 3 Platoon

No. 3 Platoon has spent most time, at the time of writing, in the Ballymurphy Estate. The "Murph" as it is not so affectionately known is a hard line Republican area, and not only houses the vast majority of PIRA, but a generally hostile public who are never short of sometimes amusing abuse. For instance, on take over from the Green Jackets we had one youth say "Bloody hell, we've only just got rid of the Green Jackets and now we've got the Red Jackets" — although none of us have felt any need to wear tunics on

the streets yet! Guardsman Mainwaring accounts of a five year old boy coming up to him, shouting 'bang', sticking his finger in his eye and then ran off shouting — "You squaddie B....."! In his own words, "I was poked in the eye by a 2½ foot mick"! However, not all have a bad opinion of the local population; Guardsman Margetson has met a Welsh Sunblest bread man who lives in the Ballymurphy and L.Cpl. "RROGERR" Teague and L.Sgt. Vaughan-Jones have had good results by offering sweets to the children!!

On the whole the "Murph" has been a quiet place apart from the occasional verbal hostility from the locals, and when L.Sgt. Edwards 74 almost caused a riot by asking one loud mouthed PIRA "player" to open the boot of his car, the whole street came out to join in the shouting match!

Generally therefore morale is high despite the harsh surroundings. L.Sgt. Lloyd accounted of how he should have brought some crampons and climbing rope to get over a wall which L. Sgt Wright assured him was an easy vault — it was 6 foot 6 at least, with glass on the top! Sgt. "Rambo" Rowlands continues to borrow cigarettes off the smokers with the well known line, "I'll owe you one, my wife's sending me out some more". L.Sgt. "Taggy pants" or "Sherlock" Wright (nick names most affectionately aquired) continues to talk in his sleep and is always the last out of bed. Guardsman Angus is also very fond of his sleep if he can get some whilst L.Cpl. Whitehouse snores next door!

Three Platoon have quickly settled into the tiring job of combating terrorism. It will be a hard slog for 4 months, but with the prevailing sense of humour of the "Men of three" it will be taken as usual, in its stride. A sense of humour portrayed, hopefully, by Guardsman Patten's postscript;

"Did you hear about the Irishman who thought a Hebrew was a male tea bag"!

And on a more serious note from Guardsman Thomas 35;

*Here I sit night and day,
Earning money the good way,
For this life the Army be,
The best maturing agent for me.
Through the training and on,
I learn the ropes,
The hardships,
The friendships
And how to mainly cope.*

*And now is the time to Ireland we go,
Where all the patience we must show.
The strains, the pains, new names.
The place nearly the same but,
Really who is to blame.
And the question is who will claim,
This small yet precious plain.*

"Do they really care"

Gdsm THOMAS 35

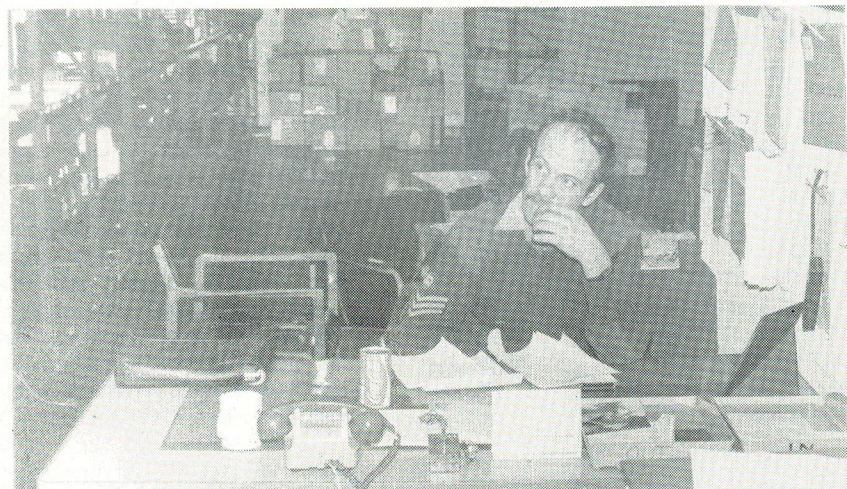




We're here - but where's here? -
Sgt. Barton and L.Sgt. Sincock



He stole my marbles, Constable — CSM Dyas and Milan platoon



Lord! It's only 10.00 What the devil can I do next? — CQMS Roberts 15



Samantha who's outside? — L.Cpl. Stefiuk, CSM Harvey, L.Cpl. Williams and Capt. Laborda



Mr. Softee's here — Gdsm. Howard



I've got to go now. They need me. —
Dmr. Woods

The MILAN Platoon is split into two platoons (the MILAN and Drums Platoon) and has reinforced the POW's Company. Although missing Support Company and dreading the order to get a "Jam Boy" haircut, they have settled in well. POW's Company should consider itself lucky to have them. L.Sgt. Evans 69 has a brick known as "the SWARVES". They have recently been complaining about the lack of plug sockets for the iron and that adopting fire positions spoils the creases in their trousers. Nevertheless both platoons are in good spirit.



Beats the real thing — Gdsm. Hermanis

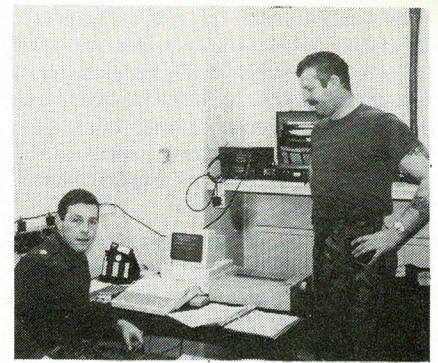
THE DRUMMY'S PATROL

*Drummy, Oh Drummy,
Oh Drummy is our man,
Does his patrols as fast as he can.
It's out at three o'clock, in at four,
Down to his room and shut the door.
Next time he's back it's just once
more,
A run round the Turf to settle the
score.
Then back to base, it's time for no
more.
Tomorrow it's guard,
Oh God we're blessed, to get plenty of
rest.*

NUMBER 2 COY North Howard Street Mill

Like a ship with rusty turbines, beginning to move through largely uncharted and dangerous waters, so have the new inhabitants of North Howard Street Mill become operational. And the transition from a beleaguered 3 platoons-strong Company being perpetually shot at and blown up in 'Tin City', to an outfit consisting of 5 platoons and numerous attachments, coping with day to day routine and administrative problems, has not been as easy as one might have hoped.

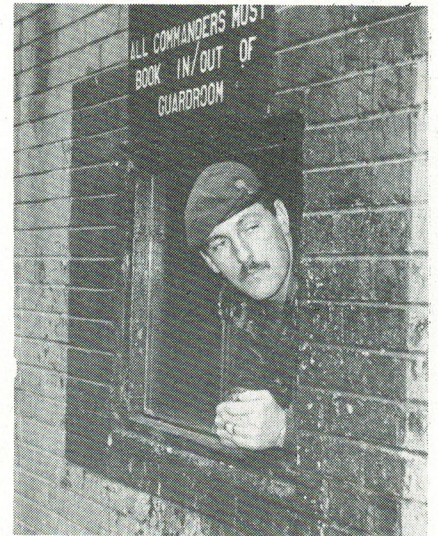
Odd really, and not something for which we can blame NITAT. Learning to react quickly, aggressively, and efficiently, to terrorist-inspired incidents, sending those marvellously concise Contact Reports at the right times, etcetera, etcetera, ("We shall leave the film. At this point . . .") is one thing. Learning to handle the domestic difficulties involved in a relentless 24



Hello Sailor —
Maj. Richards and CSM Covell

hours a day, 7 days a week routine, where "the threat" seems distant and life in this city seems normal, is quite another.

That said, we haven't done badly; just that now, with new found confidence in our all round ability building up, the complacency is setting in. Inevitable in a way. Alas, the only way to be properly shaken out of it, would be to have an incident. The circle is vicious.



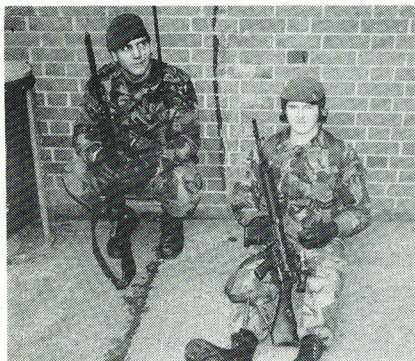
Oh no! Not you again — L.Cpl. Shannon

But life goes on . . .

Attached to the normal 2 Company composition, are a troop from 50 Missile Regiment under command Lt. Roberts, a platoon from the resident King's Own Border Regiment, which changes every 6 weeks, a large Intelligence Cell, with "Concos" who've been here for a year and more, and whose terrorist recognition is staggeringly good; also an assortment of signallers, RCT men, dog handlers and Catering Corps. We operate on a 20 day cycle: 2 days each, on Patrols West (these include Beechmounts — notable for RPG attacks and dog messes), Quick Reaction Force, Patrols East (these include the Divis Flats complex — notable for pond life — otherwise loosely classed as humans — and bombs), and Guard Platoon; the same rota again, and then 4 days spent guarding Her Majesty's Prison on Crumlin Road.

The claustrophobia of a totally walled-in Mill and Prison, makes Patrols East and West a pleasure. Added to which, a good rapport has quickly been established with the Royal Ulster Constabulary, and is an enlightening experience to patrol with them on their beat.

Those of us on the Advance Party (brick commanders and above) arrived at the end of February, and were given an excellently comprehensive and trouble-free handover during the week before the Main Body arrived. We were able to understudy the smugly efficient commanders in 2 RGJ, and then take out bricks and multiples with the experienced ones watching over and tactfully advising us. Then a frenetic day while the Green Jackets moved out and the Welsh Guards moved in, the King's Own Borderers providing an extra platoon with which to tide us over. And then straight onto the streets, with everyone understandably jumpy and nervous. However, two weeks later, it is just possible to say that we settled down quickly, and the RUC have commented on how impressed they've been with us so far. Encouraging stuff.



Have you got a Walkman for me too? — Gdsm. Smith 34 and Morgan 12

Our eyes, in many cases, have been opened a little wider. This writer, on stopping to chat with some 5 or 6 years old children in the street, was asked if he could make a model wooden boat as well as the one that a child was eagerly showing. Diplomacy, at that time being considered the order of the day, induced the reply:

... "How clever! No, I'm sure I couldn't — at least, it would take me a jolly long time." ...

... "That's because you're an effing blinding stupid British bleeder!" came the retort. The 'hearts and minds' campaigner took a step back. Never too young, it seems, to carry on the thoughts and words of an older generation.

The RUC have been most considerate, friendly and helpful (put them on the distribution list, Ed.), and so far, despite intimations of a hectic summer trying to keep the delicate

peace, we both look forward to a successful and trouble-free tour. Let us hope that the next Leek Contribution will be written in the same high spirits as this one!



This is your man on the ground — L.Sgt. Copeland

ODE TO OP BANNER

(To the tune of
"My Favourite Things")

*The howls of the dogs and the calls to sangars,
Electric-blue language from girls with no manners,
Glue-sniffing yobos bombarding with tins:*

These are a few of our favourite things.

Half an hour's sleep in a twenty day cycle,

Rude confrontation when 'P' Checking Michael,

*Area searches in muck-filled dustbins:
These are a few of our favourite things.*

When the bricks fly,

Passing close by,

On a Friday night;

Then do we think

of our favourite things,

And long for a warm July!

Name withheld by request.



This is called a rifle and it goes "Bang" — Gdsm. Morris 71 and L.Sgt. Carter

2 COY INT (secret squirrels) SECTION

We arrived in sunny Belfast on the 17th February, suitably attired in civvy clothes ready for a secret move in civvy vehicles to our various locations. The secret vehicle turned out to be a covered green four tonner with a secret army number plate, when we saw this our faith in canvas as a bullet stopper ceased to exist.

Luckily we made it to M.P.H. in one piece were we had to hang about in a form of back street cafe run by a gentleman of the coloured persuasion from a far off land called Birmingham, finally a couple of taxi-pigs turned up and conveyed us to the mill.



Yes mum. They feed me well and I change my underwear every day — Gdsm. Price 84

After a good night's sleep we arrived downstairs bright and early at the int office only to find it didn't even begin to exist until at least 9 am. It didn't take long to get into the swing of things, we even managed to squeeze in a few patrols and get to know our patch, although, I hasten to add, the majority of the office manages to get out once a day, at one time we even managed to persuade Gdsm Evans 15 to go out on patrol and it was later reported that he was seen hard-targetting up the Shankhill. We are now fully in the driving seat and are kept extremely busy (you can tell, because, we've only been here three weeks and Sgt. Steve Ranson has already demolished two squash rackets) and at the same time L.Sgt. Steve Jones (98) has improved his game 100% which comes as no surprise to L.Cpl. James 74 who seems to think 98 has no military kit in his possession.

As I continue to write, with the constant tap-tapping of L.Cpl. Adams' typewriter and the Concos' chatter about the latest batch of bog-life wafts in from the background, I bring this article to a close and think about waking L.Cpl. Evans 58 for stag (AH BLISS).

A Secret Squirrel.

NUMBER 3 COY

Musgrave Park Hospital

Finally the day had arrived for Number Three Company to put into practice all the things which we were taught during our training at Hohne and Sennelager.

Equipped with an assortment of weapons from SLRs to a Milan and even butchers' knives, No. 3 Company were mentally and physically prepared for the rigours of a tour in West Belfast.

En route to Aldergrove our VC10 passed over Britain and for a short time we were almost home. The snow-capped mountains of North Wales seemed tantalisingly close until the Irish Sea began to loom up beneath us. Once 'safely' on Irish soil and away from arctic Germany the main body including Nos. 8 and 9 Platoons were met by a fleet of four tonners escorted by Armoured Patrol Vehicles (APVs). L.Cpl. Williams 18 of the Advance Party casually enquired the whereabouts of the coaches and was stunned into silence when told to fit a magazine to his rifle!



I don't want to go on the picnic today

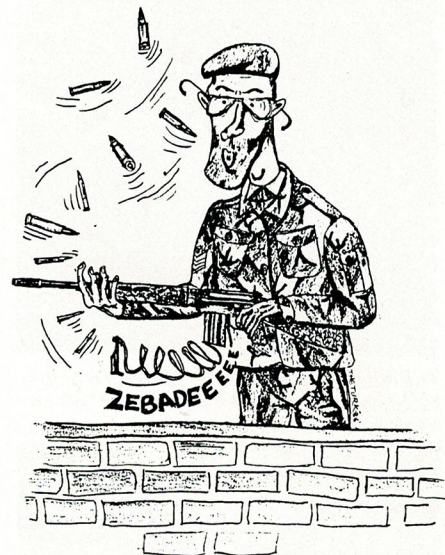
After an hour long journey from the airport we were all quite pleasantly surprised when we reached Musgrave Park Hospital (MPH) which is to be our home for four months. In fact Gdsm Evans 13 of the Rover Group was heard to say, "it's better than Hohne". MPH is a maze of portacabins and wooden huts all enclosed by a 15' corrugated iron fence. This does not sound too inspiring but the base is the largest in the Battalion area and provides a number of facilities including a daily video programme, an entertainments room and a squash court. Rumours however about plans to install an olympic-size swimming pool are completely unfounded!

The first few weeks have been hectic with very little time to concentrate on activities other than working, sleeping and eating. However, a small minority have endeavoured to keep 'fighting fit' by jogging around MPH. Apparently one lap is equal to 300m and 25 laps is equivalent to four miles, if one can survive the boredom of running in circles. L.Cpl. Went of Company Headquarters has stolen the Three Company record clocking up 30 laps, but it is early days yet.

When 3 Company are not watching piped-in videos, eating stickies or running in circles they are on the streets supporting the RUC. This is now our primary task in West Belfast and a successful patrol means the safe protection of the RUC Constable when carrying out his normal duties.

Our relations with the RUC have already got off to a good start, in fact Sgt. Price 21 spends most of his time liaising with the neighbourhood constables over a cup of tea in their blast proof station at Woodbourne. The RUC do not get an opportunity to go as far on their daily beat as was the

'Orange Suffolk'. The contrast between the smart new estates and the older badly maintained estates is very noticeable. L.Sgt. Matthews says that he enjoys patrolling especially in the Lennadoon area as it reminds him of Birkenhead.



Rambo Reavill

Meanwhile back in MPH the mass of information gathered by the patrols has been meticulously processed by the Intelligence Team headed by Staff Sgt. Reavill, with Sgt. Gibbs and L.Sgt. Hooper to assist. Their daily Int updates have provided a useful and entertaining source of reading.

As always the back bone of Army life revolves around the Daily Detail. However, despite his efforts CSM Hopkins feels he might grow to be a ripe old age before he sees the Company in the same order of Dress!

In spite of some small misunderstandings on dress the Little Iron Men have started the tour well! We have already made the news by successfully dealing with an IRA hand grenade, which was found by a young school boy, and we have clocked up many hours in the fight against terrorism. Meanwhile we are thinking of all those we have left at home, knowing that four months will be over in no time at all.

case when L.Cpl. Davies 76 decided, through a minor map reading error, to patrol the streets of Lisburn! However, when the platoons do get themselves to the right place things can be quite lively as L.Cpl. Roberts 85 found out when he touched an electric cattle fence, apparently establishing a new British long jump record.

The area which the Company is responsible for comprises of a mixture of new and old housing estates interspersed with open wasteland. The majority of the locals are Catholic with the exception of a small community of Protestants who are mainly housed in an area known as





The hills are alive with the sound of music -
L.Cpl. Roberts 54



Come out with your hands up



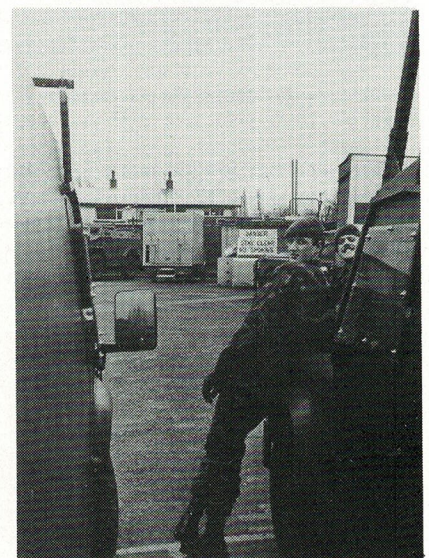
It's a bogey man - Sgt. Elliot



Are these the little people they told me about? - Gdsm. Regan



Grab your partner and swing him round



What d'y' mean. I am at attention -
Gdsm. Cromey and Edwards 61

ECHELON

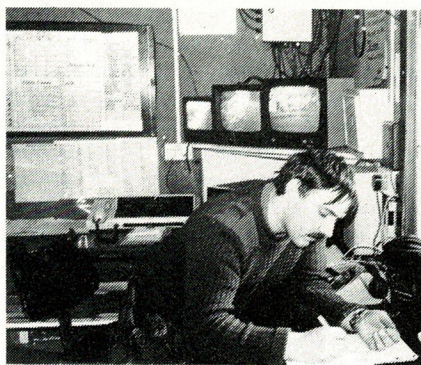
Musgrave Park Hospital

The Battalion

Administrative Office

It's hard to find somewhere to start writing notes for the 'LEEK', although so much has been happening these past few weeks. As soon as the Royal Green Jackets left, Captain 'I can do you a nice line in tracksuits' Hutchison, the Paymaster, decided it was time to unpack the BAO equipment (ie: 3 Boogie boxes, 1 Ghetto blaster, 200 Duracell batteries and 500 Blue Airmail Letters!) and to get down to the serious business of listening to music and writing letters!! Cpl. 'I'm Staying in Bed' Cooper, Pte. 'Bloody Sangers' Sykes and the Paymaster can be seen on any working day sitting at their desks attached to music machines, the rest of us in the office are convinced they're having a competition to see who can ignore the telephone the most!! (although saying that, L.Sgt. 'I'm not changing your flight' Stacey and Gdsm Rogers are now also both hooked on the dreaded box) — We may as well turn the "Brixton Briefcase" up full blast and ignore the phone completely.

L.Sgt. Stacey, possibly the most popular Clerk in the Battalion at the moment (most unpopular if he messes your flight up) is running around (well walking quickly!) trying to ensure that all the lad's get their flights for R&R, hasn't quite worked out how he can wrangle a free trip to Barbados for him and his wife when he gets married in July, so Alison, if you end up in Aldergrove on Honeymoon, don't worry — it's just another 'Cock Up'!!



Everton 0 Swansea 9 — Gdsm. Gill in MPH Ops

Gdsm. 'Glued to the Screen' Rogers is, we're all sure having a passionate affair with his Computer — he's now started talking to it! (even worse, it's started talking back — or am I just cracking up!) his wife shouldn't worry too much though — the machine's not nearly as good looking as her and cannot perform other important female tasks!!! (ie: Cook, Sew, Wash, etc.)

L.Sgt. Browne, the newly arrived from RHQ Records NCO surfaced from beneath an In Tray the other day (or was it a Pending Tray), when he saw all the work that was awaiting him he decided to go back down again! and he doesn't intend surfacing again until June to go home to his wife for R&R.

L.Cpl. Goodenough, who only got married on the 1st March is getting confused over the explanation of the word 'MARRIAGE' in the Oxford Dictionary. It says; "MARRIAGE: The state in which a man and woman are formally united for the purpose of **living together** (usually in order to procreate children)!!" We can't honestly see much of that going on with him in Ireland and his wife in

Hohne, although it's amazing what you can put in letters these days!!

Not forgetting the SQMS (late Staff Mackenzie), who we all congratulate on his recent promotion to Warrant Officer Class 2. He rules the Pay Office with a fist of steel ensuring that Cpl. Cooper and Pte. Sykes don't listen to more than 14 hours of music in any one given period, (they've got to sleep sometime!!) and then if they can fit it in WORK. Cpl. Cooper nearly sat behind his desk to work the other day, but failed miserably, (have you ever tried to sit down with a Mattress stuck to your back!!).

I'm sorry if these notes seem to go on a bit, but it was essential that we didn't miss anyone out. Hopefully the next set of notes will be more consolidated — if they let us do any more notes after this attempt!! All of us here would like to send our LOVE to all our loved ones back home in both Hohne and Britain. We think of you constantly, be assured we are safe and will be back with you once the job's done.

P.S.

Good Luck and all the best to Gdsm Burns (46) and Mrs. Burns who is expecting a baby in May — We'll be thinking of you both.



What engine's missing? — LAD at MPH



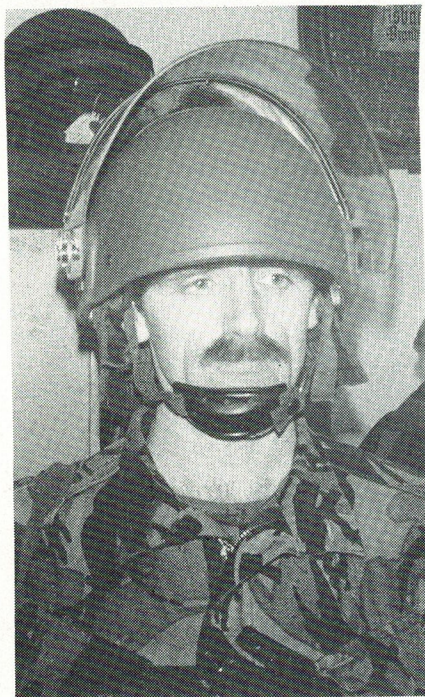
Let's see how can we confuse things today? — L.Sgt. Stacey and the Paymaster, Capt. Hutchison

THE TAXI PIGS

Life as a Taxi Pig crew can be rather varied at times as we have gathered over the past month. Our daily tasks are widespread, from delivering milk and bread to videos and mail, the major necessities of the Battalion as it seems.

Two crews operate this somewhat advantageous job, as it means we are the only ones who visit all the different locations allocated to the Battalion's area of responsibility in the Province. The 'A Team' is commanded by Sgt. 'I'm too tall' Hurley, who has a problem to position himself comfortably in the Commander's seat. Maybe if we submit a Job Sheet to the LAD they can somehow extend the cab for him. The remainder of his motley crew are Gdsm 'Billy Bunter' Rowlands O5, who has finally been caught feasting whilst everyone is asleep, after the discovery of crumbs

leading to his bedspace, and Gdsm Brennan, who is still trying to win his first game of squash. The 'Z Team' is commanded by Sgt. 'Spot that Terrorist' Cole whose main job in life out here, it seems, is spotting terrorists and in somecases apprehending them. (If only he could run faster). L. Cpl. 'Slam the Door' Jones 88 and Gdsm 'The Nag or Cluck' Edwards 85 are the sole members of his crew. The 'Z Team' is quite an appropriate name for this crew as they are always Zeding it and rarely have a task after midnight, something the 'A Team' always has. Perhaps Lt. Evans, the MTO could bear this in mind!



I think a bowl would have been better —
L.Cpl. Jones 88

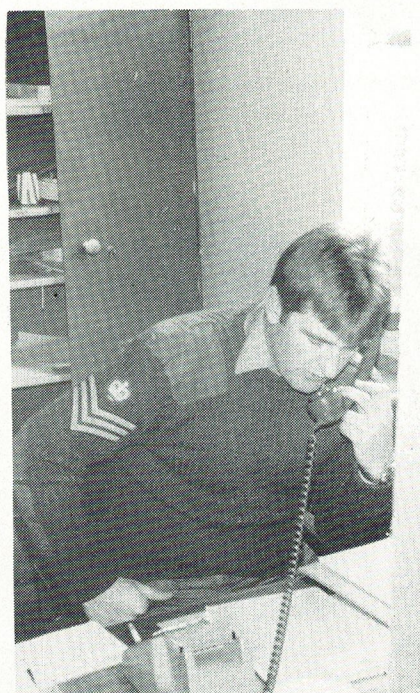
The advantage of being a Taxi Pig crew is that we shall after the end of our 4 months tour be highly proficient and trained as Postmen, Milkmen, Grocers, Refuse Collectors, etc., etc. You name it, the Taxi Pigs can do it; something the remainder of you are missing out on.

Quartermasters Department

Three weeks have passed since our first arrival in the Province and we are now firmly ensconced at the base co-located with Musgrave Park Hospital. The accommodation is adequate, not sumptuous or palatial by Hohne standards but with a few improvements from Gdsm "Benson" King 74 and a coat of paint from 12 Evans we shall make it comfortable. All members of the platoon are fully involved in Guard/Escort duties besides carrying out their normal tasks. The Master Tailor has had his machine working overtime in many of the Battalion locations but his haircut

obtained at "Fantasy Island" — Fort Whiterock — is the envy of every skinhead in Northern Ireland and he could well stand in as a mobile brillo pad. Gdsm Shaw has at last started to make conversation and handles the hoover and tea maker most expertly — he is obviously very well house trained. The dulcet tones of C.Sgt. Davies 37 are now rattling around West Belfast and his finnesse and articulate manner dealing with agencies over the phone make the last families officer seem like an angel.

The thre musketeers L.Sgt. Hibberd, L.Cpl. Conlon and 14 L.Sgt. Davies have cracked the running of their small departments, and their bunk looks like something out of the Arabian Nights. L.Cpl. Conlon has thrown himself vigourously into the squash syndrome but cannot persuade L.Sgt. Hibbard to partake. He has declined on the grounds it could interfere with his ballet lessons. 14 maintains a firm grip on any financial dealings, his Jews course which he obtained an A on makes all the difference, and at the end of four months he should improve from two finger typing to at least four. The TQMS has mastered the Irish accent and is fully accepted by all members of PSA, etc., as a superb linguist, how he manages them all I shudder to think. With Ammo demands, batteries, radios, tools, tape and all the thousand and one problems and requests he is certainly the jack of all trades. L.Sgt. Morgan 88 and L.Cpl. Peake are now completely at home in Belfast having travelled far and wide in search of parts and providing an excellent back up service to the LAD/MT, however they both look remarkably un-soldier like in their civilian clothes and would pass any day as a member of the jeans brigade.



Two fish suppers and a chip —
CQMS Carlisle

The QM is his usual happy self, always smiling and giving kit away left, right and centre. There is a remarkable drop in the number of batteries used in N.I., although I do believe there are complaints from Hohne about certain "members" having to buy them instead of being issued free!

Well we all send our love, best wishes to all our families and friends back in sunny Hohne on Sea, not to worry, we miss you all very much and look forward to seeing you soon on R and R — whoopee! L.Cpl. Peake sends his love to the Weinberg!

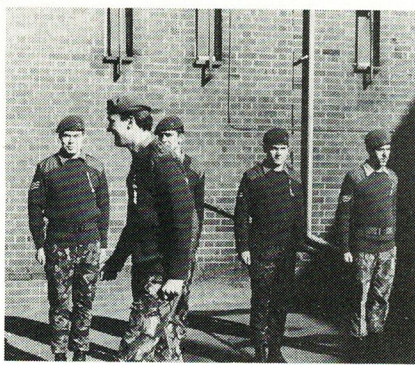
TAC HQ Springfield Road

Living at RUC Springfield Road is a bit like being on board a ship. Unfortunately there is little resemblance to the QE2 and none at all to the Good Ship Venus although at times of tension there are slight echoes of the Starship Enterprise.

It is difficult being in a police station without feeling occasionally uneasy. It is well known the last time Captain Ballard was any where near the local nick it was in connection with his shirt believed to have been stolen from the lift operator at a short stay Istanbul hotel in 1978. Captain Scott Bowden has helped the Feds on a number of occasions with their enquiries but no charges to date for flying in illegal airspace.

The Commandind Officer's Rover Group enjoys freedom of movement over the whole of our area except when opposed by a group of six year olds in the Turf Lodge who delight in throwing stones at the Sergeant Major's vehicle and clearly know nothing of Sgt. Griffiths 75's jungle warfare techniques.

The signals world is wrapped up in its new plaything: the tannoy. Day and night amusing messages like "Sgt. Burbridge to the Engine Room" or "Gash may now be ditched" can be heard over the hum of traffic or the singing of the drunks locked in the cells below. The Intelligence Cell (3rd floor but unlike UNCLE not hidden behind a tailor's shop door). Still some distinctly Napoleon Soloesque characters abound. Captain Black insists on wearing a long trench coat which he feels adds to his covertness. D.Sgt. Scott has dropped his identity altogether and rejoices in the codename "Penfold". 69 Sgt. Roberts supervises the documents — all written on edible rice paper and in disappearing ink while Apparatchiks L.Cpls. Whitely, Tutt and Elkins tap out messages in morse code to agents secreted in attics around the city. Photography is run by Sgt. "Nikon" Cooper assisted by L.Sgts. Shaw and 99 Owens who seem to prefer taking photographs of themselves to happy snaps of dubious Irishmen.



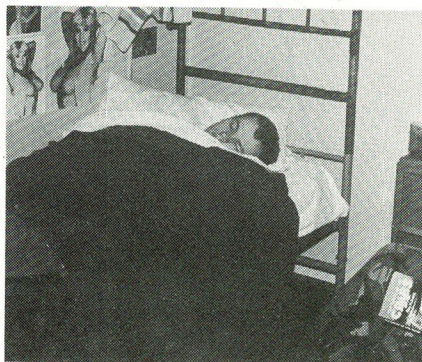
Here we are again, Happy as can be — Capt. Black and Leeks in the Int Cell

Orderly Room (The Sharp End)

Sgt. Atwell and Gdsm Newing arrived in the Emerald Isle on 27th February (coincidentally Sgt. Atwell's birthday again!). The remainder of the team; The Adjutant, Orcs and L. Cpl. Dobbin arriving on the 4th March. Orcs is adamant that it hadn't stopped raining since our last tour in 1979 - 80.

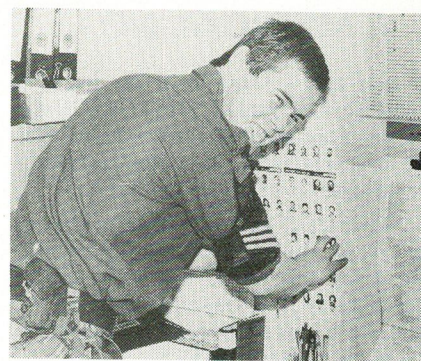
We have all settled in fairly well. The base itself somewhat resembles Fort Apache. The accommodation is basic but fairly comfortable although L.Cpl. Dobbin and Gdsm Newing do have to negotiate a maze of passageways to find their room. Orcs and Sgt. Atwell have a room to themselves but due to pressure of work have difficulty remembering where their beds are. Our illustrious leader has a small pied de terre with a view overlooking the recreation area (otherwise known as the car park and unloading bay).

Sgt. Atwell now refers to the staff that arrived on the 4th March as "half tour wonders". L.Cpl. Dobbin still has a problem with staying in the office after 5 pm, although Sgt. Atwell is working on that! Orcs has a problem arriving in the office before 9 am, the Adjutant is working on that! Gdsm Newing has a problem with his Chipmunk, the RSPCA are investigating that! We all have noticed that the Adjutant has a problem, wearing black Gucci slip ons with his lightweights, the RSM is working on that! We would like to re-assure our readers that Captain Malcolm is still Adjutant, although he is not normally seen during the early part of the day. This is due to the increasing difficulty the REME are having in prising him off his mattress.

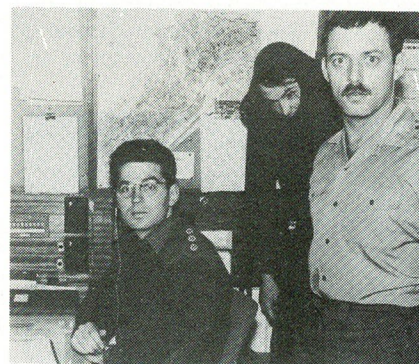


Sweet dreams — L.Cpl. Tuff

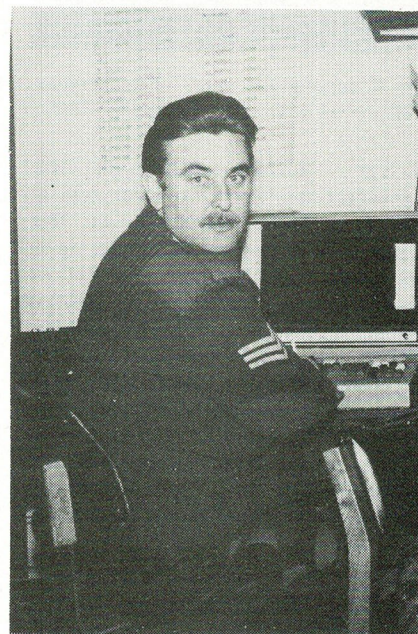
A special mention must be made of our second taskmaster the Ops Officer, Capt. Scott-Bowden. Rumour has it that he will replace heli-teli (AIR WOLF). Release him on the roof of Tac HQ and he will naturally hover at 5000 feet.



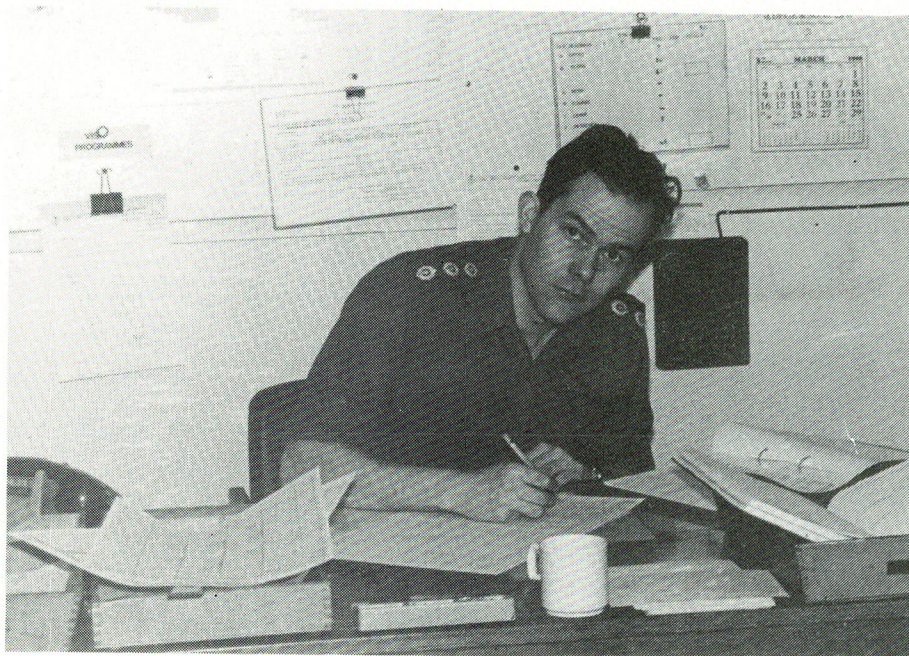
Getting to grips with the terrorists — Sgt. Chittock



Ground Control to Major Tom . . . Capt. Scott-Bowden, Ballard and D.Sgt. Scott —



All keyed up — Sgt. Davies 77



How do you spell Irland? — The Adjutant

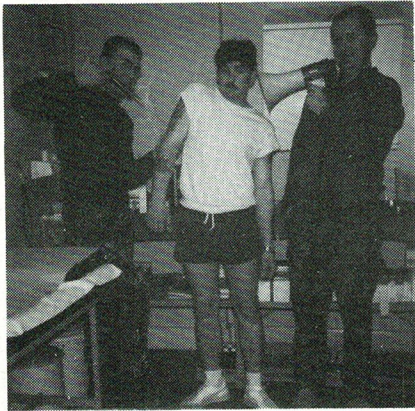


A MEDICAL NOTE

Just a few lines from the boys in Med/Ops located at 'THE FORT'. Not a lot has happened on the Medical Front so far, and let's hope that situation continues throughout the tour.

"THE DOC" has already begun to get in on the clinical meeting circuit. He says this is to cultivate useful contacts in the hospital, but we all know it's just an excuse for the slap-up supper afterwards.

Pte. "Adrain" Yendley (of MOLE fame, whom he bears more than a passing resemblance to) is pining over the loss of his darlig Pandora, but his friend Pte. "Shaft" Atkinson-Turner is providing a shoulder for him to cry on.



This 'll get the wax out — Pte. Yendley, L.Cpl. Jones and L.Sgt. (Bongo) Chittcock

L.Sgt. "Bongo" Chittcock has frightened the life out of everyone in The Fort. He's jumping at the opportunity of getting everyone up to date with their Tetanus and Yellow Fever 'Jabs', which is almost impossible when we're back at Hohne, due to people on various courses, exercise, leave, etc., and with four months to push, don't worry, he WILL get YOU. We've thrown in your annual hearing test, absolutley free of charge. So don't forget you, would-be, dodgers, of the needle, we're coming to get you.

Well, that wraps up about everything that's going on in the Medical Centre for now, all there is left for us to say is, we look forward to a safe and speedy return, and our thoughts are with our friends and loved ones back in Germany, or where ever they might be.



MESSAGES FOR THE FAMILIES

DEAR ELAINE, having a fantastic time, but the night life is not up to much. Love BRYN.

TO MY DARLING WIFE CHRISTINE and CHILDREN RICHARD and CLARE, take care of yourselves. Not long before we are all together again. Take care and keep your heads up. All my love MIKE.

TO DEBS and DAMIAN. Love and miss you both. HARVEY.

TO MARIE. Things are fine. Plenty to do. Missing you and thinking of you **always**. Love WHACKY.

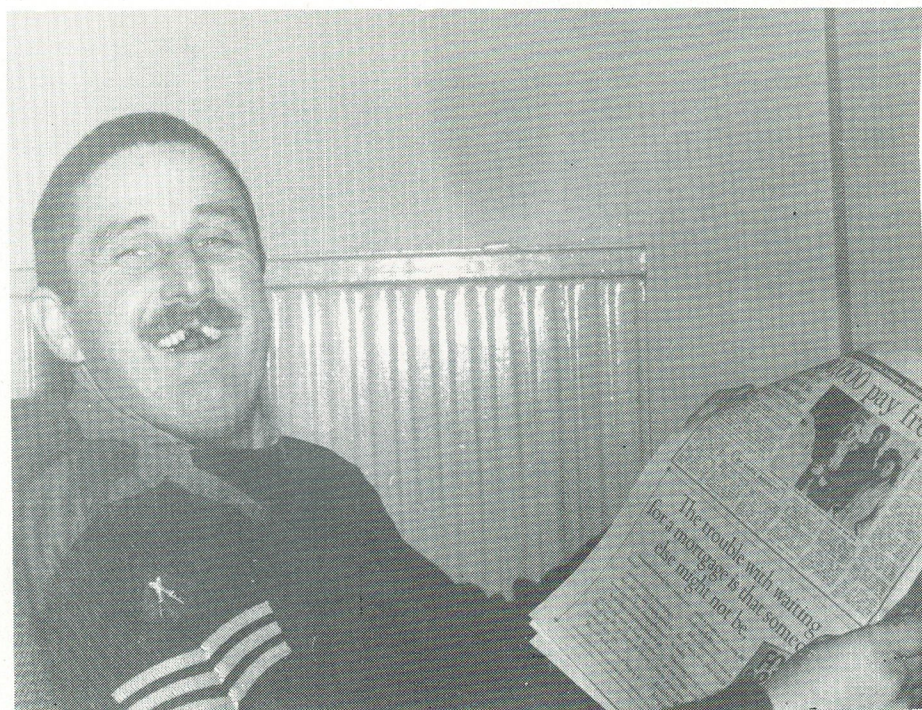
TO MY DARLING LIS. Congratulations on the good news. I look forward to when I see you again. PAUL.

TO PAT and JAN. How's the lumps? See you soon. TOPSY.

TO JULIE, GARETH and TANYA. Having a lovely time, wish you were here! See you in a couple of months. Love you all. DAVE.

TO MY DARLING WIFE. Wish you were here. The tan is coming on nicely. See you soon. IAN.

TO TRICIA. Take care of yourself love and I will see you in June. Lots of love, DEL.



THAT'S ALL FOR NOW FOLKS — Sgt. Baker

THE

LEEK

