The Thunderbolt

Journal of the RAOC Apprentices College

DECEMBER 1977

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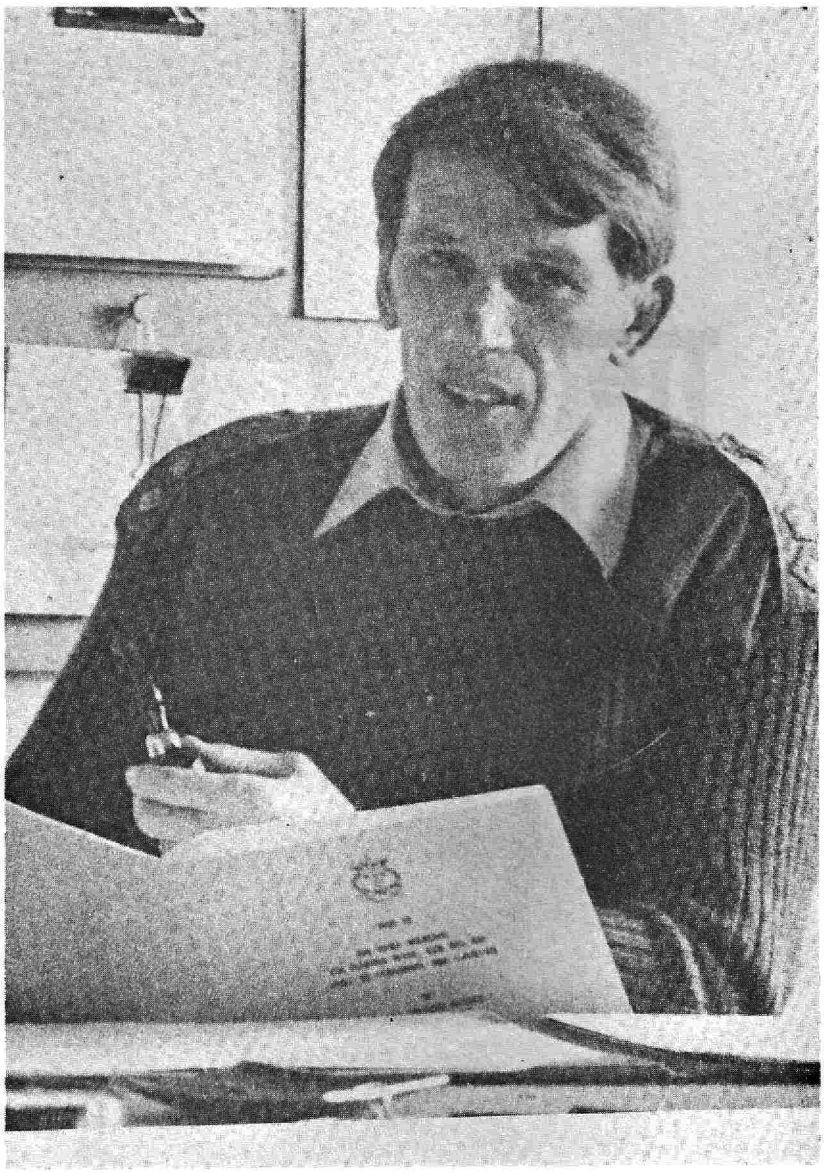
The Thunderbolt

JOURNAL OF THE
RAOC APPRENTICES' COLLEGE

Front cover:

Passing Out Parade Winter Term 1976. The Inspecting Officer was Lt Gen Sir Hugh Beach KCB OBE MC MA MSc, Deputy Commander UKLF



Lieutenant Colonel N S Bruce RAOC

Commanding Officer RAOC Apprentices College

FOREWORD BY THE COMMANDING OFFICER

It seems hard to believe that a year has gone by since I contributed my first foreword to the College Magazine. There must always be so much to strive for and possibly achieve in such a training establishment as this that time only becomes important in the lack of it or the speed at which it passes one by every minute of the day.

Much has taken place during the year. At long last the Educational Wing has moved from the old "spider" huts to the refurbished accommodation adjacent to Alma Barracks. More old buildings have been demolished and the College frontage has had a face-lift. The tidying up process is still being pursued vigorously but at long last I am happy to record that the whole College area is rapidly taking on a far more pleasing aspect than the drabness of former days. At least our particular housing problems are being tackled for the now accepted target College strength of some 390 Apprentices.

It is most gratifying to report that the boys and staff of the College have raised £2500 for charity - no mean achievement! Also during the past year there have been many instances of success both in work and play. Accounts of these will no doubt be read with a great deal of interest and pride in the many contributions which make excellent copy for our magazine.

There must be few occupations which give so much satisfaction, sense of achievement and reward than that of supervising and training young men. Despite what one reads or sees through the mass media about the youth of today, the standard of the Apprentices joining this College is notably high. They respond well to discipline, or as I prefer to say, to sound organisation. Naturally, one or two fall by the wayside, but this is due in the main to the fact that they find it difficult to measure up to the rigours of army life

May I conclude by saying how indebted I am to my hard working staff, both military and civilian, for all their loyal support and painstaking effort.

A merry Christmas and a happy New Year to you all.

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EDITORIAL

"The papers they had finished lay
In piles of blue and white,
They answered everything they could,
And wrote with all their might,
But though they wrote it all by rote,
They did not write it right"

Arthur Clement Hilton may well have been attempting to emulate the style of Lewis Carroll but his Alice in Wonderland approach would do well to describe the sentiments of the Editorial Board members as they are called upon to assess their weighty contributions so necessary to make up our College Magazine.

When Lt Col Stanley Schofield literally resurrected this journal some seven years ago, he brought to its publication his particular professional expertise which has developed over this long period and produced the truly magnificent format in which it now appears. Alas the time has come for him to hand over to others who are called upon to maintain at least the same air of professionalism throughout its pages. We may stand somewhat in awe and with no light feelings of trepidation at the example he has set us. We can only do our best. The College must be undoubtedly grateful for all his sterling efforts and more so in the knowledge that he has readily agreed not to sever all connections with the Magazine, but to keep a 'fatherly' eye on the new management and guide, advise or even help when considered necessary.

Despite the light hearted approach in the introduction to our first Editorial, the Board is most grateful for all the excellent copy it has received from the many contributors to the College Magazine. If we have been called upon to truly "edit" some versions then rest assured that has been done solely in the interests of space and suitability.

We are now about to put this edition to bed, as any self-respecting editor would say, and the Photographic Section of REME Publications Woolwich and the Printing and Reproduction Branch, Central Ordnance Depot, Donnington now take over. The College will ever be in their debt, for indeed without them, we could not possibly go to print. A great deal of the success of this highly commended magazine must assuredly be attributed to all their co-operation on our behalf.

Editorial Board

Major P A Easton RAEC
Captain C Manvell RAEC
Captain J Griffiths RAOC
W E Smith Esq, Senior Civilian Lecturer
Lt Col S Schofield, Royal Signals (Retd)

STAFF LISTS SEPTEMBER 1976 -AUGUST 1977

	Winter Term 1976	Spring Term 1977	Summer Term 1977
College Headquarters			
Commanding Officer	Lt Col N S Bruce RAOC	Lt Col N S Bruce RAOC	Lt Col N S Bruce RAOC
Adjutant	Capt A P Haden	Capt D M Chisem	Capt D M Chisem
Bursar	Capt W Playle (Retd)	Capt W Playle (Retd)	Capt W Playle (Retd)
Regimental Sergeant Major	WOI (RSM) J T Foster	WOI (RSM) J T Foster	WOI (RSM) J T Foster
Chief Clerk	WO2 (SQMS) C E Fear	WO2 (SQMS) C E Fear	WO2 (SQMS) C E Fear
HQ Company			
OC	Maj R T Arliss	Major R T Arliss	Capt W Playle (Retd)
OC Admin Platoon	Capt J G Griffin		
CSM	WO2 (CSM) B N Brace	WO2 (CSM) B J Bonthuys	WO2 (CSM) B J Bonthuys
Chaplain	Rev A C Stockbridge CF	Rev A C Stockbridge CF	Rev A C Stockbridge CF
WRVS	Miss P Riddell	Miss P Riddell	Miss P Riddell
Training Wing			
Chief Instructor	Maj R T Arliss	Maj R T Arliss	Maj R T Arliss
Training Officer	Lt T Tayler	Lt T Tayler	Capt W G F Hayes
Recruit Liaison Officer	Lt S D Jones	Lt W G F Hayes	
CSM		WO2 (CSM) S Brierley	WO2 (CSM) S Brierley
A Company			
OC	Maj R A Maby	Maj R A Maby	Maj J A Calbreath
2IC	Capt A P Byles	Capt A P Byles	Capt J Griffiths
CSM	Sgt J Bennett	WO2 B N Brace	WO2 B N Brace
Platoon Commanders			
OC Senior A Platoon	Lt P R Hanlon	Lt F T Freeman	
OC Ardennes Platoon	Capt J C Williams		Lt F T Freeman
OC Alamein Platoon	Lt P C Harris	Lt P C Harris	Lt P C Harris
OC Anguilla Platoon	Lt J P Hopkinson	Lt J P Hopkinson	Lt J P Hopkinson
OC Arnhem Platoon	Lt A Moore	Lt M H P Buchanan	Lt M H P Buchanan
OC Arakan Platoon	Lt J Payne	Lt J Payne	Lt A Ward
Platoon Sergeants			
Senior A	Sgt P Thomas	Cpl L A Anderson	
Ardennes	Sgt J Bennett		Sgt C Wolfe
Alamein	Sgt J R Davies	Sgt M T S Arnold	Sgt B D Macro
Anguilla	Sgt N P Botfield	Sgt N P Botfield	Sgt M T S Arnold
Arnhem	Sgt J F Kreft	Sgt J F Kreft	Sgt J F Kreft
Arakan	Sgt B D Macro	Sgt B D Macro	Sgt C A Proverbs
B Company			
OC	Maj D N Furness-Gibbon	Maj D N Furness-Gibbon	Maj D N Furness-Gibbon
2IC	Capt M F Fox	Capt M F Fox	Capt M F Fox Lt J Payne
CSM	WO2 (CSM) P S Slaughter	WO2 (CSM) P S Slaughter	WO2 (CSM) P S Slaughter
Platoon Commanders			
OC Senior B Platoon	Lt M H P Buchanan		Lt L E Bean
OC Barossa Platoon	Lt P A Ball	Lt L E Bean	
OC Bruneval Platoon	Lt J S Lamb	Lt C N P Emmett	Lt C N P Emmett
OC Burma Platoon	Lt G W Paton	Lt S D Jones	Lt S D Jones
OC Balaclava Platoon	Lt P B Linney	Lt R Ellis	Lt R Ellis
OC Brunei Platoon		Lt D A Major	Lt D A Major
Platoon Sergeants			
Senior B	Sgt J A G Earl		Sgt W L Rice
Barossa	Sgt W L Rice	Sgt W L Rice	
Bruneval	Sgt P M Carrick	Sgt P M Carrick	Sgt J D Wilkie
Burma	Sgt T E Jennians	Sgt T E Jennians	Sgt T E Jennians
Balaclava	Sgt C D Harris	Sgt C D Harris	Sgt J A G Earl
Brunei		Sgt P M Thayre	Sgt P M Thayre
Education Department			
Senior Education Officer	Maj P A Easton RAEC	Maj P A Easton RAEC	Maj P A Easton RAEC
Military Lecturers	Maj G D Beaumont RAEC	Maj G D Beaumont RAEC	Capt P J Lewis RAEC
	Lt B F Kane RAEC	Lt B F Kane RAEC	Lt B F Kane RAEC
	Lt C Manvell RAEC	Lt C Manvell RAEC	Lt C Manvell RAEC
Civilian Lecturers	Lt Col S Schofield MA (Oxon) R Signals (Retd)	Lt Col S Schofield MA (Oxon) R Signals (Retd)	Lt Col S Schofield MA (Oxon) R Signals (Retd)
	Wg Comd P W Hope BA RAF (Retd)	Wg Comd P W Hope BA RAF (Retd)	Wg Comd P W Hope BA RAF (Retd)
	Maj G J Forrest RAEC (Retd)	Maj G J Forrest RAEC (Retd)	Maj G J Forrest RAEC (Retd)
	Mr W E Smith	Mr W E Smith	Mr W E Smith
	Mr J F Watson	Mr J F Watson	Mr J F Watson
	Mr M F Johnson BA	Mr M F Johnson BA	Mr M F Johnson BA
	Mr W J Waddington	Mr W J Waddington	Mr W J Waddington
	Mr P Heap BA	Mr P Heap BA	Mr P Heap BA
			Maj R Challinor RAEC (Retd)

PASSING OUT PARADES 1976-1977

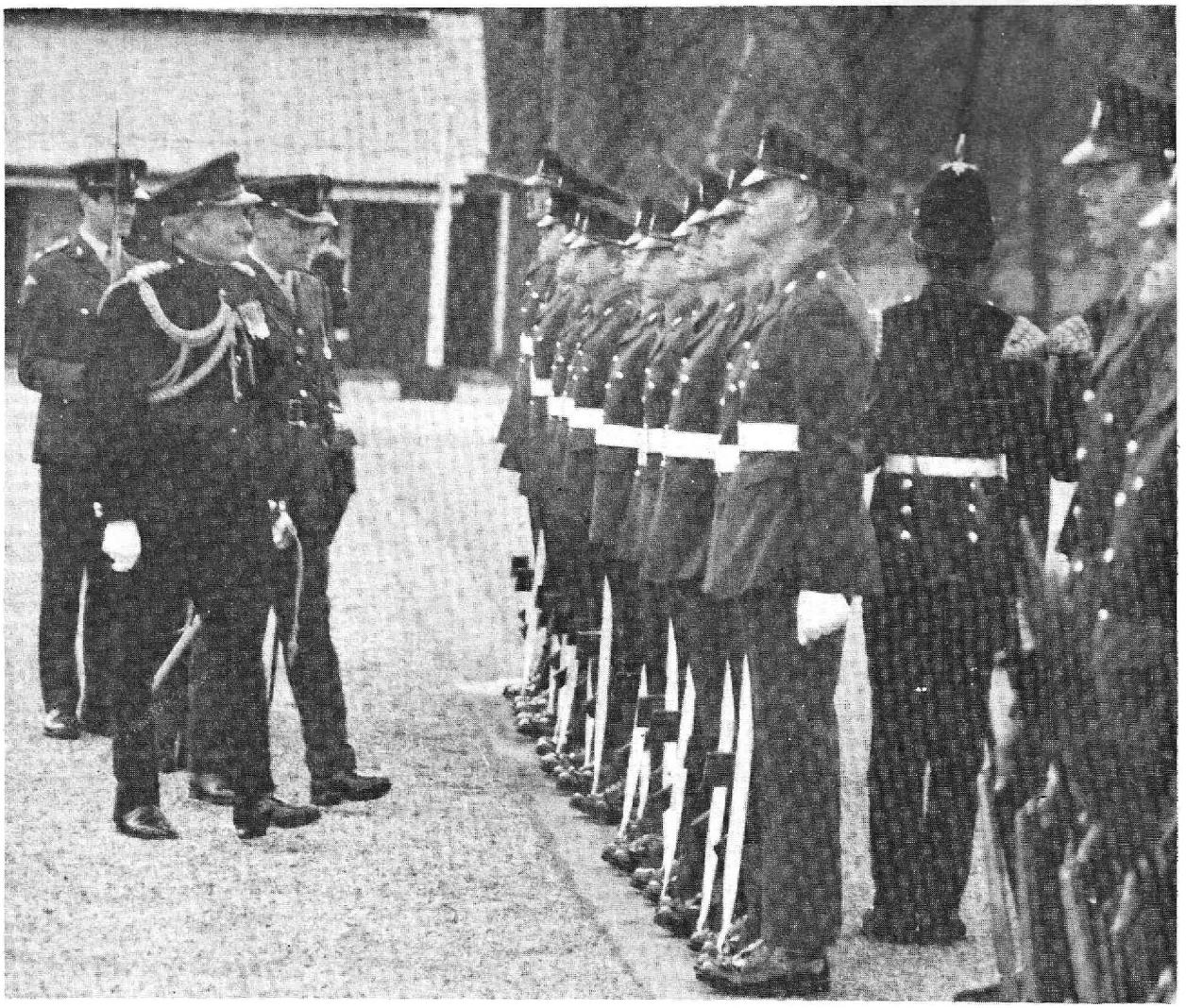
The three parades of the past year have continued to live up to the very high standards this College sets for such occasions. The precision of drill standards, the smartness of bearing and turn-out, and the pride of performance have all been sufficient testimony to the exacting preparatory work accomplished by both the apprentices and the permanent staff. When at the conclusion of the Summer Passing-Out parade, the RSM was heard to remark, "I'm happy", then indeed the epitome of 'real' soldiery had been achieved. Was that a smug grin of satisfaction one could detect when the DGOS spared no effort to confirm that fact? Indeed, as any recruit would tell you, if the RSM is happy then all is well.

The Inspecting Officers for the three parades were

Winter 1976
Lt Gen Sir Hugh Beach KCB OBE MC MA MSc
Deputy Commander UKLF

Spring 1977
Brigadier G E Dennison OBE ADC
Commander RAOC Training Centre

Summer 1977
Maj Gen M Callan
Director General Ordnance Services



Passing Out Parade Spring Term 1977. Brigadier Dennison inspects the Senior Platoon

'A' COMPANY

OC Major J A Calbreath REME

Training Officer Captain J Griffiths RAOC

CSM WOII B N Brace RAOC

A COMPANY - CIVILIANS AND PERMANENT STAFF, JULY 1977

Standing:	*Sgt C Wolfe*	*Sgt B Macro*	*Sgt J Kreft*	*Cpl L A Anderson*
		Sgt M Arnold	*Sgt N P Botfield*	*Sgt C A Proverbs*
Sitting:	*Mrs N Vipond*	*Lt A Ward*	*Lt J P Hopkinson*	*Lt M H P Buchanan*
	Capt J Griffiths	*Maj J A Calbreath*	*WO2 B N Brace*	
	Lt F T Freeman	*Lt P C Harris*	*Mrs J Eldridge*	*Carole Seymour*

For 'A'ce Company the College year 1976-77 can best be described as a year of change - settling, consolidating and success. Only five members of the present Permanent Staff have managed to survive over one year, out of a complement of 17. They are, namely, Mrs Nancy Vipond, our typist, Lt Hopkinson, Sgts Kreft, Macro and Botfield. What is their secret? We wonder!

The Spring term commenced on the 7th of January and our line up of platoons was Senior 'A', in their fourth term, Anguilla, Arakan, Arnhem and Alamein all in their second term. Platoon competition was keen and morale of the Company, as always, extremely high.

In late January our Company Training Officer, Captain Andy Byles, departed for the tax haven of Viersen, in Rhineland; he was replaced by Captain Jim Griffiths (a wee dour Scot!). Life in 'A'ce Company continued at its usual hectic pace and trying to keep up with the Commanding Officer in the College cross country run was a challenge to us all! A few just about managed to succeed.

In late January the Apprentices of Senior 'A' platoon paid a visit to Materials Handling Trials Unit, Bicester. It was an eye opener to all, especially to our young apprentice storemen who will be trained to use much of the equipment early in their career.

By College standards February was a quiet month and much of our time was taken up preparing for our Skill at Arms camp to be held in Cumbria.

A church service for A Company was held in St Barbara's, the Garrison Church. Our Unit Padre, Major Alan Stockbridge, led a moving and sincere service ably supported by A/Cpl Cape, A/Ptes Balch and Heffer who read a script from the gospel.

Our Officer Commanding Major Rene Maby retired from the Army at the end of the Spring term having completed 26 years service. To mark his retirement a social evening was held in the Unit Sports Club to enable the Permanent Staff of 'A'ce Company to bid farewell and good luck to our OC and

his charming wife, Judy, and to present them with a gift as a memento of their happy days spent at the College.

The Company Skill at Arms camp was held in Warcop, Cumbria; the apprentices enjoyed it tremendously. Good modern billets, clean, bracing air and - pleased to say - sunshine every day, but most of all it was a change from Deepcut.

The College Chief Instructor, Major Robin Arliss, was our stand-in OC for the duration of the camp,

There are a variety of ranges in the Warcop complex; the one which proved most popular with the apprentices was the electrically operated battle sight range. A competition was held on this and Anguilla Platoon just pipped Arakan Platoon by a fraction to win, but it was A/Pte Marshall of Arnhem Platoon who had the best score 35 out of the maximum of 40. Well done, Marshall!!

The event of the camp which caused the most sweat, blood and tears to flow was the Assault March cup competition. After weeks of training the apprentices were all keyed up and rairin to go. They did just that, with Arakan Platoon getting revenge on their rivals, Anguilla. The cup was filled with *shandy* and the victory toasted in traditional style.

On return to Deepcut there was no letting up. Passing-Out parade rehearsals had started and the voice of RSM Foster could be heard from Dettingen Square to Keys Cafe in the village.

Lt Freeman, our Company boxing coach, got a very good team together for the College inter-company finals. With a score of 5-4 in favour of Brassy B and only one bout to go all depended on A/Pte Coubrough winning to give us a draw. Luck was not with us and Coubrough lost on a split decision after a brave performance.

The College Rifle meeting was held over two days in late March, once again the weather remained dry and judging by the score it became apparent that our friends in Training Company are on top of their job. The outstanding achievement by A Company was in winning both falling plate competitions. Our winning teams were A Company Officers represented by Major Arliss, Lts Harris, Payne and Buchanan and Arnhem Platoon consisting of A/Cpl Snowdon, A/Ptes Riley, Buchanan and Charnick.

The Spring term ended after an impressive Passing-Out parade on 7th April, so also did the life of Senior 'A' Platoon. We wish them all well in adult service.

Summer term commenced in early May with the arrival of our new OC, Major John Calbreath, from 36 Engineer Workshop. He settled in fast and his quick wit, coupled with his simple approach to problems, makes us think twice before we knock on his door!

We also welcomed Ardennes Platoon to our fold as the new born recruit platoon. They have Lt Terry Freeman as Platoon Commander and Sgt Colin Wolfe as Platoon Sergeant. Ardennes created a bit of a surprise and murmur in the Company when they became the first recruit platoon to win the Assault March Cup. Keep it up!

Summer camp this year was held at Cultybraggen, Perthshire. Despite the extremely foul weather, it was an enjoyable camp, with everyone kept very busy either participating in organising activities and sports of their choice. On return, Lt Buchanan managed to smuggle his Duty Free (Edinburgh Rock, Arbroach Smokies and Iron Brew) through the customs without cost, but whatever happened to the bottle of Glenfiddich?

In July A Company were tasked to organise the first College Open Day and what a satisfying and successful day it was with entertainment, fun and games for everyone. The scribe would like to take this opportunity of thanking all members of the College staff, including the wives, for their great support in making the day one to remember.

The College charity effort this term was a sponsored march with the proceeds donated to John Groom's Home for the Disabled. Our task was to march 40 miles over the South Downs, ending in Eastbourne. Of the 91 starters from 'A'ce Company only two failed to complete the course. Great commendations must go to all who put in so much effort and enthusiasm, especially Arnhem Platoon who completed the march without dropping a man.

Near the end of Summer term a Company Theatre night was staged on an inter-platoon basis. It was a laugh a minute, with Anguilla Platoon judged worthy winners with their adaptation of "Music Man" and the performance of A/Pte Heffer miming 'Elvis' and A/Pte McNairn giving his RSM Foster "skit".

During the term Captain Griffiths took up Parascending, but after four jumps, one of which he landed in a turnip patch, he thought it would be a bit more peaceful if he went back to his golf clubs.

Inter-company rivalry has been fierce but friendly; in fact, it would be fair to say that B Company had a slight edge in most of the Company competitions. We waited our time patiently and to be sure it came in style at the cricket match when

we won by three wickets; our star performer was A/Lcpl Lidster who scored 29 runs.

A Company has gone from strength to strength during the year and we look forward to the Winter term with stability and confidence which we feel will bring success and results.

SALVETE

We have great pleasure in welcoming the following Permanent Staff to the Company:

Name	From	Appointment
Major Calbreath	36 Engr Regt Wksp REME	Officer Commanding
Captain Griffiths	89 Supply Depot Viersen	2IC Training Officer
Lt Buchanan	B Company	Pl Commander Arnhem Platoon
Lt Freeman	HQ DEME	Pl Commander Ardennes Platoon
Lt Harris	4 OFP	Pl Commander Alamein Platoon
Lt Ward	1 Combat Supplies Bn	Pl Commander Arakan Platoon
WO2 Brace	12 OFP	Company Sergeant Major
Sgt Wolfe	Trg Bn and Depot	Pl Sergeant Ardennes Platoon
Sgt Arnold	Int Depot Ashford	Pl Sergeant Anguilla Platoon
Sgt Proverbs	3 BAPD	Pl Sergeant Arakan Platoon
Cpl Anderson	3 Para Regiment	Pl Cpl Anguilla Platoon
Mrs Eldridge	Housewife	Who looks after the Office and our beverages
Mrs Seymour	Bulmershe College Earley	Company Clerk

VALETE

Farewell and good luck to the following in their travels:

Name	Posted to
Major R A Maby	(Civilian) Debenhams Coy Camberley
Captain Byles	15 COD BFPO 40
Lt Williams	Now Captain 32 Engr Regt Wksp REME
Lt Payne	Now Captain B Company RAOC Apprentices College
Lt Hanlon	Army School of Ammunition Kineton
Lt Taylor	YO's Course School of Ordnance
WO2 Foster	Now RSM RAOC Apprentices College
Sgt Rowlands	15 Comp Ord Depot BFPO 40
Sgt Davies	Int and Security Sec. BFPO 40
Cpl Cook	Now Sgt Training Coy RAOC Apprentices College

BIRTHS. To Sue and Lt Peter Harris, a son, Anthony David, on 28 May 1977

ALAMEIN PLATOON

Platoon Commander — Lt P C Harris RAOC

Platoon Sergeant — Sgt B Macro RAOC

Sgt J R Davies Int Corps

Winter Term 1976

Alamein Platoon's time at the College began with Lt P C Harris, Sgt J R Davies and Cpl C Johns. The latter was posted here on loan from CVD Ashchurch where he was a vehicle specialist.

The next four weeks saw the platoon settling down to the daily routine of drill, drill and more drill, interrupted by the occasional cross-country run. The College cross-country run took place during this period and several members of the platoon were in the first 50.

Company camp this term was held at Tregantle Fort near Plymouth from 2-10 October. The camp activities included a confidence area, abseiling, boat drills and a 24 hour exercise.

The confidence area was thoroughly enjoyed by one and all even though the majority of the platoon ended up in the sea. If this wasn't enough to build up their confidence the next day's activity definitely did. The abseiling, by courtesy of ELT wing, took place on the walls of the fort. To gain a little confidence the platoon attempted the 30 foot drop in the morning and then progressed to the 100 foot drop. A large majority of the lads found this activity to be the most challenging of the whole camp.

0800 hours the next morning found Alamein Platoon running down to the sea for an early morning dip. Enthusiasm for this activity was sadly lacking until Lt Harris and Sgt Davies chased each and everyone of them into the freezing brine.

The 24 hour exercise loomed its ugly head late that night and just after midnight the platoon moved out to take up a position on the side of a hill overlooking an estuary. All was going reasonably well except for the weather. Winds were strong when we moved out and by 0100 hours it had increased to a Force 9 gale. To make it worse it began to rain very heavily indeed. Not a single poncho shelter remained dry nor did any apprentice. After an hour or so with everyone soaking wet and freezing cold it was decided to break camp and head for an old fort approximately two miles away.

By the early morning it was impossible to carry on with the exercise so the platoon returned to camp looking more like drowned rats than apprentices who had spent a night under the stars. Company camp ended with 'Round the Ramparts' race and although we didn't win everyone put 100% effort into it.

During the latter half of the term leading up to Christmas the three recruit platoons, Alamein, Arnhem and Arakan, were taken to Folkestone for a weekend training camp. The first couple of days was taken up with a map reading exercise by night and a short military phase. After work comes pleasure. Early Sunday morning the three platoons boarded a ferry bound for Calais. On the way to Boulogne we were given a meal in a restaurant in the middle of nowhere. It was a first class meal being washed down by the local cider. We were then taken to Boulogne and all concerned were set free for the remainder of the day.

To end the term the platoon had a Christmas party which included A/Pte King and his supersonic disco. Approximately one hour after the party started it was noticeable that every ten minutes or so one of the lads would make a hasty disappearing trick, never to return. Unfortunately we were saying goodbye to Sgt Davies and Cpl Johns. The lads presented them with gifts and their very best wishes for the future.

Spring Term 1977

This term began with a concerted effort to get everyone fit for the College cross country run. It proved reasonably successful as we managed 6th place out of 11. Congratulations to A/Pte Balch who came 2nd overall, well done!

The same month the swimming gala was held at the RMAS. The swimmers did very well especially A/Ptes Jackson, Flinn and Barstow who won the relay race.

March 1977 saw the Company off to Warcop for one week battle training. It was enjoyed by one and all. Each day was spent on a different range, learning either Fire Control Orders, firing from different positions and section attacks using live ammunition. The final couple of days were spent on an exercise and the Assault March cup. The exercise involved a good deal of walking and some platoon and section battle tactics. The exercise ended with a Company attack on "Flip the Flop and his Flippers".

On the Saturday following our return from Warcop an inter-platoon sports competition was held. At the end of the competition Alamein and Anguilla

Shiels, Balch, Cape and Day climbing the 12 foot wall

were in equal first place, therefore a deciding game of volleyball was played. Unfortunately Anguilla won the match and took away the 30 cans of beer.

The platoon also excelled in the 5-a-side soccer competition, coming second. The College Rifle meeting held over two days included an inter-platoon competition, falling plate and a fun shoot. Alamein came third in the inter-platoon competition, third in the falling plate and won both prizes in the fun shoot. Altogether a successful day's shooting especially A/Lcpl, now A/Cpl Cape who came 4th in the individual SLR stage 2.

Kirkwood, Baxter and Jackson attempting the 2 strand bridge

Don't pray yet Helme! You're only half way

Platoon camp this term was solely geared to putting into practice the fieldcraft and minor tactics that they had learnt since arriving at the College.

It began with a movement at lunchtime on the Friday, arriving in Bordon shortly afterwards and immediately going tactical. The exercise involved dawn attacks, recce and fighting patrols, ending with a Company attack early Sunday morning. It was a hard exercise but everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and many lessons were learnt.

Vassiere, Shiels, Helme, Cape and Flynn

Summer Term

The Summer term started fairly quietly with three athletics meetings in as many weeks. This was to prepare the College for the Travers Clark competition. A/Sgt Back was the only member of the platoon to represent the College. However, throughout the remaining weeks of the term members of the platoon represented the College at tennis, cricket and swimming.

The College camp this year was in bonnie (wet) Scotland at the Cultybraggen training camp. There all types of ELT training, sailing, fishing and nature rambles (by courtesy of Mr Paul Heap) were covered.

Alamein being inspected by Capt Griffiths

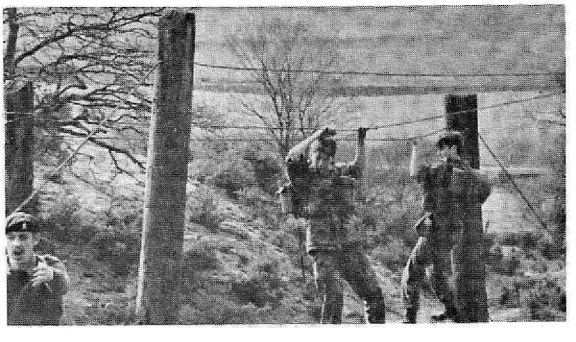
On their return from camp we had two major tasks for which to prepare. Both in aid of charity. The first being a College Open Day and the second a sponsored march.

The sponsored march was in aid of John Groom's Association for the Disabled and consisted of a 40 mile march from Washington (Sussex) over the South Downs to Eastbourne. All members of the platoon completed the march. A superb effort! The College eventually raised a total of £1,250.

As A/Cpl Cape and A/Pte Helme were due to leave us at the end of term it was decided to hold an end of term party. 42 girls were demanded through Alamein Platoon channels and all members enjoyed a superb party.

Macro's Marauders present!

Just close your eyes and go!



There's a loaf of bread for the winner

We've made good time. Now to wait for the others

Guess who's at the 'back' now?

ANGUILLA PLATOON

Platoon Commander — Lt J Hopkinson RAOC

Platoon Sergeant — Sgt N P Botfield RAOC

Platoon Corporal — Cpl Anderson RAOC

Winter Term 1976

This was the first full term for Anguilla and on the second weekend A/Pte Winyard and A/Pte Biddeford were off sailing in the REME Regatta in Thunderbolt, the College yacht. They gained an overall second place. A/Ptes Clark, Piper, Ritchie, Cannon and Clifford were training hard for places in the College soccer teams.

In early October we started training on the assault course, preparing for the Assault March cup. Some Apprentices developed new techniques in order to simplify the tasks.

The Company went to Tregantle for 10 days in October. Many enjoyable activities were undertaken. The sight of A/Pte Crook twisted up-side-down in the Burma Bridge at Piers Cellars, with his head just clear of the water, caused much amusement. The most enjoyable event for Anguilla was the exercise.

Ardennes and Senior 'A' crossed swords with Anguilla and a particularly vicious battle was fought in the rain and Anguilla eventually had to succumb to vastly superior forces. A night of intense patrols and a dawn move to Piers Cellars where the platoon boarded a naval launch for a sea landing on Tregantle beach. But alas, HMS Neptune was not in a particularly good mood that morning and a few Apprentices were seasick. Three waves of assault troops screamed ashore on the unsuspecting village of Cawsands. Resistance was fierce but finally the beach and immediate defences were overrun. A well planned exercise enjoyed by all.

Parascending had now become the big sport in the platoon, with nearly everyone having a go. There was keen competition to practice and all were hoping to be selected for the championships next year.

Spring Term 1977

The first major event of the term was the College cross-country run in which the platoon put in its usual excellent effort.

The highlight of the term was when the platoon acted as enemy for Sandhurst. This took place on Hankley Common. The luxury and comfort of the base area was a sight to behold - something never before seen in the field for the members of Anguilla. A great deal was learned by all the platoons by watching the mistakes of the Officer cadets. The value of dogs was brought home when the OC's dog accidently revealed a concealed sniper.

No sooner had we returned from this exercise than we had to begin preparations for the Company exercise at Warcop. Cpl Anderson unfortunately was unable to be with us as he was going on a First Aid Instructor course. Warcop is primarily a shooting camp. The ranges vary from 1 BSR to sections in attack and defence ranges. Anguilla just managed to beat Arakan in the shooting with an average of 29.41. The roles were reversed in the Assault March cup, where Arakan **just** beat us. Anguilla provided the enemy for the exercise and led the other platoon a merry dance. We seem to be becoming a permanent 'enemy'. A protracted battle took place on dry land to give the friendly forces some chance, with the assaulting platoons trying to scale vertical cliffs. The presense of Cpl Anderson was missed when A/Pte Cliffe decided to collapse from a ruptured appendix some two miles from the nearest track. After being carried bodily, and then transported by a 4-tonner a Landrover and a Range Rover ambulance, he was operated on that evening and made a successful recovery.

Summer Term 1977 by A/Cpl Foster

It was a hectic start to summer term in Anguilla Platoon with Sgt Arnold leaving us and the return of Sgt Botfield to breathe down our necks once more. Summer! It felt as though it were midwinter. During the summer term, thanks to the Permanent Staff, we were granted a couple of 48 hour passes, most of the lads spent the time sampling the frothie coffee at the One O Five cafe, which is a change from Ssgt Stanley's (Spotted Dick).

On 3rd June the advance party set off to Cultybraggen in the back of a rumpity bumpity Bedford. It took us some 14 hours to arrive and after getting to camp it took us about half an hour to find our block (as it was dark) we staggered into the block (or should I say nissen hut) and flaked out on the nearest bed.

Next morning was spent in preparation for the main body to arrive. For the next four days I,(with the sub-aqua club) went diving at Loch Earn. Then came the platoon command tasks which we did not do too bad in. Well, we didn't come last did we?

After returning from camp we had a couple of days to rest and unpack. Then when the rest of the College went on half term leave Anguilla Platoon started practicing for the Aldershot Army Display.

Our part in the display was to perform "It's a Knock-out" each day for seven days running the course. We were running against most of the Junior Leader units ie, ACC, RCT, Junior Para, The winning team of the day won a crate of beer, unfortunately we never won but were always 2nd or 3rd.

The next hurdle for Anguilla Platoon was our RPC 3 drill test. The rehearsals for the test were hot and hard but we all passed with flying colours. Hard work must be the secret.

After all our hard work we thought we deserved a rest but alas no - the next thing was the South Downs walk for charity, it was over a distance of 40 miles and Anguilla Platoon was volunteered to act as markers and sit out with the radio crews. In the heat of the day I must admit I managed to catch up on a couple of minutes kip (naughty boy).

The Passing-Out parade rehearsals were complicated with the RSM screaming and shouting at us, but on the actual day we were all really smart and well turned out. All our work was worth it in the end, even rewarding. The RSM managed an occasional smile and an encouraging word. We said goodbye to the REME members of Anguilla Platoon, a fairly solemn occasion but also a happy one - leave!

Anguilla Platoon was then disbanded and split up, I doubt if any platoon will be as good as the old Anguilla.

It was good fun while it lasted, lads, lots of fun, sweat and tears, but it was worthwhile.

ARAKAN PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt J Payne REME Lt A Ward RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt B D Macro REME Sgt C A Proverbs RAOC

Winter Term

From all over the country trains deposited some excited, some nervous, some overawed potential Apprentices at Deepcut. One was so keen he arrived from Scotland the day before he should have done!

Once the initial shock of having joined wore off, hair cuts, issue of uniforms and settling into the barracks passed in a daze and quickly. 33 had taken the decision to come and savour service life. During the first fortnight of training five decided that it was not to their liking and left. The remainder were forming friendships and slowly coming to grips with their new way of life. Runs, PT and drill were proving that fitness was an essential part of training, even if not liked.

Tregantle camp was looming on the horizon, excitement in moving out of barracks was mounting and the day finally arrived to get on the train. First impressions of the old fort were similar to those experienced by inmates of Colditz Castle. However, the accommodation was warm and dry, food up to the normal high standards of the College and it did not appear so bad after all.

The object of the camp was to initiate recruits into other activities such as abseiling, rock climbing, rowing and an assortment of other military skills. The day was spent abseiling down the walls of the fort, 40 foot to break in and gain confidence followed by 100 foot if desired. The expressions on faces caused mild hysteria amongst members of the Permanent Staff, whilst

The Permanent Staff catch up at last

the antics of A/Pte Tout convulsed the whole platoon, needless to say he did not volunteer to do the BIG DROP!!!

An exercise took up the next two days, map reading, night movement and a beach landing were all completed with varying amounts of success. A/Pte Aitchison discovered his niche in society and proved to be an enormous eater, to the amazement of the Permanent Staff. Rock climbing, a complete day map reading and practise for the final event of camp, 'Round the Ramparts' race, passed quickly. A day on the ranges, when personal weapons were fired for the first time,

proved the growing confidence of individuals and the reasons for premature greyness amongst the Permanent Staff. The confidence area was liked and thoroughly enjoyed by everybody. The final competition in the afternoon proved that A/Pte Jones was not lacking in talent, his antics in the boat whilst trying to climb a rope were the funniest and would have put Morecambe and Wise out of business!!

Rowing whaling boats was also on the agenda much to everybody's chagrin, however it proved worthwhile even though the platoon staff cheated and had a motor boat!!

Camp was coming to an end and after a run and swim in the sea in the morning the whole Company assembled for the race around the Fort's ramparts. A draw was made for positions and excitement mounted as each platoon completed the circuit, the last to go not knowing the official time to beat

"Don't mark time here, Sir"!

only increased the tension. However training had proved it possible, everybody gave of their best and the winners by two seconds were ARAKAN!

A week back at Deepcut preparing for the Acceptance Parade flew past. The day arrived and dressed in all their finery the parade passed without mishap, parents were impressed and everybody looked forward to their first leave.

The second half of term passed quickly, training becoming easier, fitness was improving and a team spirit forged. Success was not to be in the College cross-country or the Assault March cup but valuable experience was gained and a determination to do better next time made. The highlight of the Winter term was the platoon camp at Folkestone. A two day military exercise covering map reading, section and platoon battle drills was followed by a trip to France. Everyone returned to Deepcut refreshed ready for the Passing-Out Parade pageant. A playlet on entry into the College was the platoon's task, the start of the pageant. No stage fright was suffered and it was well received by the vast audience. Christmas leave was here at last!!

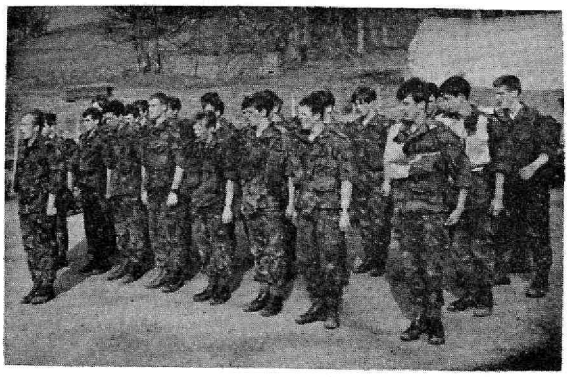
Spring Term

A new Platoon Sergeant was awaiting the return to barracks, Sgt Macro had left to do his thing at Pirbright and the unknown Sgt Proverbs made his entrance to everyone's trepidation - rumours had been rife.

Education appeared to be on each day's training programme but other activities such as running, drill and weapon training had not been forgotten. The College cross-country was here again. Instructions issued and we were away, A/Cpl Yoxall came third and the platoon, after much nail biting, had won overall by a large margin.

A/Cpl Yoxall went on to gain his Surrey county colours for cross-country running, together with his College colours - well done.

Warcop and safety were becoming the 'in' words. A shooting camp in Cumbria with excellent facilities and ranges. A long train journey brought dreams to realities. Good barracks, although slightly cramped, excellent food and good weather made whatever else happened unimportant. The ranges were excellent and lessons previously learnt were put into practice. A/Pte Skillen got carried away with excitement on the Section Attack range and caused heart failure amongst the Permanent Staff, fortunately no harm was done. An exercise looking for "Flip the Flop" was enjoyed by all, perhaps the Padre will not visit next time after requests for sermons on the Mount and loaves and fishes.



The eventual winners - Arakan .....Being congratulated by Brigadier Dennison, Commander RAOC Training Bn and the CO

Days on the individual battle range and section defence range passed quickly and the platoon's turn for the Assault March cup came round. Brigadier Dennison, the Commander of the RAOC Training Centre and the Commanding Officer were visiting so a good performance in this competition was a must. Everybody was in high spirits before the start, the inspection went well although two minutes penalty was picked up increasing determination. Lt Payne suffered and dropped back after two miles (what's that beer called). Sgt Proverbs endeavouring to help also dropped back. He should not have been there in the first place as he was suffering from flu. A/Cpl Yoxall, aided by A/Pte Younger, encouraged, coaxed and bullied until the platoon arrived TOGETHER at the start of the assault course eight miles after the start. The Brigadier and CO saw the whole platoon through the assault course in a fast time and talked with those still able at the end. A total time with penalties of 1 hour and 35 minutes was announced a good result. The other platoons times, however, were not known and the last platoon had still to go. The result was made known that evening and Arakan had done it. Celebrations were curtailed by an early start the following day.

The shooting had been of a good standard and hopes were high for the College rifle meeting. Success was missing, it was not to be and a disappointed platoon left the ranges, even failing to pick up the wooden spoon!

Half term was here and gone, the six month point (of no return) was passed and the Passing-Out parade for the Seniors was not too far away. Before preparation for the Passing-Out Parade an exercise named 'Hard Slog' had to be endured. All the knowledge learnt to date was put to the test, including individual culinary ability - compo rations throughout the exercise. A/Ptes Aitchison, Chillingworth and others who shall remain nameless, learnt that a 24 hour pack is not to be eaten in one sitting but to last for 24 hours! Rumbling tums can give your position away!

The bionic pace stick of Sgt Proverbs was not so bad as at first thought and even though he belongs to the RAOC he has managed to keep the platoon's drill to a high standard. A/Pte Benton is confirmed as a rear rank soldier. A/Ptes Chomley and Casburn have a future in the brewing trade if they decide at any time to leave, experiments now are frowned upon!!

Next term the platoon loses its Commander, he is off to B Company and a small party was held the night before the Passing-Out parade, at least he found his mark on the square.

WARCOP WOMBLE 1

by A/Pte Bamber of Arakan Platoon

We had all packed and were ready to go, waiting to see what kind of place it would be out in the wilds. Our thoughts of it being a dump increased as we neared it on a special coach, not the usual four tonner. However, it wasn't, everything was different to what I had expected, old falling down buildings with no heating. The buildings were all prefabricated, not very exciting to look at, but inside despite being cramped, warm and fairly good.

The first morning when I awoke at 0615 hrs it was fantastic, the different amount of sleep did not make me feel tired, but if anything woke me up, it was stepping out of the block in just trousers and an open necked shirt ready for a wash. The whole atmosphere was different, the cool refreshing clean air, the birds singing in the trees with clear cut tunes and the mountains reaching up to the sky in the distance. The atmosphere, compared with Deepcut was electric, like watching Exorcist for the first time.

The ranges were the big thing and they were really good, with most people's favourite being the IBSR. All the ranges were very good but this one excelled, testing your speed and accuracy and giving everyone invaluable experience. All the ranges gave everyone experience that could not be gained anywhere except in real life action. These ranges will remain in the memories of all the apprentices for a long time.

The cookhouse was good and the food remained at the Deepcut standard. The main building in the camp itself though was obviously the NAAFI, it was by far the best I had seen despite the fact that we were not allowed to drink, (this was forgotten for one night anyway). It was the NAAFI which kept the camp running, without it, it would have been a boring camp.

The other important thing everyone had on their minds before they left Deepcut was the Assault March Cup Competition. When our turn finally came we had to beat 1 hour 36 minutes to win. It was torment, nobody knows how they kept going over those frightening hills, eight miles of physical torture, which we endured and came through to win with a time of 1 hour 35 minutes. That was the climax of the camp and certainly the morale of the Platoon was boosted no end.

The cleaning up ready for the handover was easy and our departure, although apparently chaotic went smoothly. Everybody boarded the train, partly glad partly bewildered about what could come after those ranges, our success and the general good spirits and laughs.

It was a camp totally different to Tregantle, full of fun, experience and work which combined to make Warcop a very good camp and most certainly a change.

ARDENNES PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt F T Freeman REME

Platoon Sergeant Sgt C Wolfe RAOC

Summer Term 1977

Ardennes Platoon was formed from the 27 recruits who arrived at the RAOC Apprentices College on Tuesday 10th May 1977. During the first two weeks our strength was reduced to 24, three boys having decided that military life did not suit them.

On the weekend of 21st - 22nd May we were introduced to life in the field, having our first exercise, which was of 24 hours duration. For most of us it was our first experience of camping out. Building Bashas, cooking our meals and washing in our mess tins was quite a novel and interesting experience.

Just over three weeks had passed now and we were settling down nicely. Although having been in the Army for so short a time, on the 3rd June we were off on our first College Camp to Cultybraggen in Scotland. It was a long and tiring journey by train from Brookwood to Stirling and onward by coach from Stirling to Cultybraggen.

The camp was fairly old and had been used as a POW camp during the war. However, it was still reasonably comfortable. We covered a wide range of activities during the period at camp, including rock climbing, canoeing, command tasks, fishing, marches, mapcraft and visits to local areas of interest. The poor weather did curtail some of our training, though for Scotland, possibly it was not too bad.

On arriving back in Deepcut, our main effort was directed towards drill in preparation for our Acceptance parade. The day finally arrived and most of us were rather nervous and apprehensive.

Our parents were invited to attend the parade and we were naturally keen that we do well. The parade consisted of an inspection and march past. The standard was fortunately fairly high and our parents were suitably impressed.

We left the camp later that day to start our half term leave. This we had been looking forward to for some weeks.

After returning from leave on Monday 28th June, we started our first guard duty. It was a new experience for all of us. The guard consisted of six Apprentices each night. The guard itself was not too bad, however, rising at 2 or 4 o-clock in the morning for our next stint on stag is obviously not very pleasant.

Normal training continued into the second half of term, including Skill at Arms. For some weeks we had been building up to live firing. At first we used the small 25m range and then progressed to the 100, 200 and 300m ranges. This was very enjoyable but the cleaning of the weapons afterwards certainly was not.

Perhaps the most rewarding event in which our Platoon participated was the Company Assault March. Previous to the march we trained hard in the evenings and during PCD periods. As the day drew nearer members of the platoon became excited though rather apprehensive. On Saturday 16th July the Platoon paraded outside A Company office for the inspection. Then it was forward on an eight mile run and march, followed by an assault course, immediately followed by collapsing. We won the competition, the first Recruit Platoon to do so, which we considered quite an achievement.

One of the more enjoyable activities we undertook was a short 15 minute play. Ours was one of five put on by the platoons of A Company. Our play was entitled Cinderfella. Amazingly we did not win, that was Anguilla Platoons privilege. The evening closed with a prize giving ceremony, which included the award of the Assault March Cup to A/Pte Haw on behalf of Ardennes Platoon.

ARNHEM PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt A Moore/ Lt M H P Buchanan RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt J F Kreft RAOC

Platoon Corporal Cpl D F Bleasdale RAOC

Wintern Term 1976 by A/Lcpl Marshall

On the 14th September 1976, 36 would-be apprentices arrived by an Army four tonner truck at the RAOC Apprentices College. We were to be called Arnhem Platoon.

The first bit of military discipline we met was a College haircut very carefully cut by the College barber.

Our first term at the College was learning the fundamentals of Army training. We encountered things like drill, weapon training, map reading, PT, fieldcraft, abseiling and rifle drill.

We arrived back at Deepcut after three weeks Christmas leave. Some of us were glad to be back, others were not sure. We shortly found out that we were getting a new Platoon Commander Lt Buchanan from the old Senior B Platoon, who left the College at Christmas.

A few weeks later Sgt Kreft was away on a drill course, we then encountered Sgt Bennett who replaced him temporarily.

Platoon Camp was to be at Bordon. Arnhem and Alamein joined forces to attack Arakan Platoon, our so called enemy. We were introduced to patrol bases, moving as sections under the cover of darkness, also ambushes. Some ambushes worked others didn't. Moving under darkness silently, was new to us and Lt Buchanan used his expert knowledge to guide us safely to certain points.

The big event of the term was the A Company camp at Tregantle Fort, this to me anyway seemed the highlight of the term. At Tregantle we put into practice our lessons of fieldcraft and weapon training. We also went swimming in the sea, which proved to be quite amusing.

On exercise at Tregantle we did a beach landing, we also had an airlift by helicopter, which for many of us was the first time we had ever flown. We also encountered the Assault course, which to many seemed difficult.

This and other things, were what some people in the platoon thought was a successful end to an exciting term.

Spring Term 1977 by A/Pte Miller

The Platoon started off the Spring term with a complete new set of Permanent Staff. Our new Platoon Commander was Lt Buchanan whose appearance belied his attitude. He believed that we should all be much fitter than we were and constantly proved it to us especially at Warcop. Our Platoon Sgt was Sgt Bennett who also doubled-up as acting CSM. He took the place of Sgt Kreft who was away on a six week drill course down the road at Pirbright. Cpl Daniels was our new platoon Cpl. He took the place of Cpl Bleasdale who had moved to Arakan Platoon.

We had a couple of highly placed lads in the Cross Country. A/Pte Storey coming a creditable 13th. Also in the first half of term the Platoon went on a trip to London with the Padre.

Half term came as a welcome break, I think everyone was glad of the rest. About a fortnight after we came back from leave we went up to Warcop when an enjoyable time was had by nearly everyone.

We started ELT during the second term, learning about all the different kinds of equipment used for climbing and various other things which all culminated in most of the platoon scaling, or attempting to scale the climbing tower next to CHQ. We also won our first trophy for Sgt Kreft, the small games competition. This came as a surprise to some of us as we were not really accustomed to winning anything.

In the College rifle meeting, Arnhem Platoon won the falling plate competition adding to our continuing run of success. Towards the end of term, we went on platoon camp which consisted of numerous exhausting patrols in search of 'Flip the Flop' who had somehow escaped from Warcop. Towards the end of term everyone was involved in rehearsals for the Passing Out Parade which involved a lot of drill on the square, under the leadership of the RSM.

At the end of term we lost our OC Major Maby who was retiring. We also said goodbye to the two senior lads who had joined us at the beginning of the term, as NCOs for the platoon. I think that everyone was looking forward to the three weeks leave and was hoping that the summer term would turn out interesting.

Summer Term 1977 by A/Sgt Baskerville

The summer term started on 2nd May 1977 after a well deserved end of term leave.

The term got off to a start with the Athletics meetings at the Military Stadium in Aldershot, with events such as the Travers-Clark competition in which the College did quite well.

On the term calendar there was not much doing for Arnhem Platoon until 3rd June, when the whole College moved out for the annual summer camp, which this year was to take place in Scotland at a training camp called Cultybraggen, just outside Stirling in Perthshire.

The camp during the war was a POW camp. When we arrived we were amazed to see how much it looked like one, with its own tin nissen huts in neat lines. Yet the accommodation was far from the luxuries of Deepcut, but it was only for a couple of weeks.

Whilst at Cultybraggen we were to take part in a number of activities such as rock climbing, canoeing, command tasks, making maps, walking and orienteering, also we visited the capital city of Scotland, Edinburgh where we explored the castle and the city. I thought the whole summer camp was a great success due to the hard work of both boys and permanent staff.

Then, no sooner had we arrived back home to Deepcut, we were again packing, not for a camp, but for half term, which proved to be most refreshing after the first half of the term's work. The second half of the term started out much the same as the first, fast and all going for Arnhem Platoon. The next event on the calendar was RPC 3 Drill, so from then on we practised and got our drill together and when the big day came we all passed first time. It was pure relief to get it over and done with. All we had to worry about now was the sponsored endurance march over the South Downs. We had to cover 40 miles in 12 hours to raise money for John Groom's disabled people. We started out at 5 am in the morning and walked all day, check point to check point, and arrived in Eastbourne dead on time at 5 pm thus completing our 40 miles in 12 hours.

The last event this term we are having to work for, is the Passing Out Parade when the REME boys will be leaving us to go on to man service. The only boys leaving Arnhem Platoon are the Intelligence Corps boys. A/Pte Evans and A/Pte Miller, and we are sad to lose them.

Next term we go to B Company after spending three terms in A Company and we hope the fourth term will be even better than the last three.

NIJMEGEN MARCHES 1977

Officer in Charge Lt L E Bean RAOC

Nijmegen Marches

It was with some trepidation that, as the new platoon commander of Barossa Platoon, I discovered I was to lead a team of marchers selected from my new charges on the 1977 Nijmegen Marches. I had very little idea as to what this would involve, apart from the fact that I would have to walk a long way somewhere in Holland. However, enquiry around the College soon unearthed a few former 'marchers' and they provided a wealth of information. The marches are an annual event attracting competitors from all over the world and 1977 would be the 61st. It is organised by the Royal Netherlands League of Physical Culture and is intended to be a friendly, informal means of exercise rather than a race. There is, however, a great deal of friendly rivalry amongst the teams and in 1976 over 19,000 people took part. Competitors can choose from several distances and they then complete that distance on four successive days, each day having a different route, starting and finishing in Nijmegan. The distance the College team were entered for was 40 Km (25 miles) per day making a total distance of 100 miles over the four days. A long, footsore trek for any apprentice. Would Barossa Platoon be up to it?

Training began in earnest immediately after the Easter recess, with evening and weekend five milers gradually building up to double figures. Barossa Platoon, now of course Senior B, settled into the training routine well, the exercise making a welcome break from their trade training. Then with summer camp at Cultybraggen came the first real test, three days of 25 miles each day around the Scottish lochs and glens. The weather could not have been worse. It rained every day and spirits soon began to flag. However some sterling non-stop singing from our two song-birds, Cheshire and McMullen, helped to spur the flaggers on. Even so it was a weary, footsore and stiff-legged Senior B who returned each evening to Cultybraggen, but they knew the eyes of the College were upon them and always managed to march in

with a swagger and a song. Few realised that it was the song that kept us going.

Back in sunny Deepcut, training continued with regular 20 milers twice a week and then, whilst the remainder of the College headed for home and their loved ones during half term, Senior B headed south for the Downs. The aim was to walk the 80 miles from near Winchester to Eastbourne in four days. To assist in navigation we had Sgt Thayre from Brunei Platoon and apart from one slight error, which we will not say too much about, he did a sterling job and led us into Eastbourne on the afternoon of the fourth day, fit and not too footsore.

There were now only three weeks to departure and our training requirement had been completed. All we now had to do was maintain our fitness and keep our feet hard. Meanwhile behind the scenes much had been happening. The Commanding Officer and the Bursar had been scrounging round to finance the trip; the Apprentice College Army Catering Corps were making arrangements for the move across the Channel and thence to Nijmegen; the Royal Army Medical Corps Apprentice College were arranging the travel to Dover and overnight accommodation there. To reduce costs, the teams from the three Colleges were to travel together. Everything was prepared, arrangements made, the team selected and trained.

At last the 16th July arrived and after lunch 11 apprentices, their platoon commander and sergeant boarded the green luxury army coach and along with 26 competitors from the other Colleges, headed for an overnight stay at Dover. Up at 0400 hrs the following morning to catch the 0530 ferry to Zeebrugge, a last minute panic at the terminal over ferry tickets and then an uneventful Channel crossing, arriving in Nijmegen by late Sunday afternoon. It was raining. After all those warnings about heat stroke and salt tablets. Not to be daunted the boys soon settled into their new surroundings, sampled the local food and by Monday evening found the hot spots of the town. This was to be their last night of freedom. For the rest of the week they would be too footsore to venture out into the discos.

0600 hrs Tuesday, 16th July 1977, the day for which we had been training so hard had arrived, and we were off. It was a damp, chilly morning, but spirits were high and a few songs helped to get the feet moving. The first day proved uneventful. The distance was slightly over 25 miles, but being fresh and in good spirits we ate up the miles. The second day was a little harder, limbs

Standing: *A/Ptes C McMullen* *E J Gilbert* *A Harrison* *J E Hulley*
B P Hutchings *T A J Bennett* *D W Kerr*

Sitting: *A/Pte Cheshire* *A/Lcpl W L Holroyd* *Sgt W L Rice*
Lt L E Bean *A/Cpl G Davies* *A/Lcpl M H Williams*

and feet being sore from the previous day, but on a more serious note Sgt Rice developed achilles tendon trouble and looked a doubtful starter for the third day. However, in true Scots Guards fashion (he is an ex Wooden-top) he soldiered on wearing training shoes instead of boots DMS. This was the day of the seven hills, gentle slopes rising from the flat surrounding country-side, making a welcome change and a chance to race some of our fellow competitors, especially the Americans, uphill.

The third day had soon passed, but at the start of the final day's march it required great effort to become motivated. Fortunately we had teamed up with a party of Royal Engineers on the second day and as we were going at the same pace we travelled with them for the remainder of the Marches. They sang songs, we sang songs, we all sang songs together and we succeeded in raising each other's morale. The final day seemed to go on and on, the long straight road stretching into the distance, but at last we arrived at the assembly area 4 Km outside Nijmegen. Here we rested and changed into barrack dress before marching along the crowd-thronged streets, past the saluting dias. What an experience that turned out to be. Marching along behind the band of the Royal Irish Rangers; along streets lined with cheering, waving people up to ten deep; people who had queued to get the best seats or shared a friend's balcony; row upon row of people for 2½ miles. Then, finally, the salute taken as the British contingent marched past by the Commander Rhine Area, Brigadier J C Moore.I suspect that there were more than a few with a lump in their throats or a tear in their eyes as the band struck up "It's a long way to Tipperary".

It was all over then apart from the collection of medals, the Blister Ball in the town that evening and the trip back to Blackdown. Had it been worth it? Did we enjoy it? The answer again must lie in a question. Would we go again? To a man the answer was yes, despite the blisters and sore limbs. Senior B had trained hard and despite many trials and tribulations had won through. They had represented not only the RAOC Apprentice College but also the British Army and their country and they had done it well and enjoyed themselves in the process.

It only remains for me to name those who took part and any time you happen to be in College Headquarters you can see their photograph hanging there together with the medal they won.

THE FORTY MILE SPONSORED WALK

Or a Day in the Country by the Phantom Walker

0230 hrs Saturday 23rd July 1977 three platoons of A Company depart by bus and truck for some unknown destination. All are still half asleep, despite having enjoyed an early breakfast and no-one is desperately interested in the journey.

Two hours later we are dropped off the transport and are relieved to know that there is only a 40 mile march to Eastbourne to occupy us in the next 12 hours. We are all dressed in track suits and DMS boots for easy identification when we are met by screaming crowds at the end of the day but in the early morn it really doesn't seem to matter.

Off we go. Arakan Platoon plus the OC, followed by Alamein with the CSM and Arnhem Platoon with the Company 2IC. Down hill, up hill, why is there no flat ground around here? Arakan miss the last checkpoint and then go the wrong way above Brighton - eventually they get back on course and hurry to catch Alamein. Shortly before the first feeding point the correct order of march is achieved and just after dawn we take the first break.

We know B Company are somewhere behind us

Major Furness-Gibbon explains it all to the Lady Mayoress of Eastbourne

and there are only 30 miles remaining. At this point one man drops out but within 30 minutes the rest of us are off again.

Arakan Platoon. Lt Ward with A/Ptes Ham, Tout and Ellis

The route is never flat as on we go. The sun gets higher, the day warmer and the feet more sore. Welcome break follows welcome break and we discover there is no salt - a helpful housewife and an open shop fulfil the need and creeping cramp recedes.

1600 hrs we're nearly there - beside a golf course with Eastbourne in sight and one mile to go - we are told we must ride. Mutiny! - Arakan say no and take off into the distance to be followed by Alamein and Arnhem, all running the last mile. We meet the Corps of Drums and march into the town, joined by the beautiful Nolan sisters. There are hundreds of spectators to give

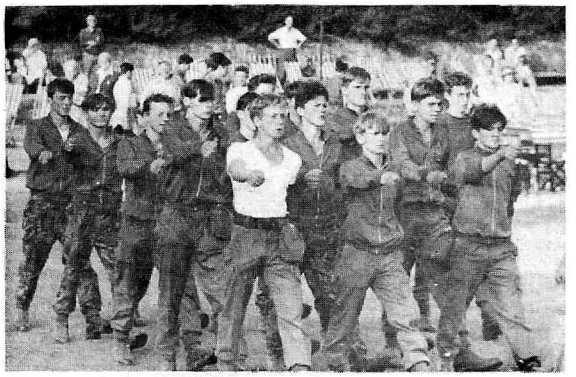
'Chatting-up' the Nolan sisters.

us a great welcome as we form up in front of the Mayor. A couple of speeches, a chat with the girls and it's all over for A Company; we have done our job and can return to Deepcut.

Later B Company, complete with OC and 2IC, are to enjoy a similar reception but we are too tired to bother.

From six platoons that started only eight individuals dropped out and all finished in the time. Much needed cash was raised for the John Groom's Organisation, we had achieved a 40 mile march in 12 hours and morale was high.

After a day's rest we were doing drill and playing sport almost as if nothing had happened but we had grown in stature and undertaken something none of us is likely to forget.



Burma Platoon in full cry

More of what it was all about

The Lady Mayoress, with Major Calbreath, awaiting the first arrivals on Grand Parade.

OPEN DAY

By WOII (CSM) Brace RAOC

How can it be done? How can what be done? Hold and run a College Open Day in the form of a mini show! Well, the CO said it will be done or was it the Padre?

The aim of the Open Day was to invite local civilians and apprentices' parents to a day out at the College and raise £250 for the HQ RAOC Training Centre charities fund.

It was decided to hold the grand day on Saturday 23 July 1977. A Company took up the challenge and immediately set about involving the rest of the College.

Thursday 21 July saw Lt J Hopkinson with Anguilla Platoon eagerly erecting tents and knocking pegs into Alma Square.

Friday 22 July, Alma Square was a hive of activity with everyone setting up and putting the final touches to their stalls and sideshows.

The great day arrived thankfully with the sun shining and no real hitches to mention. There were many fine stalls and sideshows, the Auntie Sally proved a great crowd puller. No wonder! It's not everyday one can see the CO and RSM going for a swim with their clothes on. However, the OC and CSM of A Company eventually found something in common, but full marks must go to OC B Company for his walk-the-plank gear.

A representative from John Groom's, along with 15 handicapped children, also visited our Open Day. They were entertained and escorted around by members of Alamein Platoon.

The RSM kindly consented to act as Master of Ceremonies between liaison visits to the Sgt's Mess.

The obedient dog competition turned out to be more of enter your dog and don't worry about it. All the dogs entered did very well but the best dog, an alsatian named Zac belonging to Lcpl Clint, emerged as the winner.

The Corps of Drums under the auspicious eye of Sgt Jennions, entertained everyone with a superb display.

As the day drew to a close a disco and dance was held in the gymnasium and a good time was had by all.

The College succeeded in its goal of £250, thanks to all those hard working people who were involved in the organisation and running of our Open Day. It was undoubtedly a great success.

Some of the stalls and sideshows on Alma Square.

Sgt Green and Capt Hayes of Training Wing showing off some of their ELT wares

EXERCISE SNOW PLOUGH

By A/Sgt McLean

"Excellent"! we thought as our transport pulled into the car park between the blue mountains of the Cairngorms and Glenmore. The rain and fog silhouetted the ski lifts on the mountainside and if perchance one looked hard enough, the occasional spot of snow could be seen on the mountain, although it was well-hidden among the rock face and mud.

The 'team', as we had been appropriately named set about the task of unloading. 19 OFP had certainly done its job most efficiently. The base camp had been well sited and there was a distinct friendly atmosphere whenever we came into contact with other visiting units. The accommodation was first class and if our first meal was anything to go by, we were in for a treat where food was concerned.

The hard grind began on our first full day. Snow at this particular time seemed to be a commodity as rare as money in these isolated parts. Armed guards had to be put around existing patches of it and hunting parties were despatched to locate any new falls. Our guide left us above the CoreCas, aptly named because translated it seems the core of the coffin. Now was to be the moment of truth - our ski training had to be put into practice. Of course there were spills and even casualties - minor ones I'm glad to say. It was all jolly hard work this business of learning to be a skier but to our eternal credit we all set to with a will.

What seemed an interminable time of practising eventually passed by and 'racing day' at long last dawned. Just like all big sporting events, it seemed to attract a large crowd judging by the numbers turning up to witness the thrills and spills. Our team didn't get off to a particularly good start. Apprentices Irons, Montrose and McLean all fell and it was left to Brown to save our faces. He did just that returning a very fast time. Of the rest of us the least said the soonest mended. We did enjoy one saving grace after all the racing was over and we had returned to camp. A real storm arrived with incessant rain and howling winds. By skilful and well-rehearsed training we managed somehow to keep our tent intact and standing - no such luck for the others.

It now seems ages ago since all this happened but in retrospect it was one great experience which I am sure none of us would ever regret. The exercise, if exercise it was, was thoroughly enjoyable. I am sure I speak not only for myself but for all members of the team when I say "Please, could there possibly be a repeat performance?"

'B' COMPANY

OC D N Furness-Gibbon RAOC

Training Officer Captain M F Fox REME

CSM WOII P S Slaughter RAOC

"The Pacemakers"

As an unbiased contributor there can be no doubt that the Company really does buzz with an air of comradeship, of high morale, of motivation and of a sheer joy of being here at the College. How can you possibly argue with that? Certainly those who have not served in the Company have missed a valuable experience which leaves a gap in their understanding. Let me show you what I mean.

Winter Term 1976 heralded the start of a new College year. Fresh, apprehensive and unsure faces appeared in the ranks of 175 entries on the Company nominal roll, right from the Officer Commanding's office to the end bed space in Room 3 of Block 8. 10 September is 'Foundation Day' for 33 Battery Royal Artillery and so too it was for us because this was the start of term with new platoons springing into life, their names bringing with them memories perhaps for fathers and grandfathers alike. Bruneval and Burma Platoons added their lustre to the distant sagas of Barossa and Balaclava. The slate was clean, the programme primed, hearts were willing and 'battle' was soon to commence.

Recruits' Acceptance Parade appeared in late October, yet long before, those that had paraded, had entertained the Director of Army Training, Major General Gow, at the College and on the local training area.

It was here that Sgt Thayre almost met a now senior officer who some years before had been his Brigade Major in an Armoured Division in Germany. Before the General's arrival we had fought the elements on the coast of eastern Cornwall at a memorable spot called Tregantle Fort, we had camped at Crowborough in Sussex and at Longmoor in Hampshire. Company Camp at Tregantle was a joy to most, a challenge to all and a lesson to many. Captain Fox had organised the Seniors in digging a large hole on the beach during a rainstorm and into this hole a mysterious piece of paper was subsequently buried. It is still there to this day and few will tell you any more about it than that. At Pier Cellars, on the coast overlooking Plymouth Sound and the birthplace of many World War Two ideas of midget submarine warfare, we found the joys of rope walking and the agonies of the 'death slide'. Next door at Cawsand we had stormed ashore from Royal Navy rescue launches with wild imaginations of Kirk Douglas or John Wayne at their best. We were introduced to small boat handling and one famous 'sailor' Platoon Commander learned the lessons of tidal waters by being marooned for several hours on mudflats!

The month of November saw the Seniors on the Commanding Officer's Exercise where lessons in message taking, vehicle camouflaging, respirator drills and stand-to were absorbed. In the same period Balaclava Platoon disappeared on a platoon camp and Lt Paton went off to learn the noble art of military cash accounting, a very suitable pastime for such a dour Jock. The Seniors travelled to Portsmouth under the guidance of Lt Buchanan where before a large public audience in the Guildhall they put on a very creditable display of gymnastics. Barossa Platoon took to the mountains of Harlech on the same day that Lt P Ball took up the vows of marriage, thus increasing his personal establishment by one. December appeared and the great countdown towards Passing-Out Parade began.

Lt D A Major REME arrived in the Company from commissioning whereupon all Platoons staged their Christmas parties which might have given the wrong impression to so new a Platoon Commander. Two or three days later Lt C N P Emmett arrived from 6 OFP and a smile of happy contentment was seen to descend upon Lt P Ball as he saw his first opportunity of placing a foot firmly in the door. Passing-Out Parade went off without a hitch and whilst apprentices were busy disappearing to all four corners of the British Isles, the permanent staff were taking a deep breath and looking forward to a well earned break.

Spring term started with a bang on 7 January. CSM Slaughter shook the cobwebs of Christmas and New Year away by a 'muster' the moment all had assembled. Brunei Platoon formed a few days later, just in time for the College cross-country run which regretfully we failed to win outright but put in some very good performances. Lts Ellis and Bean and Sergeant Thayre entered the RAOC cross country championships in which they helped the College team to come fourth. Burma and Balaclava Platoons explored the delights of Long Valley while Brunei experienced their very first taste of life under the

stars on the College training area. It was sad to see Lt J Lamb and Lt P Linney leave us after their valuable contributions to the College and Company but we could not dwell sadly for long because suddenly Company Camp at Warcop was upon us and so too was Acceptance Parade for Brunei Platoon. Warcop was a great success although there was the odd hiccup of lost bugles the interference of driving snow on the ranges and the mystery of the Officer Commanding's hip flask. The Padre visited us and so too did the Adjutant and unfortunately both missed the 8 mile assault march.

March was the month of the Fitness For Role Inspection by the Commander, Brigadier G E Dennison. Never before had so many apprentices responded so quickly to so many tasks but by the end of the day a twinkle in the eye could be seen in most corners of the College. In early April we set off into the local area to collect money for the spastic children of the White Lodge at Chertsey. Brunei Platoon won the rose bowl for the largest sum collected by a platoon and one officer was seen in Fleet showing two wide mouthed apprentices how to collect money from six ladies whilst they were sitting in a hairdresser's under dryers!

The Summer term was memorable for many reasons. The Company won the inter-Company athletics match, due in no small way to the outstanding performances of A/Pte Green REME of Burma Platoon, whose name we hope to see in the future amongst army athletes. In the tug-of-war, the Company team won by 3 pulls to 1 which was a notable feat in view of the fact that A Company were embedded in the mire up to their knees. A/Pte Hutton and the CSM put in some sound shot putting, Lt Ellis displayed a sprint capability which surprised many and Lt Bean did equally well by winning the 400 metres. Brunei Platoon represented the College at the Bath and West Royal Show in early June and consequently set up their platoon location at the Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton where the platoon commander's telephone extension was in the Wardroom!

The name Cultybraggen now appeared in every company conversation and in every company letter. This was the camp to which we moved in June and Captain M F Fox REME, always the pathfinder, sallied forth with an advance party by road on the last day of May. Balaclava Platoon, under the watchful eye of Sgt Reid, became the College baggage party and on Friday 3 June they, with College and Company alike, joined in the great trek north to Stirling and thence to Cultybraggen.

"They know no country, own no lord,
Their home the camp, their law the sword"

Solvio Pellico

Brunei Platoon Warcop 1977. Seven weeks old and still going strong

The joys, heartaches, thrills and labours of summer camp are glimpsed at in other articles in this edition but suffice it to say at Cultybraggen we worked and played hard, we made many local friends and helped celebrate with them Her Majesty's Silver Jubilee. The Sub Aqua boys dived, the canoeists fought white water, the climbers scaled peaks overlooking beautiful country and the golfers increased dramatically the takings of the local authority's golf course. Some apprentices were visited by parents whilst at camp, A/Pte Storey among them. Some toured

Edinburgh and some performed as members of the Corps of Drums before the public in Stirling. All the permanent staff ran three miles before breakfast - well nearly all, and some even attempted mastering the local brew!

The period from camp until the end of term was really busy for everyone in the Company. We lost the cricket to A Company but then it would be ungentlemanly to take everything from them, so honours were pretty well even in the end. The Seniors took part in the Nijmegen Marches in Holland in July and as a result of pushing and pulling by Lt Bean and Sgt Rice they accredited themselves and the College admirably. Burma Platoon went off to Capel Curig to meet the 'Viet Taff' and to savour the joys of the Welsh mountains. Cpl O'Neill limped off to Arborfield for his RDQ Course and Lt Ellis demonstrated our close and happy links with our civilian staff by marrying Mrs Titmuss' daughter Jane in the Garrison Church.

So the wheel of fortune turns. The new training programme is in print and new faces are appearing both among the permanent staff and the apprentices. We have said farewell to Captain M Fox, to Mrs Titmuss, who has left us after seven long years, to Lt Jones, to Sgt Earl, who is now in Training Company and to Sgt Harris who went on promotion. Berlin Platoon is here, so too are Lts Kelman and Wise, so too another happy year.

BALACLAVA PLATOON

Platoon Commanders: Lt P Linney REME
Lt Ellis RAOC

Platoon Sergeants: Sgt Harris REME
Sgt J A G Earl RAOC

"Will ye no come back again?"

Fort Tregantle, what visions this name conjured up in our minds! Here we were, only in the army for four weeks and already we were going away to serve our country at an outpost perched high above the Cornish coastline. True it was only a Company camp, but nevertheless, we were excited.

Our excitement waned somewhat as we were awakened at some unearthly hour on the morning of 1 October, and during the next few hours all thoughts of Tregantle were pushed from our minds in the bustle to be ready on time.

By nine o-clock, the last glimmer of excitement had gone, and a rather subdued Balaclava Platoon looked vacantly through the windows of the bus taking them to North Camp station, en route for Plymouth.

The monotony of the train journey was broken only by a display of acrobatics by A/Pte Cryans, who whilst attempting to leave his seat to pay a visit, performed a somewhat imperfect somersault and landed in the prone position in the aisle of the train. Mind you, the fact that his puttees had been tied to the leg of the table might have taken the edge of his performance.

Our stay at Tregantle proved to be not only adventurous but at times hair-raising. Who would have thought that we, who four weeks ago were hanging around coffee bars and youth clubs looking like bored, out-of-work teenagers, would end up hanging over a cliff at the end of a rope with the cold waves of the English Channel breaking angrily on the jagged rocks below.

After Tregantle our next sortie into adventure saw us braving the elements in Warcop, Cumbria. Our attempts at serious shooting on the various ranges were hindered by a biting wind which lifted freezing particles of snow and ice from the surrounding hills and hurled them into our faces with such venom that we felt we were intruding on some sinister gathering of the elements. However, our suffering was to be short-lived for the sun broke through the cloud and we found ourselves, much to our delight, involved in an assault march over the rugged but breathtaking Cumbrian countryside.

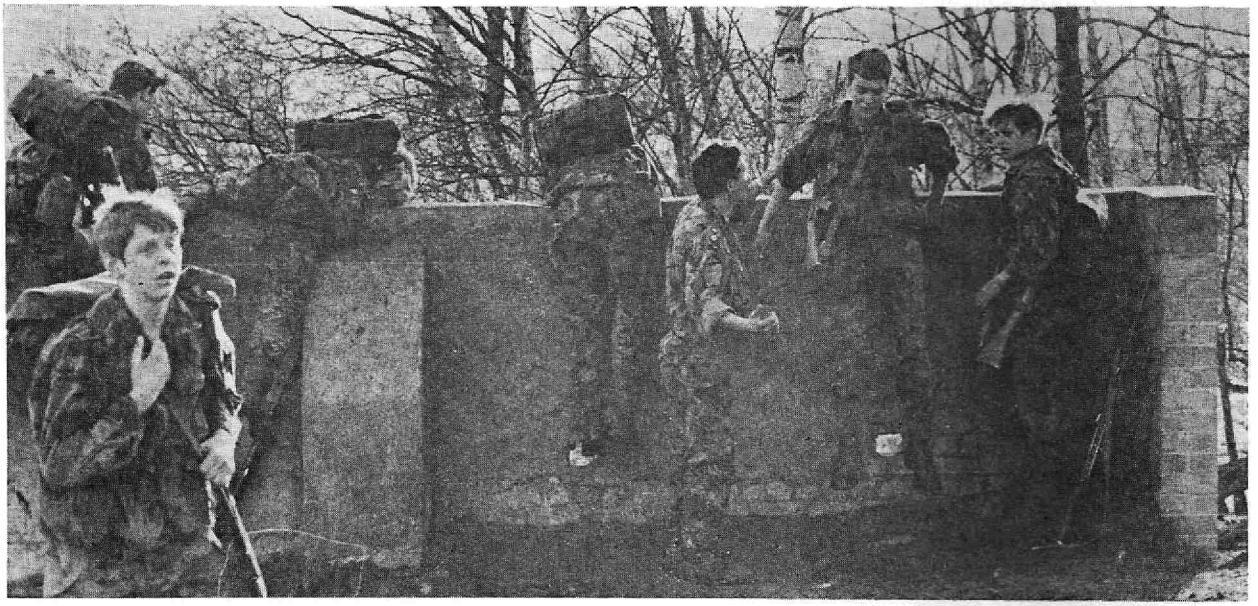
Despite some amateurish attempts at gymnastics en route by A/Pte Tully and of course A/Pte Gorman's brilliant rendition of the 'Death of Nelson', the whole platoon finished the course in a very creditable time of one hour thirty five minutes and gained 2nd place in the competition.

After the assault march came the 24-hour exercise during which we came under attack from supposedly 'friendly forces', but once we had established that these so called friendly forces were none other than Barossa Platoon, the

reason for the unprecedented attack became painfully obvious. Still, all was not lost, and our so called 'friends' drove home their final assault only to find us making a hasty withdrawal using their vehicle.

At last Spring gave way to Summer and our last term at the College. This was to be our busiest time with a College camp at Cultybraggan, our RPC 3 Drill Test and of course the inevitable Passing-Out Parade. We also took part in Exercise 'Sore Feet' which due to a slight error in navigation turned out to be literally an exercise with sore feet.

And so, sadly, the great day came and went and Balaclava Platoon took their place with the rest of the term leavers on the passing out parade. "Will ye no come back again?" echoed in our ears as we took leave of the friends and acquaintances, counsellors, guides and mentors we had known during our stay at the College and as to the question "Will ye no come back again?", well yes, soon, but not too soon.



Balaclava Platoon Warcop 1977. Lt Ellis lifts an apprentice off the ground with one hand

BURMA PLATOON

"Strength in Loyalty"

Platoon Commander Lt S D Jones RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt T E Jennians RAOC

Platoon Corporal Cpl J Starkey RAOC

Perhaps a scene from ancient Rome

And it came to pass that a leader of the tribe of Burma was called unto another land called Arborfield, there to administer to the needs of those who are wise in the ways of the pagan idol, the motor car. In the homestead of the tribe of Burma, (namely Block 6), there was a great alarm and mutterings as to who was to be the new leader, known in those parts as a Platoon Sergeant.

The message on the camp grapevine and on the scrolls was that it was to be the large one with the lashing tongue, who had sought sojourn with Bruneval Platoon after spending many days and nights in the wilderness of Pirbright, wherein doth dwell the giants with large feet and loud voices. "Ah hope it innae him" cried A/Pte Craig, the minute tartan one, "Ah may have to sort him oot." "Thou speaks from thy nether regions, Caledonian Pygmy", sayeth Sanders, who was smart and sensible and was destined to become a leader in his own right. "It would do thee more good to sort out thy locker which resembles the home of the swineherd's lowly charges".

And in this way the arrival of a new leader brought consternation to the tribe of Burma, but

the new leader, he who is called Jennians and other things, brought calm and order because he was wise in the ways of young men.

With the passing of time the tribe of Burma became accustomed to the ways of their tormentor, their father confessor, their friend and their champion and, so too, with their number one leader, Lt Jones, who arrived from a nearby encampment.

The men of Burma went about their daily tasks with a sense of purpose and soon they were seen to be happy, contented and hardworking, although a few fell by the wayside.

And it came to pass, that the feast of Christmas was soon upon them, and a great banquet was organised to which 'maidens' were invited and the boys of Burma enjoyed themselves greatly. The leader of all the tribes, Major Furness-Gibbon joined in the festivities as did the one who was feared by all, CSM Slaughter, who was to be seen destroying vast quantities of Double Diamond with the excuse that he was tasting on behalf of his leader.

And so the tribe of Burma dispersed for Christmas recess and went their many separate ways to be with their families. Soon they returned to the land of their labours and could be seen to be involved in the numerous pleasant activities which abound such as drill and physical training and all were filled with contentment.

And it came about that the Officer Commanding decided that all his people should have a 'holiday' and a great caravan was formed and the tribe of Burma boarded this caravan and headed for a far off land known as Warcop. When they arrived there they found it was exceedingly cold and many resorted to the wearing of 'Long Johns', that is, all except A/Ptes Moody and Gill, who had been wearing theirs since November.

It was at Warcop that the tribes spent many days on the mountains and their lives were made arduous but they still smiled and sang for this was their way. Whilst at Warcop they entered the great Assault March and Shoot competition and although they won the shooting they were narrowly defeated on the march, and thus returned to their tents empty handed. It was during this great event that A/Pte Hancock who was known as 'Hank' to his friends, among other less mentionable titles, showed the courage and determination which was to become synonymous with the name of the tribe of Burma.

On returning to the land of Deepcut, the tribe involved itself with skill at arms and during the College rifle meeting, no less than five of Burma's sons were included in the 15 members of their tribe who won places in the top 20 most worthy men at arms. The most noteworthy of the five being A/Lcpl Bielby who won the individual championship.

And as time passed the tribe of Burma became known and respected for its team spirit and enthusiasm. It came about that the great chief, Lt Col N S Bruce, took his people north to the the land of the Haggis, a beast which alas was

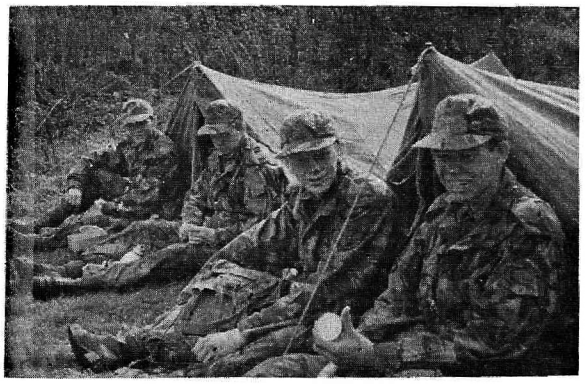
Anyone seen the Platoon Sergeant?

not captured, even though its wailing could be heard throughout the long dark days and nights.

And in this land the tribe of Burma spent many days in vigorous but enjoyable training and they were happy. During this training the tribe invaded Edinburgh and they saw many of the famous sights. On their return they pleaded with their leader, Jennians, to divulge the name of the place where did dwell the dancers called Go-Go girls, but his lips were sealed for greatly was that place sought by many wandering souls. And again they returned to Deepcut and there began training for a great march of 40 leagues to aid handicapped people. On the day of the march they travelled the distance in a time of just over seven hours which was exceeding quick for such young feet.

In the month of August they began to collect all their belongings together and on the 11th day of that month they paraded themselves in their best attire and they looked exceeding smart.

After they had paraded they began to take leave of their leader and he was sad yet proud, for they had always been true to their motto, "Strength in Loyalty".



Tregantle October 1976 Coley, Storey and Hughes

Tregantle October 1976. A/Ptes Coley and Storey

TRAINING COMPANY

Chief Instructor Major R Arliss RAOC

Training Officer Capt S Hayes REME

Winter Term 1976

Since the last issue of Thunderbolt, the Warcop Training Area has for the third time been the camp site for early training purposes. B Company started it all, along with cadets from the Royal Green Jackets. Throughout this particular period the weather was really bad what with strong winds, incessant rain and even snow on occasions. It was so bad in fact that many range practices had to be cancelled. Normal firing practices were distinctly hampered by the severe weather conditions. When A Company moved in to replace B Company, the weather took a pronounced turn for the better. The apprentices all experienced the excellent field firing ranges. The individual battle shooting range was a real Top of the Pops. Mention should be made of our logistics personnel who worked so hard and also the chefs who produced excellent meals.

Spring Term 1977

In the early months of 1977 the Chief Instructor moved, with his staff, from College HQ to Heather House; a MOQ due for demolition which has a long connection with the College as the quarter usually occupied by the Second in Command or 2IC. The new Training Company HQ comprises the OC, Major Robin Arliss; Training Officer, Captain Sean Hayes and the Training Office which contains the Training Clerk, Sgt Duffus with the G Clerk, Cpl Mick Murphy, Another clerk who deserves a mention for his 'work' is Sgt Bob Smith who occasionally entered Heather House when the Sergeants' Mess could afford to let him go. Other members of Heather House include - starting literally at the top we have ELT Wing Sgt Jim Green and Cpl Legs Dymond who are seen now and again hovering around the coffee room when they're not climbing mountains. On the middle floor

the sound of keys hitting the typewriter ribbon comes from the Training Wing typist, Mrs Mary Foster; and of course the Dymond Pad used, we believe, for (de)-briefing WRAC Adventure Training parties.

The Company HQ staff in the form of Major Arliss, Capt Hayes and Cpl Murphy represented Heather House on Summer Camp 1977 at Cultybraggan this year and although Capt Hayes was not seen for the first week, due to being on 'Arthur's Seat', (the mountain not a long drop) curses could be heard as Maj Arliss and Cpl Murphy tried to break out of Block 19A (Camp HQ). A good time was had by all especially the ducks.

Meanwhile, back at Deepcut, Sgt Duffus held the fort as OIC Heather House, that is to say looking after Mrs Foster and the two cleaners, Mrs Brenda Hobbs and Mrs Lynda Lonergan. Although Sgt Duffus was accused of working afternoons, he still sticks to the story that he was organising SED Athletics.

Summer Term 1977

The summer camp moved again into the north of the country this time going over the border completely and staying at the ex-POW camp of Cultybraggan. The training camp is not on the same site and has been re-built, I hasten to add. The Wing's task for this camp was to conduct Command tasks at a countryside location, some 20 miles from the camp. In all six tasks were erected, although bad weather meant the immediate cancellation of two. All apprentices seemed to enjoy getting apparatus, themselves and containers of 'nitro' over, under, through or around all manner of obstacles. We welcomed to the Wing for the duration of the camp Sgt Wozencroft who still tells anyone who will listen about **the** hill!

Training Wing has now become Training Company. People have come and gone. We have said farewell to Sgts Elsworth and Watson on posting, Capt Tayler on Long Course, Cpls Anderson, Thomas and Bull returning to the Rifle Companies and SSI Clarke on discharge. We welcomed Ssgt Johnson, SSI Tofield, Sgts Earl and Kreft, Cpls Bowering, Edwards, Pascoe and Raynor. Congratulations to Sgt Cook on promotion.

The Company have now got their sights firmly fixed on this year's Skill-at-Arms camp, in the opposite direction to Warcop. In November we move down to St Martin's Plain camp outside Folkestone with the aim of getting as many apprentices through their annual Personal Weapon Test as possible. Already some staff have started to look towards the east for good weather; the more experienced in the Company consider this to come under the realms of 'great expectations'.

A look forward into 1978 sees the Training Wing and Heather House staff participating in Ex 'New Phoenix' which is taking place in the Alps, a report of which can be read in the next issue of Thunderbolt.

EDUCATION WING

Senior Education Officer Major PA Easton RAEC

At long last the Education Wing is now to be found in its new quarters adjoining Alma Square. The old wooden huts, for so many years its previous home, are well and truly in the hands of the demolition experts. Of course the new 'school' has all the advantages which the old accommodation did not possess, but there will be many, staff and students alike, who will remember with affection the old 'spiders'. They provided the setting for the 'old' school and proved that successes and achievements are not necessarily the prerogative of palatial buildings.

Despite the difficult period of moving house, the work of the wing has continued with all the vigour and expertise one has come to associate with it. The preparatory educational tasks of equipping the Corps apprentices, RAOC, REME and Intelligence with sound guide lines for their future careers, have been tackled with the utmost professionalism. There are now clear-cut lines to all the support training schemes, whether administrative or engineering, and firm links have been forged with the appropriate trade schools.

Over the past year the Wing has not neglected any form of personal or individual education. The list of examination successes in GCE, RSA and CSE is well worthy of mention and is a credit to all the College candidates undertaking these commitments - well done indeed!

Hobbies, a departmental responsibility, have flourished alongside Education and there has been no lack of enthusiasm throughout the many and varied extra mural activities undertaken. The range seems to be endless and covers all possible interests. Visitors to the College never cease to be simply amazed at and possibly envious of the hobby activity set-up.

The "merry-go-round" is now turning full swing with the arrival of all the College new boys. The whole wing is agog with industry and activity. The dedicated and painstaking work of a thoroughly competent staff is quite sufficient assurance that past successes and achievements will be repeated when these particular apprentices "pass out" at the end of this particular course.

SATISFIED SOLDIER (1)

By A/Pte McNairn

It came as quite a surprise to me to hear that I had been chosen to take part in a Satisfied Soldier scheme. I had the added bonus of spending 10 days with my family, having just returned from Easter recess.

I arrived home at 11 pm on Wednesday, 4th May, much to the surprise of my family who didn't expect to see me for another 15 weeks. The following morning I reported to CSM Norton at the Army Careers Information Office in Dundee. He told me what I was to do over the next 10 days. He then took me next door to meet Maj Buchanan. after asking me whether I was enjoying my new life in the Army, he told me that the Colonel in charge of the Ordnance Corps in Scotland wanted to have a few words with me at 1500 hrs that afternoon. He arrived at the office on time and asked for a cup of tea. Feeling rather nervous I took the tea into the interviewing room where he was. I soon got rid of my nervousness because of the casual way he was talking to me, and the sort of questions he asked. After about 20 minutes he shook hands with me and wished me luck.

The next morning I started my tour of the schools which I was to visit. The first I visited was my old one, Forfar Academy. There I saw the assistant rector, Mr Martin, who took me around the classes. I spoke to several boys who were interested in joining the Army. The main thing they asked me about was the pay. I told them it got better as you get older and they seemed quite satisfied.

During the rest of the time I was at home I visited several other secondary modern schools in the area. In the evenings I went to Cadet forces and visited youth clubs.

All in all I found it very interesting and most enjoyable. If I was asked to take part again I most certainly would.

SATISFIED SOLDIER (II)

By A/Cpl Snowden

After a somewhat uncertain start I began my detachment with the Army Careers Office in Durham. I approached the front door with little knowledge of what I was about to embark upon. This soon changed when I was briefed quite capably by WOII Brough, a member of the RAOC.

As I settled down in the reception area I was quite shocked to learn that they had arranged a meeting at my old school for anyone interested in joining the army. This was to take place about 1100 hrs. So I was to go away and prepare a plan of attack. Approaching the gates of the school I felt excited as well as nervous. All my fears, however, subsided when the questions started to flow. I was well pleased with myself as I was able to cope with the questions quite well with little or no help from the recruiting sergeant. After that question and answer session sitting in the office for the rest of the day seemed to be an anti-climax. The next day started with the knowledge that I would be driving around the country sticking up posters about the army. This turned out to be quite interesting because I managed to get a good look around my home county as well as work for the enlargement of the army. Wednesday started with me reporting to the office only to be told to go straight home. This was because I was to report to the Cadet Force Centre in Durham that night instead of working in the office.

I reported to the centre at 1900 hrs in working dress and was immediately put to work answering questions from the senior members of the troop. After about an hour the same thing was to happen with the juniors of the troop, this session was something of a quiet affair though as I think they were a little scared to ask questions. My work finished at about 2030 hrs and I felt quite pleased with my performance which might gain some recruits on a later date.

The next day was very quiet owing to the slack period of recruiting we are in. However, I was kept busy with odd jobs such as answering the phone, manning the reception desk, and little bits of typing indents and memos. My last day was spent filling out a couple of forms and talking to lads wanting to join the RAMC. I think what I said must have thrilled as they signed on the dotted line to join up in September.

It has taken about a week for the facts of this visit to sink in but when they did I came up with this conclusion. The scheme is very exciting and interesting and would probably be a lot better if I had not gone during such a slack period. For this reason I would like to do it again at a later date.

INTELLIGENCE CORPS

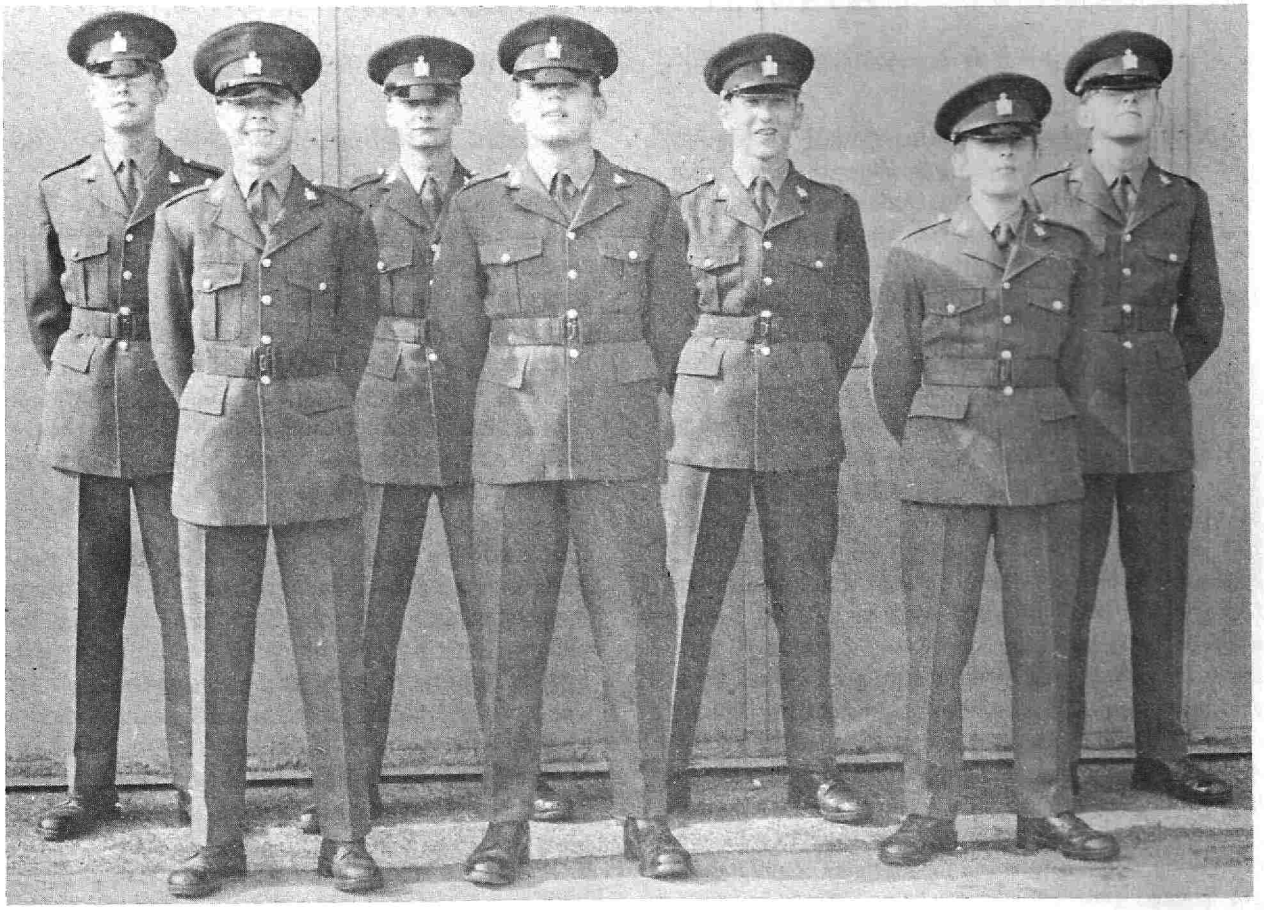
By Sgt M T S Arnold Int Corps

The Passing-Out parade of the Summer Term 1977 marked the end of one small, numerically speaking, commitment in the RAOC Apprentices College - the training of apprentices of the Intelligence Corps. When Apprentices Cape, Evans, Heavens, Helme, Miller and Pipe proudly marched off parade to the strains of Auld Lang Syne, it was sad to realise that they were to be the last young representatives of that particular Corps the College would see.

The Intelligence Corps started it all in 1970 when Apprentices Murray and Thain arrived at Deepcut as Junior Entrants. Since that time well over 50 boys have passed through the training department of the College. All these young men have made a vital and extensive contribution in all forms of training. They have all left to reap the success they so richly deserve.

Since the Intelligence Corps has now decided to end its Junior Entry requirement, the College will no longer enjoy the advantages which such types managed to bring to bear on the whole of College life. Those who had the opportunity to pass this way - a small but elite body of young men - can justifiably be proud of all the efforts they made to add distinction to College successes not only in the academic field, where they could have been expected to excel, but also on the sports field and on the barrack square.

The College staff wish them well, but particularly to those who have just departed we extend our best wishes and hopes that their careers will be long and successful.



L to R. Apprentices Miller Helme Pipe Weaver
Cape Evans Heavens

WARCOP WOMBLE II

By A/Cpl Cafe Int Corps

For most people company camp at Warcop started on 2nd March this year. But I, along with three other apprentices, CSM Brace and Capt Griffiths, had the dubious distinction of being on the advance party which departed for Warcop some three days earlier. Being a rather small party, it was decided to travel by train rather than the truck form of transport.

Anyone who has undertaken that arduous task of getting from Deepcut to King's Cross by road and rail will know only too well what I mean when I say that this was almost an exercise in itself. Our transport was late, we had to catch a later train from Brookwood to Waterloo, we had to negotiate the maze of escalators and tunnels which signify the London Underground and finally we arrived at King's Cross with barely two minutes to spare. It had all been something akin to a B.E. test, as one member of our party, obviously much more experienced in these matters than I, remarked as we scrambled madly for places on our train. But that wasn't the end of it. The train was packed tight with seemingly masses of people and luggage. Trying to make one's way through crowded compartments in a desperate search for even a standing place, is no joke at all. To me it seemed to be something strongly related to Hannibal's crossing of the Alps. However, we managed somehow and needless to say survived the "wagon trail" to Darlington.

The journey from Darlington to Warcop was by road but what luxury - the wind-swept back of a three-tonner! At least we had it all to ourselves. I must confess, however, that I had a distinct sense of foreboding as we passed along lanes already inches thick in snow. But we made it finally and Warcop Camp loomed into view. It wasn't at all as I had imagined it to be. It was a bit of a shock to find a beautifully laid-out camp with all quite up-to-date facilities. There were no grumbles about this being our home for the next week or so.

Work really began in earnest on the very next morning. After receiving a briefing on the use of a prismatic compass, we were transported into the heart of the mountains, divided into groups and given our objective tasks. At this point I hasten to add, I'm not the world's greatest map-reader and to say that A/Pte King has always been below average would be the understatement of the year. Suffice it to mention that my particular group came last in map reading exercises, but as an object lesson in the use of compasses in bleak landscape country, the whole day proved to be highly successful.

The next stage of our training in Warcop proved to be the highlight of our time there. It was all to do with range practice. Warcop itself has possibly the finest ranges in the country. It was quite a job to be called upon to put into practice the lessons learnt in classes or on our own ranges back in Deepcut. It was possible here to conduct all the training under battle conditions. There were so many different types of ranges that all the arduous tasks became not only interesting in themselves, but thoroughly enjoyable.

In addition to range work, there was ample opportunity to practice fieldcraft tactics and participate in company exercises. But it wasn't all work - we all enjoyed some excellent times in the really fine NAAFI which proved to be vastly superior to our own.

All in all the camp was a great success mainly due to the sterling and professional work of our permanent staff. They all were truly great in every respect. We learnt an awful lot about them and indeed, probably what is even more important about ourselves and our own particular capabilities.

I say "Well done, Warcop, and many thanks!"

ATHLETICS

Officer in Charge Capt J G Griffin RAOC

1977 has been a very good year for college athletics and during the season there have been notable individual achievements both on the track and on the field.

The best individual achievement was by A/Pte J D Green of B Company who won the RAOC 100m Corps Championship and both the REME and RAOC 200m Championships for 1977. The following competitors are also to be complimented on reaching the finals of the Army Junior Individual Championships at the Aldershot Stadium on 8-9 July. A/Sgt Yoxall ran in the 800m and recorded the fastest time in the College this year with 2 minutes 6.3 seconds, an excellent result. A/Ptes Green and Clark got to the finals of the 200m and Green also ran in the 100m final. In both races Green came 4th and Clark was 6th in his race. A/Pte Hutton threw well in the discus and came in 5th position. A/Pte Hutton and A/Lcpl Rocks won the discus and shot respectively in the South East District Junior Army Championships.

A/Pte Green with his season's trophies

In the team events the College won through to the Army Junior Athletics Team final and came in 5th position. With four events to go the College was tying for 4th place but then the extra reserves of the larger units taking part took their toll. Nevertheless, 5th position - one better than last year - is no mean feat considering the fact that the other major units taking part have their junior

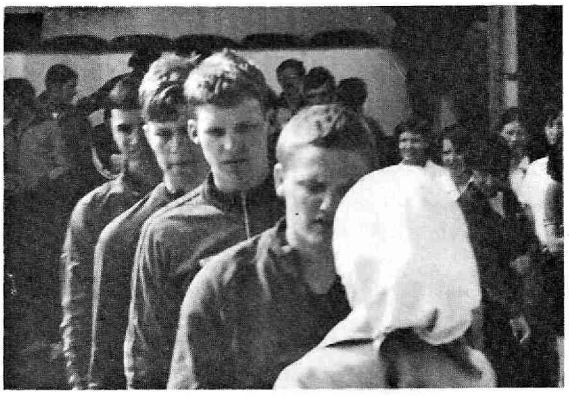
A/Pte Clark being presented with his prize by Mrs Dennison, wife of the Commander, RAOC Training Centre at the Training Centre Athletics meeting

soldiers for two years and are twice as large as College.

A great improvement occurred in the performance of all athletes during the season but probably the most remarkable was that of A/Pte Cliffe who ran in the 1500m team race in the Army Championships, where he recorded the excellent time of 4 minutes 15 seconds, leading the rest of the College team home.

The most spectacular results were achieved by the College in the Travers Clark Athletics meeting where we came second. The main star was A/Pte Green who in addition to winning the 100m and 200m came 2nd in the high jump and was in the second placed 4 x 100m relay squad. A/Pte Green won the best junior soldier award and Victor Ludorum prize too. However, all athletes who took part in competitions gave their all and though everyone can not be winners many personal triumphs were recorded and great courage shown by everyone. This was most evident in the final of the Army team championship where the College can be proud of all those who took part.

A/Pte Younger, Army Junior Pentathlon Champion receives his prize from Mrs Dennison



The successful College Tug-of-War team also line up to receive their prizes

CANOEING

Officer in Charge Lt P A Ball RAOC

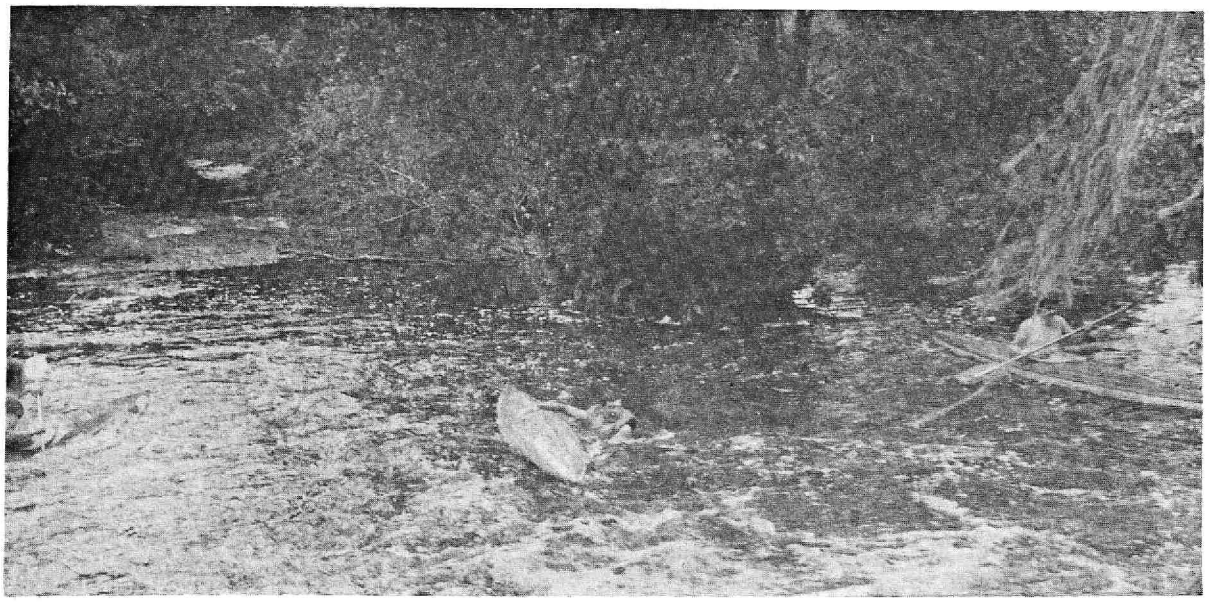
Swimming is not mandatory. A/Pte Moriarty (Balaclava)

This term has seen the canoe club blossom into life again this year with a membership of 27. The weather has not been dull enough to discourage anyone from deliberately turning his canoe over - silly sport - and all have managed to successfully complete their basic tests. In fact the vast majority of the College managed this test while up in Scotland on summer camp. There was one notable incident when canoeing at Killin when, due to the strong wind and heavy rain an Apprentice started to show signs of hypothermia. This was quickly spotted and action was taken in a nearby hotel. Cpls Raynor and Bleasdale give the club excellent instruction and have proved invaluable. Cpl Raynor, with his frequent "accidental" demonstrations of capsize drills - he is six up so far - and Cpl Bleasdale has made a few lifesaving plunges in the very cold water.

Canoeing from Deepcut has been sporadic due to the move to the new boatshed and summer camp. Several good days, however, have been spent on the Thames at Windsor and the river in Guildford.

At the moment we are looking forward to the Army Canoe Championships at the end of July. It is planned that we enter at least seven competitors and with the advantage of a week's training on the River Wye, near Monmouth, we hope to bring back more than wet Apprentices.

A/Pte Smith (Bruneval). Pride . . . . . .



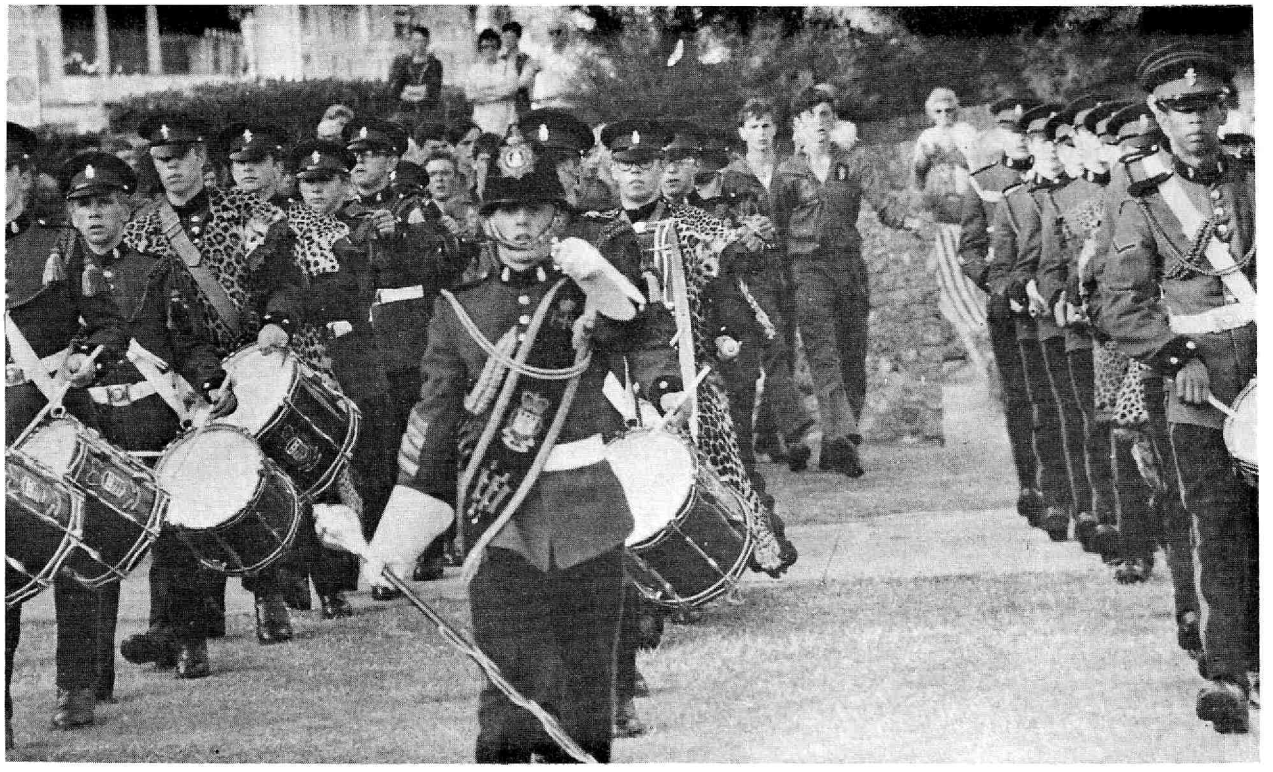
. . . . . comes before a fall!

EX TERRA LUCEM

(From out of the earth came forth light)

By Sgt T E Jennians

Corps of Drums



Many times during the winter term I wondered if I might not be trying to achieve the impossible. To form a Corps of Drums at the College seemed a reasonable task considering that all the instruments and uniforms were readily available, but then, who would wear the uniforms and play the instruments? By the end of October I was beginning to see the light, albeit a pin prick.

I now had not only the uniforms and instruments but also instrumentalists. A/Pte Thomas, an experienced tenor drummer and A/Ptes Geddes and Charlesworth who were accomplished buglers. This was a start at least. Within a few weeks the strength of the Corps of Drums had grown to 24 apprentices. True, only three had played before, and yes, they had only been in the army a few weeks, but it was a start.

During the next few weeks the residents of the Deepcut quarter's area were treated to various versions of the bugle tune 'Bugle Boy', although only the experienced ear could recognise it as such. It was even rumoured that Mrs Beryl Titmus, the B Company clerk, had invested a generous proportion of her savings in ear defenders.

Despite cutting remarks from several quarters, both married and otherwise, these dedicated sadists practised on their instruments of torture until at least everyone recognised 'Bugle Boy' as a tune.

At the end of the winter term, Major Easton was nursing an ulcer brought about by trying to produce the Christmas Pageant. Promises of "Don't worry Sir, it will be okay on the day", did little to ease his sufferings.

As with all fairy stories, it did end happily. As a finale to the pageant, A/Pte Pollack, now serving with 48 Coy RAOC, led out the new Corps of Drums to the strains of 'Pedro the Fisherman' and after a faultless display led them off to, yes, you've guess, 'Bugle Boy'.

The Corps of Drums was on its feet, even though we only knew two tunes. During the spring term the Corps of Drums could be seen on at least two evenings a week, wandering around Dettingen Square in ever decreasing circles issuing forth a cacophony of unrecognisable noise. During this time I developed more than a few grey hairs.

By mid February we had produced a reasonable routine for Beating the Retreat and during B Company battle camp at Warcop, the B Company element made their first public performance in

Appleby before the assembled Mayor and civic dignitaries.

Throughout the spring term and the early part of summer term endless hours of practice paid off and by mid May we were making regular public appearances, including leading the Camberley carnival and opening the White Lodge Centre Open Day in Chertsey where A/Pte Green, who was later to win the Victor Ludorum Trophy at the Travers Clark Athletics meeting, was given a few tips by Alan Pascoe, the Olympic sprinter.

In June the College moved to Cultybraggen in Scotland for summer camp and there we took revenge on the man who invented bagpipes. The strains of 'The Warrior' and 'Shilling a day' echoed across the breathtaking Perthshire hillsides.

Whilst staying in Cultybraggen we took part in the village Silver Jubilee celebrations. We were also invited to the mining village of Cowie and after performing there were treated to a splendid afternoon's entertainment in the Miners' Club.

It was here that we nearly lost A/Pte Craig, who was adopted by Jean, one of the local ladies, who promised me, "Ah'll sort ye oot ye big *!0¢* if you shoot at ma wee laddie agin". Needless to say I didn't shout at Craig again (he says with tongue in cheek.)

After summer camp the remainder of the College returned to Deepcut while the Corps of Drums headed south for Dumfries to take part in the Good Neighbours Week celebrations. Whilst in Dumfries we stayed at two hotels, the Mayfair and the Waverley, and there enjoyed true Scottish hospitality. During our stay at Dumfries we became well known among the local population and many firm friendships were made. The RSM even returned to the area in summer recess for a holiday with his family. He says the local 'water' is good for his health. On the last evening of our stay in Dumfries, we took part in the ceremony of Beating the Retreat, along with the band of the King's Own Scottish Borderers, in front of an audience of 35,000 people.

On our return to Deepcut our time was spent rehearsing for the Passing-Out parade. We also had a trip to Eastbourne to lead in the A and B Company teams after completing a 40 mile sponsored walk. On arrival in Eastbourne the teams were met by the beautiful Nolan Sisters, who much to the dismay of A/Lcpl Cartwright, fell in behind the Corps of Drums to march with the teams to the finishing line.

We now had a new Drum Major, A/Sgt Gadd, and were hard at work perfecting what was to be a farewell performance for a lot of our members. Just one week before the Passing-Out parade the news that we were to learn a completely new

Corps of Drums leading in the marchers, Eastbourne 1977

routine was met by looks of disbelief and cries of "It won't work, it just won't work".

However it did. On a really fine sunny day and as a finale to a splendid parade, the vast drill shed door was flung open and the Corps of Drums of the RAOC Apprentices College began a farewell performance. In honour of HM The Queen's Silver Jubilee they performed a Union Jack routine which involves very intricate drill movements and meticulous dressing. The performance was enhanced by some really faultless playing on the new B flat cavalry trumpet which we had acquired only a week previously.

And now, back to square one. The start of the winter term again and thoughts of "Have I bitten off more than I can chew."

What of the future? If I stop to think too much about it I know that I shall end up by saying farewell to the Corps of Drums and taking up far easier pursuits such as free fall parachuting, abseiling or kick starting jumbo jets.

CROSS COUNTRY RUNNING

Officer in Charge Lt R Ellis

The first race of the term was the traditional College run with boys and permanent staff competing. Cliffe of Anguilla was first with Balch of Alamein second and Yoxall of Arakan third. Arakan Platoon won the platoon prize. On the permanent staff results, the over thirties team convincingly beat the under thirties team. Lt Bean won the under thirties prize with Lt Col N S Bruce winning the over forties result.

The College run was followed by the RAOC Cross Country Championships and a league match at Arborfield being held on the same date. The team for the RAOC Championships was therefore made a combined boys and permanent staff one. The team did very well in coming fourth with Para Ord Sqn 'A' winning. At Arborfield, however, the weakened College team came fifth out of six teams.

On 27 January the South East District league race was being held at Pirbright. The College team came third with Story coming 12th and Cliffe 19th. This was to be the turning race of the season and from here on in the team never came below third in league races. On 2 February the zone championships for the Army finals were held at Deepcut. The College ran a very good team race with the first six runners coming in the first 27 places. The team came third and so qualified for the Army finals at Tweesledown later on in the month. On 10 February it was the College's turn to be host in the South East District Cross Country league. The team did well coming third behind the ACC Apprentices College and the Junior Para Coy.

The Army Championships followed on 22 February. The team came last but ran well against very stiff opposition. On 27 February the College team took part in a Surrey Association of Boys' Clubs race at Reigate. On the results of this race Cliffe and Yoxall were selected to represent Surrey in the County Championships to be held on 12 March. On 12 March, however, Cliffe was injured and so Story of Burma replaced him. The Surrey under-19 team won the race and Story and Yoxall received their County colours.

On 17 March the race took place at Mytchett and once again the College came third. This meant that on 24 March 1977 the final race of the season was being held at the ACC Apprentices College. The ACC had already won the Championship with Junior Para second. The College and the REME Apprentices College, Arborfield were tied in 3rd place and so everything rested on this last match. The College ran a very good race and came second behind the ACC College, Younger came 4th, Johnson 10th, Story 13th, Balch 15th and Yoxall 18th.

On Saturday 2 April, Story and Yoxall represented Surrey in the National Association of Boys' Clubs Championships and did very well, helping Surrey to come 3rd.

College colours were awarded to Balch, Skillen, Story, Younger, Yoxall and Hughes of Balaclava. The Cup for the College's best cross country runner was awarded to A/Pte Cliffe of Anguila Platoon. A very good term's running by all.

CRICKET

Officer in Charge Wg Comd P W Hope RAF (Retd)

Assistant Major G J Forrest RAEC (Retd)

Once again the Club had the opportunity of using the winter facilities of the Sunningdale Indoor Cricket school and, as a result, many skills were refined and secret ambitions for summer glory were nurtured. Three 'stars' were soon revealed, Apprentices Sanders, Ritchie and Barnett and they remained amongst the stalwarts of the College team when the season started on 19 May with a breezy win against the RAMC.

A strong side from Collingwood School, which included junior Surrey county players taught us a few lessons which we applied successfully in a game against Queen Victoria School, Dunblane, whilst we were in camp in Scotland. Unfortunately the lack of practice facilities at Cultybraggen was quickly revealed on our return to Deepcut when we were beaten convincingly by the AAC Chepstow in the quarter final of the Army Junior Cup. It was some consolation later in the season to know that Chepstow won the Cup convincingly.

Undeterred by our quick demise in the Cup the season continued quite successfully, despite a number of cancelled fixtures, and we had some good games including victories over the "Welbeckians" and Freezer Fare. Again we were not allowed to grow too big for our cricket boots because we were severely defeated by some excellent cricketers from the ACC. A special memory of that game is the persistent effort of medium-pace bowler Ritchie who took three wickets in a long spell of 12 inexpensive overs.

Our cricketing education continued the following week when the AAC Arborfield thrashed us by 201 runs to 71. Not all our recollections of that game, however, are depressing because it was then that our captain, Sanders', at last 'came good'. His forward defensive stroke kept out the steady fast Arborfield attack and the runs began to accumulate. He finished with the highly satisfactory score of 33 which should set him on the way to a successful career in REME cricket.

The season finished with plenty of entertainment in the traditional end of term fixtures, the Company and the Permanent Staff games. A Company was expected to win the former match quite easily but was shaking visibly until Lidster and Stanton pulled the side through with useful scores of 22 and 17 respectively. The Permanent Staff team defeated the College well enough in the end but not before the Permanent Staff 'skipper' had shown some alarm at the frailties of many of his team and the determined batting of Apprentices Sanders, Cope, McCarter and Lidster.

In conclusion your reporter would like to congratulate Apprentices Sanders, Ritchie, Barnett, Cope, Lidster and Heppinstall on their award of colours and the many other apprentices who represented the College during the season. He hopes that they will continue to develop their skills and quickly settle into Army cricket wherever they find it.

GOLF

Officer in Charge Capt J Payne REME

Assistants Capt J Griffiths RAOC

Lt Col S Schofield Royal Signals (Retd)

The swinging of clubs continued with enthusiasm and gusto during the summer term. A keen, active squad disappeared (so thought by other sportsmen) to the joys of Aldershot Golf Club, where the coaching of 'Stan the Man' was put to the test.

Summer camp was held in the home of golf, Scotland, and the opportunities were not missed by 'Messrs Starsky and Hutch'. The local course at Comrie was fully utilised by the golfing fraternity, even those who had not swung a club, now realise it is not so easy as it appears. A successful College tournament was held and even though the Chairman had overseen the seeding and pairing - he failed to win. Well done to Lt Bob Ellis and Apprentice Pte Buchanan.

The results of playing in Scotland immediately bore fruit in the HQ RAOC Training Centre summer meeting, where A/Pte Storey apart from getting his handicap chopped by three shots, won the competition. He now has a trolley to carry his clubs!! A/Pte Buchanan and A/Pte Cresswell were determined to beat Storey in the South East District Junior Army Championship. A feeling of optimism was in the air and great results were expected. However, nobody anticipated how successful the College was to be, the results as follows explain the euphoria of the PS and College golfers:

SE District Junior Army Champion
A/Pte Storey, RAOC App College, Gross 85

SE District Junior Army Handicap Winner
A/Pte Cresswell, RAOC App College, Gross 99
Nett 71

Runner up
A/Pte Buchanan, RAOC App College, Gross 88
Nett 72

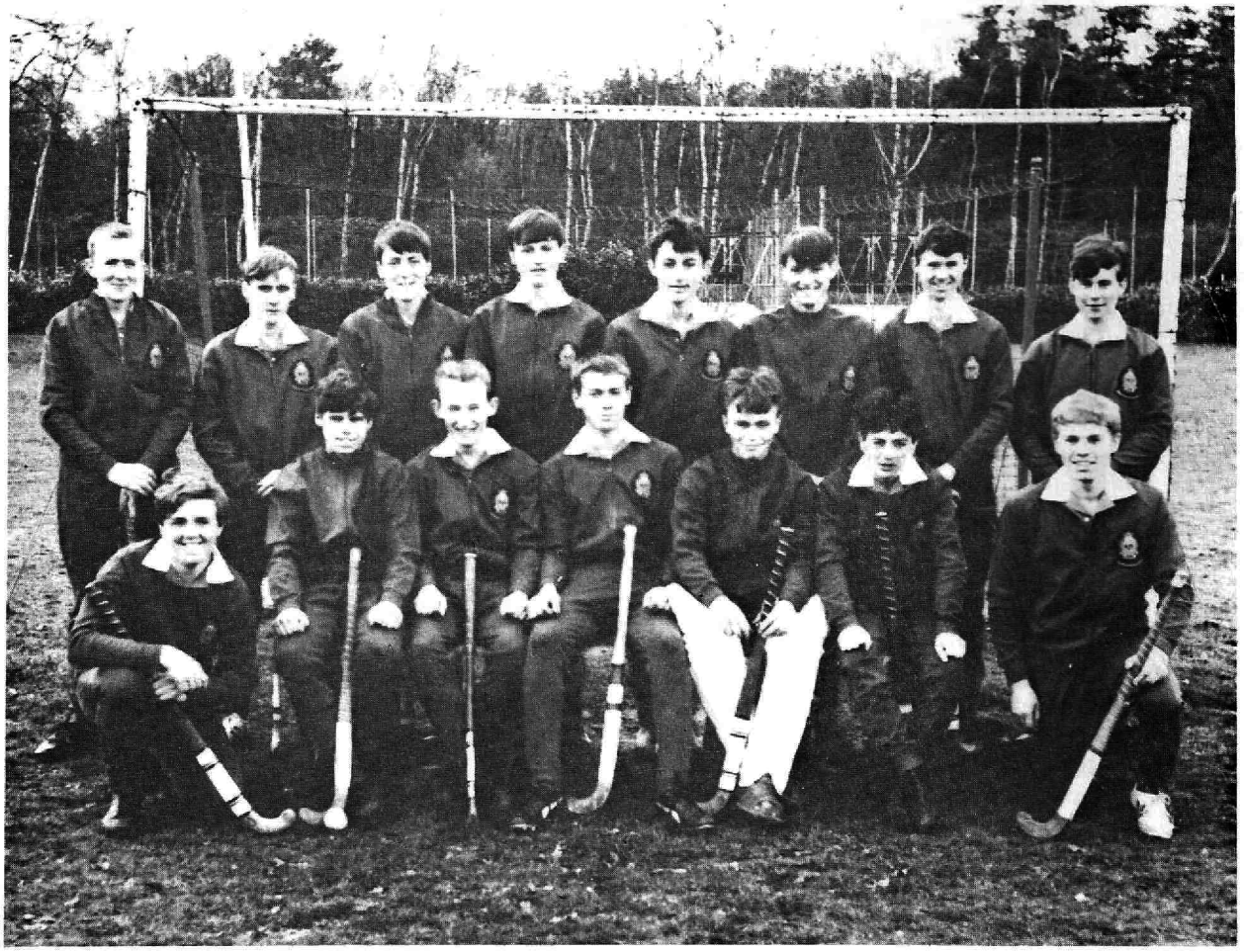
Third
A/Pte Storey, RAOC App College, Gross 85
Nett 72

The trophy now commands a place of honour amongst other College trophies. Next term should bring other Apprentices to the joy of playing and enjoying perhaps the most frustrating game devised - golf.

HOCKEY

Officer in Charge Capt C Manvell RAEC

After a number of terms without hockey, it was re-activated towards the end of the 1975/76 season. During the 1976/77 season, the College team played in the South East District Junior Hockey league, without distinction. However, the College entered the Junior Army Hockey Cup competition and reached the final. They lost, only after a hard and closely contested match, by a score of 2 - 1, to ACC Harrogate who, of course, are much older and experienced. This was therefore a very notable result for our team.



In the main, hockey in the College, could be said to be an entirely new sport to most newly joined Apprentices. It therefore requires considerable coaching and time to develop even a reasonable team during the short stay of the Apprentices at the College.

Occasionally, a boy joins the College having had some experience. This was so this season. Pte Stanton of Arakan Platoon is a natural ball-player, strong and competitive. Due very much to his influence on the rest of the team, and his goal-scoring ability, the College team did achieve some good results. Stanton scored over 20 goals during the season. His talent and experience were recognised towards the end of last season. He was selected to play for the Army Under-21 XI in the Inter-Service Competition.

Not that we were a 'one-man band'. Pte Davies is a fine goal-keeper and made some very good saves at vital moments. Lcpl Godwin and Pte Benton foremost a good full-back combination and Cpl Geoghegan, Lcpl Lidster, Pte Irons and Sgt Baskerville developed into good players.

The full squad for the 1976/77 season was:

Baskerville, Benton, Buchanan, Charnick, Edwards, Geoghegan, Harwood, Irons, Lidster, McNairn, Mather, Stanton, Woodings (A Coy) Davies, Godwin (B Coy).

MODEL MAKING/ ART CLUB

Officer in Charge Mr P Heap

Once more the club owes a great debt to Mrs Suter for her efforts in raising the standards of the art work. Under her guidance many new techniques were tried out by the artists, many of whom found that they were able to create art forms in new media.

Two projects were undertaken during the year. In the autumn term the club produced the decorations for the Christmas celebrations, while in the spring term the repair and renovation of a fire screen was undertaken. The summer term was mainly taken up in moving into the new Education Wing and, weather permitting, with outdoor sketching.

OFFSHORE SAILING CLUB

Officer in Charge Mr J F Watson

Assistant Mr M F Johnson

In the previous edition of this magazine we were pleased to report on the launching and the maiden trip of the College yacht 'Thunderbolt'.

This summer she has been tested, in strong winds and rough waters in the Solent and adjacent waters and 26 Apprentices have taken part in day and weekend sails aboard her. Most of the Apprentices who have been aboard have declared their intention to undertake courses at JSSC and continue, qualified, as offshore sailors, but a few I am afraid have stated, quite firmly, that they have no intention of voluntarily repeating the experience!

We are also very proud to announce that we took part in the 'Royal Review of the Fleet' at Spithead. I don't suppose that any of you watching the review on your TV screens spotted us, but nevertheless, we were there. Not only were we there but we also, along with hundreds of other boats, sounded our fog horn as Brittania sailed majestically past us.

Undoubtedly the highlight of offshore sailing this summer was 'Exercise Channel Buoy'. We decided that Thunderbolt should go foreign. We put forward a scheme for a 14 day sailing exercise and the CO gave his approval.

On Sunday 16th September, with Apprentices Westwood, Billinger and Gisborne we left Deepcut to join the yacht on her moorings at Gosport. We spent three days in Solent waters visiting Cowes, Beaulieu and Lymington, teaching the rudiments of seamanship and sailing and then on Wednesday 21st, with a favourable forecast, we left Lymington at 1715 hrs and headed across the Channel bound for Cherbourg. Two hours later with the famous Needles lighthouse fading astern in the evening sky and with a NE wind giving an uncomfortable quartering sea our three excited Appren-

tices began to feel the first effects of mal de mer. It proved to be a long uncomfortable crossing. No moon, no stars and eventually, no crew! But at dawn the Cherbourg peninsula was just visible in the coastal mist. The sun soon rose and our spirits with it and on informing the by now miserable crew that Cherbourg was in sight mal de mer was forgotten, the French courtesy flag was hoisted and at 1330 hrs Thursday, 22nd September Thunderbolt entered Cherbourg harbour.

We left England breadless (strike) and entered France not only breadless but francless, yet within minutes of clearing customs, two of our young apprentices were heading eagerly but nervously into the foreign town to acquire francs, bread and milk. Nervously because of the language difficulty and eagerly because they had not eaten for almost 20 hours (hunger can always overcome language).

We had no intention of staying in Cherbourg for more than 24 hours but weather conditions made it impossible for us to leave until Sunday, 25th. At 0730 hrs we slipped moorings and headed west en route for Guernsey in the Channel Isles. By 0815 hrs the wind had gone into the SW and was deteriorating and by 0930 hrs with visibility down to 200 yards and a wind directly on our bow we decided to return to Cherbourg.

The next day at 0630 hrs we had a most spectactular dawn sky with a favourable forecast - and wind - and left our moorings at 0715 hrs and headed for Alderney. It was a glorious morning and at 1000 hrs we were abeam Cap de la Hague lighthouse. The sea became choppy, then rough, and then very rough. We had expected this because we were crossing the top of the notorious Alderney Race. For two hours Thunderbolt pounded her way through the race with the small island gradually becoming clearer and clearer until we could see its lighthouse and then its forts and finally the long grey wall of the harbour. At 1215 hrs we tied up to a buoy in Braye harbour and were back in British waters.

Once again we had no intention of staying long in Alderney but the weather decreed otherwise and for the next three days we rocked and slewed and pitched and rolled tied to the same buoy in Braye harbour listening, rather dejectedly, to the same old forecasts, wind SW 6 becoming 7 and possibly even gale force 8. Fortunately, although very small, Alderney is an interesting island full of fortifications that have been built up since the 18th century by the English, French and in the second World War by the Germans and we visited explored and admired every fortification on the island. We watched in amazement as the seas pounded the 30 foot high harbour wall and broke clean over the top to fill the harbour with spray and spume and we listened, safe in our rocking little yacht, to the thunder of the water as it tore southwards down the dangerous "Swinge".

On Thursday 29th, the 0633 forecast promised a slight improvement in the weather and the 1355 forecast indicated that there was to be a brief lull which would enable us at least to return to Cherbourg and at 1710 we reefed down the mainsail, hoisted our small working jib and headed on the east flowing tide for Cherbourg. We entered the top of the Alderney Race just at sunset - a most breathtaking sight - and I don't think any of us will forget the small island, its lighthouse, its formidable forts, sitting serenely in front of the glorious back cloth of the sunset. It proved to be a most exciting sail. The seas at the top of the race were big and rough but once we cleared Cap de la Hague the surface miraculously smoothed out and Thunderbolt flew towards Cherbourg. We made the 15 miles trip in three and a half hours and entered the Grande Rade at 2055 hours and tied up to a pontoon in the yacht marina, excited by our sail and glad to be able to look forward to a quiet peaceful night. We woke the next morning to the old familiar forecast - force 7 becoming 8. We also woke to the realisation that we only had between us enough francs to buy one loaf of bread! By lunch time we had francs and the cleanest yacht in the marina - and the cleanest crew too! The forecasts on Friday and the first half of Saturday led us to believe that we were destined to spend the winter on French soil but no, on Saturday evening the possibility of a short period of less rough weather seemed feasible and the 0633 hrs forecast on Sunday confirmed this. At 0900 hrs on Sunday, 2nd October, we left our moorings and headed north for the Nab Tower. Visibility was good, slight rain showers but blue skies to the north. The sea, as we had expected, was rough but the further north towards England the quieter it became. At 1715 hrs we spotted land - St Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight. It turned out to be a long, cold, uncomfortable night and it was not until 0530 hrs that we entered the approach channel to Portsmouth. It wasn't over! The best was yet to come! At 0600 hrs we witnessed the most beautiful, the most spectacular sunrise that has ever been witnessed on this earth. The colours and the colour formations surpass description, you had to see it to believe it!

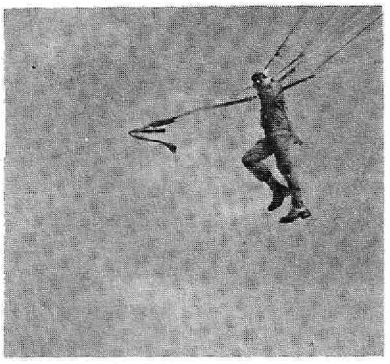
At 0730 hrs we tied up at home in Hornet sailing club, tired, dirty, hungry, happy. The yacht was good, the crew were good. We had done a lot and learnt a lot. We were glad to be back.

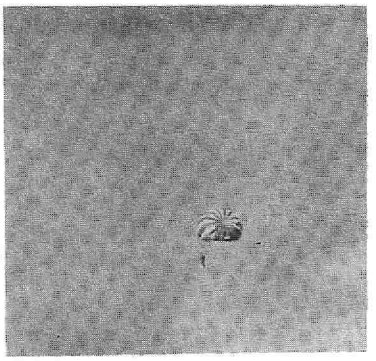
In conclusion our thanks to all who helped make the trip possible.

PARASCENDING

Officer in Charge Capt B F Kane RAEC

Assistant Cpl L A Anderson RAOC



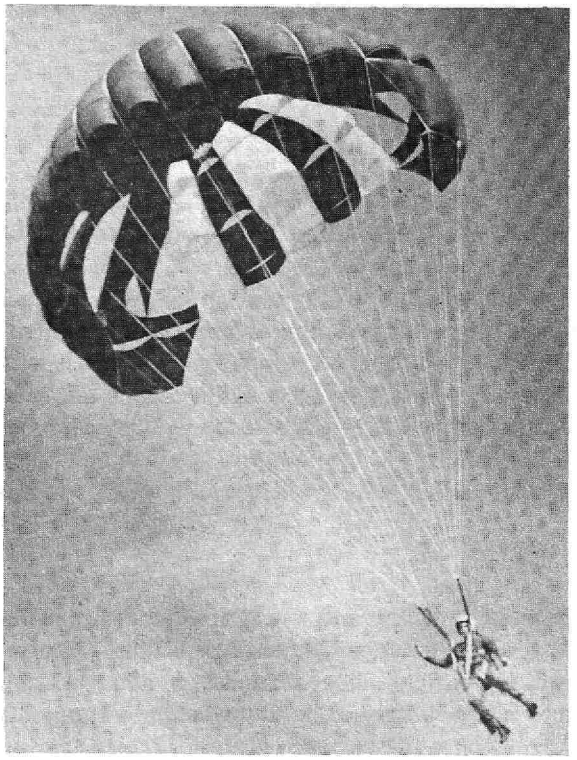


Up and away at the National Parascending Championships. A/Pte Scott of Ardennes Platoon

This year we were fortunate to obtain the use of Andover airfield at weekends for parascending. To have a suitable venue a mere 40 miles distant has enabled the club to train members up to a standard far higher than ever before. Despite frequent bad weather conditions Anguilla Platoon, who originally provided the nucleus of the club, progressed to the ultimate in parascending, targeting. Ardennes Platoon, who started much later than Anguilla, managed to get all but one of their platoon on long line working. reaching heights in excess of 1000 feet.

The annual camp at Cultybraggen was a major disappointment as regards parascending. At camp our aim is to give each apprentice the opportunity to experience being launched, flown and after self release, making a parachute descent and landing.

A/Sgt Allen at the National Championships



Airborne

Recovering the 'chute

Cultybraggen was very short of areas suitable for the sport, what there were being fair weather fields only. In the event only one platoon had the chance to parascend before wet weather put the fields out of action.

The College entered a team in the National Parascending Championships which were held at Oakington on 26, 27, and 28th August. The team of Capt Kane, A/Sgt Allen and A/Lcpl Gancarcik

All finished

Target missed by one metre!

of Anguilla Platoon and A/Pte Scott of Ardennes Platoon enjoyed some modest success. The team came third of the regular army teams competing for the Army Cup and fifth of all the round-canopy teams. Capt Kane was the most consistent, his score of 3 metres, 7 metres and 9 metres distant from the 10 cm target in his three to count attempts took him to fourth place overall in the individual round-canopy section. A/Sgt Allen had one magnificent attempt in which he landed just 1 metre from the target.

PHOTOGRAPHY CLUB

Officer in Charge Capt C Manvell RAEC

Assistants Sgt Arnold Int Corps

Sgt Green RAOC

For the past year, due to the move of the Education Wing to its new location, the activities of the Club have been limited. In fact we have spent more time as carpenters, lino-layers and builders.

Whereas the majority of the photographs in the last edition of Thunderbolt were contributed by club members, this year we have had a limited facility to produce work.

We did, however, manage to operate an 'instant-portrait' stand for the College Open Day, but with partial success, due once again to our new and very unfinished accommodation.

RIDING

Officer in Charge Mr P Heap

As a result of requests by some apprentices, a small riding club was set up in January. The club is entirely self-financing and runs in the apprentice's spare time.

Little Paddocks riding school were contacted and agreed to give tuition at a reduced rate. So far the apprentices have received basic instruction in walking, trotting and some in cantering. They have also learnt to groom and saddle a horse. Two apprentices spent a Sunday morning learning more about looking after the animals.

Members of the club helped to run a very successful pony rides activity at the College open day.

SHOOTING

Officer in Charge Mr P Heap

RSM Dorning left the College in the autumn. He had run the shooting team for several years and on his departure his place was taken by Mr Heap, assisted at various times by Lt Ward, CSM Brace, Sgt Arnold, Cpl Thomas and Cpl Bull.

About 50 apprentices started to compete for a place in the final team. Slowly numbers were reduced over the year until at Easter a final team of 11 was selected to represent the College in the RAOC Skill-at-Arms meeting and the Junior Army Skill-at-Arms meeting.

Training consisted of advanced weapon training, theory, fitness training and shooting on air weapons, miniature and a variety of full bore ranges. Unfortunately less use was made of full bore ranges than was desirable due to a severe shortage of ranges in the area, which led to a concentration on the rifle at the expense of the sub machine gun.

The team's achievements are as follows. At the RAOC meeting the 'A' team won the Young Soldiers' Inter Unit Rifle Match, with the 'B' team runners up. A/Pte Davies won the Individual Apprentices Rifle Match, closely followed by A/Pte Young. The REME Trophy for the best non-RAOC Junior Soldier went to A/Lcpl Beilby, who also won a medal for finishing in the top 40 overall in the rifle.

The team was not so successful at the Junior Army meeting, though A/Lcpl Beilby and A/Pte Clarke won medals and bars for finishing in the first 22 of the Iraq Cup.

RUGBY

Officer in Charge Lt P C Harris RAOC

Assistants WOII (CSM) Brierley RAOC
Cpl Thomas RAOC

Winter Term 1976

The term started with a completely new and untrained team which required a great deal of coaching in the basic skills of passing, handling and tackling.

v ACC Away - our first match was a lesson in tactics played against the ACC. Their scrummaging line out and three quarter play was far superior to anything our team could produce, but at times we were close to scoring.

v RAMC Home - this match was closely fought with the College just failing to make it our first win of the season. However, the whole team played very well with all previous lessons learnt and put into practice.

v RAPC Home - this was our first win. It was not a very good performance from either side but luck was with the College and scraped home to a win.

v Junior Para Away - again a very disappointing performance where no one could produce the quality of play that was apparent in the previous game. We eventually lost 30-3.

v Permanent Staff Home - an excellent game where the College produced its best performance of the season. Scrummaging and line out play was excellent but due to good defence and tackling the Permanent Staff held out. The determination and agression shown by the College increased their confidence throughout the match and stood them in good stead for the remainder of the season. The final score was 20-16 in favour of the Permanent Staff.

v RAPC Away - the result of this match was disappointing as the College could have easily won by 50 points. However luck was not on our side and we scraped a win by 8 points to 4.

v ACC Away - the less said about this game the better. We were outclassed and outplayed in every aspect of play.

v Junior Guards Home - this match was one of the best games played at home. Some minor errors gave the Guards some points. A/Pte Rubie and A/Lcpl Saunders played exceptionally well. The College won 36-10.

v Junior Para - a very hard fought match with the Junior Para scoring a lucky try in the last minute to win by 20 points to 16.

v Junior Guards Away - a similar match to the previous encounter, with the College playing reasonably well and eventually winning easily by 26 points to nil.

Bruce Sevens - in this competition the College produced two teams. The 'A' team played for the cup and the 'B' team played for the plate. Both teams played exceptionally well, the 'A' team just failing to get into the final of the cup. The 'B' team won its way into the final but were clearly outplayed by the opposition.

Overall the season was reasonably successful being placed a close 3rd in the South East District league, two points short of last season's total which won the league. Four players, A/Lcpl Bos, Williams, A/Pte Cheshire and Davies were recommended for an Army Junior trial. A/Lcpl Bos was successful and represented the Army on several occasions. Well done!

SKIING

Officer in Charge Lt J P Hopkinson

Assistant Lt F T Freeman

During the 1976/77 season the College was involved in three separate skiing exercises. On the first, Allgau Snow, we were fortunate enough to be able to travel to Sonthofen in Bavaria and be accommodated in the RAOC ski hut. This was the ideal setting in which to introduce the apprentices to the pleasures of downhill skiing.

Our instructors, Sgt Mollison HQTC and Cpl Dymond Apprentices College, had the unenviable task of converting, in just short of two weeks, eight complete novices into what we hoped would be reasonably competent skiers. In this they did remarkably well, especially when one considers the handicaps under which they were working. A typical example was A/Sgt McDonough, who decided to spend most of his time experimenting with new ways of ascending the slopes. His most notable technique being lying on his back with the heels of his skis hooked over the 'T' bar. Unfortunately it was a method he was unable to perfect, as his experiments were interrupted by injury.

The weather was fairly kind, for the sun appeared on most days and the snow was plentiful. The lads were therefore able to capitalise on their opportunity and get the maximum possible time out on the slopes. This made for a very enjoyable though physically arduous exercise.

Our second exercise, Knees Bend, was held in the Cairngorms, Scotland. Four courses, each of two weeks duration, were laid on by the RAOC Ski Association.

The RAOC ski hut, with accommodation for 15 persons, was located in a disused railway station at Nethybridge. Further accommodation was available at Speyside Caravan Park, Aviemore, consisting of three caravans capable of housing a further 15 bodies. Five apprentices took part in each of two of the four courses run and were accommodated in the caravans.

The instructors were the same two who had done us so proud on Allgau Snow. Their aim was to provide basic instruction for beginners in downhill slalom skiing and to improve the techniques of those with previous experience. It was also hoped that the apprentices would achieve a sufficiently high standard such that two teams, each of four members, could be entered in the Army Junior Championships.

Each course was divided into beginners and advanced classes. The advanced class covered all those with previous skiing experience. Weather permitting, instruction took place during five days of the week, Monday to Friday. Saturday and Sunday were set aside for free skiing, activities within the Aviemore Centre such as ice skating, visits to areas of public interest and personal admin.

Exercise Snow Plough, the third of the exercises in which the apprentices took part, was the title given to the RAOC involvement in the Army Skiing Championships. These took place during the period 13 to 20 March.

We were in tented accommodation at Glen More. The camp was set up and very well administered by 19 OFP. The highlight of our period there was on the night the whole camp was flattened by gale force winds. The following search for tentage and equipment which had been scattered across an area of approximately half a square mile, made for an interesting time. One that naturally no one would have missed for the world.

The apprentices were formed in two teams, A and B, four members per team, and entered the Army Junior Championship.

Team A	Team B
A/Sgt McLean	A/Cpl Mason
A/Cpl Brown	A/Lcpl McRae
A/Lcpl Montrose	A/Pte Arfield
A/Pte Irons	A/Pte Pollock

Team A gained seventh position in the Junior Army and Novices competition out of a total of 18 teams. A/Cpl Brown was 12th out of a total of 122 competitors and won the RAOC Individual Junior trophy. A very commendable effort and fitting climax to a thoroughly enjoyable and successful season.

A/Sgt McLean "If I could just stay on my feet!"

A/Pte Irons "Anyone else for ballet?"

COLLEGE TEAM. JUNIOR ARMY AND NOVICES CHAMPIONSHIPS

L to R. A/Lcpl McRae, A/Pte Pollock, A/Lcpl Montrose, A/Sgt McLean, Lt Hopkinson, A/Pte Irons, A/Cpl Brown

SOCCER

Officer in Charge Lt J Payne REME

Assistants Capt W W Hayes RAOC

Mr W E Smith

Wg Comd P W Hope

The organisation of the College soccer XIs remained the same as previous seasons, why change a successful system. Three teams were entered in the South East District Junior Army League, the A team (1st XI) became the league champions defeating AAC Arborfield, our favourite enemies, much to their annoyance. The results of the games appeared very much as cricket scores with McBurney, Clarke and Cope featuring as the goal scorers.

The second and third XIs were not so successful in their respective leagues, but the players gained valuable experience in preparation for their promotion to the first XI squad. This experience proved invaluable, after Christmas recess, for the start of the various Cup competitions. The South East District Army Youth Cup proved to be our lucky competition, we did not survive past the second round in the other competitions. We met the Infantry Junior Leaders Battalion in the semi-final. Knowing of their abilities the team did not think they could win and intended to play and enjoy their football. Lady luck smiled on the College and after a hard fought, well played match, with football that would not have disgraced the turf of Wembley exhibited by both sides, we were through to the final.

After such a semi-final, the final against the Apprentice Cooks was an anti-climax. The College, although playing the better soccer, failed to win. The weather was abysmal and did not help, the larger cooks found less difficulty in overcoming the conditions and played to their strength.

A successful season, 'A' League Champions and runners up in the Cup, shows the enthusiasm and skill are still present in the College.

SQUASH

Officer in Charge Capt B F Kane RAEC

Assistants Lt F T Freeman REME

Sgt N P Botfield RAOC

Maj R Challinor RAEC (Retd)

Throughout the past year Squash has, once again, proved to be among the most thriving sports in the College. The College squash ladder had more than 50 names on it yet this does not encompass all of our regular players.

In the winter term of 1976 we were fortunate that the College team could depend upon a nucleus of 4th termers, supplemented by the newcomers of the September intake. Friendly matches were played regularly against local units. The College was unbeaten against junior teams, regularly defeating the ACC Apprentices College and the AA College Arborfield, who both put out teams that were older and more experienced than ours. Squash colours were awarded to A/Cpl Cowley, A/Lcpl Tresslar, A/Ptes Scothern, Wright and Hughes.

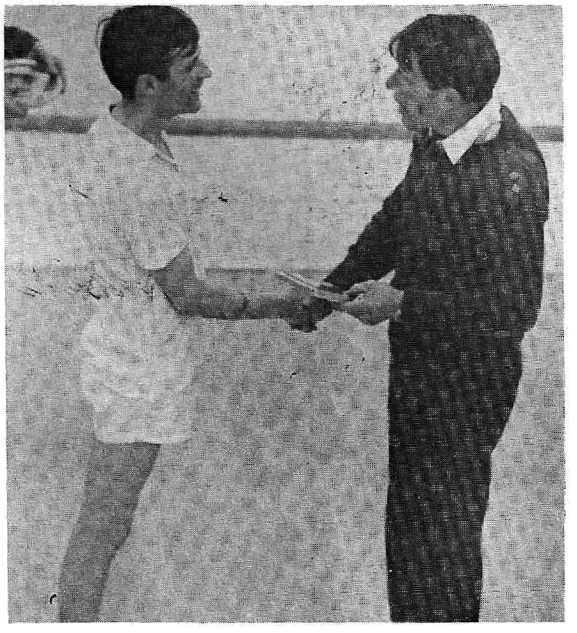
The RAOC Championships were held in October. Capt A Byles won the plate competition and reached the finals of the Novices Championship. In the Corps under-19 championships the College produced both the winner, A/Cpl Cowley, and the runner-up, A/Pte Scothern. Both players had the honour to play for the Corps team before they left the College.

At the start of the spring term the College team had to be restructured because of postings; fortunately the boys who had joined the previous September had made good progress and competition to make the team was intense. In March the College played in the Army Junior Squash Championship. The team consisted of A/Cpl Wright (1), A/Ptes Bennett (2), Hughes (2), Coley (4) and Cope (5), all as it happens from B Com-

pany. Every player excelled himself; the College reached the semi-final to meet defeat at the hands of the Army Apprentices College, Chepstow, the eventual winners. A/Ptes Bennett, Coley and Cope all gained their College colours as a result of their efforts.

Towards the end of March the College Open Championships and Apprentices Championships took place. Both competitions were well supported and a total of 48 competitors entered the events. In the Apprentices competition it was the 3rd and 4th seeds who fought their way through to the final, A/Pte Hughes, Balaclava Platoon, beat A/Pte Coley, Burma Platoon, in a well fought match. The final of the Open Championship the No 1 seed, Sgt Botfield, defeated the No 2 seed, Lt Kane, in a closely contested match. The play off for 3rd place was won by Lt Freeman from A/Pte Bennett who had beaten a number of adults to reach the semi-final. The standard of play, fitness and determination in both competitions was very high and a credit to all concerned.

A/Pte Hughes receiving the College Apprentices Squash Trophy from the CO



Sgt Botfield receiving the College Open Squash Trophy from the CO

TENNIS

Officer in Charge Major P A Easton RAEC

Assistant W E Smith Esq

The 1977 season presented some real headaches for the coaching staff. It was not possible to start really serious training until late June and this proved to be a serious handicap in so far as competitive tennis was concerned. Once again the club had no lack of applications for membership from the new apprentices many of whom joined to learn all about the game and eventually thoroughly enjoy playing it.

In the Junior Army Championship A/Pte Storey reached the semi-final stage of the competition before being defeated after a hard tussle by the eventual winner of the trophy. Bearing in mind that limited time for training and coaching, to do so well against a competitor already well-established from last season, was no mean achievement.

The junior section of the RAOC Championships was dominated by Apprentices Storey and Vaissiere who contested the final. After a splendid battle on the Aldershot courts Storey ran out the eventual winner. The doubles award was carried off by Apprentices Storey and Snowden so all in all the club could well be proud of its competition record.

It is hoped that a much earlier start can be made next season making full use of the College and Depot courts. Let us hope that the College could possibly produce another Army champion. This particularly short season, due entirely to College camp commitments, certainly showed what could be achieved with methodical coaching and practice sessions. Apprentices Storey and Snowden certainly proved that when they were selected for Corps matches and Apprentice Vaissiere among all the rest showed what keenness and enthusiasm could achieve.

COLLEGE PRIZEWINNERS 1976 – 1977

This year has seen a fundamental change in the College's prize-giving philosophy. Hitherto there has been a prize-giving ceremony at the end of every term when very much the same awards were made each time. Now there is to be only one main prize-giving - at the end of winter term in December. At this ceremony prizes will be given based on three or even four terms' work instead of the usual one. The 'take-away' books and trophies will be much improved and there will be more of them. In all the Christmas prize-giving is to be quite an occasion.

A few awards will continue to be made at the end of the other two terms, notably the MacDonald, McEwan and West Shields and the Maule Cup. Winners of these will be automatic nominees for the Pedler Cup which the CO has now selected as the premier trophy in the College, and which is, of course, to be awarded at the Christmas prize-giving. Lists of prize-winners for the year 1976/1977 follow.

COLLEGE LEAVERS

		Winter 76	Spring 77	Summer 77
Recruit Awards	PT Skill-at-Arms	A/Pte M J Jackson A/Pte A H Sanders		
Trade Training Awards	Best Storeman Best Tech Clerk Best Staff Clerk		A/Pte Pollock A/Cpl Swan A/Pte Irons	
Education Awards	A4 A3 A2 A1	A/Pte Smith (317) A/Cpl McLean A/Pte Evans A/Pte Archibald		
	B3 B2 B1	A/Lcpl Bos A/Pte Sanders A/Pte Jones (882)		
	English Maths World Affairs Office Org Science Education Cup	A/Pte Miller A/Pte Cape A/Pte Friend A/Pte Irons A/Pte Beilby A/Sgt M P Daly		
MacDonald Shield	For Perseverance		A/Pte Mortimore	A/Pte Compton
McEwan Shield	For Endeavour		A/Cpl McEwan	A/Pte Finden
West Shield	For Citizenship	A/Lcpl Ross		A/Lcpl Scott
Maule Cup	For Military Proficiency	A/Cpl W M Rennie	A/Cpl Sanders	A/Lcpl Beilby
Robinson Shield	Cross Country		A/Pte Cliffe	
St Albans Cup	For Initiative	A/Lcpl Tilley T E		
REME Association Cup	Best REME Apprentice	A/Sgt K R Smith	A/Cpl Bos	
Sergeants/Officers Mess Tankard	Senior Apprentice NCO	A/Sgt A Buckley		
Sergeants' Cup	Best All-rounder	A/Sgt L P Chandler		
Pedler Cup	For Leadership	A/Sgt K R Smith		

VALETE

WINTER TERM 1976

STAFF CLERK RAOC

A/Pte Harvey K
A/Pte Hodgson E
A/Pte Tilley W M
A/Lcpl Macdonald S
A/Sgt Walker P M
A/Pte Keelty C J

TECHNICAL CLERK RAOC

A/Sgt Batty M K
A/Cpl Taylor P A
A/Pte Bloomfield S J
A/Pte Bray P E
A/Pte Broadbent
A/Pte Brockie
A/Pte Munro J S
A/Pte Rafferty M A
A/Pte Carroll J
A/Pte Benjamin P E
A/Pte Grant G W
A/Sgt Buckley A
A/Lcpl Bush C N
A/Pte Wickham G
A/Pte Wilson M J
A/Pte Pye
A/Pte Snell J H
A/Lcpl Frame J
A/Lcpl Rees S J
A/Pte Smith R A
A/Pte Stainthorpe M
A/Pte Lord G T
A/Pte Mellor I
A/Lcpl Tressler D
A/Pte Nairn R
A/Lcpl Smith K
A/Pte Stalker S D
A/Pte Wynne D J
A/Pte Gammon R J
A/Pte Godbold S P
A/Pte Whitehead W M
A/Pte Wilson P J
A/Pte Howes K J
A/Cpl Izzo K A L

POTENTIAL REME TRADESMEN

A/Pte Bernard S J
A/Pte Cummings R P
A/Pte Doherty K
A/Pte Ewers S P
A/Pte Hailstone M K
A/Pte McColl
A/Pte Pollard S J
A/Pte Price W
A/Lcpl Ross P A
A/Pte Rostron D T
A/Sgt Smith K R
A/Pte Cox T D
A/Lcpl McBride
A/Pte Ihle K
A/Pte Marchi P P
A/Lcpl Hextall M C
A/Lcpl Macdonald A D
A/Lcpl Suttie A
A/Pte Kemp K M
A/Pte Pattison B R
A/Pte Smith M A

STOREMEN RAOC

A/Pte Artym P J
A/Pte Baughen F A
A/Pte Burgess T
A/Pte Clapton
A/Pte Davies D A
A/Lcpl Denvir D J J
A/Pte Duncan N
A/Pte Docherty W T
A/Lcpl Fleming D A
A/Pte Lewis W
A/Pte Kincaid C D
A/Lcpl Lovett N
A/Cpl McMillan P J
A/Pte Morton L K
A/Pte Silver A S
A/Pte Black R
A/Pte Buchan J
A/Pte MacGregor R C C
A/Lcpl Parkin S P
A/Pte Wilson B R
A/Pte Payne I C
A/Pte Pugh P J
A/Pte Davies A P
A/Lcpl King P J
A/Pte Lowrie C M
A/Pte Scothern P N
A/Pte Cameron R S
A/Pte Carey N
A/Pte Carpenter I J C
A/Pte Carson J
A/Lcpl Tipton E D J
A/Pte Combes P L
A/Pte Grant R A
A/Pte Cornforth I M
A/Pte Culleton M S
A/Pte Rance J F
A/Pte Wilson A
A/Lcpl Fazakerley N
A/Lcpl Sharpe
A/Pte Taylor S E

A/Pte Field J M
A/Pte Neate R J
A/Pte Dowell G J
A/Lcpl Reynolds P J
A/Pte Taafe D L
A/Pte Jackson D C
A/Lcpl Tilley T E
A/Lcpl Mayo
A/Pte Moffat
A/Lcpl Cowley
A/Cpl Rennie W M
A/Pte Roberts C H
A/Pte Sayers S J
A/Pte Stewart G D
A/Pte Pattison J R
A/Pte Peebles M J

RD RAOC

A/Sgt Chandler L P
A/Sgt Jackson L B

POTENTIAL INT CORPS TRADESMEN

A/Pte Boyle D S
A/Lcpl Clark R L
A/Sgt Daly M P
A/Cpl Fawcett J M
A/Cpl McBurney D
A/Lcpl Storey R P
A/Lcpl Townsend M I
A/Pte Watts T R
A/Sgt Wheater J C

SPRING TERM 1977

STAFF CLERK RAOC

A/Cpl Brown P
A/Pte Callow P
A/Pte Irons A P
A/Sgt McLean C D

TECHNICAL CLERK RAOC

A/Pte Coubrough W
A/Sgt McDonough P J
A/Pte Phillipson J I
A/Lcpl Montrose P A
A/Cpl Swan J M

POTENTIAL TRADESMEN REME

A/Pte Baines T J
A/Pte Clark A T
A/Cpl Bos R T
A/Pte Casson P
A/Pte Copper P A
A/Pte Gibson A D
A/Pte Hughes D J
A/Pte Lindsay D R
A/Pte Maguire R K A
A/Lcpl McLean R
A/Pte Overton P R
A/Pte Simpson J H
A/Pte Southall P A
A/Pte Wroughton J W

STOREMEN RAOC

A/Pte Arfield H S
A/Pte Clyde R
A/Cpl Mason A G
A/Lcpl McAulay A
A/Lcpl McRae I M
A/Pte Pollock R

DRIVER RAOC

A/Pte Stephenson P N

SUMMER TERM 1977

STAFF CLERK RAOC

A/Pte Aggett P R S
A/Pte Conway R
A/Pte Maxwell D C

TECHNICAL CLERK RAOC

A/Pte Hutchings B P
A/Pte Laight D A
A/Pte McMullan C

POTENTIAL TRADESMEN INT CORPS

A/Cpl Cape C S E
A/Pte Evans J G
A/Pte Heavens S M
A/Pte Helme K W
A/Pte Miller S A
A/Pte Pipe J H
A/Pte Weaver A M H

STOREMEN RAOC

A/Pte Bennett T A J
A/Pte Cheshire P A
A/Lcpl Crouch K C
A/Pte Forster A
A/Pte Geddes A
A/Pte Gilbert E J
A/Pte Harrison A
A/Pte Hendy K F C
A/Pte Hulley J E
A/Lcpl Williams M H

TECHNICAL CLERK REME

A/Pte Ayres J

A/Pte Davies G
A/Lcpl Holroyd W L
A/Pte Kerr D W

POTENTIAL TRADESMEN REME

A/Lcpl Beilby K J
A/Lcpl Brodrick A F
A/Pte Cope R S
A/Sgt Day B J
A/Pte Hughes N S
A/Pte Maxwell P W M
A/Pte Parker R R
A/Pte Piper D R
A/Lcpl Ramage S P
A/Pte Stanton R B
A/Lcpl Styles W D V
A/Pte Williams J E
A/Pte Black P L
A/Pte Chillingworth M J
A/Pte Chomley A
A/Pte Ellis V H
A/Pte Jones G M
A/Lcpl Kane N L B
A/Pte Twigg S P
A/Pte White P T
A/Sgt Yoxall J A
A/Pte Brooke L
A/Pte Hudson P A
A/Pte Johnson A A
A/Cpl Sanders A H
A/Pte Tozer S P
A/Pte Gregory A C
A/Pte Mortimore A E R
A/Pte Moriarty C J
A/Pte Green J D
A/Pte Henthorn S P
A/Pte Hunter A
A/Pte Naylor M E
A/Pte Cryans S P
A/Pte Gorman K E
A/Lcpl Johns G E
A/Pte Jones D M
A/Lcpl Regan M W
A/Pte Story A G
A/Lcpl Scott J G
A/Pte Skillen R J
A/Pte Craig M M
A/Cpl Smith D P
A/Pte Gill M
A/Lcpl Burleigh E D
A/Pte Coley J A
A/Cpl Geoghegan I M
A/Lcpl Godwin N D
A/Pte Gordon A B G
A/Pte Horne P A
A/Pte Hughes W R
A/Pte Jackson M R
A/Lcpl Panther M W
A/Sgt Parker L
A/Pte Stancombe M D
A/Pte Watson G C
A/Pte Bamber C T A
A/Pte Casburn P
A/Lcpl Gancarcik J M
A/Pte Gray C E
A/Pte Hancock I L
A/Pte Heppinstall K J
A/Sgt Johnstone J
A/Pte Mitchell R J
A/Pte Stotzel K
A/Pte Tout R S
A/Pte Tully S M
A/Pte Vickers M
A/Pte Aitchison F J
A/Sgt Allen A
A/Pte Barnett T V E
A/Lcpl Bassett M
A/Pte Benton L J
A/Pte Bliss G B
A/Pte Buss A J
A/Pte Cresswell M
A/Pte Davies B R
A/Pte Field A W
A/Pte Friend J R
A/Pte Godfrey J F
A/Pte Hancock P N
A/Pte Harding P C
A/Pte Jones A D
A/Pte Lunt P J
A/Pte Mathers D
A/Pte Moody R W
A/Lcpl Peters A R
A/Lcpl Robinson C
A/Pte Stewart D C
A/Pte Stout N P
A/Pte Winyard A V
A/Pte Wood A D