The Thunderbolt

Journal of the RAOC Apprentices College



December 1978

Issue No 9

The Thunderbolt

JOURNAL OF THE

RAOC APPRENTICES' COLLEGE

Front Cover:

The College has been supporting the White Lodge Centre for Spastic Children in Chertsey for some three years during which time a total of nearly £5,000 has been raised. Last year's donation of £1,500 went to finance a new classroom. About a dozen Apprentices, accompanied by the CO and senior members of the College, visited the centre to hand over the cheque and have a look around. The picture shows the Centre's administrator, Mrs Carol Myer, receiving the £1,500 cheque from APte Sean Hetherington whose platoon, Alamein, raised most money and won the treasured White Lodge Rose Bowl.



Lieutenant Colonel K E Curtis RAOC

Commanding Officer RAOC Apprentices College

Lieutenant Colonel Kerry Edward Curtis assumed the appointment of Commanding Officer of the College on 7 September 1978.

He joined the RAOC as a National Serviceman in January 1957. After basic training at Portsmouth he became an RAOC clerk and subsequently saw service in BAOR, Belgium and Singapore, rising to the rank of Sergeant and returning to the United Kingdom for commissioning during 1965.

Since that time he has served in BAOR, USA and in the United Kingdom. During his service he has been honoured to receive a Commander-in.Chief BAOR's commendation for brave conduct and was mentioned in despatches for service in Northern Ireland. On the academic side he has attended the Advanced Quartermasters Course in America and for subsequent study was admitted as an Associate Member of the British Institute of Management.

Lieutenant Colonel Curtis has always taken an active interest in sport as an organiser and as a player. He is currently Secretary of the Army Lawn Tennis League, and an active Royal Yacht Association instructor. He has represented his Corps at Tennis, Hockey and Sailing.

He has served in the College on two previous occasions as College Training Officer and as a Company Commander and was therefore delighted to return and command the College. Lieutenant Colonel Curtis is married with three children aged 19, 16 and 12 and lives locally.

FOREWORD BY THE COMMANDING OFFICER

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to make a small contribution to 'Thunderbolt' in the foreword to this year's publication. Of course I do start my tour of duty with one distinct advantage - I am not exactly the complete 'new boy', having previously served in the College albeit a long time ago.

First and foremost I am quite certain that you will all wish me to pay tribute to Lt Col Bruce for everything he has done for the College during his tenure of office. I know that he thoroughly enjoyed every moment of his time spent here and was deeply involved in all aspects of College life.

The RAOC Apprentices College possesses a fine tradition of providing the RAOC and REME with soldiers of high calibre and tremendous potential. It is incumbent upon each and every one of us, permanent staff and apprentices alike, to guard these standards jealously and without fear or favour. There will be at the same time, I am sure, new and exciting challenges to be met and at the end of the day even additional successes to be achieved

TEMPORA MUTANTUR, NOS ET MUTAMUR IN ILLIS

The times are changing and we must all learn to change with them.

FAREWELL

Lieutenant Colonel N S Bruce RAOC

It is with profound sadness that I leave the RAOC Apprentices College after a most memorable and enjoyable tour of duty as its Commanding Officer. I have always had, and will always continue to have, a great affection for the College and the proud position it so rightly holds in the framework of the Corps it serves. When I heard recently that at long last Treasury approval had been given for a complete re-build of the College, I was naturally delighted. Visions of a swimming pool, assembly hall, gymnasium and families club are indeed tantalising prospects for those who are still to come here. However, I am certain that there are many, like myself, who will not be thinking of buildings when they recall the worthwhileness of life experienced here.

As more and more young men are applying to join the Army, the standard of entrant is becoming higher. Our apprentices respond well to military discipline and training and pass out of the College as fit, well-trained and motivated soldiers. A few, unfortunately, fall by the wayside but then surely we all believe in laws to be obeyed and standards to be achieved in any form of civilised society. I am afraid that some young men are not up to, nor are they compatible with, Army life.

To all apprentices who made the grade during my command I trust you are still in the pursuit of excellence and wish you well.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking all the Permanent Staff for their support and loyalty. Sheila and I wish you all the very best for the future and I know that Colonel Kerry Curtis too will have a very happy time - the place grows on you.



Lieutenant Colonel Bruce took up his appointment as Commandant Army School of Physical Training Corps on 1 December 1978. He is the first RAOC Officer to hold this appointment

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EDITORIAL

"Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future
And time future contained in time past"

It seems but yesterday that all the members of the College magazine editorial staff were feverishly employed in putting the final touches to getting out the Christmas 1977 edition. However, the fact is that here we all are once again doing exactly the same thing in order to put the 1978 publication to bed.

It is extremely difficult to realise that yet another whole year in the life of this College has passed, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say flown by, with scarcely anyone being aware of the matter. Time and tide may wait for no man but in an establishment where everyone must be so totally involved, there can never be sufficient hours in any day to do all the things each and everyone of us would like to do in order to maintain, and possibly enhance, those extremely high standards which our College so rightfully demands.

In so far as the College magazine is concerned, tribute must be paid to the sterling work of Major Mike Parsons and Major George Lane - their excellent photography tells its own story - and to 2Lt Bernadette Flaherty WRAC who has so ably assisted in the editorial department. Lt Col Stanley Schofield has once again guided us through the trauma of layout and suitable arrangement of material, whilst COD Donnington have supplied the professionalism and expertise of production. The College is indeed most fortunate in being able to call upon such valuable services.

Above all, the editorial staff is deeply grateful to all contributors who this year have produced accurate copy of the right length and, probably, what is more important, at the right time so vital when deadlines have to be met.

A chaque saint sa chandelle

STAFF LISTS SEPTEMBER 1977 -AUGUST 1978

	Winter Term 1977	Spring Term 1978	Summer Term 1978
College Headquarters			
Commanding Officer	Lt Col N S Bruce RAOC	Lt Col N S Bruce RAOC	Lt Col N S Bruce RAOC
Chief Instructor	Major R T Arliss RAOC	Major R T Arliss RAOC	Major R T Arliss RAOC
College Second-in-Command			
Adjutant	Capt D M Chisem RAOC	Capt D M Chisem RAOC	Capt D M Chisem RAOC
Assistant Adjutant	Lt A Moore RAOC	Lt A Moore RAOC	
Regimental Sergeant Major	WO1 (RSM) J T Foster RAOC	WO1 (RSM) J T Foster RAOC	WO1 (RSM) P Mackey RAOC
G Clerk			
Training Wing			
Training Officer	Capt W G F Hayes REME	Capt W G F Hayes REME	Capt W G F Hayes REME
Company Sergeant Major	WO2 (CSM) S Brierley RAOC	WO2 (CSM) S Brierley RAOC	WO2 (CSM) S Brierley RAOC
Physical Training Instructor			Ssgt C J Tofield APTC
Weapon Training Instructors			Ssgt R Johnson RAOC
			Ssgt T J Miller RAOC
			Sgt L I Cook RAOC
			Sgt J A G Earl RAOC
Military Subjects Instructor			Sgt F Reid REME
External Leadership Instructor			Sgt H J Green RAOC
			Cpl Thwaites
			Cpl Raynor
Training Clerk			Sgt K W Duffus RAOC
Education Wing			
Senior Education Officer	Major P A Easton RAEC	Major P A Easton RAEC	Major P A Easton RAEC
Instructors	Capt B F Kane RAEC	Capt B F Kane RAEC	Capt B F Kane RAEC
	Capt P J Lewis RAEC	Capt P J Lewis RAEC	Capt P J Lewis RAEC
	Capt C Manvell RAEC		2/Lt B Flaherty WRAC
Civilian Lecturers	Mr W E Smith	Mr W E Smith	Mr W E Smith
	Lt Col (Retd) S Schofield	Lt Col (Retd) S Schofield	Lt Col (Retd) S Schofield
	Wg Comd (Retd) P W Hope	Wg Comd (Retd) P W Hope	Wg Comd (Retd) P W Hope
	Maj (Retd) G Forrest	Maj (Retd) G Forrest	Maj (Retd) G Forrest

	Winter Term 1977	Spring Term 1978	Summer Term 1978
	Mr P Heap	Mr P Heap	Mr P Heap
	Mr M F Johnson	Mr M F Johnson	Mr M F Johnson
	Mr W Waddington	Mr W Waddington	Mr W Waddington
	Mr J F Watson	Mr J F Watson	Mr J F Watson
Admin Company			
Bursar	Capt (Retd) W Playle	Capt (Retd) W Playle	Capt (Retd) W Playle
Admin Warrant Officer	WO2 (SQMS) G Davies RAOC	WO2 (SQMS) G Davies RAOC	WO2 (RQMS) C D Woollard RAOC
Padre	Rev A C Stockbridge RAChD	Rev A C Stockbridge RAChD	Rev Mr Ryall RAChD
WRVS	Miss P Riddell	Miss P Riddell	Miss P Riddell
Nursing Sister	Sister A Corner SRN	Sister A Corner SRN	Sister A Corner SRN
Kitchen Manager			Ssgt R A Connor ACC
Provost Sergeant			Sgt Thomas RAOC
A Company			
Officer Commanding	Maj J A Calbreath REME	Maj J A Calbreath REME	Maj J A Calbreath REME
Training Captain/2IC	Capt J Griffiths RAOC	Capt J Griffiths RAOC	Capt L P Kelman RAOC
Company Sergeant Major	WO2 (CSM) B N Brace RAOC	WO2 (CSM) B N Brace RAOC	WO2 (CSM) B N Brace RAOC
Platoon Commanders			
Senior Platoon	Lt P C Harris RAOC		
Aden	Lt M D Wood RAOC	Lt M D Wood RAOC	Lt M D Wood RAOC
Arakan	Lt A Ward RAOC	Lt A Ward RAOC	Lt A Ward RAOC
Ardennes	Lt F T Freeman RAOC	Lt F T Freeman RAOC	Lt F T Freeman RAOC
Arnhem	Lt M H P Buchanan RAOC	Lt I S J Cassidy RAOC	Lt I S J Cassidy RAOC
Anguilla			Lt P C Harris RAOC
Alamein		Lt A R L Jaggers REME	Lt A R L Jaggers REME
Platoon Sergeants			
Senior Platoon	Sgt B D Macro REME		
Aden	Sgt N P Botfield RAOC	Sgt N P Botfield RAOC	Sgt N P Botfield RAOC
Arakan	Sgt P M Carrick RAOC	Ssgt P M Carrick RAOC	Sgt P Wilkie RAOC
Ardennes	Sgt C Wolfe RAOC	Sgt C Wolfe RAOC	Sgt C Wolfe RAOC
Arnhem	Sgt C A Proverbs RAOC	Sgt C A Proverbs RAOC	
Anguilla			Sgt P W Daniel REME
Alamein		Sgt B D Macro REME	Sgt F J Keogh RAOC

B Company			
Officer Commanding	Maj D N Furness-Gibbon RAOC	Maj D N Furness-Gibbon RAOC	Maj E Champion RAOC
Training Captain/2IC	Capt M E Parsons RAOC	Capt M E Parsons RAOC	Capt M E Parsons RAOC
Company Sergeant Major	WO2 (CSM) P S Slaughter RAOC	WO2 (CSM) P S Slaughter RAOC	WO2 (CSM) P S Slaughter RAOC
Platoon Commanders			
Balaclava	Lt L E Bean RAOC	Lt M G Evans RAOC	Lt M G Evans RAOC
Berlin	Lt M Wise RAOC	Lt M Wise RAOC	Lt M Wise RAOC
Brunei	Lt D A Major REME	Lt D A Major REME	
Burma	Lt L P Kelman RAOC	Lt L P Kelman RAOC	
Bruneval			Lt D A Major REME
Platoon Sergeants			
Balaclava	Sgt W L Rice RAOC	Sgt W L Rice RAOC	Sgt W L Rice RAOC
Berlin	Sgt T E Jennians RAOC	Sgt C J Taylor REME	Sgt C J Taylor REME
Brunei	Sgt T I Long RAOC	Sgt T I Long RAOC	
Burma	Sgt G I Ogden RAOC	Sgt G I Ogden RAOC	Sgt G I Ogden RAOC
Bruneval			Sgt J D Wilkie REME

PASSING OUT PARADES 1977-1978

Over the past year many hundreds of parents, relatives and friends have enjoyed visits to the College to see one or more of the three Passing Out parades.

Our Inspecting Officers for the passing out parades, all of whom paid high tribute to the Apprentices for their turnout and bearing were:

17 December 1977
Brigadier G E Dennison OBE ADC
Commander RAOC Training Centre

6 April 1978
Brigadier P H Lee MBE
Commandant REME Training Centre

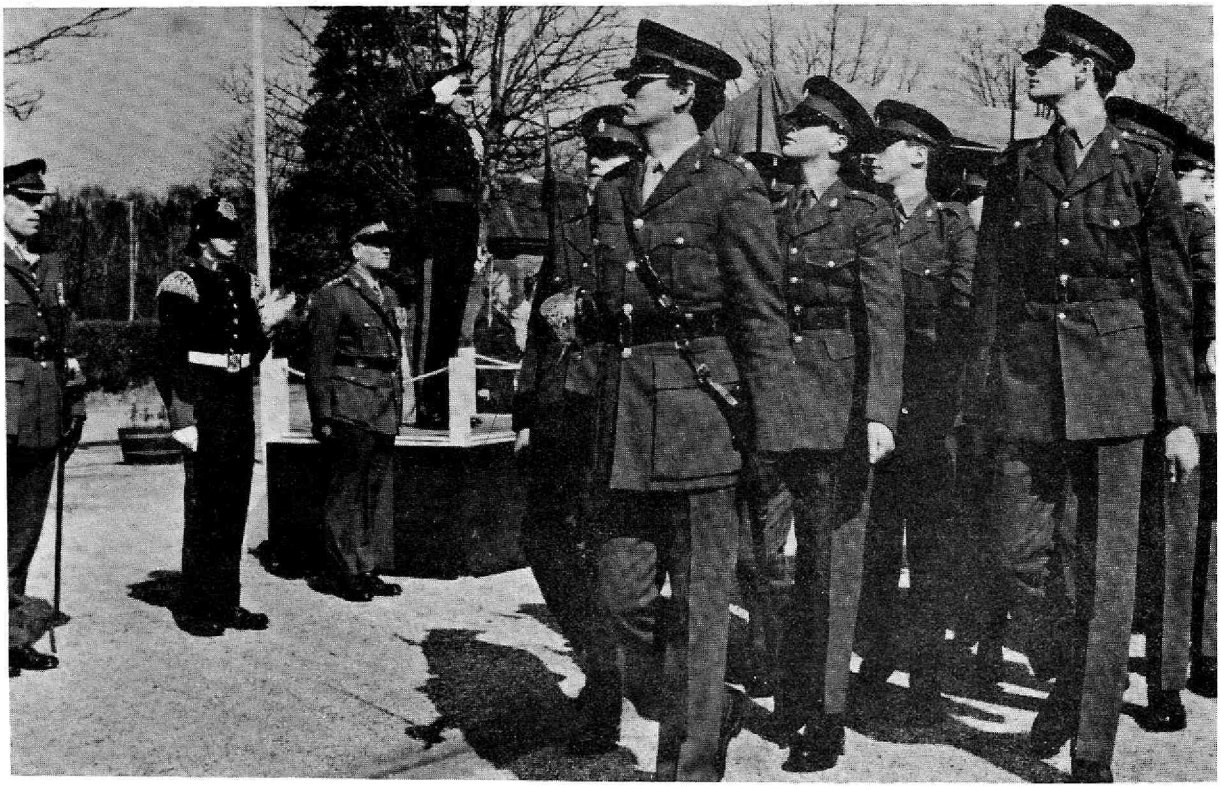
10 August 1978
Lieutenant General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley KCB DSO MBE MC
General Officer Commanding South East District



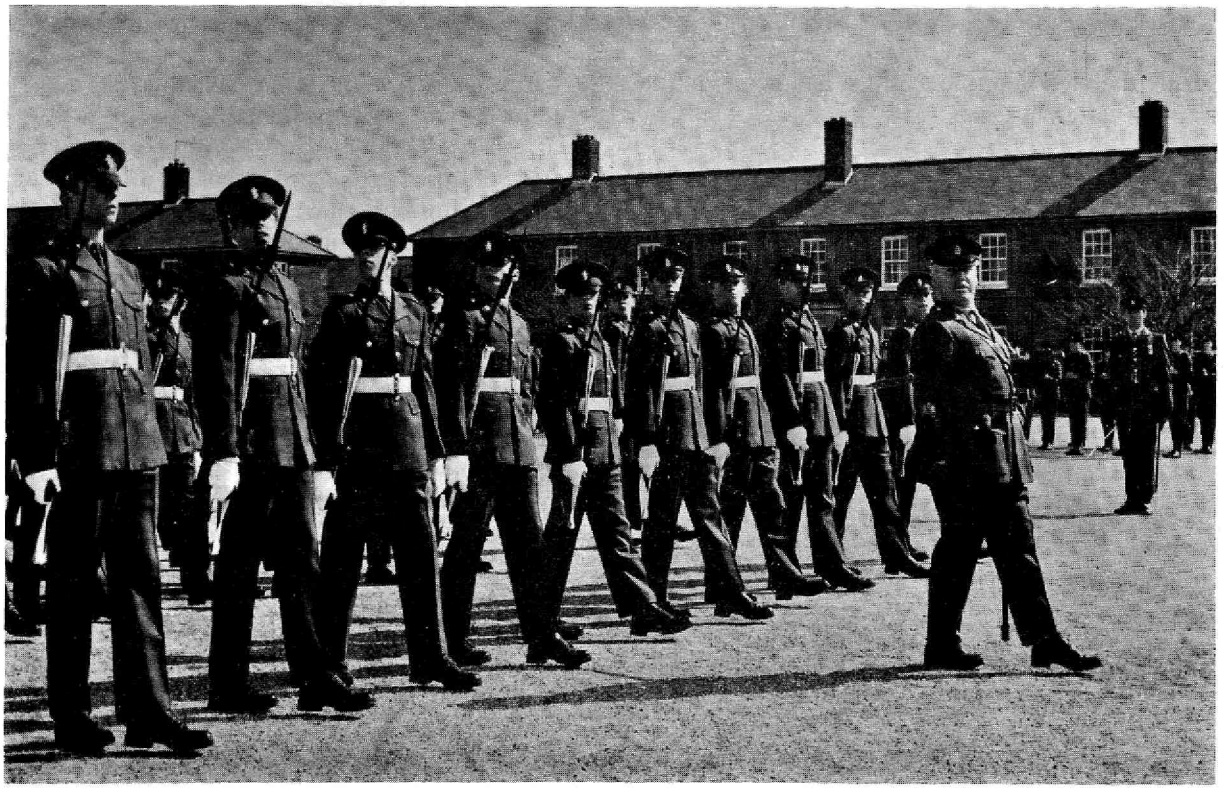
Brigadier G E Dennison OBE ADC presenting the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal to Lt D A Major REME. 17 December 1977



Brigadier Dennison also presented the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal to WO1 (SSM) G Davies RAOC at the December Passing Out Parade



Passing Out Parade April 1978. Lt D A Major leads Brunei Platoon past the Inspecting Officer, Brigadier P H Lee MBE



Passing Out Parade April 1978. Term leavers march past the Inspecting Officer, commanded by the College RSM, WO1 (RSM) J T Foster RAOC, due to be posted on 10 May 1978



August 1978. Lt M D Wood RAOC leads Aden Platoon past the Inspecting Officer, Lieutenant General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley KCB, DSO, MBE MC

VERY IMPORTANT VISITORS

During the past year the College has been visited by;

Air Chief Marshall Sir Ruthen Wade KCB DFC RAF
Chief of Personnel and Logistics

Major General J T Stanyer CBE
Representative Colonel Commandant RAOC

Brigadier W J Reed
Commander Aldershot Garrison

Colonel R M Carruthers
OIC RAOC Manning and Records

Brigadier A J Trythall MA (Oxon)
Chief Education Officer UKLF

Our visitors were introduced to all aspects of College training and in addition were invited to meet personally many of the Apprentices either in the various hobby activities or in the amenities centre. They all commented on the excellent standards of training, the smart bearing and self-confidence of the boys and the first class facilities being provided for all the Apprentices. Of course we have also had the privilege of entertaining many Careers Masters and Officers in addition to our usual quota of school visits.

TRAINING COMPANY

Chief Instructor Major R T Arliss RAOC

Training Officer Capt S Hayes REME

"I do confess the imperfect performance, sometimes". - Congreve

Winter Term 1977

The start of the winter term found the Company Staff eagerly looking forward to the Skill-at-Arms Camp to be held at St Martin's Plain. However, as usual "Sod's law" applied and the advent of "Op Burberry" saw the cancellation of the SAAC and the hasty improvisation of an alternative training programme. What with the need to classify all the Apprentices and the approximate 75% reduction in available College Staff the in-phrase was 'over-stretch'. Part of the programme consisted of an eight mile run followed by the assault course and for some members of the Company the expression "the daily grind" took on a new meaning.

Other highlights in the term were College Cross Country and the Basic Fitness Tests with the College participating in the Regular Army Validation Test.

Christmas approached with almost all staff still involved in Fire Fighting or Watchkeeping and feeling that 1978 must be an improvement, mustn't it.

Spring Term 1978

The conclusion of 'Op Burberry' was greeted with relief and we felt free to concentrate on our various tasks and to look forward to the Company Exercise in Chamonix. Seven members of the Company eventually departed on 17 February and spent approximately two weeks learning snow and ice techniques and performing like penguins on skis (Cpl Dymond's expression). A very good time was had by all and "The White Experience" has no doubt been related in various bars and messes by all concerned. The College Rifle Meeting was seriously affected by the GOC TEWT and everything had to be condensed but a very successful meeting was held. Looking forward to the College Summer Camp at Tenby.

Summer Term 1978

Summer term seems to consist of athletics whereby the Training Officer finds himself alone in Heather House interspersed with the more normal commitments eg Royal visit to Bicester; Aldershot Army Display; ELT Camps and, of course, the

College Summer Camp which this year was held in Tenby. A really excellent camp which functioned smoothly and was enjoyed by all. The Training Officer indented for good weather but it appears that the Commanding Officer is now claiming responsibility. Mention must be made of the College Project, the Ridgeway Walk. Training Company, including 'the old and the bold', decided to run the distance of 26 miles. Suffice to say that it was a very interesting experience which has left a mark(s) on all.

Personal/Personnel

Several people have come and gone since the last edition so a small recap has become necessary.

We have said farewell to:

Sgt Earl RAOC
Sgt Kreft
Sgt Thomas REME
Cpl Dymond
} On posting

Cpl Bowering - on posting to APTC

We welcome:

Ssgt Miller
Sgt Earl REME
Cpl Ritchie
Cpl Simpson
Cpl Thwaites
Lcpl Langton

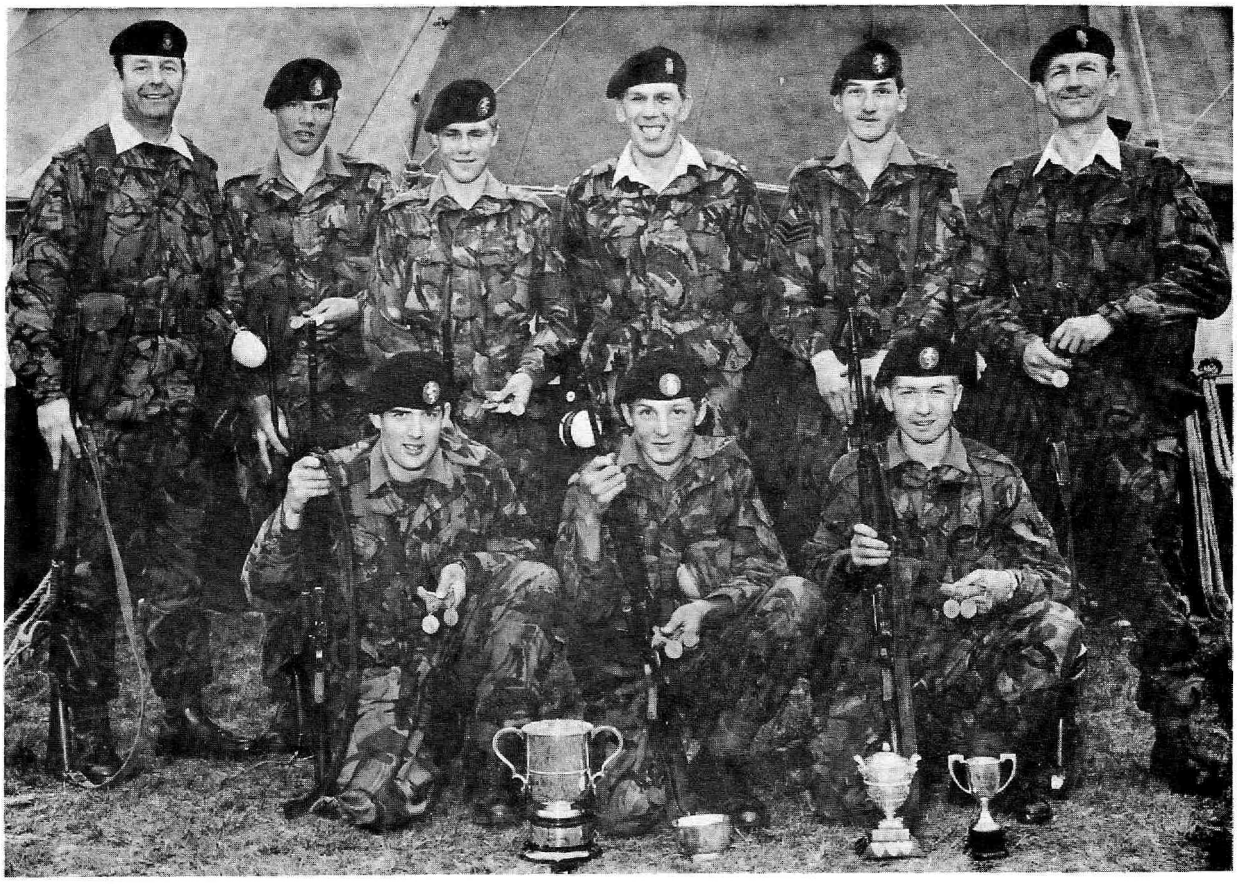
Congratulations to Sgt Earl on topping his SRD Course - welcome to the Corps; Lcpl Langton on his forthcoming marriage and Cpl Ritchie on his promotion.

Temporary absence of Cpl Murphy to Cyprus and Sgt Duffus who prepares for the rigours of civilian life.

Mention must be made of the silent minority who also serve: Mrs Mary Foster who struggles valiantly with the almost indecipherable scrawl of the CI and CTO; our two 'dailies', Mrs Brenda Hobbs and Mrs Linda Lonergan, who brighten our day as well as our offices and Mrs Carole Roberts, our CA, who is an inspiration to all who enter Heather House.



RAOC Skill-at-Arms Meeting. ALcpl Hunt receives the Skill-at-Arms Trophy from Brigadier Dennison, Commander HQTC



RAOC Skill-at-Arms Meeting. The successful College team

MUSINGS FROM A MOUNTAIN TOP

Thoughts on External Leadership Training (ELT)
by
Capt W S F Hayes, College Training Officer

"What we get from this adventure is just sheer joy and joy is, after all, the end of life."
G L MALLORY

The College Charter defines one of our main responsibilities as developing the character of the Apprentices. I can think of no better way this can be achieved than by the personal challenge of Adventurous Training. External Leadership Training means the introduction by theory and practice to Adventurous cross-country navigation in mountainous country using map and Silva compass, camp craft, rock climbing, abseiling and canoeing.

The culmination of the ELT Syllabus is a week's adventurous training based mainly on "Willies" farm near Capel Curig.

Low and High Level Navigation

The area used for our low and high level navigation includes Tryfan, the "Glyders" and the beautiful area from Lyn Ogwen through Carnedd Llewelyn to Garnedd-Wen. One wonders whether the Apprentice appreciates and absorbs the natural beauty and living history of this land or whether his thoughts are solely of his next checkpoint or when he is due to eat. Perhaps we are failing in our task if we do not educate the Apprentice on basic geography and history (a Lecture and Slide presentation whilst attending ELT Camp?).

Camp Craft

"Anyone can be uncomfortable" is an old camp craft maxim. We have all witnessed the inexperienced camper whose tent is pitched under a tree in a hollow which soon becomes waterlogged and whose equipment is strewn around the place. The ability to be comfortable under all weather conditions is a highly valued skill and can make the difference between expedition success or failure, significantly affect the morale of the group and can, in the worst instance, lead to hypothermia and exposure. However, the story does not end once we have acquired camp craft skills. When our stay at the camping place is completed we should, like the Arabs, 'fold our tents and quietly steal away, leaving no trace of our stay. Tins and plastic bags do not make a good diet for sheep and wild animals. Follow the Country Code lest one day we may require a permit to venture into the hills.

Rock Climbing and Abseiling

Strange as it may seem Apprentices are more apprehensive about abseiling down rather than climbing up. It may be Freudian in the top-rope acting as an umbilical cord providing safety and security whilst the abseiler has more personal control over his descent. To climb and to abseil needs the concentration of mental and physical techniques deep within, providing a sense of achievement and, in many instances, the overcoming of initial terror.

"Fain would I climb but that I fear to fail" - Raleigh

"If thy mind fail thee, do not climb at all" - Queen Elizabeth I

Canoeing

The range of canoeing activities from the acquisition of our basic skills to expeditions and the hairies of 'white water' and surfing demand a high degree of strength, skill and stamina plus the ability to think and act quickly. Canoeing gives us the feeling of solitude, of independence, of doing our own thing. It is rather difficult to blame someone else should your canoe capsize.

Canoeing should be made mandatory for all as it teaches us one very important thing, in canoeing as well as in life it is sometimes better to keep your mouth shut!

Adventurous training then provides the personal challenge and the element of danger we all need if only to cherish life more dearly. The leadership, physical and moral attributes that are given to us are tested by the challenge that is presented, when you have accepted and passed this challenge, when the thrill of your first climb or abseil is experienced, when you feel that communion with the wild and lonely places which are denied to so many, then welcome to our world.

"Do not follow life's easy path, rather strive to make your own".

GREEN SHIELD STAMPS

There's one in every unit
Yes, even in our domain
Chaps who plot with sleight and stealth
For some political gain.

Now let me tell you a story
Of one who played this game
So that suchlike persons can listen
And think - could their fate be the same?

He bought flowers for the Colonel's lady
And bones for the Adjutant's dog
Made sure to pass the Brigadier's house
As he went on his daily jog.

Volunteering for Recess Duties
And sponsored the Open Day
With shouts of "Up and under"
He watched the unit at play.

Treading softly through political waters
His back-stabbing knife cleaved the morass
Until he emerged clear of the herd
Mr G S S had come to pass

But an appearance like Haley's comet
Can cause an eclipse of the sun
'Tis sad to say, but alas one day
He failed to return from his run.

Some hinted darkly at murder
And "Fragging" was a popular name
Others spoke of his threatening scope
Even senior officers resented his game.

But whatever the rhyme or reason
He's gone - with nothing to remain
But the memory of a "super chappie"
We'll never forget - what's his name? **Anon**

'A' COMPANY

OC Major J A Calbreath REME

Training Officer Captain L Kelman RAOC

CSM WOII B N Brace RAOC



Lt M D Wood RAOC *Sgt C Wolfe RAOC* *Sgt N P Botfield RAOC* *CSM B N Brace RAOC* *Sgt P Wilkie RAOC* *Sgt P Daniel REME* *Lt P C Harris RAOC* *Lt A Ward RAOC*

Lt D Matheson REME *Lt C F Nisbet RAOC* *Lt A R L Jaggers REME* *Mrs J Eldrige* *Major J A Calbreath REME* *Mrs N Vipond* *Mrs D Osslesby* *Capt L P Kelman RAOC* *Lt F T Freeman REME* *Lt I S J Cassidy RAOC*

From 'A' Company angle the College year 1977-78 was one of surprise, action, high morale, low pay and a willingness of all to get on with the job on hand with a minimum of fuss.

The permanent staff of the Company arrived back from recess on Friday 9 September closely followed by the Apprentices of Senior 'A' and Ardennes Platoons. Apart from normal training and sporting activities, preparations were to be made for the arrival of 120 recruits who were to form Arnhem, Aden and Arakan Platoons, completing a Company of five platoons. It is worthy of note that much of the recruit reception and administration, etc is undertaken by Apprentices who had enlisted only six months previously. Senior "A' Platoon departed to adult service via fire fighting in January 1978, also in January 41 recruits under command of Lt Arthur Jaggers and Platoon Sergeant Brian Macro formed the new Alamein Platoon.

A College Cross Country Shield competition is held twice yearly normally in the Winter and Spring terms. It is pleasing to know that the subject shield has been held by 'A' Company since Spring 1976. On departure from the College OC 'B' Company, Major Furness-Gibbon, donated a trophy to be presented to the most outstanding apprentice cross country runner, a very kind gesture. Still on the sporting scene 'A' Company have not won the inter company boxing trophy since 1976. It is rumoured that Major Calbreath will offer a trophy to boxing if 'A' Company fails in Winter Term 1978.

The outstanding individual achievement in the Company must go to ALcpl Brooks who on 10 March won the Army Junior Featherweight Boxing Championships by knocking out his opponent in the final. The very next day ALcpl Brooks came first in the College cross country race out of a field of approximately 300, both splendid per-

formances. For his efforts ALcpl Brooks was awarded the McEwan Shield for endeavour.

In December Senior 'A' Platoon under the guidance of Lt Harris and Sgt Macro held a Regimental Dinner (silver included) in the College dining room. The purpose was twofold, first to mark the departure of the platoon to adult service and secondly to introduce the apprentices to the intricacies and dining traditions of our camps. All who attended were greatly impressed.

Industrial disputes disrupted Company camps greatly, so much so that our Skill-at-Arms, due to be held at Folkestone in November 1977 was cancelled due to the firemens' strike. Thanks to some swift telephone calls by the College Training Company, an exciting and interesting week's training was carried out in the Deepcut area, with the emphasis placed on shooting. All of the permanent staff were involved either directly or indirectly with the firemens' strike and much credit must go to the Apprentice NCOs who performed many platoon tasks and duties normally carried out by the Staff.

The strike ended early January and it was back to normal duty after a few days leave. It would be wrong to say that the strike did not dent a slight knock in the morale of all concerned.

The oil tanker drivers strike upset the transport for our Company Spring Camp held in Fort Tregantle, Cornwall. However, we were determined to make this a successful week for all despite our previous reverses. We left Deepcut on a cold February morning and made our way to Tregantle by rail and coach. On arrival at the Fort the weather had deteriorated badly and by 1400 hrs that day a state of emergency was declared in the West Country. Major Calbreath, our Officer Commanding, who was making his own way down by car arrived at about 1800 hrs on foot with the news that his car was snowed under seven miles from camp. The weather soon improved and the training got underway as planned. By the end of the camp the spirit and morale of the Company was higher than ever, even though Fort Tregantle appeared very much like Colditz.

At the College rifle meeting which was held in March the most notable performance in 'A' Company was that of Ardennes Platoon who not only won the falling plate competition convincingly, but beat a guest team from the RAOC Training Centre which contained two Corps shots, a fine effort.

Our membership of the Surrey Association of Boys Clubs continues to flourish. During the Easter recess Major Calbreath, Capt Griffiths and Lt Ward attended an adult Youth Club Instructors course in Swanage, Dorset, where much useful information was gained. In the SABC five-a-side football competition held in Guildford a College team won the Surrey regional final.

On the charity front Lt Wood and Lt Ward gave up a great deal of their own time organising a draw in aid of local Army charities in which the sum of £420 was realised. APte McLead of Alamein Platoon sold the most tickets, £16 worth, and he was presented with a £10 premium bond by the Commanding Officer.

During the year it became apparent that certain members of the Unit either robbed a bank or won the pools. The OC, Training Officer and Company Sergeant Major all purchased houses within a space of three months. To rub it in the CSM is now swanning around in a new TR 7. Rumour has it that Mrs Nancy Vipond, our charming typist, was the fourth member of the syndicate.

The College summer camp was held at Penally near the holiday resort of Tenby in South Wales. We were blessed with mediterranean weather for our two week stay. All members of the Unit, staff and apprentices alike, worked extremely hard during the day either organising or participating in the various activities. In the evening they still had a bit of life and money left to enjoy the local cafes, discos, etc, of nearby Saundersfoot and Tenby. A few Officers even formed their own beach rock group.

After camp it was back to Deepcut which looks more like motor cycle city each day. RSM Mackey and his Platoon Sergeants now started preparing for the Passing Out Parade on 10 August. All went well on the day and after inspection by Lieutenant General Farrar-Hockley KCB DSO MBE MC, GOC South East District, 45 term leavers of 'A' Company marched off to the tune of "Will ye no come back again". Good luck to all in adult service.

So ends another year in the history of "ACE Company", a year one can only describe as stimulating, enjoyable and very rewarding. We look forward to 1979 with immense anticipation and hopefully peaceful.

Salvete

We welcome the undermentioned to the Company and hope their labours are rewarded.

Name	From	Appointment
Capt Kelman	'A' Coy RAOC App College	2IC Training Officer
Lt Jaggers	7 Armoured Wksp BFPO 38	Pl Comd Alamein Platoon
Lt Cassidy	2 R Anglian	Pl Comd Arnhem Platoon
Lt Wood	Cambridge University	Pl Comd Aden Platoon
Sgt Wilkie	Training Coy	Pl Sgt Arakan Platoon
Sgt Keogh	3 BAPD Bracht	Pl Sgt Alamein Platoon
Mrs Ogglesby	Dental Nurse Berlin	Coy Clerk

Valete

Good luck to the following in their new posts.

Name	Location
Capt Griffiths	Employment Training School
Lt Buchanan	ATO Course
Lt Hopkinson	Army Youth Team
Ssgt Carrick	15 COD Dulmen
Sgt Proverbs	86 Supply Depot Dortmund
Sgt Arnold	I Corps Depot, Ashford
Sgt Kreft	Berlin Int Section
Sgt Macro	REME Arborfield
Cpl Anderson	1 Combat Supplies Battalion

Congratulations To Lt Buchanan on his marriage to Miss Julie Parratt. We wish them well.

SENIOR 'A' PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt P C Harris RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt B D Macro REME

Winter Term 1977

The term began with elements of Alamein, Arnhem, Arakan and Anguilla being integrated into one platoon. It was a difficult term in respect of moulding them together as a platoon but it began well with a clear cut win in the College cross country race. APtes Young, Balch and Cliffe came first, second and third respectively, a good effort, well done!

After two weeks of having the platoon together the next ten weeks saw some at Leconsfield on Driver training, some at the Employment Training School on detachment. Those who were left in the hands of the platoon staff were taken on educational visits, firepower demonstrations and signal training, etc.

During October the platoon took part in a mobilisation exercise which involved protecting a vital installation, namely the butts of Ash 3. The lads performed extremely well and defended the

installation against the advances of a section of Royal Marine Commandos for two nights and a day. Well done, Senior 'A'.

As it was their last term the lads were determined to win the Assault March Cup competition and that is exactly what they did. In good weather conditions the platoon completed the run and the assault course in a time of 1 hour 17 minutes. The Platoon Commander is still waiting for the beer promised to him by the OC.

The latter half of the term was interrupted by the firemen's strike and this put paid to a large part of the training, due to the number of Permanent Staff away on fire fighting duties. However we did manage to arrange a Regimental Dinner and invitations were sent to the Commanding Officer, OC 'A' Coy, Adjutant, RSM, 2IC 'A' Coy and all Platoon Commanders and Platoon Sergeants of 'A' Company. The evening began with sherry in the Quiet Room of the Seniors Block. This was followed by a four course meal in Blackdown Restaurant. After the meal the guests and seniors retired to the Quiet Room where the Commanding Officer took the lead in some singing.

Also due to the firemen's strike the end of term Passing Out Parade had to be cancelled, but a mini parade and Service of Dedication was held in the Gymnasium.

Those receiving prizes were:

ALcpl Vaissiere	Best CO's Award for the most improved Apprentice
ASgt Snowdon	Education
APte Westwood	Education

Good luck to all in adult service.

ADEN PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt M D Wood RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt Botfield RAOC

Winter Term 1977

Aden Platoon began the winter term with a new Platoon Commander and 32 raw recruits.

Having only recently arrived at the College Lt Wood viewed the prospect of greeting each of his new recruits with considerable enthusiasm and was therefore somewhat taken aback when APte Oliver, who had been in the Army all of an hour and a half, announced his intention of leaving the organisation he had so recently joined. He was not to be reconciled and so Intake Day ended with Aden Platoon containing one member intent on leaving without having given the Army any chance and a Platoon Commander wondering what surprise was next in store. At least there were two Welshmen in the Platoon to keep Sgt 'Taff' Botfield happy.

When, on their very first run as a platoon, APte Hawkins fell over and broke his arm, the fates really did seem to have it in for Aden but gradually with Sgt Botfield's 'gentle persuasion' regarding how the platoon should begin to behave, things began to take a turn for the better and the training programme got fully under way.

The first six weeks of a recruit term seem to fly by and before one knows it, it is Acceptance Parade and that collection of civilians are suddenly beginning to look like soldiers. In the midst of all the basic training periods, inter platoon and inter company competitions, the platoon did find time for a 24 hour exercise to cover the basics of living in the field.

APte Rogers had the following to say about "Exercise First Base".

"At approximately 2 pm on Saturday 15 October 1977 all 'A' Company recruit platoon took part in a 24 hour exercise.

We assembled outside the block at approximately 1.30 pm in full combat, boots, puttees, 44 pattern webbing. We were then given a briefing about the exercise by Lt Wood. Next we went over to the Armoury and drew our weapons. I had to draw the Platoon spare as mine is in for repair. We assembled back outside the block, put our back packs on and prepared to move out.

We started at approximately 2.15, then we started by placing the three sections on alternate sides of a make-believe road, in the correct tactical formation.

We marched out to the G1 training area and arrived at approximately 2.35. Lt Wood spotted a site and we positioned ourselves to give covering fire in case any enemy were present.

We moved into the site at 1800 hrs and picked a spot to put our bivvies up. We were given 1½ hrs to do this, then were called to Platoon HQ which was situated in the centre of a circle formed by our bivvies.

Our bivi was made by putting a long piece of wood between two trees then joining two ponchos together and slinging them over the piece of wood to form a rough tent-like construction. Then we were given a demonstration on how to cook our compo rations.

Everywhere we went we had to take our rifles with us, even if we went to use the latrine. We cooked our compo and for the first time, it was to say the least, not bad. I was partnered up with Tim Pettitt and we got on well as a team.

We were then marched up a track which was used in the cross country event. We sat down and listened to a demonstration of night noises, this took place at about 2015 hrs (it was pitch black). The demonstration consisted of noises such as:

Fast moving car or landrover

Opening and closing car door

Laughing

Screams

Rifle cocking

Lighting a fire

Walking through bracken

Car lights

Smoking

After this our platoon went on a night patrol and learned what to do when the Platoon Commander stopped and what to look for.

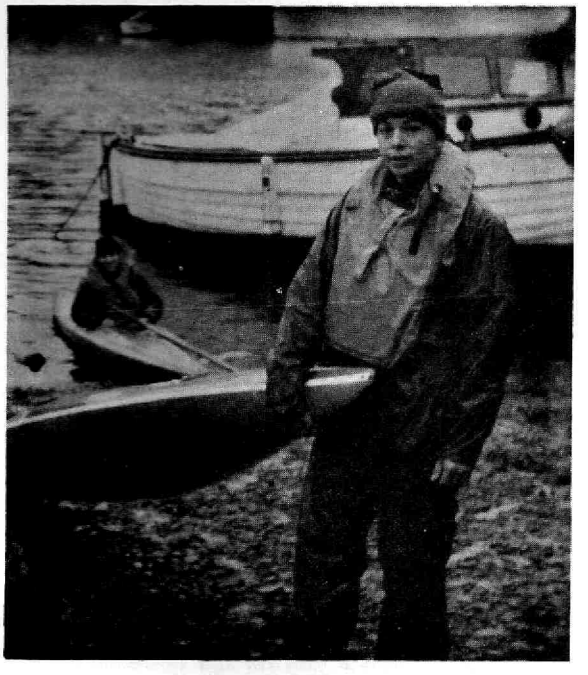
At about 2200 hrs we hit the sack. I slept with my boots on, then put my rifle in beside me and got 29 winks when I was woken and told to do my 45 minute guard duty. I paired up with Chris Cardy and we patrolled around the camp site. At one point Cardy put his foot on someone asleep so we made a rapid exit from the area. My guard duty was from 2 am to 3.45 am and I slept on restfully for the rest of the night. When we awoke next morning at 0700 hrs we gave our boots a polish over then we had a wash in our mess tins.

We started straight away on our breakfast and I had coffee, bacon burger, biscuits and jam. After my very filling breakfast we were taken down to the road, given a quick inspection, then told how to camouflage our bivvies. Pettitt and I did a fair job and following that we went down for a lesson in field craft. While one squad covered up and hid themselves the remaining two squads went on to practice arrow head walking along an airstrip.

At dinnertime we had a snack and broke camp. This was at approximately 1.30 and once all the equipment was on the truck we had to clean our weapons. Once this was finished we made our way back to camp. Our rifles were taken back to the Armoury and we all had a shower and put our kit away, aired our sleeping bags and got back on our beds, knowing we had at last achieved something."

In early November the Platoon Commander took the opportunity to support his favourite football team, Burnley, who were playing in London, to take the platoon on an 'educational' visit to White Hart Lane. It was with some trepidation that he entered the stadium bearing in mind that APte Oates had opted to wear his Manchester United emblazoned jacket and APte Reed his Leeds United scarf. Still the visit passed without incident, apart from a tragic defeat for Burnley.

The platoon got itself into the winning habit by carrying off firstly the College Rugby Sevens and secondly winning the Company Minor Games competition. Indeed the platoon came to form the nucleus of the College Rugby squad with several



APte Hoare showing how not to wear a cap-comforter while canoeing

members taking up rugby for the first time. APtes Mitchell, Morris, Watkin, Turner, Henderson, Richards and Webster have all been successful playing rugby in the College.

Success in a Company minor team games evening might seem to some to give an indication of a mis-spent youth by the boys of Aden Platoon as they eased to victory in the darts and snooker but in their defence they also displayed plenty of ability in the squash, table tennis and badminton. Whatever the reasons it was a good win and following quickly on the seven's success did a lot for platoon morale.

The platoon greeted the news that Sgt Botfield was to go to Surrey Fire Brigade Headquarters for a few days in mid-November in a manner reflecting the ambivalent relationship between a platoon and their Sergeant but when he returned over three months later they realised the guidance which they had missed. Company firing camp also disappeared from circulation owing to the firemen's strike and then the Platoon Commander followed Sgt Botfield to Reigate leaving the platoon to look largely after itself until the end of term, with the assistance of a much reduced Company staff.

Nevertheless the term continued almost according to schedule including a Company theatre night when Aden's particular brand of humour failed to impress the judges.

There was also time for an end of term trip to London to the theatre with the other recruit platoons and Christmas would not be Christmas without an end of term party for the 'lads'.

The term certainly provided plenty of opportunity for the 'character' of the platoon members to develop. APte Hoare got steadily thinner as the term progressed whilst APte Jones got steadily heavier. APte Mitchell developed the soldier's knack of never being happy unless he had something to moan about apart from rugby for which he was always enthusiastic. APte Oates was always good for a laugh and APtes Morrison and Whittaker made sure that the platoon was always kept informed of the latest 'news wave' music trends, which may or may not be regarded as a blessing.

All in all a satisfactory term for Aden.

Spring Term 1978

Aden's spring term at the College began with the Platoon Commander away on Op Burberry at Reigate and the Platoon Sergeant on his Supply Specialist course at the Employment Training School. However all good things must come to an end and Sgt Botfield was soon back at work and quietly suggesting to the platoon that they might like to correct one or two of the bad habits that they had got into. They certainly realised he was back!

The first few weeks of term involved nothing that was particularly outrageous in terms of the training programme, which continued largely according to plan. Having mastered the SLR in term 1 the platoon set about "scoring" a few Fig 11 targets, with the SMG in their Skill-at-Arms periods.

The platoon was introduced to First Aid by Sgt Thomas (REME). On a few occasions the application of first aid in practical periods left the victim worse off than when he started. APte Henderson was slightly perturbed once, when his hand went a delicate pale blue after the application of a tight fitting bandage! In the end a good pass rate was achieved.

When the weekend leave came along in February a dozen or so of the platoon spent the time together at the Tower Hamlets ACF branch which ALcpl Roberts had at one time been a member of. No doubt they gave the amateur some professional guidance, although one can only wonder in what subjects. Certainly they all came back in good spirits.

On 18 February the Company departed for camp at Tregantle Fort. The weather was pretty grim for much of the time at Tregantle, causing some alterations to the training programme but generally everything went off well. Without doubt the highlight of the Platoon's stay at the College up to that time, occurred when they won the Assault March Cup at Tregantle; the most highly valued of all the inter platoon competitions. It was a great result for the platoon and a just reward for the determination they showed on the day.

After camp it was back to educational and military training at Deepcut as well as a fair amount of ELT periods including some canoeing, which resulted in a soaking for a number of the platoon.

ACpl Pettitt decided to have a break from the College for three weeks and went to Wales on an Outward Bound course. It was very hard work, but he enjoyed it and achieved a good report.

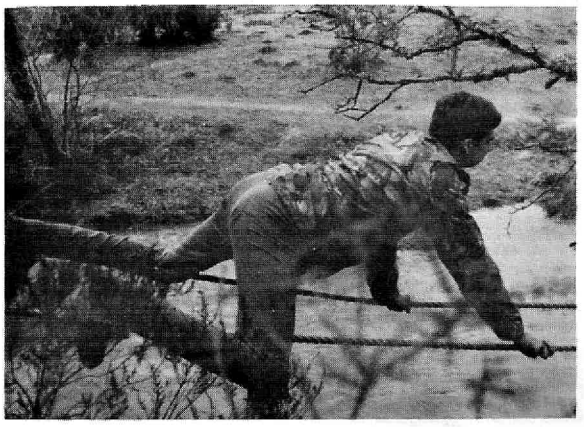
Another of the platoon's NCOs who also did well

in the term was ALcpl Osborn who won the West Shield for community work as a reward for his work with the local clubs and his involvement with Blackdown Theatre Club. APtes Whittaker and Hoare also helped with the Cubs in Deepcut, indicating the platoon's willingness to get involved in local affairs. The platoon as a whole played its part on 1 April in making the White Lodge collection the most successful ever, although a number of them were caught watching the Grand National through a TV shop window in the middle of Camberley when they should have been collecting! They said in their defence that they were collecting from happy punters.

Overall it was a good term for Aden and one in which many of the platoon made considerable progress towards becoming better soldiers.

Summer Term 1978

No sooner had we returned from Easter recess than we were pitched headlong into preparation for the College athletics meeting. Two of the platoon did well in that meeting, even though



Platoon Commander looking scared

training time had been at a minimum. ALcpl Turner came 2nd in the 1500 metres and APte Mitchell won the javelin event. Indeed Mitchell went on in the course of the season to win the javelin event at both the HQ and Training Centre meeting and the Junior Minor Units competition.

In mid-May the platoon moved to Penally Training Camp as advance party for College Camp and gained nothing but praise for their hard work in getting the camp established. Indeed throughout the Camp the platoon worked very well, with plent of enthusiasm for the various activities. APte Henderson had the following to say about summer camp

Penally Training Camp by APte R J Henderson

We arrived at Penally at about 6.30. Our platoon was advance party which meant we were to prepare the camp for the main body coming two days later. We started fatigues the following day but in the afternoon we were able to go abseiling with CSM Brace and Capt Griffiths.

The following day we were on fatigues all day. The main party arrived at dinner time. Our first actual activity was the three day exercise. As soon as we arrived we pitched tents and then went on a run whilst being shown the course for the afternoon's activity.

In the afternoon we underwent a strenuous point to point race over and down the Welsh mountains and hills. Aden did well at this and took 1st, 2nd and 3rd places.

The next day we went out on a map drawing exercise and again Aden produced a fair reconstruction of the original map. Our last day of the three day exercise was the most relaxing, we went down to the beach and played beach games.

Our whole time there seemed to be running or walking and the next day back from camp we went cliff walking, but this was slightly more relaxing as we went for a swim half way along the walk.

The most enjoyable day for me personally was the command tasks. These were difficult which made it all the more fun. The most energetic part was a platoon race in the afternoon. The platoon, I think, gave a great effort and beat the time set by other platoons by 5 minutes.

From then on the camp was slightly more relaxing but just as interesting. We did a lot of adventure training like parascending, canoeing, fishing, swimming and a few others as well, I myself did water skiing.

For me the parascending was the highlight of the camp, the only thing was, not everyone had the same experience, as parascending was stopped due to low flying aircraft.

Overall the camp was an enjoyable and valuable experience, as well as being a sort of holiday. Most people came away feeling that it was an excellent experience few would like to have missed.

Along with the rest of the College the platoon participated in the Ridgeway Walk and then

almost at once was away to Capel Curig for ELT camp. ACpl Watkin had this to say about ELT camp.

ELT Camp by ACpl Watkin

ELT camp started one morning in the month of June, with a train journey to North Wales. We were all packed and ready for a week's enjoyment doing Outward Bound training.

When we got to Builth Wells the rain started. Builth Wells is the last station but one to where we were stopping for the week. Llandidrod Wells the last station we got to was very wet at the time as it had been raining continuously for days. The lads started to look down in the dumps. "Never mind", says I, "it will stop". But it didn't. After a very wet and cold journey in the back of a four tonner we landed at our destination.

Amidst a background of Welsh mountains the camp site looked very attractive but very wet and cold. Put up the tents, said Sgt Green. At this point he picked four teams and four team leaders who were to be in charge of us for the training.

The food at the camp was quite good with Steve, a cook, in charge of the food and the members of our platoon currently on light duties helping, namely Coubrough and Dean. They worked hard on cookhouse fatigues.

Actual ELT training started next day in the rain with low level navigation. This means you are dumped somewhere and you have to find your way back. I found this part very enjoyable for the first ten minutes but after that I got soaked through. Not a dry stitch anywhere. The next day we were supposed to have had a two day exercise but this was cancelled due to the weather. Instead we visited a wood factory which I found very interesting. In the afternoon we practised our first aid. Day three arrived and it was dry. Things are turning out for the better, I thought. On the second day we had moved into the buildings of a small farm nearby which were much better than tents. In the sunshine we walked up Snowdon, the highest mountain in Wales. This was the high-point of the ELT camp and was very enjoyable. Day four we did rock climbing in the morning and packed in the afternoon. Rock climbing is very enjoyable but needs a lot of skill and not many people cleared the rock faces.

Saturday morning dawned and we came home. I never thought I would be glad to see Deepcut. On the whole ELT camp was a disappointment but if the weather had been alright I think I would have thought differently.

Summer Term (contd)

Throughout the term several members of the platoon represented the College in one of the most successful years on the cricket field. ALcpl Turner and APtes, Webster, Oates, Preston, Hawkins and Mitchell all played, and Webster and Hawkins in particular turned in several creditable performances. Indeed APte Webster was selected to represent the REME against the RAEC but rain prevented him from playing. The platoon was also heavily represented in the 'A' Company side which beat firstly the Permanent Staff of 'A' Company, and secondly, more importantly, 'B' Company.

The platoon felt that it did not quite get a fair reward for its efforts in the 'A' Company Theatre night when as the finale of their performance APtes Reed and Oates produced a near perfect imitation of John Travolta and Olivia Newton-John, a la Top of the Pops, performing "You're the one that I want". One member of the platoon who was forced to perform somewhat reluctantly was Lt Wood who had a wig and guitar thrust into his hands and was required to stomp about the stage in the manner of 'Status Quo'. Not an easy task by any means.

Towards the end of July came the platoon visit when Aden set off for the 'London Lights' to see the Royal Tournament. Everyone seemed to have a good day and then we all met up for the show, which was pretty good.

Returning to military matters the platoon took part in 'Exercise Last Chance' which was the culmination of their Fieldcraft and Minor Tactics training. It began on the afternoon of 3 August and involved setting up a defensive position, patrolling, section attacks and vehicle anti-ambush drills, and ended the following afternoon. Everyone had a chance to fire plenty of blanks and charge about with bags of enthusiasm and everything went off very well.

After that there were only a few days left before end of term and they were spent rehearsing for the Passing Out Parade on 10 August. That day soon dawned and Aden Platoon went their various ways, hopefully to successful military careers.

FORT TREGANTLE 78

by APte Ellis - Aden Platoon

Saturday. We arrived at Tregantle Fort, Cornwall, in weather that seemed more suited to the North Pole. The wind was blowing a gale, whipping the heavy falling sleet into a blizzard. After a briefing by the CSM we sorted out our baggage and were taken to the rooms that would be our home for the next week. The rest of the day was spent unpacking and settling in.

Sunday. Due to the extremely bad weather our orienteering was cancelled, a few people in the platoon breathed a sigh of relief. In the morning we did a bit of map reading which most people got through without any hitches. We had a break which was followed by a lesson in Akido by our favourite PTI, Cpl Ritchie. This was enjoyed by all, although some had painful experiences, especially Rogers who had a double gooseneck demonstrated on him.

In the afternoon we boarded the 4-tonners bound for HMS Raleigh along with the recruits of Alamein. At Raleigh we played five-a-side football which we won convincingly, although some nasty accusations of fouling came our way (as if Aden would resort to that). In the evening most of the platoon went to the cookhouse to watch the film "For Pete's Sake" starring Barbara Streisand.



On the way to victory in the Assault March. About half-way and looking good. Tregantle 1978.

Monday. We set out for Plymouth to do our first canoeing. Major Morton RAOC, who was attached to the Marines, instructed us along with our very own Cpl Ritchie. We were split into groups while the first group did canoeing, we went to play football on a rather waterlogged pitch. The match was refereed by CSM Brace, although not with the efficiency of Clive Thomas. The final score is in doubt but I am certain our side beat Sgt Botfield's. When our turn came for canoeing and we were taught to paddle forward and backward and to do turns. Bon Hawkins tested the water by capsizing and we had the added bonus of watching how to rescue someone after they had capsized. In the afternoon we had the Aden open table tennis championship which was won by Hawkins.

Tuesday. Today was the day of the assault march but in the morning we went boat training some of us in rowing boats and some in motor boats but it was changed around so that everybody had a go in the motor boats. There were two rowing boats and these had a race, with the superior team of myself (of course), Turner, Brooker, Mays, Oates and Jones, along with our superb coxswain Lt Freeman, winning the race comfortably. Dinnertime came and we all took it easy on the food ready for our Assault March which was straight afterwards. We set off on our run at 1345 hrs. From the camp we went along the coast and Sgt Botfield was proved right when he had said earlier that even though we would be tired going up and down the hills, we would have nice scenery.

We came off the coast road and started to head inland. At this point we had been going for only 40 minutes which gave us all a boost for the 1 in 4 hill ahead. After successfully conquering that we ran on to Millbrook, posing for photographs with the thumbs up sign along the way. We completed the course in 1 hour 26 minutes and 55 seconds.



Aden Platoon. Nearly finished and in a time that could not be beaten.

Wednesday. This was not exactly our favourite day as it was our duty day, although those of us who did our fatigues in the morning relaxed in the afternoon by going down to the beach with Cpl Longton, where some fished, although not very successfully. The rest of us climbed rocks or beach combed. In the evening we watched a film about running, which was very appropriate. Later the results of the AMC were announced with Aden winning with a difference of 1 minute 5 seconds between us and Ardennes. This gave Sgt Botfield his first win in his time at the College. We celebrated with a glass of coke in the Sergeants' Mess where the OC congratulated us. We went to our beds feeling very tired and happy.

Thursday. Our first impressions of today were not hopeful, in the morning the dreaded commando course, in the afternoon a visit to Plymouth with nearly all of us broke and then back for a sweat night. The assault course was more enjoyable than we first imagined with walks, rope climbing, baby crawl and a dead man's crawl across the river. This led to quite a few people in the platoon getting a ducking, including Lt Wood, and there were rumours of the Corporal being bribed with two cigarettes to help this come about. These were totally unfounded (or were they)? In the afternoon we visited Plymouth but bad weather and lack of money did not help and very little happened.

Friday. We headed back for Surrey and Deepcut with, I think on the whole, happy hearts. Who would have thought we would ever have been glad to return here.

ALAMEIN PLATOON

Platoon Commander — Lt A R L Jaggers REME

Platoon Sergeant — Sgt B Macro REME

"Alamein Platoon shun! By the left quick march". Heads held high, Alamein Platoon, under their Platoon Sergeant, Sgt Macro, marched smartly on to Dettingen Square, in front of the College Corps of Drums. As I watched Alamein Platoon march onto the parade square to present a display of "pokey drill", log exercises, Aikido and climbing I thought back to 10 January when they first arrived at the College. Newly arrived myself I was more than a little apprehensive at what was in store for me. All I knew was that I was to be instrumental in transforming a group of 'green' Geordies, Brums, Taffies, Paddies and Jock civilians, mostly straight from school, into a platoon of smart young soldiers with a good knowledge of military subjects, my particular responsibilities being military law, map reading and tactics, as well as being friend and advisor.

The WRVS club is run by Miss Pam Riddell, who provides an invaluable 'home from home' atmosphere in the club where Apprentices go to relax and enjoy playing one of the many games available, as well as providing a sympathetic feminine ear. This was the setting on 10 January where Sgt Macro and I waited to receive our young men. APte Donnan has the distinction of being the first to arrive and after tea and cakes and initial welcome he was escorted with other new arrivals on the circuit, to complete intake administration. Top of the list was a visit to Norman, the College barber, who surprisingly has many friends in the College. By 2200 hrs that night Norman was knee deep in multi-coloured hair and Alamein Platoon, 41 strong, was bedded down, some sleeping, some awake and thinking of home, many thinking excitedly of what lay in store for them over the coming months.

Soon after their arrival Alamein Platoon began to hear talk of the Assault March Cup competition which is an eight mile march in full combat clothing, followed by the Assault Course. This term the competition was to be held on Company Camp at Tregantle Fort near Plymouth from 18-24 February. In preparation for this Alamein embarked on a get fit programme. The first run was disappointing, we had barely run 200 metres when heavy smoking started taking its toll. Gradually however, fitness improved until a flu epidemic reversed all our good efforts and not only curtailed our fitness training, but to everyone's disappointment, resulted in the cancellation of our 24 hour exercise over the weekend 4-5 February. Luckily the flu-bug's debilitating effects subsided in time to enable us to enjoy a 48 hour pass at home the following weekend. Refreshed after our weekend off we resumed training with renewed vigour and mounting excitement, for Company Camp was only a week away.

I will let APte Cassidy introduce the reader to the saga of "Tregantle Tango".

"On a dull Saturday we left our barracks in Army coaches heading for Farnborough North station. The journey took about half an hour. We got off the coaches and helped unload the cases and kitbags and struggled up to the platform, leaving them all in a heap. We all fell in three ranks and waited for the train. When it finally arrived we formed a human chain to stack up the luggage in the carriages and jumped on the train and settled in our seats for a while until we reached Reading where the whole rigmarole of loading and unloading began again. We were finally on our way to St German's where we were met by three luxury coaches which took us to the Fort. It was a lovely sight, set in all its splendour on the Cornish coast. We then disembarked from the coaches and went inside its large grey stone walls which looked rather forbidding. I didn't have much time to admire the view as I was down for doing cookhouse fatigues".

The saga is continued by APte Aden

"My first impressions of Tregantle was that it was a cold, lonely and deserted place, but I was determined to make it good for myself. We were shown to our rooms and they were very cold, but after our chief fire lighter, APte Ronaldson, came to the rescue the fire was glowing and the room soon heated up and it was like home. Sunday we were supposed to go on the Tarzan course which was set up by the Royal Marine Commandos, but instead we did Aikido with Cpl Ritchie, when we were taught unarmed combat aikido. This was very interesting. In the afternoon we were supposed to go to Plymouth but because of the weather conditions we did not go so we learnt how to tie different knots for rock climbing". Yes, the weather was a bit of a let down but "the best laid plans", etc. APte Hornsey takes up the story on a more promising note.

"Once the weather calmed sufficiently we resumed the pre-planned activities. Canoeing on Monday morning in the Tamar, quite an experience considering the art of canoeing is a lot harder to grasp than perhaps first impressions would have you believe. Three people fell into the water and I nearly became the fourth at one point. After dinner the platoon was allowed into Plymouth for an afternoon to themselves. 'Star Wars' was number one on my shopping list. But was the film worth £1.10? A cup of coffee was next, to be followed by window shopping.

During the rest of the week we went swimming at the Commando's 40th Command base. Went boating (and were rescued from being grounded by the Navy), quite a funny morning despite having to wade out to free the three stranded boats. Wednesday afternoon we did an assault march after which I feel everybody was aware of their limits and aching bodies. Even if I did require help I was happy to have finished the run and beaten the challenge.

Thursday I spent cleaning up the cookhouse in preparation for departure the next day. After dinner there was a rush to change and pack kit for the updated Tarzan Confidence course. The course totally dispelled any confidence I might have had before the start. It was a good job I had dry kit for the swim I experienced was wet and miserable.

It was my turn for guard that evening, my first, and I quite enjoyed giving early calls to various individuals at 4.30 in the morning. Beforehand I had plenty of time to recap my thoughts and feelings on the camp. It had been an experience I will not forget, both for its good and its bad points.

But all this aside, I think all of us were happy to return to Deepcut refreshed and thankful for the break. When all is said and done Tregantle Fort camp was very enjoyable."

The next major event in the College calender was the College cross country race. Alamein achieved 4th place out of 9 platoons competing which was quite a creditable performance by so young a platoon. Congratulations to APte Young who was placed second Apprentice. Well done!

Despite spending a Sunday attempting to improve our standards of shooting we were narrowly beaten into second place at the College rifle meeting by Burma Platoon. However, we were consoled by the fact that we were top 'A' Company platoon. Saturday 1 April was the day when platoons collected from their allotted areas in aid of the "White Lodge" spastics Association. Alamein collected a noteworthy £316 in aid of this worthy cause, the highest figure collected by any platoon.

And so we come full circle to the end of Spring Term and the Passing Out Parade on 6 April. A successful parade and a successful and rewarding first term for Alamein.



Alamein Platoon cliff walk. Summer Camp 1978

Summer Term 1978

Alamein Platoon saw little of their Platoon Commander during the first few weeks of this term for he was totally engaged with the College shooting team at the Corps and SE District Skill-at-Arms meetings. The brunt of the preparatory work for the College camp, which was the major event this term for Alamein, fell upon the capable shoulders of Sgt Macro. Under his guidance Alamein platoon arrived at Penally fully prepared for what lay in store.

APte Hornsey relates the saga of College Camp.

College Annual Camp 1978, Penally Nr Tenby, South Wales by APte Hornsey

"Thursday 18 May started at five am for the College, for ahead of us lay a 5½ hour train journey to Penally training camp near Tenby. We invaded Tenby at 1.30 and were shuttled from there to Penally by four tonners and buses. Our home for the next fortnight was a neat and compact camp site, positioned on the side of a hill on one of these nicest of the Welsh coastlines.

ACpl Duck, a member of the advance party, met us at the parade square and directed us to our accommodation, after giving us a verbal reconnaissance of the local area and the do's and don'ts during our stay.

Our training programme for the next two weeks was indeed a busy one. Ahead of us lay para-scending, abseiling, canoeing, swimming, walking, running, command tasks, a three day exercise, fishing and fatigues.

Alamein Platoon spent Friday doing fatigues after an early morning swim at Tenby swimming pool. The weather was fantastic and lifted our spirits high throughout the whole camp.

Our free day was next but not before our early morning run. Again the weather was superb and Alamein left the camp in very high spirits. With our pockets still containing money and our bodies absorbing brilliant sunshine it was impossible to feel anything but happy.

The next time I was to see any of my platoon was in Pembroke when I spotted APtes Griffiths, Green, Heywood and Burnett. We later left Burnett chatting up two girls and went to Pembroke Fort. That evening I went into Tenby for the first time where I was quietly enchanted by the town's character as I wandered around for half an hour or so, before going to the local disco.

Our fishing day was a quiet one, spent on golden Welsh sands. A few were given the opportunity to go sea fishing from a boat for a small fee. Everybody on the boat caught something, including ACpl Phillips, a complete novice to the sport who caught six fish and ALcpl Simpson who landed an 8¾ lb skate. APte Eden caught his one and only fish, a 6½ lb bullhuss at the very last minute. All in all a very successful day for our budding young fishermen.

Perhaps the most physically demanding few days of the camp were spent out on the Preselly Hills on a three day exercise with Arakan. We were to spend our first day on a short run and a 12 mile race over eight Welsh mountains in groups of four. Both Alamein and Arakan drew for first place, winning cans of beer. The two winning teams were made up of ACpl Duck, ALcpl Hough and APtes Clarke and Hetherington of Alamein and ASgt Harwood and APtes Couland, Russell and Smith of Arakan. Both teams completed the course in the time of 2 hours 20 minutes and 8 seconds. Despite the somewhat crude accommodation it was a big relief to return to the farmer's field where we were based. Tuesday, the platoon was split up into groups of six and sent away from our camp into the Welsh countryside to compile information of the local geography, so that two newly appointed cartographers could construct a map using the gathered information. APte Green and myself had some difficulty putting the map together, as the permanent staff were out acting as the enemy and capturing Apprentices, so hindering the work we were trying to do. Wednesday we packed and went to Newport Bay before returning to Penally.

Thursday was the day we were to tax both our bodies and brains for the permanent staff had set up five different obstacles for us to overcome in the morning and one race task, involving APte Thrussel as an injured patient, in the afternoon. On each task you were either awarded or deducted points, or both, depending upon your performance. Despite splitting the platoon up, the eventual aim was to gain as many points as possible for your platoon. Burma Platoon came first, collecting two crates of beer to be split up amongst them.

Next we had our last duties to do as a platoon so Friday was a quiet day for us, quieter than the next day when we were sent out to do our abseiling. The platoon was split up into two equal halves. One half abseiling in the morning whilst the other half played beach games. After dinner the two halves reversed their roles, all save one person, myself, APte Hornsey. It took Lt Col Bruce and Sgt Green to eventually abseil my frightened body down the rockface.

The best day of the camp was Sunday, the 28th. Parascending had been worrying a few of us from the beginning of camp, but after our first attempt we were all enthusiastic about going up again. First up was Mr Jaggers, a brave man indeed, for it was he two tested the rope. It was a fantastic day except for the two incidents. APte Macdonald who broke his ankle on uneven ground after his descent from six hundred feet and Cpl Wilkie who was dragged along the ground for roughly ten feet after an accidental error made by one of the Apprentices. Canoeing turned out to be quite an amusing activity. During the afternoon the training staff decided to arrange some 'wacky races' during which Mr Jaggers ended up damper than he would have liked to be but nevertheless amused his platoon when falling out of his canoe and then being showered by Staff Toefield. Unfortunately Smith (C) hurt himself when practising his capsize drill and was later found to have damaged one of his ribs.

During the cliff walk along the coastline the next day we had to gather information about the local surroundings before we reached our destination at Freshwater East. The afternoon, up until 3.30 was spent on the beach sunbathing and swimming. After tea we started packing in readiness for our departure in the morning.

It was a six o-clock rise for the whole College and until 10.30 and our departure, we were all busy handing in bedding, doing last minute packing and cleaning up.

The camp had ended but our memories of the activities, the area and most of all the fun still linger on."

The concentrated fitness training carried out at Penally stood us in good stead for the Assault March shortly after our return. Unfortunately our numbers were sorely depleted due to a stomach bug, but even so Alamein achieved a highly creditable second place.

Congratulations are in order to APte Young who came third in the SE District Athletics 5000 metres and APte Heywood on gaining second place in the high jump. Well done!

On 10 June 'A' Company staged a collection in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund in the area surrounding Deepcut. Since it was run on a competitive basis Alamein rose to the occasion and collected the most money, a noteworthy £127. APtes Green and Martin collected over £20 between them, the highest amount for any pair in the Company, towards this worthy cause.

In July the platoon took part in the Ridgeway Walk competition. No doubt there will be a detailed account of the aims and conditions of this competition elsewhere in the magazine. Suffice it to say that Alamein thoroughly enjoyed taking part but question whether it was a walk! Well, walk or forced march, the platoon excelled itself once again by coming first in 'A' Company.

On 12 July the Company theatre night produced some sparkling talent and unearthed much latent acting ability. The platoon performed a series of skits, showing the progress of several recruits through the various stages of induction and initial training. Although this produced many laughs the winning act was Arakan with the "smurfs" and very professional drumming, however, once again Alamein came second. Congratulations to APte Green on winning the 'Best Actor' award, donated and presented by Mr Smith of the Educational Wing.

It is worthy of note that this term APte Tinkler, in company with APte Clarke of Berlin Platoon won the Army Junior Doubles Tennis Championships and ALcpl Collins won the Handicap event and came third in the scratch competition of the Junior Soldiers Golf championships.

APte Woolford was runner-up in this term's parascending competition and APte Hoe kept up the good name of the platoon and the College by winning the crew's race in the annual RAOC sailing regatta. Well done all!

On 16 July the College orienteering competition was held. Once again the platoon acquitted itself well, being placed second in the College and yet again top 'A' Company platoon. Congratulations to APte Woolford and ACpl Hough on achieving second and third places respectively in what turned out to be a very close fought competition.

During this term the platoon bade a sad farewell to Sgt Macro who had seen them over the difficult initial stages of their training. We welcomed in his stead Sgt Keogh RAOC who at the time of writing is at the Guards Depot having his heart removed and a metronome inserted. We await his return from his drill course with some apprehension.

The College is currently in the throes of final preparations for the Passing Out Parade which signifies the end of another successful term for Alamein Platoon.

EXERCISE 'DORSET DILEMMA'

by APte Green Alamein Platoon

After an early dinner on Friday 8 July, Alamein Platoon, with all of its equipment and kit, boarded two four-ton vehicles and headed for Dorset and their weekend exercise.

The platoon arrived at Westmoors Petroleum Centre which was to be their home for that night. First thing on arrival was a short brief by Lt Col Cannons the Commandant and a tour of the very large establishment that they have there. This included where they stored the bulk fuel, the tank farm, where they washed and filled the jerrycans and also where they stored them when they were full and waiting to be transported to whichever Unit they were required. The platoon was then given a demonstration on the handling and use of all different types of fire extinguishers. Some of the lads even got the chance to have a go with them on small demonstration fires. The highlight of the demonstration was when a 'petrol tanker' and a 'car' were set alight to simulate a road accident and again some of the lads were allowed to put it out using hoses and foam - tremendous fun.

After tea the platoon was briefed on the next day's exercise. The platoon was split up into three groups. Haig, Wavell and Gordon groups. I was put in charge of Gordon Group. We were told to estimate the mileage and the time it would take for the group to travel it. We were also warned about possible casualties on the way round.

Both food and accommodation at Westmoors were excellent and the next day after a very nice breakfast all three groups set off for the drop point just outside Swanage. The walk was in stages from one check point to another, along usually quite good paths or roads. It was between 16 and 17 kilometres and we estimated it would take us about four hours allowing for rucksacks and the slowest members of the team.

We had made good time up to the third check-point, a railway bridge in a cutting, so I called a rest. At this point Major Calbreath arrived and had a short talk with the group before we set off again. Little did we know that he was sent down as a diversion as no sooner had we left than we stumbled on a casualty. A member of the group was immediately put in charge. He diagnosed a broken leg and after the map reference, position and other information was collected and written down two lads set off to get help, whilst the others reassured the casualty and one administered first aid.

After the casualty situation we continued on our way slightly behind time, but because we passed the casualty without complications the lads were in high spirits. The lads remained happy even though they were very tired on the end stretch. We arrived at the finishing point 15 minutes late because we had left our planned route, but we were quite happy as we completed it in the fastest time.

We then settled down and were taught how to use hexamine burners and 24 hour ration packs. I think most of the lads had curried chicken and rice or various mixtures achieved by the use of condensed milk, biscuits and apple flakes. After dinner we were allowed down into Swanage for the rest of the day. At half past ten after a very enjoyable time walking around the shops, amusement arcades and along the sea front we returned to camp and a large blazing fire with hot pies and chicken, and after a few camp fire jokes and songs everyone turned in for the night.

Sunday morning started with very bad weather, it must have rained for most of the night. Due to the weather we got up late and after breakfast and clearing the camp site, we started on our next walk to Corfe Castle. This was quite a nice walk as there was no time limit and it allowed us to stop for a brew up about half way round with one of the other groups who we had caught up with. The morale of the group was very high, even higher than the day before in fact, singing and joking most of the way around. We arrived at Corfe Castle in very good time.

We then returned to camp via Bovington to pick up a casualty. I think that everyone enjoyed the weekend camp even though some complained of blisters or backache. I am certain that everyone learned something from the camp I know I certainly did and some people were even sad about leaving Swanage and returning to Deepcut and normal work.

ANGUILLA PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt P C Harris RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt P W Daniel REME

Summer Term began for Anguilla just before the normal half term break. The first week as usual was intake admin, interrupted by the odd run and period of drill. As the platoon were not allowed to go on half term leave, the Platoon Commander planned a day parascending at Andover airfield.

The 24 hour exercise was designed to introduce the lads into living in the field and also to teach them a little about FMT. Quite by accident it decided to rain just before we were due to leave camp but undaunted, Anguilla left for the unknown G1.

Having set up camp the lads settled down to a somewhat cool but nevertheless enjoyable meal.

During the next 2½ hours each section was tasked to produce a sketch lasting 5-10 minutes. At 2200 hours around a rather large bonfire the sections

produced some funny situations. APte Levine and his levis and Saturday Night Fever.

After the sketches the Platoon Commander gave the lads a lecture and demonstration on night noises, after which the platoon returned to camp and settled down for the night. The next morning was spent practising movement over different types of ground and cam and concealment. At one stage the Platoon Commander and Platoon Sergeant had difficulty in finding the platoon as they were so well concealed.

The day following the exercise was spent on Andover Airfield with Sgt Wilkie and his parachutes. The majority of the platoon managed to go up on the short line even though two or three suffered line breaks. Those unfortunate breaks were also suffered by the Platoon Commander who smacked into the ground from only 40 feet. An incident which has been recorded on film, and will be shown to the lads when it is developed.

End of term seemed to be approaching rather quickly and it was soon realised that the Acceptance Parade was close. A lot of hard work had been put in by Sgt Daniel and the boys and resulted in a first class parade. As it was an 'A' Coy parade the Officer Commanding decided to inspect the lads himself. It must be said that this must be the first time in the history of the College that an Officer Commanding has taken an Acceptance Parade.

Overall it has been an enjoyable but hectic term's work. Congratulations must go to APte Powley who won the best recruit award. Well done! The Platoon has worked hard and developed a good 'Esprit de Corps' and everyone is looking forward to their next term at the College.

ARAKAN PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt A Ward RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt P M Carrick RAOC

Platoon Corporal Cpl P Wilkie RAOC

Winter Term 1977

From all parts of the United Kingdom they arrived at a little picturesque part of Surrey called Deepcut. All modes of transport were used to deposit this small band of warriors who wished to become soldiers. So it came to pass that a new intake of recruits were to be formed into Arakan Platoon - 32 in all.

As soon as they arrived they were refreshed with tea and cakes and a casual smile from the members of the permanent staff. After refreshments they were documented and directed to Block 10 - their home for the next twelve months.

A visit to the butcher, sorry, I will write that again, barber, soon had them looking like (but not acting like) soldiers.

With the able assistance of Junior non-commissioned officers in the form of ASgt Back, ACpl Foster, ALCpls Williams, Ritchie and Cain they had soon visited each location within the barracks with an occasional eyes right and eyes left to avoid stopping.

After the initial shock of being moved from pillar to post the platoon settled down.

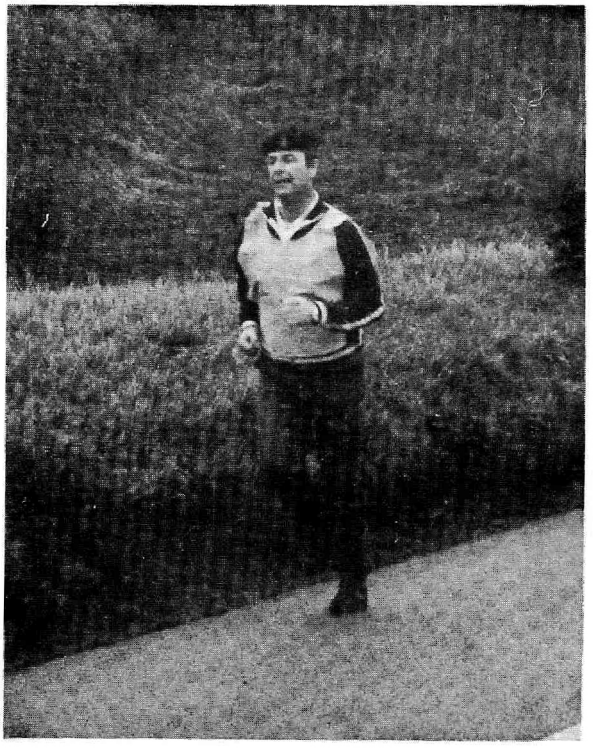


I bet we miss NAAFI break again

Their introduction to the drill square under the guidance of Sgt Carrick was of paramount importance in the early stages of training; the end product being to install self-discipline but they never believed it. This was followed by physical-fitness training and the more relaxed style of subject such as Map Reading, Military Law, Corps History, Fieldcraft, but to name a few.

Although most of the platoon settled down, unfortunately four were to leave, believing that service life was not for them.

During the middle half of the term the Platoon had a joint exercise with Aden Platoon. The object of the exercise was to practice night navigation, fieldcraft and living in the field, without home comforts. This was enjoyed by all, however, one or two remarks were made about the life-style of the Platoon Commander, who forewent his bread ration to feed the five thousand. The exercise proved a valuable guide

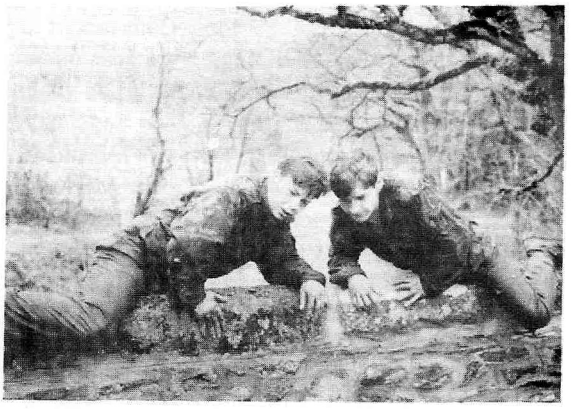


Here comes the leader!

to the permanent staff in selecting potential junior NCOs. APtes Harwood, Parker and Dick soon came to the fore and produced those qualities required in leaders. The latter was a very useful member of the platoon, who called upon his past experience as an Army Cadet, to assist others.

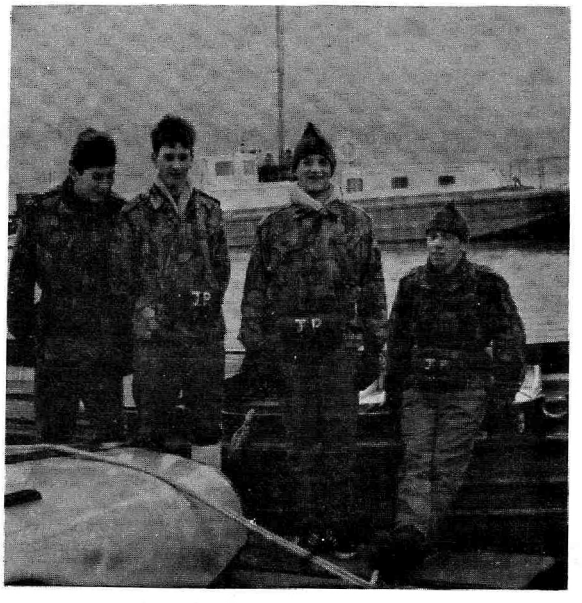
Due to the industrial troubles in civilian life the Platoon were unable to attend the Company Shooting Camp, Folkestone, however, our college Training Officer quickly produced an alternative programme which permitted some shooting which resulted in APte Priestley winning the Skill-at-Arms trophy.

The Platoon comedian was soon to be known in the form of APte Stamford, although a witty character he always managed to incorporate this in his learning - we hope!



He didn't tell me about that!

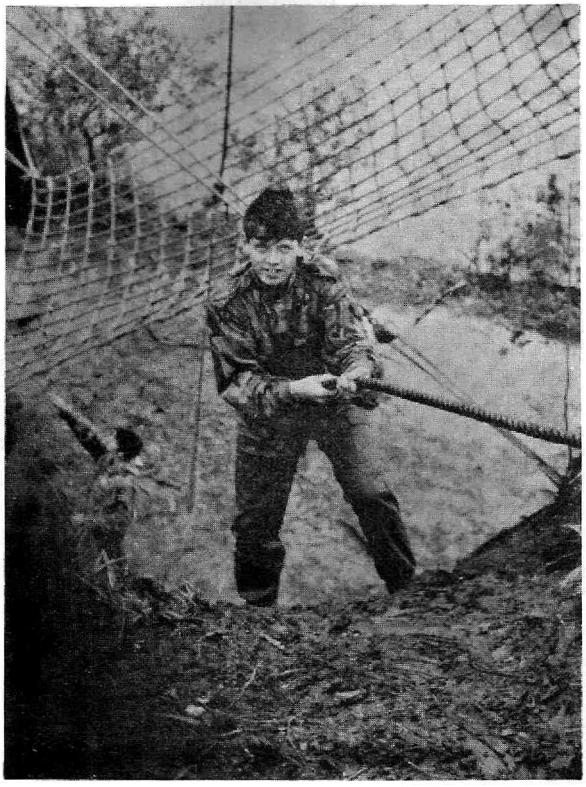
The Platoon were now able to produce some useful competitors who represented the College/ Platoon in the following events: Soccer - APtes Harwood, Smith, Hunt, Coupland. Badminton - APte Saunders, Squash - APte Chesher, Boxing - APtes Willcocks, Mooney and White.



APtes Stamford, Nay, Dick and Fiest

Arakan Platoon were soon given a taste of their first 'assault march'. This is a course of eight miles followed by an assault course. The fastest time produced being the winner. Arakan did not win but produced a very creditable effort. Although it was hard work at the time, the Platoon, to the amazement of the staff, were able to be cheerful.

The College term was drawing to an end. Everyone was busy in some form or another preparing



"I will find that spider" APte Johnston

for the college pageant. A term completed and three weeks leave to recuperate.

The following received awards as follows:

APte Harwood	-	Best Recruit
APte Deighton	-	Progress Cup

Education Awards

Office Org	-	ALCpl Ritchie
Science	-	APte Harwood
Section Prize	-	APte Parker

Spring Term 1978

To our joy Arakan Platoon returned from leave all safe and sound and raring to go. In our midst was a complete turnover of junior NCOs. They were ACpl Robson, ALCpls Harwood, Parker and Murdoch. The Platoon lost LCpl Dick to the new Recruit Platoon on promotion - well done!

The military side of training continued at the same density as the previous term. A new subject for the Platoon in the form of First Aid was taught by qualified instructors from Training Wing.

One highlight in the term was a visit to the Royal Army Chaplains' Department at Bagshot Park. The Platoon were entertained to lunch and were able to understand and appreciate the Padre's role in the forces. From remarks made by the Platoon the visit proved to be an interesting and worthwhile one.

Sad to write, but we lost another of our young warriors. APte Feist, a very keen photographer, decided to leave and pursue this career in civilian life. His discharge came through on return from Company camp.

The Company camp took place in East Cornwall at Tregantle Fort. The fort is a regular proving ground for most apprentices and needless to say it proved to be so for us. The weather on arrival was appalling and unfortunately interferred with our first day of training. The Platoon was involved in a variety of activities. The Marine Commando course was enjoyed by all, however, one or two of the Platoon who shall be nameless, did take the plunge into the icy water. The photographs show APte Johnston climbing up the side of a hill ably assisted by his hands and feet - cheat! The other photograph shows APtes Chesher and Mooney climbing onto the wall, looking rather wet. (Their clothing?).

Through the kind permission and assistance of the Royal Navy the Platoon took to boating off Jupiter Point. Our photograph shows members of the Platoon, protected of course by life-saving apparatus even though they were on dry land. One has to be so careful!

Whilst at camp the Platoon also took part in canoeing and the 'assault course'. Our photograph shows ASgt Harwood leading the Platoon up one of the many hills encountered on the course. The other photograph depicts a very old looking apprentice looking for his Platoon. Joking aside, the Platoon completed the course as a team but could only manage third place. All good things have to come to an end so we found ourselves back in the countryside of Surrey.

Shortly after returning from camp the Platoon won its first trophy, the Indoor Games Trophy. A highly-prized trophy which entails competitors throwing metal things at a dartboard, or hitting billiard balls with a stick and beating to death a little ball with a racket. It's amazing how they amuse themselves! After the Easter break the Platoon was busy under the watchful eye of the Regimental Sergeant Major preparing for the Passing-Out Parade.

Prior to the end of term we held a farewell party for SSgt Carrick who was leaving the College at the end of term, for BAOR. Although a sad occasion Cpl Wilkie, assisted by the Platoon, gave him a rousing send-off and we wish him and his charming wife all the very best for the future.

So another term ends. Next term is a very demanding one as far as the Platoon is concerned with College camp at Penally, ELT camp at Capel Curig and the really big one, their Passing-Out Parade. Roll on next term - Arakan will accept the challenge.

Summer Term 1978

I am pleased to report that the Platoon returned back to the College after their Easter break safe and sound. No sooner had they unpacked their personal effects they were preparing themselves for the College and Training Centre Athletics. Newly promoted ASgt Harwood represented the College at putting the Shot and did the Platoon proud because of his performance.

As soon as this event took place the College were then busy packing and preparing for the College Summer Camp at Penally, South Wales. There is not much point in outlining what took place as this is covered in detail by the Platoon scribe APte Stamford.

On return from Summer Camp the Platoon prepared themselves for the Assault March Cup. Again the Platoon produced a very good effort but unfortunately did not win the cup. Leading up to half term the Platoon were involved in various tests and examinations in preparation for their departure from the College.

On the 1 July a number of Platoons took part in a sponsored march along the Ridgeway path. Arakan had the honour to take part and covered the 27 miles or so in a very good time. Only one casualty, no not the Platoon Commander, but APte Coates who suffered an ankle injury prior to the event but was still prepared to have a go.

On Monday 3 July 1978 the Platoon left the College for External Leadership Training at Capel Curig in Wales. The weather was very disappointing but the Platoon enjoyed the activities laid on by the staff. The highlight of the camp was the walk/climb up Mount Snowdon. It was only when we reached summit that we realised there was a perfectly suitable journey to the top by rail, still never mind the exercise did us all good.

The Company theatre night took place on 12 July and was again a most enjoyable evening. The result was a very close one but the Platoon eventually came out winners. Due credit must go to Russell, Johnson and Willcocks for their individual efforts.

During the latter half of the term the Platoon were involved in various parades and rehearsals for their RPC 3 drill tests to be followed by the Passing-Out Parade.

May I take this opportunity in wishing all those who are leaving every success and enjoyment in their chosen careers.

SUMMER CAMP TENBY 1978

by APte Stamford Arakan Platoon

On Thursday 18 May, with most members of RAOC Apprentices College still half asleep, we boarded transport for North Camp Station. We caught a train to Tenby, South Wales where we were to spend two weeks.

As Lt Ward was going to arrive late due to SAA meeting he asked me very kindly if I would take his suitcase to Tenby, I agreed before seeing it. I think he is bringing his own bed and the kitchen sink.

The College arrived at Tenby at approximately 1330 hours. Once the train was unloaded we were transported to Penally Training Camp just outside the town.

Everybody unpacked and very quickly familiarised themselves with the camp. Some of the lads and I decided to go into Tenby that night after dinner. We walked down the beach as we were told it was the quickest way.

The Platoon's first activity was abseiling, some of the lads were looking forward to it, others a bit apprehensive. During the fortnight I will be diving with the Sub Aqua Club so I will miss out on most of the Platoon activities.

Each morning the Platoon went on a run to the

beach and back. A fairly short run because the beach is quite near and was quite enough for the Platoon staff.

The first morning went very well, enquiries within the Platoon proved abseiling to be good fun, and thoroughly enjoyed by all. In the afternoon the Platoon were involved in beach games, so called sunbathing by the way they are looking so red.

Sub Aqua went very well, one dive was made in the morning then again in the afternoon. We managed to discover all the good beaches to land and also made a recce trip around Caldey Island in the assault boat. None of us thought the island was so big. After having a look round the island we then headed for Tenby where we landed to the surprise of some bathers. It must have made their day to watch us carry the boat up the beach dressed in our sub aqua suits.

Today being the 20 May, Arakan were on duty.

This evening about 1830 hours Lt Ward and his band of trigger happy shooters, the College shooting team, arrived.

The weather so far has been excellent and the majority of the College have sore skin due to too much sun. No one complained.

Monday 22 May first day of three day exercise. We were told it would be a hard day and it turned out that way. As soon as we got to the camp we were given sleeping bags and shown where to sleep. We were then informed that we were going on a little run. The little run was 2½ miles up hill so that Capt Lewis could point a few things out to us with reference to the afternoon walk. In the afternoon I was part of the second group to set off. The walk was about 12-13 miles over fairly rugged country. We had eight check points in all, they were all at the top of steep hills.

The fastest time was 2 hours 21 minutes set by group 4. Lt Ward was quite pleased and promised to give the lads in that group a pint. I am sure he meant a pint of milk but he's completely forgotten about it or has he?

That evening we had a briefing on map reading and what we were to do the following day.

Today was a fairly hectic day, starting with Reveille at 0700 hours. After breakfast we collected our equipment for the day. At 0830 hours we set off in the vehicles to our start point. Once at our start point we had to walk about 3½ - 4 miles. We then made a rough map of the area but it had parts missing and we had to find what was missing eg river, towns and farms, and general layout of the land.

Later on that day everyone was involved in compiling the information gathered and were busy producing a map of the missing area. We produced three maps for perusal and Capt Lewis complimented the Platoon on their efforts.

Today is the last day of the three day exercise and it has been a bit wet during the night, plus there is a heavy dew.

Capt Lewis gave us a debrief on the exercise, after which we cleaned up the camp site. We then spent the rest of the morning in Newport where we had lunch on the beach. We returned to base camp at Penally at 1530 hours.

Today the Platoon went canoeing, they all thoroughly enjoyed it. We were taught by Cpls Thwaites, Pascoe, Ritchie and Rayner. In the morning we learnt the basic strokes then after lunch we did capsize drill which consists of swimming about 50 or 60 yards and emptying the canoe of water. In the afternoon we paddled all round the bay and learnt deep sea rescue. Lt Ward had a go in the canoe and I am informed that he vowed never to canoe again.

Today we went fishing. We were divided into two groups, one group fished from the shore and the other fished from a boat. On the boat some of the lads caught dog, a relation of the shark no less! Those on the beach enjoyed games and were able to improve their sun tans.

Saturday 27 May was the platoon free day. Cpl Wilkie had arranged for the platoon to go to Swansea and from what I have been told everyone enjoyed themselves.

Captain Parsons very kindly gave us a day off, so I had an enjoyable day on the beach. Today the platoon went on a cliff walk which was about 10-12 miles along the coast. We stopped halfway for lunch at a place called Freshwater East, where we rested for about 2½ hours and then progressed to Manorbier, where the vehicles picked us up and took us back to camp.

Today in Sub Aqua I took a 60-ft dive with Capt Parsons and APte Malone. It was great fun but the visability was nil, spoiling what was a very enjoyable dive.

Sunday we have Command Tasks. I have to take part because the assault boat is being used for water skiing. It turned out to be an interesting day. As I am writing this the lads from the Corps of Drums are bulling their boots for a parade in Tenby tomorrow night. Four lads from the platoon are taking part. They are Johnston, Willcocks, Nagy and Russell.

In command tasks we had what appeared to be a fairly simple situation to puzzle out but when one tried to work them out they were fairly hard. At lunchtime we had to run back to camp.and then after lunch we formed up at 1430 hours in front of the Guardroom.

The CSM Training Wing doubled us back to Penally range where we were told we had to find a casualty somewhere on the hills in front of us. We had to find him and take him back to Penally Station by a certain route and four people at a time carried the casualty. We ran all the way and then formed up on Penally Station car park. The car park was meant to be a first aid post, we did it in 18 min 54 secs. The platoon came third in the College.

The last day was spent parascending where they went up on the short line twice to get used to it. Then they moved on to the longer lines. While the platoon was parascending I had to clean the sub aqua kit ready for the return to Deepcut.

On the last day we were awakened rather early because we had quite a lot to do, but finally, everything was finished. We had to wait for the transport to take us to the station where the train was waiting for us. Once on the train we had a fast non-stop trip to North Camp station and from there back to sunny Deepcut by four ton vehicles.

ARDENNES PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt F T Freeman REME

Platoon Sergeant Sgt C Wolfe RAOC

Winter Term 1977

In the Thunderbolt magazine of December 1977, Ardennes Platoon submitted an article describing our original term in the College. At the end of term we proceeded on leave for four weeks prior to facing our second term, Winter 1977.

Everything that goes up must come down, or more appropriately in our case, everyone who goes on



College Skiers
Exercise Snow Plough March 1978
ALcpl Kerry APtes Ralston & Murdock ACpl Kelly

leave must return or face the possible drastic consequences. Ardennes returned from summer



ACpl Robson ALcpl Richardson APte Law
ALcpl Kerry APte Brown APte Murdock
APte Ralston ACpl Kelly

leave viewing the forthcoming term with mixed feelings. For six of the members the term started very well. These were the six who earned promotion, three of whom, ALcpls Fleming, Robson and Holden-Rushworth were posted to other platoons in the Company and the other three, ALcpls Foskett, Cowley and Kelly who were promoted within the platoon. This reduced our numbers to 21, the smallest platoon in the Company, which although advantageous from an administrative point of view left us rather short for the selection of a sports team for any of the various inter platoon competitions.

Training started on 9 September. We were soon enjoying the attentions of the Permanent Staff in all types of activities, most notably Battle PT, tactics and orienteering. The subjects covered were now becoming more advanced and demanding and other subjects such as first aid, NBC and ELT were being introduced.

On 18 September APtes Billinger, Gisborne and Westwood were fortunate enough to be selected to accompany our two sailors, Mr Watson and Mr Johnson, on exercise Channel Buoy. This was the name given to a 15 day sailing trip on the College yacht Thunderbolt. They sailed from Gosport to Cowes, visited Lymington and sailed across to Cherbourg. From Cherbourg they proceeded to Alderney in the Channel Islands, back to Cherbroug and finally returned to Gosport. In each of the places visited time was allotted to do some sightseeing and explore places of interest. This included a total of five days spent in Cherbourg, three days touring the forts and gun emplacements on Alderney, a day at Cowes and a night in Gosport.

The College cross country run took place on the 1 October. This is a competition in which all members of the College take part. Approximately 300 runners line up at the start point and race off on the three mile circuit. The first half mile can be quite hectic as the slower members are pushed on by the keen and fit chaps trying to get into a reasonable position in the race. Ardennes were unable to excel in the event, though we made a valient attempt to earn a reasonable position. APte Law produced a creditable performance, being first in Ardennes and 17th overall. Senior 'J' were the winning platoon with a total of four of their team in the first ten places.



Tregantle Fort 1978 Closing stages of Assault March

During the first week in October Lt Freeman ran the inter Company boxing competition. Very few of the Apprentices were keen boxers or had any previous experience. However, by encouraging each platoon to produce a team and emphasising the competitive element between the platoons in all competitions, some very reasonable boxers were found. The competition was run over two days on an elimination basis. Winners in each weight group earned two points for their platoon and runners up one point. Ardennes won what was a very close and well contested competition with a total of nine points, four winning and one losing finalist in the ten bouts. On the 8 October the inter Company competition was held between A and B Companies. Unfortunately we were not able to beat 'B' Company who won by seven bouts to five. The outstanding boxer of the evening was APte Brooks of Arnhem Platoon. Winning boxers from Ardennes Platoon were ALcpl Kelly and APte Law. Two other boxers from the platoon, APtes McGowan and Ralston represented the company but were unfortunately beaten.

Half term was upon us again and with it came half term promotions. ALcpls Fleming and Foskett were promoted to ACpls and APtes Roberts and Scott were promoted to ALcpls. This was yet another reduction in the platoon strength as ALcpl Scott was posted to Aden Platoon. ACpls Fleming and Foskett were cross posted, with ACpl Fleming returning to Ardennes and ACpl Foskett joining Aden. Our total strength was now 20.

On return from half term it was back to business as usual. Priority was given to fitness training in preparation for the Assault March Cup which was to be held later in the term.

The evening of 9 November was our Company indoor games competition night. This included darts, badminton, snooker, table tennis and squash. Our numbers made it necessary that everyone in the platoon had to compete in something which was rather a disadvantage but did mean maximum participation. Although everyone tried hard we failed to win but did get a lot of enjoyment in trying.

The weekend of 5/6 November saw our first real exercise and practice of the tactics we had learned to date. It was spent on Bordon training area P, Bramshot, with a section of Senior B Platoon acting as enemy. The exercise was called Trial Run and practised the platoon in defensive positions, concealment, fire control orders, duties of a sentry, patrolling, section battle drills, stand to, night patrols, platoon in attack and re-organisation. Though a thoroughly miser-

able weekend weather wise, we had a good time, using blanks and pyrotechnics for the first time and really getting the feel of living and exercising in the field. There were a number of amusing incidents during the exercise which allowed us a laugh and encouraged us to forget the discomfort and actual hard work involved and kept our morale high.

Skill at Arms camp for the Company was cancelled this term due to the pressures imposed by the firemen's strike, however the Assault March Cup was not. We were really keen to win this, as we had managed to do as recruits in our first term, but this was not to be. Having completed the eight mile course plus the full NATO assault course itself in 1 hour and 20 minutes we were sure we had an excellent chance of winning, for it was a very good time for the circuit, The last platoon to go, Senior A did the course in 1 hour 17 minutes, the fastest time recorded in the Company to date on the circuit. How disappointed we were, though we did have the satisfaction of knowing that we had still done a very good time in finishing second and every single member of the platoon took part, no sick, lame or lazy had appeared at the start and everyone had given it all they could.

The curtains were drawn and the quiet room was shrouded in secrecy as we rehearsed our playlet previous to the Company theatre night on 30 November. We called the play "Sale of the Century", an amateur attempt at a revised version of the television programme. ASgt Lidster, ACpl Cowley, APte McGowan and ALcpl Roberts were our stars and produced a very creditable performance on the night. Each platoon produced their own play or act, which made for a very entertraining and amusing evening.

The end of term and Christmas festivities were upon us. Prior to going on leave, in the last week of term each platoon arranged a party, visit or suchlike activity as a final fling. We arranged a trip to London, going up in the morning, visiting the Imperial War Museum, carrying out our Christmas shopping in the afternoon and going on to a show in the evening. It was a pleasant outing as a finale to the term before going on leave.

Spring Term 1978

All but nine of the platoon returned from leave to start the new term on 6 January. Promotions were to take effect as from the commencement of term, therefore it is right to firstly record the ranks of our members and ex-members and the platoons to which they were posted. In Ardennes Platoon ASgt Fleming, and ALcpls Richardson, Billinger and Kerry; in Aden ASgt Foskett and ALcpl Scott; in Arakan ACpl Robson and ALcpl Murdoch; in Alamein ACpl Kelly and ALcpl Haw and in Arnhem ACpl Cowley and ALcpl Holden-Rushworth. This was quite an achievement, of the original 27 boys who joined Ardennes as recruits, two had attained the rank of ASgt, three ACpl and a further seven ALcpl. Of this original 27, four had decided to leave the College for civilian life once again. 15 were REME and in their final term and the other eight were RAOC and in their penultimate term.

Nine of our Apprentices returned from leave one day early on 5 January. These were the ones who were lucky enough to be taking part in Exercise Snowcross Minor, a langlauf skiing course of two weeks duration run for junior soldiers at AMTC Silberhutte in the Harz mountains in Germany.

The trip to Silberhutte took approximately 24 hours, travelling by train to St Martin's Plain camp where the skiers from each of the units taking part assembled. From there it was on to Dover, across by ferry to Ostend and a trip by coach across Belgium and Germany to Silberhutte.



More of the Assault March at Tregantle

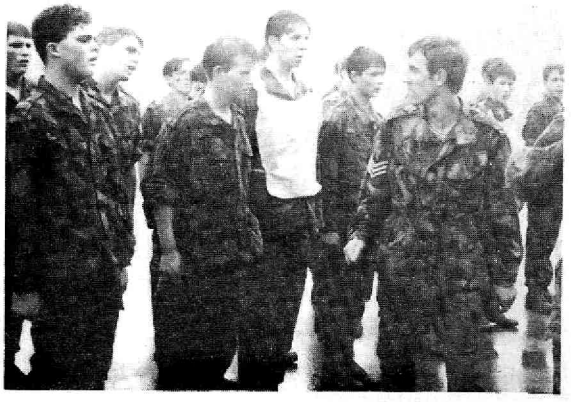
Instruction on the course was excellent. The aim was to attain the Bronze Award for langlauf skiing by the end of the two weeks' instruction. This was achieved by all of our nine Apprentices, ACpls Cowley, Kelly and Robson, ALcpls Kerry, Murdoch and Richardson and APtes Brown, Law, and Ralston. In the 20 kilometre race which was run at the end of the course, ACpl Cowley gained first place in a field of 80 competitors, a really commendable performance.

Entertainment for those who had the energy or wish to participate after a full hard days skiing, consisted of a NAAFI on camp at Silberhutte and

trips to St Andreasburg, a local town, for visits to discos, swimming baths and cinemas. The lads mixed well with the locals, learned a little Deutsch and gained a number of small souvenirs from members of the Bunderswehr.

On 28 January we were off on our ELT camp to a small village called Maentwrog in North Wales. The camp was of one week's duration. We were accommodated in rather cramped conditions in a small cottage. The weather was absolutely awful, snow, rain and extreme cold which naturally made life rather miserable. It did, however, really test everyone in the tasks undertaken. We covered climbing, abseiling, the construction of an alpine stretcher, low level mountain walks, river crossings, a number of runs, surviving in adverse conditions and as a break from the training had a one day visit to the slate mines. It was a very worthwhile camp, where we learnt a great deal, though admittedly we were not always able to maintain the spirit with which we normally worked together.

Our half term was a 48 hour pass on the weekend of 11/12 February. It was a welcome break and allowed most boys the chance of going home for the weekend.



The end of the Assault March - shattered!!

Between 18/24 February we had our Company camp at Tregantle Fort in Devon. This was without doubt the most enjoyable week of our stay in College to date. Though the weather was pretty bad, with snow, rain and sleet in turns; due to the spirit engendered by all and the activities in which we took part, morale was very high. We had arrived and settled in on the Saturday. Sunday's programmed activities were cancelled due to the gale force winds and driving snow. We therefore passed the day under platoon arrangements within the camp, carrying out classroom revision in map reading and tactics and were briefed on the Assault March Cup route in readiness for the competition later in the week.

On the Monday training began as per our planned programme with swimming in a local pool in the morning and a platoon visit in the afternoon. Our visit was to a cinema in Plymouth to see "Star Wars"

Tuesday we joined Arnhem Platoon and set off for the Commando's assault course. This was quite an experience. The course basically involved cat walks and climbing ropes. A new technique was learned by all in the crossing of a stream on a single rope which was termed a "dead man's crawl". In the afternoon we did our last Assault March Cup as Ardennes Platoon. Yet again we finished second. this time beaten by Aden Platoon. Our record in the three competitions in which we had taken part was one first and two seconds.

Wednesday saw us making an early start with the canoes to the river Tamar. Here we spent the morning improving, or trying to improve, our canoeing techniques. In the afternoon we visited the gymnasium at HMS Raleigh and spent our time playing five-a-side football, basketball and squash.

Thursday was again spent on the river Tamar, but this time we had rather bigger boats, we tried our hands with some of the Naval rowing boats, which seated six rowers and a coxswain. We also had the use of two of the SMBs and a Whaler, all of which were engine driven. That night we packed our kit in preparation for the journey back to camp on Friday.

In March our nine skiers were away again. This time they were accompanied by Lt Freeman and Cpl Diamond and went off to Scotland for two weeks downhill skiing. They were accommodated at the RAOC ski hut which was located in an annexe to the Nethybridge Hotel in Nethybridge village.

The aim was to train in slalom skiing and then enter the Junior Army and Novice races of the Army Ski Association (Scottish) meeting. APte Murdoch won the RAOC Individual Junior Trophy and was 27 out of a total of 126 competitors in the Junior Army and Novices competition.

Though our team positions in the competition were not as high as we would have liked, valuable experience was gained in downhill skiing and slalom techniques and the time spent in Scotland

was most enjoyable. We were skiing in the Cairngorms, just outside Aviemore, and Aviemore is the biggest and most renowned skiing resort in the United Kingdom. The days spent on the slopes were terrific fun and the entertainment in the evenings in Aviemore was grand.

At the College Rifle meeting in March, Ardennes managed to win the falling plate competition and even beat the RAOC Training Centre team who were shooting as guests. ACpl Cowley was our best individual shot, gaining second place in the Rifleman's Cup.

Easter leave was taken from 23-28 March 1978. On our return we had a total of eight days before the end of term and the Passing Out Parade on 6 April. This was the big occasion for all our REME members, except ASgt Foskett and ACpl Cowley who were staying on for another term with our RAOC lads, to carry out their trade training as clerks. For the 13 who were leaving this was the day towards which they had sweated and toiled during their year in the College.



Canoeing on the Tamar. Tregantle 1978

The parade itself went very well, with everyone achieving the high standards expected in the College. For the lads who were leaving it must have been a memorable event and something on which they can look back with pride.

ARNHEM PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt I SJ Cassidy RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt C Proverbs RAOC

Arnhem Platoon began their stay in the College in September of last year under the guidance of Sgt Proverbs and Cpl Anderson. Unfortunately, their Platoon Commander, Lt Malcolm Buchanan, was attending his Ordnance Officers' Course and therefore they saw very little of him. In the sixth week of training a new Platoon Commander arrived. Lt Iain Cassidy, still fresh from an Infantry attachment and Lt Buchanan was bidden farewell, and sadly, soon forgotten. The platoon worked well during the first term achieving a good standard of fieldcraft and weapon handling. The disillusioned few returned to civvy street and by the end of term a happy and reasonably efficient team had been moulded. The one notable achievement of this period was an excellent result in the Assault March cup, when the platoon were only just seconds behind third termers Ardennes to be placed third. The platoon also won the 'A' Company theatre night which has been instigated by Major John Calbreath. Much to the surprise and delight of Lt Cassidy the cast, under the supervision of APte 'Frank' Phillips, produced the 'Generation Game, Frank Spencer's Way". It was a highly imaginative parody of Bruce Forsyth's show with all sorts of people in Army macs and berets getting harassed and confused. The stars of the show were Phillips, whose performance as Frank Spencer should cause Michael Crawford some alarm, and Starbuck who played a very subtle portrayal of Master Bates.

The Spring term began amidst the chaos and frustration that accompanied Operation Burberry. It was a turbulent period for the Apprentices who spent long periods with minimum supervision. It was during this time that the Apprentices who had doubts about their careers left and the platoon strength of 26 established. The Apprentice NCOs who had been in control of the recruit Arnhem left and therefore replacements for ASgt Baskerville, ACpls Charnick and Marshall had to be found from within the platoon. Six members of the platoon had attended the ANCO Cadre and from these three were chosen because of their obvious ability for promotion. ALcpls Starbuck and Sutcliffe joined that irrepressible rogue ALcpl Holden-Rushworth in Arnhem platoon and ALcpl Phillips moved across to join Alamein, the new recruit platoon.

Midway through the term the platoon moved by train with the rest of the Company to Tregantle Fort for the annual Company camp. A wide range of activities were undertaken with people showing promise on the Commando assault course, an introduction to sea canoeing, watermanship and orienteering. The platoon ran very well in the Assault March cup, however, an unfortunate injury led to difficulties and an excellent time slipped from their grasp. The platoon also managed a trip into Plymouth where most people managed to see 'Star Wars' and then went on to see professional wrestling. Arnhem ended up having a schizophrenic Platoon Commander who had spells of believing he was Obi-wan Kenobi. As a farewell to Tregantle the platoon marched around the battlements, which had previously been out of bounds. Then they were marched up and down the hill like the Army of the Grand Old Duke. Everyone thought they were being brutally punished by Lt Cassidy, but it was preferable to standing in the cold drizzle.

One of the major individual achievements in the College was that of APte Brooks who in two days became the Army Junior Featherweight Boxing Champion and then the College Cross Country Champion. He fought his final bout at the boxing centre in Aldershot on Friday 10 March. He entered the ring looking calm and confident, despite being smaller than his opponent. The fight was over quickly, a text-book example of a technical knockout. His opponent made a few tentative jabs which glanced off Brooks' gloves, then his first punch exploded on his adversary's nose, sending a shower of blood to cover both fighters. Each bone-jarring punch was accurately placed in the centre of the bloody mass that was once a face and the referee quickly steered him away from his shocked victim, declaring him immediately, the Champion. The next day he led the platoon cross country team to a convincing victory in the College event. He was only beaten by Lt Cassidy who completed the day for the platoon by taking the Permanent Staff trophy. For these achievements Brooks received the Shield at the end of term for endeavour. The second term was rounded off by the platoon winning the indoor games night, completing a good term's work.

The third term began with the same chaotic order of the Spring term, the Queen's visit to Bicester was fast approaching, the shooting team away and the athletics meetings all on the first days back. The platoon was spread to the four winds with Tanner and Ward shooting successfully for the College, most people involved in the route lining, and a strong contingent from the platoon involved in the various athletics teams. It was significant that in most track events, Arnhem had competitors placed in first or second place in the Training Centre meeting. Well done ACpl Starbuck, APtes Firth, Brooks and Bostock.

It was also time for promotions too, with ACpls Sutcliffe and Starbuck replacing ACpl Cowley, with Bostock, Brooks and Crow being promoted to ALcpls. They settled quickly to their new tasks of junior man-management well and have since demonstrated themselves to be capable and efficient. Later in the term with the arrival of the new recruit platoon more promotions came about. ACpl Sutcliffe became a Sgt filling the vacancy left unfilled since the departure of ASgt Baskerville. ACpl Starbuck and ALcpl Crow moved across to the new platoon, Anguilla, and ACpl Phillips moved back into Arnham platoon, something he wholeheartedly welcomed. APte Ward was promoted to ALcpl to fill a vacancy.

Just before the platoon went on Summer camp, 12 members of the platoon played enemy for Balaclava on their weekend exercise. Working from a patrol base they operated a series of patrols and generally made a nuisance of themselves. On the Saturday they were joined by the remainder of the platoon and staged a deliberate attack on an OP which ended with a withdrawal in contact, during which everyone got lost in the smoke and had a good time. It was a valuable experience for those who took part and everyone agreed that we should do more of it.

The Summer camp at Tenby was held in glorious weather and a variety of activities were either tried afresh or old skills were revised. APte Scanlon proved his expertise at parascending, the platoon pulled back from being 0-3 down to draw 3-3 with Aden at Newport Sands, ACpl Starbuck scoring twice. There were some surprises on the Command tasks, with APte Strother coming awake to assert his authority and APte Cherry doing amazing one handed lifts on APte Jackson, where he was too small to scale a wall.

Straight back from Summer camp and into the Assault March cup again. This time a lot of hard work at camp paid off and the platoon were easy winners. It was Sgt Proverbs' last march and this steeled the determination of everyone to win. Lt Cassidy also helped with some persuasion all around.

Nearly everybody enjoyed the external leadership

training camp in Capel Curig. The weather deteriorated from excellent to abysmal through the week, soaking not only equipment but also spirits. Typically on the day we left the sun shone gloriously. Some good work was done on the first few days and some natural leaders emerged to take charge of groups. ASgt Sutcliffe worked with the DS using experience gained on Towyn Outward Bound course. Everything went well on the three day expedition and most people completed the course. There was one slight incident involving the mountain rescue, but all ended well.

The platoon are now in the middle of preparations to take their RPC 3 drill tests and Sgt Proverbs, who leaves soon, is confident that everybody will do well.

As the close of term draws near preparations are now being made for the Passing Out Parade, after which the platoon will become the seniors of the College. They have a busy term ahead of them learning the trade skills which are essential to their careers. If they continue to work hard and as a team I am sure that they shall continue to move from one success to another.

ARNHEM



APtes Bellamy-Wood Wilson Kelly Firth McMahon Tanner Cherry

APtes Strong Ruscoe Middleton Howlieson Strother Pettitt Norton Swann Crackett Sanders

APte Jackson *ALcpl Ward* *ACpl Phillips* *ASgt Sutcliffe* *LtI S J Cassidy RAOC* *Sgt C Proverbs RAOC* *ACpl Starbuck* *ALcpl Crow* *ALcpl Bostock* *APte Scanlan*

'B' COMPANY

OC Maj E Champion RAOC

Training Officer Capt M E Parsons RAOC

CSM WO2(CSM) P S Slaughter RAOC



B COMPANY RAOC APPRENTICES COLLEGE PERMANENT STAFF

Lt M Wise Sgt G I Ogden Sgt G H Mack CSM P S Slaugher Sgt J D Wilkie Sgt C J Taylor Lt M G Evans

Mrs E Cartwright Lt D A Major Capt M E Parsons Maj E Champion Mrs S Bell Capt L P Kelman Mrs D P Wood

Major Furness-Gibbon left the College last May although even now we are not absolutely certain that he has gone for good as he is constantly dropping in on one pretext or another. With his departure we lost a Company Commander, sub-aqua diver, amateur actor and PMC of the HQ RAOC Officers' Mess. He was the only officer in the Garrison who required a complete military wardrobe in his Company Office for quick changes.

Spring camp this year was at Fremington, north Devon. We were indeed very fortunate with the weather. The Company arrived first after the snowfall and left just before the flood. The natives were kind to us and we had several community projects in the form of snow clearing and rescue of livestock. The training programme went well much to the amazement of the 2IC - the boys actually enjoyed themselves! On the map reading exercise one Apprentice actually had the cheek to hand in a blank sheet of paper saying "all I can see is snow". The highlight of the training programme was the Assault March, exercise "Strongbow" with everyone giving a personal best.

In contrast to Fremington the weather at Tenby, South Wales for our Summer camp was so hot most of us had difficulty in avoiding sunburn. All activities were 100% successful. The sub-aqua team were able to dive off Caldey Island with the kind permission of the Abbot and had some very interesting finds including an old cannon and a collection of marker buoys. The entire College were able to take part in parascending - with the result that many of 'B' Company have been converted to this sport. Abseiling, orienteering, water skiing and even the early morning runs were all very popular, the one fault that 'B'

Company could find with the training programme was that it was over too soon.

Major Champion had one complaint - a squash court had not been provided. (Training Officer, please take note for next year).

We say farewell to the following:

Sgt T Jennians	Feb 78	Discharge
Major DN Furness-Gibbon	May 78	Kineton
Sgt T Long	Jul 78	BAOR
Capt L Kelman	Jul 78	'A' Coy

We welcome the following:

Sgt C Taylor	Jan 78
Maj E Champion	Apr 78
Sgt G Mack	May 78
Lt C P T Powrie	Jul 78

BALACLAVA PLATOON

Platoon Officer Lt I S J Evans RAOC

Platoon Sergeants Sgt W L Rice RAOC

Sgt G H Mack RAOC

First Term

The first shock of arriving at Blackdown Barracks was tempered by the confusion of documentation, hair cuts and new surroundings. The next six weeks were spent learning the basics of soldiering - drill, PT, fieldcraft and skill-at-arms. Drill became an important part of our lives as our Acceptance Parade was not far away, "and we all want to be smart for our Mums and Dads, don't we lads?."

Much to our amazement we managed to come overall second in the College cross country and as a reward the platoon was allowed out to the village which some made stretch as far as Woking. The first six weeks were soon over, Acceptance Parade and then what we had all been waiting for, a 48 hour pass.

We had a 24 hour introductory exercise which entailed Guard duties and the beginnings of how to live in the field. We were due to go to Camp at Folkestone but this was cancelled due to the firemen's strike.

Operation Burberry took away all but a skeleton crew of Permanent Staff. The last point of this term was the arrival of our new Platoon Commander. We did not know what was coming our way.

Second Term

Operation Burberry continued to affect the platoon until the beginning of February. Now at last we were not the youngest members of the College as yet another intake rolled into the maw of this gigantic machine.

Unfortunately 'B' Company lost the College cross country because the fear of 'B' Company held by 'A' Company, they ran like the wind "cowards but good runners". Their elation was soon to pass as we thrashed them at football 6-1.

We soon found that Lt Evans had a fanatical interest in digging holes and living in them. We all trooped out in the bleakest of weather to suffer the hardships of blistered hands and little sleep, a hard life but an enjoyable 48 hours out on the exercise area.

The highest point of the term was Winter camp at Fremington, north Devon. Just before we arrived there had been the blizzards that cut off all of north Devon. Fortunately the thaw had arrived and we were able to get there by train; but on our many long but interesting walks over the hills there was evidence of the extent of the snowfall, '12 foot snow drifts', which delighted our two 'abominable' Apprentices Sheriff and Curtain, who promptly disappeared into them.

Lt Evans instructed us in canoeing, during which we all capsized, with a little help from you know who. The most difficult thing we did was the seven mile assault march and assault course competition which we would have won but, unfortunately, two of our number gave up the

ghost on the way and we were penalised. We had an exciting visit to the Logistic Commando Regiment and scared ourselves on the Tarzan assault course. (A good lookout system kept CSM Slaughter at bay from our nightly haunts in Barnstaple, "Lots of ? women and song").

Of course all good fairy tales "ALcpl Milicevic" come to an end and back to Blackdown we did go, to a life of drill, spit and polish ready for the Passing Out Parade and then the long leave.

During this term APte Goodwill managed to rob enough children of their "sweetie" "money to collect £20.57p for the White Lodge Spastic Society.

Third Term
by APte Johnson P S

I got off the train at Brookwood Station and got the bus back to the College. Unpacked and 'raring' to go (?). I wondered what the term would be like. We knew we had two camps to contend with and also our RPC 3 drill test. After a fairly normal week of education and drill, Lt M G Evans RAOC, our Platoon Commander, surprised us all by announcing that the platoon was to embark on a 48 hour fieldcraft and minor tactics exercise. This was to take place approximately five days before the College summer camp at Tenby. As all good platoons should we took it calmly and went into the usual rigmarole (private joke between Platoon Commander and Platoon) of getting equipment and supplies. But it was soon over and before we knew it we were on the the train to Tenby.

Now Tenby was a great time, the weather was perfect, the exercises and walks, etc, were great. The platoon enjoyed many an enjoyable hour on the beach with a most lively Lt Evans (*¢*?*), his most famous act being to bury people who he thought had been bad. Hmmmm!

A week back from camp and we were off again on ELT camp at Capel Curig, North Wales. It was most tiring and we were all thoroughly *****d. But we all learnt something. If Lt Evans had been there, well, ----- that's a different story.

Just before half term crept onto us, we were assigned to the duty of guarding the expensive equipment at the Clothing Equipment and Stores tent of the RAOC at the Aldershot Army Display. It was really great seeing the Army displaying all their equipment. The public was most impressed that I do know, because I was certainly impressed and I am in the Army.

Today, after half term, the time is taken up by education, drill and also a lot of physical fitness. We have our RPC3 drill test soon and most of the free time is taken up on kit and best boots. I think that the worst has been accomplished and we will spend the rest of the term just getting ready for the fourth term, when we pass out from the College and take trade training.

BERLIN PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt M Wise RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt C Taylor REME

Berlin Platoon, which formed up on 13 September 1977, consisted of a mixture of new recruits and part of a platoon which had done eight weeks training. This combination caused many headaches to the platoon staff and also made it very difficult to unite the platoon. It took nearly a whole term before the two parts could be really considered one.

The following four articles are by members of Berlin Platoon and cover various aspects of their training.

First Term
by APte Heath J D

Berlin Platoon was run by Sgt Jennians and Lt Wise, with each day being drill and all the basic military training. We were given sweat nights which didn't go down very well but after the first two weeks we were allowed into civvy clothes which made us a lot happier about things. All together about eight boys left in their first six weeks but the remainder trained hard for that Acceptance Parade.

When the final day came for us to be accepted into the College, we were very excited, as the next day we were to go home on leave. We had found the first six weeks of Army life very hard and strenuous but most of all enjoyable. The Platoon Sergeant fixed lots of inter platoon football matches which Berlin always won. At the end of the first term the firemen's strike was on and the majority of the Permanent Staff had to go away and this is when the platoon lost a little interest in Army life. Also the fact that our Platoon Sergeant was getting out of the Army and he didn't show any interest whatsoever in the platoon.

But the platoon had so much loyalty and trust in each other that they managed to pull through until the end of term and had an enjoyable and well earned leave.

Second Term
by APte Hawes R M

'Hard to be done, but laughed at when finished'

I suppose the hardest part of the second term was the very beginning. Christmas leave had come and passed in a flurry of passing out parades and going home on the same day.

I don't mean the work at the beginning of the term was hard, but it was the feeling of being insecure again back in the barracks. After having a great time at home after Christmas, and of course, during Christmas, coming back to the barracks felt really bad. This was our first major leave and before we went we were told that the hardest thing about Army life in the College was coming back off leave.

For those who could not adapt back to life again as a soldier in a week were given plenty of encouragement by the Permanent Staff and the Apprentices themselves. A few left, but the rest stayed on to live through the second term. A lot was to happen in the second term. There were two days of shooting for the College and then there was camp.

Camp was held at Fremington, somewhere in Devon. The huts themselves were long columns. There wasn't one building on the site that was higher than one storey. The time of our camp was near enough straight after the great 'snowstorms of Devon'. The snow really fell down, but as soon as we got there half the snow had melted and life was just beginning to get back into order in Fremington. Then like the Black Death less than 100 apprentices turned up from Surrey. 'B' Company came to wreak their wrath upon the town. The local hard guys weren't at all happy with the idea of us turning up. But then again they didn't have to worry.

The camp was to include map-reading, orienteering and every soldier's most hated activity, the assault march and the Camp assault course. Those who thought they weren't going to finish had another think coming. The tailenders were pushed up to the front where they stayed until we were finished and we came second out of three. On our map reading exercise we were surprised to find ourselves ploughing through snow and sorry to say we unearthed a dead sheep and plenty of dead birds at the same time.

We came back from camp, tired but happy.

Berlin Platoon had a change of Platoon Sergeant. Sgt Jennians left the Army and we obtained a very small but very understanding sergeant. Sgt Taylor was his name and he was to have a very loud voice so we found out.

We speculated whether this weird little man was to be a good or bad sergeant. He turned out to be good .... if you kept in his good books and .... I won't tell you what he is like in a 'black' mood. Members of our platoon became actors for this term and they turned out a spectacular play called "Joseph and His Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat", produced by Mrs F Dennison and directed by Major Stockbridge. It made a large profit (lucky for us).

We ended off the term by doing a spectacular parade, alas the last of RSM Foster's in this College. Only one platoon passed out and that was Brunei. All we were waiting for now was going home that afternoon for three weeks.

College Summer Camp 18 - 31 May 1978
by APte Hawes R M

We arrived at Tenby at about 1700 hrs, to be met by some of the higher authorities of Tenby. The bus drivers and the police. Well, we got on our respective buses and we were driven through the town and straight out on to a main road which took us to Penally Training Camp. The whole camp was built on a slant. The huts were like little domes. About the only real, sturdy buildings there were the cookhouse and the NAAFI. The rest of the day was spent settling into our bunks. Unlucky for me I was 'down below' and was constantly being 'bugged' by a person I will not mention.

The camp itself was split up into lots of different activities. All of them were interesting and fun. I should think that parascending was one of the most exciting things anyone had ever done. Although excitement was to turn into foolishness and one person broke his foot on landing and another was dragged about 50 metres before he had taken off, overall a grand day out.

Another interesting but all the while very pleasant thing was the cliff walk. Setting out in groups of six, one was able to first walk through some of the most beautiful countryside I have ever set my eyes upon. The wildlife and the birds were inquisitive to what we were doing but after a while they didn't seem to mind us going through their land at all. Beauty was soon to turn to ruggedness and we were upon the cliffs. We were on a coastal path which led all the way round the coast. The track went up and down and in some places very steep. It was a tiring day when we completed it but when we got into our bunks I can assure you nearly everybody went straight into dreamland.

Abseiling, hosted by our very own PTIs Lcpl Langton and Cpl Edwards, turned out to be a rather nice morning's work. It took three hours to get through the whole lot in our platoon to go down the cliff. Some were scared, even myself, but when you look back on it you think it was easy, which it was.

Interrupting these glorious days we were given two days duty and two days off. Two whole free days. Marvellous! Well, we were only meant to have one but the fishing trip didn't go as planned and before we knew it we were bronzing (and swimming). The CSM appeared and we were given permission to throw Sgt Taylor into the sea. Although quite exhausted from running around ... and sleeping, we all, with renewed vigour, proceeded to chase Sgt Taylor who all the while threatened us with a charge sheet. These ridiculous noises were soon put to a stop when instead of shouting he was blowing bubbles.

The after dinner and before breakfast entertainment went down a treat with OC and Private alike. The after dinner was the movie time. The cinema opened with thousands of cheers, well, not thousands. The two weeks we were there we were feasted with films every night. The morning entertainment was a nice 20 minute run around a field opposite the camp.

Other activities included a three day exercise and some command tasks.

Overall it was a pleasant two weeks with some excellent weather. Sun all the time. I can surely say that everybody, Permanent Staff and Apprentices alike, enjoyed the fun and entertainment.

E L T by APte Agass S K

And it came to pass on the day of three in the month of June that the fabled tribes of Berlin and Burma ventured to the far off lands of the 'Taff'.

The elder of the two tribes was a man of much wisdom known as 'Uncle Jim', who lived in a mysterious habitat known as the caravan, with his right hand man known as 'Bald Les'. These two men were to be seen at night finding hideous unnatural things to do with his poor men, like strolls up small mountains.

Yet again it came to pass that Uncle Jim made another decision and he sayeth unto us that we would divide into three and behold we were of three. Our first was Ruled by Uncle Jim, the second by Bald Les and the third was commanded by 'Nando', an evil, sadistic man with hairs around the mouth and the crossed swords of a PTI sewn to his arm. And with their leaders the three groups ventured into the hills.

And soon, after many adventures through the 'valleys of death' we were sent alone into the unsuspecting land of the Taff. We raised our voices in vain as Uncle Jim sayeth unto us "Go! Forward, my braves, into the land of the Taff and place scrolls of paper into tins so I know whence you have been", and with a cheerful voice added "Don't worry lads, I'll be alright". And so we bowed our heads in shame, ate, with sheer delight, of our rations and with the promise of a 'beverage' from the great Nando if anyone from the tribe of Nando came first. And so, with hope in our hearts, and the beverage on our minds, we ventured forth.

Into the valley of death they went through both rain, sleet, fog and sunshine, some never to be seen again for three days. All that was seen or heard of them was either a lone chocolate wrapper or a message scribbled on a piece of paper in a tin.

And so on the third day the mighty braves descended to the roads of the Taff and waited to be

picked up by chariot or by the fabled female Taff that was remoured to exist.

And on that day known by some as Friday, Uncle Jim welcomed his braves with open arms and charitable voice and took us to an area known as Snowdonia whereupon he set us to work building mountain paths for the Taff.

Then came the night and dawn followed the night and the tribe of Berlin and Burma were once more as they struck camp and descended by train back to their land of Deepcut, where they ate hearty meals and awaited the coming of the 'beverage' promised by Nando.

BRUNEVAL PLATOON

Platoon Commander Lt D J Major REME

Platoon Sergeant Sgt Wilkie REME

Bruneval Platoon 'formed up' on 13 June 1978 amid all the chaos and confusion normally associated with that event. The none too happy band of motley recruits were chased from pillar to post in order to fulfil innumerable tasks. There follows an article, written by a member of Bruneval Platoon, describing his first impressions of life at the RAOC Apprentices College. How many of our readers can recall, with perhaps not a little humour, those strange early happenings?

My First Impression

When I first came I thought this place was just where you got a haircut and kit and then waited to go to Blackdown Barracks and other civilised places like that. You can imagine my unexplainable pleasure in being told I had to stay here!

After walking from the Kontiki Club across immaculate paths I came to my superb block. I walked in (and the doors actually stayed on their hinges) and asked where my bed was. I got a plain clear order from an Apprentice NCO saying "Put it down there somewhere". "Where, here?" I said. He replied, "Anywhere will do, chuck it down".

After this we went to get our haircuts. The barber showed a highly skilled hand and it was obvious he had done it before. It took him only a brief second to reduce your hair from an immaculate hair style to one which resembled a shaving brush.

I can't remember having a meal but if I did it was good. I must admit the food here is good. The only hitch is going to get it. The line is about 100 people long.

The best bit came when we were shown how to make bed boxes and locker layout, which was done with an impressing speed. I didn't even see their lips move. If you had blinked you would have missed it. Then we were shown how to lay out our lockers, that bit was alright. It was done well and explained well but the trouble was we were shown about 10 different styles, the result of which was a total muck up. I ended the day totally confused and bewildered. How can a place like this exist deep in the wilds of Deepcut, cut off from humanity? Is this the place my short and uneventful life is meant to flower? That night I slept well.

BURMA PLATOON

Platoon Commander Capt L P Kellman RAOC

Platoon Sergeant Sgt G I Ogden RAOC

The day was Tuesday 13 September 1977 and the future apprentices of Burma Platoon were congregating in the Kontiki Club. All these raw recruits were in for a large surprise when they were split up and taken to different buildings in the College lines. One building was the barber's shop, and everyone who came out looked a completely different person with their 'army issue' haircuts. After everyone had done their general administration they were ushered into Block 7 which was to be their 'home' for the next nine months. First impressions weren't very high, but

we adjusted gradually. The platoon NCOs were very strict to start with, but we adjusted to them and they got to know us better.

In the next couple of days life was fairly boring and we had all our military kit issued to us. In a morning we had to make a 'bed box', which seemed a bit pointless to start off with.

Our basic military training seemed a new and exciting episode in our lives, but we were soon to realise otherwise. This new thing called 'drill' was a major part of our training and we soon mastered this to a fine art. PT was another item on the programme and at the end of every lesson everyone was pleased that it was over. Boxing was somebody's bright idea and most of us struggled through it with minor bruises.

Six weeks of basic training went by and by this time we were nearly ready for our acceptance parade. This involved the new recruits displaying their talents in front of their parents and this was a proud moment for all. After the actual parade the whole College went on half-term leave for five days and this was a welcomed rest for everyone concerned.

The next half-term was sheer chaos because of the firemen's dispute. Our Platoon Sergeant, Sgt Ogden and Platoon Officer, Capt Kelman, were called away on duty and the platoon was run by the Junior Sergeant, ASgt Gudd and his NCOs. The platoon proceeded with their basic training but being that there was only a skeleton frame of permanent staff, we could not do our training in full. Because of the shortage in staff the platoon missed the annual Skill-at-Arms camp, so instead we proceeded to do fatigues.

By this time Christmas was approaching and the Company had arranged a talent contest in the sports club. The evening was most enjoyable and the cast of 'It ain't half hot Mum', alias Burma Platoon, came second in the contest. At the end of the evening a special award was presented to ALcpl Well, who received the Burma Shield for effort and consistency in his training.

At the end of the week the platoon held a Christmas party and this turned into a most enjoyable night out. A varied list of guests were invited and although the party stretched well into the night a good time was had by all.

The last week of the term was spent rehearsing the passing out parade and end of term's admin. The passing out parade was cancelled because of the firemen's strike but the College held a service of dedication for all the term leavers. Some of the NCOs left us at the end of term and new NCOs were promoted from the new intake which was quite an achievement. Christmas leave was a welcomed break of three weeks and not many people were looking forward to next term.

Term two started off as normal but this term was to turn out to be quite exciting. On 25 February 'B' Company travelled down to Fremington, near Barnstaple, for a week's camp. On the journey down the train passed over land that was left underwater from the recent heavy snowfall. The activities at Fremington were very varied and on Thursday the platoons had an assault march. Of course Burma Platoon won the competition. That was the first of many trophies and the platoon turned out to be quite successful in future competitions. The company returned on 3 March and three days later the RSM took his cadre course and certain members of the platoon were chosen for it.

Unfortunately, after Fremington Camp, Capt Kelman had to leave us and go on certain courses for promotion and this was a great loss to the platoon. This left a lot of work on the shoulders of Sgt Ogden, but he managed well.

The next item on the term agenda was the College Rifle meeting on Ash Ranges. Certain members of the platoon brought back medals and trophies and these were added to the collection already in the Company office.

Easter soon came and everyone was glad to go on leave, even though it was only a long weekend.

A week back at the College and we had another project. This time it was the annual collection for the White Lodge Spastics Association. The whole College collected around £1,500, which was more than last year's total. A cheque was presented to the organisers and the money put to use straight away.

The next and final event in the term was the term leavers' passing out parade and there were numerous rehearsals beforehand. The parade went off without a hitch and everyone was glad to go on leave again.

Yet another term began and athletics were a big sport now. On 4 May the College challenged the Depot to a sports meet and the College came off

the better of the two. Burma Platoon walked away with medals and shields and these were added to the lists of firsts.

Summer camp soon came around and the whole College travelled down to Penally, near Tenby for two weeks of sheer enjoyment. Again the activities varied, from rock climbing, walking, canoeing and three day exercises. Another competition was held and guess who came first? Burma walked away with another first to their name. Back at the camp other platoons were doing command tasks, this was also run on a competitive basis. Our platoon was one of the last to go and we knocked five minutes off the leading time. The platoon ended up winning the competition and were later awarded prizes.

The platoon came back on 31 May and on 3 June certain members went to Capel Curig in North Wales for a week's ELT camp. The weather was against them all the way but I am told that apart from that they enjoyed themselves.

During the third term Burma Platoon had a lot of hard work in front of them and an added bonus was a 25 mile walk along the ridgeway path. This was another College project and we all had to get up at 9.30 am. The walk was run on a competitive basis and Burma walked away with the prize again.

RPC3 drill test, adjutant inspection and the passing out parade all lie ahead of us and when Burma leave the College they will have a lot to look back on.

FREMINGTON TRAINING CAMP

By: A/Pte Johnson RAOC (B Company)

As I looked out of the four-tonner on our way to Farnborough North station I wondered what this Company camp was going to be like. The day was the 25 February 1978 and 'B' Company was about to embark on a very interesting camp. We got off the transport and piled on to the train to Reading. From Reading we went to Exeter when we had a quite excellent packed lunch provided by British Rail, who also provided a comfortable journey.

Eventually we arrived at Fremington. Balaclava Platoon moved into Block 39 and settled in quite well. The beds left a lot to be desired but we managed well enough. As the block was just one big room it created a friendly atmosphere throughout the platoon.

0900 hrs Sunday and Balaclava had a map reading exercise. I was particularly looking forward to this as I was a Section Commander. The exercise consisted of a map given to the section with one square cut out. The aim of the exercise was to fill in the square with as much detail as possible. My section did quite well and overall my platoon won the competition.

Monday consisted of a very tiring, but exciting, Commando Logistic assault course. This took place at 42 Commando Workshop Squad and the platoons were split up into two groups. The first group went on a 'Tarzan' course which consisted of ropes suspended about 20 feet off the ground. This was very exciting as the last rope stretched 70 odd yards across a river!! Many people fell in but this proved to be a popular part of the course.

Tuesday came and part of the platoon went down the road to the REME Fording Trials. This place was very interesting and again the group was split up into two separate groups. The first group went on a trip on the estuary on a DUKW then looked at some diving gear. We then looked at some tanks and other vehicles which had been waterproofed. We then had a training film on beach landings. Both groups undertook the programme but in reverse order. Later on Tuesday I went swimming with the platoon and Lt Evans at the North Devon Leisure Centre.

On Wednesday Lt Evans, our platoon commander, took us on, and I quote, "a nice short walk along the cliffs". It proved to be a massive 7½ mile trog through the cliffs and down some of the most treacherous slopes I have ever seen. Plenty of singing kept the slow coaches at the back going and morale up when it rained. Command tasks occupied the rest of the day in an interesting and exciting manner.

Thursday, Ah yes, Thursday, the day we had been dreading, the assault march! This consisted of a seven mile run followed by the Fremington Camp assault course. Balaclava ran it, completed it and made the best time, but alas two of our comrades dropped out, so unfortunately, we lost, but full credit to Burma Platoon for getting first prize.

Friday, and we are all off to sunny Deepcut. It has rained all week apart from today, but not to complain, the camp was a great success with a visit from Lieutenant Colonel Bruce RAOC and a great time for all. Very tiring, but good fun. Personally, I can't wait for Tenby.

FREMINGTON FUN

(without comment)









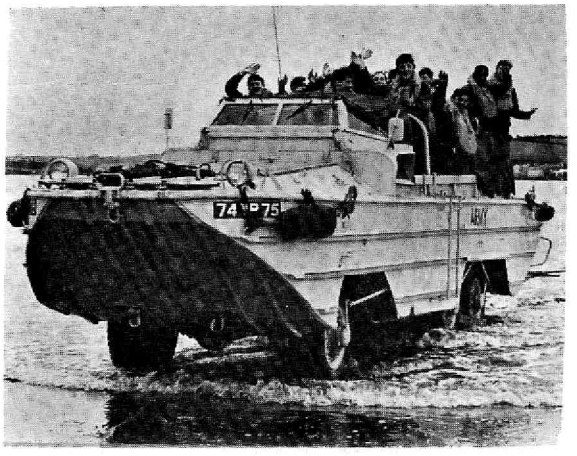




Fremington Fun (contd)

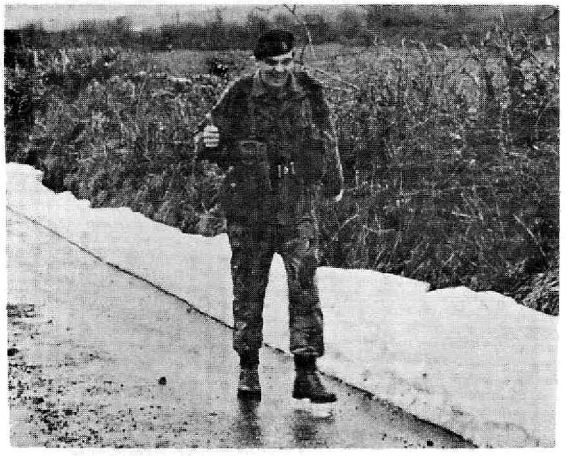












EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Senior Education Officer Major PA Easton RAEC

I think that all wise-thinking parents now realise that 'quantitative' education is not enough. They are being constantly reminded to this fact by the politicians and industrialists, and even employers of labour, in the great debate with which we are all being bombarded on radio or television and in the pages of our national press. There would now appear to be a distinct demand for 'qualitative' education.

In service life having been on the receiving end of the 'quantitative' system for so long, the urgent need to produce excellence in educational support training has been only too apparent. Systems of work have to be constantly orientated to the needs of our budding tradesmen. In this connection between trade requirements and educational philosophy, all of us are desperately anxious to do the best for our young apprentices. Methods may change and subjects taught differently where particular units are concerned, but the aim surely must remain the same.

In the RAOC Apprentices College, dealing as it has to do with both RAOC and REME personnel, we pride ourselves on the excellent standards our students achieve. The aims, systems, and methods used would appear to be the 'right' rather than the 'wrong' ones. Our masters frequently tell us so in their reports. The great educational debaters would do well to be cognizant of the 'Deepcut Plan'.

During the past year a goodly number of apprentices have received 'qualitative' training in the department. Some of their achievements are recorded in the pages of this magazine but many other successes must remain 'unsung' merely due to lack of space. Examination standards in Communication are now firmly lodged in the capable hands of both the GCE (Cambridge) Board and the Royal Society of Arts. In Science and Mathematics the 'Borden Test' sets out the levels of attainment. During the past year almost 100 apprentices here gained RSA Certificates in English Language Stage 1 and many have been successful even at Stage 2 level. In addition some 30 boys have been successful in GCE examinations. The 'Borden Test' has produced some excellent results and many of our REME apprentices are doing extremely well on their trade courses.

The staff has not changed a great deal this year but the usual comings and goings have occurred. We said goodbye to Lt Colin Manvell RAEC on posting to Germany and we welcomed 2Lt B Flaherty WRAC (Education). History was being made - for the very first time a lady member of staff! I wonder whether or not this has been responsible for the keenness and enthusiasm shown by the boys.

Generally speaking, the Department has every reason to be proud of its contribution to College life and the important part it plays in the training programme. There has been sound and rewarding progress and solid development in all aspects of the work of 'educating' our apprentices in order to make them professional soldiers and tradesmen of their respective Corps. We can all be highly satisfied with a job well-done over the past 12 months and look forward with eagerness to consolidating and perhaps even bettering, our already high standards in next year's programme.

THE GREAT DEBATE - EXAMINATIONS

by W E Smith Esq

"Examinations are formidable even to the best prepared, for the greatest fool may ask more than the wisest man can answer".

Sir Philip Hartog in his book "Examinations and their relation to Culture and Efficiency" suggested that certain cultural subjects, such as history and literature, would greatly benefit by being exempt from examinations since such testing tended to kill the plants which these subjects wished to grow. However, he did concede that some examinations were necessary to test efficiency but a great many of them did not test it at the present moment.

The examination system has many critics who are both vociferous and strong in their pleas for its abolition. It is a great pity that they are much

weaker and far less united in their suggestions for an alternative, and presumably better, method of evaluation.

Perhaps all the expertise of this modern technological age would be far better employed in devising ways and means of improving the existing system rather than destroying it. Examinations are here to stay, for better or worse, and we must all learn to live with them.

First and foremost the fault with examinations lies not in their validity but in their practical application. Surely the so-called 11 plus was finally destroyed as a means of selection for higher education, by the economics of the times. There can be no defence at all for the number of places available determining the eventual pass mark as a means of entry. The more forward looking local authorities had a distinct advantage over the more backward ones - or it would appear their children had. Our university graduates cannot altogether escape the taint of the 'luck of the draw'. It may be at best pedantic and at worse fashionable to argue the case of grey brick versus red brick, but how much more dangerous to defend the cause of selection to such exalted prowess. One Board's 'O' and 'A' levels seem to be meat and drink whereas another Board's can only be described as poison. The content and assessment of all such papers leaves a lot to be desired and as any good schoolmaster or mistress would have you know in their barrage of letters to our learned press when results are published.

Maybe we all got our sums wrong when we allowed examinations to become far more theoretical and less practical as measurements of ability. Quarts simply won't go into pint pots and Rome wasn't built in a day by so many workmen working at the same rate. Such competition must be left in the hands of would-be designers, theoreticians, planners and perhaps on the sports fields. Competitiveness should never have been allowed to become an integral part of our educational efficiency testing. Our learned politicians may well adroitly refer to a common core syllabus in their great debate on education. Standards in education can only be achieved by common core examination systems and common core marking assessors of those examinations. At least the 'old' civil service was honest in choosing its candidates for high office - 80 posts available nationally went to those gaining not a pass at some pre-conceived standard but to those achieving the top eighty positions in merit marking as a result of a national competition. The 81st candidate may have scored 90% - that just wasn't good enough for the exacting task of Government.

At school and college level our business is not free enterprise nor competition. We are the arbiters of achievement; we are the measurers of ability; we simply want pints to go into pint pots. It is rather a sad reflection on all of us that we have not only achieved the growth of doubt amongst ourselves but we have even sowed the seeds of cynicism among those on the receiving end, the examinees themselves.

ALcpl Billinger

The trouble with examinations is that not everyone has a chance to take them. This applies to me in particular because while I was at school I was given no chance whatsoever to take many exams. For example while I was at school I wanted to take an 'O' level exam. I was told however that I could not take it because to do so would mean certain failure. I cannot possible see how a person can be refused a place in 'O' level if he feels he could make a good job of it. This applies to Secondary and Comprehensive schools also where only the very clever pupils are chosen to take the higher grades of education. This system falls flat on its face when the so-called clever pupils fail and the so-called dum-dums obtain quite a high grade in a lower standard. And with these so-called 'qualifications' in CSE they find great difficulty in obtaining a place of work. Finally I would like to put a suggestion to the Examination Board - set an exam which all pupils, whether thick or thin, brainy or dumb, can take and so get a worthwhile qualification, and with the up and coming number of comprehensive schools this would seem to me to be the fairest way of assessing a pupil's knowledge.

ALcpl Haw

The trouble with examinations is, firstly an exam is a shortened test of a very limited nature. Exams last roughly about 2½ hours in which time you are tested on as many things as possible, which is not good enough. Teachers spend most of their time training people for the exam and not the actual course. Thus people only know a limited amount of work at a satisfactory standard. Secondly some people know the subject very well but cannot express themselves on paper and so miss out on this. Thirdly people get very nervous about exams so they take 10-15 minutes to get started and that is valuable time wasted. An alternative could be to take mini-exams at the end of a subject, covering everything the stu-

dent had done on the subject. This, together with an assessment of the student's attitude during the course, should prove that the student has the ability to operate the theory correctly.

ASgt Webb

The trouble with examinations is that they put one under too much direct pressure and the actual taking of the exam requires a certain amount of personal calm and discipline to concentrate, qualities which are not directly connected to intelligence and good memory. I think that examination classes should be broken down into smaller groups, water should be provided on the desk of each boy to help one relax. Examination situations should be part of the syllabus for each subject.

..... Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings!

COLLEGE PRIZEWINNERS 1977 - 1978

		Winter 1977	Spring 1978	Summer 1978
Recruit Prizes	Skill-at-Arms	APte Priestley		
	PT Cup	APte Sutcliffe		
	Best Recruit Cup	APte Harwood		APte Powley
Education Prizes	A1	APte Parker		
	A2	APte Pettitt		
	A3	ALcpl Scott		
	B1	APte Wilson		
	B2	LCpl Lewell		
	B3	APte McDowell		
	B4	APte Brittain		
	English	APte Westwood		
	Mathematics	APte Davies		
	Office Organisation	ALcpl Ritchie		
	Science	APte Harwood		
College Individual Awards				
McEwan Shield	For Endeavour	ASgt Gadd	ACpl McEwan	ACpl Hicks
St Albans Cup	For Initiative	ALcpl McIver		ASgt Sutcliffe
Progress Cup		APte Deighton		
Maule Cup	Most Military Proficient Soldier	ASgt Gadd	ACpl Sanders	
McDonald Shield	For Perseverance		APte Mortimore	APte Brooks
Robinson Shield	Cross Country		APte Cliffe	
Best REME Term Leaver			ACpl Bos	
Drum sticks	Best Drummer		APte Geddes	
SEO's Prize		ASgt Snowdon		
Sergeants' Cup	Best all-rounder in military training, education, conduct and sport	ASgt Lidster		
Commanding Officers's Special Award	Awarded to the Apprentice who has contributed most to the College during the term, but who does not qualify for any other award	ALcpl Vaissiere		
Pedlar Cup	The outstanding apprentice of the year	ALcpl MacIver		

ANGLING CLUB

Officer in Charge Mr WJ Waddington

At the commencement of the year the club membership rose to 30. The main venue was Mytchett Lake but, probably due to the drought of the previous year, catches were small in number and size. At the end of the season an outing to Farnborough Angling Club's venue at North Camp was arranged.

The main event of the year was Summer camp when all the college took part in either beach or offshore angling. The latter proved very successful and a prize of £10 premium bonds was won by APte Heath of Berlin Platoon who landed a 10 lb thornback ray.

Three members, APte Barker of Aden Platoon, and APtes Fish and Wise of Burma Platoon were selected to take part in the Army Offshore Angling Trials at Poole.



"Great Expectations". APtes Wise, Fish and Barker awaiting a boat for the Army Offshore Angling Competition

ATHLETICS 1978

Officer in Charge Capt P J Lewis RAEC

Assistant Lieutenant I Cassidy RAOC

The Summer term sees a frenzy of activity from the athletes in the College. During the first week of term there were three athletic meetings, the inter platoon event held on the College grass track and then two full scale meetings on the excellent 'tartan' track at the Aldershot Military Stadium. The first of these two events was the Inter Company Championships on 4 May which was followed by the Training Centre Athletics Meeting on 5 May.

The Inter Company Championships

The winning Company for 1978 was B Company with 133 points. Notable performances were recorded by APte Smith with a 53 sec 400 metres and ALcpl Brooks with a 4 min 45 sec 1500 metres. APte Mitchell threw well in the Javelin winning his event with a throw of 30 metres plus.

The Training Centre Athletics Meeting

The College entered three teams in the Training Centre athletics meeting and did very well indeed in forcing the Training Centre A team into 4th place. College A team won the competition but did not have it all their own way with several winners coming from B and C teams. Event winners from the College came in the High Jump - APte Haywood; Javelin - APte Mitchell. In the 400 metres APte Brown won in a time of 54.9 secs setting a new event record. Capt Lewis won the 800 metres with APte Bostock and APte Adams in hot pursuit. In the 1500 metres Lt Cassidy, although coming second, was inside the previous event record by several seconds. The 4 x 100 metre relays were won by College teams.

Travers Clarke Athletics

The Travers Clarke meeting was held in Aldershot on 6 and 7 June. Due to some injuries at Summer camp and other commitments, the two teams entered by the College had to be finally reduced to one. The standard of competition was high but good performances were recorded by our athletes. The only event winner of the day was Capt Lewis in the 800 metres but APte Smith



College Athletics Team 1978

Back Row: Goodwill Webb Coole Haywood Harwood Wakefield Mitchell Bostock Young
Middle Row: Brown Starbuck Capt Lewis Lt Cassidy Sheriff Firth
Front Row: "Jenny" Robinson Adams Trophies & Prizes Smith Sutcliffe "Holly"

was unlucky to lose the 400 metres and ALcpl Brookes ran a magnificent 1500 metres to come second in his race, moving Lt Cassidy into third place. Smith and Brookes were jointly presented with the Best Apprentice cup.

South East District Championships

The College put up a magnificent display of team athletics in the Minor Units section of the South East District Championships. No College athlete was placed lower than second in any event and the College ran out as South East District Champions at Minor Unit level and consequently went forward to the Army finals.

Army Finals

In the Army finals the standard of competition was very high indeed and the competition was very close, a matter of three points covering the first four teams. The College was, with only the relay to go, in joint second place. Though our relay squad ran their best they came home in 4th place. The runners finished within the space of a foot of each other at the finish. We were eventually placed 4th in the competition which was no mean achievement as our team's strength was slightly weaker than we had hoped because of injury. In the Army Individual Championships three athletes took part. APte Smith in the 400 metres who recorded a personal best of 52.2 seconds and APte Adams who also recorded a personal best of 2 mins 9.2 seconds in the 800 metres. Both runners were eliminated from their finals but put in excellent performances. APte Mitchell came 6th in the Javelin. Many of our Juniors have the ability to do very well as senior athletes and it is hoped that their experience as juniors will encourage them to train hard and take part on behalf of the adult units they will join upon leaving the College.

BOXING

Officer in Charge Lt F T Freeman

Assistant S/Sgt Johnson

In preparation for the boxing season 1977-78, canvassing for potential boxers was carried out immediately after commencement of the Winter term in September 1977.

An inter platoon competition was held for both A and B Companies during late September, followed by an inter Company competition on 8 October. The competition was closely contested with some very spirited bouts and a really enjoyable evening was had by all. The boxers lacked real skill due to their limited experience but attempted to compensate for this by their aggression and obvious keenness to really have a go. B Company won the match with a total of seven bouts to five. The teams entered and results of their bouts are shown on facing page.

Following the company match, training continued for those apprentices who wished to participate in boxing as their chosen sport. Our aim was to be able to form a College team and compete in the Junior Army championships, the Junior Individual Championships and the RAOC Championships. Unfortunately only ten boys wished to continue to box and their weights were such that a full team could not be formed. It was therefore decided to continue with our training but restrict our ambitions to entry by boxers into individual events only.

On 28 October APtes Brooks and Clark boxed in the Surrey Association of Boxing Clubs championship held at the Sir Phillip Game Recreation Centre at Croydon. Although these two showed most potential amongst the boxers we had, they were competing at a level which was too high for them and though putting up a very creditable performance, were rather outclassed.

Lack of accommodation within the College for sporting activities made it difficult to get an ideal area in which the boxers could train adequately. Our gymnasium is very heavily booked during sports periods with four different sports all desperately fighting for the same floor area, basketball, volleyball, badminton and boxing. However, making the best use of the limited facilities we continued to train hard. Competitive experience and ringcraft were difficult to arrange we we were unable to produce a full team to offer competition against other units.

We entered ten boxers in the Junior Army Indivi-

dual Championships held in Aldershot between 8-10 March 1978. This was a really excellent three days boxing, with the College boxers performing very well. APte McGowan and APte Brooks won the flyweight and featherweight bouts, becoming the Class C (17 years) Army Individual Champions 1978.

Bout	Weight	A Company	B Company	Winner
1	Light Fly weight	McGowan	Hicks	B
2	Fly weight	Clarke	Breen	B
3	Bantam weight	Brooks	Hollis	A
4	Feather weight	Sutcliffe	Clark	B
5	Light weight	Law	Harrison	A
6	Light weight	Willcocks	Derbyshire	A
7	Light Welter weight	Kelly	Burrows	A
8	Light Welter weight	Ralston	Rubie	B
9	Welter weight	Smith	Forsyth	A
10	Light Middle weight	Westwood	Lewis	B
11	Middle weight	No entry		
12	Light Heavy weight	Flynn	Scriven	B
13	Welter weight	Russell	Webb	B

CRICKET

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

Assistant — Major G J Forrest RAEC (Retd)

It has been an up and down season for the College Cricket club and it all began back in January when we first used the indoor school at Aldershot instead of the one at Sunningdale. With improved facilities and a promising squad of players our hopes ran high for a successful season. Then came the firemen's strike and, with the cancellation of transport, we lost all but three of our training sessions.

Our bad luck continued into the summer term when our cricket was again disrupted by such 'minor' activities as athletics training and events and the College summer camp. These were particularly

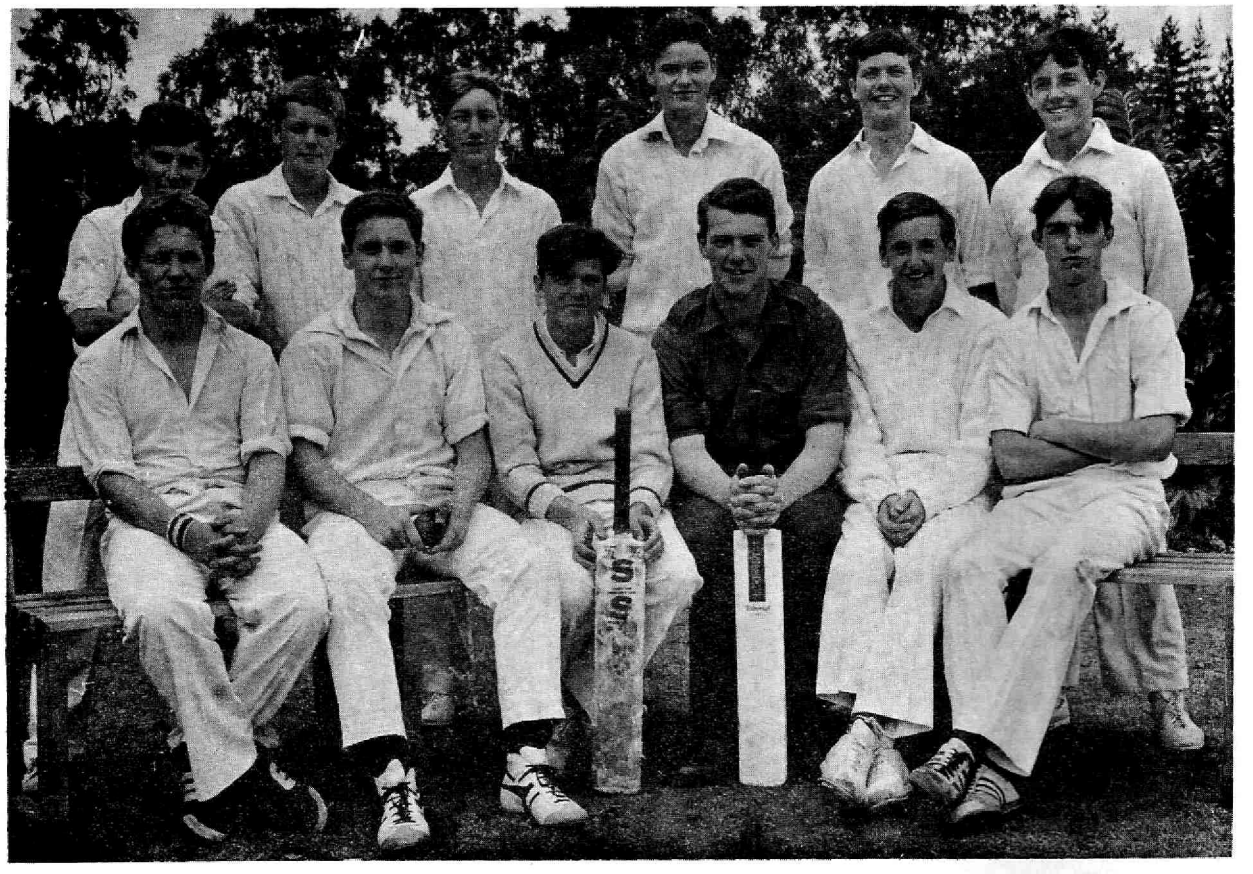
disastrous disruptions this year because we had to play the first round of the Army Junior Cup against Shorncliffe within two days of the College's return from Penally. In the circumstances we did well to restrict our strong opponents to a victory margin of 148 to 116 runs.

Games followed throughout the season at the rate of two a week and we just about broke even with victories against the Training Centre, Arborfield 2nd XI, a Wellbeck XI and the RAMC. Defeats of various magnitude were inflicted on us by the AAC twice, 10 Ord Sp Bn in the semi-final of the DGOS Cup, Arborfield 1st XI and RPC.

Further games to be played before the end of the season at the time of writing this report include the College against the Junior Guards and Collingwood as well as the traditional internecine battles of the Companies and Apprentices against the Permanent Staff. Your reporter secretly hopes that this will be the boys' year in the latter fixture. When, hopefully, you are reading this short article you will probably have seen the game and know that he was right.

Throughout our games we continued to refine our skill and we began to enjoy our cricket. None more so than our Captain, Harwood, who in his last three innings has scored 101, 37 and 47. Equally satisfying to us all was the sight of Webster bowling his medium paced swing with such consistency and consequent success; Heath's slow spin marred occasionally by those beltable long hops; Blythe's rapid development as an agile keeper with pretty good hands; and - not least except in stature - Hawkins text-book forward defensive stroke and his usually well-timed hook.

Those named in the previous paragraph were our stars and the five of them, together with Jones, were awarded their colours. Congratulations are due to them but also to the other members of the Club who represented the College on one or more occasions namely: Mobley, Wigg, Goodwill, Mitchell, Foskett, Leach, Kelly, Scott, Turner, Sheriff, Oates, Preston, Hunt, Cherry, Haw and Ken. It is regretted that 'outside' games could not be arranged for the following of the



Back Row: *Hawkins* *Mobley* *Leach* *Blyth* *Jones* *Kelly*

Front Row; *Goodwill* *Mitchell* *Webster (Vice Capt)* *Harwood (Capt)* *Heath* *Robinson*

remaining members: Billinger, Crankshaw, Stotan, Congdon and Wilson.

Most of these apprentices are not yet equipped to play as club cricketers but it is hoped that, with future practice and effort to develop their various skills, they will quickly settle into Army cricket at the appropriate level.

As for our stars, I hope they will quickly make themselves known in the cricket circles of their own Corps and break into representative cricket during the early years of their Service.

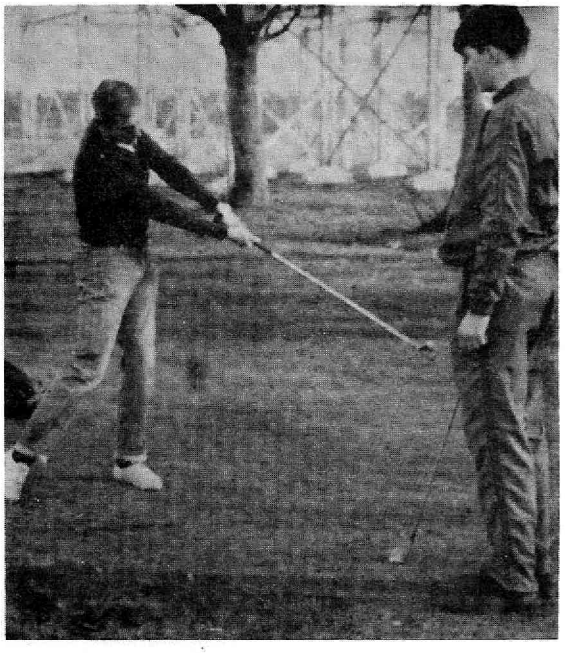
GOLF 1978

Officer in Charge Capt J Griffiths RAOC

Assistants Lt Col S Schofield Royal Signals (Retd)

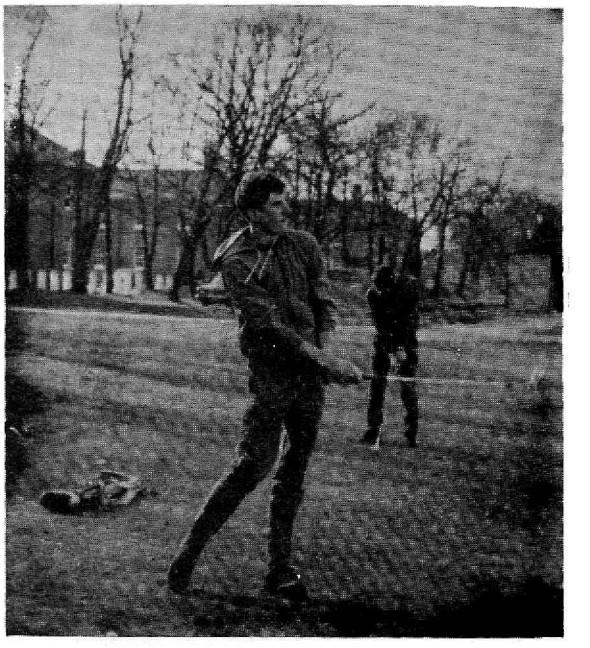
Sgt W L Rice RAOC

Training for the season got under way in February when 10 young Apprentices assembled at the College driving range under the eagle eyes of the OIC and his assistants. Coaching continued throughout the Spring term when it became apparent that three of the boys would perhaps gain more pleasure if they changed their sport, which they promptly did. Towards the end of the Spring term APte Bushall, one of our golfing hopefuls decided that a military life was not to his liking and we were down to six.



"Do as I say; not as I do!"
Sgt W L Rice coaching

ALcpl Collins and APte Rowley had played a considerable amount of golf as youngsters before enlistment. Both have improved steadily and are currently playing to handicaps of 20 - 22 respectively. They were entered for the Junior Soldiers' Championship played at Aldershot Golf Club on 21 July. ALcpl Collins came first in the handicap section with a net score of 64, he was third in the scratch competition.



Better than a lot. APtes Rowley and Parker

Golf also came to the forefront during College camp which was held this year at Tenby in South Wales. An open handicap competition was held at the local Golf Club, the challenge was taken up by our senior coach Lt Col Schofield and ALcpl Collins. Out of a field of 35 locals and

holiday visitors ALcpl Collins won the competition with a net score of 69.

A noted achievement on the golfing scene this season has been the marked improvement of ALcpls Coupland and Parker and APte Priestley, all of Arnhem Platoon. They had played little or no golf prior to enlistment and are now capable of gracing the greens and fairways of the Army Golf Club Aldershot with handicaps of 24.

In handing over the reins of OIC Golf, I take this opportunity to thank Lt Col (Retd) Schofield for his expertise and guidance and also to thank Sgt Rice for his loyal support.

MODEL MAKING/ ART CLUB

Officer in Charge Mr P Heap

Assistant Mrs Souter

The Art and Model Making Club has been very well supported this year with an average membership of about 25.

A surprisingly large number of Apprentices tried their hand at various artistic media at the expense of plastic models. Some very good works were produced particularly in 'pastels', which have proved very popular this year.

The model makers also produced some very good work with a lot of attention being paid to detail. Many more 'finishing touches' were added to the kits, while a few were mounted on specially prepared bases.

The Club owes a great debt to Mrs Souter, whose expertise and enthusiasm has had a considerable influence on many apprentices.

PARASCENDING

Officer in Charge Capt B F Kane RAEC

Instructors Major. P A Easton RAEC

Capt T Freeman REME

Sgt W P Wilkie

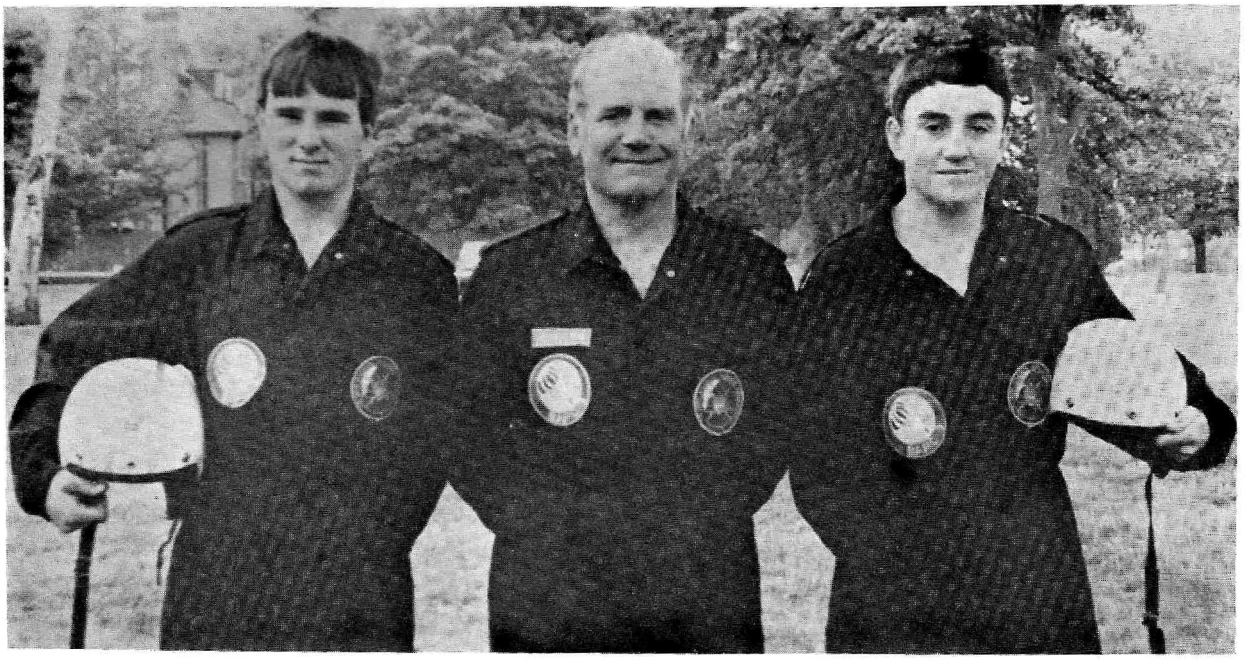
Mrs C Wilkie

At the start of the 1977 Winter term we gathered together a group of 18 potential parachutists to form a club. With only a few changes after Christmas the group stayed together throughout the year, practising on every available Sunday at Andover airfield. This meant that this year club members gained more experience and achieved higher standards of performance than any of their predecessors. Between them they made over 700 parachute landings starting from heights of over 900 feet.

At Easter Mrs Wilkie, who had accompanied her husband, Sgt Wilkie, to every Sunday training session, attended a course and also qualified as an instructor to become a very valuable membe of the group of club instructors.

During the College annual camp at Penally the rest of the College, both Apprentices and Permanent Staff, were given the opportunity to try the sport. A platoon a day came to the ex-RAF airfield of Templeton; there the aim was to bring every person up to the stage where he would ascend to 600 feet, self-release and make a normal parachute landing. With the exception of one platoon that met very adverse weather conditions we succeeded. Over 600 launches were made in the ten days.

In July we entered a new Parascending National League which was run on a non-central basis. Represented by APtes Woolford, Scanlon, White and ALcpl Scott and Capt Kane, the College achieved third place out of the nine teams entered in the competition which ran over three separate weekends.



National Championships. College 'A' Team. ALcpl Woolford Capt B Kane APte Scanlon



National Championships. 'A' and 'B' Teams and Reserves

Over the four days of the August Bank Holiday the Parascending National Championships took place at the Army Air Corps Centre, Middle Wallop. The College entered two teams but, due to the championships being over-subscribed, only one was accepted. Nevertheless the second and team and reserves, Capt Freeman, Sgt Wilkie, ALcpl Scott and APtes Murdock and Grimwood, all came back from leave to attend the meeting.

The College A team, Capt Kane and APtes Woolford and Scanlon had a fairly successful championship. At the end of the first three rounds the team was challenging strongly for both the Army Inter-Unit Challenge Trophy and the Round Canopy cup but failed somewhat in the final round.

APte Woolford had the team's best score. His total distance from a 10 centimetre target disc in four descents totalled only 14.38 metres. The final results were:

Army Inter Unit Challenge Trophy - 3rd of 9 teams

Round Canopy Competition - 5th of 18 teams

National Team Championship - 8th of 23 teams

In addition ALcpl Scott won the separate Pool competition.

It is pleasant to conclude this article by recording that three of the club members, ALcpl Ward and APtes Scanlon and Grimwood are due to attend a free-fall parachute course at the Army Parachute Centre, Netheravon in their fourth term.



Major P A Easton keeping a watchful eye on Lt A Ward

RIDING

Officer in Charge Mr P Heap

After two terms as an activity in the Apprentices own time, riding became an established sport in September 1977.

It has been necessary to make riding a self financing sport, using Little Paddocks Riding School as the riding centre.

Because of the cost and the size of the riding school, the numbers of apprentices learning to have been small. Nevertheless the groups have worked hard to learn the basic skills of riding and stable management, often in the poor weather of last winter.

The apprentices ride for two hours a week and spend between one and three hours grooming, saddling and feeding their horses.

It is hoped that in future it will be possible to teach apprentices more than has been possible this year.

RUGBY 1977/78

OIC WO2 Davies

Assistants Lt P Harris WO2 Brierley

Cpl Pasco Cpl Edwards



Rugby coaching session in progress

This season began as usual with very few experienced players and consequently training had to begin from basis. The enthusiasm and interest shown by the Apprentices was very creditable but their inexperience has reflected in the results.

There were some very good players in the squad namely APte Mitchell and ASgts Sutcliffe and Webb, but their talents were not sufficient to maintain a reasonable team standard.

However the 1978-79 season holds much more promise as the majority of the lads are still in the College.

OFFSHORE SAILING CLUB

Officer in Charge Mr J F Watson

Assistant Mr M F Johnson

ROUND THE ISLAND RACE 1978

I suppose every yachtsman in the south of England hopes that someday he will take part in this race - and many dream of entering their own yacht.

I remember saying, some three articles ago how, when we first introduced 'Thunderbolt' into the water that we held our breath and fervently hoped she would float. Two years later with many modifications and a full inventory of offshore equipment we entered her for the Island Sailing Club's "Round the Island Race".

Four days before the race the entries and rules booklet arrived. The cover was impressive - but the inside pages revealed the extent of our audacity .....

Perseverance	Sir Max Aitken
Lutine	Lloyd's Yacht Club
Yeoman	Owen Asher
Morning Cloud	Edward Heath

and 640 others!

We thumbed through the impressive list and finally, in Division E - Yachts without I O R rating - there she was "Thunderbolt" 3626Y RAOC App College.

On Friday evening Mike Johnson and I with Apprentices Turner and Parsons sailed Thunderbolt from her moorings at Gosport across to Cowes to find that hundreds of yachts had arrived before us, Cowes was a forest of masts.

We were lucky and found a berth, seven out from the pontoon. We cooked, ate, washed up, checked the rigging, checked------ we had forgotten the alarm clock! It didn't, however, matter, because at five am in the morning the marina was a hive of activity as hundreds of competitors prepared for their various start times.

We, along with 165 others, were scheduled for 0745. The race instructions were simple -

Start Cowes - leave the Isle of Wight to port finish Cowes.

What could be simpler?

Oh my God! . . . . .

Weather forecast .....Winds NE 5/6 possible 7/8

I don't suppose it concerned Lutine or Morning Cloud but we - a little 23 footer - weren't too pleased.

I refused a second cup of coffee for breakfast. (Can you imagine having to go below and take off oilskin trousers while jostling with 164 other yachts for start position?) In the event we made a perfect start and headed with the wind behind us down the Solent to round the Needles Lighthouse.

It began to rain - and how it rained! We hoisted our spinnaker and began to pick up on the fleet. We tangled and had to drop our spinnaker and began to fall behind. As we hoisted the spinnaker for the second time I could see ahead of us hundreds of multi coloured sails - and behind - just as many.

We reached the Needles mark just as the "big boys" caught us up and for a few minutes (it seemed like an eternity) all hell was let loose.

We made it and we were heading across the bottom of the island for St Catherine's Point Lighthouse.

The wind increased and the sea became choppy. It was thrilling and we were doing well because there were many yachts behind us who, on handicap, should have been well ahead.



Aboard Thunderbolt. APtes Turner and Preston Jim Watson and Mike Johnson

The wind increased again and the seas increased in size. We changed our head sail, we reefed, we reefed again and battled on, to be met by a ¼ ton racer with a broken mast limping back towards the Needles. Then several yachts around us turned and retreated. (Perhaps they would all turn round and we would win.

It was a long hard haul to windward but at last we saw St Catherine's Lighthouse and for the very first time that day - the sun. As we rounded the corner and headed NE we met very big seas, but the clouds lifted, the sun shone, and we began to overtake yachts again. Ventnor, Shanklin, Sandown Pier, Culver Cliff and Bembridge Ledge buoy. The seas were now quieter and we shook out our reefs and made for "No Man's Land Fort". At 1900 hrs we were abeam to Ryde Pier and on the last glorious broad reach for Cowes. We looked behind and saw to our delight dozens of sails, we weren't going to be last. After all, on handicap, there were only supposed to be four yachts slower than us.

We crossed the finishing line at 1954 hrs. We had done it. Our time 12 hrs 09 mins. We dropped sails and turned on our engine. Marina, food, beer, or so we thought. But alas it wasn't to be. A notice and loud hailer told us to proceed up river. There was a NE gale force warning.

We found a mooring, ate and fell into our bunks, exhausted and yet exhilerated. We didn't win and we weren't, as far as I know, selected for anything further but the next morning when we collected our tankard we were very proud. When we finally received the official placings and discovered that we had been placed 19th out of 164 we were very, very, pleased.

Look out 'Marionette', look out 'Morning Cloud', the Admiral's Cup team hasn't yet been chosen.

Thunderbolt keeps a crew afloat

by APte K Clissold

After being built at the RAOC Apprentices College, over a period of three years between 1973 and 1976, the Thunderbolt was quite a moderate success in her sailing career, having come second and third in two races.

She was set to sail once again, this time at the RAOC Sailing Regatta, which was to be held at the Netelg Sailing Club. Although Thunderbolt was not going to be raced, she was going to give a taste of excitement to a new crew. She was to be sailed from Gosport from the Joint Services Sailing Club (JSSC) to Hamble. The crew were quite new to the sport, except the following:

Lt Col N S Bruce
Mr J Watson
Susan Hill

new crew: Peter Rowley
Neil Bloomfield
and myself: Kurt Clissold

The weather was quite cloudy, with short outbursts of rain, with the occasional outbreak of a thunderstorm in the distance.

We motored out of Gosport at 1100 hrs and set sail just after leaving our moorings. As we got out of the entrance to Portsmouth we came face to face with a small squall, but all went well and we sailed through it. We got well out of the entrance to Portsmouth before we stopped the motor to let the wind take over as our power source.

The wind was quite strong and we managed to keep up a steady speed of five knots, which is just about the top speed for Thunderbolt. Just a short while under sail and the CO wanted something to eat so we went down below and made a 'wee' snack. Sailing with the CO was great, but having a snack made by him was even greater.

of it finding its target, my face, as I looked up every time we went over a wave, I would get it in the face. This brought cries of laughter from the rest of the crew and I even found it quite amusing myself.

While we were at the Regatta there was a huge American aircraft carrier anchored in the channel. She was called the Nomit. As we sailed past we could all see her huge deck with the aircraft sitting there as if she was a toy in a bath. After sailing past the carrier we made our way home, and home for the Thunderbolt was a place called Hamble which was a small place at the end of a creek.

The day had been a pleasant one and one to remember, we tied her up to a mooring and said goodbye. We took one last look at the yacht, the yacht that had kept a crew afloat all day and had made another journey to be entered in her log book.



APte M Hoe receiving first prize from Mrs Callan after winning the crew's race in the recent RAOC regatta

SHOOTING

Officer in Charge Lt A R L Jaggers REME

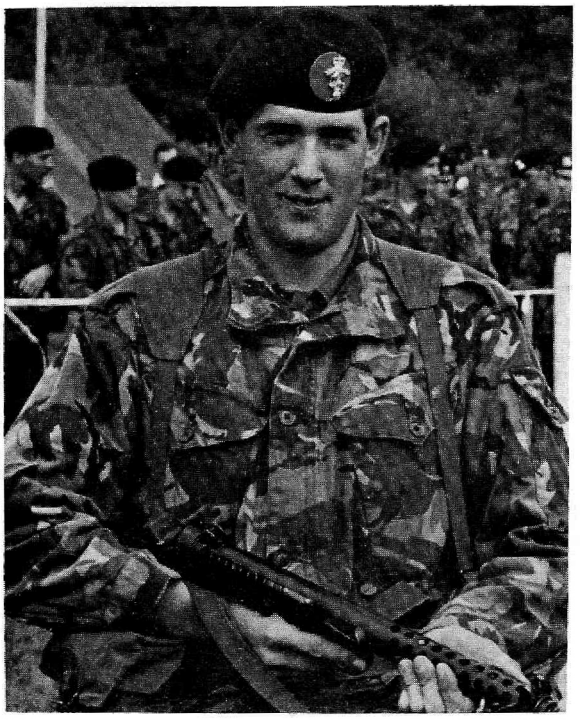
Assistants Lt A Ward RAOC

S/Sgt R L Miller RAOC

Article by ASgt Lewell R REME

Every team and sport has its season and shooting is no exception. With this in mind Lt A R L Jaggers and Lt A Ward made efforts to train up a team for the 1978 season.

In the early days of the present team, no real selection could be made. The nearest anybody so far had some to firing a live full bore weapon was at the RAOC Depot in the training theatre with conversion rifles. This went on through the Autumn and Winter terms and by now most of the team had fired the real thing although not with too much competency. Our training was affected by the industrial dispute of the firemen so our training was unfortunately non-existent during the latter half of the Winter term.



APte Wilson (Burma Platoon) after his success in the SMG Competition at JSSAAM

The real work started to rear its sturdy frame after Christmas when gallery ranges became a way of life and some useful notes were made for future reference. By March we were all familiar with all types of ranges and the different practices which were fired on them and the final selection of a team of 15 for the Skill-at-Arms meet, the REME CORPSAM Shoot, was made. The shooting started on 28 April which meant that the team returned early from leave.

As it was our first shoot we used it as a pattern and made ourselves fully conversant with everything that happened. We did not really expect to win but we enjoyed some moderate placings and APte Pawsey (Burma Platoon) especially excelled himself by attaining a medal for third best young soldier with the rifle. The weather throughout was very kind to us and this made it an enjoyable and very useful experience. Now we felt that we could go to the next meeting with a lot more confidence.

The next meeting we found was not far away, because just two days later a squad of six was to attend the RAOC/ACC annual meeting. With the shoot came an improvement in scores and also a run of certain success. Five of the squad, ALcpl Hunt (Arakan), APte Graham (Balaclava) APte Tanner (Arnhem) and APte Wilson and APte Pawsey (both Burma) were put in as a team and achieved first place in the young soldiers' team event, and second place in the Rank and File Cup. ALcpl Hunt and APte Tanner also each received medals for getting into the Corps Rifle 40, and not satisfied with that ALcpl Hunt won the best REME Apprentice. On the whole quite a worthwhile shoot. The RAOC Shoot proved interesting in that we took part in two new types of competition, at least for us they were new. The first was the team snap, a difficult Shoot at which we had no luck and the second was the moving target. We achieved some good scores and APte Pawsey managed to earn a third prize medal.

After this we had a rest from shooting for three days.!!

On 15 May a 15 strong team once again arrived at Ash Ranges, this time for the South East District Skill-at-Arms meeting (SEDSAM). This was basically the same as the previous shoots which by now we were fully conversant with. As a team we were placed fifth out of 21 other Junior teams, which we were all pleased about.

College half term passed and already we were preparing for the last and most important meeting as far as we were concerned It was the Junior Soldiers' Skill-at-Arms Meeting (JSSAM). For this a team of ten was selected and new SMGs were issued and zeroed for everyone. All of the rifles were checked and any faults rectified, not that any were serious because of the pride taken in our own personal weapons. With a final practice on Saturday 15 July, it was upon us.

On Sunday 16 July the ten arrived at Pirbright Ranges, ready to check out all the ranges and have a go on all the Sweepstakes. We had a small amount of success that day and ASgt Lewell won 80p on the SMG stage I sweeps. Monday was the first day proper of the shooting and many mixed scores, good and bad, were achieved.

APte Wilson earned himself another medal, the only one of the team to do so unfortunately, on the SMG. He got two high scores, which made him eligible for the "Junior Soldiers 30". The falling plate 'B' team also got through to the quarter finals beating the Depot Paras on the way, but were eventually knocked out by the winners of the competition, the P of W, Lichfield.

All shooting competitions have now finished and all of the team have enjoyed the experience of firing in well organised and not unsuccessful events. Now we all look forward to encountering the new RAOC Apprentices College team at the future shoots, whether it be REME or RAOC. I am sure that we will all continue the sport and will always remember the teachings and final promptings of Lt Jaggers and Lt Ward.

SKIING

Officer in Charge Lt F T Freeman REME

Assistant CSM B N Brace RAOC

In January 1978 nine apprentices and three permanent staff took part in exercise Snowcross Minor. This was the title given to a series of two week langlauf skiing courses for Units of the Junior army, held at AMTC Silberhutte in the Harz mountains in Germany. Our skiers attended course number 1 between 7-21 January.

Lt Major and Sgt Wolfe were attached at Silberhutte for one month as administration staff and were therefore available to assist and take part in the skiing along with CSM Brace and our nine Apprentices. These were ACpls Cowley, Kelly and Robson, ALcpls Kerry and Richardson and APtes Brown, Law, Murdoch and Ralston.

We had carried out fitness training and visited the dry slope in Aldershot in preparation for the 1977-78 season but this was to be our first taste of snow covered slopes.

Most of us were feeling rather apprehensive on arrival at Silberhutte. What was the course going to be like and would we manage all that we thought would be required of us?

Our first day was spent in drawing kit, attending lectures and films, meeting our instructors and being split into the five groups in which we were to ski throughout the course. The groups were named Kniesal, Anoki, Atomic, Shaeffer and Fisher and consisted of a mixture of personnel from various arms of the Junior Army. It was obvious that there would be a lot of rivalry between the groups and healthy competitiveness during their instruction and training.

From the second day onwards we were out on the slopes from early morning to about 1700 hrs, learning all that we could of langlauf skiing and being pressed in all that we undertook. Races between the groups were a regular feature of the training, which kept the competitive spirit going and ensured that everyone was giving of their best at all times.

Our evenings for those of us who still had the energy, were spent visiting the local places of entertainment in St Andreasburg, a pleasant little town approximately two and a half miles from Silberhutte. We had some really enjoyable times

visiting the discos and bars and meeting the local population. Most of us picked up the odd smattering of Deutsch but odd really is the right term, for we had some really amusing occurrences when trying to get our requirements or meaning across to the locals.

In the last week of the course we had the 20 kilometre race from St Andreasburg to Sonnenburg. There were approximately 140 competitors, all keen to do as well as possible both for themselves and their group. ACpl Cowley was absolutely fantastic and won the race which was a really commendable achievement and earned him the respect and admiration of all for the effort his performance had required.

The finale of the course was the presentation to the skiers of the Class 3 Langlauf Certificates which all of our nine Apprentices earned. A fitting end to a thoroughly worthwhile and enjoyable course.

Our second exercise, Snowplough, was held in the Cairngorms in Scotland. This was again of two weeks duration and was for RAOC skiers participating in the Army Association (Scottish) Meeting 1978.

We arrived at Nethybridge on 6 March and were accommodated in the RAOC ski hut in the annexe to the Nethybridge Hotel. Nethybridge is approximately 11 miles from Aviemore which is the most renowned skiing resort in the United Kingdom so we were ideally located.

Our intention was to train the skiers in downhill slalom skiing and to enter both as individuals and teams in the Junior Army and Novices competitions held on 14 and 15 March.

From 6 to 13 March we followed a set routine, departing for the slopes at 0830 and returning at 1700 hrs. The mornings were devoted to slalom training, with Cpl Dymond instructing the skiers in the arts of slalom racing. Free skiing was allowed in the afternoons when the apprentices practised at their own pace on the runs they selected.

On Tuesday 14 March the Novices race was held. Placings in this race were used to seed and give start positions in the Junior Army race on the Wednesday. Though considering their experience the lads did well, they were rather disappointed that they had not achieved as good results as they had hoped. Our best skier, APte Murdoch was 27 out of a total of 126 competitors and won the RAOC Individual Trophy, which was a very creditable performance.

This was the culmination of our skiing for the season. All who participated both in Germany and Scotland had thoroughly enjoyed themselves and would encourage anyone who gets the opportunity to have a go at this really grand sport.

SOCCER

Officer in Charge Capt Kelman

Coaches Capt Hayes

Sgt Proverbs

Sgt Ogden

Sgt Carrick

The soccer teams were very unfortunate in the early part of the season when they came up against teams which had a large element of previous terms' players. Our teams had to be built from scratch with only a couple of older players from the past season left, so they were up against it from the beginning. Nevertheless as the term and season wore on they became more of a team and the results improved.

The first team had been pushed up a league because of their past successes and were playing against senior boys so score lines like 6-0 against were not uncommon. However, our team played good football. Vaissiere in goal, Harwood, Robinson, Crompton, Starbuck, Crankshaw and Smith were the mainstay of the team but our main problem seemed to be a lack of a goal scoring centre forward. This was reflected by the fact

that in their Senior league at one stage in February they had scored only 8 goals for as against 32 given away.

The tide turned however in the Spring term when other Colleges had a mass exodus of players and our teams had changed very little. This, combined with the fact that a good goal scorer, Scrivens, had emerged meant that previous results were reversed. For example, the cooks were beaten by 6-0 (revenge).

Our cup run was reasonably successful and we reached the final of the South East District Youth Cup only to be beaten by C Coy AAC Arborfield by 7-1.

Our B team had a similar run. In the Autumn term their only success was against our own C team which had a season of defeats. However, in the Spring term they too benefitted from other College departures and they reached the final of the Collins Cup, only to be beaten by the RAMC College Coy 4-3.

Having said that our C team had a season of defeats, they did win one match 10-0 and had near misses in a couple of other matches. They suffered to a large extent by the constant flow and change of players between B and C teams. Firth, Thomas, Gibbs and Foskett all showed improvement to the benefit of the B team and Blyth made the transition to the A team. The team held their morale well under the circumstances and they showed that despite the difficulties they enjoyed their football.

The College team had one notable success. Boys from the College entered the Surrey Association of Boys Clubs indoor 5-a-side competition. Deighton, Crankshaw, Robinson, Crompton, Firth, Harvey and Scrivens all played for the College and they showed their abilities by winning 4 matches against civilian boys clubs to win the Surrey regional final. They then went on to the South East England regional final, only to be beaten 2-1 in the first round by London Boys' Clubs. This was a good result because the London Clubs went on to win the competition, not surprisingly since they were all on the books of professional clubs. The boys at least got their Surrey colours for their appearance. Throughout the season all the boys showed that they were fair, but hard, sportsmen and at no time did they let the College down in terms of behaviour. If future teams can emulate this, then the College soccer times will continue to do well.

SQUASH

Officer in Charge Capt B F Kane RAEC

Assistants WO2 Brace RAOC

Sgt Botfield RAOC

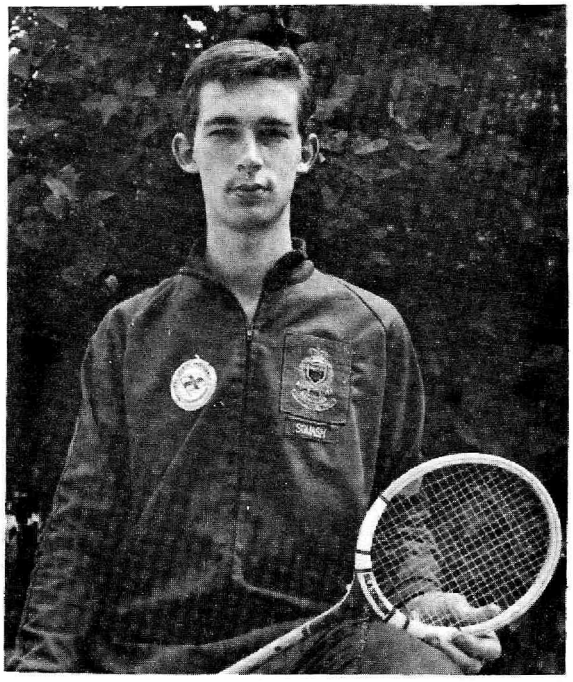
September 1977 found our previous year's strong Apprentices squash squad scattered far and wide and once more the College had to start from scratch to build another. Fortunately boundless enthusiasm and a reasonable degree of natural talent was to be found and a number of the new Apprentices made rapid progress in the game's basic techniques. A College ladder was instituted and soon Apprentices started to overtake many of the Permanent Staff members. The fact that squash was available as both a sport and a hobby was a great help.

By the middle of the winter term some Apprentices were showing real promise. Between the 10th and 16th March the College Individual Squash Championship attracted 20 entries to the Apprentices competition and 16 to the Open. The final of the Apprentices competition between ALcpl Wakefield of Burma Platoon and APte Chesher of Arakan Platoon was a particularly hard and fine game, won by Wakefield in the fifth game. The Open competition was won by Capt B F Kane who beat WO2 Brace in another hard fought match. The previous year's winner, the injured Sgt Botfield, refereed both finals.

Also in March the College entered a team in the Army under-17½ team competition and nine Apprentices in the Individual under-17½ competition. The College team went out after three hard matches. APte Johnson of Ardennes Platoon reached the quarter finals of the Individual Championships proper and APte Chesher was defeated

in the final of the Plate Competition. As a result ALcpl Wakefield, APtes Chesher and Crompton were each awarded College squash colours.

The year ends with us looking for talent from the June intake and, with the arrival of Major Champion, an established Corps player, who has offered to help coach next year's team, we look forward to the coming season with some optimism.



ALcpl Wakefield REME
Apprentice Squash Champion 1978

SUB AQUA

Officer in Charge Capt M E Parsons RAOC

Article by APte J D Maxwell

After a long tiresome journey through a small fraction of England and half of Wales, the train we were in ground to a slow half halt and then it jerked to show the journey had ended for us. As we looked out of the windows for the hundredth time our eyes lit up as we looked at a sign that read Tenby and we knew we had reached our objective. The journey, which had lasted six hours by train at least had ended, now where were we to go. We knew we were to live in a training camp called Penally near Tenby and since we had arrived at Tenby, where were we to go next? There again, who was to show us. Personally I had hardly seen any of the Permanent Staff. Well, my question was soon answered when we were ordered to disembark and get on some coaches that were waiting for us. After a ten minute journey we found ourselves approaching the training camp in Penally, where we were to live for 15 days.

The huts didn't look like much but it was better than tents or ponchos which we had lived in as a platoon. I never had much time to really settle in, this was due to the fact that I was to go on guard two hours after we arrived. Within those two hours I managed to lay most of my kit out in a locker but I never knew where I put it all, I just 'slung' it in. After my guard was over, which was at 0900 hrs the following day, I returned to the hut to find APte Deacon and ALcpl Symon were sharing the same locker as me and they had been generous enough to tidy my stuff.

This was the first day over with at least, but there was another 15. Most of these I would be

spending doing my hobby and sport which is sub aqua. The only days I would not be doing sub aqua were during the three day exercise which were to be over the last three days at camp.

During the 12 days of sub squa I managed to gain a fear towards the sea water for the first time in ages. I feared the sea water, it seemed to be an ingrown fear. I would swim in the water but I would not do any diving, so I never got in much diving. Instead I just helped out with the equipment and helped the others get ready for their dives.

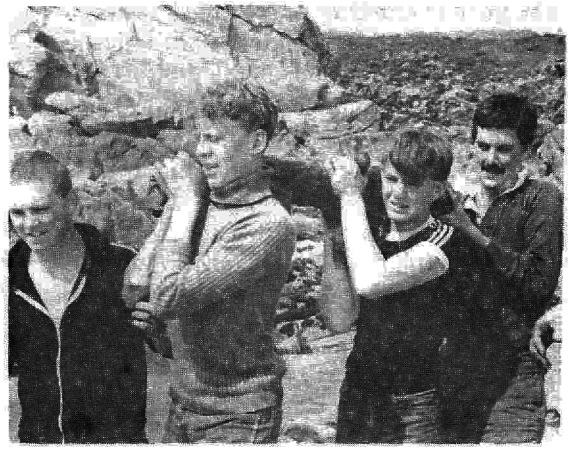
During the days of diving we were moved to four different beaches and on every beach we went on we seemed to find a buoy, so at the end of our 12 days of diving we walked away with four buoys for Capt Parson's boat. The buoys came in very handy for water skiing when we did it instead of sub squa one day. Personally I found that a good laugh and it made a change.

The worst part of doing sub aqua was that everyone grew to hate those who did sub aqua, due to the fact that they thought we were always 'skiving', although from our point of view we seemed to be doing more work than any of them. They might do a morning run up and down hills and fatigues now and then, but we in the Sub Aqua Club had to take the boat down to the harbour well before they were awakened in the morning. We also had to load it with the kit. Now that boat alone weighs enough for half of us and we were carrying and pushing that boat about six times a day if we were not careful. The equipment we used was washed at the end of each day and everything was loaded back on to the 4 tonner excluding the boat. And living on those packed lunches for 12 days was terrible. Nevertheless we survived. During our days of sub aqua we found an old cannon on the beach which nearly broke half our backs as we tried to carry it.

The three day exercise at the end of the camp I fully enjoyed. We did a lot of running around that region where we camped which I think everyone in the College enjoyed. During the camp a team which I was in managed to win a small running competition which won me two beers.



The Sub Aqua Club



Sub Aqua recovering a rusty old cannon



"Hail and farewell?"

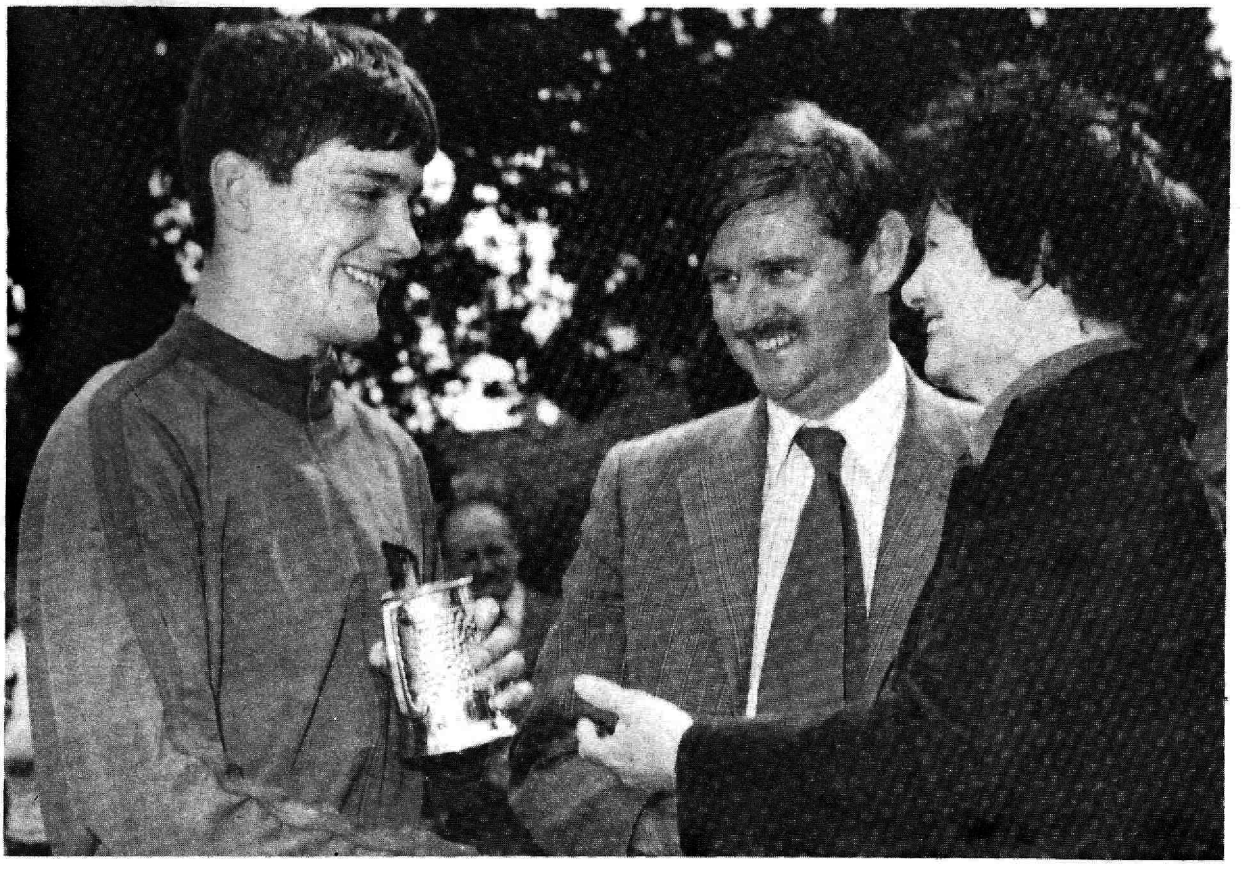
TENNIS

Officer in Charge Major P A Easton RAEC

Assistants W E Smith Esq

Lt M Thompson RAOC

LCpl Langton RAOC

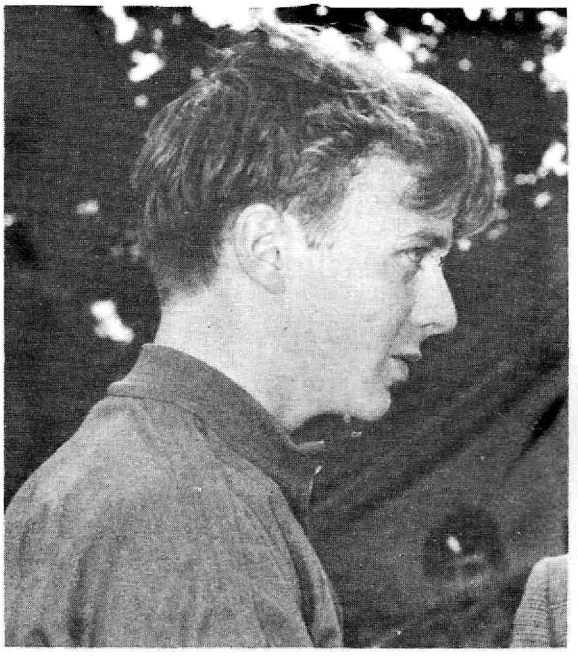


RAOC Tennis Championships 1978 Junior Doubles Winners: APtes Clark and Tinkler
APte Tinkler receiving his prize from Mrs Callan (wife of the DGOS)

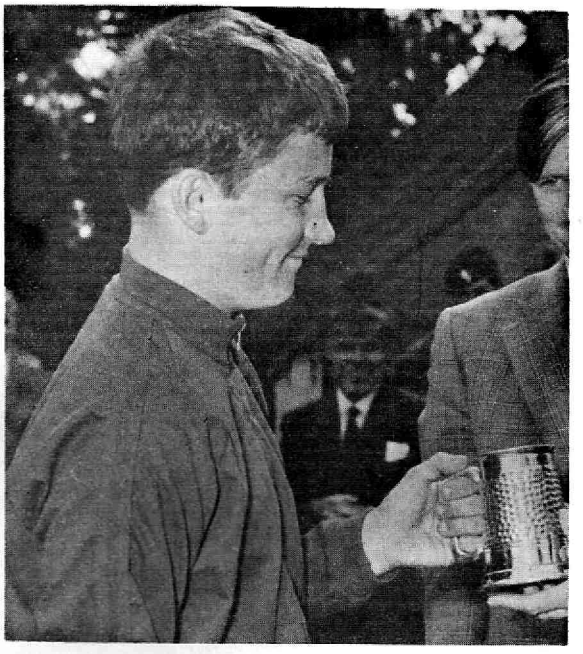
If popularity was the measure of success then there could be little doubt that the Tennis Club would be top of the pops! However, from a playing point of view it seems inevitable that all its members have to start learning the game literally from scratch. With few exceptions club members are learners in every sense of the word. Added to this there can never be sufficient time in which to produce quality players in what has to be a severely restricted season because of other vital training requirements.

Despite all difficulties, the club has developed on a solid foundation due entirely to the enthusiasm of Apprentices and coaching staff alike. Keenness was rewarded when the Club was able to put forward 10 Apprentices for inclusion in the Junior Army Championships, purely to gain experience in competitive play. To take on tennis players from Harrogate, Chepstow and Arborfield, severely coached and trained over some two years or more and obviously possessing natural ability, is no mean achievement. It is most gratifying to record that all our members accredited themselves well and indeed APte Tinkler was successful in reaching the 3rd round of the Plate Competition before being eliminated after a hard fought match. In the RAOC Championships (Junior Section) APte Clark won the Singles Cup with APte Binns runner up and APtes Clark and Tinkler the Doubles Trophy. In addition to all this the Club has every right to feel pleased that one of its former members, Cpl Charlton, flew in from Germany where he had just won the BAOR Singles and with his partner, the Doubles, to be once again successful in the Corps Senior Singles and Doubles competitions.

The Club may not have been quite successful in 'pot hunting' as in previous years, but what it has lacked in that sense it has been adequately compensated in the large number of Apprentices introduced to the game of tennis and set firmly on their way to sound all round performances in play of any good club standard.



The other half of the doubles team
APte Clark also receiving his award



APte Binns. Runner-up Junior Singles

ON REFLECTION

by WO2 (CSM) Slaughter RAOC

My previous OC in BAOR couldn't understand why I didn't jump for joy when he informed me I had been selected for promotion to WO2 (CSM). (As you have probably guessed, he told me of

the promotion as the second point he had to say).

The worst ingredient in the advent of an initial posting to the College is the **sure** knowledge that one is going to have to handle and control hundreds of damp eyed, unsure, helpless, young children. (It isn't, because that is how I felt after two weeks!) On arrival, however, clutching a stack of instruction booklets from 'Mothercare', I found that my stores should have included a Force Field, half a dozen brass necks and numerous thunderbolts, of both types. (I was lucky actually, they were all in the CSM's locker marked "use immediately).

How can I reflect? It would be useless and time consuming to list all the sports, runs, charities, assistance at shows, fetes, galas, open days and countless other activities which I have loved and hated for the past 2½ years. It would be time consuming to list the names of officers, NCOs and Apprentices who have assisted, helped, advised, consoled and impeded me for the past 2½ years. It would be a complete fabrication to say I have enjoyed every minute, as it also would if I said I hated every minute. I found the College to be a working unit, different, obviously, from others, but with the same problems and rewards on a grander scale.

The Apprentices, ah, the Apprentices; would that I see their eager, shining faces again, on the square; their jolly comments and laughter on the cross country runs; their studious determination to learn from others; would that I see them again, would I? will I? (I'm going to have to stop this or else certain people will think I want to come back for another tour!) PUT THAT DIARY DOWN RSM!!!

My **real** reward whilst I served at the College, and I'm being serious for a moment, is not (sorry girls) the three lovelies in the office, but being approached, on POP days, by parents who say, "What the heck have you done to my poor son? We can't recognise him. He's so tall, slim, smart, clean and well-spoken." I, of course, apologise for being slightly responsible for his state and try to explain that it always seems to happen at this particular stage and that we will signal his next unit to try and get them to rectify the faults! (Upon seeing Apprentices who pop back now and then to see us, it would seem that our signals get through and are acted upon most efficiently).

Seriously parental gratitude and admiration towards the College system of producing the aforementioned state, will long be my memory of the College. If a job's worth doing .....



WO2 (CSM) P S Slaughter RAOC, author of the article above, receiving the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal from the Commanding Officer, Lt Col N S Bruce RAOC

SANDES HOME-TREGANTLE TANGO 78

by Sgt P Daniel REME



Mr Les Waterhouse in charge at Tregantle

For some of us it was our first camp in the Fort of Tregantle, for the majority it was the first contact with Sandes Soldiers' Home. At short notice Mr Les Waterhouse was asked to set up a Sandes Home during the week at Tregantle because there was no other facilities available in the fort.

He was given a large room from where to operate, situated at one end he had his counter and the stock ranged from soft drinks to stamps, to the disappointment of some there were no cigarettes on sale. The remainder of the space was used as a games sitting room. Typical games like scrabble and chess were on loan from the counter.

During the first couple of days the bad weather prevented some activities being held, so the Sandes home was kept quite busy during the day as well as each evening. The Christian tracts were available and many Apprentices spent much time huddled around the coal fire reading these little books which explains God's plan of Salvation. The consequence of accepting Christ, resulting in Eternal life or rejecting Christ resulting in eternal regret.

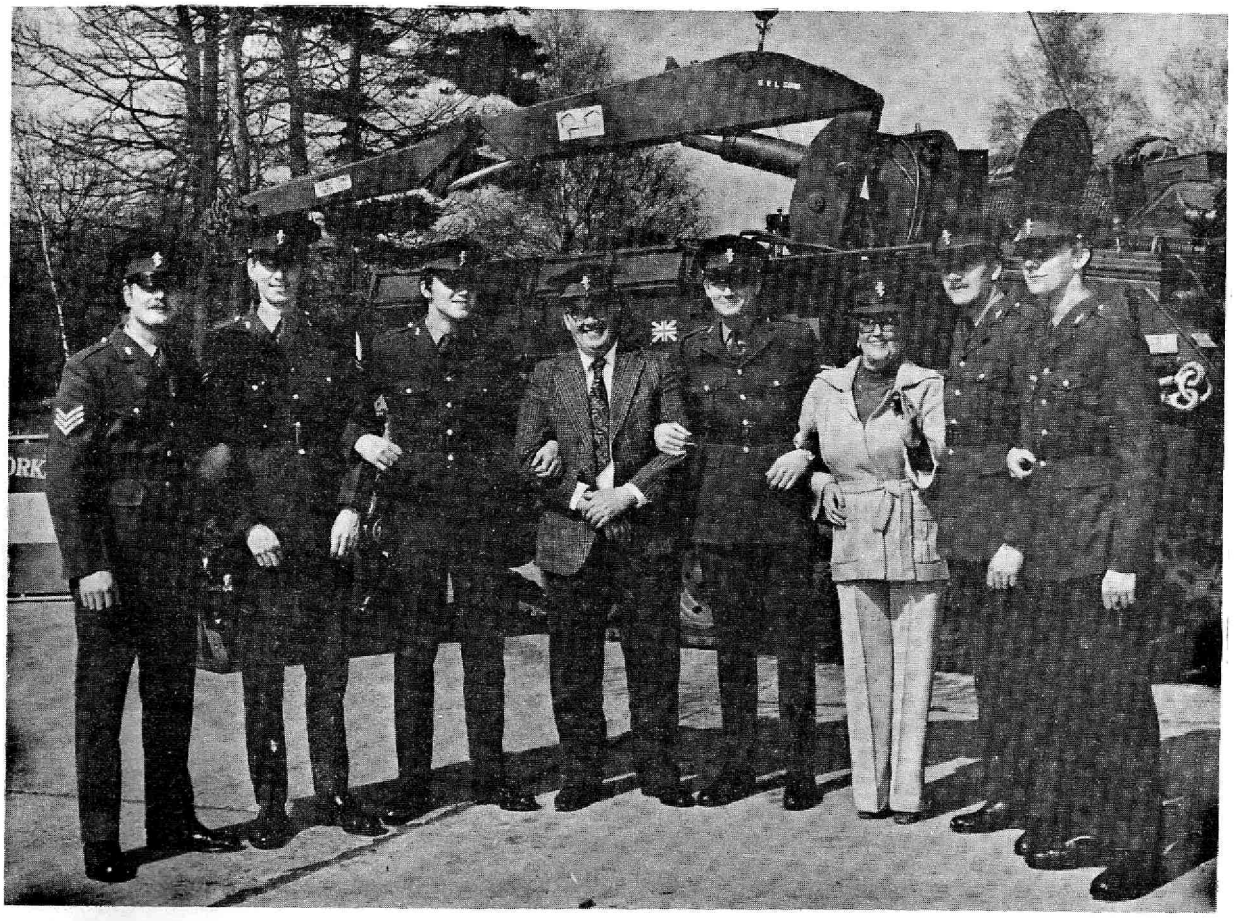
Why are they called 'Sandes Homes'. Over a hundred years ago Miss Elise Sanders felt very concerned for young servicemen. She wanted to provide a home from home for them, so after very small beginnings in Tralee the organisation has spread from Ireland to UK, India, Brunei, Malaya, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Still today the outreach goes on to Ireland, UK and the Far East. The Homes provide recreational and canteen facilities similar in ways to NAAFI except Sandes are more interested in the spiritual welfare of servicemen as well as their stomachs.

Mr Les Waterhouse and his wife are Superintendents of the Sandes Home in Pirbright where they have been for eight years. Les, himself an ex-serviceman, did 22 years in the RAF. Having been converted in 1960 it is his desire that others too might come to Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

SIX SOLDIER SONS

"It ain't half a lot, Mum"



Mum and Dad's Army.
Bill and Alice Holroyd, wearing appropriate headgear, on parade with their six REME sons at a reunion in Osnabruck. Lt to R. Gerry, Philip, Leslie, Dad, Steven, Mum, Brian and David

Bill and Alice Holroyd are back home in Elland, near Halifax, after a flying visit to Osnabruck as guests of the Army for a reunion with their own personal Defence Force - six soldier sons all serving with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

A sextet of soldier brothers all serving simultaneously is a record for REME and may be a record for the whole Army.

In the van of the Royal Holroyd Regiment, as they are sometimes known, is senior brother 29 year old Sgt Gerry Holroyd, a vehicle mechanic and bringing up the rear is 17 year old David, a Junior Craftsman training to be a vehicle mechanic.

The fine body of men in between are Cpls Philip, aged 25, and Steven, age 22, LCpl Brian, 21, and Craftsman Leslie, 18, who are REME clerks. All the brothers are 6 feet tall or over with Philip the tallest at 6 feet 4 inches.

Young David is with us in Deepcut and flew to the family parade with his parents. All his brothers are serving in Rhine Army units and marched on 12 Armoured Workshop, Osnabruck, the appointed place, when REME beat the drum. The Workshop was familiar to three of the brothers. Gerald and Philip were there together in 1971-72 and then Gerald and Steven in 1973.

Lt Col Jim Dennis, the CO, threw a party for the Holroyds as soon as they were assembled. One son observed. "Dad has now realised his ambition. Standing at the bar with all his sons, and he didn't have to pay".

How was the Royal Holroyd Regiment recruited?

Bill Holroyd, 53, a foreman at Elland power station and Alice, 48, manageress of Rex Bingo, Elland, who live in Park Avenue, said they neither encouraged or discouraged their sons to join the Army, but there is a military tradition in the family.

Bill himself was a soldier for ten years serving with the Royal Sussex Regiment in the Far East in World War II and later with the RMP. His father won the Military Medal in World War I and his grandfather served in the Boer War.

"It all started with Gerry", said Bill. "He was an apprentice fitter at the time and one night I was having a pint with him when he calmly announced that he was going to join the Army the next day. The rest followed one by one. It just snowballed. They all went to Brooksbank Grammar School, but left as soon as they could to start apprenticeships. Young David was downright annoyed at having to wait a bit between leaving school and starting at his apprentice college".

Alice chipped in: "It's the first time we've all been together as a family for six years, and we are really grateful to REME for providing this opportunity. The Army is getting to know me now - I've been to all the boys' passing out parades."

JOSEPH & THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOUR DREAMCOAT

4th and 5th April saw the Apprentices on show at the Tela Theatre in the modern 'pop/rock' opera 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat' (music by Andrew Lloyd Weber, of Jesus Christ Superstar fame).

The story is that of Joseph and his brother as told in the book of Genesis but here it is recounted in the language and music of today.

The brothers were superb in their interpretation and the eldest, Reuben (Major David Furness Gibbon) will never be forgotten. Dare I say that he put Maurice Chevalier to shame? Joseph, alias APte Hawes, stole the show and proved to be a very competent singer (although his voice did seem higher after he had been seduced by OC WRAC Coy).



APte Hawes as Joseph leading the rest of the cast.

Our thanks go to Padre Alan Stockbridge for his unfailing faith in our abilities, despite great adversities, and also to Fiona Dennison for her choreographic expertise, support and encouragement.

A good time was had by all the cast - what a pity our audiences were so small! Those who failed to see our show certainly missed a real theatrical treat.

One admiring theatre goer



Major Furness Gibbon, as Reuben, in full cry



The glamour element

VALETE

COLLEGE LEAVERS

WINTER TERM 1977

STAFF CLERKS RAOC

APte Archibald I
ASgt Baskerville J
APte Buchanan C A
ALcpl Charnick A
APte Cliffe A P
APte Compton P M J
APte Day R P
APte Finden C
APte Flinn M
APte Hughes G J
APte Hutton A R
ASgt Lidster P
ASgt Rees S
ALcpl Ritchie L J
APte Rubie L M
APte Shiels R H
ASgt Snowdon P
APte Tye C P
APte Young C B

TECHNICAL CLERKS RAOC

APte Blythe G
APte Calderwood G
ALcpl Cartwright P
APte England S M
ALcpl Goody
APte Heffer I T
APte Meek K
APte Riley S M
APte Smith S
APte Vaissiere I P

STOREMEN RAOC

ASgt Back C D
APte Balch
APte Barstow T
APte Barter P F
APte Bowes-Cavangh D P
APte Braithwaite P J
ALcpl Cain D A
ALcpl Cannon M
APte Carnell M R
APte Charlesworth T W
APte Clarke B D C
APte Clarke J

APte Clifford M J
APte Daly M J
APte Davies A
APte Davies P D
APte Dunford J M
APte Dunham D A
APte Edwards K M
ACpl Evans C D
ACpl Foster I D
APte Fox G
APte Goddard W G
APte Harwood L R
APte Hobson J L
APte Hopton C J
APte Hynd N G E
APte Jackson M J
ALcpl Johnson P
APte Kirkwood N H
APte Liddell J C
APte Long I R
APte Magor N W
APte Marshall P A
ACpl McCarter K T
APte McNairn M S
ALcpl Percival B I
APte Perry M D
ASgt Regan D R
ALcpl Roper P A
APte Shearin A J
APte Shillito D G
APte Shotton P A K
APte Smith S W
APte Storey A
APte Thomas G V
APte Ward S P
APte Whopples R E
APte Wooding S
ASgt Wright J P

POTENTIAL REME TRADESMEN

ALcpl Adams D P
APte Derbyshire A R
APte Hair J W F
APte Harrison M I
APte Jackson A
APte Kendrick R
ALcpl Lane W D
ALcpl MacDougal M R
APte Maddern B
ALcpl McLean D M A
ACpl Mellers R
ACpl Rocks M
APte Sandy J D
APte Usmar I P
APte Westwood T J K
APte Williams G
APte Younger C R

SPRING TERM 1978

STAFF CLERKS RAOC

APte Conlon C D
APte Mitchell R G

TECHNICAL CLERK RAOC

APte McDowell R G

STOREMEN RAOC

ALcpl Brogan G T P
APte Forsyth G J E
ACpl MacIver E
ACpl Norrie B McB
APte O'Neil D
APte Walker S J

STOREMAN REME

APte Robertson R A

POTENTIAL REME TRADESMEN

ACpl Cowley C J
ASgt Foskett J A
APte Fowler D
APte Gisborne A G
APte Holden-Rushworth M L
ACpl Kelly K H
ALcpl Kerry D
APte Law M S
APte McGowan M
APte Ralston S
ALcpl Richardson I
APte Roberts A D
ACpl Robson S R
APte Waters K J

CLERKS REME

ASgt Gadd T P H
APte Hollis M C G
ACpl Roberts M L
APte Snowdon C D

SUMMER TERM 1978

STAFF CLERKS RAOC

ALcpl Billinger J C
ALcpl Haw G
ALcpl Scott C K

CLERKS REME

ACpl Cowley C J
ASgt Foskett J A

SUPPLY SPECIALISTS RAOC

APte Brown K J
ASgt Fleming E S
APte Johnson D J
APte Murdoch G W
APte Westwood K A

POTENTIAL REME TRADESMEN

VEHICLE MECHANICS

APte Barker T A
APte Bernard W W
APte Brown D J
APte Chesher N S
APte Coates M
APte Crankshaw A J
APte Deighton K D
APte Ellis E
APte Fish I P
APte Goodson G F
ASgt Harwood D G
APte Henderson R J
APte Jennings I D
ALcpl Kew S
APte Malone A
APte McDermott S R
APte Minchin A W
ALcpl Osborn J A
APte Perry A F
APte Richards M W
APte Rogers M
APte Stamford A R
ALcpl Turner M A
APte Waters A D
APte Whittaker D L
APte Wilson A J
APte Wise I G
APte Beesley S
APte Binns S G R
APte Burrows K B
ALcpl Clark A S
APte Coubrough J
APte Dean A F
APte Ellinsworth C A
APte Fenwick S J
APte Folkard R D
APte Gurton K J
APte Hawkins B J
ALcpl Hunt P J
APte Johnston H R

APte Lees K J
APte Matthews G J
APte McRitchie R A
APte Nagy L
APte Pawsey D
APte Preston A C
APte Rodgers R A
APte Smith G C
ALcpl Taylor I F
ALcpl Wakefield S A I
ACpl Watkin G E
APte Willis A R
APte Wilson D

METALSMITHS

APte Beare R P
APte Flavell D O
ASgt Lewell R
ALcpl Coupland I N
ALcpl Gibbs R
APte Lingskog H C

ELECTRICIAN

ASgt Webb B W

ELECTRONIC TECHNICIANS

APte Ali Z
ASgt Pettitt T J
APte Whitehead M H

AIRCRAFT TECHNICIANS

ACpl Crumpton N D
ALcpl Parker M J

ARMOURER

APte Hoare S

RECOVERY MECHANICS

APte Jones M A
APte Mooney J P
APte Mitchell C M
APte Nagy D S
APte Priestley A G
ALcpl Roberts T W
APte Russell S
APte Saunders P D G
APte Willcocks S R
APte White J K

INSTRUMENT TECHNICIANS

APte Brittain A W
APte MacDonald F A
APte Mellor S P

FITTERS GUN

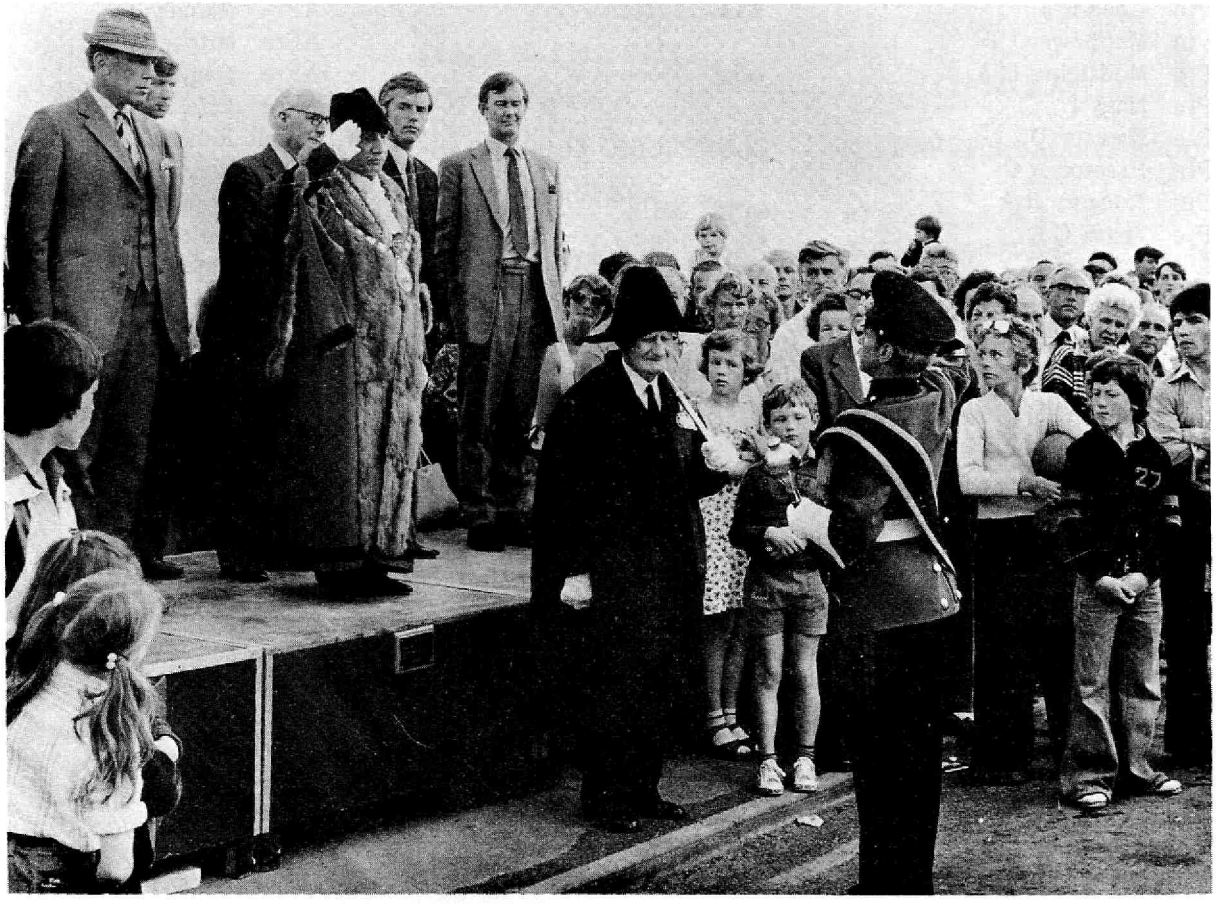
APte Dick W Y S
ALcpl Dumbrell M
ASgt Duck N R J
ALcpl Steele C

MISCELLANY

Corps of Drums

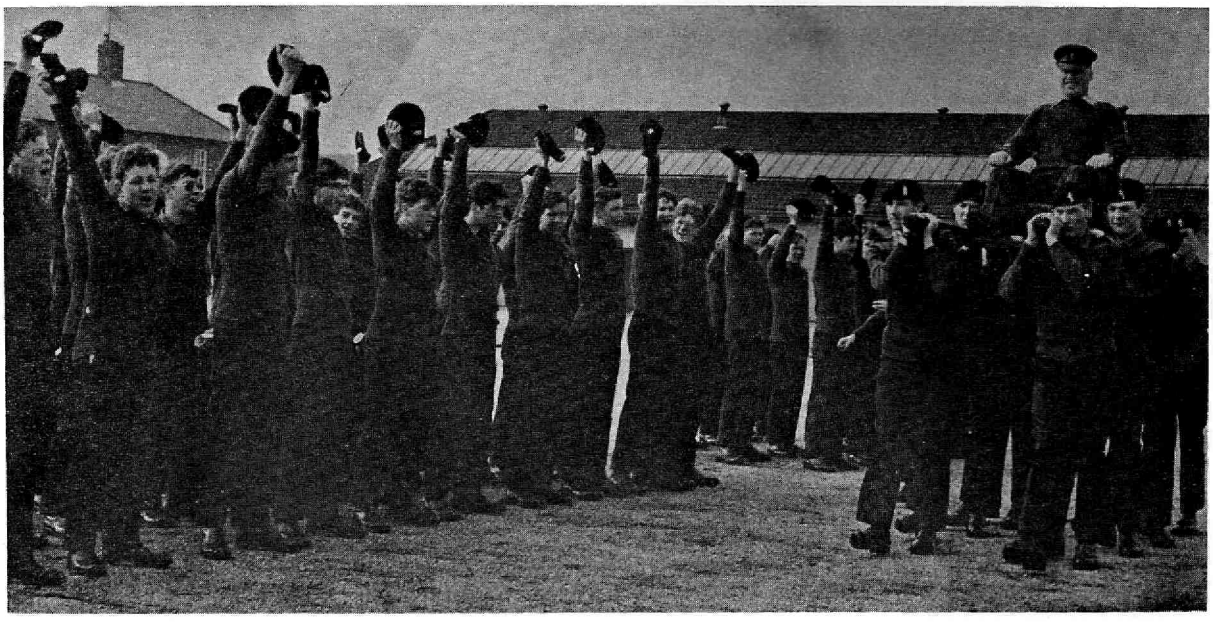


The Corps of Drums Beating Retreat on the Esplanade at Tenby. Annual Camp May 1978



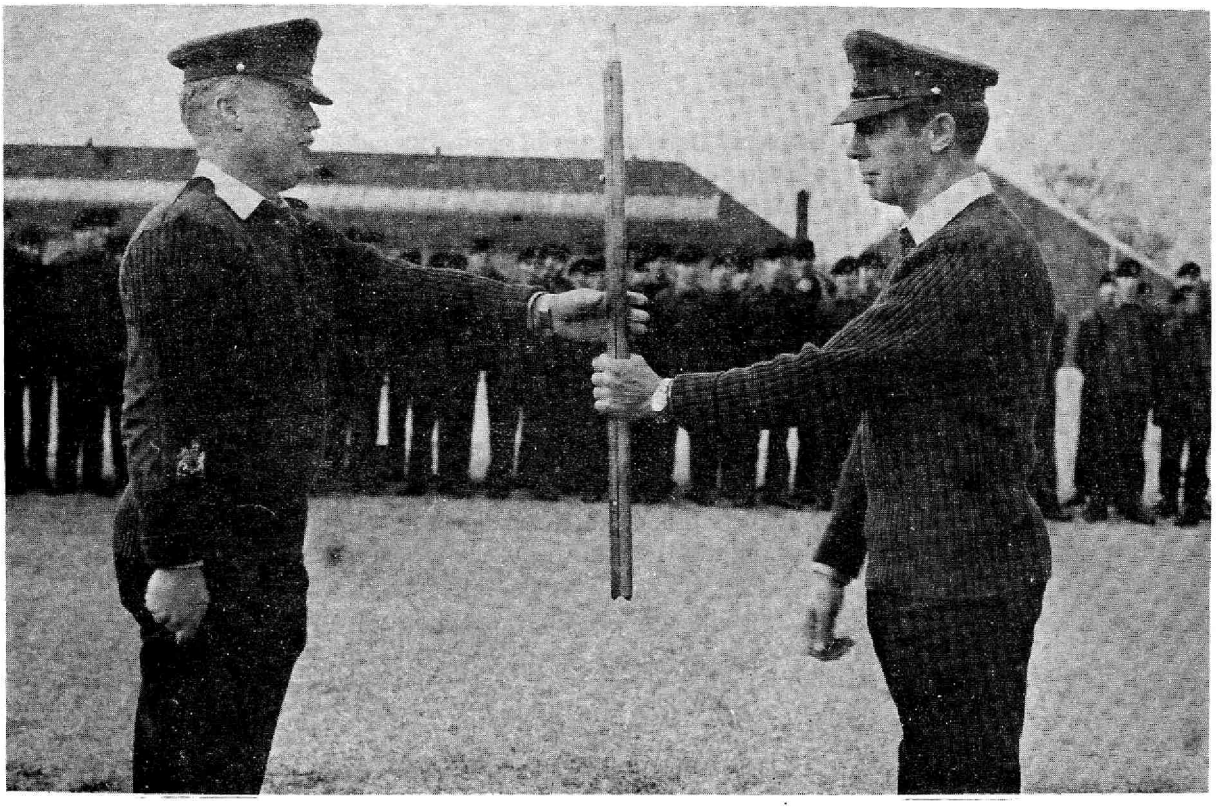
The Drum Major (Sgt C J Taylor REME) seeks the Mayor's permission to march off after the ceremony

Change of RSM



May 1978.

WO1 (RSM) J T Foster RAOC chaired from the parade ground by enthusiastic apprentices after ...



.... handing over to WO1 (RSM) P Mackey RAOC

Thoughts on a Christmas Morning

W E Smith

O Heavenly Babe this joyful morn born our King,
Who made all angels in Heaven to sing;
How gracious is God and Holy his name
How marvellous His Son and Spirit the same.

Rejoice mankind, cast aside your toil and load,
For you He did forsake His divine abode;
How blest is the world and gladdening its sound
How glory shines forth and goodwill abounds.

Merry Christmas, God bless you is our will
Ring out wild bells, awaken the hushed hill
How great is this day and bounteous its worth
How worldly is Heaven when God's on earth.