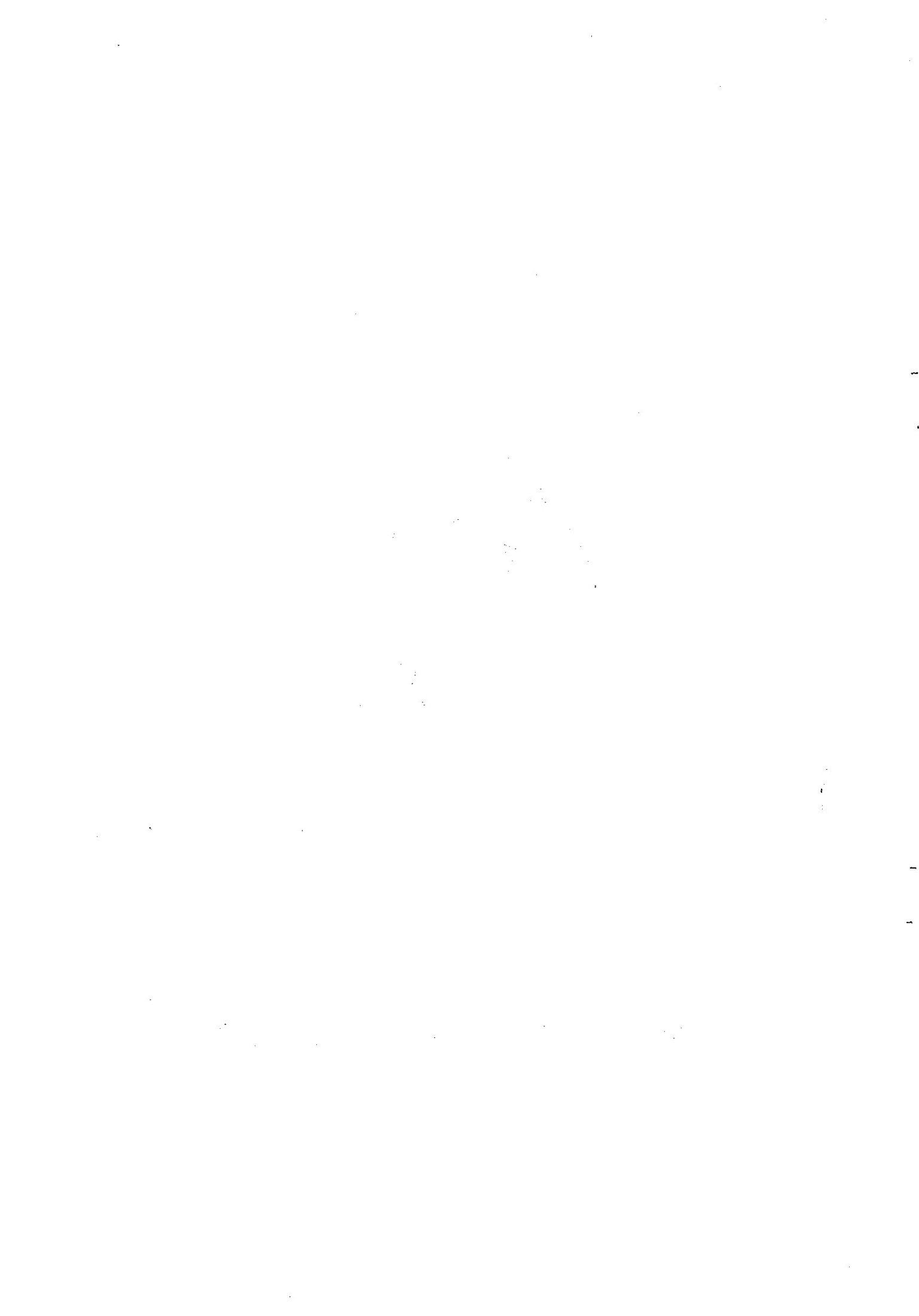


June 72

N/Ireland



DUKES' DIARY



FROM THE COMMANDING OFFICER

When I wrote my last letter to you all in Belfast I did not expect to be writing you another from Newry quite so soon. As you will see from the contributions to this edition of the Diary we are living in a variety of places, all well described inside. One of the questions I find hardest to answer is; "How does a tour in the country compare with the city?" I think the only thing to say is that it is different. It has many advantages; the lovely countryside, (when you see it through the rain), the fresh air, and the closer approach to normal soldiering. On the other hand we do have fairly long periods when nothing much is happening and it is easy for boredom to set in and for our standards of alertness to drop off.

It goes without saying that everyone is remarkably cheerful and that they are, as ever, doing a difficult job really well. You will all be glad to hear that our one casualty so far, Pte. Lingard, who was shot in the side at Crossmaglen, is making good progress and should be fit before too long. It is with the deepest regret, however, that I have to record the death of Sapper Hurst who was working at Crossmaglen helping Support Company to improve their defences. We found, on our arrival that there was a considerable amount of engineer work to be done and the Sappers of 50 Field Squadron have been doing a really good job in all our locations. We offer them all our thanks and our condolences on the loss of a member of the Squadron.

We miss having Alma Company with us and although we do not see much of them I have heard many complimentary comments on the way they are doing their job in Ballymurphy. They are evidently maintaining our name in the City.

Finally, I can assure you that we are all well, all cheerful and all keeping our eyes skinned, we trust you are doing the same at home.

JUNE, 1972



Ptes. Barron and Gibson, Burma Coy lend a hand in setting up the new front gate sangout at Bessbrook Technical.

LOCATIONS

Unlike Belfast, we are spread over a very wide area and many of the Battalion haven't had an opportunity to see how the other half live. To set the picture, here is a short description to go with the map on the next page.

Battalion Headquarters – Bessbrook Mill

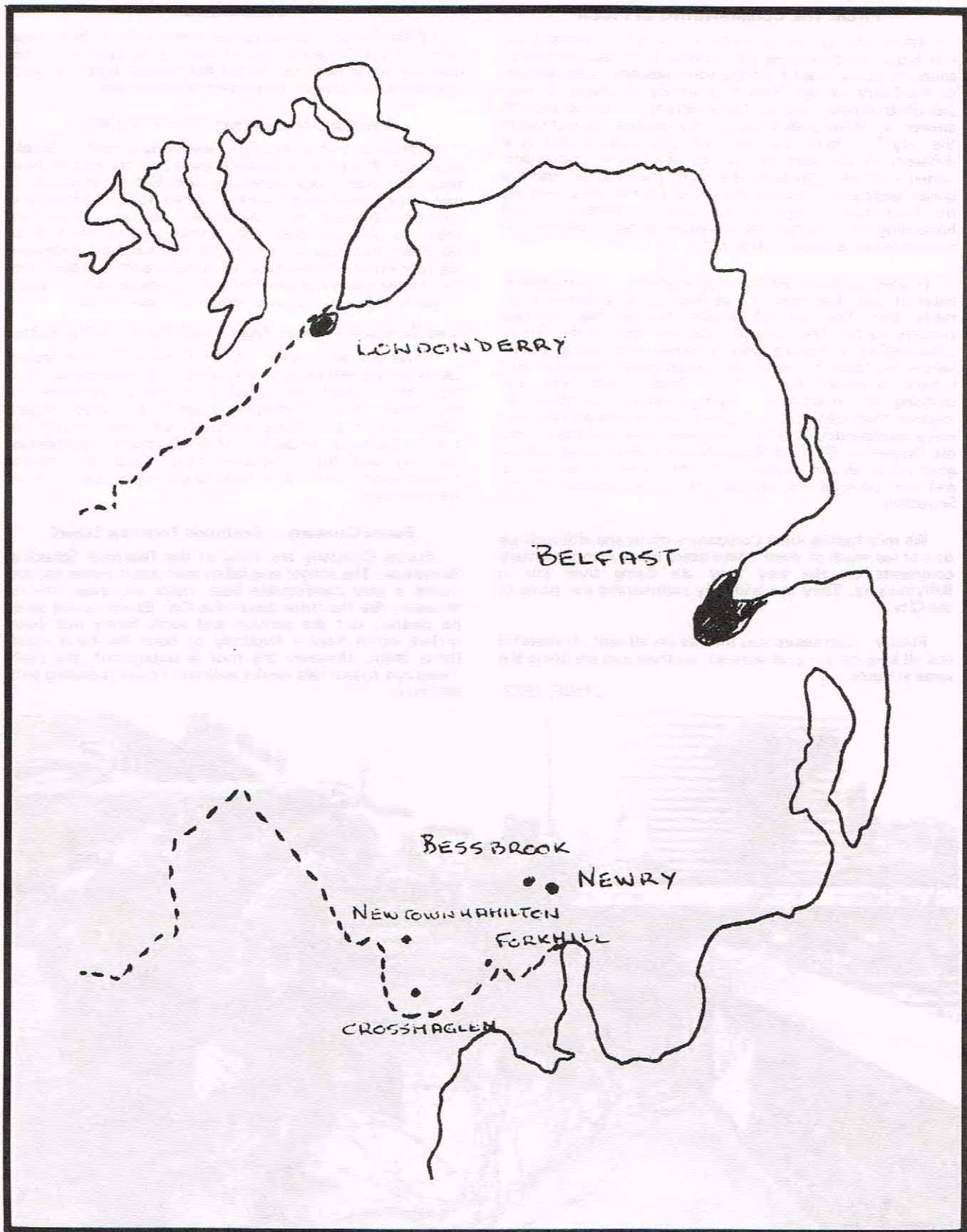
Command and Admin Coys are living in part of an old linen mill. Built over a hundred years ago, the part we have taken over was a huge machinery shed. Before we arrived, it had been partitioned, painted, wired for electricity and cooks, showers and lavatories installed. There are problems, the roof leaks, the partitions are so thin that we can hear what goes on in the next room and the bedspaces are very cramped. However the cooks are doing a good job, Cpl. Tolley keeps the beer flowing and having two company sergeant majors in the same company keeps us busy.

Alma Company – Henry Taggart Hall, Ballymurphy, Belfast

"Have gun will travel!" is the Alma motto. No sooner had they got settled into a routine in Londonderry, than they were rushed down to Belfast to lend a hand there. At the moment, they are sleeping rough in the Henry Taggart Memorial Hall and trying to arrange the move of their kit from Londonderry to Belfast. With a Company Commander who organised the withdrawal from Malta, this should present no problem and we hope to give a progress report in the next issue.

Burma Company – Bessbrook Technical School

Burma Company are living in the Technical School at Bessbrook. The school was taken over about a year ago and makes a very comfortable base, there are snags, like no showers, like the three dead mice Cpl. Barker found when he cleaned out the canteen and some funny hot water boilers which have a tendency to burn the hand which lights them. However the roof is waterproof, the Daily Telegraph colour tele works well and Toddy is dealing with the mice.



Bn. HQ., Command & Admin Coys
 Drums
 Alma Coy
 Burma Coy
 Corunna Coy
 Somme Coy HQ & Mor. Pl
 Anti Tank Pl
 Vigilant & Assault Pls

— Bessbrook Mill
 — Bessbrook RUC
 — Belfast
 — Bessbrook Tech School
 — Newry
 — Crossmaglen
 — Forkhill
 — Newtownhamilton

Corps of Drums — Bessbrook RUC Station

Shortly after we arrived, the Drums couldn't stand the pace in the mill and moved out to their own little empire in the police station. It's the first time that most of them have seen a police station from outside the cell bars and they seem to like what they see. There's a draughts league going on between them and the local coppers and they are being very generous about lending their showers to Burma company.



Lt. Thorn with two of the drums of explosives found by Pte English and a helpful cow

Corunna Company — UDR Centre, Newry

The majority of Corunna are based in the UDR Centre Newry. This is a long stone building tucked in a fold in the ground on the outskirts of Newry. The cookhouse is just by the main door, so you can have a quick look at what Cpl. Petre is going to dish up for supper as you come off patrol. What with the tower outside the gate and the pile of sand inside, you might imagine you were in Blackpool.

RUC Headquarters, Newry

Whilst the rest of Corunna perch on the edge of the town, 9 Platoon are in the thick of things, living at Police Divisional Headquarters in the middle of Newry. They are living in a fairly cramped dormitory under the eaves, but have plenty of space in the yard at the back for their daily PT.

Somme Company

Somme Company lives a split existence in three RUC stations strung along the border. All these stations are similar and each form a little Kingdom of their own.

In the North, the Vigilant Platoon dominate Newtownhamilton. They have the most space, which is lucky considering the size of their platoon commander, but are short of a ration store. The Police have loaned them a cell to use as their store, but on Saturday nights the spuds and spam have to be tipped out whilst the drunks are rolled in.

In the Centre, Company Headquarters and the Mortar Platoon are in Crossmaglen Police Station. There is a football pitch at the rear of the station but they've had to screen it off to stop CSM Lindsay pining over all the running practice he's missing.

Then in the South, the Anti-Tank Platoon in Forkhill, which is the smallest of the three villages. Scruff Gilbert makes a good village bobby (if only his feet were a big bigger).

All three police stations are little self-contained forts, with wire fences round the outside & a gas operated siren which they claim can be heard up to 20 miles away. The rest of the Battalion are laying bets as to who succumbs and lets theirs off first.

ALMA COMPANY (Stevens Strollers)

The ALMA has been gear ever since we arrived in Ireland. Our first two or three days were spent in wondering just why we had been sent at all! The next two we had a platoon employed in Londonderry City then two platoons. After a week we were given a piece of real estate to cover in the Sperrin Mountains. The pattern for the following ten days was platoon rotating daily between VCP's in the city, ops in the Sperrin Mountains, and on standby.

On Sunday, 14th May we very quickly moved into top gear. From being at ten minutes notice to move into Londonderry we were put at one hours standby for Belfast and at ten o'clock in the evening we walked onto the Maidstone. At four o'clock on Monday morning we drove into Ballymurphy. We are still here and will be for some time.

Our antics in Ballymurphy are described elsewhere. It is suffice to say that we are in full swing, working very hard, morale is high, and succeeding in what we were sent to do. Valient efforts are being made to improve our accommodation and very shortly we should be self-contained. The locals welcomed us with stones, bricks and petrol bombs and our pigs are now dressed over with all colours of the rainbow. There have been lighter moments such as OC 3pl on his way to a search and arrest op at 0330 hrs. ran over a small barricade of metal sheeting. One sheet caught on the rear of the pig as the Pl. Comd. raced to get into position on time; the noise should have been enough to wake the whole of the estate except no one stirred.

A FEW DAYS IN THE LIFE OF 1 PLATOON

The Platoon Commander, (Sgt. Simpson) and Platoon Sgt. (Sgt Barnett) went on a recon to Brooke Park on Friday to find out our tasks, the whole platoon moved down to Brooke Park on the Saturday morning. We had one Section in a Pig at Fort George whilst the rest of the platoon were doing continuous foot patrols round the clock. We had a very eventful time but the weather was not on our side and we could have done with our smocks foul weather a little earlier in the tour.

We spent 48hrs. at Brooke Park then we returned to Dromohoe a right soggy lot, to find we had new tasks allotted; the first being Op Sperrin. We visited certain Police Stations in the area Plumbridge, Claudy, Dunnamane and had a very interesting day. I think the Platoon enjoyed it and think it to be a very popular operation indeed. Our next operation was in the City (Derry) with "C Coy" 1 WFR. We had some very nery periods whilst on VCP's especially on one of them. Myself and the Pl. Sgt. never failed to be on this VCP when shots were fired in our direction. Fortunately we were not in C Coy's location when the Cookhouse was blown up. I think that was on Monday when we were in the mountains.

We were then on standby for Belfast and most people thought we would not go, but after about an hour we left Dromohoe and raced off to Belfast and ended up on the well known ship, "MAIDSTONE". But again we did not stay long and raced off once again for "Henry Taggart Hall," which is to be our new location.

This place seems to be in the front line compared with 'Derry' but the area at present seems pretty quiet except for the odd stoning.

2 PLATOON

Rent-a-platoon for VCP's or to stone and bottle. We arrived in Londonderry to a lull in IRA activity and we were promptly given the important task of checking all vehicles entering the city. For eleven hours a day we checked cars in the city then for twelve hours the next day we graduated to checking cars in the country. A very boring routine threatened, but Belfast, our favourite city, came to the rescue. On Sunday, 14th May we left Londonderry and headed for HMN Maidstone, apparently for four days. One

week later we are still in Belfast, and our kit is in Londonderry. At the moment we are dominating the Ballymurphy Estate. Every day between 4 p.m. and 10 p.m. the daily ritual of stoning and bottling begins. Paint bombs are a favourite as Cpl. Noble will verify (yellow actually, from the head downwards). L. Cpl. Shim (Sambo) is the favourite target, with Pte. Somma, a close second. Many of the children are quite friendly, and can be easily identified as they only throw small bricks. Look out the "Murphy," because we're here for a while!

P.S.—Our drivers are the only ones in Alma to have suffered no damage to their vehicles!!

3 PLATOON

The only word that can describe what happened when everyone arrived in Londonderry was confusion; nobody seemed to be quite expecting us when we arrived or knew what we were going to do. Anyway 3 Platoon got the first taste of action, if one could call it that, with VCP's in the City. It could hardly be described as action though, as the city was very quiet at that time. Next job we got was doing VCP's in a bit of country to the south east of the city where the people were either very friendly, (Cpl. Timmins always seemed to get tea to the annoyance of his Platoon Commander), or completely unco-operative. We eventually got into a routine of one day VCP's, one day in the country and the next on standby. The platoon went up to Magilligan for an Internment demonstration, estimated number of troops 200, number of demonstrators 14! Oh well better luck next time!

After that it's all been happening with the Company move to Belfast and into the Ballymurphy estate. At last some real action and now the platoon has got it's own psychedelic 'pig' from the 'respraying' that the local kids provided. At the time of writing stoning has become less frequent and the platoon is trying to find room for itself in the Henry Taggart Hall.

Pte. Pete Lee thought that Derry was too much for him so he went on leave on the first opportunity and got married!

Pte. Fisher gave every one a fright by collapsing whilst on patrol in the country. Quick casevac and into hospital for an appendix operation means that he is now recovering speedily, back in England needless to say.

L. Cpl. Dack and Pte. Bailey also thought Derry was too much for them and so took a couple of days off after a couple of games of football.

Since moving to Belfast the sick parade has been reduced drastically and now all but the Irish behave themselves.

Pte. Cowburn was christened by a drunk the other night, or was the drunk christening the hedge in which 'Covvy,' cammed up to look like one of the Minstrels, was keeping guard?

People have been wondering how long Mr. Meek has been hiding the fact that he is in the Paras. (Did you see the Daily Telegraph with the photographs on the front page describing him as one of the Paras in Ballymurphy). And a final request to Sgt. Robinson, the rugby season doesn't start for some time yet so can you hold off the training (whilst on patrols) until August.

Congratulations to L. Cpls. Best and Dack on their promotions. 3 Pl. bid L. Cpl. Best a fond (?) farewell and wish him all the best in C/S 12, he needs it!

BURMA

(Pugh's Patrollers)

There are two sorts of fools in this world. Those that have never been to Ireland and those that go there twice! Most of us are here for a second time and having paid out large premiums in life insurance we have found the quietness rather uncanny after Belfast. However, having enrolled as full-time (Resident) Students at the Bessbrook Technical School life is never dull. We even had a bomb scare in the "Dark Room" above Karls Kanteen. The bomb was a most suspicious wooden box with wires leading from beneath the lid. We had to evacuate the TV Room in the middle of the Cup Final (League) and it was not until L. Cpl. Laws arrived to say that he had opened it up two days ago that we were all persuaded it was harmless.

The wives will be delighted to hear that their husbands are models of good behaviour and even have to be chaperoned to go and see the dolly bird in the Cash and Carry!

ALMA COMPANY IN WONDERFUL BALLYMURPHY

Wonderful Ballymurphy,
A nice place in the sun,
Where the children stone our pigs,
To have their daily fun.
People abuse the Army
And tell them not to trifle
In affairs not their own,
Or we shoot you with a rifle.

In wonderful Ballymurphy,
One drab and dreary day,
Some people on the pavement
Were overheard to say:
"The Dukes go in a-swinging
Their batons and their guns,
To clear all the riffraff
From Ballymurphy's Slums."

A soldier fired a bullet
At a gunman t'other night:
The gunman died on the spot,
A case of severe fright.
We are here for three months
At a job we do the best;
We'll sort out Ballymurphy
Then we'll see about the rest.

A LETTER FROM MOTHER TO SON IN IRELAND

Dear son,

Just a few lines to let you know the score, 3 nil. Your dad was out shopping last night when he met an old friend, they called him CID; anyway CID came and told me that your Dad has gone to nick. I don't know who Nick is but your Dad is staying with him for six months. He mentioned something about joining the Forces, as he said that he is going in Armley, I think their unit is in Leeds.

Your sister got engaged on Saturday, you should see her engagement ring. It's got 3 diamonds and 3 rubys (missing). We went to get her Wedding dress and train on Monday when we arrived at the shop we got her dress, but the assistant told us her train left at 2.30 from Sowerby Bridge Station.

By the way love tell that 3 Plt. Sgt. of yours that you are not illiterate as your Dad and me married 5 years before you came along. Oh! Before I forget your sister had taken up cookery, she's joined the Pudding Club. I don't know, they seem to have clubs for everything now-a-days.

Anyway son I hope you don't get well in with that IRA girl as she doesn't sound too nice a type of girl to me.

Yours truly your darling Mum.

(Sent in anonymously by Muffet)

QUOTE

"In an English Golf Club, you can drink free for an evening on your Ulster war stories."

(Capt. JAGO)

4 PLATOON

The days of the rubber bullet and the baton seem to have left the Platoon and in their place comes the peace and quiet of the Irish countryside, the claymore, the elusive stolen car, the Royal Mail Run and when things get really hotted up some cattle rustling. One of our highlights of the tour so far was when Pte. Thompson received some great news that his Rabbit gave birth. Anyone interested in buying a Rabbit contact Pte. Thompson.

Another point was caused some controversy in the Platoon, Pte. Jackson was given a Tom cat by Pte. Pemberton and it's had kittens. Something wrong with Pemberton's "Sex recognition."

The Ballards of Pte. M'Donald (known as the Fang) seem to come rolling out of his toothless mouth much to the dislike of some of the cloth worshippers in the Coy. Due to censorship, we cannot publish them, but Dave Allen would like them.

4 PL BATTLE HONOURS SO FAR

- 1 x Tricolour
- 1 x William of Orange 8'x6'
- 2 x Union Jacks
- 1 x Badger
- 1 x Ferret as in nature not in IRA

THE BATTLE OF THE DUBLIN ROAD VCP

Whilst Sunray Call Sign 21 (the wee sergeant with the tash) was quite calmly logging down the cars being searched, some one quietly informed him that we had come under fire from, believe it or not, a church. The person who informed him was Pte. Parker, his actual words being "%"/@£" (Translated as, Hell he nearly got me) Immediately the war machine of 4 Pl sprung into action.

First the street lights were shot out by a crack shot (Sunray and his ever clinging pistol). The Playtime of my Call Sign at that time was L/Cpl Lawrence. He claimed that he had hit the attacker but when 9A arrived on the scene and we did an area search, nothing was found i.e., Fiery Fred had missed again.

5 PLATOON

As you can see we're back in Ulster again, but this time we're out in the country. The countryside tests out map reading so hard Sgt. Robson goes 'on a Mystery Tour' every time he's out on mobile. Anybody who's interested get in touch with Sgt. Robson.

THE BATTLE OF THE O'MEATH ROAD VCP

(The sequel to 4 Platoon's Shooting at the Dublin Road)

A nice quiet evening as usual on the O'Meath Road VCP and Cpl. Smith '68' was just settling down to his fourth reading of Playboy.

Suddenly three shots are fired at the VCP from the direction of the forest behind us. Immediately L/Cpl Wright and Pte. Butterfield returned fire. The sequel to this incident is that both have been issued with bows and arrows

(They're not so noisy!). The next night that 'Five' were on the O'Meath Road Block the quiet stillness was shattered by shouts of "There it is over there" "Now it's moving" "It's coming down the hill-I've lost it". "It was a phantom light that flickered (or so they say) about halfway up the hillside as if using a small torch to descend the steep slope. Judging by the row over the Company net one would have thought the hordes of Yenghis Khan were attacking. No such luck. It was car lights from across the Lough reflecting off some metal in the trees.

5 PLATOON'S JOKE CORNER

*The Irish Astronaut
Going to the Sun*

At a NASA Space convention England, the USA and Ireland were arguing about their space exploits.

England and the USA were eventually going to send a manned space craft to Mars and Venus respectively. Not to be outdone the Irishman said that his nation was going to send a manned spacecraft to the Sun. When it was explained that the craft would melt in the intense heat he said that the Irish Government had already thought of that problem. They were sending their spacecraft at night.

Footnote: If the Irish plan their military campaigns like they plan their space exploits we've cracked it.

(2) Question: How many Irishmen does it take to clean an upstairs window?

Answer: Two, one to clean the window, one to hold the ladder.

Question: How many does it take to clean a downstairs window?

Answer: Fifty two, one to clean the window, one to hold the ladder and 50 to dig the hole to put the ladder in.



JASUS PADDY WHAT EXCUSE CAN I GIVE THE MISSUS NOW!

(3) An Irishman went over to Liverpool to find a job. He went to the local Bus Depot & got a job driving a bus up and down the High Street dropping shoppers off at either end. When he asked about the conductor he was told that it was a one man bus. He would have to drive and take the fares. So out he went along the High Street. Ten minutes later the Bus Depot received a telephone call from the local Police Station. A bus has crashed and wrecked three shops. The Bus Inspector rushed to the scene and found the Irishman stood by the remains of the bus, looking puzzled. The Inspector said to him "What happened." The Irishman said "How do I know, I was upstairs taking fares at the time!"

6 PLATOON

Well then I was in a little tin wagon on the Dublin Road watching the rain coming down writing these notes.

Moral is high as Pashby has just approached a beautiful dolly in a car saying "Good evening, Sir. Can I see your driving licence please!" and Pte. Sutton is rejoicing because he has finally got over his attack of 'Rabies' or was it 'Scabies'? He claims he got it as a result of the close-living! the mind boggles!!

The Platoon continues to carry out its somewhat tedious tasks with good humour and much professionalism. It's a good job that there is one decent hard working platoon in the Company to sort out 4 and 5 Platoons!!

Ptes. Nendick and Wallace have been voted as our entries for the World's 'Top Best Dressed Men' they should win hands down!

The Platoon is eagerly awaiting the arrival of Pte. Kirkman to show us all how the job should be done, as we can't get on without the gallant lad. Rumour has it that he's just been on a short course with the Commandos, so watch it one and all!

Pte. Foo is now getting a special discount from Fry's for the number of 'Crunchie bars' he consumes daily.

Pte. Chambers has caused havoc with the MT personnel as they are having to refit his vehicle with a special high seat so that he can see out of the windscreen. He is having to help out driving because all the drivers have got sore backsides from sitting down all day!

Pte. Downs has emerged as the Platoon's great 'chatter-up' of the birds and rumour has it that he even beat the Platoon Commander to the girl from the local chemist shop!

Cpl. Smith now reckons that he has more chance of getting blood from a stone than of getting any kit from Cpl. Wood.

L/Cpls Harding and Newton have now given up sleeping in the Platoon lines as they prefer the company of their pigeons. Little do they know that their Platoon Commander uses them for target practice when they are out!

Ptes. Mawson and Allen found that they got rather more than they bargained for when taken on one particular midnight foot patrol, we managed to cover a good 10 miles half of which was through swamp, about 149 ditches and one river, they are now qualified to go on a course with the Commandos (Six Platoon are renowned for tall stories, there were only 147 ditches)?

Godfrey is having a battle with the radio sets, but we are glad to say that he is winning. They tell me that Heath is going crossed-eyed from reading all the volumes and volumes of letters that his wife-to-be keeps sending him. It's good to know that someone loves you Charlie!

We manage to save on Camouflage cream when we take Pte. Anver out on a 'black face' patrol while Gibson loves the stuff.

Peel is still having trouble with his feet though I am told that he has changed his socks once since we have been here! His old ones are still standing to attention where he left them!

Pte. Frazer seems to like cheese slices and even paid 20p for a small packet when the seller was quite prepared to give him them as he was in such a hurry to get away from us.

Barron is trying hard to find another palm tree to fall out off now that he has his plaster off his wrist, keep looking lad.

Though there is a definite lack of action round here compared to Belfast which we all remember so well, we have no doubt that we will muddle through somehow while there is always the beautiful countryside to admire.

Congratulations to L/Cpl. Lomax on his well deserved promotion.

Cpl Cowburn has now left us and we wish him all the best in civvy street.

QUOTE:

Girl in the bar at HQ Northern Ireland "Are you attached to the Army?"

Affronted Adjutant "I am in the Army."

Girl "Good grief, you don't look military at all."

(Anon, in the interests of self preservation)

CORUNNA

(Mundell's Marauders)

COY HQ

Precisely six minutes after officially taking over the UDR centre, a large explosion rent the air, by courtesy of the IRA, which in its timing seemed to be a farewell to our predecessors and a welcome to us. Sunray's smile vanished as he struggled into his kit with "Where's my vehicles?" Sunray Minor was communing with nature and has now been asked not to use the 'little room' at such important times!

The second visiting card from the IRA (the ambush that never was) found Sunray and Seagull unconsciously inviting them to go ahead, a repeat performance is considered unlikely, but since then life has been reasonably tranquil. However the general feeling of lassitude was shattered on the night of 16th May when all Coy HQ "heavies" including birthday boy L/Cpl Nicol were heavily stoned by the puberty age group of Derrybeg. Such was the volubility of the female inhabitants in defence of their "well behaved kinder" that an offer was made to Sunray of an unabridged version Irish/English Dictionary. He was not amused, and maintained he understood what they were saying, but words failed him at the moment!!!

Seagull was very much in evidence as always and in this particular incident stressed calmly to an unkempt male bystander that he was quite prepared to park his weapon and continue the argument. The offer unfortunately was not taken up. Molar emerging from his various underground caverns, blinked furiously and charged gleefully with the rest. The frustrations of 'Q' work were evident in a short verbal exchange a few nights previously whilst on patrol. That alone was worth a trip to Newry.

L/Cpl Taylor and Pte Grinsdale, we believe, thought that they might not be noticed by Sunray, Seagull and others from day to day. However they have been keeping their fingers supple and in practice. "WILLIE 45" as part of Corunna Coy stock has been strangely quiet, but ever watchful. We have the feeling that he has his resettlement course on his mind!

The MT section remains cheerful as ever and Cpl Waterhouse with the quiet voice of his directs by example. Some valuable quotes grace this page a little lower down, the majority from this voluble source. Incidentally "pig drivers" suffer from an inferiority complex with the unfortunate name associated with their vehicles! Covert remarks of "swinehead" and "piggery" have been heard by others outside of their earshot. Any offers of an alternative name would be gratefully received.

Last but not least the true mole of Newry, Sgt Nash, Ops/Int and what you will, known to the CRA as a most arrogant officer, copes manfully with the ceaseless passage of information, Sunrays requirements etc. He gets his own back by changing the layout of his Ops room every twenty four hours, including the photographs, so that the duty officers spend most of their tour trying to re-orientate themselves. He's at home with it all, but will not divulge his system to anyone else. Incidentally all Sgts Mess members will be pleased to know that he is still eating well, and has declined the offer of a CRA commission.

In case you think that C Coy HQ are a "bolshie" lot, let it be made quite clear that they are gregarious animals but not getting much change out of the local population. It may change soon, but one doubts it.

COY HQ QUOTES

Question: "Bangreps ought to be followed by Clapreps Sir?"

Answer: "Are you trying to tell me something?"

"I'm going to count up to five, and if your not out of bed by the time I get to twelve, you're in trouble Boguszewski." The reply was not recorded.

"Ani mure tew twantay." A question by Pte. Moore, which explains the problems of the MT Corporal.



Corunna Coy cleaning a weapon. Ptes. Wilkinson, O'Connor, Tointon, L/Cpl Walker, Ptes Daggett, Simpson, Steadman and O'Garro (on top again)



Pte Morsfall 28 of Corunna Coy keeps guard on the scene of the car-bomb which exploded ten minutes after 'C' Coy took over in Newry.

C COY SIGNALS DET

(The Swamp)

Since our arrival in Newry life has been quiet for the signals detachment, apart from Cpl. Morton trying to get rid of all the signals equipment by giving everyone a pen and saying "no sign, no kit." Even the operators are on temporary loan to the Ops room. He also keeps trying to fiddle the duty roster by volunteering for Coy Comds operator.

Pte. Knowles arrived not long ago, he took over from Pte. Clarkson who is going on a course to Warminster. Since Knowles arrived he thought the signals room would look better if he put up a red light, a few days later the inspecting fire officer arrived and in his inspection looked at the wiring and said "I don't want to drop anyone in, but look at this" Knowles as since been told to take the wiring down, which he did, but the red light remains.

Pte. Wolstenholme impressed us all by using his artistic

talents when he painted a landscape, ending up with a lump of brown rock floating in a clear blue sky and last but not least Pte. Bray who by all accounts is in love with Jimi Hendrix. He has a big picture of his black hero on the back of the door and won't part with it for love nor money. Rumour has it that he sometimes kisses it on his way out of the room to go on duty, the rest of the time he just lies on his bed and stares at it.

HEARD ON THE AIR

"Hello G3 this is G33A, I am being stoned and booed in Derrybeg, Over"

"G3 roger out" (passed to C/S) "Hello G3 this is / send boorep over"

"G3 w-wait out?"

"Hello G3 this is G31B an unattended Cow has just gone past the telephone Exchange" G3 Roger will inform Rucksack out."



Ptes. Bromley and Wizzard of Corunna Coy debus from a 'Pig' when patrolling in the Newry area.



Corunna Coy prepares for a night patrol. Left to right: Ptes. Day, Moody, Hoyland, Savery, Wilson, L/Cpl Hanley, Sgt Basu, Pte Hosefall 56.

7 PLATOON

Life for Seven started off literally with a bang in the first ten minutes of our tour here. Cpl Butterworth happened to have walked up to the car, checked it out and had given the nod of experience to the rest of the patrol stating that all was clear. Around the corner and thirty seconds later various bits of Red Cortina were hurtling all over the place. Luckily no casualties, and although he won't admit it Cpl B gives parked cars a wide berth these days.

However we got a bit of peace and time to settle in. It gave the newer members of the Platoon a chance to learn the ropes and obviously the odd mistake was made. We could not understand on one busy day, why no cars were using our bit of the road. The keen young lad sent as 'cut off' up the road and round the corner with the caltrops had neatly laid them across the road and had succeeded in stopping all traffic for as far back as the M1!

There is one lucky man amongst us. While the rowdier members of the town take great delight in calling us "English Swine" and the like, L/Cpl 'Jock White' just sits back and chuckles quietly, "I wonder what they've got against you lads" he is frequently heard to say.

The newly weds and the emotionally involved in the Platoon get a letter a day or spend £2 a night on phone calls. The way things are going we are going to be an "all marrieds" Platoon by the time we get back to normal in England.

Sunray minor's due for the chop soon after we get back and even Sunray thinks about someone in foreign parts rather than his car these days!

Mally Harris's corner is now empty. Having been with 7 for a long time he is much missed but we appreciate 8Pl need his experience. On that we must close. We leave you with the immortal words of our tame poet.

("HELLO THERE")

Hello all you Mums and Dads
 Girlfriends and wives too,
 I hope you think of us
 As we all think of you
 Newry is very quiet
 And Derrybeg rather nice,
 Although people shun us
 As though we had Ruddy Lice.
 We do patrols and people stare,
 They throw us stones to show they care.

The CO has found a way
 To keep us all occupied,
 PT five minutes every day
 I laughed till I cried.
 Still, not to worry
 Have no fear,
 We'll all be home
 To Yorkshire Pud, and Tetleys Beer.

(L/Cpl White, 7 Pl)

8 PLATOON

Life for 8 Platoon has so far been relatively uneventful. We always seemed to be on guard when anything was happening. So it has been a life of patrolling and guards.

One of our patrols, commanded by Cpl Nellist was told to search a row of houses and to interview the occupants. He carried out his task in his usual conscientious way and returned to be debriefed by Capt. Reid. Cpl Nellist informed the 21c that the first house was empty; the second occupied by goats and the third by hens.

He had a suspicion the owners were absent. It was not long after this that seven Platoon were on guard and one of the OP's told us the camp was being observed by two men with binoculars. So the Platoon was ordered to prepare for a night attack. However Sunray went to look at the observers to discover the "enemy" were some lights shining on the canal. This has been the story of the tour so far for Eight, something shaping to happen but never actually happening.

We are slightly more involved now as we have taken over a road-block on the border four days a week. Cpl Russell and L/Cpl Harris are pleased about this as they are now sporting new 8 guinea sunglasses 'donated' by a travelling salesman.

The first guard's only present was a bullet which caused Pelucci to disappear for a couple of minutes and Cpl Hall to attend to communication problems. Therefore Sunray himself had to lead a party through the woods to seek out the gunman.

However Daggett returned a shot this morning at a man aiming a gun, so honour is satisfied; one shot each and no casualties.

Sweeney sulked for a day when he drew the short straw and therefore had to do a stag on guard instead of watching the Cup Final. But most of the remainder saw it. Television, darts and table tennis inside the camp are the main forms of

relaxing other than 'blanket pressing' letters home, or ringing up home. With no Disco's and only one tea-stop the main relaxations are passing the schools at 1600 hours to watch the school girls catch their buses or being stoned up the Derrybeg or Barcroft. O'Garra is big headed at the moment as a corner has been named in his honour (or so he tells us) Aggro Corner.

Our thanks to Cpl Rusell for the tea stop which he laid-on through a 'school friend.' Pte. O'Connor leaves us soon for Civvie Street and we thank him for his hard work and loyalty. We would like to wish him all the best in his new occupation.

Yet another oracle from the tail, "don't worry about him, he's got macroloned glasses."

LIFE IN THE COP SHOP (9PL)

With a feeling of uneasiness and anticipation, we took over from 9PI D & D on the morning of the 27th, after a night on board our old friend, Sir Lancelot.

We were uneasy because of the thought of drinking with the 'long arm of the law' for three months, and unsure of our future task in the police station.

We shouldn't have worried, it was not the usual "Oi oi, what av we're then" from the Law, but more of a 'Top of the morning to you sur!' Our task was also apparent with the police station in a state of redecoration, it would appear that more stags will be spent on 'scrubbing out' than on the streets. The police however are an excellent crowd of men (plus 3 lovely WPC's) and immediately put us at ease with a 'sure an when wil the bar be open sur,' thus breaking the ice.

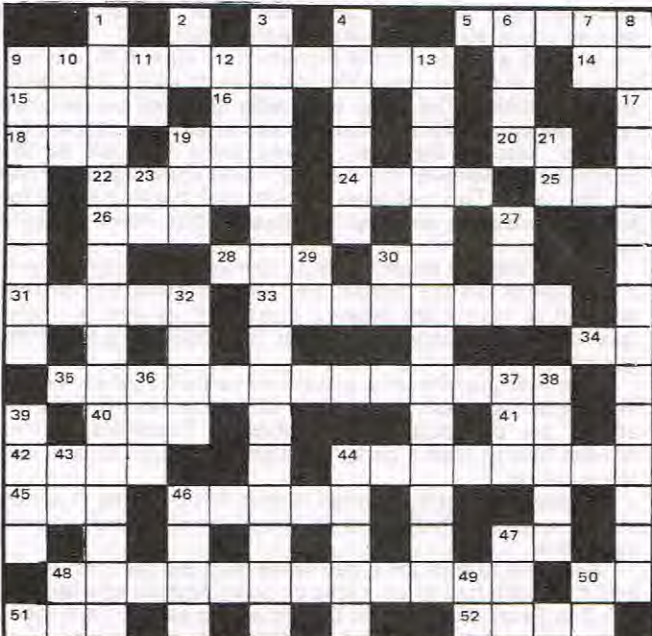
We also met the locals straight away as our welcome was a car-bomb, thus bringing back to us the realisation that there are troubles all over Ulster. During the first two weeks, we have spent our time getting to know the streets, fields, walls and hedges, possible claymore positions and loads of other points, including personalities (and feelings) of the grand old crowd of Derrybeg estate.

We had our initial success by the quick action of Cpl Franks and 3 section who, spying a car parked in the darkness, approached and found an ambush position. What followed can only be decribed as a 'say no more' episode, 4 arrests, 2 x M1 carbines and a .22 rifle, all loaded were the main parts of the hand. The question still lingers on whether Cpl Franks rubber bullet gun was loaded (He'd left his rifle in the pig).

Taking all into account, we have settled in well, although the CQMS is still moaning at Sgt Shaw for taking 'more kit than I've got in my stores,' over to the station (well we must have our comforts).

P.S.—Our support element of 3 drivers and a cook are doing a grand job with 2 ancient pigs and two small domestic stoves and all four are now volunteering (Note Volunteering) to go out on patrol. Unfortunately for L/Cpl Kay his stand in burnt the stew, so he can now only go out at night.

CROSSWORD No 1



The PRI will pay a prize of £3 for the first correct answer sent to the Medical Centre, Bessbrook Mill, Bessbrook.

CLUES TO CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 5 We have one from the Amazing Grace people under our command.
- 9 An annoyed parent with a vale found near 1. Down.
- 14 Oneself found in the Reme.
- 15 The boss of the Manor.
- 16 Inland Revenue for short (1.1.)
- 17 Across 37 Down 20 Across and 38 Down. What all students have. (1.3.2.5.)
- 18 Part of a pleasant insect.
- 19 The lot in Ballynahinch.
- 20 See 17 Across.
- 22 Claymores aren't the only mines being used to stop this Capital winning.
- 24 July 28th is the one we are looking forward to.
- 25 What a golfer plays off.
- 26 Strange or funny.
- 28 An era.
- 30 "-- top of the World" (Saying)
- 31 See 6 Down.
- 33 At the moment the division of the way to a sharp incline is the home of an untidy Officer.
- 34 "Where its --" (Slang).
- 35 A black horse, a small stream and part of what may seem illegal makes a very good home for some of us.
- 40 It may be published by 51 Across.
- 41 What is found (Medical Abbreviation).
- 42 May be derived from the produce of 39 Down. To press.
- 44 One who is keen on action.
- 45 Initially the voice of the oppressed minority minus its vowels produces an abbreviated type of national cash register.
- 46 Across and 46 Down. Trespassers may be prosecuted or shot there. (1,2,2,4.)
- 47 A reversal of the beginnings of Northern Ireland.
- 48 The P-Green Trader becomes the leader of the Recce. (5.7.)
- 50 Military Construction Experts. (1.1.)
- 51 Where administration is initially dealt with (1.1.1.)
- 52 A short Jumper!

DOWN

- 1 Where we are and our successors would sooner be (5.2.3.6.)
- 2 "-- you were" (Military order)
- 3 The local passage to the Irish Sea. (11.5.)
- 4 A curse on a recent sabbath.
- 6 Down, 19 Down and 31 Across. A popular strike in the Catholic areas (4.3.5.)
- 7 A decoration from freedom. (1.1.)
- 8 Whitelaw is dedicated to it. (5.10.)
- 9 And 39. A deadly roadside menace not mentioned in the Highway Code. (8.4.)
- 10 A man's name.
- 11 Short army uniform. (1.1.)
- 12 A clever Officer who communicates with orders (1.1.1.1.)
- 13 A rejuvenated weight sounds like the beginnings of this location and with a Scottish town makes the whole place. (Poetic licence for spelling).
- 19 See 6 Down.
- 21 The beginnings of a religious text (1.1.)
- 23 The French to.
- 27 Not good in 33 and 35 Across.
- 29 A short Executive Officer (1.1.)
- 30 Alright (Slang)
- 32 Fair (2.2.)
- 36 A qualified Nurse (1.1.1.)
- 37 See 17 Across
- 38 See 17 Across
- 39 See 9 Down
- 43 A holy Roman. (1.1.)
- 44 To be sad at a death, sounds like the Mountains.
- 46 See 46 Across
- 47 A personal retreat starts of our enemy (1.1.1.)
- 48 The commencement of the Post Office. (1.1.)
- 49 A longer game cut short. (1.1.)
- 50 The Gunners. (1.1.)

OVERHEARD IN THE BAR

Quote! They always say "Join the army and see the world, join the Dukers and clean it", including Irish police stations.

Comment by Coy Comd: "You're not fooling me."

SOMME

(Stacpoole's Strollers)

The Company Notes (or life in the Wild West) COMPANY HEADQUARTERS

Somme Company are operating close to the border with each Platoon billeted in a police station. The combined Vigilant/Assault Pioneer Platoon are at Newton Hamilton where there is a mixed community of Ulstermen and Republicans.

The Mortar Platoon share the police station at Crossmaglen with Company HQ. Forkhill police station is occupied by the Anti-Tank Platoon. These last two areas are solidly Republican.

There is a definite flavour of a Western Border town down here since the majority of incidents have concerned a family of cattle rustlers who have been terrorizing the local farmers stealing many calves from their farms and taking them over the border to sell at a good profit. The farmers were obviously pretty fed up about this because so far four of the cattle rustlers have been caught and each has been shot in the legs or the hand. It was therefore not surprising when we heard that another member of this cattle rustling gang has intimated that he is considering leaving the country!

Shortly after this Private English (with the aid of a cow) found a length of wire in a field. The cow kicked up the wire from just below the ground surface where it had been buried to conceal it from our foot patrols. At the end of the wire was a 230lb bomb buried in a culvert under a small road. The bomb was split into its four components parts and each was blown separately to minimise the blast effects.

QUOTE FROM 3 BRIGADE SITUATION REPORT

"Ulster Defence Regiment soldier accidentally discharged his weapon. His mother-in-law received gunshot wound in the chest."

MORTAR PLATOON

Our first three weeks in Crossmaglen have been very quiet indeed and we are hoping that it remains this way as it does tend to make life a little easier. The only incidents we have been involved in are the hi-jacking of a Post Office van near Mullaghbane, where we assisted Mr. Gilbert and his crew to check it out after it had been found in flames, the burning of a School Bus at Clonalig and the Vigilant Platoons fantastic find of a 230lb bomb at Mullaghduff, at which we were only too pleased to lend a section to cordon off the area. We would like to add that we are very grateful to Mr. Thorn and his lads for finding this bomb as it was right on the boundary between the two Platoons and we have crossed that particular culvert many times.

As usual we do have the humerous side of things coming to light once again and Cpl Frear gets the first mention for very quickly obtaining the coveted award of Call Sign 41 Eire. He has since lost it to John Thompson Hogg who is to be congratulated on winning the "Muckno Lake Night Orienteering Competition."

Cockroach Bradley of course is bound to get a mention at any time and is to be admired for the way he uses his time to the maximum. Who but him would dream of practising Free Fall while doing a two-hour stag in the front sangar.

The appointment of "Patrol Master" has been granted to two of our members for showing us how we can deceive the enemy very easily at night. Patrol Masters Turner and Pemberton are both specialists in the art of deception and to hear Turner impersonating an Elephant as he crashed through hedgerows is utterly fantastic, but Pemberton's imitation of a sea lion crossing a field at night really takes some beating especially when he throws the sound to make it sound like the last man in the patrol.

The last mention must go to our Coy 2i/c who as a guest on a patrol was asked by Sunray 41, while gliding along in the moonlight, if he felt exposed. The typical answer of course was "Not really, My fly is done up."

THE SECOND TIME AROUND OR (LOSING YOU)

Hello 41 this is 4
Send your location just once more
Things don't seem quite in order
I do believe you've crossed the border.

Can you tell me where you are
By the map or by a star
I'll try to help you from this mess
You'll have to do much more than guess.

If Lough Ross is to your rear
You don't have anything to fear
However if its to the fore
You're back in trouble as before.

Take your compass from its case
And set it due east with haste
Make a beeline no hesitation
Till you reach this location.

If you find out your location
Send a message to this station
Someone will come to guide you back
While the Pioneers prepare the pack.

If your passing by 43
Call in for a pot of tea
They will tell you with a frown
You've had your map upside down.

Anonymous Admirer

The Sun shines East
The Sun shines West
But the mortars go South
Where it shines Best

Peter Perfect is down in the dumps
His Platoon is scattered around in lumps
Some of the North and some in the South
It's no wonder Sunray is down in the mouth.

Maps may come and maps may go
But I'm sure the Mortars wouldn't know
Or they would have more idea where to go.

Your compass is for finding direction
Not in its case for its protection.

ANTI TANK PLATOON

Shilo Ranch, Forkhill - May 1872

Rustling reaches a new peak, moves to curb it are increased by the arrival of the Dundalk Apaches.

A Mobile of the 42nd Cavalry are shot at in Glendoe Pass, 15 arrows were fired, no strikes, but two magpies and one otter. All these hits are subject to the ruling of the Army Sports control board.

A mass wagon rally was held at M'Guigans over the week-end. Approx. four couples attended, beating the record set in 1871 by ½ (Editor's note: The ½ has now grown up).

The Forkhill Still is now fully operational. After a shaky start the still is turning out 100 proof juice 24 hours a day. This has been the cause for great celebrations in the town. The CRO was said to have been sent on leave as the whole thing was too much for him.

The missing Landrace sow, reported on the 13th May has yet to be found. A National campaign is under way to set up a province wide search for her. N.I.S.R.A. (Northern Ireland Sow Recovery Association) has sent a sum of fifteen Dollars to get the campaign under way. All contributions should be addressed to:

Account No. 45009732
The Gnomes of Zurich National Trust Fund
Wernerdrast
Monte Video
S. America

This Week's Questions in the 'Win a Holiday for two in sunny Sligo' Competition

1. Spell the following: London, Dublin, Stupidity, Guinness.
2. Name the four Georges before George V.
3. What is a silver Dollar made of?

All entries should be sent to 'F' Coy, Jamaica Street, Ardoyne, Belfast, with the entry fee, £5 enclosed. Winners will be notified in the Wanted Car List on the following Friday.



The Lord Mayor of Bradford talks to Ptes Barker and Mowbray with the Vigilant Platoon in their billet at Newtownhamilton.

THE VIGILANT ASSAULT PIONEER PLATOON

The Platoon area has been relatively quiet since our arrival, a few bomb hoaxes in the area got us into the swing of things.

Foot patrols proved their worth when Pte English spotted a length of wire in a field, this led to the discovery of a 240lb bomb in a culvert under the road, just waiting for a "pig" to come along.

Certain events in the area led to suspicion of a cattle rustling syndicate in operation. 'Marshall Thorn' and Deputy Martin' raised a posse and rode out to investigate. Nothing more can be said on this subject at the moment.

"Dad" Clark presented a major problem for the MTO when he parked his "pig" on the side, not the road side, the side of the "pig." Eventually it was towed away, the only casualty of the Platoon as yet.

"Rocky" the Platoon dog has moved into "Percy" Barkers bed space. Rocky was accused of having fleas, but Percy has not complained yet, and Rocky seems to be able to put up with him.

Cpl Ruding almost shot a cow on night patrol, is he keen to kill or is it his nerves?

Among our visitors last week was a much abused Barber, who, under terrible threats hacked our hair and fled with his blood money.

The only good news is that draught beer is now on sale at this post, would visitors please bring their own glass or mugs enamel.

The NCO's won the prize for the most unusual pin ups (an extra hour in bed). I am sure the Company Commander knows which pin ups we mean, although he said nothing at the time, his look of interested disgust showed, but it's all part of Mr. Thorns education (He gets married in August).

A POEM

This Islands of Paddies I will roam
 Always thinking of my home
 The days will pass
 The hours will drag
 Many weary hours spent on stag
 Oh to be away from this trouble and strife
 And be back in bed with my beloved wife

(A frustrated soldier)

SUN PIRATE ALL STARS

This is a rather belated report from Barbados of the Sun Pirate All Stars XV against a local XV. The match took place on a field with one and a half sets of posts and no markings and it was rumoured that the Chairman of the Selectors was there, somewhere in the long grass.

The All Stars trotted out and loosened up by throwing the ball about, this was the only occasion that some of the team touched the ball. The first half was an end to end cliffhanger, unfortunately everytime the All Stars kicked off, the locals planted the ball over the All Stars line for a try and so it went on. The best movement of the half was when the referee blew for half time and the All Stars trooped off in single file. What a movement.

The second half was a repetition of the first half with the All Stars handling superbly, someone should have told them that you play rugby with a ball. But then it happened, the move of the match, "A blonde got out of a car wearing a bikini." Magnificent. And so it ended, the locals had won 52-0 and then came the most difficult part of the afternoon. The panel had to award the Tance Lodd Trophy and after much deliberation the award went to the All Stars skipper Capt Tighe who throughout the match didn't touch the ball once, but whose running off the ball was superb.



Exploding one of the drums of explosives found by the Vigilant Platoon

QUOTE:

Instructor to student on Search Team revision course.
"Did you find the stuff you were taught at Chatham useful when you searched that house in Derrybeg?"

'C' Coy student: "No, I was part of the cordon whilst Major Mundell went in and searched it himself."

(The Instructor)

COMMAND AND ADMIN *(Iveys Irregulars)*

A Foreword from the Mill Manager

On arrival at Bessbrook Mill, Administrative and Command Companies consolidated to produce what appears to be the old Hook Company. The command and control of all ranks is exercised through an establishment called 'The Mill Office.' We have both a Mill Manager and a Mill Foreman; also one CSM 'G' and one CSM 'A'. We are just beginning to understand who does what in the Mill!

As reported elsewhere the leave plot has now begun, and is playing havoc with the duties plot. It is hoped that CSM 'G' manages to survive the next two months without throwing down his pistol and declaring that he will 'soldier no more.' Relative to conditions elsewhere, life in the Mill is quite pleasant. Everyone manages to get out on something or other and the early fears of emerging into the bright sunshine three months later have dissolved. In fact the Mill have one or two 'G' responsibilities, including being watch dogs for the village of Bessbrook.

Toddy continues to be our Sanitary expert and when he is not giving the local rats (four legged ones) their poison, he is off trying to catch a trout for the Mill Manager. Unfortunately his trout catching duties have failed so far, despite the fact that he takes four others with him (as escorts).

The "Heavies" have been out on one "Lift" operation and are happy to report they got their man. We also man a VCP (Vehicle Check Point) on the Border once a week which enables us to take some exercise and breath the Irish air.

SIGNAL PLATOON

Our arrival at Bessbrook Mill was a strangely sedate affair. None of the bustle and pushing involved in normal take-overs, from our side it was simply a case of move in, settle down, set up at leisure then open up. The accommodation is not as bad as one suspected it would be, the only problem being the impossibility for anyone to "get away from it all" within the bounds of the Mill.

The Radio Room/Ops Room set up is well planned. The installation of a telephone exchange and teleprinter, as well as the usual banks and banks of radios in the radio room has made it necessary for the radio room to be double-manned during the day to cope with all the various types of traffic.

Our Belfast practice of using the orderly room staff to send signals on the teleprinter is not being followed this tour, the job being done solely by the Bn. HQ radio operators. We still consider ourselves on trial, as far as this aspect of the job is concerned, but there have been no complaints as yet so we press on in our one-fingered way and strive to attain a reasonable typing speed. By virtue of the fact that double manning is needed during the day, the need arose to recruit a few high ranking operators for the radio room. When leave starts don't be surprised if you hear the assistant RSO's voice on the Bn. Comd. net asking for "radio Checks."

The distance of our Sub Units presented a small problem when we first arrived and an HF back up net for the Bn. Comd. net is being employed. We have a C11 SSB at this end working to A13 manpack and vehicle sets used by mobiles and sub units.

The Recce Pl have put the HF Comms to the test on their various Ops around the Mourne Mountains and though they can't claim perfect comms every time we do manage to make contact.

On our last N.I. tour it was considered normal for BHQ operators to "swan" off on escort duty quite regularly. Here opportunities do not arise as often, and there is possibly a certain reluctance due to L/Cpl Dave Ruding's near demise in Belfast a couple of weeks ago when he "copped" one right in the "coffee jar." The amazing thing

about the whole affair was his concern over the coffee more than anything else.

Being "cooped up" as we are we get very little chance of seeing much of our Coy Dets or their commanders. Particularly the "nocturnal Bowler Machine", who haunts the draughty passages of Crossmaglen RUC Station. His appetite for night duties has us all puzzled but, on reflection, we have decided there must be something in it for him. (Watch him, Somme Coy Ops!).

On the actual signalling side of things there have been no "funnies" up to date but we are optimistic on that point even though there is a general air of solemnity about the place.

At the time of writing these notes we are about to embark on the "Passionate Leave" programme and we eagerly await the return of the first lucky few bringing first hand news of the outside world.

CORPS OF DRUMS

The Drums started their tour of duty in N. Ireland as Advance Party helping to clean out the mill along with the QMs staff. There were complaints of housemaids knee, but a look at the sick reports proved that people were only bluffing.

On the arrival of the main body, we started foot patrols around the Bessbrook area, with Dads Army (UDR) helping out. They were in fact a great asset and we thank them.

We took over our present little home from "Burma Coy" to relieve them of the pressure of duties which they have to perform. We didn't mind too much. Contrary to some rumours going around, that we were upset at having to leave the home comfort of the mill.

On arrival at Bessbrook RUC station Dmr Giles set about taking extra precautions, when he looked at the bullet holes in the sanger, (7 in all). He set about armour plating it. Now it is finished, the smaller men of our family have difficulty seeing over the edge without the aid of a sandbag or two!

Apart from looking after the security of the station, we still continue our foot patrols, around the greater Bessbrook area, with the aid of the UDR looking out for some of our friends, who can't know we're here, as they haven't turned up for tea yet.

RECCE PLATOON

On Friday, 28th April, the Platoon arrived in Belfast in good spirit, with the old lags pointing out the New Lodge flats complex, and set off on a one and half hour drive to Newry and Bessbrook Mill. The mill is situated in the small village of Bessbrook, some three miles north west of Newry, and is a linen spinning and weaving mill which has seen better days. No doubt many details of the mill as we know it have appeared elsewhere, say no more!

The Platoon's area of operation is east of Newry taking in Warrenpoint, Kilkeel, Hilltown, Newcastle and the Mourne Mountains. When we saturate the area there is one 'Duke' every 13,300 square metres of ground, the Magic Roundabout has nothing on us! To be honest in these remote areas the UDR help by patrolling parts of the area. Sometimes it is a joint Duke/UDR patrol which is either in vehicles or on foot. The local Republican hot spot (apart from the whole area!) is Rostrevor which at one time was a pleasant seaside village. Did I see a slogan on a wall saying "Join the WRAC, The Pope's a Para"!

As well as daily patrols the Platoon is undertaking to do a three day remote area patrol in the Mourne, at irregular intervals. Sgt Rochester and his section can't wait to do another. They tell us the weather and view is superb in the hills.

Staff Stnsfield is as happy as a Paddy in clover (sorry about that). His stores have expanded even more in the shape of 7 IWS (night sights) and three ZB 298 ground radars, with the promise of five more and two vehicles to come, Ulster does have its small compensations.

Leave has already begun, and with the Argyll and Bolton Wanderer's Recce party coming out here in ten days, the end of July seems to be coming closer.

There are one or two operational tasks being planned at present which might make good reading for the next edition.

QUOTE:

Dr. Budden on return from an urgent call to Coy:
"The patient was displaying the classic symptoms of Readers Digest appendicitis without any of the causes."



"The weather has been lovely since we got here"

QUARTERMASTERS DEPARTMENT

Again neath the shadows of the mountains of Mourne, the department thrives, endeavouring to maintain and supply the Battalion with the homely comforts with which they have become accustomed to when visiting these green grassy shores

The socks, chairs, and bed industry is now in full swing alongside the bolts, weapons and technical aid perveyors. Repairs to leaking roofs, the fitting of lights, water supplies, and technical drawings have become the Quartermaster's speciality. If you want it, you can have it, or we'll surely have a real good try.

Trade in the 20x10x5 VAOS number F1-4286 has been in great demand. Rumour has it that the rifle company's are erecting monuments at many of their locations with this item of stores equipment, commonly called the Sandbag. Wire can also be seen encircling these newly erected obliques, is it the constructors with these tower like creations to remain intact forever? One day, verily I say unto you, one day, when one gets away from these four grey walls that surroundeth, visitors from distant lands could come to gaze upon and view the soldier made objects.

Little changes in the Quartermasters staff have been made since our last summer furlough about these parts. Captain Robins still mans the helm, ably assisted by Captain Burke as the co-pilot. Staff Sergeant Dave Pearson is this tour fixed in the chair vacated by that stalwart Sergeant Geof Firth who now holds the fort in Catterick and Pte. Washy Washington fills the chair of Cpl Craze with no overspill from his lively frame. Cpls Mick Hodgson and Wally Naiken still pound the keys of the 'E' Flat typewriter and Toddy is again having a successful season with the catching of rats. "He knows the oats!"

Tom Jackson and his chippies, namely Brian Foster, Baz Walker, Mac M'Lean and brother Dave Ellingham are now away at company locations again building comforts for the troops. The mill with its warren-like indoor runs is now better signed than Catterick Camp Centre, Diffy Davis again guards and escorts our crew giving old soldierly advice to Rodney Knowles and Les Batman, Cpl Lew Pollard of Ammo Fame has jumped onto the Second-in-Command band-wagon and Cpls Allen Northend, Fern and Sharpey play the roll of guarding, selling and exchanging the goods on the shelf. We say again, if you want it, you can have it but watch the cost, and the "Little Folk" you lucky people!

STANDING ORDERS SECURITY OF THE RQMS AND AB404 NICSA

1. The Regimental Quartermaster Sergeant is high on the wanted list of the IRA and is a prime target. (We might almost say a large target!) With this in mind the subject is confined permanently to Bessbrook Mill.
2. In the unforeseen event of his leaving Echelon the following is to take place:
 - (a) Inform MOD and request Red Alert in the Northern Hemisphere, copy to Prime Minister.
 - (b) Establish communication with USA 8th Fleet and order them into Belfast Lough.
 - (c) Info RAF to put up an ariel umbrella.
 - (d) Ask the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards to mount their Saladins and gallop to the rescue.
3. If an attack is launched on Bessbrook Mill it will be aimed at the RQ's Office and the Mis and Dis Stores. All ranks will fight to the last man, clog and cat to deny the enemy entry to the holiest of holies. The last bottle of HP sauce must be expended from the soldiers mess and the last grapefruit from the Officers Mess before capitulating.
4. Cpl Hodgson, once the battle has stated, will bar the door to the RQ's office using the filing cabinet four drawer U/S w/o keys and the chair tubular steel stacking U/S ex disposal.
5. He will assist the RQ behind the cabinet steel DOE U/S Roll front with one key and pass the AB 404 NICSA Account to him. He will then crawl into the bottom drawer of the filing cabinet four drawer U/S w/o keys put on his steel helmet and immobilise the typewriter Olympia 15" carriage before shutting himself in.
6. It is known that the enemy wish to lay hands on the AB 404 NICSA Account, in particular folio 36/3 which shows the location of Fish Frier Brat Pan and Folio 772/9 which shows breakdown of Mattresses Coir sub standard U/S. This information is Top Secret and for UK Eyes Only!



Pass the Bardic Lamp
I think I've stood on
a bloody Thompson

Part of Major Mundells thorough search.

REASONS WHY SOME DEPARTMENTS DID NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THIS EDITION OF DUKE'S DIARY

- Ops Room Staff:— Too busy making coffee.
- Int Office:— Int Staff: Too busy ordering sexy magazines; Sgt Waller: Too busy reading them.
- Bn. Orderly Room:— Too much Chess.
- Medical Centre:— Too busy bandaging the Dr's finger, worn out by making the crossword.
- Pay Staff:— They can't write (Says the Paymaster)
- Padre:— Praying.
- Messing Staff:— Drunk
- MT:— From the MTO: The boys did write some, but it read just like dreary Iron Duke stuff, so I tore it up.
- Officers and Sergeants Mess:— If you saw the crush at the bar, you'd know we hadn't time.

SIGNAL RECEIVED FROM 3 RRF ON THE DAY THEY LEFT ULSTER

Farewell to Arms in Area K
A pox on all the IRA
Good luck to everyone near or far
Be they jocks in old Armagh
Or Duke of Boots down at T'Mill
Or Sappers grafting as Sappers will
Or Hussars and Lancers on the hoof
(That voice procedure, my, how smooth)
Or Gunners doing very well
With lots of shot but damn all shell
Or the UDR and the RUC
Whose help-mates we have aimed to be
Or Brigade HQ and all their Sigs
We shall even miss our dear old "Pigs"
And the Doe will surely seem in
Retrospect a pleasant dream
Enough, enough we're on our way
Thistles then Leeks will soon hold sway
Just once again we'd like to say
A POX ON ALL THE IRA

NEXT EDITION

The next edition of 'Duke's Diary' is due out on Saturday 1st July. All contributions to the 2ic, 1 DWR, BFPO 801, by Wednesday 21st June please.

We will take any articles, stories, cartoons, jokes or other things you care to send in.

