

DUKE'S (MINI) DIARY

BELFAST — NOVEMBER, 1979



Commanding Officer's Introduction

The Springfield Road has lived up to its reputation as the IRA and Republican centre of Northern Ireland and Belfast. The Battalion was given a torrid and tragic reception: Lcpl Tait wounded (but happily back with us) on the advance party, Pte Peet shot guarding a wounded Scottish soldier in the Royal Victoria Hospital (he returns to duty in a weeks time) and the tragic murder outside Tac HQ which resulted in the deaths of QMSI Bellamy APTC and Constable Davison of the RUC. Few battalions have received such a rough introduction. We all send our sympathy and condolences to the Bellamy family; we are all quite clear in our aim to bring those responsible to justice.

We are working hard: constant patrolling, searching and guarding the

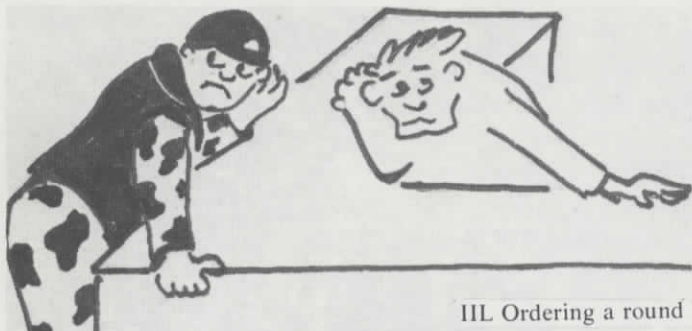
construction of new bases and improved observation posts. Alma Company is now well established in the 'Murph', Burma has named their new large base 'Jericho' as its walls keep blowing down, Corunna have a special relationship with Divis, and Somme is sorting out the problems in the middle! The Companies are showing true grit and determination, humour is apparent and the stories are beginning to grow. I am happy to command a professional battalion: the Dukes are doing their stuff again.

By the time you get this Diary, Christmas will be upon us. I and all ranks wish all our loved ones, our families and friends a very Merry Christmas. We look forward to our return to Minden in February and leave; we will have earned it!

ALMA



OC Alma has his own ideas about dealing with stoners.



ILL Ordering a round



All ears for the patrol briefing



"Oops! I've forgotten my handbag!"



Alma lads with their phsycedelic Saracen



Lt Dixon and 2lt Borwell take a break.

Heard on the battalion net:
"If you go to the cemetery you will find a big cross in the middle."
(Surprise surprise).



BURMA

OC Burma Company watching closed circuit television: "We will watch for a car and see how long it takes to reach Fort Monagh."
Lt Drake: "There's one now!"
OC Burma: "That's not a car — that's a cow!"
Lt Drake: "Oh!"

Duty Watchkeeper wrote in the log after having sent a patrol to check out a suspicious vehicle: "Call sign 22D found the vehicle was a taxi talking to another taxi."

Captain Mike Sherlock speaking to coffeepot at Grand Central Hotel:

Coffee Pot: "Will I have to stay the night?"

Capt Sherlock: "I think you might. To be on the safe side bring your washing and shaving kit with you."

(Rupert star grading 7 out of 10) ★

Sangar 7 to Burma Company Ops Room: "2 men with violin and cello case going down Glen Road."

Ops Room: "Are their names Al Capone?"

Sangar 7: "I don't know — I'll try and find out!"



Friday night is disco night!



Pte Smith keeping things under control.



'Hulk' and the incredible brick.



Pte Tattersall — "Come out ya dirty rat!"



22L seeing Coffeepot 1 month into tour (NHSM)



Wait 'till my bird sees this one!

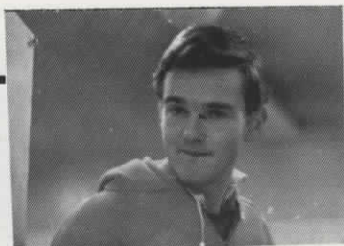
CORUNNA

ALBERT IS BACK



'P' Checks — firm but fair!

First reports of damage house search in the Clonard:
 Company Commander: "What happened?"
 Platoon Commander: "Wagtail fell through the ceiling."
 Company Commander: "Can't be helped."
 Platoon Commander: "There was something else."
 Company Commander "What?"
 Platoon Commander: "His handler followed him."
 Company Commander: "Oh"
 Platoon Commander: "They both landed on the bed."
 Company Commander: "Are we expecting charges of bestiality then?"
 Platoon Commander: "No, I don't think so sir, it's a nice dog."



Capt Shuttleworth showing why the residents of the Falls Road and Divis live in fear of him. "Nice boy!"



Which one of 8 Platoon found an electric kettle and then put it on the electric cooker to boil the water? Good lad that!



Quote of the Month
 (Heard on the battalion net)
 "Hello 3 this is 39. Send colour of the beige Ford Escort — over."



WO2 Cookson all in a spin.



And there I was on the Falls Road, when all of a sudden

Crack!! Two patrol hit the deck. Weapons were cocked and aimed. What at? "Contact!!" shouts the patrol commander (No names). The platoon commander falls off the wall — not shot — but with laughter. He had watched a dustbin lid thrown from the top floor of the Divis Flats. 32A has since changed his callsign for 32D (D for dustbin). Never mind Rod — a high velocity dustbin lid is a new one for the book.



The Sappers and Dukes at North Howard Street get on famously. I'm just a little worried about how deep the affection goes!



Dear Sir,
 Do not bite yer finger nails
 It makes 'em go all lumpy
 Think of all that this entails,
 Yours sincerely,
 Stumpy.

SOMME



Sign left by 1 KOSB for Somme Company. Don't reckon much of their Staff Duties — but the sentiments are there!



For those who hold that patrolling is a pain the the a . . . one of the funniest moments so far came when members of the Mortar Platoon "P checked" a rather nasty character in St. James'. In the ensuing body search the unsuspecting tommy lifted the lad's bush hat — hair and all — revealing a very highly polished dome!



Alderman William Bell, Lord Mayor of Belfast, chats to lads of Somme Company.



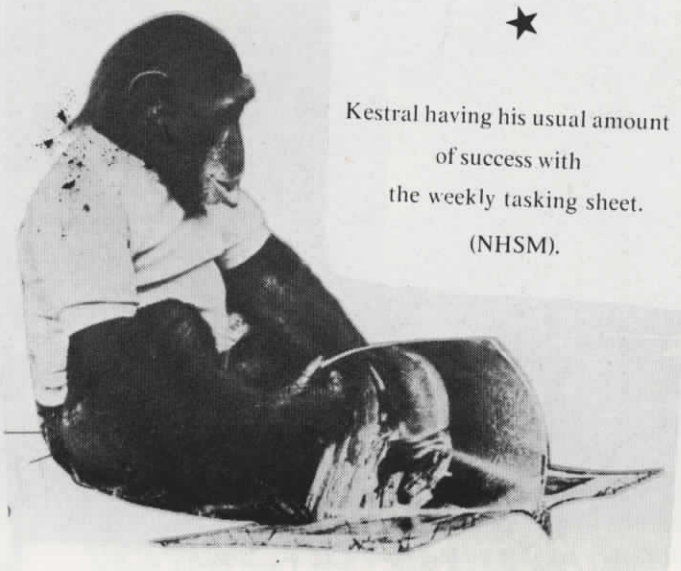
Good meals guide to dining in Belfast . . . "5 star room service is just one of the perks enjoyed by the Royal Victoria Hospital Guard."



★ Lepl Conlon speaking to housewife: "It's quiet for a Saturday morning isn't it?"
Housewife: "It would be but it's not Saturday."
Lepl Conlon: "Oh, Jacko — what day is it?"
Jacko: "Sunday"
Housewife "Dead on!! It's Tuesday..!"



Who'se the fairest of them all!

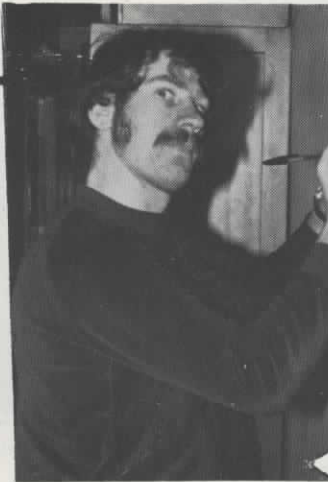


★
Kestral having his usual amount of success with the weekly tasking sheet.
(NHSM).

TACH HQ



Kelly's Corner.



Cpl Flaving — the writing's on the wall!



CO's Rover Group (Mark 1) ready for action.



I tell you it does go in here!

SIMPLY SIMON

"Mmmm; it's a thought" said Captain Simon Newton rather seriously. He was reacting to a suggestion by the Paymaster that he gathered his soap, loofah, plastic duck, talc and towel for a taxi pig safari to Echelon where he could luxuriate in a good, hot, relaxing bath.

"Why go to Flax Street for a bath?" I asked.

"Because after four weeks in this place I'm fed-up of trudging up and down four flights of stairs and through that bloody cold yard for a piddling shower," came the reply.

"Then why don't you use the showers and baths about 20 yards from your room on the same floor?" (Kick, kick; nudge nudge from others present)

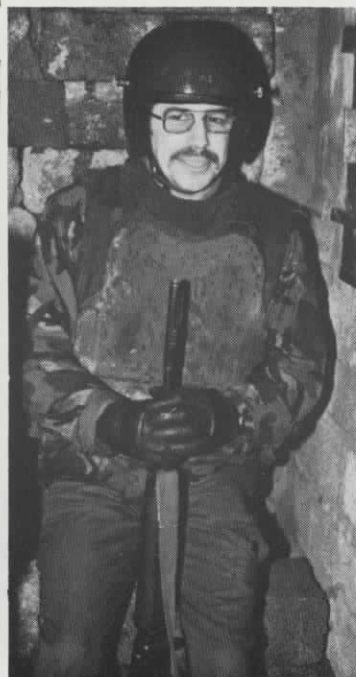
"What showers and baths?"

Thinks: "Oh dear, I've let the cat out of the bag again!"

Judging by the happy splashes later in the evening the taxi pig crews will be delighted to know that Captain Newton has now found the well appointed facilities. Rupert seemed to smile when he heard — I wonder why? (Rupert star grading — 8 out of ten) ★



Lcpl Dooler gets the point.



Lcpl Casey sitting pretty!

St. Atherton on Battalion net, "Two men crossing motorway — one carrying a rucksack — and I don't mean a policeman!"



So this is a sleeping policeman



ECHELON

ODE TO ECHELON — 1 DWR (RN)

Ech is not so far from Tac,
Ech is far from being slack,
We are not in the front line yet,
But that don't stop us getting wet.

Early morning, half past five
Ech was buzzing like a hive,
OC Ech was having a fit
Why? — Because it rained a bit!

All arose and cursing him,
We almost found we had to swim.
We went outside, all cold and blue
To find the rumour sadly true.

The place was flooded, two feet deep.
Squaddies floated fast asleep.
We all were more than slightly damp,
Who called Ech a holiday camp?

We waded fore and waded aft,
Passing by all sorts of craft.
You may think this a load of crap,
But we caught three fish in an old rat trap.

The damage done, all upset,
Ech is fighting even yet.
We do our jobs without a care,
But when it rains boys — be aware!!!



"I'll give you 24 hours to get off!"



Not exactly your London cab — but customers never argue about the fares in this taxi!



Hubble bubble, toil The traditional mixing of the Christmas pud by the CO and junior soldier at Flax Street.



★
Sgt Crowther taking
a busman's holiday.
★



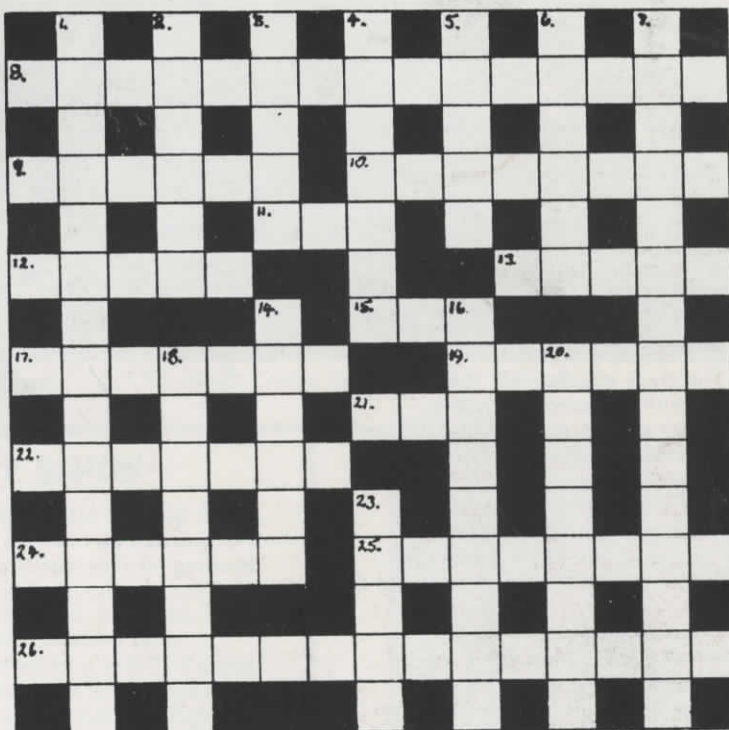
**CAPTION
COMPETITION**

The Best caption to this photograph, sent to the PRO, will earn the writer £5. Thinking caps on!

CROSSWORD



"We are not am-Hughes-ed"



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

ACROSS

8. They've obviously got together in Yorkshire (9,6)
9. Yield to compassion with the Sappers period of fasting and penitence (6)
10. Can't hope for a monumental change (8)
11. A mineral spring in Regents Park (7)
12. Back stops are unsightly (5)
13. Results of a tie-up? (5)
15. An odd tree to be in Laurel Mews (3)
17. A quiet type (7)
19. Half a sermon about a tax fiddle gives us some fringe benefits. (6)
21. A Nazi may be a fool (3)
22. Mix up with an itchy girl (7)
24. The seaman from Penzance (6)
25. Pears apt to become mutilated on the bridge (8)
26. What you need to get used to it (15)

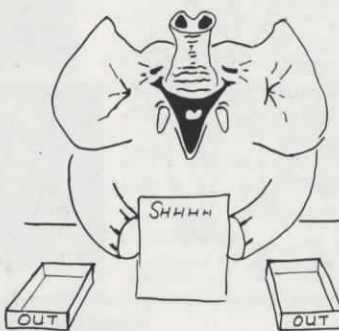
DOWN

1. Old coin or just part of one? (10,5)
2. Every cause has one (6)
3. Measures of a little intelligence in an afterthought (5)
4. Pacify (7)
5. Painful poet (5)
6. The tops in modified engine part (6)
7. Re-direct more potential up this way to keep it going (9,6)
14. Cat caught in the rescuers life lines (6)
16. Induce hypnotic state (9)
18. A friend following two turns as a matter of fact! (8)
20. Some strumming animals in the band? (8)
23. Large or excessive amount (5)

Frist Prize £2.50
Second Prize £1.50
Third Prize £1.00

Entries to be forwarded to PRO at Tac HQ

- ★ Did you hear about the policeman who found a Jew down an ally making love to a cat? The judge let him off as he said it was the first time he had heard of a Jew putting something in the kitty!
- ★ Heard the one about the Englishman, Scotsman and Irishman who went to a fancy dress party. The theme was Star Trek. The Englishman dressed as Spok, the Scotsman dressed up as Scotty and the Irishman arrived dressed as a tree. When he was asked why, he said he was the Captain's Log!!
- ★ Heard the one about the masochist who liked to take a cold shower every morning — he took a hot one!
- ★ Rooky Ruckbird listening to Battalion net when someone came up asking for Coffeepot and Rucksack to be sent to his location: "Oh — are they going camping or something?" she asked.
- ★ Seen in Belfast Telegraph
"Giant Crossword, First correct entry earns £10 for sender. (For those who don't wish to enter the answers are on page 3.)"

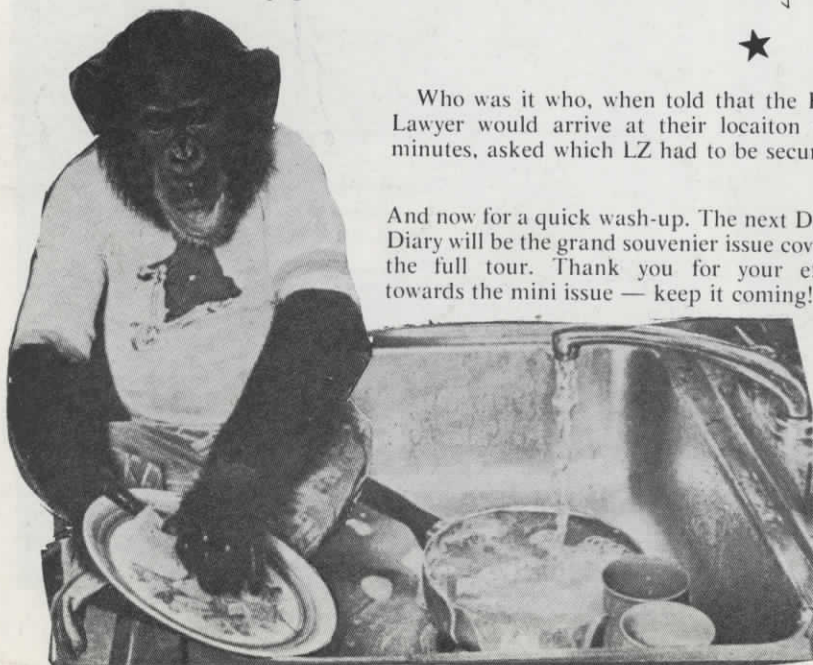


Albert reading the Intsum

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Who was it who, when told that the Flying Lawyer would arrive at their locaiton in 15 minutes, asked which LZ had to be secured?

And now for a quick wash-up. The next Duke's Diary will be the grand souvenir issue covering the full tour. Thank you for your efforts towards the mini issue — keep it coming! (Ed)



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