MERCURY

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-The Journal of the Junior Leaders Regiment, Royal Signals, Denbury Camp, S. Devon-



Major-General R. J. Moberly, C.B., O.B.E. talks to J/SSM@J. Spencer from Libya, accompanied by the Commanding Officer, Lt.-Col. D. E. Higgins, M.B.E. (by Sgt. Stockham)

FEATURING JERBOA

JUNIOR LEADERS HELP TO CLEAN UP DARTMOOR

(See centre pages)

SCENES FROM 'ON THE FRONTIER'



The Lieutenant (Denis Hodsen) makes his proposition to the Countess (Joan Joyner)

(by Maj. J. Joyner)



Sam and Pam Ward as Sergeant and peasant girl



Private Linka (Gordon Cross) mumbles his excuses to a scornful peasant maiden (Bobby Watson)

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OLYMPIC GYMNAST VISITS DENBURY

The Regiment was privileged recently to receive SSI Pancott, APTC, a United Kingdom representative in the gymnastic competition at the Tokyo Olympic Games. SSI Pancott was accompanied by SI Trenholm, APTC, another international but not an Olympics man. The purpose of their visit was to run a day course for the Gymnastic Club, under arrangements made by Lt. Pearce, QMSI Pictor and SI Dart. The course was, in fact, the first of a series to be held in all the interested Junior Leader units, and was suggested by Lt. Pearce at a recent meeting of the Army Gymnastic Association.

The course itself turned out to be a fantastic amount of hard work, but the rewards were well worth working for. It is doubtful whether the club has worked so hard ever before, and perhaps the biggest lesson was that perfection in this sport, as in every other, requires hours of constant hard work.

Basically the day involved periods of an hour's duration, with ten-minute intervals and an hour for lunch. This may not sound too strenuous, but during those hours each boy was working constantly, either performing at the particular exercise under instruction or assisting in the supervision of that exercise. And there was no chance to idle either, for the two chief instructors were constantly on the move, keeping people on their toes, literally and metaphorically. Perhaps the most overworked club member was SI Dart himself, who was making grand efforts to perfect his back flips, etc., which to most of us would seem to be perfect anyway.

The course commenced with instruction in vaulting over the box and the horse. It then proceeded to work on the parallel bars. While this was going on the trampoline was in constant use, generally under the supervision of Lt. Pearce, who specialises in this piece of apparatus. The afternoon session consisted of work on the ground, an essential part of any gymnast's training, closely followed by an immaculate demon-



SSI Pancott keeps a watchful eye as work on the trampoline proceeds

(by A. Cooksley)

stration by SSI Pancott on the high bar, and instruction in the arts of this difficult apparatus.

At the end of the day many bones were heard to be creaking and much perspiration had been deposited on the floor of the gymnasium. Some boys even found muslces they never knew they had. But the comments afterwards showed that a lot had been gained from this session by both boys and staff. It seems to me also that if more of the experts in the various sports in the army spent time in running courses of this nature at Junior Leader units, the standard of sport as a whole would rise in those units, and hence in the Services generally.



And this is how it's done

(by Lt C. Pearce)



A helping hand from the expert

toy Lt C. Pearce)

A JERBOAN AT TOWYN

by J/Sig J. Fawcett

When I was first selected to go to the Army Outward Bound School, I don't mind admitting that I was terrified. I'd heard such stories about the place, and although I realised that they were, in the main, exaggerations created by boys to boost their egos and to try to gain status in the troop, I also realised that where there is smoke there is bound to be a certain amount of fire. Those stories about the Snowdon knife edge (Crib Goch), the assault course and the rock climbing just couldn't be true-or could they?

Anyway, the day arrived when I had to go. I arrived at six o'clock and my first impression of the place was that it didn't look up to much. We were split up into patrols and I was placed in Hunt patrol, with a Sgt. Gregg as our patrol instructor. We drew the kit we were supposed to have and Sgt. Gregg spoke to us about the things we would be doing and what was expected of us. Then came bed, and the chatter in the rooms that evening showed that everyone, without exception, had reservations about what they were in for during the next three weeks.

We were roused at 0700 hours, which was rather pleasant since it was half an hour later than we get up normally. Then we slunk to the showers for the dreaded cold shower which, to our utter delight, lasted for five seconds only. Not bad after all. At least there was no swim to be taken for the time of year and the tides made it unnecessarily dangerous. Later that day we were shown the assault course and here again there was no need for the knocking knees which seemed to bother everyone. It was more exciting than ours at Denbury, but it was really no more difficult. The remainder of the day was taken up with lessons in Map Reading (especially of mountain country), Accident Drill, Stretcher Drill, Bivouac Erection, Rucksack Packing and Knotting. And then, to crown it all, at the end of the day came Circuit Training



J/Sgt Miller leads his Patrol of Jerboans down to the finish in the Commonwealth Trophy Race

which was enough to make even the fittest of us think that the only place to make for now was bed. This routine went on for five days, the only change being a morning of rock climbing on the nursery slopes near the camp.

At the end of the week came the first exercise, a 36-hour one which included a nine-mile walk on the first day, tent erection and cooking outside, and a nine-mile walk the next day to be picked up by the transport.

The next week brought a four-day exercise which I thoroughly enjoyed and which I did not find overpowering in the least. Rock climbing was included in this expedition, and neither did this inspire the awe in me that I had been led to believe it would, from the lads back in Devon. There was really no need to be afraid at all for there was always the instructor there to help you in an emergency, although it was their policy to let you do as much as possible without help.

When the final scheme came in the last week, we thought that we would be able to get around the 46 miles of the course quite easily, but this was not to be. Due to unavoidable circumstances, well beyond our control, we failed to complete the course but, as compensation, our patrol did win an award from the chief instructor for getting up a particular hill with only two stops.

The day after the completion of this scheme we had various competitions and tests and were then given our gradings for the course. I was quite satisfied with my grading and felt that the whole thing had really been worth while. What I liked most and fully appreciated was the lack of regimentation in the school and the fact that discipline was largely self-discipline. This, needless to say, was highly effective. And, as a final comment on my opening paragraph, I should categorically deny and refute any suggestion that the course in North Wales is, as one individual put it, "sheer hell." It is the same as any other course in the Army, what you make it.

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COMMENTS FROM AN OLD JERBOAN

It is perhaps appropriate, as this is the Jerboa Troop edition of Junior Mercury, to go back a few years to the origin of the troop affiliation scheme, for it started when I was adopted by Jerboa Troop in 1961. I used to think of all sorts of idealistic motives as to why they should adopt me in the first place until I overheard the conversation between two troop members. They were talking about me, and I asked them why I had been adopted. The simple answer was that they wanted an OC in order that they would be guaranteed their pay each week, and they were making sure there was someone there to pay them. It seems significant that the OC Jerboa spends a lot of time on courses, and I'm still paying them out regularly as the adopted member.

My adoption ceremony was more genteel than many others. I was asked to visit the troop and found them all on parade. I was then presented with a troop penannt and a green balaclava with a white tassel. I was then duly thanked for taking the Jerboan contingent to Nijmegen and informed that I was now a fully paid-up member of the troop. The pennant was the one I had carried at Nijmegen and had been suitably emblazoned with the words: "Nijmegen: Commonwealth Trophy 1960-61; Ten Tors (two teams)."

I thus lay claim to being the only Squadron Commander who is also a member of one of his own troops!

Jerboans have always been a happy-golucky and an intelligent crowd. They will, one hopes, continue that way. I should like to offer my personal congratulations on their final position in the Cobb Memorial Trophy last term, and especially to commend their tremendous improvement on the previous term. But in case the other troops in the Squadron get the impression that I tend to favour Jerboa, let them rest assured that I have great admiration for them all and feel a great personal pride in all their successes. Further to this is the fact that on my arrival in the unit in 1957, I was at



A group of Jerboans led by J/Sig Crookes with a part of the wing

(by Maj J. Joyner)

first appointed to be OC Iron Troop.

Jerboa also has a great moorland walking tradition, a thing which started when, as 'L' Troop, they had as OC, Lt. P. Riding. He marched them many, many miles across Dartmoor, and they were in fact the first troop to march from Okehampton to South Brent in a 24-hour period. Ten Tors has, however, beaten them twice in the last two years. They failed to finish as a team on both occasions, but are determined to do so in 1965. The most determined member is Junior Sig. Henle, from Buckfastleigh, who has completed the course twice, received a certificate but never a medal. He has confided in me that he will get the team through if he has to carry them all on his back.

SUCCESS FOR THE CORPS OF DRUMS

The Corps of Drums recently took part in the Army Junior Band and Corps of Drums competition. We are pleased to report that they finished equal first with RASC Junior Leaders from Taunton. This speaks well, not only of the boys who performed so splendidly, but also of Drum Major Yates who has spent many hours perfecting their style and bringing them to their peak at precisely the right time.

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DENBURY LADS HELP TO CLEAN UP DARTMOOR

"EXERCISE HUMPIT OR LUMPIT"

(by Maj. JOHN JOYNER)



The Humpits begin the long drag of the one-ton Merlin engine

(by Maj. J. Joyner)

It was called "Humpit or Lumpit," and that is exactly what it turned out to be. If you didn't like it you could lump it, and in any case, you had to hump it. Fortunately the weather was kind, and at the end of the exercise many lessons were learnt. But what was it all about?

On 16th March a meeting of the Disfigurement Committee of the Dartmoor National Park took place. At this meeting the services were asked to effect the removal of a crashed aircraft from Quickbeam Hill. This request was passed on by the Area Land Agent to the Commanding Officer who considered it a worthwhile task.

A week later a reconnaissance of the situation took place in thick fog, when the Land Warden, Lt. Cmr. Toll RN (Rtd), Fl. Lt. Kingdon, RAF, from the School of Combat Survival and Rescue, SSM Wilson and I went out to consider the snags and the means available. I accepted the task on behalf of the Regiment, hence "Exercise Humpit and Lumpit." A short while later, two parties totalling nearly sixty, set out from Denbury on a glorious Spring morning. The "Lumpits" were to travel by MT to within about half a mile of the wreckage, using the Redlake Track by special permission of the Lord of the Manor, Mr. H. G. Hurrell. Their task was to locate the wreck, dig up the buried parts, including its Merlin engine which weighed over a ton, and also to reconnoitre a vehicle route to the site, should this be possible. The "Humpits" were to walk to the site and then carry out

a search for scattered wreckage before assisting in the final removal to the Redlake Track.

It was my pleasure to consider myself a Humpit, and the Lumpits set out with Lt. Bruce, SSM Wilson and Sergeant Mathieson. On this occasion I experienced the satisfaction, by no means unique, of arriving at my destination ahead of those whom I had despatched at intervals ahead of me. On this occasion too I attribute our success to the good map reading of J/S/Sgt. Harper. One patrol led by J/Sig. Knell achieved the distinction of reaching their desination just before we were due to leave. Apparently their compass was wrong!

Anyway, when we arrived on the scene we we found the Lumpits hard at work and after a short rest, the combined forces were soon harnessed into action. A few individuals seemed to be helping in a manner peculiar to themselves. Gaunt of Iron took great pleasure in simply bashing at the engine with a sledge hammer—to no avail of course. Gerrey of Francisca set to work to cut the main cross member in half with a hacksaw. This took hours, but the really frustrating thing was that when the cut pieces were finally dragged away and the earth loosened around them, it was found that the cut through piece was separate from the rest anyway, but the break was under the ground.

Another party consisting of Beresford, Rainnie, Forster and Hartley fancied themselves as drainage experts and tried to drain off the water from a large pool in which was found the cockpit. It was a hard task as the channel had to be dug to a level below that of the bottom of the pool, which meant a great hole in the side of the hill. I believe that apart from getting rid of the water, the party were also hoping to find something interesting. They did—an old boot.

Meanwhile the parties were bringing in various bits and pieces of the wreckage from the surrounding area. I noticed Cook of Iron trailing along behind some of the scavengers, "tail end Charley" in more ways than one, for when he drew near he was struggling under the weight of an enormous hunk of the tail.

But the climax was drawing near. The eingine was dug out and in one piece, despite Gaunt's efforts, and the big question was, could we move it? Sixty Leaders on four drag ropes soon proved that they could, and it soon moved in bursts of speed along the half mile to the track, gathering a natural camouflage as it went. We reached the truck which had got itself bogged down in the mud, freed it from its trap, and then decided that we would attempt to get this engine off the Moor ourselves, provided we could lift the ton weight onto the truck. A convenient bank was found and sixty pairs of hands were set in motion. The engine was soon on the bank and after hovering dangerously on the edge of another bog, it was eventually heaved into the truck.

The rest of the plane was brought across with a series of boat races. We then paused

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THE LUMPITS

for a while and considered the many wonderful places where we could put the salvage; the CO's office, the door of the Guard Room, Beaufighter Troop centre barrack room and the doorway of the incinerator operator's private salvage store were all suggested. Having dismissed all these as being a wee bit impractical, it was finally decided that the best place was at the end of the Bittaford Track for final collection by the RAF.

It was during the last loading session that we sustained out only casualty. SSM Wilson got a deep and nasty cut on the hand; a case of too much supervision! Whils the was being patched up we were confronted by two Junior Seamen from HMS Figard who stated that they had a 'buddy' on the Moor who was very ill. A party was sent to rescue the casualty, led by S/Sgt. Harper. It was found that the casualty was suffering from a strong dose of 'tireditis' which he soon got over when he was marched back to the remainder of the group at Montgomery pace. Skiving is obviously not confined to Junior Leaders.

We all felt that it had been a worthwhile task that we had done in clearing this eyesore from the Moor. The journey back gave rise to a lot of speculation as to what had actually happened to cause the plane to crash, what happened to the pilot, what mission was he on and where was he making for? These must remain unanswered unfortunately, but whilst one is in a romanticising mood, and since the task was undertaken over the Easter period, it is interesting to note that the scar left by the wreckage formed the shape of an almost perfect cross.

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DEPARTURES

Captain David Lang RAEC. This term one familiar face which will be missing from the Regiment will be that of Captain David Lang, RAEC. He has been posted to the Far East after four years with the unit. Captain Lang will obviously be best remembered for his work in the classroom, but there are also many who recall his work with the Swimming Club. He took all the swimmers of varying degrees of accomplishment twice or sometimes three times weekly and achieved great things with them. He also taught life saving to a good standard and many medals were gained through his tuition. The Regimental Water Polo team also was Captain Lang's inspiration.

We wish Captain Lang and his family well in their new appointment.

Mr. Peter Tysoe. Also missing from the classrooms this term will be Mr. Peter Tysoe. Mr. Tysoe was with the unit for three years as a civilian lecturer and prior to that for two years as a member of the RAEC. He has taken up an appointment at the Council for Industrial Design in London for his first love, and indeed his qualifications, are in the world of art.

Mr. Tysoe will be missed a good deal for his skill in all forms of art which he willingly imparted to the boys with success. The numerous awards in the Army Arts and Crafts Exhibition bear witness to this.

We trust that life in London proves to be congenial to Mr. Tysoe and his wife.

OBITUARY

It is with sorrow that we learn of the death by drowning, off the coast of Malta, of Signalman Derek Frederick Gallop.

Signalman Gallop was a member of the Regiment for over two years, and graduated to man service in August of last year. He was an adventurous young man, keen and enthusiastic for all things physical, and a loyal and helpful member of both troop and squadron. Royal Signals have indeed lost a most promising young soldier.

The Commanding Officer has sent a message of sympathy to Mr. and Mrs. Gallop, who now reside at Princetown, on behalf of the Regiment.

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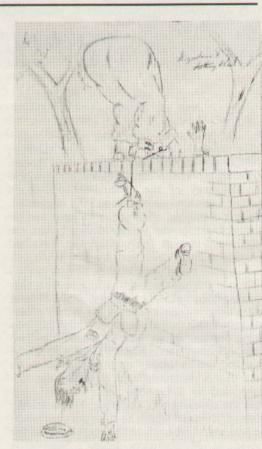
(by Sgt Stockham)



The victorious White Swan rugby team receive the cup from the Commanding Officer (by Sgt Stockham)



The Jerboans, with Lt P. Bruce and Sgt Ron Block to the fore



Signalman X on the obstacle course. Familiar?

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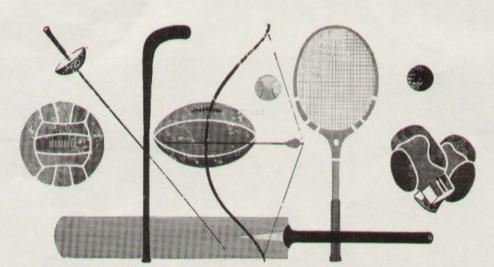
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THE EXPERT LENDS A HAND



SSI Pancott assists J/Sig Fuller of Kukri Troop in a back flip

(by A. Cooksley)



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Another Resounding Success for the Drama Club

The end of term entertainment last month brought more success to the Drama Club. It took the form of two one act plays, separated by a pot-pourri of general variety, songs and sketches etc.

The first play was the old comedy, "The Man in the Bowler Hat," by A. A. Milne, which had also been the unit entry in the Army Junior Drama Festival, the previous week. The result of that competition is not yet known. The play was well received, even though the comedy is not very obvious. Anna Pearce and Chris Endean gave polished performances as the staid, married couple, the timing of the former in particular being very professional. Carol Braund made a most authentic Flapper of the twenties, whilst John Heard was suitably casual as the Hero. A most melodramatic villain was supplied by Bob Hartley who twirled his moustache very ominously, sometimes too vigourously for the comfort of the make-up staff in the wings. Brian Levett completed the cast as the Bad Man, and he used his marvellous Black Country accent to the full.

After this play came the song and dance part of the show, and this was most enthusiastically received. The high spots of this were the wise-cracking of a 'drunken' Harry Dobson, complete with buttonhole and red nose, the singing of the Kelts and the brief sketches containing Lt. Gordon Cross. But one should not forget the hearty singing of the chorus which kept the whole thing going with verve and gaity, nor the well practised piano playing of Lt. Graham Saunders, who in fact looked extremely dashing in boater and striped blazer. This section was produced by Mr. Grant who unfortunately could not attend the final rehearsals because of illness, but who did manage to make it for the last performance. They did not let him down.

The final play was 'On the Frontier' which was produced by Major Miller and was cast from the staff and wives. Major Dennis Hodson played the young officer in charge of the frontier post, whilst Captain Sam Ward played his sergeant. Both gave ac-



The boys and girls enjoy a rousing chorus

(by Sgt Stockham)

complished performances, especially when one considers that neither had much experience on the stage. Mrs. John Joyner was her usual competant self in the role of the fleeing countess, whilst Mrs. Pam Ward, Mrs. Marjorie Coleman and Mrs. Bobby Watson made excellent peasants. The private soldier was played by Lt. Gordon Cross—what a busy night for him,—and he made the most of the comedy.

The sets for each of the entertainments were constructed by Major Jock Woodcock and designed and painted by Mr. Peter Tysoe, ably assisted by one Junior Leader, Barry Pearman. They were, as usual, excellent. All in all, this was a first class entertainment, thoroughly enjoyed by both those who took part and those who formed the audience.

A THOUGHT AT RANDOM

It was rumoured last term that the RSM had applied in sheer desperation for a new chapter to be added to the drill manual headed, "Stick Drill for One Armed Warrant Officers." To make matters worse, both a left handed and a right handed edition seemed to be required.

Actually the one armed style seems to have caught on in the manner of a Dior fashion, for two Junior Leaders were observed walking out immaculately clad in mod suit and triangular bandages, the latter beautifully tied. Two Junior Leaders from Slim Squadron though were heard discussing the latest fashion as adopted by the Senior members of their own Squadron and decided that if these members wished to stick their necks out that was their problem and good luck to them. They themselves decided to remain unfashionable.



A scene from "The Man in the Bowler Hat"

(by Sgt Stockham)



The Kelts "get with it"

SPORTS NOTES

The end of term sports competitions produced thrilling games in rugby, soccer and The first two games were played hockey. on one afternoon in blazing sunshine, which made both playing and spectating pleasant, but the hockey final was played a couple of days later in the pouring rain, much to the discomfort of all.

Rugby was the first sport to be decided and in this game we had White Swan playing Kukri. White Swan had swept all before them in previous rounds and, since they contained nine of the Regimental rugby team, they were confidently expected to do the same in the final. Although they won by 24 points to 11, they were by no means as completely dominant as people had anticipated. Kukri played with dash and enthusiasm, but White Swan had this plus skill. There were some excellent tries scored by Feegan, Blackman and Orton, whilst for the losers, Stone scored two beautiful penalties, one in particular from about 40 yards at an angle and against a very strong breeze. There is obviously something in this soccer training.

And soccer it was which was played next. The final this time was between Kohima and Francisca. Although it started off rather slowly, with little skill being shown on either side, the pace soon picked up and Kohima gradually began to assert themselves and eventually to dominate the game. They came out winners in the end by four goals to nil and were duly presented with

their medals and the trophy.

The wet pitch made play difficult in the hockey final between White Spear and Kukri. However, this in no way detracted from the keeness shown, even if the skill suffered a little. The final score was one goal each, which meant that the trophy had to be shared this year. This was a just result, for neither team was dominant and a victory for one would have been most unjust to the other. Nevertheless, the game was enjoyed by the crowd, who braved the storm to support one team or the other.

Thus, then, we reached the climax of three tournaments which had taken most of the term to complete. On the whole it was most successful, although I'm not sure that some of those who played their pre-liminary rounds at half-past seven some mornings would think so, especially if they were beaten by a large score, as happened in some of the rugby matches. It must have startled some of the local farmers to see a game going on at that unlikely hour.

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GRADUATION DAY



The Inspecting Officer congratulates SSM Gordon James, whilst SSM Norman Salter stands in the background. Both were presented with their Long Service and Good Conduct Medals. (by Sgt Stockham)

Graduation Day last term was heralded by glorious sunshine, with a slight breeze blowing in from the moor; ideal conditions for a parade. And a fine parade it turned out to be.

The Inspecting Officer was Major-General R. J. Moberly, CB, OBE, a former Signal Officer-in-Chief, and in his speech he said that as far as the boys of Denbury are concerned, the "sky was the limit," and there was no ceiling if they were pre-

pared to work.

A large number of guests and parents watched as Maj.-Gen. Moberly told the boys: "It is an amazing thing to see the large number of Junior Leaders who are now serving in the regimental corps. There are 290 sergeants, 69 staff-sergeants, 64 warrant officers, 10 regimental sergeantmajors, six lieutenants, six captains and

six majors.
"In the past, Junior Leaders have had to go to Catterick to complete their training. Due to improvements in organisation and efficiency, this year eight out of ten will complete their training here and then go forward, straight to regimental units.'

After inspecting the arrayed ranks, Maj.-Gen. Moberly presented Long Service and Good Conduct Medals to Warrant Officers Gordon James of Truro and Norman Salter of Birmingham.

APPOINTMENTS

Commanding Officer Lt.-Col. D. E. Higgins, M.B.E., R. Signals

Parade Commander Major D. J. Strong, R. Signals

Officer Commanding Alexander Squadron Major R. M. Wright, R. Signals

Officer Commanding Slim Squadron Major J. K. Heyes, R. Signals

Officer Commanding Montgomery Squadron Major J. Joyner, R. Signals

Parade Adjutant Captain C. J. Rayner, R. Signals Regimental Sergeant Major RSM W. T. Leeson

Junior Regimental Sergeant Major J/RSM A. J. Feegan

Drum Major Drum Major A. Yates, B.E.M. Junior Drum Major

J/Sig. A. K. Whillock Junior Trumpet Major J/L/Cpl. T. Williamson

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