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Photo by courtesy of National Archives

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the magazine of the Rhodesian army

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(Courtesy: Army Photographer)	
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## Editorial

Esprit-de-Corps, is one of those intangible qualities which is only obvious when it is missing from the character of a unit. Many qualities combine to produce this and generally speaking these ingredients are rarely physical ones. Military history abounds with examples of units displaying great elan under the most adverse conditions; in fact adverse conditions seem to stimulate the human being to rise above a purely physical environment.

Undoubtedly a regiment's existence over a lengthy period can provide a history and record of tradition which serves to stimulate the growth of an esprit de corps. Equally, some may argue that the size of a unit may be a consideration, especially when regimental associations become established. There are many units in the Rhodesian Army which bear witness to this. It is true of the Rhodesian African Rifles, The Rhodesian Light Infantry, The Rhodesia Regiment and The Rhodesian Corps of Engineers, to name but a few.

There are, however, units who enjoy high esprit de corps but do not conform to either lengthy tradition or large numbers — prime examples of this being the Selous Scouts and the Grey's Scouts. A possible explanation may be the selectivity of their personnel.

A number of characteristics then seem to contribute to esprit de corps and range from tradition to selectivity and the aura of special roles. Of Course without good leadership the whole concept of esprit de corps has no opportunity for growth, but the Rhodesian Army has that quality in abundance.

One factor has, however, been present in all the examples quoted; every unit mentioned has a title, be it Rifles, Light Infantry, Regiment, Corps or Scouts. Here is part, and an important part, of that mystic quality — a title with which the man can identify.

Most of our Army units do have names with which their members can identify but a minority have titles which merely indicate their function and size. Some even include the word unit as part of their title. The dictionary indicates that a unit can be a self-contained part of a greater whole; it is also a measurement of energy but to include it as part of a title is unimaginative — and counter productive to the emergence of tradition and esprit de corps.

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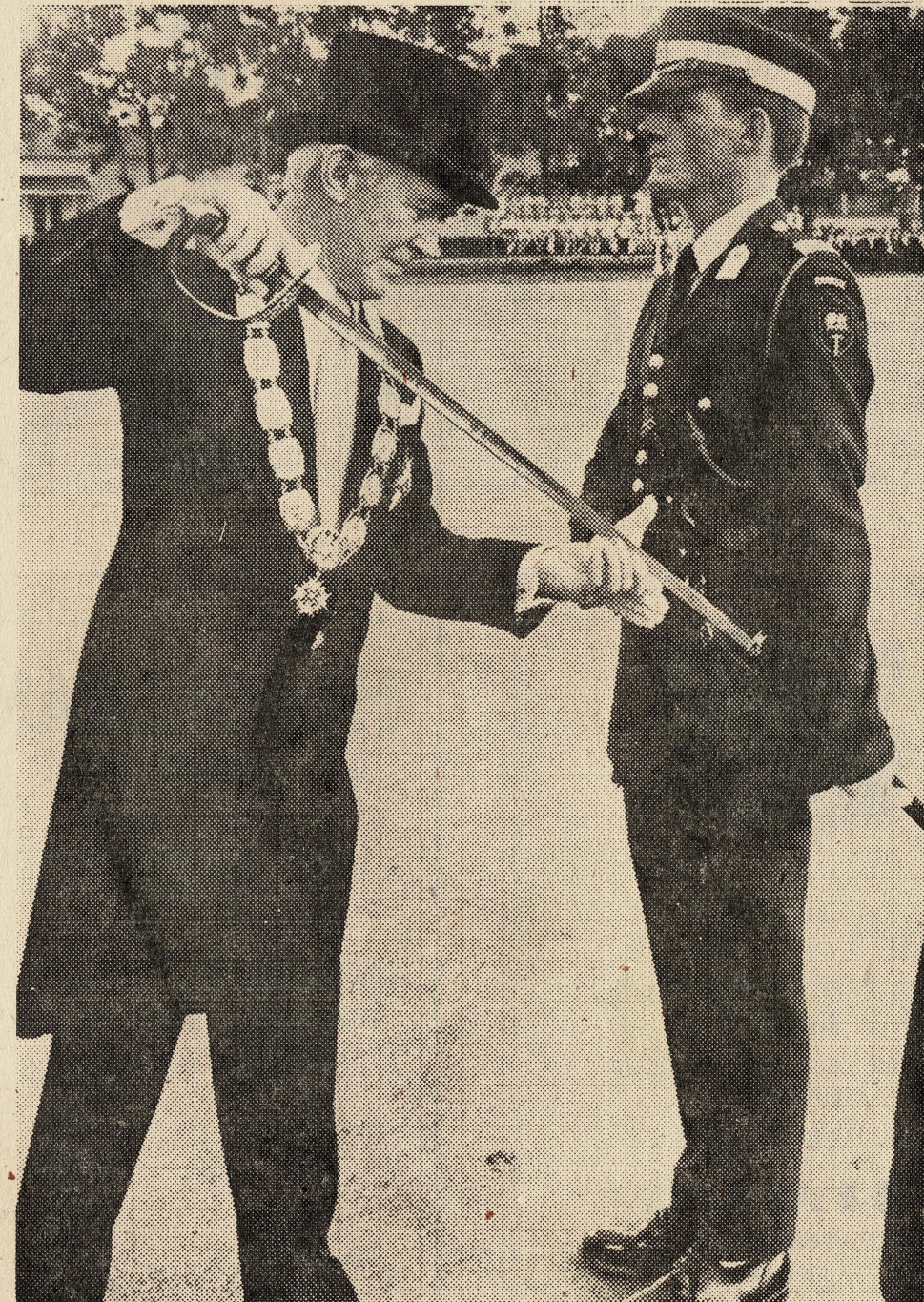
*Quinta do Lago Golf Club* 27-hole, in three nines. Part of a new 2,000 acre luxury resort estate by the sea.

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TAP 22

## REGULAR OFFICER CADETS' PASSING OUT PARADE: SCHOOL OF INFANTRY

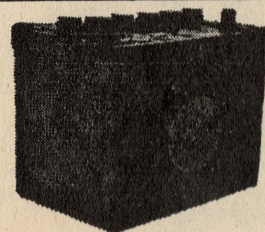


Officer Cadet Lawless receives the Sword of Honour from the President, the Hon. J. J. Wrathall, I.D. (Courtesy: Bulawayo Chronicle).

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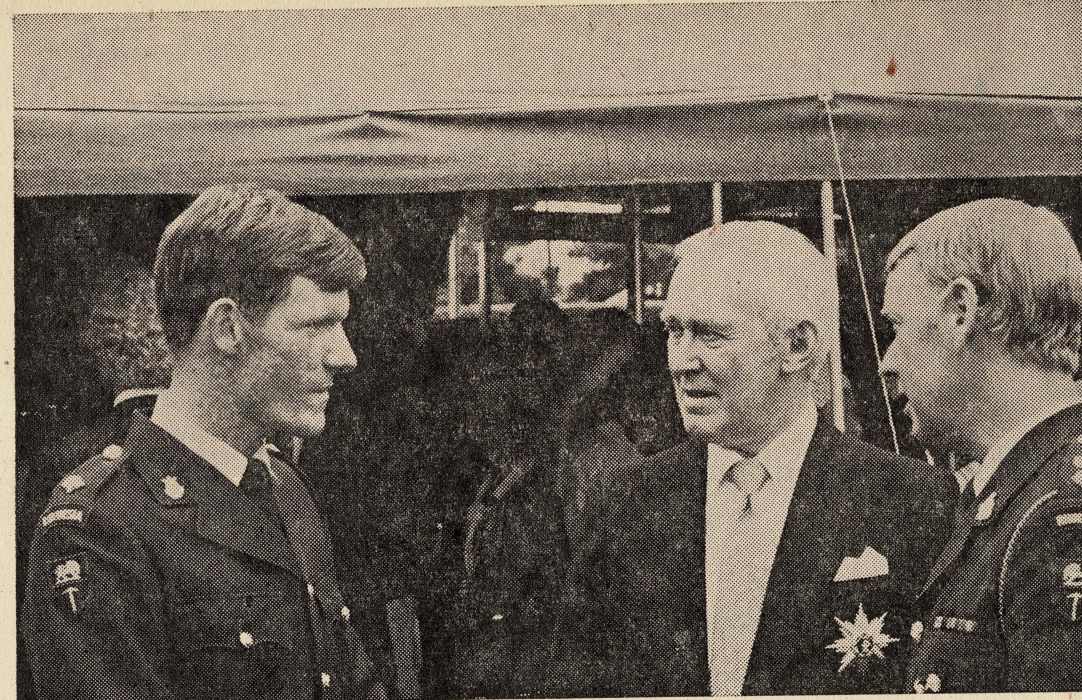
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Officer Cadet P. Lawless talks with the Hon. J. J. Wrathall, I.D., and Lt Col L. Jacobs, MLM, after the Passing Out Parade.

(Courtesy: Army Photographer).

Friday, 4th <sup>FEBRUARY</sup> ~~OCTOBER~~, 1977 marked the end of a year's training for ten officer cadets at the School of Infantry, Gwelo. A tough year no doubt but one which was amply rewarded at midnight when they wore the insignia of second lieutenants for the first time.

The Passing Out Parade was reviewed by the President The Honourable J. J. Wrathall, I.D., who was accompanied by the Minister of Defence, the Honourable R. E. G. Cowper, M.P., and the Commander of the Army, Lieutenant General G. P. Walls, OLM, ~~MBE~~, MBE.

On the parade which was <sup>led</sup> commanded by Maj Mick McKenna were six detachments of troops representing the Regiments and Corps to which the newly commissioned officers are to be posted. Music for the parade was provided by the Regimental Band of The Rhodesian African Rifles under the baton of Maj Ken Macdonald, DMM.

The officer cadets on parade were Pat Lawless, Simon Willar, Andy Telfer, Vernon Prinsloo, Mike Rich, Rich van Malsen, Bruce Thompson, Cyrille Fournier, Rich Blaylock and Graham Peak. Of the cadets only two were born Rhodesians while the majority were edu-

cated in the country. Two cadets have in fact followed military tradition as Simon Willar is the son of Col E. M. Willar (Retd.), and Mike Rich is the son of Lt Col Peter Rich, DMM, the present CO of 1 RLI.

One other cadet, Cyrille Fournier, also has military tradition behind him as his father is a retired Colonel of the French Army. Cyrille Fournier came to the School of Infantry via the St Cyr Military Academy which he left at his own request. Officer Cadet Pat Lawless could reasonably claim past association with the Army since he was for a time head boy of St. Steven's College, Balla Balla, which is now the home of Depot, The Rhodesian African Rifles.

The Sword of Honour for the cadet who has shown the most potential and the commander of the Army's award to the cadet with the highest academic results both went to Officer Cadet P. Lawless. Officer Cadet Lawless also became the first recipient of the Tactics Proficiency Trophy which is awarded to the student showing the highest tactical potential. This new award, a rose bowl, has been created by the Retired Officers' Association and is a floating trophy. The recipient of the Tactics Proficiency Trophy also receives a book on military history.

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In his address to the Officer Cadets, the President, The Honourable J. J. Wrathall, I.D., said:

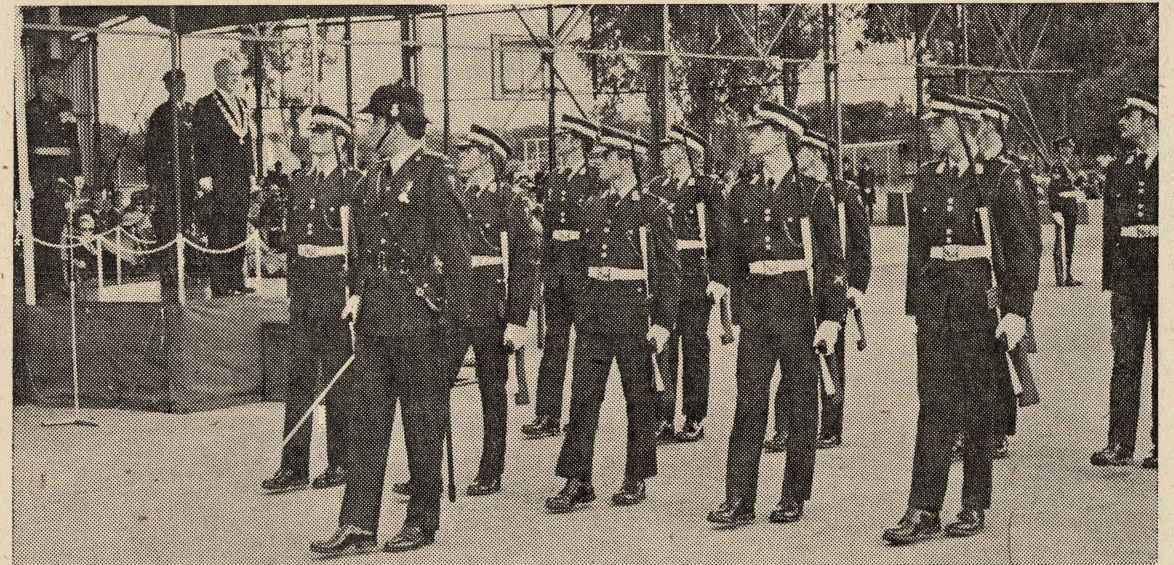
"It is to you young men who are on parade today for the last time as cadets that I wish to speak. You will march off this parade ground as officers in one of the finest small armies in the world.

Friend and foe alike agree that nowhere is there an Army to equal ours in the type of warfare in which we are presently engaged. Our friends admire us — our enemies hate us — both for the same reasons: competence, efficiency, and above all, complete dedication to our country, our comrades and our cause.

been a soldier who knows it all, but the successful ones are those who have, throughout their entire careers, never ceased to learn and train.

It is certain at this stage in our history that we are facing enormous changes. Just what form the changes will take we do not yet know, but however they may affect the Army it is as well to remember that rarely — if ever — have soldiering and politics made compatible travellers. The Rhodesian Army has always, quite properly, remained aloof from any involvement in politics. This I commend to you whole-heartedly.

On this day, one of the most important and memorable in your careers, it would be



Captain George Lambert-Porter leads the Officer Cadets past the Reviewing Officer.  
(Courtesy: Army Photographer).

You have chosen to make your careers in this Army. I envy you the life that lies ahead. It will be hard, at times frustrating, and also dangerous, but the rewards are great, and probably the greatest reward is the responsibility, honour and privilege of leading your men.

Your shoulders are yet young for this responsibility, but it is evident that you have been trained by this school to accept it. Those seventeen of your comrades who started the course with you but fell by the wayside in the twelve months that you have been here, show that the standards demanded of a young officer in Rhodesia's Army are high indeed. But let me remind you, you have as yet only put your foot on the bottom rung of the ladder, and the only way to climb that ladder is by constant learning and training. I doubt if there has ever

wrong if my whole address was devoted to admonition and advice. This day is the culmination of a year's intensive hard work, and you can congratulate yourselves on the fact that it has resulted in the proud position in which you find yourselves today. From now on, yours will be a life of interest and excitement, and I wish you all the greatest success in your chosen careers.

Good luck, and good hunting."

The newly commissioned second lieutenants have now departed to their regiments and corps: 2 Lt P. Lawless — 1 RAR; 2 Lt S. T. Willar — 1 RLI; 2 Lt A. T. Telfer — 2 RAR; 2 Lt V. A. Prinsloo — 1 RLI; 2 Lt M. A. Rich — 1 RLI; 2 Lt R. J. Malsen — 1 RLI; 2 Lt B. M. Thompson — 2 RAR; 2 Lt C. M. J. Fournier — 2 RAR; 2 Lt R. N. Blaylock — RhE and 2 Lt C. W. G. Peak — RhASC.

# The 10 most asked questions about the Army



## And haircuts?

Over the past two or three years, the rules have relaxed to the point that you don't stick out like a sore thumb when you're wearing civvies but you still look smart in uniform.

## How strict is the Army?

There is discipline, there is drill. But it's all designed to help you work as an efficient member of a team. When you're relying on your friends, and they're relying on you, there's no room for slackness or sloppiness. Funny thing about Army discipline, we haven't come across a single individual who can say that it hasn't stood him in good stead later on in life.



## What's it like in the operational area?

Tough, tiring and often dangerous. But the training you get beforehand is so thorough that you're capable of dealing with any situation that might arise.

## How tough is basic training?

Again, very tough, especially the first six weeks. But if you're reasonably fit, you shouldn't have too much trouble keeping-up. If you're not, the training will get you into shape. You'll probably feel better than you've ever felt before and have an appetite like a horse.

## What about bull?

There is now no unnecessary spit and polish. Of course, outside the operational area, we expect you to look smart and presentable. However it's nothing you can't handle. Once you get into the swing of things, kit cleaning takes only a few minutes each day.

## What about the time off?

There's plenty of free time, except when you're on ops. Usually, evenings and weekends are your own. And there's 49 days paid leave a year.

## Why is the Army still recruiting when there is such a wide-spread call-up?

The Army is an organisation that needs a nucleus of trained men to keep it at peak efficiency. The Army can't afford any gaps, so recruitment is an ongoing process to maintain the force the country needs. A team of professionals.

## Can I choose any Army job?

Yes, if you're good enough and if there's a vacancy. What we like to do is show you all our careers at a Recruitment Centre. This is a thorough process that helps us see where your talent lies. Together we'll spend some time in pinpointing the job you'll be a natural for.

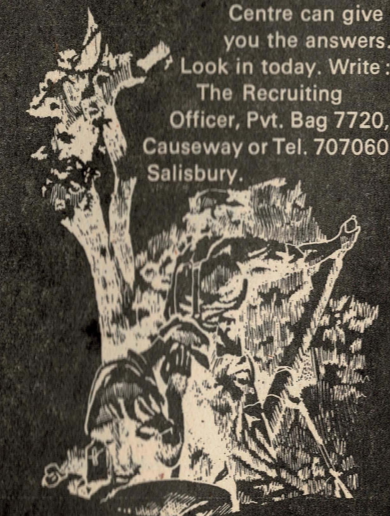
## Do I commit myself by going to an Army Recruitment Office?

Far from it. The office is there as a recruitment point. It's also there to supply you with all the information you need to help you decide if the Army's for you. And just because you might want to join, doesn't mean to say that the Army will take you on automatically. The standards are high because the demands of soldiering are tough.

## Is there much travel?

It's possible that your role could call for you to be in Bulawayo one day and the north-east or Kariba the next. Variety is the keynote and you'll travel to remote parts of the country where it's quite an event to see a European. Any other questions?

Your nearest Army Recruitment Centre can give you the answers. Look in today. Write: The Recruiting Officer, Pvt. Bag 7720, Causeway or Tel. 707060 Salisbury.



## SURPRISE PARTY

It has always been said that the good that you do for others always comes back to you. Readers will no doubt recall that the children of the Hopeland Trust Junior Training Centre in Eastlea made a donation to Army Welfare on 19th August, 1976.

On Saturday, 29th January, the members of the WOs' and Sgts' Mess, HQ 2 Brigade and several MOTHS flitted along to St. Catherine's to provide a surprise party.

Thirty-five children, all boarders at the centre, were given a bumper tea after which an Army Land-Rover arrived laden with gifts.

Helping to distribute the presents to the children were Flight Sergeant W. Reinbach and Sergeant C. Labuschagne.

A spokesman for the MOTH's said: "We were talking in the Mess about the way the children of St. Catherine's had tried to help the Army and the Terrorist Victims' Relief Fund, by saving up part of their pocket money each week. We thought this was a terrific gesture on their part and decided we'd like to give the children a party just to say "thank you".



Two of the "party springers" watch the "disappearing ice-cream trick" performed by Wayne Wasserman.

(Courtesy: Rhodesia Herald).

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# RETURN PARTY !!



Maj Steve Kruger and a member of 4 (Indep.) Coy RR recap on the local knowledge. (Courtesy: Bulawayo Chronicle)

In the present operations, Army units get around the country frequently and some are fortunate enough to include tourist centres in their itinerary.

4 (Independent) Company, The Rhodesia Regiment, commanded by Major Charles Piers was one of the lucky ones — they were stationed, for a period, at Victoria Falls. During their stay the members of the Company were inun-

dated by the kindness and co-operation of the local residents and businessmen.

Not to be outdone and in order to reciprocate the hospitality, the Company held a party for the residents of Victoria Falls at the Elephant Hills Country Club on the eve of their departure. No doubt the Company look forward to further tours in the area.



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The Meikles Southern Sun Hotels group has just released details of their hotel rates which are applicable to all members of the Regular Forces and those on continuous service. Naturally you will have to produce suitable identification to obtain these rates.

The rates cover personnel on duty and on holiday as well. No doubt the Golden Eagles will have a beady eye on all future T & S claims. While this discount offer is directly applied to the Regular Forces and those on continuous service, other categories of personnel can claim the same facilities when on duty.

**Southern Sun Hotel, Bulawayo:** \$6,00 per person bed and breakfast; Children under 18 accommodated free of charge.

**Elephant Hills Country Club, Victoria Falls:** 50% discount on accommodation on duty or holiday subject to availability of rooms.

**Wankie Safari Lodge:** \$2,00 bed and breakfast on duty; \$6,00 bed and breakfast on holiday.

**PRONTO'S PRAYERS**  
by L/CPL BELL, B. R. RhACR

**PRAYER 1**  
The Radio is our shepherd, we shall not want  
It maketh us to stay up all night  
And it leadeth us into deep sleep  
For our minds' sake.  
Yea, though we battle with the dipoles  
In the shadow of our commanding officer  
Yet we fear no major  
For the ionosphere is against us  
The weather and batteries  
And we prepare ourselves for these drawbacks.  
It annointeth our ears with its sitreps  
Our log books overflow.  
Surely, we have good comms  
And our callsigns will follow us  
All the camps of our life  
And we shall communicate with our callsigns  
Forever.

**PRAYER 2**  
Our C24, who art the greatest  
Hallowed by thy batteries  
Thy signals come, into our ops rooms  
At Boli, as they did at Mrewa.  
Give us each day our minimum deflection,  
And forgive us our mumbling  
As we forgive them who mumble against us.  
And lead us not into atmospherics  
But deliver us from jamming,  
For this is the medium wave  
With power and no distortion, for all callsigns  
Over.

**Lake View Inn, Kariba:** \$3,50 per person per room only — also open to wives and families visiting their husbands.

**Bumi Hills Safari Lodge:** 20% discount on accommodation.

**Caribbea Bay, Kariba:** No discount on accommodation, but Forces based at Kariba are not charged the entrance fee to use the facilities.

**Troutbeck Inn, Inyanga:** \$6,60 dinner, bed and breakfast on duty. 20% discount on room on holiday.

**Cecil Hotel, Umtali:** \$5,00 bed and breakfast on duty or holiday.

**Monomatapa, Salisbury:** \$6,00 per person per room only in shared twin. \$9,00 single.

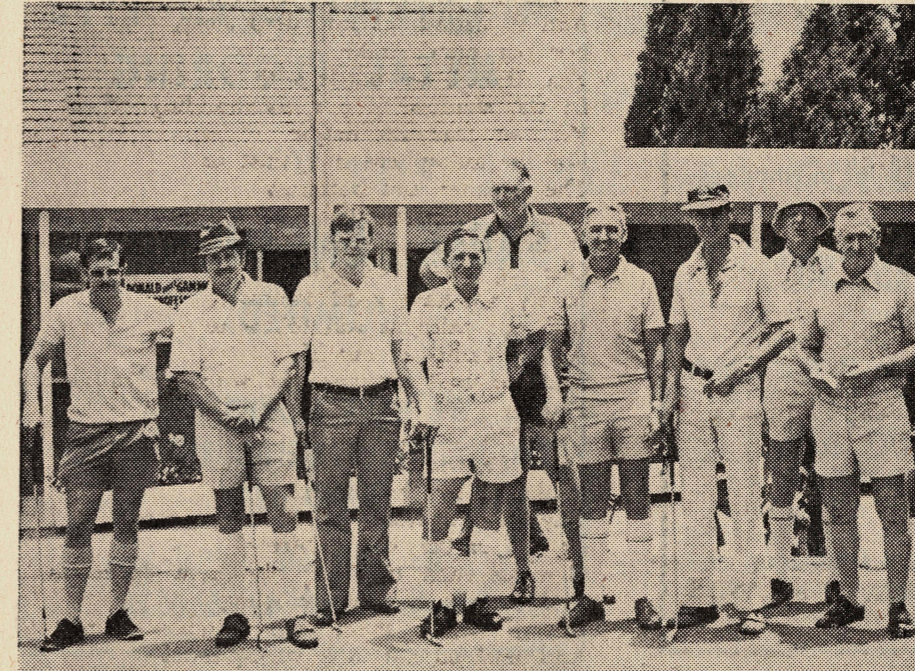
**Meikles Hotel, Salisbury:** 10% on accommodation.

**Midlands Hotel, Gwelo:** 10% on accommodation.

**Victoria Falls Hotel:** Free room when on duty in the area. \$6,00 Stay-A-While rate available for holidays on a minimum three night stay.

(Continued on Page 40)

# ARMY GOLF SCENE



So who's looking after the shop!

(Courtesy: Army Photographer)

by  
**CAPTAIN  
R. JONES**  
(Rhodesian Army)

Army Golf, over the last three years, has taken a back seat for the usual obvious reasons.

However, in 1975, I was contacted by Mr. Geoff Donaldson, of the Roads Department, who was interested in setting up a Bi-Annual Golf match, initially against HQ 2 Bde. This was arranged in May, 1975 and played at Salisbury South, possibly one of the finest courses in Rhodesia. This was won by the Army by a clear 22 points.

A further game was played at Wingate in October 1975, which was again won by the Army.

1976 was not a good year for golf as great difficulty was experienced in obtaining players, so consequently only one match was played. This took place at the BSAP Golf Club in May 1976 — we were beaten by 2 points.

This year, on 20th January, the first match was played at Henry Chapman, which is a Championship course and presently in superb condition. Again, twelve players were fielded by each side. It is worth mentioning at this point that the opposition were keen to field sixteen players, and this had been tried in October,

1975. It turned out to be unsuccessful due to many of our players being committed to a previous game against a somewhat larger field. Nevertheless, this year we had twelve players and these were played together in the following order:

Maj Burford	19	WO 1 Ross	11
Capt Haarhoff	9	Mr. H. Smith	24
WO 2 Hope	19	WO 2 Wilson	20
WO 2 Dippenaar	17	WO 2 Howden	24
Capt Treemeer	12	Maj Clark	16
Maj Hayes	12	Capt Jones	16

Again, the Army won with 216 points against 194. Overall winners were WO 2 Bob Hope and Mike Dippenaar with 39 points. Army results were fairly respectable with four teams winning, one drawn and one lost.

In conclusion should anyone have any spare toy soldiers, we should be pleased if they would donate four to go into the proposed trophy which will be a bull-dozer pushing a golf ball with a soldier at each corner. Any offers would be appreciated.

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# BULL FROM THE BUFFS

by

## THE SMALL SEA GULL

It was one of our better evenings in the Buffalo Drop Inn. The temperature was in the thirties, the humidity like Beira in November and the action at one end of the bar where Kobus, our Holdfast with a hereditary tilted cranium, was busy trying to convince an attractive sales rep., a school ma'am and a nursing sister that Director of Engineers needed their combined talents in the RWS. Translating direct from his mother tongue he said, "We'll get to mine laying later but let me tell you about the 122 rocket that I dug up with a bayonet . . ."

The brains were at the other end of the bar where our Sensor, Oliver Budd Esquire was surrounded by his planning group. Incidentally the "Esquire" is a title that Rose Budd insists on and doesn't refer to his gentlemanly qualities but to his apprenticeship as a ghost letter writer on a soft porn magazine. The other members were Ant Grace, our RIC commander, known to the Mess as Amazing Grace or Capt Marvel and his 2ic, Dave McDermott.

Capt Marvel had just finished taking old Rosey for four Oudemeesters on the dart board in very short order. McDermott had been unable to score accurately because of the sales rep's eye-filling neckline. Marvel said, "It's a dull pub," and Olly said, "Yes, it needs something to give it character. Of course I could write to my old editor and get a few of the rejects that weren't soft enough for the magazine but the boss doesn't like that sort of thing". McDermott, looking down the bar, breathed heavily and said with a vacant sort of expression, "What about a buffalo head for the wall?"

"Just what the DMS ordered — after his second pink gin," said Olly. "Too easy, we have a lad from National Parks," said Marvel, "and I seem to remember you Sensors have a fellow from the Museum. At any rate his ideas were fairly classed at antiquities by the Boss the other day." "Naughty title Marvel", said Olly, "thank goodness for your 2ic — yes one could present a buffalo head. Tell you what, my Sensors will pay for the taxidermy". The sales rep raised her eyebrows, lowered her neckline and said

in McDermott's general direction, "David darling, is taxidermy the cost of the fare to your pad?" "I can arrange a free conducted tour for you", replied Acorn minor, then to no one in particular, "Ant, we could pay for the mounting". And so it came about, as the good book says.

"Yes," said Olly, "it will come in handy for hanging things on". "Or we could have it on the cold buffet table with a paw-paw in it's mouth when the President next visits — very Rhodesian", said the Amazing Grace. Olly gave him a sideways look and said, "Splendid, Marvel, splendid. Knowing how the boss feels about his buffalo, I'd say that you do that and we will see Acorn nuts hanging from the horns at Christmas."

The sales rep shivered, Florence Nightingale looked horrified and said to Kobus in a small voice. "Your boss seemed different to me, he wouldn't?" "Got, never", said Kobus. "Jus, he's a nice chep". McDermott chipped in, "I'm not so sure, come Christmas I wouldn't be surprised if he didn't put a bit of mistletoe above the buff's head, ordered each RWS in turn to kiss it and then watched to see which one made it's glass eyes roll. Keen intellect the old man, always selects the right person for the job in hand whether it is golf, darts or secretarial duties." Rose Budd mumbled, "Come and see the spectacle of the century — Jaws versus a wild African buffalo."

During the pregnant silence the school ma'am accepted a fourth gin and tonic, much to Kobus' delight, and said, "What are you going to call him?" Kobus started, "Well, what about Johannus Jacobus after —" and was stopped by the look the lady normally reserved for small boys who put the tacks on teacher's chair. "What I meant was —" "No Kobus darling, I was referring to the buffalo and JJ would not be suitable for an animal reputed to be the most cunning and intelligent of all the wild game."

"We could call him Bradders after our last Chief Fuzz," said Olly, "Same sort of pugnacious look about him. Bradders Buffalo, lovely name."

Capt. Marvel had never met Bradders and was unimpressed. "What about Anthony after the founding father of Sensor and the greatest int. man in the game." "Another crack like that Marvel and we will flush you down the Royal Doulton," said Olly. "What a fate", said Ant, "To finish up in a sewer with nothing but Sensor's best ideas floating along beside me. Ugh, horrible. I'd rather be in the proverbial."

McDermott saw the danger warnings and for the sales rep's benefit, drawled in his sleepest voice, "The name can wait 'til we see him but we must have a party to present him to the Mess." The planning team brightened visibly and with a flush like a new blossom Rose Budd said, "Thank you, lad. Don't know what Marvel comes here for. A prime example of at least one Acorn who's brain is not made from the heart wood of England's oldest trees. Have the content of a Sally Donaldson brownie and tell me more."

McDermott the Intelligence, as his Welsh mother called him, shook his blond curls, winked at the sales rep and said, "I was thinking of something in pyjamas. A different sort of party . . ." She purred, "David doll, you'd be dishy in my see-through shorties".

"Sensational Sensor in See-thru Shorties Staggers from Cecil Session", said Olly, "I can see the headlines in the Umtali Post. No, it won't do. The old Buffalo himself would have a thrombie so we'd better think of something more original".

"What about a buffalo hanging party", said the Amazing mind, "Men to come in executioner outfits, girls as famous birds who lost their heads". The nursing sister cooed quietly, "Ideal for you Ant. If you wear a large mask, at least you could be a hit". "True, true", said Ant, "And if I come as MacBeth you could give authenticity to my outfit by coming as one of the witches". McDermott, ever the pacifier said, "It has real potential. Just imagine Kobus Pierpoint dancing with the boss's wife as Mary Queen of Scots and whispering in her shell-like earhole — Yoanna Queen of Scotch, jus, but I got a blerry hang-up on you". "Beautiful", said Olly, "and she replies — Kobus, you romantic flying dutchman, I smaak's your tender trap — then she drops him".

The teacher lady calmed Kobus and said, "But ladies in costume will boil in this place". "Yes, agreed," said Ant, "but we can put on the invites — Dress — Gents, casual as famous executioners, Ladies, prepare to lose your heads, wear a maximum of one bit of kit, others, come in anything that will clearly distinguish you from the Commander and the barman. All, bring your own Mumm since it's hot in our Mess". "Not your best Marvel," said Olly, "but we could get Peter Beck for the cabaret to help

any boiling bird by doing his undergarment removal trick". Dave indicated that he didn't think we needed Peter's help and changed the subject again, "What about guests?"

"Well, we need some locals", said Olly, "So top of the list has to be Bill Perkins in his butcher's apron with a notice on his back saying 'The Borgia's bought their beef at Bills!'" "How about Air Marshall Don Howard from PRAW," said Marvel, "After all the Commander is always saying — flew with Don again today and he kills me, etc." "Watch it Marvel," said Dave, "The boss and Don are mates. I should know. The boss sent me out the other day to buy a box of mint humbugs gift-wrapped for Don for Xmas".

"Wonder if the GOC will come," said Olly, "Should be a hot favourite for the guests' costume prize if he lives up to his old RLI nickname". Amazing Grace was in like flint. "It's not going to be a buffalo head on the wall. Oh yes, I can see it, Olly on a stink-wood plaque on the wall of Peter Johnson's reception room and a brass legend underneath saying — Sensor (large-mouthed variety), Axed by GPW, December 1976 — sorry, Olly but this is the sort of seditious stuff that has to go in the monthly return for Redfern's red book". "Marvel we are going to write a letter to your employer telling him that you are Jack the Kipper if we have any more of your third-rate imitations of Louella Parsons," said Olly.

Dave saved the day again, "How about the Freddie Commander from Machipanda and his ten wives as guests?" Kobus choked on his beer, went a deadly shade of pale and said, "Nie got! I don't mind him being a hanging decoration, but I promised my oude ma never to dance with a blackbird — Sus McDermott, acorns grows into twisted okes right enough". "He's got a point", said Olly, "Have the Fred CO there and even if we keep the bar open later than allowed at least we know we won't get a rocket. Nice what?" "Yes," said Amazing Grace, "in return for his promise to be a good lad and let us have our party in peace, we could promise to keep the RLI away from the Forbes Border Post, put his officers' mess out-of-bounds to the Selous Scouts when he is having his parties, send him one tin of bully per week to double the garrison rations and send a signal to FUMO to say, 'Nao faz mal Machipanda Fred — he's muntu bon — — pois'."

There was lots more of the same but it was an idea and believe it or not there is going to be a buffalo-hanging party some time in February. With a bit of luck, between rockets and provided I'm not hung by the boss before then we'll let you know how it went. Chao for now . . .



*Weapons and flags from the past history of Rhodesia's Armed Forces which are housed at the Midlands Museum, Gwelo.*

(Courtesy: Army Photographer)

## **THE HISTORY OF THE ARMY MUSEUM COLLECTION**

by MAJOR R. J. DAVIE, Rhodesian Army

Rhodesia has a proud military history. From the hardy Pioneer soldiers who opened up the country and won the battles of Shangani and Bembezi; the heroes who died with Allan Wilson; the volunteers of the Grey Scouts who fought at Umgusa, in the Matopos strongholds and at Thabas Imamba; the heroes of the Mazoe Patrol; the volunteers of the First World War who fought in the deserts of South West Africa, the forests of German East and in the mud Flanders; the soldiers, white and black, who fought all over the world during the Second World War, right up to the soldiers who are fighting the terrorists so bravely today, the Rhodesian soldier has, proved his courage toughness, and initiative in battle. The Rhodesian soldier is a formidable fighting man. It is fitting that the relics of this proud history should be preserved as a reminder and perhaps an inspiration to young Rhodesian fighting men.

Captain Leon Jacobs originated the idea of establishing a military museum at the School of Infantry in 1963. He discussed the idea with the Commandant, Lt Col K. R. Coster, who gave the proposal his full support. In the words of Lt Col Jacobs, "we then made it known that we wanted items for the museum and started collecting from the staff and local contributors. I went on a training tour of the Federation and continued scrounging.

Subsequently I negotiated with Army Headquarters and was authorised by the Quartermaster General to select any number of weapons from the the stocks at Central Ordnance and Supply Depot. The museum was originally housed in Regimental Wing."

On 8th May, 1964, Lt Col G. A. D. Rawlins formed a committee to investigate the details of the proposed Small Arms Museum. It was decided that the very fine collection of weapons would be displayed in the room which now houses the Reference Library. A request was submitted to Army Headquarters for £27.7s.6d. for materials to secure the room and renovate it. On 9th September, 1964, Lt D. I. Pullar, the Museum Officer, requested an additional £11.0s.4d. to secure the weapons to the walls. Much good work was done by Sgt Owen Hemsley, the armourer, who mounted all the weapons. The museum owes much to his hard work and enthusiasm. Surplus weapons were offered to other units. A fine Small Arms museum was established; a letter was written to Assegai asking for an appeal for weapons, equipment and photographs to be published; the BSA Police were asked to donate various small arms seized in illegal possession, and so the collection grew.

An approach was made to the Imperial War Museum and School of Infantry, Warminster,

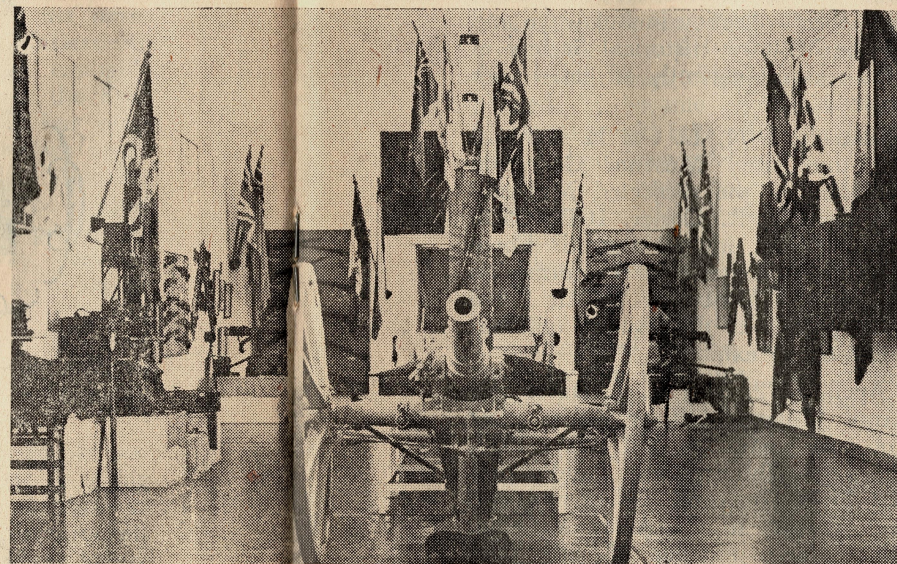


*Militaria which includes flags, maps, weapons ancient and modern are the envy of many collectors.*

(Courtesy: Army Photographer).

*View of the Boggie Memorial Hall which greets the visitor on arrival.*

(Courtesy: Army Photographer)



for certain weapons. A Maxim feed block and some rifles were received, but after 11th November, 1965, the British Board of Trade refused to grant an export licence "until conditions improve". Various weapons destined for the museum are still held in Rhodesia House.

In March, 1966, the weapons collection was taken to Bulawayo and exhibited at the Central Africa Trade Fair. The Army Stand won first prize. Perhaps in gratitude, Headquarters 1 Bde donated £10 from their "Show Vote", for display stands, and asked Army HQ for an annual museum grant of £100. This was considered excessive and the magnificent sum of £30 per annum was allocated to the museum from Government Funds. On their return from the Trade Fair the weapons were placed in the Armoury, the room in which the collection had been housed became the Reference Library and the embryo museum temporarily ceased to exist.

On 11th September, 1966, Lt Col R. Wilson appointed Capt R. J. Davie as the new Museum Officer. This officer was handed a small collection of loose maps, some documents, a Siege of Mafeking Banner taken from a "boxes, tin barrack" and fired with enthusiasm, went down to the armoury to check his collection of "museum pieces" against the ledger. The work of identifying and labelling the jumble of dusty, cobwebbed rifles took the now disillusioned museum officer the best part of two days. Then off to the Engineer Yard to view the weapon display stands, reputedly stored there for "safe-keeping" after the Show. Disillusionment deepened. The rifle boards were all scratched and the display stands resembled nothing other than matchwood.

However, still harbouring some hope, the new museum officer went to see the building which had been allocated to the museum. What a sight it was! It had been the old unit L.A.D. The floor was covered in rubbish, grease and old oil rags. The ceiling had fallen in and the brandering could be seen; the electrics had been ripped out and a gaping pit in the middle of the floor looked like the entrance to an ancient dungeon. A quick check with the Engineers revealed that the annual museum grant of £30 would pay for paint for the walls and one padlock complete with key!

However, due to the devious acquisition of a few hundred pounds from some obscure vote, hard work by the armourer, S/Sgt Blackshaw and the carpenter, Mr. Whincup, and generous help from those friends of distraught army officers, the PWD, the new museum was completely renovated inside and out. The walls were scraped down and replastered, a new ceiling was fitted,

some windows were blocked up to make more display space, burglar bars and even fluorescent lights were fitted. Attempts by desperate Cadet Wing officers to take over the pristine new building for a lecture room were successfully resisted and the weapons on their stands were moved in. The museum re-opened in October, 1967.

The collection and the displays continued to expand and improve. A Vickers machine-gun was obtained from Army HQ, and a German light Maxim was found in a garage in Lundi Park, and weapons, documents, equipment, old photographs, badges, buttons, flags, uniforms and maps were presented by many benefactors. Old cardboard cartons would be dumped in the Adjutant's office and the Museum Officer would examine his new treasures like an old rag and bone merchant. Each item conjured up some part of Rhodesia's military history. The Umtali Advertiser of 1894 announcing the massacre of Allan Wilson's band "who died very hard" and fought to the end, the ration scales of the Bulawayo Field Force, 1896, dental equipment from the Anglo-Boer War 1899-1902; the diary of an officer in the Rhodesia Regiment in German East Africa 1916; the Mad Mullah's Lebel Rifle captured in 1920 by the King's African Rifles; a Staghound armoured car, a Bren gun carrier saved from destruction on the anti-tank ranges, maps of El Alemein, Beurat, Wadi Akarit, Mareth and Medenine marked up in Eighth Army Main Headquarters by Maj R. E. B. Long during the battles, with names to conjure up images of the bare desert, moonlight, men and tanks moving forward to victory and their own destinies; "Star Track", "Moon Track", "Tenth Armoured Division Staging Area", an Italian officer's banner captured by the Rhodesian Anti-Tank Battery in Cyrenaica, Signals from the Italian Campaign; "The 8th Army will pause to re-group and put its administration in order. Only light forces will be pushed forward to link up with the 5th U.S. Army in the Salerno area"; the badge of a Kenya Regiment soldier trained at KG VI Barracks for the Mau Mau Campaign; maps of Malaya presented by Maj Genl G. A. D. Rawlins with the legend marked on it, "C Coy 1 RAR Permanent Base;" Communist weapons captured by 5 Commando in Stanleyville after the Congo debacle; the Thompson machine-gun used by terrorists in the attack on Dube Ranch, Tuli Block in 1965; terrorist weapons and uniforms captured in Operations Nickel, Cauldron and Hurricane; the exhibits all represent some part of Rhodesia's military history.

The collection was expanded continually. Letters were written to all the District Commissioners in Rhodesia in an effort to obtain

tribal battle regalia, assegais and knobkerries. Articles were published in the Press. Old soldiers and serving soldiers were badgered for their relics. Army HQ and Service Corps were very helpful. However, some incidents were amusing. It took fifteen months to obtain permission for a "Lamp Signalling Electric Daylight Mark II 1918" to be struck off charge from the School of Infantry Unit Equipment Tables. And some exhibits have a story all of their own, like the AKS carbine captured during the Suez Crisis 1956; and the .500-inch Browning heavy machine-gun taken from a UNIP supporter on his way into Northern Rhodesia from Katanga with 2000 rounds of ammunition; a 17-pounder battalion anti-tank gun which arrived dismantled; the crudely made 3-inch mortar which used to flank the entrance to a remote police station; the home-made "Mau Mau" rifle and the map of "Laagers and Rallying Points Midlands Province 1927".

In March, 1970 the Museum Officer submitted a paper on "The Development of the Army Museum" for consideration at the GOC's Conference. An Army Museum Committee was established. Units were asked to contribute their regimental museum collections. The BSA Police and the Rhodesian Air Force were invited to combine their collections to form a truly representative National War Museum.

As a result of this proposal, the Corps of Signals and the Rhodesian Light Infantry very generously donated their collection to the Army Museum. It had been hoped that the Rhodesia Regiment and the Southern Rhodesia Artillery collections would also be donated. However, 2 RR decided to keep their collection in Bulawayo and donated it to the Military Historical Society of Rhodesia which was subsequently affiliated with the Army Museum.

On 11th January, 1971, Lt Col H. Barnard proposed that the Army Museum Collection should be exhibited in the projected Midlands Museum. Maj Gen K. R. Coster, ICD, OBE, approved this idea and invited the Air Force and BSA Police to participate in the formation of a National Services Museum. The Air Force agreed to take part, but the Police, unfortunately, had nothing to exhibit.

On 12th April, 1972, Maj R. J. Davie was appointed Army Museum Officer again, after an absence of two years. On 3rd May, 1972, the Rhodesian Light Infantry very kindly presented a 1902 Field Gun and limber and two German heavy mortars to the Army Museum, together with a large number of rifles and carbines. Headquarters 3 Brigade donated the two DD gun barrels which had flanked the dias on the KG VI Barrack Square. On 6th Feb-



Display of Army vehicles and guns.

(Courtesy: Army Photographer).

ruary, 1973, the School of Signals moved their collection to Gwelo to be incorporated in the Army Museum.

Early in 1973 Dr. Reay Smithers, the Director of National Museums, visited the School of Infantry to see the collection. He expressed great interest in the exhibits and admiration for the work done. The "amateurs" were very pleased! It became obvious that the National Museums would take over the Midlands Museum once it had been established. This was welcome news as it meant that the exhibits would be professionally catalogued, displayed and preserved.

Late in 1973 the Midlands Museum was completed and the Army Museum Officer was given two weeks to move the Army Museum Collection into the new buildings. It was hard work. The armoured vehicles and the guns were towed down by the mechanics and mounted on their stands by the Sappers. A team of Regimental Wing instructors helped the Army Museum Officer to complete the interior displays. WO 2 Blackshaw came down from Salisbury to design displays and mount the weapons on new display boards. Mr. Whincup did all the carpentry work, re-built the field gun and limber wheels and made more display stands and cabinets. The photograph display racks were mounted on

the wall and the flags of Rhodesia, the Army and the Regiments were also hung on the walls.

On 24th January, 1974, the Midlands Museum was officially opened by the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. Lance Smith. The Chief of Staff, Maj Gen G. A. D. Rawlins opened the Boggie Memorial Hall in which the Army Museum Collection is displayed. The collection had at last found a permanent home.

The Midlands Museum subsequently became one of the National Museums of Rhodesia. New exhibition halls were built to house the Pioneer Collection and the Air Force Collection. Mr. R. W. S. Rees was appointed Curator. He was a tank troop commander during the Second World War and had been Curator of the Sandhurst Museum. The Army Museum Collection could not be in better hands. The "amateur" looks forward to the day when he can see the results of professional display of the relics of Rhodesia's military history.

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# DEPOT DIARY

Firstly I must ask that you print a correction with my apologies to Ivan Gregan who, on a brief visit, accused me of "snying" him out of a year. He was 14 years at DRR.

On a recent visit by air to "A" Coy on exercise, I was met at the airfield by an ambulance. I know that very occasionally an ambulance is needed at the conclusion of the flight, but I don't consider it really tactful to send one before it is requested. Their story was that it was the most convenient vehicle. Not an assessment on the abilities of the sky-pilot.

Maj Micklesfield, 2IC, Lt Seiler, Admin. Officer, RWS Miss Head as Chief Clerk and Mrs. Julie van Gelder, are all adding their part of "Cheerful Efficiency" to DRR HQ.

### DEPOT HOSPITAL

Vast changes have been taking place in and around the Depot Hospital in the past few months. We said farewell to Mr. Beach, who took up a holiday posting to Tsanga Lodge. WO 2 McGrath, his successor, could not take the pace and after only a couple of weeks, left for recuperation at Brady Barracks. Sad farewells were said to Major Davie and Major Griffiths. Major Davie, who at the moment is on a well earned two months holiday, will be taking up a posting in Salisbury. Maj Griffiths is unpredictable, no one knows what he is going to do. Mrs. Foulkes left us to be with her husband in Wankie. Mrs. Dodds arrived to take her place and has settled down very well. Julie van Gelder said "Cheers" and suddenly left to work at the CO's office. Mrs. Radford filled the gap there. We welcomed WO 2 Loots, having completed his stint at Brady to take up the position as Wardmaster. Look out for him in the mornings as he comes speeding past in his new 1963 Mini.

Now to the doctors — Capt Uprichard was welcomed to the hospital as our new SMO; to assist him with all his problems he has Capt Wright and Capt Osburn. We all hope that their stay here will be enjoyable.

RAR are now under the control of Capt

Davey and Capt Munroe. Let's hope they also enjoy their stay.

The regular faces of WO 2 Barker, Sister Burns and Sister McGrath, can still be found in the tea room . . .

### LT WING

Best of luck to our wandering OC, who is presently attending a Training Officers' course at the infamous "College of Knowledge". Who knows? With a bit of luck he'll now know where to sign the training programme.

WO 2 Eigner, our Wing CSM, has been frantically trying to prepare for our new Intake 155 coming in early February. Between "bandits", precis, water points and selection boards (not to mention the "enthusiastic" help from the staff), things are finally starting to take shape. Stand by, Sir, there are two more intakes right behind.

After a gallant attempt at the annual PT test, Sgt Rob Newbold was, shall we say, indisposed for the next week. Better luck next time, old boy.

To our newcomer and newly promoted member, Cpl De Jesus, we wish a long and happy stay at LT Wing. Rumour has it that we will soon be losing Cpl Goatly to Varsity. He has been lurking in a corner of LT for the past few weeks hoping for word about early release. Our fearless RWS has taken over his job in anticipation (hunt-peck-hunt-peck).

To our 154 Intake who left us not so long ago, we hope you're settling in well in the Op area. Word has also come from the bush that our 153 Intake NCOs are working out quite well.

Maybe we're doing our job after all, huh?

### C COMPANY

After a tough six weeks, Intake 155 got their first pass after CO's Inspection. The entire Coy got a scare recently at Woolendale range when they couldn't find a machine-gun. After a frantic search someone discovered the missing weapon was safely back at Llewelin Barracks and had never been signed for.

Veteran flyer/Padre Wally Beale, touched down at Woolendale for some soul-saving and qualified on the machine-gun before lifting off. Lt Graham Des Fountain joins "C" Coy as Training Officer after serving as Training Officer for RDU at Inkomo Garrison. He brings with him a large aquarium, two daughters, and a wife, Jenny. "C" Coy has lost the administrative talents of Mrs. Pat Radford, who is now serving Depot Hospital. RWS Miss Elaine Smith has taken over the full duties as Company Clerk and Typist. Through demobilisation "C" Coy has also lost the services of Sgt Clements, M. R., Sgt Botha, W., Cpl Burnett, B. L., Cpl Dixon, I., Cpl Godfrey, A. B., and Cpl Rodrigues, L. P. To replace them, "C" Coy welcomes Sgt Crawford, J. M., Cpl Prior, G. J., Cpl van der Westhuizen and Cpl Golsworthy, M. G.

Intake 155 is training hard for its Classical War stage.

Heard in the grapevine:

Sgt Bullivant is upset that the QM Stores doesn't hold enough Staff Corps buttons for greens.

Sgt Piert, after his drying-out period, wants a posting to Quote "Donkeys Brigade" Unquote. C Sgt Mullens has returned to the fold from the Blue Jobs and now has his feet permanently planted on the ground.

Lt Smith wants a holiday in the RSA. Capt Hickman's new orderly room is nearly completed.

One of the troopies wants to know how to carry 32 Zulus by himself . . .

Will the whole world stop picking on the OC, especially over lunch hours.

Miss Smith is embarrassed by the size of some trainees feet.

### HQ COMPANY

HQ Company, being under pressure with all the Intakes and a spate of recent downgrades, haven't really had the time to compile Assegai notes. We say "Cheers" to the 155 Squad, who are in the throes of leaving us on postings to other units. Whilst we say cheers to them in one breath, we welcome a certain amount of late arrivals recently downgraded from B Coy in the next. As HQ Coy welcomes them, so we prepare for the 157s who arrive very shortly. Also leaving us in the next day or two will be the Guard Force whom we feel sure will be pleased after climbing towers like they're going out of fashion the last month.

Congratulations to WO 1 Barkley on his marriage and also to Sgt Thomas, both from DRR MT.

## "A Man Among Men"

# PROFILE

Lt. Col. N. WOOD

by

HEATHER JARVIS



# EDUCATION

- EDUCATIONAL**  
Gen. Cert. of Education  
AEB 'O' and 'A' Levels  
Matriculation  
Rhod. External J.C., etc.
- COMMERCE**  
Accountancy/Advert  
Auditing/Bookkeeping  
Business Management  
Business Training  
Costing/Marketing  
Salesmanship  
Secretarial/Shorthand  
Storekeepers  
Typewriting, etc.
- INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNICAL**  
Air Conditioning  
Architecture/Building  
Carpentry/Chemistry  
Chemical Engineering  
Civil Engineering  
Clerk of Works  
Diesel Engineering  
Domestic Appliances  
Draughtsmanship  
(All branches)  
Electronics  
Electrical Engineering  
Fire Engineering  
Foremanship  
Instrumentation  
Maintenance  
Engineering  
Management  
(All branches)  
Mathematics/  
Metallurgy  
Mechanical  
Engineering
- Motor Engineering  
Paper Making  
Petroleum Technology  
Practical Radio  
(With Kits)  
Production Engineering  
Quantity Surveying  
Radio Eng./Television  
Refrigeration/Textiles  
Reinforced Concrete  
Structural Engineering  
Telecommunication  
Engineering  
Welding  
Work Study, etc.
- GENERAL**  
Commercial Art  
Journalism  
Painting/Photography  
Quality Control  
Short Story Writing  
TV Script Writing, etc.
- PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATIONS**  
Marketing:  
CAM Foundation,  
1.Mkt.M., etc.  
Building:  
I.Q.S., R.I.C.S., etc.  
Commercial:  
A.C.A., C.I.S., I.A.C.,  
I.C.M.A., I.Cert.B., etc.  
Electrical: C. & G., S.E.,  
Wiremen's Cert., etc.  
Management: A.S.M.C.,  
C.I.T., I.W.M., R.I.M.,  
I.P.S., I.P.W.S.O.M.,  
S.A.I.M., etc.  
Radio: C. & G.,  
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#### INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

"It was while I was at Fort Victoria that I had a tremendous desire to become involved with the forces in some way," says the Reverend Norman Wood, who at the age of 37 became Rhodesia's and possibly the world's youngest Chaplain General.

Born in Scotland in 1935, Norman Wood came out to Rhodesia with his family four years later and spent a year in Umtali before coming to Salisbury. Educated at Selborne Routledge and Prince Edward, Norman originally wanted to become a farmer but his father persuaded him to serve a term of apprenticeship first, and he chose to train as an electrician. The turning point in his life came, however, when as a teenager he attended church for the first time on the death of his uncle. Impressed by the preaching of the young Andrew van den Aardweg, and through personal conviction, Norman became a Christian. His fellow electricians and journeymen gave him six months to get over "this Christian business", but 21 years later, the Reverend Wood still has his faith and a determination to share it.

As Chaplain General to the Forces, Norman can look back on a wide range of training and experience. Two years at Bible College in Kalk Bay, South Africa, where he met his wife, Maureen, were followed by a period of practical service with the Coloured people of the Cape and then a return to college in Johannesburg.

Here, Norman Wood became a youth pastor for the Rev. Jack Gardner, and was later considering accepting service in the Baptist ministry at Port Elizabeth or Springs when, "out of the blue", he was called to Fort Victoria.

Arriving back in Rhodesia in 1965, the Rev. Wood soon found that his interest lay with the serving men and he applied to the then Chaplain General, the Rev. Bryce Nisbet. In 1967 he began his chaplaincy "travelling 4th class" and was stationed in Salisbury where he was responsible for 2 Brigade. In August of the same year he saw the beginning of the first terrorist incursions, the start of Operation Nickel and the death of the first young Rhodesian.

Norman then spent two years with "all the little wasters" of the R.L.I. and came to "love

these chaps with all their problems and hang-ups", before he moved to Llewelin Barracks. Here he found young National Servicemen facing the traumatic transitional period between school and the army, but they soon "learnt how to get into trouble and how to give me a hard time."

The young men of Rhodesia have, however, never been a problem as far as the Rev. Wood is concerned. Although attendance during the Padre's hour at R.L.I. was compulsory, Norman Wood made the meeting as informal as possible, and he himself was often "put on the carpet" at a variety of spirited discussions. Norman also found it useful to visit the forward areas where, mixing freely with the men at base camps, he learnt "an awful lot from them" and hopes that they gained something of value from his visits, too.

The duties of a chaplain are arduous but thrilling and identification with the men at all levels is essential. For this reason, the Rev. Wood underwent a period of training and gained his parachutist's badge after making nine jumps with the S.A.S. Norman believes in the value of communication through sport as well, and he still plays squash and golf. He also vehemently denies all rumours about himself being the "dirtiest rugby player" in the game, asserting that he may have hit two or three opponents but never one in his time!

He knows something of the tough life though, as taking one's chances with the men in the bush is part of a chaplain's lot. On one occasion a colleague had been particularly fortunate when two different trucks in which he should have been travelling had struck landmines only after he had disembarked from them, and as a result the Rev. Wood found everyone keen to "travel with the parson" in future. Christians, he maintains, are not exempt from the hazards or horrors of life, but because of their faith they are never alone in any situation. There have been miraculous escapes by members of the security forces and the personal sacrifice and dedication of some Rhodesians has shown "tremendous faith being put into action".

The doubts remain for some, however, and "What are we fighting for?" is an urgent and recurring question still asked of the Chaplain General, who sees personal freedom and the prevention of aethesism as a large part of the answer. He feels that many terrorists, who are given false promises of individual betterment are pawns in this sinister and insidious battle, and he contends that most of the world's chess players come from Russia.

A man with outspoken and clear-cut beliefs, the Chaplain General has been criticised by some troops for his opposition to the staging of

strip shows in the forward areas, but he insists that he has never found "any morale improvement in a soldier after this type of booster". He opposes, too, literature which, claiming to artistically release tensions, serves only to create added frustrations.

Wives, in fact, are the greatest morale boosters of all, and the Rev. Wood recommends the sending of family letters, which should be both positive and cheerful in approach, to the serving men as this not only makes them more effective in their tasks, but also ensures that they are less of a liability to themselves and to those around them. Children should write too, and the Chaplain General considers the family reunion scene that has formed part of the national pledge programme to be particularly inspiring.

Often concerned with the personal problems of others, the Rev. Wood is an advocate of humour in love as in war, and he is enthusiastic about the provision of cartoon books and comedy shows for the troops. On the individual level he admits that he has occasionally had a light-hearted slip of the tongue at some of the numerous wedding services which he performs and that once, when dressed as a civilian, he informed an engaged and outraged air hostess that he would be prepared to wed her because "I do marry a different girl every week, you know."

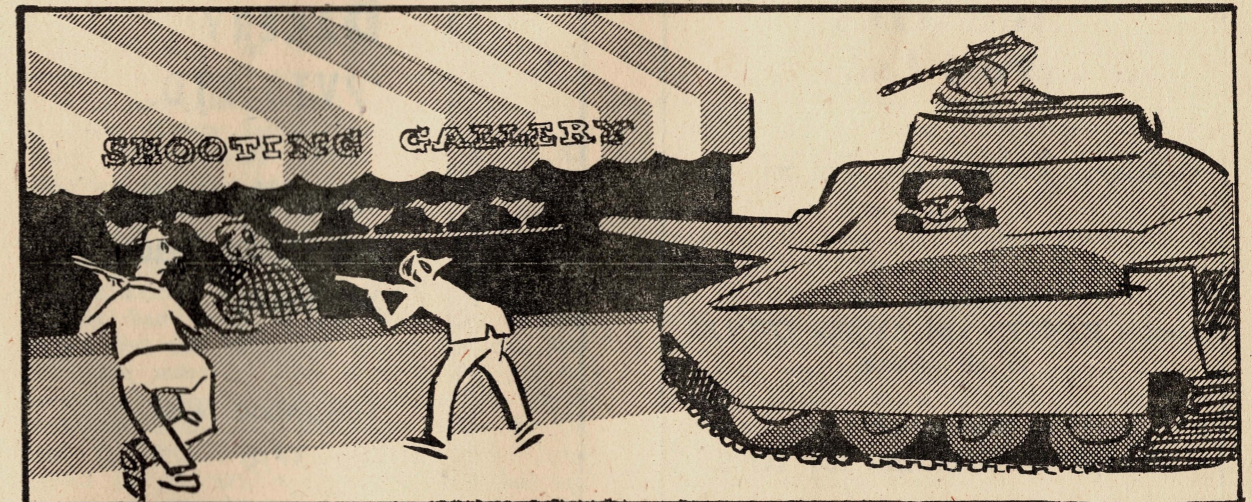
There are times though, when even the Chaplain General feels the pressures of his work and fairly recently there was an opportunity for him to move to South Africa, but the armed forces here need him and insisted that he continue in office, which he is quite prepared to do for the foreseeable future. His influential position may have its advantages, but his primary objective has always been to "include the Christian message among the guns and the bullets", and he remains a very active man. Some of his less pleasant duties include the personal delivery of tragic news to Rhodesian families.

As he enters his tenth year of army service the Chaplain General, who is ably supported by a "tremendous" five-man team of chaplains, believes that only national humility and the breaking down of prejudices on the widest possible scale will bring a solution to the present problems, and he thinks that the inclusion of a minister of religion in the Government's Geneva team is especially desirable. The long-standing racial goodwill which exists in the army encourages him, as do the many Rhodesian soldiers and airmen, who may not be so interested in ecclesiastical matters but who take a real interest in the presentation of Christ by a Chaplain General who is himself a "man among men."

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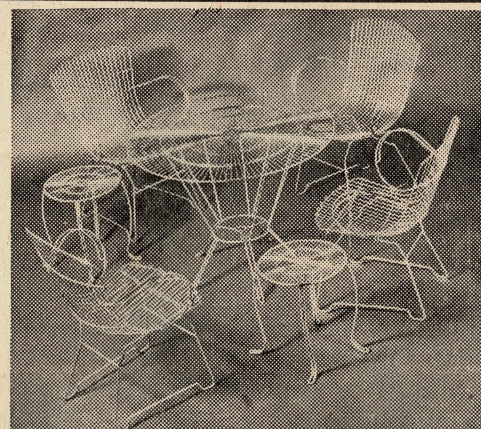
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# BATTLE OF THE ARDENNES (PART 2)

by

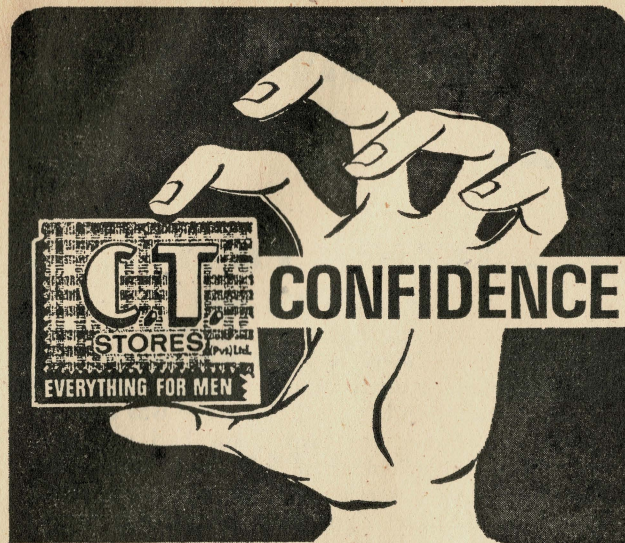
LT P. G. BOTHAM (Rhodesian Army)

In the north the 6th Panzer army surged forward in three armoured columns under artificial moonlight provided by searchlights being bounced off low lying cloud, with the elite Hitler Youth and Hitler Bodyguard SS armoured divisions bringing up the rear. High hopes were held out for these two, the apples of Hitler's eye. Included in the 6th were Skorzeny's men who were to go ahead of the army as soon as the opposing 99th U.S. infantry division had been broken, seize the Meuse bridges for the following, slower Panzers, and make the most of their time in waiting by disrupting American communications. As everywhere, the attack took Americans facing the 6th Army by surprise, even though they had been alerted by the artillery barrage. The last intelligence report had stated that the Germans had two horse-drawn guns opposite the 99th's position; after an hour's intense bombardment one officer commented, "They sure worked those horses to death." Even when the first of the German infantry came storming through the woods it was assumed to be a diversionary attack to counter the pressure on the Roer Dams, and it took some time to realise that the entire 19 mile divisional front was under attack. But the allies, though few in number here, had the ground and their prepared positions in their favour and German commanders were soon calling for reinforcements — of which there were none; however, they did get increased artillery support and were able to force back the defenders a little. Both sides suffered heavy casualties in a day's bitter fighting, but by evening the front, though dangerously weakened, still held. The 99th, inexperienced though they were, acquitted themselves well along the length of their line, fighting like veterans; before the battle was over, two battalions gained Presidential citations and the numerous individual awards included the rare medal of honour, the highest American decoration. On the German side, never renowned for handing out decorations lightly, high command was to run out of medals before the offensive was over, and to resort — not very successfully — to giving instead signed photographs of the army commander.

Despite the efforts of the German infantry the 99th weren't swept away as envisaged, and the German armour could neither help nor break through, and time at this stage was critical. What was worse, the Americans had managed to retain control of their left flank where the Germans had intended to set up their flank guard, so that the right flank of the 6th Army, even should it break through, would be vulnerable to attack. The Germans could hardly have tried harder; inexperienced though they were the Volksgrenadiers had tried to storm fixed American positions, and kept coming even in the face of point blank machine gun fire which decimated them; it wasn't enough, even though in at least three recorded cases the Germans got close enough to achieve the "impossible", falling into the enemies trenches. In the South the German attack met with even less success and the 7th Army failed to reach any of its allotted objectives. Once again, time had been lost which could never be regained and the left flank of the offensive, like the right, was unsecured.

Thus one of the primary aims, the solidifying of the flanks, was not achieved; at least as important to the invaders was that they control the road network — in the difficult terrain of the Ardennes the tanks needed the best roads they could get; the only alternatives, narrow tracks, were difficult enough in dry weather, and the breakdown of any one vehicle would block a track completely. Accordingly, the four road centres in the area — Malmedy, St. Vith, Houffalize and Bastogne — had to be taken. An additional prize would be the neighbouring American fuel dumps, including one of three million gallons, the largest in Europe. Petrol, Germany did not have in 1944, and much of the success of the plan depended on using supplies which the Americans would be forced to abandon. The situation was not helped by Hitler insisting that all German supplies be stored east of the Rhine for camouflage purposes and brought up by vehicle — an arrangement which would prove catastrophic; when the allied airforces eventually got aloft they found themselves presented with easy, massed targets.

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5th Army, and Manteuffel threw his men in hard, only to be thrown back after initial success; halted by lack of manpower and well entrenched Americans. One entire regiment was annihilated in charging American machine gun posts — German intelligence was a day too old and the set piece battle the Germans had prepared turned into carnage as they assaulted the wrong positions. Notwithstanding the initial shock the regiment reformed and attacked twice more, in the same formation over the same ground until it was cut down almost to a man... By the end of the first day only one bridgehead had been established across the river Our, the first obstacle to the German advance in the centre, while the attackers had taken severe casualties; unless the situation could be retrieved by the next day the whole offensive was in jeopardy, for the plan dictated that, despite the harder task and the greater distance to be covered, the 5th Army's armour must keep pace with that of the 6th.

Despite all these pointers to the contrary, on the second day of the offensive the Germans were in a stronger position than they realised; on the American side the first day had ended in confusion, with communications shattered, exaggerated reports of enemy strength coming in and defences reeling. During the night the situation worsened and added to the rest came reports of fleeing, fearful refugees clogging the roads, many of them leaving their homes for the second time in four years, reports of Germans in uniform behind American lines and reports too of widespread German paratroop landings: widespread they were, but not intentionally. Due to inexperienced pilots and strong cross winds only 10% of the paras reached their drop zones while many landed only to break limbs in the treacherous ground, to be taken prisoner or to die slowly of exposure and starvation. The general feeling was that all hell had broken loose and General Bradley summed up the universal amazement with: "Just where in the hell has this sonuvabitch got all his strength?"

Skorzeny in particular was a thorn in the American side and his men created havoc out of all proportion to their number, especially in the rear areas, diverting traffic, disrupting communications and intercepting despatch riders. The Yanks countered by enforcing strict identity checks, which tied up men and hampered movements.

Later in the battle Skorzeny's men were executed, as were any paras captured, in retaliation for the SS gunning down American prisoners in offhand fashion, having taken rather too literally Dietrich's injunction "not to bother with prisoners". SS Colonel Peiper was perhaps the

worst offender, but he was at least as hard on his own troops and it can be said in the SS's favour that they were used to the brutalising, no-quarter fighting of the Russian front. But whatever the excuses there were ugly acts perpetrated by both sides.

The second day of the offensive saw the northern divisions of the 6th Panzer Army still hammering at the 99th U.S. division; they were to continue to hammer for the rest of the offensive and would swallow up German reinforcements which could have been better used elsewhere. Their lack of success was due to a combination of factors — the resilience of the 99th, the allied offensive to the Roer which had seized a crossroads behind the 6th which hampered supply, tied down German divisions intended for the offensive and provided the Americans with heavier artillery back-up than anticipated and, later, the arrival of the 1st U.S. division, the Big Red One, probably the finest combat troops in the American Army. Thus the German attack was contained on the left so that the offensive was canalised onto a narrower front than intended. In the south, however, Colonel Joachim Peiper, 28, grew tired of waiting and crashed through with his 1 SS Panzer Division and raced for the Meuse, Meuse, though the assault cost him several tanks. In the centre Manteuffel renewed his attacks and knocked two gaping holes in American weak points—the thinly defended Losheim Gap, and the point where two U.S. corps met. By the end of December 17th the centre at least was pressing on, even if the flanks were held. German commanders began to feel optimistic.

As late as the 19th the allied commanders had no real idea of the forces ranged against them and Eisenhower was only too well aware that Antwerp, the eventual German objective was the only port that he could realistically use for supply during the winter months and that it was vital that he keep his other lines of communication open. To ease the situation he eventually split the command of the front between Montgomery in the north and Bradley in the south — partly because Bradley, with his headquarters in the south, could not effectively command his northern elements and partly because the only available reinforcements were British troops; the decision proved wise, for by December 25th the German penetration had effectively cut north-south contact between the Allies. Less fortunate was the differences which sprang up between commanders as a result — Montgomery was less than tactful in his remarks after the campaign, and Bradley took the change in his command as a reflection on his own ability.

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began to give way to resolution, a resolution which firmed as the green American troops heard of the treatment they could expect at the hands of 1 SS. Shaken out of their smugness they began to realise that the war wasn't over yet, and settled to the task of plugging the gaps in their line — those caused by Peiper's Battle-group, and those caused by the elements of the 5th Army which had broken through the lines and were rapidly heading for the Meuse, via St. Vith and Bastogne. These would have to be stopped before the offensive could be driven back — despite Patton's suggestion to let the Germans advance to Paris, then "chew 'em to hell."

The rampaging Battlegroups Peiper was eventually halted through the efforts of a group of U.S. Engineers who blew the bridges in his path just in time and forced him to turn north in the interests of speed. Seeking petrol he turned for the huge three million gallon dump near Spa, but his advance elements turned back when the defenders flooded the roads with 100 000 gallons and set it alight. Roaring up the Ambleve Valley through necessity Peiper was eventually stopped by enemy artillery and lack of fuel, but he was still dangerous and even when eventually surrounded he escaped with his men by sacrificing his armour.

Farther south the bulk of the 5th Army hammered at hastily improvised defences around St Vith, the hub of the northern Ardennes road network — the turning point of the campaign, for Manteuffel was held up for six days longer than he could afford, and even after the Americans withdrew the centre was useless to him for by that time the airforces were in action again and St. Vith was pounded to oblivion. Farther south, at the second important road target, Bastogne, defended hurriedly by the battered remnants of 101 Airborne, still licking its wounds from Arnhem, and a few other scratch units, Manteuffel was held up again — and would be for the remainder of the campaign.

To recapitulate; 6th Panzer Army met with set backs on the first day when it failed to crash through and secure the high ground on its flank; its southern division under Peiper did break through but was trapped and eventually destroyed as a fighting unit, 5th Army's northern divisions were blocked by the U.S. 1st Army at St. Vith, and the southern division at Bastogne, although one division did manage to get within 23 miles of the Meuse before being headed off. The Centre, however, was the German strongpoint, and Manteuffel did manage to secure the surrender of 9 000 Americans when he surrounded them in the Schnee Eifel — the greatest loss that American arms sustained in the

Western Theatre; but by the time Manteuffel had swept the defenders from his path it was already too late and the allies had plugged the gaps in their lines. Meanwhile the 7th Army failed to establish their secure flank in the south, and after four days the Germans realised that success was precluded and the supporting attack from Holland was cancelled.

But by the fourth day the threat to the Meuse and thus to Antwerp was over and the Germans turned instead to the consolidation of the salient, now a narrow-based, blunt-ended triangle pushing out almost to the Meuse from Germany; the consolidation would necessitate the taking of Bastogne, which for Western Europe was to symbolise the whole campaign, even if the military realised that the German failure to take St Vith was the crucial point in the campaign, the defence of Bastogne caught the public's imagination. On December 22nd the Germans made a last attempt to capture the town before Patton could arrive to effect a relief, and the fact that their demand for surrender was largely a bluff, the defenders' response "nuts" — is nonetheless praiseworthy, for they too, thought that they were heavily and hopelessly outnumbered. (The original of the reply was somewhat cruder but "nuts" was the written message given to the Germans). Also on the 22nd Patton's Army started hitting north, having achieved the impossible in disentangling his Army from the southern fighting and wheeling it through 90 degrees in four days, a feat unique in military history. On December 23rd the tide turned irrevocably when the weather cleared and the Allies could unleash the power of their 5 000 aircraft, against which a gallant 800 Luftwaffe planes threw themselves to their own destruction, though often they never reached the Ardennes but were destroyed within Germany.

The battle, now focussed on Bastogne, continued, until the last German attack on January 3rd and 4th was thrown back. Meanwhile, in the north, the U.S. 1st Army had also detached itself and was hitting the German right flank, which had already used most of its petrol trying to break through the stubborn defenders of the 99th. By January 8th even Hitler conceded that the situation was hopeless and allowed retreat, this after losing the best part of the Luftwaffe and having had his transport and supply system smashed by the Allied airpower. On the 16th the U.S. 1st and 3rd Armies met, and by the 28th every last trace of the bulge had disappeared; to all intents and purposes the war in the West was over.

Although the Germans undeniably did not achieve their original objectives, the commanders

convinced themselves that some damage had at least been done to the Allied cause; the initiative had been wrested from the Allies, the Allied war machine had been hit at an inopportune moment and friction between Allied commanders had increased to a point where singleness of purpose was impossible. On the credit side, two crack divisions of airborne troops had been used up as infantry: total allied losses were over 140 000. Two U.S. infantry divisions were completely destroyed, nine badly mauled; of the eight armoured divisions, five were eliminated and the other three lost heavily; all three airborne divisions could not resume their proper role for some considerable time. Effectively, Allied manpower was reduced by 10%, armour by 25% — and the losses, being largely infantry, could take a long time to replace; U.S. forces might have enormous numbers in Germany, but it took fifteen men to put one fighting man in the field.

But for the Germans the losses were disastrous — 130 000 men completely irreplaceable, much of their armour (overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of the less powerful but mass produced Sherman), and almost the entire Luftwaffe. Farther reaching still, all German reserve had been used up, Germany was naked to air attack and the morale of the civilian population was broken. Losses of armour were especially heavy — as Dietrich said with morose honesty, "We are called the 6th Panzer Army because we still have six tanks."

The reasons for the failure of the offensive are easy enough to find; Field Marshall Jodl described the campaign as a second Stalingrad and blamed bad roads and worse weather. Manteuffel, on the other hand, maintained that there were never enough troops and that the reserve should have been committed earlier instead of waiting to follow up a breakthrough that never came, and that re-supply should have been more efficiently organised. Also, he blamed the Allied control of the air and the unexpected speed of the American reaction. Dietrich said ". . . it was mainly bad preparation, lack of fuel, supplies and training plus the time of year — in that order."

The surprising thing is not that the offensive failed but that it got as far as it did and achieved the success that it did. From start to finish the whole affair was one colossal gamble as the generals at least appreciated. Success had to depend on clockwork precision and co-operative weather, on the successful seizure of Allied fuel and on the uniform advance of all units; the attack was doomed on the first day when the Americans refused to fall back as they "should" and when the Germans were

unable to secure their flanks; the final nails were driven into the coffin when reserves were thrown into stalemate positions instead of exploiting what gaps there were.

In the light of hindsight it is easy to condemn the attack as a foredoomed undertaking, but given the conditions of the time it was not so improbable as it seems now. Whatever the outcome no one can deny the courage and gallantry with which both sides met their orders.

In the long run the Ardennes proved the undoing of Germany. On the 11th of December Hitler made one of his uncomfortably accurate predictions;

"If Germany loses, it will have proved itself biologically inferior and will have forfeited its future existence. It is the West that forces us to fight to the last. However, it will transpire that the winner will not be the West but the East."

True, the offensive succeeded in delaying the allied offensive by some six weeks; it also broke the back of the German war machine. In the long term, all that the Ardennes offensive ensured was that the Russians got to Berlin first — and that the East German frontier is today 100 miles further West than it would have been.



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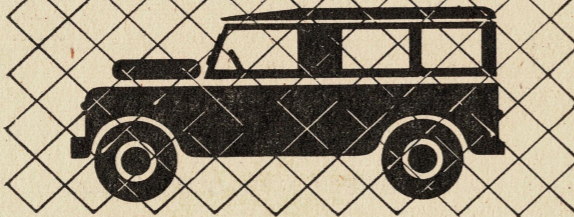
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**AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The primary aim of the Fellowship is to help members of the Services to receive Christ into

their own lives within the teaching of Scripture and secondly to encourage Christian leadership within the Services. As a country we are threatened by Communism which is an ideology backed up by force, but what Communism fears most is a stronger "ideology" (Christianity) lived out by men and women who are not afraid to witness to the reality of Christ in their own lives. Communism does not change people, it merely oppresses them, but Christ changes people's lives and liberates them from the condemnation which is reserved for those outside of Christ. Communism therefore has much to fear from Christianity because it can and ultimately will destroy Communism.

Specific aims for members will be to stimulate prayer, encourage Bible study and research, to emphasise their responsibility in the Services and their obligation to advance the cause of Christ. The fellowship will therefore seek to achieve its aims during its monthly meetings by the use of prayer, Bible study, lectures and films.

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by  
**CONNIE RADFORD**

Happy New Year to you all — now that Christmas is over and the children returned to school, we are busy making up parcels for the forces again.

In our last issue we appealed for donations towards mending the Tsanga Lodge Roof, and we are pleased to say that the Lion's Club of Salisbury gave us a cheque for \$400, while a generous donor in Bulawayo sent us \$100.

A Mess has been opened for the Grey Scouts at 10 Montagu Avenue, Salisbury, which serves to give the men a more comfortable home while on R and R in Salisbury.

We would be grateful for any contributions in the way of furniture, kitchen utensils, curtains, beds, old carpets or indeed, anything which would make the Mess look homely.

Enquiries regarding make-up pay come in from time to time and we shall be pleased to deal with any problems in this connection.

A request has been made for a couple to spend some time on a Bromley farm while the man of the house is called up. A completely furnished and serviced cottage, together with farm produce, is available from the 25th March for several weeks. Perhaps someone recuperating from an illness or hospitalization would be interested.

Our offices are on the 4th Floor of Barclays Bank head office in Manica Road, Salisbury, telephone 708818, and we should love to see you if you care to pop in for a chat and a cup of tea.

**HOLIDAY DISCOUNTS FOR FORCES**

(Continued from Page 14)

The Jameson Hotel in Salisbury is also anxious to welcome the servicemen visiting the city. They advise us that their discount rate amounts to 20% off bed and breakfast tariffs. The procedure is that the individual, on checking in, asks for a JAM-Card and introduces himself as a member of the forces. The reception desk will then make discount arrangements on his behalf.

The directors of the Mount Sheba Hotel in the Eastern Transvaal have offered Rhodesian servicemen a discount if they choose to stay at the hotel. The discount amounts to 25% off bed and breakfast charges provided that members book direct with the hotel. The reason for this is that bookings made through a travel agent incur a 10% fee and this would naturally reduce the discount available to the guest.

The hotel is situated in the Transvaal Drakensburg, above Pilgrim's Rest, overlooking the Lowveld and is 420 kilometres from Beit-bridge and 55 kilometres from Lydenburg. Accommodation consists of luxury suites attached to the main hotel, suites, rooms and nine cottages. Full particulars of the offer may be obtained from the Mount Sheba Hotel at P.O. Box 4, Pilgrim's Rest, Eastern Transvaal.

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