



ROYAL MILITARY POLICE
OLD COMRADES LINK UP
NEWSLETTER #120 JUNE 2017



NEW CONTACTS



PLUM

Former 24493349 Sergeant Gary Plum. Gary enlisted in the Corps in June 1978 and following training served with 112 Provost Company, 175 Provost Company, 247 Provost Company, 176 Provost Company, CWS Belfast, RMP Cyprus and RMPTC TDW before leaving the Army in 1992.

YOUR CORRESPONDENCE

I normally find myself in the mire, it is just the depth that varies, but this time I am not so sure just how deep I am. Taff Jones sent in the following, 'Hi Bob, thanks for the latest newsletter. Really enjoyable, however, in the account of the RMPA reunion you make mention of being revived on Sunday morning by a "full English."!!!!!! As we were in the capital city of God's own country, perhaps that should have been a "full Welsh"!!!!!! Oh duw, duw, duw.....' Point taken Taff, guess I did not have a full English in Edinburgh a couple of years ago. So that I do not leave anyone out I love an Ulster Fry as well. At least the Service banter is not dead! Just do not tell my doctor that I am eating a full anything.

-ooOoo-

David Hartley contacted me about the photograph of the Boxing Team which featured in the last edition, He said, 'A bit more info for you. Your letter showed the 1949 RMP boxing team, and their coach QMSI A La Frenais. As I could not trust myself to pronounce it properly, I wrote it down and took it with me to Lockerbie this morning. I have an old Army friend there, a former Army RSMI, Jim Millward, cousin of the famous Roger Milward of Rugby League fame. When I gave him the slip of paper he said, "That man was one of my heroes". He had met a few times, and he went on to become the Army Boxing coach, and his name is entered in the Hall of Fame for his services to Boxing. Now I know Jim Millward's name is also in the Hall of Fame as the first Non-Commissioned Officer to become the Army Rugby Coach. He also knew John Burgess, civilian Schoolteacher, who was the coach of Singapore Rugby Team in 1975, when I was the Manager. Funny how a photo can bring out so many past memories it may not have been intended to. No wonder you have a soft spot for photo's.' *Ed: David, many thanks. I look at many old photographs of myself and memories of dark, curly hair flood back.*

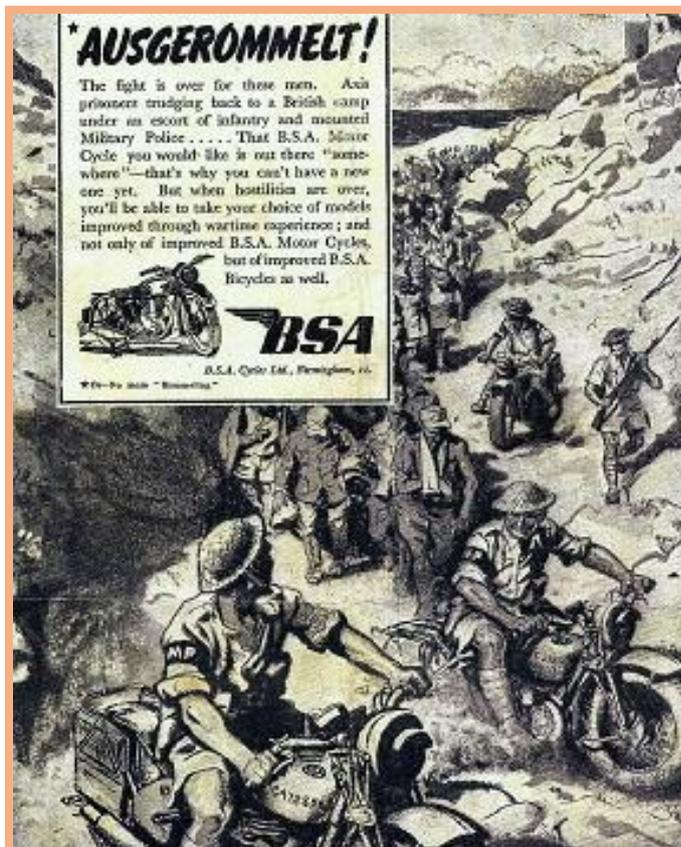
-ooOoo-

In the last edition I featured a photograph of a Trials Team. In direct response to that I heard from Dick Langstone who said, 'In regards to the RMP trials team pictured in your latest Old Comrades Link Up. It showed LCpl Steve Hoole on a 350cc Matchless G3L, Cpl Roger Kearsay on a 500cc Triumph TRW, Capt Alan Betty also on a 500cc Triumph and me, Dick Langstone on a Matchless G3L. The Triumph TRW's Twin Cylinder side valves were as far as I know the only two ever at the Depot and were being evaluated for suitability for Squad use. The Matchless was much better for the trials team and general use by the instructors they were a lot lighter and had more pulling power down low

'I am still in touch with Steve Hoole and Roger Kearsay is my Brother in Law. A few years ago I called on Alan Betty down in Bristol and as he said it was a great time at Inkerman and when we were competing there were no ranks just MP's on bikes doing a job they loved I still look on my time at the depot as an Instructor as the best time of my life.'

Staying with the same theme Peter Soper commented, 'Thank you for your excellent monthly newsletters. With every edition I hope there will be something mentioned about 'B' Company D & T E RMP Inkerman Barracks Woking and this month my waiting has been rewarded. You published the photograph of LCpl T Hoole, Cpl R Kearsay, Capt A Betty and LCpl Langstone, I was serving as a Driving Instructor at the time they won the Trophy, in fact LCpl Hoole and LCpl Langstone were in the

same accommodation as myself, a large cold Victorian house on the approach road to the barracks. The memorable thing about them both was that very often they would ride their motorcycles into the house to collect their knife fork and spoon for lunch, without stopping! With regard to the motorcycle I do not think it was a BSA as all the motorcycles in the photograph have telescopic forks, and the only BSAs' at the Depot at time if my memory serves me right had girder forks. If you have chance to communicate with them please pass my e-mail address to them. As a matter of interest when Capt Betty retired he came to live in Bristol which is 9 miles from where I live I tried to make contact, but were never able for one reason or another.' *Ed: Peter's details have been passed onto Dick Langston so I hope that by now some connection has been made although I understand that Captain Betty passed away some years ago.*



Just to close this section on motor cycles I was sent the advertisement which I am assuming has been downloaded from the BSA Museum website. It depicts three military policemen on BSA motor cycles escorting prisoners of war in what looks to be North Africa. It basically says that when the war is over you will be able to order a new BSA. My thanks to Dan Cowley for spotting this.

-ooOoo-

Peter Spooner said, 'I could not resist responding having read the mention to the Balmoral Showground. In 1969 I was a member of the RMP Mounted Troop and was 'selected' to be a member of the RMP Display Team Arena Party, one of the shows in which the Display Team appeared was the Royal Ulster Show in the Balmoral Showground. Our journey started when we left Beaumont Barracks Aldershot about 10am on the 18th May, traveling to Preston with the horses being stabled overnight in the stables of the Lancashire Constabulary Mounted

Branch. About 2pm the following day, after lunch with members of the Mounted Branch, we travelled to Preston Docks to board the ferry for the overnight journey to Larne. Because of my specialist skills or because I was in the wrong place at the wrong time, I was selected to spend the night with the horses on the freight deck. During the night I saw the dedication of the crew who, at intervals, appeared with a bucket to draw samples from a parked up beer tanker. I presume this was done to allow checks to be carried out to ensure that the beer had not gone off in transit! After landing at Larne we travelled to Belfast and the horses were stabled at the Balmoral Show Ground. Over the next four days we made six appearances in the show.

'On the 25th May we were travelling to Enniskillen for a show dress rehearsal, which I think that was taking place at the RUC Depot, on route we were stopped by the RUC and informed that the show had been cancelled and we turned back. We did take part in shows on the two following days.

On the 29th May we started our return journey, travelling back to Larne Docks for the overnight ferry back to England. I was in Larne Docks again in 1971 but this time I was travelling to Northern Ireland for a two year stay. Having disembarked we left the docks about 8am and travelled back to Aldershot, stopping on route in Crewe. We arrived back in Aldershot about 5.30pm.

'Four members of the Mounted Troop were in Northern Ireland in 1971, this time for the Opening of Parliament. The opportunity was taken for the horses and riders to be used to carry our rural patrols; I treat this as the last time that members of a British Army mounted unit were used in an operational role. I very much doubt that we will see The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment or The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery undertaking such an operational role.'

120 PROVOST COMPANY CMP

The Company was originally formed in Leeds during October 1942 and at that time was known as 79 Armoured Division Provost Company. The main activities between October 1942 and April 1943 were in forming the remainder of the Division I in readiness for extensive training in armoured equipment.

In April 1943 the Company was selected to carry out the duties of an Army HQ Provost Company on Exercise "SPARTAN" and for this purpose was made into a 9 Section Company by the addition of 3 sections from 54 Division Provost Company.

The Company readily adapted itself to its new role and performed all the duties it was called upon to undertake in an exemplary manner, and at the end of the exercise was highly commended by the C in C. During the exercise, the Company provided outriders to the CIGS, the NCOs in question being specially recommended for the excellent way in which they carried out their duties. After the exercise the Company returned to its parent division to receive orders to move to the battle-training area in Suffolk. The move took place at the end of April 1943, the Company establishing its HQ at Yoxford, Suffolk.

As soon as the Division had moved into location training began in earnest, a section being despatched to Fritton to work in close conjunction with the testing of the latest inventions in amphibious warfare. Another section was attached to 27 Armoured Brigade who were carrying out extensive training with flame throwing and flail tanks.

The Company provided Provost Sections for the main armour of the Division which moved to its advance training area in South Wales (Pembroke area) and the Portsmouth area (Amphibious vehicles) in June 1943. In view of the advance stage of the training the duties performed by the Provost became more arduous and often necessitated men being on duty for long stretches without relief and in appalling conditions.

In May 1943, the Division arranged a motor-cycle trial and once again the Company distinguished itself by taking first and third places.

Much to the regret of everybody in the Company, in September 1943 it was decided to split the Division into Independent Battle groups, thus the need for the Provost Company no longer existed and the Company was disbanded. The Company received orders to move to Southend-on-Sea on the 21st September 1943 to be reformed as a 9 section company and to be known as 120 Provost Company, 21 Army Group. This was the outcome of the high recommendation received for its work during Exercise "SPARTAN".

Shortly after reforming, 1 sergeant and 6 lance-corporals were detailed to proceed to Hammersmith to carry out duties of personal bodyguard to the C in C. The remainder of the Company underwent extensive training in their new duties until April 1944 when orders were received to move to Orpington, Kent, in order to be positioned to control all routes intended for the use of troops marshalling for the Second Front in Europe.

On the formation of TAC HQ the C in C's bodyguard was increased to a full section for Security and Police Duties within the HQ. Another section was attached to Main HQ, 21 Army Group to carry out police duties within that HQ. From Company HQ men worked continuously in keeping open routes to the marshalling area and in maintaining discipline within the marshalling area.

The first section of the Company to land in NW Europe was the section with TAC HQ who landed with that HQ on D - Day. This section was followed on the 28th July 1944 by the section at Main HQ and two sections from Company HQ whose task it was to establish the first Army Group in NW Europe in the vicinity of Bayeux.

Company HQ moved to Wentworth, Middlesex, on the 10th August 1944 to form up with Rear HQ, 21 Army Group prior to landing at Arramanches on the 14th August and from there to establish its HQ at Ranche, Nr Bayeux. On the formation of "R" Force, two sections of the Company were detailed to be attached to this Force. Their main task was to seize buildings previously held by the enemy and the collecting of any documents which may prove useful at a later date. This Force often operated well in advance of the main body and performed its task with distinction until its breaking up and entering Brussels on the 3rd September 1944. The two sections from this Force were then given the task of preparing for the arrival of the 21 Army Group HQ in Brussels. During this period the remainder of the Company were fully occupied in signing and maintaining lines of communication in the rear areas. On the 1st September 1944 the Company HQ was moved to Brussels and the Company was given the task of policing the city, which entailed far more work than was first anticipated. Immediately following the liberation celebrations the civilian population began to organise the Black Market on an enormous scale. The job of suppressing these activities meant maintaining continuous watch on all market places and also carrying out numerous raids on civilian property following reports of persons being in possession of WD property. Petrol checks had to be instigated to stop civilians using WD

petrol, this entailed stopping every civilian passing given points and taking samples of the petrol which was being used. These checks were carried out with the assistance of the Belgium Government Gendarmerie.

Coal almost became completely under the control of the Black Market, but this activity was soon suppressed by the introduction of special permits to the drivers of all coal carrying vehicles, and the confiscation of loads not covered by one of these permits.

Absenteeism reached alarming proportions amongst front line troops this meaning that patrols were kept continuously busy checking passes. As many as 100 arrests were made on one day in addition to those caught in organised raids upon cinemas, canteens and cafes.

WD vehicles were being stolen in large numbers and this again entailed periodical checks by which means hundreds of stolen vehicles were recovered. An Anti-Vice Squad was formed and by the strenuous efforts of this team the number of cases of VD were considerably reduced.

Throughout the crisis caused by the German push in the Ardennes in December 1944, the Company was continuously standing by and at the same time men were working night and day marshalling convoys of troops from her rest areas to the forward positions.

The Company was also given the task of opening the first CMP School in NW Europe and hundreds of men were trained in Police Duties under very difficult conditions, prior to the opening of the CMP Training School.

The two sections attached to TAC HQ and Main HQ continued to carry out their respective duties throughout this period. Late in the campaign however, the section with TAC HQ was detached from the Company and reformed as 20 Independent Provost Section.

On the 7th June 1945 the Company HQ was moved to Germany and established at Bad Salzufflen. From here escorts were provided to Queen Wilhelmina and several British Members of Parliament when making tours of Allied and enemy territory. Sections were despatched to Bad Oeynhausen, Bielefeld and Herford for the purpose of policing the areas in the vicinity of these towns.

On the commencement of the War Crimes Trials a half section of the Company was despatched to Nuremburg for security duties and to supply a bodyguard to the British Judges at the Trials. The Company was asked to supply volunteers for the job of assistant hangman to assist in the hanging of War Criminals. These volunteers were easily obtained and the selected assisted in many hangings.

The Company was continuously employed since its arrival in Germany on normal police duties and in suppressing Black Market activities. It also played an active part in the efforts to capture gangs of Polish displaced persons who had been touring the British Zone terrorising the civilian population committing murder and rape. *The following photograph was taken in Brussels in 1945*



Throughout the campaign and since the collapse of Germany the Company carried out the duties it had been detailed to undertake with distinction, as it proved by the fact that several members of the Company received Mentions in Despatches and the Commander-in-Chief's Certificate for devotion to duty.

-ooOoo-



I did promise you some sporting photographs in this edition and I have been delving in the archives at the Museum where I found this photograph of the Corps of Military Police Cricket Team taken in Moascar in 1945. Just love the shorts and you can just make out the Wicket Keeper behind those enormous pads. Sadly I do not have any names for those featured in the photograph.

Now for rugby and Wally Payne supplied the details, 'The all-conquering 2 RMP side in 1975. We were scared to lose with Brian Stopforth pacing the touch-line. He was a rugby league player of note in his time and had hung up his boots but, in the NI final v the Royal Marines that year, which we won, he deemed to play in the front row. My abiding memory of the match was the screaming of his opposite number, as all his rugby league guile was brought to bear.



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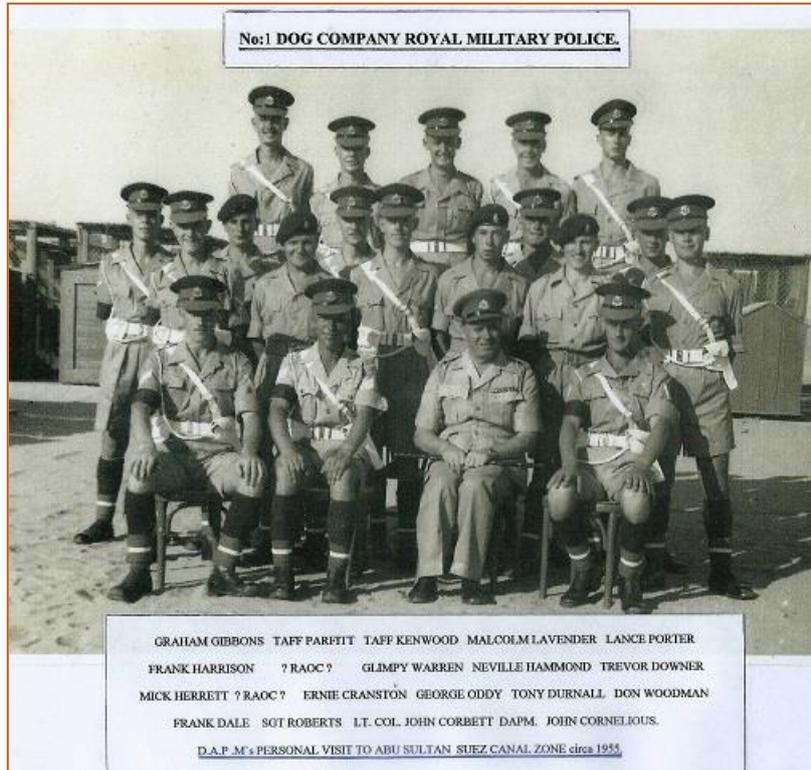
It is amazing just how fast time whizzes by. Joy and I received the call to go and celebrate Alan Wylie's 70th birthday. Now he is not really that far away from where we live and despite promises of meeting up we never did. After a while we actually worked out that the last time we saw each other was on his 50th birthday. Needless to say a good day was had by all and I did manage to sign up one more for the Link Up. See you when you are 90 Alan! Gary Plum is seated on the left.

-ooOoo-

Now and again I actually receive real letters, which makes a refreshing change. Graham Gibson wrote to me from his home on the Isle of Wight (a small Colony just off the coast from Portsmouth). He wrote, "Thank you for your recent newsletters of which number 117 turned out to be very interesting as, through the network of Old Comrades, I linked up with Joan and Frank Harrison. Joan's efforts on Frank's behalf, i.e. his life story for his Grandchildren, prompted me to review my "folder" that my sister and two daughters each possess, of life and times in the Canal Zone with No 1 Dog Coy RMP. I composed my review some time ago and worked it in a book by Air Chief Marshall

Sir Jock Kennedy and Mr Acker Bilk (yes, he served his stint¹) called "White Knees, Brown Knees" which is the story of the Canal Zone from earlier 1951 through to armistice later in 1954. Up until then we were on "Active Service". An enlightening read.

Together with my own albums and the contents of the book, I was able to retrace my steps most of the way and from a one page dossier I have finished up with about eight pages of typewritten information plus copies of photographs, maps etc and I parcelled this lot up, by now sixteen pages, and sent it off to Frank and Joan Harrison up there in Lancashire. The only other contact I have had was with Ben Chell from an earlier edition of the newsletters.



I enclose a laminated photocopy of No 1 Dog Coy detachment at Abu Sultan in company with Lt Col John Corbett who was DAPM MELF circa 1955. I have already sent a copy to Frank and Joan and in consequence, I have been able to match a few more identities but if any are wrong please let me know through the newsletters and I can correct same. It is to be remembered that we had, at one time, some 110 dogs for various duties between some 70 or so personnel. Combats, Barkers and a Tracker called Fleet, the latter being transferred to Kenya where his first expedition outside of camp resulted in an arms cache find, so I am told!"



ROYAL MILITARY POLICE ASSOCIATION

On Saturday the 3rd June 2017 the Royal Military Police Annual Service was held at the National Memorial Arboretum. The photograph below shows the march down to the Corps Plot following the service in the Chapel. The event was followed by a lunch organised as usual by the Derby Branch.





Members of the Depot Branch assisted the Museum staff during the weekend of the 10th and 11th June during the Southwick Revival Weekend. Seen with one of the restored vehicles are Colin Landreth, me, Robin Lacey, Mike Meek and Jack Duncan. Now if we can only get the Restoration Group to restore us! Other members were in attendance but we only photograph the good looking ones. That will get me into trouble. If you live within striking distance of Southwick Park and like working on vehicles please contact Colonel Green at RHQ and he will point you in the right direction.

Armed Forces Day was widely celebrated around the country and Mel Cole and Sid Price were in focus during the Flag Raising event in Havant.



CAN YOU HELP?

I had a message from David Pringuer who is seeking information on a former Captain Maguire. David knew him as a Staff Sergeant in 180 Provost Company and requires his assistance in identifying some photographs.

Seeking help is David Riordan, I will let him explain. 'By way of introduction I am former 23996515 Sergeant David Riordan. 1964 to 1977. I left the corps to join the civil police latterly West Yorkshire Police. My wife Jackie is also a former WRAC Provost. She featured in Berlin at checkpoint Charlie with Dave Joyce. So you will see we have a Provost past, the point being, we now have a 25 year old grandson who works for the New Zealand Police Ministry.

He has shown interest in our families past. To this end I told him that in the 1967/68 period when we were in Berlin, 247 Company, a recruiting film had been made, which we featured in. I contacted Toby at the museum to see if there was still any copies available, but unfortunately he can find no evidence of such. I did not work on recruiting, but I was told of such perhaps VHS tapes being shown on stands around the country. My experience of the Corps was of similar films showing Woking etc at the museum, thus I thought this type of visual history would still exist. Sadly not at the museum now. I would be grateful, without stealing too much of your time, if you could advise me of anywhere I could find such if it's still available.' *Ed: If anyone can help please let me know. David and Jackie will feature in the Contacts section of the next issue.*

Now a message from the Regimental Secretary. 'I am keen to trace a Michelle Walker – albeit she was discharged in August 1977 to marry so her surname would have changed in all likelihood. She enlisted in Leeds in December 1975 and was born in 1956. She served for 19 months and her only posting was LONDONDIST Provost Company at Rochester Row. The reason is that we have been passed her AFB 108 (Red Book) by the Joint Service Administration Unit (London) and I would like to get it to her. Can anyone help?

DEATHS

BURTON

Former Staff Sergeant Dave Burton died on the 23rd June 2017 following a long illness. At the time of writing I know that he enlisted into the Corps in 1962 having previously served for a number of years in the Royal Marines. I served with Dave in Bielefeld in the early sixties and in fact took over his MSQ when he was posted. As far as can be established at this stage he served as PSI Stoke on Trent, in Malacca with the Commonwealth Brigade, 247 Provost Company and finally as PSI in Edinburgh.

COLLYER

The following message was received. "It is with a heavy heart that I must tell you of the death of Major Michael Collyer at the age of 67. He died after suffering a major heart attack at the weekend at his home in Spain. Mike had not been well for many years requiring a kidney transplant, open heart surgery and constant dialysis. Despite all that he remained utterly cheerful to the end. For those of you who knew him Mike was larger than life and great fun to be around.'

CONOBOY

The following information was apparently gathered from an entry on Facebook and passed to me by George Harrison. 'Mick's nephew passed news through the Facebook that Mick died this morning, 26 Jun 17. He served with me and Dave Billham at Düsseldorf 1963. *Ed: At the time of writing I do not have any further information.*

HARRIS.

I received the following. 'Margaret Harris died on the 1st June 2017, in a nursing home in Cornwall where she had sadly spent the last nine years, incapacitated due to a series of strokes. Margaret served in London District, Berlin, SHAPE and Rheindahlen. She married John Clarke ex-RMP Rheindahlen, and together they built up an exceptional [partnered] business in Liverpool under the name of "Clarke and Young". Sadly John died in 1979. She was a very, very precious friend to her cohorts at 145 WRAC Provost Company, Rheindahlen 1959 – 1963. Pax Tecum.

Signed: Marjorie Kay, June Shell, Wendy Forsyth, Crys Grant, Sandy Lawson, Adrienne Lewis.

LESLIE

Former 23420986 Lance-Corporal Robert Anderson Leslie passed away on the 6th June 2017. Bob, a staunch member of the Royal Military Police Association, Scotland Central Branch, was in Squad 659 and completed his National Service in 170 Provost Company and 5 Dog Company.

ROWAN

Former 23571782 Corporal William Michael Rowan passed away in Krefeld, Germany on the 29th May 2017. Bill completed his training with Squad 656 in 1958 and went on to serve with 2 Division Provost Company, 6 Infantry Brigade Group Provost Unit and Hong Kong Provost Company before his discharge in 1964.

STAMP

I received the following message from Phil Locke. 'Informing you of the death of former 22975646 Lance Corporal Reginald Edward Stamp RMP on the 11th June 2017. His funeral was held at the South Bristol Crematorium on the 27th Jun 2017. Details of his service were sketchy via his family, but I was told he served in Egypt and Malaya.'

TISSINGTON

Former 22980674 Corporal Michael John Tissington passed away on Sunday the 28th May 2017 following a short illness. Having completed training with 415 Squad in June 1954, Mick went onto serve in Vienna and with 4 Division Provost Company until his demob in December 1956.

WINCHESTER

Former 22193581 Lance-Corporal Norman Arthur Wynton Winchester passed away recently. It has been established that he was in training in 1950.

-ooOoo-

This is quite a full edition and I have had to hold back a number of your submissions but they will appear in the next edition. Those of you that know me are aware that I have lost a bit of my Barnett fair but thanks to one kind reader I think I have found the answer. I will experiment with this "machine" and let you know how I get on.

New Kind of Hat Worn 10 Minutes a Day Grows Hair in 30 Days —or No Cost

No matter how thin your hair may be, this remarkable new scientific invention is absolutely guaranteed to give you a brand new growth of hair in 30 days—or it costs you nothing. Don't need a cent. Just mail coupon below.

By **ALOIS MERKE**

Founder of Famous Merke Institute, Fifth Ave., N. Y.

I HAVE perfected a new invention that I absolutely guarantee will give you a new head of hair in only 30 days—or the trial costs you nothing.

This new invention—the result of an experience gained in treating thousands of cases of baldness—is in the form of a new kind of hat. It is worn on the head just 10 minutes a day. No unnecessary fuss of

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