

C COMPANY

The year 1985 commenced with a new OC, Major J.A.S. Cullens and new 2IC, Capt. I. Rhodes at the helm. WO2 J. Bruno and SSgt G. Francis remained with the company as CSM and CQMS.

New platoon commanders, straight from RMC and OCS were Lt S. Smith and Lt R. Lowes. OC 8 PI, Lt S. Caughey remained with the company for a short time before moving on to Mortar Platoon. Platoon Sergeants Morris, Howard and Cowell continued to keep their platoons on the straight and narrow during these turbulent times.

With the new 'Bwanas' firmly ensconced, the training year commenced in earnest. With very little time in barracks, the company was off into the field on a shake down exercise, Exercise Shaky Start at Bluewater, where we forgot all about Christmas and New Year revelry and began to concentrate on topics such as platoon formations, ambushing, patrolling etc.

After such an enjoyable start to the year, what better activity to follow with than duties. (Oh! the luck of a soldier!)

Exercises, Weapon training, NBCD, rifle shooting, parades, ODF Readiness checks and next thing you know its April and the battalion is deploying

on Exercise Eager Eaglet. What an exercise! We had it all! Helicopter insertions, airborne assaults, Fire Support Base Defence and walking (or as we soldiers call it — patrolling). Eight or so days later we were back in barracks ready to remember our fallen comrades on Anzac Day.

Live firing at Mt Vince near Mackay and at good old High Range preceded Exercise Coral Dagger, where we saw life on the other side of the coin when we were enemy for 1 RAR's battalion exercise in Bluewater and High Range.

Just prior to Coral Dagger we saw our company 2IC depart. The CO had arranged a bit of a JOBEX and Capt G. Heald from B Company arrived and Capt I. Rhodes went to B Company. So long and welcome Sunray Minor.

Training, duties, stand down all followed and then the lead up to Exercise Swift Eagle — the Brigade exercise.

Needless to say, with everything C Company had tackled so far this year, Swift Eagle proved no problem. Plenty of 'go-getum' aggression, some 'startling' tactical appraisals, some heroic action in battle, some death defying acts of ingenuity and lo and behold, another exercise bites the dust.



CSM C Coy Belt Inspection

The training part of the year was all of a sudden, fast growing to a close. The battalion courses period loomed up suddenly. Most of the company, in some form or another, gets committed to courses at this time of the year. Some off to do their promotion courses (these people have more money to bargain with than most). Others off to tackle a specialist course (these are the poorer types). Others who.... well there's always next year.

However, the company did not get off all that lightly. Still one more bush trip. In mid November the company, plus a few hangers-on, are off to the sunny? south to provide some enemy support to RMC Duntroon. The trip should be a good way to end the year on a high note.

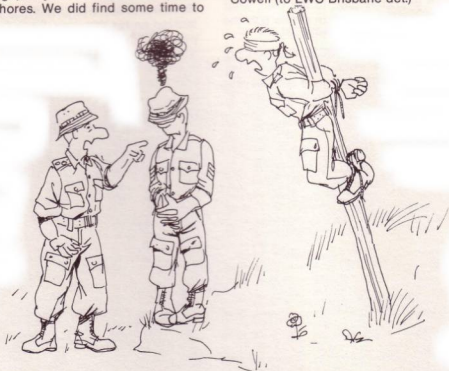
Home again in late November, a mad week of clean up, then leave. Ahhhh! Glorious leave. Where our stories can get told in countless bars, relatives homes, in fact to anyone, anywhere who will listen.

Mind you though, our year was not all racing off to defend our shores. We did find some time to

partake some of the more social aspects of soldiering. Sport played a big role in the company. The inter company competition was played in keen spirit. All games were played in a fiercely competitive nature with no love lost at times for one's fellow man. However, after much head butting etc. throughout some games, we could always look back and smile. (Well smile only when we won — most of the time).

I trust 1985 has been a rewarding year and I wish you all well for an enjoyable and safe Christmas Season.

And so at the end of 1985, it is time to say goodbye to some of our mates: Capt Garry Heald (off to the Infantry Centre); Lt Russ Lowes (off to Assault Pioneer Platoon); WO2 John Bruno (off to LWC Canungra); Sgt 'Morry' Morris (off to Recon Platoon); Cpl McGregor (to A Company); Cpl Bohn (to Battalion HQ); LCpl Bloomer (to 6 RAR 'gerronimol'); Pte Blanchard (to 3 RAR 'look out below!'); Pte Hogan (discharge); Pte Hilton (discharge); Pte McGarty (discharge); Sgt Frank Cowell (to LWC Brisbane det.)



GOOD GOOD SERGEANT! THE NEW MIL LAW DOESN'T
ENCOMPASS SUMMARY EXECUTION FOR BEING LATE!

7 PLATOON C COMPANY

1985 has been a very busy year for 7 PI. It started out with new section commanders, Kim Porter and Wayne McGregor, with Tom Basan off to try his skills on the S.A.S.R. Selection course with LCpl Adrian Hinds. This left Viv Graham and Glen Bloomer the only "old 7 PI N.C.O.'s" in the sections, and the PI Sgt Frank Cowell still without a PI Comd in P.H.Q. with Scotty Fraser the sig.

On Ex Shakey Start we lent our expertise to 9 PI to form a more formidable fighting force and destroy the Musorian enemy in Bluewater State Forest. A few weeks back in camp to perform duties, acquire a PI Comd Lt Stuart Smith, and the ever present DP 1 Check, and we were back into the bush for Ex Close Look, a two day Recon Exercise. Pte Moyle got bitten by a spider/snake/other digger (?), and got the rush treatment to 4 Camp where he was promptly told to soldier on. Bush again in March on Ex Night Raider with T.J. Jones as the new sect. comd 1 sect. Kim Porter was stolen from the PI by the R.P. Sgt with promises of no more sleeping on rocks, standing to on his guts etc., no Ex Night Raider for him. The more memorable parts of the Ex. would have to be LCpl Bloomer's all night fighting patrol of 5 k's or was it 15 k's, and Scotty Fraser's Recon (?) patrol with John Gair and Dominic Boyle which captured an enemy section that "weren't really asleep!"

Into camp for a spot of Bn stand down and then back to the bush for Eager Eaglet. Who was it that made the statement, Great things these air mobile exercises, you don't have to do much walking! Good try, fail. We went field with two sections but pioneers were gracious enough to send us a section with Geoff Ingall and Mark Irons. Irons liked the PI so much that he joined us permanently a few months later. It must have been the ambush in the flood or the "Tactical" water crossing of the Burdekin that sold him. 7 PI were in the forefront of the air mobile assault, less the pioneer sect. and Sgt Cowell whose helicopter had spat the dummy. Many lessons were learnt on this exercise especially by those newer soldiers who had not had any previous experience with RONNIE RAAF, e.g. always keep some rations in case resupply doesn't happen. April was also the month for the trip to Mt Vince where the Platoon shot the qualifying range practice. Pte Pete Ferrari (ex 7 PI) excelled himself with a 245 on the Applied Marksman Practice and took out best shot in the Coy overall.

We next had a few days playing the Milan version of space invaders and were driven around by the "buckets". Some of us combined driver training and in one case some forest, tree and fence clearing to the horror of the Crewies. Mac McGarty still carries part of the tree in his basic pouch.

May was a time for the Bde ODF Test and the PI was only just pipped at the post as best PI in the Bn by 8 PI C Coy. 7 PI then undertook a total

change of principles and doctrine and turned Brothers of God for 1 RAR on Ex Coral Dagger. Word has it that the civi in residence on arrival at our base camp was actually a RAMBO throwback in disguise as a dope grower. Many acts of heroism were performed by the B.O.G., e.g. Brothers James, Hunt and McGarty going back repeatedly to harass C Coy 1 RAR; Brothers Johnson and Boyle maliciously decapitating two chickens, Brother Oosterhuis catching Jaws in the creek, and Brother Jones hammering star pickets into the ground with his hand. To put all rumours to rest, the boss has asked the Officers' Mess to ban the dinner gong after his experience with DIV INT. We also had Spr Modra from 18 Fd Sqn with us for the exercise and his exploits cannot be forgotten. Definitely wearing the wrong badge.

By this time the PI was starting to take on a change with many older members having moved on and new blood being pumped in from School of Insanity, and it was with a somewhat different 7 PI that we went as enemy to Ex Deep Sleep, (less the section comds who had a function (?) to attend). It seems that RONNIE RAAF just can't do the right thing, with an unplanned PI attack on the boss' position who they thought were their enemy and meeting Sgt Cowell on top of a feature that according to them was 4 k's away. LCpl James was not really misplaced he just wanted to practise RTP and action on lost.

The Military Skills Competition was keenly contested by 7 PI, however even though we didn't win it wasn't for the lack of trying. Ex Northern Warrior was the first Bn sized exercise for most of our soldiers. Retests were the order of the day with "Wally" Walpole and our resident giant, Dave Buscall retesting digging latrines, Brownie and Hunter playing in them in the middle of the night and T.J.'s section retesting in track plans.

A soldier from Assault Pioneers tried the "old soldier" on Hunter with double picquets until he got caught out, and on the subject of picquets, who was the Cpl and LCpl that nearly shot up a kangaroo when he wouldn't answer a challenge? K.J. Armstrong now knows how painful a tick can be, especially if it has sexual tendencies.

Another spell of duties, Bde stand down and now we have specialist courses being conducted. One more exercise as enemy for R.M.C. and it will wind up a very busy year for 7 PI. The manning changes for the year are too numerous to list but good luck to those that have left 7 PI and no doubt some of you will return.

Things you never see:
PI Comd sending field signal "Going for Recce"
Sect. Comds brewing up
Cpl Stokes' fall for the red herring question
Ptes Johnson and Buscall walkabout warriors
Pte Kennedy on duty runner
Pte "Tac Ted" Lees shooting PI Comd's.

8 PLATOON C COMPANY

1. 8 PI started a most hectic year, both in terms of activities it engaged in and in the large turnover of members within the PI.

2. Throughout the year we said farewell to members such as: Lt 'Gungho' Caughy, Sgt 'Dogbreath' Edwards, Cpl 'Cockroach' Barker, Pte 'Good ride-dance' Bickley and Pte 'Motor Mouth' Travers.

3. The present composition of 8 PI is almost entirely of members who marched in during this year. Some element of continuity was supplied by Sgt 'Rambo' Morris who battled well to maintain an administratively smooth running PI — in between leading assaults and one man reconnaissance patrols.

4. LCpl Bloomer will be missed, going to 6 RAR on posting, for his humane mature approach to interracial and cross cultural relationships, an example to all us Australians.

5. Despite this large turnover the PI performed creditably in the military skills competition and in the final exercise — Swift Eagle, being the PI most actively engaged in pursuing the enemy and in fact leading the assault in — the final Coy

attack. We would like to thank the OC, Major J. Cullens for his faith in our ability to do the job.

6. Such is the efficiency of this fine bunch of men that the main training aim of the ODF — the ability to conduct DP1 checks is now honed to a fine edge of perfection.

7. Throughout the year the PI has acquitted itself well on 40 km nature walks and we look forward to their continuance next year.

8. Many members of the PI have distinguished themselves in their field of work — Pte Westwood has a novel approach to creek crossings.

9. The smooth running efficiency of this mighty machine was never more evident than when told to saddle up to continue the march to FSB Kate — the sound of sleeping bag zips punctuating the air was a joy to behold.

10. 8 PI is now at a relatively stable stage as regards manpower, and looks forward to marching into 1986 in its own inimitable style. To all those members who have been with 8 PI in '85 and moved, on posting or to OCS Best Wishes.

The Fighting Eight.



Ex Coral Dagger "Brothers of God"

9 PLATOON C COMPANY

1. 1985 started as a fairly "New" year for 9 Pl. Lt Lowes and Sgt Howard arrived plus several new soldiers from Inf Centre. The "old hands" such as CPL's Murray Stokes, Cess Petracca were still around with LCpl's Ray Boneham, "Scottie" Leith and T.J. Jones. During the year stripes have come and gone with LCpl Boneham becoming Cpl, LCpl Jones becoming Cpl Jones and moving house to 7 Pl. Cpl Stokes traded places with Cpl McGregor from 7 Pl and Pte Mills became LCpl Mills upon joining 9 Pl.

2. The Pl has received quite a few new additions from Inf Centre who have turned out to produce fine results especially in the Military Skills Competition for a Pl so young.

3. As part of C Coy we have had our fair share of time in the field with a shake down exercise in Paluma very early, Exercise Night Raider working on small night recon patrols inserted and extracted by LOH, and Exercise Eager Eaglet working much of the same area around Dotswood. Exercise Coral Dagger where we played enemy for 1 RAR and 1 Div Int provided a great break in regular training where the devious mind ran riot in preparing pleasant surprises for the enroaching 'imperialist dogs'. Under the alias of the 'Brothers of God' (BOG) we set up false cannabis fields but real mine fields taking heavy toll upon the assaulting troops when they finally found us.

4. Exercise 'Duties' provided worthwhile training

in many areas, then the build-up to Military Skills in which the platoon performed admirably collecting a carton of fine ale from 7 Pl. The Battalion Cross Country which C Coy won was another victory for 9 Pl within the Coy. Yet another victory for the Pl was our version of 'Almost Anything Goes' rewarded with a half day off.

5. The Pl is not without its characters of course. For instance our stomping brothers Pte's Niblett and Cuming (the original!) they are the envy of all short haired lovers and wearers of fine footwear, if you like 'BOVVA' boots that is.

6. Toward the end of the year 9 Pl is to play enemy for RMC in the deep south of ACT and NSW.

7. 2Lt Potter arrived prior to taking over the reins in 1986. Sgt Howard will remain his offsider with Cpl's Petracca, Boneham, LCpl's Trevorror, Mills and Leith. Cpl McGregor is changing career streaming to clerical.

8. I go to Aslt Pnrs. Pte Hogan has elected to try and find something outside of the army for a living.

9. To Hoges, the Pl wished you good luck for the future. Lt Lowes wishes to extend his thanks to the Pl for their help and constant good performance in 1985 — "Just keep it up in 1986 fellas."

R.J. Lowes

Lt

Occ 9 Pl



Pte Lergessner crosses the rope Mil Skills