Harold Heafford Proudfoot was born in 1889 the son of the Reverend James Proudfoot a Methodist Missionary at Green Park, St. Ann, Jamaica.

The family moved to Loughborough while he was a child and he was educated at Loughborough Grammar School before entering the School of Medicine at the University of Edinburgh to study medicine between 1906 and 1911, gaining an M.B. and Ch.B. He found a post at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary before moving to a post in Monsall Fever Hospital, Manchester, and later Bolton Infirmary. He entered the University of Manchester to study part time for his D.P.H in 1912.

He enlisted in the Royal Army Medical Corps in early 1915 and was promoted Lieutenant in May 1915, and Captain in May 1916 by which time he was serving in France as Medical Officer to
26th Brigade Royal Field Artillery. He was killed in action alongside three other Officers from his unit on 2nd September 1916 by shell fire near Mametz Wood, France. He was 27 years old when he died.

Capt HH Proudfoot is buried in Dantzig Alley British Cemetery, France. An Obituary appeared in the United Methodist Journal on September 14th 1916.

“DR. PROUDFOOT

We very deeply regret, to announce that the only son in France of the Reverend James Proudfoot, Captain Harold Heafford Proudfoot, M.B., C.M. (Edinburgh), R.A.M.C., was killed at the front by the bursting of a shell on Saturday, September 2nd. He was 27 years of age. Mr Proudfoot has received from the Colonel of the R.F. Artillery a simple and very kindly-expressed message. Deep sympathy will go out to our old African missionary in this time of great sorrow.”

United Methodist Journal: Thursday September 14th 1916 Edition

Loughborough Roll of Honour:

www.loughborough-rollofHonour.com

Sons of Jamaica: Roll of Honour

Jamaican Family Search:

www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com

University of Edinburgh Roll of Honour 1914-1919

Mike Whitworth – Manchester Museum

CAPTAIN HARRY PLATT MS, FRCS

Harry Platt, the eldest son of Ernest Platt, a master velvet cutter, and of Jessie Cameron Platt (née Lindsey), was born at Thornham, Lancashire, on 7 October 1886. His father later became chairman of United Velvet Cutters, Ltd, and both parents lived to be nonagenarians. Harry’s life was dominated by the development of a tuberculous knee joint at the age of five, though the diagnosis was somewhat delayed. As a result of this he was frequently confined to bed and his early education, which was notably catholic, was undertaken privately at home. He read widely and became quite fluent in French and German, as well as a highly proficient musician and pianist. The knee trouble precluded any active participation in sport though his three younger brothers excelled in athletics. Despite the knee problem he had a very happy childhood; but it is significant that, in later life, he remarked that his parents found it far harder to come to terms with his physical handicap than he himself did. Fortunately he was referred to Robert
Jones, the internationally renowned orthopaedic surgeon, for whom he formed a deep affection and from whom he received some of his later training.

Music became the passion of Harry's childhood, and in 1903 he prepared three compositions for the Mendelssohn scholarship which was won that year by George Dyson (later Sir George) who went on to become a distinguished composer and Principal of the Royal College of Music in London. After momentary indecision, and partly influenced by Robert Jones, Harry opted for medicine. On entering the Victoria University of Manchester without previous scientific training he had great difficulty with physics and chemistry. He was in the same year as Geoffrey Jefferson, the distinguished neurosurgeon, and they remained lifelong friends. They recall that there were three women student contemporaries who were then kept completely separate in their studies! After an outstanding undergraduate career, he qualified in 1909 from both Victoria and London Universities and secured the gold medal in London. After resident and registrar appointments at Manchester Royal Infirmary with Sir William Thorburn, he demonstrated anatomy in Grafton Elliot Smith's department at Manchester. He later passed the mastership and fellowship examinations, and secured the MD, Manchester, with gold medal, for his thesis on peripheral nerve injuries. His orthopaedic training was mainly at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in London, and in Boston, USA, with Elliot Brackett and R. B. Osgood at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Children's Hospital, whilst he also observed Harvey Cushing's neurosurgery at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital. In the days before travelling scholarships he depended upon his father's support and recalled how he had sailed from Liverpool to Boston on S. S. Franconia for £15 in a small first-class cabin. Whilst in Boston he read voraciously the orthopaedic journals in English, French and German, and deeply savoured the musical and operatic life.

On returning to England in 1914 he was appointed surgeon to Ancoats Hospital, Manchester, where he organised the first special fracture department in Great Britain. On the outbreak of the First World War he became a Captain RAMC and was appointed by Sir Robert Jones, the then Army consultant in orthopaedics, to be surgeon-in-charge of a military orthopaedic centre in Manchester. It was there that he acquired his considerable experience of nerve injuries and undertook studies in bone-grafting. He showed great organising ability and later described himself very truthfully as a contemplative man, more of a physician, and "not naturally a great craftsman." He later fostered many other institutions - the Ethel Hadley Hospital, Windermere, and the Children's Hospital at Biddulph Grange, Staffordshire. In 1920 he became consultant orthopaedic surgeon to Lancashire County Council and surgical director of the Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital, Oswestry, and in 1932 orthopaedic surgeon to the Manchester Royal Infirmary, subsequently to become its first Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery in 1939. He held all of these posts until his retirement and, with the inception of the NHS, he also served on the Board of Governors of the Manchester Royal Infirmary from 1948 to 1963. Between the two world wars Harry sometimes claimed that he had won the Ashes for England in 1932, having
declared one of Harold Larwood's knees as fit for the notorious "bodyline" tour.

During the Second World War he was consultant adviser in orthopaedic surgery to the Emergency Medical Service and an active member of innumerable government committees and other public bodies after the war. He had been elected to the Council of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1940, serving there for eighteen years and being Vice-President 1949-50 and President 1954-1957.

He had received the accolade of Knight Bachelor in 1948 and, as was then the custom, was awarded a baronetcy on completing the Presidency of the College. He also became a member of the Court of Patrons of the College and an honorary Fellow of the Faculty of Dental Surgeons and, quite exceptionally, continued to serve on one College committee until well into his eighties when he was also appointed a Knight of the Order of St John. He received honorary degrees from the Universities of Berne, Manchester, Liverpool, Belfast, Leeds and Paris; honorary fellowships of the surgical colleges of American, Canada, South Africa, Australasia and Denmark, and honorary membership of the orthopaedic associations and societies of most countries in the western world and of Latin America. He had been a founder member of the British Orthopaedic Association in 1916, its President in 1934-5 and ultimately an honorary Fellow. A founder member of the Société Internationale de Chirurgie Orthopaedique et de Traumatologie in 1929, he was its President from 1948 to 1953; he was also President of the International Federation of Surgical Colleges 1955-1966, and its honorary President from 1970. He had been a founder member of the Association of Surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland in 1919 and was President of the Royal Society of Medicine from 1931 and 1932. He contributed to nine textbooks on orthopaedic surgery and peripheral nerve injuries, and a list of all his publications is recorded in the Journal of bone and joint surgery, Harry Platt Birthday Volume, 48-B, No.4, November 1966.

As a man, Sir Harry displayed formidable energy and drive, both physical and mental, despite the handicap of a much shortened leg supported by an appliance. In early years he had a rather shy nature, married to considerable intellectual arrogance, making it difficult for many folk to get to know him well though friends became more numerous as increasing age brought greater intolerance. Many were greatly amused and enlightened by his astringent - often acidulous - comments on colleagues and affairs in general. Privately it was his firm belief that a committee of one was the quickest way to get things done! But his many great qualities of mind and heart, his organisational ability and his far-seeing philosophical outlook more than compensated for any abruptness.
of manner on first encounter. He married Gertrude Sarah Turney in 1917 and they had one son, who is a barrister, and four daughters. His wife predeceased him in 1980 after 63 years of marriage though for some time prior to her death she had been under institutional care. He continued to live alone with an ever lively mind and intellect, and he had a prodigious memory, even as he approached his century. Shortly before that he gave a five hour interview to a reporter from the British medical journal in which he showed a remarkable recollection of names and past events. His birthday was marked by an orthopaedic festschrift attended by surgeons from many countries - not a few of international renown. A dinner was held at Manchester University on the evening of Tuesday 7 October 1986, attended by a company of 338, with all of whom he insisted on shaking hands while seated in his wheel-chair. After several speeches and presentations had been made the hardy old warrior stood up and spoke for 25 minutes in a firm voice and without a note. A month later, in a last visit to his surgical alma mater he was entertained to dinner in the council room by the President and Vice-Presidents, and by four of the five surviving fellow Past-Presidents. When he died a few months later aged 100 on 20 December 1986 he was survived by his son, who inherited the baronetcy, and by his four daughters.

A memorial service was held in Manchester Cathedral on 6 March 1987 at which the address was given by A.H.C. Ratcliff, FRCS. A portrait by Sir William Oliphant Hutchison PRSA hangs in the College.

Mike Whitworth, Manchester Museum

TREKKING WITHIN THE NEPAL REGION

Shortly after New Year 1983, I was in my second year as S/Sgt in charge of Medical Supplies at the British Military Hospital in the Dharan Cantonment in Eastern Nepal. The cantonment had a number of recreational facilities; among them was a golf course. During a game with Major Richard Willis, a Welfare Officer with the Brigade of Ghurkhas, he mentioned that he was experiencing some problems with the accounting for medical supplies in the welfare centres in the foothills, and could I offer some advice. I replied that without seeing the problem at first hand it would be difficult for me to propose a solution. Richard had carefully baited the trap and I had stepped into it.

Dharan Cantonment

“I’ve cleared it with your CO for you to trek out with me to three Welfare Centres so that you can advise me on medical supply accounting, we can take Maureen (my wife) along as well if she wants to accompany us.”

And so it was, a week later that the three of us set out with six porters, to visit the welfare centres at Khotang, Diktel and Bhojphor. We drove about 40 miles by Land Rover along the East-West Highway, crossing the Khosi Barrage and, after a short break for lunch, started our trek. We climbed up ridge and down to the Sun Khosi,
which we crossed by dug-out canoe (a hollowed out log). We trekked on until early evening to our first camp on the Bhor Kola.

With one porter to as guide we left the others to break camp and pack the baskets. They soon caught up as we toiled uphill towards Khotang. This would take two days of hard walking, up and down steep gradients and crossing rivers on swinging suspension bridges.

The next day, after an hour’s walking we spotted the Welfare Centre at Khotang, high on a ridge on the distant horizon. It would take us the rest of the day to reach our goal. We arrived in late afternoon, tired after the hard slog and desperately in need of a shower.

Canoe across the Sun Khosi

One of the baskets carried by the porters contained a length of plastic drainpipe which I assumed was for one of the welfare centres. I was surprised when it was unloaded and opened to reveal a fine spinning rod. Richard duly assembled the rod and made his way to the riverside a couple of hundred meters away where he made his first cast into the rushing waters. Within minutes he had a bite, a 12 pound Mahseer which was greeted with great enthusiasm by our porters as this was to be our evening meal.

Welfare Centre

We were met by the local welfare officer, a retired Captain from King Edward’s VII Own, who showed us where to freshen up. There was a shower outside, but the water pressure was very low. I got in and under the slow dribble of freezing cold water, gave myself as good lathering. I called out to one of our porters who had been filling a bucket from a standpipe. Instead of just leaving the bucket outside the shower for me to rinse off the soap suds, he pulled open the door and threw the contents of the bucket all over me. I swear that the water was ice before it hit me!

After a good night’s sleep and a hearty breakfast I checked over the medical supplies and made a few notes. We said our goodbyes and headed off to

1st Stop

Trekking started in earnest the next morning. We were woken by a porter bringing a steaming mug of tea. Hot water for a quick wash, then breakfast of the remains of last night’s fish curry.
Diktel. The good Captain had advised that snow was due on higher ground so we trekked along the lower route to Diktel; this would add half a day to our journey but the prospect of snow along with the potential problems it would cause made the decision an easy one.

Porters on the way to Diktel

The forecast of snow was right. We woke the next morning to see the route we would have taken high above us glistening white in the early morning sunlight. Richard estimated that a meter had fallen during the night. The route took us across a number of suspension bridges across rivers, but eventually we began our descent into another river valley which would eventually lead to our climb up to Diktel. A fine drizzle started and when one of the porters slipped and fell, Richard took the decision to find us a house in which to spend the night. There were a number of houses dotted along the spur we were descending and we found a farmer willing to accommodate us for the night. One of the porters was sent off to Diktel to buy provisions for the rest of the trek and the remaining eight of us made ourselves comfortable on the veranda of the farmer’s house.

The farmer was of the Chhetri Caste as was our head porter, so he was allowed into the house to prepare a meal for us. A couple of chickens bought from the farmer were turned into a delicious curry which was shared by us and the farmer’s family. We were at about 8000 feet and as night fell so did the temperature. After a fitful night spent in the hay loft, Maureen and I woke to a frosty, bright morning. While the porters packed their baskets, Richard thanked the farmer for his hospitality and gave him some money for our use of his fire, water and his chickens. I took a photograph of his wife and family in the early morning light. (I later sent a copy of the photograph with a duty trekker up to the farmer). Then we went off down the ridge, across the river below and up the side of the valley to the welfare Centre at Diktel, where we arrived in the late afternoon. The next morning I inspected the medical supplies and watched the Welfare Officer paying pensions to the crowd that had gathered, each person signing, making their mark or applying a fingerprint against their name as they received their pension.

Pension Paying

We then set off for the two day journey to Bhojphur, reaching the highest point of our trek at 10,500 feet shortly before nightfall. We started out early next morning, with the knowledge that most of our day’s walk to Bhojphur, some 5000 feet below us, would be mostly downhill, a welcome relief after all the
steep climbs we had made over the past few days.

**Highest Point**

We stopped at a tea “basha” around mid-morning, and when Richard was ordering a round of tea, a Nepali burst out of the baha with a cry of “Willis Sahib!” He had recognised Richard’s voice and remembered him from Hong Kong some 8 years previously, when they were both serving in a Ghurkha Transport unit.

**Curious Kids**

We continued on down and on to Bhojphur where we arrived just before nightfall. While one of the porters prepared our evening meal, Richard sent out for a couple of bottles of Raksi, a local spirit distilled from millet, as a reward for the porters’ good work on our trek.

Maureen and I spent a comfortable night in the welfare centre guest room, and after breakfast I made my inspection and we continued out of Bhojphur towards Tribeni. This was to be our last camp site before returning to the cantonment in Dharan.

**Crossing the Dhud Khosi**

Tribeni lies at the confluence of the Sun Khosi and Arun Rivers, the Tamur River enters about 500 yards downstream, and Richard managed to hook another Mahseer for our evening meal. The next morning we crossed the high suspension bridge over the Tamur River and made our way to the point where our transport back to Dharan was to meet us.
Suspension Bridge

After about an hour’s walk we arrived at the base camp of the engineers building the road from Dharan to Dhankuta. The road was complete except for a bridge across the Tamur connecting the two halves of the road. A few hundred yards along the track we came to the bottom of the road from Dharan, and there, waiting patiently for us, was our driver and Land Rover, ready to return us to the Cantonment.

Nearly Home

Our trek was complete and I had a great feeling of satisfaction having travelled all the miles and met some interesting and wonderful people. I shall be ever grateful to Richard Willis for inviting my wife and I along on this journey into the foothills of the Himalayas. Our porters also deserve a vote of thanks. They carried our possessions, cooked our meals and generally looked after us. I shall never forget those two weeks in Nepal.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Trevor Mansell for this very interesting article and, if you have any more you wish to share with us Trevor, you know where I am.

MY TIME IN THE ARMY (CONTINUED)

John Silkstone’s story continues.

THE FIGHT AT OK CORRAL

This was not the famous OK Corral in Tombstone Arizona USA, where Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan Earp, together with Doc Holliday, fought the Clantons and McLaury’s on October 26, 1881. This was a collection of wooden fence post miles away from civilization, and the battle here was against the midges.

The Regimental Doctor and his crew met us with their face and arms covered in red blotches caused by midge bites. The doctor asked me why I didn’t appear to have been bitten. I informed him that one of the things I’d learned in Singapore was not to use insect repellent; instead I used lots of aftershave. The aftershave overpowers the scent of salt and sweat on your body, and the insects head straight for the nearest site they can smell, which is someone else and not me. That afternoon the doctor informed me that he’d not been bitten for ages and that the aftershave was working, and so another happy cowboy rode off into the west.

NIGHT FIRING

We moved from the OK Corral and headed into the middle of the ranges, where a night firing exercise was to take place. For those who have never seen a night fire, it is unbelievable. The whole of the night is lit up with
shell fire, and you can watch the light of the tracers as they head for their target. The targets were forty-five gallon oil drums filled with combustible material. You know when you have hit your target, as it blows up in a large ball of flame.

TAKE TWO ASPIRINS

The following morning we set off back to the main camp, and we were next to last to leave. REME were always last to leave in case a vehicle breaks down. Coming to the brow of one of the small hills, I spied a tank in the valley below. Stopping at its side, I inquired if anyone was injured. “No,” said the tank commander, “just a breakdown.” I jumped off the ambulance, and with a sticking plaster I stuck two aspirins to the side of the tank and said, “There, there, you’ll soon be better.” The driver pressed the starter and the tank roared into life. What the cause was I don’t know, but I do believe it must have been electrical and that the short stop had allowed the engine to cool down and reconnect the electrical circuit. Or is it that we medics can cure anything?

SPICK AND SPAN

The next two days were spent cleaning the ambulance down with large, high-pressure water hoses to remove every piece of mud and dirt from every nook and cranny.

The ambulance was replenished with new medical kit for the next users, and was then serviced by the REME while we went on a seventy-two hour pass. Using our North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ID cards, we went into America and stayed at the Holiday Inn in Great Falls Montana.

FALL IN

On the Saturday night, about 23:00 hours, I was drinking at the hotel bar when one of the staff informed me that there was trouble outside with some of the men. Going outside I found eight men swimming fully clothed in the hotel pool, which was closed after 21:00 hours. Beside the pool were two police officers with weapons drawn, shouting and screaming at the men to get out with very little success. I approached one of the officers and asked if I could take over, to which he answered, “Yes.” I then shouted, “You lot, out of the pool and fall in - in two ranks.” In no time at all the pool was cleared and the men formed up. I explained to the officers that we were only down for the weekend on R & R, and asked what they wanted to do about the incident. They were amazed at the speed with which the men had reacted to my command. I informed them that discipline was the backbone of the British Army, and that there would be no more trouble from the lads. At that, the matter was dropped, and once more peace reigned over the hotel.

THE MOUNTIES ALWAYS GET THEIR MAN

Still having a couple of free days I went fishing in the Saskatchewan River, I’d been fishing for about four hours when a member of the Royal Canadian mounted police pulled up in his car. “Morning Sir, do you have a licence to fish?” “Yes.” said I as I pulled from my pocket a day ticket. The officer looked at it and said, “This licence only allows you to fish in Alberta Sir.” “Yes.” said I, “but I am fishing in Alberta.” “Not strictly true Sir, the boundary line runs straight across here and you are on the bend in the river that is in fact in
NORTHERN IRELAND

I returned to 29 Field Ambulance to be told that I was to train the Gloucestershire Regiment in first aid, as they were going to Northern Ireland, and that I was to accompany them for their tour.

The first aid course was only a refresher course, as nearly everyone in the Regiment held First Aid Certificates.

Our time in Northern Ireland was spent at the police station opposite Divis Flats; The Flats were a social housing complex built on the edge of West Belfast’s Catholic area, near the city centre.

The British Army occupied the two top floors of Divis Tower as their surveillance centre, because of its commanding overview of Belfast City. One day the alarm sounded, and the ambulance, which was a converted Saracen, sped out of the gate - to collide with a VW Beatle. The driver stopped, and I told him to get going as a police officer had been injured in a blast down town. On our return, the local police stated that they were charging the driver for leaving the scene of an accident. I informed them of the facts, and that it was one of their own who had been injured, but they would not relent.

ALL’S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

The following afternoon, there was a march in the street. It was usual for the marchers to throw bottles of paint and paint stripper over the wall into the police parking area as they went by. The police began to move their cars from the police compound to park them in the ambulance compound, which was at the rear of the station. I quickly shut the gate to our compound to stop them entering. In the discussion that followed, I informed the police officers as my driver was being charged for helping only one of their comrades who had been injured, I was not going to be charged for helping more than twenty of them by allowing their cars to be parked in the safety of our compound. The charge against my driver was dropped and I opened the gate.

WHAT, NO DOCTOR?

One evening the alarm sounded; by the time the ambulance was ready to leave the location the doctor had still not appeared, so I went off to the accident without him. The casualty turned out to be a civilian who had been hit by a car, and by the shape of his right leg it was obviously broken. He refused to allow us to treat him, and so we waited until the civil ambulance arrived to take him to the hospital. After splinting his leg, they placed him on a stretcher - but, while placing him in the ambulance, one of the ambulance men slipped, throwing the patient off the stretcher and onto the floor.

On our return to base, the doctor was waiting. He informed me that he had been on the telephone, and by the time he’d got from the back of the building to the medical centre I had gone.

A couple of evenings later, the same type of incident happened again; once more I left without the doctor, who was taking a shower at the time.

Saskatchewan so do you have a licence to fish here?” My reply was no but he left me to fish there anyway.
THIRD TIME LUCKY

The third time the alarm went off, we ran out of the medical centre. As I ran to the ambulance, I was wondering if the doctor would make it this time. As I dived into the rear of the vehicle, there was the doctor lying on a stretcher reading a book. Looking over the top of the book he said, “You’re not leaving me behind this time, Sergeant Silkstone.” I gave him ten out of ten for initiative.

CAN SOMEONE STOP RINGING THOSE BLOODY BELLS?

While visiting one of the locations the RCT drive, I was walking past one of the walls when a bomb went off on the other side. The area was strewn with pieces of brick and rubble, and the driver and I were knocked to the floor. I was not injured, but I was disorientated - and there was a terrible ringing in my ears which lasted for about three days. The driver was hit by a piece of flying masonry, and thankfully his flak jacket saved him from serious injury. After being seen by the military doctors at Musgrave Park Hospital, we were both allowed back to camp.

DO YOU HAVE TO KNOW LATIN?

One night in the Sergeant’s Mess, I sat watching the quiz show Mastermind on television. One of the contestants was answering questions on mythology. As it’s one of my pet subjects, I was answering the questions before Magnus Magnusson had finished asking the question. After answering six or seven questions, I heard the alarm ring and ran to the waiting ambulance.

I returned from the call and went back to the mess, and as I sat talking a staff sergeant asked me if I had to know Latin: when he saw the doctor, he said, he could never read the doctor’s writing, yet I could and knew what treatment to give, and I had answered those questions on TV. Therefore, he thought, all medics must have to learn to read and write Latin. I decided not to tell him that doctors don’t write in Latin, and that after a while you learn how to decipher their scrawl.

IT ANGERED ME

The thing that angered me about Northern Ireland was that the other lads and I had to pay to be there.

Living in Germany, we had overseas allowance; whenPosted to Northern Ireland, this allowance was stopped. So in effect your pay was reduced for defending your country against terrorism and helping the police to perform their duty.

TOUR OVER, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

The tour over, I return to 29 Field Ambulance.

Jan and I were invited to attend the Back Badge Ball at the Gloucestershire Regiment in Minden. It was a great night, and we managed to win one of the prizes in the draw.

The following day we sat down to Sunday lunch when a car backfired; within a split second I was under the table, with visions in my head of the bomb incident back in Belfast. I will never forget the look of horror on Jan’s face as I climbed out from under the table. It then hit home how much she’d worried about my safety while I was away in Northern Ireland. I expect all wives worry about their husbands in such circumstances, but while performing my duty I needed my wits
about me and couldn't afford to think about the wife worrying back home.

That may sound hard and cruel, but self-preservation is a fact of life.

**ANOTHER HARDSHIP EXERCISE**

A couple of months after returning from Northern Ireland, we began preparations for an exercise in Denmark.

With the vehicles all packed, we waved goodbye to our families and set off on another arduous exercise. We headed for Hannover, Bremen, Hamburg, Neumunster and crossed the border at Flensburg.

We arrived at our military campsite to find that the cooks, who had been sent on ahead, had a hot meal waiting for us. The meal over, we started to erect the tents, and were told that everyone was confined to camp for the night. The following morning on parade, we were informed that this was to be a demonstration to our NATO allies, who would be arriving at the camp at 14:00 hours, and so we set about preparing the Medical, Surgical and Dental tents with all their equipment on show.

By 11:00 hours the job was complete, and I went for a walk around the area of our camp site. We were camped in a field next to a farm, and I could see carrots, potatoes, swedes and cabbages in the fields, and also an apple orchard. That afternoon we showed our visitors around the camp and invited the senior ranks back to the Sergeants Mess tent for a drink. The afternoon went well, and they left at 17:00 hours after inviting us to their Mess the following afternoon.

**HOW MANY DO YOU WANT?**

We were given the night off, and John Evens, Dodger Green and I went downtown for a drink and to see the sights. Dodger was talking to the barman in one of the pubs, and he told Dodger that he would pay twelve Krone for a bottle of whisky. At that time the exchange rate was seven Deutschemarks to one Krone, and a bottle of Whisky cost us DM5.75 a bottle, less than one Krone, so it wasn't a bad exchange. We then visited more pubs and collected more orders. The following night saw us downtown with fourteen bottles of Whisky, which we bought from the mess at the tot-age rate - a bit more expensive, but still giving us a good profit. The cash we made would keep us in beer for the next two weeks.

**I REALY MISSED THAT APPLE CRUMBLE**

Being on compo rations, a few of us went out one night to scrump (illegally take) the neighbouring farmer’s apples and vegetables for our meals.

The following afternoon, the aroma of apple crumble drifted over the camp and at 16:45 hours, the whole unit lined up for their evening meal, with mouths watering for the apple crumble. The main meal was laid out on the table, and we all strained forward to watch the cook take the crumble out of the field oven. He opened the oven door and, with an oven cloth held in his left hand, he withdrew the tray and slid his right hand along the cloth beneath the tray. All this was done in one swift professional movement. Suddenly the silence was shattered by a loud scream, and the cook stood up and tossed the apple crumble high into the
air. As all good things do, it spun over at the top of its arc and plummeted earthwards with its crumble side downwards. The tray hit the ground and spilled its contents into the earthen field. Not a word was spoken, we just looked at the dirt-encrusted apple crumble strewn on the ground. Meanwhile the Cook was dancing about like a North American Indian with his right hand tucked under his left arm pit; he ran over to a bucket of cold water and plunged his hand into it. It turned out that there was a hole in the cloth, and as he slid his hand along the cloth, his middle finger went through the hole. This meant that the burning hot tray was now resting on his naked finger. Every time I think of this incident I have a re-run of the whole scene in my mind, and I can’t help laughing.

WE’LL SHOW THEM HOW IT’S DONE

Thursday afternoon saw a number of the Danish Army members back in the camp for a drink, and they saw the Tug of War rope and asked what it was used for. We informed them that it was a sports item and explained the basic rules of Tug of War. They asked if they could have a go, and so we accepted a challenge at their camp for Saturday afternoon. As they had never played the game, we thought it would be good afternoon’s practise for us. 14:00 hours saw the rope laid out and the marker lines drawn. Their team was about the same weight as ours, but we had the advantage of knowing how to play the game. The referee dropped his arm and both sides started to pull. In no time at all the opposition was marching backwards, pulling our lads over the marker and losing us the point. ‘Beginners luck’, we told our team, and they went into the next pull with a vengeance. After losing six successive pulls, the team decided to call it a day and we all retired to the mess for a drink. There it came to light that, though they had never played the sport of Tug of War, part of their training to keep fit was for a group of six to pull a large heavy tree trunk around the camp, giving them some idea of how to pull heavy weights.

ONCE MORE INTO THE NAFFI

On the following Monday, Sergeant Evens had to go back to 5 Heavy Regiment Royal Artillery, who were stationed at Hildesheim, to collect more rations. Dodger and I gave him some cash to purchase more whisky from the NAFFI.

THE ONE THAT DIDN’T GET AWAY

While John Evens was getting the rations, some of us went off to do some sea fishing. Dodger had never been sea fishing before and soon got bored. Having nothing better to do, he attached a piece of chocolate to his hook and hung it over the side of the pier. It hadn’t been in the water long when he called out, “I’ve got a bite,” and began to pull his line in. Attached to the line was a very large crab; the line had got entangled in one of its claws, and with its other it was holding onto the chocolate and eating it. I’ve seen fish caught with all sorts of baits, but this was a first. Dodger asked me what the metal silver thing was that I was using. I informed him that it was called a spoon, and that when you reel your line in, it spins in the water and attracts the fish. “Can I have a go?” he asked, and so I gave him a quick lesson on how to cast and reel without getting a birds nest (the line tangled into knots). Dodger brought back his arm, and with one almighty thrust he
sent the spoon sailing off into the sky in a large arc. I couldn’t believe my eyes - he’d let go of the line too early, and the spoon was a lot higher that it should have been. All of a sudden, a seagull swooped down and grabbed the spoon in flight. The seagull was now hooked and it flew around the sky with Dodger still holding onto the rod and shouting for help. By the time I retrieved the rod, the seagull had flown off taking all the line with it. Because of the cost involved, I never took Dodger fishing again.

WATCH OUT MISTER!

The rest of the lads went off for a drink and I stayed fishing. A young lad approached, and said, “Big wave coming in soon mister.” I looked up, but couldn’t see anything so carried on fishing. A few minutes later I looked out to sea and saw a wave about three metres high heading towards shore. It was so near that I knew I couldn’t outrun it, and so I unzipped my combat jacket, stuffed my fishing kit inside, I then zipped up the jacket a round a stanchion and hung on. The wave crashed over me, but thankfully the stanchion took the force and I was simply soaked to the skin. Back at camp I undressed to go for a shower. On removing my clothes, I found that I was pink; I was wearing a red vest and underpants, and the dye had run and dyed my body.

ARMY CATERING CORPS or ANDY CLIDE’S COMMANDOS?

John returned and we sold the spirits. With some of the profits, we purchased five kilos of Rump Steak and some mushrooms for the Sergeants’ Mess. You can imagine the surprise we got when we found out that the cook had cut the steak into small pieces and made an all in stew out of it. Once again, our culinary hopes had been dashed.

DO WE HAVE TO GO?

Wednesday was a terrible day. We were forced against our will to visit the local Carlsberg Brewery and sample their product. (Honest! Would I lie to you?)

There were thirty of us on the trip, and after a walk around the factory we went to the reception area to sample the brew. After an hour, we’d drunk the whole month’s supply of beer allotted to visitors. Some of the lads started singing, “Oh, why are we waiting?” It was at this point that the General Manager walking by and inquired what the matter was. When he found out that there was no more beer for the visitors, he signed another chitty for a further supply of beer ‘for our NATO friends’, as he put it.

Thursday was spent packing for our return trip, and by 07:30 hours on Friday we were headed for home. The journey back didn’t take long and, once the vehicles were unloaded and the kit stowed away, we drove off home for a nice relaxing weekend with our families.

REMEMBER TO EMPTY YOUR POCKETS

Jan went through my pockets before doing the wash and found the itinerary of events. Later she asked me about the exercise, and how it went. I told her we were on the go most of the time and never got a minute to ourselves, just like any other military exercise. “Oh! So on all these exercises that you go on, you never visit the local brewery, or go fishing and spend days having fun, do you?” she said, throwing the itinerary into my lap.
Being a man of sound mind and judgement, I thought the wisest choice would be to take her out for dinner.

TEARS OF JOY

I was the secretary of the Airfield Lodge RAOB (Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffalos), and it came to the lodge’s notice in 1975 that a sergeant and his wife had been bringing their seven year old boy into Rinteln hospital to see the Ear Nose and Throat Specialist because their son was deaf. The Specialist informed them that the boy was not totally deaf, and that a special hearing aid would help him to hear. However, the hearing aid was not available on the National Health Service and the cost of the item was over a thousand pounds. One of the lodge members managed to get the address of the manufacturers, and I wrote to them to ask if we could purchase a hearing aid at cost price, telling them why we wanted it. This was done, and the hearing aid was presented to the Specialist, who duly fitted and adjusted it to the boy’s requirements. His parents were overwhelmed that someone who did not know them would go out of their way to help their child. It was a happy and tearful meeting, and both parents were ecstatic to know that their son could now hear the world around him.

A NEW CAR

I purchased a new Hillman Avenger estate for the splendid price of nine hundred and ninety-nine pounds. Chrysler had brought out a new model, and the car I bought was the last one in the old style. As it was a new estate car with only five miles on the clock and I was getting it for nearly four thousand pounds cheaper than the cost price, I wasn’t too bothered about the style.

Trevor Llewellyn, the RCT sergeant, drove me to the port of Bremerhaven. I collected the vehicle from a large car compound outside the port gates. I then drove into the port, around the island and, before leaving, showed my papers to the customs, man who stamped them as a vehicle being imported into Germany, and so I didn’t have to pay import tax on the car.

LEARNER DRIVER

I bought Jan an old V.W. beetle for a hundred and fifty Deutchemarks, so that she could take driving lessons. It was a tatty old thing, and the REME lads did it up for a few beers. I purchased a tin of apple green paint and re-sprayed the car; it looked respectable, and Jan was pleased with it.

Two months later there was an article and a photograph of the car in a German Motor Magazine, and within weeks there were lots of apple green cars driving around Germany.

WELL DONE LAD, WELL DONE

Steve Langford was one of the RCT drivers who lived in the flats above us, and he would take Jan out for driving lessons. One day he came to work, and in the mail he received a letter from the Sun Newspaper informing him that he had won their competition to have a house built anywhere in the UK. He was overjoyed, and had his house built in Scotland.

SOME DAYS ARE GOOD DAYS, OTHERS ARE UNBELIEVABLE

It was wintertime, and Prince Rupert School was closed for the Christmas
The playground was a sheet of ice, so one Sunday I took Jan onto the ice and taught her how to drive out of a skid. On the Monday, I was driving into work and went into a skid. I tried to drive out of it, but went into a 180° turn and could no longer control the vehicle. I went off the road and bumped into a tree, which damaged the back end of the vehicle. My first thought was, well, that’s the insurance going up next year. That evening I was driving home in heavy snow when I was hit in the rear by a German driver. We pulled over to the side of the road to assess the damage. The driver was the proprietor of one of the local garages, and he suggested that we didn’t contact the insurance companies, but that I take my car to his garage and he would do all the repairs for free and give me a courtesy car while it was being done. I got my car repaired and didn’t have to make an insurance claim; I couldn’t believe my luck.

28 FIELD AMBULANCE

One Friday night we travelled to 28 Field Ambulance for a Sergeants Mess games night. On the way, Del Burgess asked if I wanted to buy his old Ford Taunus 17M. He had been given the car by his father-in-law and it wasn’t working properly. I eventually bought the car for fifty marks, and wrote a bill of sale on the back of a cigarette packet.

I was on duty that Sunday and asked the REME lads to have a look at it. A few minutes later they were driving around the camp. They informed me that the distributor leads had been put on in the wrong order, and that the vehicle was now tuned and running perfectly. I bought them a crate of beer each and they told me that for an extra five crates they would give it a full service next weekend and re-spray it for me.

A few days later I drove a pillar box red car home. We put L plates on it, and Jan went out for a drive. She soon got used to the column gear change and thought that the car was fantastic. Four of us in the flats would go out for a drink on a Sunday. A few months had passed since I bought the car, and this day I was the duty driver: it was my turn to drive while the others three drank beer.

While we were sitting in the pub, a German approached and asked who owned the Ford Taunus outside. He then offered me a thousand Deutschemarks for it. I sold him the car and wrote him a bill of sale on a beer mat. He went off with the car, and even left money for our taxi home. I don’t think Jan has ever forgiven me for selling that car.

BEST THING I EVER DID

At a party on New Year’s Eve 1975, Jan asked what my resolution was for 1976. I told her that I would give up smoking. She laughed at this, because at the time I was smoking eighty Capstan Full Strength a day. I was determined to give up and so I did. I’m pleased to say that I have never smoked from that day to this.

BELFAST REVISTED

I went off to Fallingbostel to train the lads of 5 Regiment Royal Artillery on first aid as they were off to Northern Ireland and I was going with them. Like the Gloustershire Regiment, this was just a refresher course.

Outside the Sergeants Mess sat two twenty-five pound field guns. The site of these guns brought back the memories of my Artillery days. I was
looking at the guns when the RSM walked out of the mess and said, “It’s no good looking at the guns Sergeant Silkstone, you medic’s wouldn’t know what to do with them.” “Is that correct Sir.” I said, “Which of the six positions on the gun would you like me to take, the loader, the firer or would you like me to lay in the firing range?” The RSM gazed at me in surprise as I carried on, “Medics have to know about all weapons as they have to make them safe if they are brought into a Field Ambulance.”

The RSM walked off without saying another word.

Since my last visit to Belfast a few more notices had appeared on the bulletin boards, one of which was the following.

**MURPH’S 20 LAWS OF OPERATIONS IN THE PROVENCE**

1. Remember that the lowest bidder makes your weapon.
2. Automatic weapons usually aren’t.
3. Suppressive fire usually won’t.
4. When in doubt, empty the whole magazine.
5. Incoming fire has right of way.
6. A sucking chest wound is an indication that you have lost the fight.
7. If the terrorist is in range then so are you.
8. Don’t look suspicious it draws fire.
9. Never draw fire as it irritates those around you.
10. Try to look unimportant. The IRA is short of ammo.
11. Team work is essential; it gives them something else to shoot at.
12. Anything you do can get you shot, including doing nothing.
13. Never take cover with someone who is braver than you
14. The only thing more accurate than incoming fire, is incoming friendly fire.
15. The easy way is always mined.
16. If the battle is going well, it’s a meticulously planned and carefully coordinated operation.
17. If it isn’t, then it was a surprise ambush by heavily armed superior forces.
18. When you have secured an area, don’t forget to tell the enemy.
19. Your H. Q. General public and the press are only interested in the reporting of your success stories from the front line troops. It is therefore in everyone’s interest to ensure that all those engaged in the courageous and decisive battle, come up smelling of roses.
20. Finally, the senior person present gets to fill out all the incident reports, apportion any blame to be had. Is nominates for any medals or honours going about and writes the history books. If that’s you, remember not to be too bashful about your own heroic involvement in the thick of the action.

**BMH Iserlohn**

In late 1976 I was posted to BMH Iserlohn as NCO I/C Reception. On arrival I was informed by the RSM that I was to help organise the Christmas draw for the Sergeants Mess.

**BEG, BORROW or STEAL**

After settling my wife and family into a flat, I went into the town of Iserlohn and into one of the big stores. I asked if I could see the person in charge of window dressing. Herr Schroeder introduced himself, and I asked if he had any extra Christmas decorations that we could use for decorating the Sergeants Mess. I also asked him if he and the store manager would like an
invitation to attend our Christmas function, together with their wives. This he accepted, and he informed me that he would send a vehicle with the trimmings and staff to put them up. The vehicle arrived the following morning, and by 12:00 hours the mess was decorated with flashing lights and an assortment of Christmas decorations. The RSM was amazed that I had got so much done in such a short time.

My guests enjoyed the night so much that the mess was given a discount account at the store. I therefore put their names forward to become honorary members of the mess, which was sanctioned.

ALL THAT FOR TWO BOTTLES?

In the New Year I arranged a cheese and wine party in the mess, and my account for the function was two hundred and fifty deutschmarks (about £45). I contacted a German friend in Rinteln who was a wine distributor, and asked him if he would like to do a wine tasting at the mess; this he accepted.

On the night of the function there was a table with a selection of 29 cheeses. Johan arrived with thirty-five cases of red and white wine, together with two assistants to distribute it. The night was a great success, and at the end of the wine tasting I spoke to the RSM and informed him that Johan had one hundred and fourteen bottles of wine left and he was willing to let the Mess have them for two bottles of whisky. The RSM said, “Give him three, and one each for the two helpers.” So another good time was had by all.

A GOOD CAUSE

In the hospital grounds was a building known as the Rib Cage, which was sometimes used by the junior ranks to hold functions. One weekend, I and three others members of the RAOB got together and organised a social to raise some cash for the local orphanage. When we went to present the cheque for one thousand four hundred Deutschmarks (about £250) we were informed that if they received the cash they would have to pay tax on it – if, however, they received gifts like timber for the boys to make things with, or bolts of cloth for the girls to make dresses with, then no tax was paid.

We cancelled the cheque, and from that day on we supplied the children with the things they wanted. We even organised a group of twenty volunteers to paint and decorate the home, and presented the children with a new disco system and a hundred records.

TOO LONG IN THE TOOTH

By now I had given up football refereeing and was no longer fast enough to be in the rugby or cricket teams. In the hockey team I had been dropped back from being a striker to being the goal keeper. Mind you, being in the hockey team did have its rewards, as we would travel to Berlin to play the military hospital team. On one of these trips I saw Rudolf Hess, who was treated at the hospital whenever he was sick.

I though it a pity that a man who was considered to be mentally unstable and had spent most of the war locked up as a prisoner in the Tower of London was still in prison thirty-two years later, being used as a political pawn by all the four powers in Berlin.
TOO CHEAP, MY FRIEND, TOO CHEAP

Tony, the NAAFI Manager, asked me if I knew where he could get a cheap car; he only wanted it for six weeks until his new car would be delivered. For five hundred Deutschemarks, I sold him the Green VW that Jan had been driving. Two weeks after receiving his new car he asked me to sell the VW, as he had advertised it but no one appeared to want it. I found out that he was trying to sell it for a quick sale for one hundred and fifty Deutschemarks - so cheap that people thought something was wrong with it. I advertised the car for sale at one thousand, two hundred and fifty Deutschemarks or nearest offer. Within three days it was sold for seven hundred and fifty Deutschemarks.

SEEN ON NAAFI NOTICE BOARDS

Anyone found a small brown and white puppy please return to ????????. If you wish to keep the puppy, could you please come take the small child that is crying at home. He can be collected from the above address.

This one was from me and sold the car mentioned above.

For sale
One crate of Herforder Pils at 1,250 deutschemarks or nearest offer. The crate is locked in the boot of a 1965 green V.W. beetle. The purchaser of the crate of beer can have the car for nothing.

MENTAL TELEPATHY DOESN’T WORK

Jan was sitting her driving test. In Germany the examiner sits in the rear of the car and the instructor sits in the front with the driver, as they are in charge of the vehicle and are covered by the vehicle’s insurance. It began to rain as Jan started her test, but soon stopped. However, Jan was concentrating that much on her test that she forgot to switch off the windscreen wipers, and they kept on going to and fro and making a screeching sound. The passenger is not allowed to give advice to the driver whilst taking the test, and so I sat there trying to project my thoughts to her to switch off the wipers.

The test over, Jan was informed that although she had passed the test, she owned her husband ten deutschemarks for new set of wiper blades.

ANOTHER CAR

Now that Jan had passed her driving test, I looked around for a better vehicle for her. One of the lads was being posted to BMH Colchester and the RSM told him to get rid of a Ford Escort that was not running and was parked in the hospital grounds. I spoke to the lad, and he told me that the engine was cracked, and that I could have it for nothing as he wanted it off his hands. I had the vehicle towed away and went to the local scrap yard to look for a descent engine, but was unlucky.

A few days later I was on duty in reception when the ambulance was called out for a Road Traffic Accident. It turned out that one of the lads had rolled his Ford Escort car, which was only a few weeks old. He only suffered minor injuries but was kept in hospital for observations; the car however, was a write-off.

The following morning the insurance assessor arrived at the hospital to talk to the driver. I also had a word with the
assessor, and bought the write off for two hundred and fifty deutschemarks, cash.

The gearbox, engine, five new tyres and all other salvageable extras where placed into the old Escort, and Jan more or less had a new car.

**WATCH THE BIRDS SWIM**

The children wanted a pet, and so I purchased two budgies that we named Billy and Jinny after their great aunt and uncle. One day I was cleaning out the fish tank and the birds were out of their cage. I jumped back from the tank in fright as Bill dived into the water. I instantly thought that he had died in flight and had fallen into the fish tank. It's not often I'm right, but I was wrong again, for Bill surfaced and leapt onto the tank's rim. He sat there and preened himself, and then once more dived into the tank and flapped his wings below the water as if swimming. It wasn't long before Jinny was doing the same.

It became a regular thing for the girls to bring their friends round to watch the two birds swimming.

**I REFUSE TO PAY**

In 1978 I was posted back to England to take over the Medical Centre at the School of Infantry at Warminster in Wiltshire.

Before departing Iserlohn I was given a cleaning bill for five hundred and twenty-five Deutschemarks, as the flat I was leaving was dirty and would have to be cleaned before it could be occupied again. I refused to pay the bill, and was taken before the Colonel to explain. I stated that in my entire army career, which spanned nearly twenty-two years, this was the only occasion that I had been billed for leaving a dirty dwelling behind. I did not believe that the flat was dirty, and therefore requested an inspection of the flat by one of the hygiene personnel. This was done, and the flat found to be clean and fit for habitation, and so the bill was cancelled. I found out later that the civilian inspector was removed from his job, as the local cleaning firm he contracted to do all the cleaning turned out to be his brother-in-law. It made me wonder how many others before me had been caught in the same scam.

**I'M BETTER THAN SHERLOCK HOLMES**

I drove the Avenger loaded with gear while Jan drove the Escort. While driving down the autobahn, Jan flashed her lights, so I pulled in at the next stopping area. Jan said she could hear a funny noise in the car. She went off with the children for a drink while I drove the car around the car park to find out what the noise was. It turn out that it was the bird in its cage on the back seat. It had a play ball with a bell in it, and it kept picking it up and dropping it. Another case solved.

**SORRY, YOU CAN'T COME IN**

Before reporting to the School of Infantry, I took three weeks leave so that I could redecorate our house in Gainsborough to our taste.

When we arrived home, the council was still renting out our house, even though they had been notified of our return three times and I had their letters of acknowledgement. I booked us into the White Hart Hotel and went round to the council offices. I was informed that there was difficulty
finding accommodation for the family who were living in the house, and it would be a month before they could move the family out and decorate the house as per our agreement.

I informed the council staff that if it was only going to take four weeks, then everything would be okay, as I was stopping with my family at the White Hart Hotel and they would be paying the bill for the two rooms for the next four weeks. They asked if I could return to the council office at 15:30 hours. At 15:30 hours I was informed that the house would be vacated on Monday morning and that the weekend bill for the hotel would be paid for by the council. Furthermore, as they would not be able to decorate the house, they asked if I would accept five hundred pounds in lieu. I accepted the cash, as I was going to decorate to our taste anyway.

CARRY ON REGARDLESS

By now the house was decorated and the electrical goods out of storage and all was well. Jan took her UK driving test and failed. Before starting off, she checked the two wing mirrors and the rear-view mirror as was required by law in Germany, but didn’t look over her right shoulder as was now the new law just passed in England. I asked what happened now that she’d failed her test. The examiner informed me she could go on driving on her international driving licence, but would have to re-sit the UK driving test to get a UK licence.

I found it hard to believe that someone who had failed their driving test could not be stopped from driving because they held an international licence that could be renewed every year.

M.R.S. WARMINSTER

Jan and I wanted our children (notice I call them children; kids are the young of a nanny goat) to have a good education, and so it was decided that she would stay at home, while I would live in the Mess at Warminster and commute home every other weekend. This arrangement would avoid another change of schools for the children.

I reported to the Medical Reception Station (M.R.S.) at the School of Infantry, and spent the next few days taking over the inventory of the five-bedded ward and the four other medical centres of which I was in charge. My two medical orderlies were Lance Corporal Andy Mace and Private Andrew (Andy) Gormanly. The night duties of the MRS were done on a rota basis between us three medics and the three Regimental medics of the Infantry Demonstration Battalion (IDB) in Battlesberry Barracks, which was a mile up the road.

The day to day running of that medical centre was left to Sergeant Dave Harrod, who was a bandsman from the Royal Anglians and played the trumpet. His corporal was Gordon Coppersthaite, and the lance corporal was Keith Bowen.

THIS COFFEE’S LUMPY

Gordon and I were keen fishermen, and one day he said, “If you want a drink of coffee, it’s in the flask.” There was a flask on the ground near his tackle and so I picked it up and poured some out, then said, “This coffee’s a bit lumpy.” He replied, “Bloody hell, the wife’s taken my coffee to work.” Anyway, the mulligatawny soup was great.
THE BIG HOUSE

We also fished in the grounds of Longleat House. We’d been fishing there for a few weeks, when one day the lady who came round to collect the day fishing tickets asked us if we wouldn’t mind giving the lads a hand to net the bottom lake. The netting was to capture the large fish and place them in the middle lake, so that the smaller fry would have more room to grow. We agreed, and the following Saturday saw ten of us netting the lake and removing all the fish over three pounds in weight. It was also that day that I found out that the lady who collected the ticket money was no other than Lady Virginia, the wife of Sir Henry Frederick Thynne, the 6th Marquis of Bath. As of that day we were given permission to fish the large boating lake at the top of the estate, which was not open for public fishing at that time. I also helped out with any fishing work that was required on the estate.

OLD SCHOOL TIE

One of the ways in which the School of Infantry complimented its sportsmen was to present them with a School of Infantry Tie. You cannot purchase this tie, and it is held in high esteem by all who have been presented with one. I was presented with my tie for all the hard work I put into getting the Army Chiefs of Staff to realise that fishing in the army was a sport. After I had spent nearly six years writing letters and attending meetings along with others, a survey was undertaken; its conclusion was that over seventy two percent of the armed forces went fishing on average once a week, be it coarse, game or sea fishing. Though fishing is not a physical sport, it was now accepted as an army sport.

LET’S FIND OUT WHAT CAUSED THAT BUMP

One day the civilian ambulance driver Tommy Love was out on the ranges, and was half under his Land Rover ambulance doing something to the exhaust when a driver jumped into the next vehicle and drove off. He encountered a bump and, wondering what it was, he reversed back to find out what had caused it. In doing so he felt another bump. It turned out to be Tommy’s legs, which were sticking out from under his vehicle. Fortunately the ground below Tommy’s legs was soft, and he suffered no serious injuries; he did, however, have a beautiful bruise that resembled the tyre track of a Land Rover.

WHO’S EATING THE SOAP?

Each day, on my inspection of the MRS, I would check that there was a tablet of soap and clean towels at each wash hand basin. Suddenly the soap and boxes of tissues in the store room began to dwindling away. After making inquiries into their disappearance, it turned out to be the locum Doctor. He had been doctoring in a Leper colony for ten years, and he would wash his
hands after seeing every patient, whether he touched them or not. He also had a pocketful of tissues which he used when opening and closing doors.

WELL I'M NOT A ROCKET SCIENTIST, AM I?

Another locum, who was a retired headmaster, would leave the patient sitting in his office while he went over to the NAAFI shop to purchase his lunch. He also liked baked potatoes, and would put one in the oven on a very low setting. Gordon came across and saw the baked potato in the oven; he thought that it would never cook at that setting, and so he turned the oven up to its full capacity. Later in the morning there was a terrible smell, which was followed by a muffled explosion from the kitchen. On investigation it was found that the potato had exploded. Gordon made a quick exit from the MRS, but was told to come back that evening to clean up the mess. The doctor was not amused.

SABRE’S GOT SHARP TEETH

The camp was patrolled by guard dogs from the dog section. A dog called Sabre had the reputation of being vicious and always going for everyone but his handler. The dog was so bad that, when his handler was on leave, he was placed in a special cage that allowed the handlers to feed him in one side, and close a dividing door so they could clean his cage out. One day the telephone rang. It was Lance Corporal Ron Dietz on the line, and he informed us that Smith 48 (his last two numbers, as there were seven Smiths on camp) had gone into Sabre’s cage to clean it out after being told not to do so. The ambulance was dispatched, and came back without any patient.

On arrival at the dog section, Andy Gormanly found Smith 48 sat on the floor with his arm around Sabre’s neck. The dog seemed quite happy to sit there and lick his face and ears, but growled when anyone else approached him.

WHERE’S TONY?

Brian Smy one, of the REME sergeants, told me that he’d received a telephone call from Tony, a signals sergeant that we both knew. Tony was coming down on Sunday for a game of golf. Brian had been to the club house and booked the first tee for ten o’clock in my name. Tony turned up at the mess on Sunday morning and I drove us both up to the golf club. After changing I went outside and the Club Professional and Club Captain asked if they could make it a foursome. I agreed, and the captain asked me where Tony was. I looked over my shoulder to see Tony coming out of the locker room. “He’s here,” I said.

The pro and the captain looked at each other and the pro said, “I thought you were playing with Tony Jacklin?” “I am,” I replied, and then the penny dropped. Because I lived in Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, and the professional golfer Tony Jacklin was born just up the road in Scunthorpe, they thought that my friend Tony Jacklin was thee Tony Jacklin. To make it more embarrassing, there were about a hundred and fifty people waiting at the first tee to watch the game.

The Pro and Club Captain saw the funny side of it, and we had a good game.

Back in the Sergeants’ Mess, Brian was having a good laugh; he’d a good idea what would happen when he
booked the tee and told the pro the name of the player I was partnering with.

**MESS DINNER**

There was a Sergeants' Mess farewell dinner for one of the Warrant Officers, who was retiring after twenty-five years’ service. Mess etiquette says that you cannot leave the table until the RSM and the Guest of Honour depart.

The dinner being over, I sat and drank port while the others smoked their cigars. I was desperate for the toilet, and I told Brian Smy that I was off to the loo. He warned me that if I left I would be given extra duties by the RSM. The call of nature was too strong, and so I stood up and left the room. I could feel every eye in the room burning into my back. Nature’s call being over, I returned to my seat. A little later, the RSM stood up and retired to the downstairs bar and we all followed. I was standing at the bar with pint in hand when I was tapped on the shoulder and informed that RSM wished to speak to me. As I placed my pint on the bar, the lads began taking bets on how many extras I would get. Standing in front of the RSM and waiting for a roasting, I was amazed when he said, “Sergeant Silkstone, I must praise you for your diligence to duty. I couldn’t help but notice that when Staff Sergeant Walker took ill, you also left to see to him. How is he by the way?” Quickly thinking on my feet, I replied, “If you will hold on for a minute, Sir, I will phone Lance Corporal Mace and inquire how he is, as by now he should have been seen by the doctor.” “Don’t bother,” he said. “I know he’s in capable hands.”

I did phone Andy Mace and asked about S/Sergeant Walker. He informed me that he had been seen by the doctor Captain Kathy Dent RAMC, and that he was only suffering from a severe case of indigestion. I returned to drink my pint, and the lads were all waiting to hear how many extras I’d received. “None,” said I with a smile on my face, and left it at that.

*(To be continued)*

**WOULD YOU BUY A CAR FROM ANY OF THESE?**

One of the gentlemen submitted the above picture along with the title. It would appear quite apt if you know those in the picture.

The picture was taken in August 1992 in the Garrison Mess at Bulford. Left is WOI Harry Wigham who was being dined out on promotion to RSM with a TA unit. WOI Roger Simpson - who sent the photograph - was also being dined out as RSM 16 Field Ambulance on posting to CMH Aldershot as RSM and, WOI Dave Hulme was being dined in on promotion as RSM 16 Field Ambulance.
POPPIES WAVE

The work consisted of a sea of ceramic red poppies, which were individually hand-made at Cummins' ceramics works in Derbyshire, and some at Johnson Tiles in Tunstall, Stoke-on-Trent. The poppies were added to the installation progressively by volunteers. The 497,000 kg of the Etruria Marl-based Etruscan red earthenware used, as well as the majority of the manufacturing equipment and materials, was supplied by Potclays Limited in Stoke-on-Trent. There were eventually 888,246 of the flowers, representing one count of the number of British and Colonial military fatalities in World War I. The sea of flowers was arranged to resemble a pool of blood which appeared to be pouring out of a bastion window (the "Weeping Window").

Members of the public had been able to pre-order the ceramic poppies for £25 each, with a share of the proceeds (estimated at more than £15 million going to six service charities: COBSEO, Combat Stress, Coming Home, Help for Heroes, the Royal British Legion and SSAFA.

At around sunset each day between 1 September and 10 November, the names of 180 World War I service personnel, nominated by members of the public to appear on a Roll of Honour, were read aloud by a Yeoman Warder, followed by the Last Post bugle call.

14-18 NOW

14-18 NOW is the UK’s official arts programme marking the Centenary of the First World War.

14-18 NOW is a UK-wide curated programme across all the art forms with a specific set of aims. This programme is curated by the Director of 14-18 NOW, guided by a team of Artistic Advisors and overseen by the Board.
The Board commission artists from all art forms (including visual arts, film, theatre, literature, mass-participation events, music, fashion, digital projects, poetry, dance and opera) to make new work inspired by the period 1914-1918. All of the projects are co-commissioned in partnership with cultural and heritage organisations across England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. Engaging people through the arts is a powerful way to bring the past to life. With no serving survivors left to tell the stories from the First World War, the arts are an effective way to engage contemporary audiences, especially those who currently feel little connection to the First World War. This programme is indebted to the vital role that artists – poets, painters, film-makers and others – have played in shaping public perceptions of the First World War.

14-18 NOW is funded by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund and Arts Council England, and by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. We also rely on additional funds that come from a range of sources including public funding, trusts and foundations, individuals and corporate supporters. The list of current supporters is here. Fundraising is overseen by the board, under the chairmanship of Vikki Heywood.

14-18 NOW main legacy will be the impact on individuals who experience our commissioned events. The commissioned arts projects will form a body of work which will have shed light on many different aspects of the First World War. Many of the works will have a life lasting long into the future. More broadly, the heritage and contemporary arts sectors will have developed new ways to collaborate, bringing the past to vibrant life for today’s audiences.

14-18 NOW is a programme of extraordinary arts experiences connecting us all with the First World War. Our programme takes place from 2014 to 2018 and is timed to mark the centenary of the war, which engulfed Europe, Asia and Africa from 1914 to 1918.

We are commissioning artists from all art forms to look afresh at this conflict and create shared experiences exploring this significant moment in time. 14-18 NOW has commissioned over 140 artworks to date, which have gone on to be seen by more than 30 million people in total. We work with cultural organisations across the UK to commission new art, theatre, film, dance, digital, music, poetry and mass-participation events.

We firmly believe in the transformative power of the arts to bring the stories of the First World War to life. Perceptions of the war have been shaped by the artists of the time, including poets, painters, photographers and film-makers – many of whom served and who reflected on the war and its effects. One hundred years later, today’s artists are opening up new perspectives on the present as well as the past.

**LINCOLN CASTLE POPPIES WAVE**

The Poppy Wave opened at Lincoln Castle on Thursday 26th May 2016 specially presented by 14-18 NOW to mark the Centenary of the First World War.

A sweeping arch of bright red poppy heads suspended on towering stalks, the sculpture is from the exquisite display of Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red by artist Paul Cummins and designer Tom Piper. Wave and its sister sculpture Weeping Window were
Initially conceived as the key dramatic sculptural elements in the installation, which was shown at the Tower of London in 2014.

The two breath taking sculptures are being brought to venues across the country for the public to admire. And for the remainder of 2016 Lincoln Castle is the only place in England to host the poppies.

14-18NOW is very grateful to the Backstage Trust and Clore Duffield Foundation for their support in securing these sculptures for prosperity.

Lincoln Castle was selected by the 14-18 NOW because of the County of Lincolnshire war time connections with World War One.

1916 was a turning point within the four terrible years of the First World War, that saw the country begin to change in every conceivable way. Lincolnshire has strong connections with both world wars and, during the first, Lincoln castle was used by the Lincolnshire Regiment and for fundraisers and parades.

Lincolnshire engineering companies who had formerly revolutionised agricultural machinery carried on innovating, moving from tractors to tanks. It was during this period that the first operational tank was developed by Fosters of Lincoln, went into full production, and was first used on the Somme battlefield. Between 1915 and 1919 Lincoln became one of the largest centres of aircraft production in the world.

A veritable army of Lincolnshire women – the munitionettes - many as you as 14, moved into the towns and factories of Gainsborough, Grantham, Grimsby and Lincoln to make tanks, aircraft and munitions.

There were also 37 military aerodromes across the county by 1918 and this number grew in WWII. Many Aviation heritage sites remain, including the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

The People of Lincolnshire are thrilled that the Wave has come to Lincoln Castle in 2016. Seven Lincolnshire Battalions fought at the Battle of the Somme in 1916 and on 1st July, the first day of the battle, 1,000 Grimsby chums took part in the attack, 502 becoming casualties. Having the poppies ascend the Castle’s south wall is a fitting tribute in this 100th anniversary year.

The castle is also home to one of only four surviving 1215 Magna Cartas.

We were graced with the presence of Ray and Ann Turford during their recent short visit to the UK. Ray, Ann, Gloria and I went along to see the “Poppies Wave” at Lincoln Castle. The location of the wave within the castle grounds was very well thought out. The pathway leading to the “Poppies Wave” gave the individual the feeling of being in a trench. To the left was an earth embankment and buildings to the right. Having walked along the pathway for a short distance, one got the feeling that where the poppies climbed up the castle embankment towards to the castle wall, my mind’s eye replaced a soldier for each of the poppies and envisaged them walking along the trench and clambering up the ladder and disappearing over the top and a lot never to return.
On completion of the 14-18 NOW programme the Wave and Weeping Window will finish in the Imperial War Museum North and Imperial War Museum London in autumn of 2018. The sculptures will then be gifted to the Imperial War Museums.

The Veterans Welfare Service (VWS) is committed to enhancing the quality of life for veterans and beneficiaries of Veterans UK pensions and compensation schemes, and all their dependants.

Contents

It also provides support to enable the seamless transition from service to civilian life, assist bereaved families or respond to life events that present welfare needs. It achieves this by facilitating access to all appropriate services.

VWS caseworkers offer one to one professional help and guidance by telephone, or if needed, during a home visit.

Under Veterans UK, the VWS works in partnerships with the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force, ex-service charities, statutory and non-statutory bodies, local community service providers and the Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committees to deliver a quality welfare service that promotes independence, maintains dignity and provides continuous support through life.

Contact

The VWS has 4 Veterans Welfare Centres, providing advice and support across the UK.

Centurion (London, SE and SW England)
Tel 02392 702232
Email: veterans-uk-vws-south@mod.uk

Kidderminster (South and Central Wales, Midlands and East England)
Tel 01562 825527
Email: veterans-uk-vws-wales-mid@mod.uk

Norcross VWC (NW England, Yorkshire and Humber, North Wales and IOM)
Tel 01253 333494
Email: veterans-uk-vws-north@mod.uk

Glasgow (Scotland, NE England, NI and ROI)
Tel 0141 2242709
Email: veterans-uk-vws-scot-ni@mod.uk
If you are supporting a veteran and need further advice, the VWS may be able to help.

To locate your nearest centre, call our Veterans UK helpline on: 08081914218.
Further information can be obtained from: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/veterans-uk

**TURNING OF THE PAGE CEREMONY – WESTMINSTER ABBEY**

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<tr>
<td>Sat 1 Oct 16</td>
<td>253 (NI) Med Regt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sat 3 Dec 16</td>
<td>DCHET</td>
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DCHET – Defence Centre for Health Education and Training (the new phase 2 training establishment at Whittington Barracks, Litchfield).

The Books are now located at the front of Westminster Abbey under the RAMC windows.

The Ceremony always starts at 1100 hours sharp.

Those wishing to attend should be in at the designated location before 1045hrs so that they can be in position and, if they need a seat then earlier as there are only approximately 20 seats.

Those attending should state that they are attending the RAMC Service and will be allowed in.

**COMBAT STRESS – THE VETERANS’ MENTAL HEALTH CHARITY - “SAVES LIVES”**

Right now Combat Stress (CS) are helping almost 6,000 UK Veterans get their lives back. As ex medics a large number of us have never dealt with PTSD and would not be able to recognize the signs and symptoms. We know that the trauma battle inflicts on veterans goes deep. It can often lay hidden for years, but when it shows its head, the results can be devastating. Outbursts of anger against the ones you love the most. Depression which can take you on a downward spiral with the end result of committing suicide. Sufferers contemplate leaving home.

The number of veterans needing help is increasing each day. According to recent reports, thousands of soldiers who served in Iraq and Afghanistan could experience some form of mental health problem – many of a very complex nature – due to the deeply disturbing experiences they had whilst serving. CS received 2,328 referrals in 2014/15 for veterans seeking mental health support from CS.

With our help CS can engage with veterans one-to-one and promise them that CS will stick with them through the worst, until they are well again.

I ask, that if you are in a position to make a regular monthly gift of:

- **£5.16** - a month for a year can help pay for 2 hours of Helpline calls.
- **£9.94** - a month for a year can help pay for an hour with a psychologist.
- **£23.52** – a month for a year can help pay for 3 hours of occupational therapy.
Then please contact **01372 587 152** and make the necessary arrangements to make a regular monthly gift.

If you wish to make a donation, then please visit CS website at

https://www.combatstress.org.uk/support-us/donate/

**TINSEL & TURKEY – BLACKPOOL**

I have extracted the following post which was placed on the AMS Veterans FB Group by David Sidebottom.

“Hi all,

Ray Dagwell and his wife Jenny, have offered the use of their hotel The Brooklands in Blackpool for a Tinsel & Turkey for AMS family and friends, 18th to 21st November, 3 nights all meals and breakfast on the Monday, to see you on your way home.

The weekend programme is appended below. Bar and Cabaret. over 50’s. No children. Chill out with friends before the Christmas festivities begin. Cost for the Tinsel & Turkey weekend is £120.00 per person. To book your room please contact Ray on 01253 351479. We have booked and looking forward to seeing some of you there.”

David Sidebottom"

**CANOE CHALLENGE**

Andy Game posted the following Post on AMS Veterans FB Group in relation to the last Canoe challenge. Well done to all involved in this very worthwhile cause.

Well after an amazing effort by the last Canoe Challenge team who raised an amazing £3358.44 in July (all sponsor money now in) the target of raising £6.5K for Bike tours for the Wounded has been smashed to over £8.5k and I have decided to raise the target to £10K.
A massive thank you to the guys and girls who smashed the challenge and
went on to raise so much sponsor money for the group.

Also a massive thank you to everyone who has taken part in events I’ve organised or who just donated. This money goes to funding our Wounded Injured and Sick Veterans and Serving Servicemen and women on amazing life-changing motorcycle trips. Your help is very much appreciated by them and by me.

Thank you!
I have a few more events planned for this year:

In September I’m walking the whole length of Hadrian's Wall.
In November I’m flying to Barbados for the festival of running and running in 3 races!

Rest assured that I fund all my events from my own money and ALL donated/sponsor money goes to Bike Tours for the Wounded for their sterling work with our WIS.
If you would like to help by sponsoring my efforts please follow the link below. Even a pound helps......and it’s easier than doing 22 press ups and the direct effect of helping a WIS is achieved!

Thank you!

https://www.facebook.com/andygame1/posts/10153721924090846

Keep up the good work Andy.

THE LETTER – (UNABRIDGED)

Brian Wilson who is works with SSAFA Forwarded me the following which he felt should be shared amongst us all.

If you feel that you would like to support SSAFA in helping these families then please visit the links below.

“Dear Friends and Colleagues

My son told me about this audiobook, but was so moved by it – he bought it for me also and pestered me to download it. I am so glad that he did, it comes with a health warning – have a box of tissues handy!!


http://www.audible.co.uk/search?x=7&y=11&ref_=a_mycart_fi_tseft&filterby=field-keywords&advsearchKeywords=stanley+Wilson+the+letter

This is marvellous, though a fictitious moving account of a mother writing to her son who was killed after an heroic action in Afghanistan shortly before endex!! And the affect his death had on his family. Many families of service personnel will relate to this as will those roughly toughies still serving. Certainly at SSAFA we have been privileged in helping these families

The music as well as the narration is evocative and tasteful and I warmly commend it.

All proceeds from the sale will go to SSAFA – there is also an American version and proceed will go to their Veterans charities I will send it also to my American cousins.

Well done Siobhan!

Hopefully friends will share this amongst their friends and so forth, to boost SSAFA’s funds

Brian Wilson”
THE WHEREABOUTS OF JAMES & JENNIFER BENSON

I have received a request from Keith "Taff" Richards a former member of the Corps in the format of an email which I have appended below:

"Hi Mick,

It's ex 23290342 Corporal Keith 'Taff' Richards founder of 6 Field Ambulance Veterans Association. I wonder can you help me, or advise me accordingly. I am endeavouring to find Jennifer Wright, the daughter of the late Lt Col Edwin George Wright OBE, the last CO (1953-59) of 6 Field Ambulance, Thornwood Camp, Near Epping, Essex. At the time of the Colonel's death in 1981 she was married to Brian James Benson who lived in Sheffield. Since 1981, I know they lived in Cheshire and had two sons. Mrs Benson would now be in her mid to late seventies. The main reason to track her down is to become Patron of our little Association due to our high regard all personnel in 6 FA held for Colonel Wright.

I know it is a long shot, but with your contacts in the RAMC who knows?

In Arduis Fidelis

Taff Richards"

If per chance any member knows the whereabouts of James and Jennifer, would you kindly contact me on michael.mccran@gmail.com with their contact details.

BIMONTHLY MAGAZINE – MILITARY JOURNAL AUGUST 2016

I have received from the editor of the E Magazine Military Journal issue 04 August 2016

Members can access the latest version of the new layout E Magazine Military Journal by clicking on either of the links below which will enable you to download and read the magazine in either the PDF or flip-over format.

PDF
https://www.dropbox.com/s/b8i4k59zet0g97w/Military%20Journal%20August%202016%2004%202106.pdf?dl=0

Flip-over
http://online.pubhtml5.com/ehqh/fjp/

Enjoy the read.

ASPRAY – LOSS ASSESSING AND PROPERTY INSURANCE CLAIMS MANAGEMENT

I published in the August 2015 edition of this newsletter a personal account whereby I used a Company called Aspray, which dealt with my insurance claim as a result of an arson attack on a vehicle parked on the street directly outside my house. Damage was caused to my property and Aspray helped me immensely. They;

a. Removed the stress of dealing with my insurance company

b. Prepared my claim and presented it to my insurer to achieve the maximum settlement due.

c. Oversee vetted contractors who operate with a current Public Liability
Insurance cover - to ensure your property is reinstated as you would want.

If any member were to suffer from a fire, flood, water damage, storm or impact to their property then may I suggest you use Aspray.

**ASPRAY’S 5 Simple Steps**

**STEP 1** - Call Aspray on 0800-077-6705 and our experienced claims handlers will book an appointment with a dedicated local project manager to handle your claim with care.

**STEP 2** - Our project manager will arrange an appointment to assess the property damage.

**STEP 3** - A detailed schedule of works and damage report will be prepared for your insurers and the project manager will meet with the appointed loss adjuster to negotiate and agree repairs or reinstatement.

**STEP 4** - All damages and repairs are carried out by vetted contractors, overseen by our experienced project managers.

**STEP 5** - Aspray invoice your insurer direct when all repair works have been completed and you are satisfied with the work, leaving you only the insurance excess to pay.

To obtain further information on Aspray go to;

www.aspray.com

When the project manager became aware that I was an Armed Forces Veteran, and administered a group of ex RAMC Veterans, he suggested that I applied to become an “introducer.” The application has been processed and am now classed as an introducer.

Should a catastrophe befall any member of our Group and, if they were to use the facility offered by Aspray, they need to just quote RAMC REUNITED when registering.

On completion of the insurance Company settling up payment with Aspray, a percentage of the payment will be paid into the RAMC Reunited Funds.

Please find appended two attachments to this newsletter relating to this article.

**MESSAGE OF THANKS FROM SAM BATTY AND FAMILY**

Sam Batty contacted me on 29th August 2016 and requested that I publish through the various media outlets on behalf of him and his sons their gratitude and they would like to thank all the friends who kindly passed on their condolences and sympathy on the loss of Pearl.

Sam informed me that £1,200 was received in donations and the family are very much appreciative to all those who donated. He and the boys each donated £100, thus making the grand total £1,500. Sam has split the amount evenly £750.00 and the beneficiaries are;

Royal National Institute for the Blind

and

Diabetes UK

**ADEN – CORPORAL STEVE HARDWICK**

Graham (Spot) Mottley who served in Aden as an 18 year old has asked if
the following could be published in the RAMC Reunited Newsletter.

“Steve Hardwick was killed in Aden on the 9th September 1966. He was a Corporal who was 25 years of age. He was killed whilst carrying out hearts and minds campaign within the local population. As a young lad on my first active service, he was one of those NCOs that you looked up to. I just cannot believe it is 50 years.

We will never forget you.

RIP Steve.

ABSENT BRETHERN

Rob Findlay
Aspray can help you experience a less stressful property insurance claim for your home or business

If your home or business has been damaged life can be stressful enough without the added pressure of dealing with tradespeople and insurance companies.

If the worst happens, Aspray can help you achieve the best settlement from your insurer and return your home or business back to normal as quickly as possible.

Our efficient and professional service is of no cost to you as we will invoice your insurer directly for all property reinstatement and repairs. *

Aspray uses only vetted contractors to ensure that the works are completed to the highest standards.

Call **0800 077 6705** or visit [www.aspray.com](http://www.aspray.com)

*Any excess stated within your policy will still apply.

**Aspray will give you £100 towards your insurance excess when you instruct us to manage your claim and all reinstatement works have been completed. Terms and conditions apply.

Aspray is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for claims handling only.
Top tips for a tip top property

They say prevention is better than cure. That is certainly the case when it comes to your property. By carrying out these simple tasks you can safeguard your home or business, making it secure and ready to withstand the worst of the weather.

**Roof:** make a visible check of your roof to ensure there are no slipped tiles. High wind could blow tiles off the roof, damaging whatever they hit, as well as increasing the chance of leaks

**Drains and gutters:** ensure that drains and gutters are clear and silt-free

**Walls:** make sure your damp proof course is not bridged by debris

**Garden:** prune any trees near to your property to prevent branches falling onto walls or into windows during high winds

**Security:** check that your security lights and their sensors are working properly

**Garage/shed:** ensure the locks on outside buildings are in good working condition

**Water:** check your stopcock and review the insulation of the pipes and tank in the roof – a cold snap could freeze the tank. It is also a good idea to get your central heating boiler serviced regularly

**Electric:** check plugs and sockets for cracks and damage. Have them replaced if necessary. Check your fuse box and make sure you have spare fuses to hand

**Alarms:** regularly check that smoke alarms are working – if you do not have them make it a priority to install them. If you have a burglar alarm ensure it is serviced

**Insurance:** make sure your property is fully covered and any valuables or additions, such as a new conservatory or extension, are included on your policy. Ask yourself if the value of your insurance covers the cost of replacing your property and its contents. If you are unsure then you should speak to your Insurance Broker

Call 0800 077 6705 or visit www.aspray.com

Please retain and submit in the event of a claim

This voucher entitles you to £100 off your insurance excess when using Aspray to take care of your property insurance claim.

Aspray can help smooth the claims and repair process on property damage insurance claims when you instruct them to act on your behalf. Aspray will help secure a fair settlement from your insurer and oversee local contractors to complete repairs to the highest possible standard.

Contact us:
Call 0800 077 6705
Visit www.aspray.com

Please note voucher can only be used on claims valued over £1,000.

Terms & Conditions (1) To redeem simply hand this voucher to your Aspray representative. (2) This voucher is only redeemable when you have instructed us to manage your property insurance claim and all reinstatement works have been completed. (3) One voucher only per claim (4) Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. (5) This voucher has no monetary value but can be used to reduce excess on your claim by £100. (6) This voucher expires on 31/12/2017. Further excess may apply.
Loss assessing and managing property damage repairs
We care

Aspray is a leading loss assessing and property insurance claims management company specialising in property reinstatement for all types of residential and commercial property, from flats, mobile homes and static caravans to shops, offices and industrial buildings.

“Following an underground water leak in the garage I contacted a local plumbing firm who were unable to rectify the problem. I then contacted Aspray who were very helpful and assured me that they would claim back the cost of any works from my insurance company so I need not pay any monies up front. They inspected the damage to the property the same day and the leak was located, repaired and all re-instatement works carried out within one week of initial contact. A very courteous and efficient service.”

Miss Sarah George, Cheadle, Staffordshire
Supporting YOU at point of claim

Five simple steps to access our expert help:

- Call Aspray and our experienced claims handlers will book you an appointment with a dedicated local project manager to handle your claim with care
- Our project manager will arrange an appointment to assess the property damage
- A detailed schedule of works and damage report will be prepared for your insurers and the project manager will meet with the appointed loss adjuster to negotiate and agree repairs or reinstatement
- All repairs are carried out by vetted contractors, overseen by our experienced project managers
- Aspray invoices your insurer direct when all repair works have been completed and you are satisfied with the work, leaving you with only the insurance excess to pay

If your home or business has been damaged, we can help you achieve a fair settlement from your insurer and, working with vetted contractors, we will ensure that repairs are completed to the highest standards.

At Aspray, our friendly and approachable team means that you can relax in the knowledge that you will receive a professional and efficient service for any commercial or residential property insurance claim. Our experience of dealing with loss adjusters, insurers and tradespeople helps ensure a successful outcome and no-hassle approach to reinstating your property.

Our network of project managers across the UK and Ireland means that we can be there to help you wherever you need us, providing a one-stop-shop for all your property insurance claims and building repair needs.

Safe Hands for Your Claim

Aspray offers a personalised service so your dedicated project manager will invest time in understanding the problems you face, and will present your claim to your insurer in the best way to help ensure success.

Our experience means that we know how to see a claim through from start to finish, keeping you updated throughout the entire process. More importantly, we listen to your needs and respond efficiently and without any cost to you for our service."

*Please note any excess stated in your insurance policy will still apply. Aspray is paid direct by your insurance company.*
For your home or buy-to-let property

Your home is your sanctuary. Fire, flood, water damage, storms, impact or criminal damage can threaten that in an instant.

If the worst happens, Aspray helps you to achieve a fair settlement from your insurer and ensure your home returns back to normal as quickly as possible. Our efficient and professional service is of no cost to you the customer as we invoice your insurer directly for all property reinstatement and repairs. Aspray will also save you time and hassle and ensure your home is repaired to the highest possible standard.

We understand how distressing it can be when your home is damaged and we help take the stress out of those situations.

"I would like to thank you very much for the superb job you and your company provided. From the first call to Aspray to the completion of the repairs, you have acted in a thoroughly professional manner and certainly took all of the hassle off ourselves. We are delighted with the result and would like to thank you and your tradesmen again."

Mr N Smith, Didsbury
When your home has been damaged, coping with the disruption and inconvenience is stressful enough; dealing with loss adjusters and tradespeople is extra pressure you could do without. That's why Aspray will:

- Visit the property and carry out a thorough assessment of the damage
- Prepare a detailed schedule of works and damage report for your insurer
- Meet the loss adjuster, where required, to negotiate on your behalf and agree repairs
- Manage vetted tradespeople and suppliers to complete repairs to the highest possible standard
- Invoice your insurer for all completed works

Hassle-free
When you appoint Aspray, you will be expertly guided by our team at head office and assigned a dedicated project manager to handle your claim.

When you instruct Aspray to work on your behalf, you can be sure that your property is reinstated to the highest possible standards and within the shortest possible timeframe. All our skilled tradespeople are thoroughly vetted by our professional team to ensure they meet our high standards.

Cost-free
Aspray will work on your behalf to negotiate a fair settlement while you focus on getting back to normal. A dedicated, local claims project manager will prepare a detailed schedule of works and present a professional claim to your insurers, maximising your chances of a successful outcome. We will deal with your insurer, and any matters relating to your claim, at no cost to you.*

*Please note any excess stated in your insurance policy will still apply. Aspray is paid direct by your insurance company.
Aspray takes care of managing your property insurance claims so that you can concentrate on running your business.

Aspray specialises in loss assessing and handling property reinstatement for all types of commercial premises including buy-to-let properties, warehouses and offices.

“When my offices suffered flood damage, Aspray took control of the claim and ensured my staff were back at work sooner than if I had tried to take care of it myself.”

Mrs Edgerton,
Overcoming Obstacles
Your business is your livelihood. If your premises are damaged, keeping things on track can be demanding enough without the added distraction of managing tradespeople and dealing with your insurance company.

At Aspray, we understand that your company needs to remain operational. We focus on minimising disruption to your business so that you can focus on running it.

We are committed to attending commercial properties swiftly and one of our dedicated claims project managers will liaise with your insurance provider, their loss adjuster and all the tradespeople required. You can rely on an efficient turnaround and high quality repairs, from quote to completion, saving you time and enabling you to concentrate on your core business. We can even negotiate loss of rent and business interruption claims on your behalf to help minimise the financial impact of any incident involving property damage.

Landlords
Aspray takes care of all types of buy-to-let properties covering both residential and commercial buildings. Whether you are a full or part-time landlord, we understand the importance of handling your property insurance claims with absolute care and attention.

In the event of property damage, we will ensure that your property is reinstated as soon as possible so that your building can be occupied, therefore minimising potential loss of revenue. We can also deal with any loss of rent as part of your insurance claim process.

Why Aspray?
- We work on your behalf to help ensure a fair settlement for you
- We aim to remove the hassle and disruption of insurance claims
- We work with reputable, vetted contractors to produce high quality repairs
- We are committed to reinstating your property to its previous condition
- There is no cost to you as we are paid by your insurer for any property repairs we complete*

*Please note any excess stated in your insurance policy will still apply. Aspray is paid direct by your insurance company.
Caring for property insurance claims

Call 0800 077 6705
Email info@aspray.com
Visit www.aspray.com

Aspray is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority for claims handling only.
Registered address: Fell Side Farm, Church Lane, Whitechapel, PR3 2EP
Registered in England No. 5448533