

Two Platoon Roll Call



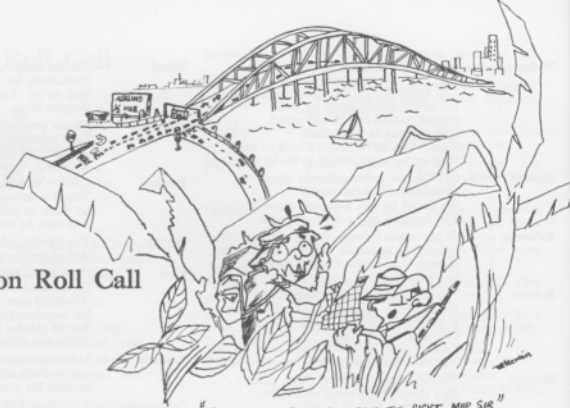
- Millar** — One-armed bandit king. A newly-wed, who decided six months was enough.
- Cormack** — Been for six months in the game, Sapper Dave was his name; All the way from SME, Just to be in infantry. He hated all admin, this was true, But loved the Yank and Aussie brew.
- Sherriff** — A short short-timer. None of us was in love with the place, but that was ridiculous.
- Johnson** — Often seen with sack of smoke grenades over shoulder. Assisted in creating dusted-off Dustoff. Last seen heading for 1ARU for more marshalling training.
- Brown** — Known to us as "Secret Squirrel," But always got us out of peril; You heard his voice o'er the battle's din, "Have you had your paludrine?"
- Williams** — The major's forward commentator. Still says he does not need to diet.
- Michie** — Armoured Scot. Bemoaned the fact he could not wear his kilt on ops.
- Hollis** — Shop steward rather than mess steward. Conscientiously objected to officers' messes.
- Perry** — One Section, their brave corporal, His trigger finger's something awful; In Saigon he gained his fame, "Shotgun Perry" was his name.
- Inall** — "Strike me pink, Blue, another fair dinkum banana bender." At his best on a pub crawl.
- Harding** — Often suffered from damaged hand between ops. Would have carried beer in his water bottles if he'd had the choice.
- Renata** — Chippie lead scout. When farewelled from New Zealand was wished best of luck fighting his "enemy friends." Also told if he died he would be a dead loss.
- Orbell** — Fitness fanatic, so went off to be battalion 2IC's batman.
- Allan** — Man with biggest collection of pawn tickets in South-East Asia. Appeared to be trying to put Gillette out of business.
- Wilson** — "Four-and-a-half." Philosophy on life: If it does not move, eat it. If it's green, bank it.

- Bayler** — Allan couldn't beat 'em, so joined 'em. Living proof of way Army can change you.
- Wiki** — Only man in platoon with "all the gears." If you could not get it through maintdem, you went to Ben.
- Whibley** — Long, lean and mean. Reason the CSM was always saying, "Shut the boozer."
- Johnson** — "Johnno" came to us late in tour. Any shorter, and it would have been "Snow White and the eight dwarfs."
- Leatham** — "Silver". Old man of platoon. If you ever needed a drink you went to him for a transfusion. Left us to man the powerhouse and ensured the lights failed every night.
- Ferguson** — Joined late from W Company. Is New Zealand that bad?
- Dil** — All that time as a clerk trying to be a rifleman. We spent all that time as rifle-men trying to be clerks!
- Dolan** — Corporal Dolan led number two, Sometimes happy, sometimes blue; From Kampong Blightly with wings, he flew, To try to tame a Kiwi crew.
- Smith** — Heard to say after one shot: "He's dead." Our answer to the people sniffer.
- Parfitt** — Angry young man. Disagreed with everything. We believe he's been commissioned to rewrite the Code of Military Law.
- Martin** — "Surfie" Martin, rarely in water, Often drank more than he oughta; At opening cans he was a master, At dodging work there was none faster.
- Shields** — Never tired of telling us about Blenheim and its 2000 hours of sunshine a year. Only man in company with animals for pinups.
- Powell** — "Aussie" was platoon's poet. Hobbies included eating, sleeping, cutting hair and playing guitar or mouth organ. Somehow or other also found time to carry an M60.
- King** — Joined us late in tour. At the end, the only task "Oddjob" hadn't done was section commander.
- Barron** — V Company's answer to Twiggy. How lucky can you be—as thin as that! Turned 21 in bush and lost R and C.
- Maui** — Never without a smile. Came to us from artillery, and was only man to fire M72 like mortar.
- Tither** — An original. Wounded twice, but still stayed with us, so we came to conclusion he liked Vietnam.
- Lowry** — Platoon's early RSA rep. Next woman he meets he may really marry.
- Tabere** — Asked why he did it, his immortal reply was: "I'm cracking up, Sergeant Major." Last seen heading for 28 days' leave in Vung Tau.

- Walker** — William Walker, now there's a bloke,
Tall as a mountain, sturdy as an oak;
Led Three Section through months of hell,
But at the end he drank up well.
Pushed, pulled, cursed and yelled,
Half a dozen he had felled;
Then down he went like a sack of sand,
Half empty can clutched in his hand.
- Sciascia** — In Malaysia, we heard news blue,
"Your 2IC will be a screw;"
We found he was a damned good bet,
The squarest screw we'd ever met.
- Robinson** — "Tiger" was always trying to put on
weight so he could get wet under the
shower. His karate displays kept the big
fellows away.
- Roberts** — "Herbie Baby" carried the gun,
We tended to think he was number one;
If he saw Charlie on patrol,
Charlie got a 6ft hole.
Lack of hair, he could boast,
'Cause on his chest he had the most.
- Beverley** — "Aussie" Beverley, from Down Under,
He's the one that made us wonder,
What it was we had to do,
To make a Kiwi out of "Roo."
- Horne** — Six months it took to grow his mo,
Then off to Bangkok he did go;
The girls they said, "Drink with me, Toff,
When you've shaved the damned thing
off!"
- Shand** — Platoon medic who went to bat for major.
Fortunately for his peace of mind, he got
back to us. Last seen being chased by a
chopper blade.
- Framheim** — All the way from Rarotonga,
Used to eating fish and Conga;
Now he's over here bush bashin',
Living off Australian ration.
- Kerikeri** — Used to be with 161,
Wasn't a helluva lot of fun;
So down to Victor he did come,
And then he said, "What have I done?"
- Brown** — The platoon LAD. Usual dress to Horse-
shoe showers—towel and sack of grenades.
- Hapi** — Came to us from Whisky One,
So we put him with the gun;
When our tour over there was through,
He hoped to go to Whisky Two.
But on the day we left the place,
Willie was there to join the race.
- Fountain** — Left after eight months and cried all the
way to Surfers' Paradise. We did not ap-
preciate his postcards.
- Sammartino** — Another Ack FO. There was some doubt
about his nationality, but one thing was
for sure; he was not a wild colonial boy.
- Golebiowski** — With a name like that, it had to be short-
ened to Ski. We hoped the Aussie beer
would treat him better than the Yank beer
at Long Binh.



"AND THE BARREL COMLADE YOP?"



Three Platoon Roll Call

"SERGE SAYS CHECK YOU GOT THE RIGHT MAP SIR"

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| Kellett | — Commander (when we let him). Will be remembered mainly for his sweet tooth and tantrums on the arrival of supplementary ration packs. Main theme: "Where the heck are my Hershey bars." | culinary ability was related totally to whichever can he opened. |
| Deazley | — Short-timer. Commonly known as "Diezel" (drank it if there was nothing else available). Always muttering: "There's too many crooks in this outfit." | Horn — The absent-minded professor. Would you believe on various occasions he left behind his map, pack, shirt, trousers, wallet, rifle and even a member of section. However, still hotly denies he left behind in the bar a full can of beer. |
| Connor | — Our first platoon sergeant. Unable to recognise airplanes. When due to go to Vung Tau on R and C climbed on to the wrong plane, ending up in Malaysia where, by happy coincidence, his family was waiting. | Tipa — "Gentleman John" had two main interests, gambling and guitar playing. Guitar playing far outshone gambling ability. Often seen coming out of "Rice's Casino" weeping as he tallied his losses. |
| Cooper | — Appeared to possess life membership card for wet canteen. Sobbed violently in beer every time heard the call, "Time gentlemen, please." | Sturgess — "Evil," but never caught. Living example that crime does pay. |
| Goodall | — Part-time radio operator, who spent most of that time counting off the days to go. | Rangiotheriri — Proprietor of "Rangi's Tavern." Ability to provide alcoholic refreshment at any time of day or night would have been envy of prohibition bootlegger. |
| Liddall | — Other radio operator, who either talked into the radio or ate. Even the two Charlie abused him when he had an accidental discharge during a contact. | Ormsby — Every time a parade was called found it necessary to go to the pay office to sort out some misunderstanding. Fond of anthills. |
| Curtis | — Platoon barber and local authority on other sex. To obtain one of his professional neck-trims one had also to endure a full resume of dealings with latest bird. | Fraser — Could be seen cleaning out the cell before company barbecues, muttering, "Better get my bed space ready for tonight." |
| Smail | — Platoon commander's batman and self-professed gourmet of platoon. Popular opinion in platoon headquarters was his | Mortenson — Platoon wit, but often believed to be half hearted. Will be remembered for desire to go surfing in the "South Shiner Cheese." |
| | | Riley — A true-blue (or green) Irishman. Often found to be plagued by leprechauns, especially after company barbecues. |

- Tocher** — Normally recognisable by the number of belts of ammunition strung all over him. Bought (under strong pressure) last ticket in a raffle — Guess who won and whose birthday it was that day.
- Driver** — Our very own Perry Mason. Normally acknowledged as being the private soldiers' union consultant. However, history of successful cases was abysmally low.
- Collins** — Hunter of renown. Believed keen to be model for Barry Crump's "A Good Keen Man." Only time got upset was when suffered from laryngitis.
- Noble** — A quiet fellow was "Scoobie" until the time he found a black lacy bra hanging on a clothesline in a VC camp. Begged to be allowed to conduct a one-man sweep.
- Miligan** — Wherever there was a job to be done, there he was. Jack of all trades, master of none. Tracking ability referred to in another part of this chapter.
- Paora** — Had everbody puzzled over insistence in volunteering for sentry duty — until the day the Vietnamese kids came and asked for their empty Ba Me Ba bottles back.
- Rice** — One hundred and forty-third fastest gun in Vietnam. Had to be protected during operation of local casino.
- Ruru** — "Bugsy" Ruru seemed to have secondary occupation of selling protection to patrons of Rice's Casino.
- Coombe** — Though an Aussie, was, in fact, very pro-NZ — demonstrated by the frequency with which he donated large sums of money to the Public Account.
- Hotene** — Shortest lead scout in company. Took delight in moving through bushes with low branches and watching everybody's struggles to follow him.
- Crowther** — Generally regarded as rather intelligent, until we found out he volunteered for second tour in Vietnam!
- Wetere** — Happiest in favourite hobby—chain-sawing rubber trees in the Dat. After felling one on section commander's tent, innocently asked, "Was that the tree you wanted cut down?"
- Barber** — NCO of old school. While practising helicopter and APC drills was heard to mutter: "Push button bloody warfare. It wasn't like this in my day. Volley — FIRE."
- Davies** — Big, with a matching appetite. Went off to instruct local ARVN. Soon found they couldn't afford to feed him so back he came.
- Lee** — Unofficial platoon PRO. Did most of this duty in or around bars in Saigon or Vung

Tau, where he could often be observed trying to win somebody's "heart or mind."

- Thompson** — Believed to be distant relative of John Paul Getty. Drank beer as if it was going to go out of style, yet still managed to remain wealthiest member of platoon. Suspected of being silent partner in Rice's Casino.
- Tewhata** — Suspected of being main supplier and chief patron of Rang's Tavern. Philanthropist who donated most of profits to Public Account.
- Eder** — Platoon intellectual. Frequently found weeping with frustration owing to the difficulty in holding an intelligent conversation with tent-mate (name withheld by request).
- Mato** — Went on sick parade one day complaining of growth on back. Diagnosed as mattress and removed.
- Coleman** — A speedy lad. Once known to outpace MPs over a quarter mile. They were in a Land-Rover. He was on foot, but his incentive was greater.
- Owen-Cooper** — Keen on undertaking and photography, but both bodies and negatives were usually over-exposed.

Quotable Quotes

After the umpteenth change of orders:
"We are supposed to be flexible — but in this outfit you need to be b.....y elastic."

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During a sweep:
"Is that Charlie dead?"
"I dunno, but I'll bet we've taken his mind of sex for a while."

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In contact:
"Corporal, what's going on?"
"Somebody's shooting at us, Sir."

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On weapon inspection:
"That's not rust — that's dust."

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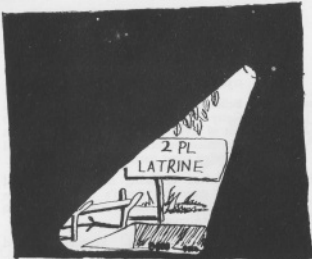
When told by the MPs to halt:
"You halt - there's nobody chasing you."

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On being told the detainee sent to battalion was the village idiot:
"Sent him to the right place. What time is he on duty?"

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From platoon commander to OC in base:
"I don't think I'll make it back tonight. There's a bunkered camp in the way."



"THE SENTRY MOVED THE SEAT TO THAT SIDE SIR, SIR!"

The Command Post, or Hub of the Confusion

Command posts were funny animals.

It took several months of hard digging before we finally settled on the optimum size for one. If you built a small one there were many complaints, but it did operate successfully (depending on the size of your FO). But build a larger one and you had achieved only one thing—magnification of your problems. Instead of a CP, you now had one, or all, of the following:

The ideal spot for holding an O group.

A gossip centre for those to-ing and fro-ing.

A reading/writing room for those lucky people who received mail.

A complaints room for those unlucky people who did not receive mail.

A room in which to solve such world-moving problems as who did or did not order or receive what on maintdem 16/21, or what should be added to maintdem 16/21, or who sent what message where and when.

A handy place to steal a pen.

The "in" spot to go during stand to.

So much for the size of the perfect CP. Now equipment. Along with such necessary items as electric light, fan, pliers, radio, telephones, strobe light, D10 cable, insulating tape, screwdriver, emergency handset and aerials and Coke machine, no CP was complete without the following buttons:

Panic button.

Heli-pad-secure button.

Throw-smoke button.

Yank-yakkety-yak-stop button.

Add-to-maintdem button.

Never-happen button.

Be-nice button (press twice to rasberry).

Check-locstat button.

Belly button (FO only).

Fetch-Keith-Holyoake button (financial matters only).

RTNZASP button.

Button-to-end-all buttons.

And, finally, a reminder—mind your head!

Animal Stories

There was the time early in the tour when a patrol from One Platoon moved up a slope and heard the crowing of a cock near by. Having heard the VC sometimes kept live animals in their camps for food, they crept along like ghosts toward the noise. But after half an hour the crowing seemed to be no closer. At last it dawned on them, the fowl was moving away as fast as they approached.



Moving through the bush, the whisper came back, "Chopping noises." Everybody stopped. Ears strained. "That's Morse," said signaller Dick Berry, hoarsely. Eyes tried to pierce the thick green undergrowth. Whoever he was, he was awfully close. Suddenly somebody pointed, and there was the Morse operator—up a tree pecking away oblivious of our presence.



Rats lived on the 'Shoe in plague proportions, but the judicious use of a little petrol soon produced a variety of flaming rats. We were thankful that one ran out of petrol just before reaching the ammo bunker.



A true Anzac dog, reared by the first V Company and fed by 2RAR and 4RAR/NZ(Anzac)Bn. This educated dog, known to us as Mako's and 85's mutt, shared the privileges of the mess, and eventually bid us a tearful farewell. A member of the local population, whose loyalty was never in doubt and who ran a very successful hearts and minds campaign.



From the 'Shoe comes a pertinent question: "Where did Daffy Duck go?" (Bearing in mind One Platoon were very partial to duck and a good wine ?????)



Elephant tracks. Charlie's?



Seeing a rats tail in his hoochie, the CQMS grabbed and pulled, ending up with eight feet of snake in his hands (well, would you believe four feet?). In the ensuing snake charming act he found snakes could spit.



Who did shoot that deer (V Company's first body count) on the Horseshoe? And who missed all those deer on the Horseshoe?



Did W Company send that "tame" monkey up to our lines to bite our shopkeeper?



Does anybody believe Three Platoon's sighting of a tiger at FSPB Avenger?



Movement on the wire? Pigs!