

CITATION FOR ENGINEER IN CHIEF'S AWARD  
19 TOPOGRAPHIC SQUADRON RE

The basis of this citation is the performance on Exercise CARTO NORGE 76 of a detachment of 37 officers and men of 19 Topographic Squadron RE, directly supported by elements of 7 Regiment AAC. No one action or event can be singled out to highlight the achievements of the detachment, and their impact on the rather insular farming community of the Hallingdal Valley in Southern Norway; but their story is typical of many which could be told of surveyors practising their skills at home or abroad, but which usually pass without comment or recognition.

An unusual feature of this exercise was that all planning and arrangements were undertaken by 13 Field Survey Squadron RE, but due to the reorganisation of 42 Survey Engineer Regiment on 26 June 1976 the officers and men of the detachment who departed for Norway between 1 and 8 July 1976 did so as members of 19 Topographic Squadron, although they continued to be known as 13 Field Survey Squadron by the Norwegians! It is particularly to the credit of the detachment commander, Captain G C Parkes RE, that as Second in Command of the disbanding 13 Field Survey Squadron he simultaneously prepared for this overseas exercise, and then saw it through to a most successful conclusion. While in Norway he was assisted by Captain R G Smith of the Royal Australian Survey Corps who was in his final months of a 2 year exchange posting to 42 Survey Engineer Regiment. Captain Smith returned to Australia in November 1976.

Unlike engineer projects the work done by surveyors on behalf of overseas governments does not result in any immediate or tangible evidence of their achievement, although the results of a survey are of

fundamental importance to the civil community, with long term benefits to the economic and social development of the area surveyed. This is particularly so in developing countries such as Kenya, or in places with particular administrative problems such as Cyprus, to both of which 19 Topographic Squadron has sent detachments on important field survey tasks in 1976. For Norway 42 Survey Engineer Regiment will produce 1:50,000 scale map sheets of Series M711 to the very high Norwegian cartographic standards, but the map production cycle will take until 1979. For this reason a proof copy of one of the maps produced from the survey work carried out in 1974, at the start of the present programme of exercises, is enclosed as an example of the high standards required for this type of work.

Exercise CARTO NORGE 76 was the third of a series of annual exercises involving the field survey work that is essential to the production of maps from air photography. The area surveyed was in Western Hallingdal and parts of Hardangervidda and Herusedalsfjellet among the mountains of central Norway. The field task was to establish and identify survey control for four 1:50,000 scale maps of Series M711, and to carry out field annotation of air photographs within the area. All the work was most satisfactorily completed and in addition most members of the detachment were able to participate in adventurous training.

The arrangements for the survey project had been made with Forsvarets Karttjeneste (the Norwegian Defence Survey Department), but unlike previous years there was no Norwegian Army Unit suitably situated to sponsor and accommodate the survey detachment. Arrangements were

eventually made for the Torpo Home Guard School to provide a liaison officer. A tented base camp was selected at a disused camping site some 3 miles from the School, although it was understood that foreign forces might not be well received in this area, the people of the Hallingdal Valley being reputed by their fellow countrymen to be unusually reluctant to welcome any outsiders.

Aware of the somewhat cool reception that might be given to his detachment, Captain Parkes decided that every effort must be made from the outset to foster good relations with the Norwegians. Various ways in which this was achieved are appended to this citation, and there is no doubt that they were highly successful in establishing excellent relations with the local population. Of equal importance was the individual contribution made by all members of the detachment, who unlike other sappers when in the field, operate in sections of two or three men, and sometimes alone, in widely separated locations. In consequence they frequently come in contact with local people who may be unaware of the reason for their presence, and the relationships which develop depend upon the behaviour and attitude of the individual junior soldier. All members of the detachment in Norway whether at work, leisure or on adventure training set themselves the highest standards of conduct and can be proud of their part in a job completed in the best professional traditions of Military Survey.

The detachment left Norway in early September having earned the best possible reputation and credit for the British Army and the Corps. Lieutenant Colonel Amundsen, Commanding Officer of the Home Guard School, praised the behaviour of the detachment in conversation with the

Commanding Officer of 42 Survey Engineer Regiment during his visit to the detachment in August. This commendation has been repeated in a letter to the Director of Military Survey from Colonel Flakstad, Chief of Forsvarets Karttjeneste, and is enclosed with this citation. A copy of a full page article which appeared in the Norwegian newspaper Hallingdolen on 24th July 1976 is also enclosed and is an example of the favourable impression established from the earliest days of the detachment. The conduct and professionalism of Captain Parkes and his men was of an exceptionally high standard throughout Exercise CARTO NORGE 76, and the contribution which they made towards the continuance of the traditionally good relations between the British and Norwegian people is deserving of special recognition.

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