



HISTORY OF SIGNALLING IN 100 OBJECTS VIBROPLEX MORSE KEY– SGT GALLAGHER



The Vibroplex morse key in the Royal Signals Museum was presented by the widow of Sgt A.E. Gallagher, who, whilst serving in 264 (SAS) Signal Sqn in the Oman, was killed in action on the 6th Nov 1975. A morse key such as this is used only by skilled and fast Morse operators.

Royal Signals soldiers were fully involved in the Oman/Dhofar conflict from 1970 to 76, which followed the British withdrawal from Aden in 1967. The insurgents from the

Aden Protectorate (Modern Yemen) had seen an opportunity to destabilize and take over the oil rich areas of Oman and the Gulf States. Special Forces were heavily engaged in this war, as were Royal Signals soldiers of 255 Signal Sqn and earlier 222 Signal Sqn, who provided communications links between Green Archer radar locating units deployed around RAF Salalah from 1971 to 1972. Linemen provided vital communications around the RAF airports of Massirah, Salalah, until the British withdrawal from the Gulf in December 1971, RAF Sharjah and RAF Muharraq in Bahrain. Following the withdrawal of British Forces Gulf, Special Forces continued to support the Sultan of Oman's Forces in Dhofar with this struggle coming to a climax in 1974-5.



L/Cpl M K Townsend Royal Signals, serving with 22 SAS Regt, was involved in operations against insurgents in support of Omani government troops. These forces, on the 6 Jan 1975, came under such heavy enemy fire that they were temporarily demoralised. Townsend with two other troopers returned fire, thereby encouraging the Omanis also finally to return fire on enemy positions. His initiative saved the day. He was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his inspiring example of the highest gallantry and military ability. The picture represents this action. Oman to this

day remains a staunch ally of the UK and RAF Sharjah is home to a luxury hotel in the Emirates!