EDITORIAL

Military Health Surveillance

Health surveillance can be defined as the systematic observation of health problems with a view to preventing or treating disease. It is equally applicable to both military and civilian populations but recently the importance of such a practice has increased following alleged causal associations between exposure of military personnel to certain health threats and the incidence of disease. This has been highlighted by events surrounding the Gulf War. Additionally, since military contingents are sent on operations as part of their role and have little or no say in such decisions, health surveillance plays a key part in minimising the risks of disease and in protecting the health of the troops.

Recently the British Army has taken a lead in developing a NATO-wide surveillance system and providing timely feed-back to contributing nations. In this issue of the Journal several papers deal with this important topic providing both an analysis and a record of how deployment affected the health of military personnel. Health surveillance, which plays a key role in supporting the soldier, is therefore an entirely appropriate topic for the Journal. The content of the papers reflects the strengths and weaknesses of the current system and readers should consider using the pages of the Journal to further the debate.

SASTJ MILLER
TO JEFFERSON

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Diploma in Medical Education

Colonel IT Houghton, late RAMC

Major AS Jacks, RAMC

Further to publication of his achieving FRCOPhth **Vol 142 No. 2: June 1996**, we are delighted to report the award, to this officer, of the **Harcourt Medal**. This is awarded to the candidate attaining the highest marks in the two sittings of the final fellowship for that Academic year.