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Opening Extract (The Clean Jokes) from...

The Laughing Soldier

Forewords by

Al Murray and Mark Ormrod

Illustrated by The Comic Stripper

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ABOUT PROJECT 65 – THE VETERANS CHARITY

Project 65 – The Veterans Charity – was founded in 2008 to raise funds for the care and support of wounded Armed Forces veterans and their families.

There are hundreds of different issues faced by UK Armed Forces veterans and families of the Armed Forces community. Project 65 focuses on being able to help fund the vital care and support available for every issue faced by those associated with forces life.

These issues include:

- [Treatment and rehabilitation following wounding or injury](#)
- [Mental health](#)
- [Illness](#)
- [Financial support](#)
- [Housing](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Employment](#)
- [Bereavement counselling](#)
- [Childcare](#)
- [Mobility](#)
- [Family welfare](#)

Every pound raised by Project 65 – The Veterans Charity will make a difference to the amount of money we can provide for our chosen beneficiaries and will enable them to continue providing the vital care and support they give to individuals and families affected by injury or trauma as a result of service in the UK armed forces. These do not just include the current and recent conflicts in Iraq or

The Laughing Soldier

Afghanistan but also Kosovo, Bosnia, Northern Ireland, The Falklands, Borneo, Aden, Korea and of course World War II.

More information about the charity and how you can help or get involved can be found at www.project65.net

The Laughing Soldier grew from our love of the legendary “military sense of humour”, the unique ability to find humour in the toughest of situations but also for some of the sharpest humour there has ever been.

Look at the greats of comedy – *The Goon Show*, *Dad’s Army*, *Blackadder* or *Monty Python* – many of the cast members and writers had a military background and some of the shows were even given a military theme or setting.

The Laughing Soldier has three simple aims:

- To provide a source of laughter when it’s needed most
- To give the caring and supportive British public a chance to send their messages of support directly to those on the front lines
- To raise funds to help the care and support of veterans and forces families through Project 65 – The Veterans Charity.

There is an almost overwhelming feeling of pride amongst the British public for what our armed forces do around the world to help protect communities from tyranny and oppression as well as ensure our country remains a safe place for us all.

We often feel that the words “thank you” could never be enough to express our gratitude and pride for everyone that has served in the Royal Navy, Army or Royal Air Force, both now and in the past. We sincerely hope that *The Laughing Soldier* will bring a smile and a laugh to those who are serving around the world and that the many messages of support will provide an insight into just how much pride, gratitude and respect there is for our Armed Forces.



Foreword by Al Murray – The Pub Landlord

Laughter finds its way into the strangest places. It permeates every aspect of life, so it should be no surprise that here's a joke book full of military humour. It can be a very particular kind of humour, the banter you'd find among mates, the kind of in-jokes, barbs and gags that to outsiders seem incomprehensible; the slogans chalked onto the sides of the gliders found outside Arnhem in 1944 stating things like "We are the Al Capone Gang" and "Up the Fräuleins' skirts" were met with bafflement by the enemy (and not just because they were humourless Germans). And when the Royal Dragoon Guards crashed the MOD's computer system with their Amarillo spoof, someone was laughing (though probably not the MOD).

But mainly I hope that this book with all its jokes will put a smile on the face of the people doing what they're doing so we that don't have to do what they're doing, because that, in the end, is what it boils down to.

Cheers!
Al Murray

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Foreword by former Royal Marine Mark Ormrod

Due to the harsh nature of life in the military, especially during times of conflicts, a good sense of humour is a key aspect to getting through the tough times that face all of our servicemen and women. Being able to tell a joke or “crack a funny” when morale is low can help even the worst of situations seem that little bit better. Our armed forces are well known for their sense of humour especially in the face of adversity. Humour was a key factor for me when I got injured right from the point of being cas-evaced up until the low points in my rehabilitation and even still today, so remember when you’re feeling low and you’re sick and tired of everything, laughter is the best medicine.

Mark Ormrod is one of the UK’s best-known former servicemen. Mark joined the Royal Marines and went on his first operational tour in Afghanistan in 2007. Just eight weeks into his tour he was caught in a landmine blast which tore off both legs and his right arm. Mark’s amazing sense of humour can be summed up with his first comment after learning of his appalling injuries: “So my dancing days are over then?”

The Clean Jokes

A vicar looked over a garden wall and saw a gardener working among a fine display of flowers, fruit and vegetables.

“Isn’t it wonderful what God can do in a garden?” he remarked.

“Yes,” said the gardener, “but you should have seen what it was like when he had it to himself.”

With very best wishes to everyone serving far from home this Christmas.

Alan Titchmarsh, television presenter and celebrity gardener



The Laughing Soldier

The reason the Army, Royal Navy, Air Force and Royal Marines squabble among themselves is that they don't speak the same language. For example, take a simple phrase like "Secure the Building":

The Army will put guards around the place.
The Royal Navy will turn out the lights and lock the doors.

The RAF will take out a five-year lease with an option to buy.

The Royal Marines will kill everybody inside and make a command post.

With love to you all.

Janice

The kid next door just challenged me to a water fight. Typing this waiting for the kettle to boil!

Blue Skies and Soft Landings.

Charlie Marsden

The Laughing Soldier

Three infantry squaddies were captured by Taliban terrorists. They were buried up to their necks in sand, just within reach of a lovely stretch of water.

The most senior said to the others, “They want us to suffer from thirst, whilst baking in the sun close to water. Don’t give them the satisfaction Don’t give in.”

After hours of this, the terrorists sitting in the shade watching, noticed that the squaddies’ heads were moving in time, from side to side.

One of the terrorists said. “Hakim, go and see what they are doing.”

Hakim returned looking bewildered and said, “Malik, they are singing?”

Malik, stunned, said “Singing, what are they singing?”

“They are singing . . . ‘Oooooooh I dooo like to be beside the seaside!’”

You have all shown the world the true meaning of “Selfless Commitment, Courage, Discipline, Integrity, Loyalty and Respect for Others.” Your individual courage is something the United Kingdom is very proud of. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for being the “True Heroes” that you all are. Take care, stay safe and keep smiling always!

Anita Cowgill-Taylor



The Laughing Soldier

A class of children were asked by their teacher to think of stories with a good moral!

One child said to the teacher, “My grandad was going to the market and he was collecting eggs and my nan said ‘Use the three baskets over there.’ But he only used one basket, and on the way to market all the eggs broke! The moral is don’t put all your eggs in one basket!”

“Great!” said the teacher.

Another child said, “My dad was going shopping and he noticed a little old lady whose car had a flat tyre, so he stopped and changed it for her! The next day the little old lady was with her son (who was a rich man), when they saw my dad outside the job centre and the son offered him a job! The moral is one good turn deserves another!”

“Well done!” said the teacher.

Little Bobby sat in the corner. He piped up very excitedly, holding up his arm, wriggling to get the teacher’s attention, “Go on then Bobby!” said the teacher.

The Clean Jokes

“Miss, Miss, my uncle is in the army and he was in an aeroplane going to Afghanistan and the plane got hit and he put on his parachute and grabbed his gun and a bottle of whisky and he jumped! On the way down in the dark and a blistering sandstorm, he drank the whisky. When he landed he was surrounded by 150 of the fiercest Taliban fighters. He shot 50 dead and then, out of bullets, he killed another 50 with the butt of his GPMG. THE FINAL 50 HE KILLED WITH HIS BARE HANDS, FEET AND TEETH!”

“Wow,” the teacher said “but what on earth is the moral of the story?”

“Don’t mess with my Uncle Scott when he has had a drink!”

To all out there in any theatre, keep your chins up and heads down. You are doing a sterling job for which we all are very, very grateful!

Ali Weatherstone, presenter, BFBS Radio

The Laughing Soldier

Did you hear about the Brummy
who fought in Vietnam? He kept
getting flashbacks to when he lived
in Birmingham!

**Sometimes people say comedians have a
difficult job, but we all know it's nothing to
what you guys do.**

Milton Jones, comedian

The Clean Jokes

A gorilla walked into a bar and ordered a pint of beer.

The barman served him with a frothing pint of real ale and said “That’ll be £5 please.”

The gorilla handed over a five-pound note. The barman said: “We don’t get many gorillas in here,” to which the gorilla replied, “I’m not surprised at £5 a pint.”

**With every best wish to our men
and women at the sharp end.
We are all very proud of you.**

Alex Cunningham, Labour MP for Stockton North



The Laughing Soldier

A man wins the National Lottery and scoops
£8 million.

The press call on him at home and ask him,
“What’s it like to win 8 million pounds?
Will it make any difference to your job as a
cleaner with Asda?”

He says, “You bet your life it will, I have told
them to stuff their ruddy job and I’m going to
enjoy myself from now on.”

The journalist says, “And what about your
wife? Will it make any difference to her as a
cleaner at Tesco?”

He says, “Why? Has she won the lottery as
well?”

**We should all be grateful to those who put
their own lives at risk for our country.**

The Rt Hon Greg Knight MP, Chairman of the
Procedure Committee, Chairman of the
Parliamentary Historic Vehicles Group

The Clean Jokes

A father and his young son were in a long queue at the post office. In front of them was a woman who frankly could do with losing a few pounds! Suddenly her mobile phone rang.

“Watch out Dad,” said the boy “she’s reversing!”

Best wishes to you and everyone out there.

Alex Lester, BBC Radio 2



The Laughing Soldier

British: "Please divert your course 15 degrees to the South to avoid collision."

Americans: "Recommend you divert your course 15 degrees to the North to avoid a collision."

British: "Negative. You will have to divert your course 15 degrees to the South to avoid a collision."

Americans: "This is the Captain of a US Navy ship. I say again, divert YOUR course."

British: "No, I say again, you divert YOUR course."

Americans: "THIS IS THE AIRCRAFT CARRIER USS LINCOLN, THE SECOND LARGEST SHIP IN THE UNITED STATES' ATLANTIC FLEET. WE ARE ACCOMPANIED BY THREE DESTROYERS, THREE CRUISERS, AND NUMEROUS SUPPORT VESSELS. I DEMAND THAT YOU CHANGE YOUR COURSE 15 DEGREES NORTH – I SAY AGAIN, THAT'S ONE FIVE DEGREES NORTH – OR COUNTER-MEASURES WILL BE UNDERTAKEN TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THIS SHIP."

British: "This is a lighthouse. Your call!"

We owe such a debt of gratitude to all of you serving overseas to protect our freedom. We can't begin to understand how hard it is for you to be away from your families and loved ones and Christmas makes that absence even harder. I hope that this book will make you smile and, if just for a short while, give you a welcome break from your duties and responsibilities. I commend you for the work you are doing so that we can have peace of mind. Thank you.

Julian Huppert, MP for Cambridge