

FROM MAJOR N J RIDLEY

NO.

QF Sir P Conledge write to Major Ridley after
the visit?



1ST BN QUEEN'S OWN HIGHLANDERS

Prms British Forces Post Office 811

R4 1 September 1979

Dear Prime Minister,

I would like to thank you most sincerely for finding the time to come and visit our Battalion in South Armagh. To lose one's commanding officer is always a blow; to lose one of the stature of Colonel David Blair is doubly hard as one rarely has the privilege to serve under a man of such charm and ability. In our close knit family Regiment the loss was felt deeply by all ranks.

Although I believe his death has in no way affected the efficiency of the Battalion the personal concern you showed for your soldiers by visiting Crossmaglen displayed the sort of leadership this country has so long been needing and it has done much to fortify this Battalion for the remainder of its tour in Northern

Ireland.

I hope you were not offended by

the Lemming Certificate. It was just my
Sergeant Major's way of saying thank
you.

You might be interested to know that many of
the villagers of Crossmaglen who normally refuse
to talk to us except to express hostility to the British
have been coming up to my soldiers expressing
great respect and admiration for you and sadness
that they could not have met you personally when
you visited.

I hope that this change in attitude will lead
to an increase in low level intelligence in our
battle to defeat terrorism.

I remain your most obedient servant

Nicholas Ridley