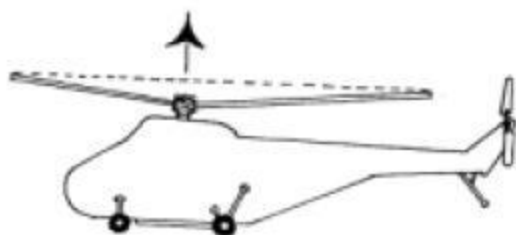


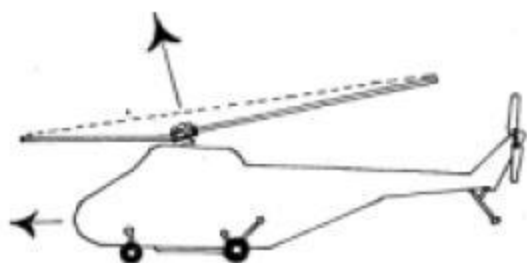
Preface

The rotor of a helicopter is very similar to the propeller of a fixed wing aircraft. A propeller faces forwards, and drags the aircraft along behind it. A helicopter rotor faces upwards, and drags the helicopter upwards.

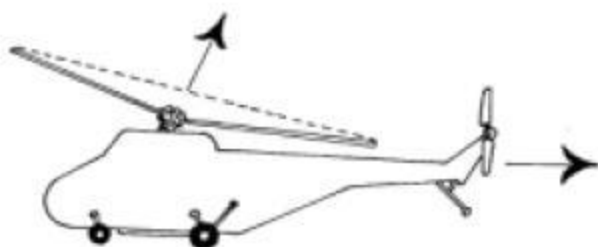
Whereas an aircraft propeller is fixed firmly to the front of the aircraft, a helicopter rotor can be tilted forwards, backwards, and sideways. The tilting causes the helicopter to move in the direction of the tilt. This is shown in the diagrams overleaf.



1. 'Normal' rotor lifts the helicopter straight up.



2. Tilted forward, the rotor moves the helicopter forward.



3. Tilted backward, the rotor moves the helicopter backward.



Flight Cadet Winston L T Forde

Author about to take off in a chipmunk aircraft in 1960 on a training sortie at
The RAF College Cranwell in Lincolnshire UK



Flying Officer Winston Forde RAF
RAF Khormakasar, Aden 1965



Makeni Bo Kenema Kono

1

Range Practice

The tropical dawn is almost as abrupt as the tropical dusk and already at this early hour, the buildings of Goderich Barracks were bathed in the warm morning rays as the sun started its rapid climb into the sky. It was January, the harmattan still blew lightly and the dry season was still a long way from ending. As the rays touched the petals of the hibiscus bushes, extra colour was added to the scene, with the cloudless azure sky above, and the rich blue sea that stretched away from the white beach at the bottom of the cliff at Goderich.

Captain Kargbo filled his lungs with the fresh air as he drove along the coast road towards Goderich. He had left the officers' mess at Wilberforce Barracks, where he was stationed as a company commander in the infantry, early as he was due for his annual range practice with the sten machine gun. As an infantry officer he was required to practice with this weapon. Range practice at Goderich was carried out immediately after breakfast to take advantage of the cooler hours of the morning. He drove straight past the main entrance to the Barracks, and continued along the coast road to the range.

Captain Kargbo belonged to the first detail of six officers, and soldiers, and as soon as all were ready, they proceeded to the actual range stopping to

collect magazines, each with 25 rounds, from the rough ammunition shed made out of sticks covered with palm fronds. Each of these was carefully booked out by the ammunition orderly, as a strict control was kept on all military expenditure. As soon as the six men were standing at ease by their carbines, range practice started.

The Sergeant's first command rang out in the stillness of the morning.

'Take up carbines and magazines—detail load!'

They had all used this weapon before and there was no need to tell them what to do, but the Sergeant still had to remind them about their safety drill.

'Use the heel of your hand to tap the magazine into place.

Number two, I said the *heel* of your hand. Number three, wake up and think what you're doing!' he barked.

Watching them closely and taking one or two paces backwards, the Sergeant, now satisfied, gave his next order.

'Ready position.'

The detail took one walking pace forward with the left foot and all cocking studs were pulled out, each soldier taking care to use the finger and thumb of the left hand. The weapons were ready to fire.

'From the shoulder—using sights—five single shots—fire!'

The Sergeant's eyes flashed from left to right watching their actions.

'Number two, lean forward and get control of that weapon—it's not a toy you know—answer me!'

'Sergeant!' replied the soldier second from the left.

On completion the weapons were brought down to the waist individually. There was no time to waste and as soon as the whole detail was standing still again, they proceeded to the trial run. The Sergeant snapped out the orders.

'Stand by—up—left, right—down. Now, using your left hand, move lever to automatic. From the shoulder, firing short service bursts and re-aiming after each burst, in your own time—fire!'

Captain Kargbo always looked forward to this stage when he could aim at his target for what seemed like a long time, and fire until the remaining twenty rounds of ammunition in his magazine were expended. As the staccato echoes died down from the surrounding hills, the weapons were simultaneously turned through 90 degrees and both magazines and chambers were carefully checked. The final order was then given.

‘Unload!’

There was no problem here; in fact, there was a distinct eagerness to get through this stage, and then find out the truth from the targets. Magazine catches were quickly depressed, and with the magazines deposited in battle dress pockets, the rest of the drill was completed after the Sergeant’s final order.

‘Ground carbines. Examine targets.’

Captain Kargbo had not done too badly and had scored, a hit on his target seventeen times. Coloured chalk was rubbed into each hole to cancel it for the next detail, and as soon as the empty shells had been collected, they made their way to the ammunition orderly to deposit their empty magazines for re-filling.

Captain Kargbo had some time to spare so he drove down through the camp towards the sea as far as he could go, and then walked to the edge of the cliffs. Down below, he could see the white sand and grey rocks, lashed by the waves as they broke into white foam. Soldiers who swam in this area had to be very careful as there were strong currents, and quicksand where the nearby river joined the sea.

As Captain Kargbo stood gazing into the blue distance, he found himself reflecting on recent happenings. He deplored the way in which the army