

IN a recent survey of 2500 children, when asked what they'd like to be when they grew up the overwhelming answer was "famous".

Ask Prince Harry the same question and his undoubted response would be "anonymous".

It may sound idyllic being a prince, growing up in castles and palaces, surrounded by wealth and being good-looking to boot, but Harry would beg to differ.

Drawbacks

Being born into the Royal Family has its drawbacks. Last week Harry's apparent racist comment about a fellow soldier made front-page news. Had it been uttered by any other officer it would never even have made a footnote in a local paper.

Gordon Brown, David Cameron and Nick Clegg all condemned the prince's comments, although apparently the story didn't receive widespread coverage in Pakistan.

On Friday Captain Ahmed Raza Khan, who was referred to as "our little Paki friend" by the prince, finally set the record straight about his own reaction to the video.

"The prince called me by a nickname which is usually very insulting but I know he didn't mean it that way. He phoned to apologise and I have no hard feelings. We need to close this chapter now."

Genuine remorse from the reluctant prince

By Ian Lloyd Royal writer

The last time Harry caused shockwaves was in 2005 when, aged 20, he wore a Nazi uniform at a private party. That time the story became an international affair, with

Israel's foreign minister and the EU's external affairs chief dragged into the row.

Being the "spare" to the heir is never easy. When she was 38

Princess Margaret told a journalist, "As my sister and I were growing up she was made out to be the goody-goody one. That was boring so the press tried to make out I was wicked as hell."

Margaret always had a chip on her shoulder because everyone, including her grandmother, Queen Mary, venerated her elder sister, Elizabeth, as she was the one who would inherit the throne. The princess was, however, being a tad disingenuous.

Party instinct

While Prince Harry, now 24, seems to have curbed his partying instinct, hers remained. It was Margaret who helped put the swing into the '60s and she smoked, danced and enjoyed her whiskies well into middle age.

Margaret never had the pressures that surround her great-nephew. She lived in a more deferential age and while her friends were often exasperated by her behaviour they rarely betrayed her.

I remember meeting the writer Sir John Mortimer, who sadly died on Friday. He'd just had dinner with the princess at Wadham College in Oxford and she'd regaled the company with such a racist anecdote that Prince Harry would have blushed. Twenty-odd years ago respect for the Queen's sister meant her un-PC words never reached the ears of Fleet Street.

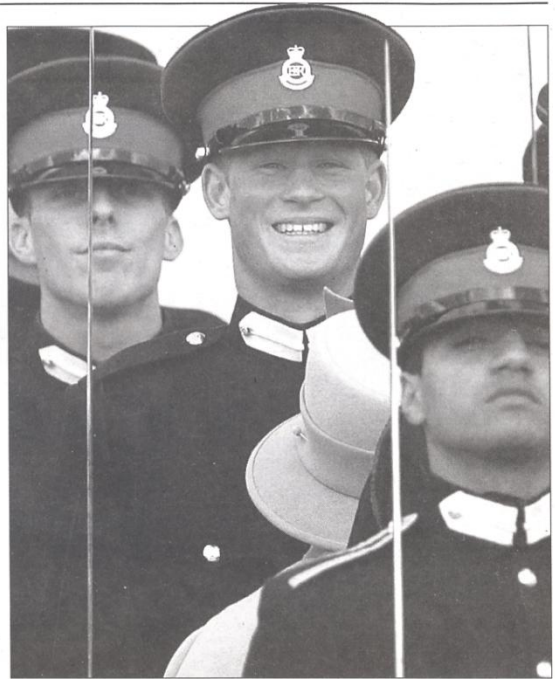
While Harry's true friends have never split on him he has been surrounded by betrayal.

Patrick Jephson, his mother's private secretary, was condemned by William and Harry for penning his memoirs. The princess were also "distressed" when Diana's detective, Ken Wharfe, revealed intimate anecdotes about his life guarding the princess and her sons.

Then of course there is Diana's self-proclaimed "rock" — Paul Burrell — who has made a career (and an estimated £25 million) from his life in royal service.

Harry is also the victim of the media and particularly photographers. The paparazzi of the 1980s were well known to royal detectives and some of them still operate around the private estates of Balmoral and Sandringham.

The modern-day paparazzi are,



■ Prince Harry and Ahmed Raza Khan (foreground) during a parade at Sandhurst. Below — A despondent Harry returns from Afghanistan.



however, a much tougher breed. They often work in pairs, with one to provoke their prey and the other to capture the reaction.

They have been known to mutter provocative remarks to the prince on anything from his poor A-level results to his mother or his girlfriend, Chelsy Davy.

The prince is never immune from harassment, even on holiday. Top Gear presenter Jeremy Clarkson witnessed this first-hand when he happened to be holidaying in Barbados at the same time Harry was there with Chelsy.

"It's astonishing," recalled Clarkson. "All they do — all day — is worry about the lenses that lurk in every bush. For a while it's fun. It makes you feel self-important, but by the third day I was bored by the whole charade and Harry's going to have to put up with it for the rest of his life."

Since Margaret's heyday technological improvement has increased the chances of press and public when it comes to securing a scoop. The quality of images on mobile phones is getting better and, as a camera flash isn't always required, snaps can be taken without the subject realising.

The photo of Harry dressed in a Nazi uniform was taken on a mobile and it's thought the prince may have used his own phone to film the airport footage.

Regardless of the right or wrong of his remarks, it seems unfair his

behaviour is analysed over and over while no-one asks how the footage or the Nazi-uniform photo were obtained or sold to the papers.

So it's not surprising Harry is no fan of the press. I was at RAF Brize Norton last March when he returned ahead of his regiment after news of his deployment to Afghanistan leaked. He was sullen, uncommunicative and avoided eye contact. It was an overseas agency that broke the embargo but Harry clearly regarded us all with the same disdain.

Although he had managed a 10-week stint on the front line, a previous attempt to send him to Afghanistan was deemed to risky for the third in line to the throne.

The Queen's father, King George VI, and her grandfather, King George V, were second sons and until William has a family Harry remains closer to the throne than he would like.

Interestingly, when asked, "Did you ever wish you weren't a prince?" Harry replied in the present tense, "I wish that quite a lot, actually."

Clowning

Friends say he went to Afghanistan a boy and came back a man. When the footage with the racist remark was filmed Harry was still at Sandhurst. Eighty-five per cent of his year were graduates and most were two or more years older.

At one point in the video Harry is deliberately clowning around with his mock call to the Queen and posturing with a cigarette. He seems to be trying too hard to fit in.

He's grown up a lot in the years since. Last weekend he was reportedly "distressed", not only for himself but Ahmed and another officer who had unwittingly been dragged into the public eye. To his credit Harry's apology was swift and heartfelt.

He is about to train to become a helicopter pilot with the Army Air Corps. His ultimate aim is to return to front-line duties and a military source has said, "If his unit goes to Afghanistan, Prince Harry will go. No doubt about it."

As Harry himself says, "The most important thing the army taught me is to turn to the right and carry on."