



Double-Four Zero SIR!



Double-Four Zero SIR!

Memories of National Service
September 1957 – September 1959



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John Wade". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

JOHN WADE
1936–2022



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Foreword

In March 2020, when the first lockdown was announced, I suggested to John that we might pass some of the time getting down on paper his memories of National Service. He was enthusiastic about the idea, and we set to work, with me as his amanuensis. His memory for people, places and dates after a gap of over 60 years was impressive, and soon we had quite a body of material.

But this was where his memory became a hindrance: I suggested we might see about getting the memoir printed professionally, but there was always just one more event that he wanted to add. Sadly his death intervened before he considered it complete, but I hope all his friends will perhaps hear his voice again, as they read his story.

This memoir would certainly not appear in the form it takes without the knowledge, expertise, advice and help which I received from Kathryn Grant, one of John's 'Henry's Eight'. On behalf of John and myself, thank you, Kathryn.

Jennifer Wade



National Service: Two words which mean little or nothing to the young people of today, but which implied a monumental change of life style to UK young men born in the 30s and 40s. Between 1949, when the National Service Act came into force and 1963, when the last National Serviceman was demobbed, more than 2 million men were conscripted to the British Army, Royal Navy or Royal Air Force.

Call up

The first sign of my invitation to see the world at Government expense was a letter requiring me to report to St Aldates Police Station at a given time on Saturday 19th June 1954, to register for call up. It coincided with my sister's wedding, so I had to leave the reception in the East Oxford Conservative Club, and make my way to St Aldates. The scheme allowed for deferment for those who were apprenticed or in higher education. I had been indentured as a motor mechanic to G.W. Salter Ltd in Banbury Road on Tuesday 22nd July 1952, the day before my 16th birthday. This bought me a stay of execution 'til I finished my apprenticeship in July 1957.

As the end of my deferment approached, I had to report to the Government Buildings in the Marston Road in June 1957. I thought I might be accepted into the RAF, and had a medical and interview with the RAF recruitment staff, but as soon as I said I didn't want to sign on for more than 2 years, I was pointed in the direction of the Army. During the discussion with the recruitment staff, they said I would be signed up for REME (Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers).

All was then quiet 'til Tuesday 24th July, the day after my 21st birthday. I was leaving home in Marston Street to go to work in North Oxford, when I met the local postman. Those were the days when post arrived before lunchtime. He knew my father who

had worked in the GPO until his retirement. Holding up a brown envelope, he enquired if I wanted it, or should he drop my call-up papers down the drain. Reluctantly I said I thought the former was probably the sensible option.

The contents of the envelope were indeed my call-up papers, telling me to report to No.1 Battalion REME at Blandford Forum on Thursday 26th September; also a travel warrant, various bits of information and a Postal Order for 4/-, which was my first day's pay. This meant that if I didn't turn up, I would be AWOL. It was intended to cover expenditure such as buying required cleaning materials. I have never cashed it.



In the course of the month before I was due to report to Blandford, I found out that Ken Grant, who worked for PJ Jones, had also been called up and was going to Blandford on the same day as I was. PJ Jones was a vehicle body building business, whose premises were just north of Salter's on the Banbury Road. We agreed we would travel to the camp together.

I finished work at Salter's on Friday 20th September, and

Mr George Salter gave me a call-up party at The Perch in Binsey. The following week, with a couple of days to kill before we went to Blandford, Ken and I decided to go and visit our old school – East Oxford – and have a look round. We met Mr Martin, the Headmaster, and one or two of the teachers whom we knew from our time there.

Then on the Thursday, it was time to set out for Blandford. Dad drove me to the station – Mum didn't want to come. My girlfriend, Penny, had biked from her home in Cowley to see me off. Ken and I caught the 8.00am direct train – "The Pines Express". That was a misnomer. It stopped at every station between Oxford and Bournemouth, but at last we reached Blandford. We were met at the station by Corporal Pulling – I learned his name later. He had a shaven head, and no brains inside it. A truck took us the camp on the hills above the town.

We were kitted out that afternoon, and got to our beds about 1.00am, having learned how to dress, make a bed, and make a bed block. Sergeant Francis Howard and Corporal Ron Neary were our instructors.

The accommodation provided by the barracks was in 'spiders', 6 wooden rooms, 3 to a side, each with 20 beds. In the centre was a brick-built section, housing the toilets and washrooms for ablutions. At the back was the boiler room, as the barracks had central heating, something few of us had at home. The whole camp was a gigantic fire hazard, the accommodation blocks, offices and training areas. It was originally built as a naval training base, and the different areas kept their naval names. The three main ones were Ansen, Craddock and Benbow. At the end of each barrack room was a bunk which an NCO had. The corporal attached to our barrack room, was Corporal Scouse, of whom more later.

The dining room for Benbow was being 'refurbished' and we

were marched across camp to Craddock for our meals. The food was terrible: cockroaches a speciality. In that September 1957 the Asian Flu pandemic was in full swing, and part of the camp was being used to quarantine sufferers, who used to watch from the windows as we were marched to the dining hall.



The First Week

Friday 27th September: Day 1 of 730.

At 6.00am the Duty Corporal, Brian Newton, threw a dustbin lid down the barracks room, accompanying the action with a carefully worded exhortation. I leave my readers to hazard a guess on what it was. I have never, before or since, got up so quickly.

He informed me I was on Company Orders at 9.00am. As I didn't know what CO were, I didn't know whether to be apprehensive or pleased, but settled for the former. The Corporal told me he would take me up to the Company Offices after breakfast. It had been my intention to keep a low profile for the next two years; this plan was ruined on Day One.

I later discovered that Company Orders were mainly for defaulters, who had to 'face the woodwork' before being marched before the OC. I was spared the woodwork facing, and marched to meet Major Boggis, the Officer Commanding. I discovered that, unbeknown to me, St Frideswide FC, for whom I played, had written to request my release to play at Slough that Saturday. It was the first round of the FA Amateur Cup. They had undertaken to pick me up and bring me back. But permission was refused – it seemed I was to be much too busy to fit in a football match.

I had teamed up with another recruit in the next bed – my bed was first on the right – called John Jones from Slough. We worked together especially getting our beds ready for inspection. Two

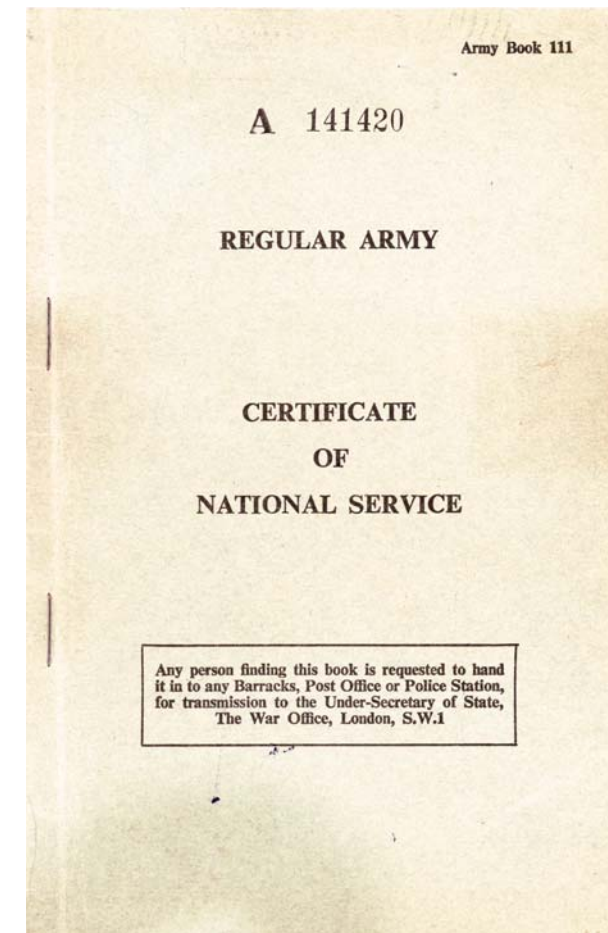
pairs of hands are better than one for folding blankets. Our bedding consisted of three blankets, two sheets, one pillow case and a pillow. There was of course a mattress, and a green counterpane to add a touch of class. A bed block was made up of layers, rather like a trifle. First layer was a folded blanket, then a sheet folded to the same size, then a second blanket and the second sheet. The third blanket covered the block, and the pillow in its case topped the whole lot off – like the cream on the trifle. To get things square we used the two mess tins they had issued us. The green counterpane covered the mattress, carefully tucked in with hospital corners and squared off with the mess tins.

Also in the bed space were a small wooden wardrobe and a small bedside table. We were provided with diagrams to show how to lay out our uniform in the wardrobe, and how to fold socks, underclothes, etc. ‘Top kit’, which was webbing, straps, pouches and haversack, was placed on top of the wardrobe, crowned with the tin hat.

This was the moment when we realised we were really in the army, with the allocation of our Army Number. This was 8 digits long, and it was impressed on us that we must learn it by heart. I broke my 8 digits down into three sections: 234, 234, 40. Throughout my time in the army the only part I can recall ever using was the last three digits, usually followed by “Sir!”

Another highlight of the day was my being marched to the Battalion barber (AKA sheep shearer). I thought I had looked ahead, having gone to Mr Mullet’s barber’s shop in Cowley the previous week for what he and I both thought was a very short haircut. This proved not to be the Army’s view of it.

Next job was to clean the brasses on our webbing, belts and gaiters. The brass holders for the buckle had to be flattened with a hammer, kindly supplied by the army for this purpose. The



trick was to upend a bench, place the curved holder on the bottom of the bench leg, then hammer gently 'til it lay flat. Why they didn't supply them flat in the first place is a question still waiting to be answered. Our cap badges were issued to us. They were out of date as they had the King's Crown, not the Queen's Crown on them. George VI had of course died in 1952. I only noticed this 50 years later!

The busy weekend which I had been promised by the OC did

not in fact materialise. It was mostly spent blancoing webbing for the top kit previously mentioned. As I have noted, we were marched to our meals, and there was an unexpected hazard involved in this. When we reached the dining hall, the command "Halt!" was given, and any onlookers had the enjoyable sight of 40 men wearing boots with studs, come to a sudden stop on a smooth surface, with the inevitable slips, slides and falls. Fortunately we were trusted to find our own way back to the billet.

On the Sunday the others in the billet, who knew I should have been playing football, searched the papers for the result, but it was of course the wrong part of the country to find results for Slough. In the end they tracked it down – St Frideswide's lost 4-1. We also started to iron our uniforms into shape, and get our boots 'pulled up', which meant taking the pimples out of the toe caps and heels. It was a long job. When it was completed, we had to leave our boots on the end of the bed for inspection.

Monday of our first full week dawned, and drilling on the parade ground played a large part in our activities, as we learned to march in time as a platoon; then there were lectures, and periods in the gym for PT. As we were waiting to go into the gym, an APTC WO2 came out, looking for people who could box. Everyone wisely denied knowledge of the art as he worked his way down the line. He came to me, I too denied any experience, but he asked my weight. "9st 13lb," I replied, which was my regatta rowing weight.

"That'll do, we'll have you," and in I went to the gym, where a ring was set up and group boxing training was taking place. I had a corporal as my 'second', whom I got to know later on when we played basketball together. His name was John Fisher. "What are you going to do?" he asked.

"Hit him before he hits me!"

When the bell went, I shot across the ring and laid into the

little lad in the other corner for about a minute and a half, till the bell rang for the end of the first round. When the bell rang for the second round, it was clear he wasn't going to hurt me, so we just danced round one another. The WO said, "You're a liar, you have boxed before," which was true as I had done a little at the Salesian Boys' Club when I was at school.

"You're in the team," and turning to John Fisher, "go and weigh him." John started on the scales at 9st 13lb and kept going up till the scales settled at 10st 4/5lb. The other little lad was only 9st 8lb. When we went back to the gym the WO said I was too heavy for what he wanted, but I could be reserve for the next weight up. My opponent was delighted that he had a place in the team, so everyone was happy.

During that first week we had 'Trade Testing' where we went into the workshops and were given various engineering tasks to do, to assess our skills. There followed an interview process, and I was told they had enough mechanics and would send me on a Stores course. We were also initiated into various guard duties, one being Armoury guard, where a group spent the whole night in the Armoury – two hours on, four hours off.

By the Saturday at the end of the week we had got our kit into some kind of semblance of good order, and a group of us decided to go into Blandford to have a look at the town. We had to report to the Guard Room to sign out – our mistake. Innocently we went in and inquired, "Is this where we sign out?"

The Sergeant inspected us one by one, and anyone who didn't come up to scratch was sent back to the billet to sort himself up. By the time the sergeant had finished with us, we gave up on the plan to see the bright lights of Blandford, and went to the NAAFI instead.



Week 2

By this time we were accustomed to the routine of drill, weapon training and preparing our gear correctly, especially our boots. There was further trade testing, and more lectures on aspects of military life. We had some practice on the 25-yard rifle range – I wasn't too bad a shot at that point. Thursday was inoculation day. We were lined up in rows, and the first set of injections was given in our inner forearms. We held out our arms in front of us, and medical orderlies came down either side to stick the needles in. There was no nonsense about a new needle for each man. The lad in front of me fainted before they got to him, so they did the deed as he lay unconscious on the floor. They then got the man in front of him and myself to lift him off the floor and carry him out, inoculating us in our upper arms as we went, and him in his unconscious state. We then dumped him on a bench for the medics to deal with.

The injections had made our arms very stiff, but the Platoon Sergeant told us that we had to get our battle dress on or we couldn't go on 48 hour pass at the weekend. The battle dresses went on immediately!

A series of coaches took us to various parts of the country. They were supplied by Bere Regis Coach Company, and we had to pay. They weren't the best coaches in the world but ours got me home safely, where I enjoyed a bit of comfort, home cooking

and general spoiling – oh, and a dance on the Saturday evening at the Town Hall.

Sunday evening arrived all too soon, and at 9.00pm Ken Grant, two lads for the RASC (Royal Army Service Corps) and I were waiting back at the Town Hall for the coach to take us back to camp. It was a misty night, and the minutes passed, then an hour, and still no coach. We were not sure what to do – were we going to be considered AWOL? Should we go to the Police Station, handily close in St Aldates, to report in? Finally, sometime after 11.00pm, the coach arrived. It had started in Newcastle and had been held up all the way by the foggy conditions. Every seat was already taken, and we had to stand all the way to Blandford.

We got back to camp after 4.00am, by which time it wasn't worth undoing the bed block, so we didn't get to bed at all. In the afternoon we were supposed to be learning to strip and reassemble a Bren gun, but the sergeant realised it was useless, as his trained fighting force were falling asleep at the trigger, and dismissed us. I vowed then never to travel by Bere Regis coaches again – and never have.



Week 4

We had the Battalion Inter-Platoon cross-country race the following week. During the race I twisted my knee, and it became a bit of a problem. Sergeant Howard noticed I was limping and assigned me the post of billet orderly on two counts: I had very neat kit, and it would give my knee a chance to recover. It was my job to present the billet for the CO's inspection.

"What activity are you missing, Wade?"

"Gas," came the aside whisper in my ear from Sgt Howard.

"Gas, sir!"

"How will you learn about it, Wade?"

"Good friend will tell me, sir!"

There came the moment for the tests for physical fitness. My upper body was strong enough for the rope climbing and chin-ups, but we had to run 100 yards in 15 seconds, and my knee wouldn't let me do it. L/Corporals Jock Arnott and Geordie Shepherd said, "You can do it," and picked me up, one on each side, and more or less carried me – within the 15 seconds.

The MO wanted to send me to the army hospital at Tidworth, but I would have been 'back squadded', so he agreed to my finishing basic training, then going to Tidworth.

That weekend Company Orders put our platoon on 24 hour guard in the main guardroom from 9.00am Saturday to 9.00am Monday. I was in the Sunday group. We were all in our best BDs,

as we were inspected before going to the guardroom, then again on arrival by the orderly officer. That Saturday night the NAAFI shop, which sold cleaning materials, cigarettes, etc was broken into, and money and cigarettes were stolen. The guard did 2 hours on duty, 4 hours off, and different areas of the camp were patrolled. One of my sessions was to stand guard outside the NAAFI shop (stable doors and horses come to mind), with a rifle. Occasionally officers came to inspect the break in, which was awkward as basic training had not included saluting while holding a rifle. No official announcement was ever made about who was responsible but word had it that Cpl Scuse and the MO were involved. Certainly both were posted very shortly afterwards. We spent 24 hours in the guardroom except when we were patrolling. Sandwiches were brought to us and we could make tea. We were relieved at 9.00am on the Monday to go back to our billet to wash, shave and then get on with the day's training.

End of Basic Training

At the end of the 6 weeks, on 5th November, we had our Passing Out Parade. I was complimented on my smart appearance! It poured with rain, so the marching on the parade ground didn't happen and we assembled in the camp cinema. Mum, Dad and Penny all came to see me pass out, but as the pipe band started up in the cinema, my Mum went out into the foyer. She was followed by L/Corporal Jock Arnott.

"Are you all right?" he asked.

"Yes, but I can't stand bagpipes."

"Neither can I. Let's go and get a cup of tea."

And off they went together to the Church of England Club.

That evening Sgt Howard organised a battalion bus and the platoon went to a pub right on the waterfront in Poole for the evening. We played skittles – the Sergeant turned out to be a bit of an expert!

I am in the second row, seventh from the left.



The Knee Interlude

Next day everyone else was being posted but I went off to the Military Hospital in Tidworth. I had to find my own way there via Salisbury, with bus passes which they provided. Various tests were done on my knee, these included electric shock treatment, also a needle being put into the joint to give me a cortisone injection.

"It won't hurt much at the moment," said the doctor, "but it may later." He was right. That evening another patient and myself took two nurses to the cinema. Coming back from the film I was in agony.

During the day we were just sitting around on the ward. Two of us were summoned to see the RSM who sent us to clean the brass in the chapel. The lady who was i/c chapel refused to let us touch it, but told us to make a cup of tea, then go back, keeping quiet about what we had, or hadn't, done.

I got very friendly with a corporal in the Army Medical Corps, and asked him if my knee needed an operation.

"Probably, but they won't do it in case it goes wrong and they have to invalid you out on a pension."

The doctors decided to immobilise my knee, and put my leg in a plaster cast from thigh to ankle. They put a cage on the bed and heat lamps to dry the plaster, and gave me tablets to make me sleep. I woke up 24 hours later, ravenously hungry.

Once it had set, they sent me home on leave for a fortnight. Armed with a travel warrant and a stick, I made my way back to Oxford for 2 weeks R&R. Then it was back to Tidworth for further tests, but the plaster stayed on. My orders were 'Return to Unit', so armed with a bus pass and my trusty stick I made my way back to Blandford Camp, which turned out to be closed for Christmas. I didn't know what to do. Corporal Ron Neary and Corporal Davy Watson appeared. "What are you doing?" Ron said. "Come to my bunk and sit down."

He went off to find Cpt Pilling 2nd i/c, who sent me home again on leave. My pass took me over Christmas but I had to be back 28th/29th December.

Christmas Day at home 1957 saw my introduction to 'gunfire'. Les, our lodger and an ex-artillery man, brought this up to me in bed. I was of course still in plaster. He opened the door and shouted, "Gunfire!" – coffee laced with rum. It was an old army tradition for officers to serve it to their men on Christmas Day.

I enjoyed the festive break at home, but all too soon it was time to make the journey back to Blandford. The company had been closed down over Christmas and New Year, and I was given a bunk on my own next to the stores. New Year's Eve came along and I was faced with spending it by myself. There was a very pleasant Lance Corporal in the stores, who came in and asked me what I was doing that evening. On hearing I had no plans, he invited me to his house in the married quarters for a meal, and I spent Hogmanay with him and his family.

Shortly after this I was given a bigger bunk with Ken Merican, who had also been in hospital. He'd had a badly broken ankle, and was batman to Major Boggis. One evening we were invited to babysit for the Major while he and his wife attended a dinner. Mrs Boggis had laid on food and beer, the children were asleep

upstairs, and we spent a relaxing evening eating, drinking and watching TV.

On another evening after showering, Ken asked me to look at his ankle – a lump had appeared. I could see what I thought was the head of a woodscrew! The next day the M/O removed it with a screwdriver, and gave it to Ken as a memento.

The day arrived at last to return to Tidworth to have my plaster off. Corporal Hale, using large cutters, started to cut down from the thigh. It became very painful, so he stopped and began cutting up from the bottom – again it was agony. He then cut across the middle and discovered that the plaster had stuck to me, and the bone was bare. The wound was cleaned up and bandaged. The problem with the knee had not been solved, and I now had a hole in it as well. I still have the scar – my old war wound.



The Chester Interlude

Instead of returning to unit, I was sent to Saughton Camp at Chester – a rehabilitation unit, where I spent all the time in the gym. A lot of that time was spent playing basketball, and I realised I was still quite a useful player. There was a little marching, but not a lot. The food was cordon bleu compared with what we had at Blandford. I spent three weeks there. My memories are mostly to do with how we spent our leisure time, but one particular image has stayed with me over all the years – seeing, for the first time in my life, a skein of geese flying overhead, silhouetted on the pale blue sky of an early winter morning.

On a more mundane level, I joined up with two RE corporals, who came from Southampton and Southend, and the three of us would go into Chester to play darts at the Old Queen's Head. They were expert players, and we rarely had to buy a drink. Another evening we went to the Packet Boat to Dublin Pub, which was run by Dixie Dean, who had played for Everton and England, and we spent the evening trying on his England caps, hung round the bar. Alas, there were no mobile phones to capture the moment. We also went to the pictures, as we called it then, and we saw *Bridge over the River Kwai*, newly released. The camp was not far from the centre of Chester, and as we walked back in the evening we called in at Threlfords, the local chippie. The lady must have felt sorry for us as the portions were always enormous.

The camp was dead at the weekend. There was one little room with a B&W television, and that was our entertainment. The two corporals could go to the Corporals' Club, and offered to lend me a jacket so that I could go with them, but I wasn't prepared to chance it. I did hitch home one weekend, but it was a long, slow, difficult trip. Johnnie Clayton who had knee trouble kept his van beside the local pub, The Rake and Pikel. The vehicle was full of trialling bike, and he rode in trials at weekends, which did his knee no good at all. He did once bring me back from home (he lived in London), and I fed him marshmallows all the way.

After three weeks I was taken to another camp on the other side of Chester for assessment. Coming back to the billet one night, we found it was Arctic cold. A resident had returned after a heavy drinking session and thrown all the cabinets out of the windows – without first opening them.

Finally I received the instruction RTU, and it was goodbye, Chester and, via Crewe and the Pines Express, hello again, Blandford.

I was attached to the Stores, but there was not much work to do, so I was told to report to the Cobbler's Shop to work under Sgt Gabbit. I proved to have a talent for putting studs in boots, and for cutting soles and fitting them.



Dixie Dean outside the Packet Boat to Dublin, Chester.



An IRA Interlude

In February 1958 I didn't hold a permanent pass, but didn't let that stop me going home each weekend at Saturday lunchtime, returning on the Sunday evening. One dark February Sunday evening at home, I was getting ready to catch the train back, when the BBC news on TV showed a map of the South of England. As I watched in fascinated horror, it zoomed in on Blandford with a large arrow. There had been an IRA attack on REME camp, my home from home – and I was AWOL. You can imagine my frame of mind as I caught the train at Oxford, changed at Reading, changed at Basingstoke, and finally climbed aboard the coach at Salisbury.

When I got off in the camp there was no one to be seen, and certainly not any guards. There was a light on in my friend's bunk in the MI Room, and I went to ask what was going on. He didn't know anything about it. I eventually discovered that one of the guys in the armoury had been shot and taken to Tidworth. We later understood that the raid had been made by Cpl Scouse, who had been posted out of Blandford. It was reckoned that he got back to Ireland via Southampton and Jersey.

Nest morning CQMS Donovan came in and asked me what I knew.

"Nothing, Staff!"

"Well, you wouldn't, would you? You were at home."

From then on I went home each weekend, either on the Friday night or the Saturday.

A Birthday Outing

On my 22nd birthday in July 1958, I had a call from Company Office to organise transport for two recruits to the RASC Camp. They had to be taken to the Delousing Unit at the RASC to be fumigated with all their kit. They were on the Stores veranda with their gear, when a 3 ton lorry arrived, driven by Cypriot Joe, who wanted to know what it was all about. They had crabs, I had to tell him. Cypriot Joe was not pleased, as he didn't want his lorry contaminated. Not the best birthday outing I have ever had, but definitely memorable.



Basketball, the Army and Me

I had been playing basketball in Oxford long before my call up. First of all I played for Oxford Youth Team then for Oxford City Basketball Club.

When I returned from Chester I had been going to the gym on my own in the evenings, doing some basketball lay-ups. The new RSM Jock Patten found me there one evening and asked me if I wanted to stay at Blandford and play basketball, rather than being posted. I said yes.

I had a friend in the MI Room and we spent most of our evenings having a kick about on the grass at the back of the stores. He was playing for the Battalion Football Team. Some one put my name forward for the Battalion football team – probably him. CSM Hancock was responsible for organising the team. Basketball had started up again after the summer break, and between it and football there wasn't much time for work. I played three games; the last one was against the Tank Unit at Bovington, when I got a nasty knock on the ankle, so I didn't go down to play basketball that week. The RSM came to find me and I was given a choice – football or basketball. As he was an RSM and Hancock was only a CSM there was no contest. On his instructions I went to tell CSM Hancock that I would not be playing any more football.

I became one of the permanent staff in the Stores at B Company, and started playing basketball every other afternoon

for the nascent Battalion Team. RSM Patten meanwhile was out talent scouting, bringing in players from other REME units, among others at Barton Stacey.

The team he put together ultimately won the South West District Championship, then went on to play in the Southern Command Championship. We played the finals at Bulford Garrison, travelling there each day. Our win there made us eligible for the All Army Finals. We travelled regularly to Aldershot to give us practice against better opposition. We played at Fox Gym. The drive over in our rattly old bus took at least two hours, and by the time we had played and started back, it was getting very late. This meant we were returning around midnight. On one memorable occasion, the side back door of the bus flew open, and the basketballs which were all on the back seat shot out of the door and we had to retrieve them in the dark.

The All Army Finals were played at Fox Gym and we were based at Arborfield. On the previous Thursday after the training session, RSM Patten gave us the arrangements for travelling to Arborfield on the Sunday afternoon. I said I was going home for the weekend and would make my own way to Depot at Arborfield. "You make sure you're there or you will be in trouble," was his response.

Mum and Dad drove me to Arborfield on the Sunday afternoon, and I reported to the Guardroom. I asked the corporal if RSM Patten and the basketball team had arrived yet, and he told me, "No." I told him that Patten would ask if I had arrived, and asked him to say that he hadn't seen me. He told me we were being billeted in a block opposite the Guard Room. The rest of the team arrived sometime later, and RSM Patten went to the Guard Room and asked if I had arrived. They said they hadn't seen me. He then appeared on the walkway in front of the Guard Room, and seeing me waving from the billet opposite, realised I had set it all up.

Being at Arborfield gave us the chance to go into Reading in the evenings, when the day's matches were over. Among the other sides was a Canadian Unit from Germany, whom we beat. We ourselves were beaten in the semi-Finals by Royal Signals from Catterick. After we were beaten in the semi-finals, the RSM organised a team dinner at the Royal Bath Hotel, Brighton.

PS The team went on to win the All Army Finals the following year, but without me. RSM Patten did his best to persuade to stay on in the army an extra year, and offered to have me transferred from the stores to the gym. I was very tempted, but there was a girl waiting at home, who had the deciding vote – and I did not take the offer.



Going Home on a Wing and a Prayer – and a Thumb

Travel Warrants were issued when you were posted somewhere and when you went home on official leave, but for a trip home at the weekends, hitching was the favoured method of travel. People were enormously helpful as a rule to all the service men looking for lifts, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank anyone reading this who stopped. My policy was never to refuse a lift going my way, even if it was only for five or six miles.

One that I remember, was a lady from Sixpenny Hanley in Dorset. She picked me up at the crossroads between Blandford and Salisbury, and asked where I was going. I said, "Salisbury." She went on to ask if I lived there, and when I explained that I was actually going to Oxford, she said that she was going to visit her son who was a student at Magdalen College – just down the road from where I lived. In the course of the journey she asked if I went home most weekends. On hearing that I did, she said that she had enjoyed my company so much, she would like to give me another lift the following weekend, and offered to come back to Pimperne to pick me up, as that was where I usually picked up my first lift.

Getting lifts in the holiday season was always more difficult, as people were going home from the coast and keen to get to their destination, or had a carful of people and luggage all ready. One Saturday I was waiting to get a lift at Pimperne. A stream of

cars went past passed but none stopped. There was a long hill out of Pimperne and as I trudged along I suddenly saw someone waving from the top of the hill – and it was at me. I legged it up the hill and it was Mr Mullett, the hairdresser, whom I have mentioned previously, coming back from Weymouth. He knew I hitched home regularly and had been looking out for me.

On another occasion a naval officer, who had been on a month long course at Portland, picked me up. He stopped at every pub we passed to have a drink. I wasn't sorry to say goodbye to him at Salisbury.

One afternoon, I had had a lift as far as Salisbury, and was walking along the A30 when an old Ford van came past with three lads in it. They had been playing at some music gig the night before, and took me as far as Sutton Scotney. When I thought about it later, I realised they could very possibly have been the members of a boy band which went on to be famous.

On a Saturday afternoon in the summer months I had got a lift as far as Newbury. I was walking along the road out of Newbury when I was passed by a petrol tanker, which disappeared around the bend ahead of me. Then it must have backed up, because I saw it stopped at the side of the road, and the driver out of his cab, waving. It was Ken, who used to deliver the petrol to Salter's. He had recognised me! I wasn't sure that his company policy allowed for passengers, but I didn't ask.

My worst experience ever of hitching home was when I was at Chester. I'd arranged for a lift back on the Sunday with Johnnie Clayton, whom I have mentioned previously. I set out from Chester on a Friday afternoon, without a map. It took 11 lifts to get home, and that included finding my way round Birmingham. I didn't try hitching from Saughton Camp again.



“Gee, Ma, I want to go home”

From time to time people went AWOL. These were mostly re-enlisted men. When someone had gone AWOL, it was my job to empty his locker and make an inventory of the contents, usually just military equipment. Sgt Donovan, who was technically in charge of the company stores should have supervised me doing this, to ensure I didn't steal anything, but he preferred an easy life, and left me to get on with it.

We had two lads who were serial bolters. When I came to empty the locker of one of them, I found he must have been stealing, as his locker was full of blankets still in their wrappers, not to mention tickets and a ticket machine stolen from the Wilts and Dorset Bus company.

The other one, whose name was Beck, was like a homing pigeon – he always made a bee-line back to his home in North Wales. When he was brought back he would spend seven days in the Guard Room, then after a couple of weeks he would be off again. Each time I had to clear his locker. On this particular escape he was picked up by the police in Rhyll. Cpl David Watson and one other went from Blandford to collect him and bring him back. They took him to the railway station in Rhyll, he went to hug his mum goodbye, dived under her arms and fled. David Watson followed down an embankment, tried to grab him, missed, fell over and damaged his back. He returned to the police station to phone Blandford and tell them what had happened.

"You've got till 2.00pm to get him, or you're on a charge," he was told. As two o'clock struck Beck, firmly handcuffed, was dragged into the police station by a constable. He was taken back to Blandford and court-martialled, sentenced to 6 months in the Military Prison at Shepton Mallett, then given a dishonourable discharge.

I built up a friendship with the Company Clerk, Ron Fane. Ron was a Londoner from Bermondsey, who spent most evenings in his bunk, practising his saxophone. Once I had my motor bike on camp we would sometimes go over to Wimborne Minster on it, to visit the excellent fish and chip shop there. When the Company decided to have a day out in Bournemouth, Ron and I went on my bike, not in one of the coaches. I remember on one occasion he had to come and find me in the stores to go to take a phone call. It was Frank Colley ringing from Salter's; he had to rebore an engine and wanted to know how to set up the boring tool. Ron was demobbed in September 1958 and I missed his friendship.

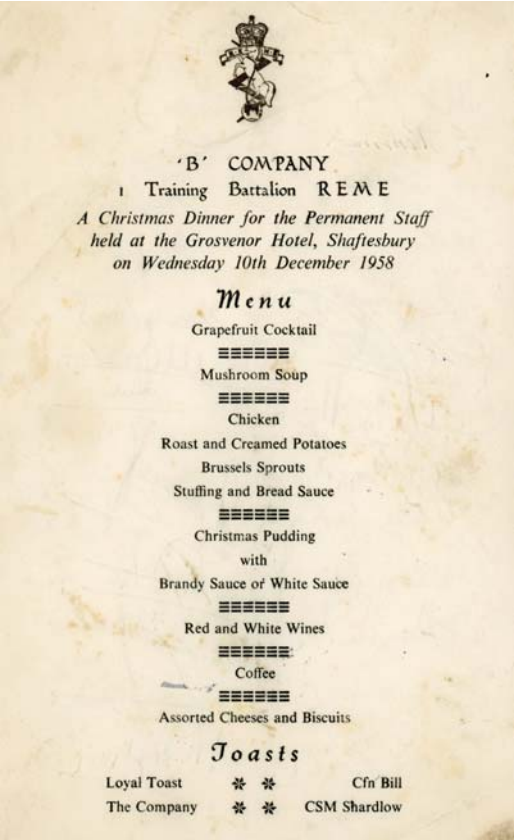
By this time National Service was drawing to a close, and there were fewer recruits coming in. To fill up our time they invented various things to keep us occupied. One of these was preparing for a nuclear attack. First we had to build a defence of sandbags in the armoury, then radio-active isotopes were scattered round the camp and we were issued with Geiger counters to try to find them – a version of 'hunt the thimble' army style. We were told to wear our woolly jumpers and gloves as protection while we searched for them. At the end of the exercise we were issued with 72 hour passes, but the CSM gathered us in the lecture room to warn us that the bus company was on strike, and there wouldn't be buses at Salisbury Station to bring us back to camp on the Sunday evening. This turned out to be the case. So we started to walk the 20 miles back to Blandford in the dark – fortunately we got a lift pretty quickly.



A rumour was circulating that because of the run down of National Service, one of our companies would be closed down, and this was confirmed as 'B' Company in November 1958. There was a Company Dinner for staff to mark the closing down, at the Grosvenor Hotel in Shaftesbury on Wednesday 10th December 1958.

The permanent Staff had a discussion about what to wear, and it was decided that the regimental tie would be appropriate. I said I didn't have one, and Sgt Ellis Rimmer gave me one of his – he had plenty. The only person not wearing a regimental tie was Corporal Paulding – who turned up in uniform. This confirmed my opinion of him, formed when he met us off the train on our arrival for duty in September 1957.

During this dinner I was sitting with Major Boggis, and after some discussion he asked me what I would like to do, now the



company was closing down. He suggested moving to the Light Aid Detachment Workshop as he knew of my engineering background. I said I would like to work with Staff Wardell in 'A' Company Stores. I'd met him on occasion, when there was a bed linen change, and was impressed by the way he always supervised, whereas Donovan always left it all to me.

I was sent to talk to Staff Wardell and was very impressed by 'A' Coy Stores. I was told I would start there after the Christmas break.



Sydling St Nicholas

Although there was a 25 yard firing range at Blandford, the Battalion also used the range at Sydling St Nicholas, to develop troops' ability to fire at longer distances. At the larger range there was opportunity to practise from 50 yards to 600. My first visit was during basic training. This involved being transported by truck as the firing range was – naturally – out in the wilds. On this first day-long visit we were given the opportunity to use a bren gun.

My next visit took place after I was made permanent staff at Blandford. The powers-that-be decided that recruits should have some experience of bivouacking overnight on the range. Recruits formed bivouacs of three ponchos (waterproof capes they were issued with). Two capes formed the cover, and three men lay on the third. The Army Catering Corps set up field kitchens on the site.

Fortunately, being in the stores, I had to go out the previous day to help erect the marquee to provide cover for the stores, which included cases of ammunition and first aid necessities. A stretcher was among the latter, which I hastily commandeered to use as a bed. I then stayed there overnight, with a guard. On the following day the recruits arrived. The weather was on the wet side but the Catering Corps excelled themselves, providing better food than ever came out of the kitchens at Blandford. The washing

facilities were very primitive at the range. There was a ford across the road, which was the only place you could get a proper wash.

Some junior subalterns (lieutenants and sublieutenants) decided they would stage a raid on the temporary camp. Pickets had been detailed to patrol the camp at night – armed with pickaxe handles. During the raid, the officers began to throw thunder flashes about. One idiot threw one through a window-like opening in the marquee. Fortunately it didn't land on me as I was asleep on my stretcher bed directly beneath the opening. Justice was done when one of the guards caught one of the raiders, and clobbered him with his pick axe handle, breaking his arm. The rest were quickly rounded up. To my knowledge the experiment of camping out on the range was not repeated. This was a pity as there was a small pub a short distance away, which we were allowed to use. They had concocted a drink of their own called 'a black and tan'. This was half a pint of rough cider and half a pint of bitter, which they sold for 9d a pint.

Later when I was in 'A' Company, we had a note to say that the Battalion Shooting Team was holding trials at Sydling St Nicholas. Staff Wardell thought it was for him, but closer inspection revealed that it was an invitation for me. They had looked at my records and found that I was an 'average shot'. The Junior Shooting Team was run by Major Mardell who had been transferred to REME from the Glosters. He was commonly known as 'Mad Mardell', a soubriquet which was entirely accurate. We were issued with a bandolier of rounds of ammunition. One exercise was to start at 600 yards distance from the target, fire five rounds, then run to 500 yards, fire your rounds, and so on till you reached the 50 yards mark, when you had to fire standing up. The targets looked as big as houses at 50 yards, but you had no breath left, so it was very difficult to hit them. We were also given another chance to fire

a Bren gun, which was good fun, as the rapid fire meant you emptied a magazine in the blink of an eye. The only drawback to this interlude was having to go over the ground at the end of the day, picking up all the empty cartridges.

One very clear non-military memory I have of travelling to the range is on one early autumn morning when we passed a parkland where the trees were in all their autumn colours – as good as anything you would see in New England. Yet making the same trip a week later, we found all the colour had gone.



January 1959

Major Boggis had arranged my transfer to 'A' Company, and I had to report to Sgt Wardell CQMS. We hit it off immediately. He was totally different from Sgt Donovan. The organisation in the Stores was superb. My bunk was situated inside the Stores, with an outlook towards the wood which surrounded the camp. The Sergeant's main requirement was a decent cup of coffee when he arrived in the morning – he lived in Married Quarters. He was an ex-guardsman, his manner was regimental, and that suited me down to the ground.

We always had re-enlistments seconded to us. These were men who had left the army, but then returned from civilian life for one reason or another. They were not required to repeat the six weeks basic training with the other recruits, and were given jobs to do around the Company lines. If one was suitable, he would bunk with me as there were two beds in the bunk. One of the first was Jock McInnes, with whom I got on exceptionally well. If there wasn't too much work to do, he would come to the gym in the afternoon and watch us play basketball. I was sorry when he was posted after 6 weeks.

Another re-enlistment who was assigned to the Stores was Joey Patterson from Egremont. He was a small lad, mad keen on boxing, whose heroes were Floyd Patterson and Ingemar Johansson. Joey was always sparring around in the Stores and encouraging me



to join in. One afternoon I caught him on the chin and knocked him to the floor. We went to the pictures that night together and he kept holding his chin and saying, "You've broken my jaw." He never sparred again.

One occasion when I had been home, Les had lent me his Hillman Minx to drive back to camp. I parked it outside the Stores. When Staff Wardell saw it, he said, "You can't leave it there, park it in the Drill Shed," which I did. Joey Patterson was due to be posted the next day, and he persuaded me to go into Blandford to a little pub called the Blue Boar, where we were invited by a sergeant to play darts with him and a friend. Joey went first and got away on a double, then went off to get some drinks in. The sergeant threw next, then it was my turn, and I did what I had never done either before or since – I scored 180 with three darts. When Joey returned with the drinks the game was over. They wouldn't play with us again. Joey ordered a large seafood

platter as part of his posting night out and invited me to share it. There was something evil in the seafood and I was very sick. Next day Staff Wardell refused to let me go home (driving Les's car) until after lunch, when he judged I had recovered enough.

Knowledge of my expertise in checking equipment of AWOLs had followed me to A Company. There weren't a lot of incidents of that sort in A company, but one I remember involved, unusually, a corporal. Staff told me to get his gear, so with a re-enlistment I went up to his bunk, opened his locker and began to remove his gear, when I came across an FN pistol, complete with a box of ammo. I told the re-enlistment to go and get Staff Wardell. "Don't tell him what we've found, just say that we need him."

I remember Staff Wardell coming down the wooden corridor at his usual steady measured pace. "What's your problem?" I showed him the gun. I'd never known him to swear but he uttered an expletive which was quite surprising. He told the re-enlistment to go to the Guardroom and tell the Provo Marshall that Staff Wardell wanted to see him in A Company lines, but not to say why.

The Provo Marshall arrived with one of his constables. "What's your problem, Staff?" When he saw the gun, he asked if I had touched it. "No, Sergeant."

"Good." He took the gun away after telling me to pack up everything else. When I had done that, the constable took it away to the Guardroom. Nothing more was heard of the matter – at least as far as I was concerned.

There was a lot of grass to cut round the camp and we had Allen Autoscythes for the job. They were very good on level ground, but on the banks they would roll over and the cutting blades would get bent. Until this time they had to be sent to a little on-site repair shop which did that sort of work. But Staff Wardell realised that I had the engineering knowledge to

strip them and take the blades to the blacksmith's shop to be straightened.

In 'B' Coy, the stores weren't adjacent to the living accommodation, and the dustbins were kept at each end of the spider. But in 'A' Coy the living accommodation was nearby, and there was a compound for the bins to keep them tidy. One of the jobs for the re-enlisted men was to go through the bins to rescue any bottles to take back to the NAAFI and recoup the deposit. This money paid for our coffee and sugar; the enlisted men were included in this. One morning Sgt Wardell came in to find me making a neat notice indicating that glass should be put in one dustbin only, which I had painted red. This saved our guys the chore of sorting through the bins to find the bottles. This gave Staff Wardell the idea that I was quite handy at making notices, so he soon had me making signs for the Sergeants' Mess. I think he was what they called President. For one of the jobs, he acquired a large roll of lino, and asked me to paint a racecourse lay out on it. It must have stretched out at 12 feet by 8 feet! I painted various hazards on it, so they could have a race night in the Sergeants' Mess.

On another occasion he asked me to help him run the bar at a Passing Out Parade Dance in the C/D Company gymnasium. I understand they bussed girls in from the Bournemouth area. All was well till a fight broke out. So we quickly put up the shutters, and exited at speed. The noise as we left was horrendous. This confirmed my view of Sgt Howard's actions at the end of our basic training when he took us to a pub in Poole to play skittles, rather than letting us go off to a dance at the camp.

On another evening I helped him with the bar at the APTC Conference held at Blandford. He told me to go and see the catering staff to find meals for us. They did us very well in return

for some drinks. On that occasion a Colonel said to Sgt Howard, "You'll have a drink, Staff?"

"Yes and my assistant will have the same."

After we had shut up the bar, I offered to drive him home to Married Quarters, which were a bit of a walk away. He invited me in for a coffee, then suggested I stay the night, so we both settled down in armchairs. I think he was concerned that I might be picked up driving round Married Quarters late at night.

Co-incidentally with moving to A Company, I produced a chart on graph paper, showing all the days I had left to serve. On it I put a key, marking off days in camp in red and out of camp days in blue. Blue meant anything that took me out of camp for any reason. There was a lot of blue!

Inspections of Stores were rare, and I had never seen one when I was in B Company, but one day the CO of the whole battalion, plus officers and the RSM arrived to inspect A Company Stores. They all packed into my bunk, and the CO had a look at Penny's picture which I had by my bed, my poster of Brigitte Bardot, from the film "And God Created Woman", and my picture of New York Harbour, with the SS France docked. The latter had been given to me by a corporal who was being posted, as it was too big for him to take with him.

Then he moved on to my demob chart.

"Where were you on that day?"

"Aldershot, playing basketball, Sir."

"And here?"

"Rifle range, Sir."

And so on for quite a few of my blue squares.

He then looked out of my window at the view of the woods and the hills and said, "You've got a better job than I have."

Yes, Sir, but I don't get paid as much."

Later that year Staff had the first hint that he was to be bowler hatted. He said to me, "If you're thinking of going on leave, I would go now." So Penny arranged for us to go to Babbacombe. At the same time he said to me that he had something to show me. He took me into the Stores, and lifted up a trapdoor set into the floor boards. Underneath was stacked a quantity of spare bedding. "If you get short, use this." That knowledge left the army with me.

There was a Cook Sergeant with whom I got friendly. Sgt Phillips was the Cook Sergeant for Benbow Cookhouse. I had numerous conversations with him. His brother was Al Phillips, the Aldgate Tiger, a well known professional boxer. On one occasion when we chatting, the Sergeant called over a lad in cookhouse fatigues. He said to him, "Show us your trick.". The lad went out the door, using the yale lock, and slammed the door with him on the outside. We could see his feet under the door. Then it opened. "How did he do that?" I asked.

"I don't know, but there doesn't seem much point in locking anything up."

Another time we were training for basketball in the afternoon. When we finished, we went straight to the cookhouse. Phillips threw us out with an order to get into uniform. We went back to the billet, showered, changed and returned to find the evening meal was more or less over. A couple of afternoons later we were training again. We told RSM Patten that we would have to go early and explained the cookhouse situation. He gave me a bit of paper to give to Sergeant Phillips. When I went in, Phillips greeted me with, "Get out of my cookhouse." I waved my piece of paper at him, which didn't go down too well. From then on he tried to hammer seven bells out of me when I was in line in the cookhouse – in a friendly fashion, of course!

At the end of June Staff Sergeant Wardell left, and Sergeant Lobb was made CQM Sergeant. From the start it was obvious that he didn't want the appointment. On our first meeting he made it very clear that he was a Drill Sergeant. He also said that it was my job to continue as I had been doing. If there were any problems I should send a re-enlistment to find him. As far as he was concerned, I was running the stores.

On one occasion I was told to arrange accommodation for 40 cyclists taking part in the Army Road Racing Championships. This was to take place over a weekend, which did not please me as I was used to going home at weekends, so was very put out at having to stay in camp. I asked what would happen about any discrepancies after bedding was issued to these people. There had been a problem over things going missing in 'B' Company after a similar event. I was told just to indent for any shortages, and replacements would be supplied. About this time too I got friendly with our two new company clerks – Ian who came from the Luton area, and John who was Scottish. Occasionally we walked down to Pimperne together for a drink. I never found out where their bunk was – they always came to mine as I had the best facilities for making tea and coffee.



My National Service mug, customised by an artistic mate.

The last bunkee I had had was Joey Patterson, so I was now bunking by myself on a permanent basis. During the August, I still had outstanding leave which I took so I could row in the City Bumping Races. During that time Sergeant Lobb had to be in the stores.

Two weeks before I was due to be demobbed, I went home and borrowed Salter's little van. On Saturday afternoon I drove back to camp with Penny, parked outside the stores and loaded up all the large pieces I had accumulated – pictures, etc – then drove back to Oxford.



One week to go 'til demob.

At the end of my time in the army I had to hand all my kit in. One of my jobs in the stores involved my having a list of new recruits and their home addresses. One of the new recruits I noticed, came from Oxford. I asked him how he was getting on bringing his kit up to the required standard. He hadn't made a start. So I told him to bring all his webbing, etc round to my bunk, and exchanged it for mine, which had had virtually two years of care, and was 'squared off' to the highest standards. I also asked him what size boots he wore; size 8 was the answer, which was the same as me. So I did him an exchange for mine (one careful owner, only used for inspection purposes), which saved him from the work involved in bringing his up to standard.

On my last evening the basketball team were having a training session and I went down to the gym to say cheerio, taking some cans of beer for a farewell drink. While they were changing, I noticed a lad at the far end of the gym, practising lay ups, and I recognised him. It turned out I had met him at Warner's Holiday Camp on Hayling Island in 1956. I had gone down for the weekend to visit Penny, who was on holiday with some other girls and I had bunked in this chap's chalet, with his mate for a couple of nights. His name was Brian, and he came from Birmingham, where he had trained in the Jewellery Quarter. He was just starting out on his army career as I was finishing mine.

On my last day I had to go to see the Company Commander, and then I made my way to the bus stop. Who should be there to see me off but RSM Patten and CSM Chardlow. The RSM said, "If you fancy coming back, just give me a ring," and he gave me his phone number. I'm not sure whether they were just seeing me off, or checking that I wasn't leaving with the Battalion silver. But it was a nice touch, much appreciated.

And so my two years of National Service came to an end, and

I was allowed to go back to my life and begin earning money and making plans for the future. But I have never regretted my time in the army. Perhaps I didn't see as much of the world as did some of my friends, but I met an amazing variety of people, which I would never have done had I continued my life in Oxford without those two years.



Post Scripts

Twenty years later I was playing basketball at Redefield Sports Hall, in my customary belligerent fashion, annoying the referee. As usual I got fouled out with five personal fouls. At the end of the game I was on the subs' bench when the referee at whom I had moaned during the whole match walked across the court towards me. Bill Baker said, "You're in for it now."

The referee said to me, "You haven't changed a bit!" It was Jock McInnes, who had reached the rank of RSM, and was acting as a Recruitment Officer in the Army Recruitment Office in St Giles. He wouldn't come for a drink with us as he had to get back to Bletchley, where he was living. He was going to be a security officer there when he left the army. I intended to go and see him in St Giles, but I never got round to it. One of the other staff in the Recruitment Office was living in North Oxford, and I knew him because he used to bring his car into Salter's.

Move on another twenty years and I was in Sainsbury's at Heyford Hill when I saw a man whom I knew from somewhere, but couldn't place him. It turned out to be the recruit to whom I had given my kit as I left the army and he went in. One reason for remembering him was that for a year or so after I was back in Oxford, I would go for a drink occasionally in the Northgate Tavern. I knew the barmaid Liz, and from time to time she would tell me that the chap had left money behind the bar for a drink for me, as a thank you for all the bull I had saved him from.

Join the Army, learn a trade,
Travel, adventure and get paid,
These are the lies you're fed upon,
And like a sucker you sign on.
Then when they've got you in their grip,
Where are the smiles, the comradeship?
Where are those friendly helpful types,
And who's the devil with the stripes?

Then you're issued with your kit – a uniform that doesn't fit,
Brasses left and brasses right, a holdall to be scrubbed snow white,
A belt – the brasses dull and black, one realised, and one small pad,
Pouches basic, buckles 'D', shirts of khaki issued three,
Boots are issued thick with grease – ain't this ever going to cease?

Ah, at last you think it's through,
And ask the Sergeant what to do.
He looks at you as if you're mad,
"You see that kit? Well, clean it lad,"
Followed by another word,
(The strangest that you've ever heard).

You look at him with quaking heart –
“But I don’t know where to start.”
The Sergeant groans and starts to swear,
“You see that webbing over there –

Well scrub it till it looks like new,
And you can scrub the room out too.
Then in the morning on the dot,
I’ll inspect the b----- lot!”
And so begins your new career
In this unfriendly atmosphere.
You think of home, your easy bed,
And wish like hell that you were dead.
The months roll by, you work (and how),
Let’s take a look and see you now.

Drills, parades and kit inspection,
Brasses bulled up to perfection,
Weapons, training and P.T.,
“Squad attention! Stand at ease!”
Damn fool orders such as these.
Then in some dreary office job
You count the days until demob.
How hopeless it all seems to you,
You find you have a year to do.
Then one fine day when you’re much older,
The blokes say, “Hi there, old soldier.”

Then you can tell any younger lad
About the good times you have had,
About the service you have seen
And all the places you have been.
Then you’ll say, “Wipe off that frown,
Don’t let the army get you down.
Stick it, lad, keep smiling through,
I’ve only got – days to do.”

(If John knew the author of this poem, he never shared the
information, but he had a copy kept from his army days.)



Military Conduct	VERY GOOD
NOTE.—The Range of Military Conduct Gradings possible is :—	Page 10 Army Book 111
(1) Very Good ; (2) Good ; (3) Fair ; (4) Indifferent ; (5) Bad ; (6) Very Bad.	
Testimonial. (To be completed with a view to civil employment and to be identical with that on page 9.)	
<p>A most likeable young man who is full of willingness and co-operation. He intends to return to his former trade of V.M. His experience of stores in the Army could no doubt be put to good use in the Technical Stores of a garage. A very good basketball player and useful footballer. I am sure he will be an asset to any civilian organisation where loyalty, hard work and co-operation is required.</p>	
UNIT STAMP 1 TRG. BN. REME ANSON & CRADOCK LINES BLANDFORD CAMP, DORSET.	Signature of CO Date 4 SEP 59 Signature of Soldier
To be Completed by Unit sending Soldier on Terminal Leave	
UNIT STAMP	TERMINAL LEAVE begins on and ends on both dates inclusive. Signature of OC Unit Date
(43274) Wt. 46991—4977 200000 10/56 W.O.P.	