Oct. 1950 – Dec. 1951
Roy Jacklin
HASLAR

I joined the boys school at Haslar in Oct 1950 and left for man service with 35 other boys in Dec 1951. We did our 6 weeks basic training at Blackdown. At the end of the training we expected to be posted to our parent units, but because there were so many of us they couldn't find us places to go. To keep us occupied they gave us another stint doing basic training. Very frustrating as we had already done this at Haslar. Well at the end of this second period of training there were still no postings so the powers that be decided to send us all for driver training to Deepcut. The idea was to form a mobile unit to tour the Southern Command demonstrating what we (RAOC) did in a theatre of war. Obviously a recruitement drive. I was out under instruction one day when a dispatch driver told us to report back to camp. The OC wanted to see all the ex-boys. He informed us of the death of the King and told us we were to represent the RAOC on the funeral procession. A great honour for us.

The run up to the actual day was quite hectic as you can imagine. More marching, and much of it in slow time. Our uniforms and greatcoats were tailored, box pleats in both. Something frowned on at the time. We were billeted in a Guards barracks somewhere near to where we we to form up. There was great activity in our quarters the night before the parade. Some smart person, probably! a Guardsman decided to fuse our lights. So we had to prepare our kit by the light of candles. Not much sleep that night. We formed up along the roadside until the procession came nearer then reformed on the road. You could hear the band on transistor radio's held by spectators. We slow marched for what seemed ages. It was very tiring for us. We were clerks, storemen, and drivers not infantry who train all the time. It was a very moving time and I was proud to have been one of the lads to have represented the Corps on this occasion. When we returned to Deepcut we were given a 72hr pass as a reward. I know that one, or perhaps two of the lads who were on that parade have since passed on themselves

I wonder if there are any ex-boys out there who were on this parade .It would be nice to hear from them.

Roy Jacklin.