By Roy Venables
January 1958

13 Jan 58.
I travelled apprehensively from Yorkshire to Brookwood.
There were two kids talking big on the train as it approached Brookwood, which made me feel even more inadequate. Ironically both these two had departed with their parents by the end of basic training so I began to think I was not so bad after all.
By the time the train got to Brookwood, having passed the huge cemetery by the rail side, those remaining in the carriage seemed all to be heading for the Army. After staring wildly around the platform I saw a very smart looking Sergeant and I approached him.
Summoning all my nerve I asked him if he was looking for me. He stared at me from beneath the peak of his cap, produced a board and bull dog clip, and asked me fiercely for my name.
Thinking I was about to be rescued from my uncertainty, I gave it.
He looked again at his list and uttered the immortal words.
"You`re not on my list, so you can F*** off!"
It seems we all arrived the same way.
The train to Brookwood then 3 Tonner to camp.

I eventually realized he was meeting recruits destined for the Guards at Pirbright.

It was dark before I eventually arrived at Blackdown.
Tea was nearly over when they had finished documenting me etc and so I got my introduction to dining on the meagre leftovers and learned another important lesson, and that was to ensure that you were in the first wave for any subsequent meals.

I was in the first intake to be drilled by Sgt Bollers, whose mentor was Sgt Barnes.
The only contributor from my time is Rumble Richards who was a J/Sgt and who, as such, I did not get to know until we went to Bramley together into Mans service.
Is there anyone out there from Jan 58?