This memory was donated by Chris Malbon
Cutforth Platoon 1973-74
B Company

September 1973 – forever ingrained in my memory. Memorable moments on the first day – getting on the wrong bus at Blackdown station and ending up at the woodentop's wooden sheds in Pirbright – and feeling very relieved when I got of the bus at the College! (This may well have set a precedent for my subsequent career!) How watching Fox Russell get his shoulder length hair cut off in the barbers made us laugh! How come we ended up with a garrulous Irishman who was headed for the Int Corps? You still out there Paddy Ballantine?

Funny how time (33 years!) adds a certain rosy glow to events that at the time made you wonder just why you really did sign up! Looking at our platoon photo taken in late October 73, I can remember why we looked such a dismal bunch; Sgt Douglas (was he really THAT big?) and Lt Rook had nailed us for something severe and life seemed dire! It wasn't just the photo that was in black and white!

Other memories; shovelling coke from one side of the yard to the other whilst on RoPes – just for fun! The whole of Senior B – Cutforth and Matthew Pls - being charged with being drunk prior to our Passing Out Parade (Dec 74) and marching in rows in the drill shed to received punishment! That HAS to be a record! Or how about coming top of my trade training course and finishing early, only to end up working in the Sgt's Mess garden as a reward?!

Hands up those who remember sitting on the warm metal plate behind the cookhouse whilst supposed to be on stag? I think I learned to skive at an early age! Anybody remember Bobby Charlton and his predilection for things that went bang? Last time I saw him he was an SSgt ATO1 when I was finishing my time at the APSC Sutton Coldfield. Hope he's still in one piece! Was I the only one who went in fear of be-whiskered Kenny Maule? Or the granite-jawed Tom Flowers? What of those beyond human folk whose charge we were put in? Given most of us are now pushing 50 plus, I do wonder!

Looking back, the College taught me a great deal, though I would have denied it at the time. Funny how you miss the things you hated at the time, is it not? I leave you to your memories of different days and different values.

By Chris Malbon
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