First Day April 1975
A/Pte Tom Orrock

I remember being pick up from the station, crammed in the back of a clapped out Landrover and driving towards Blackdown Barracks.

Everyone on board nodded with approval at the sight of the modern barrack blocks but suddenly cries of "What the....?" filled the air as we arrived at Dettingen Barracks and were told to get out.

One passenger jumped out muttered something along the lines of "Thuck Fis", grabbed his suitcase and ran off to the nearest bus stop never to be seen again (must have been a potential "B" Coy bod!!).
We were herded into the gymnasium and divided by "go left" "go right".
From there we were issued with our "part numbers"...mine was 24305006 and Alex Ahmet was 24305007.

We were then issued with our ill fitting uniforms (shirts hairy hessian etc)and told to go to our company blocks - Alex and I went to Sweeney Pl, A Coy under Sgt Taffy Rowlands, who told us we were 'hand picked',and Corporal Billy Rice (bless them both).
Our CSM was a little Southern Irish gent named Foster(aka Egg on Legs) who was actually quite a good guy except he tended to spray the whole front rank and half the centre rank with his spit.
Our Pl Commander was "Scaggy Tache" and our A/NCOs were A/Sgt Chris Sheldrake, A/Lcpl Chris Eades, A/Lcpl Jock ? and A/Cpl 'Geordie(I'll @&^%$#@ kill ya)'Denwood.

The camp RSM was Mr. Dorning who had a lovely daughter but no one was that brave as to date her.

I later served with Chris Eades in 3 Div, Bulford and later 3 Armd Div in Germany and met up with Chris Sheldrake and Geordie Denwood in a Sgts' Mess years later. Geordie Denwood denied ever being in the Apprentice College - probably afraid of revenge attacks...well he was a bit of a Rissole at times.

A few Pl members I remember are Bill Pagan (best mate),Alex Ahmet (Good mate), Gibbo (Gibson) (Good mate), Kevin Cull (good mate later served with in 14 Int NI), Geordie Coates, Bill Walker, Schrimshaw, Doc Doherty, Parker (who was unfortunately believed to be the Pl grot and punchback)," I ain't no Bender" Mills, Pogo, Martin Lawrence (tick tock), Jarmin who instigated my nickname Korky (he reckoned the Queen's Corgis were taller than me. Unfortunately he had two left feet no brains and was ugly and departed soon after enlistment).

There was another twelve bods whose names escape me at this time (sorry gents).
We all had a brilliant time until the many grease monkeys departed for Aborfield and us stackers amalgamated with the Body Pl stackers 'B Coy' (worst posting in 14 years!!!).

Later fond memories of getting lost on Dartmoor and Camp Tenby exploits will follow soon but I've probably bored you enough.

Cheers,
Korky.