

grounds, except on authorized duty such as attending sports matches, I was not to be present at any recreation or entertainment in RMC, including the cadets' wet mess, I was not to consume any alcoholic Beveridge, I was to attend all Defaulters and Check Parades, and outside working hours I was to remain dressed in the uniform ordered for the day.

### Meeting with CI MTW

On Wednesday 8 April 1987, I was one of a number of 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets who were fronted before the Chief Instructor (CI) of the Military Training Wing (MTW), Lieutenant-Colonel Simon WILLIS. I was reprimanded by Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIS for failing my first navigation theory re-test and for displaying 'low personal standards and poor discipline' on FEX "Buna". Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIS also told me, 'You are to work hard to improve your performance in both the [practical] and academic spheres and seek guidance as necessary.'

On Thursday 9 April 1987, I was rated as 103/118 in terms of leadership amongst 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Cadets at the college (\* 11 junior cadets had already resigned by this time) and 108/118 in terms of academics. I understand that the academic ranking was done according to examination test results (*see Attachment 6*) but I do not know how the leadership ranking was done.

### Meeting with CO CSC

On Thursday 9 April 1987, I was one of a handful of cadets who was seen by the CO of the CSC, Lieutenant-Colonel KIBBEY. By this stage, there were 118 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets remaining at the college, and I was one of a handful who had been raised for special mention at the RMC Board of Studies (BOS). Part of the interview with Lieutenant-Colonel KIBBEY was recorded in an official Record of Interview:

KIBBEY: At my BOS you were raised for special mention because of your indiscipline - you have the worst record in the Class. Three charges, one of which is for AWOL. Why?

KNIGHT: I have had difficulty making the transition from civilian life to RMC.

KIBBEY: Have you been able to make the change now?

KNIGHT: Yes, sir.

KIBBEY: You are 103<sup>rd</sup> in leadership and 108<sup>th</sup> in academics. I don't believe you are working to your potential. You must work harder and learn the lessons of the RMC routine here. Stay out of trouble. If you can't then I have no option but to refer you to the DMA [Director of Military Art] for a formal warning.

I had not, in fact, been charged with a count of AWOL [Absent Without Official Leave]; I had been charged twice only with Absence From Duty, a lesser charge. I accepted most of what Lieutenant-Colonel KIBBEY had to say except that I found it hard to believe that, in light of my test results, I was 108<sup>th</sup> in academics (*see Attachment 6*).

On Friday 10 April 1987, my initial Absence from Duty charge, which resulted from my non-attendance at the 1<sup>st</sup> XVIII football match on 15 March, was heard by the OC of Kapyong Company, Major S.A. RODGERS. Before the hearing, I went to see Staff Cadet QUIN in his room in the Alamein Company barracks. I discovered that QUIN had received my note and had arranged a replacement official. When I informed him that I was being charged over the incident and that I required a statement from him, QUIN claimed he could not remember the name of the replacement and that he would only go as far as stating that he received my note. QUIN refused point blank to state anything further and finally, and reluctantly, wrote out a very brief statement on my insistence. Such a statement, however, was practically useless and as a result, I did not have a defence to the charge. I obtained Staff Cadet Charles SHAW (CSC No 5201), a 20-year-old 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadet from Kokoda Company's 15 Platoon, as the Prosecutor, and Staff Cadet David HARRIS (CSC No 5174), a 19-year-old 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadet from Kokoda Company's 13 Platoon, as my defending Officer. I wanted to call QUIN as a witness but HARRIS refused to call him - a fellow 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadet - because he thought, "it might get Quin into trouble." The hearing commenced before Major RODGERS at 0700hrs in the Kapyong Company barracks. As HARRIS refused to contest the charge, I had no option but to plead guilty to the one count of Absence From Duty in breach of s.23(1) of the DFDA. HARRIS did mention, however, my attempts to contact Staff Cadet QUIN by note and telephone in his plea of mitigation. Major RODGERS considered these submissions, and then sentenced me to 5 days SOL. I was not impressed that I was found guilty of not performing my duty properly in the same manner that Staff Cadet QUIN had

originally performed it; i.e. leaving a note on the staff cadet's bedroom door and not confirming that he had received it.

In the first three months I was at Duntroon I saved over \$1,000 of my salary in order to buy a second-hand car in Melbourne whilst on Easter leave. On Wednesday 15 April 1987, I obtained a \$6,000 car loan from the Canberra branch of the Defence Force Credit Union. I considered that the total amount was sufficient to cover the cost of purchasing a second-hand car, registering it and taking out insurance. I was also able to meet the amount of the weekly loan repayments on my staff cadet's salary.

During 15-22 April 1987, I was in Melbourne on Easter leave.

On Sunday 19 April 1987, I purchased a second-hand 1974 LH model Torana SLR 5000 sedan for \$5,800. I had dreamed of buying a SLR 5000 for many years. I recognized that as a car with a 5-litre V8 engine it would be expensive to run, but I intended to keep it for only "a year or so" and then buy "something sensible."

On Thursday 23 April 1987, I drove back to the college from Easter leave.

On Friday 24 April 1987, my Leaving Post While on Guard Duty charge, incurred during FEX "Buna", was heard by the CO CSC, Lieutenant-Colonel David KIBBEY at the CSC HQ. I obtained Staff Cadet COLMER as the Prosecutor and 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Staff Cadet Michael DUNKLEY (CSC No 4675) as my Defending Officer. The college adjutant, Captain R.J. MARTIN (RMC Class of 1978, CSC No 3279), and the college RSM, WO1 BURNS, were also present during the hearing. I plead guilty to one count of Leaving Post While on Guard Duty in breach of s.32(1)(d) of the *DFDA*, and DUNKLEY made a plea of mitigation on my behalf. He said that I believed that my replacement was awake and was prepared to arise and proceed to his post. Another 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadet who was at the C Company HQ during FEX "Buna", Staff Cadet GRACE, submitted a written statement that he was awoken by my and TURKINGTON's brief conversation that night. Lieutenant-Colonel KIBBEY rejected this plea and severely reprimanded me before sentencing me to 14 days RP and 21 days SOL (the heaviest penalties that could be awarded at a CO's hearing).

## Consumption & Storage of Alcohol

At 0600hrs on Saturday 25 April 1987, ANZAC Day, all the cadets at RMC formed up outside their respective barracks to march down to assembled buses, which transported them to the nearby Australian War Memorial for the ANZAC Day dawn memorial service. As Kokoda Company began to march down in formation to the buses a 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadet, Staff Cadet FITZPATRICK, staggered into the rear of the formation. FITZPATRICK was extremely drunk and fellow 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadets made a place for him in the rear of the middle rank in an attempt to conceal him. As they marched down the road FITZPATRICK staggered and stumbled to such an extent that he had to be assisted by the cadets on either side of him. He often giggled and loudly stated that he had only stopped drinking 15 minutes beforehand, and had only just made it back to the college in time. I thought that it was a disgrace to turn up drunk to an ANZAC Day memorial service. No action was taken against Staff Cadet FITZPATRICK.

The ANZAC Day incident was not the only incidence of intoxicated senior cadets at the college whilst I was there. On one weekend afternoon in May 1987, I was washing my car in the 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadet's car park at the front of the barracks. I had no option but to wash my car there, as it was the only place where a hose was available. The car park for Kokoda Company's 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets was on top of a hill behind the barracks overlooking ADFA. As I was washing my car I was confronted by the Kokoda Company cadet CSM, Under Officer REED. I was cleaning a rag near the tap when CSM REED pulled up next to me in his car. He leant out of the window and said to me, "What's your shit heap doing here?" He was obviously intoxicated as his face was flushed, his eyes were glazed and his speech slurred. He was also holding an opened can of Fosters beer in his right hand. I told him that I was washing my car and I would remove it as soon as I had finished. He then parked his car, got out and slowly staggered into the barracks drinking his can of Fosters. He was dressed in a tee-shirt, shorts and sneakers.

Not only was the consumption or storage of alcohol in or around the barracks an offence against RMC Standing Orders (Order No 1403), but cadets were also told by the college authorities that driving under the influence of alcohol was punishable by immediate discharge from the college. Alcohol was frequently consumed and stored by senior cadets

in the Kokoda Company barracks nonetheless. Beer and wine were regularly consumed by the 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadets in the recreation room, and senior cadets frequently stored bottles of spirits, usually whiskey or rum, in their rooms and the platoon storerooms. On one occasion, myself and a few other junior cadets were watching a video in the recreation room when a 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadet, Lance-Corporal Craig THORP (CSC No 5133), walked into the room, sat down in a chair in front of me and consumed a take-away meal and a number of cans of beer.

On another occasion in mid-May 1987, myself and two 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadets in Kokoda Company, 15 Platoon's platoon sergeant, Sergeant Gary STONE (CSC No 5129) and my section leader, Corporal CRANE, consumed a cask of white wine in the recreation room over a period of about three hours late one night. STONE and CRANE had already been drinking for about an hour before I walked into the room and STONE, over the quiet objections of CRANE, invited me to join him for a drink. Most 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadets considered consuming alcohol in the barracks as a prerogative of senior cadets only. During the drinking session in the recreation room, I followed STONE and CRANE's example of using the room's balcony to urinate off. They did this simply because they were too lazy to use the nearby toilets. This was the only occasion when I was invited to socialise with any senior cadet.

I should state that during my time in Kokoda Company I cannot recall a single instance of being "bastardized" by Sergeant STONE, and I was not treated overly harshly by Corporal CRANE. In fact, I found Sergeant STONE to be one of the most conscientious and approachable 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadets at the college (He was later awarded the June 1987 graduating class's Lithgow Small Arms Factory Trophy).

I also recall an incident when a 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadet, Staff Cadet Scott BECKWITH (CSC No 4771), consumed alcohol during a field exercise. During FEX "Tobruk" in early May 1987, I was present with another 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadet, Staff Cadet Trevor DARBY (CSC No 5242), on several occasions when BECKWITH "spiked" his coffee with whiskey from a small bottle he kept in his pack. BECKWITH claimed that it woke him up in the morning and kept him warm. What concerned me was that there was one night during the exercise when all the cadets used live ammunition to repel a mock attack, and BECKWITH was firing from the trench adjacent to mine.

BECKWITH later commented adversely on me for Darren MOORE's book, *Duntroon: The Royal Military College of Australia 1911-2001* (see Attachment 28).

Senior cadets at RMC were not, however, totally free from disciplinary action. While I was at the college a number of senior cadets were charged with various military offences. One 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadet, Under Officer Paul ANGELATOS (CSC No 5012), was court martialled. ANGELATOS was the cadet CSM of Gallipoli Company when he discovered the Directing Staff (DS) written solution to a forthcoming examination in a storeroom. Before he handed it into the authorities ANGELATOS copied the solution without their knowledge. His cheating was later discovered and he was charged under the *DFDA*. ANGELATOS had contravened one of the guiding characteristics of the Charter of the Royal Military College, which contained an outline of The Military Ethic (see above). The Military Ethic stated, in part, that: 'There is an absolute requirement for integrity in a military officer and an officer cadet. Integrity demands the absolute exclusion of lying, cheating, dishonesty and evasion. It also demands that such behaviour not be tolerated in others' (CSC Standing Orders, Order No 104). Under Officer ANGELATOS was eventually tried and convicted of plagiarism by a Court Martial held at the college in mid-1987. He was reprimanded, stripped of his cadet rank and transferred to Kapyong Company as a Staff Cadet. Even with his conviction, ANGELATOS graduated as a lieutenant with the rest of his class on 16 June 1987.

#### 5<sup>th</sup> Charge

During a Defaulters Parade on the RMC Parade Ground on Monday 27 April 1987, I was charged for a fifth time. At the commencement of the 0625hrs Defaulters Parade the 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadet acting as the CSC Orderly Officer, Lance-Corporal Shane O'BRYAN (CSC No 5101), conducted an inspection of the Defaulters field back packs. When he examined my pack he found that my steel cup canteen was dirty. He flew into a rage, yelled at me and demanded an explanation. I calmly gave the standard reply: "No excuse, corporal." O'BRYAN furiously threw the cup canteen across the parade ground. At the end of the Defaulters Parade O'BRYAN paraded me before the 1<sup>st</sup> Class cadet acting as the CSC Orderly Sergeant, Sergeant Owen ROGERS (CSC No 5119), who subsequently charged me with Failure to Comply With a Lawful General Order in breach of s.29 of the *DFDA*. This was admittedly

an example of a charge that was solely my own fault; I had not taken sufficient care in the cleaning of my equipment and had missed the cup canteen.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Guidance Interview**

During the evening of 27 April 1987, I was interviewed by Captain GOSS in another guidance session at the MTW building. In the official Record of Interview Captain Goss wrote that, 'I discussed SCDT Knight's charges and poor result on EX FEM 1 [FEX "Buna"] and gave guidance on personal administration and discipline. He was advised to improve his motivation and decrease his social activities. SCDT Knight was made aware that any more charges would be seen in a very serious light.'

I must state that my social activities were no more than those of my classmates or of senior cadets. I do not know the basis for Captain GOSS's criticism of my "social activities".

## **FEX "Tobruk"**

During 1-6 May 1987, I attended FEX "Tobruk" at the Majura Field Firing Range. Exercise "Tobruk" was a training exercise in company-level defensive operations and, like FEX "Buna", was a combined 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Class field exercise. The exercise was conducted around entrenched defended positions in the northeast region of the Majura Range around 10kms from Canberra. For the duration of the eight-day exercise the command positions of section 2IC, section leader, platoon sergeant and platoon commander were filled by 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadets on a rotation basis. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets, and those 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadets not in a command position, were employed as each section's soldiers for the duration of the exercise. On Exercise "Tobruk" each cadet was required to dig the necessary two-man "fire pits" (slit trench with two covered sleeping bays in a 'U' shape), but the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadets believed that they were exempt from distasteful or tedious duties, even when they were being employed as private soldiers. This attitude was based mainly on their belief that the status they had at the college vis-à-vis junior cadets extended to training in the field. Distasteful or tedious duties such as collecting meals from the company HQ, gathering stores from the company or platoon HQs, gathering foliage for the camouflaging of the fire pits, and the running of errands and delivering messages were seen by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class cadets as the responsibility of

hexamine stove, everyone else was sitting around their fire pits talking. My assumption about the orderly was confirmed when I overheard the orderly tell the section leader that some stores were waiting to be picked up from the platoon HQ. The section leader had his back to me and before he could turn around I turned to Staff Cadet SHRIMPTON, who was sitting on the edge of the pit next to me, and said, "I betcha he picks me." I then crouched down in my fire pit out of sight and told SHRIMPTON not to look down at me. An instant later the section leader turned around and called out, "Where's Knight?... Staff Cadet Knight!" I could easily hear him but I remained in the bottom of the pit. Again the section leader called out, "Staff Cadet Knight!" I then stood up in plain view holding up my dismantled rifle in one hand and with a cleaning brush in the other. The section leader disregarded this (cadets were required to take their rifle with them everywhere when in the field) and ordered me to fetch the stores from the platoon HQ, located on an adjacent rise about 200 metres away. When I looked around and saw that everyone else in the section, apart from Staff Cadet DARBY, were still sitting around doing nothing, I turned to SHRIMPTON and angrily muttered, "I told you so, didn't I? I fuckin' knew it. I'm hiding in the bottom of the pit and he picks me. I'm the only one doing anything and he fuckin' still picks me." The section leader then turned to Staff Cadet DARBY and detailed him to go with me. DARBY, with a spoon in one hand and holding a steel cup canteen over his stove with the other, stood up and made to protest but then muttered and threw the canteen to the ground.

Captain BROWN and Sergeant SAID's Field Report on me for FEX "Tobruk" recorded that I 'did not dig with enough effort, did not take aimed shots in the live fire exercise, did not use a correct fire position, made immature statements and was not accepted as an equal by his peers'. As a result, I received a bare pass score for the exercise of 5/10, the second worst score in my section. The worst score was attained by Staff Cadet DARBY who received a score of 4/10, due mainly to the fact that he fell asleep in a fire pit during the large-scale mock attack late in the exercise that "woke up half of Canberra." (*\* It needs to be noted that Staff Cadet DARBY not only graduated with the rest of our class in June 1988 but graduated as an officer in the Royal Australian Infantry Corps. He resigned from the Army as a captain in 1995. The fact that Staff Cadet DARBY eventually graduated even after receiving lower scores than myself supports a contention that I was capable of also graduating. I think it highly unlikely that Staff Cadet DARBY miraculously achieved a 10/10 score on his next field exercise.*)



## 6<sup>th</sup> Charge

On Thursday 7 May 1987, I was charged for the sixth time. After sports training that afternoon two Kokoda Company 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets, Staff Cadets Craig SMITH (CSC No 5318) and Doug "Bart" BARTLE (CSC No 5225), approached me in my room and asked me if they could borrow my car to get a take-away meal from the McDonald's restaurant in Ainslie. They knew that 3<sup>rd</sup> Class cadets did not have local leave but they had decided to take the risk of being caught off the college grounds. I had let them borrow my car on previous occasions, but on this occasion I told them that I would drive them there because my car had not been running well. Even though I was occupied with cleaning duties at the time, I did not want them to feel responsible if my car broke down. We left the college with me and BARTLE in our RMC tracksuits and with SMITH in his Patrol Blues Mess Dress uniform. As we were collecting our order from the drive-through take-away counter at the side of the restaurant, Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIS, who was off-duty and in civilian attire, left the restaurant via the restaurant's side entrance. Almost immediately, he noticed SMITH sitting in the front passenger seat of my car. Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIS approached the car and questioned us. We admitted that we did not have local leave so Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIS took our names and ordered us to report to him the next morning. We found out later that two senior cadets were in the car behind us and were also AWOL, and were lucky not to also get caught by Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIS. At 0800hrs on Friday 8 May 1987, we reported to Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIS in his office in the MTW building. He informed us that we were charged with being Absence Without Leave, in breach of s.24 of the DFDA. This charge was heard at an OC's hearing held on 13 May 1987.

Both Sergeant JORGENSON Major VERCOE assumed that it was my idea to go to McDonald's and that I had convinced SMITH and BARTLE to come with me. On 20 May 1987, Sergeant JORGENSON submitted a Leadership Assessment/Observation Report (*see Attachment 8*) in which he wrote, 'unfortunately he has started to pulldown two other members to his level.' Major VERCOE also submitted a Leadership Assessment/Observation Report that day (*see Attachment 9*) in which he wrote, 'He is not well regarded by his peers and this stems from an inherent selfishness. ... He has had six