

General BLAKE consented to his request and RIDD returned to Duntroon, resigned and was discharged the same day.

Soon after RIDD's desertion a female 3rd Class cadet deserted and was apprehended by the Military Police at her home in Perth. She also returned to the college to resign her appointment and be discharged from the Army.

In both cases, AWOL charges were not proceeded with.

FEX "Buna"

On Wednesday 25 March 1987, the 2nd and 3rd Class cadets began FEX "Buna" at the Mogo State Forest on NSW's south coast. Exercise Buna was an 8-day tactical field exercise involving section, platoon and company level training. Due to my wrist injury, I was limited in the extent to which I could participate in the training. For the first half of the exercise I acted as the platoon signaller for WO2 CULLEN's platoon. I could only participate in the non-physical training but I did act as the "enemy" soldier during contact drills. For the second half of the exercise I joined a handful of other injured junior cadets at the C Company HQ. For the remainder of the exercise they acted as company signallers at the CHQ. The C Company commander was Major G.R. PIKE, with WO2 E.A. MADDEN as Company 2IC, and WO2 G. MAPLE as CSM. The HQ was a mobile HQ consisting of two Land Rovers, and it constantly moved location to remain within the vicinity of C Company.

4th Charge

At 0400hrs on Sunday 29 March 1987, I finished my two-hour radio piquet and returned to the lean-to shelter where the company signallers were sleeping to wake my replacement, Staff Cadet Keith TURKINGTON (CSC No 5330). I began shaking him and saying, "Wake-up, Turks. It's your turn for piquet!" TURKINGTON stirred and replied "Yeah. OK." I waited a few moments but TURKINGTON made no effort to get up so I shook him harder and repeated what I initially said except louder. TURKINGTON angrily retorted, "Yeah. Yeah. OK!" and began to get out of his sleeping bag. Seeing this, I got into my own sleeping bag

and turned on my side. I could hear TURKINGTON moving beside me so I closed my eyes and almost immediately fell asleep. When everyone awoke at 0600hrs, we instantly noticed that the Company Command Post was unattended and the radios were unmanned. I stared at the radio tent for a few moments then with exasperation realized that TURKINGTON had gone back to sleep after I had woken him earlier. WO2 MADDEN immediately investigated what had happened and questioned TURKINGTON then myself. Following her investigation I was charged by WO2 MADDEN with Leaving Post While on Guard Duty (my fourth military offence) in breach of s.32(1)(d) of the *DFDA*. I was angry with myself for not being more diligent in my efforts to ensure that my replacement was on duty before I retired. TURKINGTON later made a statement for the prosecutor (which he did not tell me about) in which he claimed not to have been woken by me. He stated that he 'was not woken up to carry out [his] radio picquet by SCDT KNIGHT' (Statement by SCDT K.A. TURKINGTON, 5 Apr 87). This charge was heard initially at an OC's hearing held on 15 April 1987 and ultimately at a CO's hearing on 24 April 1987.

On the last day of FEX "Buna", Tuesday 31 March 1987, all the cadets who were injured in some way were transported to the exercise HQ to wait for the rest of the cadets to arrive. The group of injured cadets consisted of about ten 3rd Class cadets - including myself - and around five 2nd Class cadets. Early that evening the group was waiting on the back of a truck to be driven back to the college when one of the instructors, WO2 G. JACKA, dropped the tailgate of the truck and ordered everyone off to help pack up the HQ. During the dismantling of the HQ tent and the loading of stores we [the 3rd Class cadets] noticed that the 3rd Class cadets were the only cadets present. I returned to the rear of the truck and asked the 2nd Class cadets if they would help us pack up. No-one replied so I returned to the HQ area. After all the stores had been loaded we [the 3rd Class cadets] returned to the truck to discover that the 2nd Class cadets had arranged our packs on the floor of the truck and were asleep on top of them. Myself and another 3rd Class cadet, Staff Cadet B.J. HILL (CSC No 5259), sarcastically thanked them for their help. As we sat down I tried to retrieve my pack from underneath a 2nd Class cadet, Staff Cadet Michael BATISTE (CSC No 4649). He quickly sat up and snapped, "How long have you been at RMC?" I asked him what that had to do with anything. He replied that when we reached 2nd Class we

would be exempt from such duties as well. When we returned to the college I was castigated privately by one of the other 2nd Class cadets who had been on the truck for criticising a senior cadet.

On Wednesday 1 April 1987, I was fronted before Major VERCOE to discuss my progress through the course. Major VERCOE noted in the official Record of Interview that I recognized that I had to improve my personal organization, my attitude, and my dress and bearing. Major VERCOE went on to note that, 'I confirmed this with him and told him I felt he had the potential to do better.' He finally noted that I 'accepted the counselling very positively.'

At 1730hrs on Tuesday 7 April 1987, I went before Major VERCOE to have my Absence From Duty charge relating to my non-attendance at the navigation theory re-training heard. After I plead guilty to one count of Absence From Duty in breach of s.23(1) of the *DFDA*, Major VERCOE sentenced me to 4 days Restriction of Privileges (RP) and 4 days Stoppage of Leave (SOL), to be served concurrently. This meant that I was not to leave the college 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 Beverage, 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 3rd 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 3rd Class Cadets at the college (* 12 junior cadets having already resigned by this time) and 108/118 in terms of academics.

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 David KIBBEY. By this stage, there were 118 3rd 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 103rd in leadership and 108th 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 108th in academics.

On Friday 10 April 1987, my initial Absence from Duty charge, which resulted from my non-attendance at the 1st 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 2nd Class cadet from Kokoda Company's 15 Platoon, as the Prosecutor, and Staff Cadet David HARRIS (CSC No 5174), a 19-year-old 2nd 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 2nd 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.

On Wednesday 15 April 1987, I obtained a \$6,000 car loan from the Canberra branch of the Defence Force Credit Union.

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.

On Thursday 23 April 1987, I returned 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 Ashley COLMER (CSC No 4716) as the Prosecutor and Staff Cadet Michael DUNKLEY (CSC No 4675) as my Defending Officer. The college adjutant, Captain R.J. MARTIN, and the college RSM, WO1 J.W. 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 3rd Class cadet who was at the C Company HQ during FEX "Buna", Staff Cadet Steve GRACE (CSC No 5252), 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 2nd Class cadet, Staff Cadet Brett FITZPATRICK (CSC No 5170), staggered into the rear of the formation. FITZPATRICK was extremely drunk and fellow 2nd 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 1st 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 2nd and 3rd 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 Philip REED (CSC No 4592). 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. Beer and wine were regularly consumed by the 1st 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 1st 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 1st Class cadets in Kokoda Company, 15 Platoon's platoon sergeant, Sergeant Gary STONE (CSC No 5129) and my section leader, Corporal Peter CRANE (CSC No 5037), 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 1st 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 1st Class cadets at the college.

I also recall an incident when a 2nd 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 3rd 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 12).

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 1st 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. 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.

5th 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 1st 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 1st 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*.

2nd 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.'

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 2nd and 3rd 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 2nd Class cadets on a rotation basis. The 3rd Class cadets, and those 2nd 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 2nd 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 2nd Class cadets as the responsibility of the 3rd Class cadets. Even when 2nd Class cadets were being employed as private soldiers in the sections they only assisted with such duties on the rare occasion when there were not enough 3rd Class cadets available to complete the task. Myself and the other 3rd Class cadets in my section, including Staff Cadets Trevor DARBY (CSC No 52420), Lynda SHRIMPTON (CSC No 5311) and T.M. NEWTOWN (CSC No 5290), noticed that whenever instructors were in the vicinity the 2nd Class cadets would furiously begin digging their fire pits or studiously begin performing other duties. What angered us, however, was that the 2nd Class cadets would also start yelling at us – particularly myself and Staff Cadet DARBY - to "stop bludging and get back to work!" regardless of whether or not we were already working. On most occasions, it was the 2nd Class cadets who had been "bludging". I was, in particular, singled out for abuse by the 2nd Class cadets in my section, which included Staff Cadets Brett FITZPATRICK (CSC No 5170), Scott BECKWITH (CSC No 4771) and David MICHEL (CSC No 4725), a 21-year-old ADFA graduate. This was especially so when our instructors were in the