

Ray Wyper

memories of Walter Waddle Wyper, Donald Watt and Caradoc Rowland



Being born in 1945, unlike my Father and Paternal Grandfather, I was not 'asked' to bear arms and help kill other people. I was also lucky to escape conscription into the armed forces. Known at the time as National Service, conscription ended in 1960 when at 15 I was too young.

My Father, **Walter Waddle Wyper** (9/4/1914 – 25/4/1981), served in the 'Signals Regiment' but like many soldiers he never spoke much about his role 'in the war' and to be honest I was never curious enough to ask. Looking at his Soldiers Service and

Pay Book I note that he was vaccinated for Yellow Fever as well as the T.A.B. combined vaccine used to produce immunity against the typhoid, paratyphoid A, and paratyphoid B. I found it disconcerting to realise that as part of his training he was exposed to 'Chocking Gas, Blister Gas and B.A.T. otherwise known as Adamsite, a now obsolete chemical warfare agent. I know he served in Secunderabad, India and I have a memory of him chatting away to a Sikh door to door trader in Punjabi and he didn't buy anything! This would be in the early 1950s when it was not unusual, in Glasgow anyway, to see Sikh men carrying two huge suitcases going from door to door selling their wares. I also remember him saying that the Lebanon was a land of milk and honey where the fruit was bountiful and the people were wonderful. He had developed a strong aversion to sailing and I always believed that this was due to his experiences of troop ships.



On his return to Glasgow and to his work with the Post Office Telephones (GPO) he like many of the men who had served in the armed forces during the war found that colleagues who had, for whatever reason, not served, were perceived as having had an unfair advantage in the promotion stakes. A bitterness that never went away.



Donald Watt, marked X, with comrades

After the war he joined the Territorial Army, I remember, vaguely, some of their Christmas Parties and the annual bounty for attending TA Camp paid for our modest summer holiday.

His Father, Alex Wyper, as a school janitor was in a Reserved Occupation and was never called upon to serve. My

paternal Grandfather **Donald Watt** (9/12/1889 – 3/3/1962) did serve in the Army in WW1 and I know very little. I have a photograph showing him standing with his comrades alongside a convoy, date and location unknown. I do have his gunmetal pocket watch, left to me in his will. I had fondly



thought that he had obtained this 'somehow' whilst serving in Italy but now know that 'Acier Garanti' means 'guaranteed steel'.

My Father-in-Law, **Caradoc Rowland** (29/6/1917 – 20/8/1996) served in the Cameron Highlanders although living and working in Liverpool. Again little in know other than he did manage some home leave to get married in 1941 and later served in Germany. Again like my Father he joined the TA.

Ray Wyper 13 August 2018.