

**OLD SOLDIERS NEVER DIE: THEY ADAPT THEIR MILITARY  
SKILLS AND BECOME SUCCESSFUL CIVILIANS.**

**WHAT FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESSFUL TRANSITION  
OF ARMY VETERANS TO CIVILIAN LIFE AND WORK?**

**A Doctoral thesis submitted in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the award of  
Doctor of Social Sciences  
At the University of Leicester**

**by**

**James McDermott  
Centre for Labour Market Studies  
University of Leicester**

**March 2007**

Title: Old Soldiers Never Die - They adapt their military skills and become successful civilians. What factors contribute to the successful transition of army veterans to civilian life and work?

**Author:** James McDermott

### **Abstract**

This thesis has identified a number of factors which explain why those leaving the armed forces after 22 years or more of army service make successful transitions to civilian life. The work adds to knowledge since whilst considerable literature exists relating to those who have not made successful transitions from the armed forces to civilian life and work, there is little on those who have been successful. Existing literature is primarily concerned with those who, having served for relatively short periods of time, leave and suffer a range of social and health problems including mental illness, homelessness, unemployment and alcoholism.

Evidence was gained from 51 veterans both men and women through written mini biographies, face to face interviews and interviews through the medium of the internet. Research data was drawn from the remembered lived experiences of the veterans recalling both their army and civilian careers.

A methodology based on an interpretivist perspective was employed to explore the veteran's remembered experiences, their thoughts and opinions and this approach was informed by life course and career development theories. Collected data which was transcribed and converted to text was manipulated and analysed using N-Vivo Qualitative Data Analysis software, Microsoft Word and Access applications.

Veterans' words concerning their return to civilian life reflect that many issues remain unchanged over several decades. An enforced career change at the age of 40 is a major life course event; how veterans dealt with this contributed to the main findings which show that successful army veterans accepted that their army service was ending and prepared early for civilian life and work. Most adapted their military skills and attitudes to suit the civilian environment and accepted that many civilians do not work and think in the same, positive way as ex soldiers and gradually modified their own approach to work. It is possible that problematic institutionalisation may be identifiable in those who serve for short periods whilst those who complete 22 or more year's service draw only benefit, high self esteem and a positive work ethic from this major part of their lives.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am very grateful to the staff at the University of Leicester's Centre for Labour Market Studies (CLMS) particularly Dr John Goodwin for his firm and persuasive supervision, guidance and support; for the excellent administrative support afforded by the staff at CLMS particularly that of Miss Susan Walker and for the help in accessing and understanding the Labour Force Survey given by Martin Quinn.

I am grateful for the detailed information on USA veterans provided by Joel Delofsky of the United States Department of Labor (USDOL/VETS). Thanks also to Hilary McDermott of Loughborough for teaching me the basics of N-Vivo and to Sue Hirst who transcribed some of the audio taped interviews

This work would not have been possible without the contribution of the many veterans who gave up their time to tell their stories freely and frankly and who by agreement remain anonymous.

A big thank you to my daughter Allyson who found my work interesting enough to take the time to read it all the way through and who gave me her valuable and critical comments.

Thanks are also due to all those, too numerous to mention by name, who provided leads, contacts, photographs and documents which assisted and informed my research.

Finally, sincere thanks to my wife Linda for her patience, encouragement, words of wisdom and unstinting support throughout the research period when this work was my top priority.

## STATEMENT OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

In accordance with the University of Leicester Regulations for Research Students I hereby certify that I am responsible for the work submitted in this thesis and that the original work is my own. Neither this thesis nor the original work contained therein has been submitted to this or any other institution for a higher degree

.....(Signed)

.....(Date)

# **STATEMENT OF CONSENT FOR BRITISH THESIS SERVICE INCLUSION**

In accordance with the University of Leicester Regulations for Research Students I hereby give my consent for this thesis to be included in the British Thesis Service operated by the British Library

.....(Signed)

.....(Date)

# CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	ii
Statement of original authorship	iii
Statement of consent for British Thesis Service Inclusion	iv
Contents	v-vii
List of Appendices	viii
~	ix
List of figures	x
Glossary	xi-xii

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction:**

**Old soldiers Never die they adapt their military skills and become successful civilians. What factors contribute to the successful transition of army veterans to civilian life and work?**

Introduction	1
Research problem	7
Justification for this research	8
Research in context – About The British Army	10
About the researcher	11
Methodology	14
Outline of the thesis	14
Conclusion	17

## **Chapter 2**

### **Understanding the transition from military to civilian life and work: a Literature Review**

Introduction	18
Method and Research Strategy	19
Defining Society	24
The place of the Military in Society – An Historical Perspective	33
Defining Transition – A return to a different reality	38
Institutionalisation and the Dependency culture of the military	45
Defining a Veteran	50
Resettlement – Social and Health Issues	58
Job Loss Issues	61
Career Transition	61
Finding a Job	65
Life Course Theory Issues	66
Civilian versus Military Career Development	70
Career Development Theories	74
Conclusion	77

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Methodology – Researching the Transition from Military to Civilian Life and Work**

Introduction	79
Theoretical Position and Approach to the Methodology	80
Finding the Veterans	88
Thematising, Designing the study and Developing the Interview Guide	94
Designing the Collection Instruments	96
Collecting the Data	99
Face to Face Interviews	103
Self Written Mini Biographies	105
Microsoft Messenger Interviews	107
Analysis	109
Qualitative Data Analysis Software	110
Ethical issues	113
Conclusion	116

### **Chapter 4**

#### **Analysing how the serving soldier Approaches the end of a military career.**

Introduction	119
Veterans' Data - Initial Analysis	121
Consideration and Rejection of Analysis by Conflict Eras	126
Dimension 1 - Veteran's Common Thoughts and Opinions	137
1. Choosing the right path	137
2. Family influences	138
3. Comradeship and sadness	140
4. Veteran's Self Awareness	146
5. Affects of army service	146
6. Looking back - position in society (use of term veteran)	147
Dimension Two - Preparation for leaving	149
Dimension Three - Retention and Resettlement	161
Conclusion	169

### **Chapter 5**

#### **Further analysis: veterans – A new beginning**

Introduction	171
Dimension Four – Rejoining the labour market	172
Dimension Five - Perceptions of Civilian Workers	181
Dimension Six - Veterans' experiences in and of civilian employment	194
Conclusion	205

## **Chapter 6**

### **Findings: What this research has found and what it adds to the understanding of military to civilian transition**

Introduction	208
The Findings	209
Discussion of the Six Dimensions	214
Veteran's Common Thoughts and Opinions	214
Preparation for leaving	216
Retention and Resettlement	218
Rejoining the labour market	219
Perceptions of Civilian Workers	222
Experiences in and of civilian employment	223
A summary of the research highlighting the Key Findings	225
Implications for Theory	234
Implications for Policy and Practice	234
Limitations	235
Further research	237
In Conclusion	238

<b>APPENDICES</b>	240-264
-------------------	---------

<b>REFERENCES</b>	265-281
-------------------	---------



## LIST OF APPENDICES

No	Description	Page
1	The Structure British Army	240-243
2	An Overview of the Roles and Deployments of the British Army	244-245
3	AB 108 (Regular Army Certificate of Service)	246-247
4	MOD Compliments Slip for Veterans Badge	248
5	My plea for help	249
6	Standard Question and Topic Guide	250-254
7	Veterans Data Base – example record	255
8	Veterans Consent Form	256
9	Thank you and data protection letter	257
10	Extract of a Face to Face interview	258-259
11	Extract of a Mini Biography	260-261
12	Protocol for Microsoft Messenger Exchanges	262
13	Extract of a Microsoft Messenger Interview	263-264

## LIST OF TABLES

<b>Table No:</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	Hypothetical Pattern of Age/Career Development	71
2	Veterans Anonymity Notation System	93
3	Ethical Protocol – Practical Issues	115
4	Veterans sorted by former rank – Ex Warrant Officer Class One	122
5	Veterans sorted by former rank Ex Warrant Officers Class Two	122
6	Veterans sorted by former rank Ex Staff Sergeants	123
7	Veterans sorted by former rank Ex Sergeants	124
8	Veterans' Army Service Periods as Eras	126
9	Sample Questions and Responses set 1	130
10	Sample Questions and Responses set 2	131
11	Sample Questions and Responses set 3	132
12	The Phases of a Soldier's typical career path	135
13	Response Count to 'Missing the Army' Question	141
14	Extremes of Preparation for Leaving	161
15	Post Discharge Destinations of Veterans	221

## LIST OF FIGURES

<b>Figure No:</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Page</b>
1	Photograph: "...the highly respected rank of Warrant Officer Class One."	12
2	Photograph: "...the liability of service personnel to use lethal force."	32
3	Photograph: "...individuality is not encouraged."	43
4	Example of US Census Bureau Data	54
5	Photograph: "...gender in the workplace..."	59
6	A soldier's typical career trajectory	72
7	General Chronology of a Veteran's Life Course	101
8	Time Line – Veterans Periods of Service by Era	127
9	Photograph: "...trained against the perceived threat from the Soviet Union."	129
10	Photograph: "...enlisted as Boy soldiers at 15..."	139
11	Photograph: "There are some people I will miss of course."	143
12	Photograph: "...get the best out of the soldiers they command."	183
13	The dimensions of a veteran's Typical Career Life Course	212

## GLOSSARY

AB108	Regular Army Certificate of Service
ACR	Annual Confidential Report
APTC	Army Physical Training Corps
Armour	A Tank Regiment
BAOR	British Army on the Rhine
BIOG	Mini Biography (self written by veteran)
BLS	US Bureau of Labor Statistics
BSA	The British Sociological Association
BSC	Basic Selection Criteria
BVRC	British Veteran's Recognition Card
CAQDAS	Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CO	Commanding Officer
Cpl	Corporal
CRÈME	Commander Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
CTP	Career Transition Partnership
DPA	Data Protection Act 1998
ESRC	Economic & Social Research Council
F2F	Face to Face (Interview)
ID	Identity Card
ILM	Institute of Leadership Management
INF	Infantry
INT	The Intelligence Corps
LCpl	Lance Corporal
LFS	Labour Force Survey
LMS	Labour Market Survey
MOD	Ministry of Defence
MSM	Microsoft Messenger
NCO	Non commissioned officer
NI	Northern Ireland
NRAE	Normal Regular Army Engagement
ONS	Office for National Statistics
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
QARANC	Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps
QDA	Qualitative Data Analysis
QRS	Qualitative Research Software
RAOC	Royal Army Ordnance Corps
RAF	Royal Air Force
RAMS	Royal Army Medical Corps
RASC	Royal Army Service Corps
RBL	Royal British Legion
RCT	Royal Corps of Transport
RE	Royal engineers

REME	Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
RFEA	Regular Forces Employment Association
RLC	Royal Logistics Corps
SITG	Standard Interview Topic Guide
SIGS	Royal Corps of Signals
Sgt	Sergeant
SNCO	Senior non Commissioned Officer
Ssgt	Staff Sergeant
VA	Veteran's Agency
VRQ	Vocationally Related qualifications
WRAC	Women's Royal Army Corps
WO	Warrant Officer
WO1	Warrant Officer Class One
WO11	Warrant Officer Class Two
[ ]	Square parentheses contain author's words added for clarification or to ensure anonymity of participants.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION: EXPLORING THE TRANSITION OF ARMY VETERANS TO CIVILIAN LIFE AND EMPLOYMENT

### Introduction

*"A man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country is good enough to be given a square deal afterwards. More than that no man is entitled, and less than that no man shall have."  
(Theodore Roosevelt, 4 July 1903).*

This research examines the transitional experiences of men and women who leave the armed forces and return to civilian life and work; a transition between two very different life styles. According to Iverson et al (2005):

*"Little is known about the factors associated with leaving the armed forces, or what predicts subsequent employment success for veterans." (Iverson et al 2005, p.175),*

Men and women who serve in and then leave the armed forces cover a huge population which can be divided into two distinct groupings. First, those who complete a full contracted period of military service and second those who enlist and leave at their own request within a very short period, those who are medically discharged through operational injury and those who are dismissed for disciplinary reasons. Iverson et al (2005) go on to say that within the latter grouping:

*"It is likely that there is a complex interaction of adverse social outcomes and mental health status in this group." (Iverson et al 2005, p.175)*

and further that:

*"The majority of service leavers do well after leaving and are in full time employment...Only a minority of veterans fare badly after service..." (Iverson et al 2005, p.181)*

It is therefore no surprise to find that the large amount of research conducted into those who have served in the armed forces and have left to become civilians

relates to those who have experienced adverse social outcomes or suffered mental health problems, (see Dandeker et al 2003; Barkawi et al 1999; Crompton et al 1990; Elder and Clipp, 1989; Feaver et al (2001; Jolly, 1996 and Loh, 1994; Rosenheck et al 1994; Strachan, 2003 and TISS, 2005).

Those who successfully complete a full contracted service engagement will generally feature in Iverson et al's (2005) group of service leavers who 'do well.' This research has identified a number of factors from the related experiences of army veterans who have 'done well': factors which, it is contended, add to knowledge and can contribute to a successful transition from military to civilian society. The data for this research was collected from civilians all of whom are ex military personnel who have spent a considerable part of their working lives from youths to young men and women and on into middle age, living, training, working and playing as soldiers. They all share at least one thing in common, they were all part of and were socialised into the ways and culture of the British Army an organisation which is to a large extent different and separate from civilian society; it is a military society. All the participants in this research are now outside that military society and their view of it will inevitably be different to those who have never served in the military. Having left the army ex soldiers are, like any other civilians, no longer privy to how the army operates, how soldiers are trained, disciplined and punished, how they communicate with each other, what their morale is like and how confident they are in their weapons and equipment. The daily life of a soldier is then largely conducted 'behind closed doors', out of sight of non military eyes. Knowledge of what the military does is mostly based on what ex soldiers know and on what civilians who have never served gather from the news and the entertainment media. It is argued then that the military is generally, for largely historical reasons, an organisation closed off from civilian society. In

the context of this research the ways that soldiers are trained, perform their roles, enjoy their leisure time, think and act is considered by the author to be sufficiently different to how their contemporaries in civilian life live their lives to justify an examination of how the British Army is viewed in contemporary civilian society? It is argued therefore that one of the possible barriers to successful transition for veterans can be attributed to how civilians think of the armed forces at different times. According to Edmunds et al (2002) the nature of states' particular military-society relationships develop from the societal acceptance of the military's legitimacy in fulfilling particular roles. Significantly, however, the military's roles can be multiple and not necessarily limited to the 'traditional' demands of the defence of national territory. Thus the British Army's role in different foreign conflicts often places it in the spotlight, sometimes positively but also sometimes, negatively.

During the Falklands conflict with Argentina in 1983 the armed forces were generally held in high esteem. In later, perhaps less popular conflicts, the Gulf Wars of 1991 and 2005 for instance, the armed forces' image was probably not held in such high esteem by the public. The reasons for entering these later conflicts exacerbated by the bad behaviour of some soldiers contributed to a less popular image, especially in the media. During the period that this research was conducted the British Army was involved in operations in both Iran and Afghanistan and was said by Britain's Defence Minister to be held in high esteem:

*"Public support for the forces is vitally important. It is justifiable very high – 80 per cent of the British Public thinks our Army is among the best in the world." (Ingram, 2006)*

Whilst this view almost certainly relates to the professionalism of British soldiers it does not hold that the British public were necessarily in support of Britain's foreign policy in these areas. However between the peaks of popularity and the troughs of



unpopular conflicts what armed forces people actually do is largely unknown to the majority of the civilian population. It is a fact though that the armed forces recruit from civilian society and eventually, trained sailors soldiers and airman end their service and return to civilian life and work, to a society which in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century does not understand the nature of military service.

From the end of World War Two in 1945 until 1963 almost every family in the United Kingdom had some relative or friend 'called up' for compulsory military service, or 'National Service' as it was known. This period provided a window into the otherwise closed community of the military. Now in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there is no compulsory military conscription, indeed there are people retiring now from a life working as a civilian who will never have had to serve in the armed forces. Amongst those who have served in the armed forces there is a tendency to hark back to days when ex service people were noted for their reliability and positive work ethic, such as Andrew's (2007) remark that:

*"...I know that there was a very different attitude [to work] in my day... Apart from the importance of maintaining a vital service we knew that absence... would result in a colleague losing a night's sleep... that the majority of staff were ex servicemen... may have been a contributory factor. (Andrews, 2007).*

Knowledge then of service life is limited to those with family members serving in the regular armed forces, or employers who may have to release employees to serve their volunteer reserve service for a short period. Thus the world of the military is largely seen through the eyes of the media. Equally limited is an understanding by employers of the abilities of those leaving the armed forces; what can they do, how they think, what sort of people are they, what problems do they face? How do civilian perceptions, often grounded in the portrayal of the army in the media, impact upon the transition to civilian and working life? A full army career for a soldier (that is to say not a commissioned officer) is 22 years

with enlistment at 18 and discharge at age 40 when soldiers are considered too 'old' to continue serving. This enforced retirement policy and aggressive recruiting ensures that the army retains its strength and viability. It also means that annually, a number of 'men and women, a total of 1,845 soldiers in the year 2004/5 (MOD 2005), enter the labour market, It is argued here that, having emerged from the closed community of the army into civilian life these newly discharged soldiers can be seen as unusual and different'. Unusual in that generally their backgrounds will not be understood by potential employers; different in that at age 40 they are new to the civilian labour market but too old to start work as juniors or apprentices. They will however have a wealth of life experience, be well practised in 'management' skills and will be well qualified, probably ambitious and possibly with a family to support. A military pension may also influence their salary aspirations. Some may find the transition to civilian life difficult and traumatic and have to overcome a range of issues resulting from military service. On entering civilian life the ex soldier leaves behind the familiar trappings of the army such as his or her uniform, the clearly understood relationships between different ranks, the discipline of an organised life and probably the status afforded a Warrant Officer or senior non commissioned officer. The new civilian is now automatically a 'veteran' a term disliked by many ex service people but one which is being increasingly used. The term 'veteran' is used frequently in the literature and this term is used generally throughout this work (unless its use causes confusion) specifically to describe an individual who has completed a full army career. Similarly the plural 'veterans' will be used to describe the whole participant group of those who contributed data to this research. There are several definitions of the term veteran and how the term is applied in different countries reflects government policies towards those who have

given service to their country in the armed forces. Men and women who join the armed forces enter as civilians; they leave civilian life and make a transition to the community of the military, are trained in its ways and follow its culture. However when servicemen or servicewomen leave the armed forces for whatever reason, they necessarily make a transition back to civilian life and this can be problematic for some veterans. Large numbers of men and women enlist and large numbers leave the armed forces every year often having served for much shorter periods than those who complete a full career of 22 years.

Service people who leave after only a short period will not enjoy the benefit of a service pension (unless they are wounded) and may find as a result of their military service generally or as a result of combat related stress that they are unable to cope as civilians and that their transition to civilian life is both traumatic and problematic. Members of this sector of the ex service population can and do contribute, as civilians to the numbers in society who are homeless, those who are unemployed, those who cannot maintain relationships and those who may add to the numbers who seek the help and support of the health and social services agencies, and ex service organisations. It is also likely that some will drift into crime (Dandeker et al 2003). However the armed forces spend a great deal of time and a large amount of tax payers' money investing in training and educating service people in technical trades, in management and in a wide range of skills which can be beneficial to both the individual and to society in civilian life. It is highly likely that many who do serve in the armed forces for a few years, or who complete a full career, do benefit from this investment and do not become a burden on the state, find gainful employment and live useful and rewarding lives. On the other hand it is probably inevitable that those who have served in the

armed forces for extended periods will have become deeply socialised into the military life in which they have lived, worked and played. Will this long period of socialisation within the largely closed community of the military lead necessarily to problems for the individual serviceman returning to civilian life, both during the period of transition and later? The literature indicates that whilst many do succeed, some fail and become a burden on society. Why should this be so; why do some succeed and others do not? Clearly there will be differences in the employment expectations of those who have served in the armed forces for only a few years, whilst those at the other end of the spectrum, who have completed a full career may face different problems in finding civilian employment because they will be considerably older than those who served for a shorter period of time. This research set out to study this area of transition with particular emphasis on those who had served for many years but had also been successful as civilians. Success being defined for the purposes of this research as applying to veterans who had self reportedly found a new purpose in life, civilian employment, suitable housing, places in school for children as appropriate and had *not* suffered, (again self reportedly) subsequent to their discharge, mentally or physically in ways which could be retrospectively attributed to their military service

## **Research Problem**

It is generally held in the literature that whilst some ex service men and women suffer as a result of their military service the greater majority do not and leave the army forces to lead successful civilian lives. (see Dandeker et al 2003; Barkawi et al 1999; Crompton et al 1990; Elder and Clipp, 1989; Feaver et al 2001; Jolly, 1996; Loh 1994; Rosenheck et al 1994; Strachan, 2003 and TISS, 2005), Those that do suffer do so, according to the literature, either as a direct result of

military service related trauma, such as combat induced post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or indirectly from not being able to settle in civilian life after becoming socialised (or institutionalised) into the highly structured, disciplined and somewhat sheltered life of the military (Dandeker et al 2003). It is argued that those service personnel completing an extended period of service, for example a normal regular army engagement (NRAE) of 22 years, could also be expected to become 'institutionalised' and that at least some of those completing a NRAE would be exposed to armed combat and the risks of mental or physical harm. However it is among this sector of the ex service population that veterans who have been successful in civilian life can be found. (see Dandeker 2003 *et al* and Jolly 1996. This research, whilst accepting that some ex service personnel do experience difficulty in civilian society, examines closely the notion that the vast majority of those leaving the armed forces 'do well' as civilians. The problem at the heart of this work asks the question: "Why do some ex service people succeed in civilian life when others do not?" and seeks to establish what factors, if any, can contribute to success in civilian society. It is proposed by the author that such factors do exist and that military service provides positively for a successful transition to civilian life because it provides veterans with a satisfying career with recognised qualifications, a set of high moral values and high work ethic, a positive self image and a positive attitude to health and diet.

### **Justification for this research**

Little is known about the successful transition of armed forces veterans to civilian society and employment and from the literature review it would appear that this research will not duplicate work already published. The work will also to some extent counter what Higate (2001) describes as the relative neglect of

contemporary social theory in academic work related to the sociology of the military. This qualitative enquiry enables definitive statements to be made about successful military to civilian transition. Problems encountered and overcome by the participant veterans have facilitated the drafting of a theoretical model for this type of transition and led to the production, as findings, of a list of identified positive factors. These factors will prove useful as a guide to those still serving, to 'new' veterans and to employers who may not previously have considered veterans as employees. The literature will be enhanced by research that will sit alongside data concerned with the problems of ex service people who do not succeed in civilian life, become involved in criminal activity, become homeless and become a burden on the state or become problematic in society through issues related to health. The work makes an original contribution to existing knowledge because it fills a gap in the literature related to the experiences of *successful* army veterans. This is a transition which takes place at what could be viewed as a difficult if not unusual life stage since those involved will be 40 years of age or older. Many will have served from the age of 15 and may never have worked as civilians. Transition within society is not in itself unusual and there are many examples of people moving for instance from a secular career to being an ordained priest (Musgrove et al 1977) or those who have been held captive or hostage for an extended period and return on release to 'normal' life (Cohen et al 1972; Campbell 1986 and Keenan 1992). The significance of this thesis is that it concentrates specifically on those who have completed a large part of their lives in one branch of the armed forces, the British Army and the next section provides a brief introduction to this organisation.

## **The Research in Context – About The British Army**

The British armed forces consist of three distinct organisations: the Army the Navy and the Royal Air Force (RAF). It is a set of organisations different in very many ways to civilian society. The formation and structure of each of the armed forces underpins how they operate, how individuals are trained, how they perform their roles, how they relate to each other and how, in other words they operate as organisations, somewhat culturally different and separate from civilian life. Many quotations from veterans are made later in this work with reference to various aspects of military life which emphasize the differences between those who have served and those who have not. Each branch of the armed forces has specific roles to play in defending Great Britain and each has its own particular cultures and traditions. This research looks only at the British Army; the main rationale for researching only the army is that it is the largest of the services and contributes the largest number annually into the labour market. The structure of the British Army is complex due to the different origins of its various constituent parts.

To assist the reader in more clearly understanding how the British army operates an overview of its organisational structure can be found at Appendix 1. This is followed at Appendix 2 with a descriptive overview of the British Army's roles and deployments since World War Two and has relevance to later discussions concerning the era in which individual veterans served. Clearly, the way the armed forces operates, its organisation and its culture change over time reflecting the nation's changing defence needs occasioned by political changes on the world stage. The people whose stories provided the empirical data for this research have all completed at least 22 years or more army service at different periods ranging from 1940 to the year 2005. Their transitions to civilian life and work were therefore considered initially in terms of their position on a timeline spanning the

65 years from World War Two to 2005 (see Timeline at Figure 8). However analysis of interview transcripts revealed very little difference in soldier's stories regardless of the period in which they served.

### **About the Researcher**

I chose to study the topic of military to civilian transition because I have personally made the journey from 25 years army service to successful employment in civilian life and my continued belief that those who have served in the armed forces can be undervalued and misunderstood by potential civilian employers. As a part time, mature, post graduate sociology student, and, at the time I started my doctorate studies, a widower, I found myself looking back over and evaluating my own life experiences, whilst at the same time looking forward to new opportunities and experiences. So I started *a priori* from a position of examining those who probably had similar military experiences and perhaps similar military to civilian life transition experiences as mine. This made the prospect of re living my memories and perhaps the shared memories of others both exciting and at times disconcerting. Had I done as well as I could have done? Would I end this research period feeling enriched or dejected? Without doubt my own experiences mirrored those of the many of the participants. It was not however the intention of this research to explore and perhaps explain my own experiences as an individual veteran but rather to explore and explain the lives and experiences of a particular group of veterans. Yet as Wright Mills (1959) points out:

*“Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both.” (Wright Mills 1959, p.3).*

In other words Wright Mills is saying we cannot understand ourselves as individuals unless we grasp the involvement of our own biography within the historical developments of social institutions. A major benefit deriving from my



own experience was my ability to understand military jargon and terminology and the structure of the army its roles, ranks and recent history. I had spent 25 years of my own life as a soldier and was thus able to relate easily with my interviewees. However having spent an almost equal amount of time as a civilian working in a wide variety of employments I was also able to relate to the 'civilian stories' being narrated and also to keep some 'distance' in the role of academic researcher between myself and the participants.

My military career, like those of the participants in this research has left an indelible influence on me as a person and undoubtedly this will have influenced my analysis.

**Figure: 1**



“...the highly respected rank of Warrant Officer Class One.” (Source: Author)

Like many of my participants I ended my military career with mixed emotions. I had achieved the highly respected rank of Warrant Officer Class One and wondered, as I approached the end of my service, about my marketability in the civilian labour market. Like others in my research group I was 'lucky' and found a well paid job quickly and easily. This luck however has to be viewed in the context of the thriving economy of the early 1980s with low unemployment and high

interest rates. I have tried therefore to be as objective as one can be and, as importantly, to have viewed each of the participants within the context of the period when they served. As many of the participants have commented that whilst they would rejoin the army if they could, a sentiment I share, they would really only like to join the army they knew and served in. Thus clearly society and all within it, including its armed forces, moves on and changes over time.

Many of the positive virtues which I believe a military career imbues in the individual and which he or she carries on into and to the benefit of their civilian life remain unchanged and continue, I believe, to provide the labour market with highly marketable individuals. As a Masters graduate in social science focusing mainly on training, I was motivated to consider individual personality and career issues as interrelated. This motivation and belief is borne out in the research conducted by among others Betz, (1994); Betz and Corning, (1993); Cochran, (1994); Fitzgerald and Rounds, (1994) and Gerson (1985). I believe that this *a priori* position that my own personality had been moulded both by my military experiences and my work as a civilian and had enhanced my civilian working career, has also added positively to my approach to this research. I sought to find reasons why some veterans, like me had been successful and expected to find that their transitions and subsequent civilian employment had been a positive experience. This was perhaps a subjective approach and may have influenced the way I asked my questions, reviewed the answers and the way I recorded and analysed and interpreted the data. But I listened to and read all of all the stories and have achieved, overall I believe a balanced and informed outcome. My interviewees are by agreement anonymous and my own 'story' is included in this research.

## Methodology

The following methodologies were used:

- a. A search, review and narrative overview of available literature on issues concerned with leaving the armed forces and with career development generally and from which a number of assumptions were developed.
- b. Defining and selecting a target research population of at least 100 individuals who had completed 22 or more year's army service. (The target of 100 was, for practical reasons, subsequently reduced to 50).
- c. Obtaining data from each member of the target population informed by an interpretivist perspective and the use of a standardised topic/question guide. This phase of the research included:
  - organising and conducting face to face interviews
  - organising and conducting interviews via the internet
  - arranging the completion of self written mini biographies
  - conversion of all collected data to a common textual format.
- d. Addressing the thesis question and problem by:
  - collating, coding and analysing the collected data
  - comparing and relating the analysis to the literature review
  - reaching a set of findings
  - drawing conclusions

## Outline of the Thesis

This section outlines the contents of the remaining chapters. A review of literature related to the problem is presented in Chapter 2, this reinforces the contention that there is a lot of literature concerned with veteran's problems but little on how or

why most veterans are successful. The literature review explains the position of the military within society and then focuses on the specific areas of sociological interest which form the theoretical basis for the remainder of the work, including related life course and career development theories. The section concludes by comparing and contrasting the theories described and establishing their application to the military to civilian transition which is the setting of this research. The Methodology section in Chapters 3 describes how a methodology appropriate to the problem was chosen and developed. Chapter 4 contains the narrative analysis and discussion of interviews, biographies and internet conversations. A glossary of abbreviations used in this work can be found on pages xi-xii. A standard interview topic guide (SITG) was designed and used for all methods of data collection for this research and this was structured in such a way that the veterans were encouraged to relate their stories and contrast and compare their civilian and military experiences.

The SITG varies slightly in design for each of the three different methods of data collection used but all three formats address the following main topic areas : military background; current situation; resettlement; self perception; looking back; management and communication; family issues; money matters; effects of army service; relations and perceptions and the influence of an army career. However Chapter 4 is principally structured around six main dimensions which emerged from the reading, coding and analysis of the data. These dimensions cover veteran's common thoughts and opinions; specific issues concerned with their individual preparations for leaving the army; how they used, or in some cases did not use the army's resettlement service and how they dealt with last minute attempts by the army to get them to stay on; how they set about rejoining the

civilian labour market; how they perceive civilian workers and finally their thoughts and experiences in and of civilian employment.

Each group of themes is supported by representative quotations from the participating veterans. The use of a narrative analysis approach enabled the veterans to tell their own stories and the collation of responses for each topic area assisted in revealing common themes. What was construed from these common themes is contained in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 presents the findings of the research and includes a discussion on how the research will contribute to existing knowledge and suggestions for further research. The following six findings emerged from the research and it is argued that successful veterans:

Accepted that their army service was ending and began to prepare well before they were discharged.

Practice many of the skills acquired during their army service, suitably adapted to suit the civilian environment and recognize that adaptation is the key

Are aware of the gap in knowledge of the military on the part of some civilian employers

Are aware that civilian workers do not work and think in the same way as soldiers and gradually modified their own approach to work.

It is also argued that:

Problematic institutionalisation may be identifiable in those who serve in the military for only short periods but that those who complete a full and satisfactory career of 22 or more years draw only benefit from this major part of their lives.

The thoughts and opinions that long served soldiers have about the army and about civilian life and work appears to have changed very little over the last 60 years

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has explained the nature of the problem addressed by this thesis, described the methodology employed and provided an overview of the findings and conclusions. The next chapter is a review of the literature. This phase marked the starting point for establishing the research framework, identified what research had already been accomplished and sets out the theories which support and inform the discussion of the problem and the findings.

## CHAPTER 2

# UNDERSTANDING THE TRANSITION FROM MILITARY TO CIVILIAN LIFE AND WORK: A LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction

This research set out to answer the question: ‘What factors contribute to the successful transition of army veterans to civilian life and employment?’ The purpose of this review was to find, first what research had already been completed; what had been said and published related to military to civilian transition and second to determine the sociological theories and perspectives which would best describe, inform and begin to explain this type of transition. The approach is informed from an interpretivist perspective. An interpretivist position was adopted in an attempt to explain veteran’s experiences and to some extent set aside some of the assumptions and un-researched, unproven preconceptions of ex service people which the author believes may exist due to a lack of knowledge by civilians of military life generally. The author also took heed of Giddens (1984) advice that:

*There is of course, no obligation for anyone doing detailed empirical research, in a given localized setting, to take on board an array of abstract notions that would merely clutter up what would otherwise be described with economy and in ordinary language. (Giddens, 1984, p.326).*

To this end this review of literature includes an overview of what has already been done in the area of military to civilian transition research and embraces issues concerned with human society, communities of practice, the position of the military within society and its origins within nation states, transitions within society generally and issues associated with career development theories

## Method and Research Strategy

The initial aim was to conduct a systematic literature review, identify key texts and establish inclusion and exclusion criteria. A plan was made to search the internet for related texts and produce a master list of references and sources and then to visit appropriate libraries to select read and digest relevant literature. Searches of databases at Loughborough University and Leicester University libraries and on the World-Wide-Web were conducted using first the key words '*Soldiers*' '*Ex Soldiers*' '*Servicemen*' '*Ex Service*' '*Military*' and '*Employment*' but very little directly related material was identified. With little starting material to review the search criteria was redefined. The addition of the words '*Resettlement*' and '*Veteran(s)*' yielded a considerable amount of material. The term 'veteran' itself produced a lot of conflicting data concerning its definition and interpretation into practical issues in different countries. The considerable amount of information resulting from the expanded word search was largely of USA origin and although primarily concerned with the *problems* of ex service people and not with successful transitions nevertheless provided leads to other sources of information. These other sources included The Royal British Legion (RBL), The Institute of Leadership Management (ILM) and The Ministry of Defence (MOD). The author visited the two university libraries mentioned above to search the shelves and also the library of the Imperial War Museum in London. Subsequent interviews and conversations with members of the participant research group identified additional literature and as the author gained experience in searching electronic journals on the internet via the Athens system, a number of relevant journal items were identified in particular '*Armed Forces and Society*.' It was very quickly established that the literature available on successful transition by service people to civilian life is very sparse although there are frequent references to the fact that most ex service people 'do well' (see for example Dandeker et al 2003; Iverson et al 2005



and Jolly, 1996). Higate (2001) however observes that there is a need to move away from what he describes as the crude dichotomy of those who 'fail' and those who 'succeed' which has led to an overstating of both the prevalence and nature of homelessness among ex-servicemen and has diverted attention from those who move into paid employment (Higate, 2001).

The bulk of available literature and empirical research both in Great Britain and in the USA into the fate of those leaving the armed forces has mainly focused on those who, having served become vulnerable and experience difficulties ranging from mental stress to social exclusion (see for example Beckham et al 1998; Crane, 1997; Dandeker et al 2003; Futterman, 1951; Grayson et al 1998; Grinker, et al 1945; Higate, 2001; Iverson et al 2005; Lee, et al 1995; Orner, et al 1993 and Wilson et al 1983). To balance this Dandeker et al (2003) point out that soldiers who have been exposed to the risk of trauma on operations in such places as Northern Ireland develop adequate coping strategies, make good and effective use of rest and recuperation periods to recharge their mental batteries and were less likely as a result to encounter later psychiatric problems. Other researchers describe the stresses experienced by those retiring from the armed forces which may span a period of years beginning before the individual actually retires; stresses which can lead to the need for medical intervention if not identified and treated early (see for example McNeil and Giffen, 1967). However McNeil and Giffen (1967) do point out that early planning before retirement from military service can contribute to successful transition. Wheaton (1990) argues that major life changes and role transitions are often treated as stressors that create a generalized demand for adjustment by the individual and that these transitions affect mental health. The range of effects on health, Wheaton (1990) says, can be

attributed to characteristics of the transition itself such as undesirability or foreseeability. Druss (1965) held that the major psychological difficulty (or undesirable factor), facing retiring military personnel was a sudden and dramatic loss of power and authority; whilst Wolpert (2002) reflects that soldiers know exactly when they are due to be discharged and have ample opportunity to plan ahead. Wheaton (1990) argues that consideration of the role context within which the transition occurs is of importance to its outcome, specifically the level of pre-existing chronic stress in the social role. Stanford (1971) concluded that the ease of reintegration into civilian life was related to rank and that the higher the rank held in military service the easier the transition would be. Fuller and Redferring (1976) however (agreeing with McNeil and Giffen 1967), felt that pre-retirement planning was the *only* factor which had a significant effect and those that planned well, adjusted well, regardless of rank or length of service.

From a psychological perspective Wheaton (1990) suggests that more stress actually serves as a relief from existing stress. Wheaton researched nine transitional events, job loss, divorce, pre-marital break-up, retirement, widowhood, children moving out of the house, first marriage, job promotion, and having a child. He found support in seven out of the nine transition events to support his hypothesis that prior role stress reduces the impact of life transition events on mental health. Wheaton therefore argues against the presumption that life transitions are inherently stressful, suggesting instead a need to identify and specify prior social circumstances because these determine whether or not a transition is potentially stressful Wheaton (1990). This suggestion is reinforced by Baker et al (1992) who established a significant correlation between adverse pre-enlistment experiences and subsequent stress related symptoms. Milowe (1964)

similarly argued that military service roles place on hold unresolved developmental issues and that a midlife return to 'normal' society may trigger these within the retiree and his family. Dandeker et al (2003) support these arguments adding that there was strong opinion from many sources that the roots to vulnerability lie in pre-service life and that it was highly plausible that service life delayed the emergence of pre-existing vulnerabilities; those at risk being typically identified as coming from dysfunctional families. Dandeker et al (2003) add however:

*"Yet this has not been empirically tested in a UK military context."  
(Dandeker et al 2003, p.143).*

Dandeker et al (2003) go on to say that those who have completed long periods of military service want to 'move on' despite having enjoyed their service and in particular do not want to be stereotyped as 'ex service personnel'. The focus of existing literature related directly to military to civilian transition appears to be primarily associated with stress and mental health and social issues. This focus might reinforce the notion that all those leaving the armed forces present a problem to civilian society. In reality the limited British literature points up the fact that most ex service people do not suffer as a result of serving and do succeed in civilian life (see Dandeker et al 2003 and Iverson et al 2005). However, whilst conflicts in the Middle East in the late 1990s and early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century have brought the work of the armed forces more into the public domain there appears to be little research into veterans who have found success. A limited amount of work has been conducted on military to civilian transition but is again mostly from USA based sources. This may be because of the status of and interest in veterans in the USA. Draper et al (1963) held that military retirees were a significant subject for study in their own right and were of great interest because they constituted a substantial segment of the national labour force. Graves (2005) who conducted a study of USA military officers who had retired early (having

served for 15 years or less) argued that many military retirees experienced problems in the transition to civilian life and that previous studies had thus far failed to prevent or predict such problems.

Thomas (1980) argued that the study of individuals who have made career changes in mid life could add greatly to our knowledge of normal development.

There is then quite clearly a gap in knowledge relating to the issue of *successful* ex service transition to civilian life and work. This research will contribute to knowledge and understanding of this type of transition; it will inform those approaching retirement from the army and those responsible for the determination of policy concerning the resettlement of soldiers into civilian life. The apparent lack of relevant literature reinforced the view that little is known about those who do not suffer as a result of their service life and were by contrast successful. Success in this context being measured, as set out in Chapter one, not merely on the absence of health or social problems but on the successful negotiation and resolution of issues related to the process of transition between two human societies (military and civilian) and in the context of individuals effectively losing a job and a role and purpose in life and successfully finding another. There is by contrast a wealth of literature on the topics of the place of the military within society and this was easily accessed (see for example Downing 1992; Elias, 1982; Giddens, 1985; Machiavelli 1521; Mann, 1993; Parker, 1996 and 2005; Roberts, 1967 and Rogers, 1995). A wealth of literature also about human society generally (see for example Giddens, 1984, Guba, 1990 and Wenger, 1999) and literature concerned with life course theory (see for example Erikson, 1963; Guest and Williams 1973; Pilcher, 1995 and Rapaport and Rapaport, 1980).

The relevant literature identified is now discussed in the remainder of this chapter which first of all sets out to define 'society' and the place of the military within it

from an historical perspective. Transition is then discussed as it applies particularly to army veterans along with the notion of the risk of institutionalisation for those who serve for long periods. Use of the term veteran, which in itself can be problematical in its application, is explained followed by a review of literature associated with the stages of a soldier's progression to civilian life including issues related to: health, job loss and finding a new job. Finally life course and career development theories are discussed along with a comparison of military versus civilian career development

The next part of this review, defines and considers what is meant by society, how individuals associate and form groups and how communities of practice develop which can reinforce separation and emphasize differences; differences that the author considers are of importance in discussing the processes of this type of transition.

### **Defining Society.**

The veterans who are the research population for this work are civilians and live their lives in civilian society. All of these veterans however spent 22 or more years not as civilians but as soldiers in the army; a different and separate society.

This research considers what happens to people who move from one 'society' to another and the effects that this may have. It is important at this stage to be clear what is meant here by 'society'. Durkheim (1893) says that society is:

*"...every aggregate of individuals who are in continuous contact form a society...individuals must adhere materially, but it is still necessary that there be moral links between them." (Durkheim, 1893/1933, p.276).*

According to Jarvie (1937) the behaviourist Burrhus Frederic Skinner said that:

*“...society is what people do, where ‘do’ includes ‘say’...” (Jarvie, 1937’ p.28).*

Rousseau (1762) argued that when individuals come together to form society, something happens. He says that:

*“...a new will is formed, different from anything that could exist in individuals outside society... ‘a general will’ is not the sum of individual ‘particular wills’. It is formed by people becoming socialized and part of a collective. The general will is formed by society and it is society.” (Rousseau, 1762, pp.190-196).*

Thus the collective actions of individuals create ‘societies’ with their own, ‘norms’, particular ways and their own culture. As Elster (1989) points out:

*“For norms to be social, they must be shared by other people and partly sustained by their approval and disapproval,” (Elster, 1989 p.99)*

In civilian life one can find different strata of societies. Mosca (1939) and Pareto (1963) described societies in which two classes appear – those who rule and those who are ruled, the first class being less numerous than the second. Bottomore (1993) uses the elite stratum of the Brahmins in the Indian caste system as an example of an elite group within a society. In this example the Brahmins were a closed group which survived for many hundreds of years. Wright Mills (1956) however argued against the inevitability of elite rule of the masses by a minority and explained elite rule in institutional terms such that those at the top of an institutional hierarchy largely monopolised power. According to Mills in American society certain institutions, such as major corporations, the military and national government could occupy key pivotal positions and argued that those in senior positions in these institutions were the elites. When the interests and activities of the institutional elites however coincided they formed a ‘power elite’ which dominated society. Whilst generally the common interests of different national institutions may coincide their individual internal collective activities create

a discrete and separate society, although not necessarily a totally closed and secret society such as the Brahmins. A military society is a group of individuals becoming socialized in a particular culture as part of a collective, adhering to the same set of rules governing, amongst other things, their dress, behaviour, discipline and moral code. The army is, for example a clearly definable cohesive society set apart from civilian life to perform a very specific role for and on behalf of that civilian society. The army is also an institutional hierarchy with a fewer number of officers, Warrant Officers (WOs) and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) exercising power and authority over the greater number of 'other ranks.' The military then fits Durkheim's (1933) idea that society is nothing unless it be one, definite body, distinct from its parts. Elias (1982) similarly held that individual and group cannot be distinguished and define each other. In other words individuals acting together, create society. So whilst it may be the case that individuals are real and society is not real but only exists through the actions of individuals, it is what people do, how they behave, the rules they make, the ceremonies they perform, how they dress and how they speak for example, that is observed in social systems as 'culture'. Remove the culture and there is no society. So culture does exist but only within a societal setting, it is a human reality. It is the continued repetition of routine tasks and activities in a particular way which creates a society that appears different to others not within a particular societal setting. The continued repetition of routine tasks and activities was described by Cohen (1998) who paraphrased Giddens basic image of collective life as:

*"...actors repeating routine and rituals...across time and space over and over so that the pattern itself becomes a taken for granted feature of social life." (Cohen, 1998, p282).*

The routines which develop within the structures of military society shape the way that the individual soldier thinks and acts, not only in order to 'fit in' and conform but also to avoid punishment. "*Structure*" of military society described here is in the sense of structured by commonly produced practices. To those in civilian life the world of the sailor, soldier or airman is alien, perhaps strange and probably not understood. Why is this, what might contribute to those who have served in the armed forces being misunderstood or perceived as 'different' to those who have not served? The armed forces are structurally complex organisations. Essentially each branch of the armed forces is a 'community' in much the same way that a group of butchers or tailors (Lave and Wenger, 1991) miners, or deep sea fishermen or members of parliament form communities, groups and sub groups. To those not within that particular community. some or all of what they do is unknown and unfamiliar. The army for instance can be sub divided starting at the top – 'the army' and then into different groupings by function, specialism, size or administrative unit such as a company of infantry, a platoon of infantry or a section of infantry soldiers. All soldiers including officers are trained in the basics of being a soldier, the same words are used throughout the army for specific actions or drills such as loading and firing a weapon, indicating a target or giving tactical commands. Individuals understand and are familiar with the situation they are in and the known society or group within which they identify themselves because they have learned how to survive within that group, they have learned its ways, habits and culture. Soldiers learn how to obey orders without question and when more senior in rank how to give orders and take responsibility for subsequent consequences. However as Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger proposed, individuals do not learn only through formal instruction, their model of situated learning proposed that learning involves a process of engagement in a 'community of



practice'. (Wenger, 1999). Lave and Wenger's basic argument is that communities of practice are everywhere and that we are generally involved in a number of them in all areas of life at work and at play. In some groups we are core members, in others we are more at the margins. We interact with each other and with the world and we tune our relations with each other and with the world accordingly, in other words we learn. This collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations. These practices are thus the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise. It makes sense, therefore to call these kinds of communities – 'communities of practice'. (Wenger 1998 p45). What people in these 'communities' do, that is the skills and knowledge they possess, the things they do and the ways in which they pass all of this on to continue and regenerate their community, create 'communities of practice' in both civilian life and within the highly structured organization of the military. However structure is not an essential element of Lave and Wenger's (1991) community of practise theory as Owen-Pugh (2002) points out even a basketball team can be a community of practice. Those that are in the basketball team learn within that group and are accepted because they acquire and practise the skills and drills required and thereby contribute to the team's very existence. Those not in that basketball team – who do not have the same skills and knowledge cannot be part of that community of practice. For this research the notion of 'communities of practice' has important implications. Whilst it is true that a soldier is discharged from the 'army' when he or she leaves that larger body they depart from the localised cluster of communities of practice generated in the units within which they lived their military lives, were sad, were happy, made friends and with them perhaps shared pride when marching on parade to a band playing or danger and the grief of lost

comrades. Those in the communities of practice of the military will have received formal military training to make them able both mentally and physically to perform their roles. However as Wenger (1999) observed communities of practice develop and form through learning activities outside the locations of formal training such as the lecture room or on the firing range, adding that indicators of a community of practice include dimensions such as:

*"mutually defining identities," "local lore, shared stories, inside jokes, knowing laughter," shared jargon, "very quick setup of a problem to be discussed," absence of conversational preambles, and "shared discourse reflecting a certain perspective on the world" (Wenger, 1999 p.125-6).*

Generally the public does not see the close and intimate detail, the jokes and the jargon that within the communities of practice of the military generally serve, as one of the factors which tend to set the military apart. Civilians mostly see soldiers on the television in edited clips of operational activity, or on parade at major events such as the Queen's Birthday Parade ceremony. So soldiers learn and develop through informal means within their communities of practice as well as through formal training which is an essential and important part of military life. Training in groups or in teams it is generally what most soldiers do most of the time if they are not deployed on actual operations. Soldiers become used to training and expect it to be delivered to a consistently high standard. The army describes its commitment to training as follows:

*"The British Army has a very special training ethos. It is a mixture of firm discipline, tough training, maintenance of high standards, a sense of fair play, treating the trainee as an individual and encouraging people to achieve things far beyond those that they first thought themselves capable..." (ATRA, 2001)*

Formal military training is one of the oldest examples of the calculated use of bodily exercises of various types, including physical strength, fitness training, weapon instruction, drills and the practice of strategies, to train the individual body

to the perceived maximum of its power and then to integrate it as a moving part into a larger social composite (Giddens, 1984). Thus the drills and practices of the military are essentially its warrior culture. The military however is not unique in using drills, habits, rituals and ceremonies to unite a social group. As Connerton (1989) points out, the Orthodox church emphasises the need to discipline body and mind to promote piety and contemplation. The warrior cultures of the military however emphasize discipline for the purpose of instilling loyalty whilst at the same time building physical prowess. Connerton (1989) argues that drills, habits, ceremonies and rituals help to solidify a sense of social attachment that facilitates integration of the individual into the larger social group, which is probably a different way of expressing the community of practice theory. Jolly (1996) says that from initial training onwards, the armed forces mould their men and women, conditioning them to think and respond in ways appropriate to membership of a fighting team. Jolly (1996) then goes on to argue that:

*“... Aspects of this training are not useful to individuals in other settings, (if they were, there would be no need for such specialised training in the first place), and the required conditioning is intensive and often harsh...” (Jolly, 1996 p.3).*

Jolly’s opinion on the usefulness of some aspects of military training would seem at odds with the notion of adaptability and transferability of skills and knowledge which would appear useful to soldiers when they become civilians but does support her own notion that ex service people should ‘disengage’ from their military past which otherwise, according to Jolly (1996):

*“..entraps an individual in his past and divests his subsequent endeavours of direction and intensity.” (Jolly, 1996 pp. 2-3).*

This last quote in turn conflicts with the view held by many that individuals cannot escape, nor is it necessary for him or her to escape from or deny past life experiences (see for example Goodwin and O’Connor 2005 and Biderman, 1964).

Soldiers then acquire, through training and practice specific knowledge, skills and attitudes which enable them to act appropriately. For example the hierarchical organisation of the military creates boundaries between officers and non officers and between senior NCOs and private soldiers. It is the every day routine of a soldier's life repeated over and over again which makes a soldier a soldier and different in many ways to a civilian. A soldier will, for example stand when an officer enters a room and will defer to that officer's authority. It is both common practice to stand in the presence of an officer but also a re-affirmation of respect and authority expressed in the physical act of standing up that reinforces the status of both officer and soldier. However the demarcation of the officer - soldier relationship continues 24 hours a day regardless of time or place. In civilian life, the demarcation, if it is there at all perhaps between a manager and a worker, will not necessarily be continually reinforced to the same extent by cultural displays such as standing up to show respect and the roles of manager and worker may well be dispensed with outside 'normal working hours'. A civilian employer may, for example, after giving a subordinate instruction, drop the employer role and start to discuss last Saturday's football match on terms of equality. Thus the way of living and working within a particular social life appear orderly to members living in that society only because members engage actively in making sense of social life (Garfinkel 1967). Those who serve in the armed forces live by its rules and traditions and are motivated by and contribute to its continuing culture. The rules traditions and culture of the military which are specifically militarily based are not practised in civilian life and contribute to the differences between soldiers and civilians.

In one specific and important area military service is unique, as Dandeker et al (2003) put it:

*Military uniqueness derives from the liability of service personnel to use lethal force, to risk one's own life but also those of others by ordering them to do the same. These features set the military apart from other high risk occupations such as police and fire services.” (Dandeker et al 2003, p.17 footnote 3).*

Figure: 2



“...the liability of service personnel to use lethal force. “(Source: J.A. Clark)

However, whilst it is true that those in the military were once civilians (before they enlisted) and will eventually become civilians again (when they are discharged), as members of the armed forces they don the garb of the sailor, the soldier or of the airman and use the jargon, obey the rules and contribute to the military organisation in which they live, work and play. An important question to answer next is: “What is the position of the military in human society? The next section addresses this question by exploring the historical background and developments which led to the establishment of professional armies and which have become known as the ‘Military Revolution’ (see for example Parker 1996; Knox and Murray, 2001 and Roberts, 1967).

## **The place of the military in society – An Historical Perspective.**

The military holds a particular place in a nation's consciousness, a situation which has evolved historically and which contributes to some extent to it being 'set apart' from civilian society. The history of the army in particular is inextricably linked to the history of Great Britain. The start of the 16<sup>th</sup> century is a turning point in European history in terms of the many different changes in various fields of knowledge and within society generally. Many changes took place and many discoveries were made in, among other things, printing, in the understanding of science, in navigation, in world geography and in religion. (Gardiner and Wenborn 1995) To this list can be added major changes in the way that wars were fought, the weaponry used and the way armies were established, recruited, trained and paid for. Several theorists support the thesis that the rise of the modern European state is a consequence of the 'Military Revolution' (see for example Davies, 1997; Elias, 1982; Giddens, 1985, Mann, 1993; Rogers, 1995 and Tilly, 1992),

The rise of the European state is however more complex than simply technological developments in warfare and includes considerations of geopolitics such as the unification of France under Louis XI) and the expansionist ambitions of Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella (Gardiner and Wenborn, 1995) as well as considerations of power based theories such as unity through common origin, property rights and Sovereignty (see for example Tilly, 1992). Sovereignty in early modern Europe resided in the person of the monarch and now in contemporary modern international relations is the claim of the state. Nevertheless the history of the development of weaponry and of how armies were controlled is important in considering the position now of the armed forces in relation to civilian society (Parker 2005, 2005a and Roberts 1967). Roberts (1967) identified a connection

between the development of new weaponry and tactics in warfare and social and political developments in 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe particularly in Holland and in Sweden and named this connection the 'Military Revolution'. These developments including the use of gunfire instead of lances pikes and swords, led to the need for professional, full time soldiers trained to use the new weapons effectively. Prior to the development of firearms and as early as 1181, the 'Assize of Arms' legislation had laid down regulations which required all freeman to serve in defence of their locality. However, the notion of standing armies was not popular with the land owning nobility and as Downing (1992) has pointed out:

*"...estates were suspicious of standing armies whose loyalty might be closer to the monarch than to constitutional government, and they were warier after foreign monarchs had used standing armies as the engine of autocracy." (Downing, 1992, p.75)*

Machiavelli (1521) on the other hand held that political and military affairs were interdependent:

*"As to your fears that such an institution [the civic army] may deprive you of your state... I reply that arms carried by one's citizens... when they are bestowed by law and well organised, never do harm; on the contrary, they are always useful..." (Machiavelli 1521, p.170).*

In comparing soldiers with civilians Machiavelli (1521) went on to say that there was nothing more different:

*"... and incongruous than a civil and a military life. Hence we daily see that when a man goes into the army, he immediately changes not only his dress...." (Machiavelli, 1521, p.3).*

Drawing on Machiavelli's (1521) theme of the interdependency of civil, political and military affairs, Elias (1982) stressed the importance of the internal process of pacification of the nobility by rulers which he described as the 'civilising process.' Giddens (1985) similarly postulated a power based theory that the development of the state resulted from advances in military technology and the pressure of

international relations between states. In other words Giddens was saying that the system of international relations, structures states as agents. Military interaction driven and bolstered by new technologies structured a system of international relations and this in turn brought about the formation of the state.

The system of local defence was changed by Mary I in 1558 placing the militia under the control of the Lord Lieutenant of each county. But militia service then was voluntary except in times of threat of invasion, a threat which was never realised (Gardiner & Wenborn, 1995). In other words the militia men were called to arms when required and returned to their homes and families when there was no threat. The struggle between Charles I and Parliament over control of an army to defeat the Irish rebellion (1641) was perhaps the beginning of the formalised separation of a standing army from civil society. In 1644 the 'Self Denying Ordinance' (the proposition that membership of either house of Parliament was incompatible with military and naval command), led to the introduction of the 'New Model Army' and Cromwell's subsequent victory. In the early years of Charles II reign the Militia Acts (1661-3) established the legality of the militia under the authority of the king. The first standing army created by Charles I had emerged from the aftermath of the Civil Wars (1639-1660) and, according to Gardiner and Wenborn (1995 p.546) the army's successes which ended the Civil War owed a lot to regular pay and good relations between officers and men. However the role of the army in enforcing the rule of the Protectorate (particularly in Ireland), left a strong anti-military prejudice which lasted into the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 the 'New Model Army' was only partly disbanded, the remaining regiments forming the basis of what was effectively the standing army of Charles' II. The first permanent standing army created by Charles II in 1661 as 'His Majesties Guards and Garrisons' was not,



unlike the Royal Navy, enshrined in statute and it was not until 1689 and the Declaration of rights that the Mutiny Act provided parliamentary approval for its existence. In more recent times the Mutiny Act was replaced by the Armed Forces Act (1955) and this is renewed every five years giving the armed forces their legitimacy. The development of a standing army contributed to the loss of the status and power of the nobility (who were not trained as professional soldiers). Thus the king was able to concentrate both the ability to wage war and to control revenue collected through taxation to pay for the standing army (Elias,1982). Bauman (1990) argues that Elias' power based theory does not take account of the processes of homogenisation, such as the expulsion or assimilation of ethnic minorities which were an important part of state formation. However whilst Robert's (1967) 'Military Revolution' thesis is criticised by some; Rogers (1995) for example, identified developments in fortifications, the resultant lengthening of siege campaigns and the subsequent need for raising of further resources and revenue. All the changes from medieval to modern warfare established within society an institution – a standing army. As different real and perceived threats have appeared and disappeared, such as the world wars and the Cold War of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the armed forces have changed both in strength and in organisational structure. The connection of army regiments with local counties has now largely gone due to the reduction of troop numbers and amalgamations of several regiments since the end of World War II (Chant, 1988). The many thousands of troops previously stationed in numerous garrison towns throughout Britain are now situated in just a few locations including Germany. The local county regiments, local garrisons and their associated territorial (volunteer) units and the period of compulsory military conscription, generally known as national service (1949-1963) previously gave civilians some glimpses of military life. Now due to changing

threats, a general reduction in force levels, the introduction of ever more sophisticated equipments and the need for security the military is now much less in evidence and very much an organisation separate from civilian life. The exception to this being those families with relatives serving in the military. The word 'military' of course has a wider meaning than just soldiers and the army.

At the same time that pikes gave way to fire arms other technological changes occurred in the navy (Parker, 2005b) and in more modern times the development of aircraft saw the birth of air forces armed with bombs and missiles as well as guns. Essentially the complex nature of modern warfare, which began with the introduction of firearms and has continued ever since has contributed to separation through specialization. The armed forces do their job for and on behalf of civilian society. It is a job requiring special skills and a necessarily different life style; skills and a life style which create a separate and different society made up of the many different communities of practice of military life; a life which is not fully understood by most civilians. The military then has a place based in history which sets it apart as an institution within society, an institution whose members may on behalf of the state use lethal force. It is an institution with its own ways its own communities of practice, from which civilians are excluded and in which an individual may spend many years of his or her life. According to the literature (see for instance Jolly (1996) a person who has spent a long period in an institutionalised community may find life difficult if they had to leave that community. In other words there is a risk that people in the armed forces could become institutionalised. Before discussing the risks of institutionalization the review now considers and defines what is meant by transition in the context of this work and seeks to explain that transition from military to civilian life can be

problematical because of the ways that humans interact and form 'communities of practice'

### **Defining Transition – A Return to a Different Reality**

Transition in the sense that it is applied in the social sciences is concerned with the process of individuals, or groups moving from or changing from one state or condition or set of circumstances to another. Something about the way an individual lives his or her life changes and a process or processes take place which enable and bring about that change. In the context of this research and sociologically, the 'something' which changes is the constructed reality held by the individual. The process perhaps is the mental steps taken as the individual thinks about moving from the state of being in and belonging to a known society or group with which they are familiar towards the state of entering and then becoming part of a different society or group to which they did not previously belong and with which they are not familiar. The mental steps often of course accompanied by an actual physical move of the individual from one location to another. Examples of transition within society include for example the transition from school to work, a topic which is well documented, (see for example Carter, 1966; Goodwin and O'Connor, 2005) or a transition from the priesthood (Kenny, 1986), or a transition from being a nun and then forsaking this calling (Armstrong, 1981), or career change transitions in mid life (see for example Rhodes, 1994), or moving from 'home' to a home for the disabled (Musgrove, 1977) or what was probably human transition on a massive scale when according to Souden (2005) :

*"...in September 1939 with evacuation and mobilisation, a third of all people in Britain changed address... Two different parts of Britain that once had little to do with each other now came face to face – the poverty of the inner cities and the different type of poverty amid the relative plenty of the countryside." (Souden, 2005 p.21).*

As Souden (2005) relates, children and their teachers leaving the ‘thought to be’ dangerous areas of the cities and ports to move into the countryside, experienced a cultural shock – the ways of the different communities were different – people did things differently and shock was felt by both the evacuees and their hosts. At the beginning of their military careers individual young men and women decide to make the transition from a civilian way of life to the life of a soldier. At the end of their military careers soldiers leaving the communities of practice of the armed forces after 22 years service will be mature adults, so whilst their transition to civilian life will have similarities to other transitions within society it is a different sort of transition to those which have been well researched such as the transition from school to work or that experienced by those who leave the priesthood mentioned above; this is because the communities of practice of the military are different to the communities of practice of civilian life. However, whilst men and women serving in the armed forces are obviously not civilians, all armed forces personnel *were* civilians and they generally maintain links with their civilian families and friends. Soldiers go home on leave and mix with civilians and married soldiers go home to their wives and families and if they live in married quarters if stationed in Britain and may shop at Tesco’s and send their children to the local school. So to say that an individual soldier for example is not familiar with civilian society because he or she is part of the society of the military, is to somewhat overstate the case. Soldiers whilst serving are active members of the community of practice of the military grouping in which they work live and play but are on the margins of civilian life and of its many and varied communities of practice. The social life and entertainment enjoyed for instance by young soldiers, playing sports, watching films and tackling the latest computer games, is not hugely different to the social life of their civilian counterparts.

Transition to civilian life from the military can therefore in some ways be seen as a return to a previous state, a previous reality, a return to one or more communities of practice, some of which are familiar and easily entered (enjoying sport with others for instance) while others are less familiar such as the civilian work place. Thus, whilst not every single aspect of a military to civilian transition is unknown, strange and unexpected it is viewed and considered by the 'near to retirement' soldier from the safe distance of a secure and familiar environment. This security and familiar environment is a constructed reality in the mind of the individual. He or she must now mentally wrestle with their situation and 'what comes next. A different dimension to a study of the transition process is the way that veterans consciously and unconsciously think about their situation, interpret their feelings, deal with contradictions and move from thought to action, in other words how their behaviour reflects the complex socio-economic dilemma and contradictions into which discharge from the army has placed them; the internal contradictions; the contradiction between the general and the specific, between appearance and essence, between the qualitative and the quantitative (Kvale,1996). In the process of transition to civilian life the individual (first a soldier and then a civilian) has to face the contradictions which stem from a loss of status, a loss of security, the loss of comrades in arms and the imagined future of change of newness and reactions, expressed externally in behaviour as the veteran explores and attempts to uncover a new status and a new sense of security. The long time served soldier, moved from the well known environment of the military into the much less familiar world of work as a civilian will be acutely aware of the responses of others, both in response to his or her own actions and in response to sensory clues (such as sight) of the same actions perpetrated by another individual. (Crick and Koch, 1990). Responses, for instance, to the everyday matters of life in the new

workplace may seem odd, certainly different as a veteran seeks to come to terms with the unfamiliar environment of civilian life and practice. It is here that the phenomena of consciousness assists by allowing the ability to discriminate, categorize, and react to environmental stimuli; cognitively integrate information; focus attention and react with suitably controlled behaviour (Chalmers, 1995). At the same time in wrestling with the contradictions presented by new situations and environments the veteran's unconscious mind, feeding on the stored memories of past experiences selects and steers the individual to encounter and face this new experience. As Chalmers (1995) argues:

*Experience is the most central and manifest aspect of our mental lives, and indeed is perhaps the key explanandum in the science of the mind. (Chalmers, 1995 p.200-19)*

Nevertheless for an individual coming to the end of his or her military career the transition from a known, familiar and secure situation as the member of a rifle section or of a tank crew for example, into a perhaps only partly understood civilian community can come as a shock since this transition involves both a physical move and a change of mental outlook. Becoming a civilian after many years of soldiering involves a change of mental outlook which embodies challenges to an individual's tastes, dispositions, preferences, prejudices, even of body language. Mauss(1934) introduced the idea of 'techniques of the body' as highly developed body actions that embody aspects of a given culture such as eating, washing, sitting, swimming, running, climbing, swimming, child-rearing, and so on. Elias (1978; 1982) and Bourdieu (1977) developed the ideas further in 'habitus' as the non-discursive aspects of culture that bind people into groups. Pierre Bourdieu (1984) described 'habitus' as the characteristic of a given class or class fraction, across all the different fields of practice – art appreciation, making conversation, life-style, eating and many more. It is the acquisition of a class

habitus which gains an individual recognition as a member of a given class, and determines their likely place and trajectory in social hierarchies (Bourdieu, 1984). Charlesworth (2000) drawing from Bourdieu says that habitus is:

*“...a distinct way of being... the socially constituted principle of perception and appreciation of the social world we acquire in a particular context.” (Charlesworth, 2000, p.29).*

Charlesworth (2000) studied the habitus of people in Rotherham and held that the working class in towns like Rotherham develop a distinctive habitus because of the conditions under which they live. Similarly then, soldiers will develop a distinctive habitus because of the way that they live their lives within the communities of practice of the military. This adds to the separation of the way of life of a soldier to the way of life of a civilian and contributes to the intensity of the ‘culture shock’ when it is time for the soldier to once again become a civilian and their ‘distinct way of being, their very identity has, necessarily to change.

Jenkins (1996) argues that identities have elements of both the ‘individually unique’ and the collectively shared; each individual has an identity which is personal to them and that identities are shaped through membership of social groups. The individual elements of identity emphasize difference and the collective elements similarities. Jenkins drew on the ideas of both Meade and Goffman to argue that people are concerned in every day life to manage impressions of themselves, that is the impression they wish others to have of them. Meade (1934) felt that human thought, experience and conduct are essentially social and that human beings interact in terms of symbols, the most important of which are contained in language and in the way people present themselves. British soldiers will most certainly wish to project of themselves to others in a professional manner. The way that the army trains and develops its soldiers contributes to both their individual and collective identities. However,

individuality is not encouraged with respect to a soldier's appearance or how he or she behaves or communicates with other soldiers of different rank; such matters are determined by regulation and custom.

Figure: 3



"...individuality is not encouraged." (Source J.A. Clark)

Collectively soldiers, as members of the community of practice of a rifle section or tank crew for example, work together as a team and identify with and perform their particular roles within that team. A soldier's individual 'identity' is generally determined by his or her rank, first within the broad groupings of 'officers' and so called 'other ranks'. Within the grouping of 'other ranks' soldiers are then further identified as those who are of senior rank, that is sergeant and above and those below sergeant. Soldiers then are identified by others and identify themselves within these different collective groupings and are further and clearly identifiable by the badges of rank they wear. Badges of rank are clear and visible 'labels' which allow all members of the armed forces to see what a person's rank is (even if they have never met that person before) and thus act accordingly. Such clear and obvious 'labels of identification', are not worn by civilians but people are labelled in all walks of life from the impressions they give others. The impression that people have of a person can determine how that person is treated. Once a person is identified, for example as 'ex services or 'ex army' then others may treat them



different, reinterpreting and evaluating what the ex army person says or does in the knowledge that that person's life has followed a different path to theirs. This is similar in some ways to Goffman's (1968) notion of 'spurious interaction' whereby those who are mentally ill are seen as and are treated as different. Being regarded by society in a particular way effectively attaches a label to an individual. Interactionist Howard S Becker (1963) argues that social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance. In other words the creation of deviance is a societal reaction. Of course Becker's (1963) labelling theory was primarily concerned with acts of deviance – that is an act which others perceive and define as such (Sykes, 1964). It is however not the intention here to infer that being a 'veteran' is deviant, rather that the recognition of a person as a veteran, (or ex service or ex army and so on) is a societal reaction occasioned by what a veteran says, or how they present themselves and how they react with others. Taylor et al (1973) viewed the issue of deviance differently arguing that most deviance can be defined in terms of the actions of those who break social rules and not in terms of the reaction of a social audience. In any event the veteran entering civilian life may or may not actively self promote his or her image as a veteran and the societal reaction to those bearing such a label may well differ according to the views of particular societal groupings, such as a firm which actively employs ex armed forces personnel, versus a firm or organization which has no knowledge of the armed forces and its people. In the process of leaving the army, entering civilian life and 'becoming a civilian' soldiers may experience what McNeil and Giffen (1967) describe as a 'role confusion period', a period during which both their individual and collective identities are removed from their familiar multi layered community of practice contexts. But as McNeil and Giffen (1967) point out:

:

*“Knowing that a period of role confusion is an inescapable experience may serve to bolster his ego.” (McNeil and Giffen, 1967, p.851)*

The community of practice of the rifle section or tank crew is ‘nested’ in larger communities of practice within the military, based upon its structure. For example a soldier in a rifle section will be part of a company, a company part of a battalion and a battalion part of a regiment and so on. The soldier has allegiance to and valid membership of each of these communities of practice and it is these that the veteran leaves behind on discharge. Leaving the armed forces and returning to civilian life is then a process of change from the situation and identity of being a soldier to the situation and different identity of being a civilian and a member of civilian society. The next section now returns to and discusses Jolly’s (1996) observation that a person who has spent a long period in an institutionalised community may find life difficult if they had to leave that community and considers why this might be so.

### **Institutionalisation and the Dependency Culture of Military Service**

Ruth Jolly (1996) theorises that a person who has been institutionalised would find life outside the institution hard if not impossible. According to Jolly (1996)

“There is a strong public perception that the military institutionalizes its personnel, making adjustment to civilian life when they leave very difficult.” (Jolly, 1996, p.38).

According to Goffman being institutionalised involves a total yielding of the self to an organisation to the extent that self hardly exists as a separate entity (Goffman 1968). Thus as Jolly (1996) explains fully institutionalised people can be found among long term prisoners, residents of homes for the physically or mentally handicapped or the elderly in nursing homes. Such people have, for whatever reason lost their ability to order their own lives and cannot as a result care for themselves. Those in the armed forces however are not institutionalised in this

way; certainly in Britain members of the armed forces volunteer to serve and thus retain their self esteem. Indeed in the army particularly the self reliance skills of every individual can play a crucial role. Soldiers are self reliant because they are trained to look after themselves in harsh and often unpleasant conditions, whilst at the same time contributing to their role as part of a larger group. In this way soldiers become both self reliant and part of a grouping which has confidence in itself and in each of its members. This builds a close bond of trust (Jolly 1996). Research in the USA by Janowitz (1964) and Moskos & Wood (1988) identified institutionalism as a necessary part of being a professional soldier. In order to perform their role effectively in combat soldiers need to be trained to think and act in a particular way which is different to that of civilians. The way civilians think and act is characterized by Moskos & Wood (1988) as being a “market place mentality.” Janowitz (1964) listed three major explanations of the way individuals in the military perform in combat roles:

*“... their performance is motivated by identification with some formal symbols of a particular organization or its traditions.”*

*“soldiers behave in particular ways in combat to adhere to some typically labeled “masculine’ code of behavior such as “being a man.”*

*“... in terms of a soldier’s relationship to larger society, patriotism, family, or the flag. (Janowitz, 1964, pp. 204-205).*

As evidenced by the American spelling of some words (e.g. *labeled, behavior*) the above quote is from USA sourced literature and is with reference to American soldiers and it is thought unlikely by the author that individual British soldiers identify closely or directly with such patriotic notions as the national flag. British armed forces personnel more likely associate closely with the unit in which they are serving which for most soldiers is probably his or her regiment and not ‘the army’ as a whole. Indeed until major force reductions in the 20<sup>th</sup> century many

regiments were closely associated with counties. Loyalty to a regiment or corps is a peculiar characteristic of the British Army: each regiment is a 'family' zealously guarding its heritage and traditions, and during the heyday of this system (1881-1956) personnel were not normally transferred out of the 'family' against their will (Land Forces 2006-1)

Thus the way the army is organized assists in institutionalizing its members by the way in which soldiers are grouped. Sprott (1958) supports Janowitz's (1964) notion of identification with formal symbols or traditions by soldiers and says that:

*"... the desire of the soldier himself to have something which, in his eyes and in the eyes of his companions is worth identifying himself with, a group which gives him distinction and prestige. (Sprott, 1958, p. 172).*

Sprott goes on to explain that this is achieved by laying stress on regimental history and repute, by distinctive marks of membership and by the growth of regimental mythology and customs. The general aim is to induce loyalty so that as well as habits of obedience learnt in training there is an additional control established which prevents the soldier doing anything that 'lets the regiment down'. For Sprott (1958) membership of a group is important to the well being of the individual to their self worth and to the notion of belonging. Thus an important element of military institutionalisation of the individual is that the 'person' becomes part of a group. In other words soldier's necessarily become 'institutionalised' into the ways of the military as an essential part of performing their professional roles. The professional roles soldiers play means that on behalf of the country they serve they may suffer emotional and physical hardship and act aggressively. However, whilst members of the armed forces do not spend all their time actively engaged in stressful combat situations, their lives are controlled and ordered by the requirements of the military organization that they have sworn to serve. The

commitment to serve and obey is one of unlimited liability, a 24 hour 365 days a year commitment both in peace and war. To perform their roles effectively military personnel are necessarily trained and live, work and play in a supportive environment which provides for life's essentials such as food and drink, clothing and shelter. Military personnel do not have to be concerned with these life essentials, they are organised and provided for them. The most important thing in military thinking is to accomplish the allotted task regardless of time, pain, tiredness or loss and when the job is done return to base, barracks or field location confident in the knowledge that food and shelter will be there. This is clearly at odds with civilian thinking and is an aspect of the military as an institution gives rise to the notion of a 'dependency culture' (Morgan, 2003).

However as Higate (2001) points out:

*"...we are all reliant on social structures of one or another kind..."*  
(Higate, 2001, p.447).

Some researchers argue that there is an objective tension between the needs of military life and what is required for civilian existence.

Dandeker et al (2003) for example say that:

*The dependency culture in the armed forces can lead to difficulties during the transition of service personnel to civilian life... This is probably less significant as they become more senior as more self reliance and freedom of action is allowed (Dandeker et al 2003, p. 94).*

Higate (2001) goes further with the question:

*"Might military service produces long term characteristics that transcend the myriad of variables that include, age, military task, location of service and so on?" (Higate 2001, p. 446).*

In setting out and suggesting topics for research with respect to veterans Dandeker et al (2003), state that those leaving the armed forces need to be weaned off the dependency culture in order to make a successful transition to civilian life (Dandeker et al 2003). They also ask in relation to the question of institutionalisation:

*“... how best to encourage veterans to return to civilian society rather than be confined to its margins by virtue of their very identity as veterans?” (Dandeker et al 2003, p.130)*

It would seem then that some degree of institutionalisation of those serving in the armed forces is inevitable. However, whilst Jolly (1996) says that:

*Among military leavers interviewed there was no shortage of evidence of institutionalisation, from a mild to quite marked extent. (Jolly 1996, p.40)*

there appears in reality to be limited literature and unsupported evidence of institutionalisation amongst those serving and amongst those leaving the armed forces. Indeed Dandeker et al (2003) whilst acknowledging the link between the roles of a dependency culture and institutionalisation in consideration of care and support for vulnerable armed forces leavers state quite clearly that:

*“... [institutionalisation/dependency] is a researchable question which has never been considered in the UK context.” (Dandeker et al 2003, p.130)*

Jolly's (1996) research was based on interviews with approximately 60 ex service people from all three services and included both officers and other ranks, whilst Dandeker's et al (2003) research was based on a huge random sample of 19,000 British service personnel. This again points up the lack of social science research into some areas of the British armed forces. In Dandeker's et al (2003; 2006) research the term 'veteran' is used, in close association with 'vulnerable armed forces leavers', in other words, those in need of some form of medical support. The term 'veteran' then in this context *appears* to be associated with the need for

care; however the term has different meanings in different countries as is explained in the next section.

## Defining a Veteran

The term veteran in relation to the armed forces means different things to different people and its interpretation and the practical consequences of its application to individuals is certainly broad and diverse in different countries. In a British MOD sponsored case study Wyatt (2002) says that the number of veterans as a percentage of the total population differs considerably between each country because of differing definitions. Wyatt goes on to say that Britain and New Zealand tend to apply the term to all who have served in the Armed forces whereas the USA applies the term only to those who have served for a minimum period and have been honourably discharged (Wyatt, 2002). Dandeker et al (2003) as well as Iverson et al (2005) among others, also use the term 'veteran' freely, based on its official British definition and usage which effectively embraces anyone who has ever served in the armed forces as well as their families. The British Veterans Agency answers the question "Who is a veteran?" on its internet website as follows:

*The term 'veteran' is used to mean all those who have served in the HM Armed Forces (whether Regular or Reserve). This group has been commonly known as ex-Service personnel. The term veteran also includes their widows/widowers and their dependants as part of the veterans' community. As well as all members of the Armed Forces the term veteran also, exceptionally, includes those members of the Merchant Navy who played a vital role in legally defined military operations. The veterans' community is therefore a wide and disparate population, estimated to be over 10 million people in the UK. (Veteran's Agency, 2006.)*

Lamb (2006) however, says that British Armed forces veterans receive very little recognition, help or support in Great Britain and expresses the view that an annual 'Veterans' Day' introduced from June 2006 will only serve to highlight the fact that

for the remaining 364 days of the year veterans' contributions to society go largely unnoticed. Lamb (2006) adds that:

*At the end of their service, most men and women leave the Forces and successfully integrate back into civilian life. For all, the final act of handing in their identity card constitutes a complete severance from a unique way of life and a loss of identity. (Lamb, 2006).*

Brown(2006) argues that promoting the idea of 'Britishness' and demonstrating the value of the emergency services and the military and all those who have fought for this country over the past 100 years would be one way to tackle the inequalities in society. Brown (2006) went on to say that:

*"Former servicemen and women will be presented with 'medals' on 27 June to ensure their contribution was 'never forgotten' and that veteran status is to be extended to those who have served in more recent conflicts."(Brown, 2006).*

Lamb (2006) whilst acknowledging that a Veteran's Day is a step in the right direction says that:

*University students seem to get better recognition in this country and it is not helped by Mr Brown talking about 'extending veteran status' when this government has already defined the term 'Veteran' to mean all those who have served in the UK Armed Forces whether Regular or Reserve." (Lamb, 2006),*

As has already been observed earlier in this chapter, the majority of the relevant literature on veteran's transitions is derived from the USA and it is clear that armed forces veterans in the USA do have a completely different status in civilian society to their British counterparts. Snyder (1994) for example says that military retirees [in the USA] are valued citizens and are of interest because they constitute a part of the attentive public on defence and foreign policy issues. The author considers it prudent to not rely too heavily on the large US literature. This decision further reinforces the notion that there is very little literature on the British Armed forces deriving from British sources. It is felt that this caution is well made since the



employment situation of veterans in the USA is different to the British experience.

Rexrode (2006) for instance, with reference to veterans in the USA observes that:

*The trend is especially notable because military veterans collectively consistently have a lower unemployment rate than non veterans. In 2005, veterans — all ages included — had a national unemployment rate of 4 percent, compared with 4.6 percent for non veterans. (Rexrode, 2006, p.1)*

The significance of these figures for this research is not directly in how they compare to the British experience but more with the fact that in the USA those with veteran status are recognised as an identifiable sector in the US labour force. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) maintain detailed records of US employment and unemployment including the employment situation of veterans by age, veteran status, service connected disability, period of service, sex and race. Data on US veterans is obtained from the Current Population Survey which is conducted by the US Census Bureau (BLS 2006). Figure 4 provides an example of the detailed data collected on veterans in the USA. This USA data on employment outcomes further discriminates veterans by type to include for example those who are in the process of leaving the armed forces (Transitioning Service Members), those who have served in a campaign and those who are disabled as a result of military service. By contrast in the Great Britain the employment take up rate of those leaving the armed forces is not known. A detailed interrogation of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) a quarterly sample survey conducted by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) of households living at private addresses in Great Britain to provide information on the labour market was carried out. The purpose of this exercise was to identify data relating to those reporting 'armed forces' as a previous employment. The interrogation revealed that the armed forces are treated as a sub set within 'non private organisations' and that prior to the year 2003 'armed forces' were coded under Government funded bodies and agencies

in the sector for 'central government, civil service.' However according to a note in the Labour Force Survey User Guide:

*ONS are interested in a more comprehensive measure of armed forces employees than provided by SOC2000, hence the answer category 'Armed Forces', previously along with 'central government and the civil service' now appears as a separate category. (Labour Force Survey, 2003, p. 84).*

A new code making it possible to identify those in 'armed forces' employment (either currently or previously) was introduced in the spring of 2003. However no data relevant to veterans was identified during the interrogation of the LFS mentioned above. This finding reinforces the notion that the employment situation of armed forces veterans in the USA is different to the British experience.

The MOD does collect data from ex service personnel up to 12 months after they have been discharged but no research has been conducted into the longer term outcomes and employment destinations of veterans in the civilian labour market (Dandeker et al 2003 p17). As Dandeker et al (2003) point out:

*"...despite confident statements about the benefits of military life for the post-service status of the majority we simply do not have enough robust, long term data at present to justify them." (Dandeker et al 2003, p. 17).*

Figure: 4 US Department of Labor – Performance Outcomes - Veterans

Save a Copy

Search

92%

Adobe Reader 7.0

Pages

Attachments

Comments

ETA 9002 D Quarterly Report  
Performance Outcomes - Veterans

U.S. Department of Labor  
Labor Exchange Program

National Report		Report Due Report Period 10/1/2005 to 9/30/2006				OMB No. 1205-0240 Expires: 12/31/2005				
Veterans, Eligible Persons and TSMs Performance Outcomes		A Total Veterans and Eligible Persons				B TSMs	C Campaign Veterans	D Disabled Veterans	E Special Disabled Veterans	F Recently Sep Veterans (3 Yrs)
		19-44	45-54	55+	Total					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Entered Employment Numerator	311,930	153,108	121,883	594,102	13,980	154,651	55,665	19,199	104,538
2	Entered Employment (18-44)					10,845	69,855	30,200	10,029	92,348
3	Entered Employment (45-54)					1,598	37,299	14,917	5,479	7,188
4	Entered Employment (55 and over)					563	45,820	10,058	3,518	3,161
5	Entered Employment Denominator	470,885	250,284	234,128	966,785	21,318	259,985	98,248	36,199	164,540
6	Entered Employment Rate	66	61	52	61	66	59	57	53	64
7	Employment Retention at Six Months Numerator	338,405	161,772	118,057	626,584	13,227	155,625	58,314	19,297	105,852
8	Employment Retention at Six Months Denominator	419,561	200,211	150,375	779,469	16,954	193,449	73,377	24,570	132,829
9	Employment Retention Rate at Six Months	81	81	79	80	78	80	79	79	80
10	Entered Employment Follow S-A Services Num.	274,969	135,513	106,106	522,418	12,448	133,780	49,714	17,252	93,653
11	Entered Employment Follow S-A Services Den.	408,840	218,668	201,372	838,397	19,003	220,244	86,569	32,107	144,779
12	Entered Employment Follow S-A Services Rate	3,237	3,001	2,578	3,010	2,448	2,926	2,783	2,557	3,087
13	Six Months Earnings Increase	614,712	642,482	625,424	623,650	583,935	631,049	626,541	750,925	595,815
14	Entered Employment Rate Follow Work-Info Services	63	58	50	58	48	58	54	50	59
15	Employment Retention Rate Follow Work-Info Services	70	70	68	69	47	68	68	66	68
16	Six Month Earnings Increase Follow Work-Info Services	584,848	585,479	567,243	569,037	511,127	574,805	559,868	546,481	539,891

Column B, data for TSMs, indicates outcomes for Transitioning Service Members within 6 months and as much as 24 months for retirees prior to separation from active military service; the column marked campaign badge (C) aggregates services to those who fought in a war, conflict or campaign for which a ribbon or medal was awarded; and, the column (F) marked recently separated veterans includes outcome data for those who were served within 3 years following separation from active military persons.

1 of 1

Internet

This absence of government statistics on veterans raises the question of how much civilian employers know of the capabilities of ex armed forces personnel. In the USA the capabilities of ex armed forces veterans are well known in civilian life. John Harol (2006), for example, an ex US marine writing in a veteran's internet newsletter says that:

*"Employers don't question the ability of military people to deal with high-stress environments," (Harol, 2006).*

How much should civilians know about what a soldier has done and what he or she is capable of? Lamb (2006) spoke of the handing in of the identity card as being a final act of severance. A soldier's identity card (ID) is an important part of his or her identity; it is a document which a soldier must carry at all times, indeed it is a punishable offence to not be able to produce an ID card when asked to do so. So handing in an ID card after 22 years is a very symbolic moment, without it a person can no longer easily enter military establishments. On discharge a soldier's identity card is handed in and the soldier receives a 'Regular Army Certificate of Service'. This certificate is in fact a small book with a red cover (and the nomenclature AB 108) which contains a written record of a soldier's service and a testimonial written by their last commanding officer. The 'little red book' as it is known is accompanied by other documents recording a soldier's qualifications and a description of the job or jobs they undertook whilst in the army. The preamble to the testimonial says:

*"To be completed with a view to civil employment and with relation to the Certificate of Qualifications and the Job Description." (AB108 page 2, see Appendix 3, p.246).*

The 'little red book' has the official army nomenclature of 'AB108' and this is one of the artefacts which a veteran can use to confirm his or her status or perhaps use

as a reference for a civilian job (a copy of an AB 108 can be seen at Appendix 3). Another way that a veteran can be identified as such, if indeed the individual feels the need to be so identified is by wearing a 'veteran's badge.' The veteran's badge is issued free of charge to those who apply to the MOD. However so great has been the demand for these badges that their issue is being controlled and in late 2006 badges were being issued to veterans who had served before and including the year 1969 (Veterans Agency 2006). The badge is accompanied by a printed compliments slip from the Secretary of State for Defence which says that:

*"This HM Forces Veteran's Badge is presented to you in recognition of your service to your country. You may wish to wear it on suitable occasions when dressed in civilian attire." (Copy at Appendix 4).*

These artefacts, along with any medals an individual may have been awarded mark and record a veteran's service. The term 'veteran' then whilst widely used does appear to have different interpretations and applications and what the status of 'veteran' actually means has implications for policy. According to Freeth (2005):

*A strong principle of Service life is to care for its own people. It is a lifelong commitment. The large number of regimental associations personifies this. (Freeth, 2005, p.5).*

Generally, however, in Great Britain, the needs of veterans are met through the organisations and agencies which also provide for the needs of the general population such as the National Health Service (NHS) with no special, different or exclusive provision for veterans. Fox (2006) observed that:

*"One thing which is generally agreed upon is that the state has a reciprocal duty to those it obliges to fight in war at the risk of losing their lives." (Fox, 2006).*

Fox (2006) acknowledges that the British definition of 'veteran' effectively 'spreads the [financial] jam too thinly'. He also acknowledges and praises the provision of voluntary care by such organizations as the RBL but argues that whilst the

establishment of a Veterans Agency can be taken as a welcome sign of the issue being taken seriously, it will not be worth the headed notepaper if it cannot bring about the improvements required. Fox (2006) adds that:

*“...Of course, it would be foolish to pretend that Government can do it all... It needs to co-ordinate government departments, bang heads together if need be. It cannot just be considered enough in itself... There are so many talents which could be unleashed for the public good if only we could remove the dead hand of government...” (Fox, 2006).*

British veterans do however benefit from some marginal schemes which allow veterans to receive discounts on a range of goods and services, such as travel costs and the cost of spectacles. However these discounts are linked to membership of organisations for which a membership fee is payable. One such organisation is the RBL to which large numbers of veterans belong; another is The British Veterans' Recognition Card (BVRC). The BVRC provides veterans with an 'Identity Card' very similar in appearance to a military ID card, and bearing the individual's photograph and personal details. This small provision is aimed exclusively at those who have actually served in the armed force and can, if they so desire, class themselves as veterans. The number of veterans within the general population is unclear and the RBL, a voluntary ex services care and membership organisation (praised by Fox 2006), prefer the term 'ex service community.' According to the RBL (2005, p.17) the estimated size in 2005 of the British ex-service community was just over 10.5 million people, that is 17% of the total British population. The RBL estimate approximates to the Veteran's Agency (2006) all inclusive estimate of 10 million 'veterans'. The RBL like the Veterans Agency include in their 'ex service community' definition, veterans, dependent adults over 16 years of age and dependent children under 16 years of age. Within their definition the RBL estimate that 'veterans' (those who have actually served), account for just under half (47%) of the total ex-service community, a total of 4.8

million individuals in 2005 (RBL, 2005). Dandeker et al (2003) and Fox (2006) question the inclusive definition of veteran which includes veterans their dependants and their children. However the focus of the work of the Veterans Agency and the charitable care work of the RBL is focused on those who are in need of help. It is likely that those who are successful in civilian life after discharge do not require their services. After discharge from the army and on returning to civilian life a long served soldier is entitled to funds, training and even time off to look for civilian employment, this is known as resettlement. Resettlement is an important aspect of any study of the transition from military to civilian life since it is concerned with many aspects of the retiring soldier's well being including employment, housing and perhaps schooling for children. Clearly leaving the armed forces is a major life course event and an individual's health could also be affected during and after transition. The next section considers the literature on social and health issues related to military to civilian transition.

### **Resettlement - Social and Health Issues**

Loh's (1994) research with Malaysian army veterans identified a range of social problems including homelessness, unemployment, alcoholism and psychiatric illness. USA studies, which dominate the literature, cover similar topics as well as criminal behaviour and the military family. Britain's homeless population is said to contain a large percentage of ex service people (Dandeker et al 2003; Crane 1997 and Higate 2001). If this were true then it would support the theory that only some veterans make a successful transition to civilian life. Psychiatric disorder in service and ex service people is well documented including symptoms of delayed combat disorders (Grinker et al 1945; Fetterman 1951; Grayson et al 1998 and Orner et al 1993). The impact of combat experience was also examined by Elder

and Clipp (1989) who take a different position and found that, although there were bad memories there were also life benefits associated with military service. Lee et al (1995) and O'Donnell (2000) point out that exposure to combat trauma, whilst distressing does not necessarily produce disability and this begs the relevant question: "To what extent does combat experience influence civilian job choice, or success?" Nock et al (2001); Wilson et al (1983); Beckham et al (1998) and Dandeker et al (2003), report a link between military service and civilian crime. Common also to this literature are incidences and clinical explanations of drug abuse, combat related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and of soldiers being demoted whilst serving; all problems which are probably associated with unsuccessful veterans. McClure(1992) however, was of the opinion that [in the USA], because clinical explanations of veteran's problems used mental illness models which were based on the minority who sought help, that this gave rise to the assumption that military retirement was not problematic to those who did not exhibit symptoms, seek help or complain of difficulties. McClure further argued that such an assumption could well obscure possible social origins and solutions.

Figure: 5



"...gender in the workplace..." (Source: <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/w-r-a-c/>)

A social issue which has permeated human resource debates for many years is that of gender in the work place. Soldiers in the British Army have been



accustomed to females being fully integrated into the armed forces since 1992. Prior to 1992 female members of the British armed forces were organised into women only corps such as the Woman's Royal Army Corps (WRAC). The WRAC was disbanded in 1992 and female soldiers were integrated into the different regiments and corps of the army relevant to their training (Land Forces 2006-2). Despite this, issues related to aspects of gender in the civilian workplace may present concerns for veterans (see for example Dandeker and Segal 1996; Barkawi et al 1999 and Crompton and Sanderson, 1990).. There is acknowledged to be a gap between military and civilian societies (Feaver and Kohn 2001; Strachan 2003 and TISS 2005) but soldiers retire and become civilians and many find difficulty in bridging this gap. A possible 'bridge' is the family of the married soldier. The military family whilst similar in many ways to its civilian counterpart has its own set of problems (Rosenheck and Fontana et al 1994; Jensen et al 1991; Segal and Harris et al 1993; Lagrone, 1978 and Morrison, 1981). Others, including Ickovics and Martin (1987) and Pavalko and Elder (1990) identify the impact of military society on army wives and it is highly likely that an 'army wife' who has supported her soldier husband may also play a significant role in determining amongst other issues his civilian job choice. Bell (1997) maintains that a range of emotions experienced *more often* by military families, may prove useful to both the veteran and his family in transition. An emotion, which will probably be experienced by a veteran, is that of leaving a well-loved job. Losing a job can be a painful experience and the next section reviews the possible implications of the loss of their army job to veterans.

## **Job Loss Issues**

Literature concerning 'involuntary job loss' and the notion of 'job loss grief' is relevant here. A veteran's discharge is not involuntary – a soldier enlists and his or her date of discharge is known well in advance. Factors relating to involuntary job loss may affect the well-being of veterans and their families (Bejian and Salomone, 1995; Leana and Feldman 1994; Turner et al 1991; Vinokur et al, 1996). Job loss can result in loss of identity, social contacts, and self-worth (Amundson and Borgen 1992; Beehr, 1995). For a veteran the loss of a well-loved job will probably bring some regrets and life assumptions may be reevaluated (Balk 1999; Neimeyer 1998). The veteran will also need to adjust to new roles. (Gysbers et al 1998) Several researchers have identified factors which may be related to the different ways people react when suffering involuntary job loss and these would appear relevant to the emotional state of a veteran in transition (see for example: Archer and Rhodes, 1993; Besl and Kale, 1996; Holland 1985; Leana and Feldman, 1994; Eby and Buch, 1995; Caplan et al 1989; Turner et al 1991; Gottfredson and Holland, 1990 and Wooten, et al 1994).

## **Career Transition**

Ebberwein et al (2004) say that adult career changes have become increasingly common since the 1970's and as Super (1975) has shown careers do not generally proceed sequentially along a single common continuum. This is only partly true for those who serve for an extended period in the armed forces since the military is structured in such a way that personnel are carefully selected for specific jobs and tasks and their total career from enlistment to discharge does usually proceed sequentially along a single, common continuum – within the navy, the army or the air force. Thus a substantial period of a veteran's working life is

spent in the armed forces, in a structured learning and development environment. The end of military service and the period of transition leading up to discharge from the armed forces removes the soldier from this structured learning and development environment and places him or her into the somewhat alien and different society of civilian life. The ex soldier, now a veteran, is now required to seek out employment and to change from being a soldier to some different employment as a civilian. It is at this point that the ex service person is probably at most risk and the search for a new job in civilian life becomes a high priority. Changing jobs generally can be a difficult and stressful activity especially if is associated with redundancy. However the ex service person is leaving not just a job but also a different way of life. According to Jolly (1996), people leaving the armed forces do look for work, *any work* and take up the first job that comes along with no clear or organised method or reasoning for their choice of civilian employment (Jolly 1996). Watts (1973) however, goes further in arguing that some job changing which appears haphazard is quite purposeful when the individual's motivation is understood. For some adults, however, regardless of whether or not they are ex service people, the transition from one job to another can result in a job less desirable than their previous one (Wanberg, 1995).

Some professional civilian organisations do recognise that whilst military personnel undergo extensive training and education, this is geared to the needs of the service and to the promotion of the individual. The Institute of Leadership Management (ILM) for example, has recognised the benefits of military education and training and has developed a policy which assists both serving and ex service personnel to gain recognised civilian qualifications and awards. The ILM do this by mapping military courses to their own, ILM Vocationally Related Qualifications

(VRQs) in order to demonstrate equivalence (ILM 2004). Whilst this is an example of one attempt to assist service leavers it does appear to be the case that the resettlement help and advice offered to service leavers is not always good. Jolly (1996) among others, explores the theme of poor resettlement advice, she reflects on the dynamic nature of the soldier's life, of the need to achieve objectives quickly and efficiently with little time for contemplation or reflection and contrasts this with the alienation felt by ex servicemen who often take up, she says, the first job that comes along. An exchange of views in correspondence to Modern Management Magazine on the relative merits of the armed forces resettlement service reflects generally a lack of confidence on the part of its users:

*"...My experience of the resettlement services are that they are geared towards the soldier with few qualifications...the majority of the interviews and lectures I attended suggested that ex military personnel are ideally suited to the security industry...In summary, the resettlement services did little for me and I sorted myself out. (Berry, 2002, p.33).*

*"The Resettlement Officer was not really concerned with anything except to look at my CV, his comment was that it was very good and should stand me in good stead. In fact it was rubbish... Only by pure luck was I able to get a job that suited my skills...None of this however was achieved through the offices of the Resettlement Service of the army which I feel was operated by gifted amateurs." (Belza, 2002, p.33).*

There are however words of reassurance from a provider of the service that things have improved.

*"I would like to assure your readers that the resettlement system has changed significantly since... In 1998 the Career Transition Partnership (CTP) was set up... We aim to encourage, advise and enable Service leavers to take responsibility for the whole of their second career, not just their civilian job..." (Cairns, 2002, p.31).*

This improvement is endorsed by a user:

*"...The whole resettlement service has undergone a radical change for the better..." (Ritchie, 2002, p.31).*

The Career Transition Partnership (CTP) referred to by Cairns (2002) was established in 1998; it is a contracted partnership arrangement between the

Ministry of Defence and Right Management a global career development and outplacement specialist. Service people preparing to leave the armed forces and those who have already left can register on the CTP web site <http://www.ctp.org.uk/ctp/index.html> and view job vacancies which are placed on the site by potential employers. The Regular Forces Employment Association (RFEA) works as a sub contractor to Right Management using its network of branch offices to make and maintain contact with those leaving the armed forces and seeking employment. However the point of initial contact for those still serving is with an appointed 'resettlement officer' within their military unit. (The Career Transition Partnership. 2006).

Comments however, gleaned from service related internet discussion forums reflect, for some, a continued dissatisfaction with what is provided;

*"...Mind you. the army's "pre release career planning" service was an absolute joke and more to do with attempting to ensure that soldiers were guided towards jobs in keeping with their perceived "social status" rather than their abilities, skills and qualifications. It was hopelessly out of touch with reality..." (Anon, Ex soldier, 2005).*

The intimation that the resettlement service has a 'class' bias is further reinforced in a remark by another ex soldier:

*"...The system is still flawed with institutional preconceptions of rank level achieved opposed to academia/ability." (Ex soldier, [name withheld] 2002).*

During the period of resettlement the ex service person, as well as having to deal with the stresses of leaving the armed forces has, whilst seeking civilian employment to also deal with the possible stresses that can be part of searching for a job.

## Finding a job

Employment problems have been shown to have a negative effect on health, life satisfaction, family life and financial resources (Menaghan and Merves, 1984; Williams and Johansen, 1985). Relatively little research addresses the psychological resources necessary for adult career transitions (Heppner, 1998) although Super's life-span, life-space theory (Super et al 1996) does address the need for greater understanding of adult career transition. Super's theory which emphasized career maturity contributed a great deal to studies on school to work transitions (Blustein et al 1997) but this emphasis has become less applicable and the question is now to do with the skills adults (including veterans) need for a successful career transition? Super and Knasel (1981) addressed this with the notion of career adaptability and Phillips (1997) suggested that career theorists should listen carefully to individuals who have engaged in adaptive decision-making. O'Connor and Wolfe (1987) proposed that transition and change are natural and inevitable and that growth depends on one's response to changes in the 'self' and on one's ability to adapt to crisis. As previously mentioned soldiers are formerly trained to act and react well in a military crisis, they expect things to be done 'correctly' and develop a keen and positive work ethic. However the difference in expectations on the part of the veteran and potential civilian employers bring into sharp focus the 'understanding gap' between military and civilian societies (Feaver et al 2001; Strachan, 2003 and TISS 2005). Jolly (1996), however, goes further and suggests that:

*"Military service is a unique occupation. It is more than a job, not only a profession; it is a way of life." (Jolly, 1996, p.2).*

It has already been established from the literature that most ex service people do well in civilian (Iverson et al 2005) but Jolly asks the question:

“...why is it that some people seem eminently successful in making the transition to civilian life while others remain for ever ‘square pegs’, uncomfortable as civilians, always ‘ex servicemen’?” (Jolly, 1996, p.2).

Here Jolly introduces and uses the term ‘ex servicemen’ in an almost pejorative way, indicating that part of the adjustment or transition to civilian life is dependent upon breaking all ties with a past military career and that not to do so entraps an individual in his or her past with the rest of their lives serving as an anti climax. Goodwin and O’Connor (2005) however expresses the view that everyone is a victim of their own past so that an ex miner is always an ex miner and carries with that title all that he learned and did and experienced in that special employment. As importantly perhaps is that the ex miner, for example, is seen by others as such and whatever he (or she) does or says is viewed in the knowledge held by the observer that this person acts and speaks in such a way or has certain attitudes because they have been a miner. Similarly an ex soldier, especially one who has served for 22 or more years will almost certainly have been influenced and affected in many ways during their military life. The experience of transition which includes a relatively brief period of ‘resettlement’ does not and is not intended to, ‘wash away’ the learned and remembered culture of the military. The period of transition is however an important life course change for the individual and the next section examines and discusses some of the life course theories relevant to this research.

### **Life course Theory Issues**

This study examines how veterans understood the *experience* of transition and is set within consideration of the relevant theoretical concepts of life course development. Discharge from an army career marks the end of a long period of continuous employment. As a soldier’s career comes to an end an individual ritual

takes place involving the physical relinquishing of the trappings of a soldier, the handing back of uniform, equipment and identity card, arrangements to move out of military accommodation and paperwork concerned with pay and pension. This is part of the beginning of the end of a soldier's career which, whilst it does not happen suddenly or unexpectedly is nonetheless an important and life changing event. A soldier approaching the end of his or her career is after all losing a job because the end of a contracted period of service has been reached but also because he or she is too old to continue serving. The ending of a well loved job in this way is in some ways like a redundancy in civilian employment. However, unlike a redundancy, which is *not*, a planned life course event a veteran's transition *is* a planned step in their life course. Pilcher (1995) sets out the stages of a life course and emphasises the importance of its different stages coinciding with physiological development stages and adjustment and this is important to considerations of a veteran's retirement from military service. As Bellino (1970) argued, retirement is not only a status, it is also a process for the individual such that:

*"...The transition from one period of life to another, leading to new interpersonal and social adjustment" (Bellino, 1970, p.580).*

A soldier completing a normal regular army engagement of 22 years will probably have enlisted at the age of 18 and will therefore be 40 years of age on discharge. In civilian terms 40 is perhaps viewed as the beginning of middle age (Guest and Williams, 1973). Erikson (1963) paired adulthood with parenting and maturity with the tradition of old age. A soldier at 40 is surely mature and this supports the theory but with 25 or more years of working life possible after discharge, he or she could hardly be described as in 'old age'. The termination of a career at 40, effectively an enforced retirement, is at odds with the societal norms. A soldier by definition is a fighter and to fight he or she has to be physically and mentally fit.



Indeed the active soldier (on full pay and in an active regular army unit) is expected to be fit and challenging physical tests are set which must be successfully completed by soldiers of all ranks every 6 months. Failure to pass these tests can result in demotion or loss of pay. How a soldier has performed across the whole spectrum of his or her military employment is assessed in detail annually and an annual confidential report (ACR) is used at an interview to set out each soldier's career prospects. However, the ACR is more than just a document and an interview, it is a vital part of a soldier's career progression since selection to senior rank is dependant upon what is written in these reports, which are read by a board of officers who may have never met or served with the person in question. Thus a soldier's career, after enlistment and the recruit training phase can be viewed as a sequential progression along a structured career path.

It is further argued that a soldier's career is both known and predictable whilst the career of most civilian workers is to a large extent less predictable. A soldier who performs to the norms of the community of practice of the military can be comfortable within that community but faces new and different challenges when the trappings of the soldier are removed and he or she moves into a different community of practice with different rules and different values unfamiliar to the long service soldier. Whilst the move from the military to a civilian society at the age of 40 conflicts marginally in years with Guest and Williams (1973) hypothetical pattern of age/career development it remains a life stage event experienced by all those who serve in the armed forces for a long period, a period in which from age 18 or even 15 they obviously grow up and grow old. Rapaport and Rapaport (1980) argue that in growing up and growing old individuals progress through a life cycle made up of a series of stages. Each stage of the life cycle being

characterised, they say, by typical inner pre-occupations rooted in biology and by outer challenges from the individual's environment. Psychological development takes place according to Rapaport and Rapaport (1980) when individuals find opportunities in the outside world that will channel and satisfy their inner pre-occupations. Opportunities enable individuals to adapt and develop as they make transitions from one life stage to the next and handle the specific tasks and challenges of each life crisis as it presents itself. Individuals have interests in different things and take up different activities according to the underlying personal pre-occupations of each life stage. Thus individuals channel their interests at work, in family life or in cultural ideas, which they share with other people. In this way the expressing of interests links people to other people; they associate through shared common interests (Rapaport and Rapaport, 1980).

Soldiers then grow up and grow old for a considerable part of their lives within a military society, a society which imposes its own values and norms within its own created external military environment to create soldiers who can perform their roles at any time. The internal pre-occupation of the soldier will be to perform his or her role willingly and effectively in order not to let down him or her self as an individual and as importantly the larger grouping of his or her comrades. Self is subordinated to the benefit of the task in hand, soldiers become familiar with the concept that the army always comes first; to think otherwise would be counter to the ethos of the military. However human growth is not, according to Rapaport and Rapaport (1980), something that can be done for you. Each individual must, to succeed, create conditions within which they can facilitate their own growth. To do this humans learn from an early age, often through play, who they are and what they can do. Children also learn in playing with other children that he or she is not

only an individual but also part of society (Rapaport and Rapaport 1980). Humans of course continue to learn throughout their lives via the situated learning offered by communities of practice. Lowe (1972) has a different perspective and holds that every human being experiences many critical and intense life situations. Lowe sets out life course in bands of years but Pilcher (1995) argues that definitions of life stages are best understood when linked not within chronological age but with socio-cultural life events such that adulthood is set within employment. Lowe (1972) did however link 'intense life situations' to periods of life and used the term 'adulthood' to embrace the life period of 30 – 65 years and says that:

*"...we are regarding adulthood as the period which begins in the early thirties and ends roughly with retirement." (Lowe, 1972, p.223).*

Veterans will have enjoyed an uninterrupted period of social interactivity during which they will have developed as adults within a socio-cultural military environment and developed a close bond of trust, respect and confidence with other soldiers. Such socio-cultural links as part of life development are associated with the need for individuals to be socially interactive. Marx (1857) held that the bond that individuals have one with another belongs to a specific phase of their development. The next section now discusses and compares the 'traditional' and military career paths in the context of military to civilian transition.

### **Civilian versus Military career development**

Cabral et al (1985) highlight the importance of development of the individual in employment through a sequence of work related positions arguing that a career change is *not part* of a traditional progression. Guest and Williams (1973) devised a hypothetical pattern of career progression. Whilst no two careers are identical and the pattern, presented at a Table: 1 now appears a little dated, the Guest and Williams (1973) hypothetical pattern does appear to represent, certainly for men

what could be described as a 'traditional career path'. It should be noted that this career development pattern is applicable only to civilian life. This hypothetical pattern (see Table: 1), integrates a person's age with what is probably happening at 'key' career points in that person's working life and this is considered a useful instrument against which research comparisons can be made. The original Table: has been modified by adding a column which identifies each approximate age or age band with a letter.

**Table: 1. Hypothetical Pattern of Age/Career Development**

Age Zone	Approximate Age	Probable Work Event
A	23	Completed education and training, committed to occupation and employer.
B	26	First promotion, geographical moves. Querying employer and beginning to specialise.
C	27 – 30	Still specialising, being promoted, long hours, weekend work and possibly travel. Need for higher income may influence choice of job
D	31 - 35	Career change from a specialist to general but within same occupation. May be querying choice of occupation. May have to move to progress career.
E	36 - 42	Beginning to appreciate limits of potential. May lead to questioning of self image or to urgent job changing as impending decreases in personal marketability become apparent.
F	43 - 52	Reached peak of career. Many, except those who are highly successful, consider but may not make a career change. More concerned with security and the future, provision for retirement.

(Source: Adapted from: Guest and Williams, 1973).

The period of a soldier's career plotted to show time served and rank achieved (Figure: 6) illustrates a typical progression up a ladder of promotion and the award of pay increases, leaving the soldier, who achieves Warrant Officer One rank, at the top of a curve. Guest and Williams' (1973) hypothetical pattern of career progression starts when an individual is aged 23 (Age Zone A) and has according to Guest and Williams completed his or her education and training and is committed to both an occupation and an employer. The average soldier who enlisted at 18 years of age will, by 23 have already served for 5 years and would probably have been promoted as a junior non commissioned officer and be committed to military service.

Figure 6 : A Soldier's Typical Career Trajectory

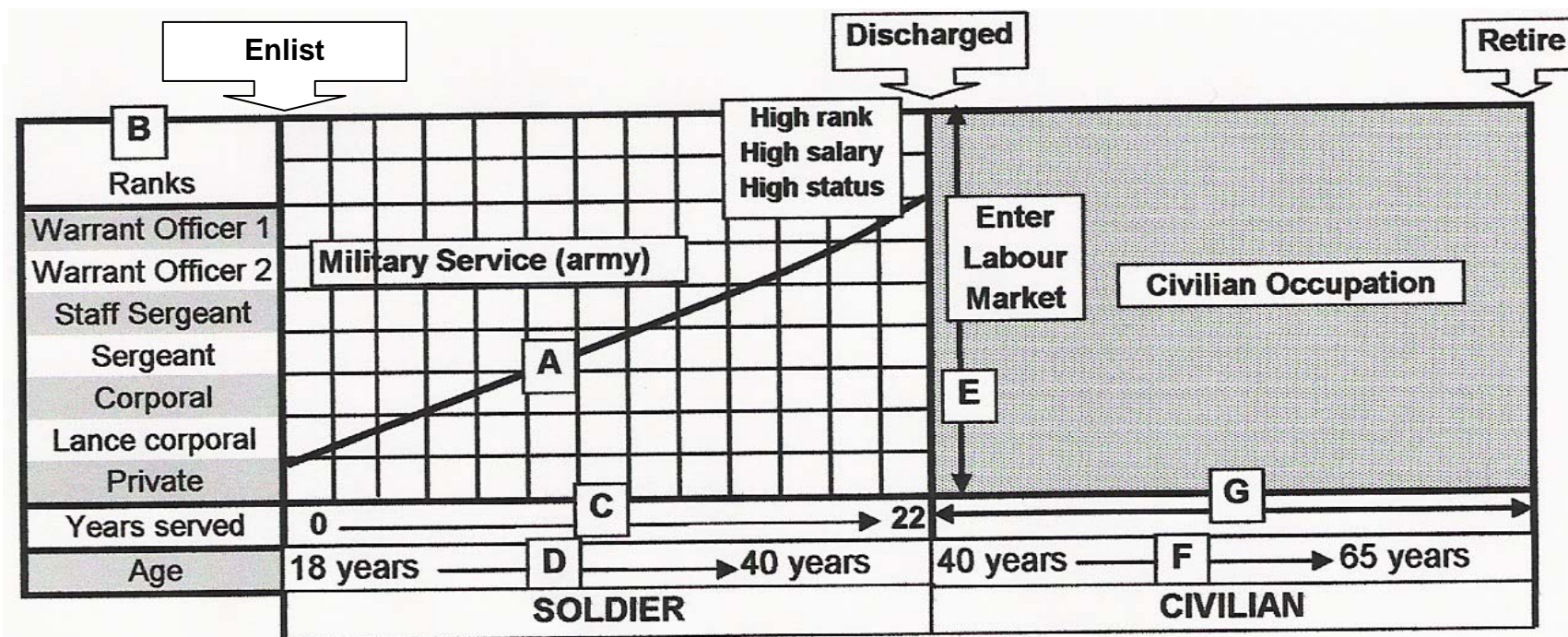


Figure 1

Source: author

- Notes:
- A. Soldier's rank and salary progression
  - B. Army ranks
  - C. Years of army service
  - D. Age
  - E. The area of initial transition
  - F. Potential period of at least 25 years working life
  - G. The period of post military life, a period of success or failure

In Figure: 6 the line 'A' plots a steady career development curve for a soldier with commensurate pay increases and the acceptance of both more authority and more responsibility. Column 'B' in Figure 6 shows the seven possible ranks from private to Warrant Officer Class One to which a soldier can be promoted. Whilst most soldiers will aspire to the highest rank of Warrant Officer Class One, like any hierarchical pyramid structure only a few places are available at the top of the rank scale, however most soldiers would hope to achieve at least the rank of Staff Sergeant within 22 years of army service. Row 'D' indicates an age band from 18 years to 40 years of age, these are the usual ages that individuals join and leave the army. The area marked 'E' is where the soldier enters civilian society and begins the transition to civilian life and work. If the individual had not become a soldier but had remained a civilian he or she would, according to Guest and Williams (1973) (see Table:1) be at the top end of Age Zone E or in the early part of Age Zone F. Beginning, then, according to Guest and William (1973), to appreciate the limits of their potential and among other things begin to question their self image. In Table:1 Zone F the individual is said to have reached the peak of their career and to have become more concerned with security and the future and with provision for retirement. This is to some extent true for most veterans. At the end of their 22 years service many soldiers will have reached a successful career peak but the concerns with security and the future are linked to immediate retirement from the army and certainly with seeking a new source of income. Winding down to retirement (Guest and Williams' Age Zone G) is not an option for most veterans. A soldier may have planned ahead and purchased a home with a mortgage before discharge and this will need to be paid for. For some veterans a military pension may influence their salary aspirations. A Warrant Officer (as an example) will, on discharge, receive a monthly pension based on his or her rank

and period of service. The soldier can elect to take part of this pension as a lump sum. In any event this pension then remains fixed at the level determined at the date of discharge until the veteran reaches the age of 55 when all the army's pay rises over the intervening period are taken into account and the pension is increased accordingly (Army, 2006). An army pension after 22 years is not sufficient for an individual to live on but it can be an important part of a household budget for some. There can therefore be a financial shortfall for some and perhaps a period of 15 years from the age of 40 until the age of 55 when they begin to receive their full army pension entitlement. This provides an incentive and great motivation to those who leave the army at the age of 40 with possibly, for male veterans, the psychological motivation of status of 'breadwinner' for the family. A change in mid life, not just of job but also of life style and transition to civilian society is a life course stage for veterans which may not fit neatly into the theoretical models. The position of the veteran theoretically is one of interrupting the continuity of employment at a point when probably a high peak has been reached in terms of rank and status and is then, in mid life, diverted along a different trajectory and to a different occupation, which is not part of a traditional progression. The theories underpinning career development however provide a framework against which the strategies adopted by successful veterans can be contrasted and this is the topic of the next section.

### **Career development theories**

Career development theories help make sense of and explain veteran's experiences and will assist in providing direction in the study of individuals. A relevant topic is Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory. Bandura encourages self-reflection because, he says, it facilitates the evaluation of an individual's choices and influences the individual's thinking, behaviour and actions significantly.

Without this efficacy belief there is little incentive to act. The military goes to great lengths to match individuals to jobs on enlistment which follows Parsons (1909) structural/trait and factor theories that a choice of a vocation depended upon the assumptions that individuals and job traits can be matched, and that close matches are positively correlated with job success and satisfaction (Davis, 1969). John Holland's personality and environments theory on the other hand is based on the assumption that different 'types' of people are attracted to certain types of employment compatible with their personalities and in which they can develop and function best and achieve job satisfaction (Holland, 1992). According to Zunker (1994), Holland's theory places emphasis on the accuracy of self-knowledge and career information necessary for career decision-making. This is counter to Jolly's (1996) assertion that ex service people invariably seek out and take the first job that comes along. Conversely Socio economic theory, in which culture, family background, social and economic conditions and factors outside an individual's control are said to strongly influence that individual's identity, values and overall human and career development, does however support Jolly's (1996) assertion. This socio economic approach to understanding career development suggests that many people follow the path of least resistance and do take the first job that comes their way (Holland 1992). Donald Super (1957) recognized the changes that people go through as they mature and that career patterns are determined by socio economic factors, mental and physical abilities, personal characteristics and life opportunities. People seek career satisfaction through work and develop their self-concepts. Career maturity (a main concept in Super's theory) is manifested in the successful accomplishment of age and stage developmental tasks across the life course. According to Zunker (1994) knowledge of 'self' is a key factor in Super's model. For the newly retired soldier, finding a new 'civilian self' may well



be as important to success as finding somewhere to live. Krumboltz (1993) developed a theory of career decision-making and development based on people's social learning, or environmental conditions and events, genetic influences and learning experiences. People choose their careers, he says, based on what they have learned; certain behaviours are modelled, rewarded and reinforced. Krumboltz's (1993) theory links neatly with the notion of individuals being members of one or more communities of practice. In order to develop successfully with a civilian community of practice veterans may well have to both 'unlearn' some of their military ways and transfer and adapt some of their learned experiences, knowledge and skills to civilian practice; to do this they will have to make conscious decisions. Such decisions as changing job or adopting different working practices are important life events which can influence future career development. Similarly, Gelatt (1991), for example, says that we make our decisions based upon what is actual and what is actual is never static. Essentially how veterans successfully move from military to civilian society is probably built around how individuals process, integrate and react to information determined by their cognitive structures; these influence how individuals see themselves, see others and the environment. Cognitive theories suggest ways to help individuals build or refine a hierarchy of thinking and decision-making skills that influence career development (Savickas & Lent 1994). Since trained soldiers do think differently to civilians; completing a mission for example at whatever the cost, is not necessarily the work attitude a civilian might hold (Jolly, 1996, p.4).

There is a thread of 'perception of self' running through most of these career development theories. A veteran who has achieved high rank and status in the army will certainly need to re-evaluate his or her 'self' in order to re-adjust to

civilian society. Finally, the limited amount of literature concerned with military transition from the USA does include studies of retiring commissioned officers (see for example McNeil, 1964). However, since fundamentally both officers and 'other ranks' are all 'soldiers' when serving and certainly they all become 'veterans' after discharge McNeil's (1964) study is worthy of consideration. The word 'success' is an important part of the title of this research and some words on 'success' can be usefully quoted and used here. McNeil (1964) says that for a transition of a retired military officer to be considered 'successful' he is expected to give up his military attitudes, have secured employment and adapted to industrial procedures and norms. Conversely he is considered maladjusted if he remains unemployed, fails to maintain the same standard of living, insists on being addressed by his military rank and is unlikely to be happy if he performs in a manner totally different from that which society haphazardly expects (McNeil, 1964, pp. 182-183). Success with respect to this research has been defined by the author as applying to ex soldiers who have completed 22 or more years army service and who have self reportedly, found civilian employment, suitable housing, places in school for children, as appropriate, and have not suffered, (again self reportedly) subsequent to their discharge from the army, mentally or physically in ways which could be retrospectively attributed to their military service.

## **Conclusion**

This review has established that the military exists within society as a separate community, performing its duties largely unseen by the civilian population. The experiences of veterans seeking employment and coping with the transition to civilian life will probably identify with many of the theoretical findings in this review but there appears to be no specific research on those who have made a *successful* transition to civilian life after discharge from the army following a full

career of 22 years. Iversen et al (2005) states that little is known about the factors associated with leaving the armed forces and that the majority of service leavers do well; why they do well is not explained. Ruth Jolly (1996) attempts an explanation in her book 'Changing Step' which looked at the experiences of men and women who chose to serve in the armed forces but have now left after completing varying lengths of service and for a variety of reasons. Jolly's (1996) study attempts to explain military to civilian transition but in doing so covers a huge spectrum including all three services and examines the careers of both commissioned and non commissioned service people. Jolly (1996) also suggests that disengagement by veterans from the military is essential a notion which conflicts with, for example Goodwin and O'Connor (2005) who maintain that a person's past remains with them and is part of who they are. The status of veterans in Great Britain has a clear official definition but government policies and the approach of such organisations as the RBL tend to focus on the problems of ex service people and collection of data by the MOD on veteran's employment lasts for only 12 months and this contrasts greatly with the status of veterans in the USA. Jolly's (1996) study appears to view military to civilian transition as a process beset with problems rather than with success. MOD commissioned research conducted by Dandeker et al (2003) and drawn on extensively in this chapter is also mainly concerned with armed forces veterans who need help. For veterans in mid life, a change of job and life style can be considered a major life course event and a need is clearly demonstrated for research to answer the problem of why some veterans are successful. This research contributes to the gap in knowledge about military to civilian transition. The next chapter sets out and discusses the methodology adopted for this research and describes the theoretical and philosophical positions by which it was informed.

## **CHAPTER 3**

# **METHODOLOGY: RESEARCHING THE TRANSITION FROM MILITARY TO CIVILIAN LIFE AND WORK**

### **Introduction**

This chapter sets out the theoretical position of the research and explains the procedures used to identify and select participants, devise data collection instruments, the collection coding and analysis of the collected data and an explanation of the ethical practices adopted. This qualitative study employing an interpretivist approach focused on the experience of army veterans moving into a civilian society at the end of their military careers. The themes emerging from the literature review are principally concerned with the largely problematical transitional experiences of those who had completed varying periods of military service, (see for example Dandeker et al 2003; Elder and Clipp, 1989; Jolly, 1996 and Loh, 1994). It was decided to restrict the study to veterans who had completed at least 22 years army service, had achieved a successful transition and adjustment to civilian life and work, The target population was limited in this way for the following reasons:

- a. The author is an ex soldier and familiar with this branch of the armed forces.
- b. The bulk of the literature suggests problematic transitions among those who serve for relatively short periods.
- c. The problem is interesting: 22 years is a normal regular army engagement, in other words a soldier leaves the army having completed his or her career but is, on average aged 40, an unusual age to make a major change
- d. The army is the largest of the three services and therefore contributes more job seekers into the labour market

In addition the group of veterans is not a randomly selected sample because the veterans self selected themselves based on the stated criteria and their motivation to participate suggested a willingness to pass on their own experiences from which

other could possible benefit. The aim of the study was to determine what factors, if any, enabled these veterans to achieve this transition successfully. Participants were identified, selected and communicated with using the internet. Three different collection methods were devised to gain answers to a number of topics arising from the literature review. 51 participants told their stories and these were documented using one of three data collection methods devised.

### **Theoretical Position and approach to the methodology**

From an ontological perspective, the social reality of people as social actors has implications for this research. The notion of 'being a veteran' is a construct located in the subconscious and feeds on experiences, memories, beliefs, views and identities. The notion of being a veteran or 'an ex soldier' in a 'civilian society' may be located within similar views of social realities in the way that the individual views him or her self as 'different' – that is through having had experiences for example that others have not had. This research is concerned with social processes and social relations and with exploring the experiences of those who have (as expressed in their own view and opinions) moved successfully without major trauma or other debilitating problems, from a military life to life as a civilian. It is concerned with the veteran's own view of themselves, of how they think of their experiences of this transition when they reflect back on how their military service may have affected, helped, hindered or influenced them. From an epistemological position and central to an understanding of the nature of evidence and knowledge for this research is the type of argument or explanation that can be built from the data collected. This research attempted to understand experience in terms of participants' personal understanding through the telling of their 'stories' which were drawn from two different social contexts, military and civilian. This task required a methodology designed for the study of human experience. Whereas

physical phenomena may be observed in a controlled environment, defined and measured through quantitative methods, and explained causally or probabilistically, psychological phenomena are more difficult to control, define, measure, and explain in this way. Human beings are not physical objects their human behaviour is constrained by social and cultural norms and biology but it is not determined by them. Therefore, alternative methods and epistemologies are needed to grasp the essence of human experience; it must be appreciated from the point of view of the person undergoing the experience (Karp, 1996) and from the socio-cultural traditions within which it is embedded (Martin and Sugarman, 1999). Studies, such as Musgrove et al (1977) and Armstrong (1981) have tried to link life changing decision-making and role change to various psychological and social factors, such as personality, gender roles and employment status. However according to Karp (1996)

*“...underneath the rates, correlations, and presumed causes of behavior are real human beings who are trying to make sense of their lives” (Karp, 1996, p.11).*

It is argued therefore that the essence of human experience cannot be represented numerically and that areas other than numeric data and analyses, such as conversation and interviews, recalled memories related as spoken stories or as written text might better describe and explain it. A number of factors influenced the choice of an appropriate methodology including access to research participants, the author's time and considered need to derive data from what veterans remembered and thought of their military careers and subsequent lives as civilians. These considerations shaped the approach to this research as did Patton's (1990) view that:

*“a paradigm of choices rejects methodological orthodoxy in favour of methodological appropriateness... The issue then becomes... whether one has made sensible methods decisions given the*

:

*purpose of the inquiry, the questions being investigated and the resources available.” (Patton, 1990, p. 38-39).*

It is important to also mention here that whilst reference is made in this work to a group of veterans (the research population); this group is not *in situ* at a single location with the veterans socialising and conversing together but quite the reverse. The veterans are individually located and the author as researcher is not a participant observer within the research group but rather travelled to or communicated with each veteran separately in different and varied locations including their own homes, the author’s home and through the medium of the internet. Therefore for this investigation data in a qualitative form was preferred and in addition, as Denzin and Lincoln (1998) point out:

*...qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them... Qualitative research involves the studied use and a collection of a variety of empirical texts, personal experience...life story...interview...that describe problematic moments and meanings in individual’s lives. (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998, p.3).*

It is exactly the personal experiences, life stories, problematic moments and the meanings that veterans bring to them which are sought in this research.

Practicality was another reason for choosing a qualitative methodology. Whilst it is the case that quantitative methods are generally less time consuming and require less personal commitment (Kvale 1996) the author was personally able to devote a considerable amount of time to this work. The author also considered that a qualitative methodology employing an interpretivist approach would provide a deeper insight into the experiences, attitudes and beliefs of the research population. The aim within the interpretivist paradigm is to capture how veterans view, describe and understand the world.

Paradigm here takes the definition of Bogdam and Biklen (1998):

*“[paradigm]... a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or propositions that orient thinking and research.” (Bogdam and Biklin, 1998, p.22).*

As well as Cohen and Manion’s 1994 description:

*“... the philosophical intent or motivation for undertaking a study.” (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.38).*

Thus an interpretivist paradigm is one of many including positivism, however a positivist approach was rejected since it assumes that the social world can be studied in the same way as the natural world and that there is a method for studying the social world that is ‘value free’ (Mertens 2005). This approach imposes a particular view of the world on subjects using experimental quantitative methods to test and verify hypotheses. Whilst in any research there is the ever present risk of researcher bias, the author’s own background as a veteran proved valuable in this research since his own experiences replicated those of the participants and the credibility of veteran’s stories was easier to assess. This is important since whilst positivists seek rigour using statistical criteria and concepts of reliability and validity to evaluate quantitative findings; the assessment of interpretivist research is more concerned with issues such as credibility, dependability and confirmability (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). However as Smith (1989) argues there are:

*“... no facts without values and different values can actually lead to different facts.” (Smith, 1989, p.111).*

Greene, (1992) adds that interpretivism is value laden while it is simultaneously value relative or equally malleable by inquirers with quite different value stances. In this way say Denzin and Lincoln (1998), values brought by the enquirer and promoted by interpretivist inquiry practice are inherently varied and diverse. Further, since collected data was examined and produced as sets of narrative



texts by the researcher recording veteran's experiences in a given context, this was inevitably a hermeneutical process, because, according to Smith (1989) investigators, like everyone else, are part of the circle of interpretation. In other words the goal of interpretivist enquiry is not a matter of manipulation and control but rather one of openness and dialogue (Smith, 1989). The interpretivist approach adopted for this work also took account to some extent of the principles of hermeneutics which essentially provide an interpretation of how one is able to understand lived experiences that are contained in spoken language and in written text. This was seen as an important consideration by the author since the collected data came in both the form of speech, recorded on audio tape and later transcribed into text, in the form of biographies written solely for the purposes of the research by some of the veterans involved and by others through the medium of the internet resulting in a textual record. Hermeneutics is the study of the interpretation particularly of texts. The purpose of hermeneutical interpretation being to obtain valid and common understanding of the meaning of a text (Kvale 1996). The word derives from the Greek god, Hermes, whose task it was to communicate messages from the gods to the ordinary mortals. Etymologically hermeneutics comes from the Greek *hermeneuo* –'to interpret' and is particularly associated with scripture and literary texts. Steiner Kvale describes a hermeneutical approach in this way:

*From a hermeneutical understanding the interpretation of meaning is the central theme, with a specification of the kinds of meaning sought and the questions posed to a text. (Kvale, 1996, p.38).*

According to Gadamer hermeneutics bridges the gap between the taken for granted world and the strangeness of meaning that evades penetrating the realities of our known world. Rather than restoring or reproducing an original production, hermeneutics is a self penetration of the Spirit that carries out

hermeneutical tasks. (Gadamer, 1960) : In other words it describes how one can interpret to avoid misunderstanding and how one comes to an understanding of what is being revealed by a text. Steiner Kvale (1996) says that the research interview is a conversation about the human life world, with oral discourse transformed into texts to be interpreted. He adds that hermeneutics is then doubly relevant to interview research because in elucidating the dialogue producing the interview texts to be interpreted and then by clarifying the subsequent process of interpreting the interview texts produced, this may again be conceived as a dialogue or a conversation with the text. Put another way the understanding of a text takes place through a cyclical process in which the meaning of different parts of a text is determined by the anticipated meaning of the totality of the text, as closer interpretation takes place the meaning of the separate parts may change the original anticipation of the totality which in turn influences the meaning of the separate parts. The cycle ending only when a 'sensible' meaning has been reached which is free of any inner contradictions (Kvale1996). Kvale adds a caution concerning the difference between the literary texts of hermeneutics and interview texts. Interview texts he says involves both the generation and the interpretation of the finished text whereas hermeneutics was traditionally applied to the interpretation of already finished texts such as ancient religious manuscripts recovered by archaeologists. Interview texts may then, by their very nature require greater clarification and condensation to arrive at the meanings intended by the interviewee (Kvale, 1996), in other words how the interview text is interpreted. Van Manen said that:

*"...hermeneutics describes how one interprets the 'text of life.'" (van Manen, 1990, p.4).*

adding that research is:

:

*“... largely a matter of identifying what it is that deeply interests you or me and of identifying this interest ... as some experience that human beings live through. (van Manen, 1990, p.40).*

The deep interest held by the researcher was in seeking to explain why most veterans were successful in civilian life and not just assume that it was so and for no discernible reason and the starting point for this research was aimed at producing social explanation including the application of developmental argument (Mason, 2002). This approach determines what themes could be explored, what kinds of analytical and explanatory possibilities are achievable and conversely those that are not. The focus of the research was on gaining information only from those who had actually experienced the transition from the military and had effectively become civilians. Initial thoughts on who or what might be included as possible sources of enquiry and explanation of the transition process from the army to civilian life revealed a number of ‘related other people’, including: army staff responsible for the army discharge process; army and civilian staff involved in the provision of training for civilian life and in assisting in finding a civilian job; soldier’s wives and families and civilian employers of ex soldiers. None of these ‘related other people’ were included in the design of this research in order to ensure that a clear focus was maintained on those who had actually experienced this type of transition. It was also thought likely that it would be feasible and practical to find a meaningful research population of ex soldiers and that to have included ‘related other people’ in this research could have diluted the focus. In any event it would have been difficult for the author to have resourced a wider enquiry. The key issue was to gain information through the medium of stories told by ex soldiers of their lived and remembered experiences. Inevitably because of the existence and actions of ‘related other people’ in the transition process, their roles, from the perspective of the ex soldiers were, to some extent also ‘heard.’

For example how those with no actual military experience view ex military people was not explored directly but what veterans ‘think’ are the views held by such people can be known and can be ‘excavated.’ Thus for this research an evocative epistemology was sought. This interpretivist hermeneutic enquiry is necessarily retrospective, because people cannot reflect on their experience while living it. Participants create explicit understanding at the moment they recall their experience and relate it to the interviewer. Further understanding is created by the researcher as the related ‘story’ unfolds. Therefore the boundaries of the analysis are determined by the accounts of the participants and the interpretation of the researcher. The inquiry is inter-subjective, but is also systematic, explicit, and self-critical. The central theme then of the research design was the contention that some factors do exist that could contribute to the successful transition of army veterans to civilian life and work. These factors though are not obvious or self evident and were thought (by the researcher) to reside in the views, opinions and lived experiences related by the veterans from whom the data was obtained. As explained in the introduction to this chapter it was decided to limit the scope of this research among other things to ex British Army soldiers who had served 22 years and who had successfully (in their own terms) made the transition to civilian life and work. This was determined as the ‘*basic selection criteria*’ (BSC). The term ‘soldier’ is used in this research with respect to those who serve or have served in the army but have not been commissioned as officers. The reason for this additional limitation is that a commissioned officer’s full career is 35 years whilst a soldier’s is 22 years and retired commissioned officers enjoy a much higher pension than soldiers and many may find no need to work full time. The next section explains how the research population found

## **Finding The Veterans**

The target population for this research had to meet the BSC and it was considered highly likely by the author that a great many veterans would be active members of ex service organisations and that these would be a rich source to explore. There are a large number of organisations serving the needs of ex service people in Great Britain and most regiments or corps has a regimental or corps association. There are also associations formed by soldiers who served in particular specialist units and national organisations such as the RBL. Many of these organisations have internet web sites. The decision was taken to use these web sites to seek out and communicate with possible participants. The rationale for deciding to use the internet initially as the sole source for identifying suitable 'veterans' was based on the assumptions that:

- a. Successful veterans would probably have access to the internet.
- b. The sites searched for, found and used were designed generally for ex service people. Thus those who responded would have identified themselves within the description 'ex service.'
- c. It was a cheap and practical way to achieve the research aim.
- d. Responses would be received quickly.

The assumption proved to be largely correct. Most of the veterans had direct access to the internet either at their place of work, at home or both. Most of the veterans had no problems using e-mail communication, downloading documents or completing and returning a 'questionnaire'. The choice of the internet proved both cheap and practical with a major benefit being that records in the form of a Veteran's Data Base of all communications was easily accomplished. The search for suitable sites began on 1 September 2005. A 'notice' was drafted (see copy at Appendix 5) and posted on a number of web sites. Several versions were produced and words added (such as male or female). The notion of 'random' selection which was part of the original notice was deleted so as not to give the impression that the author did not care about those who would not be selected. A

shorter more informal 'notice' was produced for some of the later sites identified. The main web sites found and used to advertise the request for volunteers and from which the majority of the veterans were found, were:

<http://www.birgelenvets.org/>  
[www.arrse.co.uk/](http://www.arrse.co.uk/)  
<http://www.biscuitsbrown.com/>  
<http://www.britishveterans.org.uk/>  
<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/w-r-a-c/>  
<http://www.aaca.org.uk/chat/viewchat.php>

Some of these sites are active daily with comments and exchanges between members on chat forums and these sites were examined frequently, at least twice a week. The Women's Royal Army Corps (WRAC) internet site, <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/w-r-a-c/> site initially generated two volunteers for interview and also provided leads to other potential veteran's. Some sites operate a system whereby postings associated with the request for help with this research were notified direct to the researcher's office by e-mail, and this obviated the need for frequent trawling of the sites. The principle purpose of using the internet had been to make contact with those who would meet the BSC. In the event it became clear that 'The British Army Rumour Service'- web site address: <http://www.arrse.co.uk> and the equally memorably named 'Biscuits Brown' web site address: <http://www.biscuitsbrown.com> would be useful in providing additional commentary on some of the research issues since their users were both serving and ex serving members of the armed forces. The Army Rumour service site which has proved to be extremely informative describes itself as:

*Welcome to the British Army Rumour Service, ARRSE. The Army Rumour Service is THE unofficial British Army community website. Contrary to popular belief, the Army Rumour Service is not promoting the armed overthrow of HMG by the British Military, but simply aims to provide a useful, informative and amusing resource to all. (British Army Rumour Service, 2006).*

A small number of possible quotes as useable data were identified on the British Army Rumour Service internet website and the intention was to select appropriate quotes and use them in this work. However whilst many of the remarks on this site reinforced the words of the participant group of veterans, it was not found possible to easily identify or validate many of these subscribers and as a result these unvalidated data were not used. Despite this some veterans who did meet the BSC and who could be validated did emerge from exchanges with the author on the Army Rumour Service web site. In addition to direct communication via the internet with respect to identifying veterans, there was some 'word of mouth' promotion of the research by some which produced a small number of participants who made contact with the author by e mail. Five of the participants were drawn from members of the HM Queen's bodyguard, the Yeoman Warders of The Tower of London. All Yeoman Warders automatically met the BSC since one of the entry requirements to the post is that the applicant has served for 22 years in the armed forces. Two of the five had direct access to the internet and the remainder completed the questionnaires in handwriting. Subsequently face to face contact was made with one of the Yeoman Warders in this group during a private visit to The Tower and a useful and informative, interview took place. This proved very useful as the participant in question was enjoying his job and had clearly made a great success of it.

Use of the internet as a means of identifying participants for the research did not however bring immediate responses or offers of help indeed initial responses were totally unexpected. Serious questions were asked of the researcher's identity such as 'Who was the researcher?', 'Was this research being done for the MOD?' There was also an assumption, seemingly by some that the researcher was young, a civilian with no experience of the military and an academic with no idea of

real life. Concerns were also expressed by some respondents about their personal security and with all the problems with making contact with an unknown person on the internet. These issues were resolved by providing contact details whereby the bona fide of the author could be verified by the University of Leicester. Once the author's credibility had been established volunteers and information began to appear on the various web forums and via e mail to the author. A lot of responses and comments were also received from ex soldiers who had served for only a few years; felt that they had been 'institutionalised' and that they could make a contribution to the research. Some of those who had only served for a few years did however comment that whatever was found it wouldn't make any difference. The decision was taken to politely decline offers of help from anyone who did not strictly meet the BSC. The decision was also taken by the author after one relatively unsuccessful month of seeking potential participants, to reveal his military credentials and this led to respondents being more open and willing to assist. Sadly one veteran died during the early stages of this work, one potential participant withdrew when it transpired that he had served for just 12 years and another withdrew when his wife suffered a serious accident. A total of 51 veterans were eventually reached and their details added to the Veterans' Data Base. All of the 51 veterans were scrutinised as far as was possible to ensure that they not only met the BSC but were genuine and valid 22 year served army veterans.

The participants do not represent a random selection from the special group identified by the BSC. They were essentially 'self selecting' having seen the request for volunteers and had selected and presented themselves. They were accepted as they volunteered to participate on the basis that they met the BSC. Thus the participants themselves determined by agreeing to be involved that they



met the description of 'veteran' and that their transition and subsequent civilian employment had been successful. In order to ensure that the participants did in fact meet the BSC a number of checks were carried out at different stages of the recruitment and data collection phases. Volunteers expressing an interest (initially by e mail) were asked to provide details of their date of discharge, name of the regiment or corps in which they served and their final rank on discharge. For a genuine ex service person these are easily and readily known facts requiring no research. A small number of RAF personnel who would otherwise have met the BSC volunteered but were politely informed of the limit of the research to ex army personnel only. Similarly a number of commissioned officers including Warrant Officers who had been commissioned put their names forward and these were also not included in the participant pool. Two ex soldiers who had intended to serve for 22 years but whose posts had been made redundant during the MOD's 'Options for Change Programme' also volunteered. In this group of those made redundant periods of army service advised were between 14 and 17 years. Whilst these volunteers may well have made a useful contribution to the research the decision was taken to stick strictly to the BSC in order to maintain a totally discrete cohort of those who had completed at least 22 years army service. In communicating with one possible volunteer on a military associated internet forum it became obvious from the individual's total lack of knowledge of basic military terminology that he had never served in the armed forces and his enthusiasm to contribute was politely declined. Validation of those who were interviewed face to face was straight forward. All soldiers on discharge are given an Army Record of Service – AB108) in the shape of a small book and those interviewed face to face were asked to have this and also any photographs of their military service to hand.

The validity of those participants who submitted data in writing was determined from the content of their submissions and by asking questions directly by e mail. All the veterans were communicated with by the author using their own names but all of those participating were assured that their words would remain anonymous in the final work. To provide the anonymity promised to all participants real names have been replaced with a 10 digit notation consisting of letters and figures. These notations also permit ease of reference when using veteran's own words and in plotting their years of service on a time line (see Figure 8) which is explained in the next chapter. The notation for each veteran is structured as set out in Table: 2 below.

**Table: 2 Veteran's Anonymity Notation System**

a	b	C	D	e
Collection Method	One up serial Per method	Gender	Year of Enlistment	Year of Discharge
LLL	FF	L	FF	FF

Notes to Table: 2.

a. The first three digits are letters and represent the method of data collection:

BIO. Self Written Mini Biography.

MSM. An interview conducted over the internet using Microsoft Messenger.

F2F. An interview conducted face to face by the author with the veteran.

b. The next two digits are figures representing a one up arbitrary serial for each data collection method per veteran.

c. The next digit is a single letter identifying the gender of the veteran

M. Male or F. Female

d. The final digits are two pairs of figures separated by an oblique stroke indicating the year the veteran enlisted and the year he or she was discharged.

Example of a veteran's notation

The first male veteran interviewed face to face, who enlisted in 1958 and was discharged in 1983 would have the notation: F2F01M58/83.

## **Thematising, designing the study and developing the interview guide**

The target population for this study have experienced a life style change from a structured, secure, goal oriented, hierarchical, uniformed and disciplined organisation to the widely diverse, high risk and complex civilian society and labour market. The proposition, borne out in the literature survey is that most veterans do make a successful transition to civilian life and the study sought to determine: why individuals took a particular civilian employment; what events or factors contributed to their civilian employment decision; what decision making processes took place; to what extent military culture impacted on the individual's transition and what factors may explain a successful transition?

In framing the specification for this research a number of questions were raised which informed the development of the main research instrument - an interview topic guide (SITG). Questions raised sought to draw out what it was veterans *thought* across a range of issues including:

- Is employment choice influenced by: age, gender, finance, military rank, military trade, qualifications, family responsibilities, views of spouse, personal interests?
- Does combat experience affect employment choice?
- Was a personal interest pursued during service?
- Do employers understand the military?
- Is the need to 'settle down' a factor in veteran job choice?
- Is it important for a veteran to have a civilian home before discharge?
- Does a 'new' veteran continue to think and act like a soldier
- Does an honourable discharge from the military engender feelings similar to those who experienced as a result of a civilian job redundancy?

- Is the transition to civilian life seen as a *return* to a life course disrupted by military service?
- Do veterans wish they were still serving (in the light of current conflicts ongoing during this study)?

In addition a range of questions sought to situate each veteran in a societal context by asking for details related to both their army service and their subsequent civilian experiences. The development of lines of enquiry culminating in the production of an interview topic guide was also informed by the literature review. According to the literature some veterans do not make a successful transition to civilian life but the majority do. Dandeker et al (2003) say that:

*“...most people do well when they leave the armed forces.”  
(Dandeker et al, 2003, p.111).*

However what, if anything contributes to the successful transition of some veterans is not further explained, their stories have not been told or heard. For this research the proposition that most ex soldiers do make a successful transition to civilian life and employment is based on six key assumptions which state that – military service provided veterans with a satisfying career; enabled veterans to obtain transferable skills and qualifications; provided veterans with a set of high moral values; imbued veterans with a positive work ethic; provided veterans with a positive attitude towards health and diet and finally provided veterans with a positive self image

A qualitative enquiry using face to face interviews with a number of veterans was considered the most appropriate and practical way of addressing these questions and assumptions. It was anticipated that face to face interviews would generate data from which commonalities or patterns of activity or thoughts might emerge, some of which would correspond with some or all of the assumptions listed above.

From this it was also anticipated that some common factors would be identified that would provide a plausible explanation for the success of some ex soldiers and which may be generalisable to the wider ex service population. It was also thought likely that a plausible counter explanation may also have emerged where a veteran had gained successful employment out-with the generalised model. Whilst the term interview is used here in the context of explaining the theoretical approach adopted, in this research only 10 of the veterans were interviewed face to face and two other methods; 'Self written Mini Biographies' and 'Internet Interviews using 'Microsoft Messenger' were also used to record the stories of some of the participants. However for all three methods the same topics were discussed and the same questions were asked.

### **Designing the collection instruments**

Three design instruments were used, an interview topic guide, a veteran's data base and the skills and knowledge of the researcher. The initial thinking at the methodology design stage assumed that all the data would be collected via the medium of face to face interviews using a collection instrument with a series of topics which all participating veterans would be invited to consider and respond to. In this way it was anticipated that following at least one trial interview session a base set of themes based on veteran's experiences would emerge. The responses from further face to face interviews would contribute to further development of a standard set of questions or topic areas by identifying common or frequently repeating responses. The standard set of questions or topic areas would then be used to compare the responses of the whole group of veterans to identify 'norms' or differences.

Drawing on the findings in the literature review, consideration of the theoretical approach to this study and the six assumptions set out above eleven main topics emerged which contributed to the design of the interview phase. The eleven topics embrace different aspects of a veteran's life from the period before they enlisted into the army and up to the day that each individual's data was collected and include each veteran's military background, his or her current situation, their views on the army's resettlement provision, how they now perceive themselves, what their thoughts are as they look back and consider such issues as management and communication in civilian employment, family issues, money matters, the effects of army service and their relations with and perceptions of civilians as workers and finally their views on the influences of an army career. It was considered likely that these topics would provide the most valuable knowledge about the research question. Prompts and possible supplementary questions were added and a Standard Interview Topic Guide (SITG) was produced. The same guide was used for all three methods of data collection with suitably worded administrative instructions for each. An example of a SITG is at Appendix 6.

A second research instrument used was a Veteran's Data Base using Microsoft Access. The purpose of this database was to collect and record each participant's personal data in order to ensure efficient administration and, for the purposes of the research, to place them contextually in relation to their military and civilian careers. So for example military career related data asked, among other things, for the veteran's date of enlistment, age on enlistment, date of discharge, rank on discharge, which branch of the army they had worked in and when and where they had served. Civilian career based data sought to establish if a veteran had worked before enlisting, where they were living, their family circumstances and

what kind of work they were employed at. Details of civilian salary were not requested as there was no intention to quantify veterans' own concept of 'success' beyond that of, in their own terms – having not failed in civilian life. Since this data base contains the veteran's personal details an example provided at Appendix 7 is fictionalised

The third research instrument is the author! Steiner Kvale (1996) stresses the importance of the researcher being a good interviewer, one who is able to assist the subjects in the unfolding of their narratives. Kvale (1996) suggests further that learning to become an interviewer takes place through interviewing but can be informed by reading books on the subject. To this end and to ensure that the whole process of interviewing was conducted both efficiently, effectively and without, where possible, skew or bias due to use of a variety of approaches, a short period of intensive reading of among others Bryman (2001) and Kvale (1996) was conducted by the author before any interviews took place.

In summary, the data collected for this research was obtained using a questionnaire and topic guide, recording each veteran's details in a confidential database and the researcher's knowledge and skill. Having begun the process of identifying suitable veterans who met the BSC, the next phase was to organise times and places for the interviews. The initial aim was to collect all the data by face to face interviews and the research instruments were designed with this in mind. It became clear as potential participant veterans were identified that distance, time and cost would be prohibitive if the target of 50 individuals were all to be interviewed face to face. In addition some veterans seemed reluctant or unable to commit time to an interview. The decision was taken to establish a first

cohort of just 5 veterans for face to face interview and use the results of these interviews to inform further research. At the same time thought was given to how else data could be gathered from the veterans. Subsequently the two other methods of data collection referred to earlier were devised, namely the collection of data via a self written biography and collection via a 'virtual' internet interview using the Microsoft Messenger system. Veterans were eventually given the opportunity to choose their preferred method of providing data. Appropriate changes were made to the introductory instructions and advice on the SITG documents with a modified set of documents created for each of the three collection methods. A set of field notes was maintained for each of the face to face interviews recording details of the veteran's manner, surroundings and similar data. A total of 10 veterans subsequently agreed to be interviewed face to face and each session, lasting just over an hour each, was audio tape recorded. 29 chose to write their own mini biographies which were collected via e mail and 12, several of whom live and work outside Great Britain were interviewed on the internet using Microsoft Messenger. Whilst there was a natural chronology to the initial design of the research, in reality several streams of activity ran in parallel as new potential participants were identified and contacted whilst at the same time potential veterans were in communication to arrange face to face interviews and the Veterans' Data Base was developed.

### **Collecting the Data**

All the interviews, and the term is used here to embrace both the face to face and the Microsoft Messenger sessions, were conducted by the author. To encourage respondents to relax and 'tell their own story' a semi structured interview approach was considered preferable to a fully structured approach. However one of the benefits of a structured approach is that all of the respondents are asked exactly



the same questions and this was considered important in comparing the reported lives of the respondents. A disadvantage of the structured approach is that questions may need to be asked in a specific order which can detract from the ability of the respondent to recall and relate their experiences as a recalled memory triggers other thoughts on topics perhaps occurring later on the researchers list of questions. Interruptions by the researcher to keep the respondent 'on track' can possibly shut down useful and interesting seams of rich data. In addition, as Saunders (1989) has argued, question order can lead to the inadvertent introduction, into the research, of the researchers own preconceptions. The first face to face interview organised was initially considered as a test run both for the question and topic guide and the recording equipment as well as a learning experience for the author. With the likelihood at the time that the results of this first interview would have been used only as a test or trial and any lessons learned incorporated into the subsequent interviews proper it was a pleasant surprise that the first participant proved to be extremely articulate and keen to tell his story. As a result of this first interview, small changes were made to the original question and topic guide which included adding a number of supplementary questions or prompts. These additions proved useful when it became necessary to change the strategy from collection only by face to face interview and adopt the two other methods of collecting the data from veterans.

For all three methods used, all generally followed a linear progression determined by the order of the questions and topics. The questions were however, arranged in a non chronological order to encourage participants to reflect back on their experiences in relation to where they are now. The term 'non chronological order' is used here in the sense that a 'chronological order' for a veteran would have been generally as that depicted in Figure 7.

Figure: 7 General Chronology of a Veteran's Life Course

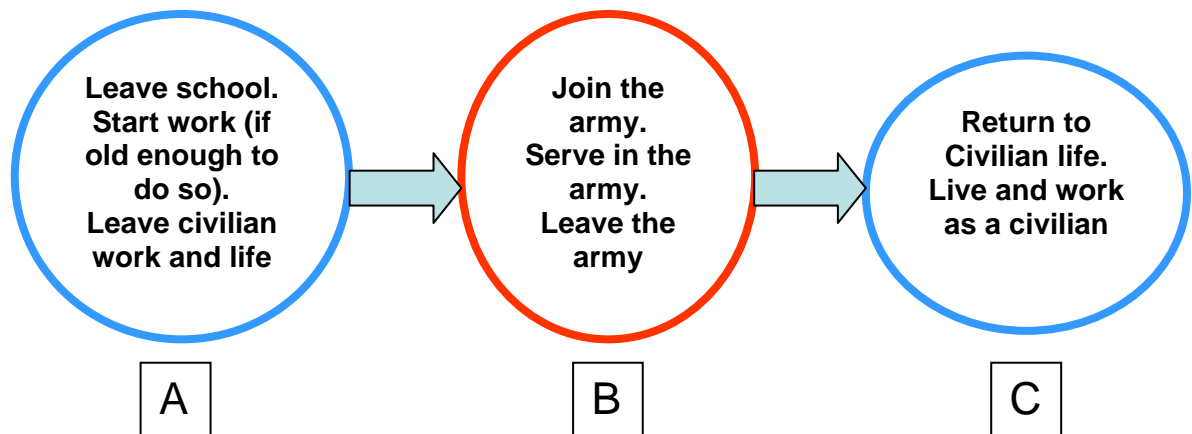


Figure: 7 illustrates the general chronology of a veteran's life course set within three very distinct periods. Periods marked A and C and banded with a blue line are the years when a veteran was a civilian and the period marked B and banded with a red line is when the veteran was serving in the army. The veterans' years in the army mark a period of life course that is different separate and contained. Different because the individual is no longer, like the majority of the population, a civilian; separate by virtue of the way that soldiers live mainly remote from the civil population and contained in that the period is delineated by a commencement date when a soldier enlists and leaves home and concluding date when he or she leaves the army. In period A the young man or woman leaves school or college and if old enough starts work. He or she then decides to enlist and joins the army. After army service the individual returns to civilian life as a mature adult. In addition to encouraging a reflective approach to question answering, the adoption of a non chronological order approach discouraged veterans from retelling their military then civilian life in strictly sequential order. This meant that recalled memories were thought about and contrasted with what had subsequently happened in the life of the individual veteran in Figure: 7 periods A, B, including and from the viewpoint of period C. In addition with face to face interviews in particular it was feared that the interviewee would start off with keen enthusiasm to

relate every detail of their military career and then become less interested, even tired, as the interview progressed. So, for example a first question asked for a brief overview of the participant's military career followed by a question about what he or she was doing now. Subsequent questions moved back and forth to draw memories from both military and civilian experiences in a reflective and contrasting way. Participants were advised that they should not feel constrained by the questions posed, the question order or by the time available. Some participants did prefer to answer the questions chronologically, starting from when they enlisted and continuing to the present time. They were allowed free reign to do this and supplementary questions were asked at the end of the interview period to address any issues not covered. Several participants used anecdotes and told stories of their experiences involving other people to validate their answers. After the first five face to face interviews had been organised veterans volunteering to participate were 'validated' and then offered one of three data collection options:

- A tape recorded face to face interview of about one hour's duration
- A mini bio-graph written by the participant using the questionnaire as a guide.
- A keyboarded conversation/interview through the medium of the internet using Microsoft Messenger.

All veterans were asked to give their approval by completing a consent form. The consent forms varied in design according to the chosen method and an example can be seen at Appendix 8. All participants were sent a letter thanking them for participating and advising them that all data would be handled in accordance with the 1998; a copy of this letter can be seen at Appendix 9.

The next section describes the process devised for the three different methods of data collection.

## Face to Face Interviews

The Face to Face (F2F) interviews were informed by Bryman's (2001) useful checklist of eight factors for conducting interviews which follows the sequence of introducing the nature and purpose of the research and establishing rapport; asking questions with consideration to the order in which questions were asked or topics introduced; probing and prompting the interviewee to elicit responses recording answers in an appropriate medium; bringing the interview to an end and finally leaving the interview session.

The veterans were introduced to the research by e mail in the early stages of identifying and building up the target population and this stage was repeated at the beginning of each interview. This repetition served the purpose of clarifying what the research was about as well as giving the interviewees an opportunity to have some conversation with the author before the interview proper began. Permission was sought and obtained on each occasion for the interview conversations to be audio tape recorded. Each session lasted between an hour and an hour and a half. After re-iterating the purpose of the research and how their words might be used a sound test was carried out to ensure that the equipment was working and also to put the interviewees at ease. Once the tape was running, the equipment was ignored and left to run until the end of the session. Veterans were asked to have to hand, if possible, their AB 108 (see Appendix 3). The purpose of this was to assist in validating the status of the individual and second to act as a prompt for the veteran with respect to their years of service. Most of the veterans made their AB 108 document available whilst others e mailed copies of pages to the author.

For the F2F interviews it was suggested to the interviewees (in advance of the arranged meetings) that they might like to have to hand some of their own photographs of their army days. Some veterans did do this and the presence of the photographs acted as a prompt or memory jogger, indeed where veterans made photographs available these interviews were up to 30 to 40 minutes longer. This approach is a variation on the mode of research known as photo-elicitation in which photographs are presented by the researcher and their responses observed and noted (Collier 2002; Harper 1998; Banks 2001). Whilst Knowles (2000) asserts that:

*“Photographs offer us a way of entering the world of others.”  
(Knowles, 2000, p.20).*

The fact that the author is a veteran meant that the images presented needed less explanation than perhaps would be needed by a non veteran since the author could visualize and to some extent enter the previous military world of the veterans. However the use of photographs enabled interviewees to play a more active role in explaining a story or anecdote and veteran’s remarks and responses often led to them more easily developing and enlarging on their answers to topics raised during the interview session; an example of what Harper (1998) described as a model of collaboration in research. The F2F interviews proved the most time consuming both in terms of the actual interviews and with respect to the time taken communicating with the participants to arrange meeting places and dates and times. One of the ten F2F interviews took place at the author’s own home as this was convenient for the interviewee, another at the veteran’s place of work (a college) and the remaining 8 took place in the veteran’s own homes. The F2F interviews also produced the greatest volume of words per veteran and the decision to limit the F2F interviews to ten proved to be wise since transcribing of

the tape recorded interviews took several days. An extract of a F2F interview is at Appendix 10.

### **Self Written Mini Biographies**

The self written mini biographies provided a practical solution to the time and distance problems associated with the F2F interviews. Of course the benefits accruing from not having to travel to time consuming interviews has to be balanced against the limitations of obtaining detailed data at a distance. There is also the question of credibility, sincerity and accuracy. Scott (1990) says that assessing the credibility of a document involves an appraisal of how distorted the contents are likely to be and that this can come from, according to Langlois and Seignobos (1898:1909), a consideration of why the document was produced and subsequent considerations of the value of its contents. In order to take account of these considerations it is necessary, says Scott (1990), for the researcher to understand why people may be insincere or produce inaccurate information. These issues were considered important in using self written mini biographies as data but the author is confident that their use and content are valid because:

- The veterans who chose this method had all volunteered to do so.
- There appears to be no obvious reason why any veteran would want to deceive the author.
- The general structure of a soldier's career and likely progression is well known to the author.
- Any obvious examples of exaggeration or clear errors of fact could be easily checked with the veteran.

Following Bryman's (2001) checklist introducing the research and establishing rapport were effectively achieved mainly by e-mail but in some cases by telephone. The veterans writing their own mini biographies were of course on their own when it came to addressing and addressing the different topics and on the

spot probing and prompting was not possible. However where there were gaps or apparent ambiguities in submitted mini biographies, veterans were contacted and any issues were resolved. This method of data collection does have some merits since there is no possibility of the veteran being led or influenced by the presence or the words of an interviewer and he or she could write as little or as much as they felt able or wished to do. With the exception of three handwritten biographies which had to be word processed a major advantage of this method is that the mini biography is presented as a text document ready for 'processing' and analysis. The same set of question topics was employed but with a detailed set of instructions to set the scene, explain the purpose of the research and set out what was required of the participating veteran. The use of photo-elicitation as a memory jogger was also suggested to veterans who selected this method to tell their stories. No data was collected on whether or not this suggestion was heeded but two veterans sent photographs of their army days and some of these have been used as illustrations in this work. Veterans were advised that they could set out their responses in any way they wished but that they should use the guide for reference. They could alternatively use the topic guide as a word processing template, type their responses in and produce their mini biography as a new saved document. The majority of those who selected this method of supplying data received the questionnaire and topic guide and submitted a completed word processed mini biography in completion time periods ranging from 1 to 10 weeks. With only one exception veterans addressed the topics fully and comprehensively and it was clear that a lot of thought and effort had gone into the compilation of the mini biographies. The exception provided single word answers or responses and several exchanges took place by e mail to flesh out and add to the information originally provided. An extract from a mini biography can be seen at Appendix 11.

### **Microsoft Messenger Interviews**

The use of the Microsoft Messenger computer application provided a practical and inexpensive way of interviewing those veterans who lived abroad or who were in Great Britain but a considerable distance from the researcher. Microsoft Messenger is one of a number of electronic communications applications available on the internet which can be of great value to sociological researchers. As O'Connor et al (2001) say:

*“Cyberspace provides a virtual social arena which is not bound by temporal and spatial restrictions where researchers can... interact with participants in way not possible in the real world.” (O'Connor et al 2001, p.2).*

Essentially the Microsoft Messenger application is a reinvention of a method whereby, before the internet was invented, telecommunications operators could communicate over a radio or cable network using a tele-printer keyboard. An operator at one end of a link typed a message, it was printed both on the local tele-printer (on paper) and was received and printed on the tele-printer of the receiving operator. The method was primarily intended for the transmission of printed messages but was also used by radio operators to set up links and manage the technical operation of a radio network. This is relevant to this research since many of the veterans were familiar with this type of communication method from using a tele-printer keyboard during their military service. The main difference between an internet based system and the tele type operation is that the text of the communication appears in Microsoft Messenger on the screen of each participant and is almost instantaneous depending on the capacity and operating speed of the computer terminals used. In addition the process can include a video channel with a camera at each end of the link so that the users can also see each other and a voice channel allows the users to also speak to each



other. For this research only the keyboarding application was used to bring some uniformity to this set of data since not all the veterans who selected this method had access to equipment with audio and visual facilities. A major benefit of this approach is that the interview or conversation is immediately produced as text which can be saved as a document and produced in printed form. The system is an example of synchronous or 'real time' online interviewing a topic which according to Chen and Hinton (1999) has been the subject of very little academic research. According to Anand (2006) in observing a synchronous on line interview, despite the fact that the respondent and moderator were connected to the internet via broadband at a reasonably high speed, the magic or the 'intimacy of a person-to-person interaction were missing. Anand (2006) sets out a litany of objections to using the internet for qualitative research including the absence of visual and verbal conversational clues when only the keyboard is used and the absence of control of the physical interview environment by the researcher. To these objections can be added practical considerations of the need to set up convenient 'chat' times (O'Connor et al 2001) although the administration of F2F interviews (in the real world) also requires that they are pre-arranged. However real time interviews via the internet are clearly better than no interview at all and probably a second best alternative to a F2F interview in that the researcher can establish a rapport, ask and re ask questions probe and clarify. 'Chat' rooms where groups of individuals can communicate have been used in qualitative research but these have the disadvantage of lack of confidentiality and with group involvement the risk of wandering off the discussion topic (Morgan, 1988). In addition in a one to one on line internet interview the researcher can maintain control over the data generated. Key requirements for employing this method are that both researcher and interviewee have the same software, can use it and have appropriate internet

capacity to allow a synchronous exchange to take place. Also important to the success of an online synchronous interview is the establishment of operating guidelines highlighting in particular the potential for technological difficulties (O'Connor et al 2001). To ensure effective use of the medium of the internet and the agreed length of session of 30 minutes a simple protocol was established and this was sent to each participant who had elected to use this method at the beginning of each session. A copy of this protocol is at Appendix 12.

Having agreed to be 'interviewed using this method a date and time was agreed when the author and the veteran would 'meet' on line in Microsoft Messenger. The veteran was supplied with an outline of the questionnaire and topic guide and also to have to hand if possible some photographs for photo-elicitation (previously described). These interviews on the internet followed the same pattern as the face to face interviews but account was taken of the fact that not all the veterans could type quickly and accurately and that in any event this is a tiring process. Microsoft Messenger sessions were therefore restricted to 30 minutes sessions and veterans were 'interviewed' usually over two sessions on different days. The protocol was sent to, discussed and agreed with each veteran interviewed. This practice makes excellent use of the time available 'on line' in that for instance the researcher will not be typing a question when the veteran is answering a previous point. After each interview was completed it was saved as a Word document for subsequent processing and analysis. An extract of an interview utilising Microsoft Messenger can be seen at Appendix 13

## **Analysis**

As each of the different methods of collection was completed the Veterans' Data Base was updated. All data was eventually produced as an individual Word document for each veteran and assigned an arbitrary notation in order to maintain

confidentiality. The notation system used for all quotes is fully explained in chapter 4. All collected raw data was printed out to facilitate initial reading by the author away from the computer. Each individual's biographical information was also used to make preliminary data sorts to determine how best to arrange the data. All the data was carefully read, initially marked up by hand and then coded and partly analysed using N - Vivo software. Coded texts were examined and veteran's responses to interview questions and related discussions were compared and interpreted to produce a narrative from which groups of common factors emerged. The commonly occurring answers and phrases were grouped into six dimensions and associated with each veteran's personal details such as date of enlistment and discharge. The researcher's role in this process was to understand participants' experiences by extracting the emerging key themes from their stories and determining whether their accounts were believable and valid. In interpreting participants' accounts, the author's own experiences and beliefs (as an army veteran) inevitably played a role which must also be considered. A different researcher with no military experience may have formed a different understanding of the participants' accounts. Moreover, participants might have told different stories to another researcher. The resulting interpretation seems to account adequately for the various themes voiced by the participants in relation to the changing over time military society in which they served and as reflected in the equally changing civilian society in which they now live or work or enjoy their retirement.

### **Qualitative Data Analysis Software**

A decision was made early in the development of the methodology process to employ Microsoft Word and the database programme Microsoft Access to handle and analyse the research data because the author is experienced in both these

applications. A Microsoft Access database (Veteran's Data Base) was developed and this proved useful in recording and manipulating personal and administrative data on participants and in managing the data collection phase of the research. The choice of Microsoft Word for the data analysis phase however proved less useful once the extent, volume and complexity of the first wave of collected data manifested itself and an alternative method for analysing the data was sought. A review and trial of Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) was conducted over a one month period and the CAQDAS programme N -Vivo was chosen. N -Vivo was chosen not only in order to facilitate consistent and uniform processing of the data but also because the intention was to use participants' own words to a very large extent and its code and retrieve facility provided an excellent means for identifying, comparing and grouping common elements in the collected texts. N -Vivo also accepts pre-formatted documents from Microsoft Word and the exercise of pre-formatting was itself a useful tool in managing and indexing collected data. A third and practical reason for choosing N -Vivo was because one to one tuition was available locally for the author. The process of learning and using the N -Vivo application forces reading and re-reading of the data and this exercise proved extremely useful. Subsequently the bulk of the data was first 'semi processed' using Microsoft Word, that is interview transcriptions, submitted biographies and MSM exchanges were all formatted to facilitate ease of indexing and the generation of top level nodes in N -Vivo and then saved as Rich Text File (RTF) Word documents. The RTF documents were transferred to N -Vivo and manipulated to examine features and relationships in the texts and these were noted. N -Vivo also provides facilities for so called theory building in which it is possible to examine features and relationships in the collected texts. This process generated a number of leads and ideas for further

avenues of enquiry within the data. For example the relationship between age on enlistment and whether the veteran looking back would now rejoin the army was examined. From this manipulation and examination of the data a framework of common features emerged. The data in N -Vivo was held on a laptop as a discrete data resource. A point was eventually reached when no further new information was being gained and manipulation of the data then moved back to the documents in Microsoft Word format on a personal computer (PC) as this was found to be an easier way of moving selected quotations within the data set and into the main thesis document. The data in N -Vivo on a separate laptop computer effectively became the reference store for all collected data. The participants' experiences were interpreted by, reading and re-reading the veteran's words, highlighting themes in their accounts, creating narratives based on those themes, and explicating the common themes across participants. The transcribed word documents were initially interpreted by using narrative analysis (Cochran, 1986; Gergen & Gergen, 1988; Mishler, 1986 and Polkinghorne, 1988). This analysis assumes that people think in narratives to make sense of their experiences (Bruner, 1986). In other words, they analyse their life experience through story-telling. Their stories incorporate themes supported by experiences reconstructed from memory. There is a main central theme that drives the story, and a set of "characters" or events that help or hinder the protagonist. People choose the elements of their experience that fit with the central theme of their story which is used to organize the chosen elements into a coherent narrative that defines the experience related. Events and actions are related as they contribute to the advancement of the theme (Bruner, 1986). The result is a retrospective account of a person's experience; in this thesis of how veterans confronted the reality of leaving the army and handled the period leading up to their discharge and their

subsequent civilian experiences. The veterans mostly had a rationale for their behaviour, and related to the researcher personal events from their lives which supported that rationale. Since the research dealt with what veteran's felt; what their personal views were on a range of issues which were expressed freely within the bounds of promised anonymity there was a clear responsibility on the part of the author as researcher to adopt a professional stance and employ an ethical approach.

### **Ethical Issues**

The data for this research came primarily from the group of veterans who participated, they are real people with real lives and there are clearly ethical and moral dimensions to any endeavour which involves people's lives and listening to, recording and writing about what they say. A great deal has been written on the topic of ethics and it is clear that attention must be paid by the researcher to such issues as the feelings of the research subjects as well as to the researchers own desire to obtain his or her 'data, (see for instance Whyte, 1943; Oakley, 1981 and Morgan, 1988). As Fontana and Frey (1998) ask:

*"...should the quest for objectivity supersede the human side of those whom we study?" (Fontana and Frey, 1998, p.71).*

In other words research with human participants must serve both scientific and human interests. The Research Ethics Framework of the Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC, 2006) states that it is the responsibility of the researcher (or research team) to decide whether a project is ethically sensitive and to what extent ethical issues should be handled and reviewed. The British Sociological Association (BSA) similarly states that it does not provide a set of recipes for resolving ethical choices but recognises that it is necessary to make choices on the basis of principles and values and the (often conflicting) interests of

those involved (BSA, 2002). The research design and conduct of this research took account of these concerns and of a remark by Kvale (1996) that:

*Ethical issues do not belong to a separate stage of interview investigations but arise throughout the entire research process. (Kvale, 1996, p.110).*

Kvale (1996) suggests the drafting of *an ethical protocol* in parallel with the research design in order to anticipate and therefore plan for any ethical issues that could arise and a Table: of considerations (see Table: 3) was drawn up for use as an aide memoir during the research. As the author worked alone this document was not formally published or made available to the participating veterans. Notes were added to this outline protocol as the research progressed and from the outset, as an additional strand to personal confidentiality, the policy was adopted to not disclose the identity of any of the participants to each other or to anyone else. This non disclosure approach also ensured that the stories the veterans related were uncontaminated by collusion within the participant group.

Table: 3 Ethical Protocol – Practical Issues

Ethical Issue	Anticipated Issues and Solution	Remarks
Morality of the research endeavour	Explanation of purpose of the research and statement of independence of the researcher	Documented in contact information (example at Appendices 5 and 6).
Confidentiality and the non use of divulged possibly sensitive information	Statement of intent with regard to use of all names as anonymous and personal names as a coded notation	Developed during the interview phase and explained in Chapter 4 Undertaking on part of researcher to destroy all collected data at end of research
Informed Consent	Consent as an agreement to participate to be obtained in text form from each individual	Documented in contact information (example at Appendix 8)
Personal security	Understand risks of meeting 'strangers on the internet offer of non contact solution (self written biographies. Challenge to authenticity of researcher	Referred to human contact at university for verification of researcher's authenticity. Documented in contact information (example at Appendix 6)

Challenges to the morality of the research endeavour were anticipated and as set out in Table: 3 above could be explained in terms partly of the independence of the author. Ethically of course 'independence' could allow a researcher to adopt a particular stance which could portray the subjects in a negative way. Worse perhaps would be the risk of not producing a full and unbiased investigation by not maintaining a professional distance and interpreting everything from the subject's perspective. The author was aware of this and guarded against this possibility by ensuring that any communication or contact with veterans was maintained at a professional level. Risk of harm to the subjects was considered in line with the spirit of beneficence which sets out that the risk of harm to a subject should be the least possible and was assessed by the author from the outset as nil. Indeed as well as the benefits which have accrued from this study as a result of data collected from veterans, it is clear that several participants felt that they had



benefited from relating their stories. Further, several veterans have asked for copies of the research when it is finished and it is the author's intention to offer feedback on the findings in the form of a summary report, an approach which accords with the Statement of Ethical Practice of the British Sociological Association (2002). An element of reciprocity in the research process with veterans was developed by keeping them informed of progress. It was felt that by doing so their participation would be seen as more than just being interviewed as anonymous contributors. Setting the scene clearly with respect to the research for each veteran regardless of the method of data collection was also considered important. Bryman suggests that it is important for prospective respondents to be provided with a credible rationale for the research in which they are being asked to participate and give up their valuable time (Bryman 2001). It was also considered important that all respondents were contacted in the same way to ensure, (as far as was possible) that they were introduced to the study using a common text. To that end contact of potential participants was made by e-mail re-using the text of the internet web site 'notice' used initially to attract interest (see example at Appendix 5).

There remains the dilemma (for which no solution is offered here) occasioned by the promise of confidentiality and the destruction of collected data, expressed by Smith (1990), who asked how research results can be checked by other researchers if no one knows who participated in the study and where and when it took place.

## **Conclusion**

The methodology was guided by an interpretivist paradigm and informed by considerations of the practise of hermeneutics. This approach is necessarily retrospective, and led to the development of a qualitative enquiry based on the

collection of data using three different methods of data collection. However all three employed a standard set of topics and questions. All three instruments contributed to the production of written textual accounts of veteran's military and civilian careers and their views thoughts and opinions relevant to the research problem. Reading and re reading of the interview transcripts, completed mini biographies and the texts of MSN exchanges as they were formatted for subsequent analysis in QDA software revealed some gaps in the basic information held for some of the participants. In addition the answers to some questions, or other points raised by veterans required further clarification. Participants were contacted by e mail and asked to provide the missing information or to discuss and clarify specific issues in their contributions. A regular progress update message was also sent to all the participating veterans in order to maintain their interest in the event of the need for further questioning. However all communications were addressed on an individual basis and the names of other participants were kept confidential. Maintaining contact in this way to some extent added an element of 'democracy' to the process. An attempt was also made by the author following Carspeken's (1996) views, and it is suggested with some success, to maintain a collaborative stance with each of the veterans as individuals to negate as far as possible any authoritarian relationship and encourage active questioning of the perspectives described in the updates. An initial plan to interview 100 veterans face to face was rethought in the light of actual research experience and other methods including the use of the internet were added to the research instruments used. As described in this chapter a limited amount of photo-elicitation was employed and some photographs have been used as illustrations in other chapters of this work. The use of photographs in social science is limited according to CLMS (2003) mainly to the covers of text books and the use of photographs more

specifically as research instrument is not without problems, however, whilst the limited use of photo-elicitation was very useful in this research, further discussion of the use of photographs in social science research is beyond the scope of this thesis. An ethical protocol was devised and implemented and administrative documents produced to ensure that the participants were aware of the use to which their words would be put and how their contributions would be handled. The methodology employed is considered by the author to have been appropriate to the purposes of the research and led to the production of valid useable data. The stories told by the veterans form the bulk of the research data in this study and the next chapter discusses the analysis of these stories.

## CHAPTER 4

# ANALYSING HOW THE SERVING SOLDIER APPROACHES THE END OF A MILITARY CAREER.

### Introduction.

Chapter one of this thesis described its purpose and aim as identifying possible common factors which contribute to successful transitions from military service to civilian life and work by army veterans. The literature review in chapter two concluded that little research has been conducted into those who have accomplished military to civilian transitions but a great deal exists which is concerned with veterans who have been *unsuccessful* or suffer in some way as a result of their military service. The qualitative methodology adopted for the collection, collation and analysis of the qualitative data which is at the heart of this research was described in chapter three. The three principle methods of data collection used, face to face interviews, interviews using the internet and self written mini biographies provided the bulk of the data for this research. However, whilst the collection methods were slightly different all the veterans were asked the same series of questions and all data was processed and variously converted to a data set of readable text documents. The data set of text documents contain the veterans' stories, extracts of which are now used in this chapter and in chapter 5 to discuss and draw out the findings which are presented in chapter 6. Other data was derived from the basic biographic details supplied by veterans and compiled as the Veterans' Database. The Qualitative Research Software (QRS) N - Vivo was used first for the initial analysis of veterans' biographic data and it was from this coding work that a conflict in how to further analyse and present the data set of text documents presented itself. A data sort by veterans' army rank on discharge compared to selected other factors such as gender, work history before

employment, branch of the army and subsequent civilian employment proved inconclusive. However coding and analysis of the data set of text documents revealed that despite the wide spread of decades during which veterans served many of their views remained constant despite changes in society and in particular with respect to the different conflict eras in which the British Army has been involved. Sample questions and responses from the data set of text documents were tested against each decade and commonalities of responses occurred frequently throughout all the periods of veterans' army service regardless of when they had served, their former rank or any of the other biographical data. These initial findings lead to the rejection of the reading and analysis of the data set of text documents based on the categorisation of the veterans' by former army rank or by the decade or conflict era in which they served. Instead a hierarchy of N - Vivo coding was developed based on topics arising from the veterans' frequently appearing responses. This approach revealed that those veterans who have made a successful transition to civilian life and work after completing 22 years army service do share a total of six groups of significant common ideas and ideals. Thus the identification of these groupings from the veterans' own stories suggested a strategy both for the structure of the analysis itself and for determining which data to select and use. This chapter first sets out how the data was sorted and then presents and discusses the first three groups of significant common ideas and ideals. The next section describes the process of the initial analysis and this also serves as a description of the veteran group.

### **Veterans' Data - Initial Analysis**

The notation system described in Chapter 3 designed to hide the identities of those participating was applied using the personal data provided by the veterans which was recorded in the Veterans Database (see example at Appendix 7). These individual notations are now used in this and the next chapter whenever a veteran's words are cited.

An initial analysis was carried out on the Veteran's Database to create a general description of the group and from this a series of data in Tables: 4 to 7 was produced. The Tables present biographical details of the veterans sorted by their final army rank on discharge and shows the branch of the army in which they served, their age on enlistment, their gender, whether or not they had worked before enlisting and their current or last civilian job. The aim of this initial analysis was to see if there were any significant correlations between these biographical details, such as rank achieved and subsequent employment and whether this would suggest a hierarchy for the selection of interview, written biography and internet derived material, contained in the data set of text documents and its subsequent analysis. The first Table: Table: 4, shows that there were 16 ex Warrant Officers Class One who had served primarily in combat support roles. The average age on enlistment in this grouping was 17 and all are male. 12 of the 16 had worked before enlistment whilst 4 had not. Of the four veterans who had not worked before enlisting three were aged 15 and one 17 years of age. The civilian occupations of these veterans reflect a spread of quite different employments.

**Table: 4 Veterans sorted by former rank - Ex Warrant Officer Class One**

NOTATION	REGT/	AGE	ARMY	GENDER	JOB PRE-	ARMY	CIVILIAN
	CORPS	JOINED	RANK	M/F	YES	NO	OCCUPATION
MSM01M70/95	SIGS	18	WO1	M	1		QA MANAGER
BIO18M72/94	RCT	19	WO1	M	1		SECURITY DIR
BIO06M65/89	INT	21	WO1	M	1		CIVIL SERVICE
BIO09M65/91	RAOC	15	WO1	M		1	CIVILIAN POLICE
MSM02M64/87	SIGS	17	WO1	M		1	GOVT AGENCY
F2F02M62/87	SIGS	15	WO1	M		1	IT
F2F04M68/90	SIGS	15	WO1	M	1		LOGISTICS
F2F07M64/86	INT	15	WO1	M		1	POST OFFICE
MSM03M81/03	RE	17	WO1	M	1		SITE MGT
BIO14M71/94	INT	17	WO1	M	1		IT
F2F06M64/86	SIGS	18	WO1	M	1		NHS
BIO15M58/83	INT	15	WO1	M	1		IT
MSM07M64/86	INT	17	WO1	M	1		CHARITY MGT
MSM10M60/83	SIGS	17	WO1	M	1		GEN MANAGER
BIO23M81/05	SIGS	21	WO1	M	1		PROJECT MANAGER
MSM08M71/93	INT	22	WO1	M	1		CIVILIAN POLICE
Totals	Average Age 17		16		12	4	

The next rank is Warrant Officer Class Two and veterans who left holding this rank are shown in Table: 5.

**Table: 5 Veterans sorted by former rank - Ex Warrant Officers Class Two**

NOTATION	REGT/	AGE	ARMY	GENDER	JOB PRE-	ARMY	CIVILIAN
	CORPS	JOINED	RANK	M/F	YES	NO	OCCUPATION
BIO01F78/00	QARANC	17	WO2	F	1		FORENSIC ANALYST
BIO03M79/01	RAMC	17	WO2	M		1	SECURITY MGT
MSM11M65/88	SIGS	18	WO2	M		1	LEGAL CLERK
BIO07M70/92	SIGS	18	WO2	M	1		IT
F2F01M76/01	INF	16	WO2	M	1		SECURITY
BIO10M81/04	RE	16	WO2	M		1	TECH TRG
BIO13M63/85	INF	18	WO2	M	1		LOCAL GOVT
BIO16M65/87	REME	18	WO2	F	1		SECURITY
BIO17F73/95	WRAC	18	WO2	F		1	ADMIN MANAGER
BIO04M72/94	RCT	15	WO2	M		1	LOGISTICS
BIO19F40/62	WRAC	16	WO2	F		1	CIVIL SERVICE
F2F09M49/73	REME	18	WO2	M		1	MOTOR IND
BIO20M79/05	INF	16	WO2	M		1	SECURITY
BIO21M72/96	RAOC	15	WO2	M		1	CHARITY MGT
BIO22M82/04	RAMC	17	WO2	M		1	SECURITY
BIO24M76/00	INF	16	WO2	M		1	SECURITY MANAGER
BIO25M82/05	INF	16	WO2	M		1	SECURITY
BIO26M66/98	INF	16	WO2	M		1	AVIATION INDUSTRY
BIO29M78/00	RE	18	WO2	M	1		MGT
BIO27M64/87	RASC	16	WO2	M		1	CIVIL SERVICE
Total	Average Age 17		20		6	14	

As shown in Table: 5 the 20 ex Warrant Officers Class Two are drawn from combat, combat support and combat service support roles and the average age on enlistment is again 17. There are 17 male and 3 female veterans only six of whom worked before enlistment and 14 who did not. The 14 who did not work before enlisting were either 15 or 16 years of age whilst the 6 who did work were aged either 17 or 18. Again, as for the veterans in Table: 4 several different employments were taken up in civilian life, seven veterans being employed in some form of security work. Veterans who left the army in the rank of Staff Sergeant are listed in Table: 6

**Table: 6 Veterans sorted by former rank - Ex Staff Sergeants**

NOTATION	REGT/ CORPS	AGE JOINED	ARMY RANK	GENDER M/F	JOB PRE- YES	ARMY NO	CIVILIAN OCCUPATION
BIO05M81/03	SIGS	17	SSGT	M		1	ENGINEER
BIO08M60/82	SIGS	17	SSGT	M	1		CIVIL POLICE
BIO02F76/01	WRAC	19	SSGT	F	1		IT
BIO12M64/88	RAPC	16	SSGT	M		1	FOREIGN OFF
BIO28M78/00	INT	21	SSGT	M	1		ENGINEER
MSM06M79/03	RE	16	SSGT	M		1	GARDEN IND
F2F08M79/02	APTC	16	SSGT	M		1	EDUCATION
Total	Average Age 17		7		3	4	

Table: 6 shows that seven veterans achieved Staff Sergeant rank and the majority served in units drawn from combat support and combat service support roles with one (ex Royal Engineers) from a combat role. As for the other two ranks described above the average age on enlistment was 17 with six males and one female appearing in this group. Three of the veterans in this group worked before enlistment and four did not with two of the four being 16 years old on enlistment. Once again there is a spread of different occupations. Seven male veterans were discharged in the rank of Sergeant with a similar mix of army roles as the Staff Sergeants; that is combat, combat support and combat service support roles.



**Table: 7 Veterans sorted by former rank - Ex Sergeants**

NOTATION	REGT/ CORPS	AGE JOINED	ARMY RANK	GENDER M/F	JOB PRE- YES	ARMY NO	CIVILIAN OCCUPATION
F2F05M64/84	SIGS	19	SGT	M	1		NHS
BIO11M60/85	SIGS	15	SGT	M		1	CIVIL SERVICE
MSM12M80/83	RA	18	SGT	M	1		IT
MSM09M70/92	RAMC	18	SGT	M	1		IT
MSM05M54/76	SIGS	18	SGT	M	1		SECURITYDIRECTOR
F2F10M59/84	RAOC	15	SGT	M		1	LOCAL GOVT
F2F03M48/72	ARMOUR	15	SGT	M		1	IT
Total	Average Age	17	7		4	3	

The ex Sergeants, as shown in Table: 7 were employed in a spread of occupations with just one working in the security industry. Four of the veterans had worked before enlisting and 3 had not. The former rank Tables from sergeant to Warrant Officer produce a total of 50, however 51 veterans contributed to this thesis and this figure is reached by the addition of one male veteran who was discharged in the rank of Corporal having enlisted at the age of 18 into a combat role with an armoured regiment. This veteran, MSM04M60/82, did work for some time in civilian life but has been a carer for several years. The 51 veterans listed in Tables 4 to 7 represent almost every branch of the army including the combat arms (those that actually engage with the enemy) and the combat support and service arms (those that support the combat arms – but who may nevertheless be involved in combat). The majority of the research population are male comprising some 47 male veterans and 4 females. All of the veterans served for at least 22 years with a number serving for 25 years having joined at the age of 15. The longest serving veteran, BIO26M66/98, joined at the age of 15 and served for 19 years he then left the army as a WO Class Two to work in aviation. After 6 months he re-enlisted and served for another 13 years finally leaving the army at the age of 47 having completed, unusually, 32 years service. Veteran BIO26M66/98 then once again took up a lucrative and interesting job in the aviation industry as a

civilian. It is interesting, although not necessarily significant given the small research population, that among the different senior ranks, of those who achieved the rank of Warrant Officer Class One rank 75% of the total of 16 had worked in civilian life before enlisting, a greater percentage than for any of the other ranks. The fact that all the Warrant Officers Class One, in this sample, are male is considered by the author to be due to the small size of the research population and the fact that there are considerably less females serving in the army. No clear and generalisable correlations were deduced from this initial analysis of the veterans' basic biographical data. However the enlistment and discharge dates of the participating veterans' showed that their periods of service span the decades from the 1940s to the first five years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, a period when a great many changes have taken place both within society generally as well as within the armed forces.

It was noted during the coding of answers to questions that when asked if they would return to military service if they could, the veterans' responses were divided almost equally in two, with half saying yes they would re-enlist if they could and half saying no, they would not. Those that responded positively added the qualification that they would only like to rejoin the army as it was at the time when they were serving. These responses suggested a concept that responses to other questions might generally differ according to world events and how the armed forces were employed and deployed during the years when the participating veterans were serving. This led to the categorisation of the veterans according to when they had served and subsequently the grouping of their responses into six different groups of dimensions.

### Consideration and Rejection of Analysis by Conflict Eras

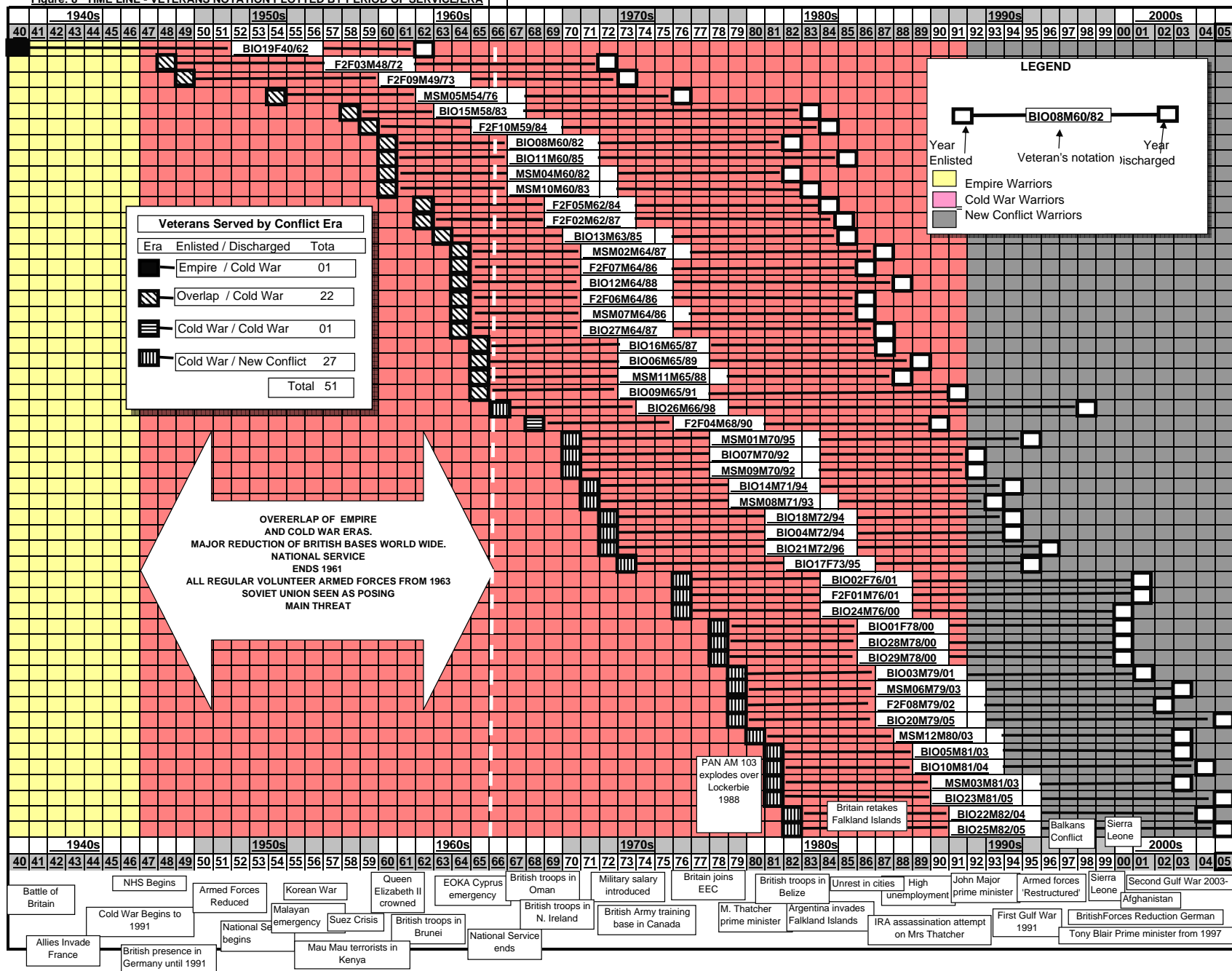
To facilitate closer analysis of the concept of a relationship between periods served and what was happening in the world (and the army) at different times, the participant group was divided among three 'conflict era' categories reflecting the decades during which each veteran began and subsequently completed their military career. The three conflict eras, identified for the purposes of this study, reflect the general nature of the armed forces' role enabling veterans to be identified as Empire Warriors, Cold War Warriors or New Conflict Warriors. The decades covered by the veterans' periods of service embrace the conflict eras as set out in Table: 8 below.

**Table: 8 Veterans' Army Service Periods as Eras**

Conflict Era	Decades	General explanation
Empire Warriors	1940 to 1947	The Second World War to the start of the Cold war
Cold War Warriors	1947 to 1991	The start and end of the Cold War
New Conflict Warriors	1991 to 2005	From the end of the Cold War to the early years of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.

The beginning of the Cold War era coincided with the decline of the British Empire and these two eras overlap in terms of the different roles, tasks and overseas deployments which were expected of those in the armed forces. The periods covered by the three conflict eras and significant military and political events have been plotted on a Timeline (Figure: 8) along with the period served by each veteran. The veterans' periods of service are plotted on the time line using their allocated notation and boxes aligned with the year in which they enlisted and the year in which they were discharged. In other words instead of sorting by rank on discharge the veterans are now arranged effectively in chronological order according to when they enlisted.

Figure: 8 TIME LINE - VETERANS NOTATION PLOTTED BY PERIOD OF SERVICE/ERA



As Figure: 8 illustrates, one veteran enlisted as an Empire Warrior leaving the army during the Cold War era; twenty two veterans began their service during the period of overlapping eras (1947-1965) when there were both regular and conscripted soldiers serving and several small conflicts were being fought in different parts of the world and were discharged during the Cold War era. In the Cold War era a large proportion of the British Army was based in what was then West Germany; this military force was known as The British Army on The Rhine (BAOR). One veteran was enlisted and discharged during the Cold War era. Twenty seven veterans enlisted during the Cold War era and were still serving when it ended in 1991 and the New Conflict era began with some veterans seeing action in the Balkans and in the Middle East. At least thirty veterans would have been serving during the periods of major unrest in Northern Ireland although it was quite possible for a soldier to serve throughout the Cold War era in BAOR and never see a shot fired in anger. Others would have experienced relatively peaceful tours of duty in BAOR or in Great Britain mainly carrying out training but mixed with operational tours in Northern Ireland. The principal role of the armed forces in BAOR was as a deterrent and soldiers spent most of their time being trained against the perceived threat from the Soviet Union. The end of the Cold War era heralded a reduction in the size of the armed forces and many soldiers whose posts were redundant left the army prematurely. An army reduced in size entered the 1990s with new commitments and a certainty that many soldiers would experience combat during their careers. It is clear, as illustrated in Figure 8 that the veterans in this study experienced collectively all of the different periods of military activity from the 1940s to the year 2005; a period when the British Empire disappeared, small conflicts were fought and the army, like the other branches of the armed forces became an all volunteer, professional force. At an individual

level soldiers received a new style of dress uniform, new and improved clothing and equipment for operational duties, new weapons and a salary based pay structure

Figure: 9



"...trained against the perceived threat from the Soviet Union." (Source: Author)

Placing the veterans in discrete eras by category did not however reveal marked differences in responses between eras, indeed quite the reverse with the same or similar responses being offered by veterans across the different eras. The concept that veterans' views may not have changed despite the passage of years and despite the different conflict eras in which they had served was then tested by applying N -Vivo searches to coded passages throughout all the collected data. Sample questions and answers were tested against each decade and commonalities of responses occurred repeatedly throughout all the periods of army service as illustrated in the analysis extracts in Tables: 9 to 11.

Table: 9 shows similar responses across all the decades of veterans' discharge years to the question:

*"Did you miss the army when you left?"*

Whilst many of the veteran's responses (shown in /CODED TEXT column) indicate that they did not necessarily miss the army as such, what they did miss without exception was their army colleagues.

**Table: 9 Sample Questions and selected Responses Set 1**  
%Resettlement/5, Question: Did you miss the army when you left?

/CODED TEXT	FILE	NAME	/NODE	/NODE	DECADE
<i>Yes I miss the army, the camaraderie, togetherness, the feeling of being part of a big family</i>	BIOG_37	(BIO19F40/62)	Miss army		1960s
<i>I miss the social life it was brilliant</i>	INT_16	(F2F03M48/72)	Miss army		1970s
<i>I did miss the army, first of all the job itself but also the great friendships</i>	MSM_30	(MSM05M54/76)	Miss army		1970s
<i>I do miss the comradeship</i>	BIOG_06	(BIO06M65/89)	Miss army		1980s
<i>...I miss the structure, the discipline.</i>	MSM_01	(MSM01M70/95)	Miss army		1990s
<i>I miss my mates (F2F04M68/90)</i>	INT_17	(F2F04M68/90)	Miss army	Leaving sad event	1990s
<i>Yes I do miss the army but the past is a distant land never to be revisited.</i>	INT_11	(F2F01M76/01)	Miss army		2000s
<i>I was sad when I left the army</i>	BIOG_03	(BIO03M79/01)	Miss army	Leaving sad event	2000s
<i>I miss the army more now than when I initially left</i>	BIOG_05	(BIO05M81/03)	Miss army		2000S

Table: 10 similarly records that veterans responses were much the same regardless of decade of discharge when asked the question

*“How do you feel then that being in the army helped you in the job market generally?”*

Veteran's responses to this question as well as occurring across all the eras in which each individual was discharged from the army were consistently positive. The N -Vivo category NODE 'Army Skills transferable' included consideration of remarks by veterans related to their ability to recognise that knowledge, skills and attitudes they had learned or acquired during their army service could be considered beneficial in civilian life and this was paired with a NODE entitled 'Army influence'. For some veterans it was clear that this was the first time they had

seriously considered to what extent they had been influenced by their time in the army and had been given the opportunity to articulate their feelings.

**Table: 10 Sample Questions and selected Responses Set 2**  
**%Self Perception/8 Question: How do you feel then that being in the army helped you in the job market generally?**

/CODED TEXT	FILE	NAME	NODE	NODE	DECADE
<i>The army gave me knowledge of organisations and running other peoples lives for them</i>	BIOG_37	(BIO19F40/62)	Army Skills Transferable		1960s
<i>Yes it probably gave me the self confidence needed when attending job interviews</i>	MSM_30	(MSM05M54/76)	Army Skills Transferable	Army influence	1970s
<i>I came out and I took over a workshop</i>	INT_40	(F2F09M49/73)	Army Skills Transferable	Army influence	1970s
<i>My experience in communications and discipline in the army came in very useful</i>	BIOG_09	(BIO08M60/82)	Army Skills Transferable	Army Influence	1980s
<i>The army taught me to understand my capabilities, I was always confident, I was an extremely valuable education</i>	INT_15	(F2F02M62/87)	Army Skills Transferable	Army Influence	1980s
<i>In my first job I had to apply a surprising amount of experience I had built up in the army</i>	BIOG_04	(BIO18M72/94)	Army Skills Transferable	Army influence	1990s
<i>But the army really made me, It has given me full(sic) of self confidence</i>	INT_17	(F2F04M68/90)	Army Skills Transferable	Army influence	1990s
<i>Well because I joined the police my military career gained me direct entry</i>	BIOG_12	(BIO09M65/91)	Army Skills Transferable		1990s
<i>It gave me good interpersonal skills, self discipline... transport leadership and management skills</i>	BIOG_24	(BIO28M78/00)	Army Skills Transferable	Army influence	2000s
<i>Having served in the army has enabled me to learn about the very different types of people that there are in the world....having been in many difficult positions has...help make me a stronger person</i>	BIOG_10	(BIO02F76/01)	Army Skills Transferable	Army influence	2000s

The third question used to test the notion of commonality regardless of era was

*“Do you feel or think of yourself as a veteran/ an ex soldier or ex serviceman or....?”*

Responses to this question, set out in Table: 11, indicated quite clearly first that the term veteran is disliked but more importantly at this stage that this same



feeling is common certainly amongst this group of veterans again regardless of when they served.

**Table: 11 Sample Questions and selected Responses Set 3**  
**%Self Perception/10. Question: Do you feel or think of yourself as a veteran/ an ex soldier or ex serviceman or....?**

/CODED TEXT	DOCUMENT	NAME	NODE	DECADE
<i>I think of myself as an ex servicewoman</i>	BIOG_37	(BIO19F40/62)	Self Image	1960s
<i>I've not really given that much thought but I don't consider myself a veteran as I associate that with the real soldiers at the sharp end, but ex serviceman covers it nicely</i>	MSM_30	(MSM05M54/76)	Self Image	1970s
<i>No, veterans were second world war chaps, first world war chaps, there's very few of them left)</i>	F2F_40	(F2F09M49/73)	Self Image	1970s
<i>I think of myself as an ex soldier, not as a veteran as we do not get any benefits for such. I only wish we were like the Americans on this point</i>	BIOG_06	(BIO06M65/89)	Self Image	1980s
<i>I am an ex serviceman and do not like the term 'veteran'</i>	MSM_14	(MSM02M64/87)	Self Image	1980s
<i>I am a civilian and a former soldier. I can't help thinking of the term veteran as...some sort of victimhood, maybe it's been used to often in that context by the press. It also has a ring of Americanism: I'm not a victim and I'm British!</i>	BIOG_04	(BIO18M72/94)	Self Image	1990s
<i>Interesting question, ex soldier probably</i>	MSM_01	(MSM01M70/95)	Self Image	1990s
<i>I will never be a civvy, I'll always be ex forces</i>	BIOG_10	(BIO02F76/01)	Self Image	2000s
<i>I'm a consultant who used to be a professional soldier</i>	BIOG_24	(BIO28M78/00)	Self Image	2000s

Notes to Tables 9-11. Original text documents contained veterans' names and these have been substituted in the NAME column with the veterans corresponding notation

The veterans' responses set out in Tables: 9 to 11 above clearly demonstrate that some thoughts and views on a range of topics have remained the same despite changes in both civilian and in military life. However whilst the timeline approach which sets each veteran within a particular time period satisfies the concerns with sociological study that research must be set in context (Mason, 2002); the commonality of responses suggested a different approach. Presenting veteran's responses and associated discussion in separate blocks or as differently indexed

data sets according to conflict era would to some extent have masked the commonality of responses over the 60 years embraced by the study. It became clear from the development of N - Vivo coding and by constant re-reading of the transcripts that veterans' responses could be clustered instead into a number of groups containing related or similar dimensions. Thus sorting data for analysis by conflict era was rejected in favour of an approach by which the veterans' common and repeated responses themselves suggested a strategy which contributed to the identification of the key factors sought by this research. Using this approach six different groups of dimensions emerged concerned first with a general collection of veteran's common thoughts and opinions and then two sets of dimensions covering preparations for leaving the army and retention/resettlement periods when the veterans were nearing the end of their service but were still serving. The final three groups of dimensions are concerned with the period after veterans were discharged from the army and were seeking to rejoin the labour market; how they now feel about civilian workers and finally the veteran's experiences in and of civilian employment. The research data is therefore presented within each of the six dimension groups mentioned above in such a way that the veteran's tell their own stories in their own way. This follows the approach adopted by some researchers which allows themes to emerge through dialogue and allows for minimum commentary (see for example Goodwin, 1999). Veteran's words are quoted verbatim.

For all the dimensions discussed in this and the next chapter, repeated and common thoughts and views expressed by the veterans emerged frequently regardless of when individuals served, clearly indicating that whilst the armed forces' roles may have changed over the years the view that veterans' hold of some aspects of service life remain the same. However the post military civilian

lives of the veterans who participated in this research are widely different and varied. What the participant group share as veterans is a generally common and remembered history of their military careers. It is accepted, as pointed out by Higate (2001) that the military-biographical behavioural experiences of individual soldiers will differ substantially, such that the presumed experiences of a member of the Special Forces are likely to be very different from those of a member of the Royal Logistics Corps (RLC) responsible for the control and supply of fuel and lubricants. Nevertheless regardless of their service specialism all soldiers will follow the general career path phases set out in Table: 12. Each phase in the Table: represents the typical activities of an individual from an initial enquiry as a civilian at a recruitment office to final discharge. The grouping of these 13 activities into phases 1 to 4 has been created solely for the purposes of this study. Phases 1 – 3 in Table: 12 represent a soldier's main period of active service, whilst Table: 12 phase 4 is the period when a serving soldier is approaching the end of his or her career and is entering or has already entered the leaving and resettlement phase. The groups of six dimensions mirror the chronology of the phases in Table: 12 and can be neatly divided into two which locate veteran's responses concerned with the first three dimensions: veteran's common thoughts and opinions (although this dimension also embraces a veterans civilian life); preparations for leaving and retention/resettlement in the period when they were still serving in the army and the remaining three dimensions: rejoining the labour market; perceptions of civilian workers and experiences in and of civilian employment in the period after they had been discharged from the army.

**Table: 12 The Phases of a Soldier's Typical Career Path**

Phase	Item	Activity
Phase 1  Pre enlistment Activity	1	Initial enquiry at a recruitment office
	2	Selection tests and interview
	3	Signing on and taking the oath of allegiance
	4	Leaving civilian life and becoming a soldier
Phase 2	5	Reporting for and completing recruit training
	6	Taking part in a Passing out ceremony
Phase 3	7	Completing training for an army trade or specialism
	8	Being Posted to an active army unit
	9	Gaining Promotion through the ranks following successful passing of education and training courses and receiving good annual reports
	10	Receiving postings to different theatres of operation
Phase 4  End of service activity	11	Approaching end of service career
	12	Completing Resettlement and discharge process
	13	Being Discharged (possibly enjoy some sort of leaving ceremony or event)

Table: 12 provides a standard template for considering a soldier's military background and the stories related by the veterans' can be located within the different phases. In order to get interviewees to talk about themselves they were first asked to briefly describe their army careers. When addressing this topic all the veterans that were interviewed face to face and those interviewed via Microsoft Messenger on the internet concentrated their detailed answers primarily on Table: 12, Phase 1 (Pre-enlistment activity) and on Phase 4 (End of service activity). Phases 2 and 3 concerned with the actual years of their army service were

generally reduced to a list of different countries or army units in which the individuals had served. More detailed information concerning what a veteran had actually been doing in the army, when it was necessary to develop answers to other questions, was achieved by probing and asking the veteran to expand on and say a little more on particular topics. Those veterans who completed self written biographies similarly concentrated the military background section of their responses on the beginning and the end of their army service. For some individuals it is clear that security issues precluded any detailed discussion of their army employment. These concentrations of volunteered information about joining and leaving the army hint at the importance of these life course events to the individual. It may be the case that because the researcher is a 25 year served army veteran the interviewees felt no need to elaborate on the detail of what they had done. In any event responses to specific questions about a veteran's military background allowed the veterans to reflect on a topic they knew well – their time in the army and these individual stories generally followed the pattern set out in Table: 12 above. Further references back to army life were made by individuals in answer to questions which, for example asked veterans to compare themselves with 'civilians' and these remarks are discussed in detail in chapter 5. This next section sets out and discusses the first three groups of dimensions drawing key issues from each. The first group of dimensions presents veterans' thoughts and opinions on a range of issues which are common to the whole participant group.

## Dimension 1 – Veterans' Common Thoughts and Opinions

This first group is drawn from common responses given by veterans as they reflected on the phases of their military and civilian careers. They effectively contribute to a general persona of a 22 year served army veteran and whilst probably not generalisable to all army veterans play a part in a notion, touched on in later identified factors, of veterans feeling 'different' to other civilians as a result of their army service. Six different issues which may have contributed to a successful military to civilian transition were identified and these are listed below.

1. Choosing the right path
2. Family influences
3. Comradeship and sadness
4. Veterans' self awareness
5. Affects of army service
6. Looking back - position in society (use of term veteran)

The list represents the sub chapter headings for the next section of this chapter; this approach is only taken with dimension 1 as it contains such a wide mix of issues. Dimension 1 also relates to veterans' reflected thoughts and opinions from the periods before during and after their military service whereas dimensions 2 and 3 are concerned only with their remembered experiences of army service.

### *1. Choosing the right path*

It is clear from all of the collected data that participating veterans joined the armed forces and went through the enlistment and selection processes because they really wanted to and with a determination to do well by choosing the most appropriate career path:

*So I had the formal interviews and they said you can go and be an apprentice at this great place down the road at Harrogate. So that was what I did I went to the Army Apprentice College at Harrogate. I went there and it was..., it wasn't like it is now, the training I mean, I was playing football and all the sports you have but I mean like, you did radio theory for a whole year, now you do it in modules, some theory, some practical and I am just no good at maths... so I*

*changed to the radio telegraphist side and went on other courses. (F2F04M68/90).*

This veteran F2F04M68/90 saw for himself and at an early stage that he was not suited to the trade he had been allocated and transferred to a more appropriate army employment. In other words he took control of his own future.

*I don't know if you remember or not but to join the boys' service you had to sit first tests to get you into Junior Leaders and then a letter came to my father saying that your son has been selected to take the exam for the Army Apprentices College – what trade would he like? So I put down draughtsman, draughtsman, and draughtsman. Took the exam, come back “your son has been accepted as an Ammunition Examiner.” I was no good at this, it was too technical and I'm no good at maths so I changed to ammunition storeman. (F2F10M59/84.)*

This veteran tried a number of different trades until taking the big step of transferring to a different corps:

*Then in 1969 I saw this thing about transferring to the Intelligence Corps so I thought “I'll have a laugh”, had a laugh, got called all the names under the sun, called stupid, you're after a clean record, this that and the other.!”. I didn't know what it was about, so I took it, struggled a bit and got through. (F2F10M59/84).*

The significance of these extracted examples which reflect the army history of several of the veterans is that at relatively early points in the careers they took the initiative to change direction and find more satisfying or appropriate work for their abilities.

## 2. Family Influences

In relating how they had come to join the army several veterans reported having set out initially to join the navy but enlisted instead into the army. The choice of service may have been as a result of the expectations of family or the influence of friends:

*When I went down the army information office they were wanting to recruit in the Royal Signals, so... I joined the Royal Signals. Went home and told my parents and they went absolutely mad. I should have joined the navy. (F2F06M64/86).*

*I failed to get into the Navy so totally fed up walked straight into the Army Careers Office! I only went to join the Navy because my best friend was joining (he got in by the way!) (MSM03M81/03).*

There was however no notion of regret on the part of these veterans at having been a soldier and not a sailor.

Figure: 10



“...enlisted as Boy Soldiers at 15...”

(Source: Author)

It was clear from these interviews and others who had initially wanted to join the Navy or the Air Force that joining the Army was not seen as a second choice but rather an opportunity to join any branch of the armed forces. Others, especially but not exclusively, those who enlisted as boy soldiers or army apprentices at 15 or 16 years of age related how their parents had influenced their decision to join the armed forces:

*I was born in Liverpool and I couldn't settle to anything there, so eventually my father, who had been in the army during the war, in the Signals, he decides that it might be a good idea that I join the army because I wasn't getting anywhere, and the area I lived in, you could have got into trouble. Toxteth, a really rough area. I think he really wanted to get rid of me. He just wanted me out of the way. (F2F02M62/87).*

*I decided to join up because my Uncle had been in and I thought “I'm not qualified to do 'owt else, I'll have a go at that.” So I joined up in end April/beg May 79 and I enlisted as a boy soldier in the Royal Corps of Signals. (F2F08M79/02).*



*My Dad really wanted me to learn a trade but in those days you joined (the army) and then they allocated you after you got there. I had a place at Art College and at the tech college but I just wanted to be in the army. I was assigned to be a Junior Leader which meant I was destined to go up the ranks all the way to WO1 (which I did). (BIO15M58/83).*

In these last three extracts, the veterans, then young service men, were displaying an ability to make their own decisions whilst at the same time showing respect for their parents or relatives wishes.

### 3. Comradeship and sadness

Actually leaving the army and the period leading up to the date of discharge appear, for the veterans, to have not been remembered in detail as significant events in themselves. Some veterans talked about attending a leaving event or ceremony organised for them but none expressed the view that this acted in any way that they remembered as marking the end of their service. The general view appeared to be that they knew that the end of their service was approaching and they prepared for it both physically, by returning their army equipment and mentally by thinking and planning ahead. What was related by all the veterans was the feeling of sadness, even loss, of the comradeship of fellow soldiers that they had enjoyed for many years and the sense that they no longer 'belonged'.

Veterans were asked questions related to leaving the army and how they felt:

*Yes I do miss the army. I miss the camaraderie, togetherness, the feeling of being part of a big family. (BIO19F40/62).*

*Leaving the army was tinged with sadness, and pleasure. Pleasure at a new start with lots to see and do, and sadness in that you would no longer be a member of the grouping that you had enjoyed for the last 25 years. (BIO06M65/89).*

Similar sentiments were expressed by the vast majority of the veterans when they were asked if they missed the army; although a cursory glance at the YES/NO response frequency counts in Table: 13 indicates an almost equal divide.

Table: 13 Response Count to 'Missing the Army' Question

Question:	Response	Frequency Count	Population
Do you miss the army?	YES	26	51
Do you miss the army?	NO	25	51

The question was deliberately posed in a 'closed' manner in order to elicit a definite response. However of the 25 veterans who answered NO to this question, 20 went on to qualify that what they missed was not the army *per se* but their mates, the comradeship, the feeling of all being in the same boat and for some being part of and belonging to something important. Other remarks provided additional insights such as to the nature of military service being more than just a job:

*If I am going to be honest, yes I have to admit that I did, and do, miss the army. After all, the army wasn't only a job; it was a way of life. (BIO11M60/85).*

Other veterans whilst generally expressing the sentiments quoted above concerning comradeship and feeling part of something added specific elements of military life which they missed:

*What I did miss was possibly the travel. You were never static and stuck in one place. (F2F03M48/72).*

*When I left the army, I did miss the comradeship and many of the perks afforded to my rank. (BIO06M65/89).*

*When I left the Army, I didn't miss it too much but did miss my friends greatly, but after about 6 months I began to yearn for the military life, my friends were away (as usual) on tour. Hearing continuously about my previous Units and friends in "Action" in Iraq and elsewhere made me wish I was with them. (BIO10M81/04).*

In addition, several veterans referred, probably inadvertently to the more psychological aspects of transition to civilian society:

*Initially of course you are bound to miss the regime. After all 22 years does not tend to rub off in one week or so. You certainly adopt a more relaxed attitude when entering civilian life and the trick is to mature that and not fight against it in any way. (BIO08M60/82).*

*I suppose I have mostly good memories – there's no point in dwelling on past injustices (valid or otherwise) since it is in the past. Times they were a-changing and I felt that I was ready for a different life style. So not sad but perhaps a little apprehensive. (BIO17F73/95).*

The notion of moving regularly whilst serving featured highly among the veteran's responses. Soldiers generally move to a new location, or theatre of operations, often a different country every 3 years. These moves or 'postings' are either with their comrades in a regiment or may be a move on promotion for an individual soldier. Thus soldiers become used to 'moving on' every three years and this 'acquired expectation of a change' is something that some veterans associated both with their transition from the army and as a feature of their civilian lives:

*I was not sad when I left the army. I was due a posting anyway and this was a great opportunity, it was an exciting time. But after three and a half years I have now got itchy feet! (BIO03M79/01).*

*The initial difference I thought when I first left [the army] was that it was akin to a new posting. (BIO08M60/82).*

*Well I suppose I was sad in a way but really I had already made the mental move. I was living in my own house. So, no, not sad, it was part of my life and I was moving on, it was like a posting, I knew I was in for 22 and that's it. (F2F04M68/90).*

The minority of 5 veterans who stated quite emphatically that they did not miss the army still shared the same sentiments of all the other veterans in saying that they did to some extent miss their former comrades.

*I can honestly say that I do not miss the army in any way whatsoever. There are some people I will miss of course. (MSM06M79/03).*

Figure: 11



"There are some people I will miss of course." (Source: Author)

Others expressed more practical reasons for completing 22 years:

*I do not miss the army at all. The only reason I completed 22 years was because of the pension. (MSM02M64/87).*

The majority of the veterans could relate in detail their final days or service which may have included a ceremony or special event related to their leaving the army. However none of the veterans felt that this had served as a real marker or end point to their career as invariably they had already mentally or in some cases actually (by taking up civilian employment before they were discharged) accepted that they were leaving the army and such farewell events carried no great significance:

*As I said I had already started to make the transition to Civvie Street. I went back again to be officially 'dined out' of the mess and somehow that was just another dinner, I do not recall any feeling of sadness. It was the end of that part of my life. I left in the year of the Falklands war and did have the feeling that I had 'missed out.' (BIO15M58/83).*

*No and no. There was no particular ceremony or event. I left on the Friday, took two weeks off and was on the train to my new job on the Monday. (BIO28M78/00).*

*Yes I had a good seeing off. All the girls from Holding and Drafting came to see me off. I couldn't get away quick enough. I'd gone out and got drunk the night before! (BIO19F40/62).*

*There were no particular events; I just sort of melted away which was in hindsight for the best. (BIO21M72/96).*

The reflective nature of the interview process employed meant that veterans would interject with answers and remarks at any point in a face to face meeting or in a Microsoft Messenger exchange on the internet. Thus expressions of pride in their service and the sentiment that they would do it all again were recorded for almost every veteran. A lot of the veterans used the word 'experience' – the experience of military service they had enjoyed and that they now looked back on with fondness and pride:

*Being in the army was a wonderful experience which I wouldn't have missed for anything. (MSM05M54/76).*

*That it was a privilege to have served my country that I was fortunate in having a great career, that I was fortunate to meet and work for some of our countries finest leaders. It was a great experience. (BIO21M72/96).*

*I now think that my military service was the best one third of my life so far. There is nothing before or after that can compare to the time spent in the forces. The combination of all the things good and bad make up a unique experience. (BIO08M60/82).*

Essentially there was a strong element in all of the veteran's feelings about army service of having done something extraordinary – of having experienced something which many had not. This sentiment is encapsulated in this slightly lengthy quote from a veteran who left the army in 1993.

*I remember being told as a child that I would remember my school days as being the best of my life. That is not true in my case. I know that the best days of my life were spent in the army. Looking back over the whole 22 years, I wouldn't have missed it for the world. I left Wales at the age of 22 as an educated but unworldly young man and returned at the age of 44 having had my eyes opened. I am still friendly with people who I knew before joining and I am continually amazed at their parochial attitudes. They are very nice people, but have very narrow minds. (MSM08M71/93).*

Whilst most of the veterans individually expressed positive views of their years in the army, describing them often as the best period of their lives which they would do all over again, there were mixed responses to the topic which asked if, in the light of current conflicts, they wished they were still serving. 26 said yes and 25 said no to this question. The next set of data extracts illustrate the two differing views among the veterans starting with those who said 'yes' they did wish they were still serving:

*I tell people that the army is like an old overcoat hanging in the hall; I could quite easily put it back on and take up from where I left off, provided it still fitted of course! I miss the structure, discipline and even the uncertainty of where you would be serving next. (MSM01M70/95).*

*I miss the army more now than when I initially left. I do see my old colleagues or friends heading off on deployments and feel that I would like to be with them. That strikes me as odd due to the dangers involved but as I always said to my JNCO technicians this is really what joining the forces is about. This is when you go and really earn your crust! (BIO05M81/03).*

*Yes I do miss the army, but sadly the past is a distant land never to be revisited. I miss the conditions, the morale courage, the money, respect, comradeship, common cause, loyalty. And Yes I do wish I was still serving but read Kipling's "Tommy Rodgers" and that gives you a feel for ex-soldiers emotions. (F2F01M76/01).*

*Oddly, occasionally, yes I do wish I was still in. Less a wish to be shot at or get cold/hot/tired/dirty, more a touch of the old warhorse hearing the trumpet and raising his head before returning to grazing! (BIO28M78/00).*

Those that said 'no' they did not wish they were still serving often added a reason why, such as:

*No, poorly equipped, lack of manpower, no I do not wish I was still serving. (BIO02F76/01).*

*Not now, I wouldn't want to go back now, the army has changed out of all recognition. The discipline, people discuss orders, they challenge authority, I don't know how things get done. If it was like it was when I was in I would go back. (F2F04M68/90).*

*I do miss the Army, but I miss the Army that I knew, not what the current version is. The Army has changed with the times, not for the better. (BIO04M72/94).*

*News of recent or current conflicts make me feel as I do when I see a Police car flying past with its blue lights flashing and siren wailing – I'm glad it's not me! As far as I am concerned, I've done my bit and it's now someone else's turn. Having said that, I will always hope for their safe return. (MSM08M71/930).*

These views reflect a change in military society brought about probably by changes in attitudes in civilian life. The attitudes towards serving again fell quite clearly into two quite separate camps. However the feeling that the army had changed them beneficially was expressed by almost all the veterans

#### 4. Veterans' self awareness

When veterans were asked to reflect on how they felt their army service had influenced them personally, the responses were all very positive and similar to the two extracts cited below:

*There is no doubt in my mind that the 22 years I served in the army had a profound effect on my life. It gave me confidence, self-esteem and integrity, and I will never forget how wonderfully fit I felt at the end of basic training. I have never been that fit since. The travel that army life afforded also helped form the person that I am today. I am much more open minded than I would ever have been should I have remained at home. (MSM08M71/93).*

*In some ways I suppose the army has changed me, (pauses) yes it has. I think I have always been a strong person, a strong minded person, I know I can do just about anything, no I mean that, I think being in the army was good for me and I did well. It gives you structure – how to do things and solve problems – get things done. (F2F04M68/90).*

#### 5. Affects of Army Service

Apart from the beneficial effects of army service expressed by all the veterans the possible effects of being in actual combat was raised. 12 of the 51 veterans stated that they had been in a combat situation. None of these veterans felt that they had

suffered in any major way as a result and were able to talk about these experiences.

*I took part in combat operations but only in Northern Ireland. I can talk about my time in NI but like most soldiers I rarely do mention it. I find that only other soldiers/ex soldiers really understand what it is like to be 'under fire.' (BIO20M79/05).*

*I was shot at in Northern Ireland; bullet went through the windscreen so that was the closest I got to being removed from earth in combat. I was very close to a large explosion but escaped, as did all of us there, with just scrapes and small cuts and being covered in dust! (BIO15M58/83).*

*I was nervous for years about walking past parked cars with no one in them in case they were booby trapped. Also witnessed a shooting and was involved in helping a policeman who was shot and then died. At the time you just got on with the job but I used to get flashbacks. I don't think it has affected me in any way that is noticeable. It's experience I can talk about now. (BIO15M58/83).*

In reflecting back to times when they felt that things were really hard and really dangerous, whilst those veterans who had been in combat would say so, there was a clear reticence to provide details and interviewees were not pressed to do so. The readiness with which all the veterans responded to topics posed for discussion reflected the importance of this part of their lives. There was eagerness on the part of many of the veterans to tell their stories and have them written down. However how veterans think of themselves sparked some negative reactions in relation to the use of the term veteran itself.

#### *6. Looking Back/ position in society – use of term veteran*

At an early point in the interview stage of this research the use of the term 'veteran' was challenged. Many of the participants felt that the term was inappropriate to them and felt very strongly that they were 'civilians' Many preferred, if anything the term 'ex serviceman' or 'ex servicewoman'. Discussions



with veterans on this issue linked closely with the issues above concerning feelings of pride in having served:

*I think of myself as an ex-soldier, not as a veteran as we do not get any benefits for such. I only wish we were like the Americans on this point. (BIO06M65/89).*

*I see myself as an ex-serviceman (but always a Sapper). I don't think you will hear many blokes call themselves a "Veteran". In my mind a "veteran" is an ex-serviceman who has seen "extensive action" like in the WW2 days or Korea or even the Falklands conflict (proper shooting matches). (BIO10M81/04).*

*I am an ex-serviceman, and do not like the term 'veteran'. This may be down to use of the term in various American shows, when they refer to all as veterans, even those who have done nothing more than attend a 'thunder box' for a short period in Cuba. (MSM02M64/87).*

*Veteran/an ex soldier or ex-serviceman/woman? Yes, I will never be a Civvy, I will always be Ex Forces. (BIO02F76/01).*

Clearly the majority of veterans who disliked the term felt that it was not necessary to attach any descriptive title to themselves. Whilst the term is used by the British government to describe anyone who have served in the armed forces – even for as little as one day – it has an effective application only for those who are in need of the financial state support provided by the Veterans' Agency. By virtue of having served in the services and left, ex army personnel were and are ex service people in the same way that those who have spent a working life mining coal and no longer do so, are ex miners.

The six issues described above are set in and are derived from the lived and remembered experiences of the veterans as they reflected back on their army careers. The end of a well loved career at 40 years of age whilst presently great difficulties for some also provides an opportunity for self reflection. All the veterans in this study expressed the view that their military service had been

rewarding and beneficial, non regretted having served and most said that they would do it all again if they could. Regrets were primarily concerned with the loss of the comradeship and team spirit which is a key feature of service life. From the six issues presented here it is clear that all of the veterans had developed a strong self awareness, they knew their own strengths and capabilities and were able to look to their future civilian careers in a positive way. This positive attitude to life and generally high self esteem meant that these veterans, generally, approached the business of becoming civilians with the same enthusiasm that they had devoted to their army careers. It is clear from the words of the veterans that they joined the army because they wanted to, tried hard and did well and left without any feeling that they had made a wrong choice in joining but regrets only that their military careers had come to an end.

## **Dimension Two - Preparation for leaving**

All three branches of the regular armed forces use the term 'resettlement' for the organised and funded process and service available to service people who have completed a qualifying period and are leaving the navy, army or air force on discharge. Some servicemen and women make full use of what is 'on offer' they attend a variety of courses, others do not. All participants were asked

*"What did YOU do to help you prepare for life as a civilian BEFORE you completed your service?"*

What emerged from the collected data on what veterans did to prepare themselves for employment is to some extent closely linked to veteran's personal experiences and views on 'resettlement' and are also drawn from answers to the slightly different question:

*"What did the ARMY do to help you prepare for life as a civilian?"*

However resettlement issues are considered separately in detail in the next section in order now to concentrate on and discuss what the individual soldier did (or did not do) for him or her self prior to leaving the army; how they prepared themselves for employment in civilian life.

Soldiers live, work and play in a structured, disciplined and regulated society. There is a clear career path to follow and those that do the right things progress up the rank and pay structure. The right things being attending and passing education courses and attending and passing specialist occupation or skills courses. In parallel to these clearly measurable activities, participation in sports and other non military or extra curricular activities and pursuits and demonstrations of leadership and team spirit on exercises and on operations will assist the individual soldier in obtaining high grades on annual performance reports. High report scores and recommendations, together with the appropriate education and training qualifications lead to promotion; the system applies to all soldiers. Those that work hard and play hard are rewarded for their efforts. Career development is discussed at least annually at report time and soldiers have a very clear idea of where they stand and what their military future holds. Those who have done well in the military will have done the right things; have probably been ambitious and planned ahead to the next set of requirements for progression. The expected results of planning ahead and doing all the right things in a military society are usually immediate and obvious. Passing a course or getting promoted can mean extra pay perhaps enhanced status and increased responsibility.

The army spends many months turning a civilian into a soldier. The new recruit will have entered a very different society and will by association and by learning the ways of the army become a soldier. However whilst the recruit develops self

reliance and learns and practices individual military skills he or she also learns to be part of a team; a team in which he or she plays an important part. The whole organisation of the military is aimed at ensuring that everyone is able to do his or her job efficiently and effectively. If soldiers are ill they are seen very quickly by a medical officer, if soldiers have family or personal problems they can seek the advice of their commander or a welfare officer. Similarly soldiers who wish to progress or obtain a specialist qualification can have a discussion with their commander or an education officer. All of these services help to ensure that soldiers are physically and mentally fit and trained to perform their military role. Soldiers come to rely on these 'immediately available' sources of support.

Throughout their service keen and ambitious soldiers are encouraged to use their initiative and to attend courses which will enhance their promotion prospects and time is made available for this to happen. Clearly the army itself is the principal beneficiary of the training it delivers to its own soldiers. However when it becomes time for a soldier to leave the army and he or she seeks appropriate training, that training is solely for the benefit of the individual soldier. Whilst official assistance is available in the form of resettlement advice and training courses, these only become available and the issue of resettlement itself an important issue to the individual, towards the end of a soldier's career.

For probably most soldiers nearing the end of a 22 year engagement the expected results of thinking about and planning for life as a civilian will not be immediate, clear and obvious. Civilian society, unlike military society, is not uniformly structured, disciplined and regulated. It is different and diverse and it is this difference and this diversity which can create uncertainty, doubt and even loss of

confidence in the minds of those nearing the end of their service career. They are leaving behind all that is familiar and all that they have known. The support afforded serving soldiers which embraces all aspects of their physical, mental and spiritual well being ends when their service contract finishes. In civilian life the help and assistance available to support the different facets of living in civilian society, work, family, relaxation and health for example can appear to be ad hoc, disorganised and perhaps difficult to obtain to an ex soldier used to the perhaps somewhat sheltered life of a soldier. Some soldiers realise that they themselves will have to do something in order to make a successful transition to life as a civilian and start to make plans often years before they are due for discharge. Other soldiers hang on hoping perhaps that they can continue to serve or that something will turn up. Questions in this section were concerned with discovering what individual veterans did to prepare themselves for civilian life.

What veterans did what they thought and how they now reflect on this period of preparation is presented and discussed in selected excerpts from the participant group. The selected excerpts portray a representative view of the several different approaches adopted. These different approaches range on a scale from those who did absolutely nothing and hoped that something would turn up, to, at the other end of the scale those who carefully planned and prepared for all aspects of leaving the army. Between these two extremes there are a number of different approaches reflecting varying degrees of forward planning and thinking.

It is evident from all the interview data that the majority of the veterans who approached the end of their military careers positively and prepared and planned ahead had already started the process of transition to civilian life; they had accepted the inevitable and using the skills learned as soldiers actively set about

planning and doing things which they hoped would achieve the results they wished for. Key to the start of a successful period of preparation however would appear to be an acceptance that the end of a military career is both inevitable and predictable. It was clear from the answers to the question, mentioned previously and repeated below for clarity that many of the participant group had begun to think about their futures well before their military service ended:

*“What did YOU do to help you prepare for life as a civilian BEFORE you completed your service?”*

The majority gave responses like the following examples

*I knew that if I did not get a job right away I could sustain the family for a good 18 months before money got tight. I did see a lot of people who did nothing to prepare, or left it to the last minute to think about things but then it was too late, and decided that I would not be one of them. (MSM01M70/95).*

*Once I'd decided on the Police Force as a career, there was very little for me to do apart from returning to the UK for interviews. (MSM08M71/93).*

*I knew it would happen so I wanted to make sure I was as ready as I could possibly be. I didn't write down any big plan, I just carried around some ideas of what I needed to do for about 7 years and acted on those ideas whenever I could. (BIO05M81/03).*

*Once I committed my self to the situation, I also knew that there was no way that I was going to try and stay in the Army beyond 40 and set about making myself as employable as possible for when I left. (MSM06M79/03).*

Two veterans, whilst accepting that their service careers were coming to an end, adopted an apparently negative approach, made no special preparations, fully expected to be unemployed and hoped that something would turn up:

*What did I do, to be honest absolutely nothing. I played it off the cuff. (BIO09M65/91).*

*Believe it or not I did NOTHING! I, like a lot of my colleagues sort of closed my eyes to the fact that I might be unemployed in the hope that something would turn up!! (MSM03M81/03).*

One veteran voiced the fear that unemployment was a possibility but did do something about it:

*As time to leave came closer and the realisation that I would be unemployed dawned on me I put some thought into what to do. As I don't live too far from a large Airport and 9/11 was a recent event I got myself onto an Aviation Security Course paid for by the MOD. (BIO24M76/00).*

One of the veterans in the participant group had fully accepted that his service career was ending, that his life and his family's was about to change. He decided that in the short term he would work part time and 'treat' his family:

*When I left the army I decided that I was sick of having no money so I worked part time for a year and spent all my gratuity. Took my family away on holiday which I had been promising them for years. Yes, suddenly I had a big splurge of money and I thought "right, we're gonna do some stuff here." I needed a new car, I bought a new car, I promised the kids I would take them to Florida. We went to Disneyworld, and I worked part time for [UK Football team] United F.C. as a Coach. (F2F08M70/02).*

Even where a veteran admitted to having made few preparations there was also an admission that this had been a mistake:

*I did very little in the form of preparation for my discharge. This was a big mistake as I soon realised that qualifications is the name of the game in civilian life. (F2F07M64/86).*

In fact, with the exception of veteran F2F08M70/02 who only worked part time initially, none of the veterans in the participant group went from military life straight into a situation of unemployment. This included one veteran who among others felt that he had been in the right place at the right time:

*I suppose I could have taken resettlement prior to leaving the army. However I was on my second tour in the Falklands, and as all I could think of doing were things like (don't laugh) thatching and dry stone walling, I didn't really have much opportunity so I didn't bother. I never bothered approaching any of the service organisations either, as when I finished my tour in the Falklands I luckily saw an ad in my hometown local paper [name of local paper] for the BBC Monitoring Service and applied for it and got it. (BIO11M60/85)*

Clearly being on the other side of the world from the United Kingdom during the last few months of service caused difficulties for BIO11M60/85.

Other veterans, including again F2F08M70/02 had strong grounds to believe that they would be commissioned or be granted continuance of their service and thus delayed making preparations for civilian life.

*I had applied for a Commission in my last year, (me and 4 others didn't get the one vacancy that year) and as soon as that avenue to extend my colour service was blocked, I remember immediately going into 'let's get ready for civilian life' mode. (BIO14M71/94).*

*I applied for continuance when I had a year to serve which would have basically given me another minimum of 2 years, up to 5, same rank, same money. I was advised to apply for a post, did so and didn't get it. So I started to make my plans getting ready to finish. Six weeks before I was due to leave, they offered me a continuance post. I had already relocated my family so I told them to shove it. (F2F08M70/02).*

*I had not intended to quit the Army, and was hopeful of either a commission or extended service in my wife's home town of [name of town], Germany, where I spent my last army tour. But with six months left, and having been promised the earth, I was instructed to return to N Germany. Thus I rushed my 'resettlement' into my last 3 months and essentially 'switched off'. (MSM07M64/86).*

Indications that a short service commission or limited continuance in the same rank might be an option for some soldiers in the final years of their service clearly caused many to delay even thinking about preparations for leaving and some were clearly aggrieved and felt let down. The vast majority of veterans had however made plans and a major priority was settling their service family in Great Britain and in their own property.

*I did not do anything to prepare for civilian life other than buying a house near Nottingham just before I left the service. I also had to buy my civilian suits! (BIO06M65/89.)*

*I was acutely aware that the day would come when I would have to leave the forces and I decided to start working towards this, within the framework of my military service. I bought myself a house whilst I was serving as an instructor with the TA. (BIO05M81/03).*



Buying a civilian house was also seen as a way into being accepted in civilian society:

*My husband and I bought a property in [town] 4-5 years before I retired which we lived in during our leave. My husband also moved into the house 10 months before I finished. By doing this we were already accepted by our community before we took up full time residence together. (BIO01F78/00).*

Almost all the participant group were or had been married whilst serving in the army and decisions made about the future as a civilian family were usually made jointly

*We had made arrangements to have a bungalow built to meet our needs and as my work has been so enjoyable we are still in that property , I guess the planning we put in and all the hours we , as a family, spent discussing how the property should be paid off and we must have got it just about right. (F2F05M62/84).*

However not all the veterans included their spouses in decisions about their future together as civilians. When asked what were the priorities when seeking a first civilian job the most popular response was 'job satisfaction.' However, in addition to job satisfaction as a major factor in job choice, identifying suitable civilian schools for children was also considered to be important:

*Getting my daughter a place in the local school proved to be easy, and as I moved back to the area where both my wife and I were originally from, the assimilation was basically seamless. (MSM08M71/93).*

*I had also settled my family in UK 2 years before my discharge, partly for the education of my children and also to ensure that they would be well suited to civilian life by the time I got out. (MSM02M64/87).*

A common activity in the period before discharge from the army was for veterans to carry out research of civilian job availability and qualifications required. In some cases this included gaining access to funding to pay course fees in others speaking to friends and former service colleagues:

Well before I left the army, I carried out research to see what the civilian industry was looking for. This was carried out about 2 years before my release, then I attended evening classes and self taught areas that I believed would help in Civvy St, And it did. (BIO02F76/01).

To prepare myself for my job as a Yeoman Warder which is what I wanted to so I studied history. (BIO22M82/04).

The Army helped prepare me for civilian life by providing me with finance for my degree, allowed me time to study – a very understanding boss!! (BIO27M64/87).

I spent my final year in the army trying to prepare for my next career of which I intended to join the Police force. (BIO10M81/04).

One veteran in particular made it quite clear the he had totally accepted that his army career would end and set out to ensure a smooth transition:

- I determined what I wanted to do and chose a path that was completely different from that which I was used to in the army.
- I studied to gain civil qualifications
- I purchased a home in good time for the future
- I sorted my finances out. (BIO26M66/98).

A number of veterans knew or found out about employment opportunities in civilian government agencies which were the same as or similar to their military trade and set about ensuring that they were eligible and qualified:

Well I knew it was coming I suppose and I knew from others I could get a job at [government agency] as a civvie and then I saw the ad for the [government agency] and went for that so I was already qualified and had the clearance. We already had our own house, not this one. I mean we had a mortgage but we were on the ladder. (F2F04M68/90).

It was always my intention to join [government agency] when my 22 was completed, so I had tried to keep abreast of current developments within that field in preparation. Being a [specialist trade] qualified me to apply for a job with [government agency], and I had also been encouraged by various [government agency] employees to apply. Having spoken to a number of army colleagues who had gone through the process, I knew what was required. (MSM02M64/87).

Clearly for soldiers with a trade or skill which is immediately transferable to civilian life, seeking employment as part of the process of transition is less of a major

concern. It is also clear that many of the veterans had recognised the need for appropriate and recognisable qualifications in the civilian labour market well before they were due for discharge and had taken the initiative to identify and study for a wide variety of qualifications:

*In order to prepare my self for civilian life I engaged in a number of educational courses: Diploma in Design Engineering, BSc (Hons) Masters degree in Science and a Masters degree in Education. (BIO16M65/87).*

*I felt I needed to prove to civilian employers my ability to study to a particular level and was accepted for the course by the university after an interview. (BIO23M81/05.)*

*In September 2001, I commenced, at my own expense and by taking a days leave every week, a day release Master of Science Degree at the University of Lincoln in HRM and Development. (BIO20M79/05).*

*Long before I left the Army I realised that I was under qualified so started an Open University degree in 1989. My intention was to finish this before my 22 year point in 1995. (BIO07M70/92).*

The Army's own resettlement service was used and praised by some veterans:

*I also made use of as much of the resettlement offered as I could. I did the 3-day career transition workshop with Coutts; I do consider this to be 3 days particularly well spent. (BIO05M81/03).*

Other veterans however did not use or made limited use of what the army's resettlement service had to offer. In fact some were very critical of this part of their preparation for leaving. Some knew what was on offer but had already made their own plans:

*I already knew that I was going into my own business – that had been decided a couple of years before, I wasn't afraid. (F2F02M62/87).*

*The army did not really help me make the transition to civilian life, but that was only my choice. I attended one resettlement interview – Financial Planning but I already had everything in hand to start work with [a civilian employer]. (BIO06M65/89).*

A small number of veterans did not attend resettlement courses but wished in hindsight that they had. One veteran wished, however, that he had and said:

*I didn't do any resettlement courses, I could have done bricklaying or plastering wish I had now for DIY, you know, not as a job. (F2F09M49/73).*

Another veteran also saw the personal benefits of learning a new skill:

*As part of my resettlement I completed a Household Maintenance course at Catterick Camp just prior to leaving the army in 1976, which I found personally very useful in future years. (MSM05M54/76).*

Whilst the various ex service organisations are clearly for the benefit of those who have finished their service, some veterans made use of organisations such as the RBL in their search for employment, prior to discharge.

*I got some help from the British Legion to help me get a War Pension. (BIO22M82/04).*

*I looked for assistance from every possible direction, including the RBL and many others. I rewrote my CV an estimated 200 times during my first two years. (BIO28M78/00).*

Other veterans did not seek help from ex service organisations although their existence was acknowledged:

*I didn't seek help from any of the service organisations I mean like the RBL, when I was leaving, they're too slow, though 'well meaning and helpful' It's more geared to National Servicemen and WW11 and Korean Vets, or is that a stereotype? (F2F01M76/01).*

*I did not have to seek any help from any service organisation, as I had made my bed a long time before. (MSM01M70/95).*

Soldiers work and play together over many years and firm bonds and friendships are made. Many veterans maintained these friendships with colleagues who had preceded them into civilian life and these contacts proved useful to some:

*I must admit to not seeking any assistance which in the short term may have helped me but as it worked out links with former colleagues proved to be more helpful. (BIO08M60/82).*

The preparations veteran's made for leaving fall into two extremes as shown in Table: 14. These extremes are drawn from the veterans' own words both when they were referring to themselves and relating what others had done or not done

to prepare themselves for leaving the army. All of the positive actions in the left hand column required the individual veteran to initiate an activity, in other words the army is no longer responsible for a whole range of life's problems once a soldier has been discharged. In the veterans' quotations cited it is clear that the majority of veterans did begin to make plans well before their discharge date and found somewhere to live and schooling for their children. In doing this they had clearly accepted the inevitable and took a positive approach to the end of their army service. No example of a veteran fitting all the negative attitudes listed in the right hand column of Table: 14 was identified and it is suggested that a soldier who has completed 22 or more years service and probably achieved senior rank is unlikely to have adopted such a negative approach to his or her departure from the army. However even when the army's active duty roles in combat zones were few and many soldiers enjoyed a more relaxed time during their last 6 months of service, such as during the Cold War era, many did not accept the training advice available to assist them in returning to civilian life; in other words they made a personal choice not to do so. Similarly in the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the resettlement training packages are not always accessed by those leaving the army indicating perhaps that soldiers do retain their individuality and ability to make their own life decisions even after a long period of military service.

**Table: 14 Extremes of Preparation for Leaving**

<b>Thoroughly Planned and Prepared Several Years ahead of discharge</b>	<b>No Planning and Preparation Up to point of discharge</b>
Accepted that it was going to happen	Did not accept that it was going to happen
Organised civilian house in Great Britain	Made no early arrangements for civilian accommodation
Discussed issues with spouse	Hoped something would turn up
Identified schools for children	Hoped to get continued service
Researched possible jobs	Expected to be unemployed
Researched necessary qualifications	Expected to go into low paid work
Identified source of funding	Took no positive action
Organised own training/education	Took no positive action
Made selected use of Army Resettlement Service	Did not use or limited use of Army Resettlement Service
Sought advice and assistance from ex service organisations	Did not seek help from ex service organisations.
Sought advice and help from colleagues, family and friends	Did not consult with spouse, colleagues or friends
Worked at getting a home posting for last 12 months of service	Took no positive action

The next section now discusses in more detail veterans' views on resettlement provision and the last minute attempts made by the army to encourage some soldiers to continue serving

### **Dimension Three - Retention and Resettlement**

With very few exceptions the organisation and provision of resettlement training and advice provided by the army attracted mainly criticism and expressions of dissatisfaction. Those veterans who did make negative remarks served in a period spanning the Second World War to the present day. Some veterans who had served in the last 10 years of the 1990s and the first 5 years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century felt that the resettlement advice they were given was satisfactory or even good. So there are those veterans who felt the service was poor and inadequate and a lesser number who felt it did help them return to civilian life.

Some veterans admitted to knowing of the existence of the resettlement service but chose not to take up what was on offer, whilst others were happy to sign up for courses in a range household maintenance skills such as bricklaying and plastering but primarily for their own benefit as house owners. Veterans were asked if they had made use of the resettlement service available to them and to comment on the quality of provision; their answers fell clearly into two groups:

*The army resettlement service? Well no, I did not really use it at the end of my service. I had an interview with a passed over major who really just gave me a lot of leaflets. I did one course on how to apply for a job and then a one-day seminar on how to handle finances which was useful and interesting. (BIO15M58/83).*

*I always put my army certificate down as Army Cert Ed, well that's what it is, The Army Certificate of Education First Class but I know at least one employer thought it was a 'Cert Ed' anyway it helped to get me into a good training job. (BIO15M58/83).*

Other veterans saw no benefit in taking up resettlement training, in some cases because although still serving they were employed within civilianised government agencies and saw this as a positive contributor to their transition training for civilian life:

*I don't know if the army did much to help me prepare for life as a civilian... having spent 5 years of my army career working in [government agency] basically as a civilian, I never felt that I needed to change to become a civilian again. I attended the Resettlement Courses provided by the army but didn't really find them beneficial. (MSM08M71/93).*

Army officers whose duties included resettlement advice came in for a great deal of criticism, the view expressed by many veterans was that officers

performing the job were not front runners in the promotion stakes and took a very complacent attitude towards those leaving the army.

*I attended one resettlement course, well not a course as such – a 3 day seminar. And I also had 3 meetings with a senior education officer. Those resettlement guidances was worse than useless because the people giving the guidance had never been civilians cos these were army people, army, air force, service people. Senior service officers. So really not qualified to give advice. (F2F02M64/87).*

*I got in touch with the Regional Resettlement Officer in [Town] who, after a few weeks research, came up with a vacancy for a stable-hand on some horse-breeding farm on the other side of the country. Heavens knows who his contacts were! But I was not willing to consider the idea of being an unwilling Heracles in someone else's Augean stables, so I declined! I don't know anything about horses. He was put out – the owner of the stables was apparently a friend of his. I didn't contact him again, and he made no further contribution. I thought then that he should have been prosecuted by MOD for drawing their money under false pretences. (BIO12M64/88).*

There was also a tendency it seemed for those about to leave the army after completing 22 years service to be encouraged not to aim too high when job hunting:

*My resettlement officer was concerned only with the date I would vacate my quarter and would not even consider any other help until I could tell him. His advice to me was 'become a security guard' without reading my career resume or medical conditions. The whole issue of resettlement advice was fudged or lacking. (BIO07M70/92).*

*The resettlement help offered to servicemen was pretty pathetic. I was offered the usual one day financial planning, how to apply for a council house, resettlement interview by an uninterested Education Corps major, and that was about it. Get the ticks in the boxes and don't say you weren't given any help. (MSM01M70/95).*



Even as recently at the year 2000 negative remarks were being made about the resettlement courses available to those leaving the army. In this next extract the veteran identified positively with the fact that he had found himself an appropriate course but was critical of other courses provided under the auspices of what he clearly identified as part of the army's resettlement provision.

*...I took an Aviation Security Course paid for by the MOD. There were some ex service people involved in running the course so the cost of the course and accommodation came to the maximum amount I was entitled to. I also completed a course with the Career Transition Partnership looking at CV's and alike which was of no benefit at all. (BIO24M76/00).*

Other veterans were simply dismissive of army resettlement provision:

*The organisation is meant to assist in identifying jobs for ex-military (can't remember what they called, but they have offices in [name of town]), however they were no help whatsoever. (BIO01F78/00).*

In similar vein this veteran thought that the resettlement provision was for those who couldn't help themselves:

*They were there to help the less intelligent people who couldn't do things for themselves and I think they were there to help them more than anybody else. . (F2F03M48/72).*

Of course the last quotation came from a veteran discharged from a much larger army in 1972 when it would not have been unusual for a soldier to complete 22 years service and have reached the relatively junior rank of Corporal. Thus large numbers of soldiers would have been passing through a resettlement system very different to the provision available to soldiers leaving in the 1990s and the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. However,

positive comments from some veterans contradict the criticisms of others and some veterans did find the resettlement courses on offer appropriate and beneficial:

*I attended two or three pre-release courses (Health and safety; NEBOSH certificate, 'TQM' and a number of one-day seminars). The H&S course was valuable in that in my first job I was handed the responsibility of H&S Manager as a consequence of the qualification, with a nice raise in pay to boot! (BIO18M72/94).*

*I also took full advantage of the 6-week resettlement course and rounded out my qualifications with a Cisco Certified Network Associate qualification (CCNA). (BIO05M81/03).*

The notion that the army does not find you a job is mentioned by several veterans in a manner almost scornful of other soldiers:

*The Army has an excellent resettlement program as you are aware of. However, it is not the Army that prepares you for Civvy St, it is the individual that prepares themselves for Civvy St. I carried out a number of exams prior to my resettlement and then did final exams during this period. (BIO02F76/01).*

*The Army resettlement facilities are very good and (although some complain) you get out of it what you need. Some expect it all to be done for them. (BIO10M81/04).*

*Whatever jargon/flannel that you are fed, sorry they cannot get you work and at 40 plus years of age whatever your qualifications are, you are a past it has been, on your own. (F2F01M76/01).*

*One of the things I actually noticed in civilian life was that you had to go and find your own job. No one was going to give it to you. (F2F03M48/72).*

This same veteran (employed in a well paid job) went on to relate that he had completed a number of courses and had gone on to study for a degree:

*To prepare myself for Civvie Street I did some courses in Security and Manned Guarding Assessor, Health and safety qualification and some computer training ECDL. MS packages. I wanted to*

*complete a degree – ‘sorry can’t’ said the army. I am now 2 years short of BA (Hons). (F2F03M48/72).*

Several veterans knew what resettlement provision was available but did not take up any courses or seek advice because they had organised it all themselves:

*There is a lot of help available though I had already sorted out housing, employment and finances so did not need to use it. (BIO20M79/05).*

Other veterans were happy to take up courses which included skills they could use to maintain their own houses:

*As part of my resettlement I completed a household Maintenance course at Catterick Camp just prior to leaving the army in 1976, which I found very useful in future years. (MSM05M54/76).*

Attempts were made by the army to track some:

*For some months after I left a Brigadier (probably a retired Brigadier) phoned me periodically to see how I was getting on and always expressed surprise that I was doing well, earning a lot and steadily moving up the corporate ladder. (BIO15M58/83).*

At least one veteran felt that his resettlement training advice had been unsatisfactory and said so in a feedback letter. This veteran tells of how he received a reply from the army which reflects perhaps the same complacency displayed by those officers conducting resettlement interviews mentioned earlier:

*For a resettlement course, I organised a place on a [foreign language] course – the Army paid for it. I received a letter asking for my thoughts on the system...I replied voicing my complaints of what I thought was a system sadly lacking in many respects, I had a very nice condescending letter from “Brigadier ever so clever”, who plainly didn’t have a clue about leaving the Army and moving abroad. (MSM07M64/86).*

The idea that serving army officers are not ideally suited to give job advice was mentioned frequently with complaints that the advice given encouraged individuals not to aim too high and effectively settle for any job. On the other hand some veterans felt that they were painted a far too rosy picture of what civilian employers were seeking:

*I felt the Army did it's best to prepare people for civilian life, but to keep drumming into everyone at the multitude of seminars and briefings I attended that all civilian employers would be falling over themselves to employ "Ex-Servicemen" just because of who or what they were and what they could offer in any field irrespective of prior experience I felt was naïve and totally unfounded. (BIO14M71/94).*

Veteran's stories of last minutes attempts by the army to get Warrant Officers in particular to stay on for further service often with less favourable pay conditions were repeated by several veterans. Resettlement is the term used by the army for the period which marks the end of a soldier's career when he or she may be allowed time off from military duties to seek civilian employment. Soldiers in this period of their service speak of "Being on resettlement." The same term is also used to describe the opportunities made available for training and advice which is funded by the army. During this period of resettlement the individual soldier will probably be considering a range of options for civilian employment and such issues as organising accommodation and coming to terms with the fact that his or her military career really is coming to an end. The army itself will have invoked this termination process; opportunities for resettlement training are discussed and dates agreed for individuals to hand back their clothing and equipment and to

vacate their military accommodation. These termination steps are major stepping stones towards becoming a civilian. It comes as a surprise even a shock therefore for some soldiers at the end of their careers to suddenly be offered an opportunity to continue their service. This is a scheme known as continuance. For a selected few there is an opportunity to continue serving up to the age of 55. When continuance is granted however there are often restrictions attached such as reduction in pay or what is known as limited continuance where a soldier is given extended service one year at a time. If the offer of continuance is made well in advance, that is well before an individual has begun the process of resettlement, then a soldier can make his or her decision to extend or to leave the army before they have become embroiled in the process of coming to terms with leaving the army.

Whilst retention of good well qualified people appears to be good human resource practice it is the fact that the offer was made on all the occasions reported when the individual concerned had only a few weeks or in some cases a few days left to serve. Veterans in this situation all say that they had already made firm plans, had perhaps obtained civilian employment and had certainly begun the mental process associated with leaving the army.

*The day came when I was due to leave and I was called in to see my commanding officer ... he said to me we would like you to stay on, on limited continuance which meant that I would drop a rank in pay but keep the badge of rank of a WO1. I had already started my civilian job, the money was as good as I was getting in the army, I liked the job, the family were settled. It also smacked of bad planning. I turned down the army's offer, much to the colonel's surprise. The army seemed to have suddenly realised*

*that they were losing a very experienced soldier and instructor and it would leave a gap. (BIO15M58/83).*

*I started to make my plans getting ready to finish. Six weeks before I was due to leave, they offered me a continuance post. I had already relocated my family so I told them to shove it. (F2F08M79/02).*

For some veterans their military career ended with an extended period during which they were not required for duty and were sent on what is known as 'gardening leave'. The soldier still receives his or her pay but lives at home, does not have to perform any military duties and can spend this time job hunting. This practice seems to be less prevalent when the armed forces are 'stretched' due to operational commitments when everyone is required to do perform their duty role:

*The one useful thing the army did was allowing me to use my last six months service to look for civilian employment. I seem to recall that most people served their last 6 months in the UK, but because of my wife's employment in Germany, the army was happy for us to stay there. (MSM08M71/93).*

## **Conclusion**

A soldier's entry into the army is orderly and highly structured. The new recruit's induction and training are uniformly delivered and usually involve perhaps 20 to 30 individuals all enlisting and being trained at the same time. By contrast, at the end of 22 years service soldiers leave their army units individually. The discharge process appears unstructured and haphazard with no uniform approach to resettling the soldier into civilian life. Some are fortunate to be released from military duties several months before discharge to seek employment. Other veterans organise their own education and

training as part of a well thought out plan made well before their discharge date, whilst others took advice from appointed army officers and attended resettlement courses. Regardless of the choices made veterans clearly had mixed feelings on the quality of the army's resettlement service voicing complaints of being encouraged to get a job, any job, or to find work in the security industry. On the other hand some veterans complained that the advice that civilian employers would be falling over themselves to recruit ex soldiers was found to be patently untrue. Veterans leaving in the late 1990s and early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century were less scathing, many feeling that the resettlement service was good. What is clear is an understanding by some that no matter what provision for training and advice the army provides it is fundamentally the individual soldier's responsibility to seek and find their own civilian employment. Those that realised this and realised it well in advance of their discharge date were better prepared to rejoin the civilian labour market than those who did not. This chapter began by describing how the sorting and analysis of data led to the conclusion that veterans can hold the same or similar views on a range of issues related to service life regardless of when they served in the army and viewing the data from this perspective generated six different dimensions. The first of the three dimensions discussed in this chapter involves a range of issues common to all the veterans and the second two with the period when they were still serving, the next chapter continues to discuss the analysis of the data and is concerned with the period when the former soldiers became civilians.

## **CHAPTER 5**

# **FURTHER ANALYSIS: VETERANS START AGAIN**

### **Introduction**

The data derived from veteran's stories covers both the memories of their military experiences and the years after they left the army and became civilians. Chapter 4 described how the data was identified and organised into 6 dimensions and discussed the first three dimensions concerned with the final phase of a soldier's career. This chapter now continues discussion of the analysis and presents data concerned with how veterans' found their way into the civilian labour market, their views and feelings about civilian workers and how they now see themselves as ex regular soldiers. Throughout the period of data collection of course all of the veterans were civilians and all of their words spoken or written directly in response to questions and in discussions generally are reflective of both periods of their lives, civilian and military. Soldiers leaving the army after 22 years or more service are as different in personality and life experiences as those who have not served. What veterans have in common is that they have all served in the army for a considerable period of time. Veterans do not share a common life history and their previous (pre military service) experiences of the civilian labour market vary considerably. Some of the veterans in the participant group had worked as civilians before they enlisted and the term 'rejoining the labour market' for some of the participant group correctly describes the process of getting a job



in civilian life after army service. This group includes those who had joined the army at 15 years of age. Until the late 1950s it was relatively easy for youngsters to find unregulated 'cash in hand' employment out of school hours and during school holidays. As was discussed in Chapter 4 as part of the initial analysis process it was determined that among the 51 veterans 25 had worked before enlistment and 26 had not. In relating what they had done after leaving school and before joining the army, none of the veterans made any conscious link to their previous civilian employment and what they ended up doing after they had left the army. It was also established in chapter 4 that there appears to be no clear correlation of variables such as age or army rank attained between those who had worked before military service, either as children or young adults and those who had not. This thread of analysis extended into considerations of the veterans' different approaches to getting a civilian job and dimension four discusses how veterans went about rejoining the labour market.

#### **Dimension Four - Rejoining the labour market**

Seeking a new job at the age of 40 plus years of age is an experience probably limited more usually to those who, for whatever reason lose their jobs. Rejoining the labour market for ex soldiers is not necessarily any different to any adult seeking and finding a job. It is however, unlike the transition of a school leaver entering the labour market for the first time, since those who have served for 22 years in the army will be at least 40 years old.

The 40 year old veteran will already have worked for many years as a soldier but in an environment and with a work ethic very different to that found in civilian society. The situation of a veteran seeking to rejoin the labour market is also different in some ways to the civilian whose job has been made redundant. Soldiers know when their contracted term of service is to end and some but not all will prepare for this change in career; the civilian suffering redundancy may not. The veteran may also have the feeling, as many do, of pride in having served and of having achieved career success by attaining a high rank such as that of a Warrant Officer, whilst the civilian facing redundancy may suffer feelings of bitterness and resentment towards their former employer. Both military and civilian working lives provide individuals with opportunities for progression and self improvement. Throughout their service career and as they are promoted or gain new skills and knowledge, individual soldiers take on more responsibilities, or are moved on promotion to a different unit (known as being posted) to take on a 'new job'. Civilian workers can similarly of course also acquire new skills and knowledge, be promoted and move on and up a career ladder or move from one employment to another. However, whereas civilians may decide themselves that they wish to change employment and seek a new job, soldiers are generally sent to where the army needs their particular expertise and where a job needs to be done. Generally soldiers move location every 3 or four years and whilst they may perform a very similar job, the change of location and perhaps the intensity of an operational tour will make the change seem different and new.

Many civilians remain in the same job doing much the same thing in the same location for a large part of their working lives. For both civilians and veterans however, changing jobs or seeking a new civilian job for the first time can be challenging and stressful. The newly discharged soldier may, like his or her civilian counterparts have family responsibilities and there is often an urgency to gain employment in order that bills can be paid and the family cared for. The newly discharged veteran however, leaves the army with initially a small pension and usually a financial gratuity. Some employers keen to employ ex service people are also keen to capitalize on the veteran's financial position by taking into consideration their military pension and paying them less. Veterans who research the market become aware of this approach and avoid such employers. Indeed for most veterans doing a good job and seeing any task through to completion often seems more important to them than how much they are paid. The soldier's family, especially the wife of a married male soldier may well influence the family's ultimate choice of where they will live and to some extent what sort of work she would like her husband to do. However the newly discharged soldier will experience a new freedom of choice in what work he or she decides to take up. What work they take up will be dictated to some extent by their own wishes and desires, not withstanding the need to earn money, rather than the needs of the armed forces. There is an option always available to the discharged ex service man or woman to not immediately take up employment but to remain unemployed and rely on state benefits. However, none of the 51 veterans who actively

sought employment identified problems with obtaining their first job and many moved seamlessly from a job in uniform to a job employing their specialist skills as a civilian. The period when soldiers enter the civilian labour market will often be whilst they are still serving as soldiers but have been authorised to seek employment in the weeks leading up to their final discharge date. How individuals rejoined the civilian labour market by finding a job varies widely and includes several different approaches: Several veterans took up employment as a civilian using or adapting skills learned in the army:

*I came into IT because of IT work I had done in the Army. (BIO07M70/92).*

*Following my return from Kosovo, my new CO tasked me to head up and run a large change management programme. I had to attend a number of training courses in project management which I passed. All this made my CV attractive to outside Project Management Consultancy Firms and I got a job straight away with a defence consultancy firm when I left [the army] in 2005. (BIO20M79/05).*

*I interviewed for a number of jobs in both the public and private sectors, looking for something that would utilise the office and numerical skills I had gained, somewhat incidentally, during my time in the army. I got this job as Office Manager (fancy title for Wages/Ledger & HR clerk, combined Financial assistant)/ [she'll do it] for [engineering company]. Come March I will have been with the company 10 years – a far cry from the 2 – 3 year stints we did in the Army! (BIO17F73/95).*

Work in 'security' is frequently quoted in the literature (see for instance Jolly 1996) as a supposed or obvious route into civilian employment for retiring soldiers and indeed a number in the participant group went initially into security related jobs. However whilst security enabled some veterans to get straight into civilian employment it was by no means, for many, a dead end

job as they rapidly gained promotion or used the opportunity to move on within the company they worked for:

*I am the security manager for [company name] in England, have held this post for the last 4 years after initially starting as a security officer. I was very fortunate to end up in the position I am in at present. As a lot of ex servicemen do I looked at what I knew (security) and transferred my military skills to my civvie job. (BIO24M76/00).*

*I Initially drifted into a security job. I got a job in security with a big Hi tech company during which time became aware of a job in their Data Media library. So I applied and got it and sorted it out like you do. I then progressed because I was 'spotted' I must have stood out and now after 4 years I have a senior job as a service analyst on good money. (BIO14M71/94).*

The management skills and potential of other veterans was also recognised in other industries and these individuals gained promotion to high status within their organisations:

*I got into Electronics and IT through my experience in the army and it was luck as well I suppose as the company I started with, [name of company], was expanding and needed a branch manager. I fitted the bill, they said and I had the great job of starting a new company as part of the group. I organised refurbishing a building hired staff and got contracts for the first lot of training courses. It was like setting up a det on a big scale. I then took on first all the West Midlands Branches and then board responsibility after 3 years as National Training Manager. (BIO15M58/83).*

*I'm the Associate Director of a large international firm of engineers, designers and consultants – with particular responsibility for specialist security and risk consultancy within a small focused business unit concentrating on security and risk consultancy. It was a natural move from a former function as Head of IT for the entire firm. I was originally employed in 2000 to run Special Projects and IT Security in the internal IT function. Promoted three times since to current senior grade. (BIO28M78/00).*

A number of veterans took up employment as civilians in organisations doing exactly the same job that they had practised in the army:

*On leaving the Army, I joined [government agency] and am still holding that post. Having always enjoyed this type of work in the Army, it was a natural progression to move into this job. Joining [government agency] allowed me back to doing the 'hands on' work I enjoyed, there was great job satisfaction and in a far more interesting environment. (MSM02M64/87).*

*I took the open competition in the last year of my service and got through the selection board. I was a soldier one day and after my terminal leave I was a civvie doing the same job! (BIO27M64/87).*

Other veterans made a conscious decision to do something completely different in civilian life to the type of work they had performed in the army.

*I work in crime / Intelligence analysis with [County Name] constabulary. I got the job after responding to a job advert in a local newspaper. I had never done anything like it before but I love it. (BIO01F78/00).*

Within this category of those doing something completely different their was an acceptance by the veterans of the probability of having to work for less pay than they had enjoyed in the army and that they had stepped off the onward and upward career trajectory of a soldier's career (Figure: 6) to effectively start again:

*It was a case of starting at the bottom of the ladder again. I was personally happier in my own business as I had only to answer to myself. In other jobs MD's had the power of life and death over you. If you did not comply you could be out of a job. (F2F07M64/86).*

*Yes. I retired as WO1 in 1987. I went to work for myself ... then we moved solely to close that business down, moved up here. I then I lowered my sights money wise. I took a job for about half – 50 per cent, but once I was there, in very swift progression, I went to National Car Parks, and as you do, I met an old acquaintance*

*in Sainsbury's and went to [Electronics Company]. The salary was not quite what I wanted but it had jumped some 40%. I stayed with them for 15 years. (F2F02M62/87).*

*The main thing I considered was work. Get a job! Money came afterwards. I wanted to be employed. I didn't want to draw dole money, probably pride. There was a need for being physically and mentally active, in a work sense. This is why I took umpteen different jobs. I moved up, if I saw another job which paid a fiver more a week I went for it. (F2F10M59/84).*

Job satisfaction features highly as veterans explained their civilian job choices

*My main consideration when I was thinking about a job in Civvie Street was job satisfaction. (BIO22M82/04).*

*Job satisfaction has always been top priority, and of course all the other things were equally important for a happy family life. (MSM05M54/76).*

*I would say: Job satisfaction, Spouse's opinion, Money, in that order. (BIO11M60/85).*

*Main consideration for a job is job satisfaction followed closely by wife's opinion on where we would have to live. Money never really came into the equation though it is obviously important. (BIO13M63/85).*

The view of veteran BIO13M63/85 that his wife's opinion was a consideration is echoed by most of the veterans and clearly the opinion and support of their spouse is of importance it seems in veteran's making a new career choice.

*Job satisfaction was not something I worried about as I was willing to accept most posts within reason and my good lady was a good critic to all the applications so her word always held sway. (BIO08M60/82).*

*What I did was, when I first came out, I knew what I wanted to do and my wife backed me all the way, no matter what it was, and we invested quite a lot of money in the business and it paid for itself. (F2F06M64/86).*

It is clear that personal contacts with friends and former army colleagues contributed to many of the veterans in the participant group gaining employment.

*I managed to be employed by the police thanks to an old friend in the Sigs... I had been serving my last 6 months of service in the local TA centre at [Town]. I left [Town] TA on a Friday and started work at [Town] police on the Monday in June 1982...Never looked back. (BIO08M60/82).*

*I am now working in [Middle East Country] as an instructor to the civil police. I'm working with a small team comprised mostly of ex-Army but with one ex police officer. I was offered the job by a colleague who left the Army one year prior to me. He needed someone with my qualifications and I was available. (BIO10M81/04).*

*Out of the blue, [name of friend] made a telephone call to a friend in France, said to the other person "I have here the guy that I told you about" and then handed me the phone, saying, "Sell yourself!" The 'lubrication' helped. The man on the end of the phone wanted to employ a project manager for the [name of company]. "...would I like to come down to see the project and have an interview?"! Without hesitation, I jumped at the chance, bril! (MSM06M79/03).*

The age and in some cases senior warrant rank of some of the veterans has been a positive factor as many speak of moving straight into management positions and of 'taking over' :

*I came out as a vehicle mechanic artificer and took over a workshop of probably one of the biggest private hire fleets in the UK. We did every bleeding thing from small cars to 3 ton trucks but it was only a small place we worked out of and I expanded. (F2F09M49/73).*

*I took over as department Head. The next 7 years were probably the happiest of my civilian life. A big fish in a small pool, establishing a good reputation for getting things done, and getting involved in everything. (MSM10M60/83).*



Whilst age does not appear to have been a major issue for any of the veterans in the participant group, one veteran was pragmatic in assessing his future as he left the army and became a policeman:

*On leaving the Army I became a Police Officer with [Named Police Force] beginning my training at the age of 44 years... I knew that I had a limited second career in front of me and settled for life as a Constable. I became a Rural Officer working in deepest West Wales within a mainly Welsh speaking community. Being a fluent Welsh speaker myself, this was ideal and gave me great job satisfaction. (MSM08M71/93).*

Several veterans, particularly those who sought jobs outside government agencies or other uniformed services like the police force had been surprised that some employers whilst keen to employ them wanted to pay a lower rate for the post offered by taking into account their military pension. None of the veterans who experienced this approach took up jobs with these employers. Indeed some were surprised, certainly annoyed that there should be such a consideration:

*Having an Army pension did not influence my choice of employment although I did rely on it to pay my mortgage. It is unfortunate that some firms and authorities offer a lesser salary to ex-servicemen and women just because they have a Service pension. (MSM11M65/88).*

*I do not even think about the pension and do not let it influence me when looking for work. (I did go for one job where they said that they would take it into consideration when offering a salary. I didn't take up the offer. (BIO07M70/92).*

For many veterans the army pension provided an essential top up to their salary, certainly in the early years when they first left the army:

*I doubt if I would have saved for a pension had it not been for the army, for during the early 'civvie street' days every penny counted, and the pension ensured stability. (MSM07M64/86).*

Others took a different view and were willing to accept a lower paid job which the army pension would top up

*Having an army pension meant that I could lower my sights when considering salaries. I suppose we were more secure financially during my time in the army. (MSM08M71/93).*

*Now then what I've actually done is gone for a job on 15 thousand a year; cos I know my army pension will be bring it up to over 20. (F2F06M64/86).*

It is clear that many of the veterans were prepared to make a complete break with what they had known before and to take up a new job in a different field. Many of the veterans had set up on their own and ran successful businesses, others stuck to what they knew and found similar employment as civilians or in exactly the same job for a defence related government agency but wearing civilian clothes. In selecting a particular job or line of work, money does not appear to be a major priority and job satisfaction was considered by almost all the participants to be the most important consideration. Having found a civilian job and rejoined the labour market, veterans then had to begin the process of acting like, looking like and becoming civilians. It is probably in the working environment that the biggest cultural and social differences are found and the next section presents veteran's experiences in civilian employment.

### **Dimension Five - Perceptions of Civilian Workers**

The highly trained 40 year old soldier who has completed 22 years or more in the army will have developed a keen sense of discipline, loyalty, trust and respect. Trust and respect will contribute to an individual's knowledge and

understanding of the capabilities of other soldiers. The long served soldier will know that fellow trained soldiers will be capable of contributing fully to the task in hand and to seeing it through without watching the clock. Indeed soldiers are paid for 24 hours work a day and are expected to perform their tasks when called upon whenever and wherever that may be. He or she will also have a keen sense of duty and a willingness to see a job through to a successful conclusion – a strong and very positive work ethic. A part of the ex soldier's positive work ethic is total confidence in him or her self and a full commitment to those involved in the completion of any task. In a modern army instilling self confidence, trust, respect and a positive work ethic is achieved through education, training and discipline. The discipline of soldiers is governed by military law and any infringements such as failing to complete an allotted task or disobeying a lawful command can attract punitive punishments. Getting soldiers to carry out their task willingly is not however achieved by shouting or by demeaning and abusive ranting. Warrant Officers, Senior and Junior Non Commissioned Officers learn over time and through experience how to get the best out of the soldiers they command and have responsibility for. A junior soldier newly arrived in a unit will automatically have respect for the rank of anyone senior to him or her and will obey orders without question. This does not mean that soldiers are dumb unthinking automatons but rather individuals who are part of a system which relies totally on people working together to achieve clear aims; people whose level of trust in each other can extend into life and death situations.

Figure: 12



“...get the best out of the soldiers they command “ (Source: Author)

The trained soldier in the British Army has the confidence that if he or she is given a task to do then that task is necessary and needs to be performed without question. Instructions to perform tasks given as orders advise soldiers what the situation is, what their particular mission is (what it is that needs to be achieved), how that mission is to be achieved and the details of when and where and how and who is to be involved. This information is as detailed as is necessary for each individual to understand what is required of them to perform their part effectively. This structured and objective approach to getting soldiers to work effectively and efficiently together is part of the culture of the military. No individual soldier wants to let the team down and mutual support is encouraged. The responses from the participant group of veteran's strongly identified with the positive work ethic of the military, with respect and trust and were critical and in some cases scathing of civilian work ethic. This is probably because civilian life is clearly different in many ways to that of a soldier. First, most civilians are not tied by contract and a sworn oath of allegiance to a 24 hour 365 days a year contract requiring soldiers to

be available for duty whenever they are needed, the exception of course being periods of leave. Generally, especially overseas and certainly when on operations, every aspect of a soldier's life is shared with his or her comrades. In civilian life, work, family and leisure are generally separated by time and location. Whilst a civilian may enjoy friendships at work and these may extend into non work time and location the civilian has freedom over when and where the different aspects of their lives are played out. For quite legitimate reasons civilian workers generally only work a set number of hours a day and are in turn only paid for the hours that they work. It may therefore be perfectly acceptable for work unfinished when the prescribed working day ends to be left until the start of the next working day. Civilian leisure time and activities are usually independent of work and how time is spent with family is determined by the individual who can prioritise and determine his or her own way of living. With some notable exceptions such as the police and fire service most civilians are not at risk, barring accidents, of being killed or seriously injured. The same level of intensity of trust and respect found in the military will not therefore generally be in evidence in civilian society.

Veterans were asked to relate their perception of civilians; especially how they remembered first working as civilians after leaving the army. Several common themes within this dimension emerged including concerns with poor timekeeping and the veterans' perceived good work ethic of ex soldiers compared to civilians workers. Similarly veterans drew on their experiences to draw mostly unfavourable comparisons between civilian and military life

with respect to both managers and workers flexibility, self confidence, loyalty, trust and respect and style of management. These themes are now discussed in the context of the veteran's own reflections of working in a civilian occupation as an ex soldier, as a veteran.

The issue of poor timekeeping as being the norm in civilian life was clearly an important issue although a few veterans responded positively and with a view that there was little difference between civilian workers and serving soldiers:

*I think civilians are actually better time-keepers on the whole as money may depend on it. (BIO01F78/00).*

*Most civilians in my line of work are fairly good timekeepers although we have a very flexible way of working perhaps a better term would be they are good at time management. (F2F05M62/84).*

The majority however were very scathing of civilian work ethic and of timekeeping in particular

*...certainly not. They [civilians] are useless [at timekeeping]. Even the police are bad time keepers. Whilst in the Police, a good number of my colleagues were also ex servicemen. As a group we all agreed that the most frustrating thing we found about the police was their poor timekeeping. It drove us mad! (BIO09M65/91).*

*Civilian attitudes to work are very different from those of the serviceman/woman. Timekeeping doesn't have the same importance. A serviceman WILL be there at 1430 if he is told to be, a civilian may amble in about 1435 and wonder what all the fuss is over 5 minutes (I shouldn't tar them all with the same brush though — there are some good ones). (BIO13M63/85).*

Humour crept into many of the answers given and in this example reflected clearly a view that some civilian workers gave only the minimum amount of time to their employer:

*Most civilians are good timekeepers, sometimes too good. When 4:30 comes you could be trampled by the stampede of people getting out of the building. (BIO04M72/94).*

This same respondent, as did others, clearly saw himself as different to his civilian counterparts although he had been discharged from the army 12 years previously:

*The major difference between myself and some of my colleagues is that I am willing to work the hours needed to get a job done — I don't feel constrained by a clock. (BIO04M72/94).*

A number of the veteran's in the research group had found employment with governmental organisations employing ex service people. Timekeeping culture in these places of employment was very much in line with military practice:

*Timekeeping — sorry I work with ex military men — timing has to be very good. (BIO25M82/05).*

Work ethic was highlighted as a major area of concern with a small number expressing the view, as with timekeeping, that there was little or no difference between the civilian and military societies. However the main strength of opinion was that most civilians performed below a level of effort which would be accepted in the army.

Of those who had expressed the view that there was little difference in attitudes to timekeeping between civilian workers and soldiers, a few gave similar responses when asked to reflect on what they thought of civilians generally as workers:

*In my experience there is little difference between working with civilians or soldiers. Individually there are people you get on with and those that you don't — no matter which organisation you work. (BIO01F78/00).*

However the vast majority felt that civilian work ethic was and is very poor and this was reflected in the responses from most of the veterans:

*The Military instilled the thought that you don't finish until the job is done this is certainly not the case in civilian life, and again on sickness unless you were unable to get out of bed or were in hospital you went to work this is certainly not the case in civilian life. (BIO24M76/00).*

*When I first left the Army I found working with civilians very different. Mainly it was the apparent lack of commitment, now I realise it was because unlike the services we aren't paid for a 24 hour day. (BIO07M70/92).*

*Generally yes, [civilians] do as little as possible, watch the clock, skive whenever they can and do the minimum. (F2F04M68/90).*

*When I first became a civilian I found it somewhat difficult to have to explain my actions and wishes in detail. There was no Esprit de Corps and when 5pm came around, the office closed, whether or not the work was done. (BIO06M65/89).*

*It took me a while to get used to working with people who just wanted to do the minimum they could get away with. (MSM04M60/82).*

Getting the job done is clearly a principle concern for the ex military man, more important it seems from veteran's responses, than keeping to the set



working hours. Conversely some veterans felt that their dedication to their job was noticed and was appreciated;

*I think having been in the Army this is seen by many employers as being a good experience and being someone who can be trusted to work to the best of their ability. (F2F05M62/84).*

*Service life gave me confidence to speak in public, to hold my head high, and to make statements with confidence. This was probably due to my position and status where I had to brief and speak with high-ranking officers of both British and Allied Armies. (BIO06M65/89).*

All of the veterans were able to identify and clearly articulate what they saw as one of the positive attributes that they had acquired through serving in the army that of seeing a job through to the end and linked to this was the ability and confidence to be flexible in the work environment.

The ability to adapt and to be flexible as well as confident were clearly identified by the veterans as common features of ex soldiers in civilian work:

*I have acquired excellent organisational and communication skills. I am very confident even in a new environment. (BIO01F78/00).*

*The military life and all of its training teaches you to assess, analyse and act in a quick and appropriate manner. Obviously there are many civilians with the same skills, but I do think that a full career in the military, exercising these skills everyday, does put an individual slightly ahead of a civilian of the same age. One must also bear in mind that the average soldier will have used these skills in a much wider variety of situations than his civilian counterpart. (MSM06M79/03).*

*I found some civilians were very institutionalized and set in their ways, it was some time before they became used to the idea that there were many other way of attaining the same , or frequently better, results. (F2F05M62/84).*

*Civilians tend to work for their own personal agenda. The concept of team effort in achieving a team objective, is a very alien*

*concept and very hard to encourage. Everyone's got 'rights' it seems — and everyone seems ready to blame circumstances or someone else for their mistakes. (MSM06M79/03).*

*A soldier is taught to think and act quickly. Civilians tend to need to be spoon fed and hand held through a task, for the fear of making an error. (MSM06M79/03).*

Another common theme was that their military service had given the veterans an edge and had made them different in a useful and positive way. This was also something that almost all the veterans perceived as an asset to a civilian employer: The word confidence appeared frequently as one of the attributes gained from army service.

*It gave me a sense of responsibility, good manners and respect for others. (BIO09M65/91).*

*I think the army gives you confidence and initiative, well you use your initiative more I think. (F2F04M68/90).*

*I think the main thing I got from the Army was confidence. It also taught me a sort of egalitarianism and as I get older I realise that there is very little difference between people, only what you impose on yourself and it does make a difference to life. (BIO07M70/92).*

*The Army has given a structure and discipline to my life. If I say I am going to do something, I do it without fail. (BIO04M72/94).*

Even where a veteran was able to admit that their civilian co workers did display positive work attitudes they still identified and expressed differences:

*Within my field people are generally responsible and dedicated but do not have the same level of self discipline and resilience as ex soldiers. Generally civilians are not as fit and healthy, energetic and don't have the perseverance soldiers have. (BIO21M72/96).*

*Being in the army has allowed me to interact effectively with people and with confidence. I have many life skills and am morally competent. (BIO25M82/05.)*

However, one veteran, who exuded confidence face to face, expressed the opinion that:

*I don't think, sadly, that there is anything I learned in the army has helped me in civilian life well to a certain degree I am unable to pass on any of the values I have learned quite simply because I am immediately stereotyped so it is best to shut up. (F2F01M76/01).*

There was a sense here of frustration almost despair with the realities of civilian life from an ex Warrant Officer who had been out of the army for 5 years.

It is clear that the loyalty, respect and trust which are key to a cohesive and successful military unit do not necessarily manifest themselves so profoundly in civilian society. Veterans commented frequently on the selfish attitude evident in civilian workers clearly demonstrating that even after many years of working as civilians they could still identify differences:

*There's not the respect you had in the army. I know people know I will always get things done so they call on me. They want me to be a supervisor but I'm happy doing what I'm doing but I suppose I get respect for doing a good job. Not the same. (F2F04M68/90).*

*I had no difficulty with working with civilians; after all I now am one! I did get a little frustrated at first, with what I felt was often selfish attitudes to work and the company. Also loyalty, often taken for granted in the military, is quite thin on the ground in civilian life, I find. (MSM06M79/03).*

*I think that I am trusted and respected by my civilian colleagues, probably because I do as I say and have the courage of my convictions. I learnt that trust was not held in the same esteem in civilian life as it is in the Army. I was let down several times early on and learned very quickly that the civilian social code was different to that of the military. (MSM06M79/03).*

Veterans employed in an organisation which specifically recruits ex Warrant Officers who have served for 22 years but also employs those who have not served, clearly saw themselves as having a different set of ideals:

*I trust and respect my working colleagues — the ex military ones that is and they likewise trust and respect me outside of that there is very little trust or respect. (BIO25M82/05).*

Another veteran said that:

*I don't feel as bonded with my civilian colleagues and many of them do not share the same humour. (BIO03M70/01).*

Reflecting, perhaps, that even after 5 years as a civilian he felt 'different'

*I believe the values and standards that I adopted and the ethos of service life has earned me the respect, trust and possibly admiration of most of my purely civilian colleagues. (BIO03M70/01).*

It is obvious that most civilian jobs do not include life and death decisions and extreme risks. The work ethic and everyday culture of the soldier however imbues a profound sense of comradeship loyalty and respect. This could perhaps be interpreted as blind obedience to orders but at least one veteran felt strongly that there is a clear difference in attitudes between the military and civilian societies.

*There's not a lot of trust or respect as a civvie, in the army you trusted each other with your lives. People gained respect from what they did in the army not from having a badge of rank. (MSM04M60/82).*

*Trust and respect both have to be earned and I feel I have achieved that through my dedication to and knowledge of my job and not because of some rank I wear. (BIO01F78/00).*

*In the Army we had to think of others and that sticks, we didn't just try and manage the problem, we'd try and manage the event. (BIO04M72/94).*

However a more philosophical view was expressed by others explaining that civilian priorities are different:

*Civilians, with a few notable exceptions, are just people with a different outlook on life — they have different priorities and mostly just think about one thing, themselves and how things will affect them. (BIO04M72/94).*

Only one veteran responded with a remark which reflected perhaps a feeling of loss of status:

*You are a little bit intolerant when you first come out because things that you take for granted, like people holding doors open for you, just doesn't happen. (F2F08M79/02).*

However the loss of the perk of having the door held open was then dismissed with the following remark in which the same veteran had found the vocational side of his transition unproblematic:

*I was lucky. When I came out I did a similar sort of job for the first 12 months, only part time, but when I was working, I was in charge. The vocational bit of my life hasn't changed. (F2F08M79/02).*

Clearly respect had been earned during a military career and had become part of the veteran's persona. His job as an instructor enabled him to some extent to remain 'in charge'. Some veterans however interpreted the question differently:

*Well I think civilians do respect ex soldiers. (F2F04M68/90).*

*Compared to soldiers civvies have no shared values or common cause and at times a pretty loathsome environment — however we all have our options I suppose out here in 'double standard land!' (F2F01M76/01).*

These last two comments reflecting perhaps that these veterans still thought of themselves as different and were able therefore to make these somewhat subjective observations.

Another common feature which led on from the issues above to do with respect and which attracted a mix of responses concerned the ways in which civilians are managed:

*Management is different. In the main civilians have no man management training and it shows. Management is focused on the task or goal only and does not generally have a view to the welfare of workers. In the Army, for good or bad, I tried to solve problems my subordinates had to ensure that they worked better, rarely does this happen in a civilian company. (BIO07M70/92).*

*Incidentally, communication [in civilian life] is much like the Army, e.g. Too much or not enough! (BIO07M70/92).*

*Civilians are very re-active not proactive like soldiers and in many cases there is a lack of mission command. (BIO25M82/05).*

This last quote with a reference to 'mission command' a very military phrase was perhaps to be expected from a veteran who had left the army less than a year previously.

*In my experience of civilian life, certain levels of management did not work together and this fact seemed to permeate down to the lower levels, with corresponding results. Trade Unions seemed to encourage transparency. (BIO06M65/89).*

*The main problem was the need to over explain a task or job. I have now mastered it and delegate nicely but in the beginning it was a pain in the butt. Another was the way that there was no loyalty to the company. Everyone was looking to a better paid job, or envying someone else's pay packet. (BIO07M70/92).*

*Civilian managers — they are beyond reprimand [sic] as managers (some that is), take timekeeping they are just as bad and seem not to embrace the moral courage to correct anything. (F2F01M76/01).*

Clearly whilst many had left the army several years previously their responses to the topics and questions posed did to a large extent reflect a critical view of civilians, especially of work ethic generally in civilian society. However all of the veterans could identify positive attributes in themselves gained from their military service. Trust and respect feature highly on the list of common themes. From the analysis of the collected data it is clear that in general the veteran's perception of civilian workers, even though the veterans themselves are civilian workers, is one of feeling that they are in some ways different. Even after many years of civilian life veterans identified with a positive work ethic and adherence to good timekeeping founded on their military careers. Flexibility and confidence were identified as positive attributes again acquired through military experience and which the individual veteran could see in themselves but not always in their civilian counterparts. Similarly trust and respect are generally perceived as being very different in civilian society as is the general approach to managing people. The final section discusses veteran's responses to topics concerned with their experiences as ex soldiers working in civilian life. Questions and discussions here sought to determine how veterans experienced working as civilians when they first left the army and how they subsequently felt.

## Dimension Six - Veterans' experiences in and of civilian employment

During the data collection phase some veteran's answered questions not necessarily in the order asked and often answered several questions at the same time. This is particularly the case with this topic where veteran's related quite lengthy stories of civilian employment and reflected on and compared these experiences to their military service. Four main areas of commonality emerged and the selected quotations generally reflect the remembered experiences of the whole participant group

The question was posed:

*"In the early days when you became a civilian how different did you find working with others? "*

Clearly the question implicitly asked '...how different...' and whilst there was no intention to elicit 'differences' where non existed already in the minds of the participants, the veterans had no problems in reflecting on and relating differences between civilian and military practice:

*It was very different initially working as a civvy especially understanding the politics, the office politics that is, in the army you knew where you were, like in the set up and you just got on with your job. I suppose there's army politics in the sense that you took the piss out of people but you still got the job done. (BIO21M72/96).*

*I very quickly realised that the civilian way of doing things was very different to that in the Army! The main difference that I noticed was that people were very much more 'self' oriented and that 'self' came before achieving a collective goal, like achieving a task that a client was paying for, for instance. (MSM06M79/03).*

Even after many years since army service some veterans still find themselves with a different attitude to work which can be associated with military service:



*I think my attitude of get on and do the job came from the military...The only real difficulty I've experienced in civilian employment was in being able to say NO. The answer in the Army was always YES and then get on with it. In civilian life I was being asked to do things and I had the choice whether to do it or not. I still have a problem with this as I have been warned that my case load is frequently too high. My answer when asked to take on more work is invariably YES; now just give me a little time to work out how I can manage it. (F2F05M64/84).*

*Well in my current job there'll all out to do as little as possible and call the managers. (F2F04M68/90).*

Timekeeping which has already been discussed is mentioned frequently as an annoyance at work. The personal attributes one expects in a soldier but not, according to the veterans necessarily found in civilian workers such as a positive work ethic, team spirit, loyalty and respect: was also raised frequently:

*Initially working as a civilian? I still kept my standards up, but felt it very difficult to understand Civilians and the way that they work, or don't as it sometimes appeared. Major issues I notice is their(civilians) time keeping or lack of it, always in late, but out of the office on the dot.... How does that work then? Also very scruffy. Majority are appalling at time keeping. (BIO18M72/94).*

*The impression that I have had is that it is take, take, take and very little give. Where as in the Army it was working together and give and take, it does appear to be all take. This sounds awful, but I do not trust them (civilians) and respect has to be earned, not just given. (BIO02F76/01).*

*I didn't like civilians. Thought they were lazy, spend too long discussing the price of fish and I had nothing in common with them. You cannot compare civilians to soldiers. They sat around all day in large organisations doing nothing if they could get away with it. (BIO19F40/62).*

*I had no problems working with anyone who worked. It was the work ethic I had problems with. (F2F09M49/73).*

Several veterans reflected that they had been successful at work because their positive work ethic acquired during military service had been recognised by their employers:

*I moved on and up within the company and became National Training Manager and then Operations manager for the whole group. When the company was taken over I was kept on when others were made redundant. I put this down to the fact that I always did what I was required to do and more and also did what I said I would do. (BIO15M58/83).*

Whether military service was understood by civilian employers, the majority of who will have had no military experience drew a lot of answers reflecting that veterans on leaving the army and seeking employment are often an unknown quantity to potential employers. Generally the veterans felt that where there was no organisational relationship with the armed forces such as those employed in the defence industries, the perception of ex service people was not favourable.

*It was difficult working with people who had pre conceived ideas about soldiers but I was able to gain people's trust and respect. (BIO21M72/96).*

Several veterans reflected that despite recent and current conflicts the image of ex service people was anchored in the media and in comedy portrayals of the services harking back to the Second World War and to the era of National Service:

*Working with civilians? There is a lack of understanding in the civilian world about what being in the military is all about. The perception is that a Warrant Officer is a Windsor Davis (It 'aint Arf Hot Mum) type character that can shout loud but has little intelligence. (BIO20M79/05).*

This same veteran reflected that the issue of understanding would not improve as time moved on:

*The further we move from National Service days the less that managers will understand about the qualities the military instils in its personnel, and the benefits that can be gained from employing these loyal hard working people. (BIO20M79/05).*

Generally though veterans felt that the army was not understood by civilians and many had pre-conceived ideas:

*No, people not knowing about service life... if anything it can be a benefit. Many people have preconceived ideas of military life; most can't believe that I served 22 years and have an exaggerated idea of my supposed achievements and abilities!! (BIO17F73/95).*

*I have found some employers have no experience of the armed forces and do not know the difference between the different ranks. I worked for a long time for and with a retired general which was great as we understood each other and this really helped the organisation. He had the same attitude of getting the job done regardless. (BIO15M58/83).*

*It can be an issue on occasions – more to do with people's incorrect perceptions of how soldiers are, as opposed to how they actually are. (MSM03M81/03).*

*I had to be interviewed several times just so that management could satisfy themselves that I was not a stereotypical RSM. I tend to think that employers think all senior soldiers get things done by screaming at others. (MSM03M81/03).*

*Some know about the forces and the ranks. Where I am now someone said ...that I had been a Warrant Officer... and I suppose people look at you differently – sort of, well treat you differently with some respect I suppose. (F2F04M68/90).*

However some veteran's reflected that lack of knowledge on the part of employers could in some ways be advantageous:

*Well I had this boss, the MD and there was a CEO visiting from [major multi national] he'd been with us a couple of days and he*

*had had some briefings on what we did and he said to our MD "...Just where do you get these people from? They know what they're doing, they're keen and smart, turn up on time and give 100%." My boss just said, "They're all ex army." I think that says it all. (MSM03M81/03).*

In a similar vein one veteran felt that the current perception of armed forces personnel projected a positive image which reflected well on veterans:

*I have found that employers' relative lack of military experience has been an advantage. It adds an air of mystique to the individual – to have served in the Army, especially with all the coverage on TV of recent conflicts. The military, especially the Army, is still synonymous with integrity, loyalty and efficiency in the mind of many civilians. (MSM06M79/03).*

One veteran expressed the view that civilians could identify ex service people by their appearance:

*When you are in the army you are taught to project yourself and how to stand tall. What will happen is, I'll walk into a room and people will think '...he's either military or police'. You've got that presence or aura [sic] about you. (F2F06M64/86).*

The same veteran also expressed the view that his employers identified in him hidden talents from which the company could benefit:

*Well, yes this company took me on full time, but what happened there then, was that um, er I had loads of skills, like from the army, which they didn't realise I had and eventually I became the media manager. (F2F06M64/86).*

Another felt that his military background placed an assumption in the minds of his employers and work colleagues that he would be a good organiser; not necessarily an attribute he wanted personally to project:

*In fact there has been a couple times when it has been said 'with your army experience, you should be able to organise such and such?' Due to my army experience, I have had the confidence to say 'bog off'. (BIO08M60/82).*

Age does not appear to be a major issue in terms of gaining employment for most of the participant group although it did feature in some answers often associated with rank and status in the army in relation to status in civilian life. This appears to be particular aspect of perception by civilians of military life which concerned the veterans:

*It doesn't help when you come out so late in life and have to start again. I was 40 when I came out ...so people will already have formed impressions before you go for interview and you have to win them round... I can explain to somebody what I have done for the last 20 years step by step by step, but when you tell them you are a Sgt Major/Warrant Officer Class 2, they don't know what it means. (BIO26M66/98).*

*I found it strange to use first names on a regular basis ... I had to tell my civilian staff exactly what I wanted, and in many cases exactly how to do it. Soldiers have the training to work together without any fuss, and on the occasions where exact instructions (orders) were not passed, they improvised. This is one of the best parts of the British Forces. Life was a bit frustrating at times. (BIO06M65/89).*

This last quote reflects both a difference in the way that soldiers and civilians are managed and supervised and indeed how they communicate. For some veterans, who took up work in civilian companies and found the management style too different, the best option was to work for themselves. This somewhat lengthy extract reflects a view expressed by a number of the participant group that they would do better running their own firm:

*Well, I was in charge of the workshops ... one day I looked for my charge hand and I said "Where's so and so?" "Oh [person's name] sent him somewhere". He was the nephew of the owner and the Yard Manager ... So I went into the owner of the company and said "Look, the situation is this, either he goes, or I go... I am not having it, I just can't put up with it. You asked me to get this, I've got rid of all your rubbish, I've got everything*

*working, I've set up a proper stores" And he said "Well, it's my wife's niece, cousin "or whatever it was." "Fair enough" I said, "I'll go". I mean I wasn't getting the money I was getting in the army. (F2F09M49/73).*

*In the army I found out that if I said I wanted something doing it was done. But we could talk about it. If I said I wanted something doing and my Sgt thought "well, if we did it this way it might be better" and I would say "that's a good idea, we'll do it that way" and if it went wrong, that was MY problem not his... but I didn't expect him to go and send one of the craftsmen out to get him a packet of cigarettes. If he had done, he wouldn't have been a Sgt any longer. (F2F09M49/73).*

*I just couldn't work in Civvy St. I set up my own company... I worked and a part time lad. I borrowed from the bank and bought an existing business ... I then built it up, we did a bit of bodywork, mechanicking obviously, and then I thought there has got to be an outlet for recovery. So we set up recovery on a small basis and there was only one firm in Sheffield – they were backhanding the police – I will be straight with you there – and they were getting all the work. Anyway we got into doing stuff they couldn't handle and built up from there. (F2F09M49/73).*

In this second example the veteran effectively retrained his staff to operate and communicate more effectively, not by turning them into soldiers but by imparting better and different ways of achieving goals:

*I worked for [name of company] who ran courses in office skills and also trained youngsters to CGLI 2 standard in electronics manufacture; towards the end of my first week as branch manager I called a meeting of all the staff to review the week. Most of them came with lists of complaints and a negative attitude... the sort of thing that in the army you sort out at the time ... It was just passing the buck. I soon had them using meetings to report and look forward. But I came across it again and again over several years in other companies, people more interested in blaming someone else than getting on with hitting targets set out for people how I operate and how I expect them to perform, it takes a while but people see it works in the end. (BIO15M58/83).*

Poor communication within management occurred again and again in the veteran's stories of their civilian work experiences as being 'different' to military practice:

*I remember we had a big mailer to be completed that evening and told the people how they were to do it. I left detailed written instructions on what was to be included and went off to another branch. Two days later on returning to that office I found the job had not been done. The staff said that the supervisor had gone home sick and they did not know what to do... no one took charge. The other excuse was that there was not enough time in the day so they had done other jobs instead. In the army you just didn't do that you got the job done... (BIO15M58/83).*

The urge to get on with the job regardless of time and local working practice was found by some to be a problem but one from which they were able to learn:

*My army experiences have lead me to expect quick results and responses from those in my employ. This does not always happen in civilian life and I have really had to try and curb my natural instinct to castigate and learn a great deal of tolerance in my new life. The occasional episode of intolerance from me has lead to some difficult situations. It has helped me to learn to say sorry and admit that I am wrong ...the civilian way of doing things is sometimes better than the Army way. (MSM06M79/03).*

Communication extends beyond the everyday routine of the work in hand and one veteran experienced what he referred to as pettiness but which also reflected perhaps an inability by the civilian manager in this extract to communicate effectively:

*Civvies can be so petty. One day I had parked my car unbeknown to me in .... That space was allocated to customers only. Instead of the MD explaining to me, he had his secretary type a note and stuck it on my windscreen. If I did it again I would be sacked. I only sat in the next desk to him and yet he was unable to speak to me personally. In the army the problem would have*

*been settled immediately in no uncertain manner.  
(F2F07M64/86).*

A key issue would appear to be the communication of requirements, what is it a manager wants a person to do? Generally among the veterans there was clear frustration that poor attitude to getting on with work, poor time keeping and lack of team spirit created an atmosphere of negativity to work in general and more an emphasis on doing as little as possible and looking after 'number one'

*...civilian life revolves around a different set of rules with the employees arranging things to suit themselves. Lane excuses, days off sick seem to be all part and parcel of the employment game which in my experience has been set up against the employer. Mutual respect is sadly missing. (F2F07M64/86).*

*Even moving from the semi civilian post I was in (I was working at [government agency] at the time) to civvy street was a bit of culture shock. I found that the majority of the younger workers lacked self discipline and motivation. Having dealt with junior ranks, who given the general outline of what to do, would get on and do it using their own initiative. I was really surprised that when dealing with so-called intelligent and educated people, who looked down on serviceman, that I had to literally spell out their work in extreme detail. (BIO06M65/89).*

Since the armed forces spend a great deal of time and money on training it was to be expected that veterans would look for, even expect training in civilian life but they were disappointed:

*Management is different. In the main civilians have no man management training and it shows. Management is focused on the task or goal only and does not generally have a view to the welfare of workers. In the Army, I tried to solve problems my subordinates had to ensure they worked better, rarely does this happen in a civilian company. The main problem was the need to over explain a task or job. I have now mastered it and delegate nicely but in the beginning it was a pain in the butt. (BIO07M70/92).*



The ability to make up one's own mind on issues, to make decisions independent of the influence of army regulations was referred to frequently by the participant group:

*When I first left the army I found it strange ... I was now able to make decisions for myself. The close comradeship of the army was definitely missing, and I felt that the support that you had while serving was not available to the same extent in civilian life/jobs. (BIO11M60/85).*

Veterans also reflected that at work they found themselves taking the initiative, as they would have done whilst serving but that this was not apparently a trait common in civilian workers:

*Well you see a problem or something comes up and you get on with sorting it, not moaning and blaming the council or whoever (F2F10M59/84).*

Three veterans in the participant group left the army and joined the civilian police force. A number of issues not wholly unique to this employment were raised in particular relating to age:

*As part of the police application process, I was interviewed by a number of senior officers and I remember one of the questions vividly. I was asked how I'd cope with working for a Sergeant who would be younger than me, and would have experienced much less in life than I had. The answer was quite easy as I had worked under junior officers in the Army, who were much younger and inexperienced – they had to give orders and sometimes you knew they didn't have a clue. The important thing was the fact that in both careers, there was a rank structure and there was discipline, both self and imposed. (MSM08M71/93).*

This perhaps reflects the similar structure between the army and the uniformed and disciplined police force which also has a two tier rank structure. A long served soldier would, as in the answer given by

MSM08M71/93 above, accept the position of the younger 'officer' as part of the system whilst not necessarily respecting the individual

*The novelty of no longer having to listen to orders being given and then determine whether the person giving them really knew what they were talking about did not take long to wear off, and the transition to the police doctrine made the change less dramatic. (BIO10M81/04).*

From a different perspective however age difference presented a somewhat different problem for one veteran:

*During my probationary period, I was partnered with a tutor officer whose job was to ensure that I received "on the job" training in numerous operational scenarios. Because of my age and confidence I was often mistaken as the tutor officer, but this could also backfire as I was always expected to have a greater level of knowledge and ability than other younger officers with a similar length of service. (MSM08M71/93).*

Generally the age of veterans, mostly 40 years on discharge was not a big problem, indeed with age came an expectation on the part of others of experience and with that respect:

*From the day I joined the police I was always left to carry out whatever duties were given to me without the level of supervision afforded to other recruits. Respect is something you earn and my army background helped a great deal. (MSM08M71/93).*

## **Conclusion**

The experiences of veterans in and of civilian employment, reflected in dimension 6 above, revealed four common issues. First was that the veterans were able to recall and reflect easily on their early experiences of civilian employment even after many years of leaving the army and appeared

to slip easily into the role of the serving soldier using vocabulary such as 'civvies' to refer to their work colleagues although they themselves are also civilians. The veterans were therefore making comparisons with those with whom they worked but with whom they also felt in some ways different. Second was that what veterans perceived as a lack of understanding of those who had completed service could result either in them not gaining specific jobs or in being undervalued. Conversely some found that this lack of understanding could be used positively even adding an air of mystery to the individual. Certainly many of the veterans related that their positive work ethic, smart appearance, dedication and loyalty to the company meant that they did stand out from their work colleagues. The third point is related to perception and again in two different ways. Some veterans found difficulty in identifying and relating to civilian management structures; who was who and areas of discretion due to the obvious absence of badges of rank. Again and conversely, where civilian work colleagues were knowledgeable of army ranks the presence of, for example an ex Warrant Officer in their midst was said to bring respect and understanding. Civilian management style is the fourth point and brought the most criticism from the veterans who related several examples of how things would have been done differently, perhaps in a better way, in the army compared to civilian life. This area of criticism embraced again the issues of work ethic, loyalty, trust and timekeeping discussed in dimension 5. Veterans who had moved from the army straight into the police force spoke generally of easier transitions as they moved from

one uniformed and disciplined organisation to another and this ease of transition applies also to those who moved from their army job to the same job as a civilian which was discussed in dimension 4. Age, particularly but not exclusively with respect to the police force only seems to have been an issue with the older appearance of some leading to assumptions that they were more senior than they were, whilst others found that they were assumed to have more experience because of their age and were left to get on with their jobs.

This discussion now continues in the next and final chapter, chapter 6 which draws out the key findings from both this chapter and chapter 4 and addresses the thesis question 'What factors contribute to the successful transition of army veterans to civilian life and work?' The answer to this question also goes some way to giving an explanation to the frequently repeated phrase in the literature that most veterans do well in civilian life. Chapter 6 also reflects back on the assumptions made in chapter 3 and considers how this research can add to the literature and contribute to the knowledge described in chapter 2.

## CHAPTER 6

# FINDINGS: WHAT THIS RESEARCH HAS FOUND AND WHAT IT ADDS TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF MILITARY TO CIVILIAN TRANSITION

### Introduction

This thesis began with a parodied quotation which says:

*Old soldiers never die -They adapt their military skills and become successful civilians.*

The title of the work asked the question :

*What factors contribute to the successful transition of army veterans to civilian life and work?*

The parodied quotation states the findings of this research and the title of the work poses the previously unanswered question. The literature review for this research revealed a gap in knowledge concerning the successful transition of soldiers from the army to civilian society. The gap has a metaphoric 'label' which reads:

*"Most veterans do well"*

However this metaphoric label has no further information or explanation to back up the assertion which is repeated frequently in the literature. On the other hand knowledge, debate, discussion and research on soldiers (indeed on all ex service people) who leave the armed forces and *do not succeed* runs to millions of words. Not knowing why "...most veterans do well..." leaves a gap in knowledge and the purpose of this research was to begin to

fill that gap. Some of the reasons which can contribute to a successful transition have been identified and form the findings of this research. Specifically, successful veterans left the army without regrets having planned ahead, secured a job and accommodation and whilst becoming civilians also maintained some elements of military culture which to some extent contributes to their inescapable role as ex service men or women and which makes them somewhat different therefore to other civilians. This chapter now describes and explains each of the findings in relation to previous research and related theories discussed in chapter 2 and the assumptions set out in chapter 3.

### **The Findings**

In framing the specification for this research in Chapter 3 a number of questions were raised which informed the development of the main research instrument – an interview topic guide (see Appendix 6) Questions raised sought to draw out what it was veterans *thought* across a range of issues. The answers to these questions have been summarized and it can be confidently asserted that individual veterans took up a wide range of different employments which reflected for some a desire to do something completely different, for others the ability to carry on doing exactly what they did whilst in uniform whilst others started afresh. The veteran's civilian employment decisions came about because most had investigated opportunities and planned well ahead. The effects of military culture on each individual veteran's transition have been largely beneficial since they were able to utilize

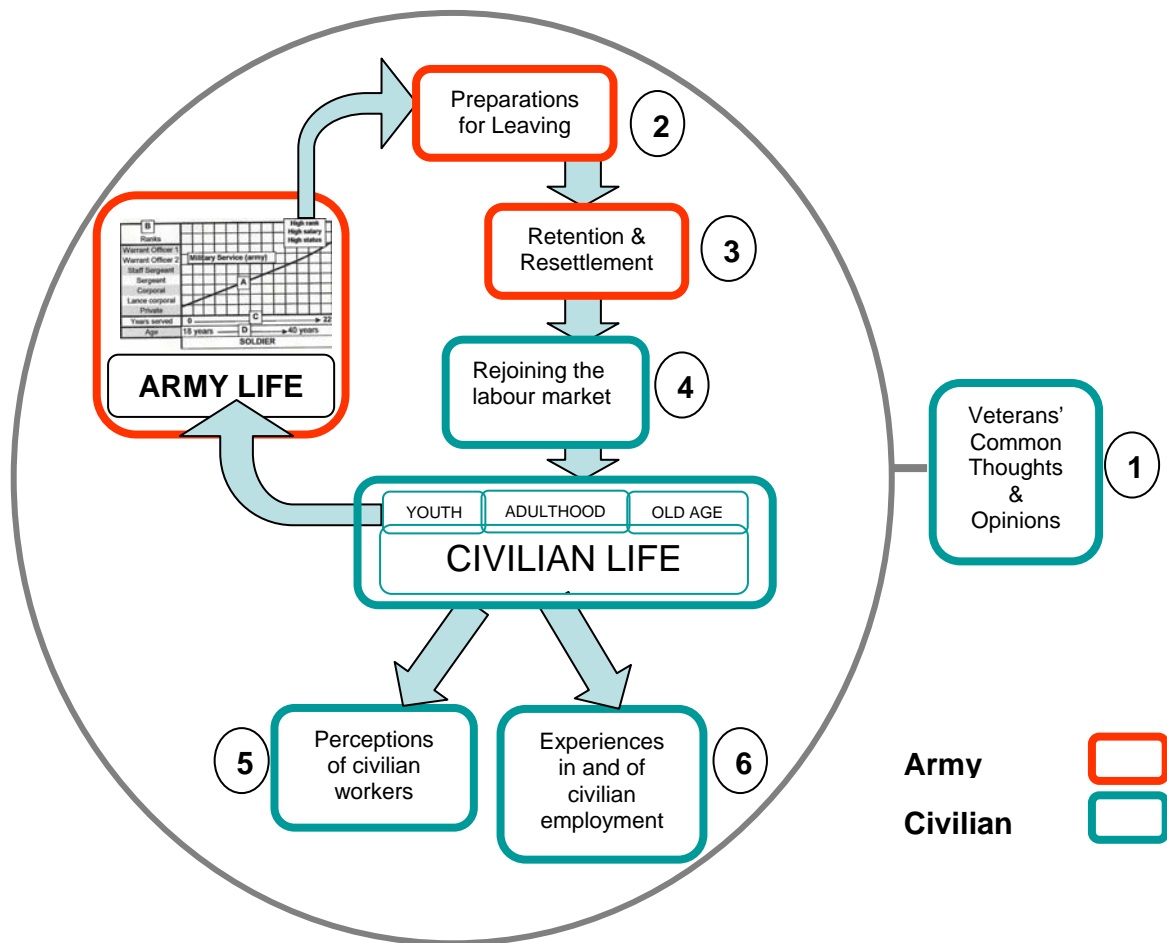
their experiences of identifying and solving problems. Employment choice does not appear to have been negatively influenced by age, gender, financial issues or military rank but to have been enhanced for some by the possession of qualifications and a military trade. The views of a spouse or partner, family responsibilities and for some personal interests were also important factors in obtaining employment. Experience of actual combat does not appear to have affected those veterans involved in conflicts and certainly did not influence employment choice. Generally, veterans felt that most employers did not understand the military, the exception being the civilian defence industry. The need to 'settle down' although not a major factor in veteran's job choices was a consideration for those with families often because they had already purchased a house. Those veterans who had already purchased a property before discharge considered this an important part of the process of their becoming civilians and was one less problem to deal with. The veterans recalled their time as retiring soldiers and moving towards the status of 'new' veteran as having already begun well before discharge, with them thinking and acting less and less like soldiers. However all retained the soldier's ideals of team spirit and a positive work ethic. Discharge from the army did not engender feelings similar to those associated with civilian job redundancy. The transition to civilian life was considered a *return* to a former life course but not one which been disrupted by military service, rather a period of life which had greatly enhanced the individual veteran. The desire to still be serving split the group into two distinct

halves; half wished they were, half were glad they were not. The main research instrument was informed by a set of key assumptions, set out in Chapter 3 and which are repeated here for ease of reference, that military service provided veterans with a satisfying career; enabled veterans to obtain transferable skills and qualifications; provided veterans with a set of high moral values; imbued veterans with a positive work ethic; provided veterans with a positive attitude towards health and diet and finally provided veterans with a positive self image

provided veterans with a satisfying career. It can certainly be stated that as a result of this research all the veterans felt that they had completed a satisfying career, some had obtained transferable qualifications but all had acquired practical and transferable management, organisation and communication skills. All the veterans felt that individually they maintained a positive work ethic but there was no evidence to confirm or to deny possession of high moral values and this assumption was therefore not determined. Whilst each veteran had clearly a positive self image not all had maintained the health and fitness regimes they had followed in the army. Several commonly occurring features emerged from the analysis phase and are derived from what veterans think now about their military life and their subsequent life as civilians. The six dimensions are located at different stages of a veterans life course as illustrated in Figure:13 which is a schematic representation of a veteran's typical career life course



Figure: 13 The Dimensions of Veterans' Typical Career Life Course



The schematic at Figure:13 is set out to show that a veteran's common thoughts and opinions are contained and encapsulated within their memories of lived experiences represented by a large circle. Within the circle the two major parts of a veteran's life 'army life' and 'civilian life' form the two main elements of a contained life cycle in which the veteran left civilian life in youth and returns to this former life in adulthood. The boxed elements 'Army Life', Preparation for leaving (dimension 2) and Retention and Resettlement (dimension 3) are bounded with red lines to indicate that they form a part of the veteran's life which is now closed. All the elements of civilian life are

bounded in blue lines indicating that this lifestyle which was voluntarily interrupted in youth now continues, in adulthood and through into old age; a part of a veteran's life which is not closed. The soldier on leaving the army would have gone through the experience of rejoining the labour market (dimension 4) and will no doubt retain good and bad memories of their army life which will continue to some extent to influence and inform their perception of civilian workers (dimension 5) and how they view and are viewed in the civilian work environment (dimension 6). Indeed a veteran's army service can contribute to how he or she views the world and how they in turn are seen by the world. It is argued then that how a veteran acts and reacts in the world of work is informed consciously or unconsciously by all that has been learned and practised in their lives; with a dominance of military influenced attitudes and values amongst those who particularly still express feelings of 'being different' in some way to their fellow workers.

The six dimensions effectively reflect a typical, although not comprehensively complete, veteran's story. Incomplete because data concerned with veteran's details of their financial situation such as salary level were deliberately excluded from this qualitative research. In addition information was sought only from veterans themselves not their spouses, partners, friends, children or employers; possible information sources which could add to stories of veteran's lives and to the knowledge of military to civilian transition. Whilst dimension 1 provides a collection of veterans commonly occurring thoughts

and opinions, dimensions 2 to 6 contain the chronology of a typical veteran's journey from being a soldier to being a civilian. The key findings from these dimensions which address and answer the research problem along with discussions related to the limited previous research and consideration of associated theoretical positions form the basis of this concluding chapter which is set out as follows. First a separate discussion of each of the 6 dimensions, this is followed by a discussion of all the findings in relation to the literature review and highlights what the author considers to be the most important factors that add to the understanding of military to civilian transition.

## **A Discussion of the Six Dimensions**

### *1. Veterans' Common Thoughts and Opinions*

The majority of the participant group joined the regular army because they had a keen desire to do so. Some had initially wanted to join the Royal Navy but ended up in the army often for reasons as simple as the fact that the Navy recruitment officer was not available or the office was closed. It would appear from this that there was more a keenness to join the armed forces rather than specifically the army although this was not a point generalisable to the whole group of veterans. The fact that most of the veterans achieved Warrant Officer rank indicates a good career choice, a desire to get on and to do well and this is reflected in the actions of several veterans who changed their service trade or employment at an early point in their careers. Actually leaving the army was not an acute or traumatic experience for most but rather

a gradual process over several months. Most veterans reported that the many activities involved in leaving meant that any sadness at parting from comrades was delayed often for several months. Others missed the travel, adventure and excitement and of, in their own words, being part of something important. A positive forward looking approach to leaving the army was a very common feature of how members remembered and related this phase of their lives and from the perspective of themselves as civilians. To many, leaving the army was very like a regular 'posting' to a new unit or assignment, which again made the experience of discharge less traumatic. However some veterans still have an urge to 'move on' every three years even as civilians. None of the veterans miss the army but most admit to missing the comradeship of their army mates.

Formal leaving ceremonies were remembered by some but do not appear to have any great significance since most veterans had already, mentally 'moved on'. Without exception 22 years plus army service was recalled by veterans as the best years of their lives, that their army service had influenced their lives and had made them better people. There was a definite feeling among all the veterans of pride in having served and a view held by most that they had done their bit and had moved on. Asked if they would rejoin the army if they could veteran's responses showed a clear divide; just over 50% said they would whilst the remainder mostly expressed the view that the army had changed too much. Among those who said that they would

rejoin (if they could) were a significant number who had enlisted as boy soldiers, junior leaders or army apprentices at the age of 15 or 16. None of the veterans appear, from their own responses, to have suffered any debilitating effects from actual combat or dangerous situations which many experienced. The issue which produced most negative responses from almost all the veterans was use of the term veteran itself which is clearly not liked. Most veterans prefer not to be labelled at all but if there is a preference for describing a person's military past it is 'ex service' or 'ex armed forces'.

## *2. Preparations for Leaving*

The date that a soldier is to be discharged is known at least to the year and month many years ahead. It would therefore appear that early planning for discharge would be an obvious thing for a soldier approaching retirement to do. However within the participating veterans group and despite the fact that all were self reportedly 'successful' in civilian life, whilst most did plan well ahead a small number did little or nothing. A number of veterans had decided early on in the final years of their service to take up employment with the civilian police force or a government agency or other organisation in which they could use their army trade and training. For this group the mental transition was already well on the way to completion and eventual transition to civilian life was simply the practicalities of moving out of military accommodation. Some made no plans because of military requirements which kept them occupied on duty even during their last few months of

service. Others knew what was available to help them but did nothing and hoped that 'something would turn up'. A few were hopeful of continued service which did not transpire and simply delayed the process of coming to terms with having to leave the army. Within this category some were offered continued service shortly before they were due for discharge – all refused. By the time veterans generally had entered the last 6 months of service they had all begun to 'wind down', had commenced the administrative tasks associated with discharge and had started to seriously seek civilian employment. It would seem then that it is not just the long served soldier who needs to take early action. The last minute offers of continued service for some indicate perhaps a lack of awareness of the career status of individuals whilst they are still serving. Having somewhere to live in civilian life is seen by veterans as a high priority and most had taken steps whilst serving to purchase property where they were intending to settle. Buying a house, indeed most if not all of the major issues related to leaving the army were taken in most cases jointly by the serving veteran and his or her spouse. School places for children were also found to be a high priority which also helped veterans to determine their eventual civilian location.

All of the veterans, even those who had perhaps done little by way of preparation for leaving were aware of the need for qualifications in order to gain employment in civilian life and most of the participant group had included this aspect in their planning and actively pursued appropriate training

courses. The armed forces resettlement service was used by some and ignored by others. Some felt that they did not need what was on offer, others that it was not for them but rather for those who really needed help. A small number of the participant group sought help and advice from organisations such as the RBL. Generally the finding in this area is that Warrant Officers and senior Non Commissioned Officers are capable, organised individuals who feel that they are well equipped and able themselves to find their own employment and their own way in civilian life; that they had completed their military careers and that it was up to them and nobody else to take action if they wished to succeed as civilians.

### *3. Retention/Resettlement*

The various military and civilian organisations which provide training courses and advice are known generally as resettlement. The armed forces provide this service for those who qualify which includes those who have completed 22 years service. The veteran's responses concerning the resettlement services fell into three groups: Those who had used the service and had found it beneficial; those that had used the service and had found it lacking and those who had not used the service at all. Of those who found the resettlement service lacking, criticism was levelled at army officers, both serving and retired who reportedly gave poor advice and several veterans complained of a tendency to steer them towards quite low paid jobs. Others complained that financial advice and CV writing in particular were poor or inadequate for their needs. These negative views from many of the veterans spanned several decades from the 1970s right through to 2005. There is a clear sense of frustration within the veteran group with respect to resettlement, soldiers are used to skills and theory based training courses

and seminars and they expect high standards in terms of content and delivery. On the other hand a proportion spoke positively about the resettlement service, many stressing the fact that it is up to the individual to find him or her self a job and not the army. There was also a view among the veterans that the resettlement service encouraged the idea that most civilian employers were keen to employ ex service people but veterans felt that this was not generally the case. Some veterans who recognised the need for training organised it themselves. Resettlement appears to be a topic which is not doing what soldiers think it will and this is perhaps an issue of perception.

#### *4. Rejoining the labour market*

For a veteran to begin the process of becoming a civilian an important factor is gaining paid employment. At 40 years of age and with an army pension providing a useful source of income the motivation and impetus to become employed may appear to be a low priority. However an army pension even after 22 years service is not sufficient by itself for most to live on and for almost all the veterans (one decided to take his family on a holiday and spending spree before finding work), getting a job was a high priority both in financial terms and as part of the transition process. Having a job, having a place in civilian society gave each individual veteran a purpose. The approaches to job finding among the veterans varied widely. Some veterans used their immediately transferable army trade or employment skills to take up work doing exactly the same or very similar work as civilians. A small number looked for any work but with a clear plan to 'get in' and then 'get on' and in this they were successful. A number of Warrant Officers went straight



into senior management roles with large companies, whilst across the whole range of army ranks represented within the group some effectively changed into civilians overnight doing the same job in the same government agency as they had performed as soldiers. A few purposefully set out to do something different whilst others assumed they would have to start again at the bottom and were willing to accept low pay to get them started in civilian employment. Job satisfaction features highly in veteran's responses to how and why they took certain jobs and generally age was experienced as a positive attribute. Veterans expressed annoyance that some potential employers would happily reduce a salary offer to take account of a veteran's army pension. Whilst no wives were interviewed as a part of this research, their opinions were sought and valued by their spouses. Friends and colleagues were mentioned by a few veterans as being important facilitators for them in gaining employment. There is a clear sense from this section of the interview data that veterans had, almost without exception, found their own way to get a job, these ways as described above were many and varied as were the many different jobs taken up by the veterans. Very few of the participants had taken up, what, according to the literature, are the usual ex service occupations but had succeeded in a wide range of employments. Table: 15 lists 28 different job types self described by the veterans either as their current or last job some having retired from full time employment. Whilst security is rumoured to be a common job destination for ex soldiers (Jolly 1996), only 8 of the research population (15.6%) entered this type of employment with 2 working at director

level, 2 in security management and 4 in 'security' which was not further described. An equal number of 8 veterans (15.6%) went into Information Technology (IT). Of the other occupations only the Civil Service (4) and the Civil Police (3) recorded higher frequency counts than the remainder the totals of which are distributed amongst the other occupations.

**Table: 15 Post Discharge Destinations of Veterans**

<b>CIVILIAN OCCUPATION</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
ADMIN MANAGER	1
AVIATION INDUSTRY	1
CARER	1
CHARITY MANAGEMENT	2
CIVIL SERVICE	4
CIVILIAN POLICE	3
EDUCATION	1
ENGINEER	2
FOREIGN OFFICE	1
FORENSIC ANALYST	1
GARDEN INDUSTRY	1
GEN MANAGER	1
GOVT AGENCY	1
IT	8
LEGAL CLERK	1
LOCAL GOVT	2
LOGISTICS MANAGEMENT	2
MANAGEMENT	1
MOTOR IND	1
NHS	2
POST OFFICE	1
PROJECT MANAGER	1
QA MANAGER	1
SECURITY	5
SECURITY DIRECTOR	2
SECURITY MANAGEMENT	1
SITE MANAGEMENT	2
TECH TRAINING	1

None of the veterans appear to have, self reportedly, suffered negatively as a result of their service army and saw the end of their army careers as a life stage from which they had moved on. Although there was sadness at leaving a well loved job and a familiar environment, all of the veterans had accepted

that the end of their military careers had been reached. Indeed, starting out in civilian life at the age of 40 was found by most to have been a challenge to be overcome rather than a problem to be suffered.

#### *5. Perceptions of civilian workers*

The entire participant group have a number of factors in common. At the time of the research they were all civilians, they had all completed at least 22 years army service and had all worked successfully in civilian employment. With perhaps one or two exceptions the majority considered themselves, as ex soldiers, to be better workers than civilians. Surprisingly many veterans spoke of 'civilians' as a separate identifiable group although as stated already, all the veterans are obviously civilians themselves. This self applied differentiation appears to stem from the work attitude of civilians which the veterans perceive as being different to that of serving soldiers who approach every task with a view to completion regardless of set working times. In addition all the veterans missed the comradeship, respect and team spirit of their former army colleagues, attributes they found lacking in their civilian co-workers. Communicating work requirements featured as an annoyance to many veterans, more used to the clarity of military practice. Some reflected that this was all part of the culture in civilian life of doing as little as possible. However a majority felt that their positive approach to work and their ability to get things done, which comes naturally to experienced Warrant Officers (WOs) and senior non commissioned officers (SNCOs) was noticed,

appreciated and rewarded by civilian employers. This also appears true of the ability of WOs and SNCOs to organise efficiently and effectively in a confident manner and to act quickly and decisively when necessary to achieve corporate objectives. Whilst one veteran expressed the view that it was best to keep quiet, clearly military experience and especially the well practised skill of organising and managing people provides veterans with an edge in management positions. Generally the veterans had accepted that the way 'civilians' are is the status quo and that they would settle into civilian life by accepting this fact whilst not necessarily lowering their own standards with respect to issues such as timekeeping and work ethic.

#### *6. Experiences in and of civilian employment*

Questions asking veterans to relate their experiences of actually working in civilian life generally reflect how veteran's perceived civilians as workers and this was discussed earlier. In relating their work experiences the notion of civilians generally having a different attitude to work became quite clear. Non veteran civilians were described as more 'self oriented' compared to the military approach of working for the common good of the group.

The veterans generally agreed that what ex service people are capable of doing appears to be unknown to most civilian employers but that they were able to be successful and gain promotion because of their attitude to work,

their skill in organising and their positive approach to accepting responsibility. There was a view, even frustration on the part of veterans that many civilians view all soldiers as they are portrayed in the entertainment media but also that where work colleagues knew of a veteran's background this could be beneficial and earn the individual respect. On the other hand some employers actively sought out ex army people because they were good, reliable workers. Such employers recognised the inherent abilities and positive attitude of ex army WOs and SNCOs. Management style is identified as a key difference in military and civilian walks of life. Veterans reported frustration at the inability of staff to understand and act on simple instructions and felt that this was bound up in the negative work attitude and lack of commitment in some workers. Finally the lack of initiative in civilian workers annoyed many veterans again reinforcing the difference between those who have served in the military and those who have not.

The next section now provides an overall summary of the key findings in relation to the literature review and highlights the most important factors which add to the understanding of successful military to civilian transition.

### **A Summary of the research findings highlighting the key factors**

The key factors from this research were not derived from single and separate dimensions but rather emerged as an amalgam of veterans overlapping and complementary views and statements. The six dimensions described above are therefore now reassembled into a single narrative discussion.

Veterans who served for 22 or more years become socialised as soldiers, generally rise through the ranks to achieve status and earn respect as WOs or SNCOs. On leaving the army those that experienced a relatively trouble free transition to civilian life did so because first, they accepted that their army service was ending and second began to prepare well before they were discharged. Thus the process of successfully becoming a civilian after a long period of army service involved acceptance of the end of a well loved career and the loss of friends, status, regular salary, continuous training and development, an interesting job, sport and travel and in operational situations what was described by some of the veterans as excitement and the feeling generally that they were contributing to a good cause. Veterans continue to practice many of the and skills acquired during their army service, suitably adapted to suit the civilian environment; in particular a positive work ethic, organizing skills and the ability to get things done. This is an important feature of transition since whilst some elements of military training may be too specific to be transferable (Jolly 1996) many are. Veterans need to look closely at what it is they can do as civilians by drawing on what they did as soldiers and find ways of expressing and utilising these skills, attitudes and

knowledge in ways understandable and beneficial to civilian employers. Even after several years of life as civilians several of the veterans allude to differences they still feel between those like themselves who have experienced military service and those who have not. It is argued here that whilst acceptance by individual veterans of the end of the military career is a positive step towards a successful transition to civilian life, what Jolly (1996) refers to as disengagement, total denial or total forgetting or turning their backs on their military past has not been seen in this research. Biderman's(1959) observation that the retired serviceman will always be a member of a special sub group, that of 'retired military' is however clearly evidenced in the expressions of pride, satisfaction and feelings of 'being different' related in the stories of the veterans interviewed. Indeed it would be difficult to see how 22 years of someone's life could be forgotten and the ways that that past life has affected an individual could stop being part of their persona. To look back with fondness to happy times spent with fellow soldiers, or indeed to difficult and hard times perhaps under fire together with one's brothers in arms is not greatly different to coal miners or deep sea fishermen or police officers for example reminiscing about past shared experiences. The difference is that the army veteran who plans and prepares for civilian life, by, for instance, taking up appropriate training, finding accommodation in civilian life, securing a job and settling children in school is approaching the task of leaving the army in exactly the same way that he or she would as a senior NCO or WO. The valuable skills and experiences

learned in the military can be a tremendous asset to the individual soldier, who recognizes their practical application and worth. Similarly employers who understand the ways of the military in modern times can benefit hugely from employing an ex soldier who will bring to an organisation, dedication, punctuality, a positive work ethic and an organized and disciplined approach to tackling tasks and seeing them through to completion. These attributes are bound up in the persona of the individual veteran and they should not be denied or rejected but developed and adapted. The veteran who recognizes that he or she has valuable transferable skills will almost certainly do well. However adaptation is the key since, as reported by some veterans being too good at a job, completing task too quickly, being evidently smarter and quicker than one's peers in a work situation may prove unpopular. The positive themes identified in this study may inform new theories concerned with military to civilian transitions and add to the body of knowledge on issues related to the ex service community. The study also revealed an issue voiced as a complaint by some veterans – the same complaint being evidenced in every decade since 1950, namely that of the poor quality of resettlement advice. Veteran's responses of those who did complain, recorded from all three methods of data collection were couched and phrased in very similar ways regardless of the era in which veterans had served, indicating that whilst British society has changed in many ways some of the army's traditions and methods have a continuity which spans many decades. However it is clear that these men and women, now veterans, and when they



were about to leave the army, senior WOs and NCOs, did not place too much reliance on the official resettlement service provided.

Chapter 2, the literature review, began with the author admitting to difficulties in finding any relevant literature directly related to success among those making the transition from military to civilian life. It was not until the introduction of the specific words 'veteran' and 'resettlement' into library catalogue and world wide web searches that previous work related in some way to this enquiry began to emerge. These are interesting words, particularly the term 'veteran' since it is not a term, title or definition with which the author (a retired career soldier) or indeed any of the participant group of 'veterans' feel a natural affinity. In the minds of the general public according to the veterans the term applies not to them but to ex service people in need of help or to those who had served in the world wars or in 'real combat'.

It was established in the literature review that the military exists within society as a separate community largely unseen and to a great extent not understood by the civilian population, a situation which has developed as an important part of the history of Great Britain (Gardiner and Wenborn 1995). This separation of the military from society and the resultant lack of knowledge of the armed forces by civilians generally, means that soldiers attempting to enter the civilian labour force after discharge can be misunderstood and their skills, knowledge and wide life experiences not appreciated. In any event

some veterans were aware of the gap in knowledge of the military on the part of some civilian employers and it is felt important that all potential veterans would benefit from awareness of this fact. However whilst the idea that ‘*most do well*’ (Iversen et al 2005 and Dandeker et al 2003) can probably be tested easily in the USA where detailed statistics are kept of all US service veterans, this is not the case for the British Army where follow up of service leavers only lasts for 12 months (Dandeker et al 2003). The author feels that it is important to stress here that whilst military service in the USA has many similarities with military service in Great Britain there are also many differences particularly the way that USA armed forces personnel are recognized, supported and cared for in civilian life after discharge. It was established in chapter 2 that in Great Britain the small amount of relevant research is focused almost entirely on those who are in need of health and social care many of whom will have served for periods much shorter than a full army engagement of 22 years (see for instance Iversen et al 2005, Dandeker et al 2003). In addition it seems generally that it is the problems suffered by some ex service people that are the main focus of armed forces related sociological research. In Great Britain the Veterans’ Agency is primarily concerned with those who need help and this is also the focus of the work of the RBL. This focus on care, important as it is, may add to the lack of understanding of the armed forces by civilians generally, by presenting veterans as people with problems. However this fact should not be interpreted as a complaint voiced by any of the interviewed veterans, rather

that a successful transition for many was made without necessarily a lot of help from military sources and that a certain amount of pride is taken by many veterans in the fact that they just got on with the job of 'getting out' and 'getting on.' The bulk of the extensive research emanating from the USA is mainly concerned, like the British literature, with veterans who suffer after discharge from a range of medical and social problems (see for example Dandeker, et al 2003; Barkawi, et al 1999; Crompton and Sanderson, 1990; Elder and Clipp, 1989; Feaver and Kohn, 2001; Jolly 1996; Loh 1994; Rosenheck and Fontana, 1994 and Strachan, 2003). Much of this research is also concerned with those who have left the armed forces after a relatively short period of service and may suffer from the effects of institutionalization and the so called dependency culture of the military (Jolly, 1996). However this is not proven since no detailed research has yet been conducted (Dandeker, 2003). Jolly's (1996) work attempts to explain the plight of those who have left the armed forces through a series of case histories but dilutes the study by including all three services and examines the careers of both those who served as officers and those who served in the ranks; she maintains however that there is strong evidence for the existence of institutionalisation (as described in chapter 2), amongst veterans. However, nothing in the entire collection of veteran's data for this research indicated symptoms of institutionalisation which could be considered problematic. It may well be that those whose military careers are prematurely terminated experience the transition to civilian life within a career framework of

incompleteness which is not experienced by those who complete a full engagement of 22 years and this would support Wheaton's (1990) notion of the negative affects of undesirability or fore-seeability. By contrast as Wolpert (2002) points out 22 year served veterans know well in advance when they are to leave and as Dandeker et al (2003) puts it, are ready to move on and become civilians. Thus whilst the 22 year served veterans in this research speak of a phase in their life ending, of looking forward to new challenges, of feelings of satisfaction and of a job well done, those that leave prematurely probably will not. The short term or prematurely retired soldier who enlists at 18 years of age learns the ways of the military and becomes involved within its communities of practice during his or her early years of becoming an adult. The 22 year served veteran, likewise, will grow up and grow old within the same environment but will mature, realize ambitions through promotion gain status with the responsibilities and authority of rank and gain satisfaction as he or she moves along and up the military career promotion curve and towards the completion of this life stage (as in Figure: 6). A veteran who has completed the full 22 years and leaves (as most do) as a senior NCO or WO will have the confidence to adapt to civilian life; confidence acquired through the multiplicity of challenges presented by military service and through leading and managing other soldiers. This sets up in the mind of the veteran, something which is reinforced again and again during military service, that getting the job done, whatever that might be is what is important. This is where the frustration and conflict of work cultures most visibly manifests itself

but it is clear from the veteran's own stories that for the most part they accepted that civilian workers do not work and think in the same way as soldiers and as a result gradually modified their own approach to work but without compromising on their own standards. This notion of a different way of thinking, particularly about work, may begin to answer Higate's (2001) question as to whether military service produces certain long term characteristics. The soldier who for whatever reason leaves the army prematurely will not necessarily have sufficient experience nor the confidence of the full career soldier and returns to a civilian life, interrupted by military service, a period of interruption during which they will have lived within the dependency culture of the military described in chapter 2. Of course many soldiers who serve for only relatively short period do not suffer as a result of health and social problems and will have developed a range of adaptive coping strategies (Dandeker et al 2003). It is possible then, though not conclusive from this research that problematic institutionalisation may be identifiable in those who serve for only short periods but that those who complete a full and satisfactory career of 22 or more years draw only benefit from this major part of their lives, indeed one veteran expressed the view that civilians with whom he worked had become institutionalised within their employing organisation. It is probably then much easier for the full career, 22 year served veteran to mentally move on and face the new challenges of civilian life than the short term military retiree. The long served veteran has developed as an individual has achieved status and confidence; the short

term soldier leaves with a career only partly completed without the finality of a career end which enables the long term veteran to disengage from this phase of their life. However for both the long term and the short term veteran the effects of military service remain with them, a notion which conflicts with Jolly's (1996) assertion that total disengagement from the military is essential but which in any event not possible since a person's past is always part of who they are (Goodwin and O'Connor, 2005; McNeil and Giffen, 1967). Generally it seems that it is the problems suffered by some ex service people that are the main focus of armed forces related sociological research. In Great Britain the Veterans' Agency is primarily concerned with those who need help and this is also the focus of the RBL. This focus on care, important as it is, may add to the lack of understanding of the armed forces by civilians generally, by presenting veterans as people with problems. Five portions of text have been underlined in this summary to highlight them as the key findings which state that: successful veterans accepted that their army service was ending and began to prepare well before they were discharged; they practice many of the skills acquired during their army service, suitably adapted to suit the civilian environment and recognizes that adaptation is the key and they are aware of the gap in knowledge of the military on the part of some civilian employers; similarly veterans are aware that civilian workers do not work and think in the same way as soldiers and gradually modified their own approach to work.

Generally it is also argued that problematic institutionalisation may be identifiable in those who serve in the military for only short periods but that those who complete a full and satisfactory career of 22 or more years draw only benefit from this major part of their lives,

### **Implications for Theory**

This research has looked closely at the midlife career change transition of 51 individuals and identified a number of factors which assist in ensuring that the transition is as unproblematic as possible. It is also a study in the process of job loss and how individuals set about finding new employment. Draper et al (1963) held that military retirees were of great interest because they constituted a substantial segment of the national labour force and were therefore a significant subject for study in their own right. As has been made clear several times in this research, in Great Britain there is little research into ex service personnel and this research will contribute to discussions in this area of sociological enquiry.

### **Implications for Policy and Practice**

Graves (2005) study of early retired military officers in the USA argued that previous studies had thus far failed to prevent or predict problems experienced by many military retirees in the transition to civilian life. Whilst it is not claimed that this research will prevent problems occurring it can

contribute to discussions on policy making and the findings can be used to give advice on how others have fared. The forces resettlement organisations might use this research as a guide to inform their understanding of how it is possible for those leaving the services in mid life to achieve both a successful transition to civilian life and enjoy successful and rewarding civilian careers. These findings will also be of interest to civilian employers, that for instance army WOs do not spend all their time shouting but are by contrast excellent managers of people and resources and would make an excellent addition to a company's staff. The apparently little used AB 108 (Army Record of Service) book could perhaps play a greater role in easing a soldier's transition to civilian life if employers were made aware of its existence. Soldiers approaching the end of their service careers could usefully inform themselves of how others have fared in their transitions to civilian life and suitably edited extracts from this work could be made available perhaps through the internet sites accessed frequently by serving soldiers. Similarly existing veterans may compare their own transitions and subsequent careers in civilian life and perhaps gain a greater appreciation of the influence of their time as soldiers.

### **Limitations**

Whilst the available literature, both from the USA and Great Britain, embraces all branches of the armed forces in identifying and describing the problems suffered by some veterans, the data presented in this thesis is limited in that it was derived only from those who served in the army and had completed at least 22 years regular service. This work is also limited only to those of



non officer rank, that is those up to and including the rank of Warrant Officer Class One. This was a deliberately enforced limitation to confine the research population to a commonly identifiable group. A number of 'veterans who had completed 22 years army service volunteered to take part but were politely rejected since they had accepted a Short Service Commission (SSC) and had then served as commissioned officers for a further period of between 5 and 15 years. Those who are commissioned from the ranks in this way and serve on past the 22 year point will of course be much older on discharge. This effectively made their position different to those who had not been commissioned. A retired officer has a different social status in Great Britain, even if the commission was 'from the ranks.' Warrant Officers receive much the same rate of pay as a Captain and see no significant rise in their pay as a result of being commissioned until they reach the rank of Major. A Captain or Major will however on discharge from the army receive a greatly enhanced pension than they would if they had not obtained a commission and had left the army at 40 years of age. Again, the difference in age and the fact of an increased pension makes them 'different' to those who had not been commissioned. Further, although a WO (as an example) will receive a pension based on his or her rank and period of service at date of discharge, only part of this pension is paid; the full pension is not paid until the individual reaches the age of 55. There can therefore be a financial shortfall for some and perhaps 15 years from the age of 40 until the age of 55. This provides an incentive and greater motivation to those who do leave at the age of 40 than

those who are commissioned and have first an enhanced pension and second a much shorter period of time to wait before they begin to receive their full pension entitlement. This approach to limiting the research population is considered valuable since the findings point to specific characteristics within the research population which differentiate the transition to civilian life of full career soldiers from those who served for a shorter period or those who were commissioned. This further provides an opportunity for further research in this area for those falling outside the rigid research population specification used.

**Further research**

The detailed data obtained from 51 soldiers who have completed 22 years regular army service and who were not commissioned (or put another way were so called 'other ranks') has provided a set of factors which to some extent explain why some retiring soldiers are successful in civilian life. Further research may usefully contribute to this area by examining in a similar way the experiences of soldiers who served for a shorter period of army service, perhaps a period which did not attract any form of post service pension. The same research could be applied equally to 'other ranks' of the navy and the air force. All the armed forces themselves differentiate between officers and non officers so this sector of the population of all three services can itself be seen as a separate area for similar research into the successful transition of 'military officers' into civilian life and employment and additionally

ask such questions as “Is being an army officer likely to enhance employability.” ; and further consider answers to the question: “Does length of service in the armed forces affect the risk of institutionalisation in service personnel?” Army wives and army families whilst included in questions as part of the data collection process played only a minor part in this study and only the opinions of the ex veterans themselves were sought not those of their wives, partners or children. Similarly time and content length precluded the possibility of obtaining data from potential or actual civilian employers; information of the views of this group being again derived and based on the views and opinions of the veteran participants themselves. Both these groups, families and employers could provide a useful and different dimension to the understanding of military to civilian transitions.

### **In Conclusion**

Without exception all participants expressed the sentiment that their time in the army had been a great experience. None of the participants appear to have suffered as a result of their service and saw the end of their engagement as a life stage from which they had moved on. Starting out in civilian life at the age of 40 was found by most to have been a challenge but one which was largely overcome but their wealth of experience and well practised people skills. This study has identified factors which it is contended add to knowledge and can assist or contribute to a successful transition from military to civilian society. It is clear that 22 years or more of army service

can have profound effects on individuals. These effects can be detrimental and debilitating for some and require medical or social services attention and support. For the majority of those who have completed a full military career however the effects of military service can be both positive and beneficial. The army veteran general maintains a disciplined approach to life and a strong work ethic. Whilst most will reject any notion that they are not fully 'civilianised' it is clear that full disengagement from military society is only ever partially achieved and the veteran remains different in the way that he or she associates with others in civilian society. Notions of institutionalisation for those who serve in the armed forces seem more likely in those who serve in the military for short periods and the long served career soldier develops and is enhanced by his or her experiences. Whilst then young soldiers become old soldiers, their return and adjustment to becoming civilians are never complete. Essentially the old adage: – '*Old soldiers never die they only fade away*', can be adapted, as it has been for the purposes of this research to:

*'Old soldiers never die; they adapt their military skills and become successful civilians'.*

## APPENDIX 1

### The Structure of the British Army

The structure of the British Army is complex, due to the different origins of its various constituent parts. In terms of the nature of its servicemen, it is divided into the Regular Army (full-time professional soldiers) and the Territorial Army (part-time paid soldiers). In terms of its military structure it is divided into corps (administrative groupings by common function), and divisions and brigades (large formations, somewhat fluid in nature).

The Regiment is in some respects the most important unit of the British Army. It is the largest "permanent" tactical unit in most corps, although it is only an administrative and ceremonial grouping of battalions in the infantry. Typically, a regiment or battalion consists of around 700 soldiers and is commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel. Many infantry regiments today consist of only one regular battalion, although many also contain another Territorial Army battalion. The main tactical formation in the British Army is the 'battle group'. This is a mixed formation of armour, infantry, artillery, engineers and support units, and is structured according to whatever task it is called on to perform ; it is formed around the core of either an armoured regiment or infantry battalion, and has other units added or removed from it as necessary. A battlegroup will typically consist of between 600 and 700 soldiers under the command of a Lt. Colonel. The British Army mainly recruits within the United Kingdom, and normally has a recruitment target of around 25,000 soldiers per year. Low unemployment in Britain has resulted in The British Army having difficulty in meeting its target, and in the early years of the 21st century there has been a marked increase in the number of recruits from other (mostly Commonwealth) countries, who as of mid-2004 comprised approximately 7.5% of The British Army's total strength.

## APPENDIX 1 contd

By 2005 this number had risen to almost 10. In 2003, nearly 10,000 teenagers joined The British Army, including more than 3000 16-year-olds.

All soldiers must take an oath of allegiance upon joining The British Army: this is known as "attestation". Those who believe in God use the following words:

*I swear by Almighty God that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, her heirs and successors and that I will as in duty bound honestly and faithfully defend Her Majesty, her heirs and successors in person, crown and dignity against all enemies and will observe and obey all orders of Her Majesty, her heirs and successors and of the generals and officers set over me. (MOD, 2006).*

Others replace the words "swear by Almighty God" with:

*"Solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm". (MOD, 2006).*

Becoming a soldier is not just learning a new job and then doing it. By swearing an oath to the monarch the individual commits his or herself to all the weight of military law and a binding agreement to follow orders. Whilst it is the case that others, such as medical doctors and judges for example take an oath, the very act of swearing allegiance to the monarch by its very nature separates those who have joined the armed forces from those who have not; it is one of the factors which make soldiers 'different to civilians'. The sworn affirmation of loyalty is part of a soldier's enlistment into the army.

Whilst it is the case that people enlist into the armed forces, the Royal Navy, The British Army or the Royal Air Force, those that join the army speak rather of joining a 'regiment', like for example the Royal Anglian Regiment or enlisting into a 'corps', such as the Royal Corps of Signals or the Intelligence Corps.

## APPENDIX 1 contd

Recruits join the army as private soldiers and progress through the ranks as they serve time, gain experience and qualifications and compete for promotion to higher rank on merit.

The different ranks for non officers are:

- Warrant Officer Class One
- Warrant Officer Class Two
- Staff Sergeant
- Sergeant
- Corporal
- Lance Corporal
- Private.

The ranks Lance Corporal, Corporal, Sergeant and Staff Sergeant are referred to collectively as 'Non commissioned Officers' and the remaining two ranks as 'Warrant Officers.' The most senior non officer rank is a Warrant Officer Class One. These are the usual names for army ranks but in different regiments and corps other titles are also used. For example a trade trained private soldier in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) is known as a 'Craftsman' whilst a private soldier in the Royal Artillery would be called a 'Gunner'. In addition, some ranks have a titular or appointment title. A Warrant Officer One in an infantry regiment could hold the title of Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) whilst the senior Warrant Officer One in charge of a REME workshop for example would have the title Artificer Sergeant Major (ASM) (Heyman 2005)

All members of the army are trained in the basics of being a 'soldier' but in addition to the rank structure there are many different specialisms. The specialisms (or trades) do not affect rank but they do affect pay bands. So, for instance an infantry sergeant will earn less than a sergeant in the Intelligence Corps who is trained as an operator special intelligence.

## APPENDIX 1 contd

Every regiment and corps has its own distinctive insignia, such as a cap badge and throughout their service all soldiers carry an identity card with a photograph, their name, rank, army number and personal details. A soldier's uniform and identity card are extremely important, they define who and what a soldier is within military society.

An enlisted soldier then is inducted into a society to which allegiance has been sworn by all its members; that gives him or her a status and a position that can be immediately recognised (by those within that society) via the visual clues of uniform and badges of rank. Production of his or her military identity card when asked to do so for identity purposes is something not soldier would find unusual and it is also not unusual for soldiers to feel that something is missing when they have to return their identity card on discharge from the army. When a soldier leaves the army the visual clues of uniform, hat and rank badges and identity card are left behind. The soldier is, on discharge from the army, an ex soldier, visibly a civilian, no different perhaps than any other civilian. However 22 years of military service in a society to which allegiance has been sworn and with a culture which generally recognises its members through their appearance and communicates up and down a hierarchical structure according to rank and accords status and respect in proportion to such ranks is a culture which is different to civilian society. It is this difference in culture that some ex service people find difficult to cope with. The culture of the military provides order and structure and having entered this society, learned and practised its ways and become used to military discipline the soldier who leaves the army must re learn the ways of the civilian in order to fit in and in order to be successful.



## APPENDIX 2

### **An Overview of the Roles and Deployment of the British Army**

After the end of World War II, the British Empire declined with the independence of India, and other colonies in Africa and Asia. Accordingly the strength of the British military was reduced, in recognition of Britain's reduced role in world affairs. However, a large deployment of British troops remained in Germany, facing the threat of Soviet invasion from the 1950s until 1991. This period became known as the Cold War.

Despite the decline of the British Empire, The British Army was still deployed around the world, fighting in the Korean War from 1950 until 1953, the Suez crisis of 1956, and colonial wars in Oman and Malaysia. In 1982 the British Army, alongside the Royal Marines, helped to recapture the Falkland Islands during the Falklands War against Argentina. In the three decades following 1969, the British Army was heavily deployed in Northern Ireland, to support the Royal Ulster Constabulary (later the Police Service of Northern Ireland) in their conflict with loyalist and republican paramilitary groups. Following the IRA ceasefires between 1994 and 1996 and since 1997, demilitarisation has taken place as part of the peace process, much reducing the military presence in the area. The ending of the Cold War saw a 40% cut in manpower, significantly reducing the size of The British Army. Despite this, The British Army has been deployed in an increasingly global role. In 1991, the United Kingdom was the second largest contributor to the coalition force that fought Iraq in the Gulf War. Later The British Army saw service in the former republics of Yugoslavia in the Bosnian War and the Kosovo War. In 2003 Great Britain was the only other major contributor to the United States led invasion of Iraq. Since 2002 there has been a British Army presence in Afghanistan.

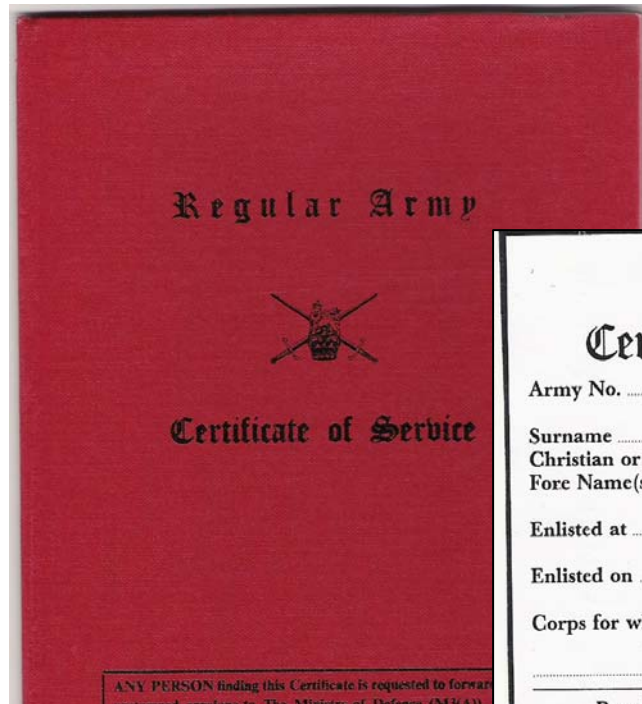
## APPENDIX 2 contd

The British Army has also been deployed in many peacekeeping operations, such as in Sierra Leone and in the war against terrorism. British troops are based in other parts of the world in either smaller scale operational deployments or providing training support. These include Belize since the country gained independence from Great Britain in 1981. Brunei since 1962 running the British Army's jungle warfare school and In Canada since 1972 running a British Army Training Unit. Britain retained two Sovereign Base Areas in Cyprus after the island's independence. British forces bases serve as forward bases for deployment in the Middle East. British forces are also deployed separately with UN forces. Since 1982 an enlarged garrison has been maintained in the Falkland Islands. British forces remained in Germany after the end of the Cold War in part due to the lack of accommodation in Britain. A small military presence is maintained in Gibraltar. Since 2003 British troops have served in Iraq on security operations. The British Army has a training centre in Kenya, under agreement with the Kenyan government. It provides training facilities for three infantry battalions per year. A British military presence has been maintained in Kosovo since 1999. Following Gulf War 1 in 1991, Britain has maintained a considerable military presence in the Middle East. Besides Iraq, there are British troops in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, as well as regular training missions in Oman. Sierra Leone. Under United Nations resolutions British troops remain in Sierra Leone to provide military support and training to the government (Heyman 2005).

# APPENDIX 3

## Regular Army Certificate of Service AB 108

AB108 page 1



1  
Army Form B.108 (Revised 12/84)

### Certificate of Service

Army No. 2387

Surname [REDACTED]  
Christian or  
Fore Name(s) [REDACTED]

Enlisted at CARLISLE

Enlisted on 21 AUGUST 1961

Corps for which enlisted GENEAL SERVICE  
CORPS

2  
(This page to be entirely free from erasure)

### Assessments of Military Conduct and Character

Military Conduct EXEMPLARY

Note—The Range of Military Conduct Gradings possible is:—  
(1) Exemplary (2) Very Good (3) Satisfactory  
(4) Fair (5) Unsatisfactory

Testimonial. (To be completed with a view to civil employment and with relation to the Certificate of Qualifications and the Job Description)

[REDACTED] is leaving the Army normally on completing 22 years service. He is nimble-witted and has shown great prowess as an Analyst which requires considerable concentration and attention to detail. He is literate and expresses himself clearly. He is of slim build; is agile and physically fit.

[REDACTED] was an honest, loyal and dedicated Warrant Officer of great moral stature who would prove to be an asset to any concern that might elect to employ him.

The above assessments have been read to me,  
Signature of Soldier [REDACTED]

Signature of C.O. [REDACTED]

Sp HQ  
Comms & Sy Gp TUN  
Barkie Hwy Bks  
11th W...house  
BOUGHBOROUGH LE12  
Unit date stamp

Description of Soldier on leaving Army Service

Birth [REDACTED] Height 182 cm  
on FRESH Eyes BROWN  
Scars (visible) NIL  
BROWN Blood Group O POS

### Warning

This certificate be lost or mislaid no duplicate can be obtained. However, loss be due to exceptional circumstances, a certificate, on B108A, may be obtained on application to the Officer in Charge, and Record Office concerned.

Person to whom this Certificate is issued should on no account part with it by post when applying for a situation but should use a copy.

Publication of the particulars given in this Certificate may render the person liable to prosecution.

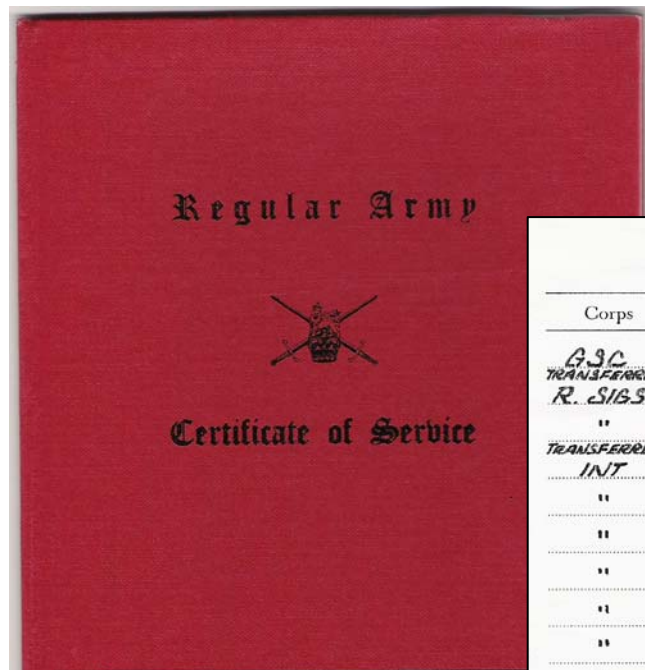
Persons on leaving Her Majesty's Service are hereby reminded that the disclosure of any information by them to another person AT ANY TIME of their service may have acquired which might be useful to any enemy renders them liable to prosecution under the Official Secrets Acts.

AB108 page 2

# APPENDIX 3 contd

## Regular Army Certificate of Service

### AB 108



AB108 page 3

4

**Certificate of Transfer to Regular Res**

Date of Transfer .....

Rank on Transfer .....

Cause of Transfer .....

Corps on Transfer .....

Total Army Service ..... years

Signature .....

Officer in C

Manning and Reco

Date .....

MRO date stamp

Army Service			
(Showing transfers, if any, to other Corps)			
Corps	Country	From	To
GSC	HOME	21 8 61	16 12 64
TRANSFERRED			
R. SIGS	HOME	17 12 64	19 1 65
"	N. GERMANY	20 1 65	4 4 68
TRANSFERRED			
INT	HOME	5 4 68	28 7 68
"	CYPRUS	29 7 68	12 7 71
"	HOME	13 7 71	15 11 71
"	N. GERMANY	16 11 71	1 1 73
"	N. IRELAND	2 1 73	26 4 73
"	N. GERMANY	27 4 73	18 4 74
"	HOME	19 4 74	26 9 76
"	N. GERMANY	27 9 76	3 10 76
"	HOME	4 10 76	6 9 77
"	N. GERMANY	7 9 77	5 4 79
"	N. IRELAND	6 4 79	19 7 79

Medals, clasps, decorations, mentions in despatches and any special acts of gallantry or distinguished conduct recorded on the regimental conduct sheet.

LIONA SERVICE AND GOOD CONDUCT MEDAL.

MENTION IN DESPATCHES.

GSM 1962 CLASP NORTHERN IRELAND.

**Certificate of Discharge**

Date of Discharge 2 December 1985.

Rank on Discharge Warrant Officer Class One.

Cause of Discharge On completion of engagement.

Corps from which Discharged Intelligence Corps.

Service on (a) Army Service 24 years 104 days

Date of Discharge (b) Reserve Service Nil years Nil days

Total Service Twenty Four years 104 days

Signature H. C. TITCHINBAS

ED for Colonel

Officer in Charge

Combined

Manning and Record Office

Date - 1 APR 1986

**COMBINED MANNING**

**AND**

**RECORD OFFICE**

**- 1 APR 1986**

**HIGHER BARRACKS**

**EXETER**

AB108 page 4

## APPENDIX 4

### MOD Compliments Slip For Veteran's Badge



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE

With the Compliments of the  
Under Secretary of State for Defence  
and Minister for Veterans

*This HM Armed Forces Veteran's Badge  
is presented to you in recognition of  
your service to your country.  
You may wish to wear it on suitable  
occasions when dressed in civilian attire.*

MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, WHITEHALL SW1A 2HB



## APPENDIX 5

### My plea for help – Version 1 (Text of e-mail)

Hi,

Please excuse this impersonal approach but I am trying to make contact with people who served in the army and who fit the profile described below to help me with my research. I am making good progress but need a few more. If you did not serve in the army, if I have already contacted you, or if you were elevated to the peerage (commissioned), then my apologies. I have already had success on several web sites with the following notice. Can you help me?

#### **Wanted: British Army Veterans for Academic Research Project**

My name is Jim McDermott and I am a post graduate research student with a particular interest in work culture and transitions within society. I am also a member of the Garats Hay 'Y Services' Branch of The Royal British Legion.

I need to interview a number of army veterans to complete my Doctoral studies at Leicester University. If you have completed 22 years of army service (that is my definition of a veteran), in any regiment or corps (male or female), worked successfully in civilian employment since discharge and can spare approximately 1 hour for an interview I would like to hear from you. You will have reached any rank up to and including Warrant Officer One and may have recently left the army or may have left several years ago – you still fit the research profile. Interviews will be recorded, transcribed and analysed.

If you are interested in helping me with my research by telling me about your experiences in your transition from military to civilian life please e-mail me on [jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com](mailto:jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com) stating your name, post code, year of discharge and your last army rank.

If you do fit my 'veteran' profile but are not in the UK you can still assist me as I will also be conducting 'interviews' by MSN messenger on the internet. A final alternative is for you to write a mini biography and e mail it to me. Full details of the aims and purposes of the research and an indication of the sorts of questions I will be asking will be made available. This project is an independent academic study. Total confidentiality and anonymity is assured

Thank you.

Jim McDermott

You can authenticate my status independently by contacting  
Dr Jason Hughes, BSc, PhD (Leicester) Lecturer and Postgraduate Tutor  
Tel: +44 (0)116 252 5984 Fax: +44 (0) 116 252 5953  
Email: [jason.hughes@le.ac.uk](mailto:jason.hughes@le.ac.uk)

Regards

Jim

From the office of Jim McDermott.

## APPENDIX 6

### Interview Topic Guide

#### Field Research Interview Topic Guide (Mini Biography) Jim McDermott

---

This research is concerned with how people move from one life style or society to another and how this affects them. In this research, how you managed the process of leaving the army and 'resettling as a civilian. A great deal has been written about ex service people who fail for one reason or another after discharge. This research takes a different approach and looks at those who have made a successful transition. I am collecting stories from ex soldiers (male and female) who have completed 22 years army service and achieved any rank up to and including Warrant Officer Class 1.

I have identified a series of topics to be covered. I would like you to write down in your own words your answers, views and thoughts on these topics but if other issues come up that is fine. So there are no right or wrong answers. What I want is your story, in your words about leaving the army and settling into civilian work and life. I am mainly interested in what has happened to you after you left the army

If possible please produce your Mini Bio-graph as a Word document by keying in your answers and responses into my document and then saving it. The Word document will be numbered and from that point on will not be identifiable to you. After my research is completed all data media and transcriptions will be destroyed. I will use only your initials or some other arbitrary label in my thesis when referring to anything you say which I quote. Your time and effort in producing this text will be greatly appreciated and as a researcher I am aware of how much time writing can take up. If you have nothing to say on a topic please leave it out. Once you get going you'll probably find you have a lot to say! Could even be your first best seller! Note that the space beneath each question or topic is not an indication of how much to write.

Visual elicitation. It may help to jog memories of your army service if you to have to hand a photograph taken during your early service.

If there is anything in your written text which may assist me but which you do not want a direct reference to, please let me know. I will not in any event use real names or the names of any companies or organisations you may mention. Please note that this is an independent academic study. My work is not sponsored by any government agency or organisation. I am not setting out to criticise or find fault. The results of my research will form the data for my PhD thesis in the combined social sciences. Hopefully what I find will be useful to those who will eventually be, or are already 22 year army veterans.

All data collected will be treated in the strictest confidence and once the thesis is published all submissions in whatever form or media will be destroyed. In the interim all data is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

If you wish you can check my bona fide as a student by contacting my university supervisor Dr John Goodwin at The University of Leicester on 0116 252 5944.  
Jim McDermott MSc. Tel: 01530 811578. Mobile: 07766 402384. E-mail [jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com](mailto:jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com) or [jm192@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:jm192@leicester.ac.uk)

---

**PLEASE DON'T BE PUT OFF BY THE NUMBER OF PAGES – MOST PEOPLE  
ACTUALLY SAY THAT THEY ENJOY THE MENTAL STROLL DOWN MEMORY LANE!**

## APPENDIX 6 contd

Please complete.

"This is a mini bio-graph produced by... (Your name) in support of the PhD research being conducted by Jim McDermott. I give my permission for my words to be used in this research."

**It is a good idea to read through the whole questionnaire to get an idea of what is required before you start writing**

### **%Military Background**

1. Tell me briefly about your army career. Include please details of:

- How old were you when you enlisted?
- When did you enlist?
- What regiment or corps did you serve with?
- Where did you serve?
- What was your final rank on discharge?
- Did you work as a civilian before you enlisted? Is so what did you do?

### **%Current Situation**

2. Tell me about your current situation

3. What job are you doing now?

4. How did you come to be in this job?

### **%Resettlement**

5. Tell me about the time when you first left the army?

- Do you miss the army?
- What do you miss?



## **APPENDIX 6** contd

- Does the news of recent/current conflicts make you wish you were still serving?

6. What did the army do to help you prepare for life as a civilian?

- Did you seek help from any of the service organisations (like The British Legion)
- Have you maintained any links with the army

7. What did YOU do to help you prepare for life as a civilian BEFORE you completed your service?

### **%Self Perception**

8. How do you feel then that being in the army helped you in the job market generally?

9. Do you feel on the other hand that being in the army hindered you in any way?

10. Do you think of yourself as a veteran/an ex soldier or ex-serviceman/woman?

11. Do you actively volunteer knowledge of your military past?

### **%Looking Back**

12. How do you NOW think about your army service?

13. Was leaving the army a sad event or were you pleased to be moving on?

14. How different was it initially working as a civilian?

15. Were there any specific issues you remember? And now?

## APPENDIX 6 contd

### %Management and Communication

16. Thinking now about management and communication – how people work together, or don't work together.

- Think about - civilians? Good timekeepers?
- Think about the ways that civilians work – compared to soldiers

17. In the early days when you became a civilian how different did you find working with others?

18. What about trust and respect?

19. What about friends and social life?

20. In what ways do you think that having served in the army has helped you in civilian life?

### %Family Issues

21. Who came first when you were serving – you the army or your wife/husband/family?  
And Now?

22. When you were seeking work (or when you seek work) what were or are the main considerations?

### %Money Matters

Does or did having an army pension influence your job choice or do you consider it 'Extra' revenue?

Do you feel more secure now financially than when you served?

### %Effects of army service

Back now to the effects of your army service on you.

23. Did you take part in actual combat operations?

## **APPENDIX 6** contd

24. Can you talk about it?

25. During your service you would have been fit and healthy and played sports – is this still the case?

### **%Relations and Perceptions**

26. Many employers have had no military experience  
Have you found this to be an issue?

27. Is age an issue (the army is made up mostly of young people)?

28. What about gender?  
The army now treats men and women on equal terms.

### **%Influence of an army career**

29. Tell me about you as a person – and as an ex soldier. In what ways has 22 years service contributed to the way you think, feel and act?

### **%Final Points (if any)**

30. Is there any other issue you feel you want to include here which may contribute to this research?

# APPENDIX 7

## Veterans Data Base – Example Record

VETERANS DATA BASE: INTERVIEWEE DATA SHEET						
ID	No	YrsService	YrEnlist	YrDisch	AgeonEntry	Regt/Corps
21	21	25	1958	1983	15	R Anglian

First name	Surname	D O B	Disch Rank
AYYEN	OTHER	1983	WO1

Addr1	Data Method	Data Collected	Transcribed
111 The Street	F2F ✓	Yes ✓	Yes ✓
Addr2	TelNo		
Close to nowhere	0116 FFFFFF		
Addr3	Email		
Leics	an.other99@nosuchnet.co.uk		
PostCode			
LE99 4GH			

Remarks:
----------

Responded from first notice on ARRSE 141105

E mail thanks and asked for pref method 151105

E mail received 181105 choose F2F

E mails agreed F2F on 081205 at his home at 1030

E mail from Ayyen F2F changed to 091205 1100. F2F conducted TAPE 07.

Thank you e mail sent 111205. Begin transcription. Data now to N-Vivo.

Telephoned 171205 ask about views on leaving ceremony. E mail reply – transcribed.

All done. Allocated F2F99M58/83

*Tape destroyed*

C:/My Documents/Access/PhD/Records/Vets DB

## APPENDIX 8

### Consent Form

Consent Form: Transition of Army Veterans to Civilian Life

**Researcher:** Jim McDermott  
University of Leicester  
(Post graduate student)

**Supervisor:** Dr. John Goodwin  
University of Leicester

**Purpose:** To identify and understand key themes in army veteran's experiences of their transition from a military to a civilian society. The study will seek to identify factors which enabled veterans to make a successful transition.

Participation I understand that:

My participation in this study is voluntary  
I may withdraw from this study at any time for any reason  
I may refuse to answer any of the questions  
I will submit a written account of my experiences  
My submission will be coded and analysed  
Confidentiality will be strictly respected and anything identifying me personally or any organization or people that I may name, will be removed from the written transcript.  
Following completion of the study all written submissions will be destroyed  
I can have access to the findings of the study by contacting Jim McDermott  
I understand the researcher will address any questions or concerns I may have about this study  
I also understand that I may register any complaint I might have with the Thesis supervisor

Researcher: Jim McDermott MSc PhD Student CLMS University of Leicester.

55 Barr Crescent Whitwick Leics LE67 5FF.

Tel: +44(0)1530 811578 Email: [jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com](mailto:jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com)

Supervisor: John Goodwin, BSc (Loughborough), PhD (Leicester)

Senior Lecturer and Sub-Dean for Graduate Studies (Social Sciences) University of Leicester  
Tel: +44 (0)116 252 5944 Email: [jdg3@le.ac.uk](mailto:jdg3@le.ac.uk)

**PLEASE INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE GIVEN YOUR CONSENT BY SENDING AN E-MAIL WORDED AS FOLLOWS TO: [jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com](mailto:jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com)**  
**Subject: Consent.**

***I have read and understood the document - Consent Form: Transition of Army Veterans to Civilian Life and agree via this e-mail to participate in this study. I have also received a letter from the researcher indicating compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.***

## APPENDIX 9

### Thank you and Data Protection Letter

55 Barr Crescent  
Whitwick  
Leicestershire  
LE67 5FF

Tel: 01530 811578  
Mob: 07766402384  
E-mail: jim.mcdermott77@ntlworld.com

---

Ref: JM/PhD/DP

Date: 15 November 2005

Dear [firstName] [SurName],

Thank you very much for agreeing to assist me. I greatly appreciate you giving up your time in order to help me with my research.

I would like to reassure you that the information, which you give to me in the form of a mini biography will be treated in the strictest of confidence. All data collected will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. In addition, your submission will be unattributed to either yourself or to any organisation which you work for or have worked for.

I am an impartial and independent postgraduate research student studying at the University of Leicester. I have no connections with any other bodies, e.g. the Inland Revenue, Social Security etc.

What will I do with the data you give me? My intention is to use the data which you and other participants provide to assist me in my study of how people coped with the experience of moving from a military to a civilian society. Once the thesis is complete all written submissions and related documents will be destroyed.

Once again, thank you very much for your participation.

Yours Sincerely

**Jim McDermott MSc**  
Centre for Labour Market Studies  
University of Leicester

Thank you letter Ver 2 (Bio)

## APPENDIX 10

### Extract of a Face to Face (F2F) Interview

F2F09M49/73, interviewed at home, interviewer Jim McDermott date audio tape no: 006

#### Military Background

INT\_JIM

Please tell me something about your army career. How old were you when you joined?

F2F09M49/73

I was 18 when I joined.

INT\_JIM

And when was that - 48?

F2F09M49/73

1948 when I actually went in. I went for my attestation before that but I had to wait. And it all came about because, well my Dad was the RSM or Chief Riding Instructor of the 9<sup>th</sup> Lancers back in the early 20's, and he always told me about India and Egypt as a kiddie. So I'd always got army in me at the end of the day. But I was working on a farm and I was getting up at 4 o'clock in a morning to milk the cows and going to bed at 10 o'clock at night for 10 bob a week.

INT\_JIM

And a lot of work in between?

F2F09M49/73

Yes, and I thought well I can do better than that, so I packed t'farm in and it was obviously my National Service I had to do. So I thought well if I join the army as a National Serviceman I am going to get 10 bob a week. I am going to be no better off financially, so if I become a regular and get £1 a week ...

INT\_JIM

It was a lot of money then wasn't it?

F2F09M49/73

It was a lot of money, considering when I first started work my wage was 5 shillings and I had to pay my tram fare to work which was at the other side from where I lived so I had no money left for the rest of the week. So I joined the army, and initially I was going to join the K.O.Y.L.I.'s but the Recruiting Sgt was

in the REME, so he suggested I join the REME. They did in them days. It didn't matter what Regiment you wanted to join, they'd get you to join their Regiment. So I joined REME and signed on. I went to Blandford, did my 6 weeks training at 1 Training Battalion at Blandford. From there I went to Totton near Southampton, which was 8 Infantry Workshops.

## APPENDIX 10 contd

INT\_JIM

So what trade were you in?

F2F09M49/73

Er, I was private when I started off. I was going to be a driver, I had always wanted to be a driver. I had driven tractors on t'farm. So I had always wanted to be a driver. I passed my test in Southampton and never, ever had a driving lesson! I used to drive around the camp....oh no, sorry, I passed my test but I didn't pass it in Southampton. I drove in Southampton and did a couple of lessons in Southampton and then the unit got closed down and it then moved and amalgamated with 8 Infantry Workshops at Dorchester. The camp was the barracks in Dorchester and the Workshops were just outside Dorchester and by this time I had been in the army about 6 months or something like that. I had done a bit of driving. And then one day the MTO said "go down to the workshops and take this". I didn't think anything of it, I just got into a Bedford 1 Tonner and drove to the workshops, come back, got back and the MTO saw me and started playing hell with me cos I hadn't gone to the workshops. I said "I've been!" "Who did you go with?" "Nobody" I said "I went by myself". So he said "Well I'd better test you" so he tested me and I got my licence. That was in 1948!!! (laughs)

INT\_JIM

That would be a full license then?

F2F09M49/73

Oh yes, it wasn't a civilian licence it was an army driving licence but it was the equivalent to a civilian licence. I think I've still got it somewhere. And then I got posted to 22 Ack Ack Workshops at Manchester, at Barton. I was only there a couple of weeks and then I got posted to the Far East.

INT\_JIM

Where did you go in the Far East?

F2F09M49/73

To District Workshops, Singapore. I was only there I suppose about 6 months and I became CRÈME's driver so I was driving the big chief of REME around the Far East.

INT\_JIM

Good job I'd say.

F2F09M49/73

Yes, except it was a boring job. I picked him up in the mornings and went down to Fort Canning which was Headquarters and I would sit there and there would be the chap who used to drive Brigadier Robinson around and we'd sit there talking all day and the Colonel Ivan, he was CRÈME would come out and say "Come on F2F09M49/73, I want to go to Changi.



## APPENDIX 11

### Extract of a Mini Biography

#### Resettlement

##### QUESTION

What did the army do to help you prepare for life as a civilian?

Did you seek help from any of the service organisations (like The British Legion)?

BIO01F78/00

Yes – an organisation which is meant to assist in identifying jobs for ex-military (can't remember the name organisation, but they have offices in [town]), however they were no help whatsoever.

Have you maintained any links with the army?

I subscribe to the WRAC Association and [army unit] Vets web site.

##### QUESTION

What did YOU do to help you prepare for life as a civilian BEFORE you completed your service?

BIO01F78/00

My husband and I bought property in [town] 4-5 years before I retired which we lived in during our leave. My husband also moved into the house 10 months before I finished. By doing this we were already accepted by our community before we took up full-time residence.

#### Self Perception

##### QUESTION

How do you feel then that being in the army helped you in the job market generally?

BIO01F78/00

Yes – particularly with public sector employers.

##### QUESTION

Do you feel on the other hand that being in the army hindered you in any way?

BIO01F78/00

Being over-qualified was a hindrance to employment in many cases.

##### QUESTION

Do you think of yourself as a veteran/an ex soldier or ex-serviceman?

BIO01F78/00

Ex-soldier.

##### QUESTION

Do you actively volunteer knowledge of your military past?

BIO01F78/00

Yes.

## APPENDIX 11 contd

### Looking Back

#### QUESTION

How do you NOW think about your army service?

BIO01F78/00

A closed chapter which has equipped me with many qualities advantageous to my current employer.

#### QUESTION

Was leaving the army a sad event or were you pleased to be moving on?

BIO01F78/00

Mixed emotions, but, due to my personal circumstances, pleased to be moving on.

#### QUESTION

How different was it initially working as a civilian?

BIO01F78/00

My first job was with the private sector and lack of any welfare infrastructure was a definite culture shock.

#### QUESTION

Were there any specific issues you remember?

BIO01F78/00

During a spell of sickness (which included hospitalisation) only one phone call was received from my employers which was to enquire when I would be returning to work. There did not appear to be any concern for my well-being.

## APPENDIX 12

### Protocol for Microsoft Messenger Exchanges

The following is an example of the text used to advise veterans of a protocol for use during Microsoft Messenger Exchanges using a keyboard to conduct text based conversations.

#### Protocol for Microsoft Messenger Exchanges (Keyboarding only)

Suggest we use the following protocol

1. We should try and operate on a send and reply basis so our conversation remains synchronised. In other words I will wait until I receive what you want to say before I send what I want to say and vice versa.
2. When typing if you have only a few words to send, say one or two lines, then end what you have typed with a full stop. This will mean that this is all you are saying at that moment and the sent text is complete.
3. If you want to type several lines of text, send it in batches of two or three lines followed by three full stops... This indicates that more is to come and the receiver should not send. Also means that the receiver can read what you are saying in smaller chunks...
4. Also means that the conversation stays on course and each end is not responding to the wrong parts of the exchange; see point 1 above about remaining in sync.
5. If you wish and you know what we are going to discuss then by all means prepare chunks of text to send. However I suggest text sent in this way should be limited to no more than 100 words and any longer texts be sent as Word documents and as e mail attachments.
6. I recommend that sessions are kept to around 30 minutes and we make arrangements for the next MSM meeting at the end of each session so please have your diary to hand.
7. Note that as per the arrangements made by e mail all MSM exchanges concerning my research will be saved as Word Documents and may be quoted in my research

## APPENDIX 13

### Extract of a Microsoft Messenger Interview

This is the transcript of an MsM conversation between [NAME] and Jim McDermott, in support of the PhD research being conducted by Jim McDermott. I give my permission for my words to be used in this research.

#### Military Background

INT\_JIM

OK, moving on, can you tell me please BRIEFLY about your army career...

INT\_JIM

When did you join?...

INT\_JIM

How old...

MSM03M81/03

Joined in 1980 as a young soldier...

INT\_JIM

What age?

MSM03M81/03

17

INT\_JIM

OK, did you work before you enlisted?

MSM03M81/03

Yes but only briefly as an apprentice panel beater for about 1 year.

INT\_JIM

OK so why did you join the army?

MSM03M81/03

Failed to get into the Navy so totally fed up walked straight into the Army Careers Office!

INT\_JIM

Right so NAVY was your first choice?

MSM03M81/03

Yes but only because my best friend was joining (he got in by the way!)

INT\_JIM

OK. What about family any influence there to do with armed forces?

MSM03M81/03

Well Grandfather was a volunteer and wartime (WW2) soldier in the Manchester Regiment and dad was a Royal Engineer (6 years) my mum had brothers serving also.

INT\_JIM

OK so some background...

INT\_JIM

Can you give me an overview of your army service...?

INT\_JIM

From when you joined until you left...

INT\_JIM

DONT GIVE any detail you don't wish to.

## **APPENDIX 13** contd

MSM03M81/03

Yes. Mainly I spent most of my time as a military engineer...

MSM03M81/03

I trained as a bomb disposal engineer and served alternate posts as a standard combat engineer and that job...

MSM03M81/03

Progressed through the ranks and was one of the lucky ones to make Warrant Officer Class 1

MSM03M81/03

Served in several areas of conflict but generally a steady and safe career!

INT\_JIM

OK, so let's reflect on some of those points. Why do you say ...was one of the lucky ones to make Warrant Officer Class 1

MSM03M81/03

I consider that I was an above average soldier in terms of intelligence and abilities.

INT\_JIM

And obviously so did the army?

MSM03M81/03

Not many people achieve the rank in fact of a basic training party of 100 only 3 statistically will make it.

MSM03M81/03

Apparently!

## References

Amundson, N. E. and Borgen, W. A. (1992) The dynamics of unemployment: Job loss and job search. *The Personnel and Guidance Journal*, Vol. 60, pp. 562-564.

Anand, R. (2006) *Online Research - To do or not to do - that is the?* Available in <http://onqualitative-research.blogspot.com/2006/04/online-research-to-do-or-not-to-do.html>, accessed 12 May 2006.

Anon, Ex soldier, (2005) Biscuits Brown Internet Forum. (2006) Available in: <http://www.biscuitsbrown.com/http://www.biscuitsbrown.com/>, accessed 8 June 2006.

Archer, J. and Rhodes, V. (1993) The grief process and job loss: A cross-sectional study. *British Journal of Psychology*, Vol. 84, pp. 395-410.

Armstrong, K. (1981) *Through the narrow gate*. New York: St Martins Press.

Army, (2006) The British Army: Armed forces (Army) Pensions. Available in: <http://www.army.mod.uk/>, accessed 12 May 2006.

ATRA, (2001) Army Training and Recruitment Agency: Code of Practice for Instructors, Students Notes. Available in: [http://www.army.mod.uk/linked\\_files/ag/servingsoldier/clm/radio\\_interviews/SN7.1.doc](http://www.army.mod.uk/linked_files/ag/servingsoldier/clm/radio_interviews/SN7.1.doc), accessed 3 Oct 2006.

Baker, D. G. Campbell, S. Rosenhek, R. Blank, A. Jr. and Farley, (eds) (1992) 'Operation Desert Storm Outreach Program', in *Returning Persian Gulf troops: First Year Findings*. Northeast Program Evaluation Center, Evaluation Division of the National Centre for PTSD, Veterans Affairs Medical Center: Wet Haven, CT.

Balk, D. E. (1999) Meaning reconstruction in the wake of loss. *Death Studies*, Vol. 23, pp. 465-472.

Bandura, A. (1997) *Self-Efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York, W.H. Freeman and Company.

Banks, M. (2001) *Visual Methods in Social Research*. London: Sage.

Barkawi, T. Dandeker, C. Wells-Petry, M. and Kier, E. (1999) Rights and Fights: Sexual Orientation and Military Effectiveness. *International Security*, Vol. 24(1) pp. 181-201.

Beckham, J. C. Feldman, M.E. and Kirby A.C. (1998) 'Atrocities exposure in Vietnam Combat Veterans with Chronic PTSD: Relationship to Combat Exposure, Symptoms Severity, Guilt and Interpersonal Violence', *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, Vol. 53(8) pp. 859-869.

Becker, H. S. (1963) *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. New York: The Free Press.

Beehr, T. A. (1995) *Psychological stress in the workplace*. New York: Routledge.

Bejian, D. V. and Salomone, P. R. (1995) Understanding midlife career renewal: Implications for counseling. *The Career Development Quarterly*, Vol. 44, pp. 52-63.

Belza, A. J. (2002) 'Letters to the Editor'. *Modern Management Journal of the Institute of Supervisory Management*, August Issue p. 33.

Berry, I. (2002) 'Letters to the Editor'. *Modern Management Journal of the Institute of Supervisory Management*, August Issue p. 33.

Besl, J. R. and Kale, B. D. (1996) 'Older workers in the 21st century: Active and educated, a case study', *Monthly Labor Review*, Vol. 119, pp. 18-28.

Betz, N. E. and Corning, A. F. (1993) 'The inseparability of career and personal counseling', *The Career Development Quarterly*, Vol. 42, pp137-142.

Betz, N. E. (1994) 'Basic issues and concepts in career counseling for women'. in W. B. Walsh and S. H. Osipow (Eds.) *Career counseling for women*, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp1- 4.

Biderman, A. D. (1959) The Prospective Impact of Large Scale Military Retirement. *Social Problems* Vol. 7, pp88-92.

Biderman, A. D. (1964) 'Sequels to a Military Career: The Retired Military Professional', in M. Janowitz, (Ed) *The New Military*, New York: Russell Sage foundation.

Biscuits Brown Internet Forum. (2006) Available in: <http://www.biscuitsbrown.com/http://www.biscuitsbrown.com/>, accessed 8 June 2006.

Black, D. et al (2002) 'Psychiatric and Medical Co-morbidity and Health Care Utilisation in Previously Incarcerated Gulf War Veterans', in C. Dandeker, S. Wessely, A. Iversen, and J. Ross. (2003) *Improving The Delivery of Cross Departmental Support and Services for Veterans. Joint Report*, Dept of War Studies and Institute of Psychiatry. London: King's College.

Bureau of Labor Statistics (2006) U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Economic News Releases: Employment Situation of Veterans. Available in: <http://www.bls.gov/bls/newsrels.htm>, accessed 9 Dec 2005.

Blustein, D. L. Phillips, S. D. Joben-Davis, K. Finkelberg, S. L. and Roarke, A. E. (1997) A theory-building investigation of the school-to-work transition, *The Counseling Psychologist*, Vol. 25, p. 364-402.

Bogdan, R.C. and Biklin, S. K. (1998) *Qualitative Research for Education: An introduction to theory and methods*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed) Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Bottomore, T.B. (1993) *Elites and Society*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn, Routledge: London.

Bourdieu, P. (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1984) *Distinction: a Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Routledge and Kegan Paul: London.

British Army Rumour Service Forum (2006) Available in: [www.arrse.co.uk](http://www.arrse.co.uk), accessed 5 Jan 2006.

British Sociological Association (2002) BSA, Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association. Durham: BSA.

Bruner, J. (1986) *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brown G (2006) *Securing our Future*: Speech by Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI), London, 13 Feb 2006 Available in:

<http://www.britischebotschaft.de/en/news/items/060213.htm>, accessed 20 Feb 2006.

Bryman, A. (2001) *Social Research Methods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cabral, A.C. Rhodes, S.R. and Doering, M. (1985) 'Determinants of career change: A path analysis'. *Academy of Management Proceedings*, 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting, Boston, 46-51.



Cairns, T. (2002) 'Letters to the Editor'. *Modern Management Journal of the Institute of Supervisory Management*, August Issue, p31.

Campbell, J. (1986) *Gate Fever*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson: London:

Caplan, R. D. Vinokur, A. D. Price, R. H. and van Ryn, M. (1989) 'Job seeking, re-employment, and mental health: A randomized field experiment in coping with job loss'. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 74, pp. 759-769.

Career Transition Partnership (2006) About CTP. Available in: <http://www.ctp.org.uk/ctp/index.html>, accessed 6 February 2006.

Carspeken, P. (1996) *Critical Ethnography in Educational Research*, Routledge: New York.

Carter, M. (1966) *Into Work*, Pelican: Harmondsworth.

Chant, C. (1988) *Handbook of British Regiments*, Routledge: London:

Charlesworth S.J, (2000) *A Phenomenology of Working Class Experience*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

CLMS (2003) Advanced Research Methods Training, Using Visual Data Methods, Module 1 Unit 4 Centre for Labour Market Studies Doctorate in Social Sciences (HRD), Leicester: CLMS pp. M1U4:-56.

Chen, P. and Hinton, S.M. (1999) Realtime interviewing using the World Wide Web, *Sociological Research Online*, Vol. 4, No 3, available at <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/4/3/chen.html>, accessed 28 Oct 2005

Cochran, L. (1986) *Portrait and story: dramaturgical approaches to the study of persons*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Cochran, L. (1994) What is a career problem? *The Career Development Quarterly*, 42, 204-215.

Cohen, S. and Taylor, I. (1972) *Psychological Survival*, Penguin: Harmondsworth.

Cohen, I. J, (1998) Anthony Giddens, in Stones, R. (1998) *Key Sociological Thinkers*, Palgrave: Basingstoke p. 282.

Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1994) *Research Methods in Education*. (4<sup>th</sup> ed), London: Routledge.

Collier, J. (2002) 'Approaches to analysis in visual anthropology', in T. Van Leeuwen, and C. Jewitt. (Eds) *Handbook of Visual Analysis*, London: Sage, pp. 35:60.

Crane, M. (1997) Older People's Experiences in the Armed forces and the Merchant Navy, [Report] For the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation.

Crompton, R. and Sanderson, K. (1990) *Gendered Jobs and Social Change*. London: Unwin and Hyman.

Dandeker, C and Segal, M. W. (1996) Gender Integration in Armed forces: Recent Policy Developments in the UK', *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 23(1) pp. 29-48.

Dandeker, C, Wessely, S, Iversen, A. and Ross, J. (2003) 'Improving the Delivery of Cross Departmental Support and Services for Veterans. Joint Report', Dept of War Studies and Institute of Psychiatry. London: King's College.

Dandeker, C, Wessely, S, Iversen, A. and Ross J (2006) What's in a Name? Defining and Caring for "Veterans", *Armed Forces and Society*, Vol. 32 (2) pp. 161-177.

Davies N. (1997) *Europe: A History*. Pimlico: London, pp. 518-519.

Davis, H.V. (1969) *Frank Parsons: Prophet, Innovator, Counselor*, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln Y. S. (1998) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Material*. London: Sage Publications.

Department of Veterans Affairs (2006) Welcome to the Dept of Veterans Affairs, Available in: [http://www.va.gov/about\\_va/](http://www.va.gov/about_va/), accessed 12 Dec 2006.

Draper, J. E. Strother, G. B. and Garrett, D. E. (1963) 'The effect of training and previous experience on the re-employment of military retirees', *Journal of Gerontology*, Vol 18, pp.71-79.

Downing B.M. (1992) *The Military Revolution and Political Change. Origins of Democracy and autocracy in Early Modern Europe*. Princetown University Press: Princetown, p.75.

Durkheim, E. (1893/ English 1933) *The Division of Labour in Society* translated from French by George Simpson. Macmillan, Basingstoke. p276,

Ebberwein, C.A. Krieshock, T.S. Ulven, J.C. and Prosser, E.C. (2004) 'Voices in Transition: Lessons on Career Adaptability', *Career Development Quarterly*, Vol. 52 pp. 292-298.

Economic and Social Research Council, The (2006) ESRC, Research Ethics Framework, Swindon: ESRC.

Eby, L. T. and Buch, K. (1995) Job loss as career growth: Responses to involuntary career transitions', *The Career Development Quarterly*, Vol. 44, pp. 26-42.

Edmunds, T. Forster, A. and Cottey A. (2002) The Armed Forces and Society in Post communist Europe: Legitimacy and Change. ESRC "One Europe or Several?" Programme Working Paper 47/02, Sussex European Institute University of Sussex.

Elder, G.H. and Clipp, E.C. (1989) Combat experience and emotional health: impairment and resilience in later life, *Journal of Personality*, Vol. 57(2) pp. 311-341.

Elder, G.H. and Clipp, E.C. (1989) Wartime losses and social bonding: Influences across 40 years in men's lives', *Psychiatry*, Vol. 51 pp.177-198.

Elias, N. (1978) *The History of Manners. The Civilizing Process: Vol 1*, New York: Pantheon Books.

Elias, N. (1982) *Power and Civility. The Civilizing Process*, Volume II, New York: Pantheon Books.

Elias, N. (1982) *The Civilising Process, Vol. 2, State formation and Civilisation*, Blackwell: Oxford.

Elster, J. (1989) Social Norms and Economic Theory, *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 3 (4) pp. 99-117.

Erikson, E. H. (1963) *Youth, change, and challenge*, New York: Basic Books.

Ex soldier, [name withheld] (2002) Letters to the Editor. Modern Management Magazine, *Journal of the Institute of Supervisory Management: August 2002 edition* p.31, Lichfield.

Feaver, P.D. and Kohn H (eds.) (2001) *The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Fitzgerald, J. F. and Rounds, J. (1994) Women and work: Theory encounters reality, in W. B. Walsh and S. H. Osipow (eds.) *Career Counseling for women*, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 327-353.

Fontana, A. and Frey J. H. (1998) 'Interviewing, The Art of Science,' in N.K Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds) *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*, London: Sage Publications, pp. 47-78.

Freeth, S. (2005) Foreword in: RBL (2005) Survey Report: Profile of the Ex-Service Community in the UK, Compass Partnership, Royal British Legion: London.

Fox, L. (2006) The objectives of a veterans' policy: Speech to a Veterans' Summit held by the Conservative Party. Available in: [http://www.conservatives.com/tile.do?def=news.story.pageandobj\\_id=129824](http://www.conservatives.com/tile.do?def=news.story.pageandobj_id=129824), accessed 12 Sept 2006.

Futterman, S. (1951) Traumatic neuroses five years later, *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 108, pp. 401-408.

Gadamer, H. G. (1960) *Truth and Method*, Continuum International Publishing: New York.

Garfinkel H 1967. *Studies in Ethno methodology*, Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.

Gardiner, J. and Wenborn, N. (1995) *The History Today Companion to: British History*, Collins and Brown Ltd: London.

Gelatt, H. B. (1991) *Creative Decision Making: Using Positive Uncertainty*, California: Crisp Publications.

Gerson, K. (1985) *Hard choices: How women decide about work, career, and motherhood*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Gergen, K. J. and Gergen, M. M. (1988) Narrative and the self as relationship, *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 21, pp.17-56.

Giddens, A. (1984) *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, Polity Press: Cambridge, p. 326.

Giddens, A. (1985) *The Nation-State and Violence; Volume Two of a contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*, Polity Press: Cambridge, pp.104-110.

Goffman, E. (1968) *Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*, Penguin: Harmondsworth.

Goodwin, J (1999) *Men's Work and Male Lives: Men and Work in Britain*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Goodwin, J. and O'Connor, H. (2005) Exploring Complex Transitions: Looking Back at the 'Golden Age' of Youth Transitions, *Sociology*, Vol. 39, No. 2.

Gottfredson, G. D. and Holland, J. L. (1990) A longitudinal test of the influence of congruence: Job satisfaction, competency utilization, and counterproductive behavior, *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, Vol. 37, pp. 389-398.

Graves, R. T. (2005) A Comparative Study of the life satisfaction of early retirement military officers, PhD Thesis. Texas A and M University: Texas.

Grayson, D. Dobson, M. and Marshall, R. (1998) Current Combat related disorders in the absence of PTSD among Australia Vietnam veterans. *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, Vol. 33, pp. 186-192.

Greene, J. C. (1992) The practitioner's perspective. *Curriculum Inquiry*, Vol. 22(1), pp. 39-45.

Grinker, R.R. and Spiegel J.P. (1945) *Men Under Stress*, London: J and A Churchill.

Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y. S. (1994) 'Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research, in N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, Newbury Park, CA, pp.105-107.

Guba, E. (1990) Social Science Paradigms: Methodology Congress Conference Proceedings, Sage Publications: Newbury Park Calif USA.

Guest, D, and Williams, R. (1973) How Home Affects Work, *New Society*, Vol. 23, pp.114 -7.

Gysbers, N. C. Heppner, M. J. and Johnston, J. A. (1998) *Career Counseling: Process, Issues, and Techniques*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Harper, D.A. (1998) An argument for visual sociology, in Prosser, J. (Ed), *Image-based Research: A sourcebook for Qualitative Researchers*, London: Routledge Falmer.

Harol, J. (2006) Military.Com - Opportunities for Military Veterans. Available in:  
<http://www.military.com/Careers/Content1?file=careersArticlesVetOpportunities.htm&area=Reference>, accessed 12 Aug 2006.

Heppner, M. J. (1998) The Career Transitions Inventory: Measuring internal resources in adulthood, *Journal of Career Assessment*, Vol. 6, pp.135-145.

Higate, P. (2001) Theorizing Continuity: From Military to Civilian Life, *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol. 27(3), pp.443-460.

Heyman, C. (2005) *The British Army Guide*, Barnsley: Pen 7 Swords Books Ltd.

Holland, J. L. (1985) *Making Vocational Choices: A theory of Vocational Personalities and Work Environments*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Holland, J.L. (1992) *Making Vocational Choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed), Odessa Florida: Psychological Assessment Resources.

Ickovics, J.R. and Martin J.A. (1987) The Impact of employment on the Psychological Well Being of Army Wives: A longitudinal survey study, *Military Medicine*, Vol.152 (10,) pp.500-503.

ILM (2004) Civilian Recognition of Military Courses leaflet. Institute of Leadership Management: London.

Ingram, A. (2006) Harrogate AFC Passing Out Parade Speech at Army Foundation College 18 August 2006, available at:  
<http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/People/Speeches/MinAF/HarrogateAfcPassingOutParadeSpeech.htm>, accessed 2 Sept 2006.

Iversen, A. Nikolaou, V. Greenberg, N. Unwin, C. Hull, L. Hotopf, M. Dandeker, C. Ross, J. and Wessely, S. (2005) What happens to British veterans when they leave the armed forces? *The European Journal of Public Health* Vol.. 15(2), pp.175-184.

Janowitz, M. (1964) *The New Military: Changing Patterns of Organization*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, pp. 204-205.

Jarvie, I., C. (1937) *Thinking about Society: Theory and Practice*, Boston: D. Reidel Publishing Co.

Jensen, P.S, Xenakis S.N, Wolf P and Bain M.W. (1991) The 'Military Family Syndrome Revisited: "By the Numbers"', *Journal of Nervous Mental Disorders* Vol. 179(2,) pp.102-107.

Jenkins, R. (1996) *Social Identity*. London: Routledge.

Jolly, R. (1996) *Changing Step*. London: Brassey's.

Karp, D. A. (1996) *Speaking of sadness: depression, disconnection, and the meanings of illness*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Keenan, B (1992) *An Evil Cradling*. London: Hutchinson.

Kenny, A. (1986) *A Path from Rome: An autobiography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Knowles, C (2000) *Bedlam on the Streets*. London: Routledge.

Knox M. Murray, W. (2001) *The Dynamics of Military Revolution, 1300–2050*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p.1.

Krumboltz, J.D. (1993) Integrating Personal Career Counseling, *The Career Development Quarterly*, Vol. 42, pp.143-148.

Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. London: Sage Publications.

Labour Force Survey (2003) Labour Force Survey User Guide – Volume 3: Details of LFS variables 2003. Available in: [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme\\_labour/LFSUG\\_Vol3\\_2003.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_labour/LFSUG_Vol3_2003.pdf), accessed 6 Feb 2007.

Lagrone, D.M. (1978) The Military Family Syndrome, *American Journal of Psychiatry*. Vol. 135(9), pp.1040-1043.

Lamb, S. (2006) British Veterans Card Organisation, Veterans Issues News Release: 'Veterans' Day Highlights 364 Days Without Recognition', Available in: <http://www.britishveterans.org.uk/issues.html>, accessed 3 Nov 2006.

Land Forces (2006-1) 'An Historical Encyclopaedia: Regiments'. Available in: <http://www.regiments.org/regiments/uk/lists/bargts.htm>, accessed 15 Apr 2006.

Land Forces (2006-2) An Historical Encyclopaedia: WRAC and predecessors a history'. Available in: <http://www.regiments.org/regiments/uk/corps/WRAC.htm#history>, accessed 15 Apr 2006.

Langlois, C.V and Seignobos, C. (1926) *Introduction to the Study of History*. English translation G.G. Berry (1909), London: Duckworth, pp.156-7.

Lave, J. and Wenger, E. (1991) *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leana, C. R. and Feldman, D. C. (1994) 'The psychology of job loss', *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, Vol. 12, pp. 271-302.

Lee, K. Vaillant, G.E, Torrey, W.C. and Elder G.H. (1995) 'A 50 year Prospective Study of the Psychological Sequelae of World War I', *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 152, pp. 516-522.

Loh, S.H. (1994) 'Resettlement and Training Factors Affecting Employment of e-servicemen in the Malaysian Army – A Case Study'. M.Ed Thesis, Australia: University of Canberra.

Lowe, G.R. (1972) *The Growth of Personality from Infancy to Old Age*. London: Penguin.

Machiavelli, N. (1521) *The Art of War*, Translated, edited and with a commentary by Christopher Lynch, University of Chicago Press: London

Mann, M. (1993) *The Sources of Power, Vol. II, The Rise of Classes and Nation States, 1760-1914*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p.35.

Martin, J. and Sugarman, J. (1999) *The psychology of human possibility and constraint*. Albany, N.Y: State University of New York Press.

Marx, K. (1857) 'The 'Economics'', in D. McLellan, (Ed), *Karl Marx Selected Writings*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mason, J. (2002) *Qualitative Researching*. London: Sage Publications.

Mauss, M. (1934) 'Les Techniques du corps', *Journal de Psychologie* Vol 32, pp.3-4, Reprinted in Mauss, *Sociologie et anthropologie*, 1936, Paris: PUF.

Mead, G. H. (1934) *Mind, Self and Society*, Free Press: New York.

McClure, H. M. (1992) Alienated patriots: A sociological portrait of military retirees. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, Berkeley.

McNeil, J. S. (1964) Adjustment of the retired air force officer. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California, Los Angeles. Available in: <https://txspace.tamu.edu/bitstream/1969.1/2581/1/etd-tamu-2005B-EPSY-Graves.pdf>, accessed 8 June 2005.

McNeil, J.S. and Giffen M. B. (1967) 'Military Retirement: The Retirement Syndrome', *American Journal of Psychiatry* Vol. 123, pp. 848-854.



Mead, G.H. (1934) *Mind, Self and Society*. Free Press: New York.

Menaghan, E. G. and Merves, E. S. (1984) 'Coping with occupational problems: The limits of individual efforts', *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, Vol. 25, pp. 406-423.

Mertens, D.M. (2005) *Research Methods in Education and Psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed) Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Milowe, I.D. (1964) 'A Study in Role Diffusion: The Chief and the Sergeant Face Retirement', *Mental Hygiene* Vol. 48, pp. 101-107.

Mishler, E. G. (1986) 'The analysis of interview-narratives', in T. R. Sarbin (Ed.) *Narrative Psychology: The Storied Nature of Human Conduct*, New York: Praeger Publishers, pp. 233-255.

MOD (2005) 'Soldier Outflow from the Army 2004/05', Report by Defence Analytical Services Agency (Army) London: MOD.

MOD (2006) *Soldiering - The Military Covenant* – Ch 3. Available in [http://www.army.mod.uk/servingsoldier/usefulinfo/valuesgeneral/adp5milcov/s\\_hrpers\\_values\\_adp5\\_3\\_w.html#selfless](http://www.army.mod.uk/servingsoldier/usefulinfo/valuesgeneral/adp5milcov/s_hrpers_values_adp5_3_w.html#selfless), accessed 3 Oct 2006.

Modern Management Magazine (2002) Letters to the Editor, *Journal of the Institute of Supervisory Management* August 2002, p. 31-33.

Morgan, D. L. (1988) *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Mosca, G. (1939) *The Ruling Class*. McGraw-Hill: New York.

Moskos, C. Wood, F. R. (1988) *The Military: More Than Just a Job?* Washington, D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers.

Morgan M. J. (2003) 'The Reconstruction of Culture, Citizenship, and Military Service', *Armed Forces and Society* Vol. 29 (3), pp. 373 – 391.

Morrison, J. (1981) 'Rethinking The Military Family Syndrome', *American Journal of Psychiatry*, Vol. 138(3) pp. 354-357.

Musgrove, F. Middleton, R. Hawes, P. (1977) *Margins of the Mind*. London: Methuen.

Neimeyer, R. A. (1998) 'Can there be a psychology of loss?' in J. H. Harvey (Ed), *Perspectives on loss: A sourcebook*, Philadelphia, PA: Brunner Mazel, pp. 331-341,

Nock, M.K., Kaufman, J. and Rosenheck, R. A. (2001) 'Examinations of predictions of Severe Violence, in *Combat exposed Vietnam Veterans' Journal of Trauma Stress*, Vol. 14 (4) pp.835-841.

Oakley, A. (1981) Interviewing Women: A contradiction in terms, in H. Roberts (Ed), *Doing Feminine Research*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. pp. 30-61.

O'Connor, D. and Wolfe, D. M. (1987) 'On managing midlife transitions in career and family,' *Human Relations*, Vol. 40, pp.799-816.

O'Connor, H. and Madge, C. (2001) 'Cybermothers: Online Synchronous Interviewing using Conferencing Software'. *Sociological Research online*, Vol. 5 issue 4, available at <http://www.socresonline.org.uk/5/4/oconnor.html>, accessed 2 Sep 2006.

O'Donnell J. (2000) 'Military service and Mental Health in later life' *Military Medicine*, Vol. 165, pp. 219-222.

Orner, R. Lynch, R.T. and Seed, P. (1993) 'Long Term Traumatic Stress Reactions in British Falklands Veterans', *British Journal of Clinical Psychology* Vol. 32(4,) pp.457-459.

Owen-Pugh, V. (2002) *The Elite British Basketball Club as a Community of Practice: Situated Lave and Wenger's Model of Learning within N., Elias' Theory of the Group.* Working Paper CLMS, University of Leicester.

Parsons, F. (1909) *Choosing a vocation*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Pareto, V. (1963) *A Treatise on General Sociology*, edited by A. Livingstone, Dover Publications: New York.

Parker, G. (1996) *The Military Revolution*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, p.1.

Parker, G. (2005a) 'Dynastic War', in G. Parker, (Ed.), *The Cambridge History of Warfare*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, pp.117-130.

Parker, G. (2005b) 'Ships of the Line', in G. Parker, (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Warfare*, Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, pp.117-130.

Patton, M.Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, (2nd Ed). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Pavalko, E.K. and Elder G. (1990) 'World War II and divorce: A life course perspective' *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 95(5), pp. 1213-1234.

Phillips, S. D. (1997) 'Toward an expanded definition of adaptive decision making' *The Career Development Quarterly*, Vol. 45, pp. 275-287.

Pilcher, J. (1995) *Age and Generation in Modern Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988) *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. New York: State University of New York.

Rapaport, R. and Rapaport, R. (1980) *Growing Through Life*. Harper and Row: London.

RBL (2005) Survey Report: Profile of the Ex-Service Community in the UK., Compass Partnership, Royal British Legion: London.

Rexrode, C. (2006) St Petersburg Online News available in:  
[http://www.sptimes.com/2006/07/16/Business/Young\\_veterans\\_new\\_ba.shtml](http://www.sptimes.com/2006/07/16/Business/Young_veterans_new_ba.shtml)  
, accessed 8 Dec 2006.

Ritchie, J. M. B. (2002) 'Letters to the Editor', *Modern Management Journal of the Institute of Supervisory Management*, August Issue, p. 31.

Roberts, M. (1967) *Essays in Swedish History*. University of Minnesota Press: Minneapolis.

Rogers, C. (1995) 'The Military Revolutions of the Hundred Years War,' in C.J., Roger, (Ed.), *The Military Revolution Debate: Readings on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe*, West view Press, Boulder, pp. 55-93.

Roosevelt T (1903) '4<sup>th</sup> July Speech to Veterans', Springfield, IL. Available in <http://www.theodoreroosevelt.org/life/quotes.htm>, accessed 11 Aug 2006.

Rosenheck, R. and Fontana, A. (1994) 'Long term Sequelae of combat on World War II, Korea and Vietnam: A comparative Study', in B., McCaughey and C., Fullerton (Eds), *Individual and Community Responses to Trauma and Disaster*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rousseau J.J. (1762) 'The Social Contractor principles of Political Right', in E. Durkheim, (1893/ (English 1933) *The Division of Labour in Society*, Macmillan, Basingstoke, pp.190-196.

Saunders, P. (1989) 'Left Write in Sociology', *Network: Newsletter of the British Sociological Association*, Vol., pp. 34-44.

Savickas, M. and Lent, R. (1994) *Convergence in Career Development Theories*. Palo Alto, California

Scott, J. (1990) *A Matter of Record*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

SCORE (2006) Counsellors to America's Small Business Veterans in Business. Available in: [http://www.score.org/small\\_biz\\_stats.html](http://www.score.org/small_biz_stats.html), accessed 8 Jan 2007.

Segal, M.W. and Harris, J.J. (1993) 'What We Know About Army Families' Special Report, Army Research Institute for the Behavioral and Social Sciences, Alexandria: VA.

Smith, J.K. (1989) *The nature of social and educational enquiry: Empiricism versus interpretation*. Norwood NJ: Ablex.

Smith, L. M. (1990) 'Ethics in qualitative field research: An individual perspective', in E.W. Eisner and A. Peskin (Eds), *Qualitative inquiry in education*, New York: Teachers College Press, pp. 258-276.

Snyder, W. P. (1994) Military retirees: 'A portrait of the community'. *Armed Forces and Society*, 20(4) pp. 581-598.

Souden, D. (2005) *War of the Unknown Warriors*. London: National Trust Enterprises Ltd.

Sprott W. J. H. (1958) *Human Groups*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books

Stones, R. (1998) *Key Sociological Thinkers*. Palgrave: Basingstoke

Strachan, H. (2003) 'The Civil-military 'gap' in Britain', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol.. 26(2), pp. 43-63.

Super, D.E. (1975) *The Psychology of Careers*. New York: Harper Row.

Super, D. E. and Knasel, E. G. (1981) 'Career development in adulthood: Some theoretical problems and a possible solution', *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, Vol. 9, pp. 194-201.

Super, D. E. Savickas, M. L. and Super, C. M. (1996) 'The life-span, life-space, approach to careers', in D. Brown, L. Brooks and others (Eds.) *Career choice and development*, (3rd ed) San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp.121-178.

Sykes, G. (1964) Review [Untitled]. Reviewed Work(s); *Outsiders: Studies in The Sociology of Deviance*, by H. S., Becker. *American Sociological Review*, Vol 29 No1, pp. 134-135.

Taylor, I. Walton, P. and Young, J. (1973) *The New Criminology*. Routledge and Kegan Paul: London.

Thomas, L. E. (1980) 'A typology of mid-life career changes', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, Vol 16, pp. 173-182.

Tilly, C., (1992) *Coercion, Capital and the European States, AD990-1992*. Blackwell: Cambridge.

TISS. (2005) "The Gap Between Military and Civilian Society" A research project by TISS, North Carolina: Duke University

Turner, J. B. Kessler, R. C. and House, J. S. (1991) 'Factors facilitating adjustment to employment: Implications for intervention', *American Journal of Community Psychology*, Vol. 19, pp. 521-542.

van Manen, M. (1990) *Researching lived experience: Human science for an action sensitive pedagogy*. New York: State University of New York Press.

Veterans Agency (2006) Veterans Agency supporting ex servicemen and women. Available in: <http://www.veteransagency.mod.uk/> accessed 15 Jul 2006.

Vinokur, A. D. Price, R. H. and Caplan, R. D. (1996) 'Hard times and hurtful partners: How financial strain affects depression and relationship satisfaction of unemployed persons and their spouses', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 71, p.p166-179.

Watts, A.G. (1973) 'A Structure for Careers Education,' in R. Jackson, (Ed), *Career Guidance, Practice and Problems*. London: Arnold

Wanberg, C. R. (1995) 'A longitudinal study of the effects of unemployment and the quality of re-employment', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, Vol. 46, pp. 40-54.

Wenger, E. (1999) *Communities of Practice. Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge

Wheaton, B. (1990) Life Transitions, Role Histories, and Mental Health, *American Sociological Review* Vol. 55, pp. 209-223.

Whyte, W. F. (1943) *Street Corner Society: The Social Structure of an Italian Slum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Williams, J. E. and Johansen, E. (1985) 'Career disruption in higher education', *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 56, pp. 145-160.

Wilson, J.P. and Zigelbaum, S.D. (1983) 'The Vietnam Veteran on Trial: The Relation of PTSD to Criminal Behaviour', *Behavioural Sciences and The Law*, Vol.1, pp69-83.

Wolpert, D. S. (2000) 'Military retirement and the transition to civilian life', in J. A. Martin, L. N. Rosen and L. R. Sparacino (Eds.), *The military family: A practice guide for human service providers*, Westport, CT: Praeger, pp.103-119.

Wooten, K. C. Sulzer, J. L. and Cornwell, J. M. (1994) 'The effects of age, financial strain, and vocational expectancies on the stress-related affect of adult job loser', in G. P. Keita, and. J.J Hurrell Jr. (Eds.), *Job stress in a changing workforce: Investigating gender, diversity, and family issues*, DC: American Psychological Association: Washington, pp.165-180.

Wright Mills, C. (1956) *The Power Elite*. Oxford University Press: New York.

Wright Mills, C. (1959) *The Sociological Imagination*. Oxford University Press: London.

Wyatt, A.(2002) A Case Study: Development of the Veterans Initiative by the UK Ministry of Defence, International Comparisons in Policy Making Project, The Government Centre for Management and Policy Studies, Civil Service College Directorate: London.

Young, R. A. Valach, L. and Collin, A. (1996) 'A contextual explanation of career', in D. Brown and L. Brooks (Eds.), *Career choice and development (3rd ed)*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 477-512.

Zunker, V.G. (1994) *Career Counseling: Applied Concepts of Life Planning*. California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.