



# steam creative writing task

## First World War Story (KS3)



Soldiers of  
Oxfordshire  
Museum

### Alan Peachey's memories of joining the Oxfordshire Yeomanry in 1914

I remember hearing a rumour that they had landed at Dover, and begging Father to let me join the army, which he at least gave me permission to do, and great was my disgust when I tried to join our local yeomanry to be told to come back in two years' time, but I could not wait, as my brother was in an **adjacent** county regiment and came home to get his kit, and horse, he suggested I should return with him and he would try to get me in...

We joined the regiment camped on the Downs and I met a lot of old and new friends, and spend my first night under canvas, it took me some time to learn how to lie comfortably on the hard ground, but when I did at last get to sleep, I heard a terrific crack on the tent, and the Sergeant Major telling us that all the little birds were singing, and telling us to show a leg, which we did although several boys who had had a stiff night the evening before, held their heads, very affectionately, for a bit. After a good breakfast my brother presented me to the Regimental Sergeant Major, and explained to him that having reached the age of twenty I would like to join the regiment, and handed over a bottle of whiskey to counteract the shock, left me to that gentleman's tender mercies. After ignoring me for about an hour, during which time I felt like a mouse must feel when the cat has it, he suddenly came out of his tent looking very fierce demanded could I shoot. I said I could, and he marched me off to the horse lines and demanded, and ride. I had noticed the awe he was able to strike in others so I answered yes sir, at which he told me to saddle a horse and mount. I managed to get a military saddle on the horse and adjusted my irons, which seemed to satisfy him, for he said that will do, and collecting a rifle took me out of camp to a small hill, where he stuck a tin on a stick, and walking back two hundred yards gave me the rifle and told me to get down and shoot, which I did and with great good luck hit the tin first shot, he gave a satisfied sort of grunt, and said you'll do, and sent me to my brother's troop, feeling on top of the world, and very sorry for the German army, I was given the horse of a man who would not volunteer for foreign service, and after cleaning him spent the evening **paying my footing**.

Read the First World War memories of Alan Peachey, who lied about his age in order to join the army.

Can you write an alternate ending to Alan's story?

Imagine that the Sergeant Major didn't believe Alan when he lied about his age. How would Alan feel? What would he do?

#### Vocabulary Key:

- **Adjacent:** next to
- **Paying my footing:** paying my fee to join the army