

## Samuel Warwick.

Mr Samuel Warwick was a man I had the pleasure of working with down Mr Harold Wards, the local Ladder Maker and Undertaker, in Church Lane Bugbrooke.

I had known Mr Warwick from when I was a very young boy, he lived up a yard opposite Browns Farm Yard called Sunny Side, this was next door to John Curtis and Glenn Nightingale, whom I first met when starting at Bugbrooke School, in 1944.

Glenn when at the age of twelve years of age was to die from Cancer, for me it took some getting used to, as we were so close at the time.

Mr Samuel Warwick worked at the time at Weedon Stores, the very large Military Small Arms Store that was built during the Napoleonic period.

When he retired from the stores at Weedon, he came down to Wards doing odd jobs like chopping sticks and painting and varnishing ladders etc, he spent most of his time working with Ben Woodham from Kislingbury, they both had served in the first world war, and they spent half of the time reminiscing about it, Ben had been badly wounded while serving in France, and suffered terribly with the consequences of his wounds, old Sam had served out in the Middle East, against the Turks, what with getting Dysentery, and some sort of Fever, he said that he was lucky to be alive, what with the battles that he had fought in, he said the some of the illnesses killed more men than the Turks did.

He had lots of sayings, one he would say quite often, if you have a good looking wife, or Misses, make sure you lock the door before you go to work, Sam had experienced this happening to him on one occasion in his life time, as they tried to get in his house just after he had left for work.

Another one of his sayings was if the weather was very cold and frosty, he would say it was cold enough for fur lined boot laces, or a walking stick with pockets in.

Or if it were really cold, he would say there are more runny noses than certain parts of the human body.

He was always playing about with lengths of wood, especially if they were to be the same length as a rifle and bayonet, he would do all sorts of moves with them, like rifle drill etc.

One day just before I was due to be called up to do my National Service at the age of Nineteen; as my call up had been deferred, due to not knowing whether they needed any more National Service men to go and train up.

Old Sam said come hear a minute young Clark, Sam stood there with two pieces of wood that came up to his arm pits, one had got red paint on the end of it, the other had Blue paint on it. He said right I will show you a trick or two, you try and touch me with the end with the paint on it, and I will touch you with the pain on my pole, just see if you can get any paint on to me he said, I was to laugh as I was very young and fast, as I thought, and Sam was very Old, he was in his late Seventies or early Eighties.

I was reluctant to take him on, until he said I will give you a pound for every time you can touch me with your pole, and you can give me a pound for every time that I touch you, I went to have a go, and before I knew what had happened, I was on my back covered in paint from the end of his pole, being prodded all over the place, I was to jump up from off the floor, and like a fool I had to have another go at him with a bit more vigour and forgetting his age, He was to knock me down yet again and gave me another pasting, he then said if we had been in the trenches fighting you would have been dead by now.

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He was to laugh and say that even thou I am very old I'm not such a fool, and that I had got a lot to learn.

I was to tell my Old neighbour Mr Jack Higginbottom, who also had fought in the first world war, what Old Sam had done, he was to laugh, and say to ask Sam to show you how he did it, so when back at work the next day I was to ask Sam about what Old Jack had said, so one afternoon when things were quiet, and the rest of the gang were out on a funeral, Sam was to start teaching me about Bayonet Drill with many moves, it became very easy for me after a while, he was to talk me through every move, that he knew, he made me do all the moves very slowly for a start, until I was really sure of myself and happy with what he had taught me, I know it is barbaric to learn to kill some one, but if it is either you or him, but the one that understands and moves the fastest stands the best chance of staying alive.

Sam taught me to parry the thrust, that came towards my body, and then come up under the Chin, then to follow through by hitting them on the side of the head or neck with the barrel, so as to knock them out, or senseless, before you stick them, as Sam said they will stick you back if they are conscious or know what is going on.

He was to show me many things to get myself from out of trouble, and told me never to tell anyone about what he had showed me, if and when I went into the Army, he said just keep quiet listen and learn, as he said there were people in the regular Army that were much quicker than him, and if not careful, I would get my head knocked off. He said if you do find yourself involved with hand to hand fighting don't forget to knock them out before you stick um.

It was to please old Sam that I had took the time to learn from him, not only that to him there was someone who could not only survive, but could fight to protect him in his old age, there was a code of conduct with these old Soldiers, they either took to you, or you could forget it.

What with old Ben Woodham, and Old Jack Higginbottom from next door, showing and telling me about different things that the Army require, and what old Sam had taught me before I was to start doing my National Service stood me in good stead, for Mr Higginbottom was to teach me to fire a rifle, with great accuracy from many different positions, Old Mr Rudkin who took us when I joined up in the Church Lads Brigade was to teach us how the march about while on parade, we were almost trained up before we went in.

The time came for me to go and do my time, and thanks the old Sam and all the others it was to stand me in good stead.

One day that I remember from old Sam was when I was very young boy, he was to take myself, Glenn Nightingale, and John Curtis, around the garden that he grew all his vegetables in, all around next to the red brick wall, that surrounded his garden were lots of Grave stones, they had no names on them only numbers, he was to tell us they were Quakers Graves, from the period when the area to where we were, at one time lived many Quakers, the house next door is called Quakers cottage, I do not know if any of the bodies have been found as late, but if they have not been recorded for the future.

Stanley Joseph Clark.