



Joining Queen Victoria's Army

Name _____



The man in the picture with three stripes on his arm is a recruiting sergeant. His job was to find new soldiers for the army. Recruiting sergeants needed to be very persuasive talkers to convince young men to leave their families and join the army.

This is the sort of thing he might have said:

'Well now, my brave Norfolk lads, help yourself to the landlords' finest ale, compliments of Queen Victoria herself, and let me tell you what a noble life awaits the true men among you in the great and glorious old 9th, Norfolk's own heroic regiment, admired by the whole army and feared by the Queen's enemies!

Think of the opportunity, my lads, to travel to Canada, India, or to the sunny West Indies- a bit further than Norwich for market day!. Think what tales you'll have to tell the girls when you come home to your village. And comradeship's the thing, my boys, you'll always have friends about you and many a happy hour in the tavern or canteen.

You'll get a handsome red coat, helmet for your head and sturdy boots. You'll get regular meals-the roast beef of Old England and best bread from the

wheat fields of your own county.

If you join this week, there's a special bounty of £5 payable to you. Think of that boys, more money than the parson collects from the plate in a month of Sundays. And you'll get your regular pay, seven shillings a week, and I have here the first shilling of that for each of you, now whose going to be the first to take it?'

Activity One (Resources needed: flip chart paper and pens)

Divide the class into two groups. One group should discuss and write down, some examples of how the recruiting sergeant tried to persuade people to join the army.

The families of the young men would have had an opinion about whether he should enlist. The second group should discuss and write down some reasons against joining up that a man's family might give.

Each group should then present their findings to the other group.

Activity Two

Divide into groups of five. One person should be the potential recruit. The other members of the group should take on the roles of the following people:

Recruiting Sergeant

Old Soldier or Uncle of the potential recruit ,

Potential recruits mother

Potential recruits fiancée

Within the groups talk about how each character might have felt. Imagine you are that person and use role play to try and persuade the potential recruit to agree with you. Remember to think about using persuasive language to convince him. Finally the potential recruit should report back to the group about what they have decided and which arguments they found the most convincing.