

PART 10: THE LATE SEVENTIES (1975-1979)

Chapter 113: Three Diaries

There are three sets of diaries that are relevant to this period. First, grandad continued his diary until he died in November 1975. Second, mum's diaries start again at the beginning of 1975 and continue virtually uninterrupted until the end of 1979. Finally, in the course of this project, I discovered some of my own diaries including those covering the period from March 1976 to November 1977. This means we have mum's diary for the entire period. It is the only source for 1978 and 1979. For most of 1975, this is supplemented by grandad's diary and, for most of 1976 and 1977, it is supplemented by my diary.



In 1975, grandad used the same ledger book, as an improvised diary, that he had used in both 1973 and 1974, see [Chapter 98](#). He had started using Denbigh commercial books as diaries in 1969, see [Chapter 87](#). There were two of these books in the collection of diaries. Each covered a three-year period, from 1969 to 1972 and from 1973 to 1975 respectively. He continued with the same hand-made layout he had used previously. He ruled off a margin and wrote the date and day of the week in that. He wrote the year and dates covered at the top of each page. Because of this approach, he was able to vary the length of entries depending on what had happened and what he wanted to record. He numbered each page sequentially, 107-147 for 1975. In this form of diary, the years follow on from each other rather than having five years of a particular date on the same page as in a five-year diary.

Top - diaries covering the period 1975-1979

Right – example of page layout from grandad's 1975 diary. This example covers from 5 to 10 June 1975

126 1975

 June 5th — 10th

THU 5 I went to Drayton to vote at the Referendum on the whether Britain should join the European Community. Barbara took Ethel. I was she was working. Result of election Yes to staying in E.C.M. 17,378,581, No 8,470,073 to come out, majority 8,908,508 in favour of staying in.

FRI 6 Very hot day not returning to school.

SAT 7 Another hot day. In the afternoon Ethel did a bit in the back garden.

SUN 8 Hottest day this year. Ethel went home to D.M.C. Miss Walter's friends, who came here for tea brought a friend, a Mrs Lofkins who had been married a Cousin. Sheila's team, came for tea, Sheila's Patricia cut both lawns. June not too well.

MON 9 Still hot Ethel did not go anywhere, but did

TUE 10 Ethel went to Clacton on sea with ladies from M.C.

	PAGE
Trammingham	106
Drove deck freeze	
Salvation (volage)	105
MAS DUCK EA	103
Wendell sing	108
Boys Chambers died	108
Alphabet books pony riding	108
Edith sing	109
Edith Bible (Pony)	109
Long electric for leader	112
Used battery lead	102
Pat out last leaves	112
E Pamlet the gates	114
Mya Sarkin's de-winter came	116
Edith bought new shoes	117
From Douglas left Rom	118
BOAT RACK	118
EASTER	118
Income tax	119
Post electric bill	119
NEW BATTERIES RADIOS	120
BUDGET DAY	121
PIANO TUNED	121
PUT MONEY IN NOTES	121
DR LEEHAN CALLED	122
Count Bartha died 9/1/75	122
Voting for E.C.M	126
Tom died	131
Wool Chair	136
Rev. Giddy came	139
Had new catheter	
by Mr Pearce	139
Had 4 catheters from	
Mr Pearson	140
New catheter	
oil from Halfords	140
Army went home	141
Night commode	142
Patricia passed her	
driving test	144
Paint o Shepherd candle	144

Grandad used the page numbers to create what he called an "index". This was organised by page number and summarised what was on each page. So, for the example on the previous page, this was entered as "voting for ECM" (European Common Market) in the index.

Details of notes and inserts that were included in the 1973-1975 diary are given in [Chapter 98](#).

As in 1974, so for some of 1975, grandad was not well and grandma completed his diary. This was particularly the case in the periods 22 April to 29 May, 24 June to 29 July and 31 October to 13 November 1975¹. This is apparent because the handwriting is different. In addition, certain phrases are used more commonly by one or the other. Also, the things they chose to record in the diary varied somewhat. For example, as noted previously, grandma sometimes referred to her doing the washing while grandad rarely, if ever, did. Grandma's writing style is somewhat confusing as she sometimes referred to grandad in the first person, that is as "I", but sometimes in the third person, that is as "Gordon". She mostly referred to herself in the third person as "Ethel" or "E".

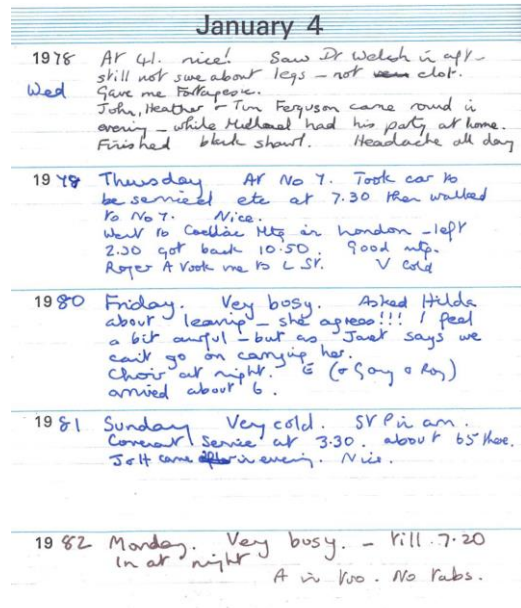
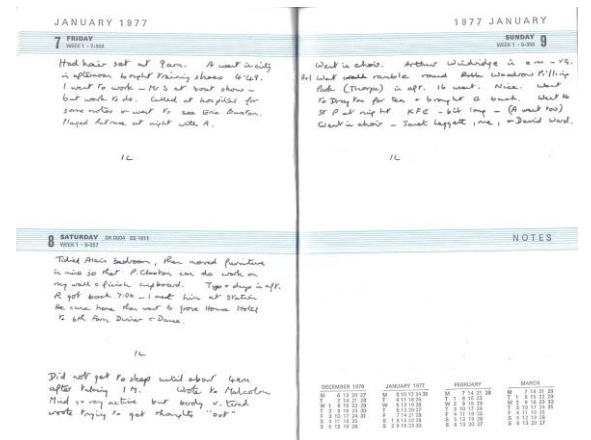
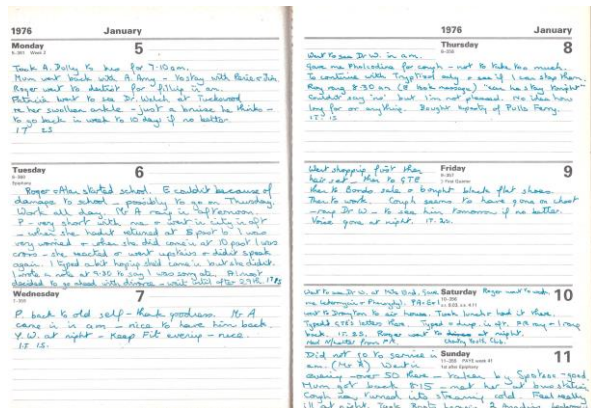
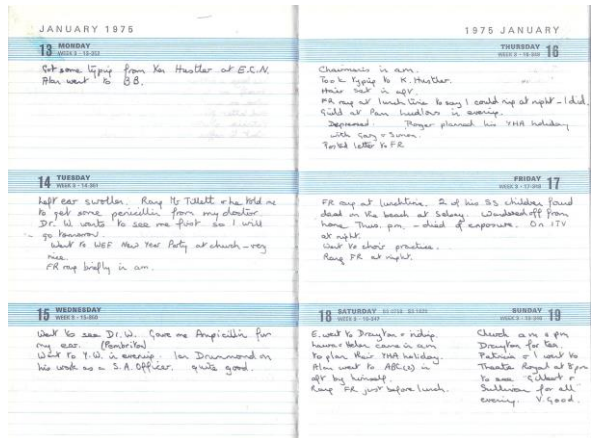
Above - index for grandad's 1975 diary
Below - final entry in grandad's diary dated 13 November 1975

The final entry in the diary, on 13 November 1975, was clearly written by grandma. It reads "I was very weak but talked nicely at 1.30AM. Then I went to sleep never to wake in this world at 9.30. Mr Pearce & Ethel were with me".

Thurs. I was very weak but talked nicely at 1.30 AM.
 Then I went to sleep never to wake in this world at 9.30 Mr Pearce & Ethel were with me.

Mum had four different diaries covering this period.² The first three were annual diaries for 1975, 1976 and 1977 respectively. Both 1975 and 1977 were Collins diaries while 1976 was a Letts diary.³ At the beginning of 1978, mum started to use a Collins five-year diary. This covered the period from 1978 to 1982 despite the cover saying, in biro, that it covered 1979 to 1982.⁴

¹ I think most of the entries during these periods were made by grandma although some could have been made by grandad.
² After 1963, mum's diary entries became very sporadic. There are no entries for the period from 1968 to 1974. When the diaries restart in 1975, there is no explanation for the lack of diaries previously.
³ The 1975 and 1976 diaries were broadly similar with a week covered over a double-page spread. The 1977 diary covered a week over two double page-spreads. So, Monday to Thursday were covered on one double-page spread with Friday to Sunday covered on another with a space for notes. The 1975 and 1976 diaries had smaller spaces for Saturdays and Sundays while the 1977 diary had equal space for all days. I recall mum being very pedantic that diaries should have weeks which started with Sunday as that is the first day of the week. However, none of these diaries have that feature.
⁴ The five-year diary was a page per day but, of course, each day covered a five year period.



Sample pages showing the layout of mum's diaries for the period 1975 to 1979
 Top left – 1975 Collins diary
 Above left – 1976 Letts diary
 Bottom left – 1977 Collins diary
 Above – Collins five-year diary for 1978 to 1982

At the front of the 1975 diary, there is a question and answer dated 17 July 1975. The question is “should I have a holiday or spend the money on the house?”. The answer is “have a holiday everytime – you deserve it”. I am not sure the nature of this question and answer session, whether it was with someone or whether it was mum giving herself the answer she wanted. At the back, there are notes about three medicines with what appear to be side-effects of each. So, Mogadon⁵ – dreams/nightmares, Dalmane⁶ – poss spots and Ampicillin – diarrhoea?⁷ Also, tucked in the back of the 1975 diary was a receipt⁸ from A Ames, a watchmaker and jeweller in Lower Goat Lane, a ten-year guarantee for a Celairic blanket⁸ and a receipt for payment of probate fees related to the death of Charles Gordon Parkin.⁹

⁵ Trade name for the benzodiazepene Nitrazepam. While it is likely that Nitrazepam could cause vivid dreams and nightmares, they are not listed under common side-effects.

⁶ Trade name for Flurazepam. While it is likely that Flurazepam could cause spots, they are not listed under common side-effects.

⁷ Diarrhoea is a common side-effect of broad-spectrum antibiotics like Ampicillin.

⁸ See [Chapter 125](#).

⁹ See [Chapter 116](#).

BOUGHT OF

A. AMES
(NORWICH) LTD.
Watchmakers and Jewellers

8 Lower Goat Lane, Norwich, Nor 66G

Specialities:
WEDDING,
GEM and
ENGAGEMENT
RINGS

ESTABLISHED 1886
Repairs done
by skilled workmen
on the premises
TELEPHONE
STD 0603 21196
VAT No. 105 1932 05

M.....
Date 30 June 75

K207 Oris Junior watch 47.80

Above – receipt from A Ames that was tucked in the back of mum’s 1975 diary
Below – ten-year guarantee for Celairic blanket that was in mum’s 1975 diary

The receipt from A Ames¹⁰ is dated 30 June 1975. On 1 July 1975, grandad was ill in hospital¹¹ and grandma was keeping grandad’s diary. She noted that she and mum visited grandad in hospital and brought his watch and new slippers. The new slippers were £2.49 and the watch £7.80. Neither the diary entry nor the receipt are particularly clear as to whether the watch had been repaired or whether this was a new watch.¹² It appears that it was an Oris¹³ watch but I do not know what K207¹⁴ means or what the second word is¹⁵.

Ten Year Guarantee

This “CELAIRIC” blanket is Warranted made from pure wool and is GUARANTEED against shrinking, stretching and felting for TEN YEARS from date of purchase, if subjected to reasonable use and washed as directed overleaf.

(This guarantee excludes ribbon on bound blankets)
No responsibility can be accepted unless the counterfoil is returned within 7 days of purchase. Any complaint MUST be accompanied by this Guarantee card.

On behalf of Celairic Limited

George Talbot
Managing Director

CELAIRIC LIMITED,
WHITLEY WILLOWS MILL,
LEPTON,
NR. HUDDERSFIELD.

WASHING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Squeeze gently in warm (not hot) water containing good quality soap flakes. DO NOT RUB.
2. Rinse thoroughly in several changes of warm water.
3. Pass through rubber rollers or squeeze by hand to remove excess moisture. DO NOT TWIST.
4. Hang to dry and pull gently to shape when drying.

NEVER use strong alkaline detergents or those containing bleach.

Packer No. _____ I A 37573

I purchased a “CELAIRIC” blanket size..... colour.....
on (date)..... 19.....
Name and address of supplier.....
Signed.....
Address.....

I A 37573

¹⁰ Apparently, Albert Ames retired around 1947 and sold his business to Zellej’s although it appears that the name was retained for at least some time. A Ames appears in the Kelly’s directories and tradefinders I have which span from 1960 to 1972.

¹¹ See Chapter 116.

¹² Simon Talbot, in a comment on Facebook, thought that it was probably a new watch as “Oris were a cheap watch back then”.

¹³ Oris is a Swiss watchmaker that was established in 1904 and is still operating.

¹⁴ Simon Talbot, in a comment on Facebook, thought that K207 was probably a receipt number or stock number.

¹⁵ Both Simon Talbot and Clive Jameson, in comments on Facebook, thought that the second word was “Junior”.

Concerning the Celairic blanket, for which mum had the guarantee, mum did not mention this brand by name in her diary. However, in October 1975, she did buy a pink blanket for work but she cut it in half and blanket stitched it! I am not sure if this was the blanket in question although cutting it in half would surely have invalidated the guarantee!! I did look online and it seems that Celairic blankets were produced in the sixties and seventies. I found a number of newspaper adverts and also a number of blankets available for sale. From photos, I was reminded of a very similar blanket that we have. Sure enough, I dug it out and it turns out to be a Celairic blanket. We do not recall exactly where we got it from. We have had it quite a long time but we don't recall buying it. It is very possible that we got it from mum¹⁶ and that it is the blanket for which she had the guarantee.



PROBATE FEES

RECEIPT

A 698980

DATE	NAME OF DECEASED	THE SUM OF		BEING FEES FOR	INITIALS	RECEIPT NO.
		BY CASH	BY CHEQUE			
11/12	Parkin C G.	10 00		Grant	AC	698980

S. & S. LTD. 56-2516 2/75

1

*Top – our Celairic blanket (left) that we might have got from mum with close up of label (right)
Above – receipt for probate fee of £10 which I found in mum's 1975 diary*

At the beginning of mum's 1976 and 1977 diaries there are summary calendars for three years, the year of the diary, the year before and the year after. In the 1976 diary, the 1976 calendar has one day each month ringed.¹⁷ The same is true for the 1977 calendar in the 1977 diary.¹⁸ I don't know the significance of these days. They occur at different points in the month and on different days of the week. I did wonder if they were a constant distance apart, e.g. 30 days, but they are not.¹⁹ In mum's 1977 diary, there was a bright pink note explaining that 6 and 7 June were two holidays for the Silver Jubilee²⁰ and that this had been decided after the diary had been printed

¹⁶ It does have a "Drew" name tag sewn into one corner. It is much more likely that mum did this than either Jo or me.

¹⁷ Two days in November.

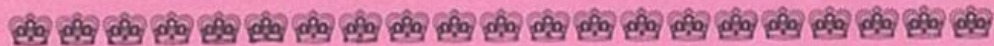
¹⁸ Two days in December.

¹⁹ In the 1977 diary, there is a circle around 28 December 1976 and a note (with an exclamation mark) that 22 April 1979 is Low Sunday. Low Sunday is the Sunday that immediately follows Easter Sunday.

²⁰ See Chapter 129.

Special bank holidays 1977

England, N Ireland, Wales



Monday 6 June Tuesday 7 June

NB Monday 30 May will not now be a holiday

This change, to celebrate the Royal Jubilee, was announced after some sections of Collins 1977 Diaries had been printed, so please ***now*** amend the 1977 Bank holidays page, the 1977 endpaper and/or the dated pages of this diary as necessary.

The date of an extra holiday for Scotland had not been decided at the time of this announcement.

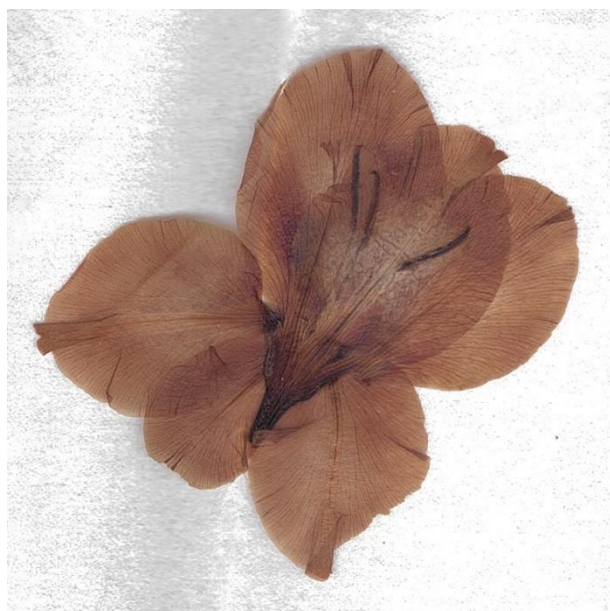


Notice about the change in bank holidays because of the Silver Jubilee in 1977. This notice was included in mum's 1977 diary as the change was made after the diary had been printed.

In her five-year diary, that started in 1978, mum recorded her name, address²¹ and phone number²². The diary contained 14 calendars which could be matched to all of the years in the twentieth century.²³ On the 1978 calendar, mum has circled days once per month, in the same way she did for 1976 and 1977, from January to August. In 1981, she has circled four dates and, in both 1980 and 1982, one. She also has what seems to be a reminder for a tetanus injection for herself for 14 October 1981 and for me and Alan on 30 September 1981.²⁴ Also, on the 1981 calendar, the words “hair cut” have been written. I don’t know if this is the meaning of the circles on the calendars, i.e. dates mum had her hair permed or cut.²⁵ On the 1978 calendar, she has written “perm Oct 28”.²⁶

There were quite a number of items tucked into mum’s five-year diary. Perhaps this is not surprising as the diary covered five years rather than a single year. Rather than reviewing them all in detail here, I will just itemise them and will discuss them more fully, where relevant in appropriate chapters. The items are:

- Four letters from Rev F R Dowson covering the period from January 1979 to August 1981²⁷
- Notices and service sheet from April 1979 for the Methodist Church in Selsey which is where Rev Dowson was based
- Letter dated August 1981 from Albert who appears to be a Methodist Minister in Shipley
- A news cutting showing Dr David Watkins receiving a cheque for £5,000 for the Norwich Continuing Care Unit
- Various loose diary notes, e.g. related to a trip to Tunisia
- What appear to be menu notes²⁸
- A Christmas gift tag addressed to mum from Tricia and Angus
- A list of jewellery with numbers alongside, presumably values
- A pressed flower
- Various blank pieces of paper and a piece of orange blotting paper



Pressed flower which I found in mum’s five-year diary. I am not aware of what it is or any significance it may have. Google Lens seems to think it is a gladiolus.

²¹ 192 College Road, NR2 3JA

²² 55222.

²³ 1978 corresponded to calendar 1, 1979 to calendar 2, 1980 to calendar 10, 1981 to calendar 5 and 1982 to calendar 6.

²⁴ It is possible that these notes were a reminder to have the injections but more likely were a reminder of when the injections had been given.

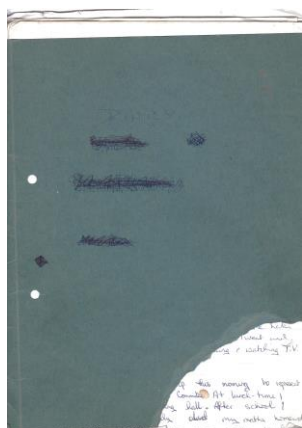
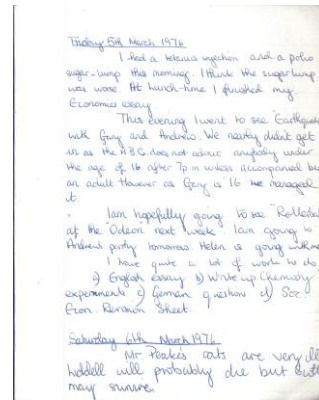
²⁵ I checked but the dates circled in 1976 do not seem to correspond to dates when mum had her hair permed, set or cut.

²⁶ There is only one note at the end of the diary. This appears to relate to a car service carried out in 1980.

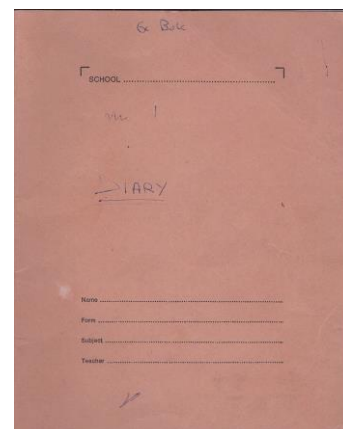
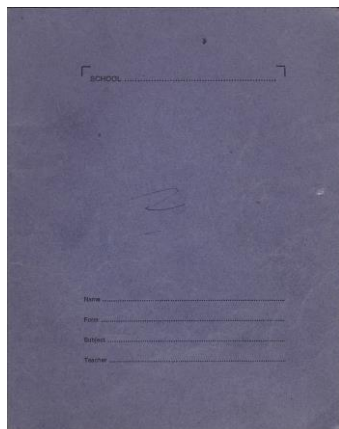
²⁷ One of them had a note by mum written on the back.

²⁸ I am not sure what menu or meals these relate to.

I have six diaries of mine for this period. They cover the period from March 1976 to November 1977. At that time I was aged 15 to 17. I recall keeping diaries at various times but thought they were all lost. I don't know if I kept a diary before this period or immediately after. The diaries are of an "improvised" nature similar to grandad's for this period. I don't know if they were based on his diaries. As far as I recall, I was aware that he and mum kept diaries but I do not remember ever seeing them. Nevertheless, like his entries for this period, my entries varied in length. To start a new day, I simply wrote the day of the week and the date and underlined it. In four of the diaries, the pages already had margins. In one of the other two, I added margins.



Unlike grandad, most of my diaries consisted of school-type exercise books. The one exception was from the period from September 1976 to April 1977 when I used a folder with loose, unbound sheets.²⁹ The green folder I used appears to have been repurposed³⁰ and I suspect I obtained it from school.³¹ I think this was also the case for the exercise books I used for the periods March to June 1976 and April to July 1977. The first was blue and the second orange and I am pretty sure they were the type of exercise books we used at school. On the front, they had lines for school, name, form, subject and teacher. On the back they are labelled "SCEA³² Essex Series". There is also a number – 273253 for the blue book and 273383 for the orange book.



Top right – my first diary entry for 5 and 6 March 1976. Other diary entries during this period were similar in style although not all quite so neat!

Middle left – the green folder I used for my diary from September 1976 to April 1977. Things that are evident from this photo include the torn front cover, the crossed-out words and the mis-match in size between the folder and the sheets of paper

Above – SCEA Essex Series exercise books including the blue one I used from March to June 1976 showing front (left) and back (centre) and the orange one I used from April to July 1977 (right)

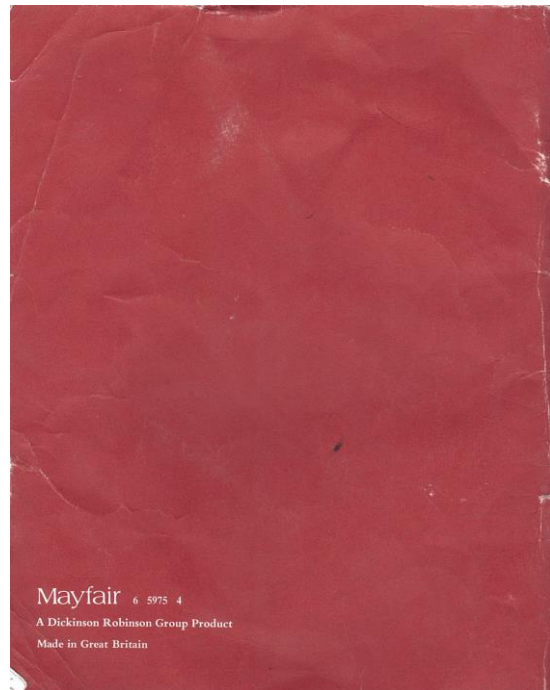
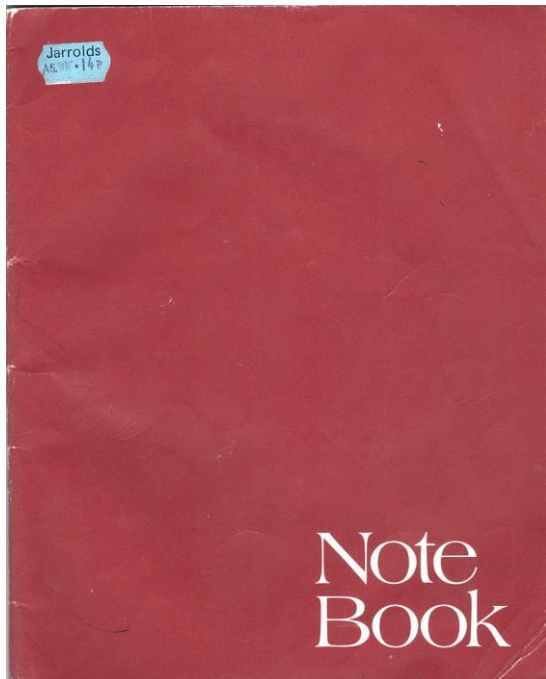
²⁹ The folder and sheets of paper are not the same size. The folder is shorter and wider.

³⁰ Some words have been crossed out. I think these are my name and form number and possibly a subject and teacher name.

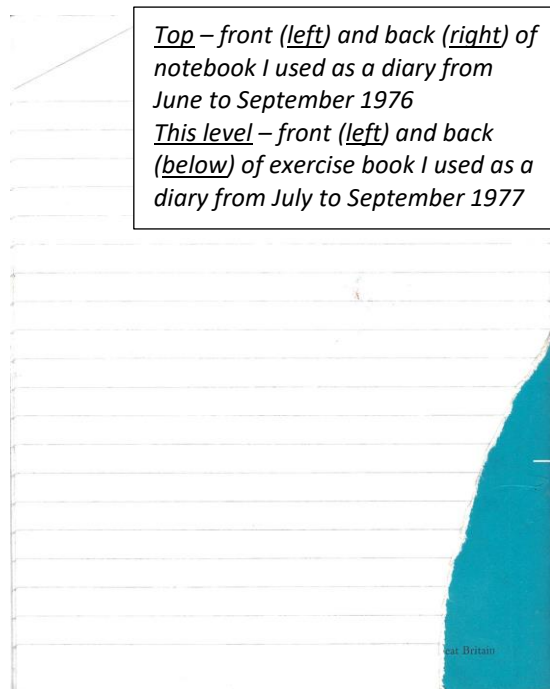
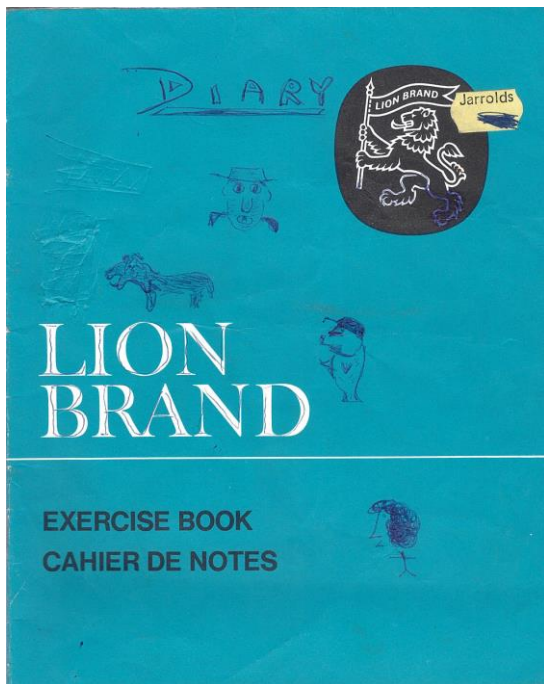
³¹ The front cover is torn. I vaguely recall tearing this off because our cat made a mess on it!! I must have left it lying around somewhere.

³² SCEA is said to stand for Supplies Consortium Eastern Authorities.

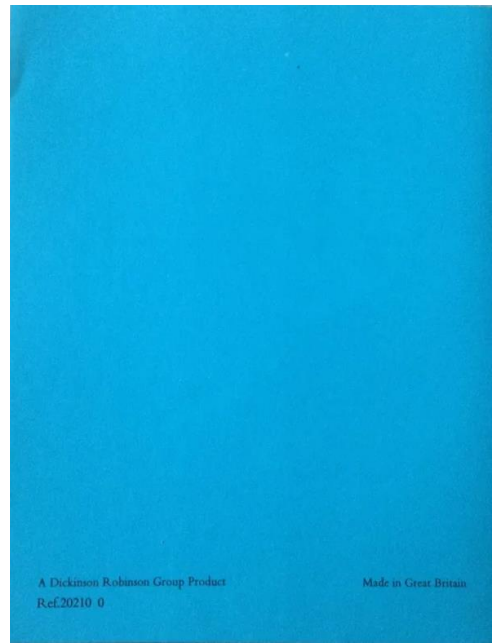
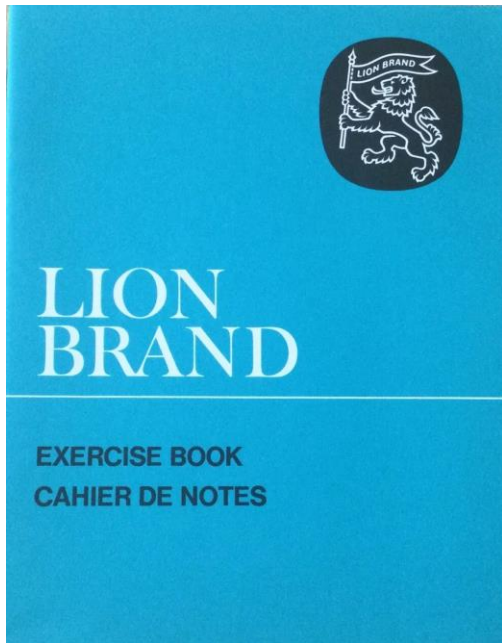
The red book I used from June to September 1976 is simply called “*Note Book*”. It has a Jarrolds sticker so, presumably, that is where I bought it, for 14p. On the back, it is labelled “*Mayfair 6 5975 4*”. It is described as a [Dickinson Robinson Group](#) Product. It was made in Great Britain.



From July to September 1977, I used a Lion Brand³³ exercise book . It also has a Jarrolds sticker although the price has been obscured. The rear cover has been torn off. Finally, from September to November 1977, I used a red exercise book with no identifying marks.



³³ I faced some challenges in trying to track down this brand, not least because Lion Brand appears to be a type of yarn and Lion Brand Notebook is a knitting blog! Nevertheless, I did manage to buy an identical notebook on eBay. This has an intact back cover which shows that this was also a Dickinson Robinson Group Product which was made in Great Britain and which had the reference number 20210 0.



Above - I found an unused version of this exercise book with intact back cover (right)
Below – receipt for travellers’ cheques that was tucked inside my 1976 diary

At the end of my second diary, covering the period June to September 1976, there were a number of notes including:

- A list of my O level results with grades
- A kit list for the youth hostel trip I made on my own in August 1976³⁴
- Lists of the Top 20 on June 15, 22 and 29³⁴

At the end of my last diary, covering September to November 1977, there are a number of lists which seem to contain country names. I am not entirely sure what these lists are but they seem to relate to some kind of sporting event.³⁵ Other items at the end of this diary include:

- A page of (very bad!) doodles.
- A (rather grandiose) paragraph on “*why do I exist*”³⁶
- Some lists related to sale of tickets possibly for the sixth form buffet and disco³⁷
- A short list of some of the University offers some of my friends had received



Tucked into my first diary, covering the period March to June 1976, was a receipt for £25 worth of Cooks³⁸ [travellers cheques](#) issued by the East Anglian Trustees Savings Bank³⁹ in Surrey Street. This receipt does not seem to be dated but I assume it was related to a school trip to France that I went on in April 1976.⁴⁰

³⁴ See [Chapter 122](#). Also tucked into this diary was a single page which appears to be a supplement to the 1976 YHA handbook.

³⁵ See [Chapter 123](#). There is also a loose page featuring more country names divided into 16 groups.

³⁶ See [Chapter 124](#).

³⁷ See [Chapter 118](#).

³⁸ [Thomas Cook](#) was one of the main producers of travellers’ cheques. The brand name of Thomas Cook is still in use.

³⁹ See [Chapter 91](#).

⁴⁰ See [Chapter 118](#).

For large parts of the late seventies, the diaries provide different perspectives on events that took place. In most of 1975, it is possible to compare what grandad or grandma recorded with what mum wrote. Similarly, in much of 1976 and 1977, it is possible to compare what I wrote with what mum noted. In 1978 and 1979, we have mum's perspectives only. In most cases, these different perspectives are reflected in what we wrote about. So, for example, I tended to write about school and things I did with my friends while mum wrote more about church and her work. On some occasions, different perspectives were given on the same issues. This is perhaps particularly true of my diaries and mum's in relation to our interaction and other family issues, including especially how we interacted with dad.