



Sedgley's

Diamond 60

*Sixty years, sixty people,
sixty stories about village life
since 1952.*

Starting work at Baggeridge Brick

by Mr B Naylor

In the early 1950s I did my National Service for one year and nine months. I was stationed in Warminster, Wiltshire, at the recently-opened School of Infantry (it's now the Land Warfare Centre).

Later I was a batman in the officers' mess in Sutton Coldfield; when they closed that down I went into the sergeants' mess, spending most of my time in the cookhouse. I went in weighing eight stone and came out at thirteen - one of the reasons was that we ate the same food as the officers! Every month they had a dinner and caviar was on the menu, as well as other fine ingredients.

After being demobbed I went back to working with my mates at Gibbons Wild Barfield in Lower Gornal making boilers and furnaces, but as soon as we reached 21 they got rid of us because they were obliged to pay us top wages when we reached that age.

In 1958 I went to work at Baggeridge Brick where I spent 38 years. I was actually on a machine making the bricks - I learnt on the job. I remember the mine closing in 1968. Before that we used to go down to the pit site for our breakfast - if you worked overnight and couldn't get anything to eat when you'd finished your shift in the brickworks, you used to go down the pit's canteen. I finished at Baggeridge Brick in 1996.

They've finished making bricks on the site now and it's going to be a new housing development; the brickworks started in 1938. We received a gold watch after 25 years' service and every year there was a party for those who had completed their quarter century.



The Baggeridge Brick logo



The Baggeridge yard with lorries.



A Commer lorry owned by Baggeridge Brick.



The chimney, a local landmark.