

Halton Humour

These few moments from the multitude are from memory. Their accuracy could be (highly) debatable. However it may be that those who wish to debate them have at best a tenuous hold on reality themselves.

So with no further apology.....

Who could forget Pomeroy, hands behind back rolling on his heels and snorting thought his nose as he described our shortcomings.

Sgt Maxwell, the man who if the expletive was deleted would have been legally mute. The man who could construct a sentence out of two adjectives one noun and five swear words. The man who having spotted me out with some young lady on Saturday night casually asked me on a Monday morning parade if I had carried out some (unrepeatable) outrageous sexual act upon her.

Tubby Reid was (and probably still is) a good bloke, but of such personal dimensions that no matter what size uniform was arrayed about his person it always looked a bit less than smart. Inevitably on parade he became a target as the inspecting officer would have finally found someone who was less than immaculate. One Saturday on room inspection an officer and Sgt Maxwell were inspecting 'Tubbies' personal box and had found three bottles of Brasso in it. The somewhat incredulous officer asked "How is it, Reid, that you have so much Brasso and your buttons aren't clean?" Without hesitation Maxwell replied "He doesn't clean his buttons with it sir, He drinks the f----- stuff".

Sgt Pomeroy loved to walk behind the Parade when we were standing at ease (not standing easy) and when he spotted someone who was not holding their rifle rigidly would smack it to the ground with an associated high volume commentary on that apprentices abilities. Knowing this I one day deliberately let my rifle swing about. Sure enough I heard the good sergeants graveled footsteps behind me and while feigning slackness I held the said rifle with a grip of steel (?). Pomeroy slammed his hand against my butt (rifle that is) which I have to tell you did not move one inch. Massaging his hand he accused me of doing this deliberately and intimated that I was small and I had no known father.

A huge propeller (from a Britannia?) fell with its stand, like a giant oak tree to the shop floor. It bounced and clanged about for a while and when at last it came to rest Les Evens was standing there. Hands held out he issued the immortal words "I didn't touch it".

You might remember that when a tea mug became cracked the tradition was to throw it at an adjacent block wall. Pete Lake was about to launch one such mug into oblivion when he was stopped by the Entry (real) corporal "any damage to Her Majesties property Lake and you'll be on a charge". "OK Corporal." said Pete and taking aim, fired the said mug.

It sailed, to our delight, with the accuracy of a laser guided bomb straight through the window of the opposite block, and as we fell about Pete was asked for his 1250. (Now who was it, by throwing someone's bed end out of the 3rd story window in 3 Wing, took down all the telephone wires?. (I dare not say)).

John Hockin, Cpl App (and young gentleman) striding briskly alongside the entry, arms to shoulder height setting a fine (but sadly ignored) example as we marched (lurched) down the hill from 1 Wing. He heard someone talking in the ranks and looking sharply to his left to observe the miscreant marched with admirable military precision right into a lamp post. (ouch!)

We stood in a semicircle about the fireman who was showing us the uses and operation of the multitude of hand held fire extinguishers, we had been giving him a hard time with various stupid and amusing answers to his questions when he suddenly went incandescent with rage. He told us he hated apprentices, that we were a bunch of smart arse little bastards and that he would kill (with his bare hands) the next apprentice who so much as looked at him the wrong way. Discretion became the order of the day and the lesson proceeded. Len Perrett turned up late just as the bloke was showing us a foam extinguisher. He held up the light blue extinguisher and nodding at someone said "What's this?" "A foam extinguisher staff" came the chastened reply. He nodded at someone else, "how do you operate it"? "Turn it upside down put you finger over the nozzle and shake it staff" came the dutiful reply. Nodding to Len he said "Then what?" and Len replied "It bursts into flames staff".

Pete Lake (again, sorry Pete) at our passing out dinner. The toast to her Majesty was made and we replied "God Bless her". Pete replied to that with a loud and confident "And God help her".

Yes indeed. And all the rest of us as well.

Chris Norman. 2008.