

Royal Command (Minus Trousers)

The media currently is very much engaged in providing the public with details concerning the “frolics”, whilst in a Las Vegas Hotel bedroom, of Prince Harry. Photographs indeed have been published, which if nothing else would have greatly shocked the royal elders.

It is claimed that the royal prince saw fit to remove his trousers, whilst in the company of a similarly uninhibited female of unknown identity. The reason for this act of exposure is only to be assumed.

This so unusual incident caused various reactions within the establishment, some being very critical, whilst others attributed the behaviour as understandable considering the young age of the undressed prince. Well, readers within NARPO can form their own opinion regarding the following “bare bottom” incident involving a Royal Prince!

My story concerns an event which took place in the year 1979 at the Anniversary of the Investiture of HM Prince of Wales at Caernarvon Castle when I was a member of the famous Pontarddulais Male Choir; “Was it going to be worth all the effort?” I thought to myself as I dragged myself out of a warm bed at the unearthly hour of 4.30am, on Wednesday, 18th July 1979 and as I look at the sleeping form of my wife, I doubted it.

Still, I thought to myself as I enjoyed my first cup of steaming tea; it was going to be something quite different to anything previously experienced. In fact it might be a unique experience of Royal Exposure, the day when the famous Pontarddulais Male Choir was going to show their qualities before H.R.H. The Prince of Wales at Caernarvon Castle.

Every choir dreams of very special concerts but of course, it is very rarely realised. In fact only twice previously have Welsh male choirs been honoured in such a way, once when Morrision Orpheus were involved and on another occasion Treorchy Male Choir. Now it was the turn of the newly formed Pontarddulais Male Choir and I, together with Inspector Ivor Sanders and Constable John Gronow represented the Swansea Police Force, after all we three formed the “backbone“ of the superb Baritone section.

In the weeks leading up to the 18th July, practices had concentrated on the items to be provided for the pleasure of H.R.H Prince Charles. In addition, full TV and Radio coverage was to be provided and so

perfection was aimed for. It was anticipated that about six million listeners and viewers would benefit from our choral renderings. Anyway, here I was, still sleepy and packing my uniform for the royal occasion.

It was 5.30am, together with Inspector Sanders when I climbed aboard the coach at Sketty Cross . Not a soul was to be seen apart from a ginger tom cat who surveyed us with a suspicious gaze. As is the usual practice, we were driven around different locations collecting other choir members for the journey north.

Our coaches arrived at Port Dinorwic where we offloaded and enjoyed our breakfast. When we continued our journey many of the lads were to be seen swatting up on their music in preparation for the “Big” occasion. Upon our arrival at Caernarvon we were requested to straight away assemble inside the castle for a full rehearsal. It was to be a full dress rehearsal and so we were provided with a large hall in a nearby hotel in order the put on our uniforms.

It was at this point that I experienced a traumatic moment. To my utter dismay I had “no” uniform trousers, Yes I had my jacket, shirt and tie but “no trousers”

It was at this moment that my police training came into action for without giving any explanation to any of my fellow choir members I ran for the door and as fast as I could into Caernarvon Town centre.

I was so embarrassed that I had not even explained the situation to my police friends. I naturally assumed that in my sleepy state whilst packing my uniform in a darkened bedroom I had neglected packing the silver grey trousers which were part of the official uniform.

Anyway, remedial action was required and so I “burst“ into a tailor shop in a breathless state and asked for a suitable trousers without delay. The shop assistant looked at me with surprise when I said that no matter what the price I would make a purchase and what is more I wanted to put them on immediately, no packing up procedure. I well remember paying the £12 with a £20 note and not waiting for change, such was the importance of speed.

I once again ran back to the hotel where Ivor Sanders asked me where the devil I had been because the coaches were delayed awaiting my return. I must admit to telling a “white lie” to everyone who asked an explanation for my strange behaviour.

The rehearsal went off well and we joined forces with the BBC Welsh Symphony Orchestra as well as the Brythoniad Male Choir, The Band of the Welsh Guards; also two of Wales great singers, Sir Geraint Evans and Stuart Burrows . Indeed, it is true to say that the cream of Welsh singing talent were in attendance.

At 7pm that evening, the “show commenced” with the compere being the Great Cliff Morgan - It was without doubt a sensational evening of music and sound and we were given to understand that the Prince was very impressed by the Pontarddulais Male Choir, both with their choral singing and also their “Very Smart” appearance , such fine uniforms adding to the colour of their singing.

A very satisfactory evening of celebration followed and I can assure readers that choir members (particularly police officers) ate and drank their full share at the laden tables.

I now come to the conclusion of the story --- It was when I was alighting from the coach at West Cross that Inspector Ivor Sanders said to me, “I wonder who is the owner of these trousers .“ He then held up a pair of silver grey choir trousers which I immediately identified as my lost pair. Yes, it would appear that my uniform trousers had fallen off the coat holder some time during the journey north and all my frantic rushing about in Caernarvon was unnecessary.

Ivor and I had a good laugh at the roadside but to sum up, I didn't appear before Prince Charles without trousers - A state of undress which sadly his Son Prince Harry did not repeat at his Las Vegas party - He would not have got away with his trouser less state if he were a member of the so famous Pontarddulais Male Choir.

A very true story submitted by Hubert Thomas - Ex 90 / 2110

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