

TWO TAPES BEATS THREE PIPS

by

Mike Davies

I have the distinct honour as far as I am aware within Her Majesty's Forces of being the only serving '*other rank*' who has had the immense pleasure of actually arresting his own O.C and having him Court Martialed !

In November 1955 I was as a full Corporal , President of the Cpls Mess at HQ No 1 Dog Company, Royal Military Police , El Kirsh just outside Ismailia In the Suez Canal Zone.

On the 14th November a meeting was held in the Mess over which presided our O.C. Captain William Lockwood. Captain Lockwood had been seconded in from some other Regt (The Military Police in those days did not have their own Corp commissioned officers).

I was later to learn that he had been a failed politician from Leeds on a short term commission, thinking that it would look good on his C.V. when he again took up politics on discharge.

We – the company – were informed that the Mess had overspent to the sum of £90 , and as we were 90 in strength it was his suggestion that each member volunteered give £1 to balance the books.

Because it sounded more like an order than a '*suggestion*' (Lockwood was a somewhat arrogant and bombastic officer) I asked to see the books.

His anger at my request was plain to see.. He said , , "*I consider your request Cpl an impertinence - it is tantamount to insubordination to doubt my word*"; "*If you value your stripes you will effect the collection of the money immediately*"

I must admit as a regular , to a few moments of great 'ring twitter' and indecision , but it was self evident from my own knowledge of the Mess accounts no-way could we be deficient by that amount.

So I arranged to go and see Capt Lockwoods predecessor, a Capt Bridden who taken up the 2 i/c post of 203 Provost Company in Moascar. for his advice and comments on the health of the Mess Accounts when he had left some 4 months or so previously. I was to “ leave it with him” - he said.

Beginning of December the Deputy Provost Marshal , a Major picked me up in his staff car and took me to the Officers Mess where Capt Lockwood was billeted

An officer has to be arrested by someone of higher rank . The DAPM said to me, *“Right Cpl this has been down to you in exposing this officers’ embezzlement of £90 from your Mess funds. The pleasure of arresting him therefore is yours. Knock the door and in my presence arrest him and lets have him away “*

I did and he was.....Being on a short term commission with a month or so to go , he was allowed to resign his commission at the end of it and return to civvy street a plain Mr.

(ends)