

I was at the school from 1959 - 1966 before my father insisted I leave and get a job. I now live in Sydney Australia.

I was not exactly a role model student, some would say I was a rebellious little barsteward but I enjoyed my time a school albeit a bit vague now.

One master particularly comes to mind when reminiscing about old school days.

Adrian Bolge was a maths teacher whose classroom was on the ground floor, I think known as B1. He was religious, one might even say a fanatic and he arranged trips for boys to Christian camps at exotic destinations such as the Gower Peninsula in South Wales. Inexpensive, our parents were glad to get us off their hands over the summer holidays.

However Adrian had a particularly cruel bent. His way of disciplining his recalcitrant pupils and there were many, was to bash them over their bare knuckles with a wooden strut taken from the back of a chair. This was excruciatingly painful but no matter how often he used this deterrent, he was one of those teachers we found difficult to take seriously.

Eventually, totally exasperated, he would despatch the errant pupil to the deputy head Mr (Clive ?) Chatterton's office. Mr C was not really disposed to handing out punishment to pupils that were not under his immediate care and without knowing the nature of the crime so he would parade the culprit outside B1 and when he had everyone's attention would commence 'six of the best'. His frustrated expression was priceless. I was never sure if he was to sending a message to the rest of the class or to indicate to Adrian that he should carry out his own corporal punishment. I noticed that Adrian could never bear to watch the affront served out to the victim.

One day Adrian Bolge offered to assist me with my maths at home. He lived near my family home in Milton so it was not a problem. At around six o'clock the door bell sounded and Adrian, complete with text books, appeared. He came in, took off his corduroy jacket and draped it around a chair and commenced some coaching in the finer points of calculus at the dining room table. Coincidentally my elder brother Alan, who did not live with us, also called in that night and was busy reading the evening paper in an armchair. My mother had gone to the shops to fetch some milk so was unaware of Adrian's visit. Entering the living room she acknowledged my brother's presence and then looked at Adrian's jacket draped around the chair. " Where on earth did you get that awful filthy rag Alan ?" she blurted. Without flinching Alan looked up from the paper and said " Why don't you ask the owner Peter's teacher and pointed to Adrian.

My mother turned the colour of a tomato and stammered an apology but the damage had been done. I tried unsuccessfully to hide my delight in both my mum and Adrian's acute embarrassment. The coaching session ended and it was the first and last. I left school without my maths 'o' level only to retake the exam at Highbury Tech College two months after leaving school and without any further preparation passed with flying colours. Whenever I see a chair with struts across the back I feel a tingling across the back of my hand then the jacket incident comes to mind and an inward smile takes over.

I wonder what happened to Adrian - did he become a vicar - anyone know ?

Cheers Peter Rendle