

This report is an account following the return of the Expeditionary Force into Dovedale Derbyshire, and in particular the assault on the Peak of Peveril by our ill lead troupe of wayward wanderers.

From your own correspondent.

The campaign as such, began with a had hock flurry of activity around some scones a butter knife a saucer of cream and some unsavoury raspberry jam. The resulting mixture of white goo intermingled with the red of the jam resembled more of a blood bath than an afternoon tea, however most of the combatants survived, at least until the evening meal. More about those later.

The first day of combat involved the full compliment of 23, there being 3 earlier with drawls from the original full strength. They were due in part to ill health claims rather than lack of moral fibre, so there is no need for a white feather exercise, and anyway the post office and DHL are far too busy with Xmas deliveries to be bothered with tokens of cowardice in front of the enema. We continue, two groups were formed in front of the hotel, one lead by Brenda and Linda (combined ages 160) and were sent out to take the short route to the objective, which was to get back before tea time. Brenda described the event as the 'Mother of all walks', and refused to venture out again. She instead took up a role of Mystery shopper in the local caffs, with the task of trying out further examples of fruit cake and weak tea. It's fair to say that Linda and David did try out a similar ploy, but without the false beard and Mershon pipe. We transgress, the second group were tasked with a long-range feint on the left flank, which eventually lead to going the wrong way up Tiverton high street, much to the alarm of the local ducks. This group led in part by Doctor Matthews, I presume and Bill, that's me in the flat cap Heaps. It was not at its best (the group) as it did become separated on the final assault, due to some rumblings over the best place to take lunch. In any event it did rain on both encampments so nothing was resolved by the squabble. The ducks did benefit, if that the right word, by being thrown some soggy bread, unappetising pie crusts and half sausage rolls. The day's activities finish without further loss, to ourselves, local wildlife, or the parish priest.

The dawn of the second day did bring some disharmony in the ranks, 2 of the native guides took off at sparrow fart, before the rest of the camp had even woken up, their purpose was to scout out a local pub, 8 miles upstream, this they accomplish in fine style. Another group under the leadership of the once mispelt David Carnel decided to drive to a near by fleshpot for some RR and cheap beer, this they also accomplish with a plumb and a packed lunch. The main group with the exception of the shirker's (no names no pack drill) headed full tilt up the Dove (other soaps are available) Dale Valley without any thought of injury to themselves, or others for that matter.

At the stepping stones the scouts opted for the easy option and went another way, taking the bridge and the path leading to Lovers Leap (no takers) and the half way point at Milldale. The village objective was taken by comparative ease, the purchase of a Latte and Penguin (Biscuit not Bird) by the Brewer assault team secured the bridgehead and the rest as they say is a mystery???. The order to withdraw came as a surprise, as everyone had not yet visited the free loo, however the route took us up a steep narrow gorge, so ablutions were completed en route with no more than wet shoe laces to complain about. The return leg, or half seemed to take twice as long as the advance move, how 3.5 miles one way can result in 7 miles on the return can only be put down to the magnificent ineptitude of the leader in a flat cap, or the trivial wandering of the baggage train and camp followers. (, Eileen, June, Kath and let's not forget the lovely Carol). The platoon was saved from a complete disaster by the plucky action of the forward scout Paul (is that for 2 pints) and guide Sue Matthews (I presume) in directing the trailing group away from the precipice which is 11am crag. The final stage of the with drawl past the well know Izak Newton hotel, where there is a strict dress code (tidy) which goes a long towards us not being allowed in there. Plus a further dress restraint which caps it off for us at least, no tee shirts or muddy sandals in the bar, and the wearing of balaclavas either in a conventional manner or in the reverse format as a Hovis 19

protection, in the restaurant is strictly a no no. In order to complete the report, it will have to run into 2 pages, sorry.

As we approached the final day of the escapade or conflict, it was becoming apparent that all was not well with the main body of the infantry. Mumblings had been heard from day one, when the evening menu was a choice of having meat or a no meat. Its always the same when given too many choices, stick to; that's it or leave it; is always the best policy, troops are there to obey, not pick and choose. I can only commend the chef for his clever use of sausages for 7 of my 11 meals, and not a chip in sight. That is unless you fell for the fish and nerks on Wednesday evening, (not half as good as Mucky Frank's) but less said the better. It was good to see that in the main the gathering maintained a sober outlook, but paying £18 for a bottle of Aldi vin or dinar went some way of keeping a lid on excessive imbibing. PS there were exceptions, which Julie and Jennifer fortunately regretted, but did recover enough to carry on the good works, as incompetent interpreters, of the local dialect.

So, the final day of the conflict lead again to a group of idlers and non-combatants taking the easy way out and staying in bed till every one had left, then wandering off elsewhere, whilst the rest were under the cosh of aggression. The baggage train left to refill the water barrels at a near by pool, whilst the main body was faced with a frontal assault of Thore Foot Cave and Outfitters. The pincer movement following a substantial lunch in the church yard at Wetton was most effective, almost as good as the Gaviscon. The air borne recce from above was most effective whilst Ken's group descending on there backsides managed a truly magnificent diversionary feint which caught the enemy well off guard. This leaving the door opens for Steve, David, Louise and John to rush headlong into the cave, before tripping over the prone figure of Chrissie who had got there first as usual and was taking a well-earned nap. Ken's team carried on in its own sweet way, speaking of which Jean, un accompanied by the AWOL Austin, helped in keeping up moral, with her impression of Charlie Chaplin and singing there'll be Blue Birds Over, wherever it is again, and again.

A further tactical retreat ensured the safe return to base, where once again the Pevert of the Peak opened its arms in a welcoming gesture, well know as the Churchillian salute, for which everyone that survived was truly happy. The accommodation itself was second to none that I have ever experience and the boot room facilities far outshone, even our own room. The provision of the washing facilities, better referred to as Persil of the Peak can only be described as first rate, and the car parking was interesting. To anyone not mentioned Sue, Kath think yourselves lucky, there always a next time, which brings me to the forthcoming Malham event. Anyone not wishing to be mentioned in dis patches or ridiculed can leave a small donation with the barman at Newfield Hall in a plain brown envelope marked for the attention of (your own correspondent or the Pratt in the Hat)

The very best to all who participated, and our thoughts go out to those who were unable to attended, or to those who bunked off to a better offer.

Regards as ever Your own correspondent Bill