

# TELLING TALES OUT OF SCHOOL

Chris Lowe and friends

Number 47

## Dental Records

Marcus Brampton was sitting in his office preparing his morning assembly. He remembers it well. It's a funny thing....he always remembered with great clarity his confrontations with 'the law'. He was just penning a suitable blessing for the final flourish at the Assembly when his secretary, Brenda, popped her head round the door.

'Two uniformed gentlemen are in Reception.....wanting to see you, headmaster. They say it's a bit urgent.'

'O Lor, and Assembly is in five minutes. Can you ask them if they can wait till after morning assembly is over. Thanks.....'

'Sorry, headmaster....' came a voice from behind her. 'We really do need to see you....now.'

Two of the burliest force's PCs kitted out with all the modern paraphernalia brushed past Brenda and filled the space available. Brenda did not wait. She was off to alert the Deputy. She could sense that the law beats Assembly..... and Assembly waits for no man pinned in his room by two bobbies.

Marcus was not one to delay constables in their duty. He dropped his assembly prep and put on another head-magisterial hat - participating in crime solving. He was sure that was what it would be. He could not imagine any other reason for the visit.

The sergeant took his cap off and handed Marcus....without explanation.....and with a dramatic thrust..... a somewhat ragged card, originally white but now a kind of dirty grey. Marcus twisted it around in his fingers and then looked enquiringly at the sergeant.

'Looks like some kind of visiting card, no?'

'It's an appointment card for the dentist, sir'

'Yes, and...?'

'Not important in itself, perhaps, sir,' sniffed the other copper, 'but we have just found it on the back seat of a stolen car – just outside your school.'

'Yes, and?'

The sergeant came to life now, 'It's an appointment card in the name of one Wayne Burton. He's one of your pupils, headmaster.'

'Yes, he is, sergeant. How did you know that?'

The policeman sniffed again, and began to count off on his fingers. 'We know him, we know his brother Tyrone, his sister Vivien, his dad Fred, his uncle Don and two cousins. Regulars they are.'

'Ah, yes,' said Marcus with a sigh, 'I thought it would not be long before Wayne graduated.' Not a very witty riposte but Marcus was now wishing he had not so readily agreed to this chance meeting.....with no time to consider its import and more importantly prepare how he was going to control it. He did not like shopping his pupils to the police without some careful thought.... and on his own terms.

'Well, sir, we are going to have a little word with Wayne.... up the road before he gets to the school. ...So we wanted you to know why he will be late this morning.... or absent.' He added the last throwaway remark with just a touch of menace.

'You're sure all this is legit procedure, sergeant? I think I ought to check it with the inspector, shouldn't I?'

'No need for that, sir....just wasting your time. We are just going to have this little word with him, just seeing what he has got to say about this card, you know....just that'

'Well.' I said mulling this over, 'I really ought to inform Mrs Burton, his mother. That's for sure. She has struggled to keep her husband and boys on the right track, you know. A losing battle but she never stops trying.'

'Yes, we know that. By all means ring her. By the time she gets here I expect our little chat with Wayne will be over.'

They both rose. We'll be off now. Wayne will be nearby by now.'

And so off they went.

They had barely gone a minute or two before Brenda put through a phone call from Mrs Burton.

'She sounds very anxious, headmaster. Do you want to speak to her?'

'Yes, put her on. I was going to ring her anyway.'

A loud and excitable Mrs. Burton came on the line. 'Headmaster, tell me what's going on. I have just had a call from Wayne on his mobile. He says two coppers have stopped him. What for?'

Marcus hesitated for a moment....did not think he was letting out any secrets, so told her, 'Well, Mrs. Burton, it seems to be something about a stolen car.'

There was a verbal explosion at the other end.

'That's plain daft!' she cried down the phone, 'It can't be Wayne.... It's not possible....It's his brother, our Tyrone, as does stealin' cars!'

'Well, that's odd,' said Marcus. 'The police have found a dental appointment card in the car with Wayne's name on it.'

'Well, I'll be blowed!' she cried after a short pause, 'We've been looking for that everywhere!'

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