

Augusta Military Academy

Oral History

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Here are a few of the stories that might be of interest -- will try to remember others, but you know how the grey matter gets when you get to be our age, "sweet 16 and never been kissed".

One day before afternoon drill, **Charlie (Harold) Chow** and I were out in front of the barracks waiting for the cadets to come out for drill (we were both officers) and we were acting silly and started sticking our swords in the ground between each other's feet.

Of course, we were some distance apart and as time progressed we would move back a little more and and throw the swords so that they would stick in the ground between the other's feet. We would, by the way, throw each other's sword back and forth.

Well, you can guess what happened...

I threw one time and instead of sticking in the ground it stuck in Charlie's left foot -- went right through the shoe and into the foot. So, of course, I helped him to the infirmary and boy did we catch the devil from **Colonel Louisell!** He didn't put us on report but we sure thought he was going to.

Well, the ironic part of the story is this: I lived in Hawaii for a number of years and, of course, Charlie and I renewed our friendship. I was married there to my present wife. Charlie was one of the ushers at our wedding and, naturally, he was at our reception.

Guess what we used to cut our wedding cake -- his AMA cadet officer's sword! Yes, the same one that I had stuck in his foot many years before at our beloved AMA. Incidentally, we did wash it before we cut the cake.

I believe it was 1950 and I was rooming with **Bob Ayres** on the third stoop -- I think it was room 311, but I'm not sure. It was right after Christmas vacation and I brought back some fireworks, which, of course, were very illegal to have, as you know.

Anyway, **Tomme Gamewell** and I were very tight, so we decided we were going to shoot some roman candles out of the window. We faced the tennis courts, so we thought we could do it out that way and no one would know about it.

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Well, being two very bright and astute AMA cadets, we raised the window, put two of the roman candles with part of them sticking out the window and part in the room, pulled the window down on top of them and proceeded to light the fuses.

What we forgot was that the end with fuse is the end the balls of fireworks come out of, so, needless to say, they started coming out, bouncing around the room, burnt holes in the blankets we had hanging on the walls, filled the room with smoke and damn near scared us to death.

When Bobby came back, I thought he was going to kill Tomme and me we had an awful mess to clean up.

Same year -- 1950, same roommate, Bob Ayres, and same buddy, Tomme Gamewell.

We were both on the fencing team and one afternoon we were acting stupid in the same roman candle room -- this was after the burning of room 311 -- and we were messing around with these white fuzzy pipe cleaners. Where we got them from or why we had them, who knows?

Anyway, we were sword fighting with them doing all of the fencing moves we knew and all at once I felt this rush of air in one of my ears and everything sounded hollow when someone spoke or made any noise.

We went to the infirmary and **Mrs. Thompson** (I think that was her name) was the nurse and she called the doctor, who looked at my ear. It turned out that Tomme had stuck the pipe cleaner in my ear and had busted my ear drum.

The doctor put in some drops, stuck a wad of cotton in it and told me it would probably never heal. Well, it did, but, boy, was that ever scary!

In 1951 or 1952, Tomme Gamewell and I were roommates in the 3rd stoop tower, along with **Parker Ward** and **Bob Went**. Bob was always getting packages from home with food in them -- you know how it was, we were always hungry.

Well, Bob was a little stingy with sharing his food, although I don't know why -- he always got plenty. Anyway, Tomme, myself, Charlie and Parker decided we were going to raid the most recent box of food from Bob's home. One of the things that he always got was some really foul smelling cheese -- I think it was Liederkrantz (spelling?) and, boy, does that stuff stink!

Anyway, we were eating the good stuff and someone, I don't remember who, got the cheese out

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and threw some on one of us. Well, you know what happened after that -- we all got into the cheese throwing business plus other food items.

Bob came in on us and was not overjoyed at what we had done, plus we then had to clean up the room.

One year, the night before Christmas vacation, **Major Hoover** asked me if I would like to make some money. I told him "sure".

Some of the South American brother cadets needed to get to Richmond to catch a train to go to Miami and he needed someone with another car. My parents had come up the day before to pick me up and they had let me keep the car so we could get an early start.

Well, as we were going to leave really early to drive to Richmond and should be back before anyone knew we had done this little escapade, I said, "Lets do it." Tomme was going with me, as we were going to take him home, because we lived close to each other.

So off we went to Richmond. Well, on the way down it started snowing like you would not believe -- could hardly see it was so bad. We got to Richmond, let the guys off and started back to Ft. Defiance. There were no freeways in those days and it was too early in the AM for the snow plows to be out.

We could not even see where the road was supposed to be, so I was following Major Hoover and, as you know, he did not have the best sight in the world. Anyway, he was making his own tracks and it took us hours to get back to AMA.

In the meantime, my parents had no idea where I was or what I was doing. They had called AMA and no one knew for sure where we were. **Doc Savedge** finally saved the day and told them where we were.

We got back safe and sound, but, oh boy, did I catch hell for doing it and not asking permission. Fortunately, Major Hoover and Doc kept us from getting killed by my parents and others.

My Dad kept the money that Major Hoover paid me -- he said it would pay for the gas and teach me a lesson about responsibility. It did too and, as you can see, I still have not forgotten it.

You can view the 1953 RECALL Here:

<https://galleries.amaalumni.org/Recalls/Recall-1953/>