

Recollections of Circumcision by an ex-Royal Navy man

by Frank Elsby (b 1933)

"Are you a Cavalier or a Roundhead?" It was my first day at my new school and this was the first question put to me by one of my new classmates. I didn't understand what he was talking about. "Roundheads have had all the skin taken off their cocks. It's hygienic and it stops you wetting your bed. Everyone has to have it done sooner or later. Cavalier haven't been done yet," he explained. "Come to the bog and let's have a look. See, I'm a Roundhead," he said, as he showed me his purple-headed cock. My cock was quite different from his. "You're a Cavalier," he explained, pointing at the sheath of skin covering over the head of my penis. "When they circumcise you, they will cut all that skin off, like peeling an organ, and your cock will then look like mine."

The first and only other time I had seen another boy's cock was when I was about four years' old. A cousin, about the same age, came to stay with us when his parents were away for a few days. We shared the same bath. I noticed that his cock was like my new friend's, whereas mine was pointed. I didn't know he had been circumcised. I had assumed that different people had different cocks and that he had been born like that. We didn't talk about it, anyway.

When I was six years' old the Second World War began. I was taken away from my mother and sent to stay with a doctor's family in the country. The doctor's wife threatened to cut off my cock and hang it round my neck if she ever found me playing with it. I was terrified. In the first week or so I wet my bed several times. The doctor examined me and said he might have to remove the cause of the irritation to stop the bed-wetting. It never occurred to me that he was going to make my cock look like my cousin's. Anyway, I had no more problems with bed-wetting and the doctor never referred to his proposed treatment again.

I was eight years' old when I went to this new school. It was a boarding school and a kind of a high-class orphanage for boys who had lost one or both parents. I was to remain there for ten years in both the junior and senior schools. The house matron reported any telltale stains on the bed sheets to the house maters, who reported the miscreants to the doctor. Two boys were circumcised in the first week. Usually, the doctor wrote to the boy's family doctor recommending circumcision, which was done during the school holidays. There were always several newly circumcised boys proudly showing off their purple bullet-headed cocks in the showers at the beginning of each term. I wanted very much to be circumcised. I even had fantasies about a Red Indian Brave circumcising me with a red-hot blade.

Us Cavaliers were repeatedly told to retract our foreskins and wash our knobs. I was about ten when I first tried this - not in the showers, but in the privacy of my bath. I had to get my cock hard so that I could exert enough force to wrench the foreskin back. At first it would not budge, and then it suddenly came back over the glans and I pulled it right back. For the first time in my life I saw and smelt the revolting *smegma* that had accumulated underneath. I did not realise how sensitive the glans was until I wiped it with my flannel. It was excruciatingly painful. The narrow opening of the

foreskin was halfway down my cock. It was bleeding from several small cracks caused by the stretching. It constricted my cock as it got harder and harder. I could not pull the foreskin forward again. I was very frightened, indeed. I got dressed and the clothes rubbed on my raw glans and kept me hard until I went to bed. The following morning my cock was back to normal. I continued washing my knob this way. After a while it became very pleasurable and I had my first ejaculation. The ecstatic spasms and seeing and feeling my pearly spunk squirt out for the first time made me an immediate and permanent *wankoholic*.

When I was 12 and going up to the senior school I can remember that my family doctor told me that the school doctor had recommended that I should be circumcised. My GP was Jewish and I told him how I wanted to be circumcised and asked why he had not circumcised me when I was born. He said that he was against routine circumcision and that I didn't need to have it done, then or now. Half my generation was circumcised in infancy; the rest often during school days or National Service.

Later on at school we were told that circumcision was necessary to disable us from the wicked vice of masturbation. Wanking would stunt our moral, mental and physical development. Our clean-cut penises would look and feel good. *Mens Sana in Corpore Sano* - a sound mind in a sound body - was the ideal of the school. A clean-cut cock was the badge of a clean-cut young man. Debilitating masturbation was inhibited and the corresponding dirty thoughts could not arise. Least, that was the theory. The mutilation was cruel to be kind. The school chaplain even endorsed circumcision in the flesh! Although not obligatory for Christians, he explained it should be done to ensure physical cleanliness and mental and spiritual purity. It would enable us to identify more closely with Jesus, who was himself circumcised. If not done earlier, it should be done preferably before confirmation.

Eventually my foreskin loosened up sufficiently so that I could pull it back without an erection. It was very long and would not stay retracted. By then the knob had lost some of its extreme sensitivity. Homosexual experiment was widespread. We formed little secret exclusive clubs. There were seven of us in mine: two Cavaliers and five Roundheads. There was mutual envy between the Roundheads and the Cavaliers. The Roundheads envied my long mobile foreskin and tried to pull it over their naked knobs. I envied the sculptured look and the feel of the flared corona and sleek immobile skin of the circumcised penis. As well as simple wanking, we were into cock sucking and tickling tits and frenulums. I always came quite quickly, but it took me ages to bring the Roundheads off. In fact, I was completely unsuccessful with one of them and my fellow Cavalier as well. I was still uncircumcised when I left school, aged 18.

At university I had almost complete privacy and didn't play any sports which necessitated mixing with my fellows in the showers, so I didn't see who was, or was not, circumcised. Towards the end of three years, I spent a fortnight in the Royal Naval Training Squadron prior to starting my full-time National Service. It was rumoured that those of us who were still Cavaliers would be circumcised as soon as we joined up. I couldn't wait until then and one evening in my last term I took a sharp pair of scissors pulled my foreskin forwards over the head of my penis, and cut the overhang off. When I got to hospital I asked the doctor to circumcise me properly but he just stitched me up and congratulated me on having done such a good job! My

foreskin was now a lot shorter. It would still cover the glans when my cock was flaccid, but retracted fully when I got hard it looked as if I was completely circumcised. After a while the scar-ring became hardly visible.

Soon after graduation I joined the Royal Navy for two years' National Service. At my entrance medical I asked the doctor if I could be circumcised. He said that my foreskin was short and loose enough and there was no need to remove it. However, the rumour about being circumcised on joining-up turned out to be largely true for some recruits; three of my classmates were circumcised immediately and on the Lower Deck Roundheads outnumbered Cavaliers by two to one.

In the Royal Navy physical sexual activity of any kind was absolutely forbidden on board ship or in any shore establishment (except married quarters). When I was in the training squadron one of the officers was caught *in flagrante delecto* with a junior seaman in his cabin. Rather than face court martial he eluded his guard and jumped overboard at night, and that was the end of him. Nevertheless, male *bonding* was considered quite normal and could take various forms. We were expected to have a particularly close chum or *Oppo*. When *Oppos* fell out with each other, they *parted cleaning rags*. My *Oppo*, another National Serviceman and, inevitably, we compared our cocks. His foreskin just about covered the flange of his knob. He didn't know whether he had been circumcised or not. He thought he may have had the skin trimmed - like I had done mine - but there was no scar. Also, it was considered normal for an older man to have a *Winger* - a younger man whom he took under his wing and protected. A particularly handsome young sailor was referred to as *a nice piece of skin*. The captain of the other training ship used to indulge in nude wrestling with handsome young National Service Upper Yardsmen (officer cadets) in his cabin. No one seemed to think that this was queer! When we were on shore leave, in our own time out of uniform we could do what we liked with whoever we liked provided we did it discreetly, did not catch VD, make a girl pregnant or get found out.

My messmates were quite open about their sexual preferences one way or the other. There was always a lot of dirty talk aboard ship and as I was a handsome *piece of skin*, I was frequently propositioned: "I'd like to fuck you so full of my spunk that it squirts out of your ears" one of mates assured me. He made it clear he wanted me to *gobble* his cock. He had been beautifully circumcised - a real cosmetic job. His knob was like a peach. His hairless cock was completely smooth all over and where his frenum had been on the underside of his knob there was now a V-shaped cut instead. A lot of my shipmates reckoned that it was safer and more hygienic to share the sensual pleasures of their bodies with friends than buy the services of the prostitutes (of either sex) who infested the ports we visited. Frankly, I was frightened by the thought of physical sex with anyone. I didn't even have a wank with my *Oppo*.

Two thirds of my messmates were circumcised. Their clean-cut knobs were clearly outlined in their tight fitting uniform bell-bottom trousers. They taunted those of us who were not. Four out of the five Leading Seamen and five out of the seven National Service Ordinary Seamen were clean cut. All the older Able Seamen were uncut, however. Half of the Regular ABs and ODs were Roundheads. Young cavaliers in the ranks were often prevailed upon to submit their cocks to the knife. Just at the time there was an opportunity for me to get circumcised I was sent off to join the Upper Yardsmen's (officer training) course. Most of the Upper Yardsmen were ex-public

school. There were an equal number of Cavaliers and Roundheads amongst them. At long last I was no longer in a minority.

After National Service I was destined to make a desk-bound career. I would need some kind of regular exercise. I was no good at ball games or athletics, so I joined a keep fit class organised by the local school soon after I after my first job. The members of the class came from all walks of life. Their ages ranged from 17 to 70. The number of Roundheads was exactly the same as Cavaliers 50/50. There was no difference between social class and age group. So being embarrassed no one in a minority one way or the other. Although changes in job and location meant joining new fitness classes every so often, these proportions seemed to remain much the same.

After full-time service in the Royal Navy, I continued as a Reserve Officer part-time. I remember we had a lot of medical students who were destined for careers in the Navy after they graduated. One evening in the mess the subject of conversation was sex, as usual. Someone asked was there anything special about circumcision? There was a lot of heated discussion. One of the senior medical students explained the benefits, as he understood them. He had been circumcised in infancy so could not speak with before-and-after experience. Indeed, he could not remember being circumcised and did not know he had been until he went to school. But he explained the benefits like this:

Circumcision promotes hygiene. The foreskin of an uncircumcised penis has to be retracted and the foul-smelling smegma that collects underneath washed away regularly. This is a painful and frightening experience the first few times it is done in boyhood when the foreskin is still tight. It becomes very pleasurable as the skin loosens and leads inevitably to wanking. Keeping the uncircumcised knob clean is no protection against fungous infection that abounds in public showers and changing rooms. Circumcised men never develop cancer of the penis; nor their wives, cancer of the cervix. For these reasons alone all boys should be circumcised in infancy.

Circumcision does not disable wanking. There is no loose skin to pull over the head of the penis, of course. But because the glans is not so sensitive, there is no danger of premature ejaculation. It can take quite a long time to come. This can be frustrating but the reward is a satiating abdominal orgasm. A circumcised penis feels good too; it is clean and free. During sex there is no interference with two-way stimulation of the head of the penis. Condoms are comfortable and easier to put on. The obviously clean and odourless knob encourages oral sex.

Altogether, he was very glad that he had been circumcised and strongly recommended it.

Soon after that I visited my doctor and told him my story. I wanted to be completely circumcised. He didn't try and dissuade me; instead he referred me to a specialist. The operation was done in hospital under a general anaesthetic the following week. The cut healed up in a few days. I was very pleased with the result. I was delighted with my no naked glans and flared corona. I could feel it all the time. Although the remaining skin was not completely immobile when I was hard, condoms no longer

rucked up and pulled off. However, I became increasingly dissatisfied with the web of frenulum that was still attached to the underside of my penis and the thick scar. Although the frenulum was sensitive, I did not like it. The scar was very thick because of the way the surgeon had folded the skin to get a good mucosal adhesion, as he explained it. He had used so-called soluble stitches but they never disappeared completely and left holes, which did not close up where they had been.

Many years later I was working in a Muslim country. I had to have a routine general medical examination. I told the doctor about my circumcision and he said he would be quite happy to tidy it up for me. He removed the frenulum and half of the remaining skin on the shaft, including the old thick scar. It took some time for the skin and the new scar to stretch to accommodate the erection. Now my cock is beautifully smooth all over soft or hard. But when I am hard the remaining skin is now very tight and completely immobile. My scrotum tightens up and holds my balls firmly at the base. It takes me much longer to cum, which please my partners and me. I have been delighted with the result ever since.