

RED is my colour

1. THEY asked me to say a few words,
and I shuddered at the thought;
“don't be pompous or long”, they said,
“and make 'em laugh – you ought”.
2. I'd read the news item in the Observer,
and the same thing repeated for Bexhill;
I'd read the item again in The News,
so what left for me? It seems nil.
3. I'm sure you all read the same items,
and know what a career can span:
Post Office, local and London, The Plaisterers,
and even “Our postal Port Said man!”
4. So what to say is the problem;
What hasn't the press found out to date?
Perhaps there are just a few secrets
that it falls my lot to relate.
5. The Press said his career was a long one,
spanning 43 years or so;
He'd been at Bexhill for eight
and ten at Hastings before having to go.
6. On a personal note, Hastings saw us together, late “68”,
in the records I see;
I arrived first as an Overseer,
He, later, but of course, as HP.
7. Mind you – his reputation preceded,
rumour had it – at least it was said
that everything he uses in the in the office
bears a common factor: they're RED.
8. Red blotter, red chairs and red waste bin,
let's think – I'm sure there's another;
Got it! Yes, red coat hanger,
red 'phone and of course – the buzzer.
9. In the fullness of time,
there was even more to see:
Red headed note paper, for example,
and “L.F.Gray” in bright red facsimile.
10. Oh yes, in the fullness of time
we learned these things were certainly true;
But why? What was the reason? Was it a secret?
Now, don't breathe a word and I'll leak it to you.
11. You see RED is the colour for ACTION.
It means “Get up and go”;
and that's just what we found,
Oh Lord, he was a busy so and so!
12. And so it remained until December,
when finally they made him take leave and to go;
but still he found time to bid “Farewell”,
to visit, shake hands and say “Cheerio”.
13. Personally, I found him an administrator,
of skill that won't be surpassed;
his finger remained on the pulse of all sections
and the effect there, I'm sure will last.
14. His OUTFILE was far reaching,
spanning Battle, Bexhill and Rye,
Hastings, and of course St Leonards,
and permitted no file to just wither and die.
15. I'd never met such an all seeing eye,
which could dissect statistics at a glance:
which would, unerringly, spot the one weak figure,
the one I'd decided to chance.
16. All of this, then, because of red blotter?
Or did talent alone suffice?
If it was just the red blotter I need some,
rather urgently for use in my own office.
17. So now, it's onto retirement,
I don't know what will be coloured bright red;
the chair, the golf clubs, the slippers?
Or perhaps a resplendent bed!
18. But I do know the ACTION will continue,
without I, he simply won't thrive;
He's booked right up to the eyebrows,
so that full satisfaction he'll derive.
19. Perhaps he has a five year plan,
a different career for each year;
between rounds on the golf course,
no chance for boredom – no fear!
20. So, whatever the colour or plan,
We of POMSA join with the others today,
to wish both Mr and Mrs retirement that's red-rosey,
long, contented and filled with happiness along the
way.

Best wishes
John VALLENDER
6th January 1979