

Millard Fillmore, Dolphin Flayer

by Dom Macchiaroli

Last week I heard that there is a new horror movie out about Abe Lincoln, with the plot of the film involving the tallest of presidents hunting down vampire bats with his axe while suspending habeas corpus, writing lame speeches about the freedom of man, restoring the union, and other crap like that.

I refuse to see this film, since I tend to really hate it when authors and movie makers alike trifle with or embellish history for their own cheap satisfaction.

But if I ever do make a film about a vengeful and murderous ex-president, I think the title will be:

Millard Fillmore, Dolphin Flayer

The 13th president of the United States, Millard Fillmore was a New York pol considered a looker and a dandy in his day, since the lady folk would gather for yards around, intent on seeing their idol.

But what these infatuated women didn't know was that old Fillmore had a latent hatred for dolphins. When he occupied the White House, the pesky critters would swim up Chesapeake Bay and even further upstream the Potomac, right onto the north lawn of the White House, just to bug the President, who would then angrily and bloodily skin them with his pioneer flint knife for no apparent reason at all. His eager yet handsome wife Carl claimed that he mistakenly hated porpoises, which are not dolphins anyway, but porpoises.

Millard Fillmore was born in a log cabin on my birthday in 1800. His

father immediately apprenticed him to a cloth manufacturer in upstate New York; Fillmore failed to make any cloth since he was a newborn, so he was diapered straight away into politics instead.

He ascended to the presidency when President Zachary Taylor died after choking on a bag of rotten cherries and a ham sandwich during an exciting Arbor Day parade.

Fillmore (whose name with letters rearranged spells out 'Firearm Doll Mill' and 'Immoral Drill Elf') didn't accomplish much else during his time in office, apart from absentmindedly misplacing the foundation of the Washington Monument and failing to sign the Compromise of 1850, when he temporarily forgot how to write his own name in cursive. Yet his presidential dolphin flaying continued quietly unabated from 1850 to 1852.

His main success as chief executive was to appoint Brigham Young as first governor of Utah Territory. Young repaid Fillmore by naming the territorial capital "Fillmore" and the surrounding county "Romney."

After his presidency, he joined the "Know-Nothing" movement, opposed Lincoln himself during the Civil War at every turn, and collected discarded pop bottles for a living. But the dolphin killing continued. History records that Fillmore was the first of a series of lower to middle-class nineteenth century presidents who spent most of their careers in public service. Yet after leaving office,

Fillmore spent the balance of his life trapped in a bidet, and for that he is ranked amongst the bottoms of presidents.

While none of the preceding was actually true, I still can write a horrifying screenplay about his fictional exploits that will frighten the under-the-age-of-six crowd, whilst amassing more cash than George Clooney. Sounds like a plan.

