

## Head to Head – Swinden to Dalrymple

The Head Masters that most of us from Trinity in the 1950s would remember were Mr L. A. Swinden and Mr A. H. Dalrymple. Using extracts from the school magazines of the time, this is the story of the end of one era and the beginning of another.

Swinden was appointed as Head to succeed Dr Emrys Jones in 1949. Jones had been Head since Trinity's first days as Trinity County School in 1924 and he seems to have been highly revered. The announcement of Swinden taking over as Head in 1949 was relatively low key and overshadowed by the departure of Jones. Also, Swinden was already well known at Trinity having been a senior master under Jones for many years – he had been briefly Headmaster at Bounds Green School in more recent years.

This is how Swinden's appointment was announced in the school magazine of Spring 1949:

### **THE NEW HEAD MASTER**

On March 4, Mr L. A. Swinden, B.Sc., was appointed Head Master, the appointment to take effect next September, when, as already announced, Dr Jones retires. Mr Swinden, at present Head Master of Bounds Green School, was formerly Senior Master here. Those members of the Staff who knew him in that capacity, and learnt to appreciate his work, have warmly welcomed the appointment.

When Swinden retired in 1956, it was treated as a much more significant event. Extracts from school magazine from Spring 1956 are reproduced in the following pages, they show how the school wanted to pay tribute to Swinden. Presumably, these were written by Mr Brandon, who seems to have been responsible for the editing and production of the magazines at that time.

# The Magazine of Trinity Grammar School, Wood Green, N.22

SPRING TERM, 1956

## CHANGE—BUT NOT DECAY

Few changes can be so important to a School as the change of Head Master. We are seeing at the end of this term the handing over of responsibilities and duties by one Head Master to another. That is the end of a period in the history of the School and the beginning of another, and it is a moment which compels even the most thoughtless of us to pause and reflect. What comes first to our minds is the natural feeling of regret at a change, however inevitable ; and that feeling is followed very quickly by a sense of gratitude for benefits we have enjoyed, often without deserving them, and by a possibly related sense of appreciation of a strength of character upon which we have learnt to rely.

But it would be unwise to confine our thoughts to the past, or we might lapse into the maudlin sentimentality of the too much quoted line, "Change and decay in all around I see." Change, it is true, we see, but decay ? It would obviously be foolish to anticipate decline and failure ; foolish, wrong, and, we venture to say, unnatural.

For in a School it is the outlook of youth which should prevail, and it is the nature of youth to look forward and to look forward confidently and optimistically. There was a School song we used to sing in our early days which contained the line, "A glorious future we all hail!" Perhaps the sentiment was expressed a little boastfully, but the sentiment itself is sound. Let us remember that early line. Though at the moment we may look back and pause to take stock of our achievements, it is to the future that we must bend our energies. What has been done in the past is merely a stepping-stone to what may be done in the future. We step forward, confidently and cheerfully, into that "glorious future."

## RETIREMENT OF MR L. A. SWINDEN, B.Sc.

Official, administrator, ceremonial figure at School functions—it will not be these capacities, important though they are, and conscientiously though the duties connected with them have been performed, that Mr Swinden will be remembered. We shall think of him here as the kindest man any of us has ever known, a man to whom anybody in trouble could turn, confident of sympathetic attention and active help.

Mr Swinden is a Londoner, and before he was appointed Assistant Master here in 1929 had had considerable experience in the London County Council teaching service. He brought with him not only the skill of the born Mathematics teacher but a passionate devotion to hobbies which served the School—swimming, walking, photography. The standard of swimming reached before the war was incredibly high. There was rarely a time when fewer than eighty per cent of the boys could swim, and it was usual for more than fifty Bronze Medallions of the Royal Life Saving Society to be gained during the year. Members of the School of that period will recall with great clarity the swimming sessions at Wood Green Baths: eight o'clock on Friday mornings, summer and winter alike. At the summer holiday camps (which the war brought to an end), Mr Swinden worked like a Trojan at everything from putting up tents to organising a sing-song. His skill in photography is known to the present generation as well as to past generations of scholars.

On September 3, 1939, the School was evacuated to Hatfield Peverel in Essex. Mr Swinden's abounding energy and his ability for getting on well with all sorts and conditions of people had full scope in that difficult time, and he was soon in charge of the billeting. Walking or riding at breakneck speed a spotlessly clean motor-bicycle, he was soon a familiar and respected figure throughout a big area of Essex. When the Wood Green branch of the School had been established and grown large and Dr Jones (Head Master at that time) had returned to London, Mr Swinden was placed in charge of the evacuated portion of the School. It was a task well suited to his temperament, and he responded with vigour to the many difficulties of that time. Possibly it was the happiest period of his teaching career.

On the resignation in 1942 of the late Mr E. B. Bowesman, M.A., Mr Swinden was appointed Senior Master, a post to which he brought with characteristic energy his usual desire to make other people comfortable and happy. It was to the regret of his colleagues that he left us in 1946 on accepting the Headship of Bounds Green Secondary Modern School. They were able, however, to welcome his return three years later as Head Master.

Mr Swinden was, perhaps, unfortunate in the date of his appointment. His Headship has coincided with the difficult era of post-war reconstruction—reconstruction, that is, in the material sense. He began with the practical difficulties of painters all over the building, and a second bout of decoration was completed only this term. He had to face, too, the very many difficult problems caused by the establishment of the General Certificate of Education and the increase in Sixth Form work. In this unsettled and baffling time, a Head Master was faced with many anxious problems. Those who have been in closest touch with him will be the first to acknowledge that Mr Swinden has faced these problems with commonsense, with a steady refusal to be flurried, and with an undeviating determination to find the best possible solution for those directly involved in difficulty.

What of the man himself? In these formal pages we must not separate the man from the Head Master, but we can say, and should say, that everyone in the School, member of Staff and scholar alike, has recognised in Mr Swinden the sincerity of his motives, and has felt that in him he has a genuine and trusted friend. It is with this feeling of friendship uppermost in our minds that we bid farewell to Mr Swinden. He has worked hard, how hard and for how long hours probably nobody knows. We wish him a very long and happy retirement.

## **APPOINTMENT OF NEW HEAD MASTER**

Mr A. H. Dalrymple, M.A. (Glasgow), at present Head of the Chartesey School, London, has been appointed Head Master, and will take up his duties next term. He attended Assembly on March 1, when he was introduced to the scholars and to members of the Staff.

The next issue of the magazine for Summer Term 1956 (see next page) gave a more fulsome account of the appointment of Mr A. H. Dalrymple. It also served to indicate Dalrymple's belief in discipline and hard work, and that he was ambitious. The closing words (presumably by Brandon) predicting a busy and hopefully a happy time ahead, could not have anticipated the kind of upheaval Trinity went through in the next few years. But that's another story, yet to be written.



## THE HEAD MASTER

The appointment of Mr A. H. Dalrymple, M.A., as Head Master was briefly announced in our last issue. He took up his duties at the beginning of this term, and we hope he has realised by now the sincerity of the welcome which was extended to him from so many quarters and which was implied in our Editorial, where we looked forward with confidence to a bright future.

Mr Dalrymple was educated at Allan Glen's School, Glasgow, where he gained his colours in Rugby football and cricket. At Glasgow University, which he represented in both these games, he gained his degree with Honours in Classics. After a brief period in journalism in London, he was appointed to the Staff of Hendon Preparatory School, but a year later, on the outbreak of war, joined the R.A.F., in which he was a navigator. In 1945 he became Latin Master at the Whitgift Grammar School, Croydon, where he was in charge of Rugby. Five years later he was appointed Head of the Chartesey School, London.

Since he has been with us, he has shown evidence of his belief in discipline and hard work. He has made no secret of the fact that he is ambitious, and that he is intending to provide the best possible facilities for the pupils of his School. In any plans to benefit our scholars which he is able to put into effect, he will, of course, have the heartiest co-operation of all who have the good of the School at heart. Mr Dalrymple can look forward to a busy time ; we hope it will prove a happy time.