

## **My Two Stints at Trinity**

I lived in Edmonton and attended the St. James C Of E primary school there when I passed the 11 plus. I should have gone to Latymer Grammer School in Edmonton as my sister had before me. My Mum though had grander ideas. She wanted me to go to The Bluecoat School and my teachers thought that this might be possible. My 11 plus papers were sent to them to see if I could go on a scholarship, my parents could not afford fees. By the time the papers were returned to say that I had not been accepted, Latymer and other closer grammar schools were full. The education authority offered a place in the closest available grammar school which was Trinity.

I don't know why but 3 other boys from Edmonton went there and one was in the Edmonton Swimming Club with me so at least I knew someone on the first day. So my first period at Trinity began.

I was put into form 1d which really upset my Mum even though we were told that it was not on academic ability and that streaming would commence from the second year. However, things progressed satisfactorily and I was placed in 2b for the second year. As an aside I have read recently that the A stream was science and the B stream was arts. As my best subject was maths and my worst was French I cannot understand that decision.

I was in the Sea Cadet Corps at the time and loving it and wanted a career at sea as an officer in the Royal Navy. Bear with me this does have a direct bearing on events. During my 3<sup>rd</sup> year I became interested in a school near Waterloo station that was specifically aimed at giving an education towards entering the Navy. Cutting a long story short I badgered my Mum until she managed to get me a place there and I was allowed to transfer to that school. It was a long journey every day from Edmonton via Liverpool Street station then 2 tube trains just to get to school and back again each afternoon. I enjoyed the curriculum there covering as it did things like morse code etc. as well as the usual academic subjects. However, I was an outsider and was never accepted by the boys and so became disruptive and played truant a lot. This didn't go down well and I was threatened with expulsion. If I was expelled it was pointed out that I would not be allowed a grammar school education and I would have to go to my local secondary school back in Edmonton. My long suffering Mum again went into battle for me and somehow, with great perseverance managed to persuade the education authority to transfer me back to Trinity. At first they wouldn't listen but finally gave in. Mr. Dalrymple was not happy about this and refused to accept me back. He was then instructed by the authority that he had to and this did not go down well. Having been forced to take me back he ensured that I was in the bottom form for the rest of my time at Trinity.

Now to complete my Trinity history. I could not be accepted by the Royal Navy as I wore glasses and in those days there was no exception, unless your eyesight deteriorated after you were in so I looked at the merchant navy. I wanted to be a navigator but again because of my glasses I could not pass the Board of Trade eyesight test. Finally I decided to go into engineering. I applied for a place with the New Zealand Shipping Company (NZSC) as their engineering cadets were trained at sea. All other companies trained their cadets in technical colleges ashore for 2 years

before they went to sea. The NZSC had a floating technical college with 3 lecturers a classroom, a lab and a workshop. The ship, the 'Otaio', was also a fully working refrigerated ship. I was accepted and took my 'O' levels to join this company, I needed 5 which I obtained. I was always told on my school reports that I only ever did just enough, it seems they were right. However, there was to be another problem, I failed the company's medical with a very small hernia and needed a minor operation to correct it. This meant that I could not go to sea, away from hospitals etc. for months at a time, until I was 'repaired'. Therefore, I did a further year in the upper 5<sup>th</sup> at Wood Green School which Trinity had now become, housed in the brand new building in White Hart lane. I needed no more 'O' levels so my lesson periods were not very many, although to keep up to speed I took Maths, Physics and English again as well as new subjects like British Constitution and metalwork. I finished up with 7 'O' levels.

Despite being a good swimmer I was not considered athletic as in my early days if you didn't play football, cricket or run fast you were ignored as a sportsman. I had swum for the school from the 1<sup>st</sup> year in inter school galas and in fact won the backstroke in some of those. I was also in the freestyle relay team as well as swimming the first leg of the medley relay which was, of course, backstroke. I was allowed to go to the pool on more occasions than I should have just to keep me occupied so I enjoyed my final year. Finally I left aged 17, not 16, and joined the NZSC as an engineering officer cadet.

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