

I was educated at Plymouth College which is a public school. The younger teachers there weren't too bad apart from the odd one. But the older ones were far too old-fashioned and set in their ways for this age. They seemed to favour corporal punishment a lot, some more than others. I was beaten with a cane several times at school, once for just having a play fight with a friend. The only time it had any effect on me was when I was beaten in front of the class which humiliated me because I couldn't take it. Most of the time when someone was beaten he was looked upon as a hero by the other students.

Detentions took place on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons which we had off for sport. They were only supposed to be an hour long but as they didn't start until 2 o'clock and school finished at 12.45 I don't think it was fair for people who lived quite a distance away and didn't have time to go home for dinner, and so they were stuck around school for ages.

I didn't appreciate the way the school was geared up for people to leave school after they had taken 'A' levels, and those who left after 'O' levels were given next to no help in finding a career. I was just given a couple of leaflets on farming and that was it, then goodbye and good luck.

I remember a time when a boy was paraded around the classrooms for spitting, with the teacher telling us of his punishment (a caning), so as to put us off. A while later a boy brought an air pistol into school and shot someone in the head. We heard this through the grapevine but he was never taken around the classrooms, and nothing was said about it in assembly. I think he was put in detention, and I'm almost certain he wasn't suspended and definitely not expelled, because I spoke to him a short while later.

It is an all-boys' school apart from a few sixth form girls, which unless we were very outgoing and not at all shy, it made it very difficult to get on with the other sex. I wasn't very shy but I still found it difficult to communicate with girls.

The school was quite military and from the fourth year upwards we had to go into one of the cadet forces: the army, navy or air force. I didn't think this was fair if you didn't believe in fighting.

The actual teaching wasn't too bad apart from a few teachers. There was one particular French teacher whose way of teaching was stupid. He would ask a boy a question, and if he didn't know it he wouldn't pass it on to another boy even if he had his hand up; the teacher would keep asking the boy who didn't know it over and over again. He would also make stupid faces and remarks at him, if by the end of the lesson he still didn't know (no-one else would tell him the answer because the lesson would carry on once he knew), the boy would be made to write the answer out 50 times by the next day.

When I was in the first year we had to wear caps which I found very humiliating as we had to wear them out of school, which made us good targets for having the piss taken. If we were caught not wearing a cap, we were put in detention and eventually caned if we carried on doing so.

I didn't like going to school on Saturdays. We had Wednesday afternoons off, but having Saturday school meant that Sunday was the only full day off.

Lessons never bothered me much because if I didn't like a particular subject I would sit at the back and daydream. It meant getting a rollicking either frequently or infrequently, depending on the teacher, for not listening but that didn't bother me.

I don't like education as a whole because I can't take discipline. Education is supposed to make you independent but how the hell does it make you independent if you're being told what to do all the time? I suppose that's fine if you want to join the army when you leave school, but what about those who want to make it on their own? They look for a job for a while and then give up because they can't put themselves across to the interviewer properly because they weren't taught how to, at school.