

THE

LONDON NAUTICAL SCHOOL'S

INHERITANCE

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Picture Post, 4th July 1942

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I visited the London Nautical School in 2003, and they seem to have little knowledge of the History of the schools which were amalgamated to form the London Nautical School of today.

I decided I would endeavour to write about what I have gleaned from my school mates of the Wartime Period, when the Schools took on a nomadic life to find a place of peace and calm to further our education in our chosen career of Seafaring.

I was very fortunate in being forwarded by Ken Read, a copy of a letter published in 'Warship', which had been written by an 'Old Boy' of its EXMOUTH, giving information of its History. Because of time and distance, I have included this letter in its entirety to ensure accuracy of that school's history, but it is without Mr G Lester's or 'Warships' permission. I trust they accept my reason for not doing so.

Much information was given by my old school friends, some of whom were Shipmates, which enriched that friendship.

Another reason of recording those Schooldays, is to acknowledge the dedication, respect and love that was given to us boys during those Wartime Years, by not only the Teachers, but by their families, we were very fortunate, and I feel it was instrumental in forming our characters into strong and better persons.

Bernard O'Sullivan
Shelly Beach,
NSW
Australia.

"In the beginning was the word!"

AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE LONDON NAUTICAL SCHOOL

The Education System has changed a few times since the founding of the London Nautical School during 1946, with the amalgamation of the three LCC Education Department's Nautical Schools:

TS Exmouth, Rotherhithe Nautical School, and The Poplar School of Navigation.

The System in vogue until the advent of the Comprehensive System, was the promotion to secondary education through, The Junior County Exhibition Scholarship.

A brief explanation.

Children were required to attend an ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, between 5 years and 14 years of age.

These schools were either the County Council Schools or Parochial Schools (the latter run either by the Parishes of the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church).

At the age of 11 years, all children sat for the Junior County Exhibition, and depending on their marks, were graded into Central, Secondary or Grammar Schools.

The actual Scholarship was a means tested award, to enable and encourage the children to further their education, without even the poorest of families being overburdened with the expense of losing the income of the bright pupil, so necessary to the larger families of those times.

The Elementary School was good, it gave the children a good grounding in the basic principles of Arithmetic, Reading and Writing. Emphasis was given to neatness, and spelling, with the solid ability to multiplication of simple numbers (2 to 12 Times Tables), all learned by rote. (We pupils of that era can still recite those tables, also challenge the total at the check-out counter should codebars not be used.)

The brightest of the children were directed to Grammar Schools, where, if the pupil continued with good progress would win scholarship into University.

Secondary Schools also had their share of University Scholarship, but many entered the Work Force via Clerical duties, as too were the Central Schools' Scholars who left school at 15, and became junior clerks or shop assistants in Department Stores.

The Elementary Pupils who had not gained Scholarship, would then attend Technical Classes, usually one afternoon a week, which included, Metal and Wood Work for Boys, Domestic Science for Girls. Should any Pupil show a natural aptitude, then at the age of 13, qualify for a Trade Scholarship, which carried the same rewards as the 'Junior County', allowing a chance for the 'late developer'. The successful Pupils would then transfer to Trade Schools, which invariably led to Apprenticeships and eventual qualification through Night School etc for Diplomas such as the 'City and Guilds'.

The unfortunate children who had to leave at aged 14, either became Messenger/Errand Boys, or if they had a 'Good Hand', Office Boys. A much sort after job was the GPO's Telegram Boy.

I am uncertain into what group Exmouth came , but Rotherhithe Nautical School, was classified Secondary, (enrolment age 11/12), while Poplar School of Navigation, was a Trade school, pupils enrolling there aged 13 plus.

There were other Nautical Schools in other cities, ie Trinity House at Kingston-upon-Hull, while there was a Private school, The Boulevard Nautical School in the same city etc.

There were 4 Boarding Schools, the Royal Naval Cadet Ship HMS OSBORNE and the 3 Royal Naval Reserve Cadet Ships, HMS CONWAY, HMS PANGBOURNE and HMS WORCESTER. The latter 3, because of their Boarding Status, earned 12 months remission of Seetime for Merchant Navy Apprentices/Cadets, while the Day Schools received 6 months remission

The RNR schools gained entry into the Royal Navy through the Britannia College Midshipman's Entrance Examination.

I think the foregoing explains the various levels both educationally and socially of pre-sea going Nautical Schools.

The original Nautical School was TS Exmouth, of which I have very little knowledge, but a letter was recently published in the "WARSHIP" from Mr George Lester.

Produced in Italics.

[Dear Sir,

To put the record straight regarding the recent correspondence relating to HMS EXMOUTH at Scapa I can confirm that she was built of steel. To go back in history the London Metropolitan Asylums Board (MAB) used ex-RN sailing vessels as nautical institutions to train boys for sea, many of whom were orphans or in some other form of care. All these MAB ships, later taken over by the London County Council were moored offshore at Grays in Essex. The first ship was GOLIATH which regrettably was lost by fire on the 22nd December 1875. After a short period of time a fully rigged ship HMS EXMOUTH was obtained from the Royal Navy and became the TS EXMOUTH. In the later ensuing years the depreciation of this vessel became most noticeable, the maintenance somewhat costly and never ending. Thus a new vessel was sought which resulted in a steel built vessel on the lines of an East Indiaman being constructed by Harland and Wolf and commissioned in 1905. She took over the moorings at Grays as well as the name of her predecessor.

I joined her as a Cadet in 1939 at the age of thirteen. Due to the proximity of Tilbury Docks and possibility of air raids the whole ships company was evacuated to Burnham on Crouch by the LCC child evacuation programme just prior to the commencement of WW2. After Dunkirk (June 1940) we were re-evacuated to Lydney in Glos. I joined the RN from Lydney as a Boy rating in January 1941.

At the commencement of hostilities the ship became accommodation/depot ship for part of the London Fire Brigade. In late 1941 she was requisitioned by the Royal Navy her fore and mizzen masts removed and the mainmast shortened to form the basis of a lifting derrick and then towed to Scapa to become the depot ship for the local minesweeping flotilla and submarines. As her Royal Naval destroyer namesake had been sunk (21 Jan 1940) it was decided to keep the name HMS EXMOUTH for the requisitioned TS EXMOUTH.

By the end of the war the original TS EXMOUTH company had adopted the title of London Nautical Training School, so when EXMOUTH decommissioned and refurbished to her original status after hostilities, she became the Merchant Navy Officer

cadet Training ship WORCESTER moored at Gravesend in the Thames and in this capacity ended her days broken up
Yours faithfully

George Lester
15 Hampden Crescent
Dagenham
Essex RM10 7HP]

While serving my time in ss FORT MAUREPAS, (1946/47), one of the other apprentices was Peter Elphick, a former Pupil of TS Exmouth. He was junior to me by about two months. He had entered the Merchant Navy directly from TS EXMOUTH, its whereabouts I do not know, but in all probability, 'squashed' into some other school, as we were at the Rotherhithe Nautical School. When the FORT MAUREPAS was returned to the USA in 1947, he and another apprentice were transferred to the HARPALION. I lost touch with him, so am unable to confirm he had continued his seafaring career and passed for Master.

The Rotherhithe Nautical School was founded in 1915, to train boys for a Seagoing Career. A School was built at Rotherhithe New Road, which was convenient to the Surrey Commercial Docks, used for both Ship visits and boat handling and practice.

The Rotherhithe Nautical School stayed at its Rotherhithe location until 1st September, 1939. when all school children were evacuated to the safety of the Country, which in the case of RNS was to Hailsham in Sussex.

Unfortunately, the evacuation prior to the new Term/School year failed to introduce the 1939 intake into the school.

Summer of 1940, brought the Evacuation of Europe at Dunkirk, bringing, the South Coast into the "Front Line" of defence.

Again the school was evacuated, this time to the safety of Wales, and again failed to introduce new boys.

By 1941, it was realised by the School authorities particularly in the case of the Poplar School, whose starting age was 13, was 'running-out' of pupils, and because of heavy casualties sustained by both the Royal Navy and Merchant Navy, the seriousness of the situation, should England still wish to lead the world as a Maritime Nation.

At this stage in the war, many school children had returned to London, and normal schooling had resumed.

School Inspectors toured these schools to recruit suitable pupils for the Nautical Schools, and because of the 'missing years', the age group was extended to include 13 and 14 year old secondary school pupils.

The depleted Rotherhithe Nautical School had been transferred from Hailsham, to Ferryside, Carmarthenshire, a village on the East bank of the River Towy estuary. An ideal spot which allowed the boys first hand knowledge of small fishing boats in a coastal/seaside environment.

With the expected expansion of the school to its pre war numbers of pupils, Ferryside

was considered too small, and it was decided to move the school yet once again during the August 1941 summer break to New Quay, Cardiganshire.

New Quay was a coastal village, basically, with three terraces of houses extending from the central road leading up the hill from the Pier.

The boys were billeted in private homes, while a couple of houses were taken over as Hostels, with 15 to 20 boys in each.

It was an ideal location for a Nautical School, the harbour sheltered small auxiliary fishing boats and moorings for the schools rowing dinghies.

We had yet another advantage, New Quay had one of the greatest concentrations of Master Mariners in the UK, if not the world. We had found a wonderful 'home'

The classes were held in the Memorial Hall (two classes), which also doubled as a Gymnasium, opposite in the Towyn Chapel's Vestry two classes, while the Parish Hall about half a mile along a back lane, had a further two classes.

An abundance of teaching space, which allowed the time table to have two classes in one location, with the Masters switching ends at the mid morning/afternoon recess, giving little interruption to boys' lessons.

The school was allowed to 'settle' in before the new boys started to arrive.

About 60 or more boys were required to make up the numbers, and the intake spread over the 1st Term, (September to December). This was because of the distance to travel, and the limited space on the Railway. It must also be remembered we were minors, and required escorts.

One can imagine the problems encountered with having such an intake of pupils covering such a wide range of age and of course Educational Standards.

So that first term was more or less divided by age groups into two classes to allow the boys to settle into a "Nautical Environment". At the end of that term, the expected replacement number of older pupils had been reached.

The older and therefore more educationally advanced pupils, ie had a sound knowledge of Algebra and Trigonometry, were placed in a class named Nautical Transition (NT).

Whereas Nautical Preparatory (NP), were the younger boys, mainly straight from Elementary schools, who had very little knowledge of Mathematics beyond Long Multiplication/ Division and simple fractions, and were probably the easiest to classify, had to be taught from the very basic principles.

The secondary pupils were a 'mixed bag' who were graded into various academic categories in that first term at New Quay, those of less academic endeavour were placed into N I, while those with greater mathematic ability into NT.

The difference in standards also coincided with the age factor, and allowed the older boys (14 year old) to progress into NT.

In January 1942 when I joined, the school numbers had been increased considerably, and the classes sizes were approximately, N III 20 ; N II 24 ; NT 18; N I 20 ; NP 26 ; a little over 100 boys. It must be remembered, N III was constantly being reduced in size, as the boys reached the age of fifteen and half, they entered the Royal Navy, and for those going to sea in the Merchant Navy the age was 16, which means, at this time, the original Rotherhithe Boys had been reduced to just 44 pupils.

It can be seen that it was no mean feat the School recovered from the years of nil recruitment

[This sudden influx of new boys arriving at the same time as the schools move caused some considerable hard ships for the staff, which included the ordering of School Uniforms, so when the Picture Post (A pictorial Magazine) published an article, June

1942, about the school, it showed only the Senior Boys in Uniform, and very few of the other boys.]

New boys of various ages still arrived at New Quay, until in June 1942, when the school population reached 130 boys.

This 'trickle recruitment' continued, although at the end of 1942, the age of acceptance had stabilised at 11 to 12 year old boys. In August, 1943, Nautical Transition was phased out, with only the 4 classes, NP; N I; N II; and N III, class sizes being increased to about 30 pupils. To maintain these numbers, 'promotions' were inclined to be at the end of each Term, when, the older/'brighter' pupils were upgraded.

Not all boys 'went to sea', some returned to London for various reasons, least of all 'Homesickness', others, sadly failed their Colour Eye Tests.

September 1943, the school rented 3 large, Private Hotels, and when we returned from the long summer holiday, the majority of boys shifted into them. Mr and Mrs Fuest had Brynafor, with 35 boys, Mr and Mrs Stead The Glenn, 30 and Captain and Mrs Harvey, The Compton, another 30 boys, leaving about 25 boys in private billets.

This enabled the school to adopt a Boarding School attitude, with 'Prep' classes at night etc. I think we all benefited from this new approach to education.

The school also took over the Pier Warehouse. The floor on the level with the upper road, became the Nautical room, the floor above fitted-out as a laboratory, while the upper floor, the practical seamanship room, with ropes, canvas etc.

This then meant, the other three Halls became single classrooms.

When the War in Europe ended, we still stayed on in New Quay until the end of the Summer Term, when the School was once again moved, back to London; an expected event, and to ease the burden, no new boys were accepted after the Easter Holidays, 1945.

The school's numbers were greatly decreased, with some pupils not returning, so much so, was reduced to 3 classes, which were allocated to three classrooms at Comber Grove School, Camberwell, and shared with the Primary School's Pupils.

Very little Nautical School equipment was transferred, it being put into storage at the site of the John Rennie School, at Blackfriars. (The site of today's London Nautical School)

The John Rennie School had sustained war damage, but it was quite slight in comparison with other schools, however, it must be understood some priority had been given to Schools, although greatest priority had to be given to housing.

It must be remembered, the Building Trade was not an exempted occupation from National Service, and most of the Tradesmen were still serving with the 'Defence Forces', (as they are known today), many of whom were stationed in Europe and the Far East. Although the Tradesmen were given priority for demobilisation, it was not until the end of 1945 beginning of 1946, that repairs were in full swing.

I have very little recollection of the time the school moved to Blackfriars.

I had completed the curriculum, and given additional mathematics, and was also utilised in taking practical seamanship classes with the juniors, which included boat work on the Surrey Commercial Docks. I was also sent to Blackfriars to set up the Nautical room. My final school reference Letterhead, showed a cancelled New Quay address, under which, the Comber Road School's address was typewritten.

The move was after I had left, so it must have been some time in 1946, that the school moved, and joined with Exmouth to become the London Nautical School.

I believe the Poplar School was not re-opened for pre-sea training, although for some time functioned as centre for revision for Master's and Mates examination, which

eventually split to King Edward VII Nautical for 2nd Mates and Mates Home Trade, (they also had a two year pre-sea school course for Merchant Navy Cadets), and Sir John Cass College for 1st Mates, Master and Extra Master.

HEADMASTERS

I have no knowledge of the original Headmaster, but from two 1938/39 Pupils, the Headmaster, was Captain Harvey, Royal Marines (Rtd).

When he joined the school I do not know, but it could have been either just after WW I, or may be about 1930 when there was a great reduction in the Defence programme which included the numbers of Defence Personnel.

He was Headmaster at Hailsham, but I feel he was 'Mobilised' after Dunkirk, for the Headmaster at Ferryside and first Term at New Quay was Mr Smith.

Mr Frank Joseph Fuest, BSc,(Ldn) became Headmaster January 1942.

It was he who designated the Classes, Nautical Preparatory (NP); Nautical First Year (NI); Nautical Second Year, (N II); Nautical Transition' (NT), Nautical Third Year, (NIII), or the Seagoing Class.

[Mr Fuest was a dedicated Teacher, it was he who founded the 'School Journey Association in 1936, when he approached the Education Authorities with a plan for Chartering a Troop Ship (British India Steam Navigation Co.). NEVASSA.

Such was his power of persuasion, they granted his wish, this enabled about a 1000 school children to take a 14 day cruise to the Norwegian Fjords for just Ten Pounds. Ten Pounds was still a huge some of money in those days, particularly so soon after the 'Depression', but still all berths were filled. It was such a success, that in 1937, they had two cruises. Unfortunately, because of the Nazi threat on the Continent, it was discontinued in 1938]

Mr Fuest, had the distinction of supervising the dramatic change in the school at New Quay, and fought extremely hard to retain it, if not at New Quay, then at some small Coastal Port, and as a Boarding School. Sadly, he had lost his power of persuasion.

Mr Fuest saw the combining of the Schools, and was the First Headmaster of the new, LONDON NAUTICAL SCHOOL, when it arrived at its new home, in the old John Rennie School Building at Blackfriars.

Dedicated to the very last, he suffered a massive heart attack while working in his office at School, and died.

Mr Stead who had been a staunch pillar of strength to Mr Fuest, was promoted to Headmaster.

I think this was early 1955, for it was he whom I visited after passing Masters and completing my first voyage in the Orient Line.

Mr Stead retired at the age of 65, about 1959/60, after having dedicated 40 or more years to the successful training and teaching of many future Mariners.

Mr Stead was relieved by Mr Brand, who I did not meet, sadly two of my friends visited, and were both treated in an off handed manner.

The Teaching Staff at Rotherhithe were long serving.

Mr Stead, joined in 1919/20, after completing his WW I service with the Royal Navy, and appointed as a Mathematics Teacher, teaching both advanced Mathematics and English to N II and N III

A wonderful Teacher. When explaining proof of formula, he would pause at each stage, and question the class for the next step. It kept us on 'our toes' as well as causing us to think ahead and anticipate the next logical progression.

Sadly to-day, logical thinking seems to have been replaced by 'Lateral thought'.

Mr Gasser the Science Teacher joined about this time too, and again after completing WW I Service, in a Yeomanry Regiment. His great subject was the 'Order of Levers', his fond saying was, "Fanny Went to Peckham" Fulcrum, Weight, Power. We joked a lot among ourselves, but when I eventually became involved with many Constructional and stability problems on ships, remembered his simple aide memoire. and they were no longer problems!

Captain Harvey, who had been employed by Hains Steamship Company of St Ives, which included his Apprenticeship, was as may be expected a Cornishman, joined the school after passing his Extra- Master's Examination, in 1925.

We old boys remember him with pleasant and grateful memories, his sonorous voice 'spelling-out' a 'forgotten' navigation definition, while the 'rhythm' was paced with his left hand on our 'thick skull'. So good was this method of teaching, I still remember those exact words 62 years later.

Mr 'DP' Owens MA. When he joined the Staff of RNS I do not know, but I feel it was when the school arrived at New Quay. He was a Welshman, and crippled, requiring the aid of a walking stick. Rumour had it, he had been badly injured playing Rugby. Both the fact he was Welsh and always known by the initials of his first two names, (a ploy to differentiate players in Welsh Rugby teams, adhered to even to today), gave credence to the rumour. He taught Mathematics to the Junior classes, and Applied Mathematics to all classes. While it was senior 'maths' which was in constant use at sea, I found that it was the knowledge of Applied Maths that helped me with practical problems encountered both at sea and during my stevedoring employment. I visited the school in 1956, and walked into his classroom during recess, there he was dressed in his Academic Gown at the Blackboard, erasing the previous lessons chalk with the sleeve of his Gown, confirming to all his 'Bachelor Status'.

(Later I visited Mrs Fuest at her home. She was the Organiser for School Journey Association, with a Staff of four, who worked from her home in South Norwood. carrying on Mr Fuest's original plan, but then, travel included Winter Sports, African Safaris etc

On entering the Sitting Room, there was 'DP' sitting in a 'favourite chair'. I was a bit startled, but Mrs Fuest told me they had 'adopted him' when the school had returned to London, which indicates the kindness of the Fuest Family.)

When I first joined the school, Mr Standen was the PE Master, and took English for the Junior Boys (NP and N I), also taught History and Geography. He was promoted out of the school, and replaced by Mr Payne, who added Mechanical Drawing to the Curriculum. This too stood me in good stead in later years.

When I visited in 1956, Captain Harvey introduced me to his Assistant Nautical Teacher, who I assumed came from TS EXMOUTH. I no longer remember his name, but he was considerably younger than Captain Harvey.

I did not return to the School until 2003, when I found, the John Rennie school had been demolished, and the new school building fronted Stamford Street, which had been built on the site of the old 'Playground'

Bernard O'Sullivan,
Pupil RNS, 14th January, 1942 to 25th January, 1946
Proof Read by Ken Read,
Pupil RNS 1st Term 1941 to 2nd Term 1945.

PICTURE POST

PUBLISHED 4TH JULY 1942

The following, contain 4 pages published in the 4th July, 1942, edition of the Weekly Publication, Picture Post.

This article about the Rotherhithe Nautical School was reproduced in many Magazines Published within the British Commonwealth. Such was its appeal, the school had enquires for recruitment from among others, an Indian Prince. Amazing !

Of course, pupils had to originate from the LCC Education System.

There were two exceptions known to me, George Lockie, a Westminster School Chorister, who was older than most and spent about a year at school. He was billeted, with Mr and Mrs Stead, before they took over The Glenn.

The other was ? Dyson, a local boy, who had attended Aberaron High School. I think, Idris Davies said he was a cousin, He joined in 1944.

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Picture Post

Description of the opposite page.

The School 'Parades' along the top level of the Pier, led by the School Captain, Frank Grayley, with the Vice Captain, Eddie Gilvray on the right flank.

Identified Boys:

Rank	Right hand file.	Centre File	Left hand file.
Front	Danny Moore	Don Kenyon	Pat Driscoll
2nd	?	'Paddy' Gavin	Jimmy Green
3rd	Ken Read	Bernie O'Sullivan	Charles Bright
4th	'DB' Stuart	Tom Pike	Bill Ball
5th	?	?	Andy Papani (Payne)
6th	Bob Ellingham	?	Stan Goodridge
7th	John Sebastian	Joe Isaacs	?

The three adults standing at the head of the pier are, Mr Fuest, Captain Harvey and the taller of the three, Mr Stead

The Pier Warehouse: The level on the ramp was still used by the Fishermen, Windows were knocked into the walls of the levels above, and converted into classrooms; the upper level of the Pier was the Nautical Room, the level above, (Marked by the boarded window), became the laboratory, while the upper level, ('blackened' window), the Practical Seamanship Room.

Nowadays, it Houses the Sailing Club.



The Love of the Sea Which Has Never Died Out of British Life: Nautical Schoolboys at New Quay
Boys of the Rotherhithe Nautical School march down to their boats. They have been evacuated to New Quay, Cardiganshire, by the L.C.C. They are training to enter the Royal Navy or the Mercantile Marine when they are 16½. Already they are at home on the sea and in it.

THE BASIS OF BRITISH SEA-POWER

Shipping losses focus our attention on the one battle on which all others is based—the battle of the sea. In spite of weighty losses, in spite of hardships that can never be told, the men to man our Navy and merchant fleet are never wanting.

WE are an island race, and the sea calls irresistibly to the youth of our country. Tough boys, imaginative boys, good boys, bad boys, still feel an urge to run away from home and face hardship and death in a private battle with the sea, a battle which will absorb their energies for a whole lifetime.

This enthusiasm forms a common link between the admiral and the deck boy. It makes for the eager outlook and practical skill which characterise the seafaring man, enables the Navy generally to find the right man for any job, and persuades the armchair critic to relax and "leave it to the marines."

To-day, the latest registration of youth has shown that so many boys still want to go to sea that the Sea Cadet Corps—an organisation formed by the Navy League in 1910 to teach boys the elements of seamanship in their spare time—has had to treble its membership, and provide for 50,000 cadets to form more than 400 units.

These boys will be spare-time sailors. There are many more who decide every year to make the sea their profession. They join the nautical schools and training ships, and they are the regular raw material for the Royal Navy and the Mercantile Marine.

Nautical training is as old as education itself. Older. It goes back to Drake's time, when boys were running away to sea to learn their job by first-hand experience. Finally they overran the ships to such an extent that it became necessary to collect them together for training in groups.

Dockyard schools were founded in 1843. Any boy who could pass the stiff qualifying examination could enter, any who survived the course could put in for a cadetship in naval construction. Any dockyard apprentice with the ability can become engineer-in-chief to the Royal Navy. But most of the modern nautical schools and training ships were started in or just after the last war, when once again we realised with a shock how well it pays us to encourage boys to man our ships.

One such school was founded in 1915 in Rotherhithe by the London County Council. It takes boys volunteering from London elementary schools. To-day the school is 130 strong. It admits about 30-40 boys each year and trains them, under the Education Act of 1902, entirely free of charge.

The boys are between the ages of 12½ and 17. They must be recommended by their headmaster, and approved in interview with the head of the nautical school. They must also pass a medical examination. Parents sign a consent form and undertake to keep their boy in the school for at least three years, though they cannot be compelled to do so. Similarly, once having admitted a boy, the school cannot expel him, though a boy who failed to make the grade would hardly want to stay.

Those boys who wish to go to sea may pass as apprentices into the Mercantile Marine. They go into the service of well-known shipping companies at 16 or 16½ on the school's recommendation, and without an entrance fee. When they go to

Continued overleaf



Boat Pulling: An Essential Part of a Sailor's Training

The School owns three boats. Boys row regularly under direction of a cox. To-day they row for exercise and as part of their craft. One day life itself may depend upon their rowing.

sea they have a knowledge of much of the theoretical work needed for their Second Mate's Certificate, which they take after four years' service. Over 200 boys have gone as apprentices since the school started, and many of these are now masters of ships.

Others pass into the Royal Navy as boy seamen and go to further training depots at about 16½. Since 1918 over 200 boys have entered the Navy in this way and several have gained commissioned rank. Three were in the *Ajax* in the River Plate battle. Not all of those who choose the Navy choose it out of preference. Many choose it through fear of the shipping slumps and the difficulty of getting jobs. Their one horror is the thought of being grounded after so much effort and hard work. Boys going to shipping companies still have no peacetime guarantee of employment.

Under the London evacuation scheme, this school of boys accustomed to smoke and trains and inadequate back yards has been moved to New Quay, in Cardiganshire, North Wales.

The boys are training in a small town steeped in maritime traditions. A port town which was a flourishing ship-building centre in the nineteenth century, and where the slip-way, sail factories and warehouses still stand in evidence of past glories. Most of the menfolk are away at sea now, and many of the boys are billeted with retired masters who sometimes lecture the school on currents, winds and cargoes from their fund of past experience.

Here, though they cannot visit the big ships whose inspection was part of their training in the London dock area, they have ideal conditions for boat-pulling, swimming, fishing, as well as an ideal background for taking in the legends of practical heroism which are part of a seaman's natural equipment. It is a town where men are expected to go to sea.

The school's practical work includes training in



They Play Cricket On The Sand

They are fit and healthy. Their life trains them to be active and energetic. Even cricket on the sands is played with excitement.

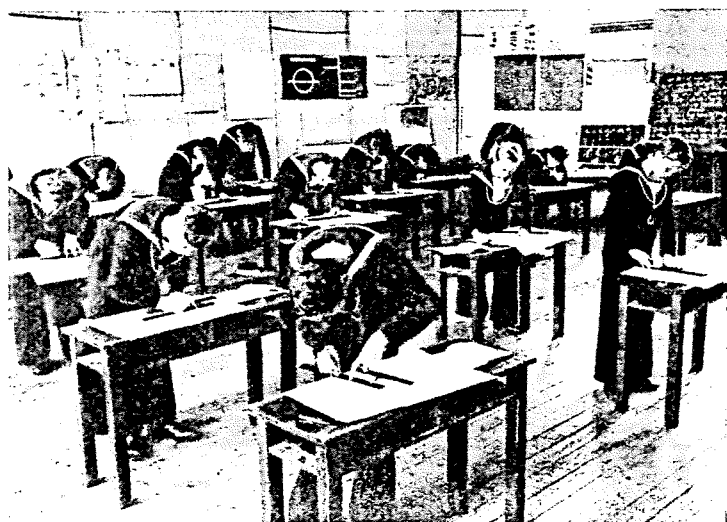


Chart Work: The Navy Always Stands To Its Work

In the classroom the boys learn to set an imaginary course; chart a ship on a coastal voyage. Behind on the walls hang diagrams of ships' cruises, charts, flags.



They Practise Signalling On The Rocks

Much of their signalling practice the boys do in their spare time. They learn to semaphore 12-15 words a minute; do 10 words a minute in morse.

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Top Picture.

Cox'n of the Leading Boat. Ted Mason

Cox'n of the second boat, Herbert Fuller.

The Cricketers
Left to Right.

? Bliss, (hands on hips), Ron Kerley, Bat, Peter Stockwell Wicket Keeper
Ted Mason (All from Nautical Transition).

Chart work. Nautical III,

Signallers: Sender ? Reader, George Tarling Writer, Herbert Fuller

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Wire Splicing.

Splicer Eddie Gilvray, assisted by Frank Grayley.

Helping the local Seamen. George Holeyman

Learning the Theory of Navigation.

Captain Harvey, Eddie Gilvray and 'Ginger' Vaughan.

The Way of Drake and Nelson.

Standing; Bernard O'Sullivan,
sitting on rail; George Tarling , George Tiinker and 'One Other'



Practical Seamanship—Wire Splicing
Wire-splicing, rope-splicing, every detail of their calling is trained into them.

life-saving with the local coastguard, and the handling of a variety of local ships whose owners often take the boys to sea as crew. In addition, they have a complete theoretical training. There are seven men in the teaching staff, all nautical specialists in their subjects, and some of them retired naval men.

Mathematics goes up to and includes spherical trigonometry. Science includes meteorology, the internal combustion engine and a thorough study of the barometer. Their study of the English language has a bias towards the sea, nautical literature, sea poetry. History concentrates particularly on naval battles. In addition the boys learn ship construction and design, both past and present. They learn about the materials used, about methods of riveting and welding, about shipyard technicalities.

One advantage of evacuation is that the boys can meet in their spare time and develop a far greater corporate spirit than was possible in London. They work garden plots, for which they pay 6d. a year and whose produce they sell locally. "Use the spade and spare the sailor" in practice. They have mixed dances with the local girls every Saturday, because social graces are an indispensable part of a sailor's training. Similarly they have clubs for table tennis, whist, boxing and community singing. They practise life-saving, cricket, football, first aid and much signalling in their spare time. (Continued overleaf)



Helping the Local Seamen: At Sea on a Sailing Auxiliary
Boys often get a chance to help the local sailors in their spare time. Captain Otway Jones, who owns this auxiliary, seldom puts to sea without George to help with the sails.



They Learn The Theory of Navigation
Captain Harvey, in charge of nautical instruction, shows two boys how to follow their course on the school blue and yellow globe.



The Way of Drake and Nelson
Four of the junior boys look out across the harbour which has built and repaired ships; stored cargoes; sent her men to sea in every British war.



1 THE SEA RESCUE THAT ONE DAY MAY BE REAL:
Boys on the spar are shipwrecked. Those in the boat have fired them a rope on a rocket, now the breeches buoy is sent across.



2 The Rescuing Buoy Reaches the Wreck
The first shipwrecked sailor climbs in to the breeches buoy, so called because it has supports or "breeches" for the legs.



3 Half-Way to Safety
The sailor in the buoy is being hauled to the rescuing ship; then the other boy will be saved.



4 Rescued, Naval Fashion
The sailor scrambles aboard the rescuing ship. Life-saving by breeches buoy is a routine naval method of saving life in a rough sea.

The school is divided into four watches, on the lines of 'houses', each with a petty officer and leading seaman. The head boy is chief petty officer, and all discipline is maintained by the boys themselves.

Now the school staff find the local boys are envious and want a nautical training too, so they are starting a local company of Sea Cadets which

the London boys will also join. They will help the new recruits, and for them this extra training will take the place of homework.

This is their connection with the public. Their connection with the Marine is by ship adoption. They correspond with certain ships' crews; hear about their cargoes and where they were shipped; read reports of engine trouble and why it de-

veloped; currents encountered and winds that sprang up. This scheme forms a realistic part of their training.

These are just some of the hundreds of boys who will be our seamen of to-morrow, the boys who by manning the new ships will carry on the old traditions of the men who are giving their lives to-day in this sea-faring nation's battle for freedom.

Facing page 10
of the

Picture Post

The names have 'gone' with the past, and although these photographs have been shown to 14 old boys, identity has only, 'sort of' confirmed those of mine.

OLD BOYS

NAME	SCHOOL	YEAR JOINED	REMARKS
Arnott Norman	RNS NQ	1942	Passed Master FG 1956
Bailey Arthur	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1953. I met Arthur in Naples 1946, while he was App. In Reardon Smith's ORIENT CITY.
Ball William (Bill)	RNS NQ	1941	Did not complete, left 1943
Bazill George	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1954. Later George Passed Extra Masters Examination. He retired to Devon.
Beadle N.C	RNS	1930's	Passed Master FG 1947
Blender Paul	RNS NQ	1942	Passed Master FG 1953. Retired in Canada
Blackwell 'Loffy'	RNS	1939	Served in RN. Heard he died 2003
Bliss	RNS NQ	1941	To RN ?
Bright Charles	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1957. Charles joined Eagle Oil 1946
Carter W.J.	RNS	1938	Passed Master FG 1953. He left school in 1941, and ship sunk, taken POW, which explains delay in obtaining Master's Certificate.
Caulfield G.R.	RNS/LNS	1943	Passed Master FG 1956
Cleaves David	RNS	?	This name was given by another old boy, as that of the person, who had been Midshipman Blue Funnel Line, and awarded the George Medal, and mentioned in connection with the founding of the Outward Bound School.
Davies Idris 'Dago'	RNS NQ	1941	Retired from RN as CPO PTI . Became a Maths Teacher at a Private School. Retired to Fareham

Dobinson Owen D.E.	RNS	1938	Passed Master's FG 1951
Dow Norman	RNS	1939	Served in RN
Doyle Desmond	RNS	1938	Passed Master FG 1951. Now living in Bognor.
Driscoll Pat	RNS NQ	1942	Did not complete left August 1942.
Duhig Joe	LNS	1950	Served his time with J & C Harrison. No news since
Ellingham Bob	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1954 Served in P&O Passenger Division. Captain of CANBERRA, SUN PRINCESS, PACIFIC PRINCESS and UGANDA. Retired to Cuffley.
English John	RNS	1938	Passed Master FG 1950. John was with P&O Orient Line 'Swallowed the Anchor' when he was Chief Officer, but returned to the sea. Retired as Captain of Gulf Line. Now living in Hereford.
Elphick Peter	EXMOUTH	1942	Served Apprenticeship with J&C Harrison. Shipmate O'Sullivan. Lost touch, he was 'bright' bloke and would have passed Master's, unfortunately we have no record.
Fuller Herbert	RNS	1939	Left 1942. Passed Master's FG 1953
Gavin Paddy	RNS NQ	1942	Joined MN 1945, no news since
Gilvray 'Eddie'	RNS	1939	Joined RN 1942, no news since
Goatley Reg	RNS	1939	Passed Master FG 1955.
Goodridge Charles	LNS	1946	JP. PhD. MSc. BA. Failed eyesight, followed Teaching career. He joined older Brother, Stan to Perth, Australia. Residing East Fremantle.

Goodridge Stan	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1955. Left Blue Funnel, joined Aust. National Line 1957, Asst. Marine Sup't, Terminal Sup't Port Kembla, but returned to sea. Retired as Captain of 150,000 ton Bulk Ship.
Grayley Frank	RNS	1939	RN. At 'D' Day landings. His ship was sunk, and Frank adrift in oil fuel covered sea, which he both inhaled and ingested. Frank visited the school about July, 1944. a very sick man (18). He died shortly after. Both Fank's Father and Brother served in the RN, sadly, they too were lost.
Hagreen Leslie	LNS	1947	Passed Master FG 1959. Served his time with J&C Harrison. was a Cadet in HARPATHIAN (the school's adopted Ship) Duhig and Harper, the 3rd Mate O'Sullivan Les after passing 2nd Mate's, sailed with O'Sullivan in HARPALYCUS 1953/54.
Harper David	LNS	1947	Passed Master FG 1960. Served time in J&C Harrison
Harrison Ken.	RNS/LNS	1943	Met in Rotterdam 1954, he was uncertificated 3rd Mate of Eagle Oil Tanker
Hogarth D	RNS	1938	Passed Master FG. He was at school with Doyle, English and Reeve.
Hollamby	RNS	1930s	Passed Master FG 1951
Holeyman George	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1952. Left 1943, George married Jill Thomas, and now they are retired in New Quay.
Holman George	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1953
Irons A	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1953
Isacacs Joe	RNS NQ	1941	Joined RN 1944/45, Radar Plotting, Commissioned
Kenyon Don	RNS NQ	1942	Don fell from cliff at Black Rock and died later in Aberaeron Hospital. His remains are buried in NQ Cemetery.
Kenyon Len	RNS NQ	1943	Don's younger brother, joined RN 1945

Kerley Ron	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG. Ron 1951, he was one of the original Nautical Transition Boys. Met him at Cass's 1952, when Ellingham and I were up for 1st Mates. We had both passed, but still hanging around for Christmas which required us to 'sign on' each day at Cass's. Passed Master FG 1955
Lawrence John	RNS NQ	1942	
Lawrence Len	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1952. Len Married Olga Richards soon afterwards. Len originally sailed with Palm Line, but then joined Gulf Shipping Line where he was Captain. Gradually, the British Officers were being replaced by Arabs. One day when approaching Dungeness, Len walked on the Bridge to find the OOW deeply immersed in prayer. After reporting the incident, he was informed, 'He did not understand. It was then Len decided to retire to New Quay. Sadly, he lost Olga to Cancer Feb 2003, and when I visited him Sept.03, he was not in the best of health. Joined RN 1941. It he who wrote the letter to the Editor of Warship Magazine, and which I have reproduced as part of the 'Oral' History of the London Nautical School. Joined the RN 1945 In Radar Plotting, served 12 years. He now has a thriving business, supplying bearings and transmission products, which is mainly run by his twin sons. He started the business wife, but sadly Doreen died February '03. after 50 years of marriage. Living in Grays Passed Master FG 1953. Saw Paddy in Hull when he was Chief Officer of BALTIC EXPORTER. He informed me was now a member of the 'Magic Circle', the Magician's Assoc. Obviously, still up to old tricks. Passed Master FG 1956. Geoff served his time with J&C Harrison. We met in Hull and had a couple of runs ashore. RN Telegraphist, served in BELLONA with Charles Reeve
Lester G.	EXMOUTH	1939	
Lilley John	RNS NQ	1942	
McGrath John	RNS NQ	1943	
Marsh Geoffrey	RNS/LNS	1943	
Mason Ted	RNS NQ	1941	

Martin S.S.	RNS	1930s	Passed Master FG 1947
Meek Les	RNS NQ	1941	Joined RN. Telegraphist with Ted Mason, also in BELLONA. Last heard, he had been CPO/Tel in Hong Kong.
Merrick J.T.	LNS	1946	Served his time with J&C Harrison in Harborton when she struck a mine in the Med. in 1950/1. Sailed in two ships with O'Sullivan.
Moore Danny	RNS	1942	Joined RN.
Nosworthy Fred	RNS NQ	1943	Passed Master FG Fred retired as Captain of an Oil Tanker running between Persian Gulf and Australia. Now living in Melbourne Vic. At one stage, Fred had a shore job as a Radio Announcer on a Sydney Radio Station.
Nosworthy R.W.	LNS	1946	Passed Master FG 1957. Fred's younger brother
O'Sullivan Bernard	RNS NQ	1942	Passed Master FG 1955. App. to 2nd Mate (9 years) with J&C Harrison. On passing for Master, followed Bob Ellingham into Orient Line. First ship ORONTES, as Jun.3rd Off. Junior OOW to John English, who was Sen 2nd Off. Joined RNR. P/A/Lieut. 6 months of Probationary courses in 1956. Met George Swan, who was PO GI at Chatham, when doing the Gunnery Course. Met no other old boys during my other courses. Obtained my Watching Keeping Certificate in VENUS, a Type 15 (Mod), Frigate a unit with the Dartmouth Training Squadron. Left the OL to immigrate and marry my Assie wife in 1961. Joined the Aust.Nat.Line. as 3rd Mate. met Stan Goodridge, who was Ch.Off. in LAKE EYRE. Transferred to RANR (Seagoing). Served in ANZAC and SUPPLY. 1966, discharged medically unfit (Hearing Impaired). 1967 Swallowed anchor. Stevedoring for 5 years, when invited to join ANL's Cargo Terminal Staff. Cargo/Planning Supt., Terminal Supt, Sydney, finally Coastal Supt. and retiring at 58 in 1988.

Payne (Papani) Andrew	RNS NQ	1941	Over the years, visited NQ 6 times, once with all my family. In contact with 11 old boys, all of whom I have visited. Those resident in UK. In 2003. This 'record of boys' is a result of their help etc. Andy left in 1944, served his time with Blue Star, and was actually serving as 2nd Officer (1st Mates), when his wife died. Andy went ashore to bring up his two children. He lived in Llanarth. After the children left home he bred and successfully 'showed' German Shepherds. He died 1998. Always known as 'Titch' so afraid I can't remember his Christian name. Joined RN in Communication Branch. While serving in CROSSBOW and on A/S exercises in the Caribbean, a 1 pound scare charge was used to communicate with the exercising submarine, (usually for the 'Sub', to show its position by firing a smoke candle from a forward torpedo tube), unfortunately it fell inboard on to the deck below, 'Titch', who was nearby, picked it up to throw overboard, but sadly it 'blew-up' and he lost both his hands.
Peters ('Titch') ?	RNS NQ	1943	He joined the Orient Line as a Cadet Purser. I sailed with him in ORCADES in 1960 when he was Asst. Purser. He was in the RNR and Transferred to RANR. I last heard of him in the early 70's, when he was a Lt.Cdr. RANR (S&S). Joined RN 1945, retired 22 years later as Chief Yeoman of Signals. Migrated to Fremantle, Australia. Now living in Herne Hill, on 15 acres of land. He was very active with the Australian Branch of the 'Old Submariners Association' I have visited him twice.
Putnam ?	LNS	1952	Left in 1942 to join RN. Telegraphist in BELLONA with other OB's. Made 3 return voyages to Murmansk. Served 12 years. When he left and became a Chartered Surveyor. Played Rugby until the ripe old age of 71. I saw Charles in
Read Ken	RNS NQ	1941	
Reeve Charles	RNS	1939	

Robertson J	RNS NQ	1941	2003, he still looked fit enough to play. His face seems to have missed to usual expected hammering! Passed Master FG 1953. Another NT Intake.
Roe JS	RNS	1930's	Passed Master FG 1949
Sebastian John	RNS NQ	1943	Joined RN ? (See Picture Post)
Shelton Archie	RNS NQ	1942	Passed Master FG 1954. I met Archie when he was up for 2nd Mates. At the time he seemed more interested in playing Rugby for Blackheath. Probably realised 'ship's tucker' better than 'Battered' body.
Smith John 'Jumbo'	RNS NQ	1941	Joined RN and served full term. retiring as Fleet Warrant Officer (RP). 'Jumbo' with a Civilian 'Simulator Programme' Planning company before retiring. Lives Southgate, Crawley, West Sussex. Passed Master FG 1945
Starr Gabriell J	RNS	1930s	
Stewart 'Dun Brown'	RNS NQ	1941	In Picture Post. Did not complete
Stewart Eric	RNS NQ	1943	Passed Master FG 1953. Up for 2nd Mates together in 1949. George Tinker informed me he was, Harbour Master North Tasmanian Ports, based in Launceston.
Streeter Gordon	RNS NQ	1943	Passed Master FG 1961 Probably the last ex NQ Old Boy to pass for Master.
Stringfellow John	RNS NQ	1944	Left from LNS. Passed Master FG 1957. I think he joined Orient Line for a couple of voyages. We did not meet.
Swan George	RNS NQ	1942	RN. I met Geoge in Chatham Gunnery School, he was PO GI. He had completed all examinations, and was waiting on the Seniority List for Promotion to Chief GI.
Tattoo Denis	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1955 (Nautical 1 Intake).

Name	RNS	Year	Notes
Tinker George	RNS NQ	1941	Joined the RN from Comber Grove School. Completed his RN Service as Chief Coxswain Submarines, and Ch Cox'n 'Blockhouse'. He migrated with his family to Australia. Passed Master (Coastal), and applied for tug Master, North Tasmanian Ports. (Interviewed by Eric Stewart). He successfully applied for the position of Mate/Relieving Master of the Wyalla SA tugs. He retired to Victor Harbour and suffered illnesses, cancer, leukaemia, heart problems. I heard of him through the Aust branch of the GANGES Assn. In 2001, I went by train to Perth, where 'Dago' was visiting Ken Read, and broke my journey at Adelaide. I visited George in Hospital. We had a good old chat about NQ and the school. I was able to bring him up-to-date. He died 2 months later Passed Master FG 1945
Townsley J	RNS	1930s	
Townsley W	RNS	1930s	Passed Master FG 1946
Thompson Ernie	RNS NQ	1941	Passed Master FG 1953 (Nautical 1 intake)
Vaughan 'Ginger'	RNS	1938/9	Left 1942 to RN?
Wailes Peter	RNS NQ	1942	Joined RN Communications Branch, Commissioned and retired as a Lieutenant Commander. His older brother Edward joined MN in 1944. No news. passed Master FG 1950
Wheatley	RNS	1930s	
Ward G, (Geoff?)	RNS	?	Joined the RN, visited New Quay in 2003/4. Contacted Mrs Gladwin (ex Liverpool Evacuee) who then gave the info to Ken Read with whom she corresponds. Passed Master FG 1953. Like Carter was a POW, which delayed his career advancement.
Ward P H	RNS	1938	

Rotherhithe Nautical School Reminiscences

By **Barnie O'Sullivan**

February, 1995

Rotherhithe Nautical School Crew 1942



BRYNARFOR -September 1943.

Back L - R : Brandon, Gavin, O'Sullivan, Goodridge, Nosworthy, Stevens, Streeter, Dyer, Lilley, Krebs (nephew of General Krebs, Wehrmacht).

Centre Standing: Oliver, Townsend, Elliott, Pinder, Allen, Potts, Legge, Lewis, Corcran.

Sitting : G.Smith, J. Smith, Stevenson, Mr & Mrs F J Fuest, Miss Brookes, Maggie Fuest, Burt.

Front Sitting: Worthington, Beasley (?), Harrison, Snooks, Grant, Bright.

In February 1995 **Barnie O'Sullivan**, Master Mariner recently retired, former student of Rotherhithe Nautical School, seaman officer with Harrisons, The Orient Line, Royal Australian Naval Reserve and the Australian National Line both at sea and ashore, with some time on his hands for reflection, realised the London Nautical School was celebrating its 50th anniversary.

The London Nautical School formed in 1945 to train boys for service in the British Merchant Navy had its beginnings in the Rotherhithe Nautical School which itself

had been formed in 1915.

Barnie was enrolled in the Rotherhithe Nautical School in 1942 aged 12, when it was evacuated to New Quay, Cardiganshire in far south west Wales, to escape the blitz - just as well because the school building didn't.

Barnie sat at an old typewriter at home and wrote to the Headmaster of the London Nautical School enclosing several pages of his reminiscences of times at New Quay in 1942 commenting that his observations might be interesting in the school's 50th anniversary

year.

This is a copy of **Barnie's** account, edited slightly to make some seafarer talk more comprehensible to non-seafarers, has been put together by friends for fun and **Barnie's** amusement.

Barnie with wife **Pam**, now retired to Shelley Beach on the New South Wales Central Coast is found dispensing his usual warm hospitality, wicked wit, tending his garden and enjoying his retirement, his children and grandchildren. A major interest is helping hearing-impaired people to adjust to their condition.

inside...

Arrival at New Quay

Fishing and farming

Practical experience

Off to sea in a liberty ship

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Arrival at New Quay

I arrived at New Quay, Cardiganshire in a Western Welsh Bus, at approximately 9pm on 14th January 1942 with three other boys, Pat Driscoll and Berry, with whom I had attended Corpus Christi School, Brixton Hill and Sidney Dossiter who was I believe, an orphan and a ward of the local Council. I was aged 12 years.

We were met by Mr F J Fuest, the Headmaster and Mr Rees, a local Councillor, who owned the General Store at the top of Hill Street. I was billeted at No.3 Park Street, with Rhys and Mrs Williams, who had two children, Sally and Ieuan, who was my age. The house was one of a terrace and illuminated with oil lamps. After a short night, I attended my first lesson at the Memorial Hall. 'Navigation' by Captain H B Harvey, who asked "What is a Great Circle?" I can't recall my reaction, but I do remember his. He gave me the definition in a sonorous, sing-song manner, keeping time with his hand on the back of my head. When he had finished he asked "Now what is it, Muggins?" I could only reply "I don't know sir!" The dulcet tones turned to a great roar "You don't know?! Well write it out 25 times and bring it to me tomorrow morning."

By this time the suppressed giggles of my new class mates had changed to laughter, and it was either Joe Isaacs or his desk mate Ken Read, who then sang out "He's a 'Newg' sir, only joined today." The feigned anger quickly left HBH's face and he said more gently "Never mind then, write it out 25 times and all the other definitions too and you'll soon learn them." I did and can still remember them, as did all the other boys I am sure, for all of us carried the sobriquet "Muggins" at one time or another and felt that rhythmic tap echoing through our skulls.

After school I joined the hooligan fringe of NP (Nautical Preparatory) at the *Quarry*, the Pencraig end of Rock Street, sliding down the shaley, slate slope on corrugated iron sheets, bent up at the front. As good as any tobogganing I have ever experienced. Within a couple of weeks I had ripped the arse out of both pairs of my shorts a half



The O'Sullivans (Snr) and two of their children Bernard (Barnie) and Lilly. Barnie is in navy top and bell bottoms carefully ironed in accordance with naval tradition with 7 creases to represent the 7 seas.

dozen times. Poor Mrs Williams patched them a few times before her husband Rhys read me the riot act. Rhys was an imposing giant of over 6 feet tall and almost as wide.

"Settling in with Rhys and Mrs Williams"

When Spring came we helped to launch the fishing boats down the old slip, using rollers and rope tackles. Rhys's boat "Salian" AB 4, had green topsides and black bottom. Another was the grey "Anita" while Gaff Williams, the coxswain of the RNLI lifeboat, had another. These were all sailing auxiliaries.

The inshore fishing season started with trolling for pollock and bass, a good catch was a dozen or so. June, I think, was the start of the mackerel run, when the catches were counted in dozens and as the season progressed the catch increased to the day when "Salian" brought in 110 dozen, a record.

I went out a few times with Rhys and was soon made aware I was seasick prone. Rhys didn't mind because he said I attracted the fish and thus saved time looking for them. Of course, when we found them, or they found us, it was all go, hauling on the lines weighted with 7 lb leads and of course the weight of the fish. This quickly took my mind off *mal de mer*, the aches quickly shifting from stomach to arms and shoulders!

On the return trip we would spend the time threading rope yarns though the mouth and gills of the fish, making up two dozen and one dozen lots. On returning to the pier, I would be sent off with the freshest fish (the last ones caught) to special customers. One was Captain Patrick, who lived in a house with a signal red door, somewhere between the "Red Lion" and "The Commercial". Mrs Patrick was a delightful lady and would always reward me with tuppence. Having not known either of my grandmothers, I was hitherto unaware such lovely persons existed. Looking back now, she filled the bill nicely.

At long last I went home to London for a short break of 2 weeks. Before leaving, Mrs Williams gave me a large parcel for my mother, containing 18 mackerel cleaned and individually wrapped in fresh cabbage leaves. They survived the 12 hour journey and were enjoyed by my family the next day - my father declaring they were nicest mackerel he had ever tasted!

The second fortnight of the holidays I attended a Farming Camp, run by the Stead and Harvey families. The Camp was an old anti-aircraft site, overlooking an airfield, where Whitley bombers were practicing picking up gliders.

Starting at 7 we had breakfast, after which, taking a sandwich lunch, we walked to our allocated farms, there performing various tasks until the dew had dried from the wheat. Then, following the mechanical reaper and binder, we stooked the sheaves. It was not all hard work though, when the standing wheat was finally reduced to a



The hard at New Quay

Farming and Fishing!

a narrow strip and the trapped rabbits mustered enough courage to escape, we gave chase; any rabbits caught being quickly despatched.

At the end of the day we returned to the camp, carrying our share of the rabbits. Mr Stead cleaned and skinned them and Mrs Stead and Mrs Harvey transformed them into rabbit pie, the like of which I have never tasted since. We were encouraged to "Oliver Twist" and ask for more which was marvelous for hungry young appetites. I enjoyed myself so much at this camp, that I went on to other Farming Camps - Swindon in 1943 and Shrewsbury in 1944..

On returning to New Quay in September 1942, the fish in the Bay was whiting again. Hand lines were used, but this time the boats were anchored and the catch was considerably smaller. In October and November the herrings ran, these were caught in lay or gill nets, moored below the cliffs between the Royal National Lifeboat Institute slip and Traeth Gwyn. Rhys again invited me to join him. One night, a Ministry of Information Film was to be shown at the Memorial Hall, which I was breaking my neck to see, but Rhys said "What do you want to see that stupid film for?

Come fishing with me." Being weak, I went fishing!

Rhys had a dinky named "Mabel" which we sculled to the net about an hour after the start of the floodtide. Rhys gave me the oar then went to the bow, hauled in the net and removed the fish caught by their gills. The net was about 100, maybe 200 feet long and we went up and down the net, pausing a while at each end. By the time we had filled the boat, about 3 to 4 hours later, the freeboard was barely 6 inches. Ignoring the strictures of Samuel Plimsoll on ships' load lines and sea worthiness, I sculled back to the Pier about 2 miles away. Even then I was barely warm. We landed and carried the fish up to the pier shed. On one occasion, carrying a couple of dozen fish each we went to the back door of the Commercial Hotel, the licensee a Londoner nearly had a fit when I walked in with Rhys, but he talked him into giving me a half pint serve of toddy. On the fire was a large cast iron pot, with a simmering mixture of beer and ginger, not ginger beer. I slowly sipped my half pint and by the end, I was as warm as toast, and enjoying a wonderful glow. A great miracle

I felt, as I was almost a block of ice before the first sip.

During the Summer of 1942, the school was visited by a reporter and photographer from Picture Post, a popular magazine before television, to write an article about the School. This was published, complete with photographs, after the holidays, it was about 4 or 5 pages and was evidently republished around the world, including The Times of India. We certainly did the rounds.

Partly because of all this publicity, some New Quay people became worried, claiming the area had now become a military target. To give partial credence to this fear, a string of bombs, reportedly 4 or 5 and supposedly enemy, was dropped on a farm above Traeth Gwyn, near the site of the present caravan park, killing a cow!

In the spring of 1943 I left the Williams and went briefly to Brynteg, an annexe to The Manse hostel. We slept at Brynteg and had all meals at The Manse, but after the summer holidays these hostels were closed and we transferred, with other boys from private billets, to Brynafor, The Glen, or The Glyn, and Compton House, which

were run by Mr & Mrs Fuest, Mr & Mrs Stead and Captain & Mrs Harvey respectively.

There were 30 boys at Brynfor and Mrs Fuest was assisted by Miss Brooks, Mrs Jones and an elderly woman and her daughter. The boys were under constant supervision of the teachers. Formal classwork finished at 4 pm, tea was at 4.30, prep 5 to 7 and supper 7 pm, after which boys could do as they wished, go for walks or play games in the Common Room. Those requiring a quieter area, returned to the Dining Room to study, read or write home, such letters usually starting "Dear Mum, Please send me....."

Being one of the few R.C.'s, as opposed to C of E's, I attended Mass at the Parish Hall conducted by Carmelite Priests, who drove down from Aberystwyth each Sunday. Then, being free from all obligations we were rostered to pump the C of E church organ for Mr Fuest the organist. Sunday afternoons with little to amuse us, most of us attended Sunday School, led by the Rector, Mr Edwards, a truly wonderful person, for whom we all had the greatest respect and affection. In the evening we went to Community Hymn singing at church, again Mr Fuest at the organ and a Holy Roman pumping, quite often me. If you can't beat 'em, join 'em. In those days, one needed permission to participate in other church services. When I asked the Carmelite priest about joining in the C of E hymn singing he said, "OK", so I joined them and was excused pumping from then on!

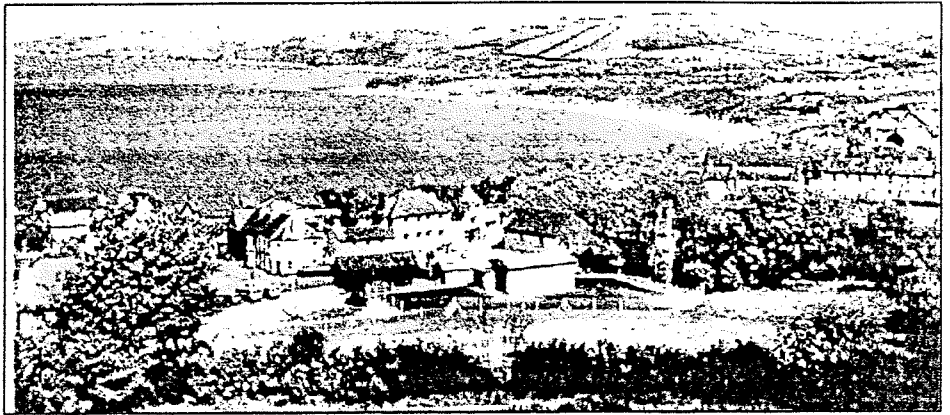
Saturday night was Dance Night. Mr Fuest bashed out tunes on the piano, an eternal fag dangling from his mouth, the ash always staying attached until the cigarette became too short for comfort, when it was removed and used to light the next fag. Jumbo Smith often pounded the bass drum, to the beat of the dance, and Stan Goodridge strummed a guitar-banjo. The local girls joined the fun, trying hard to teach us boys to quickstep, foxtrot and waltz. The girl who worked hardest on me was Madeleine Parry, why I don't know, but she did. Possibly she took pity on me because I was the most "kipperfooted" oaf there and I represented her biggest challenge. Maggie, wherever you are, you succeeded!

Eventually I could swoop, sweep, swish and fishtail around the dance floor with the best of them. Thank you, Maggie!

I took over newspaper rounds from Moggy Morgan. That day's Western Mail and the previous day's London Newspapers arrived at the Newsagent by the morning bus. At lunch time I

where the terrain was too steep for tractors, when a double bladed single plough was harnessed to a welsh pony.

The plough was guided along the centre of the mounded row, splitting it apart, like a ship's bow wave, exposing the potatoes, which were then picked up by hand. It often required further digging and groping, through the soil,



New Quay, Cardiganshire

would call at Mr Davies shop, down near the Pier, pick up the papers and commence the round at Rock Street, then Marine Street, gradually working my way across the town and ending at Brynfor, where the Fuests took the Western Mail and The Daily Telegraph.

Thursday evenings I delivered the Welsh Gazette. Many more people took this paper, which was distributed from a shop at the top of Hill Street, very close to Mr Rees' General Store. I was rewarded with 6 shillings a week for this work, a considerable sum in those days.

Digging for Victory

Other local occupations included the Summer Farming Camps which were encouraged by the National slogan, "Digging for Victory", which of course, later encouraged some boys to continue work in the rural arena. The first recruitment was harvesting potatoes, a back-breaking job, particularly

to ensure all the potatoes were harvested.

We were paid sixpence an hour, but far more important for healthy young boys, FED. Work started at 8am. By 10 we were literally "starving", when the ladies arrived with slices of freshly baked bread, farm butter, home made jam and milk churns of hot tea, which was served in bowls.

At midday, the hunger pangs having returned, we were then led to the farmhouse kitchen, where after washing our hands at an outside pump, we sat down at a table. Cowell, pronounced like towel, was the usual meal. Recipe: take one large castiron pot 10 to 15 litres, one large leg of mutton, various chopped vegetables, especially swedes, potatoes, turnips, cabbage etc, top with water, flavour to taste and simmer for 12 hours or more. Serve the liquid in bowls as consommé, carve the joint to destruction, serve with vegetables to the hungry horde. The tastiest delicacy of all, by my taste, was cowell peas.

After all this, we returned with some difficulty to the field to work, but by 3pm were again rather peckish. Fortunately the ladies would appear again over the horizon, with Burra Jam cake, scones and tea. 4 pm saw us walking back to New Quay, supper and then to bed.

Practical experience in seamanship

Spring time saw boys wandering along the cliffs in search of seagull's eggs - usually to the south towards Cwm Tudu. A favoured spot was Birds Rock, near and below the Coast Guard hut. We would clamber down cliff faces, edge along narrow ledges, showing little or no fear. Eggs were collected and returned to the kitchen, where they were fried, not boiled for there was no way of judging their freshness other than by cracking them open, when the sense of smell told the story.

It was on one such excursion that Don Kenyon, sadly, fell to his death. Joe Isaacs was one of four boys with him, and it was he who ran, from Black Rock to New Quay, for help, 3 to 4 miles on rough tracks.

Don's remains are the only relic of Rotherhithe Nautical School's time at New Quay.

One other event of 1944 which was worthy of remembrance, Mr Stead's son, a Fighter Pilot under training, was flying solo off New Quay, when he had to make a forced landing. Being low tide he chose the sand off Traeth Gwyn. When he landed, Captain Harvey volunteered the services of the school, to haul the plane up to the beach. This was declined. A recovery vehicle was sent in, but became bogged in the sand. The incoming tide soon submerged them, with only the buoyant tail and the jib being visible. The next day, a Bren-gun carrier (army tracked-vehicle) was sent to tow the recovery vehicle carrying the plane and this too became bogged and inundated. The next day 120 boys, guided by Captain Harvey, using luff on luff tackles, pulled all three to firm ground - amazing but true.

May, 1945 came and went, as did 'VE' Day. In the spring I was invited out on "Alpha", the Lancashire and Irish Sea Fisheries Patrol Boat, Skippered by Captain Perry-Evans, Dai

Williams, Mate, and Tudur Evans, Engineer. As we departed before dawn, Mrs Fuest had packed me a nice breakfast, 2 eggs, a couple of rashers of ba-



Barnie O'Sullivan as a sea-going cadet or "brassboulder" with J & C Harrison of London.

con and slices of bread.

I steered, she had a wheel house, while fish were caught and tagged - I think it probably was a case of tag one, keep four!

The sun was well up when Capt. Perry Evans came and relieved me at the wheel and sent me below to cook my breakfast. The boats motion became a little livelier, the smell of the kerosene stove and diesel fumes did the rest. No sooner had I finished cooking than I had to dash up on deck, just making the side in time. Perry-Evans said "We can't waste your breakfast can we, bach? Here, take the wheel and keep her steady as she is", then ducked below with the others. Afterwards, they all agreed I was a good cook and on return to New Quay gave me three dozen mackerel to take back to Brynarnfor. A good bargain, for I repeated the event, next time, although it was a better operation, due to the previous rehearsal.

In June, there was an RNLI lifeboat inspection. I think 4 of us boys were invited to join the crew. She was the last of the sailing RNLI lifeboats. At high water we donned lifejackets, sat on the thwarts - chocks removed and winch brake released; away we clanked in our caterpillar tracked cradle down the ramp into the water until we eventually floated free. I was No. 2 port behind my great mentor and friend Rhys Williams, who was stroke. We rowed clear of the breakwater, shipped oars and lowered the keel. Then I was then summoned aft to the coxswain's position, hoisted both lugsails, jib and staysail, then manoeuvred i.e. tack and wear, using sails and keels to best advantage. In the crew were some former Masters in Sail so I was quite nervous, but managed, happily, to acquit myself reasonably well when giving orders. The greatest achievement of the day was being able to retain my earlier meal!

In July 1945, my brother Ted came home on leave after 3 years with the army in North Africa, Sicily, Italy and Austria. I was allowed home, so was not at New Quay when the school packed up and left New Quay. After the Summer holidays and 'VJ' Day, I returned to school, which, because Rotherhithe New Road had been blitzed, now shared and was housed with Grove Primary School at Camberwell. Quite a startling come down, and possibly the reason for a partial shutdown of my memory processes for that time! After the Christmas break, the School moved to the John Rennie School, Blackfriars and eventually merged with Exmouth and Poplar School, to become the London Nautical School.

During my period in London, I usually attended practical seamanship classes, assisted teaching "Newgies" knots and splices and coxed boats on the waters of the Surrey Commercial Docks.

Barnie's Contemporaries



Barnie in battle dress with fellow cadet in square rigger uniform

Name		Career	Barnie's Notes
Ainge	Roy	?	left (N2) 1943
Ball	William	?	left (NI) 1942/43
Banks	Lionel	?	left (N2) 1942/43
Bazill	George	M.N.	Attained EXTRA MASTERS
Berry	?	?	Returned Home 17/1/42
Beutell	?	?	Left (NP) Easter 1942
Bright	Charles (Iggy)	M.N.	Apprentice Eagle Oil
Davies	Idris	R.N.	Communicator Retired
Dossiter	Sidney	M.N.	Adopted by family New York USA
			Passed 2nd Mates
Driscoll	Pat	?	left July 1942
Ellingham	Bob	M.N.	Retired Captain P&O
Goodridge	Stan	M.N.	Ret'd Capt.Australian NatLine
Isaacs	Joe	R.N.	Commisioned
Morgan	(Moggy)	?	
O'Sullivan	Bernard (Sully later Barnie)	M.N.	Retired Sydney, Australia
Payne	Andrew (Pap)	M.N.	Ret'd Aberaeron Dyffid
Read	Ken	R.N.	Ret'd Perth, Australia
Smith	John (Jumbo)	R.N.	Ret'd Crawley, Sussex
Stevenson	Steve	R.N.	
Stewart	(Dunbrown)	?	
Tinker	George	?	

JOINED LATER IN 1942

Barclay	Eric	?	
Kenyon	Don		Died 1943. Fell from cliff
Lawrence	John	M.N.	Retired New Quay
Lilley	John	R.N.	
Llewellyn	John	M.N.	Passed 1st Mates and member Magic Circle (still up to tricks!)
Swan	George	R.N.	Gunnery (P.O. G.I. 1956)
Shelton	Archy	M.N.	
Stevens	?	?	
Wailles	Peter	R.N.	Commisioned

Rotherhithe Staff

Headmaster: Mr F.J. Fuest, BSc. joined January 1942.

A very active man in the world of education. He was responsible for many changes at the school ably abetted by the other masters. Well known for founding the School Journey Association.

T.S. Stead, Senior Master.

Taught N2 and N3 Maths and English. Boys attending their first lesson in Maths were confronted with a large "CS" printed on the blackboard. None of us ever comprehended its meaning until told. COMMON SENSE.

I have never since worried over maths problems.

Mr Stead was the longest serving teacher, having joined the school on leaving service with the Royal Navy in WWI. Most oft saying "Jimmy Green."

Captain H.B. Harvey, Extra Master.

Taught Nautical Studies. Joined the RNS in 1925 from Haines S.S.Co. of St Ives. A Cornishman who retained his accent. Greatly respected by all the boys and a great friend of Mr Stead.

Mr G. Gasser, Science Teacher.

Was renowned for teaching the order of levers FWP (or in his words "Fanny went to Peckham").

He also taught swimming. Mr Gasser retired when the school left New Quay.

Mr D.P. Owen M.A. Junior Maths Master.

He ensured we were all well grounded in maths and mechanics. Mr Owen remained with the school until his retirement in the late 1950s. I visited the classroom at Blackfriars in 1956 and there he was in academic gown cleaning the blackboard with his sleeve!

Mr Standen, Junior Master, who was promoted out in 1942.

Mr Payne his relief, added mechanical drawing to the curriculum, another respected man, who very rarely joined in any extra activity. With 5 teachers and 5 classrooms there was no allowance for sickness, which meant Mr Fuest took a class on these rare occasions. It is no wonder when looking back on those 4 years of schooling I have profound affection and respect for these exceptional teachers, who dedicated such long hours to the care and education of us very fortunate boys.

Mr Fuest died while Head Master. His successor was Mr Stead.

Mrs Fuest on request from the authorities, carried on with the running of the successor to School Journey Association being helped by a staff of women.

Passing Ships

1946 Arthur (Bill) Bailey - Naples - Apprentice with Smiths of Cardiff. Heard later passed Masters, married and swallowed the anchor.

1947 Leo Krebs and Fred Nosworthy, both Apprentices with Bank Line in Buenos Aires. Leo left sea and joined Palestine Police. Fred passed 2nd Mates, and left in Australia, rumour was a Radio Announcer.

1950 Eric Stewart. Up for 2nd Mates, had false teeth and was hardly recognisable as the "Toothy" of old.
Archy Shelton- up for 2M. more interested in rugby union for Blackheath.

Bob Ellingham, up for 2nd Mates, Mates & Masters together, we both joined Orient Line. Bob before me (I failed orals 1st time) this gave him seniority but still too close to sail together except on Troopship "Empire Orwell", which carried 2 Senior 3rd Officers, when we did one trip to Singapore in 1957. Met again in 1963 for his wedding in Sydney. He 1st Officer of "Orsova", me 2nd Mate of a 500 ton Australian ship. I was best man. Met a few times when he was C/O of P&O cargo ships, including Hong Kong when I was HMAS "Supply", doing seetime with RANR. Several times since when he was Chief Officer of "Arcadia", "Himalaya" and Captain "Canberra". After his retirement from "Pacific Princess" (of Love Boat fame) he visited us staying at a flat across the road for 3 months. Still corresponds - me twice a year - Bob about 4 times, despite he being Captain of his Golf Club in its Centennial Year.

3 Cadets ex LNS - Joe Duhig, Leslie Hagreen and David Harper. Sailed again with Leslie on "Harpalycus." He was 3rd Mate.

1951 Ron Kirley - up for Masters. Bob Ellingham and I had passed Mates. We were filling in time for Christmas leave.

1955 John English: ex RNS - My 1st trip with the Orient Line, He was Senior 2nd Officer and I was his Junior Officer of the Watch. He left the sea a couple of years later to marry and settledown, but the call of the sea came again. He was in command of the Gilbert Islands Services, then to Bank Line and finally commanding a Saudi ship from where he retired to Kings Lynn, Norfolk. John and his wife visited Sydney in October 1964, when we had a good old yarn about old times.

1956 George Swan during my RNR gunnery course, He was Petty Officer/Gunnery Instructor at Chatham. Stan Goodridge, when he was in London for Masters. We have met several times since in Australia, both when working for the Australian National Line. Stan was Captain, then Assistant Marine Superintendent, Melbourne. When I called as Mate of a ship he showed no favouritism, used the old red pencil. (Had to keep down costs). Later he was Terminal Superintendent, Port Kembla. Then returned to sea, where he retired as Captain of a 250,000 Ton bulkship (to the Sunshine Coast Queensland.)

1965 Peter Ridgeway when he was 2nd Mate of Adelaide S.S. Co he lived in Adelaide.

Off to sea

It was a great blessing when in January 1946 aged 16 years and after 4 years at RNS I left to join s.s. "Fort Maurepas" in Liverpool as a cadet or "brassbounder". I had joined RNS in 1942 in second term, had I joined in first term I would have still been 11 years old!

The liberty ship "Fort Maurepas" owned by Messrs J&C Harrison of London was one of the many mass produced cargo vessels produced primarily in the US, to replace the heavy losses from U-Boat attacks. On my first trip, I sailed from Liverpool, with a Liverpudlian or "Scouse" crew. When asked my name the immediate reply was; "We don't have any Bernards in Liverpool - only Barnies." I have been Bernie ever since.

I served in various J&C Harrison ships as Cadet, 3rd Mate and 2nd Mate. I left in 1954 to study and sit for Masters which I passed on January 14th 1955! 13 years to the day of joining the Rotherhithe Nautical School. I then joined, as a deck officer, the Orient Line, which owned and operated a fleet of large passenger ships in the UK to Australia trade. I also enrolled, and was commissioned Lieutenant RNR, in the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR), starting with a Probationary Officer's course in 1956 which saw me attending several Navy Shore Establishments, and serving as a Lieutenant RNR in HMS "Venus", part of the Dartmouth Training Squadron.

With the Orient Line, I served in "Orontes", "Orcades" (twice), "Orion", "Orsova" (twice) and the troop carrier "Empire Orwell". In 1961 I left the Orient Line to migrate to Australia and marry my wife Pamela Hilder, an Australian. After our wedding and honeymoon I joined the Australian National Line, as 3rd Mate, and arranged to transfer my Naval Reserve Commission to the Royal Australian Navy (RANR) where I served as a seagoing officer in HMAS "Anzac" and HMAS "Supply".

1967 I was pronounced hearing impaired. At the end of the year I "swallowed the anchor" and joined a stevedoring company as a Stevedoring Supervisor, which I performed for 5 years until 1973, when I rejoined the Australian National Line as a Cargo Superintendent Planner. I was the last Terminal Superintendent of the former Mort Bay Shipping Terminal in Sydney, before taking up the appointment of Coastal Superintendent, Port Botany.

Finally I retired from the shipping industry in 1988, when ANL sold all their Coastal Ships. After 18 months at home I became bored with inactivity and rejoined the workforce, aged 60 and severely hearing impaired as the Mail Clerk with Toshiba in Sydney. My bosses were all women and I did not mind a bit!. The best job I ever had! I retired again after 5 years and now over 65, I feel it must be for good.

Pam and I have 3 daughters, Libby, Helen and Susie, 3 sons-in-law, and 5 grand children as of 1998.

