

Recollection from Trevor Toy (joined SGS in 1954)

“England in the 1950s was dull, drab, repressive, secretive, rather boring but compared to today, safe. Everyone more or less knew their place – class demarcations were still entrenched. So, moving to a brand new school was an exciting opportunity. The aftershock of WW2 was still felt, still much in evidence physically and emotionally.

Some of the staff had fought in WW2 and had, like everyone else, returned to an England which patently wasn't a land fit for heroes. Whatever shortcomings these men had I forgive them utterly – they were short-changed.

The one thing, in retrospect, that I learnt from the Southern Grammar was that enthusiasm for a subject and the ability to transmit that to others was all that mattered. You could have high academic qualifications as a teacher but without enthusiasm it was virtually meaningless – being their pupil that is.

The best master I ever encountered hadn't been to University but he could bring his subject alive like no other. It, of course, may be a universal truth still extant today – teachers are born not made”.

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