Quintin Kynaston

History of Quintin Kynaston

Contents

Introduction 3
The History of the Quintin Kynaston Name 3
A Ragged School for Poor Boys (1864) 3
Two Steps to Regent Street (1870-1885) 3
A Novel Prospectus (1885) 4
Facsimile of the Day School Prospectus for 1891 4
The Polytechnic Day School Opens (1886) 5
Achievement Snapshot (1888-1892) 5
Trail Blazing (1888) 6
Charity and Friendship (1888-1891) 7
Christmas Dinner Fund 7
Old Quintinians Club 7
Schism (1892-1919) 8
End of an Era (1903) 8
The Polytechnic Gets Taller (1910-1911) 9
Sporting Times (1892-1912) 10
Celebrations (1892-1912) 11
Wartime Disruption (1914-1918) 11
A New Broom (1919) 12
Reformation (1919-1934) 12
Activities Between the Wars (1919-1939) 13
Abbott's Team (1920's) 14
The Great Dispersal (1939) 15
A Safe Haven (1939) 16
Beside the Seaside (1939-1944) 16
Some Homecoming! (1944) 17
All Change (1948) 18
St John's Wood (1956) 18
Technical Education Develops (1920-69) 19
Apart Again: Grammar v. Technical (1956-69) 19
First Steps to Fusion (1969-1972) 20
A Pioneer of Comprehensive Education (1972-1983) 20
Girls Arrive (1976) 21
Emergency Evacuation (1986-1987) 21
Hard Times (1986-1994) 22
Turning the Corner (1996-2001) 23
Reaching Out (2001-present) 23
Tradition Transcends Change 24

Introduction

Pre-1956 information below is based largely on a monograph written by Mr. Lewis C B Seaman to mark the move to St John's Wood. At the time, Lewis was senior history master at the school having been a pupil at the Polytechnic Day Boys' School in the 1920s. Quoted passages are from the weekly Polytechnic Magazine and the Quintinian, the school magazine published at the end of each term. Interviews with ex-pupils, whose memories stretched back as far as Quintin Hogg, also date from 1956. We are indebted to alumni, parents, staff and others for contributions to our subsequent history and would like to have more. If you have any information about events or personalities, which we might use, please e-mail us. If this is pre-merger, please remember to tell us which school you are referring to.

The History of the Quintin Kynaston Name

From its earliest days there was some uncertainly about the school's name. Launched in November 1885 as The Polytechnic Middle Class School, by June 1887 it was known formally as The Polytechnic Intermediate Day School but often just called The Polytechnic Boys' Day School (or minor variants). Some time after 1919 it used the name St Marylebone Polytechnic Secondary School but later dropped the St Marylebone. On gaining grammar status in 1948 it became The Quintin School. Until 1956, Kynaston Technical School was the Paddington Secondary Technical School. We became Quintin Kynaston School in 1969.

A Ragged School for Poor Boys (1864)

When the young Quintin Hogg left Eton College to begin a career in the City, he embarked on a solitary mission of civilisation into the dirty and dangerous underworld of alleys and nameless streets in the area of London between Trafalgar Square and the Law Courts.

Quintin Hogg tried his hand at teaching. He found two boys working as crossing sweepers near Trafalgar Square and offered to teach them to read. In the Adelphi Arches, lapped by the river Thames, he set up with a couple of bibles as reading books and a tallow candle in an empty beer bottle for illumination. Soon he noticed a twinkling light at the far end of the Arches. "Kool ecilop", shouted one of the boys, at the same time "dousing the glim" and off they ran. Now in darkness beside an upset bottle, Quintin Hogg seemed a most suspicious character to the torchbearer. After scrutinising him closely, however, the policeman moved on, leaving Quintin to ponder on the meaning of those mystic words ("back slang" used by urchins which he later learnt). This encounter left the old Etonian determined to find out more about the lives of the poor.

In 1864, Quintin Hogg set up a *Ragged School* in rooms he acquired in York Place, near Charing Cross. The boys arrived in a dreadful state of poverty. Many had to be washed, scrubbed and deloused before they were fit to be taught to read. Some had no clothes and came with only their mothers' shawls pinned round them. Many belonged to gangs of thieves. If he was able to set them up as shoeblacks at least, Quintin Hogg felt that he had done a great deal for them. There were no state schools until Forster's 1870 Education Act, which provided elementary schooling for poor children up to the age of 12 funded from taxes. Ragged schools would no longer be needed but Quintin Hogg had other plans...

Two Steps to Regent Street (1870-1885)

Quintin Hogg continued his educational activities in larger premises, first in Endell Street and then, in 1878, at 48-49 Long Acre. Here his *Youth's Christian Institute* was a social and athletic club for young men between 16 and 22, which ran some evening classes. Technical education in London could be said to have begun.

The Polytechnic had begun life in 1838 as a permanent exhibition of scientific gadgets and contrivances, which also gave lanternslide lectures and ran evening classes in practical science. By the 1880s it was in financial trouble. Quintin Hogg acquired the lease of 309 Regent Street and left Long Acre.

Within 12 months of it's opening on 25th September 1882, *The Polytechnic Young Men's Christian Institute* had 5,000 students. A year later, classes were started in the mornings between seven and eight o'clock, attracting a further 400 students. Courses ranged from a Reading Circle to Boot & Shoe Manufacture. There were very few other places in London where young working men could improve their trade skills.

The Institute continued to run classes in the early mornings and evenings until Quintin Hogg decided he could provide education for younger boys (and gain more income) by using the building during the working day. *The Polytechnic Day School* opened for business on 1st January 1886, signaling the foundation of the Quintin part of Quintin Kynaston School.

A Novel Prospectus (1885)

In the late 19th century, it would probably have been impossible to provide what the *Polytechnic Day School for Boys* offered anywhere else in England. The first Prospectus, published in November 1885, described the approach.

The *Professional Division* "will prepare boys for matriculation [for university entrance], preliminary medical, legal, Cambridge local and similar exams. It will include a course of instruction in Greek, Latin, Arithmetic, Algebra, Euclid [geometry], [English] Grammar, Literature and Composition, History, Geography (political and physical), German, French, Chemistry (theoretical and practical) and Natural Philosophy [biology]."

The *Commercial Division* "will prepare boys for the Civil Service exams and other general office and mercantile requirements. The subjects will be Writing, Arithmetic, Book-keeping, French, Shorthand, German, Drawing, [English] Grammar, History, Geography, Mathematics, Chemistry and Experimental Physics."

The *Industrial Division* "will be of special benefit [to those wishing to pursue] some handicraft. In addition to a thoroughly good English education, including Chemistry, Experimental Physics, Mechanical Drawing and Applied Art [graphics], we shall make use of the workshops for ... Carpentry, Metal-turning and other trades."

The Prospectus announced "the school will be open for boys between the ages of 8 and 17" ... "the fees...are, for scholars under 10 years of age £1 11s 6d; over 10 and under 13, £2 2s; above 13, £2 12s 6d per term. These fees include the use of drawing boards, T-squares, slates, technical apparatus, etc."

There was no charge for swimming, drilling or gymnastics because these were "so essential to a boy's health and education" but an extra 21s per term [£1.05] was charged for "instruction in the pianoforte and organ". Gymnastics was "under the special direction of Colour Sergeant Elliot (late Scots Guards)" and instruction in "one of the handsomest swimming baths in the kingdom" was by "Professor Oates".

Boys also had access to 27 acres [67 hectares] at Merton Park, Wimbledon, which included a cricket pitch and recreation ground.

Facsimile of the Day School Prospectus for 1891

Quintin Hogg was sixty years ahead of his time. Butler's 1944 Education Act set up

Grammar, Secondary Modern and Technical Schools on the pattern of his three divisions, offering remarkably similar subjects. This model continued until the 1970s when Comprehensive Schools were established. By then Drama, Information Technology and Music had replaced Shorthand, Latin and Greek.

The Polytechnic Day School Opens (1886)

The *Polytechnic Day School for Boys* in **Regent Street** was open to boys between the ages of 8 and 17 and charged fees. The Headmaster, Mr V. Butler-Smith, B.A., B.Sc., was the only member of staff with any academic qualifications. He was remembered as "a most magisterial and awe-inspiring personage" - a sharp contrast to the kindly founder, Quintin Hogg. The new school was organised as three Divisions: Professional, Commercial and Industrial. A Preparatory Division for boys aged 6 and over was soon added.

Quintin Hogg sought to fill the gap between free state elementary schools and the fee-paying public and grammar schools. The former offered a very basic education for children up to age 12 while the curriculum of the latter was still dominated by the language and literature of Greece and Rome. The *Day School* aimed to meet the needs of what Quintin Hogg called "the middle class", seeing the future in science and technology, typewriting and bookkeeping - vocational skills much in demand in late Victorian Britain.

The new school was an immediate success, with 130 boys starting on 11th January 1886 for the first term. This had doubled by the end of the academic year and before long the school regularly had over 500 students.

An important innovation - in the days when all secondary education had to be paid for by parents - was the introduction of Scholarships for "children who exhibit sufficient exceptional ability" to merit free education in the *Technical Division*. Quintin Hogg offered twelve such Scholarships from 1888 onwards but had to wait another 15 years before he could persuade local School Boards to provide support from public funds.

Quintin Hogg also pressed for a school meals service and the raising the school leaving age to 18 - it was then 12.

Achievement Snapshot (1888-1892)

Although the *Professional Division* was supposed to prepare boys for Matriculation (needed for a university place), very few achieved this before 1919. A major reason was that boys joined the school when their parents got to hear of its existence (or could raise the fees) and left as soon as they got a job: the statutory school-leaving age was 12. Few families could afford to let their children stay on just to take examinations. University places were limited to the sons of well off families who did not need the support of juvenile wage earners; they attended expensive public and grammar schools.

The *Commercial and Technical Divisions* were much more successful in meeting their aims: to equip boys for employment or for a trade apprenticeship. Not all completed their courses, however, with many boys leaving mid-term. But a good job was the prize. Here is a small selection for the period between 1888 and 1894 as reported in the *Polytechnic Magazine*:

- F. Booth has been offered an appointment by the Civil Service Commissioners as a Telegraph Learner
- H. D. Wheeler has signed indentures for four years with Mr G. Macaire, lithographic artist and designer, of 41 Charterhouse Square
- Messrs Carrington, who applied to us for a junior clerk, have appointed W. Nelson,

one of our Commercial boys
- W. Hammond, one of our senior boys, has accepted a temporary post in the office of the Hon. T. Pelham Willie. We have missed you and await your return with anxiety.
- The manager of the Great Western [Railway] Works at Swindon has accepted F. G. Rees of the 1st Technical Division to serve a term of apprenticeship for five years
- P. Taylor, late of the Professional Division, has obtained a situation with the London and Westminster Bank
- Messrs Mellier and Co., of Margaret Street, builders and decorators, ... have accepted H. G. Holman [of the Technical Division], who will commence his duties immediately.

It was also reported with pride in 1891 that a boy of the Commercial Division had passed the entrance examination to St Paul's [a public school then in Hammersmith].

Homework was published in the Polytechnic Magazine. The purpose was to compel the boys to buy a copy and take it home, thus publicising the school. Little may be deduced from "Arithmetic: do ex 35 nos. 7 to 12" but here are some typical homework set for boys in the middle school [now Key Stage 4] in the late 1890s:

- History: Learn [sic] Henry II and give dates for the Norman Conquest, Magna Carta, Provisions of Oxford, Conquest of Wales, Black Death, Battle of Agincourt, Discovery of America, Loss of Calais.

- Geography: Learn capes, straits and islands of Europe, and describe as accurately as you can the position of the following places and state what you know about each: Caledonian Canal, Dogger Bank, Goodwin Sands, Hartland Point, The Minch, The Needles, Pentland Firth, Scilly Isles and Tarbet Ness.

- Grammar [English]: Parse - "On right, on left, above, below, Sprung up at once the lurking foe"

- French: A written exercise together with the injunction to learn the conjugation of the verb "ne pas découdre" up to the conditional.

- The Day School Question of the Week on November 25th 1892 was on Euclidean geometry: Given two intersecting lines AB and AC and a point P between them, show that, of all straight lines which pass through P and are terminated by AB and AC, that which is bisected at P cuts off the triangle of minimum area.

Trail Blazing (1888)

No one had thought of taking children on a School Journey before. The Polytechnic Day School embarked on this pioneering venture in the summer of 1888. The 27-day trip to Switzerland cost each of the 50 boys £5 19s 0d inclusive (£5.95).

The "Swiss Continental Party" left Liverpool Street Station at 8pm on Monday 28th July led by Assistant Master David Woodhall with two colleagues, Mr Pritchard and Mr Saunders, an honorary physician Dr Jackson and Mr Schauermann (an instructor in wood carving at the school) as interpreter. About the only call on Dr Jackson's services was to extract a boy's tooth.

At Brussels the party received "quite an ovation" and were "heartily cheered from the hotel to the station". One boy reported that they "surprised the Belgians with our Polytechnic French". After touring the Battlefields of Waterloo, the party took the train to Lucerne where they sailed to Flüelen.

From Flüelen, they walked to Amsteg and on to Andermatt where 14 hours of incessant snow held them up for a day. Struggling through a metre of snow, they traversed the Furka Pass to reach the Rhone Glacier Hotel, a 10 hour trek. They crossed the Devil's Bridge on August 2nd just in time: five days later the bridge fell in! Then *via* Oberwald ("a very poor place") and Fiesch to the Jungfrau Hotel at the top of the Eggishorn ("a rather stiff climb"). They were delayed for half an hour while Mr Pritchard retrieved one boy's knapsack roll which had tumbled down the side of a ravine.

The walk continued via Brieg and St Nicholas. On the way, some of the boys helped themselves from trees laden with cherries. Two irate women shouting in several languages were only calmed by the masters and two francs compensation. At Zermatt, they hired a guide to climb the Hörnli.

Rejoining the railway at Visp, the party reached Antwerp where they caught the boat home. On their return to Portland Road Station (now Great Portland Street) early in the morning, the party marched to Regent Street where "a good English breakfast" was waiting for them in the Great Hall as was Quintin Hogg with a speech welcoming their safe return.

This was to be the first of many school journeys. And it was only one of the innovations at the school...

Charity and Friendship (1888-1891)

Under the guidance of its founder, Quintin Hogg, the Polytechnic Boys Day School introduced a number of innovations giving it a unique personality.

Christmas Dinner Fund

In November 1888 it was proposed to "collect sufficient money to give at least 500 poor children a good Christmas dinner in the Gymnasium" ... "roast beef and plum pudding, a bag of cake and fruit, and a new sixpence [2½p]". They did even better than that, giving 100 children a free dinner every day for two months.

The following year they "clothed nearly twenty destitute children and gave 5000 free dinners to the very poorest children in the district during January and February." In 1891 they distributed "a joint of meat, parcels of grocery, fruit, etc." to "no less than 572 families" (some 3000 people). As well as collecting funds, some of the older boys took part in the heavy task of distributing parcels, usually on Christmas Eve.

The Fund continued to flourish for many years. The school collected £127 in 1910 and £146 in 1911. In 1919 the total reached £388 and in 1935 it was £476. These were very substantial sums indeed. Over £10,000 must have been collected during the Fund's 60-year operation.

Old Quintinians Club

Another major innovation was the formation of the *Old Quintinians Club*. Its inaugural meeting, attended by some 150 boys, was held on Thursday 12th November 1891 with Quintin Hogg in the Chair. It was open to "Old Scholars or Teachers of the Poly Day School".

Quintin Hogg provided a Club Room in the Polytechnic building and spent a great deal of time with its members. It became more an athletic and social club than a traditional "old boys" association. The other adults attending the Polytechnic Institute envied privileges afforded Old Quintinians, such as the use of football pitches without charge.

The *O.Q.Club* was run by Quintin Hogg rather than the school and had more independence than similar bodies. An Annual Dinner was held by tradition on Quintin Hogg's birthday, February 14th.

An innovative and highly successful school, numbers grew, especially in the Technical Division. Its very popularity was to cause a schism, which lasted over 25 years.

Schism (1892-1919)

Due to growing numbers of students, separate heads were appointed for the *Technical School* - originally the Industrial Division - and for the *Commercial School* (which included the Professional Division). Teacher of shorthand David Woodhall had led the famous school journey in 1886. Charles Mitchell, a sheet metal worker, taught "Geometry, Building and Machine Construction". Neither had any academic qualifications but both men had been among the original pioneers of the *Polytechnic Day School*. Their appointment in 1892 ensured continuity despite the sudden and unexpected departure of Mr Bulter-Smith, who had been Headmaster of the *Day Boys School* since its inception. His absence from the Summer Prize Distribution excited much speculation but the reason for his abrupt going was not made public.

Although the two schools managed to come together for morning prayers and on ceremonial occasions such as Sports Day (albeit as competitors) and Prize Day, they effectively operated as separate schools. This was not the intention: they occupied the same building! According to G. E. Dench (who became Second Master [Deputy Head] when the schools reunited), rivalry between the two "sometimes took unpleasant forms". This was sometimes resolved in later life when the "snobbish" Commercials and the "disreputable" Technicals joined the *Old Quintians Club*.

By 1905, seven staff could boast a B.A. or a B.Sc. - twenty years earlier only the Headmaster had a degree. Other schoolmasters claimed a strange variety of "qualifications" include Lon[don]. Mat[riculation], Inter[mediate] B.Sc., Registered Teacher, Silver Medalist and "Honours Science". Ambiguously, one master's qualification was "Edinburgh University" and another "Trinity College, Dublin". Teachers were, however, extremely poorly paid and far fewer people went to university than now. Frank Matthews, who was one of the few Poly boys to achieve London Matriculation [equivalent to NVQ Level 2] during these early years, was feted on Prize Day in July 1894. He joined the staff in the autumn term on seven shillings a week [35p]. Eight years later he married on a salary of £39 a year. He went on to become B.Sc., Ph.D. and a Fellow of the Institute of Chemistry. There were many examples of exceptionally competent teachers on the staff during this period, whether or not they had formal qualifications.

End of an Era (1903)

Born in 1845, Quintin Hogg, the Founder of the Polytechnic Day School for Boys was a successful and wealthy businessman who devoted his life to philanthropy. He dominated the school, where his sympathetic character had a profound effect on many students. "QH" possessed the unfailingly attractive quality of never forgetting a face or the right name to go with it. He astonished people by instantly recalling, after long intervals, some small private joke. He had a passion for sending birthday greetings although few knew he employed a full-time clerk whose sole function was to keep a very large book of the dates. QH continued to send birthday cards to old boys, even those fighting in the South African (Boer) wars. His manner and his kindnesses were still being remembered decades after his death in 1903.

Albert Bangert joined the school in 1890. Some 23 years later he recalled:

- *"I approached the portals of the Polytechnic, wondering what the school was like,*

when I saw a kindly looking gentleman wearing a nice grey suit and top hat."

- *"When I was at the Day School I very often saw Mr Hogg. I do not know how he found the time. I should have thought he ought to be at business at 12 o'clock in the morning. He sometimes walked round the Engineer's shop, and watched us boys, giving us a little encouragement."*
- *"Later on I joined the Institute and then I met Mr Hogg a great deal. He used to come up to the Old Quintinians Club Room and give a few yarns. He took much interest in the chaps and used to encourage us by lending books or helping in any other way."*

Oswald Greonings wrote in 1956:
"The atmosphere in those days (1892-1897) was very friendly and dominated by Mr Quintin Hogg, whose influence was so helpful and whose example was life lasting. For instance, he used to stand at the door at the close of school and one day it was pouring with rain. He said to about ten of us all going out together, 'you can't go out in this rain like that. Wait here.' In five minutes or so he came back with an arm full of umbrellas, gave us each one and called out as he we were going 'Don't forget to bring them back.' I am sure nothing was ever lost that he lent. I never forgot that incident – not the fact of lending the umbrellas but the fact that he went back and fetched them himself instead of sending one of us."

Fred Moser recalled in 1956:
"Quintin Hogg knew me ... from the time I was about 13 till I was 22, chiefly through cricket and football. Many times he played back [defender], I being wing half (midfield) in front of him in the Old Quintinians team. His son, Douglas [later the first Viscount Hailsham] played half [midfield] ... but on the outbreak of the Boer War [in 1899] he left for South Africa and I took his place in the Poly team.
"QH knew I was studying dentistry and at odd times enquired as to my progress. I managed to clear all the obstacles up to the Final examination, when my father's place of business closed down overnight, which meant my final year's fees, £80, could not be paid."

Moser needed the support of a well-known figure if he was to ask the Dean to postpone payment, so asked to see Quintin Hogg. The following morning he was amazed to receive at the Hospital a telegram, which read 'See me Polytechnic tonight six o'clock Quintin Hogg'.

"I was duly shown into his presence... He greeted me with 'Well, my boy, sit down and tell me about these difficulties'. I only got as far as 'My father's firm has closed down and he cannot meet my final fees...' QH interrupted with 'How much are the fees?'"

Not expecting this, Moser became tongue tied until Quintin Hogg said 'Out with it boy, out with it'. He blurted out the amount. Quintin Hogg immediately said *'Certainly those fees shall be paid'. He went to his desk, gave me two cheques for £40 each, one for the Royal Dental and one for Charing Cross Hospital, and with a 'God bless you, my boy!' he sent me off."*

The Polytechnic Gets Taller (1910-1911)

The extra storey added to the 309 Regent Street building since the school arrived in 1886 can be seen in the 1910 picture. For the ever-expanding Institute, more storeys were added in 1911 whilst retaining the facade at street level.

To reach the school, boys came straight off the busy **Regent Street** pavement, through revolving doors and into The Marble Entrance Hall. A group of clerks stood behind an imposing three-sided counter. From time to time anxious-looking strangers were having something earnestly explained to them here. On the left was a bookshop and stationers who stocked neither textbooks nor school exercise books. Spread around were leather-upholstered armchairs. Large notice boards on the walls

announced lectures but not lessons, for none of this had anything to do with the school - it was all for the Institute.

On the way to their second and third floor classrooms, the boys passed a tea bar, a men's billiards room and a ladies cloakroom. They may well have to struggle past a strange variety of people for the hall was hired out for anything from Masonic Meetings to rehearsals for BBC symphony concerts. Strangers were everywhere. Boys took lunch in what was effectively a public restaurant, sharing the gym, swimming pool and science labs with adult students. Young men and woman in their thousands were attending a multitude of day and evenings classes.

Two commercial bodies were also housed in the building. A door near the counter in The Marble Entrance Hall led to the travel agents Polytechnic Tours and beside the bookstall was the entrance to the Polytechnic Cinema. At 9.30 a.m. on school days, the Cinema doubled as a School Hall. The choir and prefects sat in the dearer balcony seats while the lower school occupied the front stalls. Hymns were sung accompanied by the cinema organ. Cleaners at work or the projectionist rewinding film sometimes provided noises off. A furious pianist called Mr Frederisks might treat afternoon lessons to bursts of loud accompaniment to silent films. It was worse when the "talkies" came in with amplified film music or sudden staccato squawks of Donald Duck.

Little changed during the headships of David Woodhall and Charles Mitchell. They had been teachers at the school since its earliest days, ensuring that Quintin Hogg's vision was safe. But neither man was innovative and the schools trod the well-worn path laid by Butler-Smith. Vocational training flourished but there was little academic success. Sport, however, played an important part in the life of the school...

Sporting Times (1892-1912)

Springing from the muscular brand of Christianity practised by Quintin Hogg and his disciples, the Polytechnic Commercial and Industrial Schools naturally attached much importance to games. These were considered jolly pastimes designed to encourage clean living and good fellowship. Hardly competitive, no one thought of keeping accurate statistics.

After 1903 the two schools combined in Day School teams for football and cricket. Oddly, it was quite normal in those days for masters to play in school teams. For those not in a school team, there were form matches organised in three leagues: Upper School, Middle School and Lower School. They were run by Mr W C Lee, "a formidable referee" (who died in 1955 aged 97) and Mr W J Saunders.

The splendid Polytechnic swimming pool was used in summer but "In the winter the baths were emptied and filled with a lot of decrepit and derelict furniture and moth-eaten carpets and called a Reading Room. A most depressing place." It was not until 1929 that the swimming pool was open throughout the year.

In 1904 the Poly hired Ramsay Grammar School on the **Isle of Man** as a holiday location for its schoolboys. Fifty years later, Mr Culliford proudly recalled "I was captain of the school team that beat Ramsay Town at water polo and still have my medal".

The annual Swimming Gala included such items as "Horse Racing", a Lighted Candle Race and something called "Fox and Hounds". The Annual Sports Day was an occasion to celebrate...

Celebrations (1892-1912)

Apart from cricket, football and swimming, there were few out of school activities except for an active Ramblers Club and a Scout Troop, which began "after the South African Wars". The annual Prize Day seems to have included the only cultural events.

Sports Day

From 1892 onwards, the Annual Sports Day was a highlight of the school calendar. It was held at Merton Hall, Wimbledon, at Paddington Recreation Ground or at Wembley Park.

An account of the 1902 event at Wembley concluded: "Altogether the good quality of the events together with the beautiful afternoon and with the satisfactory arrangement of sufficient seats on the lawn within the enclosure for the comfort of the visitors, added to the inspiring strains of the mandolin band under the able direction of Mr B.M.Jenkins combined to produce an ideal sports day in a rustic setting."

The following year the Wembley Brass Band provided the music but in 1905 the Mandolin Band was back, this time with the Wealdstone Male Voice Choir.

By 1912 musical delights had been replaced by a Gymnastic Display which included "Pyramids of the entire school, Irish Dance by the girls of the Business Training School, Halt and Drill by the Boy Scouts, Indian club squads and a march past by the entire school." Some of the prizes were extraordinary (this was a boys' school). For the Egg and Spoon Race the winner received "a case of spoons and tongs", for the Sack Race "a butter dish", for the Open 220 yards (200 metres) "a cake basket", for the High Jump "a silver match case", for the Half Mile (800 metres) Walk "a preserve dish" and for the Open 440 yards (400 metres) "a case of razors".

Prize Day Performances

Out of school activities such as music and drama do not seem to have existed. However, it was the custom to put on dramatic entertainments on Prize Day. In 1903 these were selections from *Le Voyage de Monsieur Perrichon* (in French), something called *A German Dictation Lesson* (in German) and a costume recital from *Hamlet*. The previous year they had a shortened version of *La Malade Imaginaire* (in French) and costume recitals from *William Tell* (in German) and from *Henry V*. There were also musical offerings on Prize Days.

Such halcyon days were to come to an end when a new Headmaster was appointed for the now re-united *Polytechnic Secondary School*.

Wartime Disruption (1914-1918)

Following the outbreak of war in August 1914, the Polytechnic was turned into a vast recruiting depot and the School into something akin to a young soldiers' battalion. Almost every boy became a cadet. Drilling, marching and manoeuvring became the major feature of the curriculum. Most members of staff became officers in the Cadet Corps. Sir Kynaston Studd, President of the Institute, became Honorary Colonel of all the London school cadet corps.

Most afternoons, boys marched off to **Regents Park** preceded by a band led by Mr Paffard. In the lunch hour, from a platform erected in the middle of Regent Street, patriotic songs were sung to stimulate recruiting. Compared with this total disruption to lessons, the evacuation during the Second World War seems a mere inconvenience.

During the war, David Woodall, Headmaster of the *Technical School*, died and Charles Mitchell retired as Headmaster of the *Commercial School*. The schools

managed without Headmasters until the war was over.

Not surprisingly, when the armistice was declared, a new start was required. The *Technical* and *Commercial Schools*, which had operated virtually independently since 1892, were recombined in 1919 as the *Polytechnic Secondary School* and Percy Abbott appointed its Headmaster. He was to have a profound influence on the school. Determined to have high standards in academic achievement, sports and behaviour, he controlled every aspect of the school. The model was no longer to be the one envisaged by Quintin Hogg and carried on until now by his acolytes.

A New Broom (1919)

Percy Abbott joined the *Polytechnic Commercial School* as a teacher in 1895, rising to senior mathematics master before being appointed in 1919 Headmaster of the *Polytechnic Secondary School* - the newly merged Commercial and Technical Schools. He was already an education adviser to various bodies, sitting on committees and examination boards. Abbott appeared to have no outside interests. He had played football for Arsenal as an amateur and, after he retired in 1934, it emerged that he had long been a Director of the club. One left wing Sixth Former was shocked to discover his Headmaster sitting next to him at a Fabian Society meeting. Shock turned to bewilderment when PA turned to him and said, somewhat conspiratorially, "It's a good thing nobody knows we're here." He did not have an imposing presence (unlike his "majestic" Deputy, George Dench) with an egg-shaped head, round shoulders and shuffling walk. In public he was quiet and solitary - the antithesis of many of his staff - and known for love of statistics on every aspect of the school. He could be convincingly angry when necessary. In private, though, he was a kindly man with a sympathetic ear.

Within twelve months, the school roll had risen to nearly 600 with record numbers of boys achieving Matriculation - up from 7 in 1919 to 50 five years later. From the advanced courses, which Abbott introduced, the number of boys passing the Higher Schools Examination rose to 18 by 1924. Several went on to success in Inter B.Sc. or Inter B.A., the gateway to university entrance. In 1920, eight boys were awarded London County Council (L.C.C.) or Middlesex County Scholarships. Only two Poly boys had gained County Scholarships in the previous 35 years. Progress continued apace, with records being broken every year. And more changes were in the pipeline...

Reformation (1919-1934)

The *Polytechnic Secondary School* continued to charge fees. London County Council (L.C.C.) Junior County Scholarships were awarded to those with the highest academic potential based on tests in English and Arithmetic. L.C.C. Scholarships included a maintenance grant as well as school fees but few boys benefited. There was also a Polytechnic Free Place Examination, easier than the L.C.C. tests - but not that much easier. In 1922 there were 320 candidates for 19 free places (without any maintenance grant). Most boys came as fee-payers but they, too, had to pass an Entrance Examination.

Some thought that Quintin Hogg's guiding principles were being abandoned, with too much emphasis on academic achievement and competitive sports. However, some boys who failed the Entrance Examination were accepted (though usually for only four years). Percy Abbott drove his staff hard. One of master's wives rang to say he had pleurisy (a potentially fatal disease at the time). "Oh," PA said, "that's very serious with the exams so near". But the school became united and considerable pride was derived from its achievements. It became a very popular school and was difficult to get into.

Percy Abbott tightened up on school uniform, insisting that caps be worn. They had disappeared by the 1920s but some 30 years earlier Poly boys walking across **Hyde Park** one day in the 1890s remembered removing their "school-badged caps" when Queen Victoria passed close by in an open landau. Making schoolboys wear caps was an unpopular move and had to be enforced by detentions "presided over by a lady" (teachers were all male). Red/green caps - the school colours used for football jerseys - became mandatory but in many different styles: in addition to the standard design, there were variants for each football and cricket team, the Sixth Form and for Prefects. The School Captain [Head Boy] wore a cap with a long golden tassel; his Vice Captains had short golden tassels and House Captains silver tassels.

Enrollment data for the Polytechnic Secondary School are available for school years:

- **1921/22**
- **1922/23**
- **1923/24**

Boys at both Quintin and Kynaston schools wore uniforms until 1969 but, in keeping with the theories of the time, QK could not be comprehensive if it had a proper uniform. However, QK re-introduced a simple uniform bearing the school logo in 1995 when it was noticed that dress and achievement might be related - as Abbott had done 75 years earlier. This was replaced by a full uniform (but without caps!) in 2001.

Activities Between the Wars (1919-1939)

With the arrival of a new Headmaster in 1919, the *Polytechnic Secondary School* renewed its interest in sport. But, in line with his views on academic achievement, Percy Abbott required games to be competitive rather than just fun. He divided the school into six Houses each with a senior boy as House Captain and set them to compete against each other - not just in sports but also in areas such as "Conduct" and "Studies" for which prizes were also awarded.

For a school with no playground, no games afternoon and playing fields miles away in Chiswick, the Poly did remarkably well against other schools. The team among its successes in Public School Sports competitions, for example, was J. B. Carne, who won the Mile Walk in 1923 in a record time of 7 minutes 32.4 seconds. During the 1920s, first places were taken in events from the High Jump to the 880 yards (800 metres).

With their own swimming pool, not surprisingly Poly boys were often London secondary schools' champions in this sport, supremacy which continued from the 1920s until the 1950s.

The arrival of an American boy called Naar stimulated an interest in basketball (then known as netball). Since matches could be played in the gymnasium during lunch times, this went some way to solving the problem of having no playground.

The Third and Fourth Forms (Years 7 and 8) had to endure The Walk every day "unless wet". Boys assembled at 1:30 in an unenthusiastic crocodile in the Polytechnic entrance hall to be conducted on a 20-minute walk around the traffic-clogged streets behind Cavendish Square and the Queen's Hall. Prefects expended much effort daily trying to track down small boys in hiding! But it is difficult to know who hated The Walk more: the staff or the boys. The Fifth and Lower Fifth Forms (Years 9 and 10) were allowed to stay in the building though not in the classrooms. Only the Upper Fifth (Year 11) enjoyed the privilege of access to classrooms during the lunch break.

Extra-curricular activities expanded. In January 1920, a Chess Club and a Literary

and Debating Society were added to the existing Cadet Corps and Ramblers Club. By 1926 there was a flourishing Scientific Society and three years later saw a Hobbies Club as well as Historical, Geographical, Natural History and Play Reading Societies.

Abbott's Team (1920's)

Percy Abbott gathered around him a talented team of enthusiastic individualists. Some he "inherited" when he became Headmaster in 1919, others he appointed. Many were dedicated Socialists who stayed at the school until they retired. These pen-pictures, based on reminiscences collected in the 1950s, give a flavour of schoolmasters between the wars.

Abbott's Second Master (Deputy Head) George Dench cultivated his majestic demeanor and was so conscious of his sonorous voice. Tonsured and rubicund as Friar Tuck, he moved about the school like a stately galleon with billowing sail, carrying a paunch of aldermanic proportions. Capable of silencing the whole school with the wave of one very fat hand, he thought himself wise and mellow, cultured and urbane. He was. Dench taught Latin and English and was the perfect foil for the quiet mathematician Abbott.

By the standards Bill Russell set, few could hope to avoid censure. He was regarded by the boys first with fear, then with awe and respect and finally with affection and admiration. He refused to compromise on either behaviour or work. For successive generations he represented a permanent father figure. He towered over the arts side as Matthews did in science.

J. B. Lambert made nonsense of the notion that schoolmasters were embittered and frustrated. He enjoyed being a master hugely and seemed to have limitless energy. Arduous days at Regent Street and energetic hours with football elevens at Chiswick left him forever good humoured and high-spirited. How he roared out the solutions to those bewildering algebraic equations! When J. W. Andrews was trying to give an identical geometry lesson to a parallel form in an adjacent room, he gave up. "Just listen to Mr Lambert doing it next door", he told his class.

Originally a classics scholar, H. O. Coleman taught German. Yet he was an international authority on phonetics and philology, once offering to teach Russian and later admitting that he was a little rusty in Chinese. This may have been one of his little jokes but such was his presence that it was believable. The "distracted eccentric" and minor poet confounded his image by taking an active part in the Cadet Corps and the Boxing Club.

C. Simmons represented England in diving events at the 1912 Olympic Games in Stockholm and did much for school swimming successes.

Master of the Gymnasium, Harry Beadon was still capable of showing a class a thing or two well into his seventies.

C. W. Hester was crisp and at times irascible. He commanded the Cadet Corps though his falsetto voice cracked whenever he gave an order. Hester was one of the staff appointed in the 1890s. Forever caressing his well-groomed moustaches, he was a small and quite gentle militarist.

Frank Matthews spent almost his whole life at the school. He joined the *Technical School* as a scholarship boy in 1898 aged 11. After Matriculating in 1903 he immediately joined the staff. But for three years at University College studying for his B.Sc., he remained on the staff until his retirement in 1950. A brilliant chemist, he took his Ph.D. in the 1920s. He had wide interests: a devoted concert goer, helping with dramatics, organising the school swimming. A product of Quintin Hogg's *Middle Class School*, he had the quirks of personality, incisiveness of mind and breadth of interests

which would have qualified him for the senior common room at any Oxbridge College. A remorseless critic of the school, he was devoted to it with obstinate loyalty. Despite his considerable intellect and quirky mannerisms, he was most of all kind, modest and gentle.

Tinny Newman was much more than an ordinary schoolmaster. He taught geography and economics but his first degree was in philosophy. He later took a B.Sc. (Econ) because he thought it "a good idea". He spoke German, French and Spanish. Newman had been a sporting and dramatic critic for several national newspapers and sub-editor on the *Morning Post*. He was a recorder of late names and a coach for the Boxing Club. In classrooms and in the staff room he was voluble, witty and loveable.
J. Stevenson came into the classroom with an air of great haste as if anxious to get back to his Surrey garden but teaching a lot of French before he went and taking on the large task of the Polytechnic Christmas Dinner Fund.

In addition to teaching English, J. B. Coates ran the Natural History Society, taking senior boys on rambles where he divided his time between observations of redstarts and willow warblers and discourses on the thinkers of the day such as H. G. Wells and G. B. Shaw, Dostoyevsky and Samuel Butler.

The Great Dispersal (1939)

Appointed Headmaster on Percy Abbott's retirement in 1934, Frederick Wilkinson sought to humanise what he saw as an "examination machine" and restore the religious life of the school. Distinguished visitors were invited, including author and diplomat Sir Harold Nicolson and liberal academic Sir William Beveridge whose 1942 *Report* laid the foundation for the Welfare State. Developing the arts side, Wilkinson produced Vaughan Williams' masque based on Dickens' *Christmas Carol* at the request of the composer. But he found the cramped conditions impossible - the Polytechnic building at 309 Regent Street was shared with the ever-expanding adult Institute. "We need more freedom, more tranquility ...more opportunity to be ourselves", he wrote. After three years, he left to become Headmaster of Latymer Upper School in Hammersmith.

Bernard Worsnop had graduated from King's College, London (KCL) in 1913 with a First class degree in Physics, served in the Royal Engineers and was awarded a Ph.D. in 1928. Dr Worsnop He was appointed Head of Maths and Physics at the Polytechnic Institute in 1932 after a spell as Senior Lecturer at KCL. Five years later he became the most highly qualified Headmaster the *Polytechnic Secondary School* had ever had. Coming after the aloof Abbott and the idealistic Wilkinson, he was quite unlike either. But, almost before Dr Worsnop had a chance to settle in, the "baffling problems" (as Wilkinson had described the lack of a playground) were solved but in a way no one would have wanted.

Assistant Master C.E. Eckersley wrote:
On Friday morning, September 1st [1939], there came an event in the life of the school that none of us who took part in it, boys or staff, will ever forget. We all assembled in the familiar Hall, sang, as we had done so often before, O God our help in ages past and heard the voice of the Padre leading us in prayer. We listened, deeply moved, to the quiet kindly words of Sir Kynaston... "You are going away; it may be only for a few days, it may be for a few months; it may be even longer. No one can tell. The Polytechnic will seem very strange without you, but wherever you are, our wishes, our thoughts, our prayers, will be with you...Good-bye."

In fact, the school was never to return to Regent Street and seventeen years were to pass before it again had a permanent home. One of the boys gave this account of what happened next on that fateful Friday:

At about 10.30 we had the order to get ready; then...the order to GO. ... We marched out of that so familiar building ... two police constables stopped the traffic for us to cross over Regent Street and proceed to Oxford Circus Station. Here we re-assembled on the platform... The train pulled in and we sped off to Ealing Broadway. Here the job of re-assembling took place again. All along the line, prefects were heard calling the roll...[After some delay,] we started off (on a Great Western train)...It was not until we were ten miles out that the Guard came to tell use that our destination was Cheddar.

When they arrived at tiny Cheddar Station, only four of the 21 coaches were alongside the platform. But the boys greatly enjoyed jumping down to the trackside and walking along it to the station. Expecting a girls' school, the reception committee were more than a little surprised when 400 boys disembarked accompanied by an all-male staff. Nevertheless, "Kind hearted villagers handed out jugs of cool, clear water, and apples. Everyone was parched." Then the boys boarded coaches for their final destinations - Weare, Blackford, Theale and Wedmore - and billets found. But the situation was most unsatisfactory, with boys scattered far and wide in hamlets and tiny villages. Crucially, there was nowhere to run a school. Few pupils complained but Dr Worsnop would be making other arrangements...

A Safe Haven (1939)

Clearly the school could not function without a building and its pupils were scattered widely in the hamlets and villages around the small Somerset town of Cheddar. So Headmaster Bernard Worsnop embarked on a tireless round of negotiations with the Board of Education, attended countless conferences and even bought a second-hand car to scour the county seeking a solution. Eventually, he got permission to share *Minehead County School*. With not a little difficulty he persuaded a reluctant Ministry of War Transport to move the 400 boys again, this time half way across the county. Not enough billets could be found locally for so many evacuees and anyway urban householders preferred to take young children, not strapping lads whose appetites were larger than the 10s.6d [52½p] weekly allowance. Worsnop persuaded the Ministry of Health to empty a hostel of expectant mothers (they went to Bath). At last the school arrived in Minehead, where the *Polytechnic Secondary School* would spend the next five years. Had they arrived at Ealing Broadway station 10 minutes earlier, it turned out, they would have reached Minehead 3 weeks ago!

Beside the Seaside (1939-1944)

The locals used Minehead County School in the mornings while Londoners' lessons took place from 1:15 to 5:15pm. But the County School wasn't large enough to accommodate well over 400 boys from the *Polytechnic School*. So the ever-resourceful Headmaster Dr Bernard Worsnop hired the Methodist and Masonic Halls, although these were some 0.75 miles (1.2km) from the school. Since the County School didn't have need of them, Meth and Ma (as they were affectionately known) could be used for morning classes. And to minimise idle time when the boys could get up to mischief, Saturday morning classes were started. With more teaching time than they were used to in London (30 rather than 27½ hours), very good results were obtained in School Certificate [GCSE], Higher Certificate [A levels] and University Scholarship examinations during the evacuation. (Fewer distractions than in central London may have helped).

One group of boys moved into the local Youth Hostel where the Warden and his wife, Mr and Mrs Hepple, entered into the scheme with zest. Known as *The Lodge*, it was used mainly by the younger boys who slept in bunks and shared domestic tasks such as bed making and the inevitable potato peeling. A large house on the edge of town in Alcombe, *The Dene*, became a hostel for Sixth Formers. Bending the rules, beds, furniture, cookers and so on were purchased. Failing to find a suitable matron,

Mrs Worsnop was recruited to serve. Other masters' wives became involved too, sorting out problems with clothing, billeting and much else.

Canteen In 1942 a third hostel, *Glen Lynn* run by Mr and Mrs Merrills, was added and then a fourth, in *Hopcot* just outside town, under the care of Rev and Mrs R.T.Newman. Thus, this central London day school turned itself into a rural boarding school for the duration. Many boys were billeted with local families and lifetime friendships (and several marriages) resulted. Life in a quiet seaside town might not be quite what they were used to in London but it had much compensation - as well as being safe from the Blitz.

Minehead itself escaped bombing but, as Bernard Worsnop reported: "Across the Estuary, we saw many night air raids on Swansea and other South Wales towns, as well as Weston (super Mare) on our side". A jettisoned bomb hit a sub-station at Watchet some two miles (3km) outside Minehead cutting off the town's electricity. And when a German Heinkel was brought down at Porlock, "the boys streamed on bicycles or on foot to inspect the remains." Much of the plane was taken until the local police arrived to ask for it back - claiming it was vital to have components for examination. The souvenirs were quickly returned after a word from the Headmaster.

Both masters and senior boys joined the Home Guard. A flight of the Air Training Corps was started and vied with the Army Cadet Corps in gaining proficiency certificates. Troops of Sea Scouts and Air Scouts were set up to complement the Scout Troop. Football and cricket flourished and many school clubs took on a new lease of life - from the Sixth Form Debating and Literary Society to the Natural History Society. A large allotment was cultivated making a healthy profit from surplus produce. The Dramatic Society put on many successful plays to raise money for the war effort. Staff gave talks to local groups such as the Rotarians and Toc H.

Returning to London when this wartime interlude was over proved quite a shock. The Polytechnic Institute no longer had room for its boys' school...

Some Homecoming! (1944)

With the war coming to an end, it was time to return to London. But it was clear that the Polytechnic building at 309 Regent Street was no longer suitable for housing a school with increasingly noisy traffic, an overcrowded site (the adult Institute continued to expand) and no playground. In the closing months of the war, a plan emerged to acquire premises near Regents Park. Architects plans were drafted and the costs of alterations agreed. But a V2 flying bomb fell on Holford House, the proposed site. Neither money, nor workers, nor materials were available to re-build it. This was just one of several proposed solutions which came to naught. Meanwhile...

Some boys had returned to London well before the rest of the school. They were being taught in St Katherine's House in Albany Street, a grand three-storied building with Adam ceilings. At the end of its long garden, debris from the Blitz filled a branch of the Grand Union Canal providing an unusual play area for the boys. But there were more classes than teachers (many were still in Minehead) and masters struggled to teach outside their specialisms. Additional space was found in the L.C.C. *Institute for Distributive Trades* building in Charing Cross Road as the Polytechnic Institute needed the classrooms in Regent Street. However, several science forms remained at the Poly and used the laboratories in its Great Portland Street Annex in Little Titchfield Street.

A school already spread over four sites was bad enough. But somewhere had to be found for the bulk of the pupils, soon to return from Minehead. So yet another site was brought into use. *Pulteney Schools*, at the southern end of Berwick Street in the heart of Soho, had been a Victorian Elementary School but closed in 1937. The derelict site had been used by the Auxiliary Fire Service during the war. But nothing else was

available in war-torn London.

Now spread over five sites, the only place where the whole school could assemble was the public cinema in the Polytechnic building and this they did on Monday mornings. The school also had the use of the swimming pool in Regent Street and the Polytechnic sports ground at Chiswick. But they managed somehow for over a decade in their temporary accommodation with much to-ing and fro-ing between Oxford Circus and Soho. Not everyone went the shortest way. An illicit route via Hamley's toy shop in Regent Street was not unknown.

All Change (1948)

The school's association with the Polytechnic Institute had changed, no longer sharing the Regent Street building. Moreover, following R. A. Butler's 1944 Education Act, the school was to have grammar status rather than become a "secondary modern". The name *The Polytechnic Secondary School* seemed inappropriate and in 1948 it became *The Quintin School* in honour of founder Quintin Hogg. Even more radical changes were in prospect...

The school had always been fee-paying though since 1911 some money had come from L.C.C. County Scholarships for very bright pupils. But fee-paying schools had to provide their own premises. Returning to the Polytechnic building was out of the question but there were insufficient funds to build a new school. By agreeing to change its status from "aided" to "voluntary controlled", the L.C.C. would provide premises but the school would lose its independence. Among other things, the Polytechnic Institute would no longer control the governing board. Homeless, there was no choice.
Grammar school status was inevitable thanks to academic achievement developed by Percy Abbott between the wars and continued under Bernard Worsnop. However, craft skills, commercial and industrial training, which the Polytechnic Technical Division began in 1886, had all but disappeared. Boys seeking a technical education would have to look elsewhere. *Paddington Secondary Technical School* in Saltram Crescent, W9 was one possibility and it was later to figure in the creation of *Quintin Kynaston School*.

Meanwhile, *The Quintin School* was unusually strong in science: the Polytechnic made its excellent laboratories available and some Institute lecturers doubled as schoolteachers. Way ahead of most grammar schools, science would be an enduring strength.

But there was one item of outstanding business before the school could get back to some sort of normality: it needed to escape from its piecemeal "temporary" accommodation scattered round London's West End...

St John's Wood (1956)

At last, more than a decade after the end of the war, a site was found in St John's Wood. Some 3km north of the Polytechnic building in Regent Street, a complete block was cleared and four new schools built, side by side, alongside the A41 Finchley Road.

George Elliott Infants School for 5-7 year olds was built at the northern end of the site adjacent to Boundary Road. Next came *George Elliott Primary School* for ages 7-11 and then two large secondary schools: *Kynaston Technical School* (11-15) and The *Quintin School* (11-18). There was ample space for grass areas with flowers and trees, footpaths and playgrounds.

Running off the five-storey block of classrooms, which housed *Kynaston Technical*

School, were well-equipped workshops and two gymnasia. At the southern end of the site, the four-storey block occupied by *The Quintin School* (foreground of the picture) had a spur of science laboratories leading to a gymnasium. In between the two blocks were shared facilities such as the School Hall (left of picture), a Library and Serveries (eating areas). Distinctive uniforms ensured that boys remained in their own part of the building and in separate playgrounds.

Technical Education Develops (1920-69)

A *Technical School* had been located on the Saltram Crescent site of the Paddington Technical Institute (renamed College in 1948) since the 1920s. There, boys learnt engineering and allied trades while girls were taught dressmaking, ladies tailoring and millinary. The 1944 Butler Education Act meant separating the school from the adult College. It had more pupils and needed a new, larger site. When it moved to St John's Wood in 1956, it became the *Kynaston Technical School*.

T. G. Jones, an experienced Headmaster, was appointed to head the new school. Pupils remembered him as a big man with a friendly and approachable manner. A garrulous Welshman who loved rugby, Jones took pride in being the first Headmaster. But within three years he had died, partly from the long-term effects of being gassed during the First World War.

His successor, G. H. Harmer, was small and neat. Not as popular as Jones, this punctilious man nevertheless established a fine reputation for quality technical education. During its relatively short existence, *Kynaston* was not without its academic successes. A few boys even passed A-levels each year – and this in the days when most pupils at similar schools finished their education at 15 with no qualifications of any kind. But *Kynaston*'s days as a separate school were numbered with the advent of comprehensives...

Apart Again: Grammar v. Technical (1956-69)

The two secondary schools occupying the new buildings in St John's Wood brought together the elements of the original *Polytechnic Day School* - the Commercial Division as *The Quintin School* and the Technical Division as the *Kynaston Technical School* - and were named after two key figures: Quintin Hogg, founder of the Polytechnic School, and Sir Kynaston Studd, one-time President of the Polytechnic Institute. Echoing the 1892 schism, they were separate schools but shared a School Hall, dining areas and other facilities. The boys were to be strictly separated.

Some sixty years earlier Deputy Head George Dench had reported that rivalry between boys at the two Polytechnic schools "sometimes took unpleasant forms". Now, Quintin boys wore conspicuous green blazers with red piping and caps to match, while Kynaston boys were adorned in black and grey uniforms. A recipe for rivalry?

Just two years after *The Quintin School* arrived at St John's Wood, the long serving Headmaster retired. Appointed in 1937, the energetic academic Bernard Worsnop had seen the school though evacuation, post-war homelessness, gaining grammar school status and occupying brand new buildings. His successor A. J. Holt, appointed in 1958, was a kind and quiet man who presided over a period of consolidation. But he was perceived by many to be old-fashioned and remote and failed to prosper after the 1969 formation of a comprehensive school.

Once again, history seemed to be repeating itself when the two schools merged - half a century after a similar event at the Polytechnic - this time to create *Quintin Kynaston School*.

First Steps to Fusion (1969-1972)

After more than a decade as rivals, neighbours *The Quintin School* and *Kynaston Technical School* merged in 1969 to create a very large comprehensive school with 270 boys joining each year in nine forms (tutor groups). Half a century earlier the *Commercial Day School* merged with the *Technical Day School*. Quintin Hogg had founded his *Polytechnic Middle Class School* on comprehensive principles in 1886, a model favoured by parents, politicians and educationalists in the 1960s. Despite shaky beginnings and radical teachers of the 1970s, comprehensive education continued to be the norm for over 30 years.

Only one Headmaster was needed for the merged school, of course, and G. H. Harmer departed when *Kynaston* lost its separate existence. The Headmaster of *Quintin* for 11 years, A. J. Holt, was appointed to be the first Head of QK but he was to leave under a cloud after only three years. His efforts in setting up a comprehensive school had limited success.

Forms for new pupils were designated "academic", "technical" or "remedial" and the inherited Quintin and Kynaston forms remained until those boys left. No attempt was made at developing a common curriculum. A new uniform was introduced but older pupils still wore grey Kynaston blazers or Quintin green/red. Segregation was evident and boys could taunt each other with "Quintin Queers" and "Kynaston C—s".

The perceived superiority of grammar schools influenced staff appointments as well as pupil relations. Some thought that *Quintin* masters got more than their fair share of senior posts while Kynaston's inspirational teachers were being passed over.

Structural changes went more smoothly. Dividing walls were removed and a bridge built to connect the two schools both physically and symbolically. The new *Quintin Kynaston School* was very well equipped with classrooms, workshops, laboratories and gymnasia. The large site boasted two playgrounds and had plenty of open space with abundant grass and trees.

But removing physical barriers and changing the school name was hardly enough. Genuine comprehensive education was meant to eliminate the socially divisiveness that "academic" and "technical" labels perpetuated. In 1972, A.J.Holt stepped down and a dynamic young Headmaster with radical ideas arrived...

A Pioneer of Comprehensive Education (1972-1983)

Appointed in 1972, Peter Mitchell (second from right in the photo) was a dynamic young Headmaster with a clear perception of the ideal comprehensive. Grammar schools had provided quality education but favoured the few and were socially divisive. Now there was to be a meritocracy based solely on ability. With a hands-on style, Mitchell was often to be seen in shirtsleeves around the corridors and playgrounds. Some boys welcomed the break with the past but many saw him as "soft". Nevertheless, as a pioneer in the field, his school would be in the vanguard of putting the latest educational theories into practice.

Many thanks to Martin Thirsk (extreme right) for this photograph of the Sixth Form in 1974. Click the picture for a larger version.

Students of all abilities were taught in the same class, where worksheets and group activity replaced text books and "chalk and talk". Instead of students switching to a new subject every 35 minutes (with teaching time lost as students traipsed through crowded corridors), there would be three long sessions separated by morning and lunch breaks. Flexibility within 70-minute blocks would accommodate the wide range of students in "mixed-ability" classes. Formal testing was dropped as it highlighted failure; instead there would be only positive encouragement. Uniforms (including

some lingering from pre-merger days) were abandoned though dark trousers and a blazer were now expected.

The curriculum was reformed. "Grammar school" disciplines like Latin and Greek were out; new subjects Social Education, Drama and, later, Computer Studies were in. Humanities combined Geography and History and expanded to include Sociology and Economics. Gender issues, blamed for holding back girls' education, were addressed. Integrated Science forced girls to study Physics and boys Biology. Design Technology included cooking and needlework, wood and metalwork. The new curriculum would be accessible to students of all abilities and relevant to the modern technological world. And, instead of competitive games, there was to be individual exercise for all (shades of Quintin Hogg's character-building games just for fun).

Among other innovations, Peter Mitchell opened the school to the local community and gained funding for after-school clubs and social activities. When QK teachers staffed these activities, they were given time off from their normal teaching load to compensate.

Girls Arrive (1976)

Headteacher Peter Mitchell had strong support from the school governors and local parents for bringing in girls. Following a vigorous lobby of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA), the planned date was brought forward to September 1976 when a vanguard of 105 girls arrived alongside a similar number of boys. There were already over 1000 older boys *in situ*.

In an interview with a local newspaper, Mitchell claimed that no special preparations had been made for the girls' arrival apart from the obvious ones of providing housecraft rooms (though some boys already had cookery lessons) and extra lavatories. "We believe that all pupils need warmth and encouragement, so there is no question of altering our approach to deal with girls", he added. In fact, precautions were put in place to ensure that the boys were not too rough in the playground but these proved unnecessary. There was already a female Deputy Head, Margritte Pressman, and a woman P.E. teacher was appointed (to a previously all-male staffroom!)

An experimental link with three primary schools – George Eliot, Barrow Hill and Holy Trinity – guaranteed places if parents choose to send their girls to QK. 58 did so and these girls began in the company of their classmates, easing the process.

Co-education was perhaps the only educational development founder Quintin Hogg had not anticipated in 1886. And, unlike many of the educational theories of the 1970s, this reform remains unchallenged.

After Peter Mitchell left in 1983, his deputy Laurie Goodhand was appointed Headteacher to be followed by Sheila Madgwich in 1987. But it was Jill Hoffbrand, acting Headteacher during a short interregnum in 1986, who, out of the blue, was faced with an urgent evacuation. But not to the delights of the seaside this time...

Emergency Evacuation (1986-1987)

Food Technician Beryl Rushbrooke was furious when she arrived at the start of the autumn term in 1986. A cupboard which she had left spotless was covered in a thick layer of dust.

Asbestos was causing much public concern at the time. Widely used in the past, experts now agreed that even minute amounts of airborne blue asbestos particles

were a serious health hazard. Asbestos used in the 1956 building was quite safe unless disturbed but, as a precaution, specialist contractors had been employed to replace the boiler house insulation during the summer holidays.

Gaps round pipes running through the food cupboard had not been properly sealed allowing asbestos to leak into the food store and possibly further afield. The building was sealed and students sent home. A room at Swiss Cottage Library witnessed a fraught meeting between officials and staff. For three weeks students collected work from a pick-up point at a nearby school. Meanwhile, dispossessed teachers struggled to prepare and deliver work, collect and mark it.

Decontamination would take months so temporary accommodation was found. Each morning QK students boarded coaches in Marlborough Hill for the trip to a disused school in Gifford Street, N1 returning in the afternoon. An emergency timetable was put together for the shortened teaching day and the absence of laboratories, workshops and gymnasium space. And barely half QK's students could be accommodated at any one time.

As Christmas 1986 approached, prefabricated huts were erected in a playground at Marlborough Hill, looking like a prisoner of war camp without the barbed wire. Now all the students could be taught at the same time. Years 7-9 were bussed daily to Gifford Street while Years 10-13 occupied the huts. But some teachers, such as the sole music specialist, were needed at both sites. They had to catch a minibus shuttle back and forth. Usually staff managed to be in front of the right class at the right time! Meanwhile, each room at QK was checked for asbestos, decontaminated and declared safe. Eventually, desperately needed science laboratories and a gymnasium were brought into use and eventually the daily excursion to Islington came to an end.

Twelve months into the disruption, Sheila Madgwick took up her appointment as Headteacher and joined the patrols of the 'hut village'. It wasn't until December 1987 that the huts went and the school could begin the process of recovery. Not surprisingly, fewer students had joined the school and a number transferred to other schools. For many years, the consequences of lost time and 15 months of woefully inadequate facilities showed up in examination results and low recruitment of students.

Hard Times (1986-1994)

Government legislation affecting all state schools brought about major changes at QK in the 1980s. The most far-reaching was the 1986 Education Reform Act which laid down a National Curriculum for the first time, set Attainment Targets, introduced Key Stage Tests and the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), and increased the number of parents on governing bodies.

But another government measure had an even greater impact on QK: the abolition of the ILEA in April 1990 and the decision of the newly created Westminster Local Education Authority (LEA) to make secondary schools manage their own finances. From the outset, income based on the number on roll (which had fallen dramatically during the 1986 asbestos disruption) would not cover staff salaries let alone pay for services previously provided centrally by the ILEA.

As surplus staff could not be removed (see panel), savings could only be made by not replacing teachers who left. This lead to a mismatch between available subject specialists and classes to be taught. Subjects outside the National Curriculum like drama and pottery were at risk and the Sixth Form offer shrank alarmingly.

The 1986 Act required a re-think of the 1970s concept of comprehensive education where mixed-ability teaching without formal testing was intended to end the social

divisions inherent in the grammar/secondary modern model. Many people had detected a serious downside: too many school leavers could barely construct a sentence, let alone do sums. Parents and employers (though not some teachers) welcomed the new national compulsory Key Stage Tests at ages 7, 11 and 14. Successive governments expressed disapproval of mixed-ability teaching but didn't proscribe it.

Only a limited response to the 1986 Act was possible at QK due to a serious shortage of resources. A spiral of decline begun with asbestos was quickening as the roll continued to decline. A new Headteacher was appointed in September 1994 but an Ofsted Inspection in February 1996 identified "serious weaknesses". Governors were required to draw up an Action Plan...

Turning the Corner (1996-2001)

Spurred on by the adverse 1996 Ofsted Report, Headteacher Nick Kemp put in place a robust recovery programme. Students were set individual targets for improvement in each subject based on their potential. Formal testing was introduced throughout the school. Staff were encouraged to give praise only when it was genuinely merited. Focusing on one's own targets discouraged complacency when ahead of classmates and the stigma of failure when behind. A sustained upward trend in achievement began.

Poor behaviour was tackled, with a tariff of rewards and punishments. Effort, attendance and behaviour were rewarded as well as academic attainment. Offences ranging from arriving late for a lesson to fighting would be punished. Disrupting the learning of others was outlawed and if necessary students were excluded (expelled). A school uniform returned as did competitive sports with teams representing the school in football and other tournaments.

Kemp set about removing teachers unsuited to a multicultural inner city school with students from socially-deprived backgrounds. In their place, Kemp sought to attract excellent teachers who were better able to meet the challenge and deliver achievement. Applicants were required to take a demonstration lesson observed by senior staff. Professional development and the spread of good practice was encouraged.

An increasing school roll started to generate more income. Gradually, specialist staff were recruited, neglected repairs undertaken, science laboratories and drama rooms re-equipped, the computer network up-graded, new projects such as mentoring started. Examination results began to improve dramatically. The school regained its reputation and became over-subscribed. By 2001 standards were high enough for QK to gain Specialist Technology College status. It was time to venture beyond the school gate...

Reaching Out (2001-present)

A new century brought renewal and change. QK's roll was rapidly rising and the school also benefitted from increasing per-pupil payments. As a Technology College, it received additional government funding plus £0.25m a year from commercial sponsors Goldman Sachs Foundation and the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers. Money also came from two government schemes - *Excellence in Cities* (EiC) for inner city schools and the *Standards Fund* to improve examination results - and from the National Lottery. By 2002, annual income was over £5m; for each of the five years to 1999 it had been less than £2.5m and falling in real terms year by year due to inflation.

When Ms Jo Shuter took up her appointment as Headteacher in January 2002, she

needed to recruit more teachers to cater for rising numbers (up from 790 in 1999 to over 1300 by 2004) and to extend the curriculum, notably with Business Studies. A range of vocational courses were started and new subjects added to the Sixth Form offer (attracting over 300 students by 2005). A Inclusion Department was set up to run a programme for gifted and talented students and to extend support for the badly behaved and disaffected, refugees and cared-for children.

Long neglected buildings were repaired, refurbished and redecorated. A suite of Music rooms and a QK Diner (to replace inadequate 1956 "serveries") were built. The computer network was up-graded and extended with fast internet access and interactive whiteboards installed in classrooms. Security of the site was enhanced and accessibility improved. A new logo, a bright new entrance foyer and a changed school uniform (shoes and trousers/skirts as well as shirts and jackets) promoted her vision for the future.

As a Technology College, QK made its resources and expertise in design technology, information technology, mathematics and science available to local primary, secondary and special schools. Primary school pupils had lessons in QK's workshops and laboratories. In 2003 QK pioneered a government initiative to create Extended Schools serving the wider community. Adult education classes and an after-school Youth Club revived memories of the community school of the 1970s.

Tradition Transcends Change

Much of the ethos of the original *Polytechnic Intermediate Day School* has survived throughout the many phases of the school's history and one or two traumas.

The school was called "Intermediate" because it was intended to fill the gap between the privileged classes who could afford public schools (and university) for their children and the great majority whose elementary education stopped at age 12. With no state funding available, the Poly school was necessarily fee-paying. But, by providing scholarships, Quintin Hogg sought to widen its scope. The Quintin School was able to extend this process when the government abolished fees in 1948 and *QK* completed it by becoming fully comprehensive in 1969.

Students have always come from a wide variety of cultures. As early as 1891 it was reported "Last term we received a scholar from St Petersburg and this term another follows." Refugees arrived throughout the 20th century: early examples included Jews and Poles escaping Tsarist pogroms, Russians fleeing the Bolsheviks, Armenians and Greeks driven out by the Ottoman Turks. Diplomats posted to London, aghast at the English practice of dispatching their sons to boarding schools, were pleased to send theirs to the *Polytechnic Day School*. Along with children of the local tradesmen and scholarship boys, there was a healthy mix of classes. By the end of the 20th century, British-born girls and boys were studying alongside those from many European countries, Commonwealth nations and the wider English-speaking world.

Although the school's origins were strongly influenced by Quintin Hogg's muscular Christian Protestantism, there was never any question of religious discrimination: the first Poly boy to read History at Cambridge later became a rabbi. Well before the school reached its centenary, all the major world faiths were represented amongst the student body.

Another continuing tradition is its strength in science and technology. The adult laboratories available in the Institute (and their lecturers) gave the *Polytechnic Boys' Day School* an advantage over even well endowed 19th century grammar schools. The two schools built in 1956 and merged in 1969 were similarly well equipped and in 2001 *Quintin Kynaston's* outstanding record was recognised by gaining specialist Technology College status.