

Over the Wall

by Keith Lloyd

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When George Lloyd was about ten years old a favourite prank of his was to scale the wall of the boys' toilet at West Silvertown School and peer over into the girls' toilet.

In those days the school toilets were outside and had no roof and it was easy to see the girls from the top of the wall. George found it difficult to climb and so his brothers Ernie and Walter would hold his feet and lift him high enough for George to clamber to the top. It was a bit precarious up there as the wall was only nine inches wide and to stay perched that way needed the utmost concentration.

So when someone shouted "Look out! 'ere comes the teacher" The brothers quickly disappeared, leaving poor George up the wall, so to speak.

The commotion caused George to lose his balance and he fell, not back to the boys side as you might expect but down amongst the screaming girls. George lay on the ground squirming as the girls crowded round pawing him, an experience he might have enjoyed had it not been for the pain in his back because of the fall and the realisation that the teacher was coming.

With an extreme effort he got up and pushed his way out, knocking some girls down in the process causing them to cry. The teacher tried to stop him but she had no chance, George knocked her over as well.

During school hours the main gate was always locked and escape was impossible. Eventually George was captured and paraded at Assembly in front of the whole school as a naughty boy. But worse was how the girls taunted him with calls like "Georgie Porgie kissed the girls and made them cry"

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The fact that his brothers 'put him up to it' so to speak, cut no ice - when quizzed they knew nothing about it!!!

I am told that George wasn't the only one to climb on the toilet wall to spy on the girls this way. Some of the other boys also did it. The little tykes!

It wouldn't have happened in my day - we would have got a ladder!