



A Day at School

by Keith Lloyd

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Two weeks after the First World War ended in 1918, Ernie Lloyd was transferred from the Infants' School to the West Silvertown Boys first year Junior School and naturally he felt nervous about the change.

But when he went into Class 1A he found that Mrs. Hake, his teacher from Infants, was the class teacher and Mrs. Jessup took Class 1B. This was to make the change easier for the children. Male teachers often came to do the odd lesson and by the time they were ready to move up to the second year the boys were quite used to the idea of male teachers. Ernie was moved to Class 2, which was Mr. Willingale's class and then on to Mr. Perry in Class 3.

Ernie sat at the front of the class in front of the teacher's desk. Next to him was Mac who had been in the class for some time and was a well dressed, clean looking lad a little smaller than Ernie. After a few days he was settling in quite well and getting on fine with Mac.

One day while he was concentrating on his exercise books and getting on with his writing (at which he was quite good) a whole stick of chalk suddenly thudded against Mac's head, breaking into pieces. Ernie was shocked, which must have been apparent by the dumfounded look on his face. He wasn't sure at first what had happened. The whole class had stopped working and were laughing. It was only when Mr. Perry said to Mac "Stop daydreaming and stay awake" that Ernie realised the chalk had been thrown by the teacher.

Mac started to cry and Ernie tried to console him. This resulted in a flip round the ear with the cane. It happened many times after that and Mr. Perry would mock Mac saying things like "Boo-hoo,

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you little baby". It was evident that the teacher was a bully. He always seemed to pick on Mac who was the smallest in the class.

One day the chalk broke in two and Ernie caught one half and threw it back at the teacher. It hit Mr. Perry a resounding whack in the forehead and his look of amazement made Ernie burst into uncontrollable laughter; even Mac laughed behind the lid of his desk, "Good old Lloydie" he whispered. But Mr. Perry didn't see the funny side. He advanced menacingly towards Ernie with his cane held in front of him. Ernie wasn't at all concerned but thinking to appease the teacher he said "Sorry Sir, I didn't mean to do that" "Oh! So you didn't mean to do it eh! I suppose it was an involuntary move" Ernie replied, "Yes" although he didn't know what involuntary meant.

"Remain seated when the class dismiss at 4pm," said Mr. Perry.

Well at precisely 4 pm the class were dismissed and as some of the older lads passed Ernie's desk they whispered,

"Good luck mate, you'll need it"

"You're in for it now Lloydie"

But strangely he wasn't worried. When the class had finally cleared Mr. Perry walked slowly to the door and closed it. Then he approached Ernie swishing his cane like an expert. It appeared he had done this before.

He stared at Ernie for some time. And then eventually he said, "As nobody can ever control involuntary movement, I suppose I will have to overlook that throw of yours which came very hard. I have kept you back to give you some advice, so just listen. Your record shows that you suffer from an inferiority complex and you think too much of others and not enough of yourself. Take my advice boy and look after yourself and don't worry about the other chap and you will find in a few years time you will know



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that what I am saying is good advice. You can go home now, don't be late in the morning"

He flipped Ernie's ear with the cane as a parting gesture.

Well, Ernie did look after himself but he still took the part defending other people - his brothers in particular.





First Tea Party





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