

Growing up in Tuakau

The hills and fields of Tuakau provided an ideal playground for the young Ed – who was something of a dreamer. Inspired by the adventure stories he loved to read, he would disappear for long walks, carrying a stick that he would pretend was a sword.

However, Ed's childhood was far from perfect. Despite being able to conjure up a good bedtime story, his father was a strict man who held very strong beliefs about how things should be done. Ed and his father often clashed, which resulted in Ed developing a strong and spirited character.

Going to school

Ed encountered his first real challenges at

school. As a young boy, he would walk barefoot the half-mile to Tuakau Primary School, whatever the weather. His mother's patient coaching meant that he progressed well at school, and he was able to skip a couple of

years. However, this was not necessarily a good thing for Ed, who found himself by far the youngest in his class. He struggled to make friends and was a shy and quiet pupil.

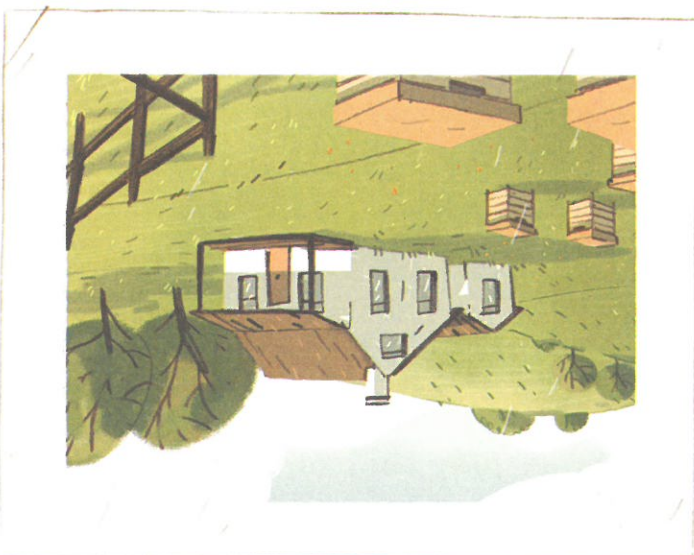
When he was just 11, his parents sent him to Auckland Grammar School. Here,

his classmates were a full two years older than him. Unsurprisingly, he was terrified and, once again, he found himself alone and friendless. When lunchtime arrived, he would escape to the back of the school where he would sit and watch a colony

of ants busy at work. These ants – he would later say – were the only friends he really had during that bleak time.

Nevertheless, things eventually began to improve for Ed. He performed well in lessons and began to grow taller and stronger.

By the final year of his sixth form, he had begun to enjoy himself.



Ed's childhood home surrounded by beehives

