



## ALUMNI

Simon Moore studied O-levels/CSEs at Kenilworth School (the bit they used to call Abbey) in the 1980s and did his A-levels at Castle (Maths, Further Maths and Physics). I've always been good at Computer Science and Electronics but terrible at English so I ended up sitting O-level English while doing my A-levels having taken CSE English previously (CSE English wasn't good enough to go to most universities). I was offered a place to study Computer Science at University of York and my three As at A-level secured it (I wouldn't have got into Cambridge with no O-level in a foreign language).

The first three years in York went well but I came down with ME at the start of the fourth (Masters) year and ended up having a year off. I went back the following year mostly recovered, finished the Masters and got hooked on research so looked around for Ph.D. opportunities. I ended up with Ph.D. offers from York and Cambridge, and decided to move to Cambridge in 1991. I ended up being based at Trinity Hall, one of the smaller and older (founded in 1350) Cambridge colleges. It was a strange place at first, but I got used to it in part because many of the senior teaching members (Fellows) were northern Grammar School lads, so they reminded me a bit of my Dad who grew up in Derbyshire. I had a great time doing my Ph.D., including working as a summer intern for an industrial research lab in Silicon Valley. Writing up my thesis was a bit of a struggle (I never was very good at English!). I made lots of use of figures (diagrams and graphs) - there are 93 of them in just over 100 pages. I worked as a postdoctoral researcher for a bit while looking around for a permanent academic position.

Having been turned down for a couple of jobs in Cambridge and one in Oxford, I was offered a job back in York made vacant by my old project supervisor quitting due to pressures of work. I decided I didn't want the job because they hadn't done anything to fix the problem (the person they appointed only lasted 18 months). Finally, in 1998, I secured a lectureship in Cambridge and scarily I've been there ever since working my way up the academic ladder, from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer, Reader and finally Professor. I also ended up being a Fellow at Trinity Hall. My old nemesis - English - has been at odds with the academic need to publish or perish. Fortunately I discovered that my technical creativity was key and simple clean language to explain these insights was sufficient. I've now published over 150 academic papers and a book. So here I am, the Deputy Head of Department for one of the top Computer Science departments in the world. I've taught over two thousand students how to design computers from electronic gates up and won the University of Cambridge's Pilkington Teaching prize. Not bad for the shy fat school boy who was useless at sport, had spidery handwriting and couldn't spell (still can't). And I know no Latin, so as a Cambridge scholar I must be a fraud (but don't tell anybody!).

Simon, or Professor Moore, as we should call him certainly shows us the resilience that many of our students have and he has worked hard in order to achieve his dream of working in academia.