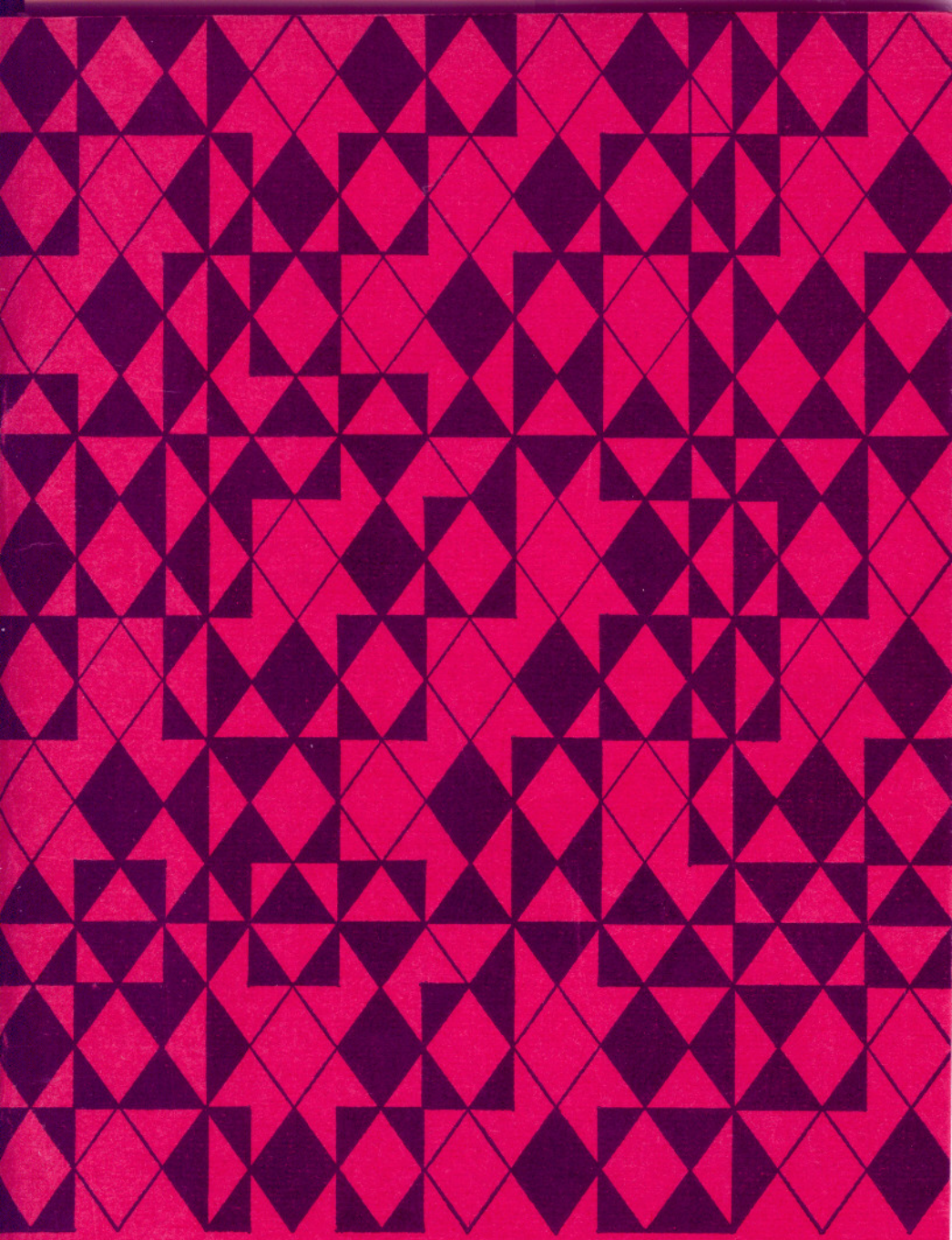

Bacup & Rawtenstall Grammar School

DIAMOND JUBILEE ANTHOLOGY

1913-1973

DIAMOND JUBILEE ANTHOLOGY

BACUP AND RAWTENSTALL

GRAMMAR SCHOOL

1973

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D. Chadwick

NEWCHURCH GRAMMAR SCHOOL

The foundation of this school at the beginning of the eighteenth century did not occur in an educational vacuum in Rossendale. In 1677 the parish registers record the death of Charles Howorth, who is affectionately called "ludimagister noster de Rossendale". This worthy had acted as the 'parish register', that is the official elected by the chapelry to be responsible for the registration of baptisms and marriages in the period of the Commonwealth.

In 1692 the dissenting body from which the Baptists in Rossendale sprang erected a schoolhouse in Bacup, but little else is known of the school conducted there. In 1701 John Kershaw of Wolfendenbooth Fold (the area around the Jolly Sailor Inn) removed certain lands "Lying in Ye Healde and Old Meadows within Bacupboothe" from the hands of one set of trustees and conveyed them to another set of three trustees, who were to devote them "to the use and behoofe of a master of a free school for ever, who is to teach ye English, Lattin and Greek tongues at Wolfendenbooth-fould in Rossendale and be qualified both in learning and good government and be diligent to ye scholars".

John Kershaw also left lands to be sold for the erection of the school — the lands in Bacup being intended to provide an income for the master. These lands lying along the east bank of the Whitewell were a collection of fields whose names have a familar ring — the Sysse (Sissclough), the Tod Carr, the Gag Hill and the Mythe Holme — and it is pleasant to speculate how the endowment of the School would have increased in the nineteenth century if they had been retained, and the outlying lands in Bacup sold.

John Kershaw was buried on the 1st February 1701, aged 85 years, and his wife, An (sic), on the 4th January 1709. On their tombstone at Newchurch is inscribed :

They lived long beloved
And dy'd bewailed
And two estates
upon one school entail'd.

The Finances of the School

From the beginning the school, like many others, suffered from two handicaps: an inadequate endowment, and lack of succession amongst the trustees. The endowment was, from the first, unfortunate. The trustees were unable to secure payment for the lands that Kershaw had meant to be sold for the erection

of a schoolhouse, since bankruptcy overtook the buyer before he could pay, and the trustees were involved in litigation, which lasted until 1742, before they could recover the money. For the first two years after Ann Kershaw's death, therefore, the trustees devoted the income from the Bacup farms to the building of a schoolhouse, so that the school did not actually open until 1711.

When the trustees did get the money, they loaned it out on mortgage of a warehouse. This mortgage failed, and they were left with the warehouse. This they converted into cottages, which they let out to rent.

In 1787 the trustees bought some land in Newchurch and erected a new school upon it at a total cost of £162, raised by public subscription. They converted the old schoolhouse in Boothfold into cottages, which were let. The rents from these properties were applied to the master's salary.

In 1828 James Thornley, of Disley, left £100 to the school. This money, together with the subscriptions from others, was used to build a house for the master, but the house proved unsuitable and was let, the rent going to augment the master's salary In 1858 the Boothfold cottages were sold for £56. This was applied to the alteration of the existing master's house at a cost of £250, the balance being raised by public subscription again. All this solicitude for the domestic comfort of the master in the nineteenth century is very touching. In 1880 the school's building was evidently so unsuitable that the school was being conducted in Baltic House, Waterfoot.

The last building to house the Newchurch Grammar School was erected in 1889 and is still in existence, now being St. Peter's Primary School in Turnpike. This was extended in 1894, so that by then it included a main schoolroom, which could hold a hundred, classrooms, a chemistry laboratory and a completely equipped gymnasium. The total cost was £3,500.

The Government of School

The old practice of appointing certain persons as trustees to be succeeded by their heirs led to many troubles in the administration of charities. The original trustees were the three most substantial landowners in the immediate vicinity of Boothfold. Within fifty years, the direct lines of at least two of those three were extinguished, and their heirs were not resident in Rossendale.

Consequently, in 1752 new statutes were drawn up, increasing the number of trustees to six, which had to include the incumbent of Newchurch, if resident. They were to meet annually and appoint one of themselves to be steward for the year. He had to collect the rents and pay for the master's salary. In choosing a new master, they should find one well versed in English and

the rudiments of the Latin tongue, expert in writing and accounts, of good conversation and firmly attached to the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the kingdom. He had to give a bond of £500 for his good behaviour and obedience to the statutes. If the master was unable to teach by reason of age or other infirmity, the trustees should allow him half the yearly salary and employ the other half to pay a teacher in his place. The master had also to attend his scholars in the church at all times of divine service and had to instruct them in the Christian religion as contained in the church catechism. Here we see the Established Church getting a grip on a foundation originally purely secular.

The scholars were to receive free tuition in English and the rudiments of Latin, having first learnt their letters at a dame's school. They had to present the master with not above half-a-crown nor under sixpence on the first Mondays after Epiphany and Midsummer. They had to pay him a shilling on entry and twopence each year at Michaelmas for mending the school windows !

There seem to be three points worthy of note about these statutes. The trustees were now the self-perpetuating oligarchy so typical of the eighteenth century. When one died, the remainder elected someone else in his place. The charging of fees is foreshadowed. This became the practice at some uncertain date between 1752 and the first report of the Charity Commissioners in 1826, since the income of the foundation — about £11 per annum at the time — was insufficient to support even a schoolmaster.

The introduction of a religious bias was particularly unfortunate in a place like Rossendale, where Dissent was strong and growing. Not only did it reduce the master's possible income in fees, but it put up a bar to the interest of a section of the community which was at the time intellectually and economically vigorous and which held education in great respect. Indeed it was the Dissenters who, during that very period, founded the academies at which it was possible to obtain the best education in England at that time.

Little else seems to be known about the curriculum of the school until the middle of the nineteenth century, when a vivid light is thrown on it by a handbill which is printed with this article.

As we see, Mr. Matthias Stephenson was not the sort of man to hide his light under a bushel, but the main reason for the issue of this document seems to be the fact that the school was feeling the competition of private schools in the vicinity, and there is the bitterness of financial rivalry in the denunciation of "unqualified and superficial pretenders".

FREE GRAMMAR SCHOOL
NEWCHURCH

Matthias Stephenson
Master of the Free Grammar School, Newchurch
Land-Surveyor and Mathematician

Respectfully informs the public that his Scholars are thoroughly, grounded, aud fundamentally instructed in every branch of learning which may qualify them for business, or for scientific pursuits, on terms varying from 6.6d. to 12s.6d. per quarter; from 6d. to 1s. per week, or from 1½d. to 3d. per day; there are no extras, and the hours of attendance are from 8 to 12 o'clock, and 1.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.

During the Mastership of Mr. Stephenson for the last ten years, some of his pupils have acquired distinguished Mathematical Honour- at College, others have succeeded to lucrative situations as books keepers, and others have passed the government examination with credit, have obtained the government grant, and have been appointed to good situations as Schoolmasters.

Attention is requested to the following advantages to be derived from attendance at this School: This being the only Public School in Rossendale to which short timers, and children who cannot read do not resort, the master's time and attention are given individually to those who do attend.

Masters of Public Endowed Schools must have had their qualifications thoroughly examined, and strictly tested before their appointment, and consequently parents may be confident that they are not wasting their own money and children's time, by sending them to unqualified and superficial pretenders. The scholars beiug attended to individually, and hours of attendance being longer than those of any other School in the district, their progress in learning is proportionally rapid, and young men who have been educated at this School being decidedly preferred are eagerly sought for by Employers in the neighourhood.

Boarders received, and an Articled Pupil wanted.

MATTHIAS STEPHENSON,
Master.

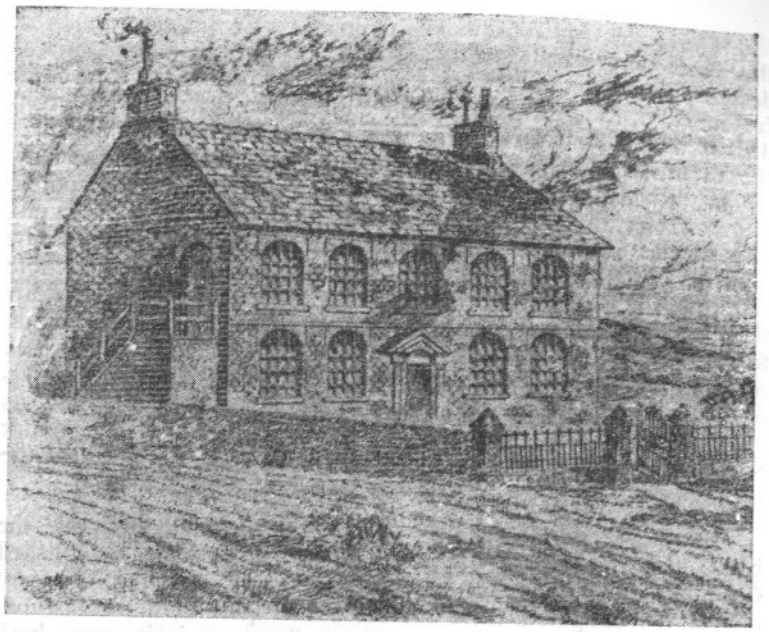
Newchurch, 6th May, 1851. (*Lonsdale, Printer*)

Handbill issued by Matthias Stephenson

The state of affairs thus illuminated was not uncommon at the time. The traditional curriculum of grammar schools was designed to give pupils the linguistic equipment to cope with further education at the ancient universities when it was conducted in Latin. It was totally unsuited to a generation of which the majority was destined to be occupied in running the new world brought about by the industrial revolution. The public appreciated this more quickly than the traditional educators, and private academies grew up to cater for their demands. Some grammar schools were so well-endowed as to be able to ignore the pressure to modify the education they gave and to draw their emoluments for teaching classes which sometimes shrank to one pupil. The others had either to close their doors for lack of fees or to adapt their curriculum in order to meet the demands of the new age. The importance of this document lies in its illustration of this last process at the Newchurch Grammar School. By 1892 it had gone a stage further, and we find that the school possessed a chemistry master of all things!

In the early 1860's, girls were being educated alongside the boys, and the bias towards the doctrines of the Established Church was so much in abeyance that a Baptist minister sent one of his daughters there for the earlier part of her education, and lo! religious principle and masculine superiority were both in flight, together with Latin and Greek, in face of the economic necessity of the master.

Obviously this sort of thing could not be allowed to continue, and, in 1867, a new scheme of government was drawn up by the Charity Commissioners. This essentially continued the system established in 1752, except that now trustees were limited to those with property in the township or more than £100 per annum. It was laid down that the headmaster should be a member of the Church of England and a graduate of one English university or of Trinity College, Dublin. Religious instruction should be in accordance with the doctrines of the Established Church, but a conscience clause was introduced. Boys (only!) between the ages of seven and seventeen should be admitted and secular instruction should be in Latin and Greek, mathematics and English subjects and, at special fees, in French, German, drawing, surveying and natural sciences. Three years before, the Schools Inquiry Commission had recorded that the education was commercial and to some extent classical, with twenty out of forty scholars taking Latin and four taking Greek. Few were staying beyond the age of fourteen. The headmaster was drawing £48 per annum from the foundation and £120 from fees. In 1854 there had been an assistant master, but in 1864 there were insufficient funds for any help but that of a pupil-teacher.



Newchurch Grammar School in the 1880's

The school seems to have been in rather a low state for the next thirteen years, from the remarks made in the first extant register, which was started in 1880 by a new master, Rev. Hubert Edward Chapman, who claimed that he completely reorganized the school. Certainly, the new register started at that date only contains the names of ten pupils.

A new constitution of government was drawn up by the Charity Commissioners in 1890, which augmented the previous trustees.

In a prospectus issued in the later 1890's, care is taken to make clear that "Religious Instruction is confined to a careful study of the Bible". This prospectus states that :

> The course of instruction given is intended to provide a liberal education adapted to the needs of a commercial district. It includes :
>
> | | |
> |---|---|
> | Mathematics | Drawing, Book-keeping, etc. |
> | German | Chemistry (Theoretical and Practical) |
> | French | English Composition |
> | Greek (if desired) | English Language and Literature |
> | The Bible | History |
> | Latin | Geography |

Under the last headmaster, Mr. T. E. Jackson, the school grew and flourished and, by the time of its closure, was becoming overcrowded. At the time of the issue of the prospectus, there were four full time staff, including the headmaster and Mrs. Martin, who ran the preparatory department, with part-time teachers of chemistry and music, together with the inevitable sergeant-major in charge of "drill and gymnastics". By 1913 there were six full-time members of staff besides the headmaster. The growth of the school during this period can be ascribed to the ability and character of Mr. Jackson and his staff, the increasing recognition of the importance of education by parents and the avoidance of anything in the curriculum which would give offence to non-conformists, so that the school was freely supported by them.

The Masters of Newchurch Grammar School

The annals of this most worthy band of men are short and simple in the extreme. They were also poor, and about the only generalisation one can make is that many of them were forced to augment their income by doing additional work of another sort.

Some of them are recorded as being licensed by the Bishop of Chester, in whose diocese Rossendale lay.

Ralph Cresswell appears to have been the first master. Although his nomination for licence was not made until 1716, in it he is stated to have been in the school for some time. The nomination is signed by the churchwardens and principal inhabitants of Newchurch. He died in 1727.

John Piccop, the elder, was master from this date until his death in 1751. Unlike Cresswell, he was a native of Boothfold, where his father (another John Piccop, who rejoiced in the nickname "Swiggers"), was an innkeeper and the parish clerk to boot. Besides being schoolmaster, John Piccop succeeded his father in the office of parish clerk.

A third John Piccop followed his father as schoolmaster and his father and grandfather as parish clerk in 1751 and continued in these offices until he died or left in 1776. From entries in the court rolls of the period, it appears that these two masters did a lot of minor legal work concerned with land transactions for the inhabitants of the locality. The parish registers are kept in their hand, sometimes in copperplate and sometimes in legal script.

I have been unable to find the name of the youngest John Piccop's successor. He had a child named John, who died in infancy. No bishop's licence seems to have been issued, and the registers of baptisms and burials for Newchurch are missing until almost 1800. A William Lord appears as the regular second witness to marriage entries — normally one of the functions of the parish clerk, but whether he supplied the office of schoolmaster or not we cannot say.

In 1808 the Rev. William Thacker died at the age of 70. He is described in the parish register as "of Staghills, a few years schoolmaster and assistant curate at Newchurch".

He was succeeded by John Bentley, who supplied the office until his death in 1840 at the age of 66. He was not licensed by the bishop until 1810. Bentley was fond of having his name inscribed on stones in buildings — while his pupils presumably confined their similar proclivities to the desks. He had an inscribed stone erected in the wall of the cottage at Boothfold, where the original school was held.

An unvarnished translation of this ponderous piece of wisdom is :

What does not destructive time (literally, day) destroy ?
What thing cannot greedy time consume ?
Worthy reader
If thou knowest anything more true than this
Clearly impart it, if not, assent to this with me.

He also managed to get his name on the farm at Heald, which was repaired under his mastership. The stone in Boothfold was rescued when the building was pulled down and is now on view in the Whitaker Park Museum.

Matthias Stephenson took over the School in 1840. He came from the Liverpool area and was one of the foundation students of the University of Durham. From the handbill previously mentioned we have a clearer idea of the school itself than at any previous time. It might be noted that Matthias Stephenson also added to his income by surveying.

By comparison, the next two masters are shadowy figures. Upon Stephenson's death, William Greenwood, B.A., was appointed. In 1864 the Rev. Thomas Howard was master.

In 1880 the Rev. Herbert Edward Chapman, of Trinity College, Dublin, took over the school and reorganised it, but it does not appear to have achieved much greater prosperity until the 1890's

He left in 1882 and was succeeded by R. W. Hay, M.A. The numbers did not increase much under these two masters. The latter was not solely dependent on the mastership for his income, since he married a member of a local family of prosperous colliery owners.

The last headmaster was Mr. T. E. Jackson, M.A., who had been educated at Dulwich College and Trinity College, Cambridge, which he entered on an open sizarship in 1877. He graduated with second class honours in the Classical Tripos of 1880. He had had considerable previous teaching experience at Cranfield College, Maidenhead, the Royal Institute School, Liverpool, and Islington High School.

The Closure of the School

Nowadays people are often puzzled as to why Newchurch Grammar School was closed when this school was opened and the name changed, instead of a continuity of name at any rate being established. The new name is certainly less graceful and smacks of civic pride.

The problem is too complex to unravel here, but may be clarified somewhat by a consideration of the picture of secondary education as a whole in the valley at the time.

One clue is the full title of the new school : The Bacup and Rawtenstall Secondary and Technical School. Technical education in the Valley had been hitherto carried on in highly unsuitable premises based on the old mechanics' institutes, but proliferating into old mills for want of space and need for equipment. The hard-headed business men of the Valley, who were also prominent in local politics, were very keen to improve this, and almost a third of the new building was devoted to technical education.

There was no satisfactory full-time secondary education for girls. A Pupil-Teachers' Centre was conducted on a day-release basis for them in Bethel Lecture Hall, Waterfoot, but this was getting overcrowded. Other girls had to travel to Bury High School or to the mixed secondary school at Haslingden, newly opened in 1904.

This school at Haslingden was probably a precipitating factor. It was the first school opened by a county council acting as a local education authority with the powers conferred by the Education Act of 1902, after the Cockerton Case had established that it was illegal for local school boards to spend more money on secondary education. People began to realise that it was more economical to send their children to this school with County Junior Scholarships, than to pay the fees at Newchurch, which was poorly endowed with scholarships.

Thus, when it became evident that Newchurch Grammar School was becoming overcrowded and that there was no room for expansion on the site, a solution, such as was offered by the example of the county's new school at Haslingden, seemed the

most commendable one, especially since the aspirations of those who were most enthusiastic for technical education could be incorporated in it. Ideas such as this seem to have been canvassed from 1906 onwards.

Had the endowments of the old grammar school been substantial, the county authorities might have considered a rehousing and expansion of the older foundation. As they were not, the County Council seems to have been unprepared to sacrifice any element of control by such a course.

As things were, the changes were carried out as painlessly as possible. They must, however, have caused distress to Mr. Jackson, who saw the closure of the school, which he had built up to the zenith of its prosperity, precipitated by his success. He wished to retire, but was urged to accept the headship of the new school to ensure a smooth start. The existing staff of Newchurch Grammar School — Mr. Tonkinson, Mr. Owen, Mr. Anstey and Mr. Richardson — was appointed to the staff of the new school, but Mr. and Mrs. Martin retired when the old school closed. The ladies who had run the Pupil-Teachers' Centre, Miss Niness and Miss Wrigley (later Mrs. Whittaker), were also appointed, Miss Niness as senior mistress.

There remained the problem of the endowments of Newchurch Grammar School. The idea of using them to provide a pension for Mr. Jackson as compensation for loss of office was considered and rejected. Eventually they were devoted to the formation of the Newchurch-in-Rossendale Foundation Exhibition, which has eased the lot of many Rossendale boys and girls at the university. It is in belated appreciation of his share of this that the present writer submits this essay, and it would gladden the heart of old John Kershaw to know that students of divinity, psychology, French, physics and chemistry at the Universities of London, Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester and Sheffield at present are enjoying benefits from funds ultimately derived from his "two messuages lying within ye Heald and ye Old Meadows within Bacupboothe."

Mr. M. B. Ormerod

(From 'The Squirrel', 1963)

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

"It was a wet November evening in 1883 when Mrs. Mills and Miss Jones (alias Potter) picked their way along the irregularly paved and badly lighted back streets of Bacup. The place seemed deserted. There was a curious stillness in the air, which overtakes a purely manufacturing town when the mills

with their noise and their lights are closed . . . the small River Irwell splashed as merrily as it could, considering its free mountain descent, over bits of broken crockery, old boots and pieces of worn-out machinery." When Beatrice Potter, later the wife of Sydney Webb, Fabian and founder of the London School of Economics, recorded these impressions of the home of her grandfather, Lawrence Heyworth, she must have been completely unaware of the low state, not of the Irwell, but of the school on the hill at Newchurch, three miles down the valley.

In 1867 the Free Grammar School had been substantially reorganised, following recommendations made by the Charity Commissioners, and was placed under the authority of six trustees, one of whom was the Rector of Newchurch, and it was stipulated that the headmaster must be a member of the Church of England and that the pupils, aged seven to seventeen, should preferably live in the township of Newchurch. However, by the last years of the following decade, as a result of an "unfortunate choice of master", the attendance at the school had dwindled almost to nothing, the school building having become "antiquated and somewhat ruinous". By 1880 the school house had been deserted, such was its condition, and the school was being conducted in a room in a house in the valley, rented by the master. It was at this time that the governors resolved upon the building of a new school, although the Charity Commissioners, concerned at the inaction following a report made at their behest in 1880, did not in fact give consent to the erection of new buildings until 1888.

It was in 1899 that the Commissioners, surveying endowments in the County of Lancaster, were able to comment upon the buildings and organisation of the new school. The school had been rebuilt partly from materials gathered from two ruined cottages on a piece of copyhold land, which formed part of the endowment, in Warehouse Lane, Newchurch. The total cost of building was £220, defrayed mainly by donations and subscriptions. The major benefactors were H. H. Bolton, who gave £300, and E. Hoyle and Captain Patrick, who each gave £200. Other contributory sources were the sale of an iron building that had for some time been used for teaching purposes, and a bequest of Mrs. Alice Martha Crabtree of 1877, specifically intended for the renewal of the school building.

The Commissioners were able to observe the operation of a scheme for the governance of the school approved by Her Majesty in Council on 15th August 1890. By this scheme there were twelve governors — two elected by the local board of Rawtenstall, two by the town council of Bacup, one by the school board of Newchurch, one by the Victoria University and six

to be co-optative. The scheme further provided that the master need not be in holy orders, a provision that had been customary until the nineteenth century in most grammar schools, in accordance with the firm belief that the combination of schoolmastership and cure of the parish was a sensible practice to the benefit of the community. The masters had considerable powers: control of financial matters, internal organisation, management and discipline of the school "including the power of expelling and suspending boys from attendance."

We can see how these provisions applied nine years later. The governing body was made up as follows:-

Rawtenstall — Edward Ashworth, J.P., of Staghills; woollen manufacturer.
Richard Ashworth, of Ashlands, Newchurch; felt manufacturer.

Bacup — Daniel Greenwood, of Lane Head House; corn miller.
G. Shepherd, J.P., Holme Villa, Bacup; cotton manufacturer.

Rawtenstall Board (absorbed the Newchurch Board in 1891) — Joseph Whitehead, Church Street, Newchurch; painter and decorator.

Victoria University — A. W. Fletcher, Barrister-at-Law, 78 Cross Street, Manchester.

Co-optative — H. H. Bolton, J.P., Heightside, Newchurch; colliery proprietor.
R. J. C. Mitchell, J.P., Springfield House, Waterfoot; felt manufacturer.
J. H. Maden, M.P., Rockcliffe House, Bacup; cotton manufacturer.
G. W. L. Schofield, New Hall Hey, Rawtenstall; gentleman.
J. C. Hoyle, J.P., Oak House, Bacup; cotton manufacturer.

Clerk — Harry K. Thompson, solicitor, Waterfoot.

During the eighteenth century, the trustees met annually on Whit Tuesday; the new scheme provided for two meetings each year, five members constituting a quorum. However, "in consequence of the unimportance of business to be transacted it was difficult to secure their attendance", and so the number required for a quorum was reduced to three. Writing at the beginning of the century, Nicholas Carlisle had ascribed the

decline of grammar schools to "the negligence or cupidity of ignorant or unprincipled Trustees".

We must assume that, despite infrequent attendance at meetings, these were not characteristics of the governors of Newchurch Grammar School at the turn of the century.

Since 1892 the man who discharged the considerable powers bestowed upon the headmaster was, of course, Mr. T. E. Jackson. Strangely, he had no fixed income, having the privilege of retaining the balance of the accounts: in 1897 this amounted to £335. It would indeed be a salutary exercise today if headmasters had to find their own salaries after paying all fuel, food and telephone bills. Mr. Jackson was assisted by a member of the University of Paris at a salary of £140 per annum, this gentleman's wife at £80, a London B.A. at £93, and a fellow of the Chemical Society who, for seven and a half hours per week, received £60 per year.

The boys of the school, 83 in all, were taught in five forms and variously occupied a large room, divided into two by a folding glass partition, two other classrooms, a chemistry laboratory and gymnasium, as well as the headmaster's room, which also served as a chemistry lecture room. The gymnasium and additional rooms had been built in 1893, and an iron dining-room added to the master's house six years later, at a total cost of £950, raised mostly from the proceeds of bazaars, as lucrative a fund-raiser as the sponsored hike of today. Forty-four of the boys came from Rawtenstall, twenty-eight from Bacup, and the remainder from Haslingden. The average stay in the school was only three years. A few boys entered at eight years of age, but most at 12, leaving at 15; some stayed until the age of 17, and one or two even longer. For boys under 10, the fees were £6, for older pupils £9, but weekly boarders paid additionally £27, and full boarders £36, although there were only three boarders at the time. Extra charges were imposed for shorthand, instrumental music and gymnastics — this last activity being taught by the caretaker, and nearly all boys took part. At the time of the report, there were no pupils learning musical instruments, whilst singing was no longer part of the curriculum, having been abandoned in the previous year, "partly for lack of time for it, partly because of the result being thought inadequate". The scheme of 1890 enabled the governors to award scholarships to a tenth of the pupils, and nine boys were thus favoured with sums to the value of £10, maintained by private benefactors. Unfortunately, no money was available for awards to places of higher education, another selective factor in the survival of the independent grammar school.

There had clearly been a recent submission to parent-power. The headmaster was prepared to teach Greek, and had done so to three boys during his period of office, but, as most of the parents were tradesmen or connected wtih the mills, they insisted upon a curriculum of "modern" character. The original charity provided for the appointment of a master to teach English and the Greek and Latin tongues; Latin continued to be taught to all scholars until the last decade of the nineteenth century, when parents objected, and so chemistry began its redoubtable career as an alternative and was soon chosen by 65% of the pupils in preference to a classical language. The well appointed chemistry laboratory had been partly equipped by Rawtenstall Council, which hired the room for its own technical classes. In addition to compulsory English and mathematics, French, German, free-hand and geometrical drawing were also taught, but not to all pupils.

It was difficult to anticipate in 1899 that the grammar school was on the threshold of the last years of its existence; difficult also to reflect with certainty upon the thoughts of "Sir" John Kershaw, yeoman, who died in 1701 at the age of 85 at Wolfenden Booth, instrumental in the establishment of education in this remote area of the County Palatine, providing ultimately for a school house and the appointment of a master, "well versed in English and the rudiments of the Latin tongue, expert in writing and accounts, of good conversation and firmly attached to the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of this kingdom."

Mr. P. L. Clark

THE OLD DAYS AT NEWCHURCH

We are indebted for the following information to Mr. R. Riley, Mr. L. A. Stocks and Mr. G. Walmsley.

Mr. Walmsley, who attended the school from 1903-5, travelled from Haslingden, as did about twenty more boys until Haslingden Municipal Secondary School (later Haslingden Grammar School) was opened. They either walked from Haslingden to the school, or came by train to Rawtenstall or by steam tram to Waterfoot, and then walked to school. The school hours were 9.00 to 12.30 and 1.45 to 3.45. At the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions, the boys were summoned into school by the ringing of a large bell hung outside above the roof of the building, which was rung by means of a bellrope inside. Each form (except Forms I and II, the younger boys) had to attend a physical training class in the school gymnasium once a week, 3.45 to 4.45.

The accommodation consisted of the main room, which was used for assembly and then divided by a partition to make two classrooms; a room known as "the headmaster's room" but frequently used for lessons; a room for the young boys; a laboratory; a very small room, known as "the porch room", which was used for lessons but was really a porch, forming the never-used main entrance to the school; and the school gymnasium, a separate building adjoining the school yard.

School punishments consisted of detention after school, writing lines and, on rare occasions, physical punishment, which was sometimes carried out by Mr. Jackson before the whole school after morning prayers. Mr. Riley writes: "The cane was a thin, flexible one, which he always tested by flexing it prior to use before administering four or six of the best across the hand of the culprit. He stood in a military posture with his chin out, so that his red, pointed beard reminded me of Cutliffe Hyne's Captain Kettle. He would then fling the cane away in the direction of the door, a signal for the head boy to collect it and return it to the Head's study."

It was usual during each term to allow two half-holidays, not on any particular days; if something of local or national interest occurred, that probably settled the date. If no such event took place, the head boy had an unusual task: he had to ask the headmaster for the holiday and explain why he thought the boys deserved one. The boys gave him no peace until he asked for the holiday, but Mr. Walmsley tells us he did not know an occasion when the request was refused.

There was, of course, no such thing as school dinners as we know them today, but Mr. Jackson took care to advise the parents of new paying pupils about arrangements for lunch, which he and his sister, Miss Jackson, provided in School House, adjacent to the school, "in a Christian manner" (that is, inclusive of the saying of grace). He would add that the less well-to-do boys brought sandwiches, which they could eat at the homes of the local residents. There were also two pastry cooks' shops in the vicinity, which provided hot lunches for a small number of pupils at the cost of 7d. a day in 1912.

Mr. Stocks, who arrived at N.G.S. in January 1913, was one of the boys who took lunch at the headmaster's house. "I arrived, along with twenty other boys, who took lunch there at that time. The lunch was quite the best part of that first day, and the boiled suet pudding really excellent. It came as quite a surprise to me, as I had previously only known rice pudding and was unaware that there was such a thing as marmalade roll. I made up my mind there and then that I would have no more rice pudding as long as I lived. After lunch we made our way

back to the school yard, where the new boys were seized upon to be ducked in the cloakroom wash basins, after which I sat all afternoon with a wet linen Eton collar clinging to my neck. When I reached home, I announced that I was not going to 'that school' any more, but, of course, I did, settled down and enjoyed my schooldays."

The boys at Newchurch Grammar School were always known as "German Sausages", because of the G.S. on their caps. The school colours were red and black, and the school motto was 'Alere flammam literarum'. They used the rough field opposite Kirk Church for football and cricket, and occasionally there was friction between the boys and the Kirk lads. One such occasion led to a fight in the Boar's Head, because one of the boys had hit a ball onto the bowling green of the Boar's Head, and, when he went to ask for it, the request was refused. There were no games periods: the football took place either in the lunch hour, after school or on Saturdays, but there was a sports day in the summer.

THE PUPIL-TEACHER CENTRE

Mrs. Emily Taylor (née Green) gives us information about the Pupil-Teacher Centre at Bethel Lecture Hall. "I won a scholarship from Central School, Bacup, and should have gone to Bury, as was the custom, but Mr. Joshua Thomas Hoyle (of the Education Committee) said that I should go to Bethel to start a class later to be included in a new secondary school. So, in 1902, I became the first day scholar. The other girls were older and were first- or second-year pupil-teachers, spending two and a half days per week at Bethel, and two and a half days in schools".

The fees were 3 guineas per term; the staff consisted of the headmistress (Miss Niness), Miss Denchan, Miss Taylor, Miss S. Lord and, later, Miss M. Wrigley; and the subjects taught were mathematics, English language and literature, French, R.K., history, geography, needlework and music. At first the girls from Bacup went on Saturday mornings to Bacup Technical School for lessons in art and chemistry. (This was in a room in Chalk's Mill in Tong Lane). Mr. Fitton from Rochdale taught art, and Mr. Hudson, the headmaster of Britannia School, taught chemistry. Later, chemistry was taught at Newchurch Grammar School on Wednesday afternoons.

The compulsory uniform consisted of a straw hat with a badge, and gloves. The girls were not to have loose hair, and were told if the rest of their clothing was "considered unsuitable". For speech day at the Victoria Hall, Waterfoot, they had to wear a white dress, white hair ribbons and white gloves.

THE NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL

The plans for the building at Waterfoot were drawn by Mr. Henry Littler, the County Architect, and it was estimated that the total cost of the land, buildings and equipment would be £26,000. The foundation stones were laid on Saturday, 1st July 1911, by the then mayors of Rawtenstall and Bacup.

The Committee of Management was to consist of representatives from the boroughs of Bacup and Rawtenstall, the Lancashire County Council, the Newchurch Grammar School, and the Victoria University of Manchester.

The following extracts are taken from the official description of the building:

"The school has been planned with a view to providing accommodation as a secondary day school for 362 mixed scholars, but in addition the building will be used as a Technical Institute and special provision has been made for the teaching of weaving and spinning; boot and shoe manufacture; painting and decorating; plumbing etc; so that altogether provision will be made for 600 scholars."

"The ground floor contains four classrooms for 30 scholars each and eight for 24 scholars, grouped round a large central assembly hall. Also rooms for headmaster, headmistress, assistant masters, assistant mistresses, a waiting room and a secretary's room adjoining the main entrance which is approached from a new street on the south side."

"On the first floor there are three art rooms facing north, accommodating 25, 22 and 18 scholars respectively; a cookery and laundry room for 25, dining room for 40; chemistry laboratories for 25 each; a lecture room for 50 and a technical drawing room for 30. All these rooms open off a gallery which runs round the upper part of the central hall."

"Rooms for technical subjects are situated in the basement which on the west side is above ground level."

"The buildings are of stone faced externally with Yorkshire parpoints with ashlar dressings and the roofs are covered with best quality Yorkshire slates. The assembly hall, entrances and classrooms have a tile dado, plastered above the same, while the rooms in the basement are faced internally with Accrington brick."

In the 'Rossendale Free Press' for Saturday, 6th September, 1913, there appeared the following advertisement:

Bacup and Rawtenstall Secondary and Technical School.

Day Department.

Headmaster: Mr. T. E. Jackson, M.A. Cantab.

Autumn Term will commence on Tuesday, September 16th at 9 a.m., and will be open to boys and girls who are 8 years of age upwards.

The fee for tuition and stationery is £1.1.0. per term and games 2/- per term. The total cost including books and extras is not likely to exceed £4.10.0. per annum.

Further particulars may be obtained from the Headmaster who will be pleased to see parents at the new school on Tuesday or Saturdays from 2.30 - 3.30 p.m. (beginning on Tuesday, 2nd September) or at other times at his residence, Grammar School House, Turnpike, Newchurch.

Forms of application and copies of the Prospectus are now available and application for them should be made as early as possible.

Holders of Lancashire County Council and other Scholarships who intend attending the new school should also make early application.

(Editor's Comment: No doubt many readers will be surpraised, as I was, to see that pupils were admitted at the age of 8, but we learn from Mr. Holden's speech to the governors on his retirement that the Preparatory Department was closed as the school grew. It also tells us that, when he was appointed as first assistant master in 1913, "there was some feeling in the district that the school would be a white elephant.")

THE OPENING OF THE SCHOOL

The 'Rossendale Free Press' gives very full coverage of the opening of the new school, "this handsome pile", whose foundation stone had been laid two years earlier by the mayors of Bacup and Rawtenstall, using a pair of silver trowels, which were afterwards presented to them.

The paper for Saturday, 20th September, tells us "Rossendale made history on Saturday afternoon when the magnificent new Secondary and Technical School for the boroughs of Bacup and Rawtenstall was formally opened in the presence of a large and distinguished assembly".

The Bacup and Rawtenstall
Joint Secondary School Committee
request the pleasure of the company of
Miss F. D. Lord.
at the Official Opening of the New Secondary
and Technical School, Waterfoot,
by
Lieut.-Col. J. Craven Hoyle, T.D., J.P.,
on the afternoon of Saturday, the 13th September, 1913,
at 2.30 o'clock.

Kindly reply on enclosed card not later than Saturday, Sept. 6th.

Invitation to the opening — 1913

The guests assembled on the balcony leading to the entrance at 2.15 p.m., when Colonel J. Craven Hoyle, the chairman of the governors, opened the main door with a key which he said "would unlock a door which would have the effect of disseminating from that building those educational advantages which up to that time, the district had not been able to have." His reward for this service was a large silver salver with a view of the new school engraved upon it.

The crowd then entered the hall, where further speeches were made (the chairman referring to the school as "a university for Rossendale"), and these are printed verbatim by the 'Free Press', filling many columns of a paper much larger in size than today's and punctuated by frequent "Applause", "Laughter" and "Hear, hear".

Every official from the County and Borough Councils who should have been there seems to have been, and the list of dignitaries seems endless and also included governors, education committee members, boot and shoe manufacturers, and cotton spinners associations and trade union representatives.

Amongst the list are found the names of the teachers who had been appointed to the new school : Mr. T. E. Jackson (headmaster), Mr. E. H. Holden (headmaster, Evening Technical Department), Miss E. Niness (senior mistress), Mr. H. Owen, Mr. J. G. Anstey, Mr. F. J. Tonkinson, Mr. J. F. Hirst, Miss M. Wrigley, Miss E. A. Lord, Mr. J. E. Kirk, Mr. F. Bellhouse, Mr. B. J. Garnett and Mr. J. W. E. Richardson.

The new term commenced on the Tuesday morning. "Forth in Thy name, O Lord, I go" was the hymn sung, followed by a prayer from the headmaster and the reading of a passage of scripture.

Mr Jackson then introduced to the pupils the chairman of the governors, Colonel J. Craven Hoyle, who said he was sorry the old Newchurch Grammar School had to close, but he hoped "they would bring with them the ideals connected with the Grammar School", and he welcomed the girls from the Pupil-Teachers' Centre. The assembly concluded with three rousing cheers for Colonel Hoyle.

SPEECH DAYS

The last . . .

This was held on Thursday, 17th July 1913, in the Public Hall, Waterfoot, when the prizes were presented by Colonel J. Craven Hoyle, J.P., of Lea Bank. This was a special speech day to end the Newchurch Grammar School, as speech days had been usually held in October.

In his report Mr. Jackson stated the numbers on roll were 102 and continued, "Ladies and Gentlemen, I am feeling tonight as though I were at one of these watch-night services which are sometimes held in churches and chapels to watch the old year go out and the new year come in. Before we go home tonight, an institution which has worked for 212 years, which has at least done something to mould for good the character of Rossendale in the last two centuries will have passed away. It is true that it is dying only phoenix-like to rise again transfigured in the public building which now towers on the hills above Waterfoot. It is not on the grandeur of that building and the greatness which we anticipate for the new school that we shall desire to dwell tonight but rather on the work which the old school has been enabled humbly but we hope not inefficiently to perform. After all, it is not grand buildings chiefly that go to the making of a good school; it is the human element that counts. Good buildings and first class equipment no doubt count for much, but capable, patient and inspiring teachers producing interested, industrious and sometimes enthusiastic scholars count for much more . . .

"The two leading ideas which the old school has ever tried to rub in, ideas that always lay behind the various lessons that were taught and learnt were, first, honesty or 'playing the game' and, second, strenuousness or hard work. Old boys will, therefore, be interested to learn that the motto which the new school has adopted is 'Fide et Labore', so that the grand old root ideas of the school are intended to be also the root idea of the new."

. . . and the first

On the 14th November 1914, at the first speech day of the new school, Mr. Jackson declared in his report that the Committee had worked hard "to remedy the early defects" and, as a result of their efforts, they now had in their midst "a secondary school which in buildings, staff and equipment was worthy to be compared with any school in Lancashire and perhaps outside that county."

The school started with a total of 188 pupils (58 girls and 130 boys, and had reached 219 pupils of which 85 were girls) and the school was now becoming "a lusty infant and was beginning to walk and talk nicely and it had all the promise of a vigorous youth and of strong and useful manhood."

NUMBERS IN SCHOOL

Year	Total	Girls	Boys	Sixth Form
1916	261	119	142	11
1918	266	124	142	14
1923	306	135	171	22
1928	308	145	163	29
1933	406	182	224	35
1938	365	158	207	35
1943	499	218	281	47
1948	562	245	317	98
1953	554	288	266	74
1958	721	399	322	74
1963	789	420	369	162
1968	702	348	354	181
1973	735	365	370	192

THE WHOLE WAY BACK

Sixty years ago, our new school opened. I recall vividly the gleaming, fresh-smelling woodwork; the desks as yet unscored by initial-carving pen knives; the leonine head of Mr. Jackson, and the trim figure of Miss Niness; our hated black woollen stockings; gym lessons in the hall, with the climbing-ropes fixed in the lofty roof; and the thrill of walking round the balcony.

The following year, 1914, the Great War broke out, and, for those of us at school from then until 1918, it was, of course, a predominant factor in our lives. For us juniors it seemed exciting, but, as it dragged on, and we grew older, the full tragedy struck home to us. One winter's night, a German zeppelin found (or lost) its way to Rossendale and even dropped one or two bombs. The fantastic stories told the next day among us pupils would have filled a book!

Perhaps the outstanding difference between then and now was in discipline. One could say that, by comparison, the society of sixty years ago was a submissive one. Discipline was strict — even talking in class could incur fifty or a hundred lines.

Girls had to wear their hair plaited, or tied back — no hair hanging over the shoulders! When 'bobbed' hair became fashionable, the trendsetters' problem was solved, whilst sixth-formers got round it by 'putting-up' their hair. Face cream and powder were forbidden, and, when a rumour went round that a box of powder had been found in a girl's locker, we were scandalised! Paradoxically, although school was 'co-ed', any gathering together of boys and girls outside the school was frowned upon, and we felt guilty if found fraternising.

School term began with the hymn, 'Forth in Thy Name' and ended with 'Lord Dismiss Us'. As we grew older, we came to realise the significance of the closing hymn, until finally it was the end of one's own last term. "Let Thy Father-hand be shielding those who here shall meet no more" — one was unable to sing the familar words, for their poignancy brought sadness to the heart and a lump to the throat.

Mrs. Martha Heath (née Thomas)

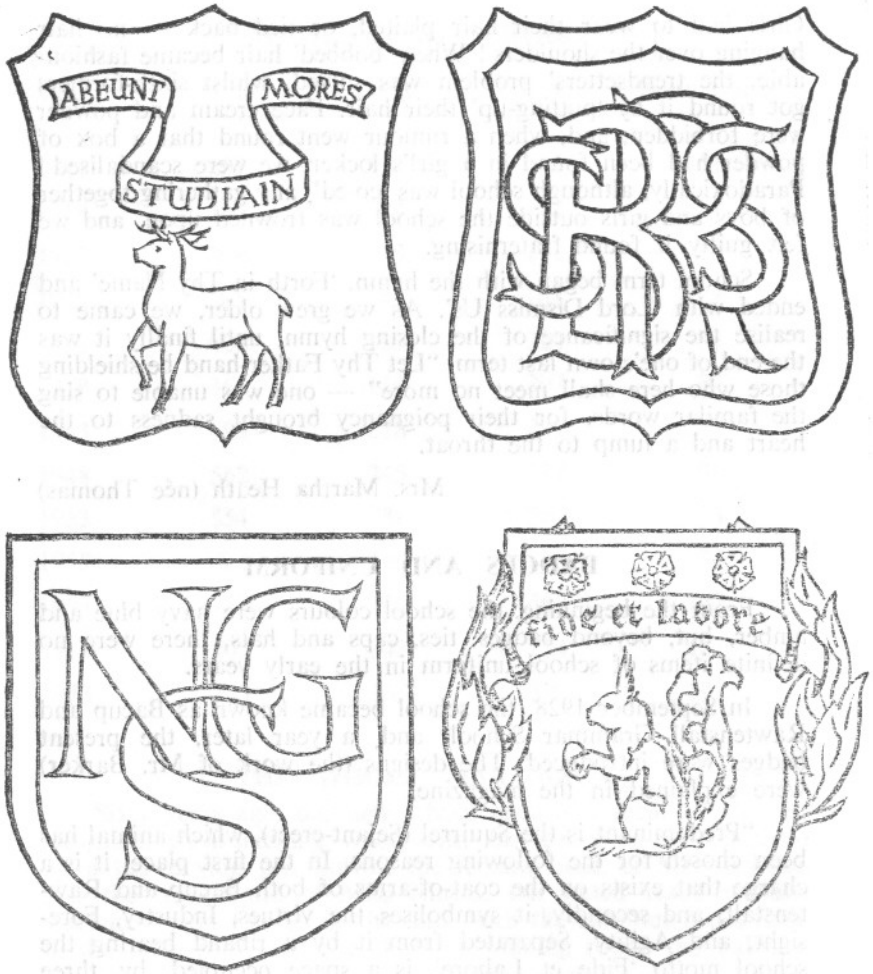
BADGES AND UNIFORM

From the beginning, the school colours were navy blue and amber, but, beyond badges, ties, caps and hats, there were no definite items of school uniform in the early years.

In September 1928, the school became known as Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School, and, a year later, the present badges were introduced. The designs (the work of Mr. Barker) were explained in the magazine.

"Predominant is the Squirrel (Sejant-erect), which animal has been chosen for the following reasons. In the first place, it is a charge that exists on the coat-of-arms of both Bacup and Rawtenstall, and secondly, it symbolises the virtues, Industry, Foresight, and Agility. Separated from it by a riband bearing the school motto 'Fide et Labore', is a space occupied by three Tudor roses — three Lancastrian roses, as will be seen from their colour, and representing the three School Houses, Bacup, Rawtenstall, and Waterfoot.

"All three devices are arranged in a panel of shield shape, the border of which has a line of colour, either red, white, or blue, according to which particular house its owner belongs. Arranged around this shield are two boughs of laurel in wreath formation, included as being emblematic of Glory — that is, in the sense of Achievement. The backgrounds of the Roses, the Squirrel, also of parts of the Squirrel, are in the school colours, Navy Blue and Amber."



BADGES

Left: top — Pupil-Teacher Centre; bottom — Newchurch Grammar School. Right: top — Bacup and Rawtenstall Secondary School; bottom — Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School.

DINNER AT SCHOOL: 1918

Around the year 1918, all the scholars approaching the school each morning would be seen to be equipped with a school-bag across the shoulder, as against the more professional briefcase of today, but some would be seen to be equipped in addition with a small rectangular box. This box was made of fibre and measured about 9 in. x 5 in. x 5 in. It had a handle on top, a hinge at one end, and some sort of fastener at the other. This was the 'tommy box', in which the scholar carried his mid-day meal. The fastener on the box was important, as new scholars were quick to learn, after having picked up the box from the seat of the tram or train and seeing the contents spill out on the ground, someone having surreptitiously unfastened the catch.

During the morning break, the mid-day diner made his way to the dining-room on the balcony (now Room 13, the biology laboratory), and there placed at one end of the long table his pot or mug, after putting therein a spoonful of tea, coffee or cocoa, and sugar for his dinner-time brew. As there was no chance of having a re-fill, most of these receptacles were on the large size, pint pots being much in evidence. Apart from filling all these pots with hot water at dinner-time, the school also provided a warming-up service, and, if you wished to take advantage of this, you placed your pie-dish on top of the large oven. One further service was provided, namely, the boiling of eggs, and these had to be marked with the owner's name and the words "Hard" or "Soft".

After the dinner-time bell there was a stampede up the the stairs to the dining-room. The various dishes and pots were now arranged once more on top of the oven; after milling around and grabbing your own and picking up your pot or mug of liquid refreshment from the end of the table, you proceeded to your accustomed place at the table. No formalities of any sort were observed, except that the girls sat at one long table and the boys at another.

The person in charge of the proceedings was Caretaker Trickett, who always seemed to be in shirt sleeves, and it was he who came round to collect our pennies. Occasionally he would carry out an inspection of the tables, accompanied by some tearful youngster who could not find his own dinner and had been left someone else's, or worse still, none at all. It was advisable, therefore, to have a pot of a distinctive size, shape or colour so that you could always tell your own.

Many and varied were the items of food brought out by the diners. One boy was particularly addicted to Shredded Wheat, and thereby earned for himself the nickname of 'Straw', which stuck to him throughout his schooldays.

Mr. J. Pilling

THE GREAT WAR

The war broke out in the year after the school opened. Many old pupils went to serve in the forces, and they were joined by two masters transformed into Bombardier Owen and Corporal Barker, and later by Mr. Duthie. 37 old boys died in the war, and their names are recorded on the memorial plaque in the entrance to the school.

We read in the magazine of collecting for the Jack Cornwell Fund, knitting for the Rawtenstall Voluntary Workers' Association, growing vegetables on spare ground at school, and sending magazines to the soldiers in the trenches. The school adopted a prisoner-of-war in Germany, sending him food parcels and money through the Red Cross. At Christmas the pupils presented all old students serving in the Forces in this country with 50 cigarettes and a tin of chocolate, and those abroad with 200 cigarettes and 8 ounces of tobacco.

Belgian refugees came to stay at Barcroft Hall, which stood in the grounds now known as Edgeside Park, and a group of boys and girls came to the school.

Rt. Hon. Lord Francis-Williams, C.B.E., who was created a life peer in 1962, was a pupil at B.R.S.S. for a short time during the war. In his autobiography 'Nothing So Strange', which was published a month before his death in June 1970, he recalls his boyhood at Britannia and a vivid memory of the school during the war. "My sister and I were by now at a secondary school at Rawtenstall . . . and I can remember how we all gathered together in the main hall shortly after I went there to cheer the captain of the school and four other sixth-formers who were leaving to go straight into the army. Within a few weeks three of them were dead, the first names on the school's roll of honour."

DURING THE WAR YEARS

As well as the serious matter of working for the war effort, Mrs. Gwen Kay (née Aspden) reminds us of the journey on the tram from Crawshawbooth in 1916. "Our journey would become more sober when we changed trams at Rawtenstall, as the senior mistress, Miss E. Niness shared it with us". Assembly was very formal — "the teachers sat on the platform and a prefect read the lesson", and the uniform for the girls was "a very heavy gym slip worn with a blouse of our own choice, long black stockings and straw boaters with amber and blue hat bands with the badge B.R.S.S. (it was then Bacup and Rawtenstall Secondary School)".

Miss M. Dodds (later senior mistress) adds to this her first acquaintance with B.R.G.S., when "in March, 1917, one Saturday morning, I went to the school to sit for a 'scholarship', or, to

give it the proper title, the Lancashire County Council Junior Exhibition." The school seemed enormous "to a shy ten-year-old who had come from a small elementary school", although at this time it consisted almost entirely of the central hall and surrounding classrooms and the rooms on the balcony, and was much smaller than today. She also tells of a very snowy day when the snow was "so heavy that it came crashing through the roof of the hall, bringing a shower of broken glass with it." Fortunately no-one was hurt.

Mr. H. A. Howard, who commenced at B.R.G.S. as the war was drawing to its close, tells us of the ordeal of the first day — "there was the mat — the seniors made one stand on the steel scraper mat, which was then suddenly pulled from beneath one's feet — then the forced journey down the coal shute into the boiler house."

He also recollects two of the school characters. "There was the caretaker, Mr. (Big) Trickett, who took great pride in the school, and who could be seen regularly walking round the balcony armed with a long feather duster, which he used to clean the lamp shade which hung down from the roof of the hall. A remark of his well known to the students was 'Now! Put all those desk'us's in rotation'." The other was Mr. Jackson's secretary, Billy Butler, "tall, thin and always peering through thick spectacles. He walked with a shuffle and gave the dread message — 'Mr. Jackson wishes to see you in his room'."

THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Miss D. Moore writes: "Soon after the start of the 1939-45 War, which broke out in September 1939, we shared B.R.G.S. with Whalley Range High School of Girls for a period of one term. The girls were billeted in the Valley, and came to school from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. one week and from about 1.30 p.m. to 5 p.m. the second week, whilst we alternated the school times with them. Each child had to share his desk with an opposite number from Whalley Range. Mr. Holden inaugurated the system of each member of staff staying in one classroom, and the pupils moving each lesson to another classroom. What an unholy row there was between lessons, as the whole school moved en masse! It only lasted one term, for, after Christmas, Whalley Range returned to Manchester, and we changed back to our old system. Then peace returned to the school."

Mrs. K. Gowers tells us there was not a single speech day held between 1940-4. "I am not sure of the reason for this, unless it was the scarcity of books! Because, not only were there no speech days, but there were no prizes. This was rectified by

presenting about four prizes at once. Paper was scarce. It was extremely difficult to purchase text-books (for which scholarship-winners were each given 30s. per annum). An executive from the local authority would visit the school annually to 'dole out' the money in the former book-room. The beginning of each school year witnessed the school basement becoming a second-hand book store. For the unlucky ones who failed to purchase at half, or quarter price or just a nominal sum, it meant an interminable wait for a new text-book.

"Air-raids during the night meant that school commenced later the following morning — 9.45 a.m., if my memory serves me correctly. Living in an area comparatively safe from bombing, it was with delight that the sirens were heard to go — although as the war dragged on, with its grim daily reminder, the delight faded.

"Air-raids during the day were welcomed — with a little apprehension. It was rather different away from the security of one's home and family. There were several air-raid shelters dug into the ground. One or two were on the site of the new biology laboratory. We were packed into these as quickly as possible. Sand-bags were piled everywhere — even in the basements of the school. Of course, gas masks had to be carried at all times — they were more a part of the pupil image than the brief-case or satchel.

"Girls were asked to knit for the Forces — pullovers, socks, helmets, mittens, and, after completion of a certain number of garments, attractive badges in blue and chromium were presented to individual girls.

"To remind one of those serving our country, photographs of former pupils, wearing forces' uniform, were displayed around the hall. All too frequent was the announcement from Mr. Holden in morning assembly that one of them would not return, having bravely laid down his or her life. Hearing the hymn, 'Jesu, Lover of my Soul', brings to mind those sad occasions when it was sung in assembly.

"There was a strong drive for National Savings during the war years. Each year a special week was held nationally with a high target set. The school also set a high target with a huge thermometer (presumably produced by the art department). Two which spring to mind are War Weapons Week and Warships Week.

"My first form room was the present Room 24, with its view across to Newchurch. Each afternoon, barrage balloons would be seen across the sky-line (I do not know the exact location),

but it was more interesting counting those (were there more than the previous day?) than listening to Mr. Owen (Dabs) unfold the mysteries of the 'Odyssey' of Homer. How could anyone be interested in that? And yet my second-hand copy was well used!"

One old boy, Mr. William Hoare, at Agedabia in the Western Desert in the winter of 1941, found himself thinking of the school and those old pupils who had died in the 1914-18 War. He remembered how the school used to assemble at eleven o'clock on the eleventh day of November to observe the two minutes' silence for the fallen and how the names of the 37 old boys who had given their lives were read out. The only name he could remember was Percy Horsfield of Booth, but this name of a man killed before he had been born and known only as a name recited from a school platform "became representative of all ordinary, unheroic, good people who, without evil or malice in themselves, are called upon to become part of all the death, misery and heartbreak of war", and he wrote the following lines, printed in 'The Squirrel', 1963:

Percy Horsfield of Booth

Whistling, where the Whitewell wanders
Through the dark, enfolding Pennine hills,
Making his reluctant way to school.
He dreamed all the high-flown dreams
Of boyhood bound by home hearth,
And shaped by class-room adventures —
Of Tom Brown at Montezuma;
The lure of far-beckoning mountains,
Unconquered yet unchallenging;
Eastern cities and sand-blown forts;
To soar amid the fleecy clouds
And plumb the ocean depths unknown.
Yet young dreams are airy things,
And, marching by the Somme, he dreamed
Of the old chuckling Whitewell
Gurgling past the humming mills,
Past his own cottage, where Mother
Smooths the soothing linen sheets,
Bakes sad cakes and brews huge pots of tea —
Thus trudging through the cloying mud
Of anguished Flanders, forward to meet
The heroes of last year's history books,
The men of Agincourt and Crécy,
Who had left, like him, their noble hearts
In some beloved nook of England,

And ached like him, in vain, for home.
Now at one with ten million yesterdays,
He is remembered who was never known;
Whilst we, fodder for tomorrow's guns,
Anonymities in yet unwritten history books,
Listen, heads bowed, to the solemn voice
. . . Percy Horsfield of Booth.

SCHOOL CAMPS

One recalls from 'The Squirrel' that school camps took place, at home and abroad, before I entered B.R.G.S., but by my first school summer, the clouds of Hitler's war had narrowed the camping field. Soon, most of the male teachers were called to the Forces, and I intend no disrespect to the remaining few, who performed prodigiously to give the boys a leavening of male teaching, when I associate the camps, farming, and Air Training Corps, with Mr. Clifford Howard.

The scene of annual B.R.G.S. farming camps from 1942 to 1945 was Halton, a quiet Cheshire farming village, lying at the foot of Castle Hill, on which stands a small Norman castle overlooking Runcorn.

Cliff and Marion Howard were members of long-established Halton families, and in 1942, Mr. Howard was telling the late revered head, Mr. E. H. Holden, on one of his characteristic trans-hall promenades, of his plans to spend part of the summer vacation helping on a Halton farm. As Mr. Howard says, with perhaps devastating oversimplification, "Ted said, 'Why not take the boys?'" The project was put to a senior farmer, John Astbury, and thus, for the six weeks of the 1942 summer holidays, gangs of B.R.G.S. boys worked on the red, fertile land of Prospect Farm. The initial success was such that, in 1943, a bigger labour force worked on more farms and inevitably, despite changing personnel, in '44 and '45. The sole qualification to attend was to be a male of 15 or more years, though the cynics said it was also necessary to be stronger in the back than in the head. The work was hard — one remembers readily the blistered palms, nettled fingers and soaked flanks after a day's 'stooking' sheaves of wet corn, and the calloused hands and aching back of a long week of, to quote our mentor, "yer 'eads down and yer a———'s up, and get them taties."

Corn and potato harvesting caused the bulk of the work, with occasionally the rare treat of helping Frank with the milking or Sam with the horses, or a day's fruit picking (followed by a night of great inconvenience!). We slept on straw in a 'loose box', (euphemism for a small cattle shed) and ate in a similar building, both allegedly cleaned out by a small advance party.

We washed, rarely, under a cold tap. The cookhouse, another 'loose box', was separated from our quarters by a vast midden. No cookhouse ever created meals so gargantuan yet wholesome as the W.V.S., inevitably organised and led by Mrs. Howard, produced for appetites accentuated to monumental by fresh air and hard labour.

For our efforts we were paid at the handsome standard national rate af 6½d. (d, not p!) per hour under 16, 8½d. per hour over 16, minus ½d per hour for insurance! After paying for food, much of it grown on the farm, we had perhaps ten bob a week to spend. Not only was Cliff Howard responsible for us, but he worked with us, and was paid precisely nothing.

We were, to be fair, the happiest of slaves, for Halton was kind to us. We swam in the River Weaver, were welcomed at the tennis and bowls club, were less than welcome to the village boys because we were welcomed by the village girls, were received in many homes and made many friends.

We were fit and hard and happy. Can one ask more from a holiday? Only this — that in a moment of rare weakness, Mr. Astbury confessed to Mr. Howard that he had never had better casual labourers.

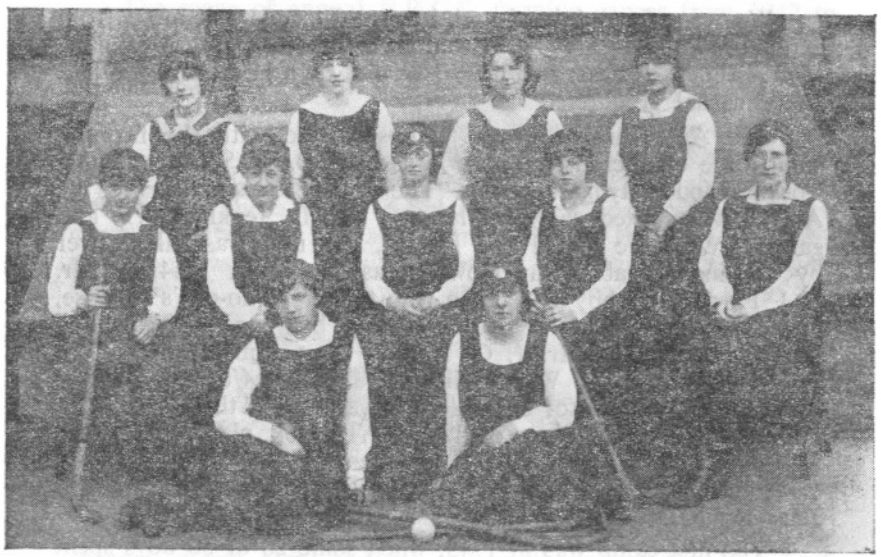
The Air Training Corps 'camps' shared with the farming camps the characteristics of a squad of B.R.G.S. boys living, working and playing together. The B.R.G.S. squadron of the A.T.C. was started early in the war by Mr. Jenkins (P.T. and games). When he joined the R.A.F., the unit was taken over by the indefatigable Mr. Howard, assisted from 1944 by Mr. P. J. Parry, a chubby Welshman who taught, to no-one's surprise, music. One's memory for details is hazy, but one recalls civilian instructors such as Mr. J. G. Barker, the art master, who had served in the 1914-18 War, giving up lunch-times to teach Morse code. Others taught, for example, navigation and theory of flight, and on Sunday mornings drill and P.T. took place, supervised by Flight Lieutenant Howard, and taken by tough N.C.O.'s, such as Flight Sergeants Derek Ingham and Peter Nolan, and Sergeant Jack Dunham.

The first camp was in 1943, when some 20 or 30 boys spent a week of the Easter holidays at R.A.F. Millom in Cumberland, where 'Old Boy' Tom Graham was on the staff, between more exacting tours with Bomber Command. We lived in a peripheral Nissen hut, a long march from the Airmen's Mess, the Naafi, and the ubiquitous Salvation Army Club. The days were spent at demonstrations and lectures, or, inevitably, on the parade ground, drilling, with an occasional highlight such as a session in navigation on a flight simulator, or, thrill of thrills, a flight in an Avro Anson or Airspeed Oxford.

The squadron spent a very wet week in the summer of '45 under canvas in Stanley Park, Blackpool. It indicates a waning interest in military matters, understandable since the war was almost over, that the outstanding memories are of the number of professional sportsmen on the P.T. staff on the 'Western Front', a boxing contest in which Russell Hutton, of Cowpe, and I fought to the strains of 'Dear Old Pals', sung by some belligerent army cadets, and a special last day inspection of the squadron by Ft. Sgt. Jack Dunham. This proved not to be for disciplinary reasons, but in order that the owner of the best-creased trousers should effect an exchange with him, since only N.C.O.'s were allowed out of camp on the last night!

Perhaps the camps can be viewed as the epitome of the school in the war period — working hard under considerable difficulties to produce results worthy of B.R.G.S., yet happy and cheerful, leaving memories for which one will be very grateful.

Dr. J. S. Metcalfe, 1938-45



Hockey Team — 1918-20

SPORTS DAYS AND HOUSES

The first important function of the new school was a Sports Day in July 1914. Despite an admission charge, there was a large number of spectators. Mr. Jackson attributed this crowd of visitors to the fact that the sports of the new co-educational secondary school were regarded as something of a curiosity.

The pupils had been divided into three houses. Those who lived beyond Stacksteads Station were in Bacup House, those who lived beyond Cloughfold Station were in Rawtenstall House, and those who lived between these landmarks were in Waterfoot House. Colonel Craven Hoyle had endowed two shields to be given to the most successful house in sports and games, and these were competed for with furious rivalry in a system which combined house loyalty with enthusiastic local 'patriotism'. In the 1923 Bacup versus Rawtenstall House Match, there was great excitement when the Bacup House rejoiced at its victory. "Mr. Proudfoot, the English master, who came from Bacup, not usually given to violent expression, skimmed his hat high in the air and saw it settle in an adjacent hen-pen."

Until 1923, when the new playing fields were made, the sports days were held on Dark Lane Football Field, and prizes and certificates were presented at the end of the proceedings. Mrs. Gwen Kay (née Aspin) has sent three athletic sports certificates designed by the school art master, Mr. Foster (Mr. Barker being away at the war). These are quite large, with a leafy border and a view of the school building. Two are for the sports day of 1918, and are to the value of 7s. 6d., while the other one, which is for 1916, informs us that "this card is awarded instead of the usual first prize for the 100 yards for girls under 13, it having been decided by the girls and boys themselves that they wish the money usually spent on prizes to be given to destitute children in Belgium."

Apart from uncertain weather, sports day was in those days a gala occasion. For instance, pupils sold 1,600 spectator's tickets for that held on the afternoon of Saturday, 16th July 1928. 'The Journal' afterwards printed photographs of the start of the boys' and girls' 100 yards races (the shorts of the boys being longer than the gym tunics of the girls), and stated, "The School Field presented a lively spectacle. There was the band with glittering braid and sheeny trumpets, the plus-fours, the coloured sashes, and the event was rounded off by the presentation of medals in the hall by the Mayor and Mayoress of Rawtenstall."

In 1938, to keep the houses equal in numbers, and to eliminate too keen a rivalry, a system without any territorial basis was introduced, whereby the present houses, Brook, Forest, Glen, and Moor, were established.

THE PLAYING FIELDS

Mr. J. R. Holt writes: "In 1916 to reach the school pitch where matches were played, one had to complete a short cross-country run finishing at Newchurch, to be confronted by a field

—not hardly a field—for grass only appeared in the four corners. One ran from goal to goal as along a sloping roof. Near one end was a well, covered by a large stone slab, a real hazard for visiting teams, but worth a couple of goals to the home side, who had learned how to negotiate it. The return journey from the pitch, especially on a cold, wet or snowy day to clean off the mud in the cloak-room with cold water, was not always appreciated."

Eventually the fields across from the school became the playing fields but were very unsatisfactory, as Miss M. Moore relates. "I had only been on the staff of B.R.G.S. a few months, when the condition of the so-called playing fields began to attract our attention. They consisted of two very rough, uneven and undrained fields across the road and were quite inadequate to meet the needs of a growing school. It was felt, if we, staff and pupils, made an effort to raise some funds, the county authority might be encouraged to find the rest of the money needed.

"It was decided after much discussion to hold a 'Café Chantant' in May 1922. A committee was formed, and it was my lot to help Mrs. Whittaker (Miss Wrigley then) and Miss Iremonger in the tea room. For weeks before the event, Mrs. Whittaker and I went round the Valley to canvas all the old students we could trace, to solicit promises of any kind of refreshment they could give. The response was amazing, and, when the time came, we were snowed under with cakes, scones and other appetizing things to eat.

"The café lasted two days. There were all kinds of attractions: stalls where fancy goods and household things were sold, side shows, a dramatic performance given by the Old Students' Dramatic Society, recently formed, and an Egyptian room, where ices, soft drinks and peach melbas were served by dusky Egyptian maidens.

"The tea room was the scene of great activity. High teas with various cold meats and hot suppers of potato pie and peas were served each day to what seemed to us an endless crowd. At 11 p.m. on the Saturday night, we were not sorry to close down, but, before going home, we collected the fragments that remained, enough to fill a large tin trunk of cakes and scones. I had to sit on the trunk to get it shut!

"As far as I can remember, a sum round about £500 was raised. What was more pleasing was that the County agreed to take up the work of laying the new playing fields, which over the last fifty years have given much pleasure to many generations of B.R.G.S."

Football Team — 1917

SPORTS

Mr. R. Y. Digby writes about school sport in 1918: "The away football game against Todmorden Secondary School was arranged to coincide with the girls' match against the same school. The two teams went by horse-drawn wagonette over Dulesgate, and the song of the moment was 'Welcome, stranger to Samoa'. On the return journey, we had to get off at the Bay Horse — from there to Sharneyford level it was too steep for the horses with a full load on — and walk. Some of the boys nipped into the Bay Horse for a 'smiler'. This was forgotten until the following Monday, when Mr. Jackson said from the rostrum, 'A little bird has whispered in my ear.' He knew all about the smilers, and a few of the boys got the stick."

Mrs. L. Ashworth recalls that Mr. Richardson was gym and games master. "He took all the school, girls and boys separately, for P.T., and boys for games. P.T. was taken in the central hall, and the only apparatus we had was a climbing rope, the full height of the hall, and a vaulting horse. For P.T. the girls wore the school uniform of knee-length gym-tunic and black woollen stockings with plimsolls. About 1923 a gym mistress was appointed for the girls, spending three days at Waterfoot and

82.

Rossendale Grammar School,

NEWCHURCH.

FOUNDED 1701.

Report for the First *Term of* 1893

NAME Pilling, Frank FORM IV

SUBJECTS.		No. IN CLASS.	PLACE.	REMARKS BY THE CLASS TEACHER
Divinity		11	6	Good progress. T.E.J.
Latin		11	8	Satisfactory progress T.E.J.
English—	History ...	15	6	Has done a good term's work. J.H.
	Geography...			
Historical	Grammar ...	11	8	Very fair. T.E.J.
	Composition.			
	Literature ...			
	Book-keeping			
	Writing ...			
	Spelling ...			
French		12	5	Very satisfactory progress. J.H.M.
German		12	5	Do. J.H.M.
Mathematics—	Arithmetic .	11	7	Clear headed, and takes pains. Has made
	Algebra ...			satisfactory progress throughout. T.E.J.
	Euclid ...			
	Mechanics...			
	Trigonometry			
	Mensuration			
Chemistry—	Theoretical .	11	8	Satisfactory.
	Practical ...	11	—	Very good. J.H.
Drawing—	Freehand ...			Most satisfactory progress. W.H.H.
	Model ...			
	Geometrical .			
Music—	Vocal ...			Fair voice.
	Instrumental			Requires more effort S.S.

Conduct Very Good — Home Lessons Well prepared

Absent — times. Late — times.

Monthly Form Order IV 1st month V 2nd month IV 3rd month.

Remarks by Head Master:

Conduct and progress very satisfactory throughout.

The next Term begins Tuesday, May 2nd.

T. E. Jackson, M.A.
Head Master.

two days at Heywood. She also took the girls for games and introduced netball, as previously in the winter we had only played hockey. In summer our games period was taken up with swimming. An additional room was brought into use for P.T., this being in the basement to the left inside the girls' entrance. At this time, wall bars, a boom and other apparatus were added to the equipment. There was only one tennis court, this being on the middle terrace without surround netting and not being very popular. About 1926 two tennis courts were laid on the bottom terrace, and tennis was then played during games periods."

The progress of sport after the 1939-45 war is recalled by Mr. J. Bridge. "As at most other schools, the end of the war found the school's physical education programme at a low ebb. This was particularly true of the boys' side, as most of the young men had been, for five years, engaged on matters of even more moment! The time was, therefore, ripe for a rebuilding of the whole structure, particularly as ideas about physical education had been liberalised by service experience, and the post-war move towards greater flexibility and wider concepts had already begun. Before the war, the games programme had included only soccer, cricket and athletics for boys, and tennis, netball and hockey for girls. In the next decade this was to be extended in many ways, and boys and girls, up to now carefully segregated, were to find many areas of common ground and some activities which they could profitably share.

"Rugby Union football was started in 1948, by the simple method of building up the two packs, then adding the backs as their functions became clear to the boys. We played our first game at Colne against their 2nd XV, and were beaten out of sight, but two years later we returned to defeat the Colne 1st XV on their own ground. It must be said that our soccer-cum-rugger methods were at first hilarious and sometimes seemed unorthodox to our opponents, but the arrival of a large and aggressive pack leader from Cardiff solved many of the early problems.

"Basketball began about the same time, and, with the benefit of regular practice against a team of Hungarian refugees, the boys soon become proficient enough to reach the Lancashire final and to establish a reputation for high standards in the game, which they have never since lost. The girls also became interested in this new 'netball' game and flocked to the matches to support our teams. Later a form of mixed basketball called 'korfeball' was developed and much enjoyed.

"In spite of difficulties in getting to the Bacup Baths, a life-saving and personal survival swimming club was started, which gained many successes. One of the main benefits of this club was

the opportunity it gave to senior pupils to teach the younger ones a useful skill. One of the first boys to be taught in this way later distinguished himself by saving a person from drowning in Morecambe Bay.

"Mixed hockey became a popular game in the senior school, the uncontrolled speed and dash of the boys being nicely countered by the stickwork and superior techniques of the girls. The staff developed its own team, which included Miss Macleroy on the left wing, and Miss Greenwood and Mr. Digby, both by then well into their fifties, also turned out.

"During that decade, there was a complete change of emphasis in the gymnastic work of the school. The girls moved from formal exercises, vaulting and agility along the lines of modern educational dance and theme activities which exercised their imaginations as well as their muscles, whilst many of the boys became interested in gymnastic activities in some form. It was good to see the effect of this on boys and girls who had hitherto considered themselves 'no good at gymnastics'. This was also the age of circuit training and other types of endurance activity.

"A host of minor activities was attempted. They had their heyday and passed away: boxing, which enjoyed a few years popularity until we received a severe hammering by the Nelson team of champions; golf, of which the first school championship was played at Bacup Golf Club, and I remember that the winning girl had a gross score of 136; indoor athletics, with strange-sounding events like throwing-the-medicine-ball and the standing long jump. We even had a 3,000 yards steeplechase complete with water jump — and the boy who won it later became an outstanding national performer in this event. Badminton at this time was strictly a sixth-form activity, and Mr. Copley ran a regular club, which reached a good standard in spite of the nuisance of low beams. Volley-ball, which is currently very much in vogue, had its devotees, but was thought at the time to be too static and simple for our tastes.

"The new playing fields 'over the glen' were, of course, a major factor in all these developments. In spite of all the groundsmen's efforts, these usually presented a watery aspect, but they gave us space to move and the old fields near the school a chance to rest.

"The one certainty is that there will be a never-ending flow of potentially talented games players in the school. This is shown by the strength of the Old Rossendalians' games teams, which have, over the years, merited the admiration and respect they have gained in the county. If everyone in the school can learn some activity which he will enjoy throughout his active life, then

the efforts of the physical education staff are indeed well rewarded. In this respect, there is no doubt that physical education has made rapid strides since the decade under review, particularly in outdoor pursuits and individual rather than team activities. I am sure that in these activities the school will, as ever, retain its leading position in the Valley."

MAGAZINES

The first school magazine, called the 'Daphnephora', was a slim, 24-page booklet, with an engraving on the cover of a classically draped female elegantly carrying a laurel wreath out of the main doorway of the school. The first publication was in 1916, and it was a long time before many of the staff, never mind pupils, knew that the title meant 'laurel bearer',

Its editor wrote, "We hope that our magazine may foster and be an outlet for the literary talent of the school; a generation to come may point to a celebrated novelist and say with pride 'His first story was published in 'The Daphnephora'. The editor's words had some prophetic truth, for on page 10 he had published 'His Bit', by Frank Williams, and we believe that this may have been the first published work of the distinguished journalist and political commentator, the late Lord Francis-Williams.

In 1926 'The Journal' was established under the editorship of Mr. Proudfoot. It had quarto-size pages and margins of lavish width. 'The Journal' aimed "to record the happenings of the little world of school . . . and the excursions into the art of living and enjoyment that a school should provide." 'The Journal' functioned successfully until the outbreak of war in 1939, and it was published for a short time afterwards.

Later Mrs. Ebden founded 'The Squirrel'. She wrote in the first editorial, "In July 1950 the School Journal died from a species of anaemia; it lacked vitality of support and vitality within itself. In June 1953 is born, we hope, a hardier offspring christened 'The Squirrel', which attempts to counteract the first weakness by remedying the second".

'The Squirrel' contained a greater variety of original contributions, reporting of events by pupils, the inclusion of an old students' section and the use of advertisements to make the magazine a paying proposition, and the financial position of 'The Squirrel' remains sound today.

Also over the last twenty years, there has appeared a duplicated little magazine of prose and verse under the title of '?', 'E.J.W.', 'Opsis' and 'Mohock', and there have been unofficial competitors such as the 'Sin Bin' of 1958.

VISITS AND JOURNEYS

From the beginning, the school has undertaken many journeys and visits to places of interest. There were visits to Bolton Abbey, York and Towneley Hall in the days before 1920 and, even from Newchurch Grammar School, a visit to Old Trafford to see a cricket match.

An outstanding visit took place in 1927 to view a total eclipse of the sun, and this is described by Miss D. Moore. "Eclipse 1927 : On June 29th, there was a total eclipse of the sun, the first for many years to be seen in England. Mr. Holden engaged a train to take us to Southport, and practically the whole school went — about 400 of us in those days. We set off about 11 p.m. the night before and travelled to Southport and then on to the sands. The eclipse was about 4 a.m., and we all waited for the sun to rise. Then, as the eclipse started, and the sun began to darken, an eerie and unnatural silence settled on us all, as we watched the phenomenon through smoked glass, which we had all taken. After it was over, we had breakfast in one of the Southport schools and then dispersed to enjoy ourselves at the fun fair and in other ways. It was fun to see Mr. Holden enjoying the Big Dipper and the Water Shute ! We returned to Rossendale in the early afternoon, with practically all the pupils asleep in the train — a lovely sight."

After the Second World War, there were many visits to the Hallé, the theatre, to castles and historic houses and towns, to Ingleton, and the Lake District.

Mrs E. Culley recalls some of the outings she has accompanied. "York has been a favourite place for whole-day outings, and most of the time there often spent in the Castle Museum. (One enterprising sixth-former locked me in the condemned cell for about two minutes on one occasion that I might appreciate the feelings of Dick Turpin on his last night alive !). We have visited Chester, Temple Newsam, Fountains Abbey, Holker Hall, Lincoln and many other places. Our longest journey was to the Bowes Museum at Barnard Castle.

"We took junior parties on evening trips, often to Shibden Hall at Halifax, or Hall i'th Wood at Bolton, where we grew fond of the elderly caretaker, whose account of the house never varied. 'Boys and girls, do you know why this old Hall still stands ? It is because of one man — Samuel Crompton, the inventor of the Spinning Mule. He made fortunes for others whilst he walked the streets of our town, down-at-heels, as you might say — with his fiddle under his arm.'

"Another favourite was Samlesbury Hall, where we hunted for the ghost in vain, and yet another was to Lyme Park, where one could actually touch the cloak which Charles I wore on the morning of his execution, as it has been used to upholster a chair."

School visits and holidays continue, perhaps more than ever at the present time, and these include theatre visits arranged by Mr. R. G. Phillips, history trips, and the weekend and summer camps at Appersett arranged by Mr. G. Phillips. Whitsuntide has become the time of year for a holiday abroad arranged by Mr. J. Timperley, and every year we have the Solingen exchange, owing to the untiring efforts of Mr. E. Rees.

MUSIC AND DRAMA

Rossendale is as musical a valley as any in Wales, and, nurtured by some excellent and hard-working teachers, music has always flourished at the school. Not only has the musical tradition of the locality been sustained, but many pupils have become professional musicians — soloists and orchestral players (including David Shorrocks, whose brilliant career was to be cut short, Joan Farrow and John Iveson), composers (Ernest Tomlinson) and many teachers (some of whom have returned to the school). Two of those who taught have just been commemorated by the creation of a memorial prize — Olive Holt and Dr. Phillip Lord.

Leafing through old programmes and magazines, we read of an amazing assortment of ensembles, providing all kinds of music for concerts, both speech days, operettas, carol services, midday recitals, music competitions and (the ultimate in dedication, even equalling the indefatigable Deighn Layrocks) serenading the May Day morning from the tower of St. Nicholas's at 6.0 a.m.

The school's first musical performance was in November of 1914 — on a day of ill omen, Friday, 13th, when most people were thinking of the British army fighting at Ypres. The audience at the first speech day was entertained with songs, girls' drill, a one-act comedy called 'A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing' and the trial scene from 'The Merchant of Venice'. This set the pattern for the Great War and for eleven years afterwards. The performance was in the hot and crowded Kozy Picture Hall in Waterfoot.

It was acknowledged that "'Crush and Rush' was the motto of Speech Day, 1929", and the School Concert began its independent existence in February 1930, when the programme included

'Scenes from the Rossendale Forest', the ever-popular 'The Grand Cham's Diamond' and, strangely side by side, a minuet and an oompah dance. Mrs. Jessie Lunt recalls that "school concerts were real highlights, whether one took part or not. They were usually a miscellany of one-act plays, period dances, tableaux, operettas or some elaborate fantasy woven together by the ingenuity of Mr. Barker and other members of staff".

The Abbot and Sheriff plead for their cash
'The King of Sherwood' — 1931

Last summer, when the basement scenery-store was turned into a new book-room, we saw dusty piles of faded photographs — the casts of concerts, 'The Count of Como', 'The King of Sherwood'. This last was an ambitious venture for 1931 — an operetta, with Mr. Duthie at the piano. It caught the attention of the national press: the 'News Chronicle' and the 'Daily Express' featured photographs of the cast, with the caption — LANCASHIRE BEAUTY, VILLAGE GIRLS IN LIGHT OPERA. It was 1960 before another production was mentioned in the columns of a national newspaper. An actor in 'Tobias and the Angel', allergic to spirit gum and crepe hair, was allowed to stop shaving — and caused a sensation. "Britain's only bearded schoolboy!" screamed the 'Daily Mail' below a picture of the whiskers. Thirteen years later, thinking of our hairy youth, we can only sigh, 'O tempora — O mores!'

The School Orchestra made its debut on 10th March 1933. Mr. W. Fielden recalls: "One of Mr. Holden's pet ideas was to have a school orchestra. The opportunity came when three boys approached me with the request that they should form a jazz band. One of the three — Cooper, by name — was a very good pianist, and the other two could play the violin, one — Harry Shenton — was a very good performer. I said 'No' to the suggested jazz band, but asked if they would consider playing some straight music. They agreed to this, and I arranged the well-known minuet from Handel's 'Samson' for piano and first and second violin. They were given a week to practise these parts, and we arranged to meet — in the classroom set aside for music — one afternoon after school.

"The result was quite a surprise for me, and the strains of music travelled through the hall to the ears of Mr Holden, who soon joined me as a listener. 'Good!' said the Headmaster, 'We must have them play this piece after prayers tomorrow morning, for this is the School Orchestra.' I sincerely hoped that the morning prayers would give these enthusiastic boys some kind of inspiration, for I had my doubts about the success of this. The result was amazing, and the three young musicians were rewarded by the clapping and the cheering of the whole school.

"This event brought forth more volunteers, and soon we had a large number of pupils wishing to learn to play instruments. They were mostly budding violinists, but a few wanted something to blow . . .

" . . . when the school staged 'H.M.S. Pinafore' in 1957, we had an orchestra of twenty players, without doubt the most balanced orchestra we ever had during my term of office as conductor."

Music was the only activity that survived throughout the rigours of the years of 'Dad's Army'. Mr. Fielden was to lay down his baton only on his retirement, at Christmas, 1957.

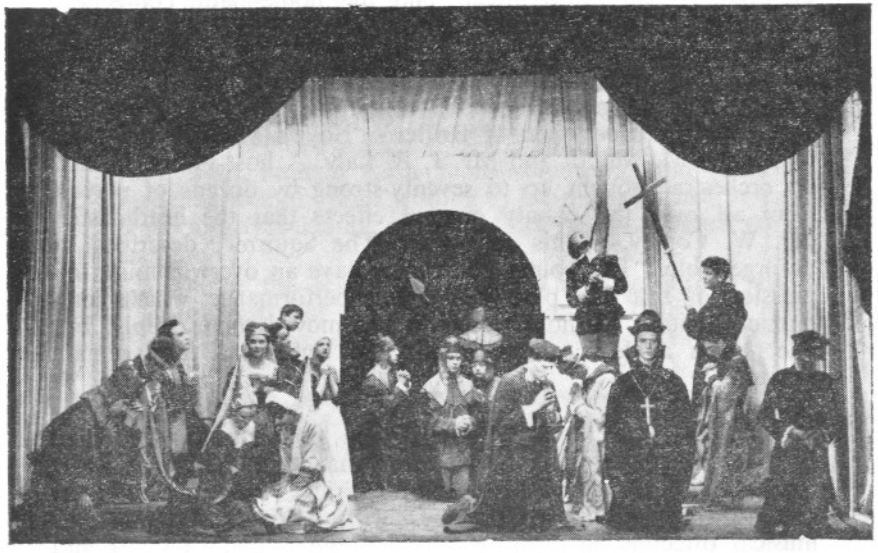
Writing of the years after the last war, Mrs. E. Culley recalls that "a great event in the school calendar was the annual concert, although for many years my part in this has been confined to helping with the make-up (as a result of this, I am very good at making young people look older, but no good at making myself look younger!). In my early years at the school, I helped to produce several concerts. The first production with which I was connected was a shortened version of 'The Magic Flute', called 'Papageno and Papagena'. I shall never forget the panic when one of the young ladies who was carrying the padlock which was to be placed on Papageno's lips dropped it through a crack in the stage. One of the masters had to crawl under the stage, and he retrieved the padlock in the nick of time.

"Another awkward moment occurred during the the performance of 'Hereward's Return'. We actually had a transformation scene! The heroine, who had just been re-united with her long-lost husband, announced that they would take a stroll in the woods. At this point, the curtain came down for about half a minute, so that a frieze of cut-out trees could be lowered into position. The short break in the action was filled by the orchestra. On two out of three evenings, all went well, but, on the third, the tree scene jammed and refused to descend. Then it came down the wrong way, so that the trees appeared as unpainted canvas. All this time, poor Mr. Fielden and the orchestra played the same piece over and over again!"

Thus, although musical concerts continued in these years, they came to alternate with ambitious productions, often of first-class material. We have seen 'Hansel and Gretel', 'Papageno and Papagena', 'The Little Sweep' and the home-made confection, 'Hereward's Return'. There was also 'The Marsh Riders', written for the school by two former pupils, Dr. Phillip Lord and Miss Lillian Holt (who, though an invalid for many years, took the keenest interest in the school's music and drama). Biggest in scale was the production of Britten's 'Noye's Fludde', the work of Mr. G. M. Nuttall and Mr. J. B. Law. A host of singers and an orchestra brought up to seventy-strong by dozens of players from all over the county created effects that the headmaster, Mr. W. Copley, in his review in 'The Squirrel', described as unforgettable. "The young performers gave an overwhelming impression of zest and pleasure in their performance, which communicated itself to those watching and moved them deeply. For one person at least, these sounds and sights will long remain present."

In 1954, Mr. E. J. Williams came to the school to teach English. The staffrooms soon learnt that Mr. Williams, apart from being a neat hand at turning a satirical verse, was a Gilbert and Sullivan enthusiast. Together with Miss R. Williams, as musical director, he firmly established the school's Gilbert and Sullivan tradition with 'Trial by Jury' and a sparkling 'H.M.S. Pinafore'. In 1973 with Ko-Ko's little list, that wandering minstrel and the gentlemen of Japan of "attitudes queer and quaint" still reverberating in our heads, and the make-up staff still haunted by the thought of making the owners of forty Rossendalian faces into slant-eyed Orientals, we know that Mr. F. Wild and Miss B. J. Harrison are their worthy successors. The enthusiasm and gaiety of 'H.M.S. Pinafore' (again!), 'The Pirates of Penzance', 'Iolanthe' and 'The Mikado' have won a well-deserved popularity for these productions.

Four years ago, a bewildered representative from a well-known firm of stage contractors gazed at our stage — and said that he had never seen anything quite like it! For fifty years, conditions had been far more primitive. We read of the strange construction of tarpaulin that was needed before scenes from 'Macbeth' could be staged. Mr. Thomson can testify that, when the old stage lighting was switched on, the walls of the hall were hot. The erection of the stage was a two-day job. The caretakers and their helpers dragged and hammered huge wooden beams into place to make the wings. Then a towering proscenium of timber and hessian was laboriously hauled erect. Over the years this came to sway and creak alarmingly, and it is a tribute to the craftmanship of Mr. Trickett (who made it years before he ever thought of teaching at the school) that it lasted for as long as it did. Was it the need for these Herculean labours that made the school play a comparatively late arrival?



Joan at the stake
'The Lark' — Golden Jubilee production — 1963

The first full-length play was performed in 1946 — a delightful production of 'The Importance of Being Earnest' by Mrs. F. L. Ebden, which the 'Bacup Times' greeted as having "established the school play as part of the curriculum". Miss J. E. Macleroy recalls "productions on a shoe string. I remember painting scenery, even making it, at week-ends. 'The Importance

of Being Earnest' was outstanding. The prompter's nightmare occurred when an over-tired young actress skipped a couple of pages, but Dr. Chasuble pulled them round and no-one noticed." 'Hobson's Choice' and a number of plays by Shaw followed Mr. Copley vividly remembers Mr. W. E. Walton's production of 'Pygmalion', when the actress playing Eliza "took the lead and held the capacity audiences in the palm of her hand".

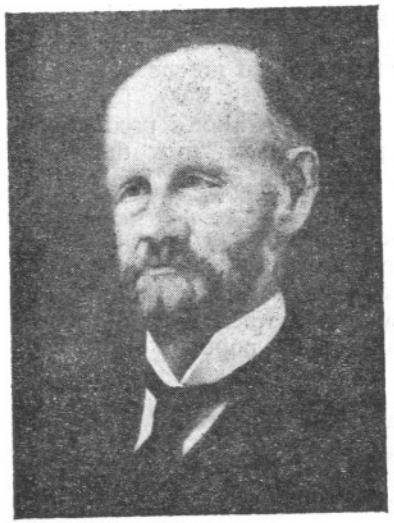
It was in these years that the Fourth Form Drama Competition was founded — with the pupils producing their own plays. Mr. H. E. Trip extended this competition to the third forms, and the Festival of One-Act Plays, when the best plays are performed in the evening, has been a popular event for fourteen years.

In recent years, most plays have been produced by me, and we can now record three firsts: the first full-length Shakespearean production ('Twelfth Night'); the first venture away from the safety of comedy ('The Lark'); and the first live monkey on the stage ('Inherit the Wind').

We have our theatrical gossip, but how many of the stories are apochryphal? For instance, did 'Hereward's Return' come to a halt while everyone waited for Sir Stephen Lightfingers to appear on cue? Did Eliza Doolittle really have to say, "Walk! Not Pygmalion likely!"? Was it really a serious suggestion that flesh-coloured material should cover the nudity of the dancing-girls' midriffs in 'Tobias and the Angel'? Did the Roman soldiers in 'Androcles and the Lion' actually find that their magnificent-looking tunics sewn with hundreds of milk bottle tops stayed creased once they had bent down? Was there a fourth-former in 'Eldorado' who dashed down right to catch a sack of potatoes that landed down left? Did an absent-minded stage-hand really march across the stage during the last act of 'When We Are Married'?

What else do we remember from these plays? The revivalist prayer-meeting in 'Inherit the Wind'? The hilarious antics of the mechanicals in 'A Midsummer-Night's Dream'? Anouilh's surprise ending as the execution gave way to the coronation in 'The Lark'? The delightful set of 'When We Are Married' — a witty background for all the "argy-bargy and hanky-panky"? Yes, we do — and so much more that is equally vivid. And do we remember the performances of — but here we must stop. We cannot single out a few, when so many did so much for us.

Mr. R. G. Phillips



HEADMASTERS

Mr. T. E. Jackson — **Mr. E. H. Holden**

Mr. W. Copley — **Mr. P. L. Clark**

HEADMASTERS

Thomas Ernest Jackson, M.A. (1892-1921)

Mr. Jackson came to Rossendale in 1892 as headmaster of Newchurch Grammar School and lived at Grammar School House until he retired to his native South in 1934. He lived near Uxbridge before removing to Devon, where he died at Smallbridge, Axminster, on 3rd November, 1948, aged 92 years.

He was born at Eltham in Kent and educated at Dulwich College and Trinity College, Cambridge. After leaving Cambridge he secured an appointment as assistant master at Cranford College, Maidenhead, and, after four years, moved to the Royal Institute School at Liverpool. Three years later he became second master at Islington High School, from where, five years later, he was appointed to Newchurch. In 1913 he became headmaster of the new Bacup and Rawtenstall Secondary School, and he retired in 1921.

In his retirement he continued to take a keen interest in the educational work of the Borough and served as a member of the Education Committee from 1921-34 and for a time was Chairman of the Union of Lancashire and Cheshire Institutes. From 1921-30 he served as a member of Rawtenstall Council and also served on many committees, as varied as the Waterfoot branch of the League of Nations, the R.S.P.C.A., Toc H, and was chairman of the Rossendale Association of Boy Scouts. He also had a prominent association with St. Nicholas's Church, Newchurch, and he was a licensed lay-reader of the Church of England. His hobbies were music, cycling and walking.

Mr. R. Y. Digby wrote ('The Squirrel', 1963) : " 'Jackie' had all the polish to be expected of one educated at Dulwich College and Trinity College, Cambridge, but no trace of snobbery in his make-up. With his bushy, red beard and temples — he was bald on top — with his forthright approach and his great physical vigour, he made a tremendous impact on his scholars, and the maintaining of school discipline was to him an easy task. His yea was yea, and his nay was nay. To get the stick from 'Jackie' was a chastening experience — his preliminary question, 'Do you wear underclothing ?'; his preliminary statement, 'I am not going to say that this hurts me as much as it hurts you !'; the exaggerated sway of his body as he delivered the strokes. It was almost worth it to be able to talk about it afterwards.

"I remember him playing hockey with the staff in his sixties and diving in at the deep end at Bacup Baths, and I had the great pleasure of climbing Cader Idris, via the Foxes Path, with David Law and Jackie actually on his sixtieth birthday. He

certainly believed in 'mens sana in corpore sano'. Sometimes in cold weather, he would dash into the playground with his stick and chase boys round to warm them up.

"Perhaps he was at his most impressive when he stalked around the school wearing a mortar board. Woe betide the evil-doer, when he proclaimed from the rostrum, 'A little bird has whispered in my ear'. Woe betide the pupil who failed to show up after being selected for the school team. That was the sin against the Holy Ghost.

"In the classroom, Jackie was dynamic. Latin may be a dead language, but he breathed fire into the corpse. I can still picture him with his foot on the chest of a prostrate boy and a ruler poised in the air like a dagger, quoting Virgil with dramatic shouts. I can't forget his example from the Bible of a hexameter — 'Husbands love your wives and be not bitter against them' — and, most of all, I can't forget the twinkle of humour and affection in his blue eyes. He won more than respect from his scholars : he won affection. He was indeed a great headmaster."

Mr. Edmund Haworth Holden, M.Sc., A.R.I.C. (1921-1948)

Mr. Holden had been appointed as principal of the Technical School and senior master and science master when the school opened in 1913. He had his first teaching experience from 1905-7 at Oxford Grove Secondary and Pupil Teacher Centre in Bolton, before joining the staff of Wigan Mining and Technical College, and later he became head of the Chemistry Department at Workington Secondary and Technical School.

On his appointment as headmaster, the 'Free Press' reported at some length on his success as senior chemistry master : "While holding his present position, the school has occupied the premier position in England with regard to the number of distinctions gained in chemistry in the Cambridge Senior Local Examination."

When he retired, he and Mrs. Holden went to live in Wimbledon, where he died on 19th February 1958.

Mrs. F. L. Ebden wrote ('The Squirrel', 1963) : "Mr. Holden was a first-rate administrator with a comprehensive grasp of every aspect of school life and an incredible interest in, and memory for, the many hundreds of pupils who passed through the school during the twenty-seven years he was at the helm. There are, of course, facts and figures to prove the great progress that the school made during this period; it expanded physically, the number of its pupils doubled, it acquired playing fields (almost entirely as the result of Mr. Holden's initiative and enthusiasm), it developed all kinds of extra-curricular activities,

it gained the highest academic honours, it grew in reputation and, perhaps, most important of all, it sent out hundreds of young people to positions of responsibility in varying spheres of life and in different parts of the world. For this progress, none would deny that Mr. Holden was ultimately responsible.

"But a record of his achievements is not the whole man, and, when I think of Mr. Holden, it is not primarily the great headmaster I remember but a warm and forceful personality with faults as well as virtues, weaknesses as well as strength.

"Perhaps Mr. Holden's most outstanding quality (and of course one reason for his success) was his selfless dedication to the welfare of the school. The school was his life; he gave unsparingly of his knowledge, his time, his energy.

"Mr. Holden could at times be a hard taskmaster. He exacted the same high standards from his staff as he imposed upon himself : slackness, indifference, inefficiency he could not tolerate; indisposition was frowned upon. On the other hand, he could give unobtrusive help and encouragement to a young teacher in difficulty, and, in the case of genuine sickness or personal trouble, no-one could be more concerned and sympathetic.

"He was not always tactful, but he was sincere, straight and always scrupulously fair. He could be formidable in anger, but invariably after a disagreement, he would meditate on the issue in hand and, if he felt he had been hasty or mistaken, he would apologize. Many hundreds of Rossendalians besides myself must have learnt of his death in 1958 with a sense of personal loss."

Mr. William Copley, M.A. (1948-1969)

Mr. Copley had been senior modern languages master for ten years when he was appointed as headmaster in 1948. He was educated at Grange High School, Bradford, and Trinity College, Cambridge, and in 1931 he was appointed senior modern languages master at City Secondary School, Leicester, and went to a similar post at Buxton College in 1934, from where he moved to B.R.G.S. in 1938. During the war he served for nearly five years with the R.A.F., attaining the rank of squadron leader.

On his retirement and remarriage, he went to live in Huntingdon, where he spends his time writing, gardening and examining candidates in the French oral examinations of the Cambridge Board.

Dr. Ian Phillips wrote ('The Squirrel', 1963): "Mr. Copley had the intellectual stature and the degree of sympathetic understanding of the young, which make a headmaster. His motive was a belief in a liberal education, adaptable to the needs of the individual, with a purpose far beyond that of training to earn a living. To this end he worked tirelessly, but so discreetly that the range of his effort was seldom obvious to the unalert.

"He saw the school increase vastly in numbers — pupils and staff — and he had to face the problems of accommodation and the avalanche of administrative work. In spite of this, he promoted a broadening of the curriculum, including an important attempt to nip in the bud the development of the 'two cultures' by such measures as the introduction of general studies in the sixth. With a similar aim at breadth of education was his encouragemnt of extra-curricular activities. His concern for the individual led him to give up vast amounts of time to interviewing parents, applying himself to problems far outside his strict province as a headmaster."

Mr. Philip Lane Clark, M.A., F.R.G.S.

(headmaster since September 1969)

Mr. Clark, who is a native of Staffordshire, who became headmaster on the retirement of Mr. W. Copley, had previously been deputy head of a comprehensive school at Bingley, Yorkshire. He was educated at Nether Edge Grammar School, Sheffield, and King Edward VI Grammar School, Aston, and then read for the degrees of B.A. and M.A. at the University of Birmingham. He served as an education officer in the R.A.F. from 1953 to 1956, in which year he was appointed head of the Geography Department at Coleshill Grammar School, Warwickshire. Mr. Clark is a keen hockey player and is interested in music and local history. He is married, with two sons.

THE TEACHERS

Almost every letter and article received has mentioned some of the scores of men and women who have taught at B.R.G.S. in the past. Some gave many years of service to the school and have become a part of it, and the names of Mr. Jackson, Mr. Holden, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Tonkinson, Mr. Hirst, Miss Niness, Miss Iremonger, Mr. Proudfoot, Mr. Barker, Mr. Duthie, Mr. Ebden, Miss D. Moore, Mr. Owen, Mrs. Whittaker, Miss M. Moore, Miss Greenwood, Mr. Fielden and Mr. Anstey are mentioned time and time again — they stayed long enough to become

"institutions". More recent old students write of Mr. Copley, Mr. Howard, Miss Dodds, Mr. Ormerod, Mrs. Ebden, Mrs. Culley, Mr. Walton, Miss Macleroy, Mr. Harding and others, and it is interesting to note that there are no less than eight old students on the present staff.

The memories are affectionate, if at times irreverent, and it was very difficult to choose from the material sent in, as so much of it was repetitive. I have finally chosen two articles by Mr. H. B. Cardwell and Mrs. Megan Newhouse (née Owen) as the ones which are likely to evoke memories amongst the greatest number of people. I have also included a poem by the late Miss Lillian Holt (from 'The Squirrel', 1963) and one or two interesting anecdotes about various members of staff.

Thanks for the Memory

With Apologies

Thanks for the memory
of Odyssey with Dabs,
of Tube and chemmy labs,
of Teddy Holden's liquid air
and Phyllis Greenwood's savoir faire —
Thank you so much.

Thanks for the memory
of Tonks and Julius C.,
of art with Johnny D.,
of Pussy's puns and Fielden's flair
and my mathematical despair —
Thank you so much.

Thanks for the memory
of Duthie's metre rule
(for those who played the fool),
of being late (those sweet lies)
of hockey teas and Dixon's pies —
Thank you so much.

Thanks for the memory
of Miss Pearson on the pitch,
of Big D. and Little Tich,
of Miss Turner and the cantaloup
and twins forever in the soup —
Thank you so much.

Thanks for the memory
of Miss Blackith and Miss G.
(frenzied French and botany),
of Miss Niness's digressions
and those long debating sessions —
Thank you so much.

Thanks for the memory
of 'Quinquireme of Nineveh'
and home-made cinema,
of Fred who swept us from the hall
and pennyworths from Annie Paul —
Thank you so much.

And thanks for the memory
of the final day of term
(the point of no return),
of governors and speech days
and ordinary teach days —
Thank you so much.

* * *

Mr. Jackson christened Miss M. Moore the "historic" and Miss D. Moore the "prehistoric", nicknames which stuck for some time.

* * *

In the early days Mr. Ebden was quite unaware of his nickname (Test Tube) and once reduced his form to hysterics by gravely announcing that he shortly expected the delivery of a lot of little test tubes.

* * *

Mr. Duthie's refusal to use the girls' names and addressing them all as "Gertie" and his favourite expression "numb as a brick".

* * *

Miss M. Moore's addressing of a sixth form boy of 6 ft. 2 in. as "You little whippersnapper".

* * *

Mr. Owen's corrections, re-corrections and re-re-corrections.

* * *

Mr. M. B. Ormerod's statement of "I want your name, boy, not your mental state" to a boy called Maden, who, in the haste of an exam, had written at the top of the paper "J. G. Mad".

* * *

Mr. Anstey's announcement the day the new gymnasium was opened : "You must wear plimsolls in the gym at all times : if you have no plimsolls, you must wear nothing."

Three Women

People are fifty times more important than places to me, so, if I am asked for recollections, they will never be about institutions, but about individuals. Without its teachers a school is nothing. I want to write about these three people, because they stand out as a group which can characterize the period when I was at B.R.G.S., 1936-42.

Two 'headmistresses' and a 'head woman', for lack of better words, are my subject, and, as three individuals, they could not possibly be more in contrast, but, as a trio, they stand out like landmarks in my schooldays. To see their character, to see what they stood for, all you needed to do was to look at their clothes, so I must be forgiven if I lay emphasis on these in my remarks. If my judgements are superficial, it will be because I am remembering them through a small boy's eyes, not because I am judging from clothes alone.

Edwina Niness was senior mistress when I first went to Waterfoot. In teaching she gave me nothing, for I didn't want to know about geography, but as an individual, she opened new vistas. She had travelled, and, in 1936, someone who talked to you in Rossendale about New York was an event. But it wasn't just that, of course. She had a sophistication and a freshness that was essentially modern and ahead of her time, and I don't think it occurred to me, as a small boy, that she must be nearly sixty, until it had happened, and she retired. She had an elegance of manner, and, when she moved, you noticed. I would so much like to have met her as an adult, though I wonder now if she was a little temperamental.

Nobody could less suggest that than her successor as senior mistress, Elizabeth Iremonger. She was from another age. Instead of the lively tweeds and cardigans of Miss Niness, Elizabeth Iremonger seemed to her pupils of fifteen to move almost on casters. Very tall and very slender, she wore her hair in an unfashionable bun, and her long skirts stopped not far from her ankles, in a fashion of some thirty years earlier. Placid and gentle as she was, one might well wonder how she ever controlled a rowdy class, in a less than popular subject, Latin. Yet, somehow, chatter would be quelled with a look so disapproving as to suggest that we had all sinned against the Holy Ghost, and we went back obediently, if reluctantly, to our Virgil.

The last of my three women is Mrs. Whittaker, who had earlier been Miss Wrigley. Her end-of-term treat was to tell ghost stories and tales of the Lancashire witches, and I'm sure we wondered whether she was a witch herself. Her appearance had more than a hint of this : a gaunt and almost haggard face,

set slightly askew on her neck, so that she moved awkwardly; her grey hair, scraped back in a rough and ready way; her black dress looking rather stained and weather-beaten. All the marks of a hard life, with a scorn for the niceties of dress and appearance. She didn't teach social history; she lived it: we didn't really learn it; we caught it from her by infection. All the way from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution to the social problems of the 1930's without once referring to notes; I can never remember her doing so. Like a grotesque Sarah Bernhardt, she moved through the nineteenth century, declaiming about social wrongs, speaking not with a political, but with a humanitarian passion, or that, at any rate, was what it seemed like to me. Good for a laugh sometimes, but good for a lifetime too.

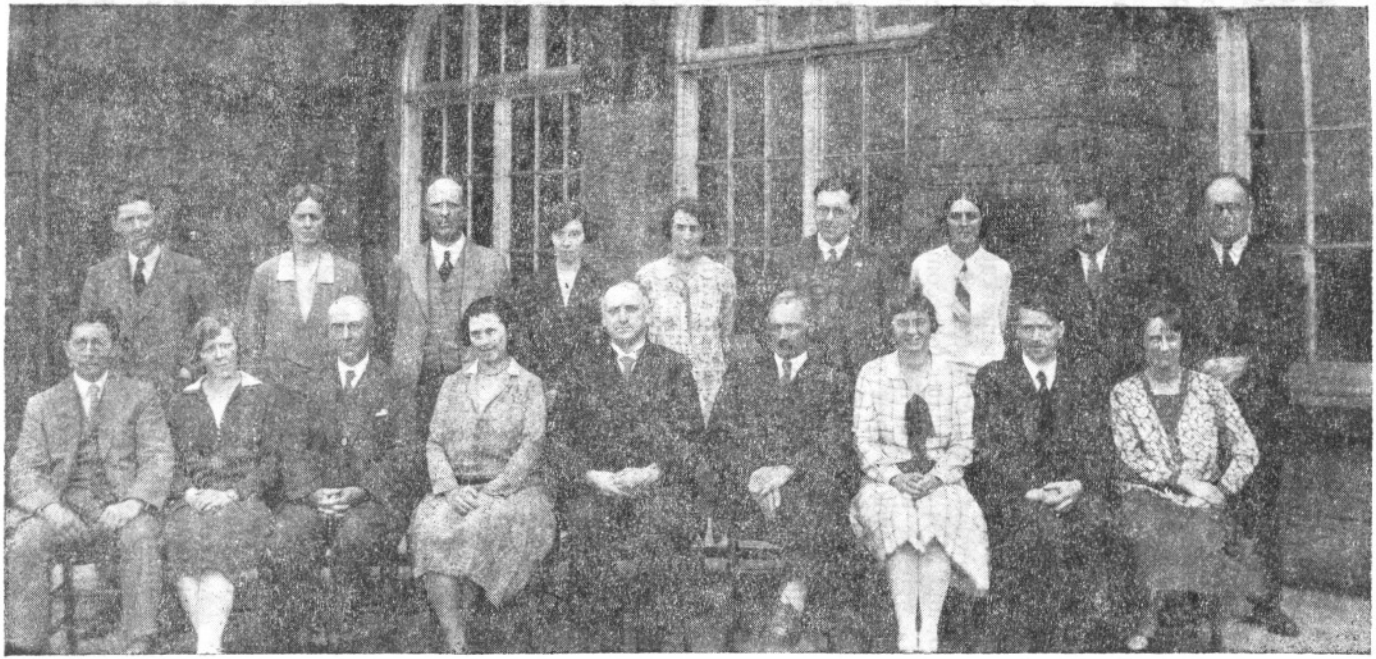
Mr. H. B. Cardwell

The Olympians

The complete 'world-in-minature' of a school seems to be the ideal catalyst for turning teachers into Characters, with a capital "C". Such characters abounded in the B.R.G.S. of the 'forties — people who were larger than life, slightly eccentric Olympians, who moved among us, and who left an indelible impression on their pupils, so that the latter, when they happened to meet, after however long a lapse since their schooldays, eagerly ask each other, "Do you remember Mr. So-and-so?", and a series of anecdotes follows, some possibly embroidered over the years, others maybe passed on from one school generation to another and quite apocryphal.

Mr. Fielden, who taught music, as well as science and woodwork. was one of the first of these Olympians to make an impression on my young mind, and, having seen him conduct the school orchestra with majestic aplomb, I built upon him all my subsequent ideas on what an orchestral conductor should be, a broad-shouldered, portly prototype. He was unfailingly good-humoured and unruffled and amazed his first-year classes by what seemed magical scientific experiments. One involved the use of a stool made entirely of ice, and, though this glittering object impressed me very much, unfortunately I can't remember what it proved.

Mr. Ebden also moved in the, to me, mysterious world of science, and we (little fiends that we were) took advantage of his occasional vagueness. "Have we done chlorine?" he would ask, and we, who had done this noxious gas only the previous week, would blandly reply, "No, sir!", so that the experiment



The Staff — 1929-30

would be carefully repeated for our benefit, with all the excitement of choking fumes and up-flung windows. Mr. Ebden had an ability to cover the blackboard in lightning calculations, which bewildered me and caused him to use his favourite phrase, "I do not like your attitude", spoken in pained bewilderment. Looking back, I marvel at his patience with the legions of the non-scientifically minded.

Little Mr. Anstey and tall, bluff Mr. Duthie did not teach me, but were memorable characters to many of the school, as were the two Miss Moores, distinguished by the staff as 'Little Miss Moore' and 'Big Miss Moore'. The latter could make maths intelligible to even the most ungifted of pupils, whilst the former brought history to life with a remarkable clarity of approach. Miss P. Greenwood, senior mistress for a time, was greatly respected, and Miss Jones (later to become Mrs Ebden) produced plays, as well as teaching English, and her enthusiasm and friendly manner evoked great zeal in her would-be actors.

Memories of my father, Mr. Owen, are coloured by the teasing I had to endure from my contemporaries, by the fact I had to call him "sir" in school, and by the necessity I felt to explain to other pupils that he was quite 'human' really and that he even indulged in such commonplace activities as listening to 'ITMA' on the radio. However, I gather he had a reputation for fairness and thorough teaching, and I know from personal recollection that he was devoted to the school and to the good of his pupils, and had a long struggle with illness, but very rarely allowed this to affect his attendance at school.

Art to us meant Mr. Barker, a brilliant artist. His vivid sketches in the corner of a paper whereon one's own miserable effort languished were only one manifestation of his gifts; for instance, many school productions were enhanced by scenery designed by him. He had a habit of giving literally thousands of lines at a time to offenders, but it is not recorded whether these ever got written in their entirety.

Mr. Proudfoot, an inspired teacher, imparted a love of English literature to his pupils, and even large teenage boys, who considered, as a rule, that only science subjects were worthy of their attention, could be brought by him to admit that Shakespeare, a line of poetry or a passage from Lamb contained beauty and relevance to their lives.

The doyen or Jupiter among all these Olympians was, of course, the headmaster, Mr. Holden. Dressed impressively (and most unusually for the Valley) in wing collar, black coat and striped trousers, he would stride majestically into the hall or onto the platform and boom instructions or admonitions. His presence alone was enough to make juniors among the mortals

quail, and he is recorded as having only ever made one mistake in an announcement, when he informed the school that "sliced speeches" would be part of the refreshments on speech day. His 'bark' was considerably worse than his 'bite', for his severity of manner concealed a very kind heart.

Such then were the characters of my schooldays; many others, like myself, must still feel gratitude and affection towards them, for, not only did they give of themselves in their teaching, but their presence made life vivid and varied in those (sometimes) halcyon days at B.R.G.S.

Mrs. Megan Newhouse (née Owen)

THE BARKER FAMILY SAGA —
and its connection with B.R.G.S.

In 1913 a young man invested in his first bowler hat (it could have been the only one he ever had throughout his life, for I certainly never saw him wearing one!) as he thought it suitable wear for travelling to Lancashire to apply for his first post. He was leaving Camden School of Art, where he had acquired as many qualifications as he could to equip himself to teach art. Almost all the men in his family before him had been artists, painters of pictures, and he felt he was letting them down by not following suit. He knew from bitter experience, however, how precarious a way of living this could be, and was determined that he must have a steady salary if possible. So he was very thrilled to be accepted for the teaching post in the new Bacup and Rawtenstall Secondary School, as it was then. He was John Edward Barker, from Bath in Somerset.

On his arrival at the beginning of term, Mr. Jackson, the headmaster, suggested he should try to get rooms at the home of Mrs. Law of Piersclough Hall, so he wended his way up the Lumb Valley in a tram, a single-decker type with seats going the full length, facing one another. He knew he looked different, a Southerner, wearing his bowler hat and neat, dark suit, and he noticed the nudges and mutters of "Oo's yon?"

At Piersclough, to the man from Somerset, the setting became completely Dickensian — a marvellous old house, set in wild country. The landlady, Mrs. Law, was a kindly, hospitable Rossendalian housewife, with a dry sense of humour and a brogue he could scarcely understand at first. Also when roused, her tongue could have a rough edge, whether for her children, the tradespeople — or her lodgers! He was given a large sitting-room in which his meals were served, and what meals! To a young man who had been a student in London for years, they were royal repasts. Mrs. Law would come in to clear the table and would comment, "Oh, you left t'dish them!"

Other members of the staff stayed there too, each with his or her private sitting-room; and all were fed and watered, scolded, nursed when ill, poulticed if necessary and generally managed by Mrs. Law. Mr. Owen, Miss Wrigley and others whom I cannot remember received the full treatment.

Very soon 1914 came along, with the declaration of war. The poster, "Kitchener needs YOU !", soon had an effect on the impressionable young man, who felt he must join up. The entire school — staff and students — went down to the station to see him off ! That must have been quite something and would hardly be possible nowadays, even if there were still a railway station.

Reminscences tend to become personal, so I must now enter the story myself. I was a little girl when the school was being built, and, living in the Valley, heard the talk about the big new school. My mother had been a teacher and was very keenly interested. I remember her on the point of tears, when a girl who came on Saturday mornings to help confessed she had won a scholarship to the school at its opening and was not allowed to take advantage of it, as her parents wanted her to work as soon as she was twelve.

When I was nine, I entered a sort of forcing frame, the headmaster's room, which just held four desks as well as his own, in the Church School at Stacksteads, and was given intensive training for the scholarship. All four of us, that year, were successful, and I had my tenth birthday between then and the time the September Term started in 1916.

Mr. Barker was still away, and we did not meet him until 1919. Mr. Foster had taken his place temporarily — a textile man and good at his job.

One remembers so many people and things — the classes were small, and I think life was more leisurely than it became later. Miss Niness kept a watchful eye on the girls. I am sure she would be pained to know that the item of information that seems to have impressed itself most clearly on my mind in the geography lessons was her comparative measurement when talking about the height of a tidal wave or whatever. Up would go her arm to point towards the hall, where in those days the climbing ropes were looped up to the ceiling. "And when you think that the ropes are thirty-three feet high", she would say. To this day, when the height of something is in question, my mind ticks over : "And when you think that the ropes are thirty-three feet high" — very useful and reliable it is too !

Years passed, Senior Cambridge loomed, as O Levels do now. To my astonishment, a distinction in art was achieved, and I departed to Manchester Municipal School of Art for four years. Coming home at week-ends, I kept in touch by attending

all Old Students' dances and plays. We had a dancing class almost every Friday evening for old students, staff and members of the sixth form. This was really an informal dance, and I remember this period as great fun.

At the end of the four years I came back to live in Waterfoot, as I married the art master, and so my life became again closely bound up with affairs at the school.

Towards the end of the Second World War, our daughter passed the 11-plus and joined the school as a student. Staff were needed badly, so I went, in some trepidation, on two afternoons each week to take junior art. I taught four forms, composed of all the incoming pupils. This went on for six years, by which time it had gone full circle, and I had taught all the students in the school who had entered in the normal way. This seemed to me a very satisfactory point to have reached on leaving.

My husband retired when he was sixty-one. He wanted so badly to live in Bath again — his birthplace — and he was feeling so strangely seedy. For years he had been badly afflicted physically — like Job, as he said. I will never understand why no one suspected he had an infection of the blood. It was not until we had lived here two years that a blood test revealed acute leukaemia. He died within the year.

My daughter and I have been in Bath for twenty-two years. Valerie is married and has seven children ! She is a trained artist (diploma in painting) but naturally, considering the size of her family, does not find time to paint just now.

It has given me pleasure to record my own connection with B.R.G.S. as student, wife of a member of the staff, member of staff myself, and mother of a student. I always have had and always will have a special interest in its welfare.

Mrs. Constance Mary Barker

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

My entry into the Lower Third of Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School was the fulfilment of an ambition. I had long looked forward to going "to t'Tec." and had already been initiated into some of its mysteries by my sister, who was then a sixth former.

It was an exciting new world, and I revelled in it. But, to the children of today, who find nothing extraordinary in the launching of Apollo 17, it would have seemed a strangely narrow world. Tape recorders and television were unthought of, and radio listening had not long since emerged from the headphone

stage. Only a year or so previously, trams had been running between Bacup and Rawtenstall, and it was something of an event to hear or see an aeroplane in the sky. To me it was an ordered and secure world, even though those six years preceded Chamberlain's visit to Munich and the subsequent cataclysm of World War II.

There were many influences which made those B.R.G.S. days so happy and rewarding (at least in retrospect).

One was the staff. Many of them had been at the school for several years. Vacancies usually occurred as a result of retirement rather than of transfer, and I can recall few staff changes. Lacking today's elaborate teaching aids, subjects were largely put across through force of personality. We had tremendous respect for teachers, however much we might ridicule them amongst ourselves. We accepted their authority, which was based, I think, on a real dedication to their task, and on the sincerity of their intentions towards us, the pupils.

To a lower-thirder, the prefects seemed like gods and goddesses. The sixth form was very small by today's standards. Rossendale had an exceptionally stable population, as it was only after World War II that it became normal for young people to take up a career away from home. The majority of pupils in the school were natives of the Valley, as were their parents before them. I have often wondered how 'foreigners', whether pupils or staff, felt on entering such a close community. If they talked 'posh' or spoke with a different accent from the rest of us, they were objects of curiosity until we got used to them. I remember a German girl called Ingeborg, who spent a term or so in the school. She was probably the first non-British person I ever met, and she completely fascinated me.

Sports days, speech days, and school concerts were the great occasions. My chief memory of events on the sports field, apart from butterflies in the tummy, is of a battle between Humberstone and Alan Taylor when running the mile. Humbie was large and tall and ran in easy strides, whilst Alan Taylor was small and slight and took two strides to Humbie's one. I've forgotten the details, but I think Taylor overtook Humbie on the very last lap. It was tremendously exciting. Then there was the occasion when the high jump events were held in the school hall because of bad weather, Des Little gave a breathtaking performance, which beat the existing and seemingly unbeatable record. That was as exciting to us as any Olympics,

My main memories of speech days are of rousing songs sung by the whole school: 'Cargoes', 'Roadways' and 'I vow to thee my country'. The guest speakers always tried to give us good advice, but the only part I remember of any of those

speeches was spoken by Alderman Carrie Whitehead. She had a very weak voice, and, as microphones were not yet in vogue, it was practically impossible to hear anything she said from the platform. On this particular occasion she was very emphatic, and, for once, it came across. She was talking about making excuses, and specially about the excuse of not having time. "I want you to remember," she said, "that you have all the time there is." She repeated it several times, and I got the message. I often recall those words of wisdom.

Ted's golden rule was to keep boys and girls separate wherever possible. We had to use different staircases up to the balcony, and, of course, we had separate playgrounds. Some of us used to spend our breaks in the basement cloakroom, whose windows overlooked the boys' playground. There we could observe our current swains, who were usually engrossed in a game of football.

I wonder how far Ted was aware of the romances that budded in this unfavourable atmosphere — or was it so unfavourable? Sam and I started 'going together' at the age of 15. This caused some embarrassment, at least to me, on more than one occasion. There was the time when Sam, as a prefect, read in morning assembly a passage from the Book of Kings, every verse of which began: "And Samuel said unto Jesse . . ." He read it without batting an eyelid, whilst I was longing for the floor to open and swallow me up. There was another occasion, when, as hockey secretary, I had to see Ted about some hockey matter, and he referred me to the football secretary, Sam Lunt. Do you know who he is?" he enquired. "You won't be shy of asking him, will you?" It was my turn not to bat an eyelid.

School days came to an end and were followed by the adventure of training college. Later there was the adventure of marriage and of rearing a family. Surely our children, too, owe much to the influences of those good old days.

Mrs. Jessie Lunt (née Hewitt)

RANDOM RECOLLECTIONS

How can one compress eighteen years' experience of living and teaching in the Valley into a few paragraphs? A wallow in sentimental nostalgia might will be the result, were it not for the intrusive memory of the deprivations and anxieties of the war years and their aftermath and, to a lesser extent, of the rigours of the Rossendale climate with its rain-filled skies, long, bitter winters and their attendant physical ills.

All the same, in retrospect, the past takes on a rosy glow because of its association with one's youth (though, to the eternally young school population, I suppose teachers are old from the age of 23 !) with its enthusiasms and aspirations, forward-looking thoughts and hopes. For me, these eighteen years were good years, of challenge, of discovery, of strenuous effort and, to a large extent, of fulfilment. And for this I have to thank B.R.G.S..

I suppose I must have taught something; I hope I did for it was no hardship to try to pass on a little of my own enduring passion for Eng. Lit., though the disciplines of Eng. Lang. were less attractive — to my pupils too, I suspect. But at this distance of time, the days in the classroom merge into a blur, and it is my colleagues in the staffroom, the youngsters I taught and the things we did OUT of school that remain most clearly in the mind.

I remain convinced that there was something special about the staff in my time — and this is not solely because I married one of them, who has put up with me cheerfully for thirty years ! There were some comings and goings, of course, in nearly twenty years, but a solid phalanx of men and women stood firm, hard-working and 'caring' teachers, loyal to the head (as he to them), the School and one another. We remember them all, some, alas, no longer with us, with respect and affection, and continuing contact over the years is a great source of interest and pleasure to both of us.

For us too there will always be something special about Rossendale children. There was, and probably still is, a friendly trust, a sturdy forthrightness and sense of fun about them that was very heart-warming. There was none of that resistance to authority that I experienced with a sense of shock when I taught boys at a Sussex public school for a brief period after my 'retirement'. Contrary, perhaps, to popular belief, one does not remember only the brilliant scholars, though there is always satisfaction in encouraging an intelligence which one recognises as superior to one's own; one recalls with equal clarity the triers and plodders, the dreamers and the fidgets, the worriers and those who did not worry enough. Helping them all to pass examinations was only part of the challenge; this, of course, is true of education generally; there are other spheres of influence and points of contact which go to establish a friendly relationship that may endure for years.

There is no doubt that our own lives were enriched by shared experiences outside the classroom: the superb music-making of Sir John Barbirolli and the Hallé, whose members became almost as familiar as our own school orchestra; the plays we saw when Sir Donald Wolfit and Sir Laurence Olivier were in their

heyday, and the plays we produced — I know there must have been problems and frustrations, but all I recall now is the fun of rehearsals and the excitement of the first night; holidays in North Wales and the Lake District, not forgetting one sodden September week-end when we trudged in a solid downpour and force-nine gale through Newlands Valley and over Honister Pass; those Ascension Day (and many other) walks in snow, mist and sunshine, including the joyful occasion when I fell into a stream and had to be ignominiously wrung out and dried in the sun; fire-watching during the war, mercifully producing no greater hazards than mice and cockroaches — I shall always remember two sixth-form boys brandishing a poker as they chased a mouse the length of the hall and the time we poured boiling water into a cockroach crevice, and the door was never the same again.

Random recollections indeed ! They can mean nothing to all the hundreds of children who have passed through the school since our time, but for us they represent practically all our teaching lives and a wealth of faithful friends. We owe a great debt to B.R.G.S. and wish the old school well on the occasion of its diamond jubilee and for all the years to come.

Mrs. F. L. Ebden.

LOOKING BACK

My time at B.R.G.S. was spent mostly in the sixth form during the late 1940's. Despite the troubles of the world at that period — the Korean War, the Indian Independence riots and the frightening spread of nuclear weapons — I remember it as a good time to be young. Britain was happy; she had won the war. She emerged from austerity, started new industries, scrapped the greater part of the rationing system and prepared with patriotic fervour for the 1951 South Bank Exhibition. The Rossendale Valley prospered with the rest of the country, and at school we were full of hope.

There were perhaps fifty of us altogether in the three sixth-form years, a small enough number to form a true community. Most pupils knew each other personally, and our teachers knew us all; and in these teachers we were infinitely lucky. They seemed to have unending patience, time and energy to encourage our wider exploration of school subjects. I still see recommended, in educational texts today, policies which were standard practice at B.R.G.S a quarter of a century ago. The emphasis now is on community involvement, with young people seeing themselves as part of society; already in 1948 our school was one of the first in the country to study social and economic history to advanced

examination level, and the importance of Rossendale, and Lancashire generally, in the Industrial Revolution was a source of pride to us. The emphasis now is on excursions and travel; already when I was in the sixth form, Mr. Copley, Mr. and Mrs. Ebden, Mrs. Culley, Miss M. Moore, Mr. Walton, Miss Macleroy and many other members of staff gave up what should have been peaceful Saturdays in order to take us all over the country in 'buses, from Stratford-on-Avon to Pendle Hill, showing us the places of interest and patiently listening, en route, to our adolescent problems and our very noisy adolescent enjoyment. The emphasis now is on free expression and creative writing; already in 1949 we had the Sixth Form Poetry Circle, which duplicated its members' verses onto broadsheets and met for readings and merciless self-criticism on Wednesdays after school. The emphasis now (still hotly argued) is on schools teaching comparative religion, rather than fixed doctrines; already in 1949 our Scripture lessons consisted of each pupil choosing at random one creed or denomination from the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica' and presenting the case for it to the rest of the class. The emphasis now is on 'education for leisure'; already in 1949 we at B.R.G.S. had a close reciprocal arrangement with the Haslingden Arts Club, visited and ourselves took part in various plays and concerts, and had a gramophone recital of classical music after every morning assembly. Incredibly, with all this going on, our teachers still managed to get us through the various educational hoops and over the hurdles — called, in those days, Higher School Certificate — and, I believe, all of us who wanted to went on to university or college.

Looking back, I feel that we had the best of both worlds, old-style confidence with modern breadth of outlook. Personally, I owe, not only my adult career, but also many of my leisure interests and commitments to those halcyon days at school in Rossendale. I send you greetings : I wish you all joy in the next sixty years.

Dr. Margaret Little (née Hutchinson)

BEDTIME STORY

"But did you really, really like school ?" my son asks me with persistent incredulity for the thirty-seventh time.

"Yes, I did", I reply and not just to encourage him. It happens to be true. "Perhaps not so much at your age, because I was an evacuee during the war, and we were moved around a lot. But by the time I got to Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School, I really did." My son chortles, as he always does, at the unfamiliar ring of the Pennines country names, which filled my youth but sound foreign to this urban-bred child.

"Tell me something you learned," he challenges, still hopeful.

I rack my brain for something truly impressive; a language or two, the domestic hot water system, Pythagoras, the Industrial Revolution. A million facts that have been absorbed into my subconscious, never to emerge again except in heavy disguise. How do I explain that this all adds up to what I am ? I decide that example is the best technique.

"One day", I say, "I was due to appear as Vicky Hobson in the school production of 'Hobson's Choice', but I could hardly speak for tonsilitis. Mr. Copley, my headmaster, came up to me and said, 'And how's the incipient 'flu ?' In this way he immortalised himself to me. I have been a dictionary devotee ever since, for I had no idea what he meant."

My son thinks I am hedging. "Mummy tell me about Miss Barnes, and Mr. Harding and your pottery classes," he pleads, putting all his cards on the table.

Naturally, I know where we are heading, and I realise that he has made the best assessment. When I think back on what my school meant to me, it is invariably in terms of the people whose words I remember, and who offered me varying degrees of affection, security, hope, amusement and challenge. I have to think harder to produce locations and activities. There was assembly, which always seemed to me to be about self-control — not to faint, not to giggle, but occasionally for airing one's histrionic leanings, reading a passage from the big Bible on the platform; and speech days, which promptly bring to mind the Mayor of Rawtenstall who announced that the Choir would now sing 'Green's Leaves', Arr. R. Vaughan Williams, and that he was glad to be with us on this fine/rainy day for our summer fete/prize-giving.

"All right," I say, "I had this Latin teacher called Miss Barnes, who came from Wigan. Once, when I was being 'stroppy', she declared, 'Della, I am sure you will lead an active life, but it will not be long. At your present rate I should think you'd be lucky to reach thirty.' Since I had about sixteen years to go at the time, I fell about with merriment and derision. I had no wish to prolong my senility once thirty had been reached. But on the eve of my thirtieth birthday, when I was coming round from having a minor operation, the first words I said were, 'I made it, Miss Barnes !' Daddy thought I'd gone mad".

"She's already five years out," says my son, in case I didn't know. "What about Miss Dodds ?"

"Well, Miss Dodds taught maths to the lower school. She had a reputation for being very strict, though in fact I think she was kind and had a good sense of humour. When we had

our very first maths lesson in the first form (Lower IIIA), she told us all exactly how we were to set about our work, and she wrote sums on the board for us to copy. I had a friend who was a very nervous type. She also had enormous handwriting, so she got to the end of the first page in her exercise book long before anyone else. The silly girl put up her hand and said, 'Please, miss, I have finished the page. Shall I turn over ?' 'Oh no, dear,' replied Miss Dodds, 'you carry on writing straight down the desk'."

My son is convulsed, as usual. I am, of course, delighted and warm to my theme. "And then there was Mr. Harding, who was my form master. He always teased me for being so skinny. One day he said, 'Della, are you wearing that skirt, or falling through it ?' I was actually serving the tea in the men's staff-room at the time, and I swore I'd never do them the favour again. I did, of course. I wasn't so militant then".

My son looks incredulous. "Oh and there was Mrs. Culley, whose idiosyncratic view of English history has left me with the unshakable impression that Gladstone was a 'baddie'; Mr. Park, who was later Daddy's colleague in the House of Commons; Miss Macleroy, who tried to be fierce; and Miss Greenwood, who let you lie down in her room if you didn't feel well; and big Miss Moore and little Miss Moore."

"Don't forget the Ebdens," chimes in my audience.

"Oh no. I never will. In fact the whole lot are so real to me, it's quite frightening. I was very fond of them all. Well, nearly all. I expect a lot has changed. But for me, my school-days are rooted in time. I will never forget them."

"I'm glad," he says, sleepy at last. "Will you tell me some more tomorrow ?"

Mrs. M. Moonman (née Dillon)

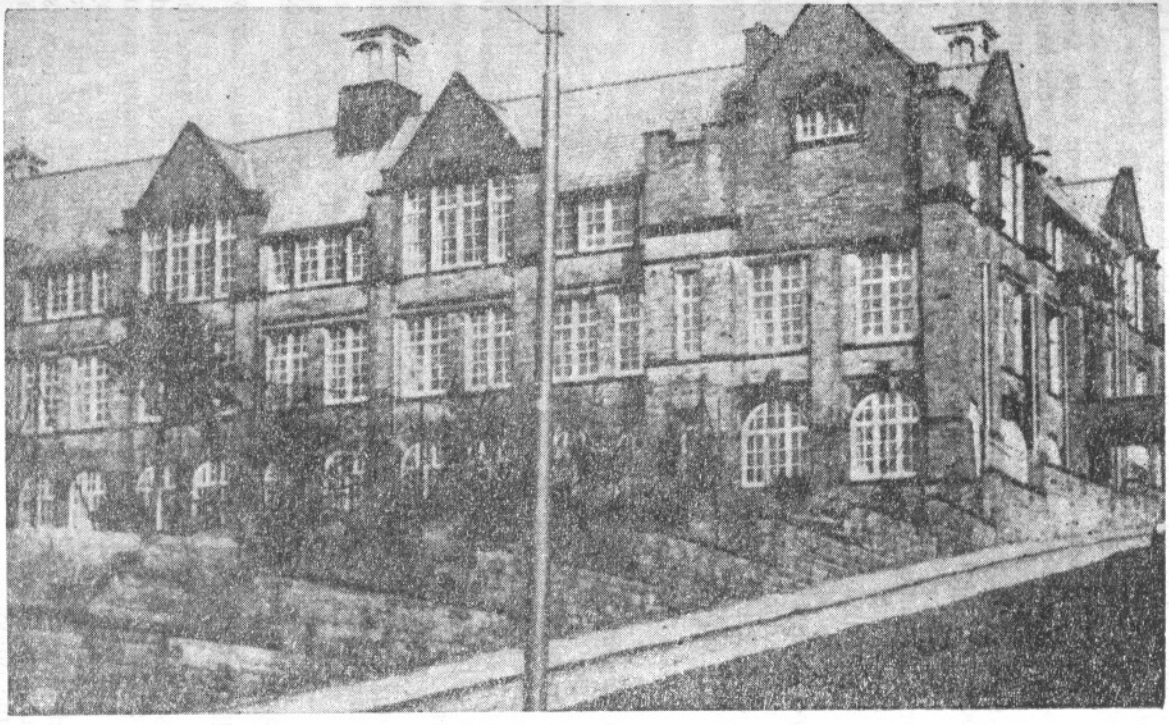
POST-WAR APPOINTMENT

Bacup and Rawtenstall — Waterfoot — Rossendale ? Good Lord ! Where finally is the place, amongst all those names ? Forbidding grey building. Forbidding figure with spectacles on forehead. Shall hate this, same as I've hated the others.

But I didn't.

The pre-fabs were only a thought. Then they came with coke stoves. Children must not touch. Staff often forgot to stoke. Brrr !

School was smaller by over a hundred. Staff dined at one table in the dining-room, Mr Holden presiding.



B.R.G.S. in the 1960's

That very deep snowfall, shortly after Hitler's War ? People climbed out of their houses through the bedroom windows, and somehow 80 heroic pupils and nine even more heroic teachers managed to get to school by 9.30 a.m. School was abandoned for the day. Next day numbers doubled, and, by the third day, school was back to normal . . .

That other winter, when the heating system broke down ? Paraffin heaters were requisitioned, juniors were sent home, and the senior school carried on manfully, clad in overcoats, mufflers, gloves, in anything they could lay their hands on . . .

The day when . . . But enough.
All, all are gone, the old familiar faces . . .

Mr. W. Copley

SOME POSTSCRIPTS

Anne Lord 4S — 'Reminiscence' :

"Good gracious ! I'm so sorry !"
The lady said to me.
I saw her face, and then I gasped :
It shook my memory.
"It can't be ? Well, I never !
And after such a time !"
For the lady who'd bumped into me
Was an old school friend of mine.
"I'm sure," she said, "that I know you.
I'll think of your name if I can . . .
You were in the same form as me.
I remember now ! It's Anne !"

So, amid the bustling street scene,
As shoppers went their ways,
We stood there, reminiscing
Of those marvellous schoolgirl days.
"Remember our start at B.R.G.S.,
When everyone called us 'sprogs' — "
"And what seemed like tons of homework :
We thought we were treated like dogs !"
"Those eventful days in the prefab,
The tricks weg ot up to there !"
"Planting a sardine sandwich
Upon the teacher's chair."
"We held 'Miss World' competitions,
At lunch time, in the cloakroom."
"We played what seem such childish games;
What a pity it passed so soon !"
"Soon we had graduated :
Second year, so 'important' were we,

And we looked on the quavering sprogs
With an air of authority !"
"We grew brave, more cheeky with teachers,
Although most would put that to a halt !"
"Yet sometimes we got off with murder —"
"But you can't say that was our fault !"
"And the teachers — oh, what a collection !
Tho' I'm sure they had views on us too."
"I suppose they were only normal, but I
Didn't think that way then — did you ?"
"Remember him ? 'Tall, dark and handsome',
And always so smartly dressed ?
There were plenty of dishy teachers,
But we all agreed, he was the best !"
"Remember the one with protruding teeth ?"
"And the teacher with a turned-up nose ?"
"The man with the curling, ginger beard,
And the one with the turned-out toes ?"
"The teacher who always repeated 'yes',
And the one with the glaring stare ?"
"And the sir who looked like a pixie ?"
"And the one with the frizzy hair ?"
"There were always several teachers
Who considered themselves 'quite a toff'."
"But one really irritated me —
His gown always half on, half off !"
"I'm sure that we make them sound gruesome,
With never a kind word to say."
"But we always took note of their little faults
And remember them better that way !"

"Ah well, it's time to be going;
Lots to do, being a wife —
But thanks so much for reminding me
Of those wonderful years in my life !"

Jill Nuttall 4B :

. . . As a first-former, I thought I would be killed in the rush, but, as I progressed up the school, I could fight back. Life in those days was hard for first-formers : order marks and prefects dogged their tracks. We inhabited prefabs in the boys' yard. Our form teacher was always pestered with complaints about the boilers : we froze in winter and roasted in summer . . .

T. McGreal 4S — 'The Same Old Trick' :

Into the school and turned half-past eight,
Must do my maths before it's too late.
Bertie arrives on the next bus :
"You got the questions ? Show 'em to us."
"Why haven't you done them ?" Bertie asks me.
"I couldn't be bothered when I'd finished my tea."
"Excuses, excuses, always the same;
But then if they're wrong, it's me that you blame."
"Aw, come on, Bertie, show us your book;
All that I want is one little look."
"Okay, you can borrow it but don't take so long —
I'm not sure about the first one; I think that it's wrong."
"It's ten to already, I'd better be quick;
You're right about the first one, it looks a bit thick."
"Ah ! just in time, there goes the bell,
It looks same as yours — I hope he can't tell !"
The lesson arrives, and we get back our books,
But, besides our books, we get funny looks.
"Who copied who's ?" He looks at us two.
"Copied ! We don't understand you !"
"Yours and Birtwistle's books look the same;
You'd better watch out, 'cos I'm on to your game."
Next day in school at turned half-past eight,
Must do my maths before it's too late.
Bertie arrives on the next bus,
"You got the answers ? Show 'em to us."
"No, you don't catch me that easy. Once bitten, twice shy !
Lend me your book. Just answer me. Why ?"

J. P. Scholes L6 :

The first day I saw B.R.G.S., two years ago, I thought it looked rather like Colditz. A great fortress-like structure, dominating the surrounding area, built of dirty, depressing stone. But there is more to it than just the building — people count, too. The natives are friendly, once you get through to them; now, I count myself as one of them . . .

. . . B.R.G.S. has a character of its own. Nothing dramatic, nothing spectacular : for me, its overwhelming characteristic is its tolerance. It is, by modern standards, a fairly small school, which means you can know almost everybody. There is no need for useless dogma here — a reasonable atmosphere of 'laissez-faire' prevails . . .

Anna Grimshaw L6 :

The regular sound of the marching army rings
In my ears and sickens me. Each with his

Haversack stuffed full with the day's provisions of
Books, books and books. Not having the courage
To desert, I fall into line now assembled
For salute. Upon the appearance
Of the Major, heels click together. "Eyes Left", and
Drilling begins.

The first obstacle in the assault course is the
Maths lesson ! Once cleared, an endless
Line of crouching bodies — like a moving caterpillar
Advances towards the second obstacle —
The games lesson. This time the firing of a
Gun sets off the army around the eight-eighty,
One of the toughest obstacles in the
Course. This completed, followed by a deserved
Break, the troops march towards the Chemistry
Laboratory. Here they are taught the manufacture
And use of poison gases — hydrogen sulphide, sulphur dioxide
And chlorine.

An army marches on its stomach.
Clearance of the third fence allows it to
Thunder toward the dining room, where empty
Filled, it is prepared for the final lap of
The course.

The brisk marching of feet are directed towards
The English Room, where interrogation
Of the enemy with the use of
'Caesar', 'Macbeth' and 'Richard III' are the
Obstacles to clear. The final fence
Looms in the distance — the success of our predecessors —
Wellington, Marlborough and Nelson. Upon this drilling,
The course completed — the army marches away.

Shirley Fish L6 :

. . . I felt very apprehensive about changing schools after five years at an all-girls school. The prospect of leaving a routine I knew and the friends I had made over the last five years and going to a school of which I knew nothing, except that it was a mixed school in Waterfoot, was awe-inspiring.

Although I knew what the school building was like, I did not know what the people were like. I was pleasantly surprised. One aspect that struck me first was the friendliness of everyone — even a genuine interest and concern for you and what you have to say. I had never come across this before and so did not

expect it to last, but I was much mistaken. To what can it be attributed ? Perhaps, because the Rossendale Valley is such a collection of tiny villages, the people are more community-conscious, and that spirit is extended automatically to others.

It goes to show that appearances can be deceptive — the school perched on top of a steep hill can be compared with a Victorian institution, but the people inside are warm and friendly, its approach to education is modern, and its whole outlook is to the future.

Julie Evans 4B :

. . . Many changes have been made inside the school during the past three or four years. For instance, the sixth-formers' common room, which was originally situated off the boys' slope, is now in the prefabs on the girls' slope. It has been fitted with chairs and tables. Most of the money needed for this project was raised by the P.T.A. Also, in 'The Belfry', a coffee room has been built. This is fitted with all the necessary facilities for the sixth-formers to make coffee at breaks and dinnertimes. The Careers Room has also been opened over the past three years. This is in the basement and furnished so that pupils can relax whilst browsing through books, choosing a career . . .

Carol Henry 4S :

Our teacher's threats of detention were completely ignored as we thundered down the corridors. For the unsuspecting first-formers, it was D-Day itself, as the older forms rose from the usual hum-drum atmosphere to a terrifying climax as the day wore on.

"We'll never live the day through," was the painful cry of many teachers, as they found themselves in the middle of farewell parties.

"Oh, don't take that grim view," was the Deputy Head's answer. "People say you have never lived till you've experienced LAST DAY OF TERM at Bacup and Rawtenstall Grammar School !"

In the sedate areas of the school (the masters' and mistresses' staffrooms), the more cowardly members of staff consoled themselves over cups of strong tea, whilst their more valiant members attempted to stifle the rising excitement. Suddenly the piercing bell rang : for some it meant capture, for others, release.

After a hectic registration, it was the usual farewell assembly, with the threat of "Another dinner-hour like that and there won't be an end-of-term."

With the final assembly over, three cheers rang out. "Hip, hip hooray ! Hip, hip hooray ! Hip, hip hooray !" And, after two more minutes of utter chaos, the once thunder-filled school was silent.