

THE OLD COVENTRIANS' ASSOCIATION

President: Roy W. Burgess
Chairman: Norman V. Teers
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Recent events include

December 1st 2007. The 85th Annual Old Coventrians' Dinner was held in the School Hall. After the usual excellent meal supplied by Greenaways Head Boy Tom Roberts made a confident speech in reply to the toast of The School and Headmaster George Fisher gave us an interesting and often highly amusing account of activities at KHVIII over the past year.

April 19th 2008. At the Class of '86 Reunion Dinner **Sarah Boden (nee White) (86-93)** gave a delightful account of her time at the school and Head Girl Alix Martin's measured reply was highly praised. It was a most enjoyable evening, as members of this age-group exchanged reminiscences as in many cases their 'significant other halves' listened with a mixture of amusement and sheer incredulity.

April 25th 2008. At the Annual Oxford Dinner, held as always at St Edmund Hall, **Robin Birch CB (44-57)** spoke enthusiastically and engagingly of the history of our two schools and George Fisher replied with an excellent and much-awaited speech which touched on current and future developments within the Coventry School Foundation.

June 24th 2008. The 24th Annual Golf Day was once more expertly organised by John Price, O.W., and a small but select group of former pupils took part. The O.Cs won the team event and **Ron Newbold QC (43-51)** was presented with the individual winner's trophy.

Here and There

Senior scientists offered to meet Roman Catholic bishops and MPs to explain the need for legislation to allow experiments on embryos that are part human and part animal. Professor **Colin Blakemore (51-62)**, the youngest man to deliver the Reith Lectures and a former head of the Medical Research Council, invited Catholic church leaders who staged an Easter attack on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill to an 'open-minded discussion' with the research community and patient groups. In a letter to The Times he wrote:

'Sir, The new Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill is essential if Britain is to maintain its responsible leadership in stem-cell research, which offers the possibility of revolutionary treatments for devastating diseases such as Parkinson's, diabetes and cancer. The Bill is not about creating monsters or mocking the sanctity of human life. Indeed, it will reduce the number of human eggs and embryos used in the production of stem cells for research.

Medical charities, patient groups and the research community are dismayed at the intervention of Catholic bishops at the end of what has been a long, thorough, national debate on this Bill. Scientists should not challenge the spiritual authority of religious leaders, but they are entitled to question the factual evidence on which moral pronouncements are based.

I would like to invite those bishops and parliamentarians who have concerns about the Bill to take part in an open-minded discussion about what exactly it will permit, what the consequences of its defeat would be, and what this research might achieve.

I would be happy to broker such a meeting, and I am confident that senior scientists and representatives of patient groups would welcome the opportunity to explain the background to this important legislation.

*Colin Blakemore
Professor of Neuroscience,
Universities of Oxford and Warwick,
Former Chairman of the International Stem Cell Forum*

Anna Brooke (98-05) spent 6 months of her gap year volunteering with Global Xchange in Hounslow, London and Piliyandala, Sri Lanka. The international exchange is run in partnership with Voluntary Service Overseas, the British Council and Community Service Volunteers.

She lived in local host families and worked with a Sri Lankan counterpart, and was part of a team of 18 volunteers - half from Sri Lanka, half from Britain. The themes of the programme were community cohesion and disability. In Hounslow, Anna worked with Groundwork Trust, a national community development organisation. The project

included youth work in an army barracks, environmental education in schools, work with students at risk of exclusion and consultation on a 'Safe Routes To School' project. In Sri Lanka, she assisted teaching IT and English in a school and worked in an SOS Youth Village for orphaned boys aged 14-18. Here Anna organised activities each afternoon, such as drama, English and debating clubs and chances for the boys to volunteer in the local community.

The 6 months were very intense and hugely mind-opening, dealing with issues to do with inequality, poverty, international politics, team dynamics, Buddhism and so much that you don't learn at school! Working through the differences between different cultures was the most challenging of all. She will never forget the 3 wheel tuk tuks, with flashing hologram Buddhas, flying into the sunset! Not to mention banana flower curry, mango curry, jackfruit curry, squid curry, ginger curry, chilli curry... mmm...*godak rasai!* (Sinhala for 'very tasty!')

Anna is very grateful for all the support she received from King Henry's before she went. She highly recommends the programme, which is free and welcomes anyone interested, and hopes more people from the school will participate in this life-changing experience. For more details contact www.vso.org.uk/volunteering/youth/

Philip Larkin (30-40) was voted the most influential writer of the second half of the century in a poll conducted by the Times newspaper. Here is one of his early poems, written while at Oxford :

The School in August

The cloakroom pegs are empty now,
And locked the classroom door,
The hollow desks are dimmed with dust,
And slow across the floor
A sunbeam creeps between the chairs
Till the sun shines no more.

Who did their hair before this glass?
Who scratched 'Elaine loves Jill'
One drowsy summer sewing-class
With scissors on the sill?
Who practised this piano
Whose notes are now so still?

Ah, notices are taken down,
And scorebooks stowed away,
And seniors grow tomorrow
From the juniors today,
And even swimming groups can fade,
Games mistresses turn grey.

Barry Ronald Littlewood (56-61), former chief executive of the Coventry Transport Museum, has been awarded the M.B.E. for services to Heritage. He almost missed out on the award because he was on holiday when the letter arrived and he was a few days late with his reply. "It feels absolutely fantastic," he said. "I feel proud of the award but even prouder of the museum, which is the reason I've been given the award. I'm just an ordinary Coventry kid from a terraced house in Chapelfields and to be bracketed with some of the well known people is great and it's good for the museum and the city".

Professor Christopher John Marshall FRS (57-67)

Chris Marshall studied Natural Sciences at Cambridge University followed by a D.Phil, in cell biology at Oxford. His graduate studies were followed by post-doctoral work at the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, Lincoln's Inn Fields, London and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston. In 1980, he moved to the Institute of Cancer Research in London and began studies to identify human cancer genes. This work in collaboration with his colleague Alan Hall resulted in the identification of NRas, a new human oncogene. Subsequent work from his laboratory showed that NRas has important roles in leukaemia and others demonstrated the role of NRas in melanoma. Following the identification of NRas, Chris has concentrated on studying how NRas and similar molecules act in cancer. His work in the field of cell signalling showed how Ras proteins are involved in transmitting signals from the outside of the cell all the way to the cell nucleus. His work laid the foundation for recent exciting studies that have shown the importance of the BRAF cancer gene in melanoma. His laboratory is now studying the cell signalling mechanisms that allow cancer cells to disseminate in the body.

Chris Marshall is currently Professor of Cell Biology and Director of the Cancer Research-UK Centre for Cell and Molecular Biology at the Institute of Cancer Research where he holds a Cancer Research-UK Gibb

Life Fellowship. His contributions to science have been recognised by election to the European Molecular Biology Organisation, the Royal Society and the Academy of Medical Sciences. He was awarded the Sterling Medal of the University of Pennsylvania (1997), the Novartis medal of the Biochemical Society (1999), and he gave the Chao Hao Li Memorial Lectures in Biochemical Endocrinology at the University of California, Berkeley in 2003.

Chris was a regular if somewhat unorthodox Guernsey camper and I still remember him sitting in silent contemplation in the cooking-tent, deep in thought until he announced to anyone who cared to listen: "I hate Frank Noble!"

JBV

In July **Ashleigh Crowter (81-91)** wrote:

I am preparing to travel out to Beijing in just under four weeks' time to report on the Olympics for the BBC. My role will be to cover the progress of the Welsh athletes at the games and then report on TV and radio for BBC Wales. It's my first major foreign assignment and I am looking forward to it a great deal.

I have just completed 10 years service for the BBC, based for the majority of that time in Cardiff. I worked as a news journalist for the first 5 years, presenting and reporting on BBC Wales Today. I then moved into sport and produced sports news programmes on television for the next 5 years. In 2007, I became the producer of a sports magazine show on television which I have enjoyed hugely. It is a varied role and has given me a great opportunity to meet and make films about some of the great sportspeople of the day including boxer Joe Calzaghe, Wales' Grand Slam rugby team and various Olympic contenders.

While in Beijing he may meet another O.C, **Adrian Warner (70-81)**, a gifted athlete himself and former Head Boy, who works as a sports journalist for the B.B.C. He has already covered seven world athletics championships and eleven Olympics.

Jim Robinson (58-69), who has spent thirty years as Rugby player, coach and administrator and for the last three years team manager of the England Counties XV, the flagship of the community game, has been appointed chief executive of the England Women's Golf Association. "My main task is to raise the profile of women's golf throughout the country, develop the game and, I hope, persuade more women to take up the sport". His playing career with Coventry was ended by serious injury, and he then turned to coaching, working with local, regional and national squads, helping to produce many of the players in England's World Cup winning team.

Vicky Stuart (94-03) elder daughter of **Robert Stuart (62-72)**, who read Geology at Durham University and had embarked on a career in cartography, trained for a 700-mile, 60-day skiing expedition to the Northwest Passage in the Canadian High Arctic. She was one of a party of six collecting snow samples and measuring ice to gather scientific data on climate change and the polar bear population. "Our team all began as absolute novices," she said, but for the last 18 months we have been learning how to cross-country ski, pull our own weight and more in sledges behind us, how to set up camp in such an extreme environment and learning to cope with the freezing temperatures. We shall have to look out for hungry polar bears and for thin ice, and we'll endure temperatures as low as minus 89 degrees".

Early training took her to the Brecon Beacons, Dartmoor and then three weeks in Arctic Norway. Snow samples will be sent to the University of Washington for research while data on ice measurements will go to the National Snow and Ice Data Centre, a NASA supported institute in the USA. Their journey will take them from Resolute in the islands of North Canada across treacherous conditions to Sachs Harbour.

Correspondence

A letter received from **Noel Hughes (33-40)**, a contemporary, of Philip Larkin, after reading a recent issue of *"The Coventrian"*.

Dear Jeff

Many thanks for your letter. The Coventrian also arrived. Whatever next? Who thought of the idea of going to Mongolia? What do the pupils know of Mongolian literature (if any) either before or after their visit. What do (or did) they know of Mongolian history or geography? Search me.

When the school organised a visit to Belgium, I could not afford to go. What did each pupil have to fork out to get on the trip? Now, as for

Mark Theaxton Mason. He was a scholar and a gentleman. There were few on the staff of whom one could say that. He took us through Henry IV part one for matriculation exam. Splendid chap. For punishment he would give the whole class a piece of writing to memorise. Not until one could recite the whole piece could one go home. He worked very late at school. We could all quote endlessly in our exams. He was followed by Ringsland, a very self-confident individual. Neither a scholar nor a gentleman. I recall an occasion on which he announced that he had once "sent a boy to Cambridge", I cannot recall what happened to the boy. What I do remember was the length of his drawled "I". It took him almost as long as the sentence that followed. I gather he left soon after I did.

MTM was the only master with whom I corresponded when I went to Oxford.

A letter to The Independent from **Nigel Cubbage (68-79)**, an U19 England Hockey International now working in the media.

Sir: I had a somewhat unnerving and alarming experience recently when I went out and bought a new DVD/video recorder. I paid and was about to leave when I was asked for my postcode, for "marketing purposes". I at first declined to give it, which prompted the assistant to get quite insistent. Being British, and aware a "scene" was developing, I gave the information and left the shop.

Imagine my surprise when I subsequently received a letter from TV Licensing, informing me that, after my recent purchase of TV receiving equipment, I must contact them to supply details of my licence. Whether this arose through use of my credit card or the shop's "marketing", I do not know, but there is no question that information is being shared left, right and centre.

The incident has convinced me that we should never allow ID cards, or national databases of any sort - the "owners" of the system can simply never be trusted.

Extracts from a letter to J.B.V. from **Chris Millerchip (69-80)**, who won three Blues for Rugby Football at Oxford:

I can honestly say that you and Ted Norrish pretty much define my school years - and you both had a profound effect on shaping my life after school.

You gave me my love of rugby (I still have a half penny you gave me for tackling David Vice in pre-season training circa 1972). I have never forgotten that "All the best tries are scored with the ball". I also have very fond and clear memories of fantastic trips to Paris and Guernsey. Bumper cars in Paris (and the smell of garlic on the Metro) and huge soccer games on L'Ancrese beach - how the other occupants of the beach must have loved us! It's wonderful that you are still doing so much for the school - generations of boys are hugely indebted to you!

As for Ted, I have never known a more driven man. He gave everything of himself and expected complete dedication from all his boys. I could have been a thoroughly mediocre achiever on the academic front but Ted (and the rest of the Classics department) really inspired me. I am now enjoying re-learning Latin and Greek with my 9 year old! Memories of Ted include long journeys in the Land Rover reciting the Greek alphabet, jumping rivers for Mars Bars (or more accurately jumping into rivers), Greek plays at Bradfield and the battle for supremacy of the school sports field in the summer (athletics v cricket). Ted persuaded me to do Classics A levels (I had chosen History, Economics and Latin until he told me otherwise in the playground) - and to this day I am so glad that he did!

I am surrounded by boxes at home today. My family (Gillian (wife), Alice (11), William (9) and Alexander (5)) are off at the end of the week to New York for a couple of years. My company (legal publishers) have set up an office over there so we should have an exciting time.

Music

Jonathan Rathbone (65-76)

Jonathan Rathbone was a chorister at Coventry Cathedral and, later, a choral scholar at Christ's College Cambridge, where he read mathematics and wrote a musical entitled *"Flame"* which was performed at the ADC theatre in Cambridge. He gained a second degree at the Royal Academy of Music where he specialised in singing and composition. Whilst there he wrote a children's musical called *"The Selfish Giant"*, and the music for a production of *"Dog Beneath The Skin"* at the Half Moon Theatre with director Julian Sands (later to star in *"Room with a View"*). He had a song-writing contract with Noel Gay Music.

Jonathan joined the Swingle Singers in 1984 and was musical director of the group for eight of the twelve years he sang with them. During that time he created the majority of their arrangements, both a cappella and with orchestra. He has been in demand ever since as a vocal arranger.

He left the group in 1996 to spend more of his time writing. He has orchestrated for Sir Cliff Richard, Michael Ball and more recently, Katherine Jenkins. He still travels all over Europe to vocal courses, to work with various vocal ensembles and to adjudicate choral competitions. In recent years he has lectured and run workshops on close harmony, improvisation, choral conducting, vocal arranging and choral techniques.

He is now an in-house composer with Peters Edition, and has recently become the composer in association to "*The Larks Ascending*", a new Cambridge based choir. He has researched and written a book on sight-singing entitled "*Sight Sing Well!*" and a book of Christmas pieces and arrangements for choir and small orchestra is in preparation. He is at present writing a large-scale a cappella choral work for a London based choir, and a smaller a cappella work for St Alban's Chamber Choir. In addition to his choral writing, Jonathan's string quartet, "*More Fools than Wise*", has been performed all over the world by the Fitzwilliam Quartet.

Jonathan is married to Helen and they have two children.

The premiere of these two works was reviewed by Rod Dunnett, a former Classics master at KHVIII and now a freelance writer.

A packed audience in St Albans Abbey was treated to a rewarding double premiere: the setting, for narrator and orchestra (the proficient Sylvan Ensemble) of Wilde's anguished outpouring "*The Ballad of Reading Gaol*"; and, in a complete performance, Rathbone's larger choral work *Requiem for the Condemned Man*.

The latter presents an unnamed man who, awaiting execution for the murder of a teenage lover (sung by a soprano), is vilified by a brutally judgemental crowd. These evocative passages, written by Paul Whitnall, are interspersed with seven sections of the *Missa pro Defunctis*, as well as excerpts from the Lord's Prayer and the *Pie Jesu*. The cumulative effect is not unlike a Passion narrative, particularly in those sections akin to *turbae*.

There is a lot of loud music in these passages, which passingly gain from some vigorous writing for brass and (here excellent) tympani and percussion, and the inclusion of saxophone and booming bass guitar, whether independently or mirroring the double-basses. The splendid outburst of the Dies Irae supplied a thrusting piece of music for the energetic large chorus.

Elsewhere, I looked for more subtle differentiation in both text and music. Once the mood of despondency and threat is established, it prevails till near the close, without notable remission. By the Sanctus, Benedictus, and Agnus - movements that offer scope for a varying or lightening of textures, like a scherzo or slow movement - the only new mood lay in hints of sentimentality and slightly pi recanting ("I'm glad to repent. Why can't you relent And make me a gift of my future?"). These veered towards the less felicitous aspects of a musical without probing deeper. Two attractive quasi-jazz passages failed quite to mesh with the rest.

The Ballad of Reading Gaol, a 20-minute setting with Speaker (Nicholas Garrett), heard just before the interval, revealed not just Rathbone's seemingly instinctive grasp of musical form and structure, and intelligent building of finely judged climaxes, but much more.

Just as his Mass has hints of Tippett (*A Child of Our Time*) and Kodaly (*Psalmus Hungaricus*), so the well-controlled textures of this cogent and handsomely played poem-setting suggested welcome, curious parallels: Schoenberg's searing *A Survivor from Warsaw*; and the rapt, filled-out orchestral writing of Alban Berg (*Lulu, or Der Wein*) - noble company.

Our Day Out, or Another Fine Mess You've Gotten Us Into, Stanley;

At 9.30 my good friend and ex-Governor Stan Gough drew up at my house, bringing with him Julieta, an Argentinian on a Rotary International Award, and two Japanese girls, Nanuko and Yasuko, who were studying at Warwick University. An hours run brought us to Oxford where heavy traffic was causing serious hold-ups and it took us a while to negotiate our way to the car park in New Road. We then took a gentle stroll towards Carfax, where Julieta announced that she felt sick ('Estoy mareada') and disappeared into one of the toilets at the nearby Macdonald's whence she finally emerged looking distinctly groggy. Medication bought from Boots on Cornmarket Street helped to relieve the symptoms somewhat and we made our way to The High and on to Oriel College, where I gave Nanuko and Yasuko a tour of my old college as Stan and Julieta rested on a bench in the third quad.

I had booked lunch at The Mitre for 12.30 and Julieta, feeling a little better but still frail, declined to eat but watched us enjoy our meal. We then walked as far as Magdalen Bridge and turned into Christ Church Meadow for a leisurely stroll along the Broad Walk which led us to the college, simply known to many as The House. There we visited the impressive dining hall and the Cathedral, watched a fifteen minute video

on the college history and spent time and money in the adjoining shop, where I was able to buy picture books in Spanish and Japanese for the girls.

Stan was eager to leave at 4.30, as he had a meeting to chair in Coventry at 6.15, so we walked back along the High Street until the girls saw a shop selling T-shirts and other items of clothing. In they went, leaving Stan and me to wait for them outside. Twenty minutes later Julieta emerged to announce that she had lost her large purse containing her American Express card, banker's card, passport and a great deal else. She and Stan set off back to Christ Church, but after an extensive search no trace of it emerged. In the meantime, the two Japanese girls and I had been waiting patiently, but after three-quarters of an hour they said they would go and meet Stan and Julieta, promising to be back within fifteen minutes. Yasuko thought it would do no harm to slip into the High Street shop, just in case it had been left there. Indeed so it had been found within three minutes of their leaving the shop. Half an hour later, as I was wondering if the two girls had got lost, Stan and Julieta returned and I was able to give them the good news. In the mean-time, however, she had 'phoned Cordoba to cancel her American Express card and her banker's card. She thought she might also have cancelled her father's cards. So where were Nanuko and Yasuko? Stan set off again to find them, but they returned a few minutes later without him. He eventually turned up and I almost thought of quoting Enid Blyton, "Now We Are Five".

By this time it was almost six o'clock, so Stan 'phoned to ask a friend to stand in for him and we had a cup of tea at The Mitre while Julieta made a few unsuccessful attempts to uncanceled her plastic. Another surprise awaited us at the car-park: we found a £40 parking fine under the car's windscreen wipers, as Stan had forgotten to do the necessary when we arrived. Stan and I are not the best people to travel with, as I could relate a number of minor disasters: arriving at Poole on our way to Fosseau only to find I had picked up an out-of-date passport and our consequent return to Coventry to collect the current document; arriving at Poole for the 8.00 a.m. ferry when we should have gone to Portsmouth; lingering over lunch en route and arriving at Poole just in time to see the ferry disappear over the horizon; off the ferry and en route for Fosseau when Stan remembered he'd left his library book on the boat; almost running out of petrol at 11.00 p.m. not far from Cherbourg and finding the port's petrol-station about to close when we returned. And, a few years earlier, arriving in Oxford for an O.Cs' Dinner only to find that Stan had forgotten to put his dinner jacket and black tie in the boot. But we do enjoy ourselves.

J.B.V.

Schoolboy Memories

"Dogged readers may not be too surprised to learn that an early experience at the new school involved detention, with activities clearly designed by those favouring the 'picking oakum' theory of punishment. The grammar school was intended to widen our mental horizons, and so punishment must obviously withhold such pleasures. Miscreants assembled immediately after close of school for one hour, or for more serious transgression, for three hours on a Saturday morning. Depending on the whim of the supervising teacher, two principal activities were available.

Coventry Council regularly published a document entitled '*Civic News*'. This comprised four pages of dense type, reporting on all council activities and statistics. The school probably represented most of its circulation. Quite simply, punishment involved writing out the contents of this document until the invigilator was satisfied with the standard of handwriting. At that point in time I knew more about the supply of books to Coventry libraries and the numerous goodwill visits of councillors to war-torn Europe than was healthy.

The second activity involved mathematics, and long preceded the availability of calculators. Each participant was issued a nine-digit number, for which he then had to calculate the arithmetic cube. Again ..., and again ..., until the correct answer was submitted; when a new number would be issued. Of course, the invigilator was provided with a master list of numbers and their cubes.

During either of these activities the invigilator would stalk up and down the rows of desks, ensuring that some sort of movement could be discerned. Retreating into coma or foaming idiocy was not permitted.

Only from hindsight do I realise that appointment as invigilator must have been a form of punishment. Certain acts of misbehaviour by teachers must have incurred allocation to detention duty. Perhaps they came to school and forgot to bring their gown? Was their facial expression in a staff meeting judged to represent dumb insolence? I've misjudged them all these years. They too were victims of a repressive society."

Joe Connell (1952-57)

The History of King Henry VIII School: Ancient and Modern.

The speech which J.B. Young-Evans gave in reply to the toast to The Guests at the Old Coventrians' Dinner held on December 5th 1964 is considered by many to be the finest they have ever heard:

Mr. President, My Lord Mayor, Mr. Head Master, Gentlemen.

One Sunday afternoon in the autumn of 1949 I remember receiving a visit from a beloved and colourful member of my Classical Sixth, who told me in the course of conversation that on the following Saturday he had as Captain of the School to reply to the School's toast at the Old Coventrians' Dinner.

He also told me something of what he was proposing to say, and, though I did not have an opportunity of hearing his oration, I learnt subsequently from many quarters of its success. This will not surprise you when I add that now the wheel has spun and that it is the same old friend, Derek John, who has tonight forsaken for a moment his inter-continental sale of aircraft to come back to propose as an Old Boy that self-same toast, while a member of the present Classical Sixth, Stephen Marfleet, has replied to it with an eloquence and fluency which will deserve the same renown as that Johannine discourse of fifteen years ago. Nor is that all, for I find the toast of your guests, among whom I am myself honoured, being proposed by a third and still earlier pupil, Kenneth Hocking, in a speech which indicated that his brother is not the only member of his family equipped to carry the School's name into the lobbies of Westminster. I taught Kenneth Hocking for two terms in my very first year here; I taught him Scripture, in the days - and I would have some of you know that there were such days - when I was reluctantly in some danger of being regarded as the Senior Scripture Master. I am sorry to infer from the confession that he has made that his mind cannot have been firmly on his Scripture; but he seems since to have atoned for that by the intensity of the research which he has clearly been doing into my own past.

As I scan your crowded tables, I am impressed by the truth of an observation, which I had intended to make in any case, that an Old Boys' Society is, above all, the embodiment of a school's continuity. Every year one annual generation makes its entry, whilst a roughly similar number of boys at the top move out; and the annual generations follow after one another like the ocean waves, and if you take five or six consecutive waves, there you have the school at any particular time; and then one by one they sweep on, and are mingled together in the great sea of the Old Coventrians' Club. And you whom I am addressing, I imagine, represent between you most of the history of the School during this century. But I see you as part of a much larger gathering, of a great army of boys marching through four centuries through the streets of Coventry, garbed in all the changing fashions of the successive eras - Elizabethan boys, little Cavaliers, little Round-heads, little Doctor Johnsons giving place to Victorian knickerbockers and the bare knees of the Boy Scout age, and now our crest-emblazoned uniforms and the flamboyant plumage of modern prefectorial headgear. What a theme for a mural from the brushes of Mr. Shore or Mr. Stephenson!

For you are the schoolfellows of those first Tudor boys who had their schooling in the church of the former Whitefriars Monastery down by the London Road; and you threw your meat-bones onto the floor and into the corners, where the City's Archaeologist, Mrs. Charmian Woodfield, has recently been digging them up. Boys change, but their habits remain, though I suppose that nowadays it is a matter not of meat-bones but of lolly-sticks.

And do you remember how there sometimes your Founder, John Hales, would limp over from his house in the Monastery to visit you? Do you remember what he looked like? I suggested some years ago to the Curator of the Herbert Art Gallery that when the time came to deal with the Corporation's dirtier pictures - I am, of course, using words in their proper and literal connotation, though I am well aware that nowadays the words "dirt" and "filth" have been made almost technical terms to denote literature and art which does not meet with the approval of one particular religious denomination - I suggested to Mr. Hewitt that, when he had time to apply modern techniques of renovation to the paintings in St. Mary's Hall and elsewhere, the portrait of John Hales in the Mayoress's Parlour might well repay attention. We know a good deal of the conditions in which it was kept for two hundred years in the Old Grammar School before it was rescued by Alderman George Eld in the early part of the last century, and I imagine that the removal of the top crust of grime may reveal a much more detailed and much better likeness. I often wonder whether we make enough of our Founder, John Hales. He played a considerable and honourable part in the politics of his time, and has won commendation from many a modern historian.

Then when the School had been moved over to that building in Hales

Street which we call the Old Grammar School, and to which the efforts of Mr. Charles Kenderdine and others have now restored an appearance worthy of its antiquity and associations, and there had been established in it what seems to have been both a School and a Town Library, it was you who drew in the margins of the books sketches of your boon-companions in their knee-breeches and Jacobean ruffs. That custom too persists: there was until recently up in Room 201 a large Lewis and Short Latin Dictionary, to the frontispiece of which an unknown hand had added a portrait in which I could not fail to recognise myself.

In the reign of the Merry Monarch we find you indulging in a ritual, common in contemporary grammar schools at the end of term, of shutting your masters out of their classrooms, and you did it with so much noise that neighbouring citizens complained to the Corporation. Do you remember the great school-masters of those days? Old Philemon Holland? And Samuel Carte? And what was the prowess with rod and birch of Thomas Sherwyn or George Greenway? And how did they compare with more recent exponents of the art of correction within your direct experience? And what of Edward Jackson? He was not content to be Master of the Free School, but had to be also Vicar of Foleshill and Vicar of Southam, and instituted that scheme by which the Head Master and Usher were to be thenceforth also Rector and Curate of St. John's. How you used to chuckle, you rogues, as half-way through the morning you saw one or other of the reverend gentlemen toddling off to perform his sacerdotal duties elsewhere! But let us hurry over that dark era, that confusion of education and religion, during which your numbers dwindled till teaching was done in the masters' houses and a great blue mould spread over the desks of the Old Schoolroom. Why, you were the schoolfellows - except that he had no schoolfellows - of that solitary little boy who had his lonely lessons in a little laundry at the back of the Head Master's house, round about 1830 - Thomas Minster, I believe, by name - who, if he had known any French (which he probably did not) might have adapted to himself that remark which we are now told that Louis XIV did not make about France, and have declared: "L'ecole c'est moi!"

But then came the Reverend Thomas Sheepshanks with his rod of gutta-percha, presumably the nearest thing permissible in educational circles to a rubber truncheon; and the School waxed again, and with the Classical and Commercial Departments your numbers recovered. Do you recall any of the boys then? Do you remember Jackie Fisher? And did you foresee in him that Lord Fisher, Admiral of the Fleet, who more than anyone fashioned that great navy which in 1914 made it true as at no time before or later that Britannia dominated the seas, and of whom it was said that his death was mourned as no sailor's since Nelson? And John Sheepshanks, the Head Master's son, later Bishop of Norwich? He became a missionary in British Columbia, and, wishing to return home, instead of taking the nearer Atlantic route, he took ship to China, there procured a little pony and cart to carry his luggage, and with them set out to walk alone through China and Mongolia and Siberia and European Russia, back to his ailing father in Coventry, a feat not unworthy of Mr. Norrish and his bands of Argonauts. Of course, had Basil Heatley, instead of returning by air from his triumph at Tokyo, been minded to follow in Sheepshanks's footsteps, he would have dispensed with the pony and cart, and would have run all the way.

Then came the period of reform and commissions, so much like our own, and ninety-nine years ago next week you were being inspected by the Endowed Schools Commissioner, the later Oxford Professor of Philosophy T. H. Green, and eventually he addressed you in the Old Schoolroom and praised your Mathematics, but in his report complained that in their Latin exercises some of the Fifth Form were (like others I have known) rather "weak on their concords". Of course. It was the Endowed Schools Commission, we may note in passing, that was largely responsible for setting the grammar schools on their feet and making them what they have become today. And as a result of its report, twenty years on, there came the time of which Mr. Charles Band, had he still been amongst us, could have told, when you finished your Summer Term down in the Old School in Hales Street, and gathered here in September for the opening of a fine new school on this site. And that was the School which many of you knew, and many of you knew also that night of destruction in 1941 which reduced it to the shambles of empty walls and scattered masonry which I and others found when we came here in the following year. But all of us present here tonight have been privileged to see, in some part at least, the most eventful twenty years in all the School's annals, as we watched the School recover and expand again, term by term, and building by building, to its present dimensions and prosperity. I wonder how many of you recently, as you manipulated your intricate and costly apparatus in your laboratories, or exercised yourselves with your gymnastic gear, or listened to your gramophones and tape-recorders, thought of that report of T. H. Green's a hundred years ago where he said that the only educational equipment he saw down in the

Old School was a blackboard and a map of Asia.

And you who are here are the rearguard of that army of which I have spoken, the newest part of the column, the novissimum agmen; yet others will still be falling in behind you. But why have I talked to you of these past events? Because sometimes it is well to remember one's ancestry, to remember the company to which one belongs, and because, "When I now salute you, I am also saluting in you all those who preceded you, those who knew the incidents which I have described, all those who, whether it was called the Coventry Free Grammar School or the School of King-Henry VIII, were nurtured by this foundation. And, as I gaze along your moving column, I see, dotted about at intervals along its whole length, all those worthy men, for so doubtless most of them were, who, whether as Head Masters or Ushers or Masters of Music or what you will, devoted themselves to your tuition, many of them now not even names. And I am proud to have had a humble place in their number, and I am proud, and perhaps a little surprised, to reflect - though there are some here whose service has been much longer than mine - that even my mere twenty-two years amount to as much as one-twentieth of the whole long story. That is why now, as I prepare to fall in again in my place to march on with them into the history of the past, I thank you for allowing me to spend this evening in your company, you the part of the army which I have myself known, carousing with you awhile at your yearly feast; and I thank you for allowing me to speak to you once again in these familiar surroundings, that I may be the spokesman of my fellow-guests, and that for your invitation and your welcome, for your hospitality and the toast which you have just drunk I may on their behalf express to you, my pupils and my friends, their gratitude and my own.

J.B.Y.E.

The School in Wartime

When war broke out in September 1939 I was about to move from Stoke Infants' into the Junior School, but due to the war we were not allowed into the building until ground floor classrooms had been provided with reinforced partitions and roofs to create air-raid shelters. As far as I can remember we had no schooling until November '39.

My younger sister had already gone to Somerset to live with farming friends at the onset of war and I followed her later in 1940 when air raids on Coventry were becoming heavier. We both attended the village school at Lymphsham, near Weston-super-Mare. Our evacuation was a private arrangement, but many Coventry children were evacuated to villages around the City and lived with local people.

Whilst we were at Lymphsham a party of children and their teachers came to the village from Dagenham and took over the village hall which adjoins the schoolrooms. They were accommodated in and around the village but, mainly due to homesickness, stayed for only a few months before returning home. Our own circumstances were different from those of these children since we knew the people and the place we had come to through having been regularly to the farm with our parents in preceding years. We were both well integrated into the village life and enjoyed a wonderful existence there until March 1943 when things had quietened down in the Midlands and we returned home.

I returned to Stoke Senior Boys' School briefly, where I sat the 11+ exam and in September of that year went to KHVIII School until 1949 when I took my Higher School Certificate and then joined up in the Royal Artillery for my National Service.

KHVIII had been bombed and half-demolished in April 1941. When I arrived in 1943 we had three rows of temporary concrete huts as classrooms, no school hall (we assembled in the playground every morning - briefly if it was raining) and about ten other class-rooms in the old school which by this time had been partially repaired. For my first year there the upper forms went to Bablake for all their science teaching, as most of the pupils there had been evacuated to Lincoln.

On account of the shortage of classrooms a shift system operated, and one attended two out of the three shifts: 8.20 - 11.00, .. 11.20 - 2.00 and 2.20 - 5.00. Each shift consisted of four 35 minute periods. The ideal combination was 1 and 2, when the afternoon became for football and other activities, the worst being 1 and 3 as we had to go home and return to school later. At first we had no changing facilities for games but I can remember cleaning bricks and mixing cement on games afternoons whilst staff and senior boys rebuilt the changing rooms round the original bathtub, which had remained intact despite the building having been demolished by blast.

We had a barrage balloon sited on the playing field with a set of Nissen huts to accommodate the WAAF girls who manned it. Their activities with the balloon provided great entertainment and interest, particularly for the older boys. Their enclosure was out of bounds to us,

but The Railway Tavern, now The Rocket, wasn't when it opened at 6.00p.m.

The Headmaster, A.A.C.Burton, lived on the premises and had a large garden and greenhouses and employed a gardener. The school playing field, as well as accommodating the balloon site and some air-raid shelters, had two rugby pitches but the lower quarter was given over to growing vegetables and a piggery. The piggery was attentively looked after by A.A.C.B. himself, who was well known to interrupt a visit to his pigs with a Latin lesson to the Fifth Form, leaving buckets of swill outside a classroom amongst the temporary huts while he pronounced on the deathless verse of Virgil. My colleague R.W.Burgess reminds me how A.A.C.B. would appear on the school field in the summer of 1949 during the course of a cricket match, not to watch the 1st XI but to reach the pigsties to feed the occupants. Members of visiting sides found it hard to believe that this scruffily dressed intruder was the Headmaster! I can remember being conscripted from Saturday morning detention to work in the garden or greenhouse; this was much more fun than writing lines. If you were on the Head's list and were asked to come in during holidays you were paid 3d (1/2 pence) an hour for gardening.

Everyone had a ration book containing coupons which were exchanged for food at shopkeepers' on a weekly basis. Compared with the way we eat today the amounts allowed were miniscule for butter, sugar, fats, milk and meat, but I can never remember going hungry. The egg ration was three eggs each a week but if you kept hens this could be converted to balancer meal which was mixed with boiled potato peelings and fed to the hens. Spare eggs were then laid down and preserved in singlass.

At home we had a small garden, part of which had been dug up and an underground air-raid shelter built. The rest was dug up and planted with vegetables. In addition, my father who hitherto had not been much of a gardener took on an allotment and grew all sorts of vegetables. We clamped the potatoes, kept the Spanish onions, pickled shallots, salted down vast quantities of runner beans and bottled all sorts of plums and fruit in Kilner jars. In the autumn term we were given a week off school to go potato- picking on farms in the nearby countryside.

For our first two years at the school everyone took sandwiches, which were eaten in the formroom. We had no hall or dining room as they had not yet been rebuilt. My mother alternated in providing corned beef or Spam and occasionally cheese and Marmite sandwiches with a hunk of fruitcake and an apple. We had a 1/3rd pint bottle of milk provided and, if you were a milk monitor, probably several more. When we returned to the normal morning and afternoon school timetable I went to one of the British Restaurants which by then were operating for lunch. For one and threepence (7 1/2 pence) you could get a tray with meat and two vegetables, a stodgy pudding with custard and a drink. Playing with any of the school teams either at home or away invariably involved a meal at a British Restaurant after the game and I remember them always being of a good standard. That in Albany Road was a regular after home fixtures.

We were very fortunate in that the many teachers who joined up were replaced by a mixture of teachers recalled from retirement, teachers declared unfit for military service, conscientious objectors and educated displaced men from Europe. There was, of course, a core of teachers ineligible for military service as they were over 34 that remained with us.

I remember 'Bodger' Wilson, who was nearing 65 when he joined the school. He had been teaching at Bablake and would not be evacuated with Bablake to Lincoln. He had taught at Bablake after the Great War and my father, who had attended Bablake at that time, remembered him returning decorated and invalidated out of the Black Watch in 1917. He was a terrific teacher and taught me Science, Arithmetic and Singing in the 2nd and 3rd forms. We had six masters who were conscientious objectors who did their own thing outside school to support people (but not war). They were wonderful teachers and all stayed at the school until their own retirement. There were several displaced persons teaching at KHVIII, all highly qualified in their original country: three lawyers with doctorates who taught Latin, Mathematics and Science, and others who were highly educated but simply weren't teachers and sadly couldn't cope with insensitive boys who soon had them in despair and caused them to quietly disappear.

We had an Army Cadet Unit at the school and the officers were a Lieutenant who had been rejected for military service on health grounds and an Under Officer who fled the Nazis from Germany in 1939. He had two left feet but terrific enthusiasm and although there was no need to do so memorised King's Rules and Regulations which he would quote to us from time to time. I can't say any games we played were necessarily influenced by the War, but the comic of the time certainly contained wartime stories such as 'Rockfist Rogan of the RAF' in the Champion. I read these avidly through the week: Monday, the Adventure; Tuesday, the Wizard; Wednesday, the Hotspur; Thursday, Boys Own; Friday, the

Champion.

Because there were only two rugby pitches available for the whole school these were real mud patches devoid of grass. To conserve them as much as possible, on many games afternoons everyone was sent out on a run. It was generally along the Kenilworth Road as far as the 'Orange Grove' and back. The 'Orange Grove' was a traffic island with orange lights on it at the junction of the Kenilworth Road and the Kenpas Highway, now a major road junction with traffic lights et al. The incentive to finish was that you were home early.

The radio provided evening entertainment. The news bulletins were a must but there were regular slots for *'Dick Barton, Special Agent'* at 7.00p.m. daily providing a welcome break from homework. *'Ack Ack Beer Beer'* was on at teatime on Mondays, followed later by *'Monday Night at Seven'*, which later became *'Monday Night at Eight'* containing *'Inspector Hornleigh Investigates'*. *'Band Wagon'* starring Arthur Askey and Richard Murdoch was a very popular programme, as was *'I.T.M.A.'* (It's That Man Again) scripted by Ted Kavanagh and broadcast on Thursday evening, while on Friday came *'Hi Gang'*, featuring Vie Oliver, Bebe Daniels and Ben Lyon. At the weekend we listened to *'Palm Court'* with Max Jaffa and the Palm Court Orchestra, with Ann Ziegler and Webster Booth singing duets. On Sunday afternoon we listened avidly to Mr Middleton on gardening with the latest tips for the allotment.

There were as many as fifteen cinemas in Coventry, all regularly showing new films and we went as a family every Friday evening to see the main film, a supporting film and the News which inevitably was devoted almost entirely to the progress of the War. At three cinemas we were entertained by an organ which rose from the orchestra pit and played such popular wartime songs as *'We're Going to Hang Out the Washing on the Siegfried Line'*, *'Roll Out the Barrel'*, *'There'll be Bluebirds over the White Cliffs of Dover'*, *'We'll Meet Again'*, *'Down at the Old Bull and Bush'*, *'Underneath the Arches'* to name but a few.

When we went out at night we always took a torch because there were no street lights in wartime and on moonless nights it was easy to bump into things in the darkness. Due to wartime conditions the opportunity for extramural activities such as exist at the school today was very limited. Nevertheless there were fixtures against other schools, a Historical Society, a Chess Club, a tennis club, a cross-country club and, ballroom dancing. Youth Clubs in the city proliferated and I think most people attended their local Youth Club or Fellowship.

Holidays as such were forgotten about in wartime as no one was encouraged to travel far, but in 1945/6 'Holidays at Home' was a government initiative and I can recall military bands playing in the parks, while 'Workers' Playtime' shows were also staged outdoors. Like most civilian cars ours was laid up 'for the duration' and I can recall my mother taking my sister and me to Malvern for a week, which entailed travelling the forty-odd miles by 'bus.

Stan Gough (43-49)

King Henry VIII School and Bablake - the roots of an ancient rivalry?

By **Robin Birch (1944-57)**. My Father, Arthur Birch (1903-98) was at Bablake from about 1914.

A few years ago I was asked by Jeff Vent to propose the toast to the Coventry School Foundation at the annual Oxford dinner for old boys and girls. I thought that a theme linking the two schools, now united in the Foundation, might be appropriate. I took two books off the shelf - the Bablake history, *'The Lion and the Stars'* (1990) and the KHS 400th anniversary history 1545-1945. As Hamlet said to his Mother, 'Look here upon this picture, and on this'. The former recalls ancient rivalries with KHS. The 1945 history does not, I think, mention Bablake at all. But being more recent, the former also recounts the setting up of the Coventry School Foundation. Like Virgil, we now sing a greater theme, and to help me mark the joint Foundation I went back to the beginning to try to understand the ancient rivalry which we have now (I hope) put behind us.

The original Bablake seems to have grown from a chantry chapel endowed by Edward II's widow, Queen Isabella, in 1344. The purpose of such chapels was to say regular masses for the soul of the Founder. Many mediaeval schools were associated with such chapels (something for the priests to do between masses). It may have been in existence by 1364 and certainly 'Bablake Hospital for Boys' was in existence in 1507. The 'Skolmayster of Bablake' is recorded in 1522, and in 1545 he or his successor was paid £6.13s.4d. a year (20 nobles). The axe fell however with the passing of the 1547 Act to suppress chantries. The School was refounded in 1560 and Thomas Wheatley, Mayor in 1556, endowed the

School handsomely in 1563. Given the continuing rivalry between Catholic and Protestant in those days, it is perhaps significant that Wheatley was Mayor in the middle of the short reign of Queen Mary I, during which Catholicism had been re-established as the national religion. He may have been a Catholic. This idea is reinforced by the reference on p5 of *The Lion and The Stars* to Wheatley having received his grant of arms in 1555 'when about to become master of the Corpus Christi Guild'. This Guild will have been prominent in putting on the Coventry Mystery Plays at Corpus Christi, a notable Catholic feast (the Thursday after Trinity Sunday).

What was going on? Henry's Charter is dated 23 July 1545 and witnessed by him at Portsmouth. Why there? He was there for more than a Spithead review. He was at the time at war with France and Pompey was in the front line. Four days earlier, on 19 July, he had witnessed something else - the capsizing of his capital ship, the *Mary Rose*, with the loss of several hundred men and his Vice-Admiral, Sir George Carew, a disaster alike in naval and PR terms. (Large portions of the ship, and of its contents, have been recovered in the last twenty five years - a veritable time-capsule). I doubt Henry was very easy to deal with on 23 July. But the charter had come down from London in the red box, so to speak. It is quite complex and it looks as if a deal had been done some time before followed by a lot of drafting. Henry did his stuff. Since he will have been in a nuclear rage that week this is significant.

It tells us that enough priority attached to it for it to be seen to in a crisis week. The key was money, which Henry desperately needed for his French war. (The French were pressing him hard, and had even landed on the Isle of Wight). John Hales had money; he was also influential. He was a supporter of Edward Seymour, the future Duke of Somerset and likewise of the Reformed religion. He was for many years what we would now reckon as a civil servant (Clerk of the Hanaper) and was simultaneously (it was a different world) MP for Preston in Edward VI's time. Since the Dissolution he had wanted to buy Coventry's monastic lands - St John's Hospital and the Whitefriars. John Leland, writing about 1544, observed sourly: 'Hales with me clubbe Foot hath gotten an interest in this Colledge and none but the Devell can get him out.' This is evidence that the deal predated 1545. Henry, no doubt on advice, had thought Coventry should have a Free School. So he was quite happy to do the deal - Hales got the land for £720 and agreed to finance the School; Henry conferred a grandiose charter empowering him to set up a school bearing the Royal name, with further power to vest its support in the City Corporation.

Why did Henry - or his advisers - think Coventry needed a Free School when it had a perfectly good one in Bablake? The Charter says that because in Coventry 'no care has hitherto been taken for the promotion of piety and virtue in boys our beloved and faithful subject John Hales an inhabitant of the said city hath humbly besought us in the name of the whole of that city that we would deign to give him permission to found a Free School...'

The key perhaps lies in the political and religious problem of the chantries. A decade after the 1534 Act nationalising the Church the chantries still continued. Since their primary purpose was to intercede for the souls of their founders they were no doubt strongholds of the old religion. They produced a lot of revenue. Henry had an Act passed in 1545 to nationalise the chantries so that it would come to him and help finance the French war. He didn't follow this up with abolition (he was always a Catholic at heart) and it was left to Edward VI's frankly Protestant administration to suppress the chantries by a further Act. The 1547 Act provided that the money released should be applied to public and charitable purposes, but most seems to have been pocketed by Edward's advisers. But in 1544 it must already have been clear that the days of the old Catholic chantries, and therefore in local terms, of Bablake School, were numbered. Hence, perhaps, the wording in the charter - it is difficult to believe that boys of any age have been susceptible to piety and virtue but from a Protestant perspective, Bablake would certainly not meet the case.

The citizens of Coventry didn't think much of John Hales or his royal scoop. Like the citizens of Oxford in 1525 when Wolsey had suppressed their beloved Priory of St Frideswide to found his new college, they felt they had been deprived of their own. Hales was Kentish gentry, and though there were Warwickshire connections, he was a stranger to Coventry. He established a house there (where he was to entertain Queen Elizabeth in 1565) but he was not likely to have been an 'inhabitant' in 1545 for very long, much less able to speak on behalf of the whole city. Nor was his connection with Coventry without severe interruption. He was definitely a member of the 'awkward squad', falling foul in turn of Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth (not many can have done this, and lived). He had to go into exile under Edward VI when his patron, Somerset, fell - his opposition to land enclosure had got him into trouble with

landowners (no doubt Catholic and Protestant alike). He continued in exile, as a Protestant, when Mary succeeded and his lands and property were confiscated, and having got these back under Elizabeth he bit the hand that fed him by saying, in effect, that if Elizabeth were not Protestant enough there was a legitimate Protestant successor (see below). From 1551 he was out of the country until 1559 and soon thereafter fell foul of Elizabeth (while, mysteriously, retaining his office as Clerk of the Hanaper). His inevitable neglect of his Coventry school had local consequences.

There seems little doubt that Bablake was refounded as an act of local protest. When the Queen came, Recorder Throgmorton said that 'although her Father the King had sold certain property to maintain a school in Coventry, the City had obtained no proper benefits', and she ordered Secretary Cecil to investigate. Hales was not found to have acted outside the terms of the charter. She visited the School and is said to have remarked around this time: 'Men of Coventry, what fools ye be.' What did this Delphic remark mean?

From the Queen's point of view Hales, a Puritan, counted as a Protestant extremist. At the beginning of her reign, in 1559, he had made a speech championing the validity of the marriage to the Earl of Hertford (son of his old patron Somerset) of Lady Katherine Grey, sister of Lady Jane (the Protestant 'nine days' Queen) displaced and executed by Queen Mary in 1554). The marriage had been declared illegal and both were in prison under Elizabeth. Lady Katherine was a great-granddaughter of Henry VII and therefore, like her sister, could be in the legitimate line of succession if Elizabeth died or were deposed. His speech appeared in Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs' in 1576, after his death; Hales was among early exponents of the idea that the sovereign could be deposed for flouting the (Puritan view of the) will of God, an idea which found realisation with the execution of Charles I in 1649. The speech was seen as potentially treasonous and earned him a year in prison (from which he was released on the intervention of Cecil) and house arrest for the rest of his life until his death on 28 December 1571. [Note: in this I have followed Thomas S Freeman in Doran and Freeman, *The Myth of Elizabeth*, Palgrave Macmillan 2003, pp 42-44. B Lowe in DNB s.v. John Hales says that Hales published his views in 1564 and went to the Tower in 1565, being released in 1566 by Cecil's influence but on condition that for the next four years he did not leave his house without royal licence].

Whatever the truth of this, it is surprising that the Queen was entertained for two nights at Hales' Coventry house in 1565, presumably by Hales himself (source: 1945 School history). Perhaps the key is to be found in William Cecil, her Secretary, who was a more radical Protestant than his Queen but remained her guide and mentor for forty years. He secured Hales' release from the Tower and got him out of trouble with the City Fathers over the conduct of the School. He no doubt persuaded the Queen of the expediency of the visit.

This visit must have had specific significance. Perhaps we should link it with Wheatley's endowment of Bablake in 1563. This was, it would seem, Catholic wealth filling a vacuum left by Hales' inattention (no doubt forced) since the early 1550s. Warwickshire was a strongly Catholic county - Stratford remained Catholic until the mid-1580s and the loyalties of the Catholic part of the county gentry were divided during the Gunpowder Plot in 1605. It may have become apparent that Hales' Reformed initiative of 1545 in Coventry was at risk of being lost. The City Fathers were displeased at Hales' neglect and those of Protestant sympathy may have appealed to the Government for help. The Royal visit with a specially-liberated Hales may have been a reasonable response. 'Men of Coventry, what fools ye be' could have been the Royal comment on Catholic progress within the City.

Through these years we can see Coventry, like England at large, edging slowly and uncomfortably from Catholicism to the Reformed religion. In the mid 1570s the Coventry Mystery Plays were suppressed; they may have been seen, feeding his imagination, by the youthful William Shakespeare with his father John from deeply Catholic Stratford. By 1605, faced with the Gunpowder Plot, Lord Harington of Exton, guardian at Coombe Abbey of the young Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James VI, could send her to Protestant Coventry to keep her safe from the Plotters operating in the Catholic counties of Warwick and Northampton. The City was set on the course which kept it a strongly Protestant, indeed Puritan, city to our own time.

The School did pass to the City in 1572 on Hales' death and remained with them, through the great days of the 17c and the later decline, until over 250 years later a report of the Charity Commissioners led to it and Bablake being taken from them and re-established under independent charity trustees. Perhaps it is no surprise that in our own time the City's relations with both schools, but especially KHS, have been difficult, and that the old rivalry of the Schools runs very deep. Hence specifically the new Foundation of 1976. May more enlightened times continue.

Footnote. I used the date of Easter 1552 in the Prayer Book of that year to work out the days of the week when the Mary Rose sank etc. If I got it right, 19 July was a Sunday and 23 July therefore a Thursday. Sailing on Sunday is a slight surprise, but it was wartime. By Thursday the King had no doubt simmered down a bit but pity his Private Office!

The Reverend Edward Jackson

Among the great mass of papers consulted by Mr J.B. Young-Evans in his research on the relationship between King Henry VIII School and the Freemen of Coventry were a number relating to Edward Jackson, who was Headmaster from 1718 to 1758, but being mainly concerned with Nineteenth Century disputes, he made no use of them. Nevertheless this box of fragile documents (now deposited with the City Record Office) give a fascinating insight into a remarkable man engaged in a bitter and protracted struggle for power.

As a result of legal action begun in the previous century, Coventry City Council had been found guilty of corrupt management of its Estates, and they were taken out of its control from 1712 to 1719, including those left by John Hales for the maintenance of the School. Thus it was against this background of a 'previous conviction' that Jackson began his own lawsuit against the Council in 1728.

With detailed evidence he alleged that 'The Mayor and his brethren' had leased or disposed of School properties to their friends (including other Aldermen) at less than the market value, hence reducing the income of the School and his own salary, for it was a unique feature of the School that the Headmaster was personally entitled to a share of the 'overplus', that is, any profit from such transactions. Elm trees had been sold for timber, but there was no sign of the cash. Properties belonging to the School had been allowed to fall into decay, while money was wasted 'erecting effigies of the Founder'. Even worse, they had frozen his salary while increasing that of his assistant, the Usher, 'designing thereby to create jealousies and misunderstandings between Master and Usher.'

Jackson was not without allies. The Reverend Sam Caute, son of a previous Headmaster, enrolled the influential advocate, Harding:

'I was last night with Mr Harding and am now going to visit him again upon your affair - and shall probably tarry with him the whole evening. I can assure ye that we have taken abundance of care in respect to ye due settlement of it - several books & reports have been consulted - and I apprehend him well apprised of your suit and the merits of your case.'

The Council, well aware of these moves, prepared its counter-charges, which were more personal.

Four years after his appointment Jackson had added to his income by becoming Vicar of Foleshill. Later he added another parish and also became a Prebend of Lichfield, giving him an income, they estimated, of £300 or £400 a year,' but,

'He often leaves the School for many days and weeks together, sometimes to the care of, and to be taught by, one of his scholars or any incompetent person he can provide, and sometimes without making any provision at all. The said Jackson has long threatened the said Corporation with suits that he will get the School Estate out of their hands, and gives out that when he has done so he will quit his place as Schoolmaster and reside at his livings.'

They added the fervent hope that he would quit 'before the School is utterly ruined.' They complained of the money spent on his house - £24 in one year - almost half his annual salary. Perhaps the contents were equally valuable, for another expenditure was, 'Iron bars for Mr Jackson's house: 18 shillings and 2 pence.'

Whatever the legal situation (the subject of Mr Young-Evans' research), the Corporation certainly believed 'that the children of Freemen inhabitants of Coventry shall be taught gratis, only paying twelvence admission.' However they observed that not only 'has the said Jackson extracted several sums of money from many Freemen, but in case his unreasonable demand has not been complied with, such children have suffered by his unreasonable and immoderate correction and gross neglect in teaching them.' They also referred to his 'sly insinuations and fair speeches' and that to some of their requests he gave 'very rude answers.' When

'Mr Mayor or any of the Council expostulate with him and desire him to take some care of the School, he not only treats them in an insolent manner, but has several times actually refused to let them come into the School, either to hear the boys declaim or upon any other occasion as they have usually done in times past.'

They also felt it wrong that,

'in a place so great and populous as the City of Coventry the said Jackson has not had above 30 boys to teach instead of 100 - the usual number when the School is in any degree of credit.'

Jackson's temper may be gauged from the marginal comments he added to his copy of their deposition: 'Impertinence!', 'False!'

But it was on the matter of finance that the case was ultimately to turn. Jackson had documentary evidence - but how had he come by it? The School deeds and accounts were kept under lock and key in the City Treasury or Counting House, and although he had 'often in a friendly manner applied to the Mayor and his Bretheren' he had got nowhere. The Council guessed the answer: their political opponents.

'We have great reason to suspect that Deeds and Accounts have been clandestinely taken away by some persons who were members of the said Corporation but were lately turned out and were intimate friends of the said Jackson.'

Clearly Jackson was a determined man; certainly more than his predecessor, who held the post for only nine months. Prior to that, the Headmaster was, for many years, Mr Greenway, an Old Boy of the School which, 'under his great care and prudent management had grown famous, having more than 40 boarders and a great number of Freemen's sons to teach.' In 1706 Mr Greenway also desired an increase in salary and asked to see the accounts, and 'the Mayor and his bretheren desired to satisfy him.' They therefore invited him to the Council House and produced a report 'which can no longer be found' apparently showing that in fact the School owed the Council £500. At this Mr Greenway expressed himself as being 'very satisfied' and 'very sorry he had occasioned so much trouble.' Small wonder the Council described him as 'an extraordinary good master' and one 'who gave no further trouble.'

In the Eighteenth Century, legal processes were painfully slow, and Dickens' devastating picture of it in Bleak House shows how little had changed. Cases in Chancery dragged on from one generation to another. Although action against the Council was in fact taken by the Attorney General, Jackson's plea was addressed to Sir Robert Walpole, Chancellor of the Court of the Exchequer. There, by comparison, events moved with almost lightning speed. Within five years there was a distinct possibility of a verdict. Even worse, from the Council's point of view, was the likelihood of it going against them. Mindful of the continuing legal costs, and remembering the penalty inflicted twenty years earlier when their Estates had been sequestered, the Mayor and his brethren decided to settle.

On 18th December, 1733, a formal meeting of the Council was held to approve what had already been decided. It was total surrender. Jackson's victory was complete; indeed he was given a bonus. The City was growing, and a new parish was to be created, St John's, based on the old Bablake church. A new parish required a new vicar: who more suited than the Reverend Edward Jackson, with the Usher as his curate? After all, it was another income. The Council had been defeated, but at least they could feel relief that the fight with Jackson was over. If so, they should have known better. It was only just beginning.

In 1733 Jackson was in the full vigour of his maturity. He had been appointed fifteen years earlier at the age of thirty-six, an ambitious, intelligent graduate of Clare College, Cambridge, with a passion for justice - in his own cause. The apparent settlement of his long quarrel with the City Council, involving the creation of a new parish, required an Act of Parliament, and it was the Council's only crumb of comfort - and a measure of Jackson's wealth and determination - that he was willing to pay the legal expenses.

In a sense, of course, the Council were 'buying him off in a very astute way with a gift which cost them nothing. His stipend as vicar of Bablake church (now St John's) would not be paid by the Council; nor were his duties onerous. Perhaps that was as well, in view of their previous complaint that he had been too busy with his ecclesiastical duties elsewhere to look after the School. But the church itself was in a sad state of repair. In fact, 'ye said Church of Bablake became so ruinous that it was unsafe for any assembly to be held therein for divine worship until October, 1737.' The only difficulty as far as the Council were concerned was the existence - or rather the disappearance - of certain small charities for the vicar, which had been left in their care.

The document which was laid before Parliament stated quite clearly that one of its purposes was the 'quieting of certain disputes and controversies which have arisen between Edward Jackson and the Mayor, Bailiffs and Commonality.' In addition to the living of St John's, the agreement gave Jackson the four things he had been fighting for: first, that his salary would always be double that of the Usher, second, that they would have a share in any excess profits from the School Estate, third, that they had a right to inspect the accounts, and finally that he should have an immediate increase in salary (£80 for himself and £40 for the Usher) with a settlement of all the salary owing to him. But what the Council gained was to them equally important: an immunity from future prosecution over any estates they or their predecessors had misappropriated: 'the said Mayor, Bailiffs and Commonality, or their predecessors, are hereby discharged from all suits and prosecutions concerning the same.' Little did either party know that Jackson was to

spend the next fifteen years trying to secure what he thought he had already won.

Jackson was not the sort of man to overlook his dues. Years earlier, when farmers in his Foleshill parish had declined to pay their tithes, he had arrived with a chum and threatened to collect the milk himself. They complained that he lived in Coventry, and only visited them once a week, even when there were bodies to be buried. On the other hand, he had been responsible for building a school in the parish, and regularly attended parish meetings (presumably to keep on eye on his own financial interests).

The terms of settlement between Jackson and the Council were by no means universally approved. Thomas Edwards, vicar of St Michaels, out of whose parish the new one was to be carved, took a poor view of this loss of income and prestige, and petitioned Parliament against the Bill. Needless to say, opposed by both Jackson and the Council, he stood no chance of success, and reluctantly accepted compensation offered by Jackson of £6 per year. But the agreement affecting Jackson's salary was doomed for other reasons: the personalities and principles of those involved. There was only one possible consequence: another lawsuit.

They met to inspect the accounts, but Jackson could not agree on what was 'reasonable expenditure', which in turn affected his share of the overplus or profits. Events then followed their previous pattern. By July 1736, they claimed that Jackson had 'left off teaching or taking care of ye said school under protest that his salary had not been paid.' In vain did they wait on him with what they considered the correct amount (£40) for the previous half-year, with the promise of the rest 'as soon as it could be collected' if he would resume teaching on the following Monday. He 'returned this answer - That he had nothing to do with them, and they should apply to my Lord Chancellor and refer it to him.' In vain did they invite him to a meeting 'at ye Mayor's parlour on Saturday next at three o'clock in the afternoon.' He failed to appear. Perhaps he had better things to do.

His list of complaints, submitted this time to the Court of Chancery, was lengthy. He pointed out that many of the rents on the School properties were overdue. The City Council replied, quite correctly, that some of the tenants were destitute, and even when their goods were seized the value was not equal to the debt. When he continued to express dissatisfaction they invited him to be present the next time prospective tenants were interviewed, but he 'had gone out of town.' The financial arrangements for the repair of Bablake church were also under dispute. The Council had failed to take adequate care of charities (some dating back to Richard II) affecting his income from the Foleshill incumbency. The Usher's house had been allowed to fall into decay and misuse, and this last point was to give a vivid illustration of the animosity and atmosphere of the quarrel.

The houses of the Master and the Usher both stood in the grounds of what is now the Old Grammar School, Hales Street. The Master's was 'a mansion', and indeed one of the complaints of the Council was that 'unnecessary repairs and alterations' had been agreed to by a former Mayor who had been 'prevailed upon by the artful persuasions and insinuations of the Headmaster. By contrast, however,

'ye said Usher's house, being an ancient building, was not only greatly decayed and very much out of Repair by being uninhabited during ye vacancy of ye said Usher's place, but also by a Great Wind that blowed down a stack of Chimneys and a flood that happened during that vacancy by which Accident the water ran into the said House and arose a considerable height - at least three foot in the Kitchen and the lower rooms thereof.'

Now one of Jackson's many enemies was the School Bailiff, which was rather unfortunate since it was his responsibility to collect the rents from the School's properties and thus secure Jackson's income. Jackson believed that the Bailiff, John Bucknall, had been allowing some people not to pay, in consideration of a small bribe for himself, so that when Bucknall began keeping fowl in the Usher's house, it was adding insult to injury. Jackson, perhaps roused by a dawn reminder of their presence, named him in the lawsuit. Bucknall's defence is interesting:

'During ye vacancy of ye Usher's place, the Usher's house being void, he did keep one cock and two hens in a back room of ye said House to divert his Children which as he conceives neither did nor could do any damage thereto, and that in about a fortnight or 3 weeks time ye said Cock and Hens were stolen or taken away through a window that opens into the Headmaster's garden, their heads being pulled off and left in ye said room.'

Whether Jackson actually did, in an excess of fury, climb in and wring their necks must be open to doubt, but it would not have been out of keeping with his personality or his belief in positive action.

Jackson was sufficiently wealthy to indulge his litigious nature to the full. During one incredible period of fifteen months his legal expenses

alone came to the equivalent of two years' salary. In addition to his suit against the Corporation he was carrying on five separate actions against individuals, and defending himself against counter-charges by two of them. Small wonder that the Victoria County History describes it as 'a period of continuous litigation.' His lawyers' bills are also revealing. One of them, John Hill, had a son William at the School, and from one of his accounts he deducts £7 - 7shillings, 'being one and threequarters years schooling for Wili.' Many today might wish the fees were four guineas a year.

Perhaps having a son at the School was one reason why Hill took care to remain on good terms with the Headmaster. To a lengthy bill of 1740 he adds the friendly note, 'besides much trouble and many attendances for which I desire nothing.' In December of that year there was a new move in the dispute. Both sides agreed to arbitration - the Arbiter being Lord Archer. What the Council may not have known was that Archer, like Jackson, was a graduate of Clare College, Cambridge, and it seems inconceivable that they were not previously acquainted. But still matters dragged on. In 1741 Jackson was complaining that he had been paid no salary for seven years, while at the same time paying an Assistant £20 a year out of his own pocket. Two months after agreeing to arbitration both sides promised to deposit bonds with a third party as evidence of good faith, but it appears that the Corporation failed to honour this condition, in spite of an agreement reached at 'The Half Moon' in Coventry,

In London Jackson waited on Archer 'for many weeks at Considerable Expense' but lacking the bond, no progress was possible. Jackson therefore appealed again to the Court, 'being now fully convinced that the said Corporation intend only to amuse him and delay him in the prosecution of his just right and property.' Presumably Jackson was not amused. In fact it was to take a further six years for a final settlement, though it seems likely temporary agreements were made and broken in the meantime. At last, in November 1747, Archer produced his judgement. Once again Jackson was totally vindicated. In addition he ordered the Council to pay Jackson £350 'being the balance of all accounts due...'

Perhaps this time it really was peace, though Jackson was to remain Headmaster for another eleven years. In 1754 one of his ex-pupils was elected Mayor, and both Jackson and Lord Archer were invited to the traditional festivities. Perhaps Jackson, now aged 72, had mellowed somewhat. In St Mary's Hall over five hundred guests sat down to a feast which included 600 bottles of wine and 17 gallons of spirits. It was a cold November day, and 'Dr Jackson, being rather infirm, desired to take his seat with the ladies in the Mayoress's Parlour, and spent the evening cordially together.' They had witnessed many changes, and if, in the conduct of Civic Affairs they were for the better, the Reverend Jackson, reflecting before the fire, must have felt he could claim no small part in that reformation.

Fred Holland (41-49)

Two Splendid Colleagues

Max Gordon, b. May 8th 1908, and Ernst Kolisch, b. December 3rd 1901 were two redoubtable masters of staff for many years and it was they who embarked on the early postwar trips abroad, Max specialising in skiing trips, Ernst with members of the Parents' Association. They are remembered today with fond affection by so many, and these are but three of the tributes to Max who fled the Nazis in Germany and Ernst who escaped from Czechoslovakia:

I learned all my Latin and half my Maths from these men. Of course, the period 1956-61 was one of a far more draconian style of teaching and learning and at times both could be quite scary. Even so, their human side was very evident, they were excellent natural teachers with a very amusing turn of phrase partly because of their continental background.

Max would say: "Nelson, be quiet or I'll separate your breath from your body", while in reply to the request "Can I go to the toilet please sir?" he would reply "I don't know whether you can but you may".

Kolisch would say "Watch the board while I run through it" and "You will line up in single lines of two". He looked after the distribution of milk from his beloved Wog-shed even through the winter months when the milk froze in the bottles.

Bob Nelson (51-56)

I have vivid memories of Max Gordon, none of which have anything to do with the learning of Latin. He was quite small and almost as wide with a bog-brush haircut and a selection of Parker pens in his breast pocket. I liked his sense of humour; even then he never took himself too seriously and though as strict as he could manage he was never malicious. He had only one punishment, the rarely-used but much-feared "walk

around the magic garden," which involved holding a boy in a half-nelson and whirling him around the classroom. After that a run through a few Latin declensions was a breeze. He tried to persuade me to take Classics at A-level, but I couldn't stand the thought of incarceration in Room 203 with all those musty texts. A teacher of the old school even then, he would probably be sectioned under the Mental Health Act if he were alive today. I wonder what he would have thought of SATs?

I remember only two things about Ernst Kolisch, who died when I was in the Lower Fifth: his OXO tin, in which he used to carry his chalk and his board rubber and his cries of "Keep to ze left!" to the swarm of boys moving up and down the central staircase. Ordnung indeed.

Paul Taylor (67-74)

A.A.C. Burton once said to me: "Kolisch understood the English boy. Mr Gordon never did". I think that was true. I have - and had - a tremendous admiration for Ernst: warm, generous, honest, modest and with a sense of honour quite foreign to Max. This probably sounds unbelievable in view of his later reputation for seriousness, but I can remember at the end of one of his very first lessons in the school, when I was probably twelve, he got each of us in turn to come out in front of the class and 'pull a funny face'. And, of course, the distress he must have endured in the later years of his disintegrating marriage, culminating in his taking digs in Broad Lane, where he died can only be imagined. Night after night one would see him alone and lonely, walking the streets of Earlsdon.

Do you remember the Suez crisis, when the staff, like the rest of the country, were bitterly divided? I remember one critical morning when he turned up in some sort of uniform, ready to serve immediately if he were called on to do so. The fact that he was taken in - as so many were - by Eden's comparison with Hitler, is irrelevant. With his personal knowledge of Fascism it was an issue which went to the very heart of everything he stood for.

Further, my sadness is in recalling his loyal attempts to carry out the ideas of Allen Edwards and the 'new approaches' to the teaching of maths which came in after I left. I remember seeing him sadly carrying a tray of sand from one class to another, which was supposedly used to demonstrate some mathematical principle which was probably opaque to both of us.

As regards Max, I remember his greeting to me when I joined the staff after my years as a pupil. "Ah, the criminal returns to the scene of the crime!" This I'm sure was not said with any ill-will but to demonstrate what he thought was a sense of humour, or wit, and his inwardsness with the English language.

Fred Holland (41-49)

Ernst was always ready to volunteer his services and in 1947 he agreed to umpire a 2nd XI match against Bablake in spite of his very limited understanding and appreciation of the game of cricket. In the field he was moved tactfully from square leg to wicket and back again at the end of each over. After some fifteen minutes the Bablake opening bowler felt he had a legitimate claim for an lbw decision and shouted triumphantly;

"How's that?", causing Ernst to turn and bark, "Speak ven you are spoken to, boy!"

The last word should go to the late Derek Parnaby, who taught History at KHVIII from 1949 to 1961. This was inspired by Ernst's devotion to the distribution of break-time milk over many years:

Please don't tear my milk-shed down,

Millie has promised to pay.

It was built to last von hundred years,

So please don't take it away.

But they did.

J.B.V.

SPORT

Old Coventrians RFC

The Old Coventrians RFC first played under the present name in 1933, therefore the club will be celebrating its 75th Anniversary during the coming season. The highlight will be a Celebration Dinner to be held in the Tile Hill Lane Clubhouse to be hosted by David Duckham, with Willie John McBride, former British & Irish Lions captain, as the guest speaker. Other events during the season will include an Invitation 7's Tournament, a Players Dinner and a Ladies Night.

During the past season the 1st XV gained promotion to Midlands 3, sealed on the final game with an impressive 44-0 win over Ledbury RFC.

Playing numbers increased considerably to enable 3 teams to be fielded each week. To round off the season a party of 40 players and supporters went on a most enjoyable tour to Bordeaux.

The Junior Section of the club is thriving with well over 200 players from age 6 to 18, training on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings under fully qualified coaches. The quality of the coaching and organisation can be measured by the Under 7's to Under 15's winning 5 of the age group tournaments on the final day of the junior season.

The club entered into a partnership with Coventry RFC at the start of last season to develop a Junior and Senior Colts team, administered by OC's with significant coaching input from senior Coventry coaches. The first year results were spectacular with the Junior Colts (Under 17) taking the Warwickshire and Midlands Championships to get to the National semi-finals. The Senior Colts (Under 19) were Warwickshire Cup finalists and National Plate semi-finalists, and winners of the County Colts 7's. Many of these players will still be available for colts rugby for the next two seasons so we are looking for even more success in the future.

Thanks to some very good investments over the past 25 years the club is financially sound with extensive facilities in Tile Hill Lane adjacent to the A45. This includes 3 rugby pitches, 2 bowls greens and a large clubhouse with a function room available for social functions.

Further information about playing opportunities or social activities may be obtained from the web site www.oldcoventriansrfc.co.uk or from Mike Owen on 07855 424097.

When Leicester beat Wasps in March, Mick Cleary writing in the Daily Telegraph referred to the 'irrepressible form' of **Andy Goode (87-96)** who won the last of his nine England caps against South Africa in November 2006. "Wasps hardly saw the ball for the first 20 minutes. The tone was set, Goode orchestrated the rest, scoring his side's opening try when slicing inside and claiming a perfect kicking return of 14 points in a 34-24 win". Later, in an interview with Paul Ackford in the Sunday edition he said of goal-kicking, "The worst thing you can do as a kicker, once you have missed, is worry about that one as you're lining up the next one. My routine after I've set up is to look at the posts and imagine a silhouette of a ball going through them. I'm not claiming to be some tree-hugger who is a great philosopher and thinker about these things, but that works for me"

In April **Michelle Mahiques (85-90)** ran in the Flora London Marathon for the charity Spinal Injuries Association, which provides lifelong support for those who have suffered paralysis as a result of spinal cord injury and boasts former 5,000 metres record-holder **Dave Moorcroft (60-64)** as its non-running team captain.

Nick Jessett (66-73) has been elected captain of Coventry Finham Golf Club, which this year hosted the Open qualifier for the first time.

Sarah Margetts (87-98), a keen school cricketer with limited opportunities, read Business Administration at Cardiff University where she captained the newly formed Women's XI which won the Welsh Universities championship in its first season. She was selected for the Wales Women's XI to play their inaugural match against Scotland in 2002 and she continues to represent Wales in the ECB County Championships, having run the administration since the start of her university career. In 2005 she was approached by the England Indoor Cricket Association to send a Welsh side to play indoor cricket in a forthcoming series against England. This was a form of the game the ladies were unfamiliar with, but Sarah organised training sessions and a coach. In 2007 the Wales U13 girls' team Sarah coached won all its games in its group and lost narrowly to Kent in the final of the ECB championship at the County Ground, Taunton. Two of the girls were selected for coaching at England U19 regional performance centres. In that year the Wales Indoor XI was invited to take part in the Indoor Cricket World Cup and Sarah was instrumental in the XI's victory over England by taking five wickets. Already a Probationary member of the Women's MCC, she was nominated for the role of Wales Female Coach of the Year and was selected as the winner from a strong field.

This year Sarah was appointed Women's and Girls' Cricket Officer for Wales, a full-time post that enables her to dedicate even more of her time to developing women's cricket in Wales. Recently she was selected for a tour of the Channel Islands with the MCC Women's XI and when not involved in local coaching sessions took 4 wickets and scored the winning runs in a 20/20 fixture against Guernsey.

OBITUARIES

Harold Crowter (59-66)

Harold Crowter, who died last year at age of 59, had a long association with King Henry VIII school, first as a pupil and then as a parent, benefactor and latterly as a governor.

He was born in Coventry in August 1948, the only child of John and Grace Crowter. The young Harold excelled in his primary education at Edgwick School in Foleshill, ultimately passing his 11 plus examinations with flying colours. His marks were so good that he was the only pupil at Edgwick that year to win a scholarship to King Henry VIII. His parents couldn't afford the fees so the council stepped in to pay.

For the first few days at his new school, Harold felt like a fish out of water. The majority of his classmates came from wealthy families and it took a while for the new boy from the other side of town to make his mark. Harold was quickly streamed into the top sets across a range of subjects. However, his intelligence was not always used to further his studies. Operating under the nickname Sam, he acquired a reputation as a prankster. His victims were for the most part doddery school masters. Several stunts are worthy of mention, not least the lesson during which he cooked baked-beans on a portable stove inside his desk. In later years, he also reminisced fondly about the time he invited a teacher to sit down on a chair he had deliberately sabotaged in a woodwork class.

A nasty dose of mumps disrupted Harold's O-levels and left him badly behind in his A-level studies. But his natural gift in mathematics saw him achieve grades sufficient to start as a trainee quantity surveyor with the Coventry City Corporation. He retained his appetite for fun, taking leading roles as both writer and performer in his department's annual revue.

A few weeks after leaving school, Harold went on a young people's holiday in Switzerland. On the shores of Lake Thun, he met Ruth Wiffen from Suffolk whom he married in June 1969. They settled in Hinckley, Leicestershire and within seven years had produced three children Gaynor, Ashleigh and Corinne, all of whom followed in their father's footsteps as pupils at King Henry VIII.

In 1972, Harold left local government and started to rise through the ranks of a local construction company, becoming Contracts Director at the age of 29. His experience of dealing with contractual claims seems to have inspired his eventual change of career.

His growing family and career took up most of his time, but in the evenings and at weekends he worked long hours to help build a new chapel for his local church where he was also a deacon, treasurer and the stand-in organist.

In the late seventies, Harold set up his own company in Hinckley, built three houses and then devoted himself to a gruelling period of study in pursuit of professional arbitration qualifications.

He loved work but was careful to take long holidays as a counter-balance. Every summer, from the early eighties onwards, he packed the family and a few belongings into a large Volvo before decamping for a month to the south of France. Here he really relaxed, acquiring a taste for red wine and many lasting friends.

Watching sport also became a major theme in Harold's life, initially on the school's courts and playing fields. Every Saturday, in all weathers, he would take Gaynor, Ashleigh and Corinne to compete in cross-country, rugby, cricket, hockey and netball. He missed very few matches, becoming such a reliable supporter that he was sometimes asked to umpire games of cricket or run the line for rugby matches. Harold donated an annual prize for girls' sport and also made a generous financial contribution to the school's new cricket pavilion.

Harold was a member of Coventry Rugby Club and was a regular at Twickenham and the Millennium Stadium for internationals. The Hong Kong Sevens became an annual pilgrimage in later years where, to his great delight, he could both network and spectate at the same time. Cricket though was his favourite sport (to play and watch) and during stressful periods of work he would occasionally sneak off to Edgbaston if Warwickshire were playing at home. Holidays in the Caribbean often coincided with test matches in Barbados.

In the nineties, Harold's company continued to grow. Offices were opened in London and Hong Kong. As an arbitrator, he acquired a reputation as one of the world's leading experts in construction disputes, working in every continent. He was particularly proud to be elected chairman of the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators in 1998. He was also made a Freeman of the City of London and a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Arbitrators.

Harold also devoted himself to training the next generation of arbitrators. He became a Course Director at the College of Estate Management at Reading University and helped other aspiring arbitrators as an author, lecturer and pupil-master.

Faith in Jesus Christ was the bedrock of Harold's life, a fact more

apparent than ever in his final days. He was a significant contributor to Christian mission in the UK and abroad, visiting and supporting churches in France, Kenya and India as well as at home. He also sat on the board of a national charity which cares for elderly Christians.

In recent years Harold's energy and talents were brought to bear as a Governor of the Foundation. He served in this role for seven years as Chairman of the Marketing Committee and a member of the financial, Arts and Resources committees. He was also an active and proud member of the Old Coventrians' Association rarely missing its annual dinner.

Harold's professional and home life was also marked by a sense of fun and generous hospitality. He loved good food and wine and was never happier than when his family and guests were enjoying it with him at his expense. As a result, he had many friends around the world - a fact well attested at his memorial service in Leamington Spa where the congregation of more than 500 people heard accounts of remarkable commitment and generosity from family, friends and colleagues.

Harold died peacefully at home in Leamington Spa on 2nd November 2007 at the age of 59, little more than six months after being diagnosed with oesophageal cancer. His wife Ruth and his three children were at his bedside. His final words were that he was "ready to go home."

Frank 'Sandy' Madden (34-40)

An above average Science student, he served an apprenticeship with Armstrong Whitworth Aero Company, where he was initially involved in the design and manufacture of sections of the wing of the famous Whitley bomber. Latterly he carried out contract work internationally, Israel, U.S.A. and Saudi Arabia being but three of the countries where he worked.

Roger Julian Megainey (32-37)

On leaving school Roger was apprenticed to British Photo Engraving, part of the Illiffe Newspaper group, for five years. He joined the Royal Navy in 1941 and served for four years on a supply ship based at Oban. On demobilisation he completed his apprenticeship and duly became a Freeman of the City of Coventry. Subsequently his entire working life was spent in the printing trade, firstly in Birmingham, then in Banbury on Woodrow Wyatt publications and finally with the Nuneaton Tribune.

He was a quiet, unassuming individual who pursued various hobbies. He had a large collection of old clocks and watches which he had painstakingly rescued and repaired over the years. He maintained a large aviary in his garden containing a number of decorative birds until he finally dispensed with them and added the aviary to his already large greenhouse where he propagated wide varieties of fuchsia and geranium. In 1948 he married Olive Smith, who died in 1964. His second marriage, in 1976, was to Gwen Freeman, widow of his lifetime friend John. He is survived by Gwen, a stepdaughter and five step-grandchildren.

Anthony Charles Prichard (48-55)

A popular dentist who treated thousands of people in Coventry over a long period, he trained at Guy's Hospital and qualified as a dental surgeon in 1960, when he set up a surgery in Baginton Road. His widow Margaret recalled that he employed one nurse, set up a post in the garden and waited for patients to arrive. For many years he worked with children suffering from spina bifida. His daughter **Caroline (??-??)** said of her father: "Dad's work was very important to him and he was totally dedicated. He thought a great deal of his patients and never wanted to let them down. He was gentle and understanding and was very good at making his patients feel comfortable. He could have a wonderful presence in a room without even saying anything." He was also a talented pianist and an avid gardener

James Noel Chalmers Barclay Wilson (29-38)

Ginger, as he was known to us all, died suddenly on 2 March 2006. He was born on Christmas Day 1919 to Alexander and Isobel Wilson at Wolston on Avon. His early education was at Kenilworth and King Henry VIII School in Coventry. Having matriculated in the Classics in 1935 he switched to sciences, much to the disgust of his headmaster. His only claim to fame at school was to be captain of shooting and playing in the second teams for cricket and rugby. He did however win a gold medal in physics, a sign of a bright academic future. Accordingly in 1938 he commenced his medical education in Birmingham. It was there in the dissecting room that he won the nickname of 'Ginger' - a tribute to his luxuriant ginger hair and Scottish ancestry. Having, by his own admission, performed passably at school, his career flourished, winning the Peter Thompson prize in anatomy, then passing the Primary fellowship, claiming the Senior Surgical prize and the Arthur Foxwell prize in medicine and, in 1943, qualifying MB ChM with Honours - quite an achievement. Whilst he was a young resident, the Healon Award came his way.

During the dark days of war he experienced the full wrath of the Luftwaffe in the onslaught on the Midlands cities. One night, while he was attending to bomb victims, serendipity struck in that he met Pat McCullough who was also ministering to the injured. They were married in September 1945 at Hampton in Arden.

Ginger's war service was, to say the least, exciting. He joined the RAMC in November 1943 but, characteristically, volunteered to become a parachutist and was duly drafted as MO to the First Parachute Division, shortly to land in Arromanche, Normandy, in August 1944. After the final breakthrough, he flew with the Airborne Division to liberate Norway. His military career ended in 1946. Returning to the quiet routine of civvy street, he trained in Orthopaedics, gaining his RCS Fellowship in 1948 and the ChM degree the following year. During the last three years of training he acted as Senior Registrar in Oswestry. In 1952 he was appointed Consultant in Cardiff but after three years migrated to London to the Directorship of Accident Services at Stanmore, with affiliation to Queen's Square and also as Clinical Teacher at London University and Assistant Director of postgraduate training at RNOH.

He was involved in many research initiatives in collaboration with Professor John Scales in developing the Stanmore Hip prosthesis and indeed was the first to insert the implant at Stanmore in 1963. This led to major hip and upper femoral reconstruction in patients with bone tumours, encouraged by Scales and Jackson Burrows. Furthermore, JNW founded the RNOH Bone Tumour Registry. Added to this he described such procedures at the Wilson osteotomy for juvenile hallux valgus and the metacarpal base thumb arthritis; also, in lighter vein, 'Winkle-Picker Disease' and 'The Battered Bottom Syndrome', both of which attracted much media attention.

He was an inveterate traveller because of his passionate desire to better the lot of the diseased and poverty-stricken peoples in developing countries. His journey started in 1967 when Sir Herbert Seddon sent him to Nigeria to organise Orthopaedic Aid during the Biafran war. Thereafter he visited and worked in a host of countries including Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Libya and others in East Africa and the Far East; this extending over a span of 30 years.

Understandably, he was a staunch supporter of World Orthopaedic Concern throughout his career eventually becoming World Chairman. He organised post-graduate training in Ethiopia and was appointed Professor in Addis Ababa. Not deterred, he became involved with the Impact Foundation founded by Sir John Wilson, establishing 'Orthopaedic Camps' in remote areas of Nepal and India.

Many honours were bestowed on JNW; limited space allows mention of only a few: ABC Travelling Fellowship in 1954, BOA Editorial Secretary 1974-78, President of the Orthopaedic Section of the RSM, President of the Old Oswestrian and Percivall Pott Clubs. Watson-Jones Lecturer 1989; Jackson Burrow Medal Lecturer 1992, Member of the JBJS Editorial Board and Editor of the 5th and 6th editions of Watson-Jones' 'Fractures and Injuries'. He was author of some 60 papers in the Orthopaedic literature. In his retirement he was awarded the OBE in recognition of his services to Orthopaedic Surgery in the UK and the developing world.

So JNW lived up to his nickname in pursuing his vocation with prodigious energy and commitment. Nevertheless, despite a busy professional life he was a dedicated family man, a caring husband to Pat and fond father of four children. Apparently he had acute hearing to the last, so when the children whispered about father his response would be "I can hear you and you'll be sorry when I'm gone!" So they are; and so are we, his friends and colleagues at home and abroad.

We extend our heartfelt sympathies to Pat and Sheila, Jane, Michael and Punch, and grandchildren Sam, Roste and Alice.

Robert Owen

And we regret to announce the deaths of the following O.Cs :

Morris Harvard Barnwell (1941)

Geoffrey Francis Elder (47-57)

Raymond Honeybourne (48-53)

Paul Huntley Horleston (60-67)

Trevor Keith Johnson (53-58)

Arthur Richard Kenderdine (28-38)

John Anthony Quick (57-67)

David George Robbins (59-66)

Martin Bradley Swift (61-68)

Former Staff

Frank Scotford

Brian Toxins wrote this heartfelt appreciation of Frank's devoted service to the school and his widow Doris, whom he married in October

1986, added this tribute.

Frank Scotford's long and loyal association with the School came to an end in 1978 through retirement. A whole generation of boys passed through his hands, many of whom must have lasting and happy memories of a dedicated, well-informed master, whose seriousness was tempered by an earthy humour and understanding nature. He was affectionately known as Fossil which arose out of the numerous outings he organised in search of the same. Some past pupils have had their sons come under his tuition and in latter years their daughters too.

Frank grew up in the village of Chedworth, Gloucestershire and his love of the country and country life remained with him all his days. He won admission to the nearest Grammar School at Cirencester from which he proceeded to the University of Bristol in 1931, where he graduated in History with a good second class and completed the Teachers' Training Year. His nonconformist early life inculcated a dedication to hard and serious work there in the years of the second catastrophe of the twentieth century - the Great Slump. The thirties were hard years, when good teaching posts were few and far between.

Four years was subsequently spent at an all-age Bristol School at Saffron Walden in Essex; but the outbreak of war saw him embarked on Probation Officer Training. Indeed he worked for a short while in a Home Office Approved School in Ashford, Kent but was summarily sacked on registration as a Conscientious Objector in May 1940. He was himself from 1941 a convinced and heart-felt Quaker. Men throughout time have always had to pay a high price for adherence to their principles. Six months of forestry work was followed by a surprising return to his first teaching post. By now Frank had married but like other non-conformists was expected to do work of national importance. In his instance this involved manning a hostel for unbilleteable boys - twenty-four in number aged ten to sixteen, his wife acting as matron. This was a formidable task, and the most searching, demanding and educative part of his life, for there, he says, he learnt more about what made boys tick and how to control them than at any other period of his life.

The inevitable closure of the hostel at the end of the war, together with now having two children, made imperative the resumption of a worthwhile career. Rather than seeking entry to the Prison Service, a reflection of his then intentions, he sought a teaching post in a Grammar School. The then unorthodox Head Master, A.A.C. Burton, appointed Frank on the spot - they had mutual rural interests - to the Junior School wherein he worked for four years. The late Mr. H. Walker appointed him to the Senior School in 1950, to teach a wide range of subjects - a feature of Edwardian schoolmastering - Physical Education, Mathematics, English and some History. In an age of intensifying specialisation however, he found himself teaching more and more History up to 'O' level. He was always very happy to oblige in terms of teaching any forms, ill-reputed, excellent or otherwise, with special interest on the less academic.

He was an enthusiastic servant of the school. He greatly admired its widening extra-curricular activity and took a great interest and pride in its dramatic, musical and sporting achievements. He thought that staff dedication in their fields is too often taken for granted, that staff and pupils get on well with one another and separately; to him King Henry VIII always was a happy school. The other major changes in his years there were the steady expansion of the School in terms of numbers, building extensions and the adaptation of existing structures, together with the admission of girls involving a reversion to a more normal sort of society. He regretted the passing away of the state of affairs in which pupils knew their place, largely because their elders have abandoned the idea of disciplining the young, maybe robbing them of that sense of security which is the basis of all explorative achievement.

Frank was a reluctant retiree. He had thoroughly enjoyed teaching but realised as he approached retirement age that he would have to find another similar occupation. He enjoyed photography and had a large collection of coloured slides, so he opted for slide lecturing to various societies and extra-mural classes on the topics that interested him - vernacular architecture, church buildings, geology and natural history. He could spend the winter months lecturing and the summer months visiting interesting places and taking pictures. He found this new career very satisfying but was forced to abandon it temporarily when he had to care for his wife Maud who suffered many minor strokes before she died in February 1985. He resumed lecturing in September 1985 and carried on until 2000 despite failing eyesight.

During the early years of his retirement he was a city guide, thoroughly enjoying the contacts he made with foreign visitors to the city. He also had an allotment, growing mainly runner beans, tomatoes and leeks. Until his eyesight failed he spent many hours bottling fruit - apples, plums, damsons and gooseberries given to him by friends.

He had always kept himself physically fit by dancing. He was introduced to English country dancing at his first teaching post and he

began Morris dancing in Oxford while caring for unbilleteable boys. He carried on with these activities in his retirement. At 79 he decided he was not sufficiently agile to continue Morris dancing in public, but he carried on country dancing until he was 91. By then he had very little sight and he also caught pneumonia. He recovered from this but at 92 was diagnosed with heart failure and kidney failure at 94. His last month was spent in hospital and he died peacefully in his sleep.

Tribute to Shirley Webb

Funeral at St James', Ansty - 26th June 2008

I regarded it as an honour and a privilege to be asked by Trevor to deliver this tribute to Shirley, particularly as I had been acquainted with her, other than on a superficial level, for less than 5 years.

Although I had met Shirley at several social functions organised by Jeff Vent before my wife's death in 2003, it was this traumatic event in my life that was to bring me into close contact with her and Trevor.

The following year I was, in my loneliness, very grateful to Stan Gough for inviting me to join his party for a week at Fousseau, the chateau belonging to the Coventry School Foundation in Northern France. Trevor and Shirley were also amongst the party; we became friendly and, in due course, they were kind enough to suggest that the three of us should consider arranging a holiday together. I was flattered indeed by this proposal in view of the political, social and financial gulf between us. The class difference was emphasized when it transpired that Shirley's parents and my parents had lived for a time in Orchard Crescent, but on opposite sides of this crescent. The Tyrells, of course, had owned a superior detached house on the right-hand side.

However, none of these distinctions influenced Trevor and Shirley, ruled as they were by the doctrine of noblesse oblige. They displayed remarkable condescension towards me and we enjoyed a number of wonderful holidays together from the Autumn of 2004 onwards, commencing with Sharrow Bay, the luxurious hotel in the Lake District. I recall Shirley's amusement at the pretensions of a very young wine waiter at Sharrow Bay who confided to us that he had high hopes of eventually being promoted to deputy assistant head wine waiter, second class. It was then that I came to appreciate Shirley's lively sense of humour and of the ridiculous.

In the following years, we embarked on organised trips to Switzerland, France and Italy and Shirley bravely coped with her physical handicaps which made walking any distance something of a trial. Shirley was never backward in speaking French which was a relief to Trevor and myself whose efforts in that direction can only be described as pathetic. On one occasion, at a wine-tasting at Chateaufort-du-Pape, Shirley startled all those present when she carried on a conversation with the sommelier in fluent French. And, on visits to Fousseau, Shirley conversed with Maryvonne, the chatelaine who spoke no English, with a facility that sometimes rivalled even that displayed by Jeff Vent.

In addition to holidays, the three of us participated in day trips to such venues as The Lost Gardens of Heligan, whilst we attended theatres in Coventry and Stratford and functions at Bablake and King Henry's and dined out at restaurants at various locations in the Midlands. Frequently, I would avail myself of the hospitality, including over-night stays, so generously offered me at 8 Michaelmas Road, which provided me with the opportunity to witness how the other half, or rather 5 per cent, lived. Shirley was always most considerate on these occasions, anxious that I should feel at home; this, unfortunately, presented problems as my humble dwelling in the backwaters of Worcestershire compares rather unfavourably, to say the least, with 8 Michaelmas Road.

In my many enjoyable and informative conversations with Shirley, I learned what an active and varied life she had led before the decline in her health. Making use of the degree she had obtained in English at Exeter University, she had brief spells as a journalist before becoming a teacher at various local schools, first of all full-time and then on specific assignments. My friend, Tony Burrows, who died last year and who had been Head of English at King Henry's, mentioned to me on several occasions how impressed he had been by the efficiency with which Shirley had taught at the school and how well she had communicated with the pupils. An avid reader as a child - indeed so avid that her father at one stage decided to restrict her to one book a day - Shirley retained her love of literature right up to the end of her life. I recall how incensed she was initially when I championed the much maligned Goneril in *King Lear*; although eventually she was prepared to admit that there might be some evidence to justify my case. I also remember arguing with her about the authorship of *Barnaby Rudge* and about the final sentence of *A Tale of Two Cities*. Or was it *The Scarlet Pimpernel*? I forget! Whatever, conversation with Shirley was always stimulating and even if we did not agree on certain subjects, the courtesy of combat was usually maintained.

Shirley served as a Justice of the Peace for 27 years, specialising in

youth and family courts and, inter alia, endeavouring to persuade renegade teenagers to return to the path of rectitude and develop their potential to the full. Shirley also had a deep commitment to St. Faith's and Dudley Lodge, helping families through difficult times. She was a member of the Warwick Road organisation's committee from 1971 until her death. Shirley was a truly caring person, particularly as regards the young and those suffering from bereavement and loneliness. Just one example, Eric Seaborne, who had been Headmaster of Bablake from 1937 until 1972 and who had gained a certain notoriety for his thuggish behaviour in the exercise of discipline, lived alone and friendless in a flat in Coventry in his final years. When Shirley heard about this, she regularly visited Mr Seaborne, giving him practical assistance and companionship.

But not all of Shirley's activities were cerebral. In her earlier years, she had been enthusiastically involved in out-door pursuits, such as camping and ski-ing. She also became interested in orienteering, taking part in the organisation and monitoring of events concerning the pupils of King Henry's.

Not surprisingly, Shirley had a host of friends from her many walks of life. But her priority was Trevor, her children and her grandchildren. She belonged to a closely-knit family and woe betide anybody who had the temerity to criticise any member of her brood. She was justly proud of the achievements of her son, Nick and her daughter, Jenny and she was keenly interested in the progress of their children. I remember her excitement when she told me about their examination successes and about her two elder grand-daughters, Holly and Imogen, obtaining places at Oxford University and London University. And she delighted in entertaining her youngest grand-daughter at Michaelmas Road in the school holidays.

I mentioned earlier my theatre visits with Trevor and Shirley. The last took place as recently as 27th May when we saw *The Taming of the Shrew* at The Courtyard in Stratford. I am sure this was a real ordeal for Shirley as her powers were rapidly waning but she bravely endured the performance until the interval when we decided to call it a day - not a great sacrifice on my part as the production left much to be desired.

Although she was obviously very ill, I did not appreciate on that occasion at Stratford what little time was left to Shirley and I shall never forget my feeling of shock when I saw her at Myton Hospice on the last two days of her life. Her incredibly long and courageous fight was ending. Perhaps we can take some comfort from the fact that she is no longer in pain and distress. Nothing, of course, can rival the loss and loneliness now being suffered by Trevor but I know I have lost a very dear friend and I mourn her passing. Shirley's memory lives on not only for the members of her family but also for all those whom she had influenced with her wisdom, understanding, compassion and courage. We thank Shirley for making the world a better place for what she did in it and for what she was. May she now rest in peace.

R.W. Burgess