

Extracts from
THE CESTREFELDIAN

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SCHOOL NOTES – December 1950

The Annual Commemoration Service was held on July 21st in the Parish Church. The sermon was preached by Canon B. C. Moloney, Headmaster of Worksop College. The Choir sang two anthems, "Te Deum" (Stanford) and "All People that on earth do dwell" (Tallis)

Another Leaving Dance was held on Thursday, July 20th in the Co-operative Hall. Some 250 members of the Staff and School enjoyed a very pleasant evening together.

During the last term a successful Parents' Evening was held for parents of first formers. This was one of a series which continues year by year.

During the Summer Term and holidays, journeys were made as usual to places of historic interest – to Chester, Lincoln, Roche Abbey and Castleton. These. Together with longer holiday journeys are described elsewhere in this Magazine.

Another hobbies day was held last term. Two innovations, the School television club and the tea tent were extremely popular.

It was with great regret that we said good-bye last term to Dr F. C. Pritchard . In the comparatively time of three years he had made a very definite mark on the School. His quiet, unfailing courtesy and his sincere wish to serve the School will long be remembered. The establishment of the two libraries on a firm footing was his first task. In addition to this, he was responsible for the School Magazine, the Junior Debating Society, and some athletics coaching. He was also Assistant Producer of the School play, and in many other ways he did excellent service. He will be missed inside and outside the classroom and we wish him every success as Headmaster of Woodhouse Grove School.

We welcome to the School Mr. T. M. Kershaw, as Senior English Master and Mr. R. M. Adlen as Assistant French Master, and hope that their stay in Chesterfield will be an enjoyable one.

Two careers talks have been held this term. Mr. M. H. Boone spoke on Hospital Administration, and Mr. J. H. Hodkin spoke on Law.

The School Prefects, the Senior Debating Society and the Puppet Club were privileged when they entertained a party of German girls and their hostesses on Thursday, October 19th. The girls attended the meeting of the Debating Society and then after tea a performance by the Puppet Club.

At half term we said good-bye with great regret to Mr. R. K. McEwan He has given a great deal to the School, and we are grateful to him. The Junior and Senior Corps will miss him particularly. Mr. McEwan formed the junior Corps, and his enthusiasm and keenness are responsible for the excellent progress made. We wish him every success as Senior History Master of Burton Grammar School.

The illustrations introducing Society Notes and Sports Section are by J. Sylvester, and "Black Magic" by D. L. Brown.

The School is sorry to learn of Mr. Varley's illness, and we send him our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

SCHOOL NOTES – May 1951

The Christmas Service was held on December 21st in the Parish Church. Carols were Sung by the choir and by the congregation. The lessons were read by the Staff and by boys from the Junior, Middle, and Senior forms, and the Headmaster preached the Sermon. We regret that some parents were unable to find room in the Church on this occasion but we hope that these parents will join with us at some future services.

Towards the end of the Christmas Term two successful parties were held. The Sixth forms entertained the Sixth forms from St. Helena School in the Co-operative Hall and the Juniors, helped by Mr. Andrew held a very successful party at School.

The School offers its congratulations to C. J. S. Rowland who has been awarded an Open Scholarship at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, to R. Boot who has been awarded an Open Exhibition at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, to L. H. Hall, who has obtained entry to St. St Edmund's Hall, Oxford, to D. Rudd and P. C. Harbidge. who have obtained entry to Pembroke College, Oxford, and to D. W. Sylvester who has obtained entry to Balliol College, Oxford.

During the Easter term two careers talks have been given. We are grateful to Mr. Clegg who spoke on "Opportunities in Local Government" and to Mr. Wilson who spoke on "Opportunities in the Post Office."

We were glad to welcome parents of Sixth formers to a Parents' Evening which was again very successful.

During the term there has been a General Inspection. A team of His Majesty's Inspectors stayed with us for a week. We appreciated their help, and I am glad to say that the report given was very good.

We were extremely sorry when Mr. Lodge had to enter the Chesterfield Royal Hospital at the end of last term, and we glad to learn that he is now much better.

The School has welcomed back Mr. Varley this term after an absence of five months. We hope that soon he will be completely restored to health.

The Easter Service was held at the Parish Church on March 21st. The Choir sang the anthems, "Lord for Thy Tender mercy's sake" and "God so loved the world". The sermon was preached by the Archdeacon of Chesterfield.

SCHOOL NOTES – December 1951

The Annual Commemoration Service was held on July 20th in the Parish Church. The sermon was preached by the Bishop of Derby. The Choir sang two anthems Te Deum (Stanford) and The Hymn to the Trinity (Tchaikovsky).

Another Leaving Dance was held on Thursday, July 19th, in the Co-operative Hall, Some 250 members of the staff and school enjoyed a very pleasant evening together.

On June 6th a successful Parents' Evening was held for parents of second formers. This was one of a series which continue throughout the year.

A large number of the School Orchestra attended a weekend school at Eastwood Grange, Ashover, on June 30th and July 1st. Under the direction of Mr. Haydn Lewis a very successful and enjoyable time was had by all who were present.

Instead of our usual Hobbies Day, an Open Day was organised. The various subject displays and the out-of-school activities combined to give parents a useful picture of what is done at the School.

It is with regret that we said goodbye to Mr. Hall and Mr. Pearson. Mr. Hall has gone as Senior Physics Master at Swanwick Hall Grammar School. Mr. Pearson is now on the staff of High Storrs Grammar School, Sheffield. To both we extend our very good wishes for the future.

We have welcomed this term Mr. Fomison as a Assistant Physics master and Mr. Hodge as Assistant Woodwork master. In both cases we hope that their stay in Chesterfield will be an enjoyable one. At the beginning of the Easter term Mr. Cant took the place of Mr. McEwan, and we take this of welcoming him to the School.

Two Careers talks have been held this term. Mr. Bucknall spoke on Estate Agency as a career and Mr. Day spoke on Accountancy. We are very grateful for this help.

We congratulate C. T. Batty, A. T. Burton, B. Dietz and D. W. Sylvester on being awarded County Major Scholarships, and B. Cresswell, I. T. Harrison, J. Metcalf, G. D. Radford and J. W. Whysall on being awarded County University Exhibitions.

Two parties of boys visited the Civic Theatre for matinee performances of "Florence Nightingale" and "Pygmalion," and a third went to Bradbury Hall for the Tipton House production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream." Sixth-formers also saw the Old Vic Company's performance of "Othello" at the Lyceum, Sheffield.

SCHOOL NOTES – May 1952

The Christmas Service was held on December 20th in the Parish Church. Carols were sung by the choir and congregation. The lessons were read by the Chairman of the Governors, by the Staff, and by the boys of the Junior, Middle and Senior forms; the Headmaster preached the sermon.

Two successful Christmas parties were held. The Sixth forms were invited by the Sixth forms at Saint Helena School, to a party at Saint Helena School, whilst the Juniors held their party at the School.

The School congratulates J. W. Whysall, who, in December was awarded an Open Exhibition in English at St. John's College, Oxford.

Also to be congratulated are D. W. Sylvester and G. D. Radford on securing admission to Balliol College, Oxford, D. B. Jones and J. Metcalf to Pembroke College, Oxford, M. Hope to Emmanuel College, Cambridge, J. P. H. Sargent to Oriel College, Oxford and J. K. Halliwell to New College, Oxford.

During the Easter Term two careers talks have been given. We are grateful to Superintendent Rudin, who spoke on the "Police Force as a Career," and to Mr. W. Grimes who spoke on "Careers in the Nationalised Electricity Undertakings."

Two Parents' Evenings have been held for parents of Transitus forms and Sixth forms.

Parties from the School have enjoyed visits to the Civic Theatre for the performance of "Macbeth" and for the visit of the Hallé Chamber Orchestra. Another successful visit was arranged to Staveley Works and we are grateful for the careful arrangements which were made on our behalf.

The Easter Service was held in the Parish Church on April 3rd. The Choir sang the anthems "Turn thy face from my sins" and "O Saviour of the World." The sermon was preached by the Archdeacon of Chesterfield.

A film based on the life and works of W. B. Yeats was shown on four occasions by Mr. McKay; this enabled the fifth, Transitus and sixth forms to see it; the beauty of the sea, sky and country settings were appreciated by all, but the speech was not always audible.

L. H. Hall, D. A. Rudd, T. A. Greenan and P. C. Harbidge are combining military service with a student's life, having been chosen out of many Public School and Grammar School candidates to study the Russian language.

CHESTERFIELD SCHOOL WEATHER STATION

The School Weather Station, which is officially part of the Air Ministry network, was born on 1st September of last year and at that time the personnel of the station was limited to Mr North together with B. L. Pexton and B. G. Priestley of U.VI. Mod. They were subsequently joined by M. P. Marshall, L.VI.Sc., J. D. Pockson, Trans. A., P. Hinchley and R. A. Wallis, U.VI.Sc., W. Longden, Trans. B. and G. H. Fawcett, 4 L. These eight observers take the weather readings daily at 9 a.m. G.M.T. At the end of each month the information is transferred to a special chart and sent to the Air Ministry.

The station is situated on the lawn at Hurst House, and the present equipment consists of a rain gauge and Stevenson screen containing four thermometers. The "dry" thermometer varies with the temperature of the surrounding air, but "wet" thermometer depends upon the temperature of a small water pot to which it is connected. A combination of "wet" and "dry" readings enables the relative humidity of the atmosphere to be calculated. The other thermometers register maximum and minimum temperatures. In addition to rainfall and temperature records, other details are taken concerning the strength and direction of the wind, cloud, amount and type, visibility and general weather conditions during the twenty four hours.

Since the commencement of weather readings, interest among the observers has been stimulated by results, some of which are worth mentioning here. For example the monthly rainfall figures in inches are as follows – Sept., 2.4 ; Oct., 1.5; Nov., 7.2; Dec., 3.4; Jan., 2.7; Feb., 1.3. This latter figure contrasts strongly with the legend "February fill-dyke."

On two occasions in November the rainfall was over one inch in twenty four hours. The first really cold weather came on 11th Dec. when snow occurred and the temperature fell to 24 deg. F. January was a much colder month and, although at the beginning of the month 53 deg. F. was recorded on the 8th, temperatures fell rapidly, and during the night of the 27th a minimum of 18 deg. F. was recorded.

Finally, the observers mentioned above, all volunteers, are to be highly commended for the spirit and diligence with which they carry out their duties. They have to turn out in all weathers not only during school time, but everyday, including week-ends and holidays. Even Christmas Day can be no exception.

J.N.

SCHOOL NOTES – December 1952

The Annual Commemoration Service was held on July 25th at the Parish Church. The sermon was preached by the Archdeacon of Doncaster. The Choir sang two anthems: Te Deum by Stanford, and With The Voice of Singing by Martin Shaw.

On July 14th some 200 members of the Staff and School enjoyed another Leaving Dance in the Co-operative Hall.

During the Summer term a Parents' Evening was arranged for Parents of Second formers. Again it was a successful and worthwhile evening.

Our congratulations go to J. T. Peck and D. Amedro who were awarded State Scholarships and County Major Scholarships on the results of the G.C.E. examinations held in June. We congratulate S. Harcourt-Webster and C.M. Wilson who were awarded County Major Scholarships.

It was with very great regret that we heard of the death of the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Alderman H. Cropper, O.B.E., J.P. As an educationalist he was outstanding, and we owe much to his interest and advice.

Recently a party of boys visited a special performance of "She Stoops to Conquer" at the Civic Theatre.

The following boys have commence degree courses at Universities this year: E.A. Simmonds (St Edmund Hall, Oxford), C. R. George (St Edmund Hall, Oxford), D.W. Sylvester (Balliol College, Oxford), G.D. Radford (Balliol College, Oxford), J. P. H. Sargent (Oriel College, Oxford), D. Amedro (Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge), F. W. Teather (London School of Pharmacy), S. E. Rodgers (Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, London), J. H. Rogan (Royal College of Mining, London), B. Furness (University College, London), C. M. Wilson (University College, London), J.E. Higson (Nottingham), K. B. Allsop (Nottingham), R. A. Scales (Nottingham), B. Austin (Nottingham), B. C. Maycock (Nottingham), J. C. Taylor (Nottingham), B. I. Pexton (Nottingham), L. F. Knowles (Durham), J. T. Peck (Durham), A. G. Frost (Durham), D. Swann (Leeds), C. J. Batty (Birmingham), N. F. Lowe (Birmingham), P. J. Edmonds (Manchester), A. P. Burcher (Manchester), F. Hutchinson (Sheffield), R. N. Platts (Sheffield), B. Bilton (Sheffield), E. Thorpe (Liverpool), D. R. Randell (Liverpool), P. Ordidge (University College, London).

The Forum scene in "Julius Caesar" was brought vividly to life by Felix Aylmer as Brutus and Leo Genn as Mark Antony, in an excellent film shown by Mr. K. S. McKay. The film which runs for 22 minutes, was operated on six occasions by Mr. McKay, and most of the Middle School and Sixth Forms were able to enjoy it.

SCHOOL NOTES – May 1953

The Christmas Service was held on December 20th in the Parish Church. Carols were sung by the Choir and the congregation. The lessons were read by the Staff and the boys, and the Headmaster preached the sermon.

The Sixth forms invited the Sixth forms from Saint Helena School to a party in St. James' Hall on Monday, December 15th. About 200 sixth formers and Staff had a very enjoyable evening.

The Junior Party, organised by Mr. Andrew and held on Tuesday, December 16th, was, as usual, a great success.

The School congratulates the following who have obtained entry into Oxford or Cambridge Colleges for this year or after Military Service: J. B. Unwin (New College), K. Yates (Balliol College), A. B. Strachan (Balliol College), P. Turner (Wadham College), S. Harcourt-Webster (Emmanuel College), D. Hopkinson (St. Catherine's College), D. G. Smith (St. Catherine's College), F. Hall (Fitzwilliam House).

We offer to Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Cant our very sincere congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of the birth of their daughter.

A Parents' Evening was arranged on March 13th for parents of boys in the Transitus and the Lower Sixths.

On the invitation of Dr. F. C. Pritchard, Headmaster of Woodhouse Grove School, Mr. Lodge judged the Reading Prizes at the end of March. Dr. Pritchard inaugurated this event when he went to his new school.

The Easter Service was held in the Parish Church on April 1st. The Choir sang the anthems "O Saviour of the World" (Sir J. Goss) and "Thou wilt keep him" (S. Wesley). The sermon was preached by the Archdeacon of Chesterfield.

Two visits to plays have been enjoyed: a party from the Junior School attended the Tapton House performance of "Christmas in the Market Place" and the Sixth Forms visited the Civic Theatre for the matinee performance of "Twelfth Night."

On March 11th a party accompanied by Mr. Grattidge visited the "Mother's Pride Bakery at Newbold. S. E. Holmes made the arrangements for the trip, which was interesting and instructive.

Congratulations to M. Allan and J. Dennis on being amongst the 48 boys selected from 203 applicants for the first entry next September to Welbeck College, the new Army boarding school.

BOARDERS AT CHESTERFIELD GRAMMAR SCHOOL

It may be of interest to boys now at school to know that comparatively recently there were boarders at out school, the last of them being in residence until near the end of the 1914-18 War, and that until 1921 the Headmaster and his family lived at the School House, which was the portion at the north end of the main building.

During the later years the boarders were not many in number, only about 15 at a time, but they were certainly a varied and interesting collection of boys. They were of all ages from Juniors to Sixth Formers, with the greater number in the Middle School. Whilst most of them came from country districts of Derbyshire, there were some whose homes were at much greater distances from Chesterfield. For instance, at one and the same time there were in residence boys from Bradwell and Tibshelf in our own county, from Colwyn Bay, Leicester, Belgium and China.

Are you wondering where they were accommodated? Senior boys still at school may remember the time when there was only one dining-room, the one now known as the Old Dining-room, the communicating archway between Old and New Dining-rooms not then having been made. In the days of the boarders, what we now call the Old Dining-room consisted of two quite distinct rooms. The one looking out on Sheffield Road was luxuriously furnished as the Headmaster's Lounge; the other, looking out to the top field, was much more austere in its equipment, and this was the one which the boarders used, for meals, for prep., and for recreation. The doorway leading from this room to the main building was the only indoor route from the School House to the School.

There were two dormitories; they are now room 12 (U. VI Sc.) and room 13 (4 P.J.G). Boys in room 12 may have been curious as to the reason for the now disused doorway communicating with the Book Room. The boarders knew all about it, for what is now the Book Room was then the Headmaster's bedroom. It should not be difficult to visualise the scene that ensued if for any reason there was excessive noise in the dormitory during the night. The door quietly opened and the grim, ghostly figure of the Headmaster, cane in hand, entered. You may be sure that the memory of the visit lingered for quite a long time in the minds of the boys, and, so long as they remembered, there were no more nocturnal disturbances. If on looking at this particular doorway you are inclined to be amused at the possibility of the Headmaster stumbling headlong into the dormitory over the pipes which pass along that side of room 12, I am sorry to disappoint you, but the pipes did not exist there in those days.

The boarders' day began at 7-0 a.m. Breakfast was at 8-0 and from then on, during the hours when School was in session, they lived exactly the same life as the day-boys, observing the same rules and receiving the same punishments and rewards.

Prep. was from 6-0 to 8-0 p.m. for the senior boarders with shorter period for the juniors. A number of day-boys came to School each evening and did their homework along with the boarders. In some instances this was because it was considered advisable for certain boys to work under supervision, and in other cases it was at the request of the parents for domestic reasons. After supper came a little relaxation, and then off to bed, at 9-0 or 9-30 according to age. Does that seem early to you? Maybe, but the Headmaster himself made a practice of retiring at 10-0 each evening.

Recreation for the boarders varied according to season. In the summer they played games at all legitimate times on the fields at School, and, incidentally, put in quite a lot of work on the cricket pitch. On winter evenings, they spent most of their spare time reading, boxing a little, and playing chess and other indoor games. On rare occasions, permission was given to attend lectures or concerts in the town, usually at the request of parents of their particular friends amongst the day-boys. The cinema, as we know it, was not then established.

Sunday had its own particular routine. Breakfast was a later than on other days, and the boarders then set about grooming themselves for attendance at the 11-0 o'clock service at the Parish Church. They looked very smart in Eton suits, with bowler hats in winter and straw boaters in summer. Their most anxious time was 10-30 a.m., when they lined up in the entrance hall for inspection by the Headmaster's wife. And what an inspection that was! Woe betide any boy whose suit or hair had not been brushed as thoroughly as it ought to have been. After inspection, the boarders walked in crocodile to Church, where they occupied the pews immediately behind the Corporation pews, the pews in which the wives of members of the Staff now sit during our end-of-term services. The afternoon was spent in walking, usually in the Tapton or Old Brampton directions, and in writing letters home.

After that, Monday morning soon came round, and the daily routine of school life with the day-boys was resumed.

R.V.

SCHOOL NOTES – December 1953

It was with sincere gratitude that the School accepted from Alderman S. T. Rodgers a very beautiful light-oak lectern on behalf of himself, his brother, J. B. Rodgers and his two nephews, J. B. Rodgers and S. E. Rodgers. This lectern was made in the family workshops and will be admired as a first class piece of craftsmanship. It will also remind the School of the high standards of the family.

The annual Commemoration Service was held on July 24th in the Parish Church. The sermon was preached by Canon Lewis Lloyd and the Choir sang two anthems: "Teach us good Lord to serve thee" (Nicholson) and "He watching over Israel" (Mendelssohn).

On July 23rd another successful Leaving Dance was held in St. James' Hall.

During the Summer term two Parents' Evenings were held for parents of boys in the Upper Sixth forms and the Second forms. These functions are very much worthwhile.

Our congratulations go to S. Harcourt-Webster, D. A. Hopkinson, K. C. Jackson, J. B. Unwin and K. Yates who were awarded State Scholarships, to P. Hollindale, D. A. Hopkinson, K. C. Jackson, B. N. J. Parker, A. G. Slater, J. B. Unwin and K. Yates who were awarded County Major Scholarships and to the following boys who were awarded County Exhibitions – F. Hall, P. T. Mellors, A. F. Taylor, P. Turner and R. A. Wallis.

The following boys commenced degree courses at Universities this year : K. Yates (Balliol College, Oxford), D. A. Hopkinson (St. Catherine's College, Cambridge), T. A. Greenan (University College, Oxford), P. C. Harbidge (Pembroke College, Oxford), D. A. Rudd (Pembroke College, Oxford), L. H. Hall (St. Edmund Hall, Oxford), R. Boot (St. Catherine's College, Cambridge), S. Harcourt-Webster (Emmanuel College, Cambridge), F. Hall (Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge), P. T. Mellors (Durham), J. D. F. Jones (Birmingham), M. J. Smith (Birmingham), J. E. Cawley (Birmingham), M. J. Farnsworth (Birmingham), P. S. Farnsworth (Nottingham), I. C. Jeffrey (Nottingham), J. P. Tillotson (Nottingham), J. Worrall (Nottingham), A. S. Fawcett (Manchester), A. T. Wagstaffe (Leeds), T. A. Smith (Hull), W. H. Booth (London), P. L. Hitchcock (London), G. C. Martin (Nottingham), P. Hinchley (Sheffield).

We congratulate John Metcalf on obtaining his commission during National Service and rejoice that he is now recovering well from his accident. We also congratulate the following who have been commissioned: D. B. Jones, W. W. Barker, P. N. Downham and J. R. Wooddisse.

At the end of the Summer term we reluctantly said good-bye to three members of the Staff. We offer our congratulations and good wishes to Mr. A. H. Jennings on his appointment as Headmaster of Tapton House School. His enthusiasm and his work for the Classical department, for cross country running, for the Field Club, for athletics are appreciated, and we offer him our sincere thanks.

Mr. R. J. Grattidge has accepted a post at Bedford Modern School. He did much for the Classical department, for the R.A.F. section of the Combined Cadet Force and for school rugby. Again we offer him our sincere thanks and good wishes. Mr. N. S. Jkinson has decided to accept a post in Sheffield. He gave much valuable service to the School on the science side and in the School Orchestra. We appreciated the many hours given in the physics department and in the training of boy instrumentalists. We offer to him also our sincere thanks and our best wishes.

Mr. J. A. Dodd, Mr. H. Schofield, and Mr. J. Thompson, have been with us for almost a term now, and we take this opportunity of welcoming them to the School.

Miss J. Goodwin has kindly presented to the School an embroidered book-mark for the use of the reader at Assembly.

A party from the Upper School and Transitus enjoyed the matinee performance at the Civic Theatre of "The School for Scandal."

SCHOOL NOTES - May 1954

The Christmas Service was held on December 23rd in the Parish Church. Carols were sung by the choir and the congregation. The lessons were read by the staff and the boys.

The Sixth form were very happy to accept an invitation from the St. Helena Sixth forms to a party in the Saint Helena School at Christmas, and it proved to be as usual a very happy occasion.

Our Junior party was held this year in St. James' Hall and two hundred boys and staff had a very happy time.

We offer our sincere congratulations to Peter Hollindale who has been awarded an Open Exhibition in English, at Jesus College, Cambridge, and to the following who have been offered definite places at the University: A. G. Slater (Balliol College, Oxford), G. J. Bacon (New College, Oxford), D. R. Fryer (New College, Oxford), G. Crookes (Pembroke College, Oxford), A. F. Taylor (Pembroke College, Oxford), A. L. Briddon (Exeter College, Oxford), E. I. Clark (St. Edmund Hall, Oxford), C. D. Simmonds (St. Edmund Hall, Oxford), K. C. Jackson (Christ's College, Cambridge), B. N. J. Parker (Trinity College, Cambridge), R. A. Wallis (Selwyn College, Cambridge), G. Inverarity (Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge), J. N. Pilling (Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge), E. G. Sibert (Imperial College of Science, London).

Two Parents' Evenings have been held recently for parents of boys in the Lower Sixth, the Transitus and the Fourth forms. These meetings are very well attended and are extremely useful.

Our congratulations go to the following Old Boys who have been recently commissioned during National Service: D. G. Smith., J. B. Unwin, and A. B. Strachan, and to D. W. Sylvester on winning the Curzon Memorial Prize for history at Oxford.

We welcomed Mr. H. Crosthwaite in January when he came to us from Trent College as Senior Classical Master, and we hope his stay in Chesterfield will be a happy one.

The Easter Service took place on April 9th in the Parish Church. The choir sang the anthems " Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace " (Wesley), "Easter Carol", and the Archdeacon preached the sermon.

A party of boys from the middle and upper schools enjoyed visits to the Civic Theatre for performances of "The Merchant of Venice" and "Anastasia".

TIMES PAST: NOTES ON SOME OLD BOYS

Since its foundation in 1594, Chesterfield Grammar School has had a great reputation. "A History of Chesterfield by Ford and Hall said :

"There was scarcely an individual of any noble or genteel family in the midland or northern counties during the last (18th) century who was not educated in this school."

Also " A Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain ", 1762, stated :

"The Free-School of this town is reckoned the most considerable of any in the north of England, and sends great numbers of students to the universities, particularly to Cambridge."

Scholars were keen to preserve the good name of the School, and many notable Old Boys reflected its glory in their own achievements.

One of the most famous of the Old Boys is Thomas Seeker, who studied here in 1707 under the Rev. Robert Browne. He entered Exeter College, Oxford, as a gentleman commoner, became the Bishop of Oxford, and finally Archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop Thomas Newton called him "that excellent prelate"; Mr. Johnson of Connecticut thought there were few bishops like him", and even Horace Walpole, 'who held a personal grievance against him, owns that he was incredibly popular in his parish. "

Ellis Farnsworth was taught at Chesterfield Grammar School under William Burrow. He rose to eminence as the first translator of the works of Nicholas Machiavel. The translation, which he at first literally “hawked around town,” was later in great demand.

Dr. John Jebb received the tuition of Mr. Burrow and Mr. Sanders when they were joint masters of the School, and he openly showed his appreciation of their efforts, as John Disney his biographer reports:

“As he was kept longer at Chesterfield and had received more advantage from the attention of the masters than at any former place, he was wont to express his obligations to them in terms of gratitude to which their care and abilities entitled them.”

Dr. Jebb used his skill as a physician to great effect in the prisons.

Two of the Darwins attended this school. Erasmus Darwin, the grandfather of Charles Darwin, was a pupil in 1741. He was renowned as a great observer and acute thinker, as well as a physician, acquiring the name of “the benevolent”. His professional fame was such that George III said that he would take him as his physician if he would come to London. Darwin, however, declined to move from Lichfield. He was no mean poet, and it is remarkable that even his bad poetry everywhere shows a powerful mind. Coleridge in the “Biographia Literaria” speaks of the impression which it made even upon good judges.

Robert Waring Darwin, the father of Charles Darwin, was also a successful physician. Commenting on his keen power of observation and his knowledge of men, Charles Darwin said they were qualities which led him to “read the characters and even the thoughts of those whom he saw even for a short time”. Charles Darwin retained to the end of his life a strong love and reverence for his father’s memory, a sentiment which was manifested by frequent allusions to his father, and references to long-remembered opinions of his.

Many other names spring to mind - Dr. Charles Bolgery, the first translator of the Decameron; the learned Dr. Samuel Pegge, who contributed memoirs on a great variety of topics to the first ten volumes of the “Archaeologia” and who is renowned for his principal work “The Life of Robert Grossetete, Bishop of Lincoln”; Henry Bradley, whose rare powers of analysis and definition, coupled with his accurate memory and his extensive knowledge of ancient and modern languages, gained for him the honour of helping to compile the Oxford English Dictionary; all of these men lived up to those lines in the version of the School Song, written in 1911, which says :

“We’ll do our best and never yield
Our School’s good name, but guard it well.”

A. L. BRIDDON, U.VI.A.

MEMORIES OF THE PREP. SCHOOL

There are only two boys remaining in our school today who can from first hand experience as pupils tell the story of the Preparatory Section of the School which flourished some ten years ago.

It was in 1944 when I joined the school and, at that time, boys could enter the Preparatory form, or Prep. to use its popular name, at the age of eight, and in two years equip themselves with the necessary knowledge to pass the examination and so enter the main part of the school. Very few of the present occupants of Hurst House are familiar with the complete history of the last decade. The form room, which now contains members of the Upper Modern Sixth, was the home of this very junior part of the school, which was also used as a store-room for the main school.

During my first year of attendance in this pleasant school, the course of academic life ran quite smoothly, except for the occasional intrusion of the fellows downstairs, who were then the first year boys of the main school. But then for some obscure reason, we were compelled to abandon the spacious luxuries of Room 56 and take up residence in a half of the present reference library, which was, at that time, two separate rooms. Over a dozen small boys, complete with desks, chairs and all, were crowded into this room which was so small that it would not house six people comfortably, although it was here, in these limited surroundings, that I received the major part of my primary education.

Our daily routine consisted of the usual basic subjects, such as English, literature and language, mathematics and art, with a little history and geography in addition, mainly in preparation for our first year in the Senior School. All these subjects, with the exception of art, were expounded by a stern, middle-aged teacher called Miss Kyle, whom everyone obeyed with instantaneous precision. On several occasions, however, we overworked the poor lady, and her sister, a former mistress at the School, had to come to the rescue. The rules and regulations for our prep. school were supplied by the Headmaster of the Senior School, who, for the majority of my time in prep., was Mr. Smeall; he was succeeded in the last few months of my preparatory school life by Mr. C. Larkin. Since we had to obey the same school rules as the senior boys, so we enjoyed the same privileges, being allowed to wear the unmistakeable school blazer, and we were even allotted to the various houses, which were then only five in number, Bradley being introduced a few years later. All these were unparalleled concessions to our minds. But, at the same time we had to pay, or, at least, our parents did, for our education and our enjoyment, the fees being four guineas per term.

The other boys in Hurst House were a very pleasant crowd, with whom we played football and cricket on the bottom field. But, while playing during the break and the dinner-hour, we introduced a new game, which consisted of climbing the adjoining wall, evading the unfriendly gardener of the neighbouring house and recovering the ball which had become lodged amongst the newly-flowered daffodils. However, many of our indescribable games took place in the cloakroom, the room now known as Room 38.

But this was some ten years ago, and "Prep," reached its end in 1946, when general opinion had its way and the last breath of life was squeezed out of this little community. No-one can doubt that Miss Kyle performed miracles with some of her tormentors and although severity was a necessary quality in dealing with such rascals, all austerity was erased as she uttered those unforgettable words, "Good-morning, boys!"

W. T. CHAPPELL, U.V.I.A.

SCHOOL NOTES – December 1954

The Annual Commemoration service was held on July 23rd in the Parish Church. The sermon was preached Rev. F. P. Crosse (Rector of Morton), and the choir sang the anthems: "Come Holy Ghost" (Attwood), "Let us with a gladsome mind" (Nicholson), and "The Lord's my shepherd" (Brother James' Air).

On July 22nd another successful Leaving Dance was held in St. James' Hall.

During the Summer term two Parents' Evenings were held for parents of boys in the Upper Sixth forms and the Second forms. These functions are extremely profitable.

Our congratulations go to B. N. J. Parker, J. D. H. Pilkington, K. G. Hambleton, A. Fish, who were awarded State Scholarships, to J. D. H. Pilkington, K. G. Hambleton, A. Fish, J. C. Booth, E. M. Hopkinson, R. A. Wallis, who were awarded County Major Scholarships, and to the following boys who were awarded County Exhibitions: F. G. Sibert, J. N. Pilling, C. T. Jackson, G. Stevenson, G. Inverarity.

The following boys commenced degree courses at Universities this year: J. W. Whysall, St. John's College, Oxford; J. K. Halliwell, New College, Oxford; J. Metcalf, Pembroke College, Oxford; M. Hope, Emmanuel College, Cambridge; D. B. Jones, Trinity College, Cambridge; A. G. Slater, Balliol College, Oxford; P. Hollindale, Jesus College, Cambridge; G. Inverarity, Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge; J. N. Pilling, Fitzwilliam House, Cambridge; D. Fryer, New College, Oxford; P. James, London University School of Pharmacy; F. G. Sibert, Imperial College of Science, London; J. C. Booth, Manchester University; C. T. Jackson, Manchester University; R. G. Nightingale, Durham University; P. W. G. Baddeley, Sheffield University; R. A. Needham, Sheffield University; K. Wadd, Leeds University; K. Sowden, Manchester University; D. L. Brown, Manchester University; G. Stevenson, Manchester University.

We congratulate D. G. Smith, J. B. Unwin, A. B. Strachan, K. Booth who have obtained commissioned rank during National Service this year.

At the end of the Summer term Mr. H. Schofield resigned from the staff and we welcomed Mr. M. B. Rothwell in his place.

Mr. J. H. Croft leaves us to take up a teaching post in Scotland at the end of the present term, and he has the School's good wishes for the future.

Parties from the Middle and Upper School have enjoyed visits to the Odeon to see the film "Great Expectations" and to the Civic Theatre for performances of "Anastasia" and "The Miser."

SCHOOL NOTES – May 1955

The Christmas Service was held on December 22nd in the Parish Church. Carols were sung by the Choir and the Congregation. The lessons were read by the Staff and the boys. It was good to see such a record attendance at this Service.

The Sixth form were happy to invite the Sixth forms from St. Helena School to a Christmas party in St. James' Hall. It was, as usual, a very happy occasion.

We offer our sincere congratulations to J. D. H. Pilkington who has been elected to an Open Major Scholarship at Trinity College, Cambridge; to K. G. Hambleton who has been elected to an Open Major Scholarship at Queens' College, Cambridge; to A. Fish who has been elected to an Open Minor Scholarship at Queens' College, Cambridge and to the following who have been offered definite places at the University: E. M. Hopkinson (Balliol College, Oxford), A. E. Back (Balliol College, Oxford), M. Tarrant (Selwyn College, Cambridge).

Two Parents' Evenings have been held recently for parents of boys in the Sixth forms and in the Transitus. It is encouraging to find these meetings so well attended.

Theatre parties have been arranged to see performances of "Othello" and "The Mikado" at the Civic Theatre.

Our congratulations go to an Old Boy, J. Metcalf (Pembroke College, Oxford), who has been awarded his "Athletics Blue."

The Easter Service took place on April 1st in the Parish Church. The Choir sang the anthems "Lead me Lord" (Wesley), "O Gladsome Light" (Sullivan), "Easter Carol"; and Archdeacon of Chesterfield preached the sermon.

Mr. Ball helped temporarily during the Easter term with the teaching of English, and the School's good wishes go to him in his new post at Egremont.

The School is sorry to hear of Mr. Swain's indisposition and sends him its very best wishes for a speedy recovery.

On Tuesday, May 17th, a party from the Lower School will visit the Civic Theatre for the performance of "Tobias and the Angel," by J. Bridie.

Mr. D. Bowler, B.A., has joined the staff to teach English. He comes to us from Alsop High School, Liverpool; we welcome him to the School and hope his stay in Chesterfield will be happy.

VALETE – MR HODGSON AND MR WOOD

Whether as Mr. Hodgson and Mr. Wood, as the formal world of parents knew them, as H.B.H. and G.S.W., as they were to their colleagues, or as Dodger and Woody as they were referred to by the less reverent world of schoolboys, these two masters covered such a long period by their careers at Chesterfield and figure so prominently in the memories of several generations of Cestrefeldians that their retirement is bound to leave the School the poorer; that they should have retired at the same time inevitably marks the end of an epoch.

There could hardly be two men more different as individuals than H.B.H. and G.S.W. and yet they have so much in common as schoolmasters that it is worth reflecting a moment on what they meant to Chesterheld Grammar School. They symbolise not one generation but two; they bestrode the years between the wars and the recent post-war years. It is to men like them that we owe in no small measure the fact that the "Chesterfield School" of the present day, shaped by the Butler Act of 1944, retains so many of the qualities that gave "Chesterfield Grammar School" an assured and valued place in the older structure of English education. It would be idle to suggest that H.B.H. and G.S.W. liked all of the innovations; it would be equally false to infer that they were reactionaries outliving their age. They carried into an unshaped era traditions that defy definition but are as real as the fabric of the School. Though no generation of Old Boys will ever admit that younger members of the School are a patch on their own contemporaries, many a Cestrefeldian must have been consoled by the thought that even the degenerate youth of to-day would feel, even as they had done, the annealing influence of "Dodger" and "Woody."

Both were acknowledged masters of their craft, wedded to the highest standards of scholarship; both made demands upon industry, both expected a level of self-discipline no longer as general as once they were. Above all, both taught as much by example as by precept. The standards they set themselves were higher than those they set their pupils, and they never fell short of them.

Of Mr. Wood it is true to say that he never did less than he promised and he never undertook more than he could do outstandingly well. As a teacher of art he understandably laid the strongest emphasis upon correct technique; airy-fairy "self-expression" was no substitute to him for basic correctness. Withal he was quick to detect talent and skilful in developing it. His own work was deft and sensitive, a recognisable complement of the music that gave him so much pleasure. As an adept gardener he naturally found his greatest interest in flowers: the same aesthetic sense characterised his own attire. Mr. Wood cut such a meticulous, and even jaunty, figure that it came as a shock to realise that he had reached the fulness of years, as officialdom understands these matters.

Few housemasters can have identified themselves more closely and conscientiously with every aspect of house activity than Mr. Wood did with Foljarnbe. It was almost as if Foljambe, knowing that it was Mr. Wood's last year, made their great effort in the Athletic Sports, to win for the first time since 1935. He knew every boy in his house and was able to judge, firmly and dispassionately but never harshly. Those who knew him only latterly will not remember in him the enthusiastic and competent designer of stage scenery or the spritely cricketer. More recent colleagues will not remember him as a militant as well as a humorous conversationalist: whether his later tendency to spend more time in the Art Room and less in the Common Room reflected the enhanced amenities of the former or the diminished comforts of the latter one does not ask.

Loyalty and patriotism were amongst his outstanding virtues. After a splendid record in the first World War, in phases of unparalleled discomfort and danger, he slid unobtrusively but energetically into pre-service work in the second; both School and open units of the Air Training Corps gained enormously from his meticulous organisation and inspiring leadership.

Mr. Hodgson infused into Chesterfield Grammar School qualities that are not generally found in these parts. He was in many ways a donnish schoolmaster whose tweed jacket and flannel trousers, whose active brain and physical vigour always retained a touch of the undergraduate. No-one more thoroughly typified Oxford; in a materialistic, commercialised world Oxford still stands for healthy tradition, for abstract ideals of scholarship for its own sake, for sport that does not seek rewards in the plaudits of the non-participant or the back-slapping of team-mates. A loyal son of his alma mater, Mr. Hodgson was clearly not a by-product of any kind but in the main stream of a long tradition, and, when once one knew, it was easy to see in him many of the influences of the vicarage where he was brought up. His was no mere lip-service to asceticism and toughness. He stripped to referee in the bitterest winds that even Storrs Road could produce, the most torrential downpour could not make him flag and he was always up with the ball in the fastest of games. He was an ideal referee, as well as a grand coach: he knew the game intimately, he was as fit as any player, he could give decisions at speed and, as an essentially manly man, he always commanded respect. Rugby at Chesterfield virtually meant H.B.H. and it must have been a bitter blow to him when the circumstances concomitant with war put an end to the magnificent XV's of the '30's and all was to do again.

Off the field he gave rise to a number of misapprehensions in the minds of those who did not know him well. There was, for instance, the legend that in the privacy of his own home he spoke in a broad Derbyshire accent; there was the schoolboy belief that in the lunch-hour he worked out mathematical problems that had baffled his colleagues. His kindly and understanding nature was sometimes hidden by an outward manner which filled schoolboys with terrified awe, as in truth it did his younger colleagues; the same emotion was not altogether unknown, it has been alleged, to HM. inspectors. Boys worked for him; they had to. Soon or late they were very glad of it, and many frequent recipients of the now outmoded "Wednesday" were the first to seek him out at School and O.C. functions. His mathematical brilliance was assuredly no legend and it remained undimmed by the passage of years; last July he performed once again this annual feat of completing all the questions of the G.C.E. "Scholarship" paper during one period on a half-sheet of foolscap.

He too was a housemaster of rare distinction. Inevitably houses have their lean years; it is an index of Mr. Hodgson's leadership that under him Large never plumbed the depths of failure. The brand of scorn which he reserved for a slacker

was something few boys could withstand; Large house boys competing in the sports may be forgiven if they feared that his pistol might be trained on them with a charge more lethal than blank if they seemed not to be trying.

Qualified by age to participate in only the final stages of the first World War, Mr. Hodgson, as an officer of the Reserve, left immediately at the beginning of the second, in which he had a distinguished career, serving in the U.K. and on a mission to the U.S.A. as Major, R.A.O.C. He returned to schoolmastering with, it seems, enhanced breadth and sureness of touch, and he was more than ever an admirable judge of men and boys. He was quick to detect good qualities; physical “guts,” application to work irrespective of ability and frankness were merits he liked particularly; anything that smacked of shirking or hypocrisy was anathema to him.

If we had to lose such stalwart schoolmasters at one stroke it was consoling that they retired in full vigour and health. All their present and former pupils and colleagues will wish them many years of happiness, and will extend the same wish to the two very gracious ladies whose companionship helped to inspire and sustain the H.B.H. and the G.S.W. whom we have been privileged to know.

B. O’K.