

# THE DIXON YEARS

## 1949-1976

### 27 YEARS AS HEAD

In 1949 the country was still reeling from the effects of a devastating and enfeebling war. Food rationing was still in progress and everywhere gave the appearance of decay and neglect. KGV was no exception. It had to share its premises with Bootle Grammar School for most of the war and, for more than ten years, had been unable to recruit any young and vigorous new members of staff. The average age of the staff was over 50. Nevertheless, it was a fine school, in spite of the war and all its attendant difficulties. Perhaps the greatest weakness was that, although the teaching was efficient, it was understandably tired and lacked sparkle. This could only come through new young staff.

The strength of the school was twofold. First was the house system, which collected the boys into small houses, under the personal care of their housemasters, for their whole school careers. Every effort was made to make the school a 'day boarding school', and it worked. No boy need ever feel that he was neglected or ignored. His housemaster was always there for him.

Second was the range and scope of out-of-school activities, which were splendid and of great educational value. To mention three in particular is not to belittle the many others. The school's Rugby, under Ike Higham, had blossomed from the start. In a short 29 years the school had produced three England internationals and a First XV each year that could match the best. This was a truly remarkable effort.

The annual school play was, in its own way, equally remarkable. Audiences at school plays become used to making allowances, both for the youth and inexperience of the players, and the amateurism of the production. No such condescension was necessary at KGV. To see productions by George Wakefield of the quality of 'The Magistrate', 'Hamlet' and 'Toad of Toad Hall', to mention just three of the most diverse, was a revelation. They would have held their own against top amateur productions anywhere. Less well remembered, perhaps, was the winning of the RLSS Life Saving Awards organised by Hubert Evans. Three times the school was awarded the Darnel Trophy of the RLSS for winning more of these awards than any other school in Britain. On his retirement from this activity, Hubert was awarded the Excellence Trophy for his lengthy and devoted service.

George Millward was a very fine man and an excellent organiser. He left a school running smoothly and easy to take over. Moreover, many of the staff, though ageing, were exemplary professionals, giving unstintingly of their time to the boys in their charge. They would have done credit to any school. One only has to think of Joe Edwards, Ike Higham, Joe Mayne, Leslie Hargreaves, Harold Booth, Hubert Evans and Alan Lessiter to realise how well served the school was in those days. There were also a few younger men on the

staff, significantly all Old Georgians, who gave great hope for the future - Hubert Long, George Wakefield and Bob Abram. These were soon to be joined by others, notably Stan Rimmer.

The first job of the new Headmaster was to bring in new young blood onto the staff, and the newcomers had to be of top academic qualifications. In this, I was greatly helped by a succession of understanding Chairmen of Governors. They allowed me to appoint with great freedom, without the bureaucracy and delay of calling a Governors' meeting every time. Thus, I was able to pounce whenever a really well-qualified candidate appeared. The success of this policy was truly astonishing. Over the years we were able to appoint a series of absolutely top quality teachers who would have done credit to any school in the country. It all started with George Wakefield. In 1950, with great difficulty, I persuaded the Governors to appoint him to the vacant post of Head of the English Department, in spite of his age of less than thirty.

Others followed, and here is a list, with their subsequent appointments in brackets:

- Tom Duncan - One of the best Physics teachers I have ever met. His textbooks won him national recognition. (Liverpool University)
- Peter Richardson - An equally good Physicist who remained at the School and College until his untimely death a few years ago.
- John Steane - History (Headmaster)
- Peter Garwood - History (HMI)
- Colin Hadley - Modern Languages (Headmaster)
- John Howgego - Modern Langs (Chief Modern Langs HMI for Scotland)
- John Clough - Classics (Remained at the School and College until his retirement)
- Idris Lunn - Mathematics (Headmaster)
- Peter Comfort - Geography (Still serving the College)
- Peter Longhurst - Economics (Head of Economics at Stowe School, later Eton College)

This incomplete list shows the galaxy of talent we were able to attract to the great benefit of the school's academic standard. At the same time, the school's traditional broad education did not suffer.

Before 1949 the parents had been kept rather at a distance, only invited to school on parents' evenings. When we later formed a Parents' Association, this proved to be a major boost to the school's fortunes, as their enthusiasm and hard work for the school soon proved. When I suggested that the school would benefit from an outdoor pursuits centre to mark the Golden Jubilee in 1970, they took up the idea and, by sheer hard work and co-operation, brought it to fruition. They held countless social and fund-raising efforts, and took a most active part in finding a suitable building near Sedbergh, which was subsequently named 'Long Rigg'. The formal opening took place in the summer of 1970.

The benefits of Long Rigg were not only the obvious ones of an ideal environment to teach Geography and Biology, but also the boarding experience of the boys in the most beautiful surroundings. Relationships between staff and boys blossomed, and discipline in the school and the academic performance of most boys developed and expanded. We were able to create the right blend of authority and friendliness in the school, under which young minds could expand and mature.

The true worth of a school can only be gauged many years after pupils leave. A member of Liverpool University once said to me: 'We like having your boys. They are such good citizens'. One of my greatest pleasures is to read the achievements of Old Georgians in the Red Rose. So many of them have not only followed successful careers, but have made major contributions to the culture and life of their neighbourhoods. They have been 'good citizens'. No school can hope for more.

**Geoffrey F Dixon, Headmaster of KGV 1949-76**

## **EARLY INFLUENCES**

It may be that only advancing years provide one with the luxury of looking back to the early influences on one's life. Certainly, over a long career as a schoolmaster, ranging from Loretto School to Eton College to Australia, I have seldom given thought to such things. Now, nearly half a century after leaving KGV, the memories come flooding back. Back to the days when, as a callow ten-year-old scholarship boy, I entered the school which, for seven years, absorbed so much of my time and energy.

Many of my school contemporaries I now recall with affection, especially 'Nobby' Slack and 'Chouf' Collins, with whom I formed a particularly close association. We seldom left school before early evening and yet I have never seen or heard of either since we left. But it is the masters at KGV whom I remember so vividly. As my housemaster, 'Joe' Mayne was

perhaps the greatest influence, and the only master to give me a beating. He was ramrod straight, of medium height and stern countenance. He reputedly had a metal plate in his head as the result of an old WWI wound, and had a funny way of saying 'of cose' for 'of course'. A Christian Scientist, he drove an ancient Armstrong Siddeley car at a steady twenty miles an hour and was a stickler for discipline and correct appearance. 'If you can't be a cricketer, Preston, at least look like one'. He never showed any emotion - that is, until his last house meeting when, as his house captain, I presented him with a book token and he broke down. I hope he had a happy retirement..

'Lettuce' Lessiter was another outwardly fierce master who was yet warm-hearted and with a wry sense of humour. His black corrugated-iron hair with its ruler-straight parting was always so immaculate that we wondered whether it was a wig. Malcolm Ridyard used to go to sleep in every Friday afternoon's Maths lesson. Lettuce just stood over him twirling his blackboard duster between his fingers, smiling his enigmatic smile and letting him sleep on. 'Bud' Payne (I suppose masters had Christian names, but we seldom knew them) was a lugubrious English teacher whose perambulations around the classroom we measured in miles per week. Unfortunately, this exercise did him little good for he died from a heart attack when relatively young.

'Mousey' Thompson, with his flapping empty left sleeve, taught French and German, which we seemed to absorb by some marvellous process of osmosis. He wrote novels under the name of 'Raoul', one starting off 'it was a hell of a night', which we thought was terribly racy. I still remember every word of the silly songs he taught us and the one-act play which he wrote for us. 'Hank', 'Claude' and 'Tufty' occupied a part of the school from which came strange and noxious smells. I often blame the fume cupboards for my lack of interest in their subjects, although Hank lived in Wigan, I think, in the real world where men played Rugby. 'Big' and 'Little Taff' also evoke memories, along with 'Squeaky' Hardacre, but I only knew by reputation 'Toss' Pye and the less-than-secret flask in his desk, and 'Froggy' who could do a standing jump from the floor onto his desk-top. And George Wakefield, the one-pedal cyclist - a genius for producing plays.

But I must find time to mention Geoff Dixon, to whom I owe a particular debt. Geoffrey was not popular when he first arrived as Headmaster; his clipped speech and military bearing tended to form a barrier between him and the rest of us, including the staff. However, one of his many saving graces was his love of the mountains and his desire to introduce us to them. Arriving late at night at one of the Climbers' Club huts in North Wales, with their smell of damp clothes and Calor gas, and awakening the next morning to the chuckles of a mountain stream, always brought a frisson of excitement to me. And it was on the mountains that Geoff relaxed, and there developed a companionship which, perhaps, only those who have experienced what Frank Smythe called 'The Spirit of the Hills' can understand.

I was responsible for pulling Geoffrey off his stance when we were climbing the Great Gulley of Craig Yr Ysfa together. He had a nasty gash on his forehead and we had a long, stumbling walk back to the hut, but he never remonstrated with me and, in fact, proposed me as a member of the Climbers' Club. Those experiences and that camaraderie, which comes from walks among the hills with friends, have remained with me, as I now live in the North West Highlands of Scotland, and I am grateful to Geoffrey Dixon for that. I am sure that many share my feelings.

**David Preston, Grear's 1944-52**

## **STARTING AT SENIOR SCHOOL**

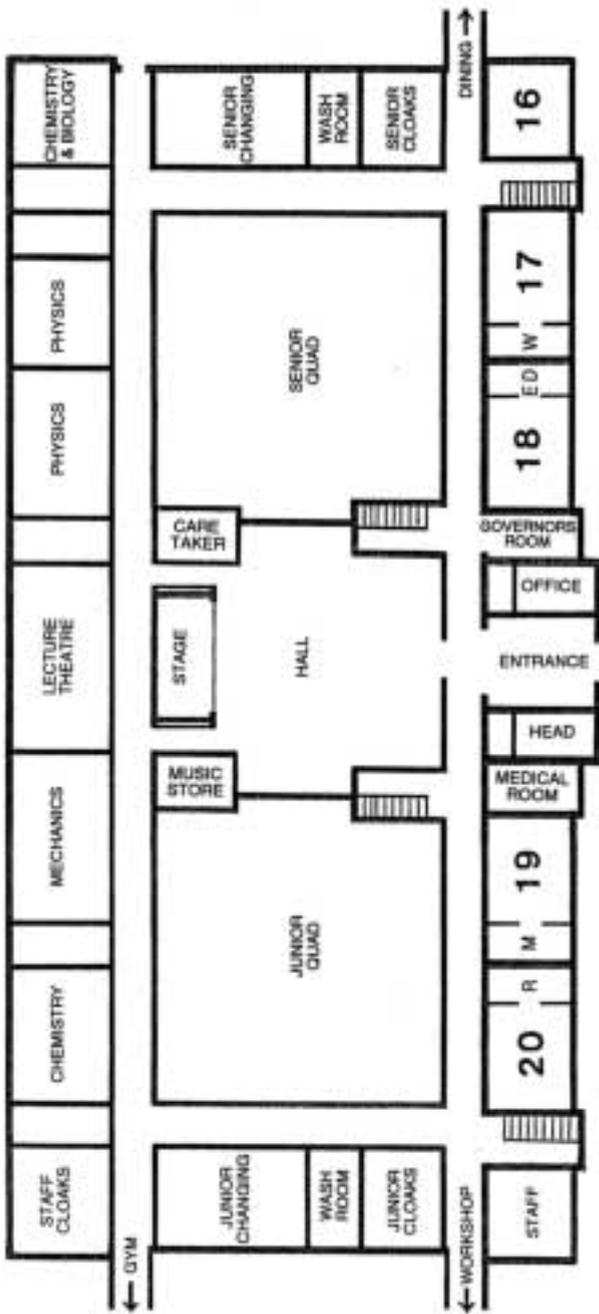
I was placed, from the 11-plus results, in the middle stream of three. The classes were about 30 strong, as opposed to those of 35-40 at junior schools. I made a number of new friends, in addition to the other seven boys who had come with me from Linaker Street. Of course, the situation was rather different, in that all the boys were academically bright, and it was a more competitive world than we had experienced before.

I settled in reasonably well; a big change was having two hours homework (in theory, at least) each day. I appear to have continued my progress in those subjects at which I had 'shone' previously, but found such matters as Physics, Chemistry and Biology more of a mystery, and was soon bored. Needless to say, my lack of interest brought some reaction from the masters, but I never did get to grips with any science subject. We also had French to learn. I did not have a great aptitude for this, at least verbally. In my second year, I moved up a stream and had to catch up on Latin.

We were introduced to Rugby - how we yearned for soccer! - and I found some aptitude for this. In summer, athletics were taken more seriously, but I was now able to proceed with learning to play Cricket. Due to my father's encouragement, I was something of a leading light at the game, at which I took great delight. To the surprise of my parents, and myself in retrospect, I also took part in boxing events, even after the sport became voluntary. In the third year I took up chess.

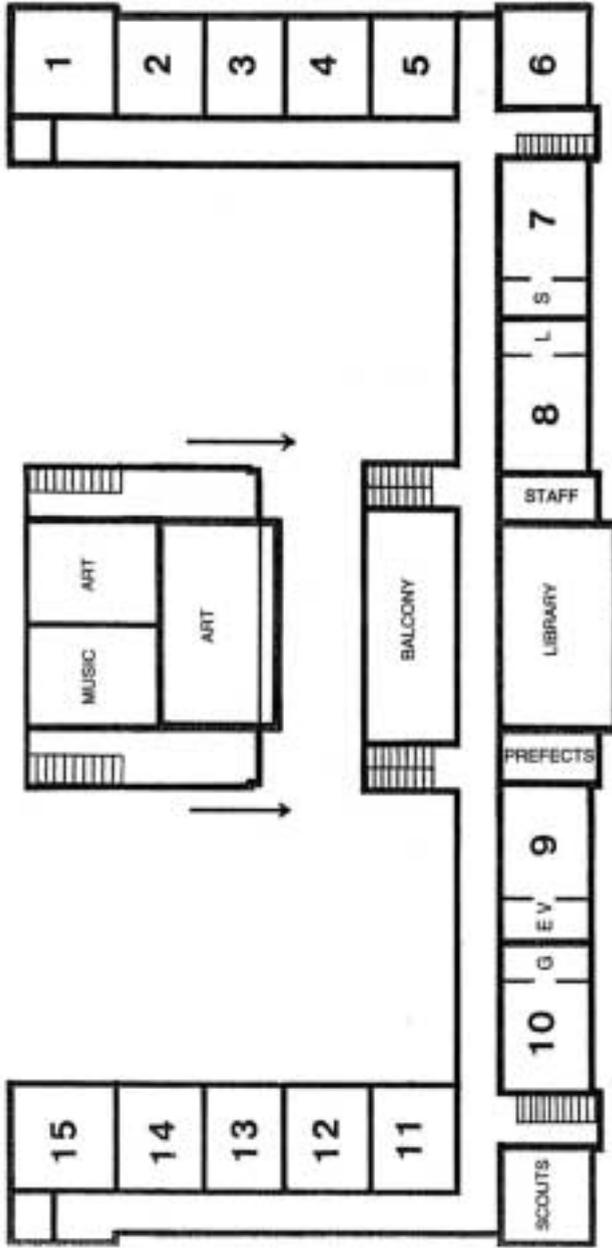
I was in Evans' house, named after the original housemaster who was in situ as the senior History master. Known as 'Big Taff', he was famous for his 'bacon slicer' punishments delivered by a ruler at a perfect tangent to a boy's behind. Only the Headmaster could give 'six of the best', and that was for major misdemeanours. All this seems totally alien today, yet I remember that we all took it in good part with little animosity.

**Brian Rimmer, Evans' 1949-54**



R Abram and P Bagshaw

**KING GEORGE V SCHOOL, SOUTHPORT**  
**Ground Floor**  
 Early 1950s



**KING GEORGE V SCHOOL SOUTHPORT**  
 First and Second Floors  
 Early 1950s

KING GEORGE V SCHOOL  
MUSIC SOCIETY

\*

PROGRAMME

\*

Choral and Orchestral Concert  
Thursday, 30th March, 1950  
at 7.30 p.m.  
in the  
ASSEMBLY HALL

\*

Admission (by programme) One Shilling

PART I

“God Save The King”

England *C H H Parry*

Choir and Orchestra

**Kentish Suite for Orchestra** *Hubert Clifford*

1 Dover Hornpipe

2 Pastoral and Folksong

3 Greenwich

**Songs - Junior Choir**

(a) **Song of the Music Makers** *Martin Shaw*

(b) **Linden Lea** *R Vaughan Williams*

(c) **Pilgrim song** *T F Dunhill*

(d) **Ride of the Witch** *Charles Wood*

**Entr'acte - Rosamunde** *F Schubert*

Orchestra

**The Hundredth Psalm** *R Vaughan Williams*

Choir and Orchestra

\*

INTERVAL

\*

## PART II

**Jerusalem** *C H H Parry*

Choir and Orchestra

**Tempo di Gavotta** *W Boyce*

Orchestra

**Songs** - Senior Choir

(a) **The Seekers** *G Dyson*

(b) **Arm, Arm ye brave** *G F Handel*

with String Orchestra

**Purcell Suite for Strings** *arranged by J Barbirolli*

Minuet : Air : Allegro

**Part Songs** - School Choir

(a) **See the realm of rest eternal (Orfeo)** *G W Gluck*

(b) **The Bold Pedlar** *arranged by T B Pitfield*

**Symphony No 104 in D major** *J Haydn*

Adagio - Allegro : Minuet and Trio

**Zion's Children** *arranged by Henry G Ley*

Choir and Orchestra

## MEMBERS OF THE ORCHESTRA

### VIOLINS

J C Higgins (leader)

S N Booth

A Chazen

M S Davidson

J M Earnshaw

N Meredith

W B Major

G F Tomany

T R Saggars

### FLUTE

Mr C Flemming

### OBOE

R N Davidson

### CLARINET

C G Booth

J A Weller

### EUPHONIUM

D Waring

### TIMPANI

Mr H Booth

### PERCUSSION

A T Jones

**'CELLO**

C B Wilson  
C Wynne

**BASSOON**

J M C Davidson

**PIANO**

P Rushton

**BASS**

W G Henderson  
J Wood

**HORNS**

K Williams  
E Massey

**CORNETS**

W Sutton  
J Howard

**MEMBERS OF THE CHOIR**

M A Adler  
C E Andrews  
D G A Alsop  
L A E Ashworth  
M M Atkinson  
P D Bagshaw  
R Barfoot  
R Beckett  
J E Belmont  
G R Blundell  
R G Blundell  
R Blackledge  
D L Booth  
B F Bracewell  
T B Bray  
R Burgess  
J R Cornett  
D A Dixon  
D R Dover  
C Dyer  
R A Eccles  
K H Elliott  
D J Farrant  
J B Forshaw  
W G Fuge  
B F Gill

W B Hainsworth  
I D Hamilton  
R A Hargreaves  
P L Harris  
I Hill  
A F Hilson  
Mr T Hodge  
Mr R Jeffs  
D I Kaitiff  
B E Key  
D Latchford  
J H Levin  
A Lindley  
B Livesley  
G Livesley  
E W Llewellyn  
W S Lynwode  
W E Marsden  
G H Marshall  
K E Mayson  
J C Meunier  
H M Morgan  
J A Nicholas  
P F Norman  
B D Ormesher  
G A Pearce

D S Preston  
W J Porter  
B Rimmer  
S B Rimmer  
B J Rimmer  
M F Savage  
R Smith  
S Taylor  
J J Thompson  
Mr R Todd  
G Topping  
D S M Walker  
J B Whittaker  
D J Williams  
F R Winrow  
H B Winter  
G Woodfine  
E J Usher  
N J Yates  
  
**ACCOMPANIST**  
J Wood

**Conductor - Mr K EGLIN**  
**Chairman of the Music society (1949-50) - J C HIGGINS**  
**Secretary - J WOOD**

## KGV LEAVERS 1950-51

UNIVERSITY: 28

Birmingham 1, Bristol 1, Cambridge 2, Lampeter 2, Leeds 1,  
Liverpool 11, London 1, Manchester 6, Oxford 2, Sheffield 1.

TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE: 2

DRAMA SCHOOL: 1

INDUSTRY & RESEARCH: 3

BUSINESS: 2

PHARMACY: 3

THE SERVICES: 17

Dartmouth 2, Sandhurst 1, RAF 3, HMS Conway 2,  
Merchant Navy 6, Police 3

ACCOUNTANCY: 6

BANKING: 8

INSURANCE: 1

ENGINEERING: 13

CATERING & HOTEL: 3

CIVIL SERVICE & LOCAL GOVERNMENT: 3

RETAIL TRADES: 5

UNKNOWN: 9

TOTAL: 104

## RECOLLECTIONS

I recall Geoffrey Dixon summoning me to his study and asking what I proposed to study at university, since my parents wished me to read Law. Little did he know the pressure being put upon me by other members of the family. The Head was somewhat surprised to hear that I wanted to read French. After a long career committed to French language and civilisation, I must set down the influences KGV had upon me.

On entering school, for two years I was nurtured, if that's the word, by Hubert Evans, 'Little Taff', whose urbane and even manner was most impressive, and I confess to his family that I still use his jokes and asides to my students...and they are still appreciated. How he managed to make Herbert

Collins interesting, and even relevant, is a wonder. Nor shall any of us forget his quirky marking of exercises: 20 + 2(bonus) + 5(presentation). It encouraged the stars and gave hope to the less talented.

As strictly non-Chemists, nine of us volunteered readily when George Millward (of the remarkable memory) offered Greek, which gave us extra Classics under R N Kirkby's care. He unknowingly taught us to love Latin literature and was astonished that some of us actually bought our own copies of Catullus. A surprising influence on me was Harry Smith whose encouragement to do handstands and clear horses gave a challenge to one overweight schoolboy, but he too, unwittingly, put me on the road to French verse when he set a La Fontaine fable as a form of punishment for forgetting kit. I can still recite it!

It was in the Sixth Form, however, that French really came into its own. I never had the opportunity to be taught by 'Froggy' Charnley, though I admired his exploit of doing a standing jump onto a staffroom table. One cannot forget, however, the quiet enthusiasm of 'Mousey' Thompson, who did a weekly cabaret in the Library, fencing himself across the room and giving us an insight into Molière that no book could match. I can't be the only OG who possesses an autographed copy of his spy novel 'Fortune Spins Auburn'. George Berry, much underrated, displayed remarkable scholarship and inculcated some love of accuracy. 'Eb' Bowker passed briefly by, but made us drool at the extent of his French library, and taught us a healthy disrespect for certain writers and Gasc's Dictionary. Thanks to him, we shared the daily excitement of Jean Cocteau's campaign to win a place in the Académie Française.

These were not the only influences in my life: I remember many others with pleasure, but they gave me the spur I needed to follow my chosen career.

**Cyril Hershon, Spencer's 1948-55**

## **THE DEATH OF KING GEORGE VI**

On 6th February 1952 at 12.30 pm, the School assembled in the Hall and was told by the Headmaster of the sudden death of the King. On 15th February a short service was held in the Hall at 1.55 pm, and two minutes silence was observed. A Civic Service was held at Christ Church at 8.00 pm, at which the School was represented by the Headmaster and 35 boys.

**The Red Rose, March 1952**

## **UNCLE IKE**

My memories of school surround the final year of George Millward and the getting of a new 'Boss', as he was to be called during my time at KGV. I was placed in Rogers' due to the fact that my Uncle Ike was indeed 'Hank'

Higham. If you think that got me any favours, then forget it. I was the son that he and Auntie Anne never had, and I always had the feeling that more was expected of me. Uncle Ike was some character, however, and after I left school we developed quite a warm relationship, mainly through golfing connections.

One little-known fact is that, during the War, Ike was a regular performer for Wigan Rugby League Club, although for many years he played Union for Wigan Old Boys. My years at school tended to nurture my sporting interests, rather than the academic, a point which readily reared its head when reports were handed in at home at the conclusion of each term. It was sometime after I left KGV that I realised what an enjoyable time I really had. It is quite true that you never really appreciate something until it's not there.

**David Howgate (Rogers' 1948-54)**

## **LIFE-LONG FRIENDSHIPS**

It is a sobering thought, as I write this article, that it is fifty-two years since I first set foot in the old KGV building. In those days, most candidates for the dreaded 11+ sat the examinations in their own schools, but a few of us from the private schools in the town were required to travel to Scarisbrick New Road to take the tests there. Thus, Louis Lyons and I appeared nervously at the front door and were led down what seemed to be endless gloomy corridors into what we later learned was the Lecture Theatre. A serious gentleman in a sweeping black gown was our invigilator, and this turned out to be Harry Booth, eventually to become our much-respected History master. The results took so long to come that I had almost forgotten about them, until one Saturday morning in April, the glad news arrived that I had passed. Louis was on the phone within fifteen minutes, and I was delighted to hear that he had also been successful. Thus, when that group of about ninety "newts" gathered at the front door in early September, we were to begin our careers in a fine school, which was to come to mean so much to all of us.

There are so many memories I could draw upon, but I think it would be best to concentrate on the remarkable quality the school had for establishing life-long friendships. Louis, for example, went on to Cambridge and gained one of the top Firsts of his year in Natural Sciences. In due course, he was to become Director of the Physics Department at Jesus College, Oxford, where I spent some time with him in later years at an educational conference. He was most helpful in assisting two candidates from my own school who were applying to read Physics at his College.

There were thirty of us in the Trans X of 1948 and I am glad to say that I am still in regular touch with a number of them. John Elliott, who also went up to Cambridge to read Medicine, invited me to be Best Man at his wedding. David Rimmer, who was at Oxford with me, and who is now the Rector of an Episcopalian Church in Edinburgh, is godfather to our son. Mark Dalby, who joined the school a year later, was Best Man at our wedding and is godfather to our daughter.

In fact, of the nine of us who formed Upper VI Modern School in 1954-5, four of us were contemporaries at Oxford, and in my undergraduate years, there were at least a dozen Old Georgians at the university. There was an interesting coincidence in that David Rimmer, then myself, and then Philip McLean, all of whom share the same birthday but in consecutive years, were there at the same time. Soon afterwards, I was an usher at Philip's wedding to Dorothy Kirkby, daughter of our Classics master. I am still in touch with them, and had the pleasure of staying with them in New York when Philip worked for the Foreign Office.

When I was teaching at Harrow for a year on our return from Canada, there was a knock at the door one morning, and it was David Max, whom I hadn't seen since leaving KGV. He had a good career in the law in London, and had somehow heard that we were living nearby: another old friendship re-created after thirty-five years. Another contemporary whom I often see is Roy Crompton, who had a senior post with Eagle Star for a number of years, now living in Cheltenham.

In 1984 I moved to Derbyshire to take up the Headship of Abbotsholme School and it was not very long before I had a call from a Senior Lecturer in teacher training asking me whether some of his students could visit to have experience of an independent school: it was Brian Howard. The following year another lecturer called with a similar request, and this time it was Harry Foster. I remember how much we smaller boys were in awe of this man-mountain when we were at school, and later on, when I played Rugby with him in the same team for Southport, continued to admire him for his tremendous strength and skill.

One day I was talking with friends in our village when one of them said that there was a teacher at the local primary school who knew me from a long time ago. It was Neil McCandlish, and it was a great pleasure to invite him for lunch and spend a long time going over old memories. This article is perhaps nothing more than one man's ramblings, but I feel that it does indicate just how precious are such friendships when they are formed at an impressionable age and in an environment that we all enjoyed.

**Darrell Farrant, Edwards' 1948-55**

## **THE BEE CLUB**

When the kindly G F Drake joined the KGV staff as a French master in 1949, he formed the School Bee Club, and a single National-type hive soon appeared in the Junior Quadrangle. The initiative no doubt received the blessing of 'the Boss' who already had hives in his garden alongside the school fields.

As a founder member, I progressed through the ranks to succeed Miles (now Sir Miles) Irving as its Chairman. In his last year we were both badly stung as our hive was sealed for its lorry-transport to Scorton Moors by the Southport

Branch of the Lancashire Bee Keepers Association. I accompanied them the following morning to an old trout farm, whose spartan accommodation made the school's pre-war sports pavilion seem like the fictional creation in Xanadu. When the hive was eventually returned containing some 30lbs of heather honey, it was extracted using the combs' wax cappings with knives kindly loaned by Miss Singleton, the Kitchen Supervisor.

During a hot day in July 1954 I was summoned to the Head's study. With relief, I discovered that Mrs Dixon required some assistance to re-hive a swarm which had settled on a tree-trunk in Scarisbrick New Road. After collecting a veil, straw skep and goose feather, I soon found her and the swarm a few yards from the Dixon front door. I was pleased to be able to solve the problem successfully and, in doing so, demonstrate the usefulness of the Bee Club in the outside world.

In the Lower VIth, Irwin Ziment, Mark Salkie and I formed a bee-keeping partnership, but with a non-viable single hive. With a little beginners' luck, some 90lbs of clover honey was produced, and its extraction at Irwin's home was supervised by his sister. So what? As a Rabbi, she pronounced it Kosher, thereby achieving for us a monopolistic sales outlet at a local synagogue. In the Upper VIth I carelessly crushed our queen bee, and her demise sparked the end of our embryonic business. After Mark left Cambridge, my wife and I attended his and Elaine's memorable and splendid wedding at a Southport synagogue, but sadly we lost contact soon after. Now, thanks to the Old Georgians section on the KGV Website and to Paul Bagshaw, there is an opportunity to re-establish our friendship.

**Brian Knowles, Leech's 1949-54**

## IT WAS NOT TO BEE

Fired with a compulsion to learn more about the activities of the Bee Club, the Editor trawled the Red Rose and found the following:

*'The Club received some undesired publicity when the bees swarmed. J B Knowles risked life and limb to place a baited hive on the roof, but the bees ignored it and flew away to the base of a tree in the Junior drive. Knowles was now beginning to doubt the effectiveness of patience and kindness, and decided to resort to brute force. The swarm was brushed into a box, as directed by all the Bee-keeping manuals, but unfortunately the bees had not read the manuals and immediately left the box, returning to the tree.'*

July 1954

*'The ill-luck that has dogged our bees for so long has not entirely left them, but we hope that the dawn is at hand.'*

December 1955

*'The bees seem to have taken a real dislike to the secretary, and he is the only person who is stung regularly.'*

July 1958

*'Bee-keeping is not at all dangerous, and you can always run away, as the secretary does very often!'* December 1958

*'Bees are not as dangerous as they look and, in any case, there is no need to go into the quadrangle, since everything can be seen through the windows.'* March 1959

*'Unfortunately, the vicious element which was prevalent last season has once more begun to rear its ugly head. Mr Drake has already been stung several times, although the bees are not really vicious yet.'* June 1959

*'This year we have more members than we have had for many years but, because of the hard winter, no bees at all!'* July 1963

*'There is general apathy towards this society, largely because of the lack of bees.'* December 1963

*'All we see are white-draped figures, equipped with distinct headgear, advancing with caution under cover of a smokescreen, or tentatively lifting the lid off a woodworm-ridden coffin in the Junior Quadrangle.'* September 1967

*'This term we have not published the Bee Club Report as, if we were to go on about painting and repairing for very long, I assure you that it would be very boring. The Bee Club has been in hibernation for much of the term, and thus the report is brief and sleepy.'* April 1971

## THE KGV SCOUT TROOP 1949-53

In 1949 I agreed to help Hubert Long to re-form the School Scout Troop. We both have some vivid, though after a lapse of fifty years, possibly inaccurate memories of those happy days. The war being so recently over, we had little love for the militaristic, marching, flag-waving side of Scouting. Nor did we go in much for badge-hunting or courts-of-honour and the like. What we did enjoy, and I think the Scouts did too, were the games and fun and comradeship, and particularly the camps and hikes.

Amongst the latter activities, our very first camp stands out in the mind as the weirdest. A friend had offered us a camp-site on the banks of the River Weaver, near to the great Dutton Viaduct. Hubert and I went along in the early Spring to inspect it and found it ideal: a nice stretch of greensward in a remote rural area. It had its snags, though. The metalled road leading to it stopped short at the opposite bank of the river at a swing-bridge that no longer swung. This necessitated a tortuous journey from the nearest operating bridge through bye-lanes and tracks. We worked out a route using the OS map.

The driver of the open lorry that conveyed our Troop and our gear from Southport said, 'It'll be fine!'. Unfortunately, our map-reading had not been detailed enough to show us that part of our route lay down a steep track through a wood. Surveying it, the lorry driver said, 'It'll be fine!', drove off and got stuck in the mud at the bottom. After struggling for over an hour to heave

the lorry out, shoving brushwood under the wheels and offloading our gear completely, we managed to get it clear of the morass. The driver poured a bucket of water over the engine to cool it, and decided not to venture any further.

So he left us and set off back home up the hill. We were still a mile or so from the camp-site and had to lug all our gear, bell-tents, cooking pots, the lot! Arriving at the site somewhat fatigued, we found that the grass on our verdant pasture had grown as high as an elephant's eye. Our host, a man of resource, offered us a scythe and we set to work hacking the grass down. Eventually, the grass was cut, the tents were erected, the Union Jack was hoisted in its flag-pole and we were ready to start the camp. Our Scouts, urban Sandgrounders to a man, gazed around at the fields and hedgerows in dismay. 'Where are the shops?', they asked.

One activity the lads did enjoy was swimming. A few days into the camp, Hubert and I were alarmed to discover that a group of our Scouts had been swimming in the Weaver, a deep and fast-flowing river, in those days busy with shipping. Without permission, without supervision, without a rope or lifebelt, they had been swimming in the Weaver! These days, we Scoutmasters would be publicly vilified before being hanged, drawn and quartered.

There was a camp at High Arnside Farm in the Lake District where it rained every single day. In those spartan days, we cooked on a wood fire in the open - no sissy primus stoves for us! Each morning, one would emerge from the tent into the pouring rain wearing an army gas-cape, under which was a box of matches, some dry paper and some dry kindling. The fire had to be lit and going well before there was any prospect of a cooked breakfast. The only wood to be found in the vicinity was oak, and soaked oak at that; hardly the best wood for starting a fire. That was the camp in which the stitching on my sportscoat rotted and the sleeve came off. It was also the camp in which the farmer's sheepdog wandered into the cook-tent and ate a whole six pounds of raw sausage that were to have been our next meal. The farmer laughed and said, 'Ee, hoo won't need feedin' for a wik!'

There was also a trip organised by Mr Dixon, the Headmaster, to descend Bull Pot on Casterton Fell. A small group of us carried our bell-tent up the fell, set it up and went off to experience pot-holing for the first time. We climbed down a rope ladder into a kind of crater, then proceeded downwards, leaving a candle burning at each stage until we emerged into a cathedral-like expanse well below ground. Mr Dixon lit a magnesium flare to show us the wonders of the cavern. A strange business, climbing down backwards into complete blackness! I remember Mark Dalby, one of our Scouts - later to become our Rector at Worsley and, eventually, Archdeacon of Rochdale - murmuring, 'Goodness gracious me!' at each new descent.

My account must sound like a chapter of disasters or a grim warning to any aspiring Scoutmaster but, in reality, it was no such thing. It was an

enjoyable experience, and our Scouts - Johnny and Mac (Wareing and McAllister, I think), Keith Slater, and all the many others - learned to take all the mishaps and drawbacks in their stride.

**Harry Liptrot, KGV Master and Scoutmaster**

## **GRAMMAR SCHOOL DAYS**

I caught the cream and red double-decker bus to Southport Station in Chapel Street and paid the fare with the tokens provided. I confided in Derek Blume, an older boy, that I was feeling a bit nervous. 'Watch out for the cycle sheds at break and lunchtime,' he said. 'The worst thing they do is hit new boys with knotted school scarves or give you a light electric shock on your tongue with a small battery. It's all in good fun.' This really cheered me up!

KGV was an impressive two-storey building. To the left was the Woodwork and Metalwork room, and behind this the Gymnasium. To the right of the School was the Dining Hall. I wore my new black blazer with a simple red rose on the breast pocket, grey shirt, school tie, school jumper and short grey trousers. The Main Hall in the centre of the school was filled with rows of tip-up wooden seats. There were two side aisles and a centre aisle, and at the front was a large stage with a reading desk in the centre. The balcony at the back of the hall was for the older boys. There were about 650 of us altogether, divided into eight houses.

The Head Boy came through the swing doors to the left of the stage and stood in the centre aisle at the front. Everyone fell silent and then he walked to the back of the Hall, and Mr Dixon, the Headmaster came onto the stage. We sang a traditional hymn and said the same two prayers each morning from the Book of Common Prayer. After notices, the school was dismissed and, on that first morning, the new boys were given special instructions and then led away upstairs. Our form was 2B. I was always first on the register and we sat in alphabetical order, my desk at the front by the door with Derek Bowen behind me. We were addressed by our surnames. There was a boy in my class called Bruford. He was quite an entrepreneur, for he used to buy sweets from the shop and sell them off to us in class at a penny or tuppence each. I wonder what became of him.

Some teachers were very strict and struck fear into our hearts. No one messed about in Mr Lessiter's Science lesson ('Old Lettuce' we called him) and, when 'Rubberneck' told you to jump in the gymnasium, you jumped. There were three teachers called 'Evans' - Big, Middle and Little Taff. Should any boy annoy big Taff, he would take hold of the small hairs around the neck or ears and pull them. Boys would rise up out of their seats, in order to avoid the pain. Little Taff hailed from Swansea, and a Swansea Town football supporter. He taught us French, at which I was useless, and became my Housemaster when Joe Mayne retired. I liked him.

On one occasion, the English Football League side was due to play the Irish League at Goodison Park. I convinced my parents that everyone was going, and I saw the match with all the national stars of the day. The next morning, as I walked along the top corridor to my first lesson, I was confronted by Mr Dixon.

‘Bennett, where were you yesterday afternoon?’

‘I went to watch England playing Ireland, sir.’

‘Go to your room, collect your books and go home.’

The bottom dropped out of my world. I caught the bus home in a dream. My father was sat by the fire. He asked me why I was home.

‘I’ve been sent home by the Headmaster because I went to watch England yesterday.’

My eyes filled with tears, and my dad went to North Road to telephone the School. He was told that I had been suspended for three days and, if I were to write a letter promising that this would never happen again, I could return to school on Monday. I was very relieved.

**Ron Bennett, Grear’s 1950-56**

## **SCHOOL ELECTION 1950**

In 1950, the Parliamentary seat of ‘Kew’ was contested by four candidates: J Levin (Liberal), H D Silverton (Communist), J R Wignall (Socialist) and A C Wynne (Conservative). During the fortnight before polling day, meetings were held in the quadrangle during the break and dinner intervals. Rowdy at first, these meetings became almost orderly, with the exception of the communist meetings, where community singing of a curious nature preceded the meetings. At 4 pm on the day, the Returning Officer, W G Fuge, read the result from the balcony to the crowd in the centre drive. At this, even the heavens wept and, before the other candidates could add a word, the crowd dispersed.

## **RESULT**

A C Wynne (Con) 256      J R Wignall (Lab) 205

J Levin (Lib) 106      H D Silverton (Comm) 23



# Romeo *and* Juliet

December  
15, 16, 17 & 18  
1954

E. S. Roberts  
Programme  
Price  
Threepence

The Debating Society of King George V School presents

**The most excellent and lamentable tragedy of**

## **ROMEO AND JULIET**

by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

### THE CHARACTERS

THE PRINCE OF VERONA	M F Savage
MONTAGUE) heads of two houses	(P F Hopwood
CAPULET) at variance with each other	(F R Entwistle
LADY MONTAGUE	R L Bowen
LADY CAPULET	D R Seddon
ROMEO, son to Montague	P A McLean
JULIET, daughter to Capulet	N H Freeman
PARIS, a young nobleman	H B Nyman
MERCUTIO) friends to Romeo	(A T Williams
BENVOLIO)	( E J Usher
TYBALT, nephew to Lady Capulet	P L Harris
FRIAR LAWRENCE	F Bibby
FRIAR JOHN	J M Dalby
SAMPSON) servants to Capulet	(G A Wade
GREGORY)	(D Latchford
BALTHASAR, servant to Romeo	P D Bagshaw
ABRAHAM, servant to Montague	A D Hughes
NURSE TO JULIET	J A Hoyle
PETER, her servant	K C Slater
OLD CAPULET	J M Dalby
AN APOTHECARY	R B Austin
PAGE TO TYBALT	S H Green
PAGE TO PARIS	B W Howgate
CHORUS	C Hershon
LADIES, CITIZENS, MASKERS, MUSICIANS, WATCHMEN and ATTENDANTS	B W Howgate
	P Dodworth, H Brooks, G F Bowyer
	P N Heyes, P G Davies, A D Hughes
	D Latchford, P L Gladney, J K Stuart

*The Play produced by Mr G P Wakefield*

The incidental music composed by Mr J R Williams  
and played by a section of the School Orchestra under his direction

STAGE MANAGER	Mr K J Bevan
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER	G A Pearce
LIGHTING MANAGERS	Mr T Duncan, Mr H C Davies
BOOKING MANAGER	Mr D Tristram

## MEMBERS OF THE ORCHESTRA

### *Flute:*

Mr C F Flemming

### *Clarinets:*

Mr H Morley

D R Dixon

### *Bassoon:*

J M C Davidson

### *Horns:*

J J Thompson

D J Rimmer

### *Trumpet:*

J H Wright

### *Trombone:*

I R Knowles

### *Violins:*

R Hargreaves (leader)

B Partington

J T Allen

J C Delaney

T R Hesketh

S T Symington

R Hind

S J Tasker

Mr G Berry

### *Percussion:*

J B Hodge

### *Violins (cont):*

Miss S Norton

Marjorie Entwistle

Maureen Bridge

### *Violas:*

Miss J Fielden

Miss J Hargreaves

### *Cello:*

D L Booth

### *Double Bass:*

I M Blair

## THE ACTION TAKES PLACE IN VERONA AND MANTUA

There will be two intervals of ten minutes each

The Setting, built in the School workshop under the direction of Mr H H Long, was designed by Mr J R Waddington, and painted under his direction by members of the School Art Society

Costumes by the Stratford Memorial Theatre Wardrobe, Stratford-upon-Avon  
Wigs by Gustave

## WE ARE GRATEFUL TO:

Miss J Fielden of the High School for Girls, together with two members and two former members of the High School Orchestra, for their services

Mrs R R Baxendale for help with costumes and make-up

Two Old Georgians, J M C Davidson for his services to the Orchestra, and D R Isenberg for help with make-up

Mrs Wakefield for making stage curtains

Mr H Taylor of Messrs J W Raylor & Co Ltd  
for the supply and erection of steel scaffolding

## LADIES ARE REQUESTED TO REMOVE THEIR HATS

Chairman of the Debating Society (Session 1954-5)

C Hershon

Secretary

A T Williams

## PREVIOUS PRODUCTIONS

1928	THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST	<i>by Oscar Wilde</i>
1929	LOYALTIES	<i>by John Galsworthy</i>
1930	ARMS AND THE MAN	<i>by George Bernard Shaw</i>
1931	THE GREAT ADVENTURE	<i>by Arnold Bennett</i>
1932	YELLOW SANDS	<i>by E &amp; A Phillpotts</i>
1933	THE IVORY DOOR	<i>by A A Milne</i>
1934	GALLOWS GLORIOUS	<i>by Ronald Gow</i>
1935	THE RIVALS	<i>by Richard Brinsley Sheridan</i>
1936	LADY PRECIOUS STREAM	<i>by S I Hsuing</i>
1937	YOUTH AT THE HELM	<i>by Hubert Griffith</i>
1938	CAESAR AND CLEOPATRA	<i>by George Bernard Shaw</i>
1946	RICHARD OF BORDEAUX	<i>by Gordon Daviot</i>
1947	THE ZEAL OF THY HOUSE	<i>by Dorothy L Sayers</i>
1948	THE COMEDY OF ERRORS	<i>by William Shakespeare</i>
1949	THE SCHOOL FOR SCANDAL	<i>by Richard Brinsley Sheridan</i>
1950	ST JOAN	<i>by George Bernard Shaw</i>
1951	THE MAGISTRATE	<i>by A W Pinero</i>
1952	HAMLET	<i>by William Shakespeare</i>
1953	TOAD OF TOAD HALL	<i>by A A Milne and Kenneth Grahame</i>

## KGV TEACHING STAFF 1954

### HEADMASTER

G F Dixon MA, formerly Scholar of New College, Oxford

### ASSISTANT MASTERS

J Edwards MA, Manchester (Geography)

C Woodham B.Sc, Manchester (Chemistry)

R J Thompson BA, London (French, German)

A G Lessiter MA, Downing College, Cambridge (Mathematics)

H Higham B.Sc, Liverpool (Chemistry)

H Booth MA, Liverpool (History, Economics)

L C Hargreaves B.Sc, Manchester (Chemistry)

H Evans BA, Wales (French, Latin)

C W Hardaker B.Sc, Leeds (Geography)

W T Marsden MA, formerly Exhibitioner of Exeter College, Oxford  
(History, Economics, Scripture)

R N Kirkby BA, formerly Scholar of Caius College, Cambridge  
(Classics)

T H A Evans BA, Manchester (Geography, French, Mathematics)

C F Flemming B.Sc, Manchester (Physics)

G P Wakefield MA, Liverpool (English)

W T Jones B.Sc, London (Physics)

R Abram B.Sc, Manchester (Mathematics)

H Smith, Loughborough College (Physical Education)

H H Long, Wigan Mining and Technical College (Handicraft)

G F Drake BA, London (French, Scripture)

J R Waddington ATD, Manchester School of Art (Art)

C J Woodcock MA, St Edmund Hall, Oxford (English)

G Berry BA, Manchester (French, German)

A J Norris B.Sc, Bristol (Mathematics)

G H Ellison BA, Manchester (Classics)

C J Dyer B.Sc, London (Mathematics)

D Tristram B.Sc, Wales (Mathematics)

H C Davies B.Sc, Liverpool (Biology)

T Duncan B.Sc, St Andrews (Physics)

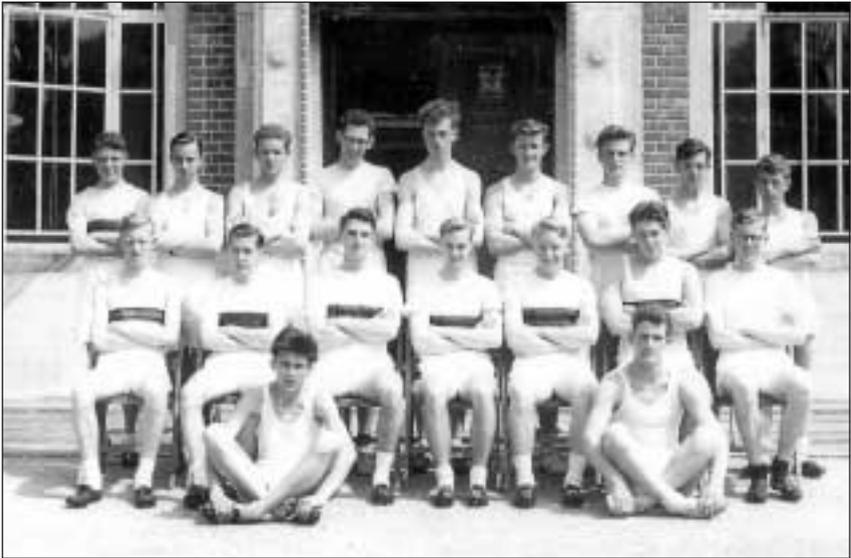
D A Garnett BA, St Edmund Hall, Oxford (French, Latin, Scripture)

H Morley BA, Durham (English)

J R Williams M.Mus, Wales, ARCO (Music)

K J Bevan BA, Wales (English)

P G Lacey MA, Balliol College, Oxford (History, English)



ATHLETICS TEAM 1955



STAFF CRICKET TEAM 1956

## MY FINEST HOUR

They say that only the highlights of your time at school remain amongst the grey cells as years go by. Much of what went on has probably been consigned to the 'recycle bin' or deleted to make room for other stuff. In my case, there was one clear highlight. As a boy I was never to be found amongst the ranks of the Rugby team, Cricket team or that privileged elite, rock climbers. Charles Atlas had given up on me from day one, so much of my time was spent between Scouting and skiffing (and avoiding sand being kicked in my face!). Then, towards the end of my time in the Sixth Form, came the opportunity to rub shoulders with the favoured few - the fourteen peaks - an educational outing which, in the current climate, would have lost half of the staff their jobs! Fourteen peaks! Prop forwards used to turn pale at the mention of these words, and even rock climbers would hang onto Sir Geoffrey's anorak and suck their thumbs.

For any who have never heard of the fourteen peaks, a word of explanation. They are fourteen mountains in north Wales, all over 3,000 feet. For those of Herculean stamina, they are climbable in one day. P G de C Elliott and I decided we would take part and, at this point, a confession must be made. We trained. Admittedly, it goes against the grain, but we spent one half-hour on the beach and walked up three sand dunes. There! It's out now and I feel so much better. P G and I not only trained but we prepared. Bags of raisins and bars of chocolate went into our Army & Navy haversacks - boots for going downhill; plimsolls for going uphill. Preparation with a capital P.

The climb began at about 10.30 on a Summer evening, somewhere near a ridge called 'Crib Goch'. It became all too obvious that this was not to everyone's liking and, before long, a number had dropped off (a technical term, not an act of suicide). All through the night we plodded on; day dawned and still we plodded. Off came the boots and on went the plimsolls. Raisins were chewed and chocolate bars munched, although we never stopped to consider the effect this mixture might have on our internal plumbing. The number in the party gradually dwindled and, by the time we reached the end of our ordeal and found the bus, we realised that very few had stuck to the task. But P G and I did. So did P Pond and maybe one or two more. But was there a medal, a certificate or even a word of praise from on high? Not a bit of it. But we couldn't help grinning when we thought of all those superheroes giving up, while we had kept on to the bitter end. Did I say bitter? That was another story. This was my finest hour!

**Ken Milne, Rogers' 1952-59**

## RED ROSE 1960

*Glimpses of Germany*

*'One arrives in Germany with certain preconceived ideas as to the German character, usually based on the opinions of one's country men. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the Germans are not held in high esteem by the British public. Yet on arrival, one finds these ideas to be wholly unfounded. The fanatical heel-clicking race proves itself to be the most hospitable nation one could hope to visit.*

*There are, however, certain aspects of the German character that the English ridicule - often, I think, justly. I remember one occasion when, on trying to gain audience with the headmaster of the (exchange) school, I was confronted by an enormous German, who enquired as to my reason. I replied: 'I want to shoot the headmaster'. Instead of bursting into fits of hilarious laughter, as I did in appreciation of this witty remark, he punched me. I concluded that the Germans have a weak sense of humour.'*

P N Walker U6M

## MISS ELIZABETH CRAIG

School Secretary 1921-1962

At the end of term the School will say farewell to Miss Elizabeth Craig and, thus, an association of forty-one years will end. Miss Craig joined the staff as School Secretary in January 1921, a few months after the opening of the School with 110 pupils in September 1920. She has seen the roll grow to well over 700, and more than 4,500 pupils have passed through the school in the years of her service. It can truthfully be asserted that she is remembered with affection and gratitude by every one of them.

It would be difficult to imagine a more dedicated servant of the School, one of whom so many have such wonderful memories. This retirement will create a gap tremendously difficult to fill, but we hope we shall see her at many School functions to come. Our heartfelt wishes go with her for a long and happy retirement.

**George A Millward (Tribute extract)**

As the years have passed Miss Craig has become an institution, able to give wise and kindly advice from her unrivalled knowledge of the School, reigning supreme and unruffled in the office, and showing an unfailing interest and pride in the achievements of the School and of all the boys and masters who have ever worked within its walls. To a young and inexperienced Headmaster in 1949, her help and encouragement were of untold value. No matter what difficulties occurred elsewhere, 'the office' could always be depended on to produce, without any fuss, punctual, reliable and accurate work.

Miss Craig's life's work has been in the service of King George V School. All of us salute her in gratitude for all she has done, and we join in wishing her every happiness in her well-earned retirement.

**Geoffrey F Dixon (Tribute extract)**

## THE DEBATING SOCIETY

Although the School Debating Society, KGV's oldest, longest-running and most prestigious extra-curricular activity, enjoyed a long run of laudable success, it did go through difficulties from time to time. A letter to the Editor of the Red Rose in 1964 illustrates the problems of the time:

*Dear Sir,*

*As a mere scientist, I feel stimulated to complain about the present inefficiency of what was the school's most well-organised and interesting society, namely the Debating Society.*

*Last term, the standard of debates, speeches and attendance was at its lowest ebb for at least the past seven years. The first debate I attended this term, however, yielded the grand total of five black blazers and nine red ones, hardly 'grand' out of a total of more than six hundred boys. The speakers all managed to speak for less than the time allocated. One or two speeches had obviously been prepared that afternoon, and were written on old envelopes. At this debate there was one person acting as both Secretary and Chairman. Two weeks later there was neither a Secretary nor a Chairman; one of the principal speakers had to change 'sides' at the last minute; three speeches ran for about half the full time, and nobody spoke from the floor because of the apathy of the speeches before. Only ten people attended this debate to the end, three having left halfway through for reasons unknown. Please, sixth form, attend the debates - and, committee of the Debating Society, do something!*

**R Porter L6 Sc.B**

## SCHOOL ELECTION 1964

The Red Rose of the period tells of a Mock Election held at KGV on October 15th 1964. The real Election brought to power the first Wilson government, but the School result was somewhat different. The thoroughness of the venture was shown in the fact that four opinion polls were held before the final voting took place.

	Oct.9th	Oct.12th	Oct.13th	Oct.14th
Conservative	52.2	49.4	49.9	45.2
Labour	20.7	24.1	26.3	25.7
Liberal	18.5	21.1	22.0	24.5
Others	1.0	0.6	0.5	0.4
Don't Know	7.6	4.8	4.3	4.2



FIRST XV 1963-4



LONG RIGG

The influence on these figures by the visits of Mr Percival, Mr Goldwater and Mr Coleman, respective candidates for the Southport Parliamentary constituency, was quite marked. The following day four polling stations were set up in the school, and voting commenced at 12.30. By 1.50 the last slips had been placed in ballot boxes and, at 3.50, the result was announced to an impatient crowd outside the pavilion:

	Votes	Percentage
R Dickinson (Conservative)	322	45.6
S Sharples (Labour)	213	30.5
D Turner (Liberal)	167	23.6

## THE BIRTH OF LONG RIGG

*We have never thought that 'Wilsonholme' was a very satisfactory name for the school's recently acquired hostel and, since the building stands on the side of a hill marked 'Long Rigg' on the Ordnance Survey map, it has been suggested that this name should be adopted....The first party went up in December taking a great deal of furniture, much of which had been kindly collected by Mrs Laws, Secretary of the Parents' Association....we hope to be ready for occupation by the beginning of the Easter holidays, when it is hoped we can use the hostel for small parties. Mr Long has started the construction of bunks.*

### **The Red Rose, December 1967**

*The first party to stay at Long Rigg was taken by Mr H C Davies during the Easter holidays, when a most useful biological survey of the area was made....this term has seen a continuation of the work on the interior of the hostel most weekends, and parties are now able to stay overnight, which means that more work can be done and a more enjoyable time can be had by those who travel up....of course, all these improvements are costing us a lot of money and, by the time these are finished, we shall have spent some £700 or £800. Our next big expenditure will be to buy a minibus for use in transporting parties to and from the hostel and for use while they are there. There seems to be every prospect that we shall have Long Rigg in full working order by 1970, when we hope to have an official opening as part of the School's Golden Jubilee celebrations.*

### **The Red Rose, April 1968**

*Work has continued steadily on Long Rigg. The remaining bunks have been installed and the plumbing work on the downstairs ablutions has been finished. This puts us in a position to begin to use the hostel fully by next Easter, and a Ford Transit 14-seater minibus has been ordered.....an Open Day for parents has been arranged for Saturday, April 12th....we are very dependant upon our primary source of income, which is the seven-year covenant scheme....our income from covenants, including recovery of income tax, now exceeds £600 per annum.*

### **The Red Rose, December 1968**

*On Tuesday, June 1st we were driven away from school in the minibus by Mr Topping - our destination: Long Rigg, Sedbergh....after we had unpacked, we were allowed to go into Sedbergh. We had a fine time eating our fill of sweets and drinking bottle after bottle of lemonade....'Never go potholing without an experienced guide' say the books, so that is what we didn't do. We took Mr Honeybone, who arrived on the Monday afternoon, with us - or rather he took us with him to a little wood just south of a cottage called 'Fellgate'....We used a rope to descend about 12ft down into water, and nearly got stuck in a narrow chimney. It took us about three quarters of an hour to get back to Long Rigg.*

**M G Davies, V Ison, A Heslegrave, A Wright, I White 2B, April 1969**

*With the generous help of the parents' Grand Draw, we now have enough money to go ahead with the addition of a games room at Long Rigg. A suitable type of building has been selected, and the foundations have already been levelled by the Sixth Form. Planning permission is now being sought and we are hoping, though time is short, to have the additional room available in time for the official opening of the hostel, which we hope to celebrate on Saturday 27th June, 1970.*

**The Red Rose, December 1969**

*The games room at Long Rigg has now been erected, and the finishing touches to the flooring and the electrical system are now being made. We are also undertaking the building of benching in the laboratory. Our next objective is the provision of a large electric cooker in the kitchen, suitable for the numbers going up to the hostel. A total of more than £6,200 has so far been subscribed to the Jubilee Fund, and the trustees feel that the hostel can be kept going permanently with an endowment fund, if fifty new £1 seven-year covenants are taken out each year.*

*At this time it would seem appropriate to say what a tremendous gain to the school Long Rigg has been, and to express gratitude to all those, whether parents, staff or Old Boys - as well as boys in the school - who have done so much, not only to raise money, but also in work at the hostel, to make the project such a success. There is every reason to hope that Long Rigg will play a major part in the education of the boys of King George V School for many years to come. It is certainly a most worthy memorial of the school's Golden Jubilee.*

**The Red Rose, December 1970**

## **KGV TEACHING STAFF 1970**

with dates of appointment

### **HEADMASTER**

G F Dixon MA Formerly Scholar of New College, Oxford 1949

### **DEPUTY HEAD**

G P Wakefield MA Liverpool (English) 1945

## ASSISTANT MASTERS

L C Hargreaves B.Sc Manchester (Chemistry)	1928
C F Flemming B.Sc Manchester (Physics)	1945
R Abram B.Sc Manchester (Mathematics)	1946
H Smith Loughborough College (Mathematics)	1947
H H Long Wigan Mining & Technical College (Head of Handicraft Department)	1948
G Berry BA Manchester (Modern Languages)	1950
H C Davies B.Sc Liverpool (Head of Biology Department)	1953
N Harrison ATD Liverpool College of Art (Head of Art Department)	1955
J Clough BA Manchester (Head of Classics Department)	1956
E S Gale Culham College and Carnegie College (Head of Physical Education Dept)	1957
T B Johnson BA Leeds (Head of English Department)	1957
C G Parsons BA Liverpool (Head of Geography Department)	1958
D Miley ARIC Liverpool College of Technology (Chemistry)	1960
T B L Davies BA Wales (Classics)	1963
P J Richardson MA Formerly Scholar of Wadham College, Oxford (Head of Physics Department)	1964
J K Andrews B.Sc London (Head of Chemistry Department)	1964
J A Honeybone BA Caius College, Cambridge (History)	1964
S B Rimmer BA Manchester (Modern Languages)	1965
P Stainton B.Sc Manchester (Physics)	1965
I Lunn BA Christ's College, Cambridge (Head of Mathematics Department)	1965
M E Amer BA Leeds (Head of Economics Department)	1965
P H W Garwood MA New College, Oxford (Head of History Department)	1966
P Holland BA Leeds (English)	1966
J M Fryer B.Sc Liverpool (Physics)	1966
H T Marsh B.Sc Manchester (Chemistry)	1966
B M Hodgkins MA Mansfield College, Oxford (Mod Languages)	1966
K Douglas MA Liverpool (English)	1967
J Ward MA Queens' College, Cambridge (English)	1967
P J Comfort B.Sc Manchester (Geography)	1967
S Smith MA Formerly Scholar of Christ's College, Cambridge (Head of Modern Languages Dept)	1967
J R Wohlers B.Sc Hull (Mathematics)	1967
J C Campbell Chester College of Education (Physical Education)	1967
W Cowburn BA Wales (Modern Languages)	1968
D E Radcliffe BA Liverpool (Modern Languages)	1968
A R Allen B.Sc Liverpool (Chemistry)	1968
S J Parkinson B.Sc Liverpool (Physics)	1969
R Clark BA St Catherine's College, Oxford (Mathematics)	1969

B Mawer B.Sc Hull (Mathematics)	1969
J Mills Didsbury College of Education (Mathematics)	1969
L S Metford BA Wales (History)	1969
I R Hartley BA Manchester (Economics)	1969
J P Dootson ARCO LRAM (Music)	1970
T E Lacy BA London (Religious Education)	1970

## HOUSES IN 1970

Edwards' Evans' Grear's Leech's Mason's Rogers'  
Spencer's Woodham's Amer's Holland's Honeybone's Lunn's

## RED ROSE 1970

When the Red Rose was written by KGV schoolboys, there was often an undisguised frankness in the expression of views, particularly when the prowess of sportsmen was featured. In the Red Rose of 1970, A J Kennedy of Upper 6 Modern described some of his Hockey First XI colleagues as follows:

### **Lowe**

*No fast enough to be a really effective winger, but his hard crosses and deceptive ball play compensated for this, and if he refrains from damaging his hand again in future, he should become an excellent player.*

### **Searle**

*A hard worker. Has little ball control and a poor shot because he holds the stick wrongly.*

### **Tighe**

*Playing out of goal for the first time, he was always good for a laugh when trying to run with the ball.*

### **Haddock**

*A lazy player, slow in tackling back, but nevertheless an efficient left half.*

At least, the writer was equally honest about himself, by writing:

### **Kennedy**

*Could usually be found on the left wing, though tried in other positions with little success. Rarely found his best form when playing for the School. His speed made him a penetrating winger, though his physical style of play visibly upset the opposition.*

## OTHER QUOTES FROM RED ROSE 1970 PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

*This term has so far not been a very eventful one for us, as we have yet to hold a meeting.*

**J R D Septon L5M**

### FENCING CLUB

*McKay impressed the opposition with his sense of humour, especially when he lost every one of his bouts.*

**K Douglas**

### THE CHESS CLUB

*Buckley, despite ugly rumours that the team's better performances were recorded when he was not present in the side, remained on Board One all season, and achieved a fair degree of success.*

**P H Buckley U6S**

### FOX SOCIETY

*The highlight of the term was undoubtedly the Balloon Debate when Robinson, posing as Miss UK, stuffed two balloons up his jersey for added effect. These were deflated by the other speakers, led by Goldie Hawn (i.e. Yours Truly).*

**J S Sykes LVX**

### MOTOR SOCIETY

*We hope to acquire a Ford Popular, which has matured throughout the year in a private garage.*

**J E A Court and H Herbert LVM**

### RAILWAY SOCIETY

*We were towed up and down the line with various loads of sewage and fertiliser behind us, but even the smell and teeming rain did not deter the more enthusiastic members from photographing the engines and taking back-seat driving lessons from the crew. We would like to thank all the employees of Bradford Corporation Sewage Works for making our day so enjoyable.*

**G Constantine U6B**

### SIXTH FORM HISTORY SOCIETY

*This year's record is the usual dismal one of unfinished schemes, unfinished plans, and lack of support. The Society has nothing tangible to its credit.*

**J Baird U6M**

### MASON'S

*The spell that has hung over our Badminton teams for many a year has still not been lifted.*

**S J Scudamore U6S**

## TIMES OF CHANGE

By the time King George V School had celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1970, there were 800 boys in the school, of whom just over 200 were in the Sixth form. For some years, three of four pupils a year had been winning open awards to Oxford and Cambridge colleges, and the annual figures published in the Times Educational Supplement showed that the record of King George V School in gaining these awards over the thirty years from 1940 to 1970 was unequalled in any maintained school in the North West of England, and exceeded by very few in any part of the country. Of the 112 boys who had left the school the previous year, 51 - just over 45% - had gone to degree courses. 44 boys had gone to 22 different universities to study 21 different subjects (28 to take science, engineering and medical degrees, and 16 to take arts subjects), and a further seven were taking degree courses at other institutions of higher education, such as polytechnics.

But by this time the movement to replace grammar schools and secondary modern schools with comprehensive schools had gained momentum in much of the country. Public opinion had changed a lot in the previous fifty years. In 1920, when KGV was founded, a common attitude would have been that it was wonderful if a bricklayer's son or a bus driver's son got a free place at a grammar school in the scholarship examination. A couple of decades later, by the beginning of the Second World War, rather more people were suggesting that it was scandalous that so very few bricklayers' or busdrivers' sons gained places at grammar schools. To some extent, this seemed to be put right by the 1944 Education Act, which had resulted in a vast extension of free grammar school places and, by 1949, when Geoffrey Dixon became Head Master, many people in Southport, as in the rest of England, must have felt that it was wonderful that so many young boys and girls were now getting a free grammar school education.

But already a further change was coming in people's attitudes, and a decade or so later it was being suggested by many people that it was scandalous that grammar schools should be bastions of privilege for the clever. Equality had become a more fashionable notion than equality of opportunity. Those who had once feared the power of the aristocracy now began to fear the potential power of a new meritocracy - and the grammar school was understandably seen as a breeding ground for the new meritocrat.

The grammar schools got little support in these years from either of the two main political parties. The leaders of the Conservative Party in the post-war years had been educated at independent schools: Churchill at Harrow, Eden and Macmillan at Eton. So had most of their cabinet colleagues. Many Conservatives resented both grammar schools and secondary modern schools as institutions to which they would not send their own children, but for which they nevertheless had to pay, and they tended to be contemptuous of grammar school boys who went up to university with the serious-minded intention of

working hard and doing well in their examinations, knowing that they had to rely on their own ability to get them a job afterwards. The leaders of the Labour Party were no better. Either they had also been educated at independent schools, Attlee at Haileybury and Gaitskell at Winchester or, like Bevin and Morrison, they had been to the old elementary schools, viewing grammar schools with suspicion as means of turning good working-class boys into middle-class Tories.

Between the Scylla of Socialist suspicion and the Charybdis of Conservative contempt, it is surprising that the grammar schools survived so long. One reason is simply that they were there. Another is that so many of them were demonstrably very good and, of this, King George V School was an outstanding example. Such schools, with scant resources other than blackboard, chalk, well-thumbed text-books and excellent staff, pulled themselves and their pupils up by their own boot straps.

**David Arnold, Headmaster and Principal of KGV 1976-1983**

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The Red Rose of December 1974 contained a number of brief comments on KGV from new boys:

*'The place seemed gigantic. The corridors seemed to last forever.'*

*'My first impression of KGV was that it was very dull and gloomy.'*

*'House meetings used to mix me up.'*

*'I had to get used to writing with a pen as I had never done so before, which might strike some people as odd.'*

*'The food was fairly digestible. Not only that, but you could have as much as you could get, both of food and of water.'*

*'At first I thought it was odd to have to sit in alphabetical order, but now I sit in alphabetical order very often.'*

*'I was used to being big boss at my old school, but here you turn a corner and bump into a giant pair of legs.'*

*'I don't like Gym because it's cold and you have to have showers. You also have to have showers after Rugby. I don't like Rugby.'*

*'Rugby is great fun and you feel a peculiar warmth when you tackle someone, especially a teacher.'*

## NUMBERS ON ROLL

The table below, with a few gaps, shows the general growth in King George V School numbers over the years:

Years	Average Roll	Average VI Form	
1920-24	230	-	Woodlands opened
1925-29	390	28	KGV opened 1926
1930-34	530	56	
1935-39	540	84	
1940-44	620	90	
1945-49	640	123	G Millward retired; G F Dixon appntd '49
1950-54	575	142	
1955-59	655	160	
1960-64	738	201	
1965-69	784	232	
1970-74	789	237	
1975-79	802	333	G F Dixon retired '76 D J Arnold appntd.

## GEOFFREY F DIXON

Geoffrey Dixon came to King George V School after teaching for a considerable time at Uppingham, commissioned service during the war, and a short period as a civilian instructor in charge of science teaching at Sandhurst. Without first-hand experience of the state education system, he took over a school which, during twenty-nine years under its first headmaster, G A Millward, had established a reputation as one of the most successful maintained grammar schools in the country.

For a time, content to listen and learn, he made no changes, but the school was growing rapidly and the increasing demand for further education caused a great expansion of the sixth form. Mr Dixon always anticipated the changes that these developments required. He constantly sought to improve the timetable so that more variety of subject choice may be offered, he initiated the formation of the Parents' Association and the institution of regular parents' meetings to discuss the welfare and progress of boys. These are only the most significant improvements among many which have reflected his unflagging concern to make a good school even better.

Mr Dixon played his part as a class teacher, especially in Physics with senior forms, and he has always given close personal attention to the academic work of every boy in the school. He has taken great interest in sports, and has made notable contributions to a variety of activities outside normal school hours. His skill and experience as a mountaineer must surely stand first among these. He has led innumerable climbing and fell-walking expeditions, inspiring a love of the sport in many pupils whose continued enthusiasm as Old Georgians he has frequently shared on the rock face. A talented musician, he was to be found at his desk, leading the cellists he had himself tutored in most performances by the School orchestra.

No man could have been more keenly aware of his duty to the school he has led for so long and with such distinction. His scholarship, and his insistence on the importance of scholarship, have played a decisive part in the many academic successes of his pupils in the most competitive fields of education in the country. To boys, staff and parents, he has always been the most accessible of headmasters, and many people who have been to him for help and guidance have cause to be grateful for his wisdom.

It is for his imaginative leadership that we are most notably in his debt. Almost every boy in the school, over the past nine years, has had his conception of the possibilities of school life transformed by one project, Long Rigg, the Sedbergh field studies centre. It has been made possible by devoted labours of staff, old boys and parents, and especially by the parents' generous financial help. But it would have been impossible, even unthought of, without Mr Dixon's vision and enthusiasm. This is happily no time for a memorial, but when that time comes, I believe he would ask for none better.

**George Wakefield, 1976**