

The History

of



Finchley County School

1890 - 2004

as seen and heard by the people who lived, worked and played there

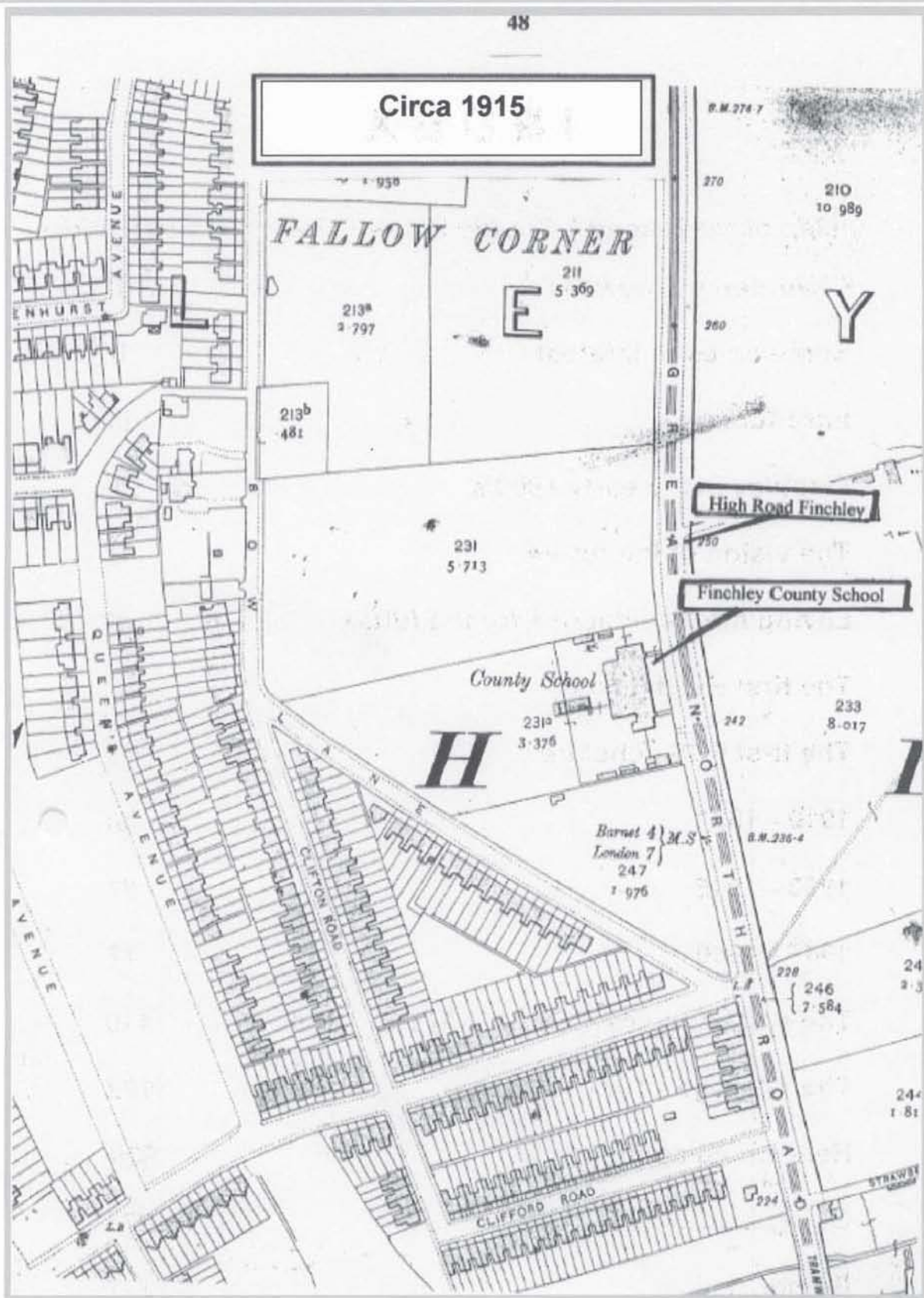
**THE
HISTORY
OF
FINCHLEY COUNTY SCHOOL
AS
RECORDED AT THE TIME
BY
THE STAFF AND THE PUPILS
WHO LIVED, WORKED AND PLAYED
THERE**

2006

The cover is adapted from a design by Ivor J Kitchener (1944/51)

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Map of the Finchley County School site

frontispiece

Chairman's Foreword

Finchley County School

The foundation stone for the School building was laid in September 1903. For the first 8 years of its life the building housed the Finchley Higher Elementary School but with grammar school status achieved in 1910 the school was renamed FINCHLEY COUNTY SCHOOL.

Finchley County School existed until 1971 when it amalgamated with Manorside and Hillside Schools to become Finchley Manorhill School. In 1984 the building ceased to be used as a school and at the end of 2003, just over one hundred years after the foundation stone was laid, the building, having been sold by the local authority to developers, was demolished.

This is the history of Finchley County School. It is the story of the four headmasters, the staff, the pupils, the friendships built and the special affection the School holds for many.

We are lucky that over the years the contemporary history of Finchley County School has been chronicled through the pages of The Fincunian (the School Magazine) and The Scimitar (the magazine of the Old Fincunians Association). Additionally, we are fortunate that in Jack 'EJR' Rawlings we had someone who loved the School probably more than most. A pupil and teacher of the School and the backbone of the OF's for 50 years Jack kept records, pictures, sports and academic cups and other memorabilia.

After two years of reading and re-reading these sources, reviewing the archives as well as trawling the columns of the local press Les Sharp has brought together all the information to create one coherent story of Our School as seen and heard through the eyes and ears of those who knew and loved the School. We are indebted to Les for his dedication in producing this history.

It is a history with a beginning, a middle, but no end, because while there is at least one Old Fincunian still breathing the School will continue to exist.

And, this book - The History of Finchley County School - will help to ensure that this is the case.

Godfrey Mann (1959/66)

Chairman of The Old Fincunian's Association

DATES OF INTEREST

- 1902** *Higher Elementary School conceived in the Alder School, Long Lane.*
- 1903** *Foundation stone laid.*
- 1904** *School opened with Mr Carr as Headmaster and 150 pupils.*
- 1910** *Grammar School status achieved, and School Song written.*
- 1911** *Cookery/Woodwork block built.*
- 1921** *War Memorial painted by Mr Howland, Art Master.*
- 1926** *Adjoining field purchased for school use.*
- 1930** *School Pavilion built.*
- 1931** *Entry restricted to girls only for one year.*
- 1932** *Mr Carr retires and Mr Chalk appointed Headmaster.*
- 1934** *Striped blazers introduced for boys and girls.*
- 1940** *Air raid shelters built.*
- 1944** *School fees abolished.*
- 1945** *Mr Chalk retires and Mr Povah appointed Headmaster*
- 1949** *All classrooms levelled and tiered floors removed.*
- 1952** *War Memorial library established*
- 1967** *Mr Povah retires and Mr Joscelyn appointed Headmaster.*
- 1971** *Amalgamation with Manorside and Hillside to form Finchley Manorhill.*
- 1984** *Building is converted into Teachers' Professional Development Centre.*
- 1990** *Barnet advisory and Inspection staff move into the building which is used for a wide range of educational and vocational courses.*
- 2003** *London Borough of Barnet decides to dispose of the building.*

INTRODUCTION

May 2004

On looking back through my copies of the Scimitar I came across a letter, dated 1 March 1971, from Mr C D Joscelyne, the last Headmaster of Finchley County School before it became a comprehensive school and changed its name. In that letter he wrote :-

'....In November 1969 I made a suggestion - that some of the photographs which were on display at the Reunion that year, might be preserved to form a permanent collection.....I now want to extend that suggestion for it seems to me it is about time that a history of the school was written. The record which I have in mind would contain some factual chapters - the dates when the various buildings were erected, the decision to change the status of the school by admitting girls only, and so on - interspersed with reminiscences about some of the school's colourful characters - perhaps Miss Dace and Mr Davie could be persuaded to contribute something here! Former issues of the Scimitar and of the Fincunian would, of course, provide much of the necessary material and in fact all we need is somebody to act as Editor to collate it all. Any volunteers?...'

With the Old School building demolished and buried by developers and the indignities suffered by our beloved War Memorial a recent memory, it is a particularly appropriate time for such a history to be written. Add to that the fact that the year 2003 was the centenary year of the foundation stone being laid. Finchley County School building would now be more than one hundred years old, and the year 2004 celebrates one hundred years since the first lessons were taught there. A history of the Old School and its building is more than appropriate.

So, Mr Joscelyne, here is your volunteer and in time honoured fashion I am holding up my right arm to signify that fact!

The book is not a text book, it is rather a chronological compilation of facts, memories and anecdotes as seen and heard through the eyes and ears of people who lived through the days, weeks, months and years between 1890 and 2004. Consequently inaccuracies and misconceptions abound as the history of the Old School unfolds, but every word contains the truthful thoughts and perceptions of those who studied, worked, played, laughed, cried and lived at that proud and stately building every Old Fincunian remembers proudly as "Finchley County School".

Les Sharp (1947/52)

Editor of the Scimitar, 1996 onwards.

FINCHLEY IN THE EARLY 1900's

When the first thoughts about a new school began to emerge, Finchley was a rural area covered by fields, hedges, trees and farms. As the 20th century dawned, change was in the air but no one foresaw the pace and the extent of the changes during the first decade or so. In March and April 1969 the Finchley Press published two articles by Jim Dark, an Old Fincunian, of Nether Street, Church End, Finchley, aged 69 at the time. They were sent in by his daughter-in-law, Mary Dark (nee Howard 1946/51) :-

'...I have been a resident in Finchley all my life. I was born in Bedford Road, East Finchley in 1900, and have seen many changes in different parts of the locality. The old boundary between Finchley and Hendon Councils at the end of Dollis Road, just past the viaduct was a watersplash which was made by Dollis Brook crossing the road in a dip. On the left-hand side of the road wooden planks were placed about two feet above the level of the brook for pedestrians to walk. Vehicles, which were mainly horse-drawn, had to pass through the water. Eventually the road was levelled off and an iron bridge was built over the brook.

At the lower end of Hendon Lane, at Crooked Usage, a path ran across the fields in Golders Green. The walk was through open country all the way.

Opposite the Green Man Public House, High Road, East Finchley, was a pathway and boundary fence, and beyond the fence there was a drop of about 20 feet to the then existing small stream which was piped under the main road. This low lying ground was very marshy and beside the stream were willow trees on both banks. A few wooden planks were laid across the stream for pedestrians. The stream eventually went as far as Long Lane where it was again piped under the road.

I lived in Richmond Road, East Finchley, at this time and attended Finchley County School, and on many occasions I used to return home by this route across the path over the fields (which are now part of the North Circular Road and the fire station) to the almshouses between Long Lane and Oak Lane (which are now used as allotments).

The two fields near the almshouses were, in those days of 1912, pastures and grazing grounds for Messrs Pulham and Sons who owned large herds of cattle.

In the early 1900's there was a footpath across the Glebe Land, then known as Roughlots, commencing opposite Squires Lane, North Finchley, to the Triumph Public House at the junction of Summers Lane and Woodhouse Road, Friern Barnet. A number of stiles made this a very interesting walk.

About 1912 - 1914 a fair was held on the first field adjacent to the High Road (where the Finchley swimming pool now stands).

At the corner of Summers Lane and bounded by High Road and Christchurch, North Finchley, was a field enclosed by a hawthorn hedge. This field was leased to

Finchley County School about 1913 and was used as their sports ground. Next to this field was the Ibis Lawn Tennis Club, belonging to the Prudential Assurance Company, which consisted of two hard courts, six grass courts and a club house. All this ground was eventually built on and became Kenver Avenue and Sandringham Gardens.

In the Finchley area during my lifetime I have seen the gradual disappearance of farming and horticultural land giving way to the building of residential and shop properties, and the curtailment of the crafts practised by journeyman and others associated with the rural activity which existed in the district. Furthermore the services provided by tradesmen have altered considerably, while the public utility undertakings have changed immensely, especially when one reflects to the days of the street lamplighter.

Advancement in the mode of transport since the pre-1920 days has necessitated the great road improvement schemes which have arisen in the locality.....

My first recollection as a boy of six years of age was being taken by my father to an evening performance at Lord George Sanger's Circus. The big top was erected on the piece of ground on the High Road, East Finchley, opposite Church Lane, part of where Chandos Road and Martin School now stand.....Lord Sanger had a farm which was situated in East End Road opposite Brackenbury Road and Sedgemere Avenue, which was called Park Farm....a large house standing in spacious grounds and the farm had many barns and outhouses as well as stables.....There was also a cricket field adjoining his farm which extended to Joslins, the monumental masons, next to St Marylebone cemetery; the entrance to the cricket field was in East End Road. Two old four-wheel open horse trams, that used to operate from the Archway Tavern to Camden Town, were used as grandstands to watch the cricket on the left hand side of the ground close to Sanger's Farm.

About the period of 1904 a horse bus service was in operation between the Bald Faced Stag in the High Road, East Finchley, and Archway Tavern, Highgate. These buses had open tops with a small cover for fixing over the seat when it was wet. Most bus drivers wore a bowler hat and I can well recall many a hat that was much discoloured through climatic conditions and old age.....In my young days, a moat surrounded three sides of the existing Finchley Cricket Ground; the water was about 25 feet wide and its boundary was Briarfield Avenue, Squires Lane and East End Road.....When the moat was filled in houses were eventually built on the piece of land in Squires Lane and the existing cricket ground had the benefit of the land bordering Briarfield Avenue and East End Road.....

In Regent's Park Road, Church End, Finchley, opposite Mountfield Road, the Finchley Water Cress Beds were situated. These beds were about 20 feet below the level of the main road and stretched for some way to where now stands the Express Dairy College Farm. When the North Circular Road at Henlys Corner was started, the water cress beds were discontinued and the water taken through pipes. Thousands of tons of soil and hardcore were carted to the area to make up the level of the North Circular Road.

An interesting walk could be taken from the Queen's Head along Regent's Park Road to Golders Green, where on each side of the road was a high hawthorn hedge and the only property in sight was the Royal Oak public house and the few shops adjoining the police station at Temple Fortune. Only about a dozen shops existed opposite the Royal Oak. It was lovely open country all the way'.

Frank Richardson was born in 1893, attended FCS from 1904 - 1909, and wrote from Canada in Scimitar No46, Spring 1964 :-

In 1904 '.... there was an abundance of space all round; fields on both sides of the road to the top of the hill - and more beyond that. The only means of travel was by horse-drawn bus, which started from the Swan and Pyramids, and proceeded via Highgate Archway to somewhere near the City. I distinctly remember the coming of electric tram cars. Motorbuses at that time were most unreliable; if a bus completed one trip of about eight miles in a day without breaking down, it was quite a feat.

Like most of my school mates, I saw Active Service in the First World War with the Royal Artillery, and finished by getting "Blighty One" two weeks before armistice was signed. Then I soon married, and came to Canada in 1926....

If I was to descend on Finchley now, I would probably fail to recognise the place! Rows and rows of houses probably cover fields where we roamed in the early years of the century. Six or seven years ago I was having a holiday at San Francisco in California, and was "making up" my attendance at the Rotary Club in that City; to my intense surprise another visitor came and sat next to me, and on his badge was "Finchley". So we had plenty to talk about while we ate. He was about twenty years my junior, but otherwise we had much in common - we both attended the County School, and both went to St Barnabas Church at Woodside Park.....'.

Those two reports describe the environment in which the Old School was conceived and built. But the system of education was also beginning to change.

Before 1890 the school curriculum was confined to the three R's and Geography. Then, Long Lane Board School introduced Chemistry and Botany as specific subjects. That does not sound too radical a change but at the time it was quite revolutionary. The Board recognised the need to provide a suitable educational course for bright children who completed their standard curriculum by the age of twelve, so the Head Master at Long Lane instituted classes in Chemistry and Physiography for his Standard VII. In this way he was able to meet the requirements set by the Science and Art Department of the Education Department of Central Government.

The Headmaster, Mr Carter, improvised in the Central Hall of the school with apparatus and benches for experiments and the classes were a huge success. The results achieved in the Science and Art Department's examinations were better than the average results achieved in adult classes throughout the kingdom.

The Board then co-operated with the Middlesex County Council Technical Instruction Committee by providing Evening Classes in the Sciences and in 1894 the Board built and equipped a Chemical Laboratory in which Day and Evening Classes were both held. The studies were extended to include Theoretical and Practical Chemistry (Organic and Inorganic).

In order to attract grants from the Science and Art Department it was necessary to establish a Day School of Science, so such a school was established on 1 August 1896. Thirty-two pupils were recruited from the Standard VII and excellent results were achieved. The School continued successfully until July 1899 when the Science and Art Department insisted on the building of a Physical Laboratory.

There was some controversy over this proposal which was considered, by some, to be illegal expenditure of money from the rates and as a result, the school had to be abandoned. But not for long because under the then new education policies which established Higher Elementary Schools, School Boards were entitled to maintain schools for the education of children aged between ten years and fifteen years who were *"likely to benefit from a more advanced course than that provided in an Elementary School"*.

Application was made immediately to the Education Department for recognition, and a curriculum was submitted for approval. This application was successful and a new Higher Elementary School, not yet built, but eventually to become Finchley County School, was recognised as from July 1901, subject to the Board agreeing to provide suitable accommodation in due course. The School in its then existing premises in Long Lane flourished and prospered and in 1903 it was reported that there were 180 children on the books and the temporary accommodation was *'crowded to its utmost limits'*.

It appears that there was a genuine political wish for every child in Finchley with ability to be able to benefit from the new educational opportunities which were necessary for a successful life career. This view was promoted by the Finchley School Board, quite a radical stance to take in view of the popular arguments against the spending of public money on educational matters which fell outside the three "R's" and Geography.

The members of the Finchley School Board at that time were :-

Henry Laming (Chairman)

S Moody

J T Harveyson (Vice-Chairman)

Andrew McMaster

Gertrude Emily Hay

C Rabbidge

C D Bray

F Tinsley

W J B Fawley

Vyvyan Wells

George Irwin

W M Wightman

Henry Stevens Clerk to the Board



From the book "Finchley and Friern Barnet" by Stewart Gillies and Pamela Taylor. Copyright Barnet Libraries Arts and Museums 1992. Published by Phillimore and Co Ltd., Shopwyke Hall, Chichester, Sussex, PO20 6BQ (ISBN 0 85033 844 1)

This picture of the East Finchley Board School was taken in 1912. The school opened in the Congregational Church premises in Chapel Street in 1881. In 1884 it moved to Long Lane where it was later to become known as the Alder School. Finchley County School was conceived there, moving to its own premises in 1904, but the Alder School continued in its own right until 1978 when it was merged with Christ's College and the buildings demolished.

K A Povah wrote in Scimitar 94, Spring edition 1982 :-

'In 1902 County Councils were empowered to set up "secondary schools" which we now call "selective Grammar" schools. Urban districts dealt with what was called "elementary education".

In 1904 our school started as a "Higher Elementary" with Mr Alder as temporary Head. He was succeeded by Mr Carr, whose aim was to enable his pupils to "matriculate" so that they could proceed to University, often graduating at age 19.

We became a "secondary" school about 1909....'.

It is perhaps worth recording that at this time there were two teachers at the Alder School who were to play a significant part in the first days of the Finchley Higher Elementary School and in its subsequent development and success as Finchley County School.

They were Miss Ethel Amelia Thrum, who taught Science, and Mr Leonard Francis Wallis, who taught Chemistry and Physics.

Their names are prominent throughout the History of FCS.

THE VISION OF THE FUTURE

The new Higher Elementary School was to be built at Long Hill, between Squire's Lane and Summers Lane, on the Great North Road.

It was to be built under the superintendence of Mr W G Wilson, A.R.I.B.A., of London, whose design was selected by the Assessor, Mr Thomas Calcutt, F.R.I.B.A., from amongst eleven designs received in the competition. His design met all the requirements of the Board of Education and the plans were approved without alteration of any kind.

The specification was :-

"The new School would provide accommodation for 330 scholars.

There would be separate entrances for boys and girls, reached through arched gateways opening direct from the High Road. The entrances would give immediate access to the cloak rooms and staircases, which would be placed at each end of the building, and to the central hall.

The central hall would be 60 feet by 30 feet, lofty and well lighted from the roof. One end would give access to ten class rooms, which would be grouped together so as to allow in their proper sequence, the first, second, third, and fourth year's scholars.

The Head Master's room would be near the boy's entrance and overlook the boy's playground.

On the half landings would be placed the rooms for assistant teachers, and on the first floor would be the Science and Art Class Rooms, with a lecture theatre for 80 scholars. These class rooms would be most thoroughly equipped with the requisite fittings and appliances, which will be designed by the Architect under the immediate supervision of Mr Alder, the Head Teacher, who would ensure that nothing was omitted which in his experience would add to their completeness and efficiency.

The floors and staircases throughout would be fire resisting and the building will be equipped with a complete system of fire appliances.

The building will be warmed by means of low pressure ventilating radiators placed in all class rooms and corridors and in the central hall.

Each radiator will be supplied with fresh cold air which is warmed to the necessary temperature while passing through the radiators. The heat would be generated in a large boiler placed in a chamber in the basement. The Contract for this work was placed with Messrs. Wenham and Waters, Ltd.

Special provision would be made for ventilating the class rooms in

addition to the means of ventilation provided in connection with the heating. Cold fresh air inlets would be provided to every class room throughout the building, so regulated that the admission of air can be reduced or increased to any necessary extent.

Extract flues will be carried from all rooms to extract ventilators placed on the roofs and to specially constructed chimney shafts, so that a constant and rapid change of air takes place. This work was entrusted to Messrs. C Kite and Sons, whose special ventilators were to be used throughout.

Most ample provision must be made so that every portion of the building will be thoroughly lighted by windows arranged not only so as to distribute light fully, but also to materially augment the ventilation without causing draughts - the type of window being that generally approved in hospital construction.

There will also be an electric light installation throughout the building in which the most recent methods and materials will be employed. This work was to be carried out by Messrs. Henry Farmer and Co.

The clock tower will be a notable feature of the building. The clock would have four illuminated dials, each four feet in diameter, and these will be automatically lighted up by electricity. Being in a commanding situation and seen from all directions, this should prove of great general service, as the want of a public clock has long been felt. The fact that the clock will be made by Messrs. J & J Stockall & Sons, with their most recent improvements, is a guarantee that it will prove to be an accurate timekeeper.

The Architect, being impressed with the necessity of having such special works as the heating and electric lighting not only effective, but carried out in the best possible manner, is advised in these two trades by Mr Hilton Johnson, A.M.I.M.E., A.M.I.E.E., who has great experience in this class of work.

Adjoining the school, but detached from it, there is to be a School-keeper's house.

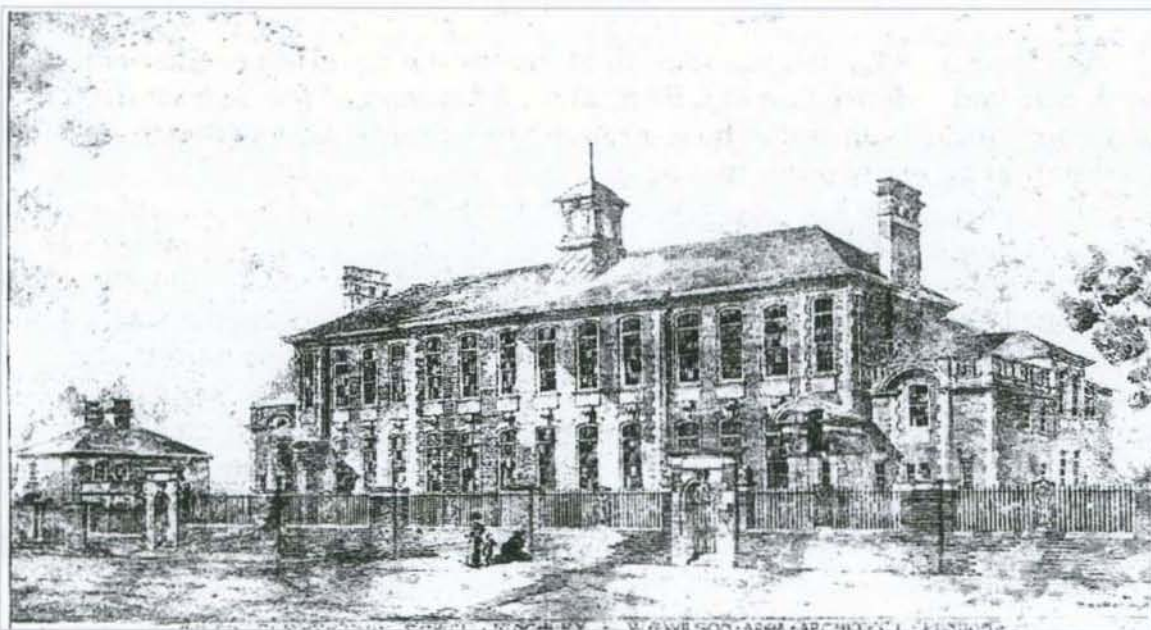
In the rear and at the sides of the school there will be large asphalted playgrounds, and behind these again, football and cricket pitches.

The buildings will be of red brick with limestone dressings from Monks Park Quarry, and numerous large skylights and closely spaced elongated windows.

The style is a free handling of what is commonly known as Queen Anne.

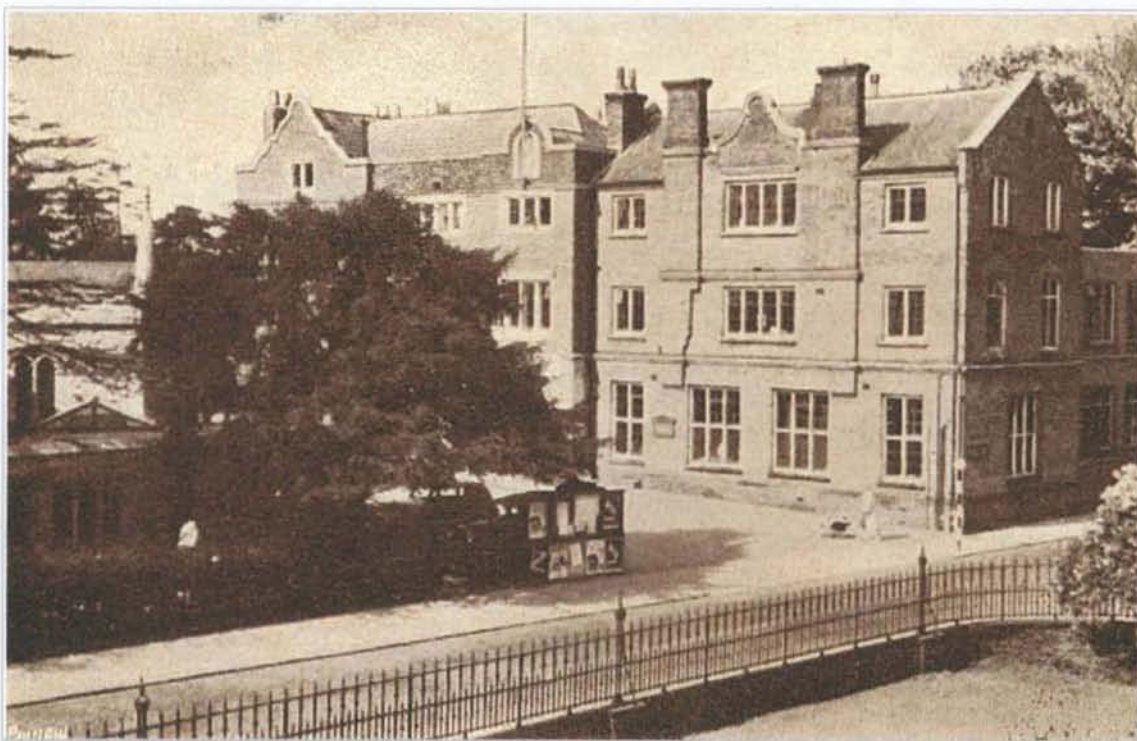
Messrs. Tasker & Sons, are the Quantity Surveyors, and the general contractors for the work are Messrs. F & E Davey, Ltd., of Scotland".

On the next page there is a drawing by the architect, Mr W G Wilson, ARIBA of London. It must have been completed before 1903 because it was used in the programme for the laying of the foundation stone that year.



FRONT VIEW OF THE NEW SCHOOL TO BE BUILT ON THE GREAT NORTH ROAD.

This photograph of Finchley Municipal Offices provides a comparison with other similar buildings in Finchley at this time :-



LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

On 24 September 1903, the foundation stone for the new Higher Elementary School was laid. Henry Laming, Esq., M.A., Chairman of the School Board, gave a short address in which he expressed the *'great encouragement'* the Board felt that so many persons had gathered around to assist in the stone-laying ceremony. Mr Laming then sketched the history of the school and expressed indebtedness to all those involved in the planning including the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and Sir Alfred de Bock Porter, for the *'handsome way in which they had met the Board'*. At this point there was loud applause from the gathering. There were shouts of *'Hear, hear'* when he said that the school *'had to be in the centre of the parish and it could not go another hundred yards nearer the centre'*. The school was *'not meant to be a competitor to the school at Church End'*, ie., Christ's College. The people who were taking up residence in Finchley *'required a school such as this and they are prepared to pay a little money to secure the education for which the school was established'*. Again, shouts of *'Hear, hear'*.

At this point he read from a report from the Board of Education :-

'This school as a whole does very creditable work. The instruction is intelligent and systematic; the scholars are alert and extremely orderly. The relations between teachers and taught are most harmonious, and conduce materially to the welfare of the school'. There was a burst of applause from the gathering.

Mr Laming then invited Mrs Hay to lay the foundation stone :-

'The builder then made a judicious disbursement of mortar, the stone was lowered into its place, and after tapping it with a trowel in the most approved fashion, the stone was laid'.

The Architect, Mr W G Wilson, A.R.I.B.A., of London, then presented Mrs Hay with a silver trowel.

After the stone was laid a short address was given by Mr Rabbidge who mentioned, amid cheers, that the Board, having received a grant of £300, *'will be able to build the school without entailing a penny on the rates'* and he believed that it was possible to carry on the school with the fee of six pence per week from the scholars and the Government grant, *'with very little burden on the rates'*.

The Head Master, Mr Alder, said that the stone had been laid in a graceful fashion and he declared that it would be *'the most pleasing grave stone that could be erected over the Old School Board which was to be replaced by the Finchley Education Committee'* the following Wednesday.

Then the Rev. J T Lang said the following prayer :-

'Prevent us O Lord in all our doings with Thy most gracious favour and further us with Thy continual help that in all our works begun, continued and ended in Thee we may

glorify Thy Holy Name and finally by Thy mercy obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Heavenly Father, Giver of all good gifts and Author of all true knowledge, accept we pray Thee the dedication of the building to be raised in this place, and assist with Thy blessing the work to be carried on in it. Shield from danger those who shall labour in its construction. Guide with Thy counsel those who shall be called to watch over and direct its progress. Thy favour rest on all who touch and all who learn, that here many of Thy servants may be trained in habits of industry and usefulness, as well as enriched with genuine knowledge, and grant that we all may so use at all times and in all places Thy good gifts in such wise as not by the enjoyment or abuse of things temporal to lose our share of things eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with Thee and the Holy Ghost be the praise and glory of this and all our works - now and for evermore. Amen'.

There then followed the Lord's Prayer and the hymn, 'O Lord of hosts, Whose glory fills....', sung by the Higher Elementary School children. The Benediction was pronounced by the Rev. A B Middleditch and the proceedings closed with the National Anthem.

The Finchley Free Press reported on 26 September 1903 that the ceremony had been attended by '...a great crowd of ratepayers and others from all ends of the parish. Representatives of all the schools in Finchley were present, and it is hardly too much to say that almost every family in the parish was also represented.....'

Amongst those present at the stone-laying were :-

Mr H Laming (Chairman of the School Board); Mrs Hay; Messrs J T Harveyson; S Moody; C Rabbidge; C D Bray; V Wells; W Wightman; District Councillors Todd JP; J Wilde; and J Boggan; Messrs C F Vernon BA; G Howard; J F Alder BSc; A B Green; L Wallace; T Coker; A Fowl; and G Mellon; Miss Thrum; Miss Bradley; Miss Johnson; Mrs Harveyson; Mrs Macfarlane; Mrs Coker; Revs A B Middleditch; J T Lang MA; Duncan Grant; S B Mayall; Messrs H T Tubbs JP; J Y Paterson; W Everest; J T Phillipson MA (Principal of Christ's College); W E Martin (Chairman of the new Education Authority); D Macfarlane (Chairman of the Technical Education Committee); J T Small; W Dowlen; H Stevens (Clerk to the School Board); and others.....

The final act was the calling for three lusty cheers for Mrs Hay, which the boys gave in hearty style'.

All this sounds very grand but an article in the June 1954 edition of Scimitar puts a slightly different complexion on the new school :-

'On Wednesday, 7 April 1954, Mrs J G Bryson, Mayoress of Finchley and an Old Fincunian, presided over a memorable gathering at the School as part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations, when the present Staff and Scholars heard from their predecessors something of the early days of FCS.

The Headmaster, Mr K A Povah, welcomed all guests and instanced one or two ways in which the school in 1954 is building on traditions. The first speaker was Mr L F Wallis, who taught at the School of Science from which FCS derived. He described how the building was put down on the edge of a swamp, and how the roller sent a wave of water before it. Mr Wallis was helping as a part-time teacher at FCS in 1953, only a year ago, and he ascribes great virtue in the school, in 1904 and in 1954, to its compactness. After Mr Wallis's fine opening, Mr Charles Carr took over and with great vigour recounted the criticisms of the building, and particularly the siting, made by Mr Wallis. The scepticism of the School Board about the need for such a school, parsimony in the provision of equipment, ill will on the part of some officials - were all handicaps which were overcome through the devoted efforts of a redoubtable staff.....At this point all present joined in the singing of the School Song. Mr L F Wallis, who wrote the words, led the singing, and Mr John Davie, the composer, played the piano "with vigorous strain".....'.

KA Povah wrote in Scimitar 103, Spring 1985 edition :-

'I am most grateful for the document concerning the 1903 opening of the FCS building. I understand that the architect never built another school, and the detailed account in that document of the ventilation and heating (so-called) system in effect says why! It was, as so many will remember, hopelessly inefficient. The air passages under the Hall and into the Classrooms could be entered from the boiler room, through a high up small door - probably still there - 3' high and 2' wide. I made it my business to crawl into this and through the dusty tunnel for the length of the Hall, and observing the branches off. The theory of fresh air being warmed and then distributed by convection through classroom grilles was fine on paper, possibly, but in practice - hopeless.....'.

K A Honess (1946/53) was stimulated in 1949 by a talk given by Mr L F Wallis, for many years a maths master at the school, to research the school's early history :-

'...Firstly, the site of the school is of special interest. Finchley County stands on part of what was Finchley Common - once famous for its highwaymen including the legendary Dick Turpin. The Great North Road, which at that time ran through the swimming pool, (or more specifically would have done if the swimming pool had been built!), was even then the major road of the country and the favourite hunting ground of the men who were after "your money or your life".

This talk of Dick Turpin reminds me that a past Mayor of Finchley, H H Wilmot, once pointed out :-

'I am a Fincunian fan! Good people, mark well that word 'Fincunian' for its derivation takes us back to the years of Saxon invasion when the overlord, called "Finc", and his followers, ventured the seas up the Thames estuary and Lea Valley to settle by the open common or "lea" sited on the northern high land within the forest of the Middle Saxons. Hence, "Finc-es-lea" of ancient days carried on in "Fincunian" of our days. An historical place-name with tradition and a King's liegeman of leadership, law and order behind it. Surely something more dignified and true in derivation than a mere seed eating bird, the Finch, as part of the original name of Finchley.....

.....In nearly twenty years I have had the privilege of contact and friendship with Fincunia - its School and Old Scholars Association. That School standing on the old common with its highway to the north where in byegone days Tom King, Dick Turpin, Claude du Val and others would sally forth and hold up wealthy merchants.....'.

But I digress - back to L F Wallis's history lesson :-

'...The Common belonged to the Bishop of London who, in 1814, leased "...all the land of twenty-two acres, three roads, two poles between Bow Lane and Granville Road", to one Alex Murray. This land constituted Cobley's or Fallow Farm: the farmhouse stood where the house of No. 70, Queens Avenue now stands.

Our field, then, was part of the farm and no one has ever built on it. Charles Dickens once stayed at the farmhouse, and in all probability used to enjoy a stroll now and again on the "back" field - which was no doubt pleasanter for the fact that several generations of footballers had not yet trampled it down.

The School, however, did not originate in this luxuriant corner of Fallow Farm. Instead, it began in a gallery at the Alder School when Mr Carter, the Headmaster started in the Spring of 1903, a "Science School" with a laboratory in the playground below'.

In the 1971 School Magazine, Fincunian, there is an anonymous article :-

"The History of FCS"The school was established in 1902 and since then many alterations have been carried out academically, structurally and socially.

The school originated in a gallery at the Alder School in 1902, where Mr Carter was the headmaster. The school then termed "higher elementary" moved, in 1904, to its present site, on what was formerly known as Finchley Common, famed for its highwaymen : "Where once Dick Turpin plied his trade; And nightly held the Northern Way".

In 1902, the authorities decided to have a Higher Elementary School built. Accordingly, a competition was held among architects, with the result that, in the following year, the plans of W G Wilson were accepted. The design was, believe it or not, the most up-to-date in school buildings.

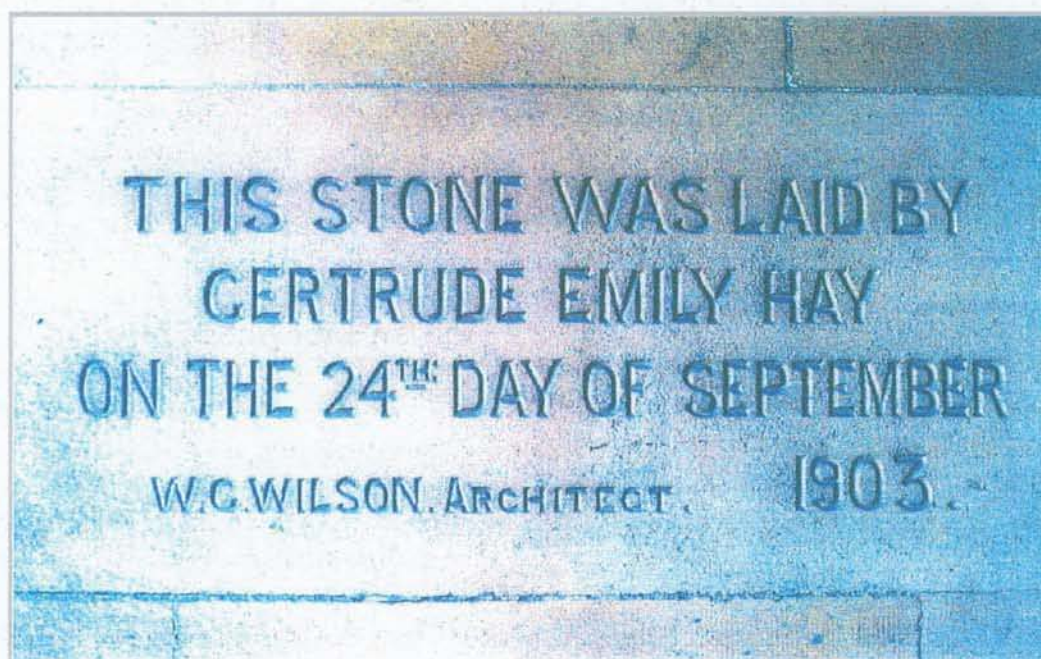
The foundation stone, which can be seen just outside the girl's entrance, was laid by Gertrude Emily Hay on 24 September 1903. This stone also bears the name of W G Wilson, the architect, and his design was regarded as the most up-to-date in school buildings (believe it or not). The splendid new building was finally opened on 7 October 1904, with 150 pupils and was known as the Higher Elementary School. Since then, there have been two changes in the nomenclature; in 1909, it became one of the old type Grammar Schools, and in January 1945, it adopted its present title of Secondary Grammar School.

Between 1904 and 1910 the pupil numbers increased to about 380. Mr Carr was then headmaster, and he held this post for twenty-eight years, in which time a strong relationship was built up between himself, staff and pupils. The Old Scholars may

remember him most for the faithfulness shown by his wire-haired fox terrier, "Chunky", who followed him closely round the school'.

Frank Richardson (1904 - 1909), wrote from Canada and his letter was published in Scimitar No46, Spring 1964 :-

'.....As a small boy of less than eleven years of age, I entered the portals after the summer vacation of 1904, at which time the "Head" was Mr Charles H Carr, BSc.; other masters were Sidney T Wallis, his elder brother, Leonard F Wallis, and Mr A Green. There were but two lady members on the staff - Miss Ethel Thrum and Miss Gillet'.



The foundation stone was saved at the time of demolition in 2004 and was presented to the Finchley Society at Avenue House, for safe keeping and display.

This photograph was taken in 2002 in preparation for the application to have the building listed. The application was unsuccessful.

For the foreseeable future the stone can be viewed, by prior appointment, at Avenue House, Finchley. The premises are used by The Finchley Society and permission was given for the stone to be stored in the archive/museum there along other artefacts from the Old School building.

We have Norman Burgess (1933/38), now deceased, to thank for this arrangement.

THE FIRST HEADMASTER

In 1999 we received a letter from Brian Rowland (1949/54) which raised some difficult questions about the number and names of the various Headmasters of the Old School :-

'...There is a reference to Manorside being Squires Lane School and a reference to Long Lane School. Long Lane School was actually the Alder School. Originally it had been called the East Finchley Board School opened in 1884. It merged with Christ's College in 1978. How do I know all this? Because there is a picture of Long Lane School as illustration No. 131 in a book published by Phillimore, called "Finchley and Friern Barnet"....'.

Despite all that has been written so far, the history has never been absolutely clear even as to the number of Headmasters who held office.

'...It's a grand old place. It faced two world wars and was run by four headmasters.....', wrote Martin Appleby in 1971. T S Jones (Jonah), teacher 1929/1967, also went for four when he wrote in the School Magazine in 1971:-

'...But as I have remembered Mr Carr, so I must remember something of the other three Headmasters; Mr Chalk, during the war, forever walking about with a large roll of drawing-paper (his time-table) and making numerous alterations on it as the situation changed day by day (nobody ever knew how many different time-tables he had to make during the first three years of the war); Mr Chalk surprising our first Girl's hockey team by his astonishing turn of speed on the right wing; Mr Chalk jamming a hat on Dick Whittington's head in the staff play (I was Dick Whittington and how it made my head ache); Mr Povah slipping a coloured tab into its allotted place in his visual aid time-table; Mr Povah delivering a jackdaw on Thursday morning - especially the one about wrapping of a parcel; Mr Joscelyne running me off my legs as I was showing him round the school before he took up his duties and....many, many more....'.

Earlier in this publication there is reference to five :-

'...The school was established in 1902...and originated in a gallery at the Alder School in 1902 where Mr Alder was the headmaster...the school moved in 1904, to its present site...Mr Carr was then the Headmaster...Summer of 1932 saw the retirement of Mr Carr.... replaced by Mr Chalk.... 1945 saw the retirement of Mr Chalk. The successor to his difficult task was Mr K A Povah...1967 saw the arrival of C D Joscelyne...'.

Certainly the origins of Finchley County School are to be found as early as 1890 in Long Lane Board School, and the Headmaster at that time was Mr Carter. By 1901 the school was flourishing in the gallery of the Alder School where Mr Alder was Headmaster.

In 1903 the foundation stone was laid and present at the ceremony was Mr Alder, referred to as the Head Teacher, but early in 1904, Mr Carr was the Headmaster.

In the Scimitar No 61, Summer 1969 edition, there is a letter from Ethel A McAllister (nee Thrum) :-

'I wonder if you know who I am or who I was? In September 1902 Mr Alder was headmaster of the Finchley Organised Science School - I think that was its name. Mr L F Wallis, Miss Bradley, Mr Green, Mr Davie and Miss E A Thrum, that's me, formed the staff. Among the first pupils was a young girl, Phyllis Milsom, later to become Mrs Stan Wallis. My father had died November 1902 so I was really appointed before I was eighteen years old. I think it was in 1904 that we moved to the High School buildings opposite the Roughlots. Mr Alder gave me class IIb which I had until January 1910 when Mr Carr put me in charge of class III....At my wedding, Mr L F Wallis was best man.....'

In the next piece, K A Povah settles the issue and explains the situation in his usual clear and concise way. He was writing in the Spring Scimitar of 1965, No 50 :-

'As is well-known,....FCS was started in 1904, though not actually called by its present name. It was, in effect, a budding-off from Long Lane Elementary School, which from a few years previous to 1904 had received a special grant from the Board of Education to run an "advanced" science course.

This was the period of H G Wells and self-education, and the Urban District Council of Finchley had the foresight to realise that there was a need for more provision of education than Christ's College could provide, and so founded FCS, but not under that name. The ultra-first Head Master was the Mr Alder whose name is commemorated in Long Lane, but he was in charge only for the Summer Term of 1904. He gave some coaching in the Easter Holiday of that year to a boy who became the very first Fincunian - George N Ross, we believe.....

Added to the original organisation there was later a "Pupil-Teacher Centre" over which Mr Carr presided, having started as Head Master in September 1904. Later Middlesex County Council decided to take over the school as a full secondary school. In those days "Elementary" schools kept their pupils till the age of 13 or 14 years but a proportion of them gained scholarships to secondary schools, the majority of whose pupils paid a small fee. The local Urban District Council had no authority to provide secondary education, and when Middlesex took over, the School became known as Finchley County School.....

So it seems that you can claim as many Headmasters as you like, up to a total of six :-

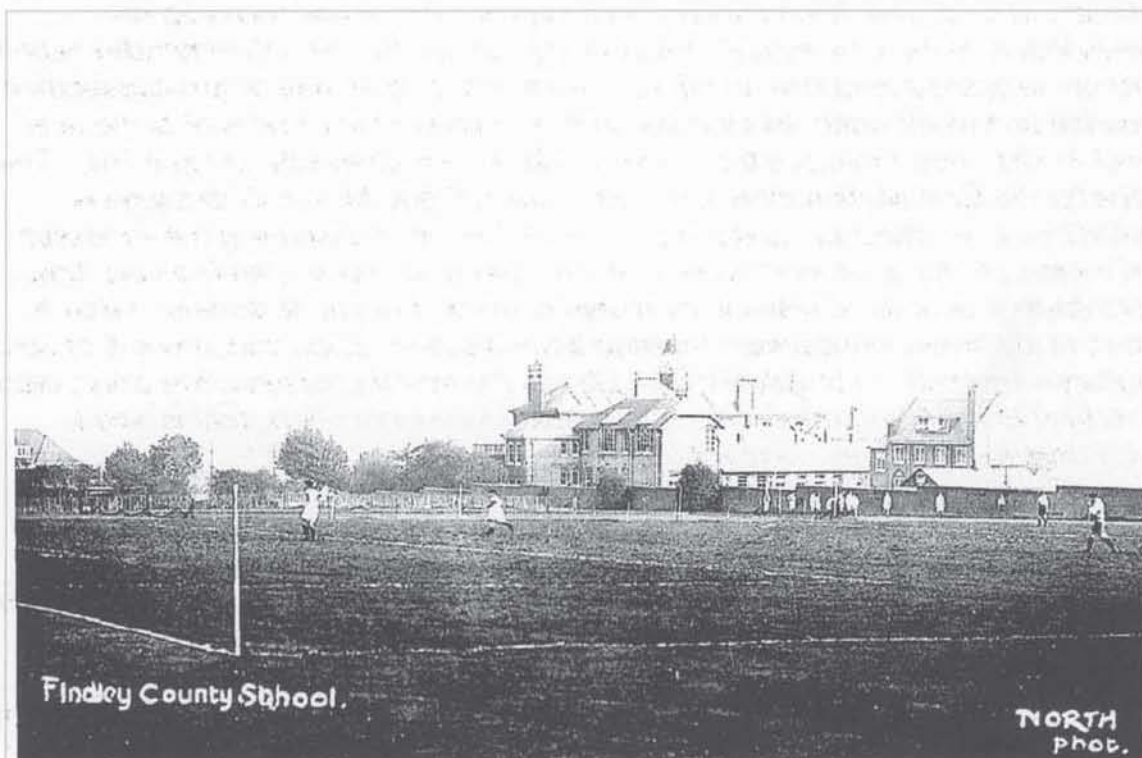
1901	Mr Carter	Long Lane School
1902	Mr Alder	Higher Elementary School
1904	Mr Carr	Higher Elementary School/Finchley County School
1932	Mr Chalk	Finchley County School
1946	Mr Povah	Finchley County Grammar School
1967	Mr Joscelyne	Finchley County Grammar School

But most people argue for four on the grounds that the name of Finchley

County School did not emerge until 1909/1910. The arguments grind on in the next chapter during the search for the very first pupil.



An early picture probably taken about 1910 just after the school became known as Finchley County School.



Picture of FCS taken across the back field about 1910

1904 - 1909 THE FIRST F.C.S SCHOLARS

The following letter from George N Ross (1904/1908) appeared in the June 1954 Golden Jubilee edition of Scimitar :-

'Some eyebrows may be lifted (it is the politest way to register disbelief) at my claim to be the first pupil at the School. It can be argued that there may be fifty or a hundred "first pupils" but not just one. A new school opens. A hundred, or so, boys and girls are told to report there on the opening date, and there you are, a hundred "first pupils". How can any one of them claim the sole distinction?

Well, it happened this way. In 1904, as you all know, the Finchley Higher Elementary School (ci-devant Finchley Science School) then fast growing out of its babyhood, was finding its nursery quarters inadequate for such a lusty child. Its new home in the High Road was almost completed and it was decided that the school should take possession on re-assembling, after the Whitsun Holidays. In those days all State Schools, as far as I can remember, had uniform holidays - 2 weeks at Christmas, 1 week at Easter, 1 week at Whitsun, and 4 weeks in August.

Some weeks previously, the then Headmaster, Mr J F Alder, had entered me for the Scholarship Examination, (one of his very few blunders!). Time was short and "Jaf", as he was affectionately known, decided I badly needed some "cramming". So to my dismay, (what schoolboy does not look forward to the "hols"?), I was told I would have to attend for private tuition during the holidays. As he had taken up his quarters already in the new school I had to report to him there on Whitmonday (when the rest of the world seemed to be out merry-making) and on one or two subsequent days during that week when, as I well remember, I had to tackle several of the later books of Euclid - how I rejoiced that several had been irretrievably lost in a fire. The Syllabus for the Examination included "Julius Caesar" and Mr L F Wallis, who is happily still with us, coached me for that. I remember him describing the excesses of the Roman youths of Caesar's day on the occasion of their Pagan festivals; how they completely ignored convention by rushing naked through the streets of Rome and how, in my sweet innocence, I blushed a deep scarlet at the very thought of such impropriety. Remind me to ask him if he recalls the faintly amused smile which crept over his face at my embarrassment. Well, dear fellow Fincunians, that is why I protest I was the first pupil. Is my claim allowed?'

Another pupil of that era was Jack Dark, perhaps a year later. Way back in 1953 Jack sent a photograph to his nephew Stanley Dark, also an Old Fincunian, of his form at school taken in 1906. The picture shows a woodwork class and attached were the following comments :-

'.....before the new school was opened, the classes were held in the top portion of the Long Lane School and it was known as Finchley Science School and a Mr J F Alder was Headmaster. The woodwork class was held in a special building there and continued there long after the new school was opened.

It is 48 years ago (1905) when I was fortunate enough to be a scholar and I still have proud recollections of my days there with all it meant in after life'.

The following names appear on the back of the photograph :

LEEMING	ANDREWS	STEVENSON	CLARKE
DARK	WASKETT	CHALK	H SOREX
OSWALD GLYN	MACHIN	WELLING	MASON

Jack Dark wrote in 1953 :- 'I wonder whether any of these are still members ?'.

The Editor of Scimitar replied in 1953 :- 'We know one, our true and trusted friend, Mr Harold Chalk, who is visible in the photograph, but only his eyes upwards managed to get into the picture. The photograph has been forwarded on to Mr Wallis because he will probably recollect most of the names on the photograph'.
That photograph is reproduced on page 26.

But wait - there is yet another claimant to the title 'First Scholar at FCS'. In 1957 Scimitar published a letter from Sydney A Spaul :-

'I was privileged to be one of the first scholars of the school and found myself often in the company of the brothers Carr - Harold and Douglas. Naturally, we had our escapades.... Not far from the school was a large house standing in its own grounds, and we often cast envious eyes at the abundance of fruit on the trees. Homeward bound one evening we decided on action, so through the hedge went Harold and Douglas whilst I kept "cavey".'

We all did our work well but not many yards away we were pounced on by the gardener and we were all shepherded back into the drawing room with pockets stuffed with apples, to await the pleasure of her ladyship. Looking very auguste, she admonished us for our wrongdoing and having done so in a manner which left us ashamed, adopted a motherly air by enquiring if we liked apples. With dropped heads we murmured that we did. To our great surprise she then ordered the gardener to give us each a sack with as many as we could carry, having first extracted a promise from us individually that we would never venture into her orchard again. We never did...through the loss of Douglas's school cap in the orchard, and the clear evidence thereby afforded of ownership, we were all duly admonished by our esteemed Head, to whom all praise be due that he did not waver', even though his son was involved.

Although he does not claim to be the first pupil at the Old School, J A J Ready was certainly there from 1911 to 1916. In 1959 he revisited the school and recounted his feelings in The Fincunian magazine of 1960 :-

'Between the years 1911 and 1916 I attended Finchley County School. Some years after I left school in pursuance of my chosen profession of banking, I emigrated to Canada, where I have lived for the past thirty years.

Remember, this was written in 1960.

During my time at School, once a week at lunch-time, under the direction of a devoted Master, pupils who were staying to dinner spent an hour in the School Hall engaged in Community Singing. Those interested were provided with a song book called "Gaudeamus" which contained the words of the best-known British and American folk songs. The first song in the book was "Forty Years On".

Possibly as a result of my singing that song so often in the School Hall, on visiting Europe in the Spring of 1959 I had an irresistible urge to visit the old School, some forty-three years after leaving it. Thus, on a bright April afternoon, by previous arrangement, I returned to the scene of so many precious boyhood memories - a visit which proved for me most rewarding.

It was with heightened step, and an eye on the clock as of old, that I walked up the hill from Squires Lane, entered the School through the well-remembered door, and called on Mr Povah, the Headmaster. Nothing seemed to have changed in his room. I could so easily recall how I first stood there in 1911 undergoing an Entrance Examination (I had come from a private school) and having to read, above all things, Chaucer! There was one difference, however; the canes which at one time were so frequently applied to my smarting hands were no longer in full view. In fact, it was only with great difficulty that Mr Povah could even find them. They were found, however, and are apparently seldom, if ever used. Times have changed!

The School Hall is quite the same; the same pictures - they could not be bettered - the same gymnastic apparatus, and the War Memorial, proudly displaying so many First-War names of boys with whom I had worked and played so long ago.

My last year at School was spent in the Fourth Form. We were the "Wandering Class"; our nominal headquarters were the Geography or Demonstration Room, opposite the Art Room. There we kept our books in cupboards; but we had few lessons in that room. We took classrooms that were vacant while the normal occupants were studying in laboratories and elsewhere. It was a considerable feat of organisation to ensure we always had the proper books with us during our wanderings.

We never, however, had a lesson in the Sixth Form room, and during my recent visit to the School I was more than gratified and perhaps a little abashed, to find myself for the first time, being ushered into that Holy of Holies to address the Sixth Form! I had prepared an account dealing with the origins of the Canadian people, remembering that on a previous visit to England I had found that English people generally regarded Canadians either as Americans, or as expatriate Englishmen, sitting in snowy wastes, longing for home....My audience appeared interested in my remarks...

After making my good-byes..... I walked down the hill to Squires Lane....it may have been the English east-wind, but I found my eyes strangely moist as... I found myself gently singing : "Away with care and sad regret.....".

How many times have we heard, spoken or sung those words, or similar?

In the Christmas 1971 edition of Scimitar, No 66, John Davie, the composer of the music for the School Song, wrote :-

'Please accept the enclosed donation from the Oldest Old Fincunian, which I think I can claim to be.....It is a far cry from 1907 when I was appointed to the Staff.....'.

But George N Ross was having none of it and again wrote to Scimitar in the Spring of 1972, :-

'Tradition, or habit, as you will, dies hard. So hard indeed that even after the 67 years since I left the School I still feel some reluctance in disputing with a Schoolmaster. In my day we held our masters in deep respect, if not awe, but temporamutantar and all that. But I feel that my status or even honour is being assailed and I must rise to its defence, come what may.

Mr Davie thinks he can claim to be the "oldest Old Fincunian". It depends, as the late Professor Joad would have said, on what he means by "oldest". In mere terms of age his claim may be good. I put my cards on the table. I shall be 82 on 9 July 1972, and if Mr Davie can beat that, I concede his point - if that is what he really means.

But I suspect that he means by "oldest" the number of years since he joined the School and I guess I score on that count. I had already left the School three years before he appeared on the scene. And - this is my trump card - Mr Povah did me the honour of creating me "Proto-Fincunian", an honour which I will not lightly renounce....'.

Not to be outdone, Sydney A Spaul re-enters the argument in Scimitar 68, November 1972. He was born 18 December 1892 within the City of London and was made a Freeman of the City in 1930. He was at FCS for only one year, 1904 - 1905 and he left because his parents moved to Essex. He achieved an "O" Level in German at the age of 76 :-

'.....I would not dare cross swords or even scimitars with our worthy friends as to who can rightly claim to be the oldest living Old Fincunian for I shall only be 80 in December 1972. Nevertheless, as George N Ross points out, it depends on how you interpret "oldest". I therefore feel entitled to join the ranks of the contenders amongst such valiant foes and in all humility claim to be the earliest still living Old Scholar, resting my case, as the QC would say, on the following facts.

I entered the school portals in the summer of 1904 as a result of an entrance exam held early that year and found myself in a form with Harold and Douglas Carr and under the Headmaster, their father, the late Charles Carr. I graduated from what was then St Mary's National School in Church End, Finchley where, at the tender age of 10 we had already learned that in French the pronoun precedes the auxiliary verb.

George Ross throws down the gauntlet but arthritis prevents me from picking it up, so may I be permitted to putting the gloves on instead and risk being adjudged the "runner up" ?'.

Michael Henderson was also born in 1892 and at FCS from 1904 to 1907 :-

'George Ross and I were contemporaries and good friends. He may remember me because I frequently went to him at the Swiss Banking Corporation for the good advice he was always prepared to give when he was working there. In age he beats me by a little - I am 82 in September 1972 and left the School at about 15 years of age'.

George N Ross was determined to have the last word and in Scimitar No 69, Spring 1973 edition he was at it again :-

'It was interesting to read Mr Spaul's amusing and witty letter. A record holder who never receives a challenge and sits alone in his glory can never be very happy, so I was pleased to see him enter the lists.

The Old School opened its doors to the mass of pupils immediately after Whitsuntide holiday, one week, in 1904 under the Headmastership of the late J F Alder. I am afraid, therefore, that the oft-repeated statement that the late Mr Carr was the first Headmaster is a rather harmless fiction. At the end of that term Mr Alder retired to take up a position with the Finchley Council and Mr Carr started the Autumn term - after the August holiday - as headmaster.

I was swotting during that summer for a scholarship and Mr Alder asked me to meet him at the then new School for some tuition by himself and the late L F Wallis on the Whit-Monday and Tuesday when the rest of the School was on holiday. As I shall be 83 next July I think my claim to be the "oldest" Old Fincunian must still stand.

Sorry, Mr Spaul, but I really do not think you can be "runner-up" either, because Mike Henderson was certainly a scholar during those few remaining weeks between Whitsun and the end of August 1904'.

Step forward H E Edwards, born April 1891, joined FCS in 1904, who wrote in Scimitar 69, Spring 1973 edition :-

'I really cannot let Mr Spaul get away with his claim to be the "runner-up". In fact he does not even get a place!

The School moved from its temporary quarters at Long Lane to the present site at Whitsun 1904. George Ross, Mike Henderson and I were among those who made the move. I was the junior of the three. Gladys Wright also made the move. Another of the migrants was Herbert Skidmore, from whom I heard two or three years ago. There are over 50 boys on the photo "Gym Class 1904" - all of them from Long Lane. In addition I miss the names of Joe Newman and Leslie Woodall who happened to be away when the group photo was taken. He lived at Barnet and as my home was at Shenley, we often travelled home by train together'. (You can see that photograph on page 26).

So who was the very first pupil to be taught at the Old School? Perhaps to settle the argument we should return to the Jubilee gathering in the Old School Hall in 1954 which is reported elsewhere in this book :-

'...Finally, Mr Harold Chalk read the Roll of Old Fincunians present, in the reputed order of their admission to the school. As their names were read out each stood and answered "Present". The first in the Roll was Mr Ross, the first pupil ever to receive

instruction on the premises - he was given some coaching during the Whit Holidays in 1904.....'.

S A Spaul (1904 - 1905) wrote in Scimitar No. 45, Spring 1964 :-

'...The year of grace 1904 found me duly installed as a scholar following an entrance examination and so at the tender age of eleven, I came under the wing of our late revered Head, Charles Carr. His two sons, Harold and Douglas, were my bosom pals. Was it that we had common interests or was I even at that early age seeking to gain influence? I do not know, but our companionship did land me into being caned with them for "scrumping" in a nearby orchard....The caning by the Head, the father of Harold and Douglas, came later at school to round things off....

We of the old vintage came from various schools in the locality. Inevitably there had to be a sorting out process. For instance, some had a grounding in French. Others hadn't a clue. Those of us who came from St Mary's National School - I think that was the name - were fortunate. We could conjugate the present indicative of "parler" and even knew that except in the imperative, the pronoun always preceded the verb. Needless to say we were a long way from the subjunctive! Still, we were on our way. In the seeding, one scholar was asked to read the sentence "les oiseaux sont beaux". He started "les" as in "Leslie", "oi....." as in "oil", "zee ux". That settled it. There would have to be a levelling up or down, but we gradually evened out. Is there any other scholar who remembers the poem we were taught and which I have never forgotten?

*Un, deux, trois, j'irai aux bois,
Quatre, cinq, six, cueillir des cerises,
Sept, huit, neuf, dans mon panier neuf,
Dix, onze, douze, ils sont toutes vouges.*

Or in more reflective mood :-

*Je me laugh
Tu te giggle
Il se crack
Nous nous bustions
Vous vous explodies
Ils se shriek*

But that was out of school hours!

Who and what do I remember? Well, I was never Samuel Pepys and a span of sixty years taxes one's memory. There is always one teacher at least whose memory never fades. To me, Mr Wallis was my mentor and I always counted myself fortunate in being thrown into his arms - or was it across his knee? I forget.

As for lessons, I loved Geography, French, and Maths, except those nasty problems dealing with tanks A and B and the ingress of water. History I hated. Could only remember the Queen of Iceni, 55BC, 1066 and 1666. Chemistry was fair - English, well "nuff said".

Times have changed and in many respects to good purpose. To the up and coming teacher, I commend the following which appeared in the "Finchley Guardian" for 16 April, 1904 :- "The Governor of the Llangollen County Schools advertised for a Classics Master at a salary of £120. The applicants numbered 26 and included six MA's, and seven BA's....". I venture to suggest that Oliver Goldsmith's "passing rich for £50 a year" might have been minded to apply.

My one regret is that I was not privileged to stay long at the school - no, I was not expelled! - but I regard the place as my Alma Mater to which I daily made the journey down Long Lane on a bicycle which would be a museum piece today...'.

Traditionally the ladies have the last word and it goes to Gwen M Hall (nee Warren 1909 - 1915) who wrote in Scimitar 70, Summer 1973 edition :- '...who is the oldest "Old Scholar" of FCS..?.....none of them can lay sole claim to that distinction.... because Finchley County School, as such, was not born until September 1909.

Why do I say this? Well, in the spring of 1909 while a scholar of Holy Trinity School, East Finchley, I sat for and was awarded by Middlesex County Council...a scholarship tenable for 4 years at Hornsey County School, Pemberton Road, Harringay. There were two scholarships awarded that year for girls and 2 for boys for the district comprising Hendon, Hornsey and Finchley. Needless to say, this area was not so thickly populated then as it is now. However, towards the end of the summer 1909 my parents were notified by the Chairman of the Middlesex Education Committee at Guildhall, that as Finchley High School was being given County Secondary School status from September, I was to attend that school from 13 September 1909 instead of Hornsey.

So surely, we who entered the school then were really the first scholars of the Finchley County School.....When the school started at Long Lane it was a Higher Elementary School, later called the High School, and I think it was under the authority of Finchley Education Committee and not until 1909 did Middlesex assume responsibility for education in Finchley, thereby creating Finchley County School.

Also, I would like to add that the oft repeated statement that Mr Carr was the first Headmaster of Finchley County School is really the truth as in 1909 Mr Carr was appointed Headmaster of the newly formed Finchley County Secondary School, whereas Mr Alder had previously left.

However, what does it matter who went to the School first or otherwise - the School has a wonderful record of achievement all through the years, and we are proud to know we are "Old Scholars" of such a School, however old or young we may be'.

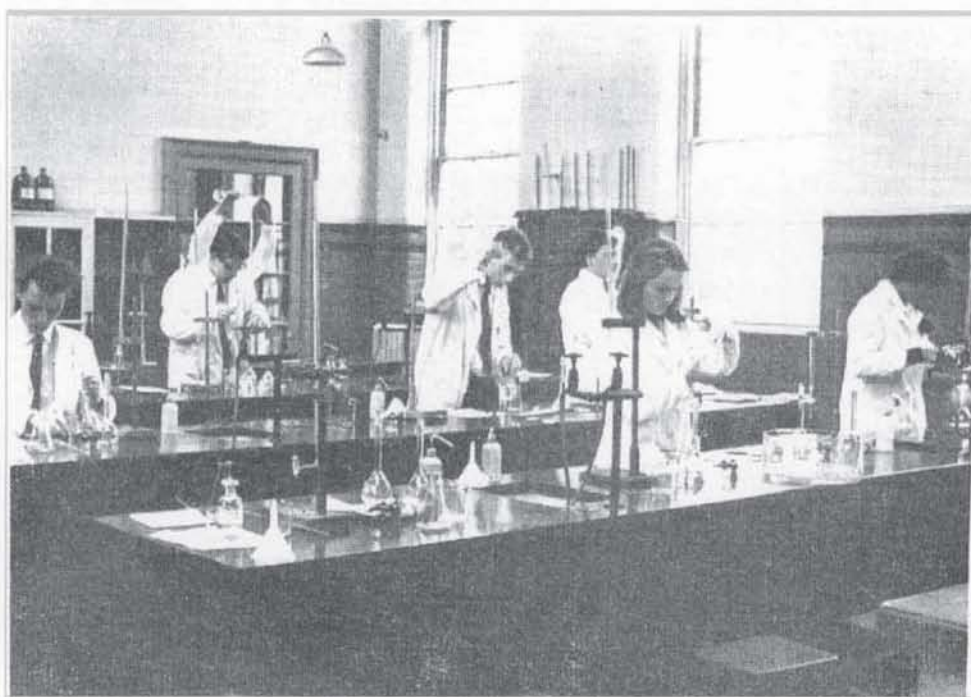
Well, I for one have no intention with arguing against that!

It is suggested that this photograph is of the Chemistry Laboratory and was taken 1904 or 1905. It is certain that Mr Carr, the Headmaster, is centre background, and it has been suggested that Mr L F Wallis is on the right.

The only clues are the handwritten words '*Presented by Mr L F Wallis*' which are written on the reverse :-



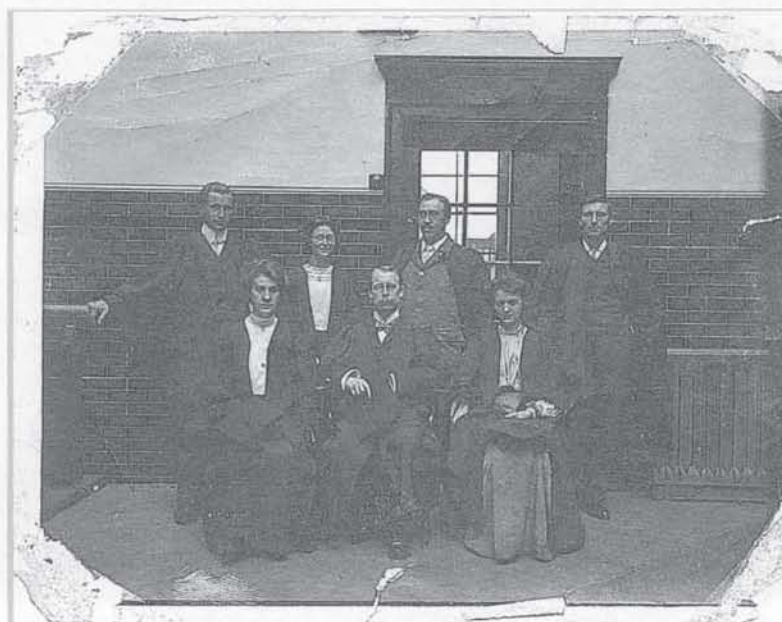
Could this be the same Chemistry Lab taken in 1962? :-



The teaching staff who joined the school during the period 1904 to 1909 were :-

Mr Charles Henry Carr	1904 - 1932	<i>Headmaster/Mathematics</i>
Miss Ada Caroline Parker	1905 - 1934	<i>English</i>
Miss Dorothy Emily Gillett	1905 - 1921	<i>French</i>
Mr S T Wallis	1904 - ?	
Miss Kate Lilian Handover	1905 - 1910	<i>Botany/Domestic Science</i>
Mr Leonard Francis Wallis	1905 - 1925	<i>Chemistry/Physics</i>
Miss Clara Maria Hands	1905 - 1909	<i>English</i>
Mr William Sayers Murphy	1909 - 1944	<i>Chemistry/Physics</i>
Mr Alfred Benjamin Green	1905 - 1912	<i>Drawing/Physical Exercise</i>
Mr Harold Chalk	1906 - 1931	<i>English</i>
Mr John Davie	1907 - 1933	<i>French</i>
Mrs Alice Mary Tapsfield (nee Crocker)	1908 - 1911	<i>Geography</i>
Miss Ethel Amelia Thrum	1902 - 1910	<i>Science ***</i>
Mr John Booth	1909 - 1918	<i>German/French</i>
Miss Sarah Jones	1909 - 1910	<i>Physical Training</i>
Annie Matilda Chappell	1909 - 1909	<i>Botany</i>

*** Miss Thrum was born 22 September 1884, educated at Finchley Elementary School, then on to Finchley Organised Science School, and at Long Lane Council School 1896 to 1902. In September 1902 she was taken on as a teacher at the Finchley Higher Elementary School, two years before the "new" school building. In 1910 she left to take a teaching position at the Municipal Secondary School, South Shields.



Mr S T Wallis Miss E A Thrum Mr A B Green Mr L F Wallis
Miss K L Handover Mr C H Carr Miss C M Hands



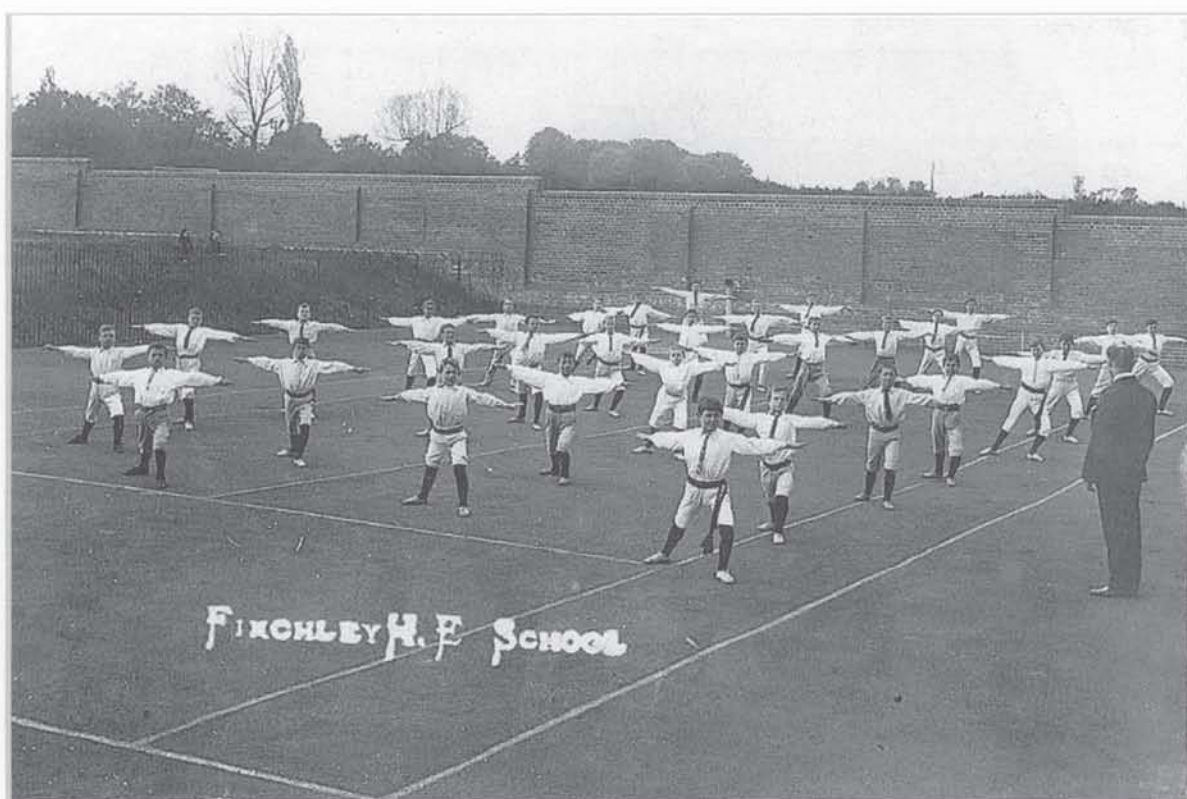
First XI 1906/7

**Back Row: Fourth from left Bill Waskett; fourth from right Oswald Glynn
 Middle Row: Third from left Ernie Baker; second from right Les Smith
 Front Row: Harold Sonex and Charles Carter**



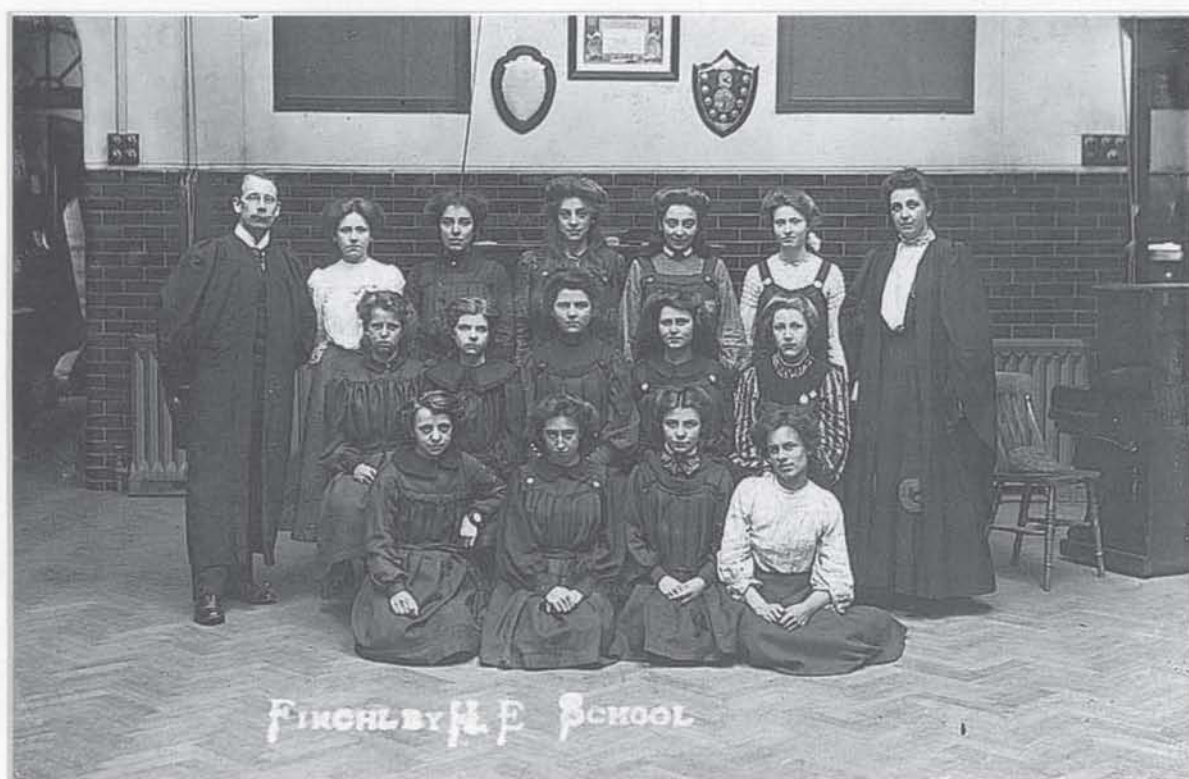
1906 Woodwork class

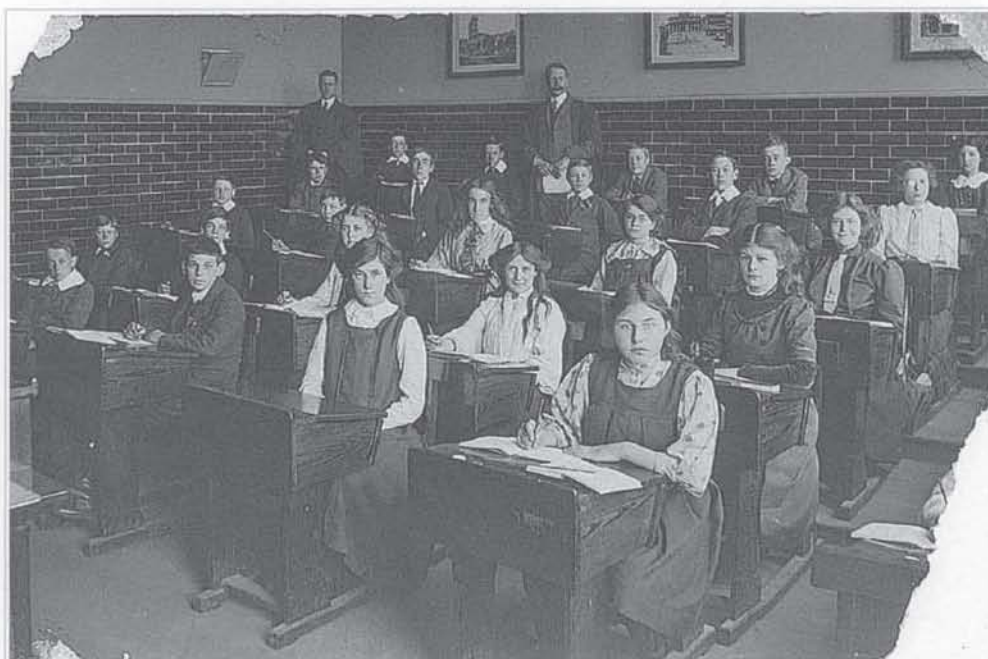
**Mr Chalk is fourth from right. The other boys are believed to be :-
 Leeming; Dark; Oswald Glynn; Andrews; Waskett; Machin;
 Stevenson; Welling; Clarke; H Sorex; and Mason.**



The picture above was taken round about 1905 or 1906. There are no girls in the picture.

The picture below is dated 1905 - 1906 and the only male in the picture is Mr Carr, the Headmaster.



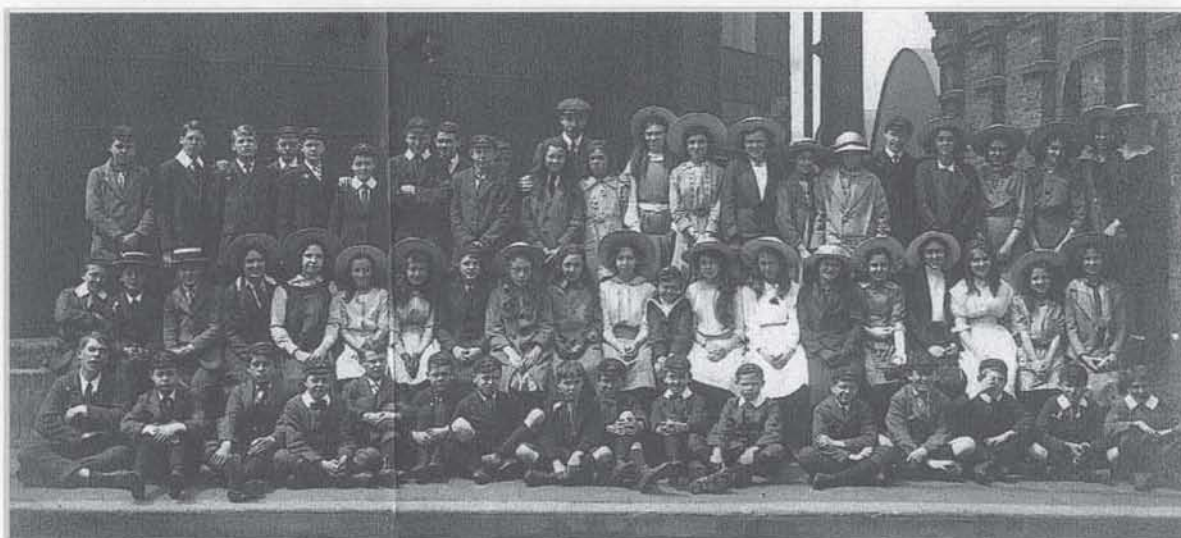


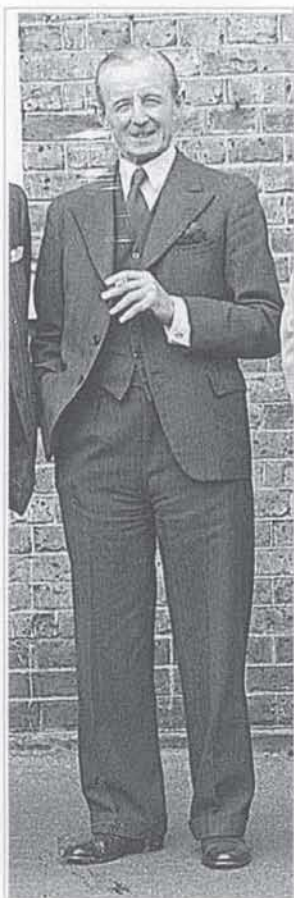
Form 2B photograph 1910 attributed to M Droom. The names are not in any particular order but are recorded on the back of the picture as :

**Taylor G Boyce Hayward J Weir Gapson D M Beath Hetherington
Neason Mira Lawrence Mateer Eileen Leeming Simon Irene Bevan
MacKechnie E Oulet Newton-Jones Winnie Lee Harward
Katherine Lord G Frutech Edith Harris**

The sloping floor with its under-floor heating was a feature of the new school, and can be clearly seen in the photograph.

The picture below is possibly of the whole school. From the clothes and headgear worn by the girls and the boys it seems clear that the photograph was taken before 1910 :-

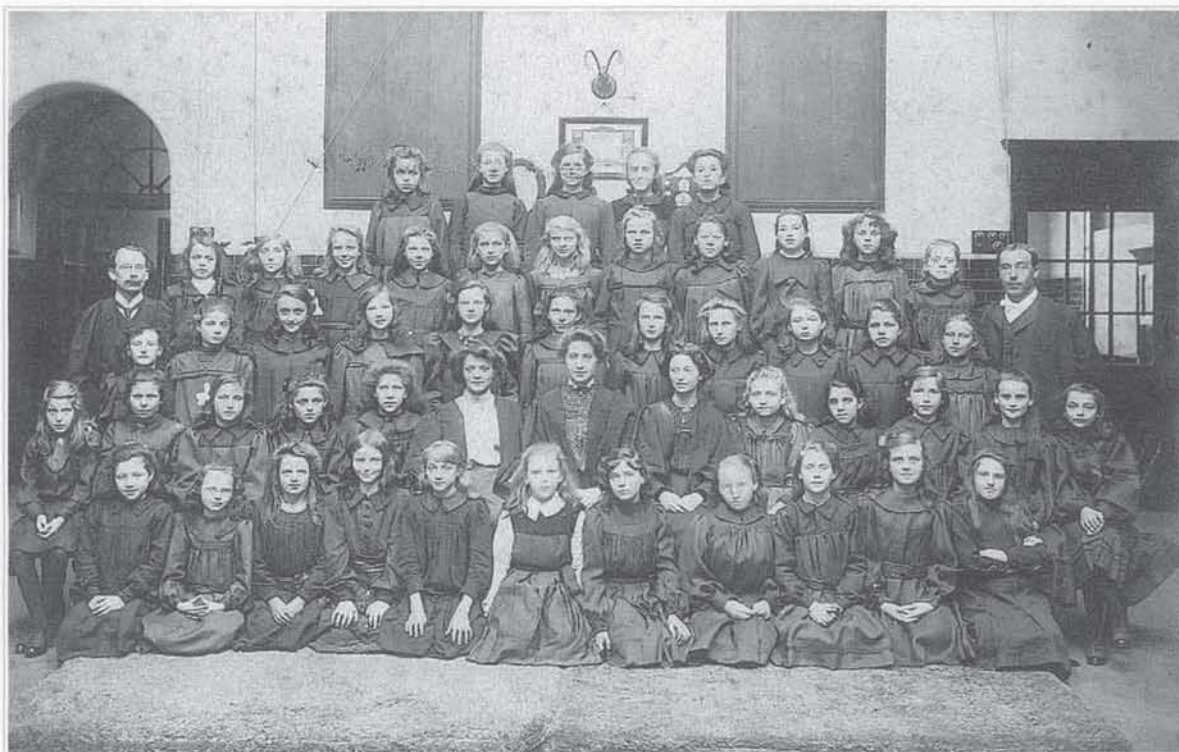




Davie



Parker



This picture is claimed to be the first picture of the whole school ever taken, probably 1905 or 1906. But where are the boys?

1910 - 1932

Clifford Dunn wrote in 1956 :- *'...The inaugural meeting of the Finchley County Old Scholars Association was held at the School on 23 July 1910 and, at a subsequent Committee meeting on 28 October 1910, "...the question of the formation of a football club" arose. This much is recorded in the minutes but we do not know anything more for the next six years. I think it is probable that the idea was shelved and, in any case, the advent of World War I no doubt stopped most of the Association's activities....'*

Philip Cook (1946/53) wrote in the 1952 Fincunian Magazine :- *'...The School Magazine first appeared in print in the Summer of 1910. The brown-covered edition has proved the forerunner of a tradition which, unaffected by two World Wars, has been flourishing for nearly half a century.*

1910 was quite a milestone in the history of the School, for it also saw the founding of the Old Scholars Association and the writing of the School Song...The Literary and Debating Society may well claim to be the School's longest established club, although the literary interests seem to have vanished during its long life. It was formed in the Autumn of 1910 and the first motion debated was, "That the entry of women into commercial life is advantageous to the nation".

More extracts from the 1910 brown-covered issue of the School Magazine, the first ever printed, reveal some of the things which seem to have had their beginning in that year :- *'In January Miss Dace, Miss Defries, Miss Beeton and Mr Pomeroy received a hearty welcome as new members of the Staff.....The term has been remarkable for the number of new pictures acquired by the School. The portraits of twelve of the greatest writers in our language have been hung in the hall - a noteworthy collection..... Form 1d rejoices in two pictures - "When did you last see you Father?" and "Loyal unto Death"..... It has been proposed to form a Literary and Debating Society for the Winter Terms.....*

In response to a widely felt desire, it has been decided to found an Old Scholars Association in connection with the School. To this end the Headmaster and Staff have invited a large number of old scholars to an Inaugural Social Meeting.....

.....news that a School Song has been written. For some time there were vague rumours as to the authorship of the aforesaid song, but we now publish the fact that the words were written by Mr Wallis and the music composed by Mr Davie, who recently wrote : "The spirit of all our efforts in study, sport and cultural activities of many kinds, were reflected in this song".

In the same year we attained Grammar School status, and on doing so, we soon introduced the House system (North, South and West; East has never been used, which were respectively nicknamed Eskimos, Kaffirs, and Red Indians, because of their geographical location in the world), school magazine, School Motto (Tache sans Tache), an orchestra, a prefectorial system (with only four prefects), and an Old Scholars Association..... Then one is struck by the constant recurrence of the name

Charles Vivian. Apparently this legendary figure performed in the Cricket First XI, captained the Football First XI, and was a South House prefect. In 1915, he wrote a Prize Essay entitled, "The War and its Causes", which can heartily be recommended to GCE candidates as a model answer to a similar question'.

Even at this time the pupils were "fashion" conscious :- '... The hair for girls was centrally parted, and the tails of hair were then tied with two large bows, but hair slides were gaining in favour, although "To wear more than four slides as well as hair ribbon is considered a breach of good taste". Today jewellery has to be carefully hidden from the watchful eyes of Mrs Barker, but in 1911 it was rumoured that much jewellery for day wear would soon be out of date, and that only a brooch and watch would be the correct thing during school hours; but for evening study diamonds and pearls would be as fashionable as ever.

Among the junior boys, knickerbocker suits were most common. Very few wore the school tie, but instead wore bows of a "subdued and inoffensive tone" with their Eton collars. Higher up the school the boys wore long trousers, abandoned their Eton collars, and even went so far as to wearing coloured shirts.

In 1911 it was reported :- "The last School year saw the institution of prefects, an innovation with which we have every reason to be pleased".

"A new feature is about to be introduced into our School life, namely the House system. Thenceforth, the direction of East ceased to exist from the School's point of view. For many years the Houses competed for three trophies For Work, For Conduct, and For Sport.....

Also in 1911, the cookery and woodwork block was erected, which, at the time was used as a kitchen, manual instruction room and pavilion, and as a tuck shop (which thrived until the late 1930's) :-



The Cookery/Woodwork Block



The School Play for 1911 was *Pride and Prejudice* and as this picture shows, if the costumes are anything to go by, the production was a very professional effort.



There are no clues at all to indicate why this picture was taken about 1911. It is believed to be the classroom which became known as the Geography Room, or a room on the first floor called the Lecture Theatre.

The School Song, words by Mr L F Wallis and music by Mr J Davie, was written in 1910 but was being tinkered with for a couple of years.

Originally the last line of each of the four verses was :-

'And to our Alma Marta, hail!'

It has been, *'And to our friends and comrades, hail!'*, ever since.

What has become known as the accepted version is reproduced overleaf.

FINCHLEY COUNTY SCHOOL SONG

Words by L F Wallis Music by J Davie

Away with care and sad regret
And lift a cheerful heart and voice,
While hopes are strong and skies are fair
And all the powers of youth rejoice;
Then let us sing with vig'rous strain,
Of one who through the storm and stress
Preserves her honour without stain,
And teaches arts of manliness;
All hail to Learning's blest abode
And to our friends and comrades, hail.

Where once Dick Turpin plied his trade,
And nightly held the Northern way
Now Fancy spreads her azure wings,
And Science holds majestic sway;
The wisdom of the mighty dead,
The lore of ages passed away,
Are with Times' latest triumphs wed,
And are our heritage to-day;
All hail to Learning's blest abode
And to our friends and comrades, hail.

But not alone from musty tome
Do we the magic secrets con:
Bring forth the racquet and the ball,
And let old Euclid rest anon.
We glory in the contest grim,
Hark how the shout and laughter ring,
With streaming hair and lusty limb
We scorn the slack and wavering;
All hail to Learning's blest abode
And to our friends and comrades, hail.

But loud above the noise and strife,
And stealing through the study's calm,
We hear the clear insistent call
From mart and office, forge and farm;
Grant us such strength that with a song
We tread with fearless steps life's way,
Against temptation make us strong,
May nought fate offers bring dismay;
All hail to Learning's blest abode
And to our friends and comrades, hail.

School Song

The musical score for "School Song" is written in 4/4 time and G major (one sharp). It consists of five systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The melody is primarily in the treble clef, while the accompaniment is in the bass clef. The piece begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on G4 and moves stepwise up to D5. The accompaniment starts on G2 and moves stepwise up to D3. The piece concludes with a double bar line.

System 1:

System 2:

System 3:

System 4:

System 5:

There are two manuscripts claiming to be the original work of the composer, Mr Davie. This one was in the possession of EJ.R. It is now believed to be the work of T S Jones, a copy for the Choir portfolio :-

1. Speech Song, see 3rd
 2. Speech Song
 3. Speech Song
 4. School Song if not, for this.
 5. King.

ETR The only eyes, I
 believe.
 This man to in Darius' land.
 There

F.C.S. School Song. 4 times.
 Beat H before each verse

Beat H before each verse

80

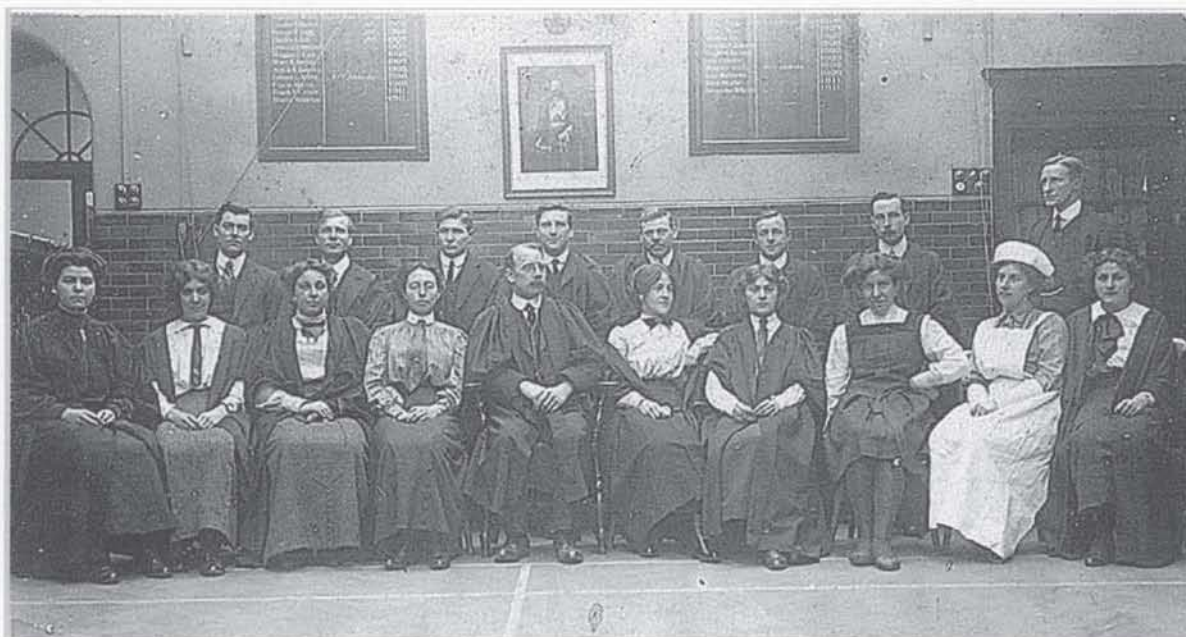
C

D

Although not proved conclusively this manuscript has a far better claim to be the original work of the composer, Mr Davie, because it shows the typical amendments (in red) of a writer struggling to get it just right. Neither of the manuscripts is signed or dated but the first bears the words, in Mr McNelly's writing, 'EJR: the only copy I believe. This may be in Davie's hand, if not, Jonah's Mac'. The copy below has no such clues :-

School Song.

The image shows a handwritten musical score on aged, yellowed paper. The title "School Song." is written in cursive at the top center. The score consists of six systems of two staves each. The top staff of each system is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The bottom staff is in bass clef with the same key signature. The music is written in black ink, but many notes and stems are crossed out or replaced with red ink, indicating amendments. For example, in the first system, the second staff has several red notes and stems. In the second system, the first staff has red notes and stems, and the second staff has red notes and stems. In the third system, the first staff has red notes and stems, and the second staff has red notes and stems. In the fourth system, the first staff has red notes and stems, and the second staff has red notes and stems. In the fifth system, the first staff has red notes and stems, and the second staff has red notes and stems. In the sixth system, the first staff has red notes and stems, and the second staff has red notes and stems. At the bottom right of the page, there is a small, simple musical staff with a few notes.



The staff as they were in 1911. Mr Carr, Headmaster, is fifth from left in the front row :-

Back Row: Mr S T Wallis Mr H Chalk Mr A B Green Mr L F Wallis
Mr J Booth Mr J Davie Mr W S Murphy Mr P S Pomeroy
Front Row: Miss E J Fraser Miss F C Simmonds Miss H G Gale Miss A C
Parker Mr Carr Miss D E Gillett Miss M Defries Miss M
McCulloch-Jones Miss F I Beeton Miss A M Crocker

In the same year (1911) the School obtained a playing field , sited opposite the school, which provided space during the winter for girls hockey and boys football. It replaced the original boggy back field, and the first school sports meeting was held there on 12 July 1912. Unfortunately, the conditions were wet (a tradition of sports days, it seems) and many of the events had to be postponed to the following week. P Hodges, Form 1alpha, was at that sports day in 1912 :-

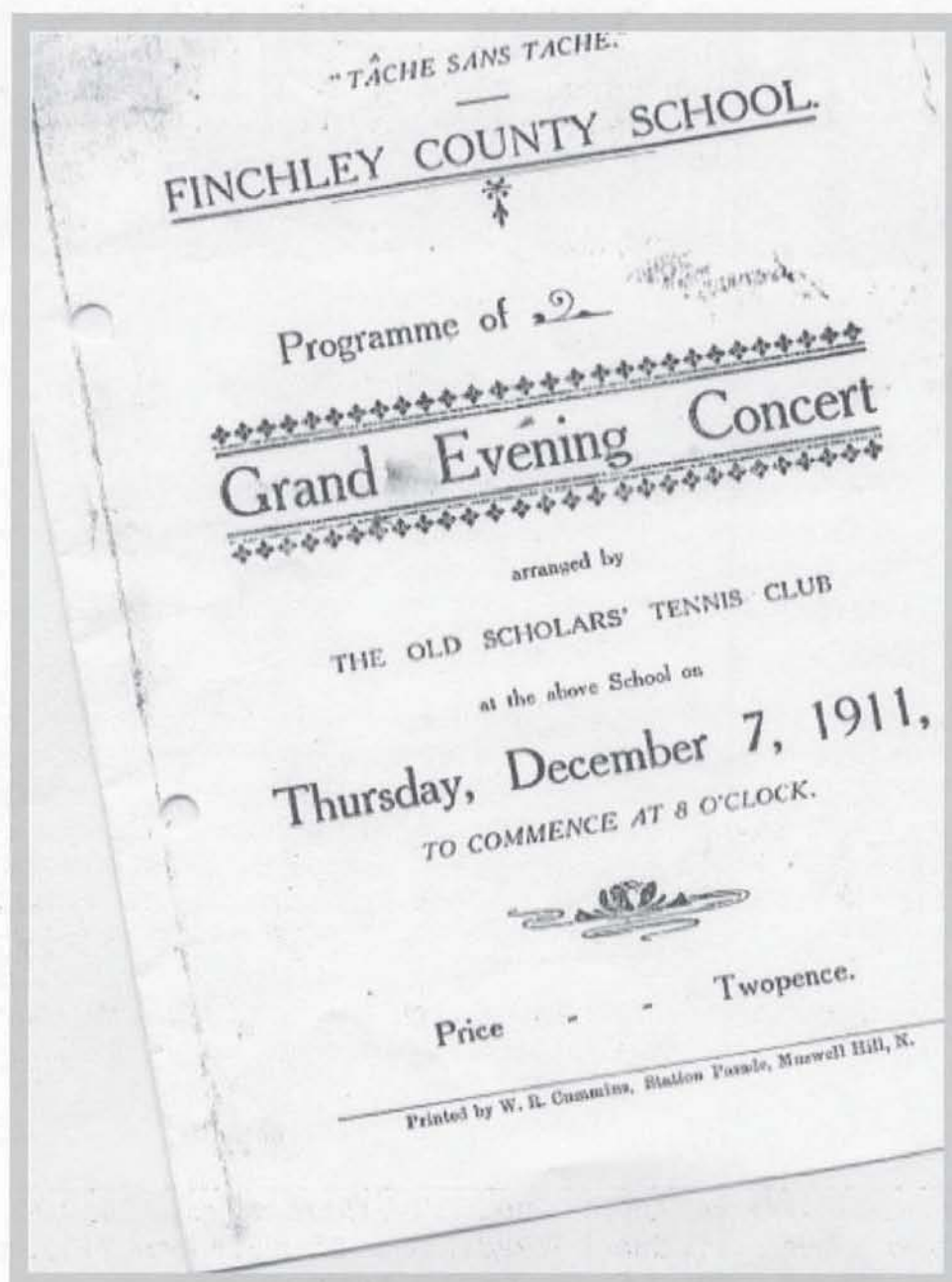
'Although I was very cold in the field, I think I would rather be there than in the dressing room which, to hold us all, ought to have been ten times larger'.



The weather may have been wet and windy on that occasion, and on many similar occasions thereafter, but this early photograph of an anonymous girl high-jumper seems to indicate that the competitors dressed accordingly !

1911 saw the first Grand Evening Concert. The arrangements were made by the Old Scholars Tennis Club and the programme comprised nine artistes who performed two pianoforte solos; eight songs; two monologues; four recitations; and two dances.

This is a picture of the front of the programme, price two pence.



It was to be another fourteen years before the second concert took place, 26 March 1926. The concerts then became an annual event.



Henry J E Hanson (1914/16) reported in Scimitar No. 20, 1956 :- *'...It must have been 1911 or 1912 when I saw two boy prefects, Crow and Cooper, preparing a painted copy of the School Song on a canvas stretched over a wooden frame....I also remember Miss de Fries, Miss Beaton, Mr Green, Mr Murphy, Mr Booth, and Mr Chalk.....'*

That School Song Board is the same one which originally hung in the Old School Hall, and since 1991 has been produced at Old Fincunian reunions. Sadly, but understandably, the board is in poor shape and at the time of writing it is far from clear as to whether it can be renovated.



Back Row : Dorothy Oram Gwen Warren Mary Graham Leslie Chennell
Walter Crowe Frank Carter Alfred Cooper Sidney Pruden ? Player
Doris Spittle Trissie Humphreys

Middle Row : Eleanor White Dora Stanlie Mr Carr Miss Dace Eleanor Salmond
Edna Clarke

Front Row: Gladys Tucker Dorothy Tucker Hilda Oulet



Throughout the 1914 - 1918 war years life continued much as normal at the school as this 1916 picture shows. Written on the back of the picture are the words :-

'1916 - a picnic of Form V (late IIIA) to South Mimms Woods.

*W Hartwell G Andrews Miss Jacoby W Margeson B Rutherford
N Pratt C Green'*

and this one entitled, *'FCS Mistresses at Boscastle on holiday - 1916'* :-



F C Simmonds (Gymnastics) E Stopford (Botany) M Jones (Games)

Clifford Dunn, in 1956, wrote about the start of the Football Club in 1916 :- '....the OFA minutes record that on 7 October 1916 the Old Boys Football Club was formed. Mr P G Osborne was the Treasurer, Secretary and Captain, and Mr J (Dickie) Bailey was the Vice Captain. The Committee consisted of the officers ex-officio and Messrs F Hadland and W Peeling, all founder-members..... It is further minuted that the Club's colours were to be those of the School whilst the subscription was 2/- and membership strictly limited to the scholars of FCS.....' **It is not clear what happened next but in 1917 the** 'sum of 5/9d was handed over to the parent association by the Football Club... and it was resolved by the Committee that this sum be held in trust for the Football Club....', **and in 1920, presumably because the War had ended, the Club was 'reformed'.**

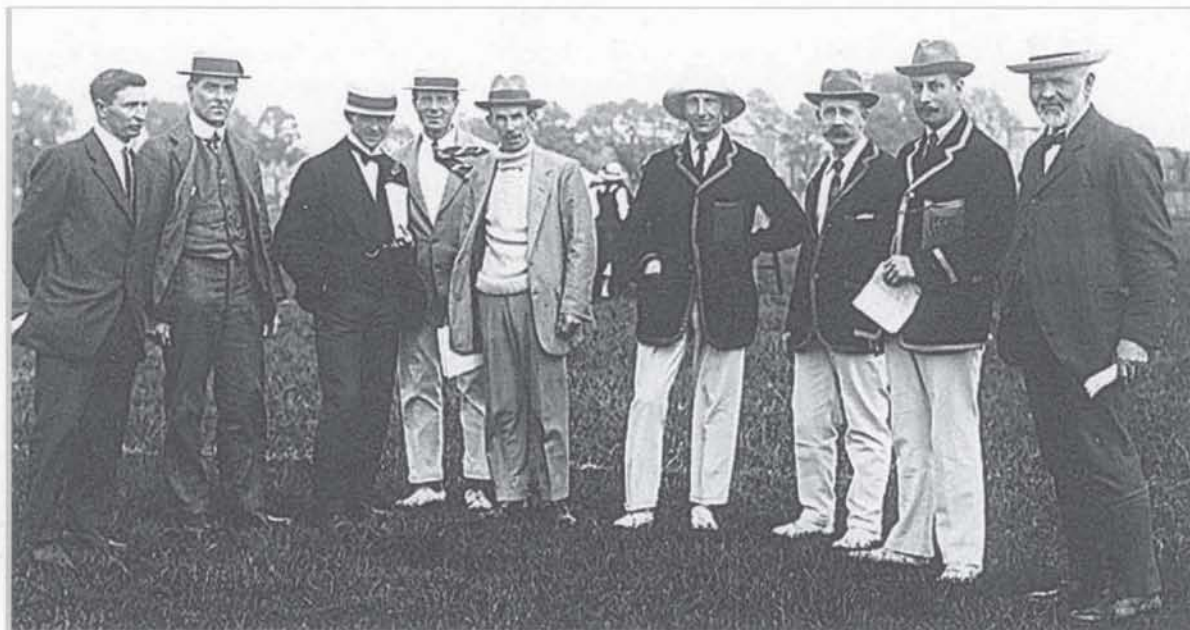
By and large, the Great War did not interfere too much with the School's life, but its end did not go unnoticed. Reg Ashby (1914/1920) celebrated in his own way according to Scimitar 115, Spring 1989 edition :- 'I am coming up 87 and FCS opened its doors to me 75 years ago. Yes, I was one of that mad lot who climbed on to the roof of the clocktower and ate our sandwiches on 11 November 1918, while the Staff were celebrating "in another place", which shall be nameless. Mr Carr was not amused when he heard about it later.....'.

A year later the celebrations continued :- 'On a Saturday in July 1919 the Old Scholars Association organised a celebration of an official "Peace Day" at the School Cookery Centre. The party went on until 4 am on the Sunday morning. A poor view was taken at "headquarters" and as a penalty, the Old Scholars were deprived of using the Cookery Centre for a long period of time'.



Also in the year a further addition was made to the buildings with the erection of The Botany Hut, later the Science Hut, but always known as "The Hut".

In 1919, owing to the expanding attendance at Prize Day, the event was divided into junior and senior, and later moved to the King Edward Hall, Church End, Finchley.



The male teachers were described by Mr Carr on more than one occasion as a "good lot". Here they are depicted in somewhat relaxed mode at a School Sports Day about 1920. Mr Wallis seems to reflect the mood of the occasion by taking a somewhat uncharacteristic pose :-

Mr Turner Mr Howland Mr Davie Mr Chalk Mr Quilliam Mr Wallis
Mr Carr Mr Murphy and Mr Danby, an unknown entity.

The picture below is of Mr Howland and Mr Murphy officiating at that same Sports Day :-



1920's pictures of the Headmaster, Charles Carr, together with his teachers :-



Back row : ? , Davis, Carr, Bailey, ? , and ? .
Front row : Hunter, Penelope Jolley (Secretary), Sturgeon, Dace, Reid and ?



Back row : Chalk, Quilliam, Sturdy, Pots Murphy, and Cornes.
Front row : Gatenby, Davie, Carr, Wallis and Howland.

The War Memorial was created, and K A Povah, Headmaster, wrote in Scimitar in 1949 :- 'As one looks around the school today, one is hardly likely to be impressed by the spacious layout and the wealth of amenities; but inside, one thing that does command attention is the excellent War Memorial... It was painted in 1920 by Mr W H Howland, the School's first Art Master, and it was unveiled in the Autumn of the same year by Sir Benjamin Gott, then Secretary for Education for Middlesex.....'. **However, the School Magazine reported :-** '....In remembrance of those Old Fincunians who had given their lives in the First World War, a Memorial was unveiled on Armistice Day, 1921, by County Alderman C F de Salis, Chairman of the Middlesex County Council.....'.



The picture, which dominates the memorial, depicts the Battle of Trafalgar, and was painted by Charles Dixon. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy, and was priced at £200 but the school was able to purchase it from the Cooling Galleries at the greatly reduced price of fifty guineas...'



The War Memorial quite rightly figures prominently throughout the history of FCS but we should be aware that the names listed were not a complete list. Understandably, nobody is able to provide a complete list of the Old Fincunians who perished in the two World Wars.

An example of one whose name was missed was Ralph Bolton who was killed in action in 1918 during the first World War. All that this document can do is draw attention to the fact.



There will have been many others whose names are not recorded and our archives do not mention, so it is important that when we talk, or think, of the "War Memorial" we remember that it is not a definitive list, it is our way of remembering all of the Old Fincunian heroes who died so that we could live for England while they for England died.

At the same time, we should also remember our Old Fincunian heroes who survived despite their active duties at the sharp edge of the wars.

Again, our archive does not reveal a complete list of all Old Fincunians who served in the world wars, so merely as a reminder, nay, an assurance that they, too, have not been forgotten, on the following page there are two pictures from the archive which may jog a memory or two.



Eric J Shiplee



John Hay

This picture of Alex D Heggie (Woodwork and Technical Drawing teacher 1968/78) appeared in the "Poppy News", the Newsletter of the Royal British Legion . Alex Heggie was one of the first, if not the first, teacher to sport a beard. Alex is describing his experiences on D-Day :-



'...I served on board HMS Shippigan, the lead minesweeper in the 16th Minesweeper Flotilla. On 5th June we led the American task force, clearing a safe path to the beaches. It was dangerous work but we knew it was vital to the success of D-Day, so we just got on with the job.

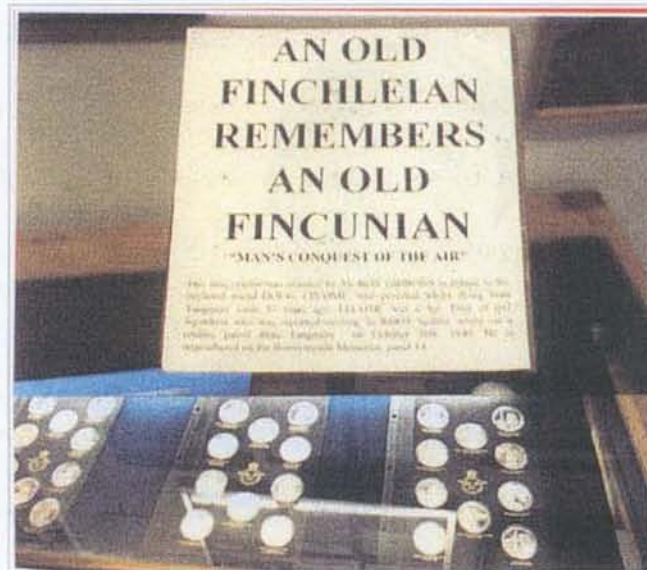
Above us the sky was black with gliders and planes. We cleared mines as close as we could to Utah Beach, but we couldn't help the boys once they were on the beaches.

I'll never forget seeing ships carrying the dead and dying back to England. Although I badly injured both of my feet during Service, I know I've been lucky.....'.

Roy Gibbons, an ex-pupil of Finchley Catholic Grammar School, devoted his entire collection of RAF silver medals to the Tangmere Military Aviation Museum in Chichester, West Sussex, in memory of Doug Elcome (FCS 1930/35). The two men grew up as friends in Whetstone, and served in the RAF together.

Sergeant Pilot Elcome was reported missing on a routine patrol 26 October 1946. He had destroyed an enemy plane before being shot down himself.

Roy Gibbons, not an Old Fincunian, spent more than four years gathering the medals together and then donated the entire collection to the museum in memory of his friend.



In the summer of 1922 :-

'...it was decided that the time had come when Old Scholars might run the Old Scholars Association themselves. Miss Parker and Mr Murphy, after many years conscientious service as Secretary and Treasurer respectively, resigned, and the office of "Staff Representative" was instituted with Mr Wallis as the first incumbent....'.

This is a picture of Miss Parker taken shortly after she relinquished her position as Secretary of the OFA.



Among the brighter spirits of the time were Charles Vivian; Doris Aylward (now Mrs Spencer Roby); Fred Mansfield; Rhoda Simpson (Now Mrs Mansfield); Hector Gauld; Barbara Saville (now Mrs Gauld); Jessie Mansfield (now Mrs Horsley); Cyril Reed; Lilian Richards (now Mrs Reed); Tommy Robertson, and Eileen Purser (now Mrs Robertson)....'.

The objects of the Old Scholars Association were then, "To promote an esprit de corps and to encourage mutual intercourse", and this was to be

effected by concerts, debates, lectures, social gatherings and sectional clubs. Many years later Scimitar described it thus :- *'There were to be, as a rule, three meetings a term; in each winter term two of them would be of a literary nature; that is to say, lectures or debates, whilst the third would be a social function.....'*

The actual programme arranged for 1914 - 1915 was reported as follows :-

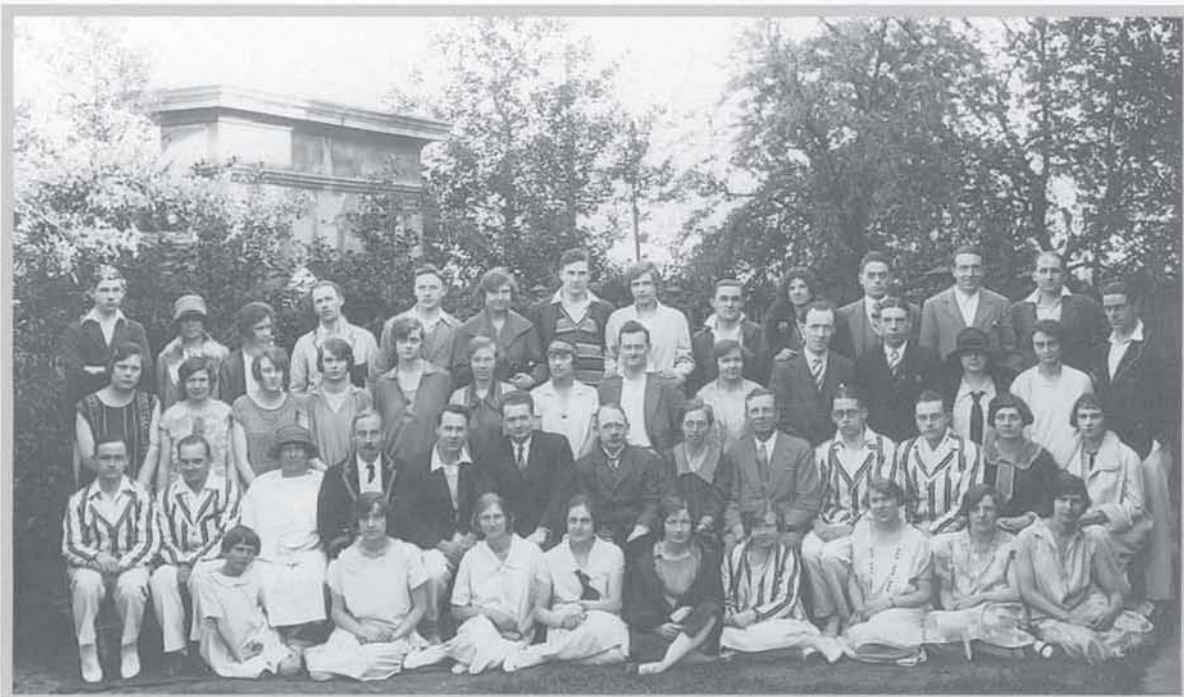
'Autumn Term 1914: A lecture on "Personal Service" and a "Christmas Party".

Spring Term 1915: A lecture and a debate.

Summer Term 1915: A general evening and an Annual General Meeting....

.....the following year opened with a "Jolly Campfire Sing-Song" followed by a lecture on "Liquid Air". It was afterwards reported that this lecture was given to only a small audience (perhaps it was a lot of "hot-air" after all) '.

The 1924 Annual General Meeting of the Old Fincunians Association was held during the evening in the School Hall. In those days the meetings tended to be well supported and it was not unusual to have rivals for the various officer vacancies, but the 1924 AGM was remarkable for nothing other than the attendance was photographed :-



Back Row: Graham Murphy; Winifred Gorton; Nancy Dearing; Hector Gauld; Helen Ross; Bobbie Brown; Molly Pyne; Trevor Sparrow; Mrs G Corden; Dudley Bennett; Arthur Wallace; Adam Wilson.
Standing: I Bartlett; Ivy Pope; Doris Stanford; N TA Hanson; Catherine Battson; Jean Dinning; Eileen Purser; Tommy Robertson; Norah Gaskin; Mr G Corden; Stanley Church; Gwen Carne; Lilian Richards; Cyril Reed.
Sitting: Reginald Edwards; Donald Parker; Mrs Murphy; Mr Murphy; Basil Gray; Percy Osborn; Mr Carr; Miss Dace; Mr Chalk; Leslie Bennett; John Murphy; Marjorie Stonebridge; Barbara Saville.
Squatting: Eileen Murphy; Dorothy Carr; Joyce Bishop; Gertrude Norris; Margaret Findlay; Doris Buttery; Doris Aylward; Marjorie Goodheart; Adeline Smith.

Old Fincunians activity in 1925 is illustrated by a programme for an Old Scholars Concert in the School hall on 7 November that year:-

Pianoforte solos:

Frederick D Brown

Songs:

Winifred Cartwright

Recitation:

Stanley Gray

Cello solo:

Frances Barnard

Songs:

Betty Thompson

Violin solo:

Stanley Andrews

Recitation:

Bessie Killinger

Recitation:

Edna Crowder

Duet:

Muriel and Doris Courtier

Sketch:

Gladys Courtan; Doris Bailey;

G J N Gaskin; Peggy Findlay

Accompanist:

Dorothy Andrews

Producer:

John Davie, Esq.

In 1926 the first Staff and Prefects against the School cricket match took place. The picture suggests that the Staff and Prefects team could only raise ten players but it may be the anonymous eleventh man was taking the picture.

There is no record of the result of the match.



The Prefects are unnamed in the back row but the staff members of the team in the front row from left to right are :-

Mr Chalk

Mr Davie

Mr Cornes

Mr Gatenby

Mr Howland

This picture of Mr Carr was drawn by Pat Adams (1924/30).

It forms part of a series of drawings of members of staff and prominent pupils which have been reproduced from time to time in the School Magazine and the early editions of Scimitar.



In 1929 the Old Fincunians Netball Club was in the news. Margaret Longley, the Hon Secretary wrote :-

'Although we remember well the fate of previous Netball Clubs, we decided to try again. A meeting was held last Autumn, officers were elected, and a date fixed for the first practice. Then it rained, and for many Saturdays play was impossible.

Three matches were played in the New Year, but, probably owing to the lack of practice, were lost. The future, however, is full of promise, and next season should see the Club firmly and permanently established.....We must thank Mr Carr for the use of the school court, Miss Window for the use of the Botany Hut, and Mrs Hughes, who gave us our ball'.

In the early thirties, a disaster of the first magnitude nearly overtook the School, reported thus :-

'..a fell blow from which it could hardly have been expected to recover, and which assuredly would have meant its downfall from glory. The School was to become solely a GIRL's school. What a horrible thought! Can you imagine FCS completely overrun by giggling and screaming females? Ugh! Everyone seemed to be resigned to this awful fate, and boys were actually excluded from entry one year, when, fortunately, the powers that be, realising their folly, relented just in time.

But in general the thirties seems to be a fairly comfortable period in the Old School's history :-

'After a long wait, the school pavilion was finally opened on Sports Day 1930 by Councillor H G Somerfield, the then Directing Governor of the school. Two years later, sport again benefitted in the form of the new Open Air Swimming Pool, opposite the school, which was used instead of the Squires Lane Baths, for our inter-house swimming gala, and proved very advantageous....'.



The sports pavilion shortly after the building was completed.

Barbara Cranfield (nee Sear 1934/39) described what life was like at the School during the early thirties :-

'..I started school on 12 September 1934, in some trepidation, I might add. I walked up Avondale Road and met Margaret Allan coming along Squires Lane, and I was very glad that I had found someone to be with while the business of entering the great building took place.

We were lined up in the corridor and Dorothy Speechly came along, looking very grown up in her own clothes, for the privileged 6th Form did not have to wear uniform. We lived next door to each other and she spoke to me kindly - from her great height. We were divided into two forms, 1A and 1 Alpha.

Our Form Master was the formidable "Viv", who terrified us but taught us Maths brilliantly. There were 34 of us in the class, neatly divided down the middle into 17 boys and 17 girls. Viv would whisk about in his chalk-covered gown, glare at us through his thick spectacles. He would march into the classroom and whizz a chalk circle on to the board, then crash the dot into the centre so that the chalk splintered.

We had Private Study on Wednesdays. In other Forms this meant you could indeed study privately, do your homework or read, so long as you were not reading comics - though a lot of people did! But not in 1 Alpha! Viv had us by the ears for the whole 40 minutes, he made us talk - "Come out here, Miss, and tell us something interesting". The mind immediately went blank. Eventually some of the older boys tried to stand up to him, tried some cheek, but he was more than a match for them. They retired, beaten by his sarcasm.

Our first days in school were given over to buying hat-bands for our new velour hat, for receiving piles of rather battered text-books, some dated 1905, which all had to be signed and covered with brown paper. Gradually we began to learn the routine of carrying piles of books from one lesson to another, for lessons were seldom held in our Form Room. Upstairs we toiled to the labs and Geography Room, across the playground to the Biology Hut.

Our uniforms consisted of cream poplin blouses with square necks and navy blue

tunics with "V" necks. Our gorgeous blazers were striped maroon, black and grey, with a nice coat of arms on the pocket.

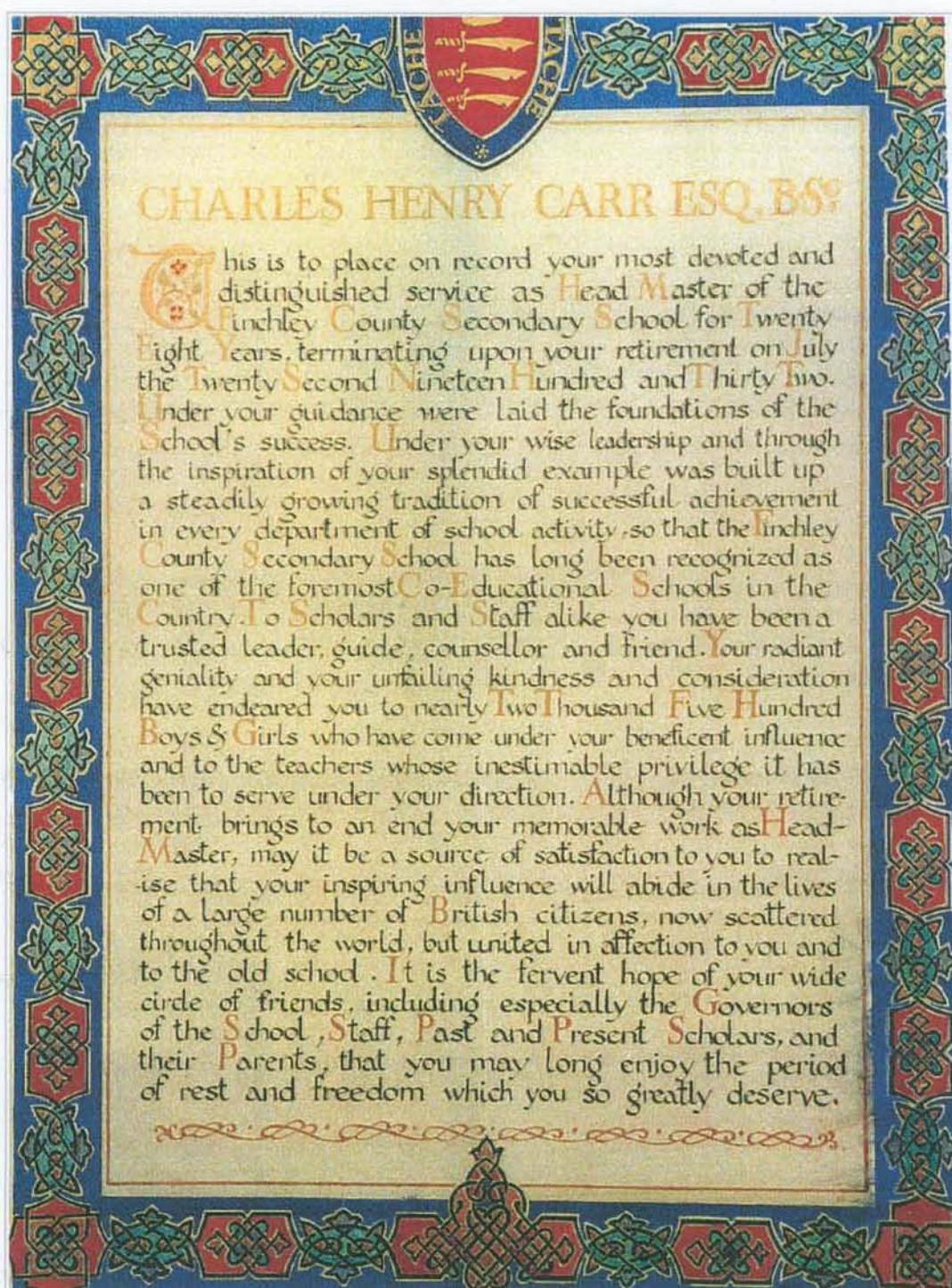
Five years is a long time from 11 to 16 but what a terrific feeling to go back in 1938 to know that we were Fifth Formers - the teachers' pets, destined to tackle the great Matric exam in the Summer of 1939!

We girls grew our hair, and wore socks with our summer frocks, which were pink check gingham. Socks were not allowed for seniors until Miss Dace had left, and how we hated the thought of fawn lisle stockings.....I could go on and on

Elsewhere, it was reported :- '.....Summer 1932 saw the retirement of Mr Carr as headmaster, who, since the school opened, had established the great tradition of friendliness, loyalty and service within the school. His departure proved a great loss. Mr Carr was replaced by Mr Chalk, who originally joined the staff in 1906 as Assistant Head, and spent a large amount of his teaching career here, before becoming Headmaster after a short spell at Wembley County School...'



Mr Carr, taken around the date of his retirement in 1932.



On the day he retired Mr Carr was presented with this testimonial. It was produced at reunions until the Old School building was demolished. It is now in the archive.

The following teachers joined the staff during the period under review, 1910 to 1932 :-

Miss Margharita Defries	1910 - 1915	English/Latin
Miss Florence Irene Beeton	1910 - 1914	Mathematics
Miss Laura Dace	1910 - 1938	English/History
Mr Philip Samuel Pomeroy	1910 - 1920	Chem'y/Maths/Physics
Miss Ella Jeannie Fraser	1910 - 1913	Botany
Miss Frieda Caroline Simmonds	1910 - 1920	Physical Training
Miss Hilda Constance Gale	1910 - 1916	Cookery
Mrs Mary Wallis (nee McCulloch-Jones)	1911 - 1923	Geography
Mr Arthur Sturdy	1911 - 1944	Manual Training
Mr Thomas Turner	1912 - 1921	Classics/Maths/History
Miss Elizabeth Stopford	1913 - 1922	Botany/Maths
Mr William Howden Howland	1912 - 1946	Art
Mr Edward George Greenfield	1914 - ?	Book-keeping
Miss Winifred May Parker	1914 - 1915	Maths
Miss Doris Vaughn Davies	1914 - 1937	History
Miss Beatrice James	1915 - 1917	Botany/Physics
Miss Winifred Caroline Heather	1915 - 1918	Chem'y/Botany/Phys.
Miss Ruth Wilks	1915 - 1915	Maths
Miss Ivah Pyle	1915 - 1915	Maths
Miss Dorothy L Irene Cattermole	1916 - 1916	French/English
Mr Charles Deane Punchard	1916 - ?	English/History/Maths
Miss Elsie Gertrude Jacoby	1916 - 1945	French/English
Mr Walter Kaye Dunn	1916 - 1919	English/History/Maths
Miss Susannah Smith	1916 - 1919	Needlew'k/Eng/History
Miss Alice Reid	1919 - 1948	Maths
Miss Catherine Flora McLeod	1917 - 1921	Cooking
Miss Sybil Agnes Webb	1918 - 1919	History/English/Maths
Miss Mary Gordon Wright	1918 - 1920	French/German
Mr Thomas Alfred Quilliam	1918 - 1941	Chemistry
Miss Katie Morgan	1918 - 1918	English/Geography
Mrs Marie Pooley	1918 - 1918	Languages/History
Miss Annette Eva Bailey	1919 - 1934	History/English
Miss Margaret Williams	1920 - 1927	German/French
Miss Monica Lennon	1920 - 1921	English/French
Miss Nellie Garside	1920 - 1921	Games/Swimming
Mr Harold William Cornes	1921 - 1943	Phys. Training/Science
Mr George Frederick Gatenby	1921 - 1929	French
Miss Edith Marjory Hicks Bolton	1921 - 1929	Cookery
Miss Florence Phyllis Hunter	1921 - 1946	Gymnastics/Games
Miss Mildred Cottam	1921 - 1921	Physical Drill/Games
Miss Marjorie Window	1922 - 1932	Botany/Maths
Miss Winifred Mary Smith	1923 - 1927	English
Dr Cyril Clayton Howard	1924 - 1931	Maths
Miss Symion Hefin Evans	1927 - 1939	German/Latin
Miss Dorothea Elizabeth Platt	1927 - 1929	English
Miss Kathleen Mary Carroll	1928 - 1928	Latin/History/Engl.
Miss Christine Joan Halton	1928 - 1928	English

Mr Vincent Aicardi	1929 - 1929	<i>French</i>
Mr Wesley Charles Frid	1929 - 1929	<i>Chemistry/Physics</i>
Miss Hilda Gertrude Sturgeon	1929 - 1964	<i>Cook'y/Needlew'rk</i>
Mr Thomas Stanley Jones	1929 - 1967	<i>English/Maths</i>
Mr Leonard John Wills	1929 - 1961	<i>French</i>
Miss Isabel Lillie Angood	1930 - 1930	<i>Maths</i>
Mrs Constance Mary Dyson	1931 - 1931	<i>English</i>
Mr Charles William Henry Vivian	1931 - 1953	<i>Maths</i>
Miss Ellen Deveson	1931 - 1932	<i>English</i>
Miss Margaret Kathleen Garry	1931 - 1931	<i>History</i>
Mr Aubrey George Batt	1931 - 1931	<i>Maths</i>
Miss Gladys Mary Wilson	1932 - 1933	<i>Maths/Games</i>
Mr Harold Chalk	1932 - 1946	<i>Headmaster</i>



Cornes	Howland	Murphy	?	Carr	Parker	Jacoby
Quilliam	Sturdy	Davie		Dace	Davies	

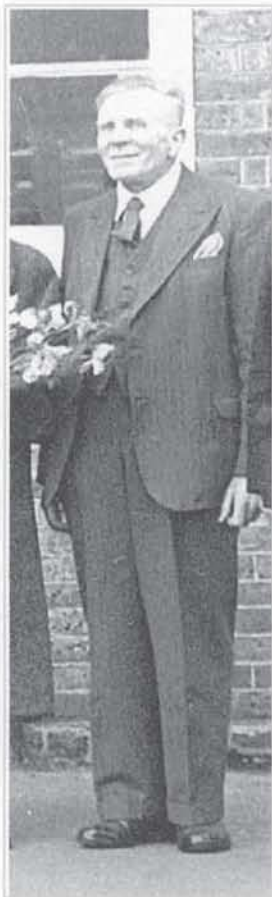


Window	Evans	?	Sturgeon	?
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Jones	Wills	Quilliam	Sturdy
Vivian	Cornes	Howland	Murphy

1933 – 1945



1933 saw the first year of Mr Chalk as Headmaster.

The School had been well and truly established during the long “reign” of Mr Carr and it was a period of relative calm, albeit before the storm of World War II. The correspondents in *Scimitar* and the School Magazine of the time reflect that.

During Mr Chalk’s time most of the Old Fincunians sections and Clubs were established, school academic work steadily went from strength to strength, and characters began to emerge, individuals who were to leave their mark on generations of pupils.

Mr Chalk and his staff were able to build on the firm foundations laid by Mr Carr and it was during this period that Finchley County School developed the character and personality admired and respected to this day.

Clifford Dunn wrote in *Scimitar* 58, Summer 1968 :-

‘....Many Old Fincunians will remember that the Cricket Club was founded in 1933 mainly through the efforts of Reg Channon, Cyril Rawlings, Eric Robin and myself. Of the original founder members, Jack Emerson, Jack Rawlings and myself have played right through until present times and I figure that we have enjoyed some 100 seasons between us.....’..

But in academic work, too, a high standard prevailed, as this report in the 1934 Magazine shows :- ‘Matriculation results last year were not quite up to standard for there were 4 failures, but 43 people gained their General Schools Certificate, 28 of these matriculating.

During these years many clubs flourished in the School, there being a Science Club, a Geographical Society, a League of Nations Union, Photographic Society, Chess Clubs, and even a Conjuring Club’.

T S JONES, better known as “Jonah”, joined the school in 1929 and rapidly established himself as not only an excellent teacher, but also a very popular one.



At the time of this picture he had developed a method of remembering important facts by connecting them with other relevant things.

Sixth formers of the day used this method extensively.

In 1935 appeared a special Jubilee number of the School Magazine The 25th year of the magazine coincided with the Jubilee of King George V. To celebrate the occasion, the School made a special effort at sport :-

'We won the 'Local Derby' by beating Woodhouse 7 - 0 and we were unfortunate in not being able to play a return match'.

For the girls, in March 1935, a special assembly was held in the Hall after prayers, to introduce them to the "new Regulation Frocks". The responses varied from, 'We shall look like an institution!', to, 'What a sight for sore eyes!'.

It was also the 25th year at the school for Miss Dace.



**THE COUNTY SECONDARY SCHOOL, NORTH FINCHLEY,
JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS, 1935.**

That same year M Rogers of Form 4Sc complained about the clock :-

'The elevated timepiece dominating our educational institution is the subject of my spontaneous discourse. There are timepieces and timepieces, but the aforesaid is unique in that it rarely bears any vestige of agreement with others bearing the same appellation. Neither does it agree with itself, as its four dials appear to be continually at variance with each other. This chronometer is the subject of great consternation to the esteemed inhabitants of this Borough. It is noteworthy to record, that whilst our instructional edifice is floodlit, the clock recedes modestly into the background and is entirely invisible. Is this because it is utterly ashamed of its abominable behaviour? We anticipate, entirely without confidence, that this contemptible deficiency will soon be satisfactorily remedied'.



Another old favourite got a mention that year when Christina Turley, Form 1a, wrote in 1935 :-

Ye Olde Tuckshoppe is a very handy place when one is hungry, and especially at dinner-times when one likes to wander round or sit on a biscuit tin. Phyllis, who serves behind the counter, is very nice, but the only free thing she has ever given me is a glass of cold water', and in Scimitar 23, March 1958 :- 'In January, Jean Spriggs wrote of the death of her step-grandmother, Mrs Hyde, on 17 January, at the age of 76. Mrs Hyde was formerly Mrs Huxtable, who was the custodian of the School Tuck Shop before Jean's mother took it on. Yes, those were the days when we used to turn the handle for her in preparation for the ice-cream to follow.....'.

The Editorial for 1935 revealed another reason to remember the King's Jubilee year :-

'There can be no doubt that by far the most important event of the last school year has been the introduction of milk-drinking at the morning break (one halfpenny per day out of a bottle, straws provided). We assure you that we say this not from any exaggerated conception of the diversion caused when milk squirted in the faces of those unaccustomed to manipulating the covers on the bottles, or by the spectacles

of manly Sixth-Formers silently sucking it through straws, or by the opportunity it afforded for girls to hoodwink prefects attempting to turn them out into the playground - far from it; for we feel it to be of primary importance owing to the incalculable improvement that will inevitably ensue in the health, not only of the present generation of scholars, but ultimately of the population of the entire borough. We feel this cannot be overestimated. At the Speech Day, Lady Stamp remarked on the unusually healthy appearance of the scholars in general; this must have been due in part to the first effects of the daily milk ration. In a few months we shall be quite outrageously healthy, we shall positively bounce, and the Staff will be forced to take milk too in order to cope with our exuberance...'

At this point in the narrative I intervene to tell you about "The Gun".

In 1935 Leslie Miller in Form 3S wrote :-

'Why, sixteen years after the war, are we constantly reminded of it by having, outside our school gate, a ghastly relic of those years of needless bloodshed (1914-1918). It has done nothing to be proud of; on the contrary, in all probability many families are still mourning for their dead, mothers for husbands and children killed by it. Yet we have it there, as in a museum. Many big schools have these objects, so proudly displayed. Let the FCS set the example, let us do away with a weapon that a murderer has used with which to kill people! WE MUST GET RID OF OUR GUN'.

The reply to Leslie read :-

'Our Headmaster has already himself made a special appeal for the removal of the above gun. If any old-iron merchant feels prepared to mobilise his own youth labour to remove this death-dealing piece of mechanism, he is more than welcome to do so'.

The final fate of the gun is unknown.

Two years later, another special edition of the Magazine appeared to mark the Coronation of King George VI.

In April 1939 The Old Fincunian Magazine announced :-

'...the formation of an Employment Bureau for Old Fincunians and Mr Vivian has already put in some hard work in the preliminary stages...'

In that same issue Mr C W H Vivian made the plea:- *'...do please let me have notice of vacancies immediately you hear of them, or, failing that, any comments, criticisms or advice you may think fit to give. This is a minor social service in which every OF should be anxious to assist...'*

The Bureau was designed to match school leavers with employment opportunities and charged five shillings should an applicant be successful in finding employment through the Bureau.

Some description of life at the Old School in the late 1930's is provided by letters from Barbara Cranfield and Brian Brett, both at FCS from 1934 to 1939. Barbara wrote :-

'....I remember as one of the live wires...Barbara Yates... who (how shocking!) wore make-up and jewellery, and I always remember the Maxwell twins whose father kept an interesting handbag shop at the Archway, Highgate. Who remembers that we had to wear black stockings at Prize-givings with white frocks? Miss Dace's dress sense! What a relief it was when in the 4th Form we were able to wear flesh-tinted ones, and when Miss Dace left we were able to wear amplex socks, even in the Fifth Form. In 1939 long hair came in and short bobs were out and we cut our hats. We took an inch off the crowns and sewed the brims back on, thus making a very fashionable Halo-velour to go with our new shoulder-length curls. I remember how we were terrified of Viv (we never called him Charlie) and would wait with baited breath to see who he would throw chalk at next. He and his battered gown seemed to exist in a cloud of chalk dust. And I remember little Miss Jacoby bouncing up and down, pink with indignation, on the tips of her dainty toes....'.

Brian Brett wrote :-

'In my time at FCS the Headmaster was Mr Chalk, who conducted Religious Studies and wielded a supple cane not infrequently. Mr Johnson, the Music Master was also Deputy Head....Mr Howland (Art), Mr Sturdy (Wood and Metal Work), Mr Vivian (Maths and General Science), Miss Davies and Miss Peeling (English and History), Miss Jacoby and Mr McNelly (French), Mr Arrowsmith (Gym, Sports and Geography), Mr Quilliam (Chemistry), Mr Murphy (Physics) - I did not take Latin, Spanish or German, so I cannot recall those teachers.

I remember Mr Vivian as a crusty character, contemptuous of the bourgeoisie and proud of his footballing skills....He coached me in French for the School Certificate examination and I just scraped through. Without him I would have surely failed....

Remnants of my education include mnemonics from Mr Vivian - MR VIVIAN EATS MARMALADE JAM AND SOME UNUSUALLY NICE PICKLES, which lists the first letter of each of the planets in the order of decreasing distance from the sun - Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. From Mr Quilliam we had ZINC - ZINC and all metals plus 'IDROGEN go to the NEGATIVE POLE, which is the CATHODE....'

....I commuted to Finchley County School by tram (later trolley-bus) and sometimes bicycle although the Great North Road, even in those days, was a bit of a hazard....'.



T S Jones	HW Cornes	WH Howland	TA Quilliam	L Dace	P Hunter
L J Wills	A Sturdy	WS Murphy	H Chalk	D Davies	



L Dace	P Hunter	EG Jacoby	M Comber	Hancock
D Davies	A Reid	E Peeling	H Sturgeon	Joan Widgery



F Arrowsmith	WT McNelly	RF Johnson	CWH Vivian	TS Jones	LJ Wills	HW Cornes
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The Girl's Playground with the Clock actually working.

Sheila Turner (nee Hurlin 1938/43)) wrote in Scimitar 129, Summer 1995 :-

'..I started FCS in 1938 when Mr Chalk was Headmaster. Mr Jones was our English teacher, Mr Quilliam chemistry, and a large man with a white moustache took Physics (the name Potts springs to mind)....Mr Vivian took Maths and many other things. I remember he used to march in and look at us, and we waited until he said, "I don't feel like Maths today". Sometimes he would take us out into the playground where he would explain the workings of his car, other times he would ask a leading question knowing that it would lead to a long and interesting discussion on any subject but Maths. I learnt a lot from him on all manner of things, but was never much good at Maths!

We had one year of peace time and the Christmas Party was our first formal do. Our long dresses made us feel almost grown up. The following year saw the hockey pitch dug up for trenches, but they soon filled with water so when the sirens sounded we couldn't use them. Shelters were then built and we would grab our books and run to them when the siren went and the poor teachers would try to carry on with the lessons. We often used to watch dog-fights overhead during the Battle of Britain. Each morning there were sad announcements of another death and sometimes it was someone who had recently left school'.

Two prominent, and much admired, members of staff at that time were Mr Johnson and Mr Cornes.



In 1938, a Musical Society, the forerunner of the Connoisseurs' Club, was founded by a handful of enthusiasts, and made good progress.

After several years of little alteration, 1938 saw a record number of innovations in the school. These included :-

'...hot water in the cloakrooms the erection of a flag-pole in front of the school to commemorate the Coronation of King George VI, and in the High Road, trolley buses replaced the noisy trams, which made teaching easier owing to the lack of outside noise.....'.

The tram era had only recently come to an end in London, so the following paragraph, from the 1938 Magazine, shows that Finchley was well ahead of the times :- *"The introduction of trolley-buses passing the School has provided certain of our pupils with yet another excuse for being late, and the voices of the Staff reach us triumphantly, no longer challenged by the rattle and clatter of trams outside".....'.*

Almost as soon as the war broke out in 1939, the pupils had to be evacuated to Henrietta Barnett Preparatory School in Hampstead, because there was no air-raid protection, nor much prospect of any....The air-raid shelters were eventually erected along the north side of the back field in 1940. In spite of these, some older pupils had to be evacuated later in the same year, because of a land mine which exploded on the Rough Lots opposite the school. Life in general altered during the war years, and many a lesson was spent in the air-raid shelters. School dinners were served in the hall because of the number of pupils who stayed to lunch.

Before the air-raid shelters were built, all schools were encouraged to make such provision as they could for the safety of the pupils and staff. At FCS it was decreed that deep trenches should be dug in which people could shelter during air-raids. It has been suggested that these two pictures record those trench-digging activities. Alternatively, it has been suggested that they depict the school's "Dig for Victory" campaign.

One thing is certain - the teacher in charge of the operation was "Potts" Murphy :-





In June 1954, the Golden Jubilee edition of Scimitar reported :-

'...the School's ATC Flight has existed for over a quarter of the School's life.... The first ATC parade in Finchley took place on the School Playground when a motley assortment of civilian clad cadets executed movements not entirely as set down in the drill book. It is a far cry from that day in 1941 to the organised life of the many huddled campments of today which, if rumour is to be believed, the Borough wants as a Town Hall.

St Michael's in Hendon Lane was the Squadron's Headquarters in those early days and prompts many happy memories - the delightful deathtrap at the top of the house where those privileged to fire-watch were allowed to go, the muddle of oil and rags and machinery in the Engine Room, and the obsolete aircraft the Air Ministry kindly sent us as an advertisement. The School Flight was soon convinced that it was the backbone of the Squadron, and by 1942 was able to prove its point by supplying NCO's to many other Flights of the Unit. Nearly one hundred cadets passed from the School Flight to the Forces during the War years and one gave his life.

Peace threatened to end interest in pre-service training. Youth no longer wished to be a fighter pilot, but to watch the Arsenal once again. But the Squadron and the Flight survived and in a difficult year, 1946, when the Headquarters were moved to their present site at Glebeland, it was perhaps the County School which kept things going - at any rate, three of the four Flight Sergeants and five other NCO's of other Flights were Fincunians.....

In 1948, the Squadron amalgamated with its rival from East Finchley and as with the peace, it has managed to survive this event. Today the training course seems much stiffer, the drill much less smart than in wartime. Cadets gain experience gliding, they are taken for flights across the world, and the best and most fortunate learn to fly themselves. They think in terms of Regular Service; Permanent Commissions and Cranwell; and are convinced that the ATC has a purpose and a future....

Here is a list of Flight Sergeants of No. 1 Flight since June 1941 :-

*D W CARR; P G VERMEULEN; E S T WALSON ; R A Shayler; G E Missenden;
P G G CHAPMAN; D J CHAPMAN; L H HOLLAND; K I Brearley; J J HOLMES;
G H LENCE; A A Scott; A R Redhouse; R D Smith; P E Blake; P E MEALYER;
R A WESTBROOKE; B D WILTSHIRE.*

The names in capitals are Old Fincunians. For almost five years the Flight Commander was F/O W T McNelly'. Signed: Peter Chapman (1940/44)

Mac Downie, Chairman of OFA, writing in the Golden Jubilee Edition of Scimitar, June 1954 :-

'The FCS I knew was a school at war. I missed the beginning, 1939-1941 saw me at various schools throughout the country, but FCS at once became "My School" when I joined in September 1941.....

They were strange days; school life continued through bombs and crises and I think at school we grew old for our ages. Most of us donned uniform in the evening and attended parades and more classes in the cadet forces or nursing services. Despite this, school work did not really suffer. We were keen to progress and serve school and country; we saw our late Fifth and Sixth formers return to school in service uniform and too often we stood in silence as Mr Chalk told us that one of them would not be coming back again.

And then again in 1944 we suffered through enemy action when a flying bomb repeated the work of the landmine. FCS carried on, classes in the shelters and difficulty upon difficulty beset the staff, but they saw our education did not suffer.

We missed a lot that present pupils enjoy - no trips abroad, no trips to the theatre - even our school parties were held in the afternoon; but we had our harvest camps - and we gained a lot in the close comradeship that those turbulent years brought us.

I remember so much of my school days - the gas masks; the Spotters' Club under the watchful eye of George Cull; the Meteorological Society with the enthusiasm of Hans Leowenthal and Mike Holton; the ATC School Flight, and so on.

One event I must recall - it was 8.45 am and an Alert had sounded. Fincunia arrived at school and proceeded direct to the shelters. Very shortly afterwards a flying bomb was heard approaching. At once everybody left the shelters and stood on the field gazing skywards to catch a glimpse of this strange weapon. The flying bomb passed over and we returned to the shelters. That was the spirit of FCS at war'.

The Second World War had quite a disruptive effect both on academic and on sporting life at the School. The School was evacuated for periods and had to endure several inconveniences. However, the Magazine was still produced, and one reads of trenches, lessons in shelters, fire-watching and many other such activities.

Charles Hale (1929/34) was always concerned about the War Memorial :-

'...In August 1942, while on leave in Cairo from the 8th Army, I was facing the wall in a public toilet when the chap on my right suddenly said, "Hello, Charlie". That was quite a surprise because it was Wallace Black, an ex-form member who I had not seen since 1934 when we were at school. Unfortunately he had sad news. He told me that R C Deere, popularly known as "Pussy", had been shot down and killed on a bombing raid over Germany.... He was a good pianist and composer. He played at the 1934 Speech Day, as did Wallace Black with his violin. With the names of Robert Deere, Sydney Turner, and other boys I knew so well on the memorial I can assure you that it has real meaning for me.....'

The war again made its mark on the school at the end of 1944, and it had to be temporarily closed while repairs were carried out. A description of the War years was written by George Cull (1939 - 1945) in Scimitar 131, Summer edition 1996 :-

'...To boys like me, obsessed with making models, aviation and the war was a fascinating time. Attendance at FCS was a grave interruption to the pursuit of our hobbies.

There was the School Flight No 393 Squadron of the Air Training Corps and the Spotters Club. The School club was No. 228 of the National Association of Spotters Clubs. These were officially encouraged because air raid spotting was carried out (not by us) from factory roofs and the like, and by the Royal Observer Corps. We were all expert at aircraft recognition. When old enough (16, I think) we could become "fire watchers". This meant that two of us would return to school at 8pm or 9 pm, and sleep on camp beds in the boy's cloakroom.

There was supposed to be a Master there, too, but as most were no longer young and did not fancy sleeping on camp beds, they did not always turn up, much to our delight.

There were also one or two plain clothes policemen who would arrive late for the fire-watching, stay for half an hour or so, and then, if the air-raid sirens had not sounded, say, "You'll be alright, lads", give us each half-a-crown, or more, and vanish. This left us in sole command at FCS and we would get the Gym mats out from under the stage and have a highly gymnastic time. We would leave for home at 7am.

It was terrific to get money for this; our other source of income was from selling our sweet coupons.....

Forgot: the idea of fire-watching was to put out (with sand and stirrup pump) any incendiary bombs which might come through the roof. None ever did! I have the steel tail fin from a German fire bomb - the rest was magnesium and burned away.

The most exciting event was the blast damage to the school from a V1 flying bomb (called Doodlebugs) which dived into the Rough Lots (Glebe Land) opposite the school. Most window frames were either blown in or splintered and all the windows, except, I think the Hall's glass roof. The thick window panes in the roof of the Art

room were all blown in and I had the enviable job of poking out the remaining jagged pieces of glass which would come crashing down and smash on the floor. If the same floor still exists I must look to see if any cuts where jagged glass struck edge on, are still to be seen. No supervision, no safety helmet, but a good long window-opening/shutting pole was all that was required'.

Spotters Clubs were all the rage in the wartime years. Small parts of planes were displayed on a screen for a few seconds, and the spotters had to identify the name of the plane and state whether it was "friend or foe". George Cull finished in about sixth place in the All-England Aircraft Spotters Competition

Peter Dewhurst (1937 - 1942) remembered the period a little differently :-

'George Cull refers to blast damage to the school by "doodle-bug" but this is news to me. I left FCS in 1942, but previous to this the school suffered severe blast damage from two land-mines delivered by parachutes. One landed on the "Gun Station" corner of Summers Lane and High Road, and the second landed opposite the school behind the swimming pool. The bombers had passed over and the local searchlights switched off, and the Ack Ack was silent. The "All Clear" had not sounded but I was in the bathroom watching the pyrotechnics following the bombers into the distance. Suddenly there was a tremendous flash to my left. I leant further out of the window and within seconds another explosion occurred much nearer. The blast of this pushed me across the bathroom. Next morning I found a piece of land-mine the size of a brick on my bed.

The school was not habitable and our education continued at Henrietta Barnett School at Hampstead Garden Suburb where we also came to know the air-raid shelters very well - they were much nicer than those at FCS...'

Bob Costain (1939 - 1944) equated the school with the war :-

'...the two ran side by side and had a great deal in common. Every morning there were lumps of shrapnel to be gathered and exchanged, dog fights to be observed, the Hendon aerodrome was within cycle distance and we could watch the Lysanders come and go. The sirens were always good for a relief from lessons....the teachers were never cruel and there was little bullying. In our class we seemed a happy bunch of conspirators...Miss Peeling spent most of the lessons telling us how bad we were....Miss Jacoby, a female Ronnie Corbett.... Naturally we tried our tricks on Mr Jones, but he was made of sterner stuff....Miss Martin known to us as Molly.... Mr Sturdy was a teacher with humour.....'

Like George Cull a lot of the boys were involved with uniformed organisations, ATC, Scouts, etc., and that involved them in the War Effort. Colin Brown (1940-1945) explains :-

'...my schooldays diary was jam-packed with numerous activities mostly involving Scouting. I was a proud member of the "81st North London (2nd Finchley) Scout Group. Their Headquarters was "The Better 'Ole" in New Trinity Road, East Finchley....Waste paper collections, messenger duties at local Civil Defence Units, acting as casualties for Red Cross Air-Raid exercises, and erecting Morrison Shelters for those people who were unable to erect them for themselves....'

I well remember 1943, the morning after the school was damaged in an enemy air-raid. On arriving we were diverted from the School building, which though standing, had been well blasted, and told to report to the History Hut to receive work to take home....Not surprisingly we did not take the work home, instead we adjourned to the swimming pool opposite the SchoolThe Manager, Mr Alison, managed to intercept us before we made our dives into the deep end. "There's a lot of debris in the pool - it has to be cleared before you can swim", he said. The solution was clear - we were unanimous. "Don't worry, we'll do it". By the end of the morning we had retrieved the equivalent of a skipful of splintered wood, pieces of slate, glass, nylon rope, and green coloured cloth which formed part of the parachute which suspended the mine that had blasted the School as it exploded over the Rough Lots opposite...'

Colin Brown also reminds us that throughout the war school dinners were provided :-

'Although "there was a war on" the younger generation were remarkably well fed. I have fond memories of "meat and two veg" school dinners. These were taken in the Hall under the aegis of the redoubtable Dinner Ladies.'



'The one who was more redoubtable than the others was a certain Mrs Howes. This ample lady would conduct the apportionment of the daily mid-day meal on the basis of her appraisal of one's need for nourishment.'

Thinking back, some of my contemporaries were not too enthusiastic about the products of Mrs Howes' kitchen. However, having experienced the deprivations of the early 1930's, I had learned to identify largesse when it was offered and be duly thankful. Consequently, my rather wan appearance when I first joined the School must have triggered a rare showing of Mrs Howes' altruistic feelings towards me. Thus it was that when I offered her my empty plate (like Oliver Twist) for my daily "vittles", this ample lady would anoint it with her customary "veg" and two slices of meat (with gravy). Then, as I was about to move on, she would call me back in pitying gesture and enquire, "Would you like a "bitta fat, Brown?", whereupon my plate would be overlaid with the offal-like substances (classed as fat) with which she annointed my two lean slices.....'.

Harold Chalk, the Headmaster, wrote the Foreword for the School magazine, The Fincunian, in 1941 :-

'The year 1940 - 1941 may well be described as one of the most eventful in the long and honourable history of the school. Not one of us is likely to forget the experiences of last Autumn with their disturbing effect on both home and school life, and the ordeal to which the school was subjected was a real test of our ability to adjust our school life to changing circumstances. Had it not been, indeed, for the unfailing loyalty and good humour of both pupils and Staff, the conditions would certainly have been most exasperating. Let us hope that one effect of the "Blitz" will be to hasten plans for the erection of new buildings when normal times return.

The enforced retirement of Mr Quilliam has deprived the school of the services of an excellent teacher and Senior Master. The ready response to my appeal for the raising of a testimonial fund gave ample evidence of the esteem in which he is held by all who were associated with him in the work of the school. It only remains now for us to wish him a speedy return to health and strength, and to assure him that he will always be a welcome visitor.

My final word must be one of thanks and congratulation to the school, on the result of the effort in connection with War Weapons Week. The sum subscribed was far beyond our most sanguine expectations, and is proof, if proof were needed, that the fine traditions of the school are being worthily maintained in these difficult times'.

Kathleen Davis, the editor of The Fincunian, *'....feared that tradition would be broken by war-time complications and the magazine would not be published, but here it is ! We have been obliged to change the cover and size of the magazine, once again because of war-time restrictions. There is just as much reading matter as usual, however....'*

Another War-time Scholar is the Rev Brian F Cross, MA (1939/45). He spent some time in Germany and while there he visited the site where the V1 (doodlebugs) and the V2 (rockets) were assembled, now sealed off as a memorial :-

'...I prepared this letter at Culzean Castle, Maybole, Ayrshire, while staying in the actual flat that Eisenhower lived in from time to time. I have called my piece about FCS in war-time, "An Extra Subject".

Anticipated commencement at school for our year coincided with the outbreak of hostilities on 3 September 1939, so there was a consequent delay. School entry was postponed because of the many evacuations from the London area.... Attendance at School, then on a part-time basis, was withheld until early Autumn. When full-time education commenced it was to be at Dame Henrietta Barnett's Junior School, Hampstead Garden Suburb. It seems this was considered a safer venue than Ballards Lane, travel to and from Hampstead seemed to offer more adventure and discovery.

The winter 1939/40 was particularly cold. Snow and cold added further test, a suitable back drop to the heroic winter war being fought by Finland against

attacking Russia. It was early in 1940 that it was considered safe to return to FCS mainly because brick air raid shelters had been completed on the back field. These remained on site for many a year.

The "phoney war" ended with winter. April saw the ill-fated Norway campaign, May saw Dunkirk, and in June Italy declared war. It is not generally remembered that Italian planes raided, rather ineffectively, these shores later in the year. I was a witness to a sad retaliation on the boy's cloakroom. A young Italian boy was set upon by two older and clearly stronger lads, as he unsuspectingly arrived. They clearly meant rough business. Fortunately, word reached Mr McNelly who promptly arrived on the scene and stopped a very unfair fight, much to his eternal credit. The boy, whose name I do not remember, did not return to school.

The conclusion of the dramatic Battle of Britain, saw 1B promoted to 2B (at that time, "2B or not 2B, that is the joke" - quite a good one, I thought). The London night blitz of the winter of 1940/41 was a test. About this time a parachute mine exploded on the Rough Lots, fortunately during the night. This did extensive damage to most of the glass on the school frontage and other areas, so it was back to Henrietta's, but to the senior school this time, which had been reinforced with wooden beams. Our own air-raid shelters had proved to be imperfect. Desks were moved in but there was no light, in any case they leaked and I believe the mortar had too much sand and not enough cement. We returned to our own premises as repairs were quite quickly completed.

1941 saw drama abroad. The Greek campaign, the fall of Crete, to and fro in the Western Desert, the attack on Pearl Harbour. At school it was business as usual. The school staff, like the rest of us, must have had many disturbed nights, but were very regular for teaching duty and they put on a very brave face. It was business as usual, with the 609 trolley-bus, it always came even if it was late sometimes, one could deduce that the overhead cables to Moorgate were operational. It was business as usual at the swimming baths, both inside and outside pools. At one stage, a captured ME 109, was put on display across from the school, which attracted considerable interest. At least we were reminded that we faced a formidable enemy. It was business as usual at the cinema and at White Hart Lane. Arsenal was also using that ground for its matches so in addition to seeing all the Spurs stars, we could see Bastin, Hapgood, and Compton. Very big attendances and very low entry costs..... One Spurs programme reminded us, "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy".

1944, and "D" Day on 6 June. Soon after ...the wretched Doodlebugs (V1's) flying bombs began to arrive. This coincided with the School Certificate examinations, and more business as usual. We sat ours in The Hut, air raid precautions were now rudimentary - getting under desks when the doodlebug's jet engine was heard as too close for comfort. Over the two-week examination period there were very many such occasions, as many as five or six during one exam. Marking, we were told, would allow for this. I still have some of the papers. The attitude to blitz was now blase indeed. Indifference again required as in September the V2 rocket attack began, 500 of which landed in the London Civil Defence Region over the next few months.

The war ended suddenly in May 1945. Six long years of war, six years of not entirely happy schooling. I do not think we would have missed the "Extra Subject". Those a few years older than us had to give so much more - many gave life itself - Sacrifice and Struggle.

I have failed to mention night fire-watching duties. Dickie Seymour, records a lucky escape when a V1 exploded dangerously close. Again very much glass damage. This was repaired during the holiday and we did not return to Henrietta's. The "A" bomb in August ended the war with Japan. Those of us about to be called up could breathe a bit easier'.

Michael Holton (1939/46) reminded us about the War Memorials:-

"...We often talk about these memorials with little thought about their contents. At the end of the morning assembly, Harold Chalk would announce in a solemn voice each fatality as it was reported. Little detail was added while the school stood in prayer before dismissing the assembly.

The war was long enough for most pupils to recall some of the names. Staff members would individually express their condolences in private later, as they did also for brothers of former pupils of Woodhouse and Christ's College as news came in.

For security reasons little was said about the circumstances which would be used by the enemy, although the next-of-kin would have had a telegram beginning, 'It is my painful duty to inform you.....'. Several weeks later there would be a letter, often from the commanding officer written in the field describing the circumstances and speaking about the boy's qualities. Later would follow a standard letter from the King. If there was one, parents rarely got to visit the grave for some years, if at all.

After the war the Commonwealth Graves Commission re-interred the bodies in beautiful, peaceful cemeteries world-wide for the 1,693,786 war dead, each next-of-kin receiving a brochure showing how to find the grave. Finally after the war the serviceman's medals would arrive through the post. You can get a feel by visiting the small war cemetery in the public cemetery next to the new Christ's CollegeI have found there on a panel the name of one Old Fincunian.

By the summer of 1945 The Fincunian magazine diligently reported the names of 294 Old Boys who saw war service. Of these 33 (over 11%) died - a very high figure in such circumstances. 39 girls also saw service, mainly in the UK, though none the less worthy.

Another surprise figure: 75% of the boys were in the RAFVR, of which 12 were Sergeant Air Crew. This is no reflection on the other two services. FCS had an active Air Training Corps Squadron (No 393).

An interesting fact, across the board in the UK was the presence of RAFVR Sergeant Aircrew who were recruited from grammar schools, exploding the myth that the pilots of the Battle of Britain were all commissioned and from public schools.

393 Squadron was one of the few picked to represent the ATC at the Victory Parade in 1946. Standing on the steps of the Queen Victoria Memorial, looking up The Mall, we could see it all.

I still have my call-up papers for RAFVR, having been a Sergeant in 393 Squadron. I am a member of the RAF Historical Society, so we are in line with received opinion.....'.

The end of World War II brought with it many changes. Perhaps the biggest change was the retirement of Mr Chalk. The members of the teaching staff at that time were :-



Back row : Jones; ? ; Wills; Hillman; Brown (nee Comber); Welch (Secretary)
Middle row : Cleghorn; Reid; McNelly; Johnson; Smith; Martin; Cleare (nee Stevens); Temkin
Front row : Sturgeon; Peeling; Darker; Howland Chalk; Carr * ; Murphy * ; Quilliam *

• indicates "retired"

Many changes in the basic school routine had occurred since the early days of FCS. Mr Povah reported on the situation as he took on his new position, Headmaster of Finchley County School :-

'...One major event was the abolition of fees in 1944, which were originally three and later raised to five guineas per term. The pupils seemed to have a much harder time, working longer hours at more subjects. On arriving at school they remained in

the playground until five to nine, when a whistle was blown by a member of staff to signify the beginning of school. The pupils then marched into the hall for Assembly, at which no Bible readings or notices were given, and lessons began at nine o'clock.

All pupils took the whole range of general subjects, including woodwork or needlework, music, scripture, art, and cookery lessons, with chemistry and physics for boys, botany for girls, and a choice of history or geography. School ended at four o'clock and the last lesson on Friday was devoted to private study.

In the Summer Term the first forms were relieved of the burden of homework, much to the envy of the older pupils. School without detention may seem like a dream, for in those days there was no official detention. Wrongdoers were punished by individual teachers in a suitable manner, while the Black Book was reserved for delinquents.

Also there were many out-of-school activities - mandolin class, Saturday morning visits to Museums, a Literary and Debating Society, a Science Club, Geographical Society, League of Nations Union, Photographic Society and even a Conjuring Club. Among the sporting activities were raquets, badminton, boxing, and a Tennis Club which in 1910 had a membership of nearly two hundred.

Another change has been in the style of uniform...Originally girls wore straw boaters, but later changed to caps similar to the boys with the peak turned back, and in 1935 regulation dresses were introduced. For both boys and girls, the blazer was plain maroon, and the house colour was embroidered under the badge. In 1934 the blazer was changed to its present striking design, as another academy adopted our colour'.



K A Povah at his desk

The new Headmaster, Mr K A Povah, wrote in Scimitar :-

'In 1944 children under 11 went to "primary" or Infant Schools or Junior Schools and all schools for 11 and over were dubbed "secondary". "County" was applied to all local authority schools, as opposed to "Church" schools, so our school had been called "Finchley County School" and so it officially remained, until I sneaked in the word "Grammar" by the very simple ruse of having it printed on the letter-heading and

on the notice board.....The staff of selective schools are expected to do a lot of "voluntary" out-of-class work. It is interesting to note that up until now the Top Field at Hilton Avenue, with its full-time groundsman, was not used at all in class-time, but only after school in the evening and on Saturdays, with supervision by staff "volunteers"....

A major change was to allocate a double period so that each form could on "clement" days, disport itself energetically. I reckon that half the days are unsuitable for outdoor games..... "General Science" is the only science studied - no individual Physics, Chemistry or Biology, and "Additional General Science" is taken only by those in 2A who were not considered suitable to take a second language - Latin or German. It will take time to let this established pattern work itself out, and as a transition we bring in Physics-with-Chemistry as one subject, Biology as another and arranged double periods for lab work. For some years Mr Salmond and Mr Vivian have worked extra hard to coach their sixth form students who had inadequate timetable provision.....'.

Philip Gillam in Scimitar 119, Summer 1990 edition :-

'...flood of memories about the odd and irascible Benjamin Arthur Roberts, known to all as "Joe".....An emergency war-time PT teacher with a tendency to start each games period in a manner which today would be classed as child abuse I well remember the excitement on the day word swept through the school that Joe had taken a swing at one of the more developed Fifth Form boys, who had promptly socked him back. Eventually Joe overstepped the mark and after a swift interview in the Headmaster's study, was seen skulking away clutching a carrier bag of plimsoles. The subsequent rumour was that he had been taken into Colney Hatch Mental Hospital.

He was replaced by ex-navy instructor Tom Cleghorn, admired by all the boys, and rather given to nonchalantly swinging from PT ropes in the Hall, rippling his tattoos as certain young lady teachers were changing classrooms. After two or three years he left to "go into films"

Joy Bigwood (nee Talbot 1942/47), writing in 2004, found Mr Hillman :-

'...a very decent and understanding person. His warmer side was revealed when he was in charge of a party of pupils working at Harvest Camp in Bletchley in August 1945. He was there with his wife and small children, two I think. VJ Day happened while we were there and some of the boys got news of this in the evening, came round and knocked on the window of the girls' dormitory. We quickly dressed and all went down to the village to see the bonfires and celebrations.

Unfortunately we had neglected to get permission and received a ticking off on our return, but a kindly one. I remember that Peter Chapman, Head Boy at the time, was with us, so we were being chaperoned really.

One other thing stays in my mind about Mr Hillman. He once said, "Don't ever have anything to do with the Firestone Tyre Company". I have no idea what lay behind this remark.....'.

Teachers appointed to the staff of Finchley County School during the period under review, 1933 to 1945, were :-

Miss Kathleen Mary Perry	1933 - 1936	Biology/Botany
Mr Reginald Frank Johnson	1933 - 1949	Maths
Mr William Thomas McNelly	1933 - 1974	French/Economics
Mr Charles Potts	1934 - 1934	French/German/English
Mr Frank A Arrowsmith	1934 - 1940	Geography/PT/Games
Miss Elaine Peeling	1934 - 1968	History/English
Miss Hilda C Hancock	1936 - 1937	German/English
Miss Iris Christine Elliott	1936 - 1936	History/English
Miss Hilda Whitlock	1936 - 1937	History/English
Margaret M Brown (nee Comber)	1937 - 1953	Biology
Mrs Evelyn Dorothy Miller	1937 - 1938	German/English
Joan Randall Reed (nee Martin)	1937 - 1949	History
Mr Thomas Challinor Conway	1937 - 1938	Maths
Dulcie E H Locke (nee Darker)	1938 - 1946	English/Latin
Miss Constance H Smith	1939 - 1946	German/English
Mr Anthony W Champion	1942 - 1942	Geography/PT
Mrs Dorothy Sara Blair	1941 - 1942	French/German
Mr Herbert Victor Hillman	1941 - 1946	Chemistry ****
Mrs Muriel Lilian Rose Hicks	1941 - 1942	Maths
Ms Blanka Holzer	1942 - 1943	German/English/French
Mr Benjamin Roberts	1943 - 1943	PT
Miss Dorothy K Havergal-Shaw	1943 - 1943	Geography
Miss Beryl Wardrop	1943 - 1944	Geography
Miss Gladys Marie Catling	1944 - 1945	Physics
Mr D Costello	1943 - 1946	?
Miss Nettie Temkin	1944 - 1970	Geography
Mrs J E A Cleare (nee Steven)	1945 - 1964	French
Mr Thomas G Cleghorn	1945 - 1947	Games/PT



Temkin



Smith



Peeling

**** Mr Hillman changed his name from Hoffman. At the 6 September 2003 Reunion, Geof Batten (1947/54) was heard to suggest that Mr Hoffman had changed his name so as to avoid a possibility of being suspected as a spy. With tongue in cheek Scimitar reported his explanation sounded a bit far fetched but the girls to whom he was making the explanation, loved it.

1946 – 1960

After causing much upheaval, the war eventually came to an end, and this was celebrated by the school in the form of parties, two days holiday and the flying of the flag outside the building. The new Headmaster wrote :-

'...Few people know that the fine flagstaff which used to stand outside the girl's entrance, was erected in 1937 to commemorate the Coronation of our present King and Queen. It was used for the last time in 1945 when the flag was flown in celebration of the end of the war.

Peace celebrations, retrospectively, remind us of the war itself. Between 1939 and 1945, the school building was narrowly missed on two occasions by bombs, and both times it sustained a certain amount of damage. Except for these disturbances, however, the school continued as usual and there were no other outstanding or abnormal events.....'.

Daphne Edler (nee Fletcher 1940/45) wrote in 2001 :-

'....Something I ought to get off my chest. I have one of the hands from the Old School clock. As you know, the school was hit by a landmine in the war and some time later, William (Mac) Downie and I climbed up through the Chemistry and Physics Laboratory to the clock tower and took the hand from the clock face. Mac was in my class and sadly he died some years ago. I suppose I shall have to take the rap for this escapade myself!'.

In 1946 and until the closure of the School in 1971, the Prefects, as part of the ceremony of their creation, were asked to sign their names in a small neatly bound book. It became obvious that the book would never be filled with such signatures, and in later pages "Successes of Old Fincunians" seemed suitable entries. As news of these successes reached the School, they were entered in the book, which thus became something of a general Honours Book. It has sections for University, Training College, Services, Merchant Navy, Civil Service and Professions including Nursing.

Fincunian 1947, Editorial by K A Povah :-

'.... The School magazine, The Fincunian is an important School activity, because it includes everyone, in some way or other, from the Headmaster to the youngest first former. It is a link, too - a link between present and past Fincunians, and also, perhaps, Fincunians-to-be.....In the RAF I was for a time Chief Ground Instructor at a Unit for Air Crew Training. In that position there was a lot of "administering" to do. Inspecting Officers came down, examinations which affected cadets' future to the extent of their life or death had to be arranged, and every Friday night I personally counted 622 folding chairs. Now the great contrast between the little jobs that are connected with the work here and the little jobs in the RAF is that the present ones are leading in a positive direction. Of course, during wartime one's efforts were bent on the essential matter of winning, but often there was much disheartening waste, both of material and effort. Here at the County School it is a pleasure to join the staff

team already established, and to know that the efforts are contributing to something that is indisputably and permanently worth while..’.

In 1954 the Fincunian Magazine carried a potted history of life at FCS in the late 1940's :-

‘1946 saw forty years of loyal service come to an end with the retirement of Mr Chalk. The successor to his difficult task was Mr K A Povah, who within a very short time arranged for many alterations to be carried out to the school.

Among these was the erection of the Refectory at the west edge of the back field, which had to be shared with the adjoining “Our Lady of Lourdes” school, as the school hall was never intended for such a purpose.

The old two-roomed stove-heated hut was replaced in 1948 by a prefabricated concrete building now known as the XYZ Block. Other classroom changes included the moving of the Biology Lab. to its present home, which was before this time, Room O, and used for Geography lessons.

Even though we had no proper gym, new apparatus was added to the hall, consisting of a set of ropes and wall bars.

Until 1949, the floors of the classrooms were raised in tiers, with radiators underneath the platforms. But by this time the heating system had become obsolete, and so it was decided that the system should be renewed, and as the tiers were removed, forty years of accumulated litter was revealed. Later the old fashioned desks and adjoining benches were replaced by separate desks and chairs.

The building had a face-lift, being newly decorated and painted. The War Memorial also had a face-lift in order to incorporate the names of those Old Fincunians who died during the Second World War. This necessitated two completely new panels.

Wednesday mornings became popular due to the musical performance of Mr McNelly, which made a marked impression on the school.



Picture of Mr McNelly taken in 1946

The school clock, famous for being temperamental, has been remarkably well-behaved this year. Quite recently, however, it showed its dislike for being surrounded by unsightly scaffolding, and stopped. It had its face painted and now it has a most handsome gleam of which other clocks might well be jealous. At the same time, the walls of the school were pointed (which is the technical name, we are told, for having the cracks filled in with mortar).

It may have been at that time the clock tower innards were examined closely, because in Scimitar, June 1954, the graffiti artists whose names and initials appear on the inside walls of the clock tower, were named in a one-page article entitled, 'Writers on the Wall' :-

1923	1926	1929	1933
N Lelean	W F Eames	A R Adams	P West (3B)
	J Blunt	Courtier	
1924	R Dane	N Lee	1934
	L R Adams	H Yaling	
W O Baird	A G White (4B)	C Turner	P Stilwell
D G Bagg	J Prideaux (5B)		K Henley
C P Stein	H Reading	1930	B Smeeton
J Emerson	E Taylor		
D Rose	G Baird	S R Cooper	1935
	K W Vincent	M Clark	
1925			E Willmot
	1927	1931	R Finch
Hughes		J Horn	1936
Carter	R Carter	L Selfe	
Hudson			R Payne
Campbell	1928	1932	
Inwards			
Muriel Coulton	D Lovell	T E Pickering	
	P Tew	Joan Cooke	
	N Brummell	Vera Newman	
		S Reading	

1947 saw one of the very few serious crimes committed during the School's long history :-

'...Recent visitors to the school include two who preferred to come in the early hours of Sunday morning. They entered by way of the window in the Head Master's study, and being of a mechanical turn of mind kept themselves occupied with metalwork for an hour or so. They seemed to be looking for something, and in fact they found the princely sum of thirty-two shillings as a reward for their persistence. Being a bit disappointed, they decided to wreck the room before leaving'.

Mr Tom Cleghorn left at the end of the 1947 Summer Term :- 'He has been in charge of Physical Training and Boys Games for nearly three years and his influence

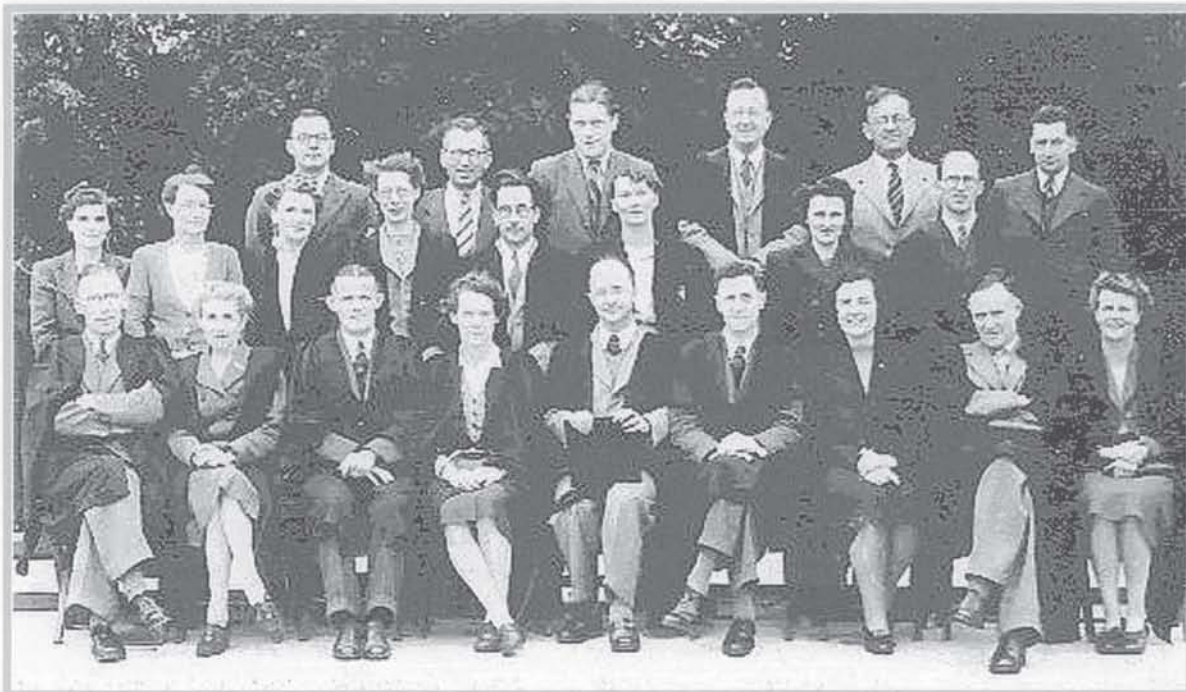
has been brought to bear on all manner of different activities. Mr Cleghorn demands a certain standard of smartness, has a sharp eye for slacking, and has a true sportsman's idea of fair play. It is no secret that his favourite sport is Boxing, and it was a privilege to see him matched against someone of apparently equal physique, but handling his opponent as delicately as a cat with a mouse, and always in charge of the boxing. The first formers were sufficiently enthused to put up a tournament on their own, and expressed their gratefulness to Mr Cleghorn in a short but sincere message....'.

It has been reported that Tom Cleghorn became Tom Clegg and performed cinematic stunts in well-known films, James Bond, for example. His position was filled by Mr E J Rawlings, better known as "E J R" :-

'The 1947 appointment of Games Master is being assumed by Mr E J Rawlings, already known to many of the teams as a great encourager and coach on the touch line.

We are very pleased to have an Old Boy of such distinction with us. In the army Mr Rawlings achieved the rank of Major, and the qualities of drive which he showed during the war will be very welcome here. We may also congratulate ourselves on having a very experienced Master of Ceremonies for the Christmas Parties....'.

This Staff photograph was taken during the Autumn Term 1947 :-



Back Row :	Foy (Caretaker)	Rawlings	?	Johnson	Vivian	Eldridge
Middle Row:	Sturgeon	?	Stevens	Smith	Williams	Hill
					?	Crabtree
Front Row:	McNelly	Gow	Povah	Temkin		?
	Peeling	Comber	Jones	Wills		

One of the few mentions of "Dinner Ladies" occurred that year :-

'After many years of service to the school Mrs Howes will be retiring at the end of the 1947 Summer Term. Many of the Staff will remember the old days when she cooked the school dinners and served as many as ninety at the Cookery Centre. It was the delight of Mrs Howes to get something very special to mark a very special occasion, and she excelled herself at the time of Mr Chalk's departure.

In connection with Parent-Staff Evenings, Prefectorial Banquets, and Old Scholars' Dances, Mrs Howes always managed to arrange for a very tasteful and appetising display of delicacies, and if one may be permitted to particularise on a single item, the sandwiches were individually designed, and quite unlike the mechanical doorsteps which so often go by the same name.

The time has now come for Mrs Howes to leave her regular work at the school, in which, until the last few weeks, her attendance has been absolutely regular, but she will continue to come in to help us on the special occasions. We thank Mrs Howes for her services in the past, and wish for her a happy and restful retirement'.

Bob Payne, OBE (1934/36) reported on Life Membership to Scimitar 140, Spring 2001 edition :-

'In a very old file I have a copy of a letter and AGM Agenda for the 1948 meeting. Fred Holbrook was Chairman 1947/48, I was Secretary and Gilbert Butlin was Treasurer. Item 9 on the Agenda reads, "To discuss the proposal of Gilbert Butlin that Life Membership be introduced for members of 30 years of age and over....and if agreed to amend the Rules of the Association accordingly".

It was approved at a Life Membership Sub-committee and I was elected Chairman for 1948/49 with Fred Holbrook as Secretary and Gilbert Butlin as Honorary Treasurer. I arranged for the "gratuitous" printing of the Life Membership Certificates and the first were issued about a year later by which time Jack Rawlings had succeeded me as Chairman and Alan Scrine was Hon Sec. About 250 Life Members have been "elected" over the years'

1950 saw the rebirth of the Old Fincunians magazine, the forerunner of Scimitar. EJR writing in the Old Fincunian September 1950 :-

'This the first attempt since the beginning of World War II to produce an Old Fincunians' Magazine, in fact it is the first time in the history of the Association that it has been an annual production. In June 1938 the Association embarked on a quarterly issue which proved highly successful but the scheme was regrettably interrupted by the War and eventually curtailed. The Committee felt that a revival, in some way, of this pre-war effort, was warranted and justifiable even though it presented a huge problem financially. Quite naturally too, the editorial staff have been more than anxious....'

The original series of Old Fincunian Magazines ran to five issues, from June 1938 to December 1939 numbered Vol.1, Nos. 1 - 5. In September 1950 the

Old Fincunian was reborn as Vol.2, No. 1 but the very next issue was Edition No. 1 of 'Scimitar'.

On the front page of that first edition is the question, "*Scimitar - can you think of a better title?*". Either we could not, or we are still thinking about it! It comprised four letter-size sheets of papers and the archive is the Headmaster's copy. Mr Povah seems to have marked the Scimitar as if it was a piece of homework. For example, on the advertisement pleading for members to pay their subscriptions, he has written in red crayon, "*How much?*". On the back page where the netball club is appealing for new players to contact them he has written in red crayon, "*Address?*".



The heading for the first Scimitar

Alan Scrine (1940/45) wrote in Scimitar 139, Autumn 2000 edition :-

'Did you know that the Scimitar came into being on the initiative of William "Mac" Downie? He thought of the name - a slight stretch of the imagination from the "swords" on the school coat-of-arms. He drew the heading for the earliest issues. It was just a scimitar sword across the top of the page. Mac died a number of years ago but he was a contemporary of mine. Just after we left school the OFA was run really by Jack and Cyril Rawlings, Fred Holbrook, Gilbert Butlin and a few other old hands whose names I do not remember.... Before the War the OFA had published an annual magazine entitled, "The Old Fincunian", somewhat on the style of the School Magazine though on a more modest scale. We sought quotations for starting publication again, but got nowhere, so Mac came up with the idea of a stencilled newsletter to be published three or four times a year - and still it goes on about 50 years later.....'

This is how "The Scimitar" was conceived and born :-

'One evening in October 1951, Muriel Grant (nee Lodge), Fred Holbrook and I, Mac Downie, were sitting in Fred's back room with a problem on our hands. At the AGM a week before, several people had been outspoken in their criticism of the existing OFA "news service". What had been said in effect was that the annual Magazine "The Old Fincunian", apart from being expensive to produce, was for the most part out of date by publication time, and the periodic Newsletter was inadequate. Consequently, the AGM had instructed that "the new committee should thoroughly explore the situation and possibly the production of an extended news sheet"

Firstly, we reviewed our resources - use of the School duplicator, limited funds and some paper. Now, the paper which had been given to us by Colin Brown consisted of about fifteen hundred sheets of duplicating paper off-cuts about octave size, and that gave me an idea. "Why not", I suggested, "staple four sheets together into a little eight page book and get away from the News Sheet idea altogether?". We talked for several hours about contents and layout, and finally someone said, "What do we call it?". I think the final idea was a combined effort when someone said, "What are those sword things on the badge called?". And so "The Scimitar" arrived. Of course, Chris Fookes went and spoiled it later by telling us that our Scimitars are Seaxes, but it was too late by then!

Almost exactly one month after the AGM the first edition was despatched to members. After evenings of struggling with the vagaries of the School Gestetner, shuffling, sorting, and stapling seemingly endless sheets of paper, our small "staff" sat back and waited for the Association's comments. They were soon forthcoming.

We had succeeded, and the "Scimitar" would continue.....Since that first edition Scimitar has grown to almost unrecognisable proportions. Twenty pages is quite normal, and in fact, our Jubilee Issue ran to thirty pages. After eighteen months of production, we purchased our own duplicator, which has enabled us to undertake more ambitious productions, with plenty of drawings and, occasionally, two colour work.....'.

Fred Holdsworth writing in Scimitar 122, Autumn 1991 :-

'The Hut was a corrugated tin hut on the School field against the tennis court by the boy's playground. It contained a classroom, a foyer to hang coats, and a small room used for studying by senior scholars. It was always used by form 2A, who were placed on their honour to behave well. Most did. We were lucky to have the piano-playing Morganstern in our form and the room had a piano.

Great times! Once, a live wire fell across the hut rendering the whole hut electrically alive. Rings of pupils held hands, the nearest touched the metal hut and they all sustained a small electric shock at the same time.

Opposite the Physics Lab was a small room in which were lodged the oiled and the awaiting oiling cricket bats, some cricket gear and footballs in various stages of blowing-upness. At the further end of the room was a small door which led onto the rafters of the classrooms below. In the ceilings of each classroom there were metal grilles to allow for circulation of air. Through these grilles it was possible to drop small balls of paper onto the teacher and class below, causing some consternation. Used with discretion, skill and seldom'.

In the Old Fincunian Magazine, September 1950, the Headmaster, Mr K A Povah thought that Old Fincunans would be interested to know how the Old School was developing :-

'The new Dining Hall has been functioning very satisfactorily since September 1949, and of our 344 pupils an average number of 220 stay to dinner.

"The Hut" has disappeared and has been replaced by a pre-fabricated block containing two large classrooms and one small, together with a small cloakroom.

"The Botany Hut" has come to the end of its period of usefulness as a teaching room, though it continues to serve the School as a much needed store room for furniture and equipment. Biology is now taught in Room O, formerly the Geography Room, while Geography has moved downstairs to Room D.

During the School Year, Room B has been set aside for Private Study only, and houses the collection of books formerly scattered in different parts of the School forming the nucleus of the Library being developed as part of the War Memorial.

There are a number of building developments in view. A small office for the School Secretary has been built next to the Headmaster's room as Room J, formerly the Office, is now required full time for Sixth Form teaching.

The "Cookery Centre" is being entirely rearranged and provided with up-to-date equipment so that Housecraft can be taken by some of the senior girls to an advanced standard; in fact it will be taken in the General Certificate of Education.

The heating system in the main building, which has not stood up to the strain for many years past and which has had to be supplemented in many of the rooms by additional gas heaters, is at long last being replaced entirely. This will no doubt introduce a less bulky type of radiator and we shall literally feel the benefit of this work next winter.....

Many Old Fincunians may be sorry to know that the Commercial Course, which has been running for a quarter of a century or more, has ceased to meet any great demand and is being closed this year. This is probably because there is now a more general recognition of the value of a two-year course in the Sixth Form.....

I am glad to say that as far as I can judge there is still something left of the old spirit for which Fincunians were noted in the past. In my experience FCS is a very friendly school, and I think this is partly due to the fact that we are small enough to know each other quickly and well. In a school of a thousand pupils, such as I have worked in for many years, it takes an exceptional personality quite a long time to be recognised as a person of school stature. In our school I find that an ordinary newcomer in Form 1 is very soon able to establish an individual position and to be known as a person....'..

Those sentiments were echoed by Alderman H H Wilmot, a former Mayor of Finchley, in 1950 when writing in that same Old Fincunian Magazine :-

'...Fostered and nurtured by Carr and the Old Guard, the fundamental values all morally and spiritually sound, so firmly fixed, were carried on by Chalk and now Povah. The Old Guard such as Davie, Wallis, Cornes, Murphy, Howland, Quilliam and Miss Dace have passed and with them my friend the late Alderman Langlands, Directing Governor who had such a deep interest in the school and indeed, did much for it. Yet the work of the Old Guard remains in the production of the Fincunian character and fine citizenship.....'.

Philip Cook (1946/53) reported in 1952 that some of the long-running criticisms had been answered :-

'The building has not received many notable additions, as the economy campaign interfered with the most important on the programme, the extension of the Girl's Cloakroom to double its present size, the provision of additional Staff Rooms for the Masters and Mistresses, and the creation of a proper Sick Room.

The South boundary wall, sapped at its rather poorly constructed base by years of underground water, fell over, nearly two years ago. The story since then of plans, drains and alterations would fill a chapter. The Boys "Sanitary Block" has been reconstructed, and now has a roof. Part of the old lavatory wall has been left, so that when funds allow a roof can be added, to form additional bicycle shelter, the present shed for boys' bicycles being much too small. Some improvements have been made to the Woodwork Centre. Apart from redecoration, the bench tops have been reconstructed. There is now hot water at the wash-basin, and a fine new timber store houses work in progress. The wood-working lathe, whizzing at an uncountable speed, has already produced several specimens of turnery.

In the Summers of 1951 and 1952, practically all the inside of the school has been redecorated, the chief exceptions being the Art Store, the Office and the Head's Study. The only controversial point might be said to be the colour of the paint in the Hall. We definitely wanted a change after twenty years of dark brown, and the blue-green (or green-blue) was chosen to harmonise with the colouring of the 1914-1918 Memorial stencilled by Mr Howland on the South wall. The frame of the battle picture, "Victory", is much worse for wear, and we shall soon have to decide what is to be done to repair or replace it'.



Once World War II was over, the School had to decide what to do about the Old Fincunians who had served in the War, many of whom had been killed in action.

K A Povah, Headmaster, wrote in The Old Fincunian, September 1950 :-

'....A representative Committee, including members of the past and present Staff, the Governing Body, and Old Fincunians, under the chairmanship of Alderman Langlands, and after his death, of Alderman Wilmot, had several meetings to discuss the wide range of proposals very thoroughly before deciding that the best solution of the problem of choice lay in having a three-fold Memorial.

'The first item, and the most urgent, was to make a public record of the names of those Old Fincunians who gave their lives. After consultation with Mr Howland, who was the designer of the War Memorial for the 1914 - 18 War, it was arranged to have the name panels on the original Memorial covered with two new panels of the same shape. The names for the 1914 - 18 War have been lettered on the left hand panel, while the new names for the 1939 - 45 War balance on the right hand side. The colour scheme has been matched very skilfully, and though we were at some stage afraid that the joining of the new work to the old would prove unsuccessful, we were, in fact, very satisfied with the final effect. Old Fincunians who wish to see this part of the Memorial are very welcome to come along during any afternoon when the School is in session.

The second item is to be a Book of Remembrance. This will be prepared by a professional scribe and will be hand bound in leather. It will consist of two sections, the first being a list of those who lost their lives, together with details of their Units and service. The second section will be a list of the many Old Fincunians, men and women, who served in the Armed Forces, together with a brief note of their Units and any outstanding points about their service or distinctions..... we hope that any mistakes will be tolerated owing to the complexity of making contact with over three hundred Old Fincunians, many of whom have long since left the district and even the country.....It is, perhaps, of special interest to know that P H Tew (1924-29), who was a fighter pilot during the Battle of Britain, was twice mentioned in despatches and was awarded the Air Force Cross. He has made the RAF his career and is now stationed in the Middle East.

The third item of the Memorial is the Library Furniture. This choice was made only after very full consideration of the alternatives, and was made because Memorial Library Furniture seems to be appropriate in itself and also because the future of the school building is uncertain. If there were to be any change of premises the Library Furniture could easily be removed. Those who remember Room B will be able to visualise the room with the stepping for the desks removed, and it is proposed to expend the sum of about £400 on suitably designed shelving, tables and chairs. The Middlesex County Council has consented to make what can only be regarded as a very generous contribution - £200, towards the cost of this item of the Memorial. As the alteration to the room is to be carried out during the Summer of 1950, it should be possible to proceed with the selection and purchase of the furniture during the succeeding months....'.

By the 1949 Summer Term :-

'.....the first item of the War Memorial Committee's programme is completed. The new panels were personally lettered by Mr Gayton, the contractor, and Mr Howland, who did the original stencil work, has expressed his satisfaction with the blending of new and old....We must now turn our attention to the other sections, and it is hoped that money-making activities in the 1949-50 year will enable us to proceed with the Book of Record and with the Library furniture, which are to complete our War Memorial.....'.

The reference about the uncertain future of the building in 1950 can be explained by this extract from the same magazine :-

'...The School's reputation grew and with it the demand for admission. The Governors constantly asked for new buildings but the only result was temporary contrivances and I shall never understand why, over a period of twenty years, we were unable to convince the County Authorities of the paramount need for a new County School. Had we "local ones" succeeded the effect would have been a great financial saving, and a better building with the consequent enhancement of the School's objects, reputation and attractiveness. Each Headmaster was insistent and persistent on the need of a new County School and the Governors were wholeheartedly behind them. We must still keep on "keeping on" to secure a home appropriate to Fincunia.....'. There is more on the "New School" later.

In The Fincunian magazine, Summer 1951 it was reported :-

'There is news about each of the three parts of our War Memorial. The mural panels with the names were dedicated on 11 November, 1950, at a special service attended by many parents and relatives of the Fallen, together with representatives of the Governors, including the Mayor and Mayoress, the Old Fincunians' Association, and the present school. The service was conducted by the Rev Roy Deasy, an Old Fincunian who as an Infantry Officer had taken part in the D-day landing, and all members of the congregation must be grateful to him for the memory of a beautiful and dignified ceremony. Mr Vivian and Mr Holbrook read the Lessons, and the ensigns covering the panels were released by D Batten of the Army and A Humberstone of the Air Force, while Lt G Thorpe, RNVR, laid the wreath of poppies. It was an occasion when there was a real community of feeling, and the singing, led by the Senior Girl's Choir, was unanimous.

At the end of the evening, those who had come from a distance stayed for a time to renew their friendships and to examine sample pages of the Book of Remembrance.

Early in 1951 the completed book arrived, finely written, and with suitable enrichment. The binding is in black leather, with the word "Remembrance" in gilt. The pages are vellum, and the whole book is practically indestructible in ordinary use. The names of the Roll of Honour make brilliant pages of scarlet and black, while the second section in plainer style records the names, ranks and units of all Old Fincunians who are known to have served in HM Forces, 1939-45. Spaces have been allowed for addition of other names should information be found. The book, both in its conception and in execution, has been much admired....

Eventually the Book of Remembrance will be housed in the Memorial Library, in Room B. The County Council agreed to contribute an amount not exceeding the normal expenditure that was due for the standard furnishing of a library, and chairs and tables have been obtained. They are in plain waxed oak, and the chair seats are upholstered in green leather-cloth. In the next month or two the shelving will be completed, and we shall consider our task largely ended, though I have no doubt that we shall continue to add to the room by buying pictures or additional chairs or perhaps a magazine stand.

The money has been contributed from all kinds of sources, ranging from a balance of shillings in the Loco-spotters Funds, to a very generous gift of pounds from an Old Fincunian who left the school in 1916 and who has rarely been able to re-visit it. But the present pupils, with a steady and persistent effort, have been the strength of the fund, and I am sure that they will rejoice to see what their subscriptions have helped to produce - a really worthy Memorial'.

The Fincunian magazine reported in 1952 :-

'During this year, the Library has approached its permanent form, with tables, chairs, and book cases installed. As under the present regime Vth formers are often burdened by Private Study lessons, they help to swell the numbers to the total of thirty-five for whom there are places.

One or two additions are worthy of special mention. Mr Eldridge kindly designed and carved a tablet to be placed on the architrave of the Library door in the Hall. In case you do not know what an architrave is, we can inform you that it is the top framework. The words "Memorial Library" have been lettered in real gold leaf.

The same applies to the lettering on an oak tablet which will shortly appear inside the Library. We are greatly indebted to Mr D Pankhurst, Susan's father, who with great attention and generous craftsmanship has made the tablet ready for the lettering, and presented it to the School. Mr Pankhurst's offer was made at Prize Day, and the Head Master was delighted that this important tablet should be a gift. The gold leaf will gradually change in colour. The wood is over forty years old as timber, having actually been purchased from Mr Sturdy, the former Woodwork master who made the Head's Lectern desk. There should be little or no deterioration, and the inscription should be permanent.

The wording, set under the school shield :-

*This Library was furnished by
Past and Present Scholars, Parents and Friends,
as a Memorial to
OLD FINCUNIANS
who gave their lives in the
Second World War, 1939-1945.*

This tablet will be affixed to the Wall of the Library at the same time as the show-case for the Book of Remembrance is installed. Mr Eldridge is contributing this, and we are very grateful to him for this most acceptable enrichment of the Library in its

Memorial aspect. A sloping glass case will exhibit the Book, the vellum pages of which will be turned from time to time, and this will be supported at a suitable height by a useful cupboard. The whole case is of M Eldridge's own design and workmanship.

Contributions of money have been received from several sources, and notably from the surplus on Senior Dances. We are in process of arranging for curtains. We should like to add some really good pictures, and it may sometime prove possible to paint over the wall-tiles and improve the floor. The Junior pupils borrow more books than the Seniors.

It is very pleasant to record that gifts of books are being made by pupils and former pupils. Mr and Mrs Turner, parents of Audrey and Pat, kindly gave a complete set of the works of Charles Dickens. The books are classified according to the Dewey Decimal system....In 1952 the changeover from Room B to a War Memorial Library was completed.



Other developments reported were :-

'...The friendly, red-roofed building at the top of the field was originally intended to be a refectory, and plans are advanced for it to open as such in September 1949.

In 1950, Miss Bennett, the school secretary, obtained her own office, which was built adjoining the Head's room, enabling both their tasks to be carried out relatively undisturbed.

By the erosion of surface water from the back field, together with the weight of ten tons of coke, a war-time store, the south boundary wall collapsed, partly destroying the boys' toilets. As a result a new block was built and the wall reconstructed.

Great excitement was caused by the occasion when Her Majesty The Queen made contact with some of the pupils. K A Povah wrote in Scimitar No 91, Christmas 1980 edition :-

'Pretty and practical' was HM The Queen Mother's description of FCS girls' summer uniform - blue and white narrow stripe frock, with a white collar. The occasion was a Royal Visit, of the King and Queen, to the Commonwealth Institute.

As FCS parties had regularly visited the galleries of the Institute, we were invited by the Director to provide the group so that Their Majesties could, as it were, see the displays being educationally used. A boys' school had already been asked to send a party, so Miss Temkin was, on this occasion, in charge of girls only.

George VI was in a good position to notice uniforms, and in fact he made quite a hobby of his interest. He therefore opined that the girls' charming appearance was due to "uniform No 1 rig for special occasions". "Not at all", interposed the Queen Mother (who, by the way, had taken a School Certificate while attending a school), "It's for everyday use, pretty and practical".

Miss Temkin was most touched by a typical example of the Queen Mother's gracious thoughtfulness - on leaving the long gallery, she turned to give a farewell smile and wave, which as it happened, Miss Temkin being the only person looking, had to herself.

There is a photographic record of this royal encounter, which would have poignant associations for the Queen Mother now, as a few days later George VI died. It may well be that this visit was their last public "on duty" appearance. The photo was preserved in the FCS "records" cupboard, a locked tall metal one kept on the top corridor. The Commonwealth Institute has no copy; ours may be unique.....'

In Scimitar No 92, Spring 1981 edition, Jean Taylor (nee Lawrie) wrote :-

'....Enclosed is a copy of the photograph mentioned by Mr Povah in his article. Unfortunately I cannot remember all the names of the other girls. I am on the far left and next to me is Sylvia Pates as she was then (I believe her married name is Vickers). I think that is Elizabeth Birchell talking to the Queen Mother and then I drew a blank....'

Vivian Hand (nee Pawle 1948/53) remembered that Royal meeting :-

'...I wonder how many of the very privileged Old Fincunians can remember the day they actually met our old King and Queen at the Imperial Institute....'

*'Finchley County was very lucky to have been selected to send a small party of very nervous but very excited, pupils to be introduced to their Majesties at this Institute. **Olive Hughes, Rose Humberstone, Elizabeth Birchell, Brenda Sprake,** and yours truly, **Vivian Pawle,** were some of the very fortunate pupils to have been picked.*

Even now I can hear the utter hush as the Royal Party drew nearer and with bated breaths we hardly dared look up as they eventually arrived, but they were so kind to us, chatting away, realising, I am sure, how overawed these "little pupils" must have been. A very momentous day for this extremely lucky little Fincunian party.....'



The following Obituary appeared in the Fincunian 1951 :-

William Sayers MURPHY

'William Sayers Murphy died on Saturday 26th May 1951 at the age of 72. Many of his friends received the news with profound regret, and yet, perhaps with the not unhappy thought that he had at last found peace after several years of acute spiritual and physical suffering.

A Londoner born, educated at Emmanuel School, Wandsworth and St Mark's College, Chelsea, he came to FCS in 1906 and held the post of Physics Master for forty years.

What can be said of him, this good man? Or, rather, what can not be said?

Forty years of expert teaching and inexhaustible patience; forty years of lucid exposition for the scholarly and forty years of sympathy, tolerance and help for the less gifted. At first we knew him severally as Mr Purphy, Billy Murphy and Potts; but, as the years passed, to those of us who had known him in the Physics Lab, and to the still more fortunate who had known him in the Staff Room, he became unanimously "Dear Old Potts". And what a wealth of meaning, of respect, affection and gratitude, those three simple words conveyed. School, however, still left him time to serve his fellows in other ways, for during the same period he became Hon Secretary of the Finchley Cottage Hospital Committee, the

Principal of the Finchley Institute and a Councillor. For forty years a good and faithful servant.

In 1945 his wife died, and with her his tender heart died also. Dear old Potts is dead. A gentle spirit has departed, and left us sorrowing. Over the long years we loved him; in the long years ahead we shall remember him. For this was a child of God and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven'.



This picture of "Potts" Murphy was drawn by Pat Adams (1924/30). The picture formed part of a series of cartoons of members of staff and prominent pupils most of which appeared in the school magazine and were repeated later in the early editions of Scimitar.

On 20 December 1952 the Old Fincunians Association held its first Christmas Party on a wet and miserable night :-

'The Hall and platform, gaily decorated with crepe paper, balloons and evergreens set the tone for the evening, whilst a magnificent tree scintillated by Room E. The party soon warmed up with a mixture of games and dances, although the prizes were not distributed as Father Christmas was expected later in the evening.

At nine o'clock chairs were moved into the middle of the Hall and Alan Littlejohns and his friends delighted us with forty minutes of wit and satire - a slick show, and cleverly done. Refreshments followed at a "bob-a-nob" and what an amazing bob's worth. Congratulations again to Muriel Lodge and Pat Try, (Hon. Gen. Sec. and Asst. Hon. Gen. Sec. to you) and their helpers for such fine helpings.

The second half of the evening had hardly got under way before the roar of a circling aeroplane was heard and Father Christmas appeared, removing his goggles. He, or should I say Holly, proceeded to give out appropriate presents for "deserving" people, and I understand "Mac" was gratified to receive a new pair of cycling clips, while Mr Povah will now be able to wear the OFA tie at all future functions.

The games and dance prizes having been distributed, Father Christmas donned his goggles again, but hardly had the noise of his plane died away before the carol singers were heard in the distance, and they soon entered complete with lanterns to quieten us with some charming singing.

Doris Butlin deserves praise for the fine taste with which the carols were presented.



The photograph may not relate to the event described above, but there is no doubt about it – those were the days!

'.....The last hour was spent with a variety of dances to suit all tastes, and the evening closed with the singing of Auld Lang Syne.....'.

Charlie Viv

Charles WH Vivian 1897-1953



Don't say 1953
original photograph supplied by Mrs. Vivian (1960/61)

Version Three: April 2003

On 1 April 1953, Charles W H Vivian died. one of the most popular, and most feared teachers in the history of the school.

This is a reproduction of the front cover of Charles Vivian's memoirs written and produced by Geof Batten (1947/54).

The obituary of W H Vivian, which appears on the following pages, was written by the Headmaster, K A Povah.

Obituary

Charles W H VIVIAN

'Mr Vivian was the first master I got to know when I arrived at the School in the last week of the summer holiday. He was engaged in preparing for the change from Maths teaching to Chemistry, and so, very early, I had the chance of watching Mr Vivian tackle a new job with the energy he always gave to a new job.

I learnt to appreciate his many qualities of character, the many facets of behaviour which made him such a lively companion. He is a big subject, and in such a brief note one must select.

We remember the tremendous help he was to all the fifth formers in the year when Mr Johnson left. He devoted himself to the Vth form maths while keeping up the Chemistry.

We remember the success he always made of an appeal for any good cause.

We remember his tours de force in discipline - controlling, for instance, three classes at once in the three labs during a time of staff absences.

We remember the season in which he went to every away football match.

We remember the friendships he made with the most unlikely pupils, and the support he gave to any boy or girl whom he regarded as unfortunate.

"Charlie" was a bundle of paradoxes, a contradiction in terms, and any balance he approached was, to use a chemical metaphor, a dynamic equilibrium. But balance was not his trait. He was versatile to a degree; his fine brain made a great impression in argument and though he had all kinds of vanities, he had at his best moments a modest willingness to be convinced.

He was a great cook, working neatly and deftly. He played the piano with considerable delicacy. He roared at his pupils and depended on their approbation. He invited, and obtained, co-operation and effort; and was a law unto himself in all matters of routine.

Our very deep sympathy goes to Mrs Vivian, a sympathy beyond what we can express in words...'

Adam J Wilson wrote in Scimitar 98, Spring 1983 :-

'...Charles Vivian married Dorothy Oram, both delightful people. He was a genius at sport and also scholastically. (Confirmed by Fred Holbrook - a great man. He joined the Army of 1914 - 1918 War under age. Was buried alive - dug himself out and wandered into another Unit - was picked up and charged with desertion - was nearly shot for same).

Stanley Gilks, representing the School, wrote :-

'I first heard of Mr Vivian on my first day at Finchley County, seven years ago in 1946. I imagined him as a man with a long tail and carrying a pitch fork. However, when I met him, I could plainly see that he did not have a tail and most certainly had no need for a pitch fork. I still vividly remember a friend making a speedy exit through the Chemy Lab door, followed by a very accurately placed left foot. He was undoubtedly the most dreadful person a first former could imagine. However, as we grew up at FCS we saw the other side of him. We never lost that fear, but as time went by, it became tempered with love and especially admiration.

He worked day after day at a superhuman rate and I am afraid that he made our efforts look very trivial. He spent a great deal of his time helping other people but was never heard to complain about his own state of affairs. His death came as a great shock to everybody and many of us cannot get used to seeing another face in the Chemy Lab. One thing is evident, though, we shall never forget him or what he did for the School.....'

E J Rawlings, Sports Master, wrote :-

'Here was a man who was known to so many of us, one whom we all admired for his tremendous enthusiasm, and one for whom we had deep respect.

In his earlier years Charles Vivian was a Scholar at FCS, and after service in World War I he spent several years in the industrial sphere from which he gleaned a wealth of experience, to be used so wisely and to such good advantage after his return to FCS as a member of the teaching staff. I was a scholar at this time and well remember the "whirlwind" fashion in which the facts were presented. These dynamic qualities were truly characteristic and were still much in evidence during recent years whilst I was associated with him as a fellow member of staff. His teaching service was interrupted by World War II in which he served as an officer of distinction.

Most of his contemporaries of former years know him as a great sportsman, gifted with natural aptitude in all games with special emphasis on football. In this he played for the Old Boys in their very early history and graduated to Tufnel Park and Finchley Football Clubs. This deep interest in all sport persisted right to the end; there was little that Charlie did not know about Games and how to play them. I had tremendous admiration for his universal knowledge and playing ability.

Whether we know him as Scholar, Old Boy, or Master, we know him as a friend, as one who gave service to others, as one who had deep feeling for Our School, and as one whose kindness, sincerity and determination were outstanding. Our loss is indeed a great one'.

By Edition No. 7, Easter 1953, the Scimitar Committee had purchased its own Ellams duplicator, and the Editor, Fred Holbrook, wrote :- *'....real hope that we can now give vent to some rather more ambitious ideas.... We anticipate colour printing (how do you like the front page for our first experiment - it is designed again by Philip Gillam who also carried out the rather tricky task of cutting stencils), the inclusion of photographs, cartoons and line drawings....'*

Edition No. 8, The Coronation Issue of June 1953, ran to ten double-sided pages with a stiff cover depicting Windsor Castle drawn by Stanley Dark. The pages were littered with black and white line drawings.

Scimitar October 1953, Edition No. 9 :-

'Staff changes this term must start with the important one of the resignation of Mrs M M Brown, from the post of Senior Mistress which she held for seven years. Mrs Brown had been at FCS since 1937, at first as Miss Margaret Comber, and many Fincunians will remember her teaching in the Old Biology Hut, which has, for several years, been condemned for teaching, though it is still very useful as an equipment store.

Mrs Brown succeeded in raising the standard of her subject in the School and she has had the pleasure of seeing many of her pupils go on to medical careers or to laboratory research. She took a very responsible part in the supervising the interests of the girls in the school and very many pupils owe a lot to her wise judgment and kindness.

Mrs Brown and her husband have taken the adventurous step of becoming farmers in Kent....Miss Sturgeon has taken over the work of Senior Mistress..'

One of the rare obituaries of a scholar, rather than a teacher, appeared in Scimitar in 1953 :-

STANLEY ANDREWS

'Thirty-seven years ago (1917), a young scholar at Finchley County School was putting in a good deal of work on the violin and piano, in addition to homework, in out-of-school hours - his name was Stanley Andrews. Earlier this year (1953) he collapsed while conducting the BBC Revue Orchestra; three weeks ago his death was announced, following a painful illness. Not only will he be missed in the realm of

British dance music and catchy melodies, where he made an assured mark, but many friends elsewhere will be sad not to see again the clear blue smiling eyes and mischievous mouth that were so much a part of him.

We were together at school for five years, and I knew him pretty well. He had a great charm, and the awkward stage in adolescence seemed to pass him by.

His school career was exemplary - I never knew him to do anything badly. He matriculated with honours, was well above the average in cricket and football, even better at tennis, and played a brilliant game of badminton for his age.

Already, before he left, he had reached professional standard in violin playing, and loved the piano as well. He and his daughter, Dorothy, with Frances Barnard on the cello, used to delight our ears with trios and solo items at school concerts.

He went into business - but before long (as "semi-pro") he was leading the dance orchestra at the Brent Bridge Hotel in the evenings, and then went to Rinoli's in

the Strand. All this time there was a tussle in his mind between business and music; after a year or two, music won. His boss parted with him reluctantly because - as might have been expected - he was good at his job. But he was even better at his music and speedily became outstanding, not only as an all-round instrumentalist, but as an expert arranger. For much of his career he was a reliable leader and deputy-conductor for Jack Jackson, Jack Payne, the Skyrockets at the Palladium, and Stanly Black. More recently, as a freelance, he conducted his own orchestra, and continued writing and arranging.

We met, from time to time, in BBC studios; I watched him at work and talked to him between-whiles - there was the same integrity and modesty (that of the true artist), the sunny smile and infectious gaiety I had always known....'.

That piece was written by Stephen Jack on 21 November 1953. Stephen Jack was an Old Fincunan and was a well-known radio personality. His most famous voices were in the long-running BBC daily programme, Children's Hour.

In that same magazine came news of a member of staff :-

'Miss Margaret C Orr, who was Senior Maths Mistress for three years until December 1952, has taken up a post at Womer's Girls' School in Kingston, Jamaica. She finds the perpetual summer climate very agreeable, and has got into the way of having six lessons with only a short break at mid-morning, and being free from 1.15 pm onwards. They are having a whole week's holiday to celebrate the Coronation'.

At the Annual Dinner Dance 1953 :-

'...How many memories were stirred as "Sonny" Moffatt, in proposing the toast to "The School", recalled expeditions to the clock tower as a Third Former, invoking the wrath of Mr Quilliam at the time. And how we laughed as "Sonny" related many "Billy Bunter" japes in which he had participated. How many present could now tell, with relief perhaps, of the initials carved on the wall behind the Air Raid Shelters.....

Mr Povah, responding, termed "Sonny's" remarks as "Hints for Headmasters" which he particularly appreciated....'.

Brian Stevens (1947 - 1954) wrote :-

'...I have a photograph taken in 1954 to commemorate the ascent of the school roof by Bob Burrin; Peter Golding; Dick Russell; and myself under the guise of dressing the school with flags for the Jubilee celebrations. We carved our names in the lead flashing around the Clock Tower and each had our photo taken. Peter Golding being the camera holder....'.

In 1954, fifty years after the school was founded, the girls' cloakroom was doubled in size, due to the previous cramped conditions.

Also that year the Golden Jubilee of FCS was celebrated in various ways including exhibitions, open evenings, a reunion of Old Fincunians, and a Grand Ball. Past acquaintances and all three headmasters were brought together.



This picture of the occasion was taken by Mr McNelly :-

K A Povah; L F Wallis; Miss S Buckerfield (Head Girl 1911); C H Carr; Mrs J G Bryson (Mayoress of Finchley and an Old Fincunian); J Davie; Miss L Dace; H Chalk; and A Sturdy.



On the same occasion the opportunity was taken for a photograph of the first three Headmasters of the school covering 53 years between them from 1904 to 1957.

Mr Povah, Mr Carr and Mr Chalk

And then in December 1954 another member of staff died, Mr T A Quilliam.



This picture of Mr Quilliam was drawn by Pat Adams (1924/30). It formed part of a series of cartoons of members of staff and prominent pupils most of which appeared in the school magazine and were repeated later in the early editions of Scimitar.

Mr Quilliam's Obituary was reported in Scimitar Edition No. 13, January 1955 :-

'All of you will join us in sorrow at the news of the passing away of our dear friend and master Mr Quilliam, who died early on Boxing Day morning. How difficult it is to find words to express adequately our feelings on such an occasion.

A letter of sympathy was sent to Mrs Quilliam and a wreath sent on behalf of the Association. Let us just pause for a moment as we read the words of Mr Chalk, and recall the memory of that character, "Q".

"I shall always retain happy memories of "Q". As senior Master he gave me valuable help - especially during the earlier years of the War and I have often thought that the gruelling journeys to and from the Henrietta Barnett School during the severe winter of 1940/41 must have imposed a heavy tax upon what, I fear, was never a very robust constitution. Hundreds of former pupils will remember him for his abhorrence of slovenly and slipshod work, and for his occupational witticisms - sometimes caustic, but never barbed.....'.

And the words of the Old Scholars as spoken by Douglas Ward :-

"How many of us remember with glee the mannerisms and idiosyncrasies of our former masters at school. The speech which we mimicked (in private); the method of teaching which amused us. These nostalgic memories are revived for many Old Scholars by the news of the passing of our former science master, Mr T A Quilliam.

His mnemonics and other aids to memory when teaching always raised a smile and never seemed to wear thin, but our memories are tempered with sadness that another old friend has left us. He was a good teacher and a kind one, and his knowledge of "boy psychology" generally meant that his pupils did not suffer unduly for their misdemeanours - rather did they learn their lessons.....'.

Scimitar 16, in 1955, featured Mr Cornes :-

'...The Athletics and Games standards at the School are long established. Mr H W Cornes, who became Sports Master in 1921, raised the standard to a degree that the School attained First Place at the Middlesex Grammar School Sports this year. Mr Cornes died in 1945 and in his memory the Old Fincunians Association instituted an annual prize, to be awarded to the boy who has the highest general attainment in athletics and games taken as a whole....'.

The reputation of Charles Carr, arguably the first headmaster of FCS, was such that it seems his slightest movement made news in the press :-

"Charlie CARR moves at 88 - Old Fincunians former Head still hale"

Those were the headlines in the Finchley Press early in November 1955. The Association sent flowers to his new address to greet him on his arrival.

'After living for many years at 33, Dollis Park, N3, Mr Charles H Carr, BSc. - "Charlie" Carr to thousands of former scholars of Finchley County School - has decided to try

a change of scenery. Not far, because he did not want to leave Finchley. He has removed to 64, Hendon Lane. Still hale, Mr Carr was Headmaster of FCS from 1904 until his retirement in 1932. It has been said of "Charlie" Carr that while he made a vast number of friends, particularly among his pupils, he "made no enemies". Old Fincunians say he was a good sport in both senses of the term. He was a fine badminton and tennis player. A Scholar, he won honours in higher maths. Mr Carr was known at the School for his attribute of regarding pupils as "individuals". He would tell them, "So long as you are really good at something - if only sport - you will do all right". He would go to great lengths to see a school leaver placed in a good job'.

Mr Carr replied :-

'Many thanks to all my dear friends for the kind wishes and floral token on my arrival at 64. Their kindness almost brought tears to my eyes. Owing to failing sight and poor locomotion I fear that I shall no longer be able to attend the very happy functions during the coming season. Will you kindly express my gratitude for their kindness to all my old friends'.

When he wrote that, Mr Carr had just passed his 88th Birthday but on 27 November 1957, his 90th Birthday :-

'...A small party was arranged at the School in the Memorial Library, when some of his former colleagues gathered to welcome him; and what a gathering of "The Old

Guard" there was. Miss Dace (formerly Senior Mistress); Miss Reid; Mrs Tapsfield (formerly Miss Crocker); Mrs Henning (formerly Miss Bailey); Mr Chalk and Mr Wallis, both so well known still in our activities; and Mr Sturdy (without his "Irish" no doubt). It was a great pity that Mr Davie was engaged in Examination duties elsewhere. From the School there was, of course, our good friend and President, Mr Carr, Mrs Povah, with Miss Sturgeon, Mr Jones, and Mr Wills, each of whom served with Mr Carr. Doris Bennett was also there, not in her capacity of School Secretary, but as a former pupil, and our comrade in arms, Jack Rawlings.

There was no formality, reminiscences and reunion being the chief activity of the occasion. During the party, Mr Povah introduced the Head Girl and Head Boy, who presented the Schools birthday wishes on a specially prepared outsized card, decorated with an owl wearing a mortar board and holding the FCS shield.....'.

Scimitar 19, Christmas 1956, Mr Povah reported :-

'...The appearance of the School has been changed by a new scheme for boy's uniform. The Junior and Middle School boys now all wear the school striped blazer and grey flannel trousers; the Senior boys have mostly availed themselves of the optional alternative, namely a navy blue blazer. The result is that for the first time in recent years, at any rate, the boys look as smart as the girls...'.

Scimitar 20, 1956:-

'After considerable service to the school, two members of staff left at the end of the Summer term. Miss Thomas, whose interest in Music and English enlivened the artistic element in the school, has sailed from these temperate isles to the tropical splendour of Hong Kong.

Mr Raynor has not travelled so far afield, but his Maths lessons, his enthusiasm for the Railway Club, his BSA sports car and his striking blazer will be remembered by many....'.

Percy Osborn wrote this obituary in Scimitar, August 1957 (21st Edition), about Florence Vivian (nee Baggott), the widow of Charles Vivian :-

'....Charlie Vivian was pleased to serve his country again in the second World War. He was a Captain in the Pioneer Corps, and there happened to meet Florence Baggott, a Group Commandant in the Women's ATS. In October of 1950 they were married. The wedding ceremony was at the Friends Meeting House in Hampstead Garden Suburb, and Mr Carr who was a very great friend and helpmate of Viv's, together with other old school friends, were present.

Viv's mother, to whom he was much attached, died, and Viv himself died of heart disease on 1 April 1953, after having been devotedly nursed by Florence. His tragically short married life with Florence was the happiest years of his tumultuous life. They both kept open house for all connected with the School, and their happiness was such that it spread and irradiated the lives of those who met them.

The death of Viv was such a dire blow to Florence that she never really recovered

from the shock of it. Even in Viv's closing years she had been troubled with excruciatingly painful headaches, but with rare courage and spirit she carried on with her Civil Service job. In spite of all that her expert medical advisers could do, she died suddenly on July 11th at her flat in Finchley Court.

At her funeral at Golders Green Crematorium on 16th July, Florence's brother, Sidney, assisted by Roy Deasy, conducted the service. The Old Fincunians were represented by Doris Aylward, George Mansfield, Muriel Gunn and Percy Osborn. Florence had been a guest of honour at the Old Fincunian's annual Dinner in 1955 and 1956, and she lent distinction to those cheery gatherings by her presence. Florence was a very sweet and dear person, and we shall not see her like again'.

Harold Chalk wrote of the demise of Mrs Mollie Wallis (nee Jones), husband of Leonard F Wallis :-

'The news of the death of Mrs Wallis (Miss Mollie Jones) will be received with sorrowshe was a teacher of outstanding ability and a delightful colleague to work with.

Those who knew her well will call to mind her friendly approach, her amazing energy, and her infectious enthusiasm for developng and maintaining a high standard of attainment in games and in her academic work. It is indeed no exaggeration to say that she literally spent herself in the interests of the girl's games. In recent years she suffered considerable physical disability, which she bore with fortitude and stoicism. Our sincere sympathy will go out to our old friend Leonard Wallis and the children in their sad loss'.

In his reply, Mr Wallis bore witness of Mollie's courage and unbreakable spirit over 30 years of arthritis and the calm resignation with which she faced the knowledge that the end was inevitable and not far off. Marjorie Pratt, Rene Woodgate, Jessie Manfield, Doris Aylward, Muriel Gunn, Lilian Richards, Adie Smith, Elsie Forrester, and Helen Ross, all Old Fincunians, attended the funeral at Willesden.

K A Povah, Scimitar December 1957 :-

'The present School building was the pride of 1904, and was built for all time. Two bombs which fell near, shattered glass and created minor damage, but failed to budge the foundations. The plan is a very rigid one - hall cum gymnasium, cum corridor, surrounded by class-rooms, ten in number.

On three occasions we have reached the stage of plans for complete changes in the school building. The first was about 1922 - just in time for the economies of Government spending known as the "Geddes' Axe", the second received the standstill blow of the 1929 slump, and the third, plans were all ready for execution in the Autumn of 1939.

We were all very delighted when a few years ago, the Development Plan was revealed, with Finchley County featuring as a larger school, preserving its general character, but to be housed in new buildings and on a new site. It is to be hoped

that the Ministry, convinced of the need for continuing educational progress, will yield us the approval for new buildings, but it will not be obtained without an administrative fight.

I was very pleased to read in *The Finchley Press* of 2 August that our needs are well recognised, To paraphrase "The rebuilding of Finchley County School is an urgent job".

Scimitar 28, June 1959, K A Povah wrote :-

'...Finchley Council have proposed to the County Council, and the proposal has been accepted, that we are to continue as a co-educational Grammar School. We are to be doubled in size, making what is called a "Four Form Entry" School, numbering about 750 pupils, when the full development has taken place. We are to have totally new buildings on the site which has been reserved for educational use by the County Council for some years, bordering on the North Circular Road between Manor Cottage and Henly's Comer. The site is a sloping one overlooking Hampstead Garden Suburb and the lower part of the slope is occupied by Brookland Junior and Infant School.

Needless to say, there will be many feelings of sadness when the School is transferred and enlarged, but it is increasingly difficult to maintain in a small school the opportunities which are now demanded, and it will be the concern of all those responsible for the new Finchley County School to maintain and develop the traditions of the old one. In which year might we expect the change? It would not be wrong to hazard the year 1962'. **How wrong can you get!!**

In December 1958, Scimitar No. 26 was again publishing a staff obituary. Mr L F Wallis wrote :-

Obituary

Mr HOWLAND

'You will be sorry to hear that, after a long and painful illness, our old friend Mr Howland passed away last Tuesday.

He was for many years our Art Master, and later Senior Master, and throughout a Master everyone loved and respected.

It has been my privilege to visit him from time to time since he left Finchley and latterly during his illness I was able to see him every fortnight. He was not able to maintain conversation but he always showed the greatest gratitude for any scrap of news I could take him of the old School and his past pupils.

Wherever he was in body, his thoughts and his heart were among his friends in Finchley. He was a good and noble man, incapable of meanness in thought or act.

All who had the privilege of his friendship have suffered a great loss, though his memory remains to console and inspire'.

Obituary

Mrs Winfred THOMAS (nee SMITH)

Scimitar 27, March 1959, Miss Phyllis Hunter (ex-Sports Mistress) wrote :-

'Mrs Thomas, known to you all as Miss Winifred Smith, died on September 18th last after two years of poor health.

She was always interested in news of the School, and was delighted to have some visits from Mr Wallis, on one of which he brought Mr Carr with him.

She and her husband and daughter were living at Bosham, Sussex; the boy having married two years ago and is now living in Cheshire. It is now about thirty years since she left Finchley, but I know many of the Old Scholars of the 1920's will remember her well.....'.

Obituary

Miss REID

Joan Johnston (nee Orton) wrote in 1959 from Ontario, Canada :-

'It was a great shock to read of Miss Reid's death...She was my class teacher for the three years ending September 1938. She was always fair and just and interested in

you as "people", not just "pupils". She travelled the same way home as I did and I often deliberately missed one bus after school in order to have the pleasure, of talking to her. She never talked down but always as one adult to another. I particularly remember how she would stand in the cold to encourage us in our class netball games.....'.

Dick Hudson (1925/31) also wrote about Miss Reid :-

'....She was, I thought, particularly charming with young children...As a teacher she was quite superb; her fairness, quiet determination and her lucidity were most impressive at all times.....I remember the occasion when Miss Reid said to our form, 'You know when Mr Carr came in, you all stood up, he whispered something to me, he went, and you all sat down again? Well, what do you think he whispered to me?'. Of course we had no idea. She said, 'Mr Carr said, "All right for badminton if I close the school five minutes early?'. '.

And so did Archie Adams (1918/23) :-

'....affectionate admiration for her facility for Maths teaching....Her cheerful and charming Scots voice is not forgotten...'.

Other changes included the loss of the Biology teacher, Miss P R Jones, who left to get married,

'....She was presented with a pressure cooker which, we trust, will be of great assistance to her in her new occupation...'

Mr R B Iles filled the vacancy for one term, then arrived Mr Alec J Churchill.

Also :-

'...We were pleased to welcome back to the school for a short stay an Old Fincunian, David Sparrow (1947/53), who came to help with French while Mr Wills was away...Another teacher whose departure we regret to announce is Mrs W Schonbeck who, apart from her normal duties of teaching English, has greatly helped in the running of the Memorial Library. She is to be replaced by Miss C Gibbons.....'

Miss G F Wright, mathematics, and Mrs M M Vaidya, Sixth Form pure maths, have left us after a temporary stay which enabled us to overcome a serious staffing difficulty....

We also appreciate the help given by Mrs H M Povah....Miss J R S Brown has arrived to help with mathematics and First Form Scripture.....

We also report that Miss Cobley, head of the school dinners department has left to get married (presented with a tray as a wedding present) and we welcome Mrs Poole in her place to take over the very difficult task of catering for so many people....'

It's time we had another look at the Old School building :-

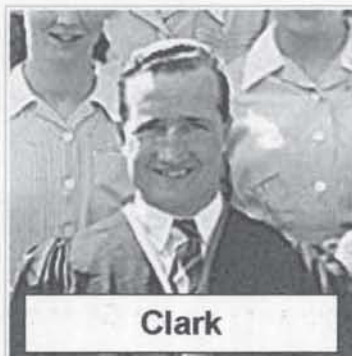


The teachers who were appointed to the staff of Finchley County School during the period under review, 1946 -1960, were :-

Mr K A Povah	1946 - 1967	Headmaster
Mr Ernest Crabtree	1946 - 1950	Geography
Mr Frederick A H Eldridge	1946 - 1963	Woodwork
Miss Joan Hill	1946 - 1970	PT/Games
Mr Frederick A Williams	1946 - 1967	Art
Mr A O Gow	1947 - 1949	Physics
Mr Edgar John Rawlings	1947 - 1977	PT/Games
Mr John M Salmond	1949 - 1971	Physics
Miss Margaret C Orr	1949 - 1952	Maths
Mr T A Millington	1949 - 1954	Maths
Miss J D Turner	1949 - 1954	English
Mr J A Nichols	1950 - 1957	Latin
Mr H T Clark	1953 - 1954	Mathematics
Mr E L Lucas	1953 - 1954	
Mr P H Andrews	1953 - 1958	Chemistry
Miss P R Jones	1953 - 1959	Biology
Miss D M Thomas	1954 - 1959	
Mr B W Raynor	1955 - 1957	
Mr M Skudder	1956 - 1957	
Miss E D Ryland	1956 - 1957	
Mr C H Gault	1957 - 1965	Latin/RE
Mrs J W Schonbeck (nee Gibbon)	1957 - 1959	
Mr L H D Samuel	1958 - 1966	Mathematics
Mr D T Bevan	1958 - 1963	
Mr H Zimmerman	1963	
Mr R Goss	1958 - 1964	Chemistry
Mr R B Iles	1959 - 1959	Biology
Miss J R S Brown	1959 - 1962	Mathematics
Mr Alex J Churchill	1959 - 1964	Biology
Miss C Gibbons	1959 - 1965	
Mr G R Davies	1960	General Science
Mrs B A Gabe	1960	German



Lucas



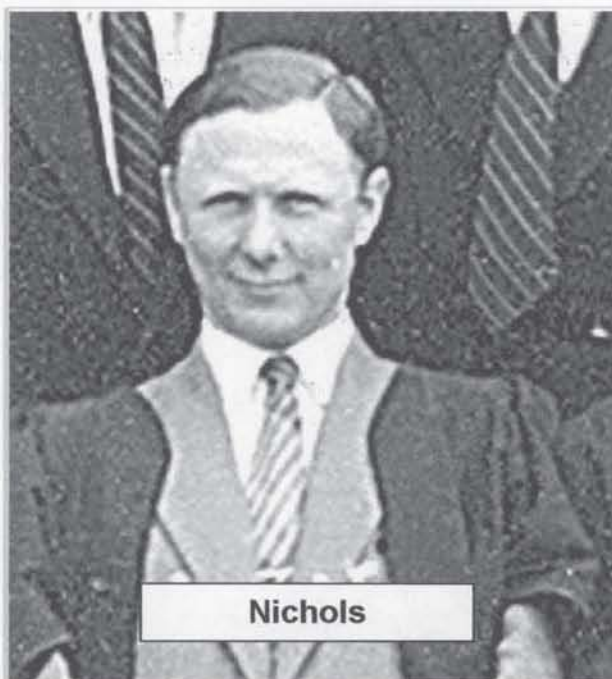
Clark



Williams



MISS J. HILL



Nichols



Eldridge



Turner

These are just a few of the Staff who served the School so well during the stewardship of K A Povah.



Obituary in Scimitar 27, March 1959 :-

CHARLES HENRY CARR

Died 9 March 1959 aged 91 years

'...When one first met him, Mr Carr seemed rather a frightening personality, with his bushy eyebrows, bristling moustache, and keen, shrewd eyes. But in a short time, one became aware of the twinkle in these eyes, and heard the kindness in the voice, and realised the essential friendliness and humanity of the man.

The members of the Staff knew Mr Carr, not only as the grand and lovable Headmaster who led and guided his school so surely and friendly, not only as a man who was fearless and without favour, but as a colleague whose jokes and apt quotations were "wont to set the staff-room on a roar". He was a man of wide attainments; mathematics was his first love, but he taught shorthand with great success; his knowledge of the Scriptures and English Literature was considerable; and there was no game or sport at which he did not excel. He took part in first-class amateur boxing, in swimming and in tennis, (and how he enjoyed our staff tennis matches with Tollington and other neighbouring schools, with Mr Murphy as his partner!). His prowess at billiards, snooker and bowls was generally acknowledged.

What was the secret of this Headmaster whom the mistresses affectionately referred to as "dear Mr Carr" and whom the masters respectfully called "Charlie"? Manliness, a sense of proportion, a sense of humour, a sense of fun, friendliness, cheerfulness, trust, loyalty - these were some of the ingredients which went into making FCS, which under his leadership soon became known and respected throughout the whole of the County as "Charlie Carr's School".

While the news of our Old Headmaster and friend does not come altogether as a

shock in view of his advanced age, it brings with it more than an ordinary touch of sadness. Yet it will also revive for a host of people happy memories of school days long ago, and that is surely what Mr Carr would wish us to remember now.

It was my good fortune to begin my teaching career and to serve under Mr Carr at FCS for 25 years and they were happy and memorable years indeed. To me personally, as to all associated with him, he was kindness itself. He had the supreme gift of being able to win the confidence, utter loyalty and warm affection of his staff and pupils. He ruled with a gentle hand.

Mr Carr was the soul of geniality and cheerfulness, which radiated from him and permeated every department of our school life. In that happy atmosphere teachers and scholars could not help but put forth the best efforts of which they were capable, whether in academic studies, or in sport, or in the many other activities that formed the corporate life of the School. How we all worked hard together, played hard together, laughed uproariously together at his quips and jokes! We Masters always enjoyed his Company in the Common Room. Indeed in his frequent visits there he was the life and soul of the party. How often he had us in fits of laughter and I'm sure we Masters all worked the better for it.....'

Signed, John Davie.

'The passing of Mr Charles Carr has removed from our midst a man of remarkable personality and influence. He will be remembered with esteem, and indeed with affection, by hundreds of Old Fincunians, both at home and abroad, to whom he was both mentor and guide during the formative years of their lives.

I believe I was the oldest living friend, for my first meeting with him dates back to the mid-eighteen nineties when I was a student and he a member of the staff of the old Finsbury Pupil Teacher's Centre which had its headquarters in the dingy purlieus which lay between the Caledonian Road and Islington Upper Street. Little did I think then that I should one day become a member of his Staff. Still less that I should have the good fortune to follow in the Headmastership of FCS.

Mr Carr was first and foremost a teacher of outstanding ability, to whom the pupil of poor attainments could look for sympathy and understanding. Yet, strangely enough, as he often told me, it was by the purest chance that he became a teacher at the School in the Bedfordshire village where he was born and bred. He had a remarkable facility for creating a happy atmosphere in School and although he could be stern with the persistent wrong-doer, he was ever ready to overlook the idiosyncrasies to which youth is prone.

The Staff admired and respected their Chief, not only because he set a wonderful example at hard work and devotion to duty, but also because he trusted them. It was indeed his custom to say to newcomers, "You must work out your own Salvation". This was, in effect, an invitation to adopt, within certain limits, one's own methods. What this meant to those of us who had previously worked under the cast iron systems of the old London School Board, can only be imagined. It was, in fact, like emancipation from slavery.

During my weekly visits to Mr Carr over the past few years I noticed that despite increasing physical weakness, his mental powers remained unimpaired and that the sense of humour was as keen as ever.

As I write, my thoughts inevitably turn to the breaking-up days to which I used to invite Mr Carr after his retirement. What an uproarious welcome the pupils used to give him as he followed me on to the platform! How they revelled in his homilies and his stories of his travels in the Far East! For them, as for those of us who are older, happy memories of the School will be closely linked with the name of its first Headmaster; and those memories will not be dimmed with the passing years'.
Signed, Harold Chalk.

'I have had the privilege of knowing Mr Carr at three stages. First, when I was a boy at the school from 1910 - 1915 (1910, by the way, was the first year in the School's history as a County Secondary School); secondly when I was prominent in the affairs of the Old Scholars Association from 1916 - 1926; and lastly as a personal friend since I returned to Finchley some six or seven years ago.

My earliest recollection of Mr Carr is seeing him, in my mind's eye, playing a skilful and vigorous game of badminton with a select few from the sixth form in the school hall. Also, popping in and out of a mysterious cubby-hole near the platform which obviously contained, inter alia, a supply of shuttlecocks and new tennis balls.

Then, to go out of doors, I can still see him on the "new" tennis court, bending over his racquet and with an arm bent at the elbow, giving the ball a wicked "cut" as he sent it back over the net. Thereupon some hapless girl would run up to return the ball, but contrary to all the laws of mathematics, the ball would curl round out of reach ending possibly somewhere round the back of her neck, leaving her gazing with bewilderment at where the ball should have been. But my abiding memory of him must be at early morning prayers. In those days he wore a cheerful red waistcoat, and with his coloured bushy eyebrows and light moustache, his eyes glistening with merry goodwill, he would address us in ever to be remembered sonorous tones for our present and future well-being. At the end of our time, on the last day of our last term, there came from him, ".....especially we commend unto Thee those who now leave us....".

Before that befell me I can remember him, after the first World War had begun, telling us that an Old Boy, feeling lonely in the vast new army camp where he was confined, suddenly decided to go round the lines, whistling loudly the School Song - with the result that he was soon lonely no longer. In the first phase, I asked Mr Carr whether this story was true. He laughed delightedly and said, "If it isn't, then it ought to be!"

In my second phase, I found that Mr Carr and I were at one in feeling that we ought to do all that was possible to promote Old Scholars activities, whether in the way of sports and games, or of indoor social and dances.

A pleasant duty fell to me to perform in the mid-1920's when I presented to Mr Carr, on behalf of the Old Scholars Association, a massive leather armchair in commemoration of his 21 years tenure of office of Headmaster of the School. Mr Carr retaliated by presenting me not long after with a clock (which I still have) as a

wedding present from the members of the Old Scholars Association. He said that Helene and I reminded him of a brandy and soda, neither were very much apart, but together, we had quite a good combination.

Mr Carr's success in his chosen profession lay in his instilling into us a precept and example, that sports and games were of the very first importance in a happy and healthy life. Above all, the spirit of healthy competition was just as much applicable to study as it was to games. To be top of one's form was equal to being captain of the first eleven.

From my vantage point of talking over old times with him some quarter of a century after he retired, I can say that what was uppermost in his mind was the help he had been able to give in early days to so many of his old scholars in their careers - often despite their parents. I can say with the very greatest pleasure that the boy of my time who Mr Carr valued beyond all the others was Charles Vivian. Viv, like Mr Carr, was an all-rounder; languages; science; games; leadership; they were all one with him. When Viv was somewhat at a loss in the later twenties what to do with himself, Mr Carr took him on the staff at the School, where Viv remained until he died prematurely in 1953.

Another boy who Mr Carr, with his shrewd appraisal of merit, singled out for possible advancement, was Frank Dollin. Mr Carr told me that he said to Frank that if he could win one of the two Scholarships open to the whole of England for free tuition at the City and Guilds Engineering College, Mr Carr would implore the local Education Authority to give him a maintenance grant (those were the days before the days of the Welfare State, of course). Frank duly won his scholarship and he is now one of the heads of the engineering profession. Mr Carr was insistent that whatever we did for a career when we left School, we should do it well....He was an incarnation of the spirit of geniality, cheefulness and goodwill and of unselfish help and concern for others.... He was the living embodiment of the principle of man's humanity to man. The world would be today a better place if only there were more like him in high places...'.
Signed, Percy Osborn.

H Debnam (1909/14) wrote in Scimitar No. 28, June 1959 :-

'As I stood in sorrow at the resting place of that "Grand Old Man" Mr Carr in St Marylebone Cemetery, listening to the last words of the committal, my mind flashed back to the classrooms in which I had studied a half century ago.

To accompany my thoughts there were many around me to make the mind-picture complete, and more real - Mr L F Wallis; Mr Sturdy; Mr Chalk; Mr Davie; Miss Dace; Miss Cocker (now Mrs Tapsfield). As I thanked them later for attending the burial (despite the sadness of the occasion how good it was to see these retired members of staff again) I realised that there was an equal attendance of the scholars of their time and my contemporaries, Sid Pruden; Percy Osborn; Agnes Middleton; the Abson sisters; Connie Dollin; Lily Richards.

It is perhaps a vain thought but I like to think that Mr Carr knew that those he had around him in the School in its earliest days were still with him - at the last....but as

one of the first scholars may I be permitted to add my tribute to the memory of a man who has left me with an ineffaceable impression of high honour and outstanding integrity, even though, at that time, I was only 11 years plus.....

....Those who knew Mr Carr only in his later life will not fully realise what a great athlete he was in his youth, and an adept at all games. He was the champion boxer of all Training Colleges, and later, on his many ocean voyages, he merited the title of "Champion Quoits Player of the Seven Seas". I remember the thrill we all got when, at the annual swimming sports at Hendon Baths, he swam underwater fully clothed, the whole length of the baths and back....'.

As I write these lines I can see him so vividly in the mind's eye as he was - his rather narrow face, the smooth yellow-golden hair, the superb imperial moustache the gold-rimmed spectacles through which looked those penetrating, shrewd, humorous blue eyes - see his upright sturdy figure and quick step, and hear with delight the hammer sound of his steel-tipped shoes as he approached from a distance. It was typical of him that he never came upon one unawares, and we rightly counted it not the least of his merits.....

What grieved him most was to see a promising lad taken from School prematurely and pushed into a blind alley occupation leading to frustration and a stunted life....'.

Douglas Carr, his son and Old Fincunian, wrote :-

'It is my intention that his testimonial shall be presented to the School together with his hood....It is my intention to establish a prize in his name at the School..... The prize will be on the academic and prizes on all-round athletic prowess for the Junior School would be appropriate....with perhaps money grants for those going on to University.....'.

In November 1960 the prefects attended a reunion at the school of former staff and pupils :-

'The majority of the guests had known the first headmaster of the school, Mr Charles Carr, who died early last year. It was very pleasant to see with what delight old friends greeted one another, and we constantly heard the words, "Do you remember...?". After they had reminisced for over an hour, and when it appeared that everyone had arrived, tea was served to the guests.

The serious part of the reunion began when tea was finished. This took the form of the official opening of the Carr Memorial Fund; speeches were made by several people, among them, Mr Chalk, who followed him in the position of Headmaster.

We who were listening, felt that Mr Carr must indeed have been a wonderful inspiration and encouragement to all who were under his leadership.

We also felt extremely proud to belong to a school with such a great tradition and with such obvious loyal old members; for well over three hundred people were present on this memorable occasion.

The Carr Memorial will consist of three items :-

- (i) Furniture for the platform;*
- (ii) Trophies for the Middle school to mark conspicuous work for the House in Sports; and*
- (iii) Money awards to Fincunians who go on to University or other advanced education'.*

In Scimitar No 33, September 1960, K A Povah reported :-

'At the end of last term we said goodbye to Miss C H Smith, who had been at the School since 1939. During this time she had not only taught German and English but had taken a keen interest in the general running of the School and in our two financial activities of helping ourselves with National Savings and helping others with Dr Barnardo's Fund. We wish her well in her new post at a Grammar School in Cambridge.

New members of the Staff this term are Mrs B Gabe, BA, who takes over the teaching of German, and Mr C R Davies, whose appointment is additional to the present members of Staff owing to the increased number of pupils which has now reached 423. This is about 70 more than the School was intended to house and is partly accounted for by the big increase in the number of pupils in Form VI, who now total 56. Of these 18 are girls.

This expansion is, of course, nothing compared with the big increase in numbers which will occur when the School moves into its new buildings. The calendar of stages in this development is by no means settled, but it is good to know that preparations are now active.....

The Carr Memorial is being proceeded with in its various sections.....with regard to the platform furniture we are so anxious to expend the available money to the best advantage that we have still delayed the actual purchases, but we hope very shortly to have finished this section of the Memorial.

Molly Powell (1929/35 nee Holbrook) wrote in Scimitar 33 of September 1960:-

'....Miss Dace will be 82 on 8 October, Mr Wallis will be 80 on 29 November, and Mr Chalk will be 80 on 15 December....I first met Miss Dace in 1929 when I was a new and very nervous school girl. I was terrified of her, in fact we all were - boys and girls alike. She was a strict disciplinarian, her very presence put you on your best behaviour, and no one dared to do anything amiss if "Daisy" was around. The girls kept their powder compacts hidden because if we were caught powdering, our compacts were confiscated; our hair must be tidy, hats must be worn, we had to be neat and tidy.

In spite of all this, Miss Dace was a patient, kind, generous, and very fair and understanding person, as many of us found out. I think I first appreciated Miss Dace on the day I left FCS. I do not remember what she said to me. What I do remember

is her smile, the kindness in her voice, and her kiss. No longer was she my Headmistress, but a friend wishing me well in the future.

My next important meeting with Miss Dace was in 1945/46, when Cedric Hunt and I reorganised the OF's after the war. We began by searching through the School records, and it was during this time that I received such encouraging and friendly letters from Miss Dace followed by her presence at many OF functions'.

Percy Osborn wrote in Scimitar 33 of September 1960 on the occasion of Mr Wallis's 80th birthday :-

'To my mind Mr Wallis had the finest intellect in the School, and being broadminded, with him the sciences and humanities went hand in hand, as did work and recreation, whether sports and games, songs, or dances. Education was his prime interest and co-education his favourite.

His powers lay essentially in his enthusiasm for all that interested him and in the thoroughness of his execution. His mind was so fresh that any sound ideas made instant appeal to him. With his clear mind, his spoken words were not only cogent to his theme but interesting.

His influence in the School was obviously immense. He was destined for higher things, and later he became the Headmaster of Willesden County School. But never was he anything but the most loyal and devoted assistant to Mr Carr, and genial companion of his colleagues in the Staff Room.

Molly McCullough Jones shared many of his enthusiasms and it was only natural that they should link their lives together. She was a much loved sports mistress, and Mr Wallis himself was always a very popular figure.

But fate was not kind to "Jonah" and Mr Wallis had to deal with the hardest of the inflictions cast upon them. The way he cared for "Jonah" that lovely and charming person, those of us who knew them will never forget. ("Jonah" refers to Molly, not TS Jones. also known as "Jonah").

Characteristically it was Mr Wallis who was the leading spirit in the original formation of the Old Scholars Association, as it was known originally.....'.

Robert Payne (1934/36) wrote on the occasion of Mr Chalk's 80th Birthday :-

'.....Mr Chalk had a difficult task ahead of him when he succeeded Charles Carr as Headmaster, but fortunate had been the choice and before long he had taken over from where his predecessor had left off, and the School went forward from strength to strength under his leadership.

Harold Chalk is a man of qualities, but he will sure be remembered for his dignity, profound sense of fairness and his unique ability for knowing what was going on all the time. Most schoolmasters have a good memory for names of their former pupils but Harold Chalk still remembers all of us, not only the surnames, but the christian names - and the nick-names, as well.....'.

Marjorie (Chere) Rowling (nee Everett 1913 - 1918) wrote :-

'..Mr Chalk was my first form-master, and how well I remember his upright figure, thumbs in waistcoat armholes, ejaculating "My Conscience". Mr Wallis was my choirmaster, and how I enjoyed the choir practices - I am still reprimanded (at times) by my younger son (an ex-chorister of Worcester Cathedral) for singing too loudly in church. Miss Dace, of course, was associated with all the girls, but what a trial those "Stupid stairs" were to Miss Dace and to Marjorie - remember "two at a time"?...'

K A Povah wrote :-

'.....In September 1960, the arrival of Mr G R Davies to teach as a fourth member of the Science team enabled us to fulfil a long prepared plan for a course in General Science, and we much appreciate his work in the Science Hut. When Mrs S M Sterman joined us we also felt great satisfaction, as she was the first Laboratory Steward we have had who is qualified by training and examination.....Mr McNelly is now in charge of Modern Languages, and both he and Mrs Cleare helped me greatly during the difficult time we had in the Spring and Summer Terms with temporary teachers.....We welcome to the Staff, Mr D J Steel, MA, who taught History as well as French. Arrangements were made for the appointment of a part-time specialist teacher of music, and we are more than grateful to Mr Gabe, Vicar of St Michael's, Cricklewood, who has at very short notice, taken over this work.....Our total number of pupils stands at 418, and, as last year, the coincidence of exactly equal numbers of girls and boys, 209 of each...'

The Fincuan for 1960 records that Mr Povah was amused to read in the local Press :-

'....the habit of knitting had established itself among Sixth Formers, including boys, and was entirely incredulous.

However, it soon appeared that the Press was accurate, and gradually squares of brightly coloured, if somewhat uneven, knitting began to appear all over the place. After varied histories they got joined up to become blankets for Refugees, and we lost count of how many were sent off..... '

Another occupation for Sixth Formers was found that year :-

'....the employment part-time of Sixth Formers for Laboratory work. This is due to the shortage of trained Laboratory Technicians, and we would still like to appoint a full-time Assistant, but we are very pleased with the work our Sixth Form have done..

The Sixth Form now occupy Rooms I and J, and the small room N, for whose untidy inadequacy quite a lot of ex-Upper Sixth have a mild affection, has been returned to its original use as a Balance Room.....

....Mrs J D Elfick and Mrs P Hicks have been sharing the work of School Secretary for the bulk of the Summer Term while Miss D Bennett has been absent through illness. Fortunately Miss Bennett has made a good recovery.....'

THE END OF AN ERA - 1961 to 1971

The Fincunian 1961 :-

DOES THE SCHOOL THINK ?

'This report can serve only as a guide to what the students of the school really think in 1961 This is for two reasons. First the poll took some weeks to complete and some people changed their views within that time. Secondly, we were unable to question at least seven pupils due to their taking early holiday, whilst several are included who left during the summer term. We actually asked a total of 2,430 questions to 204 boys and 201 girls :-

Mixed Classes

Only 1.975% were not in favour of mixed classes. For some reason known only to themselves, most of those against mixed classes were third form boys.

School Uniform

The percentage of those in favour of school uniform fell steadily from 21,4% in the first form, to 4.6% in the fourth form. Clearly the youngest in the school are still proud of their school blazer, but that pride diminishes as they grow older.

The dress options available to fifth formers saw the percentage of "no complaints" rise to 13.8%, and the further relaxation of regulations in the sixth form saw the percentage of "no complaints" rise to 38%.

Numerically speaking the overall result was that 62 pupils were completely satisfied with the uniform.

Surnames

We asked the boys if they objected to being addressed by their surname and found that 79 of them did. The percentage fell from 76% who were satisfied in the first form, to only 15.1% in the fifth form. There was then a rise to 30% in the sixth form which reflects that sixth formers are generally on better terms with the staff than those lower down the school.

Compulsory Games

The question as to whether games out of school hours should be compulsory brought more consistent results. 92% thought games should not be compulsory, with the first form showing the greatest enthusiasm (14.1% in favour), and the third form the least (only 6.1% in favour).

Political Opinions

202 of the 405 questioned said they held some political opinions. The first and second forms showed least interest, with 36% each, and this rose to 84% in the sixth form. The Lower Sixth had the highest result with 92%.

Pop Singers

The girls were asked to name their favourite pop singer and from the start it became obvious that the battle was between Elvis Presley and Adam Faith, with Cliff Richard some way behind, and no one else in the running :

Elvis Presley	43	Billy Fury	5
Adam Faith	39	Frank Sinatra	4
Cliff Richard	28	Ella Fitzgerald	8
		Anthony Newley	3

Scimitar 38, Summer 1962 :-

'....At the School Prize Day in October 1961, the Chairman, Miss E M Killip, announced that new plans for an enlarged co-educational Finchley County School were in their initial stages...The plan involving this Four Form entry School, however, has had to be revised as it did not satisfy the Ministry of Education because it considerably increased the proportion of children in Finchley going to Grammar Schools.....The Finchley Development Plan was therefore reconsidered by the SubCommitteesix different schemes for secondary schools in Finchley, and the Sub-Committee recommended Scheme 2 which involved what they are pleased to call the "amalgamation" of Christ's College with Finchley County.....This would produce a four form entry of boys, the equivalent of 3 forms from Christ's College, of which two forms would come from Hendon, and one form the equivalent of the boys at Finchley County School....The girls at present coming to Finchley County School would have to transfer to some school in Hendon, whether co-educational or for girls only.

When the full Education Committee considered this report...they also considered a seventh scheme (called Scheme 7) by which Christ's College would be rehoused with three forms of boys and Finchley County School would be rehoused with three forms of boys and girls.....this last proposal was agreed with the provision that the building for Christ's College be put up first on the Brookland site, which had been reserved for Finchley County.

The next stage took place at a meeting of Finchley Council it was formally moved that this scheme be accepted.....after much discussion it was carried that the Scheme 7, as amended, should go forward, and Scheme 2 should be regarded as a reserve scheme....'.

Mr Chalk was prompted to respond :-

'....Our School has encountered many crises and unfulfilled hopes during its

somewhat chequered history. The present circumstances, however, are infinitely more serious than any it has previously experienced; for remarks recently attributed to our good friend Alderman Bryson, lend colour to the belief that the School will not retain its identity for very much longer. That, indeed, will surely be the effect of the proposed "merger". The alternative suggestions for a new 3-form entry school seems to me to be a remote contingency, since, owing to the astonishing proposal to transfer the Brookland site to Christ's College, a new site would have to be found for us. This alone would, I imagine, constitute a major problem.

In the midst of the welter of conflicting plans one must not, of course, ignore the fact that the Committee is confronted with a problem of great complexity, bound up with proposals for the reorganisation of local government. Nevertheless, our fervent hope is that the school will emerge unscathed, and prepared, as by tradition it always has been, to play a prominent part in the educational life of the Borough...'

L P (Bunny) Nicholls (1922 - 1928) who lived outside of Finchley but took a great deal of interest in the School and its business, warned :-

'...The proposal to demolish the Old School....is one which must be resisted to the last....Does the first rate academic record of the School, which has always been at the top level in Middlesex, mean anything.....? And is the memory of Charlie Carr, the work of Harold Chalk, and the present efforts of Mr Povah to be erased? Is the OFA itself and its traditions all to be swept away? No - let them increase the size of FCS which is urgently needed, and surely there is enough space at the present site if a new site is not available.....Do not let them create huge schools which just become machines without any tradition....'.

And also from Malcolm Francis who had just left school in 1961 :-

'...many people do not appreciate the gravity of the situation.....There was a belief that the proposal would come to nothing, as many others have done in the past.....For many years we have been promised a new school. During this period the over-crowding problem has become increasingly acute. Sixth formers, most in need of the books available, have to leave the Library when there is an overflow, a frequent occurrence. Similarly, half the lesson is sometimes lost while sixth formers search for an empty room. We cursed this state of affairs....however, there was the promise of a new school for the future, if only when the present structure collapsed.

Under the main proposal we learn that Christ's College would have preference for a new school on a site hitherto reserved for us, whilst, once more FCS would have to wait.....It is the alternative proposal, providing for an amalgamation of the two schools, that is the more serious and the more likely to get through especially in these days of expenditure reductions.

It would appear that the Council judges the standard of a school by the number of bricks, and pupils, regardless of the consequences. I quote Alderman Bryson, "While everyone would regret the passing of those two historic schools the main thing is to achieve a new one". This thinking, to me, is entirely wrong.

A school is the people who attend, the spirit which prevails in it. It is the spirit, from both schools, which has contributed so much to the life of Finchley this century. Christ's College and FCS symbolise this spirit. Even in new separate schools it would prevail, though slightly modified....In a new single school it would almost certainly be destroyed. No one would dream of amalgamating Harrow and Eton.. .they are schools of great tradition and spirit. So, on a smaller scale, are FCS and Christ's College.....'.

Headlines in the Local Press on 23 November 1962 :-

'CHRIST COLLEGE AND FINCHLEY COUNTY TO BE REPLACED'.

The reponse from the School was a mass of literature, probably propaganda, a Car and Cycle parade through Finchley, car stickers, and a petition. In January 1963, that petition was submitted by Head Girl Marilyn Holbrook, Peter Caines, John Fleetcroft, Elizabeth Everest, and Mary Cecil, with photos. There were petition points all over the Borough. There was a joint deputation with Christ's College, to Mrs Thatcher at the Houses of Parliament.....'.

Obituary in The Fincunian, 1961 :-

Mr L J Wills joined the staff of Finchley County School in 1929, teaching French and taking a keen interest in games and swimming, at which he was himself proficient.

Those of us who remember him in relaxed mood have pictures of him taking part in a play at the Senior Party, or in a surprise item at the Swimming Gala, when staff, including Mr Wills in academic dress, took off in a comic dive.

In the Common Room he had a special place, and his slightly detached view of life sometimes produced characteristic comments. He had a nice appreciation of wit in English, French and Spanish, and entered with interest into linguistic matters when they were under discussion. But perhaps the function in which many generations of Fincunians will remember him was as Starter at the Athletic Sports and the Swimming Gala.



The sadness of his death struck the school with great impact, which was expressed at the funeral by the flowers, and by the clock which, with a suitable inscription, has been placed in the Library, in his memory'.

Mr Wills had a traditional role as starter at sporting events.



Mr Wills was excellent company at social events. In this picture he is in the company of T S Jones; L F Wallis; H Chalk; J Davie; Miss L Dace, and A Sturdy, amongst others.

Obituary in The Scimitar 35, Spring 1961, written by Mr MacNelly :-

'...Mr Wills came to the School in 1929 to teach French and Spanish and, on the retirement of Mr Howland, took over the North Housemastership.

He was an experienced and very successful teacher, to whose patient efforts many a scholar struggling with the intricacies of French grammar, had good reason to be grateful.

His lessons were frequently enlivened by his dry humour, his witty asides, an aptly turned phrase that so neatly deflated the pretentious and pompous, and yet there was to him an undemonstrative kindness and ready sympathy that endeared him to all, inspiring an affection that we shall long remember.

His crosswords, in French of course, his passion for Rowntrees Clear Gums, unfailing gratitude every Christmas by his form, his brisk efficiency as starter at Sports Day, his comic antics in the water at the close of Swimming Gala, his prowess at Snooker - all these were part of the man we knew and loved.....

.....we grieve that his dream of a contented retirement in his Suffolk home was not to be realised....'.

Teachers

34% of the sixth form were not completely satisfied with the teachers who taught them.

Only 7.4% were completely satisfied with all staff.

Working Hours

When asked, "How many hours of school work do you indulge in per night?", many a diligent sixth former bowed his (or her) head in shame and asked whether any names were to be mentioned in the article, before answering the question. It was only after many assurances that no names were to be mentioned that we ascertained that the average sixth former does 2 hours of school work per night. It was found however, that working time doubled and even trebled near examination time. Two people confessed to not doing any school work in the evening.

Strangely it was found in general that those who worked at home for the longest periods in the evenings went out more times in the week than those who only worked for a short time.

Breakfast

34.6% of the sixth form never eat breakfast, and only 11.5% sometimes fill their stomachs during the morning.

War

50% think there will be a Third World War.

Television

Out of a choice of three programmes, Emergency Ward 10; Coronation Street; and Compact; it was Compact the most popular with the girls. Only 10% of the boys watch any of the three programmes. Overall, Coronation Street was the most popular....'

In the Summer of 1962, the Finchley Press published in the "Around Finchley" column, an article about The Scimitar magazine :-

'A fortnight ago saw the completion of the 39th volume of Scimitar, the journal of the Old Fincunians Association. The publication is produced quarterly, is now in its tenth year, and derives its title from the three scimitars from the motif of the FCS badge.

There have been many changes and improvements since the first edition, which consisted of two foolscap sheets each folded once, and duplicated on an ancient Gestetner machine at the Finchley County School. Nonetheless, the early

volumes were immediately successful and donations were sought in order to purchase a dedicated duplicator. The appeal was quickly realised and the duplicator bought then is still in use today and waiting anxiously to turn out the fortieth volume.

News items come in all the year round, but the main work starts three weeks ahead of issue time. By then it is anticipated that reports dealing with all the club's activities will be in the editor's hands. These will include articles on cricket, football, badminton, netball, table-tennis, amateur dramatics, as well as the customary school report and news from Old Fincunians from far and wide.

The magazine has grown ten-fold since the start and today a 22 double-side edition is routine, with a differently designed cover for each issue, so ably done since the start by Philip Gillam.

There has only been one editor of the Scimitar and that is Mr F W Holbrook. Mr Holbrook was on the original committee that decided that a duplicated magazine would be a good idea. How right he and the rest of the committee were.

The Scimitar now has a circulation of around 600 copies and is sent regularly to all parts of the world, including Australia, East Germany, America, Israel, South Africa, Mauritius, India, New Zealand, Canada, and to a member of the police force in Malaya.

The greatest interest of the Scimitar is perhaps to the older Fincunians who now reside outside of Finchley and are no longer able to take an active part locally.

They are always anxious to learn of the achievements and activities both of scholars of FCS and of past scholars in the Association. Let us hope that the Scimitar will continue to prosper and provide this universal link with Old Scholars of FCS for many years to come'.

Obituary Fincunian 1962 :-

Mr HAROLD CHALK

'It was with deep sorrow that we heard of the death of Mr Chalk, our late Headmaster, who passed peacefully on 3rd October 1962.

His is a wonderful record of long service to the School. He first came here as an assistant master in 1906 two years after our foundation and remained with us, with only a short break, until his retirement in 1946, becoming West Housemaster, and subsequently acting as Second Master, until his appointment as Headmaster in 1932.

To take over and continue the high standard set by his predecessor, Mr Carr, was no mean task, but under Mr Chalk the School fully maintained its essential character, for he kept alive and nourished that tradition of friendliness, loyalty and service which still is a prominent feature of Finchley County School today. His former pupils and those of the Staff who had the good fortune to work under him will remember him as

a slightly awe-inspiring figure, quiet and dignified, yet with a merry twinkle in his eye. He was essentially just and fair, and even the most reprobate of his pupils sensed the intense human sympathy and innate kindness that lay behind his clear blue gaze.

Always ready to take part in any Staff activity, he delighted us with his speed on the wing on the hockey field and his craftily placed returns on the tennis court, while many will recall with pleasure his annual appearance as the "heavy father" in the Staff Christmas pantomime.

Mr Chalk's calm unruffled efficiency in the hurly-burly of every day school life was never more valuable than in the difficult days of the Second World War. On two occasions we arrived at school to find it a mass of broken glass and fallen plaster after the night's bombing. Notwithstanding, within the space of a few hours, he produced a new time-table for a school housed half in the undamaged part of our own building and half at the Henrietta Barnett School at Hampstead, with flying squads of teachers alternating between the two.

The present writer can personally testify to his unfailing help to young and inexperienced teachers, and to the abiding loyalty he engendered in every member of his staff. Everyone of us who came into contact with him, pupils and teachers, will mourn his passing, but will take comfort in the thought that he was spared a long and painful illness at the end, and that his spirit still lives and works within us, the School he loved and guided for so many years'.

K A Povah writing in Scimitar No. 41, December 1962 :-

'Mr Chalk died suddenly and peacefully at his home in Hendon Lane, Finchley, on 3 October in his 82nd year.

Nothing could be more fitting than that the funeral service at St Marylebone Crematorium was conducted by the Rev Roy Deasey, himself a former pupil of Mr Chalk. Roy's comment, "He ruled his school with kindness and care", gives us a mere glimpse of what those who knew him, thought of him. Local Government was well represented. Mr Povah and other members of the staff attended whilst the Association was represented by "Bunny" Nicholls. Miss Dace, our former senior mistress, and Mr John Davie, who taught with Mr Chalk, were also present.....

One of the traits which made Mr Chalk's character notable was his equability during time of stress. As a young man, coming to the School in 1906 when it was still in its formative stages, his energy and force were marked.

When I first met him, in May 1946, he was, of course, very near his retirement, and I think he was relieved to find that one of the candidates to succeed him had enough interest to visit the school. I was impressed by the cordiality of his welcome, the simplicity and frankness of his approach, and the generosity of his attitude to one who must have appeared a very junior member of the profession.

At his farewell ceremony on the School's final assembly, I heard tributes paid to his work by the Senior Mistress, Miss Dace, and Mr Charles Vivian. Both stressed his perseverance and fortitude. Throughout the war years, with sequences of

interruptions, evacuations, lessons in air-raid shelters, staffing problems, personal tragedies, he set an example of "carrying-on", and though his service was not heroic in the usual sense of the word, his responsibility, bravely shouldered, really earned such description. He sustained the FCS spirit for the School, and this was an achievement.

In his retirement he devoted himself to his invalid wife, and until Mr Carr's death he used to see him regularly. The household tasks which fell to Mr Chalk included the weekly shopping for many years, he very much enjoyed the casual encounters he made with Old Fincunians whom he met in the street. He equally appreciated the occasions when he could revisit the School and when he could attend the OF Dinners. He was sensitive to the affectionate attention of his daughter to whom our sympathy is offered.

His constitution was very sound, and after retiring he had only one illness. He recovered from this, and in his last years was very fit, though moving at a slower pace.....'.

Scimitar 42, Summer 1963, reported on the prospects for a new school :-

'Alderman Pike. Chairman of the Borough Education Committee addressed Finchley Borough Council on 25 March 1963 in the following terms :-

"This Council is aware of the disastrous effect that the Minister's announcement will have on Finchley's Development Plan for Secondary Education. Although we have now been informed that the County Council will ask the Ministry to receive a deputation of members to ask for a substantial increase in the building programme, any additional projects are unlikely to include any new school for Finchley.

There is no need for me to remind you that when we came to the difficult decision concerning the future of Finchley County School, it was in the knowledge that by doing so we were submitting a development plan which would be acceptable to both the County Council and the Ministry, and thereby make it possible for a new school to be included in a building programme, and it was hoped it would be started before 1965. In the light of the Minister's announcement, however, we must accept that a new school building for Finchley will not be possible under present circumstances.

The London Government Bill proposes that the new Boroughs shall by 1 April 1966 prepare a revised Development Plan; in the circumstances, therefore, it seems to me that this Council should allay the anxieties of all those concerned by the implications of our Development Plan, and assure the Staff, parents and scholars of Finchley County School and Christ's College that no further action can be taken which will affect the future of these two schools until London Borough No. 30 has submitted its Development Plan and the Minister has made an Education Order for the new Borough.

Although in the final reckoning the question of finance defeated the Council's plans which so vitally effect the future of the School, and in turn the Old Scholars Association, it is felt that the campaign, in all its forms, made a considerable impact on the Council, Member of Parliament and others who were involved..."

Laura Dace wrote this obituary in Scimitar No. 44, October 1963 :-

'With great regret, her old colleagues and Old Fincunians have heard, or will hear through the Scimitar, of the death of Miss D V Davies. Her illness began with tragic suddenness. She collapsed unconscious, and ten days later on 9 September, died without recovering consciousness.....

Miss Davies joined the Staff in 1916 and remained until 1937, when arthritis, which had been troubling her for some time, combined with the frail health of her mother, necessitated early retirement, a great blow to the School. Her subject was History, and her grip of it and the skilful way in which she presented her knowledge, were inspiring to all her pupils. Although a History specialist, she liked teaching English. It was a delightful relaxation when she could read aloud poems she loved, being supremely able to reveal their beauty of thought and expression. She endeared herself to Staff and pupils by her singularly sympathetic and happy disposition. Gardening was a favourite pursuit and her love of the open air, shared by Miss Jacoby, made them well-known strollers over the Rough Lots during dinner intervals. Sport and all other activities of School life claimed her interest. As long as she was physically fit, she enjoyed playing tennis and badminton. In course of time she became South House Mistress with Mr Chalk as House Master, and with the utmost enthusiasm she undertook her new duties, identifying herself with all South House efforts for supremacy in work and play and winning the affection of all "Southerners".

She was always most anxious for news of the School and of Old Scholars. Last year she came to live in Rickmansworth from Hove, where she had been for fourteen years, and I was able to have the great pleasure of seeing her again. First through the kindness of an Old Fincunian, Mrs Marjorie Stevens (nee Wilson), who invited us both to her home in Chorley Wood, and later in my own flat.....I was present at the Crematorium on 12 September. The morning was calm and sunny after days of rain and gales and when after a very brief service we moved into the sunshine of the cloisters, the peaceful scene and the beauty of the flowers sent as token of remembrance and affection, soothed our sorrow as Miss Davies would have wished, and with resignation we could say "ave atque vale"...'.

In 1963, The Fincunian magazine examined the plans for the closure of the Old School and the aspirations for a New School :-

'In 1922 plans for a new school building were considered.....then in 1923 came the Geddes axe.

In 1929 plans for a new school building were considered.....then in 1932 came the great crash.

In 1938 plans for a new school building were considered.....then in 1939 came World War II.

In 1961 plans for a new school building were considered.....then in 1962 came the Closure Plan.

This time it was not international speculation in Wall Street. It was not a mad demagogue in Berlin. It was the worthy councillors of Finchley.

One evening in the Autumn of 1962 the council was assembled to consider the plan for rebuilding Finchley Council School on a new site, linked with other improvements in the borough's education provisions. The council sat late and by eleven-thirty the press reporters had gone home. At this point an alternative scheme was proposed and appended to the original recommendation. If Middlesex County Council was unable to approve the original scheme which would involve considerable expense then Finchley County School would be closed and the proposed site would be used to build a four-stream boys school. At first there were only confused rumours reaching us. We were told that Christ's College and Finchley County were to be amalgamated. But when a mixed school is amalgamated with a boys school to give a larger boys school then someone has missed a few critical biology lessons. It was also clear that if Middlesex County Council were offered two "alternative" schemes, one much cheaper than the other, they would inevitably choose the cheaper. What sort of "alternative" is that?

The first investigations and protests were led by the Old Fincunians, always alert and devoted to the welfare of the school. As soon as the situation clarified they allowed the initiative to pass to the parents, since a campaign led by the old students of a school would naturally be seen as sentimentalism. On 14th December the first meeting of the company of parents was held, a committee was elected, £11.11.0d was collected, and a plan of action was outlined. Meanwhile, within the school the sixth-form had organised a petition, signed by most of the school.

In mid-January this petition was delivered to the Mayor. A deputation of four presented it, hoping to be allowed to explain their case. Unfortunately they were only allowed to ask questions, after hearing a lengthy explanation of the intricacies of the council's decision. Some interesting new facts emerged. Apparently the new scheme would leave only 45 grammar school places for non-Catholic girls in Finchley, compared with some four times that number of boy's places. This means that people in other parts of Middlesex would be given Grammar School places who would not be admitted in Finchley owing to the high standards of the borough. Yet in a borough where Grammar School places were already abnormally short it was proposed to reduce them by a further 30 places a year - all girls places, although girls were already at a two-to-one disadvantage.

There now followed an intensive campaign to publicise this appalling state of affairs. The Daily Express, Daily Herald, Daily Mail and Guardian gave us some publicity, and our sixth-formers were interviewed on the morning of the radio programme "Today" on the subject of co-education. The local press was inundated with letters and the company of parents obtained nearly 10,000 signatures to a petition of protest. Posters were distributed, and motor cavalcades were organised on successive Saturdays in freezing weather.

Why did Finchley Council find it necessary to propose an "alternative" plan which was so clearly inadequate for the needs of the borough? Why were the decisions and its reasons so shrouded in secrecy that it took three months of agitation to elicit the facts?

Perhaps the answer is that local decisions are only trimmings of our national education policy. Finchley Council, and every other local body, knows that the government will not sanction the heavy expenditure needed to bring our education system up to the standards laid down in the 1944 Education Act. Every year the government considers requests from local Councils all over the country for money to carry out essential school building and repair programmes. Each year necessary plans are rejected wholesale and the grants made available sometimes sink even below the minimum consistent with common sense.

Whenever the time comes round for another "squeeze" of the economy, education is the first lamb to be sacrificed. This year the cuts were so drastic that even Finchley's inadequate "alternative" scheme was seen to be starry-eyed optimism. For our school there is "no possibility of quick action". When essential services are being starved of money, who can wonder that local councils conduct their business shamefacedly, with a minimum of publicity.

Energetic protests in Finchley greatly helped to encourage us, but ironically enough it was the government's parsimony (excessive even for them) which saved the building for the time being. With luck the public interest that was stirred up by the essentially local issue of one school closure may be transferred to the more general issue of a higher national priority for education. Support can be channelled through the new Campaign for Education which is currently unearthing the unpleasant realities of our public education system.

In January Alderman Bryson gave us his considered opinion that if nothing was done about Finchley Grammar Schools at that time, then the issue would wait until after the Greater London Reorganisation had taken place. He believed, he stated, that no new schools would be begun in Finchley until at least ten years after this reorganisation. So I conclude on a sad note - in 1975 plans for a new school building may be considered.....'.

That article was written by L A Whitehead of Form VI(iii) in 1963 but one year later, the plans for an overall more comprehensive education system started to become clear. The Fincunian magazine in 1964 started to get to the bottom of it :-

'Over the past few years the fate of "Finchley County Grammar School" has hung in the balance. Now the very name has been threatened by the changes in the administration of Local Government, which have made our area the large Borough of Barnet in 1965. With the possibility of a new Committee of Education with different ideas, is it not relevant to take a look at the education system of which we are a part?

Some of the more progressive Councils throughout the country have made radical changes and taken the controversial step of adopting the Comprehensive system of education. They have met both active support and also bitter opposition.

Certainly there are valid arguments for each point of view. Those who wish the Grammar School to remain in its entirety, feel that their liberty of choice would be restricted if only the Comprehensive system was open to their children. Parents may feel that Grammar School education gives greater opportunity for their

children to attain higher academic and technical education, whereas, with only a Comprehensive School to attend, they might not have the same intensive guidance to University standard.

Those who favour the Comprehensive School feel that all children should have equal opportunities whatever their abilities, and not, as in the present system, that their future be decided at the age of eleven. Some children do develop intellectually at a later age and should have the opportunity of moving up the Education Scale with easier access to further academic study. Those of average intelligence or below who show particular aptitude for a certain field of study - perhaps that of Art or Handicrafts - should have facilities within their own school to develop further.

There is, regrettably, I feel, a definite distinction in attitudes and values between two types of schools. The Secondary Modern pupil starts with a psychological disadvantage of being a "failure" and may not have the same determination to persevere and succeed in the field of study. Unless adequate encouragement is given, the easy path, that of leaving at the age of fifteen, without any particular purpose in life, is taken. Whereas, the Grammar School pupil has a greater determination to succeed and a greater sense of duty and allegiance to his school, which makes him participate more willingly in all school activities, as for example, that of sport and for the honour of his school.

It is only comparatively recently that Secondary Modern Schools have attempted to "compete" with the Grammar Schools by taking the Ordinary Level of General Certificate of Education examinations, and they have shown remarkably successful results that have enabled some scholars to further their education by gaining places at Training Colleges and University - hardly "failures"....How much better for us to retain the name of "Finchley County" without the "Grammar" and thereby extend the long tradition of excellent teaching in a wide range of subjects to a wider section of the community".

One of the stalwarts of Finchley County was the Caretaker, Mr Foy. He died in 1963 and this is what was written about him in the Fincunian, 1963 :-



Obituary - Mr G W FOY

'The School has suffered another grievous loss in the death of Mr G W Foy. Since October, 1935, Mr and Mrs Foy have lived at the Lodge and they served the School in very many ways additional to their official capacities. Mr Foy served with the RAF during the war and in his absence Mrs Foy deputised for him. He was a man of great integrity. His relationship with pupils was respect, and he was at all times thoughtful and considerate. His influence in the School was considerable and was always truly educational.

In a building which had many difficulties he managed, with the loyal help of his staff,

to maintain a good state of cleanliness, which was especially commented upon at the time of our General Inspection. He was very interested in the techniques of his work and in addition he had many occasions to exert his shrewd judgment of character. When the Evening Institute was revived in 1948 Mr Foy took a keen interest in the arrangements, and he was very patient with enquiries from students. The nature of his work tied him to the school premises both during term and for a large part of the holidays. It was therefore fortunate that he was able to find relaxation near at hand in the Tudor Bowling Club, of which he became Captain.

Mr Foy became seriously ill in May 1963 and was treated in Barnet and at Mount Vernon Hospital. Our deep sympathy is offered to Mrs Foy and to his son and daughter'.

Brian Rowland (1949/54) asked :-

'...What happened to "Pinky"? I think he belonged to Mr Foy, the caretaker, but I couldn't be sure of that. In the first term an approach to Pinkie would probably result in the back of your hand being full of claws, but by the fifth year I seem to remember being able to stroke him without injury, and he would occasionally settle on a classroom radiator until the teacher spotted him and turned him out.....'.

Joan Ridley (1947/54) wrote in 2003 :- '...what happened to Pinkie? He scratched me when I was in the First Form and despite seven years of trying to make friends with him, he still scratched me at the end of my Sixth Form career. I have never seen a cat of that colour since...'.

The fate of "Pinkie" was reported in the Fincunian in 1956 :-

IN MEMORIAM - After fourteen years of faithful service, Pinkie, the school cat has left us. His departure is mourned by all - except the school mice.

There were many teachers who made a lasting impression on us but one who is sometimes forgotten is Mr Eldridge. His Obituary in the Fincunian 1963 :-

Frederick A ELDRIDGE

'It was with a sense of stunned incredulity that we at school learned of the death of Mr Eldridge on Thursday 27th June 1963. He had been with us at morning assembly that day and within the brief space of an hour came the tragic news that he had passed away shortly after reaching hospital.

Mr Eldridge, "Fred" to those who worked with him, came to FCS in 1946, and taught Handicraft, Mathematics and Geography. In this latter subject, his true love, he was an outstandingly successful teacher and many generations of his pupils were fired by his enthusiasm.

Many old scholars will remember how, on geography field walks, the ache of weary legs was forgotten as their eyes were opened for the fascinating history of the landscape that he revealed to them.

But he by no means limited his activities to the classroom. He was a first-class craftsman, of whose skills the school shows many examples, while as our resourceful stage manager he performed marvels of transformation on our meagre stage, and indeed had been known to complain that the play chosen did not make sufficient demands on his ingenuity.

On the sports field, his work, both at training sessions and as chief judge on Sports Day, revealed his life-long interests in athletics, and one can still hear the regret in his voice when he announced quite recently that he "had hung up his boots", in other words that he would no longer be able to referee the football every Saturday morning.

In his younger days he had been a keen dancer, and still enjoyed active participation in the school dances, which in part owed their success to the dancing classes he had organised for many years.

South House in particular will mourn the loss of an energetic and enthusiastic leader, to whom its triumphs meant so much, and the OFA owes him a very heavy debt for his lively and untiring efforts on its behalf as the staff representative.

He maintained a lively interest in the fortunes of his former pupils, and derived a keen satisfaction from the contact with many of them that his work with the OFA brought him.



From this amazing record of activity and untiring devotion in so many aspects of school life, what picture of the man emerges?

Those who were privileged to know him and work with him will remember him for his thoroughness, since he never set his hand to anything without carrying it through to the utmost of his powers, for his enthusiasm and loyalty, which inspired those around him, and for his essential integrity and genuineness, giving praise or reward, with no trace of posing or aiming at effect....and his memory will be long cherished, an example to urge and encourage us in years to come'.

Fincunian 1963 :-

YET ANOTHER SURVEY

*'59% of the school prefer pop music
16% of the school prefer jazz (preferred by the higher forms)
16% of the school prefer classical
6% revealed a strange penchant for oriental music
3% of the school had other interests.
38% claim to read at least one book per week
56% prefer books of special interest ("women" in sixth form, "tropical fish" in lowest forms, "hockey" by the girls). The lower forms read more than the higher forms (but then "Noddy" does not take long to read!)
6% found their text books sufficient reading matter
30% of the school were very enthusiastic about parties (mainly the higher forms)
16% of the school rarely go to parties
15% of the school go to the cinema at least once per week.....'.*

Hilda Post wrote from Canada about the first Head Prefect :-

'...I am sorry to advise you that Harold Leeming (1907-1912) passed away on 8 January 1964 aged 69, after a long and painful illness.

I think he was the first Head Prefect and Mrs Leeming (nee Dorothy Keen) was also a Prefect. I think he was awarded a decoration in the first World War. He married Dorothy Keen at St Paul's Church, Long Lane, in November 1916 and Douglas Carr was best man. I think this was the first School Wedding...Harold and Dorothy went to Canada in 1920 and returned in 1945.....'.

K A Povah wrote in Scimitar No. 46, Spring 1964 :-

'....The Greater London Council has now been elected with four representatives for the Borough of Barnet, of whom one, County Councillor Miss Jean Scott, BSc., FRIC., knows our School well. The GLC has little control over educational policy, however, under the present arrangements. If a Labour Government was to be formed in October, these powers might possibly be extended.....Much preliminary discussion will take place during the year and the Borough of Barnet Education Committee's first duty will be to make a new Development Plan for Schools. This is likely to take a year or two.

The policy of continued use of the Grammar and Modern Schools or one of the inclusive types (Comprehensive or Leicestershire) will have to be debated in the first place.....But at some stage practical immediacies will present themselves - the matter of sites for the big schools needed, for instance.

It is not possible to say precisely at what time a clear decision about FCS's future will be made.....a new age bulge has appeared and the abolition of any school which is in running order may well appear to be an unwise gesture.....It is interesting to note that the plan for a so-called Sixth Form College has not yet been fulfilled even in the Borough where it has been under discussion for ten years or so....We can count on a clear run in our present building very much as we are for six or seven years.....'.

And in that same 1964 edition :-

'Do you know that the box hedge in front of the School which replaced the railings of pre-war fame, has disappeared - roses have been planted....?'

Do you know that the School clock has been seen to be illuminated on a number of occasions?

Do you know that Mr Staines, the new caretaker is settling in - he is a very helpful person and looks to be fitting in to the well-known tradition?

Do you know that Mr Goss goes at the end of this term to go to Cheshunt Grammar School - he has built up a fine reputation at the County and he will be very much missed.

Do you know that Miss Sturgeon is retiring at the end of term - she has been part of our life for so long now that it will be difficult to imagine school life without her presence.....'.

Scimitar 47, Summer 1964 :-

'....Miss Sturgeon is retiring after 35 years service to FCS.

On Friday 26 June, she was invited to attend the Governors' Meeting at the Council Offices and there she heard a short address from the new Chairman of the Finchley Education Committee, Councillor N A Burgess (1933/38), who mentioned that a quarter of a century ago he had been "chidden by a mistress" whose name he did not then know, for running a ruler down the stair rails. Needless to say the mistress was Miss Sturgeon.

Miss Sturgeon was given an official letter signed by the Mayor thanking her for her services to the school over this long stretch of time.

Since Mrs Brown left in 1953, Miss Sturgeon has been Senior Mistress, responsible for the welfare and interests of the girls. She has introduced new uniform regulations and see that they were followed. She has on many occasions taken magnanimous decisions in keeping with the traditions of the School and, having taught every girl in the School for at least three years, she has been in a unique position to advise the Head about the needs of her charges.

They will join the Governors and Staff in wishing for Miss Sturgeon many years of agreeable relaxation and interest in the new house by the sea, where she will no doubt continue to maintain high standards of craftsmanship. She takes with her our best wishes for a long and pleasant retirement in sunny Worthing'.

In 2005 a number of tributes were received about Miss Sturgeon, particularly from girl members of the Association who still remember her "kitchen advice", some of which they have used throughout their lives.

Obituary

Mrs Henney (nee Bailey)

R W Royston wrote in Scimitar No. 47, Summer 1964 :-

'We remember Miss Eva Bailey (Mrs Henney). With the sound and weather of Wimbledon in my ears, it seems to me an appropriate time to be thinking of Eva Bailey, who so many of us remember as our teacher of History throughout the "twenties", and I have no doubt for some, throughout the "thirties" also. I always seem to associate her with tennis, as one who played a hard and good sound game, entirely in accordance with the standards she set as a teacher

She was always my particular favourite, with her emphatic way of speaking, always so live, ever living her subject. She taught me every year right through from the second form matriculation - I cannot recall in fact that there was another History teacher in the school at the time - and I cannot remember that she ever allowed the subject to pall.

"Miss Bailey" was a very sound teacher with a wonderfully vivid way of getting her subject over; she maintained a great sense of humour, never more apparent to me when she recalled very clearly - on the occasion of her attending a dinner as recently as 1960 in Barnet, at which she and Mr Wallis were joint guests of honour - that one of my "Black Bookings" from her was for saying "Damn!" very loudly in the middle of an otherwise comparatively quiet session of writing about the "Times of the Plantagenets".

One thing I particularly recall was her arranging for each member of the form to talk to the rest of the class for about ten minutes on any subject he or she chose, an opportunity which resulted in Norman Frost thrilling everyone with his advanced knowledge of radio, and his picking up the Dutch transmissions through his set to which was attached an enormous paper-lined gramophone horn. Wireless was then, of course, in its complete infancy....'

Miss Bailey as she was in the 1930's



One of the most important events ever to affect the School occurred in 1964, still being remembered four years later when a minor revolution occurred. Scimitar No. 58, Summer 1968 reveals all :-

"The signs on the public buildings were clear enough - they called for an armed rising. They even gave directions to "collect your weapons from Army HQ in John's Avenue, NW4".

According to another notice outside the public library the rising was to achieve "UDI for a London Borough" it was a unilateral declaration of Finchley independence. There were dozens more posters and billboards calling on "peace-loving people of Finchley to rise up in your thousands tomorrow".

The cause of the revolution was the fact that in 1964 Barnet, Hendon, Friern Barnet and Finchley were merged to form the borough of Barnet. And citizens on their way to Church on 31 March 1968 read exhortations such as, "Down with the Barnet Imperialists", and "Rescue your fellow Finchleyians from slave labours in the Barnet refuse department", and "Send the Mayor to the Church End salt mines".

Those young men who became inflamed with revolutionary fervour made their way to the "Army HQ in John's Avenue", only to find it was the Salvation Army building. And in small print at the bottom of the billboards were the words "April 1st Movement".

Nevertheless, although we did not even think about it then, that merger of the small boroughs into the giant Barnet was the beginning of the end for Finchley County School. Writing in Scimitar No. 49, February 1956, K A Povah introduced us to the idea of a comprehensive education :-

'...Middlesex County Council, whose shield the School purports to have as its badge, ceases to exist at 23.59 hours on 31 March 1965. The powers and duties it had in the education field will be taken over, not by the London County Council or by Greater London, but by the London Borough of Barnet, to which from 1 April 1965, ratepayers in Hendon, Finchley, High Barnet, East Barnet and Friern Barnet will contribute....

Whatever the party-political complexion of the government, a totally new development plan for schools in the London Borough of Barnet will be called for. An intense survey of present arrangements will be made and it is likely that all local authorities will be asked to make a development plan based on the idea of a "comprehensive" arrangement, without selection at 11 plus or any other plus on intellectual grounds....change must inevitably be gradual, if only because of the tremendous disadvantages of trying to run a scheme of education in buildings not designed accordingly....

From FCS's point of view, we can take satisfaction that we are in existence, producing advanced level results with 85% passes, and ready to be considered with all the other successful schools in the neighbourhood in which we serve'.

Frank Dollin (1910 - 1915) wrote this obituary in Scimitar 50, Spring 1965 :-

'It is only a few weeks ago that I carried out a long-standing intention of visiting Mrs Tapsfield...and the news of her death came both as a grief and a surprise. For me Mrs Tapsfield was always Miss Crocker. She was my form mistress during my first year at FCS and a better mentor during that first impressionable year we could not have had. Her dark penetrating eyes and dawning smile subdued and inspired us. We realised that she trusted us and wanted to be proud of us. For our part, we held her in admiration and affection, and felt it would be a shame to let her down by misbehaviour or doing less than our best. I do not remember her ever punishing anyone although I suppose it must have been necessary some times.

When I had a long talk with Mr Carr on the eve of his ninetieth birthday, he spoke in very warm terms of Miss Crocker as one of the best teachers he had ever had on his staff. Certainly the year that I was in her form was the happiest and , perhaps, the most formative period of my school life....'.

Mr Povah writing in Scimitar 51 in 1965 :-

'...For many years matriculation was the yardstick of success and even when other schools were establishing good sixth forms, this tended to be so still, but the pupils working for Higher School Certificates were fewer than 10 in number. In 1965 they were nearly 60. Other changes in the last 19 years have been the revival of the Old Fincunians' Association, the diversification of alternatives in the curriculum, the great increase in the amount of Science teaching, the introduction of games in school time, the establishment of the Memorial Library.

Of course the building has created many problems in the past, and it is still doing so. The enlargement of the school, with extensions on the present site has three times been approved and all plans complete, and on the fourth occasion the plans represented a totally new building on a new site. It was at this time (was it 1962?) that at the last minute a County change of plan reversed a decision, and the OFA, parents and pupils joined in the famous campaign which gained nearly 10,000 local supporting signatures.

This tremendous backing must show that FCS is performing a lively function. I think that throughout its sixty years, FCS has taken advantage of its smallness, and even the awkwardness of its building. We just have to help one another, and that's all there is to it.....

...there seems to have been many occasions since 1946 when I have had to describe wide-sweeping plans, which so far have come to nothing. Barnet was due, even before the arrival of a Labour Government, to prepare a development plan for all its schools by 1967. But now all authorities, Barnet included, have to prepare plans for the reorganisation of secondary schools on non-selective lines and these take priority due in 1966.

....If the Council follow the Government's instruction to prepare a comprehensive plan without huge expenditure :-

....there will be no 11+ selection.....

....children will go from Primary Schools to "Junior High" schools (using most of the Secondary Modern Buildings) from 11 to 14 years (or 10+ to 13+ possibly)...

....at 14 (or 13+) some children whose parents opt, by a selection process will be drafted to "Grammar Schools", only three for the whole of the London Borough of Barnet, the rest will go to "Senior High" schools (mostly using the present Grammar School premises) where a full range of studies, including sixth form "A" Level work, would be available.....

.....It must be stressed that the Secretary of State for Education and Science has indicated that he does not favour "makeshift" plans, and also says that greatly increased expenditure is not to be incurred.

Our own school is the only two-form entry Grammar School in the Borough and all the others have three-form entry and much bigger sixth forms. Our position under any plan will be critical; the goodwill shown by the nearly 10,000 signatories of the petition organised in the cold winter of 1962 - 1963 is our chief source of encouragement at the moment'.

John Davie wrote this obituary in Scimitar No. 51, Autumn 1965 :-

Leonard F WALLIS

some personal memories

Fifty-eight years ago I arrived on the staff of FCS and soon became especially friendly with L F W. We seemed to have very much in common and began to collaborate in various ways. I remember very vividly those early days when the status of the School was raised to what today is called the Grammar School. We were all filled with youthful enthusiasm but Mr Wallis was foremost with bright new ideas - a characteristic he retained throughout his professional career - We must take the leaves out of the book of Public Schools. We must inaugurate a House System. We must have a School Choir and Orchestra. We must have a School Magazine, Dramatics and in addition Dancing, Parties, Games and what-not.

It was decided there should be three Houses, arranged on a flexible territorial basis - North, South, West - for the purposes of internal competitions and rivalry, and the first Housemasters appointed by Mr Carr were Wallis, Chalk, and Davie respectively. In all these changes L F W played a notable part.

Then, of course, if Harrow had a School Song, why not FCS, too? I well remember the day when L F W stopped me in the School Hall and handed me a sheet of paper with four verses on it, asked me to read it and tell him what I thought of it, and if approved, to put it to music. That was done the same day (actually on a train journey from Finchley Central to South Kensington) and at a Staff meeting it was adopted without dissent.

Leonard Wallis's enthusiasm was infectious, and soon concerts and plays were arranged, and extra-mural activities of all sorts were promoted. He had us sometimes well-nigh breathless, and thrilled with the part we were all playing in beginning to build up FCS traditions. Days of experiment and growth are indeed exciting days, and many of the then contemporary Old Scholars will remember them. Parents were invited to concerts, and a regular item on the programme would be a solo by L F W. He had a fine baritone voice, and it was always a pleasure to me to accompany his songs, some refrains of which I fancy I hear ringing in my ears as I write.

The war came and in due course we were both in the Army in France and at the front. I happened to find out that his unit was not far from where I was stationed. Nothing could stop me and I found him alright. Was he surprised to find me suddenly appear at the door of his tent.

He was a born teacher. He was not only held in high esteem by his colleagues, but was also most popular with his pupils. Even the non-mathematically minded (girl-pupils especially) looked forward with unusual eagerness to a lesson with Mr Wallis.

In due course he was appointed the first Headmaster of Willesden County School, and later on we were to meet again at the Middlesex Grammar Schools Heads' meetings. There again he was always sparkling with ideas for improving one or other aspect of educational administration and work. He had a gift, almost a passion, for writing memoranda and lengthy documents with statistics, on current school questions, for distribution amongst his fellow heads.

Although a Science Graduate, he had a very marked poetical sense, and his mind was stored with choice passages drawn from works he had studied and he loved to quote them. He excelled as a speaker, with cogent arguments couched in well chosen words, and enlivened with humour.

.....let it be gladly said, he had lived a full and successful life, with many side interests, happily married, rightly proud of his wife and children, and always ready to lend a helping hand where needed.....'.

Helen Osborn (nee Ross) wrote in Scimitar No. 51, Autumn 1965 :-

'My first glimpse of Mr Wallis was of his leaning against the platform in the School while he was still in khaki at the end of the First World War. On his return to teaching we found ourselves successful in applying reasonable processes to obtain answers. He also aroused our interest in natural science and in the evolution of living things. His broad views made the teaching of religion a quest for truth, which was not always acceptable to pupils or their parents.

He distinguished himself on social and sporting occasions, and it was not surprising that he eventually married our beloved games mistress, "Jonah".

His love of the School remained throughout the years after he became Headmaster of another school, and on many occasions we received the warm companionship of both of our old friends. His devotion to "Jonah" in her

extremity was an inspiration in itself. Later his long experience was engaged in the service of the Education Department of King's College, London, from which he retired only a short time before the end of his long and valuable life'.

Scimitar No 52, Spring 1966 :-

'A beautiful and memorable service was held on Sunday 21 November at Willesden County Grammar School, in tribute to the memory of our honoured and beloved schoolmaster, L F Wallis.... The theme for the service was praise, gratitude and happiness. The hymns were, "For all the Saints....", "Jerusalem" which he taught us so long ago, and "The Evening Hymn" sung by Willesden County.

The service, interspersed by spoken tributes to him, included a prayer and Bible reading, 1 Phil. 4, which he loved to use in his own school assemblies, and the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's "Messiah", really beautifully rendered by the School Choir. His daughter, Dr Helen Wallis, gave a wonderful tribute to him sounding a happy note. She recalled his unfailing cheerfulness and courage and patience in the face of her mother's protracted invalidism. She hoped we would keep the occasion happy. On our own behalf, Hector Gauld gave a most sincere and moving tribute praising L F's great services to FCS. There were tributes from Dr W E J Roberts, the present Willesden Head, from Miss Jarvis, Deputy Head under Mr Wallis, and a Foundation Scholar. Professor A V Judges of King's College, London, gave an account of his work there with graduates, after retiring from Willesden, for this brilliant man had at least three teaching careers.

After the service, we were invited to tea in the Library, and to see some photographs, old school magazines and other mementoes of Mr Wallis, and a noble bronze bust of him.....In the Art Room, there were many interesting old photos and early magazines, as far back as the old hectographed copy of the early days of the Finchley County School. There were also some lovely coloured prints of his 80th Birthday celebration.....Amongst those who were present were :-

Mollie Stevens, Agnes Harding, Ruby Harding, Hal Wallis, Owen Wallis, Ivy Gilby, Barbara Saville, Muriel Jarrett (Meat), Geoff Courtier, Muriel Courtier, Hilda Oulet, May Oulet (Gregston), Idris Murphy, Bill Tangye, Eddie Bell, and Jack Rawlings.....'.

Geoff Lence (1942/49) wrote in 1997 :- *'At a recent football occasion I chatted to two Old Uffingtonians (old boys of Willesden Grammar), Ken Fletcher and Arthur Sills, who both knew Mr Wallis well and spoke glowingly of him...'. Frank Richardson (1904/08) :-* *'Mr Wallis was an unusual type of schoolmaster; he had the "human touch" which transformed a teacher into an elder brother....'.*

Hector Gauld (OF and lifelong friend) :- *'....I carry in my memory a vivid picture of a man of distinguished and dignified appearance, an academic gown flowing elegantly from his shoulders, as he strides long-legged across the Hall to the Form Room - Form Room to Common Room. But most of all I remember his smile - not that momentary upturning of the corners of the mouth which is today too often used to emphasise a word - to point an observation. No - his smile was the smile that lights the eyes - that is the sign of inner warmth, warmth of the heart, of the spirit, warmth radiated from kindness and compassion.....*

Another joyful side to this happy man's life was his marriage to Molly McCulloch Jones - "Jonah" of beloved memory at Finchley County School where she taught Geography, English Language, and was Games Mistress....At Finchley County we have an enduring memorial to Leonard Francis Wallis - that is the School Song...'

And from his daughter, Helen Wallis :-

'...It was a tough life in those early days. He became a pupil/teacher at the age of 13 - for the number of boys who won places to the Grammar School was very small indeed. As a boy of 13, facing a class of 50 to 100 unruly youths hardly younger than he was, he had a hard baptism for the teaching profession....My father's first post was in Finchley, at Long Lane Senior School, which was to become in 1904, Finchley County School. The only vacancy was in French, so he applied, informing the interviewing committee quite truthfully that he knew no French but was prepared to learn! He kept one lesson ahead of the class, and at the end of the first term was able to change to his real subjects, Maths and Science, becoming the Senior Mathematics Master of the School, where he stayed from 1900 until 1924, excluding the First World War, in 1963 when he finally retired, he had 70 active years in the teaching profession behind him....'.

Hilda Oulet wrote in Scimitar 52, Spring 1966 :-

'Since a child I have always held Mr Wallis in affection and high regard, as I think everyone must who was privileged to be taught by him. I still can see him in the characteristic attitude, leaning sideways against the platform, smiling happily. I can again hear his rich voice at long ago School Concerts, singing "Glorious Devon" and "The Floral Dance". It was an inspiration to be conducted by him - I especially loved "Dites, La Jeune Belle", and I have never forgotten the first time we sang the School Song. I wonder if anyone else remembers that he gave us the last line of the refrain as "And to our Alma Mater, Hail", and then, after a word to Mr Davie at the piano, changed it for, "And to our friends and comrades, Hail", which, of course, has been sung ever since. And what a grand song it is with his inspiring words so beautifully set to music by his, and our, dear friend, Mr John Davie.....A year or two after the last war, I met him at an Old Fincunians Drama production at East Finchley with Mr Charles Vivian. He told me he was back in harness doing supply work at the Old School - "...a bit of maths...". "How fortunate for them to have you", I said, but with the humility of the truly great, he answered, "Oh!, no. I'm very small fry - here's the Big Chief. I'm only working under him", indicating Mr Vivian, who warmly disclaimed any such notion'.

Jeannie May Gregsten (nee Oulet) wrote in the same edition :-

'Apart from memories of his rich voice when teaching us songs in the school choir - I particularly remember, "In Mary's Garden", and "Strange Adventure", from "The Yeoman of the Guard" - my most vivid recollections of Mr Leonard F Wallis were of his active help when we formed the first Old Scholars' Dramatic Club two or three years before the First World War. I was on the original committee and William Mc Beath (Mac) was the chairman. Our first production was Shaw's, "You Can Never Tell". I'm fairly sure that Mr Wallis produced it, and we managed to persuade him to take the part of Valentine. Thanks to Mr Wallis's expert help, we thought it was a

lovely performance. The following year we attempted, "Arms and the Man", this time Mr Wallis played the peppery Colonel Petkoff, not quite his own genial character. With the outbreak of war the following year, the first FCS Old Scholars' Dramatic Club ended, but any of the old guard who still remain, will recall Mr Wallis's enthusiastic encouragement and help.....'.

Jack Rawlings (EJR) finished playing cricket in 1965. Scimitar reported :-

'....Jack Rawlings unwillingly finished with the active game about 1965 when he had an operation on his hip which left him with a slight limp. All this was due to having not an inconsiderable amount of weight which was thrust down on one leg every time he bowled. As he never bowled less than 400 overs in each of his 32 years of OF cricket, you can calculate how many times he turned his arm over.....Jack was a slow bowler with an impeccable length. He could claim to turning the ball both ways but I will say that his success was mainly that he used his full height with the ball coming faster off the pitch than it went on....He would throw the ball in from mid-off harder than any player I have seen and probably hit the ball harder than most.....'.



The three ages of EJR the cricketer.

Mr Povah wrote in Scimitar 53, Summer 1966 :-

'There is no more news about the future of the school. Like all other Secondary Schools, both Grammar and Modern, we are waiting the details of a Development Plan. It is unlikely that the School will have information before it reached the local press.

The "Northern Extension" is now almost completed. On the first floor there is a new staff room which will be a genuine Common Room for both Masters and Mistresses. The School will gain greatly from this improvement.

We are losing two valued members of staff, Mr L H D Samuel has been in charge of Mathematics since Mr H T Clark left in 1958. An experienced teacher at all levels, Primary to Technical, Mr Samuel has contributed greatly to the life of the School by his personality and by his work as a Sixth Form Master. But he will be remembered not merely for his classwork; as a Form Master of the Lower VI he took a very keen interest in the development of his pupils and his friendly understanding proved most valuable. At the Final Assembly the School made a presentation and wished him a long happy retirement.

Mr H M S Totten has been with us for two years, teaching English and Physical Education. He will be remembered for his friendly initiative in many ways, particularly with regard to Cross Country and Long Distance Running, which he developed, and Camping Holidays for boys in France which he organised and attended with his wife. He has decided to give up teaching and he is to enter journalism. It would not surprise us if in a few years he returns to school life.

Miss Keane has taken over responsibility for Mathematics, and her new colleague is Mr Breakell, whom we are delighted to welcome. We are also happy to have Mr Mason teaching Scripture, English and Physical Education'.

Other snippets of news were to be found in Scimitar 55, Spring 1967 :-

'One of our most distinguished Old Fincunians is Dr W F Hilton. We were very pleased to hear his lecture demonstration on the subject of Space Rockets....

Young people of today are generous in their attention to good causes. For more than fifty years the school has made regular contributions to Doctor Barnardo's Homes. Money has also been sent to UNICEF and for Cancer Research. The Lower VI were energetic in organising a scheme of gifts of food at Christmas for Old People in the district.....

We have pupils in the School from Uganda, Tanzania, South Africa, Kenya, Mauritius, Hong Kong, Australia, Trinidad and Cyprus.....A school is the people in it, not the building. Nevertheless, the building makes a lot of difference and we shall reap many advantages from the "Northern Extension" work on which started in the Easter Holiday 1966.....'.

Finchley Press, August 1967:-

'Pupils honour retiring headmaster

END OF ERA AT FINCHLEY COUNTY.

For over twenty years two portraits have hung like proverbial guardian angels in Finchley County School hall, their subjects looking down on successive generations

of fresh-faced children who steadily mature into young men and women, ready to take their place in an ever-changing society.

By the beginning of next term, however, Charles Carr and Harold Chalk will be joined by a third silent watcher - Kenneth Povah whose retirement as Headmaster on Friday was the concluding act of another chapter in the history of the great grammar school.

Only the third head of Finchley County, Mr Povah assumed his position in 1946 and has ably maintained the tradition of long service started by those much revered predecessors, who he now joins in a place of honour in the hall.

On Friday afternoon he was presented with a bureau, wallet and framed photograph by the head boy and head girl, while during the morning members of the sixth form gave him a chair.

The audience of pupils included the other members of staff, school governors, and Mr C David Joscelyne, the man faced with the unenviable task of succeeding Mr Povah.

"Our headmaster is someone who has, over twenty-one years spread a tremendous influence in this school", said Chairman of Governors, Councillor Leslie Snelling. "You present boys and girls may not be aware of this, but it is in you and has been in all boys and girls that have passed through this school", he continued.

Councillor Snelling felt the success of the school was due to the fact that there had been only three headmasters during the whole of its existence. He believed Mr Joscelyne would maintain the standard, "you are a man who has in your make-up those gifts that go to make up an outstanding headmaster and if you share these gifts, this school will be the great grammar school it is in London".

"Present powers have told us to think again - we are going to think again and in that thinking we shall find a way to make schools like yours continue to give service to the boys and girls of the borough", asserted Councillor Snelling.

Mr T S Jones, the deputy head, who was appointed in 1929 and has served under all the heads of Finchley County, said that when he first came to the school he was immediately aware how happy, generous and friendly it was.

"You are the same happy, generous and friendly people, and I think this is the highest praise I can give to Mr Povah. It is due to his whole-hearted devotion and friendship that this happiness had prevailed".

Mr Povah said that both he and his wife had been "quite overwhelmed" by the many expressions of kindness and generosity they had received.

He recalled the school as it was the day he began his duties as headmaster, when there was no refectory or library and that general science alone was taught'.

In August 1967, Jean Nichol wrote in Scimitar :-

'The final assembly at FCS marking the occasion of the Headmaster's retirement, took the usual, well-remembered form but for a very moving interlude when the Chairman of the Governors, Councillor Snelling, said goodbye to Mr Povah and expressed everyone's thanks for 21 years service. A portrait of Mr Povah was presented to hang on the wall of the School Hall along with those of Mr Chalk and Mr Carr, while the School expressed their gratitude in the form of a combined desk, bookshelf and record cabinet.. In his farewell speech, Mr Povah expressed his deep thanks to all his colleagues, the Governors, his wife, and to the School for all the support they had given during his term as Headmaster.....'

In the same edition Scimitar announced :-

'...It is my pleasure to inform you that the new Headmaster, Mr Joscelyne, has now been appointed, and will commence his duties in September.... With every sincerity we welcome our new Headmaster. Quite naturally there is only one Grammar School - The Finchley County School, and quite naturally we would say how lucky Mr Joscelyne is to come to such a good school. I can just see Mr Joscelyne smiling when he reads this. I think he will appreciate soon enough though that between the Old Fincs and the School there is a bond, not unique of course, but a very strong one not always elsewhere.

The older of us have become used to the tradition of our past Heads, Mr Carr, Mr Chalk and Mr Povah have made the pattern of life which we like, a pattern which lasts far beyond the end of school days. We have always felt that it was hard to follow Mr Carr, but in so doing each succeeding Head has done more than just follow, they have given much of their own individuality and have strengthened the lead given by Mr Carr.....Signed, Fred Holbrook.

In 1968 the School was riding high. The Finchley Press reported :-

COUNTY SCHOOL IS GREAT, THINKS JACK

'It might have been raining at Hilton Avenue, North Finchley, on Saturday afternoon, but Jack Rawlings still managed an anniversary smile to mark his 21st Finchley County Sports. Mr Rawlings, who lives in Friern Barnet Lane, has been involved with the school and its personalities for practically the whole of his life.

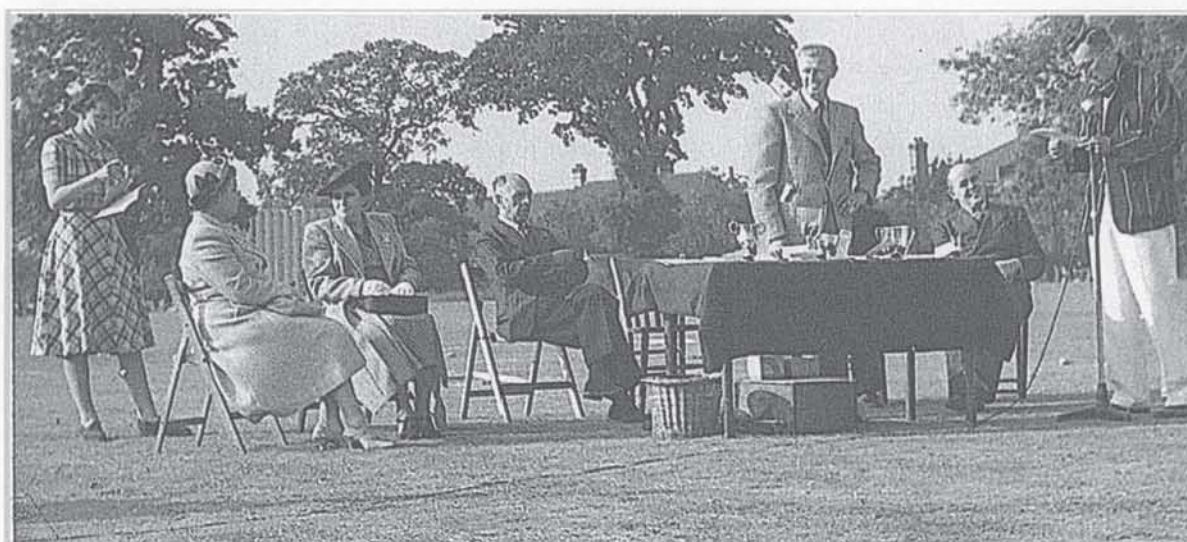
He was educated at Finchley County, he played cricket for the Fincunians, he is chairman of the old boys' association and, as a colleague said this week, "He thinks the school is the greatest and always works untiringly for it".

Mr Rawlings is married, his wife Nina coming from Woodhouse School just up the road - great friends and rivals of FCS. His brother Cyril, also went to Finchley County and is chairman of the Fincunians Cricket Club. A third member of the Rawlings family, sister Doris, was educated at Finchley County, but it is undoubtedly Jack Rawlings who has contributed so much to making the school what it is today.

After training as a teacher and serving during World War II, he joined the school staff in 1946. And he has combined his Maths teaching with that of guiding all the sports activities with an enthusiasm that rivals even the keenest players.

Throughout his 21 years, Mr Rawlings has had the aid of Miss Joan Hill, and it was unfortunate that she had to miss their anniversary sports meeting owing to illness. Typical of her loyalty to Finchley County, Miss Hill travels from her Essex home every day to take charge of girl's physical education'.

The picture shows Joan Hill and Jack Rawlings in their typical Sport's Day roles - Joan with the clip-board and Jack at the microphone!



But Jack Rawlings was worried about the future of the School, and in November 1968 he wrote :-

'...As to the future of Finchley County School, in the light of the tremendous educational upheaval, in the midst of Plans "C" and "D", and the great wave of change we hear about, sweeping through the School at the moment, I am not prepared even to hazard a guess, but would wish for greater stability in the field of education for the sake of our children's future.

What I hope is that Old Fincunians never die, nor will they fade away....'.

For those of us unfamiliar with "Plan C or Plan D", Mr Joscelyne, the Headmaster explained :-

'...Scheme "C", under which we were to become the upper half of a two-tier comprehensive unit, was accepted in principle, by the Secretary of State, but ...for various reasons it did not appear that it would be implemented in 1969 as planned - principally because the necessary building alterations could not be carried out by then.....

There is now a Fourth Report which suggests that the implementation should be spread over the three years 1969 - 1971, and in our part of the Borough the effective date would be 1970.

No final decisions can be taken on this new plan until the Education Committee meets in January but I do know that there is a growing feeling that the difficulties arising from trying to run comprehensive schools alongside grammar and modern schools, are too great - even for a short period - so we may find the Scheme "C" is eventually approved in its original form, but with 1971 as the starting date rather than 1969.

There is however, one difference in the new plan which applies to our linkage with Hillside (but to no other)...because it may be possible for Hillside and ourselves to unite as one school, instead of operating as a linked pair of schools. If that did happen it might be possible to avoid much of the commuting which Scheme "C" appears to entail.

What is abundantly clear, however, is that we shall - in one form or another - be occupying our present building for many years to come...'.

Miss Dace, who retired some thirty years previously, was in the news when Scimitar No. 59, Autumn 1968 reported :-

'...I am happy to tell you that Miss Dace, who retired from the post of Senior Mistress in 1938 and who recently celebrated her 90th Birthday, has made a satisfactory recovery from her recent fall in which she sustained a fractured hip.....There are over 90 students in the sixth form this year.....'.

The Finchley Press reported :-

WE WELCOME.....

'The new headmaster of Finchley County School, Mr C David Joscelyne, whose appointment was announced last week, is a physicist, an ex-Sandhurst instructor, and has a fine tenor voice. At 40 he is a man of varied interests and wide experience in the education field. He comes to Finchley after four years as Deputy Head of Gillingham Technical High School in Kent.

From Christ's College, Cambridge, he went into the Army and became an instructor at Sandhurst. His first teaching post was at King's College School, Wimbledon, followed by appointments at Erith Grammar School, Kent, and Epsom College.

Married with four children - two boys and two girls - Mr Joscelyne is keen on music and drama, and is a leading member of the Kentish Players. He recently took the tenor lead in their production of "Kismet".

He is secretary of Gillingham Council of Churches and former secretary of Gillingham Congregational Church. He will be moving to the district when he takes up his duties at Finchley County in September.....'.

And how does this effect the future of the OFA ? This is a question now under active consideration by your Committee. Let us hope that, just as there is to be a threefold increase in the number of pupils passing through the school, so the active membership of the Association will be tripled.....'.

Scimitar Spring 1968 had many Staff changes to report :-

- *Mr B G Gillespie, five years Science Teacher left and entered Adult Education;*
- *Mr I Maltman, five years Commercial Art teacher moved to a Secondary School in Hendon;*
- *Mr G A Mason, one year teacher of Scripture, English and Physical Education took a research post at Oregon University;*
- *Mr Gilbert after a few years left to teach Science in a comprehensive school in Hackney;*
- *Mr Nichols was welcomed as the new General Science Master;*
- *Mr R Turner was the new PE teacher;*
- *Mr R Sutton was the new Chemistry Master;*
- *Mrs J Taylor came to teach Art....'.*

That Spring, Scimitar also reported the loss of two much-loved teachers, one by Obituary, and one by Retirement :-

Mr F A WILLIAMS

Obituary

'It is with sadness that we have to record the sudden death of Mr F A Williams, who had been in charge of Art for more than 20 years. On the death of Mr Eldridge a few years ago, he also took charge of woodwork.

Mr Williams was very versatile in his talents, and in addition to his ability as an artist he was able to construct an elegant metal vase and other things of beauty. He taught his pupils the principle of giving help to others not so fortunate as themselves (as shown by the rows of Barnardo's boxes on his shelves) and he spared no energies in his efforts to encourage those pupils who wanted his help, and they enjoyed his humour, which he showed so often when he was teaching them.....'.

The Finchley Press reported :-

"JONAH" RETIRES AFTER 38 YEARS AT FINCHLEY COUNTY SCHOOL "

'Mr T S Jones, known affectionately as "Jonah" to the thousands of pupils he has taught, is retiring next week after 38 years at Finchley County School. A scholarly figure with a charming manner and a sharp sense of humour, Mr Jones has been Deputy Head of Finchley County for the past 21 years and is the only member of staff ever to have served under all four headmasters of the school. A devoted teacher, a respected adviser and a highly capable organiser, he has made an enormous contribution to the successful life of the district's smallest grammar school.

He came to Finchley County School in 1929, after five years teaching in his home town of Grays in Essex. He trained at the Borough Road College and took an external London University Master of Arts degree. English has always been his principal subject, although he has taught mathematics and music.

A great music lover, he always enjoyed organising choral and orchestral concerts at the school in the days when Finchley County boasted an accomplished orchestra. His fine rendering each year at the Christmas carol concert of "Comfort Ye My People" from Handell's "Messiah" became a popular tradition.

In his younger days, he used to edit the school magazine, run the literary and debating society and take an active part in every school function.

He has compiled several English text books and for many years was an examiner in English for Northern Universities Examination Board, including 10 years as chief examiner. He and his wife, who have lived in Friern Barnet for 30 years, will shortly be moving to Hadley Highstone.

Their new home overlooks Old Fold Manor golf course, which will no doubt tempt Mr Jones to spend some of his new leisure time improving his handicap'.



And Scimitar reported :-

Mr T S JONES

Retirement

'The final assembly at FCS at Christmas was a special occasion this year. Not only was it the beginning of the Christmas festivities, but it marked the retirement of Mr T S Jones after 38 years in the service of the School.

Seated on the platform in front of the assembled School and guests, including Mr Povah and Miss Sturgeon, were Mr Joscelyne; Miss Peeling; Mr Dodd, the Education Officer; Councillor Snelling, Chairman of the Board of Governors; and myself, Sylvia Vickers representing the Old Fincunians Association.

Mr Joscelyne opened the proceedings with a few well chosen words and then asked Miss Peeling to speak on behalf of the Staff. Miss Peeling spoke affectionately of Mr Jones and his work. The Staff had presented him with a handsome gold watch

which he was proudly wearing. I then presented him with five classical LP records of his own choice as a mark of the appreciation and good wishes of his ex-pupils.

The Head Girl and Boy, Eve Sternfield and Malcolm Hodges, then came onto the platform and after touchingly expressing their thanks to Mr Jones, presented him with a stereo record player on behalf of the school.

Mr Jones then rose to speak, after thanking everyone most heartily, recalled many memories he had collected over his 38 years at the School. Although always a good speaker, Mr Jones excelled himself in his final address to the school. Ironically, when Mr Jones called upon the School to chant the traditional end of term "Dismiss" he was, of course, not only charging the School to dismiss itself, but him also.

So ended the formal part of the proceedings but for the guests and staff there followed a delightful cocktail party in the Staff Common Room'.

In June 1968, Scimitar was saying goodbye to another old friend :-

'...At the end of the Easter term the School said goodbye to Miss Peeling, after over 30 years of devoted service to FCS. Old Scholars far and wide, who remember Miss Peeling for her charm and her devotion to our School, wish her every happiness in her retirement and, indeed, in her new venture, her married life....'.



Elaine Peeling

and congratulating another :-



'...To those of you who have known Mr McNelly over the years, it will come as no surprise to learn of his appointment as Deputy Head following Mr Jones' retirement....

Mr J H Wilson takes Miss Peeling's place as Head of the History Department.....

Mr A D Heggie presides over the Woodwork Shop - both Mr Wilson and Mr Heggie sport the most becoming beards. We wonder how long before all mistresses are in mini-skirts'.

Finchley Press 14 June 1968 :-



'Mr George Gaskin, who came to the Borough in 1913, is one of several local residents who appear in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. He has been awarded the Imperial Service Order in recognition of 46 years' service with the laboratory of the Government chemist, now part of the Ministry of Technology.

He was educated at Finchley County School and joined the department as a laboratory assistant in 1922. Today he is the senior principal.

He has taken a great interest in the Old Fincunians Club for whom he played cricket. He was the first secretary of the club.....'.





Seen here at his desk In January 1968, Mr Joscelyne began to explain how he saw the future of the School :-

'...I have, of course, arrived at a time of great change, and none so great as that envisaged by the proposed Plan for secondary re-organisation.

For the benefit of those of you who no longer live in the area, may I outline the main points of the plan so far as FCS is concerned? I must emphasise that it has not yet been passed by either the Borough or the Secretary of State.

Some time in the future (10 - 15 years) we would have moved from our present building to new premises built alongside Hillside School (in Summers Lane, three quarters of a mile away) where there is ample room for expansion. The two buildings would then form a single comprehensive school for the full age range, and would presumably have about 1,000 pupils (mixed).

Until such a building could be provided we and Hillside would be linked - though still retaining our separate identities - being respectively the Senior and Junior halves of a comprehensive unit, in which the children would spend their first three years at Hillside before coming to us for the remainder of their school career.

This would increase our "population" to about 450, but in view of the ultimate plans I feel it is questionable whether any large building project would be undertaken, and it therefore seems more likely that some of our boys and girls would return to Hillside for some of their classes, most probably the practical subjects.

Nobody will pretend that such arrangements as I have outlined are ideal in all respects, but my view is that of all the ways in which the comprehensive principle can be implemented, this one is the version most likely to enable the school to continue to play the part which by nature of its tradition - and its Staff - it is best fitted to do'.

J L Steed (Head Boy) wrote in Scimitar 61, Summer 1969 edition :-

'....This year has seen the introduction of Liberal Studies. This represents a real effort to make the Sixth Form studies more general. It was felt that some

instruction in the appreciation of the arts, or the holding of discussion groups might prove useful. It was generally found that the more practical courses were the most popular.

A further development is the abolition of the streaming of pupils into 'A' and 'B' Forms at the end of the first year. This was probably done to avoid splitting up the forms and also the possible danger of giving some children inferiority complexes. A minor development is the introduction of subject rooms, so that as room D has always been the Geography Room for as far back as I can remember, now Room 'H' has become the German Room and room 'G' the French Room.....

The system of late detention has altered slightly. Whereas under the old system if you were late you were put into late detention whether you had an excuse or not, under the present system the pupils are given a chance to present their excuse for being late and if this sounds feasible, they are excused.....

Senior girls are allowed much more freedom in the way they dress...Finchley County is still the friendly school it has always been. If anything, the degree of understanding between pupils and staff has increased and also there is more freedom of movement for pupils from form room to form room.....'.

Jack Rawlings wrote in Scimitar No 62, Christmas 1969 edition :-

'...Slowly, and sadly for most of us, the future of FCS is being deliberated on and decided by a group of individuals who, in the main, are little interested in our great, little school with all its inherent qualities and unsurpassed traditions that have been created throughout the past sixty years by enthusiastic, loyal Staff and Scholars too. Our great heritage, with an Old Scholars Association second to none, is being gradually eliminated from its position of greatness in Finchley, in order that the furtherance of educational advancement, in the shape of comprehensive-type education, may be achieved.

If these measures were purposeful and raised existing standards and over-all achievements of FCS, then indeed they would be meritorious, but to merge three schools into one, to be operative as one school from September 1971, using just one sixth of the money necessary for completion to initiate the project, with no sign of the five sixths in the pipe-line and the chance that completion would not be effected until 1980, if ever, does seem somewhat premature.....'.

The Finchley Press reported in 1969 :-

'The controversy over Barnet Council's Plan 'C' proposals to conform to the Government's dictum that all schools become comprehensive, goes on unabated. And the longer it goes on, the more heat it generates. Inevitably, as in all prolonged debate, deep waters breed red herrings. The chief objection is that it makes pseudo comprehensive schools out of existing efficient ones entirely unsuited to such a change. Many of the objectors have nothing against the principle of the comprehensive school, as such, or had not until they were faced with the prospect of the hybrid. Objection to the particular induces distaste for the general.

Another distortion that stems from the controversy is that nothing but a comprehensive system can do away with the justly disliked 11-plus examination. The 11-plus has long been abolished by many authorities who still retain grammar schools simply by selecting in more realistic and more humane ways and by later transfers if necessary.

Such confusions emphasise the need to get the future of our schools settled one way or another and lift uncertainty from the troubled minds of parents and, more importantly, the children themselves'.

On 30 November 1969 the Headmaster, Mr Joscelyne wrote in Scimitar No 62. This is the time when the individual identity of FCS was given up for lost :-

'...I can record that at their last meeting our Governors - who are also the Governors of Hillside and Manorside Schools - decided to recommend that if we must go comprehensive, the most suitable method is for the three schools to be united under a single Head, rather than for FCS to retain its separate identity and cater for all the 14-18 years old pupils (with the Juniors at Hillside). This has yet to be ratified by the Education Committee, but if it is so ratified, the intention is for the overall Head to be appointed in May 1970 - four terms before the union is to take place - in order to allow plenty of time for planning.

There is no intention to discontinue using our present building - indeed this cannot occur until the Department of Education and Science sees fit to permit the Borough to spend some £250,000 on erecting a replacement alongside the present Hillside building.

So far as the Old Fincunians Association is concerned, this will come as a great relief, for it means that despite all the upheaval that "comprehensivisation" must bring, whether it be "two tier" or "all through", the Association will still have a home, a place where meetings can be held, and where Old Scholars will always feel welcome'.

But life went on in the Old School as Brian Andrews (1965/72) reminded us that in 1970, FCS started its first girls' football team :-

'The Finchley County Girls' Football Team, alias the County Crumpets, played only one match during the season, but what a match, refereed quite expertly by Mr Williams. The Crumpets claim a moral victory, although narrowly defeated 6 - 5 by Barclays Bank Ladies Hockey Team. The team would like to thank their lone supporter, Mr B J Andrews....'.

In Scimitar No 63, Spring edition 1970, Jack Rawlings was still hitting out against the proposed school mergers in the Finchley Press :-

'In a fighting speech to Old Fincunians at their annual dinner in the Salisbury, Barnet, on Saturday, Mr Jack Rawlings, chairman of the Old Fincunians Association, spoke out strongly against the merger next year under Plan 'C' of Finchley County, Hillside and Manorside Schools.....He was vehemently opposed to the amalgamation and

the loss of Finchley County's fine traditions and unique spirit which have been built up over more than 60 years. "It hurts to feel there are people around who want to take all this away from us", he said. He warned the disappearance of Finchley County School as a separate school would mean also the end of the Old Fincunians Association.

"People in the borough do not understand this. We cannot get this across to them. No one can appreciate how proud we are of our school, We think the school is great. If you take it away from us we shall never be the same", he said.

A more optimistic view was taken by the chief guest, Alderman Leslie Snelling, chairman of the school governors. He conceded that the linked schools system was far from ideal and that £55,000 for providing new buildings at Hillside ready for the changeover was "a flea bite". But despite the disadvantages, he was confident that with goodwill and cooperation, the reorganisation challenge would be met successfully. He did not accept that education standards would deteriorate under Plan 'C'. On the contrary, he expected them to rise. The reorganisation offered a challenge to the OFA but if they showed goodwill and friendship to the pupils from Hillside and Manorside, there is no reason why the Old Fincunians Association should not continue to flourish.....'.

Nineteen Conservative Councillors "rebelled" against Barnet Councils plans to introduce comprehensive education in September 1971.

Councillor Alan Fletcher, leader of the Conservatives on the Council was dismayed by the rebellion but stated publicly :-

"At some stage the minority should accept that their democratic right to oppose has been exhausted. It is their democratic duty to help the majority make sure that the plan is a real success for the children, parents and teachers of Barnet".

The rebels publicly expressed opposition to the plans and will petition for the plan to be withdrawn when there is a change of government. A "grumble sheet" was distributed inviting the public to voice complaints which led to the parents banding together in the form of the Barnet Parents' Council calling upon the Borough to revoke the plan and introduce a new educationally sound scheme backed up by adequate Government grants. They also required the standard of comprehensive school buildings, staff and equipment to be comparable with the best comprehensive schools in the Country before the existing system is abandoned. The Barnet Parents' Council consisted of parents from all types of schools, did not fight for any particular school, were not connected with any existing parents-teachers organisations, and were not affiliated to any political party.

Scimitar No 63, in the Spring edition of 1970 :-

'We understand the authorities have decided that the Governors should decide the name for the new "All Through" school. The Governors act as such for the three schools, Hillside, Manorside and Finchley County. Suggested names were asked

for from the Staffs of the three schools - not the pupils, not their parents, nor the Old Scholars. As a result three names are under consideration :-

FINCHLEY MANOR SCHOOL
FINCHLEY GLEBE SCHOOL
FINCHLEY HILLSIDE SCHOOL

At the Old Fincunians Annual Dinner Dance it was endeavoured to ascertain the feelings of Old Scholars concerning the selection. The result was :-

FINCHLEY MANOR SCHOOL	32 votes
FINCHLEY GLEBE SCHOOL	2 votes
FINCHLEY HILLSIDE SCHOOL	4 votes

Those Old Fincunians in attendance also suggested some alternative names :-

FINCHLEY COUNTY SCHOOL	30 votes
FINCHLEY COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL	1 vote
FINCHLEY HIGH SCHOOL	1 vote
THE FINCHLEY SCHOOL	1 vote
HILLSIDE COUNTY SCHOOL	2 votes

Some might say that the result was fairly predictable!'

In 1970 the writing was on the wall, as they say, and in retrospect it seems quite clear that by then Finchley County Grammar School was on its way out. The then editor of the Fincunian magazine, Hanka Kopytynska, wrote :-

'...Concerning comprehensive education; most people at school think the idea a basically good one, because everyone would have equal opportunities and "snobbery", which I must admit I have very rarely noticed, would die out.

The arguments against the system were largely based on personal feelings concerning the amalgamation (and now apparently the complete close-down) of FCS, which plan I think everyone at school opposes. There was also a fear of a certain loss of individuality unavoidable in schools of such large numbers, which seems to reflect the generally friendly atmosphere of FCS

Surprisingly enough no one specifically mentions purpose-built schools which would solve the problem of converting old buildings, amalgamations, time-wasting journeys between schools, and time-table difficulties. Similarly no one suggests that perhaps, while purpose-built schools are under construction, the two existing types of schools remain under the present system but with far greater co-operation between the two, especially in the field of pupil transfers, being a much more integral part of educational policy.....'.

Scimitar 1971, Spring edition, Mr C D Joscelyne wrote :-

'....As most of you are aware the Local Authority issued on 12 May 1970 a notice stating its intention to "cease to maintain" Finchley County and Manorside Schools, and to "admit children of all levels of ability, and to make a significant enlargement of the premises" at Hillside School. It added that "pending completion of the enlargement of Hillside School the buildings of Finchley County will continue to be used". Similar notices have been issued in respect of other schools in the Borough, and those who wished to register their objections were invited to write to the Department of Education and Science. These objections were considered by the Secretary of State and, although in the case of one pair of schools the objections were sustained, in our case the Notice was approved.

This means that, so far as the DES is concerned, the plan to amalgamate Finchley County with Hillside and Manorside Schools may go ahead next September as planned. Of course, the Authority could still take the line that, as the Minister's decision means that Plan C cannot now be implemented in toto, all the proposed linkages must be delayed. However, the Governors have approved a name for the new school - Finchley Manorhill School - and in any case it is difficult to see how, at this stage, a selection procedure could be evolved for the children due to transfer in September.

Planning has therefore proceeded on the assumption that Finchley Manorhill School will come into existence next September, with some 400 1st and 2nd Year children endeavouring to raise the roof of our building - under the watchful eye of your Chairman, that's Jack Rawlings, in his new role as Deputy Head of the Lower School - while their elder brothers and sisters in Forms 3 and 6 will be quartered in Summers Lane.

This could, of course, lead to the demise of the Old Fincunians Association but I was heartened by the strong expression of opinion at the last AGM that the Association should seek to become associated with the new school and thus preserve continuity with the past. I see no reason why this should not work. So long as the new school continues to use our present building - and it looks as if this may be for some considerable time - the Association will still have a "home" on which to centre its memories and activities.....'

Scimitar 64, Spring 1971 reported under the worrying headline, :-

"THE SCHOOL SONG WAS SUNG FOR THE LAST OFFICIAL OCCASION"

'130 members and guests sat down at our Annual Dinner Dance on Saturday 6 March 1971 at the Salisbury, Barnet, with our President, Mr Joscelyne and his lady. Considering the postal strike and that some applications had to be turned down, this was the best response ever, and Jack Rawlings said how much he appreciated the support.

The dinner was well enjoyed, Hors d'Oeuvre, Cream of Chicken Soup, Roast Best End of Lamb, Redcurrant Jelly, Roast Potatoes, Garden Peas, Coupe Singapore, Cheese and Biscuits and Coffee. A good meal - quick service - and then on the way

to the official business, lead by our Toastmaster for the day, Bob Payne. We really must get him a red jacket!

Cyril Rawlings proposed the Toast of the Association and Affiliated Clubs. Cyril dwelt on the past and, as he explained later, to let everyone present realise what made the Association. He reminded us of those characters Charlie Carr, Potts Murphy, Quilley (There's a fellow fooling!) from the Isle of Man. He gave us the essence of distinguished Heads down to the Head elect of the new school, Mr Stokes, who was at the top table with his charming wife. The elders amongst us lapped it up, for the younger their time was to come.

Brother Jack Rawlings (sister Rawlings was also sat at the top table) replied and gave us a resume of what the Clubs had achieved - it certainly pleased us all to know that Jack will be Deputy Head of the Lower School in the Old School building. Naturally there was a good deal of fun over the appointment following Jack's persistent attacks on the establishment.

Then, much to his surprise, Fred Holbrook was presented with a barometer by the Chairman, and Fred's wife, Barbara, was presented with a silver chain. This was a token of appreciation for continuing the "lifeline" of the Association, the Scimitar, for so long, and often in difficult circumstances.....

A typical Povah response to Jack's toast Our Ladies and Guests, was forthcoming - apt, up-to-date, punchy and witty - referring to the "Jackdaw" - he really must explain this to us some time, and to the occasion when Bill Segal on the football field asked the referee for his name. The Toast to the School was followed by a response from Mr Joscelyne, our President. It was thoughtful of him to thank Bob Payne for his work throughout the evening - he drew attention to our future and gave us some heart in tackling what may be a difficult period for us. During all this Mr Stokes, Head elect, kept on borrowing my biro, making notes on anything within sight, so that it was no surprise when Bob Payne announced that Mr Stokes wished to talk to us - which he did.

A Welsh rugby man, weight 11 stones, rugged and tough, with something to say and saying it well. He assured us of a place in the system with punch and wit. We liked him and his wife - we look forward to many functions together.

First verse School Song - sung with gusto - clear the floor and on with the dance... and we danced good and hard until Auld Lang Syne at one o'clock....'.

Jack Rawlings, writing in Scimitar 65, Summer edition 1971 :-

'...The sun is about to set on FCS. By the end of this month our Swan Song will have been sung - "All hail to learning's blest abode", will have been chanted by Scholars for the last time, although many of us, I feel certain will ne'er forget those memorable words and that stirring music created by Leonard Wallis and John Davie.....As you well know, I find it difficult to say "Goodbye" to the past, but then I have been accused of not being a "Progressive". Nevertheless, I will do my best to set the lever to "Change", to steer the Old Fincunian's Committee's thoughts towards the new direction....'.

Fred Holbrook wrote :- 'By the time you receive this magazine we shall be looking backwards to FCS, but from this time the Old Fincunians will be looking forward..... Whatever personal views we each have, and there must be many, we are committed to a change; we are determined to meet the wishes and needs of the Old Scholars of Finchley Manorhill School, and those of Finchley County School to the best of the Committee's ability.....

The badge of Finchley Manorhill School is coloured red, the inner border is a wide band of black, and the letters "MFS" are in black. For the traditionalists there is something missing - "Tache sans Tache", for instance, with the wotsit over the first "a" - difficult to do with a typewriter, an English model. And bang go the three good old Scimitars from which the name of the magazine was coined. What about the OF's badge then - is this to change? And can we go on calling this magazine "Scimitar"?....In fact there must be a lot of questions that you must be asking and wanting answers :-

What will happen to the House Boards presented by Bob Payne? We assume that these will be taken down and that the House structure will disappear.

- What will happen to the Library? At the time of going to press, this will remain as it is.
- What will happen to the School Song? Mr John Davie, who wrote the music, was heard to say, "Why? It will disappear, of course".
- What will happen to the War Memorial? This is to remain untouched.

Local Old Scholars, some of whom are parents of scholars, will have to read the bitter thrust and counter-thrust that Mrs Margaret Thatcher's veto has caused. Woodhouse Grammar School will not be merged with Friern Barnet County School, but will remain a Grammar School.....'.

Mr W P Stokes, the Head of the new school, Finchley Manorhill School, wrote in the same Scimitar :-

"....In September, Finchley Manorhill comes into existence as a school community and it is my hope that September will also see the beginning of a long and happy association between the school and the Old Fincunians Association. I know that the pupils of the new school will be very pleased to become eligible for membership of the Association when they leave....'.

Scimitar 66, Christmas edition 1971, Jack Rawlings wrote this obituary :-

'...It is with considerable degree of sadness that I inform you of the passing of Miss Laura Dace in early October, on her 93rd birthday. She maintained her interest in the Association right to the end of her wonderful life and, as a member, was in communication with us and many OF's of varying vintage. She cherished her memories of FCS. We are truly grateful for all that she contributed - a great lady, loved by many and respected by all who knew her.....'.

Helen (Bunty) Neary (nee Wilson 1920/24) wrote in the same edition :-

'Those of you who were lucky enough to come under the influence of Laura Dace will be sorry to hear of her death, but glad to recall such happy memories of her. Those of you too young to have known her, please read on to see why we loved her.

Whilst I was at school I stood somewhat in awe of her and was several times meted out just punishment for mischievous misbehaviour. She dignified her position as headmistress - and had a good sense of humour, but the qualities which I did not discern at school, and have since appreciated, were her very real interest in her old scholars and their families, her marvellous memory for names, her continued activity of mind and body in the face of adversity - a broken hip and increasing blindness.

At her funeral the vicar spoke of vital elements in life - love and labour, which were beautifully balanced in her life. Afterwards five old girls who were there talked of her, and four of us (Agnes and Ruby Harding, and Kathleen Blench) were able to have tea together and recall teachers, scholars and old times....'

Mr TS Jones (Jonah) wrote in the same edition :-

'When Miss Dace retired in 1937, I was still only in my early thirties. When she died on her 93rd birthday last month, I myself had been in retirement for almost four years. She had lived a happy and contented life, a life of great value. It did not take long to discover that Miss Dace was respected, admired, and even loved by the pupils of FCS. Nor were the reasons difficult to find.

A scholar and a lady, she was the leader of that devoted team which made FCS such a grand school. I was astonished, even in 1929, to see how many OF's corresponded with, and visited her. She inspired loyalty, and remembered all her loyal friends of the school to the end. And they remembered her. Whenever I saw Miss Dace during the last few years, names of old scholars would be mentioned - OF's from whom she had just received a letter, or who had recently telephoned or visited her. I understood why: she was always intensely interested in people, and in the world around her, even at that great age.

Some time ago, I heard a middle-aged lady defending modern youth and present day schools. She said that it was only in recent years that young people, particularly in groups through their schools, were helping the old and the sick. This, she said, was never done in schools in her day. I was very happy to remember Miss Dace's "Cripples Parlour" in the 1920's and 1930's. Yes, through Miss Dace, FCS helped the old, the sick, the crippled and the lonely, forty and fifty years ago. Old Fincunians, I know, are proud of Miss Dace for this, and for many other reasons.

Of course, "Dacey", (or "Daisy", however you like to spell or pronounce the name) was a firm disciplinarian. But FCS learned a great deal from her; kindness, loyalty, good manners, dignity.

I remember her as a hostess, welcoming my wife and me to our first school socials and dances together.

I remember her courage when at the age of nearly ninety, she tackled the task of learning to walk again, after breaking her thigh.

I remember her, with the aid of a walking stick, doing her own shopping early this year at the age of ninety two.....'.

John M Salmond, Physics teacher, had retired but he kept in regular touch with the Association. He wrote in Scimitar 66, Christmas edition 1971, just after his retirement :-

'Now that I have retired after 23 years I find some of the great pleasures of having time to do those things that have attracted me always. But things unplanned often turn out to be the most delightful, and one of these occurred when six members of last year's VIth form came to see me. We spent a happy afternoon in tea and talk.

A pleasant side of teaching is the encounter with people that it brings. My last one with an old pupil happened in the centre of London one hot sunny afternoon. A very large lorry, in attempting to pass along a narrow street, had dislodged a heavy lantern which hung precariously from a height. Quite a crowd had gathered and several policemen were discussing the best approach to solve the problem, when one of them, showing the most initiative, eventually lowered the lantern to safety. I could not restrain myself from going up to the policeman to congratulate him. His name was Eddie Bassant. We exchanged a few words until I felt I was about to be charged with "interfering with a police officer in the course of his duty", so that I left Eddie to his work.

I do not intend to live without doing some work near (although I find time remarkably short already) and have been accepted as a member of "The New Bridge" and I am a member of the National Association for the Care and Rehabilitation of Offenders, too. In this organisation one meets and talks with people in prisons in an effort to help with their rehabilitation.....

My address in retirement is as always, Totteridge Lane but I shall spend some time in the country, at Burford, Oxon.....'.

Colin Brown wrote in Scimitar 66, Christmas edition 1971 :-

REQUIEM FOR A SCHOOL

*Think not of change with thoughts of dread;
Dire conflict with the past,
A better 'morrow may, perhaps
Prove more inclined to last.*

*The "Winds" that blow on "FCS",
Have blown on others, too -
Who must accept that life goes on
And learning springs anew.*

*The opportunity of youth
Must never be denied;
"All hail to learning's blest abode"
Must be the call that's cried.*

*Greetings, then, to "Manorhill" -
Farewell to "FCS",
We'll miss her halls of learning
"Tache sans Tache" - God Bless.*

Scimitar 66, Christmas edition 1971, supplied some facts and figures about the population of the new school, Finchley Manorhill :- :-

		<i>Girls</i>	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Staff</i>
1970 - 1971	<i>FCS</i>	220	170	26
	<i>Hillside</i>	242	311	33
	<i>Manorside</i>	309		
	Totals	771	481	59
1971 - 1972	<i>Manorhill Lower School (years 1 & 2)</i>	264	183	
	<i>Manorhill Middle School (years 3 & 4)</i>	287	189	77 for all 3
	<i>Manorhill Upper School (years 5,6 & 7)</i>	177	144	
	Totals	728	516	77

The following ex-members of staff of FCS have Senior appointments at the new school :-

<i>Mr Joscelyne</i>	<i>Deputy Head</i>
<i>Mr McNelly</i>	<i>Director of Studies</i>
<i>Mrs Barker</i>	<i>Head of the Middle School</i>
<i>Mr Rawlings</i>	<i>Deputy Head of the Lower School</i>
<i>Mr Heggie</i>	<i>Deputy Head of the Upper School</i>
<i>Mrs Gabe</i>	<i>Head of the Language Department</i>
<i>Mr Wilson</i>	<i>Head of the Humanities Department</i>
<i>Mr Mannall</i>	<i>Head of the Mathematics Department</i>

Mrs Barker, Mr Rawlings and Mr Heggie are responsible for the pastoral oversight.

The Lower School will be housed in the former FCS building which has nineteen teaching rooms and is now used for the first two years.....Coaches take pupils from the Lower School to Hilton Avenue for games and transfer 30 pupils from the Lower School to the Main Building and 20 in the reverse direction every week. The Main Building is the former Hillside School building in Summers Lane. 21 members of staff have time-tables which confine them to one building or another for the whole of the week; a mini-bus is available for the journeys made by the remainder.

Throughout the school the social pattern is based on Tutor-groups; each consists of pupils drawn from the whole ability range.

Years 1,2 and 3 have the subjects divided into groups, from the first of which - English, French, Geography, History, Maths and Science - covering 23 periods, the slowest 20 pupils from each year are extracted for special tuition.

In years 2 and 3 the Heads of these six departments are able to allocate pupils to Sets working at different speeds, but for the remaining subjects, and for all the subjects in year 1, the pupils are taught in their Tutor Groups, i.e., mixed ability. Years 4 and 5 have two courses available - the Main Course, leading to Examinations (either CSE or GCE) in 7 or 8 subjects (chosen from 19) and the Enterprise Course in which the emphasis is primarily on the development of character, but in which examinations can be taken in appropriate subjects.

Years 6 and 7, the pupils take either a one-year Secretarial Course, a one year course to "O" Level (for those with CSE or wishing to improve their GCE grades) or a two-years course to "A" Level. In addition to their academic subjects, all pupils have to take a course of Minority Studies, similar to that at FCS in recent years.

Such complexity can only be maintained by regular consultation, to which end all staff are involved in a programme of meetings of different groups after school each week'. **Fred Holbrook, the Editor of Scimitar at the time commented :-** 'We must thank Mr Joscelyne for the exposition of what goes on in the new school. It sounds shockingly complicated to me. I assume teachers of the future are to be trained in juggling; how far ahead are we to look for the computerised school programme?'

Mr W P Stokes, the Headmaster of the new Finchley Manorhill School, wrote to Scimitar at the end of 1971 :-

'I would first like to thank the Association for electing me as their President and say that I will do all in my power to prove a worthy successor to the excellent Headmaster/Presidents the Association has had in the past.....

I feel that Finchley Manorhill has got off to a very good start due largely to two factors Firstly, the hard work, enthusiasm and good humour of the Staff. They are an excellent body of professionals and I am very proud to work with them. Secondly, the majority of pupils from the three contributory schools have shown a most encouraging adaptability and flexibility - consequently there has been no friction at all.

I have been extremely gratified by the way in which the new 6th Form has been developed, for there are over 130 members of the 6th Form and they have become a cohesive unit, endeavouring to found a new tradition based upon all that was best in the previous schools.

I know that many pupils in the upper school are delighted that they will be able to join the Association when they leave school, and I am certain, judging by the comradeship and spirit of the Association in the past, that these new entrants will be made to feel very welcome....'.

Mr C D Joscelyne, the Headmaster, wrote the following words in 1971 just two weeks before Finchley County Grammar School ceased to exist :-

'With removal vans now appearing at school almost every day we are all reminded that the "marriage" of FCS with Hillside and Manorside is now no more than a few weeks away. What thoughts are uppermost in our minds?

If we are honest most of us will have to admit that we are not a little apprehensive of the future, just as were mariners of old, whose barques traversed uncharted seas and whose ears were assailed by strange tales brought back by previous travellers. We have heard, of course, that comprehensive schools have certain advantages, but from our insular viewpoint we may perhaps feel that all the advantages are likely to accrue to somebody else (overlooking the fact that others probably feel equally apprehensive about us!). It is hardly surprising therefore that we retire behind our smoke-screens of cliches and ask to be left in peace; that we prefer the security of stagnation to the risk of change..... Understandable though this desire to withdraw from actualities may be, it is nevertheless pointless, for of one thing we may be sure; those who spend their time looking for difficulties with an "I-told-you-so" air, or who attempt to blame the system for what are in truth their own shortcomings, will be amongst those who obtain the least benefit from their remaining years at school.

But to put things more positively, what shall be our dowry for the forthcoming union? What specific contribution can FCS make to the new enterprise?

It would be tempting to repeat the well-worn phrases about this being a happy school, and one which makes a point of looking after individuals; that we have a competent and enthusiastic staff, and loyal backing from parents and Governors; but while these statements are true we must not think that we have a monopoly of these things.

No. There is, I feel, only one feature of which we alone of the three schools can boast - our Old Scholars Association - and perhaps this can be our peculiar contribution to the common stock. And not an inappropriate one, for it may serve to remind us, the present members of the school, that we are on the stage for only one scene of a play of which several Acts have already been performed, and of which there are many still to come'.

In 1971, as the Old School left its home and changed into a comprehensive school, one of our most beloved teachers, T S Jones or 'Jonah' as many like to call him, was asked to set down his reminiscences covering his time at the

school from 1929 until his leaving in 1967 as Deputy Head. This is what he wrote :-

'....My first memory of FCS is not, paradoxically, of the school, but of its first Headmaster, Mr Carr. There he was, with his bristling ginger moustache and bushy ginger eyebrows, waiting for me at the school gate on my arrival for an interview.

I can see him again now, walking to school each morning with Chunky, his dog by his side. In one hand he carries a bag, a kind of Doctor's bag, in which lies the joint for the staff dinner - "nice piece of beef today, Mr Carr", (only a handful of pupils stayed to school dinner in those days, and dinner was served in the Cookery centre), and there he is again, eyes agleam, potting the red on the snooker table in the Master's staff room (now the Deputy Head's room), or doling out the coloured snooker balls to the Masters for a game of farthing pool. He kept a bag of farthings especially for this.

But to reminiscences of FCS itself; my first term was wonderful, enlivened as it was by a general inspection, which meant an invasion of the school by a swarm of Inspectors; by the "Staff and Prefects v. the rest of the school" football match; and by the Staff play, "The Babes in the Wood", at the Christmas Parties. This Staff play was an annual event, "Dick Whittington" being another with most pleasant memories.

Then there was the "Eisteddfod" - what else can you expect from a name like "Jones". This Music and Drama Festival included instrumental solos and duets. Form choirs and plays, vocal solos, House choirs and House plays - even Elocution. There were outside Adjudicators, and OF and well-known BBC Broadcaster, Stephen Jack, judging the plays for the annual concerts and for the school plays. It was all great fun.

From time to time, the school has urgently needed money. One great effort resulted in the erection of the pavilion during the late 1920's, when the school raised £600. Towards the end of the 1930's, it was decided to give each House a free hand in raising money. West held a bazaar; well do I remember this, as one room in the house to which my wife and I had just moved was used to store hundreds of items; and, although I was South House Master, we spent many pleasant evenings pricing all the goods. The Hall was a magnificent sight on the day of the Bazaar; West had arranged a bazaar to out-bazaar all other bazaars. South arranged a Concert, which was scheduled to be given on three nights. The Hall was packed on all occasions, and an extra performance had to be given.

In 1938, came memories of war. As nothing had been done for the safety of the pupils, the Staff decided that slit-trenches should be dug across the back field. So with "Lusty Limb" the boys of the upper school got to work with pick and shovel. Munich probably saved the back field from complete destruction.

So much happened during the war years that I shall merely mention the shattering of the school buildings in two air-raids; the long hours, sometimes whole days, spent in the half-light of the shelters; our moving to Henrietta Barnett School in Hampstead, and our gradual return; the Staff shuttling from one school to the other for lessons. The School Certificate Examinations during the Buzz-Bomb period were extraordinary; they took place in the old Hut (now the XYZ Block); watchers were

stationed on the roof of the shelters, and if a Buzz-Bomb was spotted or heard, a message would be rushed to the invigilator, and the Examinees dived under their desks until the danger had passed.

The Harvest Camp in 1943 - I could fill the "Fincunian" with reminiscences of this famous adventure. An account of the camp can no doubt be found in the appropriate school magazine, but it will be from the pupils' point of view. The boys arrived on Sunday evening to find a hot meal waiting for them, but they knew nothing of the forty-eight hours which four members of the Staff spent before their arrival at Yattendon; the setting up of the field kitchen which was found lying in hundreds of parts in the school playground; the hours spent driving round to all the Farmers in the area to find Harvest work for the boys. But by Monday morning every boy had a job.

I must not forget Firewatching, in which sixth formers took part, and were paid for their services. Very little of the school was blacked out, except the Staff Rooms and Headmaster's Room. What a godsend the snooker table was in those tedious times! But we learnt to know the school buildings; the number of stairs we had to climb in the dark; the number of paces it took to walk along the corridors.

The war ended and normal school life was resumed, if dinners brought in containers and served in the Hall can be called normal.

The Great Fire of FCS - not Hitler's work this time - was a cause of great amusement after the event. The old Hut, then used as a classroom, was heated by a coke boiler fire. One day the boiler end of the Hut was ablaze, but the promptness of certain members of Staff saved the room from destruction.

The invasion of the Hut by thousands of maggots bred in the carcasses of birds in the roof was another great joke afterwards, although it was most nauseating at the time.....'.

The mention of The Hut gives me the opportunity to report what "Long Sufferer" of Form 4L had to say about it in 1935 :-

'The Hut stove must have been designed for annoyance, not practicability. There seems to be no happy medium with regard to it. We are either icily freezing or being roasted by a roaring, raging furnace. When it is going full steam the delicious drowsiness it creates in those who sit in the front invariably provokes unpleasant consequences; and while it is in the process of burning up (when it lives up to its name, "Tortoise, Slow but Sure"), or while it is dying down, or still more, when it is out - which amounts to most of the time - the entire form has to sit and shiver. I can't help wondering whether something might be done about it, if the entire Borough Council were to remain in the hut for a whole week in mid-winter.....?'

Fred Holbrook (1927/33) was the Editor of Scimitar for many years and it is to Fred that we owe an everlasting debt of gratitude. In 1971, the year that Finchley County Grammar School lost its name and moved into the new world of comprehensive education, in his capacity as Editor he shared memories of his school days in the very last edition of the school magazine, The Fincunian :-

'What can I say worthy enough to be effective to the present generation - have we lost touch so much?

Shall I talk about the "characters" who taught us so much more than what was on the time-table? Billy Howland in the Art room, endlessly allowing boys to climb through the window on to the roof to fetch a tennis ball; Dolly Parker, the very large and awesome Geography mistress; "Q" (Quilliam) from the Isle of Man - "There's a fellow fuling"; "Potts" Murphy, "Let the punishment fit the crime"; Charles Vivian, that irascible, lovable character, who taught maths, football and cricket, the latter two off the record; the first eleven practiced weekly with him on the back field at football but every natural left-footer had to play right-footed and vice versa; at cricket each week on the top field we bowled at a stump with a chalk mark set by Viv as a good length ball. A man steeped in tragedy who gave us all he had and a lot more. Daisy, Senior Mistress, Miss Dace to you, who we feared mightily, until the day when Doug Foord, Moggy Morgenstern, Jack Rawlings, Taffy Lloyd, and myself stopped late after school to have a dance band rehearsal; we thought everyone had gone home and as usual we had the habit of getting the ropes down and equipment out, seldom used during the day; two of us were hanging from the ropes high up, when Daisy walked by on her way home - a sweet smile "Goodnight Boys" and we heard no more. Charlie Carr and Chunky his dog, who spent the day at school in and out of the Head's study. There were others - all made their mark on our future.

WE WERE LUCKY as most had been established for some time, and knew and loved the School; from them we learnt what the spirit of the School meant; their enthusiasm inside and outside the school was catching; we played hard and worked hard for our House and School.

But then these are only names - it was such a long time ago. Perhaps the funny side of life might be worthy of comparison. The joyful day in the sixth form when we discovered that one pump from the bellows in the small room adjoining the chemy lab (just after "Q" had lit all the bunsen burners) closed down the bunsen burners in our room and put all the flames out in the main lab - watching poor old "Q" having to go round and light them all up again. We didn't overdo it though and we never got caught.

The face of the boy or girl who had to collect the Black Book from "Q" during class time - an ordeal in itself. Crawling over the rafters above the classrooms and dropping small pellets of paper down the grids, air-vents, on to the class below. Leaving the Kipps apparatus on so that the smell of bad eggs descended into the classrooms below.

This was the era that saved for and built the present sports pavilion. We built it brick by brick from a drawing by Mr Howland in the Hall. Every class did its bit by organising events, Hornby Railway exhibitions, etc. The era that won the athletics trophy, the smallest school in Middlesex against the whole might of Middlesex; coming back in an open double-deck bus, with our Sports master, Mr Comes, holding aloft the Cup - just like Arsenal returning in triumph to Highbury. Great Days.

The era when each form devised, wrote and performed a play at the annual dances; when the staff performed a marvellous pantomime - "Babes in the Wood".

This was the only era I know which included boxing - an annual event which most boys hated but took part for the "honour" of the House. Charles Carr was an enthusiast, as was his son Douglas, who helped in our training on "House Nights". I can still remember two occasions when it was too painful to open my mouth more than a fraction for two or three days after bouts.

This was the time of the great fete in the school and on the back field; which included an exhibition of dancing by the first eleven dressed in football shirts and grass skirts.

At a time when work did not interfere with play, and play did not interfere with work - we took it all in our stride. A time when the whole school turned out on Sports Day with their parents; when we trained evenings for every sporting event - with the encouragement of staff at its highest peak.

Great Days when the whole school, pupils, staff and head were just one family, with a tremendous feeling for the school and those in it.....'.

But it is time we heard from the girls. Margaret Brown, Maureen Olive, Helen Sawtell, and Michell Van Put, all, I believe, of 1965/72, wrote:-

'The twelve years following the Golden Jubilee (1954) did not compare with those preceding it, as the latter had seen much activity and structural changes within the school. However, a few minor changes occurred.

The Amenities Fund was introduced as the pupils no longer paid fees, the sixth form began their annual carol singing, the top corridor was used as an art gallery, and new benches replaced the old in the Chemistry Laboratory. The final addition was made to the building in 1966. The new excellently equipped Common Room ended staff segregation and the former staff rooms are now the Studies of the Deputy Heads. The building is completed by the girl's toilets, which are accessible from the cloakroom, thus eliminating the freezing conditions that the girls had to face crossing the playground.

Although the school had been opened for sixty-three years, it had only seen three headmasters. However in 1967, Mr Povah retired, making the way for the fourth, Mr C D Joscelyne. Numerous minor alterations to school routine were made by him. Among these was the introduction of Jewish and General Assemblies, some of the latter taken by individual Forms, caps and berets became no longer compulsory, and the girls' uniform became more fashionable.

Now, in 1971, the Great History of Finchley County School is complete; however, we must not look upon this as the end, but look forward to a new History which is about to begin'.

Martin Appleby (early seventies) picks up the story :-

'...The main memories that I have collected during my first few years under Mr Povah are : the reluctance of the first and second formers who had to fetch and carry for the

prefects at residence in Room Z, the discrimination against "fags" (first formers not cigarettes). There were, of course, threats to one's life in the form of Miss Claire, who terrorised the playground every day in her maroon mini (car not skirt!); Mr Gault, who nearly succeeded in flattening the bicycle sheds by ramming them with his old grey Rover (car not dog!).

The changes brought about by M Joscelyne were gratefully received, i.e., the wearing of caps and berets no longer compulsory; girls uniform smartened up and the regulations governing it relaxed more.

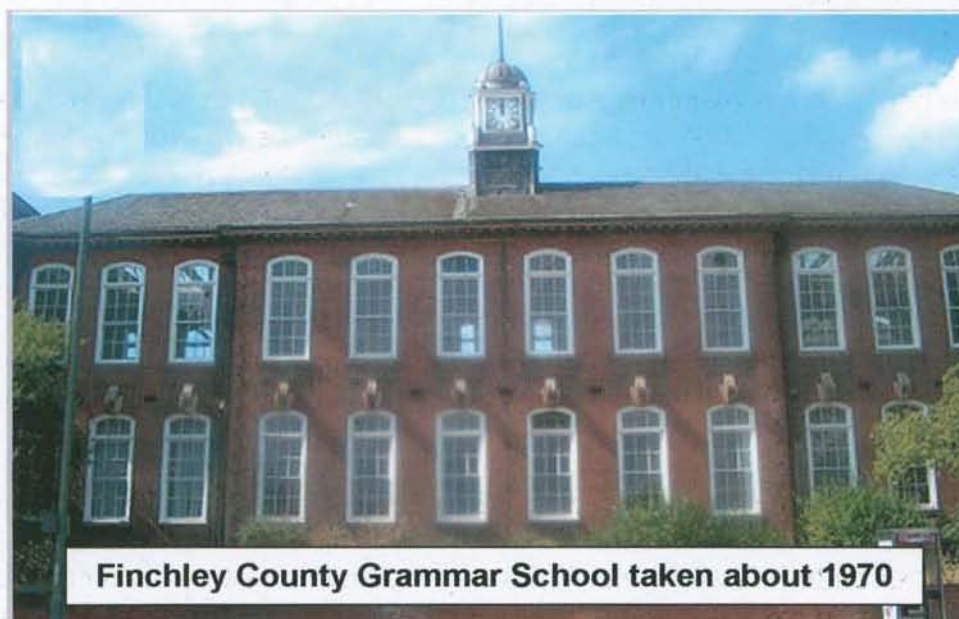
Throughout the school, sport has always been a sore point with many. In fact, on my very first day at the school, Mr Totten (HMS? SOS) brought me to realisation that the school's definition of sport was - football. This has slowly changed and a greater variety of games is now available.

The authority of the prefects has changed from one of command to a joke. In fact even the teachers' authority seems non-existent in some cases.

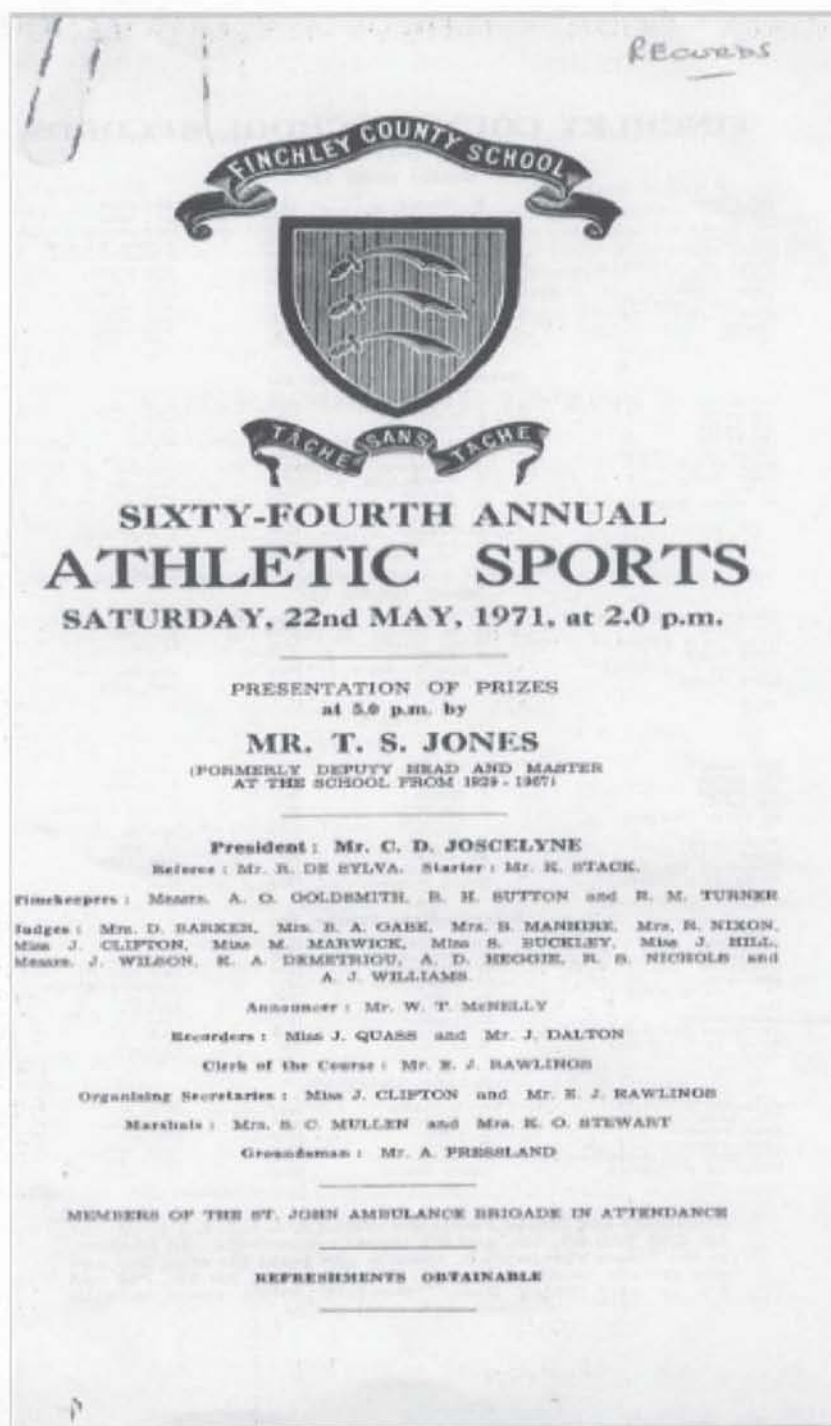
My old memories seem so far removed from the problems which face the school now. Smoking in the toilets used to be for the fifth formers who dared; now its for anyone tall enough to reach the coin slot of a cigarette machine.

Whereas seven years ago anti-smoking films were the order of the day, now there is a call for advice and guidance on drugs. First formers get the "biological facts of life" films, when in fact many are ready for education concerning the "emotional facts of life".

Now let's face it, school has changed, but it has always had a close attachment to tradition. Now the school's biggest change is coming into operation, don't shed tears thinking of the death of FCS; think of it as the birth of a new establishment....'



Finchley County Grammar School taken about 1970



1971, being the last year that the Old School bore the name of Finchley County School, saw the very last Annual Sports Day. That meant that the records for the athletic events were finally and irrevocably set at the end of that event.

Those records are now reproduced.

FINCHLEY COUNTY SCHOOL ATHLETIC RECORDS

BOYS

Senior (over 15)

100 yards	R M Russell	1954	10.2 secs
220 yards	R M Russell	1953	23.1 secs
440 yards	D Dickens	1961	54.8 secs
880 yards	D Sommerville	1968	2 mins 6.7 secs
One Mile	G O'Brien	1967	4 mins 34.2secs
Relay (4 x 110)	North House	1965	48.3 secs
High Jump	W Eynon	1958	5 ft 7 ins
Long Jump	J Chen	1967	21 ft 7.5 ins
110 yds Hurdles	I Mohammed	1964	14.9 secs
Shot (12 lb)	R Beale	1963	39 ft 2ins
Discuss	J Childs	1957	112 ft 6 ins
Javelin	J Young	1961	160 ft 0 ins

Intermediate (under 15)

100 yards	C Norris	1950	11 secs
220 yards	I Smith	1961	24.5 secs
440 yards	I Smith	1961	58.2 secs
880 yards	D Sommerville	1964	2 mins 18.1secs
Relay (4 x 110)	South House	1950	52.5 secs
High Jump	A Goldberg	1959	5 ft 0 ins
Long Jump	J Wodzianski	1970	19 ft 2 ins
Discus	W Eynon	1956	96 ft 1 in
75 yds Hurdles	P Martin	1938)	
	B Plummer	1949)	
	R M Russell	1950)	11.4 secs
	R Burrin	1951)	
	D Meacock	1952)	

Junior (under 13)

100 yards	C Norris	1948	12.2 secs
220 yards	R de Sylva	1962	27.8 secs
Relay (4 x 110)	South House	1934	60 secs
High Jump	R de Sylva	1962)	
	T Gardner	1968)	4 ft 5 ins
Long Jump	May	1970	15 ft 1.75 ins

GIRLS

Senior (over 15)

100 yards	S Merrick	1962	12.1 secs
220 yards	B Simpson	1947	27.4 secs
440 yards	J Reeve	1966	75 secs
880 yards	A Burden	1967	3 mins 7.4 secs
80 yds Hurdles	J Thomas	1956)	
	C Sivers	1962)	12.5 Secs
High Jump	C Stevens	1959	4 ft 8 ins
Long Jump	M Olive	1970	15 ft 5.5ins
Rounders Ball	A Thomas	1954	196 ft 4 ins
Relay (4 x 110)	South House	1962	56.8 secs

Intermediate (under 15)

100 yards	H Darke	1966	12.5 secs
150 yards	P Williams	1948	18.9 secs
440 yards	H Darke	1966	69.7 secs
880 yards	H Darke	1966	2 mins 55.5 secs
75 yds Hurdles	C Lobb	1957	12.5 secs
High Jump	C Stevens	1958	4 ft 7 ins
Long Jump	H Caithness	1967	16 ft 2 ins
Rounders Ball	J Arnold	1956	180 ft 8 ins
Relay (4 x 110)	West House	1960	58.4 secs

Junior (under 13)

80 yards	P Williams	1947	10 secs
110 yards	H Darke	1965	14.2 secs
High Jump	J Cook	1960	4 ft 3 ins
Long Jump	P Carter	1958	13 ft 8.5 ins
Rounders Ball	C Tartakover	1966	162 ft 6 ins
Relay (4 x 110)	South House	1953	61.6 secs



Teachers who were appointed to the staff of Finchley County School during the period under review, 1961 - 1971, were :-

Mr D J Steel	1961 - 1963	
Rev E S Gabe	1961	Music
Miss P W Keane	1962	Mathematics
Miss White	1962	
Mr B G Gillespie	1963 - 1967	
Mr I F Maltman	1963 - 1967	Art
Mr H M S Totten	1963 - 1966	
Mr D J Webb	1962 - 1965	
Mrs D Barker	1964	Geography
Mr A J Cooper	1964	
Mr L Gilbert	1964 - 1967	
Mrs J E Hounsell	1964	Cookery
Mrs H F Tattam	1965	
Miss I C Quass	1965	French
Mrs B M Wise	1964	Needlework
Mrs P A Lambert (nee Millen)	1965	
Mr P M Breakell	1966	Mathematics
Mr G A Mason	1966 - 1967	English/Scripture/PE
Mr S R Nichols	1967	
Mr R H Sutton	1967	
Mrs J E Taylor	1967	Art
Mrs M M Young	1967	Art
Mr R M Turner	1967	PE and Games
Miss A J Jones	1967 - 1967	
Mr C D Joscelyne	1967 - 1971	Headmaster



Doris Bennett	J Dalton	Jan Clifton	J F Sheppard	K O Stewart	K A Demetriou	M J Warwick	R H Sutton	N E Hammond	Rev E S Gabe	B A Gabe	W T McNelly	C D Joscelyne	D Barker
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J Prescott



B A Hardina



E J Rawlings	J C Quass	A D Heggie	S C Mullen	J H Wilson	J L Pateman	G W Mannall	S M Buckley	J A Williams	B Manhire	L W Norman	E A Staines
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THE NEW AGE - 1971 TO 2004



Teaching Staff 1971

Back Row: Nicholls; Wilson; Prescott; Dalton; Sutton; Rawlings; Mannel, Williams, Demetriou; McNelly.

Front Row: Nixon; Quass; Barker; Buckley; Stewart; Joscelyne; Marwick; Mullen; Manhire; Clifton; Hammond; Bennet (School Secretary).

Members of staff missing: Mr and Mrs Gabe; Mr Heggie; Miss Pateman; Mr Sheppard.

This picture is the last official photograph taken of the staff of Finchley County School.

It was during 1971 that the amalgamation with Manorside and Hillside brought about the name change to Finchley Manorhill.

The Fincunian in 1971, Volume XIII, edition number 5, still carried the title "The Fincunian - the magazine of Finchley County Grammar School but the editorial reflected the momentous changes which were occurring that year :-

'The purpose of this last Fincunian is to fill the gap between the established school and Finchley Manorhill. The illustration on the cover represents the metamorphosis from a school of much tradition to a relatively new educational concept.....'.

This is what that particular issue of the magazine looked like :-



The cover of the final edition of the Finchley County School Magazine.



Jack Rawlings wrote this obituary in Scimitar No 68, November 1972 edition :-

'....During the summer months we sustained yet another sad loss. Miss Temkin, a member of FCS Staff for many years, who recently retired through ill health, died on 18 July 1972. Miss Temkin, who taught Geography, was well known to post-war pupils, and gave much help in her earlier years, not only in the academic sense, but in the field of social activity, too.....'.

Fred Holbrook wrote in the same edition :-

'Her many friends will be sad to hear that Miss Temkin passed away on 18 July 1972, after a long illness which forced her to give up teaching and go into premature retirement in 1970. She came to FCS in 1944 to take charge of Geography, and throughout the 26 years she was with us, many people had to thank in large part her untiring work and long experience for the success in that subject....'.



This photograph was taken on the tour of Switzerland in 1947. Miss Temkin is fourth from the left in the front row.

'...Miss Temkin played a leading part in many School activities. As soon as foreign travel was permitted after the War, she travelled with school parties abroad in charge of the girls, and many OF's will remember her on holiday in Switzerland, Austria and Italy, ministering to aches, pains and minor ailments, and bringing up the rear on mountain walks. Though no mountaineer, her ascent of the Harder, overlooking Interlaken, was in its time, famous. Many others will have memories of Geography walks and field-trips, with a welcome pause in local hostelry for refreshment.



"The Happiest Days of Your Life" School play 1951.

For many years she acted as Wardrobe Mistress to the annual school play, meeting from her vast store of costumes and disguises the most varied demands in the way of uniforms and dress of all periods.

London born and bred, she had the plain common sense and ready humour of the Londoner. With both feet firmly on the ground, she had little time for airy-fairy ideas or false dignity, and brought to her work an unassuming and practical energy that was an example to us all. And yet most of her old pupils will remember her first and foremost for her warmth of heart, her ready sympathy, her friendliness and interest in others.....'

John Davie wrote this obituary in Scimitar No 68, November 1972 edition :-

'I was very sorry to hear of the death of my friend and former colleague, Arthur Sturdy, who died on 6 November 1972 at his home in Steyning, Sussex, at the age of 88. I well remember when he came to Finchley County School - I think about 1910 - and was appointed Woodwork Master, for part-time only at first, and at Christ's College for the other half of the week. He excelled at his job and he liked it, which accounted for his signal success as a teacher in that subject.

He was a pleasant and valued member of the Master's Common Room, always ready for a laugh, and he entered wholeheartedly into all the activities that constituted the corporate life of the School. Incidentally, in those days he was second only to the Headmaster, Mr Carr, in proficiency in the art of billiards, which we Masters indulged in - I hasten to add, after school hours!

Arthur can surely claim to hold the record as Master-cum-Parent of FCS as he had

no less than seven children, all whom passed through the school and subsequently did well for themselves. I am sure his children would gladly acknowledge the debt they owe him for the sacrifices he made on their behalf. His departure means that I alone am left of the Staff of the first decade of the existence of the FCS'.

And in the same edition TS Jones (Jonah) wrote :-

'Arthur Sturdy, the unchangeable: that is how I remember him. He seemed, in his eighties, to be just the same as he had been in his forties and fifties – less mobile, it is true, but with the same twinkle in his eyes, the same sense of humour and fun, the same active mind, and the same sound, cheerful attitude to life.

Naturally, the workshop was Mr Sturdy's domain. But his skill and craftsmanship were to be found everywhere in the School: at the snooker table in the Staff Room, he was in his element; the stage extension was his, and same construction was erected year after year by his successors; he and Mr Comes "invented" the high jump apparatus, the idea of which was later to be universally adopted; the reading-desk on the platform not only perpetuates his memory, but was also his "thank-you" gift to "learning's blest abode" for the education of his sons and daughters.

As for Mr Sturdy's sense of humour and fun, perhaps there are still some OF's who remember his antics, and his inventiveness with stage props, in the Staff pantomimes presented at Christmas parties and socials, especially his performance as one of the babes in "The Babes in the Wood", as far back as 1929. He and Mr Wills were the babes - and what a delightful incongruous pair they made.

Mr Sturdy was one of that group of men and women who, in the early years of this century, stamped their personalities on the School, and made FCS such a happy place.....'.

Hilda G Sturgeon wrote in the same edition:-

'It was my privilege to represent his FCS colleagues at the Brighton Crematorium. Agnes and Ruby Harding were also present on behalf of the Old Scholars. The short, simple service was conducted by his grandson, the Reverend John Sturdy, son of Vivian. His devoted wife, Leah, was supported by his very united family - sons, daughters and grandchildren'.

Stafford Cooper wrote in Scimitar No 94, Spring 1982 edition :-

'Arthur Sturdy was the handicrafts master at FCS and Christ's College immediately after the First World War, and carved himself a special niche in the history of the County School.

A great disciplinarian, he was, apart from Headmaster, the only master who whacked (with a "T" Square!), and he was generally regarded with awe as someone not to be trifled with.

He was, however, a very good teacher, and many of his pupils have had occasion to

remember his kindness - and the useful, worldly advice he gave - rare in those days....He examined Jennings planing, or what was left of it, felt his head - Mr Sturdy



was a phrenologist, a studier of external formation of cranium as an index to development. He sighed and said, "Jennings, you've got a destructive streak in you, lad....look what you've done to that piece of wood....".

He also achieved some kind of record by sending all seven of his children to FCS. His eldest son, Vivian, arrived at school in 1917, and his youngest daughter, Hilda, left in 1938.

Vivian was an accomplished Post Office engineer who worked development and installation of the first automatic exchange. Now dead.

The second son, Laurie, qualified as a barrister, had himself disbarred to become a solicitor in the local government field. His career took him from the Guildhall in the City of London, to Hampstead, to Marylebone as Deputy Town Clerk, and finally to Westminster City Council as assistant solicitor. He retired to Hythe, in Kent, where he still lives, and for which ancient Cinque Port he was Mayor for four successive terms.

The third son, Alec, married Joan Preston, who was also at FCS, and they still live in Totteridge. Both are keen gardeners and take an active part in the life of the local community. Alec joined a firm of wax refiners - one of the last in the country - and until his recent retirement, was Managing Director. He is also a leading member of the Worshipful Company of Wax Chandlers.

Kenneth, the youngest son, after experience in estate agency, became a chartered surveyor and joined Camden Council as a town planner. Now retired he lives at Holland-on-Sea in Essex.

Then came the girls. Helen, the eldest, was good enough to marry me, I am happy to say, and we have lived in the area all our lives - first at Church End and since at Barnet. Muriel was destined for a career in dressmaking and design, but decided on marriage, instead. After leaving Finchley she lived in Dorset, and then for some years, in the west of Ireland, where she built a guest house in a glorious setting at Inch Strand in Co Kerry. Now retired, she lives near Callington in Cornwall.

Hilda, the youngest, worked in a bank before marrying. She lived some years at Whetstone before moving to Folkestone where she still lives.

Mr Sturdy stayed in Finchley for some time after he retired, later moving to Heme Bay. After the death of his first wife he married again and lived in Steyning. He died aged 88 in 1972'.

Scimitar 69, Spring 1973 edition reported :-

'Mr David Joscelyne is to leave Finchley Manorhill School.

So read the large headlines in the Press Group for 9 March 1973....Our past President's new appointment takes him to a suburb of Norwich where he will be Headmaster of Hellsdon School, secondary modern for 750 pupils, likely to become comprehensive later on.....'.

Scimitar 70, Summer 1973 edition reports :-

'It was rather nice to see David Joscelyne and his wife at the New Leavers Dinner Dance. Let us just look back a little.

David was the fourth and the last Headmaster of Finchley County School. He took over from Mr Povah, who was Head for 21 years, in 1967, at the time when the big row over comprehensive education was beginning to brew. Throughout his four years at Finchley County, David was continually confronted with the problems and controversy of Plan "C" and the future of Finchley County in particular. He had the unenviable job of running a doomed grammar school while at the same time paving the way for Finchley County's merger with Hillside and Manorside Schools.

When the schools amalgamated two years ago in 1971 to form Finchley Manorhill, he was appointed Deputy Head.

While he was in Finchley, David sat on Barnet Borough Education Committee, served as a Secretary of Friern Barnet and New Southgate Christian Council, and lent his fine tenor voice to the Finchley and Friern Barnet Operatic and Dramatic Society.....'.

Scimitar 71, Christmas 1973 edition :-

"Happy Memories for John Davie" was the headline in a recent copy of the Finchley Press - and for us too, who remember him and his influence on us - for John Davie celebrated his 90th Birthday recently. We know that Mr Davie retired in 1949 after being Head of Woodhouse School from 1933, but most of us, I think, have ignored this period and think of him as our own, and why not, when he joined the Staff of Finchley High School, later to become Finchley County School, in 1907.

He and his wife, Dorothy, formerly Matron at Finchley Memorial Hospital, live in Long Lane, Church End, Finchley. It may interest you to know that our old friend acted as Examiner in Oral French for the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board, and London University, until he was 80. It goes without saying that you must know he composed the music for the School Song.....'.

Jack Rawlings wrote in Scimitar 72, Spring 1974 edition :- *'....Mr McNelly has decided to retire from school teaching this coming July. "Mac" has been associated with the School in this capacity since 1933, and has made many friends in this sphere. It will be a sad day for the school when "Mac" leaves, he will be missed tremendously.....'.*

In the same edition Fred Holbrook wrote :-

'He's done it at last! He can't back out now because it is publicised in the local Press. Who? None other than Mac the Nelly who is retiring in July 1974. Many of us know Mac so well for his understanding and encouragement to all who needed it, so we will leave our praise until after the event.....'

KA Povah wrote in Scimitar 73, September 1974 :-

'Most people paying tribute to Mr McNelly's wonderful career were formerly his pupils; you may be interested in a few matters which would probably be known only to his colleagues.

I made his acquaintance on the last day of Summer Term in 1946 - the day of Mr Chalk's retirement. I had been appointed only a few days previously, but my own school had broken up early and I was able to enjoy the atmosphere and warmth of Mr Chalk's farewell ceremony. At dinner, in "The Cookery", I sat next to Mr McNelly. With the aid of a fork used as a stylus on the table-cloth, yes, table-cloth, he briefly indicated to me the characteristics of Finchley, N2; N3; and N12. This showed prima facie that he was a lucid explainer (how many confirmations of this I was to have later). Next he told me some of the questions I had been asked at my interview, which showed he had friends in high places.

Many of you have benefited from Mac's gifts - energy, insight, versatility, generosity. His colleagues naturally appreciate these also, and can further admire his mastery of "technique" which I want to illustrate. Mac once had a good French class which he raced along to such effect that it was conceivable that most of the class could reach OL standard by the end of Form 4. So four or five pupils were transferred to the parallel group due to take the exam at the normal time, and the others duly took OL twelve months early. All passed. So far, splendid. But the intimate assessment of pupils potential is shown by the fact the last passing pupil got by with the minimum pass mark; there's judgement for you.

The story is not concluded. During Form V this group continued to do French and gained such fluency that early in the Summer Term they conducted, in French, a mock election. Three weeks before the OL exams they forsook their non-exam French for Private Study, but I am sure that many in that group still relish the experience that Mac gave them.

You may be interested to know that Mac's evening classes in French have been known to finish with more students than they started with, what could be christened "negative wastage".

Actually, Mac is a big subject. What about all those school plays? - The Connoisseurs Club? - the crocodile leaving the Angel tube station for Sadler's Wells Theatre? - the long series of holidays abroad? Piano recitals on Monday morning after prayers? Sale of school uniforms? Current affairs in the Upper Sixth? Once, his secret agent at Covent Garden reported last minute availability of 80 gallery places that same evening for the Ballet. Between 10am and 10.40am enough pupils

had said "Yes", and the performance was much enjoyed, all the more so for being orderly in its arrangements.

Mac is an excellent teacher and organiser. His qualities were quickly appreciated at the General Inspection when his Shorthand teaching was admired so much that he was practically assured of an appointment as one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools if he would apply. But Mac didn't apply, though, no doubt, the salary would have been much higher. Mac knew that he would not have relished the nature of the job, for in all the twenty-one years when we were colleagues I never heard him say an unkind word about anyone.....'



Mr McNelly Lady Mayoress (Mrs Bill Hart) John Davie Dorothy Davie

Finchley Press reported :-

'More than 100 past pupils, friends and colleagues attended a retirement party for Mr William Mc Nelly at Finchley Manorhill School yesterday.

"Mac" aged 67, joined the school 41 years ago, teaching French, Economics and Music. And the man he replaced, Mr John Davie, was there to see him off.

Although Mac's main subject was French, he ran an after-school club for musical appreciation and was involved in all the school's dramatic productions.

When Mr McNelly first joined the school it was known as Finchley County and before the merger a few years ago, he was Deputy Head.

The MC at the farewell evening was Mr Jack Rawlings.

The Mayor of Barnet, Alderman Bill Hart, said that every child Mac had taught had benefitted from his dedication to teaching. A cheque was presented and Mac told the assembly he would use the money to buy a stereo tape recorder.....'.

Just as a by-the way, whenever K A Povah wrote to Scimitar, and his list of correspondence is prodigious, he always drew by hand a picture of a Scimitar on the envelope.

Letter from John Murphy (1918-1923), son of "Pots" Murphy, in Scimitar 77, Spring 1976 edition :-

'....Our father was certainly renowned for "making the punishment fit the crime". He had a reputation for dealing effectively with boys prone to pea-shooting - who were given 6d to purchase half-a-pint of dried peas from the Grocers on the corner of Squires Lane, run by the father of Len and Violet Mills, which, after school hours, the offender was required to cast over the Physics Lab floor, and then pick up every pea.....'.

Dick Hudson (1925-1931) wrote in Scimitar 78, Summer edition 1976 :-

'Bill Howland.....I started at FCS in September 1925 and in my first year's report I was 35th out of 35 in Art with a "weak at drawing" comment from WHH. The second and subsequent terms I was monitor to the Art class, remained continuously bottom but always had "is a good monitor" on my reports. I continued this work for two or three years after I left school in 1931 and enjoyed a wonderful friendship with him. I remember he gave me 12 out of 20 for something I'd done - then added "plus five for a pleasant surprise".

One day he'd lost his penknife and asked me to search for it in the Art Room. After quite a time I brushed against his leg - and there it was - in his trouser's turn-up. I was told at school that he'd taken a course in Pelmanism to improve his memory but he had to give it up because he mislaid the lectures.

But what a man he was - if anyone could teach Art and enthusiasm for Art to any child, he could, and the enthusiasm, at least, has rubbed off on me. I still can't draw anything but plans.....'.

KA Povah wrote of Jack Rawlings' retirement in Scimitar 81, Summer 1977:-

'Jack Rawlings is a big subject. A full account of his influence at FCS would need a booklet rather than a page. Those who know him perhaps do not need to read about him, and those who do not know him may find the story incredible.

We owe it to Mr Jones that he was appointed in 1947. A text-book example of extra vision, in his earlier days he saw most things in clear-cut distinctions of black and white, which gave him great confidence in his effort to promote the interests of FCS

and OFA. His physique ensured ready response from the small fry in the school, and while keeping clear from the brink of bullying, there is no doubt that his use of the "you and you and you" technique was most economical and effective.

This was accepted because Jack's devotion to fitness, sport and the welfare of his pupils was so transparently clear. A great believer in competition as a challenge to self-improvement, Jack had a valuable streak of imagination which restrained him when he was faced with real incapacity in athletics matters, and I have great admiration for the way in which over the course of 5 or 7 years he would build up the confidence of a boy who could never achieve a medal, but who might perhaps reach one or two standard points.

Jack and Miss Hill had terrific disadvantages in inadequate room and equipment. Once or twice we nearly got a separate gymnasium, which would have been lovely for them and also for the 10 classes surrounding the Hall. But this huge handicap had an accompanying feature - PE had to be taught in half-classes, rarely more than 20 - and so both PE teachers had an inimitable knowledge of their pupils and their progress. Surely this contributed to the unimaginable success and continuity of the OF Cricket and Football Clubs which Jack, nobly aided by Cyril, recreated from practically scratch. And look at them now!

For years Jack voluntarily reduced the number of his free lessons in order to maintain his 5 lessons per week of Maths. When "New Maths" came along he applied himself cooperatively to the syllabus.

Perhaps the pattern element which appeals in Maths also appears in Organising. Miss Hill will agree that Jack was the leader in working out arrangements for our Sports Days; my only contribution was to support the idea of a Saturday occasion. The effectiveness, the steady sequences of interest, the climax of house relays with half the school taking part, and not least the clearing up afterwards was superbly organised - a very educational experience which was well appreciated by parents and Old Fincunians. The Swimming Galas were equally well run, and likewise a social opportunity.



It was at Christmas time that Jack's voice came into its own - how many Senior Parties did he MC and how often did King Wenceslas find himself reincarnated on our diminutive platform? It is perhaps regrettable that the red-coated Toast masters of London proved to be so closed a shop.

The history of FCS from 1947 was one long rearguard action against comprehensivisation. At the crisis time of the "Save Our School" effort I was

embarrassed by confidential information gained through membership of the Education Committee as Teacher's Representative. It was Jack, with Doris Bennett's help, who persuaded an OF parent to write to me - giving the signal for the petition which eventually gained almost 10,000 signatures - a heart-warming experience for us all.

I am sure that all the multitude of Jack's friends will congratulate him on a life-time of unique service to the School, in its original and in its composite forms, and wish him and Nina much satisfaction in relaxed years to come. Being a grand-parent has its rewards, too.....

My own picture of you will be stalking diagonally across the boys' playground one evening, about 5 pm, quite alone, but seen by me from my observant window, alternatively bouncing a football on the ground, and heading it for the next bump - I call that pure enjoyment, and your own pleasure has passed on to scores of other folk, and all will agree.....'.



The Finchley Press reported on 24 June 1977 :-

'...For all of us all things must come to an end and 62 years old Jack Rawlings is to retire at the end of term. And what better retirement present could he have had than the Queen's Jubilee Medal which he received last Wednesday. Here Jack is showing his medal to Bill Guy, another Old Fincunian....'.

Scimitar 81, Summer 1977 :-

'There are many hundreds of Old Scholars who remember Doris Bennett, the School Secretary who occupied the room next to that of the Headmaster. When Doris came back to FCS to work as Secretary in 1949 we were delighted. I say "came back" as she was a Scholar at the School when both Fred Holbrook and Jack Rawlings were scholars too. Mr Jones, or "Jonah", was largely instrumental in engineering Doris's return to the fold. She had been school secretary at East Barnet Grammar since 1937.



Doris retired on Friday 29 April 1977, having decided that 40 years service was elegant sufficiency. We had a goodbye presentation in the School Library at FCS - a portable typewriter was the gift appropriately. On the Friday, the final day, a small special group of former FCS Staff said their farewells in the Cookery Centre - a place that holds memories for many of us, Doris included. We gave her a small cheque, Old Scholars included, and I understand she has bought herself an electric hot-plate trolley - a warm reminder of all those happy days, I'm sure....

It will be strange, sad too, without Doris. She remembered most who passed through FCS. It was Doris who was dissatisfied with her working conditions and persuaded the Authority to build her an office, in which she retained Charlie Carr's special writing desk which she used till the day she retired. It was Doris, who in the earlier years as Secretary at FCS who called out, "Come in", as the knock came on the door. "Hello, fancy seeing you. Do come and sit down", and then put a "Do Not Disturb" notice on the door. It was the same Doris in later years who said, "Come in", as the knock came on the door. "Hello, what do you want. I can't stop now. I must get this done".



K A Povah wrote in Scimitar 82, September 1977 :-

'The little office next to the Head's Room at FCS where Doris Bennett worked was not actually her idea - it was all ready for her in September 1949 when she arrived. The Head's Room itself was an afterthought to the original school plan, and was, of course, a promontory into the Boys' Playground (quite a vantage point, in fact!) The space between the promontory and Room "J" was used as a dump for Mr Foy's coal. Mrs Povah, waiting one evening for a phone call to finish, was looking through the then corridor window onto a coal heap and had a flash of inspiration that the area would provide a small office. The contract was for £300.

Every single item had technical trouble - the wall did not line up with the bricks in the old school, and the bricklayer put a tarpaulin to screen his demolition of his own work; the concrete floor beams, specially made, were not delivered for seven months; the plaster fell off; the small panel of "encausted brisks" was not in the builder's order and the Council refused to pay (the brown faced surfaced bricks are made of white china clay, and they were delivered in a crate, each packed separately in straw. They cost 5/- each). In the end all was corrected, and it was a great improvement on all counts - in fact very hard to imagine how the school could function without this nerve centre'.

Fred Holbrook added :-

'Before the coal dump this space was the historic site of a wooden double-doored hut. The hut was a garage for the only motor vehicle in the school - a very large upright motor bike and side-car, the property of "Golly" Howard - a deputy head, I think. The space around the garage was about as wide as one small boy - as a first-former I well remember being chased by second-formers, and shoved, with other first-formers, into that space. The object of the exercise was to see how many you could shove in before the bell went. I remember one occasion being nearly asphyxiated by the pressure of bodies (I was naturally even smaller then) and I still think my life was saved by another first-former called Clarke, who helped me rise higher in order to breathe'.

Scimitar 84, Summer 1978 edition, reported :-



Obituary

John Davie

'We remember John Davie who died in hospital aged 94.

The funeral service was held on 12 April 1978 at Golders Green, and taken by the Minister of the Finchley Methodist Church, the Rev A Skelding, where he had been a member for much of his life.

He became Headmaster of Woodhouse when he left Finchley County in 1933 and retired from there in 1949.

It was a noticeable measure of regard the County folk had for John Davie that the majority of those attending the service were from the Old School. The names may bring back memories, good or bad :-

Fred Holbrook, Jack Rawlings, John Emerson, Idris Murphy, Ruth Murphy, Doris Bennett, Mr McNelly, Madge Bryson, Wilf Hewitt,Lelean, Gladys and Bill Tangye, Margaret Bartram, Helen Osborne, Norah Pratt. Apologies if some names have been left off, but the era represented was way long ago. That is said in the nicest possible way. John's son, Hugh, was present at the service and provided a small shock by the striking resemblance to his father. Hugh wore a gown and it could have been John Davie standing there.

From the Press:

'Mr Davie was born in Swansea although his parents came from the Barnstaple area in North Devon; in fact, all his life he was proud of his Devonian ancestry and could trace it back to 1559. In Swansea at the age of 12 he was determined to become a school teacher. He actually taught himself French from one of his father's books - The Popular Educator.

He became a pupil teacher and subsequently went to college in Swansea where he was captain of the rugby team; he was also victor ludorum in athletics for both years he was at college. Mr Davie then won a scholarship which enabled him to study for a year in Paris and Cannes. He joined the staff of Finchley High School, which later became Finchley County, initially as French master, although he later taught music and sixth form economics.

After retirement he acted as examiner in oral French for the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board, and London University until he was 80. Music was one of his interests and while he was at college in Wales he formed a singing group which was in great demand... He also composed the old Finchley County School Song, the greatest song ever. He once said, "Nature intended me to be a farmer but God made me a teacher".....In that case I think we can all say, "Thank God for John Davie".

Scimitar 84, Summer 1978 edition reported more retirements:-

'Many of you will remember Mrs D Barker, who succeeded Miss Sturgeon as Senior Mistress in the FCS days. She has decided to retire from teaching in July and has been commuting from Stroud in Gloucester, the place of her retirement, throughout the past year. Mr Jack Nyman, formerly a teacher at Hillside School, and now Head of the Department of Design and Technology at Finchley Manorhill School, will also retire in July 1978. Mr Ernie Staines, the School Caretaker is retiring also in July 1978. Many OF's will remember this cheerful, robust character...'

Doris Bennett wrote in Scimitar 85, Christmas 1978 :-

'About two weeks ago I received a telephone call from Mr Charles Gault who taught Latin and Religious Education at F.C.S, leaving in 1956 for an appointment at the Royal Belfast Academical Institution. We had exchanged Christmas cards regularly but I hadn't seen him in all that time – thirteen years!.....

Mr Gault was on his way to see me. He arrived, looking very little changed, and took me out to lunch.

Afterwards we spent a delightful afternoon of nostalgia, recalling happier times when the quality of life was a great deal finer than it is today....

.I thoroughly enjoyed my afternoon with this old friend....

On reflection it seemed to me that there can be very few schools where Staff have kept in touch long after they have scattered over the country, and even abroad. I am in touch with at least ten of the old FCS Staff - a great privilege. This is why I chose a typewriter as my leaving present - to speed up letter writing.



Mrs D Barker who was the Senior Mistress and taught Geography, is happily settled with her husband in Stroud, Gloucestershire, and are about nine miles from Mr and Mrs Povah's bungalow near Cirencester. They are therefore able to visit, and in these months of Mrs Povah's illness this has been much appreciated. Mrs Barker is identifying with the village life and remembering her organising ability, I can imagine this is to the villagers advantage.

Mrs J Bartlett (nee Brown) used to teach Mathematics. She lives in Dublin with her husband and three daughters. Mrs Bartlett is always busy with Brownies, Guides, and the many activities of her husband's parish. She recently did the costumes for a production of "The Wizard of Oz", which Mr Bartlett stage-managed. We remember the help Mrs Bartlett gave to Miss Temkin with the costumes for Mr McNelly's school productions.

Mr C Gault, who taught Latin, now lives in Northern Ireland and teaches in Belfast. In addition to his teaching he has charge of the school's flourishing Fencing Club. He has four children, all musical and playing their own instruments.

Mr R Goss, who taught Chemistry, is now Head of Chemistry and Careers at Cheshunt School.

Mrs E Gradwell (nee Peeling) taught History and now lives at Urmston, Manchester. Her husband has now retired and they enjoy many holidays together, both abroad and in this country. They are part of meals-on-wheels in their area, with Mr Gradwell the driver and his wife the "mate".

Mr A D Heggie, who taught Handicraft and Technical Drawing, and his wife have retired to a bungalow near Redruth, Cornwall, to be near to their daughter and two grandsons. Mr Heggie appreciates the freedom from the classroom and enjoys the magnificent views from the bungalow over green fields to the coast.

Miss Joan Hill, who taught PE and Games to the Girls, is also living in Cornwall, on the opposite coast at Fowey. She is always very busy helping her brother to restore the house they have there, and doing a lot of gardening so she still has the fresh air she always enjoyed.

Lady Jenny Lindop (nee Quass), who taught French, married Sir Norman Lindop, Director of Hatfield Polytechnic. They live in Hertfordshire and have a delightful young son.

Mr G Mannall, who taught Mathematics, gave up teaching when he left the school and went into administration. He is married now and lives in Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex.

Mr H D Samuel, who taught Mathematics, sent no news this year in his Christmas card from Orpington, just a laconic message, "Can you remember me?". As if I could ever forget such a dedicated teacher and perfect gentleman.

Miss Hilda G Sturgeon, Senior Mistress who taught Home Economics, lives happily by the sea at Worthing, Sussex. She has given up her house and now lives in an attractive flat nearer to the shops. She appreciates not having the toil of keeping a garden in order.

Mr R M Turner, who taught PE and Games to the Boys, and his wife live near Doncaster and he has recently had a promotion to Deputy Education Officer in the Home Office. He is in charge of the education of serious criminal offenders under the age of sixteen. As he says, "Different".

Dr D J Webb, who taught History, returned to his native Australia when he left the school, but he has visited England several times since. His present post is Assistant Professor in the Geography Department at Sydney University. He has recently bought a 100-acre farm outside Sydney containing 30 acres of orange groves, and will later devote himself to agriculture.

Mrs P Histed (nee Jones), who taught Biology, lives in Chislehurst, Kent, in a very attractive house with a swimming pool. Her two sons attend the same school, which offers a variety of activities. These boys are enthralled by computers and electronics, and are enthusiastic members of the school's astronomical society. Those of you who were Mrs Histed's pupils can imagine how interested she is in all these things, and how she encouraged her sons' endeavours in all aspects of education and leisure pursuits.

Mr H T Clark, who taught Mathematics, has decided to forsake the Blackboard Jungle to take an early retirement and enjoy life. He and his wife left the Brighton area and found a delightful country house in Hampshire with an acre of beautiful garden, greenhouse, fruit trees, and a heated swimming pool! Their two small sons who used to come to FCS Sports Days are now grown up - one a solicitor and one an actuary.....'.

Jack Rawlings wrote in Scimitar No 88, Christmas 1979 edition :-

'...Yet again there has been an eruption in local education policy and planning, which as I see it, in no way helps our Association, but condemns it to a slow lingering death. In a nut-shell, the present school, a combination of three schools in 1971, Finchley County, Manorside and Hillside, to form an 8 form-entry Comprehensive School, 11 - 18 years, will now become 6/7 form-entry Comprehensive School, 11 - 16 years, that is, NO SIXTH FORM. To accomplish this the Planners are closing Friern Barnet County School by 1982, this school to be assimilated into the Manorside System, and all 6th year pupils will "drift" into sixth form colleges now established on the Woodhouse School site.

It would appear that within a decade, the statisticians got their sums wrong, to such an extent that it now necessitates the closure of 2 or 3 secondary schools in the area - even though the buildings are comparatively new.

Should the plan be implemented as it is, which I understand on good authority is doubtful, our present School, Finchley Manorhill School, will exist entirely on the Summers Lane site, and our Old School, Finchley County School, will be demolished.....'.

But in the next edition of Scimitar, No 89 in the Spring of 1980, he wrote :-

'You may have read in the local press that the explosive plans which I mentioned last time were not accepted by the Education Committee - public opposition had been strong and due regard was paid to this. There will, of course, have to be an alternative plan produced, but not one that enforces school closures, transfer of sixth forms or mergers, just general lowering of numbers or intake, as I understand it.....'.

The Local Press carried the headline :-

"SCHOOL MERGER PLAN DEFEATED....the outcome of the meeting was that from September 1980 the size of the intake for all sixth-form entry schools will be reduced to 150 pupils; and schools will become more specialist in their choice of subject; and if any school becomes surplus to need it must be reported to the appropriate sub-committee.....'.

In that same edition, Jack Rawlings wrote :-

'In early January I had a long and newsy letter from Miss Joan Hill, PE Mistress in the post-war era from 1946 to 1970. She writes that she still takes a PE Journal called "Hockey Field", and this ceases publication at the end of the season having survived two World Wars. She quotes; "Miss Phyl Hunter died on 10 December 1979, in hospital, after a long and painful illness. Cremation in Bedford on 17 December. Was in her 83rd year".

For those who did not know Miss Phyl Hunter, she was PE mistress at FCS from 1920 until 1946. She will be well remembered for her physical power on the hockey field, as the wearer of the shortest gym-frocks on record, and as a great hockey coach who produced the best hockey team in the whole of North Middlesex, winning

the trophy for FCS three years in succession, making the trophy our very own, circum 1931.....To think that Girls' PE in FCS was under the successful leadership of Miss Hunter and Miss Hill for fifty years. Is this a record?.....'.

On 24 July 1980 the Hendon and Finchley Times carried a huge headline,

"Head May Quit Over Changes".

In a letter the following week the Head of Finchley Manorhill School, Mr Elliston, made his position quite clear :-

"Since many have made the wrong assumption, may I be allowed to state that it is not my intention to resign over any changes which may be proposed.....I am very strongly in favour of 11 -18 comprehensive schools and in the unlikely event of Finchley Manorhill School ever being closed, would wish to continue my career elsewhere, in another 11-18, not 11-16, school.

The remarks that I originally made in January about my future intentions were in the context of an amalgamation which would have effectively closed this school and would have left me without a position.....I am deeply committed to the concept of a school having its own sixth form.....Our sixth form continues to attract large numbers of students, not only to take Advanced Level subjects, but also for the many specialist courses which are offered and are particularly important in these days of high unemployment.....'.



Finchley County Grammar School latterly known as the Teacher's Professional Development Centre

Obituary

Cyril RAWLINGS

Fred Holbrook wrote in Scimitar 94, Spring edition 1982 :-

'A tribute to our old friend Cyril Rawlings who died the night before the Annual Dinner Dance, was given by Cliff Crane at Cyril's funeral service.....

He left School to enter the Civil Service in the Department of Overseas Trade and became involved in the British Industries Fair at Birminham each year. He played an important part in the OF Football Club and Cricket Club. He turned out for the Football Club on the right wing on many occasions. He was sent to America in 1939 and remained throughout the War Years. He returned after nearly ten years to live in Alexander Grove where his fame spread for his hospitality to all, especially OF footballers and cricketers.

As a bachelor he enjoyed company and many of us gave him that company. On his return he revived his active interest in the OFs and became Chairman of the Football and Cricket Clubs. In the Summer his interest was as an umpire and he was respected as such by all clubs in the North London area. He organised the first OF tour of the Isle of Wight in 1952, which has had a non-stop run for 30 years - a record in club cricket. Despite his handicaps, Cyril did not miss a single trip.

In 1971 Cyril was honoured by Her Majesty the Queen by appointment to Commander of the Order of the British Empire for his services.....

Fifteen years ago a diabetic condition led to almost total blindness....He still continued to go to the office with the help of a car service of OFs and other friends. He carried out his duties with the help of a Reader and PA which enabled him to chair meetings. His courage was tremendous and his memory fantastic.

On one occasion whilst umpiring he received a crack on the shin and on another occasion, when he was blind, he burnt his other leg on the electric fire. These wounds never really healed through his diabetes and they became gangrenous. He had to have one leg amputated above the knee. When he recovered he still went to work with the help of good friends and he was given special facilities to continue. He dreaded retirement but he had to accept when he was 67. All through his troubles he never gave in....he continued to give hospitality and has been looked after diligently by brother Jack, Old Scholars and friends of all ages.

He was a character - argumentative, dictatorial, obstinate, but honest, courageous, and very generous....'

Scimitar 97, Spring 1983 edition :-

'Sadly we have to report that Bill Guy, who was Head of Science and retired the same time as Jack Rawlings, died on 6 January 1983. He had a heart attack just after Christmas and passed away peacefully a few days later in the West Suffolk Hospital at Bury St Edmunds.....'

Scimitar No 97, Spring 1983 edition :-

'We are perturbed by the local Press reports of Barnet's Director of Education, Mr Jack Dawkins, of the nature of his report on falling school rolls. The 15 page document comes to the inescapable conclusion that undersubscribed schools cannot be allowed to jeopardise the education of pupils elsewhere in the borough.

The report seems to favour the closure of two schools from a list of seven :-

Ashmole, Southgate; Finchley Manorhill; Ravenscroft; Whetstone; Mount Moat, Mill Hill; Hendon St Mary's; Whitefield, Cricklewood; and Edgware.....

Mr B H Elliston, Headmaster of Finchley Manorhill wrote :-

By now you will know that the Town Hall may decide to close two schools....Our school is one of the seven on the short list for closure. The decision will be made in March. Clearly we do not want our school to be selected for closure.

The reason why two schools have already been closed (Southaw and Grahame Park) and why two more may have to be closed is because there are just too many schools for the number of children that have been born in the last ten years.

This School is rightly proud of its achievements in its eleven years of existence. It is unashamedly a comprehensive school. No other school in Finchley can claim to have been a comprehensive school for eleven years.

The official policy for education in Barnet is to have comprehensive schools for the 11 to 18 age range. That policy has been and is being fully carried out at Finchley Manorhill. We, our 1,000 pupils, their parents and everybody associated with the School claim the right, at the very least on our record of achievement, to a future.

Finchley Manorhill was established in 1971. It was designed for 1,080 pupils. Currently there are 1,020 pupils. The School has a traditional approach valuing high standards of work and behaviour. Examination results have always reflected the pupils' hard work, their abilities and the quality of the teaching they have received.

Community links are strong. Local employers in the last year alone have been involved in four major projects - work experience; mock interviews; Young Enterprise Project; Challenge of Industry Conference. Lettings in the evenings and at week-ends run into hundreds each year. The School's record of work as a charity is outstanding.

At Sixth Form level, the School has pioneered courses for all levels of ability. No Sixth Former is ever turned away because the School is unable to offer a course appropriate to his/her current achievements and long term aspirations. The School is in every sense mixed yet there is a harmonious community spirit, relatively free of tensions. The pupils have a sense of belonging and identify strongly with their School, with great loyalty.....Will you all please write now in support of your School, no matter how short the letter is.....'.



Obituary

W T McNELLY

Betty Kilip (1929/35) wrote in Scimitar 99, Autumn edition 1983 :-

'About fifty years ago there came to Finchley County School a man who was to play a major role in the life of the School. He was to teach French and Economics and interest himself in the musical education of the pupils in general.

He settled in and very soon showed his aptitude for teaching. That man was Mr W T McNelly who died recently.

The War came and Mac remained at FCS becoming one of the stalwarts of his profession, surmounting all the trials and tribulations of those days and assisting in his spare time with the running of the local Air Force Cadets.

From 1946 onwards Mac, with his wife Ethel, whom he had married in December 1933 just after joining FCS, and by now two daughters, were really part of Finchley. His great interest was music, and in 1958 with a few kindred spirits he helped me start what was to be a monthly musical appreciation evening at my home for the youth of Finchley. After six months or so the youth faded away, but Ethel, Mac and I continued that evening until he died, sadly, on what was the 25th anniversary of the inaugural meeting.

Mac was a great Francophile and was actively associated with twinning of Le Raincy and Chaville with the Borough and the subsequent exchange visits of the communities. With his beret and his impeccable French it was sometimes not obvious to which group he belonged.

He was very much a family man, and he and his wife have found great joy in their two daughters and grandsons. Both families are exceptionally musical and between them form their own trios and quartets without any outside assistance, which in these days of "canned" music is an achievement.

It was through our musical association that I came to realise just what the description "a born teacher" means, for to me that was what Mac was. Infinite patience, kindness, humour and great understanding of the difficulties experienced

by those trying to learn, he had them all. It is not surprising that when he retired in July 1974 he was then Deputy Head.

We shall miss him so very much, but the memory of what he taught and the way in which he imparted his knowledge will remain for ever with those who were fortunate enough to sit at his feet....

K A Povah added :-

'It is very hard to realise that Mr W T McNelly is no longer with us - he was so outstanding as a teacher and as a human being. All who came under his influence became his friends, such was his generous spirit. And his very wide range of interests and activities, sustained by what appeared to be inexhaustible energy, were completely integrated into his character....

Mac had three adult evening classes. Whereas most teachers would be happy if at the end of the session three-quarters of those enrolling still attended, these classes had more students at the end than at the start.

Studies at Birkbeck College for French and Latin were followed by BCom, and when John Davie left to become Head at Woodhouse, Mac took over the somewhat bizarre grouping of French, Music and Shorthand. Mr Carr was brought up at a time when "Matric" at 16 was followed by entry to University and graduation at 19 years, so for those who stayed at School a Commercial one-year course flourished for many years, being eased out as academic studies strengthened. At the time of one of our "General Inspections", the HMI's were so impressed by Mac's talents that they urged him to join their company as an HMI for Commercial subjects. This would have meant an increase in salary and, perhaps, prestige and much travel and much criticism of other people. Characteristically Mac stuck to his well-rooted home life and his school community....

It is hard to refer even briefly to all the contributions to FCS life which Mac made. What difficulties were overcome, what cooperation was secured, for the succession of School plays we can remember - plays of different kinds from "The Late Christopher Bean", to "St Joan", and "Lady Precious Stream". How many scores of people had an interest in Opera aroused at the Connoisseurs Club by record recitals, talks, and cheerful processions from the Angel Tube Station to Mr Sadler's Wells Theatre. Mac's skill on the piano was a benefit for many years as he started the week with a short piece. This was serious. But on other occasions Mrs Nelly Mac (Mac in drag, naturally) was an appreciated accompanist. A staff quartet (Miss Pamela Jones, Miss Thomas, Mr TS Jones, and Mac) were award winners at a Hendon festival.

After a strenuous term, one might have expected a need for utter escape from organising and responsibility. Not so. Holidays abroad, ably supported by Mrs McNelly and Miss Temkin, introduced people to the pleasures of travel, arranged visits alternating with free and independent days. When Miss Smith called on one such party in Italy she was delighted by the happy and orderly tone which prevailed, contrasting with the uncivilised behaviour of less relaxed groups.

Mac had knowledge and appreciation of the painting and architecture of France and other countries, and after retirement found some interest in Mediaeval Latin.

He was not passive or unselective in his tastes, for instance he did not respond to Purcell's music and regarded the harpsicord as insufficiently aggressive to be really musical. Width of interests did not involve shallowness, he had high standards, but engaged the efforts of his students and friends by his own manifest absorption and the "infection of good courage".....'.

KA Povah wrote this obituary for his wife in Scimitar No 100, in January 1984 :-

'Hilda Marie Povah - born 1 August 1907 - died 18 November 1983. Hilda's serenity and shrewd judgement, her contempt for anything shoddy and bogus, her generous attention to the interests of others, her integrity - these are the qualities which will surely remain in treasured memories that can enrich our lives..'

Jack Rawlings takes up the story :-

'Her activities at FCS extended beyond the normal realms of wife of Headmaster during the sojourn of our old friend KAP as Head.....Mrs Povah first joined the teaching staff in February 1949, when Mrs Brown, Senior Mistress, commenced her maternity leave. I believe she took over, with a Mrs Gray, responsibility for the Biology Department. This continued until July - Mrs Brown returning in September. Mrs Povah's accent was on the botanical side of the subject rather than the zoological.

In 1958 she helped with form I in Geography - her other subject. In 1959, very many staffing problems. Mrs Povah helped out. Subjects uncertain, some English, Maths, even History during Miss Peeling's absence. Over the years she "stood in" on many occasions. Pupils would have been grateful for her quiet and conscientious teaching in times of need.

Being the Headmaster's wife was not always the easiest role in which to become a teaching colleague. However, she was always most pleasant and diplomatic - would never "intrude" into the already very small and over-crowded female staff room - at lunchtime she would retire to Mr Povah's study.

She was always very interested in and knowledgeable about the welfare of the pupils and girls in particular; helped probably by the fact that daughters Dylis and Brigid had so many friends in the school.

In 1963 Mrs Povah presented a Housecraft prize for girls - to be awarded annually and to counter-balance the Woodwork prize awarded by Mr Sturdy. Mrs Povah did not want girls to be in any way under-privileged in what was already a rather cinderella subject. She always took a keen and sincere interest in various school activities - frequently presenting herself at school parties - most particularly the junior ones. Over the years Mrs Povah was a keen spectator at many of the girls' matches....'.

Scimitar 100, January 1984 :-

'...In response to the falling pupil numbers the Borough has during the last five years proposed various schemes, many of which have threatened the future of Finchley Manorhill. This has no doubt been a contributing factor in the decline of the intake.

The most recent and solid proposals provide for the intake at Finchley Manorhill to be pegged at 120 and for the School to become a 11-16 school with pupils transferring to Woodhouse Sixth Form College at the appropriate stage. This would eventually lead to the closure of the Old Finchley County School building and the School would be entirely accommodated at the Summers Lane site.

These proposals, having been passed by Barnet Council, are now with Sir Keith Joseph, the Secretary of Education and Science. Should they be accepted by him then the most probable date for Sixth Form pupils to begin transferring to Woodhouse Sixth Form College would be September 1986. The reduction to 120 begins in theory in September 1984, though in practice it is difficult to see how this can be implemented. The closure of the Finchley County School building will take place when the Summers Lane site has been brought up to the necessary standard to meet its change of function.....The Headmaster, Mr Elliston, led a delegation consisting of one other member of Staff, two parents, and a Sixth Former, which met Sir Keith Joseph during last term. They all felt that they had been listened to and that they were able to make a number of points which impressed the Minister.....it could be April 1984 before the decision is made.....'.

Jack Rawlings writing in Scimitar 102, Autumn 1984 edition :-

'It is sad to realise that when the Headmaster of our School moves on or retires, we lose our President. Mr Barry Elliston has been Head of the School for ten years and he has now decided to move on and face the challenge of a new appointment in the Borough. Most of our readers would not have met our President, unless it was at our Dinner Dances, and in consequence would not have known how helpful he has been in furthering the interests of Old Scholars generally. He has kept us fully informed of School activities, and has done a great deal to promote Old Scholars' interests in various ways.....We are truly sorry to lose our President at such an unfortunate time, but happy to know he will not be far away....'.

Jack Rawlings wrote in Scimitar 106, Spring edition 1986 :-

'...Most of you will be aware that our Old School building, FCS, will no longer be used as a school at the end of the summer term 1986. The pupils first and second years who normally occupy the building, can now be accommodated on the Summers Lane site, which is to become a 11-16 years co-educational unit - no sixth form any more. It is only when it actually happens that it really hurts those of us who gloried in FCS.

As you may also know, Barnet Teacher's Centre is taking over our lovable old building, so that, in a sense, is a great blessing, and some memories will be retained. For your information, I have already had conversations with Mr K Hewitt, chief organiser of the centre and he is being most helpful to us.

Realising that certain items, such as the War Memorial, the Book of Remembrance, Charles Vivian's desk in the library, and the Headmaster's photographs have great depth of meaning to us. He has assured me that these items will be preserved in situ. Other library furniture will be transferred to the Summers Lane library, this being the wish of our President, Mr John Stacey, Headmaster of Finchley Manorhill School.....'.

Pauline Ayers took the news a little further :-

'...the Finchley County building will change its function to that of a Teachers' Centre - and so in the future teachers and pupils from all over the Borough will climb the stairs and admire the Memorial and all the other unique characteristics of a school building that thousands of old scholars picture in their minds on remembering their childhood. It will no longer be an educational establishment in the way that was envisaged when the Foundation Stone was laid by Mrs Hay in 1903. Some alteration to the classroom accommodation has already started on the top floor....'.

Jack Rawlings wrote in Scimitar No 107, Summer edition 1986 :- '...in the Spring Scimitar I wrote concerning the closure of the old FCS building as a place for pupils. This, in fact, has already happened. On Friday, 27 June, the Headmaster, Mr John Stacey, kindly invited me to the Lower School in the FCS building, to take the Final Assembly at 1.45 pm. As you may imagine it was more meaningful to me, more nostalgic, than to the pupils who, at the close, were marched from the Lower School to the Main School in Summers Lane at 2.30 pm. I did endeavour to convey a little of my sadness, along with that of Doris Bennett, who was with me on the platform.... but then it was "Away with care and sad regret", and in a space of five minutes I attempted to get the pupils to sing, with support from Doris and the Head, "All Hail to learning's blest abode, and to our friends and comrades, Hail!". Some success was achieved, the pupils seemed to enjoy it. I am sure the dear old building did.....'.

An anonymous writer added to the story :- '....For staff and former pupils, a final assembly on Friday 27 June was touched with sadness. Former pupils and teacher, Jack Rawlings, talked about his days at the school from 1920....He reminded them of the school motto, "Work Without Blemish". "I suppose I will feel the changes more than most", he said, recalling the days of school social dances, playing in the school jazz band and sports....

One of the main features of the building was the Clock Tower, with four four-feet diameter illuminated faces - an amenity for the whole community. It kept wonderful time but no one has bothered to repair it because they cannot afford to, said Mr Rawlings.

The school, originally known as Finchley County Grammar School with only two form entry. Everybody knew each other and staff knew all the pupils. There was a great allegiance and loyalty to the school. "I was very sad when the school became part of the comprehensive system in 1971", said Mr Rawlings, who has been the Chairman of the Old Scholars Association for 21 years. "With the sixth form going it is going to be very difficult to get new members".

Another former pupil from the early days of the school, and later Secretary until 1977,

Doris Bennett, also attended the last assembly. "I am very sad but at least the building is not going to be pulled down. The school was like a social centre for us", she explained as she watched the pupils file out. The Headmaster, John Stacey, said the move marked the end of an era for education in the Borough but the school would not only continue, it would have improved facilities for a maximum of 600 pupils....

Scimitar 107, Summer 1986 :- 'We have watched Alan Titchmarsh on the TV presenting items from the Chelsea Flower Show and as one of the panel in a TV panel game.....on both occasions he was wearing a Finchley County School blazer. The colours were right and the pocket badge was correct. We wrote to Mr T in the sure belief that he was an Old Scholar. A delightful letter came back ; 'I confess that I am not an Old Fincunian, and I bought the blazer from a second-hand clothes shop. At least I am "flying your banner" for you, even if I did not go through the mill"...'. **Some years later we learned that the blazer was given by Mr Titchmarsh to a drama society for use in the wardrobe department.**



In 1986 the new Teacher's Training Centre, later to become the Professional Development Centre was born in the Old School building. Suddenly everything inside the building looked different.



The Main Hall used as the Professional Development Centre's refreshment and relaxation area.



Norman Burgess relaxes while he takes stock of the Professional Development Centre.

The Main Hall looking northwards.

On the steel arch, second from far end, you can just make out six steel hooks which were used for hanging climbing ropes.

By and large, Old Fincunians were pleased by the positive attitude of the staff and users of the PDC towards the school.

Doris Bennett in Scimitar 108, Christmas edition 1986 :-

'At 11 o'clock on Tuesday 11 November 1986, I stood with Jack Rawlings, Fred Holbrook and John Stacey, Head of Finchley Manorhill School, in front of the War Memorial in the old FCS building, now a Teacher's Centre, while Jack laid a wreath of red poppies to honour the Old Fincunians who gave their lives in two world wars. Some of the names on the memorial are those of boys I shared lessons with, sporting events and social occasions, in our far-off schooldays, and I was able to think of them during the short ceremony.

Afterwards, Mr Stacey took us on a tour of the building, not yet finished, so that we could see what a Teachers' Centre is like. The Hall had quite a palm court appearance with small area divided by plants, low tables and modern coloured chairs scattered about, and many pictures on the walls. The old platform, scene of so many school plays, is gone and a low carpeted platform has replaced it.

Room A is entitled "Reprographics", and revealed miraculous machines for duplicating, enlarging, reducing, photocopying. How things have progressed since I struggled with the Gestetner in the School Office. Room B is a reading centre. Room C was entitled "Mathematics Workshop". D room is devoted to music, whilst room F has become a lounge and bar.

The wall between rooms G and H has been knocked down, making one long room, and this is what it is called, "The Long Room". The floor is carpeted and the decoration is tasteful. The room was in use for some sort of seminar, the participants sitting in a circle in more of these attractive coloured chairs, which are in use throughout the Centre, in most relaxed attitudes. We saw them having a coffee break later, sitting in easy chairs in a lounge area in the Hall. The girls' cloakroom was a great surprise. This had been converted into a kitchen, where hot lunches are prepared and served when whole-day courses are in progress.

A feature of the new set up is that all the walls, corridors and staircases are covered with pictures, framed, relieving the bareness and providing an atmosphere which is apparent as soon as you enter the boys' entrance.

In the entrance from the boys' playground the small room which had contained a sink and gas rings for boiling urns and kettles for school functions, has been stripped and is now entitled "Enquiries". Behind it a door has been inserted so that the area leads into a large office, formerly rooms I and J. The door to my old office was locked so I was unable to wallow in nostalgia by looking in. It is now labelled "Study" and I wonder what this signifies. What tales that room could tell!

Upstairs, alterations are still in progress, but the Chemistry Lab is fully equipped with Primary Resources, whilst the Physics Lab contains more computers than I have ever seen in one room. The Art Room is now the Main Meeting Room...an added bonus for Jack and me was to find Pat East (nee Calkin) working in the office. She was an FCS pupil in the 1950's, and we were able to have a talk with her about old times.

All my fears about the future of the building were allayed. I had imagined a block of flats or offices, with all trace of FCS gone. All the changes have been carried out with imagination and taste, and it is good to think that the building has been put to such good use, with teachers coming and going every day to further their knowledge and add to their teaching skills. All the Centre's resources, and they are many, are available to all the schools in the Borough of Barnet...'

Finchley Press on 6 November 1986 :-

'Many people may know Finchley Manorhill Sixth Form is in the process of closing down; many people think that the whole school is closing down, but this is not so. New facilities are being developed to provide for art and technological laboratories. The textile and home economics subjects will be enhanced by new and improved facilities. The Sixth Form Block will be converted into a library which will be used mainly for reference and where videos and films can be shown and where parents can be entertained. The rest of the block will be converted into a remedial support centre for those pupils who speak English as a second language. The block will also house the careers centre.....'

But the same newspaper, just 14 days later, reported :-

'NEW PLAN THREATENS TO AXE TWO SCHOOLS'. At least two secondary schools could be axed if certain plans drawn up for discussion by Barnet education chiefs are approved.....Falling school rolls, cash shortages, and a need for decent sized sixth forms raise the spectre of school closures.....Schools listed in an earlier closure debate in 1983 included Ashmole; Finchley Manorhill; Ravenscroft; Edgware; Moat Mount; St Mary's; and Whitefield. This leaves Ashmole and Finchley Manorhill as two prime candidates for closure.....'



Then, after nearly a century of acceptance, doubt was thrown onto the validity of our "Scimitars". K A Povah wrote in Scimitar 108, Christmas 1986 edition :-

'....The word "Saxon" is almost certainly derived from the characteristic weapons used by the tribes from 340AD onwards. It was a short stabbing sword called a "Saxsam". Its derivation appears in Sussex as well as Essex and Middlesex. When counties were given Coats of Arms, both Essex and Middlesex adopted three such swords, and our prefect medals retained that simple form. But I think the blazer badge sported a crown "In Chief", i.e., at the top of the shield. This was adopted by Middlesex to distinguish it from Essex.....'

I now turn to the curious matter of the misnamed "Scimitars". The Middlesex shield had three horizontal SEAXES. Heraldry does not prescribe any particular shape for its symbols, and the draughtsman of our badges chose a very curved form for the weapons. This looked very oriental and naturally enough the description of "Scimitar", which sticks. When the badge for our school letter-heading and for the Fincunians school magazines 1953-1958 and 1960-1962, were drawn, particular care was taken to avoid the strong curvature so that the swords were straighter but retain the characteristic nick out of the end.

So, the word "SCIMITAR" is, in fact, an error, very understandable and pardonable in view of the early design....'.

Fred Holbrook then tackled the College of Arms where it was confirmed that both the Middlesex and the Essex swords are SEAXES, not SCIMITARS. The Middlesex seaxes are straighter and the nick is along the cutting edge of the sword, whilst the Essex seaxes are more curved and the nick is right at the end.

The Daily Telegraph of 16 November 1987 reported :-

'Stephen Jack has died aged 85 years. Character actor and dialect coach, he performed in classical and repertory theatre, on radio, notably in Children's Hour; Winnie the Pooh; and the House at Pooh Corner, as the voice of Owl and Rabbit.

He was well-known for his radio voice in the children's programme Toytown in which he played every major character except Larry the Lamb.

A keen Scout, Charity Worker for the blind, and served from 1939 - 1945 in the Home Guard and the Heavy Rescue Squad. He was an Old Fincunian....'.

Scimitar 112, Spring 1988 carried this obituary :-

'Sadly we have to tell you of the death of Elaine Gradwell - Miss Peeling to so many, and a dear friend of so many.....



Her husband, Charles Gradwell, has written, '.....you will already have seen the announcement in the Daily Telegraph of Elaine's death. She had not been at all well for some time, but it did not get her down too much; but on the Sunday after Christmas she suffered a stroke and died in hospital yesterday.....she suffered no pain and her end was peaceful. She was so proud of her association with FCS.

Latterly she found writing very difficult, but she was always extremely pleased to hear from former colleagues and pupils she had taught, and the news of them in the Scimitar interested her immensely.

It would perhaps be invidious to enumerate names. Suffice to say that about 40% of our Christmas and Holiday cards were from people associated with FCS....'

Obituary

K A POVAH

Scimitar 113, Summer 1988 edition, reported :-

'...Dear Kenneth Povah (KAP), Headmaster of the School from 1946 until 1967, died suddenly at his home in Kenilworth on 28 June 1988. Many of us will remember him, especially post-war pupils, as one who gave a tremendous fillip to the academic side and was also truly supportive of all aspects of school life. He was deeply concerned with Old Scholars activities and gave his time and support to functions and frequent requests for help. I am sure he will be remembered for his weekly "Jackdaw", always delivered in impeccable style...He had been very active right up to the end; cooked his own lunch.

From TS Jones (Jonah) and his wife Ann :-

*He had seen movement, and heard music;
known slumber and waking; Loved; Gone
proudly friended.*

Jack Rawlings :-

'It is with deep regret that we report the sudden death of K A Povah.....highly dedicated to the needs of the school and he devoted his life to maintain its high status in all respects. His deep concern for the pupils was paramount, but also his interest in their future lives, as Old Scholars of the School, never flagged; in fact, since his retirement in 1967 his depth of interest in School affairs and Old Scholars' activities seemed to increase.

As a former pupil under the guidance of Charlie Carr and Harold Chalk, previous Headmasters, my position became even more special when I joined the Staff in 1947 and had the pleasure and privilege of serving under KAP. I came to realise very soon what a boon he was to the Old Scholars and their affiliated Clubs, and as I was deeply involved in OF affairs and the Club, I was conscious of all the help and support he was able to give as Headmaster to the furtherance of our cause. What

he did was always done quickly, willingly and supportively, and believe me, we were deeply gratified for his guidance and help.....'.

Miriam Wood (nee Whitehead 1959 - 1966) :-

'When I heard the sad news of Mr Povah's death I found myself thinking back to my school days and appreciating anew the very real merits of the kind of school we had tried to make Finchley County. We couldn't claim the most consistently high academic, sporting or artistic achievements; after all, we were the smallest Grammar School in Middlesex. But we could claim something which I think was more important and also rather uncommon. The School had a sense of community, and of caring for its members as individuals and not as material to be moulded to specification. Even the most self-centred adolescent must have been aware at times of Mr Povah's thoughtful endeavour to foster some well-concealed talent or strength, and if only a few of those bore fruit, they were worthwhile.

Probably all those who passed through the School while he was Headmaster will remember above all Mr Povah's "Jackdaws". On how many Thursday mornings did we look forward to those odd items of information or comment, delivered in his quirky manner? On how many Thursday mornings did we leave Assembly with food for thought having learnt something without even realising it? And how many hours did we spend thinking over a Jackdaw, or did they come almost spontaneously?

I should like to mention my own experience of Mr Povah as a teacher, when I was studying English in the Sixth Form. Until then Poetry had no impact on me. However, there are certain poems of John Donne, for example, which I could never read now without remembering how they were transferred into something vibrant and full of wonderful meaning by a few brief words from Mr Povah. I teach English now.... I'd be delighted to think I had a similar effect on any of my pupils'.

Janet Banks (nee Trollope 1959/66) :-

'....at the time I was at Finchley County, I always felt that Mr Povah was an approachable Headmaster - a person you respected in the Lower School, but were never frightened of. It was only when I started teaching myself that I realised how unusual this is in a Headmaster.

Mr Povah was never a distant figure hidden away in an inaccessible office, but a true member of staff. He taught a considerable amount - almost unheard of today with "Management Teams" heading the schools - because I think he enjoyed teaching and making contact with his pupils in an entirely natural way. Most head teachers only meet their pupils when they have done something extremely well or have been extremely bad - both such artificial situations.

I remember he taught us as first-years for a single lesson a week - I cannot remember what the lesson was titled, but it was really an extended "Jackdaw" and I am sure he delighted in imparting to us his enormous range of interests and general knowledge, whilst at the same time, getting to know ALL of his new first years by name.

If nothing else I can remember learning from the Thursday "Jackdaws" that one addresses letters in the following way :-

DEAR MR. POVAH

.....YOURS SINCERELY, and

DEAR SIR,

.....YOURS FAITHFULLY.

No doubt I heard it once a year for seven years - but I've never forgotten it.

In summing up I think I shall always be grateful to Mr Povah for running such a happy school. When I went off to further education I was - naively perhaps – quite surprised to find that other people did not look back so fondly on their school days as I did - and still do. What the school may have lacked in academic powers was more than made up by the happy, well-balanced people that entered adult life after their time there.....'.

Obituary

Miss Sturgeon

Joan Hill wrote in Scimitar 114, Christmas 1988 :-

'It was with great sadness that I learnt of the death of Miss Sturgeon, a person for whom I had the highest respect and affection.....I shall always remember with gratitude how Miss Sturgeon and Mrs Brown, then Miss Comber, went out of their way to show me the ropes and smooth the settling in period when I joined as the baby of the staff in 1946. A situation that was to last for no less than the next three years, so stable and settled was the staff in those far off days.



Miss Sturgeon was a person of great integrity, always displaying the highest moral and professional standards. Naturally rather quiet and retiring, and one who never sought the limelight. She was certainly the one who taught by example.

I cannot remember a time when she was not plagued by serious family ill-health. A situation she bore with great stoicism and which made her so sympathetic and understanding when her colleagues were faced with similar troubles.

She will be remembered for the tasteful provision of Speech Day refreshments; and also VIP refreshments for Sports Days. For this EJR and I were truly appreciative. Not forgetting her readiness to make the Cookery Room available for match refreshments and the organisation of food for Christmas parties, etc.

I am sure she was to find peace and restfulness during her retirement years spent in Worthing, in the company of her life-long friend, despite continuing family worries. Sadly she was rather badly affected by arthritis in her last years. This made writing increasingly difficult.

Perhaps a coincidence - no less than three former pupils who have written or visited in 1988 have said how they still refer to Miss Sturgeon's cookery notes in running their homes'.

Over the years sport, football in particular, has never been far away from the pages of Scimitar. The results achieved varied from excellent to appalling, but then, in the Spring of 1989, Godfrey Mann reported in Scimitar 115 :-

'It is with great regret that the Football Club has decided to withdraw from the Old Boys' League from next season. Due to the lack of players and in particular the unwillingness of anyone to take on administrative duties, the few remaining officers have found it impossible to continue running league sides. The good news is, however, that the Veterans' XI continues to thrive and even managed to win the prestigious Grammarians seven-a-side tournament a few weeks back.....The end of a great club which has always been the backbone of the Association, giving generous support in time and money at all times, in every way. A big thank you to those who have administered the Club for a long time under great difficulty and with increasingly disappointing support, and with much self-sacrifice. We used to have, at one time, the following Clubs :-

FOOTBALL CRICKET TENNIS TABLE TENNIS ATHLETICS BADMINTON
DRAMATICS FINCHLEY MUMMERS OFADS CHRISTIAN UNION

and being personally associated with six of them, it was clear to me that the Clubs were the Association and the Association was the Clubs. We are left with just THE NETBALL CLUB, thriving but only a small percentage of the club members are Old Fincunians.....'.

Scimitar 115, Spring 1989 edition :- *Manorhill is to close at the end of 1991 summer term. The final go-ahead came from the Secretary of State for Education and Science, and discussions on the management of the closure will continue so that provision can be made in September 1990 and 1991 for displaced pupils. Talks will also continue with staff about their careers, particularly with those who intend to remain at the School until it closes.....'.*

At the recent Old Fincunians' Dinner, Valerie Bristow, the Acting Head, had some comments to make about the closure emphasising the need for "managing the

remaining years of the School life", not "managing the school closure". She paid tribute to the very hard-working staff, determined to be cheerful despite the circumstances and succeeding in doing this very well.

Using the letters FMS as an acrostic she stated we need "Friends" - like Old Fincunians - to keep in contact as resources shrink and colleagues move on.

We need "Memories". We plan to leave a permanent memory of this school in the local community in two ways:-

(a) Gift to the Community - a two-years programme of fund raising is to begin shortly - aiming to leave a permanent reminder of this school in the neighbourhood. We are proud of our School and do not intend to see it forgotten.

(b) A Time Capsule - in July 1991 we intend to bury memorabilia - a Time Capsule - regal and ceremoniously. Fun for the pupils and fun for the staff.

"S" is for "Support" in all these things and to sustain morale and overcome problems.

The Old Fincunians will surely ensure that Finchley Manorhill School is not forgotten, all that it stood for, all that has led up to it and was part of it....'.

Hendon Times, June 1989 :-

'A top Finchley business man is calling on former Manorhill School pupils to join a campaign to save the school. If you were a pupil at the School - formerly Hillside - in Summers Lane between 1963 and 1965, a property consultant, Stanley "Maz" Michelides, wants to hear from you.....he is also planning a grand reunion to be held on 8 September.

He says, "I have managed to locate about 70 former pupils and teachers who I haven't seen since I left the sixth form nearly twenty five years ago. Among the many teachers, many in retirement, who are expecting to attend the reunion are Peter Southwell and Bill Emms".

Scimitar 116, Summer 1989 :-

'...plans to build 32 two bedroom flats on the back field area at FCS, presumably as the area is not used by the teacher training school....residents in the area have been circulated for objections as part of the planning process...'.

Hendon Times, October 1989 :-

'Finchley Manorhill rumoured as site for a Magistrates Court, to cover the whole of the Borough of Barnet.....It was also suggested the school may become a third site for Barnet College.....the school at the moment is used for weddings and get togethers after hours....'.

However, on 2 November, the Hendon Times reported :-

'... the School ground off Hilton Avenue is destined to become the site for a new £8.4 million Barnet Magistrates Court. Details of the site along with four others has been submitted to the Home Office.....'

Scimitar asked the rhetorical question :- *'Does anyone know what is going on?'*, **but answer was there none.**

Scimitar 117, Christmas 1989 :-

'On Friday 10 November, a small group paid a fitting tribute to those gallant OF's who lost their lives in the two World Wars. A wreath was laid at the memorial in the Old School in memory of sixty names of the British Servicemen who were scholars at FCS.'

Those who stood in silence as representatives of the Association were Jack Rawlings, our President; Fred Holbrook, editor of Scimitar; Doris Bennett, former school secretary; and Judith Payne, Head-teacher of Summerside School, together with Miss Valerie Bristow, Headteacher of Finchley Manorhill School; and Miss Pauline Ayers and Mr John Wilson, members of staff of Finchley Manorhill School....'

Scimitar 117, Christmas 1989 :-

'Manorhill is now a ghost school', said Councillor Vis at the Schools and Special Services sub-committee, when he spoke about the slow transfer of children to other schools. At present there are only 19 pupils in the second year, 27 in the third year, 47 in the fourth year, and 77 in the fifth year. Most second and third year children will leave before they reach the fourth form and the fifth year would have already left by 1990, leaving only 47 pupils in the school.'

By way of response the school organised a Ghostbuster theme for the day, when teachers and pupils alike got dressed up for the Ghostbusters' Disco held during the lunch break. The Head, Valerie Bristow said, 'Councillor Vis' comment does not stand the ghost of a chance'. The school spirit is definitely alive and well.....'

Scimitar 117 and 118, 1989 :-

'Kathleen Perry, who taught Domestic Science in the 1930's at the same time Elaine Peeling was teaching at the School, died 30 November.'

Audrey Payne (nee Bradford 1935/41) wrote :-

'She was a Science Teacher who left FCS 1936 having taught me General Science as a First Year and Biology for our second year. She "reigned" in the Old Biology Hut. I believe she left to teach at a Training College and later I believe she was the Principal at Maria Gray College.....'

Jean Wilson (nee Beaumont) wrote :-

'.....Miss Perry taught me Biology in the Biology Hut from 1933 when I was first at FCS. I never knew her first name, nor was I aware of her ever teaching Domestic Science. She left to get married, we understood, probably in 1936....Miss Comber followed teaching only Biology. At that time Domestic Science was taught by Miss Sturgeon.....'.

Helen Cooper (nee Sturdy 1924/30) wrote :-

'...Kay Perry came to Finchley to teach Biology about September 1932/33....She lived in a flat in my father's (Arthur Sturdy) house in Alexandra Grove, N12, at the same time as Elaine Peeling who also lived with us as a family, as she did not know anyone in the area.....Kay then moved to a flat in Princes Avenue, N3. She left FCS in 1936 to become Principal of the Domestic Science College at West Hampstead - where Stafford Cooper and I used to visit her. When that college amalgamated with another Domestic Science College in Edmonton, Kay moved on and became Head of a large Grammar School in Sudbury, Suffolk. Later on she became Bursar to a college in Windsor. She was also a great Churchwarden and well-versed in all C of E procedures. When she retired she returned to Sudbury where she had previously bought a town-house and which she used for holidays and week-ends.

I always got on well with Kay and although of a commanding and perhaps awe-inspiring dignity, she had a wonderful sense of humour and we kept in touch with her until the end..... Kay never married'.

Scimitar 118, Spring 1990 :-

'At the Annual Dinner, held at the Royal Chase on 10 March.... Valerie Bristow, Headteacher of Finchley Manorhill School, spoke of the School and the many activities still able to be done. She produced a Time Capsule which it is intended to fill at the appropriate time. The capsule is in the form of a large goldfish bowl....to be kept displayed in the new part of the Finchley Memorial Hospital which is the target for the School's last appeal. "This is to keep the memory of the School alive", she said. "Finchley County School, Hillside, and Manorside were amalgamated to form Finchley Manorhill in 1972.

The capsule was produced and various objects were to hand to drop in. Valerie produced a pair of scissors and.....suggested that a piece of Jack Rawling's hair should go in it. Under some apprehension, Jack covered up until it was made clear that a lock of hair from his head was required! Godfrey Mann's OF tie and a badge from Colin Luke were also placed in the capsule.....'.

In Scimitar 119, Summer 1990, Jack Rawlings wrote :-

'What we must remember is that Finchley Manorhill School is a school in its own right. It was created by the amalgamation of three schools, Hillside Secondary Modern (mixed); Manorside Secondary (girls); and Finchley County Grammar School (mixed) in 1971, that's 19 years ago, and will achieve 20 years in 1991.

It is true to say that Finchley County was the longest established school out of the three and the only one of the three that really had an active Old Scholar's Association and the many affiliated clubs at the time of the amalgamation. Hence it was perfectly natural for us, the Old Fincunians, to continue in this role for the newly created school, Finchley Manorhill School.....We must remember that it is the closure of Finchley Manorhill School - 20 years a school - that is taking place in July 1991.

Great efforts are being made by present staff and coopted old scholars of the three schools concerned initially, to make the closure a truly significant one, and naturally all these efforts will be directed around and within the present surrounds of the existing building. The FCS building is no longer part of the present school...the Final Week will be staged at the Manorhill building in Summers Lane, and displays of memorabilia will be set up, refreshments will be available, and so on, and the few remaining pupils, about 40 of them, will be there to host the event.....'.

EJR wrote again in 1990 :-

'... You all know how deep my love and dedication for the old School is, and that I dearly want certain items preserved, as I am sure you do.

The Memorial to those who died in the two World Wars is still in its original position as is the excellently framed picture in the middle.....The platform (or stage) has been removed...The Book of Remembrance and the desk in which it is housed are safe in the Manorhill building at the moment. My hope is that we will be able to transfer these to our old building and place them at the foot of the War Memorial - the desk can be safely locked.

The photographs of the Headmasters are still hung in the same room, originally the library, not the library any more. We transferred all the library tables and the library desk, dedicated to Charles Vivian, to the Manorhill building.....The whereabouts of the school song-board and the matriculation boards is not known at the moment..... What I do know is that the Matric boards had been removed in the early fifties and stored in one of the shelters when the wall-bars were put up in the Hall.....As for the oak lectern, made by Mr Sturdy, which adorned the platform, I believe that is still in the old building.....'.

Scimitar 120, Winter 1990 :-

'.....On Friday 9 November, we were able to lay a wreath on the School War Memorial in the School Hall, a fitting tribute to all those Old Scholars who gave their lives for their country in two World Wars. Those who joined in this simple ceremony of deep thought on this occasion, were Fred Holbrook; Doris Bennett; Bill Segal; Jack Rawlings; Miss Valerie Bristow, Head of Finchley Manorhill School; Miss Pauline Ayers; and Miss Josephine Pateman, Art Mistress'.

On 22 March 1990 the following article appeared in the Local Press :-

'GOING BUT NOT FORGOTTEN. A glass time capsule has been specially made for Finchley Manorhill School which is due to close in 1991. The design follows a similar one made for the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew.

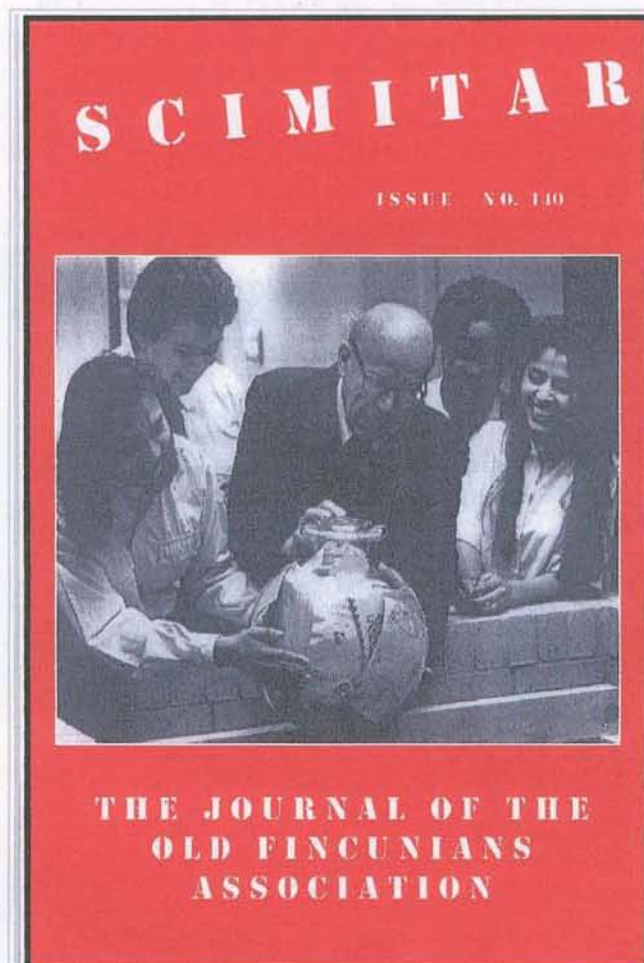
Head Teacher, Valerie Bristow, said she hoped the capsule would be displayed rather than buried. Finchley County, Hillside and Manorside amalgamated to form Finchley Manorhill in 1970.

The Old Fincunians Association has donated an old school tie, a prefect's badge, and a lock of President Jack Rawlings' hair. Present pupils are preparing personal records for the capsule and want to preserve time-tables, newspaper cuttings, chewing gum, and teacher's nicknames.

Deputy Director of Education, John Bailey, was invited to launch the capsule at Finchley Manorhill School last week....Craft, Design and Technology Head, David Bachelor, said the school had opted for glass because it had a very long life and would not erode over the years.

Valerie Bristow said, "We are going to decide on a date when it should be opened and will lodge instructions about it with the Town Hall. This will keep the memory of the school alive".....'.

Godfrey Mann (1959/66) followed up the story :- '...the Time Capsule sits in a wall built around an indoor planting area inside the Accident and Emergency Department of Finchley Memorial Hospital. It is marked with a brass plate mentioning Hillside, Manorside and FCS which came together to form Manorhill School. If I recall correctly, it is to be opened in 2095. I have no idea what happens if the hospital is redeveloped in the next ten years.....'.



Sarah Prescott (1954/61) was next :- *'....it is in Finchley Memorial Hospital. I don't know why this site was chosen I think that at the time the capsule was being prepared the hospital was having a new extension built to house, mainly, a minor accidents and casualty unit. In the waiting area there is a square brick area with plants inside and seats around the edge. On one of the walls of this area is a plaque explaining that the capsule is there.....'*

Bob Payne, OBE (1934/36) settled the matter :- *'Year 2091. A collection of memorabilia reflecting the life and work of the school has been placed in an air-tight container - articles of school uniform, like a cap, tie and blazer badge, and essentials of school organisation, like timetables, merit notes, and a box of chalk.*

Each one of the final year's pupils has written an autobiographic "pen portrait" and these, with a photograph, will be included. It should prove a fascinating source of first-hand evidence of what school was like. This Time Capsule has been placed beneath a "planter" in the entrance to the Casualty Department at Finchley Memorial Hospital. This decorative feature is the school's permanent memorial and has been paid for by money raised by the pupils and staff in a long series of events. A commemorative plaque records the school's "gift" and instructions have been left to ensure the exhumation of the Time Capsule in the year 2091'.

Scimitar 120, Winter 1990 edition, Godfrey Mann wrote :- *"...Finchley Manorhill is due to close in July 1991 and to celebrate the contribution made to Finchley by the four constituent schools, Finchley County, Hillside, Manorside, and Manorhill, we are arranging for the various school buildings to be open in July 1991 for old scholars to visit and reminisce. We hope to have a selection of memorabilia to display, cups, photographs, records, etc.....?'*

This event was the first occasion that the artefacts and archive were put on display. No complete record was left after FCS closed but over the years the reunions have always included a display of memorabilia and the archive :-



The Daily Telegraph 28 November 1990 reported on one of our more famous pupils. He was born 21 August 1911, and was educated at Finchley County Grammar School and London University. During the Second World War he spent many years working on the development of sabotage explosives. After the war he visited the Nazi concentration camp at Belsen for Military intelligence. He was knighted in 1975. :-

'Sir Frank Claringbull, the geologist and mineralogist who has died aged 79, was an innovative director of the Natural History Museum where he greatly improved the style and presentation of exhibits during his tenure from 1968 to 1976.

The hugely popular Hall of Human Biology, which opened in 1977, came into being largely on his initiative. Earlier, as keeper of mineralogy and head of the Xray section, Claringbull had worked on the jawbones of a number of prehistoric animals - and an unmarked specimen from the skull of "Piltdown Man".

Discovered in 1908 by Charles Dawson, a Hastings solicitor, the Piltdown Man was at first thought to be the "missing link" between ape and homo sapiens. The Piltdown bone was found to contain mainly gypsum, which - absent from specimens of soil from the site - had been produced when the various bones were "cooked". The infamous hoax was confirmed when Claringbull brought Xray powder photography to bear in making his tests on the skull.

During his meteorological work he had to adjudge on fragments of meteorites, notably one that fell at Barwell, Leicestershire, in 1965. He said that it was the largest specimen ever to fall on Britain, the fragment weighed in at 88 pounds....'.

Violet Spary (nee Mallard) remembered him :-

'Frank Claringbull was at Finchley County while I was there - remember he sat for us as a model in one of Bill Howlands' art classes and I still have the sketch I made (probably not in the nude)....'.

Scimitar 120, Winter 1990 asked the question :-

'Do you know who wrote the words on the School proscenium arch :

"WITH MIRTH AND LAUGHTER LET OLD WRINKLES COME"

Even T S Jones (Jonah) could not help. Can you?'

Well, Fred Holdsworth could :- *'...For a long time I thought it was a reference to "Twinkle Toes" Rawlings, but thanks to Peggy Hemmings (nee Emerson), following research at her local library, and also to Gilbert Talbot, we have the right of it. See Merchant of Venice, Act 1, Scene 1 :-*

Antonio: I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano; a stage where every man must play his part, and mine a sad one.

Gratiano: Let me play the fool; with mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come'.

Scimitar 121, Spring 1991 :-

'...Valerie Bristow, Headteacher and very good friend of the Association has presented us with an explanation of the future and what was meant by the headlines in the local press :

"MANORHILL REPRIEVED".

She said, "On 5 March the Education Sub-committee, Schools and General Purposes, took the decision to retain the Finchley Manorhill School site for education and to recommend the re-opening of a five-form-entry school in 1992, or sometime thereafter, dependant upon a second, detailed report due in April 1992. Since January 1988 the law has changed and some new factors have resulted in there being far more school places needed in Barnet than there are available, especially in the Finchley, East Finchley, and Friern Barnet areas. Hence the need for a new school, probably finally a sixth form entry, to be opened on the Finchley Manorhill site soon after Finchley Manorhill closes. The date is yet to be decided.

And for those of us involved we must be in a unique, extraordinary circumstance, and should go down in the annals of local history , for who else has had the experience of having their school closed, only to find, months before the closure is due, that it will reopen - SURELY THE CLOSURE NEED NOT, AND SHOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED.....'.

Scimitar 122, Autumn 1991 got it wrong when it reported :-

'The last Old Fincunians Reunion was held at the Old School on Saturday 13 July 1991 and was regarded as a great success. Over 300 Old Scholars and a number of ex-staff attended, including seven Old Scholars who attended FCS in the 1910's, and a number of Manorhill Old Scholars who were taught in the Old School building as late as 1985.

'We were quite overwhelmed with the turnout', said Jack Rawlings. 'All who came seemed so excited, almost exuberant, in meeting so many of their old friends - the School Hall was buzzing with conversation for three or four hours. All seemed overjoyed to be there in such a friendly, emotional atmosphere. Many happy memories have been created yet again - our dear old School meant so much to us all. Around 350 Old Scholars gathered together, and chatted, and laughed. The singing of the School Song, a fitting climax to a marvellous reunion - and yet they stayed on discovering others in the crowd that they had not yet spoken to - a wonderful afternoon'. Thanks to David Wild; Godfrey Mann (our Chairman); Colin and Janine Luke (our Treasurers); and Pauline Ayres for the organisation. The result was an inflow of cash and 35 new members.

Much of the memorabilia on display was considered to be of such social interest by the curator of Church Farm Museum, Hendon, when he toured the exhibition that he gave John Wilson a list of 16 items he would like for the museum. The Borough archivist is to take into "official custody" the remainder, thus ensuring their preservation. They will be catalogued and available to future generations of students.

Log books of the three schools together with punishment books, photos and programmes give an invaluable picture of education in Finchley for almost 90 years.....Items from the old Finchley County were well presented, in particular the old Matric Boards.....'.

Jack Rawlings writing in Scimitar 122, Autumn 1991 :-

'In September 1971 three schools, namely Manorside Girls, Hillside Mixed, and Finchley County were amalgamated to form Finchley Manorhill School - a total of 1200 pupils. In July 1991, twenty years on, Finchley Manorhill was finally closed, having run down to 40 pupils in its last school year.....It would appear that the Borough Education Committee got its sums wrong. Now we are told, via the media.....that the predicted need for more school places at Secondary Level will be met by a new mixed comprehensive five-form-entry school, about 150 pupils, built up from first year level to be opened in September 1992. The "new" school will open in the buildings left empty by the closure of Finchley Manorhill School in Summers Lane. Ironical, isn't it? This new school, would you believe, will have the working title "Hillside School of Finchley".

The very thought of using the same name for a school already closed previously irritates me strongly and I intend to voice my objection to the Authority. But to be positive I shall suggest that the "new school" could be called "The Glebe Comprehensive School", or maybe Glebelands Mixed Comprehensive School, Finchley, so there is no confusion in local residents', or former pupils' minds that this "new" school has any connection or association with the former schools already closed.

The Old Fincunians Association is the only old scholars' association in existence which has been concerned with Finchley Manorhill School and has offered membership to its scholars on leaving school. The fact that we date back to 1910 does not appear to worry the authorities....'.

The local newspapers were thinking along the same lines :-

We can accept fluctuations of school populations and the implications of legislation as well as the Greenwich Court decision, which obliges Barnet to accept pupils from outside the borough....But we cannot accept the decision to call the new school "Hillside" - even temporarily.....Finchley Manorhill School was the amalgamation of three schools - Finchley County, Manorside and Hillside. The site of the existing buildings belonged to Hillside itself. As the new comprehensive prepared to open in 1971 the powers-that-be pondered long and hard to find a suitable name that preserved the history of all three. But now to suggest Hillside as a temporary name - a name that will surely stick - can only be taken as a slap in the face for all those who worked so hard to make Finchley Manorhill School a success.

For those, too, from the original Hillside who pledged themselves to the new Finchley Manorhill era, it must surely be seen as a backward step. The memory of Finchley Manorhill School should be confined to a Time Warp. The new school needs a new name to build a new and successful future.'

Scimitar 123, Spring 1992 :-

'Barnet's new Secondary School is to be The Compton School, Finchley. New? Well, that's what the Council says, but it is still the old school (Summers Lane) refurbished. As Old Scholars we are not interested to have any connection with Compton but the following extracts may give you some idea of how the minds of the "high" work :-

In October Finchley Manorhill received an extra £230,000 in cash handout from Central Government. The money will go to replacing the school's boiler and roof. But Barnet will still be more than £1 million short of the money it needs to bring the school up to scratch...

The name Compton is taken from the historical contribution of the Compton family in Finchley....

Fears: Barnet's Education Committee was told that the council is so short of cash it plans to sell off more than a third of the site to build houses. And the cash will not go to the school. It intends to be used to bolster the Council's capital programme for general building projects and repairs....

Barnet Council will be spending almost £1 million to remodel parts of the school and to build a second sports hall....for 150 pupils in September...750 by 1997'.

Scimitar 123, Spring 1992 :-

'It is with regret that we report the death of Constance Smith who died in June 1991. Many will remember Miss Smith who taught German at the School from 1939 - 1960. She did much stoic work in organising Dr Barnardo's and National Savings and acted as a Recorder of Girl's Events on our Annual Sports Day'.

In the same edition :-

'On 11 November 1991 we placed the wreath at the War Memorial in the Old School Hall. Doris Bennett; Fred Holbrook; Janine Luke, Pauline Ayers, and Jack Rawlings represented the Association. The Principal of the Teacher's Centre, Keith Hewitt, welcomed us and indicated where he was happy to have the desk containing the Book of Remembrance, in the room we knew as the Library (pre-war room B) together with the framed photographs of Charles H Carr, Harold Chalk, and Kenneth Povah. He also indicated that he would be happy to have the "Sturdy" lectern back on the premises. It was interesting to see on the wall at the boys' entrance, by "A" room, suitably framed, the long photograph of the school pupils for 1932....'.

Scimitar 125, Spring 1993 :-

'...the Teacher's Centre, our School building, is under threat of closure, due to the latest government cut-back in funding. Those concerned with the organisation of the centre have been given "protective redundancy" notices (before Christmas in fact) and then after 31 March 1993 the centre has to become a self-supporting viable service. Should this not succeed, then our dear old school is under threat, could be

sold off as building land, even more unwanted offices built on the site. Already the back field has had houses and flats built on itAny chance of the building becoming a "listed building" seems remote at this moment

The Teacher Training Centre became known as the Professional Development Centre (PDC), and continued in the Old School building for another nine years.

In the same edition :-

'At 11 o'clock on the 11th day of the 11th month of the year 1992, Doris Bennett, Jack Rawlings and Fred Holbrook were in the Hall at the Old School standing before the War Memorial, and Jack hung a wreath of Flanders poppies below the picture so well known by you all....'

Scimitar 126, Autumn 1993 :-

'...wrote to the Planning Officer of Barnet Council asking whether a Protection Order had been placed on our Old School building. The short answer was 'No!'.....In April John Salmond wrote a personal letter protesting at the possible demolition of the building....'

A full reply by the Senior Planning Officer stated that the building was not included but he would include it in the List of Properties to receive consideration in the review of the Local List.....He advised the procedure for application to be made to the National Heritage. Old Scholar, Norman Burgess, Chairman of the Finchley Society, heard from Andrew Saint of English Heritage, who made a special visit to see the FCS building and he told us that it could not be listed because it is not under any immediate threat, which is true.....'

In the same edition :-

'The local press reported that due to a higher-than-expected spending limit from Central Government, the Teachers' Centre should be safe for the coming year provided it shares the Centre with other services.

At a meeting a few weeks ago, Headteachers, particularly from primary schools, had made it clear how much they valued the Teacher's Centre.....it was now being recommended that the ground floor of the Centre should continue with the present activities, while the upper floor and another building on site should be used to house two special education needs units.....'

Governors of Barnet's newest secondary school, Compton School, which rose from the ashes of Manorhill, have refused to ask parents about opting out of the local authority control fearing it will jeopardise building plans. This decision has to be considered each year under new Education rules.

The Chairman of Governors said, "We are about to undergo major building works and if we decide to go to a ballot, work could be held up. The Council is already spending thousands of pounds at Compton to ensure it can take more pupils in the future to meet rising class numbers'.

And in 1993 :-

'Jack Rawlings, Doris Bennett, Janine Luke, Pauline Ayres and Fred Holbrook, hung the wreath at our War Memorial at the Old School....'.

Scimitar 129, Spring 1995 carried the sad news that Fred Holbrook had died. Without Fred there would have been no Scimitar and it is my belief that if there had been no Scimitar there would have been no Old Fincunians Association. Godfrey Mann (1959/66) wrote the following words :-

Fred HOLBROOK

Died 19 April 1995

'It is with great sadness that this issue of The Scimitar is sent to you. Our Editor, Fred Holbrook, died yesterday and our thoughts and prayers go to his family.

As you will notice as you read, Fred worked on this issue right up to the end and I felt it a fitting tribute to his unflinching efforts over the last 40-plus years, that this issue is reproduced exactly as Fred had prepared it.

The Scimitar has been the life-line of the Old Fincunians and without Fred's constant efforts in collecting material, editing and producing each edition, many of you would have lost touch with the Association.....'.

Jack Rawlings wrote :-

'It is with much sadness that I bring the news of Fred Holbrook's passing. He died, quite suddenly, on Wednesday last. During the past year or two, he had experienced one or two minor operations from which, it was felt, he was slowly recovering. In fact he was continuing with all his normal commitments, which included the preparation of this Scimitar.

He was also deeply involved with the Methodist church in Crouch End, giving much of his time to the welfare of the churchgoers and in the preparation of their magazine. In addition he spent much of his time caring for the residents of "The Meadows", Old People's Home and had also been involved in the running of a Boy's Club.

Fred and I first met in 1927 as first-formers at Finchley County School and since that time have been close friends. Fred was academically gifted, was a very good sportsman, playing football with great skill, achieving success in athletics, cricket, and table-tennis, most games in fact!

He enjoyed acting and was a prominent member of the Old Fincunians Dramatic Society. He had musical ability, was a member of the School Orchestra, and in addition, played in the School Jazz Band with fellow members of our form, Doug Foord, Charles Morgenstern, Trevor Lloyd and myself. During the War he served in the Royal Artillery, Searchlight Section. His working life was spent with Sun Life Assurance.

As you will now understand, Fred was an extremely busy person, most dedicated and loyal to all his various exploits, giving his time so generously, so willingly, so happily. He understood people both elderly and youthful - he was a carer in the truest sense.

For us Old Fincunians, he had been producing the Scimitar for the past 40 years - the lifeline of our Old Scholars Association - a tremendous service for which all of us have been so grateful - thank you so much, Fred'.



The obituaries continued to appear regularly. Scimitar 129, Spring 1995 reported :-

**Tudor BEVAN
died December 1994**

EJR writes as follows :-

'He was a member of FCS staff during the 1950's teaching English, Physical Education and Games. He was indeed very popular both in the classroom and on the games field. A great football enthusiast, he played much football with the Old Boys, with whom he made many friends.

He was a great help to me in school life and subsequently we were in constant communication.....His local paper wrote well of him, "...he was much-loved in the village and always had a greeting for everyone. He was active in the Llansteffen Football Club, was a School Governor, and on the PCC of the Parish Church. Tudor loved singing and compered many concerts in the village. As a boy he had been a good runner and footballer and in London he played Senior Amateur League. A large gathering of friends and colleagues met in the Village Church to bid Tudor goodbye.....'.

May 1995 saw the first edition of the "Old Fincunians in Australia" the Oz version of Scimitar. Les Collins (1947/51) initiated it after three very successful annual reunions in Oz :-

'Not that I wish to go into competition with the "Scimitar" but I did promise to produce some kind of Newsletter after our recent third, and most successful, Old Fincunians Reunion Down Under.

For the record, and also the information of our more distant Australian friends, may I give a short history of our move to hold reunions in Australia. It all centres on the Scimitar, which I have been receiving since 1976. Over a period of years familiar names kept cropping up, in particular four people from the same, or similar era at FCS who are now resident in Australia. Various contacts were made and we held our first reunion in March 1993 in Strathfieldsaye, near Bendigo.....Four Old Fincunians attended....In 1994 there were seven Old Fincunians in attendance in Niddrie, Melbourne, plus spouses, plus one Old Fincunian all the way from the UK. And so to 1995 when seven Old Fincunians attended, plus two from Uk, and plus one from Belgium.....'.



A typical Oz Old Fincs Reunion, this one held at the home of Barry and Joyce Ackerman (1946/52) in Bendigo, Australia. From left to right :-

*Derek Woolley; Joan Wallis (nee Thompson); Ann Woolley;
Barry Ackerman; Jack Wallis; Gillian Collins & her husband; Kay Collins;
Joyce Ackerman; Charles Verga; Les Collins; and the one taking the picture is
Maureen Verga (nee Richey)*

Godfrey Mann writing in Scimitar 130, Spring 1996 :-

'.....I want to pay tribute to someone who has been a regular contributor to the Scimitar over the years - in fact a contributor to every single issue from the very first in November 1951 to the last which Fred Holbrook edited in the Spring of last year. Philip Gillam has designed and drawn each and everyone of the front covers of the

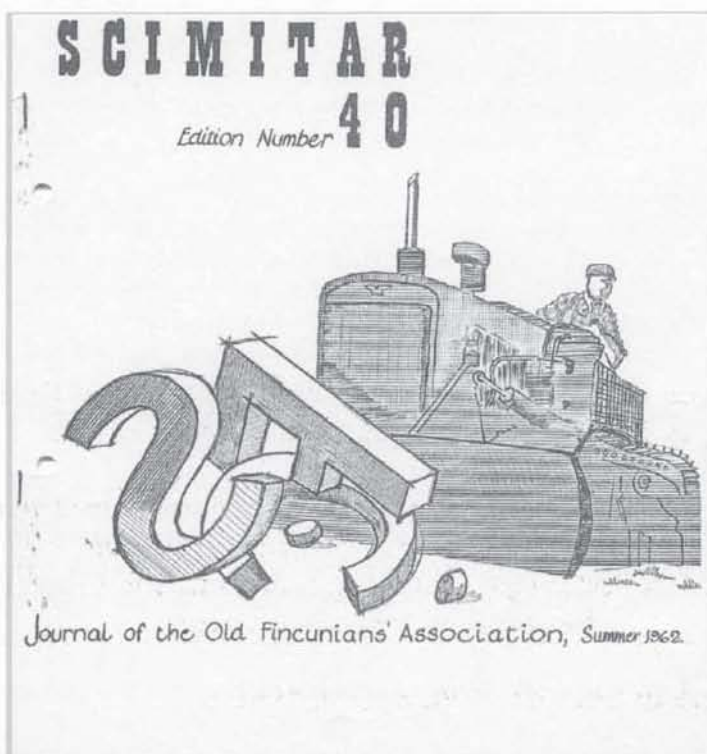
previous 129 issues of Scimitar over the past 44 years, except for two or three drawn by Stanley Dark when Philip was incapacitated. A truly magnificent effort.....'.

Philip Gillam responded :-

'I had not realised it was for 44 years - but then I don't believe the numbers on my birth certificate, either. In fact I produced the covers for only 127 of the 129 editions of Scimitar. Stanley Dark (1937 - 1942) produced two of them in the 1950's when I was incapacitated. One of them was a drawing of the School, and the other was a drawing of Windsor Castle.

I recall in my early days Fred would send me a bundle of Gestetner wax "skins" on which I would scratch my idea for the cover and also in pre-marked positions, little logos for the various club sports. Then new technology came in and a simple design on tracing paper was sufficient. At metrification I even managed to grasp the new frame size from foolscap to A4 (after three attempts!).

In all the 129 editions I was never aware of the Post Office losing, or even significantly delaying, the arrival of the package. The worst experience I gave Fred was probably in 1987 when I moved from London to Shropshire. In the hurly-burly of removals followed by rebuilding a ruined farmhouse whilst living in it, I forgot to notify him of my new address and ex-directory telephone number. Nevertheless, only a day or so before his deadline, a frantic Fred eventually managed to track me down for a new cover to be sent to Highgate the next morning. In the main the system worked well enough from Yorkshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Shropshire, and I always enjoyed doing them.....'.



A Phil Gillam cover produced for the Summer 1962 edition of Scimitar at a time when a demolition scare was current.

OBITUARIES

Brig Dame Margot Turner

BRIGADIER DAME MARGOT TURNER, who has died aged 83, survived two shipwrecks and three-and-a-half years as a Japanese prisoner of war to become the leader of the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps.

The ship on which Turner was evacuated from Singapore in February 1942 was sunk by Japanese bombers and its passengers machine-gunned in the Java Sea. Turner and a few others managed to swim to the small island of Pompong, where the surviving nurses tended to the wounded, tearing strips off their dresses to make bandages.

A small cargo ship rescued some of the castaways, including Turner, but within hours it too was bombed and wrecked by the Japanese. She later described the horrors that ensued: "The cries and screams of the wounded, the helpless and the dying were quite terrible; and the fact it was in the middle of the night made it all so much worse. Dead bodies and debris from the ship were floating everywhere."

She and another nurse managed to pull eight women and six children on to a raft. Over the next four days Turner



Turner: resilient and strong.

Brigadier Dame Margot Turner died at the age of 83. She was educated at Finchley County School from 1921 and her biography was written by Sir John Smyth, entitled "The Will to Live".

During her lifetime she survived two shipwrecks and three and a half years as a Japanese prisoner of war. She became the leader of the Queen Alexandra's Nursing Corps.

She was being evacuated from Singapore in 1942 when the ship was sunk by Japanese bombers and the passengers, including Dame Margot, struggling in the sea were machine gunned.

A small cargo ship rescued the survivors but within hours it too was bombed and wrecked by Japanese planes. Dead bodies and debris were floating around her but she, eight women and six children made it to a raft floating in the sea. With no sustenance the children went mad and Dame Margot had to watch helplessly as first the children, then the women died one by one. She managed to survive by eating drifting seaweed and drinking rainwater she collected in her powder compact. Eventually she was picked up by a Japanese battleship and incarcerated on and around Sumatra.

In 1945 she was returned to Britain where she continued her work, rising to the rank of Matron-in-Chief and Director of Army Nursing Services, the highest position in the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps. She was appointed MBE in 1946, DBE in 1965, and RRC in 1956. She led the QA contingent at the Coronation in 1953.

As a committed Christian she bore no bitterness towards the Japanese and she is quoted as saying,

'I don't think about myself very much. I think about what I have to do'.

In the 1940s and 1950s, when she was a nurse, she saw the Japanese as people, not as enemies. Turner saw

Nursing Service (she said she was drawn to the QAs' red capes). Within a

year she was posted to Bareilly hospital, near Delhi. The six QAs were kept busy, especially during the outbreaks of malaria in the hot season, but in many ways their lives were idyllic.

They were lent ponies and motor cars by the British officers stationed at Bareilly, and taken to dances, films and picnics. Turner rode every morning, and played golf and tennis.

When war broke out she made repeated applications for active service until in February 1941 she was told to report at Bombay for posting to an unknown destination.

Turner was dismayed to find that the ship on which she sailed from Bombay in March was bound even further from the battlefields — to Malaya. She was put in charge of the operating theatre in a military hospital at Tanjong Malin, near Kuala Lumpur.

But she was soon in the thick of war. In December 1941 the Japanese bombed Malaya and invaded from the north. The wounded began to flood in to the Tanjong Malin hospital and, as the Japanese advanced, the staff and patients were ordered to move to Singapore. The town's railway station had

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FAREWELL TO DORIS BENNETT

A tribute from E J Rawlings

'I was most saddened to learn of the death of Doris Bennett on Monday 19th June 1995, aged 81 years. Many of you will remember Doris as School Secretary from 1946 to 1976, at which time she retired. Prior to 1946 she was the School Secretary at East Barnet Grammar School.

Many may not realise that Doris was a scholar at Finchley County from 1925 to 1932, and it was her love of the old school and a little persuasion from T S Jones (Jonah) that she returned as secretary in 1946.

A truly dedicated Old Fincunian, loyal in the extreme, always willing to help our cause, a very strong minded person who was always prepared to state her opinion. She always attended the laying of the wreath ceremony in the School on Armistice Day even since her retirement.

I knew Doris very well. We were at the school at about the same time. A small group of lads formed a jazz band and we played at school parties and House parties. During rehearsal times Doris used to listen and dance with me to test out the rhythm and tempo of the music.

The cremation, which took place on Tuesday 27 June, was attended by about forty people, mainly from her church. Her life-long school friend, Kathleen Terry (now Mrs Butcher) and her family were there, former members of staff, including John Stacey, Josephine Pateman, Pauline Ayres, John and Rosemary Wilson, with Old Scholars Joyce and Alan Scrine, Godfrey Mann, Jack Rawlings, as well as dear old Mr Staines, the School Keeper.....'.

Jack mentioned Kathleen Butcher (nee Terry 1925/31) in that tribute and it was not long before Kathleen herself had written :-

'.....I had been in touch with her fairly recently, and although she was not her usual self, I had no idea she was so poorly. Doris was 81 years old and had a very full life, gathering many friends on the way. We first became friends at Finchley County School during 1925/31, and remained so to the end of her life.

When she left school in 1931 she worked for a few years in town, but she disliked the journey. She later became School Secretary at East Barnet Grammar, which was in the process of being "launched". She stayed there for some years before becoming School Secretary at FCS, where she remained until retirement. Doris led a very active life, playing tennis and badminton in her earlier years. Every year during August she spent two weeks at Eastbourne, at the same hotel, joining the folks with whom she had made friends. Her hobbies were reading and gardening.....'.

1995 was a difficult year and brought with it much sadness. There is something uncanny in the fact that three lifelong friends all died within months of each other. Fred Holbrook (1927/32) died 19 April 1995, Doris Bennett

(1925/33) died 19 June 1995, and Edgar John Rawlings (1927/33), better known as "Jack" or "EJR" died 9 July 1995.

Fred Holbrook had been the Editor of Scimitar since its inception and his death created a void while a replacement editor was found. That was not to be until the Spring of 1996 so the Obituary for EJR, one of the most influential teachers ever to work at FCS, probably the most popular teacher, and certainly the most well-known teacher, was reported to the members by Newsletter written by the Chairman, Godfrey Mann :-

'It is with great sadness that the main news in this communication is the death of Jack Rawlings who passed away quite suddenly on 9 July 1995. Over 150 attended the funeral service at St Marylebone Crematorium on 18 July to say farewell to dear Jack.

John Decker, a lifelong friend of Jack's, gave a eulogy at the service, which was subsequently used as the basis for a report in the local press. This is reproduced in an abbreviated form below.

"Edgar John Rawlings, known as Jack and often referred to as EJR, was born on 21 August 1915 the youngest son of three children. His schooling was in Finchley County Grammar School from 1927 - 1933. On leaving school Jack selected the teaching profession and, after a short period as a student teacher at Manorside School, did his training at the college of St Mark & St John. In 1936 he joined the staff of St James Boy's School in Edmonton.

During the War Jack joined the armed forces and became an Instructor at an Officers' Training College. At the time of his demob he had risen to the rank of Major in the Royal Artillery.

He returned to his teaching duties in Edmonton in 1946 and at the same time started to re-establish the Old Fincunians Cricket and Football Clbs. He was a member of the extremely successful Old Fincunians Premiere Division side and as a cricketer he bowled all ten in one innings and also just failed by one run to score a century in batting.

In 1947 Jack returned to his old school, Finchley County (FCS) as the new PE & Games master. Here he formed lifelong friendships, never to be forgotten by all pupils and members of the Old Fincunians Association, which he held so dear. It was thanks to Jack and many other stalwarts that the Association was rebuilt. The OFA and its affiliated clubs forged a bond of friendship the world over, helped by the production of the "Scimitar" magazine, the lifeline of the Association. This was due, in no small way, to EJR, the shining example and the common denominator over the years who masterminded it all.

EJR's brilliant career as a teacher continued until his retirement in 1977 from the then Finchley Manorhill School. His involvement with FCS Old Scholars remained steadfast to his death. He was an active participator in the Association and the Football and Cricket Clubs, hlding many official posts en route, followed by that of Chairman and President. If all that was not enough he still found time to

hold office in Finchley Schools Football Association; Finchley Schools Swimming Association; Middlesex Grammar Schools Athletics; and he was also a member of the MCC.

Jack, who had been a widower for over ten years, leaves a daughter, Sheila, son John, and five grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by all those whose lives were enriched by knowing him". All Old Fincunans reading this will have their own cherished memories of Jack and we will all miss him'.

That same Newsletter announced that Leslie Sharp (1947/52) would be the new editor of Scimitar as from January 1996.

On 18 July 1995, EJR was cremated at St Marylebone Crematorium at 3 pm. The service included Psalm 23, *The Lord is my Shepherd*; a Reading from St Paul's letter to the Corinthians, Ch.12 v 28 - end; the hymns *Jerusalem* and *Love Divine* ; the Lord's Prayer, and the following poem which was written by Canon Henry Scott Holland :-

*Death is nothing at all.....
I have only slipped away into the next room.
I am I and you are you.
Whatever we were to each other that we are still.
Call me by my old familiar name, speak to me
in the easy way which you always used.
Put no difference in your tone;
wear no forced air of solemnity or sorrow.
Laugh as we always laughed
at the little jokes we enjoyed together.
Play, smile, think of me, pray for me.
Let my name be ever the household word
that it always was.
Let it be spoken without effort,
without the ghost of a shadow on it.
Life means all that it ever meant.
It is the same as it ever was,
there is absolutely unbroken continuity.
Why should I be out of mind
because I am out of sight?
I am waiting for you for an interval,
somewhere very near, just around the corner.
All is well.*

Have you ever worried about the School motto, and where that funny upside-down "v" ought to go? Colin Brown (1940 - 1945) wrote in Scimitar 130, Spring Edition :-

'...The Scimitar was inaugurated in the early fifties. As I went into the paper trade when I left school I was ideally placed to be of some assistance.....my staff status enabled me to purchase duplicating paper at trade price, and at three monthly

intervals, I delivered it to Priory Gardens. This saved the bother of humping it and saved the Old Fins a bit of cash.....

I am reminded that I had an interesting exchange of letters with Fred in 1994 about the School Motto. I had written to the local press singing the praises of coeducational schools as against single-sex schools. In my letter I included the School Motto, "Tache sans Tache". I placed the accent over the "a" in the first "Tache". Fred challenged me as a matter of honour, that the accent should be over the "a" in the second "Tache". I called in aid a French Dictionary which suggested I was right. Fred would have none of it and produced the "55th Annual Athletic Sports Programme" for 1962, but once he had studied the logo which included the motto, he had to agree with me....'.



Norman Burgess (1933/38) was Head Teacher at Wessex Gardens Junior School until his retirement in 1987, and he became the Chairman of the Finchley Society, and the Chairman/Curator of the Stephens' Collection in Avenue House. He wrote in Scimitar 130, Spring Edition 1996. :-

'...following the passing of Fred Holbrook, Jack Rawlings and Doris Bennett, I am wondering if the remembrance ceremony at the War Memorial will be maintained as these three great supporters are now no longer with us. I do hope so as the boys whose names are on the memorial were my friends in my class at FCS.

I am always moved to tears as I am often in the Professional Development Centre, as the Old School is now called, and I look up and recall their faces.

Raymond Dix - I walked to school with him nearly every day!

Kenneth Kilby - he painted a picture which I still have in my autograph book!

Norman Mayo - he was in my class - such memories.....'.

The picture on the next page shows Fred Holbrook third from left in back row and Jack Rawlings first from right back row. It was taken in about 1930. From school days until death, Jack Rawlings and Fred Holbrook were close friends and in recognition of this, Victor Radmore (1927 - 1934), second from left in back row, wrote a joint tribute to them :-



JACK RAWLINGS & FRED HOLBROOK

Some early recollections

I little thought when I met Jack and Fred as newcomers with me to FCS, on that September morning in 1927, that in 68 years' time I would attend the funerals of both within three or four months of each other. Each started with a disadvantage - Jack was in North House, Fred in South. I know they couldn't help it....but really! Oh! yes, and like many others, each had a short fuse at that time. I suppose we were all like animals, marking out our own territory - our first attempt to assert authority.

Both loved sport and each became very proficient in soccer and cricket. Fred was a sprinter, too. His stature was such that he could get in between Jack's legs in any race and then look back with a wry grin we all came to know so well, as much as to say, "Having trouble, Jack?". They both played sport to win; quite right, of course, but enthusiasm and determination never wavered into viciousness. Of course, the odd trip did occur, but that would simply be to remind the other chap not to get "above his station".

They could both be crafty, however, yet Jack had the nerve to accuse me of just that when we in West were leading 5 - 4 in a house match with only a few minutes to play, and North attacked with Jack in the van. I had played myself out and went down with cramp a few yards from goal. I let it be known, of course, and the master refing the match blew up very quickly, as always when a boy is injured. To his dying day I feel sure that Jack believed that I really had been crafty in killing the momentum of North's attack. I tried hard to convince him in later years that I have been dogged by cramp ever since, but his mind never seemed to grasp the point!

Jack was, to my mind, the finest bowler of his generation, not only in FCS but also of all the many other schools we played. And he continued both before and after the war to gather shoals of wickets with that deceptively "easy" off-spinner that he could

trundle down hour after hour. He could always get me out in form and house matches, usually LBW, as I lacked the courage and expertise to get out to the pitch of the ball, despite having kept wicket for him in school matches.

One more cricket anecdote, with apologies, I think, to Henry Newbolt. Eleven to win, one over to go. I turned the first ball for a single and as Jack was running up the pitch he asked me, in less measured tones and terms than might have been expected, what good did I think a single was? I was about to explain about "lese majestie" but contented myself with the answer, "Win the match. You are a hitter, I'm only an opening bat. That is why I took the single". He gave me a funny look and I thought he might ask me about my cramp. But "No!" - four, six and four in three consecutive balls followed. As we both walked to the pavilion, grinning broadly, Jack said, "I always do what my skipper tells me".

Fred and Jack, however, were not merely sportsmen. They were, as we would say now, academically gifted. They knew from an early age that matriculation was a keystone in one's future career and, moreover, that it was not given away with a pound of tea, but necessitated hard work throughout their school life. Both achieved four distinctions in Matric.

Of course, Fred had learned from quite early on that it was unwise to take Friday evenings off from homework. Especially so if the alternative was to help the groundsman to prepare the wicket for Saturday's game. Jack, Fred, myself, Doug Foord, and one other had carted the heavy roller, which had shafts but no horse, to flatten the ground on either side of the actual wicket where we had been digging out plantains. Someone had blundered - please, it wasn't I. My eyes suddenly revealed a moving roller with a small boy, head tucked in mercifully, crouching down as the roller crawled up his back. Just think, we might not have had the magnificent services of Fred as editor of The Scimitar for that record period of forty years. As far as I know, Fred never bore malice for the incident and the other four of us felt it was a matter not to be publicised. We all felt better when Fred took a couple of wickets next day.

Sadly, for me, I did not know at the time about Jack, Fred, Moggy (Charles Morgenstern) and their jazz band. I'm told that they showed the same enthusiasm, verve and determination in that venture as they did in so many fields. Determination and enthusiasm were the dominant characteristics as I knew them both. They were warm and human. They loved the school and Jack battled hard to stop its closure. They both loved and dedicated themselves to the OFA for which we will always remain grateful.

I referred earlier to Fred's wry and mischievous grin. Jack, bless him, had apple red cheeks, a schoolboy's deadpan but saucy face: "Me, Sir? Oh! no, Sir, not me, Sir!", expression and, as he walked away, an impish but beatific smile would emerge: "Yes!", it would beam, "Life's wonderful. We are so lucky, but remember one's got to buckle down to it, work hard, play hard".

Loyalty was all...'

Obituary

Thomas Stanley JONES

Thomas Stanley Jones, known affectionately as "Jonah", died on 17 March 1996. It was his son, Ian, who broke the news :-

'.....He died as the result of a chest infection though, as many of you know, he had been coping for some twenty or more years with very limited speech as a result of a stroke. He was 91 last year.....'

The tributes came thick and fast. Rosemary Holland (nee Makins 1934 -1939) wrote :-

'I should like to pay tribute to Mr Jones - Jonah.....He was one of the best members of staff at FCS and an inspired teacher of English. I expect I am not the only one who can feel I had a good grounding in grammar - the differences between "will" and "shall", and "can" and "may" - and to use the word "nice was not very nice at all" - these little things stick with you.

Singing in the choir was a great joy under Jonah's baton and I have been involved with choral singing for most of my life (now going on 74) since school days.

I was privileged to visit Jonah and his lovely wife, Ann, at their home in Chichester, a few years ago. He still had that twinkle in his eye which made the girls fall for him!

Helen Cooper (nee Sturday 1924 - 1930) wrote in similar vein :-

'...When I was in the 6th Form at FCS, September 1929, Mr Jones and Mrs Wills arrived like a breath of Spring and excitement to us because the Staff hadn't changed for some years.

Mr Jones - we wouldn't have dreamed of calling him Jonah then - was an excellent teacher of English and taught us how to remember important facts by connecting them with other relevant things. He could recall up to about 30 important facts by this method and we were all duly impressed. My younger sister says she still squirms when people do not express themselves grammatically - even after all these years.....'

Jessie Beeton (1930 - 1934) expressed her undying gratitude for

'...opening my eyes to the beauty of some of the written word....I liked him and always looked forward to his lessons - and his upside-down smile when one had earned some praise.....'

Joan Hill (Girls Physical Education Teacher 1946 - 1970) described Jonah as :-

'...One of the old school, a gentleman and appearance likewise...I remember they had one son - his first post on leaving University was Cornish Schools Music Adviser.....'

Alan Littlejohn (1939 - 1944) was a popular figure on the traditional jazz scene in Britain. He died 12 November 1995 in Barnet at the age of 67. Born in Highgate, Alan was a self-taught musician, trumpet was first, but he also enjoyed singing. In the mid-sixties he joined trombonist Tony Milner in a jazz quintet which enjoyed a long run of success at the Tally Ho! in Kentish Town. Perhaps his best known activity was the long run at the 100 Club in London, where he led the Littlejohn's Jazzers, often accompanying internationally famous jazz musicians, like Yank Lawson, Nat Pierce, Dick Wellstood, Kenny Davern and Billy Butterfield.

In the eighties, Alan teamed up with the clarinettist Dick Charlesworth and in 1990 he made his first appearance at the Edinburgh Jazz Festival. His last public performance was in September 1995 at the 100 Club.

Colin Luke (1963/70) wrote in Scimitar 133, Autumn edition 1996 about the Matriculation Lists which hung on boards in the Old School Hall. When the School closed for the last time and became a Teacher's Training Centre, the boards were removed from the walls and stored for safe-keeping. They remained in Colin Luke's garage from 1971 until 1996. Some of them were in poor condition but it was decided to raise some funds by selling them off to whomsoever wanted them. That caused a postbag full of letters either supporting the idea, or expressing outrage.

First was Mary Dark (nee Howard 1946/51) :-

'...I was somewhat disturbed to find that the Matric Boards and Lectern (and what about the School Song Board?) had not been offered to the local museum or County Records Office. Such items are part of the history of the Old School and of Finchley, and should be preserved.....'

On the other hand, many Old Fincunians could not wait to get their hands on them. Barbara Cranfield (nee Sear 1934/39) sent a reply which was fairly typical of many :-

'...I knew immediately that I must have the 1939 Matric Board! This went up on the wall of the Hall after I had left school in 1939, so I saw it just once at the Reunion in 1954 before it was taken down. I saw it again at another Reunion in a heap with others in one of the classrooms.....so I rang and staked my claim and on a wet and windy Sunday with thunder and lightning all around, I splashed my way to Barnet and was surprised that not so many people seemed to care about these rather battered bits of history! Glad to say mine is not battered and has gone to be framed.....'

And Gladys Rawlings (nee Macey 1930/35) :-

'..I must be mad applying for the fragile Matric Board 1934/35!....I'm thinking of loaning it out to the other Matriculants of that year as I am in touch with quite a few....In our small flat I have so many pictures and photographs of nineteen grandchildren, how can I display a faded piece of plywood just to see my name (well, almost my name!!) in gold letters.....'

Allan Plumpton (1943/48) wrote cautiously :- *'...How big are the boards, exactly?...'*

Bob Payne, OBE (1934/36) was interested in the faded and worn names on the boards. Time had eroded some of the names on the boards and Bob saw it as a "case of the Missing Letters". Like Sherlock Holmes at his best, Bob solved the mystery :-

'...I have completed all the missing letters from the names on the 1934/35 Matric Board - except for one - ???ESME. They are : LAnaway Eric; Macey Gladys; Moat William; PEverley Marjorie; and PITE Cecil...'

Colin Luke had the unenviable task of storing the boards for many years and of distributing them :-

'...To my knowledge the Matric Boards were not even on the walls of the Hall between 1963 and 1970 having been replaced by wall bars. The age range of the Old Scholars named on the boards is 65 to 85 years (in 1998). All in all I did not think there would be much of a response...The answerphone was working in overdrive.....I photographed all the boards and sent pictures to those who were disappointed at not getting one....'

Doug Elcombe was a well-liked and well-remembered Old Fincunian as this cutting from the Hendon and Finchley Times illustrates :-

'...A former student of Christ College in Finchley is paying tribute to his childhood friend, shot down over Germany. Roy Gibbons, aged 77, has donated his entire collection of special issue RAF silver medals to a Sussex Museum in memory of Doug Elcombe, a Whetstone Second World War hero. The two men, who both served in the RAF during the war, grew up as friends and neighbours in Ridgeview Road, Whetstone. Sergeant Pilot Elcombe, who attended Finchley County School, was reported missing on a routine patrol from Tangmere on October 26, 1940, aged 21. Elcombe had destroyed an enemy aircraft before being shot down himself. Mr Gibbons, a retired Bank Manager, now living on the Isle of Wight, spent more than four years collecting the medals....the full set is now on display at the Tangmere Military Aviation Museum Trust in Chichester, Sussex....'

Alec Churchill taught at FCS 1960 to 1964 :-

'.....Oddly enough, those four years, out of my thirty years or so spent teaching, remain in what is left of my memory....After leaving FCS I taught at Broxbourne School in Hertfordshire for twenty-one years, then escaped. Since then I have been doing bits of teaching mostly at my last school, and for the Field Studies Council work for special needs in Havering.....'

Richard Nichols taught at nine schools under ten headmasters, and was a teacher at FCS from 1967 to 1971 :-

'....My own scholars' association (Old Mercurians) ceased issuing a magazine in

1975, the school (The Royal Commercial Travellers' School) having closed and been sold in 1967.....The loyalty of your scholars has never wavered.....

I have just written an article about my first job for the old students of the College of St Mark and St John where Jack Rawlings was trained.....When I was at FCS I was impressed with the natural behaviour of a very well-run mixed school, among its other fine qualities.....the meals were very much better than in my day...

When the advert for FCS appeared I applied and gave the testimonial of my previous headmaster. By a remarkable coincidence, about which I did not find out till later, the Head of RCTS applied for the headship of FCS on the retirement of Mr Povah....he must have been in his late fifties and a younger man was required to see through the changes envisaged by the proposed amalgamation with Manorside and Hillside....When a special meeting of the Barnet Teachers' Association was called to reconsider the plans for comprehensive education, I attended and....spoke in favour of the retention of grammar schools in the borough....The eleven plus did not consign pupils to the list of failures.....when a school closed each teacher's contract terminated. Such was the demand for posts that I put in for twenty-four jobs before being appointed head of science at Harefield School....I think the best atmosphere at FCS was when I first went there. It had deteriorated by the time the pupils held a protest on the school field and the head had to be phoned to leave his sick-bed to come and sort things out....'.

And the War Memorial had a long awaited face lift :-



On 11 November 1998 the Remembrance Day ceremony was conducted at the War Memorial in the Old School Hall. Norman Burgess (1933/38) reported :-

'It was a great honour to be asked yet again by Sylvia Roberts, to lead the Remembrance event...the Borough laid proper emphasis on all their staff within the

building to observe the Silence at 11 am. About 150 folk filtered into the Hall from all the various rooms and I spoke to the assembled throng.....I held aloft the Remembrance Book..... and I then named a few who were in my own class at school....I then hung the wreath just below the famous picture which has been hanging there all these years.....It is appropriate in this Millennium year and at the time of the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, that our beloved War Memorial should have a face-lift.....as I lay the annual wreath there on Remembrance Day, I am always very conscious that the passing years have left their grime, dust and dirt behind. For a long time a number of us have expressed concern about the memorial's condition - well, at last the War Memorial has been cleaned. All the surface grime has been carefully washed off and the frame of the centre-piece, the water-colour of the Battle of Trafalgar 1805 by Charles Dixon, has been repainted in gold.....

.After more than two years of talking about the cleaning, two Old Fincunians, Norman Burgess and Bob Payne, OBE, (1934/36), got together with Caretaker, Kevin, on 16 August 2000. With the support of their wives, Betty Burgess and Audrey Payne (nee Bradford), and the advice of Chris Weekes of British Conservators, they got stuck in and did the job. Norman brought his scaffold tower, he lives just round the corner. Their combined ages total 160 years. Norman said, 'The words "Away with care and sad regret", were ringing in our ears. Follow that! We certainly "Scorned the slack and wavering", didn't we?'

And suddenly the Millennium was upon us :-



No special events or activities were organised by the Association but a special edition of Scimitar marked the occasion , and in November 2000 a wreath was laid at the War Memorial.

Norman Burgess (1933/38) sent this report to Scimitar 138, the Millennium edition:-

'...Finchley County School, as that is how the building was known for seven decades - is now the Professional Development Centre. We pause from our various duties to remember, through the names written on our War Memorial, all those who made the supreme sacrifice during the two World Wars of this century. Some of them were my classmates, the boys I played football with, some even from Primary School days and their faces are forever on the video tape that can never be erased from my mind. They stay forever young.....I then hung the wreath on the hook below the famous picture in the centre of the War Memorial. Then after two minutes silence from 300 people standing in the Hall, I said, "Do not stand at my grave and weep. I am not there. I did not die".....I had been invited by Sylvia Roberts, Administrator of the PDC, who gave me the honour to represent all Old Fincunians on the last Armistice Day of the century.....'.

Brian Brett (1934/39) emigrated to New Zealand :-

'.....any reminiscences of the Old School are welcome so I have jotted down a few.....Mr Sturdy, the Woodwork Master, when requesting space in which to demonstrate some of the finer points of chisel-sharpening or some similar activity, used to say, "Stand tobacco", instead of "Stand back". He would say, "Now, boys, I want you to recomember this".

Mr Quilliam, the Chemistry Master, had a trick for new entrants to his class. He would dip his finger into copper sulphate solution and then suck it. He would then invite the new pupil to do likewise. Of course, the taste was terrible. He then demonstrated that he had actually sucked another finger, not the one he had dipped. The lesson was that observation is the first most important requirement in chemical experiments.

Mr Vivian would throw chalk, or even board dusters at dim-witted scholars. Once he even threw a text book, not to hurt anyone, just wake them up.....'.

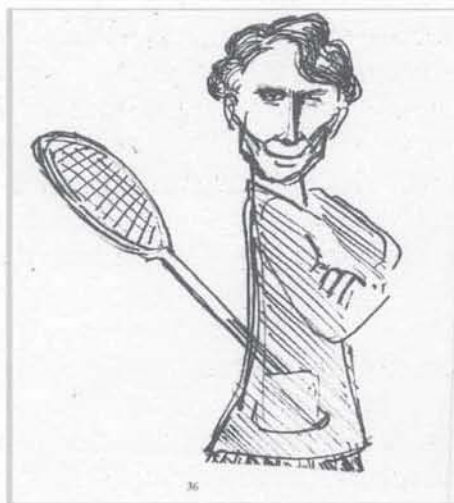
Geoff Lence (1942/49) wrote about football. Geoff was closely involved with Old Scholar's football as a player, administrator and as an officer, ever since he left school in 1949 :-

'.....The very many people who have reminisced about playing football for the Old Fincunians, and thus in the Old Boys' League, will be interested to know that the League no longer exists. I will try to summarise a very long, contentious and sometimes acrimonious debate as briefly as possible.

The Southern Olympian League, as long-standing members of the Amateur Football Alliance known as the OBFL, had, over the last 15 years, lost several bigger clubs to the Southern Amateur League, and ourselves. The remaining big clubs were also threatening to leave, causing the League to collapse (as the Nemean League did earlier for the same reason). The Southern Olympian League came to us to request amalgamation; we did not need them and many were against, but those clubs might have been lost to the AFA altogether. In the end it was agreed and we now have the

Amateur Football Combination (formerly the Old Boys' Football League and Southern Olympian League), comprising 93 clubs with 354 teams organised into 34 divisions.....'.

Bruce Hill (not an OF) wrote to Scimitar, Spring 2001 edition, about his sister, Dora Elizabeth Joan Hill, girls PE teacher at FCS from 1946 to 1970 :-



'I am afraid I have very sad news. Joan passed away in October 2000 in her 84th year.....I found her on the floor of her bedroom when I got underway at breakfast time....Joan had a very active correspondence with Scimitar, old school colleagues, and relatives, in many parts of the world. She was very proud of the fact that many had done very well. About three weeks before she went on her way, Connie Fozzard came to tea, and we had a very pleasant afternoon....Many bundles of letters, Christmas cards, etc., now have to be sorted and this will take time.

At the Glynn Valley crematorium only a few close friends and relatives attended the service which was taken by a real old Cornish Methodist Minister. I am now well into my 80th year.....'.

Vivian Hand (nee Pawle 1948/53) wrote :-

'...Miss Hill, as we all knew her, had a great influence on my life because it was through her that I really came to appreciate sport and the meaning behind it....It was through Joan and Finchley County that I "fell in love" with Wimbledon. I can remember, clearly, seeing those ivy covered walls and immaculate green lawns for the first time and how the whole atmosphere filled me with awe. Even now I can see "Little Mo", on that sacred No 1 Court (now gone). Thank you Miss Hill for those memories.

On the "indoor" side I remember distinctly one particular gym lesson. It was the end of the term and it was here that I learned the craft of Miss Hill. She divided us all into three groups - the "energetic", the "not quite so", and the "non-energetic". Eagerly I opted for the last group - much to my horror! Did she put our group through our paces - the dreaded rope, the horse buck, you name it, we

did it - there was no escape! Well done, Miss Hill, you read me like a book!

So I say farewell, and "Thankyou", to a quiet lady dressed in navy blue shorts, navy blazer, spotless white blouse, and short neat haircut....'.

Caroline Corkindale (nee Sivers 1957/64) emailed from Australia :-

'I am sure everyone reading this sad news will pause from the here and now life, to remember Joan Hill and her enormous influence on our school days. I am so glad I went to see her two years ago...'

And the boys also wished to pay their respects. Geoff Batten (1947/54) wrote:-

'....Joan Hill is remembered here because her exhortation, "Come along girls!", has entered the Batten family sayings. I understand she remembered me talking to her when she was waiting for her Green Line bus to go home after school....I do remember her being very annoyed at the way we "bent" the spirit, if not the strict rules, when we Sixth Form boys played the girls at netball. We were able to throw the ball from our end of the court to the girls' end where a very tall lad called Broadbent was waiting to drop the ball into the basket. Not done, apparently. Joan Hill took an interest in the boys as well as the girls. I remember her quizzing me about the treatment I was getting for my back troubles and enquiring what I was going to do after I left Finchley County. As I write this I am looking at a photograph of someone called "Hicks" winning the 400 yards at a very wet Sports Day - I came second - and Joan Hill is standing by the winning tape in a very fetching plastic mac'.

Janet Seddon (nee Thomas 1949/56) wrote :-

'.....I think it must have been her who persuaded me to think of teaching as a career. I loved sports and every break time we would collect a netball and go on the court. Her training made us into a very successful, winning team, and later on in years I used to remember her words when I was umpiring my teams...'

Molly James (nee Delaney 1948/54) returned to the Old School in the year 2000, the first time since she left in 1954 :-

'....to find so much the same as I remembered, it was amazing. I would like to think I will be able to attend a reunion there. I was able to visit Joan Hill a couple of times at Lescrow not long before she passed away, having only discovered that she lived in Cornwall a year or so before....'

Ann Seward (nee Prosser 1950/56) has fond memories :-

'.....I will always remember her standing beside the netball court in the girls' playground shouting "Shoulder to shoulder Attack and Defence", during a match. Apart from the long school photograph when she wore a skirt, I don't think I ever saw her in anything but her navy blue shorts.....'

Bruce Hill, Joan Hill's brother, wrote in 2001 :-

'....Jack Rawlings and his wife, were our very first visitors at Lescrow which then was no more than a ruin.....It has been a bit on the damp side and the lower garden by "bugsy's wood", is so water-logged that instead of planting a memorial tree to Joan, I have decided to build a gazebo. It will be an octagonal design with a 20 feet circular slate floor and a six sided slate pitched slate roof, with leaded hips, facias and gutters, all overlooking "bugsy's wood". A suitably inscribed slab will be set in the slated floor.....'.



And here is a picture of the gazebo in its final stages of construction.

The following headline appeared in the local press on Thursday 25 October 2001 but at that time our War Memorial was not "lost" :-

"Fallen Live Again" :- *"....Their names are engraved in stone, carved in wood and imprinted on the memories of friends and families. Decades after they died, Barnet's war heroes retain a more prominent place than ever in the community, and they look set to stay that way. Since the Press and Advertiser joined Finchley Society committee member Derek Warren, in June on a crusade to locate Barnet's lost war memorials, there have been numerous letters citing various remembrance plaques and monuments.*

The campaign was part of a nationwide search launched by the Imperial War Museum in 1989, to create a nationwide inventory by November 2001....Many of Barnet's Memorials are easily located since Barnet War Memorials Initiative groups set up by concerned local people, completed a 10-year project last year to restore 17

of them to their former glory.....One of the most impressive monuments in Barnet is the Gate of Honour outside Mill Hill School on The Ridgeway, Mill Hill. The large portland stone tower now stands in all its original glory since restoration work costing £5,000 was completed this month. Other memorials uncovered include a plaque in Hendon Methodist Church in The Burroughs, Hendon, and another in Our Lady of Dolours RC Church in Egerton Gardens, Hendon....'.

Bob Payne, OBE, (1934/36) researched the Life Membership List :- '...We have evidence that 311 Old Fincunians were made Life Members, many of whom are no longer with us. We can now put Certificate Numbers to most of the names, but not all. The last certificate number issued was 311.....

The editor of Scimitar tried to make some sense of it all :- '.....there could be 143 Life Members of whom we have no details at all. We have something like 90 claiming Life Membership but with no certificate to back it up.....the rules and costs of Life Membership have changed dramatically over the years. Once you were made a Life Member you did not have to pay anything more, but it was hoped that you would make donations from time to time....'.

Norman Burgess (1933/38) once again led the Remembrance Day Service at the Old School War Memorial on 9 November 2001 with the following words :-

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends'. Remembrance Day was first observed in 1921 and we come to remember, with honour, all those who made the supreme sacrifice in the two World Wars, and those now engaged in conflict since the events of 11 September 2001.....The names before you on the Memorial may have little meaning for you but to us here, all Old Scholars, they are flesh and blood and we hold their names in our hearts....We remember how they dressed, how they did their hair, and we remember their prowess on the sports field. Let us remember them". Over one hundred people were standing in the hall. I then hung a wreath of red poppies below the painting. Old Fincunians present were Gladys Jarman (nee Pearce 1942/46); Margaret Lee (nee Brett 1931/36), still grieving the death of her brother, Arnold; Jim Dunkley (1939/44) who travelled from Wendover to be there; Michael Holton (1939/46); Alan Edwards (1933/38); Norman Burgess (1933/38) and his wife, Betty.....'.



HERE WE GO AGAIN !

At several times during the history of the Old School attempts have been made to have the building "listed" in order to protect it from dramatic change or even demolition. In the past, in 1992 for example, because the building was not under "imminent threat", the applications failed to get off the ground.

Norman Burgess (1933/38), with his connections to The Finchley Society, had been for some time preparing the way for yet another application to give the building listed status at some time in the future. The building had operated satisfactorily as a school from 1904 until 1985, then as a Teachers Training Centre, and latterly as a Professional Development Centre. Then, after 99 years of unbroken and distinguished service to the community, not for the first time the London Borough of Barnet proposed that the Old School building should be sold off to developers.

Norman Burgess was the first Old Fincunian to learn that the sale of several Council-owned buildings was considered necessary to provide funds to transfer personnel from buildings around the Borough and to locate them temporarily in the Nortel building in Brunswick Park until new premises in Hendon were built.

The Council Meeting due to discuss the proposition was to be held on 14 October 2002 so there was not much time. We managed to cobble together a letter of protest, initially sent to all Old Fincunians known to be "on-line", then by a mail-shot to over four hundred members on the Scimitar distribution list. A special message was published on the Finchley County School web-site.

Many Old Fincunians despatched either the duplicated letter, or one of their own drafting, to the London Borough of Barnet - former pupils and teachers alike.

The protest was based upon four grounds :-

- (i) the loss of an amenity used by forty community groups each week,
- (ii) the building houses the War Memorial which is of special significance,
- (iii) the Old Fincunians, a thriving organisation, is based there,
- (iv) the building is still very serviceable as a school, and schools are needed within the Borough.

On Monday 14 October 2002, the Cabinet of the London Borough of Barnet convened and gave permission for the Old School building and the land upon which it stands, to be sold. It is pertinent to point out that :-

- (i) Opposition Councillors were not able to participate in the discussion,
- (ii) the public was allowed to be present but not to speak,
- (iii) there was no public consultation.

The following emerged from the meeting :-

- (i) the War Memorial would be treated with respect and removed to another unidentified place,
- (ii) many of the organisations currently using the building will be found alternative sites,
- (iii) it is an old building and will be treated with sympathy,
- (iv) it is an underused building,
- (v) one Councillor welcomed the assurance of protection for the War Memorial,
- (vi) there were no questions from other councillors,
- (vii) there were no other comments from other councillors,
- (viii) the proposal went through "on the nod".

The Old Fincunians Association then did two things :-

- (i) Norman Burgess and Oliver Natelson, B Pharm., PhD., M.Roy. Pharm.Soc, PGCE, representing The Finchley Society and the Old Fincunians between them, proceeded quickly to complete an application for listed status,
- (ii) they sought an interview with the Leader of Barnet Borough Council, Councillor Victor Lyon.

Thanks to Oliver Natelson and Norman Burgess, the application was completed in double-quick time. The report is of 71 pages, contains 65 pictures and 4 plans.

The reasons for the application for listing are :-

- (i) this is the most important building in the district where it is sited and a focal point for professional meetings,
- (ii) its architectural features, externally in brick, stone, slate, and lead, whilst internally glazed brick, wood block floors, steel supports, and a large expanse of glazed roofing,

- (iii) its history is one of 99 years unbroken service since it was erected in 1903, as a secondary school and latterly as a centre for development, used by teachers, local government, trade unions, charitable and other professional groups.
- (iv) the building is a very interesting early Edwardian construction and its Memorial Wall is especially valuable.
- (v) the building is under imminent threat.

That report was sent off to the Listing Branch of the Department of Culture, Media and Sports, in Cockspur Street, London, on 17 October 2002. It is a well-prepared document with well-prepared arguments and very good pictures to illustrate all the points made.

That same day Chairman, Godfrey Mann (1959/66) together with Betty Gordon-Smith (nee Bailey 1939/43) appeared in the Local Press, photographed and interviewed in front of the Old School. Councillor Anthony Finn said, *'The War Memorial will be treated with great respect. It will be removed after consultation to a place which is suitable for the memorial to go'*.



On Wednesday 6 November 2002, Norman Burgess and others attended what is called "Town Forum" when interested parties meet up with officers and some councillors of London Borough of Barnet. The Chair, Councillor L Sussman, stressed the importance of the War Memorial and gave an assurance it would be retained and protected. Meanwhile, some Old Fincunians were getting some standard replies from the London Borough of Barnet.

On 11 November 2002 the annual Remembrance Day Service was held at the Old School. Molly Powell (nee Holbrook 1929/35) placed the wreath on the Memorial Wall in the presence of Godfrey Mann (1959/66 - our Chairman), Norman Burgess (1933/38) and his wife Betty, Roy Pritchard (1936/43), Betty Gordon-Smith (nee Bailey 1939/43), Dorothy Evans (nee Gooday 1932/38), Margaret Lee (nee Brett 1931/36), Joyce Hill (1931/36), Gladys Jarman (nee Pearce 1942/46), Brigid Povah (1948/55), Mike Holton (1939/46 and Head Boy when the Memorial was re-consecrated in 1945/46), Bill Wilson, W Quillam and Mike Tomlins (1947/52).

All of the staff employed in the building and there on courses etc., stood in silence with the Old Scholars and listened to the words of Norman Burgess, all 60 of them believing that this might be the last occasion when they would be able to do so.



Chairman Godfrey Mann (1959/66 and Molly Powell (nee Holbrook 1929/35) hang the wreath on the old War Memorial for the very last time on 11 November 2002

Perhaps a significant event was the meeting between Oliver Natelson, Godfrey Mann, and others, with the Leader of Barnet Council, Councillor Victor Lyon. It was held at the Council Headquarters, The Burroughs, Hendon on 21 November 2002, and the following points emerged :-

- (i) because of the "chronic cash position", the council needs to look at the disposal of certain council owned properties, of which our Old School is one,
- (ii) no final decision has been taken,

- (iii) agents will be authorised week commencing 28 November 2002, to produce a recommendation on building disposal,
- (iv) the advertising of tenders for redevelopment will commence in January,
- (v) once received, the offers will be reviewed by the council and a final decision made.
- (vi) it was made absolutely clear to Councillor Lyon the intense passion which Old Scholars around the world feel for the School, particularly the Hall, and specifically the War Memorial.
- (vii) Councillor Lyon was certainly sympathetic to the arguments and claimed to have been a champion for the proper maintenance of war memorials within the Barnet area.
- (viii) it was made absolutely clear to Councillor Lyon that it would be totally unacceptable for a "new memorial" elsewhere in the Borough to be erected as a replacement. It was "our memorial" in "our Hall" that had to be preserved.
- (ix) all of the points were acknowledged by the Council Officers but with no undertakings made.

Following the meeting, Godfrey Mann, the Chairman, wrote to Councillor Lyon to confirm what had been discussed, and undertook, with Norman Burgess, to monitor all planning applications put before Barnet's Planning Department to ensure we are able to make the necessary representations at the appropriate time.

On 19 December 2002 the application for listing was rejected in the following terms :-

'...English Heritage, the Secretary of State's statutory advisers on the historic environment, has assessed the building at 451, High Road, London N12, and advises that it does not possess sufficient special architectural or historic interest to merit listing.

Having carefully considered all the evidence, the Secretary of State has decided to accept English Heritage's advice and will not, therefore, be adding the building on the statutory list.....'

The Inspector's advice is worth recording :-

'.....I have looked at all the papers on this file and other relevant information and have carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case. In my view the criteria for listing are not fulfilled.

This, the former Finchley County Secondary School, was opened in 1903. Since 1984 it has been used as a teacher's centre and has latterly been known as the Finchley Professional Development Centre. Barnet Council is currently undertaking a review of its premises, with a view to rationalising present arrangements and disposing of "surplus" buildings. We have received an impressively thorough application for listing, the applicants are concerned at the possible loss of this building of local prominence.

The school was built to the designs of the little-known architect W G Wilson in 1903. It comprises a 14-bay front, articulated 1-3-6-3-1, designed in a "Wrennaissance" style. It has a picturesque central cupola-cum-bell tower, and single storey end pavilions. Access is via two stone porches, with segmental pedimental canopies. Tall stacks stand at either end, over a dentil cornice. The architectural effort is concentrated overwhelmingly on this front, which is finely executed in red brick with Bath stone dressings. The more utilitarian sections are faced in stock brick; to the rear is a former crafts building, gable ended, but now attached to various C20 additions.

The interior is not without interest. The wrought iron railings to the stairs are attractive, as are the tile-lined corridors. The plan of the school is relatively common, with classrooms arranged around a central hall. The main hall contains the building's most interesting feature: a painted war memorial on one of the end walls. School war memorials are not uncommon and always of interest: this example is unusual in consisting of William Morris-inspired floral bordering over roll calls of the dead; the principal feature is a framed watercolour of the Battle of Trafalgar, by Charles Dixon of 1898. Above it is the inscription,

LIVE THOU FOR ENGLAND, WE FOR ENGLAND DIED.

This is a very unusual form of memorial (and one we have drawn to the attention of the National Inventory of War Memorials at the Imperial War Museum). The memorial is poignant and interesting : it is also a reminder of Middlesex County pride. The school has a handsome front, and a very interesting war memorial inside.

Otherwise, its claims to special interest are not very strong. Buildings such as this generate much local pride and appreciation, and it would be wrong to belittle these important considerations. However, listing can only concern itself with clear displays of special architectural or historic interest, and neither condition is fulfilled here. Edwardian schools survive in large numbers, and were frequently designed to the highest standards. The standards they need to reach are thus very high. Although this school has external and internal elements of quality, it lacks that degree of clear special interest necessary for listing.

A handsome Wrennaissance school of 1903, designed by W G Wilson as the Finchley County Secondary School. Although its hall retains an interesting war memorial incorporating a watercolour of the Battle of Trafalgar, the building overall lacks that special interest required for listing'.

On 1 February 2003 the newspapers carried the advertisement showing the Old School up for sale, and the London Borough of Barnet announced that the building would be completely vacated by Easter or Whitsun 2003.

And then this article appeared in the local newspaper PBHE on 30 January 2003 under a big picture of our War Memorial and Norman Burgess :-

'PLANS FOR NEW SCHOOL COULD BE SAVIOUR FOR HISTORIC MURAL

The former site of Finchley County School could be used for north London's first free Greek school. Barnet Council is currently in talks with a consortium from the Greek Community seeking to create a voluntary-aided school on the site of the 100-year-old building in Finchley High Road. If the negotiations are successful, the school could open by September 2004.

Councillor Katia David, who is Greek, said the consortium would not seek to make any changes to the appearance of the building.....News of the negotiations has also delighted former students of Finchley County School - Old Fincunians - who had feared that a war memorial, bearing the names of former students, could have been lost if the site had been sold.

Old Fincunian, Norman Burgess, has campaigned to have the school building listed to preserve the William Morris-style mural bearing the names of school friends who died in World War II. But English Heritage rejected the application. Mr Burgess has welcomed the council's talks with the Greek community, a strong and thriving community with 35,000 members.

There are no specialist state schools catering for the Greek language and Greek Orthodox Church, so parents are often forced to turn to the private sector. If the plan goes ahead, the school is likely to attract students from all over north London and would have a catchment area reaching into parts of Enfield, Haringey, and central London...'

Derek Batten (1942/47) was a Conservative Councillor in Northamptonshire, and he had contact with Councillor Katia David, so he sent her a message. Councillor Katia David replied by return :-

'...Regarding the old Finchley County School, nothing is definite yet but I assure you that if the Greek Community are successful with their bid, they will ensure that the building and the memorial are preserved. It is an ideal site and building for the intended school.....'

Naturally, these developments stimulated much correspondence from Old Fincunians and here is a representative sample :-

Eileen Daniell (nee Gregg 1929/33) wrote :-

'....The news really saddened me; can still see vividly the building and sports field on my daily approach to school from behind (down Bow Lane), often walking at a distance behind Mr Carr, the Headmaster, and Mr Howland, the Arts Master. They

sometimes invited me to use the back entrance so saving me time having to walk around to the front.....'.

Dick Russell (1947/53) wrote to the London Borough of Barnet from Belgium :-

'.....People in Belgium are disturbed by Barnet Council's decision of 14 October to dispose of the former Finchley County School building. Our concerns are especially centred on the fate of the war memorial housed therein. Even if the sacrifices of the brave men commemorated there are of little value to the present Barnet Council, they will never be forgotten here. Please do your best to have this place preserved.....'.

LB of Barnet replied :-

'...I received a number of messages and letters on the subject and indeed last week received a delegation about the former Finchley County School building as well as a number of other sites where the Council is proposing to dispose of the buildings. My colleagues and the Officers are conscious of the sensitivity of the war memorial housed in the building and this will be taken into account when any decision on the disposal is taken. As a former serviceman former Mayor, and instigator of the Barnet War Memorials project some ten years ago, I am conscious of the feelings of former pupils of the school concerning the war memorial. Regards, Cllr Victor Lyon'.

Mary Dark (nee Howard 1946/51) wrote a letter to LB of Barnet which was very much typical of the letters sent by so many Old Fincunians :-

'....My objections are numerous, but I should point out that the building houses the War Memorial to the dead of two World Wars, and a Memorial Service is held every year on, or near, 11 November. This should continue to be cherished, and especially as it is maintained at the expense of the Old Fincunians' Association which, although the School closed some 30 years ago, is still very much thriving, and members meet regularly every two years with old scholars coming from many parts of the world.....'.

In his letter to LB of Barnet, L Basil Pilgrim (1929/34) says :-

'....indeed my Grandfather, James Pointing, was for many years the Building Inspector for the former Finchley Council. My Grandfather's son, my Uncle, was killed during the First World War, and his name, Leslie Pointing, appears on the Finchley County School War Memorial. I am therefore appalled to hear that the Finchley County Grammar School is being considered for sale.....If the Borough go ahead with the proposal to sell the School building, much history will be lost and much distress caused to many people including my family.....'.

Margaret Message (nee Halsey 1944/48) wrote :-

'....My Dad's 17 years old brother was killed in the 1914 - 1918 War, and his name, Albert Halsey, appears on the beautiful War Memorial, so I have a special reason for supporting this cause.....'.

Mike Tomlins (1947/52) is a lifelong resident of Finchley and has lived in Squires Lane since the age of 4 years. He wrote to LB of Barnet :-

'....I write, not only as a former pupil of Finchley County Grammar School, but also as a life-long resident (and voter!) of Finchley. I moved to Squires Lane at the age of 4, shortly after the outbreak of the 2nd World War, and have continued to live here throughout my working life and into retirement. My house is no more than one quarter of a mile from the old "County School", so you can understand that I have a very real interest in the matter.

Over the last 10/20 years, various local Councils have presided over a number of events that have completely changed the area close to the junction of Finchley High Road and Squires Lane, and, in my view, all the changes have resulted in a reduction in the quality of life for local residents..... the loss of some retail properties in the nearby parade to cater for the North Circular Road upgrade, and the creation of the so-called Finchley Leisure Park (which seems to have become a magnet for noisy and rubbish-throwing youngsters), at the expense of the lovely Glebelands recreation area (tennis courts, putting green, etc) and the magnificent open air swimming pool that played host to the Olympic Games water polo events in 1948.....

I call upon the Council to avoid another ill-thought out move and retain the splendid school building for the valuable amenity it is.....'.

And then, in February 2003, The Rt. Hon. Dr. Rudi Vis, MP., started to take an interest in the fate of the Old School building. He contacted Dr S Oliver Natelson, who had worked together with Norman Burgess to prepare our application to have the building listed, suggesting that the Hampstead Garden Suburb Institute might be interested in using the building. Our response was immediate :-

- '.....I write to tell you that the Old Fincunians Association will be delighted if the building is to be used for educational purposes for a number of reasons : There are items of architectural and historic value which the Association believes should be preserved, ie., the Main Hall with its War Memorial, and the staircases*
- Biennial reunions and other meetings are held there by the Association and although they could be held elsewhere, the fact that they are currently held in the actual building gives them a real meaning. Over 150 ex-scholars attend these events coming from all over Great Britain and from overseas Canada, Australia, Europe and New Zealand.*
- There is an annual ceremony held in the Main Hall on Armistice Day every year when a wreath is laid at the War Memorial. There are still Old Fincunians who have the names of the relatives who were killed in the two World Wars, on the War Memorial and several of them have no other place to go to pay their respects and to remember.*
- The building is still a very viable facility which will be missed by local*

community and other groups should the building be closed down, or even demolished. The Old Fincunians support these groups.

I hope I have said enough to satisfy you that the Old Fincunians Association will do anything within its power to support any move to save the building and for it to continue as an educational establishment.....

On 11 March 2003 we received this reply :-

'Thank you for your letter in reference to the future of the Professional Development Centre (once Finchley County School) of which I am very much in agreement. One concern of mine, and others, is that it is clear the Institute would not be able to afford to adapt the Friern Barnet Town Hall and retain the much-loved features. This, I fear, may result in a number of things :

- the Council having offered them the Town Hall would feel they have fulfilled their duty to the Institute and therefore would not assist further,*
- the Council, in offering the Town Hall to the Institute only to have that offer rejected would feel that they have shown that a commercial development is the only option,*
- maybe the PDC would be offered to the Institute.*

I know that there are a lot of ifs, but I think we must all be vigilant.....'.

On 21 March 2003 another letter was received from Dr Rudi Vis, MP :-

With reference to the Professional Development Centre (once Finchley County School) and Friern Barnet Town Hall. I have heard only this morning that Barnet Council at a meeting on 20 March 2003 agreed a report, which outlined proposals to sell both the Professional Development Centre, High Road, N12., and Friern Barnet Town Hall, to Barratt Homes.

It is likely that this will be called in by Labour councillors and reported to Cabinet Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Monday 24 March 2003.....I will endeavour to keep you informed on developments.....'.

Derek Batten (1942/47) heard through his grapevine that the Greek Community's bid for the site had been rejected in favour of property developer's and on 24 March we learned that Barratt Homes had made the successful bid. A letter was despatched immediately to Barratt Homes and it is worth repeating its contents here :-

'THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTRE (formerly called Finchley County School), High Road, London, N12.

I write to you in connection with the recent purchase of the above site from the London Borough of Barnet, and on behalf of the Old Fincunians Association. The Association is comprised of ex-scholars of Finchley County School which still thrives

despite the fact that the school amalgamated with others to become a Comprehensive School in 1971 and the building ceased to be a school in 1986.

Since 1971 the Association has had the treasured privilege of holding reunions, first annual, and latterly biennial, in the old school building which remains much as it was when we were taught there. Ex-scholars from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Belgium, France and USA regularly attend. The usual gathering numbers between 150 and 200 ex-scholars, about half of the fully paid up members.

Since 1921 one whole wall of the main hall in the school building has borne a striking War Memorial. It was created by the Art Master in 1921, Mr Howland, with the help of the pupils. Although in 2002/2003 the Association failed to secure Listed Status for the old school building, the English Heritage Inspector, Dr R Bowdler made specific comment about the War Memorial :-

"The main hall contains the building's most interesting feature: a painted war memorial on one of the end walls. School war memorials are not uncommon and always of interest: this example is unusual in consisting of William Morris-inspired floral bordering over roll calls of the dead; the principal feature is a framed watercolour of the Battle of Trafalgar...Above it is the inscription :-

LIVE THOU FOR ENGLAND WE FOR ENGLAND DIED.

This is a very unusual form of memorial (and one we have drawn to the attention of the National Inventory of War Memorials at the Imperial War Museum). The memorial is poignant and interesting: it is also a reminder of Middlesex County pride....".

Every year since Finchley County School ceased to exist under that name, a ceremony of remembrance has been held in the hall in front of that War Memorial. Old Fincunians, Councillors, employees and students working within the building, and others, respect the silence as they stand and watch a wreath placed on the Memorial. Relatives of the dead of the two World Wars whose names appear on the Memorial are still alive and in some cases the Memorial is the only place within Great Britain where they can properly pay their respects. I enclose a picture of the War Memorial for your retention.

During the political process of selling the old school site, the Association was in regular contact with the London Borough of Barnet, and although our protests were rejected, the Council, including the Leader, Councillor Lyons, gave specific assurances that the War Memorial would be "safe". Those assurances were repeated in a face to face meeting, at the relevant Council Cabinet meetings, and in the Local Press.

Now that the site has changed hands I write to you, as the representative of the purchasers, to seek your assurance that plans are in hand to safeguard the War Memorial, and to ask what is to be done to preserve it?

So as to keep all interested parties up to date, I have copied this letter to Dr Rudi Vis, MP for Finchley and Golders Green; Councillor Lyons, Leader of L B Barnet; and the Finchley Society....'.

On 8 April 2003 we received the following reply from the Land Manager of Barratt Homes, North London :-

'....I write with reference to your letter of 3 April 2003 regarding the War Memorial inside the building.....I can confirm that Barratt North London have acquired the above site from the London Borough of Barnet with the intention of redeveloping the site for residential units. As we have just completed the purchase, we are still preparing drawings for the site, and it would be our intention once these are further advanced, that we should meet with you to discuss them in greater details. Should you need to contact me in the meantime, then please do not hesitate, otherwise I will contact you in due course.....'.

On 29 April 2003 our Chairman, Godfrey Mann (1959/66) recorded :-

'...I am clearing the school of all Old Fincunians property - I have a letter of authority from the PDC Manager. I have already got Jack Rawlings' bench at home for safe keeping.....it might be possible to get a last reunion at the building. I know it is short notice and I need to speak to Barratt's. The staff at the PDC know that their last day working there is 22 May 2003....'.

And then it all went quiet for a while until, on 21 May 2003, our Chairman, Godfrey Mann attended a meeting with the London Borough of Barnet.

Several possibilities emerged :-

- **Barratt Homes would try to convert the existing building into flats or apartments.**
- **Failing that, the building would be demolished and a new-build apartment block would be built on the site.**
- **The demolished Territorial Army building almost opposite the Old School is to be rebuilt. Remember, many Old Fincunians spent many years as Army Cadets and Air Training Corps on that site.**
- **It may be possible, subject to Ministry of Defence approval, for our War Memorial to be housed in the new Territorial Army building.**
- **Planning permission is unlikely to be finalised until the end of 2003.**
- **It is possible that an Old Fincunian Reunion, very probably the final one, can be held in the Old School building during 2003. Remember, although the Old School commenced its life in 1904, the foundation stone was laid 22 November 1903, so it is appropriate to celebrate the Centenary this year.**

Godfrey then set to work gathering together the Book of Remembrance, the special cabinet that houses it, the School Song panel, and the two name panels from the War Memorial. Those two name panels, one for 1914/18 and one for 1939/46, were screwed onto the War Memorial at the end of the Second World War. Underneath, painted directly onto the wall, were the names of those who were killed during the First World War.

On 3 June the 414 invitations were sent out for a Centenary Reunion to be held in the Old School on 6 September 2003.

So, at that time the situation was :-

- Barratt North London was awaiting a structural engineer's report into the feasibility of the existing building being converted for residential use. Should the building be deemed not suitable for conversion then it will be demolished. Subject to planning permission building works at the site could begin by mid-September 2003.
- The necessary approvals have been given for a "final reunion" of ex-pupils, etc., to be held on 6 September 2003 in the Old School building.
- The War Memorial will not remain in situ. It is possible that it may be rehoused within the redeveloped TA centre on the site to the south and on the opposite side of the A1000 to the Old School building.
- The painting which hung on the War Memorial and the name panels were safely in the custody of Godfrey Mann, our Chairman.
- Godfrey also had in his keeping the wooden cabinet with a glass topped box which housed the "roll of honour", and the canvas upon which is painted the School Song.
- All of the artefacts mentioned above are in need of professional restoration.

Godfrey Mann (1959/66), our Chairman, set out in detail what was being done, on our behalf, to rescue the School building and preserve the War Memorial :-

'.....I believe I have made every effort on behalf of the Old Fins to ensure that a memorial to those old scholars who died in each World War, remains.

As an organisation, we approached both the DCMS and English Heritage to apply for listing status. Whilst the building (and the memorial) was recognised as having some architectural value, listing was denied.

We were offered some hope when it appeared that the Greek community was considering the building, but their bid was substantially less than the bid received from Barratt.

Barratt's first plan was for the existing shell to be retained with the inside being

developed for residential use. Even if the structure of the building had been able to support this proposal, Barratts informed me that the Hall could not have been left in a way so as to allow the memorial to remain in situ. Even if there had been this chance it is most unlikely that future residents would want such a memorial inside their "home", and just as unlikely that access would be readily made for Old Fincs to visit. I have also been told (by an engineer connected neither with the OFA nor Barnet) that it would be virtually impossible (and most certainly cost prohibitive) to remove the wall intact. You may not be aware that water damage has taken its toll.

Therefore, we have to realise and accept that the existing memorial will be destroyed when the building is demolished. As a resultI have pursued alternative options to ensure that a tribute to our old scholars will exist, albeit in new form.

First, I checked whether it could be housed in Avenue House. There is no room there. Norman Burgess (1933/38) was closely involved with the application for listing and is closely involved with the Finchley Society who use Avenue House. The building, I understand, is in a poor state of repair.

Next, it appeared that a "new" TA Centre might provide an ideal site as many scholars had attended Army Cadet or ATC there.....Unfortunately, this proposal was rejected by the MOD/TA authorities on the basis that they do not allow non-military personnel access to their properties. I also believe they do not insure contents....and could not/would not guarantee future well-being or maintenance. Third, the North Finchley British Legion were approached to determine whether a war memorial of some sort can be placed in their "newish" centre off Summers Lane. The site is a prime target for vandals, the previous building was burned down. I have visited the building which is a single storey club-house type construction and although it could make a good home for the memorial/roll of honour, the outside memorial to Finchley's dead does not carry the names of individuals. I do not know whether our name panels could be housed within the club building.

Finally, I have received a letter from Barratt :-

"I can confirm that in principle Barratt North London will incorporate onto an external wall of the new residential building a memorial plaque. The size and detail will need to be agreed once the design of the site has been agreed with the Planning Department of the London Borough of Barnet, over the coming weeks. I trust this is acceptable and we will speak again once the site design is further progressed".

I am in regular contact with both Barratt and Barnet. Vic Lyon gets copies of all correspondence and he will continue to be pressurised. I intend to push fully for not only names to be included on the memorial but also the line "Live thou for England, we for England died", a reference to it being on the site of the former Finchley County Grammar School, and a copy of the School badge and motto. I have a graphic designer putting together an outline. I believe that this must be the optimum scenario - a memorial on the site of our school, and total accessibility for those who wish to visit.

..... various other elements that formed part of the "overall" memorial, the Library

furniture which was donated by the Old Fincs following World War II, has disappeared. The lectern fell apart and we gave the brass plaque to the Sturdy family. You may remember, Mr Sturdy, the Woodwork Master, made it. In my garage I have the cabinet which housed the "Roll of Honour", and was made by Mr Eldridge, Woodwork Master. It needs some restoration work. The School Song board has almost rotted away having been stored in the girls' old toilet block for the past thirty years, and as already mentioned above, I have the "Book of Remembrance". I have removed the painted name panels from the wall and I also have the Jack Rawlings bench which I am arranging to be taken to his daughter's home in Bognor. These objects, together with the painting, I collected in May 2003 when the site was being cleared.

With reference to the painting,.....there is nowhere it can be acceptably housed and there is no option available to us for it to be included within any new memorial. Les Sharp and I spoke separately to the National Maritime Gallery. They would accept it as a gift but could not guarantee its display and no reference could be made to Finchley County School War Memorial.

I have discussed all the issues with the Officers of the Old Fincunians Association and I have also sought the views of those who have been closest to the demise of the Old School building, i.e., Norman Burgess and Bob Payne. I also spoke to Jack Rawlings daughter, Sheila Segal, to ask what she thought her father's view might have been. All who have been closest to this episode in our history, supported the decision to offer the painting for sale and as a consequence I have signed a contract with Christies....Subsequent conversations with many Old Fincunians have supported this decision.....We do not need cash as an association and I have never suggested we did.....

The school closed over thirty years ago so by definition the Old Fincunians Association will not gather genuinely new members. The youngest members are already in their fifties. My wish, and it seems to be shared by everyone I have spoken to, is for the association to continue to its last living member. I will do everything I can to ensure that happens. Any funds from the sale of the painting can only help the association's continuance but it is also possible, subject to the will of the members, that perhaps the like of a local children's charity can be identified to benefit from a proportion of the funds received at the right time.

I hope that you will all support what has been done so far.....'.

Scimitar suggested that:-

'We believe that our Chairman has achieved the most satisfactory outcome possible given the surrounding circumstances. The memories of those who died, not the artefacts, must be our main focus. I believe that our Chairman has ensured that not only is the past remembered, but also that Finchley's future generations may, like us, benefit from those who went before. Surely that is a fitting and lasting legacy from "The Battle of Trafalgar"?

Many members support that view as the following sample suggests :-

Mary Dark (nee Howard 1946/51) wrote :-

'...I am very sorry to learn the fate of the dear old school but it seems that everything possible has been done to safeguard the memorial. The rescue attempt has failed but the memorial will be saved in a different form. Sad as all this is we must remember that we can still meet, albeit in other surroundings, and its people that really matter, not places. Very grateful thanks are due to all those, particularly Godfrey Mann, who have spent a great deal of time and energy trying to save FCS....I do not think any of us could ask for more'.

Peter Monk (1957/61) wrote :-

'....I think now is a good time for me - a simple Old Finc - to offer my thanks to Godfrey and the rest of the committee and other helpful people, who have worked hard, and well, to keep the Old Fincunians Association going and in tackling the tricky matters around the ending of the Old School building. I have read and thought about every step taken, and I try to keep it all in perspective. Nothing except a "beaming up" of the whole building to another safe site would come close to satisfying everyone. So, has everything done been in the right direction? Yes, it has. It seems to me that those who have worked so hard on our behalf, particularly Godfrey Mann, our Chairman, have been thinking things through very well indeed. Of course, at times they have had to decide on the least worst of bad options, but what they have done is "Well done!". I think there has been quite a bit of physical effort and time consuming activities and that should not be overlooked by those of us who have simply looked. Many thanks.....'.

Jim Hind (1926/33) with Godfrey's letter in his hand wrote :-

'....The object of this e-mail is to say how pleased I am to have been kept informed while negotiations have been taking place. Godfrey's report is magnificent. Clear, comprehensive, and good to see a determination to accept what was so dearly wanted, i.e., a place for the Memorial and a realisation of the money value of the painting, rather than it be stored as a meaningless token of things gone by and never to be the same again. I could say more about Godfrey's report, the way which the route he took, month by month, turned out to be right, and acceptable to all who will think on broad lines, rather than isolated and unstated principles.

.....I want you to know that an old member, active when not so old, but more and more a real Old Fincunian as the years have passed, is delighted with what you have achieved. Jim Hind - never lost for words, as someone rightly said - no more to say this time. "Hoorah!".

Alan Lamerton (1956/1963) wrote :-

'....I have nothing but support for what Godfrey is doing. I spent seven years at FCS and each morning I looked up to see my Uncle's name and initials "R C Lamerton" on the War Memorial in front of me. The experience undoubtedly made me feel closer to my Uncle even though I never had the chance to meet him as he was killed before I was born.

Roy Lamerton's widow, Peggy, was also an Old Fincunian circa 1924 to 1929. She died in May 1999. So was his sister an Old Fincunian, Margaret circa 1932 to 1937, still going strong and living in Croydon, and his brother Philip circa 1922 to 1927, died 1982 I think.

I mention my Uncle in order to show that I, too, have a strong attachment to the War Memorial, but like to remember it in its original setting, aided by the photograph I bought at the reunion a few years ago. It would be sad to see a progressive deterioration in its condition, as would most certainly be the case if the building were to be listed, but without any use being made of it and without the owners having the will or the money to maintain it properly. If Godfrey can persuade Barratts to set a nice memorial plaque to FCS within one of the external walls of their development, then that would be great. I expect that as long as it does not cost Barratts anything they will agree and may even get some good free publicity....'.

Jim Williams (1946/53) wrote:- *'....This e-mail is to express support for the actions taken re. the demise of the School building.....I hope that you are not experiencing what all organisers learn from bitter experience - that there is little support when things are ticking over but plenty of "carpers" when life gets difficult. My thanks to you, Godfrey, and the "committee" for all you have done and are doing. Please keep up the good work.....'.*

Bob Catling (1950/56) wrote :- *'...Many thanks for the Scimitars and to the whole team for the time and effort you all put in to the association. As requested I wrote to Barnet Council and did receive a reply - much the same reply as everyone else got, I guess.....'.*

On Saturday 6 September 2003 over 380 Old Fincunians and their families and friends gathered in the Old School building for what many thought would be "The Final Reunion". It was certainly a Reunion to say farewell to the Old School building.



This is a picture of the boys' playground taken early on the day of the reunion on Saturday 6 September 2004. Barratt Homes' signs obliterated much of the front facade of the building, but access could be gained to most parts of the Old School. The attendance that day was overwhelming.

Chairman, Godfrey Mann, reported in Scimitar 146, Spring edition 2004 :-

'The final 'Reunion' in September was very special. Over 330 OF's turned up, plus their families and friends, to say good-bye to the old place and a further 91 had been contacted but were unable to attend.

This number is amazing when you consider that across the 60+ years of Finchley County School's existence with, on average, a 60 pupil per year intake, a total of just over 3,500 passed through the School gates (and many of those of course are no longer with us) – a staggering 13% were contacted and nigh on 10% turned up. I do not believe any other Old Scholars Association anywhere would be able to match that – a testament to the aura of FCS and the strong and lasting friendships that were forged there'.

Many of those who attended took the opportunity to look around the building, some even made it up into the clock tower. Here are some of the sights they saw :-



**Ground Floor Staircase with the main entrance to the left.
The ginger tiles and the magnificent balustrade in white wrought iron are clearly visible.**



Detail of the "Ginger Tiles"
The top four courses showing the darker alternating with the paler finishes.



Half way up the girls' staircase.



Main entrance at boys' playground end as seen from ground floor corridor near to the Headmaster's Office.



Main block, first floor corridor with the ginger tiled walls and the wood block floor



First floor corridor at the top of the stairs at the boys' playground end of the building.



Southern entrance with its vaulted portico flanked by stone columns



The Headmaster's Study with bowed front and three windows, each with double hung sash. Each window faces a slightly different direction thereby enabling the Headmaster to see every corner of the boys' playground.



Rain Water Hopper attached to the wall of the Headmaster's Study.

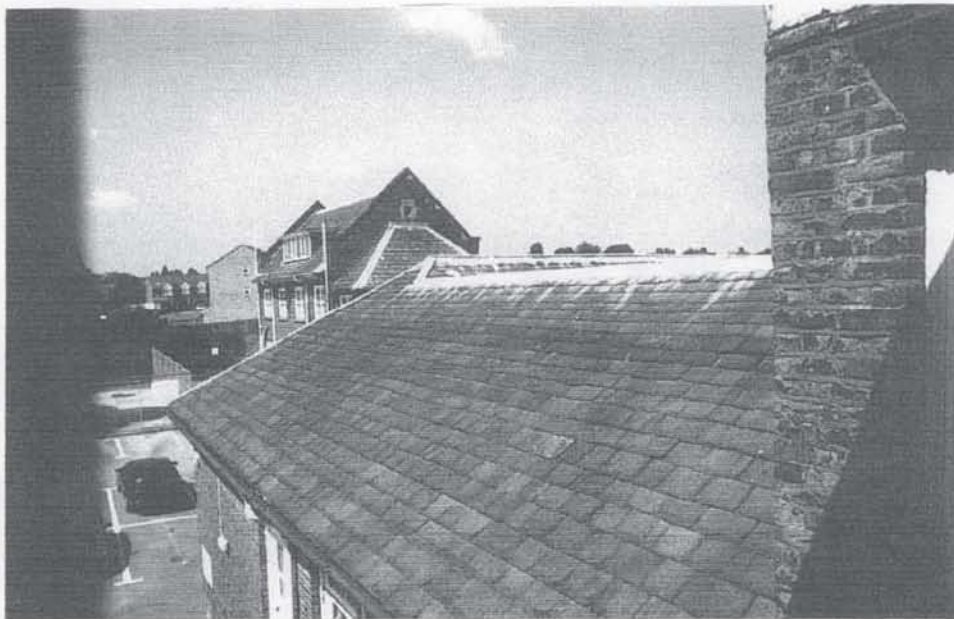
GEORGETOWN, ILL.



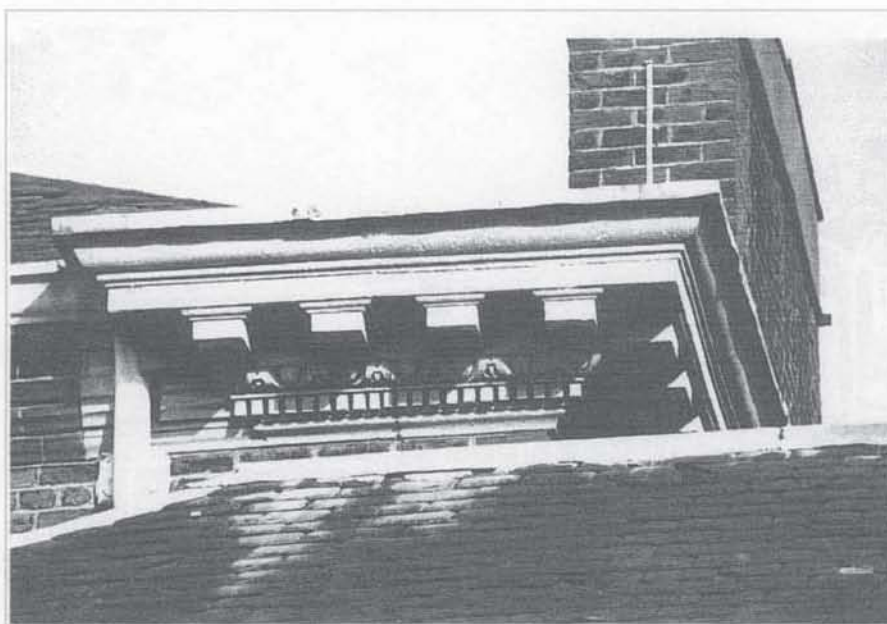
The Caretaker's House, built at the same time as the Main Block, its walls, windows and roof exhibit similar features. The bay window on the left is similar to the bay window in the Headmaster's Study.



A view of the Main Block as viewed across the girls' playground. The domed ventilator outlets are similar in shape to the clock tower - even to the point of having a finial projection.



Roof with hand-made thick slates, as seen from a first-floor window.



Eaves cornice showing the finely crafted stonework on the south east corner of the Main Block



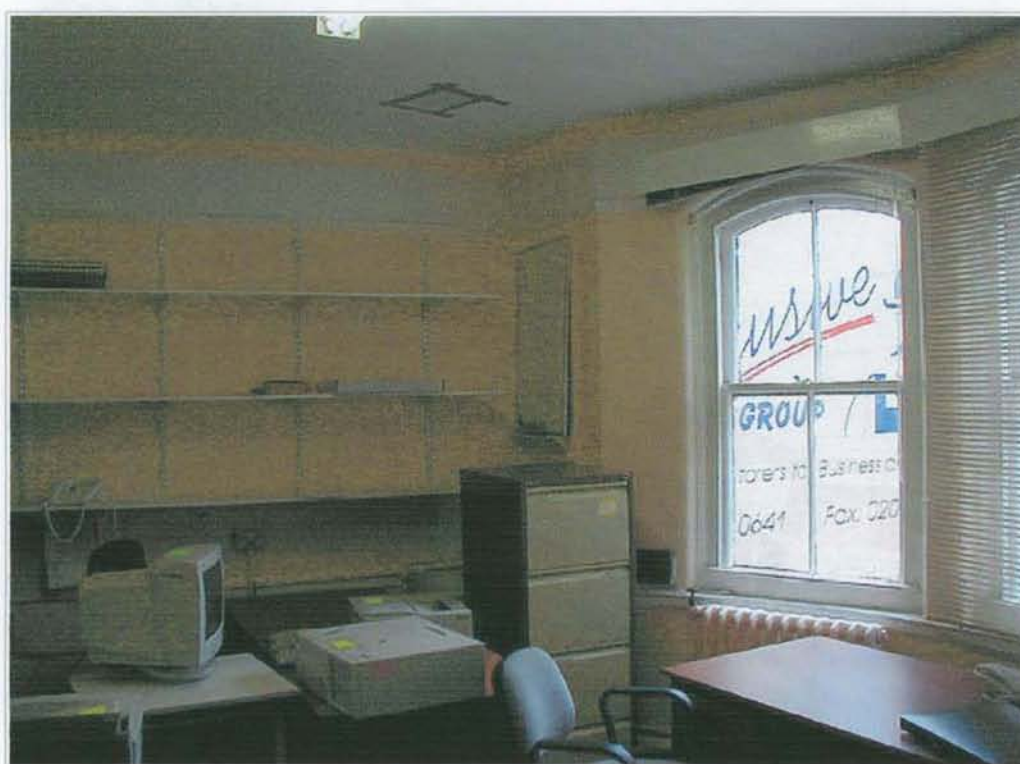
The Art Room in 2003



The Biology Lab in 2003

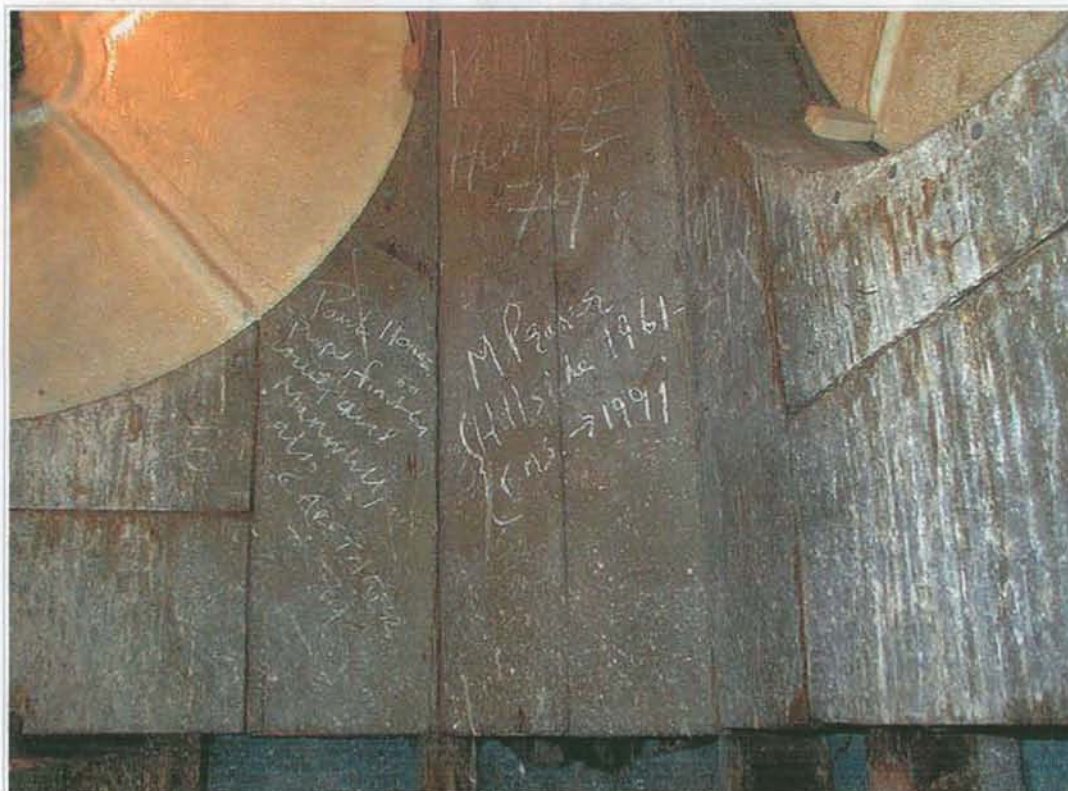


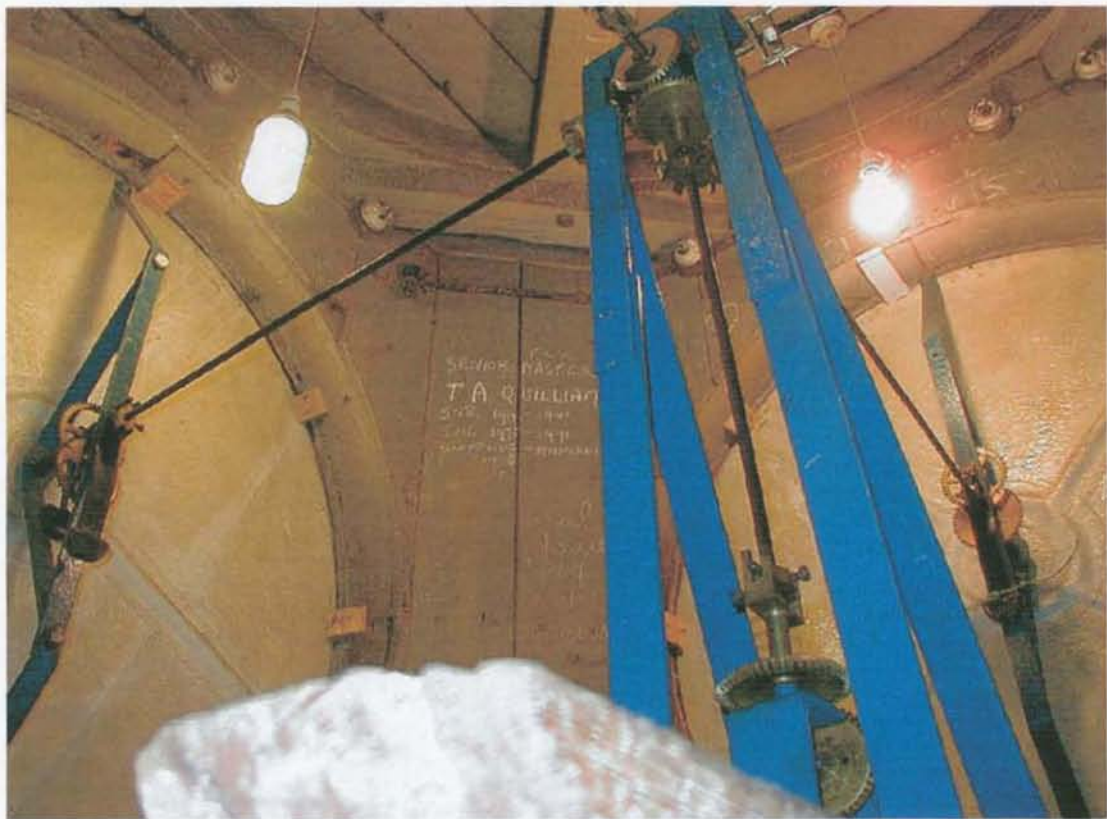
The Chemistry Lab in 2003



The Headmaster's Office in 2003

The Clock Tower was especially attractive and some brave souls even made the hazardous ascent into it to look at the graffiti. At page 79 there is an early list of of our clock tower mural artists :-







Over the years there have been many claims to be the first to write in that special place, the Clock Tower, but the earliest name found was 'N Lelean 1923'.

The most prolific year for signatories was 1926, with 'WF Eames; J Blunt; R Dane; L R Adams; A G White of 4B; J Prideaux of 5 B; H Reading; E Taylor; G Baird; and K W Vincent'.

Perhaps the most eminent name to appear there was 'T A Qilliam , Senior Master', but the name is in block capitals and could easily have been forged by one of the more mischievous pupils.

One little mystery is the name 'M Smeeton' which was clearly written there, because there has never been a pupil of that name on the school roll. There was 'Basil Smeeton' round about 1934 so if the name is his he may know something we do not know.

None of the words recorded on the walls of the Clock Tower are especially clever or amusing, but not one rude word or message has been found there.

Legend suggests that the graffiti were drawn to the attention of every Headmaster throughout the life of the school, and that each one in turn was content that the names remained undisturbed.

Scimitar reported :-

‘.....As I entered the Hall I was pleasantly surprised to find its emptiness was more like the Old School Hall than it had been for many of the reunions held there in the past. All trace of the Professional Development Centre had gone and the War Memorial displayed itself as it must have looked in 1920, now well-worn and battle scarred, but proudly remembering the names of our First World War heroes....’.

‘.....towards the Geography Room were lists of everyone who had said they were coming, all arranged in School Years order. Against the opposite wall were a number of trestle tables scattered with photographs, registers, documents, and all the other memorabilia, together with the two panels now detached from the War Memorial displaying the names of the ex-scholars who fell in both World Wars. All of these exhibits were enjoying a breath of fresh air and a return to their proper home on one of their rare trips out of Godfrey Mann’s garage....’.

‘.....Bill Wilson and a number of the boys were standing by a small card table nearby. They were slowly, nay reverently, turning the pages of the Book of Remembrance. Every name they quietly voiced, a whispered roll-call to which those names from the past all answered “Present” in their turn. Voices only raised a little to tell some anecdote, or other.

“Alexander; Barnes; Barrett; Bullock; Butler; Campbell”.....“I knew everyone of them”..... “He was such a good-looker, the girls all loved him”..... “Cooper; Davidson; Deere; ”..... “they were just boys when they fell in the War, just boys”..... “Driver; the two Edwards and Dix”..... “Fisher; Welcome; Kilby”.... “Who was it that was losing his hair even when he was at school but all the girls fell for him?”..... “Laidman; Lamerton; Lackerness”..... “What a waste”, said one drawing a quick response from another, “Don’t ever say that, don’t even think it. It cannot be a waste to make the sacrifice they did so that all of us could have a better life”..... “Mayo; Mills; Mitchell.....”.

I crept away as the roll call and the associated homage continued...’.





'...Godfrey made some announcements, Bob Payne OBE (1934/36) slotted neatly into his accustomed role of Toast Master, and Norman Burgess (1933/38), Brian Smith (1944/49), and Peter Monk (1957/61) were all presented with Old Fincunian ties. Brigid Povah got a mention and so did the members of staff who were present, and eight pupils who had joined the Old School in the early 1920's... "Thanks" for this, "Thanks" for that..... The Hall was quiet as we listened but we were all impatient to start the singing. Everyone had been given a printed copy of the words, all four verses. All eyes were no longer on Godfrey, but on our conductor....'.

Peter Monk rose majestically to his full height, took up the conductor's position in front of the standing assembly, slowly turned to face his audience, and as if in slow motion he raised the cardboard tube he was using as a baton. I thought, "*Last Night of the Proms*" has nothing to match this moment. There was a gentle rustling of song sheets and some clearing of throats. Peter Monk stood poised with both arms and the baton raised above his head like a matador about to despatch the bull. The recorded piano music started and at last we were into the "*All Hails*", boasting about our "*Lusty Limbs*", singing in "*Vig'rous Strain*" to "*Our Friends and Comrades*", both here and elsewhere.

Over 300 Old Fincunians all singing in tune and in time with the music has got to be a first. I just hoped and prayed that it will not be the last.

The words were sung with gusto but tunefully, not sadly but proudly, and with great enthusiasm. I looked around to see if I could recognise anyone just miming, or not singing, just listening, but I could find none. I am almost certain that mixed in amongst us I saw Carr and Chalk, Povah and Vivian, Joscelyne and McNelly, Dace and Sturgeon, and the others, all singing and orchestrated by EJR, while the lyricist and composer, Wallis and Davie, looked on. The fourth and final verse was now almost ended leading up to the final "*Hail*".

I wiped my eyes - must be the pepper on my food - and stood looking around me. Some of the others must have had too much pepper as well, because

there were many handkerchiefs on view. As the singing ended there was a silent pause but as the spell was broken, suddenly the chatter and the babble started again.

Not for the first time that day I just stood still and let the occasion engulf me. I could see that quite a few boys and girls were doing the same, and for each one of us the focus seemed to be the War Memorial. At that moment the sun was covered by a cloud and it became darker.....'.



It was generally agreed later that the highlight of the day was undoubtedly the singing of the School Song, positively the last occasion it was sung in the building it was written for. The singing was the outlet for much pent up emotion, but as Scimitar reported, the final moments of the day were still to come :-

'.....Around the Hall people were talking animatedly with what seemed to be a growing determination to make the best of the last few minutes. Others just stood, alone and silent.....

....I made one last tour around the school, downstairs and upstairs, and all was peaceful and quiet. No ghosts now, just a quiet "Goodbye" to the organic building known proudly and variously as Finchley County School, Finchley County Grammar School, and latterly as Finchley Manorhill Junior School.

Those of us who were still there were quietly listening for the Old School's farewell. Vivian Hand (nee Pawle 1948/53) could hear a piano start to play very softly, followed by the School Song being sung in a hush, but I could only hear it sighing.

After that things came quickly to an end - kisses and cuddles and lots of "See you next time!", and the usual volunteers started to clean up ready for the bulldozers.

I gathered up my trestle table, packed the Scimitar archive and walked out of the Old School building for the last time. I remembered 1947 and the first time I had walked out of the building, but on that occasion I could not wait to get home for tea. It was quite different on Saturday 6 September 2003.

I had no appetite for tea, and I did not sleep a wink that night!'

After the reunion Chairman, Godfrey Mann, attended a planning meeting at Barnet Town Hall. It appeared that the new building may, in some respects resemble the Old School, maybe even a clock tower on the roof.

Negotiations continued on the size and exact location of the War Memorial and it was suggested the stone tablet be placed into a "cut back" in the front wall so that it can be seen from the street.

Barratt's emphasised that the management company will have the responsibility to ensure the memorial is cared for and protected from vandalism and graffiti.

Scimitar No. 146, Spring edition 2004 reported :-

'...The last reunion to be held at the Old School building was more than a reunion.

It was our way of saying "Goodbye!" to our school.

It was our way of being with a dear friend as the end approaches.

It was our way of saying "Thank you for all you did for us".

It was our way of remembering the teachers and friends of the past...'



The very last photograph of the building with structure intact.

GOING.....



Scimitar No 146 reported that John Salmond, Physics Teacher at FCS from 1949 onwards, died on 31 July 2003. The funeral was at Great Northern Cemetery, Southgate on 8 August. Geoffrey Batten (1947-54) wrote :-

'John Salmond taught me Physics at FCS 1952 to 1954. He was a quiet, uncharismatic teacher in complete contrast to his colleague Charlie Vivian - but no less effective for that.... I was determined to go to university, although to study Chemistry, not Physics! I am so grateful to John for providing me with the encouragement.

After leaving school I remained in touch with John - an enthusiastic opponent of the fluoridation of water... This sparked an exchange of letters running over a number of years He clearly enjoyed Old Fincs reunions with so many of his old pupils around him... I spoke to him on the telephone only two days before his death ... He sounded his usual self and was looking forward to a final visit to the school building on 6 September.

John was a kind, gentle man and many will remember him with affection and respect. He was a member of the Christadelphian Church.....'

Connie Fozzard (1945/52) wrote a letter of condolence to Ron Salmond, John's brother, some of which is repeated here:-

'....he acted as guide and mentor to me...When I missed getting an A-Level pass in Physics, I thought the world had come to an end. Not so, for John had spotted that Charing Cross Hospital Medical School was setting up a first M.B. course.....I was accepted on this course..... So I remain indebted to John for my career in medicine. He and I remained in communication - curiously for Christmas cards, we both supported the charity of the Shipwrecked Sailors..... Occasionally I was able to give him a lift to the Old Fincunians biennial reunions. He was the most regular and

senior of the old staff to attend...We shall all miss him as a teacher, mentor, gentleman and friend.....I shall cherish his memory'.



This picture was taken by Martin Wellsman (1965/72) at the 2002 Reunion at the Old School. At the reunions, John Salmond was always surrounded by old scholars and he was looking forward to attending the 2003 event but he died shortly before it took place.

Joan Ridley (1947/54) thought that :-

'John Salmond was one of the most likeable of the teachers at FCS....because he liked his pupils. This is what he told us when Geof Batten and I had lunch with him and Margaret Orr last April, only a few months before he died. I remember him driving to East Finchley from his home in Totteridge during the Easter holidays of 1954...to help me when I was swotting for my civil service exams. He had a few "catch phrases", such as 'The eye is easily deceived', and his admonition to inattentive pupils, 'Give your eyes to the board, boy!'.....A benevolent, kindly gentleman, to be remembered with affection....

Dick Russell (1947/58) from Belgium :-

'I last spoke to Mr Salmond at the school reunion in 2002. He was delighted when I told him that I can still recite by heart Newton's three laws of motion that he taught me over fifty years before..an outstanding teacher whose passing will be deeply regretted by us all'.

Iona Mason (nee Jackson 1953/58) wrote :-

'When I last spoke to Mr Salmond he did not remember my face but he remembered my name.....he had always told me I would never be any good at Physics. How right he was...A good teacher, a kind man, he will be greatly missed but always remembered'.



Godfrey Man, Chairman of the Association looking pensive at the reunion in 2002, the last one attended by John Salmond.

Godfrey is standing next to the School Song board which, as usual, was on prominent display, and John Salmond showed a great deal of interest in it.

For most of the event John found a comfortable chair in the buffet room and the guests at one stage were queuing to speak with him.

He always appeared slightly bemused by the attention that was paid to him.

Alec Churchill (Teacher 1960/64) died on 29 October 2002. When he married in 1961 some of the Sixth Form travelled to Leytonstone from Finchley to be at the wedding. His widow, Sheila, recalled some of Alec's teacher colleagues :-

'...Tudor Bevan, Charlie Gault, Jonah (is it true he used to jump off the diving board fully clothed at the end of the swimming galas?), Williams, Fred something-or-other who I believe died whilst supervising an examination, and I can see the chemistry

teacher who left for Shreddies, but cannot remember his name. Then there was Jack Rawlings, Povah and Doris, the secretary.

Apparently Mr Povah phoned the hospital to see how I was on the day our son was born.....Alec wanted me to call the baby Ethelred, but I objected and he settled for Godriclater he told me that he had asked the VIth form what they thought of the name, Godric, and because they were doubtful he decided to call him Simon Godric... I remember one or two pupils names - Wanda Wojenski, who was going to be a doctor, Jennifer Cohen, a lawyer, and Pibworth who was clever but had problems with spelling and always wrote "brids" for "birds". I think he cycled to our wedding all the way from Finchley...In September 2002 it was found that Alec had contracted Sporadic CJD, a most dreadful disease and he deteriorated rapidly.....'.

No more than a few days after the reunion on 6 September 2003 the bulldozers and cranes were on site demolishing the school ready to start building. John Keogh (1960/71); Ken Amphlet (1949/54); Dr Oliver Natelson; Godfrey Mann (1959/66); and others, provided the pictorial record of those events.

But first, let us take one more look at the Old School as it was in its heyday :-



1970

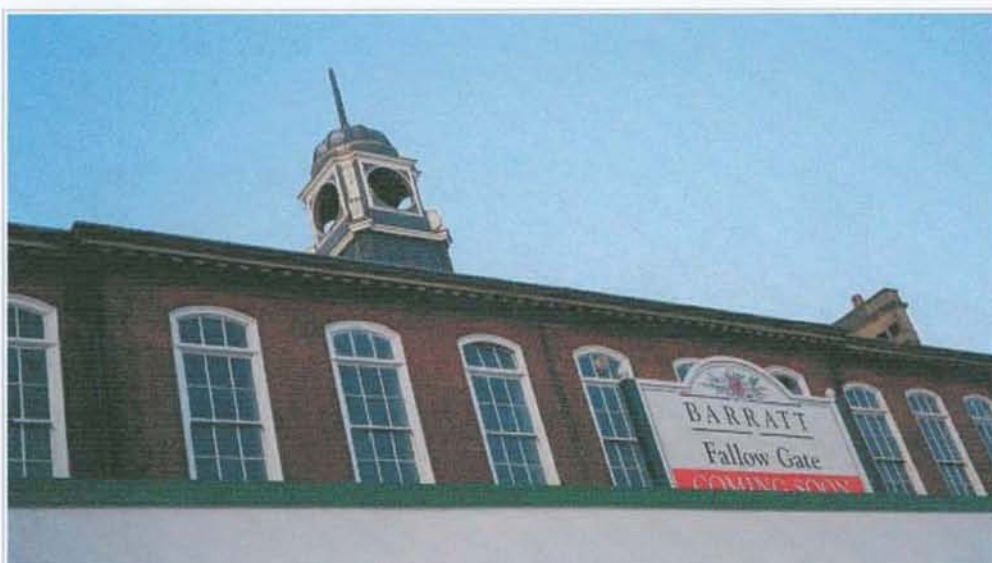
GOING.....



The signs and the screens are put in place.



The clock was never right, it will have to go....



Barratt Homes proudly announce the new name for the site -

Fallow Gate



They started on the main building at the girls' end.



JCB's strutting about like aliens from War of the Worlds!



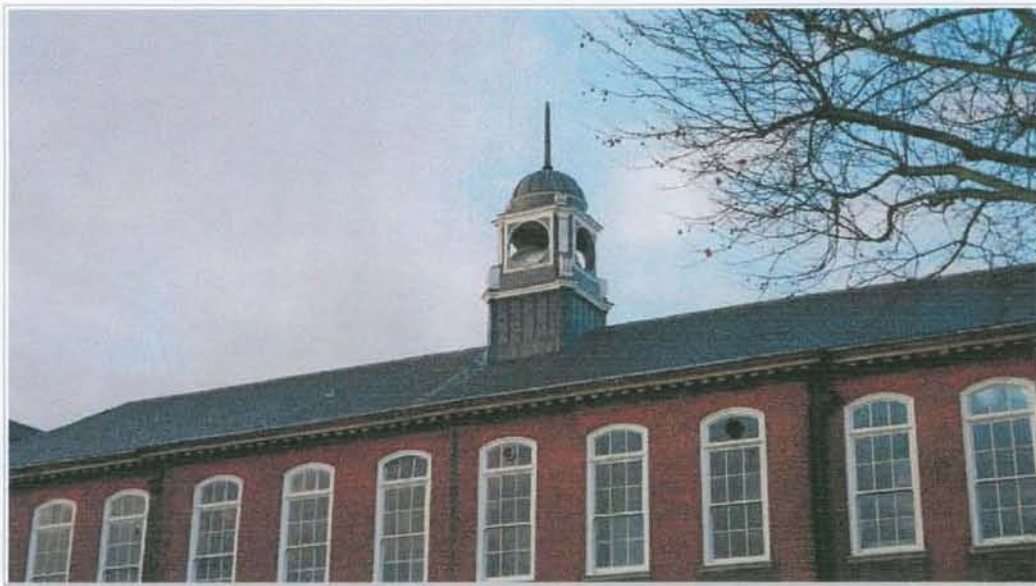
The Old School did not give up without a fight....



.....but the odds were overwhelming.



The Cookery/Woodwork block was the first to go, leaving the boys' playground buried under rubble.



The clock still held its head up high.....



....with style and dignity.....



.....but the building was disappearing from under its feet.





Was that the Art Room up there ?



The roof was disappearing fast.



**The clock was beginning to look like a relic from
World War 1.....**





....and yet there was still a classic beauty about the building.



And suddenly, the Clock was gone.....



....and that was the moment the last vestiges of life seemed to leave the Old School.



The last piece of the main building to go.



The Caretaker's house was the last building on the site to go, and Finchley County School is turned into a pile of hardcore.





The JCB's were bent like dinosaurs feeding on the carcass of the Old School.....



**.....and the landscape was changed for ever.
The view from Bow Lane.**

GONE !



I thought they said we could park in the playground !!!





Ironically, the sign restricts access to those having business at the Professional Development Centre. Buying hardcore, perhaps?



A photograph of the same gate taken by Mike Tomlins (1948/52) in August 2004

In Scimitar 146, Spring 2004, Chairman Godfrey Mann wrote :-

'....Sadly, the School buildings are no more. Demolition began in late November 2003 with the Cookery/Woodwork block. The last part of the school to tumble was the Head's study, the masters' staff room and boys' entrance, but at the time of writing the caretakers house still stands. Reclamation specialists stripped the School of the roof slates, lead guttering and most of the internal wrought iron work. The demolition team have salvaged the 'foundation' stone and one of the '1903 dated' lead rain hoppers.....

I have now finalised details of the new war memorial which will bear the names of Old Scholars who died in the two world wars, the school badge, the inscription 'Live Thou For England: We For England Died' and reference to the plaque being on the site of the former FCS. All of this will be etched onto Portland Stone and built into a recessed panel on the south end of the new development boundary wall (to the left of what was the ramp into the boys playground)....

The "Battle of Trafalgar" painting was sold at Christies but I had a full size copy made for posterity. Smaller fine art prints (approx. 15"x12") will be available costing £35 each....'.



Avenue House, East End Road

On Friday 2 April 2004, Norman Burgess (1933/38) reported that one of the lead rain hoppers, dated 1903, and the foundation stone had been delivered by Barratt Homes to Avenue House. They now repose in the archive and will be looked after by The Finchley Society. Norman reported :-

'Does anyone realise just how heavy those items are? They must weigh a ton. The porter, with a lot of help, had to manhandle them down some steps in a trolley. One thing's for sure, it is very unlikely they will ever be moved again!'

About the same time advertisements started to appear in local and regional newspapers :-

FALLOW GATE • HIGH ROAD



Marketing Suite now open on site at Fallow Gate

1 & 2 bedroom apartments 30 minutes from the West End!

MARK FLYNN



Just 1/2 hour from the West End, an outstanding collection of apartments on the Finchley High Road is taking North London by storm! The location is fantastic: you'll find everything from bowling, cinema, designer shops, restaurants and coffee shops. And the apartments are even better, with a specification to help you make the most of your free time.

- Quality fitted kitchens with integrated stainless steel ovens, hobs and hoods. Plus dishwashers and washer-dryers
- Stylish living room
- En suite to master bedroom on most 2 bedroom apartments
- Private parking
- Video entry system
- 10 year NHBC warranty

Prices from **£209,000**



SALES OFFICE: OPEN THURSDAY TO MONDAY 10AM TO 5PM
TELEPHONE **020 8371 6809**

BARRATT
Britain's Premier House Builder
www.barratthomes.co.uk/fallowgate



This is the picture pasted onto a hoarding just inside where the Boys' Entrance used to be. Take a moment to look at it and then turn the page.

The picture of Fallow Court in the advertisement is only a computer generated image but the similarity between its outline and that of the Old School is quite startling :-



Fallow Gate: The luxury one and two-bedroom homes have attracted interest before building has been completed



.....or is that just wishful thinking?

And the final design drawings for the “new” War Memorial were produced :-



The picture you see above is no more than a paper representation of how the engraved stone tablet will look once it is installed into the boundary wall of Fallow Gate, near to where the Boys' Entrance used to be, and clearly visible from the High Road. But until the stone is put in place what should we do on Remembrance Days ?

Scimitar No. 148 in the Spring of 2005 reported :-

'...On the eleventh day of the eleventh month of the year 2004, I drove into Finchley in bright winter sunshine and parked in a cinema car park opposite the site which until recently had been occupied by the Old School. The new building, called Fallow Gate, was wrapped in blue plastic and was fronted by a new wall all along the High Road boundary. To the left of the main building, just about where the School Caretaker's house had once stood, was a brightly coloured Site Office. Between that and the road was a well kept and colourful rock garden. I mounted the steps and as I paused momentarily outside the glazed and wooden doors, they were opened by a man in a hard hat and flourescent yellow jacket.

The man was very cheerful and he smiled as he invited me inside. There was a desk at each end of the Site Office and seated at each one was an attractive young lady. Spoiled for choice, I decided on the brunette, and said to her, "Of all the site offices in all the world I chose to come into this one". She stared at me and the man in the flourescent jacket paused as he went through the doorway. "Er! Let me explain....", I continued. I told the two ladies and "flourescent jacket man" about our

Old School and I showed them some pictures of the War Memorial in the Hall. I displayed the paper version of the new memorial and then explained that several Old Fincunians were coming to observe the two minutes silence at eleven o'clock.

"Would you mind if we gathered on the footway outside the Site Office? And may we place a Cross of Remembrance in your splendid garden?". "Flourescent jacket man" took charge and said it was a lovely idea. The two ladies summoned a more "junior flourescent jacket man" and told him to clear up the garden and remove all the dead leaves. Everyone wanted to hear more about our School.

At 10.30 am Michael Holton (1939/46) arrived, closely followed by Bob Payne (1934/36), and then the Reverend Brian Cross (1939/45). As we were formulating our programme of events, Betty Burgess joined us with her family, Chris and Kay. Brian and Michael shared the painful experience of having two brothers killed during Wrld War II, both in Italy, one in late 1943 and the other in early 1944. They had both been at Christ Colege, Finchley, about the same time.

At 10.50 am we unfurled the paper representation of the new war memorial and read the names quietly to ourselves. Once or twice one or other of us would say something like, "Were those two twins?", and, "He was a good looking lad", but at the eleventh hour, with heads bowed, we stood in silence for two minutes.

Brian Cross then spoke the words of Bynyon with us all echoing the final line, "...We shall remember them". We reflected on past Armistice Days and remembered how Norman Burgess (1933/38) had conducted the ceremony in the Hall for many years. His widow, Betty, then placed a little Remembrance Cross in the Site Office garden which, by then, had become our very own Garden of Remembrance. We silently said our private prayers, I know I did....'.



Then a few photographs and we all walked together across the High Road. It was difficult to say "Goodbye", so we talked for a few moments before going home....'.



When everyone had gone I went back to the site off and thanked the two young ladies and the "flourescent jacket men" who, by then, had increased in number to five. Every one of them said they had found it a moving experience and had quietly joined in with us.

As I made my way back to my car my step was lighter than it had been when I arrived earlier.....'

And then, on 11 November 2005 Scimitar reported :-

'Today was a special day not only because of Remembrance Day throughout the United Kingdom, but particularly because it was the day that the War Memorial would be dedicated on the site where once stood Finchley County School.

As I drove my car along the M4 motorway from Newbury towards London my mind continually returned to my days at the Old School. I tried to list in my minds eye the things about the school which were most vivid and it seemed to me that the one thing which always commanded attention was the excellent War Memorial. It was painted in 1920 by Mr W H Howland, the School's first Art Master, and, according to K A Povah, it was unveiled in the Autumn of the same year by Sir Benjamin Gott, then Secretary for Education for Middlesex. That always puzzled me because the School Magazine that year reported, 'In remembrance of those Old Fincunians who had given their lives in the First World

War, a Memorial was unveiled on Armistice Day, 1921, by County Alderman C F de Salis, Chairman of the Middlesex County Council.....'. I wondered which version was correct.

Of course, I thought, there was also the picture, which dominated the memorial, depicting the Battle of Trafalgar. It was painted by Charles Dixon and exhibited at the Royal Academy priced at £200 but the school was able to purchase it from the Cooling Galleries in 1921 at the greatly reduced price of fifty guineas. We sold it off in 2004 because we no longer had a wall on which to hang it.

The War Memorial quite rightly figured prominently throughout the history of FCS but I was aware that the names listed were not a complete list. Understandably, nobody is able to provide a complete list of the Old Fincunians who perished in the two World Wars. An example of one whose name was missed was Ralph Bolton who was killed in action in 1918 during the first World War.

There will have been many others whose names are not recorded and our archives do not mention, so it is important that when we talk, or think, of the "War Memorial" we remember that it is not a definitive list, it was our way of doing what we could to remember all of the Old Fincunian heroes who died for England so that we could live.

It also seemed logical to me that we should remember our Old Fincunian heroes who survived despite their active duties at the sharp edge of the wars. Our archive does not reveal a complete list of all Old Fincunians who served in the world wars. I remembered the occasion when I read the British Legion Newsletter a few years ago and read of Alex D Heggie's exploits. Alex was Woodwork and Technical Drawing teacher at FCS from 1968 to 1978). He was one of the first, if not the first, teacher to sport a beard. He had written :-

'...I served on board HMS Shippigan, the lead minesweeper in the 16th Mine-sweeper Flotilla. On 5th June we led the American task force, to the beaches. It was dangerous work but we knew it was vital to the success of D-Day, so we just got on with the job.

Above us the sky was black with gliders and planes. We cleared mines as close as we could to Utah Beach, but we couldn't help the boys once they were on the beaches. I'll never forget seeing ships carrying the dead and dying back to England. Although I badly injured both of my feet during Service, I know I've been lucky.....'.

That was during the Second World War, of course, which produced the names of another set of Old School heroes. Their names were added to the War Memorial in 1950 by means of two panels covering the old lists. The new mural panels, which now listed the names of those who fell in both World Wars were dedicated on 11 November, 1950, at a special service attended by many parents and relatives of the Fallen, together with representatives of the Governors, including the Mayor and Mayoress, Old Fincunians' Association, and the then functioning school. The service was conducted by the Rev Roy

Deasy, an Old Fincunian (1932/37) who as an Infantry Officer had taken part in the D-day landing, and many members of the congregation sent their thanks for a beautiful and dignified ceremony. Charlie Vivian and Fred Holbrook read the Lessons, and the ensigns covering the panels were released by two Old Fincunians, Derek Batten of the Army and Alan Humberstone of the Air Force, while Lt G Thorpe, RNVR, laid the wreath of poppies. It was an occasion when there was a real community of feeling, and the singing, led by the Senior Girl's Choir, was later described as superb.

At the end of the evening, those who had come from a distance stayed for a time to renew their friendships and to examine sample pages of the Book of Remembrance. By now I was on the North Circular Road and I thought for a while about the Book of Remembrance.

Early in 1951 the book was completed, finely written, with black leather binding, and with the word "Remembrance" in gilt. The pages are vellum, and the whole book is practically indestructible in ordinary use. The names of the Roll of Honour make brilliant pages of scarlet and black, while the second section in plainer style records the names, ranks and units of all Old Fincunians who are known to have served in HM Forces, 1939-45. Spaces were left to add other names should information be forthcoming.

It occurred to me that few Old Fincunians alive today have actually seen the book which eventually was housed in the Memorial Library, in Room B. I wondered if the book would be available at today's ceremony.

I was now entering the large car park opposite the Old School where the open air swimming pool used to be. I took a deep breath, locked the car and started towards the spot where the Old School used to be.

As I walked towards the Old School building its silhouette against the cloudy late autumn sky was strikingly similar to that of Finchley County School, particularly the clock tower sitting proudly on the roof. But the new orange coloured bricks destroyed any illusion of travelling back into the past because this was a brand new building. The thought crossed my mind that perhaps in 1904 our Old School had looked like it with its pristine *"red bricks with limestone dressings from Monks Park Quarry"*.

I dismissed the thought as I approached the spot where the Boys' Entrance used to be because gathered there were between sixty and seventy men and women in small groups chattering silently against the passing traffic noise. I noticed a pretty lady, much younger than the girls in the group, chasing after a noisy road sweeping machine and easily persuading the driver to move much further along the road. I tried counting heads but lost count a number of times. However, there were more than sixty people standing on the pavement just about where the Boys' Entrance used to be.

At exactly 10.50 am all eyes turned toward the new war memorial set in the outside of the perimeter wall because Godfrey Mann (1959/66), our Chairman, was starting to speak.

"Deputy Mayor, Deputy Mayoress, Mr Gary Ennis and his colleagues from Barratt North London, Members of the Finchley Society, and especially all Old Fincunians, welcome on this November morning, to a very special ceremony.... First to dedicate this, our, new memorial and then to participate in the annual Act of Remembrance....."



So that's who those people are - the Deputy Mayor (Councillor Vic Lyons) and Barratt people. The words "The assassins" and "vandals" flickered through my thoughts, but The Reverend Brian Cross (1939/45), in his cleric's robes, was speaking. The time was exactly 10.52 am.

"The stone which the builder rejected, the same is made the head of the corner - 1 Peter Chapter 2 verse 7".

"We dedicate this memorial plaque in grateful and proud memory of those named and of their supreme sacrifice".

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend - St John Chapter 15 verse 13, and in words taken from the School Song, "Away with care and sad regret and lift a cheerful heart and voice and to our friends and comrades.....Hail".

That last word, "Hail", was spoken by the whole gathering as if prompted by an unseen John Davie and Leonard Wallis, the composer and lyricist of our School song.

My mind skipped back to another Armistice Day, 11 November 1921, when the very first War Memorial was unveiled in the School Hall, and then to another, 11 November in 1950, when the World War 2 panels were dedicated at a special service again in the Hall.

Finally I remembered 11 November 2004, when six of us stood on this very spot in front of a paper representation of what we hoped the new Memorial would look like. By then not only the memorial but the building had been destroyed.

I was brought back to the present, to 10.55 am actually, by the closing blessing by Brian Cross.



"Shalom, Salaam, Peace be with us all. Amen".

There was no mistaking the next voice as Bob Payne, OBE (1934/36) gave the exhortation.

*"They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them"*

"We will remember them", responded the gathering.



Remembrance wreaths were then laid by Molly Powell (nee Holbrook 1929/35) for the Old Fincunians, by the London Borough of Barnet, by the Finchley Society, and by Barratt North London, and at precisely 11.00 am our two minutes of silent reflection commenced. And then it was Bob Payne again, this time with the Kohima Epitaph.



"When you go home, tell them of us and say, for your tomorrow, we gave our today".

But we were not ready to go home just yet. Our Chairman still had things to say.

"Thankyou everyone for attending today.

The original Foundation Stone of the School has been brought back and placed in the gardens within Fallow Gate. Those with personal tributes may like to place them there in a moment or two.

Barratt North London have kindly invited us to join them for light refreshments. In accepting on your behalf may I take this opportunity to publicly thank Gary Ennis and his team at Barratt North London. Over the past two years they have been ever understanding of, and sensitive to my requests.

The result is what you see today - not the original but I think, and I hope you all agree, a fitting tribute.....".



I was pleased to see that Betty Burgess, widow of Norman Burgess (1933/38), was with the VIP's when the official photographs were taken.



A Press Photographer was taking a picture of Brian Cross, Molly Powell and Bob Payne. They were standing by the new Memorial and I wondered if they realised that they were helping to make history today. The thought trickled through my head that we were all an integral part of the history of Finchley County School but these three Old Fincunians, and some others, had been positively and actively involved in an Act of Dedication and Remembrance

which would ensure our school and all who worked, played and lived there, and those who left there and died for their country, would live on.

I entered the site with Derek Batten (1942/47) and Ted Stevens (1945/51) through a gate and we could see a blue and white marquee erected just where the Head Master's Office used to overlook the Boys' Playground. To get to the marquee we had to pass a small and neat garden and standing proudly erect within it was the Old School foundation stone, still proudly announcing to the world that it had been *"laid by Gertrude Emily Hay on 24th Day of September 1903...."*. A number of floral tributes, wreaths and wooden crosses had been laid around the stone. I noticed that at least one of them bore the same name as appeared on the memorial tablet.

Bryan Goulding (1947/52) appeared to be photographing everything in sight. Peter Andrews (1949/56) was heard to remark, *"....I think Barratt's have done well for the school. The memorial is good and well sited on the main road. I do hope it isn't vandalised, and the foundation stone is a point of interest. Maybe the dedication ceremony deserved more than three minutes, the remainder of the time was the Remembrance Day Ceremony. I wonder if everybody could hear it over the traffic noise?"*. A mature gentleman in a brown suit with matching waistcoat responded, *"I can remember the days when the traffic used to stop for two minutes - not these days...."*.

Brenda Dean (nee Clay 1941/48) said, *"Well, I think the arrangements for the Dedication of the Memorial and Remembrance Ceremony were well planned and carried out. Anyone involved should be congratulated. The setting in the small garden of the School Foundation Stone is quite pleasant, too.....I wonder how many of those names on the Memorial were those of female Old Fincunians?"*. Sheila Knowles (nee Jones 1941/47), standing listening, was unable to answer the question. Neither was I!

Heather Marshall (nee George 1954/59) was with Carole King (nee West 1954/59) and Sarah Prescott (1954/61) *"....representing the class of '54 and we must say, we were very surprised to see such a large gathering and we are most impressed by the organisation of such a splendid event. I think that those passing in cars, lorries and buses would have been amazed at the attendance - and even more so had they realised how far some had travelled to be there. The thundering traffic made it difficult to hear the words of dedication for the memorial stone, but the silence gave us all a chance to reflect on its meaning just as we used to in front of the lovely old memorial in the quiet of the Old School Hall...."*.

Edna Grant (nee Donaldson 1940/45) was pleased, *"I like the memorial stone and everything went smoothly...."*, and Janice Western (nee Ackerman 1949/54) was on a high following her recent marriage.

"Thoroughly enjoyed the Remembrance Day ceremony and was impressed by the new building and its similarity to the Old School. I am now going to look in the marquee and sample the refreshments....".

I followed others into the marquee and immediately met Donald and Alison Yapp (nee Lang 1944/51) who were looking around *"Old Fincunian spotting"*. I

joined in and soon recognised Dennis Hall (1941/46), Brian Mitchell (1945/50), George Auger (1949/56), Judythe Roberts (nee Prince) and Rose Jones (nee Humberstone) both of 1948/53 vintage. We were joined by Stan Gilks (1946/53), Mary Dark (nee Howard 1946/51), and Kipps Ruskin (1946/53).

Geof Batten (1947/54) was telling a small group that, *'I was glad to be present today. The ceremony round the memorial stone was very appropriate, as well as moving. I was very aware of the ghosts of all those young men walking up the entrance into the school as we once did. The stone itself looks very good.....'*

Brian Cross (1939/45) was still wearing his robes and hardly moved because of the people wanting to speak with him, but eventually he made a tour of the marquee by the side of his long time friend, Michael Holton (1939/46). Michael was saying, *'For those concerned the Memorial is a great achievement and today's events have more than done it justice'. He looked at his watch. 'My wife, Joan, and I have to travel to Paris straight after this event for another Remembrance Service. We will be joining the Protestant congregation there with whom our church is twinned.....'*

Colin and Janine Luke (nee Turner 1963/70), our Treasurers were busy circulating and the thought just crossed my mind that they were the very best dressed couple in the room. I was about to tell them that when I was stopped by a waiter who insisted I had a cup of coffee. By then I had been served three cups of coffee by the waitresses and waiters. The hot drinks were very welcome on a cool day but I managed to resist the bacon rolls, sandwiches, biscuits and cakes.

Someone asked me 'who is that standing by Godfrey Mann?'. It was Alan Edwards (1934/39) who was at the Old School two years before I was born. Godfrey Mann had brought our Book of Remembrance with him and was circulating it to those who wished to see it. Alan was saying that he had never seen the book before and was trying to persuade Godfrey to let him borrow it so he could take it home and study it. I reflected that the last time I had seen it was at the final reunion in the Old School building in 2004.

Heather Marshall (nee George 1954/59) was looking around the marquee and chatting to one or two of her old class mates. *'I think that the provision of the marquee and the refreshments by Barratts is most generous and I hope it is recognised in the local press reports. And all credit to the young lady from Barratts who moved swiftly to ask a noisy passing road sweeping machine and its team to move a little further up the road to respect the occasion of the short service and the silence.....'*

Alan Rayment (1939/44) was in conversation with Vivian Hand (nee Pawle), Rose Jones (nee Humberstone) and Olive Lumley (nee Hughes), all of the 1948/53 intake. More accurately Alan was listening while the three girls talked and Rose seemed to be reminding him of the occasion he was playing cricket and was out for a "duck". I smiled as I remembered Alan's professional cricket days with Hampshire.

At that very moment, for no reason at all, I found the answer to a question someone had asked earlier in the day. Brenda Dean (nee Clay 1941/48) had asked ".....how many of those names on the Memorial were those of female Old Fincunians?". The answer is "None". How do I know? Because the original War Memorial listed the names of those who died in World War One and included the first names - "William; George; Leslie; Reginald; Albert; Leonard; Arthur; Frederick; Charles; James; Cecil; Herbert; Gwylim; Harry; Eric; Frank; Henry; John; Abel; Donald". When the new panels were added at the end of World War Two in 1950 they covered up the original list of names and did not show any first names. The list of names for World War Two we know from our records were all male.

That thought reminded me that the name "Arthur W West" was on the original World War One list but was inadvertently omitted in 1950 when the new panels were affixed to the Memorial. I was pleased to note that the new stone memorial proudly showed the name of "A W West". His name had been missing for fifty five years - missing but not forgotten.

I looked towards Derek Batten (1942/47) because on 11 November 1950 at that ceremony in the Hall he had shared with Alan Humberstone (1943/48) the honour of unveiling the amended War Memorial. I wondered if he remembered the occasion. "...I remember it well, especially today because on that occasion an Old Fincunian, The Reverend Roy Deasey (1932/37), conducted the dedication service. Alan Humberstone and I were both National Servicemen, me in the Army and Alan in the RAF. We performed the ceremony in uniform so with the painting, a Naval picture, the three services were represented....". I turned away with just a hint of a smile because Derek had forgotten that at the 1950 ceremony the Navy were represented by Lt G Thorpe an Old Fincunian in the RNVR. He had laid the wreath.

Jim Willams (1946/63) was "...impressed and astounded at the trouble Barratts had taken over the dedication of the memorial.....It was pleasing that those Old Fincunians who made the supreme sacrifice should have been given such a dignified and permanent memorial coupled with a simple and moving public service.

Two other factors stand out for me. The large number of Old Fincunian attendees and the fact that so many of them, like myself, would have been too young to know, personally, any of the names on the memorial...I have met so many people, for example, Greta Piza. When I was in the first or second form I can remember sitting cross legged on the floor of the Hall while she portrayed a Victorian personality, complete with crinoline, in a short performance to the whole school. Unfortunately I cannot remember the character she played, and neither can she! This has been a day I would not have wanted to miss!..."

Several people asked me if I knew how many Old Fincunians were present but I could only give a rough estimate of "between sixty five and seventy but they are not all Old Fincunians. I am pleased to say that some members brought their spouses, partners and families with them, and there are also five or six members of

the Finchley Society here. Remember, it was an open invitation in Scimitar so it was difficult to assess how many would actually turn up on the day....."

I knew that many of the people had travelled long distances to be there. It had taken Bryan Goulding (1947/52) four and a half hours of driving from Barton-on-Sea. Bryan had brought his wife Barbara with him. "Today is a day I will never forget. It was well worth the 110 miles trip. It is great to be meeting once again old familiar faces and talking about past and current experiences. Not being a local boy anymore, I didn't know what to expect, so to start the day rolling I managed to photograph Avenue House where I started work with Finchley Borough Council. Then, amazingly, I managed to park outside my old home, 13 Glebe Road. My wife, Barbara, could not believe that I used to play football and cricket in the road, as there wasn't a single space without a car parked on it - how times have changed.....First impression was one of pleasure that the new building had retained a feel for the Old School and that its presence has not changed the street scene, as we knew it....."

Perhaps the shortest journey to get there was that of Mike Tomlins (1947/52). Mike still lives in Squires Lane, so the walk to the school today was the same walk he used to make when he was a pupil there. Or perhaps he came on his bicycle - I know he has always been keen on cycling - used to officially measure race tracks I seem to recall. But before I could speak to Mike, Bob Payne (1934/36) approached. I was quick to thank Bob for his contribution to the days events - if the exhortation goes wrong then the whole day goes wrong. In Bob's care there was never any danger of that.

Bob wanted to make sure that our congratulations and thanks are passed properly to Godfrey Mann for the "splendid arrangements and for the War Memorial which culminated with today's dedication and wreath laying ceremony. Although the developers of the site seem to have shown much sympathy and a lot of cooperation with us - Godfrey has been much involved with them over all the details. He should be very pleased with the achievement and we Old Fincunians owe him a huge thank you. I hope that the Scimitar will reflect our thanks to Godfrey for this fine, permanent War Memorial to our Friends and Comrades who made the Supreme Sacrifice".

Having assured Bob that I would do my best to do justice to his words in Scimitar I found that Mike Tomlins was nowhere to be seen, but Dick Colomb (1947/52) was speaking to me.

"I guess you will be typing up a report of today's ceremony and events for inclusion in the History of FCS book. When you do please save a copy for me as I missed the first editions". I made no promises and moved over to where Joan Ridley (1947/54) was standing.

Joan had got to the event after the most tortuous of journeys which seemed to involve buses, trains and taxis. "All that travelling was well worth it just to be here. I never miss a reunion, I was present at the auction when we disposed of our Battle of Trafalgar painting, and here I am today to see our new War Memorial dedicated....."

Alison and Donald Yapp (1944/51) seemed not to have moved from their original spot. *"Congratulations to Barratt's on the tent, the drinks and the eats. Congratulations to all the Old Fincunians instrumental in getting the war memorial and the foundation stone. People can make a difference".*

I moved towards Dennis Signy (1938/42) because in his days as a newspaper editor he would have monitored many events such as this but I never quite made it to his side because just at that moment Gary Ennis started to speak for Barratt Homes. I doubt that many of us will remember any of the words he spoke but I have to say, rather grudgingly, that it would be difficult and churlish not to recognise that Barratt Homes had done all that could have been expected of them. Barratts have recognised the respect and admiration we all feel for our Old School, and they have done more than we ever hoped for to preserve the continuity of our War Memorial. Later, the quick word I had with Mr Ennis convinced me that for the time being at least, Barratt's share some of our feelings about the site and the memorial and were somewhat pleased and proud to be associated with them. Not for the first time that day I told myself that we have much for which to thank our Chairman, Godfrey Mann.

Ken Kench (1952/58) thought, *"The whole morning from dedication to the Barratt's hospitality was very well organised by Godfrey Mann, our Chairman, and his team". By now the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Lyons, was speaking although I do not think many people were listening. Ken Kench (1952/58) again, "I think the Deputy Mayor was more than a little OTT but I thoroughly enjoyed the morning. It has made my journey from Cheam worthwhile although I am slightly disappointed that there were no others from my years 1952 to 1958".*

I spoke to Geof Batten (1947/54) who recently published the memoirs of Charlie Vivian, one of our most popular and controversial teachers. *'Charlie Vivian would have loved to be here today', I said. 'And many others', he replied. 'Barratts struck just the right note and the food and drink are excellent. The only discordant note was the Deputy Mayor's speech which was positively inappropriate and struck entirely the wrong note - perhaps you should refrain from mentioning it in your report?'. Again I made no promises and moved on.*

Bryan Goulding (1947/52) was saying to nobody in particular, *'....The siting of both the memorial stone and the foundation stone were very successful and the ceremonies very much in keeping with the occasion - notwithstanding the noise of the passing traffic. Pity about the conglomeration of buildings across the road where the swimming pool used to be. But we all knew why we were there. The possible exception was the Deputy Mayor, but having spent forty four years in local government I have become inured to it. On the other hand, I thought that the effort put into the day by Barratts and their staff was exceptional. Congratulations to all concerned. The school building may be gone, but today's events have added something, have put something back. Long live the School !'.*

Dick Colomb (1947/52) was also mentioning what he thought was the inappropriate political nature of the Deputy Mayor's speech but Derek Batten (1942/47) summed it up nicely.

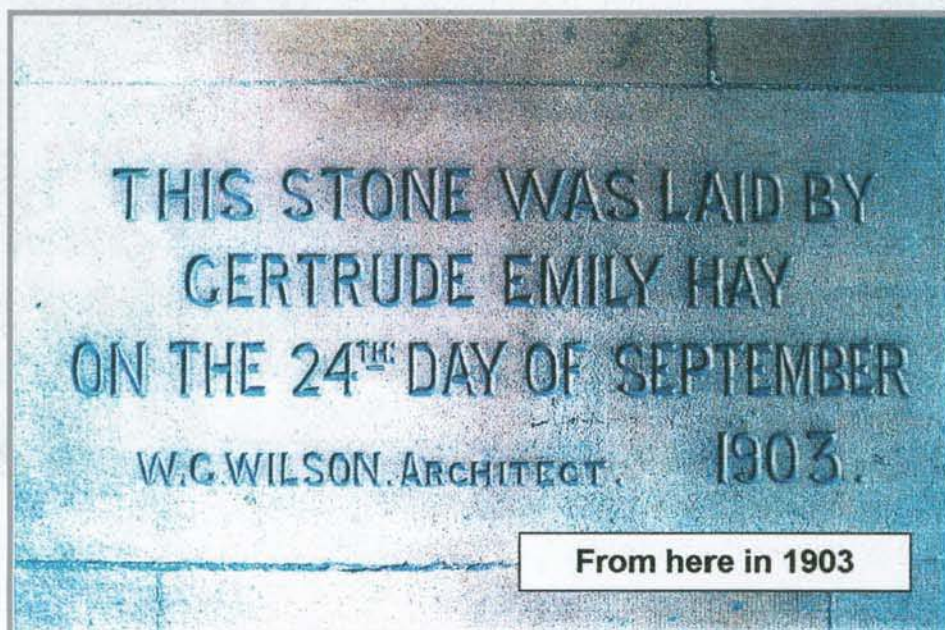
"I don't think we should allow a political speech to spoil a splendid event. Most local politicians of whichever party persuasion would have made such a speech and after eight years as a County Councillor I feel I am well qualified to make that statement..... I feel proud to be here. Barratts have done a splendid job with the new building and with the new memorial which could hardly be better. They deserve a big pat on the back".

Godfrey Mann was still buzzing about from group to group, from table to table. I don't think I saw him still for more than a moment throughout the morning. If I could have got near enough to speak to him I would have congratulated him on a perfect result to many, many months of work on our behalves. Perhaps more to the point, I could have said, 'EJR would have been so pleased and proud!', but that would have ignored all of the others who came and have gone before us.

Nobody was in any hurry to leave but we gradually drifted away and those who wanted more (like Godfrey Mann; Dick Colomb; Bryan Goulding; George Auger; and Brian Mitchell) adjourned to the Cafe Rouge for lunch and more reminiscences.

As I walked out of the marquee, past the foundation stone, pausing at the new memorial tablet, I looked back and once more, perhaps for the last time, I saw the playground, the caretaker's house, the cookery and woodwork block, the tennis court, the back field, the cycle sheds, and the tuck shop. I heard the raised and excited voices of boys chasing a soggy wet tennis ball around the playground. And wasn't that the sound of Miss Hill's whistle coming from the direction of the girls' netball court?

I raised my eyes and with something of a shock, I saw the clock tower - real this time. The shock was because the clock was showing the correct time - 12.30 pm. That had to be a first! I was due in Newport, Shropshire by 4pm so I scurried away to find my car - back in the real world of today, made just a little better by the events of the morning.....'.



To here in 1904



To here in 2005

And that, dear reader, is the history of Finchley County School. This document covers the hundred years, or so, which saw the Old School emerge as a trail-blazer, because it was one of the first schools to break out of the three "R's" by introducing science into the curriculum. It is no more than academic to say that at the time it was known as the Higher Elementary School. I have tried to show that the laying of the foundation stone in 1903 was not the start. The start of Finchley County School was in the beliefs of people like Mr Alder, and maybe before him with Mr Carter.

The problem then was the fact that there was no special building to house those ideas. Those beliefs were the start of a chain reaction which became Finchley County Grammar School and as you read the accounts from year to year I hope, like me, you will decide that those beliefs were right. Certainly the Headmasters and their Staffs believed in what they were doing, but even they saw that the emerging political will could not, and should not be resisted.

Comprehensive education was a brave and an inevitable development never foreseen by Mr Alder, Mr Carr, or Mr Chalk. The very idea of an Higher Elementary School, or later a Grammar School, was based upon the pursuit of excellence, but with excellence came the accusations of privilege which inevitably became unacceptable. Mr Povah and Mr Joscelyne may not have seen the graffiti in the Clock Tower, but they certainly saw "the writing on the wall".

This history is no more than the sum total of the comments, opinions, and reflections of the staff and the pupils who were lucky enough to have worked at Finchley County School and its earlier ancestors, and later, its descendants. For that reason the document abounds with inaccuracies and bias, but nevertheless, it is the Old School as people saw it. Take, for example, the quest to find the origins of the quotation printed over the proscenium arch over the stage in the Hall. The credit for finding that is recorded to "Fred Holdsworth". I am as sure as anyone can be that the credit was due to "Fred Holbrook".

Much grief was caused by the demolition of the Old School building and the War Memorial, but within ten years of the laying of the foundation stone in 1903, there was a strong demand for a "new" building. Every Headmaster from Mr Carr to Mr Povah, lived in the hope that the school would be rehoused in bigger and better premises. It was not until the building was under threat and the name was to be changed, that any strong voices were raised to preserve the old. I do not believe that anyone, not even Jack Rawlings, could conceive that the building was almost an irrelevancy. It was the spirit, the love, and the ethos of one hundred years of pupils and staff which produced the continuity of Finchley County School, and the building was just a resting place for that. When finally the new school building was produced, if the name Finchley County School had prevailed, there would have been no furore - regrets, yes, but life would have gone on content that Finchley County School lived on, albeit in new surroundings.

The School building is dead - Long live the School!



Time to hang up my hat and coat.

Les Sharp