



LOOKING BACK AT FOSTER'S SCHOOL



When Foster's School closed in 1992 many old documents, books, photographs, items of uniform etc were transferred to Sherborne Museum where much of this treasure trove was deposited in a cupboard in one of the storerooms.

In May 2012 Ken House, John House and Barbara Elsmore opened up the cupboard and many of the items found there went into an exhibition entitled '*Looking Back at Foster's School*' which ran during 2013. To accompany this exhibition a series of articles was produced, many of them contributed by 'Old Boys' themselves as they remembered their days spent at school. This book is the result.

Introduction

On 3 May 2012 I met Ken House and John House, at Sherborne museum, for the first time. The three of us had come together to empty the Foster's School 'cupboard'. Between us we decided that Ken and John would go through the contents of the cupboard, I would make a list of everything and we would transfer all that we found into some archive boxes that could be taken over to the storeroom where, in future, it might be possible to make the contents more accessible and available. As we opened up the cupboard and delved into this fascinating treasure trove it became clear that at some time there were people who knew exactly what was here but over the years the archive had largely become overlooked. By the end of July we had achieved our goal of getting everything over to the store and mostly into boxes. We listed and sorted the nearly 400 items into groups of related material. I went on to check the other collections in the museum and found items of uniform in the costume collection and many photographs in the photographic archive. More things came to light as the museum dismantled a large number of the exhibits to facilitate a re-decoration. Ken was surprised when his old football shirt turned up having had no idea it had been on display for some time. Finally a full list was made which now runs to nearly 500 items, plus 250 or so photographs in the photographic archive making a grand total of around 750 items of memorabilia.

The next step was to exhibit some of the key items as one of the museum's temporary exhibitions for 2013. Ken also suggested a small booklet to accompany the exhibition and when I came to investigate this possibility it all rather grew by itself and now has become a series of articles called *Looking Back at Foster's School*. These articles include a collection of personal memories starting right back in the 1880s with an article reprinted from *The Fosterian* in 1930 as an 'old boy' of the time looked back. We then went on to collect memories from as many 'old boys' as possible. These articles span over a hundred years from the 1880s to the 1990s. The exhibition had its own visitors' book and a summary of the entries has been added. The resulting 'book' is now available to download from Sherborne museum website www.sherbornemuseum.co.uk (under schools and education) and can be printed or read as an eBook. It is hoped to extract some of these articles for reproduction, over time, in the Old Fosterians' Association annual journal. This is a continuing process because if any other old boys wish to contribute their memories or if more fascinating insights into school life become available they can, and will, be added to the book on-line.

I have enjoyed the whole process enormously and I have been privileged to be part of this fascinating series of events.

Barbara Elsmore for Sherborne Museum



KEN HOUSE, JOHN HOUSE AND BARBARA ELSMORE

- LOOKING BACK 1. Herbert Lush MBE— Headmaster 1929-1959**
- LOOKING BACK 2. Stanley McKay—History Teacher 1946-1979**
- LOOKING BACK 3. Reginald Foot—a Schoolboy in the 1880s**
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LOOKING BACK 1.

HERBERT LUSH MBE

Herbert Lush Headmaster 1929-1959

Herbert Lush gave the following address at the first speech day in the new school in Tinneys Lane, June 1940

In addition to the light and airy classrooms, laboratory, art room and handicraft room and the beautiful hall I would like you to see our well equipped gymnasium with changing rooms and shower baths and our fine library upstairs. The oak panelling and much of the oak furniture in the library is a gift of the late Mrs Palmer, in memory of her son F R Palmer who was killed in the last war. I think you will agree with me that we now have what we have needed for so long – a school building in which we have every opportunity of doing good work – and one in keeping with the dignity of our old foundation.

We have gone into it at a time when we are about to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the founding of the school by Richard Foster on 20 July 1640.

I should like, if I may, to say a word to you about the history of our school during the 300 years since its foundation. I am indebted for much of the information to Mr Simms who has just completed a piece of research into the Foster Foundation and he has very generously placed it at my disposal and to Mr Fowler (Joseph Fowler local archaeologist and historian) whose help, guidance and interest are always valuable.

Richard Foster was a Sherborne Yeoman who played a part in local government during the early part of the 17thC. His will is dated 20 July 1640 and according to the parish registers he died on 24 August the same year. By his will 57 acres of meadow and pasture at Boys Hill in the parish of Haydon were left for various purposes amongst them being £13.6.8 per annum for the:

'education and breedeinge of up to ten poore boyes of the town of Sherborne to be instructed to read the English tongue', £6.13.4 per annum for the salary of the master appointed to teach the boys and £10 per annum for the education of 'ten poore maids of Sherborne'.

Surplus money (if any) was to be used for the purchase of plate for the Commoners' Table in the Abbey Church. £5 per annum for the maintenance of a poor boy at the University – 'such poore boye to be one of the charity scholars' and for the relief of the townspeople living in the almshouse.

In a register preserved in the Almshouse dated 1689 we are given the name of the first recorded schoolmaster of Foster's School – curiously enough John Foster by name. It appears that the children were originally taught in the house of the master appointed as their instructor. Hutchins in his History of Sherborne

says – 'the house in which the school is now held – situate on the west side of the Church Yard, between the vicarage and the Almshouse is the private property of the present master'. A map in this book places the school on a site which appears to be now covered by the modern part of the almshouse, but it may have been the offices of Messrs. Bartlett which are still standing.

This building may not have been used continuously as the school, it is possible the boys moved from one house to another whenever a change of mastership occurred

By the will of John Woodman, dated 12 December 1717 a sum of money was left for the payment of a schoolmaster who would educate as many poor boys 'especially some of poor widows' as the money would allow, these boys seem to have been educated with the Foster's boys by the master appointed under the Foster foundation – for Hutchins refers to the School of the Churchyard as having been founded by Richard Foster and John Woodman – and a voucher for clothing for 1864-5 is entitled 'Fosters and Woodmans'.

The Foster deed made no direct provision for clothing the children elected to the foundation – but the accounts show that such clothing was in fact given. The 4th Order said that they 'shall be yearly clad or apparelled with: a blew coate, a bonnet, two shirts, two cravats, two pairs of stockings and two pairs of shoes'

From the accounts it can be gathered that long coats of blue cloth were worn. Canon Lyon said that the boys in the 1830s and 1840s wore 'long blue coats with hats having a little red tuft on top'.

During the second half of the 19thC – the need for educational reorganisation was being felt. On the one hand the Elementary Education Act of 1870 made the original charity schools no longer needed in their original form – and on the other – some of the old Grammar Schools had been losing their local character and



MR LUSH IS SEATED IN THE CENTRE IN THIS SCHOOL PHOTO TAKEN IN 1932

developing into public schools. So in 1872 a new scheme was approved. The Trust was that Richard Foster, whose legacy with eleven other charities, became the endowment of the new school. The new scheme set up a Governing Body of 17 to replace the Almshouse Brethren. New buildings were built for the boys with accommodation for 100 scholars. A certain piece of land – representing one of the charities – was exchanged for a site in Hound Street – formerly part of Fair Field. These buildings bear the date 1874 and were formally opened on 5 April 1875. These were the buildings we left in October. They are now being used by elementary schools evacuated from London. At various times since then the curriculum has broadened as the purpose and meaning of education has changed in the minds of succeeding generations.

Richard Foster's deed mentions only 'reading the English tongue'. John Woodman's boys were taught 'to read English and write and cast accounts'.

Chemistry and Physics are not mentioned until 1884, Art and Manual Instruction until 1897, Music and singing, physical education and gymnastics until 1900 – when 26 carbines were presented to the school – I have recently handed them in to the police station. Cricket and football were played from 1876 and in 1905 the school was granted the tenancy of the terrace, conjointly with the Sherborne Cricket Club, by the owner of the Digby Estate.

A new scheme was adopted in 1905 re-organising the foundation and amended in 1909 – making more liberal provision of free tuition and maintenance grants. After the war of 1914-18 Foster's found its buildings of 1874 becoming more and more crowded, as the reputation of the school grew, and the value of education began to be more appreciated. A number of wooden huts were added in 1918 as a temporary expedient and as you know the school moved into these buildings in October 1939.

I wish we had more details of our past history but it seems appropriate in 1940 to tell you what I could about the history of the school during the 300 years since its formation.

Had it not been for the war we should no doubt have commemorated this great occasion more fully than we can now do – but I hope to hold a service of commemoration of founders and benefactors on 20 July and I also hope many parents will join boys on that occasion, as also Old Boys and others who are interested both in our past history and future progress.

May I conclude by expressing my thanks to the governors of the school for their help during the past year and especially to you Mr Chairman for your never failing interest in our welfare; to my colleagues for their loyal co-operation and to you Sir Charles Petrie for your kindness in coming here this afternoon to present our prizes and speak to us at a time when guidance and inspiration have never been more needed.

(Transcribed from Mr Lush's original handwritten notes found in the school archive)

Mr Lush Retired in 1959 and the following tribute to him appeared in *The Fostorian*

1929-1959 - AN APPRECIATION

At the end of the Spring term we said goodbye to Mr H Lush, M.B.E., M.A., who retired after having held the post of Headmaster for thirty years. From the beginning he took a deep and sincere interest in every aspect of the life of the school. He took over the teaching of English and History in the Sixth Form, warmly supported the production of more ambitious plays, encouraged the Commoners' Society to engage in wider activities, and on the sports field was for some years a member of the combined Masters and Boys cricket and football teams. His greatest contribution to the school was, however, his quiet but persistent advocacy of new buildings at a time when, owing to a falling birth-rate and somewhat straitened financial circumstances, the school was in grave danger of being closed. His determination was rewarded when the present buildings came into use in 1939. He believed that a Grammar School should produce not merely academicians but also well mannered and kindly citizens inspired to give service to their fellows. Himself thoughtful for others and always courteous, he instilled a happy spirit of co-operation between staff and boys, a spirit which showed itself on many occasions, in particular those of out-of-school activities. At the boarding house he received invaluable help from Mrs. Lush who happily devoted long hours to the care of some hundreds of boarders and yet who found, somehow, the time to share in the many-sided life of the school itself. Their daughter, Miss Anne Lush, latterly matron, also gave valuable service to the school, and we shall long remember her prowess as a cricketer when playing for the Staff. Their son Mr John S Lush made up a family all of whose members, we all knew, had the welfare of the school very much at heart. To Mr Lush's work as a co-founder of the Old Fostrians'



Association tribute is paid in the Old Boys' Notes. Upon his retirement Mr Lush was presented by the boys with a garden seat and by past and present teaching staff with a voucher for horticultural purchases. Mr and Mrs Lush are now living at Eastbourne in a retirement which we sincerely trust will be long, healthy and happy. In a recent letter Mr. Lush has written to say how much he and his family have appreciated the kindness of the boys in presenting them with "such a splendid garden seat." They have made very good use of it this summer and it has been greatly admired by numerous friends. He says that it will give tremendous pleasure to Mrs Lush and to himself if any boy can pay them a visit. Failing this he suggests a letter; the ones which he has already received have been read and re-read.



THE LATE HEADMASTER'S NAME LIVES ON IN THE PATHWAY NAMED AFTER HIM ON THE FOSTER'S FIELD DEVELOPMENT

LOOKING BACK 2. STANLEY MCKAY

Stanley G McKay - History Teacher

Stanley McKay was known as Mac to his friends and Jock or Stan to the boys. Amongst his many legacies is the production of a very fine history of the school which was published in 1975. The book is called *FOSTER'S The Story of a Dorset School* and when looking through the school archive in the museum I often had the feeling that he too would have scanned the many documents and records to glean some of the information that would have enabled him to produce this lasting record. Mr McKay's widow has given a copy to the Old Fosterians' Association and a chapter or two have been reproduced for all to see, with more in the pipeline, on their website.

Here is an addendum, produced by Mr McKay, which follows on from the book and tells of the time from 1976 leading up to the final days of the school.

Mr Francis retired in July 1976 and was succeeded by Mr C J Lea, under whom cooperation with Lord Digby's School became even closer; another feature of Mr Lea's headmastership was the introduction of Business Studies into the curriculum. It was during this time that the future of the school became uncertain, with the setting up in 1983 of a working party to consider the future of secondary education in Sherborne. By the time this reported Mr Lea had left (and moved to Birmingham) and Mr K H House, an Old Boy, who had been on the staff since 1960 and was currently Deputy Head, was appointed acting Headmaster. He retired in December 1990 and was succeeded by Mr D R Blake who became the last Headmaster of Foster's.

The report of the working party, in the spring of 1984, recommended one fixed comprehensive school for the district and ushered in eight years of uncertainty and controversy. A scheme for such a school was submitted by Dorset Education Committee to the Secretary of State for Education but, after a long delay, was turned down in March 1986 by Sir Keith Joseph on the grounds that he was "not satisfied that given the quality of the existing schools their closure would be in the best interests of pupils of higher as well as lower ability". A second scheme was also rejected on the grounds of lack of consultation. At about the same time, the autumn of 1989, an application was made by the Governors of the School for it, together with Lord Digby's School if possible, to be given the comparatively new status of "Grant Maintained", thus freeing it from the control of the Local Education Authority but this too was rejected. Yet another scheme was proposed by the County Education Committee at the end of 1990 and, in January 1991, as a result of the Government's declared support of Grammar Schools, a second application for Grant Maintained Status was submitted. The latter was, to the surprise of many, rejected in June 1991 as not

being viable and the decision was made that the three existing schools should be closed at the end of August 1992 and be replaced by one mixed comprehensive school. Even this was not quite the end of the saga as an attempt was made in the courts to overturn the decision on technical grounds. This failed and, in September, the Gryphon School came into existence. For two years the buildings of the old Foster's and Lord Digby's Schools continued to be used, while new premises were built on the St Aldhems site, but in 1994 they were vacated and in the autumn the Tinneys Lane buildings were demolished; at about the same time the Hound Street buildings were converted to residential accommodation and a number of additional houses built on the site. The hamstone "foundation stone" from Tinneys Lane was preserved and it is hoped (1997) to erect it in the Victoria Gardens, Newlands, as a memorial to the School and its Founder.

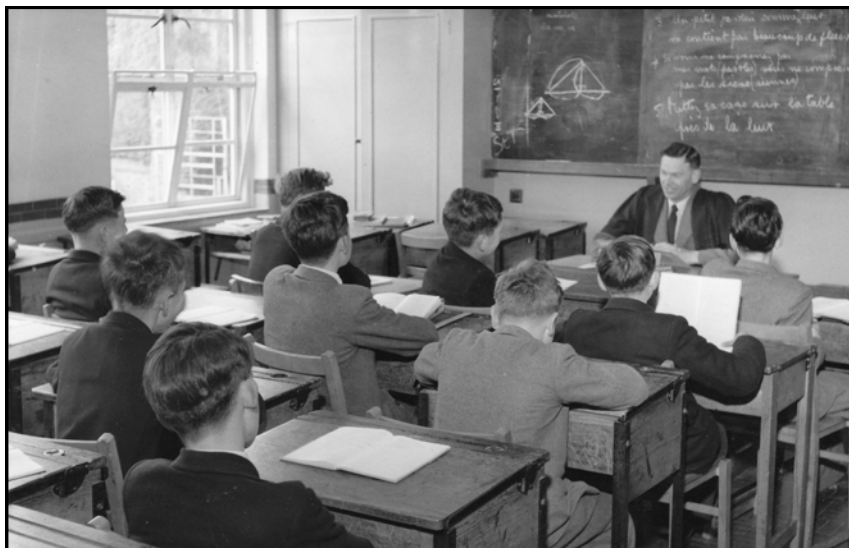
During all these years of frustration, exacerbated by national disputes and many changes in education, the examination results of Foster's remained of a remarkably high standard and in the first "league table", published in 1992, the school came second in the whole country. Ironically, by this time, there was no Foster's School as a separate entity.

Thus Foster's School ceased to exist – or did it? Just as in 1872 ten charities were amalgamated to form the new Foster's, so Foster's became part of the Gryphon School and lives on as such. Some tangible links remain too: the boards from Foster's commemorating its Old Boys who died in the two World Wars are permanently attached to the wall of the foyer leading to the main hall of the new school and a number of awards previously made to pupils of Foster's, including the Sir George Pragnell prize, are now made to the Students of the Gryphon School.

In *The Fosterian* 1979, on Mr McKay's retirement, the following tribute was paid to him

The history of a school contains many characters, and in striving to pay tribute to the man who has actually

recorded that history in his own book one cannot fail to be aware of the immensely rich contribution that the author himself has made during thirty-three years on the staff of Foster's. Six generations of boys will recall vividly and with deep affection the part played in their lives by Mr McKay, both within the classroom and beyond. He joined the school in 1946 after war service in the Middle East, and over ninety-nine terms since then his spirit of scholarship has been transmitted throughout the school. He taught History with a measured, precise, but always colourful style to boys from the first form to the upper sixth. His lessons were spiced with anecdotes, subtle asides and references to characters, their sayings and their idiosyncracies. He established firm standards of industry, organisation and clear thinking in his students, but did not stifle enthusiasm or ideas in the process. Mr McKay's presence was never far away from corridor and stage as well as classroom. He was prepared to put the errant firmly on the straight and narrow, but just as ready to give a patient, friendly hearing to the enthusiast and an encouraging word to the uncertain. His love of drama led him to the stage as performer and producer. He played in and coordinated Commoners' Concerts as well as acting with local renown for the Amateur Players of Sherborne. As a producer he had the gift of attracting loyalty from his team of actors. Versatility thrives in a small school, and Mr McKay had further interests in the Cadet Force, the Library and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. He also re-introduced Latin in his last two years before retirement, and this reflected his ever youthful outlook to changing circumstances. Although Mr McKay had firm views on many matters, his sensitivity to the ideas of others was a feature of his friendliness to colleagues. So was his sense of humour, impish, twinkling, but above all honest and open. Younger members of staff will remember gratefully his extremely helpful advice in their early days with him. Above all and beyond all, Foster's will miss a gentleman; a man who cared deeply about people, about standards, about the school; a man who generated a civilizing influence around him and who gave his scholarship a human ring. Foster's School is indebted to Mr McKay for his span of dedicated service. We wish him and his wife, June, a very long and happy retirement, and look forward to seeing him with us on many future occasions



THIS PHOTO OF MR MCKAY IN THE CLASSROOM WAS TAKEN IN THE MID 1950S

LOOKING BACK 3.

REGINALD FOOT

Reginald Foot—a Schoolboy in the 1880s

The following extract has been taken from *The Fosterian* (Summer 1930) and it is the first of what would become a continuing correspondence amongst the 'Old Boys'

'An Old Boy Looks Back'

One of the great privileges of youth is to look forward, to dream of days to come and of things to be but it is a prerogative of age to look back, and to reflect, with joy or regret, on the years that are past.

Perhaps you who are going to Foster's School now sometimes give yourself to thinking forty years on. I have been thinking of over forty years back, when morning and noon, I trotted up Hound Street, joining with others whose names and doings have been recalled by recent issues of *The Fosterian*.

School days then were, I expect, very much what they are today, times of not always too pleasant or welcome work, hours of evening prep. Or sitting for exams, and days, yes really days, of cricket football and sport.

When I joined the school in 1886 the Head was Mr Patrick Irwin, who had not long succeeded to that position and, I think, was not then married. The impression that remains with me is of a genial, happy, lively man, hot-tempered but always generous, very encouraging and a most interesting teacher.

The only other master who I recollect was Mr Biggs, tall and rather stiff in manner, and I vividly recall my consternation when, at football on the Terrace (he being on the opposing side), I charged impetuously for the ball, and somehow managed to knock him clean off his feet.

The school buildings were then quite modest, just the main school as it is today, the School House being built during my school years. Beside the large room two classrooms were used, as I expect they are today; one immediately in front of the entrance lobby and the other, Mr Irwin's room at the top left of the Schoolroom. I cannot ever remember being in the room, over the entrance, which was reached by outside steps. We had no science class, no laboratory or handicrafts room, but just plain, sound preparation for business life. English, French, Latin, maths with the usual groundings in history etc. But in later years I have had reason to be thankful for the smatterings of languages that I have retained for the joy of getting over that 'Pons Asinorum', and for such algebra as I assimilated (Oh! how I detested the beastly equations and the silly problems of X and Y!).

Once or twice a week Mr Lyle, organist at the Abbey

came to give us some training in singing, and to practise the part-songs with which we were to charm (perhaps!) the ears of fathers, mothers and friends on the annual Prize Day! A great day, that, the annual Prize Day! That is, if there were any prizes to take. Still, there was the afternoon when we could work off our elocutionary accomplishments. Generally there was a good supply of declamations from the classics, recitations, some of which would, I am afraid, be voted 'sob stuff' today, and then an act from Shakespeare or Sheridan's 'The School for Scandal'. The livelier language of a past age was, of course, modified to suit our more tender years and ears. Prize books were really good solid stuff, well bound, and some of them fine stodgy reading. I have three or four on my bookshelves still, but it was some years before I began to appreciate them, not only for their association, but for the value of their contents. In the evening we gave our concert, when we could work off our energies in the choruses and part songs we had prepared.

For drill we had Mr Ffoulkes, and as befitted an ex-Sergeant Major, his appreciation of our movements, were at times, scarcely complimentary. When Mr Taylor came to the gymnasium some of us older lads were allowed to go there for exercises, and to learn how to give or to get black eyes or sore noses. For a long time there was some amount of ill feeling between the town boys and the boys of King's School. They wore toppers then and a topper was a fine incentive for bashing as well as a strong temptation for taking pot-shots. In this I am afraid we in Foster's School were not always guiltless. Whether this was due to resentment at a loss of old privileges I do not know, but I believe that the last to enter the King's School by scholarship was R Adams who gained his scholarship just before I joined. Of course we had occasional fights amongst ourselves, and one such I remember was an occasion of much scandal. It was the volcanic explosion, after much underground rumbling, caused by strife for the Headship of the school between A and D. One day a trivial thing brought the bursting of the storm, and we juniors looked on awed and silent, while these to us big hefty giants, fought a most terrific bout, which left its mark on both faces for many days. Another fight was an occasion of much delight to us spectators. Some ill will had arisen between H, a very tall lanky country boy, and B who scarce reached to H's armpits. H, who had not the remotest idea of using his hands, while I, who had many a friendly box with B, knew that B could use his hands very well indeed. We encouraged them to have it out and forming a ring, yelled with glee at the sight of H, his arms swinging and beating the air like a windmill, rushing about, trying to meet his competitor, who just dodged in below the swinging arms, planted a few stinging punches on H's body (he could not reach his face) and was out again before H knew where his tormentor was. We so enjoyed the fun, that we persuaded them to go on again until both were quite fagged-out. Happily they made it up and were good friends afterwards.

When cricket came with the summer term, there

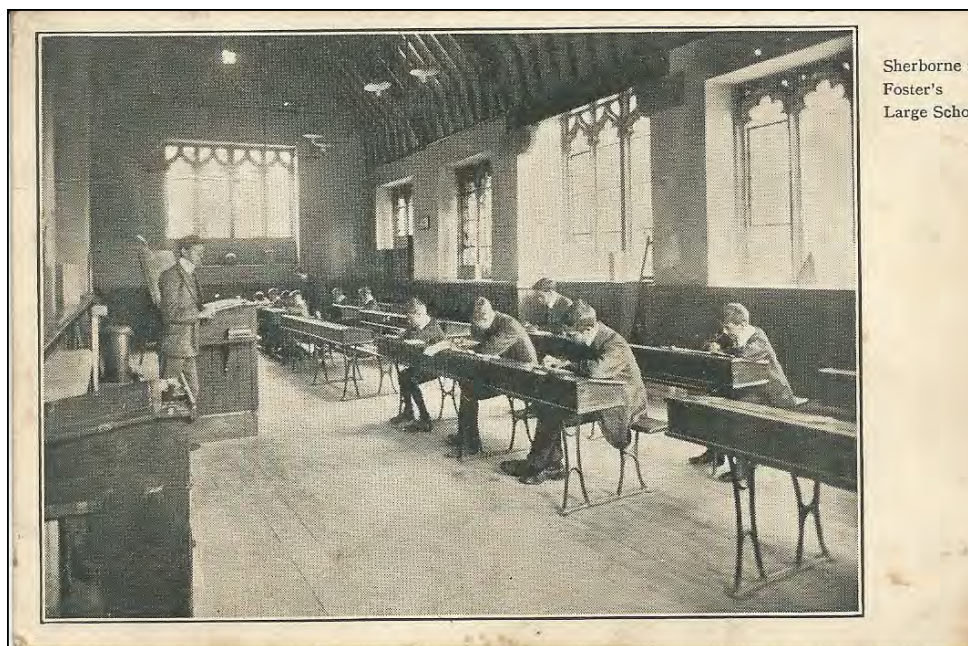
were long evenings and half days of real enjoyment, and when the lists went up, showing who were picked for the First XI, the lucky ones felt they had grown an inch or two and were now the men of the school. But the events of the season were visits to other schools such as Hendford School, Yeovil and Crewkerne grammar school. No motor charabancs in those days, but a good pair of horses and a large waggonette, and a leisurely drive through the country. I think we looked forward to the Hendford match most, because of the spanking teas which followed, but Crewkerne generally gave us the stiffest cricket.

For several seasons we were allowed to play football after school in the fair-field below the school. The

condition of our boots and frequently of our clothes was eloquent testimony of the rough and wet state of the field.

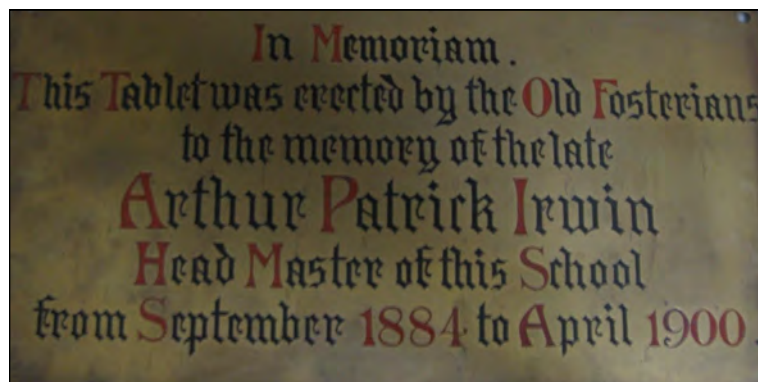
One boy I recall for the single fact that he taught us how to spin a peg top. His name was Pflieger and we often used the large stone step at the school entrance for the game. I wonder what would be said to that now.

The institution of the Sports, now so well known and eagerly anticipated, was a very great event, and I remember there was much excitement, when it became known that the late Sir George Pragnell, himself a runner of no mean order, had promised to take part in the open mile handicap.



Sherborne :
Foster's
Large School

THIS PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN INSIDE THE SCHOOL WAS FOUND IN SHERBORNE MUSEUM'S POSTCARD COLLECTION AND WAS ORIGINALLY DONATED BY GERALD PITMAN. IT IS DIFFICULT TO DATE BUT IS POSSIBLY EARLY 1900S. IT MAY BE THAT THE BRASS PLAQUE TO COMMEMORATE MR A P IRWIN HEADMASTER OF THE SCHOOL 1884-1900 IS MOUNTED ON THE WALL BETWEEN THE LAST WINDOWS ON THE RIGHT HANDSIDE.



Holidays were then, as now, keenly looked forward to and not half long enough for us, but twice too long for our parents. But school days are soon over, and through the mists of the years only the happy, jolly times stand out in the memory. That is as it should be, but perhaps too it is a tribute to the happy atmosphere of Foster's School. May it always be so to every boy, who, in the years to come, has the fortune to subscribe himself.

'An Old Boy'

When I first discovered this article it was disappointingly signed 'An Old Boy' but no matter because as I read on his name would be revealed when in the Summer 1933 edition came another article:

Sherborne Fifty Years Ago Part 1

(as seen from the 1930s)

In his short history of Sherborne Wildman repeats Hutchins' statement that in the reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth it was the most frequented town in the county. He adds that the size and shape of the town were very much what they are now (1902) though it had probably more inhabitants than at present. I have often tried to picture what it was like in those and succeeding days. With its many timber fronted houses and its shops gathered about the Shambles and the churchyard. The pictures are none too vivid so many are the changes that the years have brought.

In our day we boys thought it a town where very little took place and where, if there were changes, they were very few and far between. Perhaps those of you who go to Foster's School today still think the same. Well let us see.

Fifty years in the life of a town particularly a town like Sherborne with its 1230 years of history is a very small slice. Can there have been much change in the town's appearance in that short time? Let us go to what has always been the centre of the town the Parade and look about.

To start with the monks' old washing place, the Conduit, as I first remembered it, it was boarded up and used as a store for the stands of those who sold on the Parade. The timber fronted house adjoining the Abbey gateway was then partly an inn and partly a fish and fruit monger's shop – neither of them of very wholesome or attractive appearance. Nearest the Conduit was an old shop which later on became a grocery shop.

From the Parade one could reach Half Moon Street in three ways. You could go by the passage to the churchyard or by Cheap Street as you go now. But the quickest way was by a partly covered passage almost adjoining the grocer's shop. This passage, closed when the present buildings were erected, had on one side a very old building with two bow front shop windows on its Half Moon Street front. That was Sherborne's post office and also a stationer's business kept by two brothers bearing a name well known in Sherborne the brothers Penny with courtly dignified ways so often missing from today's life.

Outstanding from the end of Mr R Adams house was

a drum-shaped clock prominent to all who passed up and down and presenting a mystery to my younger mind: how was it wound and adjusted?

At the end of Messrs Dorlings drapery stores in South Street there stood a house jutting out into the road. This was an old tollhouse and its tenant was a one-armed Bath-chair man.

Passing along Half Moon Street we should presently come to the Town Hall occupying the grass slope, where now stands the War Memorial, down to the Weighbridge.

How old it was when it was pulled down to open up the view of the Abbey, I do not know, but it was in use over 100 years ago. At one end was a small shop, kept by a working jeweller and later on rented by my father as a store. I have some recollection of taking part in a juvenile entertainment in the Town Hall but I remember better the sensation caused by the appearance, at a ball held there, of an officer of a Highland regiment in all the glory of kilt, bonnet and shawl. The Ball was given by the officers of the Dorset Militia then encamped on Lenthay Common. The camp was a great attraction to the towns folk especially its field cooking equipment. At another time a regiment was encamped in Sherborne Park and the wonder of that camp was a floating bridge across the lake. I still have a toll-ticket for 1d which was the price of crossing the bridge.

Coming back to Half Moon Street the weighbridge was then nearer to Mr Francis Stokes' grocer's shop with low front and modest bow windows. In Westbury, where now are the Roman Catholic church and school and the adjoining terrace of houses, was a field with a low wall known as the gravel pits. In the cottages along the top of the field lived a number of old parishioners. We often called on one, an old friend, and invariably left with some flowers from her little garden and to this day the scent of Southernwood (Boy's Love) will always bring me a picture of those cottages and of some of their gracious and kindly tenants.

Where now is the beauty of the Pageant Gardens, in my view a gem amongst public gardens, was also a field, sometimes flooded in Winter and Spring and occasionally available for skating. Here also the shows and attractions of Pack Monday Fair were sometimes staged.

The Surrey Dairy company's factory occupies the site of a number of old cottages and when at times the river overflowed they were flooded as well as the roadway as far back as Ludbourne Hall. The road leading to the Corn Company's premises and the row of houses did not then exist.

Where now a broad road connects Long Street and Newlands was a narrow badly lighted sometimes foul and disreputable lane which at night it was safer to avoid. The island garden in Newland contained and filled the triangular space, which is now open, with its trees and seats.

Beyond the first four or five houses of the Avenue there was only the pathway to Cold harbour whilst the

entrance from Newlands was blocked by a very small house and garden. North Road also was approached from Newlands by a very narrow passage.

In Cold Harbour there was no steam laundry and none of the houses beyond were then built. Wootton Grove with its school, Kings Road and Vernalls Road were all fields and allotments and the Priestlands estate was allotments also. The shops facing up Bristol road and the Fair field are of course quite recent and the only entrance to the Fair was in Coldharbour.

To be concluded R W F 1896-1900

Now we have the initials and by reading on in another report in the same edition of *The Fostorian* a name is revealed at last—Reginald Foot. In the school admission book he is no 139 admitted to school 6 May 1886 the son of a seedsman.

Old Boys of his time will be very interested to learn that R. W. Foot, FSMC, FBOA, FIO (1886-1890) opened a practice as Consulting Optician at Thornton Heath at the beginning of the year (1933), and, like us, they will wish him success in his enterprising venture. Three years ago he set an example to Fosterians of past generations, which several have been led to follow, by sending us an article by an Old Boy for insertion in the magazine; and we are therefore more than ordinarily glad to include in the present issue a further contribution from his pen, of great interest to all who are or have been connected with Sherborne.

The 1933 December edition and the last instalment:

Sherborne Fifty Years Ago (Part 2)

(as seen from the 1930s)

I have seen stalls and booths for the Pack Monday Fair bordering Cheap Street from as far up as beyond the present Post Office, and along Half Moon Street each side, whilst around the Weigh House and at the top of Digby Road were shooting galleries, boxing saloons and other shows with wonderful and fearsome pictures of what might be seen within.

The Yeatman Hospital was of very modest dimensions and could look out on fields below, for Sherborne School had no gymnasium or tuck shop, no sanatorium in Acreman Street and in fact with the exception of the four or so houses next to the Drill Hall – at that time a rather forlorn thatched barn – there was no building of any kind down to Finger Lane, and no butter factory on the opposite side.

The fine block of buildings for Sherborne School for Girls is of course fairly recent and the Preparatory School, though older, had not made its appearance.

In the Marston Road the limit of the town was set by some cottages set at right angles to the road, whilst the Isolation Hospital did not exist. At Newell Water for many years there was a prosperous gloving business.

Cheap Street is full of changes, by the conversion of house fronts into shops and the modernisation of older shops. The uncovering of old timber fronts has added immensely to its interest.

The playing field of Sherborne School was confined by its present fine cricket ground and did not extend towards Lenthay, as now, whilst in the road leading to the Common there were no houses beyond the first few cottages. Neither was there a road or any houses leading out to Horsecastles opposite the Abbey School.

And what of the old School? Well, Foster's School had no Headmaster's house and garden, no laboratory or additional classrooms.

Thus the few changes in the town's appearance that I have mentioned have been seen as to make it by no means easy to visualise the Sherborne of only half-a-century ago.

Let me add just a word or two on some things that Foster's boys will never see but which added something to the gaiety of life when I was a schoolboy. Even before I was going to Foster's School, I remember the gay toot toot of the horn as Squire George Digby drove through the town his coach and four or perhaps six horses; whilst not so many years since, the late Colonel Goodden could frequently be seen sitting on the box of his coach and responding to the salutations of passers-by with that stately grace and smile which were so truly a part of one of England's gentlemen.

During the summer the town would occasionally be enlivened by the appearance of a battery of artillery on their way to Devonshire for gun practice. The guns were always drawn up in front of the Digby Hotel, where the officers stayed, and men and horses were billeted in various hotels, inns and private houses. They were off again for Okehampton the following morning, and a good number of folk were sure to assemble to watch them move away.

Then who could forget the marvellous transformation wrought on many a well known farmer, when the Sherborne troop of Yeomanry, in all the glory of their wonderful uniform, would ride through the town with Colonel John Goodden or Major John Digby at their head? Perhaps we were sometimes inclined to smile at their playing at soldiers, but we would not know how they would cover themselves with glory in that charge at Agagia, not many years after.

What flower shows there were, too, in Sherborne Park in those days! – tent after tent of the most marvellous plants, flowers, fruits and vegetables. It was at one of those or at some fete that I saw the famous Blondin wheel the barrow across the tightrope and, halfway across, cook something on the stove which was in the barrow.

Yes before the days of the motor car or the charabanc we had our little excitements, and most of them remain only in the buried past, buried with pictures of a bygone Sherborne in the memories of those who were boys and girls playing in the streets fifty years ago.

Reginald W. Foot 1886-1890

It was a wonderful opportunity to be able to extract these three reports from copies of *The Fostorian* from the 1930s. The vivid verbal picture that Reginald Foot paints of school life together with what it was like to live in Sherborne at the time can now be enjoyed by all.

LOOKING BACK 4.

EDWARD NEWLYN

Edward Newlyn—a Schoolboy in the 1880s

The following extract has been taken from *The Fosterian* (July 1934) as another 'Old Boy Looks Back'

FOSTER'S SCHOOL IN THE 1880s

The School stood in the middle of a large gravel playground which was bounded northwards by a low wall along Newland and southwards by an iron fence which separated it from the big field that extended, as now, to the gardens in Long Street. Beyond the eastern wall was another large field which stretched to a long narrow passage connecting Newland with Long Street.

At this time there were about fifty boys in the School, all of whom were fee-payers. Free places and scholarships were unknown except in so far as the School had the right of sending one of its own boys to the King's School, a privilege that enabled three brothers of a well-known Sherborne family, amongst others, to continue their education there. Eight or nine boarders lived with Mr. Irwin, the Headmaster, in a house in Castleton, as did also the assistant masters, Mr. Birch and Mr. Miles. These boarders formed a natural hub to the Fosterian universe for they included Gare, the headboy of the School, dignified and affable, and quite a stylish and effective bat. Amongst the day boys was G. H. White whose growing powers have evidently waned but little in these his sexagenarian days.

At the East end of the School-room was a lofty platform on which stood the Headmaster's desk, while round the walls were ranged our single-sticks. Each of us had his own desk in which to keep his books, though our successors to-day may be surprised to learn that most of our written work in school was done on slates. How many verbs and declensions and mathematical problems one single slate could accommodate! But I am not sure that a slate is not superior to exercise paper for a schoolboy's purpose; it certainly enables corrections to be made much more effectively, and no boy will deny that it does enable one to carry on a most effective conversation without the risk of the spoken word. Sudden and complete erasure of a whole conversation is easy if the master happens to stroll round.

The general atmosphere of the school was distinctly Victorian. We were seldom kept in after school hours, perhaps because the masters were as eager as we were for a game of football; impositions were few, and the cane was not too often in evidence. Though some of us may not have run any serious risk from over-work I do not think there was any wholesale slacking, and our work was very honestly our own whether right or wrong.

The ever-present spectre of examinations had not arisen to worry us, but we quite realised that school was a place where boys must expect laborious tasks that were meant in some way or other to fit them for their life's work.

Mr. Irwin was an inspiring master if a boy really wished to learn. His Irish imagination could turn Julius Caesar or Coriolanus into real flesh and blood, and even so dull a subject as the Feudal System he could invest with interest. I am not quite sure however that his compelling powers equalled his gifts of imagination.

We reached a fair standard in Latin and French and Mathematics, but no Science was taught in my days. Sometimes we had a Spelling Bee in which the successful boy was free to select his own Prize book. Mr. Lyle, the Abbey organist, came once a week to give a Singing lesson to those of us whose voices were not too hopelessly cracked. Physical training meant either Dumb-bell exercise or Single-stick practice. We learnt the regular cuts and parries, but the summit of our joy was reached when we paired off for personal combat. Not even the stentorian tones of Sergeant Folkes always succeeded in staying the strife when once we had got going.

Our playground games were many and varied, and the interval of ten minutes was not infrequently extended to more than twenty. Every boy joined in with a whole-hearted vigour that admitted of no saunterers or slackers. One popular game was 'Breaking the Ring,' another was a variant of 'Prisoner's Base,' while football with a hard, solid, rubber ball decorated our legs with most artistic patterns. In the summer peg-tops were very popular, and Mr. Birch did not think it beneath his dignity to show us how easy it was to split in two a top that was spinning gaily within the magic ring.

When afternoon school was over we trooped in winter time to the adjoining field for the game of football that was the crowning event of the day. It was played with a proper football, but it was by no means an ordinary game. No teams were chosen, but we all, masters and boys alike, ranged ourselves on two opposing sides. To see a boy who had offended you or a master who had just 'gone for you' upon one side was sufficient reason for you to join the opposite. Hence arose, not a regular match, but a wild and terrific struggle in which excitement ran high in both masters and boys; not a scientific game for points, but a Homerific fight in which the hatchets of each day could be finally and effectually buried.

In summer time day-boys hurried home for tea and hastened to reach the Terrace before the boarders had arrived. The rule of the nets was 'First come, first in.' The town team of those days was the strongest in Dorset, and we profited much by sharing nets with the earlier arrivals until they left us and joined our seniors and betters at their own nets. Our cricket matches were great affairs. The long drive to Crewkerne was itself a delight and we knew the game would be followed by a royal feast in our honour. Though I have watched Grace,

and Ranji, and Gregory, and Fry, the most wonderful catch I have ever seen was one by G. H. White at Yeovil from a terrific drive sent back to him from a master of Kingston School. I wonder whether his subsequent achievements have made my old friend forget that marvellous catch of his boyhood.

We did not play many schools at football, owing chiefly, I believe, to transport and climatic difficulties. But we played many games amongst ourselves and also with the Second XI of the Town. Some of our scratch games even included such stars of the First XI as H. J. Seymour, at that time considered to be the finest full-back in Dorset.

In the winter time, whether by accident or design I know not, the mid-term holiday coincided with the Meet at West-hill Gate. We all trooped thither, and our Tally-hos resounded in a way that John Peel might have envied. I am not quite sure, though, that our presence was fully appreciated by country squires resplendent in scarlet coats. One or two of our number, whose fathers were farmers, excited the envy of the rest of us by bestriding real hunters, and on one occasion a youngster of ten won a Blackmore Vale Steeplechase, but alas, he died while still at school.

On Prize Days we acted in Sheridan's plays and recited poems in Latin and French and English, while at the Christmas Concert our shrill trebles were balanced by tenors and basses from the Abbey Choir.

To all of us I think the School was a happy place. Apart from our home life our every interest centred in it or round it or for it. We had no bicycles, no cinemas. Our parents had not developed the modern sea-side holiday habit, and hence throughout the long Summer holiday we either fore-gathered on the Terrace or rambled the countryside together. Our only change was a picnic, but picnics were to the boys of those days, and to their sisters too, opportunities for much mirth and mischief.

Certainly Sherborne in the eighties was fortunate in its

schools and school-masters. At the Abbey School was Mr. Ingram, then in full vigour of early manhood, an efficient instructor and a first-rate disciplinarian who knew well how to secure the closest attention, if not always the warmest affection, of his pupils. Mr Pooley at the British School had perhaps a wider knowledge, and from his class in the Thomas a Becket chapel I returned home to manufacture electrical apparatus which, though clumsy in appearance, would work with truly Faradayan results. Mr Irwin at Foster's introduced me to a serener atmosphere and wove a glamour round literature and history which still survives. Canon Young, Headmaster of Sherborne School, when he heard that I was striving unaided to learn something of Greek, actually devoted, brilliant classical scholar though he was, many hours of his leisure on Saturday evenings to reading Sophocles with me in his study, a rare example of generous help which I gratefully acknowledge. Certainly, if Yeovil was the Corinth of our land, Sherborne was most assuredly its Athens.

Canon Lyon, the memory of whom is still dear to those who knew him, rejoiced to tell us that the University of Oxford may have owed its foundation to Alfred the Great, but Alfred the Great owed his own schooling to Sherborne. Since England had had no other king to win so splendid a surname, there could be no other town in England to make so splendid a boast.

E.G.N.

What a unique and fascinating account of school life in the 1880s. There are many glimpses into the past but none intrigues me more than the 'single-sticks' said to be ranged round the walls of the school room and used for 'Single-stick practice'. Could this be where the boys learnt 'the regular cuts and parries'? I wonder if this is fencing or swordplay of some sort and did these single-sticks have any other use?



This is the earliest 'group' school photo that has been found so far in the archive and is of the boys of forms 1V, V and V1 taken in 1898. Reginald and Herbert Newlyn are here somewhere but not their elder brother Edward.

R. W. Foot previously reminded us about the mode of transport to away matches—'No motor charabancs in those days, but a good pair of horses and a large wagonette, and a leisurely drive through the country.'

Who was E.G.N.? I have looked through the admissions register for 1878-1907 and have found the most likely contender and it is pupil No 136 Edward Newlyn Jan 1886-July 1888 the son of a scripture reader. If it is him then two younger brothers followed him into the school on the same day in May 1894 - Reginald No 258 and Herbert No 259 and they left together on 9 March 1899. Both boys are in the 1898 photograph. In the Summer 1934 edition of *The Fosterian* F R Newlyn (probably Reginald) has visited the school and he has married, has two daughters and has served in Somerset House for over 30 years. What a mine of information is contained within the pages of *The Fosterian*!

Now thanks to Hugh Jenkins, of the Old Fosterians' Association website, who has found an entry in *The Fosterian* from April 1934 that confirms that the writer is Edward Newlyn for sure:

We were delighted to receive news of Edward Newlyn, B A (1886-8), accompanying a very entertaining article for the magazine that we hope to publish in the next issue. After being Head Boy under Mr Irwin, he served three years (1888-90) as an Assistant Master at the school. He still has a handsomely bound volume which constituted the first Old Fosterian prize ever awarded (1887) and which was voted to him by his school-fellows in the same way as the Sir George Pragnell prize is awarded nowadays. In the following year it was won by G H White. From Foster's school, E G Newlyn went to London, and after five years' work in South London and two in North London, he was appointed in 1897 to the post at St Olave's school which he still holds after altogether 46 years of continuous teaching. The reputation of St Olave's has brought to it, as visitors at different times, not only statesman like Birrell and Asquith, scholars like Professor Jebb, Butler of Trinity, Warre of Eton and Burge of Winchester but also their Majesties, King George and Queen Mary. On the occasion of the royal visit, E G Newlyn who was conducting an English lesson, took up from a boy's desk his attempt at a poem, which he read aloud, eliciting from His Majesty an approving laugh and the remark 'Not bad; much better than I could have done'. We imagine that few Old Fosterians have enjoyed a similar privilege.

It comes as no surprise to me that EGN should have had such an illustrious career in education given that by his own admission he was 'striving unaided to learn something of Greek' during his time at school.

In an attempt to find out a little more about the family I

THIS IS EDWARD NEWLYN AT ST OLAVE'S SCHOOL. WITH THANKS TO JANE WELLS, SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR WHO KINDLY PROVIDED THE PHOTOGRAPH.

ON A VISIT TO THE MUSEUM AT THE WILLOW AND WETLANDS CENTRE IN SOMERSET I FINALLY FOUND OUT ABOUT 'SINGLE STICKS'. APPARENTLY THERE IS MENTION OF THEIR USE IN *TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS*.



have checked the 1881 census and found them living in Acreman Street, Sherborne, when EGN was nine years old. His father's occupation was given as scripture reader and secretary. There were six children, at the time, in the family with at least two more to follow.

Christmas 1941 edition sees EGN returning his prize ('Yesterday, To-day and For Ever', a poem in twelve books, by E.H.Bickersteth), won in 1887, as a donation to the library in the new school.

'This prize has been my treasured possession for more than 50 years, I now return it to that place whence it came, in affectionate and grateful remembrance of my old schoolfellows, who by their free votes awarded it to me, and of the happy days we spent together. Vivat Schola Nostra!'

The last entry in *The Fosterian* is for April 1952 and it is EGN's obituary; in the introduction sympathy is offered to Mr F R Newlyn, for the loss of his brother possibly indicating that EGN did not marry.

Edward Gould Newlyn was born on Christmas Day, 1871, and entered Foster's School as a pupil in 1884. In 1888 he became a junior master and held this position until 1890 when he obtained a post at the Forest Hill Middle Class School in S.E. London. In 1895 he was appointed to Tollington Park College and in 1897 joined the staff of St Olave's Grammar School, Southwark, where he remained until his retirement in 1935. He was a Licentiate of the College of Preceptors and in 1896 was awarded the Doreck Scholarship for his thesis on the theory and practice of education. In 1898 he obtained his B.A. Degree at London University. Although in later days his interests were to a great extent connected with St Olave's School, he retained a genuine affection for Foster's School and was always interested in its activities and in those of the Association of which he was a vice-president.

To find this article within the pages of an old edition of *The Fosterian* and being able to bring the memories of so eminent an 'old boy' of the school back out into the light has been very rewarding for me. I have imagined him working with his slate while I have been working with my iPad, not so very different in shape and size, but about as far apart as can be imagined. What will life be like 125 years from now and will the iPad be an anachronism in the future just as the slate is to us today?



LOOKING BACK 5.

SIR GEORGE PRAGNELL

Who was this man who is held in such high esteem in the history of the school?

Sir George Pragnell was one of the school's most illustrious pupils; he donated the prize for leadership still awarded at the Gryphon School today, he was knighted and served as a deputy Lord Lieutenant in London and he also did a great service in establishing swimming in schools. The museum holds eight or nine ring binders prepared on Sir George Pragnell's life history, but, in the tradition of the *Looking Back* series it was decided to start right back at the beginning with what can be found about him in the school archive and *The Fosterian*.

According to the admissions register he entered the school in January 1878 (born c1864) and left in December 1880. His younger brother Walter (born c1866) joined at the same time but stayed a little longer leaving in 1882. Later, though, George's time at school is said to be 1875-77, and Mr McKay, in his history of the school certainly notes an incident, in 1876, involving both George and his cousin Edwin when Mr Griffiths, the Headmaster, is charged with caning three boys in a 'brutal and unjustifiable manner'. The apparent discrepancy in the dates may arise from the way in which admissions were recorded. In 1875, when advertisements were appearing in both the *Western Gazette* and the *Sherborne Journal*, the objective of the school was to 'afford a sound Commercial Education for boys between the ages of 7 and 15 with a tuition fee of £6 per annum plus an entrance fee of £1'. It is possible that George was amongst the first intake of boys following this advertisement and that he was actually at the school from 1875 to 1880. George and Walter were sons of William Pragnell, head gardener at the Castle in Sherborne, and his wife Ann. Their cousin Edwin joined the school at the same time and he was the son of Edwin Pragnell, proprietor of the Black Horse Hotel and later the Half Moon Hotel, and his wife Sarah. William (father of George and Walter) and Edwin (father of Edwin) were sons of Joseph and Ann Pragnell. Joseph was previously Lord Digby's head gardener. When George and Walter entered the school there is no note of any scholarship and the fees were likely to be in the region of £2 per boy per term. In 1877 the Headmaster singled out four boys for special praise, George and Walter included, for some written work 'that reflected the greatest credit upon the writers'. If early potential was spotted at school then it was clearly not misplaced because the next reference to George that can be found is in 1886, only six years after he has left school and when he would be only 22 or 23 at most, he is the president and founder of the Old Fosterians' Club. A

year or so later, on the list of the newly established OFC, he is the President and Captain living at 22 St Paul's Church Yard right in the heart of the City of London. What is he doing? He is working for one of the richest men in England Sir Francis Cook, who has made his fortune in the textile industry. The company Cook, Son and Co is based in the City of London, and trades in finished wool, cotton, linen and silk. Sir Francis Cook bought the impressive Doughty House on Richmond Hill and also the Quinta of Montserrat near Sintra in Portugal (now a world heritage site) where he continued the work of William Beckford, of Fonthill Abbey fame, in creating a magnificent garden permanently employing over seventy gardeners. He also amassed a valuable art collection and when he died in 1901 he left an estate of £1,600,000. So young George, son of the gardener, who would rise to become a managing partner in the company was seeing for himself just how life can be led amongst the very wealthy. Perhaps though, having grown up on the Digby Estate he might have seen it all before, though from a very different position. George and his wife Leonora are living at Clovelly, The Avenue, Grove Park, Kent. Their son George Frederick was born in 1891 and daughter Vera in 1897. The house was close to Lewisham station which would have connected into the City. George went on to become the Founder and President of the City of London Athletic and Swimming Associations, Chairman of the National Patriotic Association of the Employers' Territorial Association and Chairman of the Wholesale Textile Association. He also became Hon Secretary and President of the Amateur Swimming Association of England. What a set of achievements, no wonder his memory is held in high esteem to this day.

Now that we know a little more about him let us return to *The Fosterian* to find out more from reports about him and his visits back to Sherborne and his old school.

The following is extracted from Summer 1912 edition.

"During the Term the honour of knighthood was conferred upon an old boy in the person of Sir George Pragnell, who was a boy at Foster's 1875-1877. He went to London where by perseverance and force of character he won for himself a partnership in one of the greatest business places in the world, was made Deputy Lieutenant of the City of London, and last of all the special honour of knighthood has been conferred on him by his Sovereign. The photograph which Sir George has been good enough to give us will be a lasting reminder of what a Foster's Schoolboy by integrity, determination, and perseverance can do. Perhaps it may even prove an inspiration to others to follow in his footsteps by doing what work falls to their lot with all their might and in the best way they can".

Christmas edition 1912 and it is reported that Sir George Pragnell presented the prizes at the annual Speech Day and he personally donated a prize for manliness and it was awarded, on this its first occasion,

to Harold Fooks. The prize took the form of a handsome engraved silver tray given by Sir George who remarked that he trusted that whenever Fooks looked into it in the future its brightness would invariably reflect a smiling and happy face and that the tray would contain the cards of many real friends and frequent letters of good tidings. This prize is awarded by the votes of all the recipient's schoolfellows. Harold Fooks was one of the 'village boys' who travelled in daily from Nether Compton and his father was the teacher at the village school. The fact that Sir George was encouraging the use of the silver tray, to be kept in the hallway of young Harold's future home, in order to have visiting cards placed upon it speaks volumes about how far Sir George has travelled in society since his days as one of the sons of Lord Digby's gardener.

Summer 1913 edition and the Old Fosterian Club is resurrected with Sir George Pragnell as President. There are 40 or more members signed up including an E Pragnell whose address is given as the Half Moon Hotel. In the Easter 1916 edition and surrounded by a heavy black border the following solemn announcement is made

"The school has to lament the loss of one of its greatest sons and certainly one of its kindest friends. The details of the late Sir George Pragnell's great and useful public life are common property, and how he died a martyr to unremitting toil for the good of his country and his fellow men is equally well known. When asked to present our Prizes, not only did he do this, but instituted a special prize to be presented annually to the straightest and most manly boy. His memory remains to encourage every boy who finds it hard to plod perseveringly and honestly along the pathway of duty".

His death on 16 February 1915 was not only reported in the London papers but also in the New York

Times, the Brisbane Courier, the Sydney Herald and probably others. He was only 53 and he had died of heart disease. Sir George, Lady Pragnell and their daughter had recently moved into the Hyde Park Hotel in Knightsbridge to be close to their work with the Red Cross in Pall Mall. He had recently been warned by his doctor that he was working too hard and to take a rest. Being a lifelong swimmer might have helped his heart, but then again he has lived quite a life and the cut and thrust of his active business life together with his many other interests and involvements must have taken their toll.

When he donated two silver trays as prizes, not long before he died, we have to wonder if he saw himself donating these trays for many years yet to come. In the Easter edition 1917 the Sir George Pragnell prize and the last silver tray, donated by the great man himself, went to Cecil J Andrews.

Another tragedy was to strike Sir George's grieving widow as on 23 July 1917 her only son Brigade Major George Frederick Pragnell was killed while serving with the Staff Headquarters of the 123rd Infantry Brigade. He is buried at Reninghelst New Military Cemetery near Ypres and is remembered on the war memorial at St Augustine's Church, Grove Park. He was awarded the DSO.

Sir George Pragnell never forgot the start in life given to him by his old school and his name lives on in the prize that he donated. Here is a list of those who have received the award while it was held at Foster's School. Very clear instructions on how boys should vote for the recipient were given by Sir George under the three headings of Manly, Truthful and Thoroughness. They were encouraged not to vote for the most popular boy unless he fully displays these three important qualities. A voting card was issued to all boys.



HAROLD FOOKS PICTURED IN
1910 CENTRE OF BACK ROW

**SIR GEORGE PRAGNELL PRIZEWINNERS
ARE AS FOLLOWS:**

1912-1992

H J Fooks	R J Sherwin	D J Pullin
H G Trilby	W J Paulley	J Burrough
A K S Dodge	G H Chubb	P Lewis
M Shutter	M E Trevett	P M D Widowson
C J Andrews	P Coombs	J R Shapland
L J Bugg	C J Bown	S A S Shapland
W R Hewitson	G H D Pitman	D G Hunt
G Coombs	G J G Stenhouse	J E Treasure
F E Harris	M A V Morris	P Barcion
E E Curtis	M A Aherne	C J C Williams
W C Jewry	R C Young	K Harvey
P J Rogers	R D Earnshaw	D M Austin
L N W Kitzerow	W K Chaffey	P Chaffey
L S Ebdon	J M Northam	C Hodges
R R Pedley	I Miller	R Manaton
G A Goodchild	M D Bishop	D Hole
G W F Ashford	D J Evans	I Haynes
A L G Hutchings	B N Longstaff	H Williams
H F M Thorne	T P Gillham	M Schofield
C T Beer	R T Blackwell	M Cockerham
A C Meaker	A B Curran	K Ackerman
P G Wood	E Hiscock	S Snook
C R G Treasure	N Holmes	
A L Bragg	T C Hoddinott	
R J Gibling	A Lincoln	
A T W Oxford	P Dawkins	



THIS IS THE LAST SILVER TRAY DONATED BY SIR GEORGE PRAGNELL AND IT WAS AWARDED TO CECIL J ANDREWS IN 1917. IT IS NOW IN THE FOSTER'S SCHOOL ARCHIVE.

LOOKING BACK 6. NORMAN PARSONS

Norman Parsons—a Schoolboy in the 1920s

Norman Parsons was the third of four brothers who all attended Foster's School.

Compared with some Counties, North Dorset was sparsely populated, and Fosters Grammar School numbered only 110 boys. About one quarter of whom were boarders, under the care of the Headmaster and his wife. Mr Hutchins – T.L.H. as we referred to him – was an impressive figure who commanded great respect. He was a man of high moral character and expected the same standard of his pupils. He was the only one to administer corporal punishment and this would be before the whole form or, for serious offences, before the whole school. Caning was a real disgrace and something that the majority avoided. Masters were allowed to give detentions of up to two hours – offenders being kept behind after school for one hour at a time for extra work under supervision.

Most masters had sufficient personality to keep order, but Freddie who took us for art was hopeless. We ragged him no end until he finally lost his temper and began to hand out detentions right, left and centre. We certainly sobered down then.

T.L.H. sported a motorcycle combination and on one occasion I had a ride in the sidecar visiting a farm about five miles out to collect a rope for the tug of war on Sports Days. That was the closest I got to T.L.H. One advantage of a small school is that classes are small too. I don't suppose that any form had more than 15 pupils, and one went up through the school with the same group of chaps.

It was early at the grammar school that I received a nickname that stuck for years. Some small boys called me 'Parsnips'. This gradually evolved to 'Snips', then 'Nip' until finally 'Nippy'. After that my Christian name was never used. I was always 'Nippy Parsons', even the masters using it when they were in a good mood. It was years before that nickname finally dropped off. In each successive drawing office where I worked there seemed always someone who knew me before to keep up the name and I suppose I was a married man with a growing family before I shed it finally. (When Norman was elderly his son David remembers hearing Norman's younger brother Philip call him 'Nippy'.)

My best subject was maths and my worst history and geography. We had quite a good school library and I lapped up all the schoolboy stories, especially those by Talbot Baines Reed. The only classical author who appealed to me was Sir Walter Scott. I found his historical novels very fascinating; the descriptive parts that should have improved my history were skipped. I read one or two of Dickens but found him more boring than Scott.

Father had a complete set of Children's Encyclopaedias and I found these invaluable when doing my English literature homework. As I wasn't reading the books I should, I found that the summaries in the encyclopaedia enabled me to get by reasonably well.

Sports Day was always in the summer and on the first occasion I took part I won the under 13 100 yards handicap. I was only 11 and was given two yards' start. The following year I had my appendix removed and was forbidden to take part in the sports. I never achieved prowess as a sprinter in spite of the early potential. Prizes were given in those days for winners so I became the proud possessor of a pocket watch, with gunmetal case. Later prizes were changed to medals with cups for some of the open events. The nearest I got to a medal was in the final of the 120 yards hurdles. At halfway I was beginning to gain, taking the hurdles slightly ahead of the others, when I 'went a purler'. I picked myself up



THE FOUR BOYS WERE THE SONS OF CHARLES SAMUEL DENNIS PARSONS AND THE FAMILY LIVED OVER THE GROCERY SHOP IN LONG STREET.

and completed the race getting quite a sympathetic round of applause from the spectators.

It was when training for the sports that I concussed myself. One morning, before breakfast, I was on the sports field with my brothers, when I tried to be clever and jump across the width of the long jump pit. I cleared the pit alright but slipped on landing and fell backwards, hitting my head on the edge of the pit. I remember nothing about walking home, having breakfast, or walking to school afterwards. I came to somewhere about the middle of the morning. Unfortunately it didn't cure me of trying to do 'clever' things.

Surgery for appendicitis was fairly new then, and was considered to be somewhat dangerous. Techniques hadn't reached their present level and hospitalisation was a minimum of two weeks. The most embarrassing part for me was being pushed by my father in a bath chair from house to hospital. Our local G.P. did the surgery but did not make a very neat job of it. Neither did he when he removed swollen glands from my neck when I was four years old. The effect of that operation was to give a slight twist to my mouth, giving me a sinister look when I grin.

It was during my schooldays that excavations in Sherborne Abbey located the coffins of Kings Ethelbert and Ethelbald – two brothers of Alfred the Great who had been Kings of Wessex. As some of my school pals were choir boys at the Abbey they took me inside to see the site and the bones; the one and only time I've seen human bones.

Remembrance Day was taken seriously at school. We all paraded in the playground in front of the flagpole. The Headmaster read out the names of old boys who were killed in the war, and on the sounding of the maroon signalling the two minutes' silence the flag was lowered to half mast. The Great War was supposed to have been a war to end all wars. As far as the Western world was concerned it did for only 20 years. For me, Remembrance Day was merely going through the motions. The war had meant nothing to me – I was only three when it broke out.

A major event in Sherborne's calendar was 'Pack Monday Fair'. It was held on a Monday in October and the whole town was in festive mood. The celebration goes back to 1490. The restoration of the Abbey had taken some years and on completion the workmen packed up their tools – hence the name – and celebrated.

The main street running through the town was lined with stalls, with cheap jacks shouting their wares and others encouraging the passers-by to take part in a game of chance. There was also a cattle market; the field adjacent to the school being occupied by sheep. At the top of the town was the fairground with the fair going for the whole week. Because of its religious connotations the church held a service on the Sunday before 'Pack Monday' in the fair ground. Then immediately after midnight on the Sunday, 'Teddy Rowe's Band' would parade through the town. I don't

know the origin of the name but the 'band' was unique. Anybody could join the band providing they had something to make a noise – trumpets, drums, tin cans, rattles etc. The resulting cacophony was terrific. We were not allowed to take part but you could never sleep through the noise.

Two things stand out in my memory. One happened when I was very young. I had wormed my way to the front of a stall where a cheap jack was holding forth, and there, right in front of my nose was a tray of balloons with one dangling temptingly over the edge. My little hand was slowly raised to take hold of the balloon when there was a tap on my head. The cheap jack, without stopping in his talk, had thwarted my attempted theft! I slunk away very shamefacedly.

The other memory is of two fiddlers who visited the fair annually. They were dressed in top hats, frock coats and pin-striped trousers. With their pleasant smiles and gracious manner they created an impression of being real gentlemen who had fallen on bad times. As they fiddled their way up Cheap Street they got far more support than if they had been in rags. Perhaps this was their psychology. Anyway, they arrived by car.

Sometimes the Town Crier's voice could be heard advertising some special function or commodity. I don't know how much he was paid for his services, but his appearances were not sufficiently frequent for him to make a living out of it. Other voices were occasionally heard too; the fisherman with his fresh Weymouth mackerel, the rag and bone man and the muffin man. Then there was the Abbey clock which chimed the quarters and struck the hours. It could be heard over most of the town and was a surprising companion to a child awake in the night. A more ominous sound was the death knell with its query of "Who will be the next?"

Because of Father's business ties, and shortage of cash, family holidays away were never a consideration. One summer during the war, after we had all had whooping cough, Mother took us away to Lyme Regis for a week. The only thing I remember now is that the furnished apartments were next door to the Police Station. From our bedroom window we could see the iron bars across the cell windows.

Sunday School outings were very much a treat then. We went by charabanc – with its open top – to Weymouth with its large expanse of sands and safe bathing. Our pennies were spent on ice creams and donkey rides. There was always something of interest in Weymouth harbour especially if a Jersey boat came in. Occasionally, too, the fleet would be anchored in Portland Harbour.

During 1925 Father took on an experienced hand in the shop. He did not last many months as the turnover was not sufficient to cover this expense. It did mean, however, that father was able to get away for a family holiday – for the first and last time. We took a furnished house at Pokesdown, between Bournemouth and Christchurch. I had just been given my first camera, an Ensign Box. Father had received it as a gift from one of

his suppliers for buying a certain quantity of their goods. I still have black and white prints of my first photographic effort of over 50 years ago.

I was very keen on football and cricket and eventually made the school first eleven without achieving anything worth recording. The school was divided into three houses, John and I being in St Bedes and Don in St Dunstons. In the cricket match between those two houses in 1925, John, opening our innings, carried his bat right through. I had just made the house team and was last man in – and out! John left school that year but in the corresponding house match the following year, Don, who opened the innings for St Dunstons also carried his bat right through the innings. During my last year at school in 1927, I was opening batsman for our house. With the achievement of my brothers behind me I was very keen to complete the hat trick. Alas, I was out for a duck. I didn't have what it takes to rise to a big occasion. Of the three of us, Don was the best cricketer and I was possibly the best at football. I played throughout the season as the school's right wing. I enjoyed my football, and occasionally found myself too fast for my colleagues.

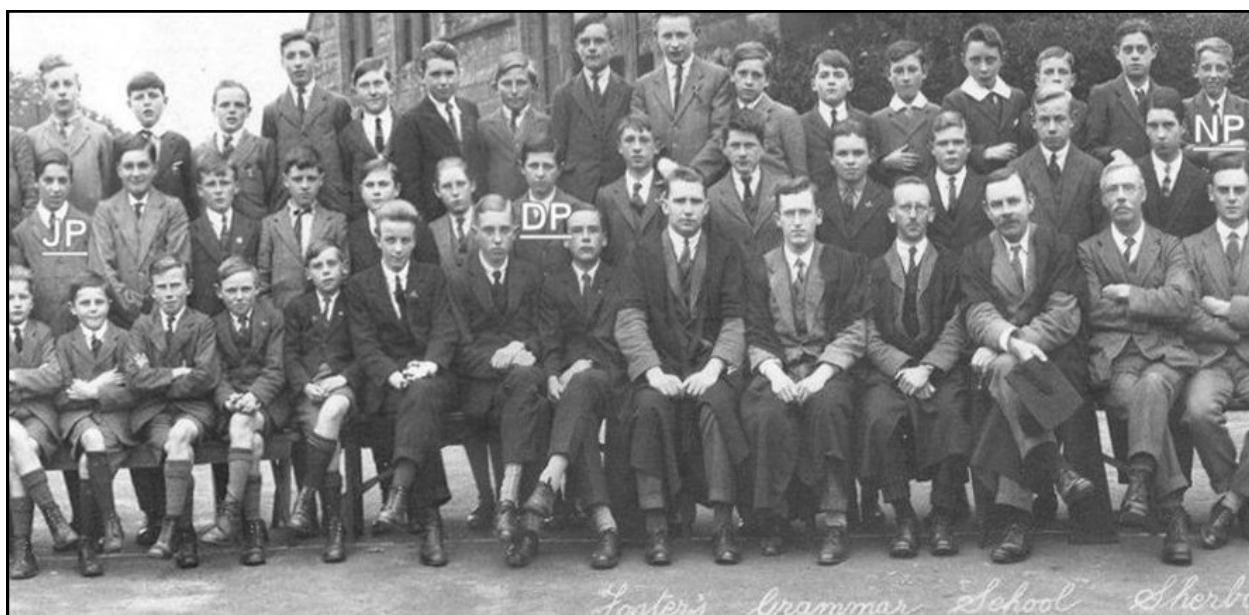
On one occasion I was called upon to referee a match. It was before I obtained a regular place in the First Eleven. The school was playing against a men's club, and our team was strengthened by the inclusion of a couple of masters. I had gone up there to watch and found that the master who was due to referee had a heavy cold and asked me to substitute. For most of the game there were no problems but towards the end of the match the opposing team hotly disputed the referee's decision – a penalty for handball. To avoid an unpleasant situation developing I altered my decision

and restarted the game with a bounce up. I probably should have stuck to my original judgement but I was only a kid and felt rather intimidated. Afterwards, the master whose place I had taken said I did the best thing. In any case he was the sort of master who encouraged rather than criticised.

The countryside around Sherborne was full of wild flowers, and during the holidays Don and I would cycle miles. We knew where to find snowdrops, primroses, cowslips and bluebells, which were always a pleasure to Mother; also hedgerows where scented violets grew – white and violet. We particularly liked hunting for orchids. The Purple Orchids were fairly common, but we also found one or two places where Bee Orchids grew each year. Once we came across a Butterfly Orchid. At Christmas time we would bring home berried holly from the woods. Sometimes I am sure we must have trespassed, because I remember one irate keeper shouting at us. It was too late as we were at the gate that led into the road and you bet we scorched home.

Occasionally Point-to-Point races were held on the outskirts. The first time we went to them we cycled across the fields and dumped our cycles under a hedge near the paddock. I noticed that part of the hedge had been neatly trimmed. As we were walking away there was a shout from a steward. We had parked the bikes under one of the jumps!

Sherborne also boasted a polo ground, and on one occasion the Duke of York was playing there. I had cycled to the ground and was by the entrance watching the cars going in – the entrance fee was beyond the range of my pocket money. A car stopped and the driver beckoned to me. I am sure he saw the wistful look on my face and contrived to get me inside. He gave me a shilling and



Three of the brothers are pictured above in a section of the school photo of 1924 John Parsons entered the school on 26 September 1919 and left on 8 April 1925 to become a Pharmacist's assistant. Donald Parsons entered the school 17 September 1920 and left on 27 July 1926 to join the National Provincial Bank. Norman Parsons entered the school on 15 September 1922 and left on 16 December 1927 to work in the drawing office at Petter's of Yeovil. All three boys received scholarships.

asked me to get a bar of household soap to wash out the horse box, saying to the fellow at the turnstile, "You'll let him in when he returns?" Needless to say I chased into the nearest grocer and returned as fast as possible. Once inside the ground I came to a halt. In my excitement I had not taken the make or number of the car; all I knew was that it was an open tourer! I wandered round the car park, but every other car was a tourer. In the end I dumped the soap on the driver's seat of what I thought might be the right one and hurried off to watch the polo. It's a fascinating game, very fast and exciting. The Duke was a very good player and scored one of the goals. The Duke cantered on to where his young wife was, and tossing his dark glasses to her, said, "Catch, Betty!" (The Duke of York subsequently became King George VI; 'Betty' was Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.)

I remember going to the cinema a couple of times to special showings for schools. One was 'The Great White South' – Scott's voyage to the Pole – and the other was, I think, 'Ben Hur'. Silent films, of course.

One of our school friends introduced us to 'Paper Cricket'. It was rather a hit and miss affair but from that beginning we developed a game, using turntable and pointer, which gave a more realistic result. We played our Test Matches – England v Australia – and our County matches – mainly Surrey v Middlesex. For some reason John and Don supported Surrey, and I supported Middlesex. I seemed to have that streak in me. They followed Cambridge whilst I favoured Oxford. Why, I don't know, but competition in the house added to the spice of life.



Tailender Philip entered the school on 16 September 1927 and left on 28 July 1933 and his education would have been paid for by his father. On leaving school Philip was the only one of the brothers to follow his father into the family business. When WW2 broke out Philip joined the army and left Sherborne which contributed to the decision to sell the family business.

Those were the days of Jack Hobbs, Andy Sandham. Jack Hearne and 'Patsy' Hendren. (Elias Hendren, Middlesex and England cricketer, generally known as 'Patsy' Hendren.) Our game told when a person was out, how he was out, and if run out, at which end and during which run. Extras were also detailed, and detailed score sheets and bowling analyses kept. We were always pleased if one of our heroes scored a century. We received hours of enjoyment from this game and after leaving school I tried to interest Chad Valley in its manufacture. Although being impressed they did not take it up. To make it a payable proposition they would have to produce 100,000, and they did not think there was sufficient national interest to sell that quantity. What a pity!

During our teenage years we taught ourselves to drive. After a horse and van, father bought a model 'T' Ford van. It was very simple to drive. There were just two pedals: the clutch/gear change, and the footbrake. The hand throttle was on the steering column. The clutch pedal was linked to the hand brake. With the hand brake on, the pedal was in the mid position – neutral gear. Depressing the pedal put it into low gear and taking the foot off put it into high gear. We would often accompany Father on his County rounds and when he was visiting a farm house to take an order we would drive up and down the field or track. We soon mastered the controls. After that he had a Citroen, and finally, a Morris Cowley with its 'bull nose' radiator. The Morris had what is now the normal layout of controls: foot accelerator, brake and clutch with a central gear lever. The gear box had three forward and a reverse gear but NO synchromesh. To change gears without 'crashing' them, the revs had to be just right. This was easily acquired when changing up, but changing down, which is a more hurried operation was very difficult. This was when one learned the art of 'double de-clutching'. This, of course, is not necessary with the modern synchromesh box but I still find myself doing this subconsciously.

We took the Cambridge Senior School certificate exam in the fifth form. To get a pass one had to obtain a credit in four basic subjects. The whole form was entered and in John's year the pass rate was 100%. I was only 14 at the time – my birthday being in September – so was kept down for a further year to try for an honours certificate. This I duly obtained, but was still under age to leave school, so had to spend a term in the sixth.

The sixth form was really for those who were taking the two years Higher School Certificate course – today's 'A' levels – and possibly a university scholarship. Further education was not free in those days. As I was not studying for anything in particular I was just kicking my heels during that final term. It was then that young Philip started at F.G.S. so I was 'Parsons 1' for a term.

The final question facing all school leavers is, 'What job?' John had gone in for pharmacy, being apprenticed to the local chemist. Don had chosen the bank. He had to travel to London to be interviewed at the National

Provincial Bank Head Office and the local branch manager advised him to carry a bowler hat and kid gloves! He never wore either again. Father had hoped one of his sons would join him in the business. Don was the obvious one as he got on very well with customers in the shop. These two having chosen other careers, I think that Father would have welcomed me although I was the 'uncouth boy'. However the job did not appeal in the least. I was good at figures but had no inclination in any direction. With my School certificate I could have taken a job as an uncertified teacher – teaching in primary or junior schools – but that was the last job I wanted to do. I'd had enough of school. Father approached his chartered accountant but he needed a premium of £50 per year for three years for the privilege of training me; so did the Borough Surveyor. Father just didn't have this cash available. We tried the Post Office, but there were no vacancies and the Bank did not appeal to me either.

There was just one thing left and that was engineering. Petter Oil engines had a large factory in Yeovil. Father knew one of the directors, Mr Percy Petter. We went along to see him, a pleasant, round faced gentleman with white hair and a white moustache. He had a twin brother who was also a director, and the only way to distinguish between them was the moustache. Sir Ernest was a smoker so his was ginger!

There was no vacancy in the oil engine side, but they had a branch which engaged in aircraft design and manufacture. During the 1914-1918 war Petters had built aircraft as a subcontractor, and subsequently had carried on the business with their own design team. Eventually I was taken on as an un-articled apprentice, starting work in January 1928.

Norman Parsons 1922-27

This extract is taken from the memoirs written by Norman Parsons and I thank his son David for allowing the reproduction here of this fascinating account of Norman's school days and adolescence spent in Sherborne.



In November 2013 four sons of the four Parsons boys visited Sherborne from various destinations across the south and southwest of England.

They are from left to right:

Ian son of John, Keith son of Donald, David son of Norman and Simon son of Philip.

There was time too to have a look through some of the old school records and photographs kept in the archive. This was followed by a visit to the former family shop, the chapel in Finger Lane, attended by their fathers and to the cemetery where their grandparents are buried.

Sherborne Museum volunteers were very pleased to have facilitated in this successful visit.



LOOKING BACK 7.

DAVID GIBLING

David Gibling—a Schoolboy in the 1930-40s

My father, Robert, taught at Foster's School from 1909 – 1947 with the exception of about two years during the First World War. My mother, Gladys Kathleen Parker, must have joined the staff before my father left for the trenches (he wrote poems to her from there) and probably continued teaching at Foster's School until shortly before their marriage on 20 December 1920. I was a pupil from 1932-41 and my brother, Robin, from 1933-42. My sister, Gillian, was at Lord Digby's School from 1940-47.

All I recall of the move itself was helping to carry some of the old-fashioned desks from Hound Street to the new site in Tinney's Lane.

It was a novel experience having the whole school - assembly hall, gymnasium, classrooms, laboratories, woodwork and art rooms – brought together on one site. Previously, they had been scattered over a wide area.

The original stone building was probably much as it had always been, divided into two classrooms (1st form and 5th form) by a movable wood and glass panelled screen in sections. It served as the Assembly Hall. The screen was removed for events such as Speech Day and performances of the school play. These were produced by Ernest Hulme (French). Maurice Welcher (Science) managed the lighting (possibly stage management also) very efficiently. There was some improvisation; I recall a drainpipe forming part of the dimming mechanism. My father would act as prompt. A recording of Elgar's 'Pomp and Circumstance' marches was played during the intervals.

All the other classrooms were 'temporary' wooden huts dating from the early twenties or before. They were heated by coke-fuelled tortoise stoves supervised by a monitor. They warmed the first few front rows, but in frosty weather overcoats and scarves would be worn and lessons might be punctuated by a run round 'the field' to get the fingers tingling again.

'The Field' was the favoured break-time area in fine weather. It sloped down from the iron railings bordering the Headmaster's vegetable garden to the woodwork hut. (The woodwork hut, incidentally, was also a form room). On the second Monday in October, the field became the site of the sheep auction associated with Pack Monday Fair, thus necessitating, to the pupils' satisfaction, a day off school, even though the field itself was unusable for several days afterwards.

Beyond it, reached by a tarmac pathway, was the Congregational schoolroom, where 'gym' lessons took place (except in July when it was commandeered for the

pupils sitting the School and Higher School Certificate exams). At one end was the platform with seats and on the wall a large sepia photograph of a foreign missionary station. RSM Brown (a redoubtable and popular teacher) also ran 'Evening Gym', a club for which one paid a small fee. This dispensed with formal exercises in favour of various vaults over the horse and swings and handstands on the parallel bars. We customarily rounded off the annual school gym display by building a carefully rehearsed multi-tiered pyramid, which at a given signal would abruptly collapse (sometimes on a summer evening the club would cross Long Street for the Brewery Field to indulge in a free-for-all game of football 'No rules!').

Among regular members of the Evening Gym, apart from my brother and myself, I recall Philip Wood, George Treasure (whose father kept the bakery on Green Hill), Dick and John Ballam, and 'Nab' Baker who sadly lost his life when his troopship was torpedoed on the voyage to Australia.

Mr Lush's vegetable garden was separated from the tarmac playground by a privet hedge. On the playground side on a low plinth stood a field gun, which we understood had been captured from the Turks. Such trophies were common enough in public places after the Great War, until taken away to be recycled for metal for another war effort. At the top corner of the playground was the Headmaster's garage with the staff room above it. One master obtained his mid-morning coffee by arrangement with a house in Hound Street. It would be carried to him by one of the boys. Beyond the steps leading up to the staff room were the primitive toilets –



DAVID WITH YOUNGER BROTHER ROBIN

just a row of wooden closets with, on the other side of the narrow passage, a cemented stone wall with a channel running below open to the elements and used by all. The cloakroom was located inside the main door of the original building. One of my memories is of H R F Young, son of a (or the) Milborne Port Policeman: his bicycle light was an oxy-acetylene lamp with a tendency to flare up when lit; if this happened he would seize his macintosh, already to hand, and deliver several blows with it until the flames went out. It was also he, as I remember, who was responsible for signalling the change-over between lessons, standing on the steps of the entrance to the main building and vigorously swinging the heavy handbell so that its jangling notes might be heard in the furthest huts.

There were no school dinners then, except for the boarders. They would be joined at the tables in the long narrow, stone-flagged dining room by the 'country boys' who cycled in from as far away as Thornford and Yetminster bringing their lunches with them. Everyone else went home for lunch. My father, who always seemed to have something on in the dinner hour, barely had time for a hasty bite before hurrying back for the afternoon session.

Soccer (as it was called then), cricket and athletics took place on the Terrace, a good mile away but a wonderful site with the woodlands of Gainsborough Hill rising steeply to the south and the valley of the river Yeo spreading mistily westward. There was Saturday morning school in those days, with voluntary games in the afternoon, but my father would be there in shorts and boots encouraging St Bedes to play up and do their best to beat St Dunstons or St Adlhelm's. By this time (mid 1930s), Mr Miller had replaced 'Johnny' Walker as mathematics master and taken over the running of the 1st XI soccer and cricket teams. Under his purposeful training and tactical knowledge of both games, we enjoyed two or three very successful seasons, beating schools much larger than our own (we numbered at most only about 120 pupils).

Before the war, cross-country meant more or less that. From Newland, the course crossed Purley Meadow, continued along New Road and from the Thornford Road headed up through Honeycombe Woods and so along the Blandford Road to eventually plunge down the stoney path through Gainsborough Woods to Purley again. Competitors were left to their own devices and evening practice runs in March and April are a pleasant memory of mine. There were, of course, no showers in the old school, just a few wash hand basins.

My father began or organised a number of activities during his time at Foster's School. Among them was the Old Fosters' Association. He would put aside the first week or so of each holiday to

writing both the School and Old Boys' sections of The Fosters' Association. The latter was largely based upon the meetings he had and letters he received from old boys, and it meant a great deal to him, especially during the war years. He would reply in detail to every letter he received, so many of them from old boys serving overseas.

He, with much help I imagine from my mother, also founded the 'Commoners' Society'. Regular meetings were held at which speakers would be invited to talk about their work (e.g. a central post office official, or a local figure such as WG Pike an expert on clocks and watches), or a debate would be held. The Commoners' Society led to the Commoners' Concert. Held annually, it drew on the varied and sometimes surprising talents of boys, old boys, masters and their wives, and was a great success. Mrs Lush, my mother and father were regular performers - Mrs Lush with her rich contralto tones, my mother with her romantic ballads, and my father with his humorous ditties typical of his self-deprecating sense of humour. Among other countless turns over the years, one could mention the illuminated Indian club-swinging of the Hann brothers of Milborne Port and the wailing notes of the musical saw as played by Robin Ridout, a small-holder from Purse Caundle.

Between them, my father and mother organised the fortnight's annual summer camp, which ran from 1932 - 1938. Mr Lush would drive them in his Swift to a possible site and if thought suitable arrangements would be agreed there and then with the farmer. Bell tents were used, except for the ladies who might have a caravan (e.g. my mother and sister, Gillian). My mother, Mrs Hulme and her sister, Grace Blease, did the cooking, assisted by the school caretaker, while orderlies for the day cut sandwiches and kept the wasps at bay, laid the tables and did the washing up. On returning home, the tents would be dried out on the 'Field', and everything cleaned and packed away ready



SUMMER CAMP 1937 DAVID IS PICTURED HERE AS ARE HIS BROTHER ROBIN AND SISTER GILLIAN, HIS FATHER ROBERT AND HIS UNCLE MICHAEL.

for next year. In 1940, instead of camping we spent the time in August digging the zig-zag trenches down the edge of the field in Tinney's Lane – and proved their worth during the bombing of the town soon afterwards.

The maximum salary my father earned during his 38 years at Foster's School (mostly as Second Master, for which there was no additional remuneration) was about £480 in his last year there. He resisted to the last the doctor's recommendation that he should retire early. I see him now, walking up The Avenue marking dictations on his small attaché case as he came. He had always kept a note of every domestic payment he made, down to the last box of matches. This was solely from prudence as he was generosity itself. I don't know what pension he received, except that wives of teachers were not included in the scheme. On his death I think my mother's official income was limited to the weekly £10 old-age pension. She once told me that her salary as a teacher at Foster's School was £100 a year, payable in three instalments at the end of each term, and that the then Headmaster, Mr Hutchins, advised her not to agree to the Governors' proposal after WW1 that she should take a £10 cut for that year. She and her colleague, Miss Laing, ran the Cub Troop, to which I imagine most of the boarders belonged. In Mr Hutchins' time as Headmaster (until 1929), we would sometimes encounter a crocodile of boarders headed by my father out for a Sunday afternoon walk. Whether this was a duty performed in rotation by all the masters I cannot say. Mr Hutchins rode a motor-cycle and sidecar for which he would dress in leather garments with helmet and goggles.

In my time at Foster's School, there were never more than six, at most seven, masters and one part-timer (Regimental Sergeant Major A.T. Brown who was in charge of the armoury at Sherborne School and taught 'Gym').

The Headmaster, Hubert Lush, taught History and

Divinity (now RE); my father (English and Latin); Maurice Welcher (Chemistry and General Science) – he had been 'demonstrator' at Sherborne School; PDF Miller (Maths) – he succeeded my father as second master in 1947; Ernest Hulme (French); Geoffrey Hewitt (Geography and Music); and Frederick Marks (Art and Woodwork) – on his retirement Mr Wilkins took over Woodwork and Frederick Colcough took over Art. Just before the outbreak of the war, John Gabe an officer in the Territorials did a student term assisting Ernest Hulme in the French department and later Margaret Hulme took over from her husband when he was called up into the Army. Frederick Colcough and Geoffrey Hewitt also departed for active service.

I should say the teaching in Grammar Schools then was orthodox but competent, with an emphasis on acquiring and passing on knowledge. Homework was taken for granted; perhaps being sons of a schoolmaster and doing our homework in the same room (the 'Study') as he did his work and preparation in, we may have been more assiduous than some. Ours was probably the age of the five-year textbook, e.g. the French syllabus followed the systematic course set out by Marc CEPI over his five-volume series; and there were textbooks for History and Geography, and useful selections of English Literature for English. Lessons were orderly and rowdiness extremely rare. There was a half hour detention in the dinner hour.

The small size of Foster's School is illustrated by the fact that for a year I was the first and sole member of the 6th form, though subsequently numbers rose to five or six. As a result of Pat Miller's enthusiastic (and demanding) teaching, George Treasure became a lecturer at Loughborough College and Philip Wood a senior teacher at a large Grammar School in the Southampton area.

One pupil for a time at Foster's School was R P

Pedley (son of the draper in Half Moon Street). He rose up through the profession to become Chairman of the Headmasters' Conference and something of a pundit at the time. I remember him coming in the holidays and engaging my father in earnest discussions about education.

David Gibling 1932-41

DAVID'S FATHER, ROBERT, WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR MANY OF THE WONDERFUL ITEMS THAT FOUND THEIR WAY INTO THE SCHOOL ARCHIVE—HERE IS A POSTCARD HE SENT HOME TO HIS PARENTS JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS 1911.



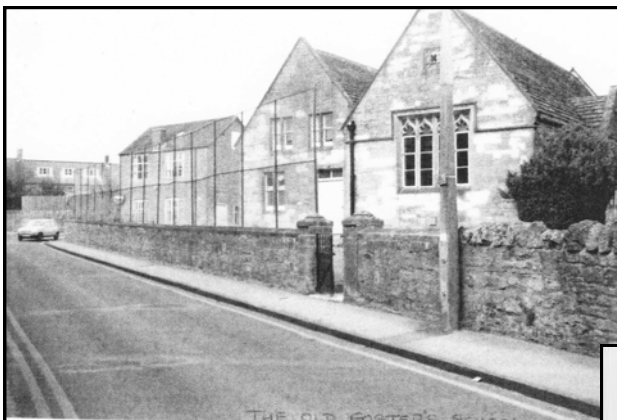
LOOKING BACK 8.

JOHN JACKSON

John Jackson—a Schoolboy in the War Years

John Samuel Jackson of Milborne Port remembers what it was like to be at school during the war years.

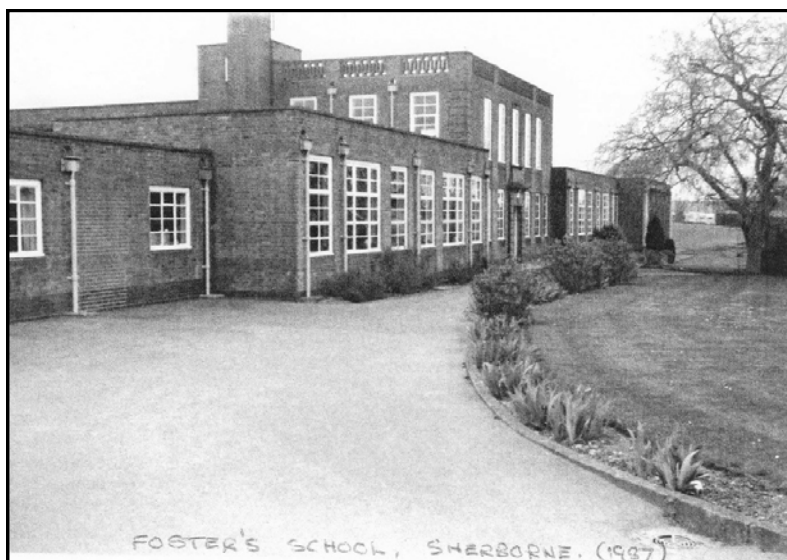
I previously went to Stonegarth School 1937 – 39 which was situated at the bottom of The Avenue. The



Headmistress was Miss Sparkes.

Having taken the Entrance Exam I then started at Foster's School in Hound Street in 1939 when I was not yet ten years old.

The Headmaster was Mr H Lush. Later that year we all moved up to the new school at the end of Tinneys Lane.



On 1 October 1940 German bomber planes on their way to Westlands or Bristol were met by British fighter planes and turned tail. Seeing a built up area below them (Sherborne) they just dropped their bombs in order to make up speed.

Although no bombs actually hit the school some landed nearby blowing all the glass out of the windows on the front of the school and shards of glass were stuck in the notice boards on the far side of class rooms. Fortunately school time ended at 4.00 pm and the class rooms were empty. The school was then closed for two weeks while the windows were re-glazed etc.



As the photograph shows the house in Newland, which Miss Billinger (Headmistress of Lord Digby's School) lived and shared with Miss Sparkes (Headmistress of Stonegarth), had a direct hit. The wall in the foreground of the house is where I and other children were waiting for the bus to pick us up at 4.05 pm on route to Milborne Port and Henstridge. To the best of my knowledge the bombs dropped on Sherborne at around 4.45 pm.

Of course because the war was on we had to carry gas masks and the first lesson on Saturday mornings was gas mask drill. As you can imagine in a class room of approx 30 boys it was quite a comical sight, which led to a certain amount of laughter, which in turn caused the eye screen to mist up and lots of strange noises coming from the sides of your face where the rubber fitted.

In the early 1940's several masters were 'called up' into the forces, two of which were Mr Hulme (French) and Mr Hewitt (Geography). Their places were taken by their wives who were also qualified teachers. I believe both masters returned to their teaching posts when the war was over.

During my time at school any article you may have mislaid or maybe dropped in the school area, be it an exercise book or gym shoe etc, usually ended up in the 'Pound' which was in the Headmaster's office. To retrieve same article you had to go to the office and pay the sum of 1d (one old penny) to the Headmaster's secretary, Mr Harry Otton.

For sports matches and competitions etc the school was divided into three houses. St Aldhelms, St Bedes and St Dunstans; I was in the latter and proud of it.

Fellow pupils at Fosters school from Milborne Port were my two cousins, Sam Pettis and John Pettis and also Royce Gay.

Unfortunately in 1944 my father, who ran a butchers business in Milborne Port had to withdraw me from school to assist in the business as three of his staff, Charlie Hinks, Reg Pattemore and Michael Coyne all got

called up for war duty. So at the age of under 15 I was doing a butchers delivery round, sometimes actually driving until the local policeman warned my father.

I am pictured below with one of the vans belonging to the family business which has the war time white edge painted around it. No street lights were allowed during the war.

John Jackson 1939-44



LOOKING BACK 9.

KENNETH HOUSE

Kenneth House —A Boarder in the 40s-50s

Kenneth House occupies a unique position in the history of Foster's school. Not only was he educated there, he was a boarder 1947-1954, but he went on to teach at the school from 1960 onwards, finishing his term as Headmaster before retiring in 1990. He is also President of the Old Fosterians' Association.

Kenneth House, or Ken as he would always be known, walked through his first set of school gates in 1941 when he entered Sturminster Newton Junior School. He remembers, as a very small boy, being taken to Sherborne by his much older sister who was at the Digby school at the time, and seeing the bomb damage to the buildings following the air raid on Sherborne in 1940. He also saw the boys of Foster's school out walking in the town in their brown and gold uniforms and he was determined, from that moment, to attend the school. He went home and told his parents of his decision. He also knew he wanted to be a teacher, again from a very early age, and was encouraged at every stage by his mother. She was the eldest child and had left school, as was the norm at the time, on reaching 11 years of age to go into service in one of the big houses. By the time her youngest sister was at school there were more of the siblings working and so this last sister was able to complete her education and go on to train and become a teacher. Ken thinks that his aunt probably influenced the creation of his clear and early ambition.

Foster's School was outside the catchment area for Sturminster Newton and so it was necessary to apply to take the 11+ at the school itself. So early in 1947 Ken travelled over to Sherborne and duly sat the entrance exams. He remembers having to write an essay and this was followed by an intelligence test. Having completed the 100 questions in the IQ test he sat back and felt quite pleased with his efforts. He was justified in his assessment of himself as the result came through and he had passed. His sister had travelled daily by train, changing at Templecombe, and getting to the Digby School in time for the start of the school day. However, it was decided that Ken was to be a boarder. Before the first term started his parents were issued with a clothing list and a luggage trunk was filled and sent on, by train, in advance of Ken who arrived on the day before the start of term. After the usual couple of weeks of homesickness, common to all new boarders, he fell into the routine of school life. There were exeat weekends during the term but other than that they all stayed at school. There were over 40 boarders when Ken joined their ranks, so not all could be accommodated in the boarding house in Hound Street and some were billeted

in the area. They would return to their billets at bedtime. There were two dormitories, senior and junior with 12-15 boys in each, on the top floor of the boarding house in Hound Street. There was no heating so in Ken's words it was a little fresh in winter and they did not hang around when it was time to get up and get dressed. Full uniform was worn at all times with short trousers up to the age of 13. Proper kit was worn for PE sessions, but kicking a ball around, usually a tennis ball, at playtimes and other spare time resulted in Ken 'kicking out' many a pair of school shoes, which his father would set to and repair when Ken took them home. He remembers spending many happy hours playing at anything that involved a ball, a bat or a racquet. Boarders took all their meals in the school canteen and they were joined at lunchtime by some of the day boys, while others brought their own sandwiches and some went home to eat. Boys had a set place at a table, for a term, where groups of boys of different ages sat together. Boys from each table went up to collect the food served by masters and senior boys because there was never enough staff. All the meals were cooked on the premises and Ken remembers that he ate most of what he was given without complaint. He also remembers "At the end of the school day we would go back to the boarding house, if we were not involved with activities, and we could make toast or something to eat on a very smelly old coke stove in the dining room. We used to fag for the seniors making toast, running errands, cleaning shoes etc. This lasted for two or three years and then came the day and it all turned round and it was our turn to be on the receiving end. This practice did run out after my time and is all part of the changing times."

The Headmaster and his family lived on the ground floor and middle floor of the boarding house. There was also a sick room on the middle floor where matron could be consulted if the need arose. The building that housed the old classrooms was empty and unused at this time. Mr Lush was the Headmaster in Ken's time and he describes him as "a gentleman in the right sense of the word". He did not find him frightening or intimidating when he arrived as an 11 year old and clearly he was highly respected and well liked by all the boys. Ken remembers that the Headmaster would look in on both



KEN IN 1949

dorms every evening before lights out. Living and working on the school premises, amongst the boys, clearly came with a huge built-in level of commitment, not just from the Headmaster, but also from his wife.

There was school on Saturday mornings for boarders and day boys alike. One afternoon a week was given over to sports, Wednesdays for seniors and Thursdays for juniors. All school sporting fixtures were held on Saturday afternoons. Sport was popular amongst all the boys and Ken does not remember there being any shirkers. He played for the under 14's in both cricket and football when he was about 12. Jimmy Bogan took the boys for PE at the time, and he was highly committed to engendering a love of sport in his charges and gave up much of his time after school to this end. He was assisted by the masters who ran various sporting teams. Ernest Hulme and PDF Miller ran teams alongside their other duties. Arthur Critchley took over from Jimmy Bogan at some time during Ken's schooling. There were away fixtures at Beaminster, Bridport, Weymouth, Shaftesbury, Blandford and Ilminster for soccer and cricket. Yeovil Grammar School was played only at cricket in Ken's day. They went by bus hired from Deweys coaches or Bere Regis coaches. In the beginning Ken was always travel sick and had to take an appropriate 'sick-bag' with him, luckily this improved over the years. In the summer the boys would troop down to the outdoor swimming pool, belonging to the Sherborne Boys' School, in crocodile fashion, once a week with additional swimming time on Sunday evenings for the boarders. The water could be cold and would start the year with the temperature in the high 50sF!

Every Sunday the Head would lead the boarders to the Abbey, again in crocodile fashion, for the 11.00am service. On Friday afternoons the school operated an Army Cadet Force (ACF) to which the majority of the boys, who were old enough (13+), belonged. Later this changed to the Combined Cadet Force (CCF).

Permission had to be sought to go out into the town and most of the time would be spent on school premises or walking to and from variously located school buildings or facilities. In the evenings all the boarders would return to the school for homework. Juniors had an hour long session and seniors around two hours. Most,

if not all, of the band of dedicated teachers lived in Sherborne and they would oversee the homework sessions on a rota. After homework there was some free time and then bed. Boys were allocated one slot a week for a bath and if it was missed, for any reason, they would have to wait another week. Luckily there were communal showers after sport.

There was much healthy inter-house rivalry between the three school Houses - St Aldhems, St Bedes and St Dunstons. Boarders were automatically put in St Aldhems house in Ken's day. All the scholastic or sports achievements were entered into the school house book and the state of play was announced each term with the awarding of the cup at the end of the school year.

As Ken became one of the senior boys and a prefect there would be extra duties to be undertaken including involvement in the general running of the boarding house. He is remembered to this day by some of his fellow pupils for his prowess on the cricket pitch and on the football field, where he was known as 'Cannonball House' because of the power he could put into his kicking of the ball.

Ken was in the first intake to sit 'O' levels when the change came from the School Certificate. He refers to himself and his fellow pupils as 'Guinea pigs'. Having successfully completed his 'O' levels he joined the 6th Form where he spent two years studying at 'A' level.

He made many friends during his time at school not least with Terry Chubb and with Bob Earnshaw who started as a boarder on the very same day as Ken, 66 years ago.



BACK ROW: Mr Lush, Cliff Mogg, Terry Ham, Eddy Shire, John Tuffin, John Curtis, Marcus Johns, Mr Hulme.

MIDDLE ROW: Bob Earnshaw, Ken House, Phil Antell, Dennis Ball, Tony Roberts.

FRONT: John Doe, Brian Moore

LOOKING BACK 10.

MIKE HOLE—WOODWORK

An important school subject for many would be the practical training given in the woodworking class. Like all school subjects some would have taken to this with rather more skill and dedication than others. Mike Hole is one of those who has benefitted greatly from his time well spent in the woodwork class.

It was in 1956 - 57 that I would spend my first time in the woodwork room, Tuesday morning 11.15 - 12.00 with Mr Wilkins with his Navy Cut cigarettes and nicotine coloured hair (he smoked 60 a day) teaching all 30 of us. I was taught to use tools before I was able to start work making joints and using planes at the end of which I was able to make a small tray.

Year 2. Progress. I was now involved in making chicken coops and runs. To some of the other boys it was just an exercise, but being a farmer's son I knew exactly what it was (Mr Wilkins was a top quality chicken breeder in his spare time). Exciting times!

Year 3. More progress. Now two double periods.

One of the jobs that had to be done was to design and make, with the help of Mr Wilkins, a slip catch cradle which was needed for the school cricket team use. One of the other jobs during that year was to hang the new art room curtains in between written work and tests. We were now down to 13 in the class.

Year 4. This was the year when I was really let loose. The lathe! A tool which we were all wanting to use, but only some of us were actually allowed to. Making a small pedestal coffee table was the result. This was also the year when I really had to get to grips because 'O' levels were looming.

Year 5. This was the year when everything depended on what Mr Wilkins had taught me. Revision, over and over again. 'O' Levels were coming up fast and woodworking would be on 13 July 1961. It was also the year when I was involved with Matt Matravers in the making of the Headmaster's chair and two lecterns to be used at morning assembly (the chair now resides with a past head boy). Then the end of my time in the woodwork room sadly. 'O' Level results top grade Pass 1. This was down to Mr Wilkins's hard work. He was one of my mentors at school and his knowledge and kindness have stood me in good stead since leaving.

Many happy memories of the woodwork room from those days.

Michael Hole 1956-61



The Woodwork class in the mid 1950s and the Headmaster's Chair made by Mike together with fellow pupil Matt Matravers. It went originally to the Gryphon School together with the two lecterns made at the same time but luckily it was rescued by Mike before it suffered the same fate as the lecterns which were 're-cycled'. The chair had become damaged over the years but has been renovated by Mike's son Duncan and lives on as testament to the talents that were nurtured in the Foster's School Woodworking class.

Now Mike's eldest son Duncan takes up the story:

I was at Foster's School from 1979 to 1985 and head boy in my final year. During my last few years at school, I built a grandfather clock which I still have today and is still keeping time. I have fond memories of woodwork at Foster's being taught mainly by Mr Crouch. I have continued to use the skills I learnt at school, with my latest completed project being an acoustic guitar which I made from an old dining table!

Duncan Hole 1979-1985



THE MAGNIFICENT GRANDFATHER CLOCK MADE NEARLY A QUARTER OF A CENTURY LATER BY DUNCAN

630/2

630/2

ORD. LEVEL UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
WOODWORK II LOCAL EXAMINATIONS SYNDICATE
PRACTICAL

SUMMER 1961 GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION
3 hours

WOODWORK
ORDINARY LEVEL
PAPER II: PRACTICAL
(Three hours)

The following material is supplied:

Softwood:

- One piece 6½ in. long, planed to 4½ in. × ⅝ in. (side).
- One piece 6½ in. long, planed to 4½ in. × ⅝ in. (bottom).
- One piece 6½ in. long, planed to 3 in. × ⅝ in. (shelf).

Plywood:

- One piece 6½ in. × 6½ in. × 4 mm.

Woodscrews:

- Steel, ⅝ in. × No. 6 countersunk head (five needed).

Notes

1. A second supply of wood is **not** allowed. If you make a mistake, do your best to work as near the drawing as possible.
2. You may use your discretion in choosing dimensions which are omitted from the drawing.
3. You may use any of the ordinary hand tools, but the use of glue, glasspaper, files, rasps and scrapers is **not** allowed.
4. An unfinished piece of work carefully done may obtain more marks than one which is completed but is inaccurate and shows poor workmanship.

THIS IS THE PRACTICAL PAPER FOR MIKE'S G.C.E. 'O' LEVEL IN WOODWORKING TAKEN IN THE SUMMER OF 1961

2

The perspective sketch in the lower right-hand portion of the page opposite shows a painted BATHROOM CABINET with glass doors, suitable for fastening to a wall. You are required to make the part indicated by the circle, working drawings for which are provided, using the materials listed overleaf.

Write your **name** and **examination number** clearly on **each** piece of wood in letters and figures ¼ in. high.

Assemble your work before handing it to the Supervisor.

LOOKING BACK 11.

NEIL GILLARD

Neil Gillard—a Schoolboy in the 1960s

My very first recollection of Foster's School, other than hearing others, including my father (J.E. Gillard, 1934 to 1939) talk of it, is one morning in early 1961, when along with all the other 11 year old primary school boys I was delivered there to sit the dreaded 11+ examinations – feeling sick and extremely nervous. The girls, of course, went to Lord Digby's School for the same purpose. Coming from Long Burton Primary School (a total of about 30 pupils from ages 5 -11), I remember what seemed like a huge place, with 2 long corridors, a hall and stage, a gymnasium, cloakrooms and lockers - as well as all those classrooms. In reality, of course, with a dozen teachers and about 170 boys, it was tiny – almost half the size of the larger of Sherborne's current primary schools. And although the building had, by that time, been open for 20 odd years, it still felt new!

So, in early September clad in navy blazer, navy and gold tie, and navy cap, to go with the universal grey shorts (longs were not worn by most until the IIIrd Form) and grey shirt (white for Vth and VIth formers, I think), I made my way into the terrifying world of grammar school – suddenly (and this much surely has not changed) the smallest, rather than the largest fish in the pond. Our form room was the nearest to the staff and prefects rooms, with its rows of double desks in which we were seated in strict alphabetical order, a blackboard and the teacher's desk to the front. Our form master was, I think, R.E.Griffiths who also taught chemistry, (and was very unimaginatively known to the boys as 'Reg').

In fact, many of the nicknames were deeply unimaginative, while others seemingly defied explanation. Of the former there was E. 'Ernie' Hulme (French - who had also taught my father some 27 years previously), S.G. 'Stan' McKay (history) who would go on to double his already 16 years of service to the school, and 'Ken' House (PE and maths), a former pupil who I believe spent his entire working life back at the school. Of the latter category were R.K.J. 'Rover' Trend (physics), who also introduced the Duke of Edinburgh award to the school, E.A. 'Pip' Davies, (Latin) who was sadly cut down far too early in life by illness, and E.A. 'Sid' Maltby, (art) whose lessons I always greatly enjoyed. P. Burness (music) P.A. Wilkins (handicrafts) and A.J. Norfolk (Geography) had nicknames which it would certainly not be politically correct to repeat today, while I have no recollection of the handle bestowed upon G.R.Northern (English). The mystery of the Senior Master's nickname P.D.F. Miller (known as 'Mick') was, however, solved for me by my father whom he had also

taught. Apparently 'Mick the Miller' had been a very successful greyhound around the time that Mr Miller joined the staff – and he was yet another who spent the vast bulk of his working life at the school.

It has been said that sometimes the staff could not bear to leave unlike many of the pupils who were eager to set out on life's highway.

But there were, of course, horrors! It goes without saying that corporal punishment still had its place in the school, and that on moving between lessons it was very common to see boys – too often the same faces - waiting outside the Head's study for a caning. For the first three years of my time there the Headmaster was J.G. Sugden, ('God') before he moved onto better things, but fortunately I did not have much occasion to spend time with him! Other teachers were also known to take matters into their own hands and a ruler across the knuckles, or a thrown wooden backed board rubber were not uncommon. But the champion was clearly a certain master, who also played cricket for Dorset, who was a dead shot with a piece of chalk – better not to talk in his lessons! Though I do remember one snowy day, having been well and truly snowballed, giving chase to my tormentors who fled into the building, to be followed by my hurled snowball, which promptly hit the said master. I must say that he took it in very good part, merely cautioning against the ill-judgement of throwing such a missile into the school! I can only imagine that my throwing ability surprised, or even pleased, him, so he was human after all!

And there were also many happy events too. I have very fond memories of Mr Sugden's successor as Headmaster, C.R.W. Francis, (inevitably 'Crow') who introduced rugby union to the school – the only game I was ever any good at – and took the trouble to promote the development of extra-curriculum activities such as visits to local industry, cultural outings and wider involvement in the local community. There was already a good range of activities within the school such as the Choral, Printing, Photographic, Radio and Debating Societies, not to mention an internal magazine, and when you added to all this the School Plays and Commoners Concerts, sporting fixtures and musical opportunities, then life was already full. But there were also opportunities to go further afield. G. 'Geoff' Tomlinson, (English) organised trips for his 'A-level' pupils to see plays in Bristol and Salisbury, and encouraged us to write poetry, while B. 'Barney' Davis (Physics – another to die tragically young) got a couple of us involved with the local rugby club, once our own season (Autumn term only) had ended.

So, despite leaving in 1968 with excitement, hope and expectation, which far exceeded any sadness, it was with some sorrow that after 20 years away from Sherborne, I returned in 1989 to find that Foster's School was unlikely to survive. Although for many years a proponent of comprehensive education – not just because of my horrible, though 'successful' 11+ experience, but also because of those really capable children who were excluded from grammar schools by

some quirk of quotas –it was with a tinge of sorrow that I watched as my own son set-off for the first day of a very successful secondary school career, on the very first day of the Gryphon School. Maybe, just maybe, it would have been nice had he been the third generation of the family to go to Foster's School?

Neil Gillard 1961-68



P.H.DAWKINS R.W.B.NICHOLS A.P.LINCOLN J.LEWIS M.J.BISS T.MILLER D.S.HOLLEX A.C.J.ORCHARD
N.HODDINOTT C.J.THOMAS G.J.QUICK A.P.WEST (Capt) N.J.GILLARD J.G.C.NEADS J.H.BROWN

LOOKING BACK 12.

SIMON NEWELL

Simon Newell —a Boarders Life

We will see here that the boys were also expected to take a wider role by assisting in the community.

I started at Fosters aged 11 in September 1966 but after a year and a term my father was asked to move from Bradford Abbas to Shepton Mallet to take up a new job and the family was moving with him (that's a distance of 16 miles - how times have changed!). Given the choice to go with them to yet another school or become a boarder I chose the latter and turned up at the Hound Street boarding house in January 1968. There were about 30 boarders in a school of about 200, so roughly one in seven.

My, how different that was from being a day boy! My earliest memories are of unheated bedrooms with ice forming on the inside of windows, and of cleaning the 6th formers' shoes before breakfast each day. It wasn't quite "Tom Brown's schooldays" but certainly there was a valid comparison. Each day commenced with the

ringing of a handbell to raise the sleepy. Of course we slept in dormitories with bare floorboards in beds which were more like hammocks, so much were the springs bowed from age. I can't be sure but I think the mattresses were horsehair. School days ended with bedtime at 7.00pm, 9.30pm or 10.30pm.

This was a time when there was great TV. Top of the Pops was establishing itself, the 1970 World Cup was staged and the Apollo moon missions were in full swing. How I know this, I do not know since we were allowed to watch very little of any of it. I well remember on the occasion of the 1970 Italy:Brazil World Cup Final (which we had been allowed to watch), as always a Sunday evening, it was my turn to push a disabled lady in her wheelchair to Evensong at Sherborne Abbey. I'm sure the school's reputation was enhanced (but not if one could have read my thoughts!). Even when we could watch the monochrome TV a complicated arrangement of dessert spoons was needed to make the tuner work properly. These actually had to be inserted into the tuning device – incredibly nobody was electrocuted.

Denied the opportunity to watch TV every night and instead made to do at least 1¾ hours' homework, academically there was an immediate improvement, coming as something of a shock to Mr EA 'Pip' Davis the Latin teacher, Ken House (Mathematics) and John Norfolk (Geography) who up until then had me down as a bit of a duffer.



INSIDE THE BOARDING HOUSE
IN THE MID 1950S

Whereas TV was limited that was not the case with listening to music; what a musical education I received. At the end of the 60's and early 70's the rock music scene was seeing Led Zeppelin, The Moody Blues, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and Cream all at the height of their influence with Genesis, Pink Floyd, Elton John, David Bowie just getting going. How those records were played and etched on my memory.

There was also salvation in sport and in the four compulsory 'Changed Exercise' sessions each week there was an opportunity to indulge in my love of football. Indeed, the regular impromptu boarding house playground sessions played with a tennis ball were a great source of enjoyment and bonding. Boarding school was also responsible for developing my skills at snooker as, remarkably, there was a two thirds sized table. Presumably the aim was to raise 'young

gentlemen'! Table tennis too was practised with great fervour.

Whereas school provided the essential structure of the week, weekends were something else to be lived through and where perhaps the pangs of homesickness were felt most poignantly. On Saturday there was the opportunity to visit Cheap Street shops – but only at 4.00pm until 5.30 (this was after visiting the Headmaster, one CRW Francis, in his study and withdrawing one's weekly allowance; justifying to him why you wanted more!). This allowance was virtually all spent on food as we were constantly starving. On Sundays, compulsory church was followed by compulsory letter writing to home (no e-mails, text messages or even 'phone calls in those days) followed by compulsory two hours' afternoon walk in the fresh air (notice any theme here?). All these activities were



SIMON NEWELL IS SECOND FROM THE RIGHT IN THE BACK ROW PICTURED WITH THE BOARDERS OF 1970. THE PHOTOGRAPH WAS TAKEN ON THE BACK LAWN—NOTE THE ARRAY OF CUPS FOR COLLECTIVE ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIOUR ACHIEVEMENTS AND FOR INDIVIDUAL AND TEAM SPORTS. THE BOYS ARE PICTURED WITH THE HEADMASTER MR C R W FRANCIS AND HIS WIFE (KNOWN TO THE BOYS AS 'MA FRANCIS') AND WITH MR ROBERTS THE HOUSE TUTOR. THE MASTERS WORE BLACK GOWNS AND THE PREFECTS WORE BLUE GOWNS. THE NON-STRIPED STAG TIES WERE WORN BY THE SIXTH FORMERS.

L-R Back Row: Bruce Stewart, Ian Waters, Philip Widdowson, Robin Stone, Steve Linham, Ian Paul, Peter Waters, Peter Robertshaw, Christopher Neil, Simon Newell, Patrick Gill

L-R Middle Row: Clive Sheward, Christopher Catton, Steven Mitchell, Jeremy Neads, 'Ma' Francis, 'Frank' Francis, Anthony Roberts, Dominic Widdowson, Philip Oatley, Kevin McClenaghan, Anthony Birch

L-R Front Row: Kester Burt, Simon Dunford, Robert Taylor, Nigel Heasman, Ralph Spilsbury, Simon Easton, Nicholas Carter, Barry Jones, Sean Gough

The Waters brothers were twins. The Widdowson brothers both attended this year. Jones and McClenaghan were half brothers

policed rigorously. I came to hate Sundays.

Given this degree of enforcement unsurprisingly rebellious adolescent minds decided that complete adherence to the regime was not possible. There were constant transgressions, punished by the cane, but only one expulsion in my time with the miscreant swearing loudly at the unfortunate headmaster's wife to the great amusement of all.

As the years went by I began to enjoy things more although I am certain this was because I was no longer bottom of the very hierarchical pile. Summer seemed to become longer than winter, a girlfriend turned up and I coped better with the cloying restriction of boarding house life. I tried to treat the younger boarders better than I had been (they'll have to tell you if I succeeded) and with four not-very-good grade A levels I left Fosters in July 1973. As soon as I started work in September that year I realised what a great education I had taken for granted, one which has stood me in great stead through life and enabled me to surprise even myself with my achievements. However, when the chance came I did not send my own sons to boarding school.

Now as I contemplate retirement and I look back now on those days, the names and faces of the 30 people who I spent five and a half years of my life with are still so fresh in my mind. I would recognise them anywhere. What great camaraderie was forged in those times of the restricted freedoms that the day boys took for granted.

It seems that very often the staff could not bear to leave – unlike many of the pupils who they so adequately equipped to make their way through life's great adventure!

Simon Newell 1966-73

(this article appeared originally in *The Fosterian* 2011)

Having received this very interesting report of Simon Newell's time as a boarder in the 1970s and looking at all the cups lined up in the photograph had me searching through the archive for the relevant edition of *The Fosterian* and sure enough there was a full report of the successes by J G C Neads, who was Vice-Captain of the school and Captain of the boarding house at the time. Simon says of him 'I worshipped him! Such a huge strapping man in the making and me so weedy and underdeveloped!'. This comment made me smile and reminded me that in an earlier chapter of *Looking Back* just the same sort of sentiments were expressed by Edward Newlyn in the 1880s.

All the members of the boarding house were automatically in School House and here is the report:

SCHOOL HOUSE

Housemaster : THE HEADMASTER

House Tutor : Mr. A. J. ROBERTS

Captain of House : J. G. C NEADS

I am pleased to report that the House has again had a very successful year in retaining the majority of the cups that it won the previous year. We have not only been well represented on the sports field but we have also managed to have a large representation in other activities, such as the VIth Form Society and the Commoners' Concert. The senior Rugby team retained the cup for the fifth successive year, after a closely contested final. In the Spring Term the senior Soccer team retained the football cup by a bigger margin than was expected. The junior side of the House has had a rather poor year in losing the Rugby Cup, but they did manage to produce some outstanding performances in Athletics which helped us to win the Standards and the Challenge Cup for the second consecutive year. The House won all the Victor Ludorum Cups on Sports Day, J. G. C. Neads taking the senior trophy, C. A Neill the Intermediate and J. D. Gill the junior. The academic results in the House have so far been encouraging and C. Catton is to be congratulated on being awarded a place at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, to read Biochemistry, especially as he was only sixteen and a half years old when he took the examination. I would like to thank the Headmaster and Mr. Roberts for their encouragement in our activities and the House Prefects, D. T. D. Widdowson, C. Catton, S. E. Mitchell, P. J. Oatley, C. A. Sheward and K. J. McClenaghan for their support in carrying out supervisory duties at the Boarding House.

We extend our congratulations to Mr. Roberts on his appointment as Head of the Chemistry Department at Bishop Fox's School, Taunton, and we wish him and his family happiness and success in their new surroundings.

J. G. C. NEADS



JERRY NEADS

LOOKING BACK 13.

ALEC THORNE

Alec Thorne—a Schoolboy in the 1970s

Alec Thorne recalls his days at school and reminds us that the school had much to offer the diverse interests of its' pupils.

He also reminds us that 'smells' too can conjure up vivid memories!

I still have quite vivid memories of starting at Foster's School in September 1971 and the feelings of nervousness and excitement that I had at the time. About thirty-five of us arrived in our new uniforms and caps which were meant to be worn by all first years. These were regularly snatched by the older boys as they made excellent Frisbees. A large number of them ended up in trees or gardens on the journeys to and from school and I believe my year was one of the last to have to wear them.

The buildings in Tinney's lane seemed to be endless corridors that all looked the same. The best way of

working out where you were in the building was through smell. We entered through the sweaty sportswear of the cloakrooms, past the fresh sawdust of the woodwork room, then between the cabbage of the kitchen and the floor polish of the hall reaching a point where we could turn left towards the sulphurous fumes of the Chemistry lab or right towards the

Unlike most of my classmates I was never a great fan of competitive sport and so the extensive playing fields held little appeal. I quickly learned how to run as far as possible from a rugby ball whilst making it look as though I was anticipating some strategic pass. Cross country was my favourite games lesson which involved running to the end of Tinney's Lane and then a saunter down New Road and across Sherborne Castle Estate. I have many happy memories of watching all sorts of wildlife, including deer, hares and a barn owl, whilst my more athletic classmates puffed and panted by. Mr House tried very patiently to teach me some basic cricket skills and finally helped me to make my only contribution to the sporting world by teaching me how to keep the score book at the edge of the field.

In many ways the school ethos was quite conservative but still embraced Harold Wilson's view of the 'white heat of technology' as the key to future success, so there was a strong leaning towards sciences, probably helped by Mr Francis's background in Chemistry. Although I followed



ALEC THORNE IN A GROUP FROM THE 1975 SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH

Maths and Sciences at A-level I will be eternally grateful for the introduction to the Arts and Humanities that I received at Foster's. I was able to sing as part of the school choir on stage, in Sherborne Abbey and at Salisbury Cathedral. In the Sixth Form Mr and Mrs Stansfield regularly took me as part of a small group of boys to concerts in the Festival Hall and Albert Hall. Mr Edwards introduced all of us to the joys of William Shakespeare and the bawdy world of Geoffrey Chaucer. Mr McKay showed great patience with those of us not good at remembering dates and still managed to create an enthusiasm for English History. Mr Maltby would chat for hours about Art and Art History to anyone willing to listen. While my classmates were making use of the sports pitches I could usually be found in the rather splendid oak-panelled library or taking advantage of the grand piano in the hall to practise for my music lessons.

I experienced a bit of a culture shock when I left the safe and intimate environment of Foster's in 1978 to go to college in London. Having spent a few years as a teacher I am more convinced than ever of the exceptional quality of the education I received. I was the first member of my family to go on to higher education and I marvel at the fact that a working-class boy from a council estate in Sherborne now has two Bachelor degrees and is studying for a Masters. I say this not to impress, but to pay tribute both to the teachers who felt it worthwhile to invest their time and effort in my education, and to Richard Foster whose radical idea in 1640 to educate poor boys from Sherborne provided a school that surpassed this aim and endured for over 300 years.

Alec Thorne 1971-78.

Alec was one of several Old Boys who requested that a copy of the school song should be reproduced in this publication. Having found a copy and sent a digital version to him, he kindly recorded it on the piano. Now Alec's version can be heard with the words cleverly appearing in time with the tune, thanks to another Old Boy David Tuffin, on Sherborne Museum's digital film and photograph display—*don't miss it!*

LOOKING BACK 14.

JACK CROUCH

Jack Crouch — The Final Year

At the closing of Foster's School, Mr Crouch gave this, the final report. It was presented at the joint event, for Foster's and Lord Digby's schools, held in November 1992 in the Digby Hall. The report is given here in full as it records the achievements of the school in the final year, bringing to a close an era that had lasted in Sherborne for over 350 years.

I am very pleased to have been asked to write a review of this year's school activities; my first and very sadly the school's last. I know its composition will be made difficult, not by having to search for material to record; for that is all too easy a task, but rather in deciding how much to précis without minimising the importance of all that has gone on. Some of the activities are recorded separately and I shall make only passing reference to these.

One of the events which stands out in the Autumn term is Prize Giving, at which the guest speaker was Mr D Mildenhall MBE and whose interesting and witty speech will long be remembered by all who were there, as will be the excellent examination results gained by the pupils and the wealth of prizes presented. The school play *'Her Honour in Peril'* produced jointly with Lord Digby's School was perhaps one of the more difficult plays that the schools have attempted and all the more credit is due to the cast, the producers and the backstage crew for a very fine performance. The Joint Carol Service in the Abbey was as successful as always, and the remark made to me afterwards that the service and singing had been "the best ever" acknowledges this, although I must confess that this remark is one made to me most years! Confirmation perhaps of the highest standard this and other events in our small school have always reached. Congratulations to all involved.

The Spring term was marked by some form of activity enjoyed by most pupils. Form one indulged themselves gastronomically in a French breakfast, form two visited Sutton Bingham and form four attended a careers conference and went on a field study to Abbotsbury. Form five had a conference run by the Forum Theatre Group on Equal Opportunities and for the sixth form there was an excellent drama group presentation on Aids which stimulated much serious-minded and thought-provoking discussion. They also went to the Faraday Science Lecture. This term saw the production of the last Commoners' Concert and we were left in no doubt regarding the high standard the boys could attain in various areas of the arts. The performance was greatly enjoyed by all. The orchestra played at some morning assemblies and its woodwind section gave a well-received concert for the Womens'

Institute.

At half term, a group of pupils who were anticipating a trip to Russia went instead, because of the uncertain political situation of the time, on a visit to Vienna and Budapest and the experience proved informative as well as enjoyable. In the Easter holiday one party went skiing at Nassfeld, and another, including pupils from all three Sherborne secondary schools, visited Holland. Both trips were memorable occasions enjoyed by all, including, I am glad to say, the staff who generously gave of their time to organise the events and accompanied the pupils on them.

The Summer term as usual was very full, starting off with a visit by French students from Granville and a musical concert performed jointly by the three secondary schools. The last day of the first half of the term saw in the morning the Founders' Day service in the Abbey, followed by a lunch for old boys of the school and an afternoon cricket match against the Old Fosterians' Association team. A truly memorable ending to a short first half of term.

In the second half of term form one were deployed on the usual week's camp, this year in South Wales, and form three spent a week at the Lyme Regis Adventure Centre busily engaged in water-sports. Both groups had happy, if exhausting, times and once again thanks are due to the staff who organised the trips. Form two went on a short visit to France. It would seem to have been form three's term, for in addition to their camp they went on a history trip to Blaenavon to spend the day discovering the delights of mining as it was during the Industrial Revolution, followed by a Geography field study at Lulworth Cove. Perhaps as a reward to staff for all this they became 'guinea pigs' who took part in the first National Curriculum testing in Mathematics and Science!

Form four got down to the serious business of two weeks of Work Experience of various kinds in and around the Sherborne and Yeovil areas, with a few of the boys working much further away from home. This insight into the field of work, restarted last year, proves a very valuable and often 'eye-opening' experience for the participants. We had very good reports back from many of the employers praising the way in which they conducted themselves. The sixth form had a programme lasting a few days which included a conference at the Post House Hotel on 'Understanding Industry', conferences in school, trips to Southampton University and to Bournemouth and a session on 'assertiveness training' – not, I assure you, a physical one! This was followed by the Mock Interviews organised with the help of local businessmen and industrialists to provide practice in the techniques required for successful interview later on. Much effort goes into the organisation of these exercises and I know the pupils find it very helpful. Nearer the end of term a 'Grand Ball', reported elsewhere, was organised and a joint musical concert with Lord Digby's School, which once again produced an extremely high standard, delighting its audience. £167

was raised in aid of the Romanian Childrens' Appeal.

On the last day, school ended with a final assembly at which all pupils were given a commemorative mug and presentations were made to staff who were leaving. A special occasion; when we heard the school song played (last sung in 1973) and which, I am sure, left many a sad heart.

There were other more personal highlights of the year. Two of our lower sixth form were lucky enough to be offered places at the last moment to voyage aboard the tall ship SS Winston Churchill and sail the high seas. On their return they regaled us with interesting and sometimes hair raising accounts of their journey. Another lower sixth former was presented with a Sherborne Rotary club 'Aubrey Allen' award. This is given each year to the pupil considered most worthy of this award given for good citizenship. Good news comes from the fourth form Geography group from the two schools who have, jointly with Mountjoy School Beaminster, undertaken a GCSE coursework project at Abbotsbury. This was a survey on the facilities provided for visitors, with emphasis on open access and they won prizes at key stage four of £250 and a Rose Bowl and the overall prize of £1,000 awarded by the Education Industry Partnership (Allsenbrook Award). The money will be used to enhance the equipment in the Geography department in the new school. Well done the fourth form Geographers and the staff who helped them.

This year has been a very special one in which, as I have detailed above, most of the usual and some of the more unusual events have taken place. All this has happened following a long period of uncertainty about the future of secondary education in Sherborne and it was not until 3rd March that the decision of the Judicial Review was announced. To anybody who has not experienced a changeover such as the three schools were going through during this time, it must be difficult to appreciate the problems that staff and pupils faced. I pay tribute to the professional and loyal way in which staff coped with their existing jobs, with all the many new educational endeavours that this entailed, and yet still found the energy necessary to plan and set-up for the new school to start in September of this year.

Whilst most members of staff were to be involved in the new school, regretfully others were not and it was with great sadness that we said goodbye to Mr Goode, Mr Thomas, Mr Ellison and Mrs Williams all of whom have served Foster's loyally, and in the case of Mr Goode for a very long time. I thank them all for the work they have done and wish them success and happiness for the future. We also said goodbye to Mr Blake after his five-term contract as Headmaster. We wish him well and look forward to hearing of his future plans. To Mr Sheppard, Headmaster of the new Gryphon School and his staff, including secretarial and ancillary staff, I extend my best wishes and high hopes for a top-class school. In particular, on behalf of us all, I would like to thank him for kindly offering to store our Honours and Remembrance boards and display one of them on a

rotating basis in a public place in the new school.

I am sure that Old Boys may like to know what happened to the many and varied artefacts of the school. The officers of the Old Fosterians' Association hold the school flags and bound copies of The Fosterian whilst the president of the Association holds a Sir George Pragnell silver salver, to be used henceforth as a badge of office. All the other items such as the school and team photographs old documents articles of school uniform etc have been lodged at the Sherborne Museum. Any of these things may be viewed by application to the secretary of the Old Fosterians' Association or Sherborne Museum as appropriate. The various challenge cups have been passed on to the new school.

How does one conclude a report such as this? We mourn the passing of a very fine school and for all of us there will be personal memories to look back on as we

go through life. Foster's has educated well, past generations of boys in character and in many other ways, and has always placed stress on good academic achievement as being of prime importance. What better news then could we have had in this our last year, than that portrayed in the 'league tables' of results published by the government. These show Foster's as being one of the country's five equal top grammar schools all having 100% of pupils gaining five or more grades A to C in the GCSE examinations. Our own results show in fact that 100% of our pupils actually gained seven subjects at grade A to C - a splendid record.

Finally, may I thank the teaching and ancillary staffs, the Parents Association, the Governors, the Old Fosterians' Association and all the many others who have supported the school, and last, but certainly not least, the pupils themselves who are the school and have always made it a school with which one has been proud to have been associated.

J F Crouch Nov 1992



THE LAST SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN IN 1992

LOOKING BACK 15. THE OLD FOSTERIANS' ASSOCIATION

As we read in *Looking Back 4* an article had appeared in the local press advertising places for boys at the school in 1875. During the next ten years two headmasters would come and go with the financial aspect of running the school appearing to cause problems in both cases. By 1886 Mr A P Irwin has stepped up from deputy to Headmaster and at the speech day, reported in the Abbot of Sherborne the school was said to be in a flourishing state. *"The newly appointed head, Mr A P Irwin, can safely lay claim to being on prosperity's high road, as the beginning of the end of the term of hard struggle was clearly evident at the school concert and prize giving."* It was also reported that the school house, with accommodation for the Headmaster and his family and dormitories for the boarders, was nearing completion. The numbers of boys now attending was given as 55. In the same edition there is a report on the very first dinner of the Old Fostorian Club which was founded on 3 August 1885. This report captures the evening, held so many years ago, in a way that a quick précis never could and so it is reprinted here in full. It should also be noted that a handwritten version painstakingly copied out, probably by J H Dalwood, the hon secretary, is held in the school archive. He has written on the top *'Reprinted from The Abbot of Sherborne, a weekly newspaper and general advertiser'*.

From The Abbot of Sherborne 5 August 1886 Old Fostorian Dinner

The first Old Fostorian Club dinner was given on Monday last at the Black Horse Hotel, Sherborne, under most favourable conditions. Host Bradford provided a spread, which, considering the popular price has never been surpassed, if ever equalled, in the town or neighbourhood. Three magnificent salmon were placed upon the table, and in addition, hot joints etc, too numerous and varied to particularise. The menu included a most liberal supply of pastry, and a very choice selection of dessert. The tables were also most tastefully laid and decorated. About sixty sat down, under the genial presidency of Mr George Pragnell, the president and founder of the club. Supporting him on either side were the Rev J Ogle, Dr Williams, Dr Nutt (governors of the school) Mr A P Irwin (Headmaster), Messrs J H Dalwood jnr, Birch and P D Irwin. Mr Arthur R Adams the hon treasurer of the club, occupied the vice chair and among the friends and supporters of the

school present were Messrs A R Adams, Chick, J H Dalwood, Dorling, T D Davis, Folkes, Gover, W Hughes, H Hughes, T Moody, Miles, McKenzie, H G Miller, W G Pragnell, A Pragnell, L H Ruegg, Runnacles, G F Stokes, Stabler, Short, Stewart, Tuffin, T W R White, R Wright, A Westcott, Dr Lieut Williams etc.

The old boys present were Messrs A R Adams, W D B Clark, J C Curteiss, J H Dalwood, C E Garrett, George Pragnell (president) F Pragnell, H Pragnell, E Pragnell, J E Smith, J E Woolmington, A K Woolmington and H J Yeo. The present were represented by Messrs Gare (captain of the school), Atkinson, W C Pragnell, Wright etc.

On the removal of the cloth, the usual loyal and patriotic toasts were given, musical honours being done by Mr G F Stokes.

The Rev J Ogle responded for "The Church and ministers of all denominations" and Lieut Williams for "the Army, Navy and Reserve Forces".

Mr G F Stokes next sang "The death of Nelson" which was rapturously encored.

The toast of the evening was then proposed by Mr Dalwood, and in giving "The Old Fostorian Club" traced the history of Foster's School, and congratulated his fellow townspeople on the happy result of being able to point to nearly 150 old boys, not one of whom could be pointed out as having reflected anything but infinite honour to the town and school; very many of the number having already obtained high, honourable, and trustworthy positions in various walks of life. (Applause)

Mr George Pragnell responding in a lengthy speech, took occasion to forcibly remind the old boys present of the fact that, in forming themselves into a club as they had done, they had thus drawn public attention to themselves, both individually and collectively, and in order to reflect credit on the school they must all the more strive now to live fearless, upright and honourable lives, and thus prove living testimonials to the school, whose memory they cherished so carefully, and in whose progress, they were still at all times, so deeply interested. The flattering personal remarks of Mr Dalwood he would pass over by concluding in the words of Hamlet:

"So, gentlemen, with all my love – I do commend me to you, and what so poor a man as Hamlet may do, to express his love and friendling to you, God willing, shall not lack."

The entertainment was concluded in the following order:

Song: "When we were Boys Together" – Mr Moody

Toast: "The Governors, Friends, and Supporters of Foster's School" Mr A R Adams. Dr Williams, Dr Nutt and Mr Dalwood replied.

Song: "The Powder Monkey" – Mr J H Dalwood Jnr

Song: "The Women of our Native Land" – Mr W G Pragnell

Toast: "The Present of Foster's School" - the chairman. Mr Irwin, Headmaster, replied.

Recitation: "Billy's Rose" – Mr Gare, captain of the school. This was one of the features of the evening, as it was at the recent speech day, recited most touchingly and with perfect balance.

Toast: "Absent Friends" – Mr C E Garrett

Song: "The Convicts Song" – Mr A R Adams. This produced roars of laughter.

Duet: "The Minute Gun at Sea" – Messrs Davis and Stokes

Toast: "The Chairman" – which was given with musical honours and acknowledged.

Song: "A Farmer's Boy" Lieut Williams.

The Toast, "To our Worthy Host", was drunk in bumpers.

It was close to midnight when the company rose to sing "Auld Lang Syne," and after "The National Anthem," a most enjoyable evening was concluded with cheers for "Our Next Merry Meeting."



THE UNBOUND BLAZER, AN O. F. A. SCARF AND TIE FROM THE MUSEUM'S COSTUME COLLECTION.

KEN HOUSE (FORMER PUPIL, TEACHER, HEADMASTER AND CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THE OFA) AND MIKE GOODE (FORMER MASTER AND SECRETARY OF THE OFA FOR MANY YEARS) AT THE REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE AT THE GRYPHON SCHOOL, SHERBORNE

What a jolly evening was had by all. There were six toasts drunk and the last was 'drunk in bumpers' (a bumper is a glass filled to the brim). There are some very well known names here from Sherborne's past. Rev Joseph Ogle, in particular should be mentioned, as he was a governor of the school. Rev Ogle was the congregational minister living at the manse in Long Street. When the silk mill in Sherborne closed down, causing great hardship amongst many in the town, Rev Ogle reopened it, created better working conditions and extended the operation to weave silk as well as to throw it (the process of making threads from the unwound cocoon silk). He is known as 'the man who saved Sherborne'. He sent his two sons, (Thomas) Burton and Percy Ogle, to the school and they were attending at the time this dinner is held. Tragically Burton was to die in WW1 and is remembered on the school's Roll of Honour board. There is clearly a strong contingent from the Pragnell family in attendance and I have a suspicion that George Pragnell may have started his illustrious career in the textile industry because of the presence in Sherborne of the silk mill.

I was especially interested to find a copy of 'Billy's Rose' the poem recited so 'movingly' by the head boy Gare at both the speech day and at the dinner. There is a John Gare who left in March 1886 and a Frederick Gare who left in April 1887 both sons of a farmer and I would guess he is one of these two but which? Edward Newlyn has described the head boy as 'dignified and affable'. The poem is such a melodramatic and very Victorian tale and I can imagine that after several toasts there would not be a dry eye in the house. I have included it at the end of this piece because again it speaks across the years to us.

A cricket match had taken place on the afternoon of this day and the Old Fosterians had beaten Foster's School by 159 runs to 89. On the next afternoon Foster's School Past and Present took on Sherborne Cricket Club and an enthusiastic write up can be found in the school archive. Foster's School P&P beat Sherborne CC 275 runs to 117. Again Host Bradford provided an excellent luncheon.

I am not sure what happened next to the club, after what appears to be a very good start, but I wonder if George Pragnell was the driving force behind it (he was only 22 or 23 at most) and perhaps his own career would be on an upward trajectory and occupying much of his time. Perhaps the club would fizzle out because the next mention I have found is in the very first edition of *The Fosterian*, in 1908, when the Headmaster Mr Hutchins is "wondering if it is possible to form an Old Fosterian Club and would be glad to receive any suggestions on the subject." Clearly the club was eventually resuscitated as on 16 September 1913 it is re-established with the now Sir George Pragnell as president, Mr C B Brett as secretary and the committee consisting of Messrs: C A Lowman, H W Lye, E Pragnell (probably Edward proprietor of the Half Moon Hotel), P Roberts, H J Seymour, C J White.

In April 1914 the colours and a blazer were adopted:

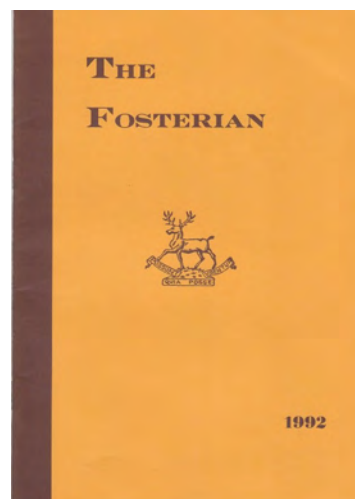
'a very handsome blend of old gold, green and chocolate for the ribbon and tie' and 'an unbound blazer of chocolate with crest and monogram on the pocket'. The ribbon (for boater) cost 1/-, the tie 1/6 and the blazer complete from 10/6 to 25/- according to quality. The O.F. colours and blazer could only be obtained from Messrs. Lowman. There are 39 members, at this time, and the minimum subscription was 1/-.

Owing to the 1914-18 war the club ceased its activities and was again revived later by Mr Lush and Mr Gibling on 16 September 1929. I think this is when it became known as the Old Fosterians' Association or OFA for short. The President was Mr H Lush, Vice Presidents: Sir Arthur Adams, C B Brett, Robert Gibling, T L Hutchins (former Headmaster) and Littleton C Powys, chairman of the governors.

A new design for the tie, with wide green bands, with narrow chocolate and gold, was adopted; it now cost 2/6 and 4/6. In November 1930 the new school song was performed at the OFA dinner. It was written by Littleton C Powys from an original manuscript by Robert Gibling. A rousing tune was composed by Mr J Barham Johnson, Music Director of Shrewsbury School. This tune has been described by an old boy as a 'real tub thumper' which went by the name of 'Castleton'. (Please see *Looking Back* 18 for a copy of the musical score.)

The Old Fosterians' Association continues to this day. On the closure of the school in Tinneys Lane in 1992 *the Fosterian* changed from being the school magazine to being the magazine of the OFA with one edition a year in March. The current editor is Tim Ashmore. There are three events each year: Firstly, together with the Lord Digby's Old Girls' Association, is the Founders Day Service and luncheon. Later in the year is the Annual Dinner and reunion and finally, in the Autumn, the Remembrance Day Service at the Gryphon School. The president is Ken House, the chairman is Philip Dolbear and the committee members are: Tim Ashmore (secretary), Peter Holden (Treasurer), Dennis Ball, Graham Bunter, John House and Stan Love.

There is an active website with much material of interest regularly posted and this is in the expert hands of Hugh Jenkins. www.fosterians.wordpress.com



Billy's Rose by George Robert Sims



To end this chapter here is the poem that was read 'most touchingly and with perfect balance' by the headboy Mr Gare. It was written by George Robert Sims 1847-1922 who is remembered as a journalist, poet, dramatist, novelist and bon vivant. He also had a strong social conscience and worked, through his undoubted talent in the use of words, to draw attention to the plight of the poor. He is best remembered for his dramatic monologue that opens 'It is Christmas Day in the Workhouse'. Its zealous social concern aroused public sentiment and made Sims a strong voice for reform, dramatising the plight of suffering Londoners. 'Billy's Rose' would have had the same effect

Billy's dead and gone to glory - so has Billy's sister Nell:
There's a tale I know about them were I poet I would tell
Soft it comes, with perfume laden like a breath of country air
Wafted down that filthy alley bringing fragrant odours there

In that vile and filthy alley long ago one Winter's day
Dying quick of want and fever, hapless, patient Billy lay
while beside him sat his sister, in the garret's dismal gloom
Cheering with her gentle presence Billy's pathway to the tomb

Many a tale of elf and fairy did she tell the dying child
Till his eyes lost half their anguish and his worn, wan features
smiled

Tales herself she heard hap-hazard, caught amid the Babel
roar
Lisped about by tiny gossips playing round their mother's door

Then she felt his wasted fingers tighten feebly as she told
How beyond this dismal alley lay a land of shining gold,
Where when all the pain was over - when all the tears were
shed
He would be a white frocked angel, with a gold thing on his
head.

Then she told some garbled story of a kind-eyed Saviour's love
How he built for little children great big playgrounds up above
Where they sang and played at hop-scotch and at horses all
the day
And where the beadles or policemen never frightened them
away.

This was Nell's idea of heaven - just a bit of what she'd heard,
With a little bit invented, with a little bit inferred.
But her brother lay and listened, and he seemed to understand,
For he closed his eyes and murmured he could see the
Promised Land.

"Yes" he whispered " -- I can see it sister Nell;
Oh the children look so happy, they are all so strong and well;
I can see them there with Jesus—He is playing with them too!
Let us run away and join them, if there's room for me and you"

She was eight this little maiden, and her life had all been spent
In the garret and the alley where they starved to pay the rent
When a drunken father's curses and a drunken mother's blows
Drove her forth into the gutter from the day's dawn to its close.

But she knew enough, this outcast, just to tell the sinking boy,
"You must die before you are able all these blessings to enjoy
You must die," she whispered, -- "Billy I am not even ill;
But I will come to you dear brother, - yes, I promise that I will.

"You are dying, little brother, you are dying, oh so fast;
I heard father say to mother that he knew you couldn't last
They will put you in a coffin, then you'll wake and be up there
While I am left alone to suffer, in this garret bleak and bare."

"Yes I know it," answered Billy. " Ah - sister I do not mind.

Gentle Jesus will not beat me he's not cruel or unkind.
But I can't help thinking, -- Nelly I should like to take away
Something sister that you gave me I might look at every day.

"In the Summer you remember how the mission took us out
To that great green lovely meadow, where we played and ran
about
and the van that took us halted by a bright green patch of land,
Where the fine red blossoms grew dear, half as big as mother's
hand.

"Nell I asked the good kind teacher what they called such
flowers as those
And I remember that he told me that the pretty name was rose
I have never seen them since, dear - how I wish that I had one
Just to keep and think of you dear, when I am up beyond the
sun."

Not a word spoke little Nelly but at night when Billy slept,
On she flung her scanty garments and then down the stairs she
crept.
Through the silent streets of London running nimbly as a fawn
Running on and running ever till the night had changed to
dawn.

When the foggy sun had risen, and the mist had cleared away,
All around her, wrapped in snowdrift, there the open country lay
She was tired, her limbs were frozen, and the roads had cut her
feet,
But there came no flowery gardens her poor tearful eyes to
greet.

She had found the road by asking she had learnt the way to go
She had found the cruel meadow - it was wrapped in cruel
snow,
Not a buttercup or daisy not a single verdant blade
Showed its head above its prison. Then she knelt her down and
prayed.

With her eyes up cast to heaven, down she sank upon the
ground
And she prayed to God to tell her where the roses might be
found
Then the cold blast numbed her senses, and her sight grew
strangely dim;
And a sudden awful tremor seem to seize her every limb.

"Oh, rose!" she moaned, " good Jesus - just a rose to take to
Bill !"
And as she prayed a chariot came thundering down the hill.
A lady sat there toying -- with a red rose rare and sweet;
As she passed she flung it from her, and it fell at Nelly's feet.

Just a word her lord had spoken caused her ladyship to fret
And the rose had been his present, so she flung it in a pet.
But the poor half blinded Nelly thought it had fallen from the
skies
And she murmured, " Thank you Jesus! " as she clasped the
dainty prize.

Lo that night from out the alley did a child's soul pass away,
From dirt and sin and misery to where God's children play
Lo that night, a wild fierce snowstorm burst in fury o'er the land
And at morn they found Nell frozen, with the red rose in her
hand.

Billy's dead and gone to glory - so has Billy's sister Nell;
Am I bold to say this happened in the land where angels dwell :
That the children met in heaven after all their earthly woes,
And that Nelly kissed her brother and said, " Billy , here's your
rose"

George Robert Sims

LOOKING BACK 16.

THE FOSTERIAN

Mr Hutchins started the school magazine *The Fosterian* in 1908 and here are the words he used to introduce the first edition:

"To Fosterians past and present this unpretentious first number is dedicated. In a utilitarian age the idea which will be prominent in many minds is a query as to its use. First of all, it is intended to be a record of all the deeds which are worth noting, accomplished by the Fosterians of today. Successes in Examination, a good innings played for Foster's when wickets are falling rapidly, a difficult catch which dismissed a batsman fast reaching his century, points gained for the school in sports, will all be reported in The Fosterian, and so it will become a permanent record of the school's life."

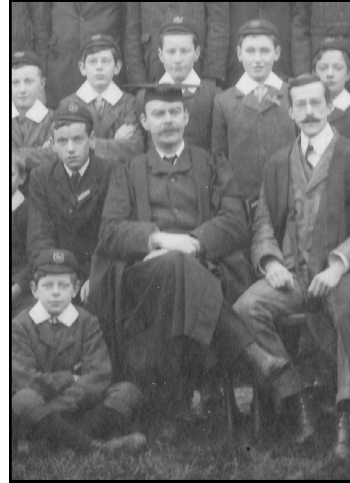
The first edition contained 12 pages. Initially it was published each term until 1957 when it became an annual publication. There were 181 editions until the last one in 1990, which contained 64 pages and included photographs and drawings. The format over the years shows little change but the content increased enormously and now stands as a unique record of the achievements of the school and the many boys who have passed through it. Mr Hutchins words *'it will become a permanent record of the school's life'* have indeed come true.

In 1991 it became the annual publication of the Old Fosterians' Association.

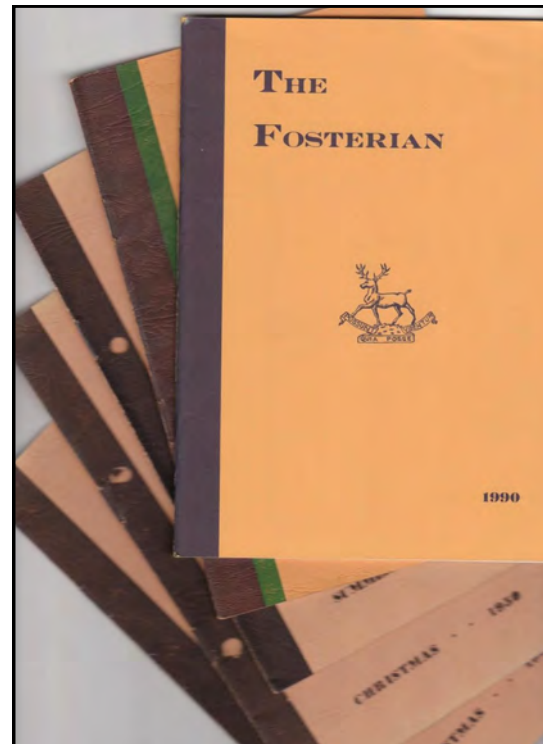
Sherborne Museum has many copies held in the archive but is actively seeking the following editions and if anyone would like to donate any of these the museum would be pleased to receive them:

1908-1917. 1922-1929. Easter and Summer 1931, Easter 1932, Christmas 1937. 1942-1949. Easter and Summer 1955. 1997. 2010

Many copies have also been put on-line at www.fosterians.wordpress.com and more are being added as they come to light. There is also a list of copies that are 'wanted on-line'.



MR HUTCHINS IN 1910



LOOKING BACK 17.

THE UNIFORM

For his book Foster's the Story of a Dorset School Mr McKay researched the history of the uniform and I have referred to his book to extract information. The colours of the school uniform had already been adopted when Mr Hutchins and the Old Fosterians' Association adopted their colours of green, gold and chocolate in 1914. It was not possible to find when the colours, gold and chocolate, were adopted originally as they were already in place when the earliest minute book of the governors started in 1898. It is in these minute books that much of the early history of the school can be found. The earliest photograph that I have found in the collection was taken in 1898 and all the boys appear to be wearing dark caps with a light badge. There is a variety of neckwear and other wear at this time. So at a guess I would say the cap was the very first recognisable piece of uniform. Caps were gradually phased out and disappeared altogether in 1974.

In the early days boys would wear their uniforms, not just on schooldays, but most of the time and I have a couple of family photographs that illustrate this.

Why was a stag adopted for the badge? Mr McKay tells us that it is unlikely that Richard Foster, as a yeoman, would have had a family crest. The name Foster is, however, a corruption of Forrester and a stag is therefore a most suitable emblem. In Fairbairn's Book of Crests of the Families of Great Britain nearly all families named Foster who have a crest have a stag in one form or another.

The more easily obtainable blue and yellow came in in 1951.

The school motto was adopted in 1962:

Possant Quia Posse Videntur

(They can because they believe they can)

Here are some of the caps and ties that have been donated to the school archive.



Top: 1910 photo showing boys in dark caps with badge.
Above: Weymouth beach 1924 my father Ralph Collings on the left with his brother Lionel wearing his Foster's school cap.



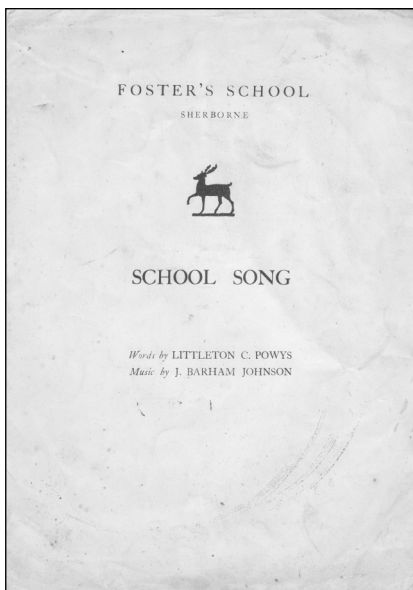
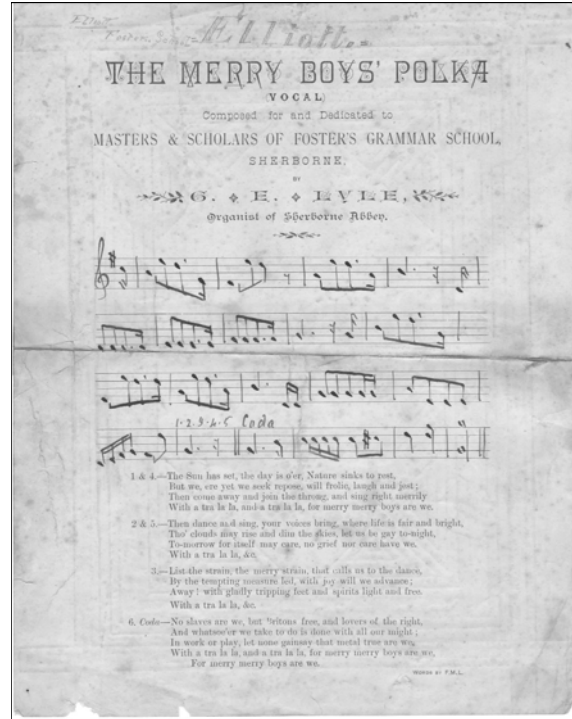
SOME EXAMPLES OF UNIFORM FROM THE MUSEUM'S COSTUME COLLECTION. THANKS ARE DUE TO RICHARD HAINES WHO MANAGED TO FIND A CHOCOLATE AND GOLD TIE IN TIME FOR THE EXHIBITION

LOOKING BACK 18.

THE SCHOOL SONG

There have been several requests to include the school song—it is remembered by some as having a ‘thumping good tune’.

The origins of the school song lie back in the early days of Mr Hutchins. There is a letter in the archive dated February 1931 from Stan B Lovell to ‘Alf’ Lowman in which he refers to the regret at the lack of a school song voiced at a recent OFA dinner. Stan Lovell reminds everyone of the song composed by A S Bolshaw in 1907 and he enclosed a handwritten copy of the words with his letter. Mr Gibling has written some very excellent words and has even managed to find a word ‘Paternosters’ to rhyme with ‘Foster’s’. His song has ‘as given at a recent OFA dinner’ pencilled on the top. Unfortunately this is not dated, most unlike Mr Gibling. There is an old piece of music in the archive of ‘The Merry Boys Polka’ and this may have been the original tune to which Mr Bolshaw and possibly Mr Gibling’s words might have been set. As far as I can tell all this hard work would eventually evolve with the final words of Littleton C Powys, Chairman of the school governors and the music of J Barham Johnson, music master of Shrewsbury school, into the final version of the school song. The words first appeared in *The Fosterian* in 1934 and the song was sung for the last time at the speech day on 15 September 1992.



RICHARD FOSTER

I.

Nestling mid the Hills of Dorset
In the Vale of Yevo,
Lies the pleasant town of Sherborne
Founded long ago.
In this famous town of learning
Stands the school that we
Think the best and hold the dearest
Of all schools that be.

CHORUS:
Therefore raise we loud our voices
And sing with all our powers
Him, whose memory we cherish
In this school of ours.

II.

Full three hundred years have vanished
Since our founder's day,
He who loved the boys of Sherborne,
Loved and helped for aye.
So All Hail! to Richard Foster
To whose vision clear
Owe we now the Education
Offered to us here.

CHORUS.

III.

Thanks to Richard Foster's goodness
Here we work and play,
Learning lessons that will help us
This and every day;
Learning all the wondrous mysteries
That our books contain;
How to live our lives most fully
By use of hand and brain.

CHORUS.

IV.

How to hit the winning sixer,
How to kick the goal,
How to make the wickets scatter
With that fast ball we bowl;
How to face the struggle bravely
When things all go wrong,
Showing that our games have made us
Generous, just and strong.

CHORUS.

V.

Soon the world will call our service,
Gladly let us give
All the best that we have learnt here
To those with whom we live,
We'll be straight in all our dealings,
Loyal, clean and true,
And count the sins of cruelty
The blackest we can do.

CHORUS.

LITTLETON C. POWYS

Richard Foster

Words by
LITTLETON C. POWYS

Music by
J. BARHAM JOHNSON

March time

VOICE

PIANO

mf

simile

1 Nest - ling mid the
2 Nigh three hun - dred
3 Thanks to Rich - ard

Hills of Dor - set In the Vale of Yeo,
years have van - ished Sfnce our found - er's day,
Fos - ter's good - ness Here we work and play,

Lies the plea - sant town of Sher - borne Found - ed long a -
He who loved the boys of Sher - borne Loved and helped for
Learn - ing less - ons that will help us This and ev - 'ry

Printed in England.

- go. In this fam - ous town of learn - ing
 aye. So All Hail! to Rich - ard Fos - ter
 day. Learn - ing all the won - drous mys - tries

Stands the school that we Think the best and
 To whose vis - ion clear Owe we now the
 That our books con - tain; How to live our

hold the dear - est Of all schools that be.
 Ed - u - ca - tion - Of - fered to us here.
 lives most ful - ly By - use of hand and brain.

CHORUS

Therefore raise we loud our voi- ces And sing with all our powers

f

3

3

Verses 1-4

D. S.

Him, whose memo-ry we cher-ish In this school of ours.

Verse 5

cher - ish In this school of ours.

ff

4

How to hit the winning sixer,
 How to kick the goal,
 (1) How to make the wickets scatter
 With that fast ball we bowl:
 How to face the struggle bravely
 When things all go wrong,
 Showing that our games have made us
 Generous, just and strong.

CHORUS

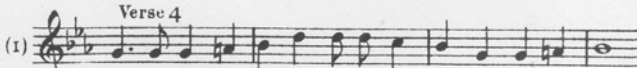
5

Soon the world will call our service,
 Gladly let us give
 (2) All the best that we have learnt here
 To those with whom we live.
 We'll be straight in all our dealings,
 (3) Loyal, clean and true,
 And count the sins of cruelty
 The blackest we can do.

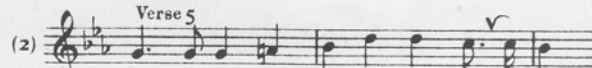
CHORUS

Therefore raise we loud our voices
 And sing with all our powers
 Him, whose memory we cherish
 In this school of ours.

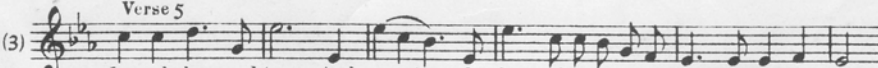
Verse 4

(1)  How to make the wickets scatter With that fast ball we bowl:

Verse 5

(2)  All the best that we have learnt here To those

Verse 5

(3)  Loy-al, clean and true, And count the sins of cruel-ty The black-est we can do

LOOKING BACK 19. PHOTOGRAPHS

Some of the most interesting items of all in the archive are undoubtedly the many photographs. Some of the larger photographs are kept with all the other items that make up the archive in the museum's store room. All the photographs A4 size and smaller are kept in the museum's photographic library along with the hundreds if not thousands of others which have been collected and donated over the years. A major part of this significant collection has now been digitised and can be seen via the new digital display on the ground floor of the museum. Many of the Foster's School photos have been included here. The total number of photographs relating to Foster's School is approximately 270.

Many of the larger panoramic photographs cannot be displayed at the Sherborne Museum exhibition in 2013 but following is a list of all the years for which a large photograph containing all the boys in the school exists. There are 47 in all—a span of nearly 100 years

(there are some duplicates)

The earliest is 1898 of the boys in forms IV, V, and VI. There is a list of names which goes with this photo but individual identities have not been determined. The boys in forms I, II and III were photographed at the same time but this photo is missing although the list of names exists. Mr Irwin was the Headmaster.

The next two photos were taken in 1900 and 1903 all boys have been named and identified together with the Headmaster, Mr Crichton, and the assistant masters. These two photos are similar and were thought to both be taken in 1900 but on closer examination I have been able to identify Sidney Taylor in both photos and he is clearly older in the second photo and 1903 was written on the back in pencil and was erroneously, in my opinion, changed to 1900 at some time in the past.

The next photo was taken in 1910, all the boys and assistant masters are named and identified and Mr Hutchins was the Headmaster.

In the 1920s large familiar panoramic photos of the whole school start to appear and continue until the school closes, here are the years that are held at the museum:

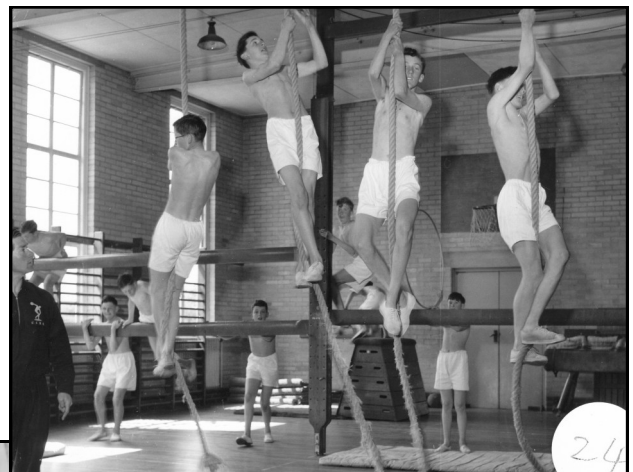
1921, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1947, 1949, ?1950, 1953, 1960, 1961, 1966, 1975, 1979, 1982, 1989, 1992.



PHOTOS FROM 1910,
1953 AND 1982.



The remaining photographs include many of the sports teams and events, theatrical occasions, the annual camp and a very large collection of photographs taken in the mid 1950s which form a wonderful record of the everyday life of the school at the time. Apart from the full school photographs, the photos do seem to have petered out by the 1970s, 80s and 90s. Perhaps they just were not put into the school archive.



THE STAFF ROOM
BACK ROW L-R: MR MILLER, MR MCKAY, MR CRITCHLEY, MR DAVIES, MR NORFOLK, MR BLYTHMAN, MR HULME.
FRONT: MR MALTBY, MR PALMER, MR WILKINS

LOOKING BACK 20.

THE EXHIBITION

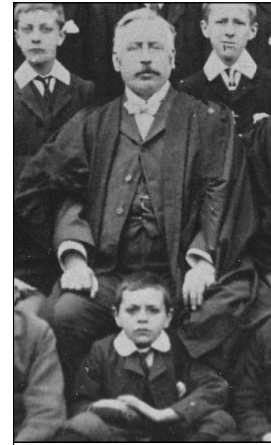
Items were assembled from the Foster's School archive with one or two additions on temporary loan. Photographs are vital components of any look back into the past and it was possible to display school photographs that went right back to 1898. The most important person in the day to day life of any school is undoubtedly the head teacher and the last nine Headmasters were shown in the photographs that were on display with their pupils and fellow staff.

As each of the headmasters pictured here, apart from Mr Irwin and Mr Crichton, retired or moved on from the school a tribute to them would have been paid in *The Fosterian*.

We have included one tribute in this publication that was paid to Mr Lush, which appeared in *Looking Back 1*. You can find the remainder amongst the copies of *The Fosterian* which are available on-line via the Old Fosterians' Association website: www.fosterians.wordpress.com



A P IRWIN
1884-1900



J CRICHTON 1900-1907



T L HUTCHINS
1907-1929



H LUSH 1929-59



J G SUGDEN
1959-1965



C R W FRANCIS
1965-76



C J LEA 1976-83



K H HOUSE 1984-90



D R BLAKE 1990-92

During the last days of the exhibition the names of those who signed the visitors' book totalled over 120. The addresses with the signatures tell a story of their own with many still living in the area but many more scattered into the wider world. New Zealand, Canada, Germany, USA, Tasmania and Australia are all noted.

Here is a small sample of some of the comments:

- *It was very surprising for me to find myself as a young teacher on the 1989 photograph—my son thought it was hilarious!*
- *Inmate 1948-1953*
- *The best years of my life*
- *All the memories and faces come flying back—those were the days!*



CHANCE ENCOUNTERS RE-
UNITE OLD FOSTERIANS

ABOVE: PETER PERRY AND
KEN HOUSE

ABOVE RIGHT L-R: GRAHAM
LOVATT, MIKE HOLE AND
NEIL PETERS



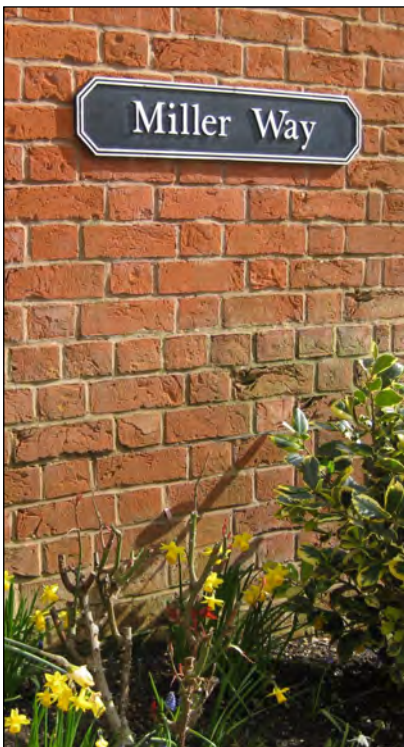
LOOKING BACK 21. THE PRESENT DAY

Today the old school and boarding house in Hound Street are still there and looking splendid, together with the nearby road sign 'Fosters'.

The site of the school in Tinney's Lane is now the housing development, known locally as Fosters Field, where there is a thriving community with reminders of the old school around every corner. I am one of those who are very happy to be living here.

I have also come to believe that my great grandfather in sending his youngest son to Foster's (where he was the only one of eight children to receive a secondary education) changed the course of my own family history.

Barbara Elsmore (barbara.elsmore@btinternet.com) for Sherborne Museum www.sherbornemuseum.co.uk





HERE IS THE WALL ON TINNEY'S LANE IN WHICH THE ORIGINAL FOUNDATION STONE IS NOW SET

