

## 1. Foreign Correspondence 1948



I seem to recall that as first or second years we were offered the addresses of similarly-aged pupils from various European countries by a member of Staff who wished to promote international peace and understanding. That was in the latter part of the nineteen-fifties. It would appear that this had already happened before, to the extent that an account of the "pen-friending" activities at the Grammar School appeared in a School Magazine report for 1948 - only three years after the end of World War 2. It reads as follows:-

International correspondence in our school has increased considerably during the past few years, not only in English, but also in Esperanto and French. The Junior School especially seems to have correspondents in foreign parts. There are comparatively very few students who have no pen contact at all. Most of the students however have two or three and sometimes as many as six or seven pen friends. Some correspond in two or three languages. Juniors seem to prefer the English correspondents, but as they learn more about other languages they will gain confidence in themselves. Correspondence in French and Esperanto is popular. Correspondence in English is carried out not only with friends in English-speaking countries, but also with some in such countries as Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Czecho-Slovakia.

T. Jones. 2a

N. Wheeldon. 2a.

I wonder if any of those pupils who had a pen-friend will remember, and let us know whether any visits were arranged, or any long-term consequences arose from their contacts?

Sheila

### Here is a report from the 1947 School Magazine.



Correspondence in French and Esperanto has increased a good deal during the past year in H.G.S. At the end of April, 1947, there were fifty pupils corresponding in French and a hundred and twenty four in Esperanto and the numbers are increasing. Another fifty pupils have applied for pen-friends and it is hoped they will soon be found. Altogether we are in touch with seventeen countries including Finland, Sweden, Hungary, Holland, Germany, and France. Correspondents are constantly exchanging photographs, stamps, picture post-cards and parcels. Quite a number on each side have expressed the wish to exchange holidays when possible. The degree of international contact established by this means cannot fail to have beneficial results. It is hoped that still more will join the ranks of "the pen-friends".

Violet Gott. 4B. Holgate.

## 2. A King's School Memory



The date was late September or sometime in October 1960. Definitely during the term between the start of the School year and Christmas, as that was the only term during which my School, the King's School Pontefract, played Rugby. It wasn't a cold day, but when we visited Hemsworth to play their first team, it was very foggy and the pitch was muddy. The 'powers that be' decided to ignore the rule that if you stand in the centre of the pitch and can not see both goalposts, the game should be abandoned, and with the mist swirling around us, in full enthusiasm, the game began.

I only remember a small part of the action, which resulted in a try for our team. I received the ball and dived forward, perhaps too soon, and seemed to hang in the air, floating, gliding and drifting towards the line for what seemed to be minutes. It was a strange sensation which defied gravity enough to stick in my memory for nearly half a century!

Royston Sang.

Dear Roy,  
Thanks for the memory, Roy. It does not seem very long ago that we were in Upton and Harewood Lane together. You chose KSP and I chose HGS. Our lives diverged at that point. These were the schools offered if you passed your 11 plus exam. Apart from playing around the War Memorial area, I seem to remember that we had athletics in common.

Dave McKenzie

### 3. Why a House system?



I think that of all the House reports I have typed, the 1950 set actually put into words what the House system was trying to achieve at HGS.

- a. A good standard of behaviour in School.
- b. A sense of "team spirit" within each House. Helping one another to achieve a desired outcome.
- c. A "bonding" of certain member-teachers to the pupils within each House.
- d. The inclusion of the many and varied talents of the pupils (music, sports, drama etc) to form a common goal - winning the Challenge Cup.
- e. The realisation that whatever your behaviour in School, your quarter of the School's population would either suffer the consequences of it, or share in its credit.
- f. The knowledge that everything each pupil did in School was open to scrutiny by one's peers and superiors, and encouragement or despair would be expressed.
- g. The openly expressed belief that competition would drive up standards.

Have I missed anything?

Sheila

### 4. A Billiards table in School?



#### From the School Magazine 1952

BANG!!! THUMP!!! \*\* b\_\_\_ .... d\_\_\_ .... h \_\_\_ The play ranges fast and furiously round a poorly illuminated billiards table - the sharp smack of the balls can be barely heard above the hubbub and confusion. Through the haze of flying slippers, balls and other movable objects, several groups can be seen; the principal cause of the flying particles is a small band of physicists who are determining the laws of ballistics; a group of pseudo-mathematicians are working out the permutation of the football pools; the classical scholars are arguing vociferously as to the relative merits of George Robey and Albert Modley; the students of French are insinuating softly that Paris is a gay city; the Rest are indulging in a practical demonstration of a forward rush against the feeble opposition of chairs and .....

(The Editorial Committee regret that this is all that remains of the original manuscript).

Manning, G. C., U6S. Price

Was there ever a Billiards table in the School? The photo extract showing P. Henry holding a cue is taken from the Prefects 1949/50 photo - a table tennis bat can also be seen on the full photo.

Dave McKenzie



Dave,

There was a snooker table in the boy Prefects' room and a fireplace with a coke fire. I seem to recall doing A level Maths seated round the table which had a top on it, but I think the snooker balls had been taken away by RWH. There were dents in the walls at both ends of the table caused by the flying snooker balls. The boy Prefects also ran the Pound in those days.

Terry McCroakam



Dear Sheila,

Ref. your item on billiards - what a coincidence. I did my usual Sunday browse on the site and was about to answer Dave's query re. the snooker cue held by Pete Henry on one of the Forum 7 photos. When I was a Prefect in 1948-1949 we had a snooker table in the Boys Prefects' room which was in regular use by us - including an annual knock-out championship. I cannot recall who donated it to the Boys Prefects, but when the room was used as a classroom for the 6<sup>th</sup> Form, we had a heavy wooden cover for it.

With regard to the cartoon the only JMG (MAC) that I can think of could be Jack McGilvray who was a Prefect at the same time as me, but I am open to correction on this. "The pound at twelve and four" refers to the reclaiming of lost property from the Prefects on payment of a small fine which went towards buying records for the dancing/Jazz Club which was held on occasions in the classroom opposite RWH's study on wet days. As I remember the Girl Prefects did not have any corresponding facility. The table was still in the Prefects room when I left, and as Pete Henry had a cue in his hand, I assume it was still there when he became a Prefect. I hope this answers your queries and Dave's question.

Regards,

Eric Jones

Dave,

To continue the "Billiard Table and Pound" debate, there was an article in the 1950 School Magazine of which the above-pictured P.G. Henry (U6S, Holgate) was co-author, together with B.H. Walker (U6S, Guest). Read it, and you'll probably appreciate why the Boss later took charge of the balls! It appears that before the existence of the rank of Assistant Prefect, the Boy Prefects did administer the Pound, as described in the following youthfully exuberant account.... [12.30 AND ALL THAT or, Minutes for the meeting of the fraternity after P.T. on a Thursday.](#)

At 12.29 silence reigns in that great centre of knowledge, wisdom and sportsmanship commonly known as the Boy Pre's Room. At 12.30 Dunc. nips smartly out in his shirt and a smile, and rings the bell. Then echoing round the lofty corridors goes the traditional cry of "Get t'top off Ern'st." Like half-naked savages, brandishing cues, pokers and other lethal weapons, the members of the fraternity indulge in their usual scrum practice around the ball box. One by one they stagger out of the rack clutching their most treasured possession. Meanwhile, Casanova has taken the liberty of "chalking 'em up" in true prefect terminology. Suttu now returns triumphantly, holding his trousers aloft, having recovered them from the arms of Wendy, and grins at the smell of burning coming from "t'ead boy's" quarters. Meanwhile the floor show has got well under way. A recitation of "The Soldier" by Shackleton is followed by the close harmony singers Korky and Slick, giving a head-rending performance of "Me and my Shadow." Loud banging on the door and blood-thirsty yells announce the arrival of the proletariat for the Pound, containing as usual on a Thursday, a large number of Bobby soxers (after Dicky). Humour is now provided by Willie and Arthur in making feverish attempts to keep the door closed and their characters respectable. Excitement and feeling run high as the game progresses and members are brought rushing to the table by loud cries of "sell" and "raffle". Henry's ball sails gaily through into the Office whereupon Tommy quickly removes his trousers from the picture rail and announces that he's "got the table". Cries of "1<sup>st</sup> Sitting in" now drown the noise from the room above and half the members retire to their lunch, the other half returning to their favourite pursuits after cleaning up the wreckage.

## **Glossary**

“t’top” - the French-polished top of the billiard table.

“chalking ‘em up” - list of colours on board to determine the order of play in the highly technical game of “chase ‘em.”

Sell/Raffle - Usually follows a breach of the rules and leaves all the balls in easy potting positions.

“Got the table” - one assumes he is in a position to clear the table.

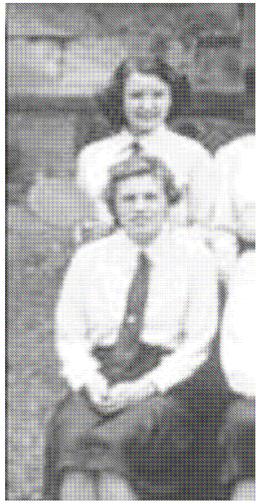
**P.G. Henry, U6S (Holgate)**

**B.H.Walker, U6S (Guest)**

Just for the record, the Boy Prefects for that year were Jackie Robinson (Head Boy), Walker, Lawton, Ackroyd, Askey, Duncan Perry, Fozzard, Dicky Whittaker, Henry, Twigg, Sutcliffe and Littleboy. I wonder who was making all the noise in “the room above” mentioned in the last sentence? As I recall, the room above the Boy Prefects’ Room was the Male Staffroom!

**Sheila Kelsall**

## 5. Table Tennis?



Jean Dillon has a Table Tennis bat in her hand but where was Table Tennis played? Was it for the girls? The image is taken from the Prefects 1949-50 photo.

Dave McKenzie

## 6. On the thought of leaving School (May 1948)



I am leaving this July. There are just three more months of School left and then I shall be an Old Hilmian. I shall be able to come back as a visitor, chat to the Staff; wait outside, or inside, the office until the bell goes, then lean on the radiator with a superior air and watch the children hurrying by. I shall be greeted with gasps of incredulity and looks of envy - but what will be my feelings? Shall I be pleased or sad? Shall I envy those still at School, or shall I pity them? I couldn't say. I wish I knew.

Two years ago, July 1948 seemed decades away, but even so, on looking ahead, I used to think, "Ye Gods! Only two years to go! What a terribly short time." Then came the beginning of this year. Des. didn't come back; George had left, Dek. went to University - Keith, Nev., and Johnny had all gone, even young Pete! But there were still Pong and Doug, and Benny, it wouldn't be so bad - or so I tried to think. I didn't succeed. School seemed lifeless. Now I began to say, "Oh, Lor! A year, twelve whole months before I leave. I'll never last it." The Prefects' was dead. There was no pushing and scrambling, no shouts of "One off!" no grabbing for balls for the inevitable "chase 'em." We could play freely all day if we wanted.

Then the new Prefects invaded our domain and I became Head Boy. In the first flush of excitement and pride, School became interesting again. The new Prefects seemed rather less riotous than last year's but they were not the sort to allow morbid thoughts in their company. Jim, Eric, Bob, Bill and 'Wom' all contributed to the enlivened atmosphere of the rejuvenated 'Pre's' room. Then Doug left and later Benny. Gradually School slipped back into the old routine once more - but with a difference. I now had a post of greater importance, necessitating a greater interest in School affairs than previously. Nevertheless I still looked forward to the end of July.

The Christmas Holidays came, and with their going, July seemed months nearer. I began almost to count the days towards the Easter holidays. They are now only a memory - and I have begun to wonder..... I now ask myself, "Do I really want to leave?" I still answer "Yes! Seven years at the same School is enough and to spare!" But not quite so emphatically as before. I try to imagine what it must be like to be free to do as I choose while others are still at School but I find it impossible to visualise; I remember Rugger, The Prefects' Room; Sports Day; excursions and the thousand and one other joys of School life. I think of the many friends I have made - Bry, Rod, good old Nobby, Young Mac, Eric, Jim and Bill and all the rest. Shall I leave them when I leave School? I sincerely hope not.

Two or three months after the final breaking-up, I shall be going into the army, meeting new people, making new friends. That is one thing I am really looking forward to without any doubt. And so now I find I want to leave School, yet I hate the thought of losing all contact with it. Perhaps the real truth is that I want to get away from its restrictions yet still retain its amenities and be a part of its social life. Whatever the reasons, I shall soon know for certain.

Derek D. Wilkinson, U6A Holgate.



Dear Dave,

Ref. the article from D.D. Wilkinson on leaving HGS at the end of 1948. Your query re. the names of the friends mentioned - answer as follows.

**Jim** = Jim Foster (became Head Boy the following year)

**Eric** = Yours truly

**Bob** = Bob Lumb

**Bill** = Brian 'Bill' Rainforth

**Womo** = Adrian Womersley

**Bry** = Brian Beaumont

Rod = Ralph O'Donnell  
Young Mac = McGilvray  
Nobby = Martin Hughes  
Eric Jones

In the Sixties, Derek took over from Les Tate as P.E. Master at HGS. Not too long after I left School for College in Wales, I went back one Wednesday in the Winter hoping I could take part in the Rugby Games afternoon. I arrived at the changing room and was met by Derek. He was only too pleased for me to play against the Senior Boys. I think this was the only time I met him but my experience that day was very positive.

Dave McKenzie

In respect of leaving at the end of 1949 year, my memories of that final year are down to two. Firstly my fallout with Mr. Leonard which led me to lose my job (50 pence a week) as Sports Monitor and joining the RAF on 11<sup>th</sup> August for my National Service. Sid Boulton and I went to RAF Padgate on the same day. After Padgate, Sid and I did our Basic Training at RAF West Kirby on the Wirral but following Trade Training posting I lost contact with Sid - although I did hear some years later that he had emigrated to Canada but I never had any confirmation of this.

Hope it is of some interest.

Regards,

Eric Jones

## 7. An unusual game of Cricket



Dear Dave,

As the cricket season is now in full swing, maybe this snippet from the School 1<sup>st</sup> XI season in 1952 maybe of interest. We were playing Wath G.S. This was a regular fixture between the two schools. Wath were normally a competitive team. The match was at home and was the most unusual result I ever experienced in a long cricket career. We scored 181 for 6 wickets. Wath were all out for 8 of which Roger Pickerill, a good cricketer, scored 7. He was dropped at short third man, by someone who will be nameless, off Neil Johnson when he had scored one. He got two runs off Neil from this mistake. Neil's bowling figures for this match were 7 for 2. He also scored 22 not out. For this feat he won a cricket bat from the paper The News Chronicle (now extinct). As I remember Neil lived at Shafton but as far as I know he never quite went onto

establish himself at senior level in spite of having enormous talent. The bat incidentally was a Gradidge Len Hutton autograph.

Best Wishes

John Hardy

Thank you, John.

Pickerill is a name familiar to me. Later on in the Fifties there was a very good Rugby player from Wath G.S. who reached South Yorkshire County standard at centre. I wonder if they were related?

Dave McKenzie

## 8. The Ice Cream Shop in the New Block



Photo: School Year 1956-57

Photo from Sid Kenningham. Thank you, Sid.

Could someone please explain the workings of this shop? Who was in control of it? Were Assistant Prefects involved? The items for sale were probably made by Northern Dairies (Adwick Depot?). Everyone must remember the wasps around the basket in the warmer weather. The classroom to the right was the Form Room of 1c in 1955-56.

I saw Sid's photo of himself standing in the doorway of the Tuck Shop, and it reminded me that the doors and windows in the New Block had metal frames, and a distinctive sound when they were opened and closed. Trap your fingers in those, and you knew about it! All were single-glazed of course, and streamed with condensation, especially when rainy weather was too cold to have the windows opened.

Most Hilmiens would remember the inside of the Tuck Shop, with its waist-high fridge in the far left corner as one queued at the door for an older pupil to serve the ice-creams and lollies. I say 'far' wall, but the room was no more than four or five feet from the door to the opposite wall, and the door was roughly one third of the room's width. I wonder how many pupils knew the layout of the room beyond the Tuck Shop?

When I was in the Sixth, and therefore in smaller study groups, we took some of our lessons in the Tuck Shop Room. It may have had a number, but that's how we knew it. The door to this room was directly opposite the door at which Sid is standing, and was always kept locked. The member of Staff used to turn up with the key to unlock the door at the beginning of the lesson. There was enough space within to accommodate a large table similar in size to the Library tables, with about eight or ten chairs grouped around it. I can also remember there were two or more easy chairs arranged against the far wall, near a large dark brown convection heater, with windows up high above them. The view out of these windows was of the dark foliage of the trees which bordered the dell, and because not much natural light seemed to penetrate, the electric light was always necessary. A large

cupboard stood against the right-hand wall. It was the typical design of a Sixties educational supply company - beech wood, with locks; rectangular and with no ornamentation. It had two full-length doors, and was, I think, used for stationery and book storage. There may even have been a carpet on the dark brown tiled floor. Perhaps others may remember this.



This little room was the filling in the sandwich of the classrooms of 1B and 1C. It was little-used, but going back to when I was next door in 1B, I do remember seeing Mr. Collette in there quite a lot. Did he go there for some peace and quiet to do his marking? For paper or book supplies? I wonder what was the original purpose of that small dark room with its tinier vestibule later to be converted to the Tuck Shop? A mini staff-room for those New Block teachers who couldn't be bothered to trail all the way over to the Main Block and up the stairs for their Break-time cup of tea? Does anyone else recall another use for this room? I suppose we need to have a look at what was written on the original architect's plans in that tiny space between the two classrooms. It may even have been an area which could have become a staircase when the next floor

was to be added above! What do you think?

Sheila Kelsall



Ref. the 'Lolly' shop in the 'New' Block - I was one of a few of us who staffed it in the mid-Sixties; can't remember the school year exactly but think it was probably Fourth Form, 1965-66. The teacher in charge was Mr Groome, then new-ish Deputy Head. Several of us ran the shop on a day-to-day basis, serving and receiving the new stock, but I don't remember the supplier. We got into first sitting of 'dinner' with the younger school so that we could get the shop open earlyish for all the 'sproggs' etc. I clearly remember the wasps and swatting them with rulers!

Mark Horbury

## 9. What was going to happen?

From the School Magazine Editorial 1948

"We are reaching the end of the small, intimate Grammar School which was known so well by countless of those hundreds who gave us these traditions. We owe it to them to close this era in the history of Hemsworth Grammar School in such a burst of energy and co-operation as has never before been surpassed."

## 10. Wendy and the Flagpole



I had been meaning to mail you about Wendy and see that there is now a picture of her. Do you remember that after such riotous (!?) evenings as a School Dance or last night of a School Play, Wendy was often found wearing some item of school uniform - hat, scarf, satchel. I also remember (I think) a flagpole at the front of school and after one such evening there was, hoisted aloft, an item of feminine apparel. How tame that seems now, but at the time it was quite shocking.

Dee Tyrrell