

The Historical Society

1946-47



The ambitious programme of lectures to be given by members of the Sixth Form to the Society was drastically curtailed, due to the pressure of school activities, both athletic and academic. Two lectures, however, were given to an enthusiastic audience. Kaye, with his characteristic conscientiousness delivered a peroration on "The History of Arms and Warfare", and a lecture, at some length, on "The Origins and Early Course of the French Revolution" proved to be of interest to those members in painstaking search of School Certificate. In the coming year it is hoped that the Historical Society will extend still further its activities and its interests. To conclude, I should like to thank Mr. Crossland and Mr. Smith, on behalf of all members, for their unfailing enthusiasm throughout the past year.

John Butt, U6A Talbot, Secretary.

1947-48



This year the Historical Society has met only three times. However, if quantity was not the key note, quality certainly was. The three lectures given were:-

1. "John Harrison and the Marine Anachronometer?" by Eric Whittle
2. "The Mystery of the daughter of Marie Antoinette" by Mr. Smith
3. "Paris" by Elizabeth Storer.

All three talks were well attended and this in itself shows how much the talks were appreciated. The Society would like to thank Mr. Crossland for his unflagging enthusiasm. We should like to express our thanks to Mr. Smith, our regret being that he is leaving us, and our best wishes to him in his new post.

Jim Foster, L6A

1948-49



This Society was re-formed during this year and is made up of about forty members from the 5th and 6th Forms. The main function of the Society in the Summer Term is the study of local history. The members are divided into groups to study places of historical interest in the district. In addition to this, Mr. Allan has given us a very interesting lecture on "Lancashire cotton Operatives and Railways in the Nineteenth Century". After an enthusiastic beginning, interest seems to have somewhat declined. We would take this opportunity of exhorting the Seniors to support this Society during the coming year, that it may become an active feature in Senior School life. Thanks are due to Mr. Crossland and Mr. Allan for their efforts in reviving the Society.

Peter Sutcliffe, L6A. Guest

1949-50



This year the Society has been something more than a vague ideal sought after by several hysterical cranks of the Senior School. The lectures, generally well-attended, have included several film-strip lectures by members of the 6th form and others on varied topics by Miss Ward, Miss B. Swinbank, Ackroyd and R. Doughty. By far the greatest event however was the Mock Election at which the Socialist candidate held his seat. Realism was added to the event by visits from the two Parliamentary candidates for the constituency. The Society learns with regret that Mr. Crossland is to retire this year. As Senior History Master, Mr. Crossland has been an active member of our Society and we would like to take this opportunity of placing on record our appreciation of his work.

Peter Sutcliffe, U6A. Guest

1950-51



The Historical Society, under the inspiring leadership of its hard-working Chairman, R. J. Whittaker, has enjoyed a very active and profitable year. Last year's society wound up its activities with a visit to Lincoln where such notable features as the Cathedral and the Museum were visited. Two of last year's members, Rita Doughty and R. J. Whittaker, gained useful prizes in the Hemsworth Rotarians' Essay Competition, the subject of which was "The Pros and Cons of a United States of Europe." The Society offers its rather belated congratulations. This year's activities opened with an entertaining debate at which it was decided that the United Nations had failed in Korea. Interest was aroused by this bright beginning and a good attendance was assured for later meetings which included a filmstrip on "Robert Owen", a Mock Trial at which Napoleon Bonaparte was acquitted of the charge of being "an enemy to civilisation," a report on the C.E.W.C, Conference held in London, and a Balloon Debate in which the eloquence of Victoria Regina saved her from the fate which befell her distinguished

fellow-aviators Mary, Queen of Scots, Columbus, Frederick the Great, Bismarck and Churchill. Activities, however, have not been confined to the School premises for numbers have paid Saturday afternoon visits to the Leeds C.E.W.C. Conference, to Wragby

Parish Church and to Temple Newsam, while other excursions are being arranged. The Society has flourished through the enthusiasm and co-operation of its members, and thanks are owed to all who assisted in its activities in any way. Special mention, however, must be made of Thelma Robinson, Ramsden, Clarke, Flavell and Gorton, a keen member from the Science Sixth. On behalf of all members may I also thank the painstaking and efficient committee, whose importance cannot be over-estimated. The success of the Society is due in no small measure to the untiring efforts and boundless enthusiasm of Mr. Allan, Miss Austin and Miss Ward. With such keen and able members of the staff to guide it the Society should meet with great success in future years.
Colin Beckett, U6A, Hon. Sec.

1951-52



This year the Historical Society has been very active and all meetings have been well attended. Early in the term the Society had a trial of Lord Palmerston at which he was acquitted of putting Patriotism before common sense. There was a session of "Any Questions" and also a "Fifth Form Night." A popular meeting was one given over to "My Age is Best," at which 62 attended, the Man of the Future being chosen unanimously. As usual the school held a Mock Election to coincide with the General Election. After a fortnight of slogans and meetings on the shelters, a rather hoarse Liberal candidate was elected M.P. for H.G.S., with a majority of 30 votes. Seven members of the Historical Society went to London to the annual C.E.W.C. conference, and our last meeting before going to Press was occupied by their report. The only other outside excursion was to Nostell Priory where everyone spent a happy afternoon. We should like to extend our thanks to Miss Ward, Miss Austin and Mr. Allan for their suggestions and guidance throughout the year.

Dorothy Pickin, U6A, Hon. Sec.

1952-53



Held every third week on Fridays, this year's meetings have so far been particularly varied. There remain two more meetings this term and of course there is the annual excursion sometime in the summer term. Nothing has yet been decided for these.

It has become traditional for a film-strip to be shown at the first meeting. This year Edith Lill and Janet Thorley presented the Social Changes in England in the 19th Century to a moderately sized and appreciative audience. At the next meeting a debate was held. The motion "That this House considers U.N.O. a waste of time and money", proposed by Sutcliffe and Amy Brook, opposed by Edith Lill and Richardson, was defeated by 11 votes to 3. In Society debates we experienced the usual lack of support from the Floor. Members' reaction and response to initial speeches are the essence of debates; as it is, isolated, tentative questions are all that are forthcoming at best. When all is said and done, notwithstanding schoolboy idealism, the Art Room is not the House of

Commons and one does not need to be an Aneurin Bevan to be worthy of a hearing. Let us, then, give more response from the Floor and, in doing so, improve any meeting by 100%. Last year's experiment of a Fifth Form Night proved so successful that this year called for another. The large audience was well rewarded with six short talks from fifth formers, with subjects ranging from Submarines and Aeroplanes to Fashion and the Gay Nineties. The final Autumn term meeting was entitled "Welsh Rarebit" and consisted of three talks on subjects with a Welsh flavour. Janet Thorley had a wide field with her choice of "Prince of Wales". Mabel Horbury talked of her holiday in North Wales and Richardson spoke about the Rt. Hon. Aneurin Bevan, M.P. This meeting was very well attended and members took a bigger and livelier part in the proceedings after a hesitant start. Once again a generous allowance from the School's funds enabled five outstanding pupils to attend the C.E.W.C. Conference, held in London during the Christmas holidays. Circumstances - examinations, interviews and a concert - affected the report to the Society. No review of the Historical Society would be complete without mentioning that Mabel Horbury, the Chairman of the Society, left at Christmas. Who among those present will ever forget her sparkling description of her "Week in North Wales"? Her exuberant personality will be missed this term.

If I may be allowed a grumble, let it make its way home to those who have not sufficiently or whole-heartedly enough supported a school society. To those who wait eagerly for 4 o'clock Friday - to rush off home - I would suggest a visit to a Society meeting. They will see a new aspect of "school" and will then long for 4 o'clock Friday for a new reason. The poor attendance from the Science side is particularly depressing. The Radio Club - the only Science society - does not by any means claim all these (at present) philistines. Although a School Society is essentially a part of school life where pupils have a free and irresponsible run, the Historical Society, for one, owes much to the guidance and suggestions of Miss Ward, Miss Austin and Mr. Allan. I seize this opportunity to offer the Historical Society's thanks in appreciation of their interest and patience.

**Donald Richardson, U6A,
Hon. Sec.**

1953-54



So far this year the society has been very active and the meetings well attended. At the end of last year, on July 10th, thirty-five members of the society went on an excursion to Lincoln where, between showers of rain, visits were made to the Guild Museum and the Art Gallery. In the afternoon, we paid a visit to the Cathedral, the "high-light" of which was a climb, by some of the braver members, to the top of the tower. Attendances so far this year have ranged between twenty-seven and seventy. The tradition of showing a film-strip at the first meeting was broken in favour of a mock election for the constituency of "South Hemswilliam". After entertaining speeches in which the Encyclopaedia Britannica was freely quoted, the Stoic representative was elected in a three-corner fight. At the next meeting there was a mock inquiry, "Was Hitler Insane?". After the Counsel for the Prosecution, Joan May, and the Counsel for Defence, Secker, B., had called upon various witnesses, Hitler was acquitted by 30 votes to 10.

The last two meetings before Christmas consisted of interesting talks by Mr. Allan; one with the aid of a film-strip entitled "C14 Noblemen", and the other a talk on the allied advance into Germany. The last meeting up to date consisted of the, now traditional, 5th form night in which six short talks ranging from "the Man who never was" to "The History of Crofton" were given by members of the 5th. The society's success this year could not have been accomplished without the aid of the staff and I would like to extend the society's appreciation to Miss Austin, Miss Ward and Mr. Allan.

Terry Dillon, L6A.

1954-55



There have been many diverse and interesting happenings in this year's activities. For example, a female member of a certain panel would like to have been Nelson - 'for personal reasons'. A highlight of the activities was a series of films. The films were very up-to-date, having that newfangled idea, a sound track. One day last summer, visitors to Chester would be confronted by the sight of Mr. Allan, followed by his circus, parading into some museum, or Cathedral. However, there are other interesting things at Chester, such as: the racecourse, dinner at Woolworth's, or watching fleas on the backs of lazing swans on the river in the evening. In all fairness to the Society, it must be said that a great deal of work goes on behind the scenes. A not uncommon sight is to see our frustrated chairman parading around the school at five minutes past four on Fridays looking for someone to take part in a quiz or second the motion in a debate. Viewers ought to know that our meetings take place at 4.10 p.m. on Fridays. The motto of our chairman, Mr. Dillon, by the way, is "La Societe, c'est Moi".

Ron Smethurst, U6A.

1955-56



Once again the Society has had a very successful year, and the meetings were well-attended. Average 42.5 to be exact. At a recent meeting Mr. Colley drew a crowd of 62, this equalling the record set up on the 15th January 1954. There have been two outstanding features of the meetings: firstly, although the audiences have been predominantly composed of "historians", there has been a bigger following of "scientists", and secondly, the history staff has played a much more active part at the meetings than in previous years. Surprisingly enough, this has not had an adverse effect on the attenders! The Society's first venture was a game called "Historical 20 Questions" and in spite of failing to gain the services of Mr. Gilbert Harding, the panel did very well, guessing all but one object. On the more serious side, Inspector Bulley gave a very interesting talk illustrated by microfilmed manuscripts, entitled "The Historian as a Detective". On November 5th the committee realised that its intellectual followers had tired of Guy Fawkes, and accordingly a balloon debate was held, and proved to be very popular. After a keen struggle it was finally decided that Albert Schweitzer (alias Anthony Foster) had done most for the world. The most popular feature of the Society, the traditional Grand Quiz, was presented next, and this was followed by a film entitled "A Medieval Village" (which had no connection with Hemsworth!). Then followed Mr. Colley's meeting in which he gave a thrilling account of "The Cave Art of the Old Stone-Age Man". The Rev. T. Boyard Webster, Vicar of Felkirk, wound up the year's activities, and it is hoped to make his visits a regular feature. For any pupils who have not yet attended the meetings, I would like to point out that they will always be welcome and that despite the protests of our chairman, Smethurst, admission will still be free. The Committee has asked me to thank them for the marvellous work they have put in during the year, but I refuse to mention their names. Seriously, however, on behalf of the Committee, I would like to express the Society's appreciation to Mr. Bulley, Mr. Colley and Miss Ward for their wonderful co-operation during the year.

Roy Homer, L6A (Price)

1956-57



Although there have been only 7 meetings of the Society this year compared to the usual 8 or even 9, most were successful and well attended. It appears that there is a trend towards higher attendances, as this year's average attendance of 48 is higher by nearly 6 than those of previous years. The reason for this was partly the success of the mock trial which established a new record with its attendance of 65, and partly that the Society's meetings have now attracted a firm following of Fourth and Fifth - formers to supplement the flagging sixth form. At the first meeting held on 21st September, Miss Valerie Manning, an ex-pupil of HGS, gave an interesting account of her recent experiences in the USA, where she spent a year with an American family. A Topical Debate on the Suez Question was held next. The motion, "that Nasser was justified in nationalising the Suez Canal" was overwhelmingly defeated by a patriotic and rather biased audience. The last meeting of the Autumn Term was an Inter-Form Quiz - a variation on the traditional Grande Quiz - the result of which was an easy victory to the Fifth Form, the Sixth lagging well behind in the company of the Fourth. At the January meeting the HGS delegates to the Christmas Conference of the C.E.W.C. in London gave their report to a large audience. One of the less successful meetings was the Historical "Any Questions", but it was followed by this year's greatest achievement which afforded some compensation. The Mock Trial, with its record-breaking attendance, was not entirely a new feature, as was first thought, for one was held in Autumn 1950. The accused was Napoleon, who was found guilty by a two-thirds majority, despite the brilliance of the Counsel for the Defence (Mr. Colley). Mr. Bulley represented the successful Counsel for the Prosecution. The final Feature was a talk by Mr. Colley on his travels in North Spain. The talk, illustrated by photographs on display in the Art Room, was interesting, and merited a far greater attendance than it received. Peter Smith presided at all the meetings, while the unusually helpful committee consisted of Kenningham, M. Coughlan and Evison, who are to be commended for the active and useful role they took. The Society would like to extend its usual and well-deserved thanks to the History Staff for their help and co-operation throughout the year.

Tony Gough, U6A (Holgate) Secretary.

1957-58



The following elections were made at the first meeting:

Chairman: Kenningham;

Secretary: S. Farmer;

Committee: Porter, G. Cavanagh, Cuthbert.

Eight meetings were held covering a wide range of activities. Some Sixth Form members gave a programme on Admiral Lord Nelson, the Fifth on readings from historical literature, and the Fourth on Sir Walter Raleigh. In a "Quiz with a Difference", not only were questions asked and answered, but information was given on various subjects by committee members. A most successful joint meeting with the S.C.M. was held at which members of Staff discussed whether a divided Church is a reproach

to Christianity. An outstanding event was Mr. Bulley's lecture on Nineteenth Century Hemsworth, which was attended by the record number of sixty pupils together with six members of Staff and seven Governors. The committee thanks Mr. Colley, who left at Easter, for his unfailing support and enthusiasm, and wishes him every success in his new appointment. The committee also hopes that next year the Society will overcome the rival attraction of Mr. Farrar's film shows.

Sheila Farmer, U6A.

1958-59



The following elections were made at the first meeting:

Chairman - Kenningham; Secretary - Porter; Committee - C. Haigh, Wild, Wass.

The Historical Society has been more popular this year, and has managed to attract enough members to make most of the seven meetings outstanding successes. An interesting experiment has been the introduction of films - we have seen films on London life in the eighteenth century and on the Cornish steam engines. In an Arts v. Science general knowledge quiz, the science team was well and truly beaten. Members of the Fifth Form gave lectures on "Women in History". We heard an interesting lecture by Mr. Knowles of Sheffield University on the development of churches through the ages, and another by Mr. Bellamy of Leeds University on "Excavating in Pontefract". Our most successful meeting from the point of view of attendance was undoubtedly the 'Mock Trial' of James Watt, when a record number of 105 pupils attended. As an experiment, members of the Third Form were allowed to

attend the last two meetings if they were going to join permanently in the Fourth Form. The annual excursion for 1958, held on the 4th July, attracted two coach loads of pupils from the Third Form upwards. A day's tour of Nottinghamshire was enjoyed in magnificent weather and stops were made at Laxton (the open-field village), Newark, Nottingham and Newstead Abbey.

John Porter, U6S

1959-60



The programme of the Historical Society this year consisted of six meetings, a mock election and an excursion, the destination of which at the time of printing is not known but it is hoped to include a visit to Chatsworth House in Derbyshire. The meetings covered a wide range of interesting and informative topics: an inter- form quiz in which the Fourth Form left their red- faced Sixth Form rivals well behind in a runaway victory; a film show with two films entitled "The Renaissance" and "The Medieval Castle"; a mock trial of Christopher Columbus which, with fine performances by Mr. Justice Lockett L.6.A. Mr. Snookes U.6.A. who prosecuted, and Mr. Richmond U.6.A. who defended, proved a vehicle for much humour; a Balloon Debate; the C.E.W.C. report; and a lecture by Sylvia Ward U.6.A. and Evison, U.6.A. called "Transport in the Eighteenth Century". The attendances varied but were quite good, thirty to thirty-five being the average. However new members are always welcome and we are sure they will also get a great deal of fun out of the meetings. The highlight of the year was undoubtedly the mock election. Anderson, the Labour candidate, Lockett for the Conservatives,

Deeley for the Communists and Evison for the Liberals, supported by an army of electioneering assistants, besieged the school with posters, pamphlets, rosettes, meetings and speeches in corridor, classroom and on the playing fields, and at the dining table in the election campaign. The climax of the campaign was reached when the candidates endeavoured to prove their party policy in the Assembly Hall before the rest of the school. This gave rise to heated arguments and a great deal of fun. The result was as follows:

Anderson	Labour	288 votes
Lockett	Conservative	147 votes
Deeley	Communist	48 votes
Evison	Liberal	31 votes

Mr. Hudson, along with Mr. Hodson, greatly helped in the organisation of the election and the Society would like to thank them both. Toft was the Chairman of the Society this year, while Cuthbert took over Beaumont's position as Secretary when he left to join the army. We wish him every success in his military career. The rest of the Committee consisted of Gwen Cavanagh, Sylvia Ward, Pat Griffiths, Jacqueline Leonard, Hawcroft, Townsend, Bashforth and Byrom.

Michael Cuthbert, L6A (Price) Secretary.

The end of the Society

1960 was the last year of existence for the Historical Society as a separate entity. During the School Year 1960-61 there was an amalgamation of the Literary and Debating and Historical Societies and the Student Christian Movement, and the new combination was named The Friday Club.