

**FOREST SCHOOL**  
**1834-2004**









1834-2004

*First published in 1984 to commemorate  
the  
150th Anniversary  
of the  
Foundation  
of  
Forest School*

# Credits

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## COVER

Reproduced from an engraving in *Greater London: its History, its People and its Places* by Edward Walford, MA, published late nineteenth century. The shield is modelled on the version of the School crest as worn on the uniform.

## FRONT ENDPAPER

Early post-World War II aerial view of Forest. (BCM/Aero Enterprises)

## REAR ENDPAPER

Forest School from the air in August 1984. Three decades of development and expansion have transformed the appearance on the northern, eastern and western sides. (Winston Ramsey)

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# Introduction to 1984 Edition

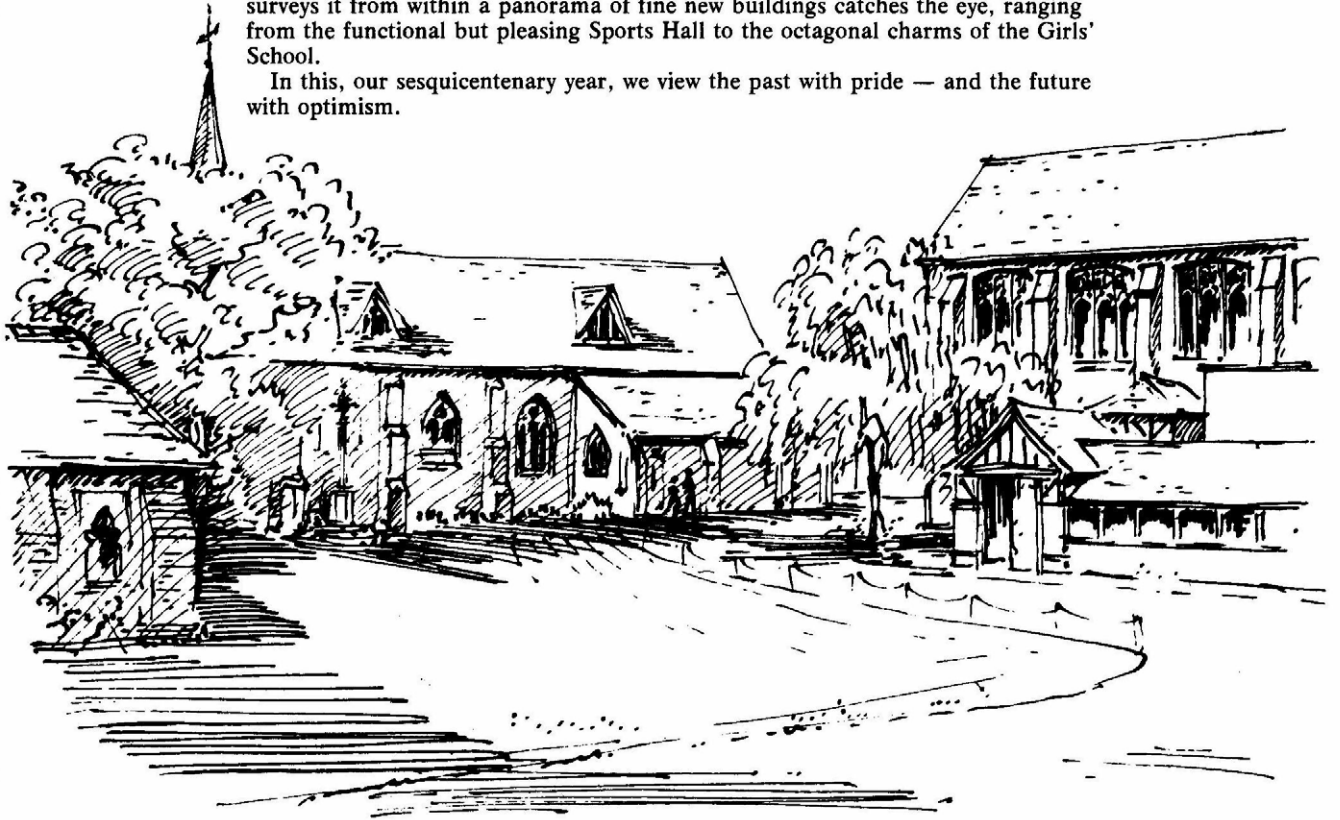
In an era of standardisation and stereotypes Forest School retains the individuality which has been its hallmark for the past 150 years.

Tradition and openmindedness — not always easy bedfellows — find compatibility here. Our unique 'three schools in one' structure now enables us to retain the virtues of intimacy whilst also allowing us to reap the benefits, in large-scale economies, of a one thousand pupil school.

The pioneering spirit of our nineteenth century founders has been fully matched by the nerve and vision of our twentieth century builders.

All of this finds visual expression as one approaches the School. The central façade is of mellow Georgian and Victorian elegance but if one enters the School and surveys it from within a panorama of fine new buildings catches the eye, ranging from the functional but pleasing Sports Hall to the octagonal charms of the Girls' School.

In this, our sesquicentenary year, we view the past with pride — and the future with optimism.



## Editor's Foreword to the First Edition

This book celebrates Forest School and its 150 years of existence. The intention is to commemorate people and events from those one and a half centuries by means of word and photograph, and to give an impression of the great variety of experiences which have constituted Forest's history. Impression is, of course, the key word, for to compile a complete history of Forest would demand a volume many times the size of this book and a period of time much longer than the months which have gone into its creation. Nevertheless, I hope that, impressionistic as it is, the book will please many and offend few.

I must also take the opportunity to thank the people without whom the book would never have reached fruition. Patricia O'Donnell typed willingly and speedily when deadlines loomed, and then proof-read with an eagle eye. Mark Spencer Ellis proof-read with equal efficiency. James Cripps, for many years a School librarian, sought out many useful photographs and documents from the School Archives, and has consistently shown as much interest as anyone in the developing project. Peter Dick lent a painting of the School and photographs of sporting Guys at Oxford for inclusion in the book. Gordon Ramsey gave invaluable help with the layout and organising of the book in its final stages, and Winston Ramsey showed an enthusiasm and helpfulness throughout, without which I might at times have faltered. Finally but by no means least I must thank John Gough, Warden of Forest School, who has backed this publication with determination from the outset.

## Editor's Foreword to the Second Edition

The larger part of this book remains as it was first published in 1984. The authors' original titles have been kept – for example, 'Forest School 70 Years Ago' – although nine years have been added to the distance in time. Photographs and text have been altered only where absolutely necessary.

It would, however, have been wrong to have missed the opportunity to bring this book up to date, considering the various developments and achievements which have marked the last nine years. Readers will find, therefore, a new section on the 1990s in the opening chapter of the book and an updated chronology at the end. Sadly the decade has seen also the deaths of Ralph Dunning, Eric Forge, Nigel Pashby and Albert Woolley, who contributed articles to the original edition, and small emendations have been made to register the progress of mortality.

I would like finally to take the opportunity to acknowledge the contribution of Deryk Wakem nine years ago in initiating the idea of a commemorative book, an omission much regretted since the first printing.

## Editor's Foreword to the Third Edition

One of the most striking features of the original edition of this book was its almost total emphasis on the one hundred and fifty year old Boys' School and its understandably cautious handling of the four year old Girls' School. It is hoped, now that the Girls' School attains its Silver Jubilee, that the present volume will do something to redress the balance. I offer grateful thanks to Helen Jolly and Melanie Wright for sharing with me their memories of life in the Girls' School from both sides of the teacher's desk.

Gerald Wright  
Forest School  
Walthamstow  
January 2004



# Forest 1834-2004

## 1830s

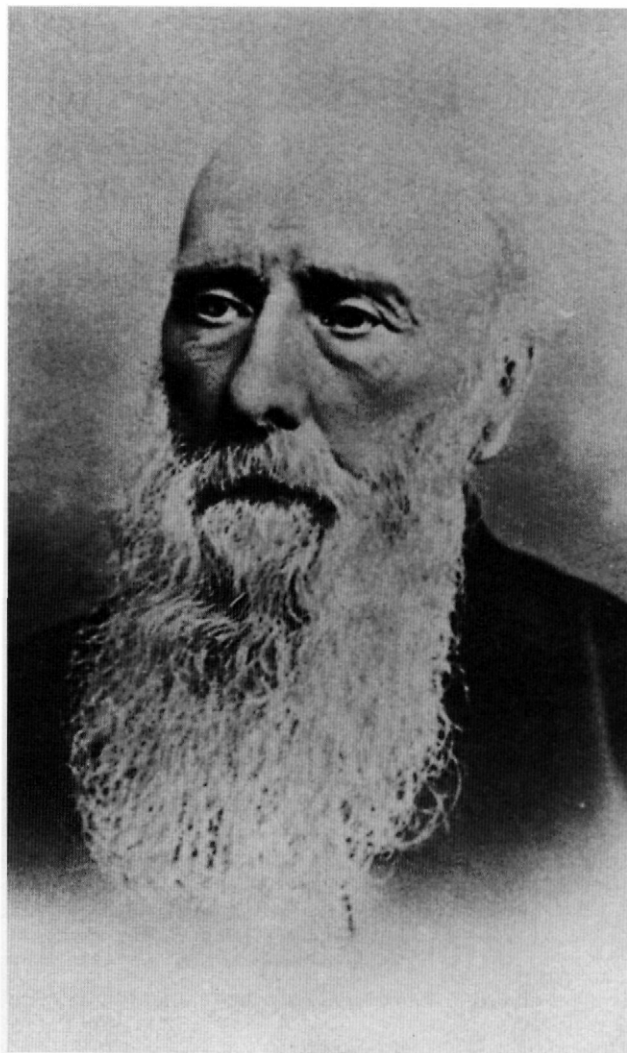
OCTOBER 1, 1834 — the day of Opening of Forest Proprietary Grammar School. The shareholders, largely local dignitaries, were invited to dine at the School — but at their own expense! The School accepted boys some five days later, 22 pupils in all, and the first Headmaster, Dr Thomas Dry, commanded the princely salary of £200 p.a. At this period the School occupied the eighteenth-century houses which still form the façade of Forest School — taken over now almost entirely by administrative staff. Their outward appearance, however, can have changed little since the 1830s.

The number of pupils increased steadily during the first years, so that before the end of the decade the roll had reached 80, and the largest room, at a later date the Upper Library, had to be utilised as a Dining Room.

In 1836 the School Library was established, making it the longest surviving Forest institution. It was launched with a donation of £40, no mean sum in the 1830s, making it clear how much value the original proprietors laid by books.

The School had no chapel at this date and it is probable that boys attended services at Walthamstow Parish Church — quite a trek in the depths of Winter. Fortunately for the School, 1840 saw the building of St Peter's-in-the-Forest, and in fact Dr Dry became the church's first vicar. From then until the erection of the School Chapel in 1857, Forest boys worshipped at this much more convenient establishment. Indeed, for the rest of the nineteenth century it became traditional for Forest School dead to be laid to rest in the churchyard of St Peter's, although sadly all trace of the tombs has disappeared by now.

At the close of the 1830s the Forest Proprietary Grammar School had grown and made handsome profits for its 120 shareholders. There seemed little hint of the troubles to come.



Dr Thomas Dry. Forest's first Headmaster resigned in 1844, but survived until the twentieth century, and it was towards the end of his very long life, one presumes, that this photograph was taken.



## 1840s

THE Walthamstow of 1840 was a very different place from the London suburb we know today. A writer of the time described it as

one of the largest and handsomest suburban villages near the metropolis . . . it contains many large and handsome villas, with tasteful pleasure grounds, mostly occupied by wealthy merchants and others, who have their places of business in London.

This unfamiliar, genteel, merchant-class Walthamstow was the environment that produced Forest School, and so it

**School Facade.** This scene can have changed little since 1834. Indeed the photograph indicates how small the changes have been to this, the oldest part of the School.

remained during the first fifty years of the School's existence. Only the opening of the Liverpool Street to Wood Street railway in 1870 and the introduction of cheap workmen's tickets heralded the Walthamstow with which we are so familiar. William Morris, writer, designer and Pre-Raphaelite, had been born in Walthamstow in the very year of Forest School's opening, and he as vividly as anyone was to lament the destruction of his idyllic childhood world by the property-speculators and jerry-builders of the 1870s and 1880s. But, for

the present, the School's setting was still rural, and the lane running alongside the School (now familiar as College Place) seemed aptly named Paradise Row.

And yet the School very nearly expired on its tenth birthday. The trouble, which came suddenly and unexpectedly, stemmed from falling numbers and rising costs. Why the demand for places at the School should have fallen off remains mysterious, but there were complaints during the 1840s of brutality and neglect. A boy had almost drowned after falling through thin ice on a local pond and the fact that the boy's father was a proprietor of the School caused somewhat of a stir. Yet another parent had complained that one of his sons had been struck several times over the head 'with the back of an octavo bound book' by his tutor. And there were other complaints concerning unchecked punishments inflicted in the Boarding House. Whatever the true reasons for the fall in numbers and income, it was decided to close the School ten years after its opening. The Headmaster, Dr Dry, applied for and obtained a new post as Headmaster of North Walsham Grammar School, and the Second Master, Mr J. F. Boyes, was invited to take over as caretaker Headmaster.

However, Mr Boyes seemed determined that Forest School should survive, even to the extent of taking a reduction in his own salary. An advertising campaign was instigated, some of the more brutal members of the staff were sacked, and eventually things began to look up. By the time of Boyes' resignation in 1848, there was still talk of the School closing, but there can be no doubt that in his four years at the helm Boyes had done much to stabilise Forest's position. An advertisement of the period indicates what was on offer:

Forest Proprietary Grammar School, in connection with King's College, London, is pleasantly situated in an open part of Epping Forest, near Snarebrook, but in Walthamstow Parish, and forms a handsome and extensive range of brick buildings, with large boarding-houses, spacious school-rooms, etc. It was founded about ten years ago and among its proprietors are some of the principal merchants, bankers etc. in London. The terms per annum are £20 for education, £35 for board, and £4.4 for washing. Many of the sons of Gentlemen residing in this and adjacent parishes are pupils. The teachers are John Frederick Boyes, Esq., M.A., Headmaster; Henry Morini, Esq., Second and French Master; Mr. Jas. Sykes, Assistant Master; Mr. Abel Siccama, M.A., German Master; and Mr. Richard Pickersgill, Drawing Master. P. H. Berthon, Esq., is honorary secretary to the proprietors; and Alderman Copeland, M.P., is the President. Coaches: F. Wragg's to London 7 times a day.

And then in 1848, J. F. Boyes inherited a fortune and the School lost yet another Headmaster when, unburdened of the

need to earn a living, Boyes decided to devote his life to writing.

The picture of life in the '40s is hazy and not as carefully documented as one would like. But interesting facts do emerge. Football, for instance, was being played at the time — or at any rate football of a kind. Apparently the teams consisted of any number of boys and the rules would seem to have been few and far between. These dramatic encounters would take place on the Common at the front of the School — where until a much later date cricket and athletic sports continued to take place.

The year 1848 then saw the arrival at Forest of its first unquestionably great Headmaster: John Gilderdale. He it was who put the School on its feet and set it on course to becoming what it eventually was — one of the most successful of the nineteenth century schools.



St Peter's-in-the-Forest: just across the Woodford New Road from the School, this church served for seventeen years as Forest's place of worship after its erection and for many more as the place of burial for the School's dead. Built in 1840, it has been much altered since.



Originally the Dining Room, this now serves as the Upper Library and one would assume that by the time this photograph was taken it had already taken on the role of reading-room. Judging by the names inscribed on the far panelling — a record of King's College Prizemen — and the point which they have reached just to the left of the

fireplace, one can deduce that the photograph was in fact taken in 1895. The room remains basically the same today — albeit carpeted and somewhat less Spartan in furnishings. The most striking question raised by the picture concerns the fate of the six busts which at one time overlooked Forest School boys!

## 1850s

WITH the arrival of John Gilderdale, Forest Proprietary Grammar School ceased to exist, from this point the Headmaster himself being sole proprietor — although it was not until the 1880s that Frederick Barlow Guy secured the freehold of all the property. Its name now became for the first time Forest School.

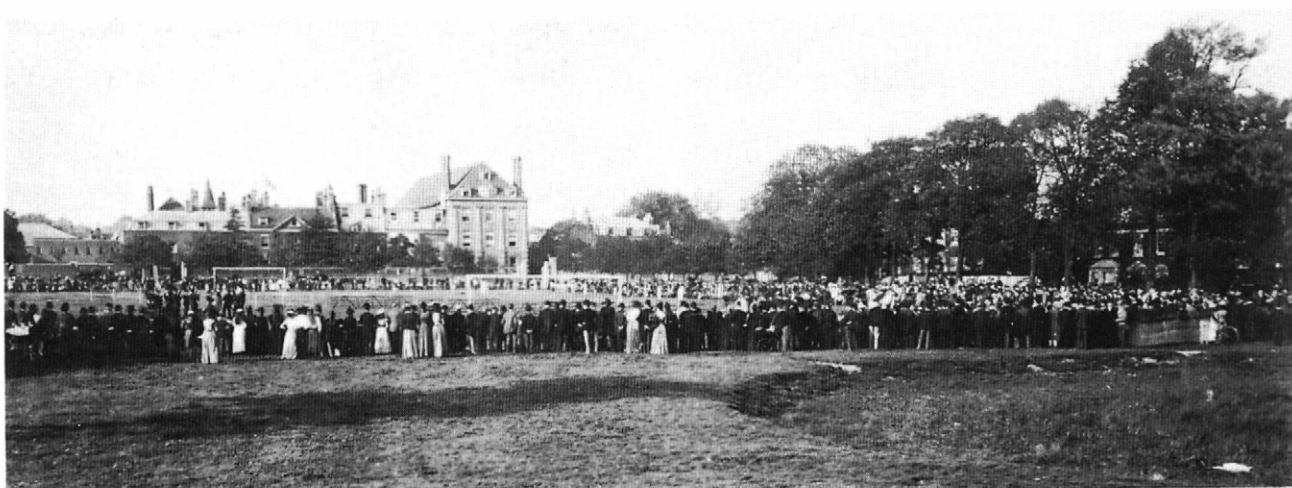
Gilderdale was a Yorkshireman who had been educated under the Rev. Thomas Guy at Howden School, and after teaching in Huddersfield had travelled south to take charge of a school in Clapton. Most important for Forest School, he had brought with him the son of his old teacher who became a pupil at Clapton, later the first Headmaster of Bradfield College, and finally Forest School's greatest Headmaster: Frederick Barlow Guy.

Gilderdale's reign lasted nine years, and it was during that time that the school motto 'In Pectore Robur' first appeared, that the school song was set to music, and that the Chapel was built. The date 1875 which appears on the foundation stone at the east end marks the time of enlargements, and the smaller original building was founded in 1857 at the very end of John Gilderdale's career at Forest. It was in many ways a fitting and lasting tribute to the qualities he had brought to Forest School. Certainly, Gilderdale had taken over the School when its future was anything but certain and had left it a much better place than he had found it.

So in 1857 the School was handed over to Frederick Barlow Guy, fellow Yorkshireman and by now Gilderdale's son-in-law. During the next thirty years Forest was to attain what many consider to have been its greatest achievements.



John Gilderdale. Forest's third Headmaster. He stabilised the School's fortunes during his nine years at the helm (1847-56).



**The Common.** Used from the first days of Dr Dry as a games field and eventually as an arena for Athletics Sports Day, held annually for many years at the beginning of October.

Judging from the Edwardian photograph, Athletic Sports were more of an attraction then than now. The football goalposts remained a fixture even on sports day.



**The Chapel.** Built at the end of Gilderdale's headmastership, though much enlarged later on. This photograph was taken during the nineteenth century but after the building was enlarged at the east end in 1875. The twentieth century photograph shows the main changes: namely electric



lighting to replace the gas lights, electric wall-heaters, The Last Supper at the altar end, post-war stained glass in the east window after a bomb exploded on Junior School in 1944, new pew-fronts, and, of course, W. B. Buncher at the organ console!

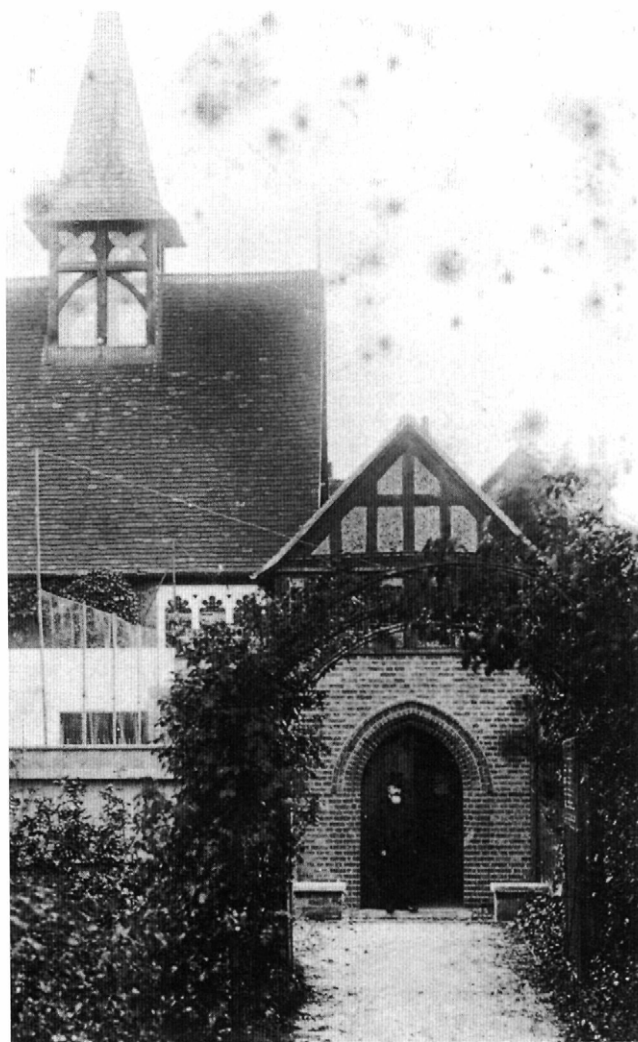
## 1860s

DR GUY'S long reign started modestly enough with the building of a Sick Cottage (at present the Senior Common Room) and the Cloisters, but the first real sign of things to come was the establishing of the Shakespeare Play as a Forest tradition. In 1860, *The Merchant of Venice* was performed, and the date marks the official beginning of the Shakespeare Tradition which has been maintained, with few breaks, until the present day. In 1965 the School celebrated the hundredth Play Night and marked the event with the opening of the New Theatre by HRH The Princess Margaret. Only the death of Dr Guy's wife in 1875 and the First World War caused the annual Shakespeare Tradition to be broken.

Then, 1865 saw the first edition of the Forest School Magazine. At first it was intended to publish monthly, but such enthusiasm waned after a few issues, and thereafter the Magazine has appeared termly. The Magazine began as a vehicle for imaginative prose and poetry, but after some years it settled down to be a record of the School's attainments and history. It remains one of the oldest school magazines, preceded only by Hurstpierpoint (1858), Eton (1862), and Marlborough (1865).

1865 also saw the construction of the School's first Swimming Pool. The Swimming Bath, or rather its lack, had been, one gathers, a sore point for some years. Matters were brought to a head shortly before 1865 when for some reason the School's tradition of utilising the River Lea for swimming was brought to an abrupt halt. A second disaster occurred with the decision to empty Wanstead's sewage into the River Roding, Forest's second string where bathing was concerned. In the words of one magazine correspondent in 1865:

Ever since the River Lea bathing was cruelly taken from us, and the Roding more cruelly deluged by the Wanstead drains, we have been in hope of a good swimming bath here on the spot.



F. B. Guy at the entrance to the Cloisters, which were built at the outset of his reign, along with the Sick Cottage, the School's first purpose-built sanatorium. Note the window very recently added to the west end of the Chapel, and also the games court to the north side of the Chapel.

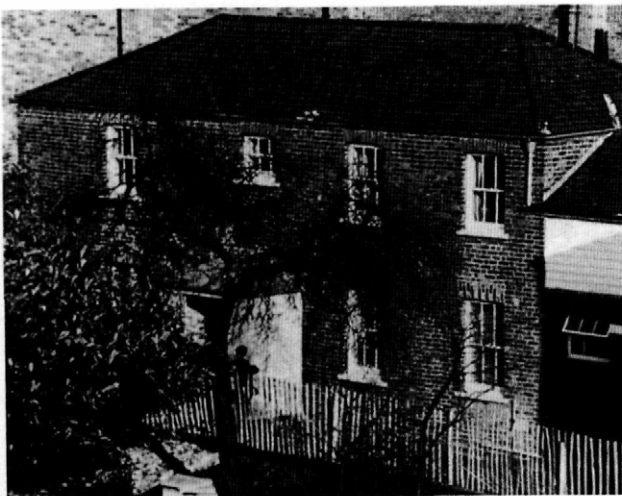
The Magazines of 1865 continue the saga. By June we have a touching Latin lyric 'De Balneo', and the Editorial comments:

Our swimming-bath is the one absorbing idea at present. We eagerly watch its progress towards completion, and are easily deceived by the delusive promises of the workmen, that in a few short days those shining walls will contain many a gallon of water, capable of sustaining the bodies of expectant Forest athletes.

By July the Bath was officially opened, an occasion commemorated in the Magazine with typical finesse:

A la Francaise je leve le [sic] main  
(I hope I'm writing sense!)  
Et disant, 'Hourray! Vive le bain!'  
Je fais ma reverence.

There then emerges from the pages of the Magazine one of the first Forest School 'characters': Woodbridge, a swimming instructor of unusual proportions who became somewhat of an



The Sick Cottage. Built in 1859, and still surviving in 1984, although all that once surrounded it – Gymnasium, Fives Courts and the Headmaster's Garden and Orchard – have by now disappeared. The Cottage now serves as the Senior Common Room. The rubble in the foreground is part of the mess caused by the erection of a Sixth Form Centre. The New Sports Hall towers somewhat dauntingly in the background.

obsession with contributors to the Magazine during the late '60s. He is first of all mentioned with Wordsworthian simplicity:

We have a swimming-master  
Who has, alas, but half his feet  
One's lost by some disaster.

Then, in the words of a later poet:

B stands for Bath, which in summer we find  
Agreeable both to the body and mind

W is for Woodbridge, a swimmer we know  
Has only got one leg on which he can go.

By 1866 the tone has become positively ecstatic:

The art of natation has been assiduously cultivated all summer. Mr W. Woodbridge, the celebrated one-legged swimmer, has been engaged as swimming-master to the School, having for his assistants C. Weightman, a professional swimmer from Nottingham, and little Harry Gurr, the champion swimmer of THE WORLD.

Exposure to the Roding's lethal bacteria had not been the only hazard facing boys indulging in outdoor pursuits prior to 1865. The dangers of the football match and cricket match



Shakespeare Play 1867. The earliest photograph of a Forest School Shakespeare Play: *Julius Caesar*, with F. J. Poole, a future Second Master commemorated by Poole's House to the present day, in the centre of the group.



were often almost as serious. This had largely been the fault of The Common. Until 1865 this notorious stretch of ground in front of the School served for all cricket fixtures, soccer matches and sports days, and while its size was an undeniable asset the bumpiness of its surface had become a major menace to the well-being of most sportsmen. Once more, expansion of the School's facilities was called for, and this time Dr Guy came to the rescue. In June 1865, the Magazine reports:

This year we owe a deep debt of gratitude to our Headmaster, who has sacrificed one of his best pasture-fields to be levelled for cricket!

Footballers, presumably considered either hardier or less skilful, had to suffer the pitfalls of The Common for some years to come.

The 1860s also saw improvements to the Chapel. The roof was replaced and a steeple and weather-cock added, while internally gas lighting was installed. The same period also heard murmurings for the first time concerning the need for a Gymnasium and a Fives Court, the latter having collapsed at some earlier date, leaving the Fives Club 'in complete despair'. Both these problems were to be solved in the 1870s.

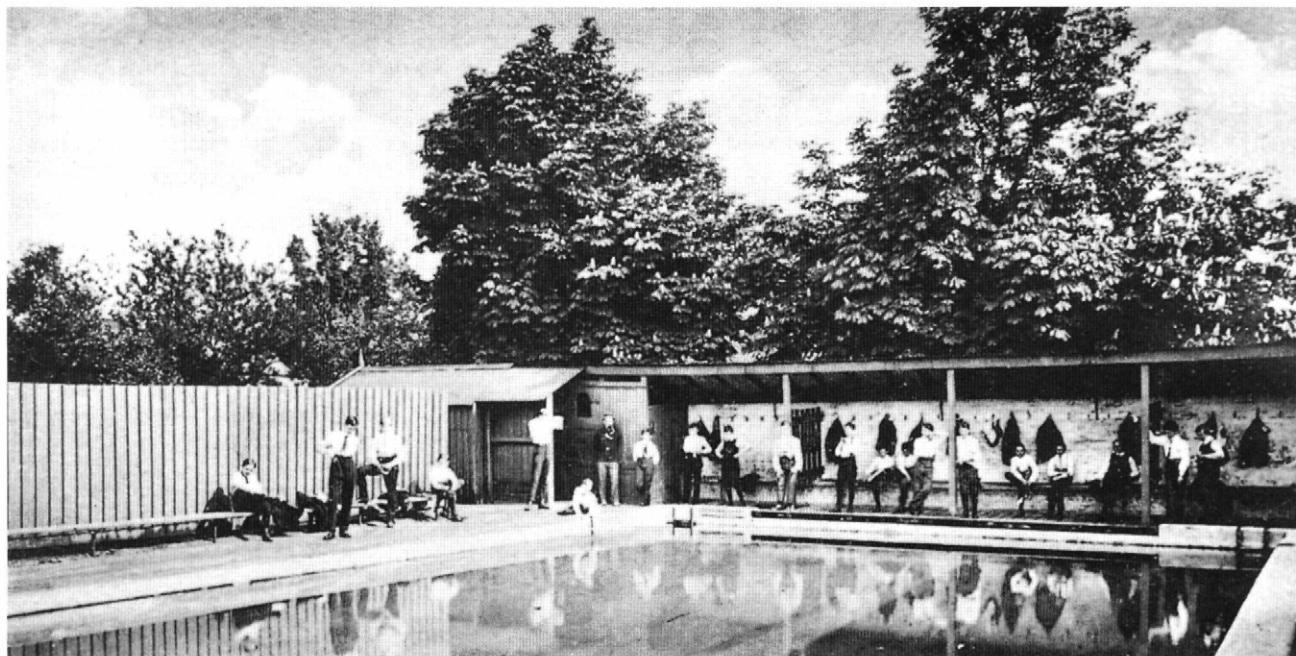


**The Farce of John Dobbs.** It was customary during the nineteenth century to perform a short farce at the end of the Shakespeare Play, and this one, using the same actors, rounded off the evening in 1867 when *Julius Caesar* had been performed. F. J. Poole once more occupies the central position.



**Macbeth.** The Shakespeare Tradition went from strength to strength during the nineteenth century. Here the 1884 performance of *Macbeth* features R. C. Guy, later Headmaster

of Forest for forty-one years, as a youthful Macbeth. The photograph was taken outside the old Gymnasium, where by the '80s the Play was performed.



## 1870s

FEW could have realised that the Forest School Bath, such a regular topic of discussion in the 1860s, would once more raise its head so soon thereafter. The Lea and Roding had become distant, unpleasant memories, and one-legged Woodbridge and Little Harry Gurr, champion swimmer of *THE WORLD*, had taken charge of the art of natation in the splendid School Pool. Poems had been written in the Magazine in celebration of the successful completion of the project. All seemed set fair for the future.

However, barely into the new decade, ominous notes were sounded. As the Magazine recorded:

At the deep end of the swimming-bath the steps are loose, and consequently when the bath is filled, the whole floats above the surface of the water, and is no use whatever. . . . Now, as there is a carpenter always about the premises, we think it would be a great improvement were he allowed to rectify this inconvenience and fix the steps immovable.

**The Swimming Bath: actually the second Forest Swimming Pool, constructed in the 1870s and surviving in use until the present day, albeit now covered and heated. This photograph shows the south end, with no Aston Block in the background, and was taken some time at the beginning of this century. Though the boys are fully dressed for the occasion, it was apparently unheard of to swim in any state but nudity! Many Old Foresters will recall those winter morning dips which were such a memorable feature of life during the early decades of this century.**

Worse was to come. In the Winter of 1873, a contributor to the Magazine noted the superior facilities enjoyed at Brentwood:

Could we not have a piece of coco-nut matting fixed along the ledge from which it is customary to dive? It would save a good deal of splashing, and would prevent fellows from slipping down and hurting themselves, as they go in, as I have seen some do. . . . I observed some such matting at the bath of the Brentwood Grammar School.

Then, the following Easter, yet another problem:

Dear Sir,

Having noticed for some time that a green weed grows in the water of the swimming-bath after it has been in a few days, might I suggest that a few pounds of salt be put into the water each time the bath is filled. This would be very little expense and would greatly add to the comfort of the swimmers!

Finally, of course, the bath which had taken five years to achieve turned out to be painfully congested in the swimming season, and it was finally decided that it should be filled in and a second version undertaken which would accept more bodies. This Bath Mk 2 of more ample proportions was begun in 1876. As the Magazine of that year observed:

The new bath, on the other side of the Gymnasium, has been commenced, and is, we understand, to be fifty feet by thirty. The old one by the side of the school room is shortly to be turned into a chemistry room.

But disaster, as always, lay just around the corner. A very irate swimmer made all clear in the Lent 1877 issue of the Magazine:

Dear Mr Editor,

May I through the valuable medium of your periodical open the eyes of the School to the fact that the amateur gang of diggers on the new bath has struck, thereby causing great anxiety and great uncertainty as to when the bath will be really finished. Should the School be baulked of their swimming-bath it will be cruel, to say the least of it. It will be the unanimous wish of the School to more than severely censure the gang, if something is not done directly to further proceedings.

However, such alarmist fears would seem to have been ill-founded, for the following term saw the appearance in the Magazine of one of the most unrelentingly awful poems ever written: 'The New Swimming—Bath. Opened June 20th, 1877'. The opening six lines will provide a taste of its quality:

Descend, Calliope, with sounding shell,  
And greet the new-born Naiad in her cell;  
See where, of late, upon the thirsty soil  
The hodsman plied his mercenary toil,  
In bright enchantment now, from side to side,  
The rising waters pour their silvery tide.

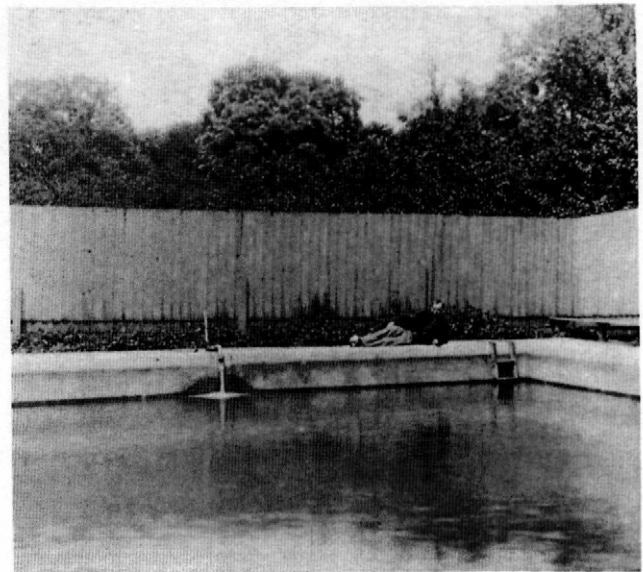
And that, perhaps thankfully, was the end of that, apart from a suggestion that the pool be somehow heated to allow an extension of the swimming season — a bright idea that took close on a century to reach fruition in the recent decision to cover it.

Many other building enterprises were of course undertaken during the 1870s: the Victorian Gymnasium, so recently

replaced by the new Sports Hall; extensions and elaborations to the Chapel; the construction of four Fives Courts (at the princely cost of £240), the last two of which have been demolished in 1983 to make way for the Sixth Form Centre; and last but not least, the first of the School Grub Shops. The growth in terms of bricks and mortar was matched by an ever-increasing roll of boys: by the middle of the decade the 22 boys of 1834 had grown to 125.

The Summer Term of 1878 saw an event of unusual importance: the visit to the School of royalty. *The Times* recorded the event thus:

On Friday 28th [of June], the Prince and Princess of Wales, while returning from their visit to the Infant Orphanage Asylum at Wanstead, halted on the playground of Forest School, and, by request, the Head-Master, Rev. Dr. F. Barlow Guy, addressed their Royal Highnesses, thanking them for their kindness. The Prince replied, and, with his thanks for the reception he met with, begged a day's holiday. Their Royal Highnesses paid this compliment to the School in consequence of the services of the Choir.



The North End of the Swimming Pool. Photographed at the end of the nineteenth century. Note the negligently posing swimming-instructor.



The Gymnasium Interior. Photographed in the late nineteenth century. Note the rather surprising organ at the far end of the building, and the rifles stored at the left hand side of the

gym. The floor had been originally rough gravel, but by the 1890s a wooden one had been installed to facilitate performances of the Shakespeare Play.

For once, *The Times* had it wrong, and the Editor of the Forest School Magazine was not slow to correct its error: it had been before and not after his visit to the Orphanage Asylum that the future Edward VII had visited the School. Reputation vindicated, the visit is described in some detail in the Trinity Term issue of the Magazine for 1878.



The William Morris Banner. Donated to the School in October 1879. The device is an oak tree, the school badge, with the arms of the Diocese of St Albans suspended from it and the school motto 'In Pectore Robur' beneath. It can now be seen in a display case at the south end of the Dining Hall.

The close of the 1870s sees the continuing association of William Morris with the School. Born in Walthamstow in the year of the School's opening and in the 1850s a pupil of Frederick Barlow Guy, the by now famous writer and artist designed for the School a new banner which was presented to the Headmaster on October 19, 1879:

A new banner was presented to the Head-Master by an old friend for the use of the School. The device is an oak tree, the School badge, with the arms of the diocese of St. Albans suspended from it and the School Motto 'In Pectore Robur' beneath. Mr. William Morris, who is so well known as the author of *The Earthly Paradise*, and whose stained-glass windows and works of art have taken so high a rank in this country, undertook the design by the request of Dr. Guy, whose pupil he was for a while, before going to the University. And not only was the banner designed by Mr. Morris, but he also superintended the working of it; and it is no exaggeration to say that a more perfect specimen of art needlework could not be seen.

This piece of Morris craftsmanship survives and can be now be seen in a display case at the south end of the Dining Hall.



The Fives Courts. Built in 1879, and originally four in all. Two were knocked down in the 1950s to make way for the Squash Courts, and this photograph was taken days before the remaining two were demolished in December 1983 to make way for the Sixth Form Centre.

## 1880s

THE GREAT ACHIEVEMENT of the 1880s was of course the construction of the Memorial Dining Hall. Barely had the dust from the Prince of Wales' carriage settled than preparations were under way for yet another visit from royalty. As the Magazine for Trinity Term 1886 records:

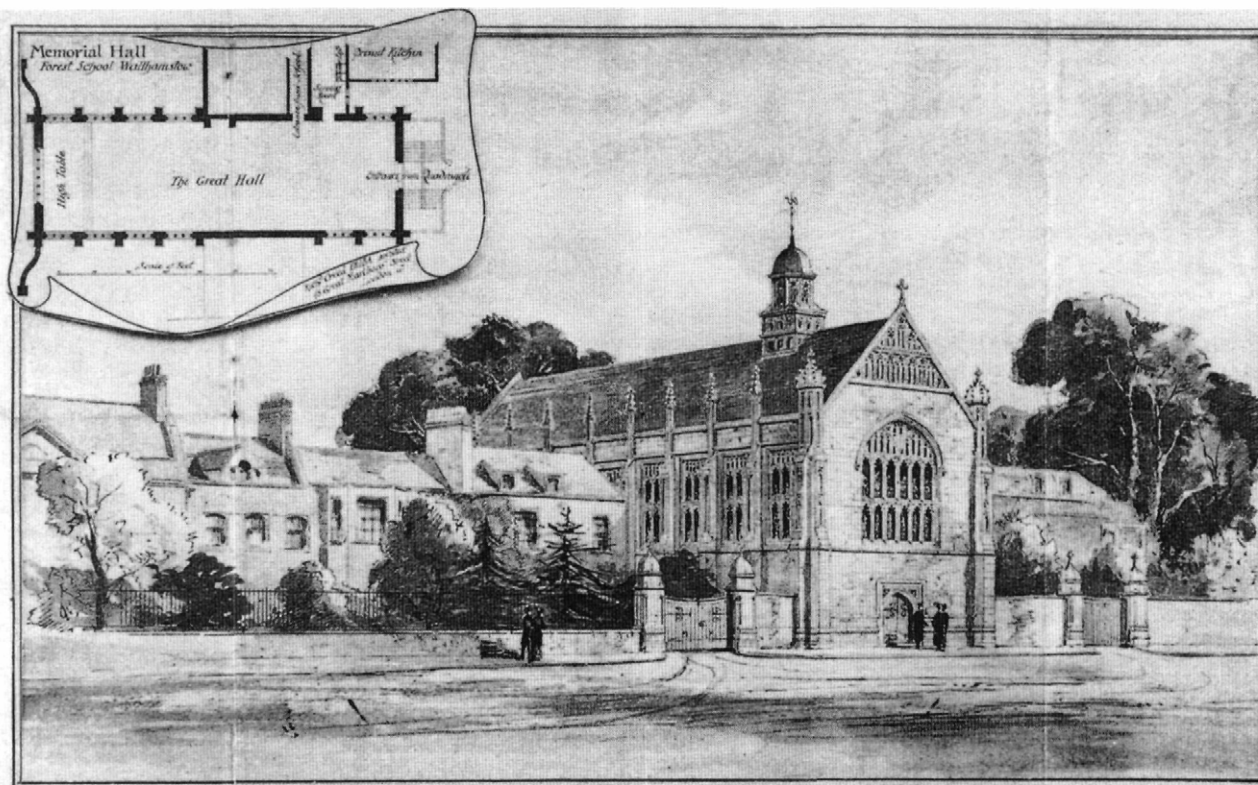
The entrance gate from the Forest was crowned with trophies of beautiful banners supporting an arch displaying in white letters on a scarlet ground the word: 'Welcome', whilst an elaborate display of flags and bannerets was made all over the School premises, and the forecourt was bright with flowers. . . . The Rifle Corps of the School, under the command of Capt. Vaux, formed a guard of honour, the band of the C and D companies of the First Battalion Essex Regiment of Rifle Volunteers was in attendance, and likewise a contingent of the Metropolitan Police under Chief Inspector Craggs.

Finally, just after 3 o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, July 3, the band struck up to announce the arrival of Her Royal Highness Helena, Princess of Schleswig-Holstein, Princess Royal of Great Britain and Ireland, accompanied by Prince Christian and entourage.

A Chapel Service conducted by the Headmaster, Rev. Canon Guy, opened the proceedings, and then the royal party made its way to the large dais which was draped and canopied in white and scarlet and which had been erected around a massive block of stone. Beneath the stone lay a series of the current coin of the realm, an 1886 Prize List, a Forest School Magazine of the previous term, a copy of the Order of Service, an invitation card, and 'In Pectore Robur' set to music. It was to be the last public occasion Dr Guy presided over at Forest, and barely nine days later he departed for the baths at Carlsbad in an attempt to stem the illness which was five years later to prove fatal. The magnificence of the day must have seemed a fitting tribute to his thirty years as Headmaster. The occasion was, of course, the laying of the foundation stone of the great Memorial Dining Hall.



Foundation Stone of the Dining Hall, reminding us of the July day of 1886 when Princess Helena visited the School.



**Memorial Hall.** Richard Creed's original design for the Dining Hall, before it was decided to attach the Headmaster's House to the south end of the Hall.

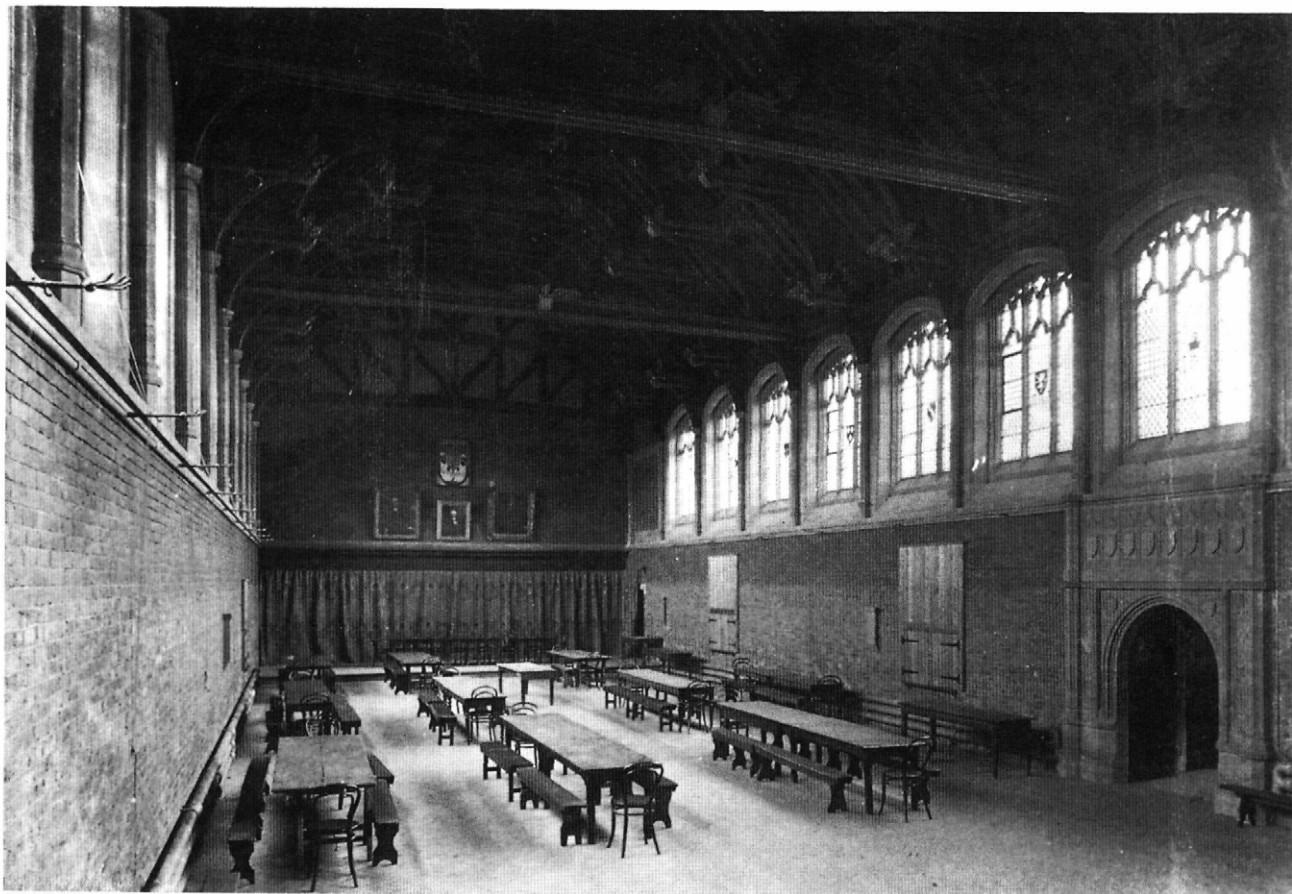
The Dining Hall, as we now know it, had, however, been envisaged as a tribute not to Dr Guy's thirty years of service but to the School's fifty years of existence. It was to provide a fitting memorial to the Old Foresters of that first difficult half century. In its early days, it was indeed more than once referred to as The Old Foresters' Hall.

The Dining Hall was first used on Speech Day, 1887, after the usual proceedings in Chapel and the Gymnasium. Dr Guy had by now retired and his son Thomas Edward Barlow Guy was in charge, but the high spot of the day was the presentation

to Dr Guy, who had returned for the day in his honorary role of Warden, of a portrait of himself, subscribed for by the boys of the School and masters, and hung in the new Hall. That same portrait hangs there still, at the north end of the Dining Hall.

The day also saw the announcement that Her Majesty Queen Victoria had expressed the wish that Forest School should have an extra week's holiday, and the Hall echoed with cheers. The concert and speeches followed, and we are told in the Magazine that the 'glees' sounded admirably in the new Hall. That same December began the tradition of taking supper in the Hall after the Shakespeare Play.

Games, gymnastics and militarism flourished during the 1880s, largely thanks to the efforts of Captain Vaux, who in 1883 had formed the Cadet Corps and who had also taken



**Memorial Dining Hall interior. Photographed soon after its erection when the walls were still bare brickwork. The oak panelling that now covers the walls was added over the years as funds became available — much of it being paid for by Old Foresters who had settled in the Argentine. The tapestry at the south end of the Hall would seem to have been by William Morris although it no longer survives today, having succumbed to the ravages of time. The seating arrangements show how small Forest was at the time. Note also the William Morris Banner above the portraits which remains in exactly the same position in 1993.**

charge of the new Gymnasium. Doubtless the move towards the cult of team games which was sweeping through the major public schools was not without its influence too. In 1888 the Cricket Field was graced with a delightful, thatched Pavilion, a building which was to survive until the flying-bomb landed on Junior School in August 1944. Forest teams began to achieve outstanding results against other, much larger schools, and to throw up outstanding sportsmen in both football and cricket. This was to be a trend encouraged by both R. C. Guy and F. J. Poole, both of them outstanding sportsmen during their days at Forest and University. Forest was entering its Golden Age.





**The Cadet Corps. Formed in 1883 under Captain Vaux, the Corps flourished during the years up to the First World War, and indeed 101 years and two World Wars later still thrives.**

**This photograph taken during the last years of the nineteenth century shows Ralph Courtenay Guy (Headmaster 1894-1935) as Officer-in-Charge.**



**Shakespeare Play Cast in the Dining Hall. The Memorial Dining Hall soon became the venue for the Shakespeare**

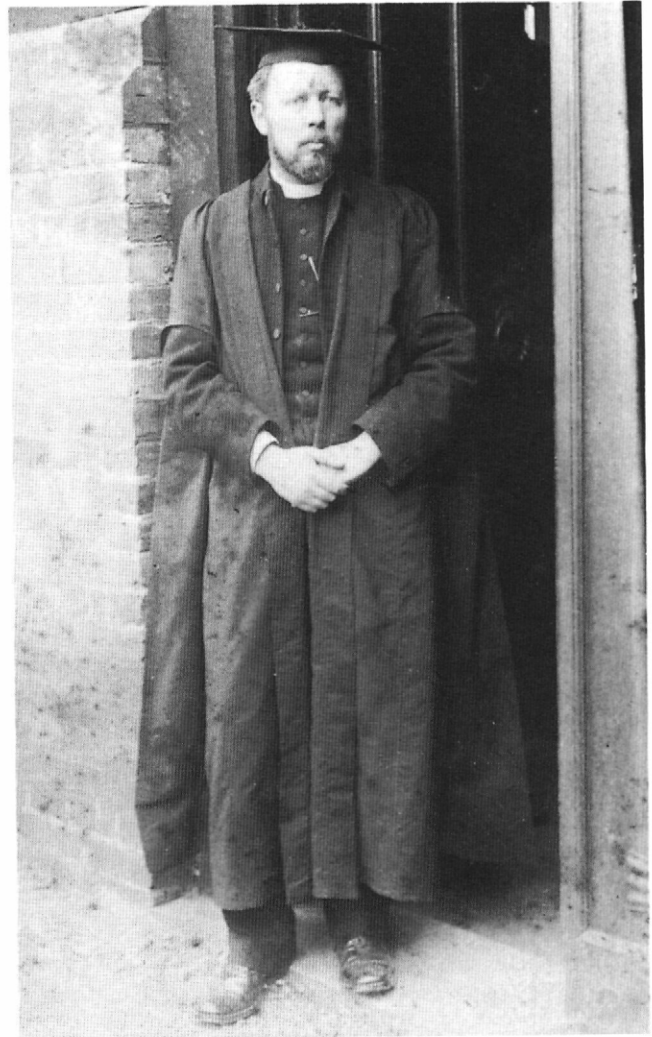
**Play, and this early photograph shows the cast posing at the north end.**



Football XI 1891. A. N. Guy, son of Dr Guy (who had 20 children in all!), sits with the ball between his knees.



Cricket XI 1890. Sport became something of an obsession during the late nineteenth century and teams were regularly photographed. Note in this one the unmistakable features of a Guy in the person of A. N. Guy, later to settle with a sizeable group of other Old Foresters in Argentina.



Rev. Thomas Edward Barlow Guy, who succeeded his father as Headmaster of Forest in 1886. Photographed by the entrance to the new Dining Hall. His reign, unlike those of his predecessor and successor, was short. In 1894 he retired to a parsonage in Yorkshire.



## 1890s

BY THE 1890s, the majority of the older School buildings had been erected: the Chapel was complete, the Dining Hall in use, the Gymnasium and Cricket Pavilion full of increasingly eager sportsmen, and the Cloisters already well-trodden. By comparison, the building programmes to be undertaken over the next fifty years were decidedly small-scale. In 1890, the view from the Cricket Field towards the Chapel and Dining Hall would have seemed very much the same as it was to be until in the 1970s when the Gymnasium was knocked down and the Sports Hall and Music School were erected.

The 1890s, however, did see many changes. The most momentous for the future of the School was, doubtless, the accession in 1894 of Ralph Courtenay Guy to the position of Headmaster. His brother Thomas Edward Barlow Guy had run Forest for eight years but finally decided to take a parish and in 1894 moved to Fulford vicarage, on the outskirts of York. R. C. Guy, Forest's sixth Headmaster, was also to be the School's longest-serving Head. Not until over forty years later was he to relinquish power and thus bring the era of the Guy dynasty to a close.

R. C. Guy was a first-class sportsman, and under him Forest became an outstanding sporting school. One of his first achievements was the establishing on a firm footing of the

**A view that has changed little in a hundred years. This photograph, taken in fairly recent times, shows a scene which would have appeared much the same in 1890. The tiled cricket pavilion is twentieth century, as are the classrooms of the Junior School. All the other features, Dining Hall, Chapel, Gymnasium and Cricket ground, would have appeared the same in 1890 and in 1970.**

annual Cricket Week, an institution which survives to this day. The Cricket Week, then as now, occupied the first week after the end of Summer Term, and consisted of daily matches involving Old Foresters, schoolmasters, and members of the Guy family. Indeed, if one is to judge by photographs of the period and the distant memories of R. C. Guy's daughters, Mary and Kathleen, who still survive hale and hearty in 1984, the Sylvestrian Cricket Week originated very much as a family occasion. It remains one of the traditions from R.C.G's reign which still play an important part in the School's life.

The Magazines of the period catch well the tone of the opening years of R. C. Guy's Headship. They consisted, on average, of 75 per cent sport, with constant emphasis on the character-building qualities inherent in hitting a ball and the conviction that a sportsman was a gentleman and that Forest School was a godly school because it kept increasing its fixture list. The cult of Muscular Christianity which had swept through public schools everywhere had finally descended upon Forest, and R.C.G. would appear to have been its High Priest.



Cricket Week in the 1890s. As these photographs show, the occasion, during its early days, was very much a family

affair. The children on their parents' laps are Kathleen and Mary Guy, still soldiering on in 1984!



And yet, despite all this heady stuff, there were sombre moments — and rather a lot of them. Death filled the air. At the beginning of the decade, P. H. Berthon died at the advanced age of 91. Little remembered nowadays, it was he who had originated the idea of founding Forest School in 1834 and he had played an important role in the early years of the School. He also it was who had been the moving force behind the erection in 1840 of St Peter's Church. He had lived for many years in the White House, now the Warden's study and drawing room. The family home had been 'Berthon's' at Whipps Cross, part of which still survives as one end of the Territorial Army Headquarters at the Whipps Cross end of the Lea Bridge Road.

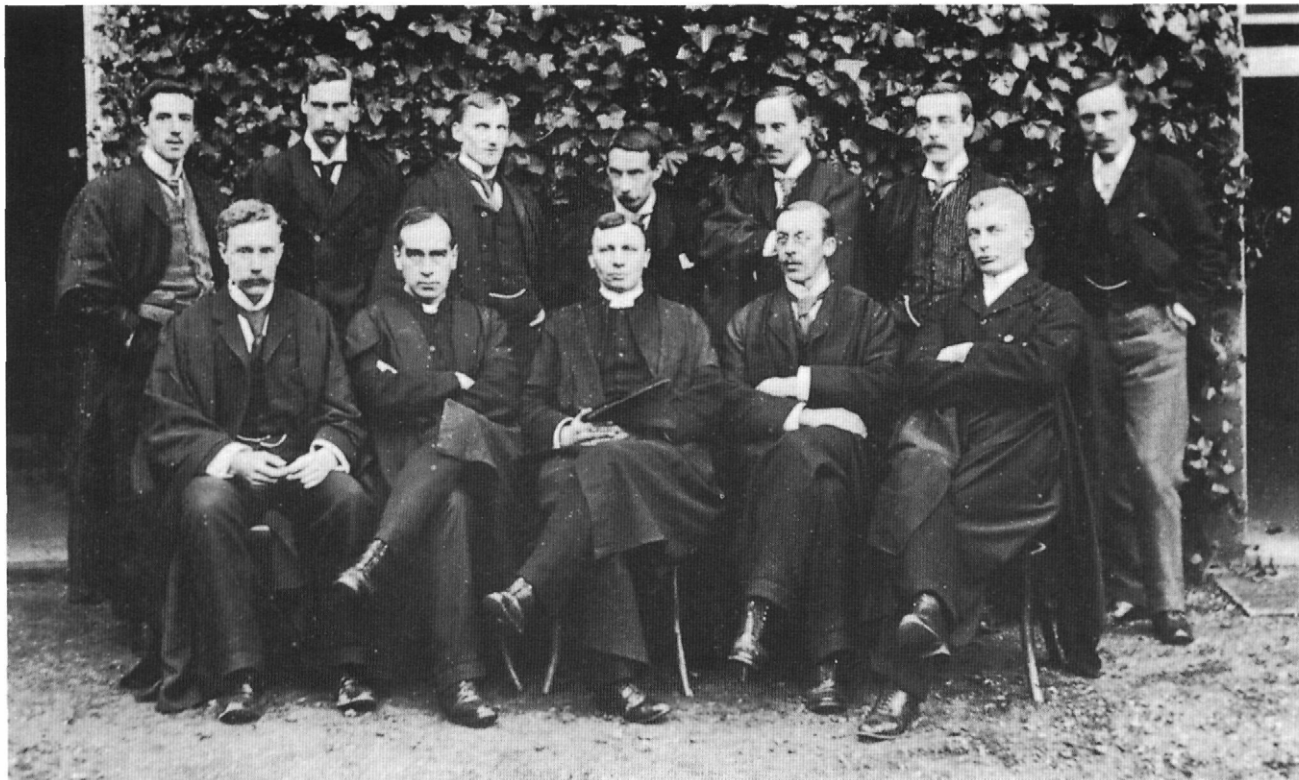
The same year sees the first of a sequence of deaths within the Guy family which was to add to the inhabitants of St Peter's churchyard regularly over the next few years. Thomas Edward Barlow Guy was to lose his eldest son, Frederick Henry Charlesworth Guy, his wife at the tender age of 28, and his two young children, Florence and Alban, within the space of two years. Such tragedies as this may have had some influence on Thomas Edward Barlow Guy when he made the decision to hand over Forest School after only eight years at the helm.

However, despite the pathos of all this, the death which overshadowed all others in the 1890s was neither unexpected nor sentimental. Historically the most significant man in Forest School's development, the eminent Yorkshireman, Dr Frederick Barlow Guy, had died with dignity after a lifetime of service and fulfilment, and he had left his stamp indelibly on Forest. The Doctor, as he was known, thirty years a Headmaster, had transformed the School in many ways: numbers of boys had multiplied greatly, Gymnasium, Chapel and Dining Hall had been erected, often partly at the Doctor's own expense, the academic reputation of the School had flourished, and a vigorous Old Boys' Association had been founded. It would be no exaggeration to say that F. B. Guy created much of the School as we now know it. The death of the Yorkshireman, along with that of Henry Berthon, marked a break with the pioneering days of Forest School that could never be recaptured. The early, formative years of the School, until recently a living memory, were now receding into history — interesting, but dead.

But more was to come, and swiftly. John Smith Gilderdale, son of Rev. John Gilderdale, the School's third Headmaster, died within a month of his friend and brother-in-law with whom he had worked as Second Master for so many years. The piece of grassland in front of Junior School, still called Johnians, derived its name from John Gilderdale.



R. C. Guy and his bride, shortly after his accession at Forest.



A photograph taken during the early years of R. C. Guy's reign. Famous figures amongst the masters are F. J. Poole, Senior Master until his retirement in 1900 (left of R.C.G.), I. G. Lloyd-Jones (sitting far right) who did so much to

forward the fortunes of the Rifle Corps after the retirement of Captain Vaux until his departure in 1900, and C. A. Eves, who succeeded F. J. Poole as Senior Master and served the School for many years thereafter.

Finally, Dr Guy's widow followed him to the grave in Great Leighs. As the Magazine records:

Barely two years elapsed since we were mourning the death of our Warden, and now we have to record another loss in the death of his second wife, Mary Guy. One more link that binds us to the past has been severed. Foresters of many generations will recall her kindness and hospitality, and the genial and cheery visits she was wont to pay to invalids at the Sick Cottage. After a long and painful illness she passed away at Whipps Cross . . . whither she had removed after her husband's death. Her body was removed for burial by her husband's side at Great Leighs.

The end of an era.

Still, despite all, both at School and at large there was much to look forward to: Victoria's Jubilee; brave new world of the twentieth century; greater than ever triumphs at football and cricket; oak panelling in the Dining Hall; Old Boys doing their bit in far-flung Empire; and the continuation of the Guy dynasty. Old Foresters wrote in to the Magazine regularly with edifying anecdotes to stir the hearts of youngsters still at school: a past editor of the Magazine described the delights of teaching the game of hockey to the aborigines of Chota



**The Original Poole's House! Although the House System was not introduced at Forest until the 1920s, masters during the nineteenth century were allowed, indeed sometimes**

**encouraged, to accommodate boarders in their houses. Here F. J. Poole, later Senior Master, is pictured with boys who fairly obviously belong to his 'house'.**

Nagpur; a former master, the Reverend Charlesworth, recounted the salutary effects of showing magic-lantern slides of the crucifixion to the natives of Madagascar; and of course by now the termly Oxford and Cambridge Letters had become a regular fixture in the Magazine. A group of Old Boys in the Argentine, among them a Guy and a Gilderdale, began a correspondence in the Magazine which was to go on for some years concerning Forest School influence in Latin America.

This group of Old Foresters in the Argentine, young men who had gone out to taste adventure and stayed to make their fortunes, did much for the old School over the years. Perhaps their most noticeable contribution nowadays would be the oak panelling which they donated to clad the somewhat bleak brick walls of the original interior and which still carries a brass plate to commemorate their generosity. They also donated an Argentinian flag to the School Museum, but no trace remains of that gift. Most remarkable of all, in the 1920s they were to establish an annual Old Foresters' Dinner in Buenos Aires which took place at the Grand Central Railway Hotel.

During the 1890s, the boy who was later to achieve the greatest eminence was of course E. L. Atkinson. At Forest he led the usual schoolboy life, trying hard at his athletics and appearing in a small role in the Shakespeare Play. Not many years later, he was to achieve international fame as the surgeon on Scott's last, fatal Antarctic Expedition, and had the good fortune to be one of the few surviving key-men. The Pennant in the glass case at the north end of the Dining Hall is from Scott's Expedition and was given to the School to mark Atkinson's connection with his old school. A full account of E. L. Atkinson and his achievements is printed in a separate article elsewhere in this book.

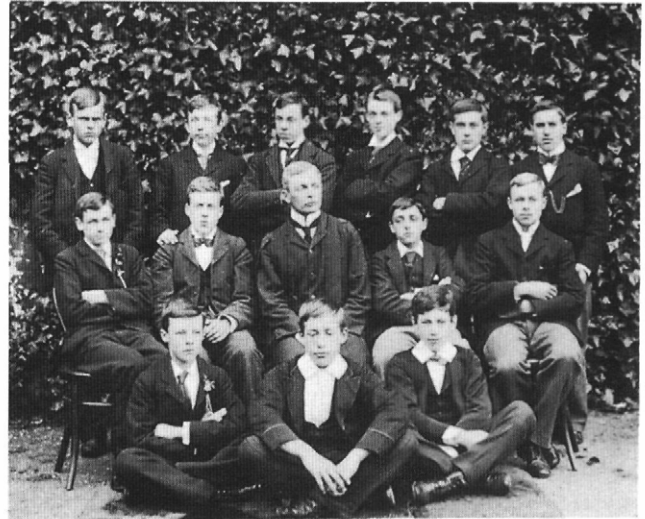
The decade ended, of course, with war, and many Old Foresters rushed out to South Africa to serve. Several were to die. Still, the horrors that doubtless took place did little to dampen the spirits of Forest. The Boer War, which ends our decade, did nothing to shake faith in the Pax Britannica, the sufficiency of the British Navy, the value of world-wide conquests and the certainty that Britain's leading rôle in the

world was permanent. The wave of patriotism continued unabated throughout the hostilities. Thus passed the last war one could positively enjoy. A letter to the Magazine from Captain R. B. Shipley serving in the Transvaal in 1899 says it all:

I walked up to a rock under which a private was sitting, and sat down. Shells were screaming close over our heads, some even bursting among the rocks above us, while a perfect hail of bullets swept down the gully on the edge of which we were sitting. My fellow lodger under the rock said to me, 'You are an Old Forester, sir, are you not?' I answered in the affirmative. He then replied, 'I am an O.F. also; would you like to see the Easter Mag?'

War was never to be quite the same again.

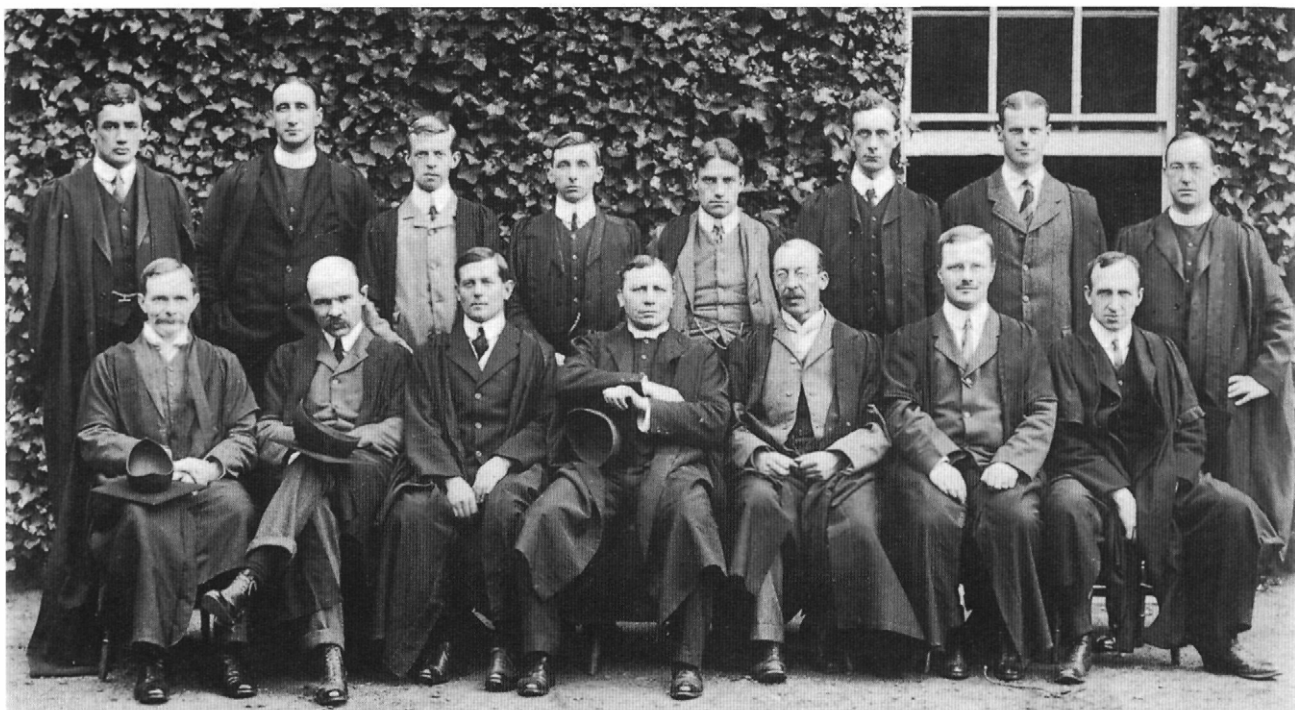
Captain I. G. Lloyd-Jones with the Vth Form, 1896. This picture gives a vivid impression of how different in terms of numbers the School was in the early days of R. C. Guy's reign. In 1984 we have something in the region of 150 in the Vth Form. Noteworthy in this photograph is the boy sitting in the centre: L. Padfield was to become the first Chairman of the Governors after the Second World War.



School Corps. R. C. Guy did much to encourage the Corps, and this photograph taken during the late nineteenth century shows with what seriousness it was taken. Prominent in the

picture is Captain I. G. Lloyd-Jones who did a great deal to establish the Corps after the departure of Captain Vaux. Note the newly-built thatched Cricket Pavilion.





R. C. Guy and masters in 1909. The picture indicates the growing size of the School at this stage.

## 1900s

THE DEATHS of Victoria and Edward VII constitute dramatic boundary-markers to this period. However, between these two shocks from the outside, life at Forest went on in its usual way; Shakespeare Plays came and went, Mr Herman Guy organised concerts, people worried a lot about the state of the fixture list, an Organ Fund was set up to help replace the decrepit instrument in Chapel, Old Foresters' Dinners became an institution.

The period also saw an expansion of the School's facilities. Firstly, in 1902, a new Sanatorium was built, along with a new Masters' House, on the other side of Johnians from the Junior School. The Sanatorium was named Oxley, after Miss Oxley,

for many years the School Matron. The neighbouring Masters' house went under the name of Evesden, in tribute to the long service of C. A. Eves who had recently become Second Master. The two large Edwardian villas still stand in 1984, now both comprising staff living accommodation.

Then Junior School facilities were considerably extended, with the addition of a new classroom and dormitory. Equally important to small boys, a brand new Grub Shop was erected behind the Cricket Pavilion. Sadly, of course, none of these buildings survives, thanks to the V1 of August 1944.

Finally, the School's Science Laboratory was built in 1906 at the south end of College Place. It remained there for over half a century until it was demolished to make room for the present School Theatre.

Perhaps the most surprising event to many was the death in 1903 of Thomas Dry, Forest's first Headmaster. He it was who



The Corps: NCOs July 1907. Like Shakespeare cast lists of the period, photographs from the 1900s often make a grim impression. In this picture, for example, all but one of the front row were to be killed in the Great War. They read, from left to right: R. E. F. Shaw, S. H. Killick, O. T. Boyd (the sole survivor), E. Spencer, F. E. Stantial, H. O. Ashton, and P. G. Franklin. The survivor went on to be killed in World War II.

had officiated at the opening ceremony in 1834 and had steered the School through its first difficult ten years. On his departure from Forest in 1844 he had taken on the Headship of North Walsham Grammar School in Norfolk, and had finished his days as Rector of Rushall, near Marlborough. Many must have been surprised that the School's first Headmaster had survived into the twentieth century.

Looking more to the future, the period sees the establishing of the Arthur Dunn Cup, which Old Foresters have contested regularly since 1902 although it was to be more than fifty years

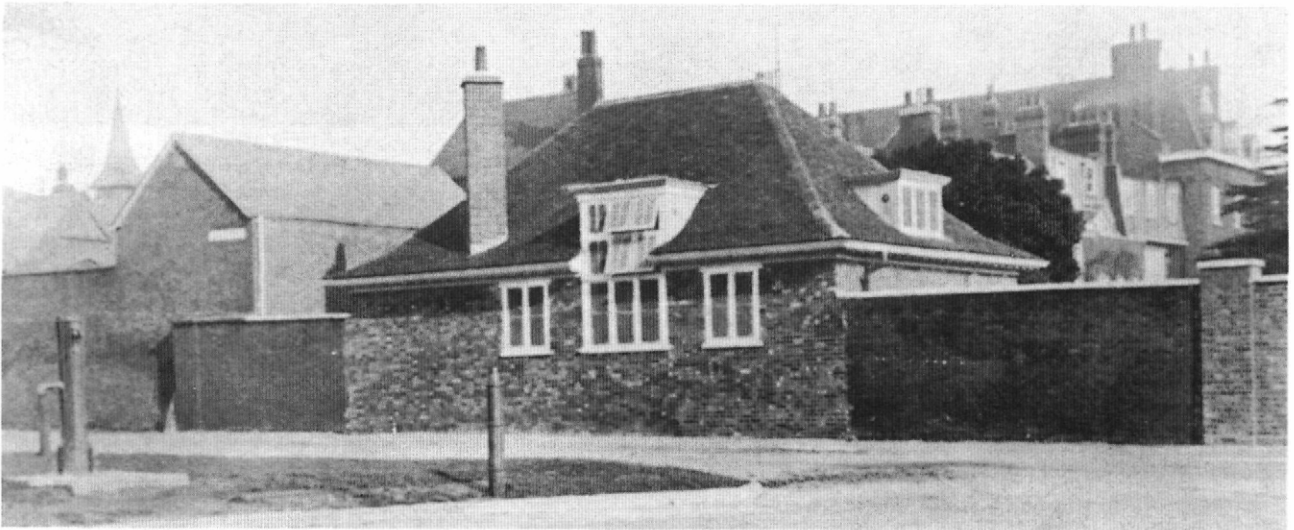
after its inauguration that Forest actually won the Cup. The Old Foresters' Club was also established on a firm footing at this time.

Reading the cast lists of the Shakespeare Plays of the period provides more sombre thoughts. In 1908, *Henry V* must have seemed an ideal choice at the height of Edwardian pomp and circumstance. Yet within two years King Edward was dead, and within six years members of the cast were in reality laying down their lives on the fields of France. Equally chilling is the realisation that the title-role actors of the last four productions of the decade were to die in action in the Great War: P. G. Franklin (*The Shrew*); S. H. Killick (*The Merchant of Venice*); and R. E. F. Shaw (*Henry V* and *Henry IV*). With hindsight, the Magazine reviews of these Shakespeare Plays makes very grim reading even eighty years on.

At which point we enter the decade which opened with the sinking of the *Titanic* and Scott's Last Expedition and continued in much the same vein.

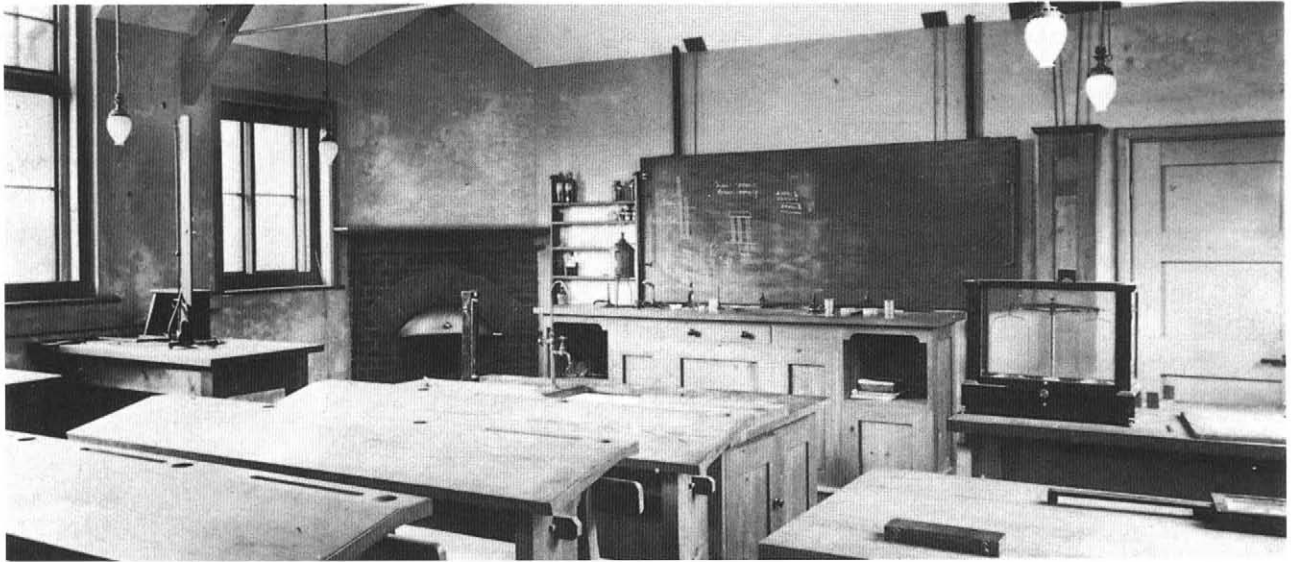


**The Grub Shop.** Built in the first years of the twentieth century, but photographed here in 1922.

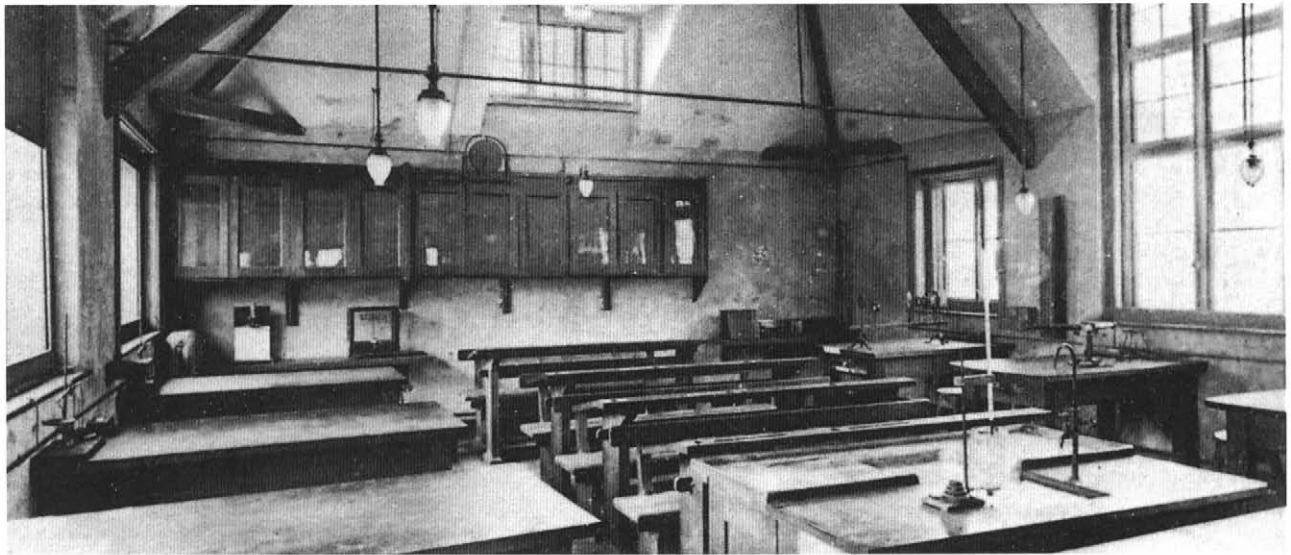


**Science Laboratory.** Built in 1906 and photographed shortly afterwards, the Science building ended its days as a

**Geography Room** before being demolished in the 1960s to make way for the Theatre.



Two interior views of the Science Laboratory giving the boys' view and the master's view.





## FOREST SCHOOL.

FORM OF SERVICE

FOR THE

### Dedication and Blessing

OF THE

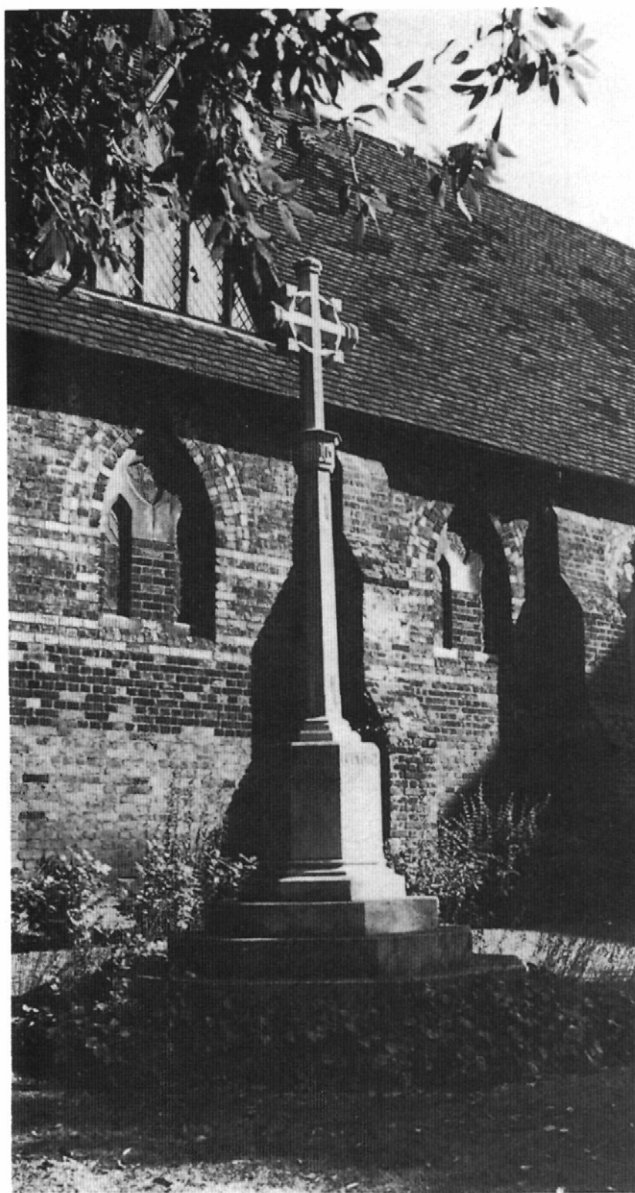
### Memorial Cross

*Erected in Memory of those from Forest School  
who laid down their lives in the Great War.*

Friday, December 3rd, 1920.

## 1911-1920

THE PERIOD was dramatic from the outset: the sinking of the *Titanic* and the débâcle of Scott's Last Expedition set the tone of much that was to follow. The Great War which broke upon the world but three years later did, of course, constitute a disaster of an altogether different order, but what is interesting to note is the similarity of response these three catastrophes triggered off in the public imagination and in the pages of the Forest School Magazine. Oates staggering dutifully out into the blizzard and well-disciplined ranks of devout passengers intoning verses of 'Abide with Me' became powerful symbols in the public imagination. Later, leaving family, college and school to lay down one's life for God and King and Country



took on an equally hypnotic quality — at least in public and in the pages of the Forest School Magazine. In fact, the reality, as must have been obvious to all at the time, was very different: the squalor of modern warfare was no mystery to the men of 1914-18. However, what Captain Oates and the *Titanic* had taught them was the overall importance of tone. Rupert Brook presented a more acceptable face than Wilfred Owen would have done.

And indeed poetry played an important role in the Magazines of the time. One specimen will suffice to illustrate the qualities of this doubtful art. In 1915 was published an effusion entitled 'In Pectore Robur', in which armed forces are heard tramping off to war, and

From Heaven's vaults to Forest's verdant floor  
'In pectore robur' rang their glad refrain.

Finally the author, unnamed, but sitting by the 'ember's glow' in Walthamstow, envisages a

fallen soldier, dying and alone, on some far, distant battlefield  
laid low'.

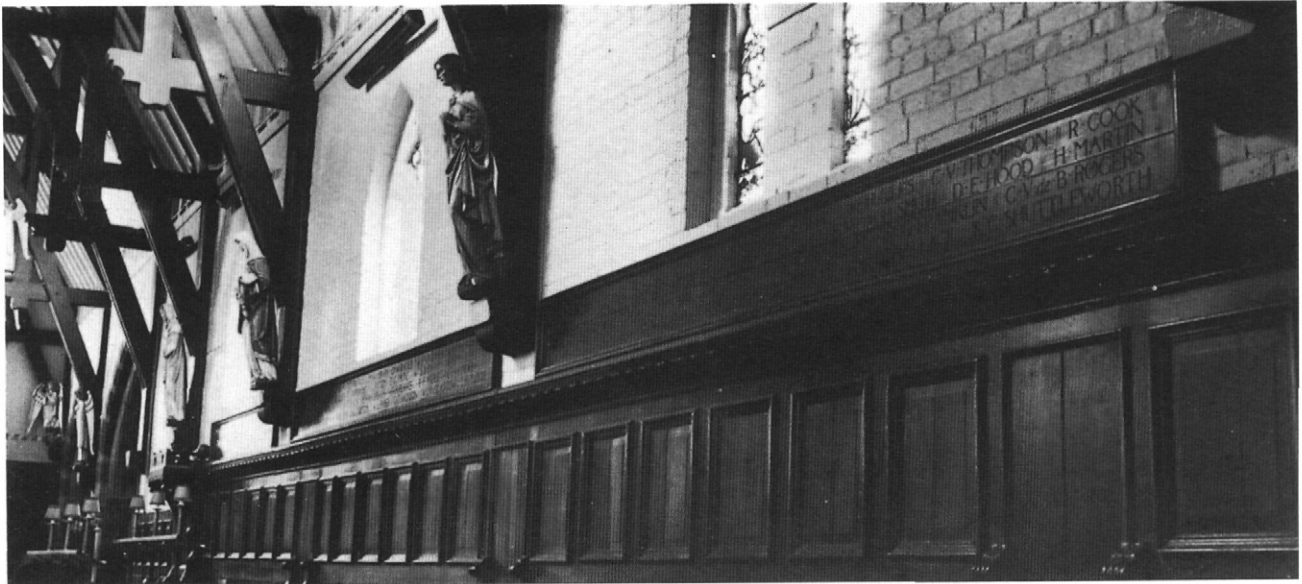
The poem then reaches its climax:

And as he lay, all lonely in his pain,  
I thought he shaped his lips as if to say  
'In pectore robur' once — and yet again —  
Then spake no more, but ever smiling lay.

A dying smiling youth in France singing the Old School Song is not a far cry from 'Abide with Me' on the listing *Titanic*.

However, if one can strip away the rhetoric and histrionics of much of the Magazine reporting at that time one can perceive some of the suffering and a little of the heroism which took place in the battlefields of Europe. Lieutenant Geary's Victoria Cross and a solid number of Military Crosses bear testimony to the valour of Old Foresters in battle. The Roll of Honour printed in the Magazine and increasing termly indicated the role a small school was playing in the larger game of European politics — 98 killed in five years. Some of the most moving and effective accounts of the war consist of the lists of maimed and dead published termly, the impartial statistics of war.

But life in the newly built Junior School could be fun, despite everything. The feel of School in time of war for a small boy is



Memorial Tablets to the 98 Dead: even in 1984 a sad reminder of the supreme sacrifice made by Old Foresters in the Great

War — the names run the whole length of the south wall of the Chapel.

conveyed vividly in some Magazine articles of the time: being woken at night and led downstairs to view a Zeppelin raid taking place over London, or, on another occasion, to witness the destruction of an airship by fire; being visited in the dormitory by the one-and-only Lieutenant Geary, and being mistaken by him for Germans and 'the rough handling we received from him one night, when we were about to return to our beds in our usual peaceful way'.

Such articles give a clear picture of what life at Forest must have been like during the Great War: a picture all the more vivid because of such details as the fact that Forest in 1915 had a security problem which led eleven-year-olds to sleep with their valuable belongings under their pillows!

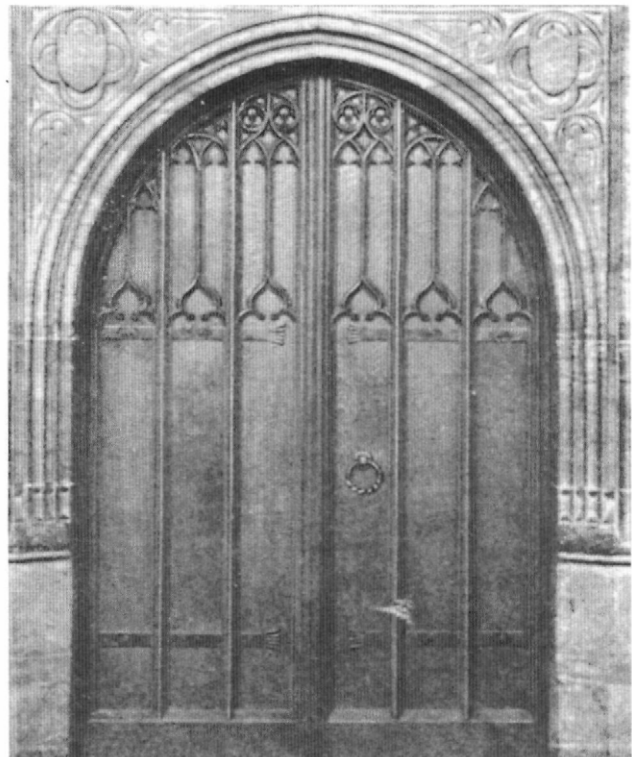
During the decade, all was not war, of course. Old Foresters in the Argentine, far from the battlefield of Western Europe, contributed to the 'addition of a handsome oak door' which finally completed the panelling in the Dining Hall. This money was donated by Guys, Gilderdales and Gardoms in South America, and the door had been designed by Richard Creed, the architect of the Memorial Dining Hall in 1886. News also



Lieutenant B. H. Geary, VC, one time Master at Forest.

came at this time of the death of Miss Oxley, also in Argentina, after whom the Sanatorium was named years previously and who had later taken charge of the sick at St George's College, Buenos Aires. E. L. Atkinson, Ship's Surgeon with Scott's Last Expedition, survived Antarctica and the Great War.

But finally, the permanent memorials to those who had fallen. The Old Foresters' Association decided to place Memorial Tablets in Chapel, a Memorial Cross in the Library Quadrangle, and to purchase new and larger games fields. By 1920 this was all achieved and the three items still bear testimony in 1984 to the 98 dead of the Great War: the Tablets, the Cross and the Park.



The Oak Door to the Dining Hall. Presented to the School by Old Foresters in the Argentine in 1913. A brass plate to one side still commemorates their generosity.

## 1920s

THE 1920s sees the formation of the House System and the inauguration of the Jenks Competition. The School was divided into three Houses, happily named after very well-known figures in School history — Doctor's after Dr F. B. Guy, Poole's after Prebendary F. J. Poole, and Johnians after John Gilderdale. R. C. Guy confidently believed that the House System would greatly stimulate both games and work.

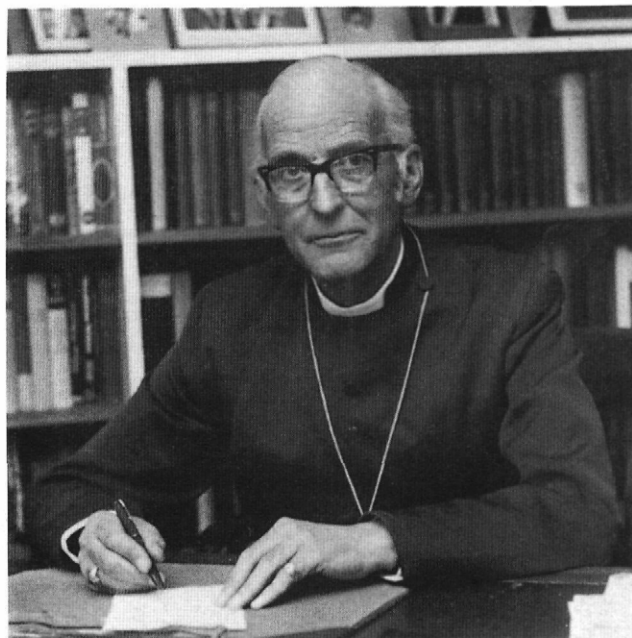
Familiar names appear for the first time during the 1920s. The last Chairman of the Governors, F. Garnham, makes his presence felt in Shakespeare Plays, along with T. W. T. Bangs, who has lived for the last fifty years in the Far East and become a convert to Islam, and of course Basil Tudor Guy, later to become Bishop of Gloucester and Chairman of the Governors.

However, drama at Forest did present problems, and these would appear to have come to a head in the 1920s. The playing of female parts by boys had always been admired and duly praised, as we can trace in reviews in the School Magazine. However, Magazines of the decade begin to comment on unfavourable reaction to more intimate moments in the plays. There are references to barracking and jeers during stage-kisses and although stage-business involving embraces is still encoered in the old tradition, the hearty minority begin to make their presence felt on Play Night, to the displeasure of Magazine reviewers. It was, of course, to be another fifty years before Forest saw fit to permit real ladies to tread its hallowed boards, and some would say that Play Nights have not been the same since.

Little building took place at this period, and the decade was essentially a time of consolidation rather than innovation. One of the few architectural forays was the construction of two new Junior School classrooms, to make way for which two cottages adjacent to the Manor Farm had to be demolished. The Museum, founded by R. C. Guy's brother during the previous century, was steadily built up with gifts of stuffed birds, birds' eggs and beetles, not to mention an Argentine Flag presented

to the Museum in 1922. Such ephemera are now, sadly, no longer with us.

Death continued to take its toll. Colin Stewart Baker, aged 14, and Geoffrey Thomas Wyatt, aged 17, both died at School at the opening of the 1920s, and indeed there were during the period dangerous outbreaks of influenza (then a killer disease) and scarlet fever which frequently filled the sanatorium. The Memorial to 14-year-old Colin Stewart Baker can still be seen in Chapel — oak panelling placed on the east wall of the Chapel by the parents in memory of their son. Other deaths of the 20s included that of F. J. Poole. He had been a boy at the School and a master, serving under all three Guys (F.B., T.E.B. and R.C.G.) until his retirement at the turn of the century. Less than a month before his death he had addressed the Old Boys' Annual Dinner, and the School heard with some shock that he had been knocked down by a bicyclist and succumbed to his injuries.



**Basil Tudor Guy, a boy at Forest in the 1920s, later became the Bishop of Gloucester and Chairman of the Governing Body. The Gloucester Building was named after him in 1970.**





Two places familiar to boys in the 1920s: the thriving School Museum and the new Junior School classrooms.



## 1930s

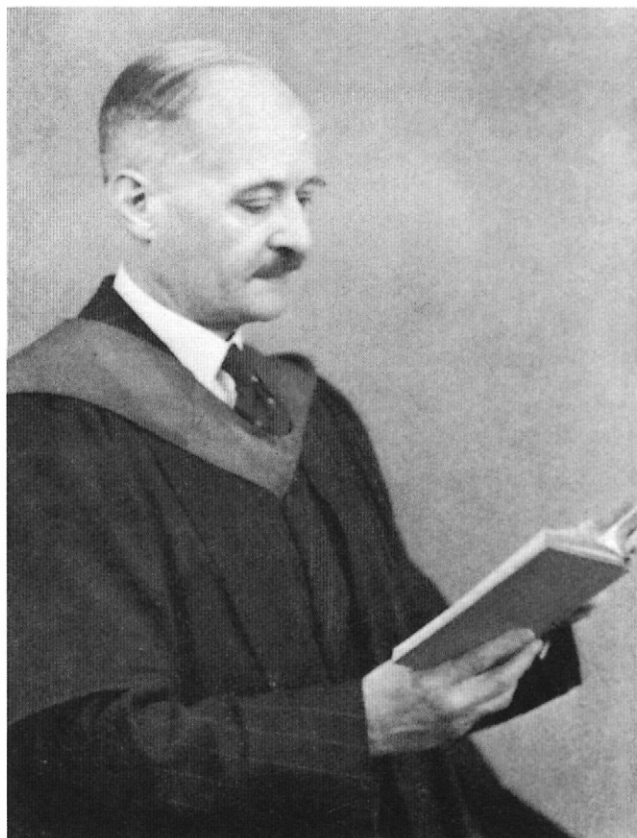
OLD departures, new arrivals are the hallmark of this decade, as perhaps could be expected in an establishment that at last had come of age. One hundred years old marked something of a boundary, and such was the occasion celebrated in 1934: one hundred years, but not out.

The departures included the Headmaster himself, the great Ralph Courtenay Guy, at the helm since 1894, and with him the Guy dynasty in the role of proprietors and rulers. When R.C.G. sold the School in 1935 and went into retirement, people felt that things could never be the same again. And of course they were right. The arrival of Gerald Cedar Miller, the School's seventh Headmaster, saw the beginning of much of the modern, twentieth century school which we now consider Forest to be. But R.C.G. continued to show a lively interest in the School's development for many more years, and he and Miller got on very well.

Other departures were more final. Robert Bruce Boswell, founder-editor in 1865 of the Forest School Magazine, and over the years one of its most dedicated contributors — his swan-song, a poem entitled 'Evening' was published in the Easter 1934 edition which also recorded his death at the age of 87 — had been a boy at Forest and a master during the reign of Dr Guy. Later during the 1930s the Boswell Society, which many readers will recall, was founded to encourage play and poetry readings and also to commemorate one of Forest's most loyal Old Boys. The Boswell Society ceased to exist more or less with the arrival on the scene of the Redgrave Society.

Vice-Presidents of the School also passed on: Colonel Sir T. Courtney Warner, Lord-Lieutenant of Suffolk and a Vice-President of Forest for forty-two years; Canon Joseph Johnson Littlewood, Vicar of Thorne, for over forty years a Vice-President of the School, and before that an Assistant Master, and still earlier a pupil; and Felix Clement Charles Fighiera,

for many years a Vice-President, and for over thirty years Secretary of the Central Argentine Railway — a post which fairly frequently took him from his home in Wimbledon to the wilds of Latin America and which helped to cement relationships with the strong body of Old Foresters in the Argentine. And indeed it had been Felix Fighiera, on one of these visits, who had inaugurated the Old Foresters' Dinner in Buenos Aires, held at the Retiro Restaurant of the Grand Central Railway Station.



**Gerald Miller: Forest's seventh Headmaster, who bought the School in 1936, saw it become a Public School in 1947 and steered its course until his retirement in 1960.**



**Shakespeare in the Gymnasium.** For many years the Play was performed in the old wooden Gymnasium, heat being supplied on cold December nights by giant braziers of coke. What the effects of the carbon monoxide were on the performances we are not told. Here the cast of *Julius Caesar* (1938) relax and get warm during a break in rehearsals. In the background G. C. Miller keeps a watchful eye.

Clerics fell too. Bishop Shaw, one of Forest's greatest sons, had been Head Monitor and King's College Prizeman during his years at School, and had gone on to become Headmaster of Bishop's Stortford Grammar School and eventually Bishop of Buckingham. He had lost three sons in the Great War, one of whom, R. E. F. Shaw, had been an actor in Shakespeare Plays during the golden years before the advent of phosgene and mustard gas. The Bishop died on November 5, 1937.

Then but one month later, the violent death of Assistant Bishop Bullen of Egypt and the Sudan, after whom, many readers will recall, a classroom in the Aston Block was named in the 1950s. Whereas Bishop Shaw had died at the end of a life of fulfilment and many years, Assistant Bishop Bullen was cut down in mid-stride, killed in an aeroplane accident near Juba, Southern Sudan, returning south from a missionary conference in Khartoum. Born in Leyton and educated at Forest he died at the sadly premature age of 41.

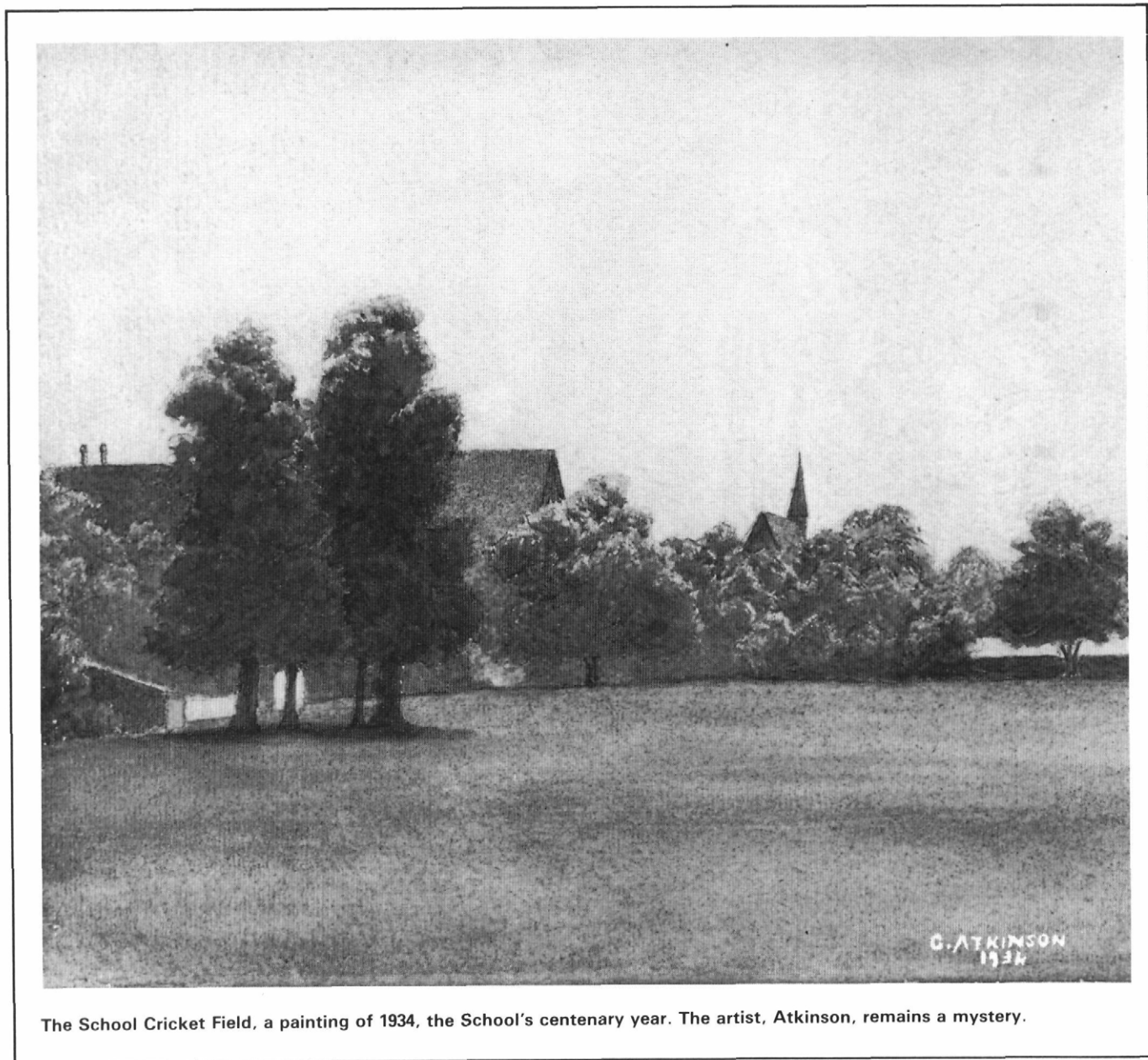
Departures — and arrivals. Familiar names begin to appear for the first time. B. H. Belle (1925-33), now a Governor of Forest, makes his presence powerfully felt as a footballer and cricketer, surpassed as the latter only by his brother Hugh. G. A. Deaton, future historian of the School, makes his mark in Shakespeare Plays and carries away many prizes. D. E. Wakem performs his debut as Madame Ernestine, a French



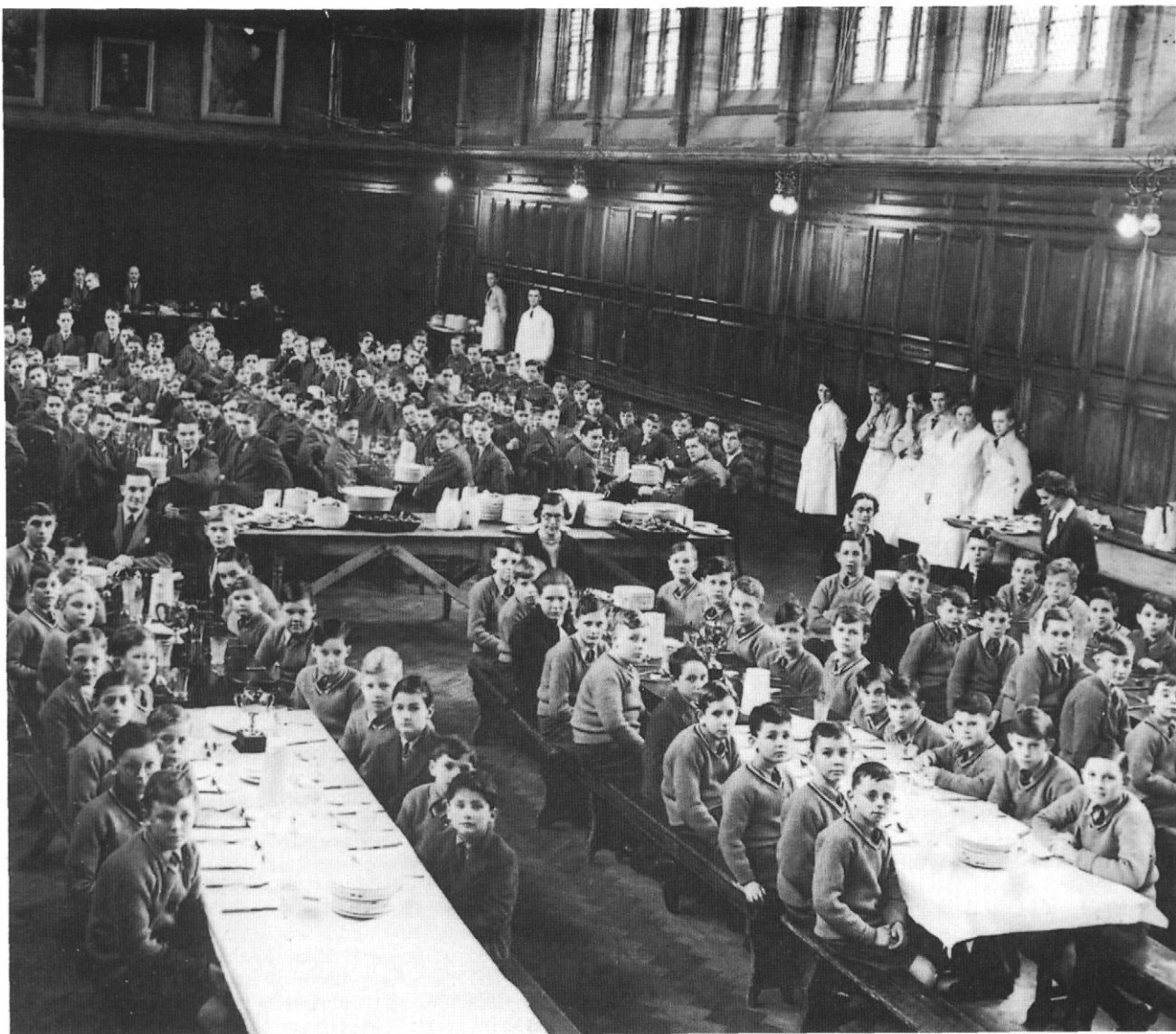
maid, in a Speech Day play . . . a success he has kept under his hat ever since. Miss Fearnside — Suzie to generations of Old Foresters — joins the School to teach Art. Also in the 1930s, C. B. Bardell takes charge of Junior School. More recently, of course, a Junior School House has been named after this eminent Head Teacher. He remains, we are glad to record, alive and kicking and could well be visiting us on the occasion of the School's 150th Anniversary.

**The finished product: conspirators prepare to stab Caesar.**

The 1930s ended, of course, with World War II, and even as early as 1938, the time of the Munich Crisis, the School Cricket Field was being used as the location for a searchlight battery. Later, as many will still remember, part of the Park was to be used as an ammunition dump. The clouds were gathering about Forest.



The School Cricket Field, a painting of 1934, the School's centenary year. The artist, Atkinson, remains a mystery.



Lunch, Christmas 1939. Perhaps many will recognise themselves in this picture taken in the Dining Hall.



## 1940s

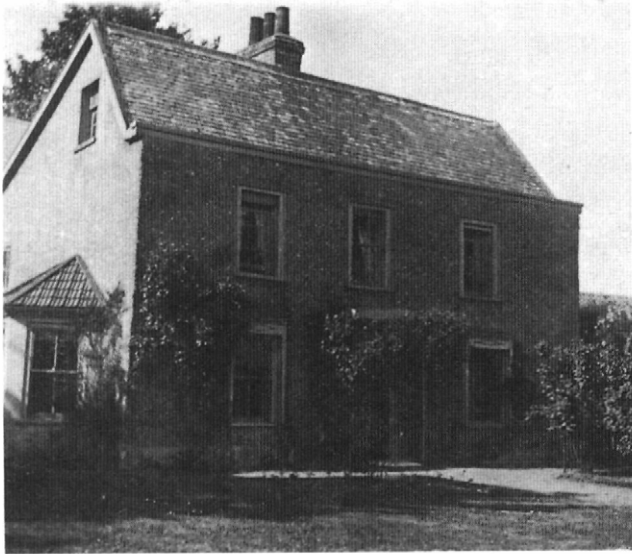
THE SHOW must go on, directors of the Shakespeare Play decreed. During the Great War of 1914-18 performances had of course been suspended, but it was decided that Hitler should have no such demoralising effect upon Forest tradition. Small concessions, however, had to be made: evening performances were ruled out by the demands of the newly enforced black-out regulations, so for the first time the Play was presented in the early afternoon. And, of course, acting time was limited by the early, December nightfall, although this was adroitly turned to advantage as the slickness of staging and pace of performance improved enormously.

The most dramatic impact upon Forest came in August 1944, when a flying-bomb scored a direct hit on Junior School.

**The Bomb:** scenes of devastation following the V1 flying-bomb explosion. Classrooms of Junior School, the Cricket Pavilion, Grub Shop and the Manor all fell victim.

The photograph published a little later and reproduced here gives some idea of the colossal devastation involved and makes one thankful that the incident had not come a month later when the place would have been full of boys. Damage also occurred to the Dining Hall (windows and roof) and the Chapel (east end windows by William Morris and Burne-Jones blown out). The Manor and Junior School classrooms were flattened.

Men whose names remain familiar today organised the running of the School during those dark years: Rev. B. A. Clegg, Chaplain and Commanding Officer of the School Corps for so many years; G. A. Deaton, Old Forester and producer of the Shakespeare Play for over a quarter of a century; and of course Gerald Miller himself. Then, after the war, many still



**One of the few remaining photographs of the Old Manor, taken about 1910, accompanied by a picture of the New Manor rebuilt after the bomb of 1944.**

familiar faces were to arrive at Forest: W. B. Buncher who took charge of music in the School; T. Cole who taught mathematics and was to spend the rest of his life in the service of the School; D. P. Barnard who taught French and led the Cadet Corps for many years after the death of Rev. B. A. Clegg; R. Dunning, Latin master and Junior School Housemaster, who quickly showed his skills as an amateur actor; and finally but not least there was the Rev. J. E. Scott who led the History Department and Copeland's House for so many years.

As the decade drew to its close, there came, in 1949, news of the death of Ralph Courtenay Guy. It seemed incredible that R.C.G. had become Headmaster of Forest as long ago as 1894. With his death Forest severed its last long tie with the nineteenth century and the Guys, its owners for close on a century. Appropriately it was at the time of Ralph Guy's demise that Forest School at last ceased to be a proprietary school and emerged for the first time a fully fledged public school. And now, the war behind him, G. C. Miller set about transforming the School in many ways.



**A fragment of the flying-bomb embedded in an elm tree which was felled in the 1970s.**





**The Cricket Pavilion: before and after the V1 bomb. The old pavilion had originally sported a thatched roof.**

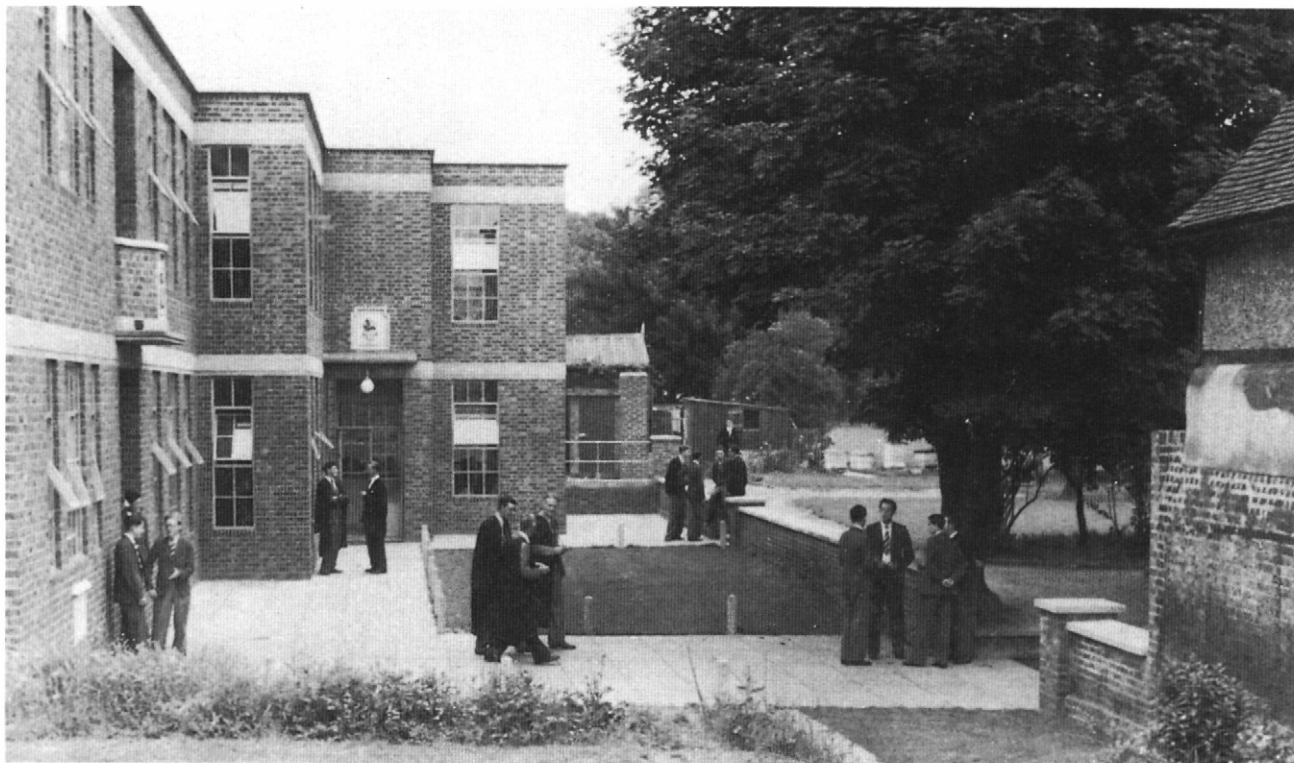




Shakespeare Play — G. A. Deaton surrounded by the cast in the Dining Hall, for many years the School's only 'theatre'.

■ A·D · 1939 - 1945 ■      J·C·H·BAKER ■ D·D·BANGAY ■ B·A·BEAMAND ■ J·F·BENDIX  
 R·G·BENTLEY ■ D·L·BLOIS ■ O·T·BOYD ■ F·BRAND ■ N·S·BRUNDELL ■ F·G·BUDD ■ W·H·CAULFEILD  
 D·COARD ■ G·D·COE ■ J·S·CRONE ■ K·G·FORD ■ W·J·FRENCH ■ L·A·T·HAWKEY ■ S·J·HERRING  
 C·M·HOWELL-JONES ■ G·S·HURST ■ P·R·V·JONES ■ R·M·KNAPMAN ■ J·LOVICK ■ A·F·MACRAE  
 R·A·McGLEW ■ M·MATHER ■ R·MAY ■ E·J·C·MICHELMORE ■ E·MORRIS ■ K·L·MOWL ■ F·C·PARRY  
 S·O·N·PINNOCK ■ G·POLGLASE ■ K·C·ROBINSON ■ J·R·SAUNDERS ■ PASCHAANNING  
 C·E·SCOONES ■ A·THOMAS ■ L·H·C·WALDOCK ■ D·S·S·WILKERSON ■ B·A·M·WINDSOR

Roll of Honour: names of the fallen in World War II commemorated on the north wall of the Chapel.



## 1950s

THE ERA of the Festival of Britain, Queen Elizabeth's Coronation, the Suez Crisis, the abortive Hungarian Uprising, not to mention the building of the Aston Block! The opening years of the decade saw, after ninety years of annual Shakespeare Plays, the first performance at Forest of *Antony and Cleopatra* — the reason for *this* omission being not difficult to surmise. At the same time the Junior School was at long last being rebuilt. The Junior School boys had been living, since the direct hit suffered by the Junior School from a flying-bomb, in the Senior School. Now at last, in 1950, foundations and bricks were being laid which were eventually to form the present Junior School.

**Men and Boys:** a carefully organised attempt at informality, as pupils and mentors show what the Aston Block was all about. Note the beehives where now the changing-rooms and Art Room stand.

Nor was that the only constructional activity during the 1950s. An enlargement was made at the time to the Swimming Bath, which had of course been designed and built in its original form during the late nineteenth century when the School had been so much smaller. Moreover, games were being transformed, and disrupted, by the releveling and resowing of the Park. New long-jump and high-jump pits were provided and gravel paths laid. To provide the finishing touches, the Chairman of the Governors — L. Padfield, an Old Boy who had attended the School 1887-97 — presented one hundred silver birch trees which were planted around the Park. Not all



**Opening of the Aston Block: Mrs Durning-Lawrence, Gerald Miller, Chairman of the Governing Body L. Padfield and**

**dignitaries pose in front of the newly completed classrooms, as in the 1950s Miller set about enlarging the School.**

of these survive in 1984, but quite a few form an effective barrier between the Park and the council flats to the south.

At the same time, Old Boys were doing well in the wide world beyond School. Roy Romaine (1933-35), holder of the European 200 Yards Swimming Record, represented Great Britain in the Empire Games in New Zealand. In the field of music, Stanley Pope conducted orchestras at the newly opened Royal Festival Hall, and Jan van der Gucht, one of a series of brothers at Forest, broadcast regularly as a BBC singer. Sadly news came just before the publication of this book of the death of Jan van der Gucht in Canada, where he had for long been a professor of music.

Nearer to home, the new Grub Shop (the old one had been destroyed by the flying-bomb of 1944) was completed, and it was to serve Forest boys well for more or less thirty years until it was destroyed by fire along with the adjoining Cricket Pavilion. At the same time, a new filtration plant was installed in the recently enlarged Swimming Bath.

Then, on a larger scale, came first thoughts of building new classrooms for the Senior School along Hog's Corner, to be funded to a large extent by the Aston Charities Trust. This eventually developed into the Aston Block, of course, and the buildings were officially opened by Mrs. Durning-Lawrence in 1953. Later in the decade, alongside the Aston Block was erected the new Science Block.



**Mrs Durning-Lawrence Reviews the Troops: Mrs Durning-Lawrence became closely associated with the School during the building of the Aston Block in the early 1950s.**



The Gordon Budd Room, dedicated in 1950 to the memory of Frank Gordon Budd, lost at sea, 1943.



**Reredos in Chapel dedicated to Gerald Stanley Lawson.**

At the other end of the Senior School, The Gordon Budd Memorial Room was refurbished, commemorating the life of an Old Forester killed in World War II. This room at present serves as a Governors' Committee Room and as a Dining Room for the entertainment of guests of the School. Also in the 1950s, and also to commemorate the death of a Forester, the Reredos in Chapel depicting the Last Supper as envisaged by Leonardo da Vinci was dedicated to the memory of Gerald Stanley Lawson, a boy who had sadly died following an appendix operation at Whipps Cross Hospital at the age of 17. Finally, the Georgian panelling in the Entrance Hall was restored and a new curved glass door was let into the Lower Library, both features remaining to the present day.

It was during the 1950s that a new House, Copeland's, was formed for the first time. The new House was named after one of the founders of 1834 and the first Housemaster was J. E. Scott, well known to many Old Foresters of the period 1950-80. Also the furnishing of the Library was undertaken at this time and an appeal was launched to that end. Finally, to return to bricks and mortar once more, Squash Courts were built during the 1950s and remain one of the School's less attractive architectural features.

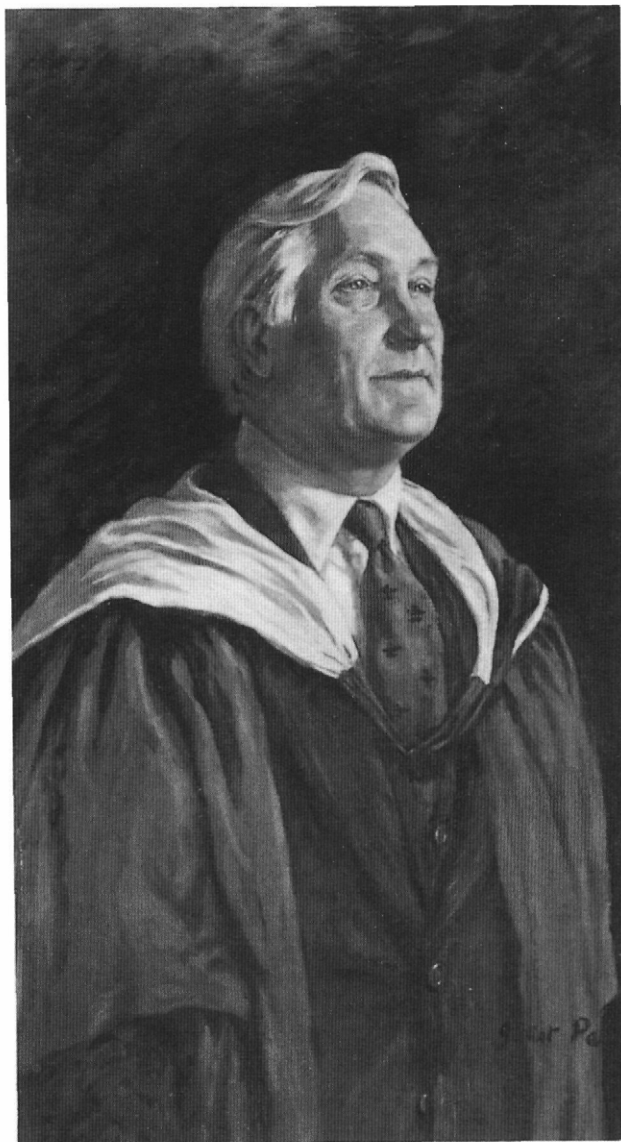
The 1950s close with the retirement of Gerald Cedar Miller after quarter of a century in control. He will be remembered for many things, but outstanding among them will always be the fact that he it was who greatly enlarged the School's capabilities and laid the strong foundations of the large establishment which Forest is in 1984.

# 1960s

WITH the arrival of Dennis Foxall as the School's eighth Headmaster, the expansion of Forest's capabilities which had been promoted by Gerald Miller continued. A 400-seat Theatre with foyer and green room was opened by Princess Margaret in 1967. Thirty Private Studies were erected for the use of Sixth Formers. Two new dormitories were furnished for boarders. Two changing rooms, a Design and Handicraft Room and an Art Room were constructed adjacent to the Swimming Bath. A Library annexe was built — now the Careers Room. Many will remember HRH Princess Margaret's spectacular arrival to open the Theatre when she flew in by helicopter. The occasion was marked by a memorable production of *Hamlet*. Then, at the end of the decade, the Gloucester Building was begun which was to house the pre-prep department of the School and which was named after the Bishop of Gloucester, Basil Tudor Guy.



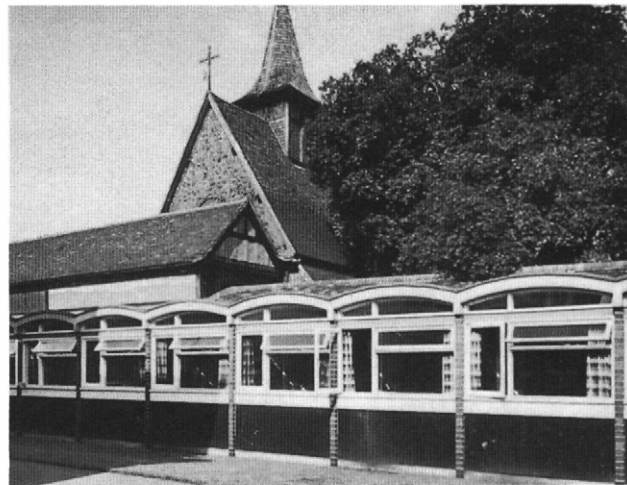
The Theatre: opened by HRH The Princess Margaret in 1967.



Dennis Foxall: Forest's eighth Headmaster.



HRH The Princess Margaret opens the School Theatre.



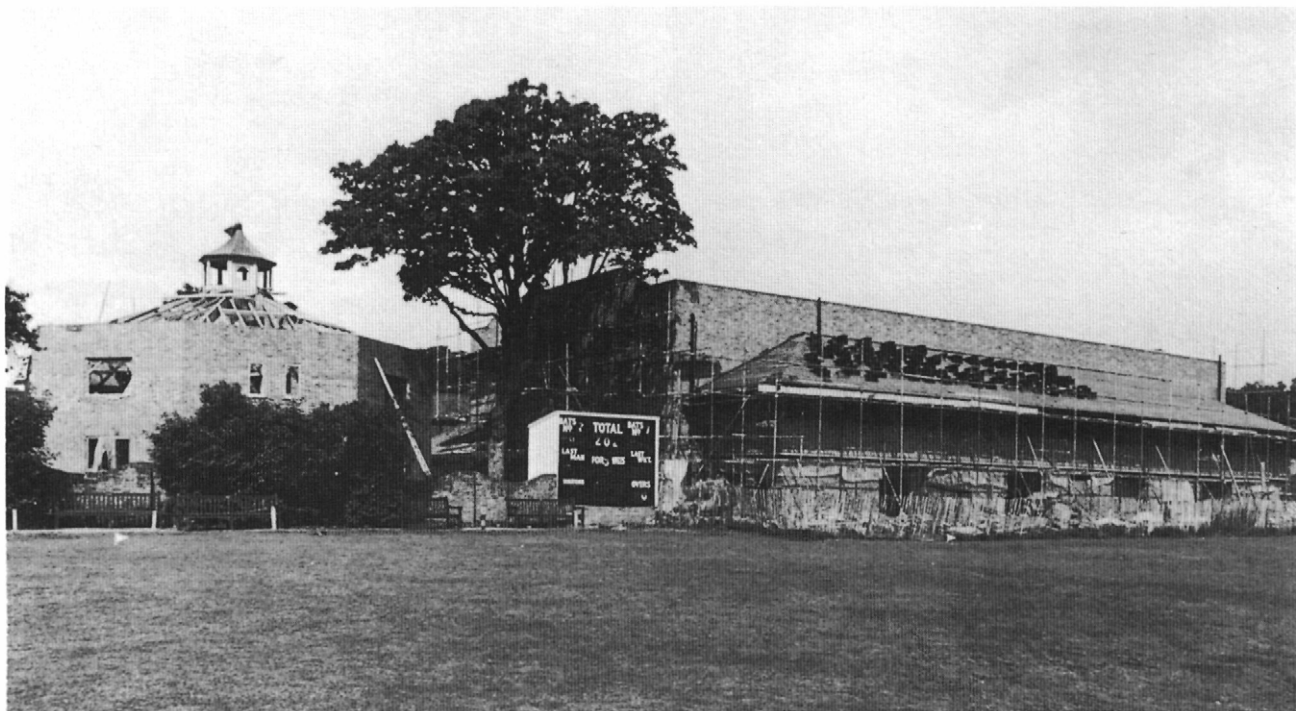
The Studies: not quite matching the elegance of the Chapel.



Art Room and Music Room: another part of the 1960s development — Art Room on the top, Music Room on the

ground floor, both backed by changing-rooms. The Music Room is now a Woodwork Room.





The 1970s: the Sports Hall and Music School in the course of construction. Note the original position of the Score Box.

## 1970s

THE EXPANSION of Forest moves apace. The 1970s sees the construction of New Kitchens and Servery, rearrangement of the Science Laboratories, the construction of Dining Hall lavatories and the restoration of the Senior Library (1974); the erection of the Sports Hall and Music School (1978); and finally the building of Forest Girls' School, which was officially opened in 1981 by HRH Duchess of Kent. It was calculated that the whole complex would then consist of three schools (with 27 acres of grounds) with a total capacity of about 1,050 to 1,100 pupils. A far cry from the 22 boys of 1834!

Sporting achievements were considerable too. The highlights which many will remember were the Old Foresters' Football

Club winning the Arthur Dunn Cup in 1974 and the School winning the Public Schools Six-a-Side Football Competition in 1975.

By the end of the decade, the House System had been expanded, with the addition of new Houses and the creation of two boarding Houses. The Houses were: Doctor's, Poole's, Johnians, Guy's, Copeland's, Miller's, Bishop's, and School — the latter two being the boarding Houses. In all ways Forest was becoming a bigger and, one hoped, better school.

Indeed, the success of Forest School in adapting its facilities and philosophy to the changing pattern of life in fifteen decades is probably its greatest achievement. Beginning as an academy for a privileged few it has opened its doors wider and wider until its thousand pupils now come from all walks of life and it provides opportunities for intellectual, sporting and social education which are the envy of many other schools.



Forest looks to the future with girls: HRH The Duchess of Kent opens the new Girls' School in 1981.

# 1980s

THE DESTRUCTION of the Cricket Pavilion by fire and of the Fives Courts by bulldozer makes way for more building for the future. Dennis Foxall retires after twenty-three years at Forest and is succeeded as Warden by John C. Gough. The title of Warden is now used to reflect the wider responsibilities involved in overseeing three schools. In the first year of John Gough's reign a Computer Centre and Cricket Pavilion go up on the site of the old pavilion and an impressive Sixth Form Centre rises from the ruin of the old Fives Courts. A fitting tribute to the School's 150th birthday! And one that looks forward to its 200th!



The 1980s saw the expansion of Junior School — much needed classrooms were provided as a third storey was added to the existing building during Winter 1983-1984.

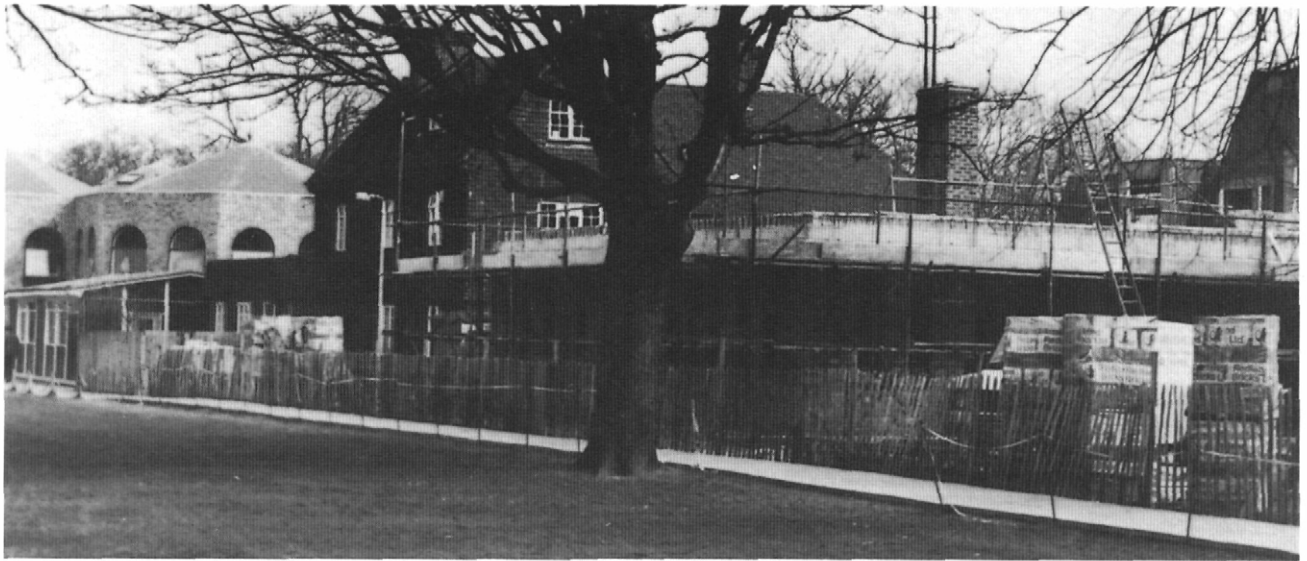


John Gough who bore responsibility for three schools of over 1,000 boys and girls in contrast to Dr Dry 150 years earlier with his 22 boys.



HRH The Duchess of Kent opens the Girls' School, and then inspects the Forest complex in 1981.





A new Computer Centre rises from the ashes of the old Cricket Pavilion, a new pavilion forming the second storey.



## 1990-2004

One of the most far-reaching and dramatic achievements during Andrew Boggis's years at Forest has been the successful development of the Girls' School. From the modest beginnings outlined in a later chapter, the Girls' School has grown to match the Boys' School numerically and in its of academic attainment, and is already throwing up its Old Forester high-flyers in the wide world of life-after-school. The establishment of a Pre-prep Department, with its delightful kindergarten, saw another new departure, as did the rationalisation involved in the restructuring of the Boys' School, which now came to include first and second years, with the Preparatory School and its Pre-prep Department dealing with the educational needs of pupils from the age of 4 to 11. The abandonment of Saturday school in 1997, along with the gradual decline in boarding, completed the scenario whereby Forest could compete successfully with the London day schools and provide a five day educational week along with a natural break at age 11 between primary and secondary education.

Buildings were changing and developing too. In 1999, with the support of a bequest from the family of an Old Forester, the Stewart Reading Rooms were built above the Library in what had been Blue and Drab dormitories in the heyday of boarding. The Deaton Theatre was treated to a millennium facelift, the 1960s concrete brutalism being tempered by brick tile-cladding. New seating arrangements had also been installed during the 1990s, along with a much-welcomed new Control Room, built by a parent, Stephen Fellowes. The Jenkin Wing, a new Design & Technology, Art and Drama building, was erected between the Green Room and the Science Block, on what had previously been a patch of open ground and the site of Monitors' Passage. Design & Technology and Art shared much of the new wing. A drama studio, departmental office, theatre workshop, dressing-room and store-room were located on the ground floor. The building was officially opened on 7 July 2001 by The Rt. Hon. The Lord Jenkin of Roding. Then, in 2003, the squash courts were demolished, and



**Andrew Boggis, the School's present Warden.**

- and after.

The Pre-prep Play Area – before -

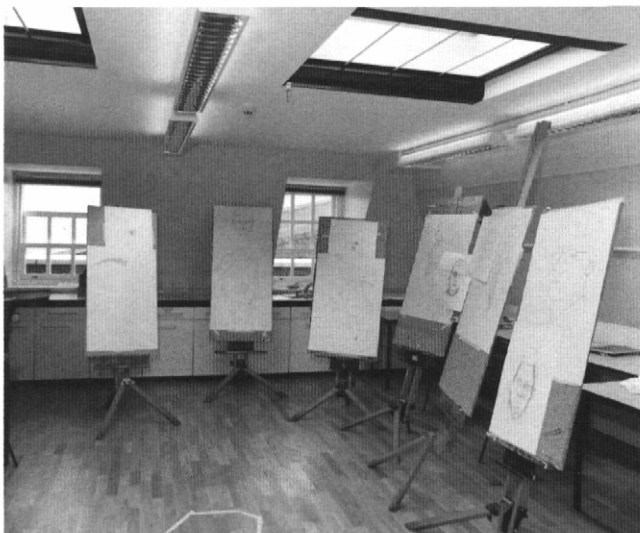


work began on the Performing Arts Centre. Completed in Spring 2004, the Centre provides scope for a much extended Sixth Form Common Room, a large Orchestral Rehearsal Room and extra music teaching rooms. And of course all these buildings underline yet another of the outstanding successes of the Andrew Boggis years: the exponential growth of Music and Arts in the life of the School and the realisation that its cultural potential can match the considerable achievements of its academic and sporting reputations.

Old Foresters continue to make their marks in the world of sport, entertainment and business, and their names and faces appear frequently in our newspapers and on our TV screens.



Work-in-progress on the Jenkin Wing.



**Art Studio in the Jenkin Wing.**



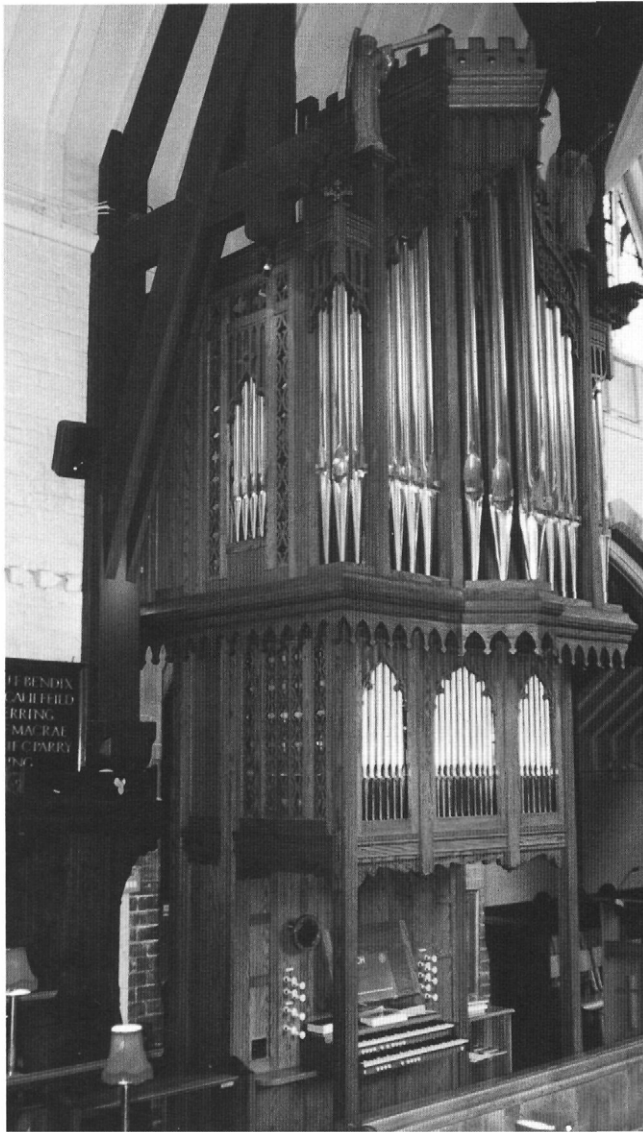
**Design & Technology workshop in the Jenkin Wing.**

Nasser Hussain captained the England Cricket Team with considerable success over a long period, while Jamie Foster made his debut as the England wicket keeper. Quinton Fortune moved from Real Madrid to Manchester United, where he continues to star. In the world of visual entertainment, Peter Greenaway is one of Britain's most outstanding avant garde film directors, while on a less elevated level Adam Woodyatt appears almost daily on television as the dysfunctional Ian Beale in the BBC1 soap *EastEnders*. A more edifying experience is provided on BBC2 by Professor Richard Holmes with his battlefield walks and historical re-enactments; he is also the author of many historical biographies, the latest being that of the Duke of Wellington. On the West End stage, as well as the small screen, Nickolas Grace continues to give acclaimed performances. On the writing-front, Richard Pinto and Sharat Sardana have scripted the highly popular Asian sitcoms *Goodness Gracious Me!* and *The Kumars at No. 42* on BBC television. Music-lovers will also have been delighted to see Tolgha Kashif making his mark over the years, culminating in the world-wide performances and the recording of his *Queen Symphony* last year. Meanwhile, Natalie Ceeney's prestigious appointment as Director of the British Library Archive gives notice that we can soon expect an equally impressive list of achievements from the growing number of alumnae from the Girls' School.

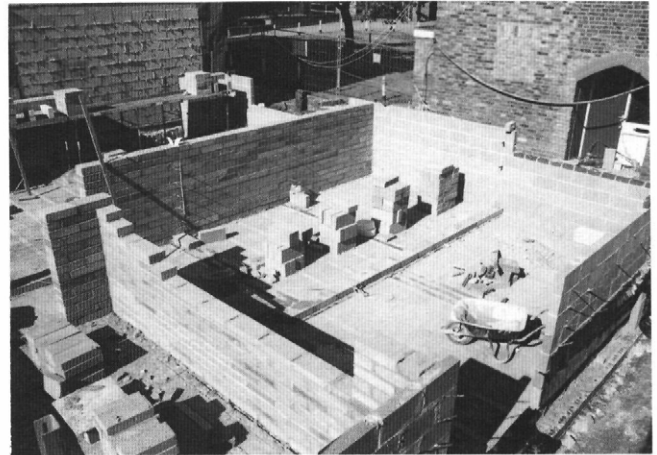


**A partial view of the refurbished Deaton Theatre foyer.**





The new Chapel organ, installed in 1999.



Work-in-progress on the Performing Arts Centre.

So, after 170 years, Forest School faces the new millennium with well-earned confidence and a definite sense of purpose, which, under wise management and with clarity of vision, should make the next few years a time of great excitement.



Heads of School 2004: from left to right, Mr I McIntyre, Mrs P Goodman and Mr R Russell.



**Girls' School 2003.**

## The Girls' School

Girls arrived, somewhat stealthily, four years before the official opening of the school in 1981. First of all, a select and very small group of girls was admitted into the sixth form in 1977, studying alongside the boys: Forest School's first tentative experiment with co-education. This handful of girls contained two who became weekly boarders and represented the school's first testing of the water where full integration of girls into school-life was concerned. Then, in early 1978, a girls' school near Sawbridgeworth in Hertfordshire closed unexpectedly, and in the summer term of that year a small group of its pupils was welcomed into Forest. They became 3E, a pleasant but idiosyncratic gathering whose ages ranged from twelve to fifteen. They were taught in the Green Room at rear of the Deaton Theatre (New Theatre, as it was then) which had the twin advantages of isolation from the main body of the Boys' School and its own

adjacent toilets and washrooms. Shortly afterwards, in Michaelmas term 1978, three first year classes (47 pupils in all) were admitted to the school and Forest's first full-scale commitment to the future Girls' School had begun. Finally, In 1979, three pupils from Normanhurst School in nearby Chingford joined the sixth form. From these very modest beginnings grew the flourishing educational establishment we now possess.

However, when Dr Judith Jago was appointed as the Girls' School's first headmistress in 1978, not a brick of the school building had been laid. Her office was situated in the Manor, next to the present Computer Centre, while her girls were taught on the upper floor of the Gloucester Building opposite. Then planning permission proved difficult to obtain, delaying progress considerably. It was to be another year before the girls had the pleasure of their own home. Finally, after further delay awaiting a royal visit, the School was officially opened by the Duchess of Kent on 7 May 1981.



**Mrs Judith Jago, first Head of Girls' School.**



**The Duchess of Kent, with Mrs Judith Jago.**

Five teachers were the founder members of the Girls' School staff: Helen Jolly (still going strong in 2004), Kathy Hickson, Toni Booth, Ruth Moir and Hilary Arthur. The first staff-meeting took place, rather curiously, in Chapel, followed, more conventionally, by tea in Dr Jago's flat. They were all, in Helen Jolly's view, fully aware of the challenges ahead of them and of the exciting role they were to play in the development of the new school. Girls and parents were also eager to establish the traditions that still flourish today, among which was the foundation of a house system. And here we come across the first hint of the conflict of interest which occasionally arose between a young and thrusting establishment and its much older parent. Judith Jago and her staff favoured the idea of naming the houses after famous women, whereas Dennis Foxall, Headmaster at the time, preferred the use of more neutral, local place-names. Hence, as the Girls' School grew in size, four houses were gradually established, somewhat blandly named Glade, Park, Field and Manor. Perhaps not entirely surprisingly, the original idea was adopted more than twenty years later.

7 May 1981 was a day that proved memorable for many, and for various reasons. The School Magazine for the summer term recounted some of the more entertaining problems encountered by girls on the day HRH the Duchess of Kent opened the school: *'I had a hole in my leotard and I was worried in case anyone could see it...Just before she got to me, I pricked my finger...I could feel myself getting redder and redder...I completely forgot to say ma'am...I forgot to curtsy...Charlotte fainted...We sat in groups, moaning about the embarrassing hats our mothers were wearing...The Bishop of Chelmsford said, looking at Katy's summer blouse, "Ah, yes, I can see you're making a patchwork quilt."'*

The royal limousine arrived promptly at two o'clock and was welcomed by the Junior Band of the Royal Artillery. The Glade was full of policemen. Suspicious packages within a quarter-mile radius had been checked out by an explosives expert and his dog. Monitors and prefects lined up to welcome the Duchess. 3N performed a dance-routine in the Girls' School Hall, while fencing and gymnastic displays followed in the Sports Hall. A plaque was



**Baroness Warnock distributes prizes on the occasion of the Girls' School's tenth anniversary.**

unveiled and appropriate speeches made. Finally, after a full tour of the school, tea and scones were served in the Dining Hall. Then it was all over, and the real process of school-life resumed, although, for many of the young girls involved, the memories of that day would doubtless remain vivid.

In September 1988, a year when the autumn gales arrived early, the Girls' School celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a marquee. The chief guest of the day was Baroness Warnock, who was to distribute prizes and give a speech drawing attention to the milestone which the new school had reached. The giant marquee had been erected as close as possible to the sacred cricket square, but, large as it was, appeared likely to burst at the seams as the last girls were packed in. The mounting gale, now gusting up to force eight, rocked the entire canvas edifice and, even more alarmingly, the chandeliers which hung above the audience began to shake disturbingly. The barrage of wind also rendered some of Baroness Warnock's words inaudible to members of the audience at the remoter areas of the tent.

However, against all the odds and despite nature's best efforts to disrupt the proceedings, the occasion was accounted a resounding success: the atmosphere among the girls was electric, even though seeing round the heads in front of them proved difficult, and most felt that this was a very special occasion and a moment to be proud of. Forest Girls' School was growing up!



**Gym and Dance Display in the Sports Hall.**

After seventeen years at Forest School, first as a Boys' School biology teacher, and then for seven distinguished years as the second headmistress of the Girls' School, Margaret Taylor finally hung up her gown in 1990 and settled into an active retirement in Wanstead. Watercolourist, globe-trotter and a remarkably dramatic operatic singer, Margaret had maintained a high profile over the years and many will still recall her arriving at the school gates in the ancient open-top Triumph sports car which was her pride and joy. The appointment of Mrs Carol Day as her successor heralded a new era in the School's existence. Some saw it as the age of the efficient professional taking over from that of the inspired amateur.

Meanwhile, the real history of the Girl's School had been getting along very nicely of its own accord. The day-to-day life of the girls proved ever-changing, whether it concerned the subjects they were taught, their uniforms or their extra-curricular activities. Needlework had found itself disbanded in 1987, with the arrival of Craft, Design and Technology, and Mrs Pam Todd found herself retraining in the process. The number of girls achieving university entrance began to rise dramatically, with particular successes at Oxbridge, where Claire Little, Rina Banerjee, Katie Roxborough, Diane Spurdons, Heklen Davis, Sharmeen Huq, Julie Taylor, Katherine Atwell, Julia Hawkins, Claire Winward, Amanda Lennon, Miriam O'Keefe, Nandita Quaderi and Shireen



**Mrs Margaret Taylor, second Head of the Girls' School.**

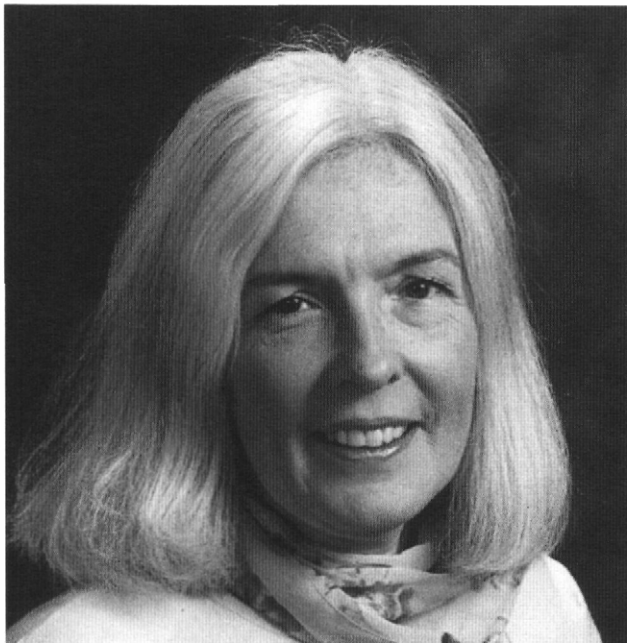
Sheikh all gained admittance during the 1980s. The first school uniform, which had consisted of winter and summer versions, had also seen changes: the blue skirt, brown socks, brown shoes, cream shirt with a liberal covering of acorns, and crew-neck brown jumper giving way to the Sainsbury years of the striped shirt and the introduction of the V-neck jumper. Girls found themselves able to join the CCF and several followed this up with military careers. Girls' House Music suffered a setback, when, as a result of Anthony Venditti's 1989 guest appearance on stage as a transvestite, and, the next year, of the sight of a whole chorus line of loin-cloth-clad Tarzans, no boys were ever again to be allowed to participate. School dramatic productions gradually became more girl-user-friendly, with performances of *Annie*, starring Melanie Clyne, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, with Susan Cawthorne as a memorable Mistress Ford, and *Guys and Dolls*, a



**Mrs Carol Daly, the third Head of Girls' School.**

progression leading ultimately to the break with the annual Shakespeare play tradition in favour of something a little less male-dominated. 1987 had also seen the first set of Girls' House photographs in the School Magazine.

The arrival of a new Warden in 1992 heralded a period of even more dynamic progress in the development of the Girls' School. Under the guidance of Rosemary Martin, the fourth Head of the Girls' School, and Andrew Boggis, Forest's tenth Warden, the run-up to the millennium saw the Girls' School rapidly increase its successes and its numbers. Overall, it became clear that the strategy was to achieve numerical parity between boys and girls and to develop a school where the best features of co-education could be adopted in extra-curricular activities such as drama, music and CCF training, while maintaining a single-sex classroom environment between the ages of 7 and 16. Education at pre-prep



**Mrs Rosemary Martin, the fourth Head of Girls' School.**



**Mrs Penny Goodman, the fifth Head of Girls' School.**

and Sixth Form level involved fully mixed classes. Shared facilities, such as science laboratories and the Sixth Form Centre, also ensured greater integration. Unisex areas became fewer and fewer. Eventually, growing numbers required the formation of two extra Houses and also provided the opportunity to name the Houses after famous women, as originally envisaged in the early years. Astell, Baylis, Eliot, Franklin, Hepworth and Kingsley were established in 2000. In that same year, the arrival of Penny Goodman, as the fifth Head, saw the Girls' School approaching its Silver Jubilee, with various planned celebrations of its twenty-five years of expansion and achievements to take place in 2004.

Looking back over a quarter of a century can in some ways prove more daunting than reviewing two hundred years: the dust has yet to settle and reveal landmarks which have stood the test of time. However, from the last twenty-five years some memories have already made their mark: the tenth anniversary Speech Day, the musicals of the 1980s which gave full rein to the singing and acting skills of the girls, the first Girls' School House photographs in the School Magazine of 1987, the 70+ girls to have achieved

Oxbridge entry, Meryl Batchelder being selected for Operation Raleigh, which involved a three month trip to the far north of Pakistan, and also serving as the first girl captain of the Forest School Boat Club, once very much a bastion of male supremacy, and many more memories which will live on in the minds and hearts of the girls involved.

In the wide world of life-after-Forest young women are already making their mark: Jacqueline Smiles was awarded the MBE in 2003 for service in Iraq; Elizabeth Stone won Gold and Silver medals at the Paralympics for Riding; and, as I write this article, news comes that the girl who offered the vote of thanks to Baroness Warnock in the wind-swept marquee fifteen years ago, Natalie Ceeney, has been appointed Director of Operations and Services at the British Library's massive document centre in Wetherby, where, with a staff of 1300, she maintains and makes accessible to the public more than 150 million items representing every age of written civilisation in every language. Quite an achievement at the age of thirty – and an ideal expression of all that is best at Forest Girls' School.

## William Morris and Forest School

1984, the sesquicentenary of the birth of William Morris in Walthamstow, is also the 150th anniversary of the opening of Forest School on Wednesday, October 1, 1834.

The Morris family's removal to Woodford Hall and subsequent return to the Water House in Walthamstow when William Morris senior died in 1847 are well known. Morris at this time was a boarder at Marlborough College and after an organised rebellion there in November 1851 it was decided that he should leave the school that Christmas and study for his matriculation with a private tutor. The chosen tutor, the Rev. Frederick Barlow Guy, was described as 'a man of high attainment and character; a High Churchman of the best type; a man of wide sympathies and cultivated taste, with an unusually large knowledge of painting and architecture.'

Rev. Frederick Guy was then Assistant Master at Forest where his father-in-law, Rev. John Gilderdale, was Headmaster and proprietor. Morris was one of a group of private pupils tutored at F. B. Guy's house on the corner of Orford Road and Hoe Street where the Co-Op has since stood for many years.

Guy's influence over his pupil was great and under his tuition Morris developed into a very fair classical scholar. A cordial friendship grew up between them that lasted throughout their lives.

In June 1852 Morris passed the matriculation examination for Exeter College, Oxford, but there were no vacancies so his entry had to be deferred to the Lent Term 1853. He returned to



**William Morris: poet, artist and socialist. He was a pupil of F. B. Guy and did much work for the School during the late nineteenth century. From a photograph by Elliott and Fry (1877) now in the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.**

Mr Guy and read with him for a further six months before going with him for the summer holidays to Alphington in Devonshire, and returning to Walthamstow for the remainder of 1852.

Morris went up to Oxford in 1853 and there befriended Edward Burne-Jones, his lifelong friend and partner. Burne-Jones left Oxford at Easter 1856 without having completed his degree course and became a full-time artist. About the same time Morris, while reading for his final examinations, had signed articles on January 21, 1856 with Woodford-born Gothic Revival architect of the Law Courts, G. E. Street.

At the end of this summer Street removed his headquarters from Oxford to London and Morris came up with him, moving into rooms in Bloomsbury with Burne-Jones. Morris continued to work in Street's office by day and went with Burne-Jones to a life school in the evenings, an arrangement that did not see out 1856.

It is thought that Street may have had a hand in the decoration of Forest School Chapel that was built in 1857, the year that F. B. Guy moved into Forest School as Headmaster.

In April 1861 the firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. was formed and premises taken from Lady Day at 8 Red Lion Square. Within the month Morris wrote to his old tutor enclosing a copy of the circular announcing the starting of the business:

8 Red Lion Square  
April 19th, 1861

My dear Guy,

By reading the enclosed you will see that I have started as a decorator which I have long meant to do when I could get men of reputation to join me, and to this end mainly I have built my fine house. You see we are, or consider ourselves to be, the only really artistic firm of the kind, the others being only glass painters in point of fact (like Clayton and Bell), or else that curious non-descript mixture of clerical tailor and decorator that flourishes in Southampton Street, Strand, whereas we shall do — most things. However, what we are most anxious to get at present is wall-decoration, and I want to know if you could be so kind as to send me (without troubling yourself) a list of clergymen and others, to whom it might be any use to send a circular. In about a month we shall have some things to show in these rooms, painted cabinets, embroidery, and all the rest of it, and perhaps you could look us up then: I suppose till the holidays you couldn't come down to the Red House. I was very much disappointed that you called when I was out before.

With kind regards to Mrs. Guy,

Believe me,

Yours very truly

[signed] William Morris

In 1863 G. E. Street was commissioned to renovate the Chapel of Jesus College, Oxford. Panelling (some decorated with acorns and oak-leaves) was removed from Jesus' Chapel and by 1865 it was lining the walls of Forest School Chapel and Upper Library, the carved decoration fortuitously echoing the School's oak-leaf and acorn emblem. One length of the carved frieze eventually found its way into the new Dining Hall in 1886 and below it a William Morris tapestry (now lost) hung for many years.

In 1867 Morris wrote to Rev. Frederick Guy with reference to the projected decoration of the Chapel at Forest School:

26 Queen Square  
November 25th, 1867

My dear Guy,

The plan I think perfectly applicable to mosaic but of course the designs want making out — avoid anything spiky in mosaic, it is too easy, and looks so. I don't think it is worth while using the material unless the work is very elaborate; and there ought to be a great deal of gold in it; the part between the bands ought also to be at least of marble or alabaster. I don't want to discourage any reasonable plans, but I should think panelling the proper thing for your east end, picked out with colour and gold if you please; the next best I should think would be hangings. I scarcely fancy mosaics on such a small scale and they are the proper decorations of curved surfaces, domes, and are concomitants of a round-arched style and great magnificence of decoration in general. But on the whole panelling is the thing; couldn't your friend paint some figures and things on the panels? Anyhow I will help if you wish it, with the designs, whatever you settle on. I have to thank you very much for your friendliness with reference to Jason, it makes me laugh to be in a position of nuisance to schoolboys.

Yours very truly,

[signed] W. Morris

By this time a great deal of Morris's time was devoted to writing poetry and in 1868 the 34-year-old Morris, as an ex-officio Old Forester, having formerly been a private pupil of the Headmaster, submitted a poem for publication in the Christmas Term edition of the Forest School Magazine. Morris is its most eminent contributor.

The poem, 'Captiva Regina', has a typical Pre-Raphaelite subject, telling of a former queen now old and enslaved on a foreign shore. It consists of four stanzas, the first two of four lines each, the third with seven lines and the fourth of eight lines:

In long-past merry days of old  
Our sea-folk grew over-bold:  
Why should the days remembered be,  
That brought bitter ill to me?



Days ago I wore but gold,  
Like a light town across the wold  
Seen by the stars, I shone out bright;  
Many a slave was mine by right.

Ah, but in the days of old  
Grew the sea-kings over-bold;  
The yellow sands ran red with blood,  
The town burnt up, both brick and wood.  
Betwixt the oars they carried me,  
And set me down by a strange sea;  
None of the gods remembered me.

Ah, in the merry days of old,  
My garments were all wrought with gold;  
Now I have but one poor gown,  
Woven of black wool and brown;  
I draw water from the well;  
I bind wood the men-slaves fell;  
Whoso willeth, smiteth me,  
An ancient woman by the sea.

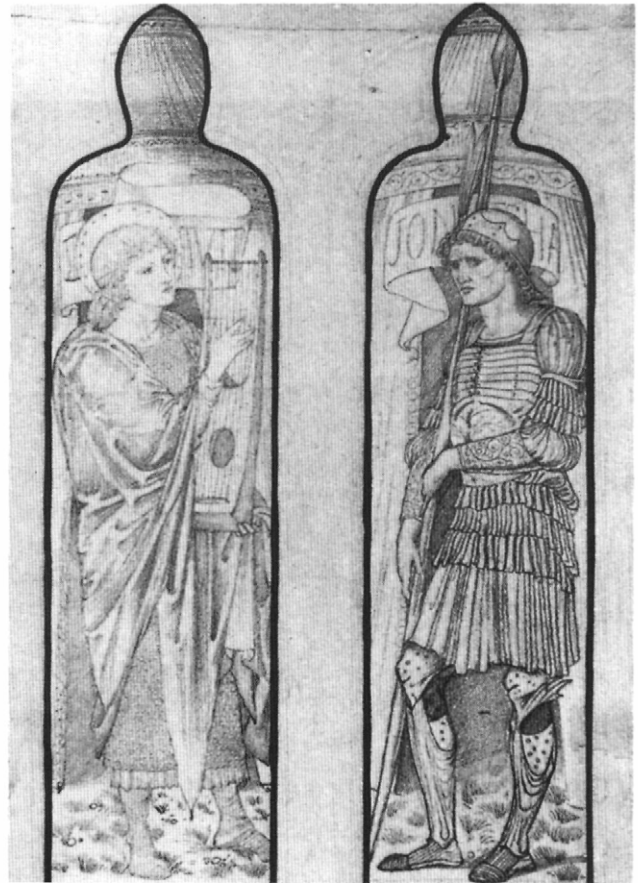
In 1875, after fourteen years, the firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. was reorganised so that Morris became the sole director. That same year Forest School Chapel was extended by the addition of the present sanctuary and transepts but none of the decorations mentioned in Morris's letter to F. B. Guy in 1867, the mosaics, hangings, or panelling, were carried out. However, as Rev. Frederick Guy's wife, Rebecca Maria, died also in 1875, the School commissioned the Morris firm to install a memorial window in the south transept designed by Burne-Jones, with two lights, one showing Rebecca and the other, the Virgin Mary. Burne-Jones also designed a window for the eastern end of the north transept which portrayed David and Jonathan. Both of these windows were shattered by the blast of the flying-bomb which destroyed the Junior School classrooms during the summer holidays of 1944. Fortunately a third window made by the Morris firm still remains in the north transept behind the organ console. It shows Samuel and Timothy and incorporates the distinctive grapes and flowers that are so typical of Morris designs. Burne-Jones no doubt drew the cartoons for the figures, a task he executed exclusively for the firm's stained glass.

This Skilbeck window was placed to remember the happy school days of Cuthbert and Clement Skilbeck who attended Forest School in the 1870s. Cuthbert Oswald Skilbeck himself became an artist befriended by Morris and Burne-Jones, working in stained glass, wood and metal church decoration.

Of late years Forest has been very fortunate to have been presented with the original drawings of Burne-Jones's

destroyed David and Jonathan and they now hang in the north transept close to the replacement window which also portrays the legendary friends.

In 1877 Morris had as his secretary and general helper at Queen Square Frederic Godfrey Guy, the fourth son of his old tutor. F. G. Guy started school at Forest at Easter of 1868 just before his ninth birthday. From April 1872 and the following academic year he did not attend classes but returned to school in September 1873, finishing in 1876.



Burne-Jones's drawing for the David and Jonathan window.

Between May and October 1877, while in Morris's employ, F. G. Guy kept a diary which gave a lively picture of the day to day work at Queen Square. At this time Morris was learning and experimenting with dyeing techniques, especially the use of indigo. He had spent some time at the factory of Thomas Wardle at Leek, Staffordshire, in 1876 learning the craft. Guy's diary on June 26, 1877 states,

There are many secrets yet to be found out about dyeing. W.M. thinks that the Indian vat is the best for silks, and perhaps he will find out that it is the best for yarns; he intends setting one again soon.

On July 23 F. G. Guy wrote,

I tried to get the Indian vat set to-day, but the indigo, which has to be ground, prevented me. I hope to do so tomorrow.

24th July. I was hard at work with the vat and managed to get it set by 5 p.m. W.M. helped, and as he slept in town he was able to look at it before going to bed. Silks were alumed for tomorrow's dyeing (weld and walnut, also madder).

25th July. The vat was coming round all day; she seemed to be doing well at 6.30, when I left; a coppery scum was coming on the surface.

27th July. The vat seemed to be doing well today; a little silk dyeing was done for experiments. A brevet was given her at 5 p.m. Not very much business done.

28th July. The hopeful Indian vat brought W.M. up to town (an unusual thing for him to do on a Saturday): the vat had come round very well by this morning; she was in a fit state for dyeing, and W.M. tried some wool in her, which proved to be successful. Still she has not quite come round to her proper form. A little cochineal dyeing was done; blues were dyed purple.

These entries indicate the extent to which F. G. Guy involved himself in the activities of the firm during his brief employment. In October 1877 Godfrey ('Boffie') Guy resolved to take orders and left the firm. He went up to Magdalene College, Oxford, in Lent Term 1878. He was a Soccer Blue in both 1878 and 1879, took his BA degree in 1881 and was ordained in 1882. After two curacies he was appointed Conduct of Eton College in 1887, resigning in 1894 when he became Vicar of Manea and later, Bournemouth. He spent the last twenty years of his life holding chaplaincies abroad. He retired in 1935 and died on April 22, 1937.

Above the dais in the Dining Hall at Forest hangs the glass-framed School Banner. This Banner was designed by William Morris at the request of F. B. Guy. It depicts an oak tree, with the arms of the diocese of St Albans suspended from it and the School motto 'In Pectore Robur' below.



**The only remaining fragment of Morris's Tapestry which once hung at the south end of the Dining Hall.**

Heraldically the arms of St Albans are described as 'Azure, a saltire Or, over all a sword erect in Pale, Proper, panelled and hilted of the second. In Chief a celestial crown of gold.' The Banner is trimmed with a wide gold fringe along its curved lower edge. It was embroidered, under Morris's supervision, by Miss Nicholson who presented it to the School in 1879.

It seems that Miss Nicholson may have been the sister of J. O. Nicholson, a manufacturer of furniture silks in brocade and damask. He started his manufacturing career in 1872 in Macclesfield and with a small office in Cheapside in London, and it is likely to have been through this office that Morris first negotiated a contract.

Nicholson founded an embroidery school in Macclesfield and Morris's visits to Hope Mill factory there, led to a friendship between the two men. This was also about the time that Morris worked with Wardle at his nearby dyeworks at Leek.

Frederic Barlow Guy resigned as Headmaster of Forest School in 1886. He handed the reins to his son, the Rev. T. E. B. Guy, but was given the title Warden and continued to take his place at School functions until shortly before his death in 1891.

Morris died at Kelmscott five years later.

## Ralph Guy and his Times

I entered Forest in 1917, and I have been asked by the Editor for a few notes on what the School was like in those far off days.

In the first place, of course, it was very much smaller than I believe it is today; the class lists of 1918 show some 199 pupils all told, of whom all the majority in the Senior School were boarders. The small proportion of day-boys were generally looked down upon and treated as pariahs — I was one of these 'untouchables'! Looking back over all these years I find that my recollections conform exactly to that piece of modern jargon called a 'Love-Hate relationship'. I was there for four years and definitely hated the first two, the third was tolerable and the fourth (by which time I was in the Sixth) quite pleasant. But all in all I have only one reply to the man who describes one's schooldays as 'the happiest days of your life, my boy' and this is a single word that is not likely to be printed in this publication even in these outspoken times.

Let me hasten that this was no fault of the School itself, qua school, Forest in those days was (and I have no doubt still is) a splendid institution, and I am very glad I went there. The sour note was the result of my own natural shortcomings combined with the stigma of 'day-boy'. It was unfortunate that as an athlete of any kind I was a dead loss, as the emphasis in those days was very much on organised sport — all of which was utterly compulsory, and a boy's popularity was in direct ratio to his athletic proficiency. Alas, I was no great shakes on either the football or cricket fields, I was slow and clumsy and a far from enthusiastic participant. That was enough to damn any boy, and scorn and reviling was my lot on the playing fields.



A youthful R. C. Guy somewhat more angelic than Eric Forge's grim figure of some years later.

I am trying very hard to be fair but the attitudes of most of my fellow pupils were hard indeed to bear and I heartily loathed most of them. There were a few exceptions and I am glad to record that one or two friendships made then lasted until the last few years, but, for the bulk of them — 'To Eblis with them!'

To turn to the School itself as an educational establishment, as I have said, the great emphasis was on sport, and for a relatively small school we put up an amazingly good show. Naturally when we met schools who had some 400 or 500 pupils to draw on to make up an eleven, we usually came off rather worse, but there were occasions I can remember when the School was the victor against all the odds.

This preoccupation with sport — and there were facilities for football, cricket, fives, swimming and all sorts of gymnastic extravagances — did not mean the scholastic side was neglected. We were dragged screaming through the usual jungles of Latin and Greek as a matter of course, and the fact that English, French, mathematics and the sciences were all thoroughly taught was reflected in the annual results of the examinations of the Oxford and Cambridge Joint Board in which Forest showed up well. In fact quite a number of Foresters gained quite high University distinctions in their later years.

Architecturally, Forest was a weird conglomerate. The basis of the School was a row of three dignified Georgian houses of the type to be seen all over Wanstead and Woodford when these areas were not yet branded as 'suburbs', and afforded convenient country retreats for the tired and jaded money-maker of the period. At the south end of this row had been added the Headmaster's house combined with the really magnificent dining hall, the latter worthy of any school in the country.

Peculiar changes came over the School over the years, for instance the Fifth Form absorbed knowledge of a secular kind under the roof of what had once been the school chapel, whilst the Lower Shell gained theirs in the subdued, almost subterranean, atmosphere of the erstwhile swimming bath, the sloping floor of which made it an excellent lecture theatre.

At the south end of the block there was a single storey addition with a row of small windows, eight of them to be precise, these were the monitors' studies. They were very small, ideal for one occupant, just possible for two, but if a third came to call he had to stand half out in the passage outside. They looked for all the world as if they had been monks' cells — or lavatories, and, in fact, the latter was just what they had been promoted from!

Present Foresters housed in up-to-date erections of glass and concrete can only imagine the old world charm of the improvisations of an earlier age. We had reason to be proud, however, of the relatively new physics lab, a fine chapel and a truly capacious gymnasium, the latter fully equipped with all the necessary torture equipment designed apparently for the gradual eviscerating of the less muscular and athletic scholars.

Finally Forest had good reason to be proud of the main playing field; set on the edge of the forest itself with the trees as a backcloth, there could have been few more delightful settings for school cricket matches.

So much for the bricks and mortar, but after all it is people who make a school, and my memory, travelling back those seventy years, automatically brings me a vivid recollection of *Ralph*! The Rev. Ralph Courtenay Guy, Headmaster after his father for so many years was Forest. He built it up, he ruled it with a rod of iron (and occasionally cane), and everybody who came under his sway was terrified of him. Shakespeare almost certainly had a prophetic vision of him when he penned the lines\*

Why, man, he doth bestride our narrow world  
Like a Colossus

Everything revolved round Ralph.

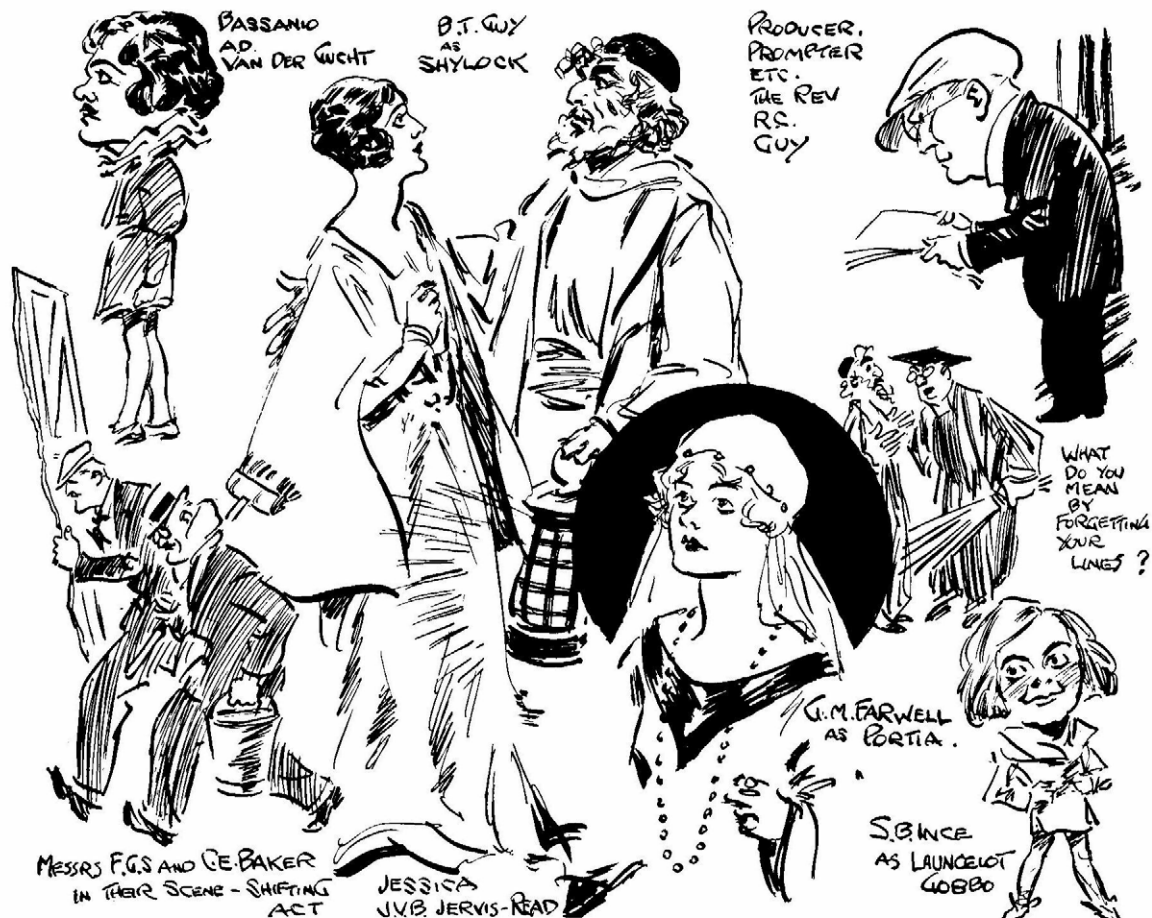
To look at he was slightly below average height, broad and thickset, and with features that could only be described as grim. He had a somewhat beaked nose, and his set of mouth and chin needed no help to strike fear into evil doers. Quite a good photograph of him appeared in the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic* in January 1937, although in this he has a slightly more benevolent expression than I usually remember.

When anything upset Ralph he roared, and one could trace his progress through the passages of the school by the crescendo of shouts that ensued as and when he found boys erring from the straight and narrow as he interpreted it. His most usual weapon was sheer invective and he did not mince his words. I remember one incident when I was indulging (under compulsion, of course) in the ritual 'run round bounds' which was ordered when no organised games were on the programme. This was a go-as-you-please run and some of us used to take it as comfortably as might be. On this occasion I was jogging gently up the straight leading to the school gates when Ralph appeared at the gate of the 'San', and it did not inflate my ego at all to be greeted with a roar of 'Get a move on, you broken-winded old cabhorse!' On another occasion I was helping him shift a folding screen on the stage just prior to the first performance of the school play. Unfortunately I managed

to nip his finger in the hinge, and of course when bellowed at I lost my head and increased the pressure in the wrong direction. This time I was castigated as a 'clumsy great hippopotamus'. It was all good clean fun and occasionally he could unbend, but one always felt the need to be very careful.

Naturally under such a Head discipline was strict, very

strict. Nearly every activity was compulsory and the penalties for malfeasance severe. The ultimate (apart from expulsion) was flogging. By a peculiar rule monitors were allowed to flog, but not masters; their capital sentence was to send the erring boy to report to Ralph, and the result was just the same. Floggings were with the cane and up to eight strokes was the



Shakespeare Play in the 1920s: R. C. Guy produces *The Merchant of Venice* and both he and his cast are caricatured

for *The Bystander*, a popular magazine of the day. Many Forest 'characters' of the period are depicted.

usual sentence. I was myself on the receiving end of this on three occasions, but in contradiction to modern thinking on the subject I cannot say that I was brutalised or bestialised by it, nor did I cherish a murderous hate for the perpetrator for evermore.

Present-day psychologists would have been very disappointed in us on that score, because, very simply, we knew quite well that flogging was the punishment decreed for certain crimes, and if we committed those crimes then we took what was coming to us. I may say, however, that in my case I was very careful not to sin again in those particular directions whilst I was in reach of those canes!

I am now an old man and I could ramble on about Ralph for a long time. I could tell of his amazing energy which led him to direct, produce and generally stage-manage the whole of a

Shakespeare play every year. The same with the sketches that were given annually on Speech Day. He had most of the day to day organising of the school because in those days it was his own private property, but he found time to take the higher classes in Latin and Greek, took morning and evening service in the chapel and was a constant spectator on the sports field. One wonders how he ever found time to sit down!

A truly great man if ever there was one, and there cannot be many Old Foresters who did not look back on his memory with mixed awe and equally real affection. I well remember him coming into the Fifth Form classroom for a Greek lecture and finding cake crumbs on the desk. The whole School shook with his denunciations — 'filthy pigs' . . . 'cheap restaurant' . . . 'stinking mess', and a lot more. Eventually he stormed out leaving instructions for us to wash the desk thoroughly and



R. C. Guy produced Shakespeare Plays for nearly half a century. Here he is seen with his final cast in 1935. Ralph

Guy's productions were a major feature of the Forest year and were photographed by Arthur Hands of Wanstead.

come and fetch him when the room was fit again for human occupation. As the head boy of the form it was left to me to beard the Nemean Lion in his den and advise him that the Augean Stables were now fit for human occupation. My news was greeted with a snarl.

Like most men of his type Ralph particularly disliked the boy who shuffled and lied to keep out of trouble, and had a sneaking regard for anyone who told him the truth and chanced it, and of this I had a first-hand example one day. Outside the monitors' studies ran a long passage terminating in a pair of glass-panelled swing doors leading to the changing room and lavatories. It was the habit among some of the senior boys to pass a quiet quarter of an hour kicking a spare football up and down this passage — why this was allowed I have no idea. From time to time the inevitable happened and the ball went through the glass panel. When this happened the drill was for the culprit to make out an order to Pedder, the school carpenter, for replacement. Taking a neatly cut half sheet of school paper, with the date at the top, one wrote: 'Please, Pedder, replace broken glass in swing door at end of monitors' corridor.'

So far so good, but . . . this had to be taken to Ralph personally for signature! The penalty varied according to the defendant's previous history and convictions! One day this unenviable task fell to me, my *vis-à-vis* having treacherously deserted his post for the sheer delight, as I believe, of seeing me 'for it'.

'Well?' Ralph growled as I entered his study.

'Will you please sign this, Sir?'

'Oh! — and how did this happen?'

Undoubtedly he was expecting one of the standard excuses: 'Please, Sir, I was running down the passage and slipped and my elbow went through the glass', or: 'Please, Sir, I opened it rather hard and it slammed against the wall before I could stop it', and so on. What he did *not* expect was my reply: 'I kicked a football through it, Sir.'

There was a horrid silence — I think that hearing the truth for once took his breath away — he glared, and then: 'Then you'll have to pay for it. Get out.' And that was that!

In my last year Ralph was still playing football and cricket occasionally. Each year there was a match with the Headmaster's Eleven, the latter being composed of such masters who had failed to duck in time, plus a few Old Boys who had been dragooned into service and the balance being made up from the Second Eleven. One day someone said to me, 'For Heaven's sake, come and look at Ralph in a "Gorblimey"! I did, and there he was turning out for his eleven in a blazer,

sweater, very long shorts and a most disreputable cloth cap pulled down over his eyes. He played in goal, and gave us a lesson. Of course he was no good for any shot that went low and fast to the bottom corner of the net, but it was amazing how many times the opposing forwards shot straight into his arms. Sheer uncanny intelligent anticipation. Later on I was to see this remarkable gift displayed by the professional goalie of England and Aston Villa, Sam Hardy; it was amazing how many shots went straight into his hands. Having secured the ball, Ralph would look round quickly for an unmarked member of his side throw it gently to his feet with a roar of 'Yours', and that was that!

I also remember a terrible afternoon on the cricket field in the same year when I had been recruited for his team, when he put himself on to bowl. He had a very old fashioned round arm delivery, his arm rising little above shoulder level and the ball emerging somewhere from the umpire's left ear, but he kept an appallingly good length and was very difficult to play.

Well, that afternoon he placed me at very deep mid-on, almost on the boundary, and set himself to bowl to the First Eleven slogger, a boy named Rihll. Before he ran up he called to me, 'Keep awake, this is coming to you.' He was right, it did! Rihll opened his shoulders and smote and the ball rose high in the sky and commenced its descent just over my head.

Now in the ordinary way, although not agile in the field, I possessed a safe pair of hands and this was a real sitter, but . . . the fact that it was Ralph bowling quite unnerved me, and of course I dropped it. There was an unsympathetic chuckle from round the field — Ralph bared his horse teeth at me and said, 'You deear old man.' The words may have been affectionate but the tone was not.

He moved me to a similar position on the offside and bowled again. Need I go on? Up came another perfect sitter . . . and I dropped it again!

Now I have always heard that anyone writing good English should always try to avoid the cliché, but there are times when only one of these is any good to convey one's true meaning, so I will just say I wished the earth could have opened up and swallowed me! This time there was no chuckle from the crowd, it was a roar of laughter! Ralph decided not to humiliate me further and yorped Rihll with the next ball.

They said he could drop a ball on a sixpence nine times out of ten and I am inclined to believe it.

As regards this particular game, I must add a last word in my defence. Later on a powerful stroke was making its way across the boundary for a six, when I managed to get one hand to it, and this time held on. I was rewarded by applause from

the whole field, even Ralph himself clapped, though he did add, 'Why couldn't you do that for me, you silly fellow?'

This was in 1921; I don't know how much longer he went on playing.

My last story about Ralph shows him in a rather different light, and it occurred after the annual Sports Day in 1921. The sports were always held in the Easter term, and the day had been a miserable one. It had rained heavily the night before and everything was drenched. There were few spectators apart from the boys who were putting in a compulsory attendance, and they were obviously longing for the final event to be completed. It was an occasion when only the hardest and super-keen athletes could obtain any sort of satisfaction. I happened to be in Ralph's study after it was all over, and suddenly he said without reference to anything in particular, 'I suppose our sports don't compare very favourably with those of your last school.'

Now that was said gruffly in his usual manner and could have been taken as a sneer but it suddenly came over me that he was depressed and looking for a bit of comfort. A ridiculous thought to be connected with Ralph but that was how it occurred to me and I realised that he was probably very disappointed at the general lack of enthusiasm and the complete absence of parents or Old Boys at the meeting. I decided to cheer him up.

'Actually, Sir,' I said, 'there can be no real comparison. The school sports at St Aubyns were more of a nature of a garden fête put on for the benefit of the parents with occasional races by their offspring to provide the entertainment that would otherwise be given by coconut shies and similar diversions. It was never a serious athletic meeting like ours.' I added, 'Moreover those sports were always held in July when the weather was likely to be kinder.'

Ralph grunted, and I added, greatly daring, 'After all, Sir, they don't attempt to put on the Olympic Games in the middle of the winter.'

'No, you've got a point there', he admitted.

I took a final fling, 'They also have the added attraction of having the prizes presented by a titled lady in a fancy hat.'

This time Ralph distinctly laughed. 'I doubt if we would want to rise to that', he said, 'Thank you. Off you go.'

As I went he turned and gave me a distinctly friendly grin, and I felt I had struck the right note, and seen another aspect of the man.

And now a word about the other masters.

The first on the list was C. A. Eves, the Second Master, known to all the School for a reason never explained to me as

'Koip'. I never came much into contact with him as all his teaching was done in the Lower School and I went straight into the Fourth on arrival, but when I did meet him he was always very friendly and I gather he was very popular. At his farewell presentation he broke down.



C. A. Eves: Senior Master for much of R. C. Guy's reign.



Holy Orders were well represented on the teaching staff, as in addition to the Rev. R. C. Guy, we also had the Rev. F. A. Woodard, and the Rev. T. Pearman-Stevens. Woodard was a good and strict teacher, a keen sportsman, and an example of the Church Militant here on earth, as he doubled in his capacity as Commanding Officer of the OTC as Captain Woodard. He was one of the well-known Woodard family who founded a number of public schools, including Lancing, to which he transferred on leaving Forest.

As a character he could not compare with the Rev. Stevens, who was a cartoonist's gift. He was tall, stooped slightly, wore pince-nez, walked with little short steps and was knock-kneed to a degree — all of which earned him the nickname of 'Staggers'. He was however an excellent teacher and pumped any amount of history into us in a most digestible way, made more digestible by a ready wit which greatly enlivened his lessons. It was a common topic in the classroom, 'Have you heard Staggers' latest', but to my regret I am quite unable to remember any of his *bon mots*, but they were many.

He used to appear on the cricket field and again his style at the wicket was full of character. As soon as the ball was bowled he would step right across his wicket with the bat in front of his pads; as he had a good eye he would score quite a few runs, but if a ball got past his bat then the result was inevitable. He left Forest to take up a cure of souls at Folkestone.

The teaching of physics and chemistry was in the hands of one F. Peachey B.Sc., who had one remarkable feature, an extremely guttural voice and a way of uttering labials that would have enabled him to pass as a German anywhere. One day when he was teaching in the Fifth, the duty monitor came round with the absentee book which was compiled daily. On this particular day the only boy absent was one named Cuttle, and the monitor was a humorist named Reid. Peachey took the book and asked who was absent. Quickly Reid said 'Guddle'. Peachey looked at him, signed the book, and as the monitor went out he said to no one in particular, 'Did that boy mead to be imberdined?'

He was a pleasant soul and we got on well with him although we were none of us very interested in Boyle's Law, and only once did I see him lose his temper. A discussion had arisen about dispensing chemists, and he had explained that people in that capacity had to pass quite severe tests before being qualified. One ill-bred type in the class piped up, 'Could you pass them, Sir?' and Peachey blew his top. After calling the wretched boy all the names he could think of he sent him straight off to Ralph for summary execution for insolence.

Generally speaking the masters at Forest were a capable and

competent lot but one must admit they were fairly colourless as far as the boys were concerned, the latter always preferring those with outstanding features that could be laughed at or caricatured, and they were hard to come by. I must however mention one who made a great impression on us, L. W. Blackman, who taught mathematics. He was an American and only in early middle age. When I say he taught mathematics, that is an understatement, he made the subject live for us, he had the knack of making it really interesting, an aspect I never met before or since. When I say that at a very early age he introduced us to the slide-rule, and made us understand the principle of the differential and integral calculus, you can imagine his real genius as a teacher.

Most unhappily he was in the grip of cancer; more than once he had to be helped out of the classroom and he died at a very early age.

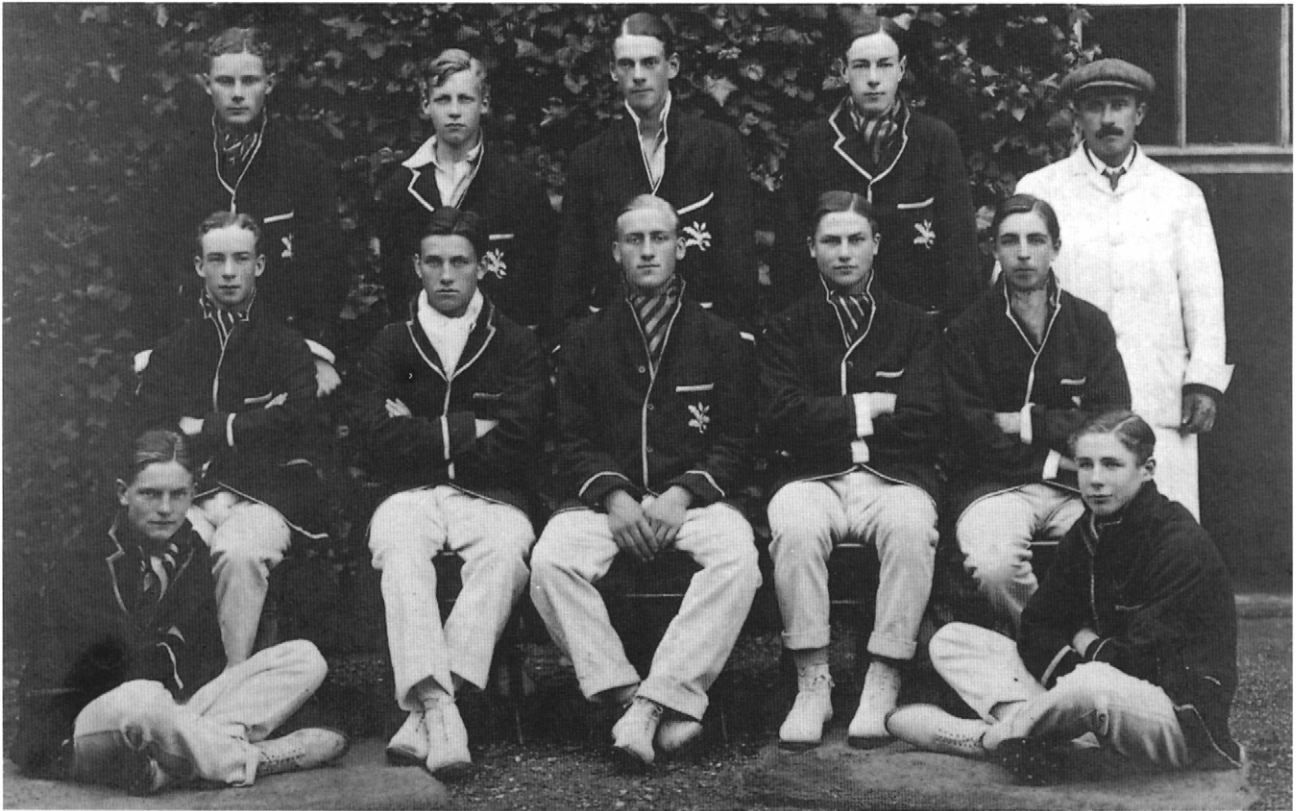
Rather more colour was to be found in the staff of the lower order. If you can imagine the presence of an archbishop, combined with the gracious condescension of a member of the Royal Family, and displaying all the tact and *savoir-faire* of an ambassador, then you have Warwick, Ralph's butler. A very stately but always courteous personage.

I have already mentioned Pedder, the school carpenter. His great characteristic was an overwhelming fear of Ralph, who paralysed him with fear as a stoat does a rabbit. It was only necessary to put your head in the carpenter's shop and say 'Pedder, He's coming' to throw the poor man into an agony of apprehension; he would scurry round the shop tidying up and fussing about and obviously fearing immediate execution.

After the plays on Speech Night Pedder was always called for to take a bow and had to be almost literally carried up to the stage and thrust into public view. He would then rush across the stage smiling apologetically, crumpling his hat in his hands and make for the safety of the opposite wings.

The groundsman was one named Russell. He was alleged to be the uncle of the then Essex and England batsman, and to have played professional football for Fulham. He never did any coaching but he kept the grounds in good order, and it is alleged that Ralph sacked him at the end of every term. He never left though, not while I was there!

A somewhat unscrupulous gentleman, our Russell. One afternoon a boy named Emile Fernand Dens, a Belgian, with more money than was good for him, had purchased a very large bag of sweets at the 'Grub'. Seeing Russell outside the pavilion he held out the open bag on his open palm, saying, 'Have a sweet, Russell.' 'Thanks very much,' said Russell, 'I don't mind if I do', and a great hairy paw enveloped the whole bag,



**Russell: the cricket professional in the white coat remembered vividly by Eric Forge. Here he is pictured with the Cricket XI of 1914: within four years four of the boys had**

**been killed in action, two had been wounded, one taken prisoner-of-war. All the team served, and D. A. Brett (back row 2nd from left) was awarded the MC.**

stuffed it into his pocket and walked away chuckling.

Mrs Guy, (Minnie) was not much seen. She suffered badly from arthritis in the feet and at the time I was there she could hardly hobble. I imagine she must have been quite good looking in her youth and her second daughter, Kathleen, seemed to show what she might have been like.

I have dragged Minnie into this because she was supposed to be responsible for the catering — whether this was true or not I am not sure, but it gives me a chance to mention the food at Forest. It was not good at the time I was there, nor was the

cooking. I don't really know whether we made allowances for the fact we were in the fourth year of war and whoever did the catering must have had a grim job, but it was fashionable to sneer at the food and so the food got sneered at! Personally although I found most of it unappetising, it wasn't all that bad, but, there, I was always a non-conformist.

Two dishes, however, stood out and still linger in my memory. The first was the stew that was always served on Wednesday, and heaven alone knows what that was made of. It was stodgy and deep purple in colour and went by the name of

'Splosh'. It brought out some very caustic remarks from Stagers when it was his turn to dispense it. It was very highly seasoned and I did not really dislike it. The other horror that was inflicted on us was a maize pudding and this was truly awful. Its glutinous consistency made it adhere firmly to the plate, and after two spoonfuls you felt as if you had eaten enough for a month. It had the demerit of being tasteless.

This very attribute of adhesiveness led me into trouble. Receiving my portion one day I made the remark that I was sure that if I inverted the plate the pudding would remain in situ, and of course, was promptly challenged to make the experiment. I did, and I was right. (I had made sure before doing it that the attention of the monitor at the head of the table was diverted). Muffled applause greeted the feat and I was urged to give an encore. Flushed with success and applause I did so but this time I had not taken the necessary precautions, and I heard the horrid words, 'Come and see me in my study directly after dinner, Forge.' I didn't really want any more dinner that day!

A few notes may here be inserted about some of the Foresters of my era. I don't think we contributed very much to the International Scene; true the School has achieved a couple of bishoprics, but I know of no prime ministers, real business tycoons or really great writers or poets. Not that we were without our characters. One I remember very well was Max Reason. A large strong fellow, a bustling centre forward with a devastating shot, a reliable opening bat and a very good medium fast opening bowler. He also had the merit of being always cheerful and, as far as I was concerned, always polite and friendly. Max seemed to take life as it came and took it very cheerfully. In his last term I remember at the end of term exams he came into the chemistry exam and sat down and studied the examination questions. Presently he wrote two words on the answer paper, blotted them and handed in his paper. He then left the room. The one question that he had answered was, 'Give one test for sulphuretted hydrogen', and Max had answered 'Smell it!' I believe he afterwards became an ornament of the Hulton Press.



Forest School meals were appalling — but Old Boys made up for it later! Note C. A. Eves bespectacled on right.

Indirectly I think we can claim a distinguished connection here, because a certain Minister of State in the present Government bears the same name, and if the press photographs are to be trusted, a strong family resemblance!

In my time the leading choir soloist, by name Benjamin van der Gucht, the third of three brothers to come to the school, was frequently heard to be asking to be blessed with the wings of a dove. In later life, as Jan van der Gucht he was even more frequently heard on the concert platform and on the radio. I am irresistably reminded of that famous limerick in that connection:

There was a young choirboy at King's  
Who sighed for a pair of dove's wings.  
When he did get a pair  
He went mad wondering where  
To stow the abominable things.

It is not often Old Foresters reach the giddy heights of a *Daily Telegraph* obituary but that recently was the case of a certain Alderman P. M. Herring. I remember Herring as a large sturdy boy who had a very red face, a rather rough skin and a peculiar throaty voice, which led one of our self-appointed comedians, named Emmett, to say to him, 'You look like a fish, you've got a skin like a fish, you talk like a fish, and with that name you must be a fish.' No comment. I quite forget what it was he did to gain that distinction.

At one time the school included in its roll a real prince. By name Prince George Chavchavadze, a Russian. 'Chav', as he was known, was a small, rather delicate boy with extraordinarily girlish features and complexion — he was a 'must' for all school plays demanding a female part because he needed so little making up. Apart from that he was a marvellous pianist, and in after life achieved an international reputation on that instrument. He took little part in games and spent most of his spare time playing all sorts of music on the school pianos.

Incidentally by some mischance I still have his copy of *Bottomley's Logarithmic Tables* with his name inscribed on the flyleaf. (I am open to offers from any interested collectors of autographs.)

No doubt many other Old Foresters achieved distinction in their various careers and I can only apologise for their omissions from this roll.

Finally a few notes on some of the traditions and shibboleths that were a feature of Forest seventy years ago. A great emphasis was always laid on manners, I am glad to say. Caps were always raised politely to masters (of course) but also to any

strangers encountered in the school grounds, were they parents, Old Boys or complete strangers. That meant that caps were removed from the head; there was no question of furtive tugs at the peak! And caps were worn at all times, and worn properly, and that meant with the hair hidden by the peak. Any unfortunate boy attempting to wear his cap on the back of his head was very soon persuaded that that was simply not done. Within the School itself certain rules were strictly observed. For instance no boy could ever enter a form room above his own without first asking, 'Please may I come in?' In the case of the Fifth Form there were two doors and woebetide the boy who tried to enter by the wrong one! A rather peculiar extension of this tradition occurred in the case of a small narrow room sandwiched between the Fourth and Sixth Form rooms. This was only used to house the sports gear of the Lower School, but anyone wishing to enter it had to knock on the door of the Fourth Form and get permission. Don't ask me why!

Another pleasing tradition, abandoned now I regret to see, was that bathing in the pool was always undertaken naked. Boots and socks were removed in the entrance and then all other clothes discarded on the side of the bath. No one thought anything of this except a few new boys coming from small private schools, whose embarrassment at first caused a certain amount of amusement, but they soon got used to the idea, (they had to!), and we all gambolled together as unselfconsciously as the unfallen Adam.

Another tradition was that college caps, (mortar boards, if you like to be vulgar) were always worn on the short transit from classroom to chapel, morning and evening, but on no other occasion. Otherwise their principal use was as ballistic missiles! The hourly breaks for the end of classes were always marked by the ringing of a bell known as 'Tinkles'. Does this still exist, I wonder. The other bell known as 'Tolls' was the chapel bell.

Otherwise Forest was singularly free from the meaningless traditions that are such a feature of all the best school stories; there was no fagging system, as such, although small boys were made use of by the monitors and the Sixth.

Enough. I could go on but I won't.

Let me just close with two wishes. First I wish I had got to know Ralph better, and I wish I had been a boarder.

And two expressions of gratitude. First to Forest School for all it gave me and taught me, and secondly to the Editor for urging me to take this walk down memory lane and revive so many memories that 'bless and burn'.

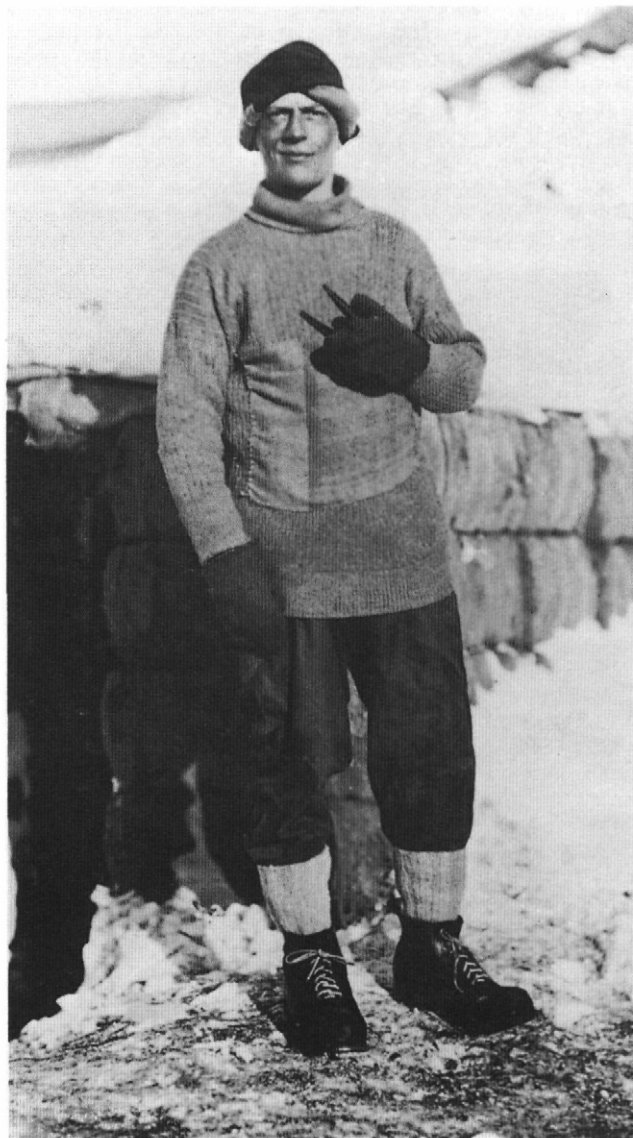
Valete.

## Surgeon-Captain E. L. Atkinson, DSO, AM, RN

On Tuesday, February 11, 1913, news of the disaster to Captain Scott's Expedition to the South Pole broke to a horrified and incredulous world. The telegram bearing the grim tidings had been telegraphed to London from Oamaru on the South Island of New Zealand by Old Forester, Surgeon Atkinson, and Lieutenant Harry Pennell, Captain of the *Terra Nova*.

During the week that followed the first publication of the tragedy, Atkinson bore the brunt of the opprobrium and recrimination that dominated the headlines of the press around the world. The quiet, unassuming surgeon was under attack because after Scott had set out on his fateful journey, Atkinson, the only naval officer left at Cape Evans, had assumed command of the base camp during the six months' darkness of the anxious, wearisome winter of 1912. It was Atkinson, alone, who decided to search for Scott's party rather than Lieutenant Campbell's party whose fate was also unknown. It was Atkinson's decision that resulted in the discovery of his dead Captain and the recovery of those immortal diaries, which told of the heroism of Lawrence Oates, the sad end of Petty Officer Edgar Evans and ultimately the privations of Scott, Wilson and Bowers.

On November 23, 1881, Edward Leicester Atkinson was born in the West Indies on the island of Saint Vincent where his father was then acting accountant in the Colonial Bank. Edward Leicester Atkinson was the second son of Canon J. C. Atkinson of Danby-in-Cleveland, North Yorkshire. He married Jane Anne Hazell, daughter of an old-established Creole family on Saint Vincent.



E. L. Atkinson in Antarctica. (SPRI Collection)

Of Leicester (his family's name for him) Atkinson's early life, little is known except that his father was moved by the bank to the islands of Saint Lucia, Trinidad, Saint Thomas and Jamaica. Before being reappointed to Trinidad as accountant, E. L. Atkinson, senior, brought his second child, his only son, to England to board at Forest School which he entered on October 28, 1895.

During his five years at Forest, Atkinson distinguished himself at football, athletics, swimming, gymnastics and boxing. He joined the Corps and was a crackshot with the rifle. He became a monitor, acted in the annual Shakespeare plays, was MC of the Debating Society and won a prize for chemistry. His holidays were spent with his uncle, Dr Miles C. H. Atkinson, one time Mayor of Leamington, and his aunt, Lady Catherine Nicholson of 'Eden', Banff in Scotland.

When Atkinson left Forest in 1900 he went to St Thomas's Hospital to train as a surgeon until 1905. There he continued his sporting prowess, now adding rugby to his skills and winning the hospital's boxing title. In 1908 Atkinson joined the Royal Navy, gaining the highest marks of his intake. He worked at Haslar, the naval hospital at Portsmouth, and his first draft was to HMS *Achilles*.

In 1910 Atkinson was selected to join Scott's Antarctic Expedition and sailed on the *Terra Nova* from Cardiff in June of that year. He became a temporary 'snotty' and worked with the sailors on all the arduous tasks demanded by a coal-burning/sailing ship.

During the voyage to South Africa, Atkinson became firm friends with Lawrence Oates with whom he had many common interests. The highlight of this leg of the voyage was the exciting landing at South Trinidad Island where Atkinson stayed ashore overnight with a sick seaman and thousands of flesh-eating land crabs.

Landed on Antarctica, Atkinson was soon a victim of its cold and his own inexperience when he was lost in a night-time blizzard and badly frost-bitten. An infected heel prevented him taking part in the early depot-laying journeys. He did not waste the time, however, but with Petty Officer Crean, set to work to clear out the hut of Scott's 1901 Expedition that was filled with snow and ice and debris of Shackleton's 1908 Expedition.

In October 1911 Scott wrote to Atkinson's mother,

... he has made himself universally beloved by his unselfishness and untiring efforts to help others. ... No member of our party is more popular and more highly esteemed.

Atkinson accompanied Scott to the top of the Beardmore Glacier, on his way to the South Pole. He returned to Cape

Evans with Wright, Cherry-Garrard and Petty Officer Keohane.

When Scott made his fateful decision to dash to the Pole with five men instead of four, Lieutenant Evans, with Petty Officer Crean and Chief Stoker Lashly man-hauling a four-man sledge, became seriously ill with scurvy. Lashly and Crean pulled Evans on the sledge until he became too ill to move. Then Crean walked on alone thirty-six miles to Hut Point whence Atkinson and Demetri Geror, with a dog-sledge, returned with him to the rescue of Evans. Lashly and Crean later received Albert Medals for their heroism.

Atkinson devoted himself entirely to caring for Lieutenant Evans whose life he saved. Because he was nursing Evans, Atkinson sent Cherry-Garrard and Demetri Geror to One Ton Camp to await Scott's return. This decision was later strongly criticised.



E. L. Atkinson as a boy. Photograph taken at Leamington Spa but obviously during his time at Forest School.

After the *Terra Nova* had made its annual call at Ross Island and had taken the scorbullic Evans back to civilisation, Atkinson attempted to cross the sea-ice in the hope of being able to relieve Campbell. He also journeyed south hoping to meet Scott's returning party. In each case the deteriorating seasonal conditions made progress impossible.

Throughout the winter of 1912 Atkinson maintained the morale of the depleted party. As surgeon he was approachable by both men and officers and he did not maintain the distinction between quarter-deck and crew. He was loved by them all.

During August, after a general discussion, Atkinson decided to go south to look for Scott even though he knew the party must all be dead, possibly in a crevasse on the Beardmore Glacier. On October 30, 1912, eight men under Wright set out

from Hut Point with mules on the journey south, travelling at night and resting during the day. Two days later, Atkinson, Cherry-Garrard and Demetri Geror followed with two dog-teams, following the mule tracks.

On November 11 they arrived at One Ton Camp. Having set off in the early morning of November 12, eleven miles further south the death-tent was discovered sheltering the bodies of Scott, Bowers and Wilson. With them were the precious records: diaries, photographs, drawings, meteorological log, and geological specimens. Even Amundsen's black flag and letter to the King of Norway and the note indicating Amundsen's time of arrival at the South Pole were there.

Atkinson gathered all the search party together and read them the account of Oates' death in Scott's diary. All the party were asked to view the bodies, then Atkinson read from the

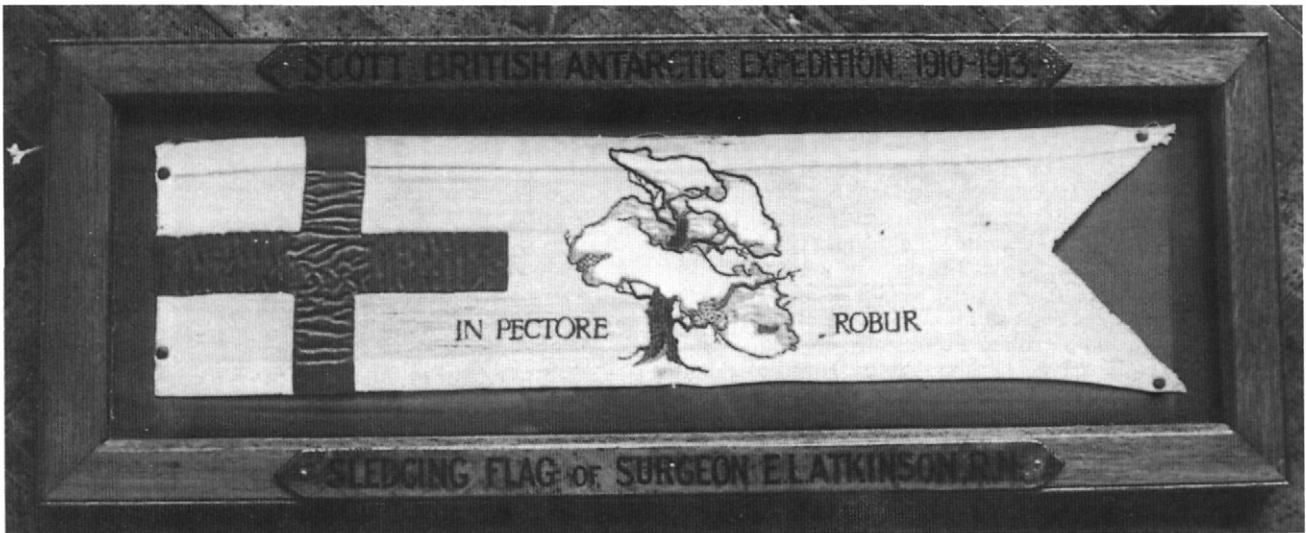


The Grave of Scott, Bowers and Wilson on the Great Ice Barrier. The Search Party had been led by E. L. Atkinson.



Above: at the Midwinter's Day Party at Cape Evans, Ross Island, Antarctica, in 1912, Atkinson's sledging pennant is visible above his head in the centre of the photograph.

Below: donated by him to the School at the 1913 Speech Day, it is now displayed at the north end of the Dining Hall. Atkinson died in February 1929.





Burial Service, the tent was let down over the bodies and a cairn built of snow raised above it. A cross made from skis was placed on top and a note of commemoration attached to it. On either side, two sledges were fixed upright and dug into the frozen snow.

On November 13 and 14 the party marched further south to search for Oates. At noon on the 14th they came upon old pony walls twenty-six miles south of One Ton Camp. Here they found Oates' sleeping bag with a theodolite, his finnesko and socks inside. A blizzard set in, so the next morning they built a cairn to mark the spot near where Oates met his death and placed a cross on it. Lashed to the cross were the now famous words written by Atkinson:

Hereabouts died a very gallant gentleman, Captain L. E. G. Oates of the Inniskilling Dragoons. In March 1912, returning from the Pole, he walked willingly to his death in a blizzard to try and save his comrades, beset by hardship. This note is left by the Relief Expedition 1912.

The search party reached Cape Evans on November 26 to find that Campbell's party had returned safely on November 6, 1912 and from then on Campbell resumed command and Atkinson relinquished the reins. The *Terra Nova* returned on January 18, 1913 and took off the survivors.

On his return to England in 1913, at Forest School Speech Day, Atkinson promised his sledging flag to the School and it has hung in the Dining Hall ever since.

Work on classifying his Antarctic collections was interrupted early in 1914 when Atkinson sailed with Dr Robert Leiper of the School of Tropical Medicine, to China to investigate Schistosomiasis, a parasitic disease sometimes contracted by sailors on duty in the Far East.

When the First World War broke out, Atkinson returned to England via Canada and was drafted to HMS *St Vincent*. He immediately set about organising a Fleet boxing tournament.

In August 1915 Atkinson quietly married the vivacious red-haired Scots lass, Jessie Ferguson, at Rochford Town Hall in Essex, and shortly afterwards, wearing the uniform of the Royal Naval Division (glamorised by Rupert Brooke) he left for Gallipoli where a most unglamorous job awaited him. His task was to deal with the appalling Fly Pest. More soldiers were incapacitated by fly-carried disease than by Turkish weapons and by December 1915 Atkinson became victim of his unsavoury duties and was invalided home with typhus, double pneumonia and pleurisy.

When he had recuperated, Atkinson returned to action. Once again his duties were land-based, on the Western Front in France, attached to the Howitzer Brigade of the Royal

Marine Artillery. Atkinson stayed with the 'Grannies' from May 1916 to August 1918, working at an advanced dressing station in the cramped conditions of a dug-out with a superficial resemblance to a primitive surgery.

Two interesting sidelights occurred at this stage. Lady Scott with Mr Henry Tonks (former surgeon and Head of the Slade School of Art) wished to establish a mobile surgery for the Western Front and they asked Atkinson to be the surgeon. The plan foundered when the French government refused permission for civilians to be in the front line.

About this time, the Geographical Society became aware that Shackleton's return from Antarctica was overdue and relief expeditions were being set up. Captain John King Davis was to lead a sea-search in Shackleton's ship *Aurora*, and Atkinson was asked to lead a search party on land. However, before these plans were set in motion, Shackleton, in his epic journeys, had effected his own salvation and that of his men on Elephant Island.



E. L. Atkinson in uniform of Royal Naval Division, 1915.

While serving in France, Atkinson was three times wounded (at least twice in his left eye), twice mentioned in despatches and awarded the DSO in June 1918. After once again having been invalided home from the front line, Atkinson, when he had recuperated, was drafted to a new monitor, HMS *Glutton* commissioned in July 1918.

In September, while *Glutton* lay alongside in Dover Harbour, there was an explosion in her magazine which set fire to the ship. Atkinson found himself to be the only able-bodied officer left on board and he set about helping those badly wounded. In rescuing five men, he himself was seriously injured in a second explosion. Atkinson was subsequently awarded the Albert Medal (the equivalent of today's George Cross) for saving life at sea. Burnt, severely wounded in the left eye, Atkinson fought for his life and in May 1919, fitted with a glass eye and limping badly, he was off to the front once more, this time to Archangel in North Russia in charge of a former pleasure steamer now converted into a hospital ship. He returned to England in October 1919.

With the cessation of hostilities in Russia, Atkinson returned to peacetime service with the Royal Navy, from then on specialising in Ophthalmics, first at the Royal Naval Hospital, Chatham. At this time he was promoted to Surgeon-Commander.

In 1920 Atkinson was posted to the Royal Naval College at Greenwich. While there, in November 1921, he went with the British Naval Mission to Greece, aboard HMS *Egmont*.

Towards the end of 1922, his old wounds began to take their toll and Atkinson was on three months sick leave until January 1923 when he returned to Chatham and then went to Portsmouth and Haslar where he remained until January 1926 when he was posted to HMS *Ramillies*.

In April 1926 his father died at Bexhill in Sussex and his mother returned to spend her last days in Trinidad in the West Indies.

Atkinson was once more shore-based at Chatham. In January 1927 his wife became ill with cancer and Atkinson himself continued to suffer ill-health. He had constant pains from a loose piece of bone in his head. Early in 1928 he was operated on for appendicitis. In July of that year Jessie Atkinson died at Chatham and the newly widowed Atkinson was once more in hospital. He did not fully recover and in November 1928 was placed on the Retired List as medically unfit. He was promoted to Surgeon-Captain, the youngest, at 46, of that rank in the Royal Navy.

The day after his retirement, on November 15, 1928, Atkinson remarried in Glasgow. His second Scots wife was

Mary Flint Hunter. Less than a week afterwards, Atkinson was aboard SS *City of Sparta* as ship's surgeon and sailing for India.

He died of heart failure at sea just north of Port Said in the Mediterranean on February 20, 1929 while returning to Britain.

Mary Flint Hunter died in Glasgow on January 12, 1954.



## 72 Years a Forester — Early Memories

My first impression of Forest School was in 1912 at the age of 4. It was the custom then for brothers and sisters of boys at School to attend drill classes in the old gymnasium, now replaced by the Sports Hall. My brother was then in the Junior School and my sister attended these classes whilst I came along as an onlooker.

Four years later I began my career at Forest! Vividly I remember being taken by my mother to be introduced to the then Headmaster, Ralph Guy, and we were received in his dining-room. After a little while my mother departed and I with some apprehension was taken down to Ralph's study where he presented me with an ink-pot, a pen, an exercise book, and a sheet of blotting-paper! I was then told by Ralph that when speaking to masters I addressed them as Sir. 'Do you understand?' To which I replied 'Yes'. 'But you are not saying it', said Ralph! I was puzzled by this as I had no idea that R.C.G. was a master but thought he was the owner of the School, which in fact he was. The Junior School Matron was summoned and told to take me to the Lower First with final instructions from Ralph to 'mind how you trip' as I followed her up the step and out of the door.

My next recollection was the first German daylight air-raid.

The whole School was ushered into the passage under the Dining Hall and as we passed from the old Junior School, Ralph lifted me up and said, 'There they are, Master Garnham, can you see them?' I replied, 'Yes, Sir' and indeed it seemed impossible not to see some fifty airplanes apparently about to unload their bombs on Forest School! However all was well and the Germans went on to Central London.

By then my family had moved from Upper Walthamstow Road to Upper Clapton and I proceeded daily to School by train from Clapton to Wood Street Station and then up the hill and through the Forest to Hogg's Corner escorted by my nurse for the first term, and then by myself. However I survived and to my surprise was awarded in midsummer 1917 the Lower First Form Prize, *Favourite Fairy Tales* by Hans Christian Andersen with coloured illustrations and which I still read with much enjoyment.

However the promising beginning was not fulfilled and the only other prize I received was eight years later in midsummer 1925; Divinity Prize, Form V. The following year I entered for the Powell Prize for Divinity Essay which was won by my old friend the late Basil T. Guy who finally became Bishop of Gloucester. I myself was 'H.M.' which means Honourably Mentioned, and I always suspected some favouritism had crept in! The same year I was 'H.M.' in the Bull History Prize, and



*The Taming of the Shrew*, 1925: the author, Frank Garnham, as Grumio. Note R. C. Guy as birch-wielding producer!



*Macbeth*, 1926: a cartoon from *The Bystander*, the author, Frank Garnham, as the Porter. Note the future Bishop of

Gloucester as Lady Macbeth and the much-changed image of Forest schoolboys!

that I think was the total of my academic success. The Shakespearian Play has always been a feature of Forest and the two cartoons reproduced here and printed in the long defunct *Bystander* published in 1925 and 1926 bring back many memories with myself as the drunken porter in *Macbeth* and Grumio in *The Taming of the Shrew*.

On leaving Forest in 1926 my father told me I was to enter the business, but could go to winter sports in Switzerland for a month before starting work. I went to St Moritz and eventually rode the famous Cresta Run for three years 1928-1930. This began my love for the Alps and with the exception of the war years I have been skiing regularly in Wengen.

## Forest School 70 Years Ago

What memories, what impressions of school life at Forest just before the First World War would be likely to strike a chord in the minds and hearts of Old Foresters, or of those boys at School now, two generations later?

My entry as a day-boy into the Junior School at the age of 10 in the summer of 1912 seems to come back now as a remembrance of sunny summer days . . . with the old First Form, and Mr Hinchcliffe our Form Master sitting on the open window-sill in the sunshine, inclined to throw papers at us if we gave the wrong answers! . . . the old horse-drawn roller ironing out the creases on the cricket pitches . . . Sergeant in his gymnasium . . . and old Pedder in the carpenter's shop. To Chapel every Sunday morning at the wish of my parents, when 'Ralph' or one of the other ordained masters would take the service.

The boys of that first year are seen quite vividly in my mind's eye . . . Lampen, the Waldock brothers, W. Cuttle (one of many brothers at Forest), Potts, Wilder, Michael van der Gucht (who was the second of six brothers, I think) and the Bethell brothers whom I distinctly recall driving up to the School in a brougham with a coachman. . . .

The School Play performed at Christmas 1912 was *The Merchant of Venice*, with C. B. Barlow in the part of Shylock, and Portia? . . . I wonder who took that role? And after the Play, Foresters and Old Foresters together singing with enormous gusto the verses of 'In Pectore Robur.'

Less than three months later, in the spring of 1913, my father died at a very early age, and for a week or two I became a boarder, under the kindly eye of the Junior School Matron, Miss Nichols, and I met with sympathetic compassion from the boarders in the dormitory.

Speech Day and the accompanying prize-giving ceremony at 'Exeat' near mid-summer was marked by short plays performed in French, German, Latin or Greek . . . and I can remember the croaking of the squatting boys in *The Frogs* by Aristophanes.

Then in 1914 came the Great War, as it was referred to until WW2 came upon us, when as a matter of history it degenerated into three initials, WW1.

What does one bring back to mind seventy years later of events that in fact shaped our futures? Week by week from the age of 12 I bought *The War Illustrated*, at 2d. per week, and I recall the artists' sketches — there were very few photographs by war correspondents until the later years of the war — depicting the Retreat from Mons, with horse-drawn gun batteries, the Battle of the Marne, the shooting of Nurse Cavell, the shelling of Scarborough and Hartlepool by German cruisers . . . then in July 1916 the British offensive, The Battle of the Somme, about which a vivid film was made by the newly-formed Ministry of Information . . . then while playing a cricket match we learned of the death by drowning of Lord Kitchener when HMS *Hampshire* was sunk . . . what a national tragedy that seemed at the time . . . and on May 31, 1916 the only great sea fight of the war, the Battle of Jutland, when Admiral Beatty's battle-cruisers blew up one after the other, and history looks upon it as a drawn battle, though it had the result of confining the German Navy's capital ships in port until the end of the war . . . but not the German U-boats, whose offensive against our merchant shipping very nearly led to our defeat, as it was so nearly to do again twenty-five years later: thus history does repeat itself!

In 1915 the air-raids by German Zeppelins started, and I can remember how at home we rushed up from the cellar to cheer as we saw a Zeppelin 'shot up' by Lieutenant W. L. Robinson of the RFC, then sink to the ground in flames. With a school friend, Donald Todd-White (later a doctor), I cycled all the way to Cuffley, to see the smoking, reeking, remains of another airship, perhaps a Schütte-Lanz, and we collected souvenirs — bits of aluminium in the twisted shapes of struts, and so on.

An air-raid by Gotha bombers later in the war — perhaps 1917 — on their way to London passed right over Forest, and we schoolboys experienced a new sensation — a portent of Things to Come!

In 1917 too came the early days of the Russian Revolution, and (I seem to remember) as perhaps the only day-boy in a class of some fourteen boarders I was expected to know and serve up the latest morning's news from the papers (no radio then) to the boarders, who followed the war news with keen interest. There were at that time three Belgian refugee boys (the Dens brothers) at Forest, two Persians (Ali) and even I think a part-Russian boy.

The OTC, which I joined in 1916, was commanded by Captain F. A. Woodard, and his aides were Lieutenant J. R. E. Howard and Lieutenant Hughes-Games. We had route-marches along the Woodford roads, singing ribald wartime songs (I am sure we got them as fast as they came over from France), and on one auspicious occasion we were inspected by

the Duke of Teck. We had 'field-days', sometimes going as far afield as Cambridge, travelling on the old Great Eastern Railway from Snaresbrook station, changing at Liverpool Street, and on the return journey sitting in darkened carriages (the black-out was very strictly enforced everywhere) and as a dare some of us would open the doors and travel on the running-board. No casualties so far as I remember, either from firing blank cartridges, or from other and various 'excursions'!

School classes in wartime were much as pre-war, but with perhaps fewer numbers — I think the total at Forest in those years was not above 150. We went to service in Chapel each morning at 8.40 a.m. — the boarders had already had early morning school — and classes started at 9.00 a.m., with two lessons before dinner in the Dining Hall at 1.00 p.m., and then



Death of SL II: a *Times* photograph of the last moments of the airship whose destruction Nigel Pashby witnessed.



Lieutenant W. Leefe Robinson, VC: a national hero after shooting down SL II. Died in the influenza epidemic of 1918.

two further lessons in the afternoon, apart from Tuesday and Saturday afternoons when cricket or football was played: if wet, running twice 'round bounds'. Football could be in the Park, and on the way we gathered acorns for feeding the pigs. Swimming in the open-air baths in the Summer Term was a delight, and Sergeant with his big 'strop' soon had us beginners doing a length unaided. 'Fives' was another popular sport — peculiar I believe to Forest and only a few other schools — and I can still picture such players as R. H. (or C. V?) Leefe, and S. H. or H. P. Waugh with their heavy Fives gloves, and hear the smack of the ball against the opposing walls.

The news of the award of the Victoria Cross to Captain Geary was a notable occasion at Forest, but he was blinded

. . . and as the war progressed the casualty lists became longer, and I have no doubt, looking back, that the Army Class contributed its share of officers to the British Army: officers who were to fall on a foreign field, and whose names now adorn the war tablets in Chapel.

A Forester of an earlier generation was Surgeon-Commander Atkinson who was on one of Captain Scott's expeditions. His pennant which was brought back used to hang in the Dining Hall, and I wonder if it still does?

A name that has been famous in my time as the 'crack shot' in the British Army, Lieutenant (later Brigadier) J. A. Barlow, was a monitor when I was in the Shell or Fourth Form, and I have painful recollections of a caning by him! . . . but no subsequent hard feelings endured.



**Zeppelin, 1916:** Nigel Pashby describes visiting Cuffley where this photograph was taken and published in *The Illustrated War News*. In 1916 two airships were shot down locally: a wooden framed Schütte-Lanz airship at Cuffley (shot down

by Lieutenant W. L. Robinson) and an aluminium framed Zeppelin at Potters Bar. This fact would seem to indicate that the author is confusing the two incidents. Lieutenant Robinson subsequently received the VC.

It would not be right perhaps to single out masters at Forest who had helped to shape one's character. and, if I may say so after all these years, gave such excellent training and teaching — but I will nevertheless mention a few names: Morgan, and Rev. McNamara in the Junior School; J. R. E. Howard and his brother; Harding, Peachey, Smith (who spoke Welsh on occasions and could pronounce without difficulty the station name in Anglesey with fifty-two letters) and F. A. Woodard, all in the Senior School. I was not taught by the Second Master, C. R. Eves, but I remember him as a stooping, but much respected figure. Forest was indeed fortunate in having at that time, and being able to retain, such able men in the middle of a war. One must not forget, either, the Rev. T. P. Stevens, who taught history and told us about York, and was for ever after affectionately known as 'Eboracum' because of his strange accent!

Then at the end of the Summer Term of 1917 came the time when at the age of 15 I was to leave Forest and start in an engineer's office as office-boy, later as draughtsman, with a firm of design consultants in reinforced-concrete construction, with offices in Victoria Street, S.W. I had by that time, after five years at Forest, absorbed the solid foundations of English grammar, and literature, Latin (and I have for ever been thankful, even in a world of engineering and science, that Latin was not considered in those days a 'dead' language), German, and French; maths and algebra, divinity, and a good general knowledge for which I gained several prizes.

Because I was a day-boy, I was spared to some extent the full rigours of boarding-school existence, which with food rationing, and black-outs, and only coal fires for warmth in the classrooms, and fairly primitive lavatories, meant a tough life at school in First World War England.

I certainly could not, and would not like to, compare my time at Forest with some of the rather lurid and forbidding accounts of public school life, as portrayed by a few of our twentieth-century authors, or as shown in a film such as *IF*, or in the portrait of Radley on TV, or again in the rather amusing play *Forty Years On* by Alan Bennett (which had as I remember Sir John Gielgud as the Headmaster).

And so in July 1917 I said goodbye to old friends — E. C. Borradaile, T. W. McHattie, Ballantine, Mailey, Moore, and others, to leave Forest for the outside world.

Here, at the conclusion of these reminiscences, it would not be inappropriate perhaps to remember for a moment and pay tribute to the Headmaster of those years, Ralph Guy (Rev. R. C. Guy), and to think of his untiring work, surrounded by his family, devoted to the furthering of the fortunes of Forest

School. I see him now, entering a classroom to read out the weekly form marks, sitting down at the master's desk, wrapping his gown around him and taking off his tasselled mortar-board . . . or, on the cricket field, in bright Hertford College blazer and cap, scoring for the Masters v. the First Eleven.

'Ralph' was a strict disciplinarian, but a man kindly at heart, and generous in his actions: and only now, these years later, can I reveal and bear witness to the fact that he assisted my mother, a widow, as a great act of kindness by considerably reducing the school fees, not only for me but also for my two brothers, who were to follow on at Forest.

'In Pectore Robur' and long may the old school survive, even, who knows, to flourish for another century, or another century-and-a-half, from 1984 to 2134!

#### Addenda, some Afterthoughts, and a few Vignettes

- I recall old Arthur Hands, the official photographer, who had a shop in High Street, Wanstead, and who came up to Forest for the annual crop of school photos; including those of the OTC.
- I remember the 'grub shop', where boys used to make for after football, quite frozen, to buy hot coffee, and a ha'penny bun plus a ha'penny bar of chocolate. I seem to think that the very first potato crisps were just then making an appearance.
- I remember the old cricket 'colours' — white caps with a red acorn for the First Eleven — red caps (I think) for the Second Eleven. For football sides — white, or black-and-white striped shirts — blue stockings with a white top; are they the same now?
- Poetry was in our curriculum during my time, and I distinctly recall going to Mr Howard's room and reciting (with one mistake) the whole of Milton's *L'Allegro*: 'Hence, loathed Melancholy, . . .'
- Rev. R. C. Guy himself took small classes of those about to be confirmed and gave instruction in Chapel on the Catechism: and perhaps mystified us by saying that the 'mystery' of the Holy Trinity was quite different from a mystery in Epping Forest (there had been a recent murder. I believe).
- Lastly, a reference to 'Hog's Corner' which was strictly out of bounds: I wonder how many Foresters would recognise that term nowadays, and indeed what that area looks like now?



## Forest in the Great War

My brother and I arrived at Forest School in the Summer Term 1914. The reason we went there was some link with C. J. Fox which I never fully understood.

Although it is now seventy years ago, I still have some vivid memories and can remember numerous names and faces. But I have met only two or three Old Boys in all that time, one being J. A. Barlow who happened to be in my Regiment and was a noted Bisley Champion.

Towards the end of term there was mounting excitement about the situation in Europe and soon after we got home for the holidays, war was declared against Germany on August 4. On the 17th my father, a regular soldier, sailed for France with the BEF. Then in September Mr Guy wrote to all parents saying that owing to various difficulties caused by the outbreak of war, he was extending the holidays by four days. When we got back to school we found that some masters and the Gym Instructor, Sergeant Turner, had already left to join up. One of the masters B. H. Geary won the VC at Hill 60 not long after. He was badly wounded and partially blinded, but he came down to the School for a hero's welcome. Other masters followed in a steady succession and I remember Mr Matson and the Rev. MacNamara coming back to see us dressed in brand-new uniforms. The chief excitement during the Christmas Term 1914 was the raids on London by the Zeppelins. The first Zeppelin to be brought down was at Potter's Bar. Everyone rushed out to watch and every single boy in the School had his personal eyewitness account of the incident.

I remember seeing the searchlights playing around the sky and people shouting 'There it is, look.' But with hindsight I think much of what we saw was imaginary. What added interest to the matter was the fact that the Zeppelin had been

shot down by Lieutenant-Commander [sic] Leefe Robinson, R.F.C., a relative of some brothers in the school. The next one to be brought down was at Cuffley, also within eyeshot, but after that we were shepherded into some downstairs room, probably the servants hall, when there was an air-raid alarm. Later on, we heard the enormous explosion as the munitions factory at Silvertown blew up, and we could see the blaze on the southern horizon lasting for many hours.



The author's brother in RAF uniform, May 1926.

As the war went on difficulties grew. Staff, both teaching and domestic, were continually changing and increasingly hard to get, and food became progressively scarcer and worse. But I remember staying at school for the Summer Exeat in, I think, 1916 and having a fine time. We dined at the High Table, waited upon by Warwick the butler and were given the freedom of Mrs Guy's drawing room whenever we wanted. We also had an enjoyable expedition to High Beach. Most of the party travelled in a wagonette with two horses but I went in a trap driven by Mr Guy. We also went to the zoo one day, conducted by the Rev. T. P. Stephens, a master, who was a Fellow of the

Society, a fine naturalist and a notable mathematician.

In those days exams were not the bugbear they are today. The first external exam most people had to face was University Entrance or equivalent. There was no O Level nor even School Certificate that I can remember and many schools, Forest included, did not operate the Common Entrance system.

Consequently, parents were free to switch their children regardless of age. My brother and I left at Easter 1917 for domestic family reasons. I was approaching 12 but my brother had turned 15, an awkward age to change school from every aspect but nobody seemed to mind.



The Silvertown Fire Station pictured after the explosion at the nearby Brunner, Mond and Co. munitions factory on

January 19, 1917. In all, 73 people were killed, with a further 98 seriously injured.

# Forest School Corps

In the entrance hall of Frimley Park House, the Cadet Training Centre, between Sandhurst and Aldershot, stands a glass case. In the case lies a book, hand-printed on vellum sheets. It contains the record of School contingents since the first were founded in the mid-nineteenth century.

Under the year 1883 is set out a brief history of Forest School Corps. The book was prepared in 1960 for presentation to Her Majesty the Queen, our Colonel-in-Chief. She, very graciously, asked for the book to be returned to Frimley where it could be seen and read by both officers and cadets when attending courses.

In this year, the 150th of Forest School and the 101st of the Corps, the book is being brought up to date and the complete entry now reads as follows:

Maj. D. P. Barnard, T.D.	1961
Maj. D. E. Wakem	1975
Lt. A. L. Little	1984

A facsimile of the relevant pages of The Queen's Book accompanies this article.

The whole history of the Corps at Forest is encompassed by the Nominal Roll of Contingent Commanders and the days of the Officers Training Corps are recalled by the list of Guards of Honour supplied by the contingent.

Alas, the formal parade, the gleaming brass buttons, shoulder titles and Forest School cap badges are gone from us for ever. The Corps has followed the Regular Army into the last quarter of the twentieth century and become smaller, more efficient and, sadly, rather drab.

However, the training is now as up to date as we can make it with the help of the Training Teams, with whom we have managed to establish a very strong rapport in recent years.

Adventurous training was begun by the contingent in 1965 and has continued with only one break when transport failed to materialise. In more recent years it has been renamed, after being called Arduous Training for many years, but most cadets still refer to it as 'Ard. Trug', with some affection.

No Corps would exist, however, without a body of officers to support the OC and to train efficient NCO instructors. At Forest, with the exception of a few lean years, we have been lucky to attract sufficient officers and, at times, have had more volunteers than places on the establishment.



The officers of the School Cadet Corps, then attached to the Essex Regiment, from the *Navy and Army Illustrated* of 1902. L-R: Lieutenant Morrison, Sergeant-Instructor Cleaver, Captain Tassell and 2nd Lieutenant Poole.

# FOREST SCHOOL

CORPS

FOUNDED  —1883

## COMMANDING OFFICERS

R.S.M.s

Capt Vaux	1883 School Cadet Corps	Cleaver
Lt. R.C. Gauy	1892	1895-1911
Capt I.G. Lloyd-Jones	1894 Royal Volunteer Corps	
Capt D.S.M. Tassel	1900	
Capt Morgan-Owen	1905	
	1908	
Capt A.de V. Wade	1911 Officers Training Corps	Lester
Capt N.D. Pagden	1912	1911-15
Capt Sleigh	1913	
Lt. F.A. Woodard	1915	
Capt J.D. Robinson	1920	
Lt. J.F.E. Monckton	1920	
Maj. L.T. Danby M.C.	1920	
Capt Roberts	1924	
Capt Venn	1925	
Capt Becher	1926	
Capt Walker	1927	
Capt I.L. Gordon	1929	

Mills  
1929-36

Capt Welch	1936	
Capt I.T. Fisher	1939	
Lt. Col. The Rev. B.A. Clegg T.D.	1940	
Maj. D.P. Barnard T.D.	1961	
Maj. D.E. Wahem	1975	
Lt. A.L. Little	1984	

{ W.P. Austin.  
(9th Hussars)  
1937-54

1940 - Junior Training Corps  
1949 - Combined Cadet Force.

The VICTORIA CROSS was awarded to:-  
1897 Bt. Lt. Col. R.B. Adams

## GUARDS OF HONOUR

1884	H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught
1886	Princess Christian.
1908	Princess Louise of Schleswig - Holstein at a local Bazaar.
1927	T.R.H.s the Duke and Duchess of York at a local Hospital.
1937	H.M. King George VI on his way to the Guildhall; the only O.T.C. there.
1937	H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester on the presentation of a charter to the Borough of Wanstead
1949	The Lord Lieutenant of Essex. Col. Sir Francis Whitmore K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

Lives lost in the 1914-1918 War - 98.  
1939-1945 War - 42

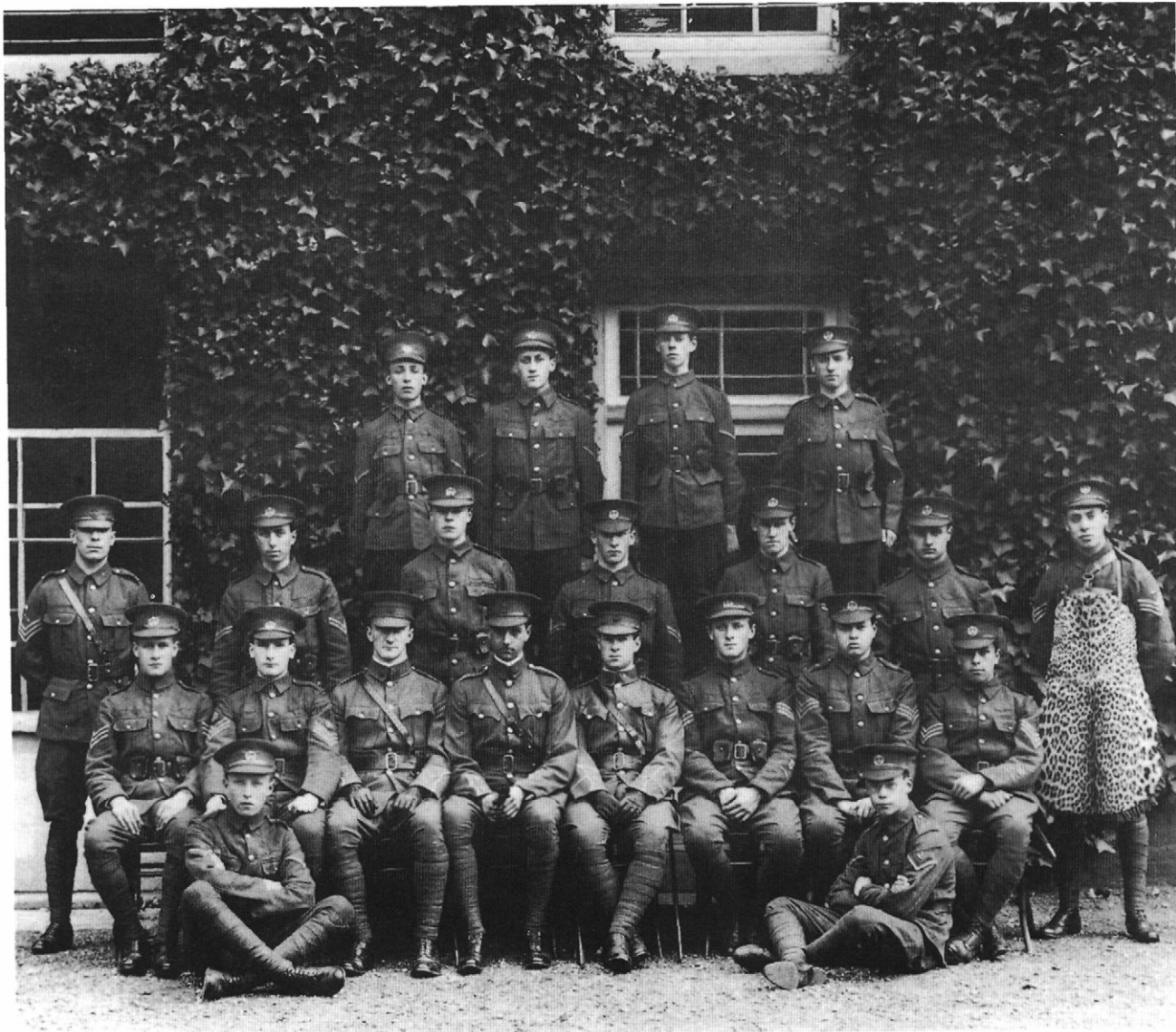
The activities of the Corps have been faithfully chronicled by generations of contingent commanders, always written in a semi-anonymous fashion, being signed 'OC'. Thus indicating that it is the job and not the man that counts in this very important area of the School.

The Corps is the only School activity which is subsidised by the State directly, by a grant from the Ministry of Defence, and so the officers and cadets form a useful bridge between the School and the Regular Army.

Facsimile of the pages in *The Queen's Book* recording 101 years of the Forest School Corps.

In more recent times the Army has laid less emphasis on Corps training leading to a career in the Army. At Forest, however, with no military tradition, we have sent a small, regular stream of cadets into the Forces, with, we hope, some grounding in the basic principles.

Long may the Corps continue to flourish!



Forest School Corps earlier this century: the uniform is that worn between the first decade and the Second World War.



Forest School Corps 1984: the Corps continues to flourish and looks forward to its second hundred years with determination.

# Some Recollections of the 20s

I was at Forest from 1920 to 1929 — for the first few years as a day-boy and thereafter as a boarder . That was a long time ago and my memory is somewhat rusty. Many of my memories would be of no interest to anyone. However I do recall a few things which may perhaps be of interest.

## **The School Play**

The Play was always produced by Ralph Guy. He was an excellent producer, extremely thorough and most amusing to watch and to listen to. For the first few weeks rehearsals were conducted behind closed doors. For the last few weeks rehearsals took place on the stage in the Gym. Most of the boarders and some of the day-boys turned up in the Gym in the evenings to watch. It was very entertaining but the amusement was tempered with sympathy for some unfortunate boy who was made to repeat a line twenty times or more until he got it right. I speak from experience!

The scenery was painted by the Baker family, who also constructed and worked the noise effects and lighting. Their thunder and lightning were very realistic. The stage was erected each year by Pedder, the school carpenter. He was a dear old man. Ralph pulled his leg unmercifully and pretended to give him endless rockets but Pedder never turned a hair.

I remember particularly Basil Guy (later Bishop of Gloucester). He was an excellent Kate in *The Taming of the*

*Shrew* and a wonderful Shylock. Originally I was cast to play Portia to his Shylock but about two weeks after the start of rehearsals my voice broke. So I was displaced. In the event that was fortunate for everyone because about ten days before Play Night I went down with chickenpox — the only boy in the school to get it.

I was bitterly disappointed at not being able to play Portia but I made up for it the following year by playing Malvolio.

## **The OTC**

Although he was some four years senior to me I remember Phil Herring as being a very smart Under Officer. In his early days I think he must have been in the Band. At that time we both lived in St Mary's Avenue, Wanstead. During one of the holidays I remember being woken many times by Phil practising the bugle on his lawn.

In my first term in the OTC the Corps formed part of the Guard of Honour (together with the local Territorial Battalion of the Essex Regiment) for the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI and Queen Elizabeth) when they opened an extension to the Whipps Cross Hospital. It was a bitterly cold day.

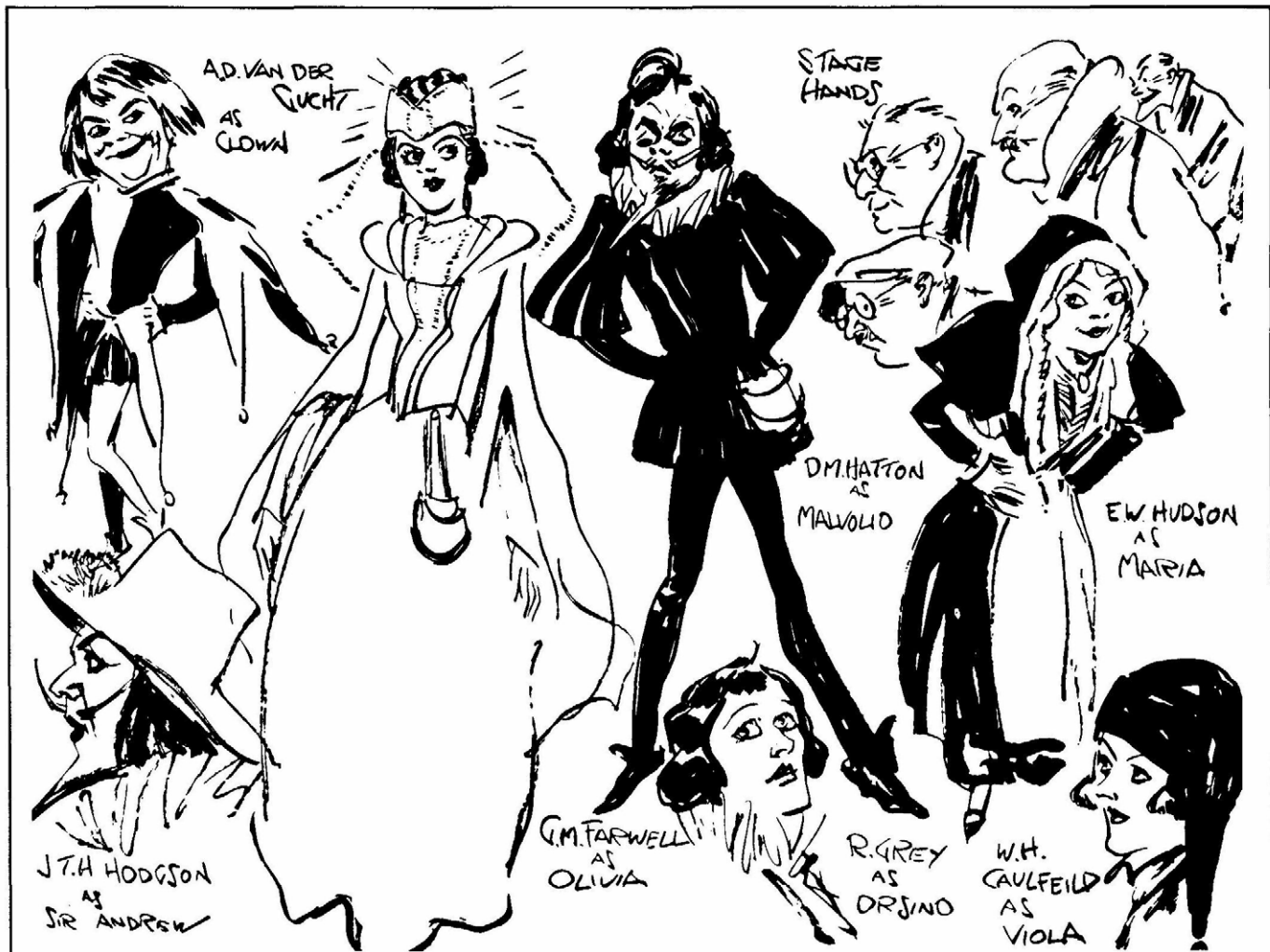
I enjoyed very much the trips to Bisley to shoot in the Eight for the Ashburton. We always travelled in private cars of Old Boys, most of whom were going to shoot in the Veterans. On the way back we stopped for supper at the same pub (I think it was called the Free Foresters), getting back to School rather late.

## **Easter and Summer Terms 1929**

By the end of 1928 I had passed the necessary exams. So for my last two terms I did not have much work to do. I had a thoroughly enjoyable time organising things for Poole's and the Corps.

The Easter Term of 1929 was bitterly cold. For at least six weeks the ground was frozen solid. At that time I was a member of a tennis club which had its courts and clubhouse beside the 'Basin' on the grounds of Wanstead Golf Club. The Basin was frozen with thick ice. Several times a week some of us spent the afternoon there skating and playing our own version of ice hockey with walking sticks. Nearly always we managed to be driven back to School by Old Boys or the odd girl friend.

The Summer Term of that year was gloriously hot. On Sundays monitors were allowed to spend the whole afternoon in the Swimming Bath followed by tea and cakes provided by the Sergeant's wife. A very happy time.



### Finale

I hope I have not put too much emphasis on the happy time I had in my last two terms. I am not going to pretend that my school days were the happiest days of my life. They were not. Nor am I going to pretend that I disliked them because that would not be true either. I have many happy memories. But what I really enjoyed about my last two terms was my first taste

The author, Derek M. Hatton, starring as Malvolio: a cartoon from *The Bystander*, January 1929.

of freedom albeit with a restraining hand in the background.

I learnt many things at Forest, not only how to study and to work to pass exams, but many other things as well. To my mind those other things are so very important.



## The Memory be Green

Your request to write recalling my schooldays at Forest brings many memories floating back, some happy, some sad — but mostly the former. Certainly they are vivid, although the events were over fifty years ago.

The chief difference, I think, between then and now is that there were no major changes throughout my career at Forest. It was the period towards the end of Ralph Guy's headmastership, and things were in a groove (some might say a rut). Term followed term, year followed year, and the routine, the meals, the buildings, the staff even, seemed to have been the same forever. I have fond memories of E. M. Guy (Carper), W. Lowndes (Dripper), Russell the groundsman, Pedder the carpenter, Warwick the butler, Gutteridge the pantryman, George the handyman (kick on the bootroom door for bangers and mash).

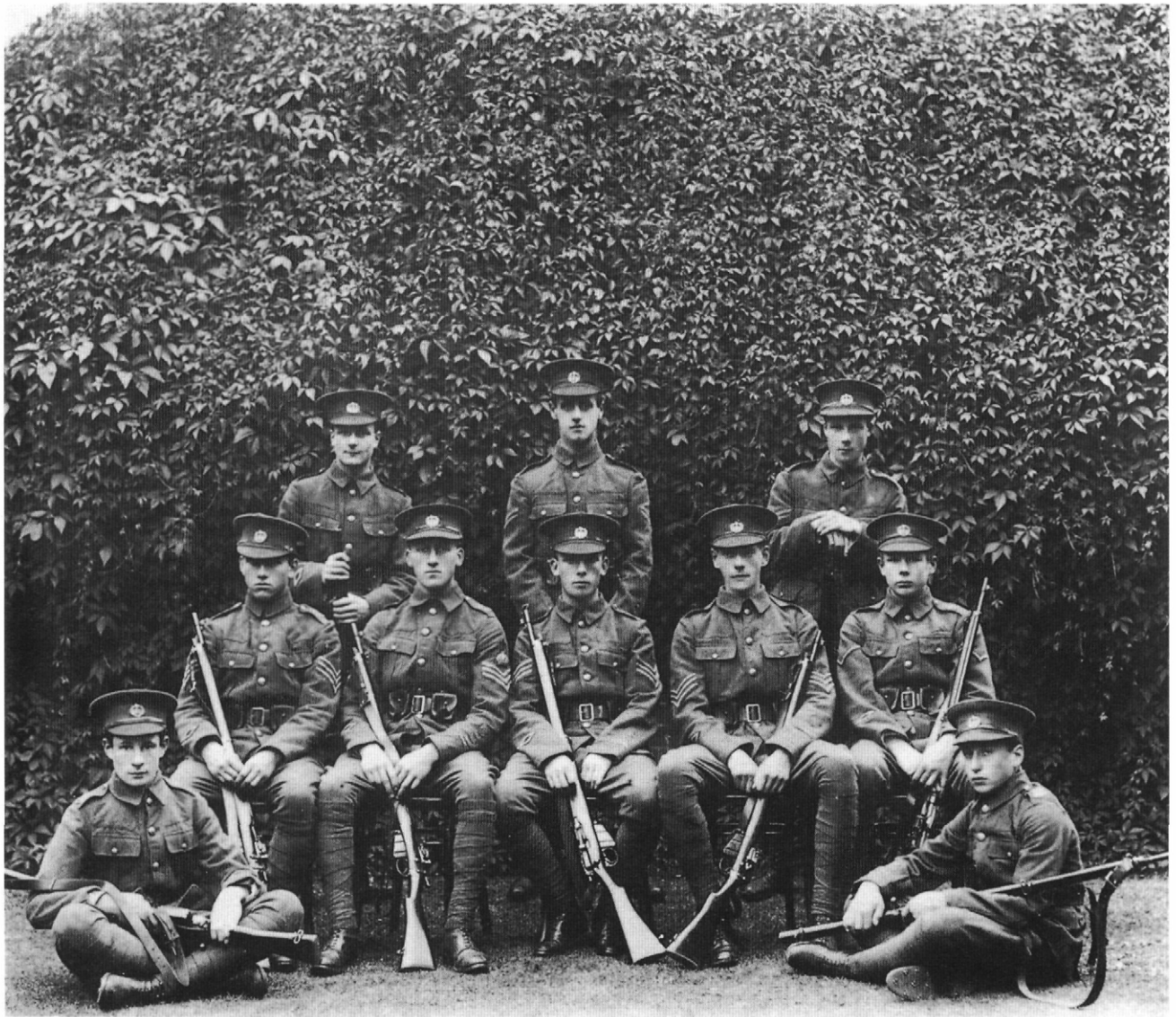
But perhaps my fondest memories are of the Junior School, under D. A. Bull and J. M. Syngé. I can see now that they were two of the best schoolmasters in the fullest sense that I have ever encountered, and in running my own Prep School I often found myself acting in a way I hoped they would have approved. Syngé used to amuse us all with a song at concerts about an old man named Abraham. Although I have never seen it written down, and it has a dozen or so verses, I can still sing it to our junior boys, and they love it as much as we did. And those special teas for the junior monitors followed by 'Racing Demon' were as exciting as they were simple. We had to make our own leisure-time activities in those days. We did not envy the day-boys. We were sorry for them, because they missed so much.

Forest was then a very small school, so most boys were engaged in a multiplicity of activities. The Play in the old gym,

the choir (compulsory Chapel twice a day and three times on Sundays), the Debating Society, the Corps with parades twice a week and a visit to Rainham marshes outdoor range once a week in summer, in preparation for Bisley and the Ashburton Shield, plus a week's camp. All this in addition to the two major games of cricket and football, with Fives (probably the best exercise for the whole body of any ball game), boxing ('You will box for the House, won't you!' Instructed by Mr Hook of the garlic diet), gymnastics — even fencing — for the annual display, thrown in.

Now as a Governor regularly visiting the School, I marvel at the changes that have taken place, the buildings, the food, the academic and sporting achievements. But I see one thing that has not changed, the spirit of dedication of those who help to run the school that has made Forest what it is today.





**A Shooting Team of the period B. H. Belle describes in his article. Such young men would have shot at Bisley.**

# Old Foresters' Football

## Foundation of the Club

For practical purposes, the Old Foresters' Football Club has taken 1876 as the year of its birth. 1876 was certainly the year in which it was firmly constituted. According to a letter, the original of which we still have, written by Prebendary Poole on August 21, 1913 to 'A.G.' (presumably Austen Guy), 'the idea of the OFFC really originated in R. Metcalfe's rooms in St Edmund Hall, Oxford around 1874 when E. G. Shuttleworth, Metcalf and myself were present, but the impetus to give it a start was supplied by A. W. Letts the first Honorary Secretary who was so energetic that he was a perfect pest to all Old Foresters but he did his work well!'

There is no doubt that Old Foresters' teams were fielded well before 1876, in regular fixtures against the School and possibly in other occasional games. R. Cutbill of 13 Gresham Street London E.C. is shown in published records as the Secretary in 1869/70 (W. J. Cutbill was an FA Committee Member).

1876 however was obviously the first full season when, as members of the Football Association, a full programme of matches, against the leading London clubs, was played. The record for that season was: played 11: won 7: drawn 2: lost 2: goals 18 against 8. In that season we also know that the Old Foresters played in a formation of two full backs, two half backs and six forwards while Forest School preferred the older style of one full back, two half backs and seven forwards.

To set matters in the general context of the development of the game it is interesting to observe that it was only in 1878 that the referee's whistle was introduced, that throw-ins did not become two handed until 1882, and that the cross bar did not replace the tape until 1883.

In the first set of club rules it is interesting to note that the subscription was proposed at '2s 6d for active members'. The teams used to change at The Eagle at a cost of 4 guineas a season and walk up to 'The Shrubbage'. The Eagle, an old coaching inn strategically placed on the eastern approaches to London and about a hundred yards from Snaresbrook station, still thrives. Until the club had its own HQ it was the regular venue for selection committee meetings and pre and post match refreshment.

The first record of matches in the club minutes is for 1877/78 when the results were: played 25: won 18: drawn 4: lost 3: goals 81-18. In the FA Cup the OF's lost 0-1 to Oxford University. At the committee meeting the team chosen to meet Oxford was recorded as:

goal	E. B. Beauchamp
back	C. J. Fox
¾ backs	J. W. Guy and K. W. Elmslie
½ backs	E. H. Topham and Rev. T. E. B. Guy
sides	P. Fairclough and E. Cazenove
centre	F. Barry
sides	T. M. Day and F. G. Guy

Beauchamp and J. W. M. Guy to change places if necessary.

The minutes do not reveal why the necessity might arise but it would appear that positions by now were firmly established and we see a slight change in formation from the six forward plan noted in the previous season.

Of this side, P. Fairclough became a full England international; E. H. Topham captained Cambridge University and T. E. B. Guy and F. G. Guy were two of the four Guy brothers, all of whom gained 'blues' at Oxford — a record which stood for quite a time until five Farnfield brothers played for Cambridge.

## End of an epoch

In 1890/91 four Old Foresters were in the county side, F. R. Pelly, G. C. Hollington, E. J. Ramsey and L. Dashwood. Pelly began his long international career — the Club's third full international (P. Fairclough and G. B. Childs having gained similar honours a few years before).

In 1891/92 the semi-final of the London Charity Cup was reached.

1893/94 was another outstanding year. A crowd of 3,000 watched the London Senior Cup Final at Leyton where the Old Foresters defeated the Old Carthusians 2-1. (This was the OF's fourth appearance in the final and its second victory.) Pelly played for England and with L. Dashwood, W. E. Brewerton and A. N. Guy in the Essex side.

In season 1899-1900, with a new secretary, S. H. J. Russell (a further blue), the club enjoyed a successful season. No Cup ties were entered but the 1st XI lost only one match out of twenty-two played.

Thus, by the time the Arthur Dunn Cup was founded in 1902 perhaps the greatest period of the club was over. E. W. Swanton wrote in 1937, 'it is perhaps a pardonable observation to make that had the Arthur Dunn Cup been started fifteen years earlier the Old Foresters would assuredly have won it not once, but several times.' (*The Illustrated Sporting & Dramatic News* — January 29, 1937.)

However, there was still plenty to be proud of. In 1907/08 the semi-final of the Dunn was reached. C. D. McIver, J. Simonds, S. R. Simonds, and F. A. H. Henley played in the first ever Essex AFA XI against Cambridge University, and the

first two were blues. Others who played for Essex AFA XIs in subsequent years were W. L. Johnson, A. J. Waugh, R. G. Roper, E. Morris, S. T. Robson, R. V. Marty, and F. W. H. Nicholas.

The Essex AFA Senior Cup (not to be confused with the Essex Senior Cup which the OF's had won three times in a row from 1885, before the founding of separate amateur competitions) was won in 1908 (held jointly with the Old Salopians). The following year the club were again finalists and in 1911-12, and were semi-finalists in 1912/13 and 1913/14. E. Morris played 'for a representative English eleven in Bohemia' in 1912, thus making a fourth full international according to club records. (The School Honours Board doesn't agree!) F. W. Nicholas brought the tally of varsity blues up to 16 before the 1914-18 war.



School Football XI, 1900: one of the main soccer schools, Forest soon developed an outstanding Old Boys' Club.



#### Between the wars

The Old Foresters' Football Club re-established itself after the 1914 war and though only two seasons saw it through the first round of the Arthur Dunn between the wars, the spirit was good and there were individual successes.

F. W. H. Nicholas played for the England amateur international team in the early 1920s. He had gained his blue at football (as well as athletics) before the war and was without doubt the finest all-rounder ever produced at Forest. He was also an international at athletics and a county cricketer while still at school, where his record was only eclipsed by C. D. McIver's fantastic 100.3 batting average, and most of his school athletics records survived for nearly fifty years. At football he also captained the Army team (in which another Old Forester, R. V. Martyn, also played between 1920 and 1922); and was in one of the outstanding Corinthian sides that defeated Blackburn Rovers in the FA Cup in 1924.

F. W. H. Nicholas played in 1919-20 for England against Wales, Belgium and France and in the following season against Ireland. He was also in the England football team for the 1920 Olympics in Antwerp. This was the only fully representative *England* side ever to play in the Olympics. B. H. Belle gained the only blue in this period (but it was a double one for good measure and times were becoming more competitive). J. A. Smith played for Oxford in 1931 but not in the varsity match (the fifth Old Forester to have that misfortune).



The Guys did much to establish the new game of soccer in the nineteenth century. Here R. C. and H. Guy are seen representing Oxford University. Old Boys' football owes much to their enthusiasm in the early days.

This raises an interesting point. I do not know when the custom of awarding blues only for appearance in the varsity match became a rule, but one Old Forester avoided the necessity. Apparently Bishop E. D. Shaw who played football for Oxford in 1881 and cricket in 1882 was injured in the last game before the University match and was awarded his blue by special registration. (*Vide* E. W. Swanton in *Illustrated, Sporting & Dramatic News* — January 29, 1937.)

#### Post-war success

There were a number of individual honours gained in the post-war period — R. J. H. Beverton having gained a 'wartime blue' at Cambridge which was remarkable for a man who did not gain his colours at school.

In the fifteen years following the war, C. J. Weir, R. W. Trimby and D. Wilson captained their respective university teams and brought the tally of blues gained by Old Foresters to forty in all (shared by twenty-one individuals — six of whom captained their side). For a school as small as Forest was up till that point in time, this represents a pretty remarkable achievement. As some comparison, for example, arch local



**Forest Football XI, 1983-84: a team which could form the basis for one of the strongest ever Old Foresters' sides?**

rivals Chigwell could boast but one solitary blue, gained by A. O. Dean for Cambridge in 1955. R. W. Trimby gained four amateur international caps, the seventh Old Forester to earn international honours, and D. Wilson was also an Olympic trialist.

The last sixteen years have brought a fair measure of success to the Foresters' Football Club.

The 1969-70 season saw it in the long awaited first Dunn Cup final, and, after a gap of sixty years, in the final of the Essex AFA Senior Cup.

At the beginning of the following season, the final of the 1969-70 Argonaut Trophy Shield was played and the Old Foresters this time won the final, after two successive seasons as the losing finalists.

In 1972-73 and 1973-74 the Arthurian League was won, and the 'double' with victory in the 1974 Arthur Dunn Cup Final.

The following season the club was again in the final of the Arthur Dunn cup.

Meanwhile, the other elevens were demonstrating the new depth and strength of the club. The Second Eleven were runners up in the League Division II four seasons in succession before winning it in 1973-74. They also won the Junior League Cup in 1969-70 and 1973-74. The Third Eleven won Division III of the league four times in five seasons between 1969-73. The Fourth Eleven were runners-up and the Fifth Eleven third in Division IV in 1972-73. The Fourth Eleven also won Division IV again in 1973-74 and the Fifth Eleven were runners-up.

A number of Old Foresters played for the Arthurian League representative XI during the period and G. S. Green became the twenty-second Old Forester to gain a blue and bring the total tally, to date, to forty-four.

## Memories of Gerald Miller

In a letter, still in my possession, written by Mr Miller in 1955, he offered me the post of Head of the Mathematics Department at Forest School at a salary of £750 less £100 for Residence plus £25 for Head of the Department. I considered myself fortunate, because in a 'State' School at that time I would have been offered no extra payment for being Departmental Head, and naturally I would have had to arrange my own accommodation. This letter was written (as were all Gerald's letters) in his own handwriting — he had no secretary and ran the 'School Office' from his study.

At that time Gerald was within five years of retirement, but the quality which struck me most about him was his tremendous energy. He was, literally, everywhere at once — ubiquitous, but always available. He must have been a positive firebrand in his earlier years! Consequently one didn't argue with Miller! He was of course the last of the patriarchal Headmasters of Forest — for he operated from a different base

from his successors. Miller was not, as they have been, appointed by the Governors. Indeed, initially he 'appointed' them! So, in a very special way, Miller's word was law, and everybody from the most senior master to the lowliest pupil knew this.

Of course, the majority of his work for Forest occurred before my time, but from my colleagues I managed to piece together that having purchased the School in 1935, pulled it through the war years despite a direct hit, patched it up afterwards and proudly presented it to the HMC for acceptance, he was ever mindful of the School's potential, thus promoting and making possible its future along the lines which we in the post-Miller era have been privileged to watch coming along steadily, year by year.

Anecdotes about Miller abound — but are not always easy to put into print! I can however reveal that, because his bees decided to swarm at the wrong moment, he once interviewed one of his future members of staff from the top of a tree! He quite often seemed to be up in the roof area of the main building, chasing leaks in either the plumbing or the roof itself. Indeed, after one of these expeditions at some unearthly hour one morning he descended through the loft 'door' of one of the bathrooms at the precise moment when one of his Housemasters was engaged in very intimate and personal morning ablutions! Miller passed through, with one of his customary quips, quite undisturbed by the incident.

During these years, we were all saddened by the death of his first wife, Rosemary, after fighting a losing battle with cancer. They must have been lonely years for Gerald too; but in his last year, he was able to bring his new wife, Mollie, to Forest where she quickly made friends with everybody. When they retired, she devoted herself to looking after Gerald; and this devotion made it possible for him to be nursed at home in his last years. This is one of the reasons why I still keep in touch with Mollie from time to time.

In a strange sort of way, I still feel in touch, too, with Gerald; remembering that without his sterling qualities and tremendous energy, his devotion to duty, his outstanding courage and vision, and his extraordinary ability to inspire confidence in those around him, Forest School would not be in existence today. The *modus operandi*, 'Primus inter pares', which has become generally accepted in schools nowadays, meant nothing to him. He was the leader, and he (and he alone) led. I am told that during the first World War, in which he was awarded the MC, his men would have followed him anywhere. I can well believe it. A quite remarkable man, and a most unusual Headmaster.

## Forest in World War II

My first recall is of the Headmaster's (Major 'Mud' Miller) request to parents of boarders to send us to School with, if possible, our own beds since the School beds had been sent to Cornwall preparatory to the School's evacuation there on the outbreak of war. Fortunately before term started, German planes had been seen over Hayle (Cornwall) so the Head felt us to be just as safe in Snaresbrook as in Cornwall.

I recall our warm welcome by the Junior Matron (Mrs Bardell — 'Mis'm') and the welcome cups of hot cocoa dished up by the 'boot boy' (soon to be called up) before bed. The latter was a great favourite as in his boot room he had an air pistol which he used to allow us to fire with feathered darts — not slugs — at a target — all very illegal!

I was one of Matron's 'babies' in the junior dorm (there were only three!) together with Fido secundus, T. G. J. Pokorny (an exile from Hitler's reign in Czechoslovakia), and one of the many Smiths (was he Octavius?). Late one night after table-tennis in the changing room, smoke was seen coming up the front stairs. A small fire in the panelling had been started (by Bardy's cigarettes?) but was soon extinguished. A full 'trial' was held later one evening in the Library where the Head — called as a witness — appeared fully gowned and in mortar board carrying a bundle of canes. Unfortunately his enthusiasm became a little excessive and in emphasising a point he hit one of the gas lights above his head with the canes, causing some mirth among the audience.

I recall the Christmas term 1940 when we all slept on mattresses on the floor below the Hall with the windows sandbagged. Vividly I remember being late for Chapel one Sunday evening (we were playing show'hapenny) and running out realised Chapel was in darkness. There was an air raid

warning which we had not heard and the rest of School were in the shelter. Two of us — myself just 10 — were rather frightened looking up into the sky to see a descending barrage balloon fully alight. Fortunately it fell into the forest but a long length of cable was left draped over the Chapel roof.

I started in the Upper First (I think there was a class of about 21 — very big) and remember the Taylorson twins (D.R. and J.B.) were in the Lower First. After school there was a certain amount of bullying of us youngsters and I remember finding with great pleasure the empty 'Shell' school room with a whole library of books which I then used to escape to on wet Sunday afternoons and read. On fine days, both before school and after, we played endless games of football with a tennis ball in the front playground — the goal was the brick wall separating us from Senior School. In those days the Tuck Shop was between the old Pavilion and Manor House and was approached up an alley from outside the School. It was run by Sergeant Major Austin ('Fruit') and his wife and the clothes were supplied by Gorrings. The only good fit we could have of the latter was when the Gorrings man visited at the beginning of term. Otherwise 'Fruit' would insist that the item of clothing he held in stock was a good fit!

French in the Upper Second was under the charge of a certain retired Arundel master, Mr E. Adams ('Gunsmoke' or 'Gunner') and I can well remember as a member of the 'intelligentsia' (the back row) standing on the bench for most of the lesson for making some silly mistake. Later on we learned to pronounce 'un bon vin blanc' very correctly as each sound was slapped into alternate sides of one's face. One pleasure, in the summer with the windows open, was to duck before the flying missive of Gunner's book hit you and see it flying through the open window. One was always blamed for damaging the book.

During the blitz many were the large pieces of shrapnel we found either in the playground or when going round the Green for our pre-breakfast walk. However we soon became very blasé about danger as was evinced later in the flying-bomb era when we went to help harvest the corn and pick soft fruit in 'flying-bomb alley' near Iden, Rye, Sussex. Many was the night we lay under *canvas* listening to the shrapnel falling through the trees! Miraculously we all survived and received some pocket money. However School was hit by a flying-bomb at this time and I remember returning home early from camp and sending a long description of the damage back to those still in camp.

In the Third Form our Mathematics was taught by a Mr Nachmanson who used to insist on Pythagoras' Theorem





saying it very often with the aid of a ruler on the hand. On one occasion having broken a ruler on a boy's hand (was it Pete Reeves again?) he offered to replace same with a new one, only to find himself forking out for an expensive slide rule — much to our amusement. Poor man, he was terrified of the 'doodle bug' and if we could imitate the sound of a distant bomb coming he would make us hide 'under ze desks' and on one occasion when we insisted it was not safe to return to our seats as the 'bomb hadn't gone off, sir' we crawled on hands and knees all the way to the shelter: except that as half the class were passing the Head's Study, the latter came out to see what the commotion was about! End of escapade.

Two views showing the damage caused by the explosion of a V1 flying-bomb at Forest in August 1944. Note the Dining Hall in background of photograph on the right.

I finished up spending three years in the Sixth studying Physics under M. Loeb and Chemistry under H. Spitz. The latter subject we enjoyed (Leach, Erskine and myself) but Matron 'Spider' Webb did *not* like the smells emanating from the Chemy lab and wafting across the passage to her sickroom. From then on we increased the smells — especially of iso nicotinic acid hydrazide! Biology I learnt (with N. I. Thomson who later bowled for Sussex and England) at the South West



Essex Tech. in Walthamstow in the company of several glamorous girls. However my last year was great as Head Boy when I had to more or less behave and set an example. On two occasions I did fail. Firstly as I was then quite an accomplished keyboard player I was allowed to play the organ in Chapel for my own amusement. The Head was however definitely not amused when I had to report that I had broken the key in the organ case thereby preventing anyone else from using it.

Secondly with the previous year's Head Boy, John E. Spencer, I remember our attempt to screw a sheet of hardboard over the bedroom door of the sleeping Mr 'Cappy' Barnard. However he woke as we were putting the first screws

in and must have been rather surprised to find (a) his bedroom door shut and (b) on opening on it, what appeared to be a solid wall outside it. Unfortunately the two of us could not go on holding the board up so had to decamp *very* quickly!

Memories of nine years become legion the more time one thinks of them. Some are still fresh. I can never hear Nelson Gabriel in *The Archers* without recalling Jack May playing *Hamlet*, Christmas 1939, in the old Gym. Others only come back with difficulty but as a whole were an experience not to have been missed and together with successful School Certificate results taken in 'Big School', led to the foundation of a successful and happy career later.

# Cambridge Old Foresters

The Cambridge University Old Foresters' Club is a club within a club and is open to Old Foresters who are presently up, or are Cambridge graduates or former members of the University or Cambridge graduates who are masters at the School. A similar club exists at Oxford.

The CUOF was founded in 1936 by Guy Deaton, OF and later Head of English at Forest for many years. The two Taster brothers, Willie Thompson and John Renshaw were also founder members. William 'Bill' Cuttle, probably one of Forest's major academics, and a don at Downing College at the time, allowed the use of his rooms and enthusiastically supported the venture.

Initially it started as termly tea-parties where a Secretary was chosen to write the Cambridge Letter to the Magazine, in which were recorded the activities (or inactivity) of OFs in residence. The letter was traditionally signed 'Cantab. Sylvestris' and the reader was encouraged to guess the identity of the author from evidence presented in the letter. (A similar tradition exists in the Annual Report of the OF Shooting Club on the results of the Bisley Veterans' event. Here the author is the winner of the Arnold Boardman Cup for the highest score of the day. As the cup may only be won once by a competitor, it is not always the highest score on the card, and so another puzzle is posed for the interested and knowledgeable reader.)

A break of six years in the CUOFs continuity came in 1939, and for the next six years fewer undergraduates were in residence. In 1945, however, the backlog of those six years came up, together with the 'contemporary' undergraduates, and the club reached its highest membership of any year.

At a post-war tea party, Bill Cuttle put forward the idea of an annual formal dinner, and the format of the present day

event was thus established. Bill himself arranged the first meal, in Downing, after much discussion with the Downing steward, and it was Bill who lovingly hand-wrote each menu for

## CAMBRIDGE OLD FORESTERS

being in L.7 Downing College

LAWFULLY ASSEMBLED

on Sunday, 30 November 1947

(being The First Sunday in ADVENT)

AND HAVING CONSIDERED

that the said Sunday is the last Sunday in  
the Full MICHELMAS TERM of the present Year

HEREBY TAKE OCCASION

to send to the School their Best Wishes in all things

AND IN PARTICULAR

FOR THE SUCCESS

of  
THE PLAY

They respectfully beg leave to convey their Wishes

By These Presents

In Pectore Robvvr

Plorat Sempar

Wherunto each has in the presence of each  
SET HIS SIGNATURE

William L. Cuttle

D. H. Sandford.

Raymond L. W. Mansfield.

Art Farrell.

Doyle E. Wakem.



Absent: E. G. SMITH.

Early post-war epistle from the Cambridge Old Foresters, handwritten by Bill Cuttle, and signed by some familiar Old Foresters. Note the absent E. G. Smith, late Bursar of Forest.

the diners (as far as memory serves, the meal was built round 'A Good Meat Pudding').

With the death of Bill, the club began to hold the annual dinner in other colleges where OFs were in residence. The result has been that, over the years, we have visited many colleges and sampled some magnificent meals. Last year we were at Girton, after the admittance of men undergraduates to the former all-ladies' college. This year sees a new twist in that the Secretary will be a girl OF and the meal will be served in her college, Emmanuel, formerly an all-male establishment.

Although each member will treasure memories of remarkable meals, the author remembers a monumental salver of 'Fruits de Mer' at Emmanuel many years ago and even this year we were presented with some surprises. The menu, presumably in the cause of austerity, was sent to diners some months prior to the actual meal. The second course arrived on the table looking curiously like legless octopus, pale green and circular. Turning to his neighbour, he asked whether *he* could remember what it was. The neighbour replied: 'No, the only thing that sticks in my mind is the sweet — and *that* is going to be a "salad of tropical fish"'.

Reference to the Secretary answered both problems. The legless octopus proved to be a cucumber mousse (cucumber mousse?), and the tropical fish turned out to be, less exotically, tropical fruits.

An old fashioned menu, to accompany the meal, might be thought dull, but might reassure nervous diners. We were informed that all correspondence and the menu had been 'computer generated', however.

A club tie of Forest navy blue with a narrow Cambridge blue diagonal stripe and embroidered with the acorns and oak leaves could be obtained from Messrs H. G. Almond Ltd, in the '40s and '50s, in Sidney Street. Alas, this is probably no longer possible as Almonds have long been taken over by a larger (and more efficient) West End concern.

Reaching back to the first small gatherings of the '30s and '40s, it still is traditional for speakers at the dinner to make their speeches while seated at the table.

Another pleasant tradition has grown up since the war, and that has been the annual invitation to the Rev J. E. Scott. Despite the handicap of having attended 'the other place', he is, nevertheless a welcome visitor.

Unfortunately, the written records of the club, giving a list of members and activities, disappeared during the iconoclastic period of the '70s. However, the Club seems to be back on course again and the small but steady stream of undergraduates keeps flowing.

The year 1986 will see the fiftieth anniversary of the Cambridge Old Foresters and it is hoped that the undergraduates in residence will mark the occasion in a fitting manner.

And now, Dear Reader, I must leave you in the traditional manner and

Remain, Sir,  
Yours faithfully,  
Cantab. Sylvestris.

#### CAMBRIDGE LETTER.

*To the Editor of the FOREST SCHOOL MAGAZINE.*

DEAR SIR,—The fine weather has encouraged us, like the crocuses along The Backs, to rear our ugly head again. We regret that we have little of great import to offer—momentous events have a habit of passing us by while we snooze before the fire—but we have been able to muster a few home truths about our numbers, who, as it happens, rarely emerge from their pensive cells more than twice a Term, and then only for as long as it takes to restore exhausted brains with vintage draughts of Ambrosia from The Anchor.

And now for the fruits of our labours :—

R. L. W. Mansfield (Downing). We are amazed to discover that despite all previous discouragement, he has again taken part in a Theatrical Entertainment. This practise must cease immediately.

D. J. H. Sandiford (Downing). We catch fleeting glimpses of him as he makes almost indecent haste towards the Labs, where, we believe, he has found a Particularly Seductive Atom.

E. G. Smith (Downing). Smith—Is a Myth!

A. D. M. Sorrell (Downing). We congratulate him on his translation to the First Boat in time for the Lent Races and take this opportunity of affirming that there is still hope for the Mays.

D. E. Wakem (Queens) has joined the Cruising Club, but we are told that he never sails beyond the bar.

That, Sir, is all our tittle-tattle. Should you feel, with others we know, that the stock of our accomplishment, so far, is but little, we would hasten to explain that "Though much is done, yet much remains," and if we cannot provide deeds positive, at least we have in our mental larders a vast store of unparalleled plans and projects which at a future date we shall launch into a world breathless with expectancy.

In conclusion, we would offer a prayer that Summer may coincide with Sports Day, and we look forward to renewing old acquaintance then.

We are, Sir,  
Yours sincerely,  
CANTAB. SYLVESTRIS.

Cambridge Old Foresters: The traditional Report to the Editor of the Forest School Magazine.

## A Memorable Evening

An evening of classical music by Chopin might not be expected as the first memory of Forest School to be recalled by an Old Boy, not blessed with any musical talent, asked to reminisce. That it immediately came to my mind confirms the opening sentence in the School Magazine for Easter Term 1938 — 'This was a memorable evening.' Prince George Chavchavadze, a renowned concert pianist at that time, had come back to his old school to give a concert in aid of the Organ Fund.

The Hall, in which as a day-boy I lunched each day, had been transformed into a Concert Hall. The expectant 'buzz' died and changed to polite applause as the Headmaster led Prince Chavchavadze to the School's best piano, tuned and polished as it had never been tuned and polished before. With the very first piece he arrested the attention of the audience. It was Ballade No. 1 in G Minor Op. 23. As piece followed piece each seemingly more brilliant than the last, the Military Polonaise in A Major was outstanding, enthusiasm grew. Encore followed encore. It was indeed 'a memorable evening'.

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### CHAVCHAVADZE.

This was a memorable evening. Chopin and Chavchavadze were with us, and to many of the large and enthusiastic audience it must have been a novel and almost startling experience. Some of the School who had never heard an artist like Prince George Chavchavadze came to the Concert ready to endure rather than to appreciate! But not for long; opening with the G Minor Ballade, Chavchavadze immediately arrested the attention of his audience; here was the fire, the understanding and technical brilliance that have earned for Chavchavadze the reputation of interpreter of Chopin. The Nocturne in F, charming and unassuming, was followed by three Studies. To most people the word "Study" suggests five finger exercises and boredom — would that they could have heard Chavchavadze's playing of the little F Minor Study—it was a miracle of delicacy and grace.

The main event of the evening was the B Flat Minor Sonata. Here came the biggest demand on the audience and for twenty-five minutes we were held in an unbroken spell. The Funeral March, with its quiet melody in the middle, was beautifully played and Chavchavadze showed a complete mastery of the last movement, which is incredibly hard and appeared astonishingly easy. The Military Polonaise in A, two Valses and the third Ballade brought the programme to an end but not the Concert! Encore followed encore and de Falla's Fire Dance gripped the imagination of the audience with its fierce intensity, but never for one moment did Chavchavadze allow his tremendous tone and pulsating rhythm to exceed the limits of the instrument. And now as we bring this account to an end, we know that we cannot thank him in words; his action, as an Old Forester, in giving such magnificent support to the Organ Fund, his pianoforte playing and his promise to come again soon, leave us completely overwhelmed.

B.H.

The Programme was as follows:—

BALLADE No. 1 in G Minor. Op. 23.

NOCTURNE in F. Op. 15.

THREE STUDIES:

F Minor. Op. 10. F Major. Op. 25.

C Minor. Op. 25.

SONATA in B Flat Minor. Op. 35.

Grave—Doppio Movimento.

Scherzo. Marche Funebre. Finale.

VALSE No. 2 in A Minor. Op. 34.

VALSE (Posthumous) in E Minor.

BALLADE No. 3 in A Flat. Op. 47.

The original school magazine article of Easter 1938.

## Tea for Dissidents

It seems only yesterday that I sat in 'Bert' Buncher's room drinking tea out of an ill-matched cup and saucer and nibbling a chocolate biscuit while he played some piece for us — Debussy, perhaps, or a Chopin Ballade — us being his handful of musical devotees.

The gas-fire blazed, the busts of the composers looked down from their top shelf on a chaos of papers, scores, broken batons, divorced records and record sleeves. Cigarette burns marked the mantelpiece, and a curious smell — three-quarters compounded of stale du Maurier smoke but one quarter inanalysably Buncherish — hung over everything: a smell which belonged only to that room and which, when I sometimes nowadays smell something similar, brings back to me that room and all it stood for.

Soon the names bell would be rung and it would be time to line up for tea. Outside came a clatter of feet on the spiral stairs and along the dormitory corridors. In one of Buncher's worn leather armchairs would nestle one of the Smiths, in the other the other — Goldsmith and Blacksmith as I called them, after the colours of their house ties. Two or three others — Trimming or Gomersall, perhaps — might also be present. I might be on the floor, in a corner, out of sight. Through the window, in the autumnal dusk, the boughs would be dancing in the light of the street lamp, a pigeon plunging up against the wind.

'Bert' was small, birdlike, nervous and not taken too seriously, one suspects, by other masters or by many of the boys. One passed him in the passages trailing his dishevelled gown from his elbows, humming through his teeth some snatch of Mozart, staggering bravely under a weight of gramophone, records, books and scores that came up to his nose — on his way to the echoey ugliness of Big School where he taught music to largely indifferent classes on a bad piano and in appalling acoustics. Music lessons were too often a joke: I remember him once being goaded to jump in fury from the stage onto the stone floor — where explosive powder had been preparatorily sprinkled.

He played the organ in chapel and trained the choir, organised annual concerts and taught piano, and probably worked harder than some others on the staff: yet his activities necessarily remained rather peripheral to the main direction and emphasis of the school. Indeed, in retrospect we who belonged to his teatime circle seem not unlike cultural dissidents — dissidents from what seemed to us an unwelcome orthodoxy of compulsory games, petty discipline, and regimented philistinism. In his room, at this brief lacuna in the framework of the day, we foregathered like conspirators, like celebrants of a furtive sect.

I still remember the *tone* of his Rogers baby grand. I still remember the performances he gave, at successive summer concerts, of Debussy's 'L'Isle Joyeuse' and Chopin's A flat Ballade and Fantasie in F — each a revelation for which I remain grateful. I remember my first piano lesson, aged 12, when he scrawled notes on blank music paper in his vicious handwriting that I could neither read nor understand; and the anger with which he once sent me packing because I had done no practice. I remember him stopping me playing once and putting on a record of Rachmaninov performing Chopin's funeral march to show that it was all right to turn the composer's markings on their heads (as I was doing) — **providing** you were a genius.

He was a fine pianist and completely devoted to music. Maybe he was unprepossessing to look at, but, to those who could perceive and looked for something more from their teachers than academic information and authority, he seemed in touch with what really counted.

I believe he was killed soon after I left by a car on a zebra crossing; but I can still hear, if I try, his smoker's cough and the rapid shuffle of his feet advancing along the stony passages, his staccato ineffectual rage provoked by a disorderly class, or the sound of his piano at night as one passed his window or sat below his room in the 'Gordon Budd'.

# Memorable (Different) Pupils

*The running title for this little collection is 'Memorable (Appalling) Pupils'. But such pupils 'deserve our gratitude for the colour they brought to the hard graft of teaching.' Thus Woolley — speaking for us all. This selection covers out-of-school anecdotes, The CCF, the Stage and what can only be described as Schoolmaster's Revenge. A second version might be 'Memorable (Appalling) Colleagues' — perhaps in the year 2034. Retiring members of Common Room could be encouraged to leave their contributions in a bank vault until publication date. Readers will notice that there is no mention of girls in these pages. All Forest School girls have been and are perfect. Let the future judge the future.*

## I: ROLE OF DISHONOUR

Having been asked to write something on the Forest Role of Dishonour, I find myself appalled by the magnitude of the task. There are the great mass of delinquents who Got Away With It, including many names deserving Honourable mention in the Role of Honour — in letters of gilt on many a notice board. It is, for example, only a matter of weeks since I

discovered that a Head of House of mine bribed my nephew with cigarettes to take messages to my 16-year-old daughter. I take this as an acceptable hazard, apportioning no blame to anyone. But then there are those who, for no fault of their own, are doomed to trouble as the sparks fly upward. There was F., for instance. I nearly went down on my bended knees and implored him. 'Don't,' I said, 'my good F.; don't *break the law*. You are always found out. If you decide to heave a brick through a window, be sure the Headmaster, fresh from a bout of indigestion, will come round the corner, and you will be *for it*. Of course he took no notice. In his very last day, a window was broken in his form room. J. E. Scott, the relevant form master, came to me and said, 'I've had a window smashed in Big School. What shall I do?' 'VB, isn't it?', I said. 'Chuck us a form list.' I looked at it — 'My guess is F. It's just the sort of dam silly thing he would do. Don't ask him if, ask him why. He won't have an answer ready.' He came back twenty minutes after, grinning all over his face. It was F. all right. Then there was S., in Guy's. A promising starter, but faded — a great dodger. He was awarded an OTC Efficiency Award. It was decided that it should be awarded by Field Marshal Earl Montgomery in Chapel when he addressed the School. Before he started his address, briefed by the CO, he asked, in those well-known metallic ringing tones: 'S. — Where's S.?' No answer. The School held its breath. S.? S. had reverted to type — he was dodging Chapel again, just the wrong one.

And then there was L. A large, cheerful specimen, who went about breaking things — not necessarily deliberately. He was reported to me by a new House Monitor, whose zeal had not, during his first fortnight, endeared him to the rank and file. I sent for him after lunch, L., I mean, and he appeared. 'Did you want to see me, Sir?', he said, smiling a welcome. 'I did, L., as you well know. What's this about your attempting to push X into the Manor Pond?' 'Me, Sir? Not me, Sir. I was late for football at the Park, and I was running to be on time. I passed X, and accidentally touched him in so doing. I said "Sorry, X." I think he must have thought that I'd done it intentionally.' 'So there was no idea of upsetting him into the Manor Pond?' 'Oh no, Sir.' L. appeared to be shocked at the idea. 'But it would have been a dam good idea, wouldn't it, L.?' 'Yes, Sir. Thank you, Sir.' L. beamed at me. 'Well, let it be the last time for tricks like that, my lad.' We remained good friends ever afterwards.

Occasionally they crop up in pairs. Such a pair were C. and W. — the younger C. and the younger W. — whose elder brothers were models of discretion. Their crimes were ones of omission, not commission, in the main. They jointly held the

steeplechase record for slowness of time — somewhere around two hours. The only time that they showed alacrity was when the grub shop opened. Allergic to any form of exercise, physical or academic, they were constantly in trouble with monitors of all grades, and maintained a serenity which defeated authority, a cheerful imperturbability in the face of penalties imposed. Some two years after I had retired they called on me one Sunday when we were away. Two dear old ladies who lived near us came to us in the evening and said, 'You had two visitors today — two charming young gentlemen, Mr W. and Mr C. They were so sorry to miss you.' You never know, do you?

But no chronicle of this nature would be complete without mention of K.P. He was a young rascal, imperturbable, cheerful, and supremely confident of his ability to outwit anyone. I was rash enough to allow him to join the first post-war trip abroad to Paris. Rationing and wartime stringencies were still with us. I had as nice a selection of scallywags as you could wish for — and K.P. was only 14. He took to Paris as a duck takes to water. Our days were divided into three parts — two given up to sightseeing — the third was their own, provided they nominated the time of return to the hotel, and the nature of their own private expedition. K.P. made friends with a waiter at a café on the Grands Boulevards and took taxis to places recommended by the above. On the Saturday night (which was free after the evening meal) my wife and I found ourselves entirely free of charges from 8 to 10 p.m. We sneaked down to the Café de la Paix, and enjoyed our first leisure time of the week. It sped all too quickly and on our return to the hotel we were informed by a flustered Madame la Patronne that 'le petit P.' was in the Commissariat (Police Station) in the Champs Elysées, charged with an assault on a taxi-driver. So leaving my wife to hold the fort, off I went.

When I entered the station at about ten-thirty, my gaze swept past the duty cop, past the inevitable Saturday night drunks, and petty law-breakers, to P. in his blue shirt and Forest School boater. It was the only time I ever saw him nonplussed by events. I signed for his carcass, said good-night to the cop — and plumped him down at a table on the terrace of a café, ordered a drink for us both and said, 'What the blazes are you playing at now?' Apparently he had taken a taxi from Montmartre to the Champs-Elysées, and, seeing an iron bar on the floor, he picked it up and handed it through the open window between the driver and himself. The driver screamed, swerved to the kerb and jumped out shouting blue murder. The surrounding public bravely attacked the desperate ruffian of 14, overpowered him and marched him off

to the jug. His French which stopped short at Chapter 7 in the *First French Course* was inadequate to deal with the situation. We got him to bed, and spent a quiet Sunday.

On Monday we were bidden to 'une petite enquête'. Not down to the charge room but upstairs with a senior officer in plain clothes who, having first seen the taxi-driver, was convinced that an attempted attack had been foiled. It took me an hour and a half to convince him otherwise and after translating P.'s deposition into French we were allowed to leave.

And that boy's suitcase on the journey home was stuffed with contraband, including a joint of uncooked meat (expressly forbidden by law). He got away with it all, and under pretext of paying the ship's cook to cook the meat, he borrowed ten shillings off me, and blued it on lunch in the 1st Class restaurant on the boat.

He got his cricket colours later on. I saw him again during my last days at Forest. He was then based in Khartoum, selling Plymouth cars to the Sudanese, very successfully, I gather.

Indeed most, nay, the overwhelming majority of 'baddies' seem to have done well for themselves in life. They deserve our gratitude for the colour they brought to the hard graft of teaching and training the young, in and out of the classroom, a welcome scent of the great wicked world outside where the righteous do not always get the bouquets, and the wicked flourish like a green bay tree.



Junior School trip to France: note J. E. Scott in background.



## II: FACE WITHOUT A NAME

My most appalling pupil? Competition for this title is immense. From the crowd of memories clamouring for recognition emerges one face to which I shall attach no name. In class he showed none of the high ability which he and his nearest and dearest so easily detected in him. His conduct was adjustable on a vernier scale to match the toughness or weakness of his teachers: docile with the disciplinarians; truculent and aggressive with the weaker sort. Outside the classroom he was evasive of such activities as cross-country running, but always ready to put forward large claims to inclusion in House teams, based on skills which existed only in his own imagination. In spite of repeated demonstrations of his ineptitude, he would demand to be wicket-keeper (rarely stopping the most innocuous ball): or to open the bowling (with wides and no-balls): or the batting — with equal non-success. To any of his peers who criticized he would bluster and bully — if they were smaller or less belligerent than he.

When cornered, he always had one last deadly shot in his locker: a parent of unquenchable eloquence, tremendous stamina and total faith in her son's estimate of himself: in short one calculated to make the bravest Housemaster cringe at the thought of another such encounter.

In the face of a memory like this, even retirement offers *some* attraction.

## III: THE CORPS

Persistent horrendousness, or even eccentricity, does not exist in the Corps, for if it does, in these days the offender, however lovable, is encouraged to leave. This arises from a policy of freedom to join — or leave after a period of a year, if either party is deemed to be unsuitable.

The result has been that, over the years, while no outstanding character has emerged, there have been a series of incidents.

The 'Negligent Discharge' is probably the most common and the present author can think of two.

The first occurred in the Park, where, as cadets loaded with blank rounds in the thin screen of trees around the boundary, the author was talking to the renowned Lieutenant-Colonel Bobby Clegg, TD, known affectionately to generations as 'Basher'.

There was a sudden report, always louder when unexpected, followed by the usual split second of appalled silence, further



followed by the time-honoured phrase used under such circumstances, 'Who the \*\*\*\*\* was *that*'?

Bobby stopped talking, but his eyes did not flicker a millimetre. The back of his trousers were smouldering around a pair of small punctures and the calf of his leg had been creased by the blast.

'What *do you* think you are doing, Boy?' he drawled in his very characteristic way. And that was the end of the incident.

The self-inflicted foot wound of Cadet N\*\*\*\*\*y in Hatfield Forest Training Area is too often told to be repeated here, but the complete penetration of the foot, driving brass bootlace eyeholes out through the sole of the stout boot, acted as an excellent safety lesson for several years.

Cadet S\*\*\*\* L\*\*\*\*y 'shot the Aston Block' one afternoon, just after the order to unload had been given, showering his neighbours with ceiling plaster and fragments of concrete.

Many years ago, during a Section Attack Exercise, using live ammunition, watched by a senior officer, at Buckenham Tofts, as far as memory serves, the Section of very senior, and thus responsible, cadets were given the order to remove magazines and 'make safe'; whereupon a round hurtled past the SO as soon as the cadets stood up and turned to move off. After some thirty years memory tends to play tricks, but Cadet NCO D\*\*\*w comes to mind.

At Middlewick Ranges, Colchester, an incautious crow, perched on the 100 yard Firing Point, was shot from the 200 yard point and the round carried on to the target beyond. In these days of more law-abiding and disciplined cadets, sheep may safely graze at Cwm Gwdi range, Brecon Beacons and browse slowly along beneath the targets, while the rounds pass a foot over their backs.

An eighteen-stone cadet who caused an incident when jumping from a hovering helicopter (it rose rapidly some twelve feet before the next cadet jumped) was, the following year, brought down at the first obstacle on an Assault Course at Proteus. He broke his leg and, due to a strike of X-ray operators, had to be hawked from hospital to hospital to confirm a broken limb. When the time came for the event to be recorded in true Army fashion in quintuplicate, the form required the information as to 'How high was the obstacle?' '9 inches' was duly recorded, but not before cadet H\*\*\*\*\*s had asked for the figure '3 feet, 6 inches' to be put down, as '9 inches seems so silly, Sir'.

Cadet V\*\* R\*\*\*\*\*, was it, who 'put one into the Forest'?

Cadet CSM R\*\*\*\* B\*\*\*\*s who received a very near miss up by the swimming pool?

The telephone message on the ranges which says 'You can

raise the red flag; we have stopped firing', followed almost immediately by the noise of a shot.

But these are all isolated incidents, spread over more than forty years, of course. Cadets are keen and much more careful than their fathers were. No more the bugler at Buckenham Tofts (again), lying in his bed, in the tent, blowing the call to 'Fall in'. Only recently, on the ranges, the grass was high enough to obscure the target from firers (M.o.D. economy measure) and cadets cheerfully rolled a rotund cadet along in lieu of the heavy roller, while another obeyed the order to help by eating as much as possible.

Cadets may not be what they used to be — but, on the whole, they are safer and infinitely more endearing.



#### IV: AYCKHORN

Old Boys' sons are special, particularly if they too like their fathers are boarders. The inherited knowledge of secret places and long-surviving staff give them an almost proprietorial air. Such a one was Ayckhorn but he went further in stoutly defending Forest School against all comers. This plain-man's faith evaporated slowly before the onslaught of the older cynics on the staff and the gradual realisation that father's experiences were no longer (or never were) so true.

Ayckhorn was an earnest sportsman not unlike others who are prone to overweight and who bustle round with misplaced optimism. His energies were similarly displayed in the classroom. He pursued Latin doggedly up to O Level against all the odds.

Always outwardly respectable, well-brushed and rosy he sailed a number of times very close to the wind. Perhaps the best occasion was when he took French leave on a Saturday morning. His parents were at that time living in a country with strict exchange control regulations and Ayckhorn invented a foreign friend of the family who was exporting money and who was supposedly using Ayckhorn as a go-between in this country. Such imagination deserves to be recognised. And it was. Ayckhorn spent two weeks in suspension with his reluctant guardians in Hertfordshire.

#### V: ANIMAL

Why do some boys acquire nicknames and not others? Why, incidentally, don't girls give each other nicknames? And why do some nicknames fit and stick?

One of those which emphatically did stick was Animal. It wasn't a hostile nickname; it was one which made full use of all the title's implications. Animal was to be treated kindly but kept on a lead. He chewed his possessions, knocked furniture over and wrote with difficulty. One of my first memories of him was the sight of his swinging a large branch round his head in a manner expressive of *joie de vivre*. Nothing unusual in that, you might think, but this was in a Middle School League football game. The referee, new to Forest that term, and the opposition were both experiencing some difficulty in approaching

Copeland's goal which Animal was defending.

That term he took to the boards in the Shakespeare Play. It wasn't a very demanding part, some thirty seconds as Second Murderer, but Animal went at it as if it were Hamlet. Things were relatively fine for as long as there was no audience but when his fans were in the gallery Animal's grasp on the producer's instructions failed completely. A slow grin of utter self-satisfaction spread over his face. The play ground to a complete halt and Richard II had to fill in the time by himself before eventually being dispatched. Animal enjoyed the stage but really shone in House Drama where inhibiting factors such as a script or threats of violence from a producer didn't restrict his rapport with the audience.

My most drawn-out acquaintance with Animal was teaching 5Q English. This was in the pre-setting days when a lively 5Q could only be approached by those with a diploma in lion taming. They had been a little unruly in the previous year when, following Animal's example and urging, they had all had their heads shaved. However, when I encountered them they were facing the assault on O Levels.

Now there is one general principle to the teaching of English Literature to 5Q. Reduce the text to Sex and Violence, then leave out the Violence. Animal developed a passionate interest in *Romeo and Juliet* once some of the jokes had been explained. He was also much taken with the term 'phallic symbol' which he misapplied in a variety of unusual ways and frequently spelled so as to suggest a strange percussion instrument.

His essays had a single-minded sense of purpose which eventually ground the examiners down; at the November re-sit they awarded him a pass. The table at which he sat didn't seem quite the same after he had gone. No longer did the next pupil have to step round the heap of objects which Animal had been chewing during the previous lesson. There is also one new pane of glass in the window between Room 12 and the corridor in the Aston Block. Animal, in a cheerful attempt to attract my attention from outside the room, once tried butting the window.

A postscript: almost two months ago, while I was trying to withdraw some meagre sum from a cash dispenser, a familiar figure appeared beside me and keyed in what looked like a request for several hundred pounds. Enormously prosperous with, I gather, his own finance company, Animal paused briefly to enquire as to whether I'd discovered anything new in *Romeo and Juliet*, offered to lend me £25,000 at very competitive rates, and shot off into the distance. I really don't want to know what the moral of that might be.

## VI: 'EACH ACTOR ON HIS ASS'

### A PAGEANT TO CELEBRATE 150 YEARS OF FOREST SCHOOL AND 4 YEARS OF FOREST DRAMA

#### DRAMATIS PERSONAE

**The Stage-Manager** . . . As the house lights dim, it should be he who pulls apart the curtains to reveal a sylvan scene. However, he will be locked in an embrace with a blonde actress who is later to take a number of prompts and drop a packet of 'Polo' from her Elizabethan purse.

**The Lighting Man** . . . On discovering that the stage-manager is otherwise engaged, he will attempt to communicate his concern via the PJC headphone system. The cries of 'You stupid bloody sex-maniac' will echo round the theatre, causing several Governors to conclude that this is another of Spencer Ellis's gimmicky productions of the Bard.

**The Sound Man** . . . will be smoking in the bicycle shed.

**King Duncan** . . . First actor on, as it was considered advisable to get his bit over and done with as early as possible, so as not to spoil the banquet at the end of the play. He will demonstrate the difficulty of speaking and moving simultaneously. The audience may notice that his tongue gets stuck outside his mouth at times. He will frequently walk backwards for no reason whatsoever. He must *not* be given a sword.

**The Gardener** . . . represents rustic simplicity and kindly wisdom, which he will impart to the young boy playing his apprentice by what was supposed to be a light cuff to the head, but which will transpire to be a murderous blow, shattering an eardrum and causing partial deafness for life.

**Luigi Spot** . . . This year's amiable buffoon, given the part because it was considered that speaking Shakespeare's immortal verse would help him more than a fifth term in the Remedial English set. He will giggle inanely at inappropriate moments because he has seen what the stage-manager is up to.

**Long John** . . . The villain. He will find this difficult, as he is this year's cult-figure amongst the 10-year-olds, who will cheer and laugh loudly whenever he shambles on. This will make him smile a lot during sinister speeches. His mother will shout encouragement to him during the soliloquies he has but scantily learnt.

**Mr Purdue** . . . is accident-prone. At the end of the first act, he will destroy the entire set (completed only seconds before curtain-up) as he has been in the 'Sun', celebrating his totally undeserved 'A' grade in Eng. Lit.

**Rahzeb Boorman** . . . This composite figure is due to start the second act. He will not. He will have gone unaccountably missing during the interval, along with a goodly measure of the interval wine (Sainsbury's 'Beaujoulais Vieux') and the co-director's 'Rothmans'. He will never be found. His part will be read in by a Miss Spencer Ellis, clad in a boarding-house blanket and a 'Peaudouce' baby slip.

**Jonah Levi** . . . Masquerading as a schoolboy, this satirical humourist is, in fact, a 47-year-old estate agent. With an ulcer. This year, he is playing either the Duke of Northumberland or Dogberry, but he isn't sure which. In any case, he is wearing a dress and smoking a cigar. With an urbane chuckle, signifying '117 years of Shakespeare plays and they're still wheeling out the same old bird-droppings', he squeezes past stage-manager's corner, pausing only to extinguish his cigar, raise his eyebrows, and whisper encouragement, then totters onto the stage, and into the world of light.

#### ACT ONE

#### SCENE ONE: A SYLVAN SCENE.

The curtains open to reveal . . .

## Newbolt served with IPA

I don't want it known, but I'm rather fond of Forest: which is odd, because I dislike direct experience of schools. My own schooldays lasted thirteen years and during that time I suppose there must have been some good moments but I don't remember them. I remember standing during break (Quarter, to the enlightened) with my face pressed against the high chain-link fence which surrounded the netball court cum playground (which I didn't know to call the Hard Play Area) and looking at the mid-morning scene in the village high street below. Housewives were shopping, delivery men were delivering and old men were pottering. They all seemed gloriously free. No one minded whether they were wearing their correct indoor shoes or had done their prep or could hang upside-down on the wall-bars. I envied them. I remained consistent though unostentatious in my dislike of school. When I left I dropped my straw boater into a litter bin, and mine were the only dry eyes during the singing of 'Go forth with God' at the final assembly. I never wanted to go back. And I never, except in moments of despair and utter lack of inspiration, wanted to teach. I'm not very good at imparting knowledge because I get worried if anyone takes notice of what I say, and I don't want to join the gamekeepers where indoor shoes and prep are concerned. My husband, extolling the virtues of teaching as a profession, points out that when you get tired of marking essays you can always go and chase a boy. But I've always regarded that as an out-of-school activity.

So I'm very happy now to be on the other side of the chain-link fence. But my face is still pressed against it, looking in. From the outside, I've always found schools fascinating. Boys' schools, that is. I find I can't write about Forest Girls' School. God bless it, and may it educate my daughters to be electronic

engineers. I have forgiven it for usurping the place of the cricket nets and like to look across the field at its calm octagons. I like, too, its leafy vestibule, and the hall that seems to cry out for a *thé dansant*. But seen from close-to any girls' school reminds me too strongly for comfort of my own. All that giggling and the uniforms that look worse the harder they strive to look attractive (Bring back the gym-slip!) and the organised passions for any nearby male not actually deformed, decrepit or under 12. (There was an assistant in a grocer's shop which we used to pass on our way to the games fields. I wonder whether now, in his forties, he looks back amazed to the days when a crocodile of forty bottoms in gym-knickers wiggled for his benefit as it passed the shop window?)

The boys' school, then. I wrote once before in the magazine, not long after I had come to Forest, that seen from outside it had for me all the glamour I used to find — and still find — in school stories. After six years this kind of magic is still potent. I still thrill to hear talk of Jenks and Johnians, of house league matches and major choral concerts. I admire the grace which boys seem to bring to being schoolboys and think they look elegant in their dark suits, even when they've rolled in the dust and reorganised their ties. To read Gerald Wright's history of the school, replete with quotations from old school magazines, fills me with a delight more acute than even *Eric* can bring.

But I'm not able any longer to see Forest just as a charming spectacle. As I said. I've grown fond of it. I think it is nice in a way that is unique. It has the appeal of a conventional public school, from the panelled dining-hall and the slightly camp cloisters to the perfect sylvan setting of the cricket field and the manners of the boys. Even the most hardened hoods at Forest can muster some old-world courtesy when it's called for. I remember an incident with a pair of rogues from Bishop's then aged about 14. They came to the flat one evening when Mark was out, complaining that they had been unjustly and cruelly treated by someone or other in authority and bigger than them. I agreed to help and remarked lightly that this person was also bigger than me, so I hoped I should not come to any harm. Don't worry, Mrs Spencer Ellis, said the first rogue, you'll be all right with us. Yes, we'll protect you, said the second, even more awful, rogue. The three of us, frail but armed with rectitude and united in comradeship, marched across the lawn to meet the enemy.

What distinguishes Forest from other public schools of my acquaintance is a sort of fly worldliness which comes from being in East London and, also arising from this, a lack of what you might call Country Life Snobbery. There is nonsense at Forest, but not much nonsense about who your people are or



whether you hunt and know what to do with a butter-knife. Forest seems, most intelligently, to have retained its public school grace and added to it some cockney irony while rejecting most of the frightful green wellington stuff.

For evidence turn to the Second XI. At one time this included a boy so fully the *prieux chevalier* that when he was bowling he would not appeal on a first ball, because 'I know how rotten it is to be out first ball, sir.' Luckily, perhaps, the wicket-keeper did not share his scruples. In fact he was a young gangster who when batting once stopped in mid run and brought the game to a halt because he saw, beyond the boundary, a group of his fellow-criminals taking and pushing away his car. In the present Second XI there is a boy who keeps wicket in dark glasses and another who, half way through the second innings, asked the umpire what school the opposing team were from. But both these boys are very keen on cricket. They just bring a bit of Forest idiosyncrasy to it.

The best way to show what I have come to like about Forest is to tell the story of another cricketing occasion. This was born out of my husband's enthusiasm for linguistics. Sometimes I think that Mark will leave us all and go to sit permanently at the feet of Professor David Lodge or Professor Roy Harris. It was the latter whom he invited to give a VI form talk. Professor

Harris got Forest's measure at once. He chose to talk about swearing and four-letter words; and he asked if he could bring a cricket team from Oxford to play in Sylvestrians' week.

The Oxford team duly arrived on a blazing day. The first weekday of the summer holidays it was, and the birthday of the newly-retired Warden, who was the Sylvestrians' wicket-keeper. Given the weather, the atmosphere of happy relaxation, and the fact that the Professor was wearing a pale blue sun hat with flowers on it, I thought it would be greedy to ask for an exciting match as well. But this was granted us. Evening came, the shadows lengthened and the face of J. E. Scott, who was umpiring, was burnished in the mature sunlight. The Sylvestrians needed five runs to win. Shannon and Foxall were at the wicket, with no more men to come. And the Sylvestrians made it! A boundary from Shannon and a single, heroically run by Foxall.

Everyone from Forest was happy, not only at winning, but at the manner of the victory. Off to the Rising Sun, where the visiting team seemed happy too. The Professor interested the locals by standing on a chair and singing, doubtless in illustration of some linguistic point. He was still wearing his sun hat. Newbolt served with IPA and jellied eels: the true flavour of Forest.



# In Pectore Robur

## I. "In Pectore Robur" ... *Carmen Feriale*

*Musicis modis accommodabat H. T. MONK.*

*Animato.*

E - ja ! fe - li - ces ! ho - di - e va - can - di Can - ti - co dul - cis

ce - le - bre - tur ho - ra ! Laus sit in lin - guis an - i - mo vo

- lup - tas, Pec - to - re ro - bur ! Pec - to - re ro - bur !

Eja ! felices ! hodie vacandi  
Cantico dulcis celebretur hora !  
Laus sit in linguis, animo voluptas,  
Pectore robur !

Gaudcant pensis pueri peractis,  
Gaudet curâ vacuus magister ;  
En ! domus gaudet ! sua concinamus  
Gaudia quisque.

Sole sub grato resonant cicadae.  
Cantat umbrosâ Philomela silvâ,  
Gaudiis saltus sonat,—assonemus  
Voce canorâ.

Aura nec semper rapidoque flatu  
Roborat vitem, neque semper arcus  
Tenditur, necnon renovant sodales  
Otia fessos.

En ! tibi currus celeres vapores  
Ferream fervent per iter voluti.  
At rotas culpat nimium morantes  
Ardor inanis.

Hinc puer laudes mereat paternas  
Oscula et laetae potiora matris,  
Ille ter felix merito ferat cui  
Præmia virtus.

Hinc probos mores referat juventas,  
Indoles crescat bene nata, recti  
Roborent cultus sobolem beatam,  
" Robora pubis."

Pectoris ROBUR, puerique CUSTOS,  
Qui Puer quondam in pueris fuisti,  
Fac Tibi semper placeamus omnes  
Pectore puro !



# Personalities and Memories 1960 - 2004

## A Photographic Survey



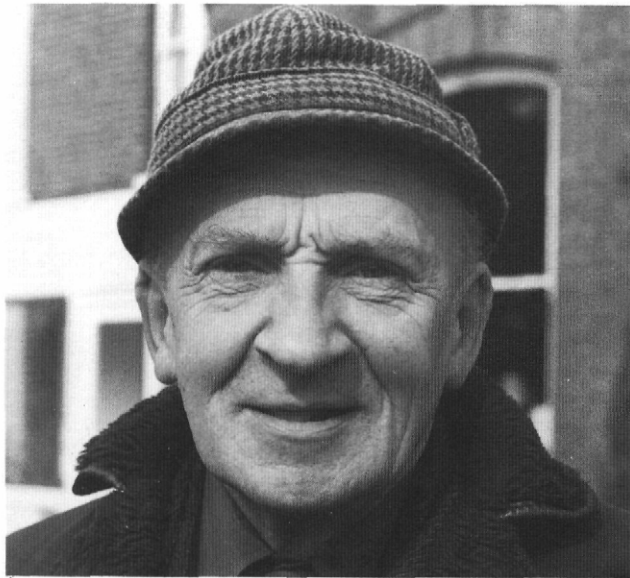
Girls' School Actresses.



**Chapel Choir Members.**



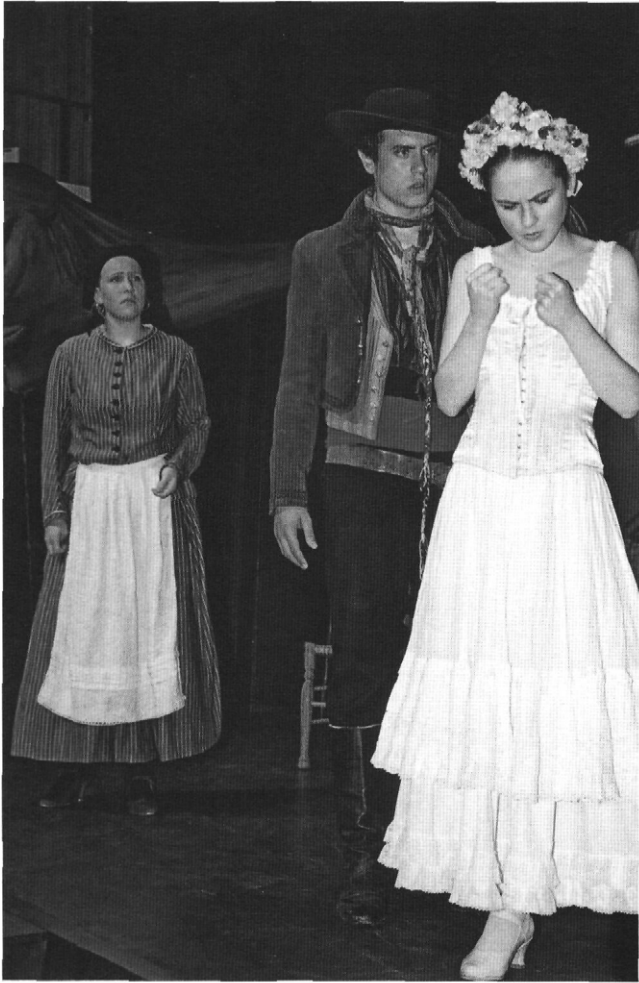
**Peter Peters, Art master.**



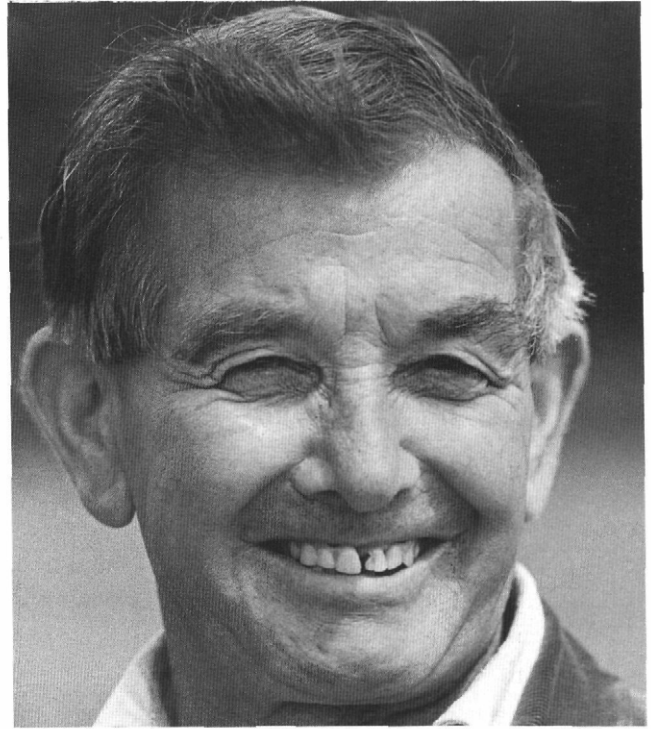
**Jock, the Porter.**



**Ralph Dunning, Latin master.**



Senior Drama: l-r Eleanor Jenkins, Chris Blohm, Hannah Hewitt.



Sid, the groundsman.



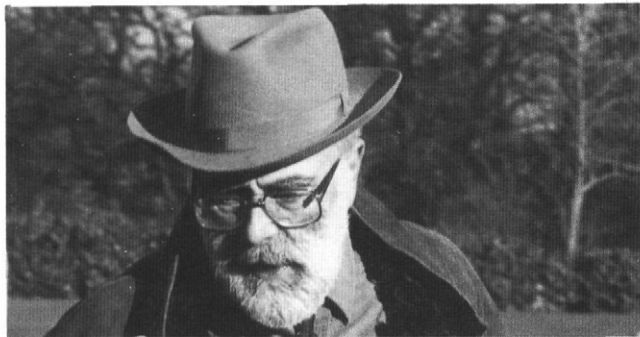
Charlie, the gardener.



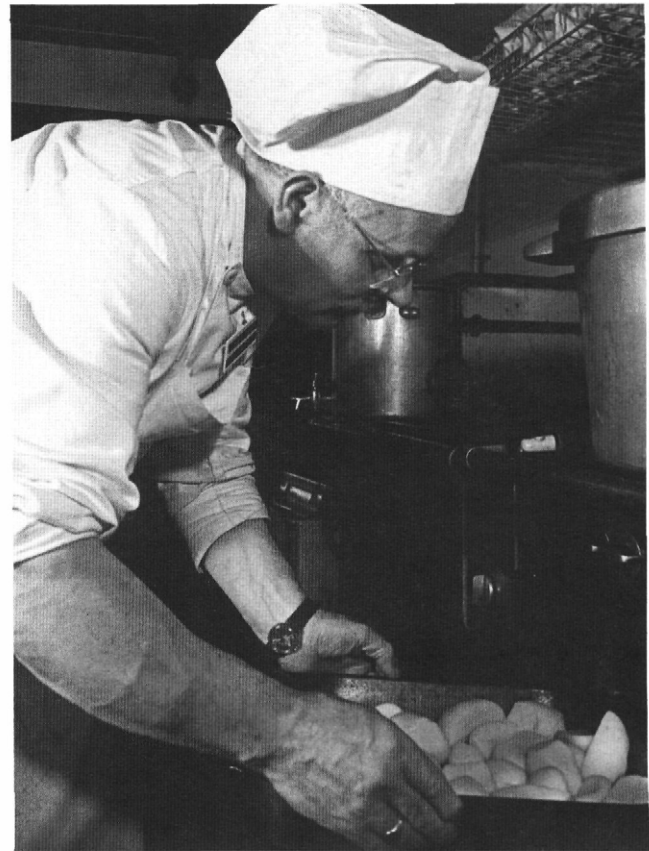
Junior Drama 1990s.



Jamie Foster in the 1980s.



Deryk Wakem, Geography master.



Ivor the Cook.

# Chronology

- 1834 William Morris born in Walthamstow.  
Forest Proprietary Grammar School opened on October 1, with Rev. Thomas Dry as Headmaster.
- 1836 School Library established.
- 1840 St Peter's-in-the-Forest built.  
Railway to Lea Bridge opened.
- 1844 Plans to close the School.  
Dr Dry leaves.  
J. F. Boyes takes over as Headmaster.
- 1848 J. F. Boyes leaves to take up literary work.  
John Gilderdale is appointed as the third Headmaster.
- 1850 Bradfield College opened, with Frederick Barlow Guy as Headmaster.
- 1852 F. B. Guy leaves Bradfield for Walthamstow, having married John Gilderdale's daughter.
- 1853 First appearance of the School motto 'In Pectore Robur'.
- 1857 Forest School Chapel built.  
School Song set to music by Theophilus Monk.  
Frederick Barlow Guy takes over as the fourth Headmaster of Forest.
- 1859 Sick Cottage (the present Senior Common Room) built.
- 1860 First authentically recorded Shakespeare Play: *The Merchant of Venice*.
- 1865 First Edition of Forest School Magazine.  
First Swimming Pool constructed.
- 1870 Railway comes to Walthamstow.
- 1871-2 Gymnasium built.
- 1875 Chapel enlarged.
- 1876 Old Foresters' Football Club formed.
- 1877 New Swimming Pool opened.
- 1878 Royal Visit: the Prince and Princess of Wales stop briefly outside the School.
- 1879 Fives Court built.
- 1879 Banner, designed and worked by William Morris, presented to the School.
- 1880 Old Foresters' First Annual Dinner held.
- 1882 Queen Victoria visits Chingford to declare Epping Forest open to the public for ever. The unique position of the School, surrounded by Forest land, was thus secured.
- 1883 Forest School Cadet Corps formed under Captain Vaux and attached to the First Essex Volunteers.
- 1886 Memorial Dining Hall — foundation stone laid by HRH Helena, Princess of Schleswig-Holstein.  
Dr F. B. Guy retires. His eldest son, Thomas Edward Barlow Guy, becomes Forest's fifth Headmaster.
- 1888 Cricket Pavilion erected.
- 1894 T. E. B. Guy retires to a living at Fulford in Yorkshire and is succeeded by his brother Ralph Courtenay Guy as the School's sixth Headmaster.
- 1900 Boer War in South Africa. Fifteen Old Foresters serve. Three give their lives.
- 1902 A new Sanatorium — Oxley House — built, along with Evesden — the new Masters' House.
- 1906 Science Laboratory built on the site of the present Theatre.
- 1910-13 E. L. Atkinson serves on Scott's Antarctic Expedition.
- 1914-18 The Great War: 98 Old Foresters are killed.
- 1920 War Memorials: Tablets in the Chapel, the Memorial Cross and the Park.
- 1923 F. J. Poole dies.
- 1924 House System introduced. The three Houses were Doctor's, Poole's and Johnians.
- 1925 New classrooms added to Junior School.
- 1934 The School celebrates its centenary.
- 1935 Ralph Courtenay Guy retires after forty-one years as Headmaster.
- 1936 Bishop Shaw and Assistant Bishop Bullen, eminent Old Boys, die.  
Gerald Cedar Miller becomes Forest's seventh Headmaster.
- 1939-45 World War II; 42 Old Foresters and 1 School servant killed; a flying-bomb scores a direct hit on Junior School in August 1944, demolishing it and



- the Manor and severely damaging the Dining Hall roof and stained glass windows at the rear end of the Chapel.
- 1947** Forest becomes a Public School as Miller makes over the School to a non-profit-making Association.
- 1949** Ralph Courtenay Guy dies.
- 1951** Foundation stone of the Aston Block laid.
- 1953** Aston Block officially opened.
- 1956** Plans made for the Science Block.
- 1959** Junior School Hobbies Room built.
- 1960** Gerald Cedar Miller retires. Dennis Foxall becomes Forest's eighth Headmaster.
- 1964** Art Room and Changing Rooms built.
- 1967** HRH The Princess Margaret opens the new Theatre.
- 1970** Opening of the Gloucester Building, the School's pre-prep department.
- 1974** Old Foresters winners of the Arthur Dunn Cup.
- 1979** Sports Hall opened.  
Music School opened.
- 1981** Forest Girls' School opened by HRH The Duchess of Kent.
- 1983** Dennis Foxall retires. John Gough becomes Forest's new Warden.  
The last of the Fives Courts demolished.
- 1984** Sixth Form Centre built.  
Computer Centre built.  
Cricket Pavilion built.
- 1985** Old Foresters' Football 1st XI reach final of the Arthur Dunn Cup.
- 1986** 100th Anniversary of the Dining Hall.
- 1987** Sir Keith Williamson becomes Chairman of Governing Council.
- 1988** Building of extension to Science Block in Senior School.  
Old Foresters' Club at Theydon closed and sold.
- 1989** Science Building completed.
- 1990** 7-year-old girls join Forest.
- 1991** Cuthbert Bardell dies.
- 1992** John Gough retires. Andrew Boggis becomes Forest's new Warden.  
The Deaton Theatre officially named.
- 1993** Forest 1st XI football team win the Boodle and Dunthorn Independent Schools' Cup.

- 1995** Forest School Chapel Organ Appeal launched.
- 1997** Deryk Wakem dies.
- 1998** New Chapel Organ installed. Old Foresters win Arthur  
Dunn Cup for the second time.
- 1999** Stewart Reading Rooms built.
- 2000** Dennis Foxall dies.
- 2001** Pre-prep Department opened. Design & Technology,  
Art and Drama development in the Jenkin Wing opened.  
Theatre Foyer refurbishment.
- 2003** The Girls' School Silver Jubilee Year begins.
- 2004** Performing Arts Centre opened.







