

OLDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL



1904 - 1974

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A SHORT HISTORY

by

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(Sometime Senior History Master)

CONTENTS

<i>Preface</i>		5
<i>Introduction</i>		7 - 10
<i>Chapter I</i>	<i>The Birth and Early Years of the School, 1904 - 11</i>	11 - 19
<i>Chapter II</i>	<i>Developments during the Headmastership of Mr. G. H. Crisp, 1911 - 20</i>	20 - 32
<i>Chapter III</i>	<i>Life in the Old and in the New School Buildings under Mr. J. G. Howarth, 1920 - 36</i>	33 - 45
<i>Chapter IV</i>	<i>The Years 1936 - 63 under Dr. C. C. Howard</i>	46 - 62
<i>Chapter V</i>	<i>The Closing Years, 1963 - 74</i>	63 - 74
<i>Conclusion</i>		75 - 76
<i>Appendices</i>		77 - 91

LIST OF APPENDICES

	<i>Page</i>
1. <i>School Song - words by J. G. Howarth, M.A.</i>	77
2. <i>- music by T. L. Davies, M.A. B.Sc. ...</i>	78 - 79 - 80
3. <i>Headmasters</i>	81
4. <i>Senior Masters</i>	81
5. <i>Senior Mistresses</i>	81
6. <i>Assistant Staff</i>	82 - 83 - 84 - 85 - 86
7. <i>Annual number of pupils on roll</i>	87
8. <i>Roll of Honour</i>	87 - 88
9. <i>School Cups</i>	88
10. <i>School Dramatic Society Productions</i>	88 - 89
11. <i>Scholarships and Exhibitions 1919</i>	89 - 90 - 91
12. <i>Chairmen of School Governors</i>	91

PREFACE

It will be clear to all who read this School history that the writer owes a great deal to the School Magazine (The Oldburian). In fact all who over the years have contributed in any way to the magazine can be regarded as having provided the basic materials for this book. This work could well be dedicated to them, and to many others, too numerous to mention by name, who have assisted the writer either verbally or by letter, and without whose help this history could not have been written.

Other sources of information which have been used include the records of Governors' meetings, Returns made to the Ministry of Education, the School Prospectus for 1919, 1936 and 1941, various pamphlets and booklets printed to mark special occasions in the life of the School, and local newspapers namely the Oldbury "*Weekly News*" and its successor the Warley "*News Telephone*".

During the seventy years of its existence the School had three names. It was known first of all as Oldbury Secondary School from its beginning in 1904 until 1926; it was then renamed Oldbury County High School, and finally became Oldbury Grammar School as a result of the 1944 Education Act.

In writing this history of a school at which he taught for twenty six years the author has experienced a great deal of pleasure, and hopes that the reader will derive some enjoyment from his work. Coming to Oldbury as a complete stranger from the Cotswolds, and educated at the school where the first Headmaster of Oldbury Secondary School began his teaching career, the writer has many memories of pleasant times here, and of good friends both on the Staff and amongst former pupils. On receiving the news that Oldbury Grammar School would come to an end in 1974 he was determined that its name should not be forgotten, and that its history should be recorded for posterity.

He considers this work, therefore, as a small contribution to the history of education in Oldbury, and hopes it may be of some value to future students and those interested in this topic. It may also give the reader some insight into past conditions under which teaching was carried on and into standards of discipline, dress and conduct.

He hopes he has rendered justice to all those connected in any way with the School and considers it, with regret, as his last service to a school with which he was proud to have been associated.

Finally the writer wishes to thank his many colleagues for the help they have given him, and in particular Mrs. Pat Brown who spent many hours in reading through and correcting the manuscript.

Any errors in the work are the responsibility of the writer alone.

Summer 1974

It will be clear to all who read this book that the writer owes a great deal to the School Magazine (The Observer). In fact all that has been said in any way to the magazine can be regarded as having provided the basic material for this book. This work could well be regarded as a tribute to those who have written to mention by name or have assisted in other ways, verbally or by letter, and without whom the history could not have been written. Other sources of information which have been used include the records of Governor's meetings, the minutes of the Board of Education, the School Yearbook for 1914, 1916 and 1941, various magazines and books, notes to many special occasions in the life of the school, and local newspapers, namely the Liberty Weekly News, and its successor the Westchester News, New York.

During the twenty years of its existence the school has had three names. It was known first of all as Olmsted Secondary School from its founding in 1904 until 1922. It was then renamed Liberty County Junior School and finally became Olmsted Grammar School as a result of the 1944 Education Act.

In writing this history of a school in which he taught for twenty years the author has experienced a great deal of pleasure and hope that the reader will derive some enjoyment from his work. Coming to Olmsted as a teacher in 1922, the author has had the opportunity to be at the school when the first President of Olmsted Secondary School, James H. Leitch, came to the school for the first time. It was a great pleasure to meet him and to know that he was interested in the school and its future. He was interested in the history of the school and the fact that the history should be recorded for posterity. He considered this work therefore as a small contribution to the history of education in Olmsted, and hopes it may be of some value to other students and those interested in this topic. It may also give some insight into past conditions under which teaching was carried on and into students of discipline, dress and conduct.

The author has rendered justice to all those connected in any way with the school and considers it with respect as his last tribute to a school which he was proud to have been associated with. He wishes to thank the many colleagues for the help they have given him and in particular Mrs. Val Brown who spent many hours in reading through and correcting the manuscript.

The author is for the work and the responsibility of the writer.

Summer 1974

INTRODUCTION

The town of Oldbury became part of the Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell in 1974 as a result of local government reorganisation, and geographically formed part of the West Midland conurbation. This was the second reorganisation in the area within a short space of time for in 1966 Oldbury had been amalgamated with the Municipal Borough of Rowley Regis and the County Borough of Smethwick to form a new County Borough known as Warley.

In 1904 when the secondary school began, Oldbury was an urban district which had been created in 1894 when it was combined with the township of Langley and part of the parish of Warley, then an entirely rural area with a few scattered groups of cottages. At that time Oldbury occupied the northern extremity of the administrative county of Worcestershire, having been transferred to that county from Salop in 1844. Its boundaries were coterminous with those of Birmingham in the south, Smethwick and West Bromwich in the east and north east, and Rowley Regis and Halesowen in the north west and south west.

The name Oldbury suggests antiquity, but it was for many years only a small part of the extensive parish of Halesowen, and did not emerge as a separate local entity until 1557 when it was first described as a manor and remained under a Lord of the Manor until 1895.

In the first half of the eighteenth century it was described as "a pleasant and pretty place nestling at the foot of the green slopes of the Rowley Hills". These hills lie a mile to the west and overlook the town; they are 900 feet high and composed mainly of basalt. By the close of the century however, Oldbury found itself emerging from its rurality and fast developing into a busy industrial village, one outward sign of which was the Birmingham canal, cut in the 1770's to connect Birmingham with the collieries at Wednesbury and which surrounded Oldbury on three sides.

It was in the nineteenth century, however, that Oldbury attained a position of considerable importance as an industrial centre. This was due to its situation in the mineral area of the prolific South Staffordshire coalfield, the coal bearing seams being found on the west side of the town. The area was rich not only in coal but also in iron stone, sandstone, limestone and granite. The upper soil consisted of a thick stratum of clay and was extensively worked for brick making. The town thus became important first of all as a coal, iron producing, and brick-making centre particularly during the 1860's and 1870's there being twenty seven coal mines and one hundred puddling furnaces in Oldbury at that time. Although the mines in Dudley and Wednesbury were approaching exhaustion, those at Oldbury and West Bromwich, on the edge of the coal field, were at the height of prosperity.

Oldbury thus acquired all the social and industrial characteristics of the older parts of the South Staffordshire coalfield. It became as black as other areas by virtue of its rapid industrialisation; it acquired a dirty and ugly appearance; its semi-rural landscape disappeared to be replaced by pit mounds, slag heaps, quarries and marl holes of a new age.

This industrial growth was naturally accompanied by an increase of population. In 1841 the population of Oldbury was 7374 a large village by twentieth century standards. By 1851 it had increased to 11,640 despite a high death rate, rising to 22,697 in 1891 and to 25,191 at the beginning of the twentieth century. The inhabitants were subject to the usual diseases of an industrial town during that period, for example smallpox, scarlet fever, typhoid fever and chest complaints. Long lines of slum houses were built lacking adequate sanitation and with a defective water system.

The town, however, continued to flourish and though by the end of the century the exhaustion of the coal mines was in sight, other industries developed to provide employment. Coal mining declined and output at the beginning of the twentieth century was only half that of the 1860-70 period because it became uneconomical to continue production after flooding; coal mining finally ceased with the coal stoppage of 1921. Other industries became important and chose Oldbury as a centre because land was cheap though much undermined. It was situated close to Birmingham and had good transport facilities by canal, rail and road.

The first industry to develop from the coal and iron trades within Oldbury was the manufacture of edge tools by William Hunt and Sons (The Brades) Limited, described by Elilhu Burritt in "*Walks in the Black Country*" in 1868. Iron manufacture continued to flourish, firms developing their own particular speciality. The chemical industry, established in the 1860's made rapid progress producing hydrochloric acid, soda and various ammonium salts. For many years Messrs. Albright and Wilson's chemical business was the only producer of white phosphorous in England. The production of cyanide and tar was also established before the end of the century.

Other industries which originated or developed before 1900 were the manufacture of bricks using the clay found over the thick coal seam, the building of canal barges, the quarrying of basalt from the Rowley Hills, the manufacture of boilers, the construction of rolling stock for railways much of which was exported, the manufacture of surgical dressings, and in the 1890's the manufacture of steel tubes which became the leading industry in the town in the twentieth century. This variety of industries provided some guarantee against heavy unemployment during periods of general depression.

In view of the fact that Oldbury was only a village at the end of the eighteenth century and that its rapid development only came after 1850, provision for the education of children was at first on a small

scale. In Oldbury itself the Free School was opened in 1780 and was established by the Unitarians of the Meeting House. It was educating forty charity children in 1791, and until 1864 the ministers of the Meeting House also acted as schoolmasters. In the parish of Warley, John Moore, yeoman, who died in 1724 left £100 in trust to teach poor children and thus an endowed school was opened there in 1730.

It was only in the second half of the nineteenth century with the increase in population that more places of worship, to which a school was almost invariably attached, were built and that elementary education became available on a wider scale. In 1850 it was reported that the number of children employed about the mines was still very great and that the eagerness of parents to send their children out to earn money irrespective of education was a crying reproach to the district. This failure on the part of some parents to realise the importance of education continued for a long period of time even in the twentieth century when not only elementary but also secondary education became freely available to all.

The expansion in the provision of elementary education in Oldbury began in 1851 when new buildings were erected for the Free School. In 1853 a Wesleyan School was built in the parish of Warley. The National Society was particularly active and a number of schools attached to the various Anglican churches in the urban district were erected in the late 1890's. A number of schools were also established by Catholics, Baptists and Independents, and a Board School was built in Warley in 1881. This upsurge was due in part to the fact that the Education Act of 1876 prohibited the employment of children under the age of ten, also in 1880 education became compulsory; in 1891 it was made free of cost to the parent, and in the same year a Factory Act raised the minimum age for employment to eleven years.

The first effective step in providing education above the elementary level for the majority of pupils in England resulted from the Technical Instruction Act of 1889 which gave the new county councils power to supply technical and manual instruction and for this purpose to levy a rate.

In addition, in 1890 the proceeds of a tax on beer and spirits, which became known as 'whisky money' was placed at the disposal of local authorities to help them in this task. In Oldbury a number of technical classes were established in 1891 attended by over 5,000 students, rising in 1899 to nearly 19,000.

Because Oldbury had become an industrial town there was a demand for workers with some technical knowledge and hence in 1899 it was decided to build a technical school in Flash Road at a cost of £6,000, this sum being raised mainly by public subscription. The school was opened in 1900 for 400 pupils. The accommodation consisted of a chemical laboratory, balance room, two engineering drawing rooms, a woodwork shop, an art room, three classrooms for commercial and

other subjects, cloakrooms, a secretary's office and a caretaker's house. It was administered jointly by the Worcestershire Education Committee and Oldbury Committee for Higher Education.

But at the beginning of the twentieth century Oldbury still had no secondary school though a start had been made in providing education of a higher nature. This defect was soon to be remedied for in 1902 came the Balfour Education Act which reorganised the system of education and led to the development of county secondary schools throughout the country. Oldbury took advantage of this act to establish its first secondary school whose history forms the subject matter of this work.

Chapter I

THE BIRTH AND EARLY YEARS, 1904 - 11

Oldbury Secondary School may be said to have its origin in a resolution proposed by Cllr. Davies and seconded by Cllr. Beach on 17 November, 1903, requesting, 'that the District Council apply to the County Council for aid and advice towards the establishment of a Secondary School to meet the needs of Oldbury, particularly in regard to the instruction of Pupil Teachers and Probationers'. This resulted in an enquiry being held by the County Council at which Mr. Willis Bund presided on 22 February, 1904 and by July the Oldbury Higher Education Committee had drawn up a scheme for submission to the county council⁽¹⁾.

The committee sought to provide a place of higher education in direct touch with the requirements of the town and with the commercial and industrial life of the neighbourhood, so the aim was to equip and organise a school which afforded a thoroughly sound and modern education yet did not lose sight of the particular scientific and technical aspects so essential to the industries of Oldbury.

Under the proposed scheme the school was to be open to boys and girls between the ages of eleven and sixteen years; the curriculum was to include English, geography, history, two languages, one of which was to be Latin, mathematics, chemistry, physics, drawing, manual instruction in wood and iron for boys, needlework and housewifery for girls, and physical exercises; the school year was to be divided into three terms each of fourteen weeks duration beginning in September 1904; the school day was to consist of a morning session from 9.15 to 12.15 and an afternoon lasting from 2 p.m. to 4.30 p.m. for five days of the week, there being no Saturday school. Fees were fixed at £3 per annum and an admission examination was to be held at the beginning of each term.

In August a headmaster was appointed and also the secretary to the Higher Education Committee, Mr. Anderson, issued a prospectus of the school⁽²⁾.

Finally the school was opened on 19 September in a building which had been erected in 1899 in Flash Road and which was used as a technical school in the evenings, the site for this building having been given by W. A. Albright Esq.

Hence Oldbury Secondary School began without any new buildings to be officially opened and no ceremony to herald its appearance⁽³⁾. Nevertheless a beginning had been made, and this only two years after the passing of the Balfour Act which had abolished the school boards and created local education authorities under the county and county borough councils which were to 'consider the educational needs of

their area and take such steps as seem to them desirable to supply or aid the supply of education other than elementary . . . '

The *Spectator* in December 1902, had expressed the opinion that the Act was 'destined to be more important in its consequences than the famous compromise act of 1870'. Certainly all credit must be given to those councillors who, seventy years ago, were quick to take advantage of this act and usher in a new dimension in education as far as Oldbury was concerned.

The population of Oldbury at that time was approximately 25,000 and there were over 5,000 children in the elementary schools⁽⁴⁾. Of this child population about thirty went to higher education with other nearby authorities because there was no secondary school in Oldbury. Similarly the pupil teachers, and there were about fifty of them in Oldbury elementary schools, had to attend centres in Dudley or West Bromwich, there being no centre in Oldbury⁽⁵⁾.

Hence the establishment of the secondary school enabled those children who wanted a more advanced education to obtain it within the urban district area, and also arrangements were made for pupil teachers aged sixteen to eighteen years to receive instruction in the same building. The pupil teacher system lasted until 1912, though there were no pupil teachers at Oldbury Secondary School after 1910-11.

When the school opened there were sixty pupil teachers and forty-nine secondary scholars in attendance. The first headmaster was Mr. C. H. Hirst Walker, M.A., an Oxford science graduate, who had begun his teaching career in 1893 at Marling School, Stroud, Gloucestershire. There were two hundred applicants for the post⁽⁶⁾ of whom six were interviewed, two of whom were local schoolmasters⁽⁷⁾. The salary was fixed at £200 per year. The first full time assistants were Mr. F. W. Towle, Miss Jessie Richards and Miss Hester Stratton whose salaries were £130, £110 and £90 respectively⁽⁸⁾. Colour Sergt. Instructor T. Pickerill was engaged for two hours per week at 2/6d per hour to take both boys and girls for drill. It was not until 1909 that girls' drill was taken by a lady teacher. A laboratory assistant was also employed.

The reader may like to compare these figures of sixty pupil teachers, forty-nine scholars, a headmaster and three assistants in the first term of the school's life with those of the 1960's and '70's. It should also be noted that from the beginning this was a mixed school at a time when, in many other parts of the country, single-sex schools were being established. Also many secondary schools worked on Saturday mornings, though this was never so at Oldbury.

The only ceremony to mark the opening of the school was held on the second day of term, Tuesday, 20 September, when a light tea was provided at the school at 4.30 p.m. so that Mr. Walker could meet the principal inhabitants of the town. A large number of people were invited to attend what was 'the most important social function in Oldbury for many years'⁽⁹⁾.

The general aim of the school was a desire to imbue each pupil with the intention of becoming a good craftsman and at the same time gaining an acquaintance with the human and scientific principles underlying his craft and applying them for his own benefit and for that of his fellow men. Children came at the age of twelve for a four year course; the first two years were devoted to general education, and for the final two years pupils were to receive special commercial, professional, or scientific training in order to prepare them for future careers as doctors, solicitors, teachers, engineers or skilled workers.

Looking back on the early years, an elderly lady wrote 'I was enrolled at the age of sixteen in 1904 on the first day. I was a pupil teacher at Warley and was placed in Form IV with others from schools in Warley, Langley, Blackheath and Rowley. The older ones in their final year about eighteen years of age, were in Form V. As these older ones were eligible to take King's Scholarships at Christmas 1904 their departure left many empty places so myself and some students from Form IV was promoted. I was in Form V till I was 18 years old. We attended five half days a week, and studied all subjects necessary for our exam'⁽¹⁰⁾.

To be more precise the number of pupil teachers who took the King's Scholarship Examinations in December 1904 was fourteen, none of them returned in 1905 so that the number of pupil teachers dropped to forty six.

Every week the pupil teachers had to write an essay, the subject for this being put on the notice board and the essay handed in each Friday. A topical subject appeared in 1906 entitled 'Will man ever be able to fly?'. One wonders what kind of answer this question elicited, for a few years later in 1909 Bleriot made the first Channel crossing by aeroplane!

A Board of Governors for the Secondary School was constituted in September, 1904 and consisted of eight members of whom two were elected by the District Council, two by the Higher Education Sub-Committee, two by Worcestershire County Council, and two were to be co-opted. Councillors W. Parkes and S. Beach were the two elected by the Higher Education Sub-Committee⁽¹¹⁾.

The course of study in the school was largely determined by the Board of Education which allowed the school to qualify for a grant only under certain conditions. For the purpose of seeing that those conditions were satisfied, two inspectors, Dr. Tutton and Mr. Barrington Ward⁽¹²⁾, visited the school in December 1904, and as a result of their favourable report the school was granted formal recognition in February 1905, thus qualifying for a Board of Education Grant⁽¹³⁾.

There were no uniforms in those early years for pupil teachers, but the secondary school girls wore a navy blue blazer, white blouse in summer, blue in winter, and a gym tunic.

The school badge on the blazer pocket was simply a large 'O' with an 'S' on each side in gold or navy blue letters. The uniform was completed by a navy cloth coat with a velour felt hat which had a blue band and red badge for winter, and a straw boater for summer, black shoes and black woollen stockings. The secondary school boys had no special uniform with the exception of a navy blue cap on which was a badge bearing in scarlet the letters O.S.S.⁽¹⁴⁾

Accommodation for pupils and staff was meagre compared with that provided in later years. There was no assembly hall, gymnasium, staffroom, or storage facilities, the headmaster's room being used for this purpose. There were no facilities for cookery but only for needlework. Physical training (drill) was taken in the art room which was also used for morning prayers which were taken by the headmaster and lasted for about fifteen minutes, and at which all pupils were expected to be present. There was a chemistry laboratory which could only accommodate eighteen pupils, no physics laboratory, and a basement in which woodwork was taught.

Pupils did not have individual desks, but sat at long tables, books being kept in lockers in the cloakroom. As there was no dining room pupils who could not get home at mid-day ate their sandwiches in one of the classrooms sitting round one of the long tables with a mistress at the head. Tea, coffee and cocoa could be obtained from the caretaker, but an inspection of the school in November 1905 suggested that better provision should be made to give a proper meal for pupils.

Organised games were football and cricket for boys, hockey and cricket for girls⁽¹⁵⁾, but as there were no playing fields at the school a field in Tat Bank Road between the railway and the canal opposite to the Old St. John's Church was used. Boys also had partial use of Oldbury Town F.C. ground for which a rent was paid. Swimming lessons in place of drill were introduced during the summer term 1909, the baths at West Bromwich being used for this purpose.

The first speech day of the school was held on Tuesday, 25 July, 1905, in the art room at the school, the address being given by Professor Muirhead and the prizes distributed by Mr. G. S. Albright, a gentleman well known to Oldbury residents, and one who was to become a generous benefactor of the school. No programme of the speech day appears to have survived, if one were ever printed. Councillor W. Parkes took the chair because of the illness of Mr. J. W. Wilson M.P.⁽¹⁶⁾. The headmaster had asked the governors for £6 to provide the prizes, one prize to each form and two special essay prizes; two special prizes in mathematics were also given by Councillor W. T. Davies and Mr. Roscoe.

The curriculum of the secondary school has already been mentioned⁽¹⁷⁾ but the allocation of school time to the various subjects may be of interest and readers may like to compare the 1904-5 timetable given below, with one with which they are more familiar :- English 2½

hours; Latin 3; French 3; History $1\frac{1}{2}$; Geography $1\frac{1}{2}$ (occasional field work); Mathematics $4\frac{1}{4}$; Science 3 (Botany, girls occasional field work); Drawing $1\frac{1}{2}$; Music $\frac{3}{4}$; Manual work (boys) $1\frac{1}{2}$; Needlework (girls) $1\frac{1}{2}$; Hygiene $\frac{3}{4}$ (forms 1 and 2 only); Physical Exercises $\frac{1}{2}$; Religious Instruction $2\frac{1}{2}$. The school worked a seven period day and homework was set for each form varying from one hour per night in the first year to one and a half hours in the fourth.

In August, 1905, a school prospectus for the coming session was issued and notice was given that the entrance and the scholarship examinations were to be held on 7 and 13 September respectively⁽¹⁸⁾. Unlike more recent times these examinations were held at the beginning of every term and pupils were interviewed by the headmaster before admission. On the results of these examinations free admission places might be awarded by the Board of Education, scholarships by the Trustees of the Oldbury Charity, by the Moore and Powell Charities, and by Worcestershire County Council⁽¹⁹⁾. The Oldbury Charity Trustees offered eight entrance scholarships and five internal exhibitions open to those who had already been in attendance at the school for two years. Those candidates who did not obtain a scholarship but whose marks were sufficiently good were admitted on payment of fees.

Because of the increase in numbers the headmaster in October 1906 established two first forms, the pupils in the school being divided as follows:- Form I 22 pupils; Form IB 20 pupils; Form II 24 pupils; Form III 21 pupils. These four classes covered a three year course, which in 1907 became a four year course, pupils sitting the Oxford Local Examinations, Senior and Junior.

The first school concert was performed in the Town Hall in May 1906, and the hope was expressed that it would become an annual event. In July 1906 at the end of its second year the headmaster expressed the view that the school was now established as qualified to receive a government grant and Oldbury now had in its secondary school an educational ladder by means of which children could pass from the elementary school to the universities and other places of higher education. The following year the headmaster was able to report that matches in football, hockey, and cricket were now being played against other neighbouring secondary schools, and that the school was becoming stronger in this respect.

But he did voice a complaint which was to be repeated time and again by his successors, that the majority of pupils left at a comparatively early age in order to begin at once to earn their living, and also that pupils were being withdrawn without previous notice being given. He suggested that a statement be put in the school prospectus requiring parents to give six weeks' notice of their intention to withdraw their child.

Mr. Walker resigned in July 1908, by which time the age of admission was fixed at ten years. Games were being played with other

schools, the number of pupils attending the Pupil Teachers' Centre was declining and the number of secondary school pupils averaged about eighty. The school was managed by the Oldbury Higher Education Committee operating under special regulations of the local education authority which was the Worcestershire County Council. The town now had its own secondary school.

The new headmaster appointed 5 October 1908 to succeed Mr. Walker was a science graduate, Mr. Peter Henderson, M.A., B.Sc., (died 1917). Though only headmaster at Oldbury for three years his term of office saw important developments which contributed to the growth of the school. The first of these was the formation of an Old Pupils' Association, the proposal to form such a body coming from the old pupils themselves who desired to preserve their connection with the school⁽²⁰⁾. The headmaster considered it an excellent idea and asked the education committee to grant the members the use of the school buildings on certain Saturday evenings for the purpose of holding meetings. Thus in 1908-9 with the support of the governors, five meetings of the association were held⁽²¹⁾. In 1909 the headmaster was able to report that:

'The Old Pupils' Association had a very satisfactory General Meeting on Saturday 2 October. The arrangements for the session were discussed and the interest and spontaneity shown in the discussion of the various proceedings promises well for the success of the winter programme.'

Another important event was the establishment of a school library, one hundred books being purchased at Christmas 1908 for this purpose. By 1974 the number had risen to 7,000. The library was opened at the beginning of the spring term 1909 with lending and reference sections, one of the school prefects being appointed librarian⁽²²⁾.

Another new feature was the establishment of a Preparatory department for pupils between ten and twelve years of age who followed a simpler curriculum than the elder pupils. A new scheme for the provision of books was also started which saved parents' money.

No changes were made in the curriculum or organisation of the school except for the introduction of swimming lessons in place of drill during the summer term, 'as I find that swimming is practically an unknown art in the school.' (headmaster).

It was during this year, 1908, that the first full inspection of the school was carried out by three of His Majesty's Inspectors on the 27 and 28 October. In their report the inspectors called attention to numerous defects and in particular the lack of suitable desks, no assembly hall, dining hall, cookery room, playground for boys, no separate entrances for boys and girls and no suitable playing fields, concluding with a statement on the 'unsuitability of the premises for permanent use of a Secondary School'. It was not until 1926 that 'suitable premises' were built in Moat Road.

The pupil teacher system also came to an end during this period and was replaced by student teacherships, there being three student teachers in 1909 who attended on Friday afternoons for assistance and guidance in their home reading.

Though the first speech day had been held in July 1905⁽²³⁾ and presumably in subsequent years, the writer has been unable to find any speech day programmes for these early years. The first programme is that for 1909 and from that year onwards there are in existence copies for nearly every year. The 1909 programme consisted of a single, duplicated sheet very different from those of later years, with the names of prizewinners. No cups had as yet been given to the school, nor had the school been divided into houses, for numbers were insufficient to warrant this and so there were no house cups. There were special prizes for art, needlework, and woodwork, form prizes and one prize donated by Mr. William Bund for head of school⁽²⁴⁾. In 1910 and for the next few years programmes were printed by W. and H. Smith Ltd., Journal Works, Evesham. During the three years that Mr. Henderson was headmaster, speech days continued to be held in July each year, the prizes being distributed by G. S. Albright Esq., Professor Turner of Birmingham University and G. W. Hobson Esq., respectively.

In his first and subsequent reports, Mr. Henderson, like other headmasters, sought to impress on parents the need to keep the pupils at school for the full four-year course, for the word 'secondary' indicated a school where the normal leaving age was sixteen years, unlike the 'elementary' school where the statutory leaving age was twelve years. The very existence of a secondary school depended on pupils remaining at least four years, and a proportion staying beyond the age of sixteen years.

By 1911 there were several former students at teacher training colleges, and boys of the school were also successful in the civil service examinations for clerks. The honours board of the school presented in 1906 by Mr. G. S. Albright was now erected, the first two names on it being those of Edmund Fisher and Arthur E. Church, who were attending Birmingham Day Training College. The Old Pupils' Association continued to hold meetings, the number of pupils remained fairly static, certain staff changes took place, and the school continued with its work despite the difficulties caused by the inadequacy of the buildings.

THE OLD SCHOOL
(Erected 1899) (Photograph 1979)



1. *'Weekly News'* 2 July 1904.
2. *Ibid.* 20 and 27 August, 1904.
3. *But see below p. 12.*
4. *'Weekly News'* 24 December 1904.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.* 29 July 1905.
7. *Ibid.* 20 August 1904.
8. *Ibid.* 3 September 1904.
9. *Ibid.* 3, 17, 24 September, 1904.
10. *Miss E. M. Cooper of Oldbury (1969).*
11. *'Weekly News'* 24 September 1904.
12. *Ibid.* 24 December 1904.
13. *Ibid.* 25 February, 1905.
14. *See below p. 24.*
15. *'To assist in establishing the 'esprit de corps' so necessary for the welfare of a school, a sports club has been established.'*
(*Headmaster's Report for the year 1904-5*).
16. *'Weekly News'* 29 July 1905.
17. *See above p. 11.*
18. *'Weekly News'* 19 August 1905.
19. *For a list of scholarships and exhibitions see Appendix No. 11.*
20. *'Early in the winter 1908 an Old Pupils' Association was founded. The opening meeting was attended by a large number of old pupils, and of the governors, and other ladies and gentlemen interested in the school.'* (*Headmaster's Report*).
21. *'The attendances were good and the enthusiasm shown promises well for the future history of the association.'* (*Ibid.*).
22. *This is the first reference to the existence of prefects which I have found.*
23. *See above p. 14.*
24. *See Appendix No. 9.*

Chapter II

DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE HEADMASTERSHIP OF MR. G. H. CRISP, 1911 - 20

The period of time covered in this chapter witnessed a great upheaval in the life of the country brought about by the First World War. Despite this it was a most important period in the life of Oldbury Secondary School under the headmaster, Mr. G. H. Crisp, M.A., B.Sc., who succeeded Mr. Henderson in 1911, and who unfortunately died at the early age of forty years in 1920.

According to the school prospectus issued during these years⁽¹⁾ the aim of the school was to give a sound general education which would fit pupils for a commercial, a technical or a professional career and which would prepare them for the training college or the university. To this end the school provided a six years' course of study for boys and girls from twelve to eighteen years of age, with preparatory classes for those between the ages of ten and twelve years. It was suggested that it was advisable for pupils to be sent as soon as possible after completion of their tenth year after having passed the entrance examination in English and arithmetic.

School fees were £6. per annum for pupils residing in Worcestershire and £8 per annum for those in Smethwick, payable in three instalments. Notice in writing had to be given to the headmaster before the withdrawal of the pupils by the parents or guardians. A certificate of freedom from infection had to be brought to school after each holiday.

Mr. Crisp came to Oldbury as a young man, about thirty-one years of age, full of ideas and enthusiasm, abundantly apparent in the changes wrought during his nine years as headmaster. He repeatedly brought to the attention of the Authority the inadequacy of the school buildings, and his reports contain demands for better salaries for teachers in Oldbury, for a new school, as well as much information on his work and new developments in the life of the school generally. Mr. Crisp appears to have been energetic, forthright in his comments on the school and the Local Education Authority, and anxious to bring about improvements for the welfare and education, in the widest sense of the term, of his pupils. Many of the later aspects of school life originated in his time as Headmaster, as the reader will notice from this chapter. When he became headmaster there were seventy-nine pupils in the school; in 1920 there were 254; this great increase obviously necessitated expansion in other directions and a certain amount of reorganisation in school life.

The new headmaster was apparently not impressed with certain aspects of the school when first appointed, for he wrote in October 1911: 'What is usually called the "Tone" of the School is not very high, the pronunciation, the manners, and the personal appearance of some of

the pupils is far from desirable. Everything that can be done by the School to improve these defects is being done.'

But at the same time he recognised that this was partly due to the low wages of the parents. He mentioned this again in 1912 writing:- 'Cricket does not seem to be very popular in this district, only seventeen boys would promise to provide proper dress and play regularly..... poverty may partly account for this.'

He left the governors and education committee in no doubt concerning the deficiencies of the school⁽²⁾, the smallness of the school playground, and the lack of adequate facilities for swimming, which sport he said in 1912 was very popular. 'The playground was a walled-in enclosure adjoining the school, seldom used since we had access to the small park nearby (Broadwell Park). Here we spent the morning break sometimes with messy explorations of the exposed tunnel which took some of the town's drainage! So wrote Dr. John Field, a pupil of the school during these years in a letter to the writer in 1974.

It was the above defects which led the inspectors in 1908 to question the suitability of the premises for permanent use of a secondary school, and in 1911 the triennial report of the Board of Education posed the question, 'whether it would not be better to establish a secondary school in a more convenient situation?' It must be said here that the headmaster took up this matter and campaigned for a new school on a better site for the remainder of his life.

In his first annual report for the year 1911-1912 the headmaster was very forthright in detailing matters which he considered should be rectified. He instanced the low salaries offered to staff by the Local Education Authority in the days when there was no national salary scale, and which caused some of the staff to apply for posts in other schools where authorities paid more money. Teachers had to ask for more money which the local committee was unwilling to grant. He repeated this in 1917 stating that frequent changes of staff⁽³⁾ would continue until the county authority established a reasonable scale of salaries. In 1919 he maintained that Oldbury teachers should be paid at the same rate as Birmingham teachers who, at that time were paid at a higher rate, and in February 1920 he stated that boys would not enter teaching so long as it was so badly paid.

He also complained of pupils leaving school at the age of fourteen years and expressed the view that free places should be granted only to those whose parents guaranteed to keep their children at school for not less than four years. In addition he was also concerned over the fact that few students were able to proceed to university, and that few pupils after having served a year as student teachers proceeded to a training college because Oldbury Elementary Education Authority employed cheap uncertified teachers.

The low reputation of the school, according to the headmaster was due to the unsatisfactory state of the buildings. He listed all the

defects⁽⁴⁾ and in addition mentioned that there was no physics laboratory, the chemistry laboratory was too small, the basement had been under water for two years, there was no special room for the library, no cycle sheds, and only four classrooms for five classes. He believed that it was impossible to compete favourably with other schools as long as work had to be carried on under such difficult conditions, and ended his report with a plea for the establishment of an up-to-date school on a more suitable site.

In addition to his concern for the material surroundings in which educational work had to be done, the headmaster was also concerned over the physical health of his pupils. He wrote, 'I am taking the heights and weights of scholars, testing their sight and examining their teeth..... work which might be done in future by the medical officer.' (June 1912). He reported that as a result of these examinations, 55% of pupils had decayed teeth and 38% defective vision. Treatment for these pupils was given at West Bromwich Hospital in 1913. These years before 1914 saw much social legislation carried through by the Liberal governments, for example, in 1906 local authorities were empowered to provide school meals for needy children, in 1907 medical inspection of school children began, and in 1908 a number of regulations were passed designed to protect the interests of children. These and other measures laid the foundations of the twentieth century 'Welfare State.'

The headmaster also carried out other analyses concerning pupils. He found that for fifty boys the average age at admission was 12.9 years and on leaving 15.9 years, giving a school life of three years. On leaving school these boys entered the following occupations:- teaching 10, clerks 22, engineering 5, draughtsmen 3, shop assistant 4, farming 3, chemist 2, assistant auctioneer 1. For fifty-seven girls he found the average age at admission was 13.3 years and on leaving 16.9 years, giving an average school life of three and a half years. When they left school they took up the following careers:- clerks and typists 17, teachers 22 (uncertificated), manual work 4, shops 2, dressmaking 1, millinery 1, at home 10.

It was probably as a result of this analysis that in December 1912 the headmaster suggested that the curriculum be widened to include book keeping, shorthand, typewriting, and possibly German. He suggested visiting teachers should be employed on two or three afternoons per week between 4.15 p.m. and 5.00 p.m. What he really wanted was to make commercial subjects an integral part of the school curriculum instead of extra classes after school hours and for this purpose he asked the committee in February 1913 to appoint an additional member of staff. This request however was not accepted and the county council was recommended by the Oldbury committee to approve the original scheme of a visiting teacher for commercial subjects after school hours. This scheme was initiated at the beginning of the summer term, 1913, the classes being optional and intended to

benefit those taking up clerical posts, for these subjects could not be made compulsory without altering the school from a secondary to a kind of higher elementary. The first teacher of commercial subjects was Mr. W. J. Howell succeeded by Mr. J. Gripton and the last was Mrs. M. Warwick.

A further change was the arrangement whereby each subject was to be taught by the same teacher throughout the school, thus the headmaster himself taught all science; Miss Martin, history and geography; Miss Massey, English; Mr. Markwick, French and Latin; Mr. Smith, mathematics; Miss Blenkhorn, art and needlework; Mr. Foster, woodwork.

Examinations taken by pupils at this time were the Oxford Senior Local Examinations after four years' study, then after a further one or two years the Intermediate B.A. or B.Sc., examination of Birmingham University, the equivalent of the later Higher School Certificate and still later of the General Certificate of Education Advanced level examination; pupils were also prepared for Civil Service Examinations.

It was Mr. Crisp who noted in June 1913 that the school had never held an athletic sports day and he hoped to inaugurate such an event that summer term. This aim was duly realised and the first sports day in the school's history was held on 17 July 1913, on the Victoria Road playing fields, prizes being purchased with money given by members of the education committee.

In July, 1913, the headmaster was able to report on academic successes of former pupils of the school and in particular of H. Alsop who entered school on the first day of opening and who had obtained his B.A. degree with First Class Honours in English at Birmingham University winning the Churton-Collins Prize for Literature; E. Fisher who also entered on the first day and had now obtained his B.A. degree with Second Class Honours at Birmingham University; and H. Round likewise. Pupils of the school were granted a half-day holiday to commemorate these successes, and likewise in July 1914, when Alsop and Fisher obtained the degree of M.A. Birmingham. With the successes of these former pupils, Oldbury Secondary School may be said to have arrived in the academic world, and from that time onwards an ever-increasing number of former pupils continued their education at university level the most distinguished of whom was Dr. J. B. Taylor, F.R.S. (The Royal Society in electing Dr. Taylor in 1970 described him as: - 'distinguished for his contribution to plasma physics, especially his work on stability and diffusion in plasma.') The last pupils from Oldbury Grammar School entered universities in October 1975.

In his second annual report, 1913, the headmaster was able to mention certain improvements which had taken place during the previous twelve months. These included the establishment of optional classes in commercial subjects⁽⁵⁾; the appointment of a gymnastics mistress; the erection of a new woodwork shop; an increase to 400 volumes in

the school library, in particular additions to the reference section as a result of money given for this purpose by Mr. G. S. Albright; the erection of a pavilion on the Victoria Road playing ground; the presentation to the school of two silver challenge cups by Messrs. W. F. Vernon and G. S. Albright⁽⁶⁾. The headmaster had also abolished the old school badges⁽⁷⁾ and introduced school caps and hat bands in blue, green and white.

But his greatest concern arose from the inadequacies of the school buildings. To him the buildings were unsuitable for two reasons, firstly because the majority of pupils did not live near the school and secondly because the buildings were not large enough and moreover dual occupation was proving unsatisfactory; the buildings were used for technical classes in the evening.

Regarding the first disadvantage the headmaster made a survey in 1913 of the districts from which pupils came, and produced the following table:- Rood End 17 pupils, Langley 26, Warley 12, Smethwick 17, Blackheath 14, Causeway Green 3, Oldbury 19, Rounds Green 2, West Bromwich 1. Total 111.

In 1914 he made an analysis of the wards in which pupils resided:- Warley North 16 pupils, Warley South 9, Langley 50, Central 6, Broadwell 18, Rounds Green 5, Halesowen/Blackheath 25, West Bromwich 3, Smethwick 26. Total 148. To those familiar with the district it will be apparent that not many pupils lived in Oldbury town area where the school was situated and the headmaster suggested a new school should be built near Oldbury and Smethwick Joint Hospital; this never materialised. A former pupil, Dr. John Field wrote as follows: 'The school served an area extending for five miles or more around Oldbury. There were few cars or buses but electric trams plied regularly between Oldbury and Dudley, Smethwick and West Bromwich. A few cycled; mainly we walked. My brothers and I walked six miles a day to and from school with the occasional luxury of a penny bus ride when a service began between Langley and Oldbury.' The inadequacy of the school buildings was becoming more and more apparent, for there were at this time the same four classrooms for six classes, necessitating the use of the art room and science lecture room as ordinary classrooms and when the student teachers were present, that was on Friday afternoons, this meant seven classes in attendance. The art room was also used as an assembly hall, examination room and gymnasium. The number of pupils had increased to 119 in October 1913, which made it necessary to divide Form I into two classes (Junior and Senior) and to appoint another member of staff. If numbers had increased still further it would have been impossible to accommodate them all in the present building. The headmaster also believed that the school was not receiving the attention from Worcestershire Education Authority that its claims warranted.

During the academic year 1913-14 a number of changes took place in the academic staff. When the French and Latin post was advertised by the county authority there were forty-five applicants from whom Mr. J. A. Malone, M.A. was selected. It was at this time also that Miss Anne Massey was promoted to senior mistress and remained as such until her retirement in 1937. A former pupil, Mrs. D. Nash (née Mansell) looking back to the 1930s wrote in 1974 to the author: 'She was a true martinet. She was also senior English mistress and took great pleasure in making us learn many lines of often useless poetry, which we recited one after the other round the class. The senior mistress also was very strict about our gym tunics. Every girl had to kneel down and the height of the tunic was measured. It had to be no more than six inches from the ground. I am sure her eyes would boggle at present fashions.'

Another former pupil, Dr. John Field, wrote of the staff during this period as follows:- 'The headmaster was Mr. Crisp who had succeeded Mr. Henderson shortly before my arrival. Crisp, I recall as an impressive head, firm and just, with a sympathetic understanding of juvenile problems, he held an authority which none would question. He directed the classes in general science and laid foundations which for me were to prove invaluable in later life. The English mistress was the austere Miss Massey under whose direction we memorised long passages of classical verse and prose, and wrestled with Nesfield's 'English Grammar' and the art of composition as, I suppose, our successors still do today. Joyless tasks they seemed to be. Little did we realise that they were preparing the ground for the awakening in later years to the beauty of poetry and the power of words. The history classes elude my memory; what remains is vague recollection of a dreary progression through Oman's 'History of England', of the Punic Wars and of the querulous Greek States, selected bits of the jigsaw history which were all, I suppose, our immature minds could grasp.

The mathematics teacher was Mr. Smith, an easy-going old fellow who turned a kindly blind eye to mischief in class but was still able to keep order and teach effectively. Maths was my favourite subject and such modest progress as I made then and since rest on the firm foundations he laid. French and Latin classes were directed by Mr. Markwick, an unbending disciplinarian for whom we had much respect with little warmth of regard. There was no slacking in his classes and when in the summer evenings homework was sacrificed for more agreeable pursuits out of doors it was never that set by Markwick. His successor, J. A. Malone ('Jammy') was indulgent, good at sport, and popular but ineffective in the classroom. We held him in warm regard, able as we were to pass a diveting hour in his classes with few of the restraints imposed by Markwick. The attractive geography mistress, Miss Martin, and the whimsical Miss Blenkarn, who taught art, I remember more clearly than I do the classes they directed. Elusive, too are my recollections

tions of music and scripture classes taken by various members of staff, and of the woodwork sessions held weekly during the winter in a workshop in Oldbury town.'

The headmaster also received requests for pupils to give up the study of Latin, but this was not approved by the Board of Education unless another language was taught in its place. Therefore the headmaster held a referendum of parents resulting in a majority stating a preference for German, which he proposed to introduce at the beginning of the academic year, 1914, to be studied by those pupils whose parents requested it. Those who intended to become teachers or university entrants, however were required to continue with Latin.

In his annual report in October 1914, the headmaster once again spoke of the difficulty of carrying on the school in its present buildings, particularly as the number of pupils continued to increase. Moreover the number of full-time staff, then six, was one more than when the school contained half the number of pupils. There was as yet no sixth form but the headmaster envisaged one being formed, for pupils were staying on longer at school, a promising development but one which rendered the problem of accommodation more difficult; as it was, the staff room had to be used as a classroom. On the credit side however, commercial classes after normal school hours were proving popular; German had been introduced in form six at the beginning of the year; and pupils had also been divided into houses⁽⁸⁾ to stimulate competition in work and play.

The war years, 1914-18, brought about certain changes in the life of the school, as was inevitable considering the magnitude and duration of the struggle. There was no official speech day in the autumn term, 1914, as it was decided to economise and shelve such functions during the war period, instead the headmaster distributed the prizes in school on the afternoon of 22 December. The next official speech day was not until 1920. Similarly other aspects of school life were ended, for example, no sports days were held in these years, and swimming was discontinued because of the closure of the West Bromwich baths. In 1917 and 1918 during the summer holidays a squad of boys under Mr. Howell gave help to farmers in the locality. The Board of Education issued a circular wishing to know what steps, if any, were being taken to add space cultivated by the school with the object of increasing the food supply; no reply, if any was made, has come to light! Two members of staff, Smith and Malone, were called to active service leaving Howell as the only assistant master on the staff and resulting in a number of mistresses being appointed at first on a temporary basis. The Old Pupils' Society continued to meet, but most of its male members were in the armed forces.

One major development in the war period was the formation of a school cadet corps of forty boys. The formation of such corps in schools was under discussion in the county in early 1915, and corps

had been formed at Dudley, Stourbridge and Kidderminster. The chief difficulty at Oldbury in forming a corps was financial, that is money to provide rifles, equipment and clothing. However, in July, 1915, Oldbury Secondary School Cadet Corps was under canvas at Himley Park, having received a donation of £40 towards the purchase of equipment. In the following years, 1916, 1917 and 1918 camps were held at Himley attended by the School Cadet Corps, which also attended a review held in Hagley Park in 1918⁽⁹⁾.

During the war years, as in previous years, the headmaster was concerned over the matter of premature leavers⁽¹⁰⁾. Two pupils left in December 1914, both scholarship holders, having been in the school only two years. In February 1915 he complained of pupils leaving without notice, having attended for only a short period of time; he believed the war to be partly responsible since good wages could be earned at this time⁽¹¹⁾ and he asked that steps should be taken to try and prevent scholarships being given to candidates who were not prepared to make full use of them. He recognised that one reason for premature leaving was the poverty of parents⁽¹²⁾, but he also believed that parents did not realise the value of education. The average school life of pupils was under three years and in May 1917, he complained that it seemed impossible to get the majority of the people in Oldbury to recognise that for secondary education sixteen years ought to be the minimum age for leaving. He maintained that the Local Education Authority should grant free places only to those whose parents signed an agreement not to remove their children until sixteen years of age. His final remark on this was made in February 1920 when he reported that during the year 1919 only twelve pupils reached the fifth form and completed the four-year course, many pupils leaving soon after their fourteenth birthday. The school leaving age had been raised to fourteen years by the Fisher Education Act of 1918.

But the recurring problem throughout the period was that of accommodation in view of the expansion of the school population. From the written material left by Mr. Crisp it appears that his brief life as headmaster of Oldbury Secondary School was devoted to campaigning for the building of a new school fit for Oldbury pupils, in which nearly all the activities which came to be associated with Oldbury Grammar School in later years, could take place, and which unfortunately he was not destined to see. He was, indeed, the pioneer.

Certain extensions to the existing premises had been started in 1915 and two new classrooms were being erected for the technical school which the headmaster hoped would also be available for use by the secondary school. In 1919 the Drill Hall in Church Street was rented as a Manual Instruction Centre and the existing woodwork shop converted for use as an ordinary classroom. Finally in June 1920 the new rooms were nearly finished and the huts in the school yard were ready for use in the following September.

But these building improvements merely 'papered over the cracks' and a new school was what the headmaster wanted. In June 1917 he noted that for nine or ten years past suggestions had been made for providing proper provision for a secondary school and that a scheme for a joint secondary school for Oldbury and Smethwick had been considered but never got past the initial stages. Oldbury would require a new school for itself after the war and he suggested one be built nearer Warley where the number of pupils was greater than in Oldbury centre.

In the year 1917-18 there were six forms in the school, the first year pupils being divided into two forms, junior and senior. Then in September 1918, because of increased numbers, Form I Senior was itself divided into Form IA and Form IB. This year also marked the beginning of the sixth form, with one pupil, Marjorie Robbins; hence there were eight forms altogether but Form VI and Form I junior had no form rooms. In September 1919 there were 238 pupils organised into the following forms:-

IA, IB, IC, IIA, IIB, III, IV, V, VI and Student Teachers.

The headmaster again emphasised the need for a new school; it was over ten years since this need was brought to the notice of the county education authority. He also noted that in other parts of the county arrangements for new schools were further advanced than in Oldbury. He therefore suggested the purchase of a fifteen-acre site and the preparation of plans. In November 1919 the site for a new school was inspected by county representatives, the headmaster expressing the opinion that the new school should provide accommodation for four hundred pupils.

In addition to waging a campaign for a new school Mr. Crisp was also responsible for two other features of the school, well known to all pupils. It was he who chose the Latin word "Cresco" (I grow) as the school motto, which was incorporated in the badge on the breast pocket of the school blazer, on the headmaster's chair in the assembly hall, and in many other places.

Finally it was due to the initiative and pioneering work of Mr. Crisp that the first school magazine 'The Oldburian' appeared in May 1920 a few months before his death. It was a slim volume⁽¹³⁾ of twenty pages, printed by the Midland Printing Co., Oldbury, and edited by A. E. Pound. This first issue was very different from those of later years, there being, of course, much less about which to write. There were few school societies as compared with later years and less social work on which to report, in fact the only society of importance appears to have been the Cadet Corps which met every Friday at 4.10 p.m. There is also an article by an Old Boy of the school referring to the revival of the Old Students' Association⁽¹⁴⁾ which held whist drives, socials, dances and lectures during the years 1919-22 and also formed an athletics club⁽¹⁵⁾. The magazine gives the names of seven boys and

seven girls who were prefects⁽¹⁶⁾ and also the results of football and hockey matches against other schools.

The headmaster's interest in football and the activities of the football team during these years were recorded in the following account by a former pupil, A. E. Parry in the Oldburian in 1958. 'Prior to 1910 there was very little in the way of a recognised football XI at the Oldbury Secondary School and at that time G. Hugh Crisp arrived as headmaster at this gas-lit school, cleaned by one Joseph Smalley and guarded by a gigantic bull mastiff. The personnel were not as now — the top formers were 18 to 20 years of age, and some came to school in bowler hats and with Gladstone bags. The school colours were navy blue with scarlet (O.S.S.) cap badges. The team played in almost anything — when we could get a ground. Changing was done in the cloak-room, there were no showers, baths or training, first aid or amenities, but we got stacks of fruit cake and some tea (for 4d) after a home match. Travel to away matches was under a person's own steam — no buses etc. Mr. Crisp soon took these matters in hand. The strip became pale green shirts with white collars and cuffs, blue knicks and stockings. After seeing the 'team' (a misnomer) in action for the first time, it was stated that the head wept bitterly. Training took place and he addressed the team in the lecture room. On his own initiative he negotiated the rental of a big field at Smith's Farm, Oldbury and one of our first mensuration lessons was the marking out of two full-sized pitches, using theodolite etc. In two seasons the men's team was very good and had the edge of most grammar schools in the area.....Mr. Crisp then approached the West Bromwich Albion F.C. concerning proper coaching (1912-13) and their captain, Jesse Pennington, was asked to view us and coach.....At this time many of the 'men' had left and a new team was forming which, it is maintained was the best the school ever had.....they went for, I think, twenty-one matches without defeat.....⁽¹⁷⁾. Then we lost a match, and on the Monday following every man in the team was sent for to the lecture room and we were 'addressed' by the head, who gave us a verbal castigation..... Mr. and Mrs. Crisp came to the matches afterwards, and their small daughter, with green, white and blue hair ribbon on top, was a mascot..... The war came and caused trouble.. .. Our field became a testing ground for tanks..... After leaving the school I still played for the above team for two seasons till one day Mr. Crisp sent for me and said I could not play again for the school as some of the opponents objected to the school playing old boys.....

After the war I met Jack Richards at the new ground, Moat Road (1920-21) the site of the present school and played my first match..... This was, I think, the beginning of the Cresconian Club..... I believe I was the first Cresconian captain.....⁽¹⁸⁾

'Mr. Crisp's death in the summer of 1920 robbed the school and Oldbury of an exceptionally brilliant man. He corresponded with Earl

Russell on mathematical logic..... and was asked to write a book on the subject..... Unfortunately he died.....very suddenly and never saw the good results of his struggles and hopes for a new school. We had the ground ready and used the fields where the school now stands for hockey and football. We used to go for walks up there, and imagine what it would be like to have a new building away from Flash Road. How eagerly he looked forward to having it; we all did..... He was interested in every subject and could always pick out the weak or difficult points for discussion. The chief things I remember about him were his sympathy, kindness and great sense of fun. He loved music and possessed a very pleasing tenor voice.....'

The above paragraph was written by a former member of staff, Mrs. C. Davies, widow of Mr. T. L. Davies and ninety years of age, in a letter to the writer in 1974. It stands as a tribute to a great headmaster.



G. HUGH CRISP M.A., B.Sc.
(Headmaster 1911 - 1920)

1. *The writer is indebted to Mrs. Ida Nicholls (formerly Mrs. Crisp) for the loan of a copy of this prospectus.*
2. *See above p. 16.*
3. *During the thirteen years of its existence there had been thirty-five teachers appointed with an average tenure of under three years.*
4. *See above pp. 16, 21.*
5. *See above p. 22.*
6. *See Appendix No. 9.*
7. *See above p. 14.*
8. *This was the beginning of the house system, though neither the names nor number of houses is given. I am informed that there were four houses as in 1974. See below p. 34.*
9. *For later history of the corps see below pp. 28, 34, 41.*
10. *See above p.p. 15, 17, 21.*
11. *The same was true of the full employment period after 1945.*
12. *See above p. 21.*
13. *Copy loaned to me by Miss Jaques of Oldbury.*
14. *Old Pupils Association formed 1908. See above p. 16. Jubilee celebrated somewhat belatedly 1961.*
15. *For later history of the Cresconians see below p.p. 39, 40, 57, 59, 72.*
16. *Prefects first mentioned 1908. See above p. 16. This is the first occasion on which a list of prefects is given. The prefects were*

<i>A. Betts</i>	<i>Gladys Foley</i>
<i>H. Dudley</i>	<i>Lily Jaques</i>
<i>R. Farrington</i>	<i>Doris Mansell</i>
<i>A. Pound</i>	<i>Evelyn Mason</i>
<i>W. Shipton</i>	<i>Mabel Smith</i>
<i>H. Smart</i>	<i>Eileen Westwood</i>
<i>T. Hawkins</i>	<i>Eva Whitehouse</i>
17. *See below p. 52 for the record of the 1957-8 team.*
18. *For later history of Cresconians' football section see below p.p. 40, 72*

Chapter III

LIFE IN THE OLD AND IN THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS UNDER MR. J. G. HOWARTH, 1920 - 36

The sudden death of Mr. G. H. Crisp in the summer of 1920 led to the appointment of Mr. J. G. Howarth, M.A. as headmaster of Oldbury Secondary School. A science graduate, he was formerly on the staff of King Edward VI's School, Stourbridge. He was to remain as headmaster until his retirement sixteen years later; he died in 1953. The most important event during his period as head was the move from the old buildings in Flash Road, Oldbury, to the new school in Moat Road, Langley, which took place in 1926.

Writing about school life during the last years in the old school buildings, Mrs. D. Nash (née Mansell) a pupil at that time, gave the author the following account: 'Mr. Howarth taught physics for a time to the sixth form, and then Mr. T. L. Davies took over. Mr. Howarth had a keen sense of humour and told pupils that when walking down the corridors he made as much noise as his shoes would allow so that when he arrived at their classroom they had had time to reach their seats and be quiet. There were no school dinners and most pupils went home; a few took sandwiches. Mr. W. J. Howell taught French and German with great gusto and bad temper. The caretaker was Mr. J. Smalley, who was most efficient and kept the school spotlessly clean, but was quite a tyrant. His house was down the small passage from the school and visitors were not welcomed by his large dog. The front door was locked at 9.00 a.m. and all outside then were late. It was quite impossible to get in any other way.'

It fell to Mr. Howarth to revive and resume activities which had ceased temporarily during the war years, and as a new headmaster to initiate new developments in school life, although the school continued to be housed in the old inadequate buildings for the first six years of his headmastership.

Speech day, which had not been held since 1913, was resumed in December 1920, being held in the Town Hall, except in 1924 and 1925 when it was held in Langley Cinema. This change from pre-war days when such ceremonies were held in school, was necessitated by the fact that the number of pupils in the school was now approximately 250, double what it had been in 1913, and there was no assembly hall in the old school in which to accommodate everybody. The first post-war speech day had a military tone, for it began with an inspection of the Guard of Honour by General R. P. Benson, C.B., C.M.G. who also gave an address; prizes were distributed by and another address given by Lieutenant Colonel Trinham. The school song was 'Forty Years On' until a new one was written in 1926⁽¹⁾. Gymnastic exercises by the girls formed part of the programme during these years, as well as a number

of musical items, always a feature of speech days, and speeches by the two school captains.

Mention has been made earlier of the prefecture⁽²⁾ and of the position of Head of School to whom in pre-war years Mr. Willis Bund awarded a prize annually. In 1920 however the positions of boy and girl captains were established, the names appearing on the first post-war speech day programme of that year⁽³⁾. School choirs had also been formed though only girls are mentioned in the programmes of these years, and they sang part-songs on these occasions⁽⁴⁾.

Another change made by Mr. Howarth was to divide the pupils into four houses in 1920 with the names King's, Queen's, School, Trinity. This revived system⁽⁵⁾ created much friendly rivalry in studies and sports and it was further increased by the presentation to the school of a silver cup by Mrs. Howarth for inter-house competitions each term and known as the Howarth Challenge Cup.

The first school Christmas parties were also held in December 1920, four taking place that month; the holding of these parties continued for many years and it was only in later years they were discontinued, with the exception of a party for forms I and for forms V and VI.

The second issue of the school magazine appeared in December 1921. Although slim by comparison with those of later years, it contained more information than the pioneer issue of May 1920⁽⁶⁾. Sports day had been revived in July 1921 under the general supervision of Mr. T. L. Davies; the Cadet Corps was flourishing, being enthusiastically organised by Capt. C. Knight Coutts M.C. and the corps visited France in 1924; a literary and debating society had been founded in 1920, being confined to the middle and upper school pupils; the Old Students' Association had been revived, the annual subscription was two shillings.

As from January, 1921, school fees were increased to £9 per year inclusive of books, pupils outside the county paying £11 per year. Parents had to sign a form undertaking to keep their children at school until sixteen years of age; a breach of this undertaking rendered parents liable to payment of damages. From this time onwards there were constant references to this matter, beginning the following year, 1922, when there were instances of pupils being withdrawn without notice and the committee decided to hand the matter over to its solicitor to deal with.

The school's Roll of Honour was also unveiled in 1921 by Mr. G. S. Albright⁽⁷⁾ and in the same month, June, an enlarged photograph of the late headmaster Mr. Crisp was handed to the school at a ceremony in the art room, and was hung in the upper part of the entrance hall. In 1920-21 a classroom was converted for use as a physics laboratory so that practical work could be started, but the room had no gas or water, only a few tables and balances! Because of the increase in the number of pupils, now over 300, an additional member of staff was required, for which post there were eighty-five applicants! Some improve-

ment in conditions came about in 1922 when pupils were able to use for games the grounds at Moat Farm where the new school was to be built, the headmaster arranging for the whole school to devote Wednesday afternoons to this.

In 1923 the Board of Education issued regulations whereby 25% of entrants should be free-place holders, and no pupils were to be admitted after the age of twelve years except for transfers from comparable schools. In the same year the public examinations taken by pupils became the Oxford School Certificate and the Joint Board Northern Universities Higher School Certificate. The following year, 1924, T. H. Morton was awarded a state scholarship on the results of the Higher School Certificate Examination, he being the first pupil of the school to win one of these awards. Older readers and students of history will recall that in days gone by England possessed an Empire of which we were justifiably proud, so it will come as no surprise to learn that a party of pupils from school visited the Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924. Mr. G. S. Albright, always a generous benefactor of the school, gave another £50 for the purchase of books for the school reference library in 1925⁽⁸⁾. At this time also, the sixth form curriculum was expanded to include geology and economics.

Throughout these years the constant demand was for the authority to begin work on the building of the new school. The following appeared in the *'Oldburian'* in December 1921. 'It is rumoured that plans of the new school to be erected in Moat Road were found scratched on the walls of a prehistoric cave in Oldbury, which cave is now called the council office. These plans are still under discussion, and the building has not yet been built. May we hope for an earthquake soon?'

Discussion went on for a long time, for it was not until November 1924 that the County Architect presented the final plans of the new school. In November, 1922 the headmaster, in view of the increased numbers in the school stressed the urgent need for a start to be made on the site in Moat Road; he repeated this again in October 1923 when his room was being used as a store room, a masters' staff room and also as a classroom! Another survey was made of the wards in which pupils of the school resided, with the following information: Oldbury — Broadwell 30 pupils, Oldbury — Central 26, Rounds Green 19, Langley 76, Warley — North 11, Warley — South 45, Blackheath and Cakemore 34, (the following three were not parts of Oldbury) Smethwick 64, Tividale 10, Others 5 giving a total of 320. This only served to re-emphasise what an earlier survey had revealed⁽⁹⁾ namely the unsuitable geographical position of the school.

A report on accommodation at the old school was drawn up in 1923-24 comparing it in that year with what it had been in 1911-12 and showing that many defects still remained. Oldbury Higher Education Committee desired the support of the district council in a resolution to the Worcestershire County Council urging that authority to take

steps to provide a new secondary school building at an early date. The committee maintained that the school building had become inadequate for the needs of the technical school and the secondary school, the development of secondary education being seriously retarded through lack of accommodation, and also because time had proved that the building was not conveniently located for pupils of the secondary school. The committee reviewed the history of the school pointing out that as long ago as 1908 the Board of Education had commented on the numerous deficiencies to which, as we have seen, the headmaster Mr. Crisp had continually drawn attention⁽¹⁰⁾. None of these deficiencies had been remedied yet the number of pupils was nearly four times what it was then.

The committee wished to make it clear that although the county authority had increased the accommodation the increase had never kept pace with the growth of the school so that consequently the strain had never been more than temporarily relieved. The committee continued,

‘of the 320 pupils in the school 180 are girls and owing to lack of accommodation and convenience no instruction in domestic subjects is given to them. It is open to doubt whether there is another secondary school in the country where so important a part of a girl’s education is so entirely absent. It is not possible to remedy this in the present building.’

The following resolution was therefore passed:

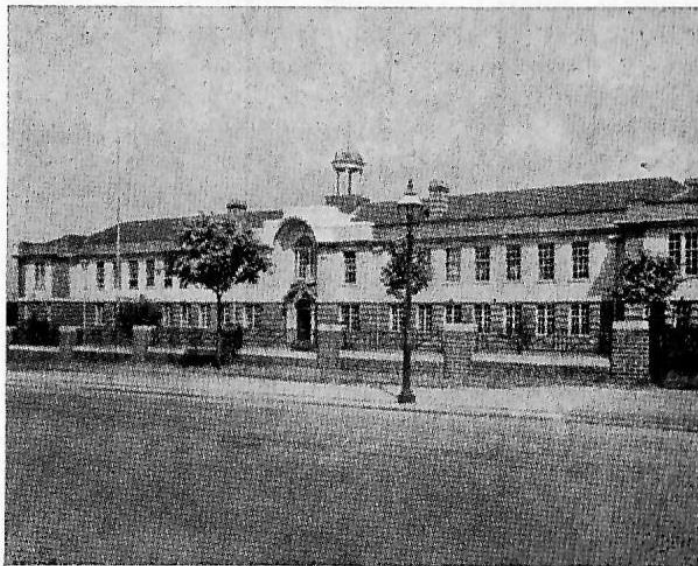
‘That this council is of the opinion that the time has come when a definite step should be taken by the Worcestershire County Council to provide a new secondary school for Oldbury. The severe limitations of the present buildings have been well known to the county authority for many years and further delay is likely to be seriously prejudicial to the educational advancement of the town.’

This apparently led to some action by the county authority and plans were drawn up for the new school buildings. A full inspection of the old school was made by seven of His Majesty’s Inspectors in March 1925 which gave a good report of work being done and also helpful criticisms, and probably gave added weight to encourage a move to new buildings, though it would not be correct to say that the report led to the building of the new school. Finally, in November 1925, plans and specifications of a house (for the headmaster) to be built adjacent to the new school were drawn up, but the proposal fell through

because the headmaster rejected the terms on which the authority would build the house.

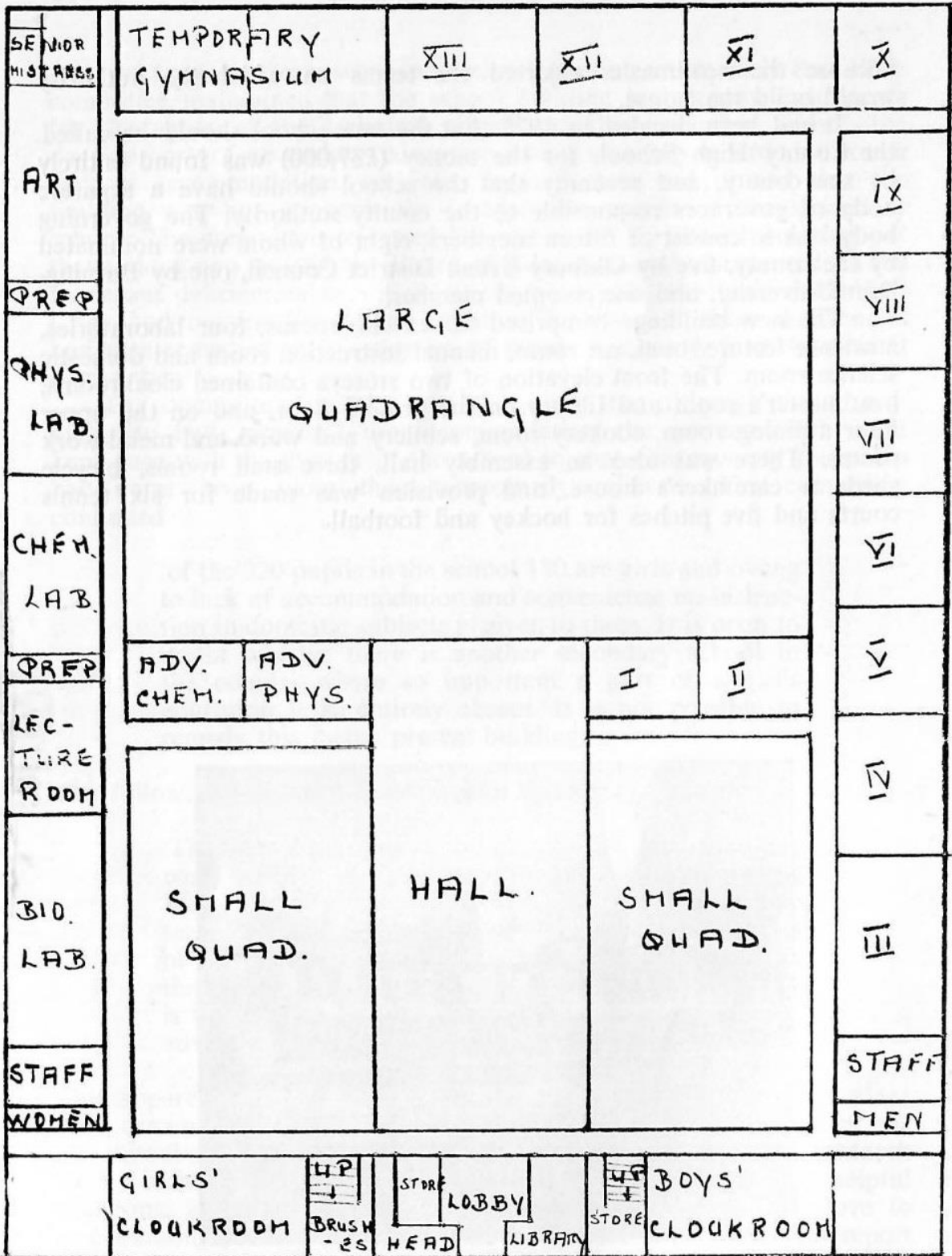
It had been decided in 1925 that the new school should be called the County High School, for the money (£37,000) was found entirely by the county, and secondly that the school should have a separate body of governors responsible to the county authority. The governing body was to consist of fifteen members, eight of whom were nominated by the county, five by Oldbury Urban District Council, one by Birmingham University, and one co-opted member.

The new buildings comprised fifteen classrooms, four laboratories, a science lecture room, art room, manual instruction room and domestic science room. The front elevation of two storeys contained cloakrooms, headmaster's room and library on the ground floor, and on the upper floor a dining room, cookery room, scullery and wood and metal-work rooms. There was also an assembly hall, three staff rooms, bicycle sheds, a caretaker's house, and provision was made for six tennis courts and five pitches for hockey and football.

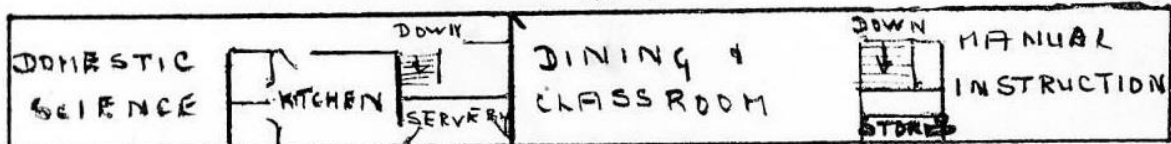


**The new school in Moat Road
1926**

OLDBURY COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL
Plan of New Buildings, 1926



1st floor



MOAT ROAD

The new school was officially opened on 26 October 1926 by the Principal, Grant Robertson of Birmingham University, at a ceremony prosided over by Mr. G. S. Albright (Chairman of Worcestershire Higher Education Committee) and Mr. W. T. Davies (Chairman of School Governors). A film was made of this ceremony and bought by the school from the director of Langley cinema. It was shown at the speech day of 1933, which was held at the cinema and attended by over a thousand people. With the exception of this year, speech days were now held in the assembly hall instead of in the town hall or the cinema as had been done in previous years. The first of these was held on the afternoon of 22 December 1926, when Mr. A. W. Priestley, M.A., B.C.L., Director of Education for Worcestershire, who had been intimately concerned with the provision of the new buildings, presented the prizes and gave an address. For the new school the headmaster had written a new school song, set to music by Mr. T. L. Davies, to replace 'Forty Years On' — which had been sung at speech days since 1920⁽¹¹⁾.

With the new school having been built and opened it is not surprising that during the next ten years very few building additions were made, though the school lacked a gymnasium and physical exercises had to be done in two classrooms adapted for this purpose. The matter of building a gymnasium was first raised in 1934 and in February 1935 it was resolved to bring the question to the attention of the county authority, with the result that in July plans were being prepared by the county authority for a gymnasium similar to the one which had been built at Redditch County High School⁽¹²⁾.

One major improvement, however, was the construction of an open-air swimming bath, the money for which was provided by the school's most generous benefactor Mr. G. S. Albright, and which was in use by July, 1927⁽¹³⁾. It was at this time also that the school entered for the first time the joint swimming sports in which all Birmingham schools competed.

The school was apparently troubled by frequent incursions of cattle and sheep which belonged to Matty's Farm, and which had to be driven off before games could begin. To deal with the problem iron railings were erected round the playing fields in 1934. In the same year also the school secured the appointment of a full-time groundsman, Mr. Samuel Morris, a former pupil of the school. The open corridors round three sides of the building resulted in classrooms being so cold that overcoats had to be worn, so that in 1934 some portion of these external corridors was enclosed, though complete enclosure was not effected until after 1936.

The impressive stained glass memorial window which meets the eye on entering the assembly hall was presented to the school by the Old Students' Association in memory of eight old boys killed in the 1914-18 war, and was unveiled by Mr. G. S. Albright, C.B.E., J.P., M.A., at a service held on Sunday 27 October 1929. The ideas depicted in

the window are Courage, Justice and Fortitude. In the central light is the enthroned figure of Justice, holding in her hands her ancient emblems, the sword and scales. On her right Courage is depicted as a youth, holding aloft in his left hand a torch, whilst his right hand rests lightly on the hilt of his sword. On her left bearing his banner amid a shower of arrows stands another youth. The two other lights contain cartouches on which are inscribed the names of the eight old boys. In four of the upper lights appear emblems of the various arms of the service, Navy, Army, Medical and Air, whilst in the centre is the emblazoned Cresco, the badge of the school.

The Old Students' Association had been particularly active since its re-formation after the war, under the presidency of the headmaster, and by 1928 had approximately one hundred and fifty members. The Old Boys' Football Club was formed in the season 1922-23 by a few enthusiasts including E. A. Richards (Secretary), J. B. Richards, N. Farrington, R. Farrington, H. Jones, V. Siviter and A. Betts. Friendly matches were played during the first two seasons, but in the 1924-25 season the club entered the Birmingham and District A.F.A., and in 1925-26 a second XI was also formed⁽¹⁴⁾. The Old Students' Hockey Section was formed in 1923, and in 1927-28 Mr. Fred Screen was the prime mover in the formation of the dramatic society with Mr. Claude Jephcott as producer. The old students used to produce one act plays in the art room of the old school and from 1921 onwards in the parish rooms, Oldbury, until 1926-27 when the headmaster Mr. J. G. Howarth allowed them to use the school hall in the new buildings in Moat Road.

Meetings of old students were now held in the new school hall instead of the parish hall, and it was also at this time that the old students decided to adopt the name 'Cresconians' by which the association has ever since been known. To establish a stronger link with the school it was also decided that the boy and girl captains of the school should be members of the Committee of the Cresconians.

When the new school began in September 1926 there were 320 pupils on the roll including ten student teachers; the attendance of student teachers had started in 1909 but was soon to end, the last one leaving the school in December 1927.

The provision of school meals was placed on a better foundation for the headmaster was authorised to engage a separate kitchen staff whose wages were to be paid out of the proceeds of the meals since the service had to be entirely self-supporting.

A new feature in the life of the school began in the autumn term 1926 with the formation of a musical society. This was followed by the holding of the first Annual Musical Festival in 1927 when the four houses competed for the silver challenge cup presented that year by Mr. W. T. Davies Chairman of the Governors. Queen's House was the first holder of the trophy. No programme of this first festival appears to have survived unless in private possession. The adjudicators at this

festival were the Rev. Walter Wale A.R.C.O. Vicar of Langley and Mr. Eric Dawes M.A., Mus. Bac.⁽¹⁵⁾. These music festivals continued to be held each year in May or June on a Saturday or Thursday evening in the school hall until the outbreak of the war in 1939.

Mr. T. L. Davies was primarily responsible for the organisation of these festivals and the adjudicators over the years included Professor David de Lloyd, Mus. Doc. of University College, Aberystwyth, Alfred Prince Esq., Mus. Bac. (Oxon) F.R.C.O., L.R.A.M., and Dr. C. S. Christopher, F.R.C.O. an old boy of the school.

In the years 1927 onwards until the closure of the school in 1974 music came to play an important part in what are often called extra-curricular activities. A great amount of time and energy was devoted to this by many members of staff in particular in the post-1945 period by Dr. C. C. Howard, Mr. Elwyn Jones and Mr. R. Broome⁽¹⁶⁾.

Another new feature was the formation of a Parents' Association in 1926 with the aim of bringing pupils, staff and parents into closer contact. It did not have a continuous existence, being allowed to lapse for a number of years, but was revived again during the time when Mr. L. E. Jennings was headmaster⁽¹⁷⁾. It was also in 1926-27 that the first cricket match between a Parents' XI and the school team took place, becoming an annual event for which a shield was bought from subscriptions made by parents.

Other school activities during these years included an annual camp for the Girl Guides Company held in the summer, usually in Devon, and organised by Miss Tweedie who had formed the School Guide Company in 1924 and who continued to be responsible for guides' activities in the school until her retirement in 1965. In 1974 an informal evening celebration was held to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the company. Among the guests were the founder captain, Miss Tweedie, and the first guide to be enrolled at the founding, Mrs. Olive Downs⁽¹⁸⁾.

The Cadet Corps under Captain Knight Coutts M.C. and Lieutenant K. D. Hopkins continued to meet and made numerous tours of the battlefields of the First World War. Annual visits were made to the London art galleries by members of the art group organised by Mrs. Quayle. In 1930 a junior branch of the League of Nations was formed in the school, but appears never to have been very active or strongly supported by pupils. For a small group of pupils a new type of holiday was organised in 1934, when for the first time a party went on a scholars' cruise on the liner 'Doric', visiting Lisbon and Madeira.

Two other aspects of school life must be mentioned because of their continuity and importance in the general education of pupils. Firstly, the year 1926-7 saw the production of the first of a long series of school plays, the school dramatic society producing its first play, *The Farmer's Wife* by Eden Phillpotts⁽¹⁹⁾. The name of Miss S. A. G. Jones will always be associated with this aspect of school life for she

was the producer for a number of years, being followed in later years by Mr. Harry Laycock until his death in 1973. Secondly, Miss Jones was also responsible for organising the activities of the Literary, Debating and Scientific Society, later known as the Joint Societies whose activities consisted of play readings, debates, the reading of scientific papers to society members, musical evenings and kindred topics.

One debate on the motion 'that Oldbury should be incorporated with Smethwick' -- a topic of much local controversy at that time -- was lost by fifty-nine votes to nineteen, and is thought worthy of mentioning because many years later in 1966 Oldbury, Smethwick and Rowley Regis were amalgamated to form the County Borough of Warley. Inter-school debates with Halesowen Grammar School were also held in these years, the first one being in 1929, and also with Holly Lodge Grammar School in 1936.

In 1935 Messrs. G. S. and W. A. Albright made another gift to the school, which took the form of the foundation of a university scholarship, one scholarship being available every year for a pupil of the school, the first of these scholarship holders being R. H. Murray who studied bio-chemistry at Birmingham University. The school also had its first exchange teacher this year, Dr. Hummel of Stuttgart, who exchanged posts with Mr. R. A. F. Newton-Hearne.

One matter which caused concern to the headmaster and governors in these years was the increasing number of withdrawals of pupils from the school by parents before the pupils had completed the full secondary school course. This was particularly so in 1927-8 when forty-two cases were reported. Many reports submitted to the governors by the headmaster were concerned with this matter, leading in some instances to protracted correspondence with parents on the question of paying the full penalty of £9 or a part thereof. Numerous instances occurred of non-payment of fees which were increased in 1931 to £10.10.0 per year and to £12 per year in 1933. One must bear in mind that these years witnessed the great depression during which, in the country as a whole, between two and three million people were unemployed. Despite this more pupils were staying on into the sixth form, which in 1932-33 consisted of thirty eight pupils.

Until July 1936 the school had a small preparatory department consisting of about thirty pupils⁽²⁰⁾. This department now came to an end so that from this time onwards no pupils but those of secondary school age were admitted. The authority also adopted the 100% special place system, that is to say all vacant places were to be treated as special places. The fees payable by parents of children obtaining admission on the results of the County Special Place Examination depended on the parent's income, ranging from the full fee of £12 per year to no fee at all.

Thinking back to her school days in the 1930's a former pupil, Mrs. J. R. Rawlings (née Lea), wrote in 1974 'When I first started at the

school we wore our gym slippers, white blouses and green girdles and black wool stockings all the year round and our woolly hats, many with the green and white band around, and the badge stitched on the front, only the better-off girls had velour hats.....senior boys always wore straw boaters with the green navy and white band on in summerdiscipline was strict, and our geography master always kept his piece of rubber tubing handy for the boys.....'

The writer of this history in studying the sources on which it is based, has been constantly made aware of the differences between conditions in the inter-war years and those of the 1960's; a study of the differences between one age and another is in some ways the life blood of history. So he believes that a few examples of such differences would not be out of place in concluding this chapter.

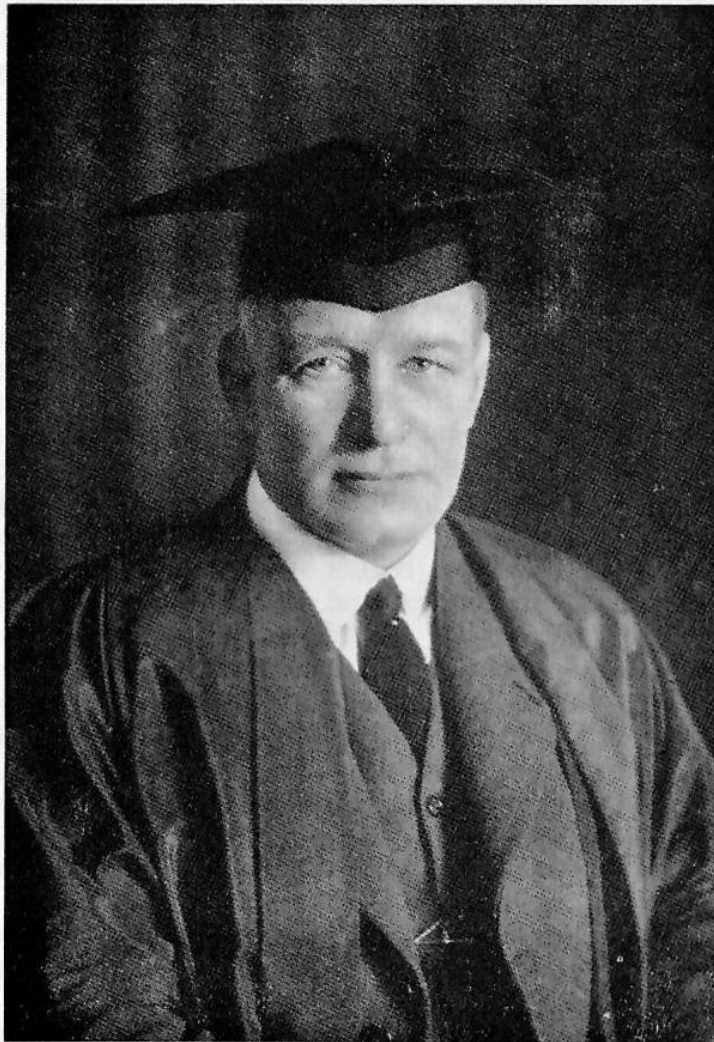
In 1931 tribute was paid in the editorial of the school magazine to Miss A. Massey who joined the staff of the school in 1906 and who worked with four headmasters, seventy-two assistants and 1558 pupils. A small present was made to her and congratulations and thanks conveyed to her from the governors in appreciation of her twenty-five years' service in the school. A certain amount of mobility is obviously desirable and necessary on the part of teachers, but the writer wonders whether the pendulum has not swung too far leading to a lack of stability and frequent changes in teachers, to the detriment of the pupils concerned. As a little exercise the reader may like to study Appendix No. 6, noting the length of time that a large number of teachers of this school served the staff, and draw his or her own conclusions⁽²¹⁾.

The year 1931 also saw a reduction of 10% in teachers' salaries and in those of ministers, judges and M.P.s; the pay of the Armed Forces and police was also cut. The dissimilarity with the position in the 1970's is too obvious to need any comment!

Headmasters in the 1960's found much difficulty in filling vacant teaching posts, often there were no applicants or one or two at the most in some subjects. By way of contrast when Dr. Thomason resigned his chemistry post at the school in 1932 there were 120 applicants for the vacancy.

Yet some problems or questions have remained the same, and should serve to remind us that the school was concerned with the education of its pupils and with their success in the academic field. One example will suffice. In 1929 the headmaster posed the question whether it was desirable to reduce the number of subjects taken by pupils in public examinations in the hope of obtaining a larger number of matriculation successes. This question or problem in a slightly different form, since the G.C.E. examination differed from the School Certificate Examination of the inter-war period, was still with us in the 1960's. It was decided to reduce the number of subjects for which some pupils were entered so that they could concentrate their time on fewer subjects. The hope was that this would give them a better chance of success in those subjects for which they were entered.

Mr. Howarth retired in 1936 and years later many remembered him as, 'a powerful, white-haired figure presiding with dignity on the platform of the school assembly hall.....a strong but quiet personality illuminated by frequent flashes of humour.'



MR. J. G. HOWARTH, M.A.
(Headmaster 1920 - 1936)

1. See Appendix No. 1.
2. See above p. 32.
3. 'I was the first head girl of the Oldbury Secondary School and Walter Shipton, the son of the then Oldbury Surveyor, was the first head boy'.
(Mrs. D. Nash in a letter to the writer 1974).
4. For later choirs see below p.p. 53, 54, 66, 71.
5. See above p. 26.
6. See above p. 28.
7. See Appendix No. 8.
8. See above p.p. 16, 24,
9. See above p. 24.
10. See above p.p. 16, 21, 22.
11. See Appendices Nos. 1 and 2.
12. For the opening of the gymnasium see below p. 48.
13. It was filled in and replaced by an asphalt playground in 1955-56.
See below p. 54.
14. See Cresconians' Amateur Football Club Handbook, season 1957-58.
Jubilee of Club celebrated 1971. See below p. 72.
15. Later Dr. Eric Dawes. See below p.p. 54, 55, 56.
16. For other aspects of musical life in the school see below p.p. 53, 66, 71.
17. See below p. 70.
18. 'News Telephone' 28 December 1974.
19. For a list of school productions see Appendix No. 10.
20. See above p. 16.
21. The last headmaster, Mr. L. E. Jennings, in a conversation with the writer in 1974 expressed the view that the school was exceptional in having so many teachers with long periods of service.

Chapter IV

THE YEARS 1936-63 UNDER DR. C.C. HOWARD

By a unanimous choice of the governors Dr. C. C. Howard was appointed to succeed Mr. J. G. Howarth in July 1936 and was destined to remain as headmaster until his retirement in 1963. Dr. Howard had obtained his B.Sc. degree in 1920, B.A. 1923, Ph.D. 1932, and had taught mathematics at Finchley County School and Latymer School, Edmonton, before coming to Oldbury. Though he did not know it when appointed, Dr. Howard was to guide the school through upheavals caused by the greatest war in the history of this country, and also through the greatest reorganisation of secondary education that the country had ever attempted.

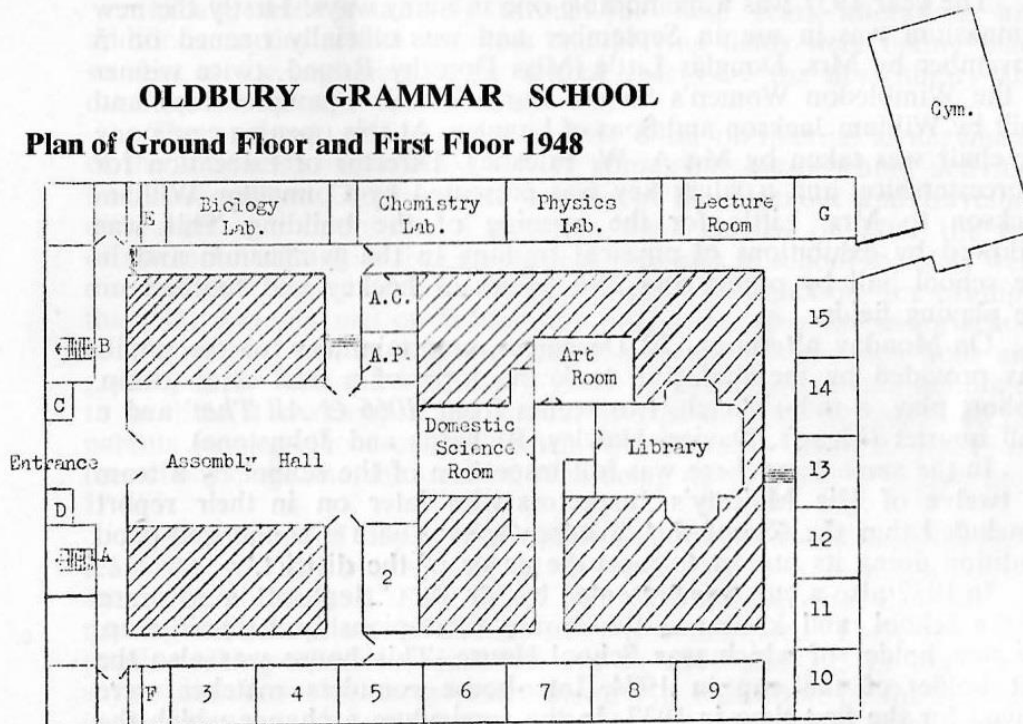


DR. C. C. HOWARD (1936)

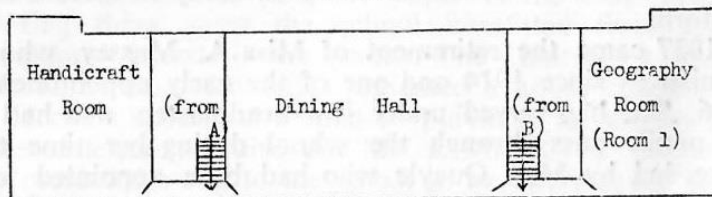
The new headmaster was not slow to realise the deficiencies of the school as far as its buildings were concerned, and during the first term suggested a number of improvements which he considered necessary, namely: a large asphalt space to provide hard tennis courts and playground surface for boys; the completion of the enclosure of the corridors round the school; the levelling and draining of the playing fields; a new domestic science room and the building of a gymnasium which had been omitted when the new school was built in 1926⁽¹⁾.

OLDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Plan of Ground Floor and First Floor 1948



Ground Floor



First Floor

KEY:

- A - Stairs to Handicraft Room and Dining Hall
- B - Stairs to Room 1 (Geography Room) and Dining Hall
- C - Headmaster's Study
- D - Office
- E - Mistresses' Staff Room
- F - Masters' Staff Room
- G - Senior Mistress's Room
- A.C. - Advanced Chemistry Laboratory
- A.P. - Advanced Physics Laboratory

It was finally decided that a new block of buildings should be provided in the large quadrangle, consisting of a library and reading room, an art room, and a housecraft room, and in addition a small greenhouse was to be built in one of the small quadrangles near to the biology laboratory. The existing library was to be converted into two rooms, one for the headmaster's clerk and the other to be used as a general store room. Provision was also to be made for a larger lecture room, a geography room and a music room.

The year 1937 was a memorable one in many ways. Firstly the new gymnasium was in use in September and was officially opened on 5 November by Mrs. Douglas Little (Miss Dorothy Round, twice winner of the Wimbledon Women's Singles Lawn Tennis Championship), and built by William Jackson and Sons of Langley. At this opening ceremony the chair was taken by Mr. A. W. Priestley, Director of Education for Worcestershire, and a silver key was presented by Councillor William Jackson to Mrs. Little for the opening of the building. This was followed by exhibitions of physical training in the gymnasium and in the school hall by pupils, and also games of hockey and football on the playing fields.

On Monday afternoon, 20 December, entertainment for the pupils was provided by the staff, and took the form of a staff carol group, a short play, a radio sketch, two scenes from *'1066 & All That'* and a staff quartet (Messrs. Davies, Hawley, Richards and Johnstone).

In the same term there was full inspection of the school by a team of twelve of His Majesty's Inspectors who later on in their report concluded that the school was 'a happy school with a sound and good tradition doing its utmost to meet the needs of the district.'

In 1937 also a cup was presented by Mr. A. C. Jephcott, a governor of the school, and known as the House Championship Athletic Cup, the first holder of which was School House. This house was also the last holder of the cup in 1974. Inter-house rounders matches were played for the first time in 1937. In the curriculum a change which the headmaster made was to introduce a course of study in current events for the sixth form.

In July 1937 came the retirement of Miss A. Massey, who had been senior mistress since 1914 and one of the early appointments to the staff, 1906. She had served under five headmasters and had seen nearly 2,000 pupils pass through the school during her time there. She was succeeded by Mrs. Quayle who had been appointed to the staff in 1914.

During these immediate pre-war years under Dr. Howard one is aware of the continuity of school life and also of preparations for a war which people hoped would never happen⁽²⁾. School plays continued to be produced by the dramatic society⁽³⁾, music festivals were organised by Mr. T. L. Davies; visits were made by art students to the London galleries; Joint Society meetings and the annual outings were still held;

Guide activities, including the annual Programme of Display to raise money for company funds continued to take place.

At the same time preparations were being made in the event of the outbreak of war. Mr. B. C. Pearson, member of staff, was trained as an air raid warden at Falfield; the provision of air raid shelters was under discussion; voluntary classes in A.R.P. and first aid were held after school hours, and pupils were allocated to duties in the borough connected with the A.R.P. organisation.

Finally and fortunately throughout these years alterations and additions to the school premises and playing fields were taking place so that at the beginning of the school year 1939 the new library and other new buildings were in use.

The outbreak of the war had little effect on internal arrangements of the school during normal school hours, but out-of-school activities had necessarily to be curtailed because of the blackout and travelling difficulties. No out-of-school activities were carried on after the end of afternoon school so that the normal meetings of school societies were discontinued; nevertheless societies continued to function, for example the Joint Societies met on Wednesday afternoons when the senior school could not play games, and the guides met during the lunch hour and guide camps were still held every year. Other annual events continued to be held, for example the annual speech day, sports day, and the parents versus school cricket match. One casualty of these years was the school magazine, the issue of 1938 being the last one to appear until 1948⁽⁴⁾.

The number of pupils in the school continued to increase and had reached over 500 by the end of the war. There were ninety places vacant each year and the demand was so great that the suggestion of making the school a four stream entry was discussed. There were 318 pupils seeking admission in 1940, 351 in 1941 and 325 in 1943. The suggestion, however, never materialised. An indication of the increase in numbers was shown by the establishment of a third fifth form in 1941 and an increase to forty-two pupils in the sixth form in 1942.

During these years the school benefitted from the generosity of a number of friends in the locality. The Chairman of the Governors, Mr. W. T. Davies (died 1941) presented a house cup for studies. Mr. A. P. Hands established a fund to purchase an annual prize for the best use of leisure, as also did Mr. & Mrs. C. T. Barlow. Alderman Hadley presented a cup to the school to be awarded annually for academic achievement by senior pupils. Dr. Eric Dawes established a fund to purchase two prizes annually for leadership. However, the most important of all these gifts was Dr. Dawes' decision to create a university scholarship in memory of his parents, by establishing a fund to enable a scholarship of £50 per year to be awarded annually and tenable for three years.

Though the school carried on with its educational work as normally as possible, the war had its impact in various ways. Eight air raid shelters were erected; the war memorial stained glass window was removed and replaced with plain glass; anti-crash netting was fixed to the windows; an air raid warden's post was established and continuously manned; a voluntary fire watching scheme was put into operation by the Staff; the railings in front of the school were removed for salvage purposes; a new dinner scheme was brought into operation in 1941 with the appointment of a cook and two assistants who provided meals for about 200 pupils at a cost of six pence per head; the time of beginning school was altered from 8.50 to 9.40 a.m. and because of the shortage of timber for woodwork, boys of forms III and IV did gardening instead for two or three periods per week.

The normal peace time out-of-school activities being somewhat curtailed, pupils energies and spare time were devoted to a number of activities directly connected with the war effort. The A.T.C. was established, there being sufficient cadets among the pupils to constitute one flight and an equal number of former pupils to form a second one.

The war time slogan 'Lend to Defend the Right to be Free' was put into practice by the school with the formation in January 1940 of a War Savings Group encouraged by competition between the four houses. A School Benevolent Fund was also established for war time charities, pupils raising money by weekly collections, public concerts, collections at music festivals and by sales of work done by pupils and friends of the school. A knitting group was formed in 1940 and parcels of knitted garments sent to the Red Cross, the army and to old students who were prisoners of war. Much work was also done by pupils in the summer holidays in factories and farms and in particular at agricultural camps and at fruit farms in the Vale of Evesham.

The girl guides were at full strength during these years, members receiving training in first aid, map work and child nursing. Changes in staff were inevitable since masters were serving in the Forces, resulting in a number of ladies being appointed⁽⁵⁾. The headmaster also lost the services of his lady clerk in 1943 when Miss Siviter was called up for war service, being replaced by Miss M. Sanders who retired in December 1974.

Dr. Howard continued as headmaster for a further eighteen years after the war ended until his retirement at the age of sixty-five in August 1963, thus becoming the longest serving headmaster in the history of the school.

These were years of great developments and events in the life of the school, and of major improvements in the school buildings, for Dr. Howard was always keen to secure the best facilities and accommodation possible in which teaching could be carried on, and to equip the school with as many amenities as could be obtained. Dr. Howard possessed boundless energy and put his heart and soul into school life,

all aspects of which he controlled, whilst leaving staff with the greatest freedom possible to teach their subject in the way they thought most suitable for their pupils.

As a result of the 1944 Education Act an administrative change came about; the Borough of Oldbury became an Excepted District under the Worcestershire Education Authority and the County High School became Oldbury Grammar School, though the new name was not officially recognised until later. The status of the school, however, remained unchanged. Oldbury now had its own education officer, the first holder of this post being Mr. J. H. Slatcher, who in 1945 moved to Lowestoft. Mr. J. H. C. March was subsequently appointed to the post of Borough Education Officer and remained so until 1966 when Oldbury was amalgamated with Smethwick and Rowley Regis to form the new County Borough of Warley. Mr. Marsh was Clerk to the Governing Body of the School and as such was acutely aware of the many problems, interested in its growth and progress, and very proud of its achievements.

The first school organisation to return to its pre-war arrangements was the Joint Societies which in the autumn term, 1945, reverted to meeting on Thursday evenings after school for about one hour, at the end of which a dancing class was now held. The general programme of activities of the Society consisted of short debates, illustrated lectures by members and by outside speakers on a variety of topics, scenes from plays, theatre visits, one-act plays, an annual dance and an annual outing. In 1948 saw the twenty-first anniversary of the founding of the society, the occasion being marked by a visit to the Birmingham theatre to see a production of *'The Rivals'*. These Joint Society evenings provided not only education but also entertainment for every member, and helped to educate fifth and sixth formers in conducting a meeting and in speaking to an audience of their peers, for as Lord Cobham reminded his audience at speech day in 1953 a grammar school education must emphasise the importance of the power to transmit thought into speech and by the written word.

Continuity, one important factor in school life, was shown by this revival of Joint Societies. But another important factor, namely change, was shown in these post-war years by an increase in the number of new school societies, by the expansion of the musical activities of the school, by the new examination system and by staff changes.

In the 1950's a branch of the Student Christian Movement was started in the school and later divided into senior and junior sections, periodic meetings being held, and members attending an annual conference which in 1956 was held at Kidderminster High School. A junior Dramatic Society (first and second year pupils) was started in 1959, and a writers' circle in 1960, the object of the latter being to develop the members' approach to literary criticism and to provide material for the school magazine.

The physical education of the boys was not neglected for in 1950-51 gymnastic competitions on a house basis were organised and a gym club was formed; cross-country running was re-introduced in 1951, school teams competing against teams from other schools such as West Bromwich and Holly Lodge Grammar Schools. The same year athletic standards were introduced so that every boy in his house was able to attempt to win points by attaining set standards; a three mile team race was also introduced. In football an under 13½ XI was formed and the 1st XI team had its most successful season in 1958, playing twenty-four matches of which twenty three were won and one match drawn, the team scoring 149 goals and conceding only twenty nine; in addition the team also won the Birmingham and District Grammar Schools Cup⁽⁶⁾. Only once before had an Oldbury Grammar School team played right through the season without defeat and that was in 1936-7 when Douglas Hadley captained the team which won thirteen of the seventeen matches played, the other four being drawn, scoring eight-six goals against twenty-nine.

OLDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL ORCHESTRA JULY 1950



Members of the Orchestra 1950

Mr. Jane	Mr. Woodward
Olwyn Ruston, Wotton, Parker	Jessica Chiles, Osborne,
Mr. Williams, Janet Hawley,	Margaret Webb, Birch, Brindley,
Perry, Mrs. Nash, Joy Howard,	Miss Sendell, Mr. Swain, Sedden,
Babbington, Brown, Pearson,	Cole, Mr. Partridge, Mr. Richards,
Mrs. Howard.	Mr. Hawley, Mr. Pearce.
Dr. HOWARD (Conductor)	

Reference has already been made to the musical life of the school in the pre-war period⁽⁷⁾ and to the revival of the annual Music Festival in 1943. This revival did not last long, for the last Music Festival was held in 1949. The post-war years however saw a great expansion in this aspect of school life, beginning with the formation of the school orchestra in 1948. This was conducted by Dr. Howard supported by Mr. T. L. Davies, eight other members of staff and a number of pupils, the strength of the orchestra in 1949-50 being eight first violins, eight second violins, five violas, five celli, one double bass, one timpani set and one piano forte; numbers varied about the thirty mark throughout the period. The orchestra which practised in the hall provided music for the Joint Society's evening, for the annual Christmas Concert and carol service and gave public concerts towards the end of the summer term. Members also took part in the annual Oldbury Schools' Music Festival and benefitted greatly from the coming of Mr. Nurse, a viola player in 1950-51 to give instruction to pupils, and welcomed Mr. Sutton in 1951-52 to instruct the cellists. In June 1951 the Orchestra and large choir gave the first performance of 'Britain' at a public concert⁽⁸⁾.

Choral music also played an ever-increasing part in the musical life, there being four choirs in existence, a girls' choir, an assembly choir (girls and junior boys) a large or augmented choir (mixed and formed for public concerts) and a four-part choir. This last consisted of girls and senior boys assisted by members of staff and had originated one lunch hour in the art room with a group of sixth formers assisted by Mr. J. B. Richards (tenor) Mr. P. F. Woodward (piano) and the writer (bass).

Mr. Richards was also responsible for arranging a number of lunch-hour programmes of gramophone records, and the formation of a musical appreciation group, later known as the Gramophone Society. During these years also the school received periodic visits from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, enabling pupils to hear music of a high standard and to learn something about the instruments and sections of a large orchestra. With Dr. Howard conducting the orchestra until 1963 and Mr. Elwyn Jones conducting and training the girls' and four-part choirs from 1956 onwards, the musical life of the school reached a high standard which was maintained until its close. In addition to the music given by the orchestra and choirs, a dance orchestra was established by Mr. J. S. Eacott in 1958 consisting of saxophone, trumpet, piano, bass, drums and three violins. This provided music for Joint Society dances, Christmas parties, functions in other schools and the Cresconian dances.

The amount of free time and energy devoted to this aspect of school life was tremendous, but it was worthwhile and appreciated by parents and friends of the school. It had some value for the pupils and provided enjoyment for members of staff engaged in it.

Shortly after the end of the war a fund was opened for the provision of a memorial to the memory of those members of the school who gave

their lives in the Second World War. It was suggested that this war memorial should be incorporated in that already in the school assembly hall bearing the names of those who died in the First World War. It was decided to provide two new bronze tablets which were unveiled by the girl and boy captains on the occasion of the memorial service, held in the school hall on 11 May 1948, the service being conducted by a former pupil the Rev. R. S. O. Stevens, Vicar of St. Paul's Birmingham, assisted by the Rev. H. Fletcher, Vicar of Oldbury, and the Rev. J. D. Crosland representing the Oldbury Ministerial Fellowship⁽⁹⁾.

Great changes took place in the school buildings during these years. The open air swimming bath⁽¹⁰⁾ proved unsatisfactory and unhealthy so that it was declared unusable and in 1951 approval was given for the laying of 800 square yards of asphalt playing space, this had originally been asked for in 1936 and finally in 1955 the school buildings and sites sub-committee made arrangements for the filling-in of the disused swimming bath and the area converted to an asphalt playing space, the task being completed in 1956. Levelling of part of the playing field was also begun in 1951, greatly curtailing the playing area available whilst the work was being done.

The year 1954 was the jubilee year of the school and to commemorate the occasion the Governors, supported by Oldbury Borough Council and Worcestershire County Council, sponsored a proposal to install an organ in the assembly hall. As the purpose of the Dawes Memorial Scholarship Fund⁽¹¹⁾ no longer really existed it was decided to request the county council as trustees to make the capital £4,000 available to purchase a two manual and pedal pipe organ. A special appeal was launched to raise a fund of £1,200 to cover the cost of installation and the construction of an organ chamber in the assembly hall. The trustees of the Oldbury Charity generously offered to give towards the cost of the installation of the organ a sum not exceeding £500, £1 for every £1 otherwise contributed.

In October 1954 the architect was authorised to approach Messrs. William Jackson and Sons regarding the construction of an organ chamber, and in February 1955 the firm's quotation of £1,300 was accepted, the fund to date having reached £1,321. The work of installation was done in the early months of 1956, the organ being built by Messrs. Nicholson and Co., Ltd. of Worcester and erected in two sections, the great and pedal organs at the back of the Hall, over and around the doors leading into the entrance hall, the swell organ and console being placed in an annexe built in the quadrangle on the girls' side where the end window of the hall had been.

The service of Dedication and Opening of the Dawes Memorial Organ took place on the evening of Thursday, 17 May 1956, the Vicar of Oldbury, the Rev. Canon H. Fletcher, M.A., officiating. Dr. Dawes gave the opening organ recital and the school four-part choir sang two items '*Thine, O Lord, is the Greatness*' by James Kent, and '*Praise Ye the Lord, Ye Children*' by Christopher Tye. The following morning



THE DAWES MEMORIAL ORGAN

Dr. Dawes gave another recital to the assembled school. The small metal plate fixed to the organ bears the following inscription:

The Organ
was presented to the School in its
Jubilee Year, 1954
by F. Eric Dawes, Esq., M.A. Mus. D., F.R.C.O.
Governor
in memory of His Parents
Frank and Lydia Dawes⁽¹²⁾

The next improvement in school facilities was the provision of a stage for dramatic productions. This was first suggested in 1957 and in the following year there was a revival of school play production, the last having been in 1938. During this twenty year lapse the portable stage had disintegrated and equipment had decayed so that there was nothing more than the assembly hall platform. Thus a start had to be made in acquiring the necessities for a revival of school dramatic activities. This revival was due to the interest and hard work of the late Mr. Harry Laycock.

The provision of a stage was recommended to the governors in June 1959 at a cost of approximately £1,600. This sum was obtained from the surplus money deriving from pre-war play productions, together with money collected to make a presentation to Miss S. A. G. Jones on her retirement which she asked should be put towards the cost of a stage. The new stage was first used for the production of the 1960 play *The Beautiful One*.⁽¹³⁾

The science laboratories of the school now being inadequate, the next major building project was the construction of a new science block, the headmaster being asked in October 1957 to submit proposals for this. The total cost of the scheme was £25,000, but because of a financial limit for minor capital building of £20,000 it was necessary for this work to be done in two instalments. It was decided to commence work on this project before the end of the financial year 1959-60, and by June 1961 work was nearly finished, the block consisting of four laboratories, store rooms and cloakrooms, which was ready for use at the beginning of the academic year 1961.

The rooms in the main building vacated by the physics and chemistry departments were now converted to other purposes, thus the old physics laboratory became the new geography room whilst the old geography room became part of the enlarged new kitchen which was constructed in 1962, and which necessitated pupils using Moat Farm School for their hot mid-day meals, causing for a time the curtailment of lunch-hour activities. Other building improvements during these post-war years were:- the construction of a senior master's room, the provision of a hard cricket pitch, and the building of a store shed for stage properties.

The year 1951 was Festival of Britain Year when a great trade

and cultural exhibition was held in London to mark the centenary year of the Great Exhibition of 1851. Festivals were also held all over the country to show the world the British way of life, the London show on the South Bank being the shining centrepiece. On 3 May, from the steps of St. Paul's, the king opened the festival, and on 5 July over over four hundred pupils of the school went by train from Langley Green station to spend a day at the London exhibition which was divided into two main sections, one representing the land, the other the people, of Britain.

To mark the Coronation of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, in 1953 it was decided to add to the dignity of the school's assembly hall by providing furniture for the platform suitably carved to commemorate the coronation and to bear the school crest. The furniture was to consist of a headmaster's chair, table and lectern, and for this purpose a fund was established in 1952 which reached a total of £300 and the furniture was duly purchased. Mr. F. L. Hawley (staff) designed and made the reading stand for the table, and the Cresconians presented the school with a large, finely-bound copy of the Bible. Coronation day was Tuesday, 2 June, and on the previous Friday, 29 May, a service of dedication of the furniture took place in the assembly hall and was conducted by the Rev. Canon H. Fletcher and the Rev. J. D. Crosland. A copy of the coronation publication "*Elizabeth our Queen*" by Richard Dimbleby, was presented to all pupils of the school.

In the educational world one change took place in 1951, namely the abolition of the School Certificate and Higher School Certificate and their replacement by the General Certificate of Education, the examination for which could be taken at three levels, Ordinary, Advanced and Special. As early as 1948 Dr. Howard mentioned at speech day the proposed modifications in these examinations and referred to the slogan ('parity of esteem') which was being bandied about by many in the educational world at that time, saying, "In the clamour for parity there is a very serious risk of sacrificing valuable traditions." The effect of the introduction of the new examination on the school was that in 1951 because of the age restriction, later abolished, twenty-eight pupils in forms five were unable to sit the examination, and these were among the best academically. The new G.C.E. certificate, unlike its predecessor the School Certificate, was awarded to candidates who passed in one or more subjects.

It is pleasing to record that the outstanding academic achievement of the year was that of I. D. Howard, son of the headmaster. He was awarded the Munro Open Scholarship in Natural Science at Queen's College, Cambridge.

It was part of normal school activities during these years for staff to organise visits for pupils to places of interest and to arrange holidays abroad. Throughout the years at Easter and in the summer holidays various groups of pupils spent part of these vacations in Switzerland,

Paris, Brittany, the French Alps, Norway, Italy and Spain. Mr. H. Laycock took parties to the Isles of Jura, Eigg and Rhum to study geology. Twice yearly under Mr. E. G. Swain's leadership a party of pupils was taken to Edgmond Hall for a week of field work in biology. Many visits of a one day nature were also made by pupils to places of interest such as Haden Hall, Ham's Hall Power Station, Walsall Wood Colliery, Aston Paper Mills, Warwick Castle, Stourbridge glass works, Fort Dunlop, Cadbury's, and Edgbaston Observatory.

Throughout these years also the School Company of Girl Guides was active and flourishing under the supervision of Miss F. Tweedie, regular weekly meetings were held after school hours, and a guide camp was arranged each year during the summer holiday period, usually at Beer.

It was the policy of the school to try and encourage pupils to use their leisure time wisely and for this purpose each autumn term an exhibition was held and pupils were invited to bring examples of their hobbies for display. One day was given to each form, and other pupils in the school were allowed to view the exhibits on show in the library. Three small endowments existed from which prizes were bought and awarded.

In 1954 there was a general inspection of the school, the third in its history, after which the inspectors reached the unqualified conclusion; "This is a good school". This proved to be the final inspection, so that the hope expressed by the headmaster that the next inspection might result in the conclusion, "This is a very good school" was never realised.

1955 saw the gift of the last of the school cups which Oldbury Grammar School had; this was the Beard Cup for National Savings given by Alderman J. D. Beard, M.B.E., a governor of the school and one who had devoted much of his time and energy to the National Savings movement in the borough. The first winner of the cup was School House.

For the academic year 1961-62 the school had its first American teacher on the staff. Miss N. Newton from California, who had exchanged places with Mr. H. Laycock for that year.

Oldbury Grammar School was one of not very many schools which received Malayan student teachers from the Malayan Teachers Training College, Wolverhampton, for which the school was thanked by the Principal, Mr. H. A. Evans, who was the guest speaker at speech day in 1962. Malaya at that time was spending about one quarter of its national income on education, and sent students to this country to be trained as teachers. The writer remembers these students well for many of them wanted to teach history; they were of many faiths, polite, well-mannered with a compelling urge to be successful so that they could return to their own country as trained teachers.

Mention must be made of the activities of the Cresconians during these years. In 1955 the Cresconians wrote a contribution to the school magazine which contained an account of various activities. The first annual post-war ball was held in 1952 and a school leavers' dance was also introduced for the first time that year. 1947 saw the revival of the Cricket Club with a nucleus of pre-war players, and the following year the Tennis Club was re-formed. In 1955 the annual dinner was revived and in 1961⁽¹⁴⁾ the jubilee dinner was held at the school on 25 March.

In 1946 the Cresconian Amateur Dramatic Society was re-formed⁽¹⁵⁾ by seven people at a meeting in a home in Queensway, Quinton, resulting in the production by the society in 1947 of *'The Light of Heart'*. From this beginning the society progressed to three and then four plays per season. These plays were produced in the Oldbury Parish Rooms which were filled five nights for each production during the first three years. After five years at the parish rooms the society moved to Messrs. Chance and Hunt's Social Club at Dog Kennel Lane, Langley where facilities for actors and audiences were first class. But the society found it increasingly difficult to attract a sufficiently large audience to its productions, and eventually due to failing support and insufficient membership the society faded away in the early sixties.

To mention all the changes in staff during these years would be tedious. However, it would be wrong to omit mention of certain members of staff, particularly those who gave many years' service to the school and who contributed, in various ways, to the education of so many pupils. In 1949 Mr. T. L. Davies retired after being on the staff for thirty years. He had been responsible for science and music, was senior master from 1920 onwards and he had made the annual music festival part of school life. He died in February 1975. 1950 saw the retirement of Miss D. Williams who had been appointed in 1916 and was head of the mathematics department. Mrs. Quayle retired in July 1953 having been appointed as Miss Underwood to the staff in April 1914, and having been responsible for art throughout this long period. She taught nearly four thousand pupils and had been senior mistress for sixteen years. One of her last actions in school was to present a number of rose bushes which were planted in the three beds on the girls' side of the premises near the senior mistress's room and the tennis courts, where they made a beautiful display in season. Miss S. A. G. Jones was forced by ill health to retire in 1957, having been on the staff for thirty-six years, for the last four of which she was senior mistress; a person of wide interests and enthusiasm she gave many hours of her time to Joint Societies, school play productions, outings, holidays abroad, and sales of work during the war years; she died in 1959.

The sudden death of Mr. B. C. Pearson in March 1957 meant that the school suffered the loss of another long serving member of the

staff, who had been appointed to teach English in 1927; a man of culture and wide interests, Mr. Pearson served in the Forces in the two world wars. In his memory a trust fund was established from which the Pearson Memorial Prize for English was awarded annually at speech day. Miss J. M. French who specialised in teaching French to the junior forms, retired in 1958 after having been a member of staff for thirty-seven years.

Finally mention must be made of two other members whose careers at school were tragically ended by death. Mr. P. F. Woodward, a former pupil, and member of the staff for fourteen years died in April 1956 after a long period of indifferent health; he had contributed much to the musical life of the school; as a pupil and as a Cresconian he had taken part in play productions and had been affectionately known as 'Pip' by his contemporaries. In 1960 Mrs. M. Jones who had been a member of staff for twenty years, the last three of which as senior mistress, died suddenly having been actively engaged in her normal school duties until a few days previously.



1963

**Presentation to Dr. C. C. Howard by head boy P. R. Webb
and Head girl Jean Hunt on his retirement**

On 25 July 1963 came the retirement of Dr. Howard, and at morning assembly tributes were paid to him by Alderman B. T. Robbins, Chairman of the Governors, who had been a member of the committee at the Shire Hall, Worcester, when Dr. Howard was selected as headmaster in 1936. He made reference to the developments and improvements made during these years and to the increase in the number of pupils from 300 to nearly 600. The two school captains (Jean Hunt and P. R. Webb) also spoke and presented Dr. and Mrs. Howard with a cheque and then unveiled the photograph of Dr. Howard which was hung on the wall of the assembly hall. A marked feature in the growth of the school generally during Dr. Howard's time was the development of the sixth form and the upper school as a whole. Whereas in 1936 there were twenty-six J.M.B. certificates awarded at fifth form level and three at sixth form level, there were in 1963 one hundred and thirty-six and forty-five respectively.

Apart from his own work as an educator, Dr. Howard loved the open air, taking long rambles in the countryside which helped to keep him physically fit. His other great love was music, and he took a great interest in this aspect of school life and set an excellent example in the amount of time and energy which he devoted to it. He conducted the school orchestra, and was himself a pianist and organist, being loyally assisted by Mrs. Howard and his family. He also trained the three school choirs (Girls', Four-part and Large) for a number of years. The writer has always regretted that a staff choir was never formed for we had so many members with musical ability during these years, but time is never sufficient to do everything.

Dr. Howard devoted his life to the pupils placed under his charge, and carried out his task with the utmost efficiency. His successor, Mr. H. A. Aykroyd, in a written tribute to Dr. Howard mentioned his predecessor's tradition of scholarship and care for the welfare of the school, and expressed his gratitude to Dr. Howard for making it easy for him to take up his responsibilities as a new headmaster.

The staff tribute was paid to Dr. Howard and Mrs. Howard at a dinner held at the Lyttleton Hotel, Hagley, and attended by a number of former members of staff in addition to those serving at that time⁽¹⁶⁾.

1. *Plans had already been made for this. See above p. 39.*
2. *For example, the efforts of Chamberlain in 1938 at Munich.*
3. *See Appendix No. 10.*
4. *The 1948 issue does however contain some information on the period of the war.*
5. *See Appendix No. 6.*
6. *The school won this cup in 1955 for the first time, and in 1960 shared it with Handsworth Grammar School. For later victories see below p. 66.*
7. *See above pp. 40, 41.*
8. *Words by Mr. B. C. Pearson (staff). Music by Dr. C. S. Christopher (a former pupil). Published by Messrs. Elkins & Co., Ltd., London 1951.*
9. *See Appendix No. 8.*
10. *See above p. 39.*
11. *See above p. 49.*
12. *F. Eric Dawes, the organist, died on April 28; he was 72. A solicitor by profession he obtained the D. Mus. at Trinity College, Dublin in 1933 and F.R.C.O. in 1941. He was organist at the Baptist Church of the Redeemer, Birmingham, and was one of the music editors of the Baptist Hymn Book. (Musical Times, October 1974).*
13. *See Appendix No. 10.*
14. *There appears to be some discrepancy in dates here which the writer has not been able to resolve. Old Pupils' Association first mentioned in 1908-9. See above p. 16.*
15. *For earlier mention of the society see above p. 40.*
16. *Dr. Howard died in 1979 at Bournemouth.*

Chapter V

THE CLOSING YEARS, 1963 - 74

After the retirement of Dr. Howard, Mr. H. A. Aykroyd was appointed headmaster as from the beginning of the academic year 1963. He was the first headmaster with a specialist degree in English having obtained his B.A. at Manchester University after his demobilisation from the R.A.F. Whilst on active service in Burma he had been awarded the D.F.C. for carrying out dangerous bombing raids. Before coming to Oldbury he had taught at Stockport and Stretford and had been second master at Sandbach school.

Like all headmasters, Mr. Aykroyd had certain aims and ideas concerning the purpose of education, one being to develop in his pupils a 'mature and well-rounded personality'⁽¹⁾. His predecessor writing in the school magazine a few years before stated that he considered the purpose of the school was to send out into the world 'useful and Christian men and women'. The school prospectus for 1941 was less ethereal than either of the above stating simply that the school provided a sound, general education to prepare pupils for a professional, commercial or scientific career. However, most readers will probably agree that these aims are not incompatible and that the school had been attempting to achieve them since its beginning.

Mr. Aykroyd saw the school as part of a wider community, and encouraged pupils to play their part in it. He was concerned to educate pupils so that they would be well able to take their place as responsible people in adult society, responsibility being a matter of taking part and giving of their time and talents to the community in which they were living, as well as developing a sense of responsibility to themselves, their parents and their school.

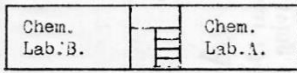
In furtherance of the above belief, and this was probably the greatest change made, the headmaster instituted a scheme of social service which took various forms, the general purpose of which was to do something for the less fortunate members of the local community. To this end a committee was formed on which each form was represented and plans were drawn up to further charitable work in the borough.

During the school holidays senior girls gave help with the 'meals on wheels' service to relieve members of the W.V.S. Voluntary work was undertaken at hospitals, and gardens of the elderly and infirm were cleaned up and cultivated. An annual harvest festival service was instituted, pupils bringing gifts which were afterwards sent to old and needy people in the borough. The sixth form organised a party and entertained the old people of the district at least once every year. Schemes to raise money were launched by the pupils of each form in the school, and linked with this was the holding of a sponsored walk every year, usually in May. The money raised was used for charitable

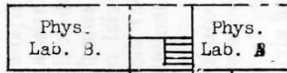
OLDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL
Plan of the Building
Ground Floor

1970

First Floor



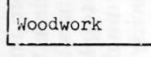
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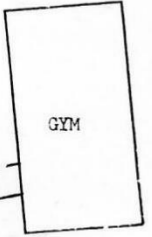
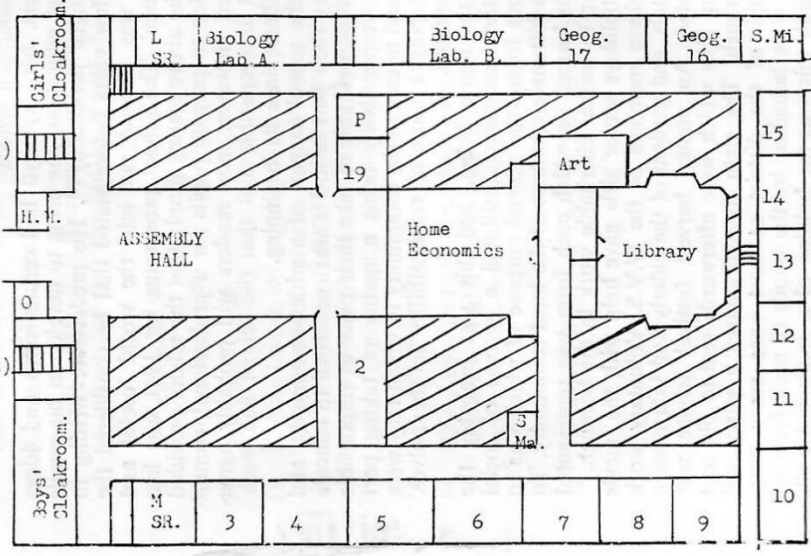
(C)

- H.M. Headmaster's Room.
- O. Office.
- S.Ma. Senior Master's Room.
- S.Mi. Senior Mistress's Room.
- L.SR. Ladies Staffroom.
- M.SR. Men's Staffroom.
- P. Prefects' Room.
- D. Division Rooms.

C A R
P A R K



(A) ←
 MAIN ENTRANCE →
 (B) ←



causes, for example: the physically and mentally handicapped, the British Empire Cancer Research Campaign, and other deserving charities; in one year over £1000 was raised.

The headmaster also made a number of changes in the curriculum. In 1964 economics was re-introduced after the lapse of a number of years, being taught at sixth form level; a specialist music teacher was appointed the same year so that music could be offered as an examination subject; general studies as an examination subject at 'A' level was introduced; and a reorganisation of subjects in the middle school was carried out so that pupils at the end of their third year chose four option subjects from a list to study in their fourth and fifth years for the 'O' level G.C.E. examination, in addition to the basic subjects, English, French and mathematics.

A number of building improvements were also made during these years. The new science block had already been completed⁽²⁾ and the laboratories were in use, but the full building project had not been finished, hence the new headmaster's first request to the governors was for this work to be done. As a result, in 1964, proposals were put forward for a new handicraft room and additional teaching accommodation to be built as an extension to the science block, and the work was in progress in 1965. The new building was in use at the beginning of 1966 and consisted of a handicraft room, two division rooms, cloakroom and toilet, the cost being approximately £7,250. At the same time the former woodwork room was converted into a music room with two practice rooms and a store room. Further improvements were envisaged by the headmaster, for suggestions were made in 1967 and 1969 for extra gym accommodation, extra storage facilities, and the provision of a careers room; unfortunately none of these materialised.

Many other changes also took place. One administrative change which had little effect on the internal life of the school was the amalgamation in 1966 of the three boroughs, Smethwick, Rowley Regis and Oldbury to form the County Borough of Warley. In 1967 the school magazine appeared in a new form and colour, replacing the familiar green publication. Subsequent issues were larger and literally more colourful, and in December 1969 an article appeared in *The Birmingham Post* on school magazines which stated: "The Oldburian, the magazine of Oldbury Grammar School had some very good poetry, well arranged with splendid graphics".

Though Parents' meetings had been held during Dr. Howard's time as headmaster, Mr. Aykroyd instituted a new system whereby one evening was allocated each year to each school year group. This provided parents of all pupils with the opportunity to discuss their children's academic progress with staff members concerned. He also held a careers convention, the first being in February 1964, when parents of upper school pupils attended to meet representatives of various

careers. Another innovation was the placing of some fifth and sixth form pupils after their examinations in the summer term in local primary schools for a week or two to give them an introduction to teaching.

The musical life of the school continued with unabated vigour, in fact, there were new outlets for those pupils with musical talent. The headmaster, like his predecessor was a musician, and conducted the choirs at the Christmas concert held every year. The school orchestra was strengthened by the introduction of wind instruments, and pupils benefitted from an increase in the number of visiting music teachers. Members of the orchestra were also able to join the newly established Warley Youth Orchestra and to take part in the Warley Schools' Music Festival. The school dance orchestra continued to flourish and now consisted of twelve players. In addition two new music groups were formed, namely, a Jazz Group and a French choir consisting of second form pupils.

The older school societies continued their activities, in particular the Joint Societies which held weekly meetings, theatre visits, and annual outings. One change did occur, however, and that was the discontinuation of the dancing class held at the end of each meeting; it had been a feature of the society for many years but had to be ended through lack of support particularly on the part of the boys. The Girl Guides' company continued its good work, holding its annual camp at Beer until 1967 when it broke with tradition and changed to a site in Wales. The Writers' Circle, consisting of a few interested sixth formers met as often as possible, and the Gramophone Society which had not met for two years was revived and flourished.

During these years physical education in the school achieved very high standards, particularly in football and athletics. The School XI won the Birmingham and District Grammar Schools' Cup in 1967, beating Sheldon Heath Comprehensive School by four goals to nil, and again in 1968 beating Handsworth by one goal to nil⁽³⁾. The year 1964 was a good one for school athletics, no less than six firsts being obtained in the Birmingham and District Sports, followed in the 1966-67 season by Keith White winning the National Schools' Championship for the high jump and later representing England against France. For the girls, netball was introduced in the 1966-67 season, and predictably many of the games against other schools were lost.

One society which did come to an end was the Student Christian Movement. Until 1966-67 it continued to hold meetings and to send representatives to the annual conference, but in that year enthusiasm seemed to wane and it was not restarted after the summer holidays.

The years however also saw the establishment of new societies and clubs to cater for the varying interests of the pupils and reflecting the various enthusiasms of members of staff. A chess club was formed in 1963-64 and inter-house matches were organised for the first time;

this club had a number of good players who played for Warley in the Birmingham and District Chess League, and in particular D. R. Slim who won the National Junior Chess Championship at Eastbourne in 1966.

A Stamp Club was also formed and held regular meetings. It organised an annual auction of stamps and a Christmas competition, being much more than a mere stamp collecting group. A Judo Class was started in 1968, a Debating Society consisting of fifth and sixth Formers, and in 1970 a Junior Anglers Club was formed for first, second and third Formers, trips being made to Kinver, Kidderminster and Wolverley.

School Christmas parties which for many years had been organised for each year group in the school were held only for the first forms and combined fifth and sixth forms.

Play productions continued annually, the 1965 production '*The Fighting Man*' being unique in that it was the only play written by a member of staff. The last school dramatic production, though no one knew that it was to be so at the time, was in 1970 and was the school's first musical venture, namely, '*Sweeney Todd*'. At the end of each summer term a One-Act Play Festival was held, the fifth and sixth formers of each house producing a play which was judged by members of the English staff, and the winning House chosen.

Visits by school parties of pupils continued to be made as in previous years: to the Wild Fowl Trust at Slimbridge, Stratford and Coventry theatres, Whipsnade Zoo, Wimbledon, the Royal Show at Stoneleigh, and Birmingham Repertory Theatre. Holidays abroad were likewise organised for pupils by members of staff, for example, ski-ing in Switzerland and holidays in Paris. Parties of pupils also attended the Semaine Culturelle in Paris, went on geographical and geological courses, and to Edgmond Hall.

There were many changes of staff during these years. In the year 1965-66 the school had its one and only Canadian teacher, Mr. Garry Smith from Royal York School, Toronto, who exchanged places for that year with Miss N. Harding. In 1968 the school suffered a loss by the death of Mr. I. T. Davies who had been on the staff for ten years, a mathematician and music lover who also assisted in the production of school plays. Four long serving members of the staff retired during this period, Mr. J. B. Richard, Miss D. F. Tweedie, Mr. F. L. Hawley and Miss G. M. Firth. Mr. Richards retired in December 1965 having been on the staff for forty-four years, a period of time longer than that of any other member, for the last sixteen years being senior master. Miss Tweedie also retired the same year having been senior mistress for the previous five years and on the staff since 1923. Mr. Hawley retired in 1966 having been handicraft master for thirty-five years and having given much time in his closing years to the planning of the new handicraft room for his successor. Lastly, Miss Firth also

retired the same year, having taught geography in the school for nearly thirty years. After forty years as school caretaker, Mr. Mitten decided to retire in 1969 and he and his wife emigrated to Spain.

In 1970 Mr. Aykroyd decided on pastures new, though still in the Midlands, and obtained the post of headmaster at Dartmouth High School, a large comprehensive school in West Bromwich. Probably the clearest characteristic that will be remembered of him was his sympathy and kindness to all.



MR. H. A. AYKROYD
(Headmaster 1963-70)

The last headmaster of the school was Mr. L. E. Jennings, an Oxford graduate in history, who had held teaching posts at East Ham Grammar School and at Sheldon Heath Comprehensive School, Birmingham, before becoming headmaster of Burnwood High School, Stoke-on-Trent in 1965, whence he came to Oldbury in January, 1971. The new headmaster was very keen on inter-House activities and competitions, and was able to revive the house spirit which for some years had been at a low ebb.

Houses competed in football, public speaking, hockey, music, arts festival, cross-country running, athletics, swimming, cricket, punctuality, National Savings and chess. He was also interested in outdoor pursuits and 'out of school' activities generally, believing that such activities had: 'a vital part to play in allowing each pupil a fuller opportunity to work with others and to develop his or her particular talents to the full.' He was destined to be headmaster for only three and a half years, a comparatively short period and one not without troubles, for example the gas strike of 1973 when the school worked part-time for five weeks, and electricity cuts which caused the 1972



Pictured at the dinner given in honour of Mr. H. A. Aykroyd, former headmaster of Oldbury Grammar School are (left to right): The Mayoress of Warley, Mrs. Freda Broaderwick, the new headmaster, Mr. L. E. Jennings, Mr. Aykroyd, the Mayor, Ald. Ray Broaderwick Mrs. D. Aston, the chairman, Mr. Roy Blackburn, Mrs. Aykroyd, Mrs. Blackburn and the Cresconians' secretary, Mr. Dennis Butler.

1971

speech day to be held by candlelight in the school hall, and which proceeded according to plan with the help of emergency lighting.

But if he cared to look back over his short time as headmaster, Mr. Jennings could feel some satisfaction with his achievements. He himself introduced a number of successful innovations, and other new features initiated by pupils themselves received his support. All added new dimensions to school life.

In 1971 the headmaster was instrumental in bringing into being the Parents' Association which had been suggested by his predecessor in 1966 and approved in principle by the governors of that year⁽⁴⁾. The association flourished and organised a number of social functions and fund-raising efforts most beneficial to the school. Another new venture was a summer fair suggested by the headmaster, and organised under his direction by pupils and members of staff, which raised a considerable sum of money for the school.

The same year also, and in succeeding years, the headmaster arranged for the three first year forms to spend one week each at the Frank Chapman Centre at Ribbesford (Bewdley). The centre, maintained by the local education authority to accommodate school parties, provided an opportunity for pupils to study biology, geography, geology and history in the surrounding area of the Wyre Forest. It enabled teachers to introduce eleven year old pupils to organised field work.

One change only was made in the curriculum, namely the introduction of German, or rather the re-introduction, as it had been taught in the school many years before.

Other aspects of school life continued to flourish as they had done in the past. The customary sporting activities and games such as swimming, hockey, netball, rounders, cross country, cricket, football, tennis, athletics continued to take place, the school 1st XI reaching the final of the Birmingham and District Grammar School's Cup, only to be beaten by King's Norton in the 1972-3 final by three goals to two⁽⁵⁾. In athletics pupils of the school achieved a number of successes in the Warley Sports, Birmingham and District Sports, and in Worcestershire County Sports. The Gym Club continued to be popular, holding meetings each week, and a competition in March each year.

Three new activities emerged during these years: the formation in 1971 of a table tennis team and club which played matches against other schools; secondly a number of fifth and sixth form pupils took up judo as an optional sport; and thirdly the lower sixth formed a rugby team. This team had more enthusiasm than skill and had no pitch of its own on which to play. The result was that matches against other teams had to be played away and were invariably lost. Had the school continued in existence these defects would, no doubt, have been overcome, and 'rugger' established as one of the school games though two previous attempts to establish it in the past, had failed.

The musical life of the school continued to flourish, the choir

and orchestra giving a Christmas concert in the school and a carol service at St. Michael's Church, Langley, in 1971. A new venture was the formation in September 1972 of the madrigal group of singers consisting of seven pupils and four members of staff, which gave a number of public performances, for example at Grafton Lodge Old People's Home, Aston Hall, Birmingham, and St. John's Church, Hagley.

The programme of music given at Hagley in May 1973 included instrumental solo items by pupils of the school, and choral items, for example *'The Heavens are Telling'* (Haydn), *'Rejoice in the Lord Always'* (Redford), *'Hosanna to the Son of David'* (Gibbons), *'Beatus Vir'* (Monteverdi) and concluded with Handel's *'Halleluiah Chorus'*. What in the end proved to be the last Oldbury Grammar School concert took place at Christmas, 1973, when a very high standard of performance was achieved by all those taking part, particularly in the choral items. The Record Society was revived and the School Rock Group *'Leviathan'* was formed by three pupils in September 1971, and carried on successfully for the remaining years of the school's life.

The Joint Societies had come to an end before Mr. Jennings' arrival, but in 1971 a less formal type of Sixth Form Society was started, being run by a committee of sixth formers who organised dances, film shows, and other social events. Older school societies continued to meet, for example the Stamp Club, and it is pleasing to record that as a result of interest acquired at school two former members of the club became members of the Royal Philatelic Society, London.

The School Guide Company continued to meet regularly as it had done for many years; the Chess Club was popular and inter-house matches were organised; the Debating Society was revived and inter-house debates held; members of the sixth form attended conferences at Halesowen on race relations, at Aston University on Japan, and Birmingham University and Wolverhampton Polytechnic on science; holidays abroad were organised as in the past by members of the staff; and pupils also attended geographical and geological courses in Yorkshire and North Wales.

The social work done by pupils of the school increased during these closing years. Over £1,000 was raised in 1969-70 as a result of various form activities and was devoted to charitable causes within the Borough of Warley. At the end of each spring term a party was held at the school for housebound people which was much appreciated. Sixth formers helped with adventure playground schemes in local parks during the holidays and on Wednesday afternoons instead of games, many pupils helped at Grafton Lodge, Barnford Day Nursery, and at two local welfare clinics. Several sixth formers also became members of the Youth Committee for Warley Council of Social Services.

Several changes of staff took place during these years, and in March 1973 the school suffered a sad loss in the death of Mr. H. Laycock after a long illness. He had been on the staff since 1951, had introduced

geology into the curriculum and in later years was Head of Geography. Also he had been responsible for eleven school drama productions⁽⁶⁾. A memorial service to him was held in St. Michael's Church, Langley⁽⁷⁾ attended by pupils of the school, present and former members of staff and Cresconians.

Finally the Cresconians continued as a fine flourishing organisation during these years, and in particular the football section which in December 1971 held a jubilee dinner at the County Ground, Edgbaston, to celebrate fifty years as a football club⁽⁸⁾. This function was quite magnificently organised by Mr. Barry Watts and his wife Sylvia. Two hundred and twenty friends and guests filled every available seat at dinner, the oldest present was probably about eighty years of age and the youngest sixteen; many old players from the 1920s and 1930s attended.

The academic year beginning in September 1973 was the last in the history of the school, though no one knew at the time that it was so to be. The local authority had submitted proposals for the re-organisation of secondary education in the County Borough of Warley, to the Secretary of State for Education and Science in February 1973, and the reply to these proposals was given in December.

In accordance with these proposals the character of the school was to be changed so that pupils were to be admitted in future without reference to ability and aptitude. The authority decided to implement this decision as soon as possible which meant that the Grammar School would cease to exist as from 31 August, 1974, and would become a non-selective school for pupils in the age group eleven to sixteen years.

This decision naturally created a certain amount of unease among members of staff, particularly when the headmaster was not re-appointed as head of the new High School to be established in September, 1974. However, life in the school with all its many activities carried on as usual during the final two terms.

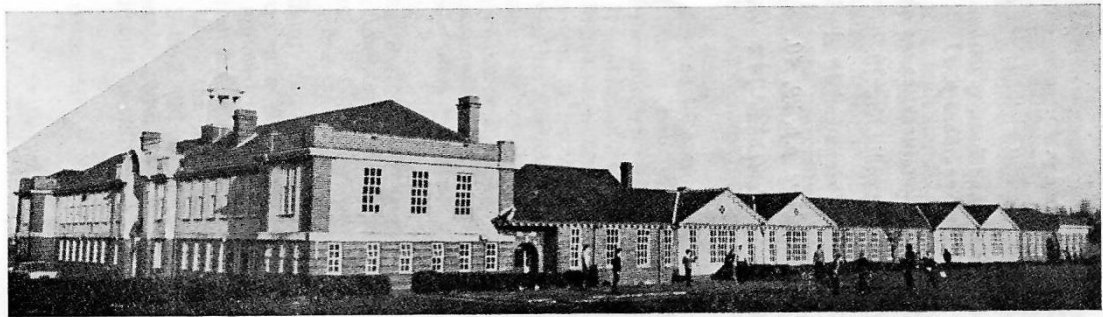
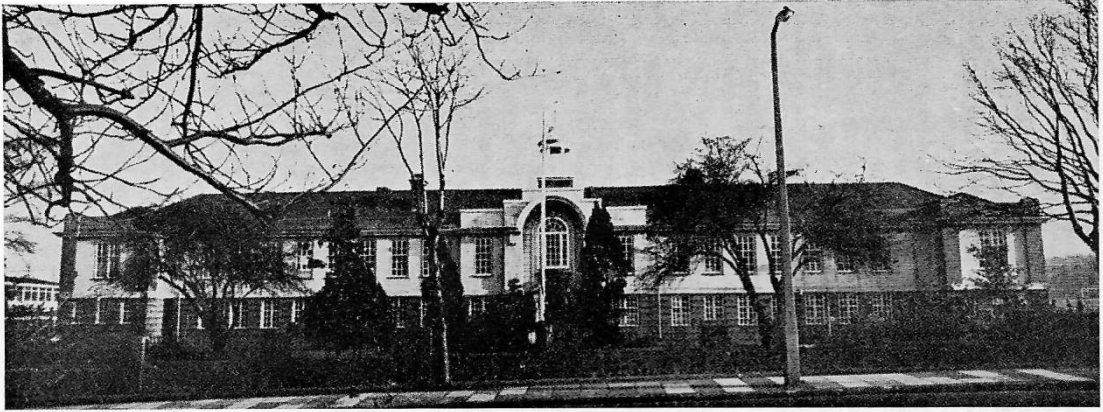
On the afternoon of 7 February 1974, the final speech day was held in the school hall, the guest speaker being the Lord Bishop of Birmingham⁽⁹⁾. Though held in the afternoon many parents attended, some being old scholars themselves and the hall was full. Speeches were shorter this year, to the delight of the pupils, and the headmaster's speech was given a great ovation.

For the past six years sponsored walks had been organised and the last of these took place on Sunday 5 May when more than two hundred pupils took part, over a route of ten miles in length along the main ridge of the Malvern Hills. The money raised was put towards the cost of building a special school for autistic children in Birmingham.

In the summer term the usual examination arrangements were made, and summer games played as usual. One by one members of staff obtained appointments for the following September either with the same authority or elsewhere; colleagues who had worked together for over twenty years in some instances bade each other farewell and on 17 July the academic year closed. Oldbury Grammar School ceased officially to exist on 31 August, 1974.

ODLBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

73



1972

1. *At his first staff meeting, September 1963, when the writer was present.*
2. *See above p. 56.*
3. *For previous victories see above p. 52.*
4. *There had been a similar association in the late 1920's and early 1930's. See above p. 41.*
5. *For earlier successes see above p.p. 52, 66.*
6. *See Appendix No. 10.*
7. *'News Telephone' 18 April 1973.*
8. *See above p.p. 29, 40.*
9. *'News Telephone' 14 February 1974.*

CONCLUSION

There are many grammar schools with a much longer history than that of Oldbury, for three score years and ten is a comparatively short period of time, but even in this short period the reader will have noticed the great changes which took place in the life of this school; it certainly did not stand still or stagnate.

It was a 'good school' according to the inspectors in 1954; a school which educated pupils of the borough to a high standard irrespective of their social background, provided they possessed ability and perseverance. Former pupils of the school came to occupy important positions in various professions and in various walks of life in all parts of the country and overseas; one a Fellow of the Royal Society, another a Professor of Nuclear Physics; many became university lecturers in various subjects, others attained important positions in industry as chairmen or directors of international firms, others as barristers, solicitors, churchmen, and civil servants. Former mayors of Oldbury and Warley are also numbered among its alumni⁽¹⁾.

The objectives to which the school directed its pupils with varying degrees of success were excellence and quality, both of intellect and personality, in a belief that the needs of the able were as important as, though different from, the needs of the less able, and that to cater for the needs of any one group was as socially just as to cater for the needs of the other. It served successive generations of pupils well, enabling many to overcome limitations of birth, whether financial or social, and to proceed to a fuller, more expansive, and more rewarding way of life, just as other grammar schools did for many of our political leaders.

Almost seventy years ago the headmaster, C. H. H. Walker, expressed the hope that from Oldbury Secondary School,

'there will be some who will pass in due course from
the school to the universities, and take prominent
places in the learned professions.'

His hopes for the future had been abundantly fulfilled⁽²⁾.

The writer will conclude by expressing a similar hope, namely that the educational system which was imposed in 1974 will also give to every child the opportunity to develop his or her abilities to the utmost, and that the new schools will serve the needs of the pupils as satisfactorily as Oldbury Grammar School did in the past; it set an example which succeeding generations of pupils and teachers may emulate and equal but will find very difficult to surpass.

Semper floreat praestantia

1. Messrs. G. W. Rose, G. H. Price and Mrs. E. M. J. Gunn (Oldbury); Mr. R. Broaderwick (Warley).
2. The last and final Oxbridge place obtained by a pupil of the Grammar School was in December 1974, when Miss K. Doughty was accepted to read history at Lady Margaret Hall.

Appendix 1

OLDBURY SCHOOL SONG

'Mid ceaseless toil and the swirling smoke, where the mighty furnace
glows,
With night skies ablaze through the murk and the haze, the Oldbury
School arose.
Her sons and her daughters both have attained a due meed of renown.
For some the hero's fame, for some the scholar's crown.

CHORUS:

*So Hurrah for the Old Boys of Oldbury,
Who have built up the fame of our School,
For they played the game, we must do the same,
Until all hail the fair name of Oldbury.
Though the strife of life may be swift and keen,
Though we may find hard knocks to rule,
Heed not the praise or blame, carry on and play the game,
For we are boys (girls) of Oldbury School.*

When War clouds rose, spread afar o'er the land, then her sons gave of
their best,
We honour those who have paid with their lives for the safety of the rest.
Her fair daughters all came forth at the call to work in Freedom's name,
So let us in our turn, carry on and play the game.

CHORUS.

When games go fast and the time passes by and the goals are hard to find
And half-back and back bear the shock of attack, and forwards gasp for
wind.
It's then gallant hearts are game to the last, no fear their strength shall
tame,
So strive on to the end, the glory's in the game.

CHORUS.

In years to come when we're grown stiff and staid, and we wonder how
we played.
And we think of the games in the rain and the sun, and the records
that we made,
We'll pause for a while and count up the score, with neither fear nor
shame,
We'll face our lives and say, we've always played the game.

CHORUS.

Appendix 2
OLDBURY SCHOOL SONG

The musical score for "Oldbury School Song" is presented in Appendix 2. It consists of ten staves of music, arranged in five systems of two staves each. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is common time (C). The first system includes a dynamic marking 'f'. The second system includes a dynamic marking 'mf'. The score features a variety of musical notations including treble and bass clefs, notes, rests, and chords. The piece concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots at the end of the final system.

Handwritten musical score for a piece in C major with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The score is divided into two systems. The first system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a "roll" in the right hand and a "f a tempo" section in the left hand. The second system includes a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a "cresc" (crescendo) in the right hand and a "ff" (fortissimo) section in the left hand. The score concludes with a "chorus" section. The page number 79 is visible at the bottom.

Handwritten musical score for three staves. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is common time (C). The score includes dynamic markings such as *cresc* and *ff*, and performance instructions like *rall*. The notation features various note values, rests, and articulation marks.

Appendix 3

Headmasters

C. H. H. Walker, M.A.	1904-08
P. Henderson, M.A., B.Sc.	1908-11
G. H. Crisp, M.A., B.Sc.	1911-20
J. G. Howarth, M.A.	1920-36
C. C. Howard, B.A., B.Sc., Ph.D.	1936-63
H. A. Aykroyd, D.F.C., B.A.	1963-70 (Dec.)
L. E. Jennings, B.A.	1971(Jan.)-74

Appendix 4

Senior Masters

W. L. Markwick	1911-14
J. Smith	1914-19
W. J. Howell	1919-20
T. L. Davies	1920-49 (Dec.)
J. B. Richards	1950-65 (Dec.)
D. Crofts	1966-72 (Dec.)
K. Johnston	1973-74 (April)
W. A. Smith	1974 (April-July)

Appendix 5

Senior Mistresses

Miss J. Richards	1904-7 (Dec.)
Miss M. L. Martin	1908 (Jan.)-14
Miss A. Massey	1914-37
Mrs. L. G. Quayle (née Underwood)	1937-53 (died 1961)
Miss S. A. G. Jones	1953-57 (died 1959)
Mrs. D. M. Jones (née Williams)	1957-60 (died)
Miss F. D. Tweedie	1960-65 (Dec.)
Mrs. J. Mends	1966-74

Appendix 6

Assistant Staff

Miss D. M. Allen	1930-49 (Dec.)	Biology
Mr. E. S. Allen	1905-08	Maths, Latin
Mr. J. Allen	1938	Chemistry
Mr. K. Andrews	1963-65	Maths
Mr. R. K. Andrews	1963-64	French
Mr. J. S. Arnold	1909-11	Maths
Miss J. Banner	1971	Geography
Mr. J. G. Barbour	1958-66	Scripture
Mr. R. F. Bedford	1966	Scripture
Miss S. J. Bell	1917-20	
Mrs. A. Benbow (née Elsdon)	1966	P.E.
Mr. H. V. Bennett	1952-54	Chemistry
Mr. D. R. Benson	1968-73 (Dec.)	History
Miss A. Birkhead	1906	
Miss M. A. Blenkharn	1906-14	Art
Miss A. Bottomley	1907	
Mrs. B. E. M. Boulton (née Challis)	1966-69	Chemistry
Mr. J. Bourne	1939-41	Chemistry
Mr. G. Bradley	1966-71	Woodwork
Mrs. A. Brayne	1968-74	Maths
Mr. R. Broome	1964-74	Music
Mrs. P. Brown (née Turner)	1957-62	English
	and 1971-74	
Miss N. J. Bryant	1947-54 (Dec.)	History
Miss L. Bullen	1955-59	Domestic Science
Mr. D. H. Burton	1974	English
Miss R. M. C. Busby	1952-55	Domestic Science
Mrs. F. Bushell	1945-47	Maths
Miss M. J. Carr	1968	French
Miss I. T. Carter	1912-13	Girls drill
Mr. D. S. A. Caulkin	1966	French
Mrs. S. Chinnery (née Walton)	1959-64	English
Mr. T. Churchill	1950-52	French
Mr. L. Clarke	1965-68 (Dec.)	English
Mr. R. J. Clarke	1955-59	Maths
Mr. A. M. Congdon	1937-38	P.E.
Mr. A. Coupland	1971-74	Physics
Mr. D. B. Cragg	1971-74	German
Mrs. I. Crisp	1916	
Mr. H. Croft	1967-71	Scripture
Mr. D. Crofts	1966-72	Maths
Miss J. Cutler	1960-61	Maths
Mrs. C. Davies	1915-17 and 1920	English

Mr. D. J. Davies	1920--26	History & German
Mr. H. G. Davies	1954-74	P.E.
Mr. I. T. Davies	1959-68 (died)	Maths
Miss J. L. Davies	1926-42	Domestic Science
Mrs. M. J. Davies (née Woodburn)	1956-74	French
Mr. T. L. Davies	1919-49 (Dec.) (died Feb. 1975)	Physics
Mr. R. P. Dennison	1970-74	Maths
Mr. J. Dickens	1956-58	Physics
Mr. F. P. Dobson	1909-10	French, Latin
Mr. J. S. Eacott	1939-72	Geography, Latin
Mr. C. H. Edlin	1934	Physics
Mr. H. M. Evans	1937	P.E.
Miss F. M. Fenter	1918-19	History, Geography
Miss G. M. Firth	1941-70 (Dec.)	Geography
Miss M. K. Fisher	1968-72 (Dec.)	P.E.
Mr. W. J. Flavell	1917	Manual Training
Miss E. M. Foster	1917-44	French
Mr. G. Foster	1906-16	Manual Training
Miss J. M. French	1921-58	French
Miss A. J. Garstang	1938-42	English, Maths
Mr. N. H. George	1965-67	Chemistry
Miss M. E. Gibbons	1921	English
Mrs. D. P. Gibson	1968-71	English
Miss M. M. Goalby	1956-57	English
Mr. T. Godden	1918-21	Woodwork
Miss J. B. Gould	1966-69	French
Mr. A. O. Gow	1943-46	Physics
Miss E. F. Green	1926-30	Biology
Mr. V. Griffiths	1944-46	P.E.
Mr. J. Gripton	1920-52	Shorthand
Miss W. M. Hadley	1920-21	P.E.
Mr. R. T. Hancox	1960-64 (Dec.)	Chemistry
Mrs. J. Hancox	1961-63	Maths
Miss N. Harding	1960-68	History
Miss M. Harrison	1965-68	English
Miss L. Harvey	1973-74	Geography
Mr. F. L. Hawley	1930-66	Handicraft
Mrs. P. Hawley	1936-37	Domestic Science
Mr. G. Heath	1968-72	Art
Mrs. D. H. Heatherley (née Greenaway)	1921-27	French, English
Miss D. J. Heekes	1965-68	Art
Mr. W. Helliwell	1948-	History
Mr. T. B. Hetherington	1957-65	English
Mrs. F. M. Higgins	1919	Maths
Mrs. M. J. Hill	1970	English

Mr. P. C. Hill	1970-73	Physics
Miss M. E. Holder	1923-25	Biology
Mr. K. D. Hopkins	1920-42 (died, prisoner of war)	Chemistry
Mr. C. F. Horton	1922-26	Woodwork
Miss W. M. Horton	1954-59 (Dec.)	French
Mr. W. J. Howell	1913-20	French, German
Mr. C. G. Howells	1921-43 (died 1945)	Geography
Mr. K. C. Hudson	1952-66	Physics
Mr. S. W. Hughes	1973-74	Science
Dr. R. P. H. Hummel	1935-36 (Exchange teacher)	German
Miss N. C. Hunt	1943-44	History
Mr. W. Hutchings	1921	
Miss J. B. Irving	20/6/16-27/6/16	History, Geog.
Mr. R. Jackman	1919	Woodwork
Miss M. G. Jackson	1935	French
Mr. J. G. James	1958-63	Maths
Mr. R. D. Jane	1948-50	P.E.
Mr. E. E. Jessop	1934	Geography, Physics
Miss F. R. Jessop	1942-48	Domestic Science
Mr. K. Johnston	1973-74 (April)	Geography
Miss E. Jones	1910	French
Mr. E. Jones	1955-74	Chemistry
Mr. F. L. Jones	1920	Science
Mrs. M. A. Jones (née Freeman)	1960-74	French
Mrs. M. Jones (née Williams)	1940-60 (died)	Chemistry
Miss M. F. Jones	1921-23	Gymnastics
Miss S. A. G. Jones	1921-57	English
Mr. T. Jones	1938-43	P.E.
Miss V. Jones	1953-56	English
Miss J. Keay	1944-51	French
Mr. A. Keen	1974	History
Mr. C. Knight-Coutts	1921-42	Chemistry, Physics
Miss M. H. Langley	1932	History
Mr. M. J. Lawson	1969-70	English, French
Mr. B. R. Lawton	1952-74	French
Mr. H. Laycock	1951-73 (died March)	Geography
Mrs. R. B. Leafe (née Knight)	1959-66	English
Miss E. M. Lewis	1937-47	History
Mrs. D. I. Lloyd	1973-74	English
Mr. P. Lucraft	1971-74	Geography
Mrs. B. Lye	1973-74	P.E.
Mr. R. F. A. Lye	1917-18	Woodwork
Mr. A. R. Malcolm	1946-48	P.E.
Mr. J. A. Malone	1914-18 (killed in action)	French, Latin
Mr. W. L. Markwick	1911-14	French

Miss B. Marston	1918-19	Maths
Miss M. L. Martin	1908-14	English, History
Miss A. Massey	1906-37	English, History
Mr. K. Mears	1971-74	Handicraft
Mrs. B. A. Menches	1964-65	French
Mrs. J. Mends	1966-74	Geography
Miss D. L. Merchant	1963-65	Art
Mr. H. Metcalf	1950-58	Biology
Miss K. M. Millen	1943-45	English
Mr. A. L. Morgan	1944-51	Maths, Geography
Miss G. G. Morgan	1916-18	History, Geography
Miss K. M. Morgan	1948-52	Domestic Science
Mr. S. L. Morgan	1919-20	History
Miss E. W. Morris	1913-16	Girls drill
Miss M. Morris	1950-57	Scripture
Mr. W. D. Morris	1938-74	Maths.
Miss W. H. Munro	1941-48 (Dec.)	English
Mrs. D. Nash (née Mansell)	1941-55	Maths
Mrs. A. Newth	1920-21	History
Mr. R. A. F. Newton Hearne	1926-48	German
Miss J. Norris	1972-74	Maths
Mrs. M. Oldfield	1968-69	English
Miss M. D. Orchard	1916-17	Gymnastics
Miss G. Owen	1964-65	English
Mr. A. Palmer	1965-66	Maths
Mr. J. B. Parkes	1972-74	Maths
Miss C. Parry	1937-46	History
Mr. P. T. Partridge	1949-54	Physics
Mr. L. C. H. Passmore	1926-30	Handicraft
Mr. A. A. L. Pearce	1948-74	History
Mr. W. B. Pearce	1922	Woodwork
Mr. B. C. Pearson	1927-57 (died)	English
Mrs. L. M. Pearson	1958-62	French
Miss F. A. Perry	1919-20	Girls drill
Mrs. J. Phillips	1971	English
Sgt. T. Pickerill	1904-08	Drill (boys & girls)
Miss S. M. Pickett	1953-55	Art
Mrs. S. M. Piercy	1957-59	English
Mr. G. Price	1966-74 (April)	English
Miss N. G. Price	1958-59	English
Mrs. J. Probert (née Smith)	1967-70	Physics
Mr. D. A. Pugh	1958-65	Biology
Mr. H. J. Quarterman	1969-74	French
Mrs. L. G. Quayle (née Underwood)	1914-53 (died 1961)	Art
Mrs. R. Radford	1974	English
Miss Radley	1920	P.E.
Mr. F. E. Relton	1908-09	Maths

Mr. A. Reynolds	1970-74	Chemistry
Miss J. Richards	1904-07	Needlework
Mr. J. B. Richards	1922-65 (Dec.)	Maths
Miss M. Rigby	1938	French
Mrs. A. Rooke	1969-72	Maths
Mrs. M. Roulstone (née Slade)	1962-66 and 1968-74	English
Mr. J. S. Russell	1971-74	Scripture
Mr. P. M. Russell	1950-54	P.E.
Mr. A. R. Sant	1959-74	Physics
Miss K. J. Scriven	1949-57	English
Miss F. Sedgeley	1921-23	English
Miss H. C. Sendell	1950-60	Maths
Mr. P. M. Sewell	1967	Scripture
Miss N. M. Shaw	1935	French
Miss E. M. Sheavyn	1920	Geography
Miss L. M. Siggins	1917-18	P.E.
Miss V. I. Sirmon	1959-66	Domestic Science
Miss A. Smart	1914-16	Geography, History
Mr. J. Smith	1911-19	Maths
Mr. S. D. Smith	1949-56	Physics
Mr. W. A. Smith	1969-74	English
Mrs. H. Springer (née Gough)	1955-63 and 1973-74	Art
Mr. W. H. Squire	1967	English
Miss H. Stratton	1904-06	
Mr. E. G. Swain	1946-74	Biology
Mr. D. S. Swann	1947-49	Physics
Miss S. Taylor	1966-68	Gymnastics
Mrs. M. E. Thomas	1964-74	Economics
Dr. R. W. Thomason	1920-32	Chemistry
Mr. F. W. Towle	1904-09	Maths, French, Music
Mr. J. D. R. Townsend	1955-60	History
Mr. O. Tudor	1965-70	Biology
Miss F. D. Tweedie	1923-65 (Dec.)	P.E.
Miss G. Waite	1916-17	French
Mr. J. M. Walker	1972-74	Latin
Mrs. Wallace (née Simpson)	1972-73	English
Mrs. M. Warwick	1952-58	Shorthand
Miss E. E. Watson	1923	English
Miss P. Westwood	1966-74	Domestic Science
Mrs. A. M. Wetson (née Price)	1970-74	Biology
Miss D. Williams	1916-50	Maths
Miss E. E. A. Williams	1940-46	Science
Mr. W. S. Williams	1947-51 (Dec.)	Chemistry
Mr. P. F. Woodward	1942-56 (died)	French
Mr. G. A. Worts	1966-68	Maths
Miss D. Wrigley	1919-20	Geography

Appendix 7

Number of Pupils on Roll at the beginning of each academic year

1904	49	1927	327	1950	562
1905	73	1928	340	1951	558
1906	87	1929	344	1952	560
1907	84	1930	342	1953	547
1908	78	1931	374	1954	556
1909	83	1932	391	1955	566
1910	86	1933	387	1956	548
1911	79	1934	356	1957	585
1912	89	1935	347	1958	581
1913	112	1936	346	1959	581
1914	148	1937	386	1960	589
1915	158	1938	421	1961	591
1916	156	1939	437	1962	573
1917	153	1940	466	1963	554
1918	181	1941	468	1964	549
1919	238	1942	492	1965	546
1920	254	1943	488	1966	550
1921	312	1944	509	1967	549
1922	327	1945	518	1968	568
1923	318	1946	509	1969	563
1924	324	1947	527	1970	554
1925	310	1948	534	1971	546
1926	320	1949	549	1972	546
				1973	551

Appendix 8

Roll of Honour

First World War

W. Q. Cook
E. Dexter
R. Evans
H. A. Foster
R. C. Gee

W. H. Jackson
F. Jacques
J. A. Malone (Staff)
H. F. Rigg

Second World War

A. E. Adams
E. J. Adams
J. P. Adams
M. Blundell
A. F. Bolton

A. J. Jones
K. S. Judd
T. H. Kidd
H. J. D. Orchard
R. W. Pennell

W. J. Bottrell
 H. Cashmore
 R. A. Clegg
 D. R. Edmonds
 N. D. Ensor
 F. J. Harper
 E. J. Hindley
 F. W. Holden
 K. D. Hopkins (Staff)
 H. W. Hoskins
 D. G. Howse
 C. A. G. J. Johnson
 D. C. Johnson

C. R. Preece
 R. M. Richardson
 A. T. M. Robinson
 W. F. Sidaway
 F. Sillitoe
 N. F. Slade
 R. J. Tansley
 R. E. Tomlinson
 G. C. Walker
 R. L. Walters
 S. F. Watton
 R. P. Watts
 W. J. Willetts

Appendix 9

School Cups

W. F. Vernon cup Boys' Athletic Champion
 G. S. Albright cup Girls' Athletic Champion
 Howarth Challenge cup
 Davies cup for music
 Jephcott cup House Championship Athletics
 Davies cup for Junior and Middle School Studies
 Hadley cup for academic achievement of Seniors
 Beard cup for National Savings
 Swimming cup
 Chess cup
 Cup for Public Speaking
 (Given by the Headmaster, Mr. H. A. Aykroyd)

Appendix 10

School Dramatic Society Productions

(Produced by Miss S. A. G. Jones)

1927 *The Farmer's Wife* Eden Phillpots
 1927 *The Rivals* Richard Brinsley Sheridan
 1928 *She Stoops to Conquer* Oliver Goldsmith
 1929 *Marigold* A. Harker & F. R. Pryor
 1930 *The Admirable Crichton* Sir James Barrie
 1931 *Trelawny of the 'Wells'* Sir Arthur Pinero
 1932 *The School for Scandal* Richard Brinsley Sheridan
 1933 *Quality Street* Sir James Barrie
 1934 *Cabbages and Kings* Emile Littler's Adaptation from the Italian
 Sad about Europe Philip Johnson
 1935 *The Barretts of Wimpole Street* Rudolf Besier

1936	<i>Pride and Prejudice</i>	Mrs. Steele Mackaye
1937	<i>The Brontes</i>	Alfred Sangster
1938	<i>Jane Eyre</i>	Helen Jerome

School Plays

(Produced by H. Laycock)

1958	<i>Caesar's Friend</i>	Divon & Morrah
1959	<i>The Nightingale</i>	Dorothy Wright
1960	<i>The Beautiful One</i>	T. B. Morris
1961	<i>Hobson's Choice</i>	Harold Brighthouse
1964	<i>The Crucible</i>	Arthur Miller
1965	<i>The Fighting Man</i>	T. B. Hetherington (Member of Staff)
1966	<i>A Hundred Years Old</i>	Quinterc
1967	<i>The Lark</i>	Anouilli
1968	<i>The Importance of Being Ernest</i>	Oscar Wilde
1969	<i>Adventure Story</i>	Terence Rattigan
1970	<i>Sweeney Todd</i>	G. Pitts

Appendix 11

Scholarships and Exhibitions 1919

Oldbury Charity Scholarships

Six Scholarships are offered each year by the Oldbury Charity Trustees and are awarded on the result of an Examination held in May. Candidates must reside in the Urban District of Oldbury. The Scholarships are tenable for four years and are of the value of £6 for the first year, £6 for the second year, £11 for the third year and £16 for the fourth year. They may be renewed for a further period. These Scholarships will be awarded only to the children of parents who undertake to keep them at school for at least four years. Further particulars can be obtained from Rev. H. C. Hawkins, Richmond Hill, Langley.

Oldbury Internal Scholarships

The Oldbury Charity Trustees also offer annually one or more Internal Scholarships to Pupils who are over 14 years of age and have been in the School for two years. The Internal Scholarships are tenable in the first place for two years and are of the value of £11 for the first year and £16 for the second. Further particulars can be obtained from the Head Master.

Warley Scholarships

Two or three Scholarships are awarded each year, by the Moore and Powell's Trustees, to children resident in the Parish of Warley Wigorn. These Scholarships defray all expenses for fees, books, apparatus

and stationery, and holders are expected to remain at the school for not less than four years. Particulars can be obtained from E. W. Jackson, Esq., J. P., Ridgacre Lane, Quinton.

Chance Scholarships

A Scholarship, tenable at the Oldbury Secondary School, is offered from time to time, by the Trustees of the Chance Educational Foundation, to children of parents in the employment of Messrs. Chance and Hunt Limited. Application should be made to the Head Master.

Free Places

A number of Free Places is offered each year by the Worcestershire County Council for competition in May. These entitle the holders to free tuition and use of all books, apparatus and stationery. The Free Place is tenable as long as the Pupil is in attendance at the School and Parents will be expected to keep the child at School at least until the end of the School year in which he (or she) reaches the age of 16. Further particulars can be had from the Director of Education, 37, Foregate Street, Worcester.

County Council Internal Exhibitions

A small sum of money is provided annually by the County Council to help Pupils over 14 who are in need of financial assistance, to continue their work at the School. Applications should be sent to the Head Master.

Bursaries

Any boy or girl who has been at the school for three years, who is not less than 16 or more than 18 years of age, and wishes to become a Teacher, can apply for a Bursary. The Bursaries are tenable, as a rule, for one year and are of the value of about £8 to £10 (with a grant where necessary for travelling expenses), together with free tuition, and use of all books, apparatus and stationery. Bursars must take the Oxford Senior Local (or some similar) Examination and afterwards either become Student Teachers or proceed directly to a Training College. Further particulars can be obtained from the Head Master.

Student Teachers

Student Teachers are apprentices to the art of teaching in the Elementary Schools. Boys receive £36, and girls £30, per annum, clear of all fees. They attend the Secondary School one day a week for guidance in their studies. They have all the privileges of the School Sports' Club and are also eligible for membership of the Old Students' Society. Further particulars can be obtained from the Director of Education, 37, Foregate Street, Worcester.

Training College Grants

At the end of the year's training, Student Teachers can obtain posts as Un-certified Teachers, but it is better for them to proceed to a training College in order to become Certificated Teachers. The ordinary Training College Course is for two years, but students who attend a University Training College for three years can also obtain a degree. The Board of Education pays a sum enough to cover all fees at Birmingham University and leave over about £10 per annum towards Board and Lodging, etc. The County Council may grant a sum not exceeding £8 per annum towards other expenses. Further particulars can be obtained from the Head Master.

Leaving Exhibitions

An Exhibition may also be awarded from time to time by the Trustees of the Oldbury Charities to enable a Pupil of the school to continue his (or her) studies at Birmingham University or some other approved Institution. Applicants should consult the Head Master.

University Scholarships

One or more University Scholarships of a total value not exceeding £50 are offered by the Worcestershire County Council. Particulars can be obtained from the Director of Education, 37, Foregate Street, Worcester.

Appendix 12

Chairmen of School Governors

1924-41	Alderman W. T. Davies, J.P., C.A.
1941-44	Councillor G. H. Price, C.C.
1944-45	Alderman B. T. Robbins, J.P., C.C.
1945-47	The Rev. H. C. Hawkins
1947-63	Alderman B. T. Robbins, J.P., C.C.
1963-67	Alderman G. H. Price, C.C.
1967-73	Alderman J. D. Beard, O.B.E.
1973-74	Councillor Mrs. E. M. J. Gunn, J.P.