



OLD

PALMERIAN

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Edited and compiled by:

Ruth Hunwick

30 Bradleigh Avenue, Grays,
Essex. RM17 5XD

Jill Snelling

27 Elm Drive, Rayleigh,
Essex. SS6 8AB

Eileen Webb

10 Woodview, Grays.
Essex. RM17 5TF

Margaret Andrews

Palmer's College, Chadwell Road,
Grays, Essex. RM17 5TD

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Well here we are again, with yet another magazine packed full of your memoirs and exploits. Thanks go to all those who have contributed articles and news. There must be many more budding authors out there with interesting stories to tell. So, why not write and tell us what YOU have been doing since you left Palmer's.

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on some of the 'events' which have occurred during the past year. Firstly, the news that, after many dedicated years of service at Palmer's, John Sach decided to retire earlier this year. I am sure you will join me in wishing him all the best for his retirement.

Secondly, I have great pleasure in reporting that work on the Miss Leworthy Memorial Notice board has now begun. Once completed it will be erected at Palmer's to serve as a lasting monument to a much-loved Headmistress.

Other items of news include the transfer of the '250 Years Celebration' cine-film onto video-tape. Copies of this are available for members to purchase. Look out for details! We are also exploring the possibility of introducing aerobics classes at the Sports Hall. If you are interested please let us know.

In conclusion, I would like to thank your committee, especially Ruth Hunwick, Eileen Webb, Beryl Saxton and Michael Parr, for all the hard work they do. Without their efforts the Association could not possibly function.

Finally, may I wish all Old Palmerians, wherever you may be, a happy and prosperous year ahead.

Jill Snelling

WHERE ARE THEY NOW

We have lost contact with some Old Palmerians and have therefore, been unable to send them a copy of the "Old Palmerian" and other notices. If any reader has a current address for any of the following members please contact us or ask the member to do so.

Mr. W Metherell	42 - 49	Miss Cheryl Gilson	69 - 76
Mr. Richard Sheil	76 - 78	Miss Frances Cooper	83 - 85
Mr. John Childs	55 - 60	Mr. Richard Zechmeister	84 - 88
Miss Jacqueline Jenman	86 - 87		

To ensure that you continue to receive your copy of the "Old Palmerian" please notify us of any change of address.

Ruth Hunwick

INFORMATION REQUIRED

MRS ALDEN would like to help a neighbour trace LESLIE SCOTT who attended the Boys' School in the early 1930's and lived in Waldegrave Gardens, Upminster, whilst at school. He damaged or lost two fingers on one hand and was tall and fair and very interested in motor bikes. He was well known in Upminster. If anyone knows of his whereabouts would they please contact Mr. J. Gray, 9 Brook Road, Gidea Park, Romford, Essex, RM2 5QS Tel.0708 761383, or Mrs R. Hunwick.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

6th November 1994	Founder's Day Service
11th November 1994	Founder's Day Dinner
15th November 1994	A.G.M.
31st March 1995	Old Boys' Dinner

ASSOCIATION SPORTS CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

PALMER'S SPORTS HALL

Open to Old Palmerians on Mondays 8.00 p.m. to 10.00 p.m. and on Thursdays 7.00 p.m. to 9.45 p.m.

Badminton Court £1.25 for 30 min. session.

Squash Court £1.75 for 40 min. session.

Slim, Trim, Weights, Training 50p per session.

Swimming Thursday evening only, 9.00 - 9.45 p.m. £1.

The main hall is available for 5 a-side football, last hour of the evening on one Monday and one Thursday each month.

Badminton courts may also be booked for basket ball practise and table tennis at the badminton rates.

Bookings may be made 6 days in advance by ringing Ruth Hunwick on 0375 380964.

Badminton continues to be very popular but we are finding that we have quite a few squash courts available on both evenings. Come on squash players - Where are you?

Membership forms for O.P.A. available at the Sports Hall or from Ruth Hunwick.

RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB REPORT

The past year has seen a continuation of the progress the club has made over the preceding 2 or 3 years and which we anticipate will continue well into the future.

We have continued our residence in the hall above the Conservative Club in Grays which has been the scene of some great social events, including discos, quiz nights and casino nights. The rugby club has continued to run the bar and we are pleased to report that it has proved to be "a nice little earner". Feel free to drop in for a drink! The club still hankers for a facility on home ground at the College in the long run however, especially Andy Marr who hasn't quite got used to spending his Saturday nights in the Conservative Club.

The youth has continued its development due to the hard work of both the players and coaches (Craig Overy and Devlin Crowhurst). We look forward to the day, hopefully not too far away, when the senior teams contain players the club has groomed from their first rugby playing days.

Despite a difficult year on the field, with many key players injured or unavailable for much of the season, the 1st XV retained their position in Division 2 of the Courage Eastern Counties League, skippered by Andy Baylis. One of the promising features of the team was the number of younger players who made a valuable contribution to the side. It is always difficult for a team to maintain momentum without pressure from players coming through, and this year it was gratifying that there was a lot of competition for places.

The 2nd XV also had a successful year winning the majority of their matches. The standard of rugby played has improved tremendously over the past few years. What a change from the 2nd team of 4 or 5 years ago, when we often couldn't field a full side! Having a talented pool of players is a benefit to the club.

After a tough year last year, the 3rd XV had a mixed season, in that they didn't win a game before Christmas and didn't lose one after. The team was given considerable momentum (in every sense of the word) by a back row which frequently averaged well over 18 stone and made the current England back row look like pygmies!

For the end of season bash, we returned to the Orsett Hall for the good reason that the bar is open later. As always a good time was had by all, perhaps too good judging by the sore heads in evidence the next morning!

In recognition of the valuable contribution and growth we were pleased to present, for the first time, Club awards to the youth team, in addition to the usual awards for the senior teams. The awards were as follows:

1 st Team Player of the Year	-	Julian Smith
2 nd Team Player of the Year	-	Mark Meechan
3 rd Team Player of the Year	-	Simon Hoy
Most Improved Player	-	Mark Meechan
Clubman	-	Gordon Purvis
Gentleman of the Tour	-	Paul 'Axe Man' Carney
Youth Team Player of the Year	-	John Patrick
Youth Team Players' Player	-	Greg Anderson

Of course, everyone from the Club would like to pass on their thanks to the College for the on-going use of the pitch and changing facilities. The continued support from all concerned is much appreciated.

Finally, we are always on the look out for fresh (and not so fresh) recruits. All enquiries can be addressed to Chris Warrior 0277 630 210

GOLFING SOCIETY REPORT 1993 SEASON

Six games were played during the year with the results and winners detailed below.

Spring Meeting - April 1993.

24 members played golf and 24 sat down to dinner.

Overall Winner: P. Bussey with 34 points

The following were the winners of the Handicapped Competition.

0 - 13	D. Thomas	33 points
14 - 17	J. Isabel	32 points
18 - 23	J. Saxton	33 points
24 +	G. Loveland	34 points.

Match vs. Palmer's College - May 1993.

The Old Palmerians' team won three matches to one.

Match vs. Old Brentwoods' - June 1993.

The Old Palmerians' team lost four and half matches to one half.

Guest Day - July 1993.

36 members and guests played golf and 41 sat down to dinner.

Winners were W. Outterside and his guest with 49 points.

Second were Dr. M. Colburn and his guest with 46 points.

Third were J. Revell and his guest with 45 points.

Captain's Day - September 1993.

Our Captain this year was D. Thorogood. 21 members played golf and 25 sat down to dinner.

Winner was J. Isabel with 47 points.

Second was W. Outterside with 45 points.

Third was J. Saxton with 40 points.

Match vs. Orsett Golf Club - December 1993.

The Old Palmerians' team lost four matches to two.

President's Cup

The winner of this cup was W. Outterside with an accumulation of 125 points from the Spring, Guest and Captain's Day meetings.

Second was J. Isabel with 119 points.

Third was J. Saxton with 115 points.

Leg O' Mutton Supper - November 1993.

The A.G.M. and Dinner was held at the Orsett Golf Club and attended by 53 members and invited guests.

Membership.

Currently we have 40 playing members with an additional 10 attending the dinner meetings.

Any Old Palmerians or Staff interested in joining the Old Palmerians' Golfing Society should contact John Revell on 0375 375395.

John Revell
(Hon. Secretary/Treas.)

OLD PALMERIANS' EMBROIDERED CASUAL/LEISURE WEAR AND TIES

For those interested in the embroidered casual/leisure wear, please see the enclosed leaflet for the extended range now available.

Ties and Bow Ties £6.00 postage and packing included.

Please enclose cheque with order, payable to Old Palmerians' Association, and send to Ms J. Snelling, 27 Elm Drive, Rayleigh, Essex, SS6 8AB. Tel. 0268 774361.

NEWS OF OLD PALMERIANS

JAMIE WILLIAMS (1988 - 1990) was awarded, in 1993, a 2 - 1 degree by Warwick University, in Mathematics. He has a job at an accountants in Coventry which he started in January 1994, but he hopes to go into business for himself.

GLYN DAVIES (1988 - 1990) was awarded, in 1993, a 2 - 1 degree by Kent University, in Computing Science and is now working at Tilbury.

DAVID DICKENS (1987 - 1990) was awarded, in 1993, a first class honours degree in Business Science by Swansea University. He is now working for the Ministry of Defence research department.

JASON HURN (1988 - 1990) was awarded, in 1993 his degree by Southampton University and now works for the Defence Research Agency as an Operational Analyst.

SIMON CLAYS (1988-1990) was awarded, in 1994, a degree in Mechanical Engineering, by Loughborough University and is currently working at Van den Berghs.

PAUL TWINN (1988-1990) was awarded, in 1994, a 2-2 degree in Maths and French, by the University of East Anglia.

STUART GRAY (1988-1991) was awarded, in 1994, a 2-1 degree in Computing by London University, Queen Mary and Westfield. He hopes to obtain employment for a year then return and do an MSc.

MARK SHELDON (1988 - 1991) was awarded, in 1994, a 2 - 1 honours degree B. Eng. in Computer Systems Engineering by the University of Kent. He now has a job in Colchester with an American company:- Climate Changer Concessionaires Windows Software, which sells air conditioning.

LISA CLARK (1988 - 1990) was awarded, in 1994, a 2 - 2 degree in French, Spanish and Business Studies, by Swansea University and so was **LIZ WILLIAMS (1988 - 1990).**

CLARE ALLCORN (1988 - 1990) was awarded, in 1994, a 2 - 1 degree in French and Spanish. She plans to have a year off and then do an M. Phil. in some aspect of Spanish Literature, or maybe Mexican Women's Literature.

VINCENT GROOM (1988 - 1990) was awarded, in 1994, a 2 - 1 degree B. Sc. Econ. in European Community Studies, (French, Spanish and Politics) and is preparing to go to the London School of Economics to study European Politics and Policy for his M. Sc.

DAVID HENDRY (1974 - 1976) has been working for the Woolwich Building Society at its Bexleyheath Head Office for the past eight years as a Senior Project Manager. He is married to Corinne and they have two daughters aged 8 and $4\frac{1}{2}$ years.

NIGEL JOHNSON (1963 - 1968) moved back from Canada to Grays last year since the economic climate in Canada had deteriorated. At the time of writing he was looking for investors for a business based on a new idea to do with computers.

Before he left Canada, he worked for a couple of semesters as a Professor in the faculty of Applied Science and Engineering at Seneca College in Toronto to fill in at the last moment. Nigel says it gave him a new respect for teachers as he had never worked so hard for so little money.

Talking of teachers, Nigel remembers his Chemistry master David Kelly (not our Principal) trying to prepare amorphous sulphur in a flask of toluene and causing a fire. Mr Kelly then used Nigel's chemistry notebook to put out the fire and Nigel kept the notebook as a souvenir of the fire until it was lost in a move between homes in Canada in 1987.

JACQUELINE, Nigel's sister was preparing for her New York Bar admission examinations last year and we hope she passed. Jacqueline is married to New York banker and is living in Brooklyn, where she manages a huge brownstone historically- listed home and studies as a foreign lawyer for the bar.

BARRY JOHNSON, Nigel's brother is still buying and selling used jet-fighter planes to collectors and museums.

MAURICE DIXSON (1953 - 1961) moved to Simon Engineering in 1993 to become its new chief executive and there was an article in the Financial Times in August. Maurice who did an Oxford doctoral thesis on the politics and economics of defence procurement, had been on the board of G.E.C. before this move, for three and a half years, as group managing director in charge of the electronic metrology and components group. Prior to that he had been at British Aerospace, latterly as managing director of the commercial aircraft side and before that as chief executive of Royal Ordnance.

British Aerospace owned a corporate chalet on the Isle of Wight and Maurice won a competition in The Independent by writing this limerick:-

*It's goodbye for a week to my spouse,
For the pleasure of yachting at Cowes,
I'll be hosting all day
At our corporate chalet
And each night I'm obliged to carouse.*

However Maurice has moved to a company where severe belt tightening rather than carousing was required, and he felt, at the time, that one of the attractions of the job was to restore Simon to where it ought to be, in the forefront of British engineering.

JAMES STEELE (1952 - 1957) became Chief of Staff to the Admiral last year at Maritime Forces Pacific Headquarters in Canada. The scope of his work has dramatically increased as he is effectively the Admiral's deputy and is responsible for acting in his place during his absences. There are many changes going on as they rebalance their Navy between the two coasts, based on the decreasing threat in the Atlantic and the more general instability world-wide. This calls for considerable co-ordination of resources at a time when fiscal restraint is the order of the day.

James was saddened to read of the passing of masters who were influential figures in his early life and said that it served to remind him of the enormous debt he owed them for giving him the chance to get where he is to-day. He visited **John Homans** in Port Alberni and their recollections of masters were remarkably consistent.

James was about to retire from the Canadian Navy, when he wrote again in March, having reached 36 years in the outfit. While most of it has been all that he would have wished and more; present practices and the challenges of making decreasing resources meet increasing commitments, he felt, was for someone else to take over. James will be seeking a second career there in Victoria.

DOUGLAS RILEY (1939 - 1942) although past 65 is still working part-time at Boots PLC. Also, after three years of not competing due to accidents, participated in over 50 cycling events during 1993, showing great enthusiasm and energy.

NICOLA DUNN (1986 -1987) met her fiancé **MARK PERRY (1983 - 1986)** when she joined the local Camera Club to learn more about using the camera she had just bought; not realising that they had both been to Palmer's. They soon discovered their common interests of photography, cars and motorsport. (The first thing that Nicola noticed when she saw Mark was the shiny red car he was driving!) After months of being friends Mark asked Nicola out and they became engaged on 29th February 1992. They own a house in Linford which they are decorating and will be getting married in September 1994.

Nicola has been working as a dispensing Optician since leaving Palmer's, after completing further training and Mark is a Senior Shipping Import Clerk for a large Haulage and Shipping Company. He travels to and from Sheerness in Kent each day to the Docks there, where his office is situated.

ALICE M. ROSEVEAR (1931 - 1936) MRS MARGARET MARTIN has moved with her husband, now that they are both fully retired, to a cosy detached bungalow in the country. It is in Carnon Downs, near Truro in Cornwall, so it is not cut off from civilisation, and only about 3 miles from Margaret's father's birthplace on the River Fal.

STEVEN ARNOLD (1988 - 1990) has now started a degree course in Chemistry and Physics at Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London.

K. E. CLARK telephone 0277 625359 is offering for sale the following Old Palmerian items:-

1. Blazer Badge, satin padded and gold wired.
2. Gold Cuff Links with the crest on one pad, and the school colours enamelled in stripes on the other.
3. Tie, multi-crested in school colours.
4. Cravat, -crested in school colours.

LEIGH AUSTIN (1970 - 1977) MRS MOSS married for the second time on 18th June 1993 and her surname is now Everingham. There were a few Old Palmerians involved in the wedding celebration. **Gillian Darton (Cant 1970 - 1977)** was one of the witnesses at Langtons Registry Office and came down from York with her husband David and their three children, Jamie (5), Hannah (4), and Abigail who was a year old on New Year's Day 1994. Another former classmate **Wendy Rethon (Edwards 1970 - 1977)** was also at the service along with **Rob Dickson (1969 - 1976)** who was an invaluable help all day and also got the beer for us! Another former classmate attended the evening reception - **Wendy Gregory (Jefferys 1970 - 1977)**. Also invited, but for a variety of reasons unable to join us were **Lynne Herriot (Claydon 1970 -1977)**, **Karen Leader (Chamber 1970 - 1977)**, **Gillian Harrison (Hollingdale 1970 - 1975)** and **Bev Moss (1970 - 1977)**. Leigh was very sorry to miss the last reunion day but it coincided with their return from honeymoon in Paris - still she hopes to make the next one.

Here is an up date on a few people she keeps in regular touch with:-

Karen Leader now lives in Kent, has a daughter, Leia and works at a residential home for the deaf and dumb.

Gillian Harrison now lives on a farm in the South of France with her husband Chris, rebuilding their farmhouse and looking after a variety of animals. She has three donkeys which were all about to give birth just before Christmas 1993!!!

Bev Moss is now an Australian citizen and lives just outside Sydney with her partner Robert and she helps to run a local day centre for young people. Bev visited the U.K. in 1993 two weeks after Leigh's wedding and a few of them got together with her for a reunion evening - **Wendy Gregory, Lynne Herriot and Irene Gillan (Wickenden)**. Irene took along some of her old photographs which gave them all a good laugh. Leigh visited Bev back in 1989 for a holiday and en route stopped off in Tokyo to stay with **Jim Heelan (1970's)** for a few days. Jim has now married and lives in America.

Leigh also writes:- "On leaving Palmer's I went straight into a secretarial position with a glass company in East London and following a short spell in the shipping industry went into the financial sector where I have remained ever since. My current position is working for the Finance Director of Mercury Asset Management which is a premier investment house in the City.

One of my main hobbies is postcard collecting which I started when I was at Palmer's and I make a point of trying to find cards of Palmer's when I visit any fairs. I have about a dozen cards shared between the boys' and girls' schools and would be interested to hear from any other Old Palmerians who share this interest. Another hobby which also dates back to my schooldays is a love of the theatre and over the last five years I have been fairly active in a group based in the Southend area, the East Essex Players, and in 1989 I was lucky enough to be part of the team which achieved success performing a play in the British One-Act Drama Festival where we eventually beat over 1,000 teams to win the festival for England. In my schooldays I took part in two of the Gilbert & Sullivan operas - backstage for *Iolanthe* (1976) and performing in the chorus for *H.M.S. Pinafore* (1977). I also recall a production that I took part in during my second year which was a modern version of the "Everyman" play where we adapted the play with modern language and used popular music and dress of the 1960's and 70's to illustrate it's relevance in contemporary times. I was the narrator and had to tell part of the story - unfortunately I don't remember all the girls involved, but I remember it being great fun."

DALIA JOLLY (1984 - 1986) has been studying this past year for her M.Sc. in Exercise and Health Psychology at the City University and also practising Optometry part time. Over Christmas and New Year, she travelled in Nepal and India.

JOHN TARLTON (1938 - 1945) will celebrate his Ruby Wedding on October 2nd 1994.

STEPHEN DINGLE (1976 - 1978) is still working in the City, and is currently an Assistant Director at N.M. Rothschild and Sons Limited, where he is responsible for all the bank's property lending and advising activities.

DENNIS WADE (1936 - 1941) writes:- "I was most intrigued by the short piece in the September 1993 issue of 'Old Palmerian' by George Wilding (1933 - 1939), who was a contemporary of my late brother David Wade.

In particular, the mention of the immediate post-war OP Football Teams stirred a chord in my memory. I turned up some old records and came across a Card with the School Song on it, written by D.P. Boatman (1900 -1908). Whilst this was interesting, I turned it over and on the reverse, written faintly in pencil, were the names of three teams selected for one of the week-end fixtures. I remember that we had two teams in those days. The first was....

		OUTTERSIDE		
	WAKEFIELD		VINCENT	
BOYD		HOLLANDS		ROBERTS
CHEESEMAM	BUGLER	RICHARDS	BUTTON	COSSINS

The Second was....

		COX		
	WADE	DUNNING		
CUBITT	OAKLEY	TARLETON		
FRENCH	WATLING	MILLS	HARVEY	WISE

The third side was a permutation of some of the above plus KEMP at Outside Right.

All this is over 45 years ago and, sadly, some are no longer here. The only person that I still see from time to time is Ernie Oakley, who lives in West Thurrock and is still active in youth football. I used to see Archie Wakefield, Arthur Bugler and John Cheeseman occasionally in the City years ago when commuting was the order of the day. Plus, of course, Ger Gunn who used to manage the two teams with Jack Stannard. They were most enjoyable years and although we were not particularly successful we made up for it in enthusiasm. We used to travel some distances to play, mostly by cycle and the home games were played on the School playing field and also that to the west of the Girls' School....still there to-day. I remember that we had no changing facilities at the Girls' School and some of the players used to use my parents'

house in Chadwell as a changing room.

Those were the days!"

JEAN LAVIS (1944 - 1949) MRS EMMERSON and PAT JONES (1944 - 1949) MRS CALLEN wrote:- "Before attending Palmer's Pat was an evacuee in Canada for 4 years. She returned there to live, married and had one son and three daughters and now lives in Windsor, Ontario.

In October 1993 she met Jean at Calgary airport and they embarked on a 21 day touring holiday which was to take them over 5,000 miles through some of the most spectacular scenery in the world. They visited 5 of America's National Parks and Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Francisco and drove along the magnificent coastlines of California and Oregon, spending the last few days with Pat's husband, their married son and his family in Cranbrook, B.C.

In Arizona they spent a long relaxing week-end at the home of **Janet Carter** and her husband Barry in the beautiful town of Scottsdale. Janet put them in touch with **Margaret Crawley (Mrs Ross)** in Los Angeles and Pat, Jean and Margaret enjoyed a day together at Universal Studios and later joined Margaret's husband **Gordon** (another Old Palmerian) for dinner at their home.

This was the first time in over 40 years that the school friends had been together and this coupled with the warm welcome received from their husbands and families made it a unique and wonderful holiday."

PALMER'S SCHOOL IN THE 1925 - 1930 PERIOD **BY KEITH BANNISTER**

I was at Palmer's from 1925 - 1930, and must confess that from the start I was not a model pupil, or enamoured of the system, at any time. I think I must have been a rebel at heart, but the system brought it out in the open. This is not an excuse for my lack of scholastic attainment but a statement of fact. I wanted to conform, but at times could see no logic in doing so. That, in those days, was heresy from the start. Why should I chase a muddy ball around on a cold winter afternoon, in stinging rain, when I could be far more profitably and comfortably engaged in doing things in the warmth and comfort of my home? Football and cricket practice were supposedly compulsory but took place in ones own time when afternoon lessons were finished. I never attended one practice in 5 years. Mark you, I took the resultant canings and hundreds of lines meted out as punishment in good part. I had broken the rules and must accept the punishment. I think that this principle is one of the most important things that I

learned about life during my period at Palmer's. Rules, are to me, made to be broken at times, but having broken a rule, be prepared to take the punishment without squalling and without resentment. This principle should be adhered to throughout ones life.

I could not give a chronological account of my term at Palmer's, but have set down some anecdotes and recollections at random by which, although my dislike of the system or at least certain aspects of it, must show through, the reader, if any, may be able to gather some idea of life there some 50 years ago. I freely admit that, despite any impression that may be gathered to the contrary, all in all I derived considerable benefit from my experience which has stood me in good stead in life since.

In some of the anecdotes and stories that follow I have only given a capital letter when referring to some people. This is purely to prevent any possible embarrassment to the persons concerned, which would be the very last thing that I would wish to do.

EARLY DAYS

From the age of about eight it had been impressed upon me and my contemporaries as to the prestige and advantages of going to Palmer's. It was the door to social and commercial success in life. Well, here I was, ten and a half years old, had won a scholarship from Arthur Street School, which had opened the door for me to this veritable wonderland of opportunity. I set out from home with mother's "Good luck son" in my ears and sick with apprehension in my tummy, but nevertheless curiously eager to try this strange new world that I was about to enter.

My first recollection is of sitting at a desk in a room with a lot of other lads who were apparently also newbies and all about the same age as myself, supervised by a fierce looking gentleman by the name of Harkins.

Soon the door opened and in came a short stiffly built, unsmiling man, wearing a clergyman's collar and carrying a cane. He was without doubt a person to regard with awe. Some muttered words to the Master in charge who then introduced him as the Rev. H. Alldridge Abbott, the Headmaster. Then came a lecture from the latter as to the honour that we were having bestowed upon us in being allowed to attend this historic school, the principles on which the school was run, and the dire punishment that would surely follow any misdemeanour, with the ultimate disgrace of EXPULSION if God in the form of Rev. H.A. Abbott saw fit.

He then barked "Stand up all the scholarship boys" and some dozen boys shuffled to their feet, thus recognised from then on as persons to be tolerated

until the tag had been expunged, either by scholastic achievement or prowess at games on the sports field.

We were then given paper and pen and told to write down our names, ages and other particulars. I had only been taught to print at Arthur Street School, so naturally printed all the necessary details. The master came around to collect the papers and straight away I was in trouble. "You were told to write it down" he said "NOT PRINT". With burning face and ears I confessed that I could not write, a statement that was received with incredulity by Mr. Harkins and with contempt by the Headmaster, who instructed Mr. Harkins to provide me with a copperplate writing copy book forthwith, and me to practice with it at once. All this in front of a grinning crowd of unsympathetic boys in my first two hours at this prestigious establishment.

However, after a break we were set an examination to establish where we were to be fitted in, and most of my age were allocated to the Removes, either A,B or C. I started in A with Mr. Harkins as form master, but due mainly, I am sure, to my appalling attempts at longhand writing, I was soon drafted down to B where Dicky Roote was the form master. He was quite a young man, kindly but strict with his charges and with the patience required to try and lick into shape a crowd of strange new boys.

Algebra, geometry and French were all new subjects to me, but the latter I really took to and enjoyed; algebra was interesting but geometry was something beyond my comprehension. By this time I was becoming familiar with the general pattern of school life. First morning assembly, which started with a C of E service (Catholics were rigidly confined to the corridor during this ritual) then they and other unbelievers were allowed in, and the head, who by now I had realised was disrespectfully referred to throughout the school as Bunnie Abbott, would read out any official school notices, sports fixtures and any general admonishments that he thought appropriate. He and the two senior masters, Mr. Holbeche and Mr. Edwards stood, during this daily ceremony upon a dais at the end of the hall and could look down the massed rows of boys, each form in one or two rows with their form-master at the end of the row. Thus if Bunnie spotted anything untoward occurring he could immediately identify the form and its master in charge. A bit of public humiliation was always good for the soul of the person concerned and for the morale of the school at large, and no opportunity was neglected. For instance, one very hot humid morning a lad from the same form as myself came to assembly wearing an open neck shirt. During the reading of notices, Bunnie spotted this and said, "You boy, you over there without a tie, go home and don't come back until you are properly dressed". Can you imagine how that eleven year old boy felt? He

had to leave the room in front of 300 boys, walk $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile home, put on a tie, walk back to school and report to his form master.

When the lad had left, we all got a lecture on the correct way to dress when attending this august establishment, followed by the usual remark that if persons could not conform, the school would be quite happy to do without them.

The form-master was not allowed to use a cane, this was the prerogative of the head alone, and when one transgressed and the master thought that an imposition of lines or detention was insufficient a punishment, then there was one expression used by all masters and understood by all boys --- Get outside the office door --- this meant proceeding to the headmaster's office and waiting outside the door until such time as the head deigned to notice that one was there. This wait could last 5 minutes or 5 hours, dependant upon the mood and whim of Bunnie. A lad I shall call 'B' had transgressed, duly sent to wait, but by 4 p.m. when school had finished, had still not been attended to. The practice under these circumstances was to resume the wait after assembly the next morning, which 'B' duly did. Lessons in Remove B had been in progress some time when I walked Bunnie, leading 'B' by the ear. With apologies to the form-master he announced that before caning 'B' he had felt his posterior (he always did this) and found that this deceitful boy was wearing two pairs of pants or shorts, and various other forms of padding, intended obviously to lessen the just severity of his punishment. However, thanks to his (Bunnie's) perspicacity, the plot had been foiled and retribution was at hand. There upon, he made 'B' drop his trousers, laid him across the top of the master's desk and administered four resounding cuts of his cane across 'B's exposed backside. I think that even the master was sickened, and it was a long time before he told anyone "Get outside the office door" again.

Term examinations and my weekly form rating put me in a very low position, and the next term found me transferred down to Remove C. Mr. Worrall, an elderly man, coming along toward retirement, was my new form-master. Here was a man who knew how to care for scholastic rejects such as we; through him I could begin to see sense in what they were trying to instil into us. Although we had different masters for various subjects. I think that the pace was slower and, while I was acutely conscious of my appalling handwriting, and still am, I began to find French really absorbing, Algebra and English Grammar were also becoming subjects of acute interest. The other subjects such as history and geography were mundane and tolerated, but geometry, was something completely beyond my puerile intellect.

It was at about this period that I first met Bunnie in his capacity as dispenser of punishment. I had persistently cut football or cricket practice, it is

immaterial which, both were anathema to me, and had been awarded lines galore, which had been dutifully done, and handed to Savage, who at that time was Captain of my House, Shaftesbury, but I had finally been ordered to the office door. I was in fear and trepidation. I had never had the cane across my posterior before in my life. What would it feel like? I duly presented myself outside the door. The system was diabolically cruel in as much that the office door opened into a large room that was used in part as a classroom by the very junior boys, children aged seven, thus every time that any one was caned it was in full view of these kids. Their teacher as a delightful old man, Mr. Maine, known with great affection by all age groups as 'Charliemaine', and when the moment of doom arrived he would gather his flock around him like a broody hen so that they might be too engrossed to notice what was going on at the other end of the room, but of course the swish of the cane and the all too frequent wowl of anguish that followed, could not but attract their attention.

To continue, however, I waited about an hour and eventually Bunnie appeared in his doorway. "You wish to see me boy?" "Yes Sir", I whispered. "Then we had better see if we can accommodate you then hadn't we". "Yes Sir", I croaked again. He then stepped back into his office and reappeared almost immediately, whipping in his hands the most enormous cane that I had ever seen. At least it seemed enormous to me at the time, but subsequent visits to that place of torture made me aware that it was only one of at least a score, all about 40 inches long but of varying thicknesses; but for all my experience over the next five years, I never did discover what decided the particular thickness that he was going to use on any particular individual at any given time.

I seem to have wandered a little, so will carry on from where Bunnie had produced his cane --- "Who sent you and why?" was invariably the next question barked at the quivering victim, then "Bend down boy". Having got me touching my toes, my backside as tight as a drum, he then ran his hand carefully over the stretched pants to see if I had any superfluous packing around the area to be treated. Apparently satisfied, he then stepped back, took his cane back in a wide arc and I heard a SWISH and the cane gently feathered my quivering rump, then SWOOSH and I felt the most excruciating pain across my backside that I had ever experienced. Then Bunnie's voice coming from far away "That will do for now, back to your form boy". I was lucky, I had got away with one, but felt that burning cut on my backside for several hours afterwards.

Through the rest of my school life I became a regular visitor to the 'office door' occasionally undeservedly, but mostly deserved. In fact, at one period it became a weekly ritual, but I never got more than two at a time, perhaps Bunnie thought it was a waste of his valuable time, but more probably that I was just not worth the effort.

One occasion remains most vivid in my memory :- I had been sent out by our form-master, a Mr. Maugham, a comparatively new teacher who had not at that time developed a sense of proportion when it came to a point of punishment, for he would send a boy to the 'Office Door' at the drop of an ink blot. When I duly arrived there was another lad already waiting and he had been there about half an hour he told me. Experience had already taught us that the first essential when awaiting a caning, was to get one's backside perched on a radiator that was conveniently situated nearby, this, in order to soften up the parts to be afflicted and presumably get the blood flowing freely. This we did, and remained so for about another hour and a half. Eventually the Reverend gentleman appeared, took the other lad through the usual performance of bottom patting, and then the WHISH WHOOSH of the cane. The lad let out a yell and straightened up. "I did not tell you to get up" said Bunnie, "get down again" and the performance was repeated. Again a yell of anguish, and a straightening up. "I'll tell you when to get up" shouted the Head, "get down again" and for the third time that vicious WHISH WHOOSH. This time the lad got up really blubbing with the pain and was allowed to depart. Of course I had been watching this performance with increasing trepidation, and was determined that the old so and so was not going to catch me on the same lark of getting up too soon. Came the question, "Who sent you out" but before I could reply, he continued "Mr. Maugham, I presume". I nodded assent and bent down expectantly. Without any preliminary patting, back went the caning arm and WHISH WHOOSH. I stayed put. "Oh you like it" quoth Bunnie, "You want some more, but before he could get the cane up in the air I was up spluttering a "No thank you Sir" and away to the wash basins. The hot radiator before, and the cold slate after was a well tried treatment for assuaging the after pangs of Bunnie's tender administrations. Remember, as I have said before, all this would take place in full view of the most junior boys.

"X" was a boarder and had apparently made an apple pie bed for some other person whose identity was unknown to the boys at large. Whether this was deliberately kept dark I don't know. Bunnie announced the crime at morning assembly, and, shortly afterwards and quite by accident I witnessed poor "X" receiving six of the best clad only in his pyjamas. Again this was administered in front of the juniors. I have often wondered what obscenities were put in whose bed in order to warrant such savage reprisals.

I think it was during my period in the third form that I first encountered Mr. Benson. A man of stern appearance and of somewhat erratic temper. He spoke with clipped sort of speech but in my eyes he was a wonderful teacher. He had no favourites. His stern eye would fall upon the swot or dullard alike, and his vitriolic tongue blast them into ignominy and, in extreme cases, a frenzied yell of "Get out boy --- get outside the Office Door, or I'll put mah

boots behind yah pants". But could he get a subject across; he brought the logic of geometry to me as a flash of light. It all fell into place and from then on geometry joined French and English Grammar as my pet subjects.

I have always remembered dear old Benno with gratitude for that alone. He was our form-master at the time, so we saw quite a lot of him but his main subject was geography and, under his tutelage we were led into the meanings of Tundra, Rain Shadow, Isobars and other erstwhile inexplicable phenomena.

Another remarkable man was Mr. Morris. He was known to all and sundry simply as Moke. Allegedly he had been a mule team driver during the 1914 -18 War. He ought to have been a grenade thrower, for I never met anyone before or since having such an unerring aim with a piece of chalk. He could have his back to the class when, like a flash, a piece of chalk would whiz through the air and catch some inattentive scholar on any part of the anatomy that Moke chose.

He taught us history and an excellent and interesting job he made of it. It made no difference what period of history he was dealing with at any given time, Moke would invariably end up by talking about the 1914 -18 War. We were all more interested in that anyway, and, if Moke showed too much attention to say, the Tudor Period, at a suitable moment in the text, a boy would put up an inquiring hand and innocently ask Moke what an arquebus was. This would of course lead on to the development of the musket and the rifle, then inevitably to the Great War. Moke of course knew what we were up to, but fell for it every time. On one occasion he came whirling into the form room, arms waving, gown flowing out like a bats wings yelling, "If you think you're going to get me on to War today you are bloody well mistaken. We have work to do". After about 35 minutes of assiduous study had taken place, we finally got him on to the War. Ten minutes of World War I and the morning break bell began to ring. Moke suddenly realised that we had beaten him again but had his own back by keeping us at class for ten minutes of our precious 15 minute break.

During another lesson he was describing the intricacies of the ancient motor-bike on which he travelled to and from school; how he had lost the top of the carburettor and substituted the kitchen kettle lid which had sufficed to get him to school that morning. This had led on to a lecture on expediency, a commodity that was essential when dealing with machines and mules, "which reminds me of the time during the Great War when....."

The building incorporating the ornate doors from the Southend Road was known in those days as the New Building, and contained the Technical Rooms such as Wood-working Room, Chemistry Lab., Physics Lab. etc. on the ground

floor, and on the First floor one or two form rooms. 4B was one of these and overlooked the quadrangle. It was first lesson after the morning break and Mr. Maugham, who was due to take the next lesson, was late in putting in an appearance. Such an opportunity was not to be wasted and several of we boys were milling round the open window looking down into the quad, when Mr Gallimore came into sight heading for the doorway immediately under the window. His bald head shone brightly in the sunshine, and the stub of chalk that I had ready to throw at some passing boy seemed just automatically to leave my hand and, describing a beautiful arc, landed fair and square on Galli's bald pate. There was a moment of horror, then everybody rushed to their seats and sat in state of tense and agonising apprehension. Within seconds Galli sailed into the room demanding, "Well, who did it, who threw the chalk. At once I say, who did it?" Dead silence from some thirty boys. "All right" said Galli, "Wednesday afternoon detention for the whole form". That of course was the end. No boy could allow this to happen so warily I got to my feet, approached the irate master and croaked, "Please Sir it was me who threw the chalk at you". Galli looked me up and down and coldly demanded the precise reason for this heinous and unwarranted action. (He was a very precise sort of man). I could only tell him the truth and said very humbly, "Please Sir I just couldn't resist the sight of your bald head." Galli looked at me in astonishment "YOU WHAT...?" and words seemed to fail him. After what seemed an age to me he turned to the class and said "Very well, the detention is cancelled forthwith". Turning back to my quivering self he said, "You wretched boy, get back to your seat and in future learn to control your evil impulses." With which he turned on his heel and sailed majestically from the room, leaving behind a very relieved but appreciative culprit and a class that had not recovered from its astonishment by the time Mr. Maugham arrived.

Walpole was the name of the boarders' house, but being as they were more or less under constant supervision, they always seemed to be a race apart from we daily boys. "Y" was their House Captain, and I seem to remember him as a tall, rather good-looking chap, good at games etc. and regarded with some awe by the more junior members of the school.

One morning, prayers and service being concluded, the Catholics and the various unbelievers admitted, Bunnie proceeded to read out the official notices. Somehow, however, that morning there seemed to be an air of expectancy or even anxiety about, but what ever was wrong, if anything, the large bulk of the school I am sure were in ignorance. I cannot remember all the details of the actual build-up to the denouement, but Bunnie finally announced that he had a most unpleasant and distasteful duty to perform. A whole spiel was recited about the honour of the school, and finally the hero "Y" was called to the dais, which by now was rapidly assuming the proportions of the Throne of

Judgement. The Head then proclaimed that "Y" had been detected in "obscene" correspondence with a girl from the Palmer's School for Girls which adjoined our own premises. There were others involved but "Y" was the ringleader. The Head then solemnly removed "Y"'s yellow tasselled captains hat, thus stripping him of all honour and, after a dramatic condemnation of "Y"'s alleged depravity, he was publicly expelled together with another lesser mortal whose name I cannot recall.

This demonstration was indeed an example to a thunderstruck assembly of the retributive power of God, still in the form of Rev. H.A. Abbott, and left we juniors at least in no doubt as to the evils of associating with members of the opposite sex.

Another expulsion that I recall concerned "O". A scholarship boy from a poorer part of the town his parents, like so many others, in those days of super slump, were not very well blessed with this world's goods and every penny that could be earned was welcome. I think the general gist of things was that "O" did odd jobs and whilst doing so, either wore his school cap, in which case he could be charged with bring disgrace on the school, or did not wear his cap, in which case he could be charged with being ashamed of his school. Which ever way it was, I gathered from school gossip that he had been warned of his misdeeds, but had chosen to ignore the warnings and therefore brought down the flames of wrath upon his own shoulders.

One assembly, just a week before sports day in which "O", a burly youth had been selected to pull in the tug of war, Bunnie announced that "O" had been dismissed the school. Whether this is the full story of his dismissal I am not sure, but I know that "O" had his revenge for on the day of the sports, with all the local bigwigs in attendance, he casually toured the sports field with a "Stop Me and Buy One" ice-cream tricycle and did a roaring trade.

There was of course an O.T.C. battalion at the school and periodically we potential leaders of men were inspected, in full military dress, by the late Col. Sir Francis Whitmore and other military gentlemen. I believe Bunnie held the rank of Colonel in this embryonic army, and weeks before the awesome day arrived we would be marched and drilled to a state of reasonable efficiency by masters and senior boys whose age and enthusiasm had secured for them a position of authority over the captive conscripts that formed the battalion.

Round and round the playing field we would be tirelessly marched, headed by the school band making the afternoon air hideous with their raucous renderings of stirring military music. About a week before the great day arrived Bunnie would announce the issue of uniforms and equipment then we would be

despatched in small groups to the armoury and fitted out with khaki uniforms of World War One style and vintage. No instructions were given as to the correct donning and wearing of this strange apparel, it was assumed that a veritable dolt would possess the sartorial sense for this exercise. On my part, I eagerly accepted my bundle to take home and don the next morning, wearing it to go to school so as to be ready for the full dress rehearsal that was to take place that afternoon. After lunch break we all assembled in the playing field, found our respective platoon positions, fell in and stood smartly to attention ready for preliminary inspection. Alas, I had boomed again. Both my puttees wound smartly clockwise instead of winding in opposite directions and I had to fall out in front of the rest of the mob in order to rectify my ignorance. However, the rehearsal, after seemingly endless hours of marching, wheeling and forming fours came to an end, and then we were ceremoniously dismissed until the next day when the inspection proper was to take place.

The great day dawned bright and sunny but as it moved toward the midday break, it developed into one of those hot humid days that are a feature of the occasional English Summer. The dais, from which Col. Whitmore, Col. Abbott and the other dignitaries were to view the proceedings, had been placed in the shadow of the magnificent elms, which in those days bordered the north side of the field. This fortuitous siting was of course purely to widen the view of the occupants and not, as some of the less charitable participants claimed, with a view to lessening their discomfort from the heat of the day. The assembled officers and other ranks had been ordered to parade at a time considerably previous to the arrival of the brass, and this time was spent on practising formations and dummy marches past the empty dais so that by the time the official party arrived, inevitably, we were all more or less suffering from exhaustion due to the heat and the unaccustomed wearing of heavy khaki uniforms. This, however, did not daunt our intrepid leaders who, on the arrival of the inspecting party to the sound of appropriate martial music, rendered by the band, straight away signalled the commencement of the proceedings proper.

Marching and wheeling, the most complicated movements were performed for the benefit of the inspecting party standing comfortably at ease in the shade of the elms, coolly watching as the action built toward the grand finale of the march past. At last the weary columns began to shape themselves into the formation immediately preceding the march past, the band gathered the last vestiges of its wind for a truly triumphal rendering when, horror of horrors, two of the less hardy heroes keeled over collapsing from the heat. Col. Whitmore, who had been watching the proceedings with a practised and experienced eye, immediately turned and said something to our own Colonel, who resignedly gave the order for us to fall out and rest under the trees. After some fifteen minutes or so we fell in again and the march past finally took place, but I had

the feeling that what our leaders had intended to be a demonstration of parade ground precision, smoothly progressing from one manoeuvre to another, culminating in a dramatic march past and giving of salute, had somehow fallen as flat as the lads who had fainted.

N. B. I freely admit that my military knowledge is abysmal and that I may have erred in my use of military terms. If this is so, please accept my apologies but the errors, if any, will not detract from the picture that I have tried to portray.

In order to prevent any confusion as to the exact meaning of certain expressions that may occur from time to time, I must explain that the school curriculum was spread over six days, Monday to Saturday inclusive. Wednesday and Saturday were half days, Saturday afternoon invariably devoted to football or cricket fixtures with other grammar schools, and Wednesday to lesser events and DETENTION. The latter meant that any one who had incurred the displeasure of a master could be ordered to attend a special class held on the Wednesday afternoon, during which period he could carry out whatever study, useful or futile, that the master ordered.

CUPBOARD

"Been to the cupboard" meant that an individual had reported to the main store cupboards that were situated in the room where caning took place, taking a full exercise book which, having been examined by the Head in person would, hopefully, be exchanged for a new one. This little ceremony always took place in the precious fifteen minute break in mid morning. Bunnie carried out the exchange in person, and woe betide anybody presenting a book that had been misused or was not completely filled on every page.

THE TUCK-SHOP

This was a small room in the caretaker's house, which opened out on to the playing field, and in which the caretaker's wife sold pennyworths of assorted confectionery and bottles of soft drinks. This establishment was heavily patronised during morning and midday breaks.

The ritual of morning assembly has already been described, and how that it was here, as the occasion demanded, the Head would make announcements and deliver admonishments to the school in general. I shall, from this point, intersperse the record with some of the pronouncements that I recall most strongly. The theme of each is fact and I have tried as far as possible to use the phraseology typical of that the head made use of, e.g. Master H. was seen by a House master, on Saturday last, crossing the foot bridge at Grays railway station, minus his school cap. Master H. will report to my office after this

assembly in order that it may be impressed upon his rear as to on what part of his anatomy his cap should be seen.

The woodworking classes were conducted under the jurisdiction of Mr. Savage, father of the K. Savage previously mentioned. Mr. Savage was not permanently attached to Palmer's, but an instructor also covering most of the local Elementary Schools, where he was accustomed to handling far tougher individuals than he normally met at Palmer's. His word was law, he had no need of the Head to administer punishment in order to maintain discipline in his class. On one occasion, we were in the woodwork room awaiting the arrival of Mr. Savage, when two boys decided to put in a bit of fencing practice using wood chisels as weapons. It was a stupid thing to do but the possible damage to life and limb was not even thought about. Suddenly the door opened and in walked Mr. Savage, his eagle eye always alert for such junketings, took in the situation at a glance, and with roar like a bull, he bounded toward the duellists who dropped the weapons in panic. Seizing them by the hair, he tore them off a strip that would have done credit to any sergeant major then, before they had recovered their wits he had them both stretched across a bench and was stinging their backsides with a two foot steel straight edge that he habitually carried. That was the end of the matter. Nothing more was said on either side, but believe me, no-one attempted to play the fool like that again in Mr. Savage's class.

Announcement by the Head at assembly

The School Calendar will be on sale as from Monday next, price sixpence. It is expected that everyone will be desirous of purchasing a copy.

Swimming in the school bath was a compulsory event, once a week, during the summer term, and as I was a non swimmer I looked forward to being taught this most necessary of accomplishments. The great day arrived and I swiftly donned my new one piece swim suit, the sleeves of which reached halfway to my elbows and the legs almost to my knees. But alas, what to do? There was no instructor and the only advice forthcoming was "just jump in and you will be all right". I must mention here that I was and indeed still am, extremely short-sighted and, without glasses as blind as a bat, so, having no glasses on could not see which was the deep end as opposed to the shallow. However, following the advice given, I plunged bravely forward determined to master the aquatic art. First I hit the water with an almighty belly smack, then plunged what seemed hundreds of feet down into the greeny water, gasping and choking as I went. After what seemed eternity I began to rise and as I broke water, gasping and choking, something hit me in the mouth nearly snapping off my head. In my dazed and breathless blindness I had shot up close to the side of the bath and had struck the hand rail which split open both my lips. My enthusiasm for the

swimming baths evaporated and it became a lesson to be avoided whenever possible for the rest of the term. I still cannot swim and I really have tried many times since to master the art, but somehow that traumatic first time always seems to revive in my memory whenever I find myself in more than three feet of water.

Announcement by the Head at assembly.

It has come to my notice that certain people using the Upminster train are causing a nuisance to the other passengers. Although these louts were not wearing Palmer's caps it is thought that they are of this school. If any person is detected in this disgusting behaviour he will be immediately expelled. We can do without such persons.

Homework was another curse on my young life. We were allocated three subjects per night, each of which was designed to take thirty minutes approximately, giving on average an hour and a half study a night. I could cope with French, English Grammar, Maths. etc., but Chemistry, Physics, English Literature and Trig. were beyond my ken and I was perforce to wait outside Bunnie's door at least once a week for non production of one or the other of these subjects. I suppose the theory being, 'knock it in at the bottom end and it's bound to register at the top end'. Like a good many theories, this one also had no substance in fact.

Announcement by the Head at assembly.

There is a growing habit on the part of certain persons to avoid raising their hats when encountering a Master in the street. Any future cases of this will be severely dealt with.

Mr C. was a generally popular master, short but very stiffly built and possessing a most commanding deep voice. He did his best to instil into my particular form the rudiments of maths and algebra. One particular morning algebra was the subject in question and as I was reasonably conversant with it, I could afford to let my eyes wander around the room to see what efforts my form-mates were making. "T" sat at the back of the class and was obviously indulging in a pleasant daydream of which algebra had no part. Mr. C. suddenly pounced, "T" he bellowed, "what comes next?" Poor "T" hadn't a clue.

Now, as I said, Mr. "C" was normally a very self controlled man who relied on his voice and bearing to command attention, but not this morning. He seemed to lose his temper altogether and, storming up to "T", he literally picked the wretched youth up by the coat collar, lugged him up to the blackboard and virtually rubbed his nose on the part of the equation in question. This action

evoked a certain amount of hostility from a certain "M", a bit of a bully boy and Mr. C., having dropped the unfortunate "T", swung round to smite "M" round the ears. The latter took violent avoiding action causing him to fall out of his desk and in doing so caught his head on an adjacent desk and knocked himself out. Poor Mr. C. went white as a sheet as "M" lay on the floor. However, "M" quickly recovered and was sent to the infirmary for check-up but it was a very subdued Mr. C. who completed the lesson. I must admit though, strangely, my sympathies were all for Mr. C.

Announcement by the Head at assembly.

I have noticed a growing tendency on the part of certain persons to wear blazers that are not of the orthodox school pattern. This practice must cease forthwith. Any boy presenting himself dressed thus will in future be sent home until he can attend school properly dressed.

(Caps at this time cost 3/6d and blazers, I believe, about £1.15s.6d. Thereafter, as can be imagined, boys without blazers were automatically regarded by some of the snobbish bully boys as lesser mortals and suffered many humiliations as a result).

Snobbery and bullying was, and no doubt still is, a part of school life. The greater proportion of the pupils in my time were fee paying, and many of these had attended prep schools and consequently their method of speech and accent was noticeably better than the scholarship boys, who naturally spoke with the rather harsh local dialect. This straightaway created a difference that could and was exploited by mental bullies or snobs, as opposed to the physical torture used by the bully boys. Strangely there was no lessons given either on speech improvement or correction of manners. Presumably both were to be acquired by example or were deemed to be a prerequisite of attending this seat of learning. To the vast majority of the staff all the boys were the same, there to learn the subjects taught as far as it was in them to do so, but I regret to say that one or two of the masters tended to treat the less well spoken boys with something amounting to disdain, unless as I have said before, scholastic achievement or prowess at sports more than compensated for their lack of polish.

Swots of course, whatever their origin, were always the target of the bully boys, and it was pitiful at times to see an inoffensive studious lad reduced to tears by the attentions of these louts - some of the indignities suffered are too crude to mention. Whatever the misery suffered, it was absolutely derigueur that they be suffered in silence. Any attempt to invoke the aid of authority would get short shrift from the hierarchy and an inevitable reprisal from the tormentors.

Fortunately for me, as I could by no means be identified among the swots, and could invariably be 'dared' to undertake some stupid prank or the other, I generally managed to avoid a great deal of the bully boys attentions, but not all for he would indeed be a lucky fellow who never ran foul of them.

Announcement by the Head at assembly.

It has come to my notice that certain persons are indulging in the disgusting habit of eating sandwiches in the classrooms during lunch break. This practice must cease. If such persons cannot avail themselves of the excellent meals provided in the school dining hall, then let it be clearly understood that they must remove themselves from the school premises during lunch break. (This notwithstanding that many day boys could not afford the shilling a day charged for a midday meal, which incidentally were provided by the Head's domestic staff, and there was not a place apart from the cycle shed in which to shelter from the weather. Of course, on a nice day, there was nothing more pleasant than to take one's packet of food down to the playing field, out of sight and mind of the school and its restrictions.)

It was eleven a.m. break and I had run down to the playing field tuck-shop to spend a halfpenny that my mother had given me that morning. I wandered around savouring my liquorice stick or whatever I had bought, when suddenly I heard the bell signalling commencement of classes. I squeezed through a gap in the iron fence and ran pell-mell up the road to the school.

During the lunch break the School Captain, Savage, sent for me and, having informed me that he had seen me getting through a hole in the fence, and this in his opinion was an improper act, I must take a hundred lines as a punishment. The line was to be....."I must not enter or leave the playing field by any other than the orthodox means of entry" and was to be presented next morning.

That night, after ploughing through my normal homework, I started my lines but by supper had only done about forty. Before next morning's breakfast I was at it again, but got nowhere near my quota. I duly reported to Savage that they were incomplete, who promptly doubled the amount to two hundred. This was too much, and for the first and only time in my life at Palmer's I complained to my father. Normally, although naturally interested in my general progress at school, he limited his inquiries to a daily question: "Well son, how have you been getting on at school today?" "Not too bad thank you Dad". "Good". Sometimes in my reply I would diffidently mention that "I had the stick today". His reply invariably being, "Oh well, I expect you deserved it", and that would be that. On this occasion however, father thought that perhaps

an injustice had been done and he provided me with a note to the Headmaster saying that he had forbidden me to do the lines, but if punishment was merited, then Bunnie should cane me. Bunnie read the note, lifted his eyebrows and sent me back to class.

I always felt rather guilty over this episode, normally ones parents did not question school authority. Poor Savage, it is only a couple of years ago that I reminded him of the incident and quoted that infamous line to him, and we both enjoyed a quiet chuckle over the memory.

Announcement by the Head at assembly.

It has come to my notice that certain persons are in the habit of conversing with members of the Girls' school after school hours. This practice must cease and any future offender will be severely punished. (The girls left school fifteen minutes earlier than the boys in order to avoid the temptation of such unseemly conduct, but somehow certain of the girls could always be relied upon to miss the earlier bus so that unavoidably they had to catch the same one as their current boyfriend).

Some of the masters that I recall include:

Jock Whitely, the Arts Master in the first few years that I was a pupil at Palmer's. He could produce wonders with a piece of chalk on a blackboard, but could not be bothered a great deal with those of us that had no artistic talent. Any way, his broad Scots accent made him difficult to understand, but provided we kept our exuberance within reason, he would make no undue effort to enforce discipline. Therefore his classes were always popular.

Mr. Edwards, one of the senior masters who only took our particular form in an emergency. Affectionately known by all the boys as Teddy and was universally popular. He generally allowed us a fair amount of rope in class, but he could, and would sharply restore order by the use of a few well chosen words and never in my personal experience sent a boy to the office door.

There were, I believe, three masters by the name of Hughes, but I only ever experienced one in class - **Mr. Frank Hughes**. He specialised in English, but of course taught other subjects, and was universally respected for his quiet patience. He eventually left the school and was ordained as a Minister of the Church.

Mr Gallimore and **Mr. Bone** were two masters that I never encountered in class, but from all accounts they were very respected members of the staff.

extremely strict as were most of the masters, but popular with the majority of their pupils.

Mr. Baxenden, the Physics Master, always struck me as a somewhat volatile person and I am positive he could never understand how some boys could be so obtuse as not to appreciate the wondrous possibilities of Ohms, Joules and Watts, and who thought that Charles Law must be something on the Statute Book.

Mr. Henley, a fairly recent addition to the staff, young, keen and wearing large horn-rimmed glasses which in those days were the exception rather than the rule, would enthusiastically extol the virtues and vices of hydrochloric acid, caustic, ammonia and other obnoxious substances, and was not a little hurt when a large body of his class were more interested in producing vile smells than noting the interaction of one chemical with another.

Announcement by the Head at assembly.

I have noticed that exercise and rough books are frequently in a torn and mutilated condition when brought to Cupboard for changing. In future, any person presenting a mutilated book or claiming to have lost one, will be punished and charged for the book.

As the years moved on I eventually arrived in form Five B. For part of the time Mr. E.E.R. Bohm was the form master and he was a very reasonable sort of man. He never bullied or belittled any member of his form, allowed discipline to relax at times, but not get out of hand and was generally well thought of and respected by his class.

Among the names of my fellow students in this my last year at Palmer's, I recall: Eldred K., Murrell R., Oakley D., Harris, Tickle, Harvey, Barnett, Pearson K., and Stacey. As the term went on we were busy preparing to sit our School Leaving Examination when, out of the blue an opportunity came for me to become an apprentice engineer. In those days of depression and job scarcity, such a chance could not be missed, and hurried consultations between my parents and the Head resulted in agreement that I should leave at the end of May, although of course I should miss sitting the examination.

The last week of school life for me seemed an age and, true to form there was I outside the office door as usual the very day before I left. Bunnie, also true to form, greeted me with the inevitable question as to who and why I had been sent, and presented me with the usual bottom stinging cut with his cane. I left the next day, unsung, and without a pang of regret. It was with some surprise, however, that I later learned that the Head had supplied me with an

excellent character report with which to persuade my prospective employers to engage me.

1991 Winter

It must be realised that the foregoing was penned in 1977/78 so it is some 64 years since the period described.

Although written in a lighted vein this does in no way detract from the accuracy of the theme (as far as my memory allows.) but no real disrespect is intended and I am sure that both Headmaster and Staff were united in their efforts to make and keep Palmer's one of the best schools of its kind.

DAWN LANGFORD (MRS READ) would like to make contact with as many as possible of the Palmer's Girls who are 40 years old, with the idea of holding a reunion. Some names which spring to her mind are Enid Archer, Julie Hill, Linda Clarke, Kaye Sibley, Janet Chapman, Helen Sheldrake and Susan Lock.

She is still in touch with Janet Winston, Moir Wren and Helen Mills, most of whom are married with children. Dawn and her husband George have four children, 19, 16, 5 and 2, which has kept them busy. Dawn hopes that if you are 40 or you know of someone who is, or staff who taught them, could you please get in contact with her at Field's End, Cornbirthwaite Road, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 1DJ.

REGINALD HODDY (1926-1929) writes:- "My news is that on 29th October 1993, I graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree, Class Upper II, in Drama, from Queen's University in Kingston Ontario, Canada, sixty-five years after I left Palmer's School in 1929.

There are, of course reasons behind the long delay between leaving Palmer's School and receiving a degree, the first of which is that during the time I attended Palmer's School, only two top boys out of the close to six hundred boys attending the school ever had the chance to attend university. The other reason is that like many people, during the intervening years I was too busy earning a living. In this connection, I would like to mention that all during my business life and during the five years I attended university I found that the education I received at Palmer's School was a wonderful asset to me. A word about the Palmer's School I remember as a schoolboy in Priestly

House. The basic curriculum included English, History, Geography, Latin, French, Math, Algebra, Geometry, Trigonometry, Chemistry and Physics, plus Sports and membership in the Cadet Corps of the 10th Battalion Essex Regiment. School hours were Monday and Tuesdays full days, Thursdays and Fridays full days, plus Wednesday and Saturday mornings. Sports took place on Wednesday afternoons except for those who were "in detention" for various infractions of the rules.

The objective of the Masters seemed to be to ensure that we acquired a good education, even if it meant that some of it had to be put in with a "Big Stick". Strangely enough, I did not find this in any way intimidating, no doubt because this was the way it was at schools such as Palmer's in those days; at least that's the way it appeared to me and perhaps thousands of other schoolboys whose favourite reading was boys periodicals such as The Magnet or The Gem. I know it may be too late to express my thanks to all the masters who took part in my education including "Tommy Newsome", "The Yorkshire Terror", who always threatened to "Put my boot (pronounced like foot) behind you", but never did, and Mr Karkins who taught us French and who knighted me with full ceremony as a "Knight of the (wastepaper) Box" which stood in the corner of the classroom and in which unruly boys were placed. Last but not least among those who shaped my early character was the Rev. H. Aldridge Abbot, who taught us Latin, dispensed justice and for whom I still have a great deal of respect. He was a tough little fellow, but after all, he did have six hundred rambunctious boys to keep in order, and keep them in order he did. I had "six" from him on several occasions, these however, were richly deserved, and helped instil in me the principle that to preserve the good order of society, proper authority must be obeyed, or one must expect the consequences. I only regret that I was unable to meet him in later life when perhaps we might have been able to shake hands and enjoy a laugh together about the 'Good Old Days'".

DAVID BRYANT (1947-1953) writes :- "I retired from my Chartered Accountancy practice of King & Taylor in July 1991, where I had been a partner in Gravesend since 1962, having trained with them after leaving school. I also founded the practice in Grays, known as Taylor & Bryant, in 1960 which is continued by another Old Palmerian, Howard Shaw. I have now settled in sunny Cyprus with my wife Pat, whom I married at Cobham, Kent, thirty-five years ago. We leave two daughters and a grand-daughter living in Gravesend and Meopham and one daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren living in our flat in Cyprus.

Having played cricket for Orsett and Thurrock for twenty-five years and table-tennis for Orsett and Stork even longer, I have retained many friends

locally, many Old Palmerians, but none are ever mentioned in our magnificent magazine. Probably this is due to them remaining in the area and not considered newsworthy, I am sure those who have left the district wish to hear how they are progressing in life [Please see Editor's Note]. I was at Palmer's 1947-1953 and two old friends with whom I lost contact many, many years ago are David Horsman (1945-1950), he emigrated to Australia in 1950 and I corresponded with him until 1958, and Michael Newport (1955-1962), who I think still lives in South Africa. Have you any news of them? I am told both have brothers still residing in Thurrock. Finally what happened to Sheila Hawes (1947-1954) I shall not tell my wife!!

Has anyone any news of these to pass on to David at "Med Breeze", Maroni, Larnaca, Cyprus?

[Editor's Note: We wish to hear how they are getting on too - we consider everyone newsworthy, whether they have stayed in the area or not.]

CLARE MARTIN (1951-1956) MRS MARFELL-HARRIS has written a new poem about Palmer's:-

CORNFLOWER FAMILY

Once, long ago, the Cornflower blue,
Was common-place in farmyards; few
Remain now wild - an altered scene
Is ours, who sigh for what has been ...
Botanically, "Centaurea
Cyanus" - and with colours pure,
Perennial of annual, flowers
That brighten up this world of ours ...

We too, are Cornflowers, wild or tamed;
We live in different places, famed
Or unknown, full of many words
Or silent; fashioned, shaken, stirred,
We live our lives and some do best
In sunshine; others, more repressed.
Thrive in soft shady undergrowth ...
It matters not. Cornflowers like both ...

We wildly skipped in time - those days -
When we were young - no shades, no greys -

Changing, with life, we hybridised
And flourished. Dreams we realised,
Born from those early roots that grew
In Palmer's. You and I - and you -
Whose names are fading down the years ...

We listened with our inner ears
To all that governed, guided, spoke
And reached out to us. Young hearts, smote
With duty, love and fealty -
That made our petals bluer. See -
We shine on still, in varied place,
Dark, light and secret; every face
Remembered still, within the host
Of Old Palmerians - who boast
The best school ever and the chance
To grow, from our inheritance ...
To take our blue to every part
And shine forever! - mind and heart -
Belonging as one family
Of Cornflowers, you and you and me.

Go, Cornflowers - and reach the heart
Of everywhere! Play out your part -
Courageous, bold and beautiful,
Who growing much at Palmer's School ...
From the wild Knapweed's plant of yore,
Then known as the "Centaurea
Cyanus" - rise we, each a stem,
A cultivar, enjoined to them!

Clare Persephone Marfell-Harris 19.6.94

Clare is also part of the managerial team marketing Penny Harris Prints. Penny was an artist of outstanding reputation and achievement. She was a leading painter using the reverse glass medium and had a world-wide following. Her pictures have depths of imagination, of composition and of colour which are quite remarkable. They have a unique appeal and are being re-produced to the highest standard and quality. The proceeds from sales go to Macmillan and will help the charity to provide more and more help for people with cancer. If anyone would like to receive a brochure showing pictures of these beautiful prints they should write to PO Box 1, St Agnes, Cornwall, TR5 0YR, England.

DANIEL SHARP (1989-1991) was awarded, in 1994, a 1st Class Honours degree in Mathematics, by Aberystwyth University.

ALBERT WINBOLT (1920-1925) has sent us the following article.

“One Saturday evening, in September 1993, I switched on the television (Channel 1 - BBC) and sat back to enjoy the “Last Night of the Proms”, from the Albert Hall. I do this every year when possible. I enjoy the boisterous enthusiasm of the promenaders and the empathy between the conductor and the members of the orchestra. One can occasionally spot a regular ‘lastnighter’ complete with Union Jack flag. He was there last year and no doubt will be there next year as well, and the year after that.

On this occasion the orchestra was playing one of Gustav Holst’s works, with various changes of instruments, this lasted about 30 minutes. “Listen”, I said to my wife, who was reading, “They’re playing the Merry Miller”. “Nonsense”, she said, “that’s the Ballet Music, by Gustav Holst”. (This music took me back some seventy years. The last time I had heard it was in 1917, at the local council school, on a Friday afternoon. We always had singing lessons prior to closing down the school for the weekend break.)

The next morning I mentally envisaged a meeting between Gustav Holst and the local Miller, and wrote down my story. I gave it to my wife to read, and her answer was “Where did you get this from?” I eventually convinced her that it was all my own work.

Here it is:-

“Gustav Holst, the great composer lived on one side of the river, his friend Mel, the Miller, close to his mill, on the other side. The river was not very wide and Mel often crossed it in his boat to congratulate his friend. Gustav Holst, on the strains of music coming across the water. To Mel, the strains of music sometimes became a bit of a ‘strain’, but for friendship sake on these occasions Mel kept his thoughts to himself.

On one particular visit however, Mel congratulated his friend’s piano playing of the previous evening. “Great stuff” said Mel, “What’s it all about?” “Ballet music”, said G.H. “but you wouldn’t be interested in that”. “I don’t know” said Mel. “I liked it. Fix some words to it and I could sing it while I’m grinding the jolly old corn. Help to pass the time away.” “OK” said Gustav Holst, “I can do it tomorrow.”

On Mel's next crossing of the river G.H. handed him a sheet of music with the caption "The Jolly Miller". "Great stuff" said Mel after reading it, "but I don't go a lot on this word wealth, people will say I'm a money grabber". "Well, so you are" said G.H., "and by the way, keep this to yourself. I wouldn't like to have it known that I added lyrics like that to one of my music pieces. It wouldn't do my reputation in the music world any good." "Mum's the word", said Mel, "you can rely on me for that."

THE JOLLY MILLER

There was a jolly miller and he lived by himself
And grinding corn he made his wealth
One hand on the *hopper* and the other in the *bag*
As the wheel went round he made his grab.

[I'm not sure of the words, *hopper* and *bag*. We didn't have song books at that time; it was chalked on the blackboard, as were the other songs.]

Since the night at the Albert Hall I have heard this music a number of times, usually as muted background music, on television programmes and advertisements, but never with the words.

Well, that's my story, almost. Some 4 - 5 weeks after I had written this I received my usual quarterly magazine (Spring edition). It contained (surprise) the life story of Gustav Holst.

He was born in England of Swedish parents. He was fond of the countryside, especially North Essex, and went to live in Thaxted (1914-1924) in a thatched cottage. There was a war on (World War I), more food was needed. East Anglia, including N. Essex was the place to grow it, so mills (windmills at that time) were needed for the wheat, and a miller is needed for the milling.

Well it all adds up but - the River? Pity, the nearest river, the Pant, is about 3 - 4 miles away from Thaxted. So much for my imagination. Still it was a good try.

CHRISTOPHER PINNOCK (1991-1993) has done exceptionally well during his first year at Queen Mary and Westfield College, London University. He has obtained a grade A on all his courses, and his average mark is 92.1%, his lowest being 86%. He is the best student in his year in the Mathematics department and he is going to transfer to the new 4 year MSci degree.

CHARLES SMITH (1935-1940) has had a partial leg amputation and was recovering in Orsett Hospital in June. We wish him a speedy recovery. He has sent us a Palmer's School (Boys) prospectus issued in the late 30's and a set of postcards of the Boys' School, for which we are very grateful. He has also sent us the printed postcard which the school issued, signed by the Rev. Alldridge Abbott, stating that Charles had Passed School Certificate and obtained Matriculation Exemption, most interesting.

JAMES PETTIGREW (1950-1955) writes :-

"I must thank the OPA for publishing the Association Membership List at the beginning of April 1993. Such information enabled me to get in touch, by phone or letter, with quite a number of classmates at the beginning of this year.

Those contacted included **David Moll**, who now works in Stevenage. **Wally Cullen**, whom I was delighted to welcome to my home for a short visit on the day of the Old Boys' Dinner this year. Wally had served as a navigator on Javelin fighters ending his flying career during 1966 in Singapore, he is now engaged in the security alarm business. All three of us had served in the RAF at one time or another. David Moll had actually arrived at RAF Locking at about the same time I was invalided out in early 1957. **J.M. Ormston (1946-1951)** whom I spoke to some weeks ago, was in the same Scout Troop (1st Grays) as myself, and is the author of a book called "The Five Minute Crossing", an account, illustrated by some fine sketches by John, of the different boats used on the Tilbury to Gravesend ferry up to the present day. (Almost.)

Readers of the "Old Palmerian" may recall that I wrote an account of my schooldays which was published in the 1992 edition. Almost at the end of the account appears a list of classmates' names including that of **Brian Postance**. I was to speak to Brian after one of those surprising coincidences that seem to happen once or twice in one's life. Last year the magazine contained a poem written by **Clare (Mrs Marfell-Harris) Martin (1951-1956)**, entitled "Cornflowers". I found this poem so attractive, partly because my wife's school badge was a Cornflower, that I wrote to Clare for a copy of her book of over a 100 poems entitled "The Web of Enchantment". During an exchange of letters Clare wrote that whilst at school she had known of a Brian Postance and her last news of him some ten years ago had been that he had been involved in a wrought iron business in Devon. With the help of BT staff I was able to trace Brian and both speak and write to him.

Brian wrote that he had studied electronic engineering before marrying in 1961. In 1962 he and his wife, Janet, went to America where Brian worked on the satellite communications programme for a year or so before driving in a VW

"Beetle" from coast to coast via the American National Parks. Later Brian returned to the UK and spent 5 years lecturing at Rugby College of Engineering Technology. Later still Brian moved to Devon and founded a company which specialised in wrought-iron work. Brian has wound down his involvement with that activity so that he can now devote more of his time to his pastoral work.

I was able to put Brian in touch with Clare and pleased to hear that Brian and his wife had been able to visit Clare and her husband in Cornwall just before Christmas 1993.

As part of our correspondence Brian was able to add the following names from the class register which had escaped my memory : Perry, Pullin, Ramsay, Reeves, Richards, Ford, Fowler, Freeman, Kubaneck, and White. The latter may have been Peter White, who also went to Quarry Hill School with me before we moved up the hill to Palmer's. Brian's recall of fellow pupils stirred more of my own memories of surnames so now can be added Bartlett, Gooch, Musgrove, Mike Smith (a past OPA Chairman), Rowe, Ramsden, Hixson, Stephens, Bob Walmsley and Barry Johnson.

Just after the Christmas holiday I was able to speak to both Len Williams, an expert swimmer at school, and Bob Walmsley, who has now given up his radio and TV shop, to do some useful pottering in his 'shed'.

Indeed all of the above would probably not have started if I had not received a welcome letter from Barry R.H. Johnson in August last year. Barry wrote to a number of OP's from his home in Canada, hoping to arrange a small gathering during a future visit to this country. Sadly I have not yet received a reply to my answering letter so if you are reading this Barry, and have moved from the address you occupied last August, please try to write again.

The Membership List also triggered off more childhood memories and such memories were those of the twice mistaken identity of one person.

Some readers may recall the strife that took place between the Print Unions and the Newspaper Publishers when new technology was being introduced to that industry. For a short period of time the evening news bulletins regularly featured the then leader of one Union, a Brenda Dean. Whenever this lady appeared on TV I would recall that I had been to school with a girl called Brenda Dean. Could this be the same person?

I used to live in South Stifford and so my first school was at the junction of Mill Lane and Warren Lane. (I'm sure that we used to call what is now Warren Lane, Clockhouse Lane). Like most other infants during the war we used to

walk to school usually accompanied by children of all ages. I recalled my mother telling me to hold this female child's hand and walk to school from our home. I was pretty sure that this young lady's name was Brenda Dean. Of course, as soon as one was out of sight of home, each one disowned the other, to proceed to school somewhat less sedately. Later, due to changed family circumstances, I changed schools and took my 11+ from Quarry Hill School, which at that time was behind the Police Station in Grays.

The OPA Membership List did not disappoint me, lots of names from the past appeared and it has been a real pleasure to receive news of the different careers that one's old classmates have followed.

Having successfully contacted a number of ex-classmates during the latter part of 1993 and earlier this year I decided to find out whether the Dean (Mrs Pritchard): Brenda was the young infant whom I had, somewhat unwillingly, and only partially, accompanied up Mill Lane to school. Might she also have grown up to be the head of the Print Union?

Having phoned Mrs Pritchard and introduced myself and after having established that we were both Old Palmerians I found that I had been the subject of selective memory. We had gone to the same school and we had moved from the Infants to the Juniors at the same time, we had for some years actually been in the same classes. However, this had all happened some years later than I had thought for we attended Quarry Hill School at the same time, rather than my first school at South Stifford. Both of us had gone to Palmer's from Quarry Hill. Yes, you are right, the Old Palmerian Brenda Dean was not the lady that led the Print Union!

On to the present time. I am a member of the Heraldry Society and I am undertaking a research programme about Old Palmerians who have been granted, inherited or acquired by marriage, their own Coat of Arms, since the School was founded in 1706. Included within the project will be those Coats of Arms which in some way are strongly associated with the schools, or our Founder, or the town of Grays. Such Grants must have been made by The College of Arms in London or by The Court of the Lord Lyon in Edinburgh, there must be some Scots who attended our schools and one or two of them may have been granted or inherited their own Arms. I would be grateful to receive any pertinent information. My address is in the Membership List."

JASON GALLIANO (1986-1989), having obtained his Teaching Certificate, has been teaching at Champion School, Hornchurch. His classes have included 'A' level (and GCSE) Business Studies and Economics; BTEC

National Diploma and First Diploma in Business and Finance; and Information Technology and PE.

JILL RICHARDS (1959-1966) MRS EDWARDS was ordained a deacon in September 1993 and is now a non-stipendary minister with the Grays Thurrock Team Ministry. Her daughter **Eleanor** left Palmer's in 1993 to study German at Exeter University and her son **Jonathan** is still at Palmer's studying 'A' levels.

ANTHONY MOORE (1968-1972) had a very busy year in 1993, singing the roles of Posa in Opera North's '*Don Carlos*', Figaro in '*The Barber of Seville*' at Covent Garden, Prince Yelitzky in English National Opera's '*Queen of Spades*', Marcello in ENO's '*La Boheme*' and the Forester in '*The Cunning Little Vixen*' at the Royal Opera House. In addition he was the bass soloist in 3 performances of Beethoven's 9th Symphony in Japan conducted by John Eliot Gardiner. Finally in December he made his debut at La Scala, Milan, in the opening production of the season, Spontini's '*La Vestale*'.

After that offers flooded in from the world's other great opera houses, including the New York Met and Paris. In April 1994 he made his debut at the Vienna State Opera as Lescaut in Puccini's '*Manon Lescaut*' and there was an article in the Times on that day about Anthony's career.

When he went to Newcastle University in 1975, he was in the Army, in the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, on a University Cadetship. He studied history and music, but soon realised that he had far more interest in music, and in particular singing. At the end of his degree course Anthony decided to terminate his commission, so he had to repay the Army all the salary he had received. To do this he took a one year Post Graduate Teaching Course (PGCE) and moved to teach in a Primary School in Crowsborough, East Sussex. He paid off the Army in instalments until 1983, while studying singing privately and then, after four years, he quit teaching in 1984 and went to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music, in Glasgow to do a one year Opera Course. He got his first solo professional contract at the end of this course with Scottish Opera, on a three month tour of the Highlands and Islands, doing a piano-accompanied version of '*Tosca*!'. At about the same time, he was fortunate enough to win the Pavarotti Opera Competition, in Philadelphia USA, the first British singer to do so. This led to an offer of management from the Agency which looks after Pavarotti in this country, as well as offers of work in the USA. In 1987 he was offered a one year contract at Covent Garden Royal Opera House, as a Junior Principal Baritone, and this has been extended every two years since. They have been very good about letting him out from time to time to sing with other companies, either in this country or abroad, and so he has been able to gain a lot of

experience in other Opera Houses, which has helped to build up his career. He has spent time in Barcelona and Madrid, Vienna and America. Once he sang a performance in London between daily rehearsals in Milan. English National Opera's *'Figaro'* was in jeopardy, as the baritone performing Figaro and his understudy had both caught 'flu'. La Scala agreed to release Anthony for one night. He had not sung *'Figaro'* in English for two years. ENO people met him at the airport with the libretto. He had three hours to study it before being rushed to the Coliseum to be fitted with a costume. The ENO provided a discreet prompter, and he had to improvise a bit, but it all came flooding back.

Anthony's done a small amount of television work, including a brief appearance in the third programme of the Harry Enfield Opera series, singing in the duet from the *'The Pearl Fishers'*. It looked a bit like an advert for Bounty Bars and he said he was made up like an extra from *'Gandhi'*! He also does a fair amount of radio broadcasts on Radio 2, for the *'Friday Night is Music Night'* show.

Anthony met his Polish wife, Ewa, at University and they have been married for fourteen years. They have a daughter, Kathryn, who is seven years old, with a lovely sense of fun and imagination. She is particularly amused at some of the Bugs Bunny cartoons that have operatic music that she knows (normally the famous aria for Figaro from *'The Barber of Seville'*) and Anthony feels sure that Kathryn expects Bugs Bunny to appear sometimes when he is singing on stage!

Anthony was back in Britain in June to rehearse for Massenet's *'Manon'* which opened in July and featured on the front of the Telegraph.

REG FOWLER (1950-1956) and Margaret have had a mixture of joy and sadness this year. Both their children became engaged around Christmas, **John Fowler (1986-1988)** to Carol and **Alison Fowler (1987-1989)** to Mark. But then shortly afterwards, Margaret's mother, Gwen Preston, collapsed and died from a heart attack. Gwen Preston was the wife of the late **Reginald Preston** (Chairman of the Association 1954-1955) who, together with **Miss E.T. Brown**, had presented Lady Whitmore, (on the 250th Anniversary of the Founding of William Palmer's School), with certificates promising presents from the Old Pupils' Associations. This scene is clearly shown on the video of that event.

NEWS FROM MISS BROWN

Miss Brown had a fall last autumn and spent several weeks in hospital. She is back at her home in Parker Road, Grays, but does not get out and about as much as before but is pleased to receive letters and phone calls from friends.

In April, Miss Brown had a long and interesting letter from **DOROTHY COCK (nee HURD)** who will be 90 this year. Dorothy wrote about her holiday in New Zealand last February with her daughter and son-in-law, Ann and Roland.

JUNE D. EARL (MRS SEDGLEY) has written recently to Miss Brown. She and her husband retired in 1982 to East Anglia after spending most of their married life, until then, travelling and living in various parts of the world. They lived for 10 years in Trinidad with their leave being spent in the USA. Here they met **Dorothy Chatt (nee Palmer)**. June and her husband then moved to Indonesia, then Nigeria and finally returned to Lowestoft, (quite a change in climate). Since her husband's retirement they have continued their travels, mainly in the Far East and Australia. Ideally they would like to live for 6 months of the year in Australia and the summer 6 months in England.

Miss Brown sends her best wishes and thanks to everyone who has sent her cards and written to her during the past year.

WEDDINGS

Congratulations to:-

WENDY SHEAD (1970 - 1978) who was married at St Mary's Church in Corringham on the 31st July 1993 to Mr. David Mott who lived in Stanford.

MANDY MAY (1968 - 1973) and **DAVID LIVERMORE (1957 - 1966)** who were married in 1993. Mandy was formerly Mrs Brown.

CATHY PIGHINI (1981 - 1984) is now married and living in Grays as her married name is Kent.

DR. SARAH MUMFORD (1987 -1989) and **PAUL DIXON (1987 -1989)** who were married at Grays Parish Church on the 9th July 1994.

CATHERINE SHINER (1987 - 1988) who was married at Grays Parish Church on the 2nd July 1994 to Stephen Fagg.

OBITUARIES

We are very sorry to have to report the deaths of the following Old Palmerians and we extend our sympathy to their families.

ALEC HOUSTON	1925 - 1927	July 11 th	1993
ALEC KEAN	1912 - 1919	April 23 rd	1988
DOUGLAS MINTER	1927 - 1933	May 6 th	1993
SIDNEY CARTER	1920 - 1926	August 29 th	1993
KENNETH RAWLINGSON	1930 - 1936	September 5 th	1993
ALAN STEWART		July	1993
ALEC REID	1919 - 1924	September	1993
KATHLEEN ROE (MRS COOTE)	1921 - 1929	October	1993
I. H. PATTISON	1936 - 1943		1993
NEIL ADAMSON	1986 - 1988	August	1993
JOHN HEMPSTEAD	1947 - 1954	November 2 nd	1993
FRANK AMOS	1921 - 1926	November 23 rd	1993
LILIAN GOODYEAR (MRS SADLER)	1920 - 1925	November 12 th	1993
FLORENCE LOVETT (MRS WADE)	1924 - 1930	February 18 th	1994
NORMAN TWYDELL	1947 - 1981	April	1994
JOAN NASH (MRS DOVE)	1938 - 1943	June 18 th	1994
PHILIP HARVEY	1930 - 1939	March	1994

MR. ALEC C. HOUSTON

Palmer's lost a dynamic and loyal supporter with the death on 11th July, 1993 of Mr. Alec Houston, aged 82, a past Chairman of the Old Palmerians and for many years a staunch committee member and frequent attender of Old Palmerian functions. After a long and happy working and family life, Alec lived for several years in nursing homes at Westcliff and Southend, visited regularly by his daughter Lynne and in close touch with his family in Canada. Even in failing health he could summon up flashes of his old energy and he retained all his keen interest in people and affairs.

When I first met Alec in 1966, he was building a block of flats in Grays into which I subsequently moved. It was a memorable meeting since he had just had a heated exchange with my central heating engineer who was gouging out channels in the recently-laid concrete floor; and Alec was still cascading words and energy in considerable quantity. All ended happily, however, and talk turned to Palmer's, Alec expressing an interest in renewing his link with the school he had attended in the twenties.

The impression of a dynamic, forceful and resourceful personality which that first meeting had stamped on my mind was soon confirmed when Alec joined the O.P. committee and then became Chairman of the Association from 1969 to 1971. It was the time of secondary reorganisation and Alec was precisely the man for the job. He threw himself might and main into the attempt to save the schools - almost undermining his health in the process. When the attempt failed, however, he resigned himself to the inevitable with good grace and good humour, accepted the argument for a sixth form college and continued to give the Old Palmerians and the new College all his support.

At this time Alec had already had a variety of careers, ranging from draughtsman to dance band leader. He was to have one more: with H.M. Customs and Excise, begun when he was sixty years old and lasting ten years. But I will let his daughter Gloria tell the story, as she did in the address of thanksgiving and tribute from the family at the funeral service held on 20th July, 1993.

"Dad's life was long, and began in Belfast in 1911. His father was a diesel engineer and officer who sailed the seven seas on the Pacific and Orient passenger liners. Young Alec grew up in Southampton where he watched the ocean liners come and go and developed a lifelong passion for ships, planes, trains, and all things mechanical.

After moving to Romford he attended Palmer's School for Boys in Grays where he was to develop an appreciation for learning which continued throughout his life and made possible his further self-education as draughtsman, architect, builder and surveyor, aero-engine fitter on Spitfires in the R.A.F., and finally as Customs Officer at Tilbury and Harwich. To all these careers, he brought a sense of dedication, appreciation for excellence, and pride in a job well done.

His musical talent was apparent at an early age when he mastered the playing of the violin and saxophone. This love of music pervaded his whole life, right from the early thirties when he formed his own dance band, "The Blue Stars". Mum was then involved in amateur dramatics and Dad played the musical scores for their performances of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. Musical evenings were a favourite pastime, since she played the piano and Dad accompanied her on the violin....

In 1950 Dad seized the opportunity to buy a shop in Rainham, where Mum happily used her years of experience as a business manager to make a success of a Ladies' Clothing Shop. Shortly after, Dad launched his own business venture as a Builder, involving costing, surveying, preparation of Tenders, and being

the dynamic leader of a group of tradesmen, one of whom was his own father-in-law, Bert Sutton."

Gloria went on to mention family highlights: how her father bought and renovated the house at Dovercourt as a surprise Silver Wedding present for her mother; and the Golden Wedding Anniversary with a grand reunion of the Canadian and English families. She also noted that, even after retirement from H. M. Customs at the age of seventy, Alec continued his public activities as Chairman of the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship in his area, whilst maintaining his active support of the Royal Air Force Association, the Architects and Surveyors Institute, the Royal Navy Lifeboat Association and, of course, the Old Palmerians' Association.

Such were Alec's versatility; and enterprise that many people who knew him in one sphere of activity hardly suspected his involvement in so many others. I for one have an enduring memorial to the skills and personality behind this amazing story in 'the flat that Alec built' in 1966.

Edward Moorhouse

MR. ALAN STEWART

Old pupils and colleagues joined family, friends and neighbours at Corbets Tey on 20th July, 1993 for the funeral of Mr. Alan Stewart, retired Headmaster of West Thurrock Junior School and a former pupil of Palmer's School. The service, sympathetically conducted by the Vicar of Grays, the Reverend Robert Wiggs, included a fine tribute by Mr. Dan Meyrick, former Headmaster of Hassenbrook School, and music from their father's collection chosen by Mr. Stewart's daughters, Ann and Jill, themselves former pupils of Palmer's Girls' School.

Born in Tilbury in 1916, Alan Stewart attended Palmer's School in the late twenties and early thirties before following his father into teaching. He gained his teaching certificate at Carmarthen Training College and began his teaching career in Dagenham. During the second world war he was a captain in the Queen's Royal Regiment, commissioned in the field and seeing active service in Normandy at the time of the D-Day landings and afterwards in India. On demobilisation he resumed his teaching career, this time in Thurrock, where he taught in particular at Culford Road School (now Deneholm). A most unusual development followed when he obtained the headship of his father's school in West Thurrock. Here he remained from 1953 until his retirement in 1979, a very successful, popular and highly-esteemed headmaster.

Never a seeker of publicity, he devoted himself at West Thurrock Juniors to the task in hand, determined to maintain the highest standards. He instilled discipline and respect, but with a human touch, combining strictness and understanding. Very much 'one of the old school', of a sound education; and, as President of the Grays Branch of the National Union of Teachers, he was able to exert an influence on colleagues outside his own school.

During his retirement, Mr. Stewart served as Chairman of the Retired Teachers' Association in Grays. Apart from this, he lived modestly for his family and among his neighbours, a well-loved and much-respected figure, taking a genuine interest in those around him and always willing to lend a helping hand. Comforted by the visits and attention of his daughters, he endured the loss of his wife and recurrent bouts of illness with fortitude and cheerfulness, underlined by such reassuring comments as "I'm winning".

With his well-stored mind and memory he continued to take a keen delight in literature, history and music; and, though sometimes baffled and indeed dismayed by changes in educational roles and models, was always eager to discuss new developments with those still "in the trade". Not perhaps an outwardly religious, or at least church-going, man, he thought much and asked the deep questions: he would probably have been happy to say with Leigh Hunt's Abou Ben Adhem: "Write me as one that loved his fellow-men".

Edward Moorhouse

ALEC KEAN

Alec died on 23rd April 1988 after 55 years of happy marriage to his wife Elsie. He was a wonderful man, always helping others. He received many awards, since like his wife he worked as a Personnel officer and later became the National Chairman of the Royal Society for the Prevention of accidents, where he had world-wide contacts. He was honoured by Her Majesty the Queen with an OBE

Alec always remembered his years at Palmer's and was secretary of the Old Boys Association. He also kept in touch with the Silverwood family and Col. Loftus, who stayed with him and Elsie during his last visit to the UK to receive his CBE. They also visited him at East Tilbury.

JOHN ROBIN GEORGE DAVID HEMPSTEAD

John died on the 2nd November 1992. Although he had been treated for cancer for almost 18 months, the chemo-therapy had seemed to have been

keeping everything under control and so his sudden death was a great shock. He always enjoyed reading the magazine and was still in contact with many 'boys' with whom he was at school.

FRANK W. J. AMOS (1906 - 1993)

Frank died on the 23rd November 1993 in High Wycombe following an illness of some months at the age of 87. He was very active in the musical life of Grays for many years and was conductor of the Essex Philharmonic Orchestra until 1979.

John Moore writes:

"I first met Frank in 1952, shortly after I came to Palmer's. At that time he was conducting not only an orchestra which he developed into the Essex Philharmonic but the Thurrock Choral Union. I well remember attending their performance of Haydn's 'Creation' on a Saturday in January 1953 which he conducted with great musicianship. The wind increased noticeably during the performance in the Palmer's Boys' School Hall, and during the night turned into the great gale which resulted in the flooding of Tilbury and the use of the school as a temporary refuge.

Over the next 40 years I came to know Frank and his wife Delia very well. He was a deeply sincere and committed musician, with a wide range of experience and knowledge. He was delighted to be able to use both the Boys and Girls School Choirs in his orchestral concerts, not least because he felt he was helping later generations of Palmerians in the area which he knew so well and which meant so much to him.

When he retired to Bourne End in the 1970's, he continued to enjoy his great love of sailing and further developed his extensive knowledge of gardening. When my wife and I visited him it was obvious his interest in Grays and Palmer's in particular showed no signs of flagging.

My own debt to him in the years when I was conducting is immeasurable. He was a friend who will be sorely missed by both my wife, Maggie and myself.

NORMAN TWYDELL

Norman who died in April 1994, taught French and Biology at the Boys' School and then at the College. He also helped with the opera box office. He started at the Boys' School in September 1947 and was made Head of the Biology Department in 1967. When the school became Palmer's College in

1971 he continued as Head of Biology until July 1981 when he retired at the age of 60 having served Thurrock for 34 years.

JOAN DOVE

Joan died in Basildon hospital in the Coronary Care Unit after a short illness. She was the mother of **Elizabeth Dove (1970 - 1975) Mrs Purdy.**

PHILIP J. J. E. HARVEY

Philip died quite suddenly at the beginning of March 1994. He was the Head Postmaster at Grays before moving to Lincolnshire in 1975, and then to Somerset where he lived for 9 years. His daughter **Mrs Philippa Maloney** was at Palmer's from 1963 to 1970.

THE COLLEGE YEAR: 1993-1994

The pace of change has, if anything, accelerated this year as the College responds to the challenges of independence and also to the demands of the Further Education Funding Council. A more 'businesslike' system of management is rapidly evolving, with a multiplication of working groups and committees leading to unavoidable complexity. It has become rather difficult for one person to have an overview of everything that is going on, so this year's report will be, at best, partial.

There is no aspect of College life which is not subject to searching scrutiny and evaluation. The process is set to continue and intensify next year with a full inspection by the new inspectorate in January of 1995.

Balancing the interests of the students against the pressures of funding has sometimes been a difficult task, but valuable "minority" subjects such as Music will continue to be protected under the new regime and it is hoped that the excellent staff/student relations which have always been enjoyed at the College will survive and perhaps even strengthen.

The college's academic reputation is certainly as high as ever with an A-level pass rate of 90.2%. This makes the College the second most successful in the Eastern England region covering Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk according to the government's "league tables". A particularly pleasing feature of the 1993 results was the record number of passes at Grade A. Twenty one students achieved three Grade A passes at A-level and more than three hundred began

degree courses. This meant that the William Palmer's Trust, whose generosity is of such benefit to students entering Higher and Further Education had to spend a great deal on bursaries!

The William Palmer's Trust has also funded the main building alterations this year, which are in the area of the main entrance and crush hall. A new reception office is being created with the object of making it easier for visitors to find their way around. Wheelchair access to the main building is also being improved.

Last year's major building works have already proved their worth. The Student Centre has proved particularly well suited to student activities as well as hosting events such as the large scale, very successful Careers Conference for all young people west of Chelmsford. Students also enjoyed cultural activities such as readings by the poet Carol Ann Duffy, whose collection 'Mean Time' attracted much attention. The expanded canteen and library areas have also seen heavy use and were much needed in order to cope with increased student numbers.

A new timetable is being tried out next year with a "flexible" lunch break in order to make better use of the space available as student numbers continue to rise. The bottom of the "demographic trough" has now been passed and increased numbers in the partner schools will feed into the College from next year onwards. The present timetable is enviably simple and it is hoped that the introduction of the new one will not bring chaos!

Last year's curriculum innovations in the area of adult education have proved successful. All the students taking the Sociology and English Degree Modules achieved passes, and several have gained the confidence to take the plunge into full time Higher Education. All the students on the Science Foundation course were, likewise, successful and many are proceeding to the next stage of their degrees at H E colleges. Fresh Sociology and English modules will be offered next year and the Science Foundation course will be repeated. It is also intended to offer A-level courses in certain subjects, during the day and on the Adult Education evening (Wednesday.)

Last year's vocational education changes with the introduction of General National Vocational Qualifications in Business, Health and Social Care, Travel and Tourism, and Manufacturing were highly successful, with eighty-five students enrolling. It is intended to expand the programme and include some 'level 3' qualifications next year. Also available will be a BTEC course in Performing Arts. This is a full time programme of study offering modules in

Drama, Music and Art, designed for students interested in working in the entertainment industry.

Other new courses include A-level Law and a number of courses certificated by the Open College. Open College certification is seen as a way of continuing to attract funding for some former 'Alternative Studies' courses such as Journalism but it also provides an opportunity for curriculum innovation. There is likely to be a considerable expansion in these specially designed courses in the future.

News from individual faculties and departments: the Science Faculty mounted a successful Girls in Science Conference in June. This was organised by Dr Angela Davey and many institutions were represented.

B.A.Y.S. enjoyed another successful year with presentations ranging from "The Big Bang and the Big Crunch" by celebrated author Dr Ian Mickleson to "Blowing Bubbles," a visual extravaganza giving a fascinating insight into 'Bubble Science'.

It is planned to introduce a GNVQ qualification in Science next year. This course has been prepared by Dr Little.

Staff news: Mr Barry Wareham, who worked part-time teaching Biology, left on 21st July; the Faculty and the College congratulate Miss Vanessa Carr on her marriage to Mr Graham Pearce on 23rd July.

The Humanities Faculty has also had a busy and successful year. A major innovation is inauguration of a College radio service with broadcasts to the Student Centre and the Common Room during break and lunchtime. The radio service is managed by Media Studies teacher Michel Mason and there are ambitious plans to form a link with Essex Radio and possibly to transmit to listeners in Thurrock for week with the aid of a rented transmitter.

Staff news: we would like to congratulate Helena Graham on the completion of her Ph.D. and Teresa Smyth on the birth of her son, John Patrick, on May 27th. Teresa has now returned to her duties as head of Psychology. From the Faculty of Arts and Technology: David Woods, Head of Music, has good news of ambitious liaison activities run jointly by Essex County Music Services and the College. 150 children from many of the surrounding schools visited Palmer's on 18th July and a further 110 on 20th July. The first date was for wind and brass players while the second was for strings with a concert at the end of each day, greatly enjoyed by all who participated.

The retirement of Mr John Sach is the subject of a separate appreciation. He takes with him our warmest good wishes.

College Sport: team sports have had a good year with the squash team gaining second place in a national competition at Lilleshall. The netball team has also won most of its matches, and the first XI football team has embarked upon a spirited defence of its championship title in Essex Sixth Form League. Despite losing the strongest players in the side, only two defeats have been conceded at this stage and the team is in the running for a second consecutive title. The Second XI were runners up last year in the 2nd XI Essex Sixth Form league and hope to gain the title this year. They are currently top of the league with only a few games outstanding.

There has also been a welcome renaissance in College Rugby with only three games lost so far. The other ten have been won in a style which has restored the team's reputation as one of the toughest to beat.

There are many individual sporting stars at Palmer's this year of whom the most prominent are: Sarah Hargis, who is a member of the British International Jujitsu Team, recently victorious in a tournament against South Africa, Alexis Blair, who competes at volleyball at a national level, Jamie Wickens, one of the top twenty junior table tennis players nationally, Debbie Cox, who competed successfully in the Horse of the Year Show, and Toby Eager, trampolinist, a member of the England Youth team which recently beat Germany.

A major item of sports news concerns the planned half million pound sports complex which will serve sportsmen and women in the local community as well as students of the college. The business plan has been produced by the William Palmer's Trust, Thurrock Borough Council and the Sports Council and the facility should be available in 1996.

There is no doubt that the College is living in interesting times, and that the current changes have released a great deal of energy and zest, together with a sense of renewal. I look forward to reporting further developments next year.

Margaret Andrews

RETIREMENT

MR V. J. SACH

Thirty-five years of loyal and varied service to Palmer's drew to a close with the retirement of Mr John Sach in July, 1994. During this time he performed an enormous number of roles: woodwork and metalwork master; Assistant Housemaster of Addison; Cricket, Tennis and Golf coach; stage carpenter and stage manager; Head of C.D.T.; Head of Creative Studies; Senior Teacher and Premises Manager.

His most spectacular role was on the cricket field. Opening bat for Hutton Cricket Club and twice a player with the Essex Second XI, he scored several hundreds in the annual Staff v. First XI fixture, as well as keeping wicket indefatigably. When he and Tony Hendry were at the crease, the elms and fences sang with sixes and strollers in the Chadwell Road gazed skyward in alarm.

However, though he was a fine cricketer and Palmer's a great cricketing school, Mr Sach was not appointed to play and coach cricket. He joined the staff in January 1959 as woodwork master after service in the armed forces and completing his apprenticeship in carpentry and joinery with a local building firm. Every boy knew him and his insistence on meticulously high standards since he taught everyone, at least in their first two years. Before long he introduced metalwork and Palmer's saw its first teaching lathe. At the same time he was coaching and managing the Colts' XI in cricket and the Second VI in Tennis. Later, the appearance of a bunker on South Field announced that he had started coaching golf.

For many years at the Boys' School and in the opening years of the Sixth Form College, Mr Sach made a valuable contribution to operatic and dramatic productions. As stage carpenter and stage manager he drew on his experience with the Billericay Operatic Society and the Brentwood Dramatic and Operatic Society. Life backstage was transformed when he introduced the 'tannoy system' he used at Billericay.

During the grand secondary reorganisation of 1971-1975 John Sach disappeared as woodwork and metalwork master to reappear first as Head of C.D.T. and then, in 1975, Head of the Creative Studies Faculty (later Faculty of Design and Technology). This proved a very successful appointment, to which he brought patience, tact and understanding as well as his customary efficiency and attention to detail. The same qualities found further scope when in 1983 he

was promoted to Senior Teacher with responsibility for stationary and supplies, lettings of premises, health and safety, publicity and fire drills.

Soon he was wearing so many hats that something had to be done. Gradually he shed all responsibilities not directly involving student contact except one - and was still overworked! For the last few years as Premises Manager he has been closely concerned with everything to do with the site from building projects to car park arrangements. This has meant a great deal of 'overtime' and holiday work. Recently the position became even more demanding with the succession of new buildings and extensions: the new Lecture Theatre in particular, but also an upper storey to the administration block, extensions to Library and Canteen, the conversion of the Hall to a two-storey student centre and, currently, the remodelling of the main entrance. In all these, as well as in the trophy cabinets transferred from the crush hall of the Boys' School and the Coat of Arms he constructed for the College's main entrance, he has a monument, if not more lasting than bronze, at least as lasting as wood and stone.

For many years John Sach has been a frequent attender at Old Palmerian functions, whether as member or speaker or Master of Ceremonies. In addition, he has arranged and officiated at a number of farewell dinners for retiring staff. I understand that during his retirement he will be organising theatre excursions for office and ancillary staff. There seem to be the makings of a new career here!

Despite apparent fitness and sporting prowess, Mr Sach has not always enjoyed the best of health. Earlier this year he underwent successful heart bypass surgery. Restored to strength, he returned to full-time duties for the summer term. This augurs well for his retirement and the greater time he will now be able to spend with his wife and family. He also has a number of projects in mind, including carpentry, gardening, golf and perhaps tennis, which he played regularly up to the time of his illness and has now tentatively resumed.

Invited to comment on this thirty-five years at Palmer's, he said "I've enjoyed every minute of it - and I'm still learning". May this be true of his retirement too!

We wish him, his wife Valerie, his two daughters and his four grandchildren many happy years together.

Edward Moorhouse

We would welcome some feed-back on the magazine and its contents, especially on particular items. Equally, along with your views, we would be glad to receive news, letters, articles or contributions of any kind. Please send them to:

The Editor,
'Old Palmerian',
c/o Palmer's College,
Chadwell Road,
Grays,
Essex.
RM17 5TD.

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