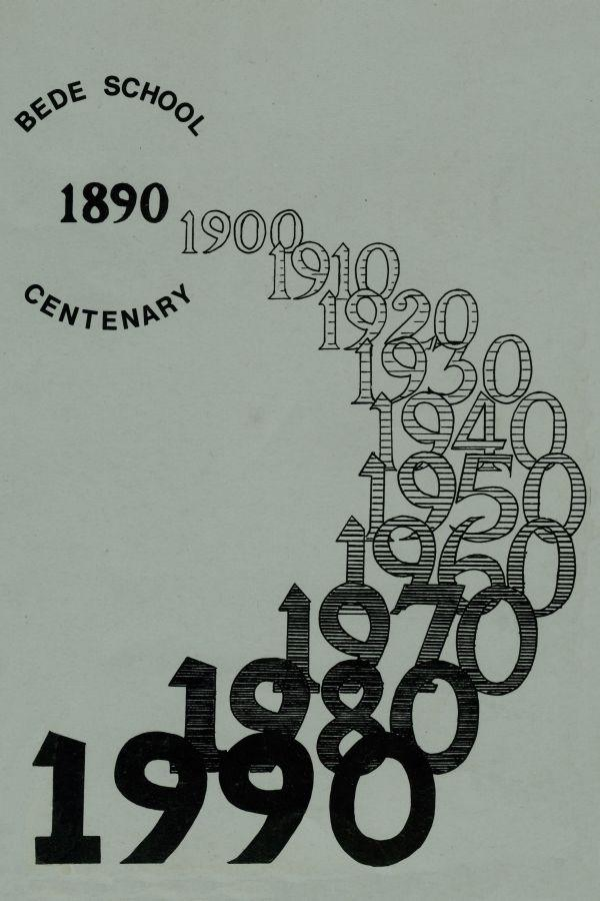
BEDE SCHOOL
1890
CENTENARY
1900
1910
1920
1930
1940
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1990

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We should like to express our gratitude, first, to Tom Cowie (1936-40), without whose assurances the production of this booklet would have been impossible. He has been most generous, too, in putting at our disposal the knowledge of his Organisation.

We are particularly indebted to his Printing Manager, Shirley Girdwood, upon whose expertise and interest in the project, together with the skill of her staff, we have been entirely dependent.

We should like to thank, too, Professor A.W. Woodruff, who sent not only his good wishes from his work place in a war-torn outpost, but substantial financial help as well.

We acknowledge our debt to the "Sunderland Echo", which has, over a hundred years, reported detailed news of the School. Its Deputy Editor, Mr Maurice Boyle, and Librarian, Mrs Marjorie Cowell, have provided particular items of interest. We have made liberal use of past compilations published by the Schools themselves. Mrs Moira Boundy (School Secretariat 1965-1985) has transposed scrawl into immaculate transcript. Jacqui Gilbert (Head of Art) designed and executed the Cover. We give them all our thanks.

Nothing at all could have happened without the zeal, good humour and goodwill of our contributors. We trust that we have done them justice.

And, finally, we are indebted to Martin Preston (1965-72) who volunteered his help in the vital matter of sales: he has offered his business premises, Hills and Co. of Waterloo Place, as a venue for the purchase of this booklet. We are deeply grateful to him.

THE CENTENARY

Some years ago John Tate, an Old Bedan and P.E. Master at the school, mentioned to me whilst we were walking along the corridor that Bede "must be nearing its centenary". It wasn't until re-organisation was under way in Autumn 1988 that questions were asked about what was to happen to the Rolls of Honour of the two World Wars and to the War Memorial Organ. Roger Maylor, another master at the school, was searching amongst the archives and produced the jubilee booklet and hence the significance of April 28th 1990 emerged.

Later in the term I approached the Headmaster, Mr. John Tait, and asked him if he would allow me to look into the prospects of commemorating the Centenary despite the irony that the school is due to close in summer, 1991.

I was fortunate to get together a splendid group of dedicated Old Bedans and Staff - some of the latter with dual qualifications - who met regularly from the start. Their names are listed elsewhere and to them I accord my thanks for their support and willingness to undertake work.

It is not an easy task to undertake, for records have been mislaid or lost altogether and the business of contacting over 10,000 Old Bedans spanning the past seven decades is fraught with obvious difficulties.

Nevertheless, wherever I went I received great support from Old Bedans like Tom Cowie who placed at our disposal the facilities of his wide-reaching organisation in order to help publicise the event and to produce this booklet. Stan Prior, a schoolfriend of mine and the first Chairman of the P.T.A. of the combined schools, made a magnanimous gesture, through Cornings, that produced the Centenary plate, which is helping finance our year. Malcolm Attey, another Old Bedan donated the Service Sheets for the Re-dedication, while many other Old Bedans have assisted in publicising our various functions.

Whatever the outcome over the forthcoming months, the concept of the Centenary has so far proved worthwhile and, as the Headmaster said initially to me, "We will go down with our colours flying".

J.R. Auld. November, 1989.


Post Tenebras Lux

on the occasion
of

THE BEDE SCHOOL CENTENARY

TO HOLD A MIRROR UP TO ITS NATURE

"..... the reforming of education (is) one of the greatest and noblest designs that can be thought on, and one for the want thereof the nation perishes."

(John Milton, 1644)

Editors: General and particularly 1890 - 1968 W.K. LEWIS (1951 - 1980)
1968 - 1989 M. BARDEN (1967 - 1989)

Printed: By courtesy of T. Cowie P.L.C., Millfield House, Hylton Road, Sunderland.

FOREWORD

"I come not to praise Caesar, but to bury him."
J. Caesar (W. Shakespeare)

Fate has decreed that the centenary of the schools of Bede in Sunderland falls on the 28th April, 1990, within the shadow of the present school's impending closure (July 1991).

Many people who have, or have had, association with the Bede Schools in their varied forms, throughout the century, were determined to recognise the advent of the centenary and produce some lasting momentoes for the legions of Old Bedans.

This booklet does not aspire to be a definitive history of "the Bede" through the century: more a collection of reflections, reminiscences, tales and legends, which may re-kindle old memories, renew old friendships and allow many people of all ages to bask in the warm glow of nostalgia.

"We give thanks for this school, for our founders and governors and for all who in their generation have built up that which we have inherited."

A book of Prayers for Schools
(donated to Bede Collegiate Girls School
by Doris H. Nicholson, Music Mistress
(1938 - 41)

The Frontpiece and Endpiece of this booklet are the contributions of David Ramsay and David Rock, respectively. David Rock has, in addition, produced the graphic illustrations. They were friends at the Bede (1940-1947) and then at the School of Architecture of Durham University; they have remained so ever since. Their initial preparation for their profession took what was the traditional Bede pattern: the mathematical and scientific grounding was part of the curriculum; the training in design and drawing was conducted after formal school hours and during holidays by John Harrison, the Head of Art, with whom they have always kept in touch.

David Ramsay (Ramsay Tugwell Associates, Architects of Covent Garden) is currently in the throes of completion of the first stage of a massive extension of the Houses of Parliament, an awesome task, one has to suppose, and a project that was in its early form when Hugh Casson was the senior man in the practice. For rural relief he is designing a clinic in idyllic New Forest surroundings in Lyndhurst. As an amiable hobby he produces family Christmas cards of an exquisite nature. His elegant and witty Frontpiece suggests the regal spirit of the intellect to which the industrial and commercial force of the River gave birth in the form of the School.

A note on David Rock's Endpiece appears on the last printed page of the Booklet.

THE TOWN AND THE GOWN

"1890 April 28. This school opened today with 321 boys. The teachers were here on Saturday to take down the names of intending scholars. There was a formal opening this morning at half past nine o'clock, several members of the School Board being present."

This matter-of-fact first entry in the log of a school for the 28th April, 1890, reveals nothing of the urgency of the forces that were precursors to its foundation.

Sunderland's rise to the rank of a town of some national significance was too late to have been affected by the Elizabethan and Jacobean educational drive, though its old Customs House suggests that it might have been. Eighteenth century prints, in the Art Gallery, of the heart of the town, the river, record the clarity of the stream and the well-found nature of the vessels that plied their ordered trade upon it and from it. Tall masts and dense rigging overtop the seaward skyline, telling where the interests of the townsfolk lay. The steep-to southern river bank is crowned with houses of substance and ingenuity, while down the slopes and on the northern shore stone-built buildings shoulder one another roughly in order to get at the business. By the end of the Century the first bridge, unique of its kind, spans the river in an arch whose elegance bespeaks a civic pride and whose traffic the confidence of a town united, and the prosperity nurtured by a distant maritime war. Everywhere there is a sense of spaciousness and light. Men and their ladies enjoy the view.

Prints and lithographs and paintings and, then, photographs of the same scene, as the next Century moves on, sieze upon a process of radical change. Thickening drifts of smoke are relieved only by plumes of steam or by mere shafts of light. The river becomes more opaque as its traffic turns more fevered and tangled; its banks are encumbered with forgings, anchors and massive cables, huge balks of timber, the ribs of obsolete vessels, jutting coal staithes and bottle-kilns and derricks. The bridge condenses into a blunt utilitarian flatness, gripping its banks with a seemingly indestructible iron geometry. It has been joined by a burly twin, a railway bridge uncompromisingly geared to the new trade. The last, and possibly the greatest, of the clippers lies alongside in the shadows. Paddle-driven tugs squat to their work. On a man-made shelf, downstream on the northern shore-side, half a dozen new-fangled conveyor belt iron hulls await the time and the tide of their launch and the deathblow to the clipper way of life. Men are smudges on the canvas of the technology or uniform figures in a shroud of a baggy cap, a baggy jacket and baggy pants..

But real people there were, and a-plenty: 25,511 in 1801; 43,078 in 1831; 71,004 in 1851; 147,077 in 1901. The frantic acceleration defied famine, war, pestilence, three of the brakes described by the dismal contemporary economist, Malthus. His fourth, sexual restraint, could not have been working very well either, though it is fair to say that Sunderland was becoming the land of opportunity for the deprived, the oppressed, the aspiring, the ambitious, the inventive and the unafraid. They came in in a ceaseless stream, from the northern hinterland, from the Celtic lands and from the European continent. They bred into a vigorous and infinitely adaptable hybrid, of which the Bede School became the exploiter and beneficiary for a hundred years.

There had, however, first to be many painful years of struggle with complex manifestations of the technological revolution of the commerce of the river. Housing, roads, public safety, lighting, water supply, public health and hygiene in a dozen different ways, the usage of the river itself became the inescapable concern, in a manner never previously envisaged, of the town administration. Education of the children to master both physically and psychologically the forces released upon them was only reluctantly seen as a public necessity: it was, as it always is, dauntingly expensive. Better to avert the eyes. Governments began to dribble a little money through, but the business was left to private enterprise and to religious denominations to sort out as particular interests required. Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Quakers took their responsibilities seriously. There were many excellent academies for boys and, increasingly, for girls, where Classics, Geography, History, Modern Languages, Mathematics (very occasionally), Astronomy (of all things) were offered at the very considerable fee of £35 per term, with extras.

Humbly placed people wanted enlightenment for their children, too, quite passionately, it appears. Scores of obscure educators with ill-defined qualifications set up shop at haphazard in Union St. or Villiers St. or Nicolson St. or wherever, in shifting market place alliances to offer sustenance to blind mouths at threepence a week, if they were not undercutting, temporarily, at twopence. Just after the middle of the Century only half of the children of Sunderland were receiving an education, other than that of the street. The unquestionably considerable and growing wealth of the town was moving steadily outwards from its source, the river. An official inquiry even three decades or so later reveals what was happening to the fine dwellings of the High St. East area: 83 people living in 24 rooms in 5 houses; 144 pubs (one for every 28 families); 51 brothels. The colliers of Monkwearmouth pit made the most vivid, and representative, riposte: they set up a school of their own for their girls and boys.

A Statute of 1870 was a Parliamentary admission that people like the colliers had scored a palpable hit. The Borough Council thought so, too, and at once began to set up its system of Board Schools. A great body of townspeople did not need to be told, a decade later, that they were *obliged* to send their children to school, though the idea that it was to be 'free' may have appealed to them: they enthusiastically despatched the girls and boys to make the most of the boon they had won for them. A well of hidden talent was tapped. Not only were the new local technologies to be well served but their advances were shaded into the curricula as well. The talent in the schools broke through the top of the structure; the appetite increased with what it fed on. Further education to the age of sixteen and beyond was to be provided.

A man called G.T. Ferguson was given a transitional appointment from Headmaster of Valley Road School to the newly built Sunderland Higher Grade School in Grange Terrace. It is he who wrote the words with which this account began. Miss J.M. Todd was his peer, the first Headmistress of the School for Girls.

POTENCY OF LIFE

The Heads of the two Departments of the School afford an interesting contrast in what was then possible for men and women. Miss Todd, a product of Halifax Girls' High School and twenty-six years of age, had obtained an ordinary Teacher's Certificate at Darlington before proceeding to Newnham College, Cambridge, for a year, though she took no degree; she obtained a temporary job at Darlington Training College before taking up work at a new Higher Grade School in Leeds for a couple of years, an experience that must have influenced her being appointed to Sunderland. Compared with many young women of her time she was quite a revolutionary.

George Ferguson had had to fight for what he may well have regarded as a minimal education; it was a fact that coloured his whole life and the sort of life that he, as a schoolmaster, offered others. Having left school at fourteen years of age, he at once got a job as pupil teacher at Burnmoor, during which time he was privately taught Latin and Greek by a Canon of Durham Cathedral, a distinguished scholar; the result was that he became a Literate of Durham University with First Class Honours in Classics and Divinity. He then formally trained as a teacher at Durham Training College; he got a First, of course. He immediately became Head of a Newcastle elementary school and then returned as a tutor at his old training College in English, Latin and Maths. During this time he took London Matriculation and became a student in evening classes at Rutherford College and at Durham College of Science. He took a B.A. of London University in 1884, but delayed taking his B.Sc. until 1896, presumably because even he must have found that running an exploding new Higher Grade School was making a few demands on his time. He may even have got married. A well-known photograph of him exists: a domed skull devoid of hairy ornament, arched brows moving precipitously to a chiselled nose, a thick, perfectly cropped moustache whose waxed ends could perch an eagle, over a sardonically humorous mouth; but the dominant feature are the eyes, dark under oval lids and with highlights that penetrate the heart of the matter. An Old Bedan of a more modern era, looking on the portrait for the first time, whispered, "Whew, the original Skinhead! No wonder they stood in awe of him."

The School Board (which included beneficent names like Bartram, Backhouse and Friend Lamb) sadly underestimated the public response to their provision of opportunity for youth. G.T. Ferguson records that he was given two additional members of staff. In fact, he found himself swamped: the school, he says, was thereafter either "full or partly full or bursting". On the first day 321 boys and 261 girls were enrolled. Number 1 on the Admissions Register was named, by a curious quirk, John Small whose father was also John, of 1 Salem Street. Tyneside may have its Andy Capp if Sunderland may have the triumph of taking, through the agency of its oldest School, an insignificant anonymity and bestowing upon it an unassailable individuality. Other John Smalls and their sisters from all over the Borough laid their claims to a place in the sun. They came from Vine Place and St. Mark's Road and Tavistock Place and Canon Cockin St. and Chester Road and Old Mill Road and Roker Avenue and Coronation St. and Harrogate St. and Cambria St. ..... eager to offer their credentials. The Wearmouth Colliery School, not suprisingly, sent some. And, after a year or so, as its reputation spread, they came from the Boldons, Silksworth, Ryhope, Seaham, Easington, Murton, Burnmoor, Coxgreen, Newbottle, South Hetton, Hetton-le-Hole, West Hartlepool, Stockton, Middlesbrough, South Shields, Felling, one even from Longframlington. Small wonder that there was a contingent known as "The Train Boys". There appears to have been no truancy problem.

RIVERS OF KNOWLEDGE ARE THERE

In fact, the expressed aims of the School as a whole were quite unembarrassedly stated: "To foster sound scholarship; to encourage and influence an esprit de corps conducive to a healthy moral tone, good manners and high character". It is probably true to say that as time passed the Girls' School laid greater direct stress on the second aim than did the Boys', where it was regarded more as an implicit part of the first: boys are keener on sin 'per se' and should, therefore, be worked to such a pitch of exhaustion that they are unable to practise it.

Mammon, however, had its empire. An 1890 girl entrant has said, "We all paid fees of 10/6 a quarter, later reduced to 7/6 or 9d a week, paid weekly to our class mistresses". There were exceptions to this rule, quite large numbers, it would appear, though the Government insisted on putting a price on what was deemed a privilege. G.T. Ferguson was gratified that in 1894 the Higher Section of his School had 'earned' a government grant of £710 through its extraordinary number of successes in advanced certificates in mathematics, science and chemistry. At the same time he was critical of the fact that this utilitarian approach to education led to a lopsided system in which the teaching of languages, the humanities and the arts was neglected. He did not allow his sorrow, however, to smother his piratical propensities: within four years the School had its first entry to Oxford, Richard Littlehailes. On the grounds, presumably, that if you go to war you use not a pop-gun but a howitzer, Littlehailes was fired at Balliol, after which, by stages, he became Educational Commissioner of the Government of the Indian Empire.

Miss Todd, unlike G.T.F., seems to have left few records of her opinions or her ambitions for her pupils other than some of a generalised nature. One of her former pupils wrote of her: "Miss Todd was a striking figure, invigorating as the East wind ....., elegant in an Edwardian fashion, tall and slim with stiffened lace ..... at her neck and fine dark hair; scholarly too as befitted one of the early Newnham students, and austere in the tradition of Miss Buss and Miss Beale and the other pioneers of women's education. Staff and children feared her and adored". It is the "East wind" bit that is bothersome.

Another, while freely acknowledging that it was her personality which held the School in close bonds of unity during its early years, says: "She was a disciplinarian. When she appeared shoulders stiffened, lines straightened, the regulation hat was pulled straight, boys' heads disappeared from the Physics Lab. windows and the unwary fidgeted guiltily with hair escaping from the regulation pig-tail. It was not that she indulged in horrific punishment, it was rather some offended moralist in herself, terrifying in its wrath. Who that sat in Form G. room one sunny day can forget the thunder of, 'Child, your ignorance is colossal!' or the vivid portrayal of the Colossus that followed! And there was one, Charlotte, completely annihilated one day for the crime of attending a Sunday School Treat, and a

Milly, who 'picked her teeth', and Grace who had 'spots on her face', - each might have figured in a Cautionary Tale! Miss Todd's teaching, too, was proverbial. She believed that every graduate should be able to teach any subject up to matriculation standard and was prepared herself to do so. With the small, awed Preparatory pupils she read *'The Ancient Mariner'* and the bare class-room became an enchanted sea. French Grammar she took with the Lower Fourth. There was a legend, too, of Domestic Science and tales of Miss Todds's demonstration of stove-blacking in the old Cookery Room, home, for long, of the Sixths.''

Her pupils believed that Miss Todd knew everything. ''Did they produce a form magazine, she must see all copies from the most learned to the famous *'OLLA PODRIDA'*, the first number of which she applauded highly, only to return the second with a devastating comment on its spelling. Had they fresh flowers in the class room she must comment on their arrangement and explain the Kyrle Society. Was paint water spilled in the corridor, she must herself interview the offending pail-bearers. Such omniscience was to be feared, but it bound them together. In Miss Todd her pupils found an abiding sense of security and of permanent values. They had no idea of her illness; hence to them her death during the summer holiday of 1908 was as if the very foundation had given'',

A century on , one can only marvel at the significance of some of this acquiescent reportage of the education of girls. One may, perhaps, be forgiven for wondering whether the stifling of the public independence of women and the sapping of their individual confidence were not, to some degree, at least, the product of women who themselves were enjoying a measure of ''liberation''. It is possible to detect a somewhat less restrictive air, in fact, only a decade later when the initial nervousness had worn off. A girl of this period writes with a more detached air and with some good humour:

''Lessons were accepted uncritically. It did occur to us that they were meant to be interesting. From Oman's fat green *HISTORY OF ENGLAND*, Nesfield's Grammar, ''Little Allen'' (Latin), Chardenal (French) and 'Warwick' Shakespeare we did our lessons. At the end of the two years we emerged with a very good grounding in Latin Grammar, and some knowledge of Caesar, a fair French accent, a command of factors in Algebra, and a useful facility in turning staff notation into tonic solfa. English Grammar we despised, preferring Latin. Shakespeare we loved. Romantic poetry was suspect. I recall Miss Manning, the gentle and charming teacher of English who turned out to our surprise to be a militant suffragette, but whose main job in our view was to deal with poetry''.

For the girls (and for their parents, one must add) of this aspiring town Education was, of itself, a Good Thing. And it certainly never dawned on anyone that the contemporary equivalent of wall-to-wall carpeting was a prerequisite for intellectual absorption; the business of exercising the mind involved the exclusion of the merely physically inconvenient. An Old Bedan (male) of a much later date was of the opinion, as will appear, that bodily discomfort was a positive advantage since it provided a spur to aggression in study. The girls taking the five year course ending in the optional sitting of public examinations regarded themselves as something of an elite, though they scarcely could be regarded as pampered. An exact account by one of them exists:

''The Ex-7th Room, as it was called, was divided by a curtain and classes were held on both sides, sometimes two on one side. My year was taught English, French, Latin, Chemistry, Art, and Singing, Botany, Physics, Mathematics and Hygiene. During these last five years we took the South Kensington Science and Art Examinations, elementary and advanced, in Chemistry, Hygiene, Magnetism and Electricity, Mathematics, Model Drawing, Freehand and Light and Shade, Perspective, and Practical, Plane and Solid Geometry. For these we went to the top storey of the Town Hall. Finally came Senior Oxford or London Matriculation, or the Queen's Scholarship Examination according to needs. During these last years we had a certain amount of freedom. Miss Todd herself was available at any time to give help. Private study meant sitting on an umbrella stand in one of the cloakrooms. Indeed many lessons were given in the corridor, outside the Ex-7th room. At the end of the course we were ready for either an Arts or a Science degree course. Miss Todd's girls were among the first in the North to obtain degrees; among these early graduates were Kate Coburn in 1896, M Gertrude Wilson in 1897, Ethel Graydon, and Margaret Charlton in 1898, who were all appointed to the Staff of their old school''.

The obligation of showing how the money was spent and to what effect was never a matter of doubt. The Speech Days that expired with the Grammar School had their origin in the very early days of the School, when the board of directors, the administrators and the shareholders assembled annually to hear the manager account for his product and the interests it had earned. It was a useful tradition of assessment **by** everybody **of** everybody else. Its original form was described by a former member of the Girls' School:

"In the early days prizes, provided by the School Staff and friends, were distributed in School or later sometimes in the Old Assembly Rooms. In1898 and 1899, however, a conversazione was held in the Victoria Hall. During the presentation of prizes, the entertainment and the speeches, visitors sat in the Dress Circle and pupils on the platform or in the body of the Hall. After refreshments had been enjoyed by visitors and scholars, people strolled about admiring the exhibited school work, such as drawings and dressed dolls, or watched experiments in Physics and Chemistry being performed by pupils; Louisa Marsden's etching by the action of hydrofluoric acid attracted much attention. There was also on one occasion a Lantern Exhibition of photographs of the school, Staff and pupils taken by the boys. Such evenings ended at 11p.m. with *"GOD SAVE THE QUEEN"*.

One of the interesting aspects of the account is its reference to the very early introduction in the Girls' School of the practice of the convivial tea-party, the 'conversazione', as a cultural exercise. It is fair to say that the continuance of this after the amalgation of the two Schools in 1968 came as a 'cultural' shock to the barbarians of the other sex, though they adapted to it. The Guild of Old Bedans perpetuate the tradition to this day, although it is open to question whether their talk centres exclusively upon Michelangelo or the English Graveyard Poets of the Eighteenth Century.

An organisational eccentricity much derided initially by new members of staff up to 1968 has it roots in the first Schools: this was the designation of the First Years as "Third" and then, successively, Lower Fourth, Upper Fourth, Lower Fifth and Upper Fith, It involved, in fact, an assurance of respect for the early development of the Schools, when they each had what became a Prep Department. What was an irritant to the tidy minds should properly have been regarded in the same sort of light as regimental traditions, the enshrinement of trivia as evidence of unique experiences that have gone to the moulding of tradition. They are the stuff of the recollection of a centenary. And everyone will have an amusing mindful of them, even if some are no more than ritual ribbing of masters or end-of-term rites.

ARTS AND SCIENCES FLOW FROM THENCE

G.T. Ferguson somewhere remarks how his boys shuddered when they were called "Higher Graders". One can even now sympathise with them as they cringed before the mechanistic conceit of the term. 1898 was for him, therefore, a memorable one, for it was then that the Board acceded to his request to have the School named 'Bede Higher Grade', a perfectly apposite description, he thought, for a school aiming at high scholarship, and one that would inevitably shed the detritus to become 'Bede School'. (In fact, it did even better in public estimation and in common parlance, 'The Bede'.) G.T.F. had no hesitation in giving his Board a deadpan speculative talk on etymology: "Bede latinized is 'Beda', the adjectival form of which is 'Bedanus', which would give a nominal English form of 'Bedan' (with the accent on the first syllable as in 'Roman'), to produce the compendious and euphonious 'Bedan', pronounced 'Bee-dun'." Even a Bartram had to concede defeat in face of this. But it also says a good deal for the Board that they could either follow the argument or, like Goldsmith's rustics, be suitably awestruck by the weight of scholarship. G.T.F. was careful to get it down immediately in writing: the first 'Bedan' magazines (Boys' and Girls') were rolled off the presses. And he also eternalized it in tablets of stone: the School badge was graven - phoenix (re-birth of the spirit of Bede), open book and motto, 'Post Tenebras Lux', one 'borrowed' after a visit to its original owner, the city of Geneva, and symbolic of the freedom of the mind.

The staff of both schools had speedily concluded that the upward pressure of their pupils' multifarious talents and ambitions was unwarrantably retricted by the Board School system. There was a fever

of public activity. The Bede School was amongst the first in the country to be mentioned in the new 1903 official National Secondary School list, by which time the Borough had taken over responsibility. A couple of years later the Schools were reconstituted as a unit, with (after competitive interview) G.T. Ferguson as Headmaster and Miss Todd responsible for the Department of Girls. The curriculum was revised at once and enlarged to include Classics, the Humanities, more advanced Mathematics and Sciences, Art and Modern Languages; appropriate graduate staff were appointed: this was the transformation to the system which was to serve, with remarkable flexibility and some distinction, the ordinary girls and boys of Sunderland for over sixty years.

Schools like Bede had an in-built obligation to provide the teachers for the widening national web of education. The early steady flow of entrants into universities and teachers' training colleges was directed mainly to that end. But there were widening horizons: D.A.S. Cairns took an Open Mathematical Scholarship at Pembroke College, Cambridge, followed his first degree with an L1.B. (Cantab.), a B.SC. (London) and a Prize-winning First in the Bar Examiniations from the Middle Temple, after which, in due process of time, he was elevated to the Bench and Knighthood; S.R. Gibson, an Open Scholar of the Queens' College, Cambridge, took a double First in History; P.B.R. Forbes and C.M. Dawson, Open Scholars at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, took double Firsts in Classics. (By Forbes there hangs a tail: he terminated his career as Reader in Greek at Edinburgh University after failing, so the story went, to organise a revolution in the Department; he became Head of Classics at the Bede Boys' G.S. and failed to bring off a palace revolution there; after which he retired to urban seclusion to refresh his memory about Catiline and to contemplate the vertebral extremity of the Devil.) G.T.F., reflecting in later years on the astonishing flowering of the decade and a half, thought, however, that the most brilliant boy he had known was the School Boxing Champion, Sydney Goldstein, an Open Scholar of St. John's, Cambridge, a University Chess Champion and the most eminent mathematician of his Year, holder of a Sir Isaac Newton Studentship. It is all made piquant when one espies the cruel canker that had lain in the bud itself. The first Open Scholar of the School, the son of a Governor, was Herbert Cairns, at Brasenose College, Oxford in 1910: he was killed on the Western Front in 1917, a home-grown archetype of a generation.

LIBERTY, NURSE OF ALL GREAT WITS

Schools have always had a rather tiresome public tendency to celebrate, noisily, the academic rocketry they produce and to keep mum about the corps of riflemen whose discipline and steadiness under stress are the very fibre of society: in the case of the Bede, to make too much of the Phoenix and too little of the Book and of the ambience of the Light. The reformed curriculum gave intellectual freedom not to just a few stratospheric figures but to hundreds of boys and girls who were to be faced with the tasks of running affairs on the ground. "Running affairs" is the phrase to note. It was an idea implicit in the foundation. Such information as is available suggests that those teachers who apprehended the fact and spent their energies in its fulfilment and those pupils who were brought to believe that their intelligence was a gift rightly to be developed were those upon whom success, at whatever level, and a measure of contentment attended. There was no secrecy about the leaving qualifications of the first decade or so of the present century: the London Matriculation results, those of the Oxford Local Board and those of the Board of Education for intending teachers were reported in exact detail in the 'Sunderland Echo'. And they are uniformly impressive for both girls and boys not only in academic range but in the quality of the grades achieved. The whole business was highly comparative and competitive. In 1910, for instance, Bede was placed second out of 775 participant schools in the Oxford Local Examinations. Its average success-rate percentage in these examinations for the years 1908 to 1911 inclusive, the date of the report used here, was 90. Many of the pupils whose work is thus mirrored provided the skills required not only for entrance to the increasing number of candidates for higher education but for the advancement of local business and industry and the increasingly complex demands of administration. This early dynamic surged in easily identifiable form through the later generations of the Schools and provided a tradition and an exemplary influence unrivalled anywhere else in the locality.

THE WAY OF UNDERSTANDING

One of the more curious aspects, to the modern eye, of the handling of the School during this early period was the contrast in the manner in which the two Heads sought to achieve the same end. No man now living who as a pupil knew G.T.F. seems able to speak of him other than with respect and admiration, even with affection: he knew everyone, and with some intimacy, moreover; he exerted a clearly defined code of discipline through a multiplicity of activities - games, music, debates, the magazine, expeditions, competitive work and creative exercises - that he deemed necessary for the full development of a boy in a civilized way; he was generous in his praise of staff and boys. He was known as "Fergie", not an insignificant point in school-boy rhetoric.

That well known Sunderland Old Bedan, Monty Joseph (1912-18), whose path to school met that of the Head Master, remembers that he was immaculately suited, with a dark overcoat whose lapels had a fashionable sheen, on his head a tall silk hat. You were well advised to tip your cap, a civility that was acknowledged at once. A girl of the same period, recalling a Speech Day in the Victoria Hall, wrote that the Headmaster opened the proceedings from the platform by apologizing for his indelicacy in wearing a hat: he explained that the furious draughts made it an over-riding necessity for one so bereft. Here was a man who had no petty concern for his dignity: the absence of thatch was a biological nuisance we should all understand. The 'hat', of course, on this occasion may not have been a stove-pipe but a mortar board.

An anonymous Old Bedan of the first years of this Century, defining her education as 'of Sparta rather than of Athens', a nicely judged phrase in the light of what follows, records her gratitude for the sensibility of a Miss Wilson, a teacher of Scripture, whose sole punishment was an instruction to learn Isaiah 40, "Comfort ye!" But she then goes on to the real point in this quite exquisite piece of oblique judgment :

"We needed comfort too, especially after examinations. It was Miss Todd's custom to give back corrected term examination papers herself. She would sail serenely into the classroom, set down the bundle of foolscap and wait. At her nod we sat, the mistress to our distress remained standing, Miss Todd having seated herself at the high desk. In a few words she made clear her approval or disapproval. We shrank, or expanded and nearly burst with joy if by chance the verdict was good and the mistress smiled. General errors were then corrected by a demonstration of teaching by Miss Todd. After this she returned to the high seat and bade us stand. With a decisive flop she turned over the mass of foolscap and with infinite contempt picked up the bottom paper. Sternly and thoroughly she went through it, and finally fixing the owner with her keen eye she bade her come and take it. Fiery-red or sheet-white the victim came forward, retrieved her paper and retired to her place where she was free to sit and, behind the backs of her standing comrades, weep unseen. Inexorably through the pile Miss Todd went. The top few shivered in their conspicuous loneliness; it was better to be in the middle, since praise was never without criticism, and lest she grow conceited, the top girl fared often as badly as the victim as the bottom. When at last it was over the girl nearest the door closed it silently upon the Head Mistress. Relax? Speak? "Get out your Bibles and learn the 40th Chapter of Isaiah". Didn't we need it? Dear Brown Willy, may she rest in peace , her warfare accomplished, her journeying done".

Miss Todd died suddenly in the summer holiday of 1908. An obituary notice by a member of staff acknowledged her spirit of individualism and power of command. Her term of office "had inculcated supremely the Pagan Virtues - justice, fortitude and loyalty".

Her successor, Miss M.E. Boon, may be regarded as an inspired change. She had been educated at Manchester High School; she had gone to the University of Zurich for a year and had taken a Diplome Superieur at the University of Caen; she graduated from Manchester University with an Honours Class 11 in English Literature and Language and became an M.A. of the University in 1903. She was already at the Bede Schoool as Senior Mistress and person responsible for English at the time of her predecessor's death.

Miss Boon turned out to be a woman of unwavering principles in her view of the education of girls. She, many years after her appointment, said that "our" aim was to inspire girls with "a right view of life" that would create a desire in them "to press forward along the paths it has been our privilege to open up to them", to encourage them to pursue learning as an end in itself, since it was there that lay the true wisdom that " we should want for them". "Every lesson", she contended, "should be a moral one": she pointed out the manifold qualities of mind and spirit to be won from the pursuit of team games and physical activities "in playing the game of life"; she saw the balance effected through the aesthetic realisations of art, music and literature; she referred to "our beloved school". A head who nowadays openly expressed such convictions would excite the sniggers of educational anarchists operating in the mass market. This lady idealist had her own riposte: she set about organising the talents of those around her in such a way as to condense her aims into practicalities.

The School had been reorganised in 1905: the Girls' and Boys' sections had had their separate identities restored, a matter for general satisfaction amongst members, it appears. It was at this point that they were recognized as fully 'secondary'. There was more to this than meets the eye: bursaries continued to be offered to Sunderland children who commended themselves, while fees were established on a scale rising from £2.0.0d a term to £2.10.0d., a bargain; the Schools were at last enabled to concentrate on the phased development of the sort of education in which they became specialists. The question of fees was a very sore point, as letters to the contemporary 'Sunderland Echo' reveal, especially where there was doubt about exclusion of able children. (It is worth remembering that many families had to live for a week on the price of a school fee.) Not for the last time was it evident that what Sunderland needed for the proper nurture of the young talent it generated was not two Bede-type schools but four. There were bitter and protracted arguments in the Council Chamber about the question of a penny on the rates for the higher forms of education. Those who wanted less expenditure were, ironically enough to modern ears, know as 'economists'. As early as 1909, Councillor Gordon Bell, Chairman of Speech Day, felt obliged to point out that fees and increased Government grants were together actually reducing the cost to the rate-payer of the provision of Bede School. There was in all this a legacy of missed opportunity that led to a long history of acrimony and political exploitation. It was during this period (1905, in fact) that the Schools were renamed 'Sunderland Bede Collegiate'. Thus, in some turmoil, was their nature publicly defined, if not agreed.

FIGHTING FOR BREATH

The avenues being opened for the pupils were, within twenty years of the Schools' establishment, in many cases turning out to be either mountain passes or dead ends. That doughty Spartan, Miss Todd, accompanied by an adjutant mistress, had spent many hours eating her lunch on the hoof while she scoured the area for a salubrious place for the exercise of her office and her girls: she found her Samarkand somewhere in the Outer Fastnesses of Hylton Road, where there was a pavilion, though the girls acted as their own pack horses. "Drill" was carried out somewhere within the school playing area. There was no adequate place of assembly or concert. Such activities were ultimately dealt with by the erection of a corrugated-iron structure in an architectural style that could be called 'Australian Outback': heat, however, was administered not by the burning winter sun of the North East Coast but in a fluctuating manner by a couple of fire grates; the space was filled with an odiferous miasma identified by the girls as 'burnt raspberry jam' but by the boys by words unknown in cookery books, though they are the common parlance of sea-cooks in a Force 10 gale. This, it seems, was entered by means of a stygian corridor probably built to a design by the architect of the Lubianka that was rejected on grounds of superfluity of horror. This place of petition and prayer and interdict was known as the Tin Tabernacle (Tin Tab. for short) and was regarded by pupils with a mixture of affectionate contempt and disbelief, of the sort usually reserved for the contemplation of the toucan. One afternoon, when its inmates were absent playing hockey in Samarkand, it decided to end it all by setting itself on fire, only to be thwarted by the arrival of the brass-helmeted Fire Brigade on over-zealous white steeds. In its purgatorial form it assumed as unmerited dignity as a venue for dodge-ball, as a centre of the higher culture as an Art Room and as the temple where the Guild of Old Bedans had its first meeting.

G.T. Ferguson had gone so far, at a Speech Day, to say he found it incomprehensible that "a town of Sunderland's standing should content itself with housing its only secondary school in buildings that would disgrace a travelling circus", a sally greeted, it was reported, with laughter, not with the almost certain stern disfavour of later, more sensitive, times. He was, however, on the side of the angels. A couple of years later Mr Hamar Greenwood M.P., without a shadow of a doubt a G.T.F. plant, reminded a Speech Day assemblage that "the building of ships was not the highest ideal of the human race, and (that) ships would be no less worthily built and no less easily sold, if the schools of Sunderland were like its ships, the best England could produce". The Schools Inspectorate weighed in in 1912.

Their Report, after recording "the remarkable progress of the School in its makeshift and cramped buildings", went on to declare that the School needed, above all, "freedom to develop, for it deserves well of the community it serves", alone, as it was, in its distinct function, apart from one small Roman Catholic establishment. The Report went on to point out that the Education Authority was not fully spending the assigned revenue on the School and to assert that it should act more generously in its provision of staff and equipment. In addition, it recommended that the Authority should "provide more handsomely in the matter of buildings, making it their aim to have each School housed in premises worthy of its status and worthy of the all-important work it performs for the town".

Fifteen years were to elapse before any practical outcome of this cannonading was to be observed. But, then, there was cannonading of a more lethal nature in between. These years were marked by steep fluctuations of depression and prosperity, too. The education of their children came to be for countless anxious parents a stable anchorage in an insecure world. The blow and counter-blow of the official discussion were mirrored in detail in the sharp public correspondence in the columns of the 'Sunderland Echo'. The inanimate bricks and mortar of a Bede School - the *Sunderland* Bede School - were, extraordinarily, endowed with an intelligent force. They became the focus, in a representative way, for the anxieties and aspirations of a people. (It would be stretching a point to say that to have been the centre of such a passion led to a prolongation of life for the spirit that invested the bricks in due course. Love turns to hate in all the best of torrid romances.) At any rate, it was all too evident that the spring to further action for the provision of higher education was there and ready for use in forms no worse, at least, than those existing.

Social creative action can never be precisely replicated. The impulses are never identical in either composition or balance in the shifting conditions of the human laboratory. Legoland construction of schools begins in fallacy and ends in folly. Within the thirty years of its pioneering birth the Bede School had become inimitable: it could carry an ethos of its own making. But this of itself made the choice of what to do to satisfy the common demand the starker: the freeing of the genies of a number of existing schools, or doing nothing very much. To do the latter would lead to envy and dismay, as matters turned out.

THE WAR

The girls and boys of September 1914 reacted to the incomprehensible behaviour of their adults in the way they have always (mercifully) done: by hoping that the result would be for them more holidays and less work. German, surely, would be off the curriculm? No such luck. Knitting holes with wool no longer a discipline? On the contrary, knitting holes was a way of life: socks for soldiers. Guns are things they use on the uncivilised Continent? Scarborough and, of all places, Hartlepool, receive an early Christmas present of eleven-inch shells from the German High Seas Fleet. Bombardment drill, made even more terrifying by the larking about of the boys in the glooms of the boiler room passage under the Chemistry Lab. floor. Or perhaps more enjoyable owing to the breach of protocol? Charity took on an enlarged dimension: the girls at one point 'adopted' a baby, the child of a soldier killed in action. The war, however, seems not to have affected school routines for the girls very much, certainly not for its first two years; cricket and hockey fixtures were somewhat restricted, but debates and the production of the School Magazine, drama and examinations continued much as usual.

There appears to have been a greater scale of disturbance in the life of the boys, though there was not the disruption of twenty years later. In the four years of conflict more than a thousand Old Bedans went into the fighting Forces, which meant that every boy in the School during this period developed a sense of awareness and of an impending call. Nine Bede masters and two ancillary staff served, one of the former being killed in action. The Senior Classical Master, F. Hogben, had two sons serving, one of whom was killed, while the other was so severely wounded that he did not enjoy many years of the peace. One hundred and eight of those engaged had distinguished service recognised by awards from D.S.O. downwards. A certain J.W. Hawkins designed the splendid and dignified Memorial that, Old Boys will recall, occupied its place on the wall of the School vestibule in the Durham Road building. It has been restored to that position after recent reconstruction work.

The Education Authority has seen to its cleaning and polishing and has generously ensured that the mahogany surround, bronze panelling, relief lettering and emblazonments are in pristine condition. It is, without question, a beautiful thing in itself. Tradition has it that G.T. Ferguson chose the inscription, four lines from John Milton's verse drama, 'Samson Agonistes', the words spoken by Manoah after the heroic death of his son, Samson:

> "Nothing is here for tears: nothing to wail,
> Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
> Dispraise or blame - nothing but well and fair,
> And what may quiet us in a death so noble."

A few Old Bedan members of the Forces of this time still survive, including the man who occupies the unique position of being the first of our long line of those trained in aerial combat. Dorothy Hanney (née Caslaw), herself an Old Bedan, reports her father's recollections. He, Ernest, entered the School in 1908, contemporaneously with Wilton and Legender Milburn and Guy Puncheon, he says. Having claimed to be older than he in fact was, he enlisted in the Northumberland Fusiliers, along with his elder brother, Herbert, also an Old Bedan. Ernest transferred to the Royal Flying Corps, the predecessor of the R.A.F., and quickly qualified as a pilot. There followed a period of theoretical instruction at Christ's College, Cambridge, after which he flew all manner of machines, Sopwiths, Camels, Tiger Moths and Avro-types. He declined the offer of a commission, a course he still thinks sensible, since it would almost certainly have entailed being shot down over France, and was employed as a flying instructor. The result of this rational procedure is that he can, happily, still take out, for demonstration purposes only, his Biggles- type flying helmet and other aeronautical memorabilia. A second result is that, in association with Herbert, who had survived the Western Front, and capitalising on a family tradition, he set up the firm of Men's Outfitters, Caslaw Bros. In doing so the pair did their bit in establishing an important example of Town/Bede School association of skills. The Caslaw business, now in its new Thomas St. premises, is still run by family Old Bedans, Herbert's son, Terence, and the latter's son, David. David conforms to the voluntary military patterns of his forbears as a Captain in the T.A., an activity that that has taken him to service widely in the Northern Hemisphere. Dorothy stands by in case David damages someone, for she practises as an osteopath; when she is not judging dogs, other than Rottweilers.

It is not, perhaps, untimely at this point to remark how many Old Bedans have followed, since those early days, careers in the R.A.F. The Sunderland Flying Club of the Thirties on what is now the Nissan ground-space attracted many Old Boys, who subsequently served with distinction in the 1939-45 War. One or two who learned to fly there (like Matthew Snowdon (1927-33), for instance) were by quirk of circumstances recruited as infantrymen or gunners. But J.F. Robson (1924-32), Head Prefect in his time, actually got off the ground, an elevation that may have been due to his reaction to the Lewis machine-gun that he saw stowed under the staff table in the Tin Tab or to 'Baggy' Moore's infuriate rendering (at Debating Society Concerts) of 'The Company Sergeant Major', with its depressing alternative, 'The Village Pump'. Jimmy appears, from his early years, perfectly attuned to the R.A.F. since he quotes appreciatively the chain-cigarette-smoking 'Daddy' Smithwhite's injunction to cads, "If you *must* smoke, boy, then smoke a pipe." Jimmy during the War flew fighter aircraft, mainly Hawker Hurricanes; he became a flying instructor at a time of dire national need and subsequently was engaged in solitary reconnaissance and photographic flights over enemy territory, when his only defence was the self-immolative one of a multiple additional array of high octane petrol tanks. It

should in fairness be assumed that while he was doing this he invariably obeyed to the letter the moral prohibition imposed upon him hundreds of times by his French Master, 'Solly' Eker, "Il ne faut pas faire les signes mystiques." Nor was Jimmy's time at the Bede devoid of provision of early training in aerial dynamics. He recalls a Sports Day on the Education Authority's Seaburn Camp Site when the English Schools' record for throwing a cricket ball was broken by a boy called, inappropriately, Sidebottom, who settled the matter for good and all by hurling the ball out of the field, out of sight and beyond mere mortal computation. The enemy, compared with this, was merely playing marbles.

For the Old Bedans who have served in the R.A.F. of modern times, life in the NATO scheme of things has been a highly technical and strategic matter involving training of the utmost intellectual rigour and discipline, where understanding of international relationships plays a vital part. An Old Bedan who has distinguished himself in this field is Air Vice Marshal Leslie Davis C.B., whose career involved periods in the strategic defence councils of Europe and attachments to the Diplomatic Service in the U.S.. The Sunderland Echo was able to report that during the late 1970's there was one period when four R.A.F. Stations were simultaneously commanded by Old Bedans. The names of only three, unfortunately, have been traced for the present purpose: Group Captain George Ord O.B.E. at Gutersloh in Germany, Group Captain David Bolton at Catterick (these two were close friends at school) and Group Captain Colin Reineck O.B.E. at Odiham. This coincidence of command must come close to the unique in the records of a school.

Currently, two Old Bedans of the younger generation are set on important work in the R.A.F.One, Stephen Boyle (the son of the Deputy Editor of the Sunderland Echo, as it happens), is undergoing university training of a specialist nature, while the other, Michael Carter, has had a spell with the Red Arrows and is currently flying the most technically advanced aircraft. He is, in fact, pursuing the career that he envisaged for himself from his early days at school. Having confessed that he is not a literary man, he offered as his contribution to the Centenary celebration to try to lay it on with his C.O. to land a Harrier Jump Jet on the School Field. "We did it for Eton", he said, "so why not for Bede?" But we could't really see our way to arranging it. Unfortunately.

It is necessary to remember, however, that even training for war in the air can still be a matter of the eclipse of bright spirits and of grief to some. Alan Bassett (1939-46), a Rugby player of repute for the School and for Ashbrooke Club, graduated from the London School of Economics, where he had been a member of the University Flying Club, and then took a permanent commission in the R.A.F. He was awarded the Sword of Honour of his Year and was selected for training in the operation of Vampire jets. In 1950 he was killed when the machine he was flying exploded into flames at some 400 feet. He was twenty-two years of age.

A RESPITE; IN AN IRON MAIDEN

Personal accounts of the period immediately succeeding the First World War suggest a restoration of tranquility of mind and a sense of purpose that now seem remarkable in young people who had suffered social dislocations of one sort and another for a significant proportion of their lives. E.E. Carlin (1917-24) in a letter of sharp clarity illuminates the end of the affair:

"On the morning of November 11th, 1918, news was expected of the end of the war, newspapers carried reports that soon an Armistice would be signed, bringing to an end hostilities. On that morning in Room 31, Form IIIA was having a Maths lesson being taught by Miss Farquhar, the deputy head-mistress. The class all became aware of cheering but why the cheers we did not know. Suddenly into Room 31 came Miss Ewart, the school secretary, who talked quietly to Miss Farquhar and then went away down the stairs. Then we were told that we in Room 31 had been forgotten so no notice had been sent to us to tell us to join the school assembly. We were told that the war was over so we had our cheers and like the rest of the school we had the day's holiday. We went happily down the stairs to our cloakroom. As I came to where the side corridor joined the main corridor I saw a girl walking along the main corridor, tears streaming down her face. Two girls with her were trying to comfort her. Someone near to me knew her and whispered to me "They got word

last night that her father had been killed". Surely this is a reminder of Sir Walter Scott's words:

"Twist ye, twine ye! even so
Mingle shades of joy and woe
Hope and fear and peace and strife
In the thread of human life."

Pupils, and the aspiring Staff who taught them, too, were increasingly stunted and thwarted by a ludicrously inappropriate building and make-shift facilities, if 'facilities' is the right word for conditions that piled difficulty upon difficulty. One girl recorded "breaking the ice on a bitter, frosty morning on the pond at the hockey field to mix the whiting in the old marker and then marking the field before the match at 10 a.m. No other school we played had to do this", she said, and wondered "how much our almost invariable success had to do with this Spartan training." There are many such stoical and ironically humorous remarks in the correspondence: Miss Wells, for instance, labelled the cramped playground where netball was played "The Dog Biscuit". The Netball team's phenomenal success rate was not, of course, *entirely* due to inside knowledge of the sharp declivity that fell away from underfoot as you made the crucial run-up to the goal-post at one end. "The Labs. had uses other than scientific", one Old Bedan confided. "Among the smells of the Chemistry Lab. we studied 'Hernani' (a singularly turgid romantic tragedy by Victor Hugo in orotund verse, if one's own jaundiced recollections are correct) at a sink at one end, while Middle III cooked at the other." The sink, one may assume to be implied, was not exclusively used for washing up. One begins to understand why the National Association for Schoolmasters sprang fully armed from the head of this Zeus.

There seems to be little doubt, however, that the School represented a stabilizing force and a direction-finding instrument in the life of pupils who had had their measure of uncertainty and who were to have more as the industrial unrest of the Twenties strained family relationships and then slump and unemployment applied their own forms of differential constraint. The ultimate source of the beneficial effect of the School is recognizably to be discovered in the two widely different characters of the Heads, the one, Miss Boon, cautiously moving towards innovation, and the other G.T. Ferguson, a privateer prowling the limits. Miss Boon, having settled into her office, appears to have exercised a power of affection that was, nevertheless, devoid of a show of power. It is probably true to say that she, above all others, was responsible for the early formation of the intangible bond, that even now is perpetuated in the Guild of Old Bedans. Alice Monro (1920-27) says that Miss Boon was regarded by many parents as "a real lady". Alice goes on to give as succinct an impression of the School for her time as one is likely to find:

"Boys and girls were strictly segregated and there were no lessons in biology or sex education for the girls. Rumour had it that when in the early thirties a broader curriculum was being considered, a school governor had said 'We do not want our girls to know the difference between He and She.' Be that as it may, the only male to enter the girls' school was Mr. Bailes who took the older girls for Physics because a qualified woman could not be found. During these lessons more attention was paid to Mr. Bailes than to Physics.

The mistresses at the girls' school were all single. Some had lost their sweethearts during the First World War years and one was seen crying at an Armistice Service held in school in 1920. Some were the new Career Women of the period. Those who married had to leave teaching as jobs were scarce and single women had to earn their living. As a result of these conditions there were few staff changes, with the advantage of continuity and stability.

Pupils were expected to study the same subjects as the boys and it was hoped that some would attend Teacher Training Colleges and Universities. Classes were streamed and the "A" Classes all had to study the "academic" subjects - Maths., Chemistry, Physics, English, History, Geography, French or German and Latin. No-one could drop any of these subjects until after the School Certificate Examination taken at sixteen. This core curriculum was enforced and considered essential if girls were to do as well as boys in their future careers. The old 19th century accomplishments thought suitable for girls were frowned on. The teaching of music and art was limited and uninspired and there were no lessons in domestic science, which it was thought mothers could teach well enough.

With no radio and television, teaching was of the "talk and chalk" type and pupils were skilled at note-taking. They had little practice in oral work but did learn to concentrate. Classes were rarely interrupted and there were few out-of-school activities.

There was no Careers Guidance at this time, but one morning when in the Upper Fifth, I remember the classroom door opened. We all stood to attention as the Headmistress entered. "Sit down girls, she said, "I have brought you some forms to sign. They are for your £5 grants to help you buy your books for your sixth form work next year as you are going to train for teaching." This was a great surprise. Did we want to be teachers? Not all of us, but £5 was a useful sum of money and following teacher training courses was the usual way to finance college courses, as grants were available for them but not for other courses. So we all signed the forms and in due course became teachers with the exception of one girl who gained a first class honours degree and obtained a good post in London in the Civil Service.

So how can I sum up the education given at Bede School between 1920 and 1927 as I experienced it? The buildings were dull and unattractive; little attention was paid to the Arts; there were no swimming lessons, school medical examinations or help given to obtain the essential school uniforms, many of which were made at home. As against these disadvantages we were fortunate in being taught by a dedicated staff who never went on strike, in enjoying a small friendly school, good discipline and receiving an academic education which enabled many of the girls to earn their own living and enjoy life in a very changing world. Supervised as we were with our pleated navy blue gym tunics "just two inches above the knee', our school caps and badges and gloves carefully put on when leaving school each afternoon, even if discarded on the walk home, we happily sang the School Song at Speech Days, were proud to be Bedans and much later, as Old Bedans, to see some of our names on the School Honours Board."

Alice's remarks about what she now sees as restrictions on the expectations of others about the achievement of girls and of girls about themselves are, of course, proper enough. Nevertheless, it has to be recognized that the School was carrying out, however tentatively it may now seem, a pioneering function. Hannah Moore, two centuries before the Bede School's foundation, had scathingly declared that girls were educated "to allure and shine" and that they were "from infancy nursed upon ignorance and vanity". And most people agree that Mrs. Malaprop accidentally hit a bulls-eye when she asserted "I would send her to a boarding school to learn a little ingenuity and artifice". The task in hand was to demolish a pyramid in order to give girls and young women of modest background confidence to believe that they had wit enough to move mountains and to accomplish anything they pleased. The girls found in due course that one of the young women teaching them had, unlike Miss Todd, actually taken a degree at Cambridge. They leapt over hurdles like the London University Matriculation examinations with as much agility as boys, though fewer, it is true, tried it. They, in the age of W.G. Grace, played cricket, competitively. For those who care to look (before it is too late), the old Honours Boards on the walls of the present Rump School Hall provide a microcosmic social history in annular ring form.

The seekers after further education in these early years almost exclusively went to the constituent Colleges of Durham, but gradually to Manchester, Liverpool and Leeds and thereafter further afield in ripples. There were occasional isolated sun-spot explosions. Elsie Lax had got a Second in Modern Languages at Somerville in 1914; three years later Mary Johnson did even better in Part II of the Natural Sciences Tripos; in another three years Elizabeth Eaves made a point by emerging as top candidate in the M.B. examinations of London University, while at the same time Kate Clark improved on Elsie Lax's record at Somerville by getting a First there. There are some who would prefer to see all this more as a single erosion of timidity than as a burgeoning of a deep-seated intellectual power within the School. But it is an ascertainable fact that by the Thirties girls educated there, other than the readily distinguishable ones above, were Town Councillors and J.P.'s, bankers and chiropodists and pharmacists, Civil Servants and local administrators, secretaries and journalists. In another ten years or so there were dentists, a graduate Engineer (Sheila Harkness), a theologian, a philosopher, an architect and an **under**-graduate, at least, of the University of Algiers; by 1935 Eva Maccoby had notched up what seems to have been (in stringent times) the first State Scholarship

for the girls. All in all, in terms of public finance, the investment of a pittance had yielded a Rolls Royce return, though one would, perhaps, want to know a bit more about that Algiers affair.

Meanwhile G.T. Ferguson, with H.M. Inspectorate and some Town Councillors behind him, kept banging away about the incongruity of the buildings with what was being accomplished within their painful constrictions and what was adjudged by the Staff as an imperative : a widening of the curriculum to meet the innate skills of their pupils. G.T.F. retired in 1926.

Three years later he was publishing his analysis of a Board of Education paper, priced at ninepence and with a sinister K.G.B. title, "List 62". It was, in fact, a fairly innocuous statistical document comparing percentage passes in nationwide maintained Schools from 1904 to 1908 at what, in modern jargon, is called a 'core' of essential subjects at School (leaving) Certificate. Sunderland topped the boys' list at 84.4 (Birkenhead 84) and was second to Rochdale (73.7) in the girls' list (72.1). G.T.F. was careful to point out that 'Sunderland' signified essentially one School, but whether he was expressing gratification or being obliquely critical is not clear. Perhaps he was having it both ways.

In the same year, surely with a twinkle in his eye, he assembled a breathlessly torrential epitaph to himself and an epitome of the School he had master-minded, virtually one and the same thing : "If the School has made provision for the educational needs of boys meaning to proceed to a university, it has, of course, never taken that as its main object. The aim of its teaching scheme, other activities and moral training has been to benefit all its pupils by developing in them the best of which they are capable. The ranks of Old Bedans include clergymen, ministers, doctors, barristers, solicitors, university professors or lecturers, schoolmasters, dentists, chemists, veterinary surgeons, shipbuilders, naval architects, architects, quantity surveyors, civil servants, municipal officers, journalists, chartered and other accountants, bank officials, railway officals, master mariners, managers, superintendents, merchants, tradesmen, representatives of business houses and shipping firms, insurance agents, house agents, professional musicians, and engineers of every description - civil, mechanical, motor, electrical, marine, mining and chemical. "

And of one thing one may be quite sure: that this scholarly man did not conjure his list from the empty air; he generalized from his detailed records.

SOMETHING AT FIRST HAND

R.W.D. Abbot (1916-21), one time Deputy City Treasurer of Norwich and then Finance Officer of the East Anglian Health Authority writes thus:
"From 1916 to 1921 I was a "scholarship boy" at the Bede School. The accommodation and facilities were inadequate for the type of institution the school aimed to be (and, I think, nevertheless succeeded in being). Football was at a distant field and cricket was at the Hendon C.C. ground. My first Form Room in the Lower Fourth contained the school piano, so from time to time we were shunted to other accommodation while other forms had their Music. Sometimes the "other accommodation" was in the "Tin Tabernacle", a corrugated iron annexe in which we shivered with cold in the winter.

During my time four or five teaching posts were adequately filled by local clergymen due to the calls of war service. They were, I think, all university graduates. Despite war conditions the staff achieved a fine record of examination successes. Pupils of the school during my time who achieved national eminence included Marcus Lipton who became a Member of Parliament; David Cairns, who became a High Court judge; Robert Easton, the well-known bass singer, was a year or two ahead of my time.

There are memories of people and events to cherish. For example, dear old "Paddy" Hogben, the Latin master, pressing his finger-ends together and reproaching one, "You have not learned your home-lesson"; another master, little C.K. Witter, an awkward shambling figure who became a completely different individual as he did length after length of the High Street Baths with his stylish Australian Crawl in the Thursday afternoon sessions, (clean water day).

Two contrasting memories of events;

1) In the absence of an assembly hall all Forms lined up in the playground before each session. On one occasion the Headmaster, G.T. Ferguson, came in from Mowbray Park and accused someone of whistling while in formation; it was, he thought, someone in either of two adjacent forms (I was in one of them). Who whistled? No-one admitted it; we lads thought it might have been someone in the Park. As nobody admitted guilt the H.M. consigned the two forms to the Art Room to be caned by "Pongo" Hawkins, the Art Master. It was an early lesson in the maladministration of justice.

2) Our Music Master was a likeable man, R.F. Jarman; quite without malice, he was known to us as "Jampot". One day, young Burgess came in late to lesson and the form master, one of the clergymen (a serious type), asked for an explanation. "Please Sir, I had to go and see Mr. Jampot," said the unfortunate Burgess. Collapse of the Upper Fourth!
I have always been very grateful for my fine years at the Bede."

Lewis Hinkley (1918-26) fills in some details of a slightly different sort:

"I have much for which to thank the Bede School; before going there my education was almost nil. I was born in November 1909, and my early education was much interrupted by war and illness; indeed, I was in hospital when the armistice was signed in November 1918. At the age of nine I entered form 1 at the Bede Collegiate Boys' School, and knowing precious little. The classroom was in a corrugated iron building, which had pegs for caps and coats at the entrance, situated at the West Park end of Cowan Terrace. I never remember anything being stolen from this very open cloakroom. The classroom floor was scarred with raised knots due to constant wear; each desk, covered with carved initials, had a lid, covering a small space for the storage of books, and of course an inkwell. Heating was by a coal fire, which in winter was comforting to the master's bottom, but not to the shivering pupils.

On reaching form 111 I was moved into the brick built main school. There was no assembly hall; if the school had to be addressed, it was in the yard, usually by the headmaster, Mr. G.T. Ferguson, who was held in much awe, and whose favourite expression to any boy who had misbehaved was "I'll see you in my study instanter". There was no gymnasium; we marched to a local hall for P.T., and to the High Street Baths for swimming. There were no immediate playing fields; during my seven years at the school several locations were used, finally at the site of the present Bede School in Durham Road. Classrooms were again heated by coal fire, and I remember one master who had the disgusting and unhygienic habit of drying his wet handkerchief in front of the fire when he had a cold.

The Bede Girls' School adjoined the Boys' School but there was no school contact between the sexes: no mixed lessons or speech days, no combined sport, no dances. There were of course loving notes dropped from tramcars making secret assignations, and indeed some boys actually walked to school hand-in-hand with a girl!

I commenced at the Bede knowing very little, and for health reasons not allowed to play games until I was thirteen years of age. Thanks to the excellence of the teaching, and in spite of limited facilities compared with schools today, I finished in the Lower VIth, passing London Matriculation in the first division, and going on to take an external London B.Sc. from the Technical College. I overcame the damage done to my health from a wrong diagnosis during the troubled days of the war, and played for the school cricket first XI, and for the soccer second XI. For me it was certainly *"Post Tenebras Lux."*

J.L. Brown (1920-28) gives us this account:
"In the Autumn of 1920 I was ten years old, when, excited but intrepid, I walked for the first time into the drab-looking playground of the old Bede Collegiate Boys' School. My school uniform consisted of only one item, a school cap, which changed from dark blue to green when years later I became a school prefect. I still have the green cap. I had a scholarship, but there was no noticeable difference between scholarship boys and the others, who paid a small fee. Once a year I received a pound (£1) towards the cost of books.

The lower part of the school occupied the "Tin Tabernacle", a temporary building with a seemingly permanent rôle. Its rooms were filled with desks deeply carved with names. The heating was primitive, a coal fire in each room stoked with a poker that was dropped to its round handle into a hole in the floor. Teaching space was scarce; I recollect that my first Greek lesson with "Paddy" Hogben was in the Staff Room, where one or two masters were marking books.

Annual Sports Day must have come late in the School's life. I have before me a tattered notice requesting the pleasure of parents and friends to the First Annual Sports Day, Friday, June 16th 1922, from 2 to 6 p.m. on the School's New Playing Field, Tea and Refreshments supplied by Birchall, procurable at moderate prices in the marquee, and 74 prizes to be presented to the Winners by Mrs. Ferguson. The lavish number of prizes was of no help to me, but a friend won a glove face-cloth.

We seemingly had plenty of energy in those days. I lived near the Roker Park ground and walked with many others each day to school and back. I often took a packed lunch (to use modern parlance) to be eaten in rooms in the Tin Tabernacle under the remote supervision of a duty master. The wealthier among us appointed a runner, who collected sixpences and hared off to a shop in Durham Road for hot pies. Speed was of the essence: the pies had to be at least warm. In the dinner break fierce games of football were played in the school yard with considerable damage to the players. Windows went fairly regularly without any complaints from the Headmaster, if they were replaced "presently" (his word for "very soon"). There was a drill for this, a quick dash into town for glass and putty and the collecting of a blunt chisel and hammer from the woodwork shop. Glazing for many of us became an extra-curricular activity.

G.T. Ferguson, Headmaster, ably served by one clerk, Mr. Wayman, looked the part in a long black coat and a big felt hat. He was king and we his subjects, quite willingly I hasten to add. He stood no nonsense from anyone. In any sort of bother, which was extremely rare, he never looked too hard for ringleaders. To protestors he was known to reply, "Avoid even the appearance of evil". A wise lad kept away from mischievous packs. He taught English now and again in the school, and was not averse to spreading culture beyond its walls. I was involved in a lecture which we had on the French Revolution one Saturday evening in the Co-operative Hall, Green Street. He sent a group of us sixth formers, who were of the right age and sufficiently revolutionary in looks, to Mr. Jarman, Music master, who made us listen to a record of Chaliapin singing the Marseillaise. This we learnt by heart and at the appropriate time in the lecture we stood up and bawled out the anthem. I can still do most of it.

The staff gave us an undying confidence in the value of hard work. Perhaps I can mention one or two, such as Dr. Sturge, affectionately called "Chuckie" by little boys, a shy History teacher who treated his form every year to a strawberry tea party on Seaburn Beach, or Maths. teacher Maccoby, a very devout Jew and Talmudic scholar, who enjoyed playing in goal during sixth form games. There was a rumbustious R.I. teacher, Dr. Joseph McCrum, who interspersed extraordinary and sometimes hilarious topics into his scripture lessons, like the tale about his locking the church door against some persistent late-comers as he began his service in his Bridge Street church. My liking for English Literature, a subsidiary subject for me, was fostered by a Mr. Smithwhite, who delighted us with his teaching but scared us by never teaching closely enough to examination requirements. Grisdale, a French master, was once asked by a young innocent, "Please, Sir, are you foreign?". He was greatly upset and in a high-pitched and angry voice reminded the poor lad of his teacher's Lake District origins.

Not having a school hall we mustered in the playground in all weathers. Speech Day was therefore held in the Victoria Hall. What a splendid affair it was! The place was packed from top to bottom with enthusiastic parents and friends. There was always a principal speaker, and I can mention some who took on the task: the Bishop of Durham, the Right Reverend H.H. Henson, Mr. Luke Thompson, a local M.P. and, appropriately for a Wearside school, Sir William Noble, once Chairman of the U.K. Chamber of Shipping, and also a solid number of university big-wigs such as vice-chancellors and masters of colleges. But it was the entertainment that drew the crowd, a play (once, in my time, a parody of The Tempest), good music, chorus singing and solos, organised by Jarman, a good

J.H. SMITHWHITE (1907-35)
Senior English Master
"If you must smoke, boy, smoke a pipe!
ORIGINAL DRAWING BY A BEDAN
Name unknown

music teacher. I remember one year a fine solo by Bob Pearson, who, I am sure, is the same one who went on with his brother to become the famous ''Bob and Alf Pearson'' duo. ''

W.T. Hinkley (1923-30), Canon and Chairman of the Northumbria Historic Churches Trust, has these reflections:

''A hundred years of Bede! My memory drifts back over more than sixty of them, back to the early 1920s. Those were the days when the ambition of every budding youth (backed by the pious aspirations of his parents) was to 'pass the scholarship' and thus gain entry to what was no ordinary secondary school, but a highly-prized establishment which gloried in the title of Bede *COLLEGIATE* School. The person who had given it that title, one G.T. Ferguson, was himself no ordinary Headmaster, but a revered character who might have stepped right out of Greyfriars School of which we used to read in those schoolboy periodicals, The Gem and The Magnet.

It *required* a man of vision and personality to enable a school housed in such inadequate premises to maintain a high profile. Those buildings near Mowbray Park lacked refinements like an assembly hall, a gymnasium or a library, and the absence of any inside toilet facilities gave rise to the request: ''Please may I go across the yard?'' The first four classes were housed in what was known as 'The Tin Tab' - one of those temporary constructions which had long exceeded its scheduled life.

So what? One was at the Bede, and pride in that step forward far surpassed any physical disadvantages. To be there was to come under the influence of a distinctive set of teachers who, one felt, had been with the school since its inception. The nicknames which were attached to them implied no disrespect; they were inherited from previous generations of Bedans, and it is doubtful if even the holders would have had it any differently, -- men like 'Paddy' Hogben (famous for his method of administering the cane by taking the culprit into the corridor, taking a run at him, and wielding the weapon en passant. Mirabile dictu he sometimes missed); 'Chuck' Sturge, a gentle historian whose organisation of wild-flower collections inspired many a boy to become an ardent naturalist; 'Puppy' Willis the Physics Master; 'Tosh' Blyth of Chemistry; and 'Pongo' Hawkins whose Art Lessons challenged us to important accomplishments like drawing a cube in perspective and giving the right colour and texture to a tulip. The days of jeans-and-sweaters teachers had not arrived, and there were not many masters who failed to keep up the high academic image by sporting cap and gown.

In Robert Jarman the school had a first-rate Music Master. The era of 'folksy' school music was not yet upon us, and we derived great satisfaction from the classical composers. Schubert, Schumann and Handel were second nature to us. It was R.J. who composed the school song which we sang with great gusto (and unofficial variations) on Speech Day.

Sporting activities required a fair amount of grim determination. There were no playing fields in the immediate vicinity of the School, so a games-afternoon was largely taken up with a crocodile-walk to and from a hired field on Hylton Road with a brief interlude for a game in between. Cricket was an adventure. The only requirement for a pitch was 22 yards between the stumps. The nature of the surface was a matter of pure chance ... and every man for himself.

But ahead of all this there was a distant horizon beyond which lay ..... *THE NEW SCHOOL*. And at last it became a reality. In 1929 we moved to those fine buildings on Humbledon Hill which seemed to provide every physical amenity a school should have .... a hall in which daily assembly became the order; well-prepared playing-fields; a library ..... and a dining room! ''

T.W. Carter (1924-31) remarks that his generation can claim the distinction of having witnessed two historic changes: the retirement of the founding Headmaster and the triumphal march into the new building. He knew the old Headmaster only as a small boy could know him, an intimidatory figure in cap and gown with a bristling white moustache and voice that rang out moral reprobations over the shivering files drawn up on the windy playground that was the 'Assembly Hall'. ''His former pupils respect his memory'', Wilf says, in the politic terms of a lawyer. The gym, somebody else's in Bede Tower, but nevertheless equipped with wall-bars and ropes, was *REAL*. In the best traditions

of boys' school-stories, the games-master was an ex-Army Sergeant, P.F. Fulton, tall, upright, with a perfectly waxed moustache and the mark of battle upon him, an artificial right arm, a matter that in no way hampered his participation in lessons. This admirable man was the first Scoutmaster of the Bede Troop and took them to camps in Yorkshire, Somerset and on Scottish loch-sides. R.S. Taylor (Geography), Wilf recalls, assisted in all this. Taylor played Rugby for Cumberland, his native county, and was the originator of the game at Bede.; He was known as "Woffy", a nickname attributable, it seems, to his dialect advice to a Scout having trouble with a smoky wood-fire: "Take your hat off and woff it oop".

Wilf has a number of photographs of groups of boys in immensely seductive garbs of a 'unisex' design and engaged in exciting histrionics against indeterminate backdrops. They are, nobody now watching televised Parliamentary occasions will be surprised to learn, members of the Debating Society. But they are also primitive life-forms of Bede Drama. The Debating Society had been a very early form of activity of the School encouraged by the Headmaster, who saw it as an important educational instrument. (Boys will recall that there were Senior and Junior branches.) The Society had been the provider of public entertainment at Speech Days in the form of one-act plays and dramatic excerpts and had put on pantomime and light pieces, notably at the end of the Christmas Term.

The latter eventually grew into the uproarious Christmas Concert that Old Bedan boys will recollect, when for an hour or two the Lord of Misrule reigned in Hall: satirical turns were put on in which authority, eccentricity and pomposity were guyed, jazz-bands raised the pulse-rate, outrageous sketches flouted all known dramatic conventions, Staff put on the motley and Alan Smith and G.T. Moore (Old Bedans themselves) sang rollicking songs. It was a healthily spontaneous and communal way of lifting the lid on high spirits. Better than the current way, perhaps, of pelting flour and ripping uniforms, even a trifle more sophisticated.

The Speech Day theatrical material was in more sober vein, for the benefit of V.I.P.'s, and was seminal of the more punishing drama that was the eventual staff of life of Bede Drama. Joe Landau (1930-35) records what might be termed a self-defensive coup: "We had many distinguished guests for our Speech Days and I well remember Lord Londonderry distributing the prizes on one occasion. A production of 'Iphigenia in Tauris' was my particular highlight and I still have the Sunderland Echo photographs of myself as a Greek handmaiden! ..... I have, however, particularly fond memories of 1932 when I was Junior Athletics Champion", when the plaudits of the crowd, no doubt restored his sense of identity.

Joe is one of a number or people who mention the annual brouhaha of the search for textual truth at a knock-down rate:
"Memories flood back covering every sphere of school activity and my very first impressions are of an atmosphere reminiscent of an Eastern bazaar with the ritual buying and selling of school books in the quadrangle. If anyone needed an early initiation into the reality of commercial life this was it and many are the tales of bargains struck and gross overpayments made. Buying-and-selling-rings developed in every corner, prices were 'set' for essential books and innocent third formers were quickly relieved of their money unless they adopted the modern advice of "Shopping around". After this frenetic introduction to school life we then all trooped down to Hills to buy the new books which

we had failed to secure second hand. It was no surprise after a couple of years that this system was abolished and all books were supplied by a benevolent education authority.''

The 'benevolence' of the education authority is beyond question. But it needed the searching parsimony and the tyranny of people like the Boys' School Clerk, Miss Amy Russell, and of teaching staff who were offended, personally, by abuse of a book, text- or exercise-, to ensure that the benevolence was not measured as cornucopia but understood to be a subject for full reparation, in the interests of successors. The 'benevolence' was, in practice, almost universally understood by pupils and parents to be part of an inescapable contract. The 'contract', however, came ultimately to be little more than a sanctioned personal licence to destroy. Joe's final remark carries more than textual truth: ''The overriding memories are of a school competitive in every sphere, highly respected by all and a certain avenue to the future which if traversed conscientiously will have set one on the correct path for the years ahead.''

The personal responses from Old Bedan girls of the period spanning the First World War do not remotely suggest a spirit of the oppressed. Nearly everyone seems to have been, for instance, a terrifying hockey player trained in trench-warfare at Hylton Road. Doreen Macrae (nee Ward) (1925-32), whose mother was a scholarship girl of 1900, well etched, it seems, with Miss Todd's severity, even now writes with glee about the ineluctable hazards of the time:
''Walking a mile four times a day to and from School until I got a bike seemed no hardship - only the rich had a car then! Hockey was a new thrill! The pitch in Hylton Road had been a ploughed field and was not levelled before grass covered it - I remember the Games Mistress shouting to us beginners ''Keep to your ridge!''

It was obviously much more difficult to control the ball on such a pitch but we mastered the art if we were keen. Visiting teams were of course at a great disadvantage as they were used to playing on a level pitch, so the School team usually won! '' ''

Doreen passed well into the Civil Service in 1932 as an Executive Officer, based in London. Even here, however, she found herself poised precariously on yet another ridge, for she lived in the Y.W.C.A. Hostel in Victoria, five doors away in the one direction from Lady Mary Cambridge and three doors away in the other from a brothel. It must surely have been the perfect training in the impartiality of the Civil Service mind.

A VISION REALISED, IN PART

G.A. Bradshaw took over the headship of the Boys' School in 1926. He was a very highly qualified academic, holder of a Master's degree in Chemistry of Manchester University. He had served throughout the War with the Lancashire Fusiliers and came to Bede after several years as Senior Chemistry Master at Bromsgrove School, Worcester, an independent boys' school.

Evidence of what he said from time to time and of what he wrote point to the fact that he carried with him a code of convictions which he was prepared to adjust rationally to the demands of ordinary circumstances, such as those of the examination system, the requirements of professional and trading bodies and of further education. He was, however, adamant in his determination that all boys in their early years should be trained in accurate memory and the use of language, preferably with the accompaniment of a Classical one. He believed that a study of literature and history led to the understanding of underlying ideas and of the cross-currents of civilisation. Introductory science, he thought, should be taught in ways that would capture an interest in what he termed the 'romantic', so that an inventive spirit would be nurtured. The latter, however, was to be governed by the discipline of the linguistic insight gained elsewhere. Boys in the Upper School were to be educated in a way that would breed confidence in the art and practice of generalisation from an assured body of fact. He was of the opinion that work should be fitted into the context of active recreation. He believed in the freedom of the expression of individual talent of whatever sort.

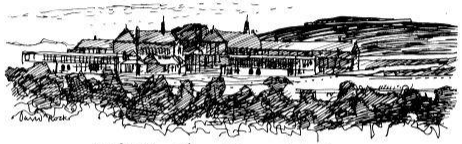
When G.A.B. was expressing his notions of practical education thus he was, it may be held, doing no more than repeating, in essence, the thoughts of English educators from the Sixteenth Century onwards. Old Bedans who were educated during his time and who have not known up to now whether he did anything very much, except put his feet on the desk and listen to his mahogany-clad wireless set (as the story went) may like to amuse themselves for a moment or two in considering whether and to what degree they went to a school that aimed at satisfying these tenets. Alternatively, of course, there is always the option of considering whether *they* aimed at fitting the tenets of the school.

By this time victory for the Big-lenders over the Little-lenders in the Battle of the New School was virtually assured, though there was sturdy resistance to the end, 1925, when the first sod was cut; as there continued to be from those who remained convinced that a good thing for some could not be a Good Thing, since a good thing for some was a Bad Thing because it was not for all. The Chief Education Officer, Herbert Reed, took a more convincing line in face of such humbug. He wrote, on the occasion of the opening of the Durham Road buildings to say that it was patently wrong to assume that any boy or girl who did not go to the Bede School should not have open to him the opportunity to be formally educated after the age of 14. He put the matter in blunt terms: "Apart from private enterprise, the facilities for secondary education have been limited to the Bede School, the Girls' High School, St. Antony's R.C. School and, under wider interpretation, the Junior Technical School and the Monkwearmouth Central School". The total annual entry to the Bede Schools was, so far as can at this moment be readily ascertained, in the region of 210 pupils. The magnitude of the misjudgment of a large and important town about the extent and depth of the educable talent of its young people can only be a matter of astonishment. At the same time it is only proper to ponder the inherent intellectual qualities of the population of the Bede School. The whole matter serves to underline the Miltonic remark that is used as the epigraph on the title-page of this booklet. It cannot, either, be without some significance for reputation that G.T.F.'s last Speech Day had as its guest of honour that revered man and outstanding scholar, the Bishop of Durham, Dr. Hensley Henson.

By a happy accident the foundation stones were laid in April, 1927, by two old friends of the School and advocates of its cause, Alderman D. Cairns, in his Mayoral year, and Alderman S.M. Swan, Chairman of the Education Committee. Construction and equipment took two years, at a total cost of about £112,000, £10,000 of which was the cost of the land, £94,000 for the buildings and £8,000 for furnishings. A 50% Government grant meant that the cost to the town was the equivalent of a penny rate per annum i.e. £3,500.

The design was the work of the architects, Wm. and J.R. Milburn of 19 Fawcett St., whose perspective drawing was acclaimed sufficiently to have become part of an exhibition run in London and in Melbourne by the Royal Academy. It is pointless to describe the buildings to Old Bedans, of course; but they have the appearance of enduring youth, sixty-odd years on. The outward aspects are imposing in their modest turrets, the annual home of kestrels, and in the splendour of their roof-shapes; the windows are elegant, brick and tile are fresh and harmonious; the general symmetry of the structures is off-set by the undulations of the land and the, now, modest gardens. Those educated within are likely to recall the pervasive air of light and a freedom from physical constraint. The elusive corporate spirit of being Bedans was encouraged by the sensation of unity conveyed by living in a close quadrangular community where everyone, large and small, was everyone else's neighbour and everyone stood on everyone else's feet, with relative impunity. (It came as what is described now as a 'cultural shock' to see the place recently described in the Sunderland Echo in an advertising feature by a firm of 'internal converters' as an "institutional-type building" that "would not provide the more sophisticated ambience that a six *(sic)* form college requires". The countless members of the Bede Sixth Form, who were taught to shun English of that sort, incidentally, never showed much evidence of being stir-happy or of believing that the most immediate and necessitous prop to scholarship was wall-to-wall carpeting. After all, they were old lags who had done seven years hard, knocking the edges off those concrete stairs equipped with nothing more than their bare hands and one pair of hob-nailed boots throughout.)

The official inauguration of the new buildings on October 19th, 1929, was a very grand civic occasion. It was reported in full in the Sunderland Echo, then a full-sized daily retailing national and international news. The paper ran, in addition, an elaborately researched and splendidly illustrated Supplement devoted to the Schools. The main speaker was Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Secretary of State of Education in the then Labour Government. He wished the School to be an exemplar for the setting up of other such schools in Sunderland as well as modern and central schools; he enjoined everyone to address themselves to making Bede School a really great school comparable with those founded three hundred years before, such as the one he had himself attended, which from humble origins had grown in numbers, in wealth and in fame. He wondered what the Bede School would make of it three hundred years on; something very big, he guessed. It will give pleasure to only very few who have had a close connexion with the School to know that a mere sixty years on they can give a definitive answer to his speculation. Alderman Swan appears to have made a more sceptical, and hence a wiser, response: "When the history of the period comes to be written, what you are witnessing today will be a worthy record of an achievement contributing to the welfare and prosperity of Sunderland and equal to anything done in the past".



The Bede from Barnes Park - early 1930's

In what has been, currently, an absence of evidence to the contrary, it seems possible to assume that the transmigration from old to new buildings was effected without religious ecstasy; for pupils it was a matter for suspended elation, one meriting protracted and formal scrutiny. One girl committed herself only thus far, after having heard a somewhat lachrymose mistress say something to the effect that she could never settle in the clinical new after the cosy pig-sty old:
"I had watched the New School being built and longed for it to be opened, but I too felt uncertainty as we gathered in the Old School Yard and the door was officially closed for the last time."
"To me", she goes on, "the New School was a wonderful place which never failed to make me feel satisfied to be a Bedan. What excitement as we assembled in the Hall, sat on the tip-up seats and heard to which room we were to go, and what disappointment to find we were next to the Common Room! I recall how a member of the First Team began at 9 a.m. to turn one of the old green tunics and had it ready for wear at the match at four o'clock, and how when Miss Stirk tripped, spilling over herself a jar full of pond-life we had just collected from the water-garden, she said as we helped her to her feet, 'Don't mind me, get the specimens!'"

A male Old Bedan, after an inspection of the place and recording his admiration for the elevation of the conception of the Hall and the wonderful facilities for the practising of 'stinks', ends his piece with what can best be termed a threnody on the death of a sacred cow, "mens sana in sano corpore'. The crown o' the earth has melted. There is nothing left remarkable beneath the visiting moon. The engine of progress has, after all, been a Friday-nighter. Somewhere along the line the cow-catcher has fallen off. **The Gymnasiums have ground into oblivion.** But a farthing on the rates has been saved. What is cold obstruction and rot of youthful joints compared to this noble cause?

Certainly, the move caused no flush of blood to the brain as far as the all-round responsibilities of high quality education were concerned, for providers or recipients. The School Prospectus for 1929

relented no whit its traditional stern requirements; fees remained the same (£3.10.0d - £4.0.0d per term); cost of books would be about £1.15.0d. ''Any boy whose character or conduct is unsatisafctory, or whose influence in the School is harmful may be suspended from attendance or expelled by the Headmaster (subject to its being reported to the Governors)''. ''Some boys, whose development is slow, gain advantage from staying two years in a Form, but a boy who makes no progress, either from carelessness or inability to take advantage of the education offered him, cannot be allowed to remain in the School. If in his second year in any Form a boy gets a marks percentage of less than 50, his withdrawal from the School is requested''. The performance of teachers was under the close supervision of the Headmaster and Senior Masters through systems of records and of public examination results, published for all to see in the Prospectus. Governors were empowered to cause the School or any part of it to be examined by a University or other Examining Body. His Majesty's Inspectorate passed judgement in particular and overall.

The interlocking chain of responsibility of pupil, parent, staff, Governors and arbiters made possible a system of education whose aims were defined, understood and unified by general consent, in a manner that is now, it appears, the near exclusive property of Independent Schools. As Old Bedans will recollect, truancy was rare enough to be a subject for wondering gossip and for genuine investigation. When it occurred on a Wednesday afternoon that happened to coincide with a Sunderland A.F.C. replay Cup Tie the matter was marked without rancour on the Thursday morning by the Headmaster.

THE ALL-TOO-BRIEF RESPITE

It is not, perhaps, commonly understood that a person born in the last year of the First World War could have celebrated a 'key-of-the-door' twenty-first birthday by getting a permanent exeat by bullet or bomb at the beginning of the Second. There were gales of savagery blowing hard, and near at hand, in the interval, unassuaged by counter-blasts of hot air emanating from the League of Nations. There were recession and depression and the B.B.C. news. An Eighteenth Century poet, writing about the 'gilded youth' of his time at Eton College, said sadly, ''Alas, regardless of their doom / The little victims play''. The not-so-gilded - and certainly not golden - youth of Sunderland who were educated at the Bede appear, like their contemporaries in such schools elsewhere, to have occupied the quiet eye of the storm. Quiet, indeed, but far from passive. The new buildings fulfilled an end in providing a real sense of progress and a divorcement from the anxieties that many unquestionably experienced in their private lives. In a context of spaciousness and modernity they could look with a renewal of confidence over old and new vistas of knowledge. The broad acres of playing fields added a dimension to their games that was not merely physical. The spirit of the place came to invest them.

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The accounts that follow seem to illustrate remarkably how the School functioned for people of widely different talents and purposes.

Both Girls' and Boys' Schools have seen a steady stream of their members on to the practice of Medicine in fields that range through psychiatry, general practice, anaesthesia, microbiological work, surgery, gynaecology, optics, social and forensic divisions, academic research and teaching and so on and so on in this diverse and complex area.

Alan W. Woodruff (1927 - 34) is one whose scholarship, skill and energy have won him an international reputation. His specialist concern is the increasingly demanding and world-wide one of Tropical Diseases. In 1952 he was appointed Wellcome Professor of that subject at University College Hospital, London, a position he held until his retirement in 1987. He has carried out work both clinical and on the ground of a quality that earned him the recognition of being made a Companion of the Order of St. Michael and St. George and, recently, of being awarded the O.B.E. Just as his old School took a proud interest in his activities so did he in the School, through his participation in the London Branch of the Old Bedans' Association; he has given us generous help in the business of setting up the Centenary celebrations. 'Retirement' is for Alan, it ought to be said, a relative term. He is

at present the Professor engaged in the setting up of a Department of Medicine in the University of Juba in Southern Sudan. The difficulties he faces with insouciance would daunt many a younger man: there is a Civil War going on, with irreconcilable religious overtones, between North and South; communications are so difficult that merely posting a letter is a contrivance in logistics; he has had to remove his students north to Khartoum in an endeavour to ensure that they are fed; English newspapers now and then report chronic shortages of medicines and equipment. The account that follows suggests the vigour, discipline and breadth of human interest that have come to invest his entire life:

''The main recollection I have of my years at Bede is that they were enjoyably spent with the feeling that one was part of a community dedicated to achievement. The emphasis on achievement brought the best efforts from us; it brought its joys when one felt successful and its periods of depression when one was not; but overall it was good for us and helped many to make a contribution to society.

I started in Form 3 (2) in September 1927. Our form master was Mr. (Ian, I think) Cameron, a kindly yet firm man who stood no nonsense and gave us a real perception of the beauties of poetry, something which has remained with me ever since. Our study of English continued the next year with 'Papa' Smithwhite, an elderly Mr. Chips type who greatly increased our love of literature and poetry, who mused on Oxford's dreaming spires, and related much of what we studied to real life by recounting his own experiences. Perhaps he regarded us as being a little distant from him and of being in a world not quite his own. I recall that while he was our English master his wife died. I wrote a letter of sympathy to him. I had a very pleasant appreciative reply but it included a revealing phrase which 60 years later lives in my memory. It was that 'the sympathies of those in the lesser walks of life meant much to him'.

Our introduction to chemistry was through Mr. G.T. Moore and to physics by Mr. R.T. Phail. Their teaching was clear and incisive and Mr. Moore later showed great interest in and gave much encouragement to our activities when Old Bedans. In my third year at the school the Headmaster Mr. G.A. Bradshaw took us for chemistry and was a splendid teacher. We were, at first, a little in awe of him but soon came to appreciate the very warm side of his personality. He took tremendous pains with those who showed an interest in the subject. Largely through the encouragement he gave me my resolve from then until my school certificate year was to study chemistry at university. It was in that year that I read Paul de Kruif's 'The Microbe Hunters'. The insight it gave me into the thrill of searching for the causes of disease, the great value chemistry and particularly bio-chemistry has in that search, and the prospects of working directly for people rather than entirely within a laboratory, led me to veer to medicine rather than pure chemistry. The decision was made firmer by the great slump in the early 1930's and the realisation that career opportunities for chemists were then very restricted.

While Mr. Bradshaw was our chemistry master a crisis occurred in his headmastership. He expelled a couple of boys, one of whom was in my class. They were lads who were always anti authority and discipline, fond of breaking rules and often getting into some sort of trouble, who hung on the school 'pepper pot' a sheet, on which was painted a skull and cross-bones with the inscription 'GAB, NBG'. We as boys accepted this expulsion as a matter of course. There had to be discipline if the school was to be run and rebellion against discipline to this degree was not compatible with continuing membership of the school. Unfortunately the Editor of the Sunderland Echo at that time decided to take up their cause and published several articles on the matter, concluding with an open letter to Mr. Bradshaw asking him to reinstate the boys. It was argued that the punishment was too severe for a boyish prank. Prank it might have been, but like many things, it was the culmination of antecedent forces which the Editor seemed not to have been aware of, or understood. Mr. Bradshaw bore all this stoically and never replied in the press. We had much sympathy for him.

The School Debating Society was an important formative influence on many of us. It was guided, in my time, first by Mr. Charles Sturge the senior History master, then by Mr. G.T. Moore. The topics debated greatly increased our interest in and knowledge of affairs of moment. The discipline of having to put one's thoughts together in an orderly fashion and then put them to an audience when standing on one's feet, is something for which I have been grateful ever since. Two of the happiest

days of my school career were those on which I won first the Debating Society Challenge Cup and then the India Cup. The latter was donated by a Mr. Everett, an Old Bedan working in India and was naturally to be given for a speech in a debate relating to India. I wrote to the School on the 50th anniversary of the day on which I won the India Cup and asked if it was now covered in names, for, if so, I would have been happy to provide another. To my regret I learnt that the Society had been defunct for some years and it was not known even where the cup was. If the Society is, 'phoenix like', reincarnated, my offer of a Cup still stands.

Throughout its 100 years of existence the School has had an immense influence for good on the lives of those who have been privileged to be its pupils. That influence has been of great benefit to many parts of the world in general and to Sunderland in particular. Long may it continue''.

W.S. Munroe (1928 - 35) highlights some different aspects of the flexible scene:
''On moving to the new school in 1929 we discovered a dining hall under supervision of a charming, young lady, Miss Dunn (dinner 9d: tea 4d. - scrumptious scones). This was shared with the Girls' School but we were separately seated and at dinner a mistress asked the Lord to look down upon and bless the girls' dinner: then a master asked the Lord to do same for the boys' dinner, which, as it was the same dinner, seemed to us a waste of the Almighty's valuable time. The segregation policy was strictly enforced and on one occasion the headmaster, Mr. Bradshaw announced, in a dry tone which disclosed he was not personally disturbed, ''The Headmistress has informed me that a boy has been seen speaking to a girl: the practice will cease''.

After leaving school eventually I managed to converse with a female Bedan (Isabel Lundy), and fifty years ago we were able to marry on the outbreak of war, which made it necessary to abandon the policy of not employing married women as teachers. Unless an employer continued to pay a serviceman his civilian salary he could not support an unemployed wife for the pay of a private soldier was 14 shillings a week - £28 pounds per annum in today's money.

The master by whom I was most influenced was the Quaker Socialist Dr Charles Sturge, Senior History Master, our friendship developing after he had retired and I had left school. A school lesson I remember with pleasure was on a hot summer afternoon when we were reading round the form Macaulay's 'Essay on Clive'. Suddenly, the Senior English Master, Mr. Smithwhite, flung his copy in the wastepaper basket, saying ''Boys, I can stand it no longer: I am retiring and for the rest of the term we will read 'The Importance of being Earnest'. My interest awakened, I obtained from the library 'The Complete Works of Oscar Wilde' and starting at page 1 (The Picture of Dorian Grey) continued reading to the end when, fascinated by a world where 'work was the curse of the drinking classes'. I left behind for ever the Puritan Sunday School in which I was a teacher.

Although nothing published after the death of Queen Victoria was mentioned by our teacher, pre-war Bedans discovered and told each other about Freud and Marx and wrote gloomy poems, mainly in the style of T.S. Eliot, as they contemplated the difficulty of earning a living in a depressed economy and the probability of another war. The boys with whom I stayed in touch became, after six years of military service, doctors, teachers, civil servants, solicitors and accountants.''

Then P.W. Hope (1928 - 36) gives the kaleidescope another turn: here we have that not uncommon specimen of the Bedan race, the bloody-minded unbeliever, in himself and in everything else, whose road to Damascus and Ultimate Truth lay through the mud of the playing fields and the combined pressure and belief of family and Staff:
''I struggled to keep pace with the rest of my intake. I remember I was always in the ''B'' stream or the ''lower'' stream as I think it was then called. Anyway, I kept going and Bradshaw, the Headmaster, together with 'Tubby' Maccoby, R.S. Taylor and the rest of the staff gradually got me to settle at my desk. But Fulton, the P.T. Games master, had much more influence and before long I was knocking on the school 1st teams in Soccer and Cricket. I would like to record here, modestly of course, that I became Captain of Soccer for two years and Cricket for three years, or was it the other way round? Also, whilst I'm in this boasting mood, I shared the school's Victor Ludorum in 1935 with Eric Marsh, my closest school pal. How often now I wonder where he is and his sister Muriel!

School certificate was a disaster! Plenty of passes but only one credit and that was in Latin. Everybody, and particularly my father, descended on me and told me that sports weren't everything in life. They insisted that if I wanted 'to get on in life' it was about time I really settled down to serious study. I took the advice: I forgot about Raich Carter's triumphs. First London Matriculation in 1934, then Higher School Certificate in 1935 and External London Intermediate and various university scholarships in 1936. I chose London University and graduated in 1939, with Dip. Ed. in 1940. I served in the Army 1940 - 46, taught in a Grammar School 1946 - 48, served in the R.A.F.

1948 - 72, lectured in an Army Apprentice College 1972 - 82 and now, resting on my laurels, if any, live on the banks of the River Thames."

T. Cowie (1936 - 40) is, almost without doubt, our most interesting example of a range of Old Bedans who, having taken a dispassionate look at what the School offered in relation to a career that he had early determined, decided that it was not entirely suited and therefore to be left. His account provides a pretty useful piece of tutorage in rational discrimination to that seeming multitude of young people of both sexes who now appear to reject the acquisition of knowledge as a matter of what passes for principle. Tom had to pay to leave, it is worth mentioning, though he has probably recouped the cost since:

"I am sure that, at the time, I looked on my years at 'The Bede' as a sentence to be served before I could devote the whole of my time to my father's motor cycle business.

I've never claimed to be an academic and my happiest memories of those days were events on the football field and in the boxing ring rather than in the classroom. I can still remember a couple of bouts with Jim Oldfield, now a distinguished surgeon, although I can't recall who won.

It wasn't the best scholastic relationship and I'm sure that the headmaster, Mr. Bradshaw, shared my relief when I left. I was 15 years old and within a few months I was Company Secretary of T. Cowie Ltd., buying, selling and repairing motor cycles.

But looking back over more than half a century, I can already recall the tremendous characters who presided over us. They left a lasting impression (sometimes literally) on their pupils.

I am sure that my contemporaries share my vivid memories of the forceful personalities of Tommy Ayre, Harry Wilson, and "Basher" Marks.

That I can so clearly recall, not only the names but the mannerisms and style of "Solly" Eker, Peter Fulton, "Baggy" Moore, Tosh Blyth and George Taylor is proof of their impact on me.

Despite my lack of interest in the classroom, I must have absorbed an appreciation of the standards they demanded, and received, from their pupils. Punctuality was not just a virtue, it was a necessity if swift retribution was not to follow. My lasting concern for 'being on time' must stem from those days.

With the exception of my wartime service, I have spent the whole of my life working in and from Sunderland. Not only have I been able to keep in touch with many of my contemporaries, I have been able to follow with interest, and sometimes concern, the changes in the School over the years.

The Bede Collegiate School that I attended has long gone, but each generation of pupils have their own memories of 'The Bede' and will have shared my sadness on learning that it is to close. "

W. Fell (1933-40), a History graduate of distinction of Durham University and eventually Head Of History and Economics at the combined Bede Schools, established the lasting value of the latter discipline by submitting his contribution written on both sides of the paper. He and J.A. Devine, his contemporary, combine, in common with most others, in praise of Miss Dunn, the Dinner Controller, whose Friday fish and chips at 8d a go are still a loving memory. The two-hour Dinner Break was an opportunity for a journey of geological discovery for small boys into Quarry Hill where fossilized sea shells informed them that they were in a submarine theatre. These two were members of the famous First XI Soccer of 1937-39 which lost only one game during that period. According to Jeff the loss of the game by 4 goals to 2 to Ryhope Grammar was due solely to the Bede fielding only a half-strength side. The side was captained by Walter MacFarlane, who became a linguist of repute, a translator of Ibsen in a much-to-be-welcomed modern idiom and, eventually, first, occupant of a

Chair in the University of East Anglia and, then, Vice Chancellor; he gained an Oxford Blue at the game, something that may only once since have been achieved - by E. Tweddle in the early 1950's. Bill Fell believes that his life-long pursuit of historical studies was set off by a Master known as Time Chart Willie, properly W.E. Willingham, whose method was based on getting the boys to find their own material and chart it in pictorial and chronological form.

He gives, too, a novel slant on the many-facetted Senior English Master, "Daddy" Smithwhite, who turns out to have been a sort of tribal witch-doctor with special powers over an aching tooth: a 'Merlin-like figure' who would deposit a great wad of cotton-wool saturated in a magic essence upon the offending tooth and utter a beneficent incantation. Which worked.

When the Schools were amalgamated in 1967 the P.T.A. did their best to remove the stigma, as they tended to see it, of its being without a swimming pool. It is, in fact, a feature of an enterprising race of girls and boys that as many good swimmers emerged as did. The Annual Swimming Sports, based on House competition, first in the High Street and then in the Newcastle Road Baths, was a torrid and noisy affair attended by very large numbers of supporters. Not everyone, as Bill Fell remembers, was triumphant. The tiled surface at High Street was treacherously slippery. In a crucial diving competition his feet disappeared from under him at the edge and he hurtled in with a crash and a tidal wave. The rules classified this as his neat dive. He was unplaced in the results, and is still a trifle aggrieved. He remarks on the insistence in the Sixth Form of extensive reading, notably in English and in History and quotes as an instance, during a period of study of the French Revolution, having been required to contrast the style and approach of Carlyle, Belloc and Madelin, a good preparation for University life, he thought.

THE GREAT TEMPEST OF '34

The Girls' School had had a respite that no-one would have wished: Miss Boon suffered a protracted and debilitating illness that kept her away from work. Miss Hutchinson (who was known, with stupefying inappropriateness, as 'Crutch') an ebullient character renowned for her stentorian touchline voice and ubiquitous inspiration, took over for the time being. The School, however, had sunk into something of a rut. In 1934 Miss E.J.E. Moul proceeded to jack it out of it. As years went by, it may be added, it became well known to the Staff of the Boys' School that she was also pretty handy with that other sort of jack known as 'black'. She was a charming exponent of the art and practice of shanghai: before one had fully recovered consciousness and equilibrium one found that one was hauling up the main top-gallants of her tall ship as she raced her human cargo into the trades.

Not that she lacked strength and agility (especially of mind) on her own account. She announced timetables of events before they had been so much as gleams in anyone else's eye; others like the Nativity Play suffered a Pharaonic infanticide, peremptorily. Where there was a vacuum there was an instantaneous occupant: a Sketch Club appeared and a Classical Society and a Middle School Debating Society that offered places to the Upper School, for Miss Moul aimed low, with the future in mind. No-one will be in the least surprised to know that a Modern Events Club sprang into being: girls were flung around to all parts of the then known world, Switzerland, Denmark, France, Norway, Holland, Ireland, Belgium and Glasgow; they went barn-storming and to International Camps in London; they were taught Mathematics in the Amercian tongue and they were organised into correspondence

chains in all sorts of obscure foreign corners. For three years, advisedly to say, on the trot they had major successes in the French Play Contest sponsored by the French Government and the newspaper, "La France". There was a mass migration to Durham on the twelve-hundreth anniversary of the death of Bede. For the sake of those who lived there was a new gymnasium for the purpose of *serious* exercise, while each morning in the hall there were rhythmics for the assurance of posture. Acts of petty piracy were committed in the acquisition of violins, with the ultimate aim of a school orchestra. Not a moment too soon, there was an issue of Nelson's Blood, one-third of a pint of milk each. "Activities", Miss Moul murmured, "are as important to a school as lessons."

She herself led the way from the top, as it were, to the bottom: the Junior Dramatic Society performed a dramatized version of the novel, "Under the Greenwood Tree", written by the Headmistress. Monty Joseph may have forgotten how he was persuaded to present a hockey stick to J. Hey, the most improved player. Doris Miller won the Poetry Prize for a sonnet whose only fault was rather exactingly adjudged by pseudonymous "Martha South" to have 'an ending with an insufficiently metaphysical seventeenth century twist'. Was the mysterious Martha no less a being than Miss Moul *herself?* A great wind bloweth where it listeth; and it leaves no cobwebs.

But even her sturdy aphorism, "That school only is alive that tries to mobilise its several differences into a *common wealth",* had yet to undergo its severest test.

THE FAMILY CULT

A not insignificant influence in the growth of a school like the Bede to a fairly venerable age is that it has attracted families through its doors. The younger generations are governed, to some degree, by the assumptions of their seniors. This makes for an economy of social effort by the school, understanding and trust between parent and school, and the establishment of a common educational pursuit. It has to be left to the staff, of course, to see that stability does not become frozen into a form of geological time.

Harold Lister (1928-33) has provided the basis of a familial Bede pattern and an interesting illustration of the infinite complexity of responses to the education offered. The genealogy has a gap or two, but will serve. The progenitor, Samuel Thomas Lister, lived in 184 Roker Avenue: he had two sons, Samuel (1896-1901) and Matthew (1898-1904(?)). The four sons of this Samuel all attended the school: C. Gordon (1927-1934), a grammar school headmaster; G. Harold (1928-1933), a civil engineer; R. Alan (1930-1935), an accountant; Kenneth (1937-1943), journalist, Editor of the Sunderland Echo, Managing Director of Sunderland and Portsmouth Newspapers and Member of the Press Council. Alan's daughter, Kathleen, and his son, Neil attended the school and became, repectively, a biochemist and an economist. Kenneth's two sons Mark and Robin, Bedans both, good Rugby footballers for the First XV, are now respectively, a solicitor in Malvern and an estate-agent-and-valuer in Sweden.

Perhaps a digression may be permitted here. The School Prospectus from 1929 on always contained the following: "A very efficient central heating system is installed to maintain an even temperature in cold weather and cross ventilation is provided in all the teaching rooms." This paradisal description was always susceptible of modification, Old Bedan guinea-pigs would agree. 'Cross ventilation' was, in fact, Artic gales whistling down from on high and banging doors and crashing glass. Harold Lister, having read in recent times of schools closing down because of broken down heating systems, recalls that when, at the Bede in the 1929-30 winter, the new system broke down, they were presumed to be of sterner stuff: they were merely told to put their coats on. The boilers, as time went on, developed the amiable habit of invariably breaking down at times when they were most in need of stoking up. School gossip had it that they were ship's boilers bought for a song from a yard that had rejected then for the purpose for which they had been intended. But that must have been wrong. Gordon Lister, during his time as Head of Biology from 1948 or so onwards, went so far as to keep a daily graph of temperatures over several years. They described a dreary winter monotony of 50°F or below, interspersed with occasional spectacular precipitous peaks. The peaks, he claimed,

coincided with visits by H.M.Inspectorate and with concerts, dramatic productions and show occasions when the School entertained V.I.P.'s. J.M. Footit, head of Geography and working on the North Cape, a man more cerebral (Geography Class 1 Dunelm; History Class 11i London) than brawny (5'2'', 7 stone 9lbs.) coped by wearing, not very, long johns, two overcoats, a gown and by means of a secondary defence, a permanent seat on the right hand side of the Common Room fire. Pupils' brains were kept at fever heat by constant bombardment by atoms of knowledge, an early form of microwave oven technology. The statutory temperature at which the young were to be preserved was at this time 62°. It must be said that replacement boilers were in due course installed, at a time when the invention of oil coincided with the death of the stoking trade.

Old Bedans descended on the male side from Old Bedans may sometimes be easily traced. Those on the distaff side are harder to identify. Emily Mary Lawson (née Durrant) describes how both her father and mother, children of workers at Doxford's Shipyard, and pupils at the School in the early 1900's, fed her at a very early age on romantic and amusing accounts of their schooldays, which fired her with the determination to follow in their footsteps. Having been ''weaned'' on legends of G.T. Ferguson, Miss Boon, Miss Hutchinson, Miss Birchall et al, lo and behold, in 1930 she saw imagination made flesh. The impact was one of the lasting influences in her life. She became in due course the recipient of the Catherine Irene Malin prize for Science, a matter of great singularity for both her and her parents, since Catherine had been a contemporary of her mother and the first Bede woman mathematics graduate at Cambridge. This, in turn, gave her a powerful impulse in the shaping of her own career in the Scientific Civil Service, which concluded forty years later as a Principal Scientific Officer in the Department of the Environment. Mary remarks, ''Women *did* manage scientific careers before the days of Women's Lib. (I also remained happily married and reared three children.)'' She remarks on an irony that gave girls of her generation a fulfilment from an emptiness of the generation before her: many of the women who taught her so selflessly and well were those of the ''two million surplus women for whom the Great War left no husbands'', the words of one of them, Miss Harris.

Mary points to the effective notions of coming to practical terms with illness and deprivation that were inculcated during her time at the Bede. ''Among our class mates'', she says, ''were those whose fathers were unemployed or who had been disabled or killed in the Great War. Single parenthood is not a modern development. Born and brought up in the shadow of that War, we absorbed the prejudices, bitter recriminations and pacifism of our elders'', but, she later goes on in her letter, ''we were ready and able to tackle the huge upheaval and disruption that the ensuing ten years brought to our lives. Many of us, too, found we had the outlook and flexibility to grab opportunities which arose in hitherto unimagined fields of work.''

Mary's clear sense of control sparked off by her schooling at this hard period, one may, perhaps, interpolate, was shared by many of her comtemporaries. Alice (Nancy) Hubicke (Lawther) is an example of one such, though in an entirely different way and field. She went on to read Honours French and English at the University of Newcastle, and then French Language and Literature at the University of Montpellier. She spent the war years as a French Monitor for the B.B.C., then ran an intensive French Course for recruits of the Foreign Service, then became an organiser of English for foreigners, as a result of which she became an academic consultant to an English-teaching organisation in Tel Aviv, and on and on. There *were*, indeed, things to be done by the women of the period and there were Bede girls to do them.

A rather different angle on a family connection with the School comes from W. Allan Phimister (1932-39). Allan's father, William, had entered the School in 1904 with a scholarship, but had, by force of circumstance, been obliged to leave before completing the education he had dearly wished. He was determined that his sons, Allan and John (1941-48) should not be thus thwarted. Nor were they, for both went to Oxford. Allan was an exhibitioner at Jesus College and an historian. He devoted much of his life subsequently to Mill Hill School; his success there may be judged from the fact that he was in turn, Head of History, Second Master and, for three years up to his retirement, Head Master.

Allan runs a professional eye over the notion of stability in a school. He points out that three masters of his father's era were teaching in his own; the annual book sales made for the continuation of out-moded texts and, hence, of unimaginative teaching. He became an Historian and not a Scientist, he says, because of a first-year report, in which he had 90 per cent for Science: the accompanying comment, "Could do better", put him off the subject for life. The curriculum was very much a standard Grammar School one, though one Vulcanic blow was struck for classical blacksmiths when it was decreed that all who studied Greek had to take Metalwork. The first organised attempts by State schools to break the independent stranglehold on Oxbridge scholarships were being made in his time, through a four-year School Certificate run-in. Allan himself profited by it. He recalls many able boys of his time who left school at 16, after two years beyond the statutory 14, simply because parents were unable to support them further. The two outstanding scholars of his year, he says, were Walter MacFarlane and Roy Kay, a fellow of Keble College, Oxford.

It has been a pretty constant practice for children of the staff to attend the School if they proved able. To mention a few who are likely to be widely known. The father of Margaret Berry (O.B.) was H.C. Hogg who for many years taught the Craft subjects. She had married Malcolm Berry, Senior Physics Master and Rugby Football man from 1932 onwards; their children Joan and Keith are Old Bedans, the one a teacher, the other in Government Physical research. John Harrison, Head of Art from the same year, married Beatrice (Bright) O.B.); their son, Robert, an historian of St. John's, Cambridge and a Ph.D., teaches American History at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth.

Mary Robinson (Arkle) (O.B.), a pre-war pupil, married the Head of Chemistry, S.A.S. Robinson; she taught Classics at the Girls' School and at the Comprehensive School period, her sons, Martin and Francis, having themselves gone on to University from the School. It is pretty intensive genealogy, but it is also an assertion of the quality of your own product, in both possible senses.

Mary recalls Miss Moul's capacity for trawling up eminent women for Speech Days, Vera Brittain, Lady Doris Blacker and Violet Bonham-Carter. She had the galvanic habit of summoning the school to unheralded talks on subjects like Esperanto and Psychology. There were dramatic afternoons, like one of Dickens' recitations from a famous actor of the period, Bransby Williams. A man with a working name of George Birmingham when he was writing comic novels gave a lecture on the Old Testament (no less) that reduced everyone to a state of abject misery and despair; the girls thought it was, at least, better than work, but the Staff were pretty stuffy. It was taken for granted by all concerned that Staff stayed on of an evening or attended on a Saturday for the conduct of Clubs and Societies, Miss Moul's 'activities'. Miss Moul taught some 'Scripture' lessons, but she was none too confident of girls' names: it was generally concluded that her assesment of Holy Writ was likely to be more accurate than it was of the performance of her pupils. Miss Moul became interested in Moral Re-armament and received telephone calls on the subject from Heaven. (People being educated at this time, the halcyon days of the Oxford Group Movement, will recollect that it appears not to have been uncommon for some Headmasters, when they were not banging on (in the middle of a war in which troops of an ancient civilisation were gassing Abyssinian barbarians of an ancient Christian persuasion) about the potency of the League of Nations, to be impelling their charges to confess to the station master to having shoved a railway wagon into the dock at the age of five. It was thought to be part of the enlightenment in Scriptural truth; for some reason no clearer now than then.)

Alan G. Sumby (1934-39) records, without rancour, some relics of a more severe regime that was at the same time, as he shows, developing characteristics of the enlightenment - or, as some would, no doubt, have it, levity - that his three children would recognise as the norm for their time at the School. He remembers his initial awed response to caps and gowns, the uniform of beings called 'Masters', a title of authority and dignity. His first form-master was a Mr. Marks, known with some justice, it appears, as 'Basher'. "He was a keen golfer and, when chastisement was necessary, the recalcitrant boy was bent over the desk and the cane was administered to the seat of his trousers with the finesse of a golfing stroke. Of course, it hurt, as it was meant to, but I cannot recall anyone harbouring ill feeling for the master. Both our attendance at school and our homework were carefully monitored, penalties being strictly enforced. Behaviour, both in and out of school, was held to be

a reflection on the School and we took conscious pride in the achievements of the institution and its members past and present." Many schoolmasters and schoolmistresses will share the implied sense of loss of a valuable disciplinary influence contained in his last remarks, for the current convention is that school law ends at a school's front door. The Bede Schools, it should be said, were empowered in a way other schools were not: pupils who failed in a major way through an act of vandalism costly to the public purse or through irresponsible lack of appreciation of the privileges extended, could be, and were, expelled, so that their place could be occupied by someone of a different outlook. Alan recalls a contemporary who was sacked for crowning one of the gargoyles with a chamberpot. (The owl was fairly regularly given a lick of paint by a succession of mountaineers through to the Sixties.)

The broadening experiences he valued were many; the moral value of an immaculately turned out Peter Fulton; the introduction of real, disciplined gymnastics by P. J. Gillespie; the Works visit to Sheffield conducted by Mr. Hogg, the man who first implanted his understanding of timber; the fortnight's visit run by F.A. Jennens to Dolgellau, where they stayed in a converted railway carriage and spent the first week swimming, climbing and walking, and the second on rail excursions all over North Wales. He certainly became an adaptable man: R.A.F. air-crew, then Radar Engineering, then travelling widely in the course of his business.

He married an Old Bedan, Muriel Reed (1941-43). They returned to Sunderland for their children's education: Jane (1966-71) spanned the union of the two Grammar Schools; David, now, in the Fleet Air Arm, and Ian are products of the Comprehensive School. All have now left Sunderland, but together they make an interesting pattern of attachment.

Lest all this should seem rather parochial and, perhaps, unduly self-congratulatory, it is as well to add at this point a counterweight that will suggest that the early assimilative nature of the School had not been lost. The Staff had traditionally been recruited from the British Isles at large, an important factor in ensuring wide horizons for pupils. Pupils, as is the proper way of things, came now from the Borough itself as a rule. There were always, of course, 'intruders'. (James Bolam, the actor, was at the School for a couple of years in the Fifties.) David Tacchi was one of these, one who not only was fully absorbed himself but in his turn absorbed everything the School had to offer, with relish, even in its alien forms. Someone at some time ought to look into the various forms of subsequent success achieved by Heads of School. Here is David's mosaic:

"I joined the School in 1938 from London, where my family had been living in Blackheath in the south east of the city. I was fortunate enough to obtain an LCC scholarship that was transferable. Bede was quite an imposing building; the two halves severely separated and although we could covertly glance at the girls on the other side, there was no hope of co-educational activity in those days. The school was somewhat regimented, had a well qualified staff and many extra-curricular activities were offered. For me it was Rugger and Scouting. My application to these activities paid off as I eventually captained the 1st XV and became Troop Leader of the School Group. I suppose I was ambitious, for in my last year I was elected Head of School. This meant walking the length of the assembly hall to the rostrum each day to read the morning lesson, the sum total of my religious activities, I regret to say.

In 1939 I was still in short trousers when a wailing siren heralded the start of hostility with Germany. At these times I, with my family, were crowded into our Anderson shelter erected in the dining room - rather claustrophobic. I tried to avoid the experience whenever I could.

Evacuation was the order of the day and in 1940 we entrained for Northallerton where we were to share the local Grammar School with the incumbents. As lessons did not begin until 2 p.m. we spent the morning practising country activities such as wild life, botany, fishing, tracking, and in this environment Scouting flourished. At first it was fun to live in a strange house with other people but life was very restricted for energetic youngsters and after a year most of us drifted back home to resume our studies back on Durham Road.

During the war our summer holidays were spent in organised camps. I well remember the marvellous summer of 1940, getting in the harvest in Essex, stooking corn six days a week, all of us burnt brown. We all noticed in the sky white strands weaving a pattern and at that time we did not appreciate that we were watching "the gallant few" winning the Battle of Britain. In later years I picked fruit in Warwickshire and felled trees in Cumbria and Northumberland. I can still drop a tree accurately, something I learnt in those days.

One accepted rationing, patched clothing, old boots. There was a great sense of camaraderie in the school and all worked hard for the war effort. During my time in the VIth I became a dispatch rider for the A.R.P. and I learned to ride a Matchless 250cc during air raids to carry messages between the rescue services. All terribly exciting at the age of sixteen.
I had elected to read Medicine and as there was but one chance at the exams, work became of serious concern in the VIth. There were two of us who passed, Bill Davidson who went off to Edinburgh, and myself to Newcastle, then part of the University of Durham
We have both, since qualification, spent a full working life as doctors and will shortly retire. My friend Bill became a physician in Cambridge and I practised as an obstetrician/gynaecologist in Newcastle.
In retrospect we were well trained and taught at Bede and we were encouraged to be gentlemen. Some of my early interests had an influence on me. After National Service in Malaysia as a doctor I joined the T.A., stayed for thirty years and retired as Colonel."

THE SAD MECHANIC EXERCISE

The recorded impressions of the atmosphere in the Schools pre-1939 are mainly of jollity and a sense of progress. Money was more plentiful and despite the threatening posturing of European figures, there was a disclination for manifestation of private misery. John Davison (1936-42), whose career in accoutancy took him from Roland Jennings to the Coal Board and thence to the charge of Research Funds at Newcastle University, seems to hit the spirit of things with considerable exactitude:

"Sports Days, too, have their memories of which the abiding one is the setting-up of the seats for parents. Fifty years later the smell of new-cut grass conjures the image, not of meadows in the sun, nor cricket on the green, but of a crocodile of small boys, each one carrying a chair, winding out from the cloakrooms to the field, there to place their chairs in rows by the side of the track, so that parents and visitors could sit in the sun - and we must have been very lucky, for I cannot recall a wet sports day. The grass newly cut - the tracks all newly marked, their white lines gleaming against the green, blue skies and sun - sounds positively idyllic! And so it was, whilst we of the lower school clapped and cheered on our idols - Winstanley, McKinley, McFarlane, Ridley, et al - great heroes, these, who on those days bestrode our little worlds like colossi.

We, of course, were the tramriders - not for us the "through the Cemetery, through the Park" routine - we rode the rails, and we were adept at doing homework standing on the upper deck whilst lurching across the Bridge, masters of a sense of balance that made us at home standing there as a sailor on his ship. We developed, too, that smooth co-ordination of hand and eye that enabled us to leap on and off moving trams with the easy insouciance of the true expert - effortless ease! And we were never without a badge - we may not wear our caps, but they were always stuffed into school bags or jacket pockets, or up jumpers - your half-fare depended upon production of a badge to establish your authenticity, and we always did it, even with one cap among six of us!

A great event, too, was the opening in early 1938 of the extensions. Suddenly space was, if not doubled, vastly increased; a new set of rooms on the top floor - the geography room, with illuminated desks which made tracing maps so much easier, the new Physics Lab. with long benches, along which Fletcher's Trolley could be propelled with sometimes alarming results, and, blessing indeed, the new Library. Outside too, two new gyms with ropes and beams and wall-bars: no more forward rolls and vaulting in the hall - suddenly it was all there, and all state of the art. They were the great days, full of events and optimism. We did the Insect Play, we did the Magic Flute, we had cricket and soccer and rugger teams which were truly forces to be reckoned with: it was a matter for surprise and gloom if there were not at least a couple of State Scholarships and Open Exhibitions each year."

There is bound to be relief, too, that irreverence was as much valued by the young of the allegedly dismal Thirties as it is by those of today and that at least some morally improving ventures do not work quite as adult prigs would like them to. The occasion is a numinous one, no less than a celebration of our revered Patron Saint himself with the full panoply of Church, Law and Academe.

But to some he's still nowt but a Jarrah lad like worsel's. And probably none the worse for that. Pudd'n head Wilson reckoned that a cauliflower was just a cabbage with a college education. There were, indeed, a few cauliflowers around. Readers of Mark Twain will, however, recognise the authentic voice of Huckleberry Finn coming from the mouth of Frances Robson (Grant) (1932-37):

"The service was one of commemoration for some aspect of Bede's life, and while I cannot find the actual date of his birth, his death is recorded as May 25th 735 A.D., which would mean that in 1935 it was the 1,200 years anniversary. This would be about the right time as I would have been about 15 years old then, and it was in early summer. Almost the whole of the school (girls only I know about - whether the boys attended I cannot tell, we were a race apart then) were taken in buses from the school to Durham, everyone carrying packed meals. We arrived before lunch and were free to wander some of the time and were shown round an exhibition of manuscripts at one period - probably in the Cathedral library. The service was in the evening and the Cathedral was packed, extra seating being brought in. The preacher was the Archbishop of Canterbury, but I do not remember his name. It had been duly impressed upon us what an honour it was to have so important a person coming to the north, but from where we were seated I could not even see him - about as far back as it was possible to get. A disembodied voice did not leave a lasting memory.

We returned to Sunderland about 9 p.m. in the evening, vaguely aware that the day was an important one, but I am afraid that the things which remain most vividly in my mind are very prosaic - the fact that almost the whole school had a day off - a few remained at school, (I believe because they could not or would not pay the money for the hired buses) so it seemed like another day's holiday. It was a fine bright day and we sat on the banks of the Wear and had our meals there. Another useless item I do remember was that of two mistresses on our bus, one had a tiny packet about 4" x 2½" for her lunch and the other what appeared to be a shoe box - we never saw the contents of either package. My final mortifying memory is that, speaking of about 6 or 8 of us, we could not find a ladies' toilet and were too shy to ask anyone, so perhaps our thoughts were elsewhere when the Archbishop spoke".

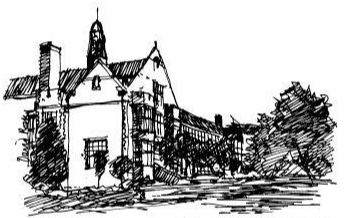
The disruption of the idyll was, however, sudden and violent. Many will recall the newspaper photograph of small boys and girls stepping out bravely into the Unknown, shoes highly polished, Bede hats and 'Natty' caps geometrically donned, blazers aglow with the badge, the light of the explorer in their eyes. In truth, they were the products of an invidious choice: children leaving an emptiness, and taking an emptiness with them, dependents on the organised generosity of strangers who already had the due of private anxiety that is the common lot of human kind in time of war. The Sam Browne crossbelt they wore with military precision suspended not a school satchel but, quite appropriately, the emblem of the time, the gas-mask.

The exercise of evacuation could at best have been little more than a desk-designed contrivance: no rehearsal had been possible; the range of eventualities was almost limitless. The dangers abroad might well turn out to be as great as those would have been at home; merely different. Education, it was obvious, was to be a relapse to a bygone age. How does one, without a magic carpet, transport a laboratory, holus-bolus? Allan Phimister mentions the horror of a reception family in Northallerton who, expecting two singing birds, were faced on their doorstep by two gravel-voiced giants with, unquestionably, appetites that would send Gargantua himself under the table in shame: the whole question of human relationships bulked as large. The difficulties and responsibilities of the two Heads and their Staff, themselves on strange territory, in every sense, are hard to imagine and impossible to compute.

Miss Moul, however, after she had had time to reflect, wrote about it in a manner that put the whole episode into a gently ironic perspective. Her review was published in the first School Magazine of the war years, in 1941. It is a fine piece of reportage that has the added interest of shedding a perhaps unique light on the character of its author:

"When in September, 1939, we were suddenly pitch-forked into Richmond, Yorkshire, there must have been many besides myself who went with misgiving and heart-burning. The reality was worse

than our expectation from the point of view of material provision, but at the same time the beauty of the country was greater than anything we had imagined. The position called out the very best in an adventurous and courageous staff and school. We found, on arrival, that there was no school that could house us. The Girls' School could accommodate only about one-third, and so we had the pleasure of going part-time into the Boys' Grammar School too. The mornings when we had no school premises were a nightmare. The first fortnight was spent looking for a place where we, four hundred of us, could seat ourselves. There was little accommodation in Richmond not already appropriated by the Military authorities. Finally we discovered the Methodist Chapel where the pastor and trustees bravely invited us. Here the whole school found seats and a roof for shelter, and here our Music Mistress, with stoic courage, worked at an American organ. The alternative to the whole school's being so housed was to separate into local units, thirty here and fifty there, or to sit all the morning in Church singing hymns. The Northallerton Education Committee wisely vetoed the first. Within the first month of our going to Richmond we had established ourselves for work in every denominated centre. We used the Church of England Parish Room, the Congregational Parish Room, the Methodist Chapel, and the Convent Courts. We used also the Town Hall, the Boys' Gym, the Y.M.C.A.,and finally Lennox House. We furnished this private house with pews and trestle tables from a Methodist Chapel, and the staff rooms with wash-hand stands for tables, and a carpet and underfelt lent us by the owner.



Girls' School (from the Boys')

One third of the school and staff were distributed into the country areas as far as Aldbro' St. John about 10 miles distant. At first our country cousins found trying travelling by special bus, the light of oil lamps, the early rising to come to school, but after a few weeks they became so rustic that many petitioned against being brought into Richmond.

In a very short time the school was working almost full time. Hundreds of articles were knitted and sent to our neighbours in Gatherly Castle and to Sunderland men wherever they were known to be. We gave regular First Aid and Home Nursing Classes; we planted our gardens, the pupils growing from seed much produce which we sold. We made jam and jelly from the fruit in our garden. Indeed the activities at Richmond were the richer for coming spontaneously out of the goodwill and co-operative spirit of staff and children. A year of evacuation was a testing time which brought out all the good and inventive genius in our folk. It gave the girls a new sense of independence and responsibility and of freedom. It gave the staff a new opportunity for viewing the pupils in out-of-school circumstances. Indeed we had the difficult but very interesting opportunity of running a Day School on something like Boarding School lines. In season and out I have preached that School Certificate Examinations results are not the best and certainly not the only measure of a secondary school's achievements. This is not to cover poor results. Judge for yourselves. Fifty one full certificates were won and this number is second only to those gained in a very big non-evacuated school in Durham County.

Billeting produced its problems. The "fluttering" that ensued when a hostess required a particular size in evacuee, objecting strongly to being over-awed by a six-footer, can be imagined better than described! Some preferred those who sang, and some preferred those who did not. Some were misfits because they did not talk, some others because they did not stop talking. The separation of families often caused parents to fret needlessly so that they took pupils away before they had time to settle down. Correspondence with parents, Education Offices, Evacuation Departments, Reception

areas, mounted alarmingly. In our next evacuation, profiting by our previous one we shall look forward to an over-seas home or somewhere equally distant from kind enquiries! Two and sixpence distance only adds to our difficulties! And talking of overseas evacuation reminds me that Eleanor Wright, rescued from a torpedoed ship, has a dramatic, awe inspiring story to tell. This we must publish as soon as she is completely recovered, for you will want to know the facts.

From the first the School was encouraged to enter heartily into the life of Richmond and to make such contribution to its activities and needs as possible. We joined the Musical Society, girls gave help in the Town Library. We gladly assisted in making habitable one of the rooms put at our disposal at the Y.M.C.A. to which we owe a debt of gratitude. Soldiers white-washed the room and we made the curtains. Not only did this room act as a classroom, but also was our dance hall. The upper school will remember the pleasure they enjoyed here.

Not least of the surprising facts at Richmond was the wonderful health of the pupils. We sat for months in our caps and coats, so that one of the major problems of post-evacuation days was to induce thoughtless people to remove caps which they seemed to have grown into! The winter was the severest for half a century, nevertheless nothing seemed to daunt the hearts of the courageous girls and staff of the Bede Girls' School''.

Description from the girls themselves pinpoint the analysis of their Head Mistress. One (relative) townee wrote:

''There was no school in Richmond big enough to house us. We worked, studied, played, knitted, made bandages and had nightmarish inspections of gas-masks in eleven or more different places, with two or three forms housed in some of them. A typical Town Hall time-table was ''Forms 111 Activities (i.e. sewing and knitting) in the Court; Form 11b, English in the Magistrates' Room; Form 1Vc, Chemistry in the Dock''. As more and more girls returned home, there was more accommodation, conditions became easier and it was possible to have greater outlet for the energies of those who remained, such as the town Musical Society, gardening, socials and a fortnightly School dance''.

While another from the Great Outback has this to say:

''When school finally began, we had a long muddy walk to the village every morning and then travelled by bus to Richmond, and we had to leave school at 3.30 p.m. as only at that time could we have a bus back. If we forgot a gas-mask and had to go home for it, that was the end of school for that day. Every evening we tried to cope with homework by the light of an inadequate oil lamp and then packed a lunch which we ate the next day in the Y.M.C.A. Rooms at Richmond. One outstanding memory is that of our first air-raid warning. It occurred one Monday morning during our weekly assembly in the Town hall, and the first hymn contained the line ''Live this day as now as 'twere thy last''.

Later, two of us who were Sixth-Formers were moved into Richmond and after that those old enough to appreciate it spent an enjoyable year. There were, of course, many drawbacks, but there was an atmosphere in the School at Richmond that had never, in my day, been present in Sunderland. The Sixth Form was an entity instead of two separate years at daggers drawn and the Upper Fifths were our firm friends. The amazing thing about life in Richmond was that, considering the conditions, we got through so much work and that to a great extent things were normal; we played games against other schools and latterly even provided refreshments for our guests.

I often wonder now how the Staff managed to teach in between acting as billeting officers and nursemaids. The older girls who were evactuated would like to pay tribute, too, to those Richmond people who did so much for our welfare, and to all our hostesses who made the best of the situation and tried to make us feel at home.'' She adds, ''Looking back, I do feel that at Bede School we were given opportunity to use our own judgement and to acquire a sense of responsibility. We were always guided by a very helpful staff and I know my own year would like to say a special 'thank you' to our Form Mistress who gave us invaluable help during two difficult years in the Sixth. ''

NEUTRALISING THE JUNGLE

Nature in the Sunderland of 1941 had a strong tendency to be red in tooth and claw; cloistered rooms for the pursuit of study were at times distinctly hard to find. A one-time member of Staff whose work at the time took him up and down the war-channel some five miles seaward, furtively creeping along in a blessed totality of darkness, recalls nights when a seemingly isolated place, previously known to him almost exclusively through cigarette card pictures of footballers, was continually silhouetted in an evanescent white light that was in an eerie syncopation with unholy spires and towers of orange and yellow and brown.

The Schools had been restored, virtually in working order, to Durham Road. Examination results of the girls were excellent at both Higher and School Certificate levels and there was a good programme of games and cultural activities: "Murder in the Cathedral" was enacted in the blacked out Girls' School Hall by a troupe of travelling players; a Guide Company was formed. Two years further on and there was optimism enough for the establishment of a Girls' Careers Advice Committee; the groundwork for this had been done by the Senior French Mistress, Miss E.M. Shearer, a woman of abounding energy and wide interests who is even now, almost half a century after her retirement, an object of devotion to those who knew her; she was unquestionably a source of ideas for those who followed her. The Head Mistress used the School Magazine of the time to encourage parents to think seriously of widening careers for girls. She was to continue to pursue this theme with great pertinacity, entering into the question of costs and relative values for educated girls; she lamented the small size of the Sixth Form and the fact that many girls were entering places of further education for the wrong reasons - often merely to avoid conscription into the Services - and too young, which resulted in their being, as she said, "combed out". The Second World War had done for girls what the First one had done, in a narrower way, for their grandmothers. It is an interesting historical exercise to see Miss Moul as a protagonist in this social drama. She emerges as an insistent agent for the advancement of her girls and not a propagandist for an abstraction of Womankind.

Boys seem to have seen the period as as much an adventure as anything else, a bit of fun with the proportion of nuisance that is all one can expect when adults are thrown in. Stanley Pattinson (1938-45) during his time in the wild blesses his luck to have been detailed to the charge of F.A. Jennens, who filled in your spare time with football, and not of Jack Harrison, who would considerably reduce your expectation of life by a constant succession of forced marches over high mountain terrain. Divine Providence was on his side even if his host had the Devil on his back: the latter fell ill with pneumonia, which had the effect of releasing Stan to reside in a millionaire's house, served hand and foot, and with a private sitting room. This set him up for his version of peace-time service in the R.A.F.. Stan does not claim to be one of the academic successes. (He has, two sons, Alan and John, who undoubtedly were, both Cambridge men, and a third, Richard, who also did outstandingly well. All Old Bedans of course.) He was, however, a most devoted Secretary of the Old Bedans Association to the day of its unhappy collapse in a differently disposed generation.

Richard Kearton (1941-48), a director with an international oil concern and an M.B.E., offered some musings on the degree to which everyone is permanently moulded (or branded) by school influence. He relates having met a Sunderland man when he was on holiday who regretted, thirty years on, not having attended the Bede. "So many old Bedans", the man claimed, "have had such a significant and direct influence in the organisations in which they serve and on the societies in which they live, one has to believe that the influence is deep and pervasive". He himself records his initiation thus:

"I nervously first set foot in Bede in September, 1941. An elderly "Woody" Hogg (Woodwork), so formal yet paternalistic, was inducting his new class. "Sir, does the school have rules which we must learn?" one new boy enquired anxiously. "Of course the school has rules," came the reply. "However, the good thing is no-one needs to learn them!" Expressions of uncomprehending relief existed everywhere. "You see it's like this", continued the master; "inwardly you know what is right and you know what is wrong. Work hard, and do what you feel is right. Problems will not then arise and rules will not be broken!" This was typical of the influence of the decade. One did know right from wrong because the previous ten years were characterised by family discipline,

one's Church and general order based on strong tradition. A high degree of obedience had generally been moulded. There was clear evidence of a very strong work ethic. The atmosphere of the time made one feel that the world required industrious application and that, once obtained, must then be respected and cared for.

The implication may be that life was dreary in the extreme. Not so. Out of effort, and the orderly existence of the time, developed satisfaction and self confidence. Enjoyable escapades occurred daily, as "Phyllis" Redfern (Divinity) knew to his mild discomfort! However, such pranks were innocent and caused no lasting ill effect or damage. Moreover, the orderliness of the school was a sustaining influence. The headmaster, G.A. Bradshaw ("The Gab"), showed how direction could be so remote yet influential for, in reality, few problems arose. "Baggy" Moore (Chemistry) exemplified how his Head's style could be augmented by his own direct involvement, Messrs. Berry (Physics), and Driver (Music) how more direct discipline could be applied if leadership, subtle or direct, had failed.

However, it was "Tommy" Ayre (Latin) who combined so much - leadership, direction and discipline. It was "Issy" Wates (Economics) who uniquely and brilliantly demonstrated a systematic approach to learning. It was dear "Jimmy" Footit (Geography) who showed how one could in fact "live" one's subject. These men, plus the true friendship of "Pat" Gillespie (Physical Training), of R.C. Taylor (Form Master), of "Buck" Ryan (Mathematics) and of Lew Jones (English) which bridged all generation gaps, dispelled any fears of seniority and abated youthful natural tendencies to rebel. They belonged to a generation which cared.

In turn they developed others who cared and became surgeons, doctors, dentists, teachers, lawyers, accountants, architects, engineers, managers in industry - all responsible stewards within the disciplines and careers they chose and in the organisations they serve. Protégés who became, in fact, wealth creators really knowing what constitutes true value in service and production. They themselves had learned to value what had been created within themselves. In turn, they added value to society via their careers.'

Truly it was a privilege to attend Bede. Many celebrate its Centenary: many must mourn its passing."

David Burnand (1941-49), a renegade graduate in Law, was a victim, as many ruefully will recollect of themselves, of the university stipulation that a satisfactory performance in Latin was a vital requirement for an aspiring under-graduate. It was a bugaboo that haunted those who had chosen German as a second language at the age of twelve, as David had. Up to the early Sixties a group of astonishingly hang-dog looking L VI boys, each crouching over a pale green text-book and being hectored by a junior member of the Classics Department with an empurpled face, was immediately identifiable as the crash-Latin lot. It was a permanent reminder of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Its modern absence, of course, is a reminder of a cultural lapse. Not that the boys above were, at the time, seriously into the business of culture. David survived the deprivation thus:

"I still remember with great affection the Bede Collegiate Boys' School, as it used to be called, which I first attended as an inchoate third-former in 1941.

I was not one of the glory boys destined to be a captain of industry or a pillar of society or even a local big-wig, more one of the rank and file, and to prove that my time at Bede was not wasted, I am now doing what I've always done - I am the proprietor of a family footwear business or what the DTI classifies in officialese as a Small Shopkeeper, 'small' in stature and turnover, presumably?

I left school at the ripe old age of 19, part of the fixtures, not because of any retarded adolescence, as has been suggested, nor because the cap no longer fitted, but because I needed to stay after Higher School Certificates to take a crash course in Latin in order to obtain an entrance qualification to college.

Initially, in the early forties, it was a period of part-time education, interrupted schooling, even school closure, continual staff changes, air-raids and evacuation to Northallerton for some. Even so, I remember there was 'mounty-kitty' in the quadrangle, fights in Barnes Park, perorations from budding

demagogues, exalted prefects reading the lesson in morning assembly. Some would soon be off to the war, or to the mines as Bevin Boys.

With a strong academic record, Bede represented the ethos of the grammar-school tradition, capable of producing a 'well-rounded' cultivated pupil before the age of narrow specialisation. The classics were taught and economics was strong. In English we were instructed in parsing and syntax, and we learned reams of Shakespeare by rote - literary appreciation or memory training? Indiscipline was not a problem.

Although there was no great pupil-teacher relationship until we approached the Sixth-Form, both parties enjoyed mutual respect and both gave freely of their time and their mind to extra-mural studies and activities.

Regrettably, many of us did not fully avail ourselves of the diverse facilities and opportunities which existed at Bede even in those dark days. The range and choice of clubs and societies, especially for the juniors, were legion and there was something after school hours to suit every taste and interest before the black-out finally descended and the sirens wailed.

From my mentors I also learned that education did not exist only in the classroom and in this respect two masters still stand out in my memory as having shaped my formative years at Bede. One was Mr Leslie Jolly, who, although a Junior Biology master, first stimulated my interest in modern languages which I retained through university and which probably provided an entrée into the Intelligence Corps during my National Service. He was well-read in the arts and liberal studies; he produced plays for the school drama club; he organised cross country runs; he taught pole-vaulting and the 'western-roll'! He took us to the Olympic Games in 1948; he also led groups to Paris and to châteaux country in the Loire valley. He was a good all-rounder, a dilettante in the Renaissance ideal, a man of many parts. Unsung and probably unacknowledged by his peers, he opened up for his protégés the many closed doors of non-curricular knowledge and experience.

The other was Mr. Malcolm Berry, a physics master, happily still with us. In charge of senior rugby, he coached and inspired the school team and later the Old Bedans XV to undreamed of heights and with a selfless devotion. We learned camaraderie through hardship and endeavour. Masochism maybe, but in today's insulated, cushioned and cosseted society, I have seldom undergone such physical exertion, suffered such excruciating pain and enjoyed such team spirit as I did on the playing fields of Bede - a valuable training ground not just for sport but for life itself. Now, thanks to Bede Rugby, the rain and mud and even boot studs do not bother me and I have a broken nose to prove it! And who could not forget the furtive half-pint in the Barnes after training at a cost of 7½d.

On the debit side I also remember a one-armed-teacher with a leathered fist like a donkey's hind leg and a one-handed pianist cum music-master, whose entire repertoire, year after year, so it seemed, was a rendition of 'Greensleeves' which we sang and he accompanied to the best of our conflicting abilities. No encore, only reprises, to the nadir of boredom and apathy. Is this what music was all about? Even today I still recoil when I hear the plaintive strains of that dreary, doleful ditty.

My own sixth-form disciplines were in the hands of teachers who came and went like ships in the night. But I was introduced to Moliere and Hugo de force majeure and to Goethe and Mann aus Diktat.

Finally I went off to Trieste for H.M. in a nebulous capacity, but that is another story.

These are some of the things which stick in my mind from my schooldays at Bede, not the end of term reports, nor the exams., nor the academia. These are the kinds of influences which honed the mind and body and shaped the personality. In retrospect they make you realise how important are our schooldays, when one's thinking and attitudes are indelibly fashioned.

It is sad to see the demise of such an institution. The esprit de corps remains. I am proud to be able to call myself an Old Bedan, like my father before me. ''

The schoolmaster's characteristic held in least popular esteem is his habit of producing other schoolmasters. The habit is more an accident of trade than a malign intent. No-one, even during a major war, would actually set about arriving at Wackford Squeers. On the other hand, to feel you have helped to raise an exceptional one who has triumphed over the chaos in society and that of your own teaching is a sort of ecstasy. Those who taught Brian Rees (1941-48) made it clear in their talk that this was so: a harmless self-indulgence.

Brian was an Open Scholar at Trinity College, and took a Double First in History. He taught at Eton and was a House Master there; he was in turn Headmaster at the Merchant Taylor's School, Charterhouse and Rugby. He has now turned to writing biography (one of his (Edward German) inspired by recollection of performances in Barnes Park by the Sunderland Operatic Society of "Merrie England" and "Tom Jones") and history, currently a History of Stowe School.

In a letter accompanying his contribution below he mentions the splendid teaching done at the Bede in his time by the temporarily appointed ladies who did so much to keep up the scholastic impetus during the War; he mentions with admiration Miss Aenid Betts (English), and one might add the wife of the Senior Classics Master, Alfred Wilson, whose christian name is not now known, who was Head of the same Department. The penultimate sentence of his remarks has the power of a knell at a time when these freedoms have been eroded by bureaucracy and by the insistence on the piling up of trivial statistics as a summation of a human being. The Bede School was at its best when freedom and independence thrived on the disciplines of learning, many would say. Here are his reflections;

"Those of us who arrived at the Bede Collegiate School for Boys in 1941 were to experience more than half of our schooldays in war-time. Even on the night before the 11+ Examinations, I seem to remember, we had all spent several hours in air-raid shelters, and no doubt we approached those vital papers fairly sleepily. The Quadrangle cloisters had been bricked up as shelters, though after 1940, daylight raids were infrequent and they were rarely used. Extra-curricular activities were sparse. The first School Play - inevitably "The Importance of Being Earnest - came in 1945. The cast listened to the B.B.C. between appearances and an announcement of the German surrender was made through the curtains by a Lower Fifth Gwendolen Fairfax, forgetful of her Belgravia accents in the excitement of the moment. (Actually the news turned out to be premature and the War ended two or three days later.) School Lunches were under the dominion of Miss Dunn, and despite war-time austerity, she remains one of the very few popular School caterers I recall. When she left for higher things, the boys made her a presentation. The fare - varieties of vegetable pie, tapioca and semolina - would not encourage much in the way of a presentation today, but we seemed to sense that she had triumphed nobly in stringent times. G.T. Moore, Head of Chemistry, who was always reputed to have his jokes - and they were quite good ones - noted down carefully against each experiment, had preserved the Debating Society from extinction. The youthful delight of Alan Brien, future author and critic, at winning the Annual "India" Cup Debate (the future of India was still an enigma) came as something of a surprise to us Fourth-Formers, who thought his speeches immensley adult and worldly-wise. A single threadbare football pitch permitted one game per fortnight. The Scout Troop, which flourished on Fridays, was the only evening activity. The days of a School Mini-bus were far distant, and for weekends at Sharpley, the local camping site, tents and equipment had to be pulled along the roads in an old hand-cart to Silksworth and beyond. The Scoutmaster, P.F. Fulton who was in sole charge of P.T. throughout the War, must also have performed feats of organisation unappreciated by his charges, in finding us sites for Summer Camps, collecting our ration coupons and provisioning for fifty or sixty hungry mouths, always with the risk that precious food stuffs would be ruined in the cooking. Scouts Parents' Evenings - pies, peas, chips and a selection of Ralph Reader songs, - provided the only opportunities for parents to cross the school threshold, strange in these days of Parent-Teacher Associations and inextricable involvement. There were no Speech Days and hence - probably a good thing - no prizes.

If the world was in conflagration, at least there was calm in the Headmaster's Study. After twenty years in his footsteps, I realise now that Mr. G.A. Bradshaw's days must have been a great deal busier than those he spent in our far-fetched speculations. To us he was a being who sailed majestically down the corridor to Prayers and majestically out of the gates at 4.00. Some years later I met him

in retirement near Oakham and found him a talkative, genial and interested host. With hindsight I am grateful that, in strenuous times, his imperturbability probably made a significant contribution to our progress. He certainly accomplished the primary task of a Headmaster, which is to appoint and, as far as possible maintain, a staff, varied in character and free from regimentation. But that subject would require a centenary volume to itself."

DISCORDANT PIPES OF PEACE

The longing for resolution of a bloody argument that characterized the last year or so of the War was partly concentrated on the Butler Education Act, an icon that promised a future. The new unsullied generation was to be endued with a vital intelligence that would liberate its hitherto cribbed and confined talents. It was, indisputably, a noble and generous aim. The brute fact was that the country hadn't a bob to bless itself with. Make-do-and-mend was not a matter merely of socks. It was, give or take a week or two, 1952 before ration books became a mark of the tyrannies of non-Britons.

As an earnest of intent, in 1945 the Bede Collegiate Schools became a Grammar School for Girls and a Boys' Grammar School. (The difference lay in Miss Moul's conviction that the proper use of the apostrophe would be a source of embarrassment. The male has always, of course, been more closely possessive than the female.)

An additional intake of thirty pupils each year was ultimately made by the School, the sixth forms began at once to swell in numbers as expectations grew in the minds of both parents and offspring; the traditional group of Student teachers that the School had always supported became larger as the implications and proposals of the Butler Act were turned into a practical necessity. The buildings were increasingly seen as insufficient in a number of ways for up-to-date requirements. Mr. Bradshaw, who by qualifications and practical experience - he taught Chemistry to the U VI to the end of his working life - was able to judge better than most, knew that laboratory facilities had been overtaken by scientific events. He began to fight a wounding, protracted and, he was to believe, thwarted campaign to ensure that his staff and pupils were not left behind in what he saw as the race into the future. He had struck the vein of penury that his predecessor had known so well, though the latter one was, indeed, the more readily comprehensible even at this distance. It was eventually recognised by his staff, in fact, that he had made his initial point abundantly well. (The original form of Lab. was to be seen in the Girls' School in the post 1967 union preserved like a prehistoric corpse in amber, with an occasional stink, however, of decay from drains that cried for radical plumbing.)

The stringencies of six years had turned even dog-eared text books into shrines to be visited with reverence. North and Hillyard, Kennedy's Latin Grammar may have been all right for the eternity of Rome, but "Letters for High Latitudes" by a dilettante aristocrat of more than half a century before was a bit of a struggle for all concerned in L IV3.

The relish with which Old Boys refer to school dinners (and teas at 2d a shot) suggests that they had moments of wrong perspective, since none so much as mentions a rare book. At any rate, one of the first things that happened was the massive reconstruction of dining facilities, a change that involved sending the girls to purdah in an upper room and leaving the lower floor to the ravening classes. At about this time, too, there were additions on the north side of both schools. The Girls' School was, in course of time, capped on the north side by a second storey: Biology Labs., a room in which to determine what life forms can survive at Absolute Zero and an Instrument Room so remote that even scraping violins could be heard only as the Music of the Spheres. The flat roof of this corridor turned out in the Seventies to be a literary experience. Old Bedans cannot fail to recall the cultural elevation to be obtained from the Noyes poem, "The Highwayman" and the unspeakable ostler, Tim, he of the punk hair-do who practised voyeurism and gave Bess a black eye. The heavy rains split the ceiling and a grey-green fibrous knob protruded. It was Tim's toupée of mouldy hay. He had been buried there, as a last gesture of friendship, by a cowboy, and in such a position as to enable him to continue voyeurism until the crack of doom. At last, one knew how he had looked and, to be truthful, how he had smelt.

A survey of such other records of this period as are available suggests that the competitive edge in all fields of activity, the determination to acquit oneself honourably and to do so by enjoying the freedoms for the individual that were the climate were in vigorous good health.

Miss Moul was able to express gratification in a Speech Day report at the way in which more and more girls, with parental support, were entering the Sixth Form, which was, at this time, still geared to university entrance. Not every girl pursued this avenue, but it is true that many did, and moved over the length of the land in the process. Medicine was favoured. One who so chose was Sheila Waiter (née Wilson) (1943-50). She entered the Medical School of Newcastle University and, having qualified, spent some time aiming at specializing in Maternity work. Her marriage rather disturbed that original career intent. But it guided her into a course never previously envisaged. She is now living in New York State and is, in fact, the Chief Executive Director of an international pharmaceutical company in its American business, Cibaciby. She has been recently made a Fellow of the Royal College of Pharmacy. Many male Old Bedans will remember her father, Harry Wilson, who taught (1932-59) Mathematics, Physics or Engineering Drawing with equal facility. He was himself an Old Bedan who had been in the Navy in 1918-19 and had then become a teacher. This he found unenterprizing so he set out on what was at the time a very bold venture: to take an External London University Honours Degree in Mechanical Engineering. He emerged with an Upper Second. He was a man who could do anything, from replacing a big-end to tying the most exquisite fishing flies of his own invention for his favourite waters.

The activity was not entirely intellectual, of course. Some involved a partial interest in muscularity of one sort and another, while some centred exclusively on Rugby Football. Kenneth Witherington (1944-51) confesses to being one of the latter. (Former Rugby players who have sent in literary contributions, it has indeed been noticeable, are in the main backs; there has been no response at all from front row forwards.) Ken now feels old enough to be able to admit that, while Malcolm Berry's method of teaching Physics tended not to work for him, in another respect he is 'one of the world's greats'; for, since the day when Ken took part in a First Year Trial and spent his time hurling his diminutive form myopically at the feet of a giant called Billy Beadnell, "his world became oval-shaped". He was picked to play for the Under 13's, a day in a life-time. But there were no football boots, for money, at any rate. And 'Coupons' were not for frivolities, anyhow. But there were football boots for love and improvisation; "Up to that point in time I had always played in a pair of old shoes with leather bars nailed across the soles and heels. How could I play reserve for Bede

Collegiate Under 13 team in such footwear? By supper time that evening my parents must have been regretting that I had ever passed my eleven plus examination. I pestered them incessantly and eventually my father produced two football boots. I deliberately avoid referring to them as a pair of boots, for although one was a left boot and the other a right boot they were by no means a pair. One was slightly larger than the other; one had studs, the other had bars and one was black and the other was brown! I can picture my poor father crouched over those boots frantically trying to bring them towards some sort of similarity. Advised by my mother he applied black polish rubbed in with half a potato (another commodity in short supply in those days) in an attempt to dye the brown boot black. Eventually by Friday evening both boots were black and gleaming, safely packed inside my satchel along with the rest of my kit."

Ken , in fact, played his first game on a morass at Westhoe. He played as prop, which means he has the unique distinction of being not only the smallest front row forward in the world but a literate one. He goes on:

"From that time onwards the game had no boundaries. I travelled by train to British West Hartlepool. Overseas to Tynemouth - memories of the ferry crossing and sarsaparilla in South Shields Market Place. In the next forty-five years I was to play, coach and referee all over the world. I gained my first international cap - playing for Singapore v Johore Bahru, coached Durham County and Denver, Colorado, refereed in England, America and Canada. From Union Street to Utah, South Shields to Singapore or Newcastle to Niagara, wherever I went, there were Old Bedans and Geordies brought together by their love of the oval ball, and for me it all started with Malcolm Berry - and a brown boot!"

A contemporary of the above has gone to the considerable trouble of writing from the Antipodes (Victoria), thus representing a part of the world fairly well scattered with Old Bedans of all persuasions. He is Peter Smurthwaite (1944-51). He, a product of the Medical School of the University of Edinburgh, has less cheerful recollections of an exhausted country and the facilities of his school: inadequate playing facilities on a municipal rubbish tip turned potato patch, a deprivation of female company through the agency of a mirror-image bit of architecture, some incomprehensible teachers, all in a land polluted and crowded. Mercifully for the reputation of us whimpering Poms who were left when he emigrated, he recovers his spirits. The Economic History he was taught, concentrating on the social and economic effects of the Industrial Revolution, had had a profound effect on his attitude to society and politics. Though Kirk had the misfortune to be no classroom teacher, the practical music was unusually good for an industrial city at the time; despite an absence of competent instrumental teachers visiting the School there was quite a competent school orchestra. It was, however, left to four boys to form a string quartet to play Beethoven's Quartet Opus 18 No. 5 with enthusiasm and, he feels obliged to claim, at quite a high standard, thanks to an exceptional First Violin, Denis Blair*, the most gifted player he has personally ever known. He has regretfully to confess that the most memorable music lesson he ever attended was one that was orchestrated by a radio broadcast of the First Test Match of 1948 when two members of Bradman's superb team, Miller and Lindwall, were skittling the English wickets. He would prefer not to have to mention the School meals, nor the School milk, though he is prepared to concede that the report that it was to be drunk standing in ranks in a corridor was probably apocryphal.

This represents an interesting, and curious, survival of a discordant note (such as is referred to in the sectional title) to be heard emanating from a section of post-war youth. To those who had spent six-and-half years listening to Variations in a Minor Key on a theme for Chicago Piano, Marks I - IV, and then found themselves teaching a callow disaffected youth for half-pay, £28 a month, it came as something of a disappointed ideal.

Cliff Nelson (1948-55), himself a medical man and President of Sunderland Photographic Society, to boot, an organisation devoted to an instrument of infallible truth, has a different viewpoint:

"I well remember a Saturday morning in the September of 1948 when I first set foot inside those hallowed portals. In those days it was a tradition that all the First Years were invited just before term began, to be shown around the school.

Never mind the form rooms, the impressive hall, laboratories and the like. It was the sight of a rugby pitch, two soccer fields, running track, pole vault pit and all the other sporting paraphernalia that made the biggest impact on me. After primary school and its primitive facilities, surely I had landed in Nirvana. The human brain is a remarkable organ that has the unique facility to recall the happy times and relegate the not-so-happy to a state of virtual 'no recall'. Of course, there were moments of unpleasantness but in the main when I think of those years it is the happy times that keep flooding back.

In 1948, the head was G.A. Bradshaw Esq., fondly known as the 'GAB'. One never saw him without a mortar board and gown, and one felt that he never actually walked: he always seemed to float around the school as though on a cushion of air. His very presence demanded repect. Not needing to speak, the fact that he was just there seemed to keep us all in order. It seems incredible that one building could house so many characters and eccentrics who all in their individual way contributed so much in their time. I remember 'Joe' Berry whose aim in life, I thought, was running a very successful 1st Rugby XV. I eventually found out that he actually taught Physics. His office walls were covered in graphs which, somehow or other, I thought were weather records from years gone by, but were actually plots of the frequency with which certain topics appeared in the 'A' level papers. He used this system to spot the questions each year and the last few weeks before the exams were spent cramming in those particular parts of the curriculum. He was rarely wrong and his success rate was legendary.

* This must be an erroneous recollection of "Dennis Gaines", an outstanding violinist of the period

'SAS' Robinson was the only man I ever met who could actually make me understand what Chemistry was all about. He was so understanding himself, when he found several gallons of a brew hidden in the cupboards of the Chemmy Lab. awaiting distillation, which we fondly thought would turn out rum.

Les Jolly, who taught us Botany, actually ran the Drama Club. Will we ever forget the thunder and lightning which emanated from the hall or the huge mechanical shovel which appeared on stage, suspended on wires that actually came through a hole in the lofty ceiling from the loft?

Eventually after a great deal of rugby, athletics, basketball and somewhere along the line, a little academia, I emerged with three 'A' levels and was fortunate enough to gain a place at the University of Durham Medical School. In 1960, the powers-that-be let me loose on the public and, after doing a few jobs in the Sunderland Hospitals, I entered general practice in 1963, where I have continued to stagnate ever since. Imagine my surprise and horror when one of the first patients to walk into the surgery was one of my old masters from Bede. It came as an even greater shock in the subsequent months to discover that he was not the only one, for I continued to find that the practice was full of Bede teaching stock. The fact that most of them still survive is no credit to my efforts! I am sure that they all were endowed with good genes. On a serious note, though, I count it a pleasure and a privilege to have the opportunity to help those who for so many years were a great source of help and encouragement to me when I most needed it. POST TENEBRAS LUX? Yes, despite the darkness all around, some light did filter through."

The Schools set about gaining a modern tempo. A record number of six State Scholarships in one year was achieved by boys in 1948, one of them, Roy Hamp, being the first to secure a Studentship at Imperial College, London, as a result of his achievement. The Old Bedans Association, under the Chairmanship of R.R. Crute, made a tremendous drive for the establishment of the War Memorial Organ and Tablet: the School orchestra supported the famous bass singer, Robert Easton, an Old Bedan, and instrumentalists from Boys' and Girls' Schools performed in a concert that raised the very large sum of £850 for the installation. Leslie Jolly, Old Bedan and member of staff, put on a now forgotten play, "The Ascent of F6", whose language and "cynicism and depth seemed unsuited to such a young cast", said one outraged spectator; a mother of one of the cast had not noticed much increase in corruption in her son, while an Old Bedan allayed concern by assuring all and sundry that there was no need to worry since the unseemly vocabulary was old hat to Bede schoolboys; the producer himself said that the thing was put on as an experimental exercise and that the staging was a clinical exercise anyhow. A year late Jolly made sure he was on the side of the angels by arranging the performance of the "Hecuba" of Euripides: the play has equal numbers of men and women characters; I.I.Chisop, I. Miller, R.E. Waiter and A. Shotton were reported as male indeed, while the others were left in the anonymous ambiguity of drag.

The reporter's plaudit was that the play was so well done as to prove a satisfying experience to even the "possibly shamelessly ignorant audience". In defiance of the jaundice of Dr. Smurthwaite (above), the School had found in 1951, his last year, a trumpeter, a sixteen year old, William Storey, who was awarded the R.F. Jarman Prize for outstanding Musical Ability. As a mark of complete modernity on 14th December, 1949, the Schools showed a united front when everybody for the first time in history downed tools: the heating systems burst open at the seams. Everybody was at his desk on the morning of the 15th. R.D. Eaton became the first Bedan to win an international cap for England at Rugby Football.

Both Schools had had the custom on General Election Day of holding their private poll. For a week beforehand at morning break and during the lunch hour candidates took to the hustings. There was a lot of noise, cat-calling, jeers, cheers and, above all, laughter, that was, however, at root organised in imitation of the real thing. Candidates talked seriously even when they talked rubbish, which is not so far removed from reality, in fact. The Girls' School affair was not quite as rumbustious, not to mention vulgar, as the Boys', which had an Eighteenth Century air, minus, of course, the beer, graft and cudgels. But the air for the final formal debate in the Hall was fevered and knife-edge. In February, 1950, there was one such occasion. The Chairman was A.A. Shotton, the Liberal Candidate was W. Campbell, the Conservative was J.W. Cash, the Communist S.F. Harle, and the

Socialist R. Walker; the total electorate was 611. Cash polled 316, Walker221, Campbell 46 and Harle 28. The School has, so far as we know, produced three M.P.'s: Sir Marcus Lipton Q.C. (1911-18), Labour Party Member for Brixton, Lambeth, and some time scholar of Merton College, Oxford; Victor Finlay, Conservative Member for Hexham, about whom we know nothing further; Derek Foster (1951-58?), sitting Labour Member for Spennymoor and currently Opposition Chief Whip, formerly of St. Catherine's College, Oxford and married to an Old Bedan. Marcus Lipton, a considerable wit, was an ardent member of the London Branch of the Old Bedans' Association and arranged the Annual Dinner in the House of Commons; he presented the prizes in Mr. Bradshaw's last Speech Day in 1951; amongst those to whom he presented an award was Alan Cowie, now Professor of Experimental Psychology at the University of Oxford.

G.A. Bradshaw retired at the end of the Summer Term of that year, having served a quarter of a century as Headmaster. It had been a most exacting period of office during which he had moved the School totally, moved it partially, and then returned it to its entity, and had seen it to its recovery of vigour and purpose during a period of penury, of changing values and conventions of truth. He confessed, at the end of his time, to feeling tired and disillusioned with modern administrative aims. But he enjoyed a beer or two and lived until he was ninety.

He was succeeded in July by A.J.B. Budge, M.A. in Geography of Liverpool University and at the time of his appointment Senior Geography Master at Alsop High School for Boys, Liverpool, where he had taught before serving, during the War, as a Staff Officer in the Army.

AN APOLOGIA

The upheaval that has gone on in the Durham Road Buildings over the last eighteen months has made access to records more difficult than would have been ideal. To accommodate the rearrangements necessary in the setting up of the Tertiary College, School records have been laid up in an arbitrary assemblage of packing cases and removed from their original place. More time, space and pure muscle-power than are available would have been required to make inroads into the mass sensible enough even for our present modest purposes. Some real future historian may, perhaps, be attracted to the work. Those used so far had, by a happy accident, as it turns out, been taken out for perusal for a separate purpose. The documentary material is to be lodged, we understand, with the Public Archivist of the Tyne and Wear District.

In the meantime, we have to rely mainly but not exclusively on the cross-balances of personal recollection. Such accounts may still come very close to giving a fair impression of the quality of the School.

Where it has been possible to ascertain facts we are especially indebted to the careful scrapbooks of R.T. Ayre, a man who devoted his entire life to the School from his entry as a pupil in 1912 to his retirement as its Deputy Headmaster in 1964.

PLAYING THE SYSTEM

In the light of what has been said above, Old Bedans of this period may well think they are more than ever entitled to have some sort of elucidation of what *was* being done to them.

By the middle Fifties the Schools had settled with some confidence into patterns of work that were well defined through the new G.C.E. Schemes of 1951. There was to be rather more than a decade when the task facing Grammar Schools was not so much what to teach as how best to teach a graduated syllabus that led pupils to the testing points of 'O' Level. Entry into 'A' Level courses was not governed by the rigidities of Matriculation but by a more elastic notion of general competence. The Sixth Forms expanded year by year as did the organisations of further education, professional and academic, that were to receive them. Emphasis lay strongly on traditional respect for linguistic

and numerate skills and on the acquisition of a sense of the continuous growth of learning, no matter what the subject. There is no doubt that for those who bent their backs to the task it was an admirable system. And it was one that the Bede Schools operated very well. In a sense, there was little new in it: it tended to be thought of as a natural expansion of limits, one to be grasped with enthusiasm. It involved a high degree of competition amongst both pupils and members of staff. It involved some losers and some relative losers; as time went on the fact came to be increasingly pondered by those who taught. Many schemes were devised to turn academic losers into winners. Some succeeded: a subsequent Head of School was one. 'Relative' losers is the phrase used. Conversations with Old Boys, at least, suggest that there are numbers who now feel that they could have used what was there to better personal advantage, but most talk of some fulfilment in all sorts of activities of a non-academic sort or in the highly competitive sphere of team games; they all are aware of community verve. Many, too, are in no doubt that the insistence on personal organisation, the good-natured relationships they enjoyed with a wide variety of boys and with at least some masters, the value of work, were all matters of great subsequent value to them. Some, of course, as always, see themselves as plain bloody-minded: one of these in due course became a mature student at Durham University and took a good Degree. This sort of thing is the balm of Gilead to guilt-wounded schoolmasters, for there is always the burden of those of whom one hears no more.

The Boys' School Staff of this period was, probably, uniquely well adapted to getting the project into effect, for it consisted of a number of masters who embodied the traditions of the School, a number of well qualified intermediate appointees and a recent corps of men who had held responsible offices in the Forces. Most of them held high academic qualifications in their specialist subjects.

The doyen was E.M. Maccoby, a Cambridge Double First, a Wrangler in his year and a First Class Honours man of London University. He was a Talmudical scholar, could outstrip many in his knowledge of Shakespeare, especially of the History Plays, a fine chess player (and teacher), but, above all, delighted to teach Mathematics to mathematicians. He served the School from 1915 to 1957. He collapsed while teaching the Lower Fourth, the place from which he earmarked his high-flying Sixth Form pupils, thus making, in a curious and fateful way, a final statement about the work of a lifetime. A brilliant man himself, he enjoyed a most talented family: his daughter, Eva, his grandsons, Joseph and Chaim, all Cambridge graduates and his son, David, a painter of style and invention. All are Old Bedans.

C.J. Wates was a man of excellent academic backgroud, a First Class Honours man of London University in Medieval and Modern History. After his appointment to the Bede in 1942 he set about developing a bastion Department of History, Economics and Political Theory: the last two subjects he acquired by private reading. He was a powerful influence in persuading the Oxford Delegacy to establish Papers at 'A' Level in the last two subjects. He developed a highly effective system of teaching them through charts: his successes were phenomenal. He set up a complicated web of contacts with universities far and wide, from which many scores of pupils derived grace and favour. He had an enviable gift of espying ability in unsuspecting bosoms. One of his former pupils, John Temple (Gonville and Caius) an escapee from the Wates trawl, once remarked on the irony that this die-hard Tory should, through his concentration on the economic theory of History, have turned out so many Left-wingers.

Both Schools were organized round a system of authority, secondary in appearance but extremely important in fact, that of the Prefects, under the charge of the Head of School. The Staff, at a special meeting, recommended people known to them particularly. Both Schools had had a "School Council" at one time, but, for whatever reason, it had made no more than a nominal impact. The Prefect system, with the access it gave to School opinion to Head and Staff, was a most valuable aid in the maintenance of a good tone. It was, too, of not inconsiderable value as an initial training ground for young men and women in the arts of persuasion and authority. Sixth Form Colleges and the like cannot offer anything similar. Previous mention has been made of the subsequent careers of Heads of School. Here are summaries of four from the Boys' School. 1949-50 R.E. Waiter: St John's College, Cambridge (Natural Sciences); Durham University (Chemical Engineering); Atomic Energy Commission; private industry; his own company, U.S.A., with international business. 1951-52 D.W. Aitchison: Emmanuel College, Cambridge (Classics); Headmaster of Comprehensive School. 1957-58 Derek Foster: St Catherine's College, Oxford (P.P.E.); Director of own Company before electing Youth Organisation work; M.P. Bishop Auckland, Opposition Chief Whip. 1966-67 Michael Gibson: University College London (Law); stockbroking; Barclays de Zoete Wedd, Directorship.

GIRLS' SCHOOL KALEIDOSCOPE: 1948 - 67

Joan Hardy (1943-50) has some kind recollections of her teachers and especially of Miss Orme:

"Miss Orme managed to make Latin less than dusty, with translations of carols, operas, and popular songs. If the tune of 'If you were the only girl in the world' comes on the radio I immediately think of the words 'Si tu sola virgo in terris esse.....etc.' Then there was the Saturnalia to look forward to every two years.
It must have been the School's 60th anniversary in 1950 and some of the Upper VIth had to dress in period costumes, with cushions tied on as bustles: I recall getting very hot in my outfit since we managed to hit upon a fine day for our Open/Sports Day. "
But her chief interests lay in Geography, which she ultimately read at King's College, London, before taking up a career there as a librarian:
"Geography was always a favourite subject of mine and in the sixth form we started to make field trips to geomorphological features such as High Force. One year we went on a week's field trip with Mr. Foster to the Field Centre at Malham. It was a cold spring but we were told there was central heating - and so there was in the main building. However, we were accommodated in a dormitory in an outbuilding and the central heating consisted of an ineffective, black, portable, oil heater in the middle of the long room. Grumbling kept us warm, and I thoroughly enjoyed the field work."

Isabel Ramsay (1946-52) has a horrified recollection of, literally, it seems, being dressed to kill, post-War fashion:
"The war had only been over for a year and rationing was still in existence. It was difficult to have everything new for school uniform and I arrived that first morning in a mixture of old and new - a hat handed down from my cousin Audrey Robson - a butcher blue blouse, square necked, home-made and a *new* navy blue tunic. I remember being very worried about my blazer. The girls at that time wore navy with blue trim but, with the restrictions of rationing, parents could buy only a plain navy blazer and sew bright blue ribbon round the edges. Mine was of the old style - handed down, too big for me but "I would grow into it". The hat was like the district nurse's and had to have a deep tuck in it to make it stay on. "

Isabel subsequently trained as a nurse at Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and then at Queen Charlotte's Maternity Hospital in London. She completed her medical career by marrying a doctor, which seems sensible.

Hazel Emslie (McCrea) (1951-58) moves at a dizzy speed that beats even aircraft recognition tests and subliminal advertising:

"Proud "Fusties" - hats over eyebrows, tunics mid-calf, satchels over *BOTH SHOULDERS*. Being introduced to hockey by the diminutive 6th former, Verna Jenkins. Miss Moul, alarm clock under arm, "Dear my love, you will take a collecting tin for the Guild of Help, won't you?" The embarrassement of having to tell Miss Kinch that I hadn't done fractions at Primary School. Being taught how to say "oeuf" by Miss Fisher. Drawing a shoe for Miss Norman. Mr Taylor's aneline solution. Miss Lax's stick insects. Miss Carrick's fume cupboard. Winnning a half crown postal order in the slow bicycle race. Fact and Faith films. James Blades and the gong he couldn't strike because it would break all the windows in the hall. Emlyn Williams' one man Dickens. Speech Day with Princess Iliana of Romania. The smell of cigarette smoke when the staffroom door opened. Friday morning Charity appeals which always ended with "and so I ask you to please give generously to this very worthy cause". Shivering in the classroom with all the windows open so that Miss Hayton would come in and say "What do you think this is, Pearson's Fresh Air Fund?" Mrs Bryce's "Amn't I". Miss Heslop in floral overall licking the chalk. Playing hockey on the beach at Seaburn with Miss Metcalfe. A skiing trip to Engleberg. Pit yacker socks. The introduction of Houses. Being the only sixth former in detention. The pride with which we wore our Scholarship Seventh badges and that basement holy of holies where we were allowed, nay, encouraged to heat milk for morning coffee. The sixth form boys' boaters. Free periods spent giggling in the library. The staff pantomime where Mrs Proud did a perfect imitation of Anne Harrison's classroom flounces. The choir practices with Miss Bernard and Mr. Hartley and the note-perfect accompaniment of a wee schoolboy, Tony Metcalfe. Being in the school's first educational dance performance: choreography - Miss Rutter, music - "Charmaine" played by Mantovani. Miss Waggott's stately glide and Du Maurier cigarettes. Mrs. Bryce's red two piece with fur trimmed collar. "

Sheila Willmott (Laybourn) (1951-58) reveals that she has had a teaching career like a fire-cracker, Benwell (Bendower) Comprehensive, a girls' C. of E. convent school, another Comprehensive, a boys'preparatory school and a minor girls' public school. This is partly to do with exigencies of rearing a family and partly to do with the career of her husband, Eric (1950-55). He is one of those Bedans, referred to before, who have found that the job they took at 16 years of age was inadequate: he went to Newcastle University after two or three years, to emerge with PH.D. and to take up work as a Research Chemist with Phillips. The rest is more tangled. Sheila's sister, June (1955-62) teaches Mathematics while Anne (1964-71) went to Somerville College, Oxford, for Natural Sciences, married a Balliol College man and now teaches at Neville's Cross. Keith (1965-72) is a Consultant Psychiatrist at St. Nicholas Hospital, Leeds. Of her nephew and niece, Jeremy and Gillian Mussa, she has a (forlorn) hope that the the latter's children may continue this connection.

Miss K.T. Heslop (1945-66) recollects shortages of necessities, even of chalk, at the beginning of her career at the School. 'Stodge and splodge', she says, were consumed with equanimity at dinners. In the hot summer of 1947, after a devastating winter, they ran a Field Course in the Lake District, an idyllic time offset every so often by an awful stench from the corpse of a sheep killed in the winter snow: even Biologists could not face lamb for a year or two after that. The arrival of Clifford Hartley, ex-R.A.F., to teach Music was an excitement: he played Entry of the Queen of Sheba as they were leaving assembly. She concludes her letter thus:

"As far as today's pupils are concerned, I agree with Louis Armstrong, 'They'll know much more than I'll ever know', yet in one respect I see no signs of Post Tenebras Lux. I go shopping, carefully, as an octogenarian must. One shop offered me FRESH CREAM GATEAUX'S, another had MATCHING CUP'S AND SAUCER'S, and the greengrocer had JERSEY POTATOE'S.

As Miss Moul said ..... "

Elke Jackson (Burnham) (1956-63) makes some remarks about the organisation and nature of the Girls' School that identify its difference from the Boys'. It was certainly a more intimately family-like place: Holy Writ was not in the forefront of the mind of any vistor to the Headmaster's Room, not even that of some of the R.I. men whom we knew; 'Creepo' may possibly have been giving a detached thought or two to his next fag or to publication of a renewed onslaught on behalf of the Liberal Party.

''Double Maths'' was never a solitary choice; even Greek usually had a couple. But there is more to it than that in the long run, of course:

''Miss Moul was still the Headmistress when I arrived in the first year. One of her most notable sayings was 'Cough, dear Bedans!' during assembly when a lot of coughing and spluttering were going on. No doubt, she felt that once everyone had had a good clear of the throat there would be no more disturbances during her sometimes lengthy sermons.

When it came to doing 'A' Levels it transpired that I was to be the only one to be doing double maths, as the remainder of the ''science people'' all had in mind to do some form of Medical studies and only needed Additional Maths. There seemed to be a strict policy of keeping the two Schools, Bede Boys' and Bede Girls', separated, so, instead of having joint lessons with the boys, I had 16 lessons a week on my own. In these cost-conscious days I think that would have been unacceptable. In the Scholarship VII, as the Upper Sixth was called , we were allowed to have a room as a prefects' room. This was facing the netball quadrangle. In order not to be spied upon we hung net curtains and tried to get some form of cosiness into the room. Selling toffee cakes was the way we raised the money for the curtains and the liquid lino for the floor.
Bede always had a good reputation for sport. I was invloved in swimming, rounders and netball, playing matches on Saturdays. For some reason the games staff did not really get involved in the swimming and it was left to the girls to organise the life-saving and survival courses. My predecessor was Margaret Beristord, and I made sure that the tradition would go on by getting Susan Melton and Kathleen Hudson involved in the instruction. Bede always did well in the Life-Saving Competitions, winning first place for many years. I am not sure that the popularity of the Life-Saving was not in some part due to the fact that we swam before school and were allowed to miss assemblies, as long as we were in by first lesson.
My time as Head Girl passed uneventfully. The main remembrance is of going to see the Headmistress, Miss Bradbury, every morning to find out which staff were away and to organise the Prefects who were to do the supervision of the classes.
Founder's Day was also a memory if only for the fact that I had to read a lesson in front of the combined schools, rather a large number of people.
During my last year there was talk of the school being turned into a Comprehensive. Petitions were signed and we even went to Westminster to present the petition to our Member of Parliament. The outcome was predictable, but our resistance to change had been noted.''

Judith Griffiths (Gribble) (1957-63), one of a largish number of people to return there to teach, joined almost as large a number who had married a colleague; in her case, Colin, Classics master originally in the Boys' School. They are now in Bedford, where they bump into Old Bedans inescapably:

''I spent as many years at Bede as a pupil as I did as a teacher. When I arrived at Bede in November 1957, I found the school to be very different from the mixed grammar school I had left. The school uniform of royal blue square necked blouses and gym slips was extremely antiquated and it took a while to settle into the predominantly female environment. From having boys as part of my everyday existence, they became specimens to be viewed but not contacted.

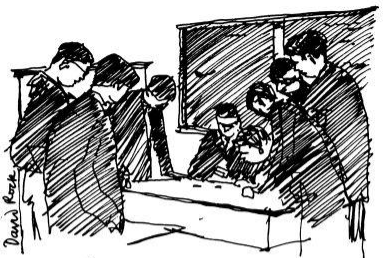
The P.E. uniform was definitely designer fashion. I was very keen on P.E. and was amazed that we were meant to do physical exercise in that attire - and there had to be knickers to match - the type that virtually covered the knees. For swimming lessons at the High Street pool, we only had minutes to dress and rush across town for the bus. It didn't matter what we looked like, as long as we were wearing a school hat.

During my U6 year we acquired a room in the basement as a Prefects' Room. Many hours were spent painting the floor, (We must have made a good job of it as I noticed it was still in good condition when Mrs. Bell inherited it as Pemberton House base.) and importing furniture from attic and spare rooms.

I returned to the school in 1967 as Head of Girls' P.E. to quite a different school. During my five years of teaching at Bede I frequently visited Mr. Temple with yet another trophy or shield that one of the school teams had won. The major triumph was winning the County Athletics Championships, when we had risen from 19th to 1st place in five seasons. I was involved with ski trips to Austria, and brought back a few plaster casts. I also introduced the Isle of Man Camp to the girls. I will never forget Denise Chalk and Judith Ruddick hanging on to the marquee guy ropes in a force 10 gale. Even at midnight with torrential rain and raging wind they could still see the funny side and kept us smiling and our spirits up well into the night. Jeff Wylie did an excellent job that evening - he was in charge of the hot drinks. ''

Irene Earl (Makel) (1957-64) establishes the point at the centre of Miss Moul's ''activities'' and makes one wonder whether the fun has not gone out of school:

''Who remembers the visiting speakers, the itinerant players, the travelling musicians? We were never warned that they were coming. We were merely summoned, en masse, to the hall - oh I can still feel the excitement, the anticipation, the hope of some unexpected fun ..... Each visitor was unique, but all had infectious enthusiasm for their chosen discipline. Some were famous: Lady Barbaroli with her cello, Percy Grainger with his flute and his 'Country Garden' song, James (wonderful) Blades and his percussion instruments.
There was the Canadian 'agony aunt' who came to talk to the whole school about our moral behaviour. My sister recalls vividly her phrase, ''Now girls, don't tease the boys. It excites them''. She was mystified. Why should calling boys a few names excite them? This was all very mysterious. Our Canadian vistor triggered off in Marjorie the desire to ask a lot of questions and launched her into the exciting world of sex education as taught to her by her half-informed girls in their early teens. It was a revelation!
Then there was Red - ? who came to talk to us about his trip up the Amazon. It must have been a long journey. I don't remember much about it, or the slides which he took about two hours to show to us. What I do recall most vividly was my aching bottom. Bede School chairs were definitely not designed for extended occupation!
Oh, then of course there were the two German ladies, clad in Robin Hood outfits. What were they doing with that vast collection of recorders which they played with such intense concentration? Their thick German accents made it impossible to understand anything they said. But everyone who saw them shares the same memory - that of trying, with excruciating difficulty, to contain the desire to break out into hysterical laughter. The air was electric that day.
And the American award-winning concert pianist! Blonde, handsome - we were all instantly in love with him. There we sat, entranced, as he bent over the school Grand Piano, playing with inspired brilliance. His fingers pounding the keys, his hair flapping boyishly over his fevered brow. But, oh joy, there was a 'bum note' on the piano ..... Who could have wished for better entertainment! But the man I remember with most affection was a genius who came to perform 'A Christmas Carol' in the style of Dickens. With only a lectern, a book, a costume and his talent, that man managed to transport all of us into the magical world of Ebenezer Scrooge, Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim..... It was wonderful! How lucky we were to have the chance to share such talents. What a pity our children can't enjoy the same opportunities. With our commitment now to the National Curriculum, there is no time left to spare for anything which is not in the syllabus. It would be too costly anyway. School budgeting won't be able to cater for such extra-curricular frivolities. And out there, there must be a wealth of talent on the fringes of the Arts, but sadly it will be left untapped. It's an exciting dimension in education which unfortunately will sadly pass our children by. ''



Shave Ha'penny : extra-curriculum, Boys' School style.

Shelagh Jones (Buchanan) (1957-64), having graduated from Durham University in French and German, was a Departmental specialist at G.C.H.Q. Cheltenham until her marriage to an officer in the R.A.F., after which there were many moves abroad and at home. She is now teaching at High Wycombe. She is a diarist, and the following remarks are based on the record at the time; they are selections from a mass of material and may seem more haphazard than the original, in fact, was:

"IX. Apart from the fact that I loved French and loathed General Science, one of the two events of that first year which are imprinted on my memory is a 'Fact and Faith' film on 'Petra - the rose red city half as old as time' which was so boring that Miss Moul promised us a better one as soon as possible.

IIX. Latin was now added to the timetable. In addition to our normal lessons, Bill Batham gave a talk on 'Colour Bar in the U.S.A.'; a Miss Macaulay talked on 'Family Life' and there was a lecture on American schools. There was also another Fact and Faith film - on the heart: the close-ups of its inner workings guaranteed a steady exodus from the hall!

The school provided plenty of entertainment: a concert based on academic work (our Form performed a play in French about Jeanne d'Arc); 'Lady Precious Stream' (the school play); and on the afternoon of Founder's Day the Houses entertained the school to an impromptu concert.

IIIG. The curriculum was very different. We had chosen German at the expense of Chemistry; I was doing Classical Greek instead of Physics, and in order to continue Latin we had to renounce Biology. The happy linguist had rid herself of the sciences. No school today would contemplate such a curriculum but 30 years ago it was perfectly acceptable and I have never regretted turning my back on the Sciences. It was a year of projects: in Scripture, History and Music (I did Missionary work in India, Captain Cook and Handel).

During the year a theatre troupe presented some French plays, Mr. Lambert Flack gave a lecture and recital on the flute, Mrs. Aylen talked on her work as a missionary in Northern India, and Mr. Martin gave a lecture on the violin. A party of us went to see the Mystery Plays in York.

I joined the Student Christian Movement (SCM), a far more serious organisation than the Junior Christian Movement (JCM) to which I had hitherto belonged. During that year, under Mr. Nottingham's aegis, SCM visited the Synagogue in Ryhope Road, went carol singing (an annual event), spent two meetings on an Any Questions session, read 'Murder in the Cathedral', held a joint meeting with Monkwearmouth SCM, discussed 'The Fallacy of Individual Freedom', attended a SCM conference at Seaham on 'The Person of Jesus' and went on a summer outing to Holy Island and Bamburgh. There was also a Scottish Dancing Club run in the lunch-hour by Miss Thompson. Towards the end of term the French exchange party arrived from St. Nazaire. Visitors during the year had included a troupe performing French plays, a missionary from New Guinea and the Youth Employment Officer.

IVX. There was a visit to the ballet and to a performance of 'Julius Caesar' in the Boys' School (their school play). Our own school play was 'Tobias and the Angel', produced by form VII and, alas, remembered for a flare in the final scene going off badly and severely burning the legs of the Angel (alias the Head Girl). The joint choirs performed Mozart's Requiem. An entire afternoon was spent watching the wedding of the Duke of Kent and Lady Katherine Worsley on T.V.

VL. (Miss Duns) The prospect of G.C.E.s brought a further tightening of the curriculum, to reduce to a maximum of 8 examinations subjects. I had to choose two of Greek, Geography and History: I choose the first two but with Miss Bradbury's blessing I did History at home with my father (Head of History at Monkwearmouth). Outside visits with the school included a performance of 'Le Malade Imaginaire', ... a Classics Conference (at Newcastle University); an officer of the W.R.N.S. gave a talk.

VIA. (Miss Taylor) Our exams safely conquered, we were at last in the Sixth Form. For me there was 'A' Level French (Mrs. Watson), German (Miss Duns) and Latin (Mr. Cox), 'O' Level Spanish, 'interest' English, Scripture, Music (at last the chance to learn the recorder) Pottery and Games. Two German students came to school for the autumn term and we were able to have conversation lessons with them.

We had many theatre visits (mainly in the evening) arranged by members of the English staff. At Newcastle Theatre Royal we saw the RSC in 'Troilus and Cressida', 'Curtmantle' and 'The Devils'; there were 'Twelfth Night' and Massinger's 'A New Way to Pay Old Debts' at Jesmond People's Theatre; 'Hamlet' and 'Arms and the Man' at the Empire; 'Androcles and the Lion' at the Royalty; 'The Crucible' at Bede Towers. We also saw 'Le Barbier de Seville' and the London Festival Ballet at the Empire in Swan Lake Act II, Le Spectre de la Rose, and Scheherezade. At Easter a large party went on a trip to Italy, with Mr. Cox, Mr. Nottingham, Miss Taylor and Miss Duns. The fortnight's trip was organised by the Northumberland and Durham Classics Association and took 140 pupils from all over the North East to Florence, Naples, Rome and Milan. The school play, produced by Miss Thompson and Miss Wilde, was Sheridans's 'The Rivals', the first to be performed on our marvellous new stage, built between November and March.

VIIA. (Mrs. Youngs) And there we were, in our last year as Bedans. The Curriculum was almost the same (without the extra 'O' Level, taken at the end of VIA), but 'interest' English had become more specifically Oral English (for the Certificate of Proficiency) and Use of English (a new exam that year). We also had Interest Science - the first science I had done since Form II!

Early in the year we had the Prefects' Service, at the end of which we signed the Prefects' Book and received our Badges (I still have mine) from Miss Bradbury. I was made Form Prefect to IIW but we had many other responsibilities: bus duty, ink duty, recreation room/senior study/junior study duty in the lunch-hour (one term on the rota for each), planning and running the Christmas party for our 'duty' year, and even holding the fort in the school office when the Secretary was otherwise engaged.

To the school came a lady who gave a lecture in French on seventeenth century French Literature. On 23rd April, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth, the Boys' Drama Club came and presented a Shakespeare tribute, including part of 'Julius Caesar' in Nazi dress. The boys also borrowed our fabulous hall for their school play.

As exams approached, the members of the 'A' Level French and German groups took 'O' Level candidates for practice oral sessions. Then, suddenly, the exams were over and we had three weeks of 'freedom' before we left school. Initially we spent all afternoon watching Wimbledon on T.V., then we played tennis. Several of us spent four days copying out the master timetable for the next year; then there was the stocktaking for the Classics cupboard. Eventually we planned a concert in which Form VII, supported by Form VI and the Staff, gave the school its end-of-term laugh.

It is only now, as I have collated these diary jottings, that I detect a pattern in all those events and activities. All these modern educational ideas - project work, social concern, participating in the community, educating for life and not just for certificates: Bede was doing it all 25 - 30 years ago, and without all this fuss.''

Miss Moul retired in 1959, memorably bright of eye and mind, able to talk with animation to all and sundry and to enjoy participating in a bit of leg-pulling. It is apparent that she had kept her School moving with controlled alacrity in the post-War years. Autocratic she may have been in her singular and sometimes conservative way, but the education she ensured for the girls was administered with good nature and with a constant eye to the future. The girls she was to give into the supervision of her successor had their minds opened to the new world around them and bolstered by a sense of cohesion. She would not wish, one may guess, for better testimonials than her former pupils have offered here.

Miss E.J. Bradbury, her successor, enjoyed distinction in many areas of national and local educational affairs. It is a sad thing that she died only last year. Mrs. A.A.Y. Carrick, who was her Deputy Headmistress at the Bede and herself and Old Bedan, writes thus of her:

''In September 1959 Miss Bradbury came to ''the Bede'' where three distinguished headmistresses had, since its inception in 1890, rendered the school long and devoted service and built up a fine tradition.

Though circumstances denied Miss Bradbury the opportunity of matching her predecessors in length of service (she was able to stay but seven years and a term, just long enough to see one generation of girls pass through the school) she proved that she was well able to match their high standards in devotion to the school, in the maintenance of traditions and in the encouragement of progressive ideals and practice within its walls.

The School at the moment when Miss Bradbury took over was still in the midst of a programme of building expansion. Her equable disposition and quiet calm in the midst of turmoil were pleasingly reassuring and, once the alterations had been completed, were clearly reflected in the even tenor of the life of the school. Under her the school continued to grow in size yet its organistation remained unobtrusively efficient. The general demand for a broadening of sixth form education was reflected in the ever widening scope of minority time activities. Science became more readily available for all and experiments with unstreamed first forms were begun.

Soon Miss Bradbury not only knew her staff but acquired a surprising acquaintance with and knowledge of most girls in the school - not just the very good or the very bad! Her interest in the individual together with her friendly and sympathetic understanding earned the respect and affection of both staff and pupils and contributed largely to the sense of community still fostered in the school despite its growing size.

The riotous concert which marked Miss Bradbury's departure from Bede was, as it were, a mask concealing a genuine sorrow at parting - but all wished her well as she went to face the challenge and adventure of building up the new school at Pennywell - which in turn bade her farewell when she became headmistress of Thornhill.

Miss Bradbury's abilities and achievements in the field of education were recognised beyond the confines of her schools. She was president of the Sunderland Branch of the Headteachers' Association, a

member of the Headmistresses' Executive Committee and eventually their elected President, schools representative on the University Grants Committee, a member of the Schools Council as well as the Council of the University of Durham and a governor of Sunderland Polytechnic and the colleges of St. Hild and the Venerable Bede. The award of a C.B.E. in 1970 was well merited.

Despite all these demanding educational interests and responsibilities, she still found time for other things, being President of the Sunderland Branch of the Royal College of Nursing, and a member and one time President of the Soroptimists Club.

Her hospitality was warm and generous. Many women members of her three Sunderland staffs will recall with delight the New Year coffee mornings at Cliffe Court as well as the wonderful evenings when she provided refreshments (delicious, for home baked) followed by a stimulating commentary on the beautiful slides taken during her adventurous holidays in distant lands. The surviving members of Bede Girls' School staff have happy memories of the extra retirement parties which became the excuse for an annual nostalgic get-together.

In retirement Miss Bradbury was as energetic and venturesome as ever: she lived life to the full and will now be sadly missed".

Mrs Mary Proud, a member of the English Department during Miss Bradbury's regime, offers some recollections of entertainment she was involved closely in:
"In the late Fifities and Sixties, Bede Grammar School for Girls experienced a series of explosions tending to occur either at the end of the school year or before Christmas. Occasionally at these particular times, teachers were retiring and, with good will abounding, as a token of affection and esteem, Bede Staff presented an afternoon's entertainment for the whole school: 'Wot larks!'. Colleagues stayed after school had finished, for numerous discussions and practices. People reluctant to appear on stage provided music, tirelessly, made masks, improvised scenery, applied make-up, sewed costumes, managed the lighting and manipulated that vital component, the curtain.

Those who peformed on stage learnt their lines, sang themsleves breathless and danced themselves to a stand-still. Their infectious enthusiasm was incredible; no matter what was asked of them, they did it. They were superb.
Even now thirty years on, merry memories remain of the classroom scene with the 'maimed' pupil returning, arm in splints, from having her polio prick; of the country yokel's rendition of 'There was an old farmer had an old sow'; of the pretty ballerinas in 'The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairies'; of the hilarious 'Can Can' - and of course, of the pantomime 'Humpty Dumpty'. Delighted by the antics of their teachers, the girls applauded furiously and fell about laughing with merriment.
The day following these explosions of joy and bonhomie Bede Grammar School for Girls was back to its normal disciplined self - a testimony to the mutual respect enjoyed by teachers and pupils - and to the stature of the school".

Mrs L. Youngs, the Head of the English Department, records some of the dramatic ventures of the same period:
"My arrival at Bede Grammar School in September, 1959, to take up the post of Head of the English Department, coincided with that of Miss Bradbury as Headmistress, and I was quickly left in no doubt that Miss Bradbury expected me to produce a play that academic year, in the Spring term of 1960 to be precise. My arguments that I didn't know the staff or the pupils were listened to courteously, but a production was expected: I had to bow to the inevitable.

Miss Thompson, a member of the English Department, volunteered immediately to help with auditions. The choice of play posed problems. In an all-girls school I felt a costume drama would provide fewer difficulties for the male parts (not quite so uni-sex in those days!), so finally decided on 'Richard of Bordeaux'.
It certainly was a case of diving in at the deep end, but I did learn a great deal about the school and

the pupils in record time. I remember with gratitude and affection the Richard and Anne of Hazel Oliver and Gillian Ditchburn (the latter now Dr. Mann of Girton), the striking Brenda Van Ham in orange velvet and Sylvia Refson, an imposing John of Gaunt. That the play was a success was due in no small measure to Miss Carlin of the Biology Department. She volunteered to take charge of the costumes; and they were magnificent. A genius, she rarely cut material, but draped it, and created magical effects. She required stage plans, particularly of important set-pieces, so that her colour schemes would be perfectly balanced. As a result I had to plan sets, arrange exits and entrances and all moves and make sketches - invaluable discipline for any producer. I shall always be indebted to her.

After 'Richard' I was allowed to sit back having encouraged Miss Thompson to take over the role of producer and excellent she proved.; I especially remember 'The Rivals' and 'Tobias and the Angel', the latter almost ending in a back-stage conflagration owing to some amazing effects conjured up by the infiltrators from next door. How those Bede Boys managed to get over to the Girls' School so frequently I never knew, but there were always enthusiastic lighting crews and scene shifters on hand. In the year before amalgamation Mr. Watson of the Boys' School produced a superb 'Twelfth Night' - a joint venture of the two Schools. I believe the young man playing 'Sebastian' (Richard Temple) drove his mother nearly insane by insisting he had his hair dyed to match the beautiful blue-black locks of Viola (Roslind Olsberg).

That was the end of an era".

Miss Muriel Duns, who taught German at the School, remembers, almost with astonishment, in the light of current educational experiences, how the Staff could put on, every year, a show where they could fool around on the stage to gales of laughter but with never a suggestion of breach of mutual respect between Staff and pupil. She recalls, too, how Miss Bradbury would react with unflappable resource when faced with a disaster, like the last-minute complete breakdown of a long-arranged tour of Germany: she conjured up an alternative that was, perhaps, better than the original.

It is evident that Miss Moul's plans for careers advice for girls were given an important turn by Miss Bradbury when she set aside a space as a Careers Room and deputed Miss Duns herself to organise its regular usage.

Mr. A.E. Snell was one of a small band of males to be appointed to the Girls' School Staff. (The Girls' School, in fact, like the Boys' School, had never turned its back upon teachers of an 'inappropriate' sex; it had been quite liberal in its outlook in Physics, Classics and Music, for instance.) He, used to conditions of Roker Park professional footballing and of boys' schools, had quaked with trepidation at his initiation and had approached his first Fourth year girls' class with some conviction of the necessity of romantic chivalry: he was disillusioned; he found himself faced with a more subtle form of barbarity than he had encountered with males. He found himself recruited to the Staff netball team where a teacher of French, K. Johnson, provided the finesse while he was expected to be merely a demolition expert. It was a bitter blow to his self-esteem; but there was worse to follow, for he was recruited into the local entertainment industry, as a Can -Can Girl. He indulges himself in a wry smile when he sometimes, even now, hears of the " narrow range" of the Old Curriculum. The fact that he taught Politics and Economics seems not to have been held in his disfavour, for he recollects the warmth of his reception by those who might have been thought of as dyed-in-the-wool traditionalists, like the whispering Miss Carlin, gifted with eternal youth, or Miss Heslop, whose only concession to weakness during a storm at sea, was to exhibit a ruffled feather or two about a minor breach of discipline by one of the girls. He grew to admire the disinterested kindness of the Staff and their single-mindedness. The reorganisation of the Schools he found to be a traumatic experience for those whose devotion was rewarded often with deprivation by people who, from political motives of one sort or another, chose to ignore foundations that had stood the test of time.

A BOYS' SCHOOL KALEIDOSCOPE : 1948 -67

D.W. Aitchison (1945-52) occupies what must be a unique vantage point for viewing the nature of the School: he was Head of School; he knew the place in three of its shapes, through the agency of his own family, and under five Heads; he himself is a Head of a comprehensive school. His wife and his sons, Mark and David, are all Old Bedans. He writes thus:

"I looked forward very much to life at the Bede: pupils at the Grammar School had eight weeks holiday in the summer - until the very year I started, when it was reduced to a mere six weeks! We were the first post-war pupils and we saw the gradual changes back to normality in the school: for example, temporary staff being replaced by staff returning from military service; the school fields turned back from the war-time vegetable crops and then their extension by building up the ground by using it as one of the town's refuse dumps for some years; in school the shortage of wood meant that 'Manual Instruction' replaced Woodwork in the early years. Current legislation on the standard National Curriculum makes me think of the contrast with my own choice of subjects: I eventually went to read Classics at Cambridge but at Bede in the second year alternate pupils on the register were assigned to Latin or German (my name was first on the register so I got Latin - the boy who was second on the register got German - and eventually studied Modern Languages at Oxford!) In year three I liked Latin so much (with Alf Wilson teaching it, who could help liking it?) that I wanted to take up the option to do Greek - but I had to drop Science altogether to do this. Then in year four, I was not allowed to take Trigonmetry because I had no Science - and had to do Metalwork instead. I remember 'Tubby' Maccoby, Head of Maths., expressing a few thoughts about that!

My final year at Bede was 1951-52. It became an especially busy and interesting year for me because I had the good fortune to become Head Prefect. I believe the office was voted on by members of staff and on the final day of term 'Baggy' Moore, the Deputy Head, sent for me to break the tidings. Douglas Eaton, who had represented England in the Under 18 Rugby International team the previous year, was to be vice-captain. Interestingly, I didn't have an interview with the headmaster Mr. G.A. Bradshaw, who was retiring that week. He was rarely seen around the school by pupils - except that the current Head Prefect or his deputy would knock at the Head's door each morning and walk behind him on the short walk down the corridor into the Assembly Hall.

I have sometimes reflected, in my current role as Head Teacher, on the contrast between the induction of new pupils in 1951, to the more highly complicated induction which pupils now customarily have in big comprehensive schools. It is commonplace for primary pupils to enjoy pre-experiences of various lengths in their new school while it is in session to lessen their anxieties about the transition. I do not remember that we used to have any fears about that transition- more than anything there was a sense of excitement! The initial introduction then was the first duty of the new Head Prefect and the School Prefects, overseen by Mr. Moore. I was, therefore, given a list of the new pupils and their addresses and during the course of the summer holidays cycled all over Sunderland delivering invitations to the homes of incoming pupils to attend a meeting on the Saturday morning before term began. On that morning I remember talking to the new boys about the school and its traditions, its rules and its extra- curricular activities. Then we split up into small parties and toured the half of the school buildings which belonged to the Boys' School. Quite an ordeal for the new Head Prefect! A further ordeal was a meeting with the School's new Head Teacher, Mr A.J.B. Budge, at the beginning of term. He was obviously anxious to have a pupil's eye view of the school and to establish his views on the rôle of the school prefects, who fulfilled quite an important function in the routine life of the school.

I remember thoroughly enjoying most of my time at Bede. We had many happy occasions together - but also the occasional tragic happenings. I remember how shocked we were by the untimely death of two of its most brilliant pupils - Roy Hamp, who was drowned while a student at Durham University, and Geoffrey Pyburn, a brilliant sportsman and academic, struck down by a fatal illness. I was deeply shocked also to hear of the death of Mr Kinnair, who briefly succeeded Mr. G.T. Taylor as Head of English in 1950-51 but who collapsed and died on his way home from teaching at an evening class. His death, however, paved the way for the arrival of Mr. W.K. Lewis and my family (my wife, Elaine,

and two sons Mark and David who were all pupils at Bede) and I have particularly warm memories of our relationship with Ken Lewis.

We are sad to see the passing of the old style Bede School, but wish the very best of luck to all future staff and pupils who have the privilege to work in its refurbished portals".

Donald makes a point about certain areas of timetable inadequacies that in retrospect seem ludicrous. They were the product of growth in what had been demanded of the school and by its Staff. The new headmaster proceeded to deal with them; the balancing of forces in the curriculum and adjustment of the curriculum through timetabling became a dominant and continual concern. The Staff, as a generality, were attuned to the very considerable changes in public demand in the market places of education. The increasingly various capacity of pupils entering the Schools made more and different demands upon teachers, who found themselves modifying their methods and reasonable expectations within an examination system that tended to find itself apt to be strangled by it own constraints. The Oxford Examination Board was more reluctant in accommodating itself to changing patterns than some others known to the Staff through their work as examiners; its methods appeared to retain their arbitrariness longer than was the case with other Boards.

A long-time irony has slowly evolved from one such - in this case, applauded - instance of conservation. H.M. Inspectorate in a major visit to the Schools in the early Sixties was condemnatory of the continued teaching of English Grammar, mainly on the grounds that English had no grammar, in the sense that Latin, for instance, had: English merely had usage, to be picked up at street-corner or Vogue coffee-table, as you pleased, since neither form was superior to the other. To rejoin that the Oxford English examination had compulsory questions testing grammar was derided as the weakest form of special pleading. Now, a full generation later, when nobody knows any grammar in any language (including, by all accounts, Latin) H.M. Inspectorate is advocating the teaching of it, in English. Educational theory is strewn with resuscitated canards.

Stephen Thompson (1949-56), rocket-propelled over 100 yards on a bumpy grass track, was so fearsome on the burst as a centre three-quarter that referees suffered anxiety about their indemnity clauses. Despite this and what follows, he moves on another plane, too: currently he holds a highly responsible post dealing with the employment of young men and women in the North East of England.

"A very Seminal Seminary

Jesuits, it is said, given the first seven years of a child's life, could so teach the articles of faith that they would remain immutable forever. Looking back after one-third of a century I've been pondering what lasting lessons I learned during seven years at Bede in the Fifities. To my shame, but not surprise, I must admit I remember too few specifics of what I was taught. The first sentence of Caesar's Gallic War Book 6, and 3 Greek words are scant reward from my brush with the Classics. The parellelogram of forces is still as much a mystery to me as $E = MC^2$ Appreciation of well written books has fared better but not as well as it should. What then are the real memories and seminal influences? Here are a few which some of you may recognise.

Marrers an' Mates

Friendships forged then have been immutable. Our gang was inseparable. No matter how far scattered or infrequently met the rapport survives. No need for polite re-introductions. Terry Gooch illustrates the point: two visits in seventeen years living in New Zealand proves he's still more Old Bedan than All Black. For me, Dave Crompton is the exception that proves the rules. He seems to have disappeared into a black hole. If you're out there, Dave, please telephone 091 226332. Certainly school friendships breed a special loyalty that those forged rarely do.,

Sport and Heroes

Sport was to the school what war and honour were to Sparta. We played everything and defeated all. Other schools were mere cannon fodder. A pall would fall over Prayers if Durham University inflicted an isolated defeat on the cross-country team! Conquering heroes were feted. Blues were

prized accolades and winning photographs were displayed for posterity to pay homage. My personal inspiration on the rugby field came from Jim Jackson (Old Bedan even then) and Wilfe Howe, and from Alan Cowie and Ken Witherington on the athletics track. These people can take the blame that sport has always excited me and remains fascinating still. Sport has dominated most of my leisure time, and I will certainly die a sports addict.

The Arts

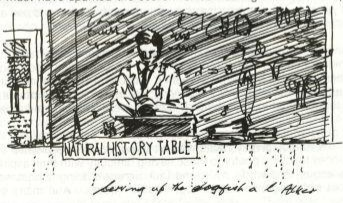
'Arts' in the school enjoyed a high reputation. The Drama Club productions were rightly given considerable critical acclaim. But, as a mere philistine, the sound of music in the school hall provides me with my strongest memories. The martial hymn in the morning roused the blood for the day's contest. We were delivered of a grand new organ during my stay and Twiggy was our own demonic organist. Jock Kirk and Gerry Lewis wrote a school anthem that reduced the Marseillaise to a soulless squeak. Released from speeches on Presentation Days the lads in full throat singing their battle song has only been matched by good choirs singing the Hallelujah Chorus or more often Bread of Heaven at the Arms Park and Bonny Scotland at Murrayfield. Certainly my taste for the Arts runs little further than a rousing tune delivered with bags of pathos.

Crime and Punishment

We were remarkably law-abiding by today's standards and self-regulation via the Prefect System seemed to work without much abuse. When you were not the sinner a good deal of amusement could be had by observing some of the idiosyncratic sanctions applied by some masters. I remember well chalk thrown with the unerring aim of the Crafty Cockney and window poles wielded with the deftness of a Knight of the Round Table. Baggy Moore, I think it was, who sheathed his wand in the seam of his gown and would surprise the unwary offender by outdrawing D'Artagnan to mete his vengeance. Headstands in waste paper baskets were popular. Lines and detention were dispensed with reckless abandon like random confetti. A bizarre punishment I recall included having to remove our desks to the outside toilets for a month by Izzy Wates. Jim Footitt favoured wearing two overcoats and would banish sneezers and coughers to the corridor until symptoms of the plague abated. Usually crimes were punished without delay or protest. But looking back it seems school has been like life since. Major criminals are not always apprehended and, when they are, punishment does not always fit the crime. In that sense the law can appear a bit of an ass.

Thompson on Food

An aspiring Egon Ronay I'm not. But I do enjoy eating in convivial company if a selection of al dente vegetables and underdone meat is available. It is dangerous to claim that any one thing determines the food one likes. Is it not always the case with things that start at the breast? Dried egg during the war and a mother and many aunts whose delight it was to see a fellow get stuck into a good roast followed by apple dumplings are factors which cannot be ignored, for example. Nevertheless, our school dinners must have sparked the search for something better in many boys.



The cacophony in the dining hall, amplified by the accoustics, would have silenced the Tower of Babel. Regularly a crescendo of metal irons and dishes smashed rythmically against formica accompanied

by stamping feet and the outraged roar of the hungry and impatient would reduce stalwart Masters, patrolling to curb the wilder excesses, to a wilting pallor. The noise alone was sufficient to blunt the healthiest appetite. The abiding smell of soggy cabbage and greasy spam fritters killed what was left. There was also an underlying air of menace between aggrieved younger boys served smaller portions by guilt-ridden elders looking to supplement their own shares. Incipient ulcers and anorexia nervosa were not exactly the order of the day but revolt against the institutionalised diet must explain, at least in part, the present growth in the gourmet industry.

I could go on. For example, I am sure my Masters and peers at school are responsible for what I find funny and certainly what is ridiculous. I remember laughing a lot. Satire was very much the order of the day. Nothing should be seen as too important. But good standards were expected. We saw the transition between two Headmasters and their different management and leadership styles. We were encouraged to adopt an open approach and try everthing. At the same time we had the right not to join in if we preferred. I'm sure all this has left me fairly agnostic about most things in later life. I wonder if my pals remember the school as I do? ''

J.P.B. Bryce (1951-58) succeeded his brother, William, at the School. Willie took a First in Mechanical Engineering at Glasgow University (where his father had been a graduate in Theology) while John went to St. John's College, Cambridge, for Economics. His mother, Constance, a graduate in Mathematics of Aberdeen University, taught the subject in the Girls' School and then became a House Tutor in the Junior School of the combined affair. Father William, not to be left out, taught R.I. in the Boys' School for a period and raised the subject to a theological level (to much acclaim from the boys) by injecting a judicious level of discussion on the Roker Park Pantheon of the Saturday before. John occupies a high rank in Westminster in the International Division of the Revenue. He was at one time especially concerned in Income Tax. Finance he learned at Cambridge, but his detailed knowledge of the duplicity, furtiveness, ruffianism and lechery that lie behind Income Tax transactions originates in the crash study he was obliged to make of 'Troilus and Creseyde' (Chaucer) in the dark recesses of the English book store at Bede. He says,
''The period which I recollect with most pleasure of my time at Bede is that spent in the sixth form. Important exams. were in the offing - 'Here where then the easy yoke was spurned and where hard duty lighted up the way' - but a rapport developed with the masters which led to increasing self-awareness and self-confidence. In my case the masters were Cyril Wates and Ken Lewis who provided what could be called, although I am sure they would never use the term, inspirational teaching - akin to kick-starting an engine into life. No sentimentality here, but these were men who were generous with their talents and unstinting with their time.

For some reason which now escapes me, the sixth form decided to wear boaters one summer and these were specially made in the school colours. I still possess mine although it has not had an outing for a least 30 years. The combination of the Sunderland weather and perhaps less adventurous spirits meant that this innovation was fairly short-lived.

Sport was always an important ingredient of life at Bede. Malcolm Berry taught tactics to the rugby team, rejoiced in their successes and commiserated on the occasions (too many) of their defeats. And I treasure the memory of Bill McClement wearing his normal attire with a cigarette dangling from his lips, teaching the tennis team the basics of serving; not one of his attempts cleared the net! The annual hockey and tennis matches with the Girls' School were a high point in the sporting calendar.

It is the personality of particular masters which stands out. Jock Kirk reliving the life of Handel in his eyrie at the top of the school; Jimmy Footitt who would surely have been better suited to a University environment; Lew Jones teaching poetry to those having difficulty with their aspirates (''arf a league, 'arf a league, 'arf a league, honward.....''); and Dick Simpson doing handstands with coins, keys etc. raining down out of his pockets onto the gymnasium floor. And many more,

Of course, it was not roses all the way. Maturing is a difficult process but I suspect that Bede was as good at coping with it as many schools, and probably better than most. Perhaps it is not so

strange therefore that even after this time I still recall the words of the school song (by Ken Lewis) and can often find myself humming the rich and flowing music of Jock Kirk. Happy times indeed.''

Another Bede family at one time occupied a three-nook'd world, a considerable elasticity, one branch in Sussex, another in Canada and the third in New Zealand. The first, John C. Griggs (1928-35), has joined the third as a gesture of complete retirement. John found himself in 1967, as a Town Councillor, with the melancholy task on his hands of acquiescing in the School's becoming comprehensive. The business had been legally tied up before he became an active participant. David proves to anyone who needs convincing that Classics needs conserving if only to ensure a steady run of conservationists. With his contribution he sent a copy of a newspaper photograph of himself looking the dead spit of Maurice Chevalier in a jaunty Prefects' boater; he is wearing an overcoat and has six other boaters alongside him. Clearly he was making a bob or two on the side. ''In retrospect, Bede Grammar School was the place where it all started to go wrong. Nothing that I learned there turned out to be useful in quite the way that one might have predicted.
I studied Classics at Bede, clearly the preliminary to a prestigious academic career. My parents probably saw me as the next Robert Graves. However, faced later with the urgent need to obtain filthy lucre, I joined an insurance company, where I learned to write memos and distrust people wearing pinstriped trousers. Armed with the necessary life experience, I moved into computer programming, having discovered to my amazement that neither a maths. background nor a white coat was required. Now I find myself managing salmon hatcheries in British Columbia, a role to which I bring little except the cunning nurtured on Bede's playing fields and in Barnes Park. The vestige that remains of my classical training manifests itself only in a certain facility with crosswords and a tendency to translate Latin mottoes if not forcibly restrained.
Similarly, fired by the enthusiam that John Kirk brought to music teaching, I joined the Bede School Orchestra as third trumpet. A new beginning: a new Maurice André in the making! Of course the orchestra, which had survived for several decades to that point, folded within weeks. Thwarted, I moved from trumpet to trombone, and from classical music to jazz. Mr. Kirk was just as keen to help me with jazz harmonies as he was to implant the idea that Mozart was the inside-left of an all-staff football team of orchestral composers, about the only thing I remember from music periods. (The movie 'Amadeus' has now popularized the view of Mozart as a sort of early Len Shackleton; maybe Kirky was right after all.) As for me, my musical career has gone full circle, from the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York to the dingy upstairs rooms of pubs in Vancouver. Meanwhile riches and critical acclaim alike have passed me by. And I still can't tell Bach from Beethoven.
As for mens sana in corpore sano (all right, work it out for yourselves), I was persuaded at Bede to take up the gentlemanly sport of rugby football. Visions of clean-limbed youth, maturing into a pure and healthy middle age! The reality: after graduating from the Old Bedans' third team to the sort of thirteen-man aggregations of cowards and cripples that leave their blood if not their breakfasts on the arid playing fields of Ontario, I'm left with gnarled, arthritic fingers, a persistent ache in the left knee when the weather's bad, more stomach than I care to contemplate, a taste for beer and the occasional ability to recite all fifty-four verses of Eskimo Nell.

In my view, the sword of past endeavour has a lot to answer for.''

John (1955-63), the one who is an All Black at last, but a bit old to play internationally, records as highlights of his education that he was one of a row of twenty-three lined up bottoms-up to be caned by Jock Kirk and that he achieved the impossible by being caned by C.A. Smith. He fails to say what he could possibly have done to disturb the Aristotelian rationality of C.A.S.

He was, however, shrewd enough to marry an Old Bedan, Glenda Lawson.

''I enjoyed my time at Bede. We seemed to have much of the best that was available. There were good sporting and cultural outlets, often thanks to masters who gave up their time and enthusiasm freely. There were some bright boys and some funny ones, There was free milk. There were some eccentric, some obviously very capable, some fairly pleasant masters. Our rugby shirt was the envy of the county. We sang hymns, though not excessively. Girls were 100 yards away.

Not that it was a free lunch. There was a drawback, possibly more to do with the system than just Bede. There was a mania, exhibited chronically by most teachers, to "educate" the inmates. This meant drumming into us every known fact or tin-pot theory and requiring us to work through excruciating solutions to alleged problems which nobody in his right mind would regard as being any of his business in the first place. As if that wasn't enough, we were given tons of homework, regular tests (even in R.E., for God's sake!), internal exams, and the chance of periodic jousts with a bunch of heavyweights from Oxford. They didn't even know us - what was it to do with them?

However, we could recite log tables, precis Merchants of Venice and gabble Franglegeordiase. We knew Timbuctoo's mean November rainfall, could envisage straight lines which scarcely met, possibly even not in infinity, and rarely confused Alexander the Unready with Catherine the Arrogant. We could expound on the similarities of reproduction in the earthworm and hippopotamus, before and after the Corn Laws. We often argued, occasionally coming to blows, about squares on the wotsit being equal to the sum of various even less likely things.

And that was just the mornings. They were followed by something much more challenging - School Dinner, offered in the grim hope that the Lord might make us truly thankful. Fat chance, I would have thought, unless there was a ginger pudding on the menu, and even then you couldn't tell until you'd seen the custard. Aargh ..... those stews, that cold brisket with beetroot and so-called salad cream, the unspeakable cabbage, the lumpy potato, the congealed gravy, the lines for talking. After lunch and usually much less fun was P.E., where 80% of the class spent three years learning not to do a handstand.

Still, madly practical as it wasn't - scarcely any coverage of panel beating, hairdressing or how to skin a possum - it wasn't all wasted. I learnt enough to eschew chemical experimentation at home, having experienced early the dangers of applying heat to a mixture of a certain liquid and a whitish powder - burnt thumb, glass all over, being screeched at and beaten about the back with a metre ruler. Just by wandering past the Biology labs., no need to go in, I know when rabbit is off and never to eat dogfish.

Regrets? They are as much to do with my life-style as with the school, I suppose, though both are to blame. I am outrageously overprepared for this Colonial existence - of course, it may well be different for you fellows back home. For example, with the simplification of the PAYE tax returns there is probably no remaining practical use for my hard earned knowledge of quadratic equations. Worse, after all this time I've found no opportunity to drop into conversation, even around the billabong between dances, the only thing other than "Ammo, Amos, Hoc" still retained from my Latin primer - that elephants about to cross a river send young ones on first. Maybe I STILL need to apply myself harder."

Whatever their other virtues may have been, the Bede grounds may only be described as hazardous for the practice of Athletics. Nevertheless the Boys' School year in and year out managed to turn our good runners and jumpers and quite competent performers elsewhere. The Annual Tyneside Grammar School Sports provided an impetus and a very useful yardstick. It was an occasion, home or away for a massive turn-out of supporters."

Laurence Pratt (1956 -63), who eventually went on to the Dental School of Newcastle University and may still be seen in marathon training around Herrington Burn, is an excellent example of the middle-distance tradition that existed, mainly in the charge of D.A. Thompson, who had been a runner when he himself was a pupil. Larry claims he became a runner after he had been told by a member of the P.E. Staff that he was not fit enough for either code of football. Having run around the school field successfully once, he decided that this was his line, so he did it endlessly. He had the example ahead of him of Barry Allison, a County cross-country man and runner-up in the Northern Championships. Peter Wood and John Barber were running at that time, while Alan Archbold was showing outstanding ability, though he tended to lack the ambition to make the most of it. There was intense competition amongst Schools; in one especially good year the School beat the R.G.S.,

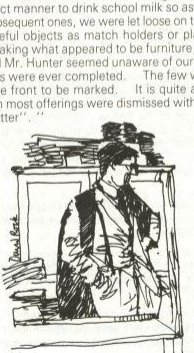
Newcastle, who had been undefeated for a number of seasons. The County team which was in 1963 second in the National Cross-country Championship was captained by Larry; Brendan Foster was one of the team. Larry recalls the very good distance runner, Alan Bright, who on one occasion got lost before a start. When he was found the master-in-charge exclaimed, with ingenuity, "Bright! What a misnomer!" Three years later Bright took a First in Chemistry at Sheffield University. Larry records the gratitude all runners felt to D.A. Thompson for his quite endless devotion to them and to their sport, training them and transporting them everywhere.

F.W. Wilson (1958-65) was the Candid Camera expert of his generation. He caught man and boy in unguarded moments on Sports field and in classroom. Perhaps some of the not-too-revealing sort may find themselves in the Exhibition in the Public Library. He wonders how many teachers smoke in class nowadays: he has a good one of C.J. Wates having a puff at a cigarette rather than a draw at his pipe. Fred's elder brother, John, is one of a number of Old Bedans working in various capacities in both Sound and T.V. at the B.B.C.; John is a producer and presenter for the World Service. Fred himself, after graduating at Durham University in Economics and Law, practises as a solicitor in Newcastle. His recollections are, not surprisingly, about the spirit of free enterprise that prevailed in all aspects of school life:

"Long before I attended Bede (1958-65) it seemed a very familiar institution as my father and many of his close friends, such as George Halstead, were Old Boys. Perhaps in those days fewer people left the town to find work elsewhere because it seemed as though a whole generation had grown up together, gone to Bede, and then found local jobs. Friendships which had started at Bede seemed to last a life-time.

The feeling of continuity at Bede seemed very strong to me. During my early years at school we had Tom Ayre for Maths. It seemed quite incredible that he had also taught my father - who by my calculations left in 1928! I remember that despite the passage of thirty years Tom Ayre was still unimpressed with the Wilson ability at the subject.

Although woodwork was a subject which I only took in the first year, it left an abiding memory. "Dickie" Hunter was in charge. The first lesson (which I imagine would have been a double period) was devoted entirely to the correct manner to drink school milk so as to derive maximum benefit from it. In the next lesson, and all subsequent ones, we were let loose on the tools, with minimal instruction, and requested to make such useful objects as match holders or plant pot stands. Whilst we did this Mr. Hunter busied himself making what appeared to be furniture, kitchen fittings, etc. Provided reasonable order was maintained Mr. Hunter seemed unaware of our presence. As you can imagine the result was that very few items were ever completed. The few which were finished were passed from boy to boy and taken to the front to be marked. It is quite amazing how different marks for the same item could be, although most offerings were dismissed with the contemptuous remark, "My dog could have chewed this better".."



Alan Thompson (1956-63) will serve admirably as a representative of a generation of boys who distinguished themselves in a seemingly inexhaustible store of energy, inventiveness and high spirits. Alan's year won eleven State Scholarships, and the air of easy accomplishment seemed to pervade all aspects of school life for a whole era. His contribution captures the spirit with considerable exactitude:

"There was a cultural life at Bede which I have never encountered to the same extent in any school I have taught at. For me, it embraced the Debating Societies, the Drama Club, the 'Bedan' magazine, and various events staged by some of the older pupils, satires, revues and what have you.

For others, the boundaries may have been different - Arthur Surtees and Dave Middlemiss, for example, tried to broaden our musical horizons. Let each define 'culture' as he may; that's how it was for me.

Yes, debating *societies*, for when I came to the school, there was a junior version too, and that familiar incantation began "The third meeting of the B.G.B.S. Junior D.S. took place.....etc." Minutes, formality, officers, including the Poet Laureates. Most famous among the latter, Anthony Metcalfe, with his saga of "The Breaking of Trog's Door". And so on to the Senior version, with the G.T. Moore Cup, which I was always too frightened to enter, and the acerbity of Pete Latham, the knockabout of 'Jade' Harris.

Then there was Bede Drama, which I first encountered when they performed "The Alchemist" - wonderful stuff, further incantations and tomfoolery; I think, looking back, they made half of it up! The next year I came in myself, for "The Strong Are Lonely", a jesuitical tale (I wonder how much of 'The Mission' which I haven't seen was borrowed from Hochwaelder's powerful drama?) followed by the part of Brutus in "Julius Caesar" opposite Metcalfe's Cassius with a 'crowd' of four for the forum scenes. Years later, when I took part in the National Youth Theatre's version in modern dress, there was such a big mob someone got shoved into Caesar's open coffin.

If I hoped for fame from Brutus, I was to be sorely disappointed. 'Ike' Waites would only come to the play if he were allowed to write the Crit. He rarely spared us, and his words this time are engraved on my heart: "Brutus, somewhat handicapped by a toga reminiscent of one gathering in the laundry....."

The Crit. appeared in the Bedan, that other legend. Ray Meddis and I became editors, under 'Jerry' Lewis's watchful eye, but I always felt inferior to those that had gone before.....

..... because, and this is where all these activities somehow come together in my memory, the year before us contained the giants of the school's cultural life, in particular (Peter) 'Wud', 'Trial' (John Temple) and Dixon (Darcy) Hawkins. These men towered wherever they performed, in the debates, on the stage, in the page of the Bedan (I remember three poems in particular of Wood's and the words 'and flick the ash in cut glass trays to show me what was lost' - although what **is** lost is the magazine itself) and when they produced their hilarious satires for all our benefits, including the gentle mocking of the notorious 'Sam' Bates, and the perennial saga of the Painting of the Rooftop Owl. The indulgence of nostalgia! But they truly did have talent, and it was good that so much of it came together.

Where are they all now? I lost them in Cambridge, but I hope they have gone on towering. There will be other names that others will remember, but this is my own treasure chest, and it has been good to lift the lid a little once again.

As a timorous eleven-year-old, I attended a pre-term meeting for all the new "Fusties". We were shown round the school in groups, mine by a not-uninteresting prefect called Coulson. At the end of the tour, he asked the inevitable "Any questions?" There was silence for a moment, then a reedy voice piped up: "Who's Trog?"

Thus my initiation into the world of teachers' nicknames, a world which seems, despite my having spent over two thirds of the years since I left Bede in 1963 in front of classes, one which no longer exists. These names alone, I suspect, would act as a more powerful prod to memory than almost anything else to my contemporaries.

Let me try it, then. Who *was* 'Trog'? Who *was* 'Moke'? Dat! Dirty Bill? Cas, Sas, Jug, Alfie, Pop, Joker? Only ten out of ten scores.

Was anyone ever present when a nickname *was* invented, or did members of staff arrive ready-named? All of the above pre-dated my time, but they can't have pre-dated everyone's, surely? I once witnessed an attempt to change a nickname. A friend of mine was incensed that the famous Trog was so named. His initials were GBT, and the friend felt that, personal characteristics accepted, Gibbity would have been far better. *Rename* Trog? Easier to rename the school.

I think we felt that the nicknames of teachers were our possession, our talisman, our defence against the power (and more solid things) that they wielded. The tone of voice in which the magic word was pronounced was of great significance. This was especially true where no idiosyncratic nickname existed, and the fashion was simply to speak the surname, with an accent which indicated anything from tolerance to contempt. I never understood why some were immune to nicknaming, but many were.

But they weren't our sole possession. Teachers knew. And from time to time they would let you know they knew, the civilised and humorous ones, that is, the ones who could take it. And that reduced our power. If he *knew*, and if he *laughed*, where was the point?

But they reverberate down the years, those names, when much else that was, surely, more real, is forgotten. Do you remember the Yellow Press? That glorious morning when a fly-sheet circulated the school, with splendid if scurrilous satire on the staff, mostly based on those secret codes, the nicknames? And how, although dawn raids by the enemy rounded up all but a few copies, it seemed, almost before we had time to open them, somehow *everybody knew*, and could recite the slander verbatim by lunchtime?

But such incursions into the public domain of the essentially private were rare, and rightly so. Too much publicity would have diminished the effect. So I think back, now, to the day, soon after I started at the school, when I saw Him in the flesh, and knew that it was true, and that someone with the wonderful name of Trog really existed, and the passage of 35 years is meaningless, and everything that ever was, is now."

An Old Bedan, Barry Robson (1958-65), runs a small pharmaceutical firm that is researching into the Aid virus. Barry, who took a Ph.D. at Newcastle University, is a part-time lecturer at Manchester University, where the research is being conducted. He and two colleagues, who together constitute the company, Proteus Biotechnology, are awaiting the results of the monitoring of their discovery and their method, which eliminates the necessity of some animal testing. Barry is married to Margaret O.B. (née Hodgson).

Magnus Carter (1957-64?) provides an unusually close look at the way that School Music - one has to say - happened under the inspiration of John Kirk. This humorous, inventive and notably voluble man, with his multiplicity of interests, had an enormous skill in dealing with the musical interests of all manner of pupils: not a man to be governed by stereotype rules. Here is Magnus's version:

"Hands up all those who remember the school song. Please sir, I do. Well, it took me all of three days to remember the last couple of lines, and I had some difficulty with the tune somewhere in the middle. But remember it I did, and proved it by singing in in the bathroom -- much to the horror of the household.

The horror, I hasten to say, was at this middle-aged man's attempts to emulate a schoolboy soprano; the song itself is as powerful, in words and music, as when it was first written. And it was, I suppose, written sometime in the fifties - at any rate, before 1959, when my arrival at the school was "celebrated" by older boys in the traditional manner - by throwing me in the nettle patch on the rugby pitch bank.

The words were written by Ken "Jerry" Lewis, who, along with older members of the English Department, strongly influenced my own career as a wordsmith. The music was composed by Jock Kirk, and was my first introduction to a talented and inspirational musician who influenced my career not one jot, but who for thirty years has illuminated my path through life in an even more profound way.

I suppose many of the best teachers are slightly eccentric - they'd have to be to put up with the antics of so many boys who didn't really want to be taught. And Jock was certainly eccentric. Not always endearingly so, if you happened to be one of those who were left cold by music and tried to fool around during one of his lessons.

I was lucky, I guess. I came from a home in which an interest in music was centrally important, and I had a certain amount of musical talent (well, at least I could sing in tune in those days). But, in any case, Jock's sheer enthusiasm for his subject was infectious. Even the cynical among us enjoyed those relaxed moments when Jock would extemporise at the piano upon the National Anthem, playing in it Ragtime or jazz rhythm, and showing us there was more to music than just the tune.

The last tribute to Jock is that "The Bede" became renowned throughout the town for its standards of music-making - despite the fact that it was, in curricular terms, just a "bolt-on" element of our education, a Cinderella subject.

The school choir - which afforded one of the few "legitimate" ways of getting to know those strange creatures from the Girls' School - was an achievement in itself. Jock's standards - and therefore ours - were always the highest.

He went one step further, too. He encouraged in any way he could anyone who showed an aptitude, which, at least in part, is what education should be about. One of the ways in which he did so was to form the Madrigal Group. This was, to be sure, an elite group, and open to criticism on those grounds. But for those involved, and many of those who heard it, it created a sense of joy that belied the hard work involved.

We rehearsed three times a week, sometimes more often, honing and polishing those difficult unaccompanied part songs. And we came back begging for more. Jock took us one stage further by writing his own special arrangements of folk songs which eventually became our trade mark. By now, we had adopted the title of The Bede Singers, and had regular engagements outside the school.

This became so important in our lives that the original group stayed together long after 'A' Levels were behind us - and continued rehearsing and performing until career and University commitments made it impossible. Jock even invented a new country - Palovia - whose folk songs and carols showed the versatility of that state's only known composer.

There's a lot more to be written about this one-man department; about the liveliness of his conversation and his fund of stories (at which no-one laughed louder than Jock himself); about his human warmth; about his knowledge of poetry (especially of Rabbie Burns). But in this context, the important thing about him was that through the force of his own personality, he inspired many, and raised the school standard for all to see.

For me, Jock Kirk epitomises all that was best about my education at Bede. It is a matter of regret that I no longer have the opportunity to perform music. But from him I learned not only to appreciate music, but more importantly not to be afraid of enthusiasm. Our education system is all the poorer if it does not allow room for that."

Graham (Gus) Ritson (1958-65) is one of a number of Old Bedans of his time to believe that Europe was the place of the future : Peter Simpson works as an accountant with an international company. Michael Gribble, a Ph.D. of Durham in Physics, operates from Basle for a firm with world-wide interests

in the chemical industry, one understands. Gus, after graduating from University College London, became a teacher in international schools in Germany and Switzerland, while his wife works for the World Health Organisation. He returns to Sunderland regularly each summer to do what he and his brother, David, in his life-time, did throughout their boyhood; that is to say, to go to the annual St. Gabriel's Boys' Camp, still an activity for Bedans, Old and new. He keeps in touch with others of his time. John Allen (now lecturing at Durham University) and Mike Harrison, a leading physicist at the Fernini (?) Laboratory in Chicago. He recollects Field Courses in Geography and Biology and some most memorable expeditions from Derwent Hill, canoeing and rock-climbing. He has some reminiscences:

"I think some of the funniest and most poignant incidents I can think of are the following: 'Grunt' Gallagher falling through the Hall roof during assembly; my brother, David, punching me several times on my upper arm in order to persuade me to sign up (as a 'Fuggie') for the School Swimming Gala; Jimmy Nixon, disarming (removing a carving knife from) a second year pupil who had run amok in the Dining Hall. S.A.S. Robinson caning me in the 6th Form for skipping a lesson to play bowls in the park (I was the only one that he could make out from the top of Science Block!); England schoolboy captain, Keith Stephenson, rising like a salmon in the school defence (as well as that of Sunderland Reserves) and then playing with us during our lunch-time kick-arounds (I always contrived to be on his team!).

I also remember with great affection end-of-term school concerts (Red River Rock played by Francis Robinson's group), Rugby, especially travelling as a team on the train to places like Hartlepool (Henry Smiths!!), and house matches - I still have a large lump of my shin, courtesy of Allan Hughes, now a more civilised man, a History don at Cambridge.

I also remember the pains and pleasures of unrequited love with several members of the Girls' School. How many times did I walk through the Park behind Gaynor Jones, hoping that she would turn round and notice me?

Bede certainly played a very prominent rôle in my growing up - although my wife might argue that I never did. It was a pleasure and a privilege to have been contacted."

One of the richest sights for any school master on days of uniform inspection was that of Gus, thirteen stone if he was an ounce and moving up to six foot tall, delicately keeping a forefinger on his (size 8?) school Natty cap, as it poised on the ends of his splendid thatch of auburn wire.

The Old Boys who were at the School in its last days as a separate entity appear to lack something of the certainty of their predecessors. If that is, indeed, fair to suggest, on scant evidence, it is only a reflexion of the flux of the time.

Robert McKeith (1961-67) strikes a melancholy note, warmed only by human relationships, which is blessing enough, perhaps, Anyhow, he escaped to Oxford, the Home of Lost Causes:

"My recollections of Bede, no doubt having acquired a rosy tint with the passing of time, are almost all fond. Friends I made between the ages of eleven and eighteen have, in very many cases, remained the closest. I often recall many of the teachers with admiration and affection: there were, of course, others, but theirs has not been a lasting impression. I have wonderful memories of the hundreds of hours spent playing rugby at and for the School. I would have to confess, however, that, with hindsight, I feel less and less convinced of the value of large parts of the classwork and homework. In particular, two of the potentially most fascinating subjects, history and geography, were taught, almost without exception, using an approach akin to painting by numbers. This I regret very much. There again, I do not imagine the teachers involved were ever inspired by the sight of their reluctant pupils to adopt any other approach, and I wonder whether anything has changed in the last 25 years.

One thing which, it seems clear to me, has changed are the pupils themselves. Today's fifteen year old is surely in a different league as regards worldliness, materialism and cynicism - or perhaps I was just a late developer. Be that as it may, I cannot help feel that recollections of school days from people of my age will, in cold print, seem naive and irrelevant, a sugary obituary to the school, lacking any perspective, providing no constructive criticism (but, there again, who needs that now) and embarrassingly rooted in a different era. It might be interesting to receive the views of the many who actively disliked their time at Bede - but they will not be submitting any copy, I doubt. Please forgive me for this very negative response. ''

David Oliver (1960-67) makes the certain point that people forget the work treadmill and recall the fun. The matter is usually reciprocating, in the engineering sense. David, in goal, was an electric Spring-heeled Jack and his music was positively alarming in its ryhthms and noises for those inclining to the sere and yellow leaf. He is now Head of Whitley Bay High School, in a mutant comprehensive form:

''It was exciting, being a teenager in the 1960s. From Lady Chatterley to a man on the moon, via Profumo, Kennedy, the Great Train Robbery, Luther King, Aberfan, Paris, Prague and Wembley '66. There was always something big happening. And amidst it, we adolescents were being beguiled by the Beatles and Stones and Dylan to question, reject, the attitudes, values and customs of our parents' generation.

It must have been hard for teachers who had lived, and in many cases fought, through the age of Hitler, to respond to the post-war, anti-war, flower-power generation of teenagers. The traditional order of things was threatened from all sides, not least as comprehensive reorganisation was planned, and then implemented.

School soccer echoed the changes. In 1960, school teams wore quaint yellow and blue quarters with red sleeves and lined up, of course, with two full backs, three halves and five forwards. A young Liverpudlian Latin teacher took over the first X1 and introduced the twin heresies of all-red strips and 4-2-4. And the team did well! Playing for school teams - soccer, cricket and tennis - was far more important than lessons. And if I'm asked what I remember of my last days at Bede I have to say that all the memorable experiences were extra-curriclar. In other words, my real education took place away from the classroom.

Lessons, as I recall them, were virtually all the same. We faced the front, we copied from the board, we memorised for tests, and we rarely discussed anything. The curriculum for History was the same as Biology: learn, revise and reproduce for exams. Those of us who were good at this limited range of skills did well, for on the whole we were conscientiously taught.

The teachers who really educated us, though, did so after hours. The school choir sang big and challenging works, and in some interesting settings, too. Other ensembles, vocal and instrumental, offered us intimate knowledge of great music, real personal development and much fun, too. Sports teams took us all over the North East, taught us how to deal with Kipling's two imposters, and helped us to become considerate hosts and courteous visitors. A ten-day visit to Rimini brought us face to face with Ravenna's mosaics and Italy's extraordinary currency.

In talking to one's Bedan contemporaries, twenty-two years on, it becomes clear that people remember their teachers very clearly, but rarely in terms of lesson-content. Some are remembered for personal eccentricities and idiosyncrasies. Others, though, are affectionately recalled for the kindness, patience, enthusiasm and time they devoted to their pupils' interests and needs and activities.

In July 1967 my contemporaries and I left school, Bede ceased to be a Grammar School and Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band was issued: three diverse watersheds. In all honesty I don't regret the passing of the Grammar Schools. But I do recall with gratitude and affection the teachers who cared for us people and who spontaneously made available to us new, worthwhile and enriching experiences''.

W.C. Blyth '(1960-67) records the reactions of the senior pupils of the School at this crucial point in its existence. He himself went up to St. John's College, Cambridge, to read Economics before qualifying in London as an accountant. He worked for a couple of years in Vancouver and then returned to the U.K. to take up a partnership in the Milton Keynes office of Grant Thornton.

"The early 1960s were years of great social and political change, culminating in a Labour victory in the 1964 General Election which ended 13 consecutive years of Conservative Government.

It was against this background that, in late 1964, the Sunderland Education Authority published plans to introduce comprehensive secondary schools in the town so terminating the selection process at age 11 and the Bede School's Grammar School status. Understandably, the proposals provoked considerable hostility from both parents of the current pupils and the ex-pupils.

At this time I was Head Boy and together with Head Girl , Jean Barnes, and the majority of our Sixth Form colleagues we decided to take an active role in the debate about the relative merits of the Grammar School and Comprehensive Systems. As we saw it, our school was threatened with extinction and so with considerable enthusiasm we organised a petition protesting that the plans would reduce the standards of education in the town. We managed to secure almost 5,000 signatures for this petition which was restricted to pupils and their parents. Considering that the schools had about 1900 pupils at the time we felt that the petition fairly represented the views of those most closely involved.

The original idea was to present this petition to Reg. Prentice, the then Minister of Education in the Labour Government during a visit to Sunderland which he had coincidentally planned for November. The whole project, as may be imagined, generated a lot of publicity, with many "photo opportunities" for Jean and myself as the great day approached. Imagine our dismay when at the last moment the Minister had to cancel his visit; it seemed that all we could do was quietly send off our document in the post. However, at this point someone had the bright idea of delivering the thing to the Houses of Parliament themselves. Of course, this plan was infinitely more appealing to Jean and me and, amid enormous excitement, this is what we did.

On Thursday, 26th November, we had a meeting with the Minister at the House of Commons and after putting our views to him presented him with our petition. This was followed by a visit to the Stranger's Gallery organised for us by the new Labour M.P. for Sunderland, Gordon Bagier.

Of course we did not change the course of events and, as we all know, the School adopted a comprehensive system of secondary education. However, I think that our actions did at the time focus attention on the local effects of the new Government's policies. In addition, the whole debate certainly ensured that all of us involved understood much more than we otherwise might have done the pros and cons of the proposals and the workings of the British political systems. This in itself, I suppose, was an important part of our own education!"

Michael Gibson (1965-68) succeeded Bill Blyth as Head Prefect in the first year of the combined Schools, when the First year entry was on a non-selctive basis. Mike's wife, in conjunction with the Girls' Head Prefect of the time, Ann Rumley, last October organised a massive reunion of comtemporaries to celebrate their communal fortieth birthdays. The gossip is worth recording for its indication of the camaraderie that continues to exist:

"Saturday, 21st October. So far we have made contact with 68 classmates including Neil Mathams, Dave Oliver, Dave Vine, Don Airey and Neil Hutton. I am also in regular contact with John Bowman, who lives in Haywards Heath and is Pensions Actuary with Commercial Union. He in turn keeps in touch with Mike Parker and his wife, Drina Graham, also an Old Bedan. I will of course publicise the Centenary when we all meet and make sure people keep in touch.

On leaving school I attended University College London and read Law. I well remember the very first Saturday going to Tottenham to watch Sunderland (which I still do) with Keith Lewis, Gus Ritson, John Mearns, Mike Knight and others to witness the first of many defeats in London. In my third year I shared a flat with Neil Hutton and Peter Wilkinson. My first job was with National Westminster Bank but I hated it, and so after two years turned to stockbroking, vowing never to work for a bank

again. I eventually became a partner of Wise Speke & Co. in Newcastle, but left five years ago to take up a partnership with de Zoete and Bevan in London. I am now a director of Barclays de Zoete Wedd (working for a bank again!!) specialising in Engineering shares and looking after several corporate clients in mergers and acquisitions.

My family moved to Sunderland in 1964, and so I first went to Bede in my 'O' Level year. First stop was Form 5B and 'Pop' Linton, who suggested a seat in the front. Fortunately I made it to the back and sat next to those well known rebels, Peter (Percy) Proud and Alan Surtees, who at that time were launching 'The Moon' to rival Mr. Murdoch's newspaper.

The Vth Form passed by rather uneventfully and I scraped four 'O' Levels, and entry into the VIth. I count that as one of the luckiest breaks I have ever had. I did enjoy Latin and the C.A. Smith lessons were always great fun. Although never a great academic, as my school reports prove, I did enjoy lessons with Messrs. Waites, Noton and, of course, 'Trog' Thompson. I also remember the Head, of course, who I think, looking back, was very good for discipline and encouraging good standards. I never ceased to be amazed at his ability to appear round a corner at just the 'wrong' time and the long hard stares as he waited for silence before assembly.

During this time Colin Griffiths arrived at the school and took charge of the football team, changing the strip to his favourite Liverpool colours. I think we lost only six times or so in three seasons.

I could not believe it when I was appointed School Captain, and remember the Speech Day, my mother presenting prizes at Sports Day and organising the dance at 'The Rink' with June Griffin, the Head Girl. Overall, the three years I was at Bede were great fun and my memories, which are very vivid, are nearly all good ones."

EVOLUTION NOT REVOLUTION

In 1967 this was the picket-line aphorism dangled saucily before the sceptical eyes of the relatively well-educated Staff of the two Schools, which had appeared to be doing as well as could be expected within the conditions of their contract but which were nevertheless to undergo dissolution. In fact, neither evolution nor revolution. Nevertheless, some saw that from the primordial soup of dissolution there could develop new forms of life. Others, who preferred to trust themselves, either retired or sought preferred preferment on their own account. Yet others stoically sat it out, waiting to see how, in fact, the chopper chopped, and where. It was a situation to become well publicized in industrial take-overs of the next decade or two, but on this occasion it was so miniscule as to cause not an eyebrow to be raised or a banner headline to be hoisted. Biting on the bullet was in itself an anodyne, as many a lumpen proletariat has known. The Great Debate, in which the opposition was a carefully neutered force, was the orchestrated voice of triumph for social progress. As has been apparent throughout the realm. It is only Business which complains about education.

The austere provisions of the Milburn collegiate buildings bore no resemblance, of course, to those architectural niceties of village life that were the only way to the harmony of endeavour and mutuality of love that were to be the bases of a comprehensive education. Everybody had read of this William-Morris-like notion, given, if not flesh, then at least Lumley brick and Pilkington double-glazing. An unexacting pilgrimage within the Borough bounds themselves would lead to a sight of a very shrine: House blocks and custom built rooms for instruction in careers in astronomy or in the elimination of sin or to the reduction of Man to readily understood scientific principles or to the cult of the L.D.C. of the I.Q., the ultimate in pedagogic conundrums that would have baffled even a Maccoby. The fundamental principle was containment of self within the hard shell of the matrix, an idea more sinister than it may seem.

Whereas the traditional view of secondary education had been the necessity of encouragement of individual talent within a discipline of learning (including memory, now thought to be respectable only in machines), the revolutionary view, camouflaged in verbal debris, was the reduction of individual talent to a scale at which those rather less well endowed with it would not feel enforced, in self-defence,

to bawl the recriminatory "Swot!" The solution, in the case of the Bede Schools, to the ostensible education problem was forestalled by the material problem: how to use the minimally altered two independent structures as a unit, of a sort, moreover, to which they were conceptually alien. All but one-seventh of the population of the final unit had to be educated, however roughly, in the Grammar School mode; the one-seventh were to be treated as an earnest of 'comprehensive' intent. It was a harsh reality from which, in common humanity, it was seemly to avert the public gaze. Any idea that it was easier to do so should be discountenanced, of course. The magnitude of the physical task and the onerousness of the scholastic one cannot be exaggerated.

The man chosen to undertake this work was Sidney Temple, a graduate in Physics of Durham University, who had been Head of Physics at Loughborough Boys' Grammar School before taking up the appointment of Headmaster of the Boys' Technical School in its long-term makeshift premises in Villiers Street.

He had ensured that it was soon made evident that that School was fostering major capacities that were, at the same time, being stultified. He had seen the School's movement to Ryhope Road, where it had quickly established itself as a true alternative to Bede, especially for those who wished for different emphases. Mr. Temple had been a University Boxing Champion at Durham and he had spent the War as a boffin dealing with explosives. The value of all these experiences was to be made clear: he was an expert in the movement of masses; he knew both how to deliver a devastating counter when seemingly on retreat and also at what precise moment to detonate a bomb under anyone who was proving tiresomely inimical of purpose. He also had the impeccable good taste to see that two of his sons were educated at the Bede: John went up to Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, to read English (1964) and Richard to Hertford College, Oxford, to read Natural Sciences (1967).

The Day of Union was, for the pupils of the School at least, one of unalloyed excitement, if not entirely of pleasure. The fact that it was gave impetus to the notion of a common cause, though it could scarcely have been that of comprehensive education since nobody knew exactly what it was. For the former members of the Grammar Schools it was the old but more so, for the other sex was there, just slightly in the offing. Staff had been latched into the movements of the day; Prefects had been detailed; First Years were gobbled up by benevolent elders. What minor matters there were to disturb the smoothness could be temporized or improvized. The Headmaster's scheme had worked like an enchantment.

The former Girls' School was designated the Junior School (for the first three Year groups, in Houses) and was to a considerable degree an autonymous concern. The Middle School and the Sixth Forms were based in the former Boys' School as separate administrative entities. But teaching took place in the old specialist rooms throughout the main buildings and their adjuncts. Lesson-endings meant that a large proportion of seventeen-hundred people were on the hoof. One-way-systems came and went. But nothing could ever quell the noise of passage nor much speed it. The original inhabitants more or less stuck to the rules but as years passed the exploiters and saboteurs grew in confidence. There was enough wastage of time to make teachers of the old-time sort weep the tears of angels. Supervision became something of a difficulty because people had not the time to do it, a phenomenon rarely previously known. There were always backstairs vacuums which sucked in stinkers. Vandalism, for the first time outside of classroom furniture subject to high jinks, became a palpable force. Cloakrooms had to be abandoned to Tarzans who scorned locks; pupils began to look like caravanners on the Silk Road in Turkestan, bent double with coats and gigantic sports bags on their backs; teachers in classrooms acquired the agility of chamois; truancy; a new facet of tyranny was born, pursuit of the free-born in the Town Centre, a relentless (in the case of the Bede) hounding, but ultimately fruitless.

In the Middle School aspiration could indeed be breathing the air of the heights in the jet-streams; but elsewhere there was an element which breathed anonymously and heavily down telephones at dead of night. The snowball fights of yesteryear in Mowbray Park became war to the knife-and-chain in Barnes Park: all braggadocio, but the product of the toneless. In the Sixth Form the air was as bracing as ever it was, the racers left to the course. Large numbers of them continued to

exercise their beneficence down the reaches of the School; their influence is immeasurable, but cannot fail to have been less than substantial in reducing the area of the amorphous. There was a massive force of endeavour in both these areas by people who took their education seriously and who are to be seen and heard of every day fulfilling the social responsibilities that are thrust upon them in any number of fields. They may not have been the contributors to this review, but they remain the fabric of ordered living. It would be gross impropriety not to acknowledge their balance and decency.

The early years of the new-style School were made manifest in brilliant dramatic productions and entertainments. Girls outshone males in inventiveness and panache; very many infiltrated the defences of the ancient universities. Speech Days disappeared and prize-giving became, of necessity, something of a dull event of family concern, not a matter of exhilaration on a public stage. Debates vanished. Morning Assembly was a matter of rota and division; but it went on, and remained significant. People moving around became aware more of encountering strangers than of brushing shoulders with acquaintances and friends. Sixth Form dinner-dances were a riot of fun; the leavers' lunch of the Fifties and Sixties became ultimately unwieldy.

Public examinations grew more and more complex in administration and demand; but they were sat in the same old way and on the self-same swaying desks that had been used for forty years or more. The tiny weeping cherry tree on its smooth quadrant of turf in the shelter of the Girls' School Library, an elegant memorial to some, now forgotten and unknown, mistress, surrendered year by year its modest pendants to the rough hands of vandals, then broke at last to the ground, its turf filled up with mud, an embodiment of a midsummer night's dream that had lasted a century - almost.

RECONSTRUCTION AND THE LEGACY : 1967-90

It is, however, vital, in considering these things, to recognise that the toughness, ingenuity and will to triumph that had been bred into the ethical structure of the Bede were not to be resigned overnight. Some mention of a new flowering has already been made, and the observations of the latest generation of Old Bedans that follow go quite a long way to reflect the breadth of accomplishment, the adaptability and the clarity of intent that have hallmarked its society. These characteristics, it is a matter of some pride to record, were imprinted upon many of those who participated in that novel venture, the Bede Remedial Department : no pupil, it has been the boast, ever left the school as an illiterate; many were so far 'remedied', indeed, as to have become able to take up adult work of a thoroughly responsible nature.

John Tait, a History graduate of the University of Newcastle, an educationist of distinction and a former Head of Usworth School, took over from Mr. Temple in 1976, by which time the school had completed its progress into a 'comprehensive' state. Apart from his first several years he has worked in conditions of continuous flux. Public examinations have been undergoing radical experimentation and change, curricula have been revolutionized; terms and conditions of employment of teachers have been subjected to great stress; the government of schools has been re-aligned. Finally, he has had to manage the school as it has, in stages, been superceded by the Tertiary College and left as a topped-and-tailed entity where the last of its school children have had to outface the unique - and unenviable - experience of having neither seniors nor juniors. That the pupils and the staff who teach them have sustained order, morale and purpose is a remarkable tribute to the abiding spirit of the School as embodied in its Headmaster. The Head himself is unshakably confident that the spirit will remain invested, as an exemplar and a spur to those who in future years will occupy the old places.

MODERNITY REFLECTED

In brief, my recollections of the years I spent at 'The Bede' is that they were very happy and enjoyable. I enjoyed the sense of community, the spirit and atmosphere. The clarity of some details fades but the impression remains.

Before I was appointed to teach I had contact with the school while a student at Durham University. I played soccer for a mixed First and Third X1 team against Bede - and lost! In the thirteen years I was in charge of the senior side many were the visitors to our remarkable pitch - mud in mid-winter, bare and baked hard in Spring and Autumn - who left defeated. (Headmaster Sidney Temple once described the pitch as 'like the surface of the moon').

As placements for the long teaching practice were being made a close friend of mine, Allan Newton (now Head of Colne Valley High School and married to an Old Bedan, Carol Rosenstein) 'arranged' for both of us to be assigned to Bede Grammar School for Boys for the Spring term. There I met the remarkable C.A. Smith, head of Classics and Sunderland Echo columnist on the subjects of stamps, coins and local history.

On the day I was interviewed for the post of assistant teacher of Classics Jeff Wylie was promoted to succeed C.A. Smith. Jeff, a gifted teacher and superb mentor, was throughout my time at the school an inspiration to colleagues and pupils. A true educator, he was liked and respected by generations of his pupils.

For two years I taught at the Boys' Grammar School as the plans for the formation of the comprehensive school took place. I was merely an observer as the difficult and traumatic decisions on the appointments for the more senior posts were made. I was amused at some of the new titles and posts - what was course tutor, for example?. How it all pales into significance compared with today's educational jargon and the plethora of acronyms. But there were other big decisions to be made. In which years could boys and girls be trusted to sit in the same rooms together? I seem to recall that it was all right for the First Years and the Lower Sixth but not the ones at the dangerous age, 12 - 16.

The staffrooms continued for some years to be largely segregated but I am delighted to say that among the social activities was the Monday evening badminton club for staff and friends. The comprehensive school had a new head of Girls' Physical Education, a young Old Bedan named Judith Gribble. When in time we were married in May 1970 St. Gabriel's Church was packed with guests - and with pupils. Bede pupils were very important to us. For example, members of my soccer team laid the back patio of our house in Durham and Judith's hockey players helped to scrub the floorboards! The first time I took her out - to the Empire Theatre - we were surprised to discover when the interval lights went up that a number of our players had decided to go and watch the show, and us, that evening.

It was a pleasure to work in the Classics Department. After his 'retirement' C.A. Smith returned as an assistant and after the amalgamation Jeff Wylie led a team consisting of Mary Robinson (husband S.A.S. Head of Chemistry), Mike Street (who went eventually to Wanganui Collegiate School in New Zealand where he taught Prince Edward everything he knows), the Deputy Head Jim Fairley, Harry Dillon (a Head, I believe in Norfolk) and myself. According to H.M. Inspectors it was the largest Classics department in the North of England. It was deeply satisfying to work with fine people and see the pupils achieving splendid results over the years.

My recollections of extra-curricular activities are many. Every summer holiday Bede pupils joined youngsters from Liverpool to camp in the Isle of Man and there they were able to demonstrate skills, character and qualities even they did not know they possessed. The best memories are of the times when the weather was foul, especially the night when such a severe storm blew up that nearly all the tents blew down, even the big marquee. The villagers rallied round and took many of the pupils into their homes.

Youth Activities took place on two nights a week and large numbers of pupils took part in the classes - crafts, sport and recreation. It was very rewarding to run the centre and meet pupils in a non-classroom environment. Trips to Hadrian's Wall were a regular feature but the most exciting classical trip was when Judith and I took a group of pupils to Greece for a month by minibus, pitching our tents in memorable places such as Delphi and Athens.

On one occasion I organised a tour for the senior football team to Greece where matches were played against junior professional clubs. The highlight was to play in the Karaiskaki Stadium before a crowd of 40,000 spectators where the England team had played a few weeks before. I still have some cine film of the game.

The senior soccer team indeed gave me many, many hours of involvement and delight. Bede seemed every year to produce players of enthusiasm, endeavour and real talent. There were always a fine team spirit, keen competition and pride in representing the school. I have lost count of the statistics but in the thirteen years I looked after them we played about 400 matches and won well over three quarters of them. We won the knock-out cup several times, the Tyneside Cup three times and the county championship three times. Over fifty boys played for the Durham County U.18 team in those years and three, Neil Matthams, Peter Candler and Tony Smith represented England Schools. I had enormous pride in the success and sportmanship of those boys over the year. An interesting measure of the relationship between pupils and teachers was the spirit shown in the frequent Staff/School matches and practices and the annual staff/pupil soccer club dinner which I am sure former colleagues will recall with pleasure.

When I became Head of Fawcett House (which of course was superior to Ettrick or Pemberton - though not everyone would agree) in September 1973 the school had become an established comprehensive with pupils of all backgrounds and abilities and I found the new role challenging and fascinating. Bede had a long tradition and a sense of history but it also accepted and introduced changes. Heads of House changed their record-keeping and conducted regular one-to-one interviews with each pupil. After all this time it is now called part of the 'profiling' process.

I have omitted much but earlier mention of colleagues - and I have mentioned very few by name - reminds me of a very important point. In my time at Bede so many colleagues were also friends - and very good friends. "The Bede" was a very special place.

COLIN GRIFFITHS
(Staff 1965 - 79)

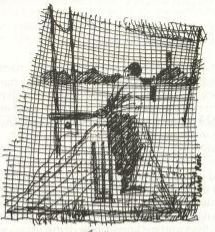
REFLECTIONS ON CRICKET AT BEDE

I love cricket and find Cricket Grounds the most fascinating of places. A drive through the most unattractive of places in the middle of winter cannot be complete without a few minutes gaze at an empty ground and the promise of what is to come in the summer months ahead. Imagine how lucky I feel to have played Durham Senior League Cricket for two great Clubs, Boldon and the picturesque Whitburn, as well as on countless other grounds in the region.

Yet even at the age of 38 I can still recall the feeling of hope, anticipation and ambition as a twelve year old when I took my first look at the Bede School Cricket Field. Now re-visiting the place there is little to see except goalposts and an open field, but in 1963 the ground was strictly out of bounds, in the winter the cricket square roped off and even a step onto the outfield felt for me illegal intrusion likely to result in 100 lines. For the rest of my school cricketing career to play on the school field was a thrill and privilege.

Cricket has always been a difficult game to organize at school because of the short summer term, examinations, etc., but certainly up to my departure in 1969 there had been an excellent tradition of cricket at Bede. I remember the efforts of Mr. J.P. Wylie and how happy he was as Master-in-

Charge of cricket, the day we beat Edinburgh High School in Scotland in 1969. Even earlier the late W.B. McClement was a leading figure in Bede cricket for many years.



Many Old Bedans went on to play cricket after school. Of those who remained in the area several such as myself have played in the Durham Senior League. The most outstanding was Peter Birtwistle (Durham County, Sunderland and Durham City) while others such as Keith Trotter (Boldon), John Beresford (Sunderland), Vince Purves (Sunderland & Boldon), Alan Warriner (Boldon), Peter Hawkins (Boldon) and Michael Johnson (South Shields) have been regular players for years. There are bound to be others.

With local Clubs now playing a greater part in developing young cricketers, probably more so than Schools, it is perhaps sad to reflect the passing of School cricket to the extent it existed say thirty years ago. But perhaps that is an overstatement. In the mind of a young boy coming into his local Comprehensive it may be possible that he too has the burning ambition to play for his School 1st X1.

For myself I can still picture the Bede School Cricket Field on a sunny day. The whole school had been excused lessons as there were House matches being played followed by a 1st X1 v Masters game. Then I recall my own matches there. In a world where dreams do not often come true it was nice for this particular twelve year old to complete his career at Bede as the 1st X1 Cricket Captain, the fulfilment of all I wanted from my school.

MICHAEL PRATT
1963 - 71

THE CHANGES SMOOTHLY RUNG

My career at Bede, September 1964 to July 1971, spanned a period of dramatic change for the school. I joined Bede Grammar School for Boys and left Bede School, a co-educational establishment. In the intervening years, the horribly named process of 'comprehensivisation' had changed both the name and nature of the school. The final name, Bede School, was a definite improvement on the intermediate name of Bede Comprehensive School.

The change imposed wasn't simply a change of name, an increase in the number of pupils and the addition of an extra gender. Bede Grammar School for Boys had established a tradition behind it, as had the Girls' Grammar School next door. These traditions had been jealously guarded and handed down, by pupils and staff alike, and it took more than a bureaucratic decision to complete the metamorphosis.

Some of the traditions themselves underwent a sea-change. When I joined the school, we had about 900 pupils, and there were 40 prefects appointed each September from the Upper Sixth. It was therefore a great honour to be made prefect. At the changeover, prefects were abolished - for a year - before pragmatism triumphed and the system was re-instated. However, prefects were now appointed at the Easter of the Lower Sixth, to allow a learning period with the old hands still around to help if required. The other change wrought was that now, in a spirit of equality, ALL the Lower Sixth were made prefects, unless they specifically asked for exemption; in my year we only had 4 who were not prefects. At the Grammar School, prefects had power - disciplinary power, woe to the boy who transgressed - writing 25 lines may not seem excessive, but when each line is the second school rule (about 2 pages as I recall, filled with paragraphs and sub-paragraphs as

in all the best law), the task ceases to be trivial. When I became prefect, we were informed that we had no disciplinary power, the headmaster's dictat. We were also informed that the first 5 Years were unaware of this fact and that we'd better not enlighten them, but simply ensure that the sentence fitted the crime and was not too harsh.

As to memories of my school career, these come across as a series of cameos.

My first chemistry teacher, Mr Black, must have transgressed mightily at some point for his punishment was to have to teach me and my peers for the next seven years. As a bonus (?) he was also our form master in the Fifth form. My main memory of Mr Black was of his incredible ability to make things go 'bang'. He must have had more explosions, both minor and major, than any other teacher ever, and yet he NEVER injured anybody. The ceilings and blackboards however bore mute testimony to his powers. The pupils too bore one scar; by the Sixth we were more than a little paranoid - retiring to a safe distance whenever there was a demonstration!

The Classics department, for some inexpicable reason located in the Science Block, was a collection of individuals. Mr. Wylie, a Liverpudlian, who would regale us with tales of 'Percy', his pet budgie during his childhood, provided we worked hard, Mr. Griffiths who ran the 1st X1 football team, and Mr C.A. Smith (CAS) who sticks in my memory as the greatest scholar I have ever had the fortune to meet. Sunderland Museum had his collection of coins on loan and his knowledge of the classics was encyclopaedic. What will remain with me always, was how he started our first Latin lesson with him. Sitting with his feet on the desk, he solemnly intoned his maxim for putting us at our ease - 'Latin is a language as dead as dead can be, it killed the ancient Romans and now it's killing me'.

About the end of my first year, an earth-shattering event occurred - we got our first lady teacher, Miss Chiari, who was, I believe, an Italian Assistant. She was soon followed by Miss Blakemore and Mrs. Ferry. The latter lady had the unenviable task of teaching my form second year biology, which included reproduction, but the task was achieved without embarrassment on either side.

Mr Corbridge head of French whose pride and joy was the language lab. Mr Feltoe, a very mild man who collected African musical instruments and who delivered the most blistering reprimands I have ever heard. Mr. Ross had the humour to laugh at himself. Mr. Lewis, inevitably known as 'Gerry', the deputy head of the Grammar School who became the head of the Lower School and hence moved beyond my ken.

The final three staff, Mrs. Crann and Messrs. Stitt and Bradshaw, made up the triumvirate that ran the School Drama and Film Club. The latter made the local press when we showed 'Barbarella', a film banned by the headmaster of Ryhope, the week before we showed it. What the paper failed to point out was that in Ryhope the film club was open to all the school; at Bede it was the Sixth Form only!

The Drama Club put on two shows a year, one at Christmas and one after the 'O' and 'A' levels had finished - the result of a three week marathon of rehearsals, set building and general panic. The Christmas show was more leisurely, being prepared all term. My first show was 'Love' a revue. As my report on drama said, 'I tried hard'; I functioned at the drama club as a stagehand. After that came 'Close the Coalhouse Door' and 'Columbine' a three-act musical specially written for us by Messrs Stitt, Bradshaw and Smith. The first run-through of 'Columbine' was hilarious because it was done straight from the script, and the proof reading left a little to be desired - strange from members of the English department. (Our next production should have been 'A Winter's Tale' but we couldn't get it ready on time, so we abandoned that.) The final major production was 'Oh what a lovely war' and that was I think the best we ever did. (In between these we took a travelling revue around Sunderland, ('Unhand that girl',) to raise money for charity and also ran the stage for Junior drama. Their show 'The Great Doctor Fox' was interrupted by a NUPE dispute and is probably most memorable for the special effect of the stove exploding. Mr. Teasdale had dreamt this one up - a mixture of zinc and sulphur, electrically ignited. All went beautifully until the performance

for the lower school when we couldn't put the blessed thing out! The result was that the last act was played in thick fog, with a choking cast and the audience not really able to see (or breathe!.)

After leaving Bede I went to Durham University where I met my wife Tricia. After graduating I went to work for the MoD as a systems programmer at GCHQ in Cheltenham. After four years I moved to IBM where I still work.

ALASDHAIR BUCHANAN

"O, FOR A BLAST OF THAT DREAD HORN ....."

Almost twenty years on and a few well chosen moments from Sir Walter Scott help me flavour this reminiscence of one life which Bede School offered to the world to do as it would.

What I remember of school and what school remembers of me are most likely far from being one and the same thing. To my comtemporaries I am sure to be remembered as the chap who carried the funny shaped case, which to the average schoolboy resembled nothing more than an upturned lavatory bowl, and there their imagination or interest ended. My memory of school is single and vivid. It is of the selfless devotion, inspiration and insistence of two teachers of the 'old' school with every bona fide passion which that term implies. I refer, of course, to Margaret Bernard and Clifford Hartley. They both know well the debt of gratitude which I owe to them both, for the golden opportunities they gave and created for me. Hindsight, being the exact science that it is, makes me appreciate more and more what a credit they were to their profession and to Bede School in particular. "Example is the school of mankind and they will learn at no other" said Edmund Burke. When I am asked today what my job is and I say that I am a member of a symphony orchestra nine times out of ten the subsequent question is either "Yes, but what do you do during the day?" or "Oh, how do you get a job like that?" How I got a job like this is, I suppose, the story of my life both at school and ever since because becoming a professional musician is not something which one can simply choose to do when the time comes to find gainful employment. It is something which one has determined upon, or somehow been singled out for, from a very tender age.

I studied music at Exeter University and The Royal Academy of Music in London and now have a position with the Welsh National Opera. WNO is now regarded as one of the world's leading opera companies and with them I have had some great musical and personal experiences. The musical triumphs are legion but playing Wagner's 'Ring' cycle at Covent Garden will be a hard one to follow.

Thanks to WNO I have stood on the top of the Empire State Building and climbed to the top of the Statue of Liberty, the symbol of freedom in the Western world. And just to redress the balance I have touched the Berlin Wall from the 'wrong' side, a stark illustration of how international a language music is and just which doors it can open. On our most recent trip abroad I sailed down the most spectacular main street on our planet ... the Grand Canal of Venice. From time to time we work with such people as Luciano Pavarotti and Joan Sutherland and then I must as Walter Scott would have it .....

"HUNTSMAN REST THY CHASE IS DONE"

DAVID SHILLAW
Bede School 1964-71

FROM YOMPING TO POISE

In recalling my days at Bede School, I suppose like most other Bedans my most poignant memories are of the first and last days.

My first week at school consisted of coming to grips with a fiendish timetable - kept in my blazer top pocket and embalmed in sticky-backed plastic for longevity - and the various buildings which comprise the school. Due to a poor sense of direction (apologies to Dad, aka DB Cowell, Head of Geography), and the mounting panic, I was consistently late for each class, steadily earning myself a reputation which I have kept to this day. As the first week gathered pace so our collections of text books, each duly inscribed with a new name, grew, along with individual rainbows of exercise books, each colour representing a separate subject.

Each night, homework was to back the text books in wallpaper. The year was 1970, and there was some pretty outrageous wallpaper around that summer. A common theme seemed to be large orange flowers, although the more sophisticated in the class managed a more professional finish by using shelf lining paper.

I've often wondered what led whoever was responsible for the timetable in 1970 to put form 1PR in Lower 13, inconveniently located in the attic. Short on storage space and far from anywhere we needed to be, it offered few advantages. Mondays were the worst. Exercising their warped mind, the unseen hand behind the timetable had decided to give us not only woodwork or cookery, and PE but also art - each of which required a separate set of kit. Everyone could tell a 1PR pupil: they were the ones weighed down like a Marine on manoeuvres and lathered in sweat.

As our fitness grew, we learned to use the weapons of our education and we didn't look back. I quickly discovered a love for the Arts subjects and pursued studies of English, languages including Spanish and Italian, and the classics, both Latin and Greek - as well as Geography of course. To this day I remain impressed by the vast range of subjects offered by Bede, and the depth of knowledge possessed by its teachers. I also quickly discovered a terminal fear of the Bunsen Burner, a dread of the Science Lab. and an inability to fathom the slide rule, beyond its flexibility for use as a machine gun or saxophone.

They say you enter school a child and leave equipped to become an adult, and it's true. Our 'passing out' into the adult world was the V1th Form leavers' Dinner Dance. We had progressed from our earliest Bede parties, held in the school hall complete with party games, through Middle School discos and the glamour rock of Slade, Gary Glitter and T. Rex, to arrive at the Roker Hotel Ballroom.

For the first time, I saw my male contemporaries in lounge suits, looking comfortable and confident as they ordered rounds of drinks and bottles of wine. The girls wore sophisticated evening dress, mostly in black or white for increased elegance, complete with corsage. We danced the night away to the strain of a five piece band, struggling to remember the Waltz and Quickstep lessons given by first year PE teachers. We didn't have as much trouble with the Rolling Stones or Roxy Music. I remember walking along the promenade, the moon reflecting white in the navy/black sea, and pausing to consider the next stage of my life and realising that both socially and educationally Bede had given me the resources to face the future with confidence.

ANNETTE CORBLE (neé Cowell)
1970 -77

EMERGENT

When asked to recollect my time at Bede School, I sat down and thought about those seven years. My first thoughts were of lots of small incidents - mainly of the first few years at Bede - trying to carry a satchel, an art folder and P.E. kit to school at the same time, getting stuck on the wall bars, first exams, Tannoy announcements telling you not to play with balls in front of the school .....!

I then thought more and decided that the deepest memories were of the Sixth Form - perhaps because of the different attitudes of the teaching staff, perhaps because we were there by choice and not simply out of necessity.

Geography field days, which always seemed to be cold or wet (or both!), are particularly memorable. On one day I can vividly remember crawling along a cliff top overlooking Robin Hood's Bay in what seemed to be a force ten gale! At the end of a long day we reached the coach to find that the driver had parked it in a field before the rain started ... when we came to leave, it wouldn't shift! The only shelter nearby was a pub/hotel, but, some of us being under 18, we didn't have anything alcoholic to drink!

On the subject of alcohol, I have to recall a totally unofficial Sixth Form trip to a Bier Keller in Newcastle! A coach from the Upper Sixth went as the Number 9 Club and we had a rather good evening! We gained an extra club member on the return journey and had to leave him on the pavement outside school (he only had to get back to Whitley Bay!) and one member managed to find a seat on a waste paper bin ... part way up a lamp post! From a personal point of view it turned out to be the first date with my now husband!

Recollection is inevitably rose-tinted, but I'm convinced that I enjoyed my time at Bede. Its teaching gave me a University place and a career in Higher Education; its social life and friendships gave me a very happy personal life.

CHRISTINE MUSHENS
(1969 - 76)

THE MAKING OF A EUROPEAN

I came to Bede School in 1968 and was one of the last pupils to enter it while it was still a grammar school, and one of the last people to take the 11-plus examination to get there. The school seemed to be having a kind of academic heyday. A bewildering range of subjects was on offer backed up by a strong professional staff. The size of the place was overwhelming at first after the more intimate environment of junior school, yet with help from form teachers and form prefects (when the latter managed to resists the temptation to exercise their sense of humour on the unitiated), and the odd stray Wise Man one encountered on one's serpentine wanderings, somehow, most of the time, one got to one's destination and roughly on time.

As I became accustomed to the place I became aware that there was more to do than lessons and homework. Although the school was never able to convince me of the value of physical exercise, it did introduce me to the joys of music, drama, artwork, film, literature. I remember with especial fondness the Gilbert and Sullivan operattas we staged, the Drama Society and, in particular, the farewell review my year group put on - ''America'', written, arranged and directed by Dick Bradshaw, and in which I took part: and the Film Society with its slightly risqué atmosphere, its seemingly daring programme (in 1974) and often frenzied discussion.

Particularly in the Upper School class discussion was lively, often passionate. One felt a willingness on the part of many members of staff to exchange ideas rather than simply to impart them, and though some members of the class were more vociferous than others, myself being one, there was nevertheless a sense of involvement which drew in the majority. Having, myself, since taught I have come to appreciate how special an atmosphere that was.

And myself ... I left Bede to go to Cambridge where I took a degree in Russian and German spending a year in the Soviet Union in the middle and a year teaching in Vienna afterwards. I then returned to do three years research on Dostoevsky, after which I took a teaching job at Rugby School under the headmastership of another old Bedan, Brian Rees. I was soon appointed Head of Russian and I stayed at the school for four and half years, until Christmas 1987, when I took up a job as a professional translator with the United Nations here in Vienna where I now live.

As a professional linguist I am particularly grateful to Bede for the vast range of languages it enabled me to study at an early age which had provided me with a wonderfully sound foundation for my career. Opportunities of that kind are becoming all too rare in England. When I left Bede I already had a fair command of four modern and one ancient language as well as a sturdy grasp of language-learning methodology. To one other feature of the school I would pay tribute: underneath the rules and the discipline there always seemed to be a flexibility and a humanity which are surely the most progressive forces in any form of education. That quality alone should suffice to ensure that it is not forgotten by the many people who studied there.

ANTHONY S. WATSON
1968 - 1975

A BEDE MOSAIC

I arrived at Bede in September 1971. I had previously been to Barnes School and at that time during the changeover from grammar school to comprehensive providing you lived in the catchment area for Barnes you automatically went to Bede without having to take the eleven plus.

I clearly recall being in awe of the School, as an institution and in particular because of its history. My father and uncles had been before me and my Uncle Gordon had returned to teach Biology after the war before moving to London.

I began playing rugby in that first year. I hadn't played before and as I wasn't good enough to get into the school soccer team I thought I would have a go. The master in charge was Norman Felce, who left Bede at the end of my second year. I must have enjoyed it as I'm still playing eighteen years later. I played in some good school teams particularly in my fifth year when I played in the first XV and we lost only twice all year. That was the first year John Tate took the side and it included some very good players such as Dave Percy (who later went on to play for Gosforth and Preston Grasshoppers), Guy Goodings, Tony Burn, Doug Bowman, Paul Huggard and Glyn Harper. I recall that the toughest games were always against the Durham Police Cadets who were never afraid to "put themselves about" but I think we always managed to come out on top.

I think the highlight of my time in the Lower School was the Nevasa Cruise which I went on in my third year in 1974. The destination that year was Scandinavia. That was the first time I had crossed the North Sea in a ship. I have crossed it on many times since but I don't think it had ever been rougher. I'm sure that everybody was seasick. We visited Helsinki, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Kristiansand (in Norway). I was absolutely enchanted with the places and it is still my favourite part of the world. That is probably just as well as my brother, Robin, is now married to a Swede and lives in Gothenburg. One thing that I remember quite distinctly from the trip was a talk we had very near to the end of the fortnight from a member of the ship's teaching staff. He said that whatever else we did when we got home we should talk about our experiences and tell our parents and friends as much as we could. I have always remembered that advice and I think my parents were completely surprised when I followed it. It is very good advice because only by sharing experiences with others can the process of education be furthered successfully.

'O' levels soon came along and I was fortunate enough to do well enough to continue to do 'A' levels.

The change in school life in the sixth form was tangible. 'Free periods' were introduced into the timetable. I regret to say that these were not always put to the best of use and card schools in the Sixth Form Centre were a regular part of the unofficial curriculum. A sharp lookout was required for approaching teachers.

The 'A' levels that I chose to do were English Literature, History and Economics with a view to going into Law or going to sea. That is not to say that if I didn't do sufficiently well I would run away to sea, but rather that I had a yearning to join the Royal Navy.

I was taught English by Mike Barden and Ken Lewis. We were very fortunate in this because I found their styles, whilst quite different, were nevertheless complementary and suited the set books that each taught. We were also given the opportunity to see performances of all the books either live at the theatre or on screen.

I did much better at English when it came to the exams than at either of the other subjects, but would hasten to add that that was entirely due to my own shortcomings rather than that of those who taught me.

I did my 'A' levels in the summer of 1978. I had a place to do Law at Newcastle University but I failed to get the required grades. Instead I went to Newcastle Polytechnic and I obtained my law degree there. I went on to do my Law Society Final Examinations and Articles of Clerkship as a solicitor in the North East before moving to Malvern in Worcestershire in 1985 where I now have my own practice. I am fortunate to live and work in an area as beautiful as this with my wife and two children, but I do not ever forget my roots and the part that Bede School has played in my life. It is perhaps indicative of the reputation that the School enjoys that a number of clients who have asked about my school tie, which I still wear to work, and who have no connection with Sunderland, have heard of Bede.

MARK LISTER

A PERSPECTIVE

The smell of the entrance room's newly-laid carpet vies for attention with the smell of newly-rendered walls. Walking up to the first floor stirs memories as the sound of footsteps echo along its windowed corridor.

Room 304, German Evening Class. The dismantling of trade barriers and a limited knowledge of German have brought me here - being able to say "steam or dry iron" doesn't get the visitor very far in Bonn.

The transformation of these Upper School classrooms, now part of the Tertiary College, has failed to mask the spirit of the school life that once existed. A life stretching back to the building's erection in the late 1920s when the school was moved from the fringe of Sunderland town centre.

As a result, this first evening lesson is interspersed with vivid recollections of school timetables from a decade ago.

Looking into Durham Road the memory of a bustling swarm of navy blue wool-and-polyester blazers is alive, running, walking, loitering, reciting exam work, forgetting homework, carrying complete P.E. kits and kits minus a gym shoe or sock.

Looking into the corridor, one's mind is led some yards away to the vast Upper School Hall where ornate celing decor and roll of honour boards provided distractions from the school assembly. Distractions, too, during the never-ending exams remembered for their roaring silence broken only by the footsteps of austere-looking invigilators. Folded, sloping wooden desks, which allowed pens and pencils to roll off, and collapsible chairs, which were hardly designed for reclining, made sure that the exam entrant was kept alert.

The next stop on this nostalgic journey is the Lower School, architecturally twinned with its upper school brother. Its hall, too, played host to thousands of exam hopefuls, but thankfully, brings back happier memories of watching "The Pirates of Penzance", "The Boyfriend", "The Revue" and countless other fine productions.

At the back of Bede's historic frontage lie the more modern ancillary buildings - the History Block, sixth-form centre and Science Block whose yesteryear smells of gas taps, hydrogen sulphide and burning gauze still make the nostrils twitch.

The Block, also the home of the classics rooms, still appears to resound with the voice of Jeff Wylie, lilting in buoyant Liverpudlian rhythm while conjugating a host of Latin verbs.

Eight-thirty and September's early darkness takes hold. The lesson over, a dozen students leave. Perhaps next week's lesson will focus on school leavers.

MERVIN STRAUGHAN
(1971)

WORTHWHILE ENDURANCE

I must confess that I am not one of those people who can claim that my school days were the happiest of my life. The months before I started at Bede I was filled with apprehension. This appeared to me to be one of the first steps out into the big wide world. The knowledge that I had a father, brother, three uncles and numerous cousins who had passed through Bede School apparently unscathed helped little. My first few weeks at the school proved as fearful as I had imagined. It seemed to me that here was a tight community of some two thousand people all of whom knew exactly where they ought to be and what they ought to be doing at any given time and that I didn't. It probably never ocurred to me that the rest of my Year's intake undoubtedly felt the same sense of lack of identity and fear as I did. Only extensive encouragement, bribery and bullying got me to school every day during my first term where I then tried to follow my father's advice and "walk around as if you own the place".

Having made my protest during that first term I begrudgingly endured the next twenty terms, quite often being given the opportunity to help other new starters who found it equally hard to settle into Bede School life. My time at Bede School gave me I think three things of great value. First, reasonably good academic qualifications, which allowed me to enter and pursue a fulfilling profession. Second, a number of great friends who, although I meet all too infrequently now, at weddings and the like, will undoubtedly remain great friends for the rest of my life. The last was a love for rugby, which I never became exceptionally good at, but which has provided many happy memories and which made emigrating far less traumatic that I thought it would be. Joining the local rugby clubs in Gothenburg has provided more friends more quickly that would have been possible by any other means.

One amusing story which I remember my father telling of his days at Bede School was the first occasion he was to be caned. The teacher who was to administer the punishment sent my father to the headmaster to get a cane. The headmaster obviously noticing a family resemblance asked what my father's name was. "Lister, sir," he stated. To which the headmaster, while rummaging in the cane cupboard replied, "Just as I thought. One moment please, I have a special cane for your family".

ROBIN LISTER
(1973 - 80)

REFLECTIVE (1)

I doubt if the nervous eleven year old, resplendent in new blazer, entering that imposing red brick building on Durham Road for the first time, can have had any ideas of the importance of the next half dozen years of the educational process. At first the complexities of timetables, labyrinthine corridors, new subjects and the school's own language addle the brain and dominate the imagination. Perhaps during their school career pupils begin eventually to appreciate the school's real strength, but I suspect a full realisation only comes much later.

For the truly imposing aspect of Bede School was not, of course, the building and its rules but its teachers. Nostalgia never was what it used to be, and rose-tinted spectacles are not needed to see that for long periods of its history Bede School fielded an amazingly diverse and talented teaching staff. Modesty rather than eulogy may be fashionable but if ever there was a time for acknowledging the true strength of Bede School it is now as its history and 100 years draw so neatly to a close. So many teachers communicated not only a deep knowledge of their subject but also an infectious enthusiasm that could not fail to leave its mark. My main interest was, and is, English and in terms of sheer lasting enjoyment the rewards have been great. This path eventually led into print journalism here and overseas and then the BBC. But the journey really began at Bede. I suspect that teachers receive only a fraction of the thanks and gratitude that pupils would like to bestow retrospectively. I am grateful that this commemoration, which is both sad and celebratory as the best occasions tend to be, has allowed me, and I am sure many others, to say thank you.

PETER ROBINSON

REFLECTIVE (2)

It was not until very recently, having completed my degree and professional training with the Royal Air Force, that I fully appreciated the quality of my school education. Throughout this time I seem to have been competing with people who, on paper at least, seemed to have an advantage over me stemming from their schooling. I now realise that few of my contemporaries, many of whom attended public and grammar schools, received an education equal to mine. (I use "education" in its broadest sense). "Post tenebras lux" has certainly applied in my case. Perhaps it's taken me ten years to realise quite how bright the light imparted on me was.

I would just like to mention one memory from my school days and that centres around Mr Wylie, my Latin master. I believe that he was the most brilliant teacher I have ever come across. Through his wit, charm and sheer hard work he implanted a working knowledge of Latin in minds of many unenthusiastic students (myself included). Mr. Wylie, for me, personifies the qualities that made my time at Bede very happy

S.J. BOYLE
1974 - 1981

A SALUTE OF COURTESY

Joining Bede Comprehensive in 1975 was the beginning of an adventure. This fine old building was home to many of my fond and not so fond memories and always will be.

Two members of the staff appear in my memories quite frequently. The first is Mr W.K. Lewis who was deputy head. He always had loose change or bottle tops in his trouser pockets which he kept shuffling much to the annoyance of the pupils, and, who knows, maybe the members of staff. You could hear the chink chink of the objects in question and knew exactly who was going to turn the

corner. Unknown to him this was a superb early warning system for the smoker behind the girls' gym, and quite a few lucky escapes were executed due to this annoying habit.

On leaving the lower school we entered the upper school only to be greeted by a gorilla known to the not-so-bright members of my year as Big Bad Bertie Auld. It was law for the crowd I used to be in not to be caught doing anything mischievous by this awesome figure. Unfortunately I managed to break this schoolboy law and left Big Bad Bertie's Auld's office holding my rear end (it did not hurt as much as the tears suggested) and standing for my next two lessons much to the amusement of my class (F4) and the teachers.

Unfortunately my final examination results were disappointing, but at least I gave the person responsible for marking my paper a good laugh.

On leaving the school, I and another pupil, Dave Allen, were interviewed by Big Bad Bertie Auld who wanted to know what occupation we had chosen to pursue. We told him that we had decided to join the Royal Marine Commandoes. After Big Bad Bertie Auld had picked himself off the floor he simply said "Good luck".

In November 1981 I was presented with my coveted Green Beret, something which I shall cherish for the rest of my life! Dave Allen was to be presented with his Green Beret three weeks later.

On leaving the Commando Training Centre, known to the Marines as the "Factory", I was posted to 45 Commando Group in Scotland. At this time I was at the grand old age of 17. In February I was sent to Brunei to do my jungle warfare course which was a five week nightmare, but Yankee Company of which I was a member at the time were looking forward to the week's run ashore booked for us in Hong Kong. This week's run ashore was rudely interrupted by a number of Argentinians who decided to invade the Falklands. We were not impressed, not only due to the fact that they had ruined our run ashore but we were due for Easter leave after being away for 2 months. Our attitude was to go and get the job done so we could get home to our families and friends as soon as possible. In a matter of a week we were round the other side of the world ready to win back our islands. We all know the outcome! Even in a god-forsaken place like the Falklands, the lads reminisced about their school days, for many of us were still young boys, myself still only 17. And my memories of Bede School were a very great morale booster. THANK YOU!

S.C. HUDSON
L/CPL RM
1975 - 81

TIME'S INTERCHANGE OF STATE

In 1976, Bede School, like so many other comprehensives, was big, crowded and not a little intimidating to the small fry who made up the new entry. I was no exception; I was as awe stricken as the rest by the sheer size of the buildings which, after four years in a relatively small primary school, seemed to me rather like a large and heavily populated rabbit warren. But once the geography of the place was explained, once I had begun to find my way round, my fears subsided and I gradually settled down.

What do I remember about the next five years? Initially my thoughts are of people and faces, some of which I can still put a name to. A clear picture of some boys, and girls, who were constantly aggressive in their attitudes towards each other and towards everybody else, including members of staff, comes readily to mind. Are they now model citizens, concerned parents? But were they really as bad as I seem to remember, and does it matter if they were? After all, I did meet many more who were amiable, friendly, bright, even brilliant, and their influences were presumably for the general good.

Still trying to dredge up memories I find myself thinking of major school events and, because I was involved, of Christmas concerts. Are they still held and, if so, are they compered by someone as urbane and be-frilled as Mr Lawson? Are the many performers, the choir, the orchestra and the brass band, in unison most of the time? And is there a latter-day Miss Northorpe who is in charge all the time? Do the distinguished guests, hi-jacked from their fire-sides for the night, clap dutifully, and hopefully in the right places? And do the parents, uncomfortable on hard seats, crane their necks in the hope of catching the eye of the one musician in the hall who matters to them?

Strange that these are the memories which come to me first. There were, after all, work to do and examinations to pass. On further reflection there were times when that was all that the school seemed to be about. Inevitably this thought brings to mind members of staff.

Most were highly professional, dedicated and effective teachers, who deserve the gratitude of those like myself who were dependent on examination results to gain entry to university. I am able to say with conviction that my own studies were strongly underpinned by first-rate 'A' level courses. Where am I now? Four years on from Bede found me at the point at which it suddenly becomes important to choose a career.

Two further years on after a course which has left me feeling like a very old Bedan I am about to enter yet another establishment, this time as an articled clerk. A new girl again!

ANNE GRIFFITHS
1976 - 83

MUTABILITY

As I have just left Bede it still seems part of my present rather than my past, so my memories are very recent and in abundance. My first memory and impression of Bede was of the building itself. On the outside it was an old and beautiful building but on the inside it was a dump. However, appearances are not everything and the dump has been a large part of my life for the last seven years, and I am proud to say I am an Old Bedan.

When I was asked to write about my memories of Bede I did not know what to write. I could have written about the snow fights we had in the second year, when we went to Switzerland, or the water fights we used to have in chemistry, or our feelings and opinions about the teachers, both past and present, but none of that seemed quite right.

Bede Sixth Form was a whole new experience. Not having to wear a uniform, only having to attend school when we had lessons and having free time in our timetable were only a few differences. The major difference to the sixth form was the amalgamation of other sixth forms with Bede's such as Farringdon, Thornhill and Southmoor. On the first day everyone turned up wearing smart clothes, unsure of what everyone else would be wearing, and everyone sat together in their school groups. Soon after jeans appeared to be the most popular clothes and everyone mixed together. At the end of the Lower Sixth year and the beginning of the Upper Sixth we were told that the Upper School building was being closed for modernization to accommodate the tertiary college. This caused many disruptions including having to use Sand Hill View School (formerly Thorney Close) for lessons and exams. Like most things Sand Hill had advantages and disadvantages. On the plus side, it was quiet and only used by sixth form students, but on the negative side it was difficult to get to and inconvenient to travel between schools for lessons and exams.

Now the modernization of the upper school building has finished and is open, as part of the college with many of the Bede staff working there. The building is very modern but it doesn't have, for me, the same friendly atmosphere the old building had.

LINDSAY BAINBRIDGE
HEAD GIRL 1988 - 89

A POSTSCRIPT

I arrived at Bede School in 1967 as part of a transfer deal involving Mr Budge and Mr Temple, in which, as a sort of make-weight, I accompanied Mr Temple from Southmoor School. From the haunted look he gave me in our first week at Bede, I suspect he was not consulted about my transfer.

After years as a capable headmaster, he was succeeded by an old college chum of mine, Mr Tait, who came to Bede under a cloud as his last school had been reduced to ashes. Rumour had it that at Bede the deputy head had the embarrassing task of searching the new Head for matches as he entered school each morning. However, it is to his credit that Mr Tait and the school remain so far intact.

I think what struck me most - it is certainly what I miss most - was the staff I joined at Bede. As well as a place for bridge and crosswords, the staff room was a place of conversation - sometimes trivial, sometimes academic, always lively - among a group of good colleagues. Whatever they did for the pupils at Bede - and I know they did a great deal - this staff in a way completed my education and I thank them for it.

I was not at Bede long before I accepted the captaincy of the staff cricket X1 which, in spite of some attempted coups, I held for 21 years. I soon gained a reputation for snatching defeat from the jaws of victory often by introducing myself into the attack. A slow bowler of rare guile, I was not always understood by my less experienced team mates, but I for one will always remember Bede Staff X1 with great affection.

There has been much talk over the years about the 'decline' of Bede School. I joined the school the year it ceased to be a Grammar School, so I can make no real comparison with its earlier days, but it seems obvious that when a school no longer takes all the 'best' pupils it is likely to decline in some ways. My own view - perhaps prejudiced - is that Bede School has done an excellent job in continuing to offer a first rate education. This was due to the quality of the staff and their high expectations of the pupils, and of course the response of the pupils.

In the last few years teaching has become more difficult and less rewarding, so that when I was offered early retirement in 1989 I accepted. My various ailments (details of which are included in a fascinating appendix, oddly mislaid by the editor) made the decision easier, but various factors have recently made a school teacher's job unenviable. The present system seems to aim at discouraging a teacher from actually teaching. Instead he is assessing, recording, profiling, being trained in new 'initiatives' or scraping desk lids. It is a sad fact that the entire staff spent one training day making Lego cars - from which I learnt nothing about industry, but a lot about my colleagues' tolerance. Perhaps the nadir was Red Nose Day - the national celebration of stupidity on which most of the pupils and some of the staff (bless them) wore fancy dress. Having had my lesson interrupted by a girl on roller skates playing the bagpipes, I was instructed to cover for a colleague who had been kidnapped as part of the jollifications. When I took a unilateral stand against this and sulked in the staff room, I was summoned by one of the deputy heads and reprimanded for my insubordination. I might have accepted this, but when I noticed that my grim-faced mentor was attired as Thomas the Tank Engine, I realised that it was time to retire.

M. BARDEN
(Staff 1967 - 89)

These lines, which reflect on Bede's death, were written by a contemporary, Cuthbert, to a lector, Cuthwine. The original English was that of the Northumbrian dialect, of which this is a translation:

"Before the inevitable journey
no-one will be wiser than he needs to be
by considering, before his own departure,
what will be adjudged of him,
after his own death-day,"

David Rock's introduction to architecture was through a school chore : the drawing of a plan to guide H.M. Inspectorate through the labyrinth of the Bede buildings, a task so well done as to win admiration of his Mathematics master. An academic career of distinction and a period in the Army during which he headed a team of architects in Germany were followed by engagement with Basil Spence and the award of the Soane Medallion for design, the major award in that field for British and Commonwealth architects. He has been a powerful agent in architectural and planning iniatives countrywide. He is a recent Vice-President of the R.I.B.A. and is Chairman of Rock Townsend, a national practice of architects, planners and designers in London, Manchester and Birmingham. Interestingly, from our immediate point of view, he is Chairman of the Society of Architect Artists. His startlingly dramatic Endpiece seems to express the unquenchable conviction that the native power that generated the ideal of a Bede School will live on in the town that gave it concrete shape a hundred years ago. It is impossible to conclude on a note of greater elevation.


post tenebras lux ..... again