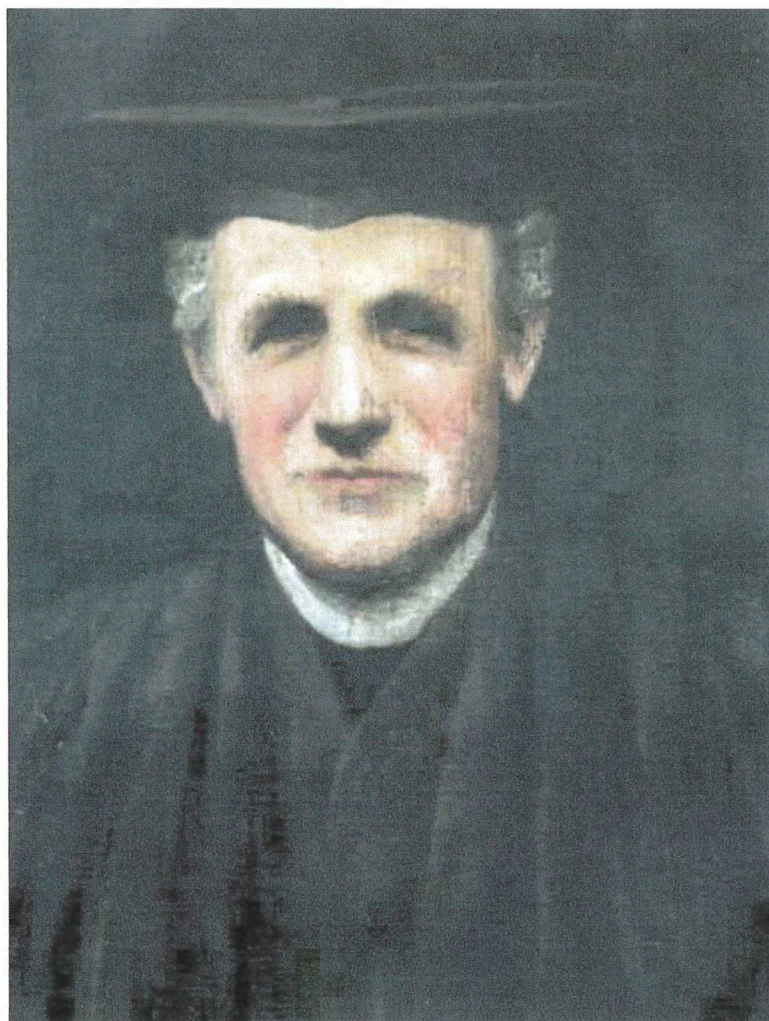


**THE HANSEN BAY HEADSHIP  
WIRKSWORTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
1908-1929**



**by Roy Pearce**

# WIRKSWORTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL 1908-1929

## THE HANSEN BAY ERA

### PREFACE

This brief preface and introduction record, rather patchily, some of the story of the grammar school founded by Anthony Gell in 1576 as it entered the twentieth century and sets the scene for the arrival of the Hansens Bays in 1908. The central tale begins in 1908 with Lauritz with his wife, Celia Hansen Bay, appointed to the headship of Wirksworth Grammar School and covers the twenty one years of their headship. The explanation of the dual appointment will emerge. They may appear in this account as HB, the HBs, Lauritz, Celia, CHB, even Mrs HB. The HBs were fascinating people and there are plenty of incidents to relate. This story is not an academic history and most of the details lack references; the information comes from three main sources. I have trawled the beautifully kept governor's minute books from 1908 to 1929; this record is formal and often frustrating when a serious argument or incident is covered up in the traditionally stilted and oblique language of governors' resolutions. In contrast the school magazines, beautifully bound for the years 1908 to 1920, provide a vivid and passionate picture of school life. I have not seen those for 1921-1925. These editions of the school magazine are notably well-written; I identify CHB as the driving force. These two sources give strongly differing views of the school and its head during its first few years as a revived foundation, reflecting two strong minded authors.

For the Last Lap section, I have drawn on my occasional reading and snippets garnered in the memory from various Wirksworth sources over the last twenty years, including a major contribution from the Hansen Bay family, with whom I made contact in 2012. I have not consulted newspapers of the period. Some of my writing is inevitably interpretation: much of it coloured by my own experience as headteacher of Anthony Gell School (1971-91). It is a test of the imagination to move back a hundred years and to follow the political and social intricacies of the school at that time; but a fascinating task.

I am grateful to Robert Few for his skills in computer technology and time willingly given; for his accuracy, creativity, energy and sheer hard work on the presentation of this piece. Rob's contribution has been inspiring.

I offer this brief contribution as a starter for a more detailed history.

## INTRODUCTION THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

We have no written history of the school through the nineteenth century, but I have begun to trace the seven Head Masters who served during this time.

When I read about Wirksworth Grammar School in those distant years I get the impression of struggle. Although the school had been rebuilt on its ancient site in 1827 it was difficult to maintain the academic standards of the classical curriculum, which was the tradition of the grammar school. From 1870 onwards in this hard working town, dominated by quarrying, elementary education was an acceptable provision in preference to the uninspiring grammar school teaching with a rigid traditional curriculum for which in addition you had to pay school fees. In 1800 these were two guineas a year for instruction in English subjects with a fee of thirty guineas a year to be a private pupil of the Head Master.

Sadly by the end of the century there were too few middle class parents in the town willing to pay for a grammar education in the classics which was inappropriate to the needs of most Wirksworth boys.

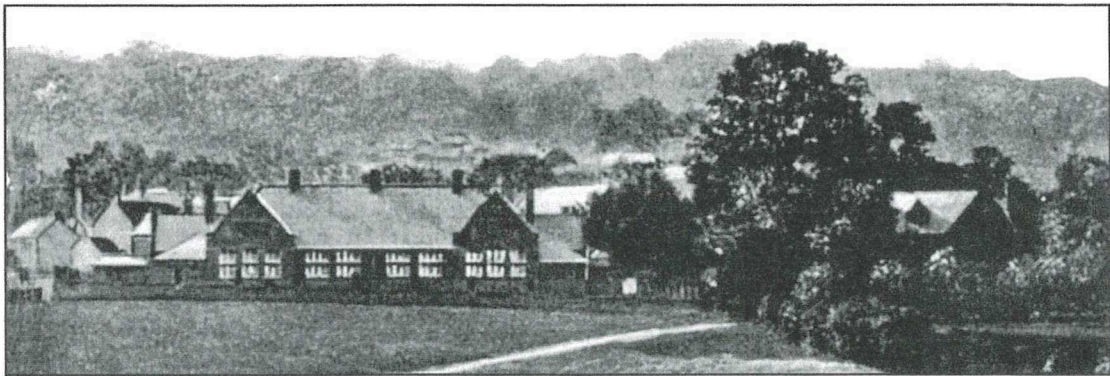
The School House was built in 1886, not only to accommodate the headmaster, but also, in the pre-bus era, to encourage boarders, who came from the local villages. We have a photo in the 1890s of the head, Mr Berridge elegant on the lawn with his wife and, at a



Mr and Mrs Berridge on School House lawn with boarders .

distance, about ten young boarders, scattered and separated discreetly from the family group. Berridge was the head from 1882 to 1908. He was a professional schoolmaster from London, not in holy orders. It is said he was member of an extreme religious sect; that puzzles me because for most of the nineteenth century (and no doubt before) the head was a clergyman of the Church of England, sometimes combining the post with clerical duties in the parish. It was a tough job and Berridge was not able to revive the school, though he stayed for twenty six years.

### A NEW SCHOOL FOR WIRKSWORTH



A postcard of the 1908 new building in Wood Street from the Hannages.

## SAVE THE SCHOOL

The key event, as the twentieth century arrived, was the Balfour education act of 1902, the inspiration of a gifted civil servant, Sir Robert Morant, who set himself to bring some order to the organisation of secondary education. The 1902 act endeavoured to tidy up the variegated provision which had developed, especially in secondary education, and for the first time gave the newly established local authorities responsibility for the organisation of schools, in this case Derbyshire County Council. A major influence in the re-organisation was Sir Michael Sadler, radical educationist, professor of education at Manchester University and previously a distinguished inspector of schools. As Derbyshire began to review their schools Sadler visited Wirksworth. He produced a dispiriting report and concluded that the school should be closed and the small number of grammar school boys transferred to the growing community of Duffield. They could travel by train. There were only about forty boys on roll and, with the town dirty and depressed, relying on poorly paid work in textiles and quarries as sources of employment in the dust bowl at the top of the valley, Sadler saw little hope that the school would be able to entice enough boys with parents willing to pay for a grammar school education. The buildings were poor, the numbers persistently low and the standards dreadful. The main career route was to work as clerks on the Midland Railway, and nobody stayed beyond sixteen.

The town was, of course, outraged that closure should be suggested and a committee was formed to save the school. The target was one third of the £4,500 estimated cost with Derbyshire County Council contributing the balance. Money was contributed by local worthies and £1,037.5s was raised. To me as a supporter of the cricket club the names are familiar! The affluent town establishment rallied. The chairman and chief donor was H Walthall Wathall from Alton Manor. Other famous names were two Wheatcrofts from Haarlem Mill, Marsden, Arkwright, Dr Broster, even the Duke of Devonshire. Charles Wright from the Vaults, the fantastically profitable wines and spirits business on Coldwell Street contributed £25. They, in co-operation with the county council, built the new school, which we now know as Gell block, faced with Wirksworth bricks and Black Rock gritstone. The building was designed by the distinguished county architect George H. Widdows, who also created Wirksworth Junior School and many other fine school buildings in the county.

Until the 1902 act Wirksworth Grammar School operated as an entirely independent organisation. It was not, like many grammar schools, a church foundation, so its financial situation was always precarious, with its small income arising from the fees paid by pupils and from the not very wealthy original trust established and run by the Gell family.

There had been various additions from bequests, usually of land, which was rented out and produced some income over the years, but it was clear in Wirksworth, as in many other towns through the country that, if a strong system of education was to be established as national policy to sustain a great empire, there must in some way be a state contribution. This was channelled through the local authorities, which were now

authorised to raise money through the rates for education. Henceforth there was financial support for the school from the county and a number of competitive scholarships were established, which made places available to those who could not afford the fees and could now move from the elementary school into the grammar school at eleven, though some fee-paying pupils were still admitted. This re-organisation, almost re-founding, raised the standard to the benefit of the whole community. The school maintained its independent governing body and made its own decisions until the Butler act at the end of the second war.

I reflect how the three major education acts of the twentieth century were pivotal in the history of our school: 1902 Balfour, 1944 Butler, which abolished fee paying in the grammar school, and the 1965 Crosland comprehensive education act.

The governors, in wisdom, but no doubt in consultation with the county, made two crucial decisions regarding the new school. They decided that the school should become mixed and girls should henceforth be admitted, a remarkably progressive policy in the 1900s, and Lauritz Hansen Bay was recruited and took up post with the support of his wife Celia in 1908, living in school house and serving notably till 1929.



The Young Hansen Bay painted by Celia (1891).

## THE HANSEN BAYS PRE-WAR 1908-14

When Rev Lauritz Hansen Bay took over as head of Wirksworth Grammar School from 1908 to 1929 the numbers on roll rose steadily from about forty five in the boys-only nineteenth century school to settle at about a hundred as the 'new school' was established. We have list of the original 71 pupils in 1908; 44 boys and 27 girls. The foundation stone of the new Gell building was laid on 13th November 1907 by the Duke of Devonshire and, amazingly, no delays reported, on 9th September 1908 the Bishop of Derby performed the official opening ceremony of the handsome new buildings designed by George Widdows, the visionary school architect, who worked on many Derbyshire schools, Mr Berridge had been head till 1908 and the Bishop 'paid a graceful and fitting tribute to the work of the late Head Master'.

The view in the town, not discouraged by HB, was that a new school was opening. The 1827 building in the churchyard was adapted to craft subjects and the four classrooms of Gell block with the science lab (a crucial provision) facing on to Wood Street were newly built. There was also teaching space in the school house. The arrival of the girls was crucial. Local families of distinction sent their sons away to school (as the HBs did), some to Derby Grammar School, travelling daily by train, others to preparatory boarding schools and then to a public school. I suspect they were more willing to take a chance with their daughters in the vigorous and idealistic new regime. As a result the school seems to have recruited a steady stream of able girls, who began to form a small majority in the school and gave it a tremendous fillip, academically, socially and on the sports field. Among the 1908 entrants roll I notice a very young Phyllis Hansen Bay, who later moved to her aunt's school at Worcester, and A. Veronica Stafford, formidable daughter of the local solicitor and subsequently, as 'Ronnie' Stafford a Labour councillor, school governor for many years and strong supporter in the sixties of the comprehensive re-organisation. Her name survives on a road in the town and I recall she interviewed me sharply for the headship in 1971. That is my only personal contact with the 1908 re-organisation and I relish it being with her.

Numbers on roll

1908 71;

1909 99;

1910 111, 'nearly full'.

Though most of the pupils were fee-paying, the county council, which had contributed generously to the new building, now gave an increasing number of scholarships to the grammar school. There were also 'foundation scholarships', and the scholarship examinations held in Wirksworth each autumn were highly competitive. The visible energy of the new head, with his powerful wife as senior mistress was inspiring. There is an inspectors' report for 1910 which praises the work of the head and the standards of the school. There had clearly been a rapid and massive improvement.

Rev. Lauritz Hansen Bay was head from 1908-1929. Born on an island in Denmark in 1866, he came as a child to Hull, where his father worked in a mission for seamen. HB was 41 on appointment, having previously taught maths and science in Carlisle and recently at Deacon's School, Peterborough. His daughter reports 'He was a wonderful teacher and there were many scholarships.' You can see still on the honours board in Gell block the outstanding achievement of Joe Talbot who won an open scholarship to Worcester College, Oxford, soon after HB arrived. Joe, a local boy, was son of the owner of the buses and taxis which served the town. Although HB suffered with a bad leg, 'kicked on the hip in a football match at 18 and lamed for life', he walked very fast and having been a 'fine athlete' he was both active and keen in many sports, including tennis and golf. I note that Lauritz was a vice chairman of the cricket club at one point and encouraged a close club/school link; detailed school cricket results survive of games in the early years from 1908. With his family coming from a remote Danish island, Lauritz, though living in land-locked Derbyshire, passed the feeling for adventure and love of the sea to his family. There is one oddity as he came to the town. I have referred to him from the beginning as Rev., but in the 1910 magazine there is a report that 'The Head Master was ordained by the Lord Bishop of Southwell': so he was not in orders on arrival, though he may have been a deacon. Assuredly he carried the Christian message firmly into the school.

He, like his predecessors, was referred to in the magazine as the Head Master, then the Headmaster and then again the Head Master. Whether there was any considered distinction I am not sure; perhaps a mixed school was a factor.

Lauritz was supported, some have said to me dominated, in his work by his no less active and energetic wife. She was born Alice Rebecca Spurling (Pancras, London 1875), but known as Celia and studied art, unusual for girl at that time, in South Kensington, the artistic quarter of London, until her marriage in 1900. An early portrait of her husband survives, skilful and passionate. Celia was a gifted and cultivated woman; painter, musician and writer. While in Wirksworth, she produced several books and pamphlets on both religious subjects, including Religion in Art, and on local history and produced many school plays, famed for the exotic scenery, which she designed, and for the music which she composed. Did they really perform on tables in the hall of Gell block? The school magazines are noticeably well written and, though she was nominally 'assistant editor' I see much of her contribution in the flowing style of many of the reports, though I thought it unnecessary to publish so many of her own poems in the school magazine. The mag. certainly promotes the values of the school – of her and her husband. From time to time, the readers benefit from her moral reflections. Celia was a woman not easily discouraged of 'strongly independent mind and judgement.' Lauritz and Celia were married in 1900 and had five children – see the tree below. They also owned a donkey called Tabitha. Her grandson, Dr Peter Andrews says that the HB family were strongly independent; my knowledge of them in three generations confirms that judgement. The letter written to me by their daughter, Rosemary, in 1976, herself then in her seventies, is energetic, adventurous and literate (as I have come to expect from the family) and vividly evokes a distant past in Wirksworth.



# THE WIRKSWORTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL MAGAZINE.

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VOL. 1. No. 1.

Editor—T. B. ASKEW.

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## EDITORIAL.

We do not make any apology for bringing into life the first number of what we hope will prove a most successful venture, our School Magazine. We have always thought that it is of the utmost necessity that a school should have a magazine, however small, in which its doings can be recorded and handed down for the benefit of future generations. Not only that, but we ourselves, at some distant future time, will always be able to bring our school days to life once more whenever we take down and glance back over the pages of the School Magazine.

We want to make this venture a success. To that end we want every member of the school to contribute a share. Contributions in prose and verse will be most thankfully considered by the Editor. We feel that there is much budding talent in the school which needs only courage and practice to make it ripen.

In these pages we hope to chronicle the doings of each term, and if we venture to make frank criticism now and again, we trust that no one will be offended.

We intend to have an Old Boys' and Old Girls' column, in which the doings of the Old Boys and Old Girls can be recorded. It will therefore be a great help if the present members of the school will find out as much as they can concerning the past members.

This term has been remarkable for the fact that it is the first under the new conditions, and it has been a term of settling down. We are glad that things have gone very smoothly. There has been much less difficulty than was anticipated, and the numbers in the school have far exceeded all anticipations for a first term.

The first page of the first magazine, 1908.

At the end of the autumn term 1908, the first for Wirksworth Grammar School with girls on roll, they bravely published the first magazine, Vol. 1 No. 1. We have copies of this momentous publication which was produced, a great effort, three times a year from 1908 to 1918, then annually for the next two years, and those editions 1-32 are preserved in an elegantly bound edition – signs of the assistant editor. The contemporary history as presented by the magazine, divides sadly into two sections with vastly different moods. We read of the six carefree, pre-war years, 1908 to 1914, all positive, cheerful, driving onwards confidently with no trace of fear for the future. The autumn 1914 edition begins on a grim note.

‘Never, perhaps, throughout all the ages has the world passed through a more serious crisis than that which it is experiencing today.’

I shall write of the two phases pre- and post-war separately and include in the appendix some of the minor points which have survived and always give a special flavour to the traditional school magazine. An important section, culled from surviving governors’ minute books, deals with the governors and the wartime crisis.

In the early years from 1908 the optimism, energy and commitment of both Lauritz and Celia shine out as they establish ‘their school’. Steadily they built up a pattern for the school year. The earliest clubs were chess and draughts, with an initial ‘lecture’ from the head on how to play chess. He was fond of lectures! Football began early and teams played regular fixtures against Ashbourne Grammar (Not QUEGS I notice), Lady Manners, Derby School, Cavendish at Matlock and later Strutts at Belper. The boys had regular cricket matches in the summer term against the same opponents and soon there was a girls’ cricket team, playing mostly St Elphin’s, but in one season both LMS and Duffield Ladies appear as opponents. At first the field was not ready for hockey, but that was soon established as the main game for girls. There was also what was called Basket Ball in the magazine; I can only assume netball, but that faded away as hockey and lawn-tennis took over. The games against the Old Boys and Old Girls were a highlight and on occasions there were mixed hockey matches entitled Past v Present. All school results were faithfully reported in detail with full cricket scorecards.

Each spring there was an athletic sports with detailed results of all events in the magazine and CHB thanked for providing the teas. The distinguished guest made an inspirational speech and asked the head to grant a half holiday. Among the events were kicking the football, throwing the Basket Ball, egg and spoon race, broad jump and sack race. There was a high participation rate.

Within the school there were house matches and I note that in the summer an ‘American’ lawn-tennis mixed doubles tournament. The first winners were the head and his young partner. The school did not neglect the social side of sport. Other delights were the hare and hound paper chases; the younger boys pursuing two older runners over an ill-defined, but quite lengthy course. In the winter skating and tobogganing (no health and safety)

emerged, with the playground watered on frosty mornings; sometimes a skating half holiday was declared.

Gardening was a popular pastime. The policy on games, perhaps inspired by Celia was 'progressive'. 'We do not make games compulsory, as is done in some schools, because we quite recognise that there are people to whom games would be a curse rather than a pleasure' - and gardening was both good exercise and useful. There are regular gardening reports with plots around the playground allocated to individual children and a gardening cup presented in the summer term.

The Head was a keen sportsman and saw games, even though non-compulsory, as central to the ethos of the school, muscular Christianity in action.

His wife, Celia, was the senior mistress, and contributed her unique brand of massive enthusiasm on the cultural side. From early days she organised a Musical Society with evenings when both staff and pupils performed. I noticed three concerts in one short winter term. Each Christmas there was a great show with music and recitation. One year they put on excerpts from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, but usually there was a play written and produced with music and the scenery created by CHB. Titles include *The Dismal Witch of Carsington Moor*, *Circe's Island* (48 on stage), *Joe & the Fairy*, *Prep and the Gamester* - both the last two short plays reviewed at three sides length in the mag. You get a tremendous spirit of enthusiastic participation in both sport and in the arts, even though the performances were produced on tables in the narrow hallway, which we now call Gell corridor. Great fun was had by all, mostly in afternoon or evening club times with wide participation and involving an energetic and committed staff. A late train from Wirksworth served some of the children involved in after school activities.

There was a feeling in Wirksworth that, isolated up a remote valley with poor communications, you had to make your own entertainment - and Celia was certainly an entertainer. The Head Master was a skilled conjuror and often performed. Both HBs encouraged debating and a Debating Society was formed, In one debate Celia supported Veronica Stafford, who was honing her oratorical skills, and they both voted in favour of suffrage for women. I was interested that the motion on capital punishment was carried only by 15 to 13. Other topics, usually with HB in the chair, were: Could women play cricket?, Town and Country Living and a lengthy and interesting debate on conscription, Among the head's 'lectures' with lantern slides were *The Art of the Potter*, *Mnemonics*, *Ancient and Medieval Sport*, *China and the Chinese* ('illustrated by numerous very good slides'), *North India and the Russo/Japanese War*; all effusively reviewed in the school magazine.

A museum was set up and unusual items were donated and received with thanks: Kaffir metal bracelets; used bullets from the Boer War; metacarpal bone from cervus elaphus found at Hoe Grange. There were few trips out of town, but one visit to Ible to study the rock formations 'under the expert guidance of Rev. Spicer' and several to see 'Mr Hurt's hounds'. The geology involved probably a walk to Ible, but the games players travelled to away fixtures by a 'brake', no doubt provided by Mr. Talbot on Coldwell Street, and for some fixtures by train.

There were two assistant staff much involved in school activities, in sport, plays and the music. (*Personal details from Phyllis Patterson, HB's daughter.*)

Mr CA Taylor, 'a jolly, outsize, young man, a giant, athletic and full of laughter, fresh from the sixth form at Deacon's School', where Lauritz had taught, played games, sang and acted. He was a lower school maths and science teacher.

Miss Kirby, who also came with the HBs from Peterborough, taught French and Needlework and played the piano at the daily assembly 'She was so beautiful, I thought, with raven wings of hair swept back from her forehead, a most elegant figure in high necked striped blouses and long dark blue skirts brushing the ground.' She often appeared on stage and she established the important school library.

I include here the generous tributes when they left, both in the fateful year, 1914. The efforts of assistant staff should be honoured – it is too easy to assume that the HBs did it all. I wonder what happened to these fine teachers, key members of the school family, when the war came.

#### Easter 1914

'We regret we have to announce the approaching departure of Miss Kirby, who has accepted a post in Poland. We shall miss her very much both in school and out of it for she has been a true friend in the school ever since it was re-opened to staff and pupils alike.

We have been singularly fortunate in having a language mistress whose accent, both in French and German, is so perfect and her fluency so great, but perhaps the greatest permanent help she has given has been in connection with the Library, where she has gently suggested the books which will be most suitable to each applicant. This has had far reaching results, which appear, (to some extent) already in the work of pupils, and which, undoubtedly, must affect their habit of mind to all time. She has been enthusiastically interested in the health and happiness of the school, and in the various games and entertainments; she has delighted us all with her excellent acting in school plays, and we should be ungrateful indeed if we did not cherish her memory with affection and wish her all happiness in her new sphere.'

#### Summer 1913

'To our sincerest regret, we shall lose, this term, Mr C.A. Taylor, who after spending six years with us, is leaving us, in order to follow a course of study at the Royal College of Science, London. Both Staff and School join in wishing him the best of good fortune and prosperity in his new sphere of life, in the full assurance that his popularity, not only in the town, but more especially in the school, augurs well for his success, wherever he may be.'

Kirby and Taylor had made significant contributions not only to a range of cultural activities, but also to establishing the academic credentials of the school. The bookish HBs approved strongly of Miss Kirby's efforts in establishing from nothing a strong library. The head saw that he must produce impressive examination results and there was much praise in the magazines for public examination success and especially for those who managed Oxbridge entrance. J.W.Talbot, was the star with an open scholarship to Worcester College, Oxford, in Maths and Science – a half holiday was awarded.

The examination achievements were recorded in detail in the magazine accompanied by letters from old boys at both Oxford and Cambridge and even one from Paris and one from Sheffield College to encourage the aspiration of the boys. A number of the girls became teachers, mostly in local schools. Veronica Stafford, having earned distinctions in her teacher training, taught in Wirksworth. The only female university student recorded in these years is Phyllis MacBeth, daughter of the local solicitor, 'pursuing a course of study at Reading University College' in 1916-17.



THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
WIRKSWORTH.

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FOUNDED 1576

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SPEECH DAY  
AND  
PRIZE DISTRIBUTION,

WEDNESDAY, NOV 30TH, 1910.

AT 3 P M

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CHAIRMAN :  
COL. CHANDOS-POLE-GELL, J.P.

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THE PRIZES WILL BE PRESENTED BY  
THE RT. REV. THE LORD BISHOP OF SOUTHWELL.

Modern readers may ask about the curriculum; what the children learnt and how they learnt it. We know about the subjects studied from the prizes awarded in each year group on Speech Day: in 1911 English, Maths, French, Scripture, Science (no separate sciences), Drawing (not Art, no space), Latin, Greek (both VI form subjects), with other minority subjects Woodwork, Needlework, Plasticine Work, Book Keeping and Gardening. A prize was awarded for the best cricket average!

### PRIZE LIST.

#### Form Prizes for Work of the three Terms.

- Form VI. J. W. Talbot.  
 ,, V. F. Horsley.  
 ,, IV. Gladys M. Fritchley.  
 ,, III. Jessie Lees.  
 ,, II. H. A. Swift.  
 (2nd prize) F. A. Hall.  
 ,, I. R. F. H. Wilson.

#### Mathematics.

- Form VI. J. W. Talbot.  
 ,, V. E. Webster.  
 ,, IV. R. P. Warren.  
 ,, III. H. J. Cockeroff.  
 ,, II. Margaret A. Pashley.

#### French.

- Form VI. W. Hallam.  
 ,, V. Norah E. Marsden.  
 ,, IV. W. Tipper.  
 ,, III. Phyllis M. Macbeth.  
 ,, II. Cissie Hall.

#### Scripture.

- Form V. Josephine A. Marsden.  
 ,, IV. Winifred A. White.  
 ,, III. Madge Lees.  
 ,, II. Leonard B. Shaw.

#### Science.

- Form VI. J. B. Bowler.  
 ,, V. H. H. Brown.  
 ,, IV. Annie Land.  
 ,, III. W. Read.  
 ,, II. W. Hallitt.

#### Drawing.

- Form V. F. Horsley.  
 ,, IV. Eleanor M. Bancroft.  
 ,, III. W. Read.  
 ,, II. H. A. Swift.

#### Latin.

- Form VI. W. Hallam.  
 ,, V. Norah E. Marsden.

#### Greek.

- R. S. Boden.

#### Pupil Teachers.

A. H. Gould.

#### Excellent General Progress.

H. Abell, Phyllis Tompkins,  
 C. A. Shaw.

#### English.

Form V. A. R. Cowlshaw.  
 ,, IV. J. R. Pitman.  
 ,, III. Phyllis M. Macbeth.

#### German.

Gladys M. Fritchley.

#### Woodwork.

R. G. Boden.

#### Needlework.

Maud Storey.

#### Plasticine Work.

W. Hallitt.

#### Cookery.

Elsie Rhodes.

#### Holiday Task.

UPPER SCHOOL—Annie E. Buxton.  
 LOWER SCHOOL—Phyllis M. Macbeth.

#### Reading.

SENIOR (Special prize presented by the  
 Rev. Canon Gem).

Eleanor M. Bancroft.

JUNIOR (Special prize presented by Miss  
 G. Smith).

Stanley L. Coulson.

#### Chess Cup.

(Presented by Miss Kirkby).  
 Held by J. W. Talbot.

#### Draughts.

W. E. Hooton.

#### Old Boys' Prize for Head of School.

Gained by J. W. Talbot, but passed  
 on to W. Hallam, as Talbot won it  
 last year.

#### Headmaster's Prizes for

#### Captains of School Clubs.

BOYS—J. W. Talbot.

GIRLS—Norah E. Marsden.

(5)

On Speech Day there was a lengthy presentation with music and recitation. In 1911 we find several choral efforts: Here's to George Our Sailor King by CHB and the Soldiers' chorus from Faust with a humorous song Dumb, Dumb, Dumb. There is a pianoforte solo, a song by Handel, and I am impressed that there was a Latin song Integer Vitae: 'integer vitae, scelerisque purus' by Horace, translates as 'upright of life and free from wickedness', so the moral message was sustained. The guests heard a French Recitation (German, Latin and Greek also in other years), a scene from Henry V and a recitation of The Centaur, a poem written by CHB and recited by her young daughter Rosemary. I am unimpressed by this tedious poem, which was printed in full in the magazine, and my sympathies go to Rosemary, who, no doubt undaunted, had to recite. She did well to escape to her aunt's school at Worcester.

#### PROGRAMME.

- 1 FRENCH RECITATION "La Cigale et la Fourmi" .. .. *La Fontaine*  
PHYLLIS TOMPKINS.
- 2 PIANOFORTE SOLO .. "Hamoreske" .. .. .. *Dvorak*  
NELLIE BANCROFT.
- 3 GERMAN RECITATION .. "Der Handschuh" .. .. .. *Schiller*  
GLADYS FRITCHLEY.
- 4 RECITATION .. .. "The Overland Mail" .. .. .. *Kipling*  
W. HALLITT.
- 5 GLEE .. .. "The Bells of St. Michael's Tower" .. .. *Knyvett*
- 6 FRENCH RECITATION .. "Ma Fille" .. .. .. ..  
ANNIE BUXTON.
- 7 GLEE .. .. "Men of Harlech" .. .. .. ..
- 8 RECITATION "How they brought the Good News from Ghent" .. *Browning*  
S. L. COULSON.
- 9 LATIN ORATION .. .. "From Catiline" .. .. .. *Cicero*  
NORAH MARSDEN.
- 10 GLEE .. .. "Glorious Apollo" .. .. .. .. *Webbe*
- 11 Chairman's Opening Remarks.
- 12 Report of Board of Education Inspection.
- 13 Annual Report of Head Master.
- 14 Presentation of Prizes and Certificates.
- 15 Votes of Thanks
- 16 BIRD SONGS .. "The Wood Pigeon" and "The Owl" .. .. *Liza Lehman*  
WINIFRED A. WHITE.
- 17 SELECTION *Shakespeare's* "Merchant of Venice" .. .. The Trial Scene.  
Portia—Nellie Bancroft. Antonio—W. Killer Gratiano—A. Done.  
Nerissa—Annie Buxton. Bassanio—R. P. Warren. Salario—B. A. Taylor.  
The Duke—H. J. Cockcroft. Shylock—J. H. Dawes. Clerk—W. Tipper.
- 18 CANTATA .. .. "The Incheape Rook" .. .. .. *J. F. Bridge*
- 19 GOD SAVE THE KING.

The "Incheape Rook" was enjoyed by all who heard it. It is difficult music, and many people thought it was decidedly plucky of Mr. Ashover to venture on it.

The different items in the programme were all creditably performed, and Norah Marsden especially deserves congratulation on the stream of impassioned pleading which flowed from her lips in Latin.

All the characters in the "Merchant of Venice" Trial Scene, especially that of Portia, were well played, and the audience shivered at the malice with which Shylock sharpened his (imaginary) knife, and laughed at the concentrated venom of Gratiano's taunts.

In these public presentations at Speech Day with capped and gowned formality HB was telling his parents and the influential members of his community that here was a school with traditional academic values supported by a strong religious, sporting and cultural background. There was obviously a teaching expectation of rote learning, traditional at the heart of an English classical education; in one year I spotted a Greek presentation from Thucydides on the excellence of the Athenians, a very difficult passage. The young orator later attended a theological college and was subsequently ordained. I am sure the invited guests were impressed, but I wonder how much that was enjoyed by the audience.

Even a century later the magazines give us a vivid and fascinating picture of a school where the learning both in and out of the classroom was consistent in its moral purpose. The first Founder's Day in honour of Anthony Gell was celebrated in 1911 with tea at Hopton Hall by kind permission of the Hon. Mrs. Gell.

Each year there is a full report of Speech Day with details of the exhortatory speeches by the array of distinguished visitors who presented the awards. These included before the war Lord Kerry (the West Derbyshire MP), The Bishop of Southwell, an admiral, a canon of Chester Cathedral (related to Celia) and the Chairman of Derbyshire Education Committee, all of whom offered wise words of advice. 'The Bishop gave a most interesting and appropriate address.' This path to virtue is supported by the Head Master's report which 'mediates the ethos' in confident words.

The formality of Speech Day may be the pinnacle of the school's presentation of itself and its values to the world, but that message is re-inforced to the pupils every day at the school prayers and on every formal and informal occasion through the school year. The school inspectors visiting in 1910 'were impressed by the reverent behaviour of the boys and girls at morning prayers'.

Even gardening has its moral lessons. Praising those who were successful in the school gardening competition Celia asserts, 'The reward has been obtained, the pleasure of having created by personal effort a lovely spot'. Those who had abandoned their plots 'advertise themselves to be deficient in Perseverance, Self Respect, Patience, Foresight, Industry and Public Spirit - every one of them qualities without which no one can hope to grow up a worthy and respected citizen of this great Empire.' Boys 'with their heavy boots, unhelpful to dancing' were mainly the culprits.

Sometimes called the hidden curriculum the HB's out-of-class curriculum was overt, committed and all-embracing, supporting and enhancing the teaching approach in the classroom. As teachers they were training children who would be sound citizens ready to serve king and country with Christianity at the core of their thoughts and actions. Empire Day was celebrated with gusto, as it was in most schools at the time; children without apology were expected to be good imperialists. There was even a rather blood-thirsty letter in one magazine from an old boy serving at Calabar in Africa who promoted the stern imperial message - as well as playing cricket. Mr. A. J. Marsden, clerk to the governors presented a large Union Jack at one Empire Day event and the children, every boy and every girl (it is reported), contributed to a flagpole on which it would be raised.



Sadly the flag was raised first to half-mast to mark 'a sad national calamity – the lamented death of King Edward VII. He will doubtless be known to future generations as King Edward the Peacemaker.' Many boys and girls were present at the proclamation of the new king in Wirksworth on May 14th 1910 and the Head Master went to London with two of his daughters for the coronation. 'On the King's birthday, as usual, the school sang the National Anthem after prayers.'

#### CORONATION DAY.

Mrs. Hansen Bay and the Staff devoted much time and energy to decorating the Old School for the festal Tea on Coronation Day. Many towns-people looked in, and were quite surprised to see what a fine room the cookery school is. Talbot and R. Warren were a great help in proffering plates piled with beef, ham and tongue (all together) to the visitors, who seemed to enjoy themselves and the food. The marguerites gathered by our girls to adorn the tables were as useful as the blue-bells collected by them, (to show forth, with laburnum, the school colours) were on Sports' Day.

We were most fortunate in the delightful weather which prevailed on the last-mentioned occasion; and on Coronation Day the rain here kept off until late in the evening, and then it was not sufficient to spoil the fireworks and bonfires which were lighted on all sides. (By the way, is it realized that bonfire means "bone-fire," and is an allusion to the martyr fires of Smithfield?)

The Head Master and his two youngest daughters went to London to report the sights seen on the spot. He saw both processions perfectly, and says that if it were not for the beauty of the "Cinderella Coach" used on Coronation Day, the spectacle on the day of the Royal progress was immeasurably finer. The colour and sparkle was so brilliant, the immense variety of our troops from all quarters of the world so impressive, the splendid military bands so exhilarating, and the King and Queen so gaily gracious, that the whole thing was, if one may say so, a much livelier affair than the more solemn and stately procession of the day before.

Here in Wirksworth we did our little best to be loyal, singing lustily a song to King George written and composed by Mrs. Hansen Bay. (She remarked with some discontent that it did not scan decently, but it undoubtedly went with a fine swing to a rousing tune, which was what was wanted).

Barnes i. was honoured by an order to go to Windsor, with other boys distinguished for their smartness as scouts, to be reviewed by the King.

#### Celebrations for the Coronation of King George V, 1910

The head's words of wisdom were presented to pupils each day at school prayers and though none survive some, taken from his Speech Day school reports are attached.

1909 'He enlarged on the loyalty and love shown by the boys and girls for their school.'

1911 'reported very favourably on the growth of the corporate spirit in the school – the typical face of this school was becoming a thoughtful, modest and happy one.'

In 1913, the last before the war, though he did not know that, the magazine reports in detail. Do I notice a hostile reference to Lloyd George's social policies?

'He hoped and trusted that parents did not send their children to school in order that they might be instructed in a few more or less useful branches of knowledge. The really important things which a school-life should give were of a deeper and more far-reaching nature. The habit of mind which could concentrate all the faculties upon the work in hand at the moment should be theirs for life, yet this power of concentration must not imply narrowness of interest. Their sympathies should be as wide as the universe. A permanent taste for all that was good in Art, Literature and Life should be formed; and above all each boy and girl should feel the obligation of each to all.

The corporate life of a school was no bad training in the duties of citizenship, but it must take time. They heard a great deal nowadays of the responsibility of the state to the individual. Well he did not belittle that responsibility in the slightest degree, but what they tried to develop here was a sense of the responsibility of the individual to the State – the State scholastic, the State political, and the State celestial. (Applause)'

When in 1910 school inspectors visited 'the report spoke of the excellent corporate life that is developing in the school'.

Celia supported HB's philosophical position with her regular moral homilies to Christian virtue printed in the school magazines; On Contemplation, On Reading, Random Reflections, The Origin of Christmas Presents.

By summer 1914 the HBs, through hard work, a clearly enunciated vision and consistent devotion to the cause, had established in the small community of Wirksworth a successful school, approved by the school inspectors, with pupils and staff united and committed to a practical delivery of the proclaimed values. Lesley Northrop who joined the school in 1925 and stayed, a brilliant teacher, for 42 years, said it was a family school. As I read the magazine with its homely good humour the mutual affection and the obvious loyalty to the HBs I agreed wholeheartedly with this judgement.

But all was soon to be tested by the horrors of war.

The richness of life at Wirksworth Grammar School is vividly recorded in the pre-war magazines. These notes from 1908, the first year, illustrate a wide range of activities with school staff strongly involved.

### SCHOOL NOTES.

Term began on Wednesday, 16th September.

On Friday evenings there have been meetings in the school, at which Chess and Draughts have been assiduously cultivated. The head master gave a preliminary lesson or two on Chess, and since then the ancient game has won many adherents. There are now several very promising players in the school.

Two very keen meetings of the Debating Society have been held. At the first "Women's Suffrage" was the question before the house. It was ably advocated by Veronica Stafford in an excellent speech, and well backed up by May Weston. T. B. Askew headed the opposition in a series of forceful propositions, some of which he did not deign to prove, and he found a good seconder in J. W. Talbot. Mrs. Bay and Miss Kirkby supported the proposition. Hilda Buxton conclusively proved to her own satisfaction that woman's place was at home, and other speakers were Gladys Storey, Blanche Lovegrove, Florence Storey, Mr. Taylor, and R. A. Pace. The proposition was lost by a large majority—20 to 10 against—and once more the suffragettes will be disappointed.

The second meeting took the form of impromptu debates. After the house had observed a discreet silence on the Polar Exploration question (through want of knowledge); had decided that "mixed games" were good for girls, had determined that boys were not naturally savage animals, and also settled other questions, we came to the most attractive debate of the evening, viz.—"Whether a Water Scheme or a Sewerage Scheme was of the greater urgency in Wirksworth." There were several staunch adherents on both sides and the question was well debated. Ultimately the house decided that a water scheme was of the greater urgency.

As younger members are always urged to speak, it was a pleasing feature on this evening to observe the eagerness of Shaw ma. to speak. He tried to catch the Speaker's eye several times, and when his turn did come, made a good speech.

We have also had two Musical Evenings which have always been most enjoyable. There is a great deal of musical talent in the school, amongst the girls particularly. We hope these evenings will prove prominent features of future winter terms. The glee singers (consisting of Florence, Maud, and Gladys Storey, Gladys Fritchley, May Weston, Veronica Stafford, Hilda Buxton, Blanche Lovegrove), gave us several glees. Miss Kirkby, Winifred White, Annie Buxton, Muriel Slack and Florence Storey, favoured us with songs. Mrs. Hansen Bay, Hilda Buxton, T. B. Askew, and R. A. Pace gave us pianoforte selections. Veronica Stafford and Mr. Taylor recited, and the Head Master gave readings. Altogether they have been very pleasant evenings. Long may they continue!

There have been two paper chases this term. The first will long live in the memory of those who took part in it. The hares

## THE GREAT WAR

Boys and girls and their teachers broke up cheerfully at the end of the summer term 1914. The school had played the Old Boys in 'an exciting game' of cricket on 17th July with no thoughts of what awaited the school and the country when they returned in September. The changes in the mood of the nation when war began in August were immediately recognised at the school and alterations were made at once to the established pattern of school life. The sombre mood became darker as terms and years passed with no resolution; at first Old Boys volunteering, then casualty lists and the death toll as so many young men, young lads, who were vividly remembered as pupils at Wirksworth Grammar School were captured, wounded or killed.

The head and Mrs Bay fought with their customary energy to sustain morale, explaining the issues with Christian fervour, urging duty and patriotism and conveying what they truly believed - that the spirit of England would never be defeated.

In some ways, sadly, the school was defeated, because never would the pre-war carefree, happy life at WGS be restored. There would be too many ghosts for the Bays to throw themselves again into school life with the optimistic vigour they had summoned in their early years in Wirksworth.

I have gathered the following items from the first wartime magazine, published, as usual, at Christmas 1914.

In a modest way the school is doing what it can to help the country – the boys by rifle practice, in order to be ready should they be needed in later years, the girls by making garments for Belgian refugees.

Daily throughout the term the SOS signal has sounded on the bell at twelve noon, and the whole school has assembled for a very short service of prayer for our Nation and its allies in the Great War. (A list of intercessory prayers is added)

Shooting now forms a regular part of the school curriculum for the senior boys. Later Sgt. Instructor Hardy was hired as drill sergeant to conduct drill with the boys for twelve lessons.

We have had only two Musical Evenings this term; there has been a strong revival of interest (*no doubt encouraged by CHB*) in the good old sea songs of an earlier fighting period; The British Grenadiers, The National Anthems of the Allied Nations, Drake's Drum and Tipperary.

The fireworks on 5th November were cancelled and the money usually used for the celebration was donated to the local company of the Sherwood Foresters.

Speech day was cancelled and there was an informal prize giving. HB made an address, including, 'I feel very confident that the spirit is, as a whole, devout, patriotic and earnest. We discourage "slackers" here.'

A little present was sent to Pte Jas Buckley of Middleton from the boys and girls in the school in token of grateful respect for the valour with which he (like his glorious comrades) endured the awful retreat from Mons. He was badly wounded at the battle of the Aisne. The present consisted of a set of choice handkerchiefs (coloured, of course,) and a flint and steel lighter. He seemed much embarrassed, but very pleased.

The first war time edition includes a long piece (1,000 words) by CHB, justifying the war in support of Belgium 'a small neutral country invaded in wicked defiance of the laws of nations'.

Later she writes:

'What of the brave dead? We may, we must, weep for them; but we may never regret that they had the honour of dying the noblest death a man may die. There is only one thing to be said about them, and, however familiar it is, we must say it now:

"DULCE ET DECORUM EST PRO PATRIA MORI".

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Thirty two old boys are reported to be 'serving their country' with another ten in the spring edition 1915. R.P.Warren writes from his training camp near Bridlington. No Oxford and Cambridge letters; from the front – France, India, Palestine. The school gardens were turned over to vegetables.

The lunch time prayers always included intercession for those Old Boys at the front and the 12 o'clock bell was rung every day through the war.

As I read the following editions of the school magazine (published three times a year till 1918 then annually) I note that football, cricket, hockey and tennis continued, though there were fewer fixtures and shorter reports. Musical evenings survived, but the great Christmas extravaganzas seem to have stopped. 'gone are the days when great iced cakes, sweets and chrystalised fruits graced our table, – but if it is for England and duty, who cares?'

The head continued to lecture: on Trafalgar Day he spoke of the good work of the navy today and Elsie Witham sang The Death of Nelson. Other lantern lectures relating to the war included an update on the western front and the Work of Aircraft in Modern Warfare. CHB continued to publish her worthy reflections (Ung Dieu Ung Roy, On the Reflex of Faith) and her poems appear in most editions. A roll of service was included, reporting on the Old Boys who had signed on.

The first death of a soldier 'killed in action' is recorded, surprisingly not till July 1st 1916; Philip Harrison, aged nineteen, who had joined the Sherwood Foresters when he was seventeen. Thereafter deaths of former pupils come regularly, some with effusive notices. Each death was announced at the morning prayers, always remembered by those who were there as a solemn moment. In the 1920 magazine the Roll of Honour of those who 'gave their lives in the Great War' is recorded; twenty two in total with a request for information of any others not so far noticed.

WIRKSWORTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL  
ROLL OF HONOUR.

*Old Boys who are serving their Country in the Great War.*

<p>H. F. SEVERNE, Notts. &amp; Derby Regt.            J. B. SYMONDS, Notts. &amp; Derby Regt.            E. D. BROSTER, Medical Staff, R.N.            W. T. TAYLOR, Notts. &amp; Derby Regt.            C. W. TAYLOR, 2nd King Edward's Horse.            F. H. TAYLOR, Leicestershire Territorials.            B. A. TAYLOR, Public School Batt. Royal Fusiliers.            ARNOLD HALL, Notts. &amp; Derby Regt.            ANGUS HALL, Notts. &amp; Derby Regt.            R. A. PACE, Royal Field Artillery, Notts.            LEWIS BEESLEY, Optimists' National Corps.            ARNOLD BEESLEY, Beckenham Volunteer Corps.            A. KILLER, Grenadier Guards.            H. J. COCKCROFT, Halifax Territorials.            R. TWIGGE, Queen's Own Hussars, Oxford.            G. HALL, Notts. &amp; Derby Regt.            T. BREAKHILL, Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.            J. R. PITMAN, Notts. &amp; Derby Regt.</p>	<p>R. P. WARREN, Huntingdonshire Cycle Battalion.            J. B. BOWLER, Reserve Batt. Sherwood Foresters.            G. W. M. HARE, Reserve Batt. Sherwood Foresters.            J. BUTLER, Royal Munster Fusiliers.            W. FOX, Reserve Batt. Sherwood Foresters.            C. F. WHITE, Reserve Batt. Sherwood Foresters.            P. CLAY, Derbyshire Yeomanry.            A. DRABBLE, Public School Batt. Royal Fusiliers.            F. C. TOWNSEND, 9th Lancers.            E. BEESTON, King's Royal Rifles.            A. FRITCHLEY, Hawke's Bay Mounted Rifles, N.Z.            W. H. BOWMER, Public School Batt. Royal Fusiliers.            JAMES ALLSOPP, King's Royal Rifles.            S. POWKES, Royal Engineers.</p>
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It seems appropriate, at a time when the war and the loss of friends dominated the life of the school and its pupils, to record extracts from some tributes published in the magazine.

'We should like to say a word about J.R.Cash, who was the most recent "Old Boy" of the four. He was just the brave, straight, frank and kindly boy whom one might trust to take the right side in a quarrel, and do all that he could for it, and yet it is difficult to realise that he was old enough to take his share in the world's quarrel. It seems only yesterday that his pleasant fresh face was seen in the school and in the playing fields, and for all our pride in him we cannot but feel a pang at the heart when we think how young he was to make the great sacrifice.'

NOTE by the author. *J.R.Cash was serving in the Seaforth Highlanders.*

'The school was deeply grieved to to hear of the loss within a few weeks of each other of both the Fritchleys.

Bertram was shot by a sniper about a fortnight after he got out to France, and poor George was injured by a bursting shell, after he had borne his share in almost continuous fighting for months; he was brought to England and died in hospital.

When the news of Bertram's loss came the whole neighbourhood was much distressed.; he had proved to be an excellent young officer, and his magnificent cricket will long remain a tradition in the school and in his regiment; (perhaps no more beautiful young figure of an athlete can ever have been seen on the cricket ground than that of Bertram Fritchley, with his lightly set burnished-copper head and slender Greek lines;) but when the news of his brother's loss so soon followed it, it was very hard to feel the glory and honour of sacrifice more than the bitter regret and grief inevitable to the occasion.'

NOTES by the author. *The Fritchleys lived on Blind Lane, Wirksworth. Father was a plumber and decorator. There were two sons and a daughter, also at WGS, Gladys. In the last season pre-war, the summer of 1914, JB Fritchley, captain of cricket, scored 113 against Derby School, the only hundred recorded in the magazine (1908-20) and took in the season 26 wickets @ 6 runs average.*

You can imagine the feelings of the older boys, who were destined soon to be in service. as they learnt of the death of their young friends. Names are recorded on the memorial tablet in the school library.

I write nearly a hundred years after the first war, but I still feel a jarring sadness when I see the names of the Taylor brothers. As Wirksworth Cricket Club historian I researched the Taylor family and felt their loss. The family grew up in Hopton and later lived on Cromford Road, Wirksworth. The brothers, former pupils, all considerable cricketers, all four commissioned officers, volunteered at the beginning of the war.

B.A. 'Bart' Taylor (Royal Fusiliers) 'one of the pluckiest and most popular boys who ever belonged to the school', and C.W. Taylor (2nd King Edward's Horse), who had been a government officer in Africa, both died. F.H. (Leicestershire Territorials, then Sherwood Foresters) and W.T. (Notts & Derby Regiment, then Lancashire Fusiliers, later returning to his job as secretary of Derbyshire County Cricket Club for 52 years) both, though wounded, survived.

I can only imagine the pain in the family.

School life went on. In summer 1918, the magazine, edited by Celia reports.

The 'prisoner' money still goes to Pte. Ault in the form of much-needed food parcels.

We welcome with pride the birth of our cadet corps. Christmas 1917.

Our girls' drill and physical exercises were inspected on March 8th by Miss Audrey Ash of the Board of Education.

A good number of vegetables have been produced in the school gardens, but there are several people who might well be a little more enthusiastic about vegetable production.

Extracts from a letter written by B Briggs, serving in Palestine.

We have been saddened this term by the death of three O.W.s.

Even Celia in her editorial seemed depressed

'When we went to press at the end of last term we were going through a very anxious time.'

But she roused to proclaim

GOD SAVE THE KING

and may his enemies be brought to confusion!

And then suddenly in November it was over.

The 1920 July magazine is the last in the preserved sequence. 'We thankfully record a year of quiet work broken only by mild but agreeable distractions.'

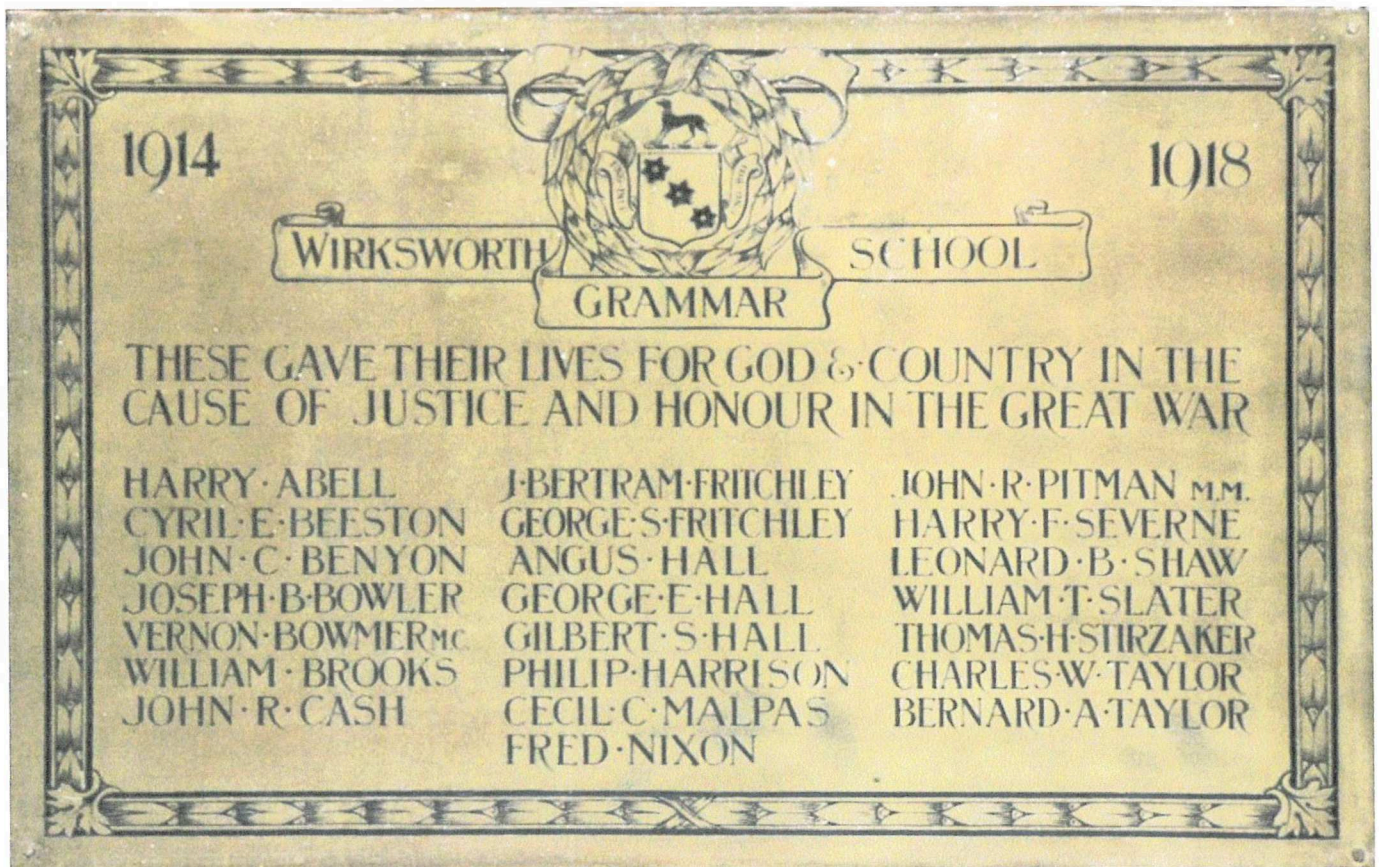
Speech Day was restored to its full glory, there was a full sports day and the town Well Dressing Festival was revived, in which for the first time the school took a share. We have had many Musical Evenings, 'we had a beautiful display of fireworks, for the first time since 1913'. The gardens round the playground have been considerably better this year. P. Slater wrote from India.

'An old pupil association has lately been formed to be known as Old Wirksworthians.'

Gradually the school was returning to its established rhythm; of course, it could never be the same again.

The magazine of July 1920 closed with a record of the Roll of Honour.





The School War Memorial for the Great War, now in the School Library.

## GOVERNORS and the 1916 FINANCIAL CRISIS

The governors are central to the next stage of the story and most of this section comes from reading their minutes, lengthy, accurate and written by hand, through these years.

### ANTHONY GELL'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL FOUNDATION GOVERNORS 1908

Mr Charles Wright, chairman; owner of the massively profitable wine merchants based at the Vaults. A generous donor to many causes and governor for 43 years.

Mr Henry Walthall Wathall, J.P., gentleman landowner, living at Alton Manor.

Canon Gem, Vicar of Wirksworth.

Colonel Henry Pole Gell, of Hopton Hall, member of the eponymous Gell family, 'living on independent means'.

Alderman George H. Wheatcroft, owner of Haarlem Mill, the biggest employer in the town, a firm Congregationalist.

Mr Charles E.B. Bowles, of Nether House, antiquarian, editor of the Derbyshire Archaeological Journal, living on own means. J.P.

Mr W. Sealey Fisher, solicitor, living on North Street.

Mr S.F.A. Hurt, of the ancient Hurt family, industrialists and landowners from Alderwasley Hall.

Dr Arthur Broster, Medical Practitioner, Coldwell Street.

Before I examine the tumultuous financial crisis of 1916 something needs to be said about governors, whom Lauritz endeavoured to cultivate in his early honeymoon days. I have listed with brief notes the gentlemen who, in 1908, formed that worthy body; all local men of distinction, but content to be at a distance from the main tasks of the school. They were stolidly respectable, wealthy representatives of the local ruling class. There were no women at this stage, though Mrs Gem, wife of the vicar, joined later. I doubt any had been educated in the town. They had great goodwill towards the school and contributed financially, but they were not a group obviously in tune with the educational issues emerging at the time. The composition of the governing body changed little over the years. I sense a growing tension with the Head. The following notes arise from a study of the relevant years in the governors' minute books, but the formal reporting of resolutions, discussion usually omitted, leaves plenty of room for interpretation.

Before Hansen Bay arrived governors were involved in 1908 in a wonderful farce relating to the formal opening of the school. They resolved, at fairly short notice, to invite the Duke of Devonshire, who had laid the foundation stone at a great ceremony in 1907, with the Duke of Rutland and Lord Scarsdale as alternatives, in that order of preference. When all three declined there was panic. They invited Lord Kerry the MP, but he was on holiday, so they asked one of the governors Mr Walthall of Alton Manor. He too refused and Canon Gem, the vicar of Wirksworth, was called upon. He tactfully suggested he might be able to find a distinguished churchman to perform the opening ceremony; if not he would do it himself. Canon Gem was successful and The Lord Bishop of Derby, (not realising, I am sure, that he was a late fifth choice) opened the school in September 1908 and 'gave a learned and most instructive address'. You sense from the minutes the uncomprehending despair that none of the local aristocracy were willing to break their long summer holidays and come to unfashionable Wirksworth.

Studying the minutes I realised that the governors had important responsibilities for the Anthony Gell almshouses as well as the school. They saw the school, run by the Head Master without their interference, as an adjunct to their main purpose. When HB arrived school matters might appear at the end of a long meeting agenda which was dominated by issues of land and rents and the allocation of flats to the aged poor: the anti-social behaviour of one ancient resident caused governors much trouble. HB managed to get them to reserve a section for school matters and for this item he was invited to attend.

### MONEY

Anyone studying the history of Wirksworth Grammar School through the nineteenth century realises that the financial position of the school was precarious. W.G.S. was independent and money for the school came from two sources: fees charged to pupils (£6-7-6 a term in 1916) and income from the property and investments held by the Anthony Gell foundation charity. As we move into the twentieth century the county council was giving a subsidy, a capitation fee for each pupil (I am not clear of the amount), but this had been reduced in 1914, perhaps as a wartime measure. The authority was asked in 1916 by WGS with both Ashbourne and Lady Manners governors to increase the sum by £10. Governors were obliged to give seven free Foundation places each year by examination and county scholarships augmented the number of fee payers. Always the Wirksworth head was poorly paid; usually they made up the salary by taking in boarders or by holding a place in the church as curate to one of the local parishes. There were no pensions and none of them made a fortune from their work. In the 1870s Harris seems to have died in poor circumstances. The Hubberstys and Brett married well and Collyns was a puritan individual who relished his later existence as secretary of the national temperance group. Berridge, HB's predecessor, had worked as a professional schoolmaster with no affluent connections and his family lived later in reduced circumstances in East Anglia. There was no security to follow years of poorly paid labour in the classroom. Both Berridge and Hansen Bay took this up with the governors and HB gained a superannuation fund with a contribution by the governing body.

It is hard to calculate the income from the charity – there is a major research project here for the interested historian. A fascinating task would be to trace the extensive areas of land in Wirksworth owned through the centuries by the trustees. In 2013 it would be worth a fortune! I notice that they spent much time pursuing tenants who were unable or unwilling to pay their rent on time and many hours were occupied administering and maintaining the properties, scattered round the Wirksworth area. They also had to run the almshouses, which as old buildings often needed repair.

It cost a great deal to maintain the fabric of the school. With an additional school building from 1908 expanding the built property and a demanding headteacher the physical maintenance of the building, the grounds and facilities increased. Science was being taught in the new laboratory by the Head Master. When the financial crisis arrived in the war one governor asked that the head should report on how many children had taken up scientific careers, implying that it was an expensive (and unnecessary) addition to the curriculum which could be cut without disadvantage to the school. That comment indicates the difficulties faced by the governing body and their lack of understanding of the real world. Dr Broster had resigned as a governor because ‘it was impossible to keep in touch with school affairs.’

The major expense to the trustees in running the school was the payment of staff. As there were no national pay rates governors fixed the salaries according to what they could afford and so paid their teachers poorly. They had already compared pay-scales with other Derbyshire schools and found, to their disappointment that they were not over-paying.

They were running the school on a shoestring and in 1909 having overspent by £1,553 they asked the Board of Education for help. At one point the head reported that Derbyshire County Council might not take up all their free scholarship places – if they did not he would have to dismiss a member of staff. The county granted £18 to make up the shortfall. He had to ask for money to buy desks – four at £4 each. On arrival HB advertised the school in local papers – sadly I have not seen any of these. ‘Mr Bay had extensively advertised the school in several papers and he asked for pecuniary assistance in this.’ The bill of £10-8-0 was voted for payment by the governors. Did they expect him to pay? Later they stopped all press advertisement on financial grounds. The staff were not well paid and several times Celia refers pointedly in the magazine to a member of staff leaving because they could earn more elsewhere. This would not have pleased attentive governors.

The work of the governors was largely undertaken by the Clerk, Mr A.J. Marsden – in the minutes he is often reported as inspecting a property or negotiating a land sale. The family business was in auctioneering and printing. He was paid, but must have spent many voluntary hours on much unrewarding work. He, Mr Bowles and Mr Fisher lived and worked close together on North Street and I see them as the core of the active voluntary governors. In 1916 the clerk reported to governors a deficit on the year of £311-14-5 and indicated the need for serious economies in expenditure.

One aspect of the school finances that repeatedly caused concern was the non-payment of school fees and several times governors were asked to remit charges. They were reluctant to do so, though their attitude softened during the war when a father was 'called to the colours'. When Derbyshire reduced the number of scholarships the governors were concerned and pressed hard for an increase both in the number of scholarships awarded and the level of capitation allowed to the school. I have looked carefully for the numbers on roll. These are recorded proudly in the school magazine during the pre-war years, from 1908, when the school was expanding steadily. I suspect that as the war began the numbers dropped – significantly the magazine no longer reports them. Governors asked the head to give a regular update on numbers in the school – but, frustratingly, they failed to include them in the governors' minutes.

Staff were paid each half term. The schedule for half term in 1912 in pounds shillings and pence follows. Multiply by six for the annual salary. At one point there is reference to the head having a capitation allowance. It is hard to pin this down. The status (and fees) of boarders is also not clear.

The Headmaster	£25	
Mrs Hansen Bay	£16-13-4	
Miss Kirby	£20.00	
Mr Taylor	£18-6-8	
Mr Warren	£18-6-8	
Ashover	£2.00	student teacher
House	£3-6-8	part time art/craft teacher, I think

HB fought hard to get more money for both Kirby & Taylor, who were his two strongest allies. Both received a £5 increase. I believe Miss Kirby lived in school house. When they both left in 1913 the governors authorised expenditure to a maximum of £220 per annum on two new teachers.

HB endeavoured to please and educate his masters! He published a school prospectus and erected an honours board, which survives as an historic record on the wall in the Gell area. From 1909 the school, with Celia in the van, produced an excellent and expensively produced school magazine. Reading it a hundred years later it throbs with vibrant optimism. HB wrote an annual Head Master's Report to the governors. Sadly none of these have survived and there is no detail in the minutes of the issues he raised. The report was received at first as 'very satisfactory', hardly great enthusiasm, and after three years 'the report was very interesting and gratifying'. One year HB asked for permission to sublet the school house during the summer holiday! Not only was the school struggling to pay its way – so was the Head. You didn't teach in Wirksworth to grow rich. HB also floated the idea of setting up a preparatory department – I am not sure where they would have been taught. After delayed consideration the idea was approved by governors, I suspect with some reluctance, but by then HB had changed his mind.

On a happier note I am sure the governors approved of the inauguration of a formal Speech Day each autumn, with governors providing some prizes and HB asking for additional funds from the foundation account; a rise from £12 to £15. Distinguished visitors presented the prizes. Governors were warmly welcomed to the summer sports day and provided cups for the winners. They joined Mrs Hansen Bay, who, as a games refusenik (I have pondered the word and wonder how she would have responded to that description) kept clear of the field and organised the teas. I contemplate how the governors found Celia with her metropolitan, artistic sensibilities. They may have been uncertain in some respects, but her profound and overt patriotism, exhibited passionately throughout the school when the war began, would have won their approval.

When in 1916 governors confronted a financial big hole they took amazing, drastic action.

The initial proposal in governors' meetings – remember the head only attended if invited - was that the number of classes be reduced from four to three with the three top years being combined. Early leaving, from the age of fourteen with no examinations taken, was a strong factor, especially during the war. Reduction in classes and an increase in numbers would produce a saving on staffing, but by cutting the number of teachers the range of subjects and teaching skills would be reduced. I read these desperate ideas with some sympathy, but with anger at the confused state the government of the school had fallen into. Governors were unable to reduce the number of foundation scholarships because they were required by statute to offer seven each year to children in the parishes of Wirksworth and Kirk Ireton. There was animated discussion before a child from Carsington could be awarded a free place, and the areas eligible for a free place by the charity were extended to the Wirksworth area normally served by the school. It was also reported that the train service after school might be cut, to the disadvantage of recruitment.

My cruel analysis is that the finances were poorly managed. There was no budget and the head asked for payment once the bills came in. Hansen Bay seems not to have been a man who was interested in accounts and he had no clerical or administrative assistance. He was rebuked by governors for receiving fees from parents and not passing the money on. I rate him as financially chaotic.

In 1912 governors had acknowledged the need for a closer eye on the money by forming a finance committee and they met about monthly to review the position. Although they still produced no budget, they insisted that the Head Master requisition for any expenditure. Some system was being imposed. With a deficit in the financial year 1915 and no likelihood of financial support from either the Board of Education or the county council, governors voted to ask the Wirksworth Urban District Council for a grant. They were turned down twice.

Eventually in April 1916 the finance committee met and summoned a full governors' meeting. It began on an acrimonious note concerning the head's failure to pay rates on

school house as he had reluctantly agreed: ‘.....although five applications had been made to him. The Head Masters attention having been drawn to the matter he promised to send cheque without delay.’ HB was not present.

The next extract from the minutes marks the critical moment

**‘RESOLVED That in view of the Financial position the Committee recommended that the Salaries of the Staff be overhauled and in view of this notice is given to the Head Master to terminate his appointment,’**

*The clerk was instructed to write to the Head Master and dates were fixed for two further meetings to ratify the decision.*

Were they serious? They must have seen that HB could not accept a reduction in salary. Was it a blunt effort to remove him?

In the depths of the money crisis an appeal was made by governors for financial support. The list of donors was published in the school magazine.

### THE SCHOOL FINANCES.

We have much pleasure in appending a list of the names of the subscribers who have so generously come forward to clear off the debt on the school finances. We can assure them that their generosity will be ever remembered and that their names will be treasured among the records of the school.

£ s. d.	£ s. d.
G. H. Wheatcroft, Esq. 50 0 0	<i>Brought forward</i> 206 4 0
C. E. B. Bowles, Esq. 10 0 0	W. J. Harrison, Esq. 1 0 0
John Hunter, Esq. ... 5 0 0	Rev. T.B. Charlesworth 1 1 0
J. B. E. Blackwall, Esq. 5 0 0	A. E. Broster, Esq. ... 3 3 0
Mrs. Blackwall ... 5 0 0	Dr. Geo. Harvey ... 3 0 0
A.L.Jenkyn-Brown, Esq. 1 1 0	Mrs. Hare ... 1 1 0
H. A. Hubbersty, Esq. 20 0 0	R. Storey, Esq. ... 1 1 0
C. Wright, Esq. ... 10 0 0	W. Sealy Fisher, Esq. 1 1 0
Mrs. C. E. B. Bowles 5 0 0	H. W. Snow, Esq. ... 2 13 0
Miss E. E. Arkwright 20 0 0	Mr. & Mrs. A. J. Marsden 2 13 0
Mrs. Withiel ... 2 0 0	F. C. Arkwright, Esq. 10 0 0
Col. Walthall ... 10 0 0	Rev. A.C. Hornby Hall
G. J. Ogdon, Esq. ... 3 3 0	<i>(as an acknowledgment</i>
Major & Mrs. Griggs 10 0 0	<i>of the services rendered</i>
G. S. Marple, Esq. ... 50 0 0	<i>at Turnditch by the</i>
	<i>Headmaster) ... 10 0 0</i>
<i>Carried forward</i> £ 206 4 0	£ 242 17 0

## GOVERNORS and the HEAD

How had it come to this? Let us try to trace the steadily deteriorating relationship between the head and the governors. I found a number of points of disagreement from 1912 until the confrontation in 1916. The decline in trust between head and governors, especially the clerk, emerges as a critical factor. I sense that HB and Celia were outsiders in this close, 'establishment' governing body and the strains showed. The line of disputes recorded below is saddening. The final crunch seems inevitable.

The first sign of trouble came in 1912 when the Head Master complained in writing about the actions of the clerk. This was Mr A.J. Marsden, (paid £30 per annum) long-serving, much-respected and the man who did the work, so a formal complaint was serious. Frustratingly there are no details of the point at issue. The matter was deferred from the governors' meeting; no doubt for compromise and reconciliation outside the formal gathering and at the following meeting the matter was declared resolved with 'no resolution'.

Soon afterwards a committee of governors was set up to review religious education in the school. This strikes me as odd, especially in view of HB's Christian commitment. However, the Congregationalist Wheatcroft, renowned for his fervour, was on the committee, so I wonder if the issue was denominational.

Perhaps the less than supportive response to HB's annual reports reflects an unhappiness even from his early days. I am sure the long-serving governors were puzzled by some of HB's enthusiastic new-broom innovations. He was a strong-minded individual and I guess he and Celia ruffled local feathers. The clerk was himself well-known in town for his fierce temper and loudly expressed views. Conflict seems inevitable.

There was another bad moment in 1912 when 'The Head Master having made a personal statement to the Governors no action was taken.' The cause of this personal statement remains mysterious, but it must have been significant to become a formal minute.

In 1913 C.E.B. Bowles became Chairman. I suspect he was a sharper individual, a neighbour and ally of the clerk.

Hansen Bay believed, as did all headmasters, that it was his job to run the school. Governors may provide the money and be impressive and decorative at formal school occasions, but they had no right to interfere. Always money was a tension between HB and his governors and it is clear to me that his relationship with the clerk, who managed the purse strings, had broken down. A.J. Marsden was a punctilious keeper of accounts; HB was not, neither in school nor in his private affairs. There was also the personal involvement of HB's family in the school. He had five children; his wife was working there and, though they had a nanny, as they grew to school age it was specially convenient (and inexpensive) to involve them in school life. HB asked that his children be granted a free place.



From the minutes in 1913:

‘The Head Master made application to the Governors that his children should be placed upon the Free list of the school and no fees be charged for their tuition.’

The request was adjourned to the following meeting (no doubt for backstairs discussion) when governors declared that ‘they cannot entertain the application.’

It sounds a bit mean – perhaps they could have remitted some fee, but by then they were not in the mood to offer favours.

Later Phyllis Hansen Bay, who had been attending the school was removed aged 12 years 3 months - to her aunt’s school at Worcester. It was discovered that no fees had been paid and she was not on the official school ‘list’, though she appears in the Speech Day prize list. No notice of leaving had been given. HB was told it must not happen again.

When in 1914 he applied for an increase in salary, the Finance Committee ‘does not see the way to recommend to governors to alter the scale of remuneration of the Head Master.’

From the beginning the school house was another *casus belli*. The Head, who paid no rent, expected all his expenses of maintenance and redecoration to be met. It was agreed by governors that the house be re-decorated every five years and the head should pay two thirds. He fought unsuccessfully for one third. Rates and income tax became issues. Before he arrived HB had to fight a battle about the school house. He held the accommodation without payment, but I am not clear about boarding arrangements which are never mentioned in governors’ minutes. His predecessor, Berridge, claimed to have improved the building and asked HB to pay him £38 for the work. HB refused and after much discussion the governors agreed to pay Berridge off, bestowing a testimonial at the same time. Nineteenth century heads had no pension rights, but the mood of the 1900s with the People’s Government was changing and governors were compelled to make some superannuation arrangements for HB.

In 1915 Mr Goulding, a parent, had written several letters of complaint. Mr Hansen Bay ‘protested against the governors interfering against the internal management of the school’. The Head Master and Mrs Bay ‘were called for explanations which they gave’.

Later a governor, who was on one of the regular governors’ visits, found that Mrs. Bay was not with her class and was teaching them at home, because she was unwell. The governor, reasonably, considered this irregular and reported to the governing body. The Head explained that no reserve teacher was available and they had no money to employ one.

Another disagreement. 'The Clerk produced and read the correspondence which had passed between the Chairman and the Board of Education relative to the Head Master undertaking clerical duties (*it means church duties*) on Sundays during term time in which the Board stated that in the special circumstances they would initiate no objection to the proposed payment to the Head Master during the period of the War for clerical work done on Sundays for incumbents actually absent on Military duty.' Surely men of goodwill could have resolved this minor dispute.

This was a long list of complaints, growing all the time and one was serial. The governors repeatedly asked HB to render accounts for the library and sports funds. I assume some money was collected for library fines, almost petty cash, perhaps for purchase of books, and as match fees with some refreshment expenses at school games. These accounts were not produced despite repeated demands from governors: 'the balance sheets were not at hand'. HB was clearly casual and at fault; more evidence of his vagueness in financial matters.

## AFTER THE EXPLOSION

It is impossible for me to imagine the feelings of the Hansen Bays when they received the notice of dismissal, a bolt from the blue is the cliché. After 'you can't do this to me' HB pondered his tactics. He had no headteachers' union to fight his cause – I am sure he, anyway, believed such organisations were dangerous socialism. But, of course he fought back.

The next move was that a school inspector, F.C.A. Traves Esq., was consulted and subsequently there was a full inspection of the school with three additional inspectors. We have considerable detail in the governors' minutes, but not the full written report. It is important that the school had been praised in the 1910 inspection, so HB must have felt on safe ground. The big difference was that two lively and competent young teachers, Kirby and Taylor, had left and their replacements, half the assistant staff, were young, inexperienced and less favoured by the head.

The results of the inspection were minuted in the summer term 1916 (and are included in an appendix) and I quote key passages from this startling document with the final advice in bold by me.

'The Inspectors and the Governors had a long conference upon the teaching staff & the organisation at the School and the following is a summary of the interview.

The Head Master is quite satisfactory, is a good teacher and doing the Science work well.

Mrs Bay is inefficient as teacher and not satisfactory for her post as Head Mistress. It is not desirable that this post should be filled by the wife of the Head Master.

Mr Warren is dull with no life in his method of teaching. He is anxious to improve, but is not likely to do so, as he has no aptitude for his profession.

Miss MacPherson is too young and inexperienced for her post. She is capable however and is likely to improve.

**The teaching staff generally is poor and unsatisfactory, but a change is not likely to improve it unless higher Salaries were offered, and during the period of the War no change is advised.**

The letter from (*I think this should be 'to'*) the Board of Education with respect to the Forms is withdrawn and no change as regards the present teaching of the four forms will be expected.

SIGNED Charles E.B. Bowles.'

In summary the advice was that, though the situation was dire, a lack of money and the pressure of the war made it unlikely there could be immediate improvement. Governors had to wait for the 'termination of the war'. The reduction to three forms would not take place. HB was safe, but badly damaged. The question remains. Was this a genuine and misguided attempt to save money or had the governors finally got so fed up with HB's individualistic regime and his vague financial incompetence that they really wanted to get rid of him in the midst of a desperate war? Perhaps, as often in life, there was a mix of motives. HB's strength was with his pupils, whose testimonials ring true and affectionate down the years: a good, humane schoolmaster, perhaps not a great head, imperfect in his administration, but one misjudged by an austere and out-of-touch governing body. Were any of them parents of children at the school?

The issue of the head's salary remained. Governors proposed that the Head receive £310 per annum with no extras. The extras included his capitation grant, variable but about £150 per year, and unspecified overtime claims (which had not been granted). In addition he would have full responsibility for school house, including rates and taxes and must leave the internal decoration (papering, painting and plastering) in the state in which he had taken it on. This was in effect a reduction in salary.

In 1916 Britain faced the horrors of the Somme. This stupidity in 1916 at Wirksworth Grammar School was as nothing. HB was sustaining the school through hard times with determined support for the war effort. Of course things could have been better, but good teachers were hard to find with so many men at the front. Above all there was not enough money to run the school properly. Sensible governors would have helped him – perhaps providing some outside clerical help and encouraged him to keep going. I blame both sides for their intransigence. I am sure HB was a difficult customer, but I see no effort to resolve any unhappy situation by talking and understanding. The visiting inspectors managed a fraught situation honestly and skilfully. The school survived. Warren soon went off to war. I wonder if the death of the previous chairman of Governors in 1914, Mr Charles Wright, known and respected as a gentleman, a great community benefactor, led to a more confrontational mood. The management of the crisis reflects well on none of the participants.

Would it be too harsh a judgement to assert that there was no possibility that the trustees with their limited income could afford to run the school? The financial difficulties were on-going and could only be resolved by the state pumping more money (more pupils and more control) into the school. This was the eventual solution, but the community had to wait until 1945.

## 1917 SLOW RECOVERY

Following the interview with the school inspectors governors faced reality. Their notion that the school could save money by cutting down to three forms was buried by the inspectors. Governors had learnt a lot; above all, the good news that there might soon be state money to support the school. The Head Master would stay and his wife with him. Governors decided they could not afford to increase salaries yet. Despite the bad reports, if the teachers wanted to remain at the school they should, since the school, considering the shortage of manpower during the war, could fall into a worse position; with no money available real improvement must await 'the termination of hostilities'. Soon Warren was summoned to the army and left. It was not straightforward to replace him and the first candidate turned the job down. Eventually 'Miss Walter of Southgate Road, London', was appointed at a salary of £120 a year, rather more than governors had wanted to pay.

The payment of teachers' was a national concern, not just a Wirksworth problem. Inspectors, who advised the governors, would have known of national developments. In 1909 a graduate master in grammar school might earn £120 and by 1914 the average teacher's pay was £129 for a man, £96 for a woman. In 1917 the Exchequer increased their contribution to teacher salaries. H.A.L. Fisher who was President of the Board of Education and introduced the 1918 Education Act (which raised the school leaving age to fourteen), set up a committee of inquiry and by 1921 the famous Burnham committee reported, introducing basic scales for teachers' pay with, in addition, superannuation and schools would be funded in order to deliver these changes. Miss Walter was an early beneficiary of these policies.

The increase in the grant from the Board of Education allowed salaries to be improved at last.

### December 1917 raised to: increase in brackets.

Head Master	£350 (+ 40);
Mrs HB	£120 (+10);
Miss Walter	£140 (+20);
Miss McPherson	£110 (+15).

An amendment that the ten pounds be not paid to Mrs Hansen Bay was defeated only by the Chairman's casting vote!

A genuine effort was now made by governors to understand and control school expenditure. The affairs of the almshouses were relegated to the end of the meeting. In the governors' minutes there is an interesting note about a public appeal and Mr Wheatcroft set the example with a donation of £50. I find no further reference to the appeal in the minutes, but in the school magazine in Easter 1917 there are effusive thanks for the generous donors 'who came forward to clear off the debt on the school finances'. £242.17.0 was raised and names of subscribers with amounts, none matching Mr Wheatcroft's, were published.

Coming to terms with their financial expenditure governors applied, unsuccessfully, to the Board of Education to reduce the number of free scholarship places. The head now had to submit a requisition for expenditure in advance and governors took over from the head control of both the library and sports funds. The stationery fund, run by the head, perhaps at private profit, was brought under governors' control. A. J. Marsden now bought the exercise books. The magazine, an expensive production, would be published once a year, not every term. Speech Day prize money was reduced and no pupil was allowed to win more than two prizes. Pressure was exerted on non-fee payers and those who left early without notice (a £2 fine) to meet their obligations; the clerk was frequently authorised to 'take proceedings'.

Alas! 'The attention of the Head Master was drawn to the payment of the school fees of his children and of the boarders and he promised to give the matter his attention.' This may not be the first complaint about his children's fees, but it is the only time boarders are mentioned in all these minutes. I am not sure how many there were (very few, probably), but the tradition of the boarding wing operating independently as a headmagisterial perk, seems to have continued.

The other aspect was to look at income and to examine the foundation estate, land owned by the trust, and to see what could be sold at a good price. Bull Hill Farm at Kirk Ireton went for £2,000 and land at Four Lanes End for £3,895. There were other minor sales and a determined pursuit of rents.

Generally as the war ended the financial situation improved with increased grants from the government and improved capitation fees available from Derbyshire in 1921, provided the school adhered to the county pay scales. From 1922 estimates were required by the county education committee and, to my surprise, they approved the first one, a deficit of £1,060.

Though we are emerging from financial stringency into more prosperous times the unhappy 'feud' (surely the right word) with the Head Master lingered on. The pay of the staff had been increased and a stable team had been established in support of the HBs: Miss Walter, Miss Barker and Mr Young, who was appointed in 1921 and served loyally for many years. There were fewer discussions about pay, but the governors felt no confidence in HB's financial reliability.

## HARE AND HOUNDS.

RUN TO KIRK IRETON.

March 16th, 1917.

On Wednesday afternoon, at 3 o'clock, three hares, E. Mason, L. Doxey and I started out from school to take a message to Kirk Ireton Rectory, and twelve hounds were to start five minutes after, to try and prevent the message from being delivered. We ran along the shortest road, that is from the end of Derby road past the Miller's Green, until we came to the bottom of Wapentake. Then we went into the fields, ran across two diagonally, and arrived near Alton Hall; climbed over several gates and walls, crossed a few more fields, and went through a wood. After leaving the wood we came into several fields which lay before the Rectory. In the corner of one field there was a stile which opened into a small lane. By going a short distance up this lane we could get to the entrance of the Rectory, but from the fields we could climb over a wall on to the lawn. Thinking the hounds, which had come the shortest way, would probably have arrived, we decided to climb over the wall, but at that moment a large number of hens came scuttering down the lane, so we concluded the hounds were coming down that way. As the other two hares had the messages, they climbed quickly over the wall, whilst I pretended to hide. By my doing this several hounds caught and searched me, thus giving the other hares a better chance. They had just gone inside the house when the rest of the hounds arrived at the door. The hares escaped through the drawing-room window, with the answer, and I joined them in the field below. When half-way through the field, we saw two more hounds coming towards us. We then lay in hole behind a large mound and they went past without seeing us. When we went into the wood again we saw six more hounds, so we turned back, and managed to get into the village without being caught.

H. BEESTON.

Hare & Hounds 1917: a traditional race, now extinct.

Before peace could break out a steady stream of minor disputes is recorded, a sign that mutual confidence was still missing.

There was the ongoing disagreement about payment for setting, supervising and marking the scholarship entry exams. One year the scholarship exams, run by the head, were held on a Saturday in the holidays with no reason given and to strong posthumous disapproval by governors.

In 1917 the head asked for a stationery grant to pay for 'his voluminous correspondence'. Governors asked whom he was writing to in his 'voluminous correspondence'. Subsequently a governors' resolution: 'The governors do not consider it is within the province of the Head Master to deal with the Board of Education and if it is necessary to communicate with the Board communication to be addressed direct'. [sic]

HB asked in 1918 for a war bonus to be paid to him and his wife. This was not granted, but in July 1919 Mr Wheatcroft proposed that Head Master's salary be increased by £50. The proposal found no seconder.

There was a dispute post-war about uniforms for the school cadet force which had recently been established. The boys drilled and paraded in school clothes, so the head requested that governors pay for uniforms. While the governing body approved of cadets they were uncertain about spending money. Having consulted Ashbourne and other schools they declared that no money was available.

Later in 1923 HB asked for a flag pole and typewriter. The typewriter was granted.

### JOY DAY.

On July 19th (Joy Day), there was a very good procession through the town. The Grammar School sent a dray, (kindly lent by Mr. Weston), in the decoration of which many old boys kindly helped. It was drawn by two fine horses, (kindly lent by Mr. Degge), and upon it was a large allegorical group. In it Peace (Letty Hatchett) was supported by Britannia (Edna Parker) with trident, breast-plate, shield and helmet complete and France (Gwendoline Williams, dressed as Joan of Arc with a tall sword and wearing full armour). Belgium in scarlet and yellow and black (Kathleen Hansen Bay) knelt on one knee before France, crowned with laurels and holding a sheathed sword. The British Lion held the chain which bound prostrate Germany between his teeth. At the rear of the car were Italy (Marie Fell), Serbia (Dorothy Lovegrove), Japan (Dorothy Ruddock) and America (Florence Fox). All looked exceedingly well, and Britannia's real brass helmet shone resplendantly, but *the* favourite of the crowd was undoubtedly the lion.

A large banner, which bore the words, PAX et VICTORIA LAUS DEO, was carried by Hilderley and Haworth, and other trophies were also borne. The girls walked two and two wearing white dresses and garlands of flowers, and carrying tall staves from which hung ropes of roses.

Altogether it was at once a festive and a highly significant little display.

.Joy Day 1919: a town celebration.

The first sign of an armistice with the head came in 1918 when the governors congratulated the Head Master upon 'the extremely satisfactory state of the work during the past year'. His annual reports had not previously received such warm approval. In 1920 with county pay scales in operation the head was being paid an annual salary of £475 with free accommodation in school house and a further increase of £50 on 1st August 1923. I note a governors' oddity in 1923: resolve that 'the summer house, formerly the property of the Head Master, becomes the property of the governors.'

In 1922 Charles Eyre Bradshaw Bowles, who had served as chairman for eleven years retired and his place was taken by The General, Brigadier General Charles Walthall. A man with a distinguished war record, known locally as a 'real gentleman', perhaps he managed the head and his concerns more happily. He would certainly not have wished to interfere. The General held the post of chairman till 1952.



By 1924 governors were planning to buy the Hannages, adjacent to the school grounds, a significant investment in building a very good sports ground for the school. HB had been 'complimented' by governors on his annual report, so morale at Wirksworth Grammar School seemed happier and more confident.



THE HEADMASTER AND MRS. HANSEN BAY.

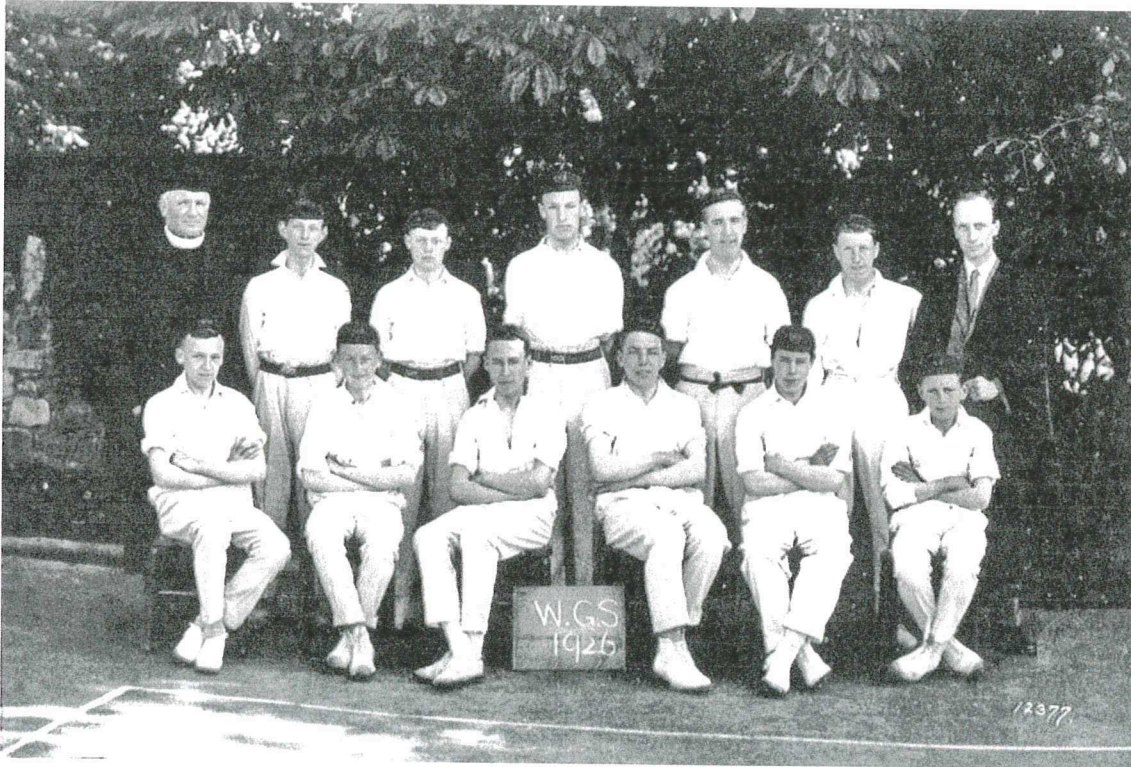
## CODA in TRANQUILLITY

From the mid-twenties the relationship between the head and his governing body was noticeably warmer. One of the causes of tension had been addressed and the salaries of both the teachers and the head had been significantly improved. HB was now paid £100/12/6 per half term, about six hundred pounds a year. The management of the money was better organised, with detailed accounts presented regularly to the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Now estimates were required from the governing body each year by the county Education Committee and a 'deficit grant' seems to have enabled governors to balance the books. I notice that many of the bills were challenged. Even HB was getting organised, asking governors for permission to appoint someone to help with clerical work. He later reported that 'he had engaged a boy called Wilson to assist him in Clerical Work at the school at a salary of 10/- (ten shillings) a week.' Approved by the governors. Who was this boy? What were his skills? Clarity in financial matters was improved by the decision to separate the almshouses from the school accounts, agreed by the Charity Commission in October 1926. Meetings were now restricted to school affairs.

The major expenditure by governors, using money raised from sale of trustees' property, was the purchase of the Hannages from Mr Marple, who at first asked for £1,400 but was negotiated down to £1,000, completed in 1925, a vital investment for the future of the school. £350 was spent on fencing. Later the Education Committee paid £12 per annum for an area of the Hannages to be used by the elementary school. But soon the clerk reported 'considerable trespass and damage was being done upon the bottom part of the Hannage.' Later 'Mr Hawley's pony was trespassing on the playing fields.'

One annoying financial issue related to parents not paying the school fees, which were due a term in advance, and their reluctance to met the penalty charged for early leaving. On entry parents agreed to send their children to Wirksworth Grammar School for five years, but with money short and the school leaving age raised to fifteen a number of parents broke their conditions and some asked for remission of fees. These parents were pursued, some even through the courts, most by a threatening letter from the clerk, who also sent letters about absentees. On one page of minutes I found seven cases. One parent asked to pay money due in six instalments of £2. Governors resolved that in future when parents signed the entrance agreement they should be given a copy and the key phrase about 'penal clauses should be printed in heavy type.' This was an understandable, but bureaucratic, response to a sensitive, social and economic problem.

The question of the preparatory unit arose regularly and the Hon. Mrs Gell, newly appointed in 1928 to the governing body, was immediately a strong proponent. HB in mellow maturity seems, unusually, to have taken a neutral stance and governors were wary of further expenditure. When they learnt HB was leaving, they took the opportunity to delay, so that the new head's opinion could be considered.



Cricket 1926: Note Mr Young on the right.



Hockey Team 1926: Miss Northrop on right.

## Hansen Bay: guide, counsellor and friend

THE school magazine for 1929 began on a "somewhat sorrowful note" — saying farewell to a long-serving headmaster, the Rev. L. Hansen Bay, and his wife, Celia.

The head had taken up his appointment 21 years previously and the magazine commented:

"None of us at present can imagine what school will be like without them, for ever since the present buildings were erected — all the time that our school has been a mixed one — it has only known one headmaster."

Mr Bay's interest in his pupils never ended. "In work at school or after we have left school, he has always been our guide, counsellor and friend."

The magazine also paid tribute to the head's wife.

"Mrs Bay's place will never be filled in quite the same way and our sorrow at losing her is deepened when we remember that she has worn herself out in our service."

The head and his wife, in a farewell message, referred to many happy memories during 21 years of "strenuous work together". They concluded:



■ L. Hansen Bay, his wife, Celia, and a group of pupils in the mid-1920s.

*Goodbye, Boys and Girls of the School;*

*Goodbye, OW's (so often a source of pride and thankfulness)*

*Goodbye, our most friendly Colleagues;*

*Goodbye, dear School! May God bless and keep you.*

Mr Bay, who was succeeded by Cecil Round, died, after an operation, within two years of his retirement.

In the 1932 magazine, the school thanked the Old Wirksworthian Association "for the gift of a beautiful clock, which has been placed in the corridor as part of the OW memorial to the late Rev. L. Hansen Bay".

*The notes that follow were sent (now slightly amended) to the Hansen Bay grandchildren in 2012. A family tree is attached.*

## **SNAPSHOTS OF THE HBs**

Notes by Roy Pearce, Head of Anthony Gell School, 1971-1991 to the family .

I lived with my family in school house. These are snippets of memory from a variety of sources.

As HB left the school over eighty years ago the only pupils who now would remember his period of headship would be in their nineties. One, whom I knew well, died recently aged 97! She spoke of your grandparents with warm affection. Amazingly in the last week a friend produced two school magazines 1926, edited by CHB and 1927. We have , sadly, no other documentary evidence of LHB's headship at school. I shall look in county records when my current work on the history of Wirksworth Cricket Club has slowed down. We have been searching and found the portrait of LHB by CHB, stored safely.

A number of former pupils have spoken to me over the years and I have built up the picture of a tremendously enthusiastic and active man who took no notice of his disability. He was remembered as a keen sportsman, more I think as a footballer, though I have notes of his involvement with the cricket club. He and his wife were at the heart of everything. Some suggested to me that she was the 'boss'. They were certainly a much loved pair. I have lived in Wirksworth for more than forty years and I have gathered some impressions which I record below. My strongest memory is of the notable portrait of HB painted by Mrs HB, which hung for many years in the school library and is now in the safe keeping of the headteacher.

Here are some items from my collection.

1. George Eric Repton, who has lived in Wirksworth near the school all his life, one day stopped me in the street and told me that he remembered seeing Mr Hansen Bay when he was a child in the 1920s. He was impressed that although HB was limping he was moving very fast over the Hannages from the old school building in the churchyard towards the new school (opened 1908). His gown was flying behind him and he was wearing his mortar board. I was amazed that this vision had stuck in his mind for more than eighty years.

2. Jack Marsden was a keen cricketer (1920s) and was encouraged by HB. When the cricket club had a special all day match and one of the teams was short of a player the club captain would contact the Head and Jack would be sent off to play cricket.

3. In contrast one of the old cricketers told me that once the school cricket team went to Derby to play with HB in charge. HB disappeared, saw nothing of the game and only returned at the end to escort the team home back to Wirksworth. I am not sure how they were travelling. It could have been by train.

4. The mother of a friend, as a young girl, came from North Wingfield, near Chesterfield, with her sister to work as a residential domestic servant in School House (date about 1920). The two girls, who were only in their teens, were away from home for the first time and were very unhappy. After three weeks they ran away home, leaving quietly early one spring morning. I can imagine the confusion! Amazingly a detailed account of this adventure survives as part of the girl's biography by her grandson. (Noel Parsons unpublished.)

5. Based on press report. In 1912 at the funeral of Charles Wright, Rev Lauritz Hansen Bay said the opening sentences. Wright was a school governor, a wealthy local businessman and a generous donor towards the building of the new school. The school was closed for the afternoon of his funeral with places reserved for some of the pupils.

6. From Wirksworth Cricket Club minutes, December 1908 at a committee meeting. 'L Hansen Bay, (vice president) in the chair.'

7. Miss Lesley Northrop came to Wirksworth to teach History in 1925, She stayed for 42 years. When she retired in 1967 she wrote, 'I think the most abiding first memory I have of Anthony Gell's Grammar School is of its family nature. This was partly due to the fact that the Rev L Hansen Bay was Headmaster, his wife Senior Mistress, and the various members of their family had been or were pupils in the school. Everybody knew everybody else.'

Miss Northrop spoke to me in her old age with strong approval of your grandparents. She took the girls' hockey teams in her young days with great success and was a notable teacher, retiring as senior mistress in 1967.

8. From 1926 magazine: R.C.S. Hansen Bay has come down from Oxford (Lady Margaret Hall). The result of her 'finals' in the History honours School is not yet known. She has played Hockey and Lacrosse for her college, acted in many plays, won a sailing prize, sung in the Bach choir, and, in general, enjoyed the many and varied opportunities afforded by four years at Oxford.

9. From 1926 school magazine:

Extract from London letter from K.M.H.H.B. during the General Strike.

'Ticket collectors say, 'Thank you very much.... one guard of a train due to depart - an immaculate youth in plus fours, waved an absurd green flag; nothing happened. He waved again and blew a whistle; still nothing happened. Then he said to the driver in injured tones, 'I say, you might GO!'

Buses have things written on them, as;

Bricks this way please.

Stones through here.

Try our fresh air cure. (If the glass is smashed).

None but the brave deserve the Threepenny Fare.

A brick in hand is worth two at the bus.

Practically all the men I know are 'Specials'. ...some have their beat from ten to two a.m. and some from ten to six (a.m.) and appear next morning as usual.

10. From 1927 magazine:

On December 18th 1926 Katherine Margaret Henriette Hansen Bay, the youngest daughter of the Headmaster and Mrs Hansen Bay was quietly married to Mr John Emanuel at the Parish Church.

The husband of the Headmaster's eldest daughter, Mrs.W.H.G.Milnes, is now appointed Housemaster of Clifton Grove at St. Peter's School, York, which has just kept its thirteenth centenary with great rejoicings.

The Historic Pageant Procession, the programme for which was drawn up by for the town by Mrs Hansen Bay - a new feature of Well Dressing Day - included a school group showing Anthony Gell the Founder.....

In addition.

11. In 1924 the Brooks Press of Wirksworth published A Little Book About Wirksworth by CHB. CHB was Celia Hansen Bay, wife of the headmaster of Wirksworth Grammar School (1907-1929) and herself a considerable artist. I have recently re-read this little gem and found the following snippet.

'Religion and sport are the two pre-occupations of Wirksworth. There is little doubt that there is a strong love of beauty in the inhabitants of picturesque little Wirksworth, and that it would be all to the good if it could be developed to a far greater extent than it is now; in which case Wirksworth may produce great things in the way of creative art; at present her recent fame may be said to rest mainly on the excellent cricketers and footballers, and hockey players she has bred.'

In Memory of  
Lieutenant JOHN SPURLING HANSEN BAY

140685, 3rd County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters), Royal  
Armoured Corps  
who died age 26  
on 21 November 1941  
Son of Lauritz and Celia Hansen Bay; husband of Betty Hansen  
Bay, of South Holmwood, Surrey.  
Remembered with honour  
KNIGHTSBRIDGE WAR CEMETERY, ACROMA



Commemorated in perpetuity by  
the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

The grave in North Africa of Lt. J.S. Hansen Bay, son of Lauritz and Celia.

The HBs died in the 1930s, so they did not see the death of a beloved son in the desert war: John Spurling Hansen Bay, killed in the Libyan Desert aged 26, is buried in the war cemetery at Acroma, 25 km west of Tobruk in Libya. As a former W.G.S. pupil his name appears on the 1939-45 war memorial.

When the HBs retired in 1929 there was great regret in the town, sincerely felt, I believe – they had run the school for twenty one years and had become important contributors to the community life of this small, underprivileged town.

The school magazine in 1929 commented: ‘None of us at present can imagine what school will be like without them, for ever since the present buildings were erected - all the time that our school has been a mixed one it has known only one headmaster.

Mr Bay’s interest in his pupils never ended. ....he has always been our guide, counsellor and friend.’



## AFTER WIRKSWORTH

Lauritz and Celia left Wirksworth in 1929 and Lauritz served as vicar of Stow with Quy, a small village just north of Cambridge. He died there in 1932 and Celia went to Brancaster Staithe, where the family had connections. She died in 1934 'in very poor circumstances'. I suspect she had been unwell in her final years in Wirksworth. They are buried together in Quy churchyard.

## EPILOGUE

The author may be allowed a last word. In researching this piece I have come to like, enjoy and admire the HBs. I value their cheerful, idiosyncratic style of leadership and their concern for the individual. Celia's devotion to the arts in education brought a special dimension to school and community life. Perhaps the inspectors could have said that in their 1916 report. The HBs gave generously of their talents to the people of Wirksworth in their long period of service through hard times, carrying the burden of running the school during the war and seeing many former pupils taken from them. They showed a spirited determination and human warmth. Their vision of England, the nation the children they were educating would serve, was profound, dedicated and unswerving. Their Christian belief was a pillar of their existence. These admirable people were poorly paid, but contrived, to produce five children, who likewise made a strong contribution to the life of their country. That success weighs highly with me. I am saddened that for both of them retirement was so short 'after 21 years of strenuous effort.'

The persistent criticism of the governing body and the ongoing conflict about the financial management of the school was distressing to read. There was surely some personal animus from governors and, I guess, Lauritz responded in kind. He was not good with money, but a solution seems in retrospect simple; that the clerk, well able to afford it, found one of his workers to come into school on a regular basis to provide clerical/financial office time. Through all this the head and his loyal wife maintained a positive spirit with the people who mattered, their devoted pupils. The warm tributes when the HBs retired and left Wirksworth were sincere and marked the significant contribution they made to the lives of many children of this underprivileged town.

Lauritz and Celia Hansen Bay made a difference.

Roy Pearce June 2013

7. 'At the beginning of the term the School received a visit from an old boy of 41 years standing, Mr Harward, who is now Director of Public Education in Ceylon.' No 7 1910

*NB I calculate Mr Harward, a famous name locally, left in 1869.*

8. 'A daffodil blowing sadly over the snow reminds us that this is an Easter number.'  
No 8 1911

9. Death of Charles Wright aged 78 He had been a governor of the school for 43 years, the latter part as Chairman. 'He was a generous supporter of the School and took a keen and untiring interest in everything connected with it..... one of the best friends the school ever had.' No 12 1912.

10. Speech Day 1912. The guest was Rev Canon F.W. Spurling M.A., Canon Residentiary of Chester Cathedral, and late Sub-Warden of Keble College Oxford. Born in 1844; he was educated at St Paul's, then Wadham College, Oxford and awarded a first class degree in classics. He taught at both Westminster and Rugby before becoming a don at Oxford and tutor of Keble College in 1875. He left Keble in 1906 for Chester Cathedral. Spurling published a commentary on the Book of Joshua and died in 1914 leaving a wife and five children.

*NB He was a relative of Celia Hansen Bay nee Spurling. More research needed.*

11. Speech Day 1912.

#### The Headmaster.

'We do not however, direct our energies mainly to the end of passing examinations and playing games. We strive to awaken in our boys and girls a true appreciation of the good and beautiful, an intelligent interest in science and literature, and above all a sense of the true proportion of things. In a word, we desire to educate – to draw out - their faculties so that if possible they may go forth into the world of 'grown-ups' with clear-seeing eyes and minds trained to reflect, and with spirits that love Righteousness and hate Iniquity. So shall they be worthy sons and daughters of our great empire, which may God preserve.'  
No 13 1912.

12. One story deserves to be preserved from 1913.

'On March 10th a fire broke out at one of Mr Fritchley's hay-stacks, in a field adjoining the school. Our boys and girls were playing games at the time, and they gallantly came to the rescue. There was no water nearer than the school kitchen yard, so a long line was made and buckets of water passed on and returned empty. Owing to the prompt measures the fire was soon extinguished. Mr Fritchley wrote a grateful letter of appreciation and we can only add that we are full of admiration for the splendid way in which our boys and girls acted their part.

Partly as an appreciation of this, and also owing to the fact that there was no half term holiday this term, the whole school broke up at 10.00am on the following day, and had a delightful walk to Ryder Point to witness a meet of Mr Hurt's Foxhounds (sic). Although no Fox (sic) was found, yet our outing was much enjoyed, and when we assembled again at 2 p.m. we felt much refreshed.

#### Comment by the editor of the school magazine.

We highly commend the patriotic spirit shown by both girls and boys in the stack fire, and we feel proud to be able to record such doings.'

## APPENDIX 2

### EXTRACTS FROM GOVERNORS' MINUTES APRIL 1916

'The Clerk produced the Revenue Account & Balance Sheet for the year ending March 31st 1916 showing a deficit upon the years working of £311-14-5. Considerable discussion ensued as to what economies could be effected in the working and ultimately it was proposed by Mr Charlesworth seconded by Mr Storey and

RESOLVED That in view of the Financial position the Committee recommended that the Salaries of the Staff be overhauled and in view of this notice is given to the Head master to terminate his appointment.

Proposed by Mr Ogden seconded by Mr Charlesworth & RESOLVED That the Chairman, Rev TB Charlesworth with Messrs Storey & Harrison be appointed a Deputation to wait upon the County Education Committee asking for financial assistance.

Applications for an increase of salary were read from Messrs Warren & Hurley, the two assistant masters at the School.

Proposed by Mr Charlesworth seconded Mr Storey & RESOLVED That in view of the present Finances of the Trust the Governors regret they cannot entertain the applications.

Signed Charles EB Bowles 18 April 1916'

#### The following meeting.

re payment of rates on the school house, which the Head had agreed to pay, but had not done so.

'.....although five applications had been made to him. The Head Masters attention having been drawn to the matter he promised to send cheque without delay.

The Clerk produced and read the correspondence which had passed between the Chairman and the Board of Education relative to the Head Master undertaking clerical duties (*it means church duties*) on Sundays during term time in which the Board stated that in the special circumstances they would initiate no objection to the proposed payment to the Head Master during the period of the War for clerical work done on Sundays for incumbents actually absent on Military duty.

The Inspectors and the Governors had a long conference upon the teaching staff & the organisation at the School and the following is a summary of the interview. (*Three inspectors had visited the school*). The Head Master is quite satisfactory, is a good teacher and doing the Science work well . Mrs Bay is inefficient as teacher and not satisfactory for her post as Head Mistress. It is not desirable that this post should be filled by the wife of the Head Master.

Mr Warren is dull with no life in his method of teaching. He is anxious to improve, but is not likely to do so, as he has no aptitude for his profession.

Miss MacPherson is too young and inexperienced for her post. She is capable however and is likely to improve.

The teaching staff generally is poor and unsatisfactory, but a change is not likely to improve it unless higher Salaries were offered, and during the period of the War no change is advised.

The letter from (*I think this should be 'to'*) the Board of Education with respect to the Forms is withdrawn and no change as regards the present teaching of the four forms will be expected.

SIGNED Charles EB Bowles.'

**APPENDIX 3**  
**WIRKSWORTH GRAMMAR SCHOOL HEADTEACHERS**

Smith	1638
Mr Topham	1645
Rev Croasdale	1669
Samuel Ogden	1695 -1697
Rev. Greatorex	
Rev. Samuel Hanson	1750s circa
Rev. Abraham Bennett	1780 -1799
Rev. Nathan Hubbersty	1799 -1828
Rev. Nathan Hubbersty	1829 -1850
Rev. Francis Henry Brett	1851-1859
Rev. Herbert Harris	1860 -1866
Rev. C.H. Collyns MA	1866 -1870
Rev. T. Johnson	1871-1881
Mr Alfred Berridge MA	1883 -1908
Rev. Lauritz Hansen Bay	1907-1929
Mr. Cecil Round	1929 -1952
Mr. L T Draycott	1952 -1956
Phillip Slater	1957-1965

ANTHONY GELL'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL BECOMES A COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

Frank Bottomley	1966 -1971
Roy Pearce	1971-1991
Rod Leach	1991-2005
David Baker	2006 -