

The Old Elizabethans (Barnet)

Honorary Secretary:

K. M. CLIFFORD M.A., 19 Old Fold View, Barnet



*Honorary Editorial Secretary
and Assistant Secretary:*

P. G. BREALEY, M.A., 21 Hadley Road, New Barnet

OBITUARY

W. LATTIMER M.A., Headmaster 1906-29

William Lattimer, Headmaster of Queen Elizabeth's from 1906 to 1929, died at Haverstock Hill on August 2nd 1960 at the age of ninety. He lived so long after his retirement that probably he was unknown to the majority of Elizabethans who entered the School in increasingly large numbers after 1930.

W.L., as he was known by masters, or Bill as the boys called him, was the connecting link between the old style of grammar school and the one we know to-day. As a boy he went to the grammar school of his native town, Carlisle, and from there to Clare College, Cambridge, where he graduated as Senior Optime in the Mathematical Tripos. Thereafter, having taught in several grammar schools, he became mathematical master at Brighton College and came thence as our Headmaster in 1906. In those days grammar schools, Queen Elizabeth's included, were peopled largely by fee-paying pupils, and entry scholarships were few. The grammar schools were not then in the full stream of national life but, rather, in its backwaters. They prepared some pupils for the professions, but sent very few boys to the university, and their contact with commerce and industry was slight. Many of those which now have 500 to 800 pupils at that time had a bare 100 boys. This was so at Barnet in 1906, when the roll stood under 80 and the School's reputation had fallen really low.

By 1914 there were 130 boys in the school, but when the war ended in 1918 there were nearly double this number, since there were both more fee-payers and an increasing number of boys entering with scholarships from primary schools. The change in grammar schools had begun. The war period was a most difficult time for W.L.; more and more pupils, and fewer and fewer adequate teachers were available. Ill-health increased his difficulties but did nothing to daunt his spirit. The school buildings, too, were quite insufficient, and it is much to his credit that he carried the School through this difficult period, that he coped successfully with larger numbers and was able to hand over the School in a flourishing condition to his successor.

Not least among the many disappointments that fell to the lot of W.L. was the continued postponement of promises to extend the school buildings, but, when towards the end of the twenties it became clear that at last something was going to be done, W.L. threw all his influence in favour of a new building alongside Stapylton rather than extensions to the existing buildings. At the time there were many O.E.'s who disagreed, but, looking back now on the last thirty years, no-one can doubt the wisdom of his views.

What kind of man, it may be asked, was W.L.? He was ruggedly independent in mind and character, unwilling to accept the prevailing fashion of thought unless he had tested it and found it to be valid. Highly sensitive by nature, he was

pained by any rebuffs but reacted cheerfully to the many encouragements that came his way. He was a kindly and perceptive man, understanding both his pupils and his staff more fully than perhaps they realised. Very happily, he had what is a saving grace for any schoolmaster, a sense of humour. Some of his happiest times, it is suspected, were spent in the successful teaching of mathematics.

Apart from his many other interests two strong and abiding ones were rugby football and his native Cumberland. He introduced rugby into the School in 1914; it was going strong when he left, and he must have been gratified by its further progress after his day. On his retirement he went to live in Cumberland and passed twenty happy years in Keswick, where his interest in young people found expression in his chairmanship of the Governing Body of the Grammar School and also in junior tennis championships which he organised.

It was not until he was in his eighties that he and his wife returned South to live with their married daughter in Haverstock Hill. A final word must be about Mrs. Lattimer. Ever a staunch and devoted help-mate of her husband, this gallant survivor is living alertly at the age of 91. She and her husband well earned the gratitude of all who knew Queen Elizabeth's between 1906 and 1930.

J.A.S.

MISS D. E. SIMS

Many more senior O.E.'s, or those approaching seniority, will be sorry to hear of the death on September 24th of Miss D. E. Sims just a little before her 73rd birthday. A Cornish woman trained to teach general subjects, she came to the School in January 1916 in the middle of the first world war, when it became almost impossible to get masters, and she proved so useful with little boys, in what were then the prep. forms, that she remained until the last of these forms disappeared in July 1946 as a result of the 1944 Education Act.

The service that she gave the School was always most loyal and willing. Indeed, during the first war she donned riding breeches and gaiters to referee small boys' rugby. Thereafter, for many years until the new buildings were erected, she carried out the onerous and troublesome task of providing teas and other refreshments on the playing field from the old pavilion. She will be affectionally remembered as a great nature lover (witness the much abused tank in her classroom) and perhaps as something of a character, but to most people a lovable one.

A. H. LIVSEY

We also record with regret the recent death of A. H. Livsey (1919-23).

Sept. 20th—To Evelyn, wife of B. L. Faulkner (1941-43), a daughter—Diane Rosalind, a sister for Duncan.

1960

MARRIAGES

July 23rd—At Southampton, R. C. Smith (1946-54), to Rosalie Spencer of Southampton.

July 30th—At Rayleigh, Essex, R. Hollinghurst (1944-53), to Valerie Tutton of Rayleigh.

Aug. 27th—At Cockfosters, B. R. Currell (1944-53), to Audrey Hassell of Enfield.

1960

BIRTHS

Aug. 17th—To Pamela, wife of E. N. H. Shearly (1929-40, A.M. from 1949), a daughter—Rosalind Ann, a sister for Jimmy and Philip.

Aug. 27th—To Mary, wife of M. F. Deller (1942-52), a daughter—Elizabeth Anne, a sister for Jane.

Aug. 30th—To Sheila, wife of G. S. Surtees (1944-52), a son—Robert William.

Sept. 15th—To June, wife of J. Boddington (1937-46), a son—David, a brother for Nicholas.