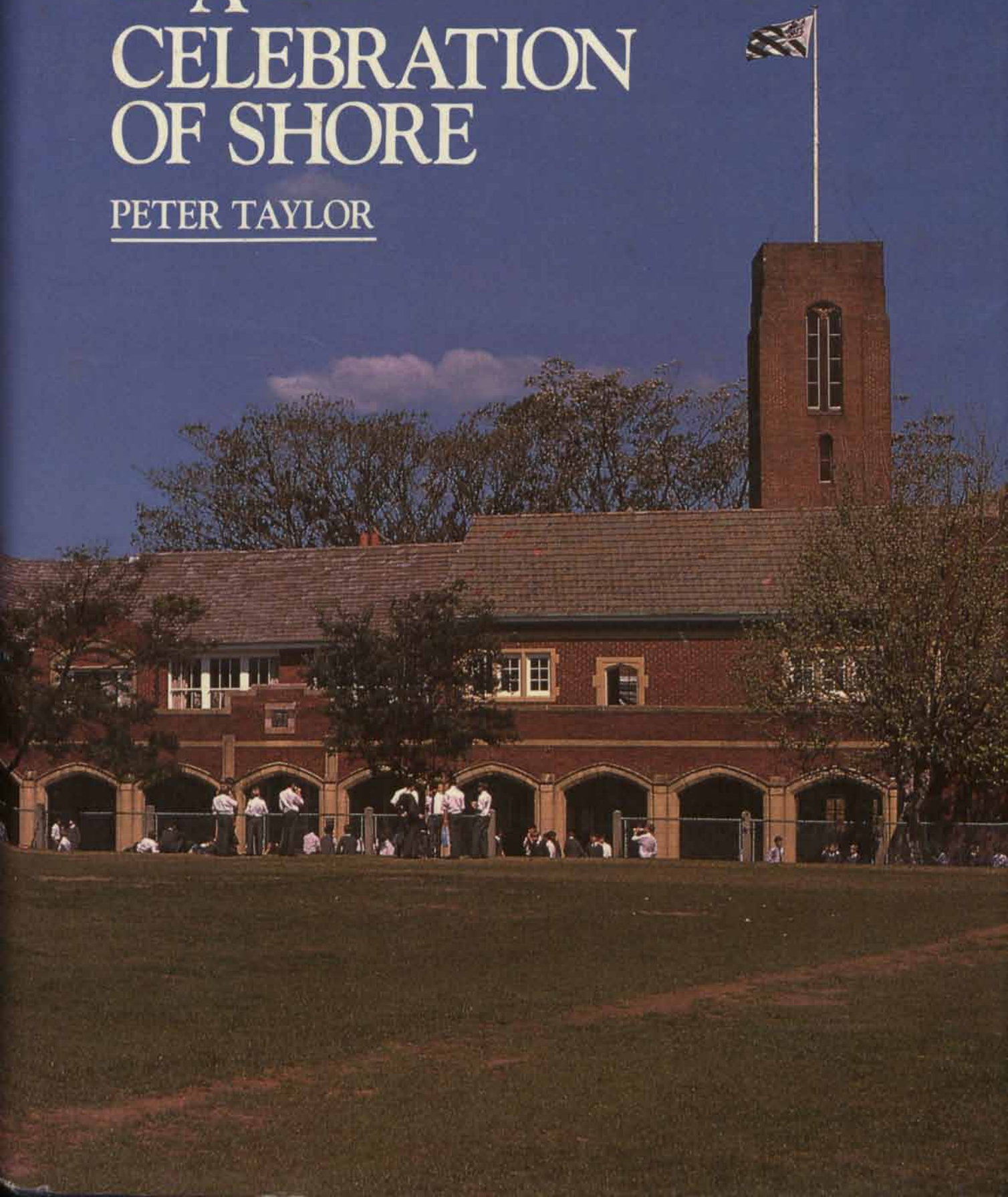


—A— CELEBRATION OF SHORE

PETER TAYLOR



In *A Celebration of Shore*, Peter Taylor draws on the recollections of Old Boys and staff to provide an evocative and perceptive account of this great school.

A school means different things to different people. Boys who were there in the 1920s experienced a school that was significantly different to the school of today, while boys at the school now have customs and traditions that were not common then. Teaching staff see the school differently too, and so do those whose job it is to provide the services needed by such a complex institution.

In *A Celebration of Shore*, Peter Taylor has captured these differences. He shows how the school has changed and how in some respects it has remained the same; how the school has reacted to changes in society without losing its sense of direction.

A Celebration of Shore is above all an entertaining account of life at the school during the past sixty years. Parents and those interested in one of Australia's greatest schools will find this book fascinating, Old Boys will enjoy it for the memories it evokes while current boys and those yet to come will understand their place in the school's continuity.



A Celebration of Shore is the centenary publication of the Sydney Church of England Grammar School.



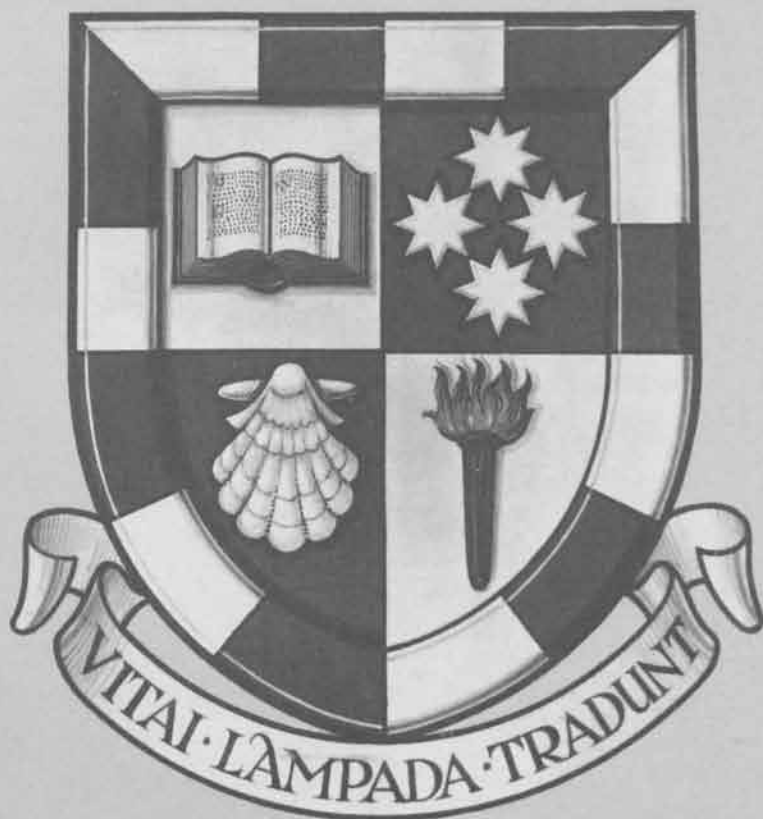
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—A—
CELEBRATION
OF SHORE

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— A —
CELEBRATION
OF SHORE

PETER TAYLOR

SYDNEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL
in association with Allen & Unwin
Sydney Wellington London

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First published in 1988

Allen & Unwin Australia Pty Ltd

An Unwin Hyman company

8 Napier Street, North Sydney, NSW 2060, Australia

Allen & Unwin New Zealand Limited

60 Cambridge Terrace, Wellington, New Zealand

Unwin Hyman Limited

37-39 Queen Elizabeth Street, London SE129B, England

Allen & Unwin Inc

8 Winchester Place, Winchester, Mass 01890, USA

Devised and produced by Taylor-Type Publications (Australia) Pty Ltd

National Library of Australia

Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:

Taylor, Peter

A celebration of Shore

Includes index

ISBN 0 04 305009 3.

1. Sydney Church of England Grammar School. —History.

I. Sydney Church of England Grammar School.

II. Title.

377'.839441

Designed by Robin James

Typeset in 11/13 pt Goudy Old Style by Caxtons Pty Ltd, Adelaide

Printed in Singapore by Kyodo Printing Co Ltd

Colour photographs by Peter Taylor

Black and white photographs from Shore Archives

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Foreword

THE CENTENARY OF A SCHOOL provides the opportunity for reflection on its past, both by the institution itself and by the members of its community. The publication in 1983 of *Shore* by Geoffrey Sherington was School Council's contribution to the formal analysis of the School.

It was due to the vision and foresight of its former Chairman, Mr J. M. Dixon, OBE, that this book, *A Celebration of Shore* began to be discussed as a second contribution to the School's centenary. The idea was to have a light-hearted, personalised account of life in the School and experiences within the memory of Old Boys and others of the School community.

At Council's invitation, Mr Dixon undertook the job of co-ordinator of the project on behalf of the School Council, immediately on his retirement as Chairman in June 1986. He played a major role in assisting the author, Peter Taylor, to produce an entertaining book which captures the flavour of life at Shore over many decades and which will appeal strongly to the School community.

Both Mr Dixon and the author were ably assisted in their task by Mr J. E. McCann, the School Bursar. Mr McCann devoted considerable time and energy in helping resolve many questions and issues which necessarily arise during the preparatory stages of such a publication.

In describing this book one cannot do better than quote from the brief originally developed with the author:

'... the book will show how the School has coped with change, how its traditions have developed, how it has remained constant to its ideals and how it is facing the future with confidence. Old Boys will enjoy the nostalgia, while existing boys, and those yet to come, will come to understand their place in the School's continuity.'

I believe the book succeeds admirably in what it set out to do.

L. W. Davies

Chairman of Council

Sydney Church of England Grammar School

Introduction

HE STOPPED EATING HIS BREAKFAST and took a deep breath.

'Mum, I'm not going to school today.'

'Why not?'

'I don't like the boys, the boys don't like me, and it's a rotten school anyway.'

'Look,' she said, 'there are two reasons why you have to go to school today. One is that you are thirty-nine years old. The other is that you are the headmaster.'

The moral of the story is that your perception of a school depends on who you are, what you are, where you are and how old you are. A book about a single school somehow has to reflect all those perceptions if it is to give a true impression. Misty-eyed nostalgia has its place, but it conveys little to those who are at the school now or who have left only recently. Similarly, a description of the school as it is now would have little in common with the school that older people knew so well. And those who work at the school, in whatever capacity, see it differently to almost everybody else. I have tried to capture as much of this variety as possible within the confines of one book.

This book does not pretend to be a history of Shore. A very good one, *Shore* by Geoffrey Sherington, was published only a few years ago and there was clearly no need to cover the same ground. Instead, this book is a celebration of Shore as it approaches its centenary year. It is about the people who made Shore work, and the people who were educated there. It is more informal than a history. Instead of recording historical events I have tried to convey what the school was like during the last sixty years, to capture its flavour rather than its fact.

This means that some 'historical' events have not been given the importance they might deserve, and some have been discarded altogether. Similarly, I have relied heavily on the recollections of those who were at the school at different times, and memory is known to be fallible. Facts have been checked where possible and I hope that any errors that remain are accepted as a consequence of a technique that relies on people rather than on minute books.

This book is unusual, if not actually unique, in that I am not an Old Boy

of the school and have had no previous connection with it. Indeed, when I went there for the first time to discuss this project I had to look at the map to make sure I was going to the right place.

I think this was a big advantage. I had no preconceptions, I could talk freely to people without being hindered by embarrassing recollections of my youth and I could, under the guise of genuine ignorance, probe matters that another might have tactfully avoided. At the same time, I think it was an act of great courage on the part of Council to trust this work to an outsider. They asked for no guarantees, nor could I have given any. They gave me guidance, but no rules. There were no restrictions of any kind. They simply put the school at my disposal and left me to do my job.

Shore is a very good school and you have every reason to be proud of it. It takes boys from different backgrounds without requiring them to pass an entrance examination, and it then educates them, in the broadest sense of the word, to the best of its considerable ability. I was impressed with the dedication of its staff, the loyalty of its Old Boys and its success as a modern school.

Finally, I would like to thank the many people who helped me to write this book. Those whose names appear in the text gave me their time freely and I hope they will forgive me if I do not list them here. Instead, I would thank those whose help will not be so obvious to the reader: the Council, and particularly Ian Dixon who had recently retired as its chairman, for their guidance when I needed it and for letting me work in my own way; Ken Smith of the Shore Foundation; Robyn Whitfield in the library; Fred Smith and Philip Moffat, two current Shore boys who helped me with the research; the teaching staff for their willing co-operation and for extending to me the courtesy of their common room; Geoffrey Sherington for allowing me access to material he had gathered while writing his own book; and Jack McCann and all his staff for taking a writer into their midst and pretending that all his requests were quite normal and perfectly convenient.

Peter Taylor
Sydney, 1988

Prologue

IT IS MONDAY MORNING, the day before the start of a new school year. The school is deserted, quiet. No bells ring. Even though it is 8 o'clock there are no boys in sight. The boarding houses are quiet, the dining hall closed and the roads empty.

This will be a hot day. Even now there is warmth in the air, and soon the overcast sky will clear and the buildings will take texture from the shadows and the brilliant sun. But not yet. There is no shadow from the fig trees, no sunlight on the lawn and across the harbour the buildings of the city are muted in a soft, blue haze. Traffic drones through the cluttered roads of North Sydney, but that is muted too. Distant, as if from another world.

But this school is not asleep, nor is it as deserted as it seems. Upstairs in the masters common room there is noise and cheerful bustle as people greet each other after the long summer holiday. Young teachers talk of experiences in Venice and London while older ones talk of Noosa and Coffs Harbour. They make changing groups as people move from one to the next. Some stand around the coffee machine, others lean from the large leather chairs to talk to their neighbour, some read the morning papers and some, a few, stand apart and try not to feel too uncomfortable. They are the new teachers and this is their first day at Shore. Some might spend a few years here, others might be here until they retire. They do not know.

There is a call to order. The talking dies away, people rustle quietly for notebooks and clipboards and then wait for the day, the year, to begin.

Peter Jenkins, sitting at a table beneath the memorials of the Boer War, asks the chaplain to say a prayer. It is short and to the point. Everybody sits down again. The new staff are welcomed and then the headmaster takes over the meeting. He talks of standards, the high standards that are expected from the boys and which can only come from the even higher standards that the staff set for themselves.

The meeting lasts two hours. By the time it is halfway through the sky has cleared and through the window the city skyline is sharp and clear. The headmaster talks in detail of the year that has gone and of the one that is about to start. Then other masters talk of different things, of the rowing

camp, of the games that have been played in the holiday, of changes to routines that will apply from tomorrow.

The meeting ends at 10.30 and everybody gets up and moves around again. The coffee machine is in great demand and those who get there first have the best choice of biscuits. The new masters are now part of small groups, no longer alone. The headmaster moves around the groups, joking about cricket scores, answering questions quietly asked. It is relaxed, but not casual. It is professional.

After the coffee break, staff members move off to department meetings and the common room is empty except for one of these small meetings.

The previous HSC results are analysed and the new syllabus studied. In the Holmes Room John Gorham, head of the History department, says that the fifth form will start with case studies and these will take up the first term. One study might deal with the political consequences of assassinations, he says, but the emphasis should be on teaching history methods rather than historical facts.

This meeting ends at noon and the teachers file out to join the rest of the staff under the fig tree. Members of Council are there too, waiting to join in the lunch in the dining hall that is a traditional feature of the day before the first term. In the hall, the staff form groups at tables and then serve themselves from a buffet at one end. There is no talk of the holiday now. The year's work has begun.

Outside, boys start to arrive. Slowly at first, but as the afternoon goes on there is an almost continuous stream of cars and taxis edging along the road towards the fig trees. Sunburnt boys, some in blue jeans and broad-brimmed country hats, get out and heave cases behind them. Boys talk to each other or to their parents, and parents talk to teachers and house-masters or try not to fuss over little boys who are joining Shore for the first time.

What was still and empty in the morning is lively now.

. . .

CHAPTER ONE

The First Hundred Years

WHEN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND GRAMMAR SCHOOL was declared officially open at its site on a North Sydney hill on 4 May 1889 most people thought optimistically of its future and the glories it would achieve. But schools are many years in their creation and even one as basic as this was on its opening day had been the subject of endless planning and hard work for many years before that splendid day. So while many thought of the future of this new school, others were slightly surprised that this day had finally arrived and that the school they had dreamed of for so long now actually existed.

The story of this school starts some sixty years earlier, for it was in the early 1820s that the Church of England in New South Wales decided that it had a duty to provide education that was not only of high standard but which was also in conformity with its religious principles. At that time the head of the Church in New South Wales was an Archdeacon, who came under the authority of the Bishop of Calcutta. It was the second Archdeacon, William Grant Broughton, who took the first practical steps. In 1831 he obtained the agreement of the British Government for an ambitious plan to establish two Church of England schools. They would both be known as The King's School and one would be in Parramatta and the other, a day school, would be in Sydney. The name came from Broughton's old school in Canterbury and his intention was to follow the old traditions of English education. Indeed, at that time there were few other traditions that a British colony at the other end of the world could have looked to.

The first of The King's Schools was established at Parramatta in 1832 and has enjoyed a fine reputation as one of the leading schools in Australia ever since. The second King's School, however, was not so fortunate. In November 1831 the Legislative Council of New South Wales announced its intention to open The King's School in Sydney. At first it was planned to occupy rooms used by St James Church in King Street, but when the school opened on 2 January 1832 it was in a building in nearby Pitt Street. The headmaster was a scholar of Trinity College, Cambridge, Reverend George Innes, but whatever his ability might have been as a teacher his chances of success were slim. There was established competition in the

form of the Australian College and the Sydney College, which later became part of Sydney Grammar School, and between them they seemed more than capable of supplying the educational needs of Sydney. They were never threatened by the new King's School. The Reverend Innes died the following September and by the end of the year the school's brief existence had come to an end.

William Broughton persevered. In 1836 he had been appointed the first Bishop of Australia and in 1841 he established the St James Grammar School on church land between Elizabeth and Castlereagh Streets. This school, which closed in the 1850s, was more limited than the second King's School had intended to be and in the end the land it stood on proved to be more important than its educational achievements.

In 1883 Bishop Alfred Barry was appointed Bishop of Sydney and Primate of Australia and with his arrival the Church's intention to provide religious education took new life. While in England Barry had been Canon of Westminster, a keen supporter of religious schools and, equally important, he had had a great deal of practical experience of them. Bishop Barry could not only see the need for more religious education in Sydney, but he also had the enthusiasm and knowledge to bring it about.

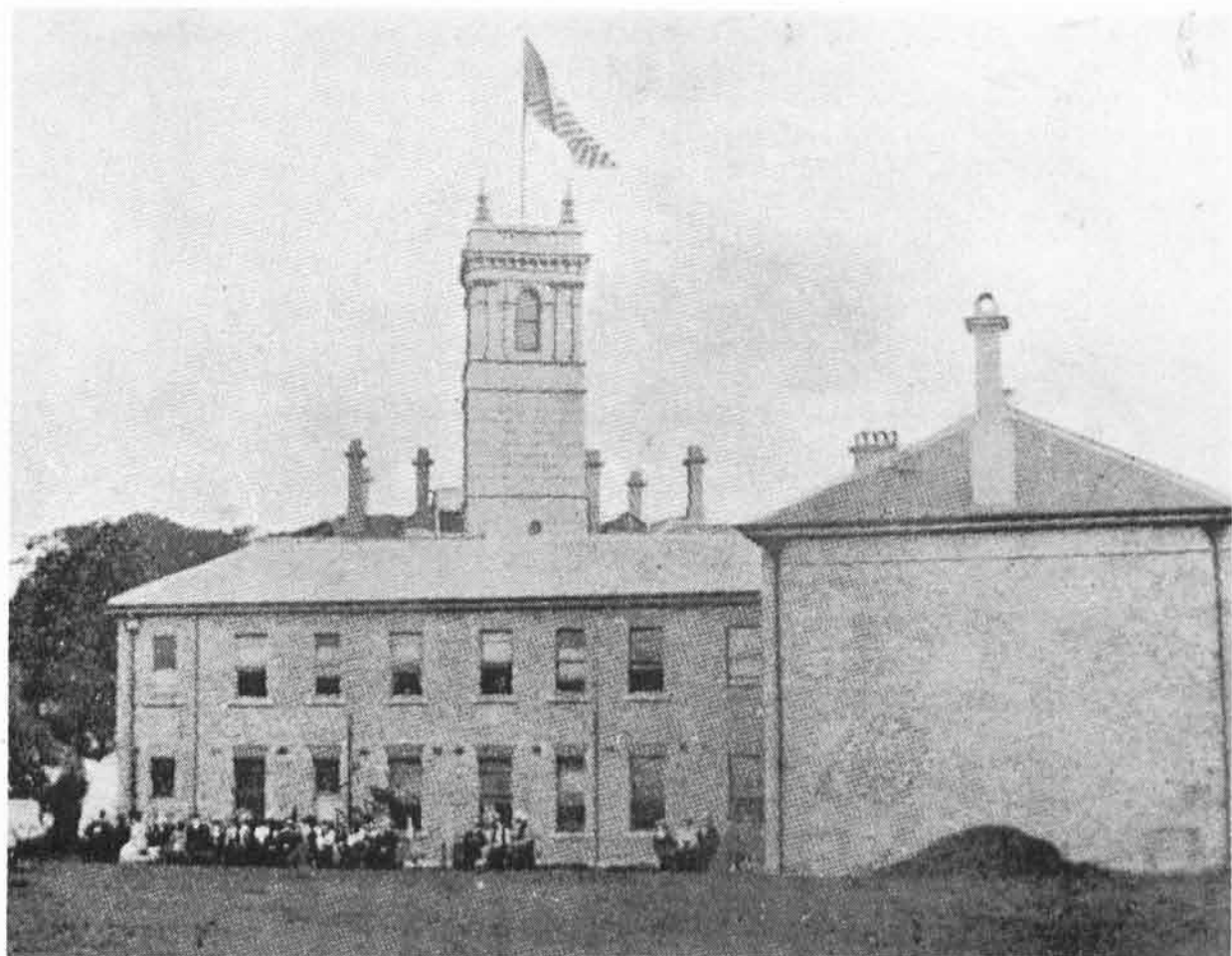
In the year of Barry's appointment the New South Wales Government resumed the land that had been occupied by the St James Grammar School and the Church suddenly found that the money it brought could be used to realise Broughton's original plan. It was not surprising that Bishop Barry was a firm supporter of the idea, if not its actual leader. In an address to Synod in July 1885 he pointed out that the Church had received £38 000 from the government and he proposed that about £30 000 should be used to 'found a great school of the highest character, having various departments for the needs of the various classes of the community—open of course to all, but under full religious teaching on the principles of the Church of England'.

Two days later Synod approved a preliminary plan for such a school and on 27 August 1886 the government passed the St James School Compensation Trust Act. This act approved the payment for the resumed land and authorised the Church to use most of this compensation to build 'a school of the highest type in which the teaching throughout shall be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England'. Thus the words of Bishop Barry were echoed in what was to be the charter and legal basis of the new school.

The first Council of the school was elected by Synod on 31 August 1887 and it met for the first time on 20 October to face two basic problems. What would the school be called, and where would it be? The first was a good deal easier to solve than the second. The name, they decided, would



Bishop Barry.



The school buildings in 1890.

be The Church of England Grammar School, but finding a home for it was much more difficult.

A great deal of time was spent examining the possibilities and in the end two emerged which seemed to offer the best future. One was near St Philip's Church at what is now the southern end of the Harbour Bridge and the other was a house in 1.7 hectares of land on a hill in North Sydney. It was not an easy choice. The land in the city was well located but it was small and even at that stage in the city's development the Council could see that there was little chance of future expansion. On the other hand, the land in North Sydney was more generous and could be expanded if necessary, but it was decidedly remote. In that pre-car age people relied on trains, horse buses and cabs and used steam ferries to cross the harbour. Although a bridge was already being planned few expected it to be built

quickly, if at all, and until it was the land to the north of the harbour remained unattractive and underdeveloped. It was with some misgivings, therefore, that the Council decided to locate the school there.

The land formed part of about 12 hectares which had been granted in 1832 to Thomas Walker. In the following years Walker sold three parts of this grant. One part is now occupied by Graythwaite and one by the house nearby called Euroka. The third, consisting of 5.2 hectares, was sold to William Miller. When Miller moved to Hong Kong he conveyed the land to his son, who built a house on it called Upton which he used until his death in 1860. The property then changed hands twice until, in 1873, it was bought by Bernhard Otto Holtermann.

Holtermann had arrived in Australia as a German immigrant in 1858. He immediately went in search of gold but met with no significant success until 1872, when a company he had started with a friend discovered the largest chunk of reef gold ever found. It weighed 285 kilograms, was 144 centimetres high and 66 centimetres wide, and it brought wealth on a scale that few could imagine.

Within a year of buying his land in North Sydney Holtermann started to build a large house that would reflect his good fortune. Its most striking feature was a huge tower that dominated North Sydney and which could be seen from almost anywhere across the harbour.

Holtermann died in 1885 on his forty-seventh birthday and his house and land were bought the following year by Thomas Dibbs, who was then living at Graythwaite. He subdivided the land and it was one section of about 1.7 hectares, which contained Holtermann's house, which was bought in March 1888 by the Diocese of Sydney as the site of the Church of England Grammar School. The following month Bishop Barry laid the foundation stone for the new buildings that would change the house into a school.

The Council could now start to look for a headmaster. A large number of candidates applied from Australia and abroad and from these the Council selected Ernest Iliff Robson. Born and educated in England, Robson had been head boy at Repton and later a scholar at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he read Classics. When he applied for this new position Robson was classical tutor at Ormond College, which was part of the University of Melbourne, and when he took up his duties with the Church of England Grammar School on 1 June 1889 he was just under twenty-eight years old.

One of Robson's first tasks was to appoint the assistant masters, and this was completed before he took up his own appointment. Those he selected were the Rev. David Davies from The King's School, A. McCulloch Hughes from Melbourne Grammar School, A. J. Kelynack from Sydney

University and Charles H. Linton from Geelong Grammar School. In addition to this full-time staff there were three part-time appointments: Herr J. Langhans was to be in charge of music, G. A. Thomas was to be in charge of drawing and Sergeant Major W. McKay of the Royal Engineers was appointed school sergeant and instructor of carpentry.

By the time the school was officially opened on that day in May 1889 it did at least look like one. The new buildings included a classroom block built of brick which contained eight classrooms, a masters room, a coat room, and 'spacious lobbies and vestibules'. Each classroom was designed to hold twenty boys. The Holtermann house had been renovated and now contained dormitories to house forty boys, 'each dormitory being well supplied with bathrooms and all sanitary conveniences'. In the southern, or front, part of the house were the headmaster's living quarters consisting of a sitting room, dining room, morning room, and study on the ground floor with a bedroom and bathroom on the floor above. Alongside the house was a new building which was to be the dining room and assembly hall. The grounds had been laid out as playgrounds and a new entrance had been installed. It was an impressive amount of work in such a short time and few were concerned that day if the platform for the dignitaries was supported by two whisky cases that clearly showed the name of the distiller to the assembled throng.

After all the pomp and ceremony of that day, the school opened for the first day of its first term on a wet and miserable morning on 16 July 1889. It was a modest affair for when the entire school assembled for morning prayers in the hall it consisted of twenty-three day boys, one boarder, and five masters. It is perhaps as well that there were not more of them, for they soon found that although the buildings were finished much of the other equipment had only just arrived. The desks and benches were so new that the varnish on them had not even dried, making it difficult for their original users to stand up again once they were seated, and the masters had to use considerable ingenuity to retrieve their notes from the sticky surface in front of them.

It was a humble start, in common with that of many similar schools, and a reminder that the facilities that are admired today were developed slowly over many years and were far beyond the expectations of the founders. In Robson's first report on the school, which he made at Christmas 1889, for example, he said that it should have been his privilege as headmaster to be able to announce the names of numerous private benefactors, but he was unable to do so. 'One friend has offered an annual prize for English history, which I hope to award as soon as we deserve it. Otherwise the only benefactions to record are a few donations to the library, for which I here beg to offer thanks, and to mention the name of Professor Cheyne of



E. I. Robson, the first Headmaster of Shore. This photograph was probably taken at Oxford during the First World War.

Oxford, to whom we are indebted for several volumes.'

In spite of the difficulties, however, the school had a good first year and by the time it reassembled at the start of 1890 there were 104 boys, including 19 boarders. In the next few years this steady progress was maintained and in 1893 the school opened with 147 boys, of whom 39 were boarders, with fees ranging from 14 to 16 guineas a year depending on the age of the boy.

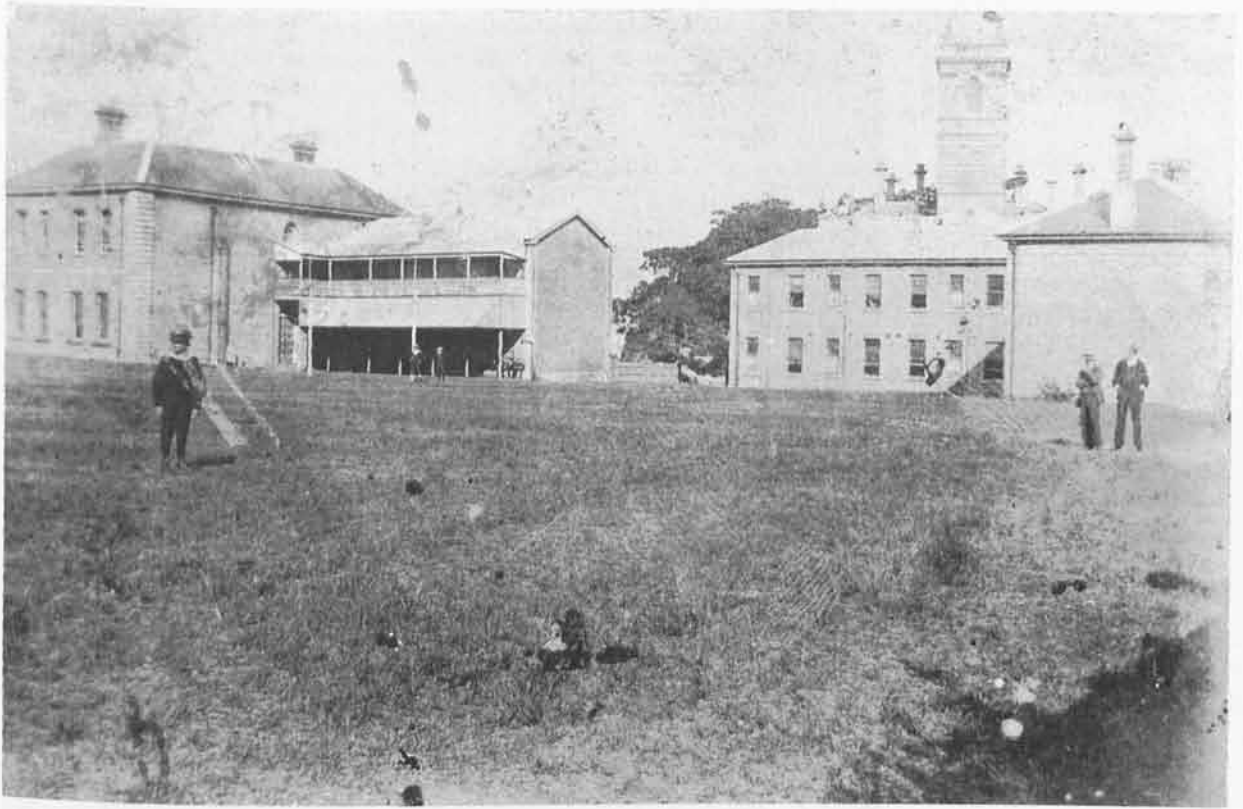
As the number of boys grew, so did the staff. L. A. Baker arrived in 1890 and A. D. Hall came the following year. These two, together with Davies and Linton who were already there, became the core of the staff for the next thirty years. There was however, no tuckshop. Instead, an old man called Thomas was allowed to wheel his barrow into the school every break and lunchtime in the summer and sell ice-creams for a penny, or 'twopence for a good-sized one'.

Although a small area of land on the northern boundary opposite Lord Street was bought in 1892 and the boarders' accommodation in School House was enlarged, there were few obvious improvements in the early years. Resources were slender and the future of the school by no means certain. Games were played on the ground to the north of the classrooms but this was so rough and sloping that it required skills not usually associated with football and cricket and more serious contests were played at St Leonards Park and other public grounds. In spite of this the school won the first athletic contest organised by the AAGPS in 1895 and its early rowing successes were equally impressive. But even the prospect of building a chapel was, in 1892, merely something that 'will soon have to be faced'. It was another twenty years before it could be faced with any real prospect of success.

If Ernest Robson could do little to improve the physical nature of the school he nevertheless worked very hard to give it a sense of identity.

During these formative years Ernest Robson laid down many of the traditions that were to become familiar to thousands of Shore boys in the future and which were so sound that most are still in use today. He changed the name of the school to Sydney Church of England Grammar School, North Shore, but this was so unwieldy that it was soon shortened unofficially to Shore. In time, the words 'North Shore' were discarded to give the school the name it is known by today. Although it was later modified, it was Ernest Robson who designed the original arms of the school and gave it its motto: *Vitai Lampada Tradunt*.

The Lucretian Torchbearers were men who raced while carrying torches whose unguarded flame would burn them if they carried them unskilfully. Handing on the torch successfully was, to Robson's classically trained mind, exactly what his school was trying to do. The motto he coined was



included in the school song. Robson wrote the words and the music was composed before 1892 by the music master, Julius Langhans. Robson said, 'I thought when Langhans first played it over to me that it was a really fine effort, and never altered my opinion of it.'

He also gave the school its diagonal colours of blue and white, which were also the colours of his college at Cambridge, and he soon introduced a ceremony for installing prefects which has been used ever since and is thought to be unique to Shore.

Above all, Robson never lost sight of what a school was supposed to do: it was to do the best it could for the boys who came to be taught there. When the first issue of the *Torch Bearer* was published in June 1891 its first editorial said: 'Strange as it may sound, it is none the less true, that the boys of a school write its history in far more abiding characters than those who from time to time are in authority over them. It is, therefore, to the boys we must look, to the boys we must appeal, for sanction to sound traditions and unwritten laws in school life, and for the exposition of the same in the future numbers of this magazine.'

The school about 1900. The boys by the goalposts are E. H. Senior and I. R. Simpson and the boy on the left is O. S. Cook.

Robson was the eldest of a family of six and although most were frequent visitors to the school it was his younger sister Gertrude who gave him most help and support. While Robson remained unmarried, Gertrude lived at the school and was the lady of the house in the absence of any other. She won an enormous amount of respect and affection from the boys and was very significant in every way. Unfortunately for the school that came to an end in 1895 when Robson married Kate Morrison, daughter of the headmaster of Scotch College in Melbourne. Robson and his new wife left School House to live elsewhere, and Kate found that she was not able to identify herself with the school as much as Gertrude had. Gertrude left Shore and opened a successful prep. school at Edgecliff, and few doubted that Shore was the loser.

Unfortunately this coincided with a fall-off in enrolments that threatened the future of the school and which suddenly turned the tide against it. It was caused by a financial crisis in Australia on a scale that few could remember and which was almost as shattering as the later Wall Street crash. It started in the early nineties and by 1893 banks were closing, debts were unpaid and mortgages were foreclosed. Many who had cheerfully paid for the education of their family could now hardly keep them in the most basic necessities. By 1894 there were only 125 boys in the school and this had fallen to 100 in 1898.

While the financial crash had much to do with this, others thought that it was not the only reason. In 1895 the father of a seventeen-year-old boy complained that his son was caned with far more vigour than seemed reasonable, and it was suggested that the drop in enrolments was partly due to the strictness of the discipline and the modest academic results.

In 1899 two Council members proposed that Robson be asked to leave. The motion was defeated, and its proposers resigned instead, but it was clear that Robson's relationship with the Council had changed significantly. When they asked him to move back into School House he did so even though he had previously resisted the suggestion.

The falling enrolments, however, put the school under considerable financial stress and in 1899 Robson decided to sack the school sergeant in order to save money. The work he did could, he thought, be carried out by the rest of the staff. Not surprisingly, this caused resentment and outright hostility amongst the teaching staff and in resolving the problem Council elected to support them instead of Robson.

Lacking the support of both the Council and his staff, Ernest Robson resigned his position and left the school at the end of 1900. His successor was Charles Henry Hodges.

Hodges had been born in England in 1853 and had graduated from Queen's College, Oxford, in 1876. He was a good rower and also



Charles Hodges, second
Headmaster of Shore from 1900
to 1910, with his wife.

represented Oxford in inter-varsity competitions as a shot-putter for four years. After leaving Queen's, Hodges taught at Radley for three years before moving to Rugby. By 1888 he was troubled by ill health and was advised to seek a better climate. Although he could then have applied for the headmastership of Shore (and may well have done so), he settled further north as headmaster of Townsville Grammar School and achieved a fine reputation there.

When he arrived at Shore in 1901 he brought his wife and her sister, Nellie Hawtrey, both of whom were to make a large contribution to his success.

The immediate task that confronted Hodges was simply defined. He had to rebuild the finances of the school now that the economic crisis had passed, and he had to rebuild the confidence of staff and public after the bitterness of Robson's departure. The Council, perhaps as a result of its experience with Robson, now went out of its way to help Hodges and seemed equally determined to do its own share of rebuilding as soon as possible.

Some aspects of the school, such as the enthusiasm for sport, did not change, but others did. Almost immediately Hodges set out to improve the academic standard. He produced a new prospectus and advertised the school widely. In 1903 he introduced a Modern Form for those who joined the school too late to take Latin and who therefore looked for an education more suitable for a commercial or country life than an academic one. At the same time he returned to a more classical grammar education for those who did the full course with university in mind.

By the end of 1902 the numbers had grown to two hundred and reached three hundred in the next two years and Shore could think that the future might be more certain than it had been. Even so, there was little emphasis on building or acquiring extra land. Hodges was a fervent supporter for the building of a chapel and even drew plans and started a fund, but it was still far beyond the resources he commanded. Instead, he built a new dining room on what is now the paved area at the back of School House, and a library and a new classroom which was joined to the existing block with an arch that gave access to the playground beyond. At the suggestion of the Old Boys' Union the library commemorated the Old Boys who had served in South Africa and served as a memorial to the three who died.

In his first few years as headmaster Hodges recruited to the staff a number of masters who, in their different ways, were to make a large contribution to the school. A. H. Yarnold was the first Old Boy to join the staff. He arrived in 1901 and left in 1904 to start a prep. school at Mosman which in turn provided Shore with many new boys. R. G. H. Walmsley also arrived in 1901 and stayed with the school for the next forty-five

years. H. H. Dixon came in 1902 and stayed until his death in 1938. J. R. O. Harris came in 1904 and stayed until he took up a headmastership in 1929. J. Lee Pulling also came in 1904 and stayed until he retired in 1938. And Iven MacKay arrived in 1905 and made a very significant contribution in the five years he spent at Shore.

At that time the school day started at 7.40, when the bell rang for morning prayers. The school assembled in the hall and as the organ played Hodges and his wife joined them. There was a hymn and prayers and after the teachers had left the boys went to their classes. After two lessons there was a fifteen-minute break at 11 o'clock and this was followed by two more lessons until the lunch break at 12.30. Charles Hodges and his wife usually joined the boys for this meal in the dining room but usually had the rest of their meals in their own quarters. They often had two or three boarders to breakfast on Sunday morning which was much appreciated by those invited. After lunch lessons started again at 1.30 and went on until 3.30.

Each class had a form master and most teachers concentrated on their own subjects so that a class would have a variety of teachers during the day. All boys did English and Maths and most did Latin and French. Some also did History, Geography, Physics and Geology and a few did German and Greek. Chemistry, it seems, was not then part of the curriculum. Hodges also taught classes and brought an informality and enthusiasm that many boys enjoyed. Dressed in a stiff shirt and collar, he would often sit beside a boy and help him to understand a point that had eluded him. Or he would stand at the board and attack an algebra problem with rapidly moving chalk. 'This kills that, this one comes upstairs, this comes downstairs and . . . X equals 14.7.' He would then turn to the class with a beam on his face and say, 'Now isn't that delightful?'

By 1903 there were so many boarders that School House was barely able to accommodate them all and David Davies and his wife started a boarding house at Cartref on the corner of Harriott Street and Bay Road. The following year Lee Pulling started to take boarders at Bishopsgate. Boarders moved into these houses with the permission of the school but paid their boarding fees directly to the housemaster, who took the financial responsibility and, if he were lucky, the profit.

The tradition of 'mill on' was already established by this time, although one boy recalls that most were deliberately created as a diversion and that genuine hot-blooded disputes were rare. About 1906 Hodges insisted that anyone wishing to fight had to collect boxing gloves from the sergeant major, who would then act as referee.

There was, however, no school uniform. All that was required was that each boy wore the school badge and had a blue and white ribbon around his hat or cap. Most masters wore full academic dress during the day.

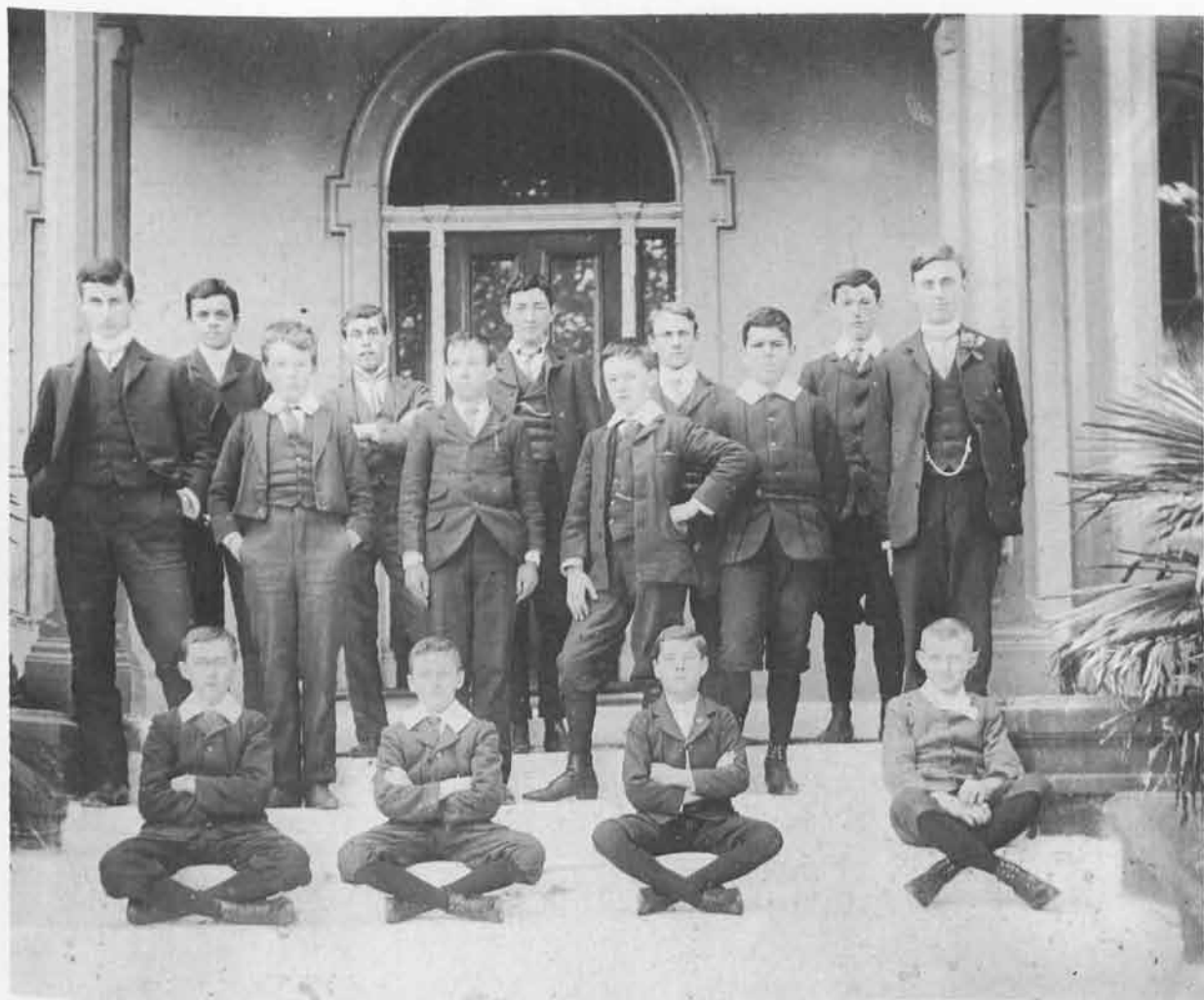
In his report in 1909 Hodges wrote with obvious pride of the school's first twenty years. During that time Shore had slowly matured and few now doubted that its future was reasonably secure. The following year, however, Charles Hodges's doctor advised him to retire because the illness that had troubled him when he was younger had now reasserted itself. He followed the advice and at the end of the second term in 1910 Charles Hodges, his wife and Miss Hawtrey left the school and retired to Orange. The *Torch Bearer* said: 'The headmaster who is leaving us has been endowed for his work with a commanding presence, high attainments and a keen insight into and sympathy with human nature.' The school was certainly far different from the one he had inherited in 1901.

Perhaps the greatest tribute to Charles Hodges was that the Council allowed him to recommend his own successor, which he did without hesitation. The third headmaster of Shore was to be William Alexander Purves. He had also attended Queen's College, Oxford, and after teaching in England he had joined Hodges at Townsville Grammar School as second master. In 1898 he moved to Melbourne Church of England Grammar School as senior classical master and in 1900 he joined Toowoomba Grammar School as headmaster. Hodges said that his character and teaching record were so good that he deserved to be selected 'without public competition'. Council agreed and Purves was appointed headmaster of Shore on Hodges's recommendation.

Purves was a keen admirer of Hodges, indeed they were now close friends, and it was clear that he intended to follow the same direction that Hodges had set and to build on his success. By now the North Shore had developed considerably. Ferry services were frequent and efficient and trains and trams served the residential areas that were now being established. The school was accessible from most of Sydney and as its numbers had increased, so had its reputation. In January 1911 the 1600th boy enrolled at Shore.

With the school secure and successful, Purves was convinced that it was time to do something that his predecessors had often thought about but had been unable to achieve. It was time to build a chapel. A fund had been established for some time and had been fairly well supported but it was not until 1912 that the school had sufficient resources of its own to make the idea practical. Now, a design by Burcham Clamp was approved by Council and on 4 May 1914, the twenty-fifth birthday of the school, the foundation stone was laid by the Archbishop of Sydney, Dr Wright. The chapel was dedicated twelve months later, to the day, and the first service was held on 13 May 1915, Ascension Day.

By then, however, World War I was already ten months old and its effect was deep and inescapable. In 1914 a small force of about battalion



strength, the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Force, was sent to occupy the German colonies of New Britain and New Guinea. There were several Old Boys in this force and one of them, Captain Brian Pockley, became the first Australian to be killed in the war.

By the time the war ended 981 Old Boys had served and 123 of them gave their lives. Masters served too. Dixon and Harris served with the infantry in France and two young members of the staff, Fornachon and Abernethy were killed. Meanwhile Old Boys turned up at school wearing uniforms and one, Lt. Littler, gave 'a short but interesting account of a soldier's life in France'. It was as good a description of the life itself as it was of his talk.

A group of Shore boys in 1903. At least one of them, Knight-Barnett (second from right in the centre row), was killed during the First World War.

Overleaf: The boatshed at Berrys Bay.



As the war went on, the growing list of casualties was read out in the chapel so frequently that those present found that they could remember the names in their sequence for years afterwards. And each issue of the *Torch Bearer* recorded the experiences of Old Boys in faraway places and paid its own tribute to those who fell. There were so many of them that they had to be brief. One said:

James Blackwood
Born July, 1896
Entered the School 1907
Left 1914
Junior 1912, Medal in Latin,
Athletic Blazer, 1914, 3rd Crew 1914
Brian Pockley Memorial Prize 1914
Senior 1914, Medal in Latin
Leaving Certificate 1914.
L-Corp in Cadets.
Hon. Sec. for Athletic Sports
Senior Prefect
Died of wounds in France, December 1916.

With such promise James Blackwood's life might well have been interesting. One hopes so because it was certainly short. His parents later gave the school a gift to fund a laboratory in his name and his death and their gift are recorded on a tablet on the wall of the former laboratory and which is now the outside of the bursar's office.

There is no doubt that the war years put a great strain on Purves and the older members of the staff. David Davies, for example, had been at the school for nearly thirty years and he had taught every boy whose name now appeared on the casualty list. Others might not have known them all but the tragedy was no less keenly felt. The pleasure of completing the chapel was overshadowed when the walls and windows started to fill with memorials to those who would not return.

There were also to be memorials of a different kind. In 1916 Purves rode his bicycle over much of the lower North Shore in search of land that could be bought for playing fields. With the school as large as it was the school grounds were quite inadequate for organised sport and there were signs that the public grounds that were then being used might not always be available. Purves eventually succeeded in finding suitable land at Northbridge. The first 4 hectares were bought in 1917 and a slightly larger adjoining area was bought in 1919. Dedicated to the memory of those who fell in the war, the Memorial Playing Fields were officially opened in 1919 and many of their features were donated by parents as individual memorials.



W. A. Purves, the third
Headmaster of Shore
from 1910 to 1922.

One of the early attempts to raise funds to build a chapel. This letter was sent in 1906. The design shown at the top of the letter was not the one that was eventually built.

Proposed
Chapel



Prize Design by
Mr. John Dunstan

*The Sydney Church of England Grammar School,
North Sydney,*

September 12th, 1906.

Dear _____

It has long been felt that, although fairly complete in most of its secular aspects, the School cannot be considered fully to perform its educational duty without more adequate provision for the religious needs of its pupils. In the School House and the Houses of Assistant Masters there are now about eighty boarders, and the day boys number over two hundred and thirty. No other Church of England school of equal standing, is without a properly equipped School Chapel, which is in daily use and of great benefit to the whole school life.

The Council is convinced that such a long-desired addition to the School structure cannot be further delayed. They have therefore invited architectural designs in an open competition of which the sketch above has taken the prize. The estimated cost of such a building, completely finished and furnished, is £3,500.

The Council, having the matter very much at heart, has promised to provide £1,000 of the amount required, so soon as sufficient donations have been received to warrant the construction being undertaken. They therefore earnestly appeal for the co-operation of past and present members and all the many friends of the School to raise the necessary sum.

The cordial support of the Old Boys' Union has already been obtained, and a joint committee of the Council and the Union, consisting of

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| The Rev. CANON SHARP, M.A. | Mr. A. F. ROBINSON |
| The Rev. A. YARNOLD | Mr. A. B. S. WHITE |
| The Rev. D. DAVIES, M.A. | Mr. J. F. FITZHARDINGE |
| His Honour JUDGE BACKHOUSE | Mr. H. P. HARRIOTT |

and Mr. E. R. HOLME

has been appointed to act with the Headmaster in making known and otherwise furthering the Council's intention.

Subscription lists are now open and donations will be thankfully acknowledged by the Hon. Treasurer to the Council, Mr. A. F. Robinson, Bond Street, Sydney, or by the Headmaster or the Rev. D. Davies, Hon. Treasurer to the Old Boys' Union, at the School.

FOR THE CHAPEL JOINT-COMMITTEE

J. F. FITZHARDINGE
E. R. HOLME

Hon. Secs.

By this time rowing was a major sport at Shore and, like the school grounds, the facilities were now quite inadequate. Land was found at Looking Glass Bay in Gladesville and plans prepared for a large boat shed. Although funds had already been raised, Russell Sinclair offered to endow the shed as a memorial to his son Eric, who had rowed in three winning crews, in 1913–14–15, and who had been killed in 1918. The shed is still known as the Eric Russell Sinclair Memorial Boat Shed.

At the same time a bequest of £10000 was received under the will of Sir Samuel McCaughey, even though he was not an Old Boy of Shore. Some of this money was used in 1920 to build a third storey on the classroom block and the following year two floors of dormitories were built at School House. By the start of 1922 there were 530 boys at the school.

Purves's technique as headmaster was kindly rather than tyrannical. If a boy was ordered to report to him as a result of a misdemeanour he was likely to find that Purves would start an amiable conversation with no reference to the matter in hand. Eventually Purves would tell the boy that he knew why he was there but he thought there was no need to say more about it as he knew the boy would keep it in mind. The boy, flattered by this gentlemanly approach, usually did.

Like his predecessors, Purves was able to recruit some outstanding and long-serving masters to serve the growing school. E. M. Bagot arrived in 1916 and stayed until 1953. C. S. Tiley served from 1917 to 1957 and I. F. Jones served from 1921 to 1964. Two, R. P. Franklin and the Reverend R. E. Freeth, went from Shore to take up headmasterships.

William Purves, who had presided over the school during the tragedy of the war but who nevertheless had succeeded in building the chapel and the Northbridge playing fields, asked to be allowed to retire at the end of 1922 and Council reluctantly agreed. 'As an educationalist he has made his mark, but the School will always feel grateful to him, not only for his professional acquirements, but for his worthy ideals and the great and good influence he had upon its life in all its phases.'

His successor, L. C. Robson, was the first Australian-born headmaster of Shore and during his long reign he was to leave an indelible impression on the thousands of boys who passed through the school in his time, as these pages will show. He was the Chief to all of them and his achievements are beyond the scope of this brief account of the history of the school.

Robson was born in 1894 and attended Sydney Grammar School in the last days of Weigall before going to the University of Sydney where he graduated with first class honours in Mathematics. He joined the First AIF in 1915 and the following year, while overseas, he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship. He won the Military Cross in 1918 and after the war took up

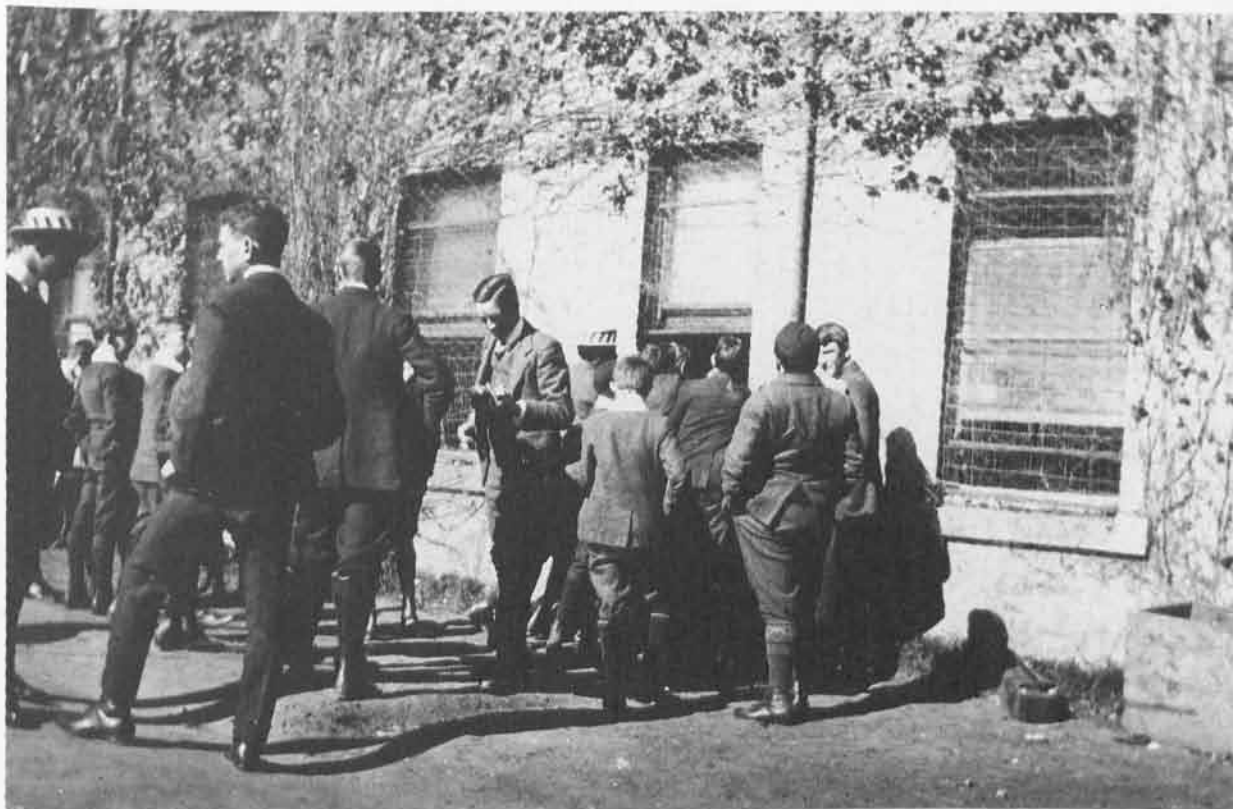
his scholarship at Oxford, where he again graduated with first class honours in Mathematics in 1920. On his return to Australia he became senior Maths master at Geelong Grammar and it was from there that, at the age of twenty-eight, he took up his appointment as headmaster of Shore in January 1923.

His firm control of the school was apparent from the start but it was, as he himself might have said, without vulgarity or ostentation. Change was not immediate but when it came it was to have a lasting effect. Chemistry, which in 1923 had been taught only up to Intermediate level, was extended in 1924 to Leaving Certificate Honours standard, and honours were now encouraged in a much wider range of subjects. More visible, though, was the introduction of the boater which came into use at the start of 1924.

As Robson arrived, so some of the older masters reached their retirement. Notable was David Davies. He retired in 1924 and the boarding house he had run privately was bought by the school and renamed Hodges. During the same year, by coincidence, a young and inexperienced master called Pat Eldershaw joined the staff although at first he had little intention of staying for very long. The retirement of old masters drew attention to the fact that their superannuation was very inadequate. A private fund called the Torchbearer Fund had been established through the initiative of the Old Boys' Union in 1914 but it proved almost impossible to obtain donations during the war. In 1926 an insurance-based fund was set up under the same name and contributions were made from school funds.

In 1924 Robson proposed that the school establish its own prep. school. Council agreed and in 1925 bought the former nurses home of Graythwaite, called Upton Grange, for this purpose. The prep. school opened in 1926 with the Reverend Freeth as headmaster and 98 boys, of whom 23 were boarders, in what was later called Purves House. Since then the lowest secondary classes of the main school have traditionally consisted of boys from the prep. school together with a slightly greater number of boys new to the school.

In spite of Robson's academic brilliance and his undoubted skill as a rowing coach he came under considerable pressure from some Old Boys because of the lack of sporting achievements by the school. Shore had not won the Head of the River since 1915 and these Old Boys thought that one of the major activities of the school was declining to an alarming level. A committee was formed to investigate it and relations between the Old Boys and Robson were at first acrimonious and then positively hostile. In 1928 Robson, who coached the eight, wrote out his letter of resignation and placed it in his desk drawer before the Head of the River was held on 21



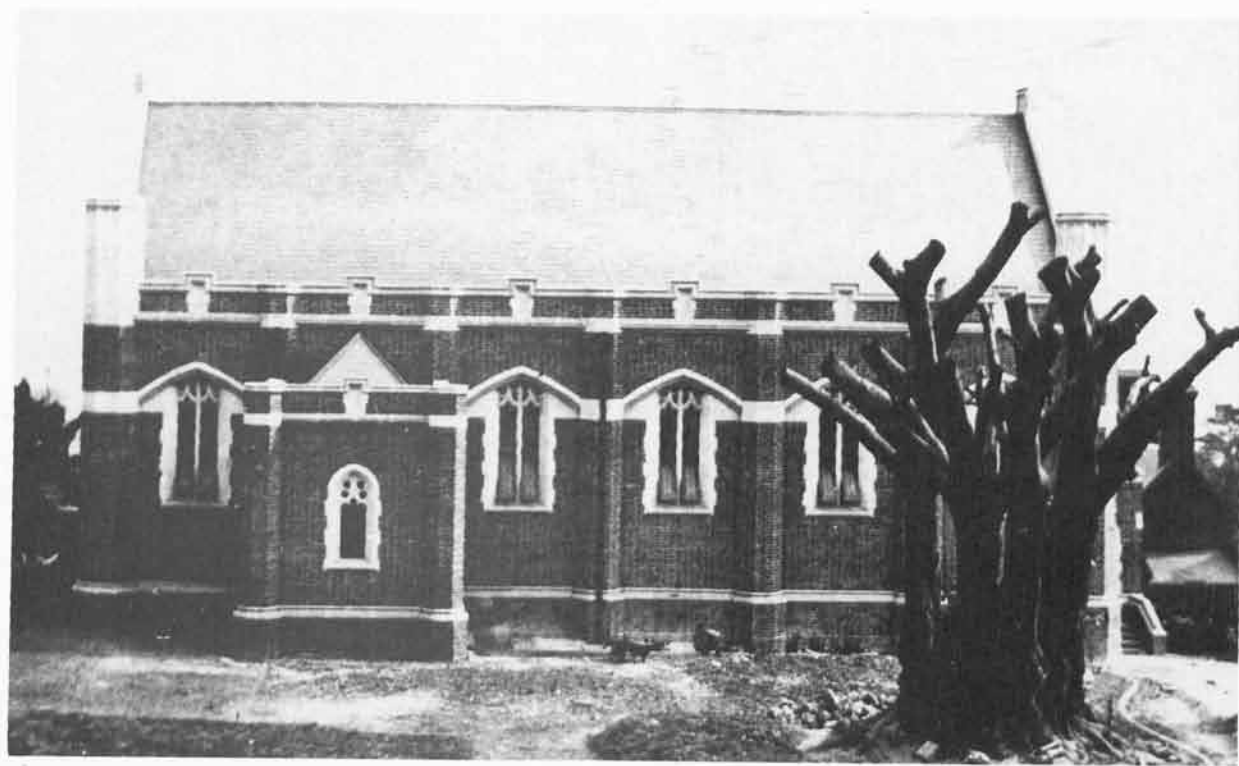
The Tuckshop as it was in 1912.

April. Shore beat Sydney Grammar by three-quarters of a length and no more was heard of the problem or his resignation. It is difficult to think that Council would have accepted it even if the result had been different.

By now two factors about the school were obvious. One was that it would remain at its location in North Sydney (although other alternatives had been recently considered). The other was that expansion would always be difficult. Graythwaite, which had been turned into a hospital during the war, blocked any development to the west and the remaining boundaries were lined with privately owned properties. In 1928 Council bought several of these as they became available and that policy has been maintained since then. In the following year the present Hodges House was bought and adapted as a boarding house and it was opened at the beginning of 1930 with Ned Bagot as housemaster. By then Robson House was already in its present location, 'Pinwherry' having been bought in 1925. It opened the following year with Mr Harris in charge. Other changes were a new dining hall, which was started in 1929, and the remodelling of School House.

Overleaf: The Chapel in 1918.





The Chapel in 1915. The photograph was taken by A. N. Eedy, who was confirmed in the first Confirmation Service, held on All Saints' Day in 1915.

The onset of the Depression not only brought most of the development to a halt, but it also put the school under financial stress once more. In 1930 the school started with 200 boarders but by September they had been reduced to 181. When Robson returned in 1931 from a visit to England boarders were down to 156 and by the start of 1932 there were only 115. In 1931 Barry House was closed and its boarders distributed through the remaining houses. The loss in fees was considerable, but the Depression had a much wider effect than that. Jobs for school leavers were difficult to find and the Old Boys' Union actively helped by finding jobs for about two hundred boys.

In 1930 Council decided to register the school coat of arms with the Royal College of Herald's but soon found that, successful though the original design of E. I. Robson had been within the school, it was not heraldically correct as it had two identical quarters and so did not satisfy the requirements of the Royal College. After discussions with the Old Boy's Union the arms were altered to their present form and they were accepted by the College in 1932. By then they had already come into use within the school and had appeared on the *Torch Bearer* in December 1931.

By 1933 the worst of the Depression was over and development work was restarted. Robson House was remodelled that year and in 1934 a great deal of work was done on School House. It was badly needed as by now the first floor alone consisted of seven different levels. Indeed, the possibility of demolishing the building was seriously considered but it had such a fundamental link with the school that Council thought it should be preserved. Most of the work was carried out in 1934. A third dormitory floor was added and the rest of the work was very extensive. On the outside, the 'old fashioned decorations' were removed from the tower and it was clad in bricks which covered the original walls. Although the new building was more practical and much admired, it had little connection with the house that Holtermann had lived in.

When School House was finished, Council drew up a comprehensive plan for further development of the teaching accommodation and this plan was particularly daring in that it foresaw use of property which the school did not then own. The first stage was carried out in 1938 when all the buildings west of the Memorial Library were demolished. These included the old hall in which the opening ceremony had taken place in 1889. A two-storeyed block of ten classrooms was built on the site with a cloister connecting it to the old building. Also in 1938 Council completed the purchase of 'Bishopsgate' and this reopened as Barry House under the control of Pat Eldershaw. Two years later four new laboratories were built adjoining the north-east corner of the main classroom block.

Although this plan was followed for many years, work was now brought to a halt by World War II. As fighting spread, Old Boys enrolled in evergrowing numbers and once again casualty lists started to appear in the *Torch Bearer*.

Life at the school continued as normally as it could and at first the war seemed very far away. It was the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and the sinking of British ships off Singapore that brought the dramatic change, for then the war seemed remarkably close. As the country mobilised so, in its small way, did the school. Funds that had been intended for development work were now used for immediate necessities, boys spent their spare time making camouflage netting, and air raid trenches were dug across the school ground and even the chapel lawn.

As a safety precaution most of the prep. school was moved to a converted pub in the Blue Mountains and it functioned better than one might have expected until, after about a year, the prospect of invasion and bombing had receded and boys and staff returned to North Sydney. There, they joined the others in trying to make textbooks last another year and cricket balls another game, for there were no replacements.

During World War II more than two thousand Old Boys served in the

forces in most theatres of war and 231 gave their lives.

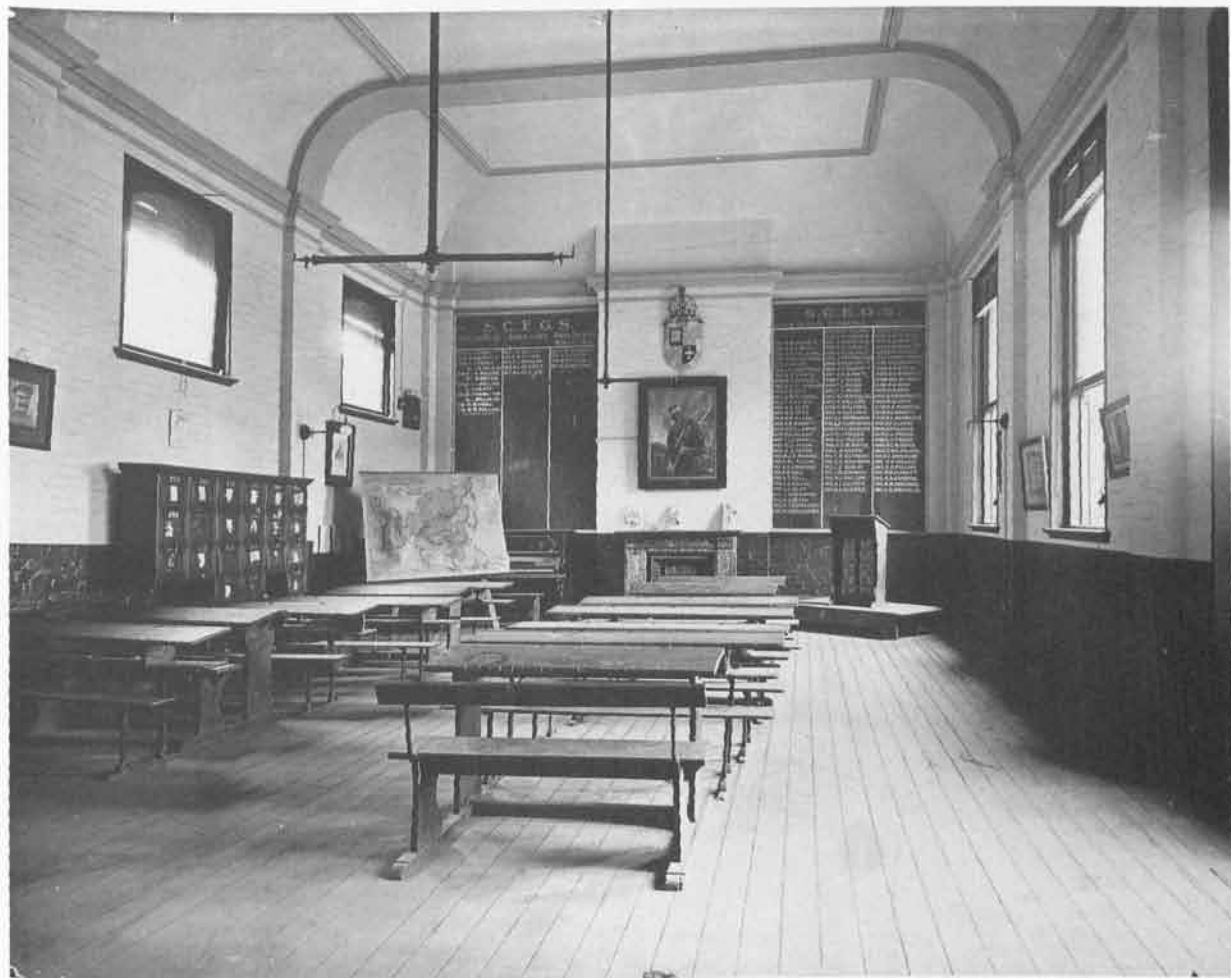
It was a long time after the war before Council could think of more building work. Resources had been stretched to the limit and as they were built up again shortages of men and materials imposed further limitations and inflation made costs soar. Council, aware that it had been impossible for a long time to gather all members of the school together in one place, had already decided that its next project would be a hall to be built as a memorial to those who fell in the war. Plans were prepared and a fund started, but the design now proved so costly that another had to be drawn up. It was 1952 before work started and by the time it was opened in 1954 by Sir William Slim it had cost nearly £70 000.

Attention then turned to the prep. school, which had hardly altered since its creation in 1926. Properties which the school owned in Lord Street were cleared and houses demolished and in 1958 work began on a new project which contained five classrooms, a large assembly room, a library, an art room and a common room.

Just as the original prep. school had been one of Robson's first projects, so its redevelopment was one of his last. He had suffered a heart attack in 1949 and his health had been uncertain ever since. He retired in 1958 after being headmaster for thirty-six years, or more than half the school's life. During that time he had controlled the school with unlimited skill and energy and had impressed thousands of boys with his passion for quality of performance and his meticulous attention to accuracy and detail. If he had, in the process, driven many of those around him almost beyond their physical and mental endurance, few doubted that the results more than justified that.

Robson had been the first Australian to be appointed headmaster of Shore and his successor, Basil Holmes Travers, was the first Old Boy to attain that position. His academic career after leaving school had been interrupted by the war, in which he served with distinction, and it was not until 1948 that he was able to take up his Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford. He had then started on a teaching career before returning to Australia. He taught at Cranbrook before being appointed headmaster of Launceston Grammar. It was from there that he returned to take up his appointment at his old school and to follow a man whom he had profoundly admired.

His career and achievements at Shore are described in some detail elsewhere in this book and need only a brief summary here. During his period of office he saw more technological and social change than his predecessors saw in a lifetime, and the effect of these on the role of headmaster was considerable. Not only had the curriculum to accept technological change, it also had to accept the consequences of political change. In 1962 the Wyndham Scheme was introduced by the



government and the course of secondary education was increased from five to six years. This additional year meant extra boys, who would need extra room and facilities and extra teachers to teach them.

In 1960 Travers had travelled overseas to study schools that used tall buildings because it was now obvious that most of the future expansion at Shore would have to be upwards. The result of this, when combined with the demands of the Wyndham Scheme, was a new multi-storeyed classroom block which was called Benefactors and which certainly would not have been built without them. In 1969, five years after the completion of Benefactors, the school embarked on an even more ambitious project, called Trident, which consisted of a large PE complex and the enlargement of Barry and Hodges houses. This was followed in 1975 by the

The School Hall in 1918. This was originally the dining room, but after 1903 it became the assembly hall and was also divided into classrooms.

third stage, the building of the present library and the Playfair Hall.

While the effect was to enlarge the school and dramatically improve its facilities, the work was not made easier by continued threats from the government to withdraw funding to independent schools. Indeed, while much of the work was being carried out the whole concept of independent schools came under question and Travers's role as headmaster included frequent, and often frustrating, meetings with those who thought such schools were an anachronism. When one of them described Shore as a fortress against change it seemed to him more like a compliment, because that was his intention.

Social changes were no less real, although at times they were much more difficult to define. In the 1960s the attitude to authority changed significantly and this continued well into the 1970s. While this was not specifically focussed on schools, the effect was that boys were now less likely to accept authority as readily as previous generations had. In many ways this was a healthy development, but because it was concentrated into a relatively short period of the 'Vietnam years' it produced a turbulence that was difficult to contain.

Travers was unyielding in his attitude and actions. The school had its traditions and they had served it well and while there might be no harm in questioning them, removing them was another matter. He believed passionately in the charter that had been drawn up so long ago and which stated that Shore had to be a 'school of the highest type in which the teaching throughout shall be in accordance with the principles of the Church of England'. Any change that did not meet that requirement, no matter how fashionable or popular, could not be considered seriously.

By the time Travers retired in 1984 he was proud to think that the charter was intact and that his fortress had indeed resisted the many attempts to change it.

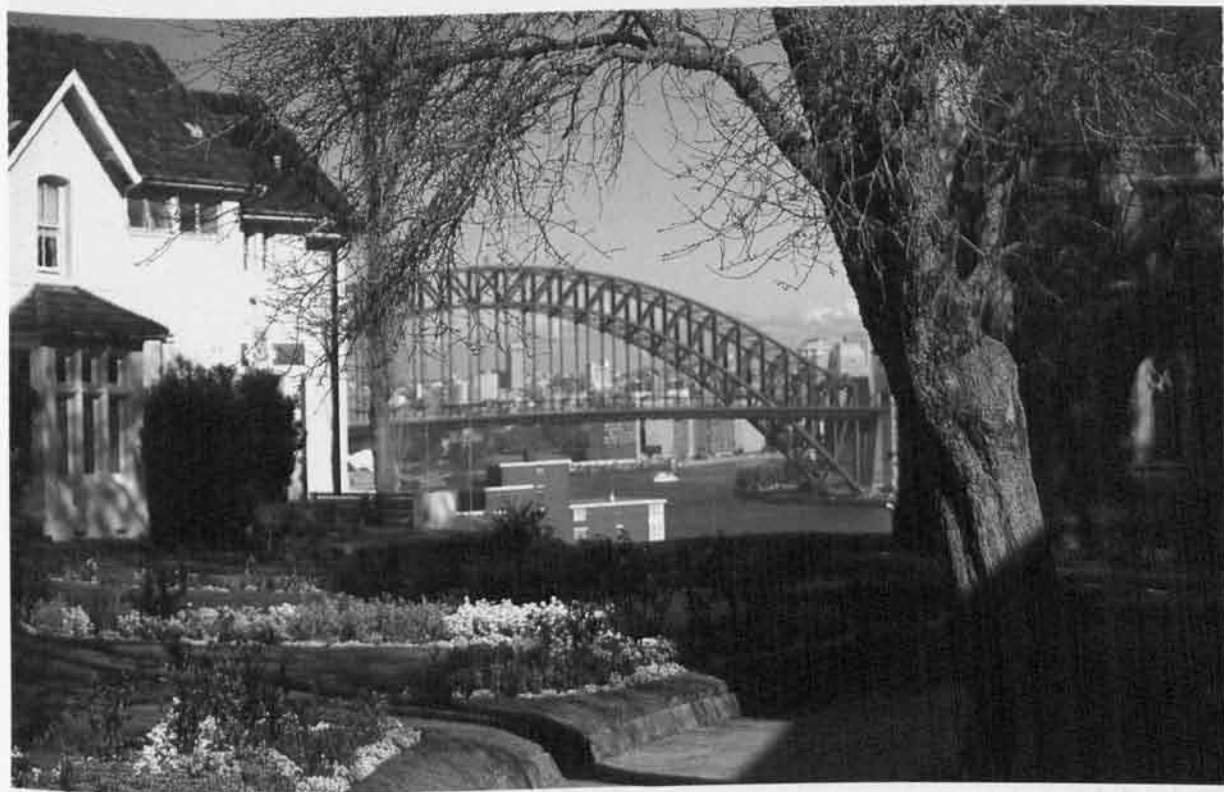
He was succeeded as headmaster by Robert A. I. Grant, who is also described elsewhere in this book. He is the sixth headmaster of Shore and he will have the privilege of helping the school to celebrate its one hundredth anniversary.

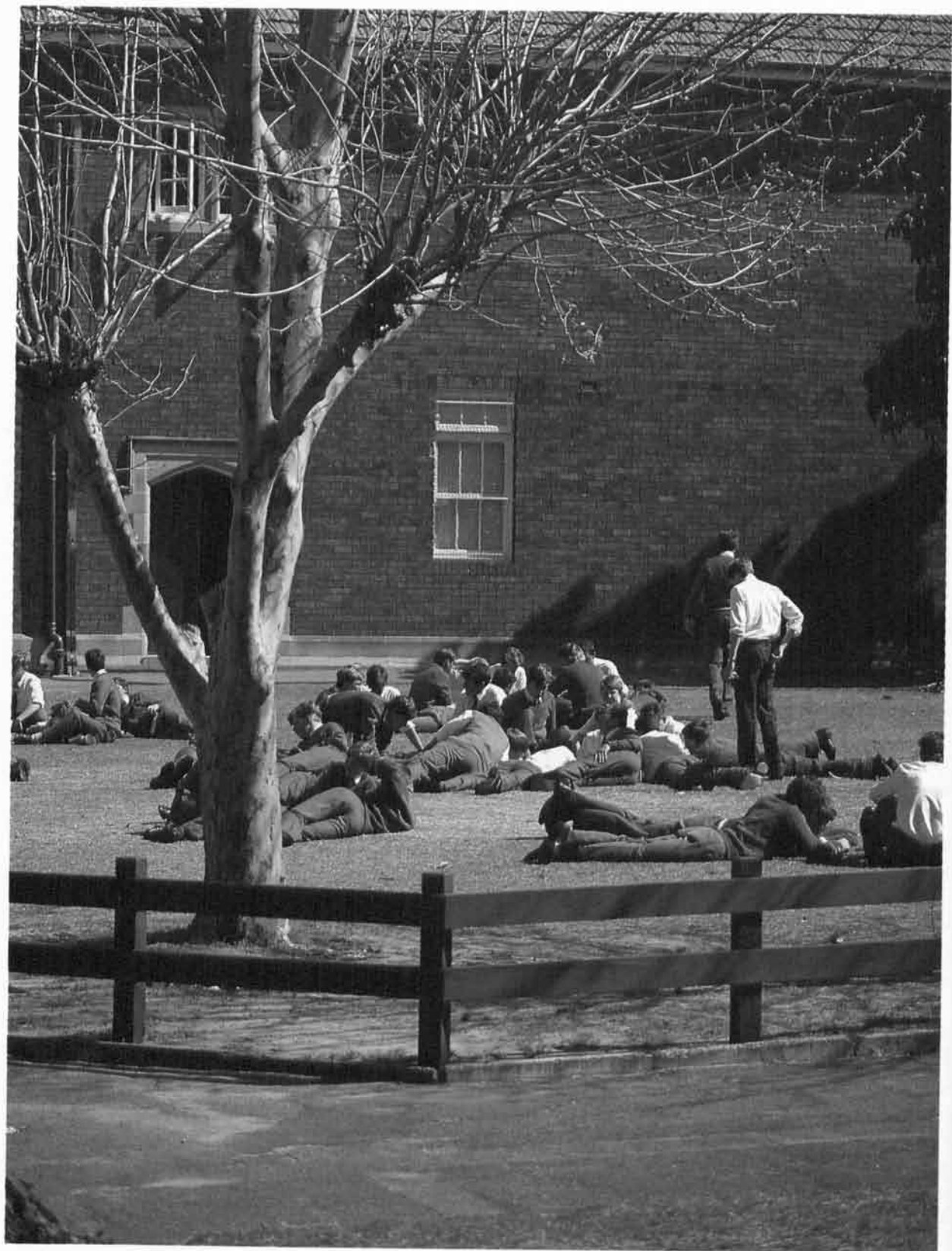
Sydney Church of England Grammar School continues to perform the function that its founders intended. It has grown in a way that they could never have envisaged, surrounded by a world that they would barely recognise, but they would be proud of the school just the same.

At the opening ceremony on that day in May in 1889 Bishop Barry said: 'I hope that when this colony should celebrate its second centenary there will be generation after generation of men who have been trained in the Church of England school and who have been real servants of God and of their country.'



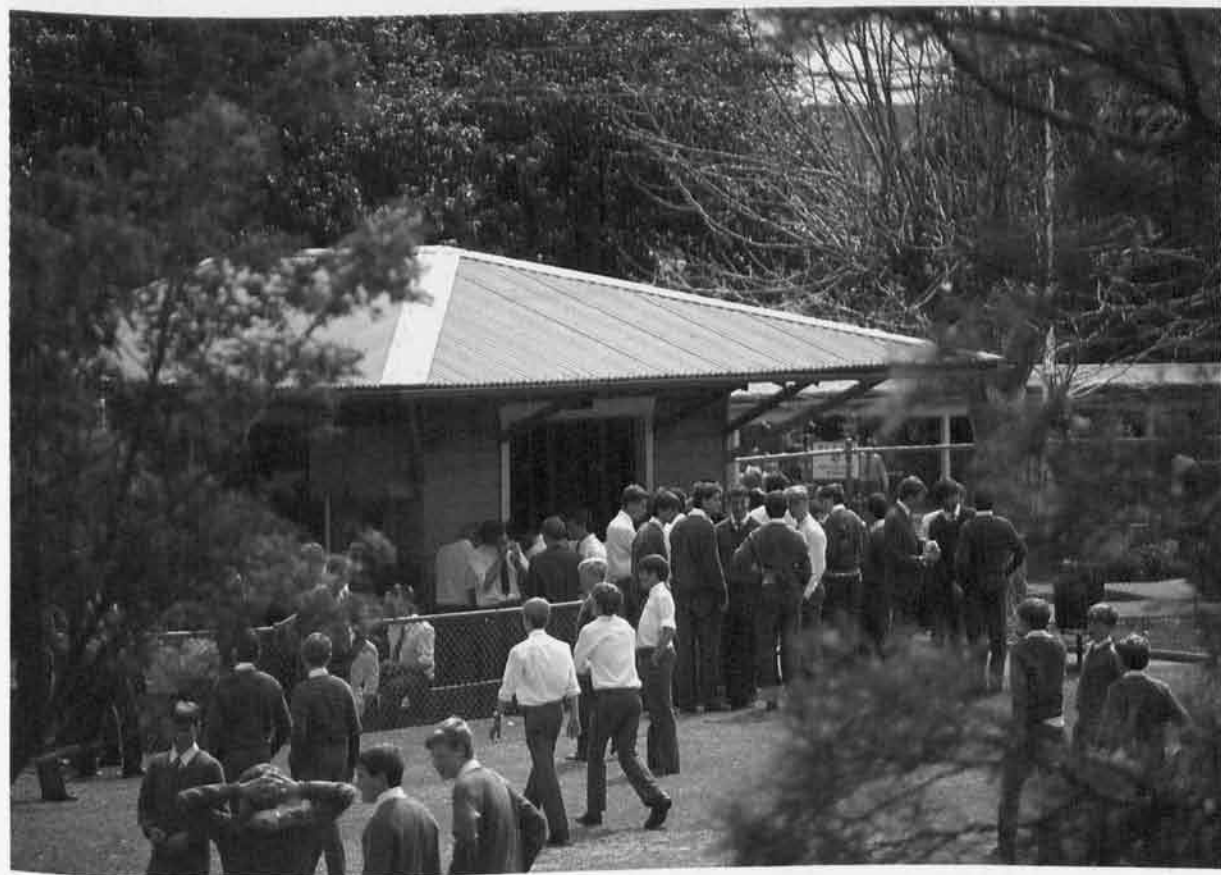
The school coat of arms on the gate, the school flag flying from the Holtermann tower and the view from the arch.







Lunch break. Relaxing for some, but busier at the tuckshop.





*Above, cadets on parade,
Speech Day 1986.
Right, the 'Bursar's Orchid', which
blooms briefly on one of the fig
trees each year.*



CHAPTER TWO

The Twenties

IN 1923 WHEN IAN DIXON was twelve years old he had two things in common with L. C. Robson. One was that they both started at Shore on the same day, although in slightly different capacities. The other, according to Dixon, was that in those early days they both seemed equally nervous.

Ian Dixon was born in Cowra in 1910 and although he was christened John after his father the confusion soon became too great for the family and so they adopted the Scottish version of the same name and he has been known as Ian ever since.

His father was a private surveyor and he worked from home, where he had a large orchard about 11 kilometres west of Koorawatha. He had established the orchard with the intention of retiring from surveying but the trees he planted needed to grow for a few years before they would bear fruit in quantity and so he continued his work as a surveyor. At that time many people in New South Wales were buying, selling or subdividing properties and they needed accurate surveys of boundaries. This survey work often covered hundreds of square kilometres and many kilometres of survey lines. Gathering his men and equipment, he would leave the orchard on a job that might take weeks to complete. When he had finished he would return to his trees until the next job arrived. He had a reasonably good income, but it depended entirely on the jobs coming in and, later, the fruit crop.

The first schooling Ian Dixon had was on the family property. There were several children living on the neighbouring properties and his father made a schoolroom in the stables and put one of his surveyor's camp stoves in it for the cold inland winters. For two years a young lady came from Greenthorpe to teach them and she lived with one of the families during the week.

But there was plenty of time to do other things. Ian and his younger brother set rabbit traps in the surrounding paddocks and examined them at first light to collect the results. They sold the rabbit skins and used the money to buy ammunition. When they were in funds they would disappear, barefoot, for a full day's rifle shooting to get even more rabbits.

When they became old enough for more formal schooling his father and

the neighbours organised a horse bus to take the children to the primary school at Koorawatha. It was only 11 kilometres away, but the trip took nearly an hour each way. Sometimes they jumped out, ran across the paddocks, and arrived home before the horse.

It was a good school, particularly in the last year when the teaching was done by the very able headmaster. His son, who was also at the school, eventually became general manager of the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney. Primary school went up to twelve, when those wishing to go to high school had to pass the Qualifying Certificate. Few at Koorawatha took this seriously, not because they lacked intelligence but because they were needed to work. Those who succeeded usually went to high school at Young or Cowra. But not Ian Dixon. His uncle, H. H. Dixon, was a master at Shore, and that was where he was to go.

As the train took him to Sydney as a twelve-year-old boy, Ian Dixon had no strong views about his immediate future. He was a fairly phlegmatic boy and used to doing what he was told.

He was to live with an aunt at Turramurra whose husband was also a surveyor. His aunt was a reserved woman, saddened by the death of her two oldest sons during the war, and Ian Dixon did not know her very well.

On his first day at Shore Ian Dixon caught an early train to be sure of being on time. He remembers that first parade. 'The archway was there and so was the asphalt, but this was before the cloister was built. Steps ran up the side of the building, hugging the wall, to the entrance to the Memorial Library, which is now the masters common room. We were ranged up by Sergeant Major Davidson, "Onkus", who I later found to be a great man in many ways. He lined us up, with the new boys at the bottom of the parade, and the new headmaster dashed up the steps and addressed us. That was Robson. He was wearing an academic gown—the first I had seen—and it flapped around his long legs, a sight that was to become very familiar. I can't remember what he said. I think I was just waiting for a sheepdog to bark to tell me where to go next.'

At that time there were about five hundred boys in the school. There was no prep. school although the one in Mosman run by an Old Boy and previous master at Shore, Yarnold, sent many boys to Shore though it never had any official connection with the school. Apart from that, boys came from all points of the compass.

Because of this diversity, the previous education of new boys could range from the formal to almost none at all and the school had to respond to widely different needs. The secondary course lasted five years, but some newcomers were not ready to start that. 'These formed one group which was the very bottom of the earth, pushed around by everybody, known as the second form. This was where the arrant beginners, whose education



F. J. Davidson, 'Onkus', who was sergeant-major from 1911 until 1940.

did not qualify them to start the five years, began. They had to be licked into shape and, because I had not done any foreign languages at Koorawatha, that is where I started.'

Dixon was neither homesick nor lonely and settled in fairly quickly. He learnt to keep out of trouble and to avoid the occasional bully. He soon realised that it was better to be seen and not heard than to draw too much attention. He learnt Latin and French in the second form and two years later won the French prize for the lower school, although he was never any good at it later.

He also learnt something of the masters. One day during his first year he was sitting next to the aisle in class and started joking with the boy next to him. The master had gone down to the back of the room and Dixon did not hear him coming back. The next he knew was when he was picking himself up off the floor. The master had come up behind him quietly and swung the flat of his hand against Dixon's ear with so much force that it lifted him right out of his desk and sent him sprawling. He thought it was pretty uncouth, but on reflection saw the point. He had been doing what he should not have been doing, and the alternative punishment was either a Friday drill or a Saturday detention, and both would have been worse.

By this time the school had its own tuckshop and it was run by the school carpenter, 'Devil' Hall, known to many Shore boys especially because of his skill at climbing the flagpole on top of the tower to impress new boys. Robin Slessor remembers how difficult it was to get served at the tuckshop when he was at school in 1917.

'It was like the old Eton wall game,' he says. 'You went in at one end, your feet left the ground and Devil Hall served a sea of hands clutching threepenny pieces. I was rather small and overawed by bigger boys, but I liked chocolate mice. When the tuckshop window opened I joined the rush and was always swept off my feet, revolving around until I passed the window and came out the other side without having been served. I would join the queue again and the same thing would happen two or three times before Devil Hall heard my plaintive cry of "one mouse, please" and a sticky chocolate mouse was pressed into my hot little hand.'

While he was living with his aunt at Turramurra, Ian Dixon travelled to school down the North Shore line, which then used steam trains. He walked to the station at Turramurra and caught the train to Milsons Point station, which was the point from which the ferries crossed the harbour. There was no railway station in North Sydney at that time. From Milsons Point he caught a tram that ran up Miller Street on its way to Northbridge or Mosman and which dropped him at North Sydney post office. One could, of course, save money by walking up from Milsons Point or by getting off the train at the previous station of Waverton, then called Bay

Road, and walking to school from there. The problem with this route was that one might be abused by local boys who thought Shore boys were a fair target.

Courtesy on public transport was rigid. A boy would always give his seat to a woman. Always. And he would offer it to any man who was old enough to be uncomfortable standing. Which, to a boy of Dixon's age, was probably anybody over twenty.

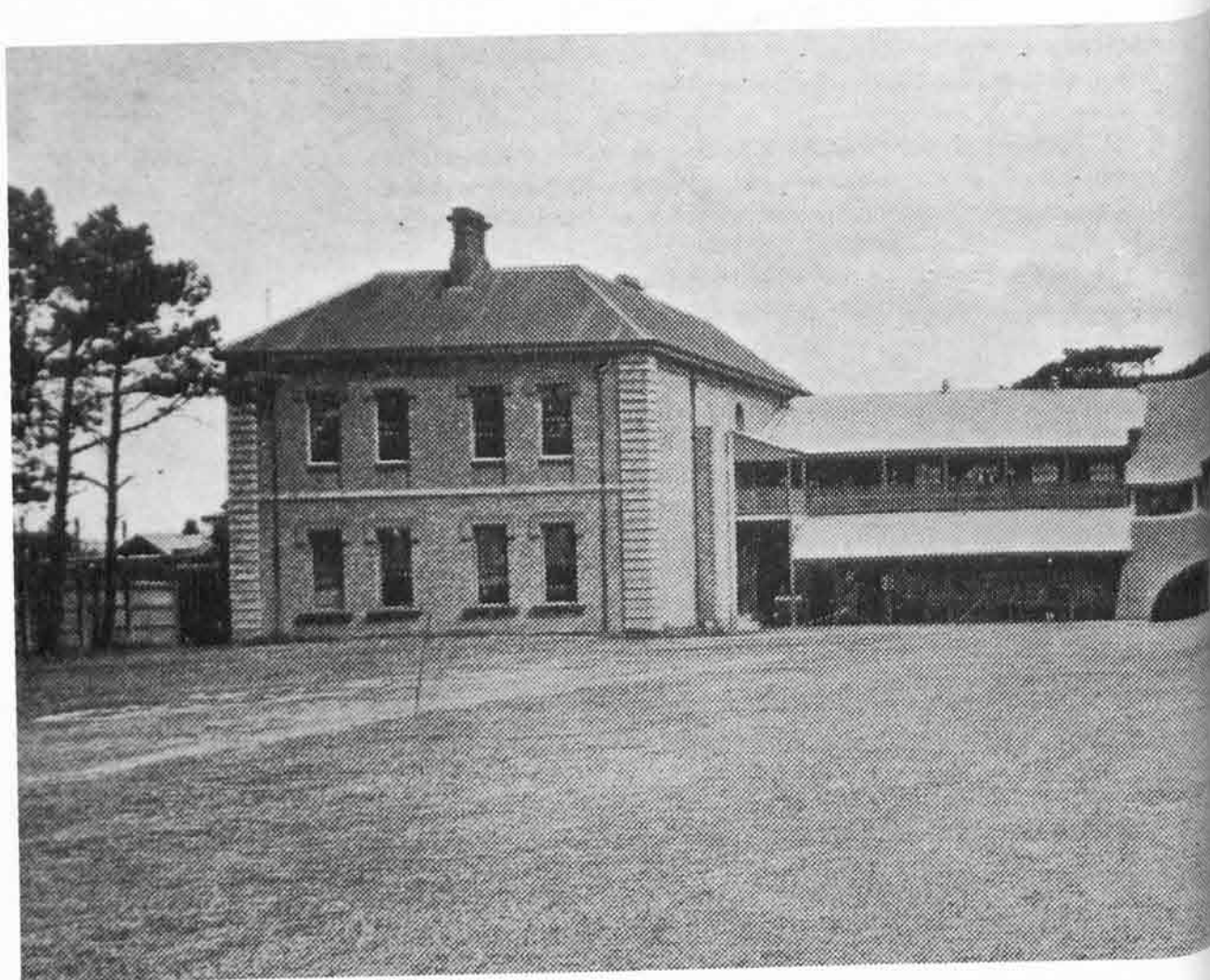
In 1925, after being at the school for two years, Ian Dixon became a boarder so that his younger brother Keith, who was about to join the school, could take his place with his aunt. Dixon moved into the house in Bay Road called Cartref which had been run as a school boarding house by the Reverend Davies. The school had recently bought it from him and it was now run as Hodges House with Mr Bagot in charge. Bagot had been master of School House, but he had married at the end of 1924 and as the School House master had in those times to be single the move to Hodges was very convenient for him.

As an experienced housemaster, Bagot had little difficulty organising his new house, even though many of the Cartref boys had left school during the changeover. His wife soon settled into her new role and, like most housemasters' wives, became friend and adviser to those in need. But that role was not hers alone. The matron also showed great kindness, especially to younger boys who might have difficulty adjusting to life away from home.

There were about twenty boys in the house when Dixon started, and all but three were new arrivals. They found the facilities were far from luxurious, but in those days few expected great comfort. The common room had a table in the middle which, in spite of the deep war scars it carried, was used for ping pong, and there was another room which doubled as a dining room and a prep room. The bedrooms were upstairs and the bathroom had a lead-covered floor and three cold showers. There were no studies, not even for the head of the house. The house was about a kilometre from the school and as the boys had to race backwards and forwards to have their midday meal they covered this route four times a day.

The three boys who had been in the house before Bagot took over were Plaskitt, who rowed in the eight and who left a few months later, Schroder and Mort, who was about eighteen years old, a good footballer and then head of the house. Mort came from Queensland and was already so mature that Bagot happily left the day-to-day control of the house to him. He was an amiable boy of positive character and had little need to exert his authority, but when he did none of the younger boys thought of arguing.

One morning after breakfast Dixon was standing at the foot of the steps



to the garden when he saw Bagot and Mort talking together under the pepper trees nearby. He heard Bagot say to Mort that somebody was smoking in the lavatories in the morning and would Mort look into it. Mort said he did not think that could be happening but Bagot said he was sure of it as he had smelled the smoke. 'Bagot knew very well who was doing the smoking. We all did. Mort had probably mustered cattle since he was ten, and might have been smoking since then. But it was a good way of handling it.'

After the three older boys had left, Ian Dixon and a boy from Cootamundra called Gibb became house prefects at the same time. Bagot continued to let them run the house with little formal direction and Dixon



soon found that there was plenty to do, especially when Gibb was called home not long afterwards. The main job in the house was keeping order and taking the other boys for prep, both of which took time which could otherwise have been spent on his own work even though he had no study.

He has no doubt that the boarders 'thought they were the school'.

Dixon soon developed a keen interest in sport after he became a boarder although at first he had no particular skills—'you didn't get them at Koorawatha primary'. His first attempts at cricket and football were depressing although skills did develop later. The sport that came most readily to him was, not surprisingly, rifle shooting. At first this was done at a range near Fullers Bridge in Chatswood but later they used the range

The school as it was about 1920.

at Long Bay. To reach it they had to get to Milsons Point, cross the harbour by ferry, take a tram to Botany and then walk from there. Later a friend of his obtained his driving licence and after that he had a lift all the way from Cartref, which in those days was luxury of a very high order.

The range at Long Bay was much more windswept than that at Chatswood and they soon realised that they had to learn to cope with it. The rifles were army bolt action .303s which had been used in the war. Dixon shot in the first team for two years and during that time the team won the GPS competition.

It was Pat Eldershaw who eventually made Dixon a 'sort of' cricketer and, later, a footballer. Until Eldershaw arrived, boys who were not good had little chance of getting better. There was nobody to coach the younger boys and they had to battle to find a decent practice pitch. Eldershaw's cricket team was called the colts and it rated eighth in the school. With Eldershaw's coaching it produced many good players who later moved up the ranks.

Another person who helped Dixon as a cricketer was the captain of the second XI, Jack Vernon, who was senior prefect in 1927. After normal practice he would take Dixon and a few others on to the big oval at Northbridge and hit the ball so high they could barely see it. Their job was to catch it and after doing this twice a week for a term Dixon thought he could catch nearly anything. Sometimes he could, and sometimes he couldn't.

One time when he did was in the game against The King's School at Northbridge in the first term of 1928. The pitch was dreadful. Wickets were not covered then and after rain the pitch of Bulli soil was not much better than a glue pot. It became even more interesting when the sun started to dry it out. In these conditions Shore was glad to win the toss and put King's in to bat. King's had in their team a batsman called Terry who was so good that he was the terror of all the other teams and who rarely got out until he decided to slog. Dixon was told to field at silly point. Terry pushed forward, Dixon stuck his hand out, and Terry was out for a duck.

King's finished their innings on this terrible pitch for a total of 24 and Dixon got the Shore innings off to a bad start when he, too, was out for a duck. It was a fourteen-year-old called Ted White who, as No. 10 batsman in his first game for the first XI, saved the day for Shore with two snicked boundaries. White later went to England in the thirties as a bowler with Bradman's team.

As it happened, Terry had his revenge on Dixon during their next game, this time at Parramatta in the third term. Dixon was fielding deep on the fence between square and fine leg when Terry lofted one hard and high towards that boundary. Dixon ran like a maniac to his left and got one

hand to the ball before it fell out and dropped over the fence. The *Torch Bearer* report on the match said: 'Terry scored 230 after Dixon dropped him when he was 35.'

Dixon didn't see much of Eldershaw as a football coach until he reached the first XV in his last year at school, but he was soon grateful to him. Playing inner centre in a match against Sydney Grammar he found his opposite number was able to sidestep inside him and head for the corner. At half-time Dixon asked Eldershaw for advice. 'You are leaving too big a gap between yourself and the five-eighth. Move closer in and make this fellow run around you or pass on. He is quicker than you are, but not by much and he won't get far if you make him run around you.' It was good advice and Dixon had no more trouble. It is not a victory story, however, as Shore lost in the last minutes of the game.

But Dixon had some good fortune in the cadets, and this time there was no coach to help. He was a member of a squad that competed in a drill competition at the Sydney Showground which Shore had won for about three successive years. On one of the commands to turn right, Ian Dixon inexplicably turned left. In spite of that Shore won by one point and there was nobody more relieved than him. 'If we had lost by one point everybody would have pointed to the person who had lost it.'

In his last two years Dixon was very busy. As he moved up the school the work became more demanding, and he was head of a boarding house where the master was happy to leave the day-to-day running of it to the senior house prefects. Looking back, Ian Dixon says he did not manage his time and energy well in his final year.

'I took my duties as head of a house reasonably seriously, and being one of the more senior prefects in the school meant there were more duties to perform. As well as those, in the summer I had two afternoons of cricket practice each week and a match on Saturday, and in the winter there were two football practices a week and a match on Saturday after I had spent the morning shooting at Long Bay. My goals after school were not clearly defined and my priorities were not well thought out. My results in the Leaving Certificate were good enough for what I wanted to do, but they should have been better.'

Many of the older masters retired while Dixon was at school, including Taffy Davies, who had taught him Divinity. By this time Davies was an old man and his deafness and failing sight made him a target for ruthless boys. The ground floor classrooms that overlooked the school oval had large sash windows that were covered on the outside by wire mesh screens. A favourite joke was to grab two small boys as they were going to their class and stand one in each window so that they were trapped between the screen and the bottom half of the window. The victims were left standing,

unable to move. When Taffy came into the room and sat at the desk at the far end of the room he inevitably said how dark it was and asked someone to put on the light. Eventually he would wander down to the back of the room, especially if there was a cricket match on the oval, and discover the small boys imprisoned in the windows. They were sent back to their class with a note explaining why they were late.

Bullying was not common but it was not rare either, especially before Robson took over. The most obvious form was the run through, which existed in several versions. Bob Gowing remembers it well. During the football season day boys as well as boarders were expected to watch the first XV match on Saturday. Boarders had little choice, but some day boys chose to do other things. So on Monday morning a group of large senior boys stood at the Blue Street entrance and questioned boys about the details of the game on Saturday. If they could not answer the questions, and sometimes even if they could, they were subjected to the run through. This took place on the school oval and consisted of two lines of boys about 30 metres long and 2 metres apart. These boys were armed with branches taken from the trees that lined the school ground and they wielded these on their victims as they ran between the lines.

This practice came to an end when Robson arrived, but it lingered on in a slightly less violent form. Robin Slessor describes it. 'I was a boarder in School House between 1920 and 1922 and woe betide any boy who was caught in the boarders' quarters, even though he went there only to see the stained-glass window of Holtermann holding his famous nugget. I am ashamed to say that I was the decoy on many occasions. I would cajole a new day boy into a dormitory on some pretext or other. When he entered it would be apparently empty but once he was inside menacing boarders would emerge from behind every bed wielding cricket bats, stumps, leather belts and towels rolled into kangaroo tails. Usually the day boy was ceremoniously debagged and then compelled to run the gauntlet, being whacked as he went.'

One boy who was willing to hand out whacks at Shore was Errol Flynn. Dixon knew him, but made sure he had very little to do with him. 'I knew he was good with his fists and I knew he was bigger than I was. It was not my policy, except perhaps for compelling reasons if they arose, to get mixed up with him.' Others were not so prudent.

Flynn was the son of a highly respected academic and it was while the family was in England that Flynn arrived at Shore in February 1926 after failing in other schools. As he said in his autobiography *My Wicked, Wicked Ways*, his father's reputation was able to get him into any school in spite of his own. 'I wasn't in this school long before I had talks with Mr Robson, the tall, redheaded schoolmaster whose eyes looked so big behind

his glasses. He warned me I was paying no attention to my studies, that I was headed for trouble. He knew my poor record elsewhere, and he cautioned me, for the sake of my father, to attend to school properly.'

Taking less notice of Robson than most people did, Flynn concentrated on advancing his affair with a thirty-year-old maid called Elsie. At night he let himself out of a rear window of School House and met her behind a hedge, although, he says, there was nothing sexual about these encounters. Unfortunately he had a rival, a very tough fellow called Lindsay who found out what was going on. Lindsay spoke to the housemaster, Mr Wentworth, and suggested that they stop Flynn's nightly excursions. The next night they put a sheet of corrugated iron on the ground under the window and as Flynn made his landing the thing rang out like a peal of bells. The talk with Robson the following day was no better than the last.

It was clear to Flynn that he and Lindsay would have to meet. 'I don't remember ever picking a fight, but I remember resenting the big boys, the bullies. I always walked way around them. I didn't want any trouble with them because they were bigger and older. But I said to myself, if one of these fellows picks on me, he will know this has been it, because I will never quit.' If he got into a quarrel, he fought dirty. 'I was out to win, not negotiate.'

His fight with Lindsay took place, he says, at the edge of the Parramatta River. He soon found that Lindsay was much stronger and decided that his best chance lay in getting him into the water. Once there Flynn had the advantage and was doing his best to drown him when the fight was stopped by a passing ferry. 'By the time we got to the bank of the river I had my breath back. Lindsay lay on the edge like a gasping blowfish. The people who brought us in cried out that he was dead.' Fortunately Lindsay recovered. 'Neither of us was reprimanded for that fight. In Australia they let you fight it out.'

Flynn's account, dashing though it might be, is not supported by the school records. Although Flynn did enter School House he was there only two hours before Eldershaw was instructed to send him over to Robson House, to the regret of the matron of School House who protested about losing 'that nice-looking new boy'. Flynn spent the rest of his brief time at Shore in Robson House. His housemaster there was J. R. O. Harris. School records make no mention of a boy at that time called Lindsay, nor of a housemaster called Wentworth.

Flynn does not explain why he was expelled, although there are plenty of stories to fill the gap. A popular one is that he was enjoying a sexual engagement with a maid in the laundry when he was discovered by an outraged master who asked him what on earth he was

Overleaf: Class 2A in the Junior House Prep. School in 1927.



doing. 'If you wait there for a few minutes, sir, I will explain it to you.' Another, perhaps more likely, was that he used to play tennis on some local courts and when money began to disappear a trap was laid with marked money which was then found in his pocket.

Whatever the reason, Flynn's description of his expulsion in July is plausible. 'A week later the headmaster called me into his office. I stared at the cold official face of Mr Robson. Here it goes again. It was like being in the dock just before sentence. "Your father is in England?" "Yessir." "He is a very distinguished man." "Yessir. I know, sir." "You show little prospect of emulating him." I was silent. "Your mother—she is also in England?" "No, she is in France, sir." "Too bad. Nothing but trouble. I don't know what you need, young man, but whatever it is, this school has not got it. You are expelled, Flynn, for being a disturbing influence on the rest of the scholars."'

Afterwards Robson had all trace of Flynn removed from the school records, or thought he had. With an uncharacteristic lack of attention to detail he forgot the class register.

A few years later Bob Gowing took his wife to the pictures in London and startled the audience when he yelled out, 'That's Flynn. He sat next to me at school!'

In spite of Flynn's fame, however, the school remained acutely embarrassed by him and could not come to terms with the fact that he had been to Shore, if only briefly. A few years ago a new member of the staff, who was also new to Sydney, was asked by a group of mothers where he lived. He lived in Northbridge, but unable to say just where he said he was on the other side of Erról Flynn bridge. The silence was icy.

DIXON'S CONTACT WITH ROBSON was less traumatic, and not much more frequent until his last year or two. 'I didn't talk to God much in those days, in the form of L. C. Robson. And he didn't talk to me very often.' But he did get the cane from him. It was during Dixon's third year, in Lower IV A, and Robson took the Geometry class. He had complained a few times that Dixon was not doing as well as he might until one day he told him to be at his study at eleven the following morning. Robson told him he was not making enough effort and Dixon said he could not agree and that he had not had any trouble with Geometry before. It was a mistake. 'You are saying I cannot teach Geometry. Is that what you are saying? Bend over.' At the end of the year Dixon got first in Maths but was several places down in Geometry. Robson told the class, 'As you know, Dixon has won the

Mathematics prize this year. I do not know whether it was because of or in spite of what I did and said to him during the year.'

Bob Smith, who was at school from 1919 to 1924, had an even more terrifying experience with Robson. Not painful, but certainly terrifying. One night when he was doing prep in School House a message came that the Chief wanted to see him. Wondering what was wrong, Smith soon found himself standing in front of Robson's desk. 'Smith, I believe you can drive a car and have a licence. I want you to teach me to drive.'

The car had been lent to Robson by an Old Boy so that he could travel more easily to and from the boat shed at Gladesville, but Smith soon found that it was less than perfect. When the motor was running it was almost impossible to put it into gear. He adjusted the clutch so that he could engage first gear, but the clutch slipped and it would not drive the car. He readjusted the clutch and from then on had to engage first gear before he started the engine. But in order to teach Robson the mysteries of a non-synchromesh gear box he found that the best way was to jack up one rear wheel and have him practise it while the car was stationary. He spent three nights a week with him after prep and soon had Robson driving through the streets of North Sydney. 'The Chief was a good pupil, and so he began his regular trips to the rowing camp.'

One of Ian Dixon's more memorable contacts with Robson started when a boy in his year told him and a friend that he had a pistol with him and that although he had not yet used it in the school he kept it loaded and ready for action. He repeated this claim a few days later and Dixon finally asked to see the gun. They went to the back of a shed which had once been a gymnasium and there the boy showed Dixon a loaded revolver. 'I don't know what calibre it was but it was certainly bigger than a .22. He carried it in his breast pocket and I know he still had it a fortnight later.'

Perhaps longer. The Head of the River took place on the Parramatta River and, as usual, the race was followed by a flotilla of privately chartered ferries and other craft. Dixon was on a tug that had been chartered by a group from school and in the general excitement of the event a boy climbed the mast of the tug and started to light big fireworks called bungers with a cigarette and throw them down on to the deck of the tug and across to nearby ferries. What made Dixon nervous was that it was the boy who had shown him the gun, and Dixon was the only prefect on board. 'I had just been appointed subprefect and I knew I should do something, but climbing the mast to bring him down did not seem too bright an idea, and getting the police, even if that had been possible, could have had all sorts of consequences.'

He solved, or more accurately dodged, the problem by stepping on to the deck of a passenger ferry that had drifted alongside in the crush. The

following Monday he was called in by Robson, who had heard something of the story and who now asked him why he had not brought the boy down. Dixon could not tell him that he thought the boy might be armed with a revolver and his rather weak explanation left him knowing Robson thought he should have done more. He heard no more about it, but the look of disapproval from Robson was enough.

'The Chief was a very profound believer in discipline. I have heard him say, and he said to me personally in later years, that if you have good discipline the rest is easy. I dare say his wartime experiences had something to do with that view, but it was very much a part of his approach. And by the late twenties he certainly had pretty tight disciplinary control of Shore.'

John Pockley, nephew of Brian Pockley who was killed in New Guinea, has no doubt about that either. 'L. C. Robson had three principles. One, the aim should be excellence. Two, no performance that does not exceed the natural ability of the performer is to be applauded or commended. Three, Shore is a training ground for the leaders of the community, but leadership comes from service beyond the call of duty.'

John Pockley had been taken for an interview with Purves by his father, who was keen for him to start at Shore. Pockley was only ten, however, and Purves thought him too immature to enter the school. He therefore went to Heyfield Prep. at Carlingford until, at the age of twelve, he finally entered School House as a boarder.

He settled in quickly. Although a small boy he had already developed an enthusiasm for boxing and had had some success at prep. school by knocking out a much bigger boy with a wild swing that happened to land on his chin. 'That gave me ideas beyond my station. If two people started a fight at Shore a group would form and the cry "mill on" would go up. I was a participant of this at a very early age, with great fierceness and wild swings and lack of science. That was dealt with by Pat Eldershaw, who said, "You are getting a bit keen on this, so you will now enter the boxing competition." So I did, at a very light weight, and the fellow I fought beat me unmercifully. And that was that.'

Pockley alternated between A and B forms during his time at Shore. He had been taught to read by his aunts who were appalled to find that he could not do so when not yet four years old. He turned into a voracious reader and English came easily to him. Latin did not and he needed two attempts before he matriculated. Bagot impressed him as a very good teacher of Maths and Physics and he also had much admiration for Burgess, who took English.

In spite of the fact that Shore was a Church of England school, Pockley remained an atheist throughout his time there, and has, indeed, remained



The eastern side of the Holtermann tower in 1928. The Holtermann window, which is now in the library, can be seen through the circular window. The man attending to the flag is H. W. 'Devil' Hall.

one ever since. 'I was convinced of the logic of the tangible.' He was, however, scrupulous in his attendance at chapel and in the fifth form even won the Divinity Prize with an essay on the scientific explanation of miracles. He was not rebellious and he stuck to the rules, so that his atheism was seen more as eccentricity than a threat to the order of things.

Nor did the school have any difficulty accommodating his eccentricity. When Nigel Backhouse, the chaplain, told Pockley that he would not be made a prefect unless he was confirmed, Robson came in with a spirited defence of independence and eventually made Pockley a subprefect. 'But I obeyed the rules and the Eleventh Commandment was the one that mattered, even for atheists.'

Discipline was fair, strict and rigid and the lines were drawn very clearly.

There is no doubt that Sergeant Major Davidson did much to establish this in day-to-day terms. He was the personification of discipline to generations of Shore boys and is remembered affectionately by most of them. When, years later, an attempt was made to obtain a donation from an Old Boy who was then a prominent Sydney businessman the prospects looked dim until somebody mentioned Onkus. 'Now there was a real man. He is worth something. Here's a cheque for five thousand quid.'

Slessor, too, remembers Onkus. 'He knew me well because over the years I rarely missed a punishment drill, which he commanded every Friday afternoon. It was a strenuous exercise and a real punishment, with Onkus using his cane freely. Calling the roll for this drill one Friday Onkus missed my name on the list. "Where's Slessor II," he roared. "'E's not missed one of these drills for two terms.'"

And John Pockley, in a speech years later, told how, stung by Onkus's criticism of his rifle drill, he had practised privately until he had achieved what he thought was a high degree of proficiency. When he next performed before Onkus he carried out all the usual movements of rifle drill with speed and precision. 'Onkus went red, his eyes bulged with a horrible glare and he said, "Slick and hexibitionist, Pockley, like they does it in the high schools.'"

John Pockley took up medicine after leaving Shore. He became chairman of the medical board of St Vincent's Hospital and President of the Royal College of Ophthalmic Surgeons. A modest man, later in the same speech he described how he had been holding forth in the club bar on capital indexation 'with all the decision and authority that I bring to bear on subjects with which I am not wholly familiar. The president listened until I had finished and then said, "Naive and simplistic, Pockley." I realised that this was true of the mental process I had relied on for the whole of my life. Naive and simplistic and slick and hexibitionist.' Nobody but John Pockley could believe that to be true.

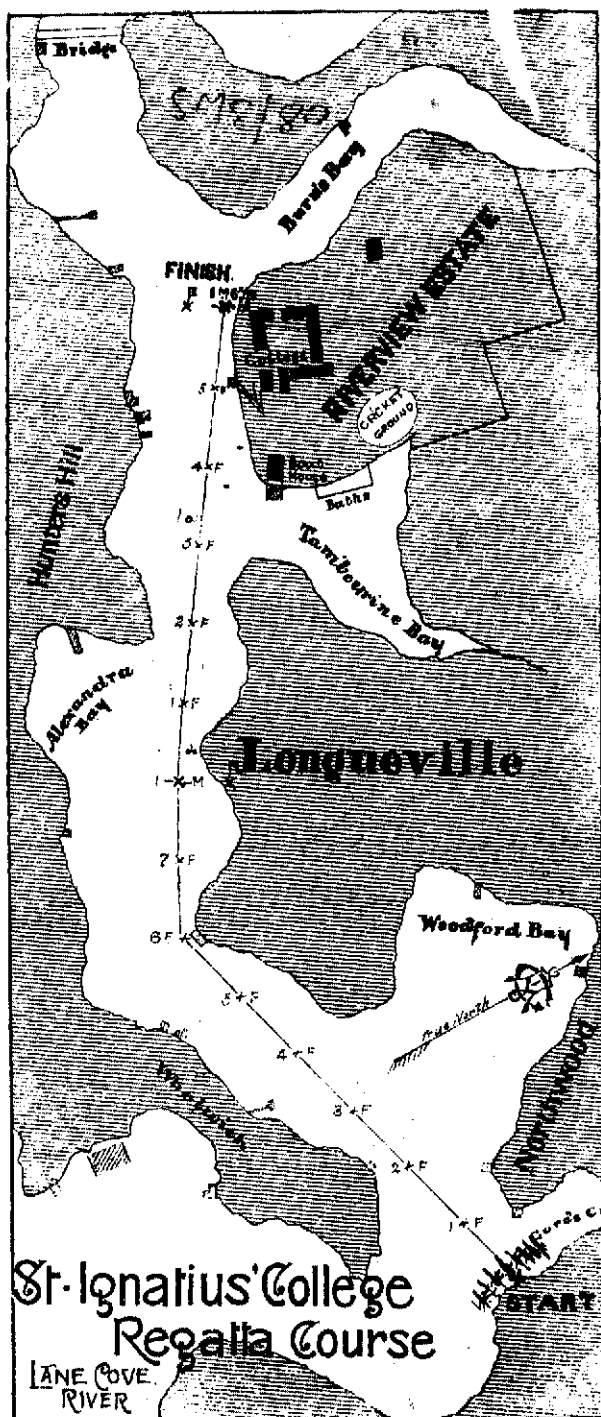
After leaving Shore, Ian Dixon won an exhibition to Sydney University and did an evening course in economics for four years while working for a trustee company during the day. He retired in 1972 as a director and deputy general manager of CSR. Ian Dixon was elected to the school Council by the Old Boys' Union in 1945 and retired from it in 1986, having been its chairman for twenty-eight years.

In addition to his service to Shore, Ian Dixon was the leading figure in policy matters in non-Catholic independent schools during the late 1960s and 1970s. He was one of the founders and soon chairman of the Association of Independent Schools, New South Wales, and the founding chairman of the National Council of Independent Schools, which he had led into existence. In his book *Our Proper Concerns*, J. Wilson Hogg said: 'It was Travers' strong persuasions that led the Chairman of the Council of Shore to take a deep and lasting interest in a federal association of Independent Schools. Travers could not have bestowed on the project a greater good. J. M. Dixon, a distinguished, gifted and determined man, was to become the first Chairman of NCIS and as such to give it a vigorous and enlightened direction. Without him the fledgling might very easily have lost its way among early difficulties and uncertainties.'

After he retired as chairman of the school Council, Council paid its own tribute to him in a minute which read, in part:

'His interest extended into every aspect of School policy with special attention to financial matters, the welfare of the staff, maintaining standards and the tone of the school; also, widening the field, to the problems arising from the expansion of governmental activity in interfering with the prerogatives of parents and of independent schools . . .

'The extent of J. M. Dixon's service to Shore and independent schools generally, is evident from . . . his involvement over forty-one years. What is not so readily evident is the quality of that service. It was always of the highest quality—never half-hearted. Ian Dixon's was a unique contribution and he exemplified to the full the true spirit of the school's motto *Vitai Lampada Tradunt*.'



PROGRAMME

ST. IGNATIUS' COLLEGE

ROWING CLUB

7th Annual Regatta

1892.

SATURDAY, 7TH MAY.

REV. T. GARTLAN, S.J., PRESIDENT

J. H. D'ARCY, CAPTAIN

J. J. LYNCH, HON. SEC. AND TREAS.

Committee:

J. R. DAVIDSON.
G. M. CULLINANE.

D. J. CORRIGAN
E. B. DALTON.

COLLEGE RACES.

A. PERRY, ESQ.

REV. J. MURPHY, S.J.

D. KENT, ESQ.

Starters:

Empires:

Judges:

Timekeeper:

J. N. OATLEY, ESQ.

OPEN RACES.

A. HOLMES, ESQ.

C. BROS. ESQ.

O. BATSON, ESQ.

By kind permission of Colonel Roberts, C.M.G.,
the Band of the Permanent Artillery will render
a selection of Music in the Grounds.

Batson & Co., Ltd., Printers, 141 Clarence Street, Sydney

CHAPTER THREE

Sport

SPORT HAS BEEN IMPORTANT at Shore almost from the school's first day, although much of it was informal and at times the standard was not very high. But there was rarely a lack of enthusiasm and indeed the sporting contribution of the early school was quite out of proportion to its modest numbers. Among the twenty-four boys who attended the school when it started was a future Australian cricketer, A. J. Hopkins; a future New South Wales cricketer, G. R. C. Clarke; and a future New South Wales tennis player, E. O. Pockley. In the next twenty years the school produced four future Australian cricketers and many more who played for New South Wales.

In those early days the school was also very active in sport with other schools. In 1891 Riverview organised a boat race in which Shore was invited to compete and which laid the foundation for inter-school rowing which has been important ever since. And it was one of the original teaching staff at Shore, Reverend David Davies, who helped to establish the AAGPS in 1892. This association, later known as the GPS, soon had a significance far beyond athletics and even sport generally.

After an encouraging start, however, sport at Shore was very badly affected when the number of boys at the school fell during the financial crisis of the 1890s. Football suffered most and the standard was poor and after Shore won the first GPS athletic contest in 1895 athletics too went into decline. Rowing was not so dependent on large numbers and was less affected at this time. Shore won the first GPS regatta in 1893 and although Sydney Grammar won the following year, Shore went on to win for the next four successive years.

Those early achievements, however, tend to disguise the fact that sport was not as universal in the school as it is now. Those who had natural ability were capable of competing at a high level and their performances were equal to any that came later. But those with less ability, or no inclination, were largely ignored and there was no attempt to coach them to a better standard. One cricketer who later played for Australia was described as a 'scabby' cricketer who played with 'a soft ball, a narrow stick for a bat, and the side of School House for a wicket and wicket keeper.' The Scabbies were graded into the 'Despicables' and the 'Inbetweens' and

Opposite page: The programme and course for the St Ignatius Seventh Annual Regatta, held on 7 May 1892.

progress from that level to the school team was 'almost completely dependent on the individual's enthusiasm, determination and luck'.

Many who made the transition rose to national prominence after they left school, but those who did not were largely left to their own devices.

By the time World War I started sport was more widely played within the school and as the numbers grew, so the facilities became less adequate. By 1916 the school had grown to four hundred boys and the school ground could barely cope with a third of that number. The St Leonards Park Oval was hired almost every afternoon of the week to provide additional facilities but there was no guarantee of permanence and when the use of the oval was handed over to the recently founded North Sydney High School, Shore was placed in the embarrassing position of having to ask its opponents to provide the grounds.

The danger of depending on St Leonards Park Oval had been recognised by Purves for some time and for the previous two years he had spent much of his spare time cycling around the northern suburbs in search of land that could be converted to playing fields. It was not an easy task for by then most of the land within a reasonable distance of the school was already in use or far beyond the resources that were available. The exception, fortunately, was the area at Northbridge on the northern side of the suspension bridge. A large development company had planned a suburb there but the company had failed in the crisis of the 1890s and the land had been largely overlooked since then.

Purves discovered two sites at Northbridge which he thought would be suitable and the one he recommended to Council in 1916 was an area of about 10 hectares on the corner of Alpha Road and Sailors Bay Road. This land was owned by the Royal North Shore Hospital and in 1917 Council bought a section of about 4 hectares for £3800.

Although this section was relatively flat, that is about all that could be said for it. In reality it was an overgrown wilderness and it took a great deal of work to convert even this modest area into playing fields. Most of the work was funded by the Old Boys' Union, which had been involved with the project from the start. The enthusiasm of the Union in raising funds was such that when the hospital offered the school an adjoining block of 4.4 hectares in 1918 Council had little hesitation in buying it, even though they were also involved at that time with developing new rowing facilities at Gladesville. In the end, the fund-raising for both projects was combined into one fund, with two-thirds going to Northbridge and the rest to Gladesville.

The main oval at Northbridge was finished in time for the opening ceremony in 1919, and it took place between innings in an inaugural match between the school and the Old Boys.



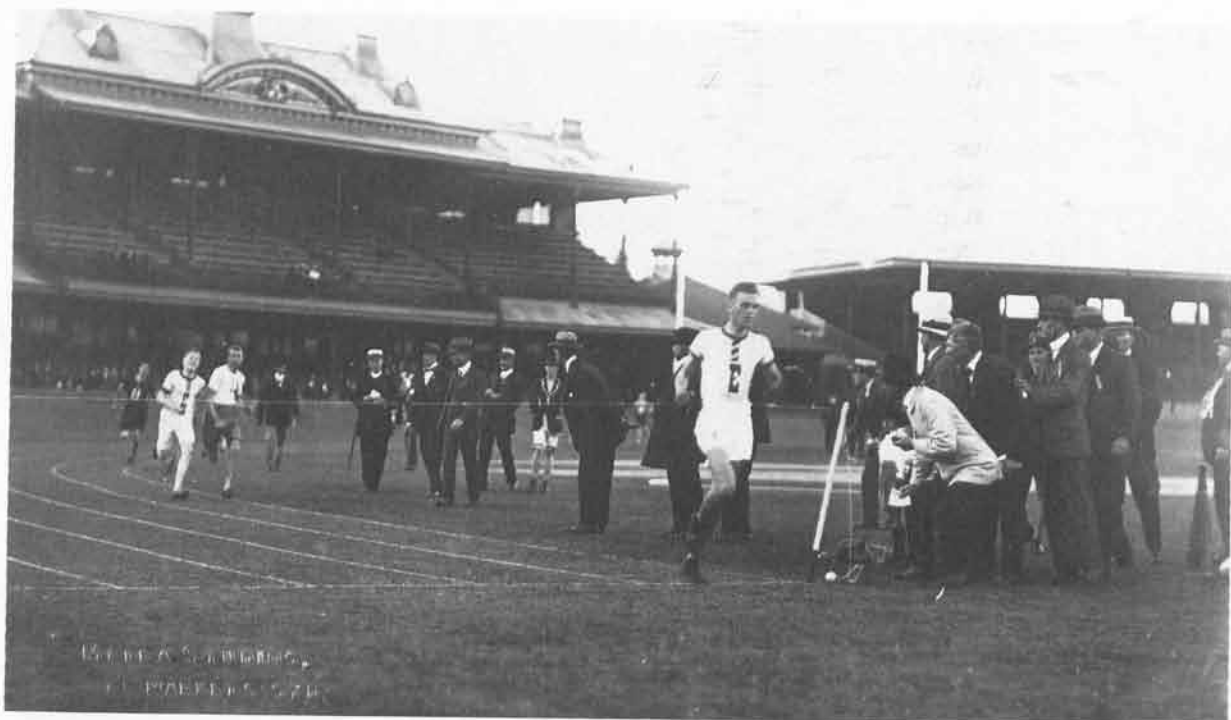
The oval had been prepared by the caretaker of the Sydney Cricket Ground but later that year Mr Ferrier was appointed the first full-time groundsman. An appeal in the *Torch Bearer* for a horse to be used for mowing and rolling brought a 'fine mare' from an Old Boy in Orange. Unfortunately this horse died shortly afterwards but a replacement sent by the same Old Boy served valiantly for many years.

Additional facilities were built over the next few years, some as a result of fund raising and some from individual donations, and in later years the grounds were extended with the purchase of small blocks of land on the boundaries.

Archie Ferrier proved to be one of the best groundsmen in Sydney and was something of a character as well, driving any adventurous larrikins off the ground with a stockwhip that he used when training his racing pigeons. On Saturdays he was an impressive and familiar figure. With a waxed moustache, polished boots and neat suit, he would roll and re-mark the wicket between innings and jealously guard it at other times.

One Saturday two young masters saw a visiting parent park his

A rowing club picnic, probably 1893.



The Championship Mile at the 1920 School Carnival, won by L. O. Rutherford in 4 minutes 56 2/5 seconds.

expensive car where it was not allowed and thought they had better do something about it. But there was no need. Archie Ferrier went up and pointed out to the parent that he would have to move his car. 'The visitor then proclaimed his own importance and expressed his intention to disregard the rules. So Archie opened the door of the car, took off his coat and carefully folded it and then took up a pugilistic attitude which he interrupted momentarily to wave the visitor courteously from the car.' The masters prudently drifted away at that stage, but thought it unlikely that the visitor would have accepted Archie's invitation.

By the mid-1920s games were organised on a house system, with each day boy allocated to one of the four houses for sporting purposes. Although this was an attempt to involve the less able in sport, it did little to improve their skill. The system relied heavily on the enthusiasm of masters and senior boys to be successful, and this varied a great deal. Refereeing sometimes varied even more. One football referee thought the try line between the posts was neutral territory and would not award a try if the ball was grounded there. As he never explained this to the players there was frequent confusion and the edict that one never argued with the referee was in his case tried to the limit.

Another hazard, on the school ground, was manure and hoof marks,



neither of which improved the wicket. Horses were widely used by tradesmen in North Sydney and some of them were turned out on the school grounds at night to take advantage of free grazing. Boarders would frequently get up before dawn, capture a horse, and ride it furiously until either the owner came to collect it or the bell summoned the boys to other duties. The theory was that the horse would then be incapable of a full day's work, although the excitement was the real motive. It was Sergeant Major Davidson who solved the problem by telling the owners that any horse found on the school grounds would be sent to the zoo to feed the lions.

Although the school performed moderately well at inter-school sports in the 1920s, the range of sporting activities at Shore was quite limited. Rifle shooting had been popular with many boys since the turn of the century, but athletics had little appeal except to the proficient. Tennis was not strong either, although in 1925 the Fairwater Cup was presented for annual competition between Shore and Sydney Grammar. Sergeant Major Davidson taught little boys to swim at Lavender Bay on Tuesday afternoons and there was an annual swimming carnival which usually excited little interest because the public baths were either not suitable or too far away. Typical was the account in the *Torch Bearer* of 1913: 'The

A launch full of supporters about to follow the regatta, photographed in 1919 or 1920.

eleventh annual swimming carnival was held at Lavender Bay Baths on March 6th—an unlucky date for the rain came down in sheets, filled the baths with mud, wet the spectators and drenched the band, who promptly departed.'

One sport that was popular, however, was boxing, and the annual carnival between houses was one of the big events of the year. There were a great number of entries in every division except the heavyweight, where the champion was so universally feared that he found it difficult to get an opponent. Binghi Bell, a Queenslander who boarded at Robson House, was an outstanding boxer and far superior to his famous contemporary, Errol Flynn.

The shortages of World War II made sport increasingly difficult and GPS competitions were abandoned until 1946. This period also coincided with a drought that resulted in severe water restrictions even in Sydney. Hoses were not allowed to be used on sports grounds and the fact that cricket could be played at all at Northbridge was due to the ingenuity of the groundsman, George Wheatley. He cemented up the water outlet from the showers and built a brick wall nearly a metre high across the front of each shower enclosure. Boys climbed over the top of this and showered standing in a tank of accumulating water. When they had finished the water was siphoned out through the windows into a portable tank, which Wheatley then transported to the wickets. It was all the water he had for a considerable time, but nobody ever complained about the quality of the match wickets he prepared.

By the middle of the 1960s the house system had been largely replaced with school teams that played at different levels within their age group. It was not unusual to have over twenty cricket teams representing the school on a Saturday. Coaching had also become much more skilled and was available for all teams, so that talent was now more likely to be recognised and progress to higher grades more certain. Surf-lifesaving had been introduced and tennis had won a grudging acceptance so that three matches were now being played every Saturday throughout the year.

The range of available sports was extended even more when Mr Grant took over in 1984. Soccer was introduced and the demand was such that the school was soon fielding five or six teams in interschool competitions. Basketball had already been introduced, but in spite of these welcome additions, the traditional Shore sports of cricket, football and rowing were still the most important, and the most popular.

CRICKET

The first school cricket teams at Shore were established at the start of the first season and they played against junior teams from local clubs, (of the

first twenty-four boys at the school, half were under fourteen years old). In 1891 Shore decided to play against the first teams of what were to be the GPS schools. This was largely based on the success of the coach of the first XI, A. McCulloch Hughes, who, it was said, wrote about cricket almost as well as he gave lessons in French or Classics. Writing of this decision, he said: 'This year we have taken a bold plunge and made our entry into first-class school cricket. Some critics may think that the step is an overbold one on our part, and others may even regard it as presumptuous; but we are more inclined to look on delays as dangerous . . . Nothing good is gained without effort and we shall derive fresh virtue from every failure . . . Think too if we win once, how much greater the honour to us and the School than the overthrow of a couple of dozen second elevens.'

In spite of his optimism the team must have derived a great deal of 'fresh virtue', as the season was 'full of defeats'.

In time, however, the standard of cricket improved and some fine schoolboy cricketers made Shore a force to be reckoned with. G. R. C. Clarke once made two unbeaten centuries and bowled a hat trick in one match against King's, while his brother, W. B. Clarke, played for three seasons and took 156 wickets for an average of about 10 runs. Other notables were the three Minnett brothers, the two Massies and O. H. Dean, who still holds the record for the highest score with an innings of 412.

Perhaps even more remarkable was Ben Salmon, who obtained cricket colours in six consecutive years. When captain of the first XI in 1924 Salmon had an average for the season of 159 and in one innings scored 385 (out of a total of 804) before being out to a ball which the *Torch Bearer* said 'never left the ground'. Salmon was selected for the combined GPS team for four years and while still at school played for the NSW second XI (and scored 95 n.o. against NSW firsts) and was twelfth man for New South Wales against England.

Under the house system of school sports in the 1920s each house had seven cricket teams. The nets at the school ground were allocated for a full day to each house in turn, while the houses not practising that day would play matches at Northbridge or on the main part of the school ground. Only four teams played interschool cricket and they were coached to a high standard and performed well. Occasionally more teams would play against other schools, but they were made up of house cricketers and the standard was not so high.

A pleasant diversion that was popular at the end of the 1920s was a match between masters and rowers, typical of an informal aspect of sport that was more noticeable then than it is now. In 1929 there was even a cricket rowing four which competed in a morning race. It was coached by

Opposite page: Shore playing against St Ignatius in May 1971. In the top photograph Butler is tackled short of the line but is able to pass to Geddes, who goes on to score, bottom. Shore players, from left to right, are T. Sawkins, S. Williams, P. Butler and T. Geddes. Shore won 17-14.

Pat Eldershaw who had never pulled a racing oar in his life.

In the early days of the school, lack of equipment had been a problem for a long time. Once there were only four pads for the whole of the first team and it became customary for the wicket keeper to open the batting because he was already wearing two of them. And during World War II shortages made life almost as difficult. School equipment was made to last, with care, but personal equipment was much more difficult to find. Cricket boots, for example, were unobtainable in Sydney and an appeal was made to Old Boys in country areas to search for boots in local shops which might still have prewar stock. The result was that the first XI continued to be shod, but the rest gradually fell into various stages of hybrid dress.

Finally, and more recently, is the story of a coach who took a team to play Scots. Shore scored more than a hundred in its innings and when Scots managed to reach only 35 before being all out, the Shore coach felt sorry for them and suggested they went in and batted again. This time Scots ran up a total of 120 and then said they were going home because they had won the match. The Shore coach, less kindly now, demanded the right to a second innings but the Scots coach pointed out, correctly, that he had already forfeited the match. It was a very silent trip back to North Sydney.

FOOTBALL

As with cricket, the early football teams at Shore played only junior teams of other schools and by 1892 had reached the Second Grade competition. The school then decided to enter a team for the Challenge Shield but it could hardly have picked a worse time. As the school population fell because of the financial crisis, football, using more men than any other school sport, suffered the most.

In 1895 the school lost five of its seven matches and in the following year it lost six out of eight. Not surprisingly, interest in football dwindled to almost nothing and in 1899 the school decided not to compete in the GPS competition.

The change in fortune came in 1905 with the arrival of Iven MacKay. He was appointed by Hodges to teach Physics, but there was a suggestion at the time that as Hodges had taken him straight from university MacKay's ability as a footballer might have been relevant to his selection.

If it was Hodges's hope that the new Physics master might also breathe life into Shore football, he could not have imagined how successful it would be. MacKay's emphasis was not only on improving skills, but also attitudes. One boy remembers him saying to the first XV, 'Shore has never won the competition, but there is no reason why you shouldn't, except



yourselves. It is not the way you play, it is the spirit you lack.' Years later MacKay, then a general, used the same technique when talking to the 6th Division in North Africa. 'You have to realise that you are up against the best-trained troops in the world,' he said. 'Don't think you are going to beat them just because you are Australians.'

In 1908 Shore won the premiership and were champions in 1909, a remarkable achievement in such a short time. By the time MacKay left Shore in 1910 to become a university lecturer he had established a standard of excellence in football in a school which previously could barely field a team. It was difficult to maintain, however, and in 1913 the *Torch Bearer* reported sadly: 'Individual members have played well on different occasions, but the whole team has never played well on the same day.'

As with cricket, only four teams represented the school and they were the only ones to receive expert coaching. The rest of the boys played only in house matches. House practices were all held on the same day, with one house to each ground. As a house consisted of about seven teams the practice sessions were too crowded to be of much value, but they did at least keep interest alive.

The first XVs of each house played each other on Wednesday afternoons throughout the season and these house matches were played with such vigour that they seem almost to have been miniature battles. In one match the senior prefect and one of the school's best forwards were sent off the field for fighting. The school teams played their inter-school matches on Saturday, so in order to reduce the risk of injury they usually played out of position in house matches. However, these matches were so tough that no other practice games could be played during the week and the school's first XV only came together during their game on Saturday.

'Everyone recognised that the house organisation was partly responsible for the poor performances of our football teams in those days, but the sponsors of the house system felt that its benefits (in giving organised games to so many) more than outweighed this. It was felt that if senior footballers were excluded from house games, there would be a general diminution of keenness.'

In the 1930s and 40s the Combined GPS football match was followed by a dinner attended by current and past coaches of Shore teams and a few invited guests. These Mentors' Dinners grew in size so that in the end they were large and popular gatherings. At one of the earlier ones, though, held at a pub in Crows Nest, most of those attending were Shore staff. One of the few guests was Colonel Travers, father of Bill Travers who was then captain of the school's first XV. Unfortunately Colonel Travers arrived in the company of a policeman, who said that he wanted the names of everybody there because they were in breach of the liquor laws. Pat

Eldershaw says: 'Probably the most worried of all was a fairly young staff member who had been notified a few days before that he was on the short list for an interstate headmastership. He abandoned hope forthwith, and everyone else began to imagine possible headlines in the press and to wonder whether it was better to face the publicity or avert it by giving a false name.' Eventually Travers explained that the policeman was a friend of his who had just come off traffic duty and he had invited him in for a drink, hatching the plot on the way.

Stories like this are as much a part of school football as they are of the club game. In the 1950s, for example, Joeys had little success against King's and in a very serious moment one of Joey's coaches said this was because many of the fathers of his boys worked on properties owned by the fathers of King's boys and the feeling of inferiority was difficult to overcome.

Less serious was the story of a Shore Old Boy who had been a prominent member of the first XV in his day and who suffered a heart attack while watching the school play King's. He was taken to hospital and when he thought he was making some recovery he was visited by the school chaplain, who said, 'I have some good news and some bad news. The good news is that there are twenty football teams in Heaven and when you get there you will be captain of the firsts. The bad news is that you have your first game a week on Saturday.'

ROWING

The first headmaster of Shore, Ernest Robson, had been an enthusiastic rower when at Cambridge and he was keen to establish the sport at Shore. A tub pair was bought in October 1890, only a few months after the school had opened, and this was followed in March 1891 by a practice four which was named *Gertrude* after his sister. The following May this boat was rowed to victory in the All Schools Race at the St Ignatius regatta.

As a result of that success, money was raised to buy a racing four and the day after it arrived it was taken around Middle Head so that the crew could train in quiet water.

In 1892 the school produced a first crew, which again won its race, and a second crew which entered in the maiden fours race at the same regatta. That race, which was open to all Sydney clubs, turned into something of a comedy. Glebe beat Shore by half a canvas, but as the judge's boat was without a flag the school crew did not realise they had completed the course and that the race was over. The Glebe crew broke the stroke-side oars when they passed too close to a post and although that did not affect the race by then, the Shore crew assumed that was why Glebe had stopped rowing. Hotly pursued by Sydney, Shore stayed ahead until they reached

Fig Tree, where they assumed they must by now have crossed the line. Although they had not won the race, stroke was presented with the bow flag for his gallant, if pointless, effort.

The coaching was done by Robson, with help from A. D. Hall, who took over after Robson left. By then, it was the custom on Saturdays for Hall to take tub fours and an eight to St Ignatius baths on Lane Cove River, where the crews swam and lazed in the sun before rowing back to the shed in Berrys Bay. This shed, which was below West Crescent Street and close to Eaton's timber yard, was later bought by the school.

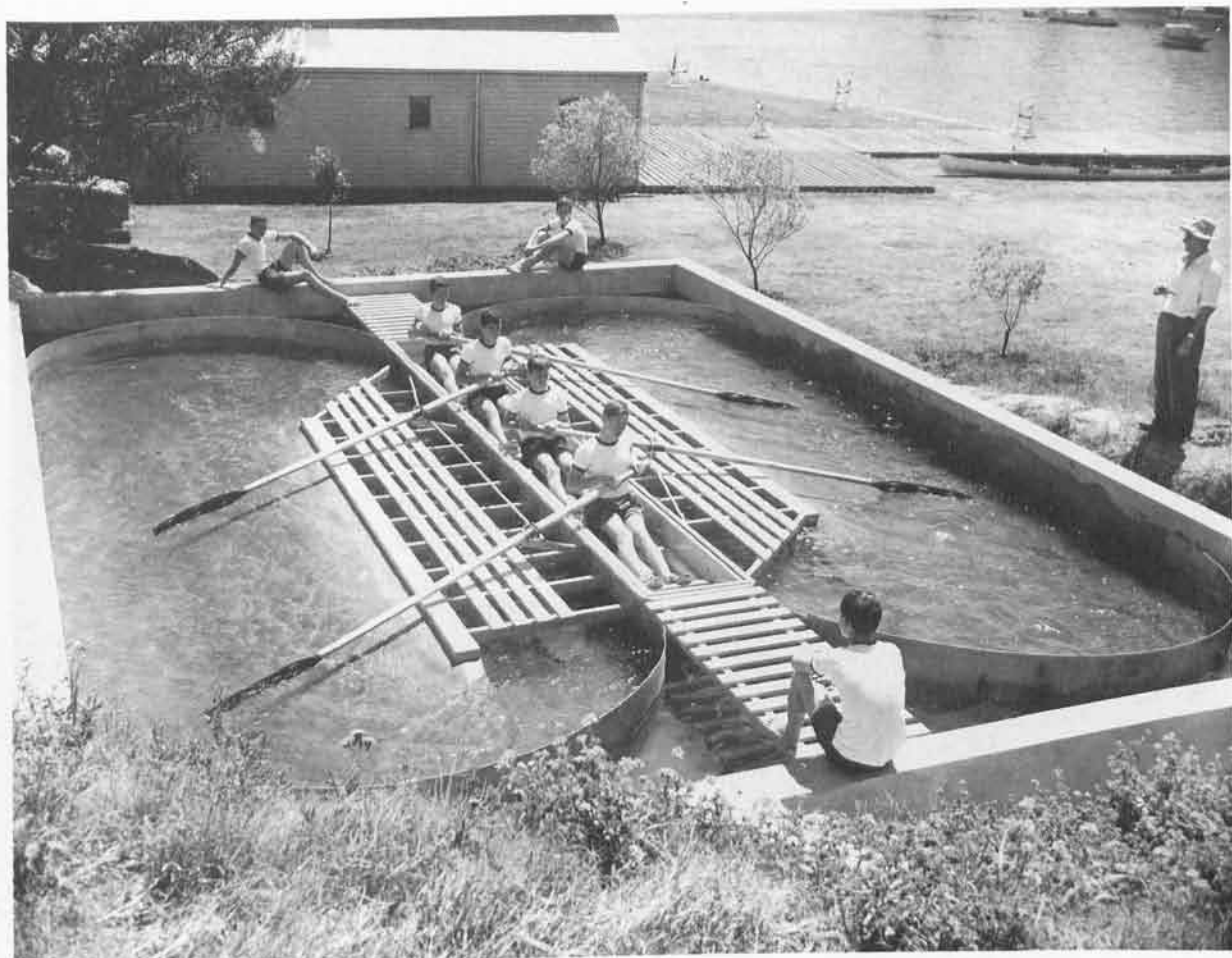
In June 1913 a school concert gave the first performance of the school rowing song, which had been written by Mr Barton:

Steady it now and swing her along,
Easy and quiet on the feather;
Drive her away, hearty and strong,
And every man together.
Our shed is down in Berry's Bay,
And that's where the tubbing 's done, Sir;
But the eight and four are now away,
The Easter camp's begun, Sir.
Pick it up now and lift her along,
Clean and neat with the feather;
Drive her away, hearty and strong,
And every man together.

Although Berrys Bay and Balls Head Bay originally provided good water for rowing, increasing traffic on the harbour became a problem and the eight, which had been introduced in 1910, and the two fours usually went up to St Ignatius or Towns' shed at Gladesville for practice.

This was not very convenient and in 1919 coach Alan Ramsey and Mr Hixson, a great supporter of rowing and later member of the school Council, started to look for a site for a shed up the river. Alan Ramsey found a site at Looking Glass Bay and Hixson started an appeal for the necessary funds. The shed itself was endowed by Russell Sinclair in memory of his eldest son, Eric, who was Captain of Boats in 1915 and had been killed in action in the war. This shed was handed over to the school in December 1919 and has been in use ever since.

In 1928 Shore achieved the distinction of winning everything there was to win at the GPS regatta, eagerly urged on by supporters in a flotilla of chartered ferries. 'Afterwards, when they had time to analyse the situation, they would feel astonished and a little timid to realise how they hung over the side of a ferry, fragilely supported by the funnel guys, or ran along the few inches of deck on the dangerous side of the railings, or helped to



weigh the boat down till its starboard bulwarks were awash. They will shudder at the thought for a while to come.'

But none would have missed the excitement of the eights. The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported:

'Near Putney you wouldn't have given a cent for anybody's chance of winning. They were all of them in it. Shore moved with a precision and an ease delusive beside the impressive effort of Grammar. They seemed almost flippant. When you looked from them to High School—so obviously powerful, smashing into the water with such entrancing gusto—you felt they might be rowing down the river for a picnic.

'On top of that the cox started to steer into the bank. People on the *Kulgoa*, who had been singing out 'Shore, Shore, Shore-or-ore' as though it was some pain they had, became silent suddenly, and leaned forward on

The training pool at Gladesville, completed in 1962.



The First VIII in 1973. Bow: M. L. Vivers, 2: D. C. Ronald, 3: A. R. Campbell, 4: M. H. Blackwood, 5: B. F. Coulson, 6: A. M. Header, 7: G. G. Brown, Stroke: S. T. May, Cox: R. D. Hodgkinson.

the railings, panting, and noisily biting pieces out of their nails and hats. A boy groaned, said something about his apoplexy, and went away to sit down with his back to the race. He couldn't bear to watch . . .

'Then suddenly people began to appreciate that cox. He almost grazed his oars along the rocks, but in those seconds he had them moving in still water. His tactics were brilliant. Before it struck the wind again Shore was leading. Here the noise started. The shrill scream of a schoolboy, like a spark flashing down a gelignite train, detonated the *Kulgoa*, and the hills flung the clamour down the river to the thousands packed precariously around the finish . . .

'At last the boats were in the narrow channel walled in by the ferries and yachts. Now the noise was stifling. It thrust itself down your throat, suffocating your own cries . . . it was a terrible noise.

'Shore still rowed calmly, easily, neatly, glancing round, almost with smiles of recognition for people on the boats. They looked as though they were unaware that these other boats were trying to race them.

'High School lashed down at the water, hammered into a more and more intense action by a cox whose frenzy was satanic . . .

'Grammar made one last effort to shake them off.

'King's made one last enormous effort to displace them.

'And Shore, as though they had realised suddenly that there was a race, dug spiralling eddies out of the water, and flung themselves fully into their work, and maintained their decisive lead.

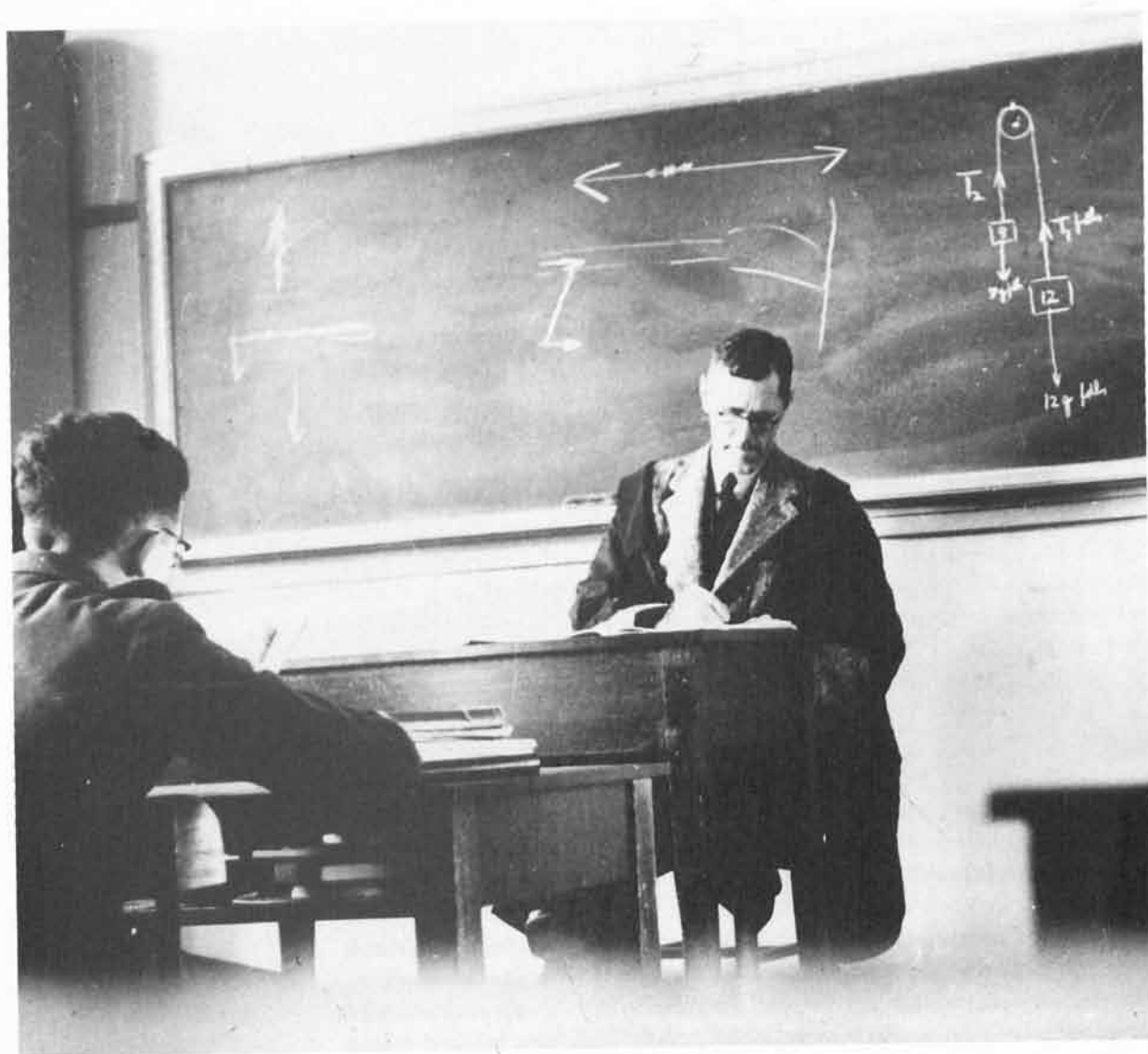
'That is how they won their fifth race that day. It was a triumph of style.'

The crowd that day was estimated at 80 000 which indicates how popular the GPS regatta was at that time. It was not just an event that interested GPS schools, it was a major sporting attraction for most of Sydney.

Nor was it the last of Shore's successes. In 1951, in front of thousands of spectators on the Nepean and with thousands more listening to the radio broadcast, Shore was third in the first fours, won the second fours, was third in the thirds and second in the fourths. It then went on to win the Championship Eights to complete a day in which it had either won or been placed in every race. And in 1952 Shore had the remarkable achievement of winning all the races in the regatta, a feat which it had also performed in 1937.

But Shore was not so successful in the 1960s. The first eight won in 1961 and that was to be their last victory until 1985. In 1967 King's won the regatta for the first time since 1920 and then won it five years in succession. One Old Boy said jokingly, 'I can't for the life of me find a completely satisfactory explanation for the reversal of Robson's wholesome policy that a cox should be the only member of a crew to have a view of the river unpolluted by other contestants!'

The role of sport at Shore has been the subject of debate on many occasions, but the present games master, Neville Emery, sees its role very clearly. 'It is part of the process of educating the boy, giving him a way of expressing his personality which is compatible with him being a young man growing up. I see it as being very important in teaching him to pay great attention to detail, to be disciplined and to find out how hard it is to become good at something.'



Clem Tiley teaching mechanics in 1939.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Thirties

IN 1928 AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD BOARDER joined the Shore prep. school and he was as nervous and confused as all the other new boys. Fifty-five years later he retired from Shore having by then become one of its longest-serving headmasters. But on that summer day in 1928 he had to take his chances with the rest. His name was Jika Travers.

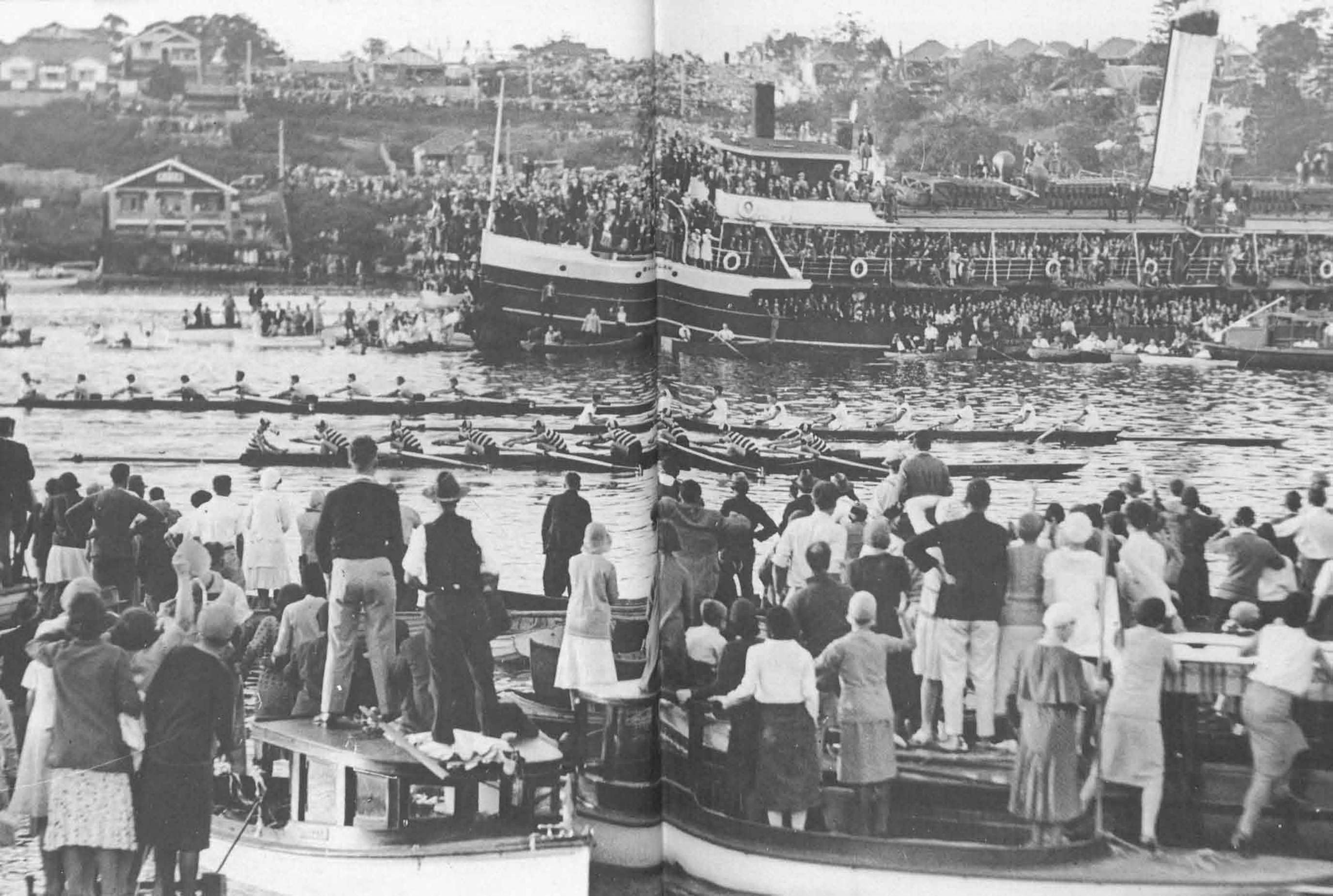
At that time his family lived in Bondi and his father was circulation manager of the *Daily Guardian*, which had been recently launched by R. C. Packer. His mother was on a visit to England, which is why he and his brother Bill joined Shore as boarders. There had never been much doubt that they would go to Shore because their mother was a cousin of L. C. Robson, but they did not talk about that at school. It was not the thing to be a relative of the headmaster.

After Jika started school the family moved from Bondi to Darlinghurst and there experienced the first effect of the Depression. One day in 1930 his father went to work as usual and came home to announce that his salary had been cut by half 'it was typical of what was happening then'. Bill and Jika Travers became day boys overnight, their mother having returned from England six months previously, and they moved successively from Darlinghurst to Lindfield to Roseville before finally settling at Kirribilli.

'They were fairly harsh times and we were always conscious of money.' Jika had two shillings a week pocket money until he reached the sixth form. Then his father gave him a pound a month, but only if he asked for it. At that time the fees for day boys were ten guineas a term and shortly afterwards they were increased by two guineas a term to provide a superannuation fund for the masters. It was a worthwhile cause, but one not welcomed by a man trying to keep two boys in the school.

After three years in the prep., Jika Travers moved into the main school in 1931. The prep. school had one grade and boys moved from there into the third form, the lower and upper fourth, the fifth and sixth forms to complete the five-year secondary course. Many boys, however, left after the Intermediate examination in upper fourth when they were about fifteen. It was a recognised and acceptable pattern, but it started to change during the Depression. If they were unable to get a job, many boys stayed on in the sixth form, some until they were nearly twenty.

Overleaf: Shore winning the 1931 Head of the River. Sydney High were second and St Joseph's third.



'The scholastic attitude came from Robson, there is no question about that.' Robson taught Maths at many levels, and Travers had him in the third, lower fourth and fifth forms. He wasn't good enough, he says, to get into Robson's Maths class in the sixth form. 'He was a good teacher, but he was not an easy man to talk to. He was a very meticulous man and set extremely high standards.' Once, while teaching Geometry to the third form, he spent a whole lesson teaching them how to sharpen a pencil so that they could draw diagrams correctly. 'If a line had to be an inch long, it had to be exactly an inch. Not an inch and a bit.' L. C. Robson was one of only two people who graduated with first class honours in Mathematics at Oxford between 1919 and 1939. 'That is how good his brain was, but it was not very appealing to a lot of boys.'

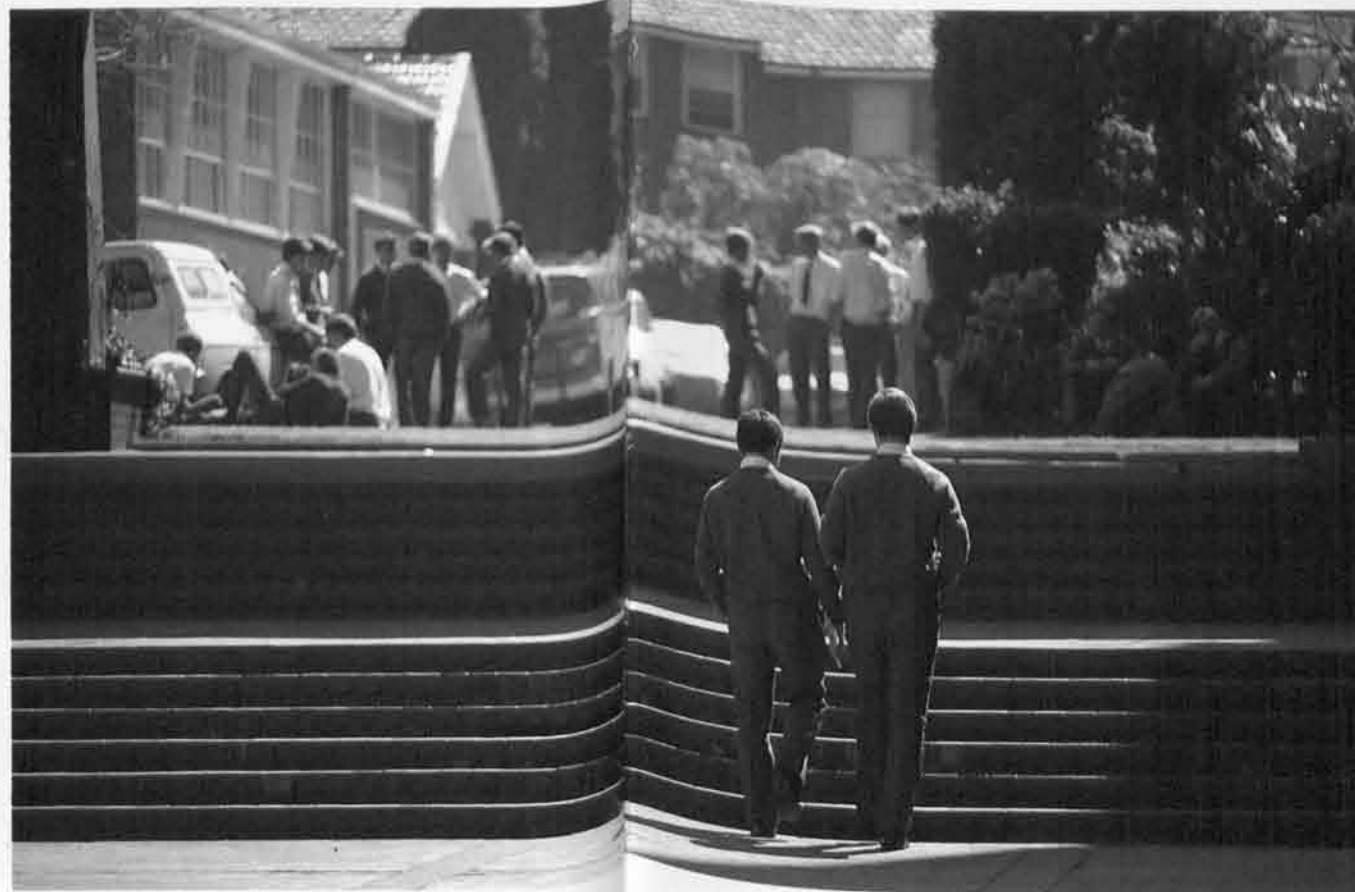
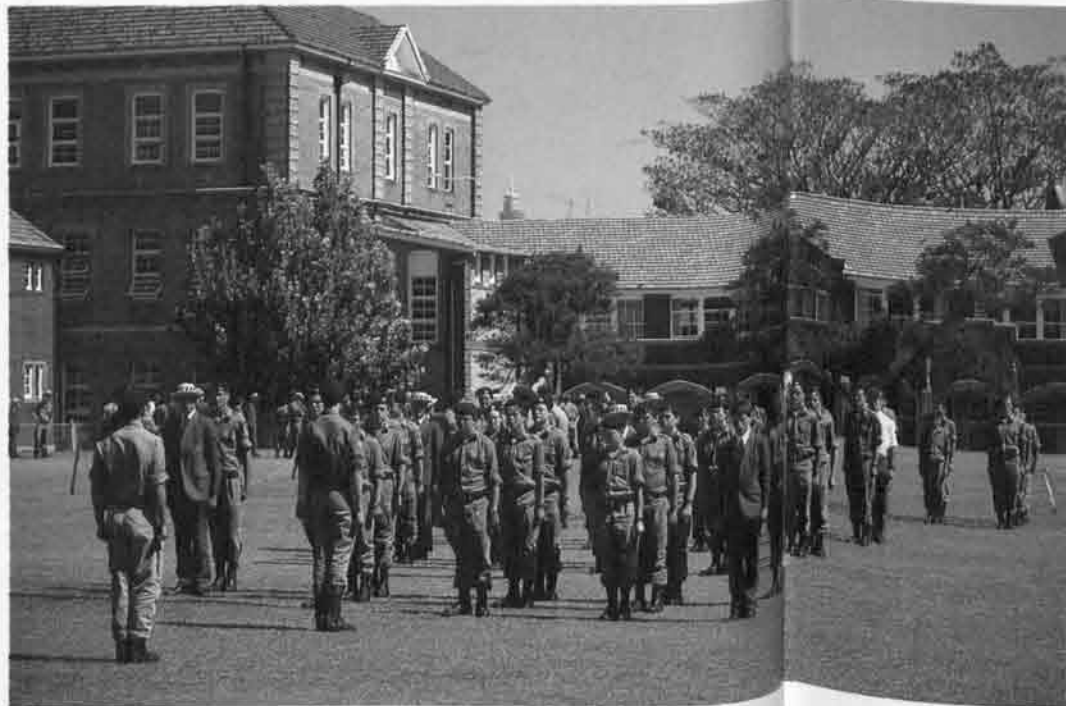
Many of the other masters were only slightly less impressive. H. H. Dixon, Ned Bagot, and Clem Tiley were, like L. C. Robson, of a calibre that would not now see them teaching in secondary schools. Today, with Ph.D.s and other degrees, they would either be in universities or in the upper echelons of the commercial world. But with fewer opportunities then, they devoted themselves to the career they had chosen. It was, in many ways, less demanding than it became later. For example, Ned Bagot had been working with the same maths text book for so long that he knew it by heart. If a hand went up in class he would say, 'Number five, permutations. Three sparrows fly in the window. There are four windows in the room, how many ways can the sparrows fly out?'

There was also more room for eccentrics. When Cock Pulling was teaching Travers Latin he was spending much of his own time translating Horace into English. Inevitably most of the time in class was spent on Horace and when it was essential to deal with Livy, Pulling had a suitcase on the desk with a crib inside. Broinowski, on the other hand, was fond of gadgets. He taught French meticulously and marked papers with a sheep counter. If an accent was missing, click went the counter, and away went another mark.

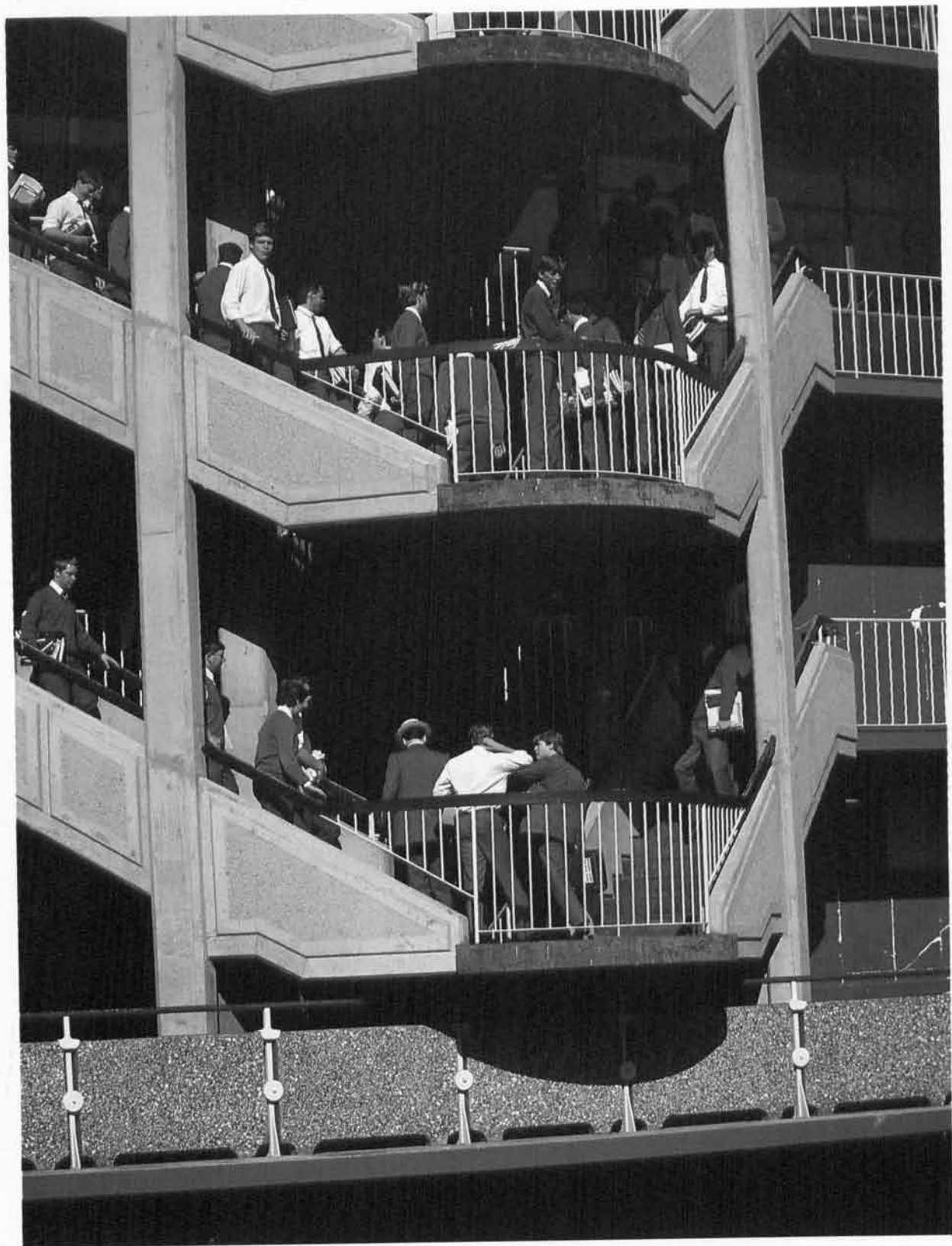
Travers's contact with Pat Eldershaw, on the other hand, was limited to the sports field, where Travers soon showed his exceptional ability. One day at fielding practice on the school ground Eldershaw gave Travers thirty lines for talking. They had to be done in his best writing and by the time Eldershaw was satisfied Travers had done them three hundred times. On another occasion Eldershaw thought one of the forwards was being lazy at practice. He went up to him, gave him a resounding kick in the rear, and when the forward reeled under the impact Eldershaw said, 'There, that shows you what you can do.'

As a footballer himself, Travers soon developed an obsession to beat Joeys, but it was to be unfulfilled. In the ten years he was at Shore the





School life, 1986-7



school played Joeys twenty times and lost eighteen matches and drew two. Indeed, during his first two years Shore did not win a football match at all. It was not until 1930, when Fisher became the coach, that this started to change. One of the drawn games against Joeys was in 1933 and that made Shore and Joeys equal premiers. It was the first football premiership Shore had won since the time of Iven MacKay.

As a boarder in the prep., Travers had to attend chapel twice on Sundays, at eleven in the morning and eight in the evening. There was a voluntary communion service at eight in the morning, but boys were not expected to be confirmed until they were thirteen or fourteen. As a day boy, he had to attend chapel for a fifteen-minute service at the start of every day.

It was while Travers was at school that Cock Pulling started the tradition of the polished pennies. Pulling's son had been killed at Gallipoli and in an emotional address in the chapel in the early thirties he said that they all had a responsibility to keep bright the memorials, and thus the memory, of those who were commemorated in the chapel. He suggested that as a symbolic gesture everybody should polish a penny and that the collection would be devoted to the upkeep of the brasses in the chapel 'to keep the memory bright'. At first this was done on Armistice Day, then moved to Anzac Day and later, because that sometimes fell out of term, to the School's birthday. It is a tradition familiar to all Shore boys since, although the brasses are no longer cleaned because that was found to do them more harm than good.

Outside the chapel, however, the Christian ethic was freely interpreted by most boys. In the sixth form, for example, Nigel Backhouse taught Divinity and the convention amongst the boys was that if you did not want to work at it you must do nothing to embarrass him, and you must not upset him by getting a poor mark in the exam. Consequently this was one examination where many boys used a crib without the slightest worry. 'You were thought to be a real louse if you performed so badly in Divinity that you got him all worked up.'

Travers thought Onkus was a fine figure of a man, and quick witted too. There was the time when Onkus was training the drill squad to form fours. The first job was to order the squad to number off and on this occasion the numbers were called by the squad as, 'one, two, three . . . nine, ten, jack, queen, king'. 'Stand at ease,' yelled Onkus. 'Fall out the court cards. I'm the joker, hend over.'

At the break the entire school would have a PE session on the school oval under Onkus, who stood on a bench and put the school through its paces. He also marched the school to chapel. Boys would line up in the quadrangle and then march through the arch and down the path with the

school band playing near the pear tree. Onkus called the step and would flick his cane at any boy who was not behaving. He was never known to miss.

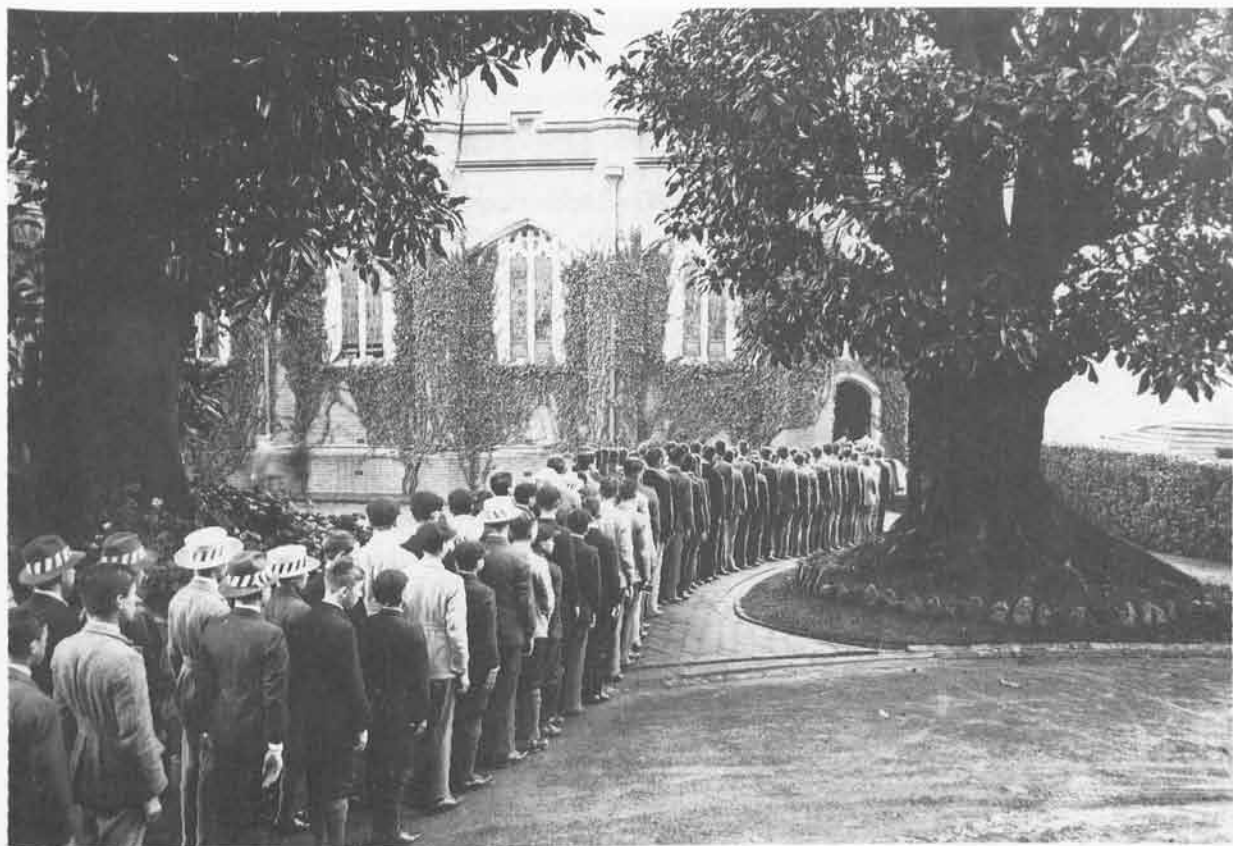
One of Onkus's duties was to accompany Robson on a Friday afternoon when he went around the classrooms with pink and white cards. Pink cards were for good work, but they were used only in the junior forms. White cards meant a Saturday morning detention. Apart from that, punishments were given in the form of 'thirties'. One thirty meant a thirty-minute detention on Tuesday or Friday afternoon, two thirties meant an hour's detention, three thirties meant attending drill with Onkus on Friday, and four thirties meant a Saturday morning detention. More than one thirty, and its corresponding punishment, could be awarded at one time, or they could build up cumulatively. Later, however, the Tuesday detention was abandoned because as junior school teams started to play more competitions against other schools the coaches complained that their Tuesday practice sessions were often thinly attended because of the detention. After that, the Friday detention could be either a drill under Onkus or be spent doing work that had been set by the master awarding it. They were recorded in the book as either 3W or 3D.

Travers, in common with most boys at that time, joined the cadets and remained in it for five years. During his first year the cadet camp was held at the end of Long Bay rifle range and nobody needed to teach him how to shoot again. 'Being in the cadets was a good experience, especially for a day boy. You went away and lived in the dust and learnt to live with other people. It was, in any case, evident to some even in 1936 that World War II was inevitable.

Jika Travers had the rare distinction of doing the Leaving Certificate three times, which seemed luxurious to many at the time. He was just over sixteen the first time, seventeen the second and eighteen the third. He was captain of football and cricket in the second year and in the third year was senior prefect as well.

At that time it was relatively easy to enter a university, with the qualifying level a fairly modest B in four subjects and a lower in a fifth. But in order to qualify for a scholarship, bursary or exhibition a candidate had to be in the first two hundred in the State. Of those, one hundred were awarded on ability and the rest depended on family income. In his last year Travers sat for honours in French, Latin, English and History and won one first and three seconds. It was enough to put him in the top hundred in the state and he was awarded an exhibition, which his father had made a condition of sending him to university.

Although a contemporary of Travers in the thirties, Peter Jenkins could hardly have been more different. Travers undoubtedly had academic



ability, as his results showed, but his fame at school was based on his skill as a sportsman. Jenkins, on the other hand, came perilously close to being a swot and as such was the type of boy who could have had a fairly unhappy time.

Peter Jenkins started at Shore in 1934. His father had been to Sydney High School and the family had no connections with Shore. They did, however, live on the North Shore. After spending two years at a Dame's school in Longueville he was sent to a private school in Hunters Hill for a year and a term before going overseas with his family for a year, during which he had no schooling at all. It was on their return that he started at Shore as a day boy. 'My mother was a keen church woman and wanted me to go to a church school. I think both my parents wanted me to go to a private school because they believed in that kind of education.'

He made friends easily although, as he says, within a fairly limited circle. He was bright and intelligent and was the top of his year all the way through the school. He was certainly no sportsman—'I like sport and

Going into Chapel. This photograph was taken shortly after the introduction of the school uniform in 1933.

always have, but I was never any good at it'—and that was a disadvantage in the sense of having friends. Two boys who were there at the same time were certainly picked on because they were intellectuals but they went out of their way to confront people. 'I wasn't built that way and so I didn't suffer in the way they did.'

Robson taught him for two consecutive years, in the lower and upper fourth, which was unusual because Robson normally took only one year in that part of the school. Rumour had it that it was because the class contained the son of a friend of his and a fellow Rhodes scholar, so Frank Henry took the blame for the extra interest Robson showed in the class. 'Not that it made much difference, for Henry was never much good as a mathematician.'

In spite of Jenkins's ability, he found L. C. Robson a terrifying figure. 'He had a very short fuse and could lose his temper very easily. Then he was not slow to box you on the ears in a way no school teacher would dare to do now.' As he got higher in the school he lost some of his fear and his respect and appreciation grew, but Robson never got close to senior boys in the way later headmasters did except, perhaps, with those in the first eight.

Peter Jenkins was grateful that his parents allowed him to repeat the final year although academically there was little need after he had come first in the school in general proficiency. But he was uncertain about his future and was, he says, socially immature at that time. He did not work as hard in that repeat year but still managed to come first in the State, 'which was not as big an achievement then, with about three thousand candidates, as it is now.'

He cannot remember when he decided to become a teacher, but thinks it might have been in his last year when he was a prefect and found that he was able to get on with younger boys and enjoyed being with them. In any case, Robson gave him an introduction to Professor Waterhouse, who was professor of German at Sydney University, and Peter Jenkins studied German under him. He was, however, still not sure what he wanted to do. A friend had advised him not to do law and as he had no science he could not take up medicine. 'But in 1940 you did not think very much about the long-term future as the short term was the concern. You did not know what the next couple of years was going to bring.'

After joining the army (he had been a lieutenant in the cadets) he was sent back to university to concentrate on his German, which was regarded as an occupation of national importance and which made him suspect that he might be being trained as a spy. During that time Robson asked him to take on some part-time teaching at Shore. Jenkins taught four afternoons a week until he graduated in 1944 and by then he had no doubt about his

career. He joined Shore as a full-time master at the beginning of 1945 and has been there ever since.

He found no difficulty teaching at the same school he had attended. He developed friendships with Eldershaw and Bagot and others who had been on the staff for many years, some of whom had actually taught him. But as a master he modelled himself on Broinowski, who, he says, was a brilliant teacher.

MICHAEL HELSHAM WAS FIFTEEN when he started at Shore in 1937 and he went straight into the fifth form as a day boy. Until then he had been at Neutral Bay Intermediate High School where the headmaster, Chas A. Teasdale, set a standard that was not very different from that at Shore. Helsham joined Shore as a result of a scholarship and there is no doubt that that pleased his father who, having rowed for New South Wales and then coached at that level, had a great admiration for L. C. Robson.

Helsham says that the boarders saw the school differently from day boys. 'There is no doubt about that. I always felt envious of the integration of the boarders compared with the day boys. Boarders were a different race and you always felt that they were more together, more part of the school than the day boys. I never felt that I was as close to the school as I thought the boarders were.'

Gundy Wileman, who started in 1935 as a boarder in School House, agrees but says that he didn't think the boarders were any closer to the masters. 'The masters I had in School House were more oriented to discipline and keeping a firm hand on things rather than assisting us in a personal way.'

Wileman had lived in Newcastle for two years before joining Shore. His father worked for BHP and was an old university friend of L. C. Robson. Wileman spent those two years at Hamilton Public School and was very conscious of the contrast when he arrived at Shore. 'Hamilton was an industrial area of Newcastle and things were very tough. It was very difficult for most boys to even find clothing.' At morning break some of the boys would go amongst those more fortunate who had brought food in the hope of getting a crust. He remembers one boy who got a good pass in his final year and could have gone to Newcastle High School, but when he next saw him he was selling newspapers on the corner of Beaumont Street wearing only a shirt and shorts and with no shoes. 'To this day I have a terrible memory of how privileged I was to go to Shore, and how unfortunate it was for people who did not have the State assistance they have today.'

Not surprisingly, Wileman arrived at Shore determined to do well,



R. J. Macarthur carrying out a dewpoint test on the oval in 1939.

although he says that the impetus diminished as he went through the school. There was, for one thing, a more relaxed atmosphere than there had been at Hamilton. While he found L. C. Robson to be just as good a slave driver as his previous headmaster, the rest of the staff were friendly and co-operative.

That was not true of all the boys, however, and he recalls that there was a great deal of bullying in the boarding house. Most was of a minor nature, but occasionally it became more serious. He was once thrashed by a member of the first XV who lived in Robson House and who would then have been seventeen. 'I admit that I must have given him some cheek, but his reaction was just ferocious.' There were times, though, when one could strike back. A friend of his called Noel Kerridge was a bright boy but his slight build attracted the attention of a bully. One night they sent a



message to the bully that Onkus wanted to see him under the arch and as he walked into the trap they both jumped on him in the darkness. It solved the problem, but the bully later became very aggressive as a sportsman.

When Wileman's brother joined him at Shore a year later he was required to stand on a table and sing. He refused, and promptly whacked a boy who tried to encourage him. When four more tried, Gundy came to his defence and helped him fight them off. 'I would not wish to over-emphasise this, but I had no misgivings about the fact that there were bullies at school who had to be dealt with. And they were.'

Helsham was in the A forms in his career and Wileman, who had not done any languages at Hamilton, was in the B forms and thus had the pleasure of being taught by Pat Eldershaw in English and Latin. He remembers the moans, and Eldershaw's complaint that somebody or other

Playing tops in 1939. George Wearne, a prefect, throws one down while senior prefect Mike Helsham waits to 'peg' it.

was 'nothing but a lousy cow and an un-cooperative citizen'. But Wileman says that it happened so seldom that when it did you knew it was serious and justified. Helsham, on the other hand, remembers Pat Eldershaw as a coach and his tongue was just as useful there. 'You have the fastest feet on a football field,' he said to one boy, 'so why don't you use them when you are batting?'

Both Helsham and Wileman were good sportsmen. Wileman played at five-eighth for the school and had, Helsham says, 'more brains on the football field than at any other time!' Wileman was also a member of the 1939 cricket team which was, he says, one of the best three teams the school has ever had because of two superb fast bowlers and a great skill in taking catches. For example, in one match against Sydney High Shore was sent in on a sticky wicket and at one stage were 5 for 29 but still managed to win by an innings. No team scored more than about seventy runs against that Shore team, and in one game Shore scored nearly four hundred runs in an innings. It was also a very difficult side to get into and many good players, like Helsham, failed when they would have succeeded at almost any other time. As Wileman says, 'It all came together in that final year, and that is the technique of schoolboy sport. That team was capable of putting on fifty partnerships right down to the last wicket.'

Although Helsham did not think there was too much emphasis in sport except perhaps with the rowers, who were a separate race, Wileman had reservations. His parents used to think there was, he says, and it was certainly very easy to let sport take over. Both agree that this was not at the cost of school work. With Wileman in School House was a rower, first XV footballer and future Rhodes Scholar called Bill Woodward. 'He was the sort of fellow who in August would ask what the Shakespeare play was that year. I shared a study with him and this happened in his last year in 1938. He found a copy of the play, swotted it up and finished with second class honours.'

Even so, there were not many activities besides sport. Helsham was in the debating team for two or three years and they remember the pageant that was staged in 1939 for the fiftieth anniversary of the school. It presented a history of Australia and most boys took part in some way. However, Wileman remembers the amusement in School House when a request came for three musicians. They thought there were probably not that number in the whole school.

There was, however, still the cadets. Wileman joined when he was in the lower fourth and became a cadet officer and thinks it was a valuable experience. Later, when he was in camp with the Sydney University Regiment at Ingleburn he was at the pictures when the film was stopped with the announcement that the Japanese had invaded Pearl Harbor. A

parade followed and they were told that the Japanese were likely to land at Jarvis Bay and they would probably be needed to stop them. Wileman, with his issue of six bullets, did not think this would be much of a problem.

Helsham, on the other hand, did not join the cadets until his final year, and only then because L. C. Robson, having appointed him head prefect, thought he should. It is probably the only time the senior prefect has been a private in the cadets.

On Monday 4 September the school assembled for the first time since the declaration of war, which had been made over the weekend. It was a solemn occasion, except at the end. The usual practice on being dismissed was for the boys to turn to the right and salute the headmaster. This time, however, a group of senior boys had worked out a variation to this routine. As they turned to the right, instead of saluting the headmaster they put their right arms into the air and yelled, 'Heil'. 'It was the only time I saw Onkus flabbergasted, and even then it lasted for only five seconds. As the boys started to break up he yelled, "Stand fast" and made us do it properly. He then told all the prefects to report to the masters common room!'

As for the chapel, Helsham sang in the choir, which gave him a close association with Old Bones Walmsley and Nigel Backhouse, 'but I don't think that religion prevailed in the atmosphere to any extent.' Wileman came from a religious family and at first did not find chapel onerous. In the end it was the repetition that bored him. 'I believe I had more religion at school than in the whole of the rest of my life.'

In 1939, when Helsham was head prefect and Wileman was second prefect they both took part in the first broadcast from the school chapel. It was a service to mark the fiftieth anniversary and it is perhaps as well that it was not televised for they both took the collection during the wrong hymn.

During that year they probably got as close to L. C. Robson as most boys ever did, but that was not very close. Helsham remembers having a sleepless night after a parent complained that he had caned his son and knowing that the Chief wished to see him the following morning. During the conversation in Robson's study the Chief suggested that they might discuss any future canings before they took place, and in retrospect Helsham thinks it was a wise approach. 'I had the right to cane and I was getting a bit big for my boots. He certainly pulled me up with a jolt.'

Wileman, however, was less forgiving as a result of an earlier experience. It was the rule that house prefects had to attend chapel a certain number of times a week on the honour system. But one day L. C. Robson became so angry because there were few prefects at the service that he stomped into School House and immediately demoted a prefect whom he found there. Wileman was outraged at the injustice. The prefect had been

to chapel earlier in the week and there was plenty of time left for him to fulfil his obligation for the week. Wileman therefore confronted Robson later and said that if the prefect was demoted, then so was he. A day or so later Robson told him that he had forgotten the matter, but Wileman did not. 'I thought it the act of a rash man, although when I was at St Paul's College later he always came over for a chat whenever he was there and I began to look on him more as a friend. But he was never an easy man.'

Difficult or not, neither doubt the effectiveness of the school at that time. As Helsham says, 'Everything came together to make you feel that you had achieved something by being at that school.'

And indeed he did achieve something. Air Vice-Marshal the Honourable Mr Justice Helsham, AO, DFC, RFD, QC, BA, LL B, was Judge Advocate General of the RAAF until 1983 and in 1986 retired as Chief Judge in Equity of the Supreme Court of New South Wales.

Lou Davies, on the other hand, was sent to Shore not for what the future might bring, but for what it might avoid.

Lou Davies, son of the manager of the meatworks at Aberdeen, first went to the Aberdeen public school and then to Muswellbrook District Rural School. This was an intermediate high school where he learnt woodwork, metal work, and how to plough behind a horse. He also started to learn some less desirable lessons and after a year one of the masters told his father that unless he took his son out of the school Lou Davies would probably become a delinquent. 'There were some very tough characters there that I was chummy with and I suspect he was probably right.'

As a result he was sent as a weekly boarder to Maitland High, but Shore looked a much better alternative. His father had a long connection with the school and his mother's brother, David Sturrock, had been a prefect at the school before being killed at Gallipoli. The difficulty was that the fees were beyond them and the only hope was that Lou might win a scholarship.

In 1936, when he was thirteen years old, Lou Davies was brought from Maitland to attend the scholarship examination at Shore. He was wearing a grey suit on which, he hoped, a Shore badge would soon be fixed to the pocket. During the day he was looking at a huge concrete map of Australia which had been built on the ground at the northern side of the three-storeyed building, and he was standing where boys of his age were not supposed to stand. The senior prefect, Brian Smith, pointed this out with some force, but his face turned to confusion when Davies turned around and he realised that this little boy was wearing a black and white tie and no school badge. Smith apologised profusely for having abused a visitor, which Davies thought was very impressive.

Unfortunately Lou Davies failed to win a scholarship, which apparently



surprised nobody, and this left the family with the alternative of severe financial strain to send him as a boarder, or leaving him at Maitland High. The solution, as often happens, was unexpected. On the advice of her uncle, who was a tin-mining engineer, his mother bought some Pungah tin shares and these proved so successful that they were able to finance Lou Davies as a fee-paying boarder in School House in 1937.

At first he was not particularly happy at Shore and was frequently in trouble with his housemaster and Nigel Backhouse. 'For some reason I kept forgetting to buy my Divinity book and Backhouse became more and more ropeable. That went on until the first boarders' weekend when my father came down to take me out. It turned out that Backhouse had been padre in the 7th Light House Regiment when my father was the adjutant. They immediately fell into each other's arms and from then on I was the curly-headed boy.'

The school entrance as it was about 1939.

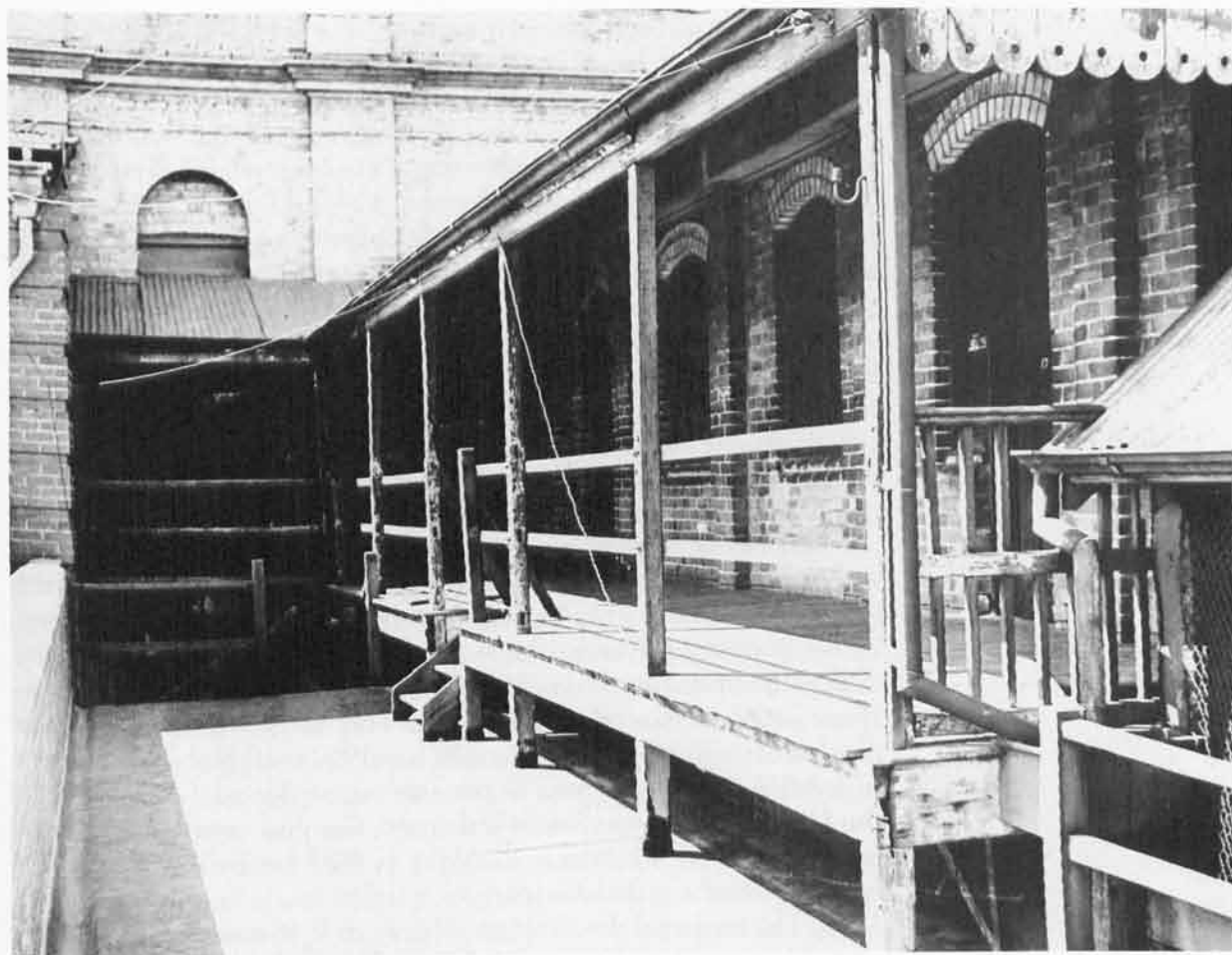
But for the rest of the staff he remained something of a handful, largely because he did not want to be there. He never asked to be taken away, but for a time he was rebellious and disorganised and 'kicked over the traces a bit'. Once he got into a fight with two other boys in the lower IVA classroom which became increasingly noisy until the Chief swished into the room. He took all three down to the sergeant major's office where he gave them four each and a full Saturday detention.

Davies started in the second year, year 8, but in School House he was put into the top dormitory which was used by year 7 boys. Because he was a year ahead of most of them he did not make many friends there. He was also very noticeable. By the time he was fifteen he stood nearly two metres tall and had the dimensions of a playing card. He was putting this to good use as a high jumper when he went down with an attack of scarlet fever. It coincided with a severe outbreak of measles within the school and at first it was assumed that that was what he had. When it was discovered that he had an infectious disease of a different kind he was sent home (although he had a temperature which would today make such a move unthinkable) and it was while he was there that he listened on the radio to Menzies declaring war. When he recovered he returned to find the school had been little affected by the news.

As a boarder, Lou Davies escaped whenever he could. The North Sydney pool had opened in 1938 for the Empire Games and this was a very welcome facility as previously they had to travel to Balmoral baths for a swim. The weekends, though, were dominated by school sport and the chapel. He had been an altar boy at Aberdeen and at one stage it had been thought that he might go into the Church. But at Shore he found the chapel boring. 'Nigel Backhouse had one of the worst deliveries of any minister I have ever heard. He used to put his right hand in the small of his back and he had a very high pitched voice. I remember it with affection now, but it used to bore the pants off me when I was young. The evening service on Sunday lasted about an hour and after a day in the sun it was very difficult to regard the proceedings as anything but a terrible nuisance.'

Lou Davies became a respectable sportsman. His high jumping brought him a Second Award blazer in 1938 and he learnt to row under the tuition of Bill Woodward. He rowed in the house regatta in 1939. 'We must have been pretty good because our bow, Tom Wise, caught a crab. By the time we had collected ourselves the boat was facing the wrong direction, but we turned it around and still managed to win.' The following year he was a member of the successful second four crew for the school.

The masters who he says did him most good were Howard Grigg, H. H. Dixon and Clem Tiley, who taught him Physics. In the laboratory, Tiley instructed them in an experiment which consisted of winding a drum for



ten minutes and measuring the rise in temperature. 'The mechanical equivalent of heat came like a bolt from the blue to me. Clem did it all so beautifully and enthused you with what most people thought of as deadly boring.'

Davies also discovered that he had a natural and uncanny ability in mental arithmetic. H. H. Dixon at first refused to believe this and announced one day that he would have a competition with him. The problem they would both face was to express 3s. 11 1/2d. as a decimal of a pound. Dixon had barely put pen to paper when Davies told him the correct answer. He was soon admired throughout the school for this remarkable, and valuable, skill.

As for L. C. Robson, 'every boy in the school without exception was petrified of him. If you went up behind someone and said, "the Chief's

Part of the Old Building
in 1939.

here", there would be a dent in the ceiling.' But in his second year Davies had the fortune of being taught Maths by him, and again when he did honours Maths in the final year. 'He thumped into us the words discipline, accuracy and incisiveness and they produced a work habit that has stood me in good stead for the rest of my life.' Davies was made a prefect in his last year and after he had read the lesson in chapel for the first time L. C. Robson stopped him only a metre from chapel door, marched him back inside and made him read it again. 'This time put your head up and don't mumble.'

By this time Davies was committed to science but was unsure of a career. Eventually he wrote to his father saying that he thought he might do medicine. Horrified at the thought of having his son around his neck for eight years as a medical student, his father rushed to Sydney and tackled Robson. 'Nonsense,' Robson said. 'What Davies wants to do is engineering.' It seemed as good an idea as any.

In the leaving certificate he came third in the State in Maths and fourth in Physics and started the engineering course. In 1942 he joined the RAAF and served as a navigator on Beauforts until 1946. After his release he was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship and went to Oxford where he studied thermonuclear fusion for three years and was awarded his D. Phil. He returned to Australia in 1951 and worked with the radio physics division of CSIRO before joining AWA in 1960 as chief physicist. While with AWA he was appointed visiting professor of electrical engineering at the University of New South Wales and this dual arrangement lasted nineteen years. He retired from AWA in 1985 but he is still honorary visiting professor at the university.

Lou Davies joined the Council of Shore in 1966 and when Ian Dixon retired in 1986 he took over as chairman. The danger of him turning into a delinquent had probably passed by then.

CHAPTER FIVE

A Variety of Activity

ALTHOUGH CLASSES AND SPORT account for much of the time at Shore, there has always been a wide range of activities available for those with other interests. Clubs have always been formed so that those with a common interest can meet each other, share their experiences and develop skills in the company of those who are more proficient and supported by the knowledge that many of their friends are experiencing similar difficulties in trying to achieve a higher standard.

Clubs of this kind often have a limited life. Frequently they rely on the enthusiasm of a small group of individuals, and when they leave school interest might wane until another group arrives to rekindle it. Or they might rely on the skill and enthusiasm of a single master who enthuses boys with a similar interest but which dies when he leaves the school. Temporary or not, all these activities have value. They draw together those who share a common interest, boys and masters are able to meet more informally than they might otherwise, and learning can be seen to be more enjoyable than it usually is in the classroom.

Boys also learn something of administration if the club is run well. A secretary learns about keeping minutes, a treasurer learns to keep track of money, however modest it might be, and a chairman learns something of running a meeting.

The results can be far reaching. One Old Boy still writes with a fair italic hand as a result of after-school lessons in calligraphy he received while in prep. school. Others have made careers in art and music after having their early interest developed in school clubs, interest that might otherwise have wilted through lack of support and a feeling that it was somehow strange to have the interest in the first place.

Some activities are more formal and widely supported. Some are virtually compulsory and, because of that, not universally enjoyed. They are all part of the fabric of the school, and all have their purpose.

CADET UNIT

The cadet unit is the most formal, and probably the oldest, of these activities at Shore.

Opposite page: Cadet drummers in 1967. Left to right: St Clair, Millyard, Greenwell, Storrier.

In 1908 the *Torch Bearer* announced that the school intended to form a cadet corps that would be part of the 3rd Battalion of Senior Cadets. The response from boys and parents was enthusiastic and enrolments soon exceeded the eighty or so needed to form one company. Indeed, out of a school population of about 285, 128 enrolled within the first few weeks.

In June 1908, 100 cadets paraded as G Coy and the following October a second company, known as K Coy, was formed. The unit was commanded by Captain Lee Pulling, with Lieutenant J. R. O. Harris as second in command. They were supported by the school clerk, Sergeant McKay, who acted as instructor until he left the school in 1909. The unit paraded every Tuesday afternoon.

At that time school cadet units had a certain amount of latitude in their choice of uniform and King's had established its grey uniform some time earlier. The uniform adopted by Shore was said to be based on that of a regiment of the Light Division of the British Army when it was serving in the Peninsular War. This uniform consisted of a khaki hat, corded breeches, a green tunic with green puttees and puggaree, and black boots. Badges and buttons were silver with the school crest on them.

With the introduction of Compulsory Military Training in 1911 the unit grew to an enlistment of over four hundred, and the uniform was standardised throughout most GPS schools. In 1930 distinctive uniforms were again allowed and the school unit changed to khaki and blue with a broad stripe down the trousers. A little later officer-style tunics were introduced, with blue shoulder straps and NCOs stripes and blue and white diagonal stripes on the puggarees. In 1945 the unit wore the uniform issued by the AMF and the only distinguishing marks were the blue and white puggarees and black badges on the hat and collar. In 1963 the uniform was changed to the jungle green then worn by the AMF, but retained the old puggarees and badges. Shortly afterwards black webbing was used instead of khaki and in 1985 the navy blue beret was introduced.

The original unit of two companies held its first Guard of Honour in 1908, when it was inspected by the Governor of New South Wales, and later that year took part in the King's Birthday Review at Centennial Park, a review for the visiting American fleet, and a battalion parade at Newington College.

At the unit's first NCOs exam, thirty-eight boys qualified and of these, Tozer and Pockley became officers. There were also two colour sergeants, two sergeants, about four corporals and four lance-corporals.

At the end of 1918 Lee Pulling handed the command of the unit to



Major Harris. When Harris left the school nine years later he handed over to Major E. M. Bagot, who served until 1948. Command was then taken over by Major Mitchell. Five years later he handed it on to Major Lipscomb, who died about a year later. In 1954 Major P. Jenkins took command and he served until 1969, when he handed over to Lt.-Col. B. J. Edwards, who later handed over to Lt.-Col D. G. Spurr.

The annual camp has been a feature of cadet activity for many years and many Old Boys have their memories of Singleton and, more recently, Holsworthy. Not all are pleasant. The flies at Singleton seem to have been quite unforgettable, even if they have grown in size and number with the passing years. But there are other memories to offset them, such as seeing Broinowski fill his palliasse with straw. Instead of using it as a mattress, he climbed into it as if it were a sleeping bag, to the delight of all who watched.

Most boys who served in the cadets and then saw service in World War II testify to the efficiency of the training they received in the unit. Many thought the standard of training was higher in the unit than in their first weeks in the forces. Most soon realised that they were already competent soldiers by then and many found themselves acting as unofficial instructors while supposedly being trained themselves. Some say that they had been in the forces for many months before the competence of those around them exceeded that of the school cadet unit. And if nothing else, they were familiar with discipline, drill and weapons and so could adjust to the reality of army life more readily than those who had no experience of such things.

Fortunately it is many years since cadet training has had to be put to that use by so many. While a number of boys continue to enter the forces, they now do so as a career choice rather than out of national necessity. Nevertheless, the cadet unit today is as strong as it ever was. The training it provides is valuable in terms of individual development and as such never did need wars to justify it.

THE AIR TRAINING CORPS

Often seen as a less 'macho' version of the cadet unit, the ATC was established in the school in 1941 and was a direct result of World War II. The government was anxious that recruits in the RAAF should have had some training before they enlisted and although the cadet unit already covered some of that work, the school responded by forming a separate corps.

The first commanding officer was C. S. Tiley, who was commissioned as Flying Officer in spite of his initial lack of enthusiasm. He was already heavily involved with organising evacuation procedures for the school and



with this on top of his other duties he thought he was already over-committed. 'But none of the men engaged in the cadets could leave the unit and Mr Bagot said that they could not find anybody in the school who knew anything about cadets except me. What could I do? I took it on.'

The initial strength was thirty-one 'rank and file' and by the end of the year this had grown to sixty-three.

The ATC was formed specifically to provide the principal source of man-power from which the squadrons of the RAAF were to be recruited. Those wishing to join the Corps had to be over sixteen and had to pass a

Cadet camp, December 1971.
Cadets J. M. N. Houston,
P. A. R. Hickson, R. J. Gray
and K. E. Johnston cooking the
evening meal under the
direction of Cpl R. M. Waldron.

medical and then successfully complete a test in Maths and Physics. They were then enrolled and started on the first stage of training.

This was made up of four stages which together provided two years of training. At the end of the first stage a boy sat for his Proficiency Certificate, and at the end of each successive stage he had to pass a Post Proficiency examination, which required that he score no less than sixty per cent in all papers.

When a boy was two months short of his eighteenth birthday he had to file an application to join the RAAF and he could then wait for it to be processed. This was not compulsory, but if it were not done the boy was liable to serve with the forces from his eighteenth birthday. But as most boys left school before that age not many completed more than two stages of the course at school. Many did apply to join the RAAF, but most had left school by then.

The Air Training Corps, now under the command of Flt. Lt. (AIRTC) R. J. McIntosh, continues to train boys who are interested in aviation, civil or military. This training is more technical than that in the cadet unit and its appeal is therefore limited to those boys with specific interests and ability. The annual camp is usually held at an RAAF airbase, where boys can see for themselves how their technical training is applied in practice. Most boys are able to obtain flying experience.

In addition, the Corps holds full-scale bivouacs which are similar to those held by the cadet unit, as well as providing training in drill and weapons.

THE SCOUT GROUP

When the 1st Waverton SCEGS Scout Group was formed in 1932 it was the first scout group to be established in a GPS school. It was actively supported by the headmaster, L. C. Robson, and Dr Moseley, a member of the school Council and a prominent Rover Leader in the New South Wales scout movement.

Scouting was not seen as a substitute for other school activities. On the contrary, scouts were expected to distinguish themselves in class work, sport and the general life of the school community. Many were prominent in all these activities as well as scouting.

After the group was founded a number of masters attended a twelve-day Wood Badge course at the Baden-Powell training camp at Pennant Hills. After that, with few exceptions, the Shore scout group was run either by masters or Old Boys. They were assisted by a very active Parents Committee who, amongst other things, rebuilt the inside of the old gymnasium and repainted it with the help of the scouts themselves.



During World War II seventy-three former scouts served in the forces and of these nearly half were commissioned. Nine were killed in the war, including three former troop leaders.

After the war, however, the number of scouts in the school troop fell, perhaps because many of its activities were then available in other forms such as adventure training and the Outward Bound Scheme. After a few years of dwindling numbers, the group was disbanded in 1980.

The cast and crew of the *Pageant of Australia*, staged in December 1936.

MUSIC AND DRAMA

While music and drama have not been as prominent at Shore as they have in some schools, they have always been part of school life, and sometimes spectacularly so. In the early days, though, they seem to have been rather sporadic. The first school concert was held in June 1891, although it seems to have had only two performers from the boys and most of the contributions came from the staff. This was the pattern for some time, although it is not surprising in view of the small number of boys who attended the school in its early years.

There was, however, no lack of enthusiasm, as this description from the *Torch Bearer* of 1913 shows.

'The School Concert in aid of the Chapel Fund was revived this year in



the Masonic Hall, North Sydney, on Friday, 13th June. The hall was packed with present boys and old boys, with parties of friends, and so the audience from the first was enthusiastic. Even before the curtain rose there was much applause, particularly for the benefit of one of the ushers, ornamental and occasionally useful, who in contempt of the foppish fashions of the day has invented a new and simple method of dressing the hair.

'The School's rowing song was performed publicly for the first time, and made a most satisfactory beginning. The song was sung by Mr Barton, the choir providing the chorus. The swing of this particularly appealed to the bulk of the School, and this the producers wished most of all. Loud—very loud—calls for the author at the conclusion were mistaken for "encore", and the last few verses were repeated. Then at last the author, Mr Barton, heard the call and appeared amid much applause.

'After the interval a sketch by Lady Gregory, entitled "Spreading the



News", was staged . . . The parts were well known and there were few signals of distress to the prompter's side; the most noticeable was when one player began to enjoy the luxury of a good smoke and forgot the play. But this was not remarked by more than a few. Some of the characters had made astonishing progress in smoking at the rehearsals, while others seemed uneasy.'

Five years later the *Torch Bearer* was a good deal less generous when describing that year's concert. 'It is a doubtful compliment to any audience,' it said sourly, 'to let loose undistinguished amateurs on stringed instruments which they have not yet learnt to tune.'

After the chapel was built the organist, R. G. H. Walmsley, formed a choir to lead the services and to perform on other significant occasions. Most members were small boys, with staff and a few older boys singing the tenor and bass parts.

Although the 'Octet' was formed in 1936 and later grew to a

The cast of *Pirates of Penzance*, staged in July 1948.

membership of over fifty masters and boys, the chapel choir was the only regular source of music in the school from its formation in 1918 until 1946, when Roland Pullen joined the staff as music master. The choir then grew in size and more older boys took part, although they still had to be augmented by members of the staff.

One of the difficulties in performing drama or music in the earlier years was the lack of a suitable hall. The dining hall was used in 1932 to stage two reviews, but the difficulty of converting it into a theatre was too great to be repeated. Until the building of the Memorial Hall, most major productions were staged outside the school.

One exception, however, was the Pageant of Australia, which the entire school joined in presenting in 1936. This involved a cast of about 150 boys drawn from all parts of the school and it was staged on the southern end of the school ground, with the audience occupying the asphalt area.

During the war, plays and concerts were frequently staged as a means of raising funds for the war effort. Many were quite informal and some were dreadful, but most were enjoyed, if only by those who took part in them. They also served to raise the level of interest in these activities and when the war ended, and with it the financial need, this interest continued. On one occasion the Captain of Boats said to one producer that the whole of the eight were willing to volunteer, but he would have to take all of them or none.

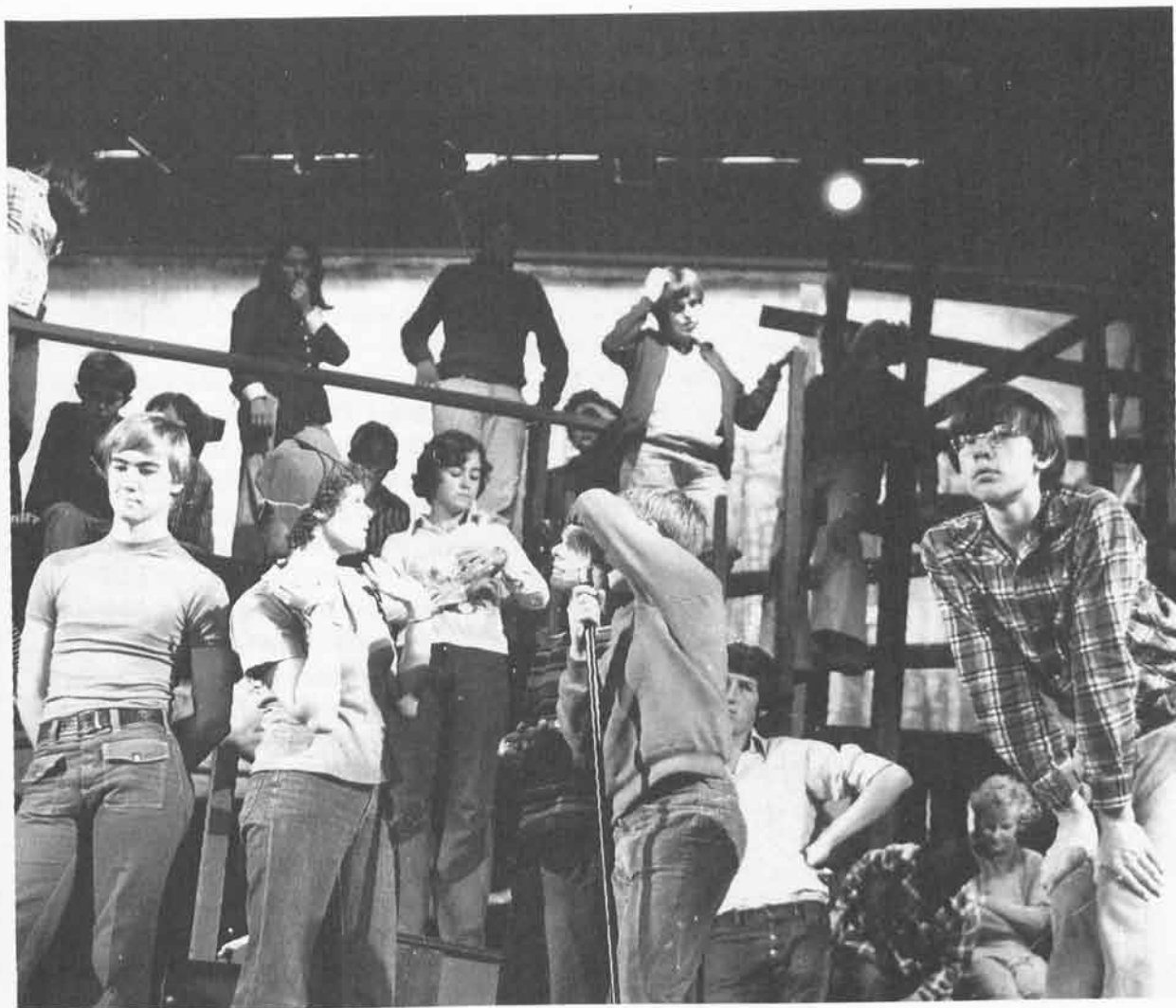
Between 1946 and 1959 there were a number of very popular musical productions, mostly of Gilbert and Sullivan. These were supported by the Octet and the school orchestra, which had been started in 1942 by Mrs Allman and which had already given a number of concerts. Two of these, in 1946, were held in the dining hall, which proved easier to adapt for this use than it had for plays.

Gradually, musical and dramatic productions became more ambitious and involved increasing numbers of boys. The Gilbert and Sullivan productions were enjoyable and well produced and when their popularity diminished they were replaced by equally enjoyable productions of shows such as *Oliver* and other modern musicals.

Drama too, moved from a series of one-act plays to more ambitious and demanding productions of *St Joan* and *Tom Sawyer*.

The building of the Memorial Hall at last meant that plays, musicals and concerts could be presented within the school, and the stage facilities and music rooms did a great deal to encourage those who might otherwise have shown little interest. Once the facilities were there, there was no shortage of people to use them.

As a background to this formal activity, boys gathered together from



time to time to perform on their own. Pop groups were formed and almost as quickly disbanded, only to be replaced by another crop. It was amateur music making by enthusiasts who played largely for their own amusement, although a swing group in the 1930s apparently had the idea 'that in order to play swing music one had to play it as slowly as possible'. This might have been because the bass player was desperately trying to slap a cello and the pianist was not quite nimble enough with his fancy breaks.

Music and drama, from being seen originally as little more than a pleasant amusement, is now an integral part of Shore life, and likely to be even more so in the future.

The cast of the 1975 production of *Oliver* during a rehearsal. In front: Sally Sussman (Nancy), Andrew Burns (Sikes), Janine Dawson (Mrs Corney), Marianne Lovejoy (Bet), Robert McCorquodale (Noah), Earle Shields (Mr Bumble), Andrew Fowler (Mr Brownlow) and Ian McDonald (Artful Dodger).

DEBATING

Although debating has at times been very successful, and the school has been prominent in inter-school competitions, it has had a chequered career during the school's history. The first debate was held in 1906 and the following year the first inter-school debate was held against Sydney Grammar. GPS debating started in 1920 and was won by Shore. The school was a frequent winner in subsequent years, although fortune varied to reflect the interest shown by the school at large. One handicap, perhaps, was that it was not possible to win a blazer by being a member of a successful school debating team.

Good debaters, though, were accorded a certain amount of respect by their fellows and skill was highly regarded. Perhaps it seemed too difficult to most boys, although many regretted afterwards that they had not taken more interest as those skills had an obvious value after they left school.

Interestingly, a school debate in 1913 chose a topic that might seem familiar even now, although the views expressed then would be unlikely to succeed in a modern debate.

The subject was 'That modern manners are gradually deteriorating'. The proposer said the action of suffragettes confirmed the belief that people had less respect for manners and customs than they ought to. Pulling explained this more fully, although he would not have delighted some listeners today. 'In early times women were inferior to men in physical strength and usually intellect; so arose the custom of men respecting and protecting women, and this movement reached its highest point at the time of Chivalry. But now women were claiming to be the equals of men in business and politics, and yet expect respect and protection. Women must either be put back to their original position or else chivalry must decline.'

. . .

CHAPTER SIX

The Forties

ONE MIGHT THINK that an event as cataclysmic as the start of World War II would have had an enormous effect even in a small community like Shore. But it did not. Changes, when they came, were gradual and were already being seen, in a more dramatic way, throughout the rest of the country and therefore did not seem very remarkable to school boys. As with the Depression, the basic pattern of school life remained constant and most boys thought more of their own activities than events outside.

But as boys approached the end of their time at Shore, and simultaneously their time for military service, they began to see things differently. In the end it was the loss of such people as John Jamieson, second prefect; George Edwards, head of School House; and Ian Osborne, one of the few boys to gain rowing and cricket colours in the same year, that did more to bring home to Shore boys what was happening outside than all the media stories of triumphs and disasters.

David 'Tiddler' Moors started at Shore in 1938 when he was thirteen and found it very different from Mosman prep., which he had attended for the previous four years. Short pants gave way to long trousers and the cap of Mosman was replaced by the boater of Shore. He travelled to North Sydney on the 'jumping jack' trams and found that if you stacked enough people at one end and made them jump up and down the tram could almost be brought off the rails.

Tiddler Moors became a rower almost immediately, starting as a cox in house rowing in tub fours. In the early days of the war this proved to have an unexpected benefit. If they rowed from the shed at Berrys Bay across to Darling Harbour and abused the wharfies they would be pelted with potatoes and onions and other things that were then in short supply. What the wharfies saw as schoolboy cheek was actually a combination of cunning and capitalism.

After house rowing most of the crew graduated to the shed at Gladesville. One day they were asked to row a shell to Gladesville from Berrys Bay and this started to fill with water when they were near Cockatoo Island. They decided to run the shell on to the island so they could empty it and were promptly stopped by an armed guard who told them to leave immediately. When they explained the situation he stood with his

submachine gun pointing at them while they emptied the boat. When they later explained the situation to Jimmy Burrell at Gladesville he had difficulty believing that a Shore crew could have been under the scrutiny of an armed guard on Sydney Harbour.

Jimmy Burrell, with his favourite aphorism of 'manners maketh man', was one of the most popular masters that ever presided over the rowing camp and one story demonstrates this well. The boys had a wind-up gramophone which they used to play on the verandah. Their favourite record contained two new and very popular hit songs, *It Ain't What you Do, It's The Way That You Do It* and *I'm Undecided Now*. 'Dear old Jimmy Burrell said it was an obscene record and he took it off the gramophone and glided it out over the bay. It didn't go far enough, though, and we were able to retrieve it when the tide went out. But we didn't play it again in the boatshed.'

In 1940 Moors coxed the second four to a one-and-a-half length victory on the Nepean. The successful crew consisted of Lou Davies, Mick Carter, George Wolstoneholme and George Edwards. Edwards was later shot down over Normandy but the rest, in common with many rowing crews, have stayed together ever since.

Moors is the first to admit that he was far from brilliant scholastically, but generously says that he and his friends bore no animosity to those who were. 'We can't all be academics and I think it is good for a school to have a balance. When I meet other Old Boys now some are Rhodes Scholars and judges but it makes no difference. We are all Old Boys.'

Moors repeated the Intermediate Certificate in fifth form and obtained two Bs the first time and three the second. He was keen to enlist in the forces but found he was too young and had to take a job until he could join the RAAF at eighteen. He became a flight engineer on Liberators and stayed with the crew when the numbers were reduced after the war so that they could fly Australian POWs from Malaysia to Sydney. 'We could carry thirty-five at a time and it took fifteen hours to fly from Darwin to Sydney. It was freezing cold all the way but they didn't seem to mind.'

When he was released he applied for repatriation training at Hawkesbury Agricultural College and was accepted on the strength of his five Bs in the Intermediate—I didn't tell them it took me two years to get them! While waiting for the course to start he jackerooed on a property near Tamworth with George Ekin, another Old Boy. After finishing at Hawkesbury 'I worked for other people before I put enough money together to buy my own place.'

A contemporary of Moors at Shore was a boy whose name has since become very familiar within the school, Neville Emery. He arrived in 1939 from Lismore High School and was one of the first boarders in Barry

House when it reopened under Pat Eldershaw. At that time the prefects were at one end of the house on the top floor and had the privilege of sleeping out on the balcony, which was not covered in, when the weather was kind. Elsewhere there was a senior dormitory with room for about twelve boys and a junior dormitory which was on the north-western corner of the old verandah. It was, he says, all fairly primitive.

He soon developed a great admiration for Pat Eldershaw, who was also his form master in upper 4B and who took them for Latin. Later in the year, however, Emery fell ill with pneumonia and spent a lot of time either in Mater Hospital or back home at Lismore. But by the third term he was back at school and playing cricket.

Like Moors, Emery did not consider himself to be particularly brilliant and, like Moors, he spent a great deal of his time on sport. 'I found Robson quite frightening, although I had no reason to be scared of him.' He was in Robson's Maths class in the sixth form but found the pace bewildering and thought he would have been better in Bagot's B form.

Emery repeated his last year in 1942 because he was too young to join the RAAF. He was senior prefect that year and finished with two As and three Bs in the Leaving Certificate.

After joining the airforce he was accepted as aircrew and was trained as a pilot before joining 467 bomber squadron near Lincoln in England. He did a number of trips over Germany, flying a Lancaster bomber. 'Everybody felt a bit scared, but when you got out there you were flying a plane and provided there was not too much going on you were OK.' The secret was to fly at the allocated height and speed and not to try to trick the system. 'I think the discipline I received at school made me a reasonably good pilot. You had learnt to do things when you did not want to do them and which you thought were going to be difficult.' But most aircrews still remember the feeling of relief they always felt when they saw the spire of Lincoln cathedral at the end of a long night over Germany.

When the war was over Neville Emery was made vice-captain of a RAAF Rugby team that made a tour of Britain and France. One game, at Chambery, was against a team of men who had been in the French Resistance and the game was started by dropping the ball from a helicopter.

When Emery returned to Australia in 1946 Robson offered him a job teaching in the prep. school for a term before he enrolled at university in 1947. During that year he was selected for the Wallabies and toured Britain with them in 1947-48. It was one of the most successful tours until recently for out of the four internationals they lost only one, against Wales.

When the tour was over he went back to St Paul's College and then returned to Shore for a short spell of teaching. He went to England again



The underwater VIII in 1940!
L. C. Robson is on the bow of
the launch.

in 1952 and played cricket as a professional with Cumberland. When he returned in 1957 Robson offered him a permanent position as a master at Shore and he taught English, History and Geography in the middle school. 'If I was going to teach I wanted to do it at this place, and if I wasn't able to teach here I would have done something completely different.'

Thirty years after joining the permanent staff, Neville Emery is the games master at Shore.

On Wednesday 10 December 1941 the British battle cruiser *Repulse* and the battleship *Prince of Wales* were sunk by the Japanese in the South China Sea and when the news reached Sydney the following Sunday it was suddenly obvious that a Japanese invasion of Australia was a real possibility. Keith Anderson returned to the school after spending the day in the bush with the Volunteer Defence Corps to find that Robson had called an



emergency meeting of housemasters for that evening. When they had assembled, Robson told them that he had prepared plans to move the prep. school out of Sydney and that he would shortly leave to find a suitable location. With him would be the bursar, Bob Anderson, Pat Eldershaw and A. L. Blythe, a member of Council.

Although the trip was successful in what it set out to do it was not a pleasant one. It was a very hot summer and their drive to Mount Victoria in the Blue Mountains took longer than it should because Blythe insisted on trying to drive the hired coke-burning car even though it came with a driver skilled in such mysteries. By the time they reached Mount Victoria and examined the disused pub Robson was ready to believe that it would do well. The others were convinced that something more suitable would be found in the next few days. But with the temperature soaring and

The back yard of School House in 1940. From left to right, Laurie Heath (killed while serving with the RAAF in the Second World War), John Ogilvie Smith, David 'Spec' Irvine and John Wise.

accommodation difficult to find Robson became progressively less interested and when they were caught in a dust storm at Cowra he said that he really could not see why anybody would bother to defend such a country from the Japanese. Mount Victoria had beaten its rivals for his support, but the field had hardly been a strong one.

Most of the prep. school moved there for the start of the next school year and the prep. in Edward Street was closed. The building at Mount Victoria proved more workable than they had feared and managed to accommodate seventy-five boarders and two day boys together with teaching staff and matrons. But after the Battle of the Coral Sea in 1942 the threat of invasion receded and in December that year the prep. school moved back to North Sydney.

If most changes at Shore were difficult to detect, one in particular was very visible: trenches. Designed by Clem Tiley and built under his supervision, they seemed to cover almost all the spare ground around the school. They were built at the far end of the main ground and up the side by the convent, while the area at the Graythwaite side was kept for games and the recently moved tuckshop. More trenches were built on the chapel lawn while others ran across the back of Robson House and extended along the front of Barry House. Another ran from the dining hall towards the entrance to the chapel.

They were stoutly built. Boys carried earth in big boxes with a handle on each end while others nailed boards to line the floor and walls and to make seats and timberwork for the roof. One trench was used to store ammunition for the armoury and for this and other obvious reasons it was a serious offence to be caught in the trenches when not authorised.

Although they were frequently used for practice, they were used only once in a real emergency. Edmund Playfair remembers. 'We were in Barry House senior dormitory when the Jap submarines came up the harbour. We turned the lights on and hung out of the windows to watch. North Sydney was not built up as much then and we could see tracer bullets across the water. We thought it was another practice until Neville Emery came in and told us to put the lights off and to go down to the trenches. We made a hell of a clatter, but when we got to the entrance of the trench I realised that a friend of mine, David Leslie, was not with us. He was a terrible fellow to wake up, so while we were waiting for Clem Tiley to arrive with the key to the trench I went back into the house to get him.'

When they returned there was still no key and together they decided to break the lock so they could enter the trench. Eventually they were joined by the Eldershaws and the matron, who had determined that if the end had come she would meet it as well-dressed as she could and now looked as if she was ready for a fox hunt. When Eldershaw called the roll he found that



Neville Emery was missing. He had performed his duties impeccably, and probably in his sleep, because he was now back in bed and snoring.

After a few hours it was thought safe to return to the House, but in the morning there was a typical Eldershaw sequel. He wanted to know if anybody knew how the lock had been removed. Playfair said he had removed it because there had been no way of getting into the trench. 'There,' said Eldershaw in disgust. 'Now the word will go around that a member of Barry House was *panic-stricken*.'

Edmund Playfair came from a family that had a long connection with Shore. He joined Shore prep. in 1938 and spent a year there before moving into Barry House as one of its new boys when it reopened. 'I think Pat Eldershaw was probably the most impressive person in my bringing up after my parents. I think he was a genius as a housemaster.'

Edmund's younger brother David thought so too after one experience

School House Prep Room in 1940. Left to right, Max Tooth, Mick Cadell, Bill Lyndon, Lou Davies and John Merewether.



'Ginge' McDiarmid and John Chancellor after a gas drill in 1940.

with him. He had been caught fooling around and this had been followed by English, History and a double Latin period, which subjected him to a massive four-period moan from Pat. During the afternoon at Northbridge Pat told him that he wanted him to play at fullback, which David disliked. In the practice, David was kicked every time he tackled until in the end he said he would take no more of it and walked off. Later, at the House, he apologised to Pat for being rude. Pat said, 'Don't worry, Dave, if you hadn't done it I would have thought you had no guts. Now give me a hand to move this table and I'll show you how to tackle properly.' From that moment David thought Pat Eldershaw could walk on water. He also became one of the best fullbacks in the school.

Edmund Playfair was at school during the last year of Sergeant Major Davidson and was impressed with him during his first day at school. 'I

knew all about Onkus, of course, from my family and thought I would impress him. I had been a very junior member of Collaroy surf club and thought I could march quite well, although marching on sand is quite different from a drill. That day Onkus was giving us PT at the back of the prep. wearing his three-piece blue suit and swishing his cane. Suddenly he yelled, "March properly, boy. What's your name?" "Playfair, sir," "Well it is a pity you can't march like your uncle did." My uncle had come out of the naval college at Jervis Bay and his surname was Hardy. I will never know how he knew we were related.'

Onkus was followed shortly afterwards by Sergeant Major Sellick. Whereas Onkus had carried a bamboo cane, Sellick carried a leather bound swagger stick but he was just as handy with it. 'Stray dogs used to come on to the grounds looking for scraps and he could pick a dog off with that cane better than anybody I have seen. For short distances he threw it sideways but for longer shots he threw it so that it turned end over end. He rarely missed.'

Edmund Playfair was not conscious of feeling threatened by the war and hardly noticed the shortages that began to creep in. It seemed quite normal for each boy to have his own jar of sugar in the dining hall and to wait while a boy at the table cut the butter into portions with a gadget he had made from wire. Nor could he say whether there was a greater sense of urgency in the cadets because he had not known what it was like in peace time. But later, when he joined the army, he found that the only part of recruit training that he had not already done was throwing a live hand grenade and firing an Owen gun. He discovered later that the Shore cadets were part of the VDC and would have been used in action had an invasion taken place.

By then, the tradition of polishing the pennies for the chapel collection was firmly established. It was a contest to see who could make the brightest and work started two minutes after the announcement. At first he saw it as no more than a contest, but as he moved up in the school he thought much more about it, especially when the names of boys he had known at school started to be read out in chapel or their memorial plaques appeared on the walls.

The biggest change in his last year or two was that he found he got on much better with the masters. He developed an unexpected love of maths under the guidance of Wilbur Sawkins and seemed to take on a new life as a scholar in the fifth form. To his father's surprise he won the form prize, the Divinity prize, and just missed the Mathematics prize. It was an incredible transformation which carried through to his final year.

Meanwhile, those who had left school were serving in many parts of the world, and occasionally bumping into each other. One of them remembers

how he met an old school friend when he was serving in a field hospital on the Malayan mainland just before the fall of Singapore. 'His name was Keegan and although the position was then close to panic he was still full of fight. After I had patched him up I asked him what he was going to do. He seemed surprised. "I'm going back to the boys. I have half a company up there. We had a go with the Japanese before I got lost in the bush and we got twenty of them to three of ours. That's not bad and if we keep it up we might get on top of them. Cheerio." The only thing I heard after that was that he was missing.'

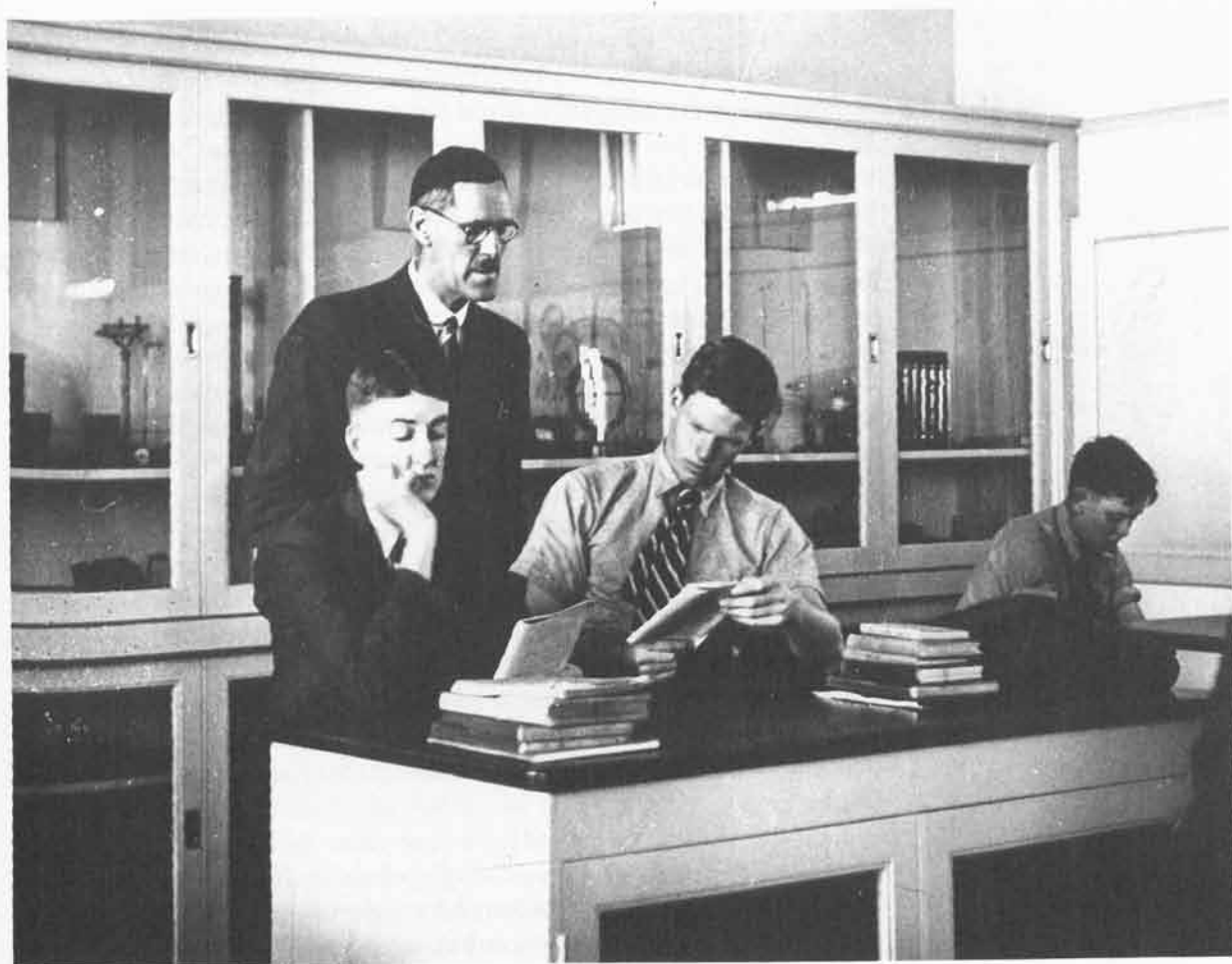
Sir Adrian Curlewis found a number of Shore Old Boys during his time in Changi and some even tried to establish a branch of the Union there. Sir Adrian was given the job with Brigadier Taylor of starting the University of Changi and became its Dean of the Faculty of Law, although his main role was advising prisoners on how they could further their education when the war ended. Sir Adrian remembered a boy at school called Rex Beale who once threatened to throw Taff Davies out of the window after Davies had slapped him in the class. Two days later, at the end of term, Beale entered Duntroon and turned into a magnificent soldier. 'He went away with the Eighth Division and just before Singapore fell he was in hospital when the Japs arrived. He stood across the doorway when they mobbed the hospital, they had bayoneted people on the operating table, and Beale stood like that to stop them getting in. They just hauled him off and bayoneted him. He was killed.'

In World War II more than 2000 Shore boys served and 231 gave their lives.

By the time John Ranken arrived at Shore in 1944 the war was nearly over. His family lived in Hunters Hill and he had attended the public school there before joining Shore when he was twelve. He found the first assembly confusing. 'The school lined up with the senior forms at the front and the little bleeders at the back, which was where I was supposed to go. I went racing out and bumped into a pair of legs that seemed to go up for ever. They belonged to Edmund Playfair. He just pushed me between his legs and said I had better get down to the back.'

Although Ranken had been dux in his last year at Hunters Hill he had not done languages and was put into IIC at Shore, which he thought was a big disadvantage. In the second year he moved into the B form and finally reached the A form in Maths in his final year.

There were already a number of boys from Hunters Hill at Shore when he started and they did much to make him more comfortable than he might have been. But it was a long day. The ferry left Valencia Street wharf at 7.40 a.m. and depending on the traffic and the mood of the captain it reached Circular Quay at about 8.15. They then ran to



Wynyard, jumped on a train, and raced up the hill to the school. If there was practice at Northbridge it would be 6.30 or later before he arrived back home. 'I will never forget going in terror to the Chief with this Hunters Hill Brigade to ask if we could be excused morning chapel because we could not get there in time. He said we just had to get there faster.'

His first form master was Peter Jenkins and he liked him immensely. 'He was so gentle, so patient that you wondered if he would ever be a disciplinarian, but somehow you didn't muck up with him.' But Ranken did with almost everybody else and trouble was never far away.

It was during his second year that the war ended. During the morning session there was a knock on the classroom door and at that moment every horn and siren went off in the harbour. The noise was so tremendous that it was some time before the small messenger could make himself heard. He

C. S. Tiley in the physics laboratory about 1941.

had come to say that peace had been declared in Europe and school was breaking up for the day.

The end of the Japanese war was just as dramatic. Ranken was playing at Northbridge and remembers the crowds in Sydney as he went home. Back in Hunters Hill 'we thought we should celebrate so we all got on our bikes and pulled kerosene tins on ropes to make a noise. We rode past All Saints' Church just as people were going in for a memorial service for those lost in action. I got into trouble for that, so it wasn't a great day after all. My timing was never good.'

As a young boy Ranken did not know what he wanted to do for a career, but he was keen on music and had a teacher whom he idolised. So in the second year when the class was asked to write down what they wanted to do when they left school he wrote 'musician' and thought no more about it. In the fourth form, however, Pat Eldershaw produced these forms so they could be reviewed. By that time Ranken had a reputation for being good at cricket and football and for being into almost any action that was available. Pat went around the class in alphabetical order saying, 'Osborne, stockbroker. Pratten, grazing . . .' but when he got to Ranken he went pink with amusement. 'Shall I tell 'em, Ranken? Shall I tell them what you put down here?' Ranken could not remember what he had put down but saw no objection. Eldershaw crinkled his face in amusement and said as only he could, 'a musician!' and the class erupted in helpless laughter.

Ranken's musical ability did have some value, however. As a good tenor he had no difficulty in joining the chapel choir and as this was an alternative to doing Divinity it was much sought after. So much so that the pews bulged with choristers whose main aim was to avoid Divinity. Unfortunately this meant that some of Backhouse's classes were so lightly attended as to be something of a worry in a church school. The next time there was choir practice the choir master was sitting at a small organ in the aisle and as each boy filed past he hit a note and asked the boy to sing it. Those that could not were sent back, and the choir, which still included Ranken, shrank to half its previous size.

He was not so successful as a scholar. Having got off to a good start he seemed to lose momentum and by the time he was in fifth form he was doing very little. 'I think a lot of people would say that we weren't taught very well scholastically. It was not as imaginative as it is now and things were just drummed into us. You weren't asked to work hard, it was simply up to you.'

There were still many old masters in the school, and these had been augmented by a number of women teachers who had arrived during the war. But even though the teaching might have been unimaginative there

were still those that had a big influence on him. 'Robson never taught me—he was the honours Maths class and they were the whizz kids. But Wilbur Sawkins opened my eyes to maths, and there were Bagot and Peter Jenkins and Pat.'

It was Pat who finally put him back on the rails. Others had pointed out that he was slipping back but it was Pat who had the biggest effect. 'Pat gave me a double period moan about going to seed and pulling others down with me. Afterwards I realised he was dead right and that I had better get on with it. And he started to encourage me whenever he could.'

Ranken's last two years were, he says, fabulous. 'I got my colours for football and athletics and played in the last three games of cricket. I had made it-up with the fuzz. I was a prefect and a cadet lieutenant and you were up there. None of the fellows let you down, they were all good mates.'

If there was a problem it was the shortage of girls. There was a school dance on the night of the regatta which, he says, was a rivetting affair, and there was an occasional game of hockey against the girls of Abbotsleigh in which 'they used to beat the hell out of us'. There was also an ecumenical service every year at St Andrew's which at least gave them the chance to look at girls. 'We were standing in a crocodile having walked up from Town Hall station and the word would go round, "Here come the black stockings from SCEGGS". Then the next lot would arrive and then "Here come the honeys from Ascham, they are looking better". Then a voice came from the back, "Steady the Buffs. The big brownies from Mittagong haven't turned up yet!"

In his last two years Ranken decided he would like to go on the land and his father arranged for him to spend part of the summer holiday on a property at Cobar. He was given an axe and spent the next three days chopping down pine trees. He came back with the view that while he still wanted to go on the land he did not want it to be *that* sort of land. When he left school he went jackarooing near Wagga before joining his father in his paint business in Sydney. One day the phone rang and the voice said, 'Robson, Shore here.' 'Ranken, Shore here, sir, I left in 1949.' 'Good God, what are you doing there?' Robson wanted some clear lacquer and Ranken said he would go over and talk about it. 'It must have been in 1958, nearly ten years after I had left Shore, but I still remember feeling in awe of him even then. I almost expected him to say, "Speak up, boy. Don't mumble!"'

Although Ranken did not have much to do with Robson at school his influence was total and he still remembers his insistence on good behaviour. 'Before one regatta the Chief told us that there was to be no unnecessary vulgarity or ostentatious behaviour on the banks of the Nepean and any breaches would be dealt with with the utmost rigour. I



The Old School Bus being helped along by Dave Hudson, about 1947.

asked a friend what it all meant and he said it meant I was going to be in trouble.'

John Ranken was very glad to have been at Shore. 'Honesty was assumed and the whole emphasis was on discipline and good behaviour. During the war and immediately after it was impossible to get new boaters and to have one at all was a great thrill. A felt hat with a Shore band on it was not the same. I once said to Pat how proud I was to be a Shore boy and he said, "Yes, and you had better be one, too."'

CHAPTER SEVEN

Women and Shore

THE CONTRIBUTION WOMEN HAVE MADE to the success of Shore has been considerable even though it has often been overlooked or taken for granted. This was, to some extent at least, a reflection of the role of women in the community in general. For most of the last hundred years women were recognised as the quiet achievers, so long as they remained quiet. On many occasions the most that women could hope for was a rather perfunctory and automatic vote of thanks after providing tea and cakes so that the men could get on with the real work in comfort. Most women did not feel offended either, for on the whole they accepted that this was their role and were pleased when their contribution gained any recognition, no matter how scant.

This was slow to change. Individual women might win distinction in high places, and be regarded with suspicion by most men, but they had little effect on the role of women in general until quite recently. At Shore this has been an even slower process than elsewhere. As a small community dominated by men, it was able to cling to the conservative view of the role of women long after the rest of the country had started to change its mind. The pressures were not there to make it change faster. Even the women associated with Shore were far removed from the prototype feminists that were forcing changes elsewhere, and indeed they probably regarded them with as much suspicion as did the men of Shore. When some guidelines were issued suggesting what women should wear at school functions one boy thought they were outrageous until he found that his mother thought they were quite sensible and acceptable.

This attitude to women should not be confused with lack of courtesy. On the contrary, good manners, always highly regarded at Shore, required that women be treated with absolute courtesy at all times. To be rude to a woman was a social offence of some magnitude and, at Shore, it still is. The difficulty was in treating them as equals.

The contribution of women to Shore has taken many forms. Some served it as paid employees, as matrons, cooks, domestic staff, secretaries and teachers; some served as unpaid employees, as wives of staff; and many served as volunteers, particularly as members of the SCEGS Association (now called the Shore Association) and other support groups.

Many Old Boys who were at Shore as boarders remember their matron with great affection, even if they do not always remember her name. The matron was the aunt they went to when they were sick, or when they wanted to talk, or when they needed help with clothes. For younger boys especially, life would have been very bleak without the matron. She was often a source of sympathy and comfort in a world which, to a new boarder, could seem harsh and intimidating and far removed from the familiar comforts of home. Most matrons carried out this role for many years, although few found their way into the records except for factual details of when they came and when they left.

The first matron at Shore might, in the absence of details about the others, stand for them all, although the details about her are quite scanty.

With only one boy boarding when the school opened the need for a matron was not immediate, but as the numbers grew E. I. Robson eventually advertised for a matron to look after them. One of the applicants was Miss Anne Christina Jago, a young woman whom Robson thought may not be worldly enough to handle a group of unruly boys. Nevertheless he described the duties to her and then took her on an inspection of School House, where most of her work would be performed. He chose a time when the boys would be in bed but not yet asleep, and most of them were. But as he was showing her the dormitory one latecomer cheerfully returned from his shower stark naked and was startled to meet not only the headmaster, but a young woman as well. In the confusion and embarrassment that followed it was the young Miss Jago who spoke first. 'Get under the blankets,' she said to the boy, 'or you will catch cold.'

After that her appointment was inevitable and she became the first matron at Shore. She was later joined by her sister Robina, whom most of the boys and staff called Miss Bina.

The first permanent woman teacher at Shore was Miss Mackey, who joined the staff in 1921 and served until 1944. She taught French and even though she was not married she was known as Madame, to the amusement of some of the younger staff. Indeed, many in the common room often tried to find amusement by playing small jokes on Miss Mackey, but she was their equal in every way. They soon found that if the joke succeeded it was because she was prepared to let it succeed.

Miss Mackey remained the only woman teacher at Shore until World War II, when the arrival of more women was thought by some in the common room to be the worst effect that the war was ever likely to bring. They soon changed their minds, however, as they realised that women teachers could match them in professional skills and that their sense of humour made them good company in the common room. By the end of the war even the most conservative masters accepted that women were now an

integral part of the staff, and they have remained so ever since.

The wives of resident staff, particularly wives of headmasters and housemasters, were almost part of the staff at Shore, and still are. Indeed, for some appointments the candidate's wife was interviewed as thoroughly as the candidate himself and she probably had as much influence on the success or failure of her husband as he did. She was expected to be actively involved in the school, even though she was not paid, and although passive goodwill was acceptable in the case of a good candidate, active indifference would disqualify all but the brilliant.

Gertrude Robson became almost as much a part of the school as her brother when he was the first headmaster. She lived at the school and, while he remained a bachelor, took on many of the duties that the headmaster's wife would perform. She clearly was a remarkable woman and won the affection of boys and staff for her competence, kindness and consideration. Her love of the school was never doubted and she served it with great vigour until her brother married and his new wife took over her role. But Mrs Robson was, it seems, a poor substitute and the school would willingly have welcomed Miss Gertrude back long after she had left to start a school of her own.

No less remarkable was the wife of L. C. Robson, Marjorie. In November 1958 a Council minute paid tribute to the help she had given to the school and her husband: 'In all the affairs of the school in which it was appropriate for the headmaster's wife to be active Mrs Robson has participated fully and continuously. Often she has given the desirable lead. She has been a positive, constructive and never-failing help to the headmaster. She made a special contribution to the effectiveness of the SCEGS Association of parents and friends and to happy relations amongst all concerned in the life of the school. In these and other ways Mrs Robson has gained the respect and deep affection of the school community, graced the position of headmaster's wife and demonstrated how significant and constructive the position can be.'

As the school became bigger, headmasters' wives had less chance to know all the boys as individuals, but their presence at sporting events, chapel services and other occasions of importance to the school was obligatory even if they were not required to do much while they were there.

The wives of housemasters, on the other hand, knew the boys in their house very well. They represented a smaller part of the school and the housemaster's wife could hardly avoid being in daily contact with them. Some wives were more active than others. Those who were bringing up their own family often left much of the work to the matron, but others became an essential part of the running of the house and tried to relieve

their husband of much of the detail involved in caring for a large group of boys of different ages.

Jamie Jamieson, for many years the master of the prep. school, had no doubt about the contribution his wife Doris made. 'Officially she had no standing whatever except that she happened to be the wife of the house-master, but I would never have been able to do what I did with the prep. if I hadn't had her assistance. Her contribution when I was there was very considerable.'

Doris Jamieson knew very well what it was like for a little boy to come from the country to join the prep. school. He had left his parents behind, he had left his horse and his dog, and he was now living in a city he had barely seen, with a grandmother he hardly knew living in one of the northern suburbs as the only immediate support. It is not surprising if he was homesick, nor that he found his first comfort with the Jamiesons' cat, Hodge. An insensitive adult would hardly have paid much attention, but Doris Jamieson was certainly not insensitive.

'Very often I would come out and find a little boy sitting on the green seat on the front verandah with Hodge, and Hodge would be there loving to be stroked and made a fuss of. I think Hodge filled a great part in easing the burden of being away from home for lots of little boys. One evening, it was the last day of term, I came out and found a boy stroking Hodge. I knew the boy was moving into the main school the following year, so I asked him if he was saying his farewells to Hodge. "Yes," he said, "I won't have him next year and he has been a good friend. He was the first friend I had."'

Pat Eldershaw, who ran Barry House from 1939 until he retired in 1965, also says that his wife was as much a part of the house as he was. 'She ran it most of the time, with the help of the boys, so that I hardly had to do anything.' Animals were also a feature of this house. They had a dog of their own who was well known throughout the school, but the Eldershaws also took care of many other animals and beasties that belonged to the boarders. One boy kept a hive of bees on vacant ground that is now occupied by the tennis courts, while another left behind a colony of silkworms which had to be cared for during the holiday. There was also a communal rabbit that lived in the house for a year before it escaped into Graythwaite.

While the contribution of individual women such as these has been formidable, the contribution of women in general is best known through the work of mothers. As early as the 1920s mothers were holding fetes to raise money for the new playing fields at Northbridge and today they do a great deal of work through the Shore Association. But even though this is very visible to the school in the form of their annual American Tea, many

of the Association's activities rarely attract attention even though they go on throughout the whole of the year.

In 1935 L. C. Robson suggested that parents, staff and Old Boys might be brought together as a group which could strengthen personal contacts by holding a social function every year. The following year the SCEGS Association was formed 'to bring together in common loyalty those who are interested in the welfare and development of the school'. Fundraising might be part of the activity of the Association, but it would not be the reason for its existence.

Membership of the Association was not restricted to women, although those who did join soon formed a Ladies Auxiliary Committee which organised a number of social functions to raise money for the Jubilee Fund. When World War II started the members decided that the Association should continue because 'such a body might well be of assistance to the school in times of stress'. In fact, its role became slightly different. Instead of raising money for the school, the Association now directed all its energies to raising money for the war effort.

When the war was over the Association turned its attention back to the school and became very active in raising money for the new Memorial Hall. It was after that had been completed that men slowly became less active in the Association, perhaps because there was no longer a major purpose in view, and it took on its present form as an organisation of mothers.

Margaret Travers, who was chairman of the Association as long as her husband was headmaster, saw its aims very clearly. 'The purpose was to contact mothers of new boys as they came into the school so that the mothers could become part of the school's activities. It is a social organisation that raises money, but the emphasis is always on people being in contact with each other. In a way it is a form of pastoral care for mothers.'

It also demanded a great deal of organisation. At the beginning of each year the Association sent a letter to the mother of every new boy joining the school inviting her to join the Association. This was followed by a meeting during which Marg Travers explained the role of the Association, and how it was divided into groups which ran a stall at the American Tea. Each mother was invited to join a group and take part in its activities, urged on by Marg who told them that boys always loved to see their mothers working on a stall.

When the meeting was over they moved to the Undercroft where existing members of the Association welcomed those who had come for the first time. If a new member was shy at the prospect of arriving alone, the Association provided a sponsor who would look after her and introduce her to the other members. During the year there were several

formal meetings of the Association, but most of the activity was amongst the individual groups who held social events to raise money for their stalls.

The first American Tea had been held in 1940 and raised £80 for the war effort. By 1945 this had become an annual event and the proceeds were then directed towards the building of the Hall and, later, to providing extra seats at Northbridge and two tennis courts at the school. It was traditional at an American Tea to take a gift for one of the stalls and to buy one, so making a double contribution.

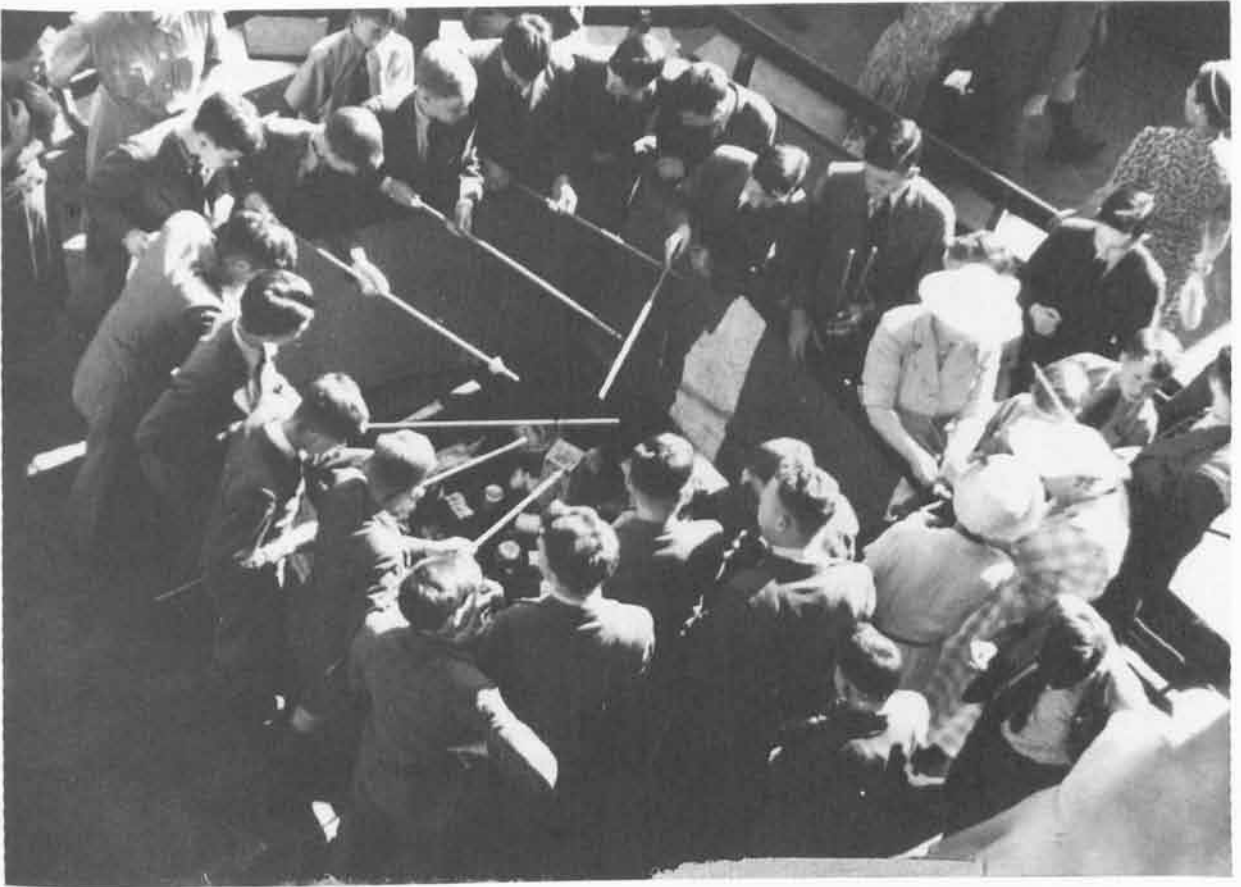
Each group runs its own bank account and raises money to provide goods or prizes for its stall. This activity goes on for most of the year before the Tea is held and is largely invisible as far as the school is concerned. Each group arranges day trips, lunches, coffee mornings or golf days and the members invite friends who might have no connection with the school but who see these activities as pleasant social occasions directed towards a good cause. The groups depend entirely on their own efforts. They draw no funds from the Association, and the Association in turn does not draw funds from the school.

At the centre of all this activity the Association looks after the general administration with a president, a chairman, an honorary secretary plus assistant, and an honorary treasurer plus assistant. When Marg Travers first became chairman they would gather at her house and spend all day writing envelopes by hand so that notices could be sent out to the members. This was later made easier by the use of address plates, and even easier when the mailing list was transferred to a computer a few years ago.

During her years as chairman Marg Travers spent about a day and a half a week on the activities of the Association. She attended many of the groups' functions, looked after the administration and helped to buy whatever the members had decided to contribute to the school.

The American Tea has always been held on the same Friday in October and is now one of the highlights of the school year. 'We started at 10.30 during morning break and the boys would come in like a swarm of locusts and usually head for the hoop-la stall and the skittles.' The first thing most boys did was size up the merits of the prizes to be won before making an investment from their limited funds. Boys, says Marg, are very shrewd about these things. One year when a stall did not perform as well as expected they found it was because the prizes had little interest for the boys.

On the day of the Tea the executive took over the prefects room and used it as a treasury. They gave out change to each stall at the start of the day and then spent the rest of the time counting and bagging money as it arrived. At lunchtime they were joined by two or three people from the Bank of New South Wales and by the end of the day they might have



counted and rolled \$30 000, much of it in sticky one-cent pieces!

While Marg Travers was chairman the Association raised about one million dollars, all of which was used for the benefit of the school. The members of the Association decided how the funds would be used each year and although they were glad of suggestions from the school the final decision was theirs alone. Sometimes this would be established early in the year, but in many cases the decision was not made until after the Tea had been held and the proceeds were known.

Over the years the Association has provided the school with many benefits that either would not have been provided at all, or would have been done so only at the expense of some other, equally desirable, benefit that might also have meant an increase in fees. The list is now very long indeed, but it includes facilities at Northbridge, the Memorial gates at the school, a grand piano for the Memorial Hall, amenities for the hut at Linden, band instruments for the ATC, televisions for the boarding

The fishing-one game at the 1951 America Tea.

houses, squash courts in the PE centre, the honour rolls in the Playfair Hall, and a launch for the boat shed. The Association has also made significant contributions to the building funds and to the Shore Foundation. Each year the Association funds six exhibitions for senior boys, pays half the fees for a boy to attend Outward Bound, buys magazines for the main library and makes a donation to the prep. library and to the *Weekly Record*. Together, these account for more than \$12 000 each year.

In spite of the successful fundraising (the American Tea in 1986 produced nearly \$50 000), the Association has never lost sight of the fact that its main role is to provide social contact for the mothers of boys at Shore and to give them an involvement in the school. Marg Travers never set a target for the American Tea, or even said that she hoped they would raise more than last year. As it happens they always did, but this was never the main purpose of the Association.

Indeed, many of the activities of the Association have nothing at all to do with fund-raising. Women support school drama productions by doing the make-up and a special wardrobe group spends a lot of time either making or acquiring the necessary clothes and costumes. Mothers also do all the cooking for the rowing camps and although this activity is organised by the parents of rowers and not the Association, most are members of the Association and are involved in its activities as well.

On two days a week groups of 'library mums' work in the library from 10 until 3 repairing books that would otherwise be discarded or have to be sent for professional attention at a considerable cost to the library's budget, and the arts and crafts group put on special displays in the library showcases every two or three months.

The library mums run a stall at the American Tea, although much of their fund-raising activity during the year is devoted to buying books. Masters are invited to submit a list of books that they would like to see in the library and these are obtained for display at the library lunch held before the American Tea. The money raised at the lunch is used to buy as many books as possible and the rest are put on the library stall at the Tea so that they can be bought by parents and donated to the library. As a result, books worth about \$4000 are added to the library each year.

Tricia Grant took over as chairman of the Association when her husband was appointed headmaster, but with a great deal of apprehension. 'I was very reluctant when Marg suggested it because I thought I had no qualifications or experience. I had never chaired a meeting in my life or coped with a large number of women and I was worried about standing up in front of them.'

But an organisation that was devoted to the pastoral care of mothers had no difficulty handling the needs of a headmaster's wife. Tricia Grant took

over as chairman, the existing administration showed her what to do, the members urged her on, and as her confidence grew Tricia Grant found that her apprehension had been unnecessary.

In the few years she has been chairman of the Association Tricia Grant has organised what is probably one of the most demanding activities that the Association has taken on, and one that had nothing to do with raising money.

When she and Robert Grant arrived at the school in 1984 the portraits of previous headmasters had been moved from the dining hall to the Memorial Hall. 'The dining hall was then very bare and one of Bob's throwaway lines was that the Association might be able to do something to decorate the walls.'

The plan that emerged from this 'throwaway line' was that the members of the Association would produce four needlepoint banners, each over a metre square and depicting the arms of each of the four senior houses, which would hang in the recessed areas in the southern wall.

By late 1984 Tricia Grant had talked to experts in needlepoint and after receiving guidance from them she asked Bob Shirlaw to draw full-sized designs of each banner on graph paper, so that each square would represent one stitch of needlepoint. After he had finished, the designs were painted in full colour on the pieces of canvas. Colour was used so that any gaps between stitches, on curved lines for example, would be less obvious.

This was finished by Easter 1985 and, with a supply of thread already available, Tricia called a meeting of volunteers from the Association. There were about sixteen of them and while some were experienced in this kind of work, most had done nothing like it before. At the end of the meeting the canvases were given to four mothers who would do the first part of the work.

This was the lettering along the top and the narrow band that goes around it. The band was particularly difficult because it was curved and quite narrow. A special stitch was employed that could be used to form the curve and which also provided more texture than a basic stitch. The four mothers worked alone in whatever time they could spare and the whole group met every fortnight to examine the work that had been done. 'It is very easy when you are working alone to make mistakes and not realise it. They also had to improvise from time to time and sometimes it would not look right. If we thought anything was not satisfactory it was pulled out and done again.'

Once that part of the design had been finished the canvas was passed on to another mother who filled in the background of the smaller part of the shield, and when that was finished another mother worked the narrower background that was also part of the shield.



Shore 'Mums' at the boatshed, photographed about 1974. Left to right: Mrs Davies, Mrs Chubb, Mrs Halliday, Mrs Jackson and Mrs Boyce.

Finally, the overall background was worked in. On two of the canvases this was done by one person and on the other two the work was divided between two mothers. 'This was determined by how much time they could spend on it. I was very emphatic that I didn't want them to work on it once they had had enough. I wanted it to remain a pleasant experience all the way through.'

Tricia did some of the work on the narrow band on the Hodges canvas. Working during the holidays she did about thirty hours on what, she says, was a very small part.

The Hodges banner was finished in April 1986, a year after work had started, and the other three finished by December. They had taken so many hours that everybody had stopped counting long ago.

The four banners were hung in the dining hall at the start of the school year in 1987. Future generations of Shore boarders will become familiar with them, but few will realise how much voluntary labour went into them. Nor will the members of the Association expect them to. It is simply another contribution that women have made to the school. It is one of many, and it will not be the last.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Fifties

BERNIE AMOS DID NOT EXPECT to be sent to Shore. His much older brother had been to The King's School while the family was living at Parramatta but Bernie moved with the family when his father, who was with the Commonwealth Bank, was transferred to Grafton. He went to the state school there and when the family moved to Chatswood in 1945 he joined Chatswood primary school. After being on the waiting list for Shore for only nine months he was lucky to get a cancellation and started there in 1947 when he was eleven. He thinks Shore was chosen because his father was impressed with the way Shore boys behaved themselves on the train.

Although he arrived with two or three other boys from Chatswood primary he found the change confusing and unsettling for at least the first term. 'It was not a totally friendly environment at first. It was not unfriendly either—just distant.' Certainly there was no great effort made to be kind to new boys and they were expected to sort themselves out as best they could.

There were only three new boys in his class, the rest all having come from the prep. school in a tightly knit group. They had all done French and Latin for at least a year and the master who had taught them in prep. now started the first class by reminding them that they were at lesson 33. Amos, who had not done languages, floundered until a new master arrived in the second term and started at the beginning.

It was sport that solved most of the problems. Amos was keen on cricket. He played in the Bs and made a few runs before being promoted to the under 13As in the third term. When he reached the school second XI he was still under fourteen. He was, however, a complete stranger to football. Sporting material had been in short supply at Grafton and when football did start there it was Rugby League and was played in bare feet. He learnt to play Union at Shore and eventually made his way into the first XV.

He had, he says, a multitude of coaches. There was Claude Prince in the under 13As and John Burns in his third term. In the 14As it was Alan Mitchell and in the seconds, Tommy Whight, 'a remarkable man who taught me an incredible amount about bowling'. The first XI was coached by Pat Eldershaw, who also taught Amos for four of his six years at school. 'It was very important amongst the boys for Pat to have a high opinion of

you. If he had a low opinion of you you were not highly regarded by other boys and I am sure that Pat cultivated that attitude.'

One of Amos's lasting impressions of Shore was the quality and dedication of the teaching staff. 'They did infinitely more than was expected of them. They were not only involved in lessons but were involved in trying to build character and create competent sportsmen.' It was partly due to this involvement with masters that he managed to settle into the school after that first disturbing term.

He had also found that the way to success within the community was through sport. 'There was no great mileage in being a swot. Although great respect was given to those who were, it was not the same sort of respect that was given to sportsmen. You had to achieve academic respect by personal effort, however, because people would devote time only to those boys who were interested.' That was also true of football even though it was compulsory and one had to be a certified invalid to avoid it.

He was also aware that Shore at that time was not kind to those who did not conform. The school followed a conservative line which was almost anti-intellectual and there was little room for those whose views strayed beyond this line. 'You went with the stream and didn't make waves. If you did, you were in big trouble.' Although this was not so important in the senior school, Amos thinks it might be why debating was never highly regarded. 'There were many excellent debaters and guys who were very articulate, but I didn't see it as a "good" thing to have a view that was very different from the rest.'

Whether or not it was an aspect of this conformity, Amos was very attracted to the chapel. He had been brought up a Presbyterian in the country and had endured long sermons by a hellfire Scottish minister at Grafton, most of which dealt with either drink or the Devil. He found the principles of the Church of England much easier to understand if only because they were clearly laid out in the Prayer Book. He was a good singer and soon joined the chapel choir. He particularly enjoyed singing at weddings, where the going rate was a block of Cadbury's Dairy Milk or, in the case of a society wedding, a fee of two shillings. It was a small fortune in those days.

Outside chapel there was Divinity, which even he often found dreary. 'It depended who took it.' In his third year it was taken by an English priest on exchange from England. 'He used to revel in getting people to talk about creationism against evolution, matters which are very interesting for fourteen-year-olds when they are trying to form their own ideas. I can still remember those periods as being some of the most stimulating. Perhaps if debating had been arranged along those lines it might have been more successful.'

Amos's first contact with L. C. Robson was also stimulating. He nearly knocked him over in the middle of a violent ball game in the playground. Robson hauled four of them to the sergeant major's office and gave them all a Saturday detention, which he later waived in Amos's case because he had also been recommended that week for a pink card. He was happy to receive neither.

Amos got to know Robson better as he went through the school. 'He had enormous stature as a role model but one was aware that there were two very strong camps: a pro-Robson camp and an anti-Robson camp. There were many parents who thought Robson was an arrogant, overbearing man, and I could understand that view. But I thought most of Robson's problems came from his shyness.'

Unlike Robson and most of the staff, some masters were simply incapable of maintaining discipline. There was one, for example, who had the misfortune to teach them in a room on the top floor of the old block which was ideal for a particular competition which had nothing to do with work. If the windows on opposite sides of the room were opened slightly the result was a high level air stream that was ideal for paper gliders. Made from onion skin paper, they would often fly right out of the window and head determinedly for the chapel or, on a good day, North Sydney station. The fun lasted until Pat came in for the next lesson.

At that time Shore was hardly the picture of an expensive private school. Classrooms were freezing cold and most did not even have lights. In contrast with today, the teaching equipment consisted of only a blackboard, chalk and a duster. After football practice on the school oval boys had to use the classroom as a changing room before it became too dark to see, and the only showers were cold and in School House.

The laboratories, however, were well equipped and Amos remembers that some of the science masters were the best he has known, especially Bagot and Pascoe. The curriculum had hardly changed for years and certainly did not reflect the technology that was evident all around them. 'We were taught in chemistry that atoms were indivisible and indestructible, but everybody knew damned well that two years before they had blown the hell out of Japan with atomic bombs because atoms *were* divisible.'

By the time Amos did the Leaving Certificate in 1951 he was sixteen and knew that he wanted to study medicine. But Robson and his parents agreed that he would get far more from the course if he were more mature and it was agreed that Bernie would repeat the year and try to improve on his results. Not that improvement was necessary. He had already been awarded a Commonwealth scholarship and his future was assured for the next few years.

Opposite page: L. C. Robson, the fourth Headmaster of Shore from 1922 to 1958.

'That last year was a very good year and I had a ball.' He was second prefect and the first XI were undefeated that year. Having already obtained honours in Maths he was able to coast that year while doing General Maths. In the final exam he found that he had only ten minutes left when he came to the last problem. It dealt with a tank that was being filled with water at one rate and being emptied by a tap at another. What would the level be after a certain time? He knew that the conventional solution would take too long so he solved the problem in a few minutes with calculus, not knowing if that would be acceptable at this level. It appears it was, for he was awarded 100 per cent for his paper. He was, he says, no academic genius, but that year he obtained first class honours in Chemistry and French, second class honours in Physics, and 'A' passes in English and General Mathematics.

After leaving school he studied medicine at Sydney University and completed the course in six years. He joined the Royal North Shore Hospital in 1958 and by the time he was twenty-eight he was acting chief executive officer. In 1972 he was invited to advise on the planning of Westmead Hospital and when it opened in 1977 he was appointed its chief executive officer. He was elected to Shore Council in 1980.

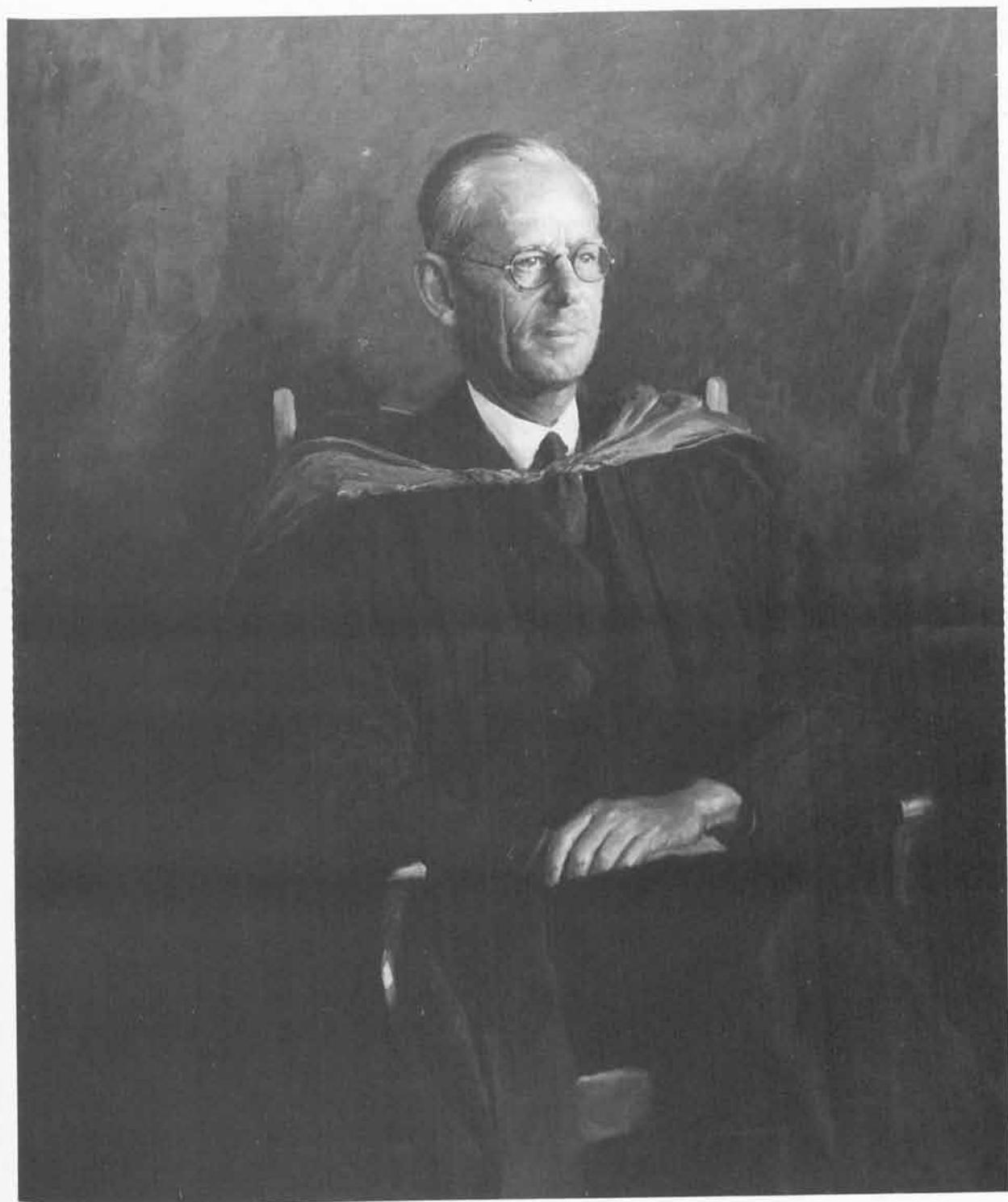
If Bernie Amos was surprised to be sent to Shore, John Sedgwick was not. His father was an Old Boy of the school and with his three brothers also at Shore at various times there were Sedgwicks in School House from the early 1940s until he left in 1958.

John Sedgwick was twelve when he started in the third form in 1953. He had previously been educated in one-teacher bush schools, first at Batlow and then at a similar school between Tumut and Gundagai.

When he arrived at Shore he thought it was a very cold and stark place. The dormitories were basic and the dining hall was not much better and apart from his twin brother, who started on the same day, he did not know a soul there. But the homesickness lasted only a week or so. Cricket was in full swing and he made friends easily.

He also learnt something of the discipline at Shore after coming from a school which had only twenty pupils. 'If you were talking after lights out a prefect might creep up, put the lights on and ask who was talking. The thing I remember was that we owned up. I would never have done that before, but here the boys knew who had been talking and they expected you to admit it.' It was accepted that you then lined up in pyjamas outside the prefect's study and waited to be socked with a specially adapted sandshoe called Hector.

Hector was in frequent use and hardly a night went by without somebody being socked. One boy from the country became tired of his frequent encounters with Hector and pointed out to a prefect that it was



all one way. So they went outside and gave each other four of the best, although their ages made it an unequal contest. But by this time there was no formal initiation into the House, following an accident a few years earlier in which a boy had had his arm broken while being tossed in a laundry basket.

Out of the twenty or so new boarders in the House, only four or five came from the prep. At first there was a feeling that they were superior beings but that disappeared after the new boys found their way into the sports teams. Sedgwick had never played an organised game of cricket in his life, but when he replaced a prep. boy as wicketkeeper in the under 13s he realised that coming from prep. was not as important as they had thought.

John Sedgwick started in IIID, with Dick Bosanquet as form master. 'We were right down at the bottom of the school where we didn't do languages. Instead we did Mods, Bookkeeping and Geology and so on. After the Intermediate we were regraded for the next two years up to the Leaving and one or two of us went a little higher, but really we were country boys that were not going to go to university.' In the Leaving Certificate Sedgwick thinks his choice of subjects was probably unique. He did Modern and Ancient History, Geology, Geography, Bookkeeping and English. 'With no languages or Maths, it was hardly a classical mixture.'

He thinks now that the teaching at that level of the school was not very good and says that while some of the masters might have been characters, there were also some pretty ordinary schoolmasters. Many masters were quite old and the staff list might remain unchanged for years. So did the textbooks. Although he did not actually buy one that had been used by his father, such a feat was not uncommon.

Although changes were infrequent, they could be dramatic when they did occur. One was John Colebrook, who later took Sedgwick for History honours. 'He was a revelation. He stood up and said that we were now doing the Leaving and that we could go to sleep if we wished, it was up to us. But then he started to lecture and it was like being at university. Until then it had all been stencilled notes and nobody had ever taken that approach with us before.'

By then, Sedgwick had already made good progress. He had topped IIID in the first year and had made his way into the A form and was keen to go to university. 'At the time it was all pretty good fun. The work did not worry me and I loved the whole atmosphere of the place.'

Sporting activities were still limited to cricket, football and rowing. 'Rowers were mostly country boys who did the same thing over and over again and got blisters on their hands and poured metho on them at night.' Football was absolutely dominant during the winter, and apart from those

there was only shooting and athletics. Tennis and swimming were hardly noticeable.

Chapel was not an attraction to John Sedgwick. 'I have to be honest and say I think it put more boys off church than anything else.' Nor was he conscious of any religious influence beyond the chapel. 'Divinity was a joke that nobody took seriously.'

John Sedgwick was made senior prefect in his last year, which was also L. C. Robson's last year as headmaster. 'Being a prefect was seen as a big honour and a very important part of your life.' The prefects were very involved in the discipline of the school and he thinks they generally made a good job of it. They would stand at the front gate to make sure that boys were wearing boaters and had their coats buttoned and generally supervised boys when they were not under the control of masters.

But he was not a great admirer of Robson. 'He was a very old man who had been there for a long time and I think our era had the worst of his reign. I think the school was living in the past. The country was rebuilding after the war and a lot was going on and the feeling at Shore was that it was time for a change.'

Even during their last year together Sedgwick found it difficult at times. It was perhaps a disappointment to Robson that in that last year his three senior boys were neither rowers, mathematicians nor athletes. In the dining hall Robson would talk to the captain of boats and they used forks to draw diagrams of currents on the Lane Cove River. 'At the end of the meal he would say grace and then ask me where we were playing on Saturday. That was almost the whole conversation.'

Later in the year, though, the relationship improved although it never became warm. There were many functions held in Robson's honour and Sedgwick, as senior prefect was involved in most of them. It did a great deal for his confidence and as the year went on he thought Robson mellowed a little. But only a little.

After leaving school, John Sedgwick studied accountancy at Sydney University with a view to eventually joining one of the merchant banks that were then starting up. In 1961, while still at university, he returned to Shore as assistant housemaster, taking prep in the evening and doing his own work in the day. 'There was one year when there were some pretty wild people on the resident staff who used the pub opposite North Sydney station. There were also some pretty lively bouts in the common room at School House. You saw the school in a different light then. It was all pretty harmless, but it was often lively.'

John Sedgwick joined Shore Council in 1972 and has been treasurer of the school since 1975.

There was, of course, nothing surprising about the retirement of L. C.

Robson as headmaster, and to many of the staff at Shore there was little surprising about the appointment of Jika Travers as his successor. As one of them said later: 'The report was that the field was not a very good one simply because everybody said Travers would be appointed and so we believed that a number of good potential candidates didn't bother to apply. That was the story, but I don't know what the field was. Travers was known to be one of Robson's protégés and everybody expected him to be the next headmaster.'

It was not universally welcomed either. As another member of the staff said: 'I think that initially I found Travers difficult because he didn't have the dignity or intellect of Robson. I thought Travers was a bit rough and undignified and I didn't think that he had the respect from the boys that he should have had. His behaviour in front of them sometimes worried me.' Another said: 'Robson had been going down hill in his last few years and most people thought there was need for a change. But after the novelty wore off some of us were not so sure.'

Certainly the school started to become less formal than it had been in Robson's day. One example was the wearing of academic dress. This was no longer general by the time Robson retired, but as Travers wore it only to chapel and school assembly it would have been inappropriate for the rest of the staff to wear it at other times and so it fell out of fashion.

One boy who was at school during this transition period was Geoff Cousins, and he also had the unusual distinction of being a member of the staff shortly afterwards, so that he also saw the change from the masters common room.

Cousins started in Shore prep. in 1953 and other than the fact that his elder brother was at the school he still does not know why he was sent there as the family had no other connection with Shore.

After two years in prep. Cousins moved into the main school, where he continued to be a day boy until he left in 1960. He soon realised that the path to success was as a sportsman. 'For boys who were not successful in any sport life was much more difficult. It would be wrong to say that academic success did not rate. But if you had no sporting ability, were not good socially, and were very bright, then you were at a distinct disadvantage.'

It was perhaps because of this that he worked very hard at being a sportsman and succeeded 'without an awful lot of natural ability'. He played cricket very badly, he says, and football moderately well. He tried being a cox but did not think much of it. 'I thought it was a rotten sport, I really did. Coxes are little kids of about twelve and you have these guys at the top of the school who tended to kick you around a fair bit. It is a pretty tough environment and I thought it was a lousy sport.'

The sport that he was most successful at was athletics and he succeeded

not because he was naturally good but because he trained harder than most. 'I figured that if you ran more miles than anybody else you could probably run a mile better than anybody else.' He trained fanatically and kept a diary in which he recorded the number of miles he had run and how he felt afterwards. Eventually he was part of the team that won the GPS athletic competition, with J. Stuart, S. Warr, P. Wanscy and M. Trigg.

His other interests were slightly unusual at that time. He enjoyed acting and took part in many school plays, but as he was an indifferent singer he was not prominent in the productions of Gilbert and Sullivan which were popular then. His crowning moment, he says, was the production of *The Importance of Being Ernest* in 1960.

In fact, one of his earliest memories of the school was performing in a play in prep. school which had only one other performer. He remembers it more for what happened to his partner later. 'He was a guy called Fingers and he had an obsession with guns. One night he joined up with another guy called Lumpy and they stole some reasonably significant weapons from the school armoury. They made the mistake of calling a taxi for the getaway. The driver saw this bundle of armament and called the police. Fingers disappeared from school shortly afterwards.'

Cousins also wrote for the *Torch Bearer* and the *Weekly Record* and thinks his best piece was one he wrote about a master called Fomenko, who before he died had coached the athletic team. Nobody encouraged him to write, he says, he wrote simply because he enjoyed it.

Scholastically, Cousins performed well in the subjects he liked, such as English and History, and modestly in those he didn't like, such as Maths and Science. He never failed at exams, nor did he ever do particularly well in them. 'I was one of those lucky people that have a wonderful life at school and I loved every minute of it.'

One of the things he was good at was the cadets and he was senior cadet officer when Peter Jenkins—'a splendid fellow'—ran the corps. He was also influenced by his brother, who had won the Churchill prize for being the top cadet in New South Wales. He was determined that he would win it too. 'I was immaculate and I worked so hard that I could strip a Bren gun faster than anybody living! But after I won the prize I lost all interest in it, which was embarrassing because I was senior cadet by then.'

He also got on well with most of the staff. 'Peter Jenkins was always very professional. Colebrook was an outstanding fellow. Nev Emery was a super guy, and there was Bob Blomfield and Moyes. The amount of time they put into activities outside school hours was simply amazing.'

He also remembers the chaplain, Blackjack Mason, and his fire and brimstone sermons. He thought the chapel was very beautiful and enjoyed the rituals, especially those, such as the appointment of prefects, which

Opposite page: Boys at the entrance to the Vestry in 1950.

were part of the tradition of the school. When he first read the lesson as a prefect, after many rehearsals, it was a moment of great significance. 'I cannot say that the chapel led me to an enduring faith, but the system could handle that. In fact I think it would have been a major problem if boys had been wandering around reading the Bible all the time.'

He was confirmed in the chapel. As he was walking towards the entrance his godfather appeared from behind the fig tree, thrust a Prayer Book into his hands, said, 'This is for you,' and disappeared again. He wasn't even sure of his name.

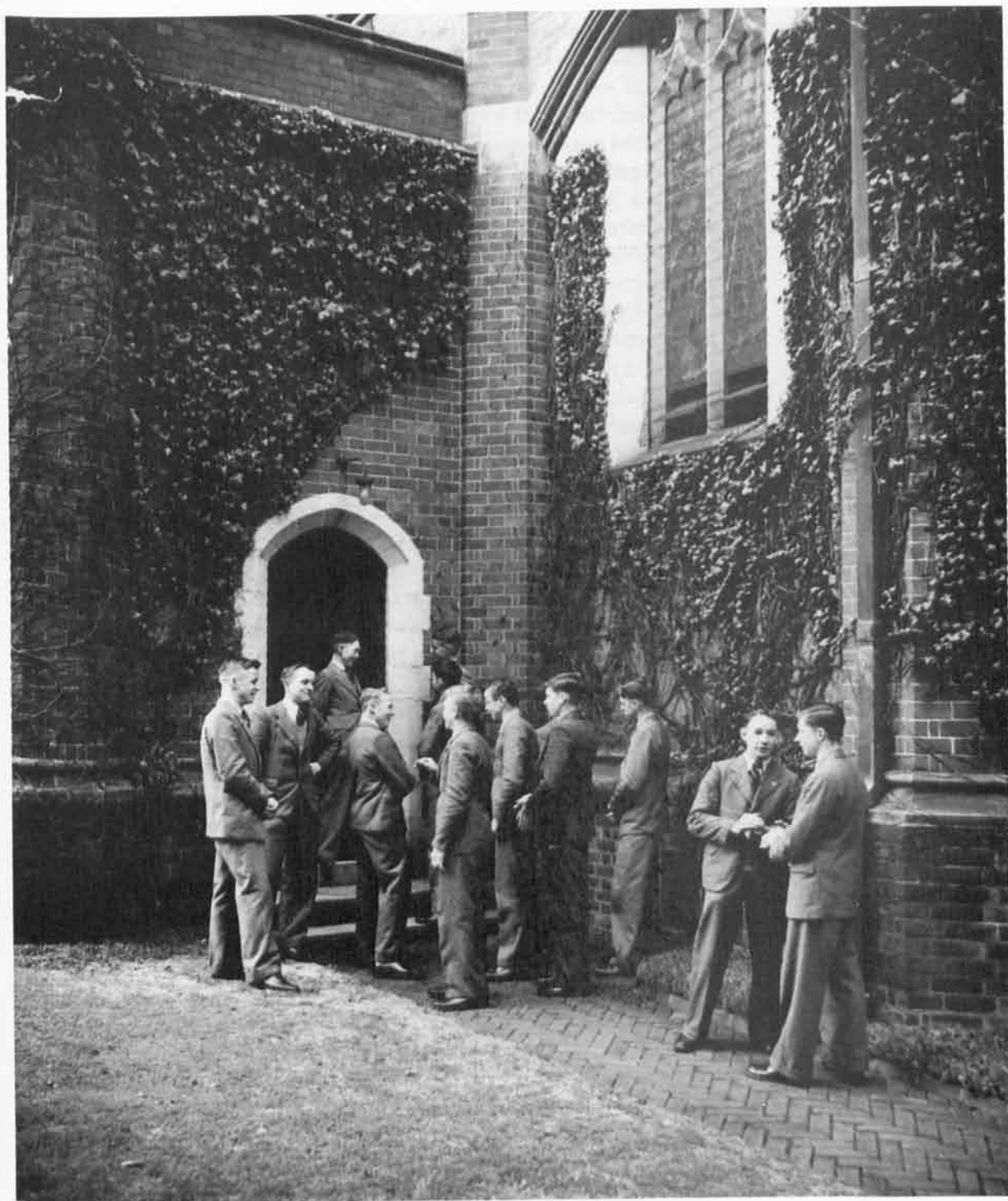
He also remembers polishing the pennies, although he cannot remember why it was done. 'It was a craft skill. There were all kinds of methods to get the brightest penny. I was good with silver polish because I was in the cadets, but all kinds of other techniques were developed and I was into them all.'

He was also into the advanced technology of protecting boaters. He put fifteen coats of clear varnish on one and it was regarded as an outstanding, if not lethal, example until somebody put their foot through it.

He was proud to wear the boater, and even prouder of his prefect's band and tie. He also took the duties seriously. 'We regarded it as an honour and I think the prefects were all very serious about their responsibilities. If a prefect was involved in any mucking up, which was very rare, it was very quickly stamped on by the other prefects.'

In his last year at Shore Robson was, he thought, a very aloof and revered figure. Discipline was absolute. Cousins repeated his last year because he was thought to be too young to go to university, and it was in his final year that Jika Travers took over. 'Any kind of change after having Robson for so long would have been difficult, but with Travers we were all at sea because he was so different. There were several of us repeating that year and I think we might have been overconfident of ourselves, but we thought that Travers set out to make himself popular with us and we couldn't relate to that at all. There was one occasion when we politely and firmly told him that we were not going to do as he asked. He accepted it, and that only confirmed our opinion that things had changed!'

Two years after leaving school Cousins was working in the university holiday, selling ties in a men's wear store by day and loading freight trains by night. One day Travers rang him at the men's wear store and invited him to lunch. Over a pie and beer in the Marble Bar of the Adam's Hotel Travers offered him a job on the staff of Shore. He was to teach English and History, help coach the athletics and also teach the new subject of Crafts. There would also be time for him to continue his university course. Cousins thought it better than selling ties, and a long way better than loading freight trains, so he agreed.



When he returned to Shore as a nineteen-year-old master one of the boys in his class was only a year younger. On his first day a boy he had known at school came up and said, 'Geoff, nice to see you. What are you doing back here?' He explained he had joined the staff. 'Sorry, sir.'

Cousins was impressed at his reception in the common room. Men of great experience who had taught him until recently now welcomed him as an equal, 'which I clearly was not'. He thought he could have been a good teacher and he certainly enjoyed it, but in retrospect he thought it was a mistake to have him back at nineteen. His lifestyle was not yet attuned to it.

'I was still going to parties and picking up girls whenever I could. One Monday I came to school and one of my English class was waiting for me. He asked if I had enjoyed the party on Saturday night and I said that I thought that was hardly a matter for him to question me about. He said, "On the contrary, sir. Since the girl you took home has been my girlfriend for the last two years I think it is something I can question you about."'

Some of his teaching methods were novel, but occasionally effective. At that time he owned an old MGA, which was his pride and joy and much admired by the boys. He offered a prize to his English class, saying that each week he would take the boy who had done the best work and drive him around Balls Head reserve as fast as he could. 'Let me tell you this was regarded as a pretty good prize and they all tried very hard!'

He was less certain about teaching Craft, until he realised that Craft could be whatever you wanted it to be. He started with leatherwork and read a book about it. Then when the leather had been reduced to a soggy and unrecognisable mass, he changed to wire work. 'We bought these massive coils of wire and various wire cutters, and you have never seen anything like it. The idea was to make wire sculptures but most of it finished up looking like barbed wire entanglements in the war. Some of the kids, entirely through their own skill and ability, did make a couple of respectable-looking objects, but generally there were vast tangles of wire all over the place.'

If Sedgwick had found life lively as an assistant housemaster, Cousins's life was no less so. He was never given a key to the house and so he had an arrangement with the house prefects that they would let him in if he came back late. One night, or early morning, he tried to wake them up by throwing pieces of coal through their open window. It did not work and he spent the night in the MG. The following morning the prefects room was covered in a layer of coal and they told him that the arrangement must come to an end.

But he did attend to his duties as a housemaster, although in an unconventional way. 'At that time a junior housemaster had to say grace in the

dining hall in the evening and then we had to say a brief prayer before the boys went to bed. Often we would come back from sport at Northbridge and go to the pub at McMahons Point and drink fairly lustily. Then you would race up to the dining hall to do whatever you had to do there without consuming any of the awful food, then you would race back to the pub and drink at great speed again before racing back to the house to say the prayer, usually at a fast gabble. It was a pretty fierce pace.'

It surprised him that Travers did not throw him out, and in retrospect he thinks he certainly should have done. After two years of being 'the most undisciplined master Shore has ever seen', Geoffrey Cousins abandoned his degree and took a job with an advertising agency. He left with a great regard for the school, which he still has even though he has had little contact since.

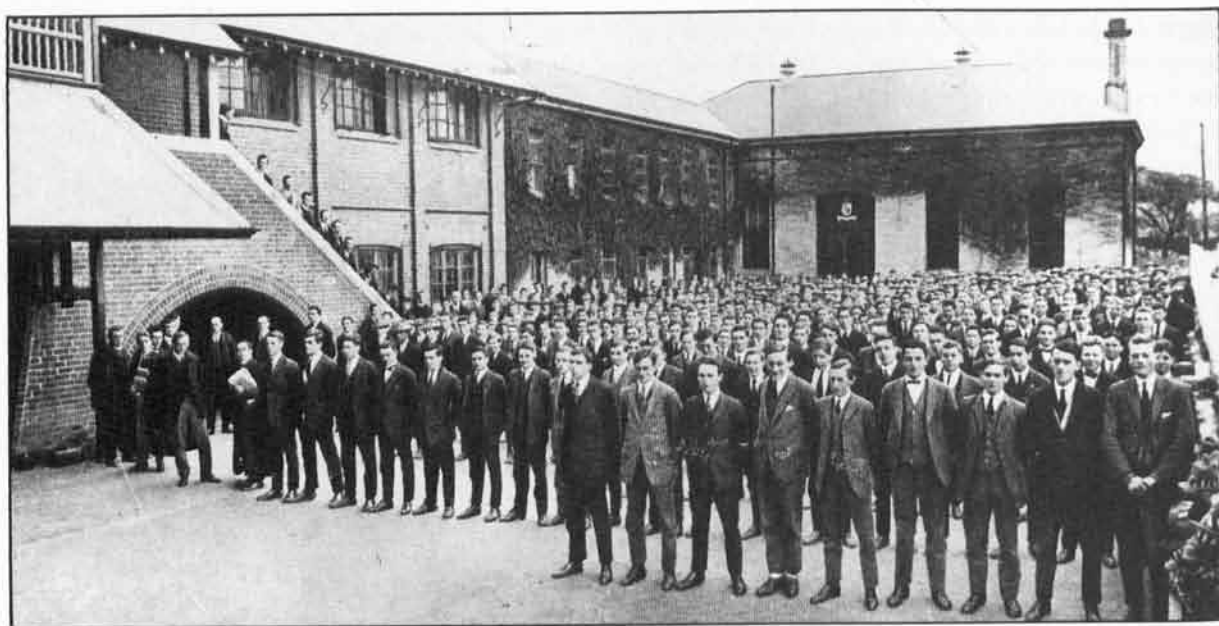
'There was always a feeling of great stability in the school and I think that is important for young people. It has a clear set of rules and disciplines and values, and you need those too. You don't necessarily need the set that Shore has, although they are a pretty good set. "These are the rules, these are the values, these are the disciplines and we expect you to adhere to them." And most people did. If you are growing up and you don't have something like that it is bloody hard to cope with the world when you leave.'

Geoffrey Cousins, prefect and tearaway teacher, coped quite well. He is now chairman of George Pattersons, the largest advertising agency in Australia.

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Above: The school as it was about 1920. *Below:* The 9 a.m. Assembly, photographed in 1923.



CHAPTER NINE

Portrait of a Master

MANY WHO HAVE KNOWN PAT ELDERSHAW, especially those whom he taught, would think that this man could not be typical of anything except Pat Eldershaw. Unique, perhaps, certainly full of character and very much his own man. There are not many like him, they say. And who would deny that? But, individual though he is, Pat Eldershaw is also typical of the many masters, some now almost forgotten, who devoted many years and in some cases their entire career to teaching at Shore. With no ambition of high office, or recognising that ambition was restricted by their qualifications, they taught diligently, professionally and with unlimited dedication for year after year. Most came to be seen as institutions within the school and when they left it seemed to boys and staff alike as if an era had come to an end.

Long-serving headmasters have been a feature of Shore. Robson and Travers between them served from 1922 to 1983 and the school's centenary year will be presided over by only the sixth man to hold that office. Headmasters are very visible, usually articulate and they command respect far beyond the boundaries of the school. The masters who support them, and on whom the school relies so heavily, are not so noticeable to the outside world. They might create fear or affection in boys, or nostalgia in Old Boys, but their role is less public than that of the headmaster. They accept this, and would not have it any other way.

If Shore has had more long-serving headmasters than most schools, it has probably had more long-serving assistant masters too. Charles Linton was an original member of the staff and served until his retirement in 1925. L. A. Baker served from 1890 until 1926, Walmsley from 1901 to 1945, H. H. Dixon from 1902 to 1938, Clem Tiley from 1917 until 1957 and Keith Anderson from 1940 to 1971, and that list is by no means complete. Pat Eldershaw served from 1924 to 1965 and this account of him serves not to record his achievements and dedication, great though they were, but to recognise how much the school has derived from people who, like him, spent a lifetime in its service.

Pat Eldershaw was born in 1901, the son of a property manager who christened him Percy Hopetoun and then called him Pat. Pat was educated at St Joseph's College and then went to Sydney University where he did

an arts degree and then, with no enthusiasm, a Diploma in Education. Uncertain of his future, he sought advice from Iven MacKay, who was then student advisor at the university, and it was on his suggestion that he applied to L. C. Robson for a job at Shore. He was successful and Robson asked him to start at the beginning of the second term in 1924 as H. H. Dixon would then be overseas.

The arrangement suited Eldershaw because he could use the time working at home to earn money to buy himself out of the bond with the Department of Education. But in late January he received a telegram from Robson asking him to start at the beginning of the school year because Freeth had pneumonia. Eldershaw managed to scrape together enough money to clear his bond, but he had so little left that when he discovered he would have to pay three guineas for his Diploma in Education he decided it was not worth the money and did not bother to collect it.

He started at Shore with two other new masters, Sturt and Lyon, and they were all delighted to be told on their first day in the common room that their January pay cheques could be collected from the bursar's office. Amused at the thought of being paid when they had done no work, they went to the bursar only to find that although there were cheques for Sturt and Lyon there was no cheque for Eldershaw as his appointment had been dated from the first of February. The rest of the staff, who heard of this from the other two, urged Eldershaw to complain, but he did not wish to start a new job on such a note. Instead, he decided to give notice at the end of the first week, saying that the job did not suit him. By then, however, he was already enjoying himself and decided that he would not give notice. Instead, he would remember the date of his appointment and claim the month's salary when he eventually retired. It would, he correctly supposed, be worth more then.

In spite of Shore's reputation he found the school to be very badly equipped. An extra desk had been put into Bagot's room for his use but he found that if he needed a bookcase he would have to buy one himself. During the first year Eldershaw boarded with the sergeant major and then the headmaster before being given a room outside the middle dormitory in School House which had been made by walling off part of the boarders common room.

Although Eldershaw arrived at Shore as a stranger with few credentials, within a few months he felt part of the place and realised he would be unlikely to leave it unless something went seriously wrong. 'I became a committed Shore man and such I remained.'

There were many older men in the common room, including some who had taught since the foundation of the school, and he was impressed by their friendship and their willingness to help. Only a complete no-hoper,

he says, could have failed to learn something of his profession and much about humanity from those men. He was also aware of his limitations. 'If ever the blind were employed to lead the blind it was at Shore in the 1920s, when the young resident masters were certainly sillier in their behaviour than the boys they were supposed to be guiding.'

In his first year Eldershaw invented a card game that was played enthusiastically for a time by the young resident housemasters. On boarders' weekends there would be in the house about sixty cards filled in with the names of boarders who were absent. They were about the size of playing cards and it was easy to select fifty-two cards to make a full deck. The deck was then divided into four suits according to the names on them. The suits were Intellectuals, Sports, Windbags and Dopes, but as there was a shortage of Intellectuals this division was fairly arbitrary. The cards were marked in the corner with I, S, W or D and the suits were graded, with the highest being Sports and the lowest Dopes.

The game was played like auction bridge. After spirited bidding had decided that the game was to be played in three Sports or four Intellectuals, play got under way. Dummy was abolished and for every trick each player had to explain the merit of his card as a Dope or Windbag or whatever suit it represented. The trick was won by the player who, in the opinion of the others, put forward the best case for his card. There were two cards which could take any trick unchallenged: an Ace of Sports and a Dope of Dopes.

One Sunday evening a lengthy game was in progress in the study of the duty housemaster and as it progressed boys started to report back just as their individual merits were, by coincidence, being hotly debated around the table. Each new appearance was greeted by wild and hysterical laughter and by the time the game broke up for evening chapel the boys were convinced that the masters were quite demented. Interest in the game declined shortly afterwards but Eldershaw still retains the pack of cards.

In School House at that time the resident matron was Mary Ducker and Eldershaw says that the one thing that masters and boys would have agreed on was that she was the best matron any school ever had. One hot Friday evening Eldershaw called in for a chat with her and found that after a hard week she was almost weary enough to drop. She said that she was all right, but that she would really enjoy a quiet glass of wine. Housemasters did not then keep drink in their quarters so there was little likelihood that he could oblige, until he remembered that during the afternoon he had seen Taff Davies put a bottle of communion wine on the shelf in the sergeant major's office. As far as Eldershaw was concerned one wine was very much like another and he thought that if he 'borrowed' the bottle it would be easy

enough to replace it before Sunday. 'If you would like some wine,' he said to the matron, 'then you shall have it.' They were soon enjoying a glass together, but he did not reveal its origin.

The difficulty came the next day when he tried to buy another bottle to put on the shelf. The wine was frontignac and no pub or wine shop in North Sydney had ever heard of it. Thinking that there might be centuries of tradition that required communion wine to be frontignac he started to comb the shops in the city as well. But it was no use and at the end of the day he had to settle for a bottle of sweet sherry, which he placed on the office shelf, fully expecting to hear later that evening that Sunday's communion service was cancelled due to unforeseen circumstances.

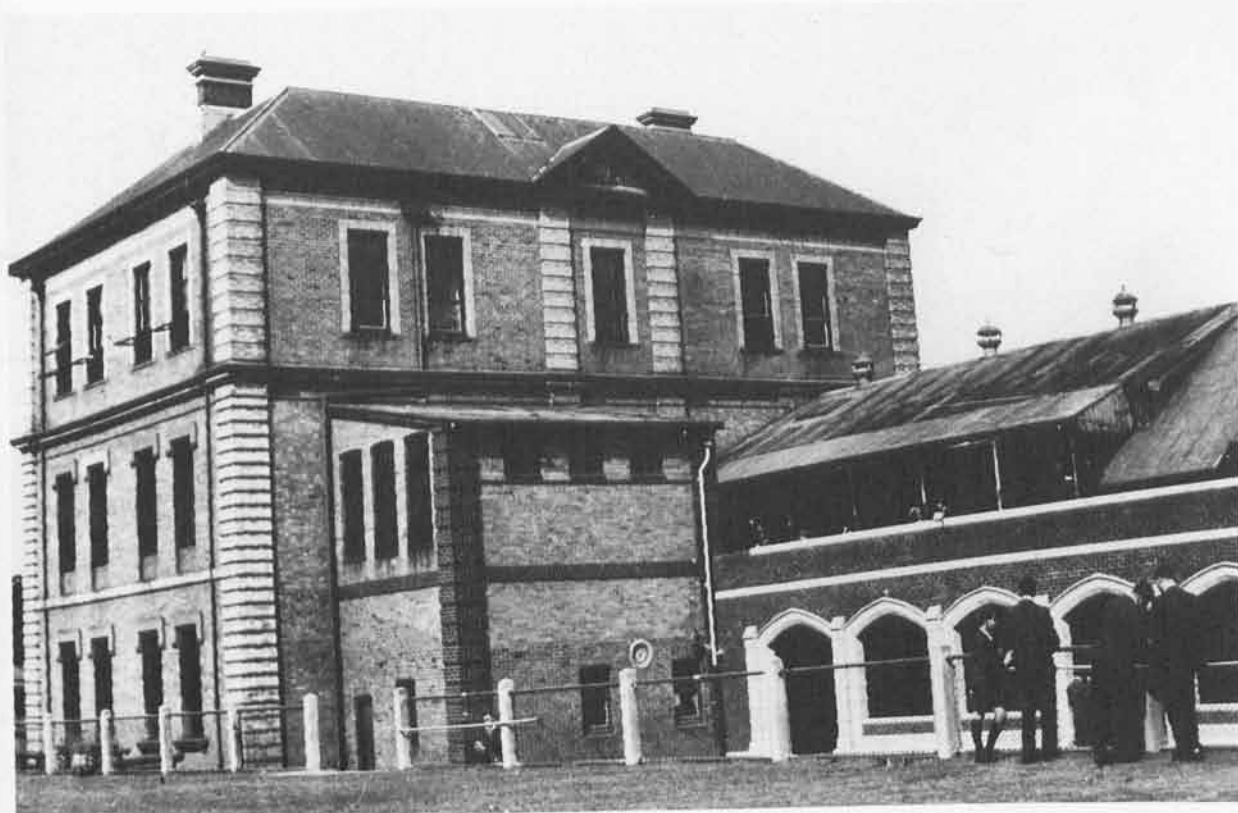
No such announcement was made and Eldershaw's carefully prepared confession was not required. Nor did he ever ask Taff Davies if he had noticed the difference.

During his first term Eldershaw was required to teach most subjects to a second year class. They were, he says, not very bright boys and he was a very inexperienced teacher and at best a superficial mathematician. One day he had at the blackboard a timid boy who found Maths difficult and Eldershaw incomprehensible. 'I thought he was stubbornly refusing to do what I now know I was incapable of getting him to do, and I attacked him verbally in somewhat unmeasured terms.' The boy promptly fainted at his feet. Water was sent for, the boy was restored sufficiently to be sent to the matron and a subdued young master continued with the lesson. It was the first of Pat's moans.

'I tend rather too readily to employ plain and vigorous speech to express my feelings, but it seemed to me that such speech was well accepted by boys and was effective with them. Because of this conviction I developed what I thought was rather a skilful technique (when circumstances warranted its use) of letting my language seem completely unrestrained but keeping it just within the limits acceptable to the broadminded. My tirades were really under better control than I let it appear and they did not occur in fact as often as they do in Old Boys' recollections.'

Whether they were always as restrained as Eldershaw suggests, boys soon discovered how effective they were. 'They were absolutely character-stripping,' one said, 'and you simply wanted to hide in a crack in the floor.' But a boy of a later generation said, 'If there was one thing worse than getting one of Pat's moans it was not getting one. That meant that he did not think you were worth the effort, and that was much worse.'

Sometimes he could be equally effective by doing very little. At the beginning of one prep. class he noticed a small boy take a huge bite from an apple. The boy thought he had seen him and pretended he had done nothing of the sort, resolutely keeping his mouth from moving. It would



have been easy for Eldershaw to ask the boy a question and thus settle the matter, but instead he decided to go about it a different way. He set some work for the class and then made sure the boy knew that he was watching him for the remainder of the period. The boy never moved his mouth and the period ended with Eldershaw admiring him for his endurance and the boy wondering whether Eldershaw had seen the bite or not.

Although his intolerance of anything less than full effort was soon well known, Eldershaw always maintained a sympathy for those having difficulty or who were naturally incompetent. He gave them a chance to talk about their problems and whenever he could he found something useful, such as line umpiring or cricket scoring, for a boy to do in the hope that it might help him to settle down. 'Plenty of other schoolmasters did this too and as a rule it is a form of help that is quite unperceived and therefore unappreciated even by the parents of those who benefit. Of course, for the therapy to be effective it is best for it not to be seen to be therapy.' This was not extended to those not in need. 'Overprotection of those who could learn for themselves to stand upon their own feet is not a kindness; and

The Main Block in 1938, shortly after the addition of the new cloisters.

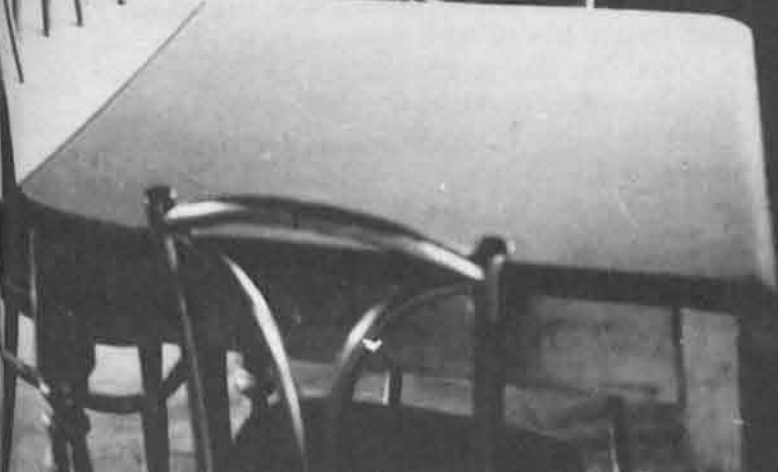
Overleaf: The original school library. This room is now the masters' common room.



SOUTH AFRICA 1800-1900
A. D. SMITH
J. D. SMITH
H. W. SMITH
J. E. SMITH
J. D. SMITH
G. F. SMITH
C. M. SMITH
O. M. SMITH
A. C. M. SMITH
O. L. SMITH
E. SMITH
H. V. SMITH
E. D. SMITH
H. D. SMITH
K. D. SMITH

TRAFFIC 1800-1900
C. M. SMITH
J. D. SMITH
H. W. SMITH
J. E. SMITH
J. D. SMITH
G. F. SMITH
C. M. SMITH
O. M. SMITH
A. C. M. SMITH
O. L. SMITH
E. SMITH
H. V. SMITH
E. D. SMITH
H. D. SMITH
K. D. SMITH

PRO REGE ET PRO PATRIA



those who, while not really needing one, yet look for a protector, ought to be made to look in vain.'

Eldershaw soon realised that his speaking voice seemed to invite constant imitation by the boys he taught. He knew it to be slow, but he thought it could not be as unpleasant to the ear as most imitations were—until he encountered his first tape recorder. 'When my voice was played back to me it was one of the most humiliating experiences I ever had. I realised then that the imitators were actually flattering me.' He soothed his feelings, as he often did, by writing a poem.

COMMENT ON BURNS

Burns knew what shock the gift would 'gie us'
Of seeing ourselves as other see us.
And tape recorders fail to cheer us
By letting us hear how others hear us;
While best friends hesitate to tell us
How stale we smell as others smell us.

He was also well aware of how boys see schoolmasters, and how unreasonable a master's behaviour can seem to them. One day on entering a classroom he found a caricature of himself lying where he could not fail to see it. He thought it amusing even though it was unflattering and he put it in his pocket and started the lesson. At the end of afternoon school a boy came to him and apologised for what he described as his insulting and reprehensible behaviour and said he would accept his punishment. 'His effusive gratitude when I told him that I thought it was a good likeness and asked his permission to keep it made me very uncomfortable, for it showed clearly what he thought would be a typical schoolmaster's reaction to such a harmless piece of foolery.'

There was some reason, though, for boys to think that masters could be unpredictable. One boy who was caned by Gilfillan could not understand why he said, while administering the punishment: 'I have no intention of taking such behaviour from you. In another matter today I have already had to take twice as much as I bargained for.' Years later the boy discovered that Gilfillan's wife had that day given birth to twins.

Eldershaw was convinced that the supposed breakdown in communication between adults and teenagers was largely a result of adults intruding into areas which adolescents wanted to keep private. The intrusions, no matter how well intentioned, were resented by growing boys and he thought that social misbehaviour on their part was often a way of defending themselves from prying adults. 'People who ask youngsters for too many confidences will get plenty, but they will be, consciously or



unconsciously, false.' A boy subjected to questions and advice from a form master, a subject master, a chaplain and a sports coach was asked to give too much of his privacy. 'I am still convinced that natural growth, carefully watched and occasionally directed, is the best line of development for most boys.'

He also had reservations about the wisdom of training boys as leaders and thought it more sensible to train boys so that they could judge leaders rather than trying to become one. But he recognised that it sounded good for a school to say that it was training the leaders of the future. Parents

A midday Assembly in 1941.

liked it and headmasters often found themselves indulging in it. Again, he expressed himself in verse.

SCHOOL FOR LEADERSHIP

The kind of school, no doubt, to give
Headmasters most elation
Would be a school that moved about
In crocodile formation.
The Head would smirk exultingly
As such a school filed past,
Each one a leader in some degree
Except the very last.

Eldershaw was on the staff at Shore for all but the first year of L. C. Robson's reign as headmaster and although he was sometimes privately critical of him he never doubted Robson's ability as a headmaster nor his huge contribution to the progress of the school. Much of the harmony amongst the staff came about because Robson was prepared to face up to the unpleasant necessities of his position. Some people could do that because they were naturally insensitive, but he knew Robson to be the opposite. Robson cared and was often deeply hurt by what he had to do, but he did it just the same. 'In their dealings with the school plenty of people (men and boys) have had their bluff called, plenty have not got away with their attempts to shirk their responsibility, plenty have been prevented from taking an unfair advantage that they thought was worth trying for; but those who have really been dealt with unfairly or unsympathetically if all the facts were known must be very few indeed.'

The other reason for Robson's success was that he always worked harder than the rest of the staff, even though he invariably expected a great deal from them. The fact that Robson continued to teach when other headmasters had already succumbed to the pressures of administration was also recognised within the common room. 'It was not that the administrative burden at Shore was lighter than elsewhere, it was that the Chief's shoulders were broader.'

His admiration and respect for Robson did not prevent him from being amused at his repetitive use of favourite phrases:

When L. C. R. was chaffed about his frequent condemnation
Of Shore boys' wild enthusiasm as 'vulgar ostentation',
He sought for an alternative of equal force and clarity
And came up with the answer—'ostentatious vulgarity'.

Even more telling was a poem he wrote after meeting Robson returning from the kitchen one Saturday morning. It is based on an incident that

Robson described to Eldershaw and one should imagine it, he says, being told by Robson himself.

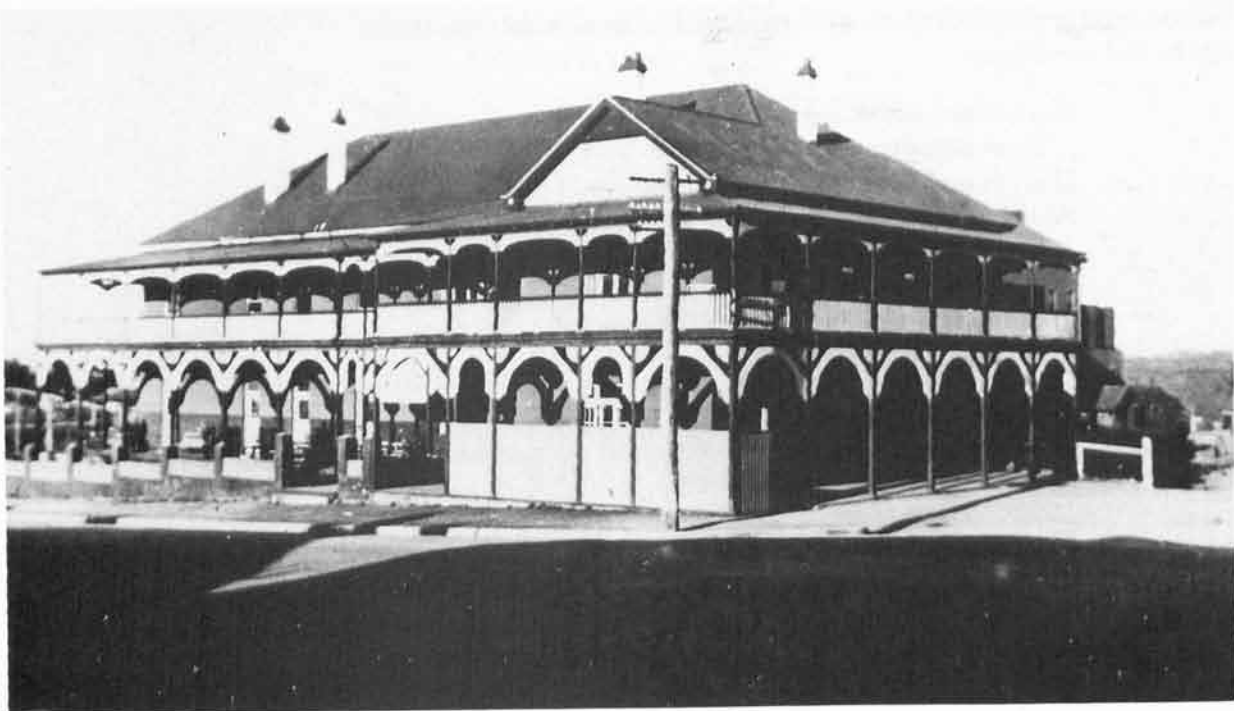
She lurched without sense of direction
 Unaware of my withering look.
 She was under my closest inspection
 As she lurched without sense of direction,
 A typical Hemlock selection,
 Our newly enrolled second cook,
 But she lurched without sense of direction
 Unaware of my withering look.

She seemed to be after the Bursar,
 Although it was plain she was drunk.
 Her antics grew worser and worser
 The nearer she got to the Bursar.
 I had to get rid of her—curse her!—
 Her language was bad and she stunk.
 She seemed to be after the Bursar,
 She must have been *horribly* drunk.

I thought if I sent her to bed
 It would clear up the fog in her mind.
 So I went to her firmly and said:
 'You had better come straight off to bed.'
 I'd have tried any measure instead,
 No matter how harsh or unkind,
 If I'd thought that the mention of bed
 Would put further ideas in her mind.

At the moment we got to her door
 She threw out an improper suggestion,
 To me, the Headmaster of Shore.
 At the moment we got to her door
 She behaved like an ordinary whore—
 But my virtue is quite beyond question.
 With a petulant slam of the door
 I cut short her improper suggestion!

Pat Eldershaw learnt most of his teaching by trial and error, as many did at that time. And by observation too. One of the rules at Shore in the early days was that English classes should learn by heart at least two hundred lines of poetry each term. One sporting-minded young master got over this



The Prep. School at Mount
Victoria in 1942.

difficulty by holding a 'poetry race meeting' every fortnight in which boys would enter as either 'stayers', with a hundred lines; 'middle distance' with about fifty lines; or 'sprints' with a quick dash of twenty-five lines. Boys had to recite the required number of lines against the clock while 'stewards' checked them for accuracy. Records, once established, were vigorously defended and the result was that the class learnt its required number of lines easily and painlessly.

The response of boys to what they were taught never failed to intrigue Eldershaw. In the chapter on the causes of the Spanish War of Succession the textbook had a sentence which said: 'Unfortunately the Bavarian baby died of smallpox.' Every boy remembered this sentence even if they remembered nothing else and would invariably use it verbatim when given the chance. Two years later an examination question, set for a different class, resulted in every boy including the sentence in his answer.

Even the textbooks themselves could be unintentionally amusing. One French textbook had been written by an early member of the Shore staff and to the enduring delight of its users contained a sentence for translation which read: 'The nuts of the Chinese are white.' Two other masters collaborated in writing a physics textbook and one day, after a visit to the school by the King's representative in New South Wales, the class found

that the next exercise in the book started with precise details about 'the balls of a governor'.

No less worthy was the essay produced by a boy on the subject of 'The School' in the days when the entrance gates were between Robson House and the corner of the three-storeyed block. 'As you enter the school gates,' he wrote, 'the first thing that catches your eye is the Headmaster's private parts.'

Pat Eldershaw sees in himself a flaw that he would have liked to correct. He was, he says, lazy in preparing lessons and too willing to rely on improvisation to get him through. 'I used to excuse myself with the rationalisation that many of my best lessons developed on those occasions when I went into class unprepared. I found it convenient to forget that my worst and most uncomfortable lessons also arose from the same cause.' He was also aware that he was better at detecting a weakness in a point of view of others than in putting forward an original view of his own. The result was often an essay or a poem that was not intended for publication, in spite of the merit that it still shows. One issue of the *Weekly Record* had a well-meant account of a 'Crusader Bike-Hike' in which it was said that it had given the boys an opportunity to meet God. His private note read:

A CRUSADER'S LAMENT

I've no more chance of meeting God
Than heathen, Jew or Tyke,
Because my father, mean old sod,
Won't let me have a bike.

What Eldershaw undoubtedly did have was an ability to get boys to do far more than they thought possible, both in the classroom and on the playing fields. He says that if he deserved any praise for their achievements it should be for having enough sense to recognise those who were naturally able and for allowing them to develop in their own way. At the same time he encouraged the less able to do the best they could and never lost his sympathy for those in need. 'I have sometimes, with full awareness of what I was doing, taken more account of the well-being of individual trees than of the development of the whole forest. I mean by this that I have played a boy in a team who at the time was not really good enough for it and allowed the team to take the consequences rather than inflict another blow on one who seemed to me to have already taken too many.'

This ability to look after boys in an unobtrusive way and to get them working together was never more successful than when he was house-master of Barry House, which he took over in 1939 and ran with his wife until he retired. The boys did everything themselves, he says, which is probably true—but they don't do it for everybody.

An outstanding example was when the boys built the tennis court at Barry House. What made it remarkable was that the work went on from 1955 to 1958 and those who worked on it so enthusiastically at the beginning had left school by the time it was finished. It was important to the boys that they see the job through without any outside help and this was maintained over several generations of boys.

It was a huge job. First they had to build a retaining wall over three metres high at one end, using material from another building that was well up the hill. Huge stones had to be moved down the hill to the wall and sometimes it took a group of boys a whole afternoon to move one of them. When the wall had been built work started on cutting away the high side of the ground and moving it to fill the lower part to make a level surface. 'It seemed to me impossible that they could carry through this part of the job with only picks, mattocks, shovels, barrows and one old crowbar, but they always assured me that it could be done.'

Finally it was done and while the soil was settling they started work on the fence. Posts were set in concrete and netting attached and then they used a hose filled with water to determine the level of the ground. They collected money so that the bitumen surface could be laid professionally, but then found that the contractor's trucks could not reach the site until they built two strong ramps for them. Putting in the net posts and painting the lines was child's play after that.

'As long as I was in charge of Barry House, the tennis court could only be made available to outsiders after application to the senior boy in the house at the time. The boys of the house to my mind had earned the right to say what use would be made of an amenity their own efforts had provided.'

As Eldershaw grew older he became more aware of the difference in his age and those of the boys he was teaching and as a result he increasingly worked through the natural leaders amongst the boys themselves. 'In my later years at Shore my success or failure as a teacher or a games coach depended largely on my compatibility with the boys' leaders through whom I tried to get things done.'

In 1961 he told his English honours group that they seemed to have the ability to achieve a better class result than his previous best group, which had gained five first class honours. They took him seriously and several times told him not to worry—they would do what was expected of them. In the end they brought him seven first class honours. 'You couldn't let Pat down, could you?'

As he approached retirement he was only too aware of the dangers that an ageing schoolmaster faces. 'They develop the inevitable weaknesses of advancing years such as slowness, deafness or a tendency to repetition, and



none escape the notice of the ultra-observant people with whom their days are spent. The young, quite pardonably lacking the sympathy that comes from understanding and shared experiences, can make men feel their increasing deficiencies more acutely than would be the case in any other walk of life.'

He suffered no such embarrassment. 'I did not become a public butt and the "courteous habits" of the boys with whom I had dealings did not break down. Whatever their private feelings may have been they were thoughtful and considerate to me right to my retirement.' When that time came, he wrote his own epitaph.

It's time for me to retire,
There can't be a doubt about that.
Education today must require
Clear thinking—not learning off Pat.

Form III A3 doing P. E. on the oval in 1964.

Looking back on his years at Shore he says, 'The most I can claim for myself is that contact with me did not disincline able boys from learning for themselves and that I could drive the less able to some kind of learning by a combination of frightening them and jollying them along.'

It is too modest a description to please the many hundreds of boys who passed through his hands and who now look back with gratitude on what Pat Eldershaw did for them. Perhaps that is best summed up in this letter written by an Old Boy in 1955 when he had become a busy and highly respected doctor.

'Dear Mr Eldershaw,

It is exactly twenty years since I promised to write you this letter. You will not recall the scene, but I do, very clearly and vividly. It was a very cold July morning in 1935. In LIVB classroom you decided that I was not paying sufficient attention to all that you were saying. So, Sir, you proceeded to deliver me an oral diatribe, for which you are so well-known and famous. In fact, Sir, your capacity and ability to do this has been discussed in many lands beyond these shores. The general tenor of your discourse was that I very much annoyed you and not only that, upon your health I would appear to have acted as a rather strong emetic. Finally, Sir, you made me promise very faithfully that in exactly twenty years from that cold July morning I would write to you and define a 'gerund'. This, Sir, I promised to do and that is the motive for this letter. I looked up the definition of a gerund the other night in Webster's. I shall not waste time by giving it to you now. You undoubtedly know it and I would be copying out from the dictionary.

'Sir, I thank you for all you have taught me and it is with all sincerity that I hope my two sons, who will shortly be attending the school, will have the privilege of learning English from you.'

It was a letter that could have been sent to any one of the many masters who, like Pat Eldershaw, came to Shore as young men and devoted the rest of their lives to the school and the boys they taught.

. . .

CHAPTER TEN

The Sixties

CHRIS PENNEY, WHO WAS AT SHORE from 1958 until 1963, is in many ways typical of a large number of boys who have made up the Shore community almost from its first day: the boarders from the bush.

English boarding schools, which were the model for most of those in Australia, offered boarding as a character-forming experience which was worthwhile even for those who lived close enough to be day boys. While that emphasis has also been part of the Australian approach, boarding schools in Australia had an additional function to those in England. They provided education of a high standard to children who lived in remote areas where local education was not available or not very good.

Chris Penney's father started his 930 hectare sheep property at Bellata in northern New South Wales in 1938 and Chris, who was born in 1945, received his first three years of education by correspondence from the Education Department at Blackfriars. Under the guidance of his mother, he worked through a basic course in the three Rs and, in common with many people in the bush, he thinks it was very successful considering its obvious limitations. There was, in any case, no alternative at that time.

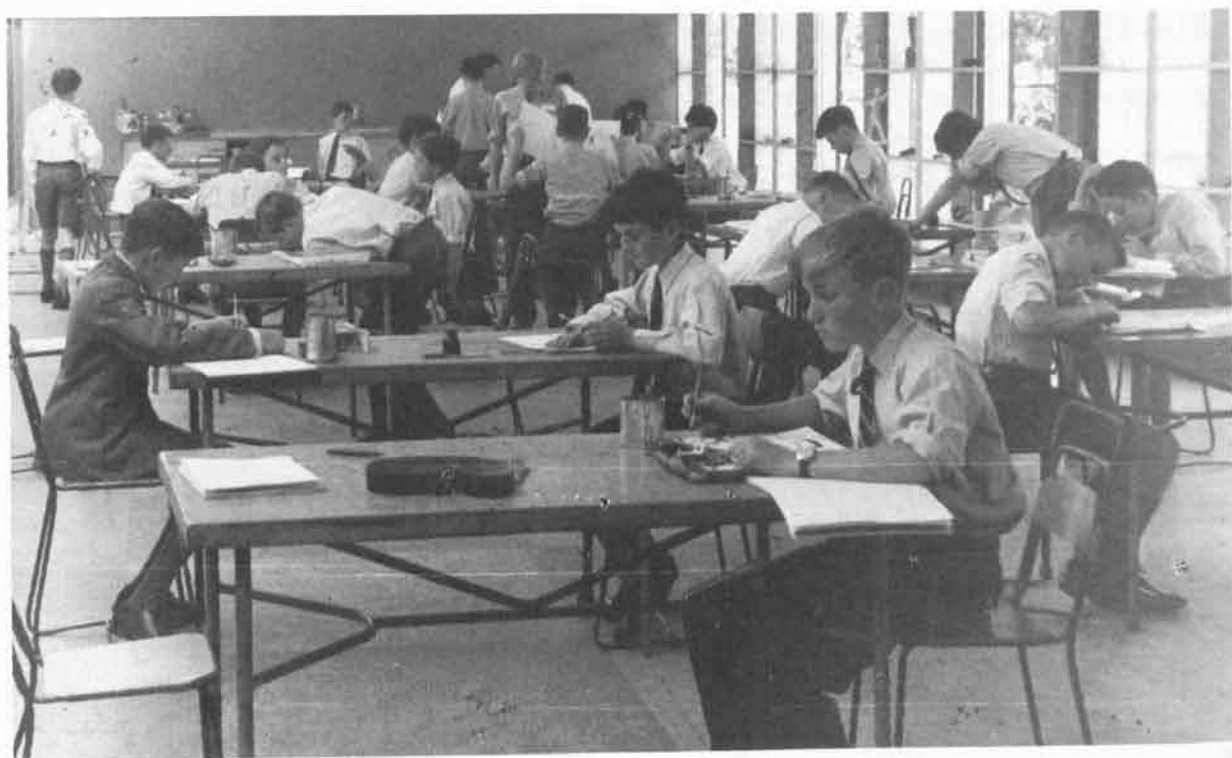
When he was nine years old Chris Penney was sent as a boarder to Knox. He had already been booked into Shore, although he did not know that then, but until a place became available Knox was a suitable alternative because he had an aunt in Pymble who he could turn to if necessary.

'I found the move a bit of a shock. I was homesick for the first year and it took longer than that before I got used to the idea.'

Fortunately he found no difficulty getting on with other boys and he gathered a group of friends quite quickly. Nor did he have any problem with the work. Most of the boys were starting languages for the first time and his only difficulty was in the subjects that could not be done well by correspondence.

At the end of his third year at Knox he returned home for Christmas and was told that he would be starting the next term, not at Knox but at Shore. 'It was a bombshell. I was doing very well at Knox, I had a lot of friends there and I did not want to leave.'

When he arrived at Shore for the first term in 1958 he was pleased to find another Knox boarder who had also been transferred and that made



III A1 and A2 art class in 1961.

Opposite page: Boys leaving the Chapel in 1962. J. H. Winstanley is in the porch.

things a little easier. 'But I would have to say that I was bewildered at the beginning. I had done three years at Knox in very pleasant surroundings and I was very familiar with the school. Then suddenly I was at Shore and there didn't seem to be much space. It seemed to be all buildings.'

He spent the first year in the prep. school and then moved into Hodges House, which was run by Wilbur Sawkins. They did not have an easy relationship. But at least the House was reasonably pleasant. It was large and the dormitories were quite acceptable to Chris Penney. The food was not great 'but there was always plenty of bread and butter and we looked forward to ice-cream, which we had once a week.'

There was still an initiation in the House, but it had changed so much that the pioneers of School House would hardly have recognised it as such. It consisted of a concert night in which all the new boys were expected to perform. It was held in the study room where tables had been arranged at one end to make a stage and a couple of sheets hung up for a curtain. The first part of the concert consisted of individual performances by the new boys, who would either sing, recite a poem or play an instrument. Chris Penney sang a song, which he thought would have been a bigger imposition on the audience than it was on him.



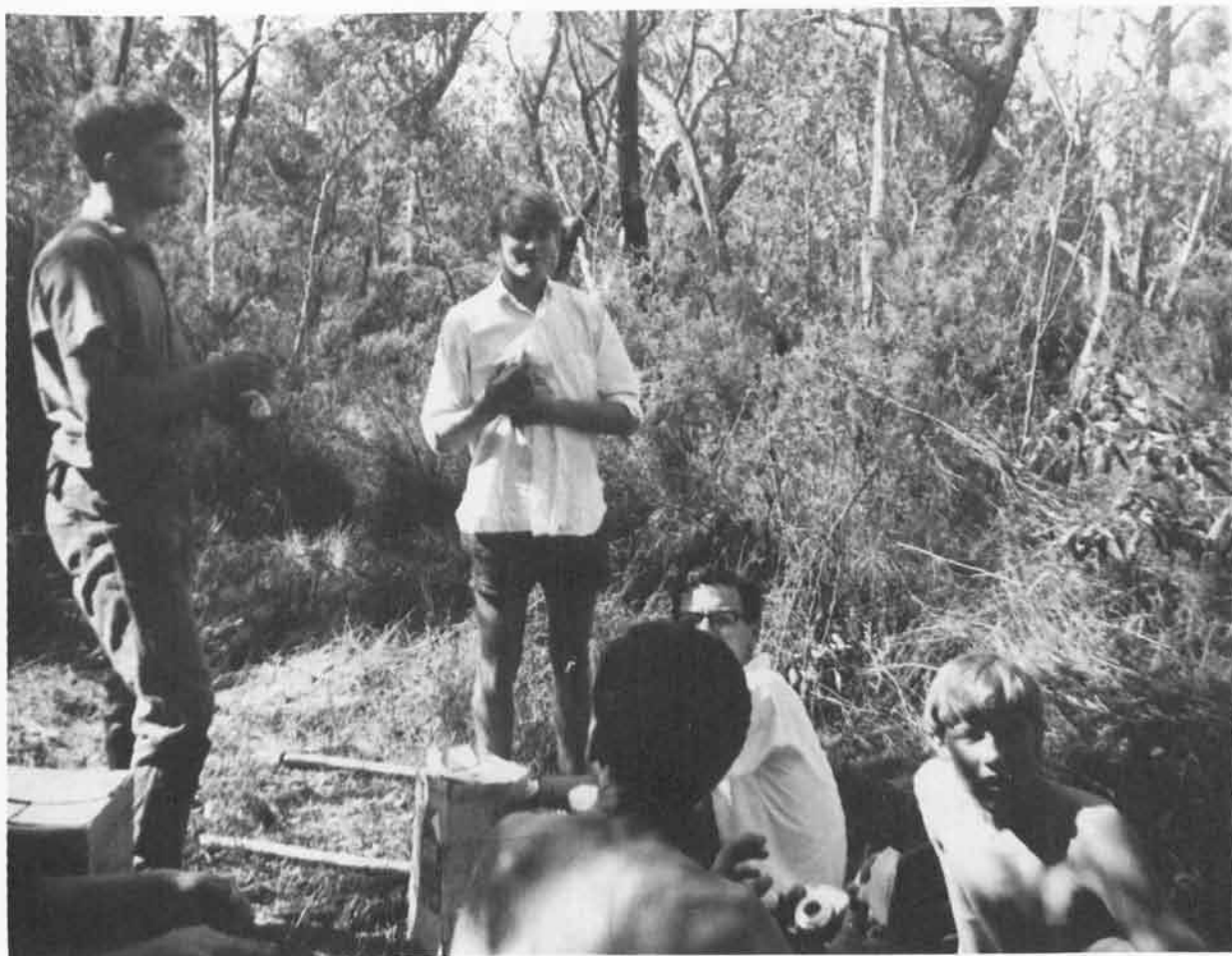


Boys under the Archway
in 1962.

After the interval, the boys grouped together to put on a series of skits. In one of them during his first concert two boys mopped the stage and made sure the audience knew that the bucket they were using really did contain water. After some dialogue the curtain closed and when it reopened the boys were back at the mopping. Then one of the boys picked up the bucket and emptied it in the direction of Wilbur Sawkins. The audience ducked as pieces of torn newspaper fluttered around them,

Nearly all the boys in the house were from the bush and they got on well together. Friendships were not restricted by differences in ages and many were long lasting. Nor were they restricted to boys in the same house even though there was keen rivalry between houses in sport.

Within the house discipline was maintained by the house prefects, who were allowed to sock boys if necessary. It was generally thought by younger



boys that it was better to be socked by a prefect than to be taken before the housemaster for punishment.

Chris Penney played cricket and football at school grade level and also played tennis, but not competitively. Tennis was in its infancy as a school sport and not highly regarded. John Newcombe was ahead of Penney in the school and had not lost a singles match since he was twelve 'but not many kids would have known much about him then'. One master was horrified when Newcombe said he intended to play tennis as a career and suggested that he ought to take up a 'real' sport instead.

Real sports were cricket, football and rowing. Penney was in the B grades for most of his time at school but played the occasional A grade game of football as first reserve, which brought him a first award, a rank slightly lower than a colour. 'I enjoyed my sport tremendously. The teams

Boys at Linden during Easter 1965. Left to right: G. Scott, S. Christiansen, G. Hyles (at the back), J. Wood and J. Linton.

Opposite page: Collecting lunch orders in 1963.

were good and I had a lot of good mates.' Graham White coached him in the second XV and in his last year he had coaching from Jika Travers as he alternated between firsts and seconds. Bogga Burns coached him in the second XI.

In retrospect he thinks that there might have been too much emphasis on sport, 'certainly in Travers's time because he had a very strong affiliation with sport and he was very keen for boys to play sport and do well'. But any emphasis on sport was not at the expense of academic achievement and many boys were able to combine success in both. But those who were good at work and had no sporting ability did not attract the same respect and were almost regarded with suspicion. 'It is curious. After you leave school and go into business for yourself you realise that those academic boys had a lot going for them. But some of those who achieved top academic results did not do anything outstanding afterwards, while some of the plodders I knew did very well for themselves.'

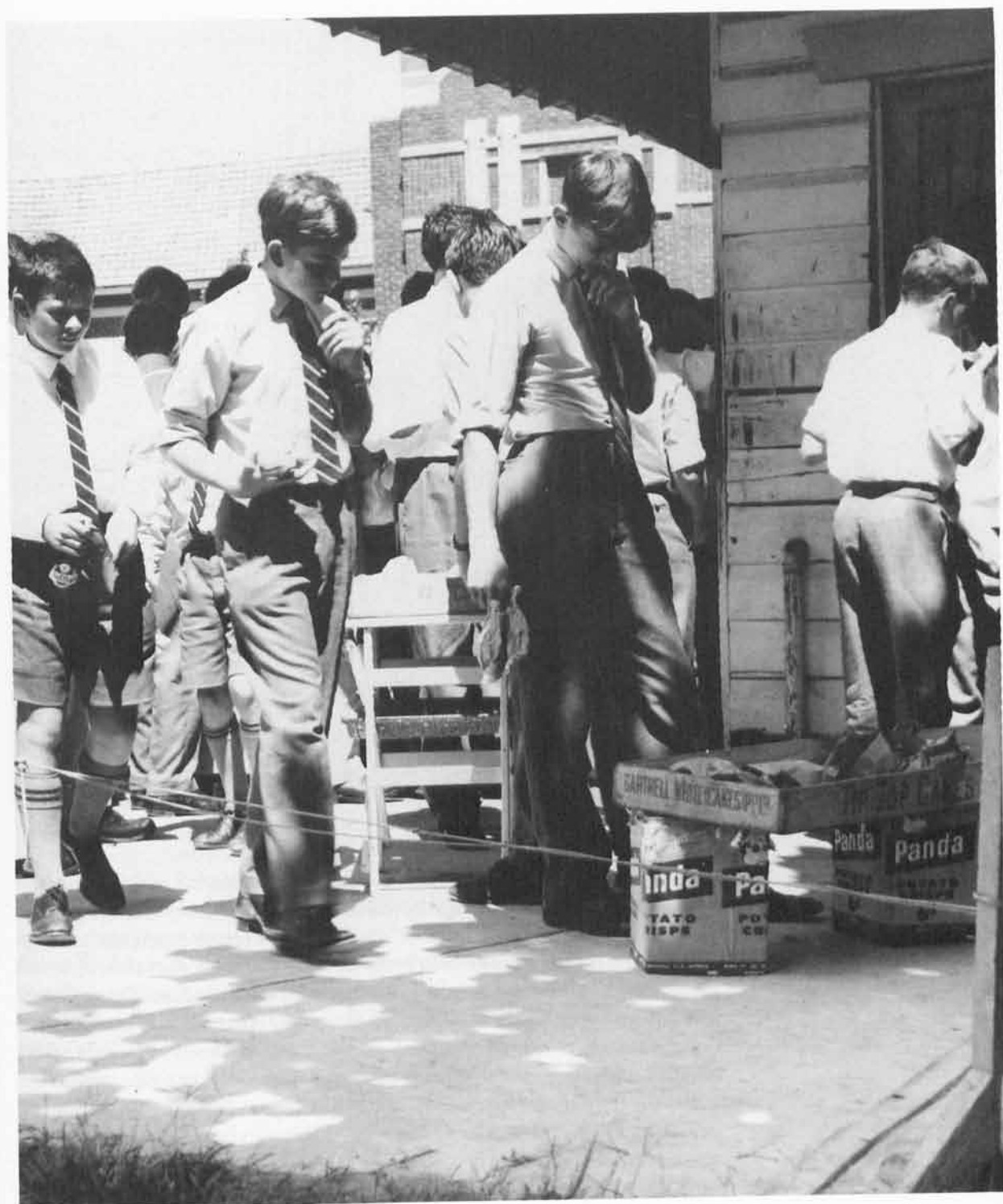
Chris Penney's first year was also Robson's last and so he remembers little of him. But he does remember Robson's final speech day, which was held at Sydney Town Hall. Penney had won a prize and he had to go on to the platform to receive it from Robson. 'It was a very public meeting for Shore. My parents came down. John Sedgwick was head prefect and he made a tremendous speech. I thought it was all very significant.'

He found Travers to be a strict disciplinarian and very unyielding. 'If he had a failing at all I think it was a tendency to be friendly with boys who were good sportsmen. It wasn't favouritism, but if you were in his football team you were top brass. I don't blame him because he loved football.'

It was in 1963 that Travers finally achieved his ambition of beating Joeys. 'He always wanted us to beat Joeys. He didn't feel this way about any other team—just Joeys. I was in the team that beat them 12–6 and at the end of the season we were invited with our parents to a party by Jika. We presented him with a football jersey with 12–6 written on the back, and he thought that was tremendous. He was over the moon.'

Penney says that the boarders did not look at the school from the view of the day boys. 'We considered the boarders were the school.' He was fortunate that he had relatives in Sydney whom he could visit on weekends, but although they lacked the facilities that modern boarders enjoy he thinks there is little difference between the generations. 'A lot of boys used to go to the northern beaches in the summer and they were regulars at the Newport Arms. We felt that if we behaved ourselves there would be no problem. We just had a few quiet ales and sometimes there was a beach party.'

But the most exciting part of a boarder's life was going home for the Christmas holiday. In Penney's case that meant a ten to fourteen hour trip





Laboratory work in the mid 1960s. Mr Barlow in the centre, Bestic on the left and Scott on the right.

on the North-west Mail, 'which was fairly infamous for the skulduggery that went on!' The train would be full of boys and girls from schools all over Sydney and the guard used to lock the doors between the carriages to keep them apart. It did not take long for somebody to unlock them after he had gone. One boy who was drinking on the train was put off at Werris Creek and his younger brother became so distraught that he was put off too. Penney's parents would meet him on the small platform at Bellata as he climbed down from a train that was by then festooned in toilet paper.

During the holiday he would work on the farm, picking up fallen timber or hoeing burrs and weeds. 'It was a good thing to be able to forget about school work and do some physical work.' And when the holiday was over the long train trip back to Sydney was much more subdued.



As a boarder, Penney had no great love of the chapel, although he was later married there. Nor, at first, did he think there was much religious influence in the school. 'No, thinking about it now I suppose it was always there. It didn't strike me then, but standards and values were obviously based on religious principles. Now I think about it they must have been very successful. There was obviously more influence than I realised at the time.'

By now, technology had come to the help of those trying to make pennies shiny. The latest technique was to immerse the penny overnight in a glass of Coke.

Eventually Chris Penney was appointed house prefect in his final year, but it was a short-lived honour. Wilbur Sawkins saw him skateboarding

A geology lesson at Long Reef in 1966.

down the hill from the dining hall and called him in for an explanation. 'I said that I thought it harmless fun, which it was, but that area was out of bounds so he demoted me.'

Thinking it had been unjust, Penney thought that Sawkins had also assumed that he would fail in the Leaving Certificate. 'I thought, damn it, he is not going to beat me, so I put a spurt on.' In the end he had an A in Geology and Bs in French, English, Maths 3 and Ancient History. 'I was happy with that.'

Chris Penney returned to the family property and when he married at twenty-three his father handed over the management to him. 'One day I was sitting on a tractor going round in circles and I asked myself if that was what I wanted. But once I was in control of the place it was different. We now have wheat as well as sheep and I am involved with the business side and decision-making. I still go round and round on a tractor, but it is not like it was at the beginning.'

He thinks Shore gave him a very good set of values and standards which have stood him in good stead. 'Ironically, when I walked out of the gates for the last time I said, "That's it, I am never coming back here again". But here I am, back with two boys. It is a very fine school.'

John Boulton was also a boarder from the bush and his father, an Old Boy who had a business in Orange, had booked him into Shore to start in 1963. If it was thought that that would be his first year of high school it proved to be a miscalculation, for by the time he started at Shore John Boulton had already done a year at Orange High School. The family later moved to West Wyalong and then to Sydney, but Boulton remained a boarder in School House until he left in 1967.

'I didn't want to go to Shore and was unhappy about the decision. I would have preferred to stay in Orange with people I had grown up with, but my parents said that I could make up my own mind after the second term. By the time that came around I think I was reluctantly enjoying it.'

At first he was very homesick and although he grew to like the House he always found weekends the worst part. 'It was really depressing on Sundays if you were not out. The day just dragged. You had no opportunity to do the things you were used to doing on weekends.' What made it worse was listening to the day boys on Monday describing what *they* had done over the weekend. In his second year Boulton wrote an article for the *Weekly Record* bemoaning the fate of a boarder who had to stay in during a boarders' weekend. He had few relatives in Sydney and the boredom of weekends remained with him throughout his time at school.

Bob Blanshard was the housemaster at School House for his first year, and then Bill Foulkes took over. The change also coincided with a remarkable improvement in comfort when the horsehair mattresses were



Outside the sergeant-major's office, 1965.

replaced by those with inner springs. In contrast, the shower routine remained unchanged. The morning shower had to be cold and although the evening shower could be taken hot it had to last no longer than one minute. A prefect stood alongside and kept time. One of the privileges of being in the sixth form was that a hot shower could be taken in the morning.

Nor did the luxury extend to the food. Mince on toast was disliked by everybody, perhaps because it was served so frequently as the evening meal. In 1965, after it had appeared for the fourth time in a fortnight, there was a food strike in the dining hall. 'On the dot of 7 o'clock everybody put down their knife and fork and stopped eating. Normally the dining hall was full of noise but everybody stopped talking and there was total silence. Then we cleared away the plates, still full of this awful mince which had been served up time and time again.'

Mince was not seen again for a long time, nor was there any disciplinary action. Boulton does not know who organised the protest—'I just remember the message coming round and you would not have dared not to be in it.'

The only bullying, he says, was authorised bullying by the house prefects. At that time in School House socking was part of daily life. Boulton was socked for leaving his window open one morning—'which was a dreadful crime'—but the most outstanding example came some time later.

Boarders had to queue outside the housemaster's office on a Friday evening to draw their week's pocket money and on one occasion somebody scratched the wall in the corridor. Nobody would own up to the crime and so the prefects, working in shifts, socked the entire house. 'I don't think the boys worried about who the culprit was or why he had not confessed, but there was a lot of talk about what a stupid idea it was to sock everybody.'

Towards the end of the first year one of the masters in School House, Tom Brewis, suggested to Boulton that he might care to try out as a cox. It was to be the start of a love of rowing that lasted throughout his time at school and which is still with him.

Almost immediately Boulton was made cox of the junior eight and was asked to attend the rowing camp in January. 'That was the ultimate for a kid starting his second year. People from that year were bound to be picked, but to be one of them was a big thrill.'

Rowing was not as popular then as it became later, largely because it was not as successful. During the time Boulton was in the shed Shore did not win a single GPS event, fours or eights. 'People chose to row, but they weren't breaking their necks or doing special work in the winter to get in.'



Blokes who were big and who weren't very good at cricket rowed. Blokes who had rowing in their family rowed. But there wasn't the tremendous keenness to get in that there is now.'

There was, he says, a proper amount of time devoted to sport. He did athletics and thought the training he had to do was not nearly enough, but later realised it had been the correct amount. The emphasis, he says, was on the *emphasis*, not on the amount of time devoted to sport. 'You could not miss the cadets even during the week before the regatta. Everything had its place. There was always a lot of talk about sport, but the time for it was kept under control.'

Boulton joined the ATC instead of the cadets. 'We were called the Cyril squad because everybody thought that if you went into the ATC you weren't as tough as the cadets.' There might even have been some truth in this, for while the cadets were trying to tame the flies at Singleton the ATC under-officers were living in the officers mess at an RAAF base and leaving their shoes outside the door at night for the batman to polish.

But although Boulton made friends, the loneliness never totally disap-

Tension shows during 'rapid fire'. L. D. Bathgate and I. A. Byrne photographed by I. Woodforth at the 1967 shooting camp.

Opposite page: Life-saving instructors demonstrating resuscitation techniques on an Ambu-Manniquen on the day of the Reading-room Dedication, 21 March 1968.

pared. Pleasures were restricted, and were usually simple and involved being out of school for almost any reason. One was to be able to buy ice-creams from the little shop opposite the playing fields at Northbridge. 'Peter Jenkins once took some of us to a lecture on German literature at Macquarie and that was a great thrill. That was a week night, which was very exceptional.'

Boulton had been confirmed by the time he arrived at Shore and he brought with him a religious commitment. He even topped Divinity in his second year but realised 'that was not the sort of thing you did as a boarder, it was a very silly thing to do.' Later, he thought chapel was overdone, certainly with boarders. 'As soon as you started to realise that you were pleased to be out of chapel you questioned what you had thought was so good about religion.'

John Boulton's year was the first under the new Wyndham Scheme, when the secondary course became six years instead of five. During the conversion they were, in effect, in the sixth form for two years, which was split into the upper and lower sixth.

It was also during that time that attitudes of boys began to change, reflecting the often considerable changes that were taking place in the country as a whole. 'Prior to that there was no questioning of the way Jika was trying to run the school and little questioning of authority, but it was starting to happen in my last two years at school.'

For example, when Travers explained to a member of the hall committee how to move the grand piano the whole committee resented the intrusion and were upset that he thought he knew more about moving a piano than they did, whose job it was to move it. 'Before then I don't think we would have given it a thought.' There was also the question of whether boys in the lower sixth could enjoy the sixth form privilege of sitting on the chapel lawn. 'I cannot even remember the outcome, but it was a big issue.'

At that time more emphasis was being placed on teaching boys to think for themselves and encouraging them to question what was going on around them. The new course of General Studies encouraged this and featured many discussions of the events of the day. At the same time John Colebrook and some of the boys formed a discussion group called the Thirty Club and their first guest speaker was Donald Horne, who had just published *The Lucky Country*. It is not surprising then if those boys started to question the very institution that was now encouraging them to be inquisitive. It was a more structured community than most and it demanded unquestioning obedience to a clearly defined authority. Boys started to wonder why the obedience had to be so absolute and why they had little chance of influencing the authority. They began, if only





amongst themselves, to question what they were told, a process that would have been unthinkable to earlier generations of Shore boys.

Travers, as the pinnacle of authority, came in for most of the criticism. He was thought to be the originator of all rules and if they were resented it was automatically assumed they had come from him. Even so, he rarely changed them. One rule, for example, was that if one member of a boat crew wore a hat during practice, then the rest had to wear hats too.

The rules were even more rigid for boarders. Their freedom as older boys was much more restricted than that of day boys and they found that difficult to understand. It was the custom that at the end of the season the crew of the eight would entertain the coach to dinner and make a presentation to him. In 1966 John Boulton was the only boarder in the crew and the only way he would be able to attend the party was if it was held on a boarders' weekend, which in the end is what happened. 'We found a solution, but it was only necessary because of an imposed ruling. I think if we had not found the solution, the imposer of the ruling would have given it no further thought.'

Perhaps the most spectacular sign of the changing times was the furore over an issue of the *Weekly Record*. While Boulton was secretary of the committee the *Record* carried an article by a boy who was opposed to the American involvement in Vietnam. Letters followed in support of the Australian position and soon this public debate became extremely political and quite heated. The committee then received an instruction, which they thought came from Council, that this debate had to stop. It was, Boulton says, an unpopular decision because boys thought it was an important issue and they wanted to talk about it.

The next issue of the *Record* carried a poem written by a member of the committee. When the first letters of each line were read down the page it made a suggestion that would have been difficult to perform with the entire Council. Boulton had not been aware of the intention to publish the poem and, now a prefect, he took his position on the top table in the dining room.

'The *Record* came out on Friday and was always on the top table at lunchtime. So I was sitting there about two places from Jika when I saw this poem in a copy of the *Record* which was lying open. It seemed to stand out from the page and the message down the lines was very clear. I did not know what to do. While I was thinking about it, somebody, probably the head prefect, pointed it out to Jika and all hell broke loose.'

All copies of the issue were called in. Those members of the committee who had known about it were dismissed, those who were also prefects were demoted, and the author of the offending poem was suspended. It was, says Boulton, a pretty frightening time.

'I think that people who look back on those years see that although Jika might not have been popular, there were a lot of advantages in having somebody at one end of the spectrum trying to force things. I think the end result was pretty good.'

In 1967 John Boulton's year was the first to sit for the Higher School Certificate which, under the Wyndham Scheme, now replaced the Leaving Certificate. The change was confusing because the school approached the HSC in the same way that it had handled the Leaving, except that boys would now do two first levels instead of two honours. 'So we all did our two first levels and thought we did pretty well, but all the other schools were doing five first levels.'

In spite of the confusion John Boulton obtained first levels in French and German (in which he was thirty-third in the State), and second levels in Ancient History, English and Short Maths. He had no clear view about a career, except he had decided in fourth year that it would have nothing to do with science. So he started an arts/law course at Sydney University with the intention of finding out during the arts degree whether he wanted to do law. He knew nothing about law, nobody in his family knew anything about it, 'and there was no work experience then'.

John Boulton is now a barrister in Sydney, and one of the rowing coaches at Shore.

'I think Shore made you want to achieve in a way that I don't think a high school could have done. It directed you towards a certain standard and I think it was very successful in instilling some important attitudes in you. Christian ethics were certainly instilled, if not Christianity. I would have no hesitation in sending a child of mine to Shore, but not as a boarder. Never. But the kids I coach now seem to be boarders in name only.'

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Organisations and Benefactors

THE OLD BOYS' UNION

The proposal to form an Old Boys' Union was made at the dinner which followed the Old Boys' Football Match in May 1894 and the first meeting was held at the school the following August. A later meeting elected the first committee and appointed the headmaster as president.

During the first year sixty-one Old Boys joined the new Union and paid an annual subscription of 2s. 6d., although they had to pay an additional 2s. 6d. if they wished to receive the *Torch Bearer*. At first the Union did not hold an annual dinner of its own but continued to regard the Old Boys' football match as its major social occasion. In 1897, however, the Rev. Davies suggested that the annual reunion might now take the form of a formal dinner. The first dinner, held that year, was at Quong Tart's restaurant and they were able to celebrate the fact that the Union now boasted a membership of one hundred Old Boys.

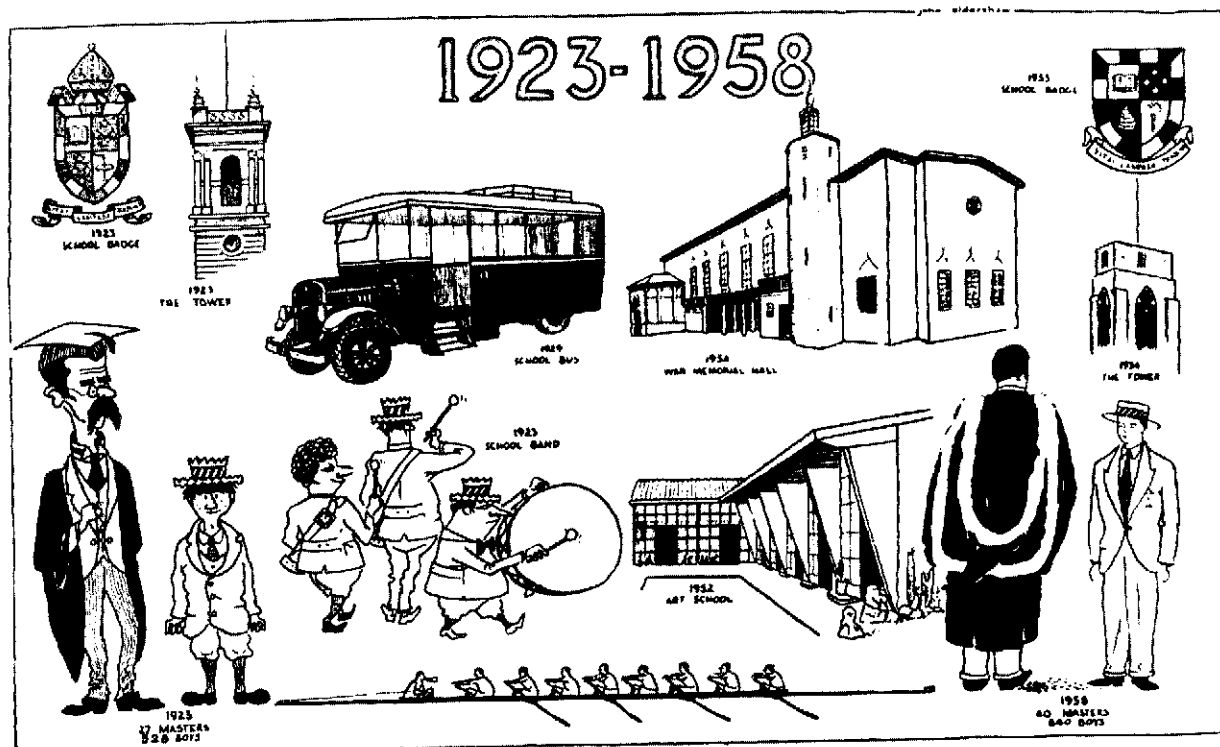
Although formed primarily as a social group, the Union recognised from the outset that it should also serve the school whenever it could. An Old Boys' Prize Fund was established to provide annual prizes at the school for athletics and rowing, and in 1898 an additional prize was established for an essay on the history and resources of Australia. This link with the school was reinforced when it was decided to use the *Torch Bearer* as the official journal of the Union.

The first building project supported by the Union was the Memorial Library, built in memory of Old Boys who were killed in the Boer War. The foundation stone was laid in 1902 and the plans were prepared and donated by an Old Boy, M. L. Clarke. Old Boys made generous donations to the fund and when the building was opened in 1903 it was almost free of debt. So, indeed, was the Union, for at the annual meeting that year it reported a balance in credit of 4s. 11d.

The annual dinner had always been followed by a Smoke Concert, and for many members this was probably the best part of the evening. In 1904, however, it was decided to abandon the concert so that there could be

Overleaf: The 1907 Old Boys' Dinner, held at the ABC Cafe.





The programme designed by John Eldershaw for the Old Boys' Union dance at the Trocadero in 1958.

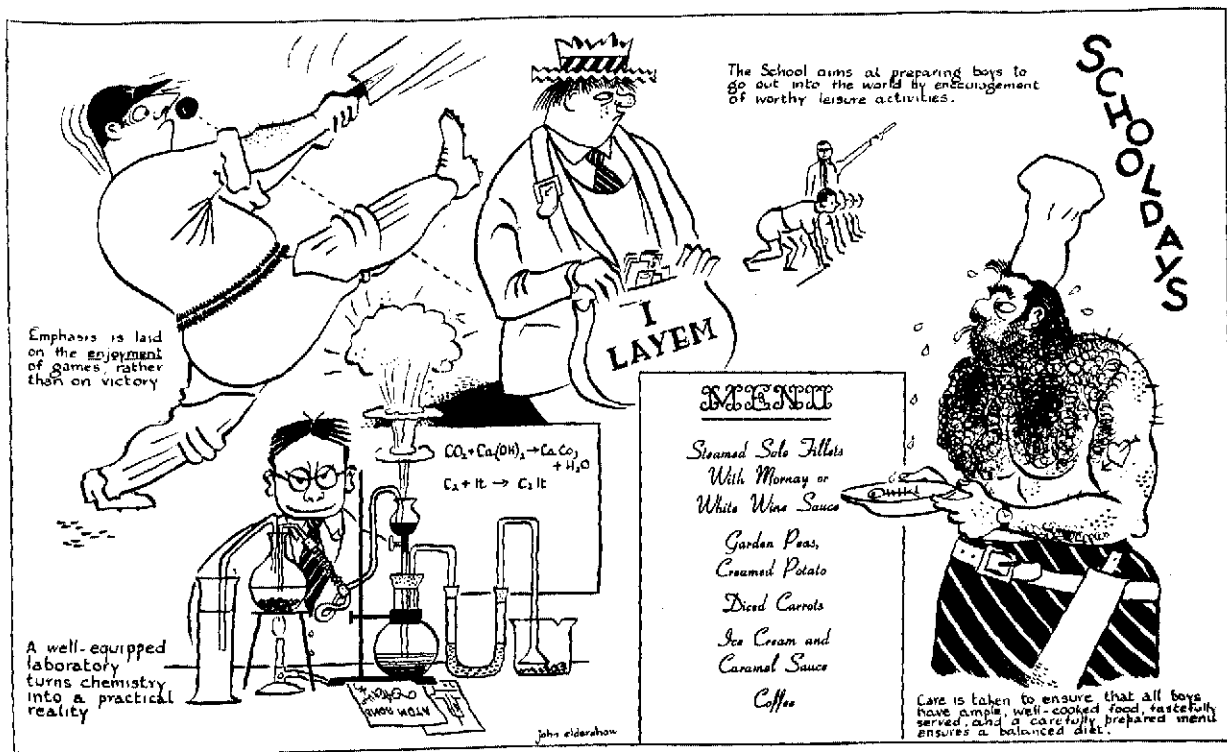
more time for speeches, a step that was not universally popular even though it was probably more healthy.

At this time, though, the finances of the Union were rarely healthy. The credit balance of 1903 had been reduced to 7d. in 1905, although the treasurer was able to report that while membership had exceeded one hundred for some time, this was the first year in which he had actually received more than a hundred subscriptions. Even so, by 1907 the credit balance had disappeared and the Union's books were showing a loss.

The members did, however, make substantial contributions to the chapel fund, which was started by the headmaster in 1905. By the time the chapel was finished, however, it had the sad task of holding memorial services for Old Boys who died in the war. In 1916 the committee introduced a Union badge, and one was sent to the parents of Old Boys who were killed.

During the last few years of the war the Union played an important part in financing the new playing fields at Northbridge, which were also to be a memorial to those who had fallen in the war. The grounds were opened in 1919 during a match played between the Union and the school, which was won by the Union.

In 1923 the Union formed a committee to examine the possibility of



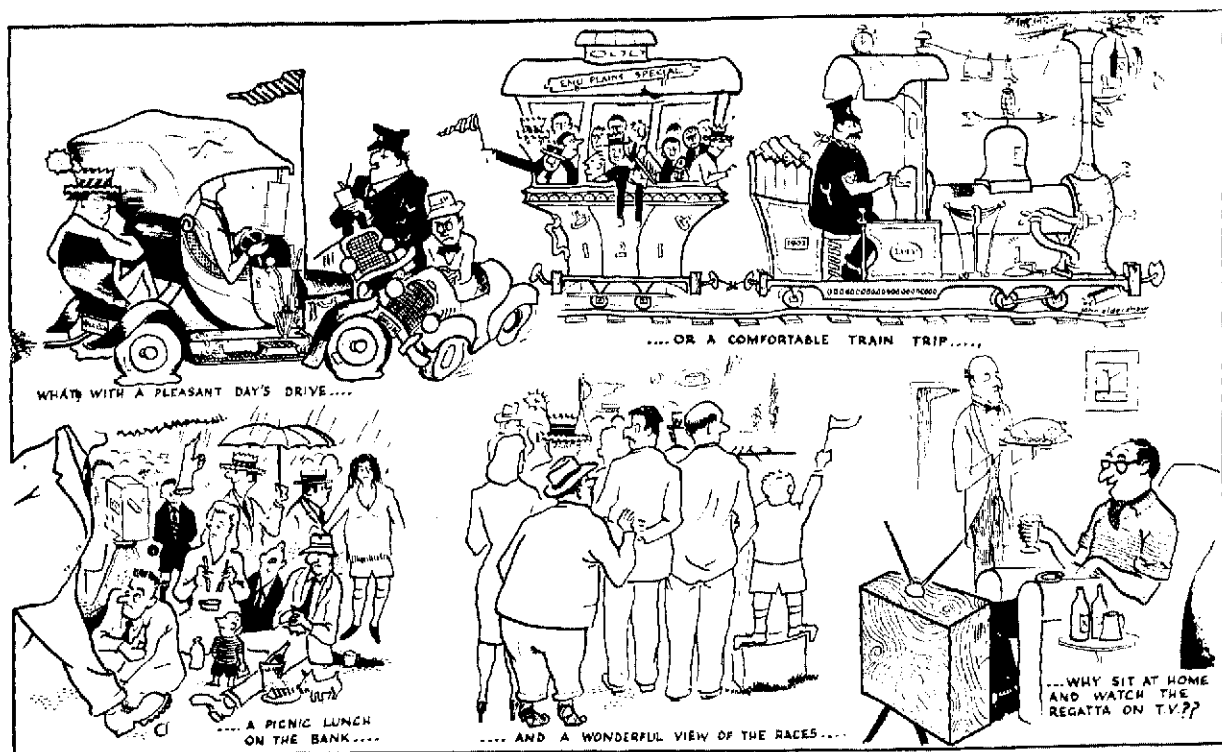
establishing an Old Boys' Club with permanent premises in the city. The committee reported that such an idea was feasible provided the membership was not less than four hundred. The club opened in 1924 in a building in Phillip Street which already contained the club rooms of the Old Boys of Sydney Grammar and Newington.

In 1925, when King's was about to form a similar club, it was suggested that the GPS schools might combine to establish a single club in which each school would have a room or section for its own Old Boys, and thus retain its individuality, while sharing common facilities such as the lounge and dining room. This idea had obvious merit and in 1927 the Schools Club opened in Hamilton Street in premises leased from the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The participating schools were Shore, Newington, Sydney Grammar, King's and Scots, with The Armidale School as an associate member.

In 1946 the name of the club changed to the Alpha Club so that it could obtain a licence, after which the club was renamed the Schools Club. In 1962 the club moved into larger premises in Underwood Street, but with falling membership in later years the club amalgamated with the University Club to form the University & Schools Club, which still exists.

In the Union, meanwhile, the custom of appointing the headmaster as

The programme designed by John Eldershaw for the Old Boys' Union dance at the Trocadero in 1957.



The programme designed by John Eldershaw for the Old Boys' Union dance at the Trocadero in 1960.

its president was dropped in 1926, to the fury, it seems, of L. C. Robson. Since then, successive headmasters have been patrons, but the president of the Union has always been an Old Boy.

So far the Union had held its reunions in Sydney, but with Old Boys living in the bush and elsewhere there was an obvious need for local functions to bring them together. In 1936 organisers were appointed in several country towns to arrange Old Boys functions on a regional basis and to act as a liaison with the Union in Sydney and the school. This soon extended to other States and in 1937 the first overseas branch of the Union was formed in England. During the war a group of Old Boys tried to form a Shore Association in Changi and although not successful in a formal sense they remained as a loosely knit group throughout the rest of the war.

In 1946 the first Union Chapel Service was held at the school and this has been an annual event since then. Services are now held on Remembrance Sunday and during the service flowers are placed on the two Books of Remembrance which list the names of those who died in the World Wars. After World War II Old Boys made many contributions to the fund for the building of the Memorial Hall and all the profits from the annual dinners were donated to this fund until the building was paid for.

Today, the Old Boys' Union has a membership of about 4600 and has representatives in all Australian State capitals and in thirteen country areas of New South Wales as well as in London and New Zealand.

The Union has a major responsibility in electing five of its members to the school Council. These members are elected for a term of three years, but if an existing member is willing to serve longer than that his place is rarely contested. If a member retires in the middle of his term the committee of the Union elects a replacement. Elections by members for these places, however, are quite rare and have occurred only three times in the last thirty years.

Although the Union has always been prominent in raising funds for the school, that is not its main role. Instead, its aim is to keep Old Boys in touch with the school and with each other and to provide representatives to the Council. In recent years it has been very active in providing careers advice to school leavers, which, because of its varied membership, it can do with a great deal of expertise.

Every year the annual general meeting of the Union, which is held at the school, is now followed by the Old Boys' Tea in the dining hall and this is hosted by the headmaster and the school Council. This is the major social gathering of the Union and is very well attended. There is also an annual dinner and sports day held at Killara Golf Club. Country, interstate and overseas groups all hold functions of their own throughout the year.

The Old Boys' football match is a regular event and several cricket matches are played against the school. Shore Old Boys rowing crews also compete regularly in the Newington regatta, often with considerable success.

Four reunion dinners are usually held each year for those who left school forty-five, thirty-five, twenty-five and ten years ago. These are organised not by the Union but by an Old Boy of the respective year, but the Union provides encouragement and advice on how they might be organised and sometimes makes the first approach to a suitable and willing organiser.

LODGE TORCHBEARER, NO. 638

In 1929 the United Grand Lodge of New South Wales granted a charter to Lodge Sydney High School and the new Lodge invited masons who were Old Boys of GPS schools to attend the opening. One of these, Norman Harding, was surprised to see how many of the guests were Old Boys of Shore and he later suggested that they might come together to form a Lodge of their own. Hearing that Sydney Grammar was about to do the same, they quickly organised the necessary petition and succeeded in becoming the second school Lodge.

Lodge Torchbearer was consecrated on 20 June 1930 with A. B. S. White as foundation Master and L. A. 'Bull' Baker as foundation Chaplain. The Volume of Sacred Law used in the Lodge is dated 1853 and had been presented in 1856 to Archdeacon Cowper, who later became a member of the first Council of Shore. It was presented to the Lodge by his grandson, the founding Master. The markers are embroidered with the school colours.

THE SHORE ASSOCIATION

This is described in Chapter Seven, Women and Shore.

THE SHORE FOUNDATION

Most of the organisations associated with the school support it by raising funds, but this is incidental to their main, and separate, functions. The Shore Foundation, on the other hand, has the specific purpose of raising money for the use and benefit of the school.

The Foundation was formed by the school Council in 1973 and was incorporated as an independent body, The Shore Foundation Limited, in 1976. In 1977 the Foundation established two trusts, of which it is the corporate trustee: the Shore Foundation Building Trust and the Shore Foundation Educational Trust.

Membership of the foundation is open to people who donate or make a bequest of a specific sum to the Foundation, or to a fund approved by the Board of Trustees, and is available at three levels: member, fellow and trustee. The Foundation now has more than two hundred members. The Board of Trustees, which is the governing body of the Foundation, consists of trustee members who wish to join the board, one representative elected by the fellows, one representative elected by the members, the chairman of the school Council and the headmaster. The Foundation and the trusts within it are required by their constitutions to have the permission of the school Council before applying any part of their capital or income to purposes within the school.

The first task of the Foundation was to provide \$500 000 towards the cost of the present library, and this was achieved by its first drive for members and its associated Library Appeal. The money was paid to the school progressively from 1973 until 1980. The Building Trust receives most of its income from donations from new members of the Foundation and is always in need of support so that it can build a capital fund that is quite separate to any building fund that Council might create for a specific purpose.

The Educational Trust, on the other hand, is funded mainly by bequests written into wills of Old Boys, parents, and friends of the school. Members



of the Foundation spend a great deal of time encouraging such bequests and advising on how they might best be made. Although this work goes on all the time, it can be many years before the benefit is felt and it is, of course, impossible to know at any one time how many bequests have been written into wills. Since the Trust was established several earlier bequests received by the school have been transferred to the Trust but the Foundation is anxious to encourage future bequests to this fund so that capital can be made available to the school for the benefit of future generations of Shore boys.

THE BENEFACTORS OF SHORE

In his book called *Shore*, E. R. Holme said: 'The anxiety attendant upon maintaining religious education is largely financial. Great benefactors are needed if high fees are not to be charged.'

Not only was that true when the book was published in 1951, but it was true when the school was founded, is still true now, and will continue to be true as long as the school exists.

Looking at the school as it is today it is easy to suppose that its facilities

The Chapel, from a water-colour by John Moore, c. 1926. Reproduced by courtesy of Mr Pat Carey.

Overleaf: The Chapel, after 1952.



were always there, as if the school was somehow established as a complete entity. Elderly Old Boys, especially those who remember the horror of School House in the 1920s, know this is not the case. They have seen the school grow and the facilities improve, and indeed many of them helped to bring that about. Many people interested in the school but less familiar with its history may overlook the fact that much of what is enjoyed now is the result of people supporting the school by making financial donations. Without them, the school would not have been able to develop as it has, and without them it will not be able to develop as it should in the future.

In the past, most benefactions were directed towards specific purposes, and if not they were usually so applied by Council. An account of some of these specific purposes might show how much the modern school owes to those who have supported it in the past, and how much it has relied on their generosity.

The Chapel

It was a matter of considerable regret to the first two headmasters of Shore that the school did not have a chapel, even though they recognised that in the infancy of the school, born as it was just before the financial crisis of the 1890s, funds of that magnitude were simply not available.

By 1900 it seemed that it might be possible to build a chapel, but it was not until 1906 that Council advertised for competitive plans. At the same time a joint committee of the Council and the Old Boys' Union started a building fund, which opened with a donation of £1000 from Council and a promise by Thomas Dibbs to contribute ten per cent of the total cost. By 1913 there was enough money in the fund for building to start. A new design was prepared and a tender of £5668 was accepted from the many submitted by builders interested in carrying out the work.

Much of the cost, and nearly all the cost of furnishing the building, came from donations. The Walter and Eliza Hall Trust gave £1500 to the Chapel Fund and also, incidentally, established a scholarship at the school for the sons of Anglican clergy. The eight windows in the nave all commemorate Old Boys who died in the war and were given by their relatives. The original organ, which cost over £1000, was donated by the widow of Lt. Pockley, who had also been killed in action. A group of subscribers led by the Rev. Davies contributed more than £1000 to the east window, which commemorates the services of Old Boys in World War I.

By 1952 all the windows in the chapel had either been filled or were accounted for, and it was clear that there was little room left for tangible memorials. The only major part of the building that remained was the wall under the east window, which then consisted of five small recesses. It was decided that year to replace the recesses with low-relief sculpture to

commemorate four Old Boys who had died in World War II. The cost was originally paid out of the Chapel Fund and was then replaced by donations.

The Memorial Playing Fields, Northbridge

In 1917 the Old Boys' Union formed a committee to raise funds to put the newly acquired sports ground in order, and to pay off the debt that had been incurred in its purchase. Each member of the committee undertook to enlist at least four Old Boys who would join him in making a contribution of at least £5 each every year for five years. Some of this money was used to fence the property, but unfortunately a gale blew it away almost as soon as it had been erected. It was replaced with the help of donations from the lieutenant governor and A. B. S. White.

By the time the additional land was bought in 1918 donations had reached nearly £2000, of which over half had already been spent.

The facilities at the ground were improved by many individual and group donations. In 1921 Dr Pockley gave a drinking fountain in memory of his two sons, Brian and John, who had both been killed in the war. And in 1924 the Old Boys' Committee managed to raise sufficient money to complete the pavilion, which had not been finished because of lack of funds. Meanwhile the Ladies Committee had raised funds to provide an additional pavilion and this was opened in 1922, although it was not then finished. In 1924 a flagpole was erected in the pavilion area as a memorial to William Vivers, who had died the previous year when seventeen.

The entrance to the ground and the memorial gates were donated in 1923 by A. B. S. White, who had been senior prefect in 1898 and who served on the school Council from 1923 until 1945. More recently, the scoreboard and its structure were given as a memorial to Richard Nash Marshall, who died as a result of a sport injury in 1963, and the clock in the tower above it was given in memory of John Wearne, who had been killed while on active service with the RAAF in 1943.

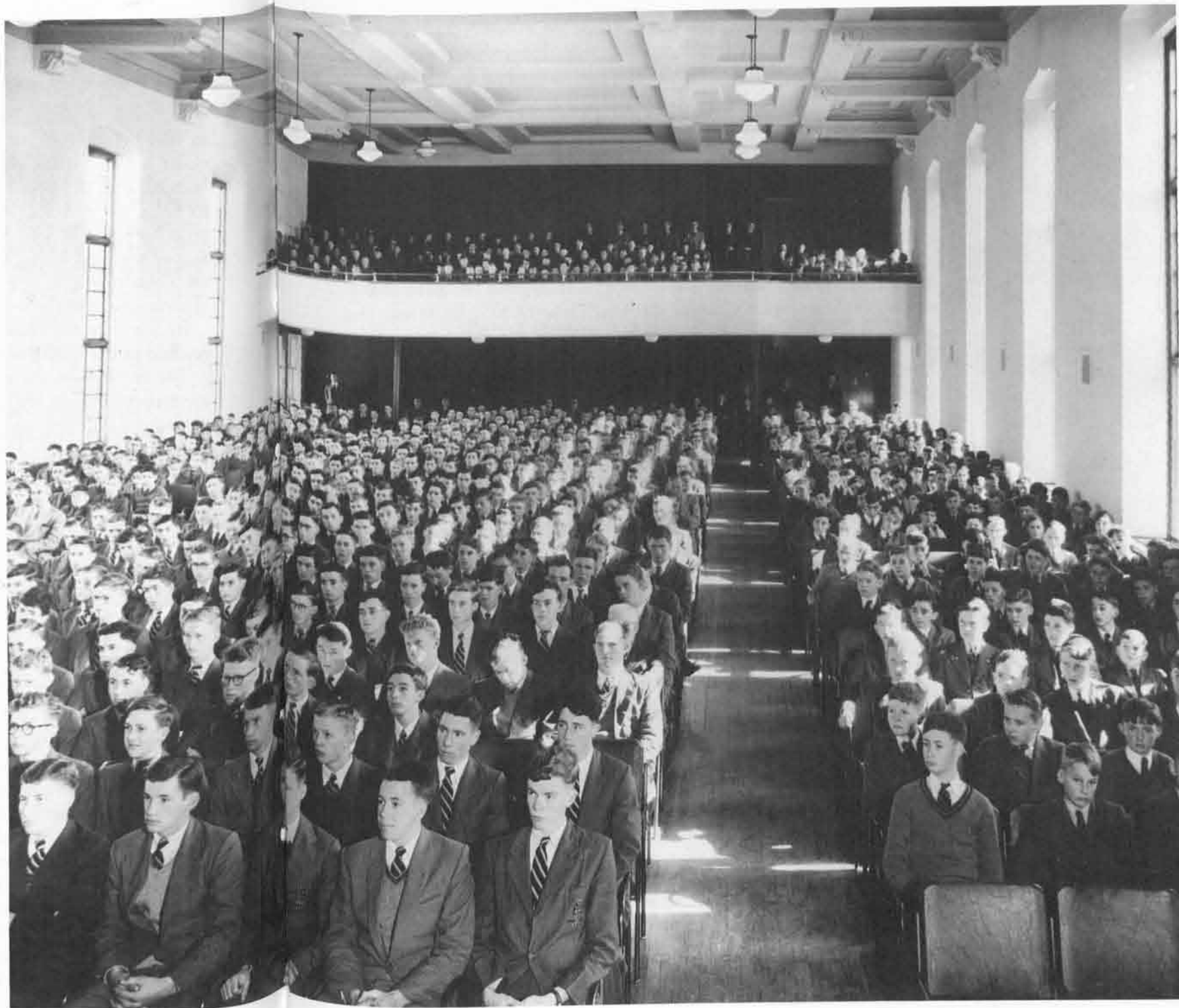
The McCaughey Bequest

After arriving from Ireland in 1856, Samuel McCaughey went on to be so successful as a grazier that by the early 1880s he was reputed to be shearing a million sheep a year on his many properties. He became a member of the New South Wales Legislative Council in 1899 and was knighted in 1905. When he died in 1919, however, he was still a bachelor and his will contained many bequests to schools, universities and charities. One of these was a bequest of £10000 to Shore, even though he had no connection with the school.

Part of this money was used to build two extra floors of dormitories in School House, which was then badly in need of renovation. The



Above: The Memorial Hall being built in 1952. Below: The Governor-General, Sir William Slim, inspecting the guard of honour at the opening of the Memorial Hall in May 1954.



Right: Assembly in the Memorial Hall.

dormitories were opened in 1921 and their use allowed other parts of School House to be converted into much needed studies and common rooms. The new floors were on the south-west corner of the old building (the top floor was added in 1934).

While this work was being carried out on School House, the remainder of the bequest was used to add a third floor to the eastern end of the main classroom block. This was done by lifting the existing roof on jacks and building the extra floor beneath it, an early use of a technique that later became common. The new classrooms, complete with electric light, were opened in 1920 and the building became known as the 'three storey block'.

These were the first major projects at Shore to be financed by a single donor and together they represented an enormous improvement to the school's facilities.

The SCEGS Jubilee Fund

This fund was established in 1937 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the school. By 1938 more than £11 000 had been raised, and this included two individual donations of £1000 each, one of which was made anonymously. The fund was used to build the western classrooms and colonnade in 1938 and new laboratories in 1939.

The War Memorial Hall

By the late 1930s the school was in urgent need of a new hall because the existing one could no longer accommodate the entire school. Plans were drawn up for a larger hall, but the outbreak of war meant that they had to be abandoned for the time being.

In 1946 the idea was revived. The need was now even greater than before, and it coincided with a profound wish to commemorate the service that had been given by Old Boys during the war, and particularly to serve as a memorial to those who had been killed.

The SCEGS War Memorial Fund was established with the intention of raising £30 000, which had been the cost of the original plan. Postwar shortages meant that this plan could not go for tender until 1951, and the lowest tender received at that time was £80 000 and wage increases made it unlikely that it would be completed even at this figure.

It was clear that this plan was too ambitious and an alternative had to be prepared. Faced with this situation, the Council sought advice from a panel of architects who subsequently reported that a building with the dignity and style of a memorial and which could accommodate a thousand people and provide facilities for music and drama would require a budget of about £50 000.

The panel produced sketches of two designs and one of them was accepted with slight modifications. This was then prepared as a finished

design by Leslie Wilkinson, who had been a member of the panel. The design contained a lantern tower which was a distinguishing feature of much of his work and which was particularly appropriate in this case as the building would at that time dominate the entrance to the school.

By the end of 1952 the Memorial Fund stood at £35 000 and a tender of £47 500 was accepted. Professional fees and furniture would add another £7 500 to the cost, making a total which was £20 000 more than had been so far subscribed. By the time the foundation stone was laid in 1953 the Fund had grown to more than £42 000 and there were more than 2000 contributors. By 1953 the fund stood at £46 000, which means that £12 000 had been raised since the building contract had been signed.

When the hall was opened in 1954 its total cost was over £60 000, which was then about £11 000 more than the Fund had available. The difference was met with a bank overdraft raised by the school, and this was later reduced by further gifts.

A project as ambitious as this could be achieved only through the co-operation of a large number of people and organisations. Council had to plan a long way ahead and make financial commitments at a time when they far exceeded the school's resources. In doing so, Council relied heavily on its own ability, and the willingness of others, to raise sufficient funds for the project to be completed.

The Art School and Prize

In 1948 the school learnt that Mrs E. Thring wished to make a gift of £5000 to the school to create a memorial to her husband, who had been a well-known surgeon. He had had no contact with Shore other than playing golf with its headmaster, L. C. Robson.

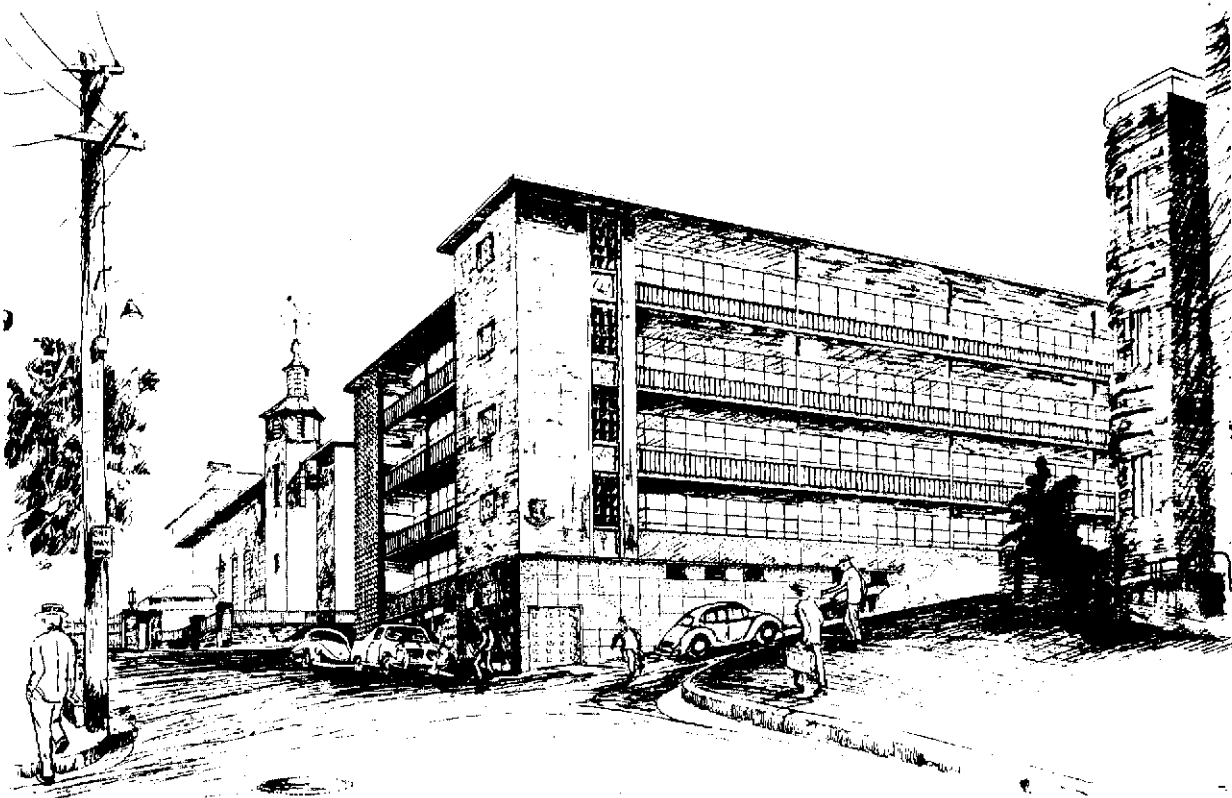
Mrs Thring suggested that the money might be used to build a swimming pool but when it was found that shortage of material would make this very difficult, she accepted the idea of an art studies block as an alternative.

This became known as the E. T. Thring Memorial Art School and it was furnished by donations from the SCEGS Association. In 1951 Mrs Thring made a further gift of £150 to endow the E. T. Thring Memorial Art Prize, awarded annually for art in association with the art school.

A similar bequest was received in 1958 from Hector Stewart to commemorate his son who had been killed serving in the RAAF in 1940. This was used to equip the prep. school art room and to endow the Wallace Stewart Memorial Prize which is awarded annually for art in the prep. school.

Arthur Eedy Memorial Room

In 1960 Mr and Mrs Noel Eedy informed the school that they wished to donate a memorial in the school to their son Arthur, who had been senior



The original design for Benefactors. Notice the position of the entrance gates near the Memorial Hall.

prefect in 1944, Captain of School House and a resident master from 1948 to 1950. He had been killed as a result of an accident in 1951. Their gift of £1000 was used to convert the old prep. room at the back of School House into an attractive recreation room, which was then called the Eedy Room.

Benefactors Building

The Wyndham Scheme of 1962 meant that the school would have to accommodate an additional 120 boys as a result of the secondary course being extended from five to six years. It was clear that a new building would be needed and the SCEGS Building Fund Appeal was launched at the Old Boys' Union annual dinner in 1962, although the committee of the appeal also included representatives of Council, teaching staff and the SCEGS Association.

With support from country areas and interstate groups the appeal raised nearly £270000 by the end of 1963 and work on the new classroom block had already started. The headmaster, Mr Travers, said: 'It has been most



striking to see the way in which the Appeal has knit the Shore Community even more closely than it already was.'

One of the largest single contributions was a donation of £30 000 from the Industrial Fund for the Advancement of Scientific Education in Schools, an organisation that had received much support from the former headmaster, L. C. Robson.

The building, aptly named Benefactors, was opened in 1964 and the entrance gates, which had been presented by the SCEGS Association in 1954, were moved to their present position on William Street. An additional floor was built on Benefactors in 1982.

The Ormond Philip Wood Science Reference Library

In 1963 the family of Ormond Wood, who had been at Shore from 1904 to 1911, endowed an exhibition at the school based on a capital sum of £5000. Twelve months later, when the Commonwealth secondary scholarships were established, it was agreed to devote the annual income from this endowment to buy scientific books and magazines for a specialist library. This is now housed in Benefactors.

One of the many meetings held in 1962 to raise money for the building of Benefactors.



Above: Concreting the second floor of Benefactors on 22 May 1963. Photographed from the AMP Building.

Right: Removing one of the concrete posts that had supported the school gates before they were moved to their present location in 1964.



The Greenwell Memorial Library

This library, which is part of the school library, is housed in the prep. school. It was established as a result of a bequest of £3000 made by an Old Boy, Richard Greenwell, who wished to create a memorial to his younger brother George, who had been drowned in 1931 while trying to rescue a surfer at Collaroy.

L. C. Robson Memorial Reading Room

This room was opened in 1968 as a memorial to L. C. Robson, who had been headmaster at Shore from 1923 until 1958. It was paid for by a quietly run appeal in which 1326 donors contributed a total of \$31 389. The room joins Benefactors to the Memorial Hall and is used by senior boys for private study.

The Trident Development and School Library

This is the most significant development in recent years and was promoted as 'Shore's three-pronged thrust into the future'. The three parts were to be a PE complex, modernising and expanding Barry House and Hodges House, and the building of a cultural centre.

The appeal was launched in 1968 and by the end of the year had raised nearly \$600 000. This was enough for work on the first two projects to be put in hand.

The PE complex itself consisted of two parts: a swimming pool and a gymnasium. The pool is 25 metres long and has eight lanes. A separate diving pool was built as the result of a donation made for this purpose. The gymnasium contains an exercise area, weight training facilities, squash courts and an indoor rifle range.

Work on the Houses consisted of erecting a new building which joined the northern sides of each house. This building contains a sick bay on the first floor which is used by both houses, but the houses themselves, which were now modernised, remain self-contained.

By the end of 1969, by which time this work was well advanced, the fund stood at more than \$612 000 and included a donation of \$6000 from the SCEGS Association for the squash courts and an anonymous donation of \$2000 for a study in Hodges House. Of the remainder, nearly \$600 000 had come from more than 2000 donors.

The first two stages of the Trident Development were opened in 1970. Meanwhile, as a result of a visit overseas by Mr Travers to examine development in other schools, it was decided that instead of a cultural centre the third part of the project would become a library resource centre. This was to consist of a large, modern library with additional facilities for storing the school archives, an auditorium seating approximately three



Re-erecting the gates on the present site on 29 January 1964. At 9.10 a.m. Jika Travers was, by chance, the first person to walk through them.

hundred to be known as the T. A. J. Playfair Memorial Hall, and an audiovisual workshop and tape library.

Council adopted this proposal in 1973 and the newly formed Shore Foundation set itself a target of raising \$500 000 in five years. The enthusiasm for this project was such that the Foundation reached this target at the end of 1977. This magnificent new building was opened in 1976.

In addition to these major projects there have been many individual bequests to endow prizes, scholarships and additional facilities. One donation, for example, came from an Old Boy who never knew whether his family would be able to afford the fees for the next term. Having achieved success in his career he gave a cheque to the school in the hope that it might be used to help pay fees for a boy who might otherwise have to leave. Some of those who were helped in this way later made a donation to the fund for the same reason.

Shore is constantly in need of donations, gifts and bequests so that development can be continued and facilities improved. There is no end, no finality, in the development of a school such as this. One can only hope that those associated with Shore, now and in the future, will be as generous as those in the past.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Seventies

BY THE TIME ANDREW HENDERSON started at Shore in 1969 he had probably seen more of the world than most people do in a lifetime. His father was an officer in the army and as most postings lasted only two years, Henderson's education had already included a small public school in Kent and a high school in America by the time he came to Shore. The move was not unexpected. His father was an Old Boy and his elder brothers had already been to the school and it was now time for Andrew Henderson to learn one system of spelling.

He arrived at Shore as a boarder and went into Hodges House under Wilbur Sawkins, who had taught Maths to his father. 'Wilbur was a difficult person to get on with, but that tended to make boarders united.'

When Henderson arrived Hodges was being renovated and the house was temporarily using the bottom of Benefactors for accommodation. 'I thought it was bloody awful. There were a lot of beds in the dormitories and the conditions were not very good.' The worst problem was the noise because, being under one of the main buildings, people were often crashing around at times when a boarding house would usually be fairly quiet. 'It was inconvenient, rough and messy.'

Apart from that, his main problem was that he had no idea how the school functioned, and he had entered at a level where people did not expect to have to explain it. Nor had he known a system like it. 'Everybody else seemed to know intuitively what to do. You had to sign up for cricket at the beginning of the year, but I did not know that. I goofed off and read in the library.' As a result he spent the next two years without doing a summer sport because, he thinks, none of the sports masters knew he existed. 'I thought there should have been some predetermined genetic system that made you put your name down for sport on the first Wednesday of every term. I am sure something must have been said, but everything was couched in public school archaic language!'

He was not homesick so much as nervous about doing the right thing. But he was lonely for the first year. 'In America the schools were really casual. You would play with people after school or visit places. When I came back here it all changed and I didn't understand the system or social interactions between people.'

Henderson's father had been military attaché in America and Andrew was used to being with older people. The children he knew were from families of diplomatic staff and they came from all over the world and were different ages. 'Suddenly I came to this school which was basically Anglo-Saxon and which was much more structured than anything I had known before.'

So for a while he was lonely, but not unhappy. He read voraciously for pleasure and at the weekend would frequently explore the bookshops in North Sydney. He made one friend almost immediately. He was the son of a friend of his father and it was fortunate that he was also in Hodges. But it was a while before he made other friends. 'There were cliques of people who had been to prep. school together and so on. But after a while I realised that all the people in the house were really very nice and it became less of a problem.'

Academically he got on well. He was interested in science and engineering, he read a great deal and he found studying easy. He also thought there were real advantages in being a boarder. There was no television to tempt him from work, the library was open after school and there were masters available at almost any time if help was needed. 'It was demanding because the school put you in a situation where you were not allowed to slack very much if the teaching staff were doing their job. Most of the time I found it very challenging.'

Religious conviction, he says, came and went. He often liked to go to chapel—'but nothing ever really stuck'—but he found it irksome 'when somebody was coming who you knew was going to be really, really boring.' On the other hand if Jika was to talk in chapel that would be different. The sermon would be short and it was generally interesting and relevant.

Religious influence outside the chapel came from masters who were personally religious, and 'when there were school Council meetings you couldn't see boys for people wearing dog collars and purple vests.' Apart from that, he thought religion was well contained. 'People didn't go into a huddle and say prayers before roaring out on to the football field.' Religion was, he says, a part of the school, but not a big part. Nor was it for him.

Nor was most sport. Having finally meshed in with the system he started to play football and cricket, but he lacked good hand-eye co-ordination and was not much good at either. He was also nearly blind without his glasses. In spite of this he was once asked to field at silly point, but it was not a success. At football he played in the under 16 G and H teams, where the standard was not great. 'We used to play the A team of another school and these kids were all two and a half metres tall and had one eye in the middle of their forehead. The coach would beat them out with a whip and

fed them raw meat at half time. We would get slaughtered. It is very depressing to lose week after week.' The height of his ambition as a footballer was to be promoted to the Js and Ks. 'But even though I really loathed football it got me into the habit of knowing that you feel better if you take regular exercise than if you don't.'

It was not simply a dislike of sport, it was a dislike of almost anything that was organised. If they were not organised, he enjoyed himself much more. If he had done something in a certain time on one occasion, he was more than happy to try to do it faster next time. But if somebody started to scream that he was not doing it fast enough it became irksome.

Andrew Henderson found his niche in adventure training. It was the master in charge, Tony Hill, who suggested it. Hill had sailed in the Antarctic and that made him one of Henderson's heroes. If Hill thought adventure training was interesting, then Henderson was prepared to give it a try, in spite of its low status within the school. 'You tried to do rowing and you tried to play cricket, but if you couldn't do any of those things you dropped out to adventure training. The people who did it were supposed to be real wimps.'

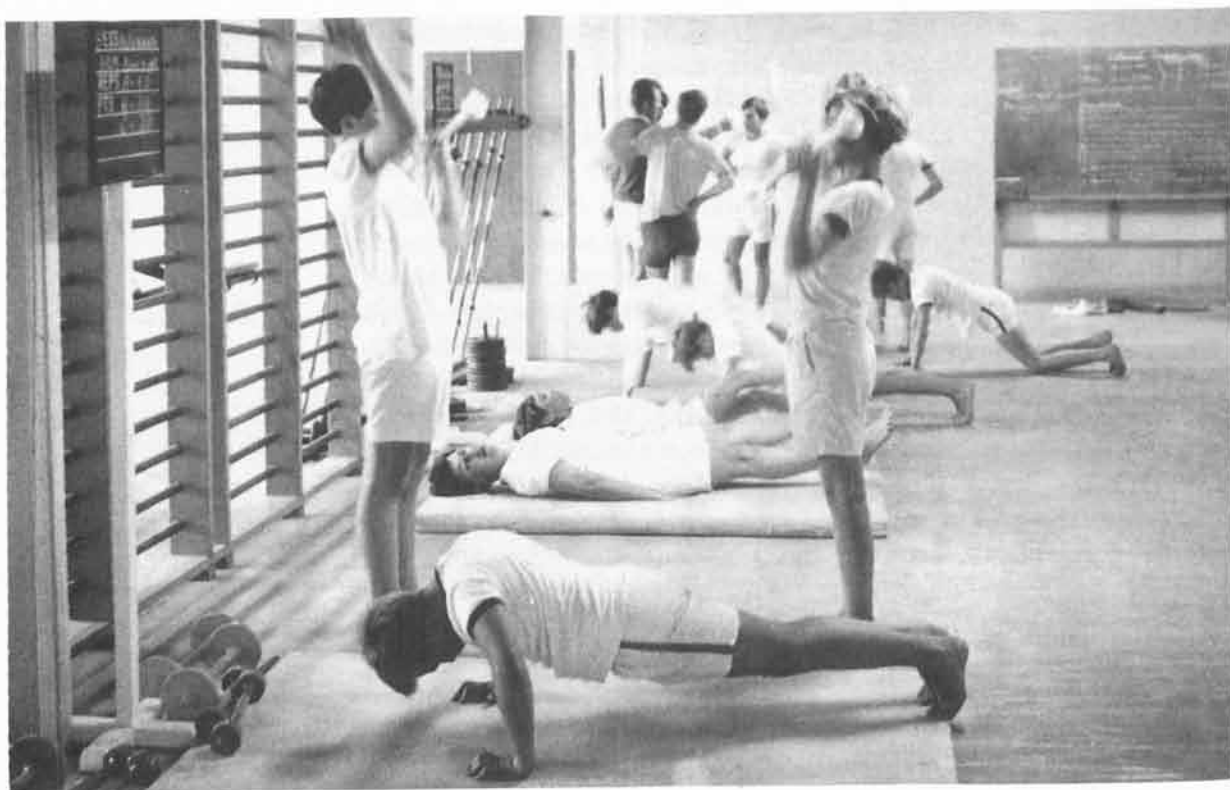
Most people in the school at that time had only a vague idea of what adventure training was, and that included the authorities. The result was that while it was assumed that it was a 'good thing' for the loners in the school to amuse themselves by going for gentle bushwalks, those actually doing it realised that they were relatively free from supervision and could interpret adventure training in a much more vigorous way.

By the time he was fifteen, Henderson and a couple of others were doing ten-day bushwalks in rough country which most people would have thought inaccessible. Tony Hill taught them how to use ropes and how to abseil, and from then on they could combine caving and climbing with their bushwalking. The group took over the old scout hut and started to build canoes, so that their activities became even more varied.

As they became more proficient they arranged walking and canoeing trips into the Snowy Mountains. If they could not go that far they would go abseiling off Balls Head, and then Henderson would use the ropes to do some rock climbing, which nobody else liked doing. 'We just had a really good time because nobody knew what we were doing. They just thought we were going out for walks in the bush.'

The rest of the school began to realise what they were doing when the Duke of Edinburgh scheme became popular. Those in adventure training found themselves taking other people into the bush, and those people found that their sporting skills were not as useful as they thought.

Footballers, for example, were often startled when they found what was involved. They were used to being picked up by a bus and playing a match



Inside the gymnasium in 1970.

that lasted not much more than an hour before a cheering crowd. Now they found themselves in the Blue Mountains for days on end, fording swollen creeks or scrambling on steep rocks with a drop of a hundred metres below them. The intellectual side, which had always appealed to Henderson, was quite new to them. 'You had to sit down and work out where you were going to go, how you were going to get there, whether there would be any water there, know what food to take and then cook for yourself for several days. We had been doing that for two or three years by then, but they found it very strange.'

By then adventure training was an essential part of Henderson's school life. Between trips he was either climbing at Balls Head or running to stay fit. And if he was in Sydney he lingered over the mountaineering equipment in Paddy Pallin's shop and thought how great it would be to be using it properly.

Henderson enjoyed his last year at school. There was more freedom 'and you get left alone'. He was a subprefect and a house prefect and by then he was in charge of adventure training. He enjoyed the sense of responsibility and the closer relations with the masters. He saw very little of Travers



The old library in 1973.

while at school, although as Travers was a friend of his father he did occasionally see him at home. 'But because I wasn't a good sportsman in the sense that the school regarded it, he and I rarely crossed paths.'

He was aware, though, that there was a growing reaction in the school to some of the rules. Dress regulations were increasingly resented—having to wear a uniform (especially the boater) and having to have short hair when that was very unfashionable out of school. He thought that when the school announced that women should not wear pants-suits when they attended school functions it was being extreme, but then his mother said she could not understand why anybody would wish to wear one anyway.

He was conscious that the school was changing, no matter how slowly. Some masters allowed boys to argue about almost anything provided it was done reasonably, and he says that there was more room for academic boys than when he started. At the beginning there had been a distinct social scene in which a group of people hung together. He had never been one of them. 'When I started it was important to be part of that scene, but when I left it was not so important. People had started to be seen as individuals. That scene had always been dominated by sportsmen, but

others had social skills that were important. Some were real pains in my opinion.'

The school, he says, tended to intellectualise change. 'When you were doing economics you were doing Keynesian macro-economics without reference to the fact a few thousand kilometres away Vietnam had been subjected to exactly those forces and wasn't doing too well.'

There was, he says, a group in the school which actively fought against authority, knowing that there were things that they wanted from the school but able to reject those they did not want. Henderson was more 'establishment' than most in that group, but he says he was on the edge of it. 'I think I was rebellious in the sense that the system was jerking me around because I wasn't good at what the system wanted me to be doing.'

An example of that was in the cadets. 'I hated, loathed and detested the cadets, but we had to be in it.' The only part he liked were the camps at Singleton. He had become a radio operator and was handling communications from the army base when a master-officer reprimanded him for wearing a school sweater over his army gear. The master said that if he did not appreciate the privilege of being at the base he could go out into the bush with the rest and cook his own food. It seemed a strange threat to somebody who knew more about such things than most people. 'When things like that happened I thought I had prompted a reaction that was desirable and started to do that more and more.'

When the HSC results came through Henderson was startled to find how well he had done. He obtained a ninety-fifth decile pass and that qualified him for any course he was interested in. He decided to do electrical engineering at the University of New South Wales. 'I didn't know what electrical engineering was about, but I wanted to do something that had lots of flashing lights.' Before starting at university he did a course in alpine climbing in New Zealand.

In the third year he got distinctions in nuclear and astro-physics but failed the engineering subjects. While he was repeating the year he went climbing in India and then studied furiously for a month to complete the year. After graduating he worked for EMI in England and spent his spare time climbing in Scotland and the European alps. On his way back he spent three months climbing in Nepal before reaching Australia in 1981. After a climbing trip to China he started work with the radio physics division of CSIRO and stayed with them until 1984, the year he went to Everest.

He was a member of the first Australian team to attempt the mountain. There were only five climbers, no mountain porters and, for ethical and logistical reasons, no oxygen. Andrew Henderson got within a few metres of the summit before being stopped by gear failure. By the time he had



rectified it he had severe frostbite in both hands. But the team was successful. 'We got two people on the top, which was considered a successful run, and the same number of people came back as left, which is the main indicator of success.'

Six months later he had surgery for his frostbitten hands. He now works with Fairlight Instruments developing electronic musical equipment and has started rock climbing again.

'I guess I was never the typical prototype Shore boy, but the school could handle that. It gave me adventure training, even if it didn't know what it was, and that has determined much of my life since. I will always be grateful for that. And it did not try to force me into a mould. There was an expectation that boys would go into the professions and become leaders, but if you wanted to do something else that was OK.'

Michael Copeman was a bright boy when he arrived at Shore in 1973 as a day boy, and even brighter when he left in 1978.

Members of the ATC receiving instruction on the S. L. R. rifle during the 1973 camp. In the photograph are M. B. Wilkinson, A. F. Godfrey, D. Hinchey, C. S. Greaves, D. Myers, R. B. McGowan and M. C. Donnelly.



Athletics camp at Palm Beach
in 1975.

His family lived at Roseville and he went to Lindfield primary school before being selected for Artarmon Opportunity School, which was a selective State primary school. There, children were taught music and encouraged to develop their own studies instead of following a strict curriculum. He entered Shore by winning a scholarship in 1972.

He was keen to start. 'I liked the idea of going to a school where I would be encouraged to do extra work and where I would have a good choice of subjects. I also liked the uniform. It annoyed me how untidy most Australian kids looked when they were coming home from school. I didn't particularly want to wear a boater, but I thought the uniform set a good tone.'

He soon found that boys who had come from Shore prep. had a big advantage over the rest of the new boys. They knew how the system worked, they knew most of the masters and they seemed supremely confident of themselves. Copeman was acutely conscious that having been top of his primary school he was now at the bottom of a system that was infinitely more complicated.



The awe he felt for prep. boys disappeared when he realised that he was ahead of them in work. So while the prep. boys caught up, those from the Opportunity school had time to find their bearings.

He started in IIIA1 and was soon aware that this was the top stream. 'There was a clear impression that IIIA1 were the superior kids and the teachers that were selected for us had to be good otherwise we would give them a hard time. So I guess in that sense we didn't settle down, we settled up.'

His first form master was Mr Potter, who also took them for Maths and knew how to deal with a group of high-spirited achievers. Others did too. Dave Rossell, who took them for French, had a useful reputation for having a bad temper. While other masters sometimes suffered from these high spirits, Rossell shouted at them a couple of times and had no need to do that again. 'If there was anything we were scared of it was somebody who would change from a friendly attitude and start roaring at us.'

Another master who had their measure was Mr Puller, the Physical Education master, who simply told them that if they thought they were

Part of the orchestra for the 1975 production of *Oliver*.
Cellos: Peter Hammond, Adrian Bingham, Helen Brett, Tim Blomfield. Flutes: Fiona Haines, Michael Copeman, Paul Nunn, Janet Carmichael. Trumpets: Grant Sara, Ian Lyall, David Hanlon, David Lawrence. Trombone: Warwick Burgess. Drums: Richard Weller.

Opposite page: Rock climbing in Adventure Training in 1978.

smart they could do another couple of laps of the oval. He also told them that they would enjoy life much more if they did some useful exercise, and most found this to be true. The one exercise they did not like, though, was the compulsory swim at the end of PE in winter. People produced every possible kind of note in the hope that it would get them excused for several weeks, and there was universal admiration for the boy who brought a note saying he had an allergy which, with care, could be used for years.

Sport was not one of Copeman's passions, but he realised it had to be done and tried to make the best of it. He even scored a try once in a minor game against Scots (he played only one half) and this made him think that perhaps football was not so bad after all. 'But then at practice I would think, "Here I am being hurt again. Why am I doing this?" I wasn't very keen about running into people, and that seemed to be the object of the game.'

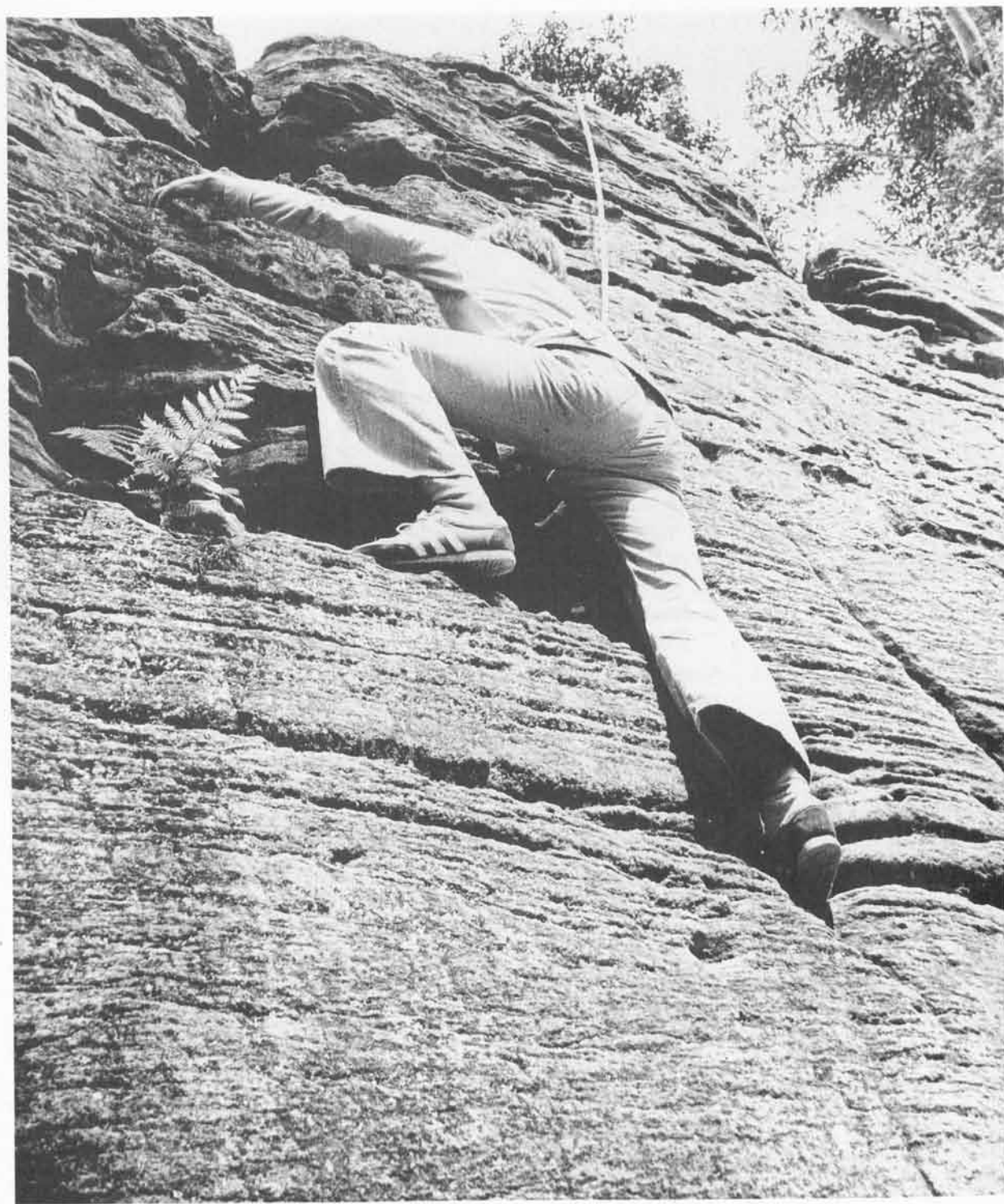
Cricket was a little easier. At that level the bowling was rarely dangerous, except for the occasional ball whose destination was unknown, and the balls that did reach the bat could often be hit without a great deal of skill. Even the coach was genial. He used to stand at the stumps with a can of beer in his hand, safely assuming that Travers was unlikely to visit their distant pitch even if he knew where it was.

Copeman was well aware of the respect that sportsmen earned at Shore, even if he could never be one. Rowers were admired once they had reached the stage of competing in the regatta, and the first XV was admired all the time. What did surprise him was that even in the first two years boys would be identified by coaches as being future first XV or first XI players.

He does not think there was too much emphasis on sport, although he thinks there was too much emphasis on Rugby. 'If you are going to have an elitist academic side, then it makes sense to balance it with an elite on the sporting side.' But it was important that sport be played at the level appropriate to the player. Copeman was once captain of the under 15Js. The Rugby they played had little in common with that played by the first XV, but he thinks they probably enjoyed it just as much.

He was, though, very conscious that there was little emphasis on any other activity. Those who had decided that sport was not for them and who preferred drama and music instead of football and cricket, found that not only was there little encouragement but also whatever they did had to take second place to sport. But perhaps that was not the handicap it might seem. 'People were prepared to put extra effort into whatever it was they were doing because they knew they would not be noticed unless they did.'

Copeman had learnt to play the flute at the school in Artarmon and he was encouraged at Shore by the junior Music teacher, Mrs Orchard. She spent most lunchtimes working with the small orchestra. 'At that time it



sounded dreadful and I don't know how she put up with it. Without people as dedicated as that very little would have happened.'

Equally dedicated was Maths master, Mr Ross, who produced a number of plays within the school. This became easier in Copeman's second year when girls from Wenona were allowed to play the female roles. 'That opened practically every romantic link I had until I left school. Apart from meeting on the railway platform, which was the traditional way, I don't know how people arranged things before that.' But in spite of that advantage, drama remained a minority interest.

Copeman was religious when he started at Shore in the sense, he says, that the world was opening up and religion was a part of it. Later, though he became less sure. 'Teachers were teaching you to think cynically and to investigate other aspects of life. Many of those teachers were agnostic and I found myself developing a similar attitude.' Coming from a religious family, he also came into contact with boys who had no religious background and that, too, helped to erode his faith.

By this time, smart boys in the A stream polished pennies by dropping them in an acid bath, while the C forms continued to labour with Brasso. He was aware of the reason behind the tradition, though, and knew it was more than a competition. 'We knew that we would have a good life after we left school, but when you looked at the brass plates in the chapel you realised that these people had left school and that was it.'

What they did resent was the interminable speechmaking that seemed to go with it, and particularly the attitude that their generation could not understand the effort that had been made during the wars. 'People in my years used to say, "How dare these people say that we have to spend our lives being terribly upset all the time". It was not that they didn't appreciate it, it was that they didn't like these people on the verge of retirement telling them what they should think.'

Copeman thought there was religious influence in the school beyond the confines of the chapel, but was not sure that it was always for the better. The good side was the caring that was readily available to those in need and which has influenced his own life ever since. 'But what did annoy us were the masters who were not ministers but who had strong personal religion and who we thought were not very good teachers. It seemed to us that their professed faith was allowed to make up for their shortcomings as teachers.'

The best time in Divinity was when Margaret Orchard filled a gap and spent a term going through *Jesus Christ, Superstar*, 'but I'm not sure that it would ever happen again.'

Copeman thinks that religion was successful in the school, but not always in the way it was intended. 'If some people ended up as agnostics,



it was a considered view. Most of my contemporaries would like to preserve the caring attitude that was at Shore in their own lives, whatever their religion. Teaching your own children about sharing and the religious example, which Shore espouses, must make for a better civilisation, apart from anything else.'

Michael Copeman was surprised when he was made a prefect in his final year because, he says, he had been fairly rowdy over the last two years. 'I think Jika had a theory that if you made people like me prefects they might start leading the forces for good rather than evil.'

He enjoyed being able to talk to and encourage younger boys, which was normally difficult to do within the Shore community, but he was less sure about some aspects of discipline. He was prepared to hand out prefect's detentions and drills but realised that when the same boy was repeatedly involved they were not having much effect.

He was also editor of the *Weekly Record* in his final year and found that most enjoyable, perhaps because of the wine cellar hidden in the floor. The committee was given an allowance of \$11 a week to mail several copies of the *Record*, but there was usually about \$2 a week left which could be devoted to 'refreshments'.

S Form at camp in 1978.

The year was also memorable for a concert that he helped to stage. The days of painful recitals of Bach and Mozart were long gone and, partly because of his liking for any type of music, concerts were now much more varied and involved people who otherwise would not have gone near them. On this occasion a group of normally rebellious sixth formers had such a good time singing the Monty Python 'Lumberjack Song' that Travers came out of his house to find out what was going on.

Copeman thought Travers handled the difficult times well. The Labor government had just been elected and the future of independent schools was far from certain. Parents were being organised in defence, but some of the boys at school said they wouldn't mind if the place disappeared.

'I have a lot of respect for Travers because he managed to combine academic respect with his sporting encouragement. There were completely diverse groups in the school who could respect him for different reasons and have completely different conversations with him, from the techniques of the Rugby scrum to studying at Oxford.'

Travers always had an answer. It was usually no, but it was quick and hopes were not raised by indecision.

Copeman also thinks that Travers's lack of interest in some school activities was actually an advantage. Not only did it make those involved aware that they had to make a big effort, but he thinks that masters who encouraged them might have been less likely to do so had Travers been involved. Not that they would have resented him, but they might have assumed that they were no longer needed.

The Higher School Certificate had now changed from 'levels' to 'units'. A candidate had to do a minimum of twelve units and of these the best ten scored. There was some uncertainty about how many units should be attempted, but the general view was that effort should be concentrated into as small a range as possible. 'But Travers's attitude was that if you had ability you should extend yourself, and I am sure he was correct.'

Copeman did seventeen units and scored 462 out of a possible 500, 'which wasn't terrific but I did feel that I had stretched myself'. As a result he did medicine at Sydney University, and also started an arts course at the same time. When people suggested that it might be too much, he said that others had said the same about doing seventeen units in the HSC.

When he left university to do his intern year at Royal North Shore he needed only one more course to complete his arts degree, and he completed it during that year. He then spent six months at the Children's Hospital before taking up a Commonwealth medical scholarship to work on cancer research at Oxford. He has been there for eighteen months and is working for a Ph.D.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Portrait of a Headmaster

WHEN JIKA TRAVERS RETURNED to Shore as its new headmaster in 1959 the school had not changed very much since he left it in 1937. But he had. The eighteen-year-old schoolboy with a good academic and sporting record was now a schoolmaster of considerable experience and stature and his return as headmaster, which surprised very few, had little to do with his being an Old Boy.

In 1938 Travers started an honours course in arts at Sydney University, doing History, French and Latin, and became a double blue in his first year. The following year he enlisted in the AIF, even though as a language student he was in a reserved occupation. Because of this, joining the army was not all that simple. In the end his father arranged for him to have an interview with Colonel Wootton at Victoria Barracks. At the end of the interview Wootton said he would take him on after Travers had completed his second year at university.

Travers joined the AIF in December 1939. He served in the 2nd Battalion and in October 1940 he was made ADC by Iven MacKay, who had been headmaster of Cranbrook and who now suggested to Travers that he should become a school teacher after the war was over.

At the end of the Greek campaign Travers returned to 2nd Battalion before joining the last ship of a convoy returning to Australia. He and the rest of the men on that ship were to be the advance party for those who were due to follow on the next convoy. However, when Travers reached Adelaide in 1942 the following convoy was unloaded at Ceylon because of the danger from the Japanese. He rejoined MacKay for a few weeks before joining Stan Savige, who was then GOC 2nd Army.

He also married Margaret Marr that year. They had known each other for several years as her elder brother had been at Shore at the same time as Travers. There was an unusual complication, however. Urged on by L. C. Robson, Travers had applied for a Rhodes Scholarship in 1939 and had been interviewed before he left Australia. The news of his success came in February 1940 when Travers was somewhere in the Red Sea on his way to the Middle East. The complication was that the Rhodes was awarded only to single men and it seemed that by marrying he might disqualify himself

from taking it up. They tried to obtain a ruling from the authorities but when that proved difficult they married anyway.

A few weeks later Travers was on his way to New Guinea, where he served until the end of 1943 with the 15th Australian Infantry Brigade. He then went to Staff School and eventually rejoined Savage as a corps staff officer. In 1945 Travers took an early release which was offered to young men who had left university in 1939 to enlist. So he returned to Sydney University and completed his degree.

Fortunately he was now able to take up the Rhodes Scholarship in spite of his marriage and he, Margaret and two-year-old Sue left for England at the end of 1945 in a returning troopship. They arrived at Oxford in January 1946 and, because of his senior standing, Travers was allowed to complete his degree in five terms instead of nine. Having completed his BA he spent a year working for a B.Litt., during which he wrote a biography of Governor Macquarie which was later published as *The Captain General*.

They lived in Oxford until the middle of 1948 and enjoyed it enormously in spite of the postwar austerity. Rationing was still as stringent as it had been during the war and they relied heavily on the monthly food parcel from Australia. Shipping delays sometimes produced an embarrassing glut of parcels containing delicacies that had not been seen in England for years. Their second daughter, Tina, was born at Oxford and Margaret spent most of her time looking after the girls and enjoying the cosmopolitan company of the families of other Rhodes scholars.

Jika captained Oxford at Rugby football and played for England several times. He also played for the Barbarians and sometimes captained them. He won his cricket blue at Oxford and, surprisingly, a half-blue for athletics as well. In the terrible winter of 1947 a planned football tour had to be cancelled and so one day some of them decided to watch Roger Bannister in an early attempt to run the first sub four-minute mile. The athletics captain asked them to compete in the match against Cambridge and the wing three-quarter ran the sprints and Jika put the shot.

Towards the end of his time at Oxford Travers decided to spend some time teaching in an English school and with the help of the provost of Worcester College he was offered a job at Wellington College in Berkshire. It was supposed to be a two-year appointment, but at the end of the first year he was told that there would not be a place for him the following year. It seemed like a good time to return to Australia and this was confirmed when a long-running application with the Commonwealth Reconstruction Scheme finally brought enough back pay to pay for the trip.

It did no more than that, however, and by the time Travers and his

family arrived back in Sydney they were comprehensively broke. By now, Jika was set on a teaching career and Margaret assumed that it would not be long before he would be appointed to an Australian school. But after a few weeks Jika was not so sure. 'I used to go and see Robson and he would ask me if I had a job yet. I used to wonder why he didn't offer me one!'

In spite of his three degrees and a Rhodes Scholarship, a good war record and a year's teaching experience, Jika Travers was unemployed for nearly four months. They lived with his family at Kirribilli and somehow managed to keep their heads above water until, to their relief, Jika was offered a job at Cranbrook at a salary of £700 a year.

In 1950, eight years after they married, the Travers were able to buy their first house. It was at East Lindfield and at first Jika had to get a lift into the city with his father-in-law and catch a bus to Cranbrook from there. Later, when he acquired a car of his own, life became a little less rushed.

In the three years he was at Cranbrook Travers coached the first XI and also played Rugby for New South Wales and Northern Suburbs, but that was not always an advantage. When he applied for a job at Sydney Grammar he was entertained to lunch by the selection committee and was reassured when most of the conversation centred on his football career, and particularly his games in England. At the school after lunch, however, one of the committee said, 'Well, Mr Travers, the interview will now begin. Perhaps you will start by telling us why you are still playing football!'

Fortunately not all selection committees were the same and in 1953 Travers was appointed headmaster of Launceston Church of England Grammar School, where he spent a very pleasant six years. Not long after he arrived he took over the coaching of the football team, as might be expected, but in this case the football was Australian Rules and his appointment as coach came about because the previous coach seduced one of the matrons in the boarding house.

Travers also received a great deal of help from Robson, whom he saw during visits to Sydney and at meetings of headmasters. Travers frequently sought his advice and Robson gave it freely. 'A lot of people said Robson was not good at helping people. I never found that, but there was certainly an art in handling him.' Occasionally Travers would send teachers to Shore to discuss their methods and he would tell them that if they asked Robson a question the answer would not relate to the question they had asked, but to the third question Robson knew they would ask in due course. If they could not keep up with Robson's mind, Robson would go back to the beginning and talk to them as if they were in fifth form.

When Robson announced his intention to retire it was a foregone conclusion that Travers would apply for the job as headmaster of Shore

Opposite page: Jika Travers playing for Oxford.

and, some thought, a foregone conclusion that he would get it. Robson certainly championed his cause and wrote him a series of letters telling him what the situation was, how he stood and what he might do to improve his chances. The Council, who had not had to appoint a headmaster since 1922, was unaware of these letters and although they knew of Robson's support for Travers there is no evidence that they were unduly influenced by it. Travers had to attend as many interviews as the other candidates, and even more in the closing stages. In due course Marg was also interviewed during morning tea at the home of a member of Council, whose wife said that if she had known what was to happen she would never have allowed it.

After the interviews they returned to Launceston and waited for the news. It arrived in August and offered Travers the position as headmaster of Shore. He would start at the beginning of the next school year.

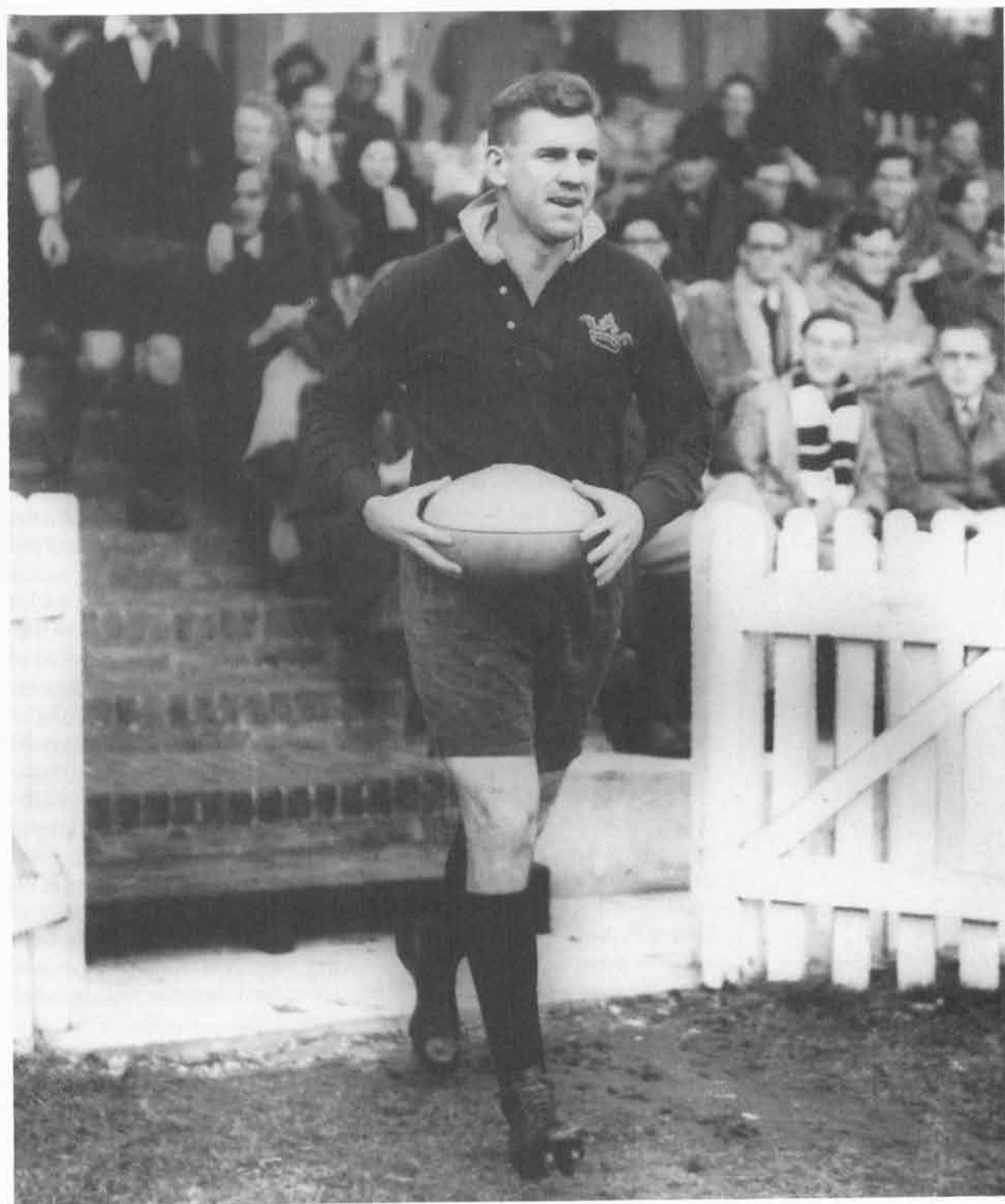
It was an exciting moment, for Marg as much as Jika. 'I was absolutely thrilled for him. He never admitted it to me, but I knew that was where he wanted to be.'

There could be no doubt that taking over from Robson would be a huge task. L. C. Robson had been headmaster of Shore for thirty-six years and while many of the staff were happy to welcome a new headmaster almost regardless of who it might be, others were apprehensive of the changes that might occur. It was not unusual for the morale of a school to plummet after a long-serving headmaster retired. Staff could divide into factions, arguments could be intense, the reputation and efficiency of the school could suffer, and sometimes the new headmaster left much sooner than he had intended. It is a time when the structure of the school can become very fragile, and Travers was well aware of that.

But the situation had to be faced, and Travers did so in a typically forthright way. At his first staff meeting he said that Robson had been his mentor, and that he intended to base all immediate policies and decisions on his. Many of the traditions and systems of the school had stood the test of time and he intended to preserve them. Change, when it came, would be slow and well considered.

When Travers took over as headmaster there were nine men on the staff who had taught him as a boy, but to most of the others he was a complete stranger. 'He had hardly been back to the school since he left.' Many of the older staff gave him immediate support and did a great deal to minimise any adverse effects of the changeover by their quiet leadership in the common room.

The problem was basically one of communication. It was difficult to explain things to a large staff and although Travers continued to hold weekly staff meetings he sometimes wondered how effective they were. 'I



think in Robson's time many of the staff were terrified of him and during his meetings they just sat and listened. They were not used to hearing something explained, let alone being asked for their views, and it took a while for them to get used to it.'

The changes, when they started to occur, were significant but hardly revolutionary. He made it clear, for example, that it would no longer be automatic for a subprefect to be eventually made a full prefect, or for a captain of a school first team to be made a prefect for that reason alone. 'I had a hell of a row with a parent when I refused to make his son a prefect. They all had the idea that it was automatic and I reckoned that many of the prefects took it for granted and did not do very much once they had been appointed. I said I would appoint only those boys who were worthy of the job, and whose performance had been above what might have been expected of them.'

He abolished the Sunday evening chapel service for boarders and brought forward the morning service to 9.30. He also fought a hard battle with the Church in favour of lay staff preaching in the chapel. Travers had been a diocesan lay preacher in Tasmania and had been allowed by the bishop to assist in the distribution of communion so that the service would not be too long.

Robson had occasionally preached in chapel but the concept of lay preachers was not popular in the Church at that time. Travers argued that teachers could not provide the Christian influence that was required of them unless they were allowed to express themselves. 'They used to say that they ought to do that in the classrooms, but I told them that if that is what they thought, they did not understand modern boys.' Eventually he won the battle and laymen were able to preach regularly at chapel services.

At the same time Travers introduced the concept of pastoral care to the school. This meant that the care and concern for boys should extend beyond the classroom and playing fields into all aspects of their life, caring in the wider sense rather than being restricted to school activities. This concept had been expressed in the early 1950s by the headmaster of Charterhouse and at the Headmaster's Conference meeting and although many at the time said that this was simply putting into words what good schoolmasters had always done, others recognised that many teachers had not been doing it as often or as well as they might.

Travers placed great emphasis on pastoral care, but always stressed that it should not be confused with meddling and for it to be effective it had to be unnoticeable to the boy. It was an unobtrusive way of helping boys to overcome difficulties, perhaps arising from a divorce or a death in the family, when support from within the school might otherwise have been lacking.

In the broader sense it also meant trying to bring out the talent that each boy had, and to Travers that meant making them leaders. 'I was not interested in producing followers. I wanted boys to be leaders at whatever level was most suitable for them. There are leaders at all levels.'

Explaining these changes to the staff was not always easy. Explanations at meetings could be misunderstood or not be as informative as they were thought to be. Nor were all the changes universally popular at first. The solution came when an old member of the staff suggested to Travers that he put his thoughts about the school in writing, so that staff would have a better chance of understanding him than was possible at meetings. He did so and at the end of his first year produced a paper describing his philosophy as headmaster. 'It was then that they began to see what I was getting at. After that, I wrote a paper whenever there was to be a significant change, whether it was coming from me or a change imposed by government such as the Wyndham Scheme.'

Margaret Travers, meanwhile, took over the role of headmaster's wife at Shore, a role that is fairly clearly defined by custom but not always well understood. She soon became involved with the SCEGS Association, but she was also bringing up a family of girls in the middle of a boys' boarding school. It sometimes surprised people that she did her own cooking. 'Most people think that the headmaster's wife sits there and says to somebody that we will be having ten for dinner. I don't know who was supposed to produce it, but everybody thought somebody else did.' She also had to maintain domestic peace. 'When the girls were at school they would walk in and ask him a question about their work and that could be a problem. He might have been answering the same question all day and then collect it again when he was at home in the evening!'

Being a child of a headmaster is, she says, a hazard. If they are boys they get hell from the others, and if they are girls their every action is subject to scrutiny. By now there were three Travers girls and their home life was no less restricted than the boarders'. They could not go out without shoes nor have lunch on the chapel lawn because the boys were not allowed to do those things. Nor were they allowed to talk to boys outside. They had to bring them into the house, which, understandably, was not a popular idea amongst the boys.

Every Saturday evening there was a film show for the boarders and it soon became the convention for each house in turn to nominate boys to invite the Travers girls. One boy, John Hyles, rebelled at being told he had to invite Pip Travers to the pictures and refused to do so until his brother, who was in the same house, threatened to give him six if he didn't. The evening was more pleasant than he expected, however, and a few years later John Hyles married Pip Travers without a single threat being made.

Most domestic difficulties were a result of the house itself. It was pleasant in many ways, with large rooms and high ceilings, but it had two faults. One was that it did not have enough room. The other was that it was in the wrong place. When the girls were living there it was almost impossible to accommodate guests, and even after they left it was not easy. And the fact that it was right in the centre of the school meant that privacy ended at the front door.

Travers campaigned for many years for a new house and even drew up a specification, but it did not come about in his time and throughout his reign as headmaster he continued to occupy the old quarters. 'Building a headmaster's house has caused trouble in a number of independent schools. When you draw up a plan everybody thinks you are trying to build a mansion. But you have to assume that a headmaster will have a family, you have to have guest rooms and possibly rooms for domestic staff, and the house has to be easy to run. It has to be big, but not just for the hell of it.'

In order to keep some distinction between home life and the job of running a school, the evening meal was preserved as a time for the family and this was jealously guarded. Although he was available at almost any other time, staff soon learnt that the hour of 7 o'clock was off-limits. It was important to the whole family that it could talk together without interruption at least once a day.

Perhaps the most informal link between the headmaster's quarters and the rest of the school was their two labradors, father and son, called Ret and Sandy. Ret had been borrowed for mating by a family who lived in a house where Benefactors now stands and they offered the Travers one of the litter. Marg Travers was adamant. 'I said to the family that these people were bringing the pups to show us—but NO. So who was the mug when they arrived?'

At the end of the day the two dogs used to lie under the fig tree and Marg often saw new boarders shedding tears and stroking them before going in for tea on their first day at school. 'I used to ask Jike to go out and talk to them, but he always said that they would be all right. A few days later you might see the same boys having a great time fighting and chasing each other, but those dogs were often the only friends they had for the first day or two.'

The dogs became known all over North Sydney and people driving into the school often had to stop as they walked imperiously across the road on the crossing nearby. Once Marg had a call from the police at North Sydney saying that the two dogs were there. She said she would collect them immediately but was told that would not be necessary. An hour later, when the school was at midday break, a police car pulled into the grounds

with Ret sitting beside the driver and Sandy next to the sergeant in the rear seat. Marg says they would have waved to the crowds if they could.

Although a school the size of Shore is a large concern and has very wide responsibilities to boys, parents, staff and others, Travers never doubted where his responsibility lay. 'You are employed by the Council, which is the governing body of the school. If the Council is well organised, as it is at Shore, it will define the headmaster's role and then let him get on with the job. You then ask yourself what the school is for, and the answer is in its charter. "It shall be a school of the highest type including various departments of education for all classes of the community in which the teaching shall be throughout in accordance with the principles of the Church of England." The headmaster's job is to see that this is carried out.'

If it sounds simple in theory, it was often very difficult in practice. The phrase, 'various departments of education', might have seemed appropriate when education was fairly basic but it could now be used to justify including any course that happened to be fashionable, and there was no shortage of those. It was a matter of combining a respect for the charter with what was practical and reasonable. Once, for example, there was considerable discussion about the school teaching agriculture, but it was resolved when one country parent said that he could teach his boy more about agriculture in the summer holiday than the school could teach in three years. 'So that part of the charter had to be interpreted in different ways.'

What he did do, though, was make games universal. 'People sometimes say that I put in games, but of course I didn't. What I did was put in games for every boy.'

Travers found when he came to the school that there was little technical ability in games and that most of the boys were not very fit. During the first two years he and Neville Emery coached football together and the teams played every Monday and Saturday. 'We did that until 1963 and the boys hated it. Every time a boy lay down I used to send him to John Burns to ask him to send me a fit boy to play in that position. It was two years before Shore boys stopped lying down.'

The essential part was seeing that boys competed at the correct level of their ability. Teams went down to the Is and Js, where the ability was not marked, but provided the boys were correctly matched they could enjoy the game and become fit as well.

For Travers, games were an essential part of the education process, not an end in themselves. They represented a considerable financial investment by way of grounds and equipment, and a considerable amount of time in coaching, playing and general organisation. All that was justified, not by trophy hunting but because boys learnt things about

themselves and other boys that they probably would not have learnt otherwise. They learnt discipline and self-control, they learnt to get up when they were knocked over, they learnt to play fairly, they learnt how to win without arrogance and, perhaps most important of all, they learnt how to lose.

As for his emphasis on Rugby, it was largely a matter of logistics. 'Rugby is a high-density game in which you have thirty boys all occupied at the same time and which takes no more than an hour. Cricket is a low-density game because there are only thirteen boys on a larger ground and they might be there for hours. The rest will be sitting around doing nothing.' Because of its history and location, Rugby was the best game for Shore, but not necessarily anywhere else. He had not tried to introduce it at Launceston, for instance, because of the tradition of playing Australian Rules there.

Nor was he keen to extend the range of activities. Some games, such as basketball, he thought were games for coaches rather than players and therefore the educational element was missing. Others, such as soccer, he resisted because he thought they would divide the interest, just as Rugby might have been divisive at Launceston.

Travers did, however, set out to help Shore recover from a slump in rowing skill and form. His encouragement and perseverance were producing results just as he retired and led to a very successful revival on the river.

Sporting ability was not allowed to develop at the expense of academic ability and Travers points to a long list of boys who achieved excellent academic results while also representing the school at high levels in sport. Similarly, those boys who were the academic leaders were expected to set the tone of the school in that respect and to set an example by leadership just as the sportsmen did. It was, he thought, very significant that the only prizes awarded on speech day were for academic success.

While much of the job of the headmaster is very visible, there is much that is no less important but which is not so obvious. One is the huge task of writing reports to parents. Robson had always added a personal comment on every report instead of simply signing it, even though he often found the job irksome. It was perhaps even more so for Travers as the school grew to over a thousand boys, but he continued to do it all the time he was there.

The headmaster should also be planning for the future, for if the school is successful it will not remain static for long. When the Wyndham Scheme was introduced it added an extra year to the secondary course, and this alone increased the number of boys at Shore by 160. It was also obvious that most schools would need extra staff and facilities to cope with



the extra numbers. Travers anticipated the problem. First he went overseas to study how other schools had developed on restricted sites and returned convinced that high buildings were practical, although previously there had been some uncertainty about them. The result of that was the relatively high Benefactors Building. Travers also obtained permission from the Council to recruit new staff whenever and wherever they were available, so that most of them had already joined Shore by the time other schools were competing furiously for a diminishing supply.

There is no doubt that Traver's time as headmaster of Shore coincided with a period of tremendous social change in the country as a whole, and he had to cope with the effects of those changes on the school. 'You had

B. H. Travers, the fifth Headmaster of Shore from 1959 until 1984. This photograph was taken in 1964.

this constant attack on authority. Robson used to say that schoolmastering was a constant struggle for discipline and in the sixties and seventies that is what I was trying to preserve: discipline.'

Among boys and staff alike there were some who could not agree, or failed to see why it was important. To them, Travers and Shore seemed to be out of step with the times and unresponsive to the changes that were taking place elsewhere, if not actually ignoring them. But Travers was convinced that most changes suggested at the time had little relevance to what the school should be doing, and the greatest danger was that if major changes were made they would be very difficult to undo should they prove valueless.

What seemed to some to be bloody-mindedness was in fact a carefully thought out position which was designed to safeguard all that was worth preserving. Travers said at a later speech day:

'At the same time alternative lifestyle values were now being widely propounded . . . and were attacking all that the school had ever stood for. Not only was the attack coming now from older pupils, but it was also coming from younger Old Boys, members of staff and parents as well as from the media and their highly qualified, but life-inexperienced, young commentators.

'The struggle to teach discipline, hard work, sound learning, right conduct and moral judgement was intensely wearying and extremely enervating. Although we had the knowledge and experience to put a man on the moon, we lacked the wisdom necessary to rediscover and to reaffirm the importance of those spiritual and moral attitudes and values which had characterised and held together earlier generations of the nation. Education was now in danger of becoming a smorgasbord of disjointed courses which pupils would pigeonhole in their minds but never cross-reference within their thinking because they had no unifying philosophical or spiritual concepts.'

He could hardly expect to be popular amongst the avant-garde when he seemed to be so out of step with what was going on around him, but if unpopularity were to be the price he had no hesitation in accepting it. When boys grew angry because he insisted on retaining the boater and insisted on short hair when others wore it to their shoulders, he was unmoved. For the changes that boys thought were inconsequential were to him the thin end of a very nasty wedge that could eventually destroy all that the school stood for, and he had no intention of presiding over that.

But there were changes during this time, even though they were not as obvious as those demanded by some. New buildings were erected to house an increasing school population, boarding houses were improved and became less strict, especially for older boys, activities such as adventure

training and surf-lifesaving were introduced and the range of subjects was increased slightly. Perhaps more important, he made sure that every boy would have a chance to matriculate, whatever his ability might be. Previously boys had been allowed to drop subjects that they found incomprehensible, but in doing so they ran the risk of finishing with a range of subjects that would not qualify them for university entrance. Travers insisted that every boy should now follow a range of subjects that would allow him to matriculate if he had the ability. 'We provided him with the opportunity, which I thought to be one of our responsibilities. It was equal opportunity long before it became a fashionable phrase.'

At the same time there were problems with other aspects of a modern lifestyle which Robson, in his thirty-six years, had rarely had to contemplate: drugs and alcohol. Their use was never widespread, but Travers said that any headmaster who said he did not have drugs and booze in his school was kidding himself. They were current problems and there was nothing to be gained by not facing up to them. Observation and education were the key factors, as John Colebrook proved when he discovered a very healthy marijuana plant growing in a pot in the window of the boarding house.

Those boys who had a problem were counselled, an aspect of pastoral care in action, and if there was no alternative they were suspended or asked to leave. Boys who did not have a problem were encouraged to stay that way. Travers once invited a policeman from the drug squad to give a lecture on drugs to the senior boys. The policeman started by standing on the platform a life-sized photograph of a very attractive girl which he then ignored until the end of the lecture. He then turned it around to show another photograph of the same girl after prolonged use of drugs. The effect on his audience was devastating.

In 1978 Travers wrote a paper for Council called 'The Management of Shore in 1984'. In it he pointed out that in 1984 the headmaster and the chairman of Council would be approaching retiring age and the archbishop would be at the age when he would have to retire. In six years' time, therefore, the school would be faced with the retirement of three senior people within a very short period. He suggested that his own retirement might be brought forward but this was not accepted.

In the event, the archbishop retired at the age of seventy, Travers retired in 1984, and Ian Dixon, chairman of Council, worked on until 1986 to minimise the effect of the change in headmasters and to help the new one.

When he retired, Jika Travers had become as synonymous with Shore as Robson had before him. He had been responsible for thousands of boys and had been deeply involved in the expenditure of millions of dollars over

the period of half his lifetime that he had devoted to the school. He had also been responsible for maintaining the standard and reputation of Shore when it came under threat, and he had coped with more changes to education, both administrative and technical, than the school had previously seen in the whole of its history. In spite of this, Shore's academic standard had remained high throughout his long reign as headmaster.

He had not done this alone. He had been supported by a Council who understood what he was trying to do, and by staff that remained loyal to him. He had educated teachers as well as boys, and by the time he retired there were few in the common room who disagreed with him.

He is modest when talking of his achievements. There are, he says, only two of any note. One was taking over the school from Robson without there being any serious difficulties. The other was in handing over a school that was still faithful to its charter.

He did much more than that. As John Colebrook said in an article published in the October 1986 issue of *Independence*: 'Scholarship at Shore under Travers remained at a high level. Old Boys of his period won University Medals, Rhodes Scholarships and all the other visible and material signs of academic success. He made a particular point of giving great personal encouragement and advice to boys who had high academic potential, games players or not. As a historian he had the broad perspective of values which that discipline bestows and this was of great value to all whom he advised, personally and frequently. Many have acknowledged their debt to him for this.'

It was, above all, Shore's good fortune that it had as a headmaster a man of great strength at a time when it needed one most. Other schools certainly survived the same period, but some experienced a great deal of turbulence on the way. Others lost much of their reputation and saw enrolments decline as a result. Travers helped Shore to hold on to the things that were precious to it and when he left the school was fully booked for years to come.

Travers might not always have been popular, he might at times have been infuriating and he might, even, have been guilty of some of the things that boys accused him of. But he stuck to his principles because he saw that as the only way to survive with honour. Above all, Jika Travers always knew what he was doing.

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CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Eighties

IN DECEMBER 1912 THE *Torch Bearer* marked the end of the school year with an editorial that is as relevant now as it was then.

'As the fourth term of each year draws to a close, some half a hundred young men, emancipated from the wholesome regulations that have circumscribed their actions for the past three or four years, pass through, and with a pang of regret and perhaps also with a throb of expectant excitement, strip from their hat the familiar slanting stripes or perchance the more august plain blue with the School Arms.

"Young men" we call them, and so they are, for though their ages may be from sixteen to twenty, each is about to put his hands to his life's work, which is the work of a man.'

The world is a different place to what it was then, even for school boys. In the pre-boater days of 1912, removing the school band from the hat converted it into an acceptable, and essential, item of daily wear, which is hardly the case now. And most boys leaving school now will have had their actions 'circumscribed' for more than three or four years.

There are other differences that are more important. The school leaver of the 1980s will, if he has done the full secondary course, have spent the last two years working very hard to prepare for the Higher School Certificate. His final year, culminating with several weeks of examinations in October and November, will have put him under strains and pressures that earlier generations of boys and teachers would have thought intolerable. Entry into university always did require good examination results, but with demand now far exceeding supply they have to be much better than that. It is a competitive system, and the school boy of the eighties is well aware that the whole of his future might be determined by those few weeks of examinations.

Although boys of the sixth form remain on the school roll until the end of the year, they effectively leave school when they have completed their examinations. It is no longer a mass exodus on one day. Depending on what subjects they are sitting and the programme of examinations, boys of the sixth form will leave at different times over a period of a week or more. Some find it difficult to leave at all and keep coming back while the rest of the school works towards the end of term. One master said: 'They have

been subject to such a demanding programme of work and preparation that when it is all over some of them do not know what to do. They find it difficult to believe that there is not another study period, another session in the lab, or another five books to read.'

Greg Kierath sat the Higher School Certificate in 1986 and then returned to his home at Narromine in the west of New South Wales to await the results. They would be announced early the following January, but it would be several weeks after that before he knew whether his application for a place at university had been successful. 'If I don't get enough marks to get into university I do not know what I will do. I haven't thought about that.'

Kierath is from a family which has strong connections with Shore. His father and grandfather were at the school and his elder brother was already there by the time Greg arrived in 1981 and moved into Hodges House under Mr Whiley.

There were about fifty boys in the house and Kierath found it overwhelming at first. The house was big and it was quite easy for a small boy to get lost in it until he learnt his way around. The routine was confusing, too. Bells seemed to ring without warning and although it was obvious that they required some kind of action, the nature of that action was often far from obvious. His brother was in the same house, which he thought was a big advantage, but it was several weeks before he began to feel part of the system.

He was homesick at first and this lingered on for some time, although later he was aware of it only when returning to school after the holidays or if he had been home for a boarders' weekend. But he made friends easily and loneliness was not a problem.

There was some bullying. 'You get guys who don't fit in very well and they get picked on by the others. Little guys who are a bit small for their age sometimes get picked on, depending on their character.' By now, bullying was more likely to be verbal than physical, or it might consist of stealing a boy's dessert in the dining hall. The run through and mill on had disappeared long ago, but the effect of mental bullying could be just as great. 'I was on the receiving end of it occasionally and it was pretty unpleasant. All you can do is fight back so that the bloke thinks twice about doing it.' Nor was it always a matter of older boys picking on younger ones. Boys might be rejected by those in their own age group. As one housemaster says: 'It is no use telling the boys to include Bill in whatever they are doing. That would simply make them more determined to exclude him. But it passes. All you can do is keep a discreet eye on them and wait for them to sort themselves out. They always do.'

Kierath started in form B2 and moved progressively to B1 and A2. In the

final two years boys were in different classes for different subjects, so that a boy might be with a different group of boys for each period during the day. Some classes were graded within the subject, so that those doing a 3 unit course would often be taught separately to those doing fewer units of the same subject.

Kierath says he did not do much when he first came, perhaps because he did not feel at any disadvantage against those who had come from the prep. school. 'I did the homework because you got into trouble if you didn't, but I didn't do any more than that.' He started to work harder after a year or two and found it fairly easy going until his later years. 'I found it harder to get motivated as time went on.'

He played cricket for the first four years and was in the 16Ds when he gave it up to do surf-lifesaving at Long Reef instead. He played football until his second-last year but played no higher than the 5ths. He was, however, more successful at rifle shooting. Using the range at Long Bay, he shot .308 over 300, 500 and 600 metres on a Saturday morning, going there in the school four-wheel drive or getting a lift with friends who had cars.

He did not think that the emphasis on sport was any greater at Shore than in most GPS schools, and in some cases probably less. 'But I think guys who are good at sport are more highly regarded than those who are good academically, and I think that is bad. Guys in the first XV or eight become prefects but their school results are often not as good as others. It is the fact that they are better known and I think that is wrong.'

Football still rates highly in terms of recognition within the school. The first XV plays the last game of the day, so they are watched by those who have played earlier. Not many boys watch school cricket, but the whole school still turns out for the GPS regatta and the crews are highly regarded.

Greg Kierath was made a house prefect in his final year, but says this is usual for sixth formers.

House prefects take it in turns to be on duty within the house. The duty prefect is woken at 7.15 by a first former. He is given the leave book and then rings the bell at 7.30. The rest of the house assembles downstairs and the prefect calls the roll and takes details of boys who want leave that afternoon. Breakfast is at 7.35, with other houses entering the dining room at their appointed times to avoid congestion. By the time the last house has entered some of the earlier boys are already leaving. When breakfast is over, the duty prefect rings the house bell again and checks that the younger boys have done their allotted housekeeping duties. School then starts at 8.40 a.m.

At the end of the day, the duty prefect takes prep after dinner and then starts to send the boys to bed at the appointed time for their age. The first

form will be sent to the showers at about 8.50 and their lights will be out at ten past nine. Each year has to be in bed within ten minutes of having a shower and the duty prefect checks the progress of each year as the evening progresses. By the time most of the boys are in bed the duty prefect has a little time left to do his own work and usually goes to bed about 11 p.m.

A house prefect who is not on duty has most of the time to himself, but is still expected to maintain discipline within the house. He can award punishment on the 'minute system', so that a boy who has been given 'thirty' will not be able to leave the school on Sunday until thirty minutes after chapel and will spend that time doing housekeeping duties in the house. A punishment of 120 means that a boy cannot go out on Sunday.

Socking is no longer used as a punishment, and there is no initiation into the house. During the first house assembly at the start of the year new boys have to stand in front and tell the house their names and where they come from, and later in the year there is a house concert in which the new boys perform. This is held after a barbecue and the evening is seen more as a good social occasion than a terrifying experience.

While Kierath was at school Travers retired as headmaster and the current head, Robert Grant, took over. Kierath saw little of Travers but thinks he was not as involved with the boys as much as Grant is. 'I don't think Travers was actively disliked—he just ran the school.' Grant, too, was 'just another headmaster at first but I soon got to know him and found him more down-to-earth and not as distant as Travers was.' He says he cannot understand why Travers insisted on the boys using suitcases instead of soft bags, but he didn't see it as a big issue.

He did not like wearing the boater, however, but says, 'We are one of the few Australian schools with a boater. It is a good distinguishing feature and that seems a good reason to keep it.'

Kierath had several friends amongst the day boys, but rarely saw them during weekends. Sport took all day Saturday and he might see day boys then but hardly ever on Sundays. Instead, he might have lunch with his grandmother and spend the day at the beach before returning to school at 8.30. Boarders did not have to wear school uniform at the weekend but could not wear thongs or sandals and if they wore shorts they had to wear long socks as well. He went out as often as he could until his last year, when he stayed in to catch up on work. A difficult part of the boarder's life, he says, was the lack of girls, and this was one of the biggest differences between the boarders and day boys. Even when he left school he was not socially at ease with girls and thought this was a big disadvantage.

There was a chapel service once a week during school time which was





Above, Peter Jenkins welcomes new boys on the first day of the school year, 1987. Below, Speech Day 1986.





The library in 1976.

attended by day boys as well as boarders, and a compulsory service on Sunday morning for boarders. Boys who had been confirmed could attend the early communion service, but still had to attend the later service as well. There was no evening service. Kierath attended the Christian Fellowship in the house once a week and enjoyed this more than the chapel. He says he is religious now, but not in a formal sense.

He never saw any evidence of drugs in the school but there was talk of it amongst the day boys. Drinking outside the school was known to take place and the school and housemasters came down hard on boys found to be involved.

Kierath thinks that the worst times were the fights. 'Our year had quite a few fights. Not physical, mental fights. There were a lot of divisions and our year was not a well-knit group of people.'

Kierath says he found the HSC 'nerve-racking', but he tried not to become too worried about it. He did 2 unit Biology, 3 unit Geography, 3 unit Maths, 2 unit Economics, 2 unit English and one unit of General

Studies. He hoped to get enough points to do commerce at the University of New South Wales, but the new system of marking introduced in 1986 meant that he did not know how many points he would need.

He has already joined the Old Boys' Union although he is not sure if he will maintain contact with them. And at the end of his time at Shore: 'I think the school has done a good job for me. Being a boarder teaches you responsibility and makes you get on with people of different ages. I think I have learnt a lot about people even though the people in this school are from similar backgrounds. There are obviously a lot of people that you would not meet here, but it is still pretty varied.' Except for girls, of course.

Amongst the others leaving Shore with Greg Kierath at the end of 1986 were Scott McCann, son of the bursar, and Matthew McCredie, son of an Old Boy who had booked him into Shore when he was born. 'I took it for granted that I would be going to Shore and always looked forward to it.' He started in 1980, having come from Lindfield primary school, and at first found himself lost and bewildered. 'The school seemed so large. I didn't know where anything was and I just followed everybody else around. I was very self-conscious and didn't feel part of the place for two or three months, but after that I started to fit in.'

Scott McCann started in prep. in 1976 and repeated the first year because of his age. He found the transition from public school to the prep. was not too difficult—the big change was in moving out of prep. into the main school. 'It was a different world. It might have been a little easier for us than for people coming straight into the main school, but the changes were very great.' When his family returned from an overseas trip Scott McCann became a day boy and lived with his family in a house on the school boundary.

There was no choice of subjects during the first year in the main school. Everybody did History, English, Maths, German, Craft, Art, and a broad Science. Certain classes, however, had a few options as they moved up. The top class could do languages, while the B class could do German or Commerce. McCann did Commerce up to School Certificate with the rest of the subjects unchanged. After that he selected the courses and units for the Higher School Certificate. McCredie did German for four years, until the end of Year 10.

Selecting the course for the HSC involved a great deal of thought. McCredie was keen to get into military flying and so he had to retain Physics even though he found it difficult. McCann decided to neglect Maths in order to concentrate on History.

Of the two, McCredie was the better sportsman. He played cricket and football at first but then gave up cricket in favour of tennis. The following year he started rowing in the tubs. 'I didn't have anything to do and the

rowing master asked me to give it a try. I thought I might as well. I thought it couldn't be as bad as everybody said, but it was!' He was a member of the junior eight at the end of his fourth year and of the second eight in his final year. But it required a lot of hard work. In addition to the time spent on the water he had to run for fitness and supplement that with weight training in the gym. 'You have to really push yourself hard to get into a crew, but it is worth it. There is a great spirit in the shed. You live together during the camp and everybody gets to know each other really well.'

McCann was less interested in sport and thought that it carried too much emphasis, although he said that it was known to be that kind of school and those who did not like that could go somewhere else. He thought the newer sports such as soccer and basketball were welcome and most had grown in popularity. McCredie, having been more involved in sport, thought that was what the school was noted for. 'People ask you what sport you are playing, not how well you are doing with the HSC.'

Both said that the sportsmen were widely admired in the school and that they were the most likely to be made prefects whatever their other qualities might be. Neither was impressed with the prefect system although they saw that the school needed one if it were to function well. They certainly thought that some boys who were made prefects were not suitable for the job. 'There are some nice guys who are prefects, but some don't measure up.'

Boarders still thought they were the heart of the school although this was less noticeable as they became more senior. Scott McCann, who had boarded in the prep., did not particularly like boarding. 'Most of them were country boys who spent all their free time talking about combine harvesters.' Even though he lived almost in the school grounds he had little contact with boarders. McCredie, though, had a number of friends who were boarders and they would sometimes arrange to do things together at the weekends.

Chapel was seen as one of the routines of the school and as such drew neither hostility nor enthusiasm. It was simply there. If nothing else, it could be seen as a release from other things and one could go into a mind-wandering trance without it being obvious.

Polishing the pennies was still seen as a competition, but the smart thing now was to get a freshly minted coin from the bank. One Science master developed a mixture that certainly produced a gleaming coin, but as it also made it noticeably smaller it was thought to be of limited use. McCann and McCredie knew the significance of polishing the penny and McCredie, intent on a career in the forces, was particularly conscious of it. 'I thought they might be remembering me one day. It was a competition, sure, but I also thought of what it was about.'

Masters were judged on their ability as teachers, and then on their merits as people. 'Somebody could be a good teacher and a rotten bloke, and some were the other way round. Some were good on both counts.' A teacher who lacked a sense of humour was unlikely to rate well on either scale.

Masters who were young had no advantage over those who were older. Indeed, young masters were thought to be less patient than older ones and often tried to teach their subject at too high a level, 'especially those in Science who had just got their degrees'. However, they expected more of teachers than a simple repetition of facts. Much depended on the ability of the teacher to convey information. Those who simply wrote on the board or handed out duplicated notes were thought to be less effective than those who taught by discussion. Scott McCann found this especially true in his History course. 'I didn't take any notes in class. I would listen to what he had to say and then go home and do my own reading. I could get facts for myself. What I wanted from a teacher was interpretation—ideas rather than facts.'

Like Greg Kierath, they experienced the change in headmasters. Travers struck them as a strict disciplinarian. He had an aura, one of them said, which was impressive, but they did not feel intimidated by it. 'I thought he was an old bastard. But when I was older I began to appreciate how difficult it is to run a school. I think he did a pretty good job.'

The changes that Mr Grant introduced were mostly well regarded and some, such as extending the range of sporting activities, they thought were long overdue. The new cycle of teaching was also welcomed. Previously there had been a fixed programme of periods, so that, for example, the second period on a Monday morning would be French, and if Monday was a holiday the work would restart with Tuesday's programme. This was changed so that the teaching programme repeated over a cycle of seven school days. Day Two programme would therefore follow that of Day One even though a brief holiday might intervene. Not only did it help preserve continuity, but it also meant the days were more varied and the 'this is Monday afternoon so this must be Latin' syndrome disappeared.

Less welcome was the decision that caning should be done only by the headmaster, housemaster or the year master. 'It is passing the buck and I don't see the point. If you think somebody deserves the cane you should have the guts to do it.' There was, however, no objection to caning as a punishment and it was thought to be effective with younger boys, although the waiting was the worst part. Caning was thought preferable to detention because it was over much quicker.

During their senior years they were both conscious of drugs and alcohol in the school. 'One heard that there were boys who were into drugs but we

didn't know much about them. Booze was more noticeable, but only out of school.'

Both turned eighteen in their final year, the legal age for drinking, but going into a pub was an offence as far as the school was concerned. If they had been detected and brought up for punishment they would have accepted that they had broken the rules. But they thought it was an unfair rule once they had reached eighteen. 'I really do not think that anybody seeing an eighteen-year-old boy in a pub would think that he was destroying the reputation of the school.'

On the other hand, they had no objection to the uniform, not even to the boater. 'Mr Grant asked us how many would like to get rid of the boater and not many people put up their hand.' Although McCann did not have to travel to school and therefore rarely wore the boater in public, McCredie did. 'I was proud to wear the boater on the train. "Get stuffed, I'm a Shore boy!"' Nor did they use the soft bags when they became permissible. 'They didn't look right with a suit.'

They regretted that the school hierarchy did not take more note of their views, 'But we didn't even think about student rights.' Although there were student representatives on various committees they thought they were not always very effective in presenting the views of boys. They also thought they should have had more influence in the appointment of prefects, but recognised that the results might have been no better.

What they did resent was having views forced upon them. McCredie found himself at odds in General Studies with a master who accused him of being a fascist. His views were certainly to the right of his teacher's, but he thought this was a valid position and he was entitled to be there if he had thought about it. Religious views were resented even more.

In the end, they said, they came out with their own views. Although they recognised that the school was capable of turning them into something they did not want to be, they had no difficulty in arriving at a position they were comfortable with. 'It was a sort of mild mental coercion, especially when you were young. But if you had your wits about you when you grew older you could totally refute it because it was so mild. In the end I think we each came out as our own person.'

Matthew McCredie sat for twelve units in the HSC and by that time had already applied for a place at Duntroon. Although it seemed that he had been successful, he was told at the end that he was too young but that they would like to see him apply the following year. Whereas earlier generations of Shore boys would probably have done another year at school in that situation, he has no intention of doing so. 'I have had my share and that is it. It would be too restrictive now.' He can, in any case, do extra HSC subjects in a tech course should that be necessary.

Scott McCann also sat for twelve units, half of which were in Ancient and Modern History. He was very conscious of the economic climate when choosing his subjects. 'I am not interested in making massive amounts of money, but you have to think about it and jobs are not easy to come by.' Many boys in his year opted for Economics and Commerce because they seemed to offer a wide choice of careers and reasonable security. McCann thinks he would do law if he gained enough marks. If not he would probably do arts with a major in history with a view to a career in teaching.

He thinks that his time at Shore has made him aware of himself and of his feelings. 'It inspired likes and dislikes. Some people I respected and some I did not. That is amongst the staff—I never had any problems with the boys. I think it might have prepared me for the outside world in that respect, in so far as a school can prepare you for that. But Shore has given me a square deal. After the HSC I just wanted to get out of the place, but that was the HSC, not the school.'

Matthew McCredie thinks the school offered a great deal to those who were prepared to put something into it. 'That is the way it works. It has shaped my outlook on life. It stopped me being a lazy person and made me do more than I thought I could. I enjoyed the place.'

Both said they would miss the school, 'especially next year when we are not going back. But we are looking at the future now, and that all hangs on the HSC results.'

It is clear that not only has the school changed a great deal since that issue of the *Torch Bearer* in 1912, so have the boys. But not entirely. For at the end of this school year another group of Shore boys are about to put their hands to their life's work, 'which is the work of a man'.

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CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Shore Today

NEARLY A HUNDRED YEARS AFTER its foundation, the Sydney Church of England Grammar School has progressed to a stage that its founders could barely have imagined. It is a large school, supported by an administrative structure necessary for running a sizeable business operation. For as well as being an educational institution, Shore has to be run like a business. Behind the academic world of Shore is a commercial world which thinks of forward planning, cash flows, property administration and industrial relations. The fact that much of this is not obvious is a tribute to the skill of those whose job it is, fully or in part, to make the school run smoothly so that it can achieve the aims of its charter.

In 1987 there were approximately 1140 boys at Shore, of whom 220 were boarders and 170 were in the prep. school. Fees for day boys ranged from \$3300 to \$4200 a year, while boarders paid an additional \$4000 a year. It therefore cost a little over \$8000 a year to send a senior boy to Shore as a boarder, and the parent paid this out of taxed income.

There is a teaching staff of eighty, and a less visible support staff of about the same number although some of those are employed part time. This support staff includes plumbers, cleaners, seamstresses, groundsman, computer operators, secretaries and many more. The kitchen, for example, serves about 200 000 meals a year.

In addition to the premises at North Sydney, the school also owns property at Northbridge, Gladesville, and a tract of bushland at Linden in the Blue Mountains which is used for cadet courses, adventure training and field studies. Some of the residential and commercial properties surrounding the school facilities are also owned by the school. The buildings alone are insured for \$30 million dollars on a cost of replacement basis.

The operating budget is about \$8 million a year. That does not make it a huge business, but it certainly lifts it well above the range of most family businesses.

The governing body of the school is the Council. In 1923 the constitution of the school was amended so that life membership of the Council was abolished and it was to consist of the Archbishop of Sydney as President, six clergy to be elected by Synod, six laymen to be elected by

Synod and five Old Boys to be elected by the Old Boys' Union. Of those elected by Synod, some might also be Old Boys of the school. The Council is still made up in this way.

The Council members provided by the Old Boys' Union are elected for three years, but it is rare for a position to be contested if the current member is willing to continue. A member who resigns while in office is replaced by a man appointed by the committee of the Union, and he is then usually elected at the appropriate time. The present chairman of the Council is Lou Davies, a representative of the Old Boys' Union who joined the Council in 1966 and took over after the long-serving chairman, Ian Dixon, retired in 1986.

While the school has some influence in the selection of the Old Boys' representatives, in that it might suggest that a lawyer would be most welcome, it has no such influence on Synod. Indeed, relations with the Church have sometimes been uneasy because of the need to combine education and religion to the satisfaction of all concerned. During L. C. Robson's time, for example, Synod insisted on the right to appoint the school chaplain and said that the chaplain was the only person who could give permission to enter the chapel. A furious Robson pointed out how idiotic it would be if he, as headmaster of the school, could not even go into the chapel without the permission of one of his staff. Synod accepted the point and a less rigid system resulted, but it was fiercely debated at the time.

It is unlikely that such an issue would occur today, but one has to recognise that the views of members of Synod cover a wide range and it is a matter of record that some are not in favour of independent schools such as Shore.

In the commercial world, a board of directors appointed entirely by outsiders, some with views contrary to those of the organisation, would be seen as a recipe for disaster. In practice, at Shore it works very well, even though nobody seems to know why. Certainly Ian Dixon insisted that members of Council should see themselves not as delegates but as persons charged with the responsibility of running the school, and that the needs and operations of the school should override any other predilections they might have. Although views are sometimes argued with vigour at Council meetings, real conflict is rare and Lou Davies says that the school continues to be served well by those who are appointed, regardless of the method by which they are elected. Most turn up on speech day, and he says there can be no greater sign of loyalty than that!

Within the Council is a smaller body, the executive, which is elected by Council and includes the chairman, treasurer and secretary together with as many other members as the Council decides. Council meets on the third





Above, preparing equipment for the 1986 cadet camp, below, an informal game, opposite, the Second VIII in 1987.





Above, the boat shed, below, the pear tree outside the headmaster's study.



Tuesday of each month during school terms and the executive committee meets on the first Tuesday of each month. The executive is less formal and acts as a filter for administrative matters as well as for ideas or new proposals and will, if absolutely necessary, take action on behalf of the Council. But Davies says: 'Council is fairly watchful, and rightly so, to make sure that the executive does not exceed its authority. It would certainly resist any tendency of the executive to run the show by making decisions and acting on them and then reporting to Council. There is no suggestion that Council is simply a rubber stamp for the executive.' Indeed, the headmaster reports directly and fully to Council and only rarely would he approach the executive for a decision.

The role of the Council is to maintain the school in accordance with its charter and to do so at a cost which will not make the school's fees prohibitive. A few years ago Council drew up a ten-year plan which redefined its objectives: it was a school for boys; it would remain in North Sydney and it would stay about the same size.

Much of the Council's work revolves around money. Most of the school's income comes from fees and about fifteen per cent comes from government aid. Because the level of this aid has been frozen in dollar terms, its value decreases with inflation. Nevertheless it is a vital part of the school's income and if it were not there the school's fees would have to increase by about thirty per cent. In addition, the school receives income from investment properties which it has bought over the last thirty years or so. Most were bought to protect the boundaries and to provide room for future expansion, but the rents they produce also serve to keep fees down.

The school must produce a financial surplus. While the income from fees, aid and rents covers most of the operating costs, it does not allow for capital development such as new buildings. These are financed from appeals, donations and bequests and any shortfall is made up by borrowings. The interest on these borrowings has to be paid from the operating surplus, and this surplus is also used to pay for smaller items of capital development that would not justify a full-scale appeal.

The Council continues to resist the temptation of improving the surplus by increasing the fees. Fees rise because of inflation, but even that presents real difficulties for many parents. Shore's fees have usually been towards the bottom of the list of those charged by similar schools and Council is determined that they should not stray too far from that point.

The major uncertainty, however, is the future of government aid. It might be withdrawn completely, or it might be available with conditions that are thought to be too onerous or undesirable. Those conditions have been increasing over the last few years and now have an effect on some

aspects of the educational programme that the school offers. Each new condition has not been important enough to justify refusing the aid, but their cumulative effect becomes more noticeable and there may be a time in the future when the Council has to redefine the meaning of independence. It might then decide that the school's independence can only be preserved by refusing government aid, in which case it will need to rely heavily on the Foundation for another source of income.

The headmaster of the school is appointed by the Council and although he is not a member of Council he reports directly to it and attends its meetings. Having had only six headmasters in its history, the Shore Council has not been involved in selection procedures very often, but Lou Davies knows exactly what they should look for.

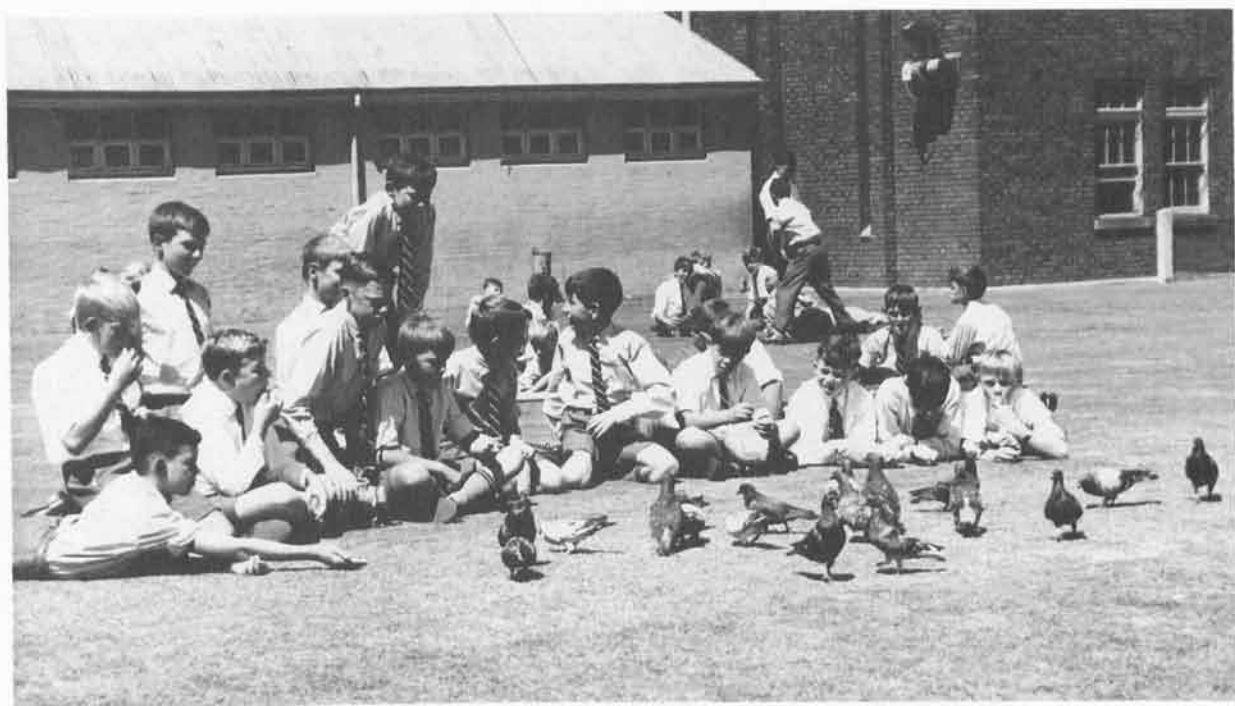
'You need someone who is a leader of men and well qualified to run a secondary school. You need someone who is capable of running a business as its chief executive officer. You need someone who is capable of dealing with the obstacles that are always in the path of a headmaster. And you need someone who has the usual attributes of integrity and honesty and who is capable of speaking at a moment's notice in an engaging manner on almost any subject.'

The present headmaster, Robert Grant, says that there was no school in Australia that he would have rather been appointed to than Shore. 'Its whole ethos is exactly mine. There are good schools that I would happily have gone to, but this was the one I wanted most.' In view of Lou Davies's exacting specification it is not surprising if he thought his application was unlikely to succeed.

Robert Grant was educated at Sydney Grammar and then did economics at Sydney University with a view to a commercial career or teaching. When he graduated he joined the staff of The Armidale School and stayed there four years before joining Myer Melbourne as personnel officer in 1968. Three and a half years later he decided that he preferred teaching to commerce and joined Scotch College in Melbourne. During his eight years there he began to think of the possibility of becoming a headmaster.

In 1980 he moved to Canberra Grammar as assistant to the headmaster and was appointed deputy head some two years later. He spent much of his final year there as acting head while the headmaster was ill or overseas convalescing. It was during that year that he applied for the position of headmaster of Shore when it was advertised prior to the retirement of Jika Travers.

The result was a visit to Canberra at Easter in 1983 by Shore chairman, Ian Dixon, and Bishop Cameron of the Shore Council, who interviewed Bob Grant and his wife. Shortly afterwards he was invited to Sydney to attend an interview by full Council at St Andrew's House. The interview



lasted an hour and a half, during which he was invited to address them for ten minutes and then answer questions about what he had said. He found it enjoyable and returned to Canberra with restrained confidence.

The following week he was invited to another interview with Council and made the journey from Canberra wondering whether they might be intending to discuss more detailed aspects of appointment. But it was not to be so easy. 'I was warned in the office that I was going to be asked a question that I would be given in writing the moment I sat down. I realised that this was serious. When I was given the question I did not answer it very well. I had come up thinking that it would be rather pleasant, sorting out a few details and so on, but now it looked more like a hanging.'

After the interview he visited his brother-in-law to tell him that they would not be moving to Sydney after all and then returned to Canberra and telephoned his headmaster, who was on leave in Adelaide, to reassure him that he still had a deputy head. Later that day, Ian Dixon telephoned and said that Council had made its decision and would like to offer him the position. There was no man in Canberra more surprised than Robert Grant that day.

As soon as the appointment was announced rumours started to circulate at Shore. The boater would be going, he was terribly religious, he was very

Feeding the pigeons,
March 1963.

strict. One person even arrived at Canberra Grammar to discuss the possibility of enrolling his son there, but he turned out to be a parent of a Shore boy trying to have an early look at the new headmaster.

The first day of a new headmaster at Shore is a nerve-racking experience, no matter how keenly anticipated. The first function in Robert Grant's case was his induction in the chapel and this was followed by a simple service during which the chairman of Council presented him with a copy of the St James Act which founded the school.

After that came the first school assembly. As the boys studied him carefully, he told them that he would have no great regard for a boy who had a lot of natural ability but who did not put it to good use. He did have regard for a boy who used what talent he had to the full, and he told them he would encourage every boy to stretch himself to the limit.

This was followed by his first staff meeting in the common room. 'I remember how I felt, sitting in that traditional room, looking at the staff while the chairman introduced me to them.' After the chairman had left, Grant explained something of his philosophy. 'We are all called to serve,' he said, 'and we must not forget that we are here to serve boys.' He also said that the staff had a great reputation and included people who were doyens of the profession. He urged them to listen to, and learn from, each other and not to be impatient with others who were younger or older.

After that, Robert Grant got on with the job of running the school. 'I didn't have much trouble with that because Shore was very similar to other schools I had known as a boy and a master. And Shore was hierarchical in concept and people simply expected the headmaster to be the headmaster. It had, after all, been like that for the last ninety years.'

Grant knew from experience how important the relationship between headmaster and Council was to the whole tone of the school. 'If there is no harmony between them, the school cannot make progress.' Nor does he see any difficulty in the make up of the Council, even though some members have little experience of education in a practical sense. 'This is more than a teaching institution, it is a school of Christian foundation. One reason why clergy are on the Council is to see that the Christian values espoused by the school are in keeping with the charter. They do that very well and I do not see it as a problem.'

Since taking over, Grant has increased the number of sports in the school and Rugby is now compulsory only in the first year of the main school. He introduced soccer and cross-country running as alternative winter sports and the immediate response showed how welcome that was. He has also placed more emphasis on art, music, drama and debating and plans to develop these even more in the future.

The problems that Jika Travers faced, the problems of social change, did



not disappear on his retirement even though attitudes are not as strident now as they were in the sixties and seventies. The problems of drugs and alcohol have not been solved, and may never be. While drugs are still only a problem of the minority, the use of alcohol is much more widespread.

This has to be handled differently depending on whether a boy is a boarder or a day boy, and this introduces an apparent inconsistency that is itself an additional problem. There is no question about the use of alcohol by boys under eighteen. It is unacceptable under any circumstances. With day boys over eighteen, however, Grant has to assume that if they are drinking outside school they are doing so with the knowledge of their parents. He would pass the information on to the parents and expect them to take any steps that they might consider necessary.

But an eighteen-year-old boarder is treated more harshly. He is a member of a house which contains boys a great deal younger than him, and the effect of the behaviour of older boys cannot be divorced from them. Indeed, much of the effectiveness of the house system comes from the leadership and example of older boys on younger boys and while this is

Boys at the school notice board in 1963.

mostly for the good it is no less effective when it is undesirable. A boarder found drinking in a pub is likely to face strong disciplinary action by the school, while a day boy found drinking in similar circumstances will be subject to a different course of action.

Parents are an added complication, for their attitudes can range from indifference to fury, whatever the boy might have been doing. Some parents of boarders are delighted that their eighteen-year-old is not allowed to touch alcohol, others see no harm in their son spending Saturday evening in a decent pub.

Grant recognises that parents now have a different role than they did in Robson's day, when he made the point strongly that parents had to keep out of the way and leave it all to the school. 'Education is no longer regarded as something for the experts to do alone, it is a complementary exercise between parents and the school.' Parents now expect to be able to make their views known, and they expect the headmaster to give them some consideration. It takes a great deal of time, of course, but it is now an inescapable part of being a headmaster.

These changes have not only affected headmasters, they have affected the teaching staff as well. As Peter Jenkins says: 'The relationship with parents has changed very considerably in the last ten years. There is now much more accountability and contact between parents and staff. And a greater readiness to be critical of decisions. It sometimes seems that some parents want to have the best of both worlds. They send their child to a school such as this because it offers stricter discipline, and yet they do not hesitate to query decisions that are made in order to preserve it.'

Teachers, too, have changed. The days when a form master taught English, Maths and Geography to the same group of boys are long gone. Now school teachers see themselves as specialists in their own subject and spend most of their time within their own department. They might teach that subject at all levels, and if so they will handle so many boys that they are unlikely to get to know any of them really well.

This makes the need for pastoral care even greater, as without it boys with difficulties would be even more likely to escape notice. The school has a full-time counsellor on the staff for specialist help, although it also remains part of the duty of the chaplain as well. Pastoral care is even extended to those who are asked to leave the school and they are given help, if they need it, to obtain a place in another independent school. The school also takes boys who have been asked to leave other schools, although the results are not always satisfactory. But it is important that care of this kind is available, no matter what the circumstances might be.

Although the boarding system has not changed as much as some other aspects of the school, there is some concern about its long term future.



Many girls' schools have found it difficult to find teaching staff that are willing to run houses and there is a fear that boys' schools might soon experience the same difficulty. While the extra income and free accommodation are still attractive to many masters in boys' schools, there is no doubt that the job calls for a great deal of dedication.

John Colebrook, who has run Robson House since 1972, knows more about boys than most parents ever do. 'By the time a boy has been in the house for twelve months you know what his needs are, how he reacts and how well you get on with him. So you are dealing intensively only with this group of new boys because you already have the basis of your relationship established with the older boys. But you have to keep an eye on them all the time because boys change. There is a period in third and fourth form when most of them become hostile for a while and it seems then that your friendship with them has come to an end. They lose their good manners, hardly ever have a smile and can barely say good morning to you. I accept that as a stage in their development. In many cases they are best left alone, but watched carefully to see that they do not come to any harm. You let them enjoy the new status they have reached in their lives where they don't want you standing over them. By the time they reach fifth form, and

Robert Grant, the sixth Headmaster of Shore, with his family in 1983.

certainly the sixth, they are all back on side again. It is perfectly natural.'

It is also time consuming and a housemaster can expect little privacy during term time. But the thought of houses being run by non-teaching staff is not a welcome one.

Much of the administration of the school is carried out by the bursar, who acts as its business manager. Jack McCann has been the bursar at Shore since 1962. He was born in Newcastle and worked briefly for the Commonwealth Bank before doing war service in the Royal Australian Navy. When the war ended he returned to the bank and studied part-time for a commerce degree. He then moved to stockbrokers Ord Minnett and when the position of bursar at Shore was advertised he decided to apply. 'My idea at that stage was to get out of the stockbroking business and to spend a year or two collecting my thoughts. Being the bursar of a school that obviously must be rolling in dough seemed like a good idea. I thought they probably sat on high stools with quill pens and eyeshades and I thought that would be a nice relaxing job while I worked out what I wanted to do.' He was still there twenty-five years later.

The bursar at Shore has two distinct and separate functions. On the one hand he is clerk of the Council, appointed by it and answerable to it. He attends Council meetings in this capacity and he might advise on legal obligations or the commercial details that a proposed plan might raise. As chief financial officer he keeps the accounts and provides the professional assistance and advice on business matters that Council members, none of whom are full-time, might need.

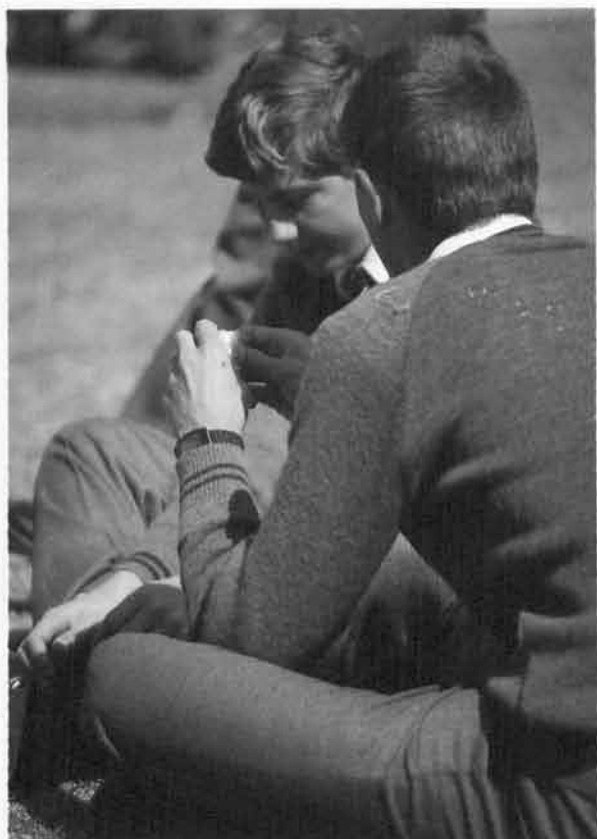
In the second part of his job he works with the delegated authority of the headmaster and is responsible for maintaining the fabric of the school and engaging and directing the maintenance and catering staff so that they can provide the services that the school needs.

As the school grows, so does the need for services. Although academic staff are the responsibility of the headmaster, they are paid from the bursar's office and they have to be supported with the material they need. So an increase in teaching staff automatically flows through to the bursar's office and in time leads to an increase in administrative staff. That staff also does the buying for most of the school (the exception is the library) and as such it has to direct a large number of purchase orders and organise an equally large number of payments. It is also responsible for collecting fees from parents and for dealing with government departments and their ever-increasing demands for information.

One of Jack McCann's most difficult jobs is controlling expenditure so that it does not exceed the budget set by Council, and in this he does not have a great deal of scope. Most of the expenditure goes on salaries and wages. 'and that makes up a figure that you cannot do much about'. He has



The Gladesville boat shed.



Above, lunch break. Below, The First VIII at the 1987 January rowing camp.



a big advantage in that because the school is fully booked he knows fairly accurately what the income will be, but equally he knows what the demands on it will be. If there is a slight drop in the number of day boys or boarders this will not result in a similar drop in expenditure because teaching staff and house facilities still have to be maintained. 'You would need to lose about twenty-five people from each year before you can adjust the staff. If you were to lose only ten in each year that would be a big loss of income with very little saving.'

The control of expenditure can therefore be applied to only a small range of activities, and it is a fact of a bursar's life that it is these activities that he is most likely to be asked to increase, which leads many on the teaching staff to view his approach as extremely parsimonious.

'I adopt a fairly critical approach that starts with "no". I do not find that difficult, although some of the teaching staff do. Their job is to run their departments as best they can and to see that they are well provided. It is my job to identify for the Council or the headmaster those situations where the cost is high and the benefit is low.'

Many requests fall into a recognised pattern and can be approved with little difficulty. It is when something is proposed for the first time that Jack McCann has to ask why. 'One of the staff might want to buy a dozen bottles of beer at Christmas for the people who have helped with butterfly collecting. A nice thing to do for them. But then others will want to do the same for people who have helped them, and before you know it we are talking real money. So there is often more to a simple request than meets the eye, and it all gets back to the fact that you are working with a small range of expenses because there is nowhere else to work.'

The meals at Shore are produced by Nationwide Food Services, a large, specialist company that now provides this service for a number of schools and other institutions. The company provides Shore with a chef-manager whose job it is to produce the meals that the school needs. He employs staff on behalf of the school, does all the marketing and keeps the meals within an agreed cost.

The advantage to the school is that the job is carried out by experts and that the staff do not have to be employed when the school is not in term. Even so, penalty rates for weekends make labour costs a problem. Unlike boarding schools in America, labour costs in Australia for each meal amount to more than the cost of the food.

The aim is to supply a balanced Australian diet that will not be too unlike that served at home. 'From time to time a parent will say that we should not serve ice-cream and that we should give them muesli for breakfast. But that does not work. Most kids do not eat muesli for breakfast at home, and they have no intention of eating it here. So the diet does

B. Barnier and S. Siddle
cataloguing in the Archives
in 1981.



include some things that are not nutritionally ideal, but we are doing more than just stoke a lot of furnaces.'

Feeding over two hundred boys three times a day is no small task, and the amount of food used is considerable. In one year, for instance, Shore gets through more than 14 000 loaves of bread, 22 000 litres of milk, nearly 1500 kilograms of peas, 2000 kilograms of topside steak, 2000 no. 11 chickens, 9000 fish fingers and, to the relief of some parents, 500 kilograms of muesli.

It is tempting to believe, when looking at figures such as these or when standing beside the dining hall when the bell rings, that boys are simply food-seeking organisms with few other needs.

But their other needs are considerable, often complex and invariably individual. With over a thousand boys in its care, Shore has to educate them, guide them, advise them, discipline them, encourage them, and only in some cases feed them. It needs a staff of 160 people, an investment of millions of dollars, and an income that has to be used with care and which, if government decides, might drop alarmingly in the future.

It needs more than that, even. It needs dedication, it needs people who understand boys and who can excite their interest, people who will devote countless hours encouraging boys to do the things they enjoy.

It is nice to think, as Bishop Barry did at the opening ceremony, that Shore will still be doing all that in a hundred years' time.

Epilogue

IF THE DAY BEFORE grew lively as it went on, the first day of the new year starts like bedlam and builds up from there.

There are boys everywhere, fast-moving, erratic, noisy. Games are already in progress; formal games which have rules that only the players know. If one boy touches the ball they all know it to be a foul, but if another touches it they know it to be a sign of true class. Others talk, but it is difficult in the noise. Or it would be to anybody who is not a boy. Boys simply talk louder. Even in this din, most are still not using their maximum volume. Perhaps they do not have a maximum.

At 9 o'clock exactly the bell rings. It is the start of a sequence of ringing bells that will continue with patterned punctuality until the end of term.

In spite of the noise, every boy in the school hears the bell and most know what it means. They separate into groups and move off to their allotted classrooms. Within seconds most of them have disappeared, and with them the noise.

But some are left behind, standing uncertainly beside the arch. Most are small boys but some are much older. They are all slightly nervous. They all have neat white shirts, polished shoes, trousers with knife-edged creases and pristine boaters.

Peter Jenkins comes from his office beside the arch and walks across to stand on the steps that lead to the school ground. He calls together this immaculate group of quiet boys. 'Good morning, boys, and welcome to Shore.'

He separates the older boys and sends them off with guides to join their classes. The new first year boys then file into the Memorial Hall for more welcomes. The headmaster arrives. There is complete silence. It is not imposed on them. For once it is natural. This is an important day. 'You are now a member of one of the great schools of Australia. Take pride in it.' They do. They might be determined not to show it, but they are bursting with so much pride that they can hardly contain it.

Their names are called and they are led off in groups by their new form master to classrooms that their grandfathers might have occupied on their first day at Shore.

And later in the morning they file into the chapel and occupy the seat

he might have used. After a hymn and a psalm, the new senior prefect gets up and turns the pages of the Memorial Books as he makes his way to the lectern. Then he reads the school lesson.

'For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.'

Some of these boys will be confirmed in this chapel, some will marry in it and some will have their children christened in it.

But they are not thinking of such things now. They are Shore boys and there is work to do.

They file out of the chapel into the bright sunshine and move off in groups so that the work can begin.

It is the start of a new year at Shore.

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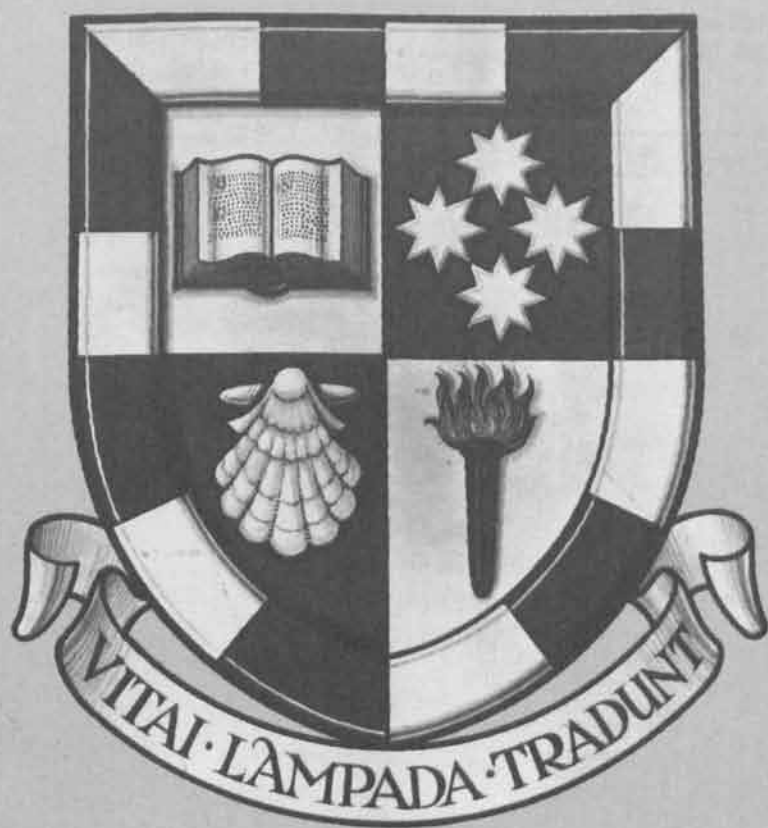
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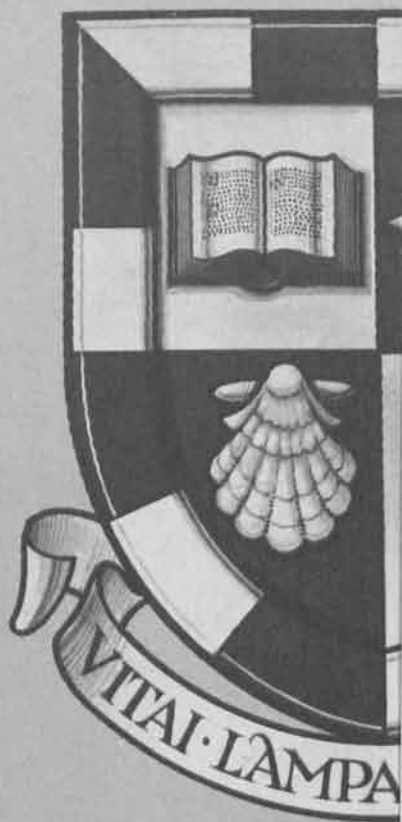
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Peter Taylor was born and educated in England before moving to Australia in 1970 to run the Australian branch of an international book publisher. In 1976 he became a full-time writer and since then has written widely on Australian life, history and culture. When not travelling thousands of kilometres across the Australian countryside with note book and camera he lives in Sydney with his wife Rosemary and a large dog called Sam.

Jacket photograph by Peter Taylor.

