

Recollections of 1910-12

1. I must begin in the Spring of 1910.

My father wanted me to follow my brother's footsteps and enter Saltley College, Birmingham. But I had heard of this new College in Leeds and made up my mind to apply. I thought my father would stop me, as the fees were double that of Saltley. However, he backed me, bless him. I applied and was called to Interview in Leeds Town Hall.

This story may be a bit far fetched but it is absolutely true. I had never been away from home before, so you can imagine my feelings. I was called into the Interview Room and sat before Mr. Parsons and his Secretary.

He had a good look at me, shuffled amongst papers and then asked just one question - Can you play any games? That was all and I was able to respond by telling him I had gained my Cricket Colours at my Rugby Grammar School.

2. So I entered in September 1910, a College in the heart of Yorkshire Cricket.

I am more than grateful for the tradition which was building up with regards to the first night at Buckingham House. A social gathering in our Lounge. All new students had to contribute something to the entertainment - no excuses whatever. What was I to do? Fortunately I had a musical background - piano. So, looking through the students' National Song Book, I chose the simplest song - "Ye Banks & Braes", and when my turn came, set down at the piano and sang the song. To my surprise (and I think everybody else's) I discovered I had a pleasing tenor vice (sorry - voice) and that put me in the musical events for the next two years - and, later, followed me wherever I went - even during the 14-18 war. So you can now see I am grateful to Leeds for bringing that out of me.

One contribution stays with me to this day and I am often quoting it -  
One student got up and just said this -

'When I was young and in my prime,  
I could eat a bun at any time,  
But now I'm getting old and grey  
I could only eat but one a day.'

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3. Mr. Parson's talk to New Entrants

This I shall always remember for 3 things

## (a) We were all put on our honour:

Being an undenominational College there was no compulsion to attend a place of worship on Sundays. However, he put us on our honour to attend at least once on a Sunday. To my knowledge this honour was generally accepted.

## (b) He told us that on no account would he tolerate swearing, but he did let us use one word - a good old English damn when the necessity arose.

## (c) Although a mixed College, on no account were we to associate either with a College girl - or one outside.

The penalty for this would be severe. One of my year did get caught and was sent down for a week - if caught again expulsion. There was little socialising with College girls. We met, of course, on way to lectures, or at a concert, but I never remember a dance being held. Maybe that was because of the hostel system.

## 4. You ask about hostel life.

We were quite a happy family : In my case we were kindly supervised by Mr. Harrison. He ruled us gently and sympathetically. Mr. Kerr was his second in command. Both were killed in the 14-18 war.

One of the Seniors was appointed as a Senior Prefect. It was his task to see we kept the few rules of the house, reporting to Mr. Harrison any defaulters.

He also presided at our Study Sessions. These were held every evening (with the exception of Saturday and Sunday). This study period was from 6 p.m. - 9 p.m. Supper followed, and just a short period until lights were out in our dormitory at 10.15.

Meals were 'smashing'. It was well known that the Principal believed in feeding us well. We had an excellent matron and a marvellous cook. The result was that it was 'home from home' feeding - perhaps I could say - even better. Extra helpings were there, if wanted.

I think our Cook's speciality went to - porridge, ginger cake and ginger pudding. Of course the ginger cake was the Special Yorkshire kind - Parkin. This was provided in plenty on my birthday, Nov. 5th. Yes, we were more than well fed.

Each Saturday and Sunday we were allowed out till 9.30. We had to get special permission for a later return - mainly to attend a theatre or a concert in the City.

How the T.V. series 'Good Old Days' brought memory to work and the great, old time comedians we saw in that Theatre.

Just one hostel tradition was building up. That was on Hallowe'en. After 10.15 we all covered ourselves with a white bed sheet and took our 'Jerry' and placed a lighted candle in it, and then paraded round the landings. I shall never forget Mr. Kerr's face when he met us! A second custom was - no bed at all the last night we were in College, generally spent walking about the grounds.

Of course, we sang the College Song on many occasions - particularly on a birthday of a student. Is Yip-i-du-da, still the College Anthem?

#### 5. Leisure Time

Normal routine followed these lines:

Lectures in the morning.

Afternoons mostly free, and most of us took to games; football, hockey or Harriers.

If you were a member of the Harriers you were allowed out after study for a training spin along the Headingley lanes and came into supper after.

Two fixtures were held - No. 1. Seniors V Juniors. After this race, the team was selected to Run against York Training College - the venue alternating. In my case it was held at York. The winter games were Association Football and Hockey, played on rather a rough ground.

Cricket There was great competition here. Most of the 1st XI were Yorkshire lads and how a Warwickshire man got into the XI I do not know. I was selected as a bowler, but was never called on once.

I think this must be a College record for all time. We went to play Cleckheaton. Our openers were both named Smith (not related) and on a summer's afternoon they put on 303 without being parted. Cleckheaton were dismissed for under 40.

Our home games were played on the Sacred Headingley Cricket Ground. When the County side were not using it, as least 3 local clubs could operate at the same time.

Colours were awarded for Football, Hockey and Cricket and Harriers. I was awarded my Hockey and Harriers' colours.

We enjoyed the many walks out on to the Moors.

Mr. Parsons, a noted mountaineer, took us on an excursion to Ingleboro. It was while climbing this that he made us stop frequently and turn round and admire the views behind us.

His theory was that so few people turned round, consequently missing many superb views.

6. Dress. I think the group photographs I enclose will adequately describe our dress at that time. Sombre ready made mostly. Stiff collars were the fashion then, with the odd 'butterfly' thrown in for state occasions.
- Boots - not shoes.
- Head dress - College Caps to attend lectures. Straw hats with College band for summer.
- Sunday best - Bowler Hat.
- Nowadays, of course, it is generally 'no hat'.
- This custom came into force after the 14-18 war. A spell of tin-helmets, sun-helmets out East, I think was mostly responsible for this fashion coming into use.

7. School Practice

Three Stages. 1st Year. Mainly Observation

2nd Year. A week's school practice in one of the local schools.

During this each student gave a lesson, the subject being chosen by the Tutor in Charge.

In my case, English - a selected poem.

This was observed by fellow students and the Tutor. At the end a general criticism.

Rather an ordeal.

Finally, came the Final Examination for the Certificate.

I have mine still and its number is 12/709 with a Distinction in Theory of Music.

I had no difficulty in finding a teaching post. In fact it was offered to me - in Nuneaton, Warwickshire.

It was unfortunate that the 1914-18 war interrupted our teaching career after leaving College. I volunteered in early Sept./14, service in the 2nd landing at Gallipoli, then to Salonica line.

Leeds stood me in good stead, I am sure. I went without an illness or a scratch.

1919. Fe. return to teaching. It was a hard task, teachers forget all about their training.

However, it all a humble one. In 1927 I obtained my 1st Headfordshire. In 1933 I moved to a large Village Sch. I retired in 1950. But

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here again, teaching was sadly interrupted by the 39/45 war.

This experience as a Village Schoolmaster during that War is a story in itself.

I still maintain that it was a great pity that the Education authority did not send us back to College in 1919 for a Refresher.

I sincerely hope you can pick out some recollections which will be of use to you. To me Leeds T.C. was a very happy place and I am proud that I am still a Wise Old Owl?

Thomas Halliwell.

Please forgive any errors and I hope you can read the writing.