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GRAMMAR SCHOOLS  
IN  
HANOVERIAN ENGLAND

A.M.d'I.OAKESHOTT

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A thesis submitted for the Master of Education Degree of  
Durham University in January, 1964.

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To avoid unnecessary repetition, the following abbreviations have been used in the references appended to each Section:

Carlisle - N. Carlisle: A Concise Description of the Endowed Grammar Schools in England and Wales, 1818.

CCR. - Reports of the Charity Commissioners 1818-42.

ESR. - Report of the Endowed Schools Commission 1864.

VCH. - Victoria County History.

**PART I**

**INTRODUCTION**

PART IINTRODUCTION

Historians of English education have devoted considerable time to the Grammar School, its origins, tradition and development. In all this wealth of information and interpretation, however, one period has received relatively less attention than the rest. There is much written on the Grammar school under the Tudors and Stuarts and the influences and effects of Renaissance, Reformation and Restoration. There is much written on the Grammar school from the Victorian era to the present day and the growth of the modern systems - and philosophies - of education. Yet the history of the classical school between these two periods - from the accession of George I to the death of William IV, from the rise of the Dissenting Academies to the failure of the monitorial schools - has been somewhat lightly treated.

This does not mean a neglect of the history of education in the Hanoverian age: indeed a great deal has been written. The various Academies, the charity schools, the Lancasterian and Bell schools all have their chroniclers. The many societies for the development of education and the views of the many radical and liberal philosophers and educationalists have all been examined in some detail. The Eighteenth Century has been treated as presenting two aspects in education. It is seen as a period rich in new ideas and methods which, although they were frequently unsuccessful in practice, reveal a genuine enthusiasm for, and awareness of the importance of, education. It is also seen as a period of decline and decay, a period in which a

diminishing group of reactionaries clung to outmoded fashions and thus caused the traditional bases of education - the grammar schools and universities - to stagnate.

The Grammar schools have, therefore, been relegated to a minor role as unworthy of detailed investigation. They were, almost invariably, regarded as institutions notable for the degeneracy of staff, the barbarity of discipline and the paucity of useful instruction, and which remained in this condition until purged and revived by the various activities of Lord Brougham, Charity Commissioners and Dr. Thomas Arnold. More recent historians of education, however, while not entirely rejecting the traditional view, have suggested that the situation was not in fact quite so appalling. Some notable teachers and scholars have been "discovered", some grammar schools have been shown to have flourished despite the apparent inadequacies of staff and curriculum. Some schools, it has been suggested, contrived to adapt themselves to the new learning of the age without rejecting the classical pattern which was their heritage.

In the early nineteenth century, Nicholas Carlisle tried to investigate the condition of the grammar schools of England and Wales. He wrote to every grammar school foundation he could trace and asked the Headmaster and Governors for an account of the school's recent history, its curriculum and its methods. Carlisle's industry is much to be admired and the resulting publication throws much light on the subject. His method, however, was open to abuse. Some Headmasters stated their case rather than told the strict truth, some ignored Carlisle altogether,

and others replied in vague and general terms. At much the same time, the Charity Commissioners began their massive investigation of English charities including, of course, most of the endowed Grammar schools - most, but not all, because certain types of charitable trust were excluded from the Commissioners' inquiry. The collected reports of the Charities Commission furnish a considerable volume of information on the schools, but even here this is some problem, since the investigation tended to touch only lightly on matters of curriculum and to ignore discipline (save where these directly affected the condition of the charity) and to be much more concerned with the management and condition of the endowment. Since then there have been many histories of specific schools which include some account of the particular institutions in the Hanoverian period, but there has been no comprehensive survey to correct, clarify and extend the work of Carlisle and the Commissioners.

With the recent suggestion that the accepted evaluation of the eighteenth century grammar schools may need reconsideration and perhaps even correction, the lack of information has become more important. The object of this thesis is neither to eulogise nor to condemn the Hanoverian grammar schools: my purpose is to amass the available information, to correlate the various sources and accounts, to assemble and not to assess.

Before attempting to do this, before attempting any examination of the many aspects of the Hanoverian grammar school, it is obviously necessary to consider what is understood by this term: what, in fact, was a Grammar school in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries?



In earlier ages the grammar school was clearly distinguished from other schools by its curriculum. Founders, governors, staff, and society, had been convinced of the value and necessity of Greek, Latin and, to a lesser extent, Hebraic, studies and had endowed, maintained and patronised schools specifically for these subjects. By 1700 many people were no longer convinced of the merit or utility of the Grammar schools; by 1800 this doubt was shared by many of the schools' teachers and governors. In consequence the Grammar school was faced with a choice: either it must broaden its curriculum and so keep alive or remain strictly classical and hope that a sufficient number of conservative parents could be found to maintain it. Even in these latter schools some concessions were usually made and there was provision for leisure-hour tuition in non-classical subjects. Some of the best grammar schools, however, accepted the new attitudes and changed, quite voluntarily, to a broader curriculum, introducing the new studies as a subordinate but essential part of the classical scholars' education. Both are, clearly, still Grammar schools, yet there is considerable divergence between the two groups. Moreover, some schools, not by foundation intended as classical schools, included Latin and, rather less often, Greek, in their studies: the distinction between these and those grammar schools offering a wide curriculum is hard to discern. It is clear that curriculum alone cannot be regarded as a satisfactory criterion by which to assess the nature of Hanoverian schools.

The earlier Grammar schools had also been distinguished by their relationship with the Church. Both before and after the Reformation the

Grammar schools had been partly controlled by the Church authorities and had, in their turn, devoted time to teaching the doctrines and beliefs of the Established Church. In the eighteenth century, however, this connection was no longer universally accepted or maintained. Some Grammar schools were run by Non-Conformist teachers, a few even had governors who were Dissenters. Furthermore the traditional control by the Bishop - by virtue of his right to grant or withhold a licence to teach and as Visitor - was diminishing through the reluctance of teachers to accept the episcopal authority and through the laxity of many Bishops in their exercise of it. Although most Grammar schools continued to support the Church and to remain obedient to its authority, this too is an unsatisfactory method of distinguishing the nature of schools. Many non-classical schools taught the doctrines of the Anglican church and some grammar schools did not, while the question of licensing became increasingly confused by legal restrictions and disputes.

It is perhaps wiser to turn to the intentions of founders and governors in determining the function, purpose and nature of schools. Thus a school founded as a Grammar School clearly comes within the scope of this thesis whatever the nature of its curriculum in the eighteenth century. So too do those schools which while neither founded nor maintained as purely classical schools, were designed to provide a secondary type of education, teaching pupils more than the mere rudiments of reading and writing, and which considered Latin as a major element in this task.

The question of curriculum becomes important not so much in determining which schools fall within these categories, but only in deciding when schools ceased to be genuine grammar schools. There can be no dispute about those schools founded and maintained as purely, or largely, classical schools. Nor can there be any problem about those which, unable to meet the many challenges which confronted them, either closed altogether or, more frequently, ceased any attempt to teach the classics and became entirely elementary schools. The difficulty comes with those schools which taught the classics - usually Latin alone - to those pupils who asked. This usually meant that the bulk of the school was composed of elementary pupils, under the care of an usher, with a small class, under the Headmaster's direction, studying the classics. Frequently, however, even this expedient for maintaining some degree of classical education was unsuccessful and the number of pupils who sought the higher studies diminished and, on many occasions, ceased entirely. Schools might continue to have qualified staff and to offer Latin and even Greek to those who required long after the last classical student had departed.

When is a grammar school not a grammar school? The solution must, of course, rest on some examination of the particular circumstances. In general, however, it is noticeable that once schools ceased to teach - as distinct from offer - the classics, the likelihood of a revival was small. Such schools became, almost invariably, no more than elementary schools. So long as a regular stream of pupils seeking some classical tuition could be obtained, however small a proportion of the whole school

they might form, staff and governors had some justification in considering their institution to be still a Grammar school.

PART II

SECTION 1

AUTHORITY

PART IISECTION 1AUTHORITY

When grammar schools were founded one of the first problems that had to be decided was in who or whom the authority and control should be vested. Founders devised a number of different solutions and the people and methods of control decided upon were, fundamentally, responsible for the prosperity and, indeed, survival of the schools.

The great majority of grammar schools were controlled by some incorporated body of governors. This could be quite simply a group of men, chosen in the first instance by the founder or his delegate, whose sole corporate function was to manage endowments and administer the school (Yarm<sup>(1)</sup>, Wath<sup>(2)</sup>, Kinver<sup>(3)</sup>). Often, though not always, these governors had the right to appoint and dismiss staff and they could inspect the school as and when they chose. Such bodies were usually self-perpetuating, though here too there were exceptions and various other institutions or assemblies had the right to appoint new governors - or some of them - when necessary (Newcastle-under-Lyme<sup>(4)</sup>). A popular alternative to this type of incorporated government was for the control of the school to be vested in some already existing, well-established and reputable corporation. Thus some schools were controlled by London guilds (Sutton Valence<sup>(5)</sup>, Barton-under-Needwood<sup>(6)</sup>) and others by town corporations (Totnes<sup>(7)</sup>, Boston<sup>(8)</sup>). A few of the schools were governed by the Dean and Chapter of an appropriate Cathedral or Minster (King's School, Gloucester<sup>(9)</sup>, Southwell<sup>(10)</sup>) while rather more had as their

trustees, the Fellows of some Oxford or Cambridge College (Abergavenny<sup>(11)</sup>, Middleton<sup>(12)</sup>). There were, of course, variations. At some schools the founder's heirs acted in conjunction with the incorporated trustees, and at others the right to appoint staff was granted to some separate person or body. Generally, however, the duties and responsibilities of these trustees were the same as for the others - management of property, choice and payment of staff, upkeep of the school, and the general supervision of school rules and progress. There was a further, and often far less satisfactory, type of control. This was where the endowment by which the school was supported was left by bequest to the care of a group of feoffees (Towcester<sup>(13)</sup>, Heversham<sup>(14)</sup>). Their task was quite simply to administer the property and, sometimes, to appoint staff. In this way it was quite possible for control of a school to be handed down as a kind of family heirloom and little could be done to right matters if the family or the feoffees lost interest in their charge. There was also a very real danger that feoffees might appropriate the funds to their own purposes: little could be done to prevent or secure compensation for this.\*

In addition to the governors there were also Visitors. The Bishop of the diocese in which a school stood was always the general Visitor and he had the right to issue to the staff a licence to teach. Without this they could not, in theory at least, take up their duties.

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\* For full discussion on types of governor see A. M. Stowe: English Grammar Schools in the Reign of Queen Elizabeth.



Moreover the Bishop had the right to inspect this licence, or, more precisely, the holder, and, if necessary, withdraw it if it could be shown that the holder was failing in his duty.\* Obviously this was a form of check on school governors since the Bishop could always refuse to give permission for anyone to teach in the school until such time as it had been brought up to what he considered a suitable standard. Bishops, unfortunately perhaps, did not always exercise this authority and it was unusual for a licence to be refused. It did happen. The celebrated wrangle over Skipton Grammar School reached its first climax when the Archbishop of York refused a licence to a man he considered unsuitable and later Lord Chief Justice Kenyon was to observe that if more ecclesiastics had been as conscientious then the decline of English grammar schools might well have been averted.<sup>(15)</sup>‡ There was too the incident at Little Strickland and Thrimby where the school was allowed to fall into disrepair. When a new master sought a licence, the Bishop refused it until the school buildings had been put into better condition. Unfortunately the owner of the property refused to repair the school until there was a licensed master. There was stalemate for some years until the Earl of Lonsdale intervened and offered a site for a new building. A collection was made, a building erected and a licence granted.<sup>(16)</sup>

In addition to this general Visitor, however, the founder or the governors of a school could appoint a Special Visitor or Visitors, whose

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\* See Part II, Section 2, p. 33 ff.

‡ See Part II, Section 2, p. 36.

task it was to inspect the school at regular intervals, examine the pupils - and the staff - for their ability and diligence. They seldom had any power to compel, but obviously conscientious governors would take note of the Visitors' report and, if possible, remedy any defects remarked upon. At a few schools the Visitors' power was real and extensive: they could order the alteration of unsatisfactory features and even, in some cases, control the appointment, salary and deposition of staff - leaving little to the governors beyond the management of the property and the chore of drafting regulations to accord with the Visitors' decisions. Not surprisingly, this arrangement tended to be unsatisfactory. Governors resented the authority vested in the Visitors and tended to neglect the school (Bedford<sup>(17)</sup>) or to usurp the Visitors' rights (Shrewsbury<sup>(18)</sup>). In either case the only result could be that school and staff suffered.

At some schools the governors themselves acted as Visitors (Bolton-le-Moors<sup>(19)</sup>, Kirkby Lonsdale<sup>(20)</sup>) but more often some outsider was invited to act. The Visitor was frequently the holder of some notable office - a Bishop, an academic or some equally distinguished public figure. Thus the Bishop of Ely was Visitor to Wisbech Grammar School,<sup>(21)</sup> while at Reading the three Visitors were the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, the President of St. John's College, Oxford and the Warden of All Souls, Oxford.<sup>(22)</sup> After the refoundation in 1792 of the King's School, Pontefract, the special Visitor was the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster.<sup>(23)</sup>

Generally, however, Visitors were only as useful as the governors allowed them to be. Unless they held some particular authority, the occasional inspection by Visitors was no more than an opportunity for a social occasion for the governors, however much of an ordeal it may have been for masters and pupils. At most schools real power lay in the hands of the trustees, feoffees or governors and it was their competence and diligence which determined the success or failure of the schools.

No doubt many governors attempted sincerely to exercise their powers and fulfil their responsibilities to the best of their ability. It is undoubtedly true that the good governors occasioned little comment and were taken for granted while the bad governors achieved a greater notice and thus appear more common. It is, however, a sad commentary on the standards of public responsibility that so many boards of governors should have in some way failed in their duties and positively harmed the school whose care they held. Even some of the more successful schools were hampered by the indifference or irresponsibility of their governors.

Very often the governors were guilty of dreadful mismanagement of property and funds. It was not unusual for trustees to sell property and attempt to raise income by investing the resulting monies. All too often the funds were unwisely invested with some local merchant or man of property who subsequently defaulted (Kirkby Stephen,<sup>(24)</sup> Cartmel<sup>(25)</sup>, Bispham<sup>(26)</sup>). Even where this did not occur, it could happen that the governors made an unwise bargain and that the property could more properly have been kept and developed (Colchester<sup>(27)</sup>, Ravonstonedale<sup>(28)</sup>).

Sometimes the trustees quite simply showed little financial acumen. Thus at Queen Elizabeth's Free Grammar and Writing School, Bristol, the governors were persuaded to commute an annual tribute of three bushels of rye and three and a half bushels of wheat for a money payment. Even at the time of the change the sum given in lieu was rather small and after a few years it became utterly inadequate as prices rose and the value of money fell.<sup>(29)</sup> A similar mistake was made at Kirkby Beacock when it was decided to let lands on ridiculously long leases (up to 1000 years) at a low rent (£3 10s. Od. p.a.) to one of the governors. Some years later the successful opening up of coal mines on this land increased its value enormously. In fact the governors were fortunate and were able, after a long legal struggle, to have the leases annulled and to gain restitution of a considerable sum of money. None the less the original action was remarkably ill-advised and might well have caused the ultimate collapse of the school.<sup>(30)</sup> Some governors allowed property to fall into disrepair and so caused greater expense than would have been incurred by ordinary repairs (Bolton-le-Sands<sup>(31)</sup>); others forgot to renew leases and so lost control of their property (Maldon<sup>(32)</sup>). Some governors confused their sources of income, and contrived to muddle property belonging to the school charity with property belonging to other endowments and so became financially embarrassed (Plymouth<sup>(33)</sup>); others let property at special reduced rates to colleagues or staff and so prevented the school from enjoying the full income proper to it (Camberwell<sup>(34)</sup>). All governors could well have taken note of the Charity Commissioners' observation to the negligent trustees of Wigan

Grammar schools: repairs must be carried out and debts paid but "such a system of management will require much more careful attention than any of the governors appear to have bestowed lately upon the affairs of the school."<sup>(35)</sup>

Incompetence and bad management were serious but they were no worse than the quite simple neglect of duty which was so frequently to be found amongst the governors of grammar schools in the Hanoverian period. Trustees often failed to attend meetings (Crypt Grammar School, Gloucester<sup>(36)</sup>, Wolverhampton<sup>(37)</sup>, North Walsham<sup>(38)</sup>) or, perhaps worse, there was so little interest shown that for many years there were no governors' meetings at all - for six years at Blackrod (1822-28)<sup>(39)</sup>, between 1762-1780 at Bell's Grammar School, Newlands<sup>(40)</sup>, and for over forty years at Calne<sup>(41)</sup>. Lack of interest and regular meetings could easily lead to failure by the trustees to keep their numbers up to the required level. It could happen that eventually all a school's trustees had resigned or died (Upholland<sup>(42)</sup>, Ambleside<sup>(43)</sup>) and that there was no legally authorised body to control the school - if the school contrived to survive the indifference of its governors. This apathy had obvious results. Property was neglected, the school and staff were unsupervised, standards were allowed to fall, appointments were neither quickly nor properly made. A letter, written in 1729, referred to Heath Grammar School, Halifax, observed that "if the Trustees and the Bishop had any concern for the public good since the old little good for naught fellow died, they have had time enough to have placed a good master in the school."<sup>(44)</sup> Moreover, unscrupulous men could take advantage of

the inactivity of governors. Thus at Walsall between 1787 and 1813, the neglect of the trustees enabled the Treasurer to embezzle the funds<sup>(45)</sup> and the same thing occurred at Ripon a few years later.<sup>(46)</sup>

Incompetent and apathetic governors could have a considerable and depressing effect on a school, yet their influence was far smaller than that exerted by avaricious and corrupt men who sought to use their authority and the property in their care to increase not the income and prestige of the school, but their own personal wealth. Thus complaints about the governors of King Edward's School, Birmingham in the 1720's led to an investigation in Chancery which revealed the whole management to be incompetent and corrupt and showed that some of the governors had "borrowed" from the school's funds.<sup>(47)</sup> There was clearly some corruption at Bedford in the 1760's, for although £1,300 was spent on "restoring the school" the results were negligible: the Headmaster remained without a house and the school still had only a single usable room.<sup>(48)</sup> For over twenty years the trustees of Ayshford's Grammar School, Uffculme, failed to make any payment to the staff or towards the upkeep of the school.<sup>(49)</sup> Perhaps the most remarkable example of all is that of the Perse School, Cambridge. A Chancery suit was needed to resolve the matter, but the story was exposed, fully and accurately, in a pamphlet which appeared while the case was still sub judice! The school's founder left £250 p.a. income to be used by the Fellows of Caius College, Cambridge, for the maintenance of the school and some almshouses: the school was to have £60 p.a. By 1829 the income had

risen to some £2,000 p.a. but the school's share was only £150 while the College kept over £1,600. The founder had fixed a Trustee's allowance of £9 p.a.: this had risen to £840 p.a. Moreover, other members of the College were allowed to share in the benefits, and there had been two occasions on which the Bursar had contrived to make errors in the accounts which cheated the school but benefited himself. In view of the conduct of the trustees, what is surprising is not that the school had been in decline and even, temporarily, shut, but that it survived at all. (50)

Not all schools were fortunate enough to have their financial affairs put right by the intervention of the Courts. Sometimes there was insufficient evidence to warrant action; sometimes there was no power by which the Law could interfere. Thus at Bristol, the City Corporation, who were governors of the Grammar School, manipulated their accounts and records so that a considerable sum of money which had accumulated was transferred from the school's account to the Corporation's and, what was perhaps worse, the actual endowed property also became part of the Corporation's general possessions. There was considerable disquiet: it was common knowledge that the City finances had been in chaos and it was obvious that the school monies had averted disaster - but all investigations proved inconclusive and the school gained no redress. (51) The selfish control of governors affected the great boarding schools. The Chapter of Westminster Abbey ignored the school during much of the Hanoverian period and, as Lord Clarendon observed, the school did not share "in that increase of income to an extent which

appears to be proper and right."<sup>(52)</sup> The situation at Winchester was even worse. The rising income was shared between Warden and Fellows: staff and school received nothing. One Warden, in 1740, perceived the wrong - "the unlawfullness of our Proceedings ... the heinous crimes of Perjury, Breach of Trust and injustice to our Wards" - but admitted his lack of courage and did nothing: nor did his successors. The school flourished in spite of the Warden and Fellows.<sup>(53)</sup>

Incompetent and corrupt, negligent and criminal governors were an obvious hazard to the well-being of schools. Unfortunately, sincere and diligent trustees could also be a problem. Country schools - where squire, gentry and vicar acted as trustees - and the large well-established boarding schools, indeed all schools where the governors were representatives of the established tradition and modes of education, were unable to make the adjustments necessary to offer a classical education and still attract support from a population which put greater value on a more utilitarian discipline. Conservative governors chose conservative staff and their schools attempted to preserve, in face of increasing popular opposition, the old, narrow, classical curriculum. They could argue, legitimately, that their task was to enforce a charter which only catered for a classical school and that, in many cases, only the costly and slow expedient of an Act of Parliament could increase the powers of the governors and enable the school to expand and broaden its outlook. When governors were compelled to adopt this defence, change was near: this was the last refuge of reactionary authorities. More often, such governors ignored all criticism and they and their schools



became isolated and introverted - schools like Eton and Westminster are excellent examples of this.

It was only where schools were in the care of governors whose origins were middle-class and who embraced the new attitude to education, that change, voluntary and from within, could occur. Even here there was a danger that in the enthusiasm for the new ways, such governors might sweep away the better parts of the old system. It was, however, authorities of this kind who were best fitted to exercise their power and fulfil their responsibilities. Some blend of traditional and modern, classical and commercial, education had to be evolved which satisfied the demands of all sections of the population. Such grammar schools were the ones which survived to face the new challenges of the Victorian era.

To be a school governor meant different things to different people. For some it was just a title, for others an opportunity for gain. For some it was a means to defend and preserve the classical tradition, for others a chance to rejuvenate and invigorate a moribund stock. It was always more easily possible for governors to have a detrimental influence than a beneficial one. There were so many poor governors because of the almost impossible task which confronted them.

1. CCR. Vol. 8, p.750.
2. CCR. Vol.4, p.410.
3. CCR. Vol. 5, p.622.
4. CCR. Vol.13, p.281.
5. CCR. Vol. 1, p.147.
6. CCR. Vol. 7, p.302.
7. CCR. Vol. 7, p.71.
8. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.789.
9. ESR. p.58.
10. W. A. James: Grammar and Song Schools, Southwell, p.41.
11. Carlisle, Vol. 2, p.164.
12. CCR. Vol. 19, p.260.
13. CCR. Vol.14, p.307.
14. CCR. Vol. 7, p.461.
15. A. M. Gibbons: The Ancient Free Grammar School of Skipton-in-Craven,  
pp.80-82.
16. CCR. Vol. 7, p.597.
17. J. Sargeaunt: A History of Bedford School, pp.50, 62-66.
18. J. B. Oldham: A History of Shrewsbury School, pp.60-62.
19. CCR. Vol. 19, p.155.
20. CCR. Vol. 7, p.544.
21. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.101.
22. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.37; CCR. Vol. 1, p.57.
23. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.866.
24. CCR. Vol. 9, p.674.
25. CCR. Vol. 3, p.183.
26. CCR. Vol. 15, p.137.

27. VCH. Essex Vol. 2, p.507.
28. CCR. Vol. 9, p.699.
29. CCR. Vol. 7, p.196.
30. CCR. Vol. 3, p.5; The Story of St. Bee's, p.24.
31. CCR. Vol. 15, p.241.
32. VCH Essex Vol. 2, p.517.
33. CCR. Vol. 5, p.237.
34. CCR. Vol. 1, p.216.
35. CCR. Vol.21, p.263.
36. R. Austin: Crypt School, Gloucester, p.113.
37. G. P. Mander: The History of the Wolverhampton Grammar School,  
pp.201-202.
38. C. R. Forder: A History of the Paston Grammar School, pp.123-124.
39. CCR. Vol.19, p.184.
40. T. Bright: Bell's ... The Story of a Gloucestershire School, p.17.
41. Carlisle, Vol. 2, p.740.
42. CCR. Vol.21, p.310.
43. CCR. Vol. 7, p.536.
44. Quoted in T. Cox: Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth at Heath, p.28.
45. D. P. J. Fink: Queen Mary's Grammar School, pp.253-254.
46. P. W. Rogers: A History of Ripon Grammar School, pp.133-134.
47. T. W. Hutton: King Edward's School, Birmingham, pp.71-72, 217-220.
48. J. Sargeaunt: op.cit., pp.43-47.
49. CCR. Vol. 3, p.47.
50. J. M. Gray: A History of the Perse School, Cambridge, pp.108-117.
51. C. P. Hill: The History of Bristol Grammar School, pp.69-74.
52. J. Sargeaunt: Annals of Westminster School, pp.240-241;  
L. Tanner: Westminster School, pp.40-42.
53. J. D'E. Firth: Winchester College, pp.87-90.

SECTION 2

STAFF

SECTION 2STAFF

Educationalists in the eighteenth century, much concerned about the decline in standard and popularity of grammar school education, naturally turned their attention to staff and, in particular, to the kind of men required by schools if former glories were to be recovered. John Clarke, in 1730, considered the matter in some detail. The master, he thought, had to be a man of virtue so that he could set an example to everyone; he must be extremely learned in Latin and, should, preferably, know at least some Greek, and something about History and Geography. The master must be proficient at English - there is no value in classical learning if the teacher is not skilled in the use of his own tongue - and must be a Philosopher, well read in Logic and Morality.<sup>(1)</sup> Half-a-century later other writers said much the same. Croft (1784) thought the essential qualities for a teacher were learning, morality, Patience and perseverance.<sup>(2)</sup> Chapman was more specific. For him, the "ideal master" would have studied the Classics, Belles Lettres, Mathematics, Logic, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Natural History, Astronomy, Geography, History and, for men teaching in country schools, Agriculture. Moreover - and here Chapman shows greater realism - the master of a school must find out how best to teach each individual child as well as the class as a whole.<sup>(3)</sup>

It was a formidable requirement. As Clarke declared, the teacher had to be a man "of parts, virtue and a liberal education" prepared to "spend his days (for low reward) in the midst of Noise, Nonsense and

Vexation, and his evenings in hard study."<sup>(4)</sup> This was the ideal. The reality was less satisfactory; many teachers were negligent and bigoted or, as was said of a young master at Arksey, "rather in the way of becoming competent than already efficient."<sup>(5)</sup> It is not easy to discern exactly where the responsibility for this sad state lay.

Appointing staff was one of the duties usually undertaken by the trustee or trustees who were responsible for the school.\* There were, however, exceptions to this, and though their unusual nature must be stressed, it is necessary to consider these exceptions and the problems that could result from them.

At Bromyard, although the Bailiffs and Burgesses were the School's trustees, by the end of the eighteenth century, the master was elected at a parish meeting.<sup>(6)</sup> Guildford's master, who was chosen by the Mayor, also had to be approved by local men.<sup>(7)</sup> The vicar of Earl's Colne paid the trustees £100 for the right to appoint staff (1723)<sup>(8)</sup>. The charter of the Holy Ghost School, Basingstoke, vested the appointment of the Head Master in the Crown, but left the selection of ushers to the trustees, the local Corporation.<sup>(9)</sup> A group of principal townsmen - vicar, coroner, steward and four other citizens - made the appointment of staff at Prescott.<sup>(10)</sup>

These are oddities: curious groups devised by cautious founders, or arrived at by time, influence and circumstance. It was not uncommon, however, for the power of appointment to be officially vested

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\* See Part II, Section 1.

in the Fellows of a University college, even though some other group controlled all other of the school's affairs. At both Bedford and Shrewsbury this dual control was much resented by the trustees - in both cases the local Corporation - and Bedford attempted to wrest control from New College, Oxford<sup>(11)</sup> while Shrewsbury disputed with St. John's College, Cambridge.<sup>(12)</sup> A more satisfactory relationship with St. John's was established at Rivington. In theory the governors had to submit a short list of candidates for appointment as master to the college authorities who then examined candidates and made a choice: in practice the governors usually sought permission to elect a master themselves, and the Fellows of St. John's always agreed.<sup>(13)</sup> Somewhat similarly, at Dalston, the Bishop of Carlisle waived his right to appoint a master, but reserved the right to examine for suitability whoever the parishioners chose.<sup>(14)</sup>

On occasions the right of control passed from one person or group to another. This could be quite voluntary and by agreement. At Appleby, authority was relinquished during the eighteenth century by Queen's College, Oxford, and allowed to pass to the governors.<sup>(15)</sup> The same action was taken at Wolverhampton in 1778, where the Merchant Taylors Company acquiesced in the appointment of a Board of Trustees by Chancery,<sup>(16)</sup> and at Chard in 1801 where the local corporation stepped down in favour of a body of trustees.<sup>(17)</sup> At Colne in 1812 the minister and wardens gave up their rights, and subsequent masters were appointed by those who had contributed to the cost of a new school building.<sup>(18)</sup>

Elsewhere the change was enforced. At Yarm the official governing body failed to perpetuate itself and eventually ceased to exist. Consequently the principal local inhabitants chose a master and in 1812 twelve local "worthies" agreed to act as governors.<sup>(19)</sup> Similarly at Maughanby trustees ceased to exist and here authority lapsed to the Bishop of Carlisle.<sup>(20)</sup> At Workington from 1664-1803 choice lay in the hands of two local vicars with the consent of two churchwardens; but then the trusts were not properly conveyed, and thereafter, until the school shut, the owner of the school property appointed the master.<sup>(21)</sup>

On occasions the law intervened if it could be established that trustees were neglecting their duties. This was how the local corporation lost their control over King Charles I Grammar School, Kidderminster to a group of trustees appointed by Chancery<sup>(22)</sup> and how one set of trustees gave way to another in 1802 at Ayshford's Grammar School, Uffculme.<sup>(23)</sup> An interesting extension of this occurred at Abergavenny. In 1689 the Corporation neglected its duty and Jesus College, Oxford, became trustees. However in 1760 a petition from both Corporation and College to the King procured an Act of Parliament restoring control to the original trustees.<sup>(24)</sup>

Some trustees did more than merely appoint a master. They had to consider his work and, provided all was well, re-appoint him at regular intervals - every Candlemas at Thornton (Lancs.),<sup>(25)</sup> every two years at Gresham's Free Grammar School, Holt.<sup>(26)</sup> In contrast, other masters were never officially appointed! At both Walwyn's Free School, Colwall<sup>(27)</sup> and Thornton (Yorks.)<sup>(28)</sup>, for example, the retiring master "gave" the



school to someone of his choice - in both cases, an improper choice of an incompetent or selfish master - while the governors ignored the situation.

Generally, however, the appointment of staff lay firmly in the hands of the official trustees whether these were local gentry, town corporations, burgesses and ratepayers, or Cathedral Chapters, Livery Companies or University Colleges, and even the numerous exceptions to the general pattern show a connection with it.

The number of staff in a school was frequently fixed by statute and almost always this meant a master and an usher. By far the greatest number of Grammar schools in England had, for most, if not all, of the Hanoverian epoch two members of staff; though it must be added that as the century passed the occupation of the junior master or usher often became merely that of an elementary or "petty" teacher. Moreover in some cases a decline in income, or numbers, or both, led to the reduction of staff to a single master who ran the entire school - and in return took both salaries. Normally, though, schools had two members of staff.

In the greater schools this was too few and extra teachers or assistants had to be employed. It is clear too that in some cases an assistant, or unqualified teacher, was employed instead of an usher or qualified classical teacher. At Witney, for example, there was no great demand for classics and so the staff consisted of a single qualified classical master and a writing master.<sup>(29)</sup> Similarly at Holgate's Free Grammar School, York, the master was assisted by a senior boy who helped teach reading and writing to the youngest pupils.<sup>(30)</sup> At Church

Eaton there was a staff of three: a master for classics, and two mistresses to prepare boys for the master's form and to teach girls.<sup>(31)</sup> This was rather like the situation at Godshill (Isle of Wight) where the master taught classics, the usher taught the three R's and the usher's wife taught local girls who also attended the school.<sup>(32)</sup>

It must of course be recognised that these are far from being "traditional-type" grammar schools even though they retained in part their classical nature. In the genuine grammar schools the duties and the numbers of assistants employed varied, but the most common need was for a writing master to take some of the burden from the usher on whose shoulders fell the task of both preparing boys for the master's, more advanced, classes, and of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic to juniors and seniors as well. The appointment of a writing-master frequently lay in the hands of the Headmaster and depended both on his inclination and on the numbers in the school. A writing-master was an extra and not always a permanent addition to the staff. There were however sufficient throughout the country for us to be able to generalise with justification and regard the standard grammar school staff as consisting either of a single classical master and an usher who taught all subjects as required (at Wigton this included elementary classics<sup>(33)</sup>), but at some schools, like Moulton, it was simply the three R's<sup>(34)</sup>, or of two classical masters and a writing master (as at Boston<sup>(35)</sup>).

There were, of course, some schools of sufficiently constant size and reputation, and with either a Headmaster or governors of sufficient financial means, that they were able to employ more than a single

assistant. Thus Ashby-de-la-Zouch had two classical and two English (or elementary) masters<sup>(36)</sup>; Blundell's School, Tiverton had three classical<sup>tutors</sup> and a writing master<sup>(37)</sup>; while Bedford in the 1830's had a master and an usher and extra staff for French and Mathematics.<sup>(38)</sup> By the same time, Bury St. Edmunds had a staff of five<sup>(39)</sup>, and King Edward's School, Birmingham had a staff of six or seven<sup>(40)</sup> which, like the six at Brewood<sup>(41)</sup> included both French and Drawing-masters. These were considerable staffs, yet some of the greatest schools employed still more. Charterhouse had eight staff in 1825<sup>(42)</sup>, but Harrow had had five classical masters, two writing masters and French and Dancing masters as early as 1771.<sup>(43)</sup> Over fifty years earlier still, at the very opening of the Hanoverian era, Eton had had, in addition to the statutory Headmaster and usher, no less than eight assistants, including masters for French, Drawing, Dancing and Fencing.<sup>(44)</sup> Moreover many of the wealthy boys were attended by their own private tutors.<sup>(45)</sup> By 1766 there were ten assistants and three writing masters and the staff grew as the school flourished. It is worth noting too, that despite this relatively huge staff, the Headmaster of Eton at the turn of the century had a class of 170 and introduced a further assistant in 1820 in order to cut it to 100.<sup>(46)</sup> It is, in the circumstances, not surprising that the staff of nearly twenty masters and assistants had to be supplemented by twenty or thirty private tutors.<sup>(47)</sup>

The appointment of assistants was, at most schools, the Headmaster's prerogative and consequently statutory qualifications were not generally laid down. However founders in their charters, governors in

subsequent revisions of rules, and Chancery when intervening to right wrongs or resolve conflicting claims, often laid down minimum academic, religious and moral qualifications for masters and ushers, and sometimes went into very precise detail.

The standard academic requirement was for the master to be a graduate of an English University (Shrewsbury 1798 rules<sup>(48)</sup>, Hatfield 1716<sup>(49)</sup>). There were many variations on this. Sometimes a Master of Arts degree (rather than a simple Bachelor's degree) was required, as at Rugby in the 1777 scheme<sup>(50)</sup> and at Appleby Parva<sup>(51)</sup>, while the 1745 rules at Bristol allow masters to be Bachelors of Law or Medicine instead of, as required previously, Masters of Arts.<sup>(52)</sup> Walsall's 1797 Act of Parliament states that the master must be a graduate but departs from the usual by recognising not just Oxford and Cambridge but also a Dublin degree.<sup>(53)</sup> The founder of Bentham School in 1726 specified the English Universities only, "meaning", he wrote, "to exclude the pretensions of all who may be of a narrower education."<sup>(54)</sup> (To balance this we might note the Chancery ruling in 1824 on Hexham where the statutory need for the master to be Master of Arts was dispensed with.<sup>(55)</sup>)

Specific requirements for ushers were less frequent: of course, as the century passed the majority of ushers ceased to need high academic qualifications. Where a degree was required, the B.A. of an English University was the standard (Sherborne 1827<sup>(56)</sup>, Appleby Parva<sup>(57)</sup>). Occasionally some extra quality or qualification was needed. The usher at Abingdon had to be skilled at classics<sup>(58)</sup>; at Bosworth (1826) it was necessary for the usher to have a degree and to be qualified to teach mathematics.<sup>(59)</sup>

Additional qualities were more frequently sought in masters. At its simplest this could mean no more than an injunction to the governors to choose a man "qualified in ... learning" (Grantham 1815<sup>(60)</sup>), skilled in learning (Lymm 1813<sup>(61)</sup>) or skilled in classics (Heath 1730<sup>(62)</sup>) while at Leeds in 1778 candidates had to produce testimonials to show "abilities as a teacher of Greek and Latin".<sup>(63)</sup> Skill at Hebrew was sometimes required, as at Bury in 1726<sup>(64)</sup> (though when the post was advertised in 1818 it was no longer specified<sup>(65)</sup>). The governors at Rivington c.1788 somewhat optimistically sought a headmaster to teach Latin, Greek and French, but met no response and the modern language was dropped.<sup>(66)</sup> Skills other than classical ones, skills more appropriate for the majority of pupils, were required in some schools, particularly in those founded in the eighteenth century. Thus an advertisement (1753) for Burtonwood seeks a man "qualified to teach classic authors, writing and accounts,"<sup>(67)</sup> while the 1752 rules at Newchurch-in-Rossendale specify a master "well versed in English, the rudiments of Latin and expert in writing and accounts."<sup>(68)</sup> We might note, in conclusion, the somewhat intimidating requirements of the governors of Blackrod Free Grammar School who advertised in 1836 for a master - "a classical scholar of sufficient acquirements to qualify his pupils to enter ... (universities and professions) ... Candidates will be examined in Greek, in Homer, Thucydides and either Xenophon or Lucian, and in Latin in Virgil, Horace, Livy, and in the initiative branches of mathematics."<sup>(69)</sup> Graduates would of course be thoroughly familiar with the authors named, and, perhaps, capable of the elementary mathematics, but the advertisements

forthrightness was no doubt responsible, in some part, for the difficulty the governors had in finding staff.<sup>(70)</sup>

Educational fitness was not the only necessity for an aspiring schoolmaster. The charters, rules and injunctions of the Hanoverian era evidence clearly the strong - though at times contradictory - views of the various authorities on religious and moral fitness required among staff. In earlier times it had been the almost universal practice to require teachers to be in Holy Orders and this, to a somewhat reduced extent, continued throughout the period. Thus at Horton-in-Ribblesdale (1725)<sup>(71)</sup>, King's School, Pontefract (1792)<sup>(72)</sup>, and Clipston (1819)<sup>(73)</sup> the rules required the Headmaster to be an Anglican clergyman. The same requirement was sometimes applied to ushers (Grantham)<sup>(74)</sup>. However the striking thing is that the dangers of this - the tendency in particular for an underpaid master to supplement his income by acquiring clerical livings, by becoming a pluralist, and, in consequence, neglecting either his pastoral or his educational duties - or both - have been so clearly recognised that Hanoverian regulations not infrequently legislated to prevent this. At Bury in 1726 the master was required to resign if he obtained preferment to a living worth £100 p.a., and the usher if preferred to a £50 p.a. living.<sup>(75)</sup> The 1745 rules at Bristol quite simply prohibited staff from holding any other post or benefice,<sup>(76)</sup> and this was the standard formula (Witton<sup>(77)</sup>, Andover<sup>(78)</sup>). At Wiggonby (1797) it was decreed that the local cleric could not have care of the school<sup>(79)</sup> and the law courts ruled similarly over Warrington in 1815.<sup>(80)</sup> Occasionally a complete ban on the appointment of clergymen was made - as at Liverpool (1748)<sup>(81)</sup>.

This was in no way a concession to Non-conformity, still less Catholicism. Many schools stipulated that all staff must be members of the Church of England - as at Rugby (1777)<sup>(82)</sup> - while at Hatfield(1716) the extra precaution was added that masters must remain members of the Church after appointment.<sup>(83)</sup> The same intention lay behind the 1730 rule at Heath which required masters to be "well-affected" to church and state.<sup>(84)</sup> Before 1745 masters at Bristol had to be supporters of "kingly government" and after 1745 they had to be "well-affected to the constitution in church and state."<sup>(85)</sup> Similarly at Newchurch-in-Rossendale (1752) masters had to be "firmly established to the civil and ecclesiastical constitutions of the kingdom."<sup>(86)</sup> In 1809, the governors of King Edward VI Grammar School, Bruton, ruled that members of staff could not keep their posts if they were converted either to the Non-conformist or the Roman churches.<sup>(87)</sup>

There had been some attempt to impose legal restrictions on Catholics and Dissenters by Acts of Parliament. In 1714 the short-lived Schism Act had required all teachers to have a licence from the Bishop and this could not be granted unless a candidate could produce a certificate establishing that he was a communicating member of the church and until he had taken oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, Moreover, any person attending a service or prayer-meeting at which the royal family were not prayed for according to the pattern set out by the church and enforced by law was prohibited from teaching. In addition, all licensed teachers had to instruct pupils in the Anglican catechism. Bishops were required to take action against any unlicensed teachers in their

diocese. The Schism Act did not apply to all schools and elementary, mathematical and navigation schools were specifically exempted from the regulations. The Schism Act was repealed in 1719 and for the following sixty years the only restraint on teachers was the need for a Bishop's licence - though even here the interpretation of the legal position was uncertain, and, in any case, few bishops showed great energy in enforcing the requirement. In consequence some masters, who were dissenters, were appointed to grammar schools (Monks Kirby,<sup>(88)</sup> Stand<sup>(89)</sup>).

In 1779 an attempt was made to regularise the absurd situation. Dissenters were teaching, despite their being unlicensed, and bishops were not prosecuting them. The 1779 Act officially allowed Dissenters to teach provided they made a Declaration of Allegiance. This freedom, however, had limits and they were prohibited from holding the "mastership of any College or School or Royal Foundation, or of any other endowed college or school for the education of youth, unless the same shall have been founded since the first year of the reign of their late Majesties King William and Queen Mary for the immediate use and benefit of Dissenters."<sup>(90)</sup> In 1790 the Roman Catholic Relief Act extended very similar concessions - and restrictions - to Papists.<sup>(91)</sup>

In some grammar schools, however, neither membership of the Anglican church nor even possession of Holy Orders was regarded as a guarantee of moral rectitude. Quite apart from the many rules prohibiting immoral behaviour after appointment,\* many schools specified

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\* See below, p.39.



certain qualities which must be present before staff could be appointed. This was generally quite straightforward, the master being required to be of "good reputation" (Charterhouse<sup>(92)</sup>) or "of good conversation" (Newchurch-in-Rossendale<sup>(93)</sup>), but could form part of a formula which described, briefly, the kind of Master governors sought. There was much similarity. Masters must be "honest, substantial, learned" (Leeds<sup>(94)</sup>), "wise, prudent, discreet" (Lowton 1751<sup>(95)</sup>), "pious, sober and learned" (Malham 1717<sup>(96)</sup>), "discreet, learned and sober (Lydyate School, Rochdale, 1763<sup>(97)</sup>). At Morpeth, the governors were rather more specific. The 1725 rules required masters to be sound in health and morals and "Pious, Sober, Grave, Diligent and Industrious; dextrous in Teaching, of Temper and Moderation, wisely to distinguish between Defects of Nature and wilful negligence",<sup>(98)</sup> while the 1811 rules required masters to produce three Testimonials signed by clergymen and countersigned by a Bishop as to conduct and doctrine.<sup>(99)</sup>

The influence of Bishops, over the appointment of teachers, was in some decline during the eighteenth century. In earlier times no one had disputed the Bishop's right to license teachers and to expel any unlicensed or unsuitable master. In 1670, however, an attempt by a Bishop to eject an unlicensed teacher failed and the courts ruled that where the master had been appointed by a school's founder, the Bishop could only censure and not expel.<sup>(100)</sup> The problem was further discussed in 1700-1701 when three cases concerning licences came before the courts. In Cox's case, it was argued, for the Bishop, that the Lateran Council of 1215 had required teachers to be licensed and that since this had

always been accepted in England, it had become a part of ecclesiastical law. Moreover Elizabeth had issued injunctions, never confirmed by Parliament but made canons of the church, allowing Bishops to grant licences to teachers. For the defendant it was argued that the authority of a Lateran Council over English law was doubtful and that, in any case, the Council had only been concerned with Cathedral schools. More pertinent were the Elizabethan injunctions, but canons are not binding on laymen. The Lord Keeper's judgment was that "the canons of a convocation do not bind the laity without an act of Parliament: but I always was, and still am, of opinion that keeping of school is by the old laws of England of ecclesiastical cognisance." However, the Lord Keeper agreed that this only applied to Grammar schools.<sup>(101)</sup> This was confirmed and repeated in the case of *Rex v. Douse*<sup>(102)</sup> and *Rex v. Hill*. In the latter case, however, the Judge, Holt, expressed doubts as to whether licences were really needed even by grammar school teachers and said "prohibitions have deservedly gone to stop proceeding for teaching school without license because it is a point never yet determined." Moreover, he refused a writ sought by the Bishop on the grounds that it did not specify the kind of school in which the unlicensed master was teaching - though the precedents of previous cases suggest that had the Writ been specific and referred to a grammar school, the Bishop's application would have been granted.<sup>(103)</sup> In 1702 the dispute was taken a stage further - *Matthews v. Burnett* - by an attempt to remove the ecclesiastical authority over the grammar school. Curiously the case was never heard<sup>(104)</sup> and consequently the position remained somewhat unclear.

The problem was raised again some thirty years later in a dispute over the appointment of an usher to the King Henry VIII Grammar School, Coventry. The quarrel was not over the rights and wrongs of licences but over the delay in granting one. The Bishop's defence - that he had to enquire into the character and abilities of the applicant - was upheld but, in passing judgment, some reference was made to the larger issue involved. Judge Hardwicke observed that "it is pretty extraordinary how the keeping a grammar school should be matter of ecclesiastical conusance", but refrained from considering the matter further. (Rex v. Bishop of Lichfield, 1734<sup>(105)</sup>). Moreover in 1741 Judge Lee - hearing a complaint about an absentee clergyman who was teaching a Grammar school without a licence - declared that "The teaching school without licence is now made a temporal offence", that there was a penalty for doing so, and that, in consequence the spiritual courts had no jurisdiction over such matters (Jones v. Gegg, 1741<sup>(106)</sup>).

The problem was not fully raised in court for a further half-century\* but the situation was far from clear. There was apparently no law requiring a licence and the courts only reluctantly, it seems, upheld the authority of the Bishops - and even here there were dissenting voices. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that not all masters obtained a licence. Ashton-in-Makerfield had an unlicensed master for twenty years after 1730.<sup>(107)</sup> However, some people retained faith in the system: at Darlington the rules (1748) made possession of a Bishop's Licence a

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\* See below, p.36.

condition of appointment for staff.<sup>(108)</sup> Twenty years later, the governors of Morpeth asked the Bishop to withhold a licence from an elected master, as they doubted his abilities. (In fact this matter was quickly cleared up and the master stayed for thirty years!)<sup>(109)</sup> A similar course was taken by the Mayor of Richmond in 1795 to prevent an unsuitable man being put in charge of The Grammar School.<sup>(110)</sup>

The situation was resolved in 1795 by a decision by Lord Chief Justice Kenyon in a legal battle over the mastership of Skipton Grammar school. Following a dispute between rival "masters" - both claiming rightful election - the Archbishop of York refused a licence until the "master" in possession had been examined and proved his fitness. The master refused and subsequently had his election confirmed in the law courts. However the Archbishop still refused a licence and this too was taken to court.<sup>(111)</sup> Kenyon backed the Archbishop in a now famous judgment: "whoever will examine the state of Grammar Schools in the different parts of this Kingdom will see to what a lamentable condition most of them are reduced, and would wish that those who have any superintendence or control over them had been as circumspect as the Archbishop of York has been on the present occasion. If other persons had equally done their duty, we should not find, as is now the case, empty walls without scholars and everything neglected but the receipt of the salaries and emoluments." Thereafter masters had to be licensed and examined in learning, morality and religion.<sup>(112)</sup>

What Kenyon's judgment did not do was to prohibit evasions like that at Whicham and Millom Grammar school. Here the local rector was

master but paid the stipend to young men (appointed by the governors) who did the teaching. (These teachers were usually filling in two or three years before proceeding to University.) When questioned on this, it was revealed that the reason was because Bishop's licences were costly, that the stipend had to be paid to a licensed master and that the school was too insignificant to attract able men for long periods. Hence the scheme was devised to cut costs and evade the law.<sup>(113)</sup> Obviously the granting of a licence was no guarantee that a school would be well conducted.

These then are the main requirements specified by statutes - academic, religious and moral. There were others, less common. Before 1798, the Headmaster of Shrewsbury had to be Anglican, an English University graduate and an old boy of the school, a native of the town and the son of a burgess.<sup>(114)</sup> Age limits were fixed at some schools: the usher at Charterhouse had to be over twenty-four, the master over twenty-seven.<sup>(115)</sup> Sometimes the Master had to be unmarried - as at Clipston, before 1819,<sup>(116)</sup> and at Horton-in-Ribblesdale.<sup>(117)</sup> In 1778 the governors of Leeds advertised for a master specifying the need for classical ability and adding "if he has had the care of a school upon him heretofore it will give additional strength to his recommendation",<sup>(118)</sup> and doubtless this was a principle applied, even if not statutorily required, at many of the bigger schools. Finally we should note a fairly common rule obliging governors to give preference when making a choice, to old boys of the school (Darlington,<sup>(119)</sup> Charterhouse<sup>(120)</sup>).

Theoretically masters were required to comply with that selection

of regulations peculiar to the particular school. In practice, many schools were unable to offer facilities and stipends adequate enough to attract qualified candidates and these schools either shut or, more often, lost their grammar school status with the continual appointment of unqualified staff. This had happened widely - Goosenargh<sup>(121)</sup>, Cromer<sup>(122)</sup>, Godmanchester,<sup>(123)</sup> Ledbury,<sup>(124)</sup> Saffron Walden,<sup>(125)</sup> and, perhaps most notably of all, at Earl's Colne where the Charity Commissioners in 1837 found the master, appointed 1804, unfit to teach and incompetent at classics and themselves shut the school.<sup>(126)</sup> Nor did the bigger, wealthier, thriving schools necessarily conform strictly with the statutes. The governors at the King's School, Canterbury, anxious to appoint a young, promising man in 1832 and finding him not properly qualified as he was not in Holy Orders nor an M.A., promptly arranged for the Archbishop to exercise his rights and award both immediately.<sup>(127)</sup> (In fact, this young man was highly successful.)

On appointment, staff, whether properly or improperly qualified, were often required to agree to obey the school statutes and any other rules the governors might wish to make; and to ensure that staff did this a financial precaution was often taken. The size of the bond required as surety varied widely - £100 at Ashton-in-Makerfield,<sup>(128)</sup> £200 at Bolton-le-Sands,<sup>(129)</sup> £400 at Lymm,<sup>(130)</sup> £500 at Northampton,<sup>(131)</sup> £600 at Witton<sup>(132)</sup> and at Wolverhampton a £500 bond was theoretically required of the master, and £300 from the usher, though these were not always demanded.<sup>(133)</sup>

The rules that masters and ushers, all over the country, were

required to keep show a good deal of similarity.. Frequently they were threatened with expulsion from their posts if found guilty of immoral behaviour: gross crime or misdemeanour (Bury<sup>(134)</sup>); "a frequent Haunter of Taverns and Alehouses" (Morpeth<sup>(135)</sup>), or becoming a drunkard, gamester, frequenter of gaming or tippling houses or guilty of fornication, adultery or incest (Richmond, Yorks. 1750<sup>(136)</sup>). Similarly punishable were proven cases of neglect and staff were often warned of this (Rugeley<sup>(137)</sup>). It was to avoid this fault that many governors imposed restrictions on absence. Thus staff had to be constant attenders at Lymm<sup>(138)</sup>; had to attend daily at Charterhouse<sup>(139)</sup>; keep to hours and not have more than three days' continuous absence at Bury<sup>(140)</sup>; not have more than twenty days' absence in a year at Richmond (Yorks).<sup>(141)</sup>

Another area in which governors required staff to obey rules was in the division of teaching: compelling Headmasters to teach classics to senior boys and ushers to teach as necessary, at the Headmaster's discretion (Norwich<sup>(142)</sup>); requiring staff to teach good manners (Heath<sup>(143)</sup>); requiring the usher to teach English only. (Blackburn<sup>(144)</sup>)

In addition many rules fixed salaries, gratuities\* and fees<sup>‡</sup>, and prohibited staff from taking any other post or benefice which would interfere with the proper accomplishment of duty.<sup>∅</sup> There were, of course, the usual range of special rules to deal with particular circumstances that had arisen or that governors feared would arise. It was not

\* See Part II, Section 6.

‡ See Part III, Section 4.

∅ See above, p.30.

uncommon, especially in schools with quarrelsome staff, for there to be a rule confirming the authority of the master and his right to dismiss other members of staff. (Warrington<sup>(145)</sup>, Norwich<sup>(146)</sup>). At St. Bartholomews Hospital Grammar School, Newbury, by a rule of 1766, the master had to resign if at any time he had fewer than two boarders - a desperate effort to keep the school alive, but unsuccessful.<sup>(147)</sup> Perhaps even more surprising was the 1725 rule at Morpeth by which the usher was required to keep the school clean and tidy, and to be responsible for opening and shutting the doors before and after school.<sup>(148)</sup>

Governors of many schools, on the other hand, seem to have considered their activities over once a master had been appointed. Masters were sometimes left in sole charge of all the school's internal problems and management of estates, arranging leases, rents and fines (Steypning<sup>(149)</sup>, Moulton<sup>(150)</sup>, Bingley<sup>(151)</sup>). There were obvious dangers involved in this. At Wigan the governors did not meet for nearly twenty-five years at the end of the eighteenth century. When they did it was because of the dreadful state of the property and the near ruin the Headmaster had brought on the school.<sup>(152)</sup> At Kinver, the Headmaster ran the school and estate for over a quarter of a century before his death in 1816. The income was neglected, property decayed and the school shut.<sup>(153)</sup>

Sometimes masters revealed real, if unorthodox, talents for estate management. The finances of Bosworth Grammar school were in such a state in 1711 that the Headmaster was given full control as a last desperate remedy. His methods, it is said, were not very businesslike - but they worked! In a decade he restored the economic situation.<sup>(154)</sup> At



Pocklington the master, 1807-48, achieved remarkable results: his predecessor having mismanaged the property the income in 1807 was around £65 p.a. By a mixture of frequent litigation, hard work and luck, - the new railway companies suddenly wanted some of the school lands - the Headmaster raised income, in a little over a quarter of a century, to over £1,000 p.a. Less happy was the side effect: the Headmaster was so busy raising funds that he almost completely ignored his scholastic duties and the school declined to an appalling academic condition.<sup>(155)</sup> But here, as in so many cases, while we may consider much of the master's behaviour as reprehensible, we must never forget to lay a considerable share of the blame on lazy and neglectful or insufficiently assertive governors.\*

Teachers, good and bad, whatever their qualifications, however appointed, tended to fall, in the Hanoverian period, into two categories: those who stayed and those who did not! For many, appointment as usher was merely a step to a mastership, and mastership was a springboard to more lucrative posts - as chaplain, tutor, rector, even - occasionally - teachers. However, very many either could not or, more often, would not relinquish their posts.

Thirty years as master was relatively common, forty years was not infrequent, and some masters achieved fifty years or more. (Bradford<sup>(156)</sup>, Bideford<sup>(157)</sup>, Reading<sup>(158)</sup>). Even more remarkable is the number of men who served for long years as under-masters, as ill-paid and, too often,

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\* See Part II, Section 1.

ill-regarded subordinates. It is true that in some instances there was the chance of being "rewarded" for devotion to duty by ultimate appointment as master, but governors were often capricious in their choice and the succession was seldom, if ever, guaranteed. Here again forty years' service was not unusual and fifty years was sometimes achieved (Wigan,<sup>(159)</sup> Abingdon.<sup>(160)</sup>)

More frequent, of course, are examples of men who, though remaining many years at the same school, served in more than one capacity: first as usher, then as master. Remarkable too are the schools where single families provided a succession of staff. At Audley father and son were successively Headmaster and spanned over eighty years;<sup>(161)</sup> at Newcastle-upon-Tyne the great Hugh Moises and his nephew ruled for nearly as long;<sup>(162)</sup> at Buckingham two brothers covered over sixty-five years<sup>(163)</sup>; and many other schools could boast similar circumstances. (Richmond [Yorks]<sup>(164)</sup>, Evesham<sup>(165)</sup>).

Some schools attracted a succession of long-serving men - a reflection on the financial and social attributes more often than on the academic standards. At Newport (Salop) two men spanned nearly a century;<sup>(166)</sup> Goudhurst<sup>(167)</sup> and Brigg<sup>(168)</sup> had only three masters each in the century after George I's accession, and Buckingham had only four in the period 1723-1867.<sup>(169)</sup>

It must not be imagined that this long service was necessarily beneficial; indeed all too often it resulted in decline and disaster. Age and infirmity, inadequate stipends and lack of pension combined to keep a failing man in office and to lead to a collapse of academic

standards. Sometimes long-serving masters were more concerned with deriving financial benefits than with teaching and this meant absentee masters and a series of cheap, often incompetent, deputies. (Pocklington after 1807.<sup>(170)</sup>). Moreover long-service could be quite simply because the governors could not dismiss a deficient master. Thus Heighington had a single master for nearly sixty years after 1770, but, following a dispute some thirty years after he had been appointed, he ceased teaching, merely taking the income. This, of course, prevented the governors from being able to employ anyone else.<sup>(171)</sup>

There is perhaps one other example of long service - by two men - which deserves mention here, though it is a curious story that will be noted again in another section.\* Shrewsbury had a Headmaster and an usher, both appointed in 1798, who remained for over thirty years (until the usher died). During this period the school became the greatest classical establishment in the country - its scholars took the prizes at the Universities (sometimes before even leaving school) and showed a remarkable degree of skill and appreciation. Yet the Headmaster and usher quarrelled so bitterly that for almost all this long period they did not speak to each other and could not even manage to correspond without recrimination and abuse.<sup>(172)</sup>

The effect of this Headmaster, Samuel Butler, on Shrewsbury was remarkable and he was, perhaps, the outstanding teacher and headmaster of the period. There were, however, other men at other schools who

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\* See Part II, Section 3, p.67.

accomplished revivals or obtained a standard of scholarship almost as remarkable. Since so frequently we are only able to perceive the chaos, the mismanagement, the disasters and the incompetence, it is only proper that we should record, however briefly, the beneficial achievements and successes, the triumphs and the scholarship that were to be found at the time.

There is little purpose served in considering extensively the already established great schools. Eton and Westminster, Winchester and St. Paul's were famous and successful and could choose whom they would for staff; their headmasters seldom lacked scholarship and reputation even where they were unable to cope with running a school. It is, however, pertinent to note that just as the efforts of Butler raised Shrewsbury to a place amongst the great schools, so too great Headmasters at Rugby (James, Wooll and Arnold) and at Charterhouse (Raine and Russell) accomplished a similar feat.

These were remarkable men but not more than many who under far less favourable circumstances contrived to obtain success. At Northampton the work of the headmaster appointed in 1765 was recognised after only four years when he was granted the freedom of the Borough "as a Public Testimony of that Esteem which his singular Diligence and Assiduity in the Duties of his Profession justly deserve."<sup>(173)</sup> A headmaster of Guildford Free Grammar School obtained similar recognition in 1804. (Unlike the master of Northampton, this master had served for many years, indeed for over a generation.<sup>(174)</sup>). Probably as valuable a testimonial was to be found in the admiration, respect and affection of pupils for

men like Hugh Moises, the great and long-serving headmaster of Newcastle Royal Grammar School,<sup>(175)</sup> and for the headmaster at King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath (1778-1871) of whom De Quincy said that his school was "the only place where I can be happy or from which I can derive any solid and lasting advantage."<sup>(176)</sup>

The testimony of pupils was not always so forcibly demonstrated as it was at Harrow, when, in 1771, an assistant, Samuel Parr was not appointed headmaster. In fury the boys rioted and Parr left, taking forty to fifty pupils with him, and set up his own school at Stanmore.<sup>(177)</sup> He later became headmaster of Colchester and then Norwich Grammar Schools. Pupils at Norwich clearly did not agree with those at Harrow. While admitting Parr's many good qualities, his ability, kindness and scholarship, one wrote that Parr was "irritable, capricious and tyrannical ...",<sup>(178)</sup> Since he was still under forty years old, it can only be presumed either that disappointments had sharpened his temper or that the pupils at Harrow expected masters to be irritable, capricious and tyrannical!

There was a most remarkable headmaster at Ripon in the early nineteenth century. He transformed the school into a flourishing, successful classical boarding school and then, when the governors yielded to local opinion and revised the rules in 1837, he stuck to his post and created a successful school of the more elementary type which the new regulations enforced.<sup>(179)</sup>

Contemporary with this man was the great James Tate, headmaster at Richmond. Tate was a notable scholar, but more than this, he had a wonderful gift for imparting his knowledge and his pupils stood comparison

with those of Butler at Shrewsbury. Tate would probably have received some official recognition much sooner than he did, but he was a staunch Whig and there was a succession of Tory governments. When the Whigs did eventually gain office, Tate was offered a Canonry of St. Paul's to which he retired. (180)

This was not the only school where politics had an influence, and where outstanding scholarly masters suffered in consequence. One of the most brilliant men of the whole Hanoverian era was Vicesimus Knox, headmaster of Tonbridge 1779-1812. He was a noted essayist and philosopher, translator and editor, even before his appointment and he continued to produce work of high merit during his period in office. This scholarship attracted many pupils but they departed speedily when Knox championed the policies of Fox and praised the principles of Liberty and the French Revolution. (181) His son and successor, Thomas, was also a talented man and he too raised the school and then caused a decline by supporting the Whigs and advocating electoral reform. (182)

The Hanoverian schoolmaster was beset by many problems. Appointment rested in the capricious hands of patrons and trustees, who often regarded this as their only function and left the master to work out his own salvation. Elsewhere trustees, either of their own volition or in response to local feeling, intervened and insisted on changes of policy, on fresh rules and regulations, on - very frequently - an emphasis on extremes of curriculum, too narrowly classical or frankly elementary. The master was usually overworked and underpaid; even at a big school like Wolverhampton Grammar School an able master could report that

expenses were "five times as much as my salary ... I comfort myself with tags of verse and sayings of Philosophers. If I cannot enlarge my possessions I can contract my desires."<sup>(183)</sup>\* The problems were enormous. The whole position of the grammar school was in dispute. There were many bad masters, men who put personal survival and economic stability before their academic responsibilities. There were many bad governors who either took no interest in their schools, or, when they did, too often sought to take personal advantage of their office.

The surprising factor is that there were, despite all the problems and hindrances, so many responsible teachers trying their utmost to make grammar schools serve a useful academic and social purpose.

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SECTION 3

UNSATISFACTORY AND DISPUTATIOUS STAFF



SECTION 3UNSATISFACTORY AND DISPUTATIOUS STAFF

Founders and governors of grammar schools devised innumerable rules to ensure that staff were both properly appointed and qualified. Further rules attempted to prevent negligence on the part of the staff, to prevent absenteeism and to ensure that they taught and behaved with circumspection. Despite all rules, however, a distressingly large number of Hanoverian schoolmasters were either incompetent or disputatious. Some were immoral, some were vicious, some were unscrupulous and some were criminals: all contributed to the undermining of the quality of grammar school education and to the destruction of good relations between schools and citizens.

Before examining the failings of staff themselves, it is proper to remember that in some cases the governors of schools failed in their own responsibilities and allowed unqualified teachers to be appointed and indeed, on some occasions, failed to make any appointment but allowed a usurpation of rights, and office, to occur. Schools where trusteeship was vested in a single patron - often heir to the founder - were particularly vulnerable. Thus, in the early eighteenth century, the elderly Patron of Bromsgrove School was persuaded to marry the daughter of the headmaster and to allow the headmaster's son to "inherit" the school. In consequence the school suffered great declines, the headmaster's family acquired much of the school's estates, and further decay occurred.<sup>(1)</sup> The Patron of Brentwood Free Grammar School allowed an elderly headmaster 1787-9 to advertise for a successor and to appoint an

unqualified man - who promptly shut the school but kept the stipend. For a decade the Patron had to employ an assistant to do the teaching. Even when the master's post finally fell vacant a curious appointment was made: the new master had to agree to resign as soon as the Patron's son was qualified to take the post.<sup>(2)</sup> Insufficient control was the cause of disaster at these two schools, but the opposite could be equally unfortunate. Bosworth Grammar School in the eighteenth century suffered from an authoritarian Patron who boasted that he could appoint anyone he liked to be headmaster. He was challenged on this claim, in 1730, and, to prove his point, appointed his butler to the post. In this instance, the Patron, fortunately, changed his mind after a few months, but his general eccentricity led to a considerable decline.<sup>(3)</sup>

Not only single trustees, but whole groups of them too were liable to make erratic judgments and to allow irresponsible headmasters to usurp their functions. Thus at Bosbury Grammar School in 1800 the Trustees appointed as headmaster a man who was "illiterate" and "who had never learned or knew a single word of the Latin or Greek languages".<sup>(4)</sup> At Strode's School, Shepton Mallet in the late eighteenth century, son succeeded father as headmaster - without permission - and then took, for himself, the school estates. The trustees took no positive action until eventually public indignation was roused and the usurper was arrested and imprisoned in 1800.<sup>(5)</sup> In all these instances, while there can be no disputing the irregularity of the staff, much of the blame must rest on the governors for their lack of care. The negligence of governors led far too frequently to unqualified men obtaining control of grammar schools

and their endowments. (Hitchin 1720-50,<sup>(6)</sup> St. John the Baptist Hospital Grammar School, Kirkby Ravensworth,<sup>(7)</sup> Upholland.<sup>(8)</sup>)

Even when the trustees did take care in their selection of staff, their appointments sometimes proved unwise and the unhappy governors would find themselves urged to intervene by irate parents and enraged local inhabitants. A regular occasion of complaint was the taking of boarders and private paying pupils by headmasters whose stipends were too low to allow survival without additional income. Inevitably some headmasters devoted excessive attention to these pupils and rather ignored the local, free, boys. (Bosworth 1826<sup>(9)</sup>, Farnham,<sup>(10)</sup> Ashby-de-la-Zouch.<sup>(11)</sup>) Elsewhere the problem was over-attention generally, and headmasters were accused of extreme harshness in their punishment of pupils (Enfield,<sup>(12)</sup> St. Paul's,<sup>(13)</sup> Leigh c.1820.<sup>(14)</sup>) In 1779 at Lancaster, the headmaster was severely criticised by the governors - the local Corporation - for his punishment of a particular pupil and his action was called "improper, inhuman and unjustifiable". More faith could be placed on this judgment if the punished pupil had not been a son of the Mayor of Lancaster.<sup>(15)</sup> Probably more justified were complaints about a headmaster of Manchester Grammar School of whom it was said that parents were "afraid to send him their children."<sup>(16)</sup>

Many schools were caused to decay through the neglect of unstable or even criminal staff. The headmaster of Whitgift in the early nineteenth century misappropriated the school funds for some years before his theft was discovered and he was arrested.<sup>(17)</sup> A headmaster of Bromsgrove, a few years later, ended in the Fleet prison and was said to

have been profane, blasphemous, regularly drunk and, of course, a debtor.<sup>(18)</sup> In fact debt and drink seem to have been sadly frequent weaknesses of Hanoverian schoolmasters. The Headmaster of Harrow 1731-46, described by the governors as living "a disorderly, drunken, idle life,"<sup>(19)</sup> eventually absconded because of the pressure of creditors.<sup>(20)</sup> Similarly a Headmaster of Andover Grammar School, 1744-72, - who had previously lost a post at Biddenden because he was "not fit and capable", - was always in financial difficulties and eventually, under pressure from the governors, ceased teaching.<sup>(21)</sup> A Headmaster of Queen Mary's Grammar School, Walsall, was enslaved by drink, fell into debt and had to seek his salary in advance until the governors, after warning the man, finally dismissed him.<sup>(22)</sup> No school was too great or too small to escape. In 1736 the Surmaster of St. Paul's was "admonished for coming into school disordered by drinking."<sup>(23)</sup> A century later, the Headmaster of the little school at Norton (County Durham) "often continued in a state of constant intoxication for weeks together during which periods he was totally disabled from attending to the school." However, after warnings, this man contrived to mend his ways and to behave with "great propriety."<sup>(24)</sup> Not so fortunate were the parents and governors of Rivington Grammar School. The Headmaster was accused, in 1796, of being "drunk and quarrelsome, neglecting his duties and abusing his scholars." Apparently this warning passed unheeded and six months later he was accused of non-attendance and of being, on one occasion, so drunk that when preaching he could not find his way to the reading-desk and then, later, "misbehaved" in the street. This time the Headmaster left the area and did not return

for a month. On his return he assaulted and fought a deputy installed by the perplexed governors. Chaos followed. The governors, it was discovered, were not properly qualified and the Fellows of St. John's College, Cambridge, who also had authority over the charity had to intervene. The Headmaster could not be dismissed and the local governors refused to pay his salary: a long law suit was in prospect when, for some unknown reason, the Headmaster had to leave the country in a hurry and was glad to settle the dispute out of court, accepting some back pay in return for his resignation. Though the conclusion was satisfactory, the school had endured two years of considerable turmoil and had definitely declined. (25)

Just as extraordinary was the case of the Headmaster of Leigh Grammar School, 1808-20, who got into debt, shut the school, and absconded. Although he was dismissed an acrimonious quarrel broke out between rival groups of governors during which the former master was accused of being a radical, of neglect, of lateness in starting daily school, of excessive beating and severity, of failing to go to church on Sundays, and of making noises at night so disturbing his neighbours. (26) Neither Rivington nor Leigh, however, can really compare with Skipton-in-Craven Grammar School where a bitter quarrel over the right to appoint staff was followed by a generation of dispute and turbulence. Even as the Courts resolved the question of appointment,\* a quarrel broke out between the governors and the new Headmaster (1795). The

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\* See Part II, Section 2, p.36.

Headmaster claimed arrears of salary - to cover the years the case had been at law - but the governors refused. So the Headmaster sold the school furniture and regularly appropriated large sums of money from the school's estates and funds. Despite this the situation was relatively calm until c.1815. Then scandals became known and there were numerous attempts to eject the Headmaster. These culminated in a public meeting in 1822 at which the master was accused of being grossly immoral, of being frequently arrested for debt, of following eccentric courses which involved costly books and extensive holidays. He was said to have treated the Vicar and Wardens with "derision", to have removed the school-bell so that school always began late, and to have only sixteen pupils, from "humbler stations" and some of whom he paid to attend. Moreover it was alleged that he "frequently offered himself in marriage to certain of the (parishioners') daughters without any previous acquaintance." Some people rallied to the Headmaster's support, others supported the opposition. Public squabbles, fights and finally a legal suit followed until the Court of Appeal ruled that, irrespective of his conduct and ability, the Headmaster could not be dismissed. The situation was not even properly settled by the master's death in 1825: the various parties disputing with as much bitterness over the appointment of a successor.<sup>(27)</sup>

The havoc that could be wrought by charges, whether justified or not, of immorality and the damage to a school's prestige, stability and prosperity which often resulted, can only with difficulty be grasped. The incidents appear trivial and quickly settled: the repercussions, decline and decay, and, perhaps most of all, the loss of public confidence, last for many years.

This could be caused just as easily by an incompetent or negligent master as by the immoral or unstable man. The Charity Commissioners at Audley Grammar School noted its decline and remarked of the master that he was of such "an advanced age he seems little capable of conducting a Grammar School with efficiency."<sup>(28)</sup> It was, moreover, often very difficult - and expensive - for governors to dismiss a master. Staff knew this, and, once appointed, some stayed on and on despite age, infirmity and the decline in the standard of education that often resulted. (Ashford 1770-1820<sup>(29)</sup>, Blackrod 1800-36,<sup>(30)</sup> Slaidburn.<sup>(31)</sup>). Incompetent teaching, however, could stem from other things besides age. Thus at Old Malton Grammar School the usher's duties as parish clerk which caused him to neglect his work simply aggravated his general inability to teach.<sup>(32)</sup> At Upholland Grammar School the master was not competent to teach the classics above a very low level.<sup>(33)</sup> Even a great school like Manchester Grammar School could suffer from poor teachers: a pupil of the late eighteenth century wrote that "most of my teachers were so inadequate to the province they assumed that though I read Homer it was with a man who I could discover had little knowledge even of his accidence"<sup>(34)</sup> and, a few years later, another pupil felt much the same.<sup>(35)</sup> There is a strong suggestion of incompetence and certainly of lack of enthusiasm in a letter of 1772 which refers to the Headmaster of Stratford-upon-Avon Grammar School as a man "of whose abilities and attention the neighbourhood have entertain'd so high a notion that they have not troubled him with above two or three scholars at most, lest the multitude of sonorous pupils should sour his temper and render his ideas too perplex'd for one of an agreeable Quadrille party ..."<sup>(36)</sup>

Masters are often reported as regularly having arrived late for morning school (Dovenby,<sup>(37)</sup> Otley,<sup>(38)</sup> St. Paul's,<sup>(39)</sup>) or only attending for a short time each day. (Chesterfield.<sup>(40)</sup>). Even more often were schools neglected entirely. Pocklington was a sinecure for thirty years at least in the late eighteenth century<sup>(41)</sup> and Colchester had, for twenty-seven years, a Headmaster who ignored the school and had no pupils.<sup>(42)</sup> At Winwick Grammar School, c.1822, the master lived twenty miles away and seldom travelled the distance to attend,<sup>(43)</sup> and at Guisborough Grammar School a similar state developed<sup>(44)</sup> - though in both cases the neglect stemmed, in part, from disputes between staff and governors. The Headmaster of Sedbergh 1742-6 became a recluse and ignored everybody<sup>(45)</sup> while at Shrewsbury the Headmaster 1770-98 is said to have had only three or four boys and to have used the school Library as a hairdressing saloon.<sup>(46)</sup> The governors of Otley Grammar School declared that the usher in 1776 "hath, by following his diversions neglected the said School and by means thereof decreased the number of boys."<sup>(47)</sup> Ashbourne was still worse off. In 1794 the governors wrote complaining of the "present deserted and neglected state of the school. The Headmaster now has but one scholar and has had ... for many years, while the under-master teaches a private school in his house and in consequence neglects the few scholars that do attend."<sup>(48)</sup> Ashbourne however was a special problem, since the Headmaster was a most awkward and difficult man.

In schools as small as most grammar schools were, with a staff of only two or three, harmony between master and usher and assistant was



essential to the well-being of the school. Inevitably there were disputes and equally inevitably these were reported while the many instances of excellent co-operation were not. Many of these quarrels, often springing from trivial incidents, showed remarkable bitterness and intensity.

Some masters were cantankerous and, whatever their academic and tutorial ability, were unable to establish a stable relationship with any other teacher. The Headmaster of Ashbourne Free Grammar School, 1752-96, whom we have already mentioned, was such a man. One usher bore with him for nine years, one for four years and two others for about a year. Most of his many ushers left within a few months and some within weeks. One teacher, who stayed for six months, wrote in his letter of resignation, that he was "wearied by the repeated Ill-usages of the Headmaster, and his family", and said he was "desirous to withdraw myself from all connection with a man from whose temper there is but little probability of expecting peace or quietness." A few years later another usher, also resigning after a brief stay, used curiously similar phrases to express his feelings. He was "wearied by the repeated Ill-usages of the Headmaster ... who hath taken every method in his power to render the charge committed to me ... irksome and disagreeable."<sup>(49)</sup> Clearly this Headmaster was like the Highmaster of St. Paul's earlier in the century. In 1741 the Surmaster wrote to the governors that the master "often comes down when I am teaching the children, treats me in the hearing of them all with the most indecent and ungentlemanlike language, punishes my scholars before my face and that in so passionate unguarded a

manner as must raise the utmost concern..." and then alleged that he too had been threatened with violence by this Highmaster. The governors demanded a reconciliation, but the Surmaster left soon after.<sup>(50)</sup> Only three years later the new Surmaster wrote in very similar terms complaining of much the same things and again the governors had to intervene.<sup>(51)</sup>

Sometimes complaints and charges were rather more concerned with the actual work of teaching. Thus at Lancaster an usher resigned in 1717 because he was given so much extra work by the negligence of the master.<sup>(52)</sup> The Headmaster of the Grammar School at Newcastle-upon-Tyne at the end of the eighteenth century asked his usher to "stay the usual hours in school" to which the usher replied with complaints of the master's "improper absences, irregularity and uncertainty."<sup>(53)</sup> In 1836 the usher of Blackrod Grammar School felt forced to complain because he had a class of seventy-seven while the Headmaster had but thirteen pupils.<sup>(54)</sup> At Wolverhampton master and usher quarrelled over discipline. In 1737 the usher refused to allow the Headmaster to punish boys in the lower forms.<sup>(55)</sup> A similarly unfortunate situation occurred, thirty years later, at the Merchant Taylors' School. The Headmaster allowed the monitors too much scope and belittled the ushers until the monitors refused to obey the ushers. Finally the governors had to intervene and restore order.<sup>(56)</sup>

Fees too could cause ill-feeling. An usher at Harrow complained bitterly when a reorganisation of the system of fee-paying caused his income to decline and the governors had to compensate him.<sup>(57)</sup> At Ripon a governors' ruling on fees was less successful. The Headmaster had claimed all gratuities given by the pupils but the governors ruled that

they should be given to the master of the donor's class. To thwart the governors, and the usher, the Headmaster took all new pupils himself and so left the usher with neither class nor extra income! The dispute lasted until the resignation of the master following further intervention by the governors.<sup>(58)</sup> Money caused a quarrel at Pocklington Grammar School just before the end of the Hanoverian period. Here, although the dispute was between father and son, a disagreement over stipends spread to wider complaints and both men ceased regular attendance at the school.<sup>(59)</sup> The cost of repairs and who should bear it caused a quarrel between staff at Wolverhampton in 1818.<sup>(60)\*</sup> At Stratford-upon-Avon in mid-century there was a quarrel over the rights of an assistant to use various rooms in the school building.<sup>(61)</sup>

Disputes could spring from the most trivial origins, but sometimes deeper issues were involved. In 1771 a Dissenting Minister was appointed master of the school at Monk's Kirby. "In fury the then usher violently assaulted him" and both left the school - which shut for sixteen years. To religion was added politics in a vicious quarrel 1715-7 between the master of Morpeth Grammar School and his usher. The master was a Tory and a High Churchman; the usher a Whig and a Low church man. The master and some friends contrived to get the usher summonsed for various offences and finally got him dismissed. The usher sought legal help, won a case against the master and governors who had to restore him, pay arrears of salary and all the heavy legal costs. The master introduced a rival

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\* See Part IV, Section 1, p.216.

usher and the real usher was left with only one pupil. Moreover, the boys, said the usher, were bribed to shout "'Away Whigs. Away! No Low Church! High Church and Ormond' ... clapping on their hats in contempt, making wry faces at me, hallooing and shouting intolerably, singing and whistling and sometimes throwing cherry-stones and such things towards me when I am teaching the boy." However, revenge was sweet: the usher managed to establish that the Master had been negligent and had mismanaged the school and the governors ordered the Headmaster to leave.<sup>(63)</sup>

Some ushers, of course, were quite simply jealous of their masters, believed that they should have been appointed and refused to co-operate (Oakham 1724,<sup>(64)</sup> Bedford 1810.<sup>(65)</sup>). The origins, however, of the most remarkable dispute of all, the thirty-seven year quarrel between Butler, the Headmaster, and Jeurwine, the usher, of Shrewsbury School, remain largely obscure. It is true that the men were of entirely different temperament and character. Jeurwine, though able, could not control boys and many parents were reluctant to send boys to his boarding house. This cut his income and he blamed Butler, though in fact the Headmaster was scrupulous in recommending his usher's house. In any case this was merely an additional source of dispute, the quarrel having earlier origins. Whatever the cause this dispute is exceptional for its length and bitterness and, perhaps most of all, because, despite it, the school flourished to a remarkable degree.<sup>(66)</sup> More frequently, indeed almost invariably, disputations masters were - judged by the state of their schools - unsatisfactory masters. Vigilant governors intervened to settle quarrels before educational standards and stability suffered.

Quarrels were not, however, restricted to staff alone. An even more distressing and frequent feature of grammar schools in Hanoverian England was bickering and animosity between staff and governors. On occasions this was provoked by laxity and negligence on the governors' part so infuriating a conscientious master that he attempted to awaken them to their duties and responsibilities. Admirable as this may have been, it was often resented as unwarranted interference and resisted, on principle, by the governors.

In 1811 the Headmaster of the Grammar School at Ripon wrote to his governors declaring that they were ill-managing the leases of property and that increases of income should go to increasing staff salaries. The governors rejected the accusation and suggestion and the Headmaster quickly resigned - "on account of my health"!<sup>(67)</sup> Other masters showed greater endurance. When the Headmaster of North Walsham Grammar School resigned in 1825 he wrote "For fifteen years past I have had frequent occasion to regret the want of confidence on the part of the governors towards me and the obstacles that are always placed in the way of any communication between me and them." The time had been spent in disputes over salaries, admission of pupils, repairs, attendance and finally over the decision of the governors that the Headmaster must dispense with an usher and do all the work himself.<sup>(68)</sup> Still longer, and more serious, was a dispute between the master of King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath, and the governors, Bath Corporation. The Headmaster, appointed 1721, discovered negligence and mismanagement by the Corporation and in 1736 he won a legal suit against them and new Trustees were appointed. Unfortunately

the new Trustees refused to act and the Corporation continued to run the school. Relations between Headmaster and Corporation were not amicable. After some years the Corporation built a new school, appointed a master and fixed his salary at three times the stipend they paid the Grammar School master. The Corporation lavished money on the new school but the old Headmaster fought on, advertising in the local paper that "The Grammar School ... is, and will be (notwithstanding any malicious Insinuations to the contrary) continu'd." The quarrel was only resolved with his death in 1762, a decade after the establishment of the rival school, and over twenty-five years after the master's fruitless legal victory. (69)

Few schools suffered such long disputes as these, but at many there were sharp differences of opinion with staff accusing governors of neglect and mismanagement (East Retford, (70) Lancaster (71)) or, still more frequently, of failure to raise stipends in proportion to income - as the Headmaster of Stratford-upon-Avon Grammar School, in the middle of the eighteenth century, wrote "why ye Schoolmaster should be ye only person debarr'd of ye increase seems unaccountable and somewhat Partial". (72) The same cry was heard at Whitchurch (73) and at Crispin's School, Kingsbridge (74), though in both cases a legal suit was able to gain the desired increase. Elsewhere not a rise in pay, but the failure of governors to pay at all caused disagreement (Warmpton, (75) Ipswich, (76) Brandon. (77))

In many cases, an element of personal animosity provides both the cause of the dispute and the reason for its undue prolongation (Tunstall, (78))

Warrington,<sup>(79)</sup> Farnham.<sup>(80)</sup> The bases of such feelings were often quite remote from the business of teaching and controlling a school. Thus Abingdon Grammar School declined in the 1760's because of the ill-feeling between Headmaster and governors which resulted from the former being a Whig and the latter Tories.<sup>(81)</sup> Still more absurd was a dispute at Crosthwaite School in 1832. The governors took offence at the sermons of the local curate and, because the curate was friendly with the schoolmaster, they resolved to dismiss their master - and his usher - even though the school was flourishing. The plan in fact failed: the Headmaster proved more popular than the governors and, moreover, his contract could not, so lightly, be broken.<sup>(82)</sup> The point, however, remains clear. Irresponsible governors might ignore the quality of their staff in order to indulge some personal, or collective, foible.

It must not, of course, be imagined that governors were always vindictive and ill-advised. Many had real cause for anxiety and intervened only in efforts to maintain proper standards. This particularly applied to changes in curriculum. Thus the master at Mercer's School, 1743, refused to admit a pupil who sought an elementary education. The Company intervened, overruling the master and pointing out that he already had similar pupils and that he had advertised the school as offering English as well as classics, thus himself admitting that the school was not purely classical.<sup>(83)</sup> The master of Brandon School early in the nineteenth century took a similar stand and refused to admit non-classical scholars even when the boys had been approved by the trustees. The law courts upheld the Headmaster's action but he resigned his post.<sup>(84)</sup>

Probably the most notable of all these disputes over curriculum was that at Leeds 1795-1805. The governors of the Grammar school sought to introduce a broad curriculum but were opposed by the Headmaster and usher who based their argument on the school's charter and letters patent. The two parties agreed, amicably, to take the dispute to law, almost as a "test-case", and the governors agreed that the school funds should be used to pay all the legal expenses. The case dragged on for some years until concluded with Lord Eldon's famous judgment that the Free Grammar School was "for the teaching grammatically (of) the learned languages". This apparently restrictive judgment is often used to illustrate the reactionary nature of the law and regarded as a major obstacle to grammar schools wishing to meet the challenge of the new learning by introducing new studies. In fact, though both assertions are partially true, Eldon's ruling in this case was tempered by his also suggesting that provided every boy did some classics - which had been the founder's clear intention - there was no reason why other subjects should not be taught, as demanded, in an effort to attract pupils.<sup>(85)</sup> Eldon urged the staff and governors of Leeds Grammar school to come to some private agreement on a new scheme and then to seek the formal approval of the court. This did not come about - not through Eldon's fault alone, but because the strain of the long case had frayed tempers and caused some ill-feeling amongst staff and governors.<sup>(86)</sup>

Many schoolmasters, as we have seen, were incompetent, negligent or, in some way, unsatisfactory and some were allowed to hold office unchecked. Elsewhere, however, governors attempted to restrain masters



whose behaviour was irresponsible. The master at Southwell was censured in 1731 for "indecent behaviour"<sup>(87)</sup> and a few years later the usher at Wolverhampton Grammar School resigned following an official inquiry into his diligence.<sup>(88)</sup> In 1783 the Headmaster of Leeds Grammar School was ordered to obey the school rules relating to hours and holidays and the following year he was reminded that school lists had to be "those who are really at school at the time ... and none else." This same master was later reprimanded for taking a benefice without permission and, finally, repeating this offence, he was asked to leave.<sup>(89)</sup>

The governors of Guildford Grammar School tried a stronger approach. They censured the Headmaster for "intolerable negligence and misbehaviour" and refused to pay his salary. In court, though the governors' action was seen to be justified, it was ruled that they had no power to withhold salary and they were forced to pay the master £200 arrears and all the legal costs.<sup>(90)</sup> A similar situation occurred at King Edward VI Free Grammar School, Bruton.<sup>(91)</sup> At Ashton-in-Makerfield an appalling dispute followed an attempt by the governors to reprove an unsatisfactory Headmaster. The governors criticised the master's failure to keep the buildings repaired and his general neglect and, as a reprimand, cut his stipend. The Headmaster accused the governors of acting "most tyrannically" and gave three months' notice to expire on June 31st. On June 18th he pointed out that since the 31st could never occur his notice was void and said that the governors would have to give him six months' notice during which period he could shut the school, still be entitled to full salary and not have to forfeit the Bond he had been

required to pay on his appointment. After further bickering the governors took legal advice which, to their dismay, declared that the Headmaster's notice was indeed void, and, moreover, that the Bond was so ill-phrased that it would be almost impossible for the governors to dismiss the master if he did not wish to go. Disaster was only averted by the sudden and unexpected departure of the master. The governors hastily drew up new rules which ordered masters to give three months' notice of their intention to leave and then to go "notwithstanding any informality or error on the face of such notice."<sup>(92)</sup>

The governors at Ashton were fortunate. Other governors found that they could not evict masters however deplorable the situation and that nothing save a sudden change of heart or the master's death could improve matters, (Guisborough,<sup>(93)</sup> Pocklington.<sup>(94)</sup>), Wise governors entered into carefully worded Bonds, or formulated precise rules to which staff had to subscribe, in order to avoid such problems. Some masters were dismissed - or forced to resign - because of their inefficiency (Aldridge,<sup>(95)</sup> Walsall,<sup>(96)</sup>) their neglect (Northampton,<sup>(97)</sup> Hampton<sup>(98)</sup>) or their general refusal to obey the rules formulated by the governors (Wigan,<sup>(99)</sup> Bosworth<sup>(100)</sup>, Heath.<sup>(101)</sup>)

It is easy to be led by the many reports of unsatisfactory, disputatious staff to conclude that matters were much worse than, in reality, they were. The rogues and scoundrels, the ambitious and the quarrelsome made their mark. Many schools suffered great losses of wealth and reputation because of the activities of bad masters. Some schools, unlucky or badly-governed, were unfortunate enough to have a succession

of poor masters which caused deeper, graver, more enduring harm. It must not, however, be forgotten that there were just as many able and devoted men, spending long hours and years teaching in small, often ill-housed and ill-attended, schools all over England and Wales. These were the real teachers in Hanoverian Grammar schools.

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20. E. D. Laborde: Harrow School, p.37.
21. S. M. Longstaff: Andover Grammar School, p.19.
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- 44.. CCR. Vol. 8, p.724.
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SECTION 4

PUBLIC ACTION



SECTION 4PUBLIC ACTION

Having considered the problems of securing qualified and competent staff and having observed the many deficiencies that both teachers and governors often revealed, it is perhaps necessary to consider, briefly, the reactions of the general public to the grammar schools' activities. Grammar schools had been designed to serve a particular educational need of their environment, and, in many areas, the local people were quick to react to what they considered detrimental innovations or reactionary practices. These attacks were frequently directed at the school's staff, even where the governors were in fact responsible for the unpopular policy, and they embraced a wide range of complaints.

There were, of course, some odd sources of dispute. Shortly after the accession of George I, the citizens of Hitchin complained - in a Chancery suit - that the Headmaster taught "the boys too well and quite (unfitted) them for their proper station."<sup>(1)</sup> Amongst general complaints at Ripon in the early nineteenth century was one protesting at the change of the school's weekly half-holiday from Thursday, which was market-day, to Wednesday. A few years later, when the Charity Commissioners visited the school, there were further complaints declaring that the Headmaster favoured wealthier pupils and accusing him of having destroyed the school's library in order to force free boys to buy costly books - the inference being, of course, that unable to do this the poorer boys would leave. The governors agreed that a library was needed - what had really happened to the old one, if indeed it had ever existed, they did not say -

but they completely rejected all the other charges. The Charity Commissioners, not usually restrained when there is cause for criticism, curiously add nothing to this which suggests that this was more an instance of bad relations between the school and the public than a genuine, serious case of mismanagement.<sup>(2)</sup>

At Stratford-upon-Avon in the late eighteenth century there were complaints about the inability and idleness of the master,<sup>(3)</sup> and complaints of this nature, and allegations of neglect, were not unusual.\* At Roystone the charge was of inattention and absence by the master.<sup>(4)</sup> At Pocklington there was a complaint in 1817 about the master's absenteeism and the unsuitability of the usher - old, deaf and incompetent.<sup>(5)</sup> A little later the people of Blackrod were provoked by the frequent holidays and short hours kept by the school, by the master being stone-deaf and in the habit of falling asleep during lessons. The usher was similarly aggrieved because he had seventy-seven in his class while the Headmaster had but thirteen pupils. A public meeting was held but the criticised master did not attend, claiming that because of illness he "must not leave his house on any account."<sup>(6)</sup> The meeting achieved very little, but criticism could be effective. It was reported that following criticisms of the master of Norton School (County Durham), accusing him of frequent drunkenness and, consequently, inability to conduct the school with propriety, he had made great efforts, had ceased to drink, had improved himself and had increased and improved the school.<sup>(7)</sup>

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\* See also Part II, Section 3.

Another source of discontent was the religious teaching of schools.\* In 1750 Baptists in Hitchin went to Chancery to protest when the Headmaster began taking all his pupils to church twice weekly and told the dissenters that if they objected then they could care for their own children. The Chancellor agreed with the Baptists, decided that the master was anyway unsatisfactory, and ordered his dismissal.<sup>(8)</sup> At Kettering, local Non-Conformists objected both to the assistant teacher being a "menial" and unfit to teach, and to the master teaching the Anglican catechism. The master defended himself and, needing the support of all the people to sustain the school, declared that he had omitted, and would continue to omit, all parts of the catechism to which Dissenters might object.<sup>(9)</sup> There was an outcry over religion - though not the teaching of it - concerning King Edward's School, Birmingham, in 1831. The school's governors proposed to introduce a Bill in Parliament which, if approved, would extend their powers. One of the clauses of the Bill required all governors to be members of the Church of England. There was immediately great dissatisfaction and it was only quelled when, after a discreet intervention by the Bishop of Birmingham, the offending clause was deleted.<sup>(10)</sup>

Without doubt, however, the three main sources of discontent were discipline, fees and curriculum. Complaints of masters being unduly severe were regular (Northampton,<sup>(11)</sup> Enfield<sup>(12)</sup>) even though subsequent investigation sometimes vindicated the master. (Bingley<sup>(13)</sup>). Critics of

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\* See also Part IV, Section 3.

the Headmaster at Birmingham, 1797-1834, quite apart from accusations of laziness, laxity, negligence, favouritism and incompetence, referred to him as a tyrant and a butcher.<sup>(14)</sup> Similarly it was said of the Highmaster of Manchester Grammar School, 1721-7, that he caused parents to withdraw boys because they "are afraid to send their children to him."<sup>(15)</sup> Public protest at the strictness of a master at Crosthwaite in the early nineteenth century took a curious form. The wealthy uncle of a flogged pupil was so enraged by the master's action that he entered the school and, in front of the pupils, seized the master by the scruff of his neck and threw him out of the school. A fight followed. The incident resulted in the incensed uncle appearing at Lancaster Assizes, on charges of assault, and cost him a £200 fine and £700 costs. The village, however, supported the boy and his relative and the fined man was cheered home. The effect on school and master is not, unhappily, recorded.<sup>(16)</sup>

A long-serving master at Sedbergh in the eighteenth century was similarly assaulted though why is not clear. A letter written when he was growing old said of him that "People here have made very free with him. He has been twice pulled by the nose besides being very rudely treated in other ways. But this is all his own seeking."<sup>(17)</sup> Clearly teaching had unexpected hazards in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The complaints over fees were almost invariably the same: a grievance at being caused to pay for elementary tuition and the restriction of free tuition to pupils studying the classics. (Cranbrooke,<sup>(18)</sup> Monmouth<sup>(19)</sup>). In most cases, however, the authorities - Chancery Courts

or Charity Commissioners - reported after investigation that, because of the letters patent establishing the school and enforcing the founder's charter, the staff had no choice but to charge for elementary tuition and to limit freedom to classical scholars (Hipperholme,<sup>(20)</sup> Guisborough.<sup>(21)</sup>) Under these circumstances masters were free to charge what they liked, unless their governors officially drew up a list of fees. Too many staff showed little sympathy for the local inhabitants and complaints about high fees were sometimes made. The Commissioners were particularly provoked by high fees charged for elementary tuition at Oundle, considering it a device to bar local boys, and they urged the school governors - the Grocers Company - to intervene.<sup>(22)</sup> Complaints about other fees were rather less frequent. There were occasional disputes over the imposition of fees on the children of parents who lived outside the parish at schools which were considered entirely free (Sedbergh<sup>(23)</sup>) and over a charge being made for classical tuition at traditionally "free" grammar schools (Beverley<sup>(24)</sup>). For the most part, however, disputes over fees reflected the main concern of the great majority of parents in the period: the greater utilitarian value of elementary education as opposed to the classics.

Indeed, most of these quarrels were really an extension of the many disputes over curriculum. Examination of these, however, does reveal a curious situation. As is to be expected, there are many instances of masters and governors being criticised for their failure to provide sufficient tuition in reading, writing and arithmetic and their restriction of the curriculum to the classics (Bitterley,<sup>(25)</sup> Leicester,<sup>(26)</sup>)

Sevenoaks<sup>(27)</sup>). What is surprising is the fact that in some places pressure was being exerted - sometimes with success - to secure the restoration of a classical curriculum in schools which had forsaken it. At Martley this amounted to no more than a feeling amongst some local people which was reported to the Charity Commissioners,<sup>(28)</sup> and, at Bridlington, to complaints that an otherwise satisfactory and diligent master was neither able nor qualified to teach the classics.<sup>(29)</sup> The feeling at Bedale was stronger and forced the trustees to agree to shut the National school they had provided and to restore the Grammar school if the parishioners continued to demand it.<sup>(30)</sup> Opponents of a plan to make the grammar school at Bingley more elementary took the governors to court (1836)<sup>(31)</sup>, while at Northallerton opposition to the cessation of tuition in Latin was so great that, in 1821, the classical curriculum was restored.<sup>(32)</sup> At Wolverhampton there was opposition to an extension of the curriculum. Petitioners in a Chancery suit against the governors (1830) argued that the school had declined as a result of the appointment of an art master some years earlier. The manufacture of japanned goods had developed in the town and there was a demand for workers with some ability to draw. The grammar school - free - had promptly become filled with children whose parents had no interest in the classical curriculum but who were anxious for the advantages of lessons from the art master - children, said the petitioners, who were poor and unclean and from the lowest classes. The trustees, no doubt anxious to avoid the costs of a long court case, accepted the petition and the case was dropped.<sup>(33)</sup> Despite all this, it would, of course, be wrong to presume

a large, popular, pro-classical movement. These are the exceptions to the general pattern. Mostly the classics were retained by law rather than public support. In many schools, the change from the old discipline to the newer more utilitarian one roused no opposition: everyone recognised the need for change and the advantages it must bring.

Criticism and popular complaint were not always levelled at the masters. Blame for decay was often attached to governors for their neglect or incompetence. Governors, not infrequently, had to defend themselves in court against the charges of aggrieved parishioners and parents. (Wolverhampton 1778,<sup>(34)</sup> Steyning 1816<sup>(35)</sup>).\* The law courts were the answer when all other pressure had failed, as at Bosbury, 1800, when the trustees appointed an illiterate unqualified master and let school property at an absurdly low rent to a relation of one of the trustees, and refused to consider the charges of enraged local citizens.<sup>(36)</sup> Sometimes public action persuaded governors to make changes and so avoid greater scandal. At Dilhorne, following complaints and disputes, all the interested parties held a meeting, put the points at issue to the vote, and governors and opponents alike accepted the decisions of the majority.<sup>(37)</sup> At the Perse School, Cambridge, where decay was almost permanent, an effort to revive the school - it was shut - was made in 1787 by a letter printed in a local newspaper. The governors replied, excusing themselves and blaming parents for lack of interest. The result was considerable - a stream of bitter letters and complaints -

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\* See Part II, Section 5.

and the governors quickly inserted a further note in the newspaper announcing that they would re-open the school.<sup>(38)</sup> Unfortunately the revival was unsuccessful, the governors continued to show little interest in the school and too much interest in the school funds, and it took legal action, many years later, to effect a proper improvement.<sup>(39)</sup>

Some criticisms of governors had only indirect bearing on the educational state of the school. Thus at Oldham there were complaints that it was "disadvantageous that the school, the neighbourhood of which is inhabited by persons of a low description, should have been so much enclosed by buildings."<sup>(40)</sup> At Guisborough there was a dispute over the custom of Wardens holding their office for several years instead of being elected annually. Unfortunately this went to Chancery and became involved in the notorious delays of the law and, while the case dragged on, the school fell into considerable decline.<sup>(41)</sup> The Dean of Westminster was taken to court, and indeed even, on appeal, to the House of Lords, by some of the Abbey prebendaries who were opposed to his plan to pull down some of the delapidated old dormitories of Westminster school and to build new ones. The Dean won his case and the school got its new dormitories.<sup>(42)</sup> Westminster got to the House of Lords and Manchester was attacked - by the Member of Parliament for Wigan - in the House of Commons. The attack, which was as much on the property management and governorship as on the actual state of the school, was continued in a pamphlet - "The Abuses of the Manchester Free Grammar School" - and the governors and supporters of the school published a pamphlet in defence of the school.<sup>(43)</sup>



Public opinion was as unreliable and unpredictable a force in Hanoverian England as it is anywhere at any time. Many of the complaints were senseless and baseless, no more than figments of local imagination proclaimed as fact. No aspect of school life, no incident in the master's private life, was too trivial to become the occasion for popular opposition and accusations of harshness, avariciousness, mismanagement, incompetence, immorality. Sometimes, of course, the complaints were justified and sometimes the grievance was genuine. The significance of opposition lies not so much in its beliefs but in its presence and activity. The presence of people prepared to interest themselves in the conduct of the schools was the best possible guarantee of the schools' survival. Apathy and indifference were fatal. Opposition, however uninformed, was a stimulant to negligent governors and staff alike.

1. R. L. Hine: History of Hitchin Grammar School, pp.24-28.
2. CCR. Vol. 3, p.481; P. W. Rogers: A History of Ripon Grammar School, pp.127-129.
3. MSS. letter in Shakespeare Birthplace Library, Stratford-upon-Avon?
4. CCR. Vol. 17, p.755.
5. P. C. Sands and C. M. Haworth: A History of Pocklington School, pp.70-75.
6. M. M. Kay: History of Rivington and Blackrod Free Grammar Schools, p.135.
7. CCR. Vol. 23, p.97.
8. R. L. Hine: op.cit., pp.29-30.
9. CCR. Vol. 24, p.131.
10. T. W. Hutton: King Edward's School, Birmingham, p.116.
11. CCR. Vol. 14, p.263.
12. CCR. Vol. 9, p.188.
13. E. Dodd: History of the Bingley Grammar School, pp.81-86.
14. T. W. Hutton: op.cit., pp.77-80.
15. A. Mumford: The Manchester Grammar School, pp.146-147.
16. T. Wilson: The History and Chronicles of Crosthwaite Old School, pp.25-26.
17. H. L. Clarke: History of Sedbergh School, p.70.
18. CCR. Vol. 1, p.94.
19. CCR. Vol. 10, p.200.
20. CCR. Vol. 18, p.574.
21. CCR. Vol. 8, p.724.
22. CCR. Vol. 23, p.351.
23. CCR. Vol. 27, p.773.
24. CCR. Vol. 10, p.676.
25. CCR. Vol. 3, p.226.

26. G. Cowie: History of the Wyggeston's Hospital, Hospital Schools, and the old Free Grammar School, Leicester, p.97.
27. CCR. Vol. 1, p.140.
28. CCR. Vol. 23, p.576.
29. CCR. Vol. 9, p.721.
30. CCR. Vol. 7, p.679.
31. E. Dodd: op.cit., pp.89-92.
32. CCR. Vol. 8, p.699.
33. G. P. Mander: The History of the Wolverhampton Grammar School, pp.225-227.
34. CCR. Vol. 4, p.349.
35. CCR. Vol. 2, p.178.
36. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.480.
37. CCR. Vol. 13, p.362.
38. J. M. Gray: A History of the Perse School, Cambridge, pp.85-86.
39. J. M. Gray: op.cit., pp.108-117.
40. CCR. Vol. 16, p.222.
41. CCR. Vol. 8, p.724.
42. L. Tanner: Westminster School, pp.24-25.
43. A. Mumford: op.cit., p.270.

SECTION 5

LAW SUITS

SECTION 5LAW SUITS

Many of the disputes and complaints referred to in the previous section, and many of the quarrels between staff and governors, finally came for settlement to the courts of law. Throughout the Hanoverian period a stream of law suits involving grammar schools passed into the English courts. There were schoolmasters seeking restitution for wrongful dismissal, governors seeking authority to rearrange estates and income, parishioners seeking to remove master or governors who had failed, in the popular estimation, to satisfy. There were disputes between staff, between staff and governors, between schools and their neighbours; there were disputes over legacies, over appointments, over estates, over charters, methods, discipline, curriculum, pensions and dismissals. Scholastic litigation poured into the courts - "into", but not always "through". The delays of the law have long been the subject of comment, and suits involving schools were no exception. More than one school died, or was caused to decline greatly, by the failure of the courts to produce judgments or even mere interim settlements within a reasonable period of time.

The survival of a school could depend upon the outcome of a legal battle. Grantham, in decline, was saved early in the nineteenth century by a Chancery suit which recovered a lost endowment worth £700 p.a.<sup>(1)</sup> Similarly the mismanagement of earlier governors was corrected, disaster averted and the future assured by a long suit, concluded in 1827, which enabled Kirkby Beacock Free Grammar School to recover an ill-leased portion of the school lands and so raise the income it produced from under £4 p.a.

to nearly £1,000 p.a.<sup>(2)</sup> Less fortunate was the school at Hungerford. A will of 1735 left the town £400 to be invested for the benefit of the Grammar school and other charities. A codicil in 1743 increased this sum to £1,000, but the courts, unfortunately for the school, declared the codicil invalid.<sup>(3)</sup>

Equally fundamental were cases involving disputes over the control of a school. In 1723 the local corporation appointed a master for Shrewsbury school and their action was disputed by St. John's College, Cambridge. The courts rejected the Corporation's case, and, even though the appeal eventually went to the House of Lords, the Law upheld the right of the Cambridge college to appoint the staff at Shrewsbury.<sup>(4)</sup> A similar dispute between Bedford Corporation and St. John's College, Oxford, 1718-20, had ended in an identical decision, though, in addition, the Corporation at Bedford were severely censured for failing to notify the College that they were seeking a court ruling and so obtaining a first victorious - but short-lived - verdict through the failure of the College to present its case.<sup>(5)</sup>

Even where the right of control was not contested, the exercise of it was often subject to attack. Governors were liable to find any innovation disputed by local opinion and, unless they took care, to find themselves as defendants in Chancery. Early in the period, some of the old prebendaries of Westminster Abbey sought an injunction to restrain a new Dean building new dormitories for the school: they lost!<sup>(6)\*</sup> The

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\* See Part II, Section 4, p.86.

governors of Harrow were taken to law by local inhabitants who claimed that the nature of the curriculum made the school unsuitable for local boys. Since the school had been founded to serve the local needs, it was argued, the curriculum should be extended.<sup>(7)</sup> A similar suit had been instituted over Wickwar School in 1734 in an effort to substitute a broad for a purely classical curriculum.<sup>(8)</sup> In both cases the courts upheld the governors and rejected the petitions. At Hitchin the effort to broaden the curriculum had been more successful. A petition to Chancery in 1720 argued that the founder had intended the school to be for poor children and "if another clergyman comes here and teaches Latin, the use and intent of the schoole will be quite perverted." The Judge agreed and the next master of the grammar school was not qualified to teach the classics.<sup>(9)</sup> Though cases involving curriculum were frequent, it was not always opponents of the classical regime who sought the help of the law. At Pecoock's School, Rye<sup>(10)</sup> and Bingley<sup>(11)</sup> it was critics of plans to introduce wider studies who instituted legal actions. It was an extension of the classical curriculum at Wolverhampton which led to the law suit seeking to restore the old education and rid the school of its art master.<sup>(12)\*</sup> Yet another aspect of the problem was the subject of a court case in 1743, when, following a dispute between the masters of the Latin and English branches of Chigwell School, it was ruled that neither master was to teach the other's subject in his own school but must adhere to the curriculum laid down in the rules.<sup>(13)</sup> The most notable of all

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\* See Part II, Section 4, p: 84.

disputes of this nature was that at Leeds which ended in Lord Eldon's judgment that the function of grammar schools was to teach the classics. In fact, as we have already seen,<sup>\*</sup> he tempered this remark by a suggestion that there was no reason to limit the curriculum to the classical languages if staff and governors could reach agreement on a new system and provided all pupils did undertake some classical study.<sup>(14)</sup> However, the weight of Eldon's ruling and of his remarks in 1826 in another case - "There have been changes made in many of (the Endowed Grammar schools), and made without due authority, under the notion that education might be more usefully conducted upon another plan"<sup>(15)</sup> - was enough to restrict, for a time at least, any schemes, however enlightened, devised by other schools in attempts to attract support and meet popular demand. Even before Eldon's second ruling, however, such was the urgency of the demand and since most now recognised it as a sensible demand, the courts overlooked the Leeds school judgment and in rulings on Bosworth Grammar School (1825)<sup>(16)</sup> and Haberdashers' (1827)<sup>(17)</sup> provision was made for elementary tuition to be given in classical foundations. Furthermore, in 1837, the courts ruled that "free-school" did not mean the same as "Free Grammar School" and that free schools could therefore follow what courses they wished.<sup>(18)</sup> This legalised extensions of curriculum already made at many schools and gave encouragement to those governors whose fear of possible legal action had caused them to keep to a narrower curriculum than they really wished.

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\* See Part II, Section 3, p. 71.



Probably the greatest number of law suits involving schools concerned staffs - appointment, pay, behaviour and dismissal. The disputes at both Shrewsbury and Bedford, as we have seen, though really struggles for authority, were ostensibly cases of improper appointment.\* The disputed election of a master at Skipton-in-Craven in 1792 also had a wider significance in that it provided the opportunity for an eminent Judge to make some general criticisms of school governors and of the ecclesiastical authorities for their collective failure to exercise a proper care over the grammar schools. Still more important, the Lord Chief Justice reaffirmed the power of the Church over the schools by upholding the right of Bishops to examine, and, if appropriate, grant a licence to, prospective staff.<sup>‡</sup> These were not isolated examples of disputed appointments. The feoffees of Leigh Grammar School disagreed over the choice of a master in 1744 and one party went to Chancery in an effort to prevent the other party's candidate being installed as master. The whole matter became somewhat absurd, however, since the case was not judged for over a quarter of a century!<sup>(19)</sup> The appointment of the local rector as Master of Warrington Grammar School in 1810 was the cause of an action which, five years later, led to the decision that the rector could not, by the school's charter, also be master and to the annulment of the appointment,<sup>(20)</sup> More serious, and more slowly settled, was the suit in Chancery opposing the appointment of a master at Risley School, in the 1820's. The previous master - who was also Lord of the Manor and an absentee - had been

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\* See above, p. 91.

‡ See Part II, Section 2, p. 36.

dismissed following a Chancery suit. At this the Trustees appointed the dismissed man's son as the new master. The successful plaintiffs returned, at once, to the courts. Unfortunately the case was not concluded - and the master removed - until 1865, by which time neglect and expense had combined to ruin the school.<sup>(21)</sup>

Even where appointments were not contested, even where appointments were unanimously approved, there was no guarantee that the masters would be entirely satisfactory. It too frequently became necessary for governors and citizens to take legal action to restrain masters from improper behaviour. Thus the governors of Shrewsbury sought, and won, a ruling that pluralism was contrary to the school statutes and so tried to curb the actions of the Headmaster.<sup>(22)</sup> At Hitchin, local Dissenters succeeded in thwarting a master whose duties as parish clerk conflicted with his duties as schoolteacher.<sup>(23)</sup> The Headmaster of Whitgift, 1812, had to be restrained too: his weakness was for embezzling school funds.<sup>(24)</sup> On occasions, however, attacks on unsatisfactory masters failed not because they lacked evidence but because the law was powerless to intervene. This was the situation that arose in the case over Berkhamstead Grammar School early in the nineteenth century. Master and usher had but one pupil; seldom attended the school, and made no effort to revive it. Moreover they were receiving not only their own considerable salaries - totalling some £3,000 p.a. - but also large sums of money from fines on renewing leases of school property. When this state of affairs was taken to court, the Judge, Lord Eldon, expressed his sympathy for the plaintiffs, condemned the behaviour of the staff, and declared that the whole situation

was quite scandalous. However, he also decided that the only remedy lay with the governors and school Visitors, who could intervene if they wished, and that the law could not take any action.<sup>(25)</sup>

There were, in addition to these, a considerable number of cases brought by staff in attempts to make governors pay proper salaries (Crediton,<sup>(26)</sup> Ripon,<sup>(27)</sup> Whitchurch<sup>(28)</sup>) and in resisting attempts by governors to dismiss them from their posts (Sherborne,<sup>(29)</sup> Dronfield,<sup>(30)</sup> Ashby-de-la-Zouch<sup>(31)</sup>).

A large part of the litigation involving schools originated from the opposition of staff and governors and from the irresponsible behaviour of staff. Another major source of legal action was the unsatisfactory nature of so many governors and trustees. All over the country, throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, attempts were made to use the law either to force governors to accept their responsibilities and to exercise proper care of the schools in their charge or to prevent governors from embarking on what were considered foolish or improper actions.

Generally criticism of governors is summed up by an accusation of mismanagement (King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath 1736,<sup>(32)</sup> Wolverhampton 1760<sup>(33)</sup> and 1776<sup>(34)</sup>). Sometimes the problem was a more specific one. The notable suit against the Fellows of Caius College, Cambridge in their capacity as governors of the Perse school was concerned not only with their mismanagement and neglect in general, but with their

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\* See Part II, Section 3, p. 68 ff.

appropriation of school funds in particular.<sup>(35)\*</sup> There had been a similar case over Ayshford's Grammar School, Uffculme. The trustee's heirs had kept the school funds and neglected the school. Moreover in 1771 they ceased to pay any money to the master - by his death in 1789 he was owed over £1,000. The court appointed new trustees and laid down specific rules for control of the school and management of the property and to prevent any similar occurrence.<sup>(36)</sup> Improper leasing arrangements and the appointment of an unsuitable master occasioned an action against the trustees of Bosbury Grammar school just after the turn of the century.<sup>(37)</sup> The election of Wardens and their tenure of office caused a legal battle - which lasted for half a century and ruined the school - at Guisborough.<sup>(38)</sup> A similar case had been fought over Sevenoaks school in 1728 when the Wardens were taken to Chancery and a Judge made more explicit regulations for their election and for the auditing - at regular intervals and by qualified people - of the school funds.<sup>(39)</sup> In 1817 a Chancery petition called in question the whole existence and future of Bridlington Free School. The petitioners attacked the Founder's heirs for allowing the staff to hold their appointments as sinecures and declared that the founder had made no clear statement of the function intended for the school and, moreover, that there were no legal rights invested in his heirs. Plans for the reorganisation and development of the school were submitted to the court by both the petitioners and the founder's kin, but the court rejected both schemes and devised rules and organisation of its own to control the school.<sup>(40)</sup>

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\* See Part II, Section 1, p.15.

Bridlington was fortunate: judgment was secured in a relatively short time. Some cases lasted for many years - for so long that the original causes of dispute had long ceased to matter and that the school had ceased to resemble the institution whose theoretical fate was still in the judicial balance. A notable example of this occurred in the case of a will of 1676 leaving funds to found a free school at Somerton. Unfortunately the trustees mismanaged the monies and were taken to Chancery before a proper school had been established. In 1744 the Judges directed that some of the remaining funds must be used to establish a free grammar school. Nothing, however, could be done until the case was concluded - which did not happen until 1791. By this time the costs were so high that all the school's revenue was used to pay them and for a decade no action could be taken. Eventually 125 years after the bequest and over seventy years after the interim settlement establishing a grammar school, a school of sorts was established - but it taught only elementary subjects as the funds were too low to employ a classical master. (41)

Worse, in some ways, was the fate of Bosworth Grammar School, old and distinguished and formerly of a high academic standard. The school suffered from the eccentricity of the Dixie family who were its patrons. There were various crises until in 1779 a Chancery suit was commenced with the objects of deposing Headmaster, Governors and Patron, of amending the school's curriculum so that it better served the needs of the area, and of reorganising the management of the school's estates. In 1790 a Judge declared that the estates had been mismanaged. He also ordered an

enquiry into the position of a new - de facto - master: what was his standing in law? In 1805 a Judge declared that the governors had been improperly appointed. In 1816 the court was still debating the problem of the master's status (first raised in 1790). The question was academic - the master had resigned in 1808. The whole case was tending to become even more absurd since the school had shut at the master's resignation. In 1820 a new patron and new governors were chosen and given the right to elect a master. By this time the school buildings were in ruins and temporary premises had to be found and plans for rebuilding had to be submitted to the court. In 1826 the building plans were approved and rules devised for the control of the school. A temporary school was opened, but the case remained in Chancery - settling the problem of costs, which, in the end, it was decided the school funds should pay - for a further decade. Not until 1836 was Bosworth Grammar School freed from the suit which, though its intentions were excellent, had nonetheless helped the decline of the school until, finally, it shut for nearly twenty years. (42)

Such cases were, it is true, unusual, but some delay was customary and five to ten years waiting for a ruling was not infrequent. Many disputes never reached the courts: the threat of legal action was often sufficient to persuade all parties to reach a settlement rather than run the risks of delay and expense that so often accompanied the working of justice. However, a remarkably large number of cases concerning schools, staff, governors and classical education generally, did come before the law courts of England and Wales in the Hanoverian period. In some cases

it is almost correct to regard the courts as acting as Visitor because the proper Visitor failed so frequently to exercise his authority.

The law courts became an essential part of the complex and confused educational system of the Hanoverian period. . It seems that no risk was too great if the object was the restoration or confirmation of personal rights, of the school's rights, of the rights of the people whose needs the Grammar school was supposed to serve.

1. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.804.
2. The Story of St. Bee's, p.24.
3. CCR. Vol. 2, p.5.
4. J. B. Oldham: A History of Shrewsbury School, p.62.
5. J. Sargeaunt: A History of Bedford School, p.38.
6. L. Tanners: Westminster School, pp.24-25.
7. E. D. Laborde: Harrow School, pp. 46-48.
8. CCR. Vol. 17, p.388.
9. R. L. Hine: History of Hitchin Grammar School, pp.27-28.
10. CCR. Vol. 3, p.442.
11. E. Dodd: History of the Bingley Grammar School, pp.89-92.
12. G. P. Mander: The History of the Wolverhampton Grammar School, pp.225-227.
13. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.415.
14. A. C. Price: History of the Leeds Grammar School, pp.137-144.
15. Russell's Reports in Chancery, Vol. 2, p.501.
16. S. Hopewell: The Book of Bosworth School, pp.61-72.
17. J. E. G. de Montmorency: State Intervention in English Education, p.183.
18. Ibid.
19. J. Lunn: A History of Leigh Grammar School, pp.53-60.
20. CCR. Vol. 20, p.166.
21. VCH. Derbyshire, Vol. 2, p.267.
22. J. B. Oldham: op.cit., p.61.
23. R. L. Hine: op.cit., pp.29-30.
24. History of the Whitgift Grammar School, p.10.
25. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.532.



26. CCR. Vol. 10, p.46.
27. P. W. Rogers: A History of Ripon Grammar School, pp.101-108.
28. CCR. Vol. 24, p.336.
29. W. B. Wildman: A Short history of Sherborne, pp.144-145.
30. CCR. Vol. 18, p.197.
31. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.742.
32. CCR. Vol. 4, p.269.
33. G. P. Mander: op.cit., pp.187-188.
34. CCR. Vol. 4, p.349.
35. J. M. Gray: A History of the Perse School, Cambridge, pp.108-117.
36. CCR. Vol. 3, p.47.
37. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.480.
38. CCR. Vol. 8, p.724.
39. J. T. Lennox: Sevenoaks School and its Founder, pp.32-33.
40. CCR. Vol. 9, p.721.
41. CCR. Vol. 11, p.442.
42. S. Hopewell: op.cit., pp.61-72.

**SECTION 6**

**SALARIES**

SECTION 6SALARIES

Any investigation of the salaries paid to schoolmasters during the period meets with considerable difficulty. The major sources of information are Nicholas Carlisle and the reports of the Charity Commissioners and, quite apart from the fact that the salaries they report differ markedly without any evidence of changing circumstances to explain the fluctuation, neither is an entirely satisfactory nor reliable source. The Commissioners, concerned mainly with the proper application of endowments and legacies, tend to be content with a statement of this sort of income only - which takes no account of the extra earnings from boarders, fees, gratuities and, all too frequently, pluralism. Carlisle's reports seldom contain a detailed analysis of the quoted "salaries" and there is no way of discerning whether the figure is a regular or even average salary, a high-water mark (reached by the sale of property, sale of timber, by fines on renewing leases, by exceptionally high numbers of fee-payers), merely the expectation of an eager new master, or the boast of a man with social aspirations!

Masters themselves, and writers on education, during the Hanoverian period - as indeed at all times - complained bitterly of the inadequacy of stipends and presented a harrowing picture of the overworked, underpaid servant of society vainly working with no real hope of reward - at least on this earth. There is, to be just, a considerable amount of truth in this, but, in fairness too, one must not fail to record that some men were drawing great benefits from what were, in effect, sinecures and were making no real effort to serve the community.

More valid is the practical criticism of low salaries that they made it impossible to attract qualified competent teachers and this in turn meant the inevitable decline of grammar school to petty school and even, on occasions, the necessity of shutting the school.

A number of schoolmasters were receiving salaries of under £10 p.a. but were in schools which had ceased to be classical schools. At Aspull School, Wigan, the stipend was £1 p.a.,<sup>(1)</sup> at Ledbury £3 11s. 3d. p.a.,<sup>(2)</sup> at Rock £5 2s. 4d.,<sup>(3)</sup> at Frome £6 p.a.,<sup>(4)</sup> but none of these was properly a grammar school by the beginning of the nineteenth century and, moreover, at all of them fees were charged. Less fortunate was the master of Ashford School (Derby) whose only stipend was a meagre £6 13s. 4d. p.a.<sup>(5)</sup> Comparatively more fortunate appears the situation of masters at Witney who were paid £30 p.a., but in fact £20 of this went on rates and left the master with a bare £10 to be supplemented as best could be managed - and this school remained at least semi-classical.<sup>(6)</sup> Stipends of under £10 p.a. were paid at numerous other schools - Evesham,<sup>(7)</sup> Hindley Low School,<sup>(8)</sup> Rothwell,<sup>(9)</sup> and Bleasdale<sup>(10)</sup> for example - but even where fees were allowed, as in all the schools cited, the great majority had ceased to be proper classical schools.

At a few schools, however, where salaries only a very little greater were paid, the classical tradition had been retained. This was so at Ottery St. Mary<sup>(11)</sup> and Buckingham.<sup>(12)</sup> Both were sustained by boarders and, at Buckingham, the master was officially allowed a benefice as an additional inducement for a qualified man. Some less fortunate staff found themselves with no official salary - as at Brough where it was

stopped in the years before 1817 in order to save funds to rebuild the school. When it was restored, after taxes had been deducted, it amounted to only £6 19s. Od. p.a.<sup>(13)</sup> At Hexham the costs of a Chancery suit in 1825 were so great the master could not be paid until 1833.<sup>(14)</sup> At New Sleaford the master received only £4 of his £24 p.a. stipend, the rest being saved to pay for repairs - a situation which had lasted for some years according to Carlisle's report.<sup>(15)</sup> An even larger cut was made at Guisborough in 1819 where £50 was reduced to £10 p.a., but this was a disciplinary action by the governors aimed at making an absentee master either return or resign. He did both!<sup>(16)</sup> The governors of Manchester Grammar School had set a precedent by reducing the Highmaster's salary to £10 p.a. in 1726 - the master left - and in 1734-40, though on this occasion the Highmaster was subsequently reimbursed.<sup>(17)</sup>

Some grammar schools where low stipends were paid at the beginning of the period raised remuneration and kept their classical status. Barely in this category falls Barnstaple. In 1760 a £10 p.a. salary was increased (by a bequest from a former master) to £14 and this was further implemented, at the end of the century, by the provision of a house for the master.<sup>(18)</sup> More significant increases occur at Newark (£10 in 1732 to £250 p.a. in 1830)<sup>(19)</sup>, at Whitchurch (£10 in 1747 to £210 p.a. in 1830)<sup>(20)</sup> and at Bridgenorth where an allowance of £10 in 1726 was raised to £30 by 1817, and then, by an agreement between those members of the local Corporation who had sons at the school, to over £100 p.a.<sup>(21)</sup>

As a final observation on low stipends, we must re-emphasise that the statutory allowance can be very misleading. At Shrewsbury the salary

paid to the Headmaster by 1832 was, by most standards, large - £300 p.a. Yet the Headmaster paid over £500 p.a. to his assistants and, after all expenses, still had left some £4,000 p.a. from fees and gratuities.<sup>(22)</sup> Similarly at Rugby, where the scheme of 1777 allowed the Headmaster a salary of £63 6s. 8d. p.a. and £50 gratuity,<sup>(23)</sup> an account of 1793 shows that in that year the Headmaster received over £1,000, though this was reduced to some £750 after the Second Master had been given his share of the fees.<sup>(24)</sup> This state of affairs was not confined to the great schools nor to schools already paying considerable stipends. At Midhurst the salary was £20 p.a. but the Charity Commissioners reported that the Headmaster paid £40 p.a. to the widowed mother of a former benefactor and master, and that the Headmaster had himself spent some £2,000 on improvements.<sup>(25)</sup> At Appleby the Headmaster received £30 p.a. from the endowment<sup>(26)</sup> but his total emoluments were around £300 p.a.<sup>(27)</sup> It could, though, have been little consolation to the poorly paid teachers of the Hanoverian era that the Master at Winchester received a mere £10 p.a. salary and was - theoretically - among the lowest paid of all masters.<sup>(28)</sup>

This is perhaps a convenient point to consider in some detail the sources from which emoluments came. For most, if not all, masters the only dependable and predictable part of their income was a fixed stipend. But even here chance, as well as the wisdom of past and present trustees, could have considerable effect. Most, indeed nearly all, schools derived revenue from endowed land and on the fluctuating value of the estates rested the fortunes of the school. Thus at Giggleswick enclosures of

land at the end of the eighteenth century increased revenue from about £100 p.a. to over £500 p.a.<sup>(29)</sup> At Pocklington, land producing £40 p.a. in 1807 was worth £800 p.a. in twenty years and almost as much again in a further twenty years: the land was mismanaged in previous years and an energetic, litigious Headmaster worked hard to recover alienated lands and then had the good fortune to find the land sought by the new wave of railway owners and builders. Sadly the funds were not used, at first, to benefit the school.<sup>(30)</sup> Headmasters were not always so fortunate. At Bromsgrove, the deprivations of unscrupulous masters and governors succeeded in reducing the already low stipend from £30 p.a. to £20 p.a. in the course of the century.<sup>(31)</sup>

Sometimes the trustees of a school embarked on foolish speculation or managed the property incompetently. At Kirkby Beacock the governors in 1742 leased lands and mines for 867 years (so that all property leases would expire simultaneously, an earlier generation of trustees having rashly agreed to 1000 year leases). The tenant - a governor - agreed to pay £3 10s. Od. p.a. In 1800 the mines on the land were found to be productive and the school was fortunate that the Courts ruled (1827) the leases invalid, ordered a short lease to be signed, and fixed income and compensation - thus saving the school.<sup>(32)</sup> At Maldon incompetent management allowed the property to lapse and in 1810 the master's income stopped. Not unnaturally he ceased work and the school stayed in this declined state until the lands were recovered over twenty years later.<sup>(33)</sup> Sometimes trustees were guilty of more than mere incompetence in property management; sometimes they shamelessly lined their own pockets leaving the school's fate

to the enthusiasm and ability of underpaid staff. At the Perse School, Cambridge, while the trustee's stipend rose from £9 p.a. to £840 p.a., the master's income first fell (from £40 p.a. to £20) and then slowly rose to £120 p.a. until public opinion and a legal battle caused a sudden increase to £450 p.a. (24)\*

Land was not the only source of revenue. Trustees could, and often did, obtain permission - by Act of Parliament or Chancery judgment - to sell property and invest the proceeds in stocks and shares. Success here, of course, depended on the financial acumen of the trustees. Sometimes money was deposited at interest with some local speculator or business man: this could be a disastrous practice and the Charity Commissioners were outspoken in their condemnation. Dividends were not paid (Kirkby Stephen<sup>(35)</sup>) and monies were sometimes irrecoverably lost (Bispham<sup>(36)</sup>) with consequent loss of salary to master and, frequently, decline in size and standard of school.

Basic salaries were not always monetary. At Kirkby Ireleth Chapelry School the master received £12 p.a., pasturage, and the people had to provide turfs and stones for repairs to the school, though some commuted this for a small cash payment.<sup>(37)</sup> At Strodes' school, Shepton Mallet, part of the salary of the master was paid in hay and potatoes.<sup>(38)</sup> Until 1762 the master of Queen Elizabeth's Free Grammar and Writing School, Bristol, received £12 10s. 6d. p.a. and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  bushels of wheat and 3 bushels of rye. However in 1762 these bushels were commuted to a monetary payment,

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\* For this and further details on bad management generally see Part II, Section I.



though the Commissioners declared that the commutation value bears no relation to reality.<sup>(39)</sup>

However, as we have already seen, basic stipends do not always give accurate information on emoluments received nor on supplementary extras. Most schools provided a house for the master and frequently this was not only rate and rent free but also big enough to accommodate boarders - a way of maintaining academic standards and offering inducement to ambitious and competent men. A few allowed the master lands or orchards from which he could derive what profit he was able (as at Woodbridge,<sup>(40)</sup> Maidstone,<sup>(41)</sup> Hales Owen,<sup>(42)</sup> Wainfleet.<sup>(43)</sup>) Some masters were given a cash allowance for coals and candles: £10 p.a. at Easingwold,<sup>(44)</sup> £5 p.a. at Andrew's School, Holybourn.<sup>(45)</sup> Some were given coal - five chaldrons annually at Gresham's, Holt,<sup>(46)</sup> two chaldrons at Platt's Free Grammar School, Aldenham,<sup>(47)</sup> but only one chaldron yearly at Thornton (Yorkshire).<sup>(48)</sup> As an alternative masters were allowed to collect a small fee to pay for coal, 1/- p.a. at Aldridge,<sup>(49)</sup> 2/6d. p.a. at Kirkham,<sup>(50)</sup> while at Plumbland the master was allowed to collect a sack of coal from those parents who kept a horse.<sup>(51)</sup>

There were other small scale fees for extras which the master was allowed to collect - for mending windows (6d. per boy p.a. at Bury,<sup>(52)</sup> 2d. per boy at Newchurch-in-Rossendale<sup>(53)</sup>), on entry (this varied widely according to the type of pupil and the school's reputation\*), at the end of each term or gratuities on certain fixed days (12/- at Easter, Whitsun,

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\* See Part III, Section 1.

Summer and Christmas at Merchant Taylor's,<sup>(54)</sup> 10/6d. at Christmas at Ipswich,<sup>(55)</sup> 2/6d. to 5/- at Epiphany and Midsummer at Bury.<sup>(56)</sup> At Cockermonth and Embleton School the master was entitled, in theory, to a fleece of wool at clipping times from boys from Embleton, though apparently he did not always exercise this right.<sup>(57)</sup> The most common special gratuity was the Shrovetide gift of "Cockpenny". This was a (voluntary) payment deriving from the times when Shrove Tuesday had been the day for the great cock-fighting competition. At some schools, the tradition lingered in more than mere payments (Lancaster,<sup>(58)</sup> and, possibly, Crosthwaite.<sup>(59)</sup>). The size of Cockpenny varied enormously and probably the best assessment is that of the pupils at Blackburn who said of their Headmaster, 1819-45, that he preferred a silver cockpenny but liked gold even better.<sup>(60)</sup> Some masters also received gratuities from parents which were little better than extra, semi-official, fees. At Langport,<sup>(61)</sup> and Martock<sup>(62)</sup>, as at many other schools, only the parents of classical scholars paid. The governors of Leeds Grammar School prohibited such gratuities in 1737<sup>(63)</sup>, but at Winchester the custom of the seventy scholars paying ten guineas each year, although condemned and its cessation ordered in 1776, continued for many years after this. The removal of such a huge part of the master's remuneration would have necessitated giving him a share of the revenues enjoyed by the Warden and Fellows, and this they would not contemplate. The scandal was resolved, in 1834, by a former Headmaster who donated a large sum of invested money to provide the gratuity - "It has," he said, "been such a distress of conscience to me."<sup>(64)</sup>

Additional funds came from school governors, most usually in the form of occasional (or even regular and annual) gratuities. Rivington's master was allowed 2 guineas p.a. after 1755.<sup>(65)</sup> Stratford's received 5 guineas in 1765.<sup>(66)</sup> The Headmaster of Wolverhampton received £40 in 1769,<sup>(67)</sup> while the Headmaster at Guildford was given £100 "in compensation for his diligence in raising school", in 1778.<sup>(68)</sup> The masters at Leeds did rather better - 40 guineas regularly after 1771; a decade later this reached 70 guineas; by 1800 the gratuities were around £100 p.a., and in 1822 and 1827 gifts of £200 and £500 respectively were made.<sup>(69)</sup>

An alternative system of increasing the master's stipend was for the governors to allow him to hold an ecclesiastical preferment (even though founders, fearing neglect of school, curacy or both, often prohibited this) or to secure his appointment to some lectureships, chaplaincy or some equivalent sinecure. The master at Bodmin was usually appointed Prison Chaplain at £100 p.a.<sup>(70)</sup> At Newcastle-upon-Tyne the Headmaster was given a benefice as a reward for "his eminent industry and the exertions of his very distinguished abilities" in 1761, and later was further rewarded with the sinecure mastership of the Virgin Mary Hospital (worth £100 p.a.)<sup>(71)</sup> Shrewsbury linked the post of school Headmaster and parish catechist at £20 p.a.,<sup>(72)</sup> while, on a humbler scale, the masters at Penrith and Bell's Grammar School, Newlands, both received an extra £1 p.a. - the former for preaching a sermon promoting the education of youth,<sup>(73)</sup> the latter for keeping the charity accounts.<sup>(74)</sup>

Some trustees, clearly anxious not to spend money without first seeing that they got full value, linked allowances with some requirement,

such as at Gresham's Free Grammar School, Holts to induce the Headmaster to pay attention to keeping up the numbers of classical scholars and of free boys, the rules of 1821 allowed him two boarders for every ten free boys and an extra payment, ranging from 10/- to 30/- per classical pupil p.a. depending on which class the pupil was in.<sup>(75)</sup> Similar arrangements existed at Ilminster (an extra £10 p.a. per free boy up to five boys before 1805, an extra £5 p.a. per free boy for up to ten boys after 1805).<sup>(76)</sup> At Bolton-le-Moors the master was paid £5 for teaching any boy who claimed the university exhibition to which the school was entitled - and this payment was made in 1820.<sup>(77)</sup> More demanding was the promise of a benefice to the master of Doncaster Grammar School, provided he had 50 Latin pupils. Carlisle's correspondent records that he never had more than forty-five and "although a good scholar, an excellent Pulpit Orator, and a respectable Poet, died nearly broken-hearted in distress and misery."<sup>(78)</sup>

More predictable and more remunerative were the occasional bonuses governors, and, in many cases, staff received from the fines on renewal of lapsed leases. These might be no more than a few pounds but they were sometimes considerable - £500 at Holgate's Free Grammar School, York<sup>(79)</sup> and £5000 in 1813 at Berkhamstead which was, in any case, a sinecure.<sup>(80)</sup>

Finally, though not strictly classifiable as an additional source of income, but obviously pertinent, are the sensible arrangements made by some governors to provide pensions for staff who had served their schools well. It was the lack of such provisions which forced many an able man to stay teaching long after his health, and that of the school, demanded

retirement. At Wigan the master was paid £15 p.a. after fifteen years' service,<sup>(81)</sup> at Wolverhampton the master who retired in 1762 was given £40 p.a. pension,<sup>(82)</sup> the 1777 scheme at Rugby provides for £80 p.a. pension if required<sup>(83)</sup> while the retiring Highmaster of St. Paul's in 1814 was given by his generous governors a pension of £1000 p.a.<sup>(84)</sup>

These then are the main sources of income, save, where permitted, for the regular fees paid by boarders and for tuition. These could be very considerable. At Merchant Taylor's school quarterage produced about £500 p.a.<sup>(85)</sup> and not much less was received by the staff at Portsmouth.<sup>(86)\*</sup> Governors sometimes laid down careful provisions for the division of income; allotting a proportion to master and usher and to a general repair and emergency fund; alternatively the Headmaster sometimes received everything and his assistants were paid by him, though here a fixed minimum was sometimes imposed by the governors.

From all these sources some masters enjoyed huge, and occasionally undeserved, incomes. By 1830 stipends of over £400 p.a. though not common were certainly not unknown - Northleach,<sup>(87)</sup> Sedbergh,<sup>(88)</sup> Pocklington,<sup>(89)</sup> King'Edward VI Grammar School, Birmingham,<sup>(90)</sup> Dedham,<sup>(91)</sup> Burton-upon-Trent,<sup>(92)</sup> St. Paul's,<sup>(93)</sup> and Wolverhampton,<sup>(94)</sup> for instance were all in this class. Shrewd management (or exploitation) could double this easily - as at Shrewsbury and Rugby where the masters were getting over £1000 p.a., as at Skipton where between 1795 and 1824 the master was increasing a stipend of just over £300 p.a. to nearly £1000 p.a. by

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\* See Part III, Sections 2, 3, 4.

plundering school property,<sup>(95)</sup> and, perhaps above all, at Berkhamstead where a father and son held the sinecure appointments of master and usher, worth together £3000 p.a.

Many founders, envisaging thriving schools had left funds to support two or more masters. As a general rule the usher or surmaster or second master got between a third and a half as much as the Headmaster. In many schools the decline in numbers or the failure of endowments to yield higher dividends, or both combined, resulted in there being either no employment for an usher or no funds to increase his salary. We have seen how low some master's salaries were; ushers were no different. At Kirkby Stephen the stipend of £1 6s. 8d. p.a. was paid to a senior boy since no usher could be attracted.<sup>(96)</sup> Until 1808 the usher at Hawkshead received only £3 6s. 8d. p.a.; in 1808 the governors rightly judging it absurd and wishing to attract a competent classical scholar raised the stipend to £50 p.a.<sup>(97)</sup> Equally low, though raised sooner were the stipends at Kirkby Beacock (£3 p.a. before 1738 and only £10 in 1819),<sup>(98)</sup> at Whitchurch (£3 6s. 8d. p.a. until 1747).<sup>(99)</sup> More remarkable were grammar schools like those at Rock,<sup>(100)</sup> Daventry,<sup>(101)</sup> Burneston,<sup>(102)</sup> Otley,<sup>(103)</sup> where ushers' stipends continued to be only £5 or £6 p.a. It is hardly surprising that qualified men could not be found at such absurdly low remuneration. At Daventry, as at many other schools, the meagre salary was used to supplement an almost equally inadequate allowance for the master. An alternative was to employ an unqualified man (or woman) to teach young pupils elementary work: a task which frequently fell to the masters and of which they almost as frequently

complained. Moreover, it was sometimes possible, particularly if some low fees could be imposed, to find a teacher at this level and for this salary. (It must be remembered that it was often possible to charge for elementary work where the statutes forbade fees for the more advanced classical studies.) This solution was adopted at Witney<sup>(104)</sup> and at Witton where £20 p.a. was supplemented by fees of £1 p.a. for reading and writing and a further £1 p.a. for cyphering, mathematics and bookkeeping.<sup>(105)</sup>

The salary pattern for ushers was, of course, basically similar to that for masters and, like masters, an usher could, if fortunate, supplement his income with extras: by taking boarders (Thetford,<sup>(106)</sup> Blundell's School, Tiverton<sup>(107)</sup>), though this required a suitable house and official permission; or by being permitted a share of the extra fees and gratuities - at Marton the usher was allowed a third,<sup>(108)</sup> at Kirkby Beacock two-sevenths.<sup>(109)</sup> In addition, many ushers were given gratuities by trustees at the same time as the master was or as compensation for doing the master's work during illness or absence: this happened at Bristol 1803-11 when the usher received £20 p.a. gratuity<sup>(110)</sup> and at Leeds in 1764 (£20) and 1778 (50 guineas).<sup>(111)</sup>

Undoubtedly by far the best prospects for young teachers were offered by the assistantships and undermasters' posts at the great boarding schools and the flourishing city grammar schools. Here salaries were high, fees were high, boarders could be taken, gratuities were often generous and, perhaps above all, there was the strong possibility of promotion, either to some comparable school elsewhere, or even within the school itself. Some were very highly paid - at Leeds the basic stipend

was £20 in 1720, £63 until 1807<sup>(112)</sup> and £250 p.a. soon after 1820;<sup>(113)</sup> at Wolverhampton the salary rose from £31 3s. 4d. p.a. in 1785 to £200 p.a. in 1815;<sup>(114)</sup> at Birmingham the usher received £34 6s. 8d. p.a. until 1738, and £300 p.a. after 1816<sup>(115)</sup> and the surmaster at St. Paul's received a similar amount.<sup>(116)</sup> Both these latter two schools paid stipends of over £200 p.a. to their third masters.

These extra teachers, writing masters, art masters, French, Music, Fencing masters, assistants, only appear in larger and more flourishing institutions: their salaries, like those of their senior colleagues, were high; their perquisites and gratuities equally attractive. Most usually assistants were the Headmaster's private affair and he fixed their allowance himself. Writing-masters were mostly paid by a combination of fees and a small stipend and the others were usually extras paid by their pupils' fees. However, King Edward's School, Birmingham, had a French master 1774-1828 and the governors paid him £40 p.a.;<sup>(117)</sup> Wolverhampton paid £60 p.a. from 1788-1816 to a German and French master, and then raised it to £80 p.a.<sup>(118)</sup> while Macclesfield allowed £50 p.a. for their linguist.<sup>(119)</sup> Art masters received much the same though at Birmingham the stipend reached £100 p.a. by 1830.<sup>(120)</sup> Some writing masters did even better. At Mercer's School after 1804 a writing-master was paid £80 p.a. for four afternoons per week work,<sup>(121)</sup> at Macclesfield after 1816<sup>(122)</sup> and Newcastle-upon-Tyne after 1830<sup>(123)</sup> the writing masters received £100 p.a., while at Wolverhampton the writing master 1801-17 was allowed two guineas per week - in view of his large family - and was then given fifty guineas p.a. pension.<sup>(124)</sup> Even better paid were



Headmasters' assistants or extra staff. At Birmingham, the assistant was paid £20 p.a. in 1773, in just over twenty-years this had risen to £100 p.a. and by 1816 it had doubled again.<sup>(125)</sup> At Manchester the High-master's assistant was paid £160 p.a. after 1825, and even the usher's assistant got £120 p.a.<sup>(126)</sup> At Eton the assistants were ill-paid - only £40-£50 p.a. - but they held curacies, late in the century began taking boarders and usually acted as private tutors - at fees of up to £100 p.a. per boy - all of which considerably supplemented their income.<sup>(127)</sup>

It was probably far more remunerative to be a junior assistant in a large school than Headmaster of a small or even medium sized institution.\* Too often masters and ushers were expected to use their own initiative to increase low and fixed incomes and this deficiency, often brought about by inert, inept or avaricious trustees, could lead to lack of care, to irresponsibility and to exploitation. The poor salaries and uncertain prospects could not secure worthy men: the poor quality of so many masters alienated parents and led to the numbers, already affected by the competition from more up to date and more utilitarian schools, declining still further; falling numbers affected the extras which were the necessary addition to make low salaries tolerable. It required dedicated men to accept such jobs and to do them properly: it required remarkable men to reverse the decline once it had begun: and usually it required greater salaries than were available in any, save the great, schools to attract such masters.

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\* For comparative size, see Part III, Section 5.

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3. CCR. Vol. 24, p.534.
4. CCR. Vol. 3, p.335.
5. CCR. Vol. 18, p.20.
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7. CCR. Vol. 24, p.502.
8. CCR. Vol. 21, p.305.
9. Carlisle, Vol. 2, p.291.
10. CCR. Vol. 15, p.273.
11. CCR. Vol. 3, p.99.
12. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.47.
13. CCR. Vol. 9, p.661.
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21. CCR. Vol. 4, p.226.
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23. H. C. Bradby: Rugby, p.35.
24. G. Bettinson: Rugby School, p.30.
25. CCR. Vol. 2, p.173.

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28. J. D'E Firths: Winchester College, pp.40-41.
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38. CCR. Vol. 3, p.396.
39. CCR. Vol. 7, p.196.
40. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.557.
41. CCR. Vol. 7, p.46.
42. CCR. Vol. 5, p.439.
43. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.853.
44. CCR. Vol. 6, p.601.
45. CCR. Vol. 13, p.496.
46. CCR. Vol. 12, p.103.
47. CCR. Vol. 1, p.78.
48. CCR. Vol. 7, p.771.
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50. CCR. Vol. 11, p.236.

51. CCR. Vol. 5, p.87.-
52. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
53. CCR. Vol. 15, p.92.
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83. G. Bettinson: op.cit., p.26.
- 84.. CCR. Vol. 3, p.230.
85. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.55.
86. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.446.
87. CCR. Vol. 21, p.113.
88. CCR. Vol. 17, p.773.
- 89.. CCR. Vol. 19, p.541.
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- 91.. VCH. Essex, Vol. 2, p.540.
92. CCR. Vol. 11, p.558.
- 93.. M. F. J. McDonnell: A History of St. Paul's, p.362.
94. CCR. Vol. 4, p.349.
95. A. M. Gibbon: The Ancient Free Grammar School of Skipton-in-Craven,  
pp.77-85.
96. CCR. Vol. 9, p.674.
97. CCR. Vol. 3, p.205.
98. CCR. Vol. 3, p.5.
99. CCR. Vol. 24, p.336.
100. CCR. Vol. 24, p.534.

101. CCR. Vol. 13, p.9.
102. CCR. Vol. 4, p.403.
103. CCR. Vol. 15, p.681.
104. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.320.
105. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.135.
106. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.193.
107. CCR. Vol. 3, p.135.
108. CCR. Vol. 11, p.316.
109. CCR. Vol. 3, p.5; The Story of St. Bees, pp.22-24.
110. C. P. Hill: The History of Bristol Grammar School, p.63.
111. A. C. Price: op.cit., pp.104-105.
112. Ibid.
113. CCR. Vol. 15; p.662.
114. CCR. Vol. 4, p.349; G. P. Mander: op.cit., p.206.
115. CCR. Vol. 20, p.647.
116. M. F. J. McDonnell: op.cit., p.362.
117. CCR. Vol. 20, p.647.
118. CCR. Vol. 4, p.349; G. P. Mander: op.cit., p.206.
119. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.117.
120. CCR. Vol. 20, p.647.
121. J. Watney: Some Account of Mercer's School, p.20.
122. Carlisle Vol. 1; p.117.
123. CCR. Vol. 23, p.387.
124. CCR. Vol. 4, p.349.
125. CCR. Vol. 20, p.647.
126. CCR. Vol. 16, p.103.
127. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: History of Eton College, pp.317, 367.

PART III

SECTION 1

ENTRANCE



SECTION 1ENTRANCE

When parents sought to send their children to a grammar school, they first had to discover what the entrance requirements were. This was often far less simple than might at first sight appear. There was an enormous range of different rules and regulations relating to the age and capacity and academic attainment of the child, and the social status of the parent, and the admission fees that they would be required to pay. Much, of course, depended on the size and the scholastic and social reputation of the school. Some classical schools were able to place complex restrictions on prospective entrants in an effort to secure only the best academically, and the most suitable socially - and financially. Other schools were anxious for any pupils and placed no restrictions at all: anyone who applied was admitted. (Kimbolton,<sup>(1)</sup> Burnshall.<sup>(2)</sup>)

Most schools had some kind of age limit and refused children until they were considered old enough to attempt at least the rudiments of Latin grammar. At the great majority of such schools the minimum age was seven (Chelmsford,<sup>(3)</sup> Earle's Colne,<sup>(4)</sup> Kibworth Beauchamp,<sup>(5)</sup>) or eight (Sheffield,<sup>(6)</sup> Spalding,<sup>(7)</sup> Thetford.<sup>(8)</sup>) There were of course the usual wide differences. Thus Wainfleet admitted six-year-old children<sup>(9)</sup> while c.1730 at Bingley some pupils were allowed to enter when only five.<sup>(10)</sup> These, however, were as unusual as those schools which refused to admit boys until they were nine (Wolsingham<sup>(11)</sup>) or even ten years old (Wotton-under-Edge.<sup>(12)</sup>) Although most schools would not admit pupils before they were aged seven or eight, those institutions

which held valuable closed scholarships to the Universities often imposed an additional age limit to prevent older boys entering the school solely for the purpose of securing these awards. Thus at Repton entrants had to be over seven but under twelve years old,<sup>(13)</sup> between ten and fourteen at Charterhouse<sup>(14)</sup> and between seven and fourteen at Bosworth.<sup>(15)</sup> Leeds permitted a wider range accepting boys over eight but under sixteen.<sup>(16)</sup> Such restrictions, however, were considerably less common and most parents would have been concerned only with the minimum age limit.

Often it was not age alone but the attainment and capacity of the child as well which determined suitability for admission. The standard test was the child's ability to read. At the great majority of schools this was the only entrance test and there was considerable variety in the standard required. Thus at Orton ability to read monosyllables was sufficient,<sup>(17)</sup> and Ambleside - two-syllable words - was little more arduous.<sup>(18)</sup> Elsewhere the standard was more severe - read decently (Ludlow<sup>(19)</sup>), "pretty well" (Lancaster<sup>(20)</sup>), very well (Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham<sup>(21)</sup>), fluently (Leeds<sup>(22)</sup>), or even perfectly (Bristol<sup>(23)</sup>). At some schools founders and governors anxious to make this test a proper one, and to apply a consistent standard to prospective entrants, not only specified the level of attainment to be shown but also the book to be used. At a very small number of schools a Primer or some similar book had to be used (Dunchurch<sup>(24)</sup>), but elsewhere the Bible or some part of it was specified - the New Testament (High Ercal<sup>(25)</sup>), or some of the Psalms (Batley<sup>(26)</sup>, Almondbury.<sup>(27)</sup>).

Ability to read from the Bible was usually sufficient, but some schools added to this the need for entrants to be able to write and spell. Here too there is a considerable range of requirements from the ability to spell single-syllable words at Lymm<sup>(28)</sup> to the ability to write "written and printed hand" at Brentwood<sup>(29)</sup>. Most schools, however, were rather more vague and where pupils were required to show some competence, often the only standard was that their writing be legible (Bury St. Edmunds<sup>(30)</sup> or just tolerably good, (Spalding<sup>(31)</sup>).

It was not unusual for schools, quite apart from any test on ability in reading or writing, to require entrants to be competent enough, and capable enough, to attempt classical study. A few schools even imposed a test to determine how far advanced in Latin the prospective pupil was. This was merely a vague requirement to have "some knowledge of the Accidence" at St. Albans<sup>(32)</sup> and this was undoubtedly the most usual standard in such cases. (Skipton,<sup>(33)</sup> Bury St. Edmunds<sup>(34)</sup>). The more selective and more successful schools could, of course, look for an even greater degree of proficiency. Thus entrants at Guildford had to be tolerably perfect in the Accidence<sup>(35)</sup> and able, at Tonbridge, to read Latin perfectly.<sup>(36)</sup> Mostly however, schools looked for no more than a willingness to do Latin and Greek and some general indication that this was feasible (Wantage,<sup>(37)</sup> Stamford.<sup>(38)</sup>) When efforts to apply any higher standard were made, they were not noticeably successful: this happened at Bingley in the mid-eighteenth century,<sup>(39)</sup> and, some years later, at Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham, where the numbers of entrants diminished sharply when competence was required.<sup>(40)</sup> At

Charterhouse the Headmaster 1811-32 tried to introduce a competitive examination to select pupils, but failed in his efforts because of the opposition of former and existing pupils, parents and governors.<sup>(41)</sup>

Other types of academic requirement were most unusual, but a few schools did demand that entrants should have some knowledge of the first rules of arithmetic (Newcastle-upon-Tyne,<sup>(42)</sup> Walsall (after 1837)<sup>(43)</sup>). Normally, however, provided a child was sufficiently advanced in his reading and perhaps writing, showed the ability to study the classics, and, of course, was old enough, he was eligible to enter most of the English grammar schools.

Before he was actually allowed to enter, it was first necessary for his parents to pay a fee. Not all schools demanded entrance money but most did even if it was only a nominal sum like the 4d. fee at Moulton,<sup>(44)</sup> and the 6d. at Perrin's School, New Alresford - though even this could be dispensed with if the master wished.<sup>(45)</sup> These were, perhaps, rather lower than was usual. At most schools parents were required to pay at least 1/- (Barton,<sup>(46)</sup> Liverpool<sup>(47)</sup>) and probably rather more if the school was a genuine classical school. Indeed at some of the more successful schools, the entrance fee was a great deal higher - three guineas at Uppingham,<sup>(48)</sup> four pounds - after 1812 - at Bristol.<sup>(49)</sup> At some schools the entry fee was voluntary (Rivington<sup>(50)</sup>); at others on a sliding scale varying with parental means (Wigan<sup>(51)</sup>), or only demanded of wealthy parents (Hawkshead.<sup>(52)</sup>). In many schools there were alternative charges - local boys might pay less than extra-parishionary pupils. (Steypning<sup>(53)</sup>), elementary pupils less than classical ones (High

Ercal<sup>(54)</sup>), while at Tavistock, parents who applied for entry through the proper channels paid one guinea but those who obtained admission for their children by applying direct to the master paid twice as much.<sup>(55)</sup> With such a wide diversity of fees and provisions it would be rash to suggest any one sum as being the average. Generally, however, parents of day boys at classical schools could expect to pay from 2/6d. to 5/- for entry to the ushers' department (Appleby<sup>(56)</sup>, King Charles I Grammar School, Kidderminster,<sup>(57)</sup> Alford,<sup>(58)</sup>) and between 10/6d. and one guinea for entry to the master's classes (Southampton,<sup>(59)</sup> Leicester,<sup>(60)</sup> Stratford-upon-Avon.<sup>(61)</sup>). For boarders special terms were arranged and they were often, not unnaturally, required to pay a great deal more.\*

In some places yet another barrier had to be surmounted by parents who wished their children to enter the local grammar school. This could be the hardest test of all for this was the social qualification. In some schools it was actually embodied in the rules: until 1745 entrants at Bristol were required to be "lawfully baptized";<sup>(62)</sup> the 1828 rules at Hitchin stipulated that pupils must be "sons of respectable tradesmen or similar".<sup>(63)</sup> At Wolverhampton (1831) boys had to be able to buy books and had to be recommended by respectable householders - qualifications which combine, in practice, to make entry almost impossible for poorer boys.<sup>(64)</sup> Rather more often there was an unwritten rule. Gislingham is typical. Local children were all entitled to free schooling but in fact only farmers' and traders' sons - and not those of the poorer families - were admitted.<sup>(65)</sup>

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\* See Part III, Section 3, p.151.

At a number of schools this same matter was dealt with indirectly by what was ostensibly a hygienic and disciplinary standard. Many schools insisted that pupils be washed and healthy and respectable - "sound in their person, clean in their dress" (Kingston [Hereford]<sup>(66)</sup>), "neat and clean, with shoes on their feet" (Bingley<sup>(67)</sup>), or, most frequently, "clean and decent and free from offensive and catching Disorders" (Liverpool,<sup>(68)</sup> Warrington.<sup>(69)</sup>) Obviously, while not specifically designed to prevent any particular class of pupil entering a school, such a rule could have a social application, though it would be ungenerous to imply such motives to the founders or governors who designed their rules to protect their schools against the slovenly and the carriers of disease rather than the poor.

Such were the complex regulations governing entry to grammar schools; whether they were strictly adhered to is, of course, impossible to determine. A letter of the late eighteenth century referring to Skipton Grammar School, said that entrants were supposed to be able to "read the Bible pretty well, but some have been admitted which could but read the New Testament indifferently: if they can but write so as their exercises be intelligible it may do."<sup>(70)</sup> Similarly a new Headmaster at Hitchin in 1819, forced a number of pupils to leave because, amongst other complaints, "nine cannot read in any degree, seven read badly" - yet they were supposed to have been examined to prove their capability of attempting classical studies.<sup>(71)</sup> The need to maintain numbers and stipends, and perhaps even more fundamental, the wish to survive could clearly make a mockery of the rules governing the admission of pupils to grammar schools.

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2. CCR. Vol. 13, p.621.
3. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.411.
4. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.430.
5. B. Elliott: A History of Kibworth Beauchamp Grammar School, p.39.
6. Carlisle, Vol. 2, p.897.
7. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.843.
8. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.193.
9. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.853.
10. E. Dodd: History of the Bingley Grammar School, p.55.
11. CCR. Vol. 21, p.107.
12. CCR. Vol. 17, p.341.
13. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.232.
14. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.2.
15. S. Hopewell; The Book of Bosworth School, p.73.
16. A. C. Price: History of the Leeds Grammar School, p.157.
17. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.729.
18. CCR. Vol. 7, p.536.
19. CCR. Vol. 3, p.284.
20. A. L. Murray: A History of the Royal Grammar School, Lancaster, p.85.
21. CCR. Vol. 10, p.258.
22. A. C. Price: op.cit., p.157.
23. C. P. Hill: The History of Bristol Grammar School, pp.29-31.
24. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.654.
25. CCR. Vol. 24, p.354.

26. CCR. Vol. 17, p.716..
27. CCR. Vol. 18, p.547..
28. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.114..
29. CCR. Vol. 11, p.203..
30. CCR. Vol. 23, p.529.
31. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.843..
32. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.508..
33. CCR. Vol. 17, p.778.
34. CCR. Vol. 23, p.529.
35. CCR. Vol. 10, p.617.
36. S. Rivington: The History of Tonbridge School (4th edition), p.162.
37. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.43.
38. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.846..
39. E. Dodd: op.cit., p.57..
40. CCR. Vol. 10, p.258.
41. E. M. Jameson: Charterhouse, p.21.
42. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis, Vol. 2, p.112.
43. D. P. J. Fink: Queen Mary's Grammar School, p.285.
44. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.837.
45. CCR. Vol. 12, p.502.
46. CCR. Vol. 7, p.569.
47. H. A. Ormerod: Liverpool Free School 1515-1803, p.33.
48. CCR. Vol. 5, p.371.
49. C. P. Hill: op.cit., p.63.
50. CCR. Vol. 19, p.196,



51. CCR. Vol. 21, p.263.
52. CCR. Vol. 3, p.205..
53. CCR. Vol. 2, p.178.
54. CCR. Vol. 24, p.354.
55. CCR. Vol. 5, p.343..
56. CCR. Vol. 9, p.635.
57. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.764.
58. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.780.
59. CCR. Vol. 13, p.165.
60. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.770.
61. CCR. Vol. 15, p.550.
62. C. P. Hill: op.cit., pp.29-31.
63. R. L. Hine: History of Hitchin Grammar School, p.45.
64. G. P. Mander: The History of the Wolverhampton Grammar School, p.230.
65. CCR. Vol. 22, p.148.
66. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.498.
67. E. Dodd: op.cit., p.79.
68. H. A. Ormerod: op.cit., p.33.
69. CCR. Vol. 20, p.166.
70. Quoted in A. M. Gibbon: The Ancient Free Grammar School of Skipton-in-Craven, p.77.
71. R. L. Hine: op.cit., pp.34, 40.

SECTION 2

FREE BOYS

SECTION 2FREE BOYS

Many schools numbered free boys amongst the pupils. Often these were obligatory, and an essential part of the institution's endowment, but occasionally they were gratuitous, a recognition of merit or a charitable gesture to the locality.

It is desirable to distinguish immediately between the general conditions and usages in Grammar schools and the extraordinary freedoms of the great boarding schools. There were free boys at Eton - though conditions in the College boarding house were so bad that at times there was a considerable shortage of candidates\* - and at Winchester and Westminster and so on, but their fees and gratuities remained very considerable. In fairness it must be said that the advantages offered by free places at these schools were also very great and usually led to University scholarships. At some of these schools, Rugby and Tonbridge, for example, the free places were, however, given under much the same rules and to much the same type of boy as in the great mass of grammar schools: although these were boarding schools there were day boys too, and where these were eligible for free places they could have them; though it is said that free boys at Shrewsbury, for instance, were regarded by their fellow pupils with some contempt.<sup>(1)</sup>

By far the greatest number of schools specified that candidates for free places must be "local" boys, usually defining this as 'belonging' to

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\* See Part III, Section 3, pp 147-148, 159.

the parish or borough. There were a number of minor variations on this. In some boroughs freedom was only for children of freemen (Northampton,<sup>(2)</sup> Leicester,<sup>(3)</sup>); at Richmond (Yorks.), the rules of 1750 specified "sons of inhabitants exercising any trade mystery or manual occupation";<sup>(4)</sup> at Marlborough parents had to have lived in the town for at least seven years before their children were eligible.<sup>(5)</sup> Candidates for freedom at King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath, had to live in the city and be nominated by twenty ratepayers.<sup>(6)</sup> It was not unusual for freedom to be available for children of descendants of those who had subscribed to the cost of new buildings at some point in the school's history (Malpas,<sup>(7)</sup> Uldale.<sup>(8)</sup>). At Wigton however a rule to this effect made in 1714 was withdrawn in 1825,<sup>(9)</sup> while at Plumbland, an eighteenth century foundation freedom was for all locals and for namesakes of the founder but it was expressly forbidden for those who had not contributed to building the school.<sup>(10)</sup>

At many schools some kind of financial qualification was required. At Uppingham this was simply "poor" - and the application of a well-to-do doctor for a free place for his son was rejected.<sup>(11)</sup> At Upholland freedom was restricted to children of parents whose income was under £5 p.a.<sup>(12)</sup> At Lucton the limits were land worth £20 p.a. freehold or £50 p.a. renthold (1712 rule) and these were subsequently raised to £100 p.a. and £300 p.a. respectively.<sup>(13)</sup> At Gravesend and Milton Free School the requirements for the thirty free places were in part socio-financial. Parents had to be people "of good credit ... (but who) have fallen into decay." In addition there was an age minimum for the boys and also a residential qualification.<sup>(14)</sup>

These last were usually vague, as we have already said, but this vagueness while probably unintentional or even well-intended, could lead to confusion or oddity. This was so at Tonbridge where the charter said: "ibidem adjacens", which, as the town grew, became increasingly difficult to determine. Not even the 1764 ruling of a small and extremely distinguished committee - it included Lord Chancellor Hardwicke and Judge Blackstone - completely solved the issue; they defined the disputed phrase as "town or parish". The problem remained and in 1825 a further ruling restricted freedom to bona fide inhabitants who lived within ten miles of the school and in the county of Kent (this excluded a small area of Sussex which lay within the prescribed distance).<sup>(15)</sup> Distance - or proximity - was also used as a qualification at Rugby. Here the 1777 scheme specified within five miles of the school, but in 1780 this was extended to ten miles.<sup>(16)</sup> At Crewkerne the Headmaster reported that freedom was for "the people of Crewkerne and the neighbourhood to the extent of a foot walk in every direction from the town - which it must be owned is a very indefinite limit; but this is said to have been the practice from time immemorial."<sup>(17)</sup>

The Headmaster at Newport (Shropshire), finding insufficient applications from the local people, admitted any boy who applied from the whole area; but even in this way only 38 of the 80 statutorily allowed places were filled in 1820.<sup>(18)</sup> At some schools freedom was, apparently, even less restricted - open to any who applied. This was so at Giggleswick where the only restriction was the size of the school building.<sup>(19)</sup> It was also the rule at Wolverhampton and, as at Giggleswick, the only fees

were those paid by boarders for board and lodging.<sup>(20)</sup>

As an alternative, or addition, to these conditions, there were the various entry requirements - age, ability, fees - which were often statutory for all pupils.\*

The actual decision on which pupils were to be admitted free rested most usually with governors or the Headmaster and was merely a matter of applying and establishing conformity with the rules - if any. Very occasionally there were variations. At Wallingford the six free boys were nominated one by each Alderman in turn;<sup>(21)</sup> similarly at High Wycombe the Alderman and Bailiffs took turns to nominate two boys each.<sup>(22)</sup> More unusually, at Halsham, free boys were chosen by descendants of the founder from a list drawn up by the parish officer.<sup>(23)</sup> Perhaps the most complex arrangement existed after the 1792 re-foundation of King's School, Pontefract, where the governors appointed fourteen free boys; two were appointed by the Visitor, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster; and the trustees of a local charity school, who had given money towards the re-foundation, were allowed to nominate one free boy.<sup>(24)</sup>

In many schools a free place meant little - a freedom only to learn classics without charge or even merely at a lower fee than other pupils. Free classics was of course a basic right in many grammar schools and was a statutory requirement which could<sup>not</sup> be easily evaded. However, some staff and governors, finding a lack of demand for classics, voluntarily extended the freedom to elementary subjects in order to

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\* See Part III, Section 1.

attract pupils and increase the utility of the school (Cartmel,<sup>(25)</sup> Bosbury<sup>(26)</sup>). The situation at Howden was the exact opposite: freedom was for sixteen pupils to do reading, writing and arithmetic, but as a concession one poor but clever boy was allowed free Latin.<sup>(27)</sup> This clearly is the contingency envisaged by the numerous acts of governors up and down the country who legislated to provide elementary subjects free and also the classics "if required". At Cartmel, the range of free subjects was increased so as to include English, Latin, Greek, Geography and the use of globes,<sup>(28)</sup> and at Bolton-le-Moors free tuition was extended to the classics, reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, navigation, mathematics and modern languages.<sup>(29)</sup> There were some oddities: at Brigg freedom was for local boys to learn classics but for any pupil to learn the elementary subjects.<sup>(30)</sup> At Fotheringhay classical freedom, though in little demand, existed throughout the period, but freedom for reading, writing and accounts was only given in return for the master being allowed grazing rights in certain fields. However, in 1794, these fields were enclosed and the freedom ceased.<sup>(31)</sup>

Not surprisingly the number of free places filled, or of free boys attending a school, depended in large part on the breadth of curriculum and the extent of freedom offered. At some schools there were limitations either imposed by statute or by the terms of the bequest or charity, which provided the free places. These varied greatly - one at Blackburn<sup>(32)</sup>, two at Chipping Norton,<sup>(33)</sup> three at Bideford,<sup>(34)</sup> four at Scarborough<sup>(35)</sup> and so on, 25 at Northampton,<sup>(36)</sup> 40 at North Walsham,<sup>(37)</sup> 50 at Daventry,<sup>(38)</sup> 100 at Ipswich (before 1751)<sup>(39)</sup> 153 at St. Paul's,<sup>(40)</sup>

beyond this governors resorted to the less precise "all who apply" formula! Even more variation occurred in the number who availed themselves of the offered freedom. By virtue of broad curriculum, skill of staff, reputation, or because of incentives to the staff to attract free boys, or, sometimes, because of economic inducements to parents, some schools were able to attract a reasonable number of free boys. At Ripon in the 1770's there were forty,<sup>(41)</sup> Rugby a generation later had thirty,<sup>(42)</sup> and Giggleswick had twenty-one entirely free and a further forty paying only for their board;<sup>(43)</sup> Berwick-upon-Tweed in the early nineteenth century averaged twenty,<sup>(44)</sup> while at Bedford there were thirty-six in 1824 and sixty in 1832 - though this was a brief prosperity.<sup>(45)</sup> More frequently, lack of demand, negligence and incompetence and sometimes opposition for social and financial reasons combined to keep numbers down - as at Collier's School, Horsham, where of sixty free boys only four did Latin,<sup>(46)</sup> and at Standish where only two or three of forty free pupils did classics.<sup>(47)</sup> At many schools there were no applications at all - as at Cuckfield<sup>(48)</sup> and King's Lynn<sup>(49)</sup>, Bromyard<sup>(50)</sup> and Barnsley,<sup>(51)</sup> Scarborough<sup>(52)</sup> and Snaith.<sup>(53)</sup>

It is not difficult to realise why, at so many schools, the numbers of pupils seeking and receiving free education should have diminished. Some masters clearly regarded free boys as inferior and as having an adverse influence on the social, as well as the educational, standard of the school, and they attempted, by adhering to a strict classical routine and by charging fees for anything beyond this, to prevent candidates. At Lewes, the Headmaster sent an "optional" bill for



stationery;<sup>(54)</sup> at Sir Roger Manwood's Free Grammar School, Sandwich, free boys were charged as much for elementary subjects as others paid for a full curriculum.<sup>(55)</sup> At Bristol, it was alleged that the Headmaster, from 1764 to 1811 discouraged free boys in order to have more room for boarders - but always kept one free boy as a safeguard against legal action;<sup>(56)</sup> even after this, in 1821, free boys had to pay sixteen guineas for tuition in non-classical subjects<sup>(57)</sup> a fee high enough to deter those who sought genuine benefit from free places. The situation at Newark was similar - though the fees, five guineas p.a., were considerably lower - and the Headmaster complacently declared that unfortunately the poor "derived no benefit, though he has publicly shown the free nature of classical education and never insisted on any boy doing a wider course."<sup>(58)</sup> In 1834 Chancery intervened and directed that free boys were in future to enjoy the whole curriculum without any fee being enforced.<sup>(59)</sup> Less fortunate were free boys at Bromsgrove: their privileges were gradually whittled away. In 1756 freedom was restricted to elementary subjects; in 1779 free boys were ruled ineligible for prizes; in 1832<sup>they were deprived</sup> of the opportunity to learn the classics, to compete for prizes or to hold the school's scholarships.<sup>(60)</sup> As Carlisle reported on Macclesfield - "the poor (are) not excluded, but the cost of books and the classical bias means they do not attend."<sup>(61)</sup>

Many, if not most, free boys paid some kind of fee -for entry (Oswestry<sup>(62)</sup>), for coals (Hales Owen<sup>(63)</sup>), for stationery (Northampton<sup>(64)</sup>), for those subjects which were not statutorily free - arithmetic, writing and reading at Cartmel<sup>(65)</sup> or a variable fee based on subjects taken and

standard reached (Cockermouth and Embleton<sup>(66)</sup>). But at some schools, despite theoretical freedom, everybody paid: £2 p.a. at Beverley,<sup>(67)</sup> two guineas p.a. at Leicester (in lieu of a gratuity<sup>(68)</sup>), four guineas p.a. at Bampton (Oxford).<sup>(69)</sup>

Some school governors sought to encourage Headmasters to take free boys by offering extra remuneration - though this was not always successful. At Bury St. Edmunds (where free boys were called "royalists") this scheme, however, worked in that in 1830 there were thirty-one free - but since fairly high "gratuities" were paid it seems unlikely that the class for whom freedom was a necessity could benefit even if they had wished.<sup>(70)</sup> At Bath, the Headmaster was paid £40 p.a. extra to take ten free boys, and, although Chancery adjudged their education adequate, complaints on this score were frequent. This, however, did not ease the Headmaster's problem of how to integrate a small elementary group into a large classical boarding school.<sup>(71)</sup> The governors of Great Yarmouth Grammar School devised a more complex scheme - the salary of the Headmaster being supplemented in proportion to the number of free boys attending the school. However free boys were hard to find. In 1721 the Council ordered the Town Clerk to advertise vacancies in an effort to attract pupils. Even if this was successful, the success was not lasting. In 1741 there was only one free boy - which meant no allowance for the Headmaster; there was a brief revival: in 1751 six free (£20 p.a.) and later nine, providing the Headmaster with an extra £30 p.a., but then collapse. In 1757 there were no free boys, the Headmaster left and the school shut - the scheme had not been successful.<sup>(72)</sup> To balance

this, it must be recorded that the governors of Gresham's Free Grammar School, Holt, were rather more successful with the scheme they devised in 1821. In this more complex scheme the Headmaster's salary was linked not only directly to the number of free boys, but indirectly too - the number of boarders allowed depended on the number of free boys in the school. Furthermore, it was in the Headmaster's interest to stimulate an interest in the classics since he got a further allowance for each free boy studying the classics. There was an immediate response - there were soon fifty free boys - "sons of farmers, traders, or inferior stations" - and twenty-two were pursuing classical studies.<sup>(73)</sup>

At other schools, the inducements were made more directly, to the boys or their parents. At Crediton, a bequest providing £8 p.a. was divided each year amongst the four local free boys who were "of best disposition and capacity for grammatical learning" and who most needed financial help.<sup>(74)</sup> A cash payment was also made at Wootton-under-Edge and in addition the boys were provided with caps and gowns.<sup>(75)</sup> Clothing was provided at other schools - for two boys at Whitchurch,<sup>(76)</sup> for twenty at Gravesend and Milton,<sup>(77)</sup> for over thirty on the Latymer foundation at Edmonton.<sup>(78)</sup> At a few schools free boys were provided with their books - at a reduced price at Tebay School, Orton,<sup>(79)</sup> but free at Bosworth, where the governors in 1725 instituted a scheme of buying the books and loaning them to pupils.<sup>(80)</sup>

Most schools had free places: some admitted free boys willingly if they could be persuaded to apply. Unfortunately the boys did not always apply, and even where they did, they were not always made welcome

nor given the full benefit of the school's advantages. The scales were undoubtedly weighted against those who sought free schooling. The scales were certainly tilted at Northampton in the late 1820's. In 1833 it was discovered that the chances of a parent securing a free place for his son at the local Grammar School depended largely on how he had voted in the local elections. The Town Corporation controlled entrance to the school and between 1828 and 1832 only ten of the fifty-two free pupils admitted came from families which had opposed the Corporation's candidates in the elections.

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8. CCR. Vol. 5, p.93.
9. CCR. Vol. 5, p.112.
10. CCR. Vol. 5, p.87.
11. CCR. Vol. 5, p.371.
12. CCR. Vol. 21, p.310.
13. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.503.
14. CCR. Vol. 1, p.110.
15. S. Rivington: The History of Tonbridge School (4th edition), pp.79-80, 162
16. H. C. Bradby: Rugby, p.35.
17. CCR. Vol. 9, p.477.
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26. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.480.
27. CCR. Vol. 11, p.762.

28. CCR. Vol. 3, p.183.
29. CCR. Vol. 19, p.155.
30. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.800.
31. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.207; CCR. Vol. 24, p.204.
32. CCR. Vol. 9, p.28.
33. CCR. Vol. 12, p.256.
34. CCR. Vol. 9, p.129.
35. CCR. Vol. 11, p.780.
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44. CCR. Vol. 23, p.507.
45. J. Sargeant: A History of Bedford School, pp.65-66.
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49. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.182.
50. CCR. Vol. 12, p.71.
51. CCR. Vol. 17, p.764.
52. CCR. Vol. 11, p.780.
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55. CCR. Vol. 1, p.137.
56. Quoted in C. P. Mill: *The History of Bristol Grammar School*, pp.61-62.
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63. CCR. Vol. 5, p.439.
64. CCR. Vol. 14, p.263.
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74. CCR. Vol. 10, p.46.
75. CCR. Vol. 17, p.341.
76. CCR. Vol. 24, p.336.
77. CCR. Vol. 1, p.110.
78. CCR. Vol. 9, p.174.
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81. T. C. Lees: *op.cit.*, p.48.

SECTION 3

BOARDERS



SECTION 3BOARDERS

The boarding pupil was a prominent feature of many grammar schools in the Hanoverian period. At some schools boarders were essential for survival as a classical institution; at some they were simply an extra to supplement the salaries of underpaid staff. For parents, the advantages of a boarding school could be various. At some schools there were specific advantages like restricted university scholarships; at others there was a social distinction, and for some parents there were, of course, academic considerations and an attempt to secure the best possible classical tuition for their children. Moreover, in the eighteenth century, as in earlier and indeed in recent times, there was lively controversy over the advantages of boarding schools, day schools and private tutors. Some - though probably a minority - would be influenced by some of the more abstract, more theoretical, explanations of the benefits of a boarding school.

The existence of this separate, and often entirely different group of pupils could influence greatly the function of a grammar school by causing the school to pay greater attention to the building of a flourishing boarding department than it did to the task of serving the more immediate community. To prevent this and to exercise some control over such developments, governors often fixed the number of boarders allowed, the fees these were to pay, and even the courses they were to take. Any increase in size or alteration in these arrangements, naturally had to have proper authority.

At some schools the questions of whether there should be boarders or not, and of how many should be admitted, were solved by the extent and condition of the accommodation available. In 1732 the Corporation of Andover agreed that "by reason of numerous boarders" the school house should be extended to make more adequate provision for existing pupils and to anticipate further increases in size.<sup>(1)</sup> The governors of Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham added an extra wooden building to allow the Headmaster space for more than the twenty-five boarders which earlier statutes had allowed.<sup>(2)</sup> Many schools were far more limited. A pupil of the early eighteenth century at Repton wrote that there were thirteen boarders and more expected, but the Headmaster "has not room for them."<sup>(3)</sup> Truro was limited, by its accommodation, to twelve boarders,<sup>(4)</sup> and Preston to two.<sup>(5)</sup> At some schools there could be no boarders since accommodation did not exist (Sedbergh before 1782,<sup>(6)</sup> Abingdon before 1758<sup>(7)</sup>) or because the condition of the property was too bad and too dilapidated (Tavistock after 1804,<sup>(8)</sup> Hele's School, Plympton Maurice.<sup>(9)</sup>)

The extent of the accommodation was, of course, a main influence on governors when they decided the number of boarders permitted at a school. This number, in consequence, varied enormously. Sometimes it was very low. At St. John the Baptist Hospital Grammar School, Kirkby Ravensworth, it was fixed at three (though the manner in which this decision was made and the decision itself were declared illegal after the whole affair had been taken to court.<sup>(10)</sup>) At Walsall, a valid rule allowed four.<sup>(11)</sup> More usually the number was ten (as at Bury<sup>(12)</sup>), sixteen (Risley<sup>(13)</sup>), twenty (Bungay<sup>(14)</sup>), twenty-five (Queen Elizabeth

Grammar School, Atherstone<sup>(15)</sup>), or thirty (Sutton Valence<sup>(16)</sup>). A few large, and optimistic, schools put their limit still higher - fifty-two at Wolverhampton (1786)<sup>(17)</sup>, ninety-four at Buckingham<sup>(18)</sup>, and well over one hundred at Tonbridge after 1825.<sup>(19)</sup>

The Headmaster of Gresham's Free Grammar School, Holt, was under more complex regulation: he was allowed two boarders for every ten free boys at the school, up to a maximum of ten boarders (1821 rules).<sup>(20)</sup>

Permission to take boarders was often granted to assistants and ushers as well as to the Headmaster, though Carlisle reported of Chipping Campden that the usher was "now" forbidden.<sup>(21)</sup> Usually the usher was allowed between half and two-thirds of the number of boarders permitted to the Headmaster. Thus at Tonbridge before 1825 the usher was allowed eight and the Headmaster twelve; new rules in that year increased these figures to forty and sixty respectively, and fixed a limit of twenty on boarders taken by any other members of the staff.<sup>(22)</sup> At Ripon the 1837 rules fixed the numbers at six and ten for usher and master.<sup>(23)</sup> Rules in 1785 at Wolverhampton were rather less generous to the usher who was only allowed twelve boarders while the master could have forty.<sup>(24)</sup> In fact the master failed to reach his maximum and the usher, more successful, was able, with special permission, to have twenty. However, after a decade, this extra allowance was stopped.<sup>(25)</sup>

At the largest schools, the difficulty was often considerable. Demand far exceeded available places and those unable to enter the official boarding house controlled by the Headmaster had to find rooms as best they could. Thus at Eton, in mid-eighteenth century, there were

thirteen boarding houses in the town apart from the actual College boarding house. Officially these were not part of the school's organisation and staff were not allowed to control them.<sup>(26)</sup> They were run by local landladies and discipline was often dreadful. There was a great improvement when, towards the end of the century, assistants began to control these houses. Indeed, although the costs were high these houses flourished<sup>(27)</sup> and the notoriety of the discipline and conditions in both the college itself and the dames' houses was such that demand declined - at the very end of the Hanoverian period there were, on one occasion, but two applications for the thirty-five vacant scholars' places at Eton.<sup>(28)</sup> Similar problems occurred at Harrow, where the Headmaster between 1760-71 achieved some improvement by restricting control of boarding houses to properly appointed people and by imposing a single set of rules on all boarders whatever their house.<sup>(29)</sup> A different solution was tried at Westminster by appointing an assistant to reside in each dame's house. However their effect was negligible and here too the better houses were those actually run by staff.<sup>(30)</sup> The root of the problem, of course, was that these schools still regarded themselves as day schools with only a few privileged scholars as boarders, and regarded boarding by other pupils as a private concern and no business of the school. Inevitably, as numbers grew and the lack of proper discipline in unofficial boarding houses became more apparent, the schools had to recognise and tackle the problem. As we have seen their attempts were not always successful.

In the numbers of boarders who actually attended, as in the numbers

staff were allowed, grammar schools show little uniformity. At many schools there were quite large fluctuations. It must be remembered, moreover, that although boarders might form only a small proportion of the whole school, it was on them, very often, that the maintenance of the classical tradition as well as the school's economy depended. Thus change here, although apparently smaller than those which we can observe in the size of whole schools,\* were often very significant and far-reaching in their results. Many schools declined. At Wem numbers fell from twenty to four or five in five years early in the nineteenth century;<sup>(31)</sup> there was apparently a drop from forty to fifteen at Lewes and Southover Free Grammar School between 1816 and 1818.<sup>(32)</sup> Leicester decreased from thirty in the early nineteenth century to one in 1836 and eventually the school shut.<sup>(33)</sup> Some schools increased. Sedbergh was empty in 1819<sup>(34)</sup> but had thirty-three boarders only five years later;<sup>(35)</sup> Ripon was empty in 1803,<sup>(36)</sup> had thirty boarders in 1818 and fifty-one in 1820<sup>(37)</sup> - but had collapsed to only three after a further twenty years.<sup>(38)</sup> Bedford shows a similar lack of stability, falling from around fifty boarders in 1820, to twenty-five in 1824, but rising to sixty by 1832.<sup>(39)</sup>

At some schools the lack of boarders was as great a problem as lack of accommodation was at others. At Clitheroe, a special large house was provided in 1815 but the master refused to pay £50 p.a. rent for it and left the house. The usher moved in, but this dispute and other disagreements resulted in there being only one boarder by 1825.<sup>(40)</sup> High Ercal

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\* See Part III, Section 5.

had space for fifty but when the Charity Commissioners visited the school there were only four pupils boarding.<sup>(41)</sup> Winwick, which also had space for fifty,<sup>(42)</sup> was empty.<sup>(43)</sup> Crewkerne had had eighty boarders in the 1780's<sup>(44)</sup> but only had six in 1822.<sup>(45)</sup> At Loughborough, where the Headmaster was allowed thirty boarders, there were none in 1816;<sup>(46)</sup> similarly at Ashbourne, the 1796 rules allowed thirty boarders,<sup>(47)</sup> but, after mismanagement and incompetent staff, there were none in 1836.<sup>(48)</sup> Compared with this, the thirty boarders at Buckingham (1830) represent an extremely flourishing boarding school, yet the number becomes less impressive if we remember that the school master was allowed one hundred pupils of whom six were to be free and ninety-four could be boarders.<sup>(49)</sup> Here, as so often, the fault was not that of the school nor of the staff, but more that the governors in their enthusiasm did not perceive the declining demand for a classical education nor the greater drawing power of the already flourishing, well-established and socially attractive "public" schools.

If we consider these factors, then the number of boarders attending some of the smaller grammar schools reflects very favourably on the standard of scholarship and success obtained. It was said of the schools at both Heath<sup>(50)</sup> and Lichfield<sup>(51)</sup> that at some time in the eighteenth century they had around one hundred boarders. North Walsham had sixty in 1775<sup>(52)</sup> and generally maintained this size for half a century and, once, exceeded eighty.<sup>(53)</sup> Several schools had about seventy (Midhurst,<sup>(54)</sup> Macclesfield (1803)<sup>(55)</sup>, Dedham (1833)<sup>(56)</sup>); many had between forty and fifty (Knutsford,<sup>(57)</sup> Cuckfield,<sup>(58)</sup> Ottery St. Mary<sup>(59)</sup>).

and a very considerable number of grammar schools had some twenty-five or thirty boarders for some part of the Hanoverian period (Cranbrook,<sup>(60)</sup> Rock,<sup>(61)</sup> Gainsford,<sup>(62)</sup> Wirksworth.<sup>(63)</sup>) At the biggest schools, of course, where pupils were almost exclusively boarders of one kind or another,<sup>\*</sup> numbers were measured more in hundreds than tens,<sup>‡</sup> but these are exceptions and are certainly not typical grammar schools.

At some schools boarders were necessary because without them, there would have been no pupils wishing to study the classics and so preserve the school's classical nature. At even more schools, boarders were vital because they provided an extra source of revenue and thus made the school more attractive to able and qualified teachers - even though the official stipend might be low. Boarders, therefore, paid fees: if the school flourished and the demand grew, so did the fees.

At most schools boarders paid a special entry fee. This varied from as high as five guineas (Macclesfield,<sup>(64)</sup> Shrewsbury - where three guineas was house entry fee and two guineas school fee<sup>(65)</sup>) to the more usual three guineas (Midhurst,<sup>(66)</sup> Exeter<sup>(67)</sup>) and the still more frequent two guineas (Beverley,<sup>(68)</sup> Northampton<sup>(69)</sup>) or one guinea (Towcester,<sup>(70)</sup> Brewood<sup>(71)</sup>). At a few schools the fee varied depending on whose house or which department of the school the boarder entered: thus at King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath, the Headmaster's pupils paid an entry fee of two guineas but the assistant's new boarders only paid half this.<sup>(72)</sup>

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\* See above, pp 147-148.

‡ See Part III, Section 5.

There was a similar range in the actual fees for boarding. Some schools themselves had different fees for different age groups. Thus at Lichfield, boarders under ten years old paid forty guineas, those between ten and fourteen paid forty-five guineas, and those over fourteen paid fifty guineas per annum.<sup>(73)</sup> Ripon had a similar scheme in 1810<sup>(74)</sup> but changed to a simpler plan, fixing fees at forty guineas p.a. for under 12's, and fifty guineas p.a. for older boys.<sup>(75)</sup> Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham, adopted a scheme identical with Ripon's a few years later.<sup>(76)</sup> Elsewhere the division between younger and older, cheaper and more costly, pupils varied from ten years old (Sudbury<sup>(77)</sup>) to fourteen (Guildford.<sup>(78)</sup>)

There was a difference, too, in the fees paid by those who boarded with the usher and those boarding with the Headmaster. In schools where pupils boarded with the master who taught them, the boarding fees were often the same, but the tuition fees were different. Thus at Blundell's School, Tiverton, all boarders paid thirty guineas but the Headmaster's paid five guineas tuition fee and the usher's boys paid only four guineas.<sup>(79)</sup> This was relatively slight; at most schools the difference was rather greater. At Brigg, the usher's boarders paid twenty guineas p.a., the Headmaster's paid thirty guineas p.a. for board and elementary education, and all pupils paid a further four guineas p.a. for classical tuition.<sup>(80)</sup> At Colchester fees were sixty guineas p.a. for the usher's pupils and between 80 and 120 guineas, depending on age, for the master's.<sup>(81)</sup> The difference was even more marked at Ashby-de-la-Zouch where the assistants charged between £20 and £30 p.a., and the Headmaster charged



seventy guineas for board and tuition.<sup>(82)</sup> It was perhaps to avoid unduly disproportionate incomes that at Charterhouse the governors made special rules. The Headmaster had no boarders - he controlled the foundationers - but the usher and an assistant each had a house, one large enough for eighty and the other for sixty. The governors fixed the fees (about £80 p.a. including extras) but also collected the fees and divided them, in a pre-arranged way, between the staff.<sup>(83)</sup> This contrasts with Merchant Taylor's School, where the governors regarded boarding as a private arrangement and save for giving all staff permission to take boarders took no further interest in the matter. However, the Headmaster and his three staff, to prevent rivalry, agreed to charge the same fees - five guineas for entry and fifty guineas p.a. (Tuition fees, were, of course, the governors' concern and were extra.)<sup>(84)</sup>

At some schools, a few boarders were given extra consideration, were, in effect, taken into the master's family. This, naturally, depended on the payment of an additional fee. At Woodstock, the planned fee was nearly £10 extra;<sup>(85)</sup> at Ludlow it was a further twenty guineas;<sup>(86)</sup> while at Manchester the normal boarding fee was sixty guineas p.a. but parlour boarders paid at least 120 guineas p.a.<sup>(87)</sup> It was presumably this that caused the headmaster of Tonbridge to accept an offer of a higher fee than boarders usually paid with the assurance that "a more than ordinary care ... " would be taken.<sup>(88)</sup> It was this too that was implied by the prospectus of Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham: "Each boarder has a separate bed and the domestic accommodation and treatment are assimilated very nearly to those of a private family."<sup>(89)</sup>

This was perhaps so, but at many schools such treatment was very definitely regarded as additional and extra charges were numerous. Thus Rugby charged a one-guinea entry fee, and thirty guineas for board. In addition there were fees of £1 for servants,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  guineas for washing, 10/- for candles, 10/- for fires, 1/6d. for attendance at bathing, 2/- for the chapel clerk, 4/- for the hairdresser, 4 guineas for a single bed (which was compulsory save for brothers under twelve years old: these could share for 2 guineas each). There was an extra charge for a single study (2 guineas and £2 16s. Od. for coals) and a double study (4 guineas and £4 for coal), and, as Carlisle added, "N.B. washing a third shirt and waistcoats are separate charges - a third shirt, 15/9d", and continued by reporting that there were further, variable charges for weekly allowances, journeys, clothes, mending, candles in studies, and repairs.<sup>(90)</sup> Clearly any parent believing that the thirty guineas for board was a comprehensive fee would be sadly in error. Nor was Rugby unusual. Most schools charged extra for a single bed - 3 guineas at King Edward's School, Birmingham,<sup>(91)</sup> 4 guineas (after 1816) at Macclesfield,<sup>(92)</sup> 5 guineas (in 1816) at Westminster.<sup>(93)</sup> Most schools charged extra for washing - £2 at Leicester c.1800,<sup>(94)</sup>  $2\frac{1}{2}$  guineas at Dorchester (for washing and mending)<sup>(95)</sup> and 4 guineas at Ipswich (1837)<sup>(96)</sup>. At King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath, c.1800, there was an extra charge of 8/- for cleaning shoes and mending stockings.<sup>(97)</sup> Several schools charged a further fee for pupils who stayed on during the school holidays (Kirkby Beacock c.1770,<sup>(98)</sup> Ravenstonedale<sup>(99)</sup>). Moreover, schools, on occasions, required boarders to provide certain things: sometimes just

towels (six at Dorchester<sup>(100)</sup> and six at Shrewsbury<sup>(101)</sup>), sometimes towels and sheets (four towels and one pair of sheets at Brewood,<sup>(102)</sup> six towels and two pairs of sheets at Ipswich<sup>(103)</sup>), and sometimes even more (twelve new linen towels, two pairs of new linen sheets, two pillow cases and a new silver tablespoon at Westminster.<sup>(104)</sup>)

There was yet another charge - a tuition fee. This could be simply an additional charge for education (4 guineas p.a. at Truro,<sup>(105)</sup> 8 guineas at Taunton<sup>(106)</sup> and the King's School, Canterbury<sup>(107)</sup>), but often this was considered as part of the basic fee and the extra demands were for extra subjects. Thus many schools charged for French (Tonbridge £2 in mid-eighteenth century,<sup>(108)</sup> Leicester 4 guineas c.1800<sup>(109)</sup>) and for writing and arithmetic (£3 at Beverley,<sup>(110)</sup> 3 guineas at Dorchester<sup>(111)</sup>). Geography and mathematics, geometry and algebra were also extras at Dorchester.<sup>(112)</sup> Dancing (Tonbridge,<sup>(113)</sup> Midhurst<sup>(114)</sup>) and drawing (Brewood,<sup>(115)</sup> Exeter<sup>(116)</sup>) were fairly frequent sources of additional fees, and, in declining grammar schools, boys who boarded with an usher sometimes had to pay extra for classical tuition which could only be given by the Headmaster (King Charles I Grammar School, Kidderminster.<sup>(117)</sup>)

It has been necessary to consider the variety of charges that could be made, in order to perceive more clearly the difficulties in attempting to discover exactly what fees boarders did pay in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Indeed there is still one further complication. The main source of information on the whole question of boarders and their fees is Carlisle and his work relates almost exclusively to the post-1800 period. Save for a few bills and letters and one or two

prospectuses, there is no information on either conditions or fees during the greater part of the Hanoverian period.

A bill of 1717 for a pupil at Richmond (Yorks.) shows a fee of £7 for board but extras (tuition, books, fires, writing and gratuities) raised it to £12.<sup>(118)</sup> At about the same time fees for boys at Sedbergh (boarding in approved houses in the village) came to between £7 and £10 p.a.<sup>(119)</sup> Moving south to two bigger schools, various bills from 1719, 1724 and 1726 suggest fees of between £20 and £30 p.a. at Eton,<sup>(120)</sup> and a letter of 1735 referring to Westminster says that the charge was £25 or £30 p.a. depending on whether boarders stayed during the holidays.<sup>(121)</sup> This was certainly not excessive since in the same year the charge for board and tuition at Ipswich was £28.<sup>(122)</sup>

There is rather more information on the period 1760-70. At Repton the fees c.1767 were about £9 p.a. and the addition of a two-guinea tuition fee caused a fall in numbers.<sup>(123)</sup> There was a similar drop in numbers in 1764 at Taunton when the 12-guinea charge was increased to 16 guineas p.a.<sup>(124)</sup> This was about the same fee as at Northampton - an advertisement of 1761 says the board and tuition charge was 15 guineas p.a.<sup>(125)</sup> All these, however, were a little lower than average. At Manchester the charge c.1760 was 20 guineas p.a.<sup>(126)</sup> and it was about the same at North Walsham in 1771 (£19 10s. 0. p.a. for board, washing and tuition<sup>(127)</sup>) and at Abingdon 1762-83 (£20 p.a.)<sup>(128)</sup> Tonbridge also charged £20 p.a. and extras added a further £7 (1761-72)<sup>(129)</sup> Confirmation that this was the usual size fee for the time can be drawn from the fact that at Kirkby Beacock the usher, who would charge somewhat less

than a master, asked for 13 guineas p.a. c.1770.<sup>(130)</sup> No doubt the bigger schools, which as we have seen already charged more in earlier years than these schools did in mid-century, had increased their fees to meet rising costs and growing demand.

Certainly by the turn of the century fees were considerably higher. At a few small schools where masters did not take boarders, or where there was more than one boarding house, it was possible to get board and tuition in an usher's house for under £30 (Thetford 28 guineas p.a.<sup>(131)</sup>). At genuine grammar schools, however, boarders with the master paid, as at Giggleswick, from £30 to £150 p.a.<sup>(132)</sup> or even more. Thus the charge for board, washing and education was £30 at Whalley,<sup>(133)</sup> 30 guineas at Bampton<sup>(134)</sup> and 32 guineas at Fotheringhay<sup>(135)</sup> and at Whalley and Fotheringhay,<sup>(137)</sup> at least, the standard was low and there were few, if any, boarders. At Darlington board, washing and education cost, for the pupils over twelve years old, 40 guineas;<sup>(138)</sup> at King Edward's School, Birmingham, the charge was 42½ guineas p.a.,<sup>(139)</sup> and at Brewood it varied between 47 and 52 guineas p.a.<sup>(140)</sup> Clitheroe charged £50 "exclusive of incidental expenses";<sup>(141)</sup> Bedford's boarders paid 55 guineas for Board, washing, education and writing,<sup>(142)</sup> and at Kingston-upon-Hull the fee was 60 guineas p.a.<sup>(143)</sup> Undoubtedly most grammar schools did charge somewhere between 40 and 60 guineas, though, as we have seen, the "incidental expenses" could well raise this appreciably.

The greater and more successful schools charged a great deal more. This is well demonstrated by the rising fees of Richmond (Yorks.) For many years after his appointment (1796), James Tate ran a brilliantly

successful school and his fees rose with his fame. Thus in 1800 board and tuition cost 32-34 guineas; in 1807 they cost 50 guineas, and an extra 10 guineas p.a. for the two years immediately preceding a pupil's entry to University; in 1809 the charge became 64 guineas and in 1816 it rose to 100 guineas.<sup>(144)</sup> Nor was such a figure exceptional for a notable master or school. At St. Albans it was reported that the older boys paid up to 100 guineas p.a.,<sup>(145)</sup> at Colchester up to 120 guineas,<sup>(146)</sup> at Harrow the assistants' boarders paid 125 guineas p.a.,<sup>(147)</sup> and at Giggleswick fees went as high as £150 p.a.<sup>(148)</sup> (The master of Collier's School, Horsham, charged two private pupils even more - 200 guineas p.a. - but these were special pupils being prepared for the Universities and the school was no longer truly classical: these can hardly be regarded as boarders in the usual sense.<sup>(149)</sup> Clearly the master at this school was not taking any chance of the risk recorded a few years later by the usher at Wolverhampton - "boarders on low terms cannot be profitable as experience has taught me to my cost."<sup>(150)</sup>)

Presumably a situation like that at Wolverhampton occurred at Martock, where the boarding school was shut following a rise in the cost of provisions.<sup>(151)</sup> The price of food, or more generally the cost of living exerted considerable influence on boarding school fees. Patrons of Abingdon must have been pleasantly surprised when in 1759, only a year after the boarding house had opened, fees were cut following a fall in food prices.<sup>(152)</sup> The concession was short lived and by 1762 fees were back at the original level.<sup>(153)</sup> The Napoleonic wars had a notable effect. As the master at Northampton wrote in 1801 - "owing to the high

price of provisions it is necessary to make an extra charge of 5 guineas." Later, however, there was a 10% reduction "in consideration of the distressed state of the times." His pupils were aware of this too - they wrote to the Headmaster announcing that "we, your most dutiful Pupils, in consideration of the great difficulty which the Poor have in procuring Bread - are unanimously determined, with your consent, during the present Scarcity, to do without it entirely at Dinner, and to be perfectly satisfied with Potatoes for supper, either boiled or roasted."<sup>(154)</sup> Fees followed the same pattern at Eton. An extra 5 guineas was charged in the first half of 1800 as prices rose, but this was later reduced to a two guinea increase, each half year.<sup>(155)</sup> Other Headmasters when asked by Carlisle to give their precise fees for boarders would not do so. Whatever the reasons for their reticence, they, many of them, agreed in excusing themselves by declaring that fees fluctuated - because of "the late changeable time" (Crispin's School, Kingsbridge<sup>(156)</sup>), because they "depend on circumstances" (Aylesbury<sup>(157)</sup>), or because they are "regulated by the price of articles in domestic consumption" (Ilminster<sup>(158)</sup>).

Fees were high, but this was no guarantee of good living conditions or discipline. At Eton the college was notorious for the appalling manner in which the foundationers existed. Until 1716 all seventy were in one room, the Long Room, and then, when a small extra room was provided, enabling all to have a single bed, those who moved to the second room had to pay extra. Windows were open and until 1788 snow, and rain, blew in through the ill-fitting shutters. The rooms were damp and dark and dirty. Immorality and violence were the rule; gambling, drunkenness and bullying

were regular. The boys were locked in and then left entirely unsupervised until next morning. Food was bad. Until 1780, dinner was mutton, bread and beer. Then a bequest paid for Plum pudding every Sunday, and later provided for vegetables. Moreover, the boys carved their own portions of meat and the seniors, who carved first, did well at the expense of the younger boys.<sup>(159)</sup> Eton had become infamous but it was little worse than many other schools. Discipline was appalling, sleeping conditions dreadful and the food disgraceful at eighteenth century Harrow.<sup>(160)</sup> Even at Shrewsbury in the time of Samuel Butler, the dormitories were overcrowded and there was but one washroom with only a few (cold) water taps.<sup>(161)</sup>

It was perhaps, to allay parental fears of such living conditions that the special category of parlour boarders was so stressed by Headmasters, and that Headmasters should advertise that boarders were treated "in every respect as members of (the master's) family" (Northampton<sup>(162)</sup>). Even this could prove misleading. In 1729 the usher at Ripon had connived at the marriage of his sister-in-law to a wealthy boarder of his, without the boy's parents being aware of the escapade. Naturally this scandalous exploitation of his position led to the usher being deprived of his post.<sup>(163)</sup>

Boarders were often essential for the survival of small classical schools, but taking them created new problems for masters. Accommodation had to be provided and pupils secured. Fees had to be fixed at the proper level: low enough to attract parents, high enough to make a reasonable profit. Parents had to be reassured about a wide variety of things -



living conditions, scholarship, class separations: at Chipping Sodbury the master believed that his failure to attract boarders was because parents were unwilling for their sons to associate with the other, inferior, pupils;<sup>(164)</sup> to avoid this danger, the master at Lichfield declared that boarders and other pupils were kept apart except in public lessons.<sup>(165)\*</sup> Disease could cause a master great difficulties. A Headmaster of King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath, tried to protect himself - "If children are found at any time to have any infectious disorder, they are to be removed and a proper lodging taken for them, at the expense of their Parents."<sup>(166)</sup> However, when illness did strike, no excuse nor precaution could be relied on to save a school. In 1828 a boarder at Bromsgrove died of typhus and immediately the house emptied: it was a decade before, under a new Headmaster, the position was properly restored.<sup>(167)</sup>

In fact the success of a boarding school rested on the character, ability, academic successes and good fortune of the master. A poor, indifferent or undistinguished teacher could not expect more than local support and this seldom meant more than a very few pupils. To attract from a wide field a master had to have extraordinary talents. Moreover any success had to be won against the competition of both other small grammar schools and the greater schools who drew pupils from a social group rather than a geographical area. There were almost as many boarding schools in the Hanoverian period as there were grammar school masters. Most lived and died unacclaimed, or achieved no more than a passing local reputation. It required the exceptional - a James at Rugby, a Butler at Shrewsbury, a

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\* See Part III, Section 6.

Tate at Richmond - to transform a school. Even then there was no certainty that success would endure. Boarding education could be an expensive matter for masters as well as parents.

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SECTION 4

FEEES

SECTION 4FEEs

Almost all grammar school pupils, free boys\* as well as day boys and boarders, ‡ paid fees. This was hardly surprising since there was an enormous variety of items for which fees could be - and usually were - charged.

Even before a pupil could enter many schools his parents were likely to be asked to pay a fee. Entry fees varied considerably, from 4d. at Warrington,<sup>(1)</sup> 6d. at Audley,<sup>(2)</sup> and 1/- at Barton,<sup>(3)</sup> to three guineas at Uppingham<sup>(4)</sup> and five guineas at Westminster.<sup>(5)</sup> Mostly, however, the entry fee lay between 10/6d. (Drayton,<sup>(6)</sup> Appleby<sup>(7)</sup>) and one guinea (Bampton (Oxford)<sup>(8)</sup>, Buntingford<sup>(9)</sup>). The fee was usually standard for all entrants, but some alternatives did exist: a lower fee for free boys (Wem<sup>(10)</sup>) or for local boys (Steyning<sup>(11)</sup>) or for boys in the usher's class (Northleach<sup>(12)</sup>), and a higher fee for boys from outside the parish (Exeter<sup>(13)</sup>) and for boarders (Rivington<sup>(14)</sup>). At some schools parents paid what they could afford (Wigan - up to one guinea<sup>(15)</sup>) and occasionally payment was quite voluntary (Cartmel<sup>(16)</sup>). Most parents, however, paid for their sons to enter a grammar school.∅

Once a boy was in the school payments began in earnest: there were few activities and events that were not the occasion for some charge to be added to the term's bill.

\* See Part III, Section 2, pp. 137-139

‡ See Part III, Section 3, p. 151 ff.

∅ For fuller details see Part III, Section 1.

The most important of these fees was for tuition. This was sometimes an inclusive charge, but more frequently there was a separate fee for each part of the curriculum and for all extra activities.

Many schools, by their foundation charters or by the terms of legacies, were bound to offer free classical tuition to some, if not all, of their pupils.\* On occasions, rising costs and economic difficulties caused this freedom to be restricted and fees were imposed on all pupils seeking a classical education. At Beverley, for example, "free" boys paid £2 p.a. for Latin and Greek (and the other pupils paid six guineas per annum.<sup>(17)</sup>) At King's School, Pontefract, free boys paid one guinea per annum,<sup>(18)</sup> and at Leicester two guineas per annum<sup>(19)</sup> for classical instruction, and at both schools the other pupils paid double the amount. These were exceptions. At most schools, those entitled to free classical tuition could get it.

Those not included in this privilege, however, had to pay a fee. At Almondbury the charge was 10/- p.a. for Latin and a further 2/- p.a. for Greek;<sup>(20)</sup> at Brough the fee was 30/- p.a., though the Charity Commissioners commented on the absence of classical scholars,<sup>(21)</sup> and at Bishop Auckland it was two guineas p.a.<sup>(22)</sup> These are rather lower than was usual - a reflection perhaps of the demand for classical education in these areas - and at most schools the cost was about 4 guineas p.a. (Abergavenny<sup>(23)</sup>), 5 guineas p.a. (Sheffield<sup>(24)</sup>) or 6 guineas p.a. (Plymouth<sup>(25)</sup>, Newcastle-under-Lyme<sup>(26)</sup>). If the school could boast a

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\* See Part III, Section 2.

fine academic record or if the school had a social attraction, then the fees could rise. Thus Valpy, the distinguished classical scholar and Headmaster at Reading, charged 7 guineas p.a. for classical tuition,<sup>(27)</sup> and Carlisle reported still higher fees at Gainsborough (8 guineas)<sup>(28)</sup> and Buntingford<sup>(29)</sup> and Harrow<sup>(30)</sup>, both charging 10 guineas p.a.

The demand for this kind of instruction was, however, diminishing. As the period passed, fewer schools could rely on a steady influx of classical students and a small number of well established grammar schools tended to attract most boys whose parents still valued this type of education. Many grammar schools were compelled to admit non-classical students and to make proper provision for an elementary, and more utilitarian instruction. (If they refused to do this, schools dwindled and even died completely in some cases.)\* Lessons in reading, writing, arithmetic and accounts were seldom covered by the freedom from tuition fees decreed by founders, testators and governors. The fee asked varied according to the nature of the school, the purpose of the elementary instruction, and the economic circumstances of the students' parents.

Where a school was not celebrated enough to attract scholars from beyond its immediate environment, and where there was little demand for a classical curriculum, fees for elementary work tended to be low. Sometimes they had to be, since those who could afford to pay more would usually wish to place their children at better schools, and to charge more than other parents could afford could only lead to a fall in numbers.

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\* See Part V, Section 1, p.374 ff.

In consequence fees were sometimes very low. At Abingdon c.1780, before it underwent a revival, poor parents paid as little as 4d. p.a. (rising to 10/- p.a. as income rose)<sup>(31)</sup> Parents at Brough paid 3d, 4d. or 5d. per week (depending on the child's course)<sup>(32)</sup> and at Martley the fee was a fixed 4d. per week.<sup>(33)</sup> (In view of the long terms worked by schools in the Hanoverian period, a fee of 4d. per week would probably amount to about 15/- p.a.) Some schools, like Abingdon, varied their fees in relation to parental means (Bampton (Westmorland),<sup>(34)</sup> Kirkby Beacock<sup>(35)</sup>). Generally the smaller and the less successful grammar schools had a fee for elementary tuition of under 7/6d. per quarter, 30/- p.a. (Kirkby Stephen,<sup>(36)</sup> Kirkby Lonsdale,<sup>(37)</sup> Hargrave.<sup>(38)</sup>)

Those establishments which were in a position to admit only those applicants they chose were able to charge rather more. Similarly, where the economic circumstances of the area were more favourable parents could reasonably be expected to make a greater contribution to the school than those in poorer parts. By the early nineteenth century, quarterpence (the quarterly charge) was 10/6d. at Bradford<sup>(39)</sup> and Preston,<sup>(40)</sup> and the fee for writing and arithmetic was 1/- per week (around 45/- to 50/- p.a.) at Burnsall<sup>(41)</sup> and Hipperholme.<sup>(42)</sup> Some schools, of no great distinction, were nevertheless able to charge more: a fee of 4 guineas p.a. was not unusual (Southwell<sup>(43)</sup>), and at both Evesham<sup>(44)</sup> and Maidstone<sup>(45)</sup> day boys paid about £6 p.a. for elementary education.

The smaller and less successful grammar schools had to provide elementary education to meet the needs of their pupils. The larger, academically and socially successful grammar schools, though teaching the

elementary subjects where necessary, were more often called upon to provide extra instruction in various subjects regarded as social accomplishments. It was usual for them to teach French, Drawing and Dancing, and the fee was generally 1 guinea per quarter for each subject (Buntingford,<sup>(46)</sup> Rugby<sup>(47)</sup>) though it was sometimes a little higher ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  guineas p.q. at King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath.<sup>(48)</sup>). Some schools offered additional subjects: Music at Bath ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  guineas p.q.)<sup>(49)</sup> Fencing at Shrewsbury (1 guinea p.q.)<sup>(50)</sup> Natural Philosophy - General Science with a somewhat speculative content - at Newcastle-upon-Tyne ( $5/-$  p.q.)<sup>(51)</sup>, and even Drill with a Drill Sergeant at Bedford ( $10/6d.$  p.q.)<sup>(52)</sup>. Moreover, at some of the biggest schools, there was also the opportunity for the pupils to have additional, private, tuition - often necessary in the overcrowded classes of the popular schools. This extra instruction was usually costly. At Shrewsbury there was a fee of 8 guineas p.a. for coaching in classics and the same fee for mathematics (or 12 guineas p.a. for coaching in both)<sup>(53)</sup> and at other schools the cost was still higher, 10 guineas p.a. at Westminster,<sup>(54)</sup> 20 guineas p.a. at Harrow.<sup>(55)</sup>

In contrast to this method of charging a separate fee for each part of the curriculum, some schools made a single, standard charge on all pupils either regardless of their course (as at Penrith where all boys paid 2 guineas p.a.<sup>(56)</sup>) or for a fixed, but fairly wide curriculum. Usually this comprehensive fee embraced classics, reading, writing and arithmetic, and it was for this that pupils at Crosthwaite paid just  $1/-$  p.q.<sup>(57)</sup> and at Hexham  $7/6d.$  p.q.<sup>(58)</sup> Most schools charged rather

more. The usual fee was between 4 and six guineas p.a. (Prescott,<sup>(59)</sup> Cirencester,<sup>(60)</sup> St. John's Hospital Free Grammar School, Huntingdon<sup>(61)</sup>), though at both Andover<sup>(62)</sup> and King James Free School, Bridgewater<sup>(63)</sup> the charge was as high as 8 guineas p.a.

There was no system about this and many schools had a particular group of subjects which they offered at a comprehensive fee. Thus Bideford charged six guineas p.a. for classics, history, geography and astronomy,<sup>(64)</sup> and Rochdale made the same charge for history, geography and the three R's.<sup>(65)</sup> At Chipping Norton there was a 30/- p.a. fee for any boy studying the classics, French and the three R's,<sup>(66)</sup> and for the same fee pupils at Bunbury could study writing, geography, arithmetic, bookkeeping, mensuration and land surveying.<sup>(67)</sup>

It was not unusual for boys in the master's class - where they would perhaps be doing classical work, even preparing for a University - to be charged rather more than boys in the lower, often elementary, forms. Thus at Lancaster in 1816, the usher's pupils paid 7/6d. per quarter and the senior boys paid 10/6d.:<sup>(68)</sup> these were changed and raised in 1824 and a third group, of the very senior pupils, paid still more.<sup>(69)</sup> Similarly at Kirkham non-free pupils paid 2/6d., 4/- or 5/- quarterly, depending on which of the three masters they were taught by.<sup>(70)</sup> This system was also applied at Leeds in 1815 when fees of 6, 10 and 12 guineas p.a. were fixed for the lower, middle and senior classes. This was slightly simplified in 1820 when fees were raised, and adjusted to 8 guineas p.a. for the four junior forms and 12 guineas p.a. for the three senior forms.<sup>(71)</sup>



There was a wide variation in the methods of charging fees for tuition and a wide range of extra-subjects for which additional fees could be levied. Not many pupils could claim exemption from all these fees, and fewer could avoid the special charges and gratuities which were to be found at most schools. Undoubtedly the most common of these was the Shrove Tuesday gratuity or "Cockpenny" which was customary in a very large number of grammar schools. There was often no set amount for this and it could be as little as 1/- (Great Blencowe<sup>(72)</sup>) and as much as 1 guinea (Wigan - where parents could afford it<sup>(73)</sup>) and very probably many pupils gave more. At some schools, there were other occasions on which gratuities to the staff were customarily given. At Liverpool in the middle of the eighteenth century a Christmas gift was usual<sup>(74)</sup> and at some schools a sum of money was given to the master at the end of each term (Merchant Taylor's<sup>(75)</sup> Bury.<sup>(76)</sup>) Fees of this nature were simply a means of allowing masters, frequently underpaid, to supplement their salaries.\*

There were many other charges. Often there was a fee for coals or fires to heat the schoolroom. In 1717 this cost 6d. at Richmond(Yorks.)<sup>(77)</sup> A century later the charge ranged from 1/- p.a. at Pursglove's Grammar School, Tideswell<sup>(78)</sup> and 1/- in each winter quarter at Hales Owen<sup>(79)</sup> to 7/6d. p.a. at Ormskirk<sup>(80)</sup> and, even more, to 10/- p.a. at Bristol.<sup>(81)</sup> Some schools made pupils pay for candles to read by (Appleby 2/6d.,<sup>(82)</sup> Perse School, Cambridge - though the charge was quickly dropped after a

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\* See Part II, Section 6.

public outcry.<sup>(83)</sup> Other schools charged for pens and paper (Clipston 1/-,<sup>(84)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne 8/- p.a. for boys in the 3rd master's class<sup>(85)</sup>), for cleaning and sweeping (10/- p.a. at Bristol<sup>(86)</sup>) or for repairs (King's School, Pontefract 1/-<sup>(87)</sup>). Roman Catholics at Lea paid a special fee in return for which the master ignored the will of a former patron which prohibited the entry of Catholic children to the school.<sup>(88)</sup> Pupils at Merchant Taylor's paid 5/- on being promoted from one form to another and 1/- for a special exercise book at each school examination.<sup>(89)</sup>

It was quite usual for several of these ~~small~~ extra fees to be levied at a school. At Perrin's School, New Alresford pupils paid 4d. p.a. for cleaning and the same for candles and for rods.<sup>(90)</sup> At Steyning pupils paid for brooms, rods, candles and coals: until 1816 the fee was only 8d. p.a. but then it rose sharply to 8/- p.a.<sup>(91)</sup> At the bigger schools, of course, there were even more charges. Thus at Winchester, in addition to the boarding and tuition and coaching fees and the customary gratuities, boys also paid 4/- p.a. to the bed-maker, 1/- at Whitsun to buy rods or canes, 6d. p.a. window money, 4/- p.a. as a gift to charity, 9d. nutting-money - a payment for an annual nut-gathering expedition - and fees for fires and candles.<sup>(92)</sup> Presumably, however, parents who could afford the high charges of schools such as this would not be troubled by such, relatively small, extra expenses.

Any attempt to generalise about fees would be as unwise as the result would be misleading. Only one or two conclusions emerge clearly. Fees varied considerably, and were influenced by the wealth and condition of those people living in the environment of the school, save at those

schools able to attract boarding pupils from beyond their own surroundings. In these boarding schools, the academic and social factors which attracted parents were also the factors which influenced fees. At most grammar schools there was little to induce those who could afford high charges to send their children, and little money available for fees amongst most of those who did send their children. Moreover, if a school was successful and drew boys from an affluent, social group, then it became necessary to extend the curriculum to provide tuition in socially esteemed accomplishments and this occasioned still higher fees. It was, therefore, an unfortunate, but regular, consequence of academic success that, by enabling a school to secure its future by increasing fees, it also effectively prevented the people for whom the school was often intended from enjoying its advantages. Even where there was no intentional prohibition of pupils from poor families, fees often accomplished the same result. The free tuition schools offered was seldom of much benefit to those who sought a utilitarian or elementary education. Few, very few, pupils can have attended grammar schools in the Hanoverian period without becoming liable for the payment of some fee or fees.

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6. CCR. Vol. 24, p.300.
7. CCR. Vol. 9, p.635.
8. CCR. Vol. 10, p.341.
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63. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.403.
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87. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.866.
88. CCR. Vol. 11, p.348.
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91. CCR. Vol. 2; p.178.
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SECTION 5

NUMBERS



SECTION 5NUMBERS

The huge disparity between all the varying types of institution covered by the generic title of "Grammar School" is, of course, reflected by the numbers of pupils and by the extent to which these pursued classical, or even semi-classical, courses. It was only the exceptional school which could consistently attract large numbers - and these mainly boarders - to attend a mainly classical course. For the others, some abandoned their heritage and became exclusively elementary; many more opened their doors to all children who wanted to come, and taught what was appropriate - which meant reading, writing and arithmetic to almost everyone, and classics to the odd one or two gifted or ambitious children. Some schools, from choice, and some, because they were bound by law to do so, maintained the classical bias and offered it to the few who wished: survival here depended largely on the willingness of masters to attract boarders, and on the appointment of devoted men who would not treat such posts as sinecures. Finally, a few schools, by virtue of shrewd appointments of staff, through lack of local competition and convenience of situation, through coveted awards to Universities, and because of their reputation, managed to keep going despite fluctuating numbers and increasing competition from the remoter but bigger, more famous and socially more brilliant, boarding schools.

These great schools all reached at some point in the period a numerical as well as an educational standing which marked them out from the ordinary run of grammar schools.

In the early eighteenth century Eton and Westminster were the outstanding schools, - both had over 400 pupils in the early years of the period: 425 at Eton (1721)<sup>(1)</sup>, 434 at Westminster (1727).<sup>(2)</sup> Neither was unaffected by the same ills that beset other schools - political controversy, unpopular or incompetent staff, bad discipline - but both were too secure to be greatly affected. Eton fluctuated - down to 212 in 1731, up steadily to 513 in 1765, down again to 230 in 1773<sup>(3)</sup> and then rising to over 600 in 1833.<sup>(4)</sup> Westminster was not so successful and indeed nearly came, in the nineteenth century, to disaster. After outstripping Eton in the early eighteenth century, and matching it in the middle years, various factors, not least the patronage of George III for the school at Windsor, caused Westminster to decline, and despite a brief revival to over 300 pupils in 1819,<sup>(5)</sup> numbers fell steadily, eventually sinking to 67 in 1841.<sup>(6)</sup>

No other school really competed, numerically, with these two, until the end of the eighteenth century. Then Harrow, previously rather a shadow of Eton, blossomed and in 1803 had over 350 pupils<sup>(7)</sup> - though forty years later there were under seventy.<sup>(8)</sup> Charterhouse was even more successful reaching a peak of 480 in 1825 - about 250-300 more than was usual.<sup>(9)</sup> Shrewsbury too joined the ranks of the major schools as a result of the brilliance of Dr. Samuel Butler who not only revived scholarship but also numbers - from under twenty in 1798 to 295 in 1832.<sup>(10)</sup> The effect of brilliant men is notable also at Rugby, first under James, who raised numbers from eighty in 1779 to 240 in a decade,<sup>(11)</sup> and then Arnold who attracted over 250 pupils in the 1830's.<sup>(12)</sup> Both

Winchester and Merchant Taylor's<sup>1</sup> School exceeded 200 pupils at some time in the period, and St. Paul's generally kept at its maximum permitted size (153) though, on occasions the majority of these were "petties" or elementary, as in 1729 when at least ninety were under the Chaplain or third master<sup>(13)</sup> and again around 1750 when only about forty of the 150 were in the top, classical forms.<sup>(14)</sup>

The only other schools in England which could compare with such great schools as these were the grammar schools of the rapidly growing industrial cities and one or two old established boarding schools far enough from the schools already mentioned to avoid competition from them and having a large area from which to draw support. Thus at Birmingham and Manchester the grammar schools prospered as the cities grew and added numbers to already well-founded scholastic reputations: Birmingham had 200 pupils in the mid-1830's though some of these were in the elementary department;<sup>(15)</sup> Manchester had consistently around 150 pupils (sometimes nearly 200) after 1750.<sup>(16)</sup> Similar numbers can be found in some of the remote<sup>\*</sup> classical boarding schools - Repton, though subject to great fluctuation, exceeded 100 and even 150 on occasions.<sup>(17)</sup> Blundell's School, Tiverton had 230 pupils in 1816 according to Carlisle<sup>(18)</sup> though very soon after the Charity Commissioners only noted 160,<sup>(19)</sup> while Sherborne had around 150 pupils in the period 1823-45.<sup>(20)</sup> However neither these city grammar nor the rural boarding schools can really be said to rank with the great schools in the Hanoverian era. They more properly fall in the category of those schools whose survival as classical schools - indeed as schools at all - depended on environment and staff and fortune.

The great bulk of the population saw no value nor utility in a classical education and grammar schools had to decide whether to open their doors to all, obtain an economic number of pupils and secure survival at the cost of a lowered standard, or whether to follow the harder and less certain path dictated by a restricted curriculum.

Many schools became entirely elementary,\* but even more, suiting their provision to the needs of the community they served, offered a mixed and wide range of subjects.† Basically they became elementary schools with classics for those who were able and interested. Thus at Wigan, circa 1820, there were 95 pupils of whom 45 did Latin and 2 Greek,<sup>(21)</sup> and at Bolton-le-Moors about 30 of the 120 pupils did classics.<sup>(22)</sup> Not all schools had such a high proportion of classical to elementary pupils. At Penwortham there were only five in a school of 140,<sup>(23)</sup> four of 45 at Otley,<sup>(24)</sup> three (out of about 50) at Maughanby,<sup>(25)</sup> two of 88 at Blackrod (1828)<sup>(26)</sup> and just one in a school of 80 at Bretherton.<sup>(27)</sup> Sometimes no classical pupils appeared at all, though staff were qualified to teach Latin and Greek and often it seems schools clung to the belief that they offered classics long after the last vestiges had really disappeared. [The point at which "classics if required" becomes so infrequently required as to make a school elementary is a fine one and need not detain us here.]

While this admission of the many to preserve the opportunity of classical education for the few was often both practical and beneficial,

\* See Part V, Section 1, p. 376 ff.

† See Part IV, Section 4.

it is, for our purpose, confusing since it inflates unrealistically the apparent size of the classical schools. Probably a more accurate indication can be gained from the size of those schools which maintained the classics as their primary object and only offered reading, writing and arithmetic to those who were intending to proceed to the more advanced studies or as an extra (at a charge) to the senior boys.

The most striking feature of these establishments is the quite remarkable fluctuations they suffered. The fundamental cause is the much closer link between school and community. The great schools catered for a class and derived pupils from wherever the wealthy and the socially conscious and aspiring, or, of course, the wealthy and educationally conscious, were found. As social units, though they were affected by changes in the national economic situation, minor movements were of no moment; as educational units, the deficiencies of any one teacher were not in themselves serious - it was only when several of the staff, or a succession of Headmasters, were lacking in ability that the school suffered. This is not true of the great majority of classical schools. The movement of population towards cities had a considerable effect on the market towns' grammar schools. The rise and fall of the economic fortunes of the cities - and their population - was reflected in the grammar schools. Similarly, disputes between staff and governors, or between staff themselves, though in no way the prerogative of the smaller school, had a far more immediate, and devastating, effect. So too did the capability of the staff. In most of these schools there were but two or three staff - Headmaster and usher (and writing master if

there were sufficient Latin boys to occupy the usher) - and consequently incompetence, or poor discipline, were far more serious and could quickly affect numbers.

As a result of this, it is dangerous to think of any one estimate of numbers as being a reliable guide to the size of such a school and it is safer to consider mainly those where evidence for different years shows the overall state of the school.

It is perhaps worth observing briefly too, that many schools also suffered a fairly considerable seasonal fluctuation in numbers - as at Daventry where they were described as "irregular, very low at harvest and hay-times,"<sup>(28)</sup> and Church Eaton where they fell as low as twenty in summer but neared fifty in winter.<sup>(29)</sup> However, seasonal variation is not apparent in more strictly classical schools and it is reasonable, and sensible, to regard this irregular attendance as having a real influence only in elementary schools or amongst the elementary pupils in mixed course schools.

In the classical schools variations are perhaps even more remarkable. Drayton, a school of 60 in 1816 had declined to two by 1830;<sup>(30)</sup> at Bristol Grammar School the whole period is marked by constant and considerable fluctuations: the 81 boys of 1716 falling in six years to twenty<sup>(31)</sup> and a century later a school of fifty (1821) quickly disappeared entirely (1829), leaving the school empty for twenty years;<sup>(32)</sup> nearby at King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath, a dispute over free places led to a similar change - the 70 or 80 paying boys of 1819-20 becoming but one by 1823 when 10 free boys were admitted.<sup>(33)</sup> Changes

were not always of as disastrous a nature. Increases were equally sudden. At Wolverhampton in the 1780's there was a rise from two to 98 pupils in only a few years;<sup>(34)</sup> St. Peter's School, York, increased from 20 in 1827 to over 200 when a rival school shut and transferred all the pupils to St. Peter's. (To complete the "bargain" the Headmaster of the closed school was appointed second master at St. Peter's.<sup>(35)</sup>) Most remarkable of all, perhaps, were the changes at Norwich where a school of eight in 1811 became 220 in 1814, went on to reach 280, before falling back again to 50 (1834) and then, still further, to 24 (1842).<sup>(36)</sup>

Many grammar schools show no such sudden variations but, nevertheless, over a longer period, do reveal considerable alteration, rising and falling with the changes of staff, of rules, of local prosperity. This is apparent at Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The brilliant classical teacher, Hugh Moises had 133 pupils when he retired in 1787.<sup>(37)</sup> Under his less capable and less attractive successor, and in the face of strong competition from rival academies offering a more fundamental curriculum, numbers fell to a mere nine in 1820. A new scheme revived interest; there was a rapid rise - 80 by 1826<sup>(38)</sup> - but enthusiasm waned and numbers fell again to 15 (1834). Then a further revival followed a further scheme for broadening the curriculum and numbers rose to 50 in 1836.<sup>(39)</sup> Similar patterns can be found at Sedbergh - 120 pupils in 1714, circa 25 in 1780, 6 in 1819, 39 in 1824<sup>(40)</sup> - and at Leicester, where the 100 classical pupils of mid-eighteenth century gave way to a virtually empty school in 1791, increased to 80 and relapsed to 14 by 1814, rose to over 50 before finally collapsing to five by 1837 and subsequently to nil,

when the school was closed.<sup>(41)</sup> As a final example let us look at Tonbridge. Here information is such that we can see the rise and fall clearly over the whole period. In 1714 there were just 14 boys, but they quickly rose to 70, then declined to 52 (1729), to 26 (1743), before rising again to 67 (1761) and falling sharply to 17 (c.1772-8). A further increase to 85 (1780's) was followed by the apparently inevitable decline to 28 (1790's). Between this time and 1820 the numbers varied only a little, 30-40, but then increased greatly to a record 110 in 1827, from which they fell slowly to just over 55 by 1843.<sup>(42)</sup>

The poorer, smaller and ill-situated schools - and in particular those where the curriculum had, through prejudice or legal restrictions, remained narrowly classical - found the problems even more difficult. Thus Carlisle reports that at Stourbridge the average size was under 10 pupils, and says that the school has, at times, been empty;<sup>(43)</sup> at Chaloner's Free Grammar School, Amersham there were twelve pupils in 1796, but thereafter until the end of the Hanoverian era, the greatest number was six and sometimes there were none.<sup>(44)</sup>

The causes of such extraordinarily low numbers are sometimes easily discerned. At Stratford-upon-Avon an outbreak of smallpox caused a flourishing though small school to disappear in 1766-67.<sup>(45)</sup> More reprehensible was the indifference of some masters - as at Ashbourne (Derby) where a report of 1794 said that "the Headmaster now has but one scholar and has had but two or three for many years last past."<sup>(46)</sup> This can be remedied by active governors, but the combination of disinterested trustees and incompetent or unsupported staff could lead to



absolute disaster. Thus the Perse School, Cambridge, was in a state of collapse for virtually all the eighteenth century, sometimes actually shut and often with only a very few pupils.<sup>(47)</sup> Similarly Chesterfield, which had been a considerable school in mid-century, sank to a mere handful after 1794, sometimes being completely empty.<sup>(48)</sup> These schools survived - others did not. At many the struggle was too great and they either turned to a purely elementary course or closed altogether.\*

For few schools was survival assured. Even the greatest had times of crises when circumstances combined to reduce numbers to a low level. If it could be thus for such as Winchester and Harrow, how much worse it was for the majority of grammar schools. For these, the general decline in demand for classical education was problem enough and often necessitated the expenditure of already slim resources on the provision of facilities for boarding in order to secure pupils. If any additional damaging factor should arise, if the governors lost interest, if an unsatisfactory master secured appointment (and once appointed it was often costly, and sometimes impossible, to dismiss a master), or if some nearby institution increased in popularity and stature, then the problems became almost insuperable. The few who flourished did so at the expense of the rest; the many who merely survived did so at the expense of others which could not. With so many difficulties and complications prevalent, it is in fact surprising not how many schools died, but that so many did not, and that, of these, so many contrived, in varying degrees, to flourish.

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\* For a fuller investigation of the causes of low numbers, see Part V, Section 1, p. 374 ff.

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SECTION 6

CLASS DISTINCTION

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The problem of class distinction was inevitable. Those who were entitled to free places at grammar schools often did not want a classical education: those who did want it, and could pay, were chary of mixing with "inferior" classes. The presence of the poor might well lower the educational standards and deter the wealthier classes.

At Burton-upon-Trent, the Headmaster blamed the decline in standard on the admission of "boys of the lower class" who only wanted to learn the three R's - only the trustees could prevent or remedy the situation, and they never met.<sup>(1)</sup> The argument was taken a stage further by the master at Dartford who told the Charity Commissioners that all his pupils were taught together<sup>(2)</sup> but also said that "People who are able to pay do not like to send their children to charitable foundations."<sup>(3)</sup> This was also noticed at Midhurst where, though there were free boys, some local parents, who could have claimed free tuition, preferred to pay.<sup>(4)</sup> This sort of argument too can be taken further as at Brentwood - the pupils included some from "inferior stations - labourers and mechanics" and it was observed that the presence of these deterred gentry from using the school<sup>(5)</sup> - and at Wotton-under-Edge where the presence of free boys from "low parents" caused other parents to complain.<sup>(6)</sup> At Chipping Sodbury it was said that the absence, despite facilities, of boarders was because no one was willing to associate with the inferior boys who attended the school.<sup>(7)</sup>

Some schools were able to bar the poorer classes and so avoided the problem. Thus at Macclesfield though "children of indigent persons are not excluded" the cost of books and the classical bias effectively prevented any from attending.<sup>(8)</sup> A rule at Wolverhampton (1831) said boys must be able to buy books and have the recommendation of respectable householders.<sup>(9)</sup> When the Charity Commissioners visited Oundle they noted the very great cost of elementary instruction and suspected this was designed to deter free boys and restrict pupils to the more remunerative boarders.<sup>(10)</sup> At Repton one of the staff was paid by the grammar boarders and a rule declared that other boys "shall not be admitted to instruction with the grammar boys in any way which may inconvenience the latter."<sup>(11)</sup> Even more specific was the rule of 1828 at Hitchin - only the "sons of respectable tradesmen or similar" were to be admitted.<sup>(12)</sup> Poor pupils had long been a problem at Hitchin. In the 1760's and 1770's they formed the bulk of the school and were held to be responsible for its decay - they did not wish a classical education themselves and deterred those who did. Later, under the Headmaster appointed in 1819, a boarding school was encouraged, but a bitter rivalry between boarders and local day boys existed, and on one occasion, in a fight, a local boy was killed.<sup>(13)</sup>

Where it was not possible to prohibit the attendance of unwanted free boys, staff and governors sometimes went to great pains to prevent these pupils from mingling with the paying pupils and to reassure parents of the latter class. Thus at Lichfield, in the early nineteenth century, the Headmaster declared there to be "no free boys of an inferior grade"

and said that except in public lessons boarders did not mingle with other pupils.<sup>(14)</sup> At Gravesend and Milton Free School all pupils were taught in the same room, but only the usher taught the free boys and they were kept separate from the others.<sup>(15)</sup> Even more elaborate was the provision at Martley. In 1825 it was ruled that better class boys were to "be placed at a desk by themselves, separate from the lower orders, yet so as not to interfere with the classification of the school." Moreover they were allowed a broader curriculum including "books calculated to enlarge the mind and promote good morals." (One wonders whether these were deemed impossible or improper or unnecessary for the "lower orders"). However this rule was scrapped after the Charity Commissioners had criticised any distinctions other than those based on conduct and proficiency.<sup>(16)</sup> A stage further, at Kibworth Beauchamp free boys and paying boys were taught in the same room but separated by a partition,<sup>(17)</sup> while the obvious complete solution can be found where, as at Haydon Bridge, boarders were kept entirely apart from the rest and taught by the Headmaster and staff in some private room or building - a practice condemned vigorously by the Charity Commissioners.<sup>(18)</sup> A writer of 1772 represented an even more extreme attitude: he sought to limit the studies of the poor pupils, arguing that although teaching them to read was permissible since it did not "qualify for any employment above labour", but "Accounts, in particular, do, and have often, no doubt been the cause of high thoughts and bad conduct in youths of the meanest capacity as well as birth."<sup>(19)</sup>

Though not entirely relevant to the question of social distinctions

and prejudices, it is perhaps as well to note here that other distinctions, especially religious, were made. At Merchant Taylor's School, for example, in 1731, Jewish boys were banned,<sup>(20)</sup> and early in the nineteenth century there was a Chancery suit over the admission of Jewish pupils to Bedford Free Grammar School. It was ruled that Jews could not be admitted to the benefits of Christian schools and charities. Many people were disgusted but there was no alternative and the boys were excluded.<sup>(21)</sup> At Lea in 1784 Catholics were barred though this severely limited the size of the school since the area was predominantly Catholic. (Despite the ban, Catholics were subsequently admitted provided they paid a fee, but few could afford this.)<sup>(22)</sup> Some of the trustees of Pinsent's Free School, Chudleigh told the Charity Commissioners that the Headmaster's religious teaching deterred Catholics and Dissenters from entering the school. The Commissioners, vehement against social distinctions, accepted this unmoved, observing that the Headmaster was probably only teaching what the founder intended.<sup>(23)</sup>

We might also note here an advertisement for Northampton Grammar School in 1761 - "Young ladies will be taught writing, Arithmetic and French in a department remote from the young Gentlemen ... "<sup>(24)</sup> Not all schools were so cautious: many allowed girls to attend the junior forms while at Rivington, in 1820, ten of the Headmaster's class of thirty were girls, and they were allowed to stay till fourteen years old and to study classics.<sup>(25)</sup>

Many schools genuinely attempted to integrate free and paying pupils, and at some this equality was made a school rule, and staff were



required to treat all pupils alike (Morpeth 1725,<sup>(26)</sup> King's School, Pontefract 1792,<sup>(27)</sup> Leicester, 1816,<sup>(28)</sup> Evesham 1820's<sup>(29)</sup>). At Rugeley some caution was exercised - free boys "are classed with boarders according to their proficiency, if the condition of the parents is respectable and their habits decent"<sup>(30)</sup> - but the general principle remained.

Moreover these rules were enforced in some schools at least. At Worcester, the Headmaster of the Royal Grammar School, accused, at the end of the eighteenth century, of teaching boarders and private pupils only and leaving the others to an usher, was forced to resign.<sup>(31)</sup> Similarly at Ashby-de-la-Zouch the Headmaster was dismissed in 1814 for refusing to admit free boys save as a favour, and only teaching boarders.<sup>(32)</sup> Accusations of partiality were made at Ripon in 1819 but these were disproved, and the mayor said that his son was treated just like the boarders "many of whom are sons of persons of rank and consequence, I consider it a great advantage that he should associate with such boys."<sup>(33)</sup>

Perhaps it was. Less sure, probably, were the feelings of the "persons of rank and consequence" at the benefits their children received by mixing with the mayor's son. It was undoubtedly a great deal easier, then as now, to pass rules than to enforce them. Trustees might urge equality: the practical problems remained. The poor who were often entitled to the benefits of a free classical education did not want it. Where they did, or where they were anyway admitted to schools even if it was only for elementary instruction, there was a strong probability that their presence would deter wealthier fee paying pupils who both sought

a classical education and who provided additional income for the underpaid staff.

There was no easy answer to this problem and it was widely felt. Even the great schools suffered from it: many provided free places for poor boys but in practice few genuinely poor either sought entry or could have afforded the "gratuities" which were required. At Winchester the scholars all paid a tenguinea gratuity annually, even though this practice had been condemned and banned, until the very end of the Hanoverian era. (34) At Harrow, local people felt so strongly that the school no longer served the community as originally intended that they went to law. The school won, but the governors, anxious to prevent such a criticism, campaigned hard to attract local boys; very few came: for the generality of people the school as it stood offered no advantage. (35)

A mid-eighteenth century Headmaster of Westminster uttered a now famous rebuke to a new boy who asked to be shown the place for boys of his noble rank - "you, sir, with more confidence and consequently less respect for me than you ought on this important occasion to feel, enquire for your proper place in the school. It is, therefore, my duty to inform you that the only distinctions made are those which arise from superior talents and superior application. The youth that wishes to obtain eminence must endeavour by assiduity to deserve it. Therefore your place at present is the lowest seat in the lowest form." (36) This is very fine and not all the pupils at Westminster were of the nobility nor even the wealthiest classes. The ideals remain as true now as then. But it was rather easier to say this if you were such an eminent school-

master than if you were in charge of a poor county grammar school whose existence could depend on the support of the local aristocracy and gentry.

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2. CCR. Vol. 2, p.21.
3. CCR. Vol. 2, p.192.
4. CCR. Vol. 2, p.173.
5. CCR. Vol. 11, p.203.
6. CCR. Vol. 17, p.341.
7. CCR. Vol. 17, p.384.
8. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.117.
9. G. P. Mander: The History of the Wolverhampton Grammar School, p.230.
10. CCR. Vol. 23, p.351.
11. A. MacDonald: A Short History of Repton, pp.139-140;  
B. Thomas: Repton, p.16.
12. R. L. Hine: History of Hitchin Grammar School, p.45.
13. R. L. Hine: op.cit., pp.31-36.
14. P. Laithwaite: A Short History of Lichfield Grammar School, p.65.
15. CCR. Vol. 1, p.110.
16. CCR. Vol. 23, p.576.
17. B. Elliott: A History of Kibworth Beauchamp Grammar School, p.40.
18. CCR. Vol. 23, p.499.
19. Proposals for an Amendment of School Instruction (1772), p.87.
20. Merchant Taylor's School, p.54.
21. J. Sargeant: A History of Bedford School, pp.59-61.
22. CCR. Vol. 11, p.348.
23. CCR. Vol. 9, p.67.
24. T. C. Lees: A History of Northampton Grammar School, p.40.
25. CCR. Vol. 19, p.196.

26. G. Kennedy: The Story of Morpeth Grammar School, p.60.
27. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.866.
28. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.770.
29. CCR. Vol. 24, p.502.
30. CCR. Vol. 7, p.276.
31. F. V. Follett: A History of the Worcester Royal Grammar School, p.66.
32. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.742.
33. P. W. Rogers: A History of Ripon Grammar School, pp.128-129.
34. A. F. Leach: A History of Winchester College, pp.417-418.
35. E. D. Laborde: Harrow School, pp.46-48.
36. J. Sargeaunt: Annals of Westminster School, pp.194-195.

SECTION 7

LEAVING

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At most schools pupils remained as long as their parents considered suitable, which meant until the boys were old enough to go to work, take up an apprenticeship or proceed to University. Some schools, however, fixed a leaving age - not, as now, a minimum, but a maximum - or framed some sort of rule designed to prevent pupils staying longer than was considered necessary.

Where elementary subjects were the staple of the curriculum, where the classical tradition had been lost, then only a brief stay and a low standard of attainment was allowed. Thus at Wolsingham<sup>(1)</sup> and Yarm<sup>(2)</sup> free boys were only allowed to stay for three years and had to leave at the age of twelve or thirteen. Of similar intent was the rule at Ledbury by which boys had to leave when "soundly grounded" in reading, writing and arithmetic.<sup>(3)</sup> Even more restrictive were the trustees at Tarleton who caused, each Michaelmas, all boys to be examined and made all who could read the Bible to leave.<sup>(4)</sup>

A second group of schools, however, while doubtless having those who were not likely to benefit from prolonged education also had potential University candidates, and here, of course, rule making became difficult. The 1792 rules of King's School, Pontefract offered one solution - leave at sixteen unless intending to enter University when a further two years were allowed.<sup>(5)</sup> At Northampton it was free boys who had to leave at sixteen, others were not affected,<sup>(6)</sup> which effectively designates free boys as non-university candidates. At Lucton everyone had to

leave after eight years at the school, or on reaching the age of seventeen, whichever came the first.<sup>(7)</sup> More generous were Rugby<sup>(8)</sup> and Reading<sup>(9)</sup>, both of which had considerable classical scholarship and both of which allowed pupils to stay till nineteen, while at Wiggonby the rules of 1742 prohibited "boys" from staying after the age of twenty-one!<sup>(10)</sup>

When pupils left, whether they were twelve or twenty, they were often able to benefit from charitable endowments in the possession of their school. These funds took the form of help to those who sought apprenticeships and of awards to those who sought university education.

It would be unfair to regard as a sign of declining academic - and perhaps social - standards the number of schools which offered financial help to pupils seeking apprenticeships. Unfair because in many instances the apprenticeships were from bequests of much older origin, sometimes even dating from the Foundation and as a planned supplement to University exhibitions.

More significant is the fact that at some schools money intended to send scholars to university was so seldom, if indeed ever, claimed, that the funds were regularly used for apprenticing fees - as, for example, at Cavendish,<sup>(11)</sup> and Kirkham.<sup>(12)</sup> Moreover it is clear, that just as the possession of closed exhibitions was an inducement to aspiring scholars so too bequests for apprenticeships served as an attraction and restrictions on the awards had to be made - at Crispin's School, Kingsbridge, boys had to have attended for at least two years before they were eligible,<sup>(13)</sup> and the same rule applied at Scorton School, Bolton-upon-Swale.<sup>(14)</sup> At Hungerford only the four free boys - all non-



classical pupils - were eligible;<sup>(15)</sup> at Salisbury Close School awards were for the eight choristers when they reached the age of fourteen,<sup>(16)</sup> while at Abingdon a special charity provided six boys with free schooling and then paid their indentures, and all the while clothed them.<sup>(17)</sup>

The number and value of the apprenticeships varied widely - £4 p.a. for a single boy each year at Richmond (Yorks.),<sup>(18)</sup> £7 p.a. for 1 fee at Bury,<sup>(19)</sup> £7 p.a. raised in 1819 to £10 p.a. for all boys eligible and seeking them at Crispin's School, Kingsbridge,<sup>(20)</sup> up to £60 p.a. at Charterhouse.<sup>(21)</sup> The governors of Sevenoaks School paid apprenticeship fees for over 300 boys in the period 1742-1819,<sup>(22)</sup> while, by utilising money intended for University exhibitions, the governors at Kirkham were able to pay for about six apprenticeships each year.<sup>(23)</sup>

For many parents and schools this must have been just another aspect of the conflict over purpose and curriculum. Parents had to decide whether the advantages offered by apprenticeships were greater than the disadvantages attached to a narrowly classical curriculum. Schools had to solve the problem of reconciling the classical intentions of the founder, and sometimes a restrictive charter, with the demand for a more utilitarian discipline. For the country grammar school, with a limited population to support it and with academic standards held in low regard, the problem was often one of survival.

Many schools aided apprentices; even more were either entitled to awards at Oxford and Cambridge or were in possession of funds specifically designated for the support of students proceeding to the Universities. Unfortunately a very large proportion of these funds - and opportunities - were either unusable or neglected.

In theory the opportunities were enormous. Some great schools held a dozen or more exhibitions - Rugby (after 1808),<sup>(24)</sup> Manchester,<sup>(25)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne,<sup>(26)</sup> Uppingham<sup>(27)</sup> - and others had a share in, or preference in, as many. Even some of the relatively minor schools held a large number: Fockerby<sup>(28)</sup> and Thornton both had ten (though at Thornton this was reduced after 1741<sup>(29)</sup>) - and a great number of schools were in possession of one or two exhibitions.

The difficulty was that in many of the small schools there were fewer and fewer classical students, and often by the end of the Hanoverian period they had become merely elementary schools: there were simply no candidates. Thus no one had claimed the award available at Loughborough for over 60 years when Carlisle reported on it;<sup>(30)</sup> Castle Hanley possessed two but was non-classical after c.1767,<sup>(31)</sup> Sherburn could not fill four,<sup>(32)</sup> nor Hertford seven,<sup>(33)</sup> University places.

The problem was not always just lack of candidates. The shortage was partially due to the low values of many exhibitions. The master of St. Olave's Free Grammar School, Southwark, told the Charity Commissioners that even with awards the poor could not afford to send their sons to University. This remark gains point when the Commissioners report that two scholarships had been awarded at St. Olave's after 1800 - one of £80, and one of £50 p.a.<sup>(34)</sup> If these were insufficient then it is hardly surprising that exhibitions of £5 p.a. (Bolton-le-Moors,<sup>(35)</sup> Hartforth<sup>(36)</sup>) and even less, £3 6s. 8d. at Kirkby Stephen,<sup>(37)</sup> £3 p.a. at Stourbridge,<sup>(38)</sup> were of no practical utility. At some schools this was overcome by amalgamating several awards in order to finance a single scholar: as at

Beverley where five awards totalling over £30 p.a., and £80 accumulated funds, were given to a single pupil,<sup>(39)</sup> and at Giggleswick<sup>(40)</sup> and Richmond (Yorks.).<sup>(41)</sup>

During the course of the eighteenth century some schools, realising the excessive number of inadequate awards, altered the balance and raised the value by diminishing the number - Thornton in 1741,<sup>(42)</sup> King Edward VI Free Grammar School, Bruton in 1818<sup>(43)</sup> - in an effort to attract candidates. Sometimes they succeeded in an unintended fashion; there were boys, in schools which had no awards, who realised that a closed award was a safe (and sometimes remunerative) way of gaining entry to a University. Masters were often badly paid. The result was the virtual "selling" of awards: nominal entry on the school register in return for a fee to the master and the subsequent "award" of an exhibition, as happened at Hampton Lucy,<sup>(44)</sup> at Ringwood,<sup>(45)</sup> at Warwick<sup>(46)</sup>, at Blackrod (between 1754-1800).<sup>(47)</sup> It was in order to prevent this sort of abuse that many testators and trustees imposed restrictions. Some decreed that pupils were ineligible unless they had been at the school for a fixed period - one year at Thornton,<sup>(48)</sup> two at Shrewsbury,<sup>(49)</sup> three at Fockerby,<sup>(50)</sup> four at Bedford<sup>(51)</sup> and five at Tonbridge.<sup>(52)</sup> Some were restricted to sons of clergy (Carlisle,<sup>(53)</sup> Grantham<sup>(54)</sup>); some to free boys (Ashburton<sup>(55)</sup>), and some to pupils in a certain order of preferences: at Crewkerne preference was first to boys of a certain nearby village, then any local boy and finally boarders.<sup>(56)</sup> Unfortunately the result very often was either to prevent anyone from claiming the award or to make the evasion more

complex and costly: at Abingdon the "price" was twenty guineas.<sup>(57)</sup>

In all this mismanagement and misuse, we must not lose sight of those schools which were still classical, which did possess properly administered exhibitions and which had sufficient pupils of both standard and inclination to fill the places. Indeed in some it was necessary to hold competitive examinations - as at Rugby,<sup>(58)</sup> at King Edward VI Free Grammar School, Birmingham,<sup>(59)</sup> at Sherborne (by 1830 the examination here was on a wide range of classical authors, included prose and verse composition and the catechism)<sup>(60)</sup>, and at Oakham, where candidates had to make a theme or compose verses, on a subject chosen by the governors, while "lock't up in ye school".<sup>(61)</sup> Similarly the three Newcastle scholarships instituted at Eton in 1829 were of some significance in that they were specially designed to test a wide range of knowledge beyond mere acquaintance with the classics.<sup>(62)</sup>

In addition, it would be wrong not to note the Hastings Exhibitions - awarded by a strange mixture of examination and chance - and the Careswell Exhibitions, the former in Northern England, the latter in the West. Both were open to a number of schools, both requiring some academic distinction, and both an attempt, albeit not entirely successful, to keep up standards in classical learning and to keep open the road to the universities.

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2. CCR. Vol. 8, p.750.
3. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.502.
4. CCR. Vol. 15, p.239.
5. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.866.
6. T. C. Lees: A History of Northampton Grammar School, p.44.
7. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.503.
8. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
9. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.40.
10. CCR. Vol. 5, p.96.
11. CCR. Vol. 21, p.488.
12. CCR. Vol. 11, p.236.
13. CCR. Vol. 5, p.316.
14. CCR. Vol. 6, p.606.
15. CCR. Vol. 2, p.5.
16. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.747.
17. CCR. Vol. 1, p.5.
18. CCR. Vol. 7, p.652.
19. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
20. CCR. Vol. 5, p.316.
21. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.2.
22. J. T. Lennox: Sevenoaks School and its Founders: p.34.
23. CCR. Vol. 11, p.236.
24. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
25. CCR. Vol. 16, p.103.

26. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis Vol. 2, pp.35-38.
27. CCR. Vol. 5, p.371.
28. CCR. Vol. 18, p.593. . .
29. CCR. Vol. 7, p.771.
30. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.776.
31. CCR. Vol. 22, p.291.
32. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.899; CCR. Vol. 16, p.417.
33. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.547.
34. CCR. Vol. 1, p.207.
35. CCR. Vol. 19, p.155.
36. CCR. Vol. 7, p.623.
37. CCR. Vol. 9, p.674. .
38. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.773.
39. CCR. Vol. 10, p.676.
40. CCR. Vol. 13, pp.646, 674.
41. CCR. Vol. 7, p.652.
42. CCR. Vol. 7, p.771.
43. CCR. Vol. 11, p.380.
44. CCR. Vol. 15, p.529.
45. CCR. Vol. 14, p.529.
46. CCR. Vol. 17, p.475..
47. M. M. Kay: History of Rivington and Blackrod Free Grammar Schools, p.129.
48. CCR. Vol. 7, p.771.
49. CCR. Vol. 24, p.213. .
50. CCR. Vol. 18, p.593.

51. CCR. Vol. 6, p.5.
52. S. Rivington: The History of Tonbridge School (4th edition), pp.180-181.
53. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.175.
54. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.804.
55. CCR. Vol. 8, p.239.
56. CCR. Vol. 9, p.477.
57. CCR. Vol. 1, p.5.
58. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
59. CCR. Vol. 20, p.647.
60. W. B. Wildman: A Short History of Sherborne, p.148.
61. W. L. Sargant: The Book of Oakham School, pp.24-25.
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PART IV



SECTION 1

BUILDINGS

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The school room was usually large, sometimes vast, designed to accommodate the whole school in the single room. At Chipping Sodbury the room was described as suitable for fifty pupils and it was thirty feet long by fifteen feet wide,<sup>(1)</sup> but this was small when compared with the seventy feet by twenty feet at Wainfleet,<sup>(2)</sup> or the 100 feet by 50 feet at Appleby Parva (and this one, designed by Wren, was thirty feet high too!)<sup>(3)</sup> At Ipswich the room was similarly huge; originally an old monastic building, "something between a prison and a large barn", it was 120 feet by 24 feet - but by 1830 the roof was falling down which rather invalidated the advantage the size offered.<sup>(4)</sup> A single room was common, but the bigger schools which could afford to build often had more: though even here the tendency was to have a large room for the bulk of the pupils, and one or more smaller rooms for smaller groups of senior or junior boys (Newcastle-upon-Tyne,<sup>(5)</sup> Manchester<sup>(6)</sup>) or, as at Godshill, Isle of Wight, one boys' and one girls' room.<sup>(7)</sup>

Not all schools were fortunate enough to have their own exclusive buildings. Thus, at Hereford, when the old building became dilapidated, the local people built a new one which could also be used for concerts and public meetings. This edifice was called "The Music Room", and had the virtue of being very large (80 feet by 40 feet by 40 feet in height) but was "injudiciously built in brick without any regard to congruity or taste". Whatever the aesthetic disadvantages, however, the practical

ones were more pressing and within twenty years (1779) a subscription had to be raised to collect funds to build a room for the school to use on the occasions when the 'Music Room' was required for other functions.<sup>(8)</sup> At Bosworth the problem was more pressing, in that for over ten years there was no permanent school building and various rooms had to be rented, including one in an Inn and one in a warehouse.<sup>(9)</sup>

More usual, and probably a good deal more convenient, was the practice of using the school room as a chapel on Sundays (Wainfleet, after 1785<sup>(10)</sup>) or alternatively using the chapel as a schoolroom on week days (Lowick before 1757<sup>(11)</sup>). There was of course a strong connection with the church; many schools were built in churchyards (Barnstaple,<sup>(12)</sup> Clitheroe<sup>(13)</sup>). At Tavistock the school was formerly a part of the vicarage;<sup>(14)</sup> at Rock the school used a room in the church;<sup>(15)</sup> while at Bishop Auckland the governors, in 1780, allowed a chapel to be built over the schoolroom.<sup>(16)</sup>

The public-spirited governors at Bishop Auckland also gave a part of the school building, detached from the rest, to be used for town business.<sup>(17)</sup> This too was a common link. Thus at Eye the school was in the Guildhall,<sup>(18)</sup> and at Rotherham, after 1739, in the Town Hall.<sup>(19)</sup> Dartford Grammar School was in a loft over the corn-market house, and when, in 1769, this building, dilapidated, was pulled down and a new one built, a loft was again assigned to the school.<sup>(20)</sup> The position was reversed at Ambleside: here the school was downstairs and above was a granary.<sup>(21)</sup>

More common, however, than any of these arrangements was for

schools to be taught in the house provided for the master. At Farnham, the old school room was demolished in 1760, so the school transferred to an outbuilding of the master's house.<sup>(22)</sup> At Brandon too master and school shared a house. (In fact this building was so large the Trustees devised a scheme for partitioning it up, letting some out as flats, and so raising income.)<sup>(23)</sup> At Wotton-under-Edge the building contained a large school room, dormitories for boarders and apartments for the master,<sup>(24)</sup> and, even bigger, at Kingston, there were rooms for the usher to live in too.<sup>(25)</sup>

It was, of course, common practice for governors to provide accommodation for the master, and this frequently meant not just apartments in the school building, but a house, and often a house large enough to take boarders. This was an inducement, an extra to supplement meagre salaries, and any school not offering it was liable to find recruitment of staff a problem. In many cases the master had a fine house for his family. Of Cawthorne it was reported that the "Inhabitants have erected not only a spacious school-house but also a convenient Dwelling-house for the master, with a place for his cow," and this was a small village school sadly declined from its classical foundation.<sup>(26)</sup> Governors frequently dipped into their purses to enlarge or improve the houses provided for the staff, or at least to aid masters who sought to increase the boarding accommodation. This happened at Oswestry (1796)<sup>(27)</sup> and East Retford (1797)<sup>(28)</sup> while at Rugeley an extra storey, a stable and a coach house were all added to the original building.<sup>(29)</sup>

Not all masters were so fortunate. In 1811 the new master of

Sir Roger Manwood's Free Grammar School, Sandwich, found "there was but one fixture in the house, a stove, in the only room then habitable."<sup>(30)</sup>

The master at Witney had an old and decayed property and was expected to pay rates of £20 p.a. on it,<sup>(31)</sup> while at Warrington the master had to pay taxes and repairs "keeping in repair the glass of the windows, and the papering, painting and whitewashing the interior parts of the said house and buildings ... and also whitewashing the schoolrooms at least once in each year."<sup>(32)</sup> Such demands were exceptional, but it was less unusual for a master to have to pay rent for his house. The 1837 rules for Southwell fixed this at the token sum of 10/- p.a. - and this was for a house less than twenty years old.<sup>(33)</sup> The governors of Clitheroe, however, built a house in 1815 and asked the master to pay £50 p.a. rent. He refused and left the house in 1819 whereupon the usher took the house but at a reduced rental of £40 p.a.<sup>(34)</sup> There was a curious arrangement at Ashford (Kent) where master and governors combined c.1762 to build a house. Ownership was divided into eight parts and three were allotted to the master and the others shared amongst those who had contributed to the cost. This master generously bequeathed his three shares to all successive masters, thus giving them an option on the house, but they had to pay rent to whoever held each of the other five shares.<sup>(35)</sup>

A greater problem for many masters was that of keeping their, often dilapidated, schools repaired. The more fortunate ones had all costs met by the governors (Barton-under-Needwood<sup>(36)</sup>); the less fortunate had a perpetual difficulty. At Buntingford in 1815 the master had to find £250 for repairs.<sup>(37)</sup> At Bromsgrove in 1832 the master faced a heavy

bill but persuaded the Visitors (Worcester College, Oxford) and local gentry to subscribe towards it, and this influenced the governors to help too.<sup>(38)</sup> Payment of repair bills was the cause of a staff dispute at Wolverhampton: until 1814 master and usher paid the costs of their own rooms (the usher devised a halfpenny fine on late boys to help meet his bill) but then, both moved into the same room - and both refused to accept responsibility for repairs.<sup>(39)</sup> It was to avoid such a situation, and to help meet costs that some governors ruled that all boys must pay for window breakages (Norwich<sup>(40)</sup>), or required a fixed contribution from all pupils (1/- p.a. at King's School, Pontefract<sup>(41)</sup>), or assigned a fixed amount of the income specifically to a repair fund (£10 p.a. at Hertford<sup>(42)</sup>).

Repairs were costly, but rebuilding was a great deal more so, and schools had to be in a very poor condition and local people or governors had to feel very strongly or be very affluent before rebuilding could be contemplated. Naturally, the price of such an operation could vary enormously - Rivington in 1714 cost, apparently, only £80 to rebuild<sup>(43)</sup> and Crosthwaite a century later only cost £130 for a two-room building with porch, bell tower and lavatories.<sup>(44)</sup> The order of Chancery in 1760 that the rebuilding of North Walsham be in "a plain and frugal manner"<sup>(45)</sup> becomes understandable when we find that it cost £900 in 1726 to extend Hampton in order to make it large enough for eighty pupils<sup>(46)</sup> and that another small school, Wirksworth, cost £900 to rebuild in 1827.<sup>(47)</sup> Large schools cost a great deal more. Harrow's great rebuilding which took a decade (1819-29) cost over £8,000<sup>(48)</sup>

while the new buildings erected early in the nineteenth century at Rugby were estimated at costing £32,000 and this did not include the chapel built a few years later.<sup>(49)</sup>

It is not surprising in view of these high prices, that many schools once they had fallen into decay, could not be promptly restored. At Ramsey the lands from which income was derived were flooded in 1786 and a generation passed before they were effectively reclaimed. Meanwhile the lack of funds had resulted in the collapse of the school and its buildings. When rebuilding could take place it had, moreover, to be on a limited scale.<sup>(50)</sup> Much the same occurred at Henbury when the Severn burst its bank in 1815: the house was wrecked, the school's endowed property was wrecked, and the school shut. The Charity Commissioners were told that it was hoped eventually to re-open the school but as a National Society School.<sup>(51)</sup> Carlisle reported that the governors of Horncastle were contemplating borrowing money, since income from their lands - also liable to flooding - was too low to permit the expense of repairs or rebuilding.<sup>(52)</sup> Most usually funds for this costly purpose were raised by calling on local people to subscribe to a rebuilding fund (Cartmel,<sup>(53)</sup> Prescott<sup>(54)</sup>) and this method even financed the cost of building and equipping and staffing entirely new Grammar Schools (Leek<sup>(55)</sup>).

Despite all efforts, many governors and schools were unable to find funds to keep buildings in prime condition. Other governors, although they had ample resources, were reluctant to apply them. Thus at Eton, although it was resolved in 1746 to glaze windows in the

college, the work was not done till 1788 and even then fittings were poor and in bad weather snow drifted in and rain came through. The boarders' rooms were damp, dirty and dark, with hard beds, desks and chairs. In 1838 a deputation of boys asked the governors for improvements, for running water and basins. They were turned away. "You will be wanting gas and turkey carpets next."<sup>(56)</sup>

A combination of lack of funds and reluctant governors was sufficient to make many schools remain in a dreadful condition throughout the period. Crosthwaite school, which despite its remoteness continued to find classical pupils, was not rebuilt until 1829. The old building had a cobble stone floor, and the seats - deemed when installed to be an improvement - were old church benches. It was a large mixed school of over 100 pupils - Carlisle says 260<sup>(57)</sup> - but there were only three privies for the whole school. It was complained that boys and girls alike had to use corners for want of better arrangements.<sup>(58)</sup> Bradford Grammar School was rebuilt in 1820<sup>(59)</sup> and of the old building it was said that though "not absolutely now in a ruinous state, yet it is an indifferent edifice."<sup>(60)</sup>

It did not matter whether the buildings were costly or not, whether they were new or old, nor, within limits, whether they were large or small. It was the effect on, and their suitability for, the pupils that was important. It was quite possible for a large or new or expensive building or buildings to have a depressing effect. Newcastle-upon-Tyne, a converted Hospital church, was relatively large and was anyway, after 1823, supplemented by use of additional premises



nearby. In any case the number of pupils at this time was never very great.\* Superficially it was excellent. Yet one writer declared that the buildings "in some places present somewhat of the dark and frowning aspect of the ancient monastic style, but successive and tasteless repairs have long since taken away all its character" and later referred to "bricked-up windows" and "patched repair-work".<sup>(61)</sup> Compared with the outbuildings and corn-lofts we have already noted, this was palatial and criticism is misplaced, yet the fact remains that the atmosphere was hardly conducive to enthusiasm and energy and scholarship.

Most schools consisted, unlike Newcastle, of a single room, which, as we have already seen, could be very spacious. It had to be, since, usually, all classes were taught together in the one room and this could mean a large number of pupils: Norwich had some 280 boys in its single room at one time.<sup>(62)</sup> The master and usher sat facing each other at opposite ends (Bedford,<sup>(63)</sup> Morpeth<sup>(64)</sup>) with the pupils on benches around the walls.<sup>†</sup> At Warwick pupils sat in (rose) of old oak desks and the Headmaster was on a raised dais,<sup>(65)</sup> as he was at Worcester too.<sup>(66)</sup> This was the traditional pattern. For writing and other subjects pupils either went to other schools or to other rooms (Bedford,<sup>(67)</sup> Ulverston<sup>(68)</sup>). However the pattern began to change during the Hanoverian period. As the demand for classics fell so the usher's class tended to become more and more elementary and the master's strictly classical class to become

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\* See Part III, Section 5, pp. 189.

† For a series of good illustrations, see Ackermann: History of the Public Schools (1816) and Buckler: Sixty Views of Endowed Grammar Schools.

fewer and fewer. At Bury<sup>(69)</sup> and Kibworth Beauchamp<sup>(70)</sup>, for example, the groups were divided by a screen or partition. At Brewood in 1800, the Headmaster of this very thriving school, built an extra room for the usher, and a "dancing-room" over it.<sup>(71)</sup> (Dancing was frequently a subsidiary course.) In some schools the master withdrew from the school-room altogether, leaving it to the majority of pupils, and taking the few real classical students into his own apartments or into a smaller study (Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(72)</sup>).

In addition to this room or rooms for teaching, some schools had a room, or even building for a library (Tonbridge,<sup>(73)</sup> Bury<sup>(74)</sup>). Most schools must have made some provision for book-space, though probably many were like the library-room at St. Paul's, "dark, diminutive and dusty."<sup>(75)</sup>\*

Schools then were usually in old buildings and frequently in decaying ones. Lessons were held in large barn-like halls either filled with a wide variety of children in different classes or empty with only a bare handful of pupils. Facilities were limited: a few had playgrounds, some had libraries, though the books were seldom attractive and designed with pupils in mind. As the period progressed some welcome changes can be discerned. The problems of financing rebuilding were overcome by collecting subscriptions from as wide an area as possible. The problems of multiplicity of classes are met by partitions or by providing separate rooms for different groups.

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\* See Part IV, Section 8, p. 344 ff.

However, one can only conclude that Hanoverian Grammar schools provided an unsatisfactory and depressing environment for pupils. In 1721 it was written of the Free School of Liverpool that the building was "in the churchyard but by reason of its scituation on the sea-shore was manifestly inconvenient and a great hindrance to the scholar's improving."<sup>(76)</sup> Just over a century later it was written of Burnley Grammar School that "The wretched building ... is alone sufficient to dishearten masters and boys."<sup>(77)</sup> The words of the Charity Commissioners could well serve as an epitaph for schools and buildings throughout England in the Hanoverian period. The criticisms, though made specifically of Burnley and Liverpool, were widely and tragically applicable.

1. CCR. Vol. 17, p.384.
2. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.853.
3. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.734.
4. I. E. Gray and W. E. Potter: Ipswich School, pp.75, 82.
5. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis, Vol. 2, p.48.
6. CCR. Vol. 16, p.103.
7. CCR. Vol. 15, p.476.
8. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.488.
9. S. Hopewell: The Book of Bosworth School, pp.73-79.
10. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.853.
11. CCR. Vol. 3, p.227.
12. CCR. Vol. 9, p.28.
13. CCR. Vol. 15, p.74.
14. CCR. Vol. 5, p.343.
15. CCR. Vol. 24, p.534.
16. CCR. Vol. 21, p.38.
17. Ibid.
18. CCR. Vol. 22, p.140.
19. CCR. Vol. 23, p.630.
20. CCR. Vol. 2, p.21.
21. CCR. Vol. 7, p.536.
22. CCR. Vol. 12, p.581.
23. CCR. Vol. 22, p.156.
24. CCR. Vol. 17, p.341.
25. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.498.

26. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.794.
27. CCR. Vol. 24, p.424.
28. CCR. Vol. 4, p.187.
29. CCR. Vol. 7, p.276.
30. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.598.
31. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.320.
32. CCR. Vol. 20, p.166.
33. W. A. James: Grammar and Song Schools, Southwell, p.33.
34. CCR. Vol. 15, p.74.
35. CCR. Vol. 1, p.81.
36. CCR. Vol. 7, p.302.
37. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.543.
38. H. E. M. Icely: Bromsgrove School Through Four Centuries, pp.52-55.
39. CCR. Vol. 4, p.349; G. P. Mander: The History of the  
Wolverhampton Grammar School, p.211.
40. H. W. Saunders: History of Norwich Grammar School, p.167.
41. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.866.
42. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.547.
43. M. M. Kay: History of Rivington and Blackrod Free Grammar Schools, p.86.
44. T. Wilson: The History and Chronicles of Crosthwaite Old School, pp.27-29.
45. C. R. Forder: A History of the Paston Grammar School, p.80.
46. B. Garside: A Brief History of Hampton School, p.44.
47. CCR. Vol. 21, p.9.
48. Great Public Schools, p.78.
49. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662; H. C. Bradby: Rugby, p.52.
50. CCR. Vol. 24, p.28.
51. CCR. Vol. 18, p.295.

52. Carlisle, Vol. 1, p.837.
53. CCR. Vol. 3, p.183.
54. CCR. Vol. 21, p.219.
55. CCR. Vol. 13, p.383.
56. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: History of Eton College, pp.447-448.
57. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.180.
58. T. Wilson: op.cit., pp.27-29.
59. W. Claridge: Origin and History of the Bradford Grammar-School, p.45.
60. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.790.
61. Quoted in A. R. Laws: op.cit., p.143.
62. H. W. Saunders: op.cit., p.231.
63. J. Garstang: History of the Blackburn Grammar School, pp.59-61.
64. G. Kennedy: The Story of Morpeth Grammar School, p.71.
65. A. F. Leach: History of Warwick School, pp.160-161.
66. F. V. Follett: A History of the Worcester Royal Grammar School, p.64.
67. J. Sargeant: A History of Bedford School, pp.46-47.
68. CCR. Vol. 3, p.221.
69. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
70. B. Elliott: A History of Kibworth Beauchamp Grammar School, p.40.
71. CCR. Vol. 5, p.552.
72. A. R. Laws: op.cit., p.48.
73. S. Rivington: The History of Tonbridge School (4th edition), p.157.
74. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
75. Quoted in M. F. J. McDonnell: A History of St. Paul's School, p.365.
76. Quoted in H. A. Ormerod: Liverpool Free School, pp.29-31.
77. Quoted in W. Bennett: A History of the Burnley Grammar School, p.39.

SECTION 2

HOURS AND HOLIDAYS

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It is not easy to determine just what hours were worked by schools in the eighteenth century. Enquirers were usually given the statutory limits, and these, often fixed a century or more earlier, were frequently ignored by staff and boys. Nevertheless it is clear that, except at those schools controlled by incompetent or negligent teachers the hours of attendance were considerable. The schoolboy may not have had to work quite so many hours per day nor days per year as his Tudor or Stuart counterpart, but he was still required to spend a great deal of time in study.

When, in the first few decades of the Hanoverian period, governors fixed hours of attendance, they generally required at least eight hours daily in the summer months, and some even demanded nine (Steypning,<sup>(1)</sup> Heath,<sup>(2)</sup> Leeds - as late as the rules of 1764<sup>(3)</sup>). At Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield, the statutory hours were from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, and sunrise to sunset in winter, with a 2-hour break at mid-day. Moreover, between 1777 and 1782 these hours were strictly enforced. By then, however, a more relaxed discipline had become widely accepted and the times were revised and shortened by an hour and a half in summer and with winter times fixed at a further hour less. In 1820, the governors - realists - declared that these hours were little heeded and reduced them by a further hour in summer and two in winter: thus the total hours worked each day at Wakefield varied between six and eight according to the season.<sup>(4)</sup> By doing this, the governors caused the school to conform more closely to the general pattern.



Schools began to ignore the old distinctions between winter and summer times and to work to a regular timetable all the year round. Moreover the length of the schoolday decreased, at most schools, to about six hours attendance (Guisborough,<sup>(5)</sup> Hitchin,<sup>(6)</sup> King Edward VI Free Grammar School, Bruton<sup>(7)</sup>) and even, at some schools, to the relatively low figure of five hours daily (Newcastle-upon-Tyne,<sup>(8)</sup> Perse School, Cambridge,<sup>(9)</sup> Harrow<sup>(10)</sup>). These, however, are, mostly, the statutory requirements and, as the governors at Wakefield discovered, it would be quite wrong to suppose that the regulations and the actual practice corresponded. At Brentwood the master attended for only two hours each day, though this rose to three in 1818;<sup>(11)</sup> at Tamworth, the master was in school for two hours daily<sup>(12)</sup> while at Chesterfield he attended for a maximum of ninety minutes every day.<sup>(13)</sup>

As in so many aspects of the Hanoverian grammar school there was a considerable gap between what was generally accepted as proper and what was actually done. There can be little doubt that just as governors lowered the hours of attendance required, many masters reduced the time they spent in school and continued to work shorter hours than the statutes prescribed. It is worth noticing too, that at some schools the Headmaster was indulged by means of a provision for him to arrive some time - usually 30 minutes - later than the other staff and the boys (Norwich,<sup>(14)</sup> Guildford<sup>(15)</sup>). Moreover the old starting hour of 6 o'clock - usual in earlier days - had by the end of the period more or less disappeared, though it was retained at a few schools (Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Atherstone, 1816,<sup>(16)</sup> Lancaster until 1824,<sup>(17)</sup> Alford, 1802.<sup>(18)</sup>)

Disappearing too were the old distinctions between winter and summer. In times when hours of attendance were long and in part regulated by the hours of daylight some statutory division of the year was probably necessary. Governors and founders usually fixed a date for the beginning and end of winter - Michaelmas or November 1st were popular for the former, Lady-day or March 1st for the latter - but some, more scrupulous, divided the year more precisely. Thus at Norwich the governors stipulated a change in the hours of attendance to begin every March 25th, May 1st, September 29th and November 5th.<sup>(19)</sup> Though these distinctions of season were retained at some schools, at many of them the shorter hours of study required by revised rules, enabled the distinctions to be forgotten and for regular starting and finishing times, constant all the year, to be fixed.

The great boarding schools revealed some divergence from the general pattern in that the hours required for class work were often few. Thus at Eton in mid-eighteenth century the lesson hours were four on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, one on Tuesday, two on Thursday and three on Saturday.<sup>(20)</sup> The difference, however, was more apparent than real. Boarders were expected to work in their leisure hours and very often had tutorial classes and private lessons to attend: in fact, the number of hours spent in some form of supervised work was probably much the same as that worked by a pupil at an ordinary day grammar school.

At all schools Sunday was a free day, though very often staff and pupils were engaged in communal and sometimes compulsory, worship at a local church or in the school chapel.\* In addition, certain days were

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\* See Part IV, Section 3.

half-days. Most schools allowed Saturday afternoon to be free but there was no conformity amongst schools in their choice of other days: doubtless custom and local influences had much effect. Some schools are noteworthy as exceptions: some only allowed one free afternoon each week (Louth,<sup>(21)</sup> Lymm<sup>(22)</sup>) while at Richmond (Yorkshire) the 1796 rules only permitted a half-day every other week.<sup>(23)</sup> Other schools placed time restrictions on their half-days: Nottingham allowed pupils only an hour less in afternoon school for one "half-day";<sup>(24)</sup> at Blackrod, school closed in mid-morning on a Saturday but not until 3 p.m. on the other half-day.<sup>(25)</sup> At most schools, however, pupils were quite simply allowed two (Hipperholme,<sup>(26)</sup> Grantham,<sup>(27)</sup> Mercers,<sup>(28)</sup>) or even three (Manchester,<sup>(29)</sup> Bristol<sup>(30)</sup>) free afternoons each week.

There were also a number of whole free days allowed. These could be purely gratuitous, at the Headmaster's discretion, as at Leeds<sup>(31)</sup> and Bradford<sup>(32)</sup> (one day per month), Merchant Taylors - eight in the year,<sup>(33)</sup> or Norwich<sup>(34)</sup> and Southwell<sup>(35)</sup> (one day each week). However, there were also well-established day-holidays quite apart from these bounties: both Eton and Harrow<sup>(36)</sup> had Tuesday free, though this still involved an hour long early morning lesson at Eton.<sup>(37)</sup> Most schools were free on Holy Days and church festivals, on days when local Assizes were in session (Oakham,<sup>(38)</sup> Norwich<sup>(39)</sup>), on the anniversaries of the King's Accession and Birthday (Lancaster,<sup>(40)</sup> Leeds<sup>(41)</sup>), during local fairs (Ipswich,<sup>(42)</sup> Perse School, Cambridge<sup>(43)</sup>) on November 5th and even on January 30th and May 29th, the anniversaries of the Gunpowder plot, execution of Charles I and the Restoration respectively (Bradford,<sup>(44)</sup> Oakham.<sup>(45)</sup>)

[ At Hastings the children are supposed, on May 29th, to have chanted -

"Royal Oak Day, Royal Oak Day,  
If you don't give us a holiday;  
We'll all run away. ] (46)

It will be evident that there were a large number of these special days - as many as thirty in one year were recorded at Oakham. (47)

At almost all schools the main holidays, to which the free days were merely supplements, can be classified into one or other of two categories. Many schools had two holidays each year, usually at Christmas and in Midsummer, of some four to six weeks each (Bell's Grammar School, Newlands, (50) Repton, (51) Truro (52)). The alternative was to divide the same amount of time into three holiday periods, usually at Christmas, Easter, and either Whitsuntide or Midsummer. (Heath, (53) Darlington (54)). Curiously, a number of schools changed: Sherborne in 1827 (55) and Southwell in 1837 (56) gave up three holidays for two, while Alford (1802) (57) and Harrow (by 1760) (58) had changed from two vacations to three in each year. There were, of course, considerable differences between schools both in the length of time allowed for holidays and in the manner in which this should be divided. Thus the 1718 rules of Risley School only allowed three weeks vacation annually, (59) while other schools gave as much as fourteen weeks holiday (Rugby (60)). Indeed, some pupils at Shrewsbury had even longer vacations since, in addition to the fourteen weeks statutory holiday, boys who had a good conduct record were allowed home four days early. (61) Some schools took a part of the year's holiday at harvest-time (Kirkham, (62)

Steypning<sup>(63)</sup>); some schools regarded Shrovetide (Witton<sup>(64)</sup>) and Kirkby Kendal<sup>(65)</sup>) or All-Hallows (Wakefield<sup>(66)</sup>) as being worthy of several days' or even a whole week's holiday; some schools had special holidays on Founder's Day or on civic Festivals.\*

The hours were long and the terms were long and, although both decreased as the eighteenth century passed, the requirements remained, by modern standards, very hard. Indeed who now can grudge either pupil or master the welcome respite which the half-days and special holidays must have provided?

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\* See Part IV, Section 9 and Section 10.

1. CCR. Vol. 2, p.178.
2. T. Cox: Grammar School of Queen Elizabeth at Heath, p.57.
3. A. C. Price: History of the Leeds Grammar School, p.109.
4. M. H. Peacock: History of the Free Grammar School at Wakefield, p.230.
5. CCR. Vol. 8, p.724.
6. R. L. Hines: History of Hitchin Grammar School, p.37.
7. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.419.
8. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis Vol. 2, p.113.
9. J. M. Gray: A History of the Perse School, Cambridge, p.104.
10. E. D. Laborde: Harrow School, pp.43-44.
11. CCR. Vol. 11, p.203.
12. CCR. Vol. 12, p.543.
13. CCR. Vol. 18, p.146.
14. H. W. Saunders: History of Norwich Grammar School, p.166.
15. G. C. Williamson: Royal Grammar School, Guildford, pp.55-59.
16. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.617.
17. A. L. Murray: A History of the Royal Grammar School, Lancaster, p.101.
18. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.780.
19. H. W. Saunders; op.cit., p.166.
20. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: History of Eton College, p.308.
21. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.822.
22. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.115.
23. CCR. Vol. 7, p.826.
24. CCR. Vol. 20, p.383.
25. M. M. Kay: History of the Rivington and Blackrod Free Grammar Schools, p.127.

26. J. W. Housemans: Hipperholme Grammar School, p.11.
27. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.804.
28. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.45.
29. A. Mumford: The Manchester Grammar School, p.259.
30. C. P. Hill: The History of Bristol Grammar School, pp.29-31.
31. A. C. Price: op.cit., p.152.
32. W. Claridge: Origin and History of the Bradford Grammar School, p.44.
33. Merchant Taylor's School, p.51.
34. H. W. Saunders: op.cit., p.166.
35. W. A. James: Grammar and Song Schools, Southwell, p.20.
36. E. D. Laborde: op.cit., p.48.
37. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: op.cit., p.308.
38. W. L. Sargant: The Book of Oakham School, p.32.
39. H. W. Saunders: op.cit., p.166.
40. A. L. Murray: op.cit., p.106.
41. A. C. Price: op.cit., p.152.
42. I. E. Gray and W. E. Potter: Ipswich School, p.73.
43. J. M. Gray: op.cit., p.104.
44. W. Claridge: op.cit., p.44.
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46. J. M. Baines: History of Hastings Grammar School, p.26.
47. W. L. Sargant; op.cit., p.32.
48. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.822.
49. W. Claridge: op.cit., p.43.
50. T. Bright: Bell's ... The Story of a Gloucestershire School, p.21.

51. A. MacDonald: A Short History of Repton, p.147.
52. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.144.
53. T. Cox: op.cit., p.57.
54. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.392.
55. W. B. Wildman: A Short History of Sherborne, pp.105, 113.
56. W. A. James: op.cit., pp.20, 33.
57. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.780.
58. E. D. Laborde: op.cit., p.40.
59. CCR. Vol. 17, p.223.
60. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
61. J. B. Oldham: A History of Shrewsbury School, pp.156-158.
62. CCR. Vol. 11, p.236.
63. CCR. Vol. 2, p.178.
64. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.135.
65. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.711.
66. M. H. Peacock: op.cit., p.231.



SECTION 3

RELIGION

SECTION 3RELIGION

Instilling a firm belief in the principles of Christianity and adherence to the established church was regarded, by most founders of Grammar Schools, as being a prime duty of teachers. Thus, in addition to the regulations made to ensure that pupils were thoroughly trained in Latin and Greek, many schools had detailed rules on how religious instruction was to be given and how pupils were to be trained in the rites and ritual of the Anglican church. To achieve their purpose masters had not only to teach their pupils Catechism and Christian morality but also to create a proper spiritual environment for the pupils.

At almost all schools the day began and ended with the reading of prayers. Even when governors were revising rules they remained firm in their preservation of this long-established practice (Drayton 1720,<sup>(1)</sup> Bury 1726,<sup>(2)</sup> Bradford 1808, 1818<sup>(3)</sup>). At some schools very precise directions were given on the form the morning and evening services should take. At Oswestry senior boys were required to read from the Bible four times daily - at 7 and 10 o'clock in the morning, at 3 and 5 o'clock each afternoon. After the first and last of these readings, the master had to read the General Confession, the Lord's Prayer and the morning and evening collects appropriate to the day.<sup>(4)</sup> At Morpeth the 1725 rules stipulate that the master must read prayers, in Latin each morning and English each afternoon, in a "Distinct and Audible voice" with each boy "meekly and Decently upon his knees". A century

later, however, the rules at Morpeth only specify the reading of prayers in English.<sup>(5)</sup> This was, of course, the usual language, but a few schools maintained the old ways: at Mercer's in the early nineteenth century prayers were read in both Latin and Greek<sup>(6)</sup> and at Darlington masters were allowed to use Latin if they wished.<sup>(7)</sup> The most usual rule was quite simply that the master had to read prayers, sometimes aided by senior boys (Grantham,<sup>(8)</sup> Pocklington<sup>(9)</sup>) and, beyond a general understanding that prayers be taken from the Anglican Liturgy (Louth,<sup>(10)</sup> Rivington,<sup>(11)</sup> Hipperholme<sup>(12)</sup>), to leave all further arrangements to the staff.

In addition to these daily prayers, pupils were given regular lessons in the articles of faith and the catechism. These occurred at least once each week and often far more frequently - even daily (Kirkham,<sup>(13)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(14)</sup>). At boarding schools Saturday morning and Sunday were often devoted to religious instruction with lessons in the elements of religion and the Anglican faith for the younger pupils and the study of some of the many heavy theological commentaries or expositions for senior pupils.\* Yet even outside these formal lessons, the school work often contained a strongly moral, didactic flavour. The Bible was a standard reader in English, Hebrew, Latin and Greek. As exercises grew more advanced pupils would frequently be required to read, translate or analyse exhortations to be truthful, devout, moral and Christian.<sup>†</sup> Where the curriculum was broad and pupils

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\* See Part IV, Section 4, p.278 ff.

† See Part IV, Section 4, pp. 254, 283.

studied history beyond that of the Ancients, it was usual for a part of the time to be devoted to tracing the early history of the Church and, emphasising the dangers and perils of Catholicism and Dissent, to present a somewhat partial account of the growth and triumph of the established church in England.\*

The work towards shaping Christian citizens was completed by securing the regular attendance of all pupils at church on Sundays and Holy Days. At boarding schools this was a simple matter. It was usually compulsory for all pupils to attend services in the school chapel or local church at least once and at some schools twice, each Sunday (Eton,<sup>(15)</sup> Bury St. Edmunds<sup>(16)</sup>). Boys at Winchester were even more closely supervised: they were required to attend the school chapel twice every day for prayers, three times every Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and, in addition, to attend two of the Sunday services in the Cathedral.<sup>(17)</sup>

However, at boarding schools which did not have a convenient chapel, and at most day schools, attendance at church on Sundays was easier to require than to achieve. The frequency with which governors had to remind staff of their duty to escort boys to church suggests that this was not a popular burden. In 1725 the governors of Oakham criticised the usher and ordered him to attend the boys to church.<sup>(18)</sup> At Westminster the junior usher was paid a guinea per annum per boy as a recompense for his duty in supervising the boys in church,<sup>(19)</sup> and at Wolverhampton, 1796, a payment of £10 was made to the writing-master for the same task.<sup>(20)</sup>

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\* See Part IV, Section 4, pp. 287-288.

At most schools the rules required this duty to be borne by all staff, either together every Sunday or in turn (Norwich,<sup>(21)</sup> Hampton<sup>(22)</sup>). It was not easy in a day school to ensure the pupils' attendance at church on a Sunday. Bideford Grammar School which spent over £30 in 1816 to provide special seats in church for the use of its pupils was a rare example of optimism.<sup>(23)</sup> Indeed some schools, recognising the hopelessness of the task, abolished those rules enforcing communal worship every Sunday (Bury,<sup>(24)</sup> Bell's Grammar School, Newlands<sup>(25)</sup>) and many more must have been like Walsall where, in 1835, the master reported that if he were fortunate about half of the thirty pupils accompanied him to Sunday morning service in the local church.<sup>(26)</sup>

In pre-Hanoverian times the activity of governors and of bishops - by means of their power to grant or withhold licences to teachers - had been sufficient to ensure that the Christianity taught in grammar schools was consistent with the doctrines and beliefs of the Anglican church. There was little danger from Catholics or Jews: as toleration grew and members of these faiths returned to England or made their belief public they established their own schools and colleges. They were, in any case, small groups with no political voice and constituted no real threat during Hanoverian times. The same could not, of course, be said of the Non-Conformists. Here the problem was considerable. Despite the legal restrictions placed on the appointment of Dissenters as teachers in endowed Grammar schools,\* the failure of bishops to exercise their

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\* See Part II, Section 2, p.31 ff.

authority and the negligence or even in some cases, disaffection of governors enabled the Dissenting movement to actually get into the Anglican Grammar schools. For the most part, however, the problem facing the Anglican church was not the insinuation of Non-conformists into grammar schools but rather the departure from these schools of many pupils who preferred the more enlightened regime and the broader more utilitarian curriculum of the Dissenters' own schools. The success of the Academies is not relevant here, but the influence of Dissenters inside the Grammar schools does deserve our attention.

In some areas this influence was quite strong and in Lancashire in particular a number of so called "Grammar schools" were established by the Dissenters. Some of these were quite successful and survived for some years (Mort's Grammar School, Astley whose early staff had been at Rathmell Academy continued well into the eighteenth century).<sup>(27)</sup> This, however, was not a true Grammar school though to the people of the area it clearly served the purpose of one. Rather more remarkable was Rivington Grammar school. The Diocesan return of 1789 says that five of the governors were Presbyterian and that the sixth (and last) was a Quaker.<sup>(28)</sup> Carlisle reported that all six were Socinian Presbyterians,<sup>(29)</sup> and the Charity Commissioners a few years later were outraged to find only one Anglican governor but two "moderate Calvinists" and three Unitarians. Moreover, after 1805, the usher had been a licensed dissenting preacher. The governors defended this curious bias in a school founded by an Anglican bishop by arguing that the founder had had Calvinist leanings. The Charity Commissioners were not impressed and

declared the whole situation highly unsatisfactory - but they were forced to admit that the school was efficient and that it was well-regarded by the neighbourhood.<sup>(30)</sup> A similar situation existed at Stand where the schoolmaster was a non-conformist from 1722-70 and where in 1823 a dissenting minister was appointed master by Trustees who were also Dissenters.<sup>(31)</sup>

Often, however, the appointment of a Non-conformist to a grammar school post, was disastrous - not because of the inability of the master but more because of the righteous indignation of local Anglican clergy at this corruption of a pillar of the church. Thus at Bretherton in the late eighteenth century an Evangelical Dissenter was appointed master of the Grammar School and was so successful and popular that parents asked to be allowed to attend his services and addresses to the boys. The local Anglican clergyman - jealous - caused the withdrawal of the children from the school (on religious grounds) and the master was forced to resign. (He later became a Dissenting minister).<sup>(32)</sup> Much more disastrous was the situation created by the clash of religious feeling at Kibworth Beauchamp in the early Hanoverian period. In 1708 pressure by the townspeople caused a number of Dissenters to be chosen as governors of the local Grammar School. This was declared illegal and both Dissenters and Anglicans agreed to arbitration. The decision, 1718, ruled that while both groups should be represented amongst the feoffees, the master must be orthodox Anglican and, moreover, that no further Dissenters were to be elected to the trustees. The disgruntled non-conformists bided their time and then, in 1724, attempted to get one

of their number as headmaster and to thwart the election of an Anglican. The scheme was foiled by the intervention of the arbiter of a few years earlier and of the bishop in his capacity as Visitor. The cost of the "victory" for orthodoxy was high. The Dissenters withdrew their support of the school and established their own Academy which, in an area so strong in Non-conformity, thrived while the Grammar school declined abruptly.<sup>(33)</sup> There was an even more calamitous clash at Monks Kirby Grammar school. Coventry Corporation, governors of the school, appointed in 1771 a Dissenting Minister to be master. "In fury the then usher violently assaulted him", both left the school which then shut for seventeen years. Even then the quarrel lingered on and the school, though re-opened, never fully recovered.<sup>(34)</sup>

Elsewhere Dissenters became Grammar school masters with rather less disturbance. Wallingford tolerated one, on condition that he allowed boys freedom to worship as their parents wished.<sup>(35)</sup> Perhaps even more astonishing, St. Paul's was, for nearly a decade in the early eighteenth century, under a Highmaster who had been unable to proceed to a degree at Cambridge because of his dissenting beliefs, who had subsequently taught in a Dissenting Academy and who, though a distinguished scholar and an undoubted Christian, was certainly not in conformity with the Anglican church.<sup>(36)</sup>

For the most part, however, the Grammar Schools were not run by Dissenters and it must be admitted that the schools discussed are exceptions. Yet there could be a breach in the security of the Anglican grasp on schools even where the master was firmly orthodox. If the



local population should contain many Non-conformists it was inevitable that children from Dissenting backgrounds should seek admission to the grammar school. The support of the local people was, except for the great boarding schools, essential to schools and, in consequence, governors and staff had either to admit these applicants or, in effect, condemn the school. Once admitted their presence affected the religious, or rather the Anglican Christian, atmosphere that founders, governors and staff were at such pains to create. Concessions had to be made by both sides. Dissenters were admitted at Bolton-le-Moors on condition that they agreed to conform to all the school rules, including those prescribing prayers and religious instruction.<sup>(37)</sup> At Kettering, on the other hand, the master agreed to omit from his teaching of religion - in particular the catechism - all parts that Dissenters might object to, in order to keep these children in the school.<sup>(38)</sup>

It was active Dissenters who, incensed by the behaviour of a headmaster at Hitchin, instituted a Chancery suit which led to the master's dismissal. The headmaster had become parish clerk, a post which necessitated his attendance at Church on two mornings each week. He solved his problem of dual responsibility by taking his pupils with him and declared that either the non-conformist children came too or "as ye Dissenters may have objections to their children going to church, the care for them for such hours will lie upon themselves." It was the Baptists who objected and though the master was dismissed for his negligence not his religious attachments, there can be no doubt of the significance of the Dissenters' intervention.<sup>(39)</sup>

The Anglican church was far from healthy in the Hanoverian period and the negligence and self-interest of so many clergy and the failure of the Bishops to exercise their proper authority combined to weaken the spiritual atmosphere governors and founders of Grammar schools had sought to create. The disabilities of the Established Church were emphasised by the liveliness and enthusiasm of the Dissenters. Although the schools did not become a battleground for the two forces, they did not escape the conflict entirely. However, both parties had the same object in view: the creation of Christians, the education of all children in the virtuous and proper paths of moral behaviour and in the principles of faith. Dissenters and Anglicans might disagree bitterly on the content of prayers, religious instruction and church services: they were united in regarding all these things as an essential to proper schooling.

1. CCR. Vol. 24, p.300.
2. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
3. W. Claridge: Origins and History of Bradford Grammar School, p.44.
4. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.372.
5. G. Kennedy: The Story of Morpeth Grammar School, p.62.
6. J. Watney: Some Account of Mercers' School, p.25.
7. CCR. Vol. 21, p.58.
8. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.804.
9. CCR. Vol. 19, p.541.
10. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.822.
11. M. M. Kay: History of Rivington and Blackrod Free Grammar Schools, p.111.
12. J. W. Houseman: Hipperholme Grammar School, p.11.
13. CCR. Vol. 11, p.236.
14. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis, Vol. 2, p.49.
15. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: History of Eton College, p.310.
16. CCR. Vol. 23, p.529.
17. J. D'E Firth: Winchester College, p.116.
18. W. L. Sargant: The Book of Oakham School, p.24.
19. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.98.
20. CCR. Vol. 4, p.349.
21. H. W. Saunders: History of Norwich Grammar School, p.166.
22. B. Garside: A Brief History of Hampton School, p.18.
23. CCR. Vol. 9, p.129.
24. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
25. T. Bright: Bell's ... The Story of a Gloucestershire School, pp.21-22.

26. D. P. J. Fink: Queen Mary's Grammar School, pp.279-280.
27. J. Lunn: A History of Leigh Grammar School, p.35.
28. M. M. Kay: op.cit., p.87.
29. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.716.
30. CCR. Vol. 19, p.196.
31. CCR. Vol. 16, p.237.
32. A. Mumford: The Manchester Grammar School, p.245.
33. B. Elliott: A History of Kibworth Beauchamp Grammar School, pp.33-35.
34. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.659.
35. CCR. Vol. 1, p.65.
36. M. F. J. McDonnell: History of St. Paul's School, p.305;  
Annals of St. Paul's, p.281.
37. CCR. Vol. 19, p.155.
38. CCR. Vol. 24, p.131.
39. R. L. Hine: History of Hitchin Grammar School, pp.29-30.

SECTION 4

CURRICULA AND SYLLABI

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Pupils at schools which had any pretensions to grammar school status devoted much of their time to classical studies. This was by definition, the purpose of the school. Classical studies could, however, mean quite simply instruction in Latin, or it could extend to Greek and occasionally, though this became increasingly rare, it included Hebrew. In addition most schools, certainly by the end of the eighteenth century, attempted some study of English, and almost every school included Religious Instruction in the curriculum. Beyond this, however, it is impossible to generalise with any great certainty. Some schools taught nothing else - indeed a few taught rather less - and where the curriculum was extended it could either mark a response to the demands of local citizens or it could merely be provision of an opportunity for the Headmaster to teach some particular favourite subject.

Few schools, consciously at least, can have adopted any of the curricula suggested by the educational writers of the time. The views of most were more utopian than practical. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, one writer urged that, in addition to the usual classical studies, lessons in "Divinity, Reason, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, History, Mathematics, Metaphysics, Logic, Oratory and the Art of War."<sup>(1)</sup> Later the author adds a particular recommendation that the curriculum should include Nature Study (especially Animal Anatomy), Astronomy, Music, Dancing and, in moderation, Acting.<sup>(2)</sup> John Clarke, the Headmaster of Kingston-upon-Hull Grammar School, wisely observed that

"it is not ... in bare Latin and Greek a boy should spend his whole time at school", and added History, Ancient and Modern Geography, Chronology and Divinity.<sup>(3)</sup> (In a later work, Clarke suggested that after these are mastered, a pupil should move on to Logic, Natural Philosophy, Mathematics, Morality, Eloquence, Poetry and critical learning. However this cannot be fairly considered as specifically for inclusion in grammar school curricula since the point Clarke was making was that pupils should progress to these when ready and not necessarily during their school days.) An anonymous pamphlet of 1772 urged the restriction of classical study to the capable and interested few, and - to complete their curriculum - added English, History, Mathematics and Geography, Poetry and Works of Imagination, Biography and Chronology.<sup>(4)</sup> Croft, Headmaster first at Beverley Grammar School and then at Brewood, a prolific writer on education, in a book of 1775 urged a curriculum similar to the usual classics, English and Religious Instruction but added Mathematics - Algebra, Mensuration and Surveying.<sup>(5)</sup> In a later book he extended this including Hebrew (for prospective clergy), Geography, Natural History, French, Drawing, Dancing, Music, Writing and Accounts.<sup>(6)</sup> Most of the writers of the last years of the eighteenth century adopted this type of plan only adding or substituting some personal favourite subject - Rhetoric,<sup>(7)</sup> and Fencing and Military Exercises.<sup>(8)</sup> Later writers still kept the basic pattern suggested by Croft but tended to lay rather more stress on Mathematics and Natural Philosophy (Science),<sup>(9)</sup> or, being more specific, on Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry for the former and Chemistry, Geology and Astronomy for the latter.<sup>(10)</sup>

It is not difficult to envisage the scepticism with which these theoretical determinations of ideal curricula would be received by the underpaid and overworked master of a small, struggling country grammar school. He could not teach such a wide range of subjects unaided; his usher - if he had one - was probably fully occupied with instructing the younger children in the elements of reading, writing and arithmetic. In any case, those local parents who favoured such studies would probably be able to send their children to boarding schools where, for a fee, a wide range of extra subjects could usually be undertaken. The majority of the population were not convinced of the value of Latin and Greek: what hope was there of persuading them to permit their children to study Hebrew, Astronomy, Rhetoric, Fencing or Dancing? These were the factors which compelled so many of the smaller schools to restrict their curricula to essentials - English, reading, writing and arithmetic (to meet popular demands), Latin and, if possible, Greek (to preserve classical school status, serve the few, and satisfy the intentions of the founder) and Religious Instruction. In so far as there can be such a thing, this was the basic curriculum of most grammar schools in Hanoverian England (Hipperholme,<sup>(11)</sup> Clipston,<sup>(12)</sup> Stafford,<sup>(13)</sup> Hales Owen<sup>(14)</sup>).

Some schools either could not or would not go beyond this, but it would be wrong to imagine that there were no variations in pattern. A large number of schools while keeping broadly to these subjects added others which the staff felt able to offer, or, in some instances, which local circumstances made desirable. Thus it was not unusual for



history and geography to be listed as separate subjects even though they were often no more than subsidiary branches of the basic classical lessons and were learnt in a haphazard, and frequently, garbled fashion. At some schools, however, a more organised approach was followed and a full study of ancient and modern history and geography was made (Sir Roger Manwood's Free Grammar School, Sandwich,<sup>(15)</sup> Rugby,<sup>(16)</sup> Mercers<sup>(17)</sup>).

Hebrew declined in popularity, but a few schools continued to teach, or at least, to offer to teach, it (St. Paul's before 1814,<sup>(18)</sup> King's School, Canterbury,<sup>(19)</sup> Ipswich<sup>(20)</sup>). In the early eighteenth century, St. Paul's also had courses in Chaldee and Oriental languages<sup>(21)</sup> and the Headmaster of King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath, advertised in 1754 that he was ready to give tuition in "Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, Samaritan, Aethiopic and Arabic."<sup>(22)</sup> In fact, of course, there was no general wish for such studies and they largely disappeared to be replaced by the far more useful modern languages. French was very popular and was quite widely taught (Bedford,<sup>(23)</sup> Sudbury,<sup>(24)</sup> Midhurst<sup>(25)</sup>). Some schools offered German (King Edward's School, Birmingham,<sup>(26)</sup> Manchester, after 1833<sup>(27)</sup>), Italian (Dudley,<sup>(28)</sup> Harrow<sup>(29)</sup>) and even, at Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Portuguese and Spanish as well.<sup>(30)</sup> These were extras and a special fee had to be paid, but public demand ensured that the best schools and ambitious masters had to be prepared to offer some range of modern languages. Initiative rather than competence was probably a major factor in determining the languages offered: as a pupil at Lancaster remarked: "French was taught

by the Headmaster who had not the most remote idea how to pronounce it." (31)

Even more in demand were the many branches of Mathematics. Elementary arithmetic was taught in most schools by the usher or writing master. This was an essentially practical discipline and, at many schools, was developed to become still more utilitarian. Thus some schools taught mensuration and elementary surveying (Bunbury, (32) Ormskirk (33)), others offered instruction in elementary navigation (Bolton-le-Moors, (34) Macclesfield (35)) and a very large number had courses in book-keeping and elementary accounting, designed to fit pupils for clerical work (Berwick-upon-Tweed, (36) Easingwold, (37) Chipping Norton (38)). For those pupils who stayed longer and who hoped to proceed to a University, some real Mathematics was often thought desirable - though at some schools, even major schools like Eton, (39) the subject remained neglected and ignored. What was included in this study is often obscure but some schools taught Algebra and Geometry (Oswestry, (40) Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham, (41) Dorchester (42)), and, a little more precise, a Prospectus of 1827 for St. Peter's School, York, includes Euclid, Trigonometry and Algebra as far as Quadratic Equations. (43)

In 1825, the governors of Worcester Royal Grammar School ordered the Highmaster to teach "the Analytical Methods of Reasoning in Mathematics and Natural Philosophy." (44) This, however, was a radical advance and most schools, even if they considered Mathematics as a necessary extra, made no real effort to teach Natural Philosophy. A remarkably

enlightened Headmaster of Eton in the early eighteenth century had instituted courses in astronomy, optics and statics,<sup>(45)</sup> but these lapsed after his departure. Most schools offered no instruction in any branch of science until the very end of the eighteenth or the early nineteenth century. Thus Natural Philosophy was included in the 1793 scheme for Newcastle-upon-Tyne's Grammar school<sup>(46)</sup> and in the 1809 rules at Lancaster - though there is some doubt as to whether the particular rule was ever obeyed.<sup>(47)</sup> A plan of 1826 for a school at Rishworth included chemistry<sup>(48)</sup> and this was taught at Manchester after 1833.<sup>(49)</sup> Pupils at Harrow had regular lessons in mathematics and lectures on scientific subjects such as galvanism, pneumatics and the chemical properties of air.<sup>(50)</sup> A similar approach can be found at Birmingham where, in a plan of 1836 devised by the Headmaster, there was included lectures and experiments in Science, Geology and Mineralogy.<sup>(51)</sup>

Such lectures were not considered a part of the regular tuition offered in schools and pupils paid special fees for them. Normally these extra courses were rather less ambitious than those we have considered and were more designed to supply training in social graces and accomplishments. There were lessons in Drawing (Midhurst,<sup>(52)</sup> Buntingford<sup>(53)</sup>), Music (Harrow,<sup>(54)</sup> Northampton<sup>(55)</sup>), Dancing (Brewood,<sup>(56)</sup> Sudbury<sup>(57)</sup>), Fencing (Macclesfield,<sup>(58)</sup> King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath<sup>(59)</sup>) and even - serving the causes of patriotism and health - Military Exercises (Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham,<sup>(60)</sup> Northampton<sup>(61)</sup>). Another recreational subject was, briefly, taught at Otley Grammar School but the governors objected to the boys learning how to play bagatelle and

dismissed the master.<sup>(62)</sup> The excessive levity of this "recreational course" was more than balanced by the weighty and erudite extra studies at Worcester - Moral Philosophy and Ethics<sup>(63)</sup> - and Birmingham - Political Economy.<sup>(64)</sup>

Curricula then, were at once both standard and yet diverse. Founders, governors, staff were almost united in preserving a classical core to the curriculum as long as a pupil could be found to take advantage of it. Latin was the fundamental study; Greek, though in decline generally, actually grew in popularity at the bigger schools; Hebrew did largely disappear, to be replaced by modern languages - in particular French and German. Elementary instruction, though usually given out of school hours, nevertheless was an integral part of the education offered by all save the most fortunate and the most reactionary schools. The other extra courses, though not always found in the smaller grammar schools, were increasingly recognised as necessary and were provided in most schools which catered for prospective university students and whose pupils were drawn from the wealthier social classes.

Methods of tuition and standards might vary, syllabi might differ, the designation of subjects as part of the basic curricula or as expensive extras might show wide variation, but, generally, what was taught in those grammar schools able to preserve classical status revealed considerable similarity. We must now consider the integral parts of the curriculum more closely and examine the books and methods advocated and used in each of the major subjects and assess the value of subjects as social and educational mediums.

Latin

The classics were the essential study of grammar schools. At the best schools, a slightly greater importance was attached, as the century passed, to Greek. At the great majority of schools, however, it was the study of Latin which was considered all important. The methods of teaching Latin and the authors read showed little variation, though slowly progressing changes can be discerned by the end of the Hanoverian period. To some extent these changes resulted from the considerable criticism which was aroused by the preoccupation of schools with the Latin language and their reluctance to depart from the traditional patterns of teaching it.

The fundamental book was the Latin Grammar and here, without doubt, lay the root of most of the problems of the schools and the complaints of the critics. The great majority of schools used the Eton Latin grammar which was a direct descendant of Lily's grammar of two centuries earlier. The critics were almost unanimous in their objection to the book and its use. The first decade of the eighteenth century saw a bitter dispute between Richard Johnson, the Headmaster of the grammar school at Nottingham, who wrote "Grammatical Commentaries" in 1703 attacking Lily, and the Headmasters of Bury St. Edmunds Free Grammar School and St. Saviour's Free Grammar School, Southwark who both attacked Johnson, accusing him of obscurity and exaggeration even worse than the target of his attack. In 1714 Johnson returned to the battle, publishing a new book, "Noctes Nottinghamicae", the dedication of which condemned Lily as "false ... obscure ... downright unintelligible" and the preface of which

attacked some teachers as "smatterers" and generally inferior. More to the point were his remarks in the Preface of an edition of *Noctes Nottinghamicae* in 1718, Here he attacked "the preposterous order in teaching Grammar. It is commonly put upon Children at their first coming to school to learn it all by heart, and that in great part, by a language they don't understand" and remarked that anyway much of Lily was far too difficult for mere children.<sup>(65)</sup> There was undoubtedly much in what Johnson said. Lily was a dull and complex book and it was entirely in Latin: to present this to a pupil just entering on classical work was indeed liable to create an immediate antipathy - quite apart from the obvious problems of comprehension.

Even Lily's supporters had reservations. In 1719 there was published a "supplement to Lily's Grammar for use in Exon Free School". This declared Lily to be easily the best Latin Grammar, but admitted the need for some improvements and made the considerable advance of using some English instructions to explain the Latin. The Preface made it clear that the authors did not regard this as a new grammar - merely an aid for beginners who found the existing grammar difficult. Moreover, the Preface admitted that most grammars, including Lily, were full of useless information and needless rules, and urged masters to be ruthless in pruning these unnecessary complications to study.<sup>(66)</sup> Both J. T. Philipps, author of "A Compendious Way of Teaching Ancient and Modern Languages" (1723)<sup>(67)</sup> and John Clarke in "An Essay upon the Education of Youth in Grammar Schools" (1730)<sup>(68)</sup> called for an immediate reform in grammar books and grammar teaching. T. Bowles in "*Grammaticae Latinae*

"Syntaxis" (1738) was outspoken and accused previous grammarians of writing books, "industriously calculated to entail Dullness upon Posterity", which were "dark and difficult, barren and empty" and contained "many Falsities".<sup>(69)</sup> A considerable advance came with Clarke's "Introduction to the Making of Latin" which was a positive attempt to produce, not a mere grammar, but a really useful and usable first book for students of Latin. He omitted all syntax, organised the rules in a more simple fashion, and used frequent examples chosen from the classics and so arranged that there was a short example to show each rule, longer ones to show earlier rules and general revision exercises. The examples themselves are of a rather solemn nature with frequent exhortations to industry and virtue - "Learning makes life sweet and produces Pleasure, Tranquillity, Glory and Praise", "A boy can never become learned without Diligence", "My brother is a good boy because he reads his Book, but thou art a bad boy because thou neglectest thy lesson," and "Virtue is a jewel, but Vice is abominable". The book was immediately successful and ran to many editions, yet a decade later a writer on education declared that many schools ignored Clarke's works and still used Lily<sup>(70)</sup> and made pupils learn it by heart despite its "monstrous length" and "complications".<sup>(71)</sup>

Despite this, despite the popularity of Clarke's works, the Eton Latin Grammar flourished and was re-edited and re-printed at regular intervals throughout the period. New grammars were published, new critics arose, but the Eton Grammar continued only little changed. It was made less complex and English was slowly introduced but it remained a stiff hurdle for the new pupil.

It must not be assumed, however, that the Eton Grammar was alone in its obscurity and complexity. Other great schools had their own grammars - though nearly all owed much to Lily - and they too were attacked. The Westminster Grammar was specifically criticised by Solomon Lowe who published a "Critique on the Etymology of the Westminster Grammar" listing "errors", "perplexities" and "superfluities" and giving an Appendix tabulating 89 defects and 102 errors in the Grammar. Moreover, claimed Lowe, the so-called "corrected edition" of the Westminster Grammar while cutting the defects to 79 at the same time increased the number of errors to 134. As Lowe wrote, a few years later, despite all his efforts, the Headmaster of Westminster was "content still to let it come abroad in almost as bad a condition as ever,"<sup>(72)</sup> and, although he did not remark upon it, the book continued to be widely used. There were a few other grammars in occasional use - those of Charterhouse (Beverley<sup>(73)</sup>) and the popular Valpy (Thame<sup>(74)</sup>) being the most notable.

There were in addition to these grammars a host of books designed to help the Latin scholar at all stages and in all aspects of the subject. Many of the great schools had their own collection of aids. Thus Winchester had its own Phrase book, and St. Paul's had a special book of English-Latin Dialogues, an Anglo-Latine Nomenclature and a special catechetical version of the Accidence. Not surprisingly the great influence of Eton ensured a wide popularity for the Eton books - a Nomenclature (Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(75)</sup>), a collection of English examples arranged to fit the pattern of the Eton grammar and suitable for translation into Latin (Appleby Parva<sup>(76)</sup>), Walsall<sup>(77)</sup>) and Scriptores



Romani, a selection of excerpts from the classics (Louth,<sup>(78)</sup> Shrewsbury<sup>(79)</sup>). Willymott also wrote a treatise on English Particles with Latin Exercises designed to match the Eton grammar, and both this and an earlier work on the same subject by William Walker (Headmaster at Grantham) were used at Lichfield.<sup>(80)</sup> Towards the end of the period more and more schools used the Introduction to the Making of Latin written by John Clarke (Chesterfield,<sup>(81)</sup> Sir Roger Manwood's Free Grammar School, Sandwich,<sup>(82)</sup> King's School, Canterbury<sup>(83)</sup>), and the various works of Richard Valpy - a Delectus, a Vocabulary, a collection of Dialogues and an aid to composition - were all popular (Louth,<sup>(84)</sup> Bell's Grammar School, Newlands,<sup>(85)</sup> Walsall<sup>(86)</sup>).

In many respects, necessary as all these grammars and text-books were, they were not the main diet of classical students. As the value of Latin as a functional and utilitarian subject diminished, it became a literary study and in consequence Latin poetry became more emphasised than prose and, allied to this, there was a revival in the study of Greek which had never had a utilitarian value. Clearly the grammars and vocabularies were essential but once they had been absorbed pupils could move on to the real work and commence an enormous course of classical reading.

The object was, in the main, to inculcate some knowledge and appreciation of the literature of the great classical authors and, though this was a secondary aim, to provide pupils with a superficial understanding of Roman History, Geography and Customs. Since every man had his own opinion of the outstanding Roman writers, since

literary excellences cannot be satisfactorily compared, the range of books embarked upon was tremendous. There was some agreement on the most vital authors but there was a large fringe of unusual works which were either recommended by educational writers or were the particular favourites of individual teachers. Thus Clarke advocated Suetonius and Seneca,<sup>(87)</sup> Croft praised Comenius and Quintilian,<sup>(88)</sup> and Chapman suggested Pliny.<sup>(89)</sup> Both Clarke<sup>(90)</sup> and Chapman<sup>(91)</sup> recommended Florus and Justin, and this latter author was indeed read at some schools (King's School, Canterbury<sup>(92)</sup>). There was a limited number of schools which read Propertius and Mela (Eton<sup>(93)</sup>), Catullus and Lucretius (Christ's Hospital<sup>(94)</sup>), Helvicius (Lichfield<sup>(95)</sup>), Martial (Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham<sup>(96)</sup>), Tibullus (Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(97)</sup>) and Persius (Shrewsbury<sup>(98)</sup>). A few schools continued to use the books which had been popular in earlier days, Aesop (Guisborough<sup>(99)</sup>) and Cato (Christ's Hospital<sup>(100)</sup>) and, since the Bible in Latin remained an obvious study, Castellion's New Testament continued to be used (Sir Roger Manwood's Free Grammar School, Sandwich<sup>(101)</sup>).

Although Latin was no longer valued as a spoken language, many schools went on using the established favourite collections of Dialogues and Colloquies, Corderius (Brewood,<sup>(102)</sup> Walsall<sup>(103)</sup>) and Erasmus (Coventry,<sup>(104)</sup> St. Paul's<sup>(105)</sup>) a version of whose colloquies ran to 23 editions in less than the century. Probably the most commonly used first texts were the works of Eutropius (Witton,<sup>(106)</sup> Chesterfield<sup>(107)</sup>) and the Fables of Phaedrus (Hertford,<sup>(108)</sup> Warwick<sup>(109)</sup>). There was, however, no set pattern and every school had its own plan and arranged

the authors and books entirely in accordance with the judgment and preference of the staff. Nevertheless there was a good measure of agreement as to which were the main classical authors to be read. The writings of Tacitus (Chipping Norton,<sup>(110)</sup> Louth<sup>(111)</sup>), Nepos (Perse School, Cambridge,<sup>(112)</sup> Leeds<sup>(113)</sup>), Juvenal (Heversham,<sup>(114)</sup> Ripon<sup>(115)</sup>), Livy (Heath,<sup>(116)</sup> Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham<sup>(117)</sup>) and Curtius (Blackrod,<sup>(118)</sup> St. Paul's<sup>(119)</sup>) were generally either read in class or were a necessary part of the leisure time work which was usual in grammar schools. Probably even more popular than any of these were the Commentaries of Caesar (Lancaster,<sup>(120)</sup> Heversham,<sup>(121)</sup> Louth<sup>(122)</sup>) and these took the place of Sallust (Appleby Parva<sup>(123)</sup>, Sherborne<sup>(124)</sup>) and, more particularly, the Orations of Cicero (Chipping Norton,<sup>(125)</sup> Tonbridge<sup>(126)</sup>). Cicero remained a favourite source of extracts for speech-day recitation, but the practical value of his Orations as an example to those aspiring to perfect spoken Latin had diminished, and, much as his style was admired by scholars, he ceased to be an essential part of the main classical course. Some schools read and acted Latin plays, in particular those of Terence (Lancaster,<sup>(127)</sup> Merchant Taylors<sup>(128)</sup>) and Plautus (Reading<sup>(129)</sup>).

The peak of classical writing was considered to be in its poetry, and there was a great emphasis placed on the three most admired Roman poets, Ovid (Perse School, Cambridge,<sup>(130)</sup> Leeds,<sup>(131)</sup> Morpeth<sup>(132)</sup>), Horace (Burtonwood,<sup>(133)</sup> St. Paul's,<sup>(134)</sup> Richmond (Yorkshire)<sup>(135)</sup>) and - most of all - Virgil (Hertford,<sup>(136)</sup> Tonbridge,<sup>(137)</sup> Bell's Grammar School, Newlands,<sup>(138)</sup> Warwick<sup>(139)</sup>). There was some standardisation,

too, of the main works studied. Thus most schools concentrated on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* - though some read the *Epistles* - and on Horace's *Odes* and *Satires*, - though the *Ars Poeticae* was, understandably, read at better schools - and on Virgil's *Aeneid* and, to a lesser degree, the *Georgics* and, still less commonly, the *Eclogues*. Opinions varied on the particular virtues and merits of these poems and their authors: few doubted their pre-eminence in Latin literature.

The profusion of books considered necessary created both a problem and, in turn, much criticism. As Philipps wrote in 1723 "Whenever I pass by a Latin school in a Morning and see Boys loaden with large Satchels full of Books, I pity the Boys and wonder at the Master's Indiscretion. I could name many famous schools in England, where the Boys, by that time they reach Virgil are ply'd with such a multiplicity of Authors that Virgil takes his turn but once a week ... I cannot understand nor conceive what occasion children have for more Authors than one (in Latin and one in Greek) at a time."<sup>(140)</sup> This involved more than just a criticism of the excessive reading, it brought in question the whole method of classical instruction.

There was considerable similarity in the methods used by schools to teach pupils Latin. Learning by heart, repetition and parsing were the commonly accepted keys. The plan of 1793 for Newcastle-upon-Tyne declared "The Latin Grammar is first read through and explained to them and afterwards repeated by heart to the end of the verbs; after this they proceed to the Rules for the Gender etc. etc. and at the same time read one lesson each morning in *Nomenclatura*. Previous to each new

lesson, the boys are questioned as to the substance of the last lesson in the same book. This method is strictly attended to throughout the whole school. On Saturday the lessons of the week are repeated and the difficulties explained by the master." The next class, more advanced, repeated the whole grammar on three mornings each week and spent other lessons on first authors and selections. "Every word is strictly parsed and the rules for the gender, conjugations and syntax repeated at full length."<sup>(141)</sup> Other schools were little different. The Headmaster of Louth declared that each boy was "almost incessantly employed in parsing ... In preparing the lesson (in Valpy) the ablest boy takes the direction of the class, observes that the words are found" in the dictionary by every boy and then each pupil construed in turn both to the senior boy and then to the master. Then everyone parsed and gave the rules of Accidence in turn to the senior boy and to the master - with pauses for consideration and correction when errors were made.<sup>(142)</sup> At Sir Roger Manwood's Free Grammar School, Sandwich, the system outlined in the 1580 statutes was still followed - "the wordes shall first be Englished severallie as the Grammaticall construction lieth, and afterwards the hole sentence or lesson rehersed in English as it lieth together" and then, the master added, "This is the present mode of Tuition, save that each pupil is made to parse." Each boy was selected, at random, "to test diligence."<sup>(143)</sup> The Headmaster of Wolverhampton in 1830 declared that he used "the Charterhouse Method".<sup>(144)</sup> This system involved the rendering of every single Latin word by an English word and was ludicrously cumbersome: it also involved incessant repetition. This was

because Charterhouse<sup>(145)</sup> under Dr. Russell had, like various other schools, adopted and adapted the Madras system or Bell's Monitorial system to the teaching of classics (Newark,<sup>(146)</sup> Lucton<sup>(147)</sup>). "The Brief History of Leeds Grammar School" published in 1820, describes how this was accomplished: "The lessons learnt ... are confined to grammar and construing. All sit round a table in order of merit, under a monitor and a sub-monitor. In grammar each boy reads a word in turn from a sentence and the others copy it down. Repetition till all have learnt it." The same was done for construing. The monitor then tested each boy by giving the English while the boys gave the Greek and Latin. Every lesson was done twice and everything was learnt by heart - which had the added advantage of dispensing with books!" It was thus "impossible for any boy to be idle for a single moment, or to neglect the learning of each lesson perfectly without the knowledge of his whole form and the notice of his monitor."<sup>(148)</sup>

The methods showed little variety and their object was always the same: the perfect knowledge of grammar and syntax and thus enable pupils to attack the prescribed authors. The treatment of literature was little different. Each lesson consisted of translating, parsing, and construing a number of lines of the text, which had usually been prepared for homework on the previous evening and which was repeated as a test at a later lesson. Thus each piece was, in effect, worked over three times at least. After the first few prose authors had been started, pupils moved on to the rules of prosody and the problems of scansion and versification so that they could attempt the main core of the course -

classical poetry. This involved not only reading and appreciating the great Latin poets but also the composition of verses by the pupils themselves. The Headmaster of Louth explained his system of teaching this in the report to Carlisle. He began by "first giving the scholar the words of some Latin poet thrown into disorder, to reduce into Verse - then by forming nonsense verses from the words of his Latin prose exercise, to which he subjoins them - by then giving him the verbal translation of Latin verses to be reduced by him into metre - to this succeed Imitation of some English poet in heroic and elegaic verse - and lastly original composition and lyric verse."<sup>(149)</sup>

There were, of course, other exercises. Declamations, in which a number of boys debated on some predetermined topic, continued to be held. They had, however, for some time been in disrepute and the increasing pointlessness of such exercises caused them to decline. Mostly they disappeared but a few schools - often for traditional rather than academic reasons, continued to hold declamations before a public audience on certain occasions each year (Winchester,<sup>(150)</sup> Blackrod<sup>(151)</sup>). Translation from Latin into English and then back to Latin, attempting to capture the style of the original, was an exercise often set to junior pupils (King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath<sup>(152)</sup>). This was a preparation for prose composition which occupied a good deal of the senior boys' time. Samuel Butler, in particular, valued prose as well as verse composition and, in reply to a parent who criticised them as a waste of time, he wrote "if Latin composition in either prose or verse consisted merely of stringing a few words or phrases together I should

not be much disposed to differ from you ... My view of it, however, is entirely different. Composition in both prose and verse is an essential part of education here, and the higher (a pupil) gets in the school, the more (he) will have of it."<sup>(153)</sup> Butler's answer may not have explained his reasons for placing so high a value on the exercises, but it was part of his particular genius that he could convince his pupils of the value of classical studies and of the classics themselves. Even under an able scholar like Butler, however, much of the work was of an extremely pointless nature and was little other than scholarship for its own sake and with no real practical value. It has been suggested that the real contribution of Arnold to English education was his emphasis on the historical, political and philosophical value of books and on the necessity of composing good English rather than making exact translations.<sup>(154)</sup> In the hands of an unimaginative man classical lessons must have been appalling drudgery. A pupil of the 1830's at Lancaster remarked that his teacher was efficient but that "the instruction was conveyed in the most mechanical and uninteresting manner."<sup>(155)</sup>

Whatever the manner, the pattern remained simple and changed little. For homework each pupil learnt grammar, prepared texts for parsing and construing in class, made translations and eventually, when he was sufficiently advanced, composed themes and verses. In class, he repeated or showed his homework, repeated the previous day's lessons and then parsed and construed some lines from a classical author, either prose or verse. After two or three years the whole arrangement would be repeated for the purpose of learning Greek. At all stages repetition



and committing to memory were the main methods of learning.

The system was unimaginative, save under a perceptive and sympathetic teacher, and cumbersome. To attempt so many authors in such a fashion took considerable time and in part explains, even if it does not excuse, the reluctance with which classical schools added other subjects to the curriculum. Even if, as was often the case, the number of formal lessons was small, the time required for private reading and preparation was obviously extensive and any new studies could only diminish this necessary "leisure".

In some respects the dispute over the method of teaching the classics was the crucial issue in the development of the grammar schools. Some of the critics of the standard practice merely sought to save time and energy in order to achieve the same degree of classical scholarship with less difficulty. Thus William Walker's book, "Some Improvements to the Art of Teaching", which, although published in the previous century, had some popularity in early Hanoverian times, criticised teaching. Walker said, in a Preface, that the standard was poor - "neither the skill required to it, nor the pains taken at it ... nor the benefits reaped from it." He went on to suggest "improvements" but he adhered closely to the classical tradition and kept the same general pattern and the same objectives. F. B. writing in 1701 criticised the methods of teaching as being dull and urged that much unnecessary grammar need not be taught.<sup>(156)</sup> He did advocate the introduction of some recreational studies<sup>(157)</sup>, but he too accepted the general desirability of concentrating on the classics. Another writer, a decade later, was harsh in his

criticism of existing grammars and methods but his purpose was to advocate an almost entirely oral course with children taught to speak Latin from the cradle: "by conversation (it) must come with ease and pleasure", and later, at school, he considered that if pupils "were accustomed to converse with their master in Latin or Greek, they would without doubt endeavour in their master's absence to discourse with one another in these languages". Clearly an optimist, the author was also an extreme reactionary whose complaint did not extend to the function, only the systems, of the grammar school.<sup>(158)</sup>

The Headmaster of Bedford Grammar School described his own work, for which he had no affection, as "catechising nouns and pronouns eight hours every day"<sup>(159)</sup> and Stirling, editor of numerous editions of the classics, in the Preface to Cato, admitted that the method of teaching was "tedious and tiresome" and urged teachers to adopt the fresh approach he advocated. Even John Clarke, who could find little good in the grammar schools' teaching system - "The vulgar method that obtains in our schools is ... miserably trifling ... it has been contrived in opposition to all the rules of good method, on purpose to render the learning of the languages more tedious than it needs be"<sup>(160)</sup> and who advocated a great reorganisation of classical teaching, based his work on the assumption that Latin was essential to education and the major consideration when devising a curriculum. Clarke's "Essay on the Education of Youth in Grammar Schools" defined eight major faults in the school method. He attacked the practice of learning the grammar in Latin,<sup>(161)</sup> urged the use of translations to help beginners,<sup>(162)</sup>

condemned attempts to speak Latin before the pupil was sufficiently far advanced, <sup>(163)</sup> insisted that prose must be mastered before poetry was attempted and then expressed doubt as to the merit of learning poetry. <sup>(164)</sup> Like other educationalists of the time\* Clarke criticised the complexity of classical study and condemned the practice of starting more than one author at a time. <sup>(165)</sup> The founder of the school at Sandwich had said the same in 1580 - pupils "should learne but a fewe books in Lattin and in Greek correspondent to them, and not to be suffered to rove in many authors, but that that fewe should be learned most perfectlie." <sup>(166)</sup> Change was slow to come.

Clarke remarked, very properly, that some boys had no talent for poetical composition and to expect them to spend time at it was ridiculous, of no value to either master or pupil. <sup>(167)</sup> This was a particularly acute problem in many schools and the greater the stress on polished prose composition became, so the problem grew worse. Sydney Smith estimated that he had composed 10,000 verses during his years at Winchester and "no man in his senses would dream in after life of ever making another." <sup>(168)</sup> Some schoolboys found an easier answer - the crib. This widely practiced solution reached its climax at Eton in 1830 when a pupil offered for sale a collection of verses indexed to insure the purchaser's ability to find a verse appropriate to each occasion and demand. <sup>(169)</sup> More enlightened was the approach of Hugh Moises, Headmaster at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, "when any boy did not write

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\* See above, p.259

Latin verse with some taste for that model of composition he was not compelled, in vita Minerva, to attempt it, but he was required to finish his English essays with peculiar niceness. This led many pupils to the early practice of English prose composition ... "(170) Later in the century a distinguished defender of grammar school education said that in his school he insisted on verse composition but it was "revised by the master who is sometimes obliged to assist (the pupils) in making it."(171) The logical conclusion to this can be found in a later book by another educationalist, Nugent, who omitted versification, from his Latin grammar teaching, since it "is not calculated so much for tender capacities as for persons more advanced who are desirous of having a critical and complete knowledge of the Roman language."(172)

Whatever their particular complaint and however strongly these critics felt, whatever changes they advocated - and, where they were teachers themselves, made - in studies, they all continued to accept the necessity of Latin being the main concern of the grammar school pupil. To attack Latin was, after all, to attack the whole conception of traditional English education. Thus when Clarke, in the Essay already discussed, made his eighth and last criticism of the grammar school, he was in fact breaching the defences of the whole system. Why, he argued, study Greek? It had no practical value, and the benefits derived from it could be just as well obtained by reading selected translations.(173) It is but a short step from questioning the value of Greek to questioning the value of Latin.

The many critics of grammar school education show different

characteristics as the eighteenth century progressed. Whereas, at first, the number who attacked the whole system had been an eccentric fringe around those who merely criticised the methods and emphasis of the education, they gradually grew in strength and vehemence to a considerable body which censured every aspect of classical education and which demanded a fresh approach to curriculum, discipline and purpose as well as to the actual methods of tuition. Stackhouse, at one time a Grammar school master, crystallised the whole issue in 1731. He could not, he wrote, "conceive why a Tongue wherein we are to act upon the Stage of the world ... should be so entirely postponed for what is not near so useful to us, for what we commonly forget we seldom learn properly and our Masters have not often the capacity to teach us."<sup>(174)</sup> This was largely ignored at the time, but his criticism revealed the problem that was to occupy so many minds in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Criticism of methods developed into attacks on the function of Latin teaching and, ultimately, into a demand for the abandonment of the whole classical routine. Those who criticised the pedantry of the Latin grammars in the early Hanoverian period, and those who denounced the drudgery and pointless versifying of the middle Hanoverian period gave way to those who sought to abolish the whole grammar school system. The disputes on what authors should be taught and on how best to teach the classics had a significance and effect deeper and more lasting than any could have realised at the time.

Greek

During the period, Greek studies underwent a curious transformation. Whereas they declined and largely disappeared in the smaller schools - where they served no utilitarian function - in the larger and more exclusively classical schools, Greek studies became of greater importance than before and were even more stressed than Latin. Moreover the type of book read changed and a greater emphasis was placed on prose composition, on reading the great prose writers and playwrights of Ancient Greece.

Most schools used the same authors (probably in part due to the influence of the bigger schools) but at some the work included less popular books - presumably because of tradition or the inclinations of the master. Thus Longinus on the Sublime was studied at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in the mid-eighteenth century<sup>(175)</sup> and was included in the plan of education devised in 1793.<sup>(176)</sup> Appolonius Rhodius was read at Shrewsbury<sup>(177)</sup> and an excerpt from Theophrastus was included in recitations of 1761 at Merchant Taylor's School.<sup>(178)</sup> There were similarly limited uses of Isocrates speeches (Heath,<sup>(179)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(180)</sup>), Hesiod (Heath,<sup>(182)</sup> St. Paul's<sup>(183)</sup> and Aeschines (Sir Roger Manwood's Free Grammar School, Sandwich,<sup>(184)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(185)</sup>).

Rather more popular and more widely studied were the writings of Lucian (King's School, Canterbury<sup>(186)</sup>) which were recommended both by Croft<sup>(187)</sup> and Knox<sup>(188)</sup>, Pindar - recommended by Croft<sup>(189)</sup> and used at Dorchester<sup>(190)</sup> and Louth<sup>(191)</sup>, and Theocritus, recommended by Clarke<sup>(192)</sup> and read at Shrewsbury<sup>(193)</sup> and Christ's Hospital.<sup>(194)</sup>

Great attention was paid, particularly in the later years of the period, to reading the notable Greek historians and Thucydides (Ripon,<sup>(195)</sup> Richmond,<sup>(196)</sup> Tonbridge<sup>(197)</sup>), Herodotus (Dorchester,<sup>(198)</sup> Ripon,<sup>(199)</sup> Louth<sup>(200)</sup>) and Xenophon (Witton,<sup>(201)</sup> Chesterfield,<sup>(202)</sup> Harrow<sup>(203)</sup>) were all studied at many schools. For the most senior pupils, whose study of Greek was at an advanced stage, the speeches of Demosthenes were frequently used (Heversham,<sup>(204)</sup> Heath,<sup>(205)</sup> Merchant Taylor's<sup>(206)</sup>) and so too were the great plays, in particular those of Sophocles (Reading,<sup>(207)</sup> Appleby Parva,<sup>(208)</sup> King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath<sup>(209)</sup>) though others were read and acted - Euripedes (Reading,<sup>(210)</sup> Richmond<sup>(211)</sup>), Aeschylus (Colfe's Grammar school, Lewisham,<sup>(212)</sup> Tonbridge<sup>(213)</sup>) and Aristophanes (St. Paul's,<sup>(214)</sup> Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham<sup>(215)</sup>).

Two pieces of literature, however, stand out above all others by their popularity in Hanoverian schools. Homer's Iliad (Hertford,<sup>(216)</sup> Chipping Norton,<sup>(217)</sup> Leeds,<sup>(218)</sup> Morpeth<sup>(219)</sup>) and the Bible (Chelmsford,<sup>(220)</sup> Burtonwood,<sup>(221)</sup> Hertford,<sup>(222)</sup> Bell's Grammar School, Newlands<sup>(223)</sup>) were the standard texts in almost all schools for almost all pupils studying Greek. Founders urged their use, educationalists devised schemes for Greek studies based on them, and compilers of easy passages for beginners and complex exercises for more advanced students borrowed liberally from them. The schoolboy would begin his Greek lessons with Homer and the Bible as his first books and when his school course was finished, he would still be using them regularly.

In many ways the Iliad and the Testaments served the function usually performed by books of collected extracts or stories designed as

easy introductions to Greek prose and verse. Aesop's Fables had once had a similar purpose but, though recommended by educational writers as late as 1784 at least,<sup>(224)</sup> only a few schools continued to read the Fables in Greek. (Appleby Parva,<sup>(225)</sup> Harrow until 1770<sup>(226)</sup>). There were various compilations of easy passages: Priest's Delectus was used at Louth,<sup>(227)</sup> and Valpy's Delectus Sententiarum Graecarum and Analecta Graeca Minora were both used at Bell's Grammar School, Newlands.<sup>(228)</sup> Dalzell's Analecta Minora et Majora was quite popular (Chipping Norton,<sup>(229)</sup> Warwick<sup>(230)</sup>) but probably the most widely used introductory books were those coming from Eton - Farnaby, Poetae Graeci, and Scriptorum Graeci. Nobody thought them entirely satisfactory - "very meagre and insufficient" was a phrase used to describe one of them by an early nineteenth century Etonian<sup>(231)</sup> - and the tendency was to use Lucian or, more probably, Homer and the Greek Testament to supplement such collections when they were used by the lower forms.

The influence of the great schools - as in Latin - was considerable and extended to the grammars and text book used in schools. Thus the Eton Graecae Grammatices Rudimenta and the Westminster Graecae Grammaticae Compendium were studied for more than any other Greek grammar. Both were in Latin and Greek, with no English, and both were extremely similar in arrangement and material, though the Westminster grammar was a little more tabular and contained a useful synopsis at the end. A few schools used other grammars like that of Richard Valpy (Bodmin<sup>(232)</sup>), Nugent's Port Royal Grammar (Skipton<sup>(233)</sup>) or the Charterhouse grammar (Plymouth<sup>(234)</sup>). These were a minority, however, and there was some disagreement amongst



them as to the merits and purposes of these alternatives to the popular texts. The Headmaster of Northampton Grammar School praised Valpy's Grammar as "being better calculated to expedite the progress of a classical education, as well as being more complete and scientific."<sup>(235)</sup> Yet while the master at Kirkby Beacock used Valpy as a successor to the Eton grammar and kept it for the upper school,<sup>(236)</sup> the Headmaster of Crispin's School, Kingsbridge thought the book only suitable as an introduction to the more standard grammars.<sup>(237)</sup> Generally schoolmasters had little doubt about the superiority of the Eton and Westminster grammars and, similarly, they accepted the product of another great school, Winchester, as the book best designed to help students in their prose and verse composition. This was Huntingford's Introduction to the writing of Greek, published in 1778 and modelled on the work by John Clarke which had proved so valuable and so popular.\* Huntingford rightly anticipated the growing popularity of Greek studies and of the increasing attention paid to developing a fluent prose style.

Pupils usually began Greek when they had completed - and theoretically mastered - the first part of the Latin course. Clarke's suggestion that Greek studies be abandoned was ignored<sup>(238)</sup> and most supporters of the grammar schools treated Greek as a necessary complement to Latin. Indeed Croft, in 1775, declared that Greek was not studied early enough and that in consequence pupils were insufficiently prepared when they were sent to enter Universities.<sup>(239)</sup> At whatever age

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\* See above, p.254.

or moment in the pupil's school career Greek was commenced, the method of teaching the subject was the same as that used in Latin. The Greek grammar was learnt by heart and then easy authors or specially selected extracts were read, parsed, construed and translated. Here, as in Latin, every word was dealt with in turn and the emphasis was on literal translating and accurate parsing and construing. It should be remembered that, for a considerable part of the period at least, no use was made of the vernacular to help pupils and Greek was studied through the medium of Latin. Even so perceptive a man as Thomas James, a most distinguished and capable Headmaster of the late eighteenth century and the mentor and friend of Butler, could, in all sincerity, write that "Greek without the Latin will be only a sort of inexplicable and learned puzzle to all dull boys," and "many boys will despair of doing without Latin unless they can have the assistance of a tutor to prepare them."<sup>(240)</sup> Certainly Greek alone would provide serious problems but equally surely the use of English notes would have aided most, if not all, pupils.

Once the boys had mastered sufficient grammar and vocabulary then they started making polished translations, composing themes and, later still, writing Greek verse. As in Latin, the successful acquirement of a facility to write polished verse and prose was regarded as the greatest accomplishment. Even fewer boys became adept at Greek verse composition than managed some little success in Latin versifying. The educational writers, however, continued to praise the practice on the grounds that even the worst pupil could gain variety of expression and thought, or at least become more aware of the quantity and meanings of words.<sup>(241)</sup>

Those who criticised the methods of teaching Latin naturally raised the same objections to the methods used in teaching Greek. Some went further and cast doubts on the value of the study. It was, however, a curious feature of the Hanoverian period, that Greek, for many years the inferior branch of the classics, increased in popularity amongst scholars and grammar school masters. As the schools became less and less utilitarian and as it became accepted that the classics were studied for their literary, philosophical and cultural merits, so the study of Greek revived and even, in some measure, surpassed Latin. Certainly many of the most distinguished Headmasters of the late Hanoverian period were Greek scholars and they, in turn, gave the subject great attention, and prominence, in their schools. In an age when the whole existence of the grammar schools was in jeopardy, Greek, perhaps the most academic <sup>of all studies</sup> and, with Hebrew, of little practical value, continued to flourish.

### Hebrew

It must be doubtful whether Hebrew was ever greatly studied in English schools. Founders frequently exhorted staff to teach it and pupils to study the subject - especially senior boys proposing to take Holy Orders. Yet, save for a small number of schools inspired by a few notable Hebraic scholars, Hebrew was mostly ignored. If we combine this with the widespread dissatisfaction with classical education and the growing demand for more obviously useful subjects it is not hard to explain the virtually complete disappearance of Hebrew from English grammar schools in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Hebrew was certainly studied at St. Paul's in the first half of the eighteenth century,<sup>(242)</sup> at Bosworth Grammar School between 1711 and 1722<sup>(243)</sup> and at Leigh Grammar School in the 1720's.<sup>(244)</sup> It was an optional subject according to the 1725 rules for Morpeth Grammar School<sup>(245)</sup> and probably it was offered, perhaps even taught, at Manchester, since a grammar was purchased early in the eighteenth century.<sup>(246)</sup> Towards the end of the Hanoverian period the number of schools actually teaching Hebrew had definitely diminished. Information is not always clear: Carlisle reports on which Hebrew grammars were used at various schools (Drayton,<sup>(247)</sup> Merchant Taylor's,<sup>(248)</sup> Westminster,<sup>(249)</sup> Skipton-in-Craven<sup>(250)</sup>). There is evidence that the subject was taught, throughout the period, at Westminster<sup>(251)</sup> and also that it had been taught, during the eighteenth century, at Merchant Taylor's.<sup>(252)</sup> However the Charity Commissioners' report, a few years after Carlisle's, on Skipton-in-Craven Grammar School makes no mention of Hebrew and their assertion that the school was in effect an elementary school<sup>(253)</sup> makes the validity of Carlisle's report rather doubtful. The wishes of staff and governors that pupils should study Hebrew were undoubtedly optimistic rather than realistic, on many occasions. It seems probable that some of those who advised Carlisle on the grammars used by the schools did not always declare how many Hebrew students there had been to use them in the years immediately preceding the inquiry. The 1793 Plan for Newcastle-upon-Tyne Royal Grammar School outlined a Hebrew course to be followed by senior pupils,<sup>(254)</sup> but few if any of the small number of boys who attended the school in the following thirty years can have studied the subject and in the plan of 1823, for the school, Hebrew is not mentioned.<sup>(255)</sup>

Even where the subject was studied, it was not a major part of the course but more usually an optional extra (Ipswich<sup>(256)</sup>) or regular for only a few of the top class (Westminster,<sup>(257)</sup> King's School, Canterbury<sup>(258)</sup>). Moreover the study was seldom extensive and, even in the early part of the period, was often no more than a quick working through of some suitable grammar and some elementary reading. The standard Grammar was that of Buxtorf - the English edition of 1656 - which included rules on pronunciation and accents and a few Hebrew Psalms and Texts. Most reading was done in the Scriptures, in particular the Psalms (Merchant Taylor's,<sup>(259)</sup> Westminster<sup>(260)</sup>). St. Paul's School pupils who studied Hebrew are said to have read Exodus and Genesis as part of the course.<sup>(261)</sup> There were a few books of collected passages for translation and comprehension but these too were almost entirely Scriptural in content like the Horologium and the Florilegium Hebraicum (Leigh<sup>(262)</sup>) and Bythnern's Lyra Prophetica (Merchant Taylor's<sup>(263)</sup>).

The conclusion must be that Hebrew was in little or no demand. Its complete lack of utility had overcome the traditional support for it as a supplement to the other classical subjects. Few staff were qualified to teach Hebrew, few pupils wished to learn it. Only at the largest schools was there much possibility of survival, and even there, by 1837, the pressure of newer studies, mathematics, science, modern languages, had forced Hebrew to disappear almost completely.

### Religious Instruction

We have already remarked upon the value placed on this aspect of school work by many founders, governors and teachers.\* Some schools had precise rules on the nature and frequency of the instruction in religious beliefs and duties that had to be given. This was not entirely the rule. A few schools paid little attention, in practice, to the teaching of religion. At Eton there was no formal instruction until the 1830's and the traditional Sunday sermon and the reading from a devotional work were treated by the boys with contempt and lack of interest.<sup>(264)</sup> Harrow had no regular religious teaching - save at school prayers - during the eighteenth century, though it was customary to read some explanation of the Catechism to the boys before breakfast every Sunday.<sup>(265)</sup>

These, however, were unusual. At most schools there was a weekly lesson (Bosworth,<sup>(266)</sup> Bury<sup>(267)</sup>) and many schools devoted Saturday morning to reading devotional books and learning the catechism and the articles of the church (Appleby Parva,<sup>(268)</sup> Richmond,<sup>(269)</sup> Sherborne,<sup>(270)</sup> Guildford<sup>(271)</sup>). A few schools had other days reserved by regulation or tradition for this work - Monday at Ashton-in-Makerfield,<sup>(272)</sup> Friday at Oswestry.<sup>(273)</sup> Some Headmasters increased the time given to religious instruction. At Mercers' there were lessons on two days each week<sup>(274)</sup> and at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Wakefield, in the middle of the eighteenth century, three mornings per week were allotted to the subject.<sup>(275)</sup> At a few schools, during the masterships of especially devout men, there

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\* See Part IV, Section 3.

was some religious teaching every day (Newcastle-upon-Tyne,<sup>(276)</sup> Kirkham,<sup>(277)</sup> St. Peter's, York<sup>(278)</sup>). This was, of course, additional to religious reading on Sundays at boarding schools, to regular attendance at Church, and to any work that might be required on appreciating, expounding, explaining, or even just reproducing, the Sunday Sermon.

There were many ways of spending the time devoted to religious instruction. Some schools drilled pupils in the Anglican catechism (Darlington,<sup>(279)</sup> Salford<sup>(280)</sup>), made boys learn by heart the Creed and Commandments (Perse School, Cambridge<sup>(281)</sup>) or the 39 Articles of Faith (Appleby Parva<sup>(282)</sup>), or quite simply read the Bible (Ripon,<sup>(283)</sup> Pinsent's Free School, Chudleigh<sup>(284)</sup>). Many schools, particularly those with a number of senior boys hoping to proceed to Universities, devised far more complex syllabi. The straightforward exercises were retained as suitable for junior classes but deeper more abstruse work was considered necessary for older pupils. Thus at Westminster the lowest forms read Psalms and Gospels in Latin and studied the Catechism; the next classes also read an exposition and explanation of the Catechism; more senior boys did similar work in Greek and studied the Bible, while the top form read the writings of Grotius.<sup>(285)</sup> His great work "The Truth of the Christian Religion" set out to establish the truth of Christianity against all other religions by examining "Natural Principles", "Visible Evidences", Scriptural accounts and revealed truth. This was covered in six books and to them Le Clerc added a seventh, "What Christian Church we ought to join ourselves to", which explained the virtues of the Church of England and declared that, although he did not

say so, Grotius himself approved of it. This long and complex work was much praised and used by schools in the Hanoverian period (Oswestry,<sup>(286)</sup> Sir Roger Manwood's Free Grammar School, Sandwich<sup>(287)</sup>).

The pattern at Westminster was to be found repeated in many grammar schools, the only difference being in the choice of books used. Two long books by Paley - "A View of the Evidences of Christianity" and "Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy" - were popular (Leeds,<sup>(288)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1793 scheme<sup>(289)</sup>). Both were extremely detailed works filled with quotations from the Scriptures, the early Christian Fathers and the classics, and, though much in favour of the Anglican system, they showed a degree of enlightenment not always apparent in Hanoverian, even late Hanoverian, times - "The slave trade destroys more in a year than the Inquisition does in a hundred or perhaps hath done since its foundation."<sup>(290)</sup> Paley dealt with the moral obligations of government and the relation of the individual to the state and examined them in every situation from Incest and Fornication to Bribery, Drunkenness and Slavery, with comments on the Efficacy of Prayer, on Civil Liberty and Legal Contracts. If Grotius and Paley were not considered suitable or sufficient there was Percy's "Key to the New Testament" (Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(291)</sup>), Wake's Catechetical "Principles of the Christian Religion" (King's School, Canterbury<sup>(292)</sup>) or Gilpin's "Catechetical Lectures" (Dorchester<sup>(293)</sup>), and especially popular as compulsory sabbath reading in boarding schools, volumes and volumes of sermons by distinguished clerics. If none of these was satisfactory there remained the publications of the Society for the Propagation of



Christian Knowledge (Bolton-le-Moors<sup>(294)</sup>) and rather less theoretical works on the Catechism, such as that of Bishop Williams (Westminster,<sup>(295)</sup> King's School, Canterbury<sup>(296)</sup>), or Scriptural Histories, such as that of Watt's (Shrewsbury,<sup>(297)</sup> Bell's Grammar School, Newlands<sup>(298)</sup>).

The range and number of books was enormous and reflects the importance which all connected with education attached to religious instruction. It was more than merely teaching children their prayers and taking them to church. Religious instruction was the basis of harmonious society and was a fundamental part of both the organisation and purpose of schools. Latin, Greek and Divinity combined to produce the complete man. The classics equipped a man with knowledge and understandings: Divinity made him a proper, morally sound member of society. The duty of the school was, through religious instruction, to bring pupils not only to being members of the church but, just as important, to teach them to value "good nature and good manners, to reverence their betters in all places, to be courteous in speech to all men, in their apparel always cleanly, and in their whole carriage joining decency with modesty and good manners with good learning."<sup>(299)</sup>

### English

Grammar schools were only just - at the beginning of the period - becoming aware of the value of, and need to teach, English. Even so it remained peripheral to the essential classical and religious studies and, at many schools, was treated rather lightly and

superficially. Stackhouse, formerly Headmaster at Hexham, pointed out, in 1731, that English was a rich and abundant language<sup>(300)</sup> and had warned his contemporaries that their society would be judged by future generations on the evidence of their literature.<sup>(301)</sup> Croft agreed that it was essential for pupils to be shown the beauty and uses of the English language and literature, but also warned that children were "too apt to learn the barbarous dialect" of their own environment which was often far from the required standard of language.<sup>(302)</sup>

To solve these problems, Croft recommended that two hours each week should be spent reading English Verse and Prose and also periodicals and literary magazines.<sup>(303)</sup> It is not easy to determine whether this apparently sparse time-allotment was more or less than other schools allowed, but, from the lack of information, and, in particular, of really detailed information, it seems probable that, until late in the period at least, English was regarded and treated as a distinctly inferior branch of learning. At Eton, in mid-eighteenth century, boys were required to read various books and authors, but only as a leisure time occupation.<sup>(304)</sup> James, Headmaster of Rugby, advised his protegee, Butler, to "always have, in all forms, at least one English exercise a week. Mind the spelling."<sup>(305)</sup> Croft, in 1784, favoured spelling tests<sup>(306)</sup> while Knox of Tonbridge, supported essay writing, composition of themes and wide reading.<sup>(307)</sup>

It is obvious that even the more progressive of grammar school masters were cautious in their placing of English on the time-table. Even the comprehensive and detailed plan of 1793 setting out a scheme for

education at the grammar school of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, although the approach was more organised and the range of authors enterprising, still reveals a great debt to the classical methods - learning by heart, writing themes, epistles and verses, and making declamations.<sup>(308)</sup> At Worcester a very grand sounding course was introduced described by the Headmaster as "Lectures on the Theory of Language and Grammar, with a particular reference to the English tongue: in the course of which the literal meaning will be distinguished from the figurative, one species of figure from another, the philosophical use of words from the idiomatical, and the vulgar from the elegant."<sup>(309)</sup> This compares oddly with the rather quaint observation of the 1835 scheme at Bradford which called for greater stress on English composition and declared that junior classes were to read English and do "a very useful exercise called Dictates."<sup>(310)</sup>

The objects of what little teaching of English there was, were to instill a sound, grammatical, fluent style of composition and to provide pupils with a superficial knowledge of the recognised masters of English literature. The basis of English was held to be an understanding of grammar, and a number of English grammars were published. Lowth's Short English Grammar, 1762, was recommended by Croft<sup>(311)</sup> and used at many schools together with a special version, edited by Ash and published in 1768 which included various exercises to illustrate common grammatical errors, lessons to show the purpose and value of grammatical study and a list of suitable books for class reading (Skipton,<sup>(312)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(313)</sup>). Other schools used grammars by Arnold (Ripon<sup>(314)</sup>) and Murray (Rivington,<sup>(315)</sup> Lancaster,<sup>(316)</sup> Chipping Norton<sup>(317)</sup>). No

book could be said to hold anything like the monopoly exerted in Latin and Greek by Eton and Westminster. To support these grammars, to provide a collection of prose and verse suitable for general reading, and, incidentally, to instill a basic code of morality and reinforce the efforts in this direction made in other subjects, a number of books were used. Lower classes frequently studied Gay's collection of Fables (Oswestry,<sup>(318)</sup> Walsall,<sup>(319)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(320)</sup>) and Croxall's translation of Aesop in which each Fable was followed by an "Application" explaining the moral and how it should affect behaviour (Walsall,<sup>(321)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(322)</sup>)

A far wider range of books was available for study by senior pupils. Croft advised the use of Harris' Hermes,<sup>(323)</sup> which was subtitled "A Philosophical Inquiry concerning Grammar" and was a very detailed study of the fundamentals of language. This could be supplemented - as at Newcastle<sup>(324)</sup> - by Blair's Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres. This long, detailed book considered taste, style, criticism and all the aspects of composition. Morality as well as information was supplied by Stretch's "The Beauties of History or Pictures of Virtue and Vice drawn from Real Life", a collection in two volumes of stories, from many sources, each designed to illustrate one of 49 virtues (such as Clemency, Courage, Affection) or vices (Ingratitude, Luxury, Indolence). More pleasant general reading was provided by Enfield's extremely popular book "The Speaker". This was a book of eight sections each dealing with a type of style (Narrative, Pathetic, Didactic) and supported by nearly 150 extracts from an enormous range of authors -

Livy, Sallust, Shakespeare, Bacon, Milton, Chesterfield, Sterne, Akenside, Gray, Warton, Dryden, Pope, Mrs. Barbauld and from periodicals like the Tatler and Spectator. No doubt one of the reasons why writers on education recommended this book<sup>(325)</sup> and why schools used it (Chipping Norton<sup>(326)</sup>) was that it served both to instruct and as a quick introduction to the most popular English authors.

More specifically designed to serve this purpose were many collections of extracts and articles, The Headmaster of Shrewsbury was advised to buy Elegant Extracts of Prose, of Poetry and of Epistles and also the Beauties of the Spectator, Tatler and Rambler<sup>(327)</sup> and many of these were used in other schools and were included in the 1793 plan at Newcastle.<sup>(328)</sup> There is little information on which authors were actually read in schools and still less on which particular works were studied. Gray was read (Oswestry<sup>(329)</sup>) and so was Pope (Eton,<sup>(330)</sup> Newcastle<sup>(331)</sup>) while some schools read Shakespeare plays (Christ's Hospital,<sup>(332)</sup> Reading - where the Headmaster "purified" and altered King John, A Merchant of Venice, Henry IV Part 2, and Henry VI part 3, so that the boys could perform them in public.<sup>(333)</sup>) The most popular, or most studied, author appears to have been Milton: his poems were included in recitations at Merchant Taylor's,<sup>(334)</sup> were required leisure time reading at Eton,<sup>(335)</sup> and recommended to the Headmaster of Shrewsbury as suitable for the pupils' study.<sup>(336)</sup> Milton was included in the syllabus at Newcastle-upon-Tyne,<sup>(337)</sup> Christ's Hospital<sup>(338)</sup> and Oswestry - where Paradise Lost was read.<sup>(339)</sup>

Beyond this everything seems to have depended on the particular

inclinations of individual masters. It was said of some that they placed a great stress and real value on fluency in, and appreciation of, English (Newcastle 1749-87,<sup>(340)</sup> Leeds in the 1830's<sup>(341)</sup>). It is, however, clear that while many admitted the value of facility in English composition and the need for proper tuition in the language and literature, there was still widespread reluctance to permit any substitution of English for classical studies. Wide reading, in pupils' own time, was encouraged and some formal instruction was given but few grammar schools of the Hanoverian period can be said to have adopted, consistently, a really thorough approach to the study of English.

### History and Geography

Oliver Goldsmith wrote that "From history ... every advantage that improves the gentleman or confirms the patriot can be hoped for ... To study history is to weigh the motives, the opinions, the passions of mankind, in order to avoid a similitude of errors in ourselves, or profit by the wisdom of their example."<sup>(342)</sup> A pamphleteer declared that history elevated the natural curiosity of youth<sup>(343)</sup> and a Headmaster of Tonbridge said that he regarded both history and geography as necessities in a grammar school education.<sup>(344)</sup>

Both were frequently studied but, in the early part of the period at least, they were regarded as little better than a part of the basic classical course. Thus history and geography could mean no more than readings from celebrated Latins and Greek authors. While, no doubt, these were very interesting and it could be argued that they had a general

educational value, the main purpose was really to provide practice in reading and translating the classics. A pupil learning history and geography in this way would get no comprehensive view of the subjects but merely a series of unrelated incidents and items of information. It was, presumably, to avoid this that a writer in 1731 suggested that classical history should be studied in Justin, Florus, Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Nepos, Plutarch, Curtius, Dionysius, Livy, Polybius, Sallust, Caesar, Appian, Eutropius, Suetonius, Tacitus, Dion, Herodian, Zosimus, Aurelius and Marcellinus.<sup>(345)</sup> It is not surprising that there was a demand for Histories of Rome and Greece - written in the vernacular and consisting largely of a selection of extracts from the relevant classical authors.

There were a number of such books. Croft recommended, and presumably in his own schools used, Stanyan's Grecian History (published in two volumes 1707 and 1739, a long, heavy, highly moral book) and Rollin's books - the many volumed History of the Ancients (10 volumes in the 1738 edition) and the Roman History (only 7 volumes).<sup>(346)</sup> Bishop Kennett's *Romae Antiquiae Notitia* (published 1696 and consisting of a brief history of Rome and a long description of the city and the customs of its people) was commended by John Clarke<sup>(347)</sup> and Knox.<sup>(348)</sup> Undoubtedly the most popular of these and other similar works were the books of Oliver Goldsmith, and, in particular, the Histories of Rome and of Greece. Both these ran to numerous editions, were translated and published abroad, were abridged, and even turned into a simple catechetical form for young pupils. Contemporary writers praised the books

(Croft, (349) Knox, (350) Chapman (351)) and Headmasters bought and used them (Bell's Grammar School, Newlands, (352) Walsall, (353) Newcastle (354)).

Ancient Geography could either be read in Cellarius (Eton, (355) Newcastle (356)) or in one of various eighteenth century textbooks which covered both ancient and modern geography. At the simplest level these were just question and answer books like those of W. Pinnock (Rivington, (357) Walsall (358)) but these were really more suitable for junior forms and senior boys would more frequently have used one of the comprehensive geographies, like Guthrie's A New Geographical, Historical, Commercial Grammar (Newcastle, (359)) or Butler's Sketch of Modern and Ancient Geography (Appleby Parva, (360) Bell's Grammar School, Newlands (361)). These were both large and exhaustive examinations of the physical and regional geography of the world, of the Flora and Fauna, and of the customs, language, learning and history of each nation. Butler, in particular, as befitted a Headmaster of Shrewsbury and Bishop of Lichfield made a particularly close survey of history, including a list of errors in Catholicism and the meaning of Purgatory and Transubstantiation, and divergent topics like the meaning of Vishna, the history of the Incas, and the death of Sir John Moore. The result was as formidable as it sounds and Bishop Stubbs who used the book when a pupil at Ripon in the early nineteenth century, said, many years later, that it "occasionally still gives me the nightmare." (362)

No doubt, at most schools the historical information on modern nations supplied by these books was considered sufficient. Clarke was in favour of a more particular survey and recommended Puffendorf's



Introduction to the History of the Principal Kingdoms and States of Europe, Burnet's History of the Reformation of the Church of England - in three, long, Anglican volumes - and separate histories of England (by Tyrrel, an incomplete work finishing with Richard II), Scotland (Buchanan), Spain (Mariana), France (Daniella), United Provinces (Le Clerc) and a general history (by Rapin).<sup>(363)</sup> In fact most schools were a good deal less ambitious and, though these tomes were often included in libraries, for regular study the more straightforward works, like Holland's Essays on History (Lancaster<sup>(364)</sup>), Russell's History of Modern Europe (Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(365)</sup>), and Goldsmith's History of England (in two volumes [St. Peter's, York,<sup>(366)</sup> Walsall<sup>(367)</sup>]) were most popular.

History and geography were generally rather casually treated. At many schools there was no planned approach but boys were encouraged to read widely in these subjects in their leisure time (Eton<sup>(368)</sup>) or in some more specific period. Thus at Oswestry boys spent one hour every evening reading history and also had regular lessons in geography.<sup>(369)</sup> At Perse School, Cambridge (around 1830) English History and Ancient History were each taught on one afternoon a week,<sup>(370)</sup> while at York only one hour each week was kept for reading history.<sup>(371)</sup> A few schools in prospecti, declared a full syllabi. At Bell's Grammar School, Newlands (1837) the lowest class simply did Descriptive Geography, the second form studied an outline of Geography and of Ancient History; the third and fourth forms did ancient geography and Roman and Greek history, while the top class turned to English history and Modern Geography.<sup>(372)</sup>

The syllabus of 1793 at Newcastle-upon-Tyne was more detailed and prescribed books for work on Ancient and Modern history, on Mythology, on Ancient and Modern Geography, and there was a weekly lecture, for senior pupils, on the use of globes. However, save for this lecture course, all the work was to be done at home, though the plan declared that it would be tested at fortnightly or monthly intervals. (373)

History and Geography undoubtedly developed during the Hanoverian period, but they remained as peripheral subjects to be studied as an aid to the main studies, Latin and Greek, or to be read as generally "improving" leisure time work. Another half-century was to elapse before they obtained a secure and individual place in curricula.

#### Mathematics and Natural Philosophy

Pressure of public opinion and the demands of the developing industrial society slowly forced the classical schools to extend their scope and include some mathematics and some science in the curriculum. The factors which actually caused the schools to offer such subjects were largely utilitarian but the educationalists were able to justify the studies on theoretical grounds. A writer of 1818 referred to mathematics as an "admirable subject" explaining that it was based on obvious principles, led to satisfactory conclusions, required class application and allowed ingenuity and invention in treatment. (374) Not all were convinced. Knox declared that science was above children's comprehension, derided the scientific apparatus used in schools as "mere playthings" and asserted that the "surest foundation for the superstructure of science "was the study of classical languages." (375)

There was, of course, a distinction between Arithmetic and Mathematics. The former, an elementary subject, was taught to almost all boys by the grammar school's usher or by the writing-master. It was a practical study introduced, because of popular demand. Mathematics, however, was a cultural study, a branch of philosophy, an ideal extra-curricula course for senior pupils. This was equally true of Science - as its eighteenth century title "Natural Philosophy" suggests.

There was little standardisation of the syllabi of Mathematics and Science. Indeed few schools had a really comprehensive, organised course of study. At Leeds in 1820 a syllabus was devised to provide a proper course leading from elementary Arithmetic to the complexities of Mathematics. Junior boys learnt addition, subtraction and multiplication and division of first whole and, later, decimal numbers. Senior boys read Euclid, and did some Algebra and plane and spherical Trigonometry. (376) The 1837 Prospectus of Bell's Grammar School, Newlands, outlined an almost identical course. (377) These, however, were the exceptions. At some schools, even large and flourishing schools, Mathematics and Science were almost completely ignored (Winchester before 1820, (378) Eton until 1836 (379)) or relegated to very subordinate positions. Thus the 1793 plan for Newcastle-upon-Tyne stipulated lectures in Mathematics three times each week but they were "not to interfere with the usual business of the school", (380) while at Harrow, according to Carlisle's informant, lectures were only once a month. (381)

There was some uniformity in the subjects taught as part of the Mathematical course, Usually they were Algebra, Geometry and Trigonometry

(Louth,<sup>(382)</sup> Bell's Grammar School, Newlands<sup>(383)</sup>) though at some schools a study of conics was also included (Perse School, Cambridge,<sup>(384)</sup> Leeds<sup>(385)</sup>). There was, however, absolutely no uniformity in the Science courses. At Newcastle, the 1793 plan outlined a lecture course in Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Optics and Astronomy<sup>(386)</sup> which bore some similarity to the course followed by pupils at Eton during the rule of an enlightened Headmaster in the early eighteenth century.<sup>(387)</sup> At Harrow, towards the end of the period, pupils attended occasional lectures on Galvanism, Pneumatics and the chemical properties of air.<sup>(388)</sup> The 1837 plan for Walsall did not specify any particular subjects but proposed a course of General Science.<sup>(389)</sup>

There is even less information on the content of the scientific courses. Much must have depended on the enthusiasm and knowledge of the teacher. There were no recognised textbooks designed for use in schools but Clarke, in his Essay upon Study, recommended Rohault's Physica - published in a Latin edition in England in 1718 - and Keill's Introduction to Natural Philosophy. Keill was a Fellow of the Royal Society and a Professor of Astronomy and the book was a series of lectures delivered at Oxford in the early eighteenth century. The book was published in Latin and ran to four editions before an English version was produced in 1758. It was a thorough examination of existing knowledge in such Mathematical and physical subjects as pendulums, time and motion, centrifugal force and the divisibility of matter. Perhaps even more interesting is a book, recommended - and presumably used - by Croft, with the somewhat ominous title "Physico and Astro-Theology".<sup>(390)</sup>

This work, written by W. Derham, in two volumes, was also based on a series of lectures given at Oxford in the early eighteenth century. It was an enormous, and sometimes rather ingenuous, survey of all the visible parts of creation. The whole object of the book was to show and prove God's purpose - and the nobility of man, particularly Anglican English man.

This is, perhaps, a fitting epitaph for Mathematical and Scientific tuition in grammar schools in Hanoverian England. Mathematics was studied as a cultural extra rather than as a necessary or useful subject; Science had little practical value but was taught as an aspect of religion. Few recognised the need for, and merits of, proper courses in these subjects. Few teachers had the time, enthusiasm or capacity to give more than cursory, elementary instruction. Few pupils could have been able to discern what was accurate and significant and what was mere speculation. There could have been little real benefit, either academic or material, to be derived from such superficial, unorganised and confused studies.

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**SECTION 5**  
**EXAMINATIONS**

SECTION 5EXAMINATIONS

In many schools, examinations were such an integral part of the established method of teaching that they attracted no special attention. Examinations were simply regular tests to ascertain the pupils' progress. Thus at Norwich the Headmaster tested all the usher's pupils each Friday, and, at the same time, the usher examined the senior boys.<sup>(1)</sup> The same practice was observed by a Headmaster at Newcastle-upon-Tyne between 1749-87.<sup>(2)</sup> Sometimes the Headmaster's examinations had a greater significance. The 1793 scheme at Newcastle-upon-Tyne provided for a monthly test of junior forms after which the Headmaster was to place the boys in order of merit and award a book prize to the top pupil.<sup>(3)</sup> At Nottingham the rules required the Headmaster to hold an examination every six months the results of which were to determine which of the usher's class could be promoted to the senior forms.<sup>(4)</sup> The same type of examination, classification and promotion was required by the rules of 1751 at Ipswich.<sup>(5)</sup>

It was usual for schools to have one full scale examination annually (Darlington,<sup>(6)</sup> Guildford,<sup>(7)</sup> Dudley<sup>(8)</sup>) though some schools had two such occasions each year (Louth,<sup>(9)</sup> Blackburn,<sup>(10)</sup> Moulton<sup>(11)</sup>). There was no standard practice amongst schools about when these examinations were held. The most usual times were probably at Midsummer and Christmas (Bell's Grammar School, Newlands,<sup>(12)</sup> Gresham's Free Grammar School, Holt (1821)<sup>(13)</sup>), but some schools chose March and October (Christ's Hospital,<sup>(14)</sup> Merchant Taylor's<sup>(15)</sup>) and others picked just

when they fancied or when custom dictated. Thus the major examination at Rivington was in January,<sup>(16)</sup> at Hawkshead in April,<sup>(17)</sup> at Bolton-le-Moors in June,<sup>(18)</sup> at East Malling in July<sup>(19)</sup> and at St. Olave's Free Grammar School, Southwark in November,<sup>(20)</sup> while at Newport (Isle of Wight) the annual examination was held on the Tuesday in Passion week.<sup>(21)</sup> Reading Grammar School, though doubtless having tests as at most schools, only had a really major examination every third year when the school's visitors - the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, the President of St. John's College, Oxford, and the Warden of All Souls - inspected staff and buildings as well as the pupils.<sup>(22)</sup>

Almost every school had its own particular rules, system and methods of examining pupils. It was usual, of course, for all boys to have to submit to the test and indeed absence, without good excuse, from the examination was, at some schools, punishable by expulsion (Bell's Grammar School, Newlands,<sup>(23)</sup> Leeds<sup>(24)</sup>). However at Colfe's Grammar School, Lewisham, the examination was only of the free boys and this practice continued both when the numerous free boys only did elementary subjects and later, when after a change of policy, free boys did classics and there were only a very few of them.<sup>(25)</sup> At Christ's Hospital, where the examination was a very formal event and concluded with the singing of an anthem, candidates were not allowed to enter the examination room unless they were respectably dressed and could pass the porter's scrutiny.<sup>(26)</sup>

The examination was sometimes conducted by a school's Visitors (Bury,<sup>(27)</sup> Bedford<sup>(28)</sup>) but it was more usual for governors to do this



(Brigg,<sup>(29)</sup> Tonbridge (before 1818)<sup>(30)</sup>). A most interesting development in the Hanoverian period was the introduction of external examiners. The idea was not new - the rules of 1608 at Guildford had provided for outside examiners<sup>(31)</sup> - but nearly two centuries passed before many schools adopted the practice. Towards the very end of the eighteenth century, however, some big schools appointed special examiners (King Edward's School, Birmingham,<sup>(32)</sup> Leeds,<sup>(33)</sup> Rugby<sup>(34)</sup>) and the idea grew in popularity. Added to this, was the practice of requiring examiners to have certain qualifications - to be an M.A. (Rishworth 1826 scheme<sup>(35)</sup>), to be in Orders (St. Olave's Free Grammar School, Southwark<sup>(36)</sup>), or to be a University fellow (Rugby<sup>(37)</sup>). These two improvements on the old custom of leaving governors or staff to conduct examinations meant that progress reports became really valuable and gave governors a qualified report on the work of the staff and the advancement of the pupils.

Examinations, under the new conditions, could be very searching. At Leeds, where staff were required to attend the examinations,<sup>(38)</sup> there were occasions (1822, 1823, 1826) when the examiners' report was critical, and, in particular, questioned the standard of the lower forms.<sup>(39)</sup> Similarly at Bell's Grammar School, Newlands, the examiner in 1828 criticised the boys' "reading, and understanding (of) what they read."<sup>(40)</sup>

The most damning criticism during the period, however, must surely be that of examiners at the King's School, Canterbury, in 1829. There had been some criticism and complaint and the examiners were summoned to

investigate. They spent a day testing the whole school and then reported: "Beginning at the Upper form and going regularly down, we examined every boy in the Books he was reading, both Greek and Latin, and made each of them write an exercise. The result was not satisfactory. The upper form was the best but by no means in the state in which it ought to be. There was an evident want of good foundation. What the boys knew, they did not know thoroughly or well; of quantity they had very little idea, of composition in Prose or Verse very little, in the latter none; and the Latin exercises which they wrote were very incorrect. What has been observed of the first applies equally to the next three forms with some variations. They were, however, excepting their Latin exercises and their knowledge of quantity, rather nearer what they ought to be than the first or monitor class. Nothing could be more unsatisfactory than the state of the Fourth and Fifth classes which are under Mr. Jones, the Second Master. The boys really knew nothing. Several of them, who had been three years in the school, could not decline a noun substantive, nor had they an idea of syntax, or of construing the easiest Latin books. We expressed strongly to Mr. Jones our opinion of the disgraceful state of this part of the school."<sup>(41)</sup> Such strong words suggest a genuine examination rather than the declamations and recitations and the social occasion which many schools' examinations had become.

Testing was almost always by oral interrogation. Most usually the group being tested would be seated in estimated order of merit, or, more frequently, in the order in which they had been placed in the

previous test. The examiner would then ask each boy, in turn, a question; when a wrong answer was given the question was passed on to the next pupil and, if he could answer correctly, he moved up a place and the unsuccessful pupil moved down. This process was repeated until the examiner considered the boys' places to be a fair reflection of the knowledge and ability. The hazards and disadvantages of such examinations are clear, but, though there is evidence that a few schools required some written work as a part, at least, of the examinations (King's School, Canterbury,<sup>(42)</sup> Merchant Taylor's<sup>(43)</sup>), there was no real break with the traditional method until early in the Nineteenth century. As in so many aspects of educational reform, Dr. Samuel Butler led the way by introducing, at Shrewsbury, full scale written examinations with invigilators to prevent cheating. In 1820 the senior boys were faced with the following examination timetable:

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| Monday:    | 1. English Theme.   |
|            | 2. Latin Theme.   |
|            | 3. Greek metres; adjustment and translation in Latin verse of a Greek chorus. |
| Tuesday:   | 1. History.   |
|            | 2. English translated into Latin.   |
| Wednesday: | 1. Geography.   |
|            | 2. Euclid.  |
|            | 3. Philology.   |
| Thursday:  | 1. Latin translated into English.   |
|            | 2. Latin verse.   |
| Friday:    | 1. English translated into Greek.   |
|            | 2. Greek translated into English.   |
|            | 3. Algebra.   |
| Saturday:  | 1. Religion.  |

Each examination lasted some two hours. On the basis of this admirable and comprehensive test, boys were classified and promoted and prizes were awarded to the best scholars.<sup>(44)</sup>

Examinations were used to decide important academic questions. Thus, as at Shrewsbury, they could be used to place boys in order and decide promotion (Leicester,<sup>(45)</sup> Brewood<sup>(46)</sup>), or to settle the award of prizes (Bury St. Edmunds,<sup>(47)</sup> Blackburn<sup>(48)</sup>).\* Sometimes, however, other rewards were at stake. At Mercer's School, for example, the pupils were examined immediately before the governors' meeting at which the decision whether to re-elect the master was taken.<sup>(49)</sup> Sometimes pupils, particularly free boys, won admission on the results of an examination (St. Peter's School, York<sup>(50)</sup>). At Westminster, the coveted King's Scholars places were decided by an eight week examination in classics under the supervision of the Headmaster. When the examination was over, the boys were placed in order of merit and took up Scholar's places as vacancies occurred.<sup>(51)</sup> Rather more common was the custom of using examinations to determine the award of closed exhibitions and scholarships to the universities (Rugby,<sup>(52)</sup> King Edward's School, Birmingham<sup>(53)</sup>).<sup>‡</sup> At Oakham, candidates had to write a theme or verses while "lock't up in ye school",<sup>(54)</sup> and at Sherborne in 1830 there was a test involving Sallust, Virgil, Homer, Horace, Livy, Cicero and Demosthenes, the Greek Testament, compositions in Latin and Greek and knowledge of the Catechism.<sup>(55)</sup>

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\* See Part IV, Section 6.

‡ See Part III, Section 7.

These were, no doubt, real examinations but it was many years before the advantages of the Shrewsbury system were appreciated and adopted. As the Duke of Sussex wrote in 1832: "Would the masters of Eton and Westminster follow the (Shrewsbury) system, instead of sticking to the old Posting system, they would send up to the Universities more distinguished young men than they do at present and would lay a proper foundation to work upon with every probability of success."<sup>(56)</sup>

Unfortunately tradition died hard and for many years examinations continued to be either haphazard oral tests or displays of memory work in front of local dignitaries and governors rather than really searching enquiries into knowledge and understanding and perception.

1. H. W. Saunders: History of Norwich Grammar School, p.167.
2. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis, Vol. 2, pp.48-49.
3. A. R. Laws: op.cit., Vol. 2, p.157.
4. CCR. Vol. 20, p.383.
5. I. E. Gray and W. E. Potter: Ipswich School, p.73.
6. CCR. Vol. 21, p.58.
7. CCR. Vol. 10, p.617; G. C. Williamson: Royal Grammar School, Guildford, pp.55-59.
8. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.751.
9. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.822.
10. J. Garstang: History of the Blackburn Grammar School, p.70.
11. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.837.
12. T. Bright: Bell's ... The Story of a Gloucestershire School, p.21.
13. CCR. Vol. 12, p.103.
14. E. Blunden: Christ's Hospital, p.73.
15. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.55.
16. CCR. Vol. 19, p.196; M. M. Kay: History of the Rivington and Blackrod Free Grammar Schools, p.101.
17. CCR. Vol. 3, p.205.
18. CCR. Vol. 19, p.155.
19. CCR. Vol. 2, p.213.
20. CCR. Vol. 1, p.207.
21. CCR. Vol. 15, p.483.
22. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.37; CCR. Vol. 1, p.57.
23. T. Bright: op.cit., p.21.
24. A. C. Price: History of the Leeds Grammar School, pp.164-166.
25. L. L. Duncan: The History of Colfe's Grammar School, pp.94-97.

26. E. Blunden: *op.cit.*, p.73.
27. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
28. J. Sargeant: *A History of Bedford School*, p.50.
29. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.800.
30. CCR. Vol. 1, p.149; S. Rivington: *History of Tonbridge School* (4th edit.), p.74.
31. CCR. Vol. 10, p.617.
32. T. W. Hutton: *King Edward's School, Birmingham*, p.79.
33. A. C. Price: *op.cit.*, pp.154-155.
34. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
35. CCR. Vol. 17, p.816.
36. CCR. Vol. 1, p.207.
37. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
38. A. C. Price: *op.cit.*, pp.154-155.
39. A. C. Price: *op.cit.*, pp.164-166.
40. T. Bright: *op.cit.*, p.25.
41. Quoted in C. E. Woodruff and H. J. Cape: *History of the King's School, Canterbury*, p.185.
42. *Ibid.*
43. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.55.
44. S. Butler: *Life and Letters of Samuel Butler*, Vol. 1, p.197.
45. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.770.
46. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.474.
47. CCR. Vol. 23, p.529.
48. J. Garstang: *op.cit.*, p.70.
49. J. Watney: *Some Account of Mercers' School*, p.18.
50. A. Raine: *History of St. Peter's School, York*, p.108.

51. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.98.
52. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
53. CCR. Vol. 20, p.647.
54. W. L. Sargent: The Book of Oakham School, p.25.
55. W. B. Wildman: A Short History of Sherborne, pp.146-148.
56. S. Butler: op.cit., Vol. 2, p.32.



SECTION 6

PRIZES

SECTION 6PRIZES

Pupils who did well were frequently rewarded by the presentation of a prize. There was, however, a great variety of methods used in deciding which pupils were to receive awards, and as great a variety of actual prizes.

Probably the most common award was a book or set of books (Morpeth,<sup>(1)</sup> Bury St. Edmunds<sup>(2)</sup>) but the annual cost of the book prizes for a school could range from the £1 of Blundell's School, Tiverton<sup>(3)</sup> to the £40 of St. Paul's<sup>(4)</sup> and probably even more. There is little information on the actual books themselves. At East Malling, which was not by the early nineteenth century a true grammar school, no fewer than 8 Bibles, 24 Testaments and 24 Spelling Books were among the prizes.<sup>(5)</sup> More usual in classical schools, probably, would be books of the kind awarded at Shrewsbury in 1836. Some of the prize-winners there were given money but the writer of the best Latin Essay received 5 volumes of Aristophanes and the composer of the best set of Greek Iambics received 5 volumes of Tacitus - both of which prizes seem, perhaps, a little inappropriate. Moreover the first and second boys in the annual school examination won 8 volumes of Cicero and 5 of Livy respectively.<sup>(6)</sup>

The value of money prizes, which were fairly common, varied considerably from school to school. At Bell's Grammar School, Newlands, in 1837, four prizes were awarded: three of 1/3d. each to free boys and one of 4/6d. to a boarding pupil.<sup>(7)</sup> Seventy years earlier Eton had awarded various small prizes of 2/6d. each, but had then added the

half-crown to the winner's end of term bill.<sup>(8)</sup> Rather more generous were the prizes at Bosbury - half-a-guinea each, after 1811<sup>(9)</sup> - and at Macclesfield - where they were of one or two pounds each, with a top award of £3.<sup>(10)</sup>

These prizes totalled somewhere between £5 and £10 and this was about average for most grammar schools (Leeds,<sup>(11)</sup> Mercers',<sup>(12)</sup> King Edward VI Grammar School, Bruton<sup>(13)</sup>). Not all schools were so generous. At Burneside the only prizes were half-guineas to the best arithmetician and the best essayist,<sup>(14)</sup> and at Darlington the 1748 rules stipulated that only £1 p.a. was to be spent on prizes.<sup>(15)</sup> At Prescott rewards were still smaller - only 7/- p.a.<sup>(16)</sup> - while at Louth although prizes were awarded each half-year the cost was met by imposing fines on all boys who arrived late for school.<sup>(17)</sup> Bigger and wealthier foundations were more lavish. At Rugby, two prizes were instituted, in 1807, worth 6 guineas and 10 guineas.<sup>(18)</sup> (Some years earlier the Headmaster at Rugby had devised a scheme whereby any pupils who produced exceedingly good work had their pocket-money doubled.<sup>(19)</sup>) Shrewsbury was even more generous and by 1836 awarded various money prizes of ten and twenty guineas each,<sup>(20)</sup> while at St. Paul's there was an annual award of thirty guineas to the senior boy.<sup>(21)</sup>

Some schools, either in addition to, or instead of, the conventional prizes of books and money, made special awards. Several schools gave gold medals (St. Paul's,<sup>(22)</sup> Harrow<sup>(23)</sup>) or silver medals (Penrith,<sup>(24)</sup> Truro<sup>(25)</sup>) or both (Bromsgrove<sup>(26)</sup>). A few schools had prizes of silver pens (Penrith<sup>(27)</sup>) or silver pencil-cases (Blackburn<sup>(28)</sup>) which were

usually awarded to the best writer, while at Westminster, in the middle of the eighteenth century, prizes of silver pence were awarded to the authors of the best verse compositions.<sup>(29)</sup>

There were many ways of choosing prize-winners. Very commonly prizes were given to the boys who did best in each class in the regular school examinations\* (Bristol,<sup>(30)</sup> Bury<sup>(31)</sup>). Early in the period many schools awarded a prize to the best orator and the winner was chosen after a Declamation or Disputation contest (King Edward's School, Birmingham<sup>(32)</sup>). It seems probable, however, that most schools were like Eton, where the contest so declined in popularity, that no one, eventually, could be persuaded to enter.<sup>(33)</sup> There were, too, prizes in specific subjects and, not surprisingly, there was a great deal of similarity between schools in their choice of subjects. Many had awards for Latin verse composition (Penrith,<sup>(34)</sup> Rugby<sup>(35)</sup>) or Latin prose composition (Shrewsbury,<sup>(36)</sup> Newcastle-upon-Tyne<sup>(37)</sup>) and some schools rewarded the best composer of English verse (Rugby,<sup>(38)</sup> Harrow<sup>(39)</sup>). At the bigger schools - the only ones able to afford more than one or two prizes - there were some even more specific prizes. Thus Harrow had special awards for Latin Hexameters and Greek Sapphics,<sup>(40)</sup> Shrewsbury for Greek Iambics,<sup>(41)</sup> and Newcastle-upon-Tyne planned, in 1793, to award prizes for translations from Cicero and Demosthenes.<sup>(42)</sup>

A few grammar schools awarded prizes for non-classical subjects. Bosbury offered prizes for writing and arithmetic,<sup>(43)</sup> and Macclesfield

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\* See Part IV, Section 5.

had prizes for Euclid and Algebra, for French, for Chirography and for General Merit.<sup>(44)</sup> Andover too offered a prize for general merit; a book, a prize of 1825, records that it was awarded for merit in "The Catechism, Spelling, Reading, Writing, Printing, Abbreviations and Divine Service, Arithmetic" - which was defined as "Tables, Numeration, Addition, Subtraction, Multiplication, Division, Reduction, Proportion, Bills of Parcels, Fractions, Decimals" - and for "Geometry ... Mensuration (of land, of Board and of Timber), Geography" - which included Europe, Asia, Africa, North and South America, England, Scotland and Ireland" - "Grammar (History of England, History of Rome, History of Greece), English authors, Latin and Greek."<sup>(45)</sup>

Clearly pupils at Andover had to work hard for their prizes. Pupils at Lancaster were more fortunate - they had no need to work at all. There were three prizes awarded annually to the winners of a competition in which each boy threw dice. The highest scorers won books bearing a Latin inscription: "In their studies, he proposed that the contest be waged by the throw of a dice." The contest was held for over fifty years before the end of the Hanoverian period: it had "a great advantage" observed one Headmaster, since there was "no bias to age or knowledge".<sup>(46)</sup>

Lancaster was undoubtedly unusual. At most schools, the function of prizes was quite different. The number of awards, the form they took and the method of selecting winners might all vary with the wealth, size and curriculum of schools, but the objects remained almost unvariable. As a Headmaster of Hitchin discerned, prizes were a means of inducing pupils to proceed to higher studies, and he was surely voicing the common view when he declared that prizes were really meant "to encourage an emulation."<sup>(47)</sup>

1. CCR. Vol. 23, p.459.
2. CCR. Vol. 24, p.529.
3. CCR. Vol. 3, p.135.
4. CCR. Vol. 3, p.230.
5. CCR. Vol. 2, p.213.
6. S. Butler: The Life and Letters of Samuel Butler, Vol. 2, p.159.
7. T. Bright: Bell's ... The Story of a Gloucestershire School, p.29.
8. Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte: History of Eton College, p.314.
9. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.480.
10. D. Wilmot: A Short History of the Grammar School, Macclesfield, pp.53-54.
11. A. C. Price: History of the Leeds Grammar School, p.164.
12. J. Watney: Some Account of Mercers' School, p.21.
13. CCR. Vol. 11, p.380.
14. CCR. Vol. 7, p.522.
15. CCR. Vol. 21, p.58.
16. CCR. Vol. 21, p.219.
17. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.822.
18. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
19. H. C. Bradby: Rugby, p.39.
20. S. Butler: op.cit., Vol. 2, p.159.
21. CCR. Vol. 3, p.230.
22. M. F. J. McDonnell: A History of St. Paul's School, p.346.
23. E. D. Labordes Harrow School, p.49.
24. CCR. Vol. 5, p.156.
25. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.144.

26. H. E. M. Icely: Bromsgrove School Through Four Centuries, pp.48-49.
27. CCR. Vol. 5, p.156.
28. J. Garstang: History of the Blackburn Grammar School, p.128.
29. Great Public Schools, p.245.
30. C. P. Hills: The History of Bristol Grammar School, pp.43-45.
31. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
32. T. W. Hutton: King Edward's School, Birmingham, p.141.
33. W. Sterry: Annals of Eton College, p.156.
34. CCR. Vol. 5, p.156.
35. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
36. S. Butler: op.cit., Vol. 2, p.159.
37. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis, Vol. 2, p.157.
38. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
39. E. D. Laborde: op.cit., p.49.
40. Ibid.
41. S. Butler: op.cit., Vol. 2, p.159.
42. A. R. Laws: op.cit., Vol. 2, p.157.
43. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.480.
44. D. Wilmot: op.cit., pp.53-54.
45. S. M. Longstaff: Andover Grammar School, p.25.
46. A. L. Murray: A History of the Royal Grammar School, Lancaster, p.108.
47. R. L. Hine: History of Hitchin Grammar School, p.46.

SECTION 7

DISCIPLINE



SECTION 7DISCIPLINE

Discipline, methods of teaching and curricula were the three aspects of education which more than any others occupied the attentions of writers on, and critics of, education in the Hanoverian period. Unfortunately there was a great gulf between the modes of discipline advocated by the theorists and the methods revealed, and pilloried by the critics.

Early in the eighteenth century, the distinguished master of Kingston-upon-Hull Grammar School, John Clarke, wrote that many Grammar schools were "little more than Houses of Correction"<sup>(1)</sup> and he offered some advice to masters: - "I would caution against leaning too much on the side of authority, as I doubt is too commonly done. It's hard indeed to conceive it possible for boys to committ so many Oversights as they usually do against Rules they know very well ... and yet it's plain such slips will scape them ... in spite of all the chidding and whipping that can be used,"<sup>(2)</sup> and, later, he urged the use of rewards and promotion and encouragement.<sup>(3)</sup> Half a century later other masters were saying the same things - "if liberal admonition will enforce diligence it is needless to say that severity will never be shown"<sup>(4)</sup> and, rather more positively - "Indeed I could wish to see the severities of corporal punishment less frequent in the foundations. What is received with dislike and enforced by violence seldom outlives the authority which inflicts it, and it is this which gives school boys chiefly a distaste both to learning and their masters."<sup>(5)</sup>

Others were far less restrained. The Edgeworths wrote that after "a certain number of years ... in 'durance vile', by the influence of bodily punishment' a regiment of boys may be drilled by an indefatigable usher into what are called scholars."<sup>(6)</sup> Another pamphleteer recalls his own boyhood and his schools: "Its vices, its profligacy, and its cruelty with its total want of morals, method or principle in its course of education ... and the most horrid chastisement inflicted for the most trivial causes."<sup>(7)</sup>

Before considering the conditions which gave rise to such strong feelings, it is perhaps not without point to note that some considered strong discipline both essential and even beneficial. A writer of 1769 deemed complaints of undue severity invalid since the adult population, the product of this system, was so fine,<sup>(8)</sup> and elsewhere wrote that "Authority (is) to be maintained ... and rather ... enforced with rigour and chastisement than given up or even relaxed."<sup>(9)</sup> Another author reveals an interesting change. In an early work he favoured corporal punishment,<sup>(10)</sup> but later, noting the current preference for encouragement and affection, he expressed a growing belief in a sympathetic mode of discipline<sup>(11)</sup> and notes critically the punishments favoured by an American writer, whose work, published in England, commended - admonition, solitary confinement, low diet, darkness, public symbols of disgrace and expulsion.<sup>(12)</sup>

Few, if any, school governors actually embodied such recommendations in the rules they made on discipline, but many did make quite precise instructions to staff on how - and when - to punish.

Rules followed a generally similar pattern. A straightforward exhortation to pupils to come to school clean and decently clothed was common (Grantham<sup>(13)</sup>), though the 1725 rules at Morpeth expanded on this theme with a prohibition of "unwash't hands or face, ... Dirty tatter'd clothes or sleeves or anything else that is indecent or slovenly".<sup>(14)</sup> Observation of these rules was a condition of attendance. Other rules required specific punishments.

Thus lateness was widely condemned, and at Louth (1796) it was to be punished by a monetary fine,<sup>(15)\*</sup> while at Bedford (1811) offenders were to receive two strokes of the cane.<sup>(16)</sup> More serious were regular absence and truancy. The standard punishment was expulsion (Bedford<sup>(17)</sup>), though not until the third offence at Grantham,<sup>(18)</sup> nor till after the offender had first been "exhorted, reprimanded and punished" in an effort to cure him at Bell's Grammar School, Newlands.<sup>(19)</sup>

Expulsion was the punishment for many of the statutory offences. It was the fate of those who would not or could not learn, - for "repeated inattention to their learning" (Bell's Grammar School, Newlands<sup>(20)</sup>), for those who "after a whole year's experience be found incapable of learning" (Morpeth<sup>(21)</sup>), for those "incorrigibly vicious or ungovernable" (Ipswich<sup>(22)</sup>).

Expulsion was also the fate of pupils of "evil disposition or lewd conversation" at Grantham,<sup>(23)</sup> while at Lymm the rules required severe punishment for "the sins of drunkenness, swearing, cursing, filthy

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\* See also this section, pp 331-332.

and obscene talk and gaming for anything of value".<sup>(24)</sup> It was the punishment too for breaking the most unusual rule at Richmond (Yorks.) which condemned any boy who "by virtue of disputation or conference with other scholars" upheld Popery, or kept Catholic books or writings.<sup>(25)</sup> Expulsion was the last resort, the greatest punishment, and although at some schools the Headmaster was given the freedom to expel (Witton<sup>(26)</sup>), more often he was required to get the governors' prior approval for such an extreme action (King's School, Pontefract<sup>(27)</sup>).

For all offences not covered by expulsion, beating was the standard, in fact almost the only, punishment. The governors of some schools deemed it advisable, or found it necessary, to give instructions to the staff on who should administer corporal punishment and the forms it should and should not take. Thus at Harrow the Headmaster's assistant in the early eighteenth century was not allowed "the power of the Rod",<sup>(28)</sup> while at Leeds, by a ruling of 1802, although the usher was to exercise control over all boys when the Headmaster was away, he was only allowed to use corporal punishment on his own class.<sup>(29)</sup> Instructions were usually couched in general terms. At Charterhouse the master was required to be moderate;<sup>(30)</sup> at Louth (1796) he was forbidden to use cruelty or undue severity;<sup>(31)</sup> similarly at Richmond (Yorks.), "cruelty and inhumanity" were prohibited (1750 and 1796).<sup>(32)</sup> On occasions, however, the instructions were detailed and probably followed complaints of brutality. Cautious trustees at Witton ruled in 1744 that the master "shall only use the cane, except in cases of gross misbehaviour" when he must seek the Trustees' advice on what mode of corporal punishment to

adopt.<sup>(33)</sup> Far more precise was a rule of 1778 at Norwich. "No scholar shall be corrected, or reported, in an immoderate, or illiberal Manner, and no violent Blows, Kicks or boisterous Vociferation shall be used by either master or usher, to any of the scholars on such occasions, neither shall any improper Method be used in correcting any Scholar, nor violent Action or passionate word be expressed at those Times."<sup>(34)</sup> At Leeds, in 1802, the governors ruled that "when corporal correction is judged necessary by either master it shall be public and with such instruments as cannot do any bodily Injury."<sup>(35)</sup> Not long after they felt impelled to expand on this - "to neither master, however, is permitted the striking of the boys over the hands or head with cane, ruler, or like improper instrument. It is also strongly recommended to both masters to adopt more lenient methods of correction except in very particular cases." The admonition went on with an even more surprising statement: "The present discipline of the national schools have (sic) clearly proved that good order is best preserved and the literary progress and emulation of the boys best excited by deprivations and punishments of a more lenient nature."<sup>(36)</sup> Unfortunately this sensible advice was not entirely heeded. For, although the governors at Bradford appear to have adopted the same rule almost word for word in 1818,<sup>(37)</sup> at Leeds itself the governors had to censure the usher twice, within eight years of the rule being passed, for harsh and unreasonable punishments.<sup>(38)</sup>

The governors at Leeds were showing a degree of enlightenment that was unfortunately not often apparent amongst the schoolmasters of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Even making due allowance

for the dullness of the work, the long hours, the low pay, and the frequently rebellious attitude of pupils, masters did too often behave in a coarse, brutal, even barbarous fashion.

The Headmaster of Eton in the 1790's, by tradition, once flogged 70 boys with 10 strokes each,<sup>(39)</sup> and on another occasion 52 boys 12 strokes each,<sup>(40)</sup> and during his reign it is reported that a 5-stroke birching was the usual punishment for failure to know work.<sup>(41)</sup> A later Headmaster, Keate, was even more excessive. Stories of Eton are well known, yet it was no worse than many other schools.

At Hastings, where the school had become little better than elementary, all pupils were punished by cane, or birch, or cat o' six tails.<sup>(42)</sup> In 1749 the Headmaster of the King's School, Canterbury, was accused of "kicking (a pupil) on ye belly at one time and beating him at another with an hazel stick till he broke it on him."<sup>(43)</sup> The governors investigated and reported that punishment was with "A Rod and sometimes [a box o' th' ear (deleted)] a slap of the face, confinement and proper punishment as deserved [except once a boy was struck with a stick that he was doing mischief with (deleted)]"<sup>(44)</sup> An old boy of Ripon Grammar school in the early nineteenth century wrote: "I have seen boys made to stand up on a high stool where they could be better reached and coat and trousers cut to ribbons."<sup>(45)</sup> A Headmaster of Blackburn Grammar School is said to have developed sadistic tendencies<sup>(46)</sup> and, amongst other things, measured with compasses the boys' writing of letters in their copybooks and thrashed for the slightest inaccuracy.<sup>(47)</sup> The rule at Repton 1832-40 was subsequently described by a pupil of the

times: "I could only describe it as a reign of terror. There was no such thing as reward or prize or so far as I know even of praise ... If we were late it was either a hundred lines or a caning, sometimes a flogging. Boys were birched for false quantities or a false concord. There was hardly a day without some lad being birched and the system brutalised the school ... I have seen thirteen boys publically flogged in one morning ... "(48)

These were the orthodox modes of punishment. Many masters developed methods of their own. Thus a Headmaster of Wolverhampton (1830) indulged in ear twisting<sup>(49)</sup> and a contemporary at nearby Warwick practised hair-pulling.<sup>(50)</sup> A century earlier, a pupil at Repton had written "I did lose my Breckfast last Monday morning and so did most of the boys because we could not say our Epistle."<sup>(51)</sup> At Lancaster in the early nineteenth century, a Headmaster allowed punishments to accumulate until "Black Monday", though here caning remained the method.<sup>(52)</sup> It was usually the method at Tonbridge too, but an old boy recalls "the unheard of punishment of writing out 500 lines of Homer was once given by the (Headmaster) who caught a boy, flagrante delicto, riding his favourite heifer round the cricket field."<sup>(53)</sup> Greater variety was to be found at Walsall. Here an enquiry in 1835 revealed that between them, the Headmaster, usher and English master made use of recitation in class, loss of recommendation for prizes, extra tasks, detention and corporal punishment.<sup>(54)</sup> Perhaps the most unusual system of all was that of fining offenders. A rule at Darlington (1748) required breaches of discipline to be punished by a "small Pecuniary fine", to be used for the

benefit of the school.<sup>(55)</sup> Half a century later, a rule at Louth instituted fines for lateness.<sup>(56)</sup> Whatever the results at Darlington and Louth, at a third school a similar scheme had a considerable, and curious, effect. In 1818 the Headmaster of Charterhouse abolished corporal punishment and substituted fining. The boys bitterly resented the change and violently opposed it. (The pupil who led the opposition subsequently became Headmaster.)<sup>(57)</sup>

Violent opposition was a common feature of schools throughout the period and was in part responsible for the brutality of many teachers. It was, of course, a vicious circle: the one being both cause and effect of the other. Without in any way minimising the excessive behaviour of many teachers, the violence and intractability of pupils does at least make it understandable.

The rebellions of the great schools are notorious. At Harrow there were strikes and a gunpowder plot in mid-eighteenth century;<sup>(58)</sup> a riot, because of an unpopular new Headmaster in 1771 (during which a governor's carriage was destroyed),<sup>(59)</sup> and another rebellion in 1808, for reasons similar to that of 1771. In this last the rebels paraded with banners inscribed "Liberty and Rebellion", presumably an echo of earlier events in France, and blocked the London road to prevent outside interference. However the new Headmaster acted with great firmness and took the opportunity to purge unruly elements and tighten discipline generally. In consequence numbers fell at first, but revived quickly and overall the effect was most beneficial. It earned the warm approval of many prominent schoolmasters and even of the King.<sup>(60)</sup>



Westminster had three rebellions in the period 1764-1801 and a further, relatively minor, riot in the early nineteenth century.<sup>(61)</sup> Rugby, not really a great school till late in the eighteenth century, had a rebellion in 1786 and another more serious one in 1797 when the militia had to be called and the Riot Act was read by a magistrate.<sup>(62)</sup> Shrewsbury flourished under Butler, but even this humane and sensible man\* met with a rebellion. He quickly overcame it by ending term early and refusing to re-admit pupils who would not take a pledge of obedience. He also wrote to parents warning them that he regarded presents of fruit and game sent to the boys to be pernicious - "highly prejudicial, tempting them to form junketing parties at low houses."<sup>(63)</sup>

At Winchester rebellion in one form or other was relatively frequent in the last half of the Hanoverian era. In 1770 following a dispute in a local Inn, there was a skirmish between boys and townspeople. The next night the boys, who had been armed with bludgeons and pistols, set out for revenge, and the magistrates, anxious to prevent further violence, intervened and read the Riot Act. There were further rebellions in 1774 and 1778 and then, in 1793, the Great Rebellion. The cause was the unwise action of the Warden, who broke his word. Warden Huntingford forbade the boys to go to hear a concert by a military band, declaring that if one boy were caught he would be severely punished but that if more were caught the whole school would lose a holiday. One boy only was detected but the warden stopped the holiday. Forty senior boys,

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\* For his sound reasoning on punishment, see below pp.336-338.

resentful, twice protested in Latin letters to the Warden but received curt, rude replies. They armed with clubs, assaulted an usher, and refused to go to school. Thus encouraged the school broke into the Warden's house, keeping him prisoner in his dining-room for a night and then locking him out of his house. By then they were armed with swords and paving stones (to drop on any who tried to reach them) and were flying the Red Cap of Liberty. This apparently hopeless situation was resolved by the intervention of the popular Headmaster - the boys had sent him a note excluding him from their fury!<sup>(64)</sup> - but after a brief pause the truce was broken and all forty seniors resigned. Most were refused readmittance, which, in many cases, was most unjust. Moreover the Warden had broken faith again by secretly, during the truce, writing to parents urging them to force their sons' submission.<sup>(65)</sup>

This same Warden was again at fault in the 1818 rebellion when the magistrates read the Riot Act and the militia were called in to arrest the boys. (The cause of the riot was the use of a spy system, by the Warden and staff, which a subsequent investigation soundly condemned). There were further disturbances at Winchester in 1823 and 1825, but, compared with those of 1793 and 1818, they were minor affairs.<sup>(66)</sup>

Eton had a considerable rebellion in 1729,<sup>(67)</sup> several minor ones around 1750, followed by the most serious single rebellion in 1768 when 160 boys marched off and refused, at first, to return.<sup>(68)</sup> There was a further skirmish in 1783 in which the Headmaster had to escape leaving the boys to destroy desks and classrooms.<sup>(69)</sup> Probably, however, Eton endured its worst disciplinary problems, after the turn of the century,

during the 25 year rule of Keate. He was a great believer in corporal correction and the boys' reactions were equally brutal. He was pelted with rotten eggs, his desk smashed, windows broken and even small bombs were thrown.<sup>(70)</sup> In the College, the boarders lived in appalling conditions,\* profligacy, bullying, immorality and drunkenness were common and no one attempted intervention.<sup>(71)</sup>

It must not, however, be imagined that such excesses were unusual. At St. Paul's in the late eighteenth century discipline was generally poor.<sup>(72)</sup> At Blackburn, as at the great schools, there were rebellions. One, in the early nineteenth century, attempted to blow up the Headmaster's desk and possibly the brutal Headmaster too; certainly, on another occasion, a senior boy, incensed by an unwise blow, knocked the Headmaster unconscious, and there were several attempts to run away.<sup>(73)</sup> There was a similar lack of discipline in the early nineteenth century at King Edward's, Birmingham, the most notable incident being in 1832 when the boys barricaded a master in his room and left him there till he was discovered and freed some time later by a cleaner.<sup>(74)</sup>

Even in their relations with one another and in their recreations, pupils were coarse and violent. At Beverley boys defaced the beautiful minster,<sup>(75)</sup> and a pupil of the early eighteenth century at Ely records that "in bad weather we sheltered ourselves in the cathedral and ... spun our tops and trundled our hoops without interruption."<sup>(76)</sup> At Rugby, boys who earned promotion were liable to suffer brutal, even dangerous,

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\* See Part III, Section 3, p.159; Part IV, Section 1, p.217.

torture from their fellows,<sup>(77)</sup> while at Eton in 1730 a pupil died: his tombstone records that he "lost his life by an accidental stab with a penknife from one of his schoolfellows", but the Chapel register records<sup>\*</sup> "murdered by a schoolfellow".<sup>(78)</sup> Even games tended to the sadistic and cruel.<sup>\*</sup> Life was bitter, brutal and fierce. As a pupil of Westminster, 1809, wrote: "the boys fought one another, they fought the masters, the masters fought them, then fought outsiders."<sup>(79)</sup>

The gloom is not, however, entirely unrelieved. Some men, against all the odds, contrived to rule sensibly, in a civilised fashion and by example and precept to instill a purpose and a discipline that none of the more precipitate Headmasters could emulate. St. Paul's had a Headmaster (1748-69) who, it was said, "considered boys as rational beings and to be governed by reasons not by the rod."<sup>(80)</sup> A contemporary Headmaster at Eton "had that power of impressing his dictates and opinions upon his scholars which lessened the necessity of practising corporal correction ... boys, who would have been hardened by the infliction of punishment, trembled at his rebuke."<sup>(81)</sup> There were others too who regarded corporal punishment as a last, and unsatisfactory, resort - Westminster c.1740,<sup>(82)</sup> Bedford c.1810,<sup>(83)</sup> the King's School, Canterbury, c.1830.<sup>(84)</sup>

We began by noting the attitudes of some writers and educationalists, and it is fitting to end, in similar fashion, with some observations of Dr. Samuel Butler, whose sensibility and ability we have already noted.<sup>‡</sup>

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\* See Part IV, Section 8, pp 348-349.

‡ See this section, p. 333.

It is true that while in a letter of 1826 he reckons the numbers of beatings to amount to about two per week<sup>(85)</sup>, in a letter of 1835 he makes the average to be three weekly.<sup>(86)</sup> Considerable as this may now seem, even for a school of nearly 300 pupils, it was nothing when considered in relation to some other institutions of the time, as we have seen. Butler's attitude to punishment, corporal punishment especially, was enlightened. In February 1826 he wrote: "I have a great aversion to the infliction of mere bodily punishment though it is an evil which is sometimes unavoidable."<sup>(87)</sup> In 1827, "Incessant flogging only hardens the offender. It makes him callous to punishment and takes off the edge of moral feeling instead of whetting it. If the punishment of flogging is inflicted for petty offences no greater remains for heavier ones and the effect is destroyed by the frequency." This is sound enough, but his conclusion is even more pertinent - "... weekly conferences (of staff) will pretty well point out the ordinary case for punishment in the week ensuing. The extraordinary will occur either from cases of idleness and misconduct in boys not included in the ordinary cases or in grosser idleness and misconduct than usual in those that are. An intelligent master can be at no loss in the selection of these, if he can govern his temper, and if he cannot, he ought not to hold an appointment which exposes him to continual irritation."<sup>(88)</sup>

It was not, perhaps, immediately obvious, but the efforts of men like Butler, did have effect. The sense and humanity of Butler at Shrewsbury, the reforms of Hawtrey and the compassion of Hodgson at Eton, and the Christian morality of Arnold at Rugby, combined to set a new,

far from perfect, but much less depraved standard of expected behaviour and school discipline.

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16. J. Sargeaunt: A History of Bedford Grammar School, pp.55-56.
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24. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.115.
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54. D. P. J. Fink: *Queen Mary's Grammar School*, pp.279-280.
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57. E. M. Jameson: *Charterhouse*, p.21.
58. E. D. Laborde: *op.cit.*, pp.41-43.
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60. E. D. Laborde: *op.cit.*, p.46.
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68. Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte: *op.cit.*, pp.338-341.
69. Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte: *op.cit.*, pp.349-350.
70. Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte: *op.cit.*, pp.375-379.
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73. J. Garstang: *History of the Blackburn Grammar School*, pp.125-130.
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80. M. F. J. McDonnell: op.cit., pp.337-338.
81. Quoted in Sir H. C. Maxwell Lyte: op.cit., p.331.
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85. S. Butler: op.cit., Vol. 1, p.296.
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87. S. Butler: op.cit., Vol. 1, p.296.
88. S. Butler: op.cit., Vol. 1, pp.334-336.

SECTION 8

LEISURE

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The Hanoverian schoolboy had few holidays and little spare time. His games and recreations - both strictly extra-curricula activities - had little opportunity to flourish save at the boarding schools. A few not particularly academic studies - most notably dancing and fencing - were catered for by many schools as extra subjects for which a fee was charged (Macclesfield,<sup>(1)</sup> King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath<sup>(2)</sup>), but, beyond this, games were seldom officially recognised. It is noticeable that the writers on education during the period, even those who so fiercely criticised the debauchery and vice prevalent in some boarding schools, had few constructive recommendations or innovations to suggest for the boys' leisure time activities.

A writer of 1701, who was rather opposed to physical activities, like wrestling, riding and marching, suggested that boys should be encouraged to read, sing, dance, and act (in moderation) and to develop enthusiasm for Mineralogy, History, Natural History, using a microscope and a telescope and - least appealing of all to most schoolboys - for Arithmetic.<sup>(3)</sup> A mid-century essayist added to this the necessity for teachers to supervise closely all recreational activities,<sup>(4)</sup> while a writer of 1804 recommended that boys take up skating, swimming and gardening.<sup>(5)</sup>

In one respect, at least, conscientious masters, if not their pupils, agreed with this advice: as an advertisement of 1758 at Abingdon Grammar School declared: "great regard will be had to the morals of the

young gentlemen, and whenever they walk abroad they will be under the inspection of the master or some other person equally careful."<sup>(6)</sup> A few years later, a similar advertisement for the school at Northampton assured parents that "such recreation will only be tolerated as is innocent and conducive to health - and always under the inspection of one of the masters."<sup>(7)</sup>

One of the leisure activities that was generally encouraged by schoolmasters was reading. In fact much of the pupils' work had to be done in the form of spare time reading and in consequence most governors, and many enlightened benefactors, made provision for a library of suitable books. Some governors apportioned a regular sum of money for buying books (and globes) for use in the school. At Bury this was £4 p.a.,<sup>(8)</sup> at Newport (Salop.) £10 p.a. by 1800,<sup>(9)</sup> and at Penwortham a plan of 1823 allowed £20 p.a.<sup>(10)</sup> More often, however, a lump sum - depending on funds - was given from time to time: 14 guineas in 1771 at Heath,<sup>(11)</sup> for example, and, in 1814, the Mercers' Company which governed both the Mercers' School and St. Paul's School, gave £10 to the former<sup>(12)</sup> and £200 to the latter for buying books.<sup>(13)</sup> Alternatively, the pupils could contribute to the cost of new library books. A plan of 1837 at Walsall required each boy to pay 2/6d. subscription "to furnish profitable and interesting reading for the pupils' leisure hours."<sup>(14)</sup> At Lancaster boys were allowed to borrow books for up to a fortnight - after this they paid a penny per day fine, the income going towards the cost of new volumes.<sup>(15)</sup> At Sherborne sixpence of every boy's entry fee went to library funds,<sup>(16)</sup> and at Louth 10/6d. of the same fee - which provided

the Headmaster with some 10 guineas, annually, to extend the already considerable library.<sup>(17)</sup> Many schools profited from the gifts of former pupils or local gentry. The Headmaster at Wakefield between 1751 and 1758 persuaded boys when they left to present a volume each to the library.<sup>(18)</sup> At Lancaster gifts, of money, amounted to enough to purchase some half-dozen books each year.<sup>(19)</sup> Fortunate schools were left whole libraries - Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1762,<sup>(20)</sup> Leigh<sup>(21)</sup> and Burnley in 1728, where the gift of over 1000 books included Edward VI's personal copy of Cicero's Orations and many other old and valuable volumes.<sup>(22)</sup>

This great gift endowed Burnley with a library that must have been the envy of almost all schools. Many had almost no real library. Bosworth, in 1751, had some 45 books;<sup>(23)</sup> St. Albans described its collection as "small but good".<sup>(24)</sup> A few were more fortunate - Bristol had over 100 works (1725),<sup>(25)</sup> Bampton had 250<sup>(26)</sup> and Lancaster about 300 (1800).<sup>(27)</sup> St. Paul's, like Burnley, had a large library, but it was so neglected for some years, around 1800, that it decreased by some forty volumes. Subsequently it was restored and increased so that the school could boast of a fine collection of over 1,300 books.<sup>(28)</sup>

The contents of the libraries were very standard: mainly works by classical authors and religious commentators, histories, English literature, and the usual reference books, grammars, lexicons, maps, globes and gazeteers. Little of which would seem, by modern standards, to make very attractive leisure reading material. Moreover not all schools fortunate enough to have a library made proper use of this valuable aid to education. It was only in 1719 that it was resolved at Eton to "take

the chains of the books in the library,"<sup>(29)</sup> and another twenty-five years passed before the Merchant Taylor's School library was similarly unchained.<sup>(30)</sup> Frome did have a valuable library but contrived to lose it;<sup>(31)</sup> Stourbridge had a library, but no pupils!<sup>(32)</sup> Kirkham, however, had both books and boys, but the books were kept in the Headmaster's room and a rule forbade the boys taking the books out - and thus effectively prevented the proper use of the library.<sup>(33)</sup> It is said that at Shrewsbury, towards the end of the eighteenth century, the books were given away and the room used as a hairdressing saloon.<sup>(34)</sup> At Wigan the books were damp<sup>(35)</sup> and at Rotheringhay they were "for the most part in a bad condition."<sup>(36)</sup> A writer of 1803 describing the library at St. Paul's said it was a "dark, diminutive and dusty room ... where the books which compose it are covered with dust and defaced by the boys with ink and erasures."<sup>(37)</sup>

It seems probable that reading, partly because of the nature of the books usually provided and partly because it was an essential part of school work rather than a pleasant relaxation, was not - despite the enthusiasm of educationalists, governors and teachers - as popular with the boys as might be expected.

Dramatics, on the other hand, were extremely popular (Reading,<sup>(38)</sup> Norwich,<sup>(39)</sup> Christ's Hospital<sup>(40)</sup>). Indeed, at Eton, in the early nineteenth century, they were so popular that they became a considerable distraction until the Headmaster intervened and curtailed the time spent in rehearsing and play-acting.<sup>(41)</sup> Elsewhere the authorities encouraged this pastime and even turned it to the advantage of the school - at least

so it was intended - by inviting friends and neighbours to attend performances.\* In the later part of the Hanoverian period there developed a great enthusiasm for school magazines. At Eton, Microcosm was founded in 1786,<sup>(42)</sup> and within thirty years there were several flourishing and distinguished literary magazines in the school.<sup>(43)</sup> Other schools too had magazines. Southey was expelled from Westminster following an article he wrote for "The Flagellant".<sup>(44)</sup> At Bromsgrove in 1834 a literary magazine called "Pandect" was produced. The editors of the first issue explained their motives - "We freely avow ourselves infected with the typic mania, and must conscientiously subscribe to that universal maxim 'Tis very pleasant, sure, to see oneself in print' ... (and we wish) ... to pour into our reader's ear the recital of our troubles ... among the first of which we rank the influence of party spirit. In no place are the distinctions of Whig and Tory, Conservative and Radical more carefully observed."<sup>(45)</sup>

Doubtless many schoolboys were aware of the political issues of the day. Few, however, can have carried their interest so far as two senior boys at Merchant Taylor's School in the 1790's. On 18th January, 1796, the Queen's Birthday, a tricolour flag appeared on the Tower and the misdemeanour was traced to two boys who had already been caught writing treasonable slogans on walls near the school. The boys tried to arouse their fellow pupils by haranguing the Sixth form on the merits of Republicanism and the French Revolution but the Sixth form proved

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\* See Part IV, Section 10, pp 365-366.



conservative and the enthusiastic young politicians were physically assaulted. To complete their woe, the governors approved their expulsion and ordered that 18th January be an annual holiday to commemorate the loyalty of staff and school.<sup>(46)</sup>

At Eton political enthusiasm was less vigorously demonstrated but was one of the many subjects discussed by the Eton Society, or "Pop" founded in 1811. This club, a social, debating and literary society, met some setbacks but survived to flourish<sup>(47)</sup> and to add not a little intellectual content to the school's recreations, which had tended to be athletic and, in some instances, rather brutal. Ram-hunting had formerly been very popular but grew too dangerous and so, instead, a hamstrung ram was tied up and beaten to death. Eventually the authorities awoke to the barbarous practice and it was abolished in the middle of the eighteenth century.<sup>(48)</sup> The boys turned to a wide variety of occupations: cricket, football and rowing had been popular for some time, and to these were added many other recreations including fives, battledore, marbles, hoops, hockey, swimming, shooting, tennis, billiards, riding, badger-baiting and various kinds of hunting,<sup>(49)</sup> and, no doubt, poaching and fisticuffs - both popular activities amongst young men and students in the period.

Recreational activities and games tended to be brutal. Cock-fighting had long been a favourite, though by the Hanoverian period it was officially prohibited at most schools. Despite this, at Lancaster for instance, cockfighting continued to take place throughout the period. At Lancaster too there existed an annual Shrove Tuesday sport of throwing

cudgels at a tied-up chicken and another game known as "Threshing the hen". In this, one boy, wearing bells that rang as he moved, had a live hen tied to his back. The other boys, blindfolded but armed with sticks, attempted to locate the hen - by the bells' ringing - and to hit the bird. The hen-bearer, naturally, attempted to evade the assault, When the game was finished the boys ate the dead bird or birds, though, by tradition, the bird killed in the Shrove Tuesday "game" was eaten by the staff. (50)

There were, of course, some more civilised recreations peculiar to particular schools. Thus at Repton in the early nineteenth century archaeology was a hobby amongst the boys, (51) while at Blackburn hand-bell ringing was the great recreation and the school was very proud of its reputation and skill at this. (52)

A few schools continued to support the old traditional sport of archery. At Manchester there was a contest each year followed by the Headmaster entertaining the pupils at the city's largest Inn. (53). A Silver Arrow was contested for at Harrow every year until the late eighteenth century when the event was abolished. The reason for its cessation was that it had been abused by pupils claiming absence from lessons to prepare for the competition and, worse, by the growing practice of crowds of Londoners coming down to watch and turning the whole event into an unruly, rowdy occasion. (54)

The most popular of the new sports were cricket and football (Eton, (55) Rugby (56)) and of these the authorities looked more kindly on cricket. At Eton it was played throughout the period and, in 1796, a

match was arranged with Westminster. The Headmaster forbade the match but the boys nonetheless played. Sadly for the Etonians they suffered the indignity of being beaten first by the opposing school, and then - for their disobedience, not defeat - by the Headmaster.<sup>(57)</sup> However, by the 1820's, Eton was playing matches, officially approved, against Harrow and Winchester<sup>(58)</sup> - at both of which cricket flourished - at Lords.<sup>(59)</sup> Nor was this a sport restricted to the few biggest schools. Tonbridge in the early nineteenth century had a cricket field and the Headmaster is supposed to have said "I never knew a boy worth anything who was not fond of cricket."<sup>(60)</sup> Oakham was playing matches against other schools in 1821 and in 1836 a school cricket club with rules and proper membership requirements was formed.<sup>(61)</sup>

There was undoubtedly some evolution in the leisure activities of schoolboys during the Hanoverian period. This was the result both of the growing revulsion at the barbarity and brutality of the games of early days and also of the increasing amount of free time allowed to the boys as the number of hours spent in school was decreased by enlightened staff and governors.\* Pupils had, therefore, more time for recreation and, although the essential reading still occupied a considerable portion of the boys' free time, there was a greater opportunity for other, newer, ventures and this undoubtedly explains the increase in popularity of play-acting and of the more organised outdoor games.

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\* See Part IV, Section 2.

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28. M. F. J. McDonnell: *op.cit.*, pp.326, 365, 387.
29. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: *History of Eton College*, p.290.
30. Merchant Taylor's School, p.55.
31. CCR. Vol. 3, p.335.
32. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.773.
33. CCR. Vol. 11, p.236.
34. J. B. Oldham: *A History of Shrewsbury School*, p.67.
35. G. C. Chambres: *History of Wigan Free Grammar School*, p.66.
36. CCR. Vol. 24, p.204.
37. Quoted in M. F. J. McDonnell: *op.cit.*, p.365.
38. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.37.
39. H. W. Saunders: *History of Norwich Grammar School*, p.309.
40. E. Blunden: *Christ's Hospital*, p.83.
41. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: *op.cit.*, p.400.
42. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: *op.cit.*, p.356.
43. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: *op.cit.*, pp.405-408.
44. *Great Public Schools*, p.248.
45. H. E. M. Icely: *Bromsgrove School Through Four Centuries*, p.58.
46. Merchant Taylor's School, pp.60-61.
47. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: *op.cit.*, pp.403-405.
48. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: *op.cit.*, pp.297-298.
49. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: *op.cit.*, pp.318-325.
50. A. L. Murray: *op.cit.*, pp.107-109.

51. B. Thomas: Repton 1557-1957, p.16.
52. J. Garstang: History of the Blackburn Grammar School, p.130.
53. A. Mumford: The Manchester Grammar School, p.200.
54. Great Public Schools, pp.70-72; E. D. Laborde: Harrow School, p.43.
55. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: op.cit., p.296.
56. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.662.
57. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: op.cit., p.359.
58. A. F. Leach: A History of Winchester College, p.442.
59. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: op.cit., pp.411-412.
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SECTION .9

TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

SECTION 9TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS

At many schools boys and staff united in the upkeep of ancient and traditional practices. How "ancient" or "traditional" some of these were, and how long into the Hanoverian period they survived, is often far from clear since few records of these celebrations exist. They were not of significance in the eyes of either Carlisle or of the Charity Commissioners and it is only from contemporary chroniclers and the memories of old pupils that school historians have been able to derive information. There is, however, some similarity in many of the school customs of which we do know.

In the eighteenth century, it was the practice of senior boys at Burnley Grammar School, taking it in turns, two by two, to bar the way of newly-wed couples leaving the nearby church until fees of 2/6d. for the school library, and 6d. to each boy had been paid.<sup>(1)</sup> Similarly, at Lancaster, until the mid-nineteenth century, it was the custom for six senior boys to waylay each bridal pair leaving the parish church. Here the "ransom" was on a sliding scale varying from 2/6d. to one guinea.<sup>(2)</sup>

Both these schools had a special Shrove Tuesday celebration. In each case there was a cockfight and then, at Burnley, there was a bonfire for which each boy paid a 1d. fee.<sup>(3)</sup> At Lancaster the entertainment was more brutal: a fowl was tied to a stake in the cockpit - which was in the playground - and the boys paid a fee for the pleasure of throwing cudgels, "cock steles", at the bird. When dead, it was



cooked and served, the traditional Shrove Tuesday lunch, to the staff.<sup>(4)</sup> Unpleasant as this may seem it is well to remember that it was little different from, and certainly no worse than, some of the normal recreations of schoolboys in this period.\*

It is not, however, fair to suggest that all the cherished customs were barbarous. Thus Lancaster - which was clearly very tradition-conscious - had its own particular method of choosing prize-winners by means of a dice-throwing contest.<sup>†</sup> The school had close affiliations with the Town Corporation and this too resulted in a number of traditional events: the boys annually "beat the bounds"<sup>(5)</sup> and each year had a whole day's holiday - Auditors' Day - when the staff were invited to audit the corporation's finances. There was also a celebration following the mayoral election. In the morning, boys and staff, mayor and corporation, all attended a service in the parish church. In the afternoon the boys went to the houses of the newly-elected mayor, and the new High and Low Bailiffs: at each they were entertained and each boy was given two apples, two pears, two "Mayor's Cakes", a gill of nuts and a cup of port. Boys at other schools in Lancaster invented their traditional practice for this day - to ambush and attempt to plunder the pickings from the laden grammar scholars.<sup>(6)</sup> Undoubtedly many schools controlled by local corporations participated to some degree in the celebrations that went with the election of a new Mayor. At King Edward VI Grammar School, Bath, there was an old custom that the senior pupil made a Latin speech, in

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\* See Part IV, Section 8, p. 348.

† See Part IV, Section 6, p. 322.

the presence of the newly chosen official and the other councillors, on mayor-making day. There was a second speech, in English, by the senior boy from a local charity school and then both boys received a small gratuity - the grammar school pupil usually being given rather more than the other. This tradition was maintained until 1824, revived in 1826 but finally disappeared in 1834.<sup>(7)</sup> The celebration of the Mayor's election and, indeed, the election itself at Newcastle-upon-Tyne were both most closely connected with the local grammar school. The actual election took place in an upper room of the school building and the retiring mayor then broke his rod of office over the election table -<sup>(8)</sup> which is still used in the present day school. The boys had a holiday and paraded the town with amateur bands and their own "mayor" wearing medal and chain in imitation of the real mayor. After the election the new officials were feasted at the Mansion House while the other prominent townsmen had a great banquet in the school building. The whole celebration lasted well into the night.<sup>(9)</sup> It is interesting to note that the first duty of the Lord Mayor of Newcastle after his election is, now, to visit the grammar school, address the boys, and ask that the school be given a holiday.

Food and drink were closely involved with long-maintained traditions at other schools. At Leicester the baker called daily with a basket of fresh hot buns for the lower school and three times a year there was a special celebration or "potation" at which buns and ale were provided.<sup>(10)</sup> A fee was levied to pay for this and by 1816 even free boys were paying 2 guineas p.a. to help maintain the custom.<sup>(11)</sup> At Ashton-in-Makerfield

a bequest of 1707 gave 5/- p.a. to be used to buy ale and cakes to be given to all pupils at 10 o'clock in the morning every 4th July. Over a century later new rules for the school directed that holidays must always be arranged so that this day fell in term-time - presumably so that the custom or some relic of it could be preserved.<sup>(12)</sup> St. Paul's had an Annual Feast Day for a few years in the middle of the eighteenth century<sup>(13)</sup> and there was a similar occasion at the King's School, Canterbury. Old Boys and friends of the school attended and heard a senior boy deliver a speech composed by the Headmaster - though one pupil wrote that the Headmaster "had, I suspect, a collection of such speeches handed down to him." After this, the boys had a holiday, the speech-maker received a 2 guinea reward, and the visitors retired for refreshment.<sup>(14)</sup>

In earlier times one of the most widely observed of schoolboy customs was the right of the scholars to bar or lock-out the master on one morning of the year and to demand a day's holiday. This seems largely, indeed almost entirely, to have died. Probably this was because it was a somewhat abused privilege and liable to lead to bad discipline. It did survive at Burnley, however, though even here it seems to have been out of favour and the custom was eventually stopped during the eighteenth century.<sup>(15)</sup> Another practice in decline was the custom of boys going on a nut-gathering expedition - officially organised by the school and the occasion for a small fee. This custom was definitely observed during the early part of the period at both Eton and Winchester but its survival is less certain.<sup>(16)</sup>

At some point in the Hanoverian period, there ceased, also, the paying of the traditional fee of "a fleece of wool at clipping time" by Embleton boys who attended the school at Cockermouth which served both parishes.<sup>(17)</sup> No doubt this was commuted for a money payment as happened with the wheat and rye which, before 1762, formed part of the stipend of the master of Queen Elizabeth's Free Grammar and Writing School, Bristol.<sup>(18)</sup> Not all such payments were commuted: at Strodes' School, Shepton Mallett, the Headmaster's stipend included hay and potatoes<sup>(19)</sup> and at Kirkby Ireleth some villagers continued to give the master turf and stones for repairs to the school, though some did change to a money payment.<sup>(20)</sup> A small sum of money was involved - or rather it should have been involved - in an enduring custom at Appleby Grammar School. The Head Boy had to compose special verses honouring the school's founder and also a benefactor of the school. Unfortunately the benefaction was lost and Head Boys had to forgo the 2/4d. which it had formerly produced as an annual reward for them.<sup>(21)</sup>

In the early nineteenth century a lively custom was established at Bedford in which the Headmaster organised and paid for a firework display to entertain the boys and to mark the beginning of the Christmas holiday.<sup>(22)</sup> Boys at Morpeth also celebrated this day in a special way. A pupil of the Napoleonic period records that on the last day of the term, the boys took wooden horns to school and that, after breaking-up for the holidays, they all "made music as they went home".<sup>(23)</sup> One is forced to wonder whether local inhabitants found this as charming a practice as it sounds in theory, over a century later. Like most of the traditions, it died.

No doubt at a few schools, generations of pupils honoured customs that originated in Hanoverian times. Certainly no one of humanity or sensitivity would mourn the passing of some of the more brutal traditions. There can be no doubt that the advantage of this more than outweighs any slight regret we may feel that the increasingly utilitarian discipline of the schools should have killed some of the more pleasing and charming of the quaint customs of the age.

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2. A. L. Murray: A History of the Royal Grammar School, Lancaster, pp.107-9.
3. W. Bennett: op.cit., p.27.
4. A. L. Murray: op.cit., pp.107-109.
5. Ibid.
6. A. L. Murray: op.cit., p.115.
7. K. E. Symons: The Grammar School of King Edward VI, Bath, pp.271, 309.
8. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis, Vol. 2, p.61.
9. The Story of the Royal Grammar School, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, pp.22-25.
10. M. C. Crosse: The Free Grammar School of Leicester, p.39.
11. G. Cowie: History of Wyggeston's Hospital, Hospital Schools and the Old Free Grammar School, Leicester, p.98.
12. CCR. Vol. 20, p.202.
13. M. F. J. McDonnell: A History of St. Paul's School, p.337.
14. C. E. Woodruff and H. J. Cape: History of the King's School, Canterbury, p.180.
15. W. Bennett: op.cit., p.27.
16. A. F. Leach: A History of Winchester College, p.369.
17. CCR. Vol. 5, p.48.
18. CCR. Vol. 7, p.196.
19. CCR. Vol. 3, p.396.
20. CCR. Vol. 3, p.203.
21. CCR. Vol. 9, p.635.
22. J. Sargeaunt: A History of Bedford School, p.67.
23. G. Kennedy: The Story of Morpeth Grammar School, p.71.

SECTION 10

SPEECH DAYS AND SOCIAL OCCASIONS

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Public sympathy and support were essential for the grammar school if it was to survive the ever growing and exceedingly complex challenges of the social, financial and educational developments of Hanoverian times. The schools, therefore, usually contrived on at least one day in every year to put on some sort of display to which the public could be invited, their interest roused, their admiration gained, and, where appropriate, support secured.

These displays were, frequently, specially contrived "Speech Days" at which a series of boys delivered speeches, gave recitations, indulged in oratorical contests and disputes and generally showed their capabilities and prowess. In 1735 there was such an occasion at Eton. Fourteen boys took part: there were declamations on "Spectant me mille loquentem", verses on the Royal Family and on Sir Robert Walpole, and extempore verse-making. The display was followed by a collection which produced gifts of £100 for the college and 140 guineas for the performers.<sup>(1)</sup> Until 1761 boys at Merchant Taylors' participated in public disputations, but then the Headmaster replaced this distinctly old-fashioned contest with a "Recitation Day" and there were speeches in Hebrew (from the Psalms), Latin (Sallust and Horace), Greek (Homer and Theophrastus) and English (Milton and Swift).<sup>(2)</sup> The 1736 rules at Blackrod even specified that the boys must entertain the public with Orations in Greek and Latin chosen from Tully, Livy, Quintus Curtius, Sallust and Caesar or any author especially recommended by the master.<sup>(3)</sup>



Most schools were like Blackrod and kept firmly to the classical authors, but as the century passed so the more progressive schools and masters widened their scope. Thus the 1803 speech day at Oakham included extracts from Virgil and Curtius, but also from Shakespeare, Cowper, Scott, W. Spencer, Béranger and Beattie (a popular contemporary apologist for classical education.)<sup>(4)</sup> Louth also included French and English authors on its speech day programme after 1800,<sup>(5)</sup> while the 1836 speech day at Shrewsbury had speeches from the elder Pitt, Sheridan, Pope, Mrs. Hemans, and, perhaps most remarkable of all, Byron.<sup>(6)</sup>

At some schools, the display was not of speech-making, but was a public examination of the pupils.

At Bury St. Edmunds this was an annual event,<sup>(7)</sup> but at Morpeth there were three such examinations each year.<sup>(8)</sup> In fact the examination at Bury St. Edmunds included recitations or speeches by senior boys and this was probably a fairly regular practice (St. Olave's Free Grammar School, Southwark,<sup>(9)</sup> Ipswich,<sup>(10)</sup> Truro,<sup>(11)</sup> Bury<sup>(12)</sup>).

In any case, this sort of occasion seems a somewhat formidable test for the audience, especially when the declamation was on a topic like "ought virtue to show itself most in prosperity or adversity" (St. Paul's, 1768<sup>(13)</sup>), or when the boys composed and recited their own poems (Manchester c.1760)<sup>(14)</sup>. Clearly, however, not all speech days were such an ordeal nor were without some compensation. At Bristol, after the recitations, all the speakers and all the visitors retired to a feast to reward or revive them.<sup>(15)</sup> Visitors, some of them at least, to Newcastle-upon-Tyne's speech day in 1745 must have been amused,

startled or enraged when the Headmaster, who was involved in a dispute with the local Corporation, caused boys to translate the word 'Alderman' as 'Ass'.<sup>(16)</sup> At Winchester the standard of the speeches was so high that people travelled considerable distances to hear them,<sup>(17)</sup> and at Rivington, after there had been no public speech day in 1835, the local people demanded its re-institution in the following year.<sup>(18)</sup>

Many public displays were designed solely for this one purpose, but on occasions schools took advantage of some convenient event to participate in corporate celebrations or to produce some performance of their own. Thus at the King's School, Canterbury, there were recitations in the presence of the Dean and Canons on the Feast of the Ascension.<sup>(19)</sup> At Lancaster, in 1777, the boys composed verses in honour of the King's Birthday and these were read aloud as part of the Town's celebrations.<sup>(20)</sup> The Christmas Fair at Leicester was an opportunity for senior boys to compose and deliver Latin speeches.<sup>(21)</sup> Rather more common was the custom of marking the Mayor's election by the senior boy of the grammar school composing a Latin speech and delivering it in the presence of the new Mayor (Norwich,<sup>(22)</sup> Bristol<sup>(23)</sup>). Advantage was often taken too, of the annual official visit of school governors (Bolton-le-Moors<sup>(24)</sup>) or of the school visitor. At Reading, where the visitation was triennial, it was celebrated by an examination, recitation and then a dramatic performance.<sup>(25)\*</sup> At Wisbech, an annual visit was the occasion for a special Latin oration by the Senior Boy.<sup>(26)</sup>

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\* See below, pp. 365-366.

Tonbridge school was visited by its governors, the Skinners' Company, every year on "Skinner's Day" and a contemporary account describes the occasion. The governors, it says, are "attended by a very respectable clergyman of London whose business it is to examine the several classes of the school. On the arrival of the ... carriages at the gates of the school, a congratulatory oration in Latin is spoken by the head boy. The company then proceed to church where they distribute (alms) ... On their return, after a cold collation, they survey the buildings and give orders for all necessary repairs. They next proceed to the school, where, after a few Latin orations, the examination begins, at the close of which the whole company, which consists, besides the visitors and their friends, of the neighbouring gentry and clergy, retire to dinner. ... At five o'clock they return to the school and the grammatical disputations, a very ancient exercise, are commenced by the six senior scholars. These exercises conclude with the repetition of English or Latin verses. The examiner then distributes ... as honorary reward, a silver pen, to each of the six senior scholars who on that day walk in procession to the church before their patrons, with garlands of fresh flowers on their heads. Such is the form which has been constantly observed since the foundation of the school."<sup>(27)</sup> We can fill in one further detail by noticing the titles of some orations recited by prize-winners at Tonbridge on one speech day in the mid-eighteenth century. These included "Lady Jane Grey to Lord Guildford Dudley: an Epistle in the manner of Ovid", "Anne Boleyn to Henry VIII: an Epistle in the manner of Ovid" and "The Temple of Hymen."<sup>(28)</sup>

It is, probably, safe to assume that this type of occasion, and, before the introduction of a wider range of authors, of this type of oration and recitation; must have been a fairly standard pattern throughout the county. However remarkable the display of memory work, of borrowed erudition, or of academic style, it is hard to believe that this type of display and performance could really have won the classical schools any fresh admirers. It was preaching to not only the converted but to the almost fanatic believer; it can surely not have impressed the wider range of population necessary to support flourishing schools.

This, however, cannot so certainly be said of another display, popular with many schools, to which the public were invited. This was the practice of acting and staging plays. At many schools dramatics formed a pleasant recreation for boarding pupils, but the pastime became widely popular and then the actors' friends and relatives came to hear and applaud. It was a short step to inviting the local people to come. In 1679 a rule at Sherborne had declared that English and Latin plays might be presented "but such playes shall not see much as savour of profainnesse, scurrillity or levity but shall observe the bounds of Christianity and Urbanity", and this rule was repeated at intervals for over a century.<sup>(29)</sup> Merchant Taylor's had performed plays even earlier, though the custom lapsed between 1665 and 1762. Then the boys staged *Eunuchus* by Terence and later produced other plays.<sup>(30)</sup> The Headmaster of Reading was a dramatic enthusiast and specially "purified and altered" some plays to make them suitable for performance at the Triennial Visitation. Several plays by Plautus, Sophocles and Euripedes were acted

and so too were some by Shakespeare (King John, Henry IV (Part II), Merchant of Venice and "The Roses", an adaptation from Henry VI (Part III)<sup>(31)</sup>). In fact Shakespeare was not widely performed and schools seem to have preferred the classical authors or pieces like Addison's Cato (with obviously classical origins) which was very popular (Wolverhampton,<sup>(32)</sup> Reading in 1731,<sup>(33)</sup> the King's School, Canterbury<sup>(34)</sup>).

Not everyone approved of this type of school activity. At Merchant Taylor's' the governors prohibited acting, soon after it had been revived in the mid-eighteenth century. They argued that although the plays brought credit to the school the plays also distracted the boys from their studies.<sup>(35)</sup> At Manchester c.1759-61 charges of immorality were levelled at the boys' performances. The Highmaster, however, replied "There are some vices more fit for reproof by the stage than by the pulpit."<sup>(36)</sup> Criticism of a play performed in 1743 in a Canterbury theatre by the boys of the King's School took an unusually violent form. A mob savagely attacked the theatre and soldiers had to be summoned to protect visitors and actors. That this was genuine criticism seems unlikely: more probably it was hooliganism stemming from the other celebrations of the day - November 5th.<sup>(37)</sup>

Violence was, however, an ever-increasing feature of Montem, the special celebration day at Eton. This was really more for the boys' enjoyment and a good deal of ceremonial, ritual, parading and elaborate performance became a part of the custom, and the whole attracted outside interest. Hundreds of Londoners, often the most disreputable of London's citizens, began to make Montem the occasion for a day out and they

introduced an unruly, undisciplined element. Unhappily the boys, too, began to exploit the situation and "begging" and "licensed brigandage" took place. The whole performance became a notorious scandal and eventually in 1844, Montem was abolished.<sup>(38)</sup> A similar fate had befallen the Silver Arrow archery contest at Harrow in the 1770's. Here too a traditional school event had become public, had been exploited by the boys, and had degenerated into rowdiness, violence, idleness, even crime.<sup>(39)</sup>

To balance such scenes we must note the social activity at Kirkby Beacock. A newspaper in 1778 recorded that "last week the young gentlemen students at St. Bee's gave a very elegant ball to the young ladies of Egremont and other neighbouring places. Upwards of thirty couples danced country dances and the whole was conducted with the greatest propriety."<sup>(40)</sup> This was probably no more a common feature of Hanoverian grammar schools than the violence at Eton and Harrow, but it was no doubt a good deal more pleasant. It is not unlikely too, that it was more effective than many speech days, in providing entertainment and attracting support.

As in many other aspects of grammar school life during the Hanoverian period, there was a change in the nature of speech days and social occasions. The old public, Latin disputation died. It was replaced by scholars reciting notable orations, poems, excerpts from plays. French and English began to appear beside the traditional classical languages. The occasions, governors' visits, Mayoral elections, local events, are unchanged; the performances show a gradual transformation. The Play-acting that was so

popular with pupils was, by some schools, used to attract outside attention and support, but here popular opinion was fickle and not always appropriate.

These were the ways in which grammar schools sought support in their attempt to meet the challenges of the time; it cannot truthfully be said that many were very successful.

1. Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: History of Eton College, pp.298-299.
2. Merchant Taylor's School, p.56.
3. M. M. Kay: History of Rivington and Blackrod Free Grammar Schools, p.127.
4. W. L. Sargent: The Book of Oakham School, p.29.
5. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.822.
6. S. Butler: The Life and Letters of Samuel Butler, Vol. 2, p.159.
7. CCR. Vol. 23, p.529.
8. G. Kennedy: The Story of Morpeth Grammar School, p.61.
9. CCR. Vol. 1, p.207.
10. I. E. Gray and W. E. Potter: Ipswich School, p.73.
11. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.144.
12. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
13. M. F. J. McDonnell: History of St. Paul's School, p.348.
14. A. Mumford: The Manchester Grammar School, p.200.
15. C. P. Hill: The History of Bristol Grammar School, pp.43-45.
16. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis, Vol. 2, p.41.
17. A. F. Leach: A History of Winchester College, pp.397-398.
18. CCR. Vol. 19, p.196; M. M. Kay: op.cit., p.101.
19. C. E. Woodruff and H. J. Cape: History of the King's School, Canterbury, p.180.
20. A. L. Murray: A History of the Royal Grammar School, Lancaster, p.72.
21. M. C. Crosse: The Free Grammar School of Leicester, p.39.
22. H. W. Saunders: History of Norwich Grammar School, p.167.
23. C. P. Hill: op.cit., p.61.
24. CCR. Vol. 19, p.155.
25. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.37.



26. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.101.
27. Quoted in D. C. Somervell: A History of Tonbridge School, p.40.
28. D. C. Somervell: op.cit., p.30.
29. W. B. Wildman: A Short History of Sherborne, p.107.
30. Merchant Taylors' School, pp.57-58.
31. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.37.
32. G. P. Mander: The History of the Wolverhampton Grammar School, p.198.
33. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.37.
34. C. E. Woodruff and H. J. Cape: op.cit., pp.170-171.
35. Merchant Taylor's' School, pp.57-58.
36. A. Mumford: op.cit., p.191.
37. C. E. Woodruff and H. J. Cape: op.cit., pp.170-171.
38. W. Sterry: Annals of Eton College, p.273; Sir H. C. Maxwell-Lyte: op.cit., pp.495-517.
39. Great Public Schools, pp.70-72; E. D. Laborde: Harrow School, p.43.
40. The Story of St. Bees, p.23.

PART V

SECTION 1

THE SUCCESS AND FAILURE OF GRAMMAR SCHOOLS 1714-1837

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It would be inaccurate to depict the Hanoverian period as in any way comparable with earlier epochs in the number of classical schools founded. The demand for grammar school education was, in general, diminishing and in consequence fewer classical schools were required. However, despite this, a surprisingly large number of people bequeathed or donated money or land to help maintain existing grammar schools or even, in a few cases, to found new ones.

At Bolton (Westmorland) in 1721 there was a man -

"who to this town poor out of his store,  
His last will makes relation,  
Ten pounds he gave and forty more,  
For children's education,"

and this school developed a classical bias.<sup>(1)</sup> A curious example of the support for grammar school education occurred at Monks Horton. A complex will of 1713 included a plan for the foundation of a school, but unfortunately the plan came to nothing since it depended on the fulfilment of a number of other conditions. The scheme, however, is interesting for its remarkably old-fashioned conception of a grammar school. The testator decreed that "children speak (Latin) commonly freely and constantly in their ordinary discourse with one another both within the school and without the school." Moreover, if the master had failed to enforce this he would have been deprived of a year's salary.<sup>(2)</sup> Efforts to establish a school met with far greater success at Portsmouth (1732),<sup>(3)\*</sup> and at

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\* Dates in brackets - unless otherwise stated - are for the foundation of new schools or for endowments of existing institutions which required them to become classical schools.

Uldale (1726) where a wealthy inhabitant made an agreement with other citizens by which each party agreed to provide money to build a school and endow it.<sup>(4)</sup> Presumably the founder of the school at Charing in 1761 intended it to be a classical school since he also founded two exhibitions at Oxford for local boys who attended the new school,<sup>(5)</sup> and a similar charitable thought was in the mind of the founder of Pearsall's Grammar School, Kidderminster (1795) who gave money "for the education of the children of tradesmen and others unable to bear the expense of a boarding school".<sup>(6)</sup>

These were genuine grammar schools. Some specified that both Latin and Greek must be taught (Scorton School, Bolton-upon-Swale(1720),<sup>(7)</sup> Redmire School (1725),<sup>(8)</sup> Burtonwood Grammar school (deed 1793),<sup>(9)</sup>) and at Bury (1726) Hebrew was included in the statutory curriculum.<sup>(10)</sup> Other schools, while not specifying curriculum, clearly envisaged a classical school since staff were required to be University graduates (Bentham (1726)<sup>(11)</sup>) or skilled in the classics (Newchurch-in-Rossendale (1752 rules)<sup>(12)</sup>) as well as being of good moral standing (Lydyate school, Rochdale (1763)<sup>(13)</sup>).

Some of these new classical schools flourished. Horton-in-Ribblesdale (1725) maintained a strong classical department, and, before a disastrous intervention by misguided Trustees in 1821, the school flourished, reached considerable celebrity at one time and attracted pupils from a wide area.<sup>(14)</sup> Witton-le-Wear, built in 1733 and endowed half-a-century later, was "greatly raised" in the last half of the eighteenth century and the Charity Commissioners reported that after 1806

there were always over ninety pupils studying classics and mathematics - though no local parents took advantage of a few free places.<sup>(15)</sup> Not as large as this, but perhaps more closely akin to the older classical foundations, was Bury. The foundation statutes provided for tuition in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and the classical class, limited to thirty-five, was nearly full when the Charity Commissioners visited the school.<sup>(16)</sup> Carlisle, however, declared that Hebrew was no longer required.<sup>(17)</sup>

Most Hanoverian foundations, however, were not so successful and were forced to move away from a purely - or, indeed, even a mainly - classical curriculum. Thus although Wigton (1714) had some fifteen grammar scholars<sup>(18)</sup> and Ambleside (1721) had fourteen, in the early nineteenth century,<sup>(19)</sup> the greater part of each school was devoted to elementary work. At Broughton (1784) the master reported in 1818, that there were only "occasional" classical pupils,<sup>(20)</sup> while at March (1717) - although the rules were revised in 1826 and provision made for a small classical section in a large elementary school - no pupils at all could be persuaded to study Latin.<sup>(21)</sup> This school, of course, was in reality elementary and this was the fate of many of the new grammar schools (Thornton, Lancashire (1717),<sup>(22)</sup> Comb Martin (1733)<sup>(23)</sup> Nun Monkton (1716)<sup>(24)</sup>). Some of the new foundations passed quickly into great decline. Risley (1718) became a sinecure and the school house was used as a greenhouse until law suits secured some kind of revival after 1812.<sup>(25)</sup> Warmpton (1729) lost all its funds in 1826 when the holder of the moneys went bankrupt. Since there was, in consequence, no salary for the 80-year-old master, he refused to teach and shut the school. The

trustees were in a quandary: they had neither funds nor school and could not even begin to restore the situation since the master refused to give up the school-house and could not, legally, be evicted, nor deprived of his office.<sup>(26)</sup> Crosby Garrett (1735) also suffered from lack of money and eventually the school had to shut.<sup>(27)</sup>

The new foundations were no more successful than the older ones: like them, the new grammar schools flourished and decayed according to local influences, popular demand, and the quality of staff. Their only significance is in their foundation: the popular demand was decreasing yet there were still people so wedded to the cause of classical tuition that they were prepared to offer large sums of money in an effort to preserve the system. This must not obscure the fact that very few grammar schools were founded in this period and that as many if not more such schools were forced to close in the same years. Moreover many schools were only able to avoid complete collapse by changing their fundamental nature and becoming mainly elementary schools with, if a qualified master could be secured, classics for the very few who might seek such tuition. Even if we remember that some classical schools grew enormously and reached great numbers and that many others flourished at some time in the Hanoverian era, there can be little doubt that the overall picture while not as disastrous as some critics have suggested does show a notable decline in the number of grammar schools and, probably, though this must be less sure, in the number of classical students in grammar schools throughout England and Wales.

Schools shut for many reasons. Many towns had two classical

foundations and, there being insufficient demand, one at least had to shut (St. John's Hospital School, Lichfield,<sup>(28)</sup> Old School, Cleobury Mortimer<sup>(29)</sup>). Elsewhere there was "insufficiency of income" (Crosby Garrett<sup>(30)</sup>) and this was, fundamentally, the reason for the decline and closure of Liverpool Free School in 1803. The buildings were lost when their lease expired and the governors, whose interest had long been somewhat lacking, were not prepared to meet the huge cost of new buildings.<sup>(31)</sup> At other schools incompetence and neglect on the part of those responsible led to decline and ultimate collapse. Thus at Workington the governors failed to take proper care of the school's estates - the title deeds were never properly conveyed - and control of the endowment passed to a man unconnected with the school.<sup>(32)</sup> By 1865 Workington Grammar school had ceased to exist.<sup>(33)</sup> At Milton Abbas, the trustees moved the school to a new building which was some miles out of the parish. This effectively prevented local boys from using the school: it soon shut and, eventually, the charity was lost.<sup>(34)</sup> Kirkleatham school was closed by its patron and a rumour in the area claimed that it was either because the school was deficient or because the patron found the boys a nuisance and wanted to repossess the school house.<sup>(35)</sup>

At even more schools the reasons for closing are obscure, "shrouded in mystery" as Carlisle remarked of St. Bartholemew's Hospital Grammar School, Newbury,<sup>(36)</sup> and he lists many dead grammar schools with no explanation of their demise (Saltash,<sup>(37)</sup> Stoke, Suffolk,<sup>(38)</sup> Shaftesbury.<sup>(39)</sup>)

It is not really correct to regard the decline of the demand for



classics as being directly responsible for the shutting of schools. Certainly, for many schools, it meant that they could no longer continue to offer a solely classical curriculum, and, if they wished to survive, they had to introduce elementary studies as the basis of the curriculum with Latin and Greek as optional additional subjects. Thus at Burton-upon-Trent about twenty pupils (in a school of sixty)<sup>(40)</sup>, at Bunbury some fifteen (out of forty)<sup>(41)</sup> and Hexham eleven (out of forty)<sup>(42)</sup> boys took advantage of the voluntary classical course. On the other hand only seven boys in a school of sixty at Newport (Essex),<sup>(43)</sup> only three out of ninety-three at Pursglove's Grammar School, Tideswell,<sup>(44)</sup> and only two out of over fifty pupils at Wainfleet Free Grammar School<sup>(45)</sup> took Latin. Elsewhere the Charity Commissioners discovered schools which, though theoretically offering the classics to those who wished, in fact had no classical pupils (Burneston,<sup>(46)</sup> Brough<sup>(47)</sup>) and in some cases had not had such students for many years (Shipton,<sup>(48)</sup> Snaith - since before 1779<sup>(49)</sup>). At some point, of course, these particular schools had ceased to be grammar schools, ceased to be even semi-classical schools. Many, however, even if they could only secure a handful of classical students could continue to keep their original functions of serving their parish and teaching the classics.

Nevertheless we cannot escape the fact that those grammar schools which ceased either to make provision for Greek and Latin studies or, over a period of years, to find classical students, had, as completely as those schools which shut, become dead grammar schools. There were large numbers of such declined schools. Many, with fixed incomes,

found the stipends too low to attract qualified masters (Kingsnorton,<sup>(50)</sup> Higham Ferrers,<sup>(51)</sup> Godmanchester<sup>(52)</sup>). Other schools were unable to secure suitable pupils and so, eventually, ceased to offer the classics (Horton,<sup>(53)</sup> Hampton Lucy,<sup>(54)</sup> Penistone<sup>(55)</sup>). At many schools, which had tried in part to preserve the classics for the few, the popular success of the Lancastrian and Bell school system captured the imagination of governors and people and, amid a wave of enthusiasm, they became National, rather than grammar, schools (Aylesham,<sup>(56)</sup> North Meoles,<sup>(57)</sup> Henbury<sup>(58)</sup>). This was not so much a retreat by the classical schools as a positive success by the new and flourishing popular elementary schools.

On all sides, so it seems, the grammar schools were being undermined: lack of money, lack of staff, lack of pupils, lack of support - they were all related and all contributed to the decline of schools. However, this is far from being a complete picture. There were a very large number of grammar schools which, although they sometimes met with great setbacks and endured considerable hardships, continued to offer a classical education, contrived to survive, and, in some cases, to flourish.

The demand for classical education was very largely restricted to the middle and upper strata of society and schools could not expect to find a great local reservoir of classical pupils. The story that circa 1740 a stranger visiting Bewdley was "much astonished at hearing how familiar the lower class of Tradesmen, and even Mechanics here, were with the Latin language, bringing out Proverbs and Phrases on every occasion"<sup>(59)</sup> was not widely true and certainly not by 1837. More

commonly, as the Charity Commissioners remarked of Northleach, schools had "fallen into a state of inactivity like many other similar establishments in the country, from the unsuitableness of an education purely classical to the wants and employments of the town and neighbourhood."<sup>(60)</sup>

The need to secure boarders did, however, place a premium on the development of a high academic standard: this was the factor that determined when most grammar schools flourished and declined. At the more notable schools, of course, the name and reputation and social distinction were sufficient to ensure a steady flow of pupils, though, even here, a prolonged fall in standard could have a marked effect. This is most obviously true of Westminster, the outstanding school of the early Hanoverian period, which had a succession of unsatisfactory masters and, in the early nineteenth century, sank to a very low, and insecure, condition.<sup>(61)</sup> As we have already seen, most schools fluctuated in size and this was so at even the greatest schools.\*

The point, however, which must concern us is that although many schools declined and some shut many others contrived to secure both a high reputation and large numbers for a part, at least, of the Hanoverian period. Nor was this limited to schools like Eton and Westminster, St. Paul's and Winchester, Merchant Taylor's' and Harrow. The striking success of brilliant men at Rugby, at Charterhouse and at Shrewsbury was, to some degree, paralleled at grammar schools all over England. It was written of Chesterfield Grammar School in the eighteenth

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\* See Part III, Section 5.

century that there was "Scarcely an individual of any noble or genteel family in the midland or northern counties who was not educated in this school" and that it "is reckoned the most considerable of any in the north of England and sends great numbers of students to the universities."<sup>(62)</sup> Bosworth Grammar School flourished in numbers and scholarship in the early eighteenth century - Richard Bentley was a pupil of the time<sup>(63)</sup> - and so too did many other schools (Bristol,<sup>(64)</sup> Oakham,<sup>(65)</sup> Leeds<sup>(66)</sup>). Hugh Moises made Newcastle-upon-Tyne's grammar school great in the second half of the eighteenth century<sup>(67)</sup> and Hudson was similarly successful at Hipperholme - indeed with over two hundred classical pupils in 1786, it ranked as one of the largest grammar schools in the land.<sup>(68)</sup> Guildford also flourished at this time,<sup>(69)</sup> and so too did the Paston Grammar School, North Walsham, "to an unexpected degree" as a local inhabitant unkindly wrote.<sup>(70)</sup>

There is, of course, a great deal more information available about schools in the early nineteenth century and a very large number seem to have been in a good state. Macclesfield was said to have maintained a high standard of work;<sup>(71)</sup> Repton had a period of outstanding scholarship;<sup>(72)</sup> Ripon "advanced to a very high reputation",<sup>(73)</sup> and so too did Ashford.<sup>(74)</sup> Truro was called "The Eton of Cornwall" and this was certainly intended as a compliment to the size of the school and the quality of the work.<sup>(75)</sup> St. Peter's School, York,<sup>(76)</sup> Norwich,<sup>(77)</sup> Bury St. Edmunds<sup>(78)</sup> and Manchester<sup>(79)</sup> all grew large and eminent. Richmond under the guidance of the remarkable James Tate flourished to an astonishing degree, winning many scholarships, attracting very large numbers, and offering a high standard of education.<sup>(80)</sup>

This then, is the picture. A few new foundations attempting, and occasionally managing, to endure as classical schools in the undoubtedly difficult circumstances of the period. Of the older foundations some were forced to become only partially classical, to become entirely elementary or to face the probability of closure. There was, on the other hand, an undoubted, if limited, demand, for social as well as academic reasons, for a classical education provided that it was well and sympathetically taught. If a school was fortunate enough to secure an able master then it stood a reasonable chance of flourishing: without such a master the prospect was undoubtedly less satisfactory. There were, unhappily, rather too few devoted and distinguished men to save more than a minority of schools for any length of time.

1. CCR. Vol. 7, p.593.
2. CCR. Vol. 1, p.119.
3. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.446; E.S.R., p.184.
4. CCR. Vol. 5, p.93.
5. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.570.
6. ESR., p.232.
7. CCR. Vol. 6, p.606.
8. CCR. Vol. 7, p.708.
9. CCR. Vol. 20, p.192.
10. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
11. CCR. Vol. 15, p.694.
12. CCR. Vol. 15, p.92.
13. CCR. Vol. 19, p.294.
14. CCR. Vol. 15, p.698.
15. CCR. Vol. 21, p.50.
16. CCR. Vol. 19, p.216.
17. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.644.
18. CCR. Vol. 5, p.112.
19. CCR. Vol. 7, p.536.
20. CCR. Vol. 3, p.219.
21. V.C.H. Cambridgeshire, Vol. 2, p.333.
22. CCR. Vol. 11, p.321.
23. CCR. Vol. 9, p.37.
24. CCR. Vol. 4, p.386.
25. CCR. Vol. 17, p.223.

26. CCR. Vol. 19, p.293.
27. ESR., p.248.
28. CCR. Vol. 7, p.387.
29. CCR. Vol. 3, p.277.
30. ESR., p.248.
31. H. A. Ormerod: Liverpool Free School, pp.35-37.
32. CCR. Vol. 5, p.55.
33. ESR., p.30.
34. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.375.
35. CCR. Vol. 8, p.734.
36. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.35.
37. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.143.
38. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.532.
39. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.376.
40. CCR. Vol. 11, p.558.
41. CCR. Vol. 10, p.193.
42. CCR. Vol. 23, p.478.
43. CCR. Vol. 32, p.798.
44. CCR. Vol. 17, p.266.
45. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.853.
46. CCR. Vol. 4, p.403.
47. CCR. Vol. 9, p.661.
48. CCR. Vol. 8, p.717.
49. CCR. Vol. 12, p.658.
50. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.768.

51. CCR. Vol. 23, p.316.
52. CCR. Vol. 24, p.96.
53. CCR. Vol. 17, p.726.
54. CCR. Vol. 15, p.529.
55. CCR. Vol. 17, p.751.
56. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.177.
57. CCR. Vol. 19, p.154.
58. CCR. Vol. 18, p.295.
59. Carlisle Vol. 2, p.748.
60. CCR. Vol. 21, p.113.
61. Great Public Schools, pp.249-250; J. Sargeaunt: Annals of Westminster School, pp.229-231; L. Tanner: Westminster School, pp.40-3.
62. Quoted VCH. Derbyshire, Vol. 2, p.225.
63. S. Hopewell: The Book of Bosworth School, pp.45-51.
64. C. P. Hill: The History of Bristol Grammar School, pp.40-42, 61.
65. W. L. Sargent: The Book of Oakham School, pp.21-22, 25.
66. A. C. Price: History of the Leeds Grammar School, pp.117, 121.
67. A. R. Laws: Schola Novocastrensis, Vol. 2, pp.47-53.
68. J. W. Houseman: Hipperholme Grammar School, pp.11-12.
69. G. C. Williamson: Royal Grammar School, Guildford, pp.46-47.
70. C. R. Forder: A History of the Paston Grammar School, p.88.
71. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.117; D. Wilmot: A Short History of the Grammar School, Macclesfield, p.29ff.
72. A. MacDonald: A Short History of Repton, p.151.
73. CCR. Vol. 3, p.481.
74. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.560; CCR. Vol. 1, p.81.
75. Carlisle Vol. 1, p.144.



76. A. Raine: History of St. Peter's School, York, pp.110ff.
77. H. W. Saunders: History of Norwich Grammar School, p.233.
78. CCR. Vol. 23, p.529.
79. A. Mumford: The Manchester Grammar School, p.193.
80. L. P. Wenham: The History of Richmond School, Yorkshire, pp.33ff.

SECTION 2

CRITICS AND SUPPORTERS 1714-1838

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From much that has been written in earlier sections it will be clear that for many people there was little that could be said to justify the existence of grammar schools. There were, too, others for whom the grammar school in its oldest and most narrow form represented all that was best in English education. We have already seen the views of both these groups on many of the different aspects of life and work within the schools. It is, perhaps, necessary, however, to consider briefly the attacks that were made on the conception that a classical education, through a grammar school, was the finest possible method of training children from all classes for all occupations. It is also necessary, obviously, to consider the views of those who sought to justify the survival of the grammar schools.

There was, of course, criticism of these schools throughout the post-Restoration period and it was, in many cases, only the link with the Church - as a bulwark against the Dissenting movement and the Academies - which reconciled people to the nature and continued existence of grammar schools. By the middle of the eighteenth century, however, these criticisms and attacks had become rather more significant. An Essay, written c.1750, expressing little that was original but combining the different suggestions of numerous earlier critics, including Stackhouse, Defoe and John Clarke, established a pattern of attack that was followed by most critics of grammar schools for the next century. The author, "A Gentleman of Bristol", asserted that the existing school system put a higher value on the acquisition of classical knowledge than

it did on the inculcation of morality and good manners or on the teaching of English.<sup>(1)</sup> Moreover, declared the writer, "what scenes of Debauchery have not many boys gone thro' at some of our great schools, before they were sixteen years of age? ... how few have not contracted ill Habits at the same time that they have acquired learning."<sup>(2)</sup> He argued that the purpose of education was to build up "a general store of knowledge" and suggested that the schools' insistence on the classics made this impossible and that this failure was aggravated by the additional failure of schools to fit the work to the capacity of each individual pupil.<sup>(4)</sup> Later still the author - by this point thoroughly committed, declared that for boys not wishing to enter a profession nor proceed to University, and only intending to stay for a short time at school, the classics were best ignored and a general course prepared.<sup>(5)</sup>

This was a pattern. The whole organisation and basis of the grammar schools was called in question: the particular defects were exposed and criticised. A writer of 1762, in a long rather rambling attack on classical pedantry asserted that "I firmly believe that under a master capable of giving the mind a turn for reflection boys might spend their time more profitably in gathering flowers and catching butterflies than in the trifling hic and haec business of Grammar schools."<sup>(6)</sup> More important were the opinions of such men as Joseph Priestley and Adam Smith and of the Radical and liberal political scientists generally. They were not opposed to the learning of Latin and Greek but rather to the excessive emphasis which they considered was laid on it and to the repressive influence which the conservative grammar schools had on the attempts to spread education more widely.

Priestley argued that "the severe and proper discipline of a grammar school is become a common topic of ridicule, and few young gentlemen except those who are designed for some of the learned professions are made to submit to the rigours of it,"<sup>(7)</sup> and sought the introduction of a wide, and more utilitarian, curriculum. Adam Smith believed the solution was for government to destroy all endowments thus forcing the schools to depend on support from the public for income and survival - which must result in school curricula becoming adapted to the needs of the great mass of the people rather than to those of the few.<sup>(8)</sup>

During the last years of the eighteenth century the polemicists continued to proclaim loudly on the abuses and failures of the grammar schools. Many of the more responsible critics, however, while certainly not silenced were preoccupied with efforts to develop schools satisfying the demands they had themselves made. The distinguished Academies of Warrington and Hackney with their outstanding teachers and broad range of studies, were conscious attempts to construct instruments of education on the principles proclaimed by the more progressive social and educational theorists. These schools were not entirely successful but, in any case, the grammar schools continued, if not always to flourish, at least to survive. The result was that the last years of the Napoleonic war and the decades immediately after its conclusion were marked by a further outburst of criticism of the grammar schools.

There were, of course, numerous critical pamphlets and books. A writer of 1818 declared that "solid, useful and practical information should be preferred to that classical reveries, mythology and fables so

often regarded as the perfection of education; for things not words constitute real knowledge."<sup>(9)</sup> Another writer, Boade, rather more forceful, a few years later observed that the classical languages, splendid as they were, were useless for all save academics and gentlemen of leisure - anyhow the classics were extremely ill taught. "Our pedagogues treat all our English authors as nonentities ... (they) are discarded from our schools for the admission of such vile trash as the filthy amours of heathen gods and goddesses,"<sup>(10)</sup> Later this same author praises Bell's system and schools: the pupils develop "a degree of mind and intelligence not to be traced in boys of the same age in our greater schools."<sup>(11)</sup>

More effective, perhaps, was the criticism in the literary and political magazines. The Edinburgh Review, in a series of articles between 1808-1810, delivered a violent assault on the stagnation of Oxford and Cambridge Universities. In part this involved grammar schools and the classical routine, and the issue of October 1809 suggested that schools should be concerned with modern languages, modern history, science, geography and mathematics and that, for most pupils, knowledge of the world and commercial life were of far more interest and value than Latin and Greek.<sup>(12)</sup> The Edinburgh Review, however, was not really concerned with schools in that particular series of articles and it was not until the 1820's, in the Westminster Review, that the topic was again examined - and, this time, in rather more detail. The Review attacked the belief that classical education was essential - there was "a very important part of the community to whom, at least as it is at present communicated,

experience proves it to be utterly useless."<sup>(13)</sup> Some months later (July 1825) the argument was repeated in more detail. Boys were forced to ignore the philosophy and even the history and customs of the ancients in order to learn by heart the grammar and syntax, and in order to learn the intricacies of parsing and construing, in learning "scraps of poetry", in "fabricating nonsense, or sense, verses", and, the author concluded, "in ten years of this labour, privation, punishment, slavery and expense, what is gained even of this useless trash? Nothing."<sup>(14)</sup>

Other magazines pilloried the immorality and barbarity of the public schools.<sup>(15)</sup> The Quarterly Journal of Education urged the need for teaching boys some mechanics, geography and more English and arithmetic, and declared that everything was being "sacrificed to the supposed attainment of two dead languages."<sup>(16)</sup> In later issues the Quarterly Journal attacked the conditions in public and grammar schools, in particular in boarding houses - as at Eton.<sup>(17)</sup> There was criticism too of the harsh, repressive discipline found in some institutions.<sup>(18)</sup>

By this time the whole question of education had been taken up by Parliament. Brougham's Select Committee on the Education of the Lower Orders (1816), which had interpreted its function broadly and examined some of the grammar and public schools, had revealed flagrant abuses of the endowments and charities. In 1818 a Bill enabling the appointment of Charity Commissioners to investigate all charitable trusts was introduced into Parliament and, despite bitter opposition - notably in the (Tory) Quarterly - it was passed. The effectiveness of their work

we have already seen. It is perhaps fitting that a Member of Parliament should be the author of the last indictment of grammar schools in the Hanoverian period. In "Education in the United Kingdom" (1837) Thomas Wyse wrote: "If we find in the country and town schools little preparation for the occupations, still less for the duties, of the future agriculturists or mechanics, we find in the grammar schools much greater defects. The middle class, in all its sections, except the mere learned professions, finds no instruction which can suit their special middle class wants. They are fed with the dry husks of ancient learning, when they should be taking sound and substantial food from the great treasury of modern discovery."<sup>(19)</sup>

This is a far cry from the anonymous pamphleteer from Bristol: not in the content, nor even in the purpose of the criticism, but simply because the cause had become accepted. Critics of the schools were no longer automatically disregarded as impractical dreamers or political extremists. Parliament itself, always conservative even in its liberalism, had agreed that there was substance for complaint and scope for change.

It must not be imagined, however, that the classical schools were without their defenders and apologists. John Clarke, who attacked the method and content of so much classical education, still considered it the best system, and thought that even those boys intending to leave school early and go into trade could derive more from a "proper" - reformed - grammar school than from an elementary school.<sup>(20)</sup> This was echoed by J. Cornish later in the century. The classics gave such boys better judgment, and better character and better understanding of their



own language.<sup>(21)</sup> The classics contained "the seeds of immortality; all who would hope for a lasting fame or even temporary admiration must learn to fashion themselves after those models which will be ever regarded as the standards of perfection and excellence."<sup>(22)</sup> Moreover, declared the writer, "it is hardly possible that (classical education) should do harm; it will in all probability be of vast advantage."<sup>(23)</sup>

Even those who thought the classics had a limited value only and who sought a general reform had misgivings about some aspects of change. An anonymous pamphleteer of 1772 while declaring that at least half the boys studying Latin were wasting their time<sup>(24)</sup> and saying that it was of little use to those outside the professions or the leisured classes,<sup>(25)</sup> had doubts about any extension of the educational facilities: " ... writing and Accounts ... have been the cause of all the mischief pretended and laid to the charge of Reading. The latter does not (directly, at least) qualify for any employment above labour. Accounts in particular do, and have often, no doubt, been the cause of high thoughts and bad conduct in youths of the meanest capacity as well as birth."<sup>(26)</sup>

At much the same time, the Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic at Aberdeen, Beattie, published a book: "Remarks on the Usefulness of Classical learning", which soon became very popular with supporters of grammar schools in this country. Beattie's position was clear - "an early acquaintance with the classics is the only foundation of good learning" and is the basis of public and private virtue.<sup>(27)</sup> He discerned four main targets for those who opposed classical education - its slowness, lack of obvious benefits, failure to stimulate and improve the

mind, and its corrupting and immoral influence. Beattie answered each point in turn. The right system will not result in undue slowness; there are benefits since classics form the best basis for all other studies; if pupils are properly taught, and encouraged into critical thinking, then clearly their minds will be improved; morality is easily preserved if each master acts, judiciously, as a censor. Beattie may have convinced himself, and he undoubtedly delighted many English classical scholars, but his rather facile arguments had no positive effect on the opposition. (28)

Most defenders of the classics made little effort to do more than merely refurbish and rephrase the same arguments. "The superiority of the Greeks and Romans in elegance of sentiment and diction remains undisputed, and if we can gain access to the invaluable treasures which they have left us, without the neglect of any more necessary acquisition, it will undoubtedly follow that advantages so considerable should not be lost." (29) Classical studies "will not be useless to the meanest capacity nor inadequate to the noblest," (30) and are "calculated to make (pupils) respectable and happy through life." (31) Another writer echoed this - classics are "the foundation of a happy and useful life" - and suggested that special studies in other subjects could be profitably delayed until the all-important classical grounding has been given. (32)

The Headmaster of Winchester was appropriately convinced and elegant in his refutation of criticism. How could schools be accused of dealing with words alone and of ignoring real knowledge, he argued, when they ask pupils "to read, to interpret, to translate the best poets,

orators and historians of the best ages, that is, those authors that supply most axioms of prudence, most principles of moral truth, most examples of virtue and integrity, most materials for conversation."<sup>(33)</sup>

The Headmaster of Thame resorted to poetry to explain the growth, development and heritage of our schools. In a preface - in prose - he answered the critics and asserted that the grammar schools had been responsible for almost all that was great and commendable in English life.<sup>(34)</sup> He also carried the attack to the enemy and condemned the Academies: some, he conceded, were good, but many were "under the government of mean and unprincipled men" and were "the retreats of profligacy ... and ignorance."<sup>(35)</sup>

A rather more reasoned, fluent and persuasive defence - though its bases were the same - was made by the distinguished scholar, writer and Headmaster, Vicessimus Knox. He argued that grammar schools offered an opportunity for advance to boys of all classes. The local grammar school had been the agency in the rise of many distinguished men who came of humble parents. Quite apart from this, Knox reasoned, to force the grammar schools to introduce elementary studies would be to debase the schools and exclude the middle classes.<sup>(36)</sup> Like other supporters of the classical curriculum, he explained and emphasised that the classics were the key to the appreciation of what was beautiful and proper<sup>(37)</sup> and furnished "the means of knowledge to communicate or improve a power of invention and composition."<sup>(38)</sup> It is, however, difficult not to feel that the whole argument is weakened by the appeal to the middle classes to show good sense and come to the support of the grammar

schools.<sup>(39)</sup> This suggests that those middle classes whom Knox feared would be excluded by any change in the classical routine had, in fact, already deserted the schools for some broader curriculum.

There is, moreover, a notable change between the arguments used by earlier classicists and those of Knox. The former had frequently attacked the existence of non-classical schools and argued that the classical discipline was adequate for all children whatever their origins or objectives. This was, by Knox's time, no longer a position tenable by any man who wished to be considered at all seriously. The defenders were in retreat - admitting the validity of alternative systems of education, admitting the poor quality of some teachers and grammar schools, admitting the declining support from those very people for whom the schools were, in theory and according to their apologists, most suited.

The battle was virtually over. The Universities were revived and reforming. The 1830's saw the first moves toward social and electoral and municipal reform. The Charity Commissioners were destroying the façade behind which so much decay and even corruption had sheltered. Some of the bigger schools, though still adhering to the traditional pattern, were making a conscious effort to improve standards and set an example to other schools.

Many of the attacks on the classical schools had been as irresponsible and irrational and impractical as the defences had been bigoted and intolerant and imperceptive. Between these extremes the more balanced protagonists found some measure of agreement - the need

for reform, the need for a broader curriculum, the need for schools and universities to bear in mind the needs and demands of the majority of people. Critics and defenders differed in the degree of reform they considered necessary: they were united in opposition to corrupt and decadent institutions and in seeking better standards. The grammar schools, all agreed, must make great efforts to come to terms with their environments.

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PART VI

CONCLUSION



PART VICONCLUSION

There can be little doubt that, whatever the shortcomings of the eighteenth century, the post-Napoleonic years witnessed a general revival in many aspects of English life and not least in education. The Grammar School had undoubtedly suffered a decline in standard, in usefulness of function, in popularity. The Schools Inquiry Commission estimated that only about half the endowed Grammar Schools had continued to teach any classics and that the remainder had become purely elementary schools, or had even shut - some 7% of the total.<sup>(1)</sup>

If indeed one is concerned solely with the preservation, in its entirety, of the traditional pattern and method of education, then the Hanoverian age was disastrous. If, however, the main concern is the development of a sounder, more up-to-date system of schools and schooling then the Grammar schools made a positive contribution. In an indirect and rather cynical fashion, it could be argued that the incompetence of so many teachers and the corruption of so many governors, the brutality and expense, the limited curriculum and the frequent class distinction, all combined to produce a hostile atmosphere which led to criticism and improvement on the one hand and to alternative schemes of education on the other. This is true - but does rather less than justice to the Grammar schools themselves.

Many were deplorable but some were not, and the influence and success of the better ones was considerable. The pupils of the great headmasters of the early nineteenth century were frequently inspired to

teach and many became senior masters and Headmasters at a wide variety of old-established schools and also, perhaps even more important, at some new ones. At the existing grammar schools they introduced the more humane, moral and liberal atmosphere they had been trained to respect. At the new foundations - and the mid-nineteenth century saw a large number - they maintained the respect for the classics, which they had themselves acquired at school, as a foundation for the newer studies. The influence of the great Headmasters was considerable. Pupils of Dr. Arnold became masters at old schools, like Harrow, King Edward's School, Birmingham and Rugby itself, and at new ones, such as Cheltenham (founded 1841), Marlborough (1843), Wellington (1852) and Haileybury (1862).<sup>(2)</sup> Of Dr. Butler it was said that "the advance of learning among the young has decidedly at all English schools of any note generally taken its impulse from you; and where it has not, as at Westminster, the decadence has been doleful ... "<sup>(3)</sup>

The more liberal and enlightened approach to education was, however, widely accepted even without the considerable contributions of these distinguished and remarkable men. As we have seen, even the defenders of the classical schools against the severe criticism of the liberals and radicals had been constrained to accept that some of the criticism was justified and that change was needed. Once this had been agreed it was only a question of time before improvement followed.

In part the weakness of the grammar schools in Hanoverian England was due to the poor quality of the men who controlled and taught the schools. It cannot be denied that far too many brutal or incompetent

teachers and corrupt or inefficient governors were entrusted with responsibilities for which they were not fitted. Nor can it be denied that many governors and teachers were unable to appreciate the merits of the better methods, more sensible syllabi, more realistic, broader curricula, which some of the progressive grammar school masters devised and advocated.

Yet, despite all this, the blame must rest to some degree not on the individuals but on the system which they inherited: a system which permitted such undiscerning choice of governors, which offered such low stipends to teachers, and which, as a result, failed to attract the best quality men. In earlier days, when classical studies were an essential part of the training for so many men and offered a means of advancement even for the humblest, there had been a need for a great number of grammar schools. By the eighteenth century, however, the classics were no longer essential. The poor man could become richer without recourse to the classics; the church was no longer the ladder to social and financial improvement. The merchant and the tradesman no longer felt any need for classical education - they sought instead a commercial education and tuition in modern languages. Only scholars and professional men needed Latin and Greek. Only men of leisure found a social merit in them. The demand for a classical training diminished but intensified. Fewer schools were needed but those that survived had to attain a high educational standard, unless they could offer some other attraction - like the social prestige of Westminster, in the early Hanoverian period, and Eton during the later part. While it must not be forgotten that

many schools ceased to teach the classics, it must also be remembered that those which continued to be grammar schools often increased their size very considerably. A smaller proportion of the population required and desired a classical training: those who did, preferred to use a few notable schools rather than the wide range of local, smaller, schools.

The grammar schools which did survive were often not the best educationally: the forces which maintained them tended to be obscurantist and reactionary. In time, however, even these schools became aware of the changes in spirit, and began to move towards a more liberal system. "Please God I will do something for these poor boys," said a newly-appointed Provost of Eton in 1840, when he saw the conditions which the boys endured<sup>(4)</sup> and the remark, a recognition of changing atmosphere at what had been for so long the most reactionary, decadent and hated - but also the most famous - of all classical schools, could well be taken to represent the general feeling.

By 1837 the old type of grammar school was disappearing, replaced by a school which offered a wide range of subjects taught in a more sensible fashion by more enlightened - and better paid - teachers. The schools recognised their duty to serve public needs: a few did this by providing a traditional education for the limited numbers who required or valued it, most - without rejecting their classical heritage - offered a broader curriculum to suit the needs of a wider range of people. The grammar school, despite all the deficiencies it revealed, and the attacks which it suffered, during the Hanoverian period, nevertheless survived.

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