

BALSHAW'S SCHOOL
1782 — 1982



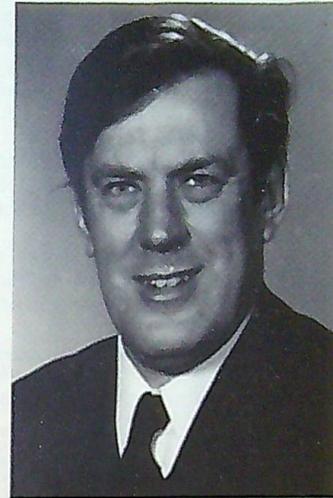
A HISTORY OF 200 YEARS

by George Birtill

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P. J. Ingram B.Sc., headmaster since 1973.

Foreword

I have pleasure in commending Mr. George Birtill's "History of Balshaw's School" to you. Mr. Birtill has been planning the book for some time, but it is particularly appropriate that its publication is timed for the bicentenary of the Balshaw's Foundation.

Mr. Birtill touches on the influence of Richard Balshaw on the development of the school throughout the nineteenth century, the change to a secondary school at the start of this century, and the move to the present site in Church Road in 1931. Mr. Birtill has illustrated the general trends by referring to the part played by local people, teachers and pupils in the continued progress of the school.

Governors, teachers, parents, past and present pupils as represented on the 1982 Committee join me in expressing our gratitude to Mr. Birtill for his major contribution to the annals of the School.

P. J. Ingram
Headmaster



Left: The memorial to Richard Balshaw, founder of the school, in St. Giles, Charing Cross, London.

Balshaws Foundation Stone

Below: The foundation stone in the old school at Golden Hill built in 1784 — two years after the foundation. Even when the new school was opened in 1904 part of the old building was used for the headmaster's house and lab and cookery rooms.



THE FOUNDER

Richard Balshaw is said to have been living in Hemel Hempstead when he founded a trust for a charity school in Leyland on June 14, 1782. It is fair to assume he was a native of Leyland as the memorial marble to him in St. Giles, Charing Cross, London describes him as of "Golden Hill, Leyland, Lancashire".

A deed dated 1790 refers to him as "formerly of Leyland now of Tottenham in the parish of St. Pancras, Middlesex".

He died on April 11, 1811, at the age of 86, nearly 30 years after he founded the school, but he is reputed to have managed it entirely himself during that time though he had appointed trustees to act with him. The amount of travel and trouble this must have involved is an indication of devotion of the kind inspired in the place of one's birth.

The epitaph in the marble is "Of whom it may be justly said he was a truly benevolent and charitable man."

The foundation stone of the original school at Golden Hill reads:

*"In the Year of our Lord
1784*

*This Charity School was founded endowed and erected by
Richard Balshaw, Gentleman
For instructing the Children of the Poor only of this Parish,
In Reading, Writing and Arithmatic, in the English Tongue,
And in the principles of the Church of England As by law Established
The Girls to be taught also to Knit, Sew and Mark."*

The original endowment was 11 acres of land in Leyland, land and property in St. Giles-in-the-Fields, Middlesex. A further 2 acres, 3 roods and 14 perches, the Oven Field, in Leyland was added by Balshaw on July 12, 1786. On August 1, 1790, the trust was augmented by over 20 acres of land in Leyland, the intention being to provide for a mistress to teach the girls attending the school.

Progress continued after Balshaw's death, for in 1817, the building was enlarged by means of loans subsequently repaid.

In 1829, Balshaw's widow, Ellen Fisher, who had remarried, conveyed by deed premises on trust mainly for the education of girls in the school.

NO STAFF CHILDREN

Insight into the character of Richard Balshaw is to be found in the rules printed in Preston in 1846. They must have been prepared under his direction, even if he did not write them. His charge to 'present and future trustees' on August 20, 1794, to 'discharge, expel, put out and remove' teachers with a child or children of their own, is preceded by the words "Now know ye, that I Richard Balshaw, founder of the said Charity-school . . ." His injunction is based on "well known experience and in a great many instances that teachers having a child or children of their own are prejudicial to scholars learning education, good order and regularity in the Charity-school at Leyland."

Evidently something untoward has happened in the running of the school for an

earlier rule (Rule 8) states plainly that the schoolmaster, Mistress or Teachers "shall keep good order in their families if they have any."

It is true that Rule 1, which states that no person shall be Schoolmaster, Schoolmistress or Teacher, who shall be under twenty-one, or more than forty-five years of age, at the time of his or her appointment, adds 'nor shall they have any child or children of their own'. But this relates surely to the time of appointment.

Rule 2 also stipulates that the Schoolmistress shall not be the wife or daughter of the Schoolmaster or in any way related to him.

It was of course, not unusual for schools to provide against claims in respect of dependants. Founders of Chorley Grammar School also laid down that no schoolmaster or clergyman was to inhabit the school with his wife, on that account.

Favouritism, which was prevalent in his time, may have been behind Richard Balshaw's ban on staff children. Thus Rule 37 states "No Trustee or Trustees shall at any time hereafter, permit or suffer their or any of their Children, to be taught or instructed by the Schoolmaster, Schoolmistress or Teachers belonging to the said school, or any of them, under any pretence whatever".

Residing at the school was frequently a condition of office and Golden Hill was no exception. Balshaw's Rule 21 requires the schoolmaster to dwell in the house adjoining the school "during all the time he is Teacher therein, and not elsewhere, on pain of being removed or expelled from the School and Premises."

The Schoolmistress also occupied apartments in the school.

No mention is made of rent, but the Schoolmaster's stipend was not to be paid out of the estate until cost of repairs and maintenance had been met. The Mistress is to repair, amend and make good all and every part of the glass windows and the accompanying lead work in the part of the school, where she has her apartments and teaches the girls 'over the boys school'.

What happened to staff pay in the event of serious repairs or a spate of broken windows on the upper floors is left to conjecture, except that rule 40 gives a clue. It states that when it shall be necessary to rebuild the Charity-school, the payment of the stipend and wages of the Schoolmaster and Schoolmistress, or Teachers, shall cease, and be void, until it shall be rebuilt and paid for out of rents and profits of the estates in the trust.

LONG HOURS

Residence of staff at the school must however, have been an advantage if not a necessity in view of the hours worked.

From March 25 to the end of October, these were 7 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and from the end of October and March 25, 9 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Rule 9).

Exceptions were Sundays and the afternoons of holy days appointed by the Church and Thursday and Saturday afternoons and appointed holidays, but Rule 47 required the Charity-school to be opened as a Sunday Charity-school throughout the year.

Staff and children had to attend morning and afternoon service at Leyland Parish Church from the school 'every Sunday throughout the year, yearly' (Rule 50). Presumably they walked in procession, having been sent to school 'perfectly neat and clean in their persons and as decently clothed as their circumstances allowed' (Rule 49).

CHURCH PARADE

Sunday school started at 8 a.m. from March 25 to the end of October to get in two hours of schooling before church. After church, school was resumed at 1.30 p.m. for an hour before afternoon service. There was another two hours in school after the service. The relaxation for the winter period — from the end of October to March 25 — was a 9 a.m. start and only one hour before morning service and one before afternoon service and none afterwards (Rule 50).

Under Rule 51, absentees from roll calls taken every Sunday morning and evening were to have their names entered in a book, shown to the founder or trustees for the time being, who also had discretion (Rule 54) to expel 'after frequent and sufficient admonition' for great faults 'such as swearing, lying, stealing, taking God's name in vain, absenting from church and school.'

The link with Leyland Parish Church, where staff of Balshaw's were expected "to receive the holy sacrament regularly" (Rule 7) continued long after the death of the Founder. Richard Balshaw himself left £200 to provide interest to pay the vicar for reading prayers and delivering a sermon or lecture every Friday throughout the year. If the vicar failed in this duty for a period of three months, the income was to be expended on cloth for the poor.

Children from Balshaw's and those of the free grammar school in the churchyard attended the service, which eventually became one for adults.

In view of the religious flavour of the rules, it is perhaps surprising that they banned any Minister of the Gospel from appointment as Schoolmaster or Teacher at the school (Rule 6).

Rules related to the Sunday School were among those to be read to parents on admission of their children into school.

TRUST TEACHER

The more general ones (Rules 43-46) have a strong parent teacher interest. Thus parents must "freely submit their children to undergo the discipline of the school, when guilty of any faults, and forbear coming thither on such occasions." (Rule 44).

Also that "parents correct their children for such faults as they commit at home, or inform their teachers thereof, thereby the whole behaviour of their children may be better ordered." (Rule 45).

Parents are also to "set their children good examples, and keep them in good order at home, and frequently call on them there, to repeat their catechism, and read the holy scriptures, especially on the Lord's day, and say their prayers day and evening." (Rule 46).

The association of cleanliness with godliness may be embodied in the charge to parents to take care to send their children (clean, washed and well combed) at the stipulated times (7 a.m. to 6 p.m. in summer, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in winter with an hour for lunch at midday). (Rule 43).

Two vacations are named for the children — from December 19 to Monday after the twelfth day, and 21 days at Whitsuntide, but no more. (Rule 17).

Because the rules are in sections relating respectively to staff, parents and trustees, there has to be some repetition. As may be expected Schoolmaster, Schoolmistress, Teachers and children "shall begin and close the day in the school, with a psalm or hymn, and a form of prayer composed for that purpose. And the children are to be

instructed and enjoined to say their prayers at home on rising in the morning and going to bed at night, and likewise as to grace before and after meat." This rule (No. 13) has a note that prayers to be used shall be such as are contained in the Book of Common Prayer, or such as the Founder of the Trustees of the Charity, and the Minister of the Parish Church of Leyland shall recommend.

Catechism of the Church of England is to be taught every Monday and Thursday and children who are perfect are to be taken to the church (presumably to be tested) at such time as the Minister shall think proper. (Rule 14).

Of the books provided for the use of the children, none are to be taken home on any pretence whatever except catechism books (Rule 34).

PRIZE DAY

Speech day (could it have been December?) appears to be foreshadowed by the award at Christmas of four bibles, commonly called 'twenty-fours' (Rule 35). These were for the greatest improvement in reading — two to the head boys and two to the girls. No one could win more than one.

The curriculum outside religious knowledge is defined in rules to staff. Besides teaching girls and boys psalmody, the Schoolmaster is to instruct the boys to read well, and after they are competent readers, to write a fair legible hand, and grounds of arithmetic to fit them for business (Rule 10).

The Schoolmistress is to instruct the girls to read well, and to knit, sew and mark, make and mend and such other things as the Founder and the Trustees may judge proper and necessary. (Rule 11).

In evaluating this, it needs to be remembered that children admitted had to be the full age of six years and were allowed to continue until they attained the age of 12, "but no longer". (Rule 28).

EXPULSION

Discipline is more explicit in teachers rules than those read to parents. Any children who refuse, or neglect coming to school, seven days successively, being school days, unless prevented by sickness, shall play the truant, and notwithstanding due correction obstinately refuse to obey such rules and orders as shall be given by the Schoolmaster, Schoolmistress or Teachers are to be expelled by the founder or the trustees. (Rule 31).

Breaking a window or windows in the school, or in any apartment belonging to it, or doing any mischief, hurt, spoil or damage in or to the school property, requires the parents of the offending child to make full satisfaction. Otherwise the child or children will be expelled. (Rule 33).

Other teachers rules also carried the penalty of expulsion of the teacher. These related to engaging in employment or business other than school duty, or permitting any person or persons to inhabit the school property. (Rules 18 and 19).

The children admitted were to be those of poor persons only, real objects of charity, and reside in and belong to the parish of Leyland, and not elsewhere, and who were unable to pay for their learning. This Rule (No. 25) was to be the source of contention when a bid was made to change the status of the school in 1870 — 88 years after establishment of the trust.

Rule 27, indicates that children of the poor that belong to the parish of Leyland, and reside within the township of Leyland, shall have preference over those within the parish but outside the township.

Even with all these qualifications, candidates had to be approved by the founder or trustees at a meeting in the school (Rule 29). Each child also had to bring a recommendation in writing, signed by the parents or next of kin and two or three principal inhabitants of the parish, setting forth personal circumstances of the parents. (Rule 30).

TRUSTEES' DUTIES

The trustees rules require them to meet four times a year December 19, the first Monday after March 25, June 24 and September 29 or oftener as occasion may require, and on the following day if any date fall on a Sunday. The purpose of the meetings usually at 10 a.m. in the school was to examine the behaviour and improvement of the children, the conduct of the Schoolmaster, Schoolmistress or Teachers and other matters relating to the good government of the school (Rule 36).

The trustees are also desired to visit the school frequently in order to examine the children and see how they improve in their learning and that the Master and Mistress or Teachers perform their duty. (Rule 41).

The trustees also had responsibilities in regard to the Sunday Charity-school. Under Rule 56, they are desired alternately to visit the school every Sunday in order to encourage the children to go thither, and set forth the great use and benefit it will be to them, and also endeavour to promote good order and regulation.

LONDON PROPERTY

Also attributed to the founder from the wording if not the date (March 4, 1798) are stipulations about maintenance and repair which give an insight of the London property forming part of the trust. This is described as 'all and every part of that messuage or tenement, erections, buildings and premises fronting Denmark Street and High Street, in the parish of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, in the county of Middlesex, now in the occupation of Mr. John Thompson or his undertenants, and Crouch a dealer in birds.

And also all and every part of the stable workshop or building in or near the passage leading from Denmark Street to Dudley Court in the said parish of St. Giles, now or late in the occupation of John Baker a dealer in rags, and let or agreed to be let to John Thompson.

The local properties were Banister House, which was quite near the school, and Wright's. Both were farms and the children of the farmers were allowed to attend the school over and above the permitted 50 boys and 50 girls, but they were not to be provided with books or other necessities by the school (Rule 34) or participate in the reward of bibles for improvement in reading (Rule 35). This last seems rather unfair since the bibles were paid for out of the profits of Wright's.

The profits from Wright's in fact were required to meet the cost of reading school books, paper for copy books, quills, ink, turf and coals for the school. Other income available was to be laid out in oatmeal and clothing for the greatest real objects of charity in the township who did not receive relief of charity from the parish.

Turf for one year's use in the school is not to exceed one horse cart load, one half for the boys, the other half for the girls' and no more is to be allowed in any one year at any time hereafter. The maximum allowance of coals is twenty baskets for the boys school and twenty for the girls.

Thus on July 26, 1892, there was a meeting to receive recommendations for "re-organisation of Golden Hill or Balshaw's Charity School."

The venue was the old grammar school in the corner of the churchyard, but such was the interest in the business, the accommodation was quite inadequate and the meeting took place "in the open air of the churchyard in Vicar's Fields".

Those who remember the open space beyond the gravestones flanked by the great beeches will have no difficulty in conjuring up a vision of this crowd of village forefathers dressed in their best black, standing bareheaded as the principals held forth.

Presiding was the redoubtable Vicar of Leyland, the Rev. Leyland Baldwin.

The surprise of the meeting was that the recommendations were put forward by Mr. John Stanning, who had been chief opponent of the changed role for Balshaw's nine years before.

He explained his position by saying that though Richard Balshaw founded his charity entirely for the poor people of Leyland, in his time there was no free education in England. Now any man could get his children educated for nothing.

In reply to challenges from the audience, Mr. Stanning said the trustees of the charity had not received for the past four months, one single application from anyone in Leyland for any children to be educated at Golden Hill. Did not that point to a deadlock showing that this school, like the fifth wheel of a coach, was doing no good?

The recommendations were, enlargement of Golden Hill school to take 150 scholars as an elementary mixed school, and provision of a higher grade school with separate departments for boys and girls, free for all who had passed the fourth standard in any elementary school in the parish, preference being for children of Leyland residents.

Commenting on the objection to a higher grade school in Leyland that the poor would be deprived of their birthright, Mr. Stanning asked if those who were called the working class were always going to say their children should have an elementary education and nothing more. "The very flower of the working classes," he said, "were willing to make sacrifices for the benefit of their children and now they had a chance of higher education would perhaps be able to send their children to colleges and University". He added "that his father had made sacrifices for him and he wished every man imbued with that spirit."

The charity commissioners held an inquiry two days later, but it was not until January 1894 that the trustees considered the scheme and made their observations. A cause of delay was that their numbers had been reduced by death to three and the trust deed required new appointments to be made.

One of the observations of the duly constituted body was that the founders wishes on teaching of Church of England doctrines should be carried out.

On December 19, 1895 at the annual prize distribution, it was revealed that one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools had complained that Golden Hill School was not efficient. Parents of half-timers attending had been told they must send their children to an elementary school within the meaning of the Act.

MIDDLE CLASS CLAIMS

Trustee, Mr. Tootell expressed the view that the school should be made a middle class school.

The people of Leyland were put to considerable inconvenience by having to send their children to outside places and he thought they should be able to establish a higher grade school in Leyland on Church of England lines.

The trustees objected to the suggestion that the school should be an elementary one because the ratepayers would receive a benefit by lessening their responsibilities by the trust income of £385.

It did not occur to him that Richard Balshaw had left money for relief of rates.

Therefore if the trust was to be used for free education, it ought to be used for higher education.

Although Mr. Tootell was applauded at the prize day, he raised a doughty opponent in the columns of the local press — one Mark Whitehead of 20 Towngate, Leyland.

In a letter to the Chorley Guardian of December 28, 1895, Mr. Whitehead accused Mr. Tootell of being in favour of the scheme rejected by parishoners in Vicars Fields in 1892.

Convinced that the donor intended his charity for the poor only, Mr. Whitehead, declared his intention to oppose to the uttermost "the downright robbery of those who are blessed with the least of this world's goods to benefit a class who are well able to pay for the education of their children."

Considerable opposition was shown by a number of parishoners at a ratepayers meeting at Golden Hill School on July 23, 1896, when it was reported the Charity Commissioners had approved a scheme for establishing a school for secondary education to which the trust funds might be devoted. This included government by co-optative trustees with a Master of Arts as head teacher. There were also to be scholarships to the annual value of £76 while fees varied from £4 to £8 per annum, the age for admission not being less than eight years.

On December 17, the same year, Mr. Tootell made a speech day tribute to the last Master of the Charity-school, Mr. De Pennington, and thanked him for the excellent work he had accomplished. He also alluded to the quality of the work displayed by the scholars.

The outcome of fifteen years of conflict during which a variety of schemes was suggested came in 1898 when a scheme was sanctioned by the Charity Commissioners and the Board of Education. This permitted a considerable portion of the trust estate to be sold and the proceeds applied to the erection of a new schoolroom and classrooms, and general improvement of the premises, in order that Lancashire County Council might include Balshaw's among the secondary schools of the county, for which they were prepared to undertake financial responsibility.

Mr. Tootell of West Cliff, Preston, who had been appointed a trustee in 1869 — just before the wind of change — was appointed the first chairman of the governors on Sept. 20, 1898. On his death on June 22, 1901, he was succeeded by Mr. John Stanning.

The list of masters at the Charity-school, as recorded on the brass plate, were:

1786-1790 William Boyer;
1790-1792 John Singleton;
1792-1799 Stephen Hayhurst;
1799-1850 Robert Kellett;
1849-1870 George Singleton;
1870-1899 John De Pennington.

CHARITY SCHOOL OLD BOY

An old boy of the Charity-school, Mr. John Winder of Hall Lane, who was 90 when interviewed in 1972, recalled that Mr. De Pennington was married but not to the headmistress.

He had another reason for remembering Mr. De Pennington. The headmaster had a habit of putting a sum on the blackboard on a Friday afternoon and the last four to answer had to sweep out the classroom. Mr. Winder was one of the quartette required to perform this duty. But they failed to do so and were hauled before the school on Monday morning.

One boy at a time was to bend over the table so that the punishment could be administered by one of the four. The boy so ordered not only refused to punish his mates, but kicked Mr. De Pennington.

Mr. Winder, a half timer, completed his education at the old Top School in Union Street (now Fox Lane), but he did not indicate whether this was on account of the incident! No doubt Balshaw's rule would have applied!

Incidentally, Mr. Winder never knew the school as Balshaw's. It was always called the Golden Hill School, he said.

The first headmaster of the grammar school was Mr. James D. Wilde M.A., who was appointed at £100 a year and a fee of £3 a head out of a capitation grant.

He started with 12 boys on Sept. 13, 1899.

In the same year the Charity Commissioners inquired into the old grammar school in the churchyard which had not been used as a school for 30 years. The building was bought by Mr. John Stanning who gave it to the vicar and wardens for parochial purposes.

The first prize distribution at Balshaw's after it became a higher grade school was on July 17, 1900.

The report states that considerable structural alterations had been carried out and the portion formerly used as the girls school and the mistresses apartment had been turned into additional accommodation for the boys. Some of the smaller rooms were being used as a workshop, laboratory and for clay modelling.

Excellent arrangements had also been made for accommodation of boarders and a football and cricket field provided.

The intention to build a new school on the site was disclosed by Mr. Wilde at the second annual speech day in July 1901. The governors were, he said, negotiating with the county council for assistance.

GIRLS SCHOOL PROPOSED

Unfortunately, everything did not go well with Mr. Wilde's ambitious curriculum.

When he held the speech day on July 31, 1902, no governors were present.

Reporting that the number of scholars had increased from 19 to 25, Mr. Wilde said in his three years at the school, he had done his best to carry out the new scheme with a certain amount of success.

Unfortunately after his appointment, the governors arranged a plan for a girls school against which he protested and pointed out that it was contrary to the scheme under which he had been engaged and that it was an encroachment on his rights.

He protested to the governors but was informed that if he persisted in his opposition to the girls school they would apply to the Charity Commissioners for a new scheme. Consequently he did not take any further action.

He was much astonished a month before to be told that the school was to be closed as matters were in such a state the governors could go no further.

The press report had its own footnote to the effect that it was understood it was not the intention of the governors to carry on two separate schools after Christmas, seeing that the present expenditure was in excess of income. It was proposed to have a mixed school of a higher grade character.

Although the term grammar school had been applied to Balshaw's School in advertising for a headmaster under the new scheme, it is doubtful if the appellation applied at Golden Hill except for the three years Mr. Wilde was in charge. He claimed to give a sound classical and commercial education. Early prize lists seem to support this and one award was actually given for German.

Although Latin was taught at Balshaw's after Mr. Frederic Jackson M.A. took over in 1903, it was more a subject for individuals than classes.

This was probably because 'Pa' Jackson, as he became known, was an educationist with a practical turn. He saw Balshaw's as 'belonging to Leyland', which was changing from an agricultural village to an industrial town at what in those days, must have seemed a tremendous pace. If the emphasis was on mathematics and science rather than the classics, it was because there was a need in the new and thriving industries growing round the school.

Not that Mr. Jackson neglected the other side, as will be seen from some of his reports. He may have been a sentimentalist at heart with a Victorian respect for individualism, but he tried to meet the demands of the time with an eye on the future.

As a historian, he was probably content to apply the term grammar school to Balshaw's because of the link with the grammar school in the churchyard founded as a chantry school by Sir Henry Farington in 1537.

It was however, in the field of co-education that Mr. Jackson assisted by Mrs. Jackson ('Ma') showed the pioneering spirit — though they may have been in contravention of Balshaw's Rule 2 (The schoolmistress shall not be the wife or daughter of the schoolmaster, or any ways related to him).

The first reference to Mr. Jackson in the Chorley Guardian, from which much contemporary information has been obtained, is of an 'at home' on Friday, December 18, at Wellington House where the school was housed during the building of the new school at Golden Hill. The report states that girl scholars past and present at Balshaw's attended the event in the reception room and scenes were performed from 'The Merchant of Venice' and 'Macbeth'. Mr. Jackson afterwards gave a short address.

Following re-organisation, the girls had been accommodated in Leyland Public Hall and kept well away from the boys.

This separation was evidently envisaged in the new school and the four classrooms, each with a capacity for 25 pupils, were to be equally divided between boys and girls.

As those who attended that school know full well, boys and girls were taught together in the same classrooms — except for such subjects as cookery in the old school.

But in 1903 co-education was a very controversial subject.

Mr. Mark Whitehead continued to oppose the changes to the last. According to Mr. Bob Crozier, an old boy who moved from Wellington House to the new school with Mr. Jackson, Mr. Whitehead had an outfitters business in Towngate. If he happened to be standing in front of his premises when a Balshaw boy went past he would scream and shout after him "Charity Boy"!

Mr. Crozier also recalled Mr. De Pennington who would not allow any boy to kick when fighting. "Anyone caught doing this," recalled Mr. Crozier, "was taken into the yard and made to kick the wall until his boot or clog was burst or broken.

NEW SCHOOL OPENS

The new building at Golden Hill was opened on June 9, 1904, by the Chairman of the Lancashire Education Committee, Sir Henry F. Hibbert, who has been described as the founder of Chorley Secondary (later Grammar) School opened in 1906.

It was largely on account of his work in framing the 1902 Education Act (which made the new school possible) that he had been knighted.

The new building on Golden Hill cost £3,500. The architects were Garlick, Sykes and Catterall, Preston and the contractors, Cartmells of Preston.

Clergy, governors of the old school, scholars and visitors, formed at the old building to walk in procession to the new one.

The senior governor, Mr. T. F. Hutchinson, gave a brief history of the development of the school and said that the governors consisted of representatives of Leyland Urban District Council, Lancashire County Council, Victoria University, and two or three outlying parishes which Richard Balshaw had included in his scheme and which had a right to the share in the advantages of the new school.

Mr. Hutchinson did not forget to pay tribute to Mr. Tootell, who had worked so hard for the scheme. Although it was not yet satisfactory to them as governors, on the principle that half a loaf was better than no bread, they had accepted it and loyally tried to carry it out to the best of their ability.

Recalling that the running of the separate girls' school had not been a success financially, Mr. Hutchinson revealed that visits had been paid to various schools in surrounding districts which showed it was perfectly feasible to run a mixed school for boys and girls.

Sir Henry, commenting on Richard Balshaw's rules, said he had to agree with the one giving 21 days holiday at Summer and 24 at Christmas.

He did not know whether he was a bit before his time as regards school holidays, but he thought there was an enormous waste of time in those given at public schools in the country.

If he was in control he would want to curtail the 13, 14 and sometimes 15 weeks holiday given every year, though he would see that teachers had ample leisure.

He went on to point out that whilst the old school taught reading, writing and arithmetic, the curriculum of the new school included geography, history, mathematics, Latin and at least one modern language, natural science, music and drill.

Sir Henry caused amusement when he said that some people were commenting that in consequence of education "the peas are above the sticks", but our greatest competitors, Germany and the United States, were sparing neither time nor money to equip their workers adequately.

Men in charge of blast furnaces in America were University graduates.

The Lancashire County Council's scheme for Secondary Education aimed to form a ladder on which a child with ability would be able to climb from the lowest stratum of society right up to university (applause). He mentioned 'A' type secondary schools which took pupils to 18 years and 'B' type to 15 or 16. A third class was for pupils from the sixth standard up to 14 years. With the middle class school at Leyland, it was

intended to cater for those who intended to become pupil teachers as well as those who were to be educated for other walks of life.

Sir Henry praised the forethought of the governors of Balshaw's because if a secondary school had not been in existence in Leyland it was extremely improbable one would have been built.

The whole problem of secondary education turned on finance. But he knew of no better investment for money than the brains of the children.

The new school began with 60 pupils — 36 boys and 26 girls, but the numbers increased rapidly and in 1905 the roll was 110.

Mr. and Mrs. Jackson were no longer able to manage on their own and the names of J. J. Stubbs (Science), T. H. Clements (Maths) appear as assistant staff.

Mr. Norris Bretherton of Runshaw Hall had become chairman of governors and then Archdeacon Fletcher of Chorley, but Mr. Hutchinson, one of the oldest governors, seemed to deputise regularly at speech day and in 1908, was still referring to the loss sustained by the death of John Stanning "Who being dead, yet speaketh" through the Stanning Memorial Scholarship won by John Mee.

SEX EQUALITY

Mr. Hutchinson also put in a further word for co-education when he said they had been criticised at Balshaw's for putting boys and girls on terms of equality, but they had been shown to be right in results.

He suggested that the scheme had pleased the suffragettes in this way, and by educating 25 per cent of scholars without cost to their parents — the Socialists also!

The speech day was notable for the fact that on the platform, making his first public appearance in Leyland was the new squire, William Edmund Farington, who had married in June, the Hon. Margeurite Phyllis Blake, daughter of Lord Wasscourt and granddaughter of the Dowager Countess of Harrington of Cowes. As the Hon. Mrs. Farington, the Squire's lady presented the prizes.

Evidently the school hall was already too small at Golden Hill for this event, like others that followed, took place in the public hall.

A sad postscript to the occasion was that the young squire died early the following year.

In 1910 Archdeacon Fletcher presided at speech day and presented a silver bowl to Mr. Hutchinson for his long service as governor and correspondent.

This was the year when the Oxford Local was first mentioned.

The girls performed 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' with Mrs. Jackson as producer.

The link with Worden was resumed in 1911 when a new Squire, Henry Nowell ffarington appeared on the platform with his mother, Mrs. ffarington, who presented the prizes.

Kipling's 'Recessional' was sung as the school song.

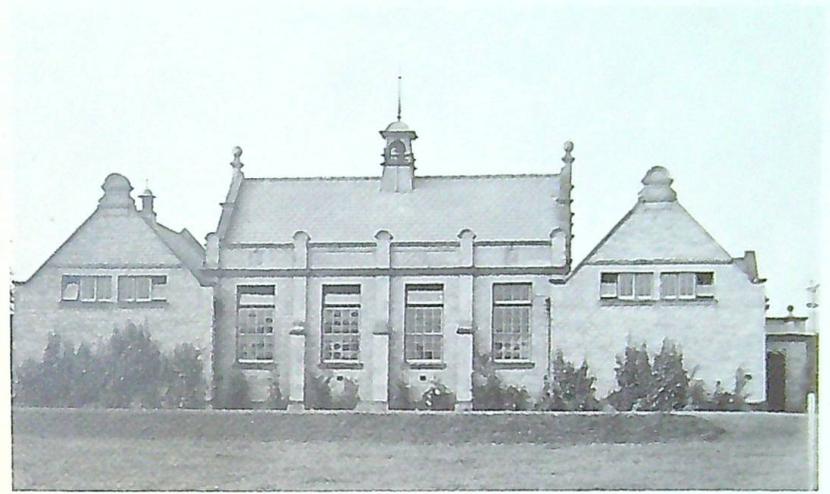
Mr. Hutchinson was back in the chair, but the following year 1912, Archdeacon Fletcher presided again and his daughter presented the prizes.

The school now had 133 pupils, 430 having been enrolled since 1903. Successes had been gained in open scholarships.

For the first time mention was made of games being organised under elective captains and the school captain, Porter, was praised for his work. His name appears at the top of the board listing head prefects in the present school.



Golden Hill School 1784.



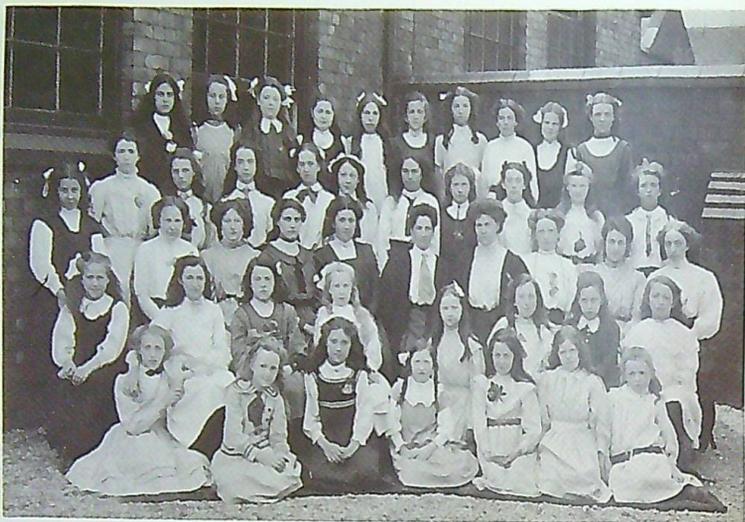
Golden Hill School 1904.



Church Road



1931



In 1911 all the girls could be grouped in a corner of their school yard. They are seen here with the headmistress, Mrs. Jackson (centre). Photo A. Stott, Deepdale, Preston.



Girls of the then equivalent sixth form around 1914. Mrs. M. E. Edge of Adlington who loaned this picture and the one above appears in the front row. She was then first head girl, Nelly Smith. Photo A. Stott, Deepdale Preston.

Four houses were named after captains. Later they became known from the colours as 'Lights and Darks (blues)', 'the Blues', 'the Amber and Blacks' and 'the Clarets'.

Rifle shooting appeared on two early prize lists and Mr. Jackson suggested the winners might join the territorials. This year he thanked Leyland Rifle Club for facilities for practice under the eagle eye of Mr. Stubbs.

Two new tennis courts were in constant use when weather permitted.

Mr. Jackson added, what he repeated on a number of occasions, that it was the matter of frequent lament that there was no safe bathing place for teaching swimming.

BREAD AND BUTTER

Although Balshaw's itself was still regarded as an experiment in some quarters. Mr. Jackson had little time for those who 'invited teachers to scrap their methods of teaching and pursue pleasant paths to knowledge. There had to be some drudgery in any work that counted', he said. And at Balshaw's they were contentedly early Victorian in their simple taste for 'plain bread and butter cut thick as multiplication tables and spelling afforded a healthy digestion.'

This year 'Pa' Jackson was able to let himself go. The play, "Twelfth Night" performed by the boys and girls had been the previous Friday, leaving him more time on speech day.

Reports began to appear in 1913 of the annual sports with 27 events on the third Saturday in June, nicely steered between the May Festival and exams.

Mr. Alfred Lomax, later chairman of the governors, acted as starter, a duty he continued to perform until the school moved to Church Road.

It was in 1913 that Sir Henry Hibbert, who had opened the school, returned to present the prizes. He treated the audience to a lesson in simple arithmetic which showed that the 115 scholars were costing the ratepayer £11 per head. Of the scholars, 55 came from Leyland itself, 60 from surrounding districts. Forty had won scholarships.

EARLY LEAVERS

Then he delivered a bombshell. The Board of Education were hinting at withholding grants as the secondary school life over 12 averaged only one year.

Parents, he said, were being asked to agree to their children not yet 12, to stay four years, and those over — three years.

It was impossible, he declared, to obtain the full advantage of secondary education unless three or four years were spent at school. In his opinion, children who stayed until 14 years and three months would do better not attending at all.

Here he was touching on a matter of which Mr. Jackson had complained as early as 1907. It was to go on for some decades in spite of printed agreements signed by parents.

The headmaster's review mentioned two new names on the staff list. Mr. H. Butler (History) and Miss Nellie Kay.

Mr. Clements who had regularly got his pupils through the Oxford Local in Arithmetic had now achieved the same success in Maths.

WARTIME SCHOOL

The period of the First World War at Balshaw's is still remembered for its 'Pa' Jackson's Army of boys who paraded up and down the town carrying broomsticks for rifles.

Yet they were years of progress made in spite of the call-up depleting the numbers taking examinations. In 1915, 30 boys were at the front and Mr. Clements had joined the forces.

The school had 153 pupils and was drawing them from 21 townships. The boys had started a field club and an engineering society. A library under Miss Inglis was well patronised.

In the following year, 1916, the governors had another chairman named Hutchinson, the Rev. F. E. Hutchinson, Vicar of Leyland and a great scholar who later returned to university as a professor.

He is quoted as saying that it was not enough to think of education as a road to money, but also as a gateway to a fuller life, which should be made available to a large proportion of the population.

The number of pupils —176— had almost trebled since adoption of co-education and as if in celebration, the girls wrested back the dramatic society for themselves, gaining favourable press notice with their performance of 'As You Like It'. Proceeds were for the Red Cross Society. Other efforts contributed to the Soldiers Christmas Pudding Fund and a Jack Cornwell Fund.

Mr. (later Sir) John Peter Todd Jackson, representative of Victoria University on the governors, presented the prizes and told pupils that by cultivation and practice of courtesy and chivalry, by devotion to duty and self sacrifice, every boy or girl could earn the title of lady or gentleman.

The new chariman, Mr. W. S. Kinch C.C., J.P., had been appointed in 1917, but the vicar presided at speech day and followed up his earlier appeal by saying that for every British boy or girl who stayed at school after 15 years of age, there were proportionally five times as many in Sweden and seven times as many in the United States of America.

The number of pupils on the roll at Balshaw's was now 192.

Speech day in 1919 was tinged with sadness. In the words of Mr. Jackson, the school had gathered if possible more closely to their hearts, the names of the fallen, when the school captain read the list in their simple Peace Day service.

Reading names of old boys who had died in the war was a practice at Armistice Day service for many years to come.

Twenty three out of 175 who served, was the quota of their generation to die.

The demand for school places was shown by a waiting list of 93. As 12 had won scholarships it was only possible to offer 39 places. The roll stood at 195.

UTOPIA ACHIEVED

The fifth form was to take the Oxford Local on the advice of H.M. Inspector so that the sixth could take the Higher School Certificate after two years.

Mr. Jackson's comment on this was "It would have appeared Utopian to dream of a secondary school course offering two years study in the sixth form in a school in Lancashire where all the traditions point to the burdens of the standard of life being cheerfully shouldered at 14".

The year began with 14 pupils in the sixth.

In September 1920 the number of pupils had risen to 232 — almost four times the roll of 1903. Mr. Stubbs and Mr. Clements had been replaced by Mr. B. Taylor (Maths) and Mr. A. J. Lomax (Science).

There were also visiting teachers in specialised subjects. These included Mr. Wilcox from Chorley whose enjoyment of art infected his pupils, and Mr. La Hive P.T. instructor who was followed by Sgt. Major Wright who caused a sensation in the school hall by exploding a barrack word during drill.

Four new classrooms had been provided, but these were ex-army huts, draughty and cold in winter and over hot in summer. Occasionally, they had to be evacuated when the stove pipe became blocked by accident or design.

They housed respectively forms 4a and 5b, and 5a and 6.

SCIENCE SCHOOL?

Mr. Jackson who developed his own teaching methods by breaking into a lesson to write on the boards some such word as 'eschatology' on which he would dissertate at length, now incorporated comments on education in his report as a matter of course.

It was highly desirable, he said, in 1920, that education at Golden Hill should be stronger on the side of science 'because of the special character of the area'.

In the same speech he also complained that handwriting threatened to become a lost art.

GIRLS GALORE!

The new vicar of Leyland, Canon Stather Hunt, presented the prizes with the advice to the girls, "Don't try to copy the boys." God had given girls something infinitely more beautiful in character than boys had by nature, he said. In a school which had pioneered co-education this may have been the solecism of the decade.

On the other hand, the reverend gentleman may have been forewarned of a new problem which first revealed itself the following year (1921) when Mr. Jackson had to report that the number of girls on the roll exceeded the number of boys.

The explanation was a general shortage of teachers. Girls were staying on at school to train. Mr. Jackson expressed a view that the profession had many claims for the younger man who wished to do something with his life.

Granted that 50 years of compulsory education had made the peasant and the artisan thoughtful and efficient, but there was still in village welfare "a call for sympathetic and intelligent effort on behalf of the community and for that outlook on public affairs which extended beyond the bounds of mere remuneration."

"The Effort" the school magazine had been started "under the careful editorship of Miss Nellie Bates and censorship of Mr. Jackson."

Miss Bates, a pretty blonde, had succeeded another attractive teacher, Miss Kay, who had returned as Mrs. John Stanton Jnr. of Chorley, to present prizes. No one was surprised when Miss Bates herself left to get married.

She was followed by Miss Milroy a charming brunette who stayed until 1964.

The name of the magazine by the way, was derived from the school motto "Strenue" — the imperative of 'strive'. Presumably this was in token of the efforts being put into the Oxford Local and Higher School Certificate. This was one of the reasons which explained the growth of numbers at the school to 246 in 1922.

A distinguished old boy who presented the prizes, Councillor Harry Berry, regretted the economy measures of 1921, which had necessitated dropping the county programme for new schools. But he promised to do his best for Balshaw's after Mr. A. J. Lomax had said the governors looked forward anxiously to a new school.

Mr. A. J. Lomax with customary bluntness said the staff realised that if they were to continue with the same efficiency they would have to have better accommodation.

OLD STUDENTS

Reference had been made to the Old Boys Football Team as early as 1906, to an old girls reunion in January, 1922 and the first Old Boys Dinner on December 21, 1922 at the Queen's Hotel, Leyland.

The war had increased a desire for reunions and this event continued at any rate until the outbreak of the Second World War.

On the 21st anniversary of Balshaw's as a co-ed school, Mr. Jackson observed that in character building the large family — a school in itself — played its part. With families shrinking in size he thought, the loss was partially repaired in the rough and tumble of school life. At Balshaw's he explained that study had not developed on the lines of the old grammar schools with classical education in Greek and Latin languages.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF SCIENCE

The modern secondary school was the immediate successor of the organised science school and in an industrial community of such highly scientific character as Leyland, the needs of science had been met, it was hoped.

A tradition for music had also been established said this headmaster, who was never happier than when with his mortarboard on the back of his head, he played the piano in front of a class. Who better qualified than he to prophecy that "it is likely that music of the 20th century has in its possibilities outstripped the sister arts".

The school had another great tradition in the nursery of Lancashire — cricket. This was the year when the school team was entertained at Fox Lane by Mr. A. K. Davies of Broadfield whose son Ben Davies brought along a team from his public school.

Thus one half of the world learned how other lived — but the refreshments were excellent!

Perhaps 1924 must be remembered more than anything else as the year of the visit to the Wembley Exhibition when co-education reached new heights. In charge were Miss F. W. Royle (Geography), Miss E. Brindle (French), Mr. H. J. Lomax and Mr. Butler.

Another name also mentioned in the headmaster's report of that year was that of Sidney Farrar who had arranged for some senior pupils to study in France on an exchange basis.

Mr. H. J. Lomax became deputy head, after Mr. Butler's retirement after illness.

Mr. Jackson in this year (1924) had evidently reasons to think again about his advocacy of teaching for industrial careers. G. L. Hay won an agricultural exhibition and we were reminded that the oldest industry in Leyland Hundred was still farming. The boys should ask themselves, "Why should I not be a farmer?"

THE SLUMP

As the twenties rolled on unfortunately boys leaving school were lucky to get jobs at all. Many left at 14 to serve their time in factories where their fathers got them 'axed on'. This meant they missed the Oxford Local. Those who had this qualification however went to the County Offices or the banks.

An invaluable reservoir for old boys was the office of the Leyland and Birmingham Rubber Co. where Harry Berry was on the board.

The thumety-thump of the engine at this works could be heard in the huts and was a reminder of how close we were to industry.

The other reminder was the first rule of the school which we had to write in our attendance books at the beginning of term. It ran, "I must not ride my bicycle out of the bottom gate." Such early attention to road safety was thanks to the testers from Leyland Motors which regularly went up and down Golden Hill.

In 1927 Mr. Jackson said with regret that in the past academic year the output of boys was 64 and for many, employment had to be found.

This was the year when Mr. A. J. Bull the gentle graduate from Oxford replaced Mr. Farrar and taught the use of long sentences and longer words.

His quiet smile was to haunt the classrooms and corridors of Balshaw's until 1966.

When he came, the longest serving master was Henry Butler who completed 16 years on the staff, 12 as senior assistant. A small man, he was held in such respect that no one ever dared try anything on him. He made a history book by "Tout" become a living vibrant thing. His collapse when teaching the sixth form in 1928, shocked the whole school and his premature retirement a year later was received with universal regret.

Mr. Jackson said that Mr. Butler's motto was "School before self" and we believed it.

He was followed by Mr. C. S. Hilditch whose approach, though different, carried on the good work of showing that history is not just a calendar of events. He stayed until 1970.

Mr. B. L. Wilkinson who came some months later, and did the same for maths, was still on the staff when he died in 1972.

On the question of winning pupil interest a palm must go to the late Mr. J. Sutcliffe who taught science and maths. On wet afternoons when he should have taken sport, he read aloud to the class 'The Adventures of Dr. Thorndyke the Scientific Detective'.

NEW SCHOOL PROMISE

By far the most important news in 1928, was the announcement by Mr. A. J. Lomax who occupied the chair at speech day following the death of Mr. Kinch. He said, "The long promised new school is no longer in the air but on paper and will probably be proceeded with immediately." He had seen the plans and was sure when the building was complete they would have a school of which Leyland could be proud.

Evidently Harry Berry had done his stuff.

This was also the year when 5b as well as 5a took the Oxford Local. As Mr. Jackson pointed out this meant that three forms out of eight were taking public examinations.



The school team in 1928-29 became the 'all-blacks' a Strip chosen by John Sanderson (captain) centre. Photo by Harry Wade, Leyland.



Black shirts are worn in the first fifteen 1952-53.

As the new school drew nearer and nearer 'Pa' Jackson announced that he believed that he would serve Leyland best by retirement. In this he expressed himself as he had often done before — that Balshaw's was in effect Leyland.

The new school had been talked of for so long one was reminded of Moses on top of Pisgah. 'Pa' had certainly guided us through the wilderness from the day when he had gone to Wellington House with a handful of pupils.

But his parting words were a tribute to John Stanning who "had to combat the opinions of the Board of Education that an artisan centre did not need culture and that a higher grade school would suffice." It seemed the county authority had also reported that a school in Chorley would meet the needs of Leyland.

Mr. Stanning had taken matters further — 'to London — "I remember his telegram," revealed Mr. Jackson, "saying that he had won."

A tribute to Mr. Jackson himself came in 1930 from no less a person than the Director of Education for Lancashire Mr. Percy Meadon, who presented the prizes.

Children he said were privileged to attend grammar school. In England only 7.2 per cent of children from the age of 11 to 16 went to grammar schools.

Mr. Jackson's wish was that he should withdraw quietly without fuss. On July 30, 1931, he retired and Mr. H. J. Lomax presented him with a solid silver rose bowl and two solid silver vases on behalf of the staff and pupils.

Mr. Jackson acknowledged these in a few words.

His deeds spoke loudest of all, especially the fact that he had come to the school when it was new and now it was too small to accommodate all the pupils. It was in truth 'Pa' Jackson's school.

The old students association would not let Mr. and Mrs. Jackson go so quietly, however, and on November 6, 1931, 'Pa' and 'Ma' were guests of honour at a ball held in the Public Hall.

Bob Crozier who had moved from Wellington House to Balshaw's with 'Pa' and 'Ma' presented them with a mahogany sideboard and a canteen of cutlery on behalf of the old students.

The remarkable thing was that 'Ma' and 'Pa' still called them all by their christian names! These they never forgot!

CHURCH ROAD SCHOOL

In September 1931, 165 scholars from Golden Hill moved to the new school in Church Road — almost opposite where 'Pa' Jackson had begun his labour at Wellington House in 1903. In the following March, there was an entertainment still remembered by all who were present. It included a unison song 'In Poland there is a house', two one-act plays, 'The Bishop's Candlesticks' and 'The Goose Girl'. There was also a comedy duo 'There's a hole in the bucket, dear Liza' by Jack Downie and Joan Griffiths.

The official opening of the school was on June 18, 1932, near enough to the anniversary of the foundation on June 14, 1782. The happy coincidence of 150 years was pointed out by the chairman of governors, Mr. J. B. Cardwell, who said he believed that following economy measures, Leyland was the last place to get a school of that standard in the administrative county.

Chairman of the Lancashire County Higher Education Sub-Committee, Sir James Openshaw, performed the opening ceremony with a key provided by Mr. S. Wilkinson, the architect.

The headmaster, Mr. V. U. Oldland, spoke on the inheritance of a fine old tradition. They wished to keep this tradition and graft something new on to it.

It may have appeared more dramatic than that, to some! The badge, a cross saltire with a book in the centre bearing the motto 'Strenue' was replaced by a silver griffin with the words 'Non sibi sed aliis' ('Not for self but for all').

The four houses assumed the names of local houses, which may have explained the griffin — a creature of heraldry.

The house captains were all prefects or sub-prefects (an innovation) and each house had a master and mistress.

It is worth putting on the record, the new set up from 'The Balshavian' (No. 1, Christmas Term 1931), which took over from the old 'Effort'. The system of putting girls' initials first, and boys' initials last is followed.

Prefects. Boys. Senior Prefect: Shepherd R.; Prefects, McCann, Stringfellow R.; Vause P. G. Sub-prefects: Briggs C. A.; Fishwick. Girls. Senior Prefect: E. Forshaw. Prefects, E. Cross and A. Thornber. Sub-prefects: K. Butterworth, M. Edmunds, L. Lomax.

Houses:

Clayton: Housemaster; Mr. J. Sutcliffe. Housemistress; Miss F. W. Royle. House Captains; Briggs A. C. and B. Wilkinson.

Cuerden: Housemaster; Mr. C. S. Hilditch, Housemistress; Miss E. Brindle; House Captains; Shepherd R. and A. Thornber.

Farington: Housemaster; Mr. H. J. Lomax. Housemistress; Miss A. Milroy. House Captains; McCann W. and E. Forshaw.

Worden: Housemaster; Mr. B. L. Wilkinson. Housemistress; Miss M. A. Rahill. House Captains; Vause P. G. and E. Cross.

The colours were: Clayton — green; Cuerden — red; Farington — gold; Worden — blue.

No doubt the system was designed to play its part in the discipline of the larger school and was a necessary provision. As early as 1933 (Balshavian, Autumn Term) this process had started. Under 'School notes' appears the paragraph "Despite the increase in school fees and the continuance of the industrial depression, our numbers continue to grow at a remarkable pace. Last year's record has been eclipsed and we now have no less than 285 pupils on the school roll. In addition to an increase in numbers from Leyland itself there are also larger contingents arriving each morning by special school buses. People now come to this school from places as far apart as Knowle Green and Wrightington."

The same notes record that "the school enters this term on its second season of Rugby. The first and second Colts XV's have excellent fixture lists which include matches with teams from Sedburgh, Rossall, Kirkham G.S., Blackpool Secondary School, Newton G.S., Preston Grasshoppers and Wellington House". The first match is against Wellington House when the School XV will make their debut in the new school colours — all black with black and silver striped stockings."

Here is change indeed! What is going to happen to Preston North End and Blackburn Rovers — teams to which Balshaw's the Soccer School has been known to send players?

However, Mr. Oldland, an ex-Harlequin himself, could hardly be expected to follow that tradition, but he made up for it by upholding an even greater one. He became captain of Leyland Cricket team which included many old boys.

After the first shock, the old students who had never attended the new school, formed a relationship which grew closer as they were joined by the new generation.

Diplomatically, Mr. Oldland resurrected the old 'captains board' from the boiler house, and added the head boys of Golden Hill to the prefects of Church Road! A noble gesture!

The old students of Golden Hill days rejoiced in facilities at the new school and even performed plays "Hobson's Choice" and the "The Fourth Wall". The old school had not even had a stage. The old students association showed their approval by presenting the 'Silver Griffin' to be awarded for scholastic merit.

The school tradition in drama and music indeed took a great step forward.

The forerunner of many notable productions had to be "A Midsummer Night's Dream" in 1933. Mr. C. S. Hilditch the producer, Mr. H. J. Lomax the stage manager, and Mr. J. Sutcliffe the business manager, old stalwarts, combined with newcomers Mr. R. Hill (singing), Miss Spellman (dancing), Miss Abbey (costume), Miss Brocklehurst (curtains) and Mr. H. Hewartson (stage construction).

One general inspection report said "The school has a fine dramatic tradition". Commented the late Mr. Hilditch in 1973, on reading the notes for this history "The H.M.I.'s like myself did not know how old that tradition was!"

Mr. Hilditch was producer for ten years, chiefly of Shakespeare, Shaw and Sheridan, though he did Beaumont and Fletcher, Dekker and Farquhar too.

NEW HORIZONS

Perhaps it was in the curriculum that Mr. Oldland really used the new broom. On speech day in 1934 he was openly critical of parents who were too parochial in their outlook, who preferred "to see their children nestling safely in some business in the neighbourhood which had no prospects and very low wages to a post in some other part of the country which had good prospects and high wages."

The new school was certainly outward looking and every opportunity was taken to make contact with the outside world.

A party of 20 were going as far afield as Italy, 90 had paid a visit to London to view the exhibition of British Art at Burlington House and seen several other places of interest. Three visits had been made to Manchester to dramatic productions of "Twelfth Night", "Anthony and Cleopatra" and "Peter Pan". They had also seen a play by Moliere, toured Sablesbury Hall and Leyland Motors and seen Lancashire play hockey in the semi-finals at Blundellsands.

Sound films had been introduced into the school, the first one showing the attempt on Everest in 1933. There were to be hockey films and a film explaining rugby. The third year had been receiving a series of broadcast lectures during school hours. They were eagerly awaiting the return of the Osiris Players.

SIXTH FORM VALUE

Right from the start, Mr. Oldland had encouraged parents to leave children at school 'long enough to gain the precious gift of leadership'. "What they learn in the sixth form is worth all they have learned in other forms," he said on his first speech day. That seemed to set the sights for Balshaw's for the next forty years.

Not only the success, but the growth of the sixth form was the outstanding achievement of the generation.

As late as December 1947, Mr. Oldland reported that many parents were



An even bigger success than 'A Midsummer's Night's Dream' (a Balshaw tradition) was Sheridan's 'The Rivals' in 1934. Mr. C. S. Hilditch, producer of many of the School plays is in the centre as Sir Anthony.



School Hockey Team 1931-32 includes Golden Hill girls and Miss E. Brindle, French Mistress.

convinced of the value of the work done in the sixth form — the supreme importance of which he had stressed for many years.

One reason for the growth of the sixth form was the achievement in the School Certificate of pupils in lower forms. In 1932 — the first year at the new school, 76 per cent of the fifth form entrants obtained certificates, 50 per cent with matriculation. Three obtained higher school certificates and 13 received letters of success in their subjects.

But Mr. Oldland made it clear he did not intend to subordinate everything to examinations.

An interesting commentary on the results was that many of the pupils were of the fee paying variety who had not been subjected to 11-plus selection though there was an entrance exam at the school. Despite the increase in fees mentioned, earlier numbers continued to increase and in 1937 the complement of 330 boys and girls was exactly double the number who come from Golden Hill.

By 1946, there were 480 pupils and congestion had been relieved to a certain extent by the building of two new classrooms.

Academic standards had risen, successes being 62 school certificates and 12 higher school certificates, Geoffrey Barrett had gained a county university major scholarship.

The results were all the more remarkable because there had been six years of war and the school had been kept going with depleted staff and other difficulties.

The annual sports had become more or less a domestic event (Mr. Oldland in 1941), though there had been some notable achievements in this sphere, like Salisbury winning the victor ludorum three times in succession (1944).

In May 1945, with 'peace just around the corner' Flt. Leut. Hilditch, back from the Middle East, and now prospective Labour Candidate for Blackpool, took the field during the tug-o-war and offered his house Cuerden, loud encouragement. They won the under-15 tug and also the house championship so he left in a satisfied frame of mind, it is recorded.

EARLY WARNING

As the war ended, Mr. B. L. Wilkinson warned of a new conflict in the field of education. Writing in the press under the heading "The New Education Act — Does it mean Mess and Muddle?" he commented that a working lad's best friend was his secondary schoolmaster.

"Strange as it may seem to Labour Party officials," he wrote, "a secondary school teacher is not interested in the social status of his pupils. What he begs for in them is ability as this makes his job easier and much more interesting."

Mr. Wilkinson also drew attention to an aspect of the Act which was already coming in for criticism.

It promised every child who was capable of profiting by a secondary education would receive it. But the plain truth was that the only schools capable of giving such education were the grammar schools, and those were already overcrowded.

Eighteen months later (December 1946) Mr. Oldland in his annual report said the new Education Act had changed the whole face of state aided education in the country.

He warned that it became increasingly important to safeguard types of education which had survived the acid test of time. It was doubtful if any feature in English

education had developed so greatly during the previous forty years as the grammar school with its particular refinement of advanced work in the sixth form.

He also forecast that the right use of leisure would be of paramount importance and threatened to be one of the most significant problems of the future, if the general standard of living was raised and men and women were to be released from the thralldom of long working hours.

That was what the grammar schools ought to do.

Mr. Oldland refuted suggestions that the curriculum at Balshaw's was too academic. A girl had a four years' course in handicraft and a two year course in cookery, and every boy had a four years' course in handicraft. Art was taken seriously by all pupils for the same period and they had 67 pupils a year taking one of the subjects to the higher standard with a full subject in the school certificate examination.

Boys and girls enjoyed physical training and games in school throughout their whole school life and many other activities in connection with school societies.

All would understand why they were anxious to preserve the precious heritage of the voluntary grammar school. There must be no levelling down of standards. Rather must there be a levelling up of the newly created secondary schools to theirs, though the bias in curriculum might be different.

It was impossible to change the character and ethics of a school overnight by pulling down one label over its door and substituting another.

Academically the vindication of the grammar school was Mr. Oldland's announcement in 1949. Never before in the history of the school, he said, had 20 pupils gained higher school certificates and 96 per cent entrants in the Oxford Local passed.

In 1951, the first year of the General Certificate of Education 92 passed at 'O' Level and 39 at 'A' Level.

Alluding to the fact that the previous year's record of 24 pupils being admitted to university had been equalled, Mr. Oldland attributed the success to the policy of the school in giving prominence to sixth form work.

Mr. Oldland also revealed that after prolonged negotiations, the Ministry of Education had granted the school voluntary controlled status.

The ability of the grammar school to "weather the storm of egalitarianism" was also referred to by Mr. Oldland, who somewhat prophetically said it remained to be seen what would be the impact of the G.C.E.

He continued to defend grammar schools, remarking in 1952 that their reputation was never higher as competition for entry indicated, and in 1957 that the only complaint against them was from parents whose children had failed to gain admittance.

It is difficult to miss the historic repetition of Balshaw's being once more in the centre of conflict on secondary education!

DISTINGUISHED OLD BOYS

At a number of the post-war speech days, old boys who had distinguished themselves in various fields returned to present the prizes. One of these was Jack Downie who flew from Geneva where he was doing important work for U.N.O. in 1954. The office was performed in 1957 by K. M. Grayson, assistant master, Malvern College and in 1959 by Dr. F. L. Mitchell, principal bio-chemist for Dundee Hospital Board.

It came as something of a shock to those who still regarded Mr. Oldland as the new headmaster, to learn he was to retire on August 31, 1960 — after an even longer service than 'Pa' Jackson!

As happened with 'Pa' and 'Ma', the old students association arranged a dinner four days before and presented Mr. and Mrs. Oldland with two silver bob-bon dishes and a cheque for a T.V. Set.

Mr. Oldland in his reply, said it was a tremendous wrench to leave so many friends in and around Leyland for he had spent 29 of the happiest years of his life at Balshaw's.

THE AGE OF OPPORTUNITY

Mr. R. A. Bennison, who had joined the staff as science master in 1933, was acting head until the appointment of Mr. Fred Bleasdale in 1961. The school then had 591 pupils and the number in the sixth form was approaching the hundred.

Considerable change had been introduced into the curriculum during the year. Instruction was offered in 20 subjects at 'O' Level including chemistry, physics, biology as separate subjects. Nearly all 'O' Level subjects from Greek and German to engineering drawing and domestic science could be offered in the sixth.

The object of every pupil entering grammar school should be an advanced certificate, not merely 'O' Level, said Mr. Bleasdale, taking up the sixth form objective of Mr. Oldland.

The numbers continued to increase and in 1963, when the roll was over 600, the sixth broke the hundred barrier. Of the 130 in that form, 11 were pupils from local secondary modern schools.

This development interested Mr. Bleasdale, who drew attention in 1964 to the fact one boy had gone to Lancaster University from the school had gained his 'O' Levels at Worden Secondary Modern School before coming to the sixth at Balshaw's. Another boy from the same school was reading physics at Salford. Former pupils of Wellfield and Worden Secondary Modern Schools had gone from Balshaw's sixth to teacher training colleges.

No boy or girl need be cut off from such opportunities, said Mr. Bleasdale.

In fact in that year 13 pupils from secondary modern schools had come to Balshaw's and the sixth form strength was 160 — that was only five less than the entire complement from Golden Hill in 1931!

11-PLUS VIEWS

Probably the most contentious part of secondary education was selection at 11-plus. Mr. Bleasdale commented at a church meeting in 1965, that whilst it did not test artistic ability, judgement or capacity to discriminate, it was if applied with integrity, as good a test of ability as anything they had. In any event a child could be transferred from a secondary modern school to a grammar school sixth form.

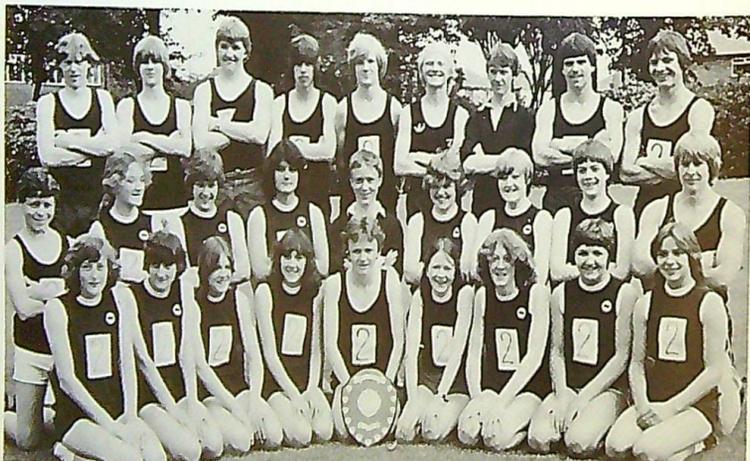
A different view was that expressed by the Chief Education Officer for Lancashire, Mr. Percy Lord, speaking at Leyland Rotary Club of which Mr. Bleasdale is a member. He said that children were now selected at the tender age of 11 by a system that was "quite inaccurate in fact and questionable" apart from whether or not it was moral.

He said "We separate neighbours, friends, classmates because we have the audacity to think that for some at the age of 11 years, they are destined for a career



For the third successive year Balshaw's practically swept the board in Chorley, Leyland and District School Hockey (1978-79).

They won first and second team championships and shared second year title with Bishop Rawstorne H.S. Photo: Chorley Guardian



South Ribble Champion Athletics 1980 — Balshaw's competitors

Photo: Chorley Guardian

and a future that belongs to the professions, the universities and the best. We say they are different from the boy or girl next to them."

The working party in Education Division 10 had evidently been giving Mr. Lord some trouble because instead of the scheme he suggested for a sixth form college fed by secondary schools including grammar schools, they wanted Balshaw's, Chorley Grammar School and possibly St. Michael's to have sixth form wings.

In 1966 the working party compromise was revealed when the divisional executive approved for submission to the county council a scheme for Leyland, whereby Worden, Wellfield and Balshaw's became schools for pupils up to sixteen, but Balshaw's provided a sixth form wing. Worden and Wellfield were also to develop their own sixth form wings.

This was the year when Lord Robens, presented the prizes on speech day and spoke of a 'second' industrial revolution in which the only asset of the nation was the brains and abilities of its people. Since that time a prize has been awarded each year to a pupil displaying outstanding merit in some worthy achievement. We look forward to his return on a future occasion.

Mr. Bleasdale announced that five languages were now offered other than English and the spectrum of courses was in every way comparable with the bigger institutions.

He added that the avante garde of educationists were advocating the abolition of streamlining but at Balshaw's they had been without it for years.

It was when he introduced Miss K. M. Kenyon, principal of St. Hugh's College, Oxford, that Mr. Bleasdale gave a reason why Balshaw's had been a pioneer in co-education. He said that only a conviction about the value of education for girls and higher education in particular could have brought Miss Kenyon all the way from Oxford to Leyland. Then he went on; "she shares this conviction with the wife of our founder, Richard Balshaw, who when she augmented her late husband's bequest for the foundation, laid it down that girls were to be educated.

The school at Church Road had also pioneered the sixth form. The year of 1968 was one of the best academically and more pupils had gone to university than ever before — an equivalent of one third of the first form intake.

None of the fourth form 'O' Levels had failed and 39 per cent of passes had gained top grade.

But Mr. Bleasdale reported that the main area of growth continued to be in the sixth form where 160 of the 660 pupils in the school were doing advanced level work.

"We have in this school," said Mr. Bleasdale, "a sixth form which is as comprehensive under present conditions as possible. Any limitations on its scope are in consequence of accommodation problems, and staffing ratios, and not upon what was or was not done at the age of 11".

He went on "May I hope we shall think carefully before we make it impossible to pass on to others the goodly heritage we now so readily enjoy."

RUNSHAW COLLEGE

Scarcely six weeks later, the divisional education officer announced the comprehensive scheme for Division 10, which provided for a sixth form college which would serve Leyland and Chorley whereby the three secondary schools, including Balshaw's, would become equal comprehensive schools for pupils aged 11 to 16.

The site chosen was in Leyland near Worden Park, but the name given was Runshaw out of deference to the Chorley part of the catchment area.

In the last speech day of Balshaw's as a grammar school in 1971, Mr. Bleasdale, now principal designate of the new college, announced that 71 pupils had gained 'A' Level passes and 199 'O' Level passes had been obtained. Thirty six pupils had been awarded university scholarships.

The first comprehensive intake of four forms (125 pupils) entered the second form and the next comprehensive intake of five forms (145) entered in September 1973. The total number of pupils in 1973-4, including the sixth form was 765.

The second comprehensive intake was joined by Mr. Paul Ingram, the new headmaster, who was responsible for continuing the changes to a comprehensive school.

In July 1974, the sixth and twenty members of staff left for Runshaw. The Balshaw High School re-opened in September the same year with 654 pupils and 16 new members of staff.

One of the pleasing features of the recent years at Balshaws has been the return of former pupils to join the teaching staff. Mrs. Margaret Pickersgill (née Hutchings) was responsible for girls' Physical Education for many years and now holds the post of Senior Mistress. Mr. Keith Smith was Head of Geography and is Head of Cuerden House and in representing the Northern Counties against the All Blacks rugby team is the School's outstanding rugby player. His wife, formerly Miss Gwyneth Hall, is Head of Home Economics teaching in school.

Mrs. Joyce Penswick (née Marsden) is head of Remedial Studies. Mrs. Kathleen Bretherton (née Hosker) was Victrix Ludorum and teachers of Chemistry, Biology and junior Science. Mr. Philip Banks was Head Boy and has returned to teach Mathematics, Mrs. Carole Powell (née Rennie) was Deputy Head Girl and for several years taught French and Spanish. Miss Anne Rigby and Mr. Noel Bannister are the most recent pupils to return to teach English and Music respectively.

During forty years as a grammar school at Church Road, accommodation in the building opened in 1932 had been severely taxed by growth.

Extra classrooms enclosed the west quadrangle in 1952-53. The new science block was opened in 1966. Then in 1970, came the two story R.S.L.A. block supplied as part of the county programme for raising the school leaving age.

In the years that followed the demands of the developing comprehensive school were reflected by further changes.

There was a new practical block for engineering, woodwork, needlework, and cookery. The old woodwork room became the music room.

In September 1975 art teaching was re-housed in the R.L.S.A. block and the library moved to the old art room.

In September 1977, there were six forms of entry (175 pupils) and commerce, typing and office practice were included in the timetable.

September 1979 saw the changing rooms and showers completely remodelled.

By September 1981 there were six forms of entry right through the school, total number of pupils being 895.

Educational thought has changed greatly since the Foundation as reflected on the previous pages. Children today grow up in a different society from that of 1782.

Balshaw's today still reflects the ideals of Richard Balshaw, namely to serve the young people of Leyland and the surrounding area.

Comprehensive schooling has brought a wider view of education, whilst still preserving high academic standards. This wider view seeks to help young people to enter a complex modern world with high standards of integrity, morality and skills.

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