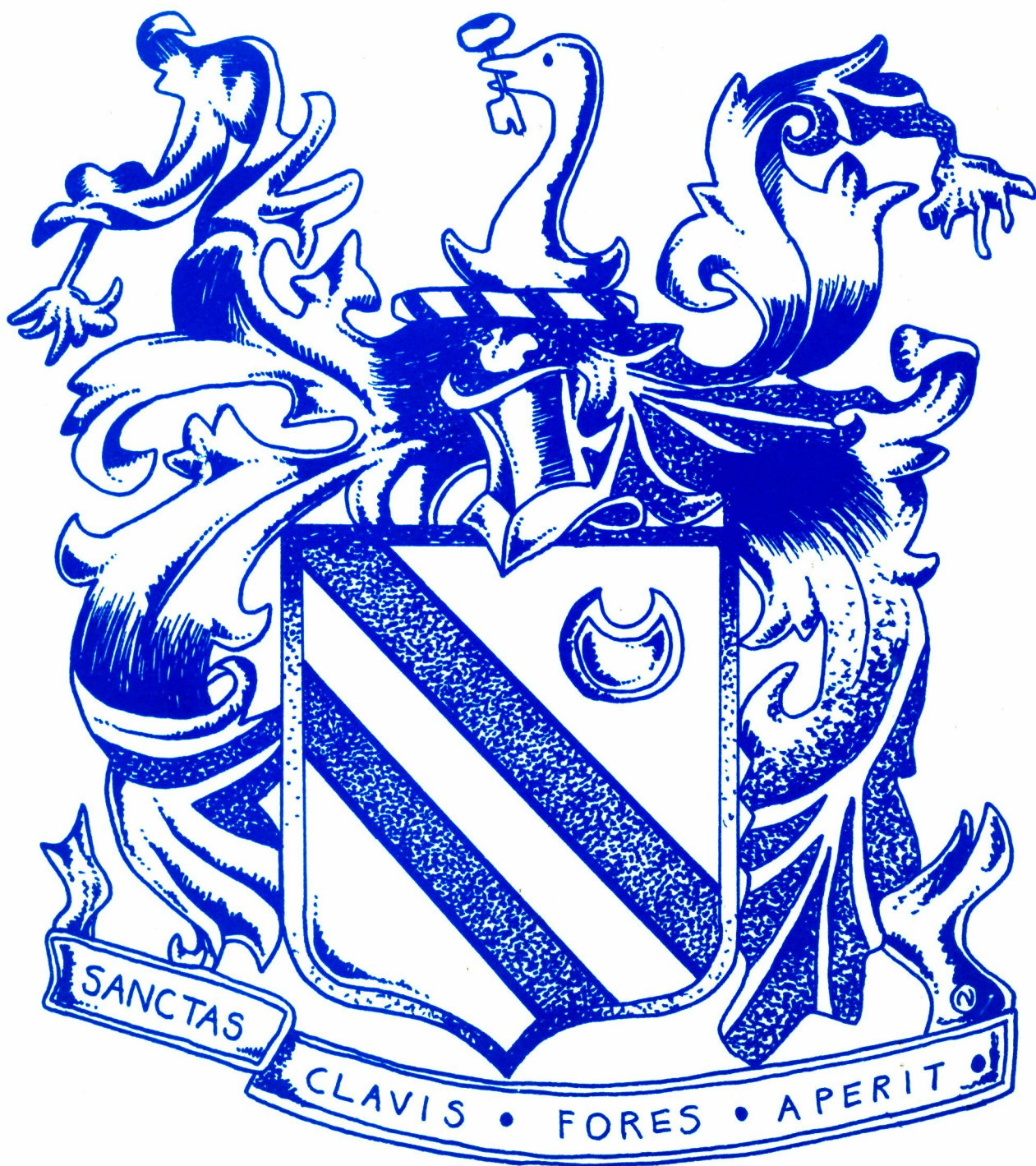


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1976

**Bury  
Grammar School**



**250th Anniversary of the Refounding  
of the School by Roger Kay**

## BURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL (GIRLS)

Headmistress: Miss L. D. Lester, J.P., B.Sc. Manchester

Deputy Headmistress: Miss J. S. James, B.A., London, B.A., Manchester

Assistant Mistresses:

Mrs. J. A. Ackroyd, M.A., Manchester	Mrs. F. H. Little, Diploma in Domestic Economy, Manchester
Mrs. L. E. Baker, B.Sc., London	Mrs. R. M. Lord, B.Sc., Birmingham
Mrs. K. A. Beales, B.A., Liverpool	Miss H. C. Lunt, B.A., Manchester
Mrs. R. M. Blackett, B.A., Lancaster	Mrs. E. J. Mack, Diploma in Art and Design Loughborough
Mrs. C. Bret, B.A., Liverpool	Miss J. M. Mullineaux, B.A., Manchester
Mrs. M. Buckman, B.A., Cantab.	Miss C. F. Naylor, B.Sc., Manchester
Miss J. E. Cardno, B.Sc., London	Mrs. G. Newman, B.A., Hull
Miss M. Carney, B.A., London	Miss J. Outhwaite, B.Sc., Nottingham
Mrs. L. M. Chatburn, B.A., Sheffield	Mrs. B. Powell, Graduate Northern School of Music
Miss J. Clayton, B.A., London	Mrs. O. Riley, Chelsea College of Physical Education
Miss S. Davenport, B.A., London	Miss C. P. Roberts, Edge Hill and Whitelands Colleges of Education
Miss M. A. Dawson, B.A., Leeds	Mrs. E. J. Short, B.A., Wales
Mrs. R. Evans, B.Sc., Wales	Mrs. M. J. Sleigh, Elizabeth Gaskell College, Manchester
Miss G. L. Fildes, B.Sc., Sheffield	Mrs. G. M. Smith, B.Sc., Manchester
Mrs. E. M. Greenhalgh, B.Sc., Manchester	Mrs. B. G. B. Soper, M.A., Cantab.
Mrs. V. J. Hargreaves, Battersea College of Domestic Science	Mrs. B. Starkey, B.A., Hull
Miss B. G. Hill, Bedford College of Physical Education	Mrs. N. L. Welch, B.A., London
Mrs. A. Houghton, Art Teacher's Diploma	Mr. G. R. Wignall, B.Sc., Sheffield
Miss G. Hughes, B.A., Leicester	
Mrs. D. I. Hyde, Liverpool University	
Mrs. I. Lawton, B.Sc., Durham	

## PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

Head: Miss D. R. Lemmon, N.F.U. Certificate, Froebel Educational Institute, Roehampton

Mrs. M. J. Aldred, Kenton Lodge College of Education	Mrs. J. L. Robinson, County of Stafford College of Education
Mrs. M. K. Froggatt, Bangor Normal College	Mrs. D. Stoddard, Graduate Northern School of Music

## KINDERGARTEN

Head: Miss M. Stephenson, N.F.U. Certificate, Rachel McMillan College of Education

Mrs. K. J. Harper, B.Ed. Manchester	Mrs. H. J. Rea, B.Ed., Lancaster
Mrs. D. V. Leese, Cheshire County College of Education (Crewe)	Miss D. E. Smith, Didsbury College of Education
Miss E. H. Mason, Margaret McMillan College of Education	Miss F. M. Wilkinsohn, Chester College of Education

# Bury Grammar School (Girls) 1884–1976

by J. Sonia James, Deputy Headmistress

## Head Mistresses

Jane Penelope Kitchener	1884–1919
Nellie Neild	1919–1940
Grace Perigo	1940–1954
Lillian Dorothy Lester	1954–

When the Rev. Roger Kay re-founded the Grammar School 250 years ago, it would not have been thought strange if he had only been concerned with the welfare of boys. Education in schools at that time was mainly for boys; in the universities it was completely so. But Roger Kay had something more in mind for he wrote, "I charge my Estate called Warth in Rattcliff with the payment of five pounds yearly" in order that ten poor girls born, or to be born, in the parish and town of Bury might receive an education "to make them perfect in their Reading the Bible, to teach 'em to write well, and to be good Accountants to fit 'em for Trades or to be good Servants".

As we look at the present position, we can see how well his hopes have been realised, particularly if we give a modern interpretation to his words, for ex-members of the Girls' School are to be found in most of the professions and both past and present members have a fine record of voluntary service in many spheres.

It was not, however, until 1884 that the school for girls came into being as the Bury High School for Girls. Mr. Henry Webb, Bury's representative on the Hulme Trust, had moved a resolution that "it is desirable that a High School for Girls be formed." At first it was run by a private company of gentlemen interested in education, who appointed Miss Jane Penelope Kitchener to be Headmistress. In 1900 it was taken over by the Governors of Bury Grammar School as their Roger Kay Foundation was to be augmented by some of the Hulme Trust money, and the girls were to share in the joint endowment. The Education Act of

1902 extended Government grants and in 1906 the school moved from Bolton Street to the building in Tenterden Street which was already occupied by the boys.

Miss Kitchener, Headmistress from 1884 – 1919, had been an assistant mistress at Plymouth High School from 1876 – 1881; she then spent a year at Newnham College and was assistant mistress at Sheffield High School from 1882 – 1884. When the school opened she had two assistants and a timetable of this first year, in Miss Kitchener's hand-writing, shows that there were four forms; Miss Ellen Kitchener taught Form I, Miss Ramsey Form II and Miss Kitchener herself Forms III and IV. At first lessons were from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. each day, three 45 minute lessons with a half-hour recreation period from 11.15 to 11.45 followed by a 45 minute and a 30 minute period. Latin, French, Science and Mathematics were included in the curriculum. It is obvious from remarks by some of the earliest pupils that the methods of Miss Kitchener and her staff were very enlightened for that time.

Among the girls who entered the school between 1884 and 1919 the following 'firsts' might be noticed as their achievements say much for the standard of teaching.

**Sarah Alcock** B.A. Manchester University 1892; member of the staff 1897 – 1916; Governor of the school 1934 – 1959; celebrated her 100th birthday in 1971.

**Annie B. Hewart** B.Sc. London University 1892.

**Ethel Withers** M.A. Manchester 1905; Latin Mistress 1908 – 1938.

**Gladys Ramsden** M.B., Ch.B. Manchester 1913.

**Maud Wild** Classical Tripos, Cambridge 1914  
**Nonita Glenday** Hons. English (later M.A.) Oxford 1921; Headmistress of the Arnold High School, Rugby, 1926. She later became Headmistress of Clifton High School for Girls, Bristol, and has recently been co-author of "Reluctant Revolutionaries", an account of the Headmistresses Association.  
**Dorothy Jeffrey** called to the bar 1924.

**Marion Brandwood** Diploma in Dentistry, Manchester, 1928.

Since these early days the fields of study have widened and in recent years several pupils have taken second degrees, and former members of the school are to be found in all parts of the British Isles and other parts of the world as students and members of university staffs.

Over the years the Headmistresses and members of the staff have tried to assess the latest educational developments and put into practice those which are most likely to give wide opportunities to all the girls in both academic and practical fields and above all to train them to be self-reliant and ready to pursue knowledge for its own sake.

Nowadays all girls in the Upper Fifth forms are entered for the Joint Matriculation Board's 'O' Level examinations in six, seven or eight subjects and most of them enter the Sixth form and embark on 'A' Level courses. Few girls leave without the higher qualifications and those who do usually go to other establishments for specialised training or

obtain positions where further training is given.

In every year there is close co-operation between the school and the parents by means of parents' evenings when short discussions with the staff can take place. More detailed consultations can be arranged at any time. This makes it possible for every girl to follow a choice of subjects which does not force her into a rigid course which cannot be varied if she changes her mind about her ultimate aims.

Every effort is made to keep a balance between Arts and Science subjects and between academic and practical ones. After 'O' Level examinations have been taken this continues in the Sixth form and general and non-specialist courses in English, French and Science are followed by those girls who are studying mainly Science or Arts subjects respectively. Those who are considering College of Education courses are encouraged to do practical work in Art, Craft Needlework or Music.



**The Staff of the Girls' School, 1909**



Reports on the term's work are sent to parents of girls in the first four years and the Lower Sixth in December and examinations for these forms are taken in June of each year. After the G.C.E. examinations during the Summer term girls in the Upper Fifth forms carry out a fortnight of voluntary social service which includes working in schools, libraries, hospitals and doing decorating for elderly people.

Members of the staff teach throughout the school and so get to know many of the girls at some stage of their careers. In most subjects girls in the first two years are taught as a form, but from the third year onwards it is possible for them to be divided into groups of varying size. This allows for more mixing than would otherwise be the case.

In the Sixth form there are four groups in each year in charge of a tutor and these groups are made up of both Arts and Science students and some taking mixed courses. They remain in the same group for two years which enables the tutor to know the girls and be able to advise them in making choices and applications in consultation with the Headmistress and Careers mistresses. All mistresses may become Sixth form tutors and so gain experience during their time on the staff.

When the Sixth Form Centre was opened in 1968 all Sixth – formers became responsible for carrying out the duties formerly undertaken by prefects and committees are elected each year to carry out the day-to-day running of the Centre. These committees deal with Finance, Catering, Furnishing, Charities, Tidiness and Hospitality, each having a Chairman and Secretary. The Chairman together with the Games Captains and two or three elected members, to the number of about 14, make up the Organisation Committee, the Head Girl and her deputy being the Chairman and Secretary. The various Societies also have their committees.

## The House system

In 1920, Miss Neild introduced the House system. The girls were divided into five houses according to the area in which they lived. Those who lived in Bury were members of Kitchener House (named after Miss Kitchener); those from the Walmersley and Ainsworth areas were in Peel and Crompton Houses (named after Bury notables of the past). As Robert Clive had connections with Whitefield, girls from Whitefield, Prestwich and Crumpsall were in Clive House. Those who lived in Rochdale were members of Byron House, and if this poet seems an odd choice for a girls' school, it appears that Lord Byron's family owned the manor of Rochdale from the fifteenth century to 1823 and he inherited the title of Lord Byron of Rochdale from his great-uncle in 1798.

Each house had a member of staff as a Housemistress, a House Captain, a Games Captain and a Secretary. Girls remained in the same house throughout their time in the school which meant that the older girls came to know the younger ones and vice versa. The houses continued in this form until 1950 when, as the numbers in each house had become uneven, making it difficult to arrange games tournaments, it was decided to have six houses, roughly equal in number irrespective of the girls' home areas. The new houses were given the names of famous women: Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, Frances Mary Buss, Edith Cavell, Elizabeth Fry, Octavia Hill and Florence Nightingale. As well as the house-mistress, other members of staff were attached to each house.

The house system was used in connection with all aspects of Physical Education and an impressive array of cups and badges was distributed at prize-giving. There were also cups for work, music and reading. The work cup was awarded on the results of the year's examinations and in alternate years there was a Music competition and a Reading competition.

Each house supported a charity for which money was raised in various ingenious ways. The charities were usually chosen as being appropriate to the house in question, for instance, Fry house took an interest in the Police Court Mission.

In 1968 the Charities Committee took over the house charities and extended this work as each form was made responsible for raising money and from time to time a special effort is made in the case of an earthquake or similar disaster, for example. There is still, as in the past, a strong feeling for giving generous help to others and former pupils often make appeals for causes in which they are interested.

Two notable examples of fund-raising were in 1971–2 and again in 1973. On the first occasion £500 was raised, £300 of which was divided among the various form charities and £200 of which was the result of a special effort in aid of the Leonard Cheshire Home in Littleborough. The occasion in 1973 was marked by a visit to the Bury Town Hall by the Head Girl and members of the Charities Committee to present a cheque for £250 as a contribution to the Mayor's Bedside Radio Fund for the local hospitals.

The tradition of helping others goes back to the earliest days and a file of letters from many sources, kept by Miss Kitchener, shows how much the girls contributed to various causes during the First World War. They raised money to provide wool and knitted this into an extraordinary variety of garments for soldiers and sailors. One list mentions 64 mufflers, 67 body bands, 8 pairs of mittens, 112 pairs of wristlets, 13 pairs of stockings, 10 pairs of sea-boot stockings and 1 jersey!

Letters from Commander Kitchener (son of Lord Kitchener of Khartoum, a kinsman of Miss Kitchener) of H.M.S. Ajax speak of books and cakes sent on several occasions and there are also letters of appreciation from a James Law on behalf of himself and another Bury man, both of whom were serving in the ship and who visited the school

in March 1916. Commander Kitchener refers to the fact that "They seem to have been treated below Royalty but above a Prime Minister." There are also letters referring to support for the Church Army, the Mine-sweepers' Fund, the Red Cross Comforts Section and various Refugee Organisations.

During the Second World War knitting for the troops and the Merchant Navy, the making of camouflage nets, financial and material help to refugees and those in bombed areas were some of the ways in which members of the school showed their willingness to help the war effort.

As Bury was considered a neutral area the school was not evacuated but there were other problems. It was necessary to provide air-raid shelters and negotiations were started in April 1939 but it was not until the end of the year that the provision was adequate. School opened on September 19th and many pupils came in from surrounding evacuation areas. A convoy system was introduced so that children went home in groups in charge of older girls; preparation at school was discontinued; more girls stayed for a mid-day meal; in winter school finished at 3 p.m. to ease the transport situation and to allow cleaning to be done before black-out and prize-givings became smaller, day-time occasions.

The Spring term of 1940 opened with extremely cold weather developing on January 29th into heavy snow. School was closed for two days while a new boiler was installed and until coal was delivered Miss Neild stated that these two terms were the most difficult in her experience. Yet in spite of all this the swimming-bath was opened in the summer of 1940.

Miss Perigo, who became Headmistress in September 1940, remembers sleeping on the couch in her room when she took her turn with other members of the staff in fire-watching. A bomb which dropped in the area one night did nothing worse than break a window in the library. An important event of these years was the passing of the 1944 Education Act and the eventual confirmation of the fact that the schools should remain on the Direct Grant list of schools.

## Developments and re-building

When the school celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1934, there were still several of the original pupils able to attend the ceremonies. The numbers had increased to 365 girls with the Headmistress, Miss Neild, and 19 members of staff. In 1958 three-form entry began and there was a consequent increase in the number of staff. Now, well on the way to its centenary, the upper school has 640 girls and a staff of 41.

The presence of two schools in one building working as separate entities made it necessary to exercise much ingenuity so that everything was as harmonious as possible. The boys' school, for instance, had prayers first in the morning and as the last boys left the hall by the door on their side of the building, the first girls entered from their side.

In 1940, Miss Neild had said that the school could not hold more than the 401 girls then on the roll, but somehow another 120 were in the school by 1954. During Miss Perigo's headship, the Governors, in spite of building restrictions, began to consider the much-needed enlargement of the premises. In 1951, the new dining block came into use. This was a single-storey building with, most prudently, foundations strong enough to allow the addition of a second storey when the restrictions were at an end.

The appointment of Miss L. D. Lester as headmistress in 1954 preceded by only a short period the inception of a series of public appeals and capital development lasting for some 20 years down to the present date, during which the Governors and their Clerk in close co-operation with the Headmistress and the Staff have implemented a continuous policy of modernisation by the establishment of a separate girls' school in the extended premises formerly comprising the boys' school and later the combined schools.

Anyone who knew the school 20 years ago would probably need a map to find her way around today. The outside may seem

very similar but inside much has been done. No longer does a green baize door act as a barrier between the two schools. The office has been given more adequate accommodation by building over the front staircase and giving access to the Headmistress's room. The library has taken in the old Art room and been re-shelved and re-equipped; the laboratories have all been modernised and there are now two each for Biology, Chemistry and Physics; the Domestic Science Department has two well-equipped Cookery rooms and a Needlework room. There is also an Art room with display cabinets on the lower corridor and a Craft room with facilities for making all kinds of pottery.

There are two Geography rooms and a language laboratory and every department possesses audio-visual aids of all types. Music is catered for in two music rooms and practice rooms for those who learn to play musical instruments; while information on careers can be obtained in a pleasantly-furnished Careers room.

The form-rooms have been refurnished with stacking desks or tables and chairs, and lockers are provided for books and other belongings. A more informal atmosphere has been created by the removal of the platforms which gave a lecture-theatre air to the rooms on the upper corridor and a stone slab in the floor of some of these rooms is the only reminder of the days when a fireplace provided the heat in each room.

An innovation was the building of the sixth-form centre. The four classrooms in what used to be known as the 'wooden corridor' have disappeared and in their place is the lower floor of the Centre which comprises a lecture-room, which can be divided into three smaller teaching areas, a games room, a common-room with a coffee bar, a locker-room and a committee-room. On the level of the Roger Kay Hall there are two teaching rooms and a work-room while on the floor above there are four teaching rooms used mainly by the lower sixth groups.

Following the building of the sixth-

form centre, the Roger Kay Hall was extended by taking in the old Physics laboratory to give a deeper stage with a retractable apron and a lighting-gallery with a console to control the modern lighting equipment. The old woodwork room which was below the hall has become a room for making properties, a puppet theatre, and a wardrobe and make-up room.

When the school became three-form entry, the number of staff was gradually increased and staff-room space became inadequate. The existing staff-room was refurnished to provide working spaces and cupboards and a separate sitting-room was built and an enlarged cloakroom and sandwich-bar added.

Outside, playing-fields have been created on the old woodyard premises and tennis-courts have taken the place of the top hockey pitches. The Barlow gymnasium is now available for the sole use of the girls and improved cloakroom space has been added with a new sports-hall which means that games can still be played in bad weather.

In spite of the extension of the Hall, it is still not large enough to accommodate the whole school with parents and governors at Prize-giving so the present pattern is to have a distribution of prizes and certificates for the Upper Fifth and Sixth forms in the Autumn and a more informal gathering for the Upper Third to Upper Fourth forms in July.

### **Extra-curricular activities**

There has been a tradition of organised visits at home and abroad, and to plays and conferences and this still continues in spite of rising costs. There is a record of visits to Paris in 1934 and 1936 when a considerable amount of ground was covered on foot and by public transport. There were also several visits to Stratford-on-Avon for the special "Shakespeare week" which seems to have been arranged for schoolchildren.

During the summer holiday of 1930,

Miss Neild took a party to Geneva. In her report of that year she said, "The purpose of the expedition was to spend a week in Geneva under the auspices of the League of Nations Union, acquiring a familiarity with the working of the League of Nations. I wish I could make those of you who did not go understand what those of us who did were fortunate enough to experience."

An attempt to do this followed in November when a Model Assembly took place in the Roger Kay Hall. The lay-out was similar to that in the Hall of Assembly at Geneva. Fifty-two countries were represented and realism was lent to the proceedings by the fact that India, Norway and Czechoslovakia were represented by natives of those countries and that the French delegate (Miss Watson) spoke in French, which was then translated by Miss Pemberton, acting as interpreter. The delegates discussed M. Briand's proposal for a federation of European States and the vote at the end was 35 for the resolution and 17 against.

Since the war trips to many parts of Europe have been arranged and girls have taken part in sponsored visits to the U.S.A. and the Summer exchanges with pupils from Bury's twin town of Angouleme. It is felt that longer exchange visits to families abroad are more valuable than shorter group visits.

Visits to Stratford-on-Avon have, since 1953, become a regular feature, taking place every other year. In July about 80 girls, accompanied by members of staff, stay for two or three days, seeing three or four plays and visiting places of interest. In the past few years, a second visit in October has been necessary as the number of girls wanting to go has increased. Ludlow Castle is also frequently visited. The annual festival at the end of June usually includes a play by Shakespeare so a suitable group of girls goes to see the performance. A sixth form party would go to see "Hamlet", while the Lower Fourths would go to see "A Midsummer Night's Dream".

Visits to exhibitions, international matches, potteries, Art Galleries, the Law



Courts and places connected with careers are a regular feature of each year. Speakers who are experts in various fields are invited to give talks to the senior forms, some of the speakers being former pupils.

## Music and Drama

Music has always played a great part in school life. Many girls study for certificates and diplomas awarded by various bodies. The majority are for piano-playing but nowadays there is an increasing number of girls studying stringed and wind instruments so that for several years there has been an orchestra which plays at Prize-giving and on other occasions.

Between 1925 and 1932 a series of concerts and lecture-concerts were given on Friday afternoons by a group of Halle players and notes were supplied to illustrate the pieces played. In many cases these were the work of Miss Attridge, Head of the Music Department.

Choirs took part in several of the Music Festivals for Girls' Secondary Schools held at Manchester University before the War and visits to concerts take place regularly while recitals are frequently given by the music staff and visitors.

The choir on Founder's Day now includes boys and girls and members of the staff of both schools. Recent performances of Verdi's 'Requiem' and Bach's 'Mass in B Minor', given by the music societies and staff, have been highly praised and we look forward to further recitals.

Drama, too, has always had a place in the school's activities. Joint productions of 'As You Like It' and 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' were performed in 1922 and 1926 under the direction of the Headmaster, the Headmistress and members of the Girls' school staff. Since 1950, a play has been produced every other year at the end of the Autumn term. Shakespeare's plays have few female parts but in costume girls are capable of portraying many of the male parts. There have been times when the current hairstyles

have created slight difficulties but one or two dedicated actresses have been prepared to make sacrifices in the cause of their art!

These productions involve all parts of the school. The cast is drawn from all years and behind the scenes is a vast army of helpers making costumes, properties and scenery, helping with make-up and lighting. The experience gained is put to good use in the Summer when the Sixth formers produce a series of one-act plays which in turn reveal talent for the future.

Middle school and Junior productions have included 'The Rivals', 'She Stoops to Conquer' and 'Toad of Toad Hall' while, not to be outdone by their pupils, the Staff performed 'The Chalk Garden' a few years ago.

These opportunities for seeing plays and taking part in them, not only as actresses but also in the many backstage activities, mean that all girls have a chance of widening their knowledge and appreciation and several have taken part in the National Youth Theatre's productions and have also gone on to universities which offer drama courses.

## Physical Education

The physical side of education has always had its place in the curriculum. Photographs of the early days show tennis and hockey teams and one can only admire the determination which must have been needed to overcome the handicap of the dress of those days. Over the years several girls have represented the school in county and international teams in hockey and tennis and have also been included in their university sides.

In 1924-5 the school team won the Manchester District Girls' Schools Hockey League Shield and the Lancashire Lawn Tennis League Shield for the ninth time. In that year a Board of Education inspector gave an excellent report on the Physical Education. There was adequate gymnastic

apparatus and a good hockey field with three new asphalt and two new grass tennis courts. The Barlow gymnasium, to be shared with the Boys' school, was opened in 1930 and in 1925 Dr. Atkinson had taken charge of regular medical inspection.

Royal Life Saving Society examinations have been prepared for and taken for many years but when the Swimming Bath was opened in 1940 this increased the opportunities. Nowadays practically every girl can swim and successes in the examinations are shown by the winning of the Bukta Shield. Matches are played after school and on Saturday mornings and cross-country running and athletic training have been added since the acquisition of the Kitchener playing-fields which were opened officially in 1974.

Since the opening of the Sixth-form centre it has been possible to take Judo and Fencing with visiting teachers and there are also facilities for table-tennis and badminton.

The extended gymnasium has a trampoline and there is a large hall where games can be played in bad weather thus releasing the Roger Kay Hall for other activities. The new accommodation has improved showers and a separate room for medical inspection.

### **The School Magazine**

In 1912 a Girls' school magazine appeared; until then there had been a joint publication with the Boys' school. In more recent years the magazine has been produced annually and has attempted to keep up with the times in appearance while maintaining a high standard in content. There has been a committee made up of representatives from each form with an editress and sub-editress from the sixth form and representatives from the staff. A smaller selection Committee composed of the staff representatives, editresses, sixth form and upper fifth members under the chairmanship of the Headmistress considered the various contributions and decided upon illustrations. These were submitted by members of the Senior school and the Preparatory Department and the magazine contained reports on all aspects of school life.

The cover was re-designed in 1963 and given the name "Cygnus", the swan and key motif being used in the name and the background development of the Greek key design. In 1970 yet another cover was designed. It became increasingly difficult to keep down the price of the magazine and in 1973 an experiment was tried with a duplicated news-sheet without original contributions.

Now it seems as though the wheel has come full circle with a joint publication of "Phoenix" produced by members of the sixth forms of both schools. It remains to be seen whether this will have sufficient appeal and support to continue.

### **The Preparatory Department**

In 1924, the Preparatory Department was recognised as a separate entity. The room below the Headmistress's room had been used as a library and this was converted into the Kindergarten rooms. By 1927 the building was completed and the department contained all the pupils between the ages of 4 and 11. Boys and girls were admitted and the boys entered the Boys' school at the end of four years. The girls, at the age of about 11, had to pass the entrance examination admitting them to the upper school and parents were expected to sign an agreement to keep them in school until the age of 16.

In view of the demand for places during recent years, the Governors decided to enlarge the Preparatory Department. There have been two Lower III forms since 1971 and in 1974 two Kindergarten classes were admitted (24 girls and 24 boys). This will continue, the boys entering the Boys' school after three years instead of four and there will be a Form I and a Form II, all girls. Girls will continue to be admitted to the two Lower III forms on the results of the senior school examination. The examination for younger children will not continue, vacancies before the age of nine being filled from the waiting-list. Extra members of staff will be appointed as necessary to keep the same staffing ratio.

The Preparatory Department had its Prize-giving at the end of the Summer term when a programme of singing was presented

to parents and friends. In the Autumn term a Harvest Festival service is held after which gifts of fruit and flowers are distributed to any who may be ill. For several years a series of Nativity tableaux and carols has been presented in December.

On the retirement of Miss E. Farrow in 1950, Miss E. J. Hamilton took charge of the Department until 1975 and owing to the increase in numbers Miss R. Lemmon and Miss M. Stephenson are now jointly in charge.

### **The Old Girls' Association**

One of the notable features of the school is the strong family feeling that exists. This is not surprising as there are many girls in the school whose mothers, aunts and grandmothers were pupils before them. This feeling has been kept alive by the Old Girls' Association which was re-organised in 1912 and has had its A.G.M. each year on Founder's Day. Apparently there used to be an annual dance in these early days and the following announcement gives an interesting period flavour:

"January 1913, There are only two conditions.

- a) Girls attending the dance must be members of the O.G.A.
- b) No girl may attend who is not over 18 years of age. Brothers and friends will be sent invitations if their names are sent in. It is hoped that there will be a large attendance of mothers and chaperones, for whom whist and bridge will be arranged, so that the evening may not seem long and wearisome."

In 1923 it was decided to publish a yearly record which would enable members to keep in touch. The cost of the Record was met from members' subscriptions and it was hoped that the larger membership which would result would eventually lead to larger funds from which grants to various charitable causes might continue to be given.

Miss Ethel Withers, a member of the staff and a former pupil, was the first editress and members sent details of their work,

their marriages and family news. The success of this venture is shown by the fact that the Record is still in existence in spite of the rising costs of printing and postage. Amendments to the Constitution have made it possible for members of the staff to become members and serve on the committee.

Miss Farrow and Mrs. Horridge were also editresses and in 1950 Miss Pemberton took over the task which she continued until 1968. During this period, she revived the inclusion of articles written by members of the Association concerning their activities in many fields and many parts of the world. Since 1968 it has been edited by Miss James assisted by Mrs. Susan Burgoine and Miss Ena Lord.

In the earlier days monthly meetings were held including a dance and a Christmas party and the A.G.M. on May 6th. There was a flourishing Hockey club, a Netball club existed for a short time and a Swimming club was formed in 1940. When the war came these meetings had to take place on Sunday afternoons because of the blackout regulations and transport difficulties.

Nowadays the school year begins with a coffee evening to which recent leavers come before they go to universities, colleges and other spheres of activity. An Autumn dinner has replaced the Christmas party and economies have had to be considered in order to keep within the budget. However it is obvious that the tradition of the Association will be continued by the younger members.

There must often be unofficial meetings of former pupils from time to time in many places, as we receive news of these, but the other group which must be mentioned is the London Branch.

In 1946 Miss Perigo was instrumental in reviving the meetings which had taken place before the War and Officers and a Committee were elected. There were to be two meetings a year, one to be on the Saturday after Founder's Day. Younger O.G's who are working or studying in London are made very welcome and Miss Lester makes a point of attending the meetings and taking the opportunity of keeping members up-to-

date with the developments in Bury. Miss Pemberton is also a very faithful visitor and finds the gatherings stimulating and encouraging, while the London members marvel at her stamina and were delighted in 1974 to celebrate her 80th birthday and hear news of former members of staff.

News continually comes from former pupils and it is fascinating to hear of the varied careers that they follow. While teaching has claimed many, there are others working in journalism, the law, medicine and dentistry, the forces, engineering, many branches of Science, local government, banking, and practically every profession open to women. We await our first M.P. but perhaps we shall achieve that before the school's centenary in 1984!

#### **The Guild of Parents and Friends**

In the Autumn of 1957, a group of parents arranged a bring-and-buy sale to raise money for the building fund. This was held one Saturday afternoon in the Girls' dining-hall.

In 1958, one of the parents decided to organise a similar event but so many willing helpers came forward that both dining-halls had to be used and even then the crowd of would-be buyers had great difficulty in getting anywhere near the stalls. £800 was raised and it was decided to put the whole thing on a more formal footing.

In March 1959, an inaugural meeting was held followed by the election of a committee in April. It was to be known as the Guild of Parents and Friends and the aims were to give the parents of girls in the school opportunities for social gatherings and also to raise funds for extra amenities. A series of Autumn and May fairs, each bigger and better than the last, and many other smaller efforts have resulted in the gift of a Steinway grand piano; furniture and fittings for the Careers room and an Upper Fifth common-room; garden seats for the tennis-courts; a record-player with a public address system; the refurnishing of the Girls' dining-hall; the equipping and lighting of the new stage, and curtains and furnishings for the library.

When in 1963 and again in 1970, a professional body took over the fund-raising on a large scale, the activities of the Guild were restricted to the social events but since the close of the official Appeal the Guild held another Autumn Fair in 1975 and the school is very grateful for the practical help that has been given over the years.

#### **Gifts and Benefactions**

The school is full of reminders of former pupils, parents, members of staff and governors who have shown their gratitude and interest in tangible gifts. The Roger Kay Hall was the gift of Mr. Henry Whitehead; the trustees of the late Colonel Barlow gave money to reduce the fees of Bury pupils and to build the gymnasium; Miss Susannah Ramsbottom gave a special sum to provide a scholarship for a Sixth form girl; Bishop Hill's parting gift provided library equipment and many books; the O.G.A. raised money to extend the library in 1934 as a Jubilee gift; many books have been given to the library by girls and their parents.

The electric clock system was given by Mr. A. Lomax after his five daughters had completed their education; the Head Girl's medallion was presented by Mrs. Oliver Entwistle; a gift from Miss Farrow's estate was used to provide cloakroom accommodation for the Preparatory Department.

The Kitchener Memorial Fund was raised by the O.G.A. to be used to help cases of need in the school and a memorial tablet was provided by the Governors and may be seen in the Roger Kay Hall. A similar one to Miss Neild was added in 1967. The Cecil Heap Memorial Prize was instituted by his wife and son in memory of his time as Chairman of the Governors from 1955—1967. The Sarah Alcock Prize was given by members of her family on the occasion of her 100th birthday and is awarded to a Sixth-former, preferably a mathematician. The first recipient of this prize, Brenda Holt, graduated in 1975, her subject being Electronic Engineering, a subject unheard of a century ago. Following the death in December 1975 of Miss M. L. Morris, Senior mistress and Head of the

English Department, a memorial fund was opened to provide a Bursary for a girl entering the Senior School.

### A Final Word

The success of the school lies not only in those pupils who achieve high academic honours but also in the many who build on the foundations which were laid during the course of their school life. This can still be summed up in words spoken by Miss Neild in her report at the Prize-giving in 1937.

“Someone recently asked me what the girls in this school were like, so I said, ‘They are a group of rather slightly made, neat-looking girls, dressed in navy-blue tunics and blue blouses; nearly all short-haired. To the casual observer they are very difficult to distinguish; to the expert every one differs profoundly from every other. They have certain marked characteristics in common; a passion for movement and exercise, a passion for chatter, and a perfect genius for losing things.’

‘Some of them work willingly, some unwillingly, some hard, some intelligently, and some not at all, and one or two, now and then, very rare people indeed, work because a passion for knowledge and learning has seized them. They have a sense of honour, a stronger sense of honour than responsibility, and they have great sincerity.

So much for the mass. Individually, every child is different. We never lose sight of the individual; we never think of the children in the way in which I have been describing them, but we think of every girl as a person for whose individual benefit all the resources and capabilities of the school have to be exercised. So I cannot really describe the children because that would mean describing every single child. I can only say that after five or more years in which we despair of them, and hope for them, and chide them, and perhaps too little praise them, they generally turn out well. Whether we have really done well by them will appear in Bury’s history in the next fifty years. I can only say I like them very much.’ ”

The outward appearance may have altered slightly, their priorities may have changed with the times but there is still, at the end of the year, a quantity of unclaimed property and the school is an assembly of highly individual characters.

I wish to thank the many former members of staff and pupils who have answered questions, given useful suggestions and referred me to various sources for the information in this survey of the history of the Girls’ School.

As I compiled it, the great strength of the girls’ school became crystal clear to me. The foresight of Roger Kay in providing for the ten girl apprentices, the pioneer work of Henry Webb and his associates in setting up the Bury High School for Girls, the wisdom of the governors of that school and of the Grammar School in pooling their resources, and the generosity and the goodwill of so many parents, old girls and friends are a splendid basis for our future as an independent school.

We face that future with confidence, determined in spite of the Government’s withdrawal of the direct grant to make available to as many girls as possible the opportunities for success, academic and otherwise, that the school has so richly offered in the past.





**The Girls' School**