

THAT AMAZING INSTITUTION



Nihil Magnum Nisi Bonum

KYRLE C. SYMONS

That Amazing Institution

The Story of St. Michael's School,
Victoria, B. C., from 1910 - 1948



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Michael Ned Kyrle
K. C. S.

FOREWORD

It is a great privilege to have been asked by the author to write a foreword to this chronicle of St. Michael's School. It is not only a privilege but a great honour to have been asked to do so. There are many better fitted for the task than I, but very few who can claim such a long, unbroken friendship and association with him.

The author, Mr. Kyrle C. Symons, affectionately known to his intimates as Uncle Kyrle and all from the most junior boy attending St. Michael's to his "Old Boys" scattered over the world as "The Head" took up residence in Victoria about the year 1909 and in that year I decided to follow the profession of a surveyor, and so it came about that I first met him. He coached me in mathematics for my exams and led me through the mazes of trigonometry and logarithms and no one had a better master.

It was not long after the events just recorded that the author gave up private tutoring and started that outstanding preparatory school, St. Michael's. On occasion the author has been heard to refer to St. Michael's as that Amazing Institution. An amazing institution it certainly is, but a great deal more than that. From its earliest inception it has exercised an influence for good in the community and this influence has spread with the passing of the years in ever widening circles. St. Michael's boys are to be found in every clime and in every corner of the globe holding positions of responsibility in all the services and professions. It is noteworthy that although St. Michael's is a preparatory school and the boys have perforce continued their education at other schools, their first allegiance is to St. Michael's. One man, the author, is alone responsible for this unswerving loyalty. His high ideals, sense of justice, honour and kindly generosity have

inspired and influenced generations of boys who have had the privilege of coming under his jurisdiction for a short period.

Those who are privileged to read this book will glean something of what St. Michael's stands for and the great personality of the man who made it. *Nihil magnun nisi bonum.*

G. W. BAUGH-ALLEN,
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INTRODUCTION

One's life—it seems to me—as one looks back over the years, now nearing the Three Score and Ten, is rather like a picture gallery. Portraits, views, episodes, line the walls and, as we get older, some fade away and are replaced by others—some stand out more and more vividly and will never fade. Dear faces become more alive; places where we have been happy, or the reverse, come out in clearer detail. The "Owner" lent us those pictures for our walls and he wants some of them back; but even where there are blank spaces, we have the memories ever with us.

It is in such a gallery that I spend much of my old age and I dare to hope that some of my many friends, with whom I have been blessed above most men, will care to stroll through it with me and, perhaps, find a little pleasure and interest there. There will be no great adventures—no hair-raising episodes—but to me, almost every day has brought its thrill and a hum-drum life has been a great adventure.

It is just the plain story of nearly forty years of School-Mastering in this great province of British Columbia, and I can lay my hand on my heart, and assure you that nothing has been set down for effect and that every word is true. At times you may find this hard to believe, but true it is, and that is why, out of the many titles that have occurred to me—"An Englishman in Canada", "Gratitude", "Forty Years in B. C.", and so on—I have decided on one, suggested by an Old Boy of the School, himself a prominent school-master, who always spoke of his early school as "*That Amazing Institution*".

CHAPTER 1.

THE PICTURE GALLERY

1908-1910 — *Pre-School Days*

Before we enter the main hall, there is a little ante-room in which I would show you one or two sketches. It is only a very humble little room—about two years in length—but I spend much time there, and here are some of the pictures I see.

A young man and his wife arriving in Victoria; they have little except each other, but that is great riches. He is a teacher, the son of a teacher, and has the idea of starting a little school of his own. They both have always felt the urge to go West—the early history of England is a series of whole peoples coming Westward across Europe like waves, to her shores—and here they are, met by an old cousin, as far West as they can go, till the final Westward journey. Almost at once the man is taken ill and the small capital dwindles, but the faith remains.

So here he is in August before the Superintendent of Education, seeking a position in the Public Schools of British Columbia. Dr. A. Robinson receives him kindly and asks him his qualifications. Then, turning to his stenographer, a pretty girl in a white frock, he says, "Shall we let him try Beaver Point?"

He hires a launch from Sidney with a few of his remaining dollars, which he still finds rather difficult to understand, and goes to Beaver Point, on Salt Spring Island, to interview the Secretary. (I think one's first view of the Gulf Islands on a perfect day is well worth six thousand miles of travel. It is a paradise—blue sea, mountains, an occasional seal, sea

birds galore, the "put-put" of a Japanese fisherman's boat; and I have been an Islander at heart ever since!)

Here he is trudging along a dusty road, by the side of an old buck-board in which sits the said Secretary—an oldish Scotsman with a red beard and a most disreputable hat—who takes him to his farm, obviously to be sized up by "Mamma";—he decides that the man will do and arranges to take him and his wife as boarders in "the room."

August 25th, the first day in School—a modest little one-room building in a forest clearing—where he is scrutinized by some dozen little Canadians of various nationalities, all wondering about the strange Englishman—who in his turn is wondering how he will handle Grades I to VIII, and yet keep them all occupied; and so they settle down to work.

(I note already lapses in literary composition; the pronouns "he" and "I" are getting a bit involved and now comes "we"—which I prefer. I offer apologies and suggest that you look at the pictures rather than the pronouns!)

In September a good friend, Mr. J. Monk, most kindly offered us a tiny, primitive log hut—built by a Kanaka—where we made our first home—a very happy one—and into it we welcome our first little son. He was born November 22nd, in the house of Mrs. Beddis, near Ganges; she with her daughter, did everything for us at a somewhat difficult time—and her grandson years afterwards attended the School.

The return "home" in December was in its way an Odyssey. It was a bad day, very wet, and with a rising wind. Mrs. Beddis saw us into a small row-boat I had borrowed; hot bricks were put on the floor and a shapeless bundle of rugs, etc., that was my family, was installed in the back. We rowed to the Bulman saw-mill, now no more, where the foreman boosted them up a steep ladder to a little cottage. Here a short rest and some hot cocoa did wonders. The next step was to board the old steamer IROQUOIS — which not long afterwards was lost with many good lives. On it we reached Beaver Point wharf in a gale and deluge. Here another good friend, still my good friend, Mr. Ruckle, lent us a horse

and buggy and we drove home, avoiding falling branches with more luck than skill. There Mrs. Monk had a nice fire going, and took charge—while I drove the “carriage” back in pitch darkness—finally returning to a little scene which I can only leave you to imagine.

The tiny hut, with a white-washed board partition in which was an opening—no door—to the bedroom, the main furnishings of which were empty apple boxes; an equally tiny kitchen, with a table and 2 hard chairs—a little stove burning cheerfully, and a lamp doing its best—mother and child (duly bathed and asleep) waiting for the return of “Daddy.” Does one easily forget such a day?

Such happiness was inside those log walls. If the window *was* short of glass and a vine poked inquisitively through the opening, it certainly kept out some weather and was quite ornamental. Mr. Monk had some Japs working for him, and they used to come to me at night, to learn to read from an infant's Reader; in return they used to cut and stack a fine lot of fire-wood for us every Sunday. They were deeply interested in the baby. I have snapshots of all these people and things, and very precious they are.

Looking through the diaries I have kept all the time, I see we had our first experience of a “cold snap” in January, 1909—that school was closed, that I learned to pluck and clean chickens, that we bought 45 lbs. of beef from a neighbour at the modest price of 90c—(take note, ye butchers of today!), that we took our baby for a little walk in deep snow, that we attended various services of all denominations in the school house—and that finally we arranged with senior Mr. Ruckle, a grand old pioneer, to rent from him a piece of his property known as the “Pea Vine.” This consisted of 160 acres—mostly trees—an orchard—a little cleared ground—a barn and another little log cabin, also built by a Kanaka, that is a man from the South Seas, of whom there had been a few on the Island. When I inquired the rent Mr. R said “Would \$4.00 a month hurt you?” As I was drawing

the princely salary of \$42.50 a month, we felt we could manage this and made preparations for our first move.

The cabin had stood empty for a long time; but I used to go up daily after school with a most devoted and excellent school boy, Dimitri Stevens, now a guard at Banff, and work at it. Having scraped bats off the walls and filled up the chinks with moss, etc., we pasted on the walls coloured pictures from various magazines sent us from home and really made the place quite cheery. Mr. A. Ruckle fixed up the door and windows—and made us a rough sideboard and table. I made a magnificent cot for the little boy, out of some old table legs that I found in the barn! For a mattress we sewed up an old blanket into a bag, filled it with hay—also from the barn—and never had a princeling such a bed!

There was at some distance from the house, a spring of really good water—which we cleared of accumulated leaves, mud and foreign bodies—and this was our cistern. I manufactured buckets out of empty coal-oil tins and went daily for the water supply, invariably accompanied, as soon as he could toddle, by my little son who kept his tiny hand on one bucket and thought he was carrying it. At any rate he was helping.

No fuel bill for us: There was wood in abundance all round.

Greatly daring, we now bought a cross-cut saw to fell our trees and I flatter myself that for a man and wife just out from busy English towns we made surprisingly good loggers. We would wheel the baby in his folding buggy to a safe spot, and then, one at each end of the saw, attack our tree, which obligingly fell just where it was wanted. Then it was sawn into drums which were rolled into a collapsed chicken house that made a good woodshed—and there split up with wedges and a heavy sledge hammer. I well remember having some thirty of these round the wood shed and coming back from School to find that "she" had split every one. It was not many days later that our second son was born! Next

we broke into chickens—bought twelve Black Minorcas and were presented with a fine Rhode Island Red rooster. Marvellous creatures, they did their duty, each and every one of them, and kept us abundantly in eggs. One day there were thirteen, and we believed that the rooster was doing his bit to keep us well supplied.

Finally there was the garden. We dug up a big patch of the open ground below the orchard and even now I see that wonderful Edith of mine pushing the buggy with one hand and with the other dragging long pieces of split cedar from an old "snake fence" which we discovered. We made it high to keep out the deer and it must have resembled one of the old stockades built to resist Indian attack. We bought a "monster" packet of various seeds from T. Eaton — planted them and very many potatoes. Soon we had an amazing crop of every kind of vegetable — even to "squashes," which we had never seen and which caused us some surprise when they appeared.

The baby and I fetched the milk every night — a good two-mile walk — he sitting in a sling draped over my shoulder and making pleasant conversation.

I had a gun — but no license — which I used to carry to school and hide behind an old harmonium in the corner. With it I bagged the odd grouse (usually sitting) — occasionally a friend might bring us a piece of venison. A farmer generously gave me some liver for helping him stack hay in his barn. And for Christmas we really cut loose and bought a leg of mutton from Victoria. So you see we did not starve, and my wonderful wife could have cooked a pair of boots and made them palatable.

One story of the gun. While I was at school a very large chicken hawk — or fish eagle — appeared circling round the chicken pen. With great presence of mind Edith loaded the gun and fired at the marauder — or in its direction. Then, and not till then, did her nerve fail her. She hurled the gun from her — dashed inside and locked the door. How often we laughed over that!

Now appears the second little son — under the magnificent management of a little nurse, Miss Bulman, clearly sent by Providence to take care of the growing family. No doctor was available — nor necessary. So far as I can see she never closed her eyes for days on end, but when the business was all over she burrowed out of sight under her bedclothes and slept and slept and slept. She will always have my loving gratitude.

I'm afraid there are more pictures than you bargained for — and even so you have not had the half of it — but we're nearing the end of the first gallery and I'll ask you to look at just one more.

I am splitting wood from a charred tree (covered with soot and thoroughly disreputable). Up the path from the road comes a young girl in a white coat and a smart young man. She asks, "Are you the teacher?" and I have to admit the fact. "My father," she says, "has built a summer home down by the sea and wants you to coach my young brother during the holidays."

Here it is — the great moment — my first private pupil. The lady is now Mrs. John Grant and I am proud to be allowed to call them friends. The father was Mr. A. W. Bridgman, who, we might say, was our founder. The boy is now Lt.-Com. M. W. Bridgman, as ever a firm friend and ally.

Now you see why I have taken you round these pictures and what they were all leading up to. Both the father and mother were utterly charming and kind — and arrangements were soon made. He nobly offered me fifty dollars a month, a considerable "raise." During July and August I used to go down to their very nice house, often with the big baby. There (in a little room at the back) Monty and I plunged into "Elementa Latina." Those portraits will hang on the walls of memory as long as I last.

The holidays end and Mr. Bridgman suggests that we move into Victoria and carry on — saying "I'll see you through," and you'll see later that he certainly did so. So it



"Mum"

was decided. Mrs. Bridgman secured us a tiny house (but a *house* this time) on Catherine St. in Victoria West—a minimum of furniture was secured and we moved in (having first removed the coal from the bath where it evidently had been kept previously).

Here I should like to pay my tribute to the Department of Education. In order to teach in the Public School one must have a Certificate. They were good enough to give a temporary one—for my first year—but in July I had to take their examination in order to be a “proper” teacher. What a day that was! It was our wedding anniversary to begin with. We boarded the old “Iroquois” at the wharf and while backing out from Bedwell Harbour, her next stop, she ran on a rock and smashed her steering gear. Capt. Sears promptly called out to a young man who was working on a launch close by, “Tom, I want your father to take the passengers to Sidney” and in a few minutes the launch came alongside and we were transferred. It was a crowd to put it mildly; the women and babies were shut up like sardines in the cabin. Men stood in the little pilot house—men stood on the little deck at the stern—the steward and I laid ourselves on the cabin roof with the suitcases, of which we were allowed one—and off we went. As soon as we were out of the harbor we ran into very bad weather. The boat plunged and rolled so that we had to run a rope through all the handles of the suitcases to prevent them from falling overboard. The rest of us hung on to anything we could. It really was a bad journey, but the engine, mercifully, did not miss a shot and eventually, at about six, we reached the little town of Sidney. Here quite a crowd had assembled and kindly hands armed us out onto terra firma which quite frankly I had not much expected to see again. Most of the babies, and consequently the women, had been violently sea sick; and they were all definitely the worse for wear. I consider we all owe our lives to Mr. L. S. Higgs, owner, builder and pilot of the launch. The old train that used to run (optimistic word) to Victoria, known as the “Cordwood

Flier," had waited for us and ultimately we reached the city and found a comfy room in Amelia St. The next day I had my exam. The Department was good enough to give me the Academic Certificate—and soon after that we got back to the beloved Island and home once more.

And so farewell for the time being to Beaver Point—the little school house—the little log cabin—the woods—the winding country road—and many good friends who are to this day my friends and whom I visit whenever I can. We recall the early days when I was a very green young stranger and they took me in.

That, ladies and gentlemen, concludes an all too rapid survey of our ante-room. Now we enter the main gallery and start the, to me, amazing story of St. Michael's School, founded in 1910.

CHAPTER 2.

1910-1911 — *Inspiration Is Found*

In a very small room Monty and I resume our lessons. A sign on the front door "K. C. Symons, M.A." entices sundry young men who require some coaching. One asks for mechanics which is an unknown quantity to a man whose education has been almost entirely on the Classical side. Indeed I think the only classics I tried to impart were to a very cultured Chinese gentleman with whom I waded through some Vergil and Caesar—to his great content! Another comes with a request that I help him polish up his Trigonometry and he is rather disgusted when I admit frankly that I've never heard of it! "I thought you were a Master of Arts," he says.

However, this difficulty was disposed of in a rather remarkable way. I had an introduction to Mr. M. A. Grainger, a Cambridge "wrangler," and one of the ablest men I have ever met. He had been coaching budding surveyors and wished to pass on the work to me. When I told him of my complete lack of mathematics, especially this weird Trigonometry, he replied, "I'll teach you the whole thing in ten minutes: all the books on the subject are rot!" So I would go down to him at night and he would try to get into my head these mysteries—keeping level on paper with what he said. Then I would take these copious notes home—copy them out—study them—and fire them off the next day at a pupil with great eclat and some success. Anyhow it helped keep the family pot boiling or, at least, warm.

Then disaster struck. Monty was taken seriously ill and we were "up against it" tighter than ever before. I seem to remember a Chinaman bringing home our humble laundry

—charge 35c—and being asked to wait till we had got it; However, here as always, Providence stepped in. Why should one feel afraid to say straight out that God took special care of us?

One evening Mr. Grainger came in to see how things were going and found they weren't. Five minutes after he had left he came back and said, "Symons, I'm having a house built on Lampson Street and, if you like, I'll ask the foreman to give you a job." Did I jump at the offer—even if it was not quite in my line? The very next afternoon, after giving a lesson to one boy who came twice a week in the mornings, I presented myself to the foreman, whose first question naturally was, "Have you brought your tools?" Will you believe it when I tell you that my innocent reply was, "What tools?" That was at a time when the sign "No English need apply" was unpleasantly conspicuous; but in this case, where it might so well have been used, the foreman and his carpenters were all English. Indeed one came from a town where I had lived. So he put me to work as a "handy?" man and on the Saturday I received my envelope for a day and a half, \$3.75—the sweetest money I have ever earned. I rush home, we pay the laundry, we buy a Sunday dinner, and the crisis is past. I hold down the job for three weeks, am promoted to laying flooring (I think I could show you today one board that is wrong side up!) and am certainly learning. And there is still the odd pupil.

But this job is not teaching. So back I go to the Education Office and this time interview Mr. E. B. Paul, at that time, I believe, inspector of City Schools, a grand old gentleman, courtly and charming. He gives me a temporary post at George Jay School in place of a Mr. Spouse who was ill, and back I go to schooling. I cannot say it was a particularly happy or successful effort. I am confronted with a large class of some forty children—of all sizes, ages, sexes, dispositions—and have quite a time. They know as well as I do that my presence is only a stop-gap and make the most of their chances. I'm sure I was not at all popular; but one of the

boys, Abner Garland, is still my friend and we meet now and then. Well, it was hard going but the Eye above was ever watchful.

Almost the first day I got home there was waiting to see me a short, determined looking man, who said, "My name is Matson. I wish you to take my two sons." I told him how the first venture had "flopped" and he then and there guaranteed me \$125 per month for two years; \$40—\$50—\$90—\$125—it sounds like an auction. At once I went straight off to Mr. Paul and asked for a release so as to get back to my own line of work. He heard me out then made this remark, which I shall ever cherish: "We release you with regret but shall watch your attempt at aviation with the greatest interest; and, if you do come to the ground, the Department will be there to pick you up."

Just think that over, you who read; it was a lovely valediction. Some time later, when I asked Mr. Paul to present the prizes at the School Closing, he not only did so and made a very gracious little speech but actually rang up beforehand to ask if he should wear a top hat and frock coat. Could courtesy go further?

The year ended with some grim moments. Kyrle had to have an operation—his little brother Ned was very ill and to this day we believe his life was saved by Dr. Fraser. Finally I had to retire to St. Joseph's Hospital, where the same Dr. Fraser attended to various boils and blains, and I woke up with tubes running all ways through my chin, etc.

Here comes another of our many blessings. At that time the Vicar at St. Saviour's, Victoria West was a Canon Cooper. He came to visit me when I got home and made this remarkable statement. He said: "I never have to go to a doctor, but every year put aside the amount one might reasonably expect to pay for medical attention; this I call my Thanksgiving Fund. I should be so grateful if you would let it pay your expenses in this illness!" What about that? Later on, one evening, a note was slipped under the front door containing a cheque which paid all expenses (that I was quite

unable to cope with) and a slip of paper on which were the words "Canon Cooper's Thank Offering." He also offered us a turkey Dec. 23rd.

I said at the beginning that one of the titles that came into mind for this book was "Gratitude." Do you wonder?

So it was a very happy Christmas. Lots of friends brought toys for the little boys—there was a big English mail and we actually had a guest to dinner! It must have been a very good one, for after it was finished he asked in a most matter of fact way if he might take off his shoes and have a nap. These things he proceeded to do with great success; so I'm sure he must have felt quite at home.

1911. The little School, which one may say had started the year before in patches, now began again in a more complete though still very small way—backed by a syndicate of three men. Let me pay tribute to them. Mr. Matson, whom I have mentioned, was then a power in the land, owning the "Victoria Daily Colonist" among other big enterprises—"a good friend but a bad enemy" people said of him and he was certainly a good friend to us. Mr. F. M. Rattenbury (of whom you are to hear more later on and who many years afterwards was murdered near Bournemouth in a horrible affair) sent us his son Frank. Mr. J. D. Prentice, a big man in every way, sent us his son Douglas. It was very pleasant to be able to tell you that Tim Matson, now owner of the paper; Frank in Vancouver, and Douglas, one of the senior naval officers of Canada with a most distinguished record, are still my very good friends. At this moment I am writing these words in the little home Douglas has provided for me—a dear little cottage on his place at Gordon Head, where I am happy and comfortable and thoroughly spoiled by both him and his wife. When Monty Bridgman recovered from his illness and returned to the school that really was the crowning joy.

Our numbers now reached the monumental figure of six and the question of larger premises cropped up. Once again Mr. Bridgman came to the rescue and rented us a house

next to his own, No. 725 Esquimalt Road. This has now been pulled down and replaced by a small green stucco one but the site is ever to me an historic spot.

The new house had two very large rooms, one of which made an excellent class room; in fact it was just right for the twelve tables which I bought and which are still doing good service today! The question of furniture for this mansion, after the tiny home, was more difficult—but we took a plunge and bought a piano, \$10 down and \$10 a month plus interest for what seemed to me a century or so—pictures chosen for size rather than merit to cover the wide open spaces—a chesterfield which would have completely filled the other house. Then after much cleaning and polishing, we moved in—all very happy except until the tragic death of a pupil, John Rogers. Numbers began to go up—I'd like to give you the names of all the boys as they came in but it would be too much of a good thing. As private pupils flocked in—including a very interesting fireman—things began to go along on a more even keel. Naturally that was the moment for measles—and my thirtieth birthday was spent in disinfecting the house!

June 30th saw our first real Prize Giving. Mrs. Croft lent us the beautiful gardens of Mt. Adelaide—she and Mrs. Matson provided a sumptuous tea—the then Dean of Christ Church, Rev. Doull, presented the prizes, the boys put on a little Shakespeare in costume—and the official year ended with quite a flourish—I venture to say that a start had been made from which there has been no looking back.

The summer holiday was spent for the first of very many times at our beloved Beaver Point. Mr. Bridgman lent us his summer house. We bathed and “lazed” (being very weary), and visited old friends. I shot my first deer—out of season—but right in the head while it was moving at full speed. This fluke won me the reputation of a marksman that ever since I have signally failed to maintain. Altogether we generally had a wonderful time. Oh yes, I forgot to tell

you that we actually had a Chinese boy at the time, San, who really deserves a line or two.

San was a thorough sportsman, and did less work than any one I have known. He first distinguished himself by producing a "bb" gun with which he used to take pot shots at the boys as they came along the board walk to the school. When we took him to the Island he really settled down to enjoy himself. His passion was building rafts, to which he attached with various pieces of wire a sort of propeller. I can see him now, squatting on the raft and violently turning a handle and moving slowly but surely out from shore. This action, I may say, invariably occurred about meal times so that one had to shriek at him to return to his duties. As a chef he was unusual—his chief delight being to mould his dough into various designs before baking—his masterpiece being a turtle—with two currants for eyes and its body brightly dyed with cochineal. This he served with enormous pride in lieu of bread. Anyhow, he enjoyed it.

Things must have been very different in those days, for my diary—which I am following—tells me we started school again in August. As I look through it I see so many little things which I'd like to tell you but am terrified of becoming tedious. Likewise the word "I" occurs too often. The proper thing is to offer apologies for using it, but at this stage in the story of the School it is very hard to avoid. To say, "One did this," "One did that," would become even more tiresome. Besides, I am not expecting this to become a "best seller"—it is being written for old boys and friends of the School who have asked for it, and I feel I can just gossip along to them and they will not be too particular.

School went along—growing slowly. We had our first boarder, J. Carey, and "lunches" became a part of the routine. Many an old boy will tell you of the treacle pies that Edith used to make; perhaps that is why they came to school. I do know that she was as wonderful at cooking as she was at everything else. So far I have said little about one who gave her life to the School—loved it and the boys

—worked for it—and certainly did all that a woman could do to keep us all going. Some thoughts one does not put on paper and those who knew and loved her will understand. People have said many kind things to me and I would like to go on record here and say that I ascribe what success St. Michael's School has had—not to myself—but:

1. To my own mother and her training and example.
2. To Mr. A. H. Gilkes—the great master of Dulwich College.
3. To my gallant and wonderful wife.
4. The masters and boys who have given their best and built up a tradition.
5. Our many surpassing friends.

I wanted to say that, especially after reading the all too glowing foreword. So ends 1911—and Christmas saw a real tree—the little sons old enough to enjoy it to the full—and, when they had been tucked away for the night, two very happy and grateful people sitting by the fire. They were looking back over trials and blessings, work and play; and gazing ahead to the future, perhaps a little anxiously, but always with that faith that had been and was to be so fully justified.

The main anxiety was about proper games. The house stood on rock with a few stunted bushes and not a foot of level ground—nor was there any place available within reach. Hide-and-seek (no 'cops and robbers' in those days, I am thankful to say) and such were about the best we could manage. I well remember looking down from the verandah during a recess and watching the boys. One of them was on all fours and being led along by the others with a rope round his neck—stopping at intervals to crop a bit of grass. They were farmers and he was the cow being taken out to pasture! That has never struck me as quite the type of game to win the battle of Waterloo and I did not see the remedy. Let us see how 1912 was going to deal with the situation.

CHAPTER 3.

1912-1913 — *The Start Is Made*

"Lord, Behold Us with Thy Blessing"

January, 1912, starts with the cheerful note in my diary, "We still owe \$150.00 on the piano"! But this is soon forgotten in preparations for the new term—with ten boys on the roll—and January 7th is really a red-letter day in our history. We go to tea with Mr. and Mrs. Rattenbury in their beautiful home and he asks about the School. I tell him that all goes well except for the matter of a proper playground, recounting the episode of the cow! He then says, just as easily as he can: "Look here, Symons, go round and find some level ground, build a house for yourselves and a school on it. I'll pay for it and you can repay me in so many years." This from a man who, as some said, was "close." What do you think?

So off we go to the real estate people and drive round in fine cars inspecting and rather perplexed in spite of being hampered by the fact that all my family were quite seedy—that Douglas had left for England—and that the weather was vile. However, we finally decided on the spot where the School now stands. We bought two lots on what was then called Saratoga Avenue (which the patriotic inhabitants later changed to Windsor Road.) Then we managed to find a builder—one, McCrimmon, who agreed to build a bungalow for \$2,800.00 (think of that in these days of crazy prices) and throw in a schoolroom at the back, 20' x 20' x 12', for another \$200.00. The two lots cost \$2,300.00. By Feb. 27th all the arrangements were complete and the work started in due course. Whenever money was

required I just went to the B. C. Land Agency, where Mr. Holland, the manager, who had two sons at the school, handed over whatever was asked for.

Apparently we still had our share of boils and blains and so on. I mention this unpleasant detail because it brings me to the mention of another very dear and good friend, Doctor A. W. Popert, who tended school boys and ourselves with unfailing care and skill for many years. His wife was as fine as himself, but not very long ago she was called to her rest—and he now lives alone in a little house where we still meet and talk over the old days. I hope he may live to read that he and his May occupy a very large and honoured place *on the line* on the walls of our gallery of memories.

I am getting a deal of pleasure out of the pages of the diary open beside me, which could easily be enlarged to 20 volumes. I see the names of many dear old-timers who were good to us—so many that I cannot name them all—that we went to the movies now and then—that I scrubbed floors at every opportunity—paid frequent visits to the new building—heard pupils at night—walked with E. and the little boys—had frantic rows with sundry Chinese 'helpers'—cut wood, wrote endless letters. Certainly the days were full.

It was now that we adopted our School Colours—Blue and Black. These were displayed at the School closing on June 28th in the Rattenbury's garden, when Archdeacon Scriven gave the prizes. We did the usual drill and a bit of Shakespeare in costume. I well remember one boy, now in China, who was our leading lady. In a pink frock with a large sort of picture hat and a reddish wig, he looked too beautiful for words so that at tea time the school boys waited on him with cakes, etc., in a most gentlemanly way, possibly more than they did on their own invited guests. Do you remember that, George?

July—Then came the packing up for the move. That was another fierce time, for little Kyrle developed a very bad growth of some kind deep in his neck so that we were all very anxious. Let me tell you how Doctor and Mrs. Popert

acted. They took him into their house, the Doctor secured a nurse, and working on his own dining table did a most delicate and wonderful operation. I remember taking the little boy down to the hospital later to have the place dressed and seeing the medico pull apparently miles of iodoform gauze out of his neck and then repack it with furlongs more. For a long time after that it was a great business to get Kyrle into a barber's shop; the white coats brought memories. However, the operation was completely successful and I have a picture of the small boy very much bandaged up—watching the painters who were still at work when we actually moved.

July 6: We all went to the new home. We slept in the kitchen which was the only place available, with the plaster still damp, and everything extremely cold. The following nights we slept in the School where the furniture was stacked. We had meals in the basement on a dirt floor among buckets, tools and pieces. We had dust and heat and flies. One might almost add we suffered "blood, sweat and tears," but gradually began to get straightened out.

Then, of course, the playground—indeed, yes, the prime object of the move. We hired a little gang of five Chinese who in a leisurely way levelled off the spare lot but were chiefly concerned with a quilted basket in which was a teapot to which they had recourse every few minutes. But again the job was done—though the painters were jostling the carpenters, the bricklayer was falling foul of the Chinaman, and we were weaving in and out of the melee, loaded with furniture which we were getting into place. Great days—m-o-v-i-n-g moments!

Finally the plumber, the electrician and the sole remaining carpenter left—for some reason the painters returned but not for long—and at long last we were clear for the next job and that was a fence round the new estate. Ladies and gentlemen, I would have you know that Edith and I built that fence—and some of it stands today as a proof of what real carpentry means. For a week we dug post-holes. I had

engaged a Chinaman by the day, but when the first day's work showed two holes done and two more started and dozens to be done, I politely let him go. Certainly the ground at that time of year was a kind of reinforced concrete—but I'd scoop out a bit and go on to the next spot while E. poured water into the first—then back to dig out a little deeper—more water—until the job was done. I may be lying, but I believe we did eighteen holes in one day. Then the posts went in, with the assistance of one I. Forrest, and the rest was easy. A strange little man used to walk up and down and watch us at work. Imagine my pride when he came up and asked if I'd take a contract to build him a fence. And imagine his surprise when I looked him between the eyes and said, "Yes—but my price will be one million dollars." Presumably he found a cheaper man as I did not get the contract!

A little rest was indicated so off we went once more to Beaver Point and set up our tents, fished, bathed, had picnics, saw old friends, and enjoyed ourselves to the full for about three weeks. We returned full of vigour to deal with more fence, staining, painting, and so on. It was then that Mr. R. N. Hincks, known to all Victorians who love the theatre, came to see me about his son—also Mr. M. B. Jackson, at one time Member of Parliament for the Island, about his.

So on September 2nd (presumably Labour Day and a holiday) we began one more School year—this time with a real class room, a real place where one could kick a ball about, a definite School badge and colours—borrowed from my old School, now widely known.

Out of School hours we improved the little bungalow by flooring the attic on the half-storey at the top. E. tied up bundles of shiplap below and I hauled them up through a small window. Then we both slogged them into the rafters and made a capital place for the boys to play with their trains and so on. Numbers grew. Doctor O. M. Jones' son

Joe (who has two sons at the School at time of writing this) and Randle Mathews joined the ranks of the early heroes. You may visit his 'Landing' out at Sidney today. Private pupils went on and life was very strenuous. The term ended with a soccer match, which must have been our first, and the blessed relief of a holiday came when it did most good. *Annus mirabilis*—but more to come!

By January 16th we reached the prodigious total of 14, and were able to field teams. Matches became possible and fairly frequent, our first being against the Collegiate School. I have two fat volumes of newspaper clippings recording various games and can truly say we learned to be good losers. Talking of games I must tell you of a glorified form of hockey which we invented. The playground was 120 by about 50, shut in by our fence on three sides and the bungalow on the fourth. We certainly got a maximum of exercise in a minimum of space. We had a solid rubber ball which was never dead, as one could play it against the sidewalks and take it on as it bounced back. Also one could shoot at the goal again and again until one did score between the painted lines. How I loved it and how infuriated it made me when some little wretch would nimbly take the ball from me. Those were the days! I remember one curious episode. I was in the basement looking through the window when I saw R. M. (to whom I recalled it just recently) spitting out blood and teeth all over the place, evidently having had a nasty one in the mouth. In due course he reappeared with nice new ones screwed in and started to play again, and I believe it was in the very first game after his return that he got another smack in precisely the same place, with the same disastrous and expensive result.

At this stage W. Higgs joined us—known to all as "Bos'n" and now head of the Nanaimo Towing Co., with a fleet under his command. One of the things I remember about him was that whenever and wherever he was hit with a hockey stick he always held his tummy! We also had R. Fowler, now manager of a bank in Vancouver.

We managed to improve the little bungalow and attempted a garden. An additional chimney was added to the den and a cement walk, now built over, was made to the School door. We set up a flag pole on a little plot of grass, hoisted our own flag beside the Jack which has flown every school day since then.

In April cricket really got going, but I do not think we won any matches. However, that was of no importance. In June we had our usual break-up in the Rattenbury's garden to end up a year of definite progress all round. Rev. 'Padre' Andrews, the well-known and well-loved rector of St. Mary's Church for so many years, gave the prizes.

It occurs to me that this chronicle may quite easily become very dry and monotonous, for year after year we have had the same events—lessons, exams, games, closings, but each year with new faces perhaps the record may be of interest to the boys of different years.

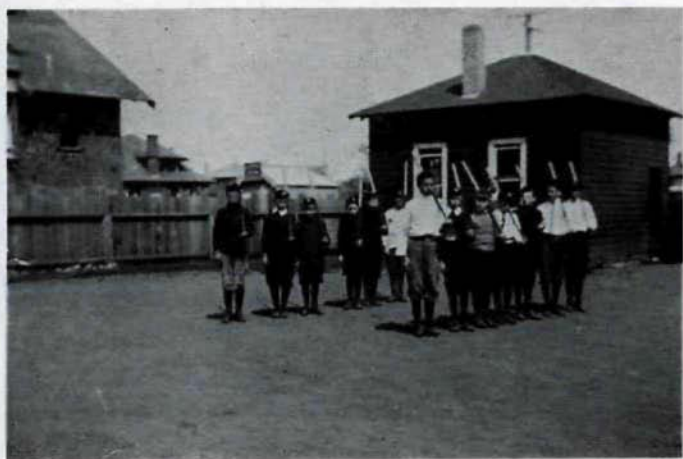
It was now that we chose our name, St. Michael's. While it has a faint flavour of goose, yet it does bring to mind the Archangel, and while we have not all been angels (an angelic school would be quite something;) yet we have tried to battle for the right, as it says in our School hymn.

This summer we camped on Salt Spring in a new spot on the edge of what was known as Johnson's Lake; there is a 'resort' there now. The bathing was very pleasant but there were leeches! We always declare that we used to send the little boys into the water first and if they came out with a reptile attached we did not go in! But they certainly loved a vast sort of punt, and I can see them now tugging at the oars and getting it along. Then home for a time and a great deal of preparation for a visit from my cousin, Mr. Reade, who came out from England with a friend to stay with us. He was a very learned don at Oxford and had been like a guardian to me. He wrote books and told me of one, that, he said, only eleven people in Europe would buy and only four would understand! He also wrote a criticism of Einstein's theory, but mercifully left all that at home and

became a British Columbian and an Islander for a time—to his great enjoyment and benefit! For we took him off to camp for some days, this time to South Pender, before he returned to his sumptuous rooms at Oxford and the 'amenities' to which he had always been accustomed. I must say he bore up extremely well without me.

Term began once more on a Labour Day and soon after that I had nine teeth out but still had plenty left to bite the boys with! We had a match with St. Margaret's School and the big girls beat us well. Everything went along much as usual until December 12th when we were all quite ready for a rest.

There was one exciting episode in the holidays. We were returning from a party, all four of us in our best, and had to cross a side lane at the top of which stood a delivery truck. As we passed behind it the driver started up, in reverse, as he afterwards admitted. I was thrown up against a garden fence and when I looked round there was no sign of the family, *only the car moving down the lane, still backwards.* Almost at once appeared a small form from under the car, then another, and finally Edith. The boys were untouched, as their yells proved, but Edith was very badly bruised: one wheel had gone over her picture hat, and they were all soaked in oil and plastered with the mud. The Doctor assured us that no bones were broken and the firm, to whom I reported the matter, were most solicitous, and begged me to bring them to the store where a complete new outfit was provided for all three—and there we were. Providence again? A very wet but happy Christmas, and, as usual, we sat up to hear the midnight whistles ushering in 1914.



Our start in Oak Bay, 1912



The present building

CHAPTER 4.

1914-1916 — *The Influence Spreads*

1914.—The diary opens, as it does every year, with a little prayer. "Go before us, O Lord, in all our doings, and further us with thy continual help," etc. It has been answered time and time again.

We start with the basement being cemented, an incredibly bad job which gives trouble to this very day. Rain, snow, sleet, but a very satisfactory School month. February saw lots of games, hockey and soccer, with results gradually improving.

April 21st saw little Kyrle to School with Miss Ashworth. He is now acting head of St. Michael's and she has retired after many years at St. Christopher's. I salute her for the splendid work she has done with her pupils. Perhaps this is the place to pay homage once more, this time to Mrs. Suttie, who, though crippled with rheumatism and barely able to leave her wheel chair, ran St. George's School and inspired it. I think she was the epitome of courage and cheer and devotion to duty. She is now in England, has a big School of her own, and has only recently retired. Time for a set back! Whooping cough came along, but we were able to play cricket against the Collegiate, St. George's and St. Margaret's. The girls were amazing; they bowled like demons, fielded about two feet from the batsman and held anything we sent them—ran impossibly short runs and got away with it and were thorough sportsmen! On June 26th there was the first Fathers' Match, now an institution. On July 7th our fourth Closing, once again a good show and again with Dean Doul as our guest. Then the scurry to camp on South Pender, with only 21 pieces of baggage which

opened up into a very satisfactory camp. There were lots of rabbits in those days and a prowl round with a .22 could always produce a good supper. We speared fish, made rafts, were taken on launch trips by L. S. Higgs, and into this Eden, on August 5th came W-A-R. Home we came—this time with a dog known as “Strorks,” which about describes him. He was for ever ailing and finally had to be put to sleep.

The September term began with troops beginning to leave and news was not very good. If you’ll forgive a personal note, it was very difficult to decide whether one’s duty was to go or stay with the School. So many begged me to carry on that I did so and hope and believe that was the right course. It is strange that my eldest son had to make the same decision: I think he is still dubious but feel sure he did right. We did our best for boys whose fathers were overseas, and I know I worked harder and for less than ever before or since.

Now came a hockey match with the University School intermediates, and later with the High School, and it was good to see our circle of friends widening like this. Perhaps we were taking our place as a School.

So, on to Christmas, and though there was not ‘peace on earth’ yet it was the children’s festival and was ever a happy one.

I find it difficult to keep myself out of this record because the school and I are so closely knit together. That Personal Pronoun, first singular, is an odious little word; but all the time I’m thinking in terms of “we.”

As I told you, I stayed behind and worked harder than ever at what I conceive was my job. The boys’ ages and standing varied from little beginners up to a most scholarly boy—perhaps the most scholarly we ever had—who is now an ornament of the Foreign Office. While I wrestled with “The Cat is on the mat” sort of literature he would be composing Greek and Latin verse in a far corner and I can see him leaping up and exclaiming with joy “I’ve got it.” So, you see, there was much work to see to after school night

after night, perhaps at midnight or later, I'm at my desk when in comes my wonderful wife with a tray—bacon and eggs—sometimes a whisky and soda—keeping me going, as she always did until the job was done.

1915—It was on January 1st that I went to see the Rev. W. W. Bolton, head of University School, in St. Joseph's Hospital, and he did me the great honour of suggesting that I take hold of his junior school. But I had my own and even for the privilege of working with him I could not leave it.

We raised quite a good cricket team that year and played matches against the various Garrisons in the Forts at Rodd Hill, Macaulay, Black Rock. At this last there was a most enthusiastic corporal known for some reason as "Piccolo Pete"! Sometimes the boys had to be reinforced by a friend and myself. How well I remember dropping a catch in the deep field and sending Drennan Hincks to take my place. The batsman smote another mighty one, exactly as before, and did Drennan show me how it should be caught? He is now Science Master at L.C.C. and we often recall the episode. On one occasion, at Macaulay, I made 100, being the worst batsman in the world. The paper next day entered it as 10, to my great and proper humiliation. Anyhow, these games were all very pleasant and I'm sure they did us a deal of good. We also had some tennis games with St. George's School. Mrs. Suttie would be wheeled out to watch, and I can see her clapping her poor little twisted hands together and cheering on both sides impartially.

There was always the shadow of war; troops left and many dear friends with them. H.M.S. KENT came into Esquimalt Harbour for repairs (her picture is on the wall at the Pacific Club) and we went to see over her. We invited two sailors, who showed us round, to come and have a meal with us. One presented us with a bit of the ship's ensign which had been shot to pieces in the Falkland Islands. He had recovered the pieces and smuggled a bit for us and I have it yet in a frame. On July 8th we closed, when Mr. Bolton gave the

prizes. I always regarded him as the doyen of School Masters in this country and like to think he is still going strong somewhere in Polynesia. The last I heard was that on his 80th birthday he went for a walk—40 miles. (Since writing this I hear he has passed to his rest.) Camp at South Pender was good as ever—better than ever as we gradually acquired more equipment. In the earlier days we 'roughed' it; folding canvas cots used to collapse in the middle of the night and one would wake with one's head on the ground and feet in the air—definitely uncomfortable. A five-foot folding rubber bath was a great joy except on the occasion when Ned converted it into an aquarium. When one went for a dip, lo, it was full of creeping things, even down to sea cucumbers. At night Mr. Higgs used to have enormous bonfires on the beach. We made endless slices of anchovy toast—very thirsty fare—and he always managed to produce large demijohns of what was required to quench it—and this went on until the small hours.

Term and hard work began again, and there was always plenty to do. The Duke of Connaught visited the Willows, then a big Army depot; a Jap warship came in and joined in the sports at Esquimalt; news of a victory was very welcome; Australian cadets appeared at the theatre; the then Pantages theatre had excellent variety shows—so there was respite from the everlasting wood-cutting, floor scrubbing, and so on that were incessant. We built a nice little porch to the School, as the rain had a habit of coming in, and the School was quite attractive. I had a good deal to do with Scouts in those days and besides attending very many meetings was examiner for some of the badges—notably cooks!

I came out one evening to a spot not far from where I'm sitting with a lot of budding chefs and they got to work on the beach. I had to sample and pass judgment on their efforts—and nibbled mulligan, potatoes and various dainties on the end of a spit until it was dark and a deluge came on to help things out. Mercifully a friend turned up in his car and got us home, or we might still be there. Term ended as

all terms must do. We had a wonderful holiday at Qualicum, staying with Mrs. Noel Money, the general being overseas, and playing with the children, then known as Tim and Mim. Ah me, the days that are no more. I was poetical and quote Horace for your edification.

Enu, fugaces labuntur anni

of which a rough translation is that time flies and I'm getting very old and garrulous and am probably boring you more and more. However, be lenient with me and though in the natural course of a school record there must be much that is monotonous and which I'm sparing you, there are still many good things and surprising things to come.

So lay down the book for a bit—or read *"Inside Detective"* for a time—and when you feel, "Well I suppose I'd better get on with it," come back to it and see what 1916 has in store.

1916 started off with a cold snap and a great deal of snow, so much so that drifts were level with the top of the door and the washroom roof; the road was blocked and school was impossible. It took me about an hour to wade to the local grocery where people with small sleighs were stocking up supplies in case of being completely snowed in. Ploughs were out, soldiers at work, and Edith and I shovelled paths and tunnels till our backs nearly broke. I imagine the boys were quite aggrieved when school started again.

It was about now that Edith joined the I.O.D.E. and I think this splendid Order was always very dear to her. It was a proud day for us all when she was made Municipal Regent. They do a grand work and I salute them.

Arthur Jackson, one of our early and certainly one of our ablest boys, appeared in uniform. He gave his fine young life in that first war.

We seem from the diary to have been always very busy—school affairs taking up 25 out of 24 hours and the rest being spent by Edith on her beloved Chapter I.O.D.E. I was busy

with Scout affairs, testing boys for Cookery badge, writing a weekly report for the paper, and so on. All the time there was the shadow of war over everything—the Western Scots left—we heard of the sinking of the "HAMPSHIRE" with Lord Kitchener—our dear Dr. Popert went overseas and we did what we could to look after his affairs. All the time one felt there was a weight pressing down.

Some say we school people have too long holidays; my view is that they save our reason. Certainly it was a delight, after a capital closing (No. 6), to get away to South Pender once more and really relax. But there was always something to do. I got my first experience of road work at \$2.50 per day—very helpful it was too. I remember being told by the foreman, L. S. Higgs, to make a culvert. I wasn't quite sure what it was but I shouldered a pick and shovel and went off manfully to the job. I remember picking a beautifully straight channel across the road, about six inches deep and six inches wide and feeling what a fine job it was till he came up and said, "Very good! Now if you'll make it about four times as deep and wide it will do nicely." It seemed to me I had been working for about eight hours but it was only 10 a.m. I was glad enough when 12 o'clock came and we downed tools for lunch—still more glad when a deluge came on and we had to quit. Half a day was plenty for my unaccustomed hands and back, but one soon got used to it and I really enjoyed it.

We were back at the end of August. One of my first visitors was Judge Hyndman, who came to talk about sending his son Louis to us and decided to do so. I shall not soon forget the evening when he came to leave the boy with us and am sure it nearly broke his heart. As soon as he had gone Louis and I went upstairs to play with soldiers and trains. He was quite happy until the Judge returned for another look at him, and I had it all to do over again. Only the other day I had lunch with the Judge and Mrs. Hyndman before they returned to Ottawa, where he still holds an important position, and we recalled those early days.

Louis, like so many, was one of our best and is still one of my dearest friends—and a leading legal light in Edmonton.

So ends another year—not very exciting to you perhaps, but to me full of interest. I so often recall words spoken by an old former master at Dulwich, Mr. Pearson, who for some reason was known as "Snegg." When we made him a very handsome presentation on his retirement, he said: "Our life is one of steady, unremitting toil, drudgery for the most part." I think that is true, but I find it has been always spiced with something—unexpected joys and some sorrows, anxieties crowding in and melting away—rough water and smooth sailing—rocky ways and primrose paths, and always the joys of wife and children and friends and an unconquerable feeling that "God's in His Heaven, All's right with the world."

CHAPTER 5.

1917 — "*Dreams of Bigger Things*"

1917—A year to remember especially. School began with 12 stalwarts and all the usual "cares and occupations of our daily life." There are constant allusions to snow and sleet so that I really think that even the weather was different in those early days. Queer entries keep catching my eye in the diary; "Little Dick" did so and so; spanked John for so and so. Now these are mostly brass hats in the services, or what was vulgarly called in the war, "the high-priced help"! "Term began well but Brookes has the measles" is a typical sort of entry; and there is even reference to a street car strike in June. At the June closing the Rev. R. Connell gave away the prizes. One of our earliest friends—he sent us his three sons—taught for some time in the school, excelling in arts and science; later on became M.P.P. and is now venerable as Archdeacon.

This time we camped at Albert Head where there are acres of sand and warm water. It took several trips by the local stage to get all our goods out there but we were soon comfortably settled. Only one contretemps do I remember vividly—a cow! Returning from a dip we found her standing in the tent beside my bed on which I had deposited some three dozen oranges and lemons; most of these she had eaten with disastrous results and we had to start all over again. To eke out our resources which were still slender, as we had to exist from July and August on what was left over at the end of June, I got a job sawing fence-posts, tarring a barn roof on a very hot day, and even giving a hand on the construction of a pig pen. Meanwhile the small sons, now growing up, learned to swim and I built them a boat; such a boat as

never was seen before or since. I think it was finally converted into a store cupboard. The sand was full of flounders and the odd skate and we went spearing them most days. One other episode stands out. Mr. and Mrs. Clark came out by stage to supper but awful weather came on and they had to stay the night. We slept (?) on beds and chairs, eight in one tent listening to the rain and welcomed the dawn. But it was a very happy holiday and set us up for the start of another year which began September 4th with sixteen boys.

For some time there had been great preparations for welcoming another member of the family and, as we confidently expected a daughter, a lot of pink ribboned garments and baskets and cradles and things were daily prepared. However, on September 13th, during recess, Mrs. Giles appeared and announced another son, Michael. All went very well, I'm thankful to say, as there were now seventeen boys in school and a considerable amount of domestic details into the bargain.

We secured a very good Chinaman—Ah Gain—who was a great ally and stayed with us for twenty-eight years, cleaning house, school, chopping wood, doing garden, even some washing on occasions and always good natured with the heartiest laugh you can imagine. Edith fed him enormously and I think that helped, for after his dinner he used to push back his chair, pat his tummy and say, "Thank you, good dinner, too much, to muchee" and off he'd go to work it off. It was a great blow when last year he calmly announced "I no come next Saturday—I go China." Good luck to him—we were great friends and used to pat each other on the back and I'd say, "You good man, Gain" and he'd go one better—"You heap good man." He loved the baby and we were all very fond of him. That year saw our first visit to Shownigan for a match. Mr. Lonsdale, whose school in those days was small and rather like ours, gave us a great time—one of many.

In October we started another of our "features," namely, a lecture on Wednesday afternoon by some visitor. These

still go on and have been of the greatest value as well as pleasure to us all. There have been over four hundred and fifty of them. Members of every profession, travellers from all parts, have come and talked to us. I can not thank them all by name but I would like to mention Mr. Napier Denison, head of the Gonzales Observatory, who was our faithful friend till his death recently. One of his last actions was to present us with a beautiful orery he had constructed, which is used in the School today. Canon G. Scott came and gave a wonderful talk, quoting freely from his own poems. A British Admiral, a Blackfoot Indian chief, Paul Little Walker, with Canon Stocken as his interpreter, came to us. More recently we have welcomed experts from the Government departments, Major Nation (Mines); Dr. Carl and Mr. Hardy from the Provincial Museum; Mr. Simmons, a member of the Forestry Branch, and others. We were honoured by a visit from Mr. Randolph Bruce, then Lieutenant-Governor, whom we welcomed with a ceremonial turn out of Scouts and Cubs and who made a fine address. I wish time and space permitted me to tell you of others; we have nine volumes of their signatures, but I should most certainly omit one gentleman, strongly recommended by a parent, who arrived for his speech in a condition known as "speechless"—here I think we'll draw a veil!

In addition to receiving visits we used to pay them when the numbers were smaller and transport was more easily managed. We visited the *Colonist* and *Times* and saw the whole process of making a newspaper; the Sidney Roofing plant, of which the manager is a very dear old boy and now prominent business man, Logan Mayhew; the Dominion Observatory, where Mr. N. Denison always kindly and patiently explained his wonderful instruments—so the list goes on. Later on we acquired a small projector and screen and had our own movies with many visits from Mr. Marshall of the National Film Board, whose pictures and talkies have been outstanding. To all these kind people, many of them no longer with us, we owe a great debt of gratitude.

I must not forget trips to visiting ships. We had seen the old KENT which came into Esquimalt for repairs. But the highlight was our visit to H.M.S. LANCASTER at the invitation of Capt. Gresham. We marched—in soldierly fashion—down to the jetty where boats were waiting for us. Officers had been told off to escort small parties all over the ship. I sat in great pomp in the Captain's cabin, where there was Admiral Colcomb, and was duly refreshed and then escorted round by the Yeoman of Signals, being first provided with leather gloves lest my hands should get soiled on the brass work! A space had been cleared between decks and hung with flags and there the boys had the biggest tea I have ever seen, being encouraged by sailors, as they began to slow up, to gargantuan efforts, while the ship's band played. What an afternoon in a boy's memory! Truly the Navy does things well.

Captain Fleming of the Cable Ship RESTORER had us all on board and treated us royally. We visited the HOOD when she came. You can see that Wednesday afternoon occupies a big place in our time table.

In November of that year it looked as if we would have to increase our capacity and I had a talk with Mr. C. V. Milton, then at the Oak Bay High School, about the possibility of joining us. Of course that meant the building of another class-room and the question was how it was to be managed. Finance has never meant much to us—the till has nearly always been almost empty but always something has turned up, as you shall see. Again Elijah and his ravens had nothing on St. Michael's! I know well that Faith can and does work miracles. Here is the proof and we come to one of the most remarkable periods in our story. If this were a work of fiction people might well say, "This fellow has a rich imagination, but why doesn't he talk of things less improbable? You can't expect me to believe this." I assure you, my friend, that every word of this record is true and solid facts and you are at liberty at any time to see the various documents to prove it. Well, here is the miracle.

ENTER THE FAIRY GODMOTHER

On December 7th I was in school and the Christmas examinations were on when I was told that a lady wished to see me: so I left the boys to it—I've always trusted them—and went to see my visitor. A middle-aged lady was in the sitting room. She announced that she was from the Prairie and asked if we would take her two sons. Reluctantly I told her that the class-room was quite full up (as I told you before, I was taking a good many boys whose fathers were overseas, trying to make things easy for them.) I may say that at that time only a very few were "paying propositions," some doing what they could out of their separation allowances, some doing less. Might one hint that it seemed to me a chance to "do my bit" and that it was to help such as these that I *had decided to stay this side and keep the school going?* I also figured that if I tried to collect fees in full some would drop out and there would then be room for these two boys. Anyhow, I told her this and her reply was immediately, "What shall you do?" I said that it looked as if we should have to build another class-room. She then said: "Well, Mr. Symons, if you do decide to build I have \$1000.00 which I will gladly put into your hands; if you repay it, well and good; if not, it will have been spent on education and I shall be quite content." This, from a complete stranger and she left me gasping.

It appeared afterwards that this sum she kept for helping lame dogs over styles. The last time she had lent it to a farmer who was struggling along with no equipment. *The war put him on his feet and he prospered—and the fund was restored ready for the next case!* Well, I found it would cost \$600.00 to build on a second room and porch, and drew up a document acknowledging that sum and leaving gaps for rate of interest, date of repayment and took it up to show her. She promptly tore up the paper, so that "There should be no record of the transaction, if I'm run over by a street car," as she put it, and begged me to go ahead. I borrowed

\$500.00 and the room was built by Mr. W. M. Sutton. I approached Mr. Milton once more about joining me—which he agreed to do—and that was the end of the little one-room school, and I hope, of the personal pronoun I.

Wasn't that amazing? But, in the language of the country, "Brother, you have not heard the half of it yet."

Work began on December 14th—and we made a nice little plot of green grass, with a flag-pole in the middle, just outside the new room. Progress was good, the necessary funds were in the bank and once again the year ended with the deepest sense of gratitude.

CHAPTER 6.

1918 — *The Fairy Godmother Again*

January is so called from the Roman deity Janus—who had two heads, one looking forward and one backward. I've always admired that, for every year, indeed almost every day, is like a door that opens both ways—and one has always looked ahead into the future with faith and back into the past with gratitude. As the vista behind one gets longer and longer, so the one in front gets shorter. But I like to feel that whatever happens to me, whenever it happens, it will make no difference and that St. Michael's will go on as usual—with my sons at the helm—grandsons in the offing—a fine staff of officers, a good crew of passengers, and always a loyal crowd of friends to wish the ship "bon voyage."

The holiday had been spent in getting the new room cleaned, painted and ready and on January 7th we started in with Mr. Milton, myself and twenty-four boys. Naturally it took a little organizing but we very soon settled down and were able to cope with more boys as they came in. We started carpentry classes under Mr. Sutton on Fridays, having benches in the basement and high power lights overhead. Here the boys sawed and planed and made a hideous mess of shavings and sawdust which we took it in turn to clean up, but they turned out some good pieces and I think for a time it was worth while—at any rate for those who meant business. Mr. Milton, besides being a sound teacher, was and is a great soccer man and games began to go ahead. At this time another benefactor appeared, Mr. H. A. Ross, who married Miss J. Butchart, and had a son Ian, who came to the School. He most kindly lent us his field, a very pretty one on Boundary Road, and we have used it ever since for

games and our sports. We regard the "Little Field" as one of our greatest blessings for the lack of a ground of our very own is still a worry. Now the field seems to be common property, we have suffered a good deal from "louts" in the neighbourhood whose delight is to destroy or remove our goal-posts and do what they can to spoil things for little boys—truly a fine spirit! Latterly we have been reduced to carrying down each time long sticks to act as posts, with string for the crosspiece. Why do vandals exist?

Lectures went on excellently, as did our hockey. The boys were a very good lot and all went along swimmingly till the measles once more appeared. They seem to be part of young lives. However, we survived and on March 28th Mr. Milton organized our first Athletic Sports meeting in the Little Field, and quite excellent they were. We entertained some *seventy parents and friends to tea in the school* as we had removable doors and could throw the two rooms into one. These sports and teas still continue as all our functions seem to do, with unfailing popularity; but now they are run better than ever by K. W. S., who with his brother Ned, entered the School in that same year.

Of course there were the usual trials; the baby got a cold on his lungs while his mother had influenza but carried on with her usual pluck. K. had serious ear trouble, I wasn't too fit. But the School went on and now had some thirty boys. I think it was then that our first school photos were taken by "Trio," who has done them ever since. The gym walls were so thick with pictures of the different years that there is hardly room for another post card, but they make an interesting record.

In June we got a piano. Mr. Rattenbury had one in an open verandah upstairs and said we could have it if we'd take it away. We certainly did; and though it had stood the weather—even snow—for years it was a brave old instrument, and really started the musical side of our existence.

We had a grand break-up in the usual garden, when Dr. Hudson was the speaker and the boys' exhibition of drill was

as near perfect as could be. A big crowd came—many “prospects” among them. That was a memorable day as in the evening I actually presented prizes at St. Margaret’s School. To face all those girls was quite an ordeal and I remember quite well saying that nothing less than my devotion to Miss Barton (then headmistress) would have got me on the platform. My Edith was sitting in the audience and heard a lady behind her say to her companion: “I wonder if she knows he is married.” Memories.

The usual camping holiday at Albert Head, when I see the baby Michael “paddled.” A host of names appear in the diary and I’d like to mention them all but obviously that can’t be done, yet they mean much to me.

At the June closing, our 8th, I had reported that the School had been doubled and that applications were so frequent that it looked as if we might have to build again. Directly we reached Albert Head, now a little party of five, I received a letter from the Fairy Godmother: “Dear Mr. Symons. If you are in earnest about building, I have \$3000.00 for you on the same terms as before.” I am thankful to say we had repaid her first loan but this was a big proposition and gave us a great deal to think about. We consulted an architect, Mr. Hennell, whose three sons came to us, and Mr. Sutton as to whether to build on one more room to join the existing school to the bungalow, or two, while we were at it. Finally we were persuaded to build four—two down and two upstairs. Edith and I once more most gratefully accepted this wonderful offer and decided to go ahead *without* looking back. The contract was signed and I think it was on the same day that we secured the services of Mr. Eden Quainton as junior master.

Here is the place to pay my tribute of respect and affection to the Quainton family. The Dean was a remarkable and outstanding man, a marvellous speaker, definitely, in my opinion, a great man. Many are the services at half term that he has taken for us, and in his own words he was our “unsalaried Chaplain.” Eden was with us for two years,

competent to the Nth degree and altogether delightful. He was a born teacher and did a splendid job. He had, I remember, an amazing vocabulary and used it freely. One of his pet expressions was "You paralyzed rabbit" to some wretched tongue-tied urchin. I learned this one because it became quite prevalent in several homes as a term used by our boys on their infant sisters—much to the consternation of certain rather over-correct parents! Eden was a fine athlete and a very good pianist. It was he who organized a little choir and enabled us to start prayers in the morning with a hymn. When he left I had a desperate struggle to keep it up—being the world's worst pianist. But I would pick a hymn in the key of C, with no black notes, and play it doggedly through a hundred times till I felt we could venture on it next day. We kept the hymns going and added, by degrees to our store. Now three of our staff play and I quite willingly vacated the piano stool. Dear Eden, he became a very popular History Lecturer at the University of Washington, was borrowed by Mexico University for a year and came back in very bad health. He died quite recently to the genuine horror and grief of all who knew him.

The family tradition is kept up by Eric Quainton who, I am glad to say, is still with us and is, I always say, as sound and reliable as the Rock of Gibraltar. It was a fine family—St. Michael's is all the richer and better for knowing them.

The School year began September 9th with forty-two boys. In October the Health Officer closed all schools for an epidemic of influenza, but it was not for long. Meanwhile the building continued and the work was actually finished and new boys enrolled by the end of the year. Now, of course, we had dormitories upstairs and very soon they were as full of boarders as the school was of day boys. I see that in November we had to get a doctor for Edith and he said she needed rest. Will you, can you, believe me when I tell you that at one time she looked after seventeen of us—twelve

boarders and five of ourselves—single handed? There were seventeen to breakfast and extra day boys to lunch (how we ever squeezed them in I do not know as we had only my little den) and seventeen to supper—and she did it *all*, to say nothing of washing and mending. And yet I can see her now, with the work all done, looking neat and pretty and wheeling the baby out for a walk about 3 p.m. I have a terrible feeling that if she *had* been able and willing to rest then, she might have been with us still.

I hope I did my share. Certainly the diary shows full days, for there were occasional private pupils to coach and endless letters to write, the total for that year being five hundred and twenty-three and still going up. Kyrle was ten, Ned eight, and Michael was learning to walk, and we enjoyed every bit of our very busy lives. But was it a mistake ever to build and grow? I have told you that in this year my two eldest sons, Kyrle and Ned, entered the school; and it is into their hands I commit my most precious treasure. It is a comfort to feel that they have known it, been in it, learned in it, taught in it, for getting on towards thirty years, as boys and men; and that what tradition we have is safe in their good hands, and that St. Michael's will go on—please God—with the third generation now growing up, my grandson Philip having already had one year. But, he, of course, wants to be a farmer!

CHAPTER 7.

1919-1920 — *Growing Pains*

By now we had seven boarders and to this day I wonder how we squeezed them into the little dining room—but there were more to come.

Here, once more, is a fitting place to pay my tribute of admiration and gratitude to Mr. Stewart G. Clark, my closest friend to this day. He officially became School Bursar and did the work faithfully and well for no less than 27 years. I have always been a perfect fool at finance, which I hate, and instead of my chaotic attempts at accounts he organized properly kept books. Monday night after Monday night, though a very busy man, he came to keep things straight and no doubt kept us off the rocks which were often perilously near. Thank you, my dear Stewart. You'll find him in Crescent Road and he'll tell you of those days. I record with sorrow his son, Jim, an old boy and an old friend, passed away rather more than a year ago after a long and gallant fight with T.B.

Once again the school was closed by the M. O.—though we were all very fit—and we made efforts to visit the boys who, I am sure, were not too grateful for this attention. Mr. DeTrafford and Mr. "Dodie" Hope came on the staff for a short time.

By February we had 56 boys and on March 5th played our first Rugby match against the University School, a much heavier, more experienced lot. Naturally we did not make any show at all; but when they had got over their astonishment at our even appearing on a field, they were most anxious to help us along and it all enabled us to learn something of the game besides how to be good losers. On the

8th we actually took two soccer teams up to Shawnigan Lake School—in those days a small place rather like our own—and a real event it was. In April, we had our second annual sports—good again—and this time about 150 came to tea. On the 23rd, term began with 59 boys. A new time-table, starting work at 9 and making slightly longer periods, was organized with good results. July 11th was our 9th prize giving, by Dean Quainton, once again in the same garden. We lugged the old piano out for some singing, the drill was good, the costume plays went well and we estimate some 300 people attended.

On looking back I am amazed at the length of the programme our good friends sat through. Singing, recitations in French and Latin and English, drill, Shakespeare plays, speeches, prizes. We had made our own benches, 50 of them, and they still stand up, with a deal of repair work, and are quite the most uncomfortable things I know. "Bring your own cushions" has been on several of the invitation cards. Now our show has been curtailed very considerably and, I think, is more enjoyed for that reason.

As before, the holiday camp was at Albert Head and very good it was. *I remember so well our being taken on a trip by Mr. P. Homer in his launch "SEDGELY" round to Sooke to see a fish trap lifted; thousands of salmon were in it, swimming aimlessly round and round until they were scooped up remorselessly by a big sort of landing net and dumped on to the deck of the ship that was to take them to the cannery. I've always thought that was no way to treat a salmon! We also saw the rest of the process. The fish were landed on to the cannery wharf where a machine cleaned each one in a twinkling; another cut them into the right-sized pieces; these were packed into tins on an endless belt; lids fixed on; wheeled away to cook, labelled, packed. Not much romance about it but doubtless a profitable industry.*

September saw the dormitories filled and the incredible amount of work done by one gallant little woman in looking after us all, single-handed. *I have said very little about her,*

for I have not the words nor is it easy to put one's innermost heart on paper. But I think all will agree—especially many old boys—that she did every bit as much towards making the School as all the rest of us put together. She certainly gave her life to the School and for the School and I feel now that if she had spared herself then we might have had her with us today.

Mr. Anderson came to us for drawing and Mme. Sander-son-Mongin, an inspired teacher if ever there was one, came and galvanized the little boys into some sort of French. I remember her lessons, which I attended and enjoyed enormously, almost verbatim: the visit to the zoo, "*l'elephant marche lourdement*"—"il balance sa trompe à droit, à gauche"—"*le lion, la maison des singes.*" We quote fragments of this when we meet now as I am happy to say we occasionally do.

Another character comes on the stage—as janitress—Miss Sarah Short, a little tiny Lancashire woman, loyal to the core, who stayed with us until nearly the end. I think her creed could be summed up as "The British Empire and St. Michael's School." At first she swept the class rooms, laid fires and generally kept us tidy; but before long she was handling our tea parties, and one only had to say to her "tea for 300 at 4 o'clock" and there it was. She adored our little son, Michael, was quite devoted to us all, and was always on the spot to *serve*. When she had to give up, her work was taken on by her sister-in-law, Mrs. Short, who now lives in the little cottage at the School House—two brave, loyal, fine people.

On September 23rd, we all marched up to Government House to see the then Prince of Wales, who came on one of those visits which earned him such enormous popularity. That same week we had an adventure that might interest you.

At the kind invitation of Captain Beaumont, I took eleven boarders to visit him on Discovery Island, where he has a charming home. After a delightful day, we went on board

his launch for the return; but unfortunately ran on a rock where, with the tide falling rapidly, we stuck. There was a small boat in which we got the boys to the beach one by one. There we stayed, marooned, till about 11 at night, rather cold and hungry and wondering if in time to come someone would find our bones bleaching there. However, on a last despairing walk around the Island, we saw a light and managed, by all yelling together, to rouse a Japanese fisherman who had come in for the night. We made him understand that we wanted to get back to the Oak Bay boathouse and it was a relief to hear his engine start and see the boat come round to pick us up. He got us home, at \$1.00 a head, and we hurried up Windsor Road where various distracted mothers were walking up and down, wringing their hands and bewailing our untimely end! They had been to the police who, I believe, had kindly offered to drag for our corpses in the morning—which must have been a great comfort. However, it was just one of those things and, as ever, Providence stood by to see that it all ended up satisfactorily.

Fresh names of boys keep coming up in the diary: the boarders formed a "Cronies Club" which had a short life. We saw the New Zealand Rugby team in action at the Willows. Lectures were regular and always good. Work was incessant; minor illnesses frequent, but the days went on. Some of our boys were now beginning to pass examinations as the boards in the gymnasium will testify. On December 12th, we actually had an Old Boys' team to play the School at hockey and soccer; this was followed by tea and a concert in the School. That concert was the forerunner of many, as you shall hear. One item was a quartette in which the fairy godmother sang a fine alto and I—save the mark—attempted the bass. So ended a great year and a very hard one. One thing did much to keep us going and that our hiring a car, driven by Mr. Skelton, and going for a good drive now and then. It was a break and a rest of which there was far too little. With the idea of some day

having a car of our own, I took driving lessons and was uncommonly slow to learn. I drive now but have no idea why the thing goes or stops!

I record with deep thankfulness that the last repayment was made to Mr. Rattenbury and also to the Fairy God-mother. We have never had any capital of our own—people have always been on hand to lend us funds when necessary and we've always managed to pay back and be clear of all debts except the biggest one of all, a debt that can never be repaid—the debt of gratitude.

I wish I had kept track of the number of lessons given, interviews, visits paid and received, but naturally they grew as the school grew. I can tell you that the number of letters written that year reached the respectable (?) total of 656.

I begin to have an uncomfortable feeling that some of you may be finding this record a bit tedious. I'm doing my best to avoid that but it is obvious that there must be a certain amount of sameness in school routine; that such events as sports, matches, examinations, holidays come round with monotonous regularity. If I feel it getting too heavy I'll try to lighten it by regaling you with little tales of boys and episodes—of which there is an unlimited store. So, please, take courage and keep going.

1920—We cannot expect every year to be full of thrills but most years have added something to our life and this year was no exception.

On January 5th I had a long talk with Mr. Leonard G. Tolson and the Rev. C. Swanson, one of the finest parsons I've ever met and a great name in Vancouver today—about the possibilities of getting them on the staff and running four rooms. The next day School began with 60 boys divided up into five rooms. We now started having School prefects. Their names and those of the games captains may be seen on the walls of the gymnasium. Considering that our boys are very young, I think that on the whole, we have been fortunate in our choice and would certainly claim that our "head" boys have been as fine as they come.

On the 13th, Mr. Tolson agreed to come to us in September and meanwhile, we fixed up a 4th room for the little boys, who were taken in hand by Mr. T. F. Hope, whose father became the first headmaster of Brentwood College. Mr. Dudley Anderson continued his drawing lessons—himself a bit of a poet. Another influenza wave caused the school to be closed for 10 days. This was just as well as all my family succumbed and I was their nurse, cook and general factotum. I attribute my freedom from infection to a prescription of the School doctor, namely, large quantities of Scotch whisky (for which, in those days, one had to have a doctor's signature).

We opened again with I. Sterling passing into Wellington. I like to think that very many of our boys have gone into the great English public schools and found themselves quite at home there. Just as many have gone into our bigger schools and high schools here and have been definitely "Marked Men." Perhaps it will not be bad taste if I recall a remark made to me by a certain high school teacher, who said: "Your boys are a perfect nuisance!" This was a bit staggering and I meekly asked why. "Because they all know their work and are so far ahead." Balm in Gilead.

The second term began on April 12th with Mr. R. H. Bates on the staff (of whom you will hear later), the Forms ranging from 1—6. Yes, we had a 6th Form in those days. New lockers were built in the hall by Mr. G. Swarbrick, 82 of them, and that did something at least for the boys' clothes which have always been rather a trial. I would write a chapter or two on the subject of clothes unmarked and have addressed many winged words to my parents on the subject, but with very little result except in the case of the chosen few who really do seem to care that their son shall return home in his own trousers.

May saw a capital sports meeting and in June the Fathers' match was resumed after a long break and is to this day one of our best events. I recall so many episodes; one match played when the ground was in very bad condition and a

distinguished Commissioner of Police, who gallantly offered to play, getting "severe contusions" as a result. I remember W. Tunnard, a good cricketer, hitting a ball hard to point which caught young N. Martin in the stomach. Instinctively, he clutched the spot and the ball and held it, whereupon the batsman immediately asked if he might buy the ball and present it to the boy who got him out; that is cricket.

There was also a certain headmaster who donned his pads and marched to the wicket amid great applause only to be bowled, first ball, by a little ruffian, who also shall be nameless. In the second innings, the headmaster went in again to face the bowling of his own son and asked him for an easy one. He certainly got it—right in the middle of the stumps—and again first ball. I rather think that was his last appearance in the Fathers' match—except as scorer.

Meanwhile, Mr. Milton had decided to start a school of his own, Cranleigh House. He had done good work here and we made him a little presentation with our very best wishes. He has retired from the scholastic life and is now secretary of the Elks in Victoria.

June 7th, a desperately hot day, saw our 10th prize giving in the same lovely surroundings with our Dean once more officiating. There was a big crowd and I particularly noticed how keen everyone seemed; that is always inspiring. Mrs. Symons presented us with a lovely silver shield on which are engraved the names of the first 70 boys. We have two more shields with masses of names but need about six more to make the series complete, but what about engraving hundreds more names? Pro tem, they are now modestly chalked on little boards that hang in Room 3.

I must tell you about an essay that I made every boy in the School write during that term on, "What I would like to do with my life." Two or three stand out in my mind to this day. One small boy was as definite as his aims were lofty. "When I grow up," he wrote, "I shall be a farmer and send my wife to market twice a week and be buried in

St. Paul's Cathedral." Another, a grandson of old Mr. Duns-muir, who reared pedigree cattle, said: "I shall be a farmer and keep animals like my grandfather." A third wrote to me personally and said: "I shall be a doctor and I hope you will be very ill, so that I can operate on you." Well, at any rate, they had ideas as to what they wanted, that was something.

The summer term seems to have had more matches than ever before and now to the ordinary list of fixtures was added the Mothers' Cricket Match. This was played for many years and I would like to see it revived. How sporting they were! I can see Mrs. S. wearing cricket pads as wicket keeper and stopping anything quite fearlessly and getting black and blue in the process. Some mothers were demon bowlers, others hit like veterans; they always provided tea and very happy little events they were.

Talking of mothers being sporting, I recall their highest point of sportsmanship. It was a cold wet day, Oak Bay was a sea of fearfully slippery mud, but they turned out for a hockey match. It seems to me, looking back, that if anyone moved, she promptly slid and fell down—but the game went on. I think, too, I am right in saying that one lady had influenza or a very severe cold or something but she turned up. She was made goal keeper and stood there, wrapped in countless coats and cloaks, till she was almost as wide as the goal itself. Splendid mothers.

Holidays came—as, thank goodness, they do—and off again the family moved to camp at Albert Head. Applications for admission were more frequent than ever and good prospects always help a holiday along. Endless baths, launch trips, visits to and from friends—the time fled by except when I was flattened out by a sudden attack of lumbago which was most unpleasant.

September 7th saw us off again—this time with Mr. Tolson on the staff, I'm glad to say. I used to remark then and I'd like to repeat it now, "Any school that has Mr. Tolson on the staff must be a good school."

Now we started having divisions—as distinct from forms—for languages and mathematics; this has worked well. It is ridiculous to think that a child is in the same grade for all subjects; he may be grade 1 for reading but a really good mathematician. Hence, our sets contain boys from different forms but having the same sort of standard in that particular subject.

September 29th is St. Michael's Day. That year, Dean Quainton conducted a service in School. That was the beginning of the Mid-Term Services which we have had for so many years—every half term. It has grown and widened and now we have sometimes 40 to 50 parents and friends, and make a collection for the Solarium. We have been most privileged in having splendid addresses from various clergy, Dean Quainton and Dean Spencer Elliott, the Rev. G. Biddle, Canon Coleman, and many others have left their mark. I do not pretend to be a very good person but it has always seemed to me that we spend nearly all the time in school on our boys' minds and bodies—and very little on the immortal souls of them. So I feel it has been a splendid thing for the school to have a little time for spiritual things, when one rises, we hope, above the ordinary cares and occupations of our daily life. For this reason, too, I have never allowed the Scripture period to become a lesson but just a little time "apart" each day when one can think of the finer things. We always had a Mid-Term Service at Dulwich, when various divines of the staff, robed in real cassock and surplice took part; but it was always the Head—the great A. H. Gilkes—who preached the sermon—many of which I remember to this day.

We also started "Collections"—a survival of Oxford days. At the end of each term the dons all sat at a long table in the great hall with the Warden in the centre, and opposite him was one chair. In this sat an undergraduate, each called up in turn, who was told what the powers thought of his term. In a modified way, we do the same. We sit in an awe-inspiring row one side of the room, and the forms are

ushered in by a prefect. Each boy in turn comes up, hears from me just exactly what we think of him and his term, and is given his report. We then shake hands all round and off he goes.

Some queer incidents have occurred during this ceremonial. On one occasion, just as I called up the first boy, another small fellow stepped forward rather pink-cheeked and announced: "I wish to say something." As it is our business to do the saying and theirs the listening, you can imagine we all sat up in some anticipation. The boy, bracing himself and looking straight to the front, made a little speech which I fancy he must have learned by heart—"On behalf of the Form, I wish to ask the Head to accept this little present as a token of *et cetera*"—and presented me with a really good Ronson cigarette lighter. As I had always been in the 35c class of lighter (made in Austria), I was as delighted as I was touched and tried to thank them adequately. The small boy, having got his speech off his mind, then turned round and said quite chattily, "You see, Sir, we wanted to get you one for your birthday, but could only raise 25c." Life is as full of halfpence as it is of kicks—fuller in my case.

But this was even better—and happened at the end of the December term. I always end my remarks at this season by wishing each boy a happy Christmas to which he dutifully replies, "The same to you." On this occasion, I had a small malefactor up in front of me and told him in no unmeasured terms our opinion of him. "You have done a very poor term, have been lazy, generally untidy, not always quite honest. However, I wish you a good holiday and hope you will come back next term more worth having." His reply was prompt, "Thank you, Sir, and the same to you." I wonder?

The Scout Troop got going on September 28th with Drennan Hinks as Scout Master. The troop until recently carried on very well under the leadership of Kyrle, who must by now be one of the Senior Scouts in Victoria and bears

a long service medal. There have been other scout masters, Mr. Aldis, P. Wilkinson, D. Southworth and "Middy Mackenzie" all of whom have had the real Scout spirit and have made the troop what it is to-day. It is now in the good hands of Colonel Girard.

I see we had some Rugby matches now and shall always remember the finest we ever played when we were beaten by 52 points to 0. For some reason the Naval College, then at Esquimalt, asked us for a game against their second XV, assuring us they were quite small. So down we went to the old Canteen ground (now all built over) and saw our opponents. Our boys were definitely small and these young cadets appeared to us enormous and husky giants. However, we started and they just scored at will. I can still see one of them crossing our line with the best part of our team hanging on to him, his legs, neck, arms—wherever they could get a hold—and him just ploughing along as if they were so many bootlaces. Almost at once Captain Nixon, then in command, sent one of their men off by way of evening things up; but I think the result would have been the same if he had sent off ten. The points of the game that still thrill me when I think of them were that the cadets were cheering themselves hoarse in their efforts to encourage us and our boys were playing just as keenly and hard at the end as at the start. Really an epic fray. I always remember, too, a teamster driving down the road who stopped for a bit to watch and—quite misunderstanding the situation—was hurling taunts and abuse at those fine young cadets who were doing all they could for us in the most sporting way and, I should say, in the best naval tradition.

Soccer, hockey, Rugby matches came thick and fast. We boldly accepted any challenge, which seems to me the right spirit. Work, exams, Masters' meetings and a thousand things filled up each and every day till we got to December 16th, the last day, which was celebrated by a soccer match against the Old Boys. I think the famous Mothers' hockey match already mentioned was on the same day. This was

followed by a large and welcome tea and another jolly little concert. Once more peace reigned and we were left to clean up and prepare for next term. So ended 1920, with more than 70 boys in the School, a splendid staff, 621 letters written, Kyrle now 12 years old, more and more friends being added to our marvellous list. The diary ends—as it well might—with the words "*Laus Deo.*"

CHAPTER 8.

1921 — *Terra Firma*

The term started off quite well with 15 Scouts shooting in the Drill Hall and Capt. St. Clair taking boxing. He certainly was a fine man, as hard as nails and I always felt that if you hit him with a crow-bar it would bend. For all his lack of sight he seemed to see or sense every wrong movement of foot or hand.

It was now, I fancy, that we started Group matches among ourselves—each one taking the name of a Philistine tribe: so the Jebusites played the Hivites, and the Perizzites tangled with the Hittites, and so on. It was amusing to hear a little chap about three foot high announce to all and sundry that he was an Amalekite and rather turning up his small nose at a rival Gibeonite.

On January 30th we made the final repayment of our debt to the Fairy Godmother; glory be. I might say that at this time I had an offer to sell the School; it was refused.

Now I see a note that in the second half term we had two boys with pneumonia, one scarlet fever, and one whooping cough—all at the same time. There is one of the "hair-bleaching emergencies" that come our way but pass. That year we won the Wilson Cup match against Shawnigan, I think our only victory. I only mention it because of the amazing performance of our Captain, John Woods, who was one of the best athletes we have had.

There were lots of interludes in between steady and constant hard work. I saw my first ice hockey match then, if the diary is correct. I remember at any rate that sitting next to me was a darky maiden who went completely off her head with excitement, flung her arms round my neck—it

being the nearest object available—and between efforts to strangle me issued most profane and irreverent remarks into my ear with the voice of a steam locomotive.

There were constant Rugby matches to watch, the Dumbbells gave a splendid show, bike rides with the boys, games to referee, Scout meetings, house chores, in fact never a dull moment.

It may interest you to know that it was about now I approached the late Mr. H. P. Hope, then Head at Oak Bay High School, as to the possibility of his becoming head of a school for older boys, on our lines, if it could be financed. We had many talks on the subject and discussed the possibilities of securing Craigdarroch, Resthaven, and other places, and on March 11th we had a meeting in school to discuss it. Unfortunately it was a snowy night and only about a dozen interested persons turned up, but they were definitely interested. I had seen the need for such a school some time before and they saw it, too; but for the time nothing more happened. It was some time later that a group of more influential people—with money that talks loud on such occasions—met with the same idea and the result was Brentwood College. So obviously while I cannot claim to be one of its "pious founders" I can at any rate say I have a very fatherly interest in it. You all know that now it is amalgamated with University School. The Easter holiday seems to have been nothing but cleaning school, oiling floors, putting up shelves, and so on; the usual business of clearing up last term and getting ready for next—which always takes a considerable chip out of the holiday.

In May came our 4th sports—very well done by E. Quainton. In June the usual Fathers' match against the School—while the Mothers played the Juniors. Then also came our first drill inspection by General Money, with Major Spurgin and Captain St. Clair in attendance. The boys did very well on the whole and cups were presented, as they still are, for the best platoon, best senior, intermediate, junior and midget. We have had so many cups and trophies given us

and good friends are still anxious to give more as the present ones get filled up with names of the winners. On the 28th we made a handsome presentation to Eden Quainton and on the 29th had our 11th closing in the same garden. It just poured with rain all the morning. We planned to have simply the prize-giving in the boat house for as many as could squeeze in; but, as ever, Providence was with us. At 2 o'clock it cleared and the sun blazed out. We all got busy and whisked all the seats and tables out and had a grand show. "As You Like It" was our play and it ended with a very pretty dance on the lawn to the strains of a gramophone hidden in the laurels. I take some pride in saying I was the ballet master—invented and taught the boys their steps (in hob nail boots in our basement) and hammered away at it till the finished performance—in costume—was really "quite something" as they say.

One more great event—our first motor car. It was essential for Mrs. S. to get out into the fresh air more and without unnecessary fatigue; for some time we had got a Mr. Skelton to drive us for an hour or so on a Sunday. Now I incautiously let it out that I'd like a car of my own and the hunt was up; dealers came from everywhere. Magnificent cars thronged our street until I convinced them that all I could manage was about 15 cents. This reduced the congestion and finally we secured an ancient 1914 Overland—for which I still cherish a warm place in my heart. It was mountains high, built like a battleship and we christened it "Leviathan." But it went—and for all I know is going still—and carried not only ourselves but seemingly countless boarders as well. I'm sure we were an impressive sight as we took our rides abroad. I completely failed to master the Ford but this one was easy. I can remember only one accident and for it we chose the road in front of the City Hall. There, on our way to camp, I really rammed another car that had the insolence to dispute our passage. I can't remember what became of it but think it must have been reduced to its component parts. From the crowd that always collects

on these occasions a most helpful man stepped out and said he was a mechanic who worked just up the side street; with him waggling the wheels, but under our own power, we got the car there. Apparently they bent her straight, for after going to a movie and having tea we found her ready for the road once more and reached our camp, with all our goods and ourselves intact. She was just one more old friend.

It was the usual delightful holiday at Albert Head—but I need not repeat previous experiences.

Term began September 6th with 67 boys. We had secured Mr. L. C. Vulliamy for afternoon work—especially drawing, for he is a real artist—and also Mr. C. K. Warren, one of the most charming and courtly of young men, who is now a vicar somewhere in England.

It think it was now that we had three pews assigned to us at St. Mary's church and we have attended with some regularity since then. Padre Andrews was loved by everyone. Now Archdeacon Nunns keeps us in the straight and narrow path, I hope. I pass over various accidents and unpleasantnesses which are recorded in the diary—as they would not interest you and are better in oblivion. Our games and matches seem to have been more frequent than ever and I think perhaps it was our most successful year up till that time. Of course our pride was taken down by a series of mumps—you see it is always up and down—but we finished the year in some style. Here it is. Some one presented us with a drum. Many of the Old Boys will recall seeing me beating it while they marched. Then came a big forward step. Our members as you know had grown considerably but all the playground we had was the one lot on the Roslyn Road side. On the other side were three vacant lots with a deep ditch running diagonally across them. Two of these belonged to Messrs. Oliver and Townsend, who now had a chance to sell them but *most* kindly and considerately told me so. Suppose bungalows had been built on them, where should we have been? Already the boys were playing there and we decided we must secure them. So we did at a price.

There was still the third lot next the School but here once more the Fairy Godmother came in and with a wave of her wand it was ours—a gift. I need hardly tell you that we had most valuable help from good friends in paying for the other two—Mr. Lawson, Dr. S. Moncrieff, Mrs. Denton Holmes and others all lending a helping hand (and no interest charged.) As usual we put up every penny we had—the deal was closed. St. Michael's owned the whole block from Hampshire to Roslyn.

And so do you wander that my diary for that year ends up with the still increasing total of 726 letters written—and the words “as always, so much to be thankful for.”?

CHAPTER 9.

1922 — *The Gym — The School House*

The year 1922 started off with a good deal of activity and plenty to use it on. Now that we had a real playground of our own, my dream of building a gymnasium came appreciably nearer. The lot next to Roslyn Road was available but the everlasting question of funds arose. So some of the Old Boys formed a committee to see what could be done—and made an appeal. The "Gym Fund" did not exactly boom though occasional dribblets arrived from various good friends whose names appear in a little frame that hangs over the mantelpiece. Yet once more our Fairy Godmother came to our help. I remember as if it were only yesterday her asking me "How is the fund progressing?" and my telling her that we were getting there by degrees.

"How much is still needed?"

"Just \$800."

"Well, I'm going to *give* you that."

And so she did—in cash.

Now you'll see perhaps why Gratitude is one of the ideas that keep coming into my mind as a title for this story—which, I admit, does at times sound like a fairy tale. And so the gym came into being.

Meanwhile we fenced very badly the three lots and Mr. E. Scroggs made a wonderful job of draining them. In heavy rain large ponds form but disappear very quickly and dry land appears as it did in the days of Noah!

We also bought at this time quite a good supply of chemical apparatus—glass tubes, retorts, jars, etc., which formed the nucleus of a laboratory. It was still not very extensive, however, our scientific members were able to do experi-

ments, create terrific smells, and have an occasional explosion, which no doubt they found most satisfying.

The weather was bad for the first term but in April we had four cricket nets up and the balls whizzed all over the place. One just missed the head of a young lady who was passing at the time and she happened to be the daughter of a policeman. That meant a good wire screen which doubtless has saved several lives and many windows.

The sports were excellent and we had tea in the new playground. Father and Mother matches continued, as well as many other fixtures. Offers of apparatus for the gym came in. Our boys were passing well into the second year of high school, then a matter of a public examination, and I think you will see that the School was progressing all the time, inch by inch, with fine boys, loyal friends, hard work and no advertising. One big tragedy occurred at the end of June. F. Norris, riding his bicycle home, was caught by a street car in the "Dardanelles," dragged many feet, his body badly burned, covered with great splinters and his arm completely ground off. He was rushed to the hospital and made a wonderful recovery. Not only did he return to School but he won his football colours. Recently he was president of the Old Boys' Association, and now holds an important post in the coach lines. I take off my hat to Fred.

The Scouts had a week-end in Camp at Albert Head. I went out to see them and while inspecting their tent have a vivid picture of seeing a treasured flounder which one boy had caught, comfortably reposing on his pillow.

We went on till July when Major Spurgin took the drill competition. We had our 12th prize giving in a new place, a pretty little copse (now built over) opposite the usual garden, when Dean Quainton presented a grand lot of prizes. The boys put on a very good show and some 400 visitors attended. Again I remind you that photos of all these events hang in the gymnasium and old boys returning to the School like to see what they were like as little boys so many years ago.

As I turn over the pages of the diary, while I write, I keep on coming across name after name. For instance, I see that on January 11th a Mrs. Groos called to see me with her son Harold. Yesterday I had a charming letter from him, now Lieut.-Commr. in the Navy and taking a course at the Staff College in Greenwich. He also, as Captain of H.M.C.S. Crescent actually invited me to go on a cruise as his guest, but the ship was sent on official business to China, January, 1949.

That is the sort of link running through all this rambling story and I only wish I could convey to you what it all means to me. I'd like even to mention each boy by name, but that is out of the question.

I see that on January 1st, 1922, all cars took to the right hand side of the road and very careful we all were. I need not tell you that "Leviathan" behaved beautifully.

E. was very seedy in April and a good friend (you can guess who it was) sent the whole family for a week-end to Brentwood, which was then a fine hotel. There we were treated royally. This was yet one more good turn which I cannot omit for it was at that time that her doctor detected faint signs of T.B. but in a very early stage. But she was the sort that would never give in, and I always feel that when she was ill she always worked harder than ever. What could we do? We definitely decided that she must have more rest and so, after many talks, it was arranged that Mr. and Mrs. Bates should secure a house and take on the boarders. He secured No. 1231 Victoria Avenue and started in September with 16 boys. He was enormously particular and precise and efficient—almost too much so, I would say—but it did mean that E. and I had our little bungalow to ourselves and that she could take life a little more easily, though it was never in her nature to spare herself. The usual holiday at Albert Head always gave me a reserve of strength for what might come next.

During that holiday our gym was built by Mr. W. M. Sutton—50' x 28'. Mr. Gillatt presented us with a vaulting

horse, Mrs. Daly presented ropes and rings, and we picked up various pieces of apparatus from a club that had ceased to function, and so had all the necessary equipment for the start.

Still more changes. Now that the boarders had moved out we were able to convert the two dormitories into class-rooms which we needed for our increasing numbers. The upstairs bathroom was converted into a library. This, I may say, was started by J. Napier, a great lover of books, and has grown till now it is loaded with books, and good ones, and is also a regular museum of things sent us from all over the world. It is well administered by the boys and is very popular, but again much too small. I have visions, in the future school, of a spacious hall in which all our treasures may be set out to better advantage.

That was practically the end of our building and rebuilding, and behold, it was good. No one can say the School quarters are imposing but they do fulfil the purpose—and so many people sense a "homely" 'atmosphere about the whole place which I think is worth more than some of these palatial places and marble halls. For, after all, it is not the building that makes the school but what goes on inside—and those who judge by exteriors are quite welcome to go to more showy places. On September 6th the new menage started—and started well with 71 boys—many little ones among them. My notes say they were "very vague and troublesome" but add "so good and nice." Perhaps this is the place to pay a compliment—of which I am far too nig-gardly—to the small boys who with a few exceptions proved themselves the right sort. A good nursery is indispensable to a good garden.

Of course the gym was a great joy and always has been. Ernie Money, an Old Boy, became games master and Mr. Bates took on the boarders at the School House. I need not say what a relief this was. It had been a super-human work for Mrs. S., and I always feel that that time was her hardest—and her greatest.

The 29th was St. Michael's Day and we certainly celebrated it. At 9:30 Dean Quainton took a fine service in the gym—with many parents present. From 3 to 5 we were "at home" and lots of people came to inspect the finished school. Miss Short had an excellent tea for them. From 9 to 1 we had a splendid dance, Miss Thain at the piano with a drummer to help out, and about 100 parents and Old Boys enjoying the very good floor and supper in the classrooms. It was a real day. Mr. C. A. Foster presented us with a gramophone and records of the "Daily Dozen" setting up exercises. A voice told us what to do, the music started, and we were then put through a good course of P. T. We were so pleased with this that at the dance—by way of an extra—we lined up the men and put them through a bit of bending and stretching—"tux," stiff collar and all.

In October the Old Boys' Association was formed. President E. Money, Secretary Burke McPhillips (now prominent Vancouver lawyer), Treasurer W. Winter (well-known doctor in Honolulu, who died recently to our great sorrow) and a small committee. As most of these left town the association rather petered out but it had been started and was the kernel from which sprang the vigorous and well established association that we have today, with about 400 life members. I have always said there are no boys like our Old Boys and I say it again. I think they provide a wonderful backing to the School, just as our dear Mothers' Association does. I believe that it is due to the boys themselves—what they were while at School and what they have been and done since leaving—that a very great part of the credit is due for what success their School has had. To tell the truth, they form a large part of my life today. They are to my mind what St. Paul calls "the cloud of witnesses"—the athletes who have run their school course and are now sitting on the benches and watching the little athletes of today training for and running the same course. It is very largely for them that this record is being compiled and I trust indeed they will not find it tedious. They are a tower of strength to the School

and to us all, especially to the old man. (Even in 1922 I see the word "old" occurs).

In November we had a meeting of parents to form an association and I had a vague idea of choosing a board of governors. We had several meetings but found there was really no need for such an association. We have it, even if there are no officers, minutes or paraphernalia. Say "the Parents" and you've got it. We still have an elaborate stamp announcing the date of the next meeting.

December 15th saw the closing of a strenuous year with an admirable gym display and a crowd of about 150 people to watch it and take tea. Besides gym, our two teams appeared in their football kit. That was the day spoken of above when the F. G. gave us all that was still needed to pay for the building. She remains anonymous. But I see written in invisible letters all over the School the name of a great lady and a great benefactress.

Everything was wonderful as far as School life went, but, as I read over the diary it gives me a pang to see how often comes the entry, "E. not at all well." Was I neglectful—or so absorbed in the School as to fail to notice anything else? The year ended with silver skies—but the little cloud was on the horizon.

CHAPTER 10.

1923 — *St. Michael's Day*

We can run through this year quite swiftly—you might even prefer to skip it—as it contains nothing really exciting—but for the sake of making the record complete I shall go through it.

Cold and wet weather for a start does not help much. A new time-table was drawn up, with plenty more spelling added. Mr. Bates came on as full-time master. The gym fund committee was dissolved, having achieved its purpose and made up its rather remarkable balance sheet, Parents met, Old Boys met, Masters met as usual, with more than our share of illnesses cropping up between times.

In February we had to close up on account of deep snow. Six heroic boys arrived though I cannot imagine how they got there. The service was scratched on Ash Wednesday but was held by Dean Quainton the following week.

In March Mr. Tolson fell out with lumbago and the Rev. R. Connell very kindly deputized for him—and later on became a member of our staff. Certainly by his learning and the interest he always aroused he made a valuable contribution to our "institution." The Old Boys had a ping pong tournament in the gym and the School tied in a match with the Collegiate School for the Wilson Cup. In the replay we beat them 2-1 and it was definitely Kyrle's match as he scored both our goals. However, we lost well and truly to Shawnigan soon after in a morning match. In the afternoon the Old Boys played hockey against a Victoria team. We certainly are not of those who care to boast of an unbeaten record. I know that many of our finest games

were played with our team thoroughly defeated. I think it was now that the "Fragments" cup was started for competition between the four districts—Victoria, Saanich, Esquimalt and Oak Bay. Great was my pride when Kyrle was tried for the Oak Bay team—having recovered from a touch of bronchial pneumonia. Just about the same time we thought Mrs. S. was in for appendicitis—and one of the boys hurt his back. In fact life was one darned thing after another. The great thing is to realize, if one can, that "*tout passe*", i.e., you leave it behind you as you go ahead.

A very useful covered way from the gym to the School was given to us by Mr. and Mrs. William Todd and built by Mr. Le Gresley, who also braced up our fence all round the playground and repapered the upstairs rooms.

On April 3rd and 4th we had two delightful dances. One was for the Florence Nightingale Chapter of the I.O.D.E., of which Mrs. Symons was an ardent member and later on became Regent to her and my pride and joy. The other we gave for Kyrle and Ned. (Edith looked so pretty and Michael sat up for it.) Besides its many uses as a chapel, on occasions, a lecture room, a movie theatre, a concert hall, Scout and Cub headquarters, and wet day "rumpus room" the gym, when prettily decorated and warmed, is a most delightful place for a dance. At the end of the month Sir Robert Baden-Powell held a Scout rally and described ours as a "nice little troupe." He was properly impressed by the Albert Medal of Anthony Farrer, awarded, as some of you will remember, for his gallant encounter with a panther up at Cowichan, which attacked him and his cousin. I believe he tackled it with a school bag or a bridle and was badly mauled in the process but succeeded in driving it off. When he first came to School he was so full of stitches and scars that we had to be desperately careful; but he became a great boxer, a very fine athlete and Rugby player, fast and hard as nails. It was a most tragic thing that he was accidentally shot on the range at Winnipeg when a young officer. There is a window to his memory in the Brentwood Chapel.

May. A very good Ascension Day service by Dean Quainton in the morning and at night the Old Boys came to do gym with Mr. Kinch, a naval veteran and expert, to coach them. Mr. W. H. Wilkerson presented us with a fine cup for the best Scout patrol and we presented Mr. Tolson with a gift on his trip to England. While he was away, Mr. Eric Quainton deputized for him but soon joined us in earnest. I'm so glad to think he is today a valued member of our staff and, as I've always said, the essence of reliability at all times. He has a keen sense of humor behind a somewhat austere manner. Of course school boys have an amazing knack of finding nicknames for the masters and I think their selection of "Tombstone Joe" for him was distinctly superficial.

We had such a good series of lectures that term and I so well recall Mr. Withers, who had been a warden at Jasper Park, telling us how he went to his little cottage and found a bear, which had helped himself freely to his supplies (mostly sticky) and was then resting comfortably on his bed.

Empire Day saw us all in the gym hearing a record of the King's speech—and then, of course, came measles and so on. The sports were postponed by rain but held on June 4 and well worth waiting for. Edith presented the School with a big clock, now in Room 3, and later on with another for the gym. They both have her little message attached. *She also presented a large prayer book which found its place on a little lectern given by Mr. Bates, at which every day one of the boys reads the portion appointed at prayers.* (Since this was written it has had to be replaced).

Fathers' and Mothers' matches, drill competition (with Captain Money as judge) went well as usual, and I have a note which says "kindness of parents noticeable—more interest and help greatly appreciated."

I pass over such items as "sent out 196 invitations," and my encounter with a drug store errand boy who ran into the old car and disappeared under the wheels, in a welter of broken bottles and pill boxes, etc. Mercifully he was not

hurt, the police accepted my report, and the drug store manager seemed to think it was rather a habit of the said boy and nothing to worry about. I bought him a new lamp and all was well. Such little episodes relieved the monotony of bringing in the wood, repairing tables, writing notes, taking teams about, and the thousand and one things that fill up every moment of every day. So, at long last, we reach the 13th prize giving, with the Dean in his best form, Eden back, and all kinds of school masters among a crowd of 400 or so. His advice on that occasion was, as always, very sound. "Put school before self, duty before *"a good time"* and don't go to too many movies!"

Our holiday camp got better each year, and Albert Head was still the place. Kyrle erected an awning over the meal table, and fixed up wires for his radio. We constructed a vast sort of cupboard, with a padlock to it, as we found that trippers, who got more numerous (and offensive) every year, were helping themselves to our larder.

Meanwhile things were happening at home. The painters had made the place look very smart, but I got a phone message from the Oak Bay police to tell me that 25 of the windows in the house and the gym had been broken. In I went hot foot to see the damage and found that Constable Suckling—known to all as "Tanglefoot" and a terror to evil doers—had caught the culprits, two small boys. I visited their parents who tearfully besought me not to send the brats to prison and to this I magnanimously agreed on the understanding that they should pay for the damage, to which they readily assented. Before I left to go back to camp, a glazier was at work and the ruin made good. I wonder what the bill was! Anyhow I went back to picking cherries and stacking hay for Dr. Hart, who so kindly lent us the camp site—bathing endlessly and resting continually till the moment came for packing up and going home to prepare once more.

September 4th. Term began with 76 boys out of 78 present. Mr. Tolson was back, also Mr. Bates, Ernie Money

and Eric Quainton; Kyrle was captain of games and Ned treasurer of the games fund. Mr. Connell came in the afternoons, "Doug" Southworth ran the Scouts and Mr. Hart came in soon after as extra master but did not stay very long. My small Michael started his school days, aged 6, with Miss Ashworth, and Brentwood College opened.

All the time I am writing I wonder if I am putting in or leaving out too much. September 18th. "Another bad night—very busy day in School—took eight sacks and \$52.50 to Red Cross—took dear Edith to dentist to have three bad teeth out, plucked a grouse, took 'Prep,' saw two parents, wrote three letters (making 60 so far for the month), did school accounts, etc. Weary." Let us multiply that by very many days and let it go at that. Certainly "life was real, life was earnest."

The parents' meeting brought 45 to the gym. Mr. McIntosh presented the fine big box heater which has kept so many of you warm. Apparently there were 23 boarders though I can't imagine how Mr. Bates got them all in. The usual mid-term service and a quite imposing and solemn investiture of Scouts all have their place in the record. On November 8th Mrs. Symons—as usual doing the work of about 20 ordinary people—held her first meeting for a Cub Pack.

The Scout Troup owes much to its various Scout masters—notably P. E. Wilkinson and J. L. Aldis—just as the Cub Pack does to Miss Stirling, Miss Money, Miss R. Bridgman, Miss W. Worsley, Miss B. Nation, Miss Barbara Gordon and others who have given of their time to a very good and very exacting piece of work. (Carried on at this date by Ned).

Once more the break-up came in time to save a break-down and on December 14th we had a very good one. Gym display, boxing, single stick, teams, Scouts and Cubs all did their turns. Our programmes have a tendency to grow and grow and have to be curtailed. One important addition was made and that was the reading competition, instituted by a very dear friend, Mrs. J. Redpath. This comes every year

in what is now the Christmas "Concert" and is judged by some visitor from outside. There are two groups, senior and junior, and anyone who wishes may enter. We hear each candidate and gradually eliminate till two are left in each group; these read a piece they have never seen before the audience and the judge decides the issue. A prize goes to each winner and a book to each runner-up. It is a very valuable thing; and I've always enjoyed a good reader, just as much as a bad one gives me a pain. I would say that on the whole the winners have been good. The first winner was Stephen Robinson, then known as "Binkie," who, after shooting big game in Africa and adorning the Canadian Navy in the war, still finds time to write and tell me of his doings.

Just one or two more items to close the year. The dear old Overland gave place to a Dodge; there was a smallpox scare and a good deal of vaccination; Hallowe'en was a nightmare. I was brought up to think of it as Holy Evening, All Souls Day, when we think of the spirits and souls of the righteous who have gone on ahead. The older I get and the more numerous they become, the less can I reconcile myself to the idea that a spirit must be a ghost—with witches and lanterns and all the rest of it. Still less can I see the point of wrenching off gates and doing incredible damage to the accompaniment of fireworks. No one minds good honest mischief but this vandalism by "louts" seems to me all wrong and public opinion should kill it. I suppose I'm a "back number" but I've had my say.

The year ended with a cold snap and all of us thawing out the car and pipes, etc. Edith excelling as a plumber and also thinking nothing of sitting up all night so as to keep the fires burning. Wonderful. And so, to you all, Happy Christmas and New Year, 1924.

CHAPTER 11.

1924-1925 — *The Trivial Round*

1924. I started prudently by making my will and imprudently by attending several dances! School opened with 75 boys and Miss Stirling helping with the Cubs. She is the sister of a distinguished Old Boy, Norman, scholar of Wellington and Corpus College, already mentioned as an adornment of the Foreign Office.

A beautiful mid-term service and a fine address by Dean Quainton on one of my favorite texts, "There is a lad here." I always feel when looking at the rows of young faces before me that perhaps there is a lad here through whom in some way or another five thousand may be fed and refreshed—and miracles performed.

At the parents' meeting soon afterwards we discussed the possibility of getting the gym walls lined. We had only the bare studding and the outer wall; rain had been known to seep in. Well, as has happened so often for us, the very next day came an anonymous gift of \$100 towards it and other generous donations followed. During the holiday the gym was lined and also the washroom. Not only that but a bike shed was built with a trellis fence and gate leading to it by the wonderful response of our parents. I know it is the fashion for schoolmasters to say that our chief trouble is parents—and sometimes that is true. But what do you think of ours? Their names are written on a tablet in the gym—not, I fear, in letters of gold but in blue chalk.

Now Ned was ill and I followed his bad example in real earnest. Need I tell you that a gift of \$100 was immediately forthcoming to send me away for a little change. Ravens again looking after Elijah!

Forgive one personal reminiscence here but I like the story. It was March 28th (my father's birthday) and I was in bed—leprosy or some hateful thing, and unable to watch the Fragments match. Kyrle, now in "longs" and with a permit to drive the car, was chosen as centre forward on the Oak Bay "Rep" team. It was snowing and before he left I called out and said, "I'll give you \$2.00 for every goal you score," which was very wrong of me, as no incentive should be necessary to do any job well. What I did not know was that his mother had promised \$1.00 on the same terms—nor did he enlighten me. He came back to announce victory and I asked if he had scored. Nonchalantly and modestly he admitted that he had—twice. So he collected on that game and scored yet another one in the final match. It is not easy to talk of one's own but after all he is just another St. Michael's boy and I think it is due to him to say that as boy and man he has done and does a tremendous lot for our games. He did as well in Rugby—both at Brentwood College and then for the Oak Bay Wanderers as he did in Soccer, at School and later on for the Five C's team. It is only fair to add that Ned, his brother, could always be relied on to play a good sound game and with the best spirit in the world. Bless 'em both.

By April 1st I was on my way to Prince Rupert, and got back to my family on the 6th. They all met me and were all rather worn out, having worked desperately day and night to get the new walls all stained and ready for my return. Edith as usual was quite done up but as usual up and about and busy almost at once.

Easter brought in the summer term, saddened by the death of Padre Andrews. It was that day I went to call on Judge F. B. Gregory about his son, George Frederic, then a little chap—now a rising legal light, father of two and president of the Old Boys' Association—and a very good friend.

It was in May that I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. W. E. Wilkinson, also of Keble College, an old Rugby

"blue," an ex-schoolmaster and one of the finest of men. How fortunate we were to secure him for our staff.

The sports on the 16th were very good, more cups were awarded, more than ever people came to tea. In the morning we had made a presentation of a really terrific revolver to Ernie Money, who was going off to the wilds, and a more pacific handbag to dear old "Shorty," who was planning a trip to England. When Ernie left, Owen Goward took his place and carried on. The Rev. R. Connell took the Ascension Day service and the next day came a case of scarlet fever. You will say—and quite truly—that this is bad composition and that the two sentences are not related. It is like the question, "Have you seen the cathedral or would you like ice cream?" which I have often given our boys to criticize. I know it is bad composition but it is so exactly like one's daily life where things go entirely different, jostle each other—and so we'll let it stand. Any day will produce the same. For example, School visited H.M.S. Hood and I bought prizes. Presentations to Eric Quainton and D. Southworth and repair jobs—and so it goes.

Our 14th prize giving was held this time in Mr. Ross Sutherland's gardens on Foul Bay Road, an ideal spot, with the tennis court for drill displays, etc., and beautiful settings for tea. Dr. Scott Moncrieff gave the prizes very charmingly and I think everyone was well fed and well pleased.

Almost directly afterwards, on the 30th, I made agreements with Mr. W. E. Wilkinson, M.A., of Keble College, and Mr. P. E. Wilkinson to join us in September. I take this opportunity of thanking them for the splendid work they did in every phase of school life. With that most important matter settled to my enormous satisfaction we could safely call it "a term" and relax for the ever-blessed relief of summer holidays. A cousin came out from England and spent the time with us.

Speaking frankly, many people have said to me in their kind way: "*But you are the School.*" I do not think so at all

and am the first to acknowledge all that has been done by various masters, boys, old boys, parents, friends, with the finger pointing the way to go. To my old headmaster, my mother, my wife and all our good friends I ascribe what success we have had in our amazing institution.

In September we started with 68 boys, and new forms. We decided to eliminate the entrance examinations. Frankly I never thought it of much educational value and entrance to Grades 9 and 10 was much more in accord with our course. The Department of Education agreed to make this a public examination, charging us a moderate fee—and it did mean that a boy who failed in the entrance exam passed very well into the second year of high school and also fitted to go into an English public school if parental plans so decided. That exam was later on abolished and now our pupils enter high school on approval at the discretion of the principal and I'm bound to say we generally get their approval.

The new forms have been kept more or less ever since, though the standards may fluctuate.

It was on September 7th that our two eldest sons entered Brentwood College, under Mr. H. P. Pope, and on the 25th we heard that Ned had been awarded a scholarship. I put this in because St. Michael's is now in their hands and I think and hope the training at their two schools have stood and will stand them in good stead in their very busy and important professional life. Sunday after Sunday we drove out to see them, sat and had tea in the old car and drove them back in time for chapel. Even with fourteen boarders the house seemed very empty without them. I think Michael started at the School about the same time.

St. Michael's Day was celebrated with a service in the gym and a thrilling hockey tournament in the afternoon.

Of course the usual programme of matches and school routine carried on with nothing of any special interest to write home about.

In December we sent each parent a copy of the new Prospectus with the Christmas reports and the pious hope they

would read it. Some do! They were also notified of whooping cough though I've never quite seen how it can be so where there is no whoop! Anyhow it did not amount to much and we ended up the year with a capital dance in the gym for the two sons and had about eighty of our friends for a very happy evening.

Just to go back to that matter of reading the Prospectus. I never quite understood people getting a notice and not reading it. In the old days when I was a good deal more explosive than I am now, I used to speak rather violently on the subject; but it still goes on. One sends an invitation to the closing, specifying place, time and all details, and, sure as fate, at the last moment, when one is in the throes of final preparations the phone rings. "Could you tell me when the closing is, where it is, what time it is, and so on?" and the questioner is the first to admit having received a card! Strange?

Perhaps this is not a very exciting year to read about but it was a very good one for the School.

If any tolerant and courageous reader has survived so far, I salute him and it seems hardly kind to remark that there are still more than twenty years to go. Some of these years are prosaic, apt to be a rather monotonous repetition of what has gone before. I think that is how tradition comes but it may tend to make dull reading. So I'll be honest with you and tell you that this year can be skipped, if you feel like it.

1925. The School record shows the same old series of events—with occasional highlights such as our visit to the dry dock at Esquimalt in thirteen cars driven by parents. Mr. and Mrs. Tolson celebrated their silver wedding and received a present that tried to express adequately our affection and admiration for them both. You may see pictures of it in the gym and in the same frame one of the Scout Troup standing on a bridge which they had constructed somehow out of their staves and which actually held them

until the camera clicked—when the whole thing disintegrated and down they came. We had a smallpox scare. The Health Department sent a circular to each parent and most of the boys were vaccinated. We must have been getting better known as in May Miss Bruce of the *Colonist*, who for many years wrote accounts of our closing better than it has ever been done before or since, came to interview us and there was a very pleasant article in the Sunday paper. I may say that we have never sought publicity and avoid advertising, but there is no doubt that an “unsolicited testimonial” rather helps things along. Presentations were made to the Rev. R. Connell and Mr. Vulliamy. The boys presented me with a very fine barometer for my birthday. All our eight candidates passed the Grade 9 examination and we had a charming letter from Dr. Willis, then Superintendent of Education and Deputy Minister. I should like to say here that he was a good friend of the private schools and ever kind and helpful to me. I used to visit him constantly with my problems and described myself as the “thorn in his flesh.” But he would never admit it. He was always kindly, courteous and wise, far more than merely an “official” and his death in 1947 removed a very fine gentleman whom we could ill spare.

I believe, as already said, it is bad composition to lump a lot of disconnected items into one paragraph, but I'm doing so for your convenience so that we may get on with the story—and shall add a few more.

In September Mr. Jack Aldis started work and we all remember him with great affection. He was an excellent teacher—had some original views of his own—and was an ardent Scout. I remember saying that he seemed to spend more time on his Scout duties than anything else, and he promptly agreed, saying they were much more valuable. Both the closings were good. The summer one on June 30th was remarkable for the day opened with a deluge but it cleared. Providence was on the job as usual for us. We had our 15th and one of our best endings. A new feature, and

one which was much enjoyed, was the introduction of short speeches by the masters. December 15th saw the gym very gaily decorated, a big enthusiastic crowd and a very good show to end up another most satisfactory year.

There seems to have been plenty of other "doings," according to my diary, to help the time along. The previous year Victoria was visited by the great H.M.S. Hood, H.M.S. Rodney and a flotilla of destroyers; and there was a magnificent parade of the sailors. Then this year we had the pleasure of seeing the All Blacks play Rugby when they took some 70 points off us. However, we did score as Mr. Walter Brynjolfsen dropped a goal (which will not soon be forgotten.) He has been at Monterey School for many years and is now the principal. He is a thorough sportsman all the way and has long been the backbone secretary of the Oak Bay Athletic Association that did much to foster games and a good spirit among the schools, public and private. Recently a new scheme of zoning has come into being and somewhat to the regret of many of us, Oak Bay is no longer a separate group.

And that brings to mind the man who, to me, *was* Oak Bay, Captain F. G. Dexter, and it would need a far abler pen than mine to do proper justice to him. We shall hear more of him as the record goes on.

You might care for one or two personal recollections. This year we added two rooms to the little bungalow for the two sons who were now fairly large. Also Mrs. S. acquired a bull dog on which she had set her heart. He is worth a word or two. His name was "Prince Dunbar" and I believe he had a distinguished pedigree, but he was plain stupid. He was very large with a mouth that Tennyson would have called the "jaws of hell." When I first took him (somewhat proudly) out for exercise the streets cleared as if for a fire engine, children more or less vanishing and pedestrians edging nervously out of his way. When it seemed a lead was no further needed he really showed his most affectionate nature for he would desert me and follow any

and every one who came near. I spent my time tearing after him and trying to persuade him that I was the one to follow; not a bit of it. The end of his story is remarkable. One summer day I took him, on a lead, down to the little field where I used to tie him up while I watched the little boys play cricket. On this occasion, just as we were entering, he gave a sudden dash, jerking the lead from my hand, and proceeded back to the school house as fast as he could travel, uttering fearsome and unnatural noises. I thought he had gone mad and would bite all the boys and spread rabies broadcast. Little boys on bikes, little boys on foot, and I raced after him and ultimately I found him lying under a bed, panting and demented. I coaxed him out into the little yard where he began a series of ungainly leaps all round the fence, still giving out those unearthly and alarming sounds. What a pet to have in a school. Luckily I thought of a man who had always admired and coveted this priceless pedigree bull dog and rang him up there and then to say the dog was his, free, gratis and for nothing, if only he'd take him away at once. That is exactly what he did. Apparently the dog had "barking flu"; and the man, who evidently *know more about dogs than I shall ever do*, gave him two bottles of castor oil. The treatment restored him to health and his right mind and I hope he lived happily ever after.

Still one or two more items crop up. I think it was now that we were all uniform in grey suits which, I claim, we started though everybody uses them now when they can get them. I am a great believer in uniform outfit. Bell bottomed corduroy pants, red pullovers with yellow stripes, "gob caps" never appealing to my aesthetic sense.

A small boy broke his leg and I took him home. The other day I received a letter from him—now Lt.-Col. John Collier-Wright, who, as an expert, has an important post on the Kenya-Uganda Railway. He invited me to go stay with him and his family and even hinted at a world tour of good will. I've all the good will in the world but the trip might be costly. As in a pipe dream I have worked

out in my mind various trips to old boys and I think there are very few countries where I could not count on a welcome; that is my life. The poor bread I have thrown on the waters has come back after many days so richly buttered and "jammed."

There were 22 boarders, I believe, at the School House with Mr. Bates and Mrs. S. and I had some sort of home life for a year or two, but it was school, school for us both all and every day.

Old Boys' weddings seem to have started about then, and I might almost claim now to have an Old Girls' Association. These young people are so sweet and charming to me—"Grandpa" or "Uncle K" as the case may be—and I do thank them all here and now for adding so much pleasure to my life.

Items throng in that mean nothing to you but much to me: "Went for a bike ride with Michael"; "traded the old car for a Dodge"; Scout meetings, O.B.S.A. meetings; Kyrle made 46 out of 65 at a cricket match; E. and I painted two rooms; Michael left St. Christopher's School; cleaned filthy stovepipes; trip to Sproat Lake and alarm of bears (false); saw the laying of the foundation stone of Brentwood Chapel; K. got his first XV colours; golf with Mr. R. W. Mayhew, and so on and so on, always something, pleasure and pain, work and play, in fact "the trivial round, the common task" and so ends 1925 which "opened out" far more abundantly than I expected.

CHAPTER 12.

1926 — *Top Figures*

This year will produce one or two events of interest beside the usual routine which by now seemed to be well established.

On January 6th we opened with 82 on our register, our highest total. Twelve boys were admitted during the Christmas holidays and many had to be refused. Personally I think this was rather too many, but it is not easy to refuse a nice boy but a good deal simpler if he seems to be otherwise. (Note: January 14th diary says "boys maddening"! Sometimes it is so!) Which reminds me of the story of the earnest mother interviewing the head about her son and finally saying, "Well, he is trying, isn't he?" and the grim reply, "Yes, he is, very."

February brought a pleasant surprise. Our old piano, after doing a gallant job, was really getting past it and it took a sledge hammer blow to produce a faint response. One afternoon I came in from a game to find some men removing it from the gym and to my intense delight there in its place stood a fine new one, the final gesture of our Fairy Godmother, given in memory of her two sons.

March brought whooping cough and a real dose of "flu," as many as 40 being absent; but in these cases there is only one thing to do, carry on, and that we did. The School did a deal of visiting on those days. We all went to see the Sidney Roofing plant and on May 15 cars took 76 boys to the Quarantine Station.

We had the pleasure of entertaining the Brentwood College XV to dinner at the old Brentwood Grill and then on to see Martin Harvey in "David Garrick." Our sons had been doing well on the team and "those were the days."

Probably I ought not to mention this but, as he never will, I feel it is due to K. to say that he had a fine athletic record at Brentwood. Won a swimming prize, the prize for reading in chapel, was captain of Rugby and senior prefect and played cricket for Victoria and later on Rugby. There is little wonder that we were glad when the time came to sign him on here as games master, and I know well that our games are in good hands.

Nor shall I omit again to mention Ned, whose games have always been very useful.

We made a presentation to Mr. P. E. Wilkinson and Mr. McLaren, who did fine work for us and signed on another master who shall be nameless as he was not a success and did not survive for long.

The school year ended with one of our best closings, this time in Mr. Hammond's garden, when Mr. Hope gave the prizes before some 500 people on June 30th. On July 1st our two boys left for a trip to England. There are very many stories I could tell you about that and perhaps they'll forgive me if I break off the school recital to tell you some.

You must bear in mind that they were both quite unused to travel, Vancouver being probably the furthest they had been from home. Trans-Canada trains were a novelty and so was the dining car. The first morning, having been unable to get dinner the previous evening, they decided to have a real breakfast and did so. I believe their bill was about \$10 and it alarmed them so much that for the rest of the trip they subsisted more or less on coffee and doughnuts, which they grabbed at brief stops en route. When they reached Liverpool K. was very sick, having been poisoned by something on the ship, and the result was that they had the carriage to themselves all the way to Oxford, where the first thing was to buy a new suit. My cousin, Mr. Reade, was more than good to them and put them up at Keble, my old college, in the same room that I had occupied.

I had impressed on them that they *must* go to hear the choir sing at Magdalen College (I always think of it as the best I ever heard)—and remember the notice pasted into the pews, "You are requested to join in the service—silently"! (I should think so.) Their first day in Oxford they duly went to evensong.

The next day they were summoned to Hereford to see my old aunt, who was seriously ill. Then they stayed with another cousin, the Archdeacon at the Cathedral, who, of course, took them off to evensong. So I think their first impressions of England were of a place where you were whisked off to Church at the first possible opportunity. However, the relations were all very good to them and spoke well of them and I am always so glad they were able to make the trip, and how we welcomed their safe return on September 4th. The rest of the family had a delightful trip to Alaska before going off to Albert Head for the usual camp and rest.

To return to school. I must not weary you with every detail, such as the visit of 29 Cubs to Albert Head, Mr. Diggon's wonderful conjuring entertainment on St. Michael's Day, a present of four clocks for the class-rooms from Mrs. S., news that we had seven Old Boys at McGill, and the signing on of Capt. Harrison. Suffice it to say that once more we got through all our fixtures very well, each year seeing them more firmly established, and the year ended with 585 letters written, endless work done by us both, and the usual deep sense of gratitude for "new mercies each returning day."

CHAPTER 13.

1927 — *The Seven Pillars*

I have a feeling that the last two or three years may have made rather dull reading. But if you have been kind and brave enough to wade through them I think I can promise you something remarkable in this year.

Everything in School went on much as usual but there seem to have been more treats than usual. I shall always remember the Gilbert and Sullivan operas with Sir Harry Lytton and Miss Bertha Lewis, and the great joy I had when they accepted my offer to drive them from the theatre to the boat. There were a lot of good Rugby games to watch and our two sons were doing well. Our Cubs went to a rally where Viscount Willingdon—to my mind a really great man—inspected them. I treasure a picture of him shaking hands with our Cub mistress. Of course you know who she was, Mrs. S., who in spite of doing the work of a dozen found time to run our Cub Pack extremely well. All these are landmarks.

Meanwhile School was running along very well, with Capt. Harrison on the staff. We had to renew our fence and rewire it. Applications were continuous and some of our finest boys came in about then. But a big change was in sight.

In May my wife and I felt that we ought to take over the School House from Mr. Bates. As you know we had handed the boarders over to him in 1922. He had bought the house, added to it and organized it in his own precise and meticulous way, and, of course, it was all his own. So it was a matter of buying it from him. Here I must try to be discreet and only say that after some discussion a price was agreed upon, \$10,000, which was a good deal to pay

and seemed to us, who have never had any capital, quite impossible. However, in the amazing way in which Providence has ever directed our affairs, the way opened up and, being a poor beggar, I very reluctantly started to borrow. I suggested to one good friend and parent that he should buy the whole thing and rent it to us, the debt to be repaid by degrees. His idea was that ten men should be asked to put up \$1000 each, himself gladly offering to be the first. The first seven men I approached, in fear and trembling, said without hesitation, "Why, of course, only too glad." One of them came to a sports meeting and said, "I hear you are borrowing, why didn't you ask me? How much do you want?" He promptly produced his cheque book and his \$1000. I do hope they will not mind if I give their names. Here they are, in letters of gold: Messrs. D. J. Angus, P. F. Curtis, H. R. Hammond, W. B. Monteith, E. P. Porter, G. T. Roberts and W. C. Todd, five of whom have passed on.

The first slight hesitation came at No. 8—and that was quite enough to choke me off, as I hated asking in spite of their wonderfully generous willingness to help. And we were still \$3000 short of the mark. Well, here is yet another "amazing" thing you may find it hard to believe, but it is true—so help me! (I think it has already been said that you are at liberty to see for yourself the various documents, etc. As I write there lies by my side a bulky envelope containing all the letters and receipts from our "7 pillars".)

Just at that time my small son Michael's godmother died in England leaving him £500. I had a letter from the lawyer asking what our wishes were and naturally enough I asked that the money should be sent out at once as it would just meet the case and that I would invest it for M. in the School house. The reply came back that the money had to be invested in Consols; but the lawyer, a most delightful man whom we had the pleasure of meeting later on, added that I was named as residuary legatee and sent out £200 with the assurance that there would be more to follow. And so it did—another cheque for the same amount and a final one, when

the estate was cleared up—making a total of £600—or \$3000. So the sum was made up, the School House was purchased and it only remained to repay those grand friends (who would not let themselves be called our creditors) who had made the whole thing possible. This, I am thankful to say, was done in an incredibly short time, as everything was booming both in the day and the boarding school. Mrs. S. rose to greater heights than ever—we certainly worked very hard—and once more had the supreme satisfaction of being “in the clear”—to my mind the only way to be.

All of the business was handled for us by a great and good and wise friend, Mr. H. G. Lawson, who held a meeting in his office library and had everything in apple pie order.

June 20th, 1927.

At the end of the month presentations were made to Mr. and Mrs. Bates—also to Captain Harrison; and the 17th Annual Closing—once more held in Mr. Hammond's garden, was a fine culmination to an eventful term.

I have no desire at all to be like the advertisements of the Movies which, you will have noticed, invariably tell you that this picture is even greater than the last—till I wonder they do not run short of adjectives and superlatives; but I do believe it is true that our Closings have been bigger and better and it is quite the usual thing when one is over to hear the remark, “That was the best one yet.” That means we've got to make it better still next time and it helps to keep us on our toes.

July and August were not much of a holiday this year, as you can well imagine—but there were bright spots as when all our 10 Candidates passed the Grade 9 examinations and our Scouts won a swimming competition. We were very busy moving into the School House—after some years of comparative peace in our little bungalow—and into all the work it entailed, but we were ready by September 5th when the school year began.

Mr. D. Browne was resident master and my eldest son, K. W., came in as Junior Master, principally for the Games, but he was more than able and willing to handle anything else that was needed. This means he has, at date of writing, given 20 years as a master, to say nothing of some 7 as a school boy, to the School—years of unostentatious and valuable service. It is not easy to talk of oneself and one's own but I must say once more—and I do so unhesitatingly—that in his hands, held up by his brother "Mr. Ned", the school is safe and I know that when I make my final bow, the two sons (with their sons in the reserve line) will carry on the tradition that St. Michael's has made for itself.

In September we secured Sergt. Major Blaine, late of the Scots Guards, for special boxing classes. Mr. Browne organized musical drill of his own and I can still see him and the boys leaping about in time to the piano.

The final show in December—Gym, Scouts, Cubs, Drill, Singing, gave one the comfortable feeling that things were alive and efficient.

Of course there had been the usual interruptions of whooping cough and measles and those things which, no doubt, are sent for our good but are extremely tiresome at the time—and equally there had been the usual series of matches. Sports, Mid-term Services—a meeting of 53 parents—Drill Competition and all the usual routine, but from now onward we can take that all for granted as part of the school life. 658 letters this year.

I've always been rather chary (perhaps too much so) of my praise of the boys (partly because I think there is far too much of "the kiddies" in these days) but very many are the occasions on which I have been and am fairly bursting with pride—and I thank them for it.

Gobbets from the Diary.

K. received a very handsome prize on leaving Brentwood for "School Spirit."

Dr. Popert removed a most unpleasant bump from my neck.

We had a short camp at Albert Head—this time on Mr. Homer's land.

Our Gym was used by Intermediate "Wanderers" Rugby Club for meetings.

Almost on every page "E & I" did this and that, and often K and I, or "E & K & I", sometimes N & I. They all did their share and E. more than that.

Thus ends a great year

CHAPTER 14.

1928 — *The Junior Partner*

You can skip this year without missing much. It started grandly with Scarlet Fever and Dr. Price fumigating the entire place!

There is no need to repeat all the usual functions which were quite firmly established and went well consistently. I expect very few of you know that in April a scheme was suggested by a then prominent lawyer that the School should amalgamate with the old Collegiate School and move out to Saanich. Amalgamation of various schools had been proposed more than once but has never come to anything, and I think we are all rather independent persons and do not quite see how such an idea would work.

Mrs. Armstrong and Mrs. Driscoll most kindly gave us new lighting for the gym. June saw presentations made to Mr. J. L. Aldis, who made a very definite mark on the life of the School, and Mr. D. S. Browne. However, what you lose on the swings you generally make up on the roundabouts and it was a very lucky day for us all when Mr. C. E. Ley signed on for September. I certainly think he was one of the best men we ever had and he gave all he had to the School, as you will hear in due course.

Our June closing was in Mr. Merrill's garden on Foul Bay Road. He was a gentleman from Salt Lake City who lived here for a short time and took a great interest in us.

In September we welcomed Mr. Ley, Captain Lake who was with us a short time but had to leave for a police appointment, and Mr. Keates for Drawing, a clever artist. There were 22 boarders and the debt to our seven friends shrank rapidly.

Mr. Yerburgh filled Mr. Lake's place and got to work at once. A fine old boy, and for a short time drawing master. Frank Holland died at this time.

As I say, a year of little interest to any except ourselves but, looking back, a time of intensely hard work, with a heavy load on our shoulders, lightened by countless acts of kindness and consideration from the many friends by whom the School has always been richly blessed.

The diary has a few gobbets which might be of interest. I leave out various crises and "hair-bleaching emergencies" which we survived and which concern me alone. No doubt I made many mistakes and for these I offer apologies to all concerned.

Ned was ending up at Brentwood, and very well, both in school and out. We had the team once more for supper and a theatre in his honour. He was ready for University of British Columbia, which he entered in this year, taking Arts and Education, which has stood him and us all in good stead. Ned remembers so well his first flight in a little plane that made short trips from the field below University School. He went up with an Oak Bay policeman and seems to have enjoyed it far more than I should have.

We also became proud possessors of a launch, known as the "little red boat". It was 22 feet long, had about six inches free board, and a one-cylinder engine that had a crack in it, but it went most of the time. We'll draw a veil over the times it refused. But it certainly did its best on one never-to-be-forgotten occasion, when the whole family should certainly have been drowned. We had been for our usual summer camp on South Pender Island this time and got there in great style. A dear old boy "Bos'n" Higgs fetched us from Oak Bay with one of his tugs, to which a scow was attached, on which our mountain of luggage was piled. But we decided to return under our own power. Accordingly, the little boat was packed from end to end with our belongings, and though the day looked threatening and our friends strongly urged us to wait, we started off for Victoria. But

they were right, and almost at once we found ourselves in very nasty water. Waves were high enough to come over the side. E. and the small boys and I sat at the stern. I remember holding a tarpaulin up, ostensibly to shield them, but really to prevent their seeing what was coming. K. sat and watched the engine and Ned watched him, both with very set faces. We decided it was not possible to make Victoria, so managed to turn off and get into a little bay at Moresby. Here we landed, lighted a fire and dried out. Then, though it was still bad, E. bravely agreed to face it again, and the little boat, in K.'s skilful hands, managed to get us safe to Sidney, and a taxi did the rest. I was never so scared and never so thankful to feel solid ground under foot. And that's enough for that.

1929 — *Twenty Years On; A Respite*

This year certainly was an eventful one, and I think I can promise you more of interest than the last two or three have produced. To me it is a very memorable one. It started with a wonderful party on New Year's Day, given by Mr. and Mrs. Butchart in their beautiful home at Tod Inlet—the gardens of which are world famous. Three of their grandsons came to our school.

We started well on the 7th with 72. My dear E. became Regent of the Florence Nightingale Chapter. I rushed over to Vancouver to bring Ned home, who was very ill. School was closed by reason of snow and severe cold, and we heard of the death of Mr. Bates, whom I shall always remember with affection and respect, even if we did not always have the same point of view. If he had a fault, perhaps it was being a little too exact. We had a most thrilling visit and lecture from a genuine Blackfoot chief, Paul Little Walker, with Canon Stocken interpreting. I can see them on the platform; Paul tall, dignified and fine, and by his side Canon Stocken, who had been missionary to the Blackfeet for forty years, and in the background, Naomi, Paul's wife, in very gay colours. We cheered them in Blackfoot style, and then gave them tea, with many signs and smiles. Finally, the last of the debt on the School House was cleared off to the last cent, and I think the credit goes for that, as for so much else, to Mrs. S. A good month and never a dull moment, as you see.

February, March and April were the usual hum-drum affairs, with the occasional "event," good or bad, to break the monotony. One of our boarders was very ill with pneu-

monia and that was a dreadful time. I heard Rabindranath Tagore speak in Vancouver, and have never forgotten his wisdom—nor a rather nasty motor collision on the way home. And so, on to May, when I had to retire to the hospital for a short but unpleasant spell, and a minor “op.” I was very run down and miserable when I got home, and my experience has always been that when things look particularly bad, something comes along which is particularly good—and so it was now. One evening I was sitting and wondering if I was really going to peter out, and not much caring, when a friend came in to see me, one of those grand seven I have mentioned. I wish I could tell you his name. “Sorry to see you like this, Symons,” he said, “I came to ask you a favour.” Of course I said I would gladly to anything I possibly could, and “what was the favour?” “I want you to let me send you and your wife away for a change and rest—to any place you like to choose.” Think that one over. It was no flash in the pan offer and he kept me up to it. Finally we decided on Honolulu, to which he thoroughly agreed, and I think now that trip pretty well saved my life. We figured that we could have a month and be back in time for the June closing. Mr. Gibson of the C.N.R. fixed everything up for us so well and kindly. Of course we had to travel first class and we secured Room 22 on the AORANGI, a very fine ship of the Canadian Australian Line. We secured a goodish matron, Ned took my work very excellently and Kyrle was left in charge. On Thursday, May 30th, we sailed. Our three sons saw us off and that part was not too happy. I remember seeing his two big brothers leading Michael, rather tearful, away as we moved out.

Well, it was all very sumptuous. Our cabin was loaded with flowers and gifts from good friends. “Bell hops” kept dashing up with telegrams, and they must have thought we really were “somebody.” Unfortunately we are *not* good sailors, but we were more or less able to take notice by June 3rd, when it became quite hot, and we saw flying fish. We passed Diamond Head at 2 o’clock, took a taxi to Halekulani

and secured a delightful cottage among the palms. To us it was all very like Paradise, but I must not forget this is the story of the School. I'd like to tell you of the drive around the Island, the amazing trees and colours, the fish market and the sampans, the incredible fish, the most beautiful Academy of Arts, Jap tea gardens, Buddhist temple, a real Hula done most gracefully on the lawn outside the Moana Hotel, the glorious voices, the night blooming cereus. Here I go and I said I would not. The time passed all too quickly, and on Friday 14th, we boarded the NIAGARA for the return trip. We were swathed in leis, overpoweringly fragrant, the band all in white played us out to the strains of "Aloha," boys dived for coins, the paper streamers gradually broke, and we were off. I might just tell you that my efforts on a surf board were *not* successful.

The trip back was much as before, not our strong point, but, as usual, just as we were finding our feet, the journey was almost over. After the blaze of colour, whole streets of flaming trees, I must say the sombre green of the pines of British Columbia looked very good to me. Better still was it to be met by our dear boys, and the good friend who had given us this stupendous treat. We got home on Thursday 20th and on Friday morning I was back in School, a giant refreshed, and doing reports till midnight.

While we were away we had a cable from the boys for my birthday, and one from Mr. R. W. Mayhew, to say the sports had been so very good and "Kyrle excelled himself." Apparently the drill competition, Fathers' match, and other events were first rate; and our 19th closing on June 28th in Mr. Merrill's garden was, as usual, "the best yet," with Dean Quainton at the very top of his form.

July. Scouts went off to camp. All our boys passed their Grade 9 exams, a new floor had to be laid in Room 2, as the building had begun to slope a bit, and that is why you'll notice a step between Rooms 2 and 3 today. My belief is that the School would fall over if the bungalow were not

in the way. And so off to South Pender for another lovely camp, ending in the alarming trip on the little boat I have already told you about.

September saw a good start, with Captain Massy taking 4A and Mr. L. G. Tolson 5. We acquired a little Erskine car, which was a great comfort, and I really think this must have been a time of prosperity. Ned had a car of sorts which took him about Vancouver; K. had his, we had ours; the family had a boat. It all seems to me rather wonderful as I look back. How did we manage it?

October saw a rather mysterious fire in our basement, which might have been quite serious, but for the prompt action of our Scouts. That month also saw a record attendance of 51 parents at the usual mid-term service.

Two things in November. A Rugby game at Oak Bay Park, on one of the wettest days I have ever known. I arrived late and saw two spectators, each taking a touch line. One of them was Mrs. S., who was ever a great Rugby fan, especially when her sons were playing.

Then on the 22nd my dear Kyrle came of age. He had wonderful presents, a silver cigarette box from the School, and a charming speech by Mr. Tolson. We stopped at 2 for a movie of the School taken and shown by Mr. Rutherford. Dinner at the Beach Hotel for 26, when Mr. Mayhew proposed K's health, and 8:30 a dance for about 90 friends—truly a great day for him, and well he deserved it.

December 12th. The gym was prettily decorated for a good closing and a good tea. (I see a note that we got outside 65 dozen buns.) It was then Mr. and Mrs. Rutherford gave us a lovely piano cover, with the School crest and motto on it, which many of you have seen so often. Six hundred and fifty letters were written and E. and I saw this memorable year out, sitting together in front of the fire, so happy.

CHAPTER 16.

1930 — *Excursions and Alarms*

Twenty years have passed since our start, and you are now more than half way, so take courage and let us proceed. This year is not going to be dull, I promise you, though the start was difficult. We had one of those most unpleasant "cold snaps"—four weeks of real cold, two weeks of rain. At one time no less than 30 boys were away with illness, but the rest carried on with the job in splendid style. Michael had croup and I had a most painful time with a toe which our good Dr. Popert finally opened, so that I could move round once more. It must have been harder than usual for E. (Mrs. S.) but she found time to reorganize her Cubs, and we both rejoiced to see Ned over playing Rugby for U.B.C. against Victoria. A jolly good forward he was, and always played with a smile. K. was playing good Rugby for the Wanderers, and these games were our great treat each week.

In February I sent a circular to 141 Old Boys and also to those present, about a testimonial for Mr. Tolson and Miss ~~Cham~~ ^{Cham} ~~on~~ ^{celebrates} their 10th and 11th years respectively. As usual there was a good response, the total reached being \$229.59. More of this later. The short Easter holiday was busy indeed. Panels of cottonwood replaced the plaster walls of Rooms 7 and 8 and the stairs. Painted a dark green they have stood up very well. Also the whole place was kalsomined, to say nothing of renovations in the house. So there was not much time to relax. But this was nothing compared with what was in store for us.

The gym roof began to leak and the roofers who went up to inspect it said that the rafters inside were too weak to

carry another layer and would have to be strengthened first. Major Spurgin came to look it over and on his way up decided that the School itself was falling down and must have new bearers underneath. Apparently we had dry rot under the school, though probably most boys would have told you it was in the class-room. Be that as it may, new bearers were put in, fresh posts were set up in the gym and enormous purlines (are they?) were run the full length to support the rafters, and only then did the roofers get busy. While up there they decided that the shingles on the bungalow were coming to grief and that meant another job of roofing. We had saved up about \$800 to send Mrs. S. home to England for a holiday and much needed rest. The repair bill was \$800. She did *not* get the holiday. Mr. Tolson did—and E. J. Symons took his place on April 30th.

More excursions and alarms. A fire in the bungalow which at that time stood empty, except for one huge chesterfield, which was too cumbersome to move. E. and I returning from watching a game, found a big crowd outside, and firemen squirting tons of water through the window where the said couch was flaming merrily. Believe it or not, arson! A lad who was distinctly peculiar, and whom I had repeatedly saved from murder at the hands of his companions, so that I might murder him myself, had set light to the chesterfield just to "get back" at us monsters. "Did you hate me so much?" I asked him. "I did at the time, but I don't now," was the reply. Very nice of him, but he faded away the same day and I hope is doing well many thousands of miles away. Wild horses will not drag from me the secret of how I found him out, but believe me, it was by low cunning of the highest order. Perhaps to make up for it our sports started in rain but the weather cleared and apparently they were much enjoyed.

It was about this time that plays or entertainments by the various forms began to be popular on Wednesday afternoons and I see we had the Mikado by 4B (in wonderful costumes, largely filched from mother's dressing table) and other

"feature presentations." I believe this is very good for the boys, and to this day in the summer term each form puts on a show of varying calibre and the odd parent is ordered to come by her hopeful young Roscius.

In June the Fathers won an excellent cricket match against the sons, 83 to 76, but the Mothers just swamped their opponent sons and won by seven wickets. I need not tell you the drill competition was the "best yet"—it always is—and on the 27th we had our 20th closing. There was a little rain, a big crowd and a good show. It was then that we purchased three tea urns and countless cups and saucers, which have been used by so many so often. (I sometimes think we could do better financially in the catering and *entertainment* business. The presentation was grand. Mr. Tolson received a \$100.00 bond, and engraved tray, a box for letters and an album; Mrs. Tolson a picture and bouquet; Miss Short \$50.00 in gold pieces, tray and purse of flowers. I treasure in my den a picture of the dear old soul, that she had specially taken for the occasion, standing by her treasures in an attitude that plainly dares anyone to come on and touch them.

Even I received a present from my dear family of the two silver shields with the names of all the boys up to date engraved on them. Now we have had to fall back on 3-ply wood panels with the names in chalk.

Kyrle took 16 Scouts to camp and on arrival one P. Cox, cut his foot horribly with an axe. I remember how they tied him up and Kyrle whizzed him into town from Sooke, in about 10 seconds flat; and I recall the doctor telling me that *everything* had been done that should be done, and nothing done that should not. I wonder if Peter remembers?

The Grade "niners" continued to pass their exams—always a satisfaction—but the holiday was saddened by two deaths. Tony Farrer, a fine lad and a great athlete, was shot on the rifle range at Winnipeg, and Mr. H. R. Hammond, a great friend and benefactor, was drowned while bathing. Two most tragic accidents.

The usual holiday on South Pender, on Mr. Parkyn's land, perhaps the best of all the spots we have squatted on. Picture a row of tents among the trees on the bank overlooking a bay, with Mount Baker in the distance, Saturna on our left and the American islands on the right, throw in every possible convenience and comfort and dear good friends and you've got the ideal life in my opinion.

School again in September, with the old Scouts meeting in the Gym and a grand lot of new boys whose names are in the diary and also in my heart. There were 72 boys, and of course all the usual doings. Mr. Allwood gave a course of six lectures on electricity, and all the Wednesday speakers were good. The most fluent was *not* a lecturer, but an infuriated parent who went for me hammer and tongs over a regrettable mistake made by one of the staff. I need not enter into details, but feel that his closing remark is worth recording. He said, "Your speech at the end of term is nothing more than the hysterical ravings of a dyspeptic who is too old for his job." A masterly description and I do not think it helped the situation when I entirely agreed with him. We get our kicks, but they do not compare with the "ha'pence" that come our way.

On December 19th we closed with our first concert. It was a good change from the same old gym display (which now takes place in the Easter term.) We had conjuring, singing, instruments, which, with the reading competition, made an interesting programme. The stage was distinctly amateur—being perched on apple boxes, with an old and dirty canvas curtain. But we've gone ahead since then. Have a real stage, backdrops, made by E., and I venture to say that the concert, as we call it, has become one of the features. Mr. P. T. Barnum would rightly have described it as "The Greatest Show on Earth."

CHAPTER 17.

1931 — *The Old Guard*

January 12th saw us off to a good start, with 68 out of 69 boys "on tap." Mr. Field most kindly carried on the boxing in place of Mr. Bain.

The 14th was an eventful day for us, as we were honoured by a visit from the Lieut.-Governor, Mr. Randolph Bruce, who had expressed a wish to see the School, and came with his niece, Miss Mackenzie (Mrs. Hobart Molson), to pay us a visit, being always interested in the affairs of the province. He was received in state by the Scouts, walked through a lane of boys, who fell in behind him and marched to the gym, where the Cubs were lined up. He made a very charming little speech and took the trouble to go through the class-rooms, apparently being well pleased with what he saw. Of course, jumping from one pole to the other, we followed this up with that eternal chicken pox. On the 29th my dear son Ned came of age and we were lucky to get him over from U.B.C. for a little week-end celebration.

There seem to have been more events, chores, meetings, matches than ever. I remember some of them so well. The opening of the sun room at the Jubilee Hospital Pavilion, the work of the Florence Nightingale Chapter to which E. was so devoted; a lecture in the theatre by G. K. Chesterton on "The Ignorance of the Educated"; just the sort of title he would choose; a lecture in the gym by a visitor who spoke uninterruptedly for 2½ hours (the boys were *so* good); a wonderful visit to Seattle, the first of many, and another to Vancouver for our Private Schools Association meeting. I am so glad to say this continues, and we meet alternately in Vancouver and Victoria; are very highbrow during the

morning session and end with a very festive dinner at night.

In April the so-called summer term started with 72 boys. We tried a course of singing, under Mr. Stanley Bulley, but it did not seem to go very well. However, singing has a definite place in our life. We have our own pianists, and I hope we sing because we want to. Four cricket nets went up, and, as ever, the playground resounded with yells of "Play," "No. 19 coming up," "My turn to bat," and the balls whizzed as on a battlefield, but with no real casualties.

In May our Scout Troop went to Lord Colville's wedding, where they did good service as traffic "cops," ushers, etc., and no doubt joined in the refreshments. The 14th annual sports event went off excellently; there was rain before, and rain after, but it was fine for the events, and we have *almost* always been blessed with fine weather for our outdoor "shows."

I had the joy and pride of seeing Ned take his degree at U.B.C. Also this month as the result of a windfall, we were able to get a nice big and safe launch, LORRAINE, in which we had many delightful trips. She was not showy nor speedy, but she was most comfortable and a vast improvement on the "little red boat" of which you've heard.

June saw my 50th birthday celebrated with ice cream, and it is a joyful sight to see all the School armed with cones, standing round during the drill period. This, too, has become one of our traditions. But the day was marred by the illness of Michael, and we had to send him off with Ned to Sooke for a rest and change at Woodside Farm. There's always *something*. The Fathers' and Mothers' matches were particularly good, and the 11th drill competition, judged by Capt. Dexter, was of course, the best yet. On the 21st the Scouts and Cubs went in a body to St. Mary's Church, where their colours were consecrated; a fine ceremony.

The 27th saw the first Old Boys' cricket match at Oak Bay Park, and they beat us easily. I have their names. At 8 o'clock there was a jolly meeting in the gymnasium, and the Old Boys' Association was formed with F. Rattenbury as

president and M. Bridgman, secretary. It was decided then that the second Saturday in June should be Old Boys' Day—and so it is; *the* day of the year for me. If I once start on the subject of the Old Boys' Association I shall never be able to stop, but I do want to say what I truly and honestly feel, that no association ever had finer or more loyal members; the School is all the richer and stronger and better for their background, and for what they have handed down to their successors. What they mean to me no one but myself can tell. They are everywhere on the globe—some 700 of them now—and always make me think of St. Paul's "Cloud of Witnesses" watching, from the grandstand, us run our race. Of course many of them have dropped out. They leave us when still quite young and rightly attach themselves to their next school, but it is amazing and wonderful to know how many stick closer than a brother—some from 1910 and onwards.

On the 30th we ended up a fine term with our 21st closing in Mr. Merrill's garden. It was a perfect day and a great success; a picked squad of 48 boys put on the best display of drill I have ever seen outside the military tournament or the Aldershot Tattoo.

The next day Kyrle, feeling very seedy, took 12 Scouts off to camp. I do take off my hat to him for that; we're all completely used up by the end of term and instead of "flopping" as we do, he has the work and responsibility of his troop. He is a "good Scout." Meanwhile the new "liner" was being fixed up and made ready for the trip to South Pender, where the Parkyns once more made everything so pleasant for us, and where, as we said before, we had the best camp in all our experience. Even then I had marked Mr. P. down as the man I wanted on our staff, and it was a good day for us when we prevailed on him to join us. I'm sorely tempted to talk and talk about the Gulf Islands, but this is supposed to be a record of the School, in spite of personal intrusions, and so I must hold back. Suffice it to say that among other joys we made a wonderful trip up to the

head of Princess Louise Inlet; it took 7 days and the old LORRAINE did so well. I have to admit that I do not like crossing the Gulf, but Mr. Parkyn, who was one of the party, piloted her most skilfully. We fed well, slept soundly, and all in the most perfect scenery.

September started off well with an Old Boys' dinner at the Beach Hotel; 31 of us sat down, including our guests, Dean Quainton, always our friend and "unsalaried chaplain," Capt. John Grant and Capt. Dexter. We had music, conjuring, and a lovely evening.

Term began on the 8th and was rather heavy at times. Ned had a nasty operation on his nose, which was broken when he was a small boy by a cricket ball, and was discovered to be likely to cause serious trouble. K. had trouble with teeth; E. was seedy, but "the show had to go on." We acquired a small 16 mm. projector which has been very useful and very many "movies" have we had in the gym. Now, of course, we want a better and bigger one.

I haven't mentioned the mid-term services, but am glad to say they are a part of our life and many good parents are regular attendants. That year there were 30 on Ash Wednesday (Dean Quainton), 39 on Ascension Day (Archdeacon Tunns), and 48 in October. A box hangs on the wall of the gymnasium marked "Solarium" and the collection is handed over each term, being carefully counted under the eyes of certain boys who constitute themselves church wardens for the occasion.

December 18th the end of term came, as it has to come. The gym was crowded to bursting point for the entertainment. We decorate very gaily and you can depend on seeing a phalanx of Old Boys at the back. I know no more delightful thing than to feel that everyone in the building is a keen and interested friend of the School.

So here's wishing you a Happy Christmas—you've still got about 16 more years to go.

school masters I've ever known. I see that it was very hot and the first half term is set down as "arduous" with my polite comments—"form lazy"—"form stupid" and so on. M. started at Brentwood College and ended up as head boy later on. I feel we owe a great debt of gratitude to the college for what it did for all our three sons; and I hope in their way they each contributed something to it "*reddens quod accepit donum*" as our School song says and as many of you have sung.

December 15th produced a very good entertainment—our 3rd of its kind—to finish up the year "with deep gratitude for the past and high hopes for the future." Letters written 749.

CHAPTER 19.

1933 — *Is All Our Company Here?*

Again the New Year was opened by the Old Boys' dance, this time at the Crystal Garden. Here the Mothers' Auxiliary arranged and carried out a very good supper and you will see, as we go along, how this essential part has been one of the very many good deeds they do for us and is largely the making of its unvarying success. I need not say that an excellent committee of Old Boys more than did their share. We had 250 people and made a good sum.

School began on the 9th with some whooping cough and in bad weather. The old round of meetings, Oak Bay Schools Association, Oak Bay Wanderers, etc., began again. On February 18th the School was incorporated as a private company and is strictly speaking "Limited," though I dislike the term. The idea was first brought up by an old lawyer cousin when Michael and I were in England — largely, I think, to avoid death duties if anything happened to me, as it was all in my name. The whole business was carried out most admirably by our good friend, Mr. H. G. Lawson, whom I have already mentioned as having kept us straight on more than one occasion. That business settled, E. and I had a little mid-term holiday in Seattle.

On March 21st the Old Boys held a meeting and discussed the matter of awarding an annual scholarship. This has been in existence for some years now and is known by their wish, as the Old Boys' Appreciation Scholarship. It is good to feel they appreciate the School and their time here, and I can certainly say the winner appreciates it. It has a value of \$25.00 per term and is continued so long as the boy's progress and conduct, etc., are satisfactory. In nearly every

case it has been well earned. The names of the winners are on a fine mahogany shield in the gym, which was made and presented to us by Yarrows Ltd.

I remember some time ago hearing that some sweet person had diverted several boys from us by saying we had no games. It is interesting to see that at the end of March our 105-lb. team (Rugby) was unbeaten in Oak Bay and therefore played in the final against the City, losing to Central who were a good deal heavier. No games indeed. Almost every page of the diary records them.

The April holiday was spent in repainting Rooms 7 and 8 and various repairs which are an incessant "chore." Weeds grow, awnings have to go up and down, fence wire perishes, blackboards decay. We have no paternal government to provide us with all these things nor people to do them; but somehow it seems more intimate when one does one's own jobs, generally with the aid of willing hands. "Sir, can I help you?" Lots of interesting (to me) little items show up as I turn the pages of my diary. Michael's first communion, J. Napier's wedding, Private Schools meeting in Vancouver, St. George's Society dinner and a dance at the Crystal Garden which I remember was very hard work for some people, especially Mrs. R. Angus. I can't remember why we had it.

May 20th we saw dear E. and Ned off for *their* visit to England, richly deserved and do doubt much needed. But when they were away one realized something of what they did and were in our life. However, K. was and always has been a tower of strength and reliability and the sports were as good as ever, so was the Fathers' match, drill competition and all the rest of it.

The second Saturday in June, established as Old Boys' Day, was an outstanding one. The 1st XI beat the Fathers, their 2nd beat us, and we all enjoyed our tea. At 7 o'clock we had a capital dinner, at which Mr. Mayhew was our guest speaker, followed by a good meeting.

10 Not only that but the next day our good old "Bos'n" Higgs took between 40 and 50 of us from the Yacht Club in his good ship SOLANDER to Chatham Island for the day, a perfect one. Membership in the Old Boys' Association was growing all the time and I'd like once more to say that my boast is and always has been that there are no boys like our Old Boys, and all honour to those finest of all who started the whole thing so well. Certainly the daily letter to our dear ones at home had plenty of good news, and so did we when their letters began to arrive.

10 The 23rd closing was in the same garden but it was *wet*. However, Capt. and Mrs. John Grant most kindly took us into their house for tea—a regular squash. Mr. Anscombe made a first rate speech and all was well.

Holidays once more, and none too soon. K. as usual took his Scouts off to camp and I had a few days in Seattle, spending one night in a cabin at Sunset Lodge on Mt. Rainier. We were almost the first car and I remember so well that the snow was in most parts over the roofs of the cabins and ploughs were still at work clearing the road up—a thrilling experience.

When K. and M. returned from camp we had our *real* time. We packed the old car and went off to the States for a long trip, Washington, Oregon, California, where we stayed with an Old Boy, C. A. Foster. On to San Diego, where another one, Joe Fretwell, drove us across the Mexican border and gave us lunch at Agua Caliente. Again I'd like to tell you all about this in detail but must keep it for another time. We got back on July 28th to hear that all our candidates had once more passed their examinations.

Then in August off we went in our "liner" to South Pender for a few days of rest and quiet, and on the 12th E. and N. came home. The family were together again and everything was very, very good. So back we all go to Pender where there was time to talk and talk and talk of our respective trips and get settled down once more to readiness for the new term.

September 6th. It started and pleasantly, with Mr. Tolson *doing half time work and 4 rooms in use, as there were only 49 boys.* However, numbers have never been our main care; one just plugs along.

I think there is little in the term that would interest you, though it does me, so we'll jump on to the 4th evening show on December 15th that put a good finish to the term. There was heavy snow but we fixed up canvas shelters of a kind and matting underfoot and our friends turned up undaunted. The boys made a great success out of rather a poor start and yet once more came the blessed period of rest and a very happy Christmas. Fifteen more years to go. Can you take it?

CHAPTER 20.

1934 — *Depression*

Once more the Old Boys' dance ushered in a new year, this time at the Yacht Club, with Len Acres and his band. Of course it was a success. We felt that is the place and he is the man for the function—always such a jolly one.

Now we started to compile a list of the Old Boys, J. Holms and I, and I have been trying ever since to keep it up to date. We have nine loose leaf volumes of the register. Many Old Boys help us by writing, but so many have just not had time to get "round to it." However, I never give up hope of hearing, and that hope seemed justified when I received an 8-page letter from a boy who had not written or given us any sign of life for 22 years. But I'm afraid some have completely dropped out. Natural, I suppose, as they leave us when quite young and it is right that their loyalty should go to the school they go on to when they are more mature. On many pages of the record you'll find a big bulge. That is made by a flower from the bouquet of an Old Boy's bride, which I always beg after the wedding. I think you'd agree that the volumes are worth seeing and they're there for your inspection.

In March a team of Old Boys played Rugby against the Oak Bay Wanderers. One of the most enjoyable games I've ever had the pleasure of watching, as everyone was so jolly. We lost 13 to 3, but that wasn't the point. Mr. Ley refereed and I have a list of the players and, better still, a photo taken by "Trio." It was delicious to see great hairy men squeezed into the little blue and black jerseys they used to wear in their school days. Comfort? No. Loyalty? Yes, indeed.

Then in April an Old Boys 6 played tennis at Brentwood.

Again we were beaten but we've always felt that the game is the thing and I'd like to see that spirit pervade all teams.

Incidentally it was in this year that I was asked to give a lecture on the "Tower of London," which, with one on the Crown Jewels, seemed to catch on and I must have fired it off in 50 different halls. Anyhow, a good friend of mine once said to me, "For goodness sake don't talk about the Crown Jewels!"—so evidently they had their fill of me.

It was about this time I notice there was some correspondence in the press about private schools being a "curse against children." I imagine and hope the letters were written by some disgruntled person who knew nothing about them. Anyhow if that is the case I must bear the brand of Cain all over me but must confess it does not worry me unduly. Anyhow our poor cursed children had a very good time that term, as our lectures were even better than usual, one visitor being Canon George Scott, the poet and the "best loved chaplain in Canada." Gen. Sir Charles Radcliffe, Count de Suzannet, Mr. Napier Denison and others visited and enthralled us. Also we paid some visits. We marched to the Naval Barracks to see a film "Britain's Birthright." We were taken all over the cable ship *RESTORER* by Capt. *C. M. Fleming, who gave us a sumptuous tea in his own* cabin, and so on; so we'll hope the curse was lightened somewhat.

In May we sent out the first list of Old Boys and addresses, 8,400 sheets of reading matter, Logan Mayhew making himself responsible for the stencils and copies. Sports, Mothers' and Fathers' matches all went on as usual, or better than ever. The forms did various plays and we had two rather unusual "shows." We lent our playground for a pet show, which attracted many children and animals. I still have a vivid memory of a duck with two heads or five legs or something, which reclined in a box and seemed to me in *articulo mortis*, but was quite a drawing card. The other was a garden party given by the I.O.D.E. when 32 of our boys gave an exhibition of drill for the guests.

Old Boys' Day, June 9th, was lovely. The usual two cricket matches and tea in the afternoon and at 7 o'clock we had dinner at the School House, when 52 sat down. I needn't tell you that E. did the whole thing, even to cooking many pies. We made her a little present and also one to "Bos'n" Higgs, and re-elected L. Mayhew as our president. The next day we again had a picnic by car and bus to Sidney, where Capt. Higgs took 45 of us to Bedwell Harbour. He had a scow lashed alongside his boat, where we lolled comfortably. Returned at 6 p.m. and a general vote showed that it had been a grand outing.

That year numbers were very small. All private schools were down a lot and for the only time in our history we did some rather extensive advertising in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, as well as our own papers. I cannot remember that it produced one result; and now, though many think we're quite crazy, we do not advertise. If parents are satisfied they will tell others, and that is the only kind of advertisement that I think is worth while.

A very good prize giving on June 29th in Mr. Aylard's garden on Foul Bay Road, with Dean Quainton as usual officiating and Mrs. Walter Nichol presenting her cup. A very good crowd and a lovely day brought the school year to a good finish; then K. took his Scouts off to camp at Sooke.

The holiday in camp at South Pender was the usual joy, with one special feature. I got word that Douglas Prentice and family (1911?) would be in town and came in on purpose to see them. It was the greatest delight to see him after so many years, monocle, little family and all. It is to him that I am indebted for the comfy little house in which these words are written. You'll hear later how in the good hands of Providence it all came about.

September started with the smallest school for a long time—38 on the roll. These were divided into two groups to compete in all games and work for the Nichol Cup. Now there are three, Blues, Blacks and Whites, and the compe-

tition is keen, and the boy earns points *not* for himself but for his "House."

At the end of the month dear little Miss Short gave up her job as janitress after so long. Never was there anyone more loyal and devoted to the School and her memory is ever green. Her place was taken by her sister-in-law, Mrs. Short, who carried on for many years in the same fine way and who now lives, we're glad to say, in the little cottage at the School House.

Mr. Ley formed a Natural History Club, of which only their notice board remains. The youngsters took it up, as youngsters do anything new, with enormous enthusiasm. Probably one of these days it will revive.

That year we started collecting for Dr. Barnardo's Christmas fund and raised \$30.86. That has been kept up really keenly by the School, in addition to collections for Poppy Fund, Navy League, Solarium, and every year we do better. That means something more than actual cash.

December 14th we had our 5th concert. Good as usual, and 24 years have now passed.

CHAPTER 21.

1935 — *Jubilee*

After rather a long gap I take up my hard-worked pen once more to continue the record and find the year very much like the preceding one with some notable events here and there. You see it was our jubilee year—25 years since one boy and I started to work together in a tiny room. As usual I am hoping that the repetition of events will not become sheer monotony but that these events continue and always are voted "the best yet" is an indication that they are pretty firmly established and well worth while.

January 4th saw the 4th Old Boys' dance at the Yacht Club, with 176 present and nearly all our own people, which is what I want it to be and which means the best and nicest party one could wish for. The first half term was a heavy one; vile weather, cold, floods, illness, and the boys naturally rather "flabby."

I seem to have delivered endless lectures on my beloved Tower of London and the Crown Jewels; Mrs. S. to have been always busy with the good works of the Daughters of the Empire; the boys busy with Rugby; and all of us busy with school affairs. I well remember the Old Boys 2nd Rugby match with the Wanderers, a very good and amusing game. "B. P." held a fine rally of Scouts and Cubs. Other events stand out. Then on the 9th came the great news that Kyrle and Miss Joan Watts had got themselves engaged. I could tell you a lot about that but it is their story and I can only say that it was a very, very happy thing, for he secured a wonderful little wife and I was almost as proud and happy at being a father-in-law.

May was full of events, not the least being our job of painting the School House with some skill and success. The gym and boxing competition was held in the evening with Mr. Kinch as judge, and on the 18th came our 18th sports in lovely weather. We revised the Old Boys' list for the second time and now one could really spend full time on it.

June brought Fathers' match and drill competition as usual and the 8th was Old Boys' Day. We had the usual two cricket matches and a good crowd of spectators, and at 7 o'clock supper in the gym with Norrington's catering extremely well. We had our record number of 80. The Old Boys presented us with four silver cellars to mark the jubilee; and Ned was president. The next day was our picnic. Coach lines took 50 of us to Sidney and our good Capt. Higgs transported us to Portland Island. It was, of course, all very nice but it rained incessantly and to this day I can see various people trying to dry out by the fire in the galley; but we had a good time.

June 28th was our jubilee prize giving in Mr. Aylard's garden once more. It *rained!* We had to move the benches, etc., in the house and a pretty good squash it was. Mr. Mayhew gave our prizes and I was honoured by the gift of a fine striking clock from the Private Schools Association. Everyone was so kind and good, and, what is more, the weather cleared enough for the boys to do their drill in the garden and very well they did it. See pictures in gym, which is practically lined with photos by Trio of all these events and you can see for yourself what our shows were like better than I can tell you.

But that is not all by any means. While all else was going well the fence round the playground had become so dilapidated that it was an eye sore to Oak Bay in general and myself in particular. Originally, when there were just vacant lots there was a sort of fence round them; rather shaky cedar posts with 3 bars of 1x6 tacked on. On to these we tacked 1x12, quite insecurely and increasingly askew. Then came the staining thereof. In a weak moment I asked

the boarders to help and of course they responded with enthusiasm and every one wanted to do his bit. There were not enough brushes to go round so every sort of substitute was requisitioned, even to hair brushes. I can see now some good lad trying to make up for the inefficiency of his hair brush by the enormous quantity of stain (home made at that) that he tried to get on; and the mess! Well, that job was done, or rather botched, and as soon as the stain was dry most of it rubbed off. That was the situation when a little committee of three good men and true friends stepped in to the rescue, Messrs. Bridgman, E. P. Gillespie and E. W. Izard, who said we should have a new and proper fence. They surely did. I believe they collected nearly \$300 and set two real carpenters to work. The result, as you may see today (though you may look through big gaps in the wire) was a real fence—a Jubilee Fence.

And then K. and Scouts went off to camp, while we cleaned, painted, papered and generally fixed up the School and School House before going off to camp on Pender for the much needed and long expected holiday. A cousin, Mr. Reade, and his friend came out again from England and spent some time with us under canvas and then we took them for a long and lovely trip into the States. They had a wonderful time but seemed rather reluctant to admit it till they got back to England. I could tell you a lot of stories about that but above all things let us be charitable.

September 4th. School began again, smallish numbers but all our candidates had passed their exams and we were doing some Grade 10 work in the senior form.

The fence was a great joy and our deepest thanks go to those three friends and the many who helped and Mr. Collett and Walter, who did such a fine job putting it up.

Rather an uneventful term for all but ourselves. It would not interest you to hear of interviews with parents about their boys, now old boys; of some lessons in Greek; of some new flooring in the gym; of Michael being made a Prefect at Brentwood; of my having a real row with an impossible

cook and "firing" her in real style; of two trips to Seattle; of K's 27th birthday and his singing a solo at the Arion Club concert; of a jolly Old Boys' meeting in the gym; of the 6th Christmas concert which was good as ever and enhanced by the new stage curtains which Mrs. S. made for us. I don't know how many thousands of rings she sewed on, or weights at the bottom to make them straight, but you have seen them many times and can count them if you want to. The old days when we had to balance a dais on apple boxes and fill up the gaps with anything we could find were over. We had and have a stage and properties that, while not Hollywood, suit us well and are always admired.

A very happy Christmas and 1935 was tucked neatly away with other years.

To those of you who have stayed the course with us so far I must say one word. Thank you for your interest. Believe me, I feel more and more that the story begins to be a bit stodgy and offer apologies. As I have said before, when year after year goes by with the same events coming time after time it is not easy to write a "thriller"; but there have been and are to me great and unusual events and I only want to write worthily enough to encourage you to fresh patience and if possible, interest. Not many more years to go, as I open the diary for 1936.

CHAPTER 22.

1936 — *Hard Times*

This year will not keep you long. Of course there were the usual trials and tribulations inseparable from our job but they pass. Perhaps the chief anxiety was the alarmingly small numbers; but though vague ideas of shipwreck occasionally came to mind, yet we never really lost faith that we should keep afloat. After all that had gone before how could we? So we went ahead as usual and all the hardy annual events were carried out in good order.

The 5th Old Boys' dance started us off. The orchestra was not very good but the supper made up for that! We could have had a few more people but the committee managed to end up a little on the right side. Term began with 41 on January 6th. On the 28th we held a service in memory of King George V.

February produced one of those hateful cold spells; we had to hold the mid-term service in the School in order to keep reasonably warm. However, Bishop Sexton gave a most inspiring address on the ring of Louis IX, inscribed with the words God, France, Margaret—stressing loyalty to God, country and friends.

In March our little Rugby team (doubtless inspired by the visit of the New Zealanders) distinguished itself at Brentwood, University and Duncan, and I greatly hope to see it in action again. On the 10th occurred the death of Mr. P. F. Curtis, not only a good friend and parent of the School but a good friend to all the youngsters, the president of the Oak Bay Schools Athletic Association, which he fostered in every way. We have a grand photo of him surrounded by teams from every school in the municipality, each in their own colours, united to do him honour.

Term ended with the gym competition on April 3rd and the holidays were divided up between kalsomining and rubella!

The sports in May were particularly good and there were a lot of old boys. I have the names of those who have judged our various events and thank them one and all.

Then on Ascension Day Dean Quainton gave one of his best addresses at our service on "Clyde-built, British-built, Christ-built." I certainly believe that these short services have been of inestimable value to many of us.

The summer term was quite notable. I claim, not without due modesty, that we have a good record of scholarship but must mention the successes of "Sandy" McCallum—scholarship at U.C.G., Rocke Robertson medal at McGill—Ian Drum scholarship at Queen's Toronto, P. Nation, 16th out of 60 at R.M.C., and at the end of the year a Rhodes Scholarship for D. Fulton. All those five boys today are right at the top of their respective trees.

The Old Boys' Day was, as ever, a joy and about 60 of us sat down to supper after a good cricket afternoon. The picnic next day was on Chatham Island, whither K. transported us in his LORRAINE for a lovely afternoon.

On June 30th came the 26th annual closing in Mr. Aylard's garden. Rain began at 2 o'clock and we feverishly shifted everything into the billiard room but then it cleared and we all streamed out again. It was "some programme" for in addition to drill display we had some amazingly good gym. We did selections from "The Midsummer Night" and "As You Like It" in costume. Mrs. W. Nichol gave the prizes and a host of people made the usual remark—of which you must by now be quite tired—"the best yet!"

In the morning presentations were made to K. W. Symons and Mr. Ley.

This time Ned took the Scouts to camp, K. being somewhat busy, for on July 11th he and Miss Joan Watts were married in St. Mary's Church. It was quite a lovely wedding. His Scouts and her Guides formed a guard of honour as they

came out, man and wife. Ned was his best man, Miss Findlay her bridesmaid. Of course I think that not the least impressive figure at the ceremony was his father in a frock coat, borrowed from an old boy, a waistcoat purchased for the occasion, and the correct striped trousers hired from a theatrical costumer, being the only pair in Victoria capable of containing my figure, obviously swollen with pride and joy. I think it was the ideal match (the wedding, not the suit) and in his busy life Kyrle always has by his side his wife who is "above rubies."

Term began in September with 37 only but it seems to me that one cannot judge by numbers. We formed a branch of the Junior Red Cross for a time.

In October I see the entries are in Ned's handwriting, the reason being my visit to St. Joseph's Hospital when Dr. Mitchell did some extensive and brilliant repairs to my plumbing system. I need not tell you that I was surrounded by care and kindness. Almost my first visitor was the old Rabbi Berner, who, with tears running down his old cheeks, thanked God. Very soon came another visitor, a parent, who said, "I just popped in to say that your surgeon and hospital accounts are my affair," and out he went. Just think what that all means and what a memory it is. No one, least of all myself, could be worthy of all I have had.

It was good to get back, and with my wonderful Edith looking after me, I was soon on my feet. Of course everything had run on quite smoothly and so we continued till the break-up on December 18th with the usual entertainment. Looking back, I do not think it was such an uneventful year after all, do you? Six hundred and fifty-seven letters.

It is only the fear of becoming burdensome to you that makes me slip over so much that the personal diary recalls of that summer holiday in Pender. A very dear cousin, Miss Money-Kyrle, came out from England for Kyrle's wedding and was then taken off to Pender. I do not think she liked the life particularly, but she did achieve three main objects,

to catch a salmon, which she did from a very leaky old boat rowed by Michael (though at first she could hardly trust herself to a sturdy launch); to see a bear, which she actually did on our way down from Mt. Rainier and wanted us to stop the car so that she could pat it, and to see a humming bird, which she did at Sol Duc Hot Springs, where incidentally she thought the smell was due to faulty drain! I shall not forget Michael going out to sea in the same old boat with a home-made harpoon to slay dogfish which were following shoals of herring and, in spite of our jeers, returning in triumph with seven; nor our efforts to photograph him and his prize. Truly one could write books on the summer holidays on the Gulf Islands—to us still a Paradise and after the stress of a school year, the nearest thing to heaven. Try it yourself and see if I lie.

CHAPTER 23.

1937 — *An Honourable Thing*

This year opened with a fine action on the part of the ever fine Old Boys. On January 9th they held a meeting in the Gym and established the "St. Michael's Old Boys Appreciation Scholarship." This has been and is one of the best things we have; the examination is held in May and consists mainly of interviews of each boy by each master in turn. Our "findings" are then tabulated and submitted to a selection committee of Old Boys, which makes the award. The selections have been almost uniformly good and boys have been enabled to attend the School, who, without help, would have found it impossible. I believe, too, it does something towards keeping up the standard of scholarship by its very name. A publicity committee sent out a circular letter and the response was good. Now, as you know, the scholarship is kept going by the proceeds from the annual dance, the proceeds of which at first were eaten up by the supper; but since that was taken on by our grand Mothers' Auxiliary to the Old Boys' Association and has cost us exactly nothing, the proceeds have been able to take care of the annual \$75 which is the value of the award. Apart from that it was a bad start on the 11th. It was very cold and several were away with illness. For four weeks there were no games. Kyrle had a bad attack of "flu" and our good Mr. Ley began to have trouble with his heart.

February brought plenty of snow and more sickness. I counted up and found that in six weeks 222 days were missed, adding each boy's absences. However, "Parson Payne" took our half-term service as usual and fifteen parents attended.

In March Oak Bay won the Fragments Cup after twelve years. Six of our boys were on the team and Kyrle was the coach. So much for those know-alls who have said we have no games!

On the 25th Capt. John Grant judged the gym and boxing competition, a very close finish between the Blacks (15) and Blue (16) and that ended a tiresome term to the great relief of us all.

This year the Old Boys' dance took place in April at the Oak Bay Hall with Len Acres in charge of the music, as he has been ever since, and a good crowd of some 200 people. Some of our very finest mothers provided the supper (I have all their names.) The committee worked excellently and it was, I need hardly say, a great success.

School began on the 5th with one new boy bringing the total to 40 and on the 12th came another real "event." An Old Boy made a most generous gift of \$100 to start our "Bursary Fund." Good friends, always ready to help, have kept it going and it has helped a great many boys, as well as the School. Amazing Institution!

In spite of discouraging weather earlier in the week, courage prevailed and we decided to hold our 20th sports meeting and an excellent afternoon it was.

From May 3 to 22 I was away, being sent on a lecture tour to various Canadian Clubs on the Island and Mainland, as far as Rossland. I enjoyed the trip probably much more than they did. Meanwhile, my work was excellently done by G. Kidd. Incidentally I have just heard from him in the Embassy at Warsaw, 1936. Of course it was good to get back to my dear ones and the job. Then on the 29th the first scholarship exam. was held and the award was made to R. Ainscough, who has amply fulfilled our expectations.

June was a grand month. The Fathers' match was won by the boys, definitely a Gillespie day. We won two scholarships at Brentwood, J. Gillespie and J. Watson. There I pause for a minute in memory of Mr. H. P. Hope, the first headmaster, who died in that month. The 12th was Old

Boys' Day with its usual two cricket matches and supper in the gym at night for 52 boys and several guests, including Mr. Herbert Anscombe, Capt. Grant, Capt. Dexter and others. J. Monteith was elected president. I think our boys took 23 prizes at the Brentwood speech day on the 26th, and on the 30th a presentation was made to K. W. S. on completing his 10th year of most valuable service to the School. In the afternoon came the 27th prize giving. The rain kept off kindly till tea time so that we got through the drill, P. T., gym displays in great style. That was the occasion I've told you of on which the Scouts built a bridge out of their staves and all mounted on it triumphantly as the photo will show. What is not shown is that just a second after the camera clicked, the whole structure collapsed and great was the fall thereof.

July saw K. and 16 Scouts off to camp at Gillespie Lake. Two of the old boys, H. Mitchell and Michael, rowed in the Brentwood "four" at the P. N. W. regatta on Elk Lake; and the 2nd annual letter was sent off to some 300 old boys. That season there was a St. Michael's cricket team playing in the league and only at the end being defeated by the H. B. C. team.

I remember Ned and Michael going out to Jordan River and starting to hike up the West Coast by the West Road. But there was none, and after being bushed in more ways than one, they had to give up and returned in tatters.

Later on we went off in the boat to Pender once more—Ned, Michael and I—but this time we did not have our "Mum" with us. She was not feeling up to it, chiefly owing to some sort of gout which caused a lot of pain. However, of course, she wished us to go and meanwhile Kyrle and Joan took care of her. However, we wrote regularly and made trips to see her. I went back fairly soon for a little visit before returning to the Island. We stayed till well on in August and then returned home to find E.'s foot was better but not right yet. After the usual days of painting, cleaning, preparation, school began again on September 8th. The

old routine started up once more. There were 14 new boys but still the numbers were small. Michael reached the age of 20 and went to Victoria College, where he was known as "the boy with the curly hair and the smile, and the baby Austin" (his brother's!) That was the time we said our farewell to Dean Quainton, who left for England and died very soon after. No words can express our gratitude to him for the very many kindnesses he did us, his grand addresses as our "unsalaried chaplain" and his presentation of prizes on so many occasions. Truly he enriched the life of the School. That month we had the pleasure of seeing President F. D. Roosevelt go along Beach Drive in his car with the usual retinue of "gun men" on the running board.

Golf, stamps, rugby filled in any few gaps that occurred and I had a course of steam baths massage to get my old frame into better shape. On looking back I can see now that both E. and I were beginning to show signs of wear and tear, but she would not and I could not do much about it.

In December, one of our boys, Lyndsay Towler, was killed in an accident; somehow the death of a young lad seems to me particularly tragic, but there was a deal more in store if we had known it.

On the 16th came the usual concert and then the rest, becoming more welcome and necessary each year. My correspondence had swollen to 801 letters that year.

The holidays were always busy with preparations for the next term. However, one more year was neatly tucked away with a great deal to be thankful for, things to regret, things to hope for. I suppose that is life.

NOTE: The mid-term service will always be a memorable one as we had three generations of Bridgman present, Mrs. M. W. Bridgman, Monty B., the first boy, and his son, Hamish. Loyalty?

CHAPTER 24.

1938 — *A Son Comes: A Son Goes*

This year will not detain you very long. It was ushered in with its main event; for on January 7th a little son, Philip, came to Kyrle and Joan the very day before School began. Could anything have been arranged better? "Granpa" I was and "Granpa" I have been to an increasing number ever since. It was a proud moment, and when E. came back from an I. O. D. E. meeting as Regent of the Municipal Chapter, two cups were brimming over. Meanwhile all the usual school events followed as usual, but we did have a stamp exhibition under the care of Mr. Lethaby. The soccer sixes were won by the "Hittites." In the summer term we paid several visits en masse to the Post Office Navy Yard, Yarrow, Sidney Roofing, and were most kindly shown round by the various "bosses."

P. Salmon was elected president at the Old Boys' meeting. Capt. Grant said the gym competition was the best he had seen for some time. A presentation was made to Mr. Ley after ten years of invaluable service. The term ended with Bishop Sexton giving the prizes at our 28th annual closing in the same garden with the same crowd of friends and very many Old Boys.

We all went to Saltlam for part of July, being lent his house by Mr. Williams, and then off to Pender yet once more, staying till about the end of August.

Michael had decided to try for the Royal Air Force and it was now that a letter came from the air ministry telling him that he would have to go over at his own expense and that there was no guarantee of a place. But he stuck to it and the time galloped on. September 3rd Ned gave a little fare-

Philip's birthday is Jan 9 School was open

well party for him and on the Sunday we all went to St. Mary's to commend our boy to God's care and—can I say?—God took him into His keeping. On Wednesday the 7th we went down to see him off and the last picture I have is of him standing by the rail on the deck and waving his hand slowly to his mother and me, as I led her away. I have to hurry over this part. It was a good thing we had school affairs to plunge into right away. He had his 21st birthday on the 13th in Montreal and I am very happy always to think that our dear friends, the Bradshaws, gave him a good send-off there on the AQUITANIA.

St. Michael's Day was celebrated by distribution of chocolate bars, now replaced by ice cream, which has become an institution. Also the School bought and installed a radio so that we might hear the speeches at that very critical time with war in the air and all it meant. On October 20th we heard that Michael was accepted for the R.A.F. and on December 2nd we had a letter to say that he was flying solo and very thrilled with the whole business. The usual concert ended the year. Seven hundred and fifty-two letters, not counting the annual to the Old Boys. A grandson came—a son went.

Have you ever seen Niagara and how the water gets faster and faster as it nears the brink? Well, those days seem to me like that—racing on to the brink.

CHAPTER 25.

1939 — *War Years*

So this year, too, need not keep you long. I am glad to say we have always carried out all our "functions" without a miss. This year was the same with one or two little extras thrown in—a record stamp exhibition, visits to 'Bapco' by the kindness of Mr. Pendray, to the cold storage plant and to the gas works. The School was smaller and transport easier in those days. We had three cricket pitches made in the playground and coaching became a regular thing; Mr. Ley, as ever, being keen on the games. At the Youth Service in May A. Gillespie was chosen to represent the Private Schools and read extremely well a message from the Governor of Fiji. On the 30th we all marched to Cranmore Road to see the King and Queen. It was admirably arranged for the schools and we all had our appointed places; but Their Majesties went by too quickly. A shorter route and a slower pace would have given us a longer sight of them. However, we shall never forget the beauty and charm of the Queen, who really "stole the show." One gazed at her and was also conscious of an officer's white naval cap beside her. However, the next day a few of us hung about on Rockland Ave. and had a wonderful "close-up" of them when they drove to Hatley Park.

J. E. V. Holms was chosen president of the Old Boys at their annual dinner and meeting, after cricket at Macdonald Park. The bishop was our guest among others. The 29th annual prize-giving by Mr. Mayhew was, of course, the best yet, the Merit Shield going to A. E. Gillespie. Indeed that family always came on top and still do.

And so once more to the holidays; but there was always a

sense of something lacking, someone not there. You will understand. They ended with the declaration of war on September 3rd.

School opened on the 6th. In a world cataclysm it seems selfish to talk of ourselves but of course one had the picture of masters and sons leaving to join up; but the advice given was "carry on and see," and that came from a very "high up" in the army. So we did, with new blackboards, the school tables all renovated (and badly they needed it after the scars inflicted by many wood-carvers for many years) and a new roof for the library.

Almost the first, if not the first, Canadian casualty was one of our boys, A. Playfair. He was the first of an all too long list of twenty-nine of the finest who gave their young lives. Their names are on a marble plaque in the gymnasium and they shall not be forgotten.

You all know the A.R.P. got busy and we had to make plans for getting the boys away and invisible, in case of need, without alarming them. The fire chief said he was very pleased with our arrangements but even now one has a deep sense of gratitude that we were not called on to face the reality.

St. Michael's Day saw a circular go to parents about the vexed question of "prep" and the importance of having a time limit, so that over-conscientious youngsters should not sit up half the night over a sum while their distracted parents wrung their hands.

Three hundred copies of the Old Boys letter went out. We raised \$20 for Dr. Barnardo's Homes and ended up well with our 10th concert, a year that we shall remember. Eight hundred and sixty-seven letters.

A few "gobbets" might be of interest to fill in this year. It was a joy to me on January 14th to watch two rugby matches, K. and N. being the referees. We had several meetings about getting up a testimonial for our dear Capt. Dexter, who was ending up his 25th year in June. I am glad to say the idea was taken up warmly and on June 7th I had the honour

(as president of Oak Bay Schools Athletic Association) of making a very handsome presentation. Nothing was good enough for him in my view. I wonder how many remember him as I do?

In April E. and I had the pleasure of meeting Lord Tweedsmuir; of course she was *the* personage. Yet I see time and again in my diary that she was very far from well; but almost in the same page there is a note that she and I stacked four cords of wood. That is like her.

We had letters from Michael; now a P/O, and not long long afterwards, in October, that he was married to a Miss Heywood; and on April 18th that he had been transferred to a fighter squadron.

In August we said farewell to Miss Barton, head of St. Margaret's School, and always a great friend. I've told you she once asked me to distribute the prizes there and very much alarmed I was.

And all the time the war scares were getting more frequent and the news was not very good. And all the time our dear boys were going off to serve their King and country—at least 250 of them that I know of and probably many more. The Roll of Honour in School is something to be proud of—and all the time E. was fighting various ailments. Have you ever seen Niagara?

CHAPTER 26.

1940 — *Chaotic Times*

The year opened sadly with the funeral of Ernle Money, a fine boy, a fine man, and some time master at the School. We have lost many dear ones, boys, masters, parents, friends, and their names are on the other marble plaque in the gym. To me these plaques mean a very great deal and seem to create an atmosphere of their own. One thinks of the "cloud of witnesses" and I like to feel they are all there watching us who are still running the race which they ran so well. Forgive my repeating this.

Letters went daily to Michael, and only those who had sons serving "over there" will know the strain under which one lived in those grim days.

School began very well on the 8th. I missed the afternoon for Sholto Watt, a distinguished Old Boy, addressed the Men's Canadian Club. I had the honour of proposing the vote of thanks to him, being called on by Mr. Parsons, then Commissioner of B. C. Police, and president of the club, who spoke very kindly of the School. That is the sort of advertising one does not mind.

I see that we received many donations to our Bursary Fund and also that we started Volume 9 of signatures of our lecturers. That Wednesday afternoon lecture or talk was started in 1917 and by now reached the respectable total of 394. It is still a regular feature of the week. I think it is the best kind of general knowledge, and no one knows how pleasant and valuable these visits from all sorts and conditions of men have been. I'd like to give you all the names and subjects, but there is a limit to all good things.

On the 18th we received, at last, photos of Michael's wife, now well known to so many of you.

Lots of rugby, lots of visits, lots of lectures (one I delivered to the Hard of Hearing Club), meetings of National Council of Education, Private Schools Association, Oak Bay Schools Athletic Association, endless letters and unending jobs kept the time from hanging. On Monday, February 19th, came to K. and Joan a little daughter, also exactly as requested. I see, too, that dear Edith was ill again and had to keep to her bed, a thing she resented strongly and endured only for the minimum of time.

I forgot to say that the Old Boys' dance this year was at the Royal Oak Inn for a change.

Summer term brought in the usual events. The 23rd sports went off well. There was a mild rain all the time but a very good and cheery crowd sat in puddles and enjoyed it. That is the kind of person to help things go.

At the end of May we heard from Michael; France on the 13th.

June 2nd saw me stagger into my 60th. The Old Boys Scholarship was awarded to G. Farmer and an Exhibition to D. Price. Some more gifts came in for the Bursary Fund. On Old Boys' day, now firmly, I hope, remembered as the second Saturday in June, the cricket match featured a team of Old Boys dating from 1910 to 1933 versus a team from 1933 and on, and resulted in a draw. Of course the mothers provided a grand tea; they always do; and at night about fifty of us had supper in the gym with our usual guests and also Brig. Sutherland Brown.

Now attention please. Though our mothers had already done so much for us, it was all in an informal way. Now they began to discuss the possible formation of a real Mothers' Auxiliary to the Old Boys' Association, the originator being Mrs. Treherne (all honour to her and the other faithful friends.) On June 20th a meeting was held at her house and the auxiliary came into being to handle all Old Boys' functions, and also to sew and knit garments for refu-

gees and those in need. This organization has grown and shown its value in very many ways. There is no question that the School is better, stronger and happier for the backing it gets from these loyal, dear souls. I would like once more to thank the presidents, secretaries, treasurers and all members one and all. I may add that in July they met, fifty strong, in the gym and decided to give an annual bursary or scholarship. This is but one of the many acts that St. Michael's has to thank them for. (First president, Mrs. Treherne; secretary, Mrs. A. Weldon; treasurer, Mrs. Ley).

I might mention here that in the gym you will see three fine wooden shields or boards; a mahogany one for the names of the winners of the Old Boys' Scholarship, made and presented by Yarrows; a lovely teak shield made by the Navy for the names of the mothers' scholars and presented by Lt.-Com. Bridgman, and an oak board made in Prince Albert and presented by P. Salmon for the names of those winning the Edith Symons Bursary. You see practically every board, almost every nail in the School has its associations and that is one reason why I would hate to see it go. But it cannot last forever and I know my sons have it in mind to build a real school some day, but I tell them it must wait till my life insurance is available to help pay the bill.

June 28th, the 30th prize-giving by the bishop was well up to standard. You know all about these by now so I'll only say that everyone was ready for the holiday. That day we heard to our joy that H. Groos and A. Crane were both safe, after the loss of H.M.C.S. FRASER.

July saw various repairs to the building, etc., to keep it standing—floors, steps, chairs, tables—the usual struggle that has to be kept up unceasingly against wear and tear.

In August Ned took me to the Forbidden Plateau for three memorable days and I shall not soon forget how he piloted me right into two camps, Mackenzie Lake and Marywood, and how astonished they were at the good time we made, thanks to him.

Then I had a great treat, a trip to Saskatchewan by the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Wells, who took me all over the province and gave me a grand time. He was building most of the air stations and training schools in the province and kept an eye on everything, going at top speed from place to place. Now I feel I can almost call myself a prairie man. (I must tell you that his son Jack has ordered 15 copies of this book).

Meanwhile Ned joined up with the 5th B.C.C.A. Kyrle, I persuaded that his time was not yet. I reasoned that there were many men yet available for war service but knew of none who could do his job. Mr. Tolson thought he might return to help hold the line. Mr. Ley volunteered for service but his physical condition prevented his being accepted. "It is an ill wind," etc., but you can see that everything was rather chaotic. Pat Izard came to the rescue and very ably took Ned's place. And then on September 7th dear little old Miss Short passed away at 9 p.m., the most loyal, staunch supporter of the School, which I think she really put first in her life. She cleaned the School, served teas for the School, ran the School, and lived for the School.

September 11th. We managed to make a good start. There were 22 new boys and we went back to the five rooms once more. I must mention Billy Pettit, whose parents travelled in a car and caravan from Kentucky to bring him to us.

A.R.P. meetings and first aid classes continued. I could say so much about them; but this year, the first of our third decade, seems to be running on and on. Ned came in and gave a hand whenever he could. Letters from Michael kept us going and he seemed well and happy.

On October 5th we had a lovely "at home" to the mothers, 67 of them in the gym, past and present, and a grand lot of people.

In November the Old Boys held a "box social" which was great fun. The annual letter went out to some 300 of them. This is always our "collecting" term and the boys raised:

Poppies \$7.55, Princess Elizabeth \$15, Dr. Barnardo's Home \$34.30, War Charities \$42.10, so we tried to do our bit.

December 13th brought the end of term with our 11th concert; but E. was not there, being once more very far from well, so, of course, it was not the same thing. *Shadows of coming events?* The year ended with the tragic deaths of Dr. and Mrs. Cluff, just as it had opened sadly. But the School went on and I hope did its part. This year I wrote 923 letters.

CHAPTER 27.

1941 — "*Blood, Sweat, Tears*"

A crowded year, bringing, as ever, its joys, sorrows with the background of war and all it meant plus steady, unremitting work.

January 8th we started with 55 and had Mr. Peaker for singing, a fairly successful venture. On the 24th was the 10th annual Old Boys' dance at the Yacht Club and a rousing good one. Len Acres at his best. The mothers' committee excelled themselves in the matter of supper and decorations, and of course we had the very nicest people, as we always do. Then, by contrast, a big dose of 'flu and measles came along to even things up. Wonderful letters were arriving all the time from our Old Boys in the navy, army and air force, and they seemed to come from all parts of the globe. With them came a long list of distinctions won and, far too often, news of some gallant young life given for the Empire. Every time it was like losing a son, but we shall hear more of this as time goes on. As the tension increased out here, several parents gave provisional notice in case they should leave to seek a safer place. Meanwhile we A.R.P. stalwarts were studying gas; and everything was very unsettling, to put it mildly. That was when we had a big "war savings" parade in town—lots of troops, and bringing up the rear and trying to keep in step, came the A.R.P. contingent. As we marched along, I heard a spectator ask his neighbor who and what we were and was slightly surprised when this well-informed gentleman announced that we were the Gestapo.

In March Mr. C. C. Wilson gave a lecture and showed wonderful films on India in aid of the Bombers' Fund and raised \$58.75 for it.

May was a month of marriages and I must say our Old Boys do choose the very sweetest wives, all of whom seem like daughters to me. In fact, in my old age I admit that the daughters mean almost as much to me as the sons.

More and more boys were serving and already V. Woodward and E. Williams were piling up honours in the air force. It is not arrogance to say they are too many to mention individually, but you may see for yourself on our Roll of Honour that the School has every reason to be proud of them.

Mrs. O'Halloran gave a lovely coffee party and raised a considerable sum for the mothers' funds. Edith was ill again. Every month of the diary has its items which one does not like to omit but the result on paper is necessarily a medley, in which meetings, trips to Vancouver, measles, income tax, repairs, matches, interviews, sports and services swirl round and are served up as a sort of stew.

June was a month of scholarships. Adam, Butler and Young each gained one at Brentwood; our own was won by P. King, with the mothers' scholarship going to C. Drage, who has also recently won a scholarship at Oxford. (Here a little blowing our trumpet may be permissible, for both the Drages went from us to Eton where their classical master said they were the best taught boys he had. So there!)

The 11th Old Boys' Day was celebrated as usual, with the dinner at Spencer's, Capt. Grant as our speaker. G. Kirkpatrick was chosen president and J. Watson as treasurer. Watson is now in China, but I would like to thank him here for the excellent job he did for so long in charge of our funds.

Then came 31st prize giving in Mr. Aylard's garden, on a lovely day with a big crowd. General R. O. Alexander gave the prizes and with his faculty of saying the right and worthwhile thing, gave a splendid talk. And so the long holiday arrived at last with K. taking his Scouts to camp at Mathieson Lake and some 300 copies of the annual letter going off to the Old Boys. It really was amazing how and when

and where these letters reached them. One, for instance, got to Okinawa, where R. Todd was fighting the Japs. Another boy wrote to me saying, "Your letter generally arrives in the midst of a battle and the battle has to wait till I have read it!"

In July I took E. for a little trip to the Forbidden Plateau and then to Vesuvius Bay, hoping it might set her up. I think it did her good, but that is all I can say. The rest of the holiday we spent at home, working, resting and preparing.

September starts again, 16 new boys replacing 16 who left, and the staff all back. Things ran along as usual till the mid-term service on October 29th, taken by Mr. Biddle, who spoke on "Salt of the Earth." That was our farewell for the time to Ned, who left for the Mary Hill Fort on November 5th. Many were the tears of the little boys at his departure and I think no one was particularly happy about it. However, it must always be a case of "carry on" and mercifully we have been able to do that right through. We had Mr. Eric Quainton in the morning and Mr. Turpin in the afternoon to fill the gap, and Miss Barbara Gordon took on the Cubs. She was just a high school girl but she was extraordinarily efficient and had those Cubs just where she wanted them with no difficulty. Cubs are fine, but I would not say it is an easy job to keep 20 to 25 of them busy, happy and learning.

This is the collecting time and we managed to raise for Navy League \$17.20, Poppies \$7, Barnardo \$54.03, Red Cross \$30.70, all on the heels of each other. Old Boys' smoker was held on the 21st.

In December a friend, who wishes to be anonymous, made over to the School three oil share certificates. They have been used as the nucleus of an "endowment fund" and are most helpful in supplying the odd prize when needed, or dealing with an emergency if it crops up. Small sums come by way of interest and we are sanguine enough to hope that one day the fund will be able to provide us with a real

science laboratory. At present our equipment is distinctly sketchy but adequate for our needs.

Victoria had various "black-out" practices, but unfortunately not on the night of our 12th concert which we specially held in the afternoon. I remember how bad the rehearsal was and how the boys "put it over" really well when the time came. I've always held that one cannot and should not expect a lot of youngsters to be 100% all the time; certainly we adults are not. But also I have always claimed that our boys always can, and do, rise to the occasion when it comes; and, looking back, I cannot think of any occasion when they have let us down. Could one ask for more?

And so the holidays; never quite long enough at Christmas; for it takes about a week to clear up and another to prepare for the next session and there is always much in between. This time we were making endless cardboard and three-ply screens for the School House and I venture to think we were ready, as far as possible, for any black-out if one came.

Hongkong fell and I believe we had ten parents there. It all sounds rather bare and cold on paper but I ask you to think what that meant.

December 29th was the 11th Old Boys' dance at the Yacht Club with the mothers, as ever, to the fore and Kyrle doing most of the others' work.

So ended a year that called for a lot of faith and "stick-to-it-ness" though always with many blessings to be thankful for and a feeling that one must square one's shoulders and be prepared for what might be in store for us. There was plenty.

CHAPTER 28.

1942 — *The Home Coming*

Per Ardua ad Astra

A heavy and sad year—so that I rather dread the writing of it. I expect you know what is coming and I suppose I did. However, I know that her wish would be to carry on and so it shall be.

Term began with chicken pox and mumps and whooping cough, also a cold spell to make good measure. A poor atmosphere in which to do good work. People were running away from "danger" rather freely. Mr. Ley had a heart attack which caused us anxiety and "Mum" was never well, though few knew it, such was her courage and brightness. However, undismayed by war and rumours of war, the Old Boys continued to get engaged and married in large numbers.

When things get gloomy and the sun cannot always be shining, one always has the comforting assurance, "There are the mothers behind us" and "there are the Old Boys behind us." I don't suppose either or any of them realize what a very pleasant help and comfort this is.

We saw the New Year in once more at M. Bridgman's very happily and then plunged into the usual preparations for a start on January 6th with 55 boys (when all present).

A.R.P. was active. One spent plenty of time getting sand in buckets and shovels for those who were too indifferent to get it for themselves as a precaution against incendiaries, which mercifully did not come. Ned ran in to see us whenever he could and that always helped things along. Michael's

letters were less frequent—for various reasons of the “hush-hush” kind. I gather he was engaged in some very important confidential work. Edith continued to attend many meetings and often returned completely used up; but she still managed to entertain various service lads whom we picked up at odd times as they looked lonely. Now Ned collapsed at Gordon Head Camp and was taken to hospital where he had the best care, but it was just one more thing. However, he got more or less right, graduated on the 17th, and was then ordered off to Winnipeg for some artillery course. So there was only K. to lean on and I cannot think what we should have done without him though I know he felt he should go too. I assure you the little break at Easter was very welcome.

April 8th saw us in harness again. H. Nicol writing the scholarship exam for U.C.C. and of course winning it, and Alyn Taylor calling to see me after twenty-three years. These are the bright spots which are always there and come when least expected and most needed.

So things go on. A. Macdonald took Mr. Ley's work for a fortnight. Several Old Boys have helped us out on similar occasions and I have always thought what good schoolmasters they make; but very few have made it their life work (probably having seen the awful effects on me!)

The sports in May were excellent. Round about then we heard that J. Barber Starkey won the Newcome prize. J. Fulton was covering himself with glory in the R.A.F., leading the “Moose” Squadron. D. Prentice was sinking submarines and commanding a flotilla of destroyers. “Teddy” Williams won the A. F. Cross and appeared in the birthday honours list—just to mention one or two of “the boys.” Meanwhile their scholarship was won by M. Williams, who still keeps a consistently good record; and the Exhibition by D. Privett, of whom the same can be truly said.

The Bursary Fund was well supported and scores of times has proved its worth. The mothers in their June meeting awarded a bursary. (President, Mrs. Nation; vice-president,

Mrs. Ley; secretary, Mrs. Woodcroft, who have done so much for us).

Here almost every page of the diary tells that E. was *getting no better but rather worse, yet she attended the service at the Cenotaph on the 23rd with her beloved Daughters of Empire*. I spent a lot of time on A.R.P. and remember calling one night at fourteen houses to instruct them on the ways of the sirens that had been set up. I am sure it was good to have every moment filled.

Mercifully Ned returned on June 1st, and, of course, helped out in every way he could, coming in from barracks or camp to take duty and so on, till he went off again.

Old Boys' Day was grand as ever. P. Salmon was president, J. Watson continued as treasurer and Kyrle became secretary—a biggish job he has kept on in spite of endless other duties.

I see, by way of being candid, that there were two epidemics of criticism, or, shall we say gossip; (1) that we did nothing for the boys after 3 during the previous term, (I might draw attention to such factors as the weather, Mr. Ley's illness, etc); (2) that we did not do this, that and the other. I suppose all schools get it and have always thought schools come in for more talk and gossip than any other institution. So I say here, for all schools and for all people for all time, before talking about things, just ask these questions: "Is it true? Is it necessary? Is it kind? I think that is good advice. Personally I attached little importance to the talks on evacuation.

And on to June and the 32nd annual closing when we had great doings. Bishop Sexton gave the prizes and Gen. Alexander presented the Merit Shield to B. McLoughlin, whom I saw the other day and who won the Kiwanis Scholarship; so he also is keeping up his record.

The holidays came, as they do, and the "break-up" was just in time to prevent a "breakdown." I borrowed Ned's fine car and took E. for a little trip up the Island, hoping

it would do her good. We stayed at Yellow Point Lodge and I shall always remember how kind they were. E. could manage a little walk with my arm and she actually insisted on bathing twice. One very touching episode I must relate. While there we had our anniversary. Could it have been the 35th?—and someone got to know of it. Anyhow, after dinner there was a little bouquet in her place and afterwards the doors from the kitchen swung open and in came one of the nice little waitresses with a lovely iced cake and the lettering "Happy Anniversary." That was not all. The guests, who must have numbered about 60, all stood and sang "For they are jolly good fellows"; and on going out they congratulated us, and many young couples said they hoped they would be as happy in their lives as we had been. That is truly my wish for them. Talk about having a lump in one's throat. So on to our dear friends the Idiens at Courtenay (where Commandos were training) and then once more to the Forbidden Plateau, where Mrs. Woods was all that is kind, but said she would not have known Edith. And so south once more, with rather a bad collision near Nanaimo but no damage that could not be made good and back to the School House once more. I can only say that E. was no better when we got home but, if anything, not so well. She actually was willing to go to bed where she stayed under the good care of Dr. Baillie. I went down to see friends in Seattle on some rather important business, not unconnected with a position of some dignity in one of the universities. But E. could not have "taken" it, and how could I leave my own little school? When I got home E. was in the Jubilee Hospital and longing to get home again. She *hated* illness and had so much of it. Every day I went up and we talked and talked, but she never said one word to indicate whether she knew the end was getting nearer and I shall never know. But I knew, for the doctor told me, so kindly and gently, that there wasn't a chance. On August 13th we brought her home and she was quite content to rest, while good friends came in to see her. I managed to

get the Old Boys' letters off as usual and had to report that J. Fulton was missing.

At the end of the month it was quite obvious that E.'s health would not allow her to do any more work in the School House. So Kyrle and Joan, to their everlasting honour, gave up their own little home and garden, which they had made so nice and loved so much, and took it on. One does not want to talk too much of one's "Ain Folk," but I leave you to decide on this action. We decided to go back to our little bungalow which we had built so many years before, but Mrs. Short had been living there for some time. However, she agreed to move into the little cottage beside the School House, where she still is very happy and comfy, I'm glad to say. Kyrle scrubbed and I cleaned and we made it very nice and snug. Then we got our little home to rights by degrees, but it was quite a big move.

Meanwhile no word from Michael, and the air ministry replied to my request for information that they were not at liberty to give me his address. I know he was getting my daily letter but I was not getting his—that did not help.

By September 1st we were "home" and settled. Then a wire came from Ned, who arrived on the 3rd, so that we say him now and then; and at long last a letter came from Michael. Kyrle and Joan were getting into the School House and we were more or less ready for the September term.

Things all seem rather blurred but I'll do the best I can to keep the record going. We began on the 9th with 15 new boys and Mr. Tolson doing afternoon work only as he, too, was far from well. Dear Joan nobly took on the Cubs, being a born Guide herself.

October is a hard month to write up. On the 7th Wing Commr. J. Twigg killed in action; then on the 15th, after taking a game with the little boys, I was watching them change when one came and said, "There is a man at the door who wants to see you." I went out and there was a tall man standing, who said, "I have a telegram for you which

I'm afraid is going to hurt you a good deal." There it was—"deeply regret to inform you that Flt. Lt. M. Symons . . . " and so on; many of you know. He had written to me some time before saying in a guarded sort of way, that if he had to go he hoped it would be in the air. It was his life—a full and happy one—and he had done a good job as test pilot and he had his wish. I had to break the news to his mother, who was desperately ill and failing; also to his brother Kyrle as he came back from taking his game. Ned heard and was out in a flash. She had her boys and was very brave.

No need to say more. School as usual the next morning. All day long sweet and lovely messages, flowers and visits from dear friends. One came round with a basket containing everything for afternoon tea and made us drive out together. So Mum and I went to the end of Shelbourne St. and sat and had tea and talked. Somehow it helped a great deal. One strange thing I remember; it was on the Saturday (17th), I was out in the playground when a formation of planes (12) came right over, circled round and roared away. I wonder. On the 21st came a telegram from his wife, who was working in a canteen when they told her.

The mid-term service taken by Dean Spencer Elliot was particularly beautiful and there were 45 present.

E. was still getting up and dragging herself round and I used to take her for little drives, but she admitted that bed was the place. She would get up in the afternoon for a little but soon gave that up. *She just slept, more and more,* and then on Sunday, November 29th she just drifted away very peacefully, with both her boys and "Daddy" by her side. I cannot say more except that we all felt it was a merciful release as there was nothing left and life would have been a misery for her. There was a lovely service at St. Mary's on December 1st and I think there were sixty-seven wreaths and crosses. Many "Daughters" were at the service and the bishop spoke a few words. One remembers those things more clearly as time goes on. I have all the letters, as I have those about Michael, two great portfolios. So ended the year and

so ended a chapter of life; life which still goes on but can never be the same. The little plot next to her's at Royal Oak is already secured. Meanwhile, I have fine sons, grand friends, and full life with infinitely lovely memories.

Navy \$12.55, Poppies \$7.25, Barnardo \$111, and 1084 letters written.

CHAPTER 29.

1943 — "*Carry On . . .*"

Something had gone from the School; more was going. Mr. Tolson, after many years, had to drop out. I always said that any school that had him was a good school and he did much for St. Michael's. He set me an example of gentleness, for the fiercest expression I ever heard him use and it was his favourite, was "Blow you, twice!" Mr. O. Wilkinson took his place and has become more and more a part of us as we are a part of him. In addition to taking classes, he has assumed the job of general repair man, and many a chair and table still stand up, thanks to him.

Mr. R. Bradshaw presented the School with a magnificent framed Roll of Honour, even having specially made pictures of it to send the Old Boys. There were not many names at first but now it is full and indeed over full. It is a grand thing, rendered even more so by the increasing roll of names on it, beautifully lettered by the late Mr. Wilson of Diggon's.

Cold, snow, thaw, slush occupied much of January. School was closed for a time, but on a particularly revolting day I had a wonderful mail. Letters came from G. Wilmot (B.B.C. announcer) whom I spanked soundly as a little boy and who always remembers me kindly (not for that reason I suspect), R. Young from Scotland, V. Woodward, ace airman from Rhodesia; J. Gurney, Brigadier from India (your affectionate old boy, "Jock.") Cast your bread upon the waters and it will come back to you with jam on it; it has done so for me time and time again.

On January 28th Brian Carmichael was reported missing — R.C.A.F.

February saw much illness, bad weather and irregularity of attendance, but Ned showed up whenever he could and that has always helped. Of course Kyrle was, as he has ever been, a great tower of strength. I found full days a great help and the A.R.P. took up quite a lot of evenings, so one got along, but the bungalow was an awfully empty place.

We had a particularly beautiful half-term service taken by Mr. Biddle. He drew a large "I" (a selfish pronoun, used far too much in these pages) and then showed by drawing a stroke across it—that self-sacrifice is a finer thing.

That was in my mind when in March Lt. Com. T. Golby was lost and P. Jeanneret missing. That month brought a cable from Michael's little widow that she was actually coming out to see me, and great was the excitement and mighty the preparations for her in the way of painting up, new furniture, etc., etc. On April 1st she arrived, just in *time for the drill competition, being introduced into the School almost before she had time to take her hat off!*

I had a companion, though I don't think I was much of a one for her; but again Ned paid his little visits and evidently made up for a good deal for Joan foretold coming events with great vision and accuracy.

On the 14th we heard that dear "Spud" (R.) Field was killed, so soon after he joined the air force.

May saw sports and cricket as usual, Andrew Gillespie winning a scholarship at McGill and thus giving us an honour "off" for a very good match against the Brentwood Juniors, 40 to 41, with tea once more in Mrs. Woodcroft's garden.

I remember the 17th, as the Arion Club celebrated its 50th year with a concert at the Royal Theatre and K. sang a solo. He keeps so much in the background that I had to mention this.

In June the Old Boys made one more of their lovely gestures by founding the "Edith Symons" Bursary; as I've

said, I think the oak board for the name of the winners was made in Saskatchewan and presented us by P. Salmon.

The Mothers' Association met in the gym on the 24th and in their goodness decided not only to continue their bursary but to award an annual scholarship as well. The names of the winners are painted by Mr. Ainscough on a magnificent teak shield made by the Navy and presented by Lt. Com. Bridgman. Mrs. Ellis was president; Mrs. L. R. Davies, secretary-treasurer. The O. B. Scholarship was awarded by the committee to M. Fraser; the Mothers' to T. Wood, and the E. Symons Bursary to R. Hughes, pending confirmation by the general meeting.

Scholarships at Brentwood were won by H. Bridgman, V. Holmes, J. Watson. This may all sound a bit "prosy" but I do think should be made public, for scholarship is, *after all, rather important to a school, isn't it?*

The 23rd drill competition continued to draw quite a lot of spectators and right on its heels came the 13th Old Boys' Day with F. Norris elected president and a very good one, *after dinner at the Douglas Hotel.*

Then dear Alan Mayhew was reported missing.

Our 33rd annual prize giving was held in the garden at 935 Foul Bay Road, a lovely day and lovely people, all so thoughtful of dear E. Mrs. Preston kindly lent us her garden for tea and it was a real thrill to see M. Bridgman present the merit shield to his son, H. Bridgman, who had been an excellent head boy.

And so to the holidays.

In July I had a second delightful visit to Saskatchewan, again by the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Wells. It was very hot and I see by my diary that I spent a good deal of time just "sitting," but it did me a lot of good. Then home and off to Salt Spring where I set up a snug little tent and camp in M. Bridgman's orchard, he most nobly having allowed the family to use his nice summer home; that too was very happy. I got the Old Boys' letter off as usual and came back in good time to clean up and prepare once more for town.

Dear Mr. Tolson died on August 13th and K. and I were able to represent the School at his funeral at Ganges, which he loved so well. R. I. P.

Term started well in September 8th with numbers going up and a good lot of new boys; there had been a great deal of painting and re-roofing and general cleaning up. I think we were in good shape.

I must fill in two notes here. I would like to say a great deal about the gallantry of those many who lost their nearest and dearest but I feel it is holy ground and only want to pay my tribute of honour to them one and all for the way they carried on.

Also I have a note on the appalling lack of religious knowledge of many of our boys—boys from good homes. One asked what a sermon was, another had never heard of a pulpit, another asked "what is an Apostle?" We were as ignorant as the famous boy who said, "it was the husband of an epistle." My brethren these things ought not so to be. Pardon me this, and let us get on with the School diary.

September 8 to 18 new boys brought us up to 57 and there were 19 boarders for K. and J. to look after in new painted dormitories. Mrs. King most kindly helped with Prep and "Duty." Mr. A. Gillespie, who has just passed on at the time of writing, presented us with a very fine collection of birds' eggs. They are at present in a class-room, three cases of them; and it has made more obvious than ever the need for a really big room, a combined library and museum, if we can ever get to build it. Our library has a very large collection of books and there are curios galore sent us from the Seven Seas that really deserve to be set out in more spacious quarters. One question is this, is it worth while adding to a building that is already quite old. Shall we wait for that new school which is to be a *real* building? It is a pity one's means do not keep pace with one's ideas.

On the 23rd Ned announced that he and "Tiny," as she is now known, had decided to get married and one month later to the very day they did, a charming little military

wedding at St. Mary's Church. It sounded a bit redundant when Mr. K. C. Symons requested "the pleasure of your company at the wedding of his son, Lt. E. J. Symons to his daughter-in-law, Margaret J. Symons," but so it was; and once more I was alone in the little house. I had already had about seven months of it and did not like it. However, as you have seen already so often, there are always ups and downs. Before long Mrs. Harry Bapty, whom we had known and loved since her infancy, and whose husband was overseas, came with her little son to "2176" and looked after us both and made a real home. I can never be grateful enough to "Dawdie." It was something of a joy to realize that as her father, Mr. Monk, had given us a home in the Salt Spring days, so now I was able and happy indeed to be able to offer his daughter a home (I hope); and that, as I have said, is what she made it. That was on December 5th.

At the mid-term service taken by Dean Elliott, we had present 59 parents, nearly the record, and I always hope that we shall have the gym full of parents and sons on these brief occasions when we do try to rise above ordinary things.

The collections went up—Solarium \$10, Poppies \$8.75, Naval League \$14.50, Dr. Barnardo \$117.28.

The Christmas concert was on the 13th and perhaps that is why the boys were falling out with the "flu" one after another. On the night we were seventeen men short. However, the rest were grand and everyone enjoyed it. My small grandchildren collected \$20 for the Red Cross.

The year ended with an ever increasing shower of Christmas cards, so many with navy, army, or air force crests, showing that in all their activities our dear boys had time for a thought of their old school.

But Sergt. V. Knox was killed and Flying Officer Ian Gillespie was reported missing. I cannot think that "merry" was quite the word for Christmas wishes.

So another year has gone, and as ever, one looks back on so much and so many to think of—in sorrow and joy—that is life.

CHAPTER 30.

1944 — . . . *And On*”

A lovely Old Boys' dance started it off, so many old boys and their delightful young wives were there. Of course the mothers gave a grand supper. Len Acres was at his best and the Oak Bay Hall, while not quite the most convenient, gives ample floor space. I am told, but can hardly believe it, that I danced, and a rumba or something at that. The truth is that I was dragged into it and soon found myself in a long line of young people marching round, convict style, with hands on shoulders of the one in front, and stopping abruptly every few paces to have a mild sort of epileptic seizure. Possibly the dance was St. Vitus and no one knew it.

Tax inspectors, registrar, business preparations, kept us going till the start on January 12th and the same old routine. We got our scheme for disposing of the boys in a hurry, if need arose, down to a fine point by way of fire drill, etc., and found we could get them all outside in 45 seconds and out of sight (if bombers should be looking for us) in two minutes flat. One had to be prepared to get out all the youngsters. (Unpleasant note. I disapprove of parents who tell their boys what to do regardless of what the School says!) Mr. Ley had several attacks of illness but always was plucky and carried on.

February 5th was rather a red letter day. J. Boak wrote with a generous subscription to the Bursary Fund. Two Old Boys were playing rugby in the Army and R.C.A.F. match. A Navy cadet, P. Birch-Jones, talked to me on the line; Dr. D. Boyd called; Major F. Bernie (A.N.) wrote that his Old Boys' letters reach him. He it was who said that if the letter came in the midst of a battle the battle had to wait till he had read it.

Dear old Archbishop Harding came to visit us and gave the school a nice fatherly talk, just one of those many Wednesday afternoons when we ask visitors to come and talk to the boys on any subject they choose—the best kind of “general knowledge.”

On March 1st we enrolled our 600th boy, A. Innes Mackenzie. Meanwhile Mrs. Bapty was making a real home for her small son and me all the time. I see so many references to that in the diary and how often she had my friends in to little suppers and so on. I see one day this entry “did papers from 3 to 12”; evidently *some* papers.

Another note occurs here; my disagreeable nature again; to the effect that most of the boys had far too valuable fountain pens (which they lost two or three times a week) and also far too much money. If I had kept all the money picked up and handed in to me by our good lads I think *we could have built that new school by now!*)

Then at the end of the month I was privileged to see a letter written by an Old Boy to his mother, in case he was killed, saying what he felt St. Michael's had done for him. Later on, he was killed. The same day I had a visit from Sergt. R. Barker (R.C.A.F.) who was badly burned in a plane crash and decorated later for his gallant effort to rescue his pilot. A very good gym competition (No. 24) judged by Mr. Privett, ended up the term.

Have I told you of the two marble slabs given us, one by Mr. Bradshaw, and one by his son “Gerry,” in memory of his friend Michael? These hang in the gym. One has the names of our twenty-nine boys who gave their lives in the war that we might live in peace. The other has the names of friends of the School who have passed over to the other side. Would we had a chapel.

Meanwhile the Old Boys were proving themselves. Group Captain P. Maxwell, R.A.F., was O.C. at Patricia Bay before moving up to Comox. It is interesting that another, Group Captain F. Mathewson, popped in to see me from the main-

land as he was on his way up the Island to confer with the O.C. there. Both Old Boys and neither knew that.

Capt. R. Robinson, wounded in Italy, won the M.C. for gallantry in the field (though he told me it was his men and not himself.) The number of majors was bounding up.

On Easter Day dear Mrs. J. Redpath passed on, one of the greatest friends of the School. Mrs. Short, who, like her sister-in-law, had given us many years of loyal and good service, gave up the job of janitress and Mr. Davenport kindly took on in her place to help us out.

In May we heard of the loss of Lt. T. Izard on the ATHABASCAN; that F/O R. Idiens had been killed in action; that O/S J. Cornwall was missing almost directly after joining the Navy; that Gnr. J. Martin had been killed in Italy. Blow upon sledge hammer blow again and again, but there was nothing one could do except carry on and try to do so worthily of these boys, and so the service, sports, matches, etc., all came off as usual.

Things were getting harder; grey clothes were almost impossible, football jerseys were unknown. Bad news kept coming and almost unconsciously everyone felt as if a weight were pressing down on one. Those are really the times of testing and the tradition of "holding on" carried us all through.

After the usual rush of drill competition, scholarship exam, won by T. Kirby, Old Boys' Day, etc., etc., the 34th closing was a joy. Mr. and Mrs. M. Carmichael lent us their beautiful garden, perhaps the best spot of all, and everything they could do they did. Dean Spencer Elliott gave away the usual pile of prizes and a very large number of friends, new and old, and a good tea helped to make one more success.

In July K. took his Scouts to camp as usual and the Old Boys' letter was sent out. One very great improvement was made by having the ceiling of the gym lined with ten-test, most generously supplied by Logan Mayhew. The men did

a good job and the difference in winter cold and summer heat is most noticeable.

I had a little trip to my good friends in Seattle and then once more set up my solitary tent in the orchard of M. Bridgman on Salt Spring, spending the time most pleasantly in pruning old trees, seeing old friends and generally living a peaceful life. But on July 23rd came another very heavy blow, the death of our dear Mr. Ley on Sunday, just after service in St. John's Church, where he was a keen choirman. He was a great friend, a splendid master, sportsman through and through, and always gave everything he had to the school and the boys. He certainly did his bit, as did Mr. Tolson, to the building up of a good school tradition.

The rest of the holidays were a nightmare of anxiety about trying to replace him, as the applications for admission of new boys were very numerous; but the chances of securing a master seemed hopeless. However, at the very last moment we were able to get the services of Mr. Mutart and Mr. Pethick and were able to face the prospect of 26 new boys, making a total of 73, with a full staff; all tables repainted (after the hieroglyphics of years had been sanded out), and the School House done up.

Here too, I must mention that the house staff was an acute problem until Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Rippingale—both mothers of new boys—actually offered to come and help us out, and right well they did it. I take off my hat to them both and keep it off to Mrs. Rippingale who is still, and always, on the spot and indeed indispensable. All honour and thanks to them.

Then a very small person came to fill a very big space in our lives. A little Michael came to Ned and "Tiny," Ned celebrating the event by having a finger badly broken as he was helping his men hoist ammunition boxes into a truck. What a day! I managed to collide with another car, just to round things off smoothly. When I went to see my new grandson and his mother, I found her very tearful. She

had just heard that Ned, after trying in vain for so long to get overseas, had just received his marching orders.

Good news of Old Boys this time. John Mogg was in command of a battalion in the invasion and received his D.S.O. from Gen. Montgomery; M. Allan commanded his regiment; R. Hennell was A.D.C. to General Crerar (who told me at the Government House investiture that he remembered Bob perfectly) and so on.

The Cubs got a new lease of life when Miss Rosemary Bridgman, assisted by Miss Beryl Nation and Miss Winona Worsley, took on and did splendidly. Very few packs have had three such charming leaders. I could have wished myself back a few years to be running around in a little blue uniform and green cap yelling that "I'll do my best" for such leaders!

So September saw us well afloat again. But again I have a note that more stuff was lost than ever before; at one time the pound, where lost property goes, had 13 combs for a starter. And there were other troubles into which I need not enter.

In November another little daughter came to K. and J.—"Elsie Gay," on his birthday. I had always been rather *down* on grandparents as spoilers of their grandchildren, but now they were able to come back at me, and come they did with a vengeance and I had to agree. See the babies and you'll not wonder. Forgive me!

The year ended with more sorrows. P/O Deakin missing; F/O T. Pidcock killed and on almost the last day of the year I called on Mrs. Gregory just as she had had word that her son "Punt" (F/O) was missing. What a Christmas for her and how gallantly she faced it.

Collections: Poppies \$12.10, Navy League \$18.55, Dr. Barnardo \$140.02.

I had more cards than ever before; so many service cards. The annual concert (24th) was excellent and ended up a year that you will agree was a full one.

CHAPTER 31.

1945 — *The Clouds Begin to Break*

If you have struggled thus far with us you have the reward of knowing that there is not much further to go.

At any rate the year started well with a grand Old Boys' dance on the 4th, and of course the mothers' supper, which put us in good train for the start on the 9th. "Tiny" and her little boy were installed with good friends at Esquimalt, where I could run down to see them. Good letters were coming from Ned, which was better than nothing, doing artillery stuff at Petawawa; then the news that he was going over, and finally a cable to announce his safe arrival in England. He had an extremely busy job with transport and was driving every kind of army vehicle amongst other things and had odd time off in hospital directly after arrival.

Mr. Napier Denison presented his orery to the School, brass plate inscription and all. This must have been admired by thousands of the visitors to the observatory on Gonzales Hill and is a treasure not only for its instructional value but as a memorial of the giver, now passed on, who was always a good and kindly friend of the School.

Almost on the same day we heard that Michael Allan had been awarded the D.S.O. and of the death of George Luxton, a very brilliant scholar and well known in Eastern Canada. He had a great career before him.

In February came bad news once more. Wing Commander E. (Teddy) Williams was killed in action. "An outstanding pilot," they said of him. Then there came the death of Mr. H. G. Lawson, K.C., who did so much for the School in a professional legal capacity as well as in more personal ways. It was he who piloted us through the formalities of becoming a company and guided us wisely and well.

That month the School actually received a little legacy of \$50.00 from the estate of Mr. Harold Robinson; this is set aside in the form of a bond and the interest buys a New Testament each June for our head boy.

By March we were feeling badly the loss of "Mr. Ned" in School and as there seemed to be no chance of his being sent over the Channel I tried hard to get him back but in vain; his brother, too, felt that he should go and I only hope I did right in persuading him that his duty was here—for he could do things for the School that no one else could; so he stayed and held up my hands as he always has done.

Another of my nasty comments. I try to deal gently with the ignoring of requests by the School and only mention it as I feel that such things tend to weaken our fibres. It must be the School first, last and all the time. Marking clothes I've given up as hopeless.

We had so many good lectures that term, many from Old Boys themselves in uniform. W. Kidd, J. Grogan, etc., also from the school boys themselves. We do call on them at times to give a short talk on any subject they like to choose and often get an amazingly good response. I think it is very good training for them and helps them to be natural and easy before an audience; there is never any "showing off."

In April we lost two men who in my opinion were as fine as any we have ever known. One was Mr. W. E. Wilkinson, who was an old Oxford Blue for Rugby, Corinthian for cricket, master at Durham and many years a master with us and one of the finest. The other was Capt. F. G. Dexter, of whom I have spoken and who, I should like to repeat, *was* Oak Bay in the eyes of many of us. He had a long illness but had carried a tremendous load with two schools, Monterey and Willows. I wonder how many remember him after this short time. We tried to get the council to name the Windsor Road Oak Bay Park after him but did not get anywhere. Though the backbone of so many organizations, he always had time and a good word for us. It will be long

before Oak Bay has such a grand man to serve it. D. Pudney, R.C.A.F., won the D.F.C. with a very fine citation.

Is it too trivial to mention something that has become almost a chestnut or \$64 question. "What happened to R. Jones' shirt?" You'll admit we do our best when I tell you we sent out 70 circulars in an effort to trace it. Three replies came but never a sign, though I know someone had it, and it *was* marked.

In May our sports went hand in hand with the surrender of Germany. Here I must mention one of the most touching things in our story. Amid all the rejoicing I received a lovely bunch of flowers in memory of those boys who would not now be coming back. And one was Jack Grogan, killed in a crash, a grand boy, a great footballer, one of the best.

In June the Fathers' match celebrated my 64th birthday and a letter from Ned (in and out of hospital once more) gave some hope of his getting back to another job, to say nothing of his little family. On Old Boys' Day, the 15th (J. Nation became president) they presented me with a beautiful little silver medallion with the School crest and inscription, which Mr. Bridgman hung round my neck with a blue and black ribbon. It hangs on my mirror and I wear it at the Old Boys' dance and have arranged that it be round my neck when my turn comes, just as his mother had Michael's air force brooch. More than fifty parents watched the drill competition. The mothers elected Mrs. Cuthbert Holmes as president and Mrs. McCallum as secretary-treasurer.

The 35th prize giving was again in the Carmichael's garden, when Capt. J. Grant gave the prizes. The best show yet, it goes without saying, and I have a very charming picture of him presenting his niece, Miss Bridgman, and her aides with a little prize and a kiss. Some people can do that! And so the holidays—just in time.

Almost the first thing was a letter from the powers that be refusing our request for Ned's release which I had made honestly for the sake of the School work, not on personal grounds, and I had made it with the complete approval of

all the big men out here, army and civilian, whose opinion I had asked. So that was that.

It was a very busy August, for the School House had a new roof. We installed sloping wash troughs in place of the basins which were perpetually left full of good rich deposits of mud. Plans were made for special fire escapes, extra doors, electric alarms, and all the rest of it. The Old Boys' letter went off and also to our great joy, we prevailed on Mr. G. F. (Gerry) Parkyn to join our staff. I have known him so long and always felt he was the type of man it is good for a school to have. He has been with us ever since and I am sure we made no mistake there.

I was thoroughly restless during that holiday. Set up my little tent once more on the same spot. Drove up to Qualicum to see "Tiny" and "Dawdie" and a friend, all three with their babies, and had a great time. Then the urge came to go back to my little camp, and as soon as I got there the wanderlust took me up Island again; this time to Campbell River, and then back to camp. At the end of the holiday we heard of the death of Alan Felton. He had put up a wonderful fight against T.B. for a long time and I never heard one word of complaint from his lips. What a lot of splendid people have passed on and I, like the brook, go on and on, but an occasional warning that it could not be "for ever."

September 16th saw a good start with 68 on the books and in my notes "a sensible lot." It is not very often I forget myself so far as to say that. Ask our parents.

September 16th was a red letter day. The telephone rang; a cable; what could it be? I am not fond of cables but this one said, "I'm on my way, Ned." I remember that "Tiny" practically collapsed almost as if it had been the other thing. What is more, lots more Old Boys were on their way back and everything seemed to pick up accordingly. On the 25th "Dawdie," the little Michael, and I went down to meet the Vancouver boat and off he came, beret on head; his wife, who had gone to meet him there, on his arm. I had the

supreme joy of handing his little son (whom, remember, he had barely seen) to his father. What a moment! Honestly I don't think they have been apart for five minutes since then.

On the 30th I went over to Salt Spring for a historic meeting, the 60th anniversary of the little school at Beaver Point, where I had started so many years before. Five of the original pupils were there. We crossed into the little school, had speeches, a great feast in the hall and one really felt there was something in being an "old-timer."

Then on October 2nd my dear "Dawdie" left; she had been so wonderful and certainly carried me over a bad time. I'm so thankful to say her man came back safe and sound and that they are together. But I shall never forget our time together. Meanwhile Ned was settling down and, of course, giving the helping hand when I got "used up" as I began to do rather frequently. It was not till November 5th that he resumed his job officially. The mid-term service meant more than ever with Mr. Biddle and over sixty parents. Let us hurry on. P. Izard married E. Angus. Such a dear couple and with such lovely parents.

Collections: Solarium \$10, Navy \$13.32, Poppies \$7.75, Dr. Barnardo \$145, the record.

On December 14th was our annual concert which promised poorly but turned out splendidly. The gym was packed and we had a little party afterwards. Happiness once more. On the 28th was our 15th dance. Lots of Old Boys were back for it and I can't do better than close that year on a note of great joy and gratitude for all our blessings and very many thoughts for those who had suffered and bore it so bravely.

CHAPTER 32.

1946 — *Doctor's Orders*

One stage nearer the close of an epoch!

School began with 63 but several absent on very flimsy pretexts, one being "I thought I'd sleep in." Strict home discipline, you observe. Kyrle and Mr. Parkyn started some real singing and I hope the boys enjoy it as much as we do. A great deal of work was done on our Roll of Honour. On that list and high up is the name of an Old Boy in the army, who sent the Old Boys' Association a cheque for \$100.

January 31st was a great day in my life. In the afternoon Canon Coleman brought the "Wayside Church" to the School for the boys to see. Then I went to Government House under the wing of Capt. and Mrs. Prentice for an investiture, when four of our boys, Prentice, Gregory, Groos and Robertson were all decorated and I, on top of the world, hobnobbed with Gen. Crerar and the great. I'm sure it was too much for my feeling, as after that I had quite a collapse—the first and worst of several—and retired to bed. There D. A. Reid, an Old Boy, looked well after me and urged me to take a little rest when I got up. So up the Island I went in the faithful, if noisy, old Buick, seeing Old Boys all the way. Another bad spell came in March.

February saw, as I told you, an electric fire alarm, extra doors, etc., installed by order of the fire marshal, though we have always found a 15c whistle far more efficient. In March Dean Elliott took the Ash Wednesday service, the best yet. We worked at a revised prospectus, being compelled to raise tuition fees \$10 a year. It is not much, indeed not half enough, but it is our gesture against the never ceasing rise in prices that prevails today. We are notoriously bad financiers but so long as we get by we do not seem to mind. All

the same I would like to see our staff much better paid, especially as they could double their salaries if they took to carrying hods or kalsomining kitchens. I do really feel we are all in it for love of the game. The halos will no doubt encircle their furrowed brows in due course. A good gym, camp made a good finish.

In that month, John Watson, leaving for Shanghai, gave up his job as treasurer for the Old Boys after many years of most valuable service. We shall always be grateful to him. Also my dear friend, Stewart Clark, said he would have to give up his post as school bursar. I think he had kept our accounts straight for about thirty years out of the sheer goodness of his heart. We shall never cease to be in his debt. His place was taken by J. Davies, an Old Boy; and I rejoice to think of the School and its affairs passing more and more into the hands of Old Boys.

April saw the cricket nets set up, though we observed cynically enough that marbles and air balls were really more popular and thought of engaging a professional coach for these grand sports. However, I believe that "conquerors" and "cops and robbers" are dying out.

I had a short trip to Seattle, where Old Boys greeted and treated me well. At the risk of being accused of bad taste I must mention that a steward on the boat, whom I had never set eyes on, remarked about some school boys. "These are not St. Michael's boys, Sir. We all know your boys on the boats." That is something money does not buy.

In May our Cubs went to Lady Baden-Powell's "rally." The sports were excellent. V. Holmes spoke extremely well at our annual youth rally.

Mr. O. Wilkinson was doing a fine job with war savings stamps among the boys and I know we had a very large total. I remember gratefully the anonymous father who sent in \$500 to help the School along.

The Old Boys' Scholarship went to C. Latham, the Mothers' to John Rockingham and very good choices they have proved.

In June, in addition to Fathers' match we had excellent form plays on Wednesday afternoons. On the usual grand Old Boys' Day the veterans made 71 against the younger Old Boys' 62; and after a good supper, catered by Mr. and Mrs. Marshall, the meeting was held in the gym, when G. F. Gregory became our president. Forms 4 and 3, taught by Mr. Parkyn, were examined in St. John's Ambulance work and all passed.

I ought to have added that for the supper Mrs. Ned made the gym quite lovely with flowers. Both daughters-in-law, Mrs. Ley, of course, helping, and Mrs. Marshall, did all the washing up. The boarders were most helpful in clearing away. It is so wonderful the way in which friends always turn in and help out.

The mothers elected Mrs. C. Holmes as president and Mrs. T. Ainscough as secretary-treasurer. I again pay my tribute to their unfailing hard and conscientious work for their association, which means so much to us.

On June 28 was our 36th annual closing, and for the first time it was too wet to have the Carmichael's garden though everything was prepared there. At the 11th hour Kyrle and his trailer feverishly took everything back to the gym. The boys mopped off the wet benches and then put out teacups in school and we were ready on time, as is our habit. How we squeezed in is a mystery and I know many old and good friends were squeezed out. General Alexander gave the prizes and in his happy way said exactly the right thing. Everyone was grand and, of course, the Old Boys rallied round.

In one way this was my last. For some time I had felt that the old man was beginning to wear out. You will forgive this personal note but it is hard to avoid it. I felt that I hadn't much left to give. These breakdowns were rather upsetting to routine and it would be better all round if I began to slide out quietly. Not that I loved the School less, but I did feel it would cause more trouble if I collapsed in the middle of a term, as seemed rather probable, than if

School started with me in the background where I couldn't do much harm but would be always available if wanted, as indeed I am still (available, not wanted.) So let us call it semi-retirement or, as Gen. Alexander put it so well, "Still holding the reins, but from further back," which I hope will never mean back seat driving.

And so to the summer holidays and time to think and readjust myself. Having seen K. and his Scouts once more in camp, I went off to the orchard once again and set up my little tent. There a variety of things happened. The old car broke down in the middle of nowhere, but an Old Boy, R. Beddis, came to the rescue. Then there were deluges of rain day after day so I went home and had another overhaul by my good doctor, whose advice again was to "take it easy." Back I went to camp and got the old car once more and had a spell of real hot weather. Being restless I decided to go up Island to see Ned at Qualicum. Almost at once came the urge to go back to camp. A few happy days there, then up to Qualicum again, and on to Campbell River, where we watched them fishing for the "big ones." Then back home again, rather a long run and so another collapse and return to the doctor. You see how it was. I tell you this in hopes you will agree that my decision to slip out was a wise one. In among all these excursions I tried to write and made the first draft of this story or book or whatever you like to call it. I feel it is too much of an autobiography and I did set out to tell about the School and not about myself. Perhaps the fact that we have been so close may be an excuse.

Towards the end of August I realized that if I were getting out, someone would be needed to fill in. We were very lucky to secure Mr. Hansen, who was with us for two years; a man of highest principles, boundless humour, great ability and a wizard at things electrical into the bargain. A great deal of preparation as usual and then School began on September 4th; it was arranged that I should be there three days a week. As soon as routine was established I

moved off, leaving Ned and family in the little bungalow that was our home for so many happy years, and secured a room in town in the house of some old very good friends, Mr. and Miss Walls, who did everything possible for my comfort.

The very first Saturday of term I volunteered to take the boarders to Ten Mile Point Beach. There they found two large logs, tried to make a raft by nailing a small strip across with a six-inch nail partly driven in by a rock, and proceeded to sea. The next moment the logs parted company and the whole lot, eight or nine plus Kyrle's Diana, disappeared into the ocean. But mercifully it was not too deep and they scrambled out dripping. I drove them home in a hurry to report to Kyrle. I think that was almost the last time I took them out.

Of course the new life was all very strange and I certainly missed the bustle and activity and the boys badly; especially the days of inaction seemed to "get me down." However, all sorts of miracles were in store (as they always have been) and here they come.

In October, being bored to tears by inaction, I rang up my great friends, Mr. and Mrs. Aldous (he having been at Dulwich College with me some aeons ago) and asked if they could find a job for me to do. Certainly, lots of jobs; so up I went to their charming home, Willow Cove, and started on painting a garage door with "Ursie." When I told her about things, she said, "Kyrle, come and live with us"—just like that! On recovering consciousness I pointed out that things like that simply do not happen. However, they talked it over and proved that they do, for on October 11th Kyrle and his invaluable trailer picked up my bed and desk and chair and moved me to the new home; and a home indeed it was. They gave me two dear little rooms at the top of the house, fed me, made me one of the family. I did what I could to be useful to them and there was plenty to do on the place. Then they sold and bought another piece of land quite close. At once off we went to open this

up, cutting trees for a road, cleaning up after a bulldozer, hauling rock and gravel for the road, etc., and then the carpenters started to build the new house. The Aldous' plan was to live, more or less camping, in the garage till the house was habitable. I saw that they certainly would not want anyone else on their hands during that time, so I began to contemplate a return to my previous room.

Meanwhile School was proceeding very well; good lectures were being given by visitors. The mothers had a wonderful gathering in the gym when some eighty were present, and many "old timers" to my great joy. Then we had fifty parents at the service, taken by Canon Coleman. I feel increasingly sure that things go on very well without me—a chastening but comforting thought. We are a little apt to think ourselves indispensable. The usual collections were made: Navy League \$27.62, Poppies \$8.60, Dr. Barnardo \$112.26.

On December 12th we heard that A. W. Gillespie had won a Rhodes Scholarship and I cannot think of a more suitable candidate for the award. He is at Oxford now, with a charming wife, and enjoying every bit of it. I wish he had been physically fit enough to secure his rugby and cricket "blues" in the bargain. Then on the next day we broke up with the usual concert. I'm almost tired of saying it was the "best yet" but that was the usual opinion.

I have left November till the last, for in that month a most wonderful thing happened and even now I can hardly realize it. The Old Boys' president, G. F. Gregory, wrote me a charming letter and secured me an annuity. Please let that sink in. I never had the least idea of such a thing and certainly did not expect anything in the way of a farewell present. Frankly, I had looked vaguely ahead, and, as I told many friends, was divided in my mind as to the choice of two destinations—the Old Men's Home or the White Bear's cave in Beacon Hill Park. Now this most magnificent gesture put a new light, a brighter light, on the future. To this day I do not know the names, and there must be many, of

those to whom I owe my deepest thanks. I feel extremely unworthy and very humble and very, very grateful. I feel that my years in school were their own reward in the friendships and happiness they brought me; and therewith am content indeed! This was the culminating act of so very many years. Should not this *magnum opus* have a second title "Gratitude." I think that feeling is always uppermost in my heart.

CHAPTER 33.

1947 — *Rewards and Fairies*

After a very happy holiday with my "ain folk" and many visits to and from Old Boys and their charming wives, many invitations to dear friends, much preparation and cleaning up of school, a fresh start was made. We opened very happily with the 16th Old Boys' dance. But on the 4th we were stunned by a tragedy. Dear old Jack Napier was killed out at Elk Lake in a motor smash. He was a very old friend and had started our library very many years before. That library, so full and so popular, is a great memorial to him. Just two days later I went to the funeral of dear Mrs. Popert, one of the oldest friends and as sweet a woman as ever lived.

So on January 7th, in very cold weather, we started up the "trivial round, the common task" and I went back to Gray and Ursie, who welcomed me as kindly as ever.

I remember what a joy it was to welcome back to Victoria Col. and Mrs. Maurice Turner, who I am glad to say, now live here and who are always so good to "Chips."

In February and March we had two very nice games against Duncan Grammar School, which we always enjoy.

The mid-term service, taken by Archdeacon Nunns, was attended by 36 parents, two children and one dog. The Solarium, for which we always collect on these occasions, benefitted by \$12.50.

In March, on the 2nd, to be precise, I went out to see Douglas and Patricia Prentice at the new place they had bought at Gordon Head called "Arbutus"—a beautiful spot rich in cedars and arbutus trees and sloping down to a lovely little sandy bay. On the estate stood a tiny cottage, evi-

dently at some time the Chinaman's house. Douglas, knowing the situation at the Aldous', in his extraordinarily kind and thoughtful way, spoke of the possibility of letting me have this for my little home. I don't want to be sanctimonious but it seems to me obvious that this was nothing less than the hand of God. I've so often compared myself to Elijah and the ravens; so many "ravens" have ministered to me in time of need; and here was this—a home, an annuity, and what had I done to merit it?

March 28th saw the end of the term with many away and the usual Easter holiday clean up and preparation for April. It is just a break but hardly can be called a rest. When all was ready I returned once more to my dear Aldous and got the usual welcome.

April 8th was a dismal start. The weather was vile and many were away. Almost at the start we heard of the death of Eden Quainton, one time junior master here, father of an Old Boy, professor at Washington, a brilliant man with a great future and a very dear fellow.

On the 12th Kyrle and I made one of our annual visits to Vancouver for the meeting of the Private Schools Association, which I am glad to say still goes on and meets alternately in Victoria and Vancouver. At the dinner which closed the proceedings and is *always* such a pleasure, my good friends completely flabbergasted me by presenting me, through Mr. Harker of St. George's School, with an "Oscar." This took the form of a cheque with which to buy myself an arm chair in which to rest my aged bones. Again, you see? However, it was not all joy to be appointed secretary-treasurer in the place of dear old P. T. Dale of North Shore College, who passed away after a longish illness and had been the mainstay of the whole thing for many years. It means plenty of work and correspondence but I could not well refuse and am very glad to do my humble best to help out an association which is, I think, of great value. All the same I hardly feel qualified to deal with earnest souls who come, or write, to ask me what to do with their daughters.

I take the whole thing as a compliment to the School, of which all members spoke so very kindly.

Back to the summer term and all its events, Kyrle definitely in charge of gym competition judged by Mr. Colchester, sports; myself merely looking on and admiring; 29th Fathers' match, and so on.

Meanwhile, when there was an opportunity, Ned and Tiny and I worked on the little cottage which seemed clearly now destined to be my home. We tore the old paper off the walls, scraped and painted, then scrubbed floors, put on more paint and really made it very nice. But it was doubly good when Douglas had his old stove and hot water tank installed. The master touch was when, at a time when nothing was procurable, he waved his wand and almost by magic, a small three-piece bathroom was added, and the little house complete.

June saw me reach 66 years of age; another successful exam for St. John's Ambulance; a very good drill competition, and a lovely 17th Old Boys' dance. Supper in the gym, catered by the Kit Kat, and the place was a mass of flowers thanks to Tiny. A very good meeting followed. G. F. Gregory was again made president and a right good one he was. The Old Boys handed me a cheque for the amounts that had come in since the annuity was purchased. I hated taking their funds, but it was their wish. Now you'll see what they have done for me.

The closing (37th) in the Carmichael's garden, was a supreme joy. I can say it was first class and the joy was that it was all K.'s show. I did nothing for it and it just showed once more that I am not needed any more. The dean was in the best of his always good form. The boys were excellent and there was a feeling of loyalty that one could almost touch. "LAUS DEO" are not just two Latin words.

And so to the holidays, the Old Boys' letter, the final touches to the little cottage and on June 29th Ned and family moved me into it—not a very big affair. How can I ever thank Gray and Ursie for tiding me happily over nine

difficult months; or Douglas and Patricia for the haven they have given me, and the care and goodness they have lavished, and do lavish, on me to this day?

July was spent here, trying to be useful on the place and loving the open air jobs. I had a brief and rather hectic few weeks when the Arts Centre, for lack of anyone else, made me president. It was a great compliment but I soon realized it was a full time job and certainly I was not the one for it; so they let me out as kindly as they put me in. However, I still feel very strongly in favour of it and do think a city like Victoria should have a really fine centre where the arts can grow and flourish. Perhaps it will come some day.

August I had a little run up to the family at Qualicum; and a delightful week with Kyrle and his family on their boat, to Thetis Island and elsewhere. We did a good deal of work in School, and at the end of the month I had a grand little visit to some American friends on their Crane Island. The last act was to dispose of my dear old Buick, which I did very well, though it was almost on its last legs or wheels, and to secure, by great luck, a little Model A Ford (being helped thereto by the family) which is easier, cheaper and handier in every way and which takes me where I have to go in a Model A manner.

Term began on September 10th, the 38th year for me, though I had to cut down to two days. This just gives me a chance to handle each form and know every boy. I go into lunch at the School House on Tuesday and work in the afternoon at grammar. Then I sleep in the bungalow so as to be able to join in prayers on Wednesday, spend the day in School and return to "Arbutus" at night, all agog for shovel or saw or barrow next day.

May I here copy down two notes I made in the record, with the hope that this is the last time I shall say grumpy things. Here they are:

(1) I must repeat my diatribes against gossip. I know of definitely hostile propaganda and wish that people dissatis-

fied would come straight to us with their grievances instead of discussing them over the tea cups;

(2) Of course there are many who idolize their boys and think them far more wonderful than they really are. I venture to think our judgment is likely to be less biased and more sound. At the same time I feel we do lose something by *not joining in this idol-worship and thereby lose boys*. But we retain those whose parents are more reasonable and fairer in their outlook. There! That is said and done with.

September 10th. School began with 63 present and the staff as before, only Mr. James now being janitor. We were very proud of an Old Boy, Eric Thorn, who won a \$300 scholarship, open to all Canada under twenty-one, for a mural painting; also of James Prentice, who won a Dominion cadetship to Royal Roads Naval College, topping the list, as is his habit.

At the same time we heard that an Old Boy, John Hertley, was killed in the New Zealand Air Force. We pray that *is the last name to go on the memorial slab*.

In October the mothers had their annual meeting in the gym, beautifully decorated by "Tiny" once more. Mrs. McCallum was president, Mrs. E. P. Gillespie, vice-president, Mrs. Ainscough still secretary-treasurer. The report of their activities just show what a splendid lot they are though and that we know already.

There is nothing new to report in November and December. Dr. Barnardo had \$126.11. The concert was grand. Once more I impress on you that it was Kyrle and Joan's show and I contributed exactly nothing but the doggerel that always opens the programme. I thought I was rather *good at entertainments but think K. and J. do better*. Of course everyone helped, Hansen doing wonders with the lighting; Ned providing stunts; O. W. keeping order behind the scenes; Eric Q. looking after the reading comp. and G. Parkyn, not only at the piano, but putting on his form in a most spectacular Chinese interlude. Believe me, it was an evening to enjoy and made a very good ending to the year.

CHAPTER 34.

1948 — *Such Is Life*

I really expected that 1947 would be the final chapter but now here is 1948 with only two months left and we're still going. It seem to me rather like "last appearance" of some celebrated singer, whose last appearance is followed by another "positively the last" and that in its turn is succeeded by "absolutely and definitely the last" and so on ad infinitum. We must spare you that and make the story end with 1948 (even if there is a postscript).

However, there are still a few things to mention in order to bring us right up to date. The year started with K. and myself at St. John's for the midnight Eucharist—a good start I feel; and then a while of gaiety. Government House reception, where one kept on bumping into Old Boys and friends, lunch, tea, dinner with different friends; the next day was wood cutting; the theatre with my two eldest grandchildren; a lovely party at Mrs. Weldon's as an opener to the Old Boys' dance, which was quite wonderful, as you have already guessed.

On the 6th, John Nation and Dagmar Hertzburg were married—a glorious pair and only two days ago I had the pleasure of dining with them. Then after many more parties and calls, I returned to the little house at Gordon Head and got down once more to the old routine. School for two days a week and all sorts of jobs out here. Mrs. Ainscough, the invaluable secretary of our Mothers' Association, had a serious operation but I'm thankful to say she is well on the way to recovery. A very full and happy month. Every spare moment of it (not many) was spent writing up this record.

February 11th. Ash Wednesday, the mid-term service was taken by Rev. Frew Martin. A bout of "flu" and many absentees, but the term went quite well, with excellent lectures that always help out the week.

I went to a cocktail party (rare for me) given by G. F. Gregory and his delightful Martha Anne, when many Old Boys greeted me kindly, including Bob Nelles, whom I had not seen for years.

The 29th another wedding, Jimmie Davies takes a wife. My car failed me on that occasion and I had to leave it by the roadside and catch buses, telling the drivers I was in a great hurry to get to a wedding. They were not helpful, the first telling me I should be in time for the funeral and the second asking if I were the bridegroom. However, I got to the church just as the ring went well and truly on Betty's finger, and all was well.

March saw Mr. Parkyn absent for a little and still several boys away. Again my car misbehaved badly, for as I went down View St., I suddenly saw clouds of smoke pouring from the bonnet. I, never knowing a thing about cars, leaped out to telephone for help, returning to find that some good Samaritan had disconnected the battery and the conflagration had died down, all but the smell. Whoever saved the situation had not waited and to this day I have no idea who "done" it. We saw the "Wallabies" in action and for the third time my old car in inaction. However, that was the end of its misbehaviour for the time being.

March 17th. In the intervals of doing reports I played rugby. It is true the field was the little kitchen and the opposing side was my three-year-old grandson Michael, but I can assure you it was some game. I had the pleasure of seeing George Martin for an hour or two after a very long time. I do so love these meetings!

March 24th a very good gym competition and on the 25th the term ended. Looking through the diary I seem to have been most gay and constantly out to various good friends. I spent the holiday at the School House and see that we

did a tremendous lot of cleaning up School, room by room. I managed to make a little bit of a garden outside the cottage but, not being very bright, planted vegetable peas under the impression that I should in time see great masses of sweet peas blooming gloriously.

Just after the summer term started I went over to Vancouver for our Private Schools semi-annual meeting and was kindly welcomed by Mr. and Mrs. Pudney. Their son David was in hospital and minus an appendix but he was soon up and about. Got the appointment he so wanted to a long term service in the air force, where he had greatly distinguished himself in the war, and not long after got married to his very sweet Gwynneth. To my shame I omitted this great event in my last "annual" to the Old Boys. We had a good gathering of teachers and it is always such a pleasure to meet our Vancouver "opposite numbers."

Home again to the busy round, every day full and interesting. (Not the least exciting event was driving out late one night to Gordon Head in the dark, as my head-lights refused to function and I had to depend on an almost expired flash!)

May 1st. 31st Annual Sports. The day was dubious at first but turned fine and, of course, we had a capital afternoon tea and the usual mass of tiny but much enjoyed prizes.

6th Ascension Day service was taken by Canon Wickens. That month I very gladly handed over my job as secretary of the private schools to Miss Ashworth who nobly took it on and does it so well. I remain treasurer and so far our books have balanced.

I had some eye trouble and Dr. Elkington, with great skill and kindness, took a small cyst away—a great relief.

Empire Day we watched a fine parade and went on to Albert Head for a picnic.

24th: I heard with deep regret of the death in Honolulu of Dr. W. Winter, a very dear old boy of the early days. On the 25th, while watching cricket, a stranger came out to me and announced he was Preston Locke, another whom I had

lost sight of for ages. That day I note I managed to address 375 envelopes ready for invitations to the prize-giving.

29th: Scholarship exam. The Old Boys' Scholarship was awarded to a very small boy, D. Field (nephew of our "Spud" Field), the Mothers' to R. Stone. In the afternoon I went to a wedding and then on to see over the new ship PRINCE GEORGE, taking Mrs. Bapty, of whom you have heard, with me. At the dockyard we were told it was too late to see the ship, so we promptly went over it from stem to stern. There was a fine reception going on—for men only—so I calmly took Mrs. B. to it and a great time we had. Nothing like impudence, but in my case I plead ignorance.

And so to June and my 67th birthday with the usual ice cream ceremonial. I can not tell you how kind and nice the youngsters were to the "old man". Which reminds me of a tiny boy who was watching me clean out a gutter on the roof of the library one rainy day and stopped to say gravely: "Sir, you have no business on that roof at *your* age!"

Bailey's Circus, Fathers' Match (Boys 72, Fathers 59)—tests—meetings crowded on each other and on the 9th Capt. Prentice judged, most competently, a very good drill competition of which photos were taken for *Island Events* magazine.

The 12th was Old Boys' Day with the usual cricket, old Old Boys scoring 115, young Old Boys 60 and tea in the Nations' garden. We had our dinner in the gym. again, catered by the Kit Kat, and the meeting at which Captain Prentice was very properly elected our president.

15th: I had the pleasure of seeing Alan Brown and his wife and daughter Susan here on leave.

19th: Brentwood closing and I was so glad to be there and sensed the brave and hopeful spirit that pervaded everything.

25th: Our 38th closing, again in the Carmichael garden, beautiful and beautifully kept. A big crowd, a lovely day and Dean Elliott in very good form in spite of his serious

accident. As you know, it was his last function with and for St. Michael's, and he has now gone to Winnipeg as head of the Theological College. His last words to me were: "I shall always have a spot in my heart for St. Michael's" and I think we can say the same for him.

That was also the last appearance of Mr. Hanson who, after two good years of loyal and keen service with us, got an appointment, more in keeping with his talents, at a technical school in Vancouver. Good luck to him!

So, once more, to the holidays. K. as usual took his scouts off to camp in his boat where they seem to have had a good time according to their lights. He had a bad trip back but got them safely home. Most of the time he and the family were away on the high seas and I do think they earned every bit of their holiday. But I was more than sorry that Ned and his family did not get away. He stayed at home, working off and on, and just getting short day trips away. We'll have to arrange an equal division next time. I was far too busy all July to get away. One item that took time was the annual Old Boys' letter. This time I threatened to excommunicate (literally) any who had not the grace to acknowledge it and that has stirred up a lot of replies, which makes me feel the letter is worth while. It strikes me that this record is getting more and more of a letter instead of a school record.

I did manage three or four happy days with the family in the boat and came back refreshed, to repaint the floor of the little house and do other jobs, breaking the monotony with trips to the Starlight Operas. I also managed to get a glimpse of Joe Fretwell and his family as they were embarking for their Florida home via Seattle. He is one of our most loyal old boys, a high-up Pan-American pilot and a good friend. I also had two or three delicious days at Deep Cove with Mrs. Cross, her sister, and their brother Mr. Bevan. He took us for a wonderful trip in his fine cruiser up to Princess Louise Inlet in August. They all spoiled me utterly with their kindness. His crowning act has been to present me with a lovely little new Morris 8 car!

In July also came the sudden death of Mr. Scarrett, head master of University School for so long, a fine man and an old friend. His place is taken by Mr. Timmis to whom we send our best wishes.

August, Ned and I did a lot of work in school. I had the pleasure of seeing one very dear friend from Los Angeles, and on the 9th started my annual trip up the Island, trusting the old Ford which rose to the occasion. Monday night with the Johnsons; Tuesday, H. Hammond and his wife and baby at Crofton; Wednesday, Capt. Higgs at Nanaimo; then on Friday, Kinnell at Qualicum; Saturday and Sunday my dear friends the Idiens at Campbell River, definitely an Old Boy and old friend trip. Then I turned round and came back quite easily in a day, with time to spare, having figured on four or five at least. Next day the car required new intestines and since having them has been most angelic, even if a bit rattly!

Back to jobs in school. Masters' meeting and all the usual preparations for our 39th year which started on September 8th with Lt.-Col. Girard as our new colleague and 100% good one he is proving; a great joy to us and an asset to the school. Numbers were down a little, owing to an unpleasing habit some have of changing their minds at the very last moment after all has been made ready to receive their progeny!

The Oak Bay Schools Athletic Association held a meeting. I'm glad to say it decided to keep on with the inter-school matches, a decision which is all to the good.

I was very honoured at being asked to join the Board of Governors of Brentwood College and so happy to note that the majority of its members are connected with St. Michael's, in many cases Old Boys.

And now we have passed the mid-term. Tests are over. Reports are out and before we know it there will be a Christmas concert coming up. Lectures are well up to standard and our visit to the post office by special bus is quite some-

thing to be remembered. I was impressed with the good manners of our youngsters.

It is six years ago yesterday since I received the telegram about my youngest son—six years. Only the other day dear old Derek Woodcroft was drowned off Trial Island and our hearts go out to his wonderful mother.

John Aldous, a most learned professor, has a son. E. Alington is our first Old Boy to be headmaster; he has a fine school in Anglesea. (Don't forget D. Hincks in charge of science at L. C. C. and Leslie Hinton at Eton; they certainly never learned any from me!)

I promise you faithfully that this is the last page but one and I want to write it so as to complete the year.

It is with great regret that we lovers of Brentwood College hear that it has been unable to carry on in the face of overwhelming difficulties. However it is now happily, I trust and believe, merged with the University School and my hope is that this alliance may work out in the best and happiest way for all concerned.

When the Oak Bay Memorial to the boys who gave their lives in the last war was unveiled, ten of the names engraved on the tablets were those of our old boys. The school will lay a wreath there on Christmas Eve.

T. Treherne has married Miss Hilda Soulsby. All happiness to them. Mr. and Mrs. A. Izard have another son, which we think is correct of them.

F. Norris has nobly agreed to become our Bursar, and I have this day voted for him, with no misgivings, at the Municipal Polling Station.

The dear mothers had a very good meeting on November 17th. Mrs. McCallum was re-elected as president, Mrs. E. P. Gillespie as vice-president, and Mrs. Owen Jones has taken on the job as secretary. As usual we know we have another good one.

The boys collected some \$140 for Dr. Bernado, almost reaching their record.

The school has been presented by Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Gillespie with a magnificent "movie-talkie" machine and screen which will be a joy and help for all time. It is in memory of their fine and gallant son Ian, and a little plate is put on the machine. His name stands out among many of our finest.

My truest thanks to the following who have typed out my manuscript: Miss Farquharson, Mrs. Doidge, Mrs. H. Bapty, Miss Taylor, Miss Privett, Mr. Kirkpatrick, Mrs. Bell, Mrs. Edgelow, Mrs. Sharp, Mr. R. Bradshaw, Mr. B. Ainscough, and Mr. P. Izard. I have just arranged and numbered their pages.

The Christmas concert came last night and was much enjoyed, I hope; the gym. is tidied, the boys have gone, today week is Christmas. School is ready for 1949 and the story is told.

Letters come in, jobs go on, every day has something, and on we go, but I think we will and can say that we are up to date, and if the record is to continue in Volume 2, it will be in a worthier and abler hand than mine. I may have confused some dates, even made repetitions, but it has been a great joy to go through all these years. And if you, my dear friend, can get half the pleasure in reading that I have had in writing this rambling story, I shall be well repaid.

I feel that this record is extremely inadequate and that I have failed to convey on to paper all that I wanted to. There has been a Niagara of thoughts but a meagre trickle of words to express them. But through the whole thing runs a great current of wonder and gratitude that no words can express. Many writers acknowledge this indebtedness to so and so. May I do the same by saying my heartfelt thank you to so many:

To my dear and wonderful wife, the inspiration of it all.

To my two fine sons who are carrying on the school as
I think we should all wish.

To my very many boys and masters who have given so much to St. Michael's.

To my countless friends who have done so much to make life happy.

To Canada which received an exile and gave him a home from home.

To God under Whose guidance all these things have come to pass. May He continue that guidance and bless you all abundantly even as He has blessed me.

*Gordon Head,
December, 1948.*

