

ONE HUNDRED & FIFTY



PROUD YEARS

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150 PROUD YEARS

Introduction

On behalf of the Board of Directors it gives me great pleasure to commend this 150th Anniversary publication commemorating the establishment of the School in Euclid Crescent. Through the noble columns of the portico have come forth many generations of pupils who have become leaders of the professions, industry and commerce in all parts of the world. The achievements of the School are well portrayed and are a worthy record for which the several Rectors and Staff over the years may be justly proud.



D. ARNOT SHEPHERD, J.P., B.Sc., FRICS, PPRVA.
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

150 PROUD YEARS

Foreword

The Rector



This slim volume is designed to mark the 150th Anniversary of the Main Building of the High School of Dundee. Previously known as the Boys' School, the building was constructed, as a result of public subscription, during the period 1829–1834, and opened as the Dundee Public Seminaries on the 10th October 1834. It brought together under one roof its three predecessor schools: the Grammar School, the English School and the Academy.

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Since opening its doors on that auspicious date on its new and present site, the School has continued to serve the community and the nation by providing generations of boys and girls who have passed through its portals with their formative education. In particular, it redounds to its credit that, from the opening of the new building, it provided education for girls as well as boys, as the original timetables testify. Its educational provision was to be increased with the opening, on an adjoining site, of the Girls' School in 1890, and, in more recent years, its facilities have been further enhanced by the addition of Bonar House in Bell Street in 1978. Despite these changes, however, it is still the pillars of the Main Building, which remain in the memory of all those associated with it as the symbol of the School.

From its earliest days the new School building situated on an eminence at the top of Reform Street, has occupied a privileged position, from which it has been able to observe the changing face of the City of Dundee. The scene which it surveyed in the 1830-ties has undergone many transformations as the City has developed during the past one hundred and fifty years, through the rural, industrial and post-industrial eras, a period of immense historical events, political changes and social evolution. If only its impressive pillars could speak, what fascinating accounts it could give, what absorbing tales it could tell . . . it almost sounds like a school essay topic!

Since the pillars, however, must remain the silent observers of the past, an attempt to recapture and recollect some of the moments and events of this historical and social pageant, changing and bewilderingly varied, is embodied in this slim Festschrift. To achieve this aim a number of eminent members of the community were invited to contribute a note from their own speciality or store of memories. In this way it has been possible to gather together a variety of topics: history, local government, education, church, newspapers, commerce and personal memories. Their articles combine to form a delightful collection of insights into the past, informative, fascinating and entertaining.

How much in the rich daily lives of our institutions must go, understandably, for time is short, unrecorded. Life truly lived, as one Chinese sage remarked, is already poetry. In these few pages we offer some recollections of things past.

150 Proud Years

James D. Boyd, O.B.E., DA, FMA, FSA. Scot., FRSA
formerly
Director of Dundee Museums & Art Galleries.

It may not be generally known to many, that the High School of Dundee is one of the oldest educational establishments in Scotland and owes its foundation to the church.

Towards the end of the twelfth century, David Earl of Huntingdon founded the Abbey of Lindores in North Fife. The Abbey was dedicated by its founder to the Virgin Mary and was erected and endowed for monks of the Tironensian or reformed class of the Benedictine Order. Benedict or Bennet who founded his order in A.D. 538 is credited with being the first to bring the idea of monastic life into favour in the West.

Corruption crept into the order and one of the monks Bernard of Abbeville left it and, in retirement in the woods of Tiron in the diocese of Chartres, France established a monastery for reformed Benedictines in 1109.

The Tironensians consisted of monks possessing various skills, for example, masons, carpenters, smiths, carvers, painters, tradesmen, and significantly teachers to educate and instruct the young.

The parent abbey of the order was at Kelso and Earl David arranged for Guido, Prior to that establishment, to come to Lindores and established the new charge.

Not long after Earl David founded the Abbey of Lindores he decided to found a new church for his burgh of Dundee for which he had received a charter from his brother King William the Lion.

David dedicated his church to the Virgin Mary and placed it under the care and control of the Abbots of Lindores who were charged with the appointment of its Vicars.

Early in the 13th century, Gilbert, then Bishop of Brechin, granted a charter to the Abbot and Abbey of Lindores to found a school or schools in Dundee. This charter was confirmed by Pope Gregory IX on 14th February, 1239.

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Under the terms of this Charter the Grammar School of Dundee was founded and this school was the origin of the High School of Dundee.

In Pre-Reformation times the school was administered by the Abbots of Lindores but after the Reformation in 1560 the Town Council of Dundee took over this responsibility.

The Grammar School was moved into a new home in St. Clements' Lane (now part of the site of City Square).

One of the early Rectors of the Grammar School, David Lindsay, became Bishop of Edinburgh and was involved in the riot in St Giles Church in that town in 1637. This was the occasion when stools and bibles were thrown at the preachers in protest against the introduction of a new Prayer Book.

In the 17th and 18th centuries the schoolday in the Grammar School was from 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning until 6 in the evening. A three week holiday in summer, a day at New Year, a day at the Spring and Autumn fasts were the lot of the scholars. Christmas and Easter were regarded as Popish or pagan festivals and no holidays granted.

During its early years the School taught Latin, Greek, Oratory, Grammar, Moral Letters, 'gude manners and cumlie order'.

Early in the 18th century an English School was founded and in 1789 this School and the older Grammar School were sharing a building in School Wynd (later South Lindsay Street, and now a pedestrian way just south and west of the Old Steeple).

Another school known as the Dundee Academy was opened in the Nethergate on the site of the present day St Andrew's Roman Catholic Cathedral in 1785.

The three schools, the Grammar, the English and the Academy were united in 1829 under the new name of the Dundee Public Seminaries.

New and larger premises were required and a site was chosen in the Meadows part of the mediaeval common lands of the town. An Edinburgh architect, George Angus was appointed to design the new building.

He chose the classical style and gave the building its noble Doric Portico. Building operations were conducted from 1832 to 1834.

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The new building provided accommodation for the three schools, who retained their independence, as follows: the Dundee Academy was located in the centre, behind the portico, the Grammar School in the west wing and the English School in the east wing.

The Public Seminaries opened on 1 October 1834 and for a time, owing to conflicts over relative importance and precedence, no overall Rector or Headmaster was appointed.

The eight or nine teachers acted independently but took turns in presiding over a Censor's Court which dealt with matters of common interest. Later this system was replaced by one in which one of the Directors acted as Governor.

In 1882 under the terms of the Harris Endowment, the first Rector was appointed. Earlier in 1859, under a Royal Charter, the three components of the Public Seminaries were amalgamated under the proud name, the High School of Dundee.

Dundee, one hundred and fifty years ago, was in the process of being somewhat drastically changed from a mediaeval town into an industrial one.

The Meadows were still largely open space of green grass on the banks of the burn which originated away to the north-west beyond the Law and Balgay Hill.

From the portico of the Public Seminaries building one would have seen the site of Albert Square, but no Albert Institute, and the new Reform Street with the Adam's Town House at its southern end.

George Angus had designed Reform Street as an architectural unity, linking the classical frontage of his Public Seminarie's building with the Adam's Town House.

Among the former pupils of the early schools which were the fore-runners of the High School can be listed William Wallace, the liberator of Scotland, Hector Boece, the early historian and the first Principal of the University of Aberdeen and Robert Fergusson the poet.

From the High School building sited between Euclid Crescent and Bell Street, generations of pupils have gone forth and contributed to the heritage not only of Dundee but of the world.

The school is not 150 years old but almost 750 years young.

From Burgh to Region

Dr. W.K. Fitzgerald, C.B.E., D.L., J.P.
Chairman of Tayside Regional Council

Some 396,000 people live in Tayside's 3,000 square miles. Responsible for their day-to-day needs in a wide range of vital public services such as education, social work, roads, water, police and fire services, is Tayside Regional Council.

Tayside is Scotland's fourth largest region and, as Dundee High pupils will know, it is a region of contrasts. More than half its population live in the coastal arc from Montrose down to Dundee, and up the River Tay to Perth, at the heart of Scotland and the gateway to the Highlands. The Regional Council meets the need of lonely Highland glen and bustling city.

As Dundee High School celebrates the 150th anniversary of its Main Building it may be of interest to review, in tandem, the history of local government. Many pupils may choose local government as a career.

The Regional Council is part of a mosaic which has changed its shape and form to meet the needs of a society changing with the centuries. Scottish local government dates back to the mediaeval burghs established by King David as trading communities 800 years ago. In time the Crown devolved the collection of revenues to 50 or so Royal Burghs. As domestic and foreign trade grew so did the number of Royal Burghs, many of which declined in importance as trading monopolies decayed. But the Burghs formed the basis of the changes which followed the 1832 parliamentary Reform Act (Dundee High School history pupils will have that date imprinted on their minds). Then, with the extension of the parliamentary franchise came the call for further democratic representation and town councils became subject to popular election.

In the rural areas the new county councils had evolved from the mediaeval sheriffdoms, succeeding the committees of landowners which, since 17th century, had fixed assessment, levied taxes and assumed responsibility for the militia, police and road administration. Steps to simplify the system were taken in the 19th century and again in

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1918. Over 1,000 school boards were replaced by elected education authorities for each county and some burghs. In 1929 the simplification process was taken a step further. Parishes, established the previous century, were abolished; large and small burgh councils were established; and district councils (not with the same responsibilities as present district councils) were introduced. Then, although society was transformed through technological change and the emergence of the welfare state, the structure of local government remained largely unaltered for 45 years.

In 1971 local government re-organisation proposals were published. There were then 430 local authority councils in Scotland plus water boards, joint boards, etc. Four years later, following legislation, Scottish local government was 'stream-lined'. The 430 bodies became 65. In Tayside 34 local authorities and joint boards were replaced by Tayside Regional Council and three District Councils.

The Regional Council was established with powers and resources to deal with education, strategic planning, transport, roads, water services, industrial and economic development, police, fire and social work. District Council functions include local planning, housing, environmental health and building control. Community Councils, which have no statutory powers, can be established if local communities wish to reflect community views on a wide range of topics to public agencies.

Meeting individual and community needs is a multi-million pound business. The Regional Council has a £250 million revenue budget. Its annual capital works programme is £23 million-plus. A workforce of over 16,000 embraces a whole spectrum of occupations including teachers, policemen, firemen, architects, engineers, lawyers, cooks, social workers, roadmen, bus drivers, cleaners, countryside rangers . . . It owns over 1,500 individual properties with a total reinstatement value in excess of £638 million.

Deciding its policies and where the community's money is spent are 46 ordinary men and women, a cross-section of the Tayside community which elected them to the Regional Council. The Council may meet in Tayside House, Dundee, but operationally it responds at community level, meeting grassroot needs. The Council provides public service around the clock.

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On top of that, it seeks, in partnership with District Councils and government agencies, to plan and provide an economic environment in which enterprise can flourish. As well as investing heavily in the infrastructure essential for modern industry and commerce, it 'sells' tayside as a business location through TRIO, the Tayside Regional Industrial Office. The creation of more job opportunities is essential.

It is the job of the Regional Council to plan for the future. In the Tayside Structure Plan, with a 15 year time scale, the Council lays down a frame work for change and growth with local plans filling in the detail, area by area. In planning the Region's spending programme, the elected Regional Councillors must decide where need is greatest. It is a balancing act; the services one would like on the one hand and on the other, what can reasonably be afforded. It's a difficult job to achieve the right balance but it is one the Regional Council is proud to do — providing services today while planning on the community's behalf for Tayside tomorrow.

During its history, the school has produced leaders of industry, commerce and the professions. Their influence has extended far beyond the boundaries of our city. As Convener of Tayside Regional Council it gives me great pleasure to congratulate the school on its long record of achievement and to convey my Council's good wishes for continued successes.

An Austere Regime

The Dundee High School Bylaws of 1860

Iain Flett, M.A., M.Fil., DAA, FSA.Scot.,
City Archivist

The bylaws which were adopted by the Directors of the High School on Thursday 1 November 1860 give some fascinating glimpses into the everyday life and habits of the school in mid thirteenth century Dundee. These bylaws have been developed through previous enactments in June 1845 and in February 1855, but the 1860 enactment contains the most interesting details, particularly about the functions of the Censor's Court and about the many responsibilities placed upon the Janitor.

General Regulations

Provision was made in the 1845 bylaws that they were to be read out in their entirety at least once during each session, but the staff and the pupils were spared this ordeal after 1860. However, it was still the duty of the teachers to give direct notice of their absence 'by indisposition or other unavoidable cause', and they also had to give the Secretary notice in writing of what temporary arrangements they had made for the conduct of their classes in their absence.

Classes

It would appear from the rules for the government of classes that the behaviour they were designed to regulate has not changed much over the years. Pupils were to attend precisely at the hours appointed, they were to take their place in the classrooms without jostling or noise, they were to 'transmit to the Teachers an explanation in writing' of any absence, and the 'business of the classes shall be conducted with the utmost quietness and good order'. The pupils were also 'enjoined not to mark, cut, or otherwise injure the walls, tables, benches, or furniture. If all these rules for good living failed, and any pupil was deemed to be 'contumacious or incorrigible', then the final solution of expulsion was to be applied.

Examinations

These could be held quarterly, but had definitely to be held at the close

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of the session in July, and were held in public. The 1845 provisions had the frightening addition that the public examinations were to be attended by the Magistrates and Town Council, the Ministers of the Gospel of all denominations, the parents and guardians of the pupils, those who had made subscriptions to the Seminaries, as well as all who took 'an interest in the cause of education.'

The Area

Although it was stated that the Area of the Seminaries was to be for exercise and recreation, stringent restrictions seem to have been applied against games, sport or amusement which were thought to be 'calculated to injure the Pupils or others.' Prohibited activities under the 1845 rules were the 'Throwing of stones, snowballs or other substances, playing at football or similar sports; fighting, wrestling, pushing, jostling and leaping; engaging in games for money or stakes of any kind.' Clubs, sticks and other 'hurtful weapons' were not to be brought by pupils in the Area, and no games were to be permitted in which these were used. It would be interesting to know precisely what kind of games were being prohibited by this action, but unfortunately they are not identified by name.

Censor's Court

This remarkable disciplinary hearing must have struck awe into those who were brought before it. The Court was composed of all the teachers holding office in the Seminaries, and was held on the first Saturday of each month. It considered offences which took place in the area of the Seminaries, but not within the classrooms themselves. The teachers were to hold the office of Censor for a quarter in turn, each following the order of seniority from the date of their appointment. The Court was to be held in the classroom of the Censor, minutes were to be taken and these minutes were to be made available to the Directors. The Janitor was to act as Officer to the Court and had to cite the pupils who were to appear before it. Having been grilled by the Censor, the quivering miscreant could suffer a range of judgments ranging from admonition, suspension of privileges, fine, 'rustication for a limited time', or expulsion.

The Court also appears to have enjoyed general powers, and was able to consider any matter generally affecting the interests of the School.

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The Treasurer

The Treasurer was exhorted to have a cash book 'in which all monies received or paid shall be duly entered of the proper dates', a matriculation book and a state book. It was stated with optimism that 'The Bank accounts and the Treasurer's cash book shall at all times correspond, or be within a few shillings and pence of each other' and by this hinted that this admirable arrangement had not always been adhered to.

The Janitor

- I. The Janitor shall take particular care of the buildings and grounds; and shall keep the gates regularly shut on Sundays and holidays . .
- II. He shall . . . give notice to the proper Teacher of every breach of the regulations by Pupils . . .
- III. He shall daily clean the various rooms and kindle the fires . . .
- IV. He shall take notice of any damage done to the furniture or apparatus . . .
- V. He shall take into custody, and, if necessary carry before the proper Teacher, any Pupil seen fighting with or maltreating another . . .
- VI. He shall aid the Pupils . . . In providing for the safe custody of their topcoats, cloaks, and umbrellas (on each of which their names should be legibly written,) and in assisting to search for and recover any articles or books which may be missing . . . and, generally, give every assistance and service to the Teachers and Pupils . . . with a due regard to the performance of the special duties hereby assigned to him.
- VII. He shall act as Officer to the Censor's Court . . .'

This overworked employee had other burdens occasionally heaped upon his shoulders, for in November 1845 the Janitor was instructed not to allow beggars to come within the railings, whereas the teachers were merely requested to discourage them coming within the railings of the ground, but in the unrest of 1845 this could prove quite a hazardous activity.

Although the bylaws are superficially a basic set of rules of government, a great deal of useful information on the social standing and habits of both pupils and staff can be deduced from them to give us a clearer understanding of Victorian Dundee.

An Inspector Calls

Dr. W.A. Illsley, Principal, Dundee College of Education

We are constantly reminded that this is an age of accountability in education. As a consequence, the teacher can have no secrets: the classroom door is open: indeed, the school portals are unbarred, and with freedom of parental choice come general availability of examination results and inspection reports, for purposes of comparison and information. The High School has recently emerged with credit from a full scale inspection conducted by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, in which many helpful observations were made, and it may be interesting to look back in contrast to the last century, and a previous visitation which aroused much controversy and rancour.

About 150 years ago, the introduction of Parliamentary grants in aid of elementary education had led to the appointment of inspectors of schools, Dr John Kerr recalling that by 1860 all classes of schools in Scotland were served by seven inspectors, with two additional for the Episcopalian and Roman Catholic church school. Their work was complicated by many significant changes in educational trends and curriculum, one of the most important being the demand for teaching of the English language in a way which would go far beyond the 'beggarly elements', particularly as regards grammar and 'intelligence', or insistence on the pupil's ability to give an intelligent explanation of what had been read. The process was much deeper than a simple shift in emphasis from the teaching of Classics to the teaching of English, and new and more active methods were essential to accomplish it successfully.

The High School had been slow to keep abreast of contemporary movements and admissions are implicit in reminiscences of 1859 and of the 1860s that both curriculum and methods of teaching English were out of date. The staff themselves were also conscious of defects in the system, and in 1873 Mr John B Charles, the English Master, put forward a scheme for improvement to the Chairman of Directors, pointing out that for several years the average attendance at English classes had been more than double that for Latin and Greek classes. It was apparent that the teaching of private classes in English, which was

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still permitted, was more thorough and effective than that of the regular, time-tabled classes in the school; that better text-books were obtainable; and that the Writing Department, in which 'an hour in every day for six years is provided for writing by the present arrangement of the classes' was truly 'the paradise of the school'.

Any premonitions of the Directors could scarcely have prepared them however for the article which appeared in the *Dundee Advertiser* on Thursday April 8th, 1875 commencing

Mr Meiklejohn's Report on Local Schools
Slashing criticism of the Dundee High School

Mr Meiklejohn, Assistant Commissioner of the Scotch Endowed Schools, enjoyed a facility of expression which he was not reluctant to use, and of the boys' English class his remarks begin: 'The knowledge shown of the English language is very small, the power of expression shown is very weak, the spelling is poor, and the amount of culture obtained from the training given in these classes is extremely meagre'. Parsing was 'poverty-stricken'; grammar included 'bad logic, cross divisions and bald truism'; training and literature seemed 'insufficient and resultless'. The work of the girls surpassed that of the boys in quantity and quality, but it did not escape the comment that 'the natural tendency of the untrained female intellect to regard details of as great importance as the main feature of a subject', had been unchecked, and that in a few cases 'the composition consists of one long sentence, straggling, involved, obscure, gossipy, and aimless, like the interminable talk of Mrs. Nickleby'. Only spelling received praise: it was 'excellent, almost without error'.

Reaction to Mr Meiklejohn's trenchant and perhaps needlessly hurtful remarks was strong, and by early June of the same year a Standing Committee had prepared its reply. Abstracts from this were published in the *Advertiser* of 2nd June 1875. An impartial eye might judge the defence, or counter-attack, of the English Department as less effective and convincing than the response of other Departments; but the Committee considered that in general Mr Meiklejohn's criticisms were not well founded or fairly represented. The Committee expressed its regret 'that Mr Meiklejohn should have embodied in his report statements calculated seriously to injure a Seminary which has hitherto held a very high place amongst the educational institutions of the

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country, and which can show results in the success of its pupils at the great seats of learning in the kingdom of which any school might be proud . . .’.

It is difficult after more than a century to pretend to an accurate appraisal of the rights and wrongs of this celebrated quarrel. Reforms, however, followed; and one may reflect that although a school does not always benefit from being educationally too far ahead of its time, there is much peril in not keeping up with the leaders. In our own age, present developments stemming from new technology and from changes in curriculum and assesment will transform Scottish education during the next decade, and we can be pleased, though not complacent, that the High School is this time aware of the situation, and poised to profit from it.



The Town School and the Parish Church

The Very Rev. Hugh O. Douglas

When I came to St. Mary's in 1951 I was at once impressed by the close connection which existed between the Parish church and the High School of Dundee. Several of my Elders were Directors, quite a number of our members taught in the High School and, of course, many of our young people were pupils. I always enjoyed the Carol Services in St Mary's, as also my visits as Chaplain to senior classes.

My years in Dundee covered the revived interest in religion and the increase in church membership which followed the Second World War and reached their peak around 1960. Then came the 'permissive society', the 'sexual revolution' and the 'retreat from organised religion'. These trends were naturally reflected in the attitudes of the pupils of the High School, as was obvious in the questions I was asked when I took 'religious instruction' periods.

There were the usual doubts as to how religion and science could be reconciled. In 1968 the British Association for the Advancement of Science met in Dundee, and I was glad to point out that both the President, Dame Kathleen Lonsdale, and the Director of Jodrell Bank, Sir Bernard Lovell were Christians and had attended the B.A. Service in St. Mary's.

In addition, however, there was a detectable reluctance, on the part of some pupils, to commit themselves to the organised churches, and a tendency among others to regard Christian moral standards as puritanical and restrictive. I have little doubt that the influence of television played its part in producing such views.

I hasten to add that I found such questionings stimulating and challenging and saw — as with my own family — that they were preferable to a meek acceptance of conventional ways.

Looking back over my 26 years as Chaplain, it seems to me that the High School admirably maintained its moral, intellectual and sporting standards through a difficult period. I am happy to have been associated, in however small a way, with such an excellent school.

Dundee's Newspapers

Robert D. Kennedy, Esq.
formerly Editor of the Evening Telegraph

Everything worthy of reporting at the High School of Dundee for over a century has been recorded in the local Press — the Courier, the Evening Telegraph, the People's Journal and the Sunday Post.

It is surprising how often the school's name appears in the columns of these newspapers. Promotions, retirements, prize lists, sports results, winners of scholarships, successes of former pupils and deaths mean that hardly a week passes without the High School receiving a mention.

Like the school itself, these newspapers are held in high esteem even in places remote from the Tayside city.

It was in 1886 that William Thomson, a Dundee shipowner, took over control of the Dundee Courier (started in 1816) and the Weekly News (founded in 1855) of which he had been a shareholder for some time.

The family tradition has been retained and the present directors of the firm are all great grandsons of William Thomson.

Around the turn of the century there was fierce competition between the firms of W. and D. C. Thomson (as it was then) and John Leng and Co. Ltd. who published the Dundee Advertiser (founded in 1801), the Evening Telegraph (1877) and the People's Journal (1858).

In 1906 an agreement was reached between the firms for the pooling of the two businesses with Thomson's as the senior partners.

The Evening Post, started by D. C. Thomson in 1900, merged in 1905 with the Evening Telegraph which still bears the joint names of Evening Telegraph and Post.

A later merger took place in 1926 when the Courier and the Advertiser were combined into one paper.

The success of that move is shown by the fact that today the Courier has the biggest sale of any provincial morning newspaper in Britain.

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Like the Evening Telegraph and the People's Journal, the Courier gives comprehensive coverage to all local events and takes up the cudgel fearlessly on behalf of any project which is felt to be in the interests of the people of Dundee and the surrounding areas.

Vigorous campaigns on behalf of or against various plans have been fought, whatever the opinions of local or national politicians of any party.

Projects which received early and continuous support from the Thomson newspapers were the establishment of an independent Dundee University, the building of the road bridge of the River Tay and the construction of an airport and the start of an air service from the city.

In the field of sport, too, the Dundee newspapers have given extensive coverage in words and pictures. On Saturdays the Sporting Post, which is the final issue of the Evening Telegraph of that day, is taken up almost completely by reports of sporting events.

The Sunday Post was first launched in 1914 as the Post Sunday Special. Its main purpose was in these pre-radio and television days, to give special news of events in the First World War.

Its name was changed to the Sunday Post in 1919. Since then the success of the paper has become a legend.

As 'the most read newspaper' the Sunday Post is in the Guinness Book of Records. This accolade was bestowed on it after a survey showed that seven out of ten of the population of Scotland aged 15 and over read it, and that does not include the many thousands in England and Overseas who read it eagerly every week.

The Broons and Oor Wullie, featured in its fun section (the latter created by a DHS former pupil and modelled on a classmate) have become national figures. During the war years many servicemen from all parts of the world clamoured for the comic section from the Post sent from home to Scots in the forces. Sometimes a little translation was needed too.

Just as the firm has remained a family concern, many of its employees have spent much, if not all of their working lives on its pay roll. And it is to the firm's credit that it is one of the few concerns in the printing, or any other industry, which has survived the depression of

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the 1970's and '80s without having to make any redundancies.

Although it has been in the newspapers named above, that generations of High School pupils and FPs have looked for their names, most of them have read other publications of this Dundee firm from their childhood.

Twinkle and other Thomson magazines cater for the youngest readers and the Beano and the Dandy are the two most popular comics in the country. In the girls' field D. C. Thomson publish among others, Bunty and Judy and for teenagers Jackie is the leader in its market.

My Weekly and the People's Friend are popular weeklies for women and Annabel is a well-established monthly publication in that field. The Weekly News sells in all parts of Britain as a family newspaper and the Scots Magazine has a niche of its own, specialising in all aspects of life north of the border.

To print these and their many other publications, D. C. Thomson have printing works in Glasgow and Manchester as well as Dundee, an editorial staff in Fleet Street and editorial offices and circulation staff in many other important centres.

These Thomson newspapers and magazines have always striven to maintain the highest standards of journalism. That is exemplified in the remark of one Dundee man who when asked if a statement he had made was authentic, replied emphatically, "Of course it's authentic. It was in the Courier!"

The High School and the University : Two Dundee Institutions

Adam Neville
Principal of the University of Dundee

Commissioned articles for a *Festschrift* are difficult to write because they are expected to be laudatory by command. This may not be difficult when writing about the High School of Dundee but to be rather more objective (as befits an academic) I have chosen to write about your institution and mine at the same time. I am not offering a scholarly exercise (as would befit an academic) of the 'compare and contrast' variety but rather a selection of notes on where the High School and the University stand and what they stand for.

Starting in the present, we can observe very simply that our common city needs a wide range of educational provision. These days, there are very few jobs which do not require a reasonable education – may I call it background education – as well as training. Moreover, enjoyment of life, as perceived today, and participation in society also require the same reasonable education. The range of educational provision in a city like ours must include an academic approach, and this is what the two institutions have in common. The school prospectus clearly refers to 'a predominantly academic school' and, by definition, the University is an academic institution.

But it was not always so. My statement, perhaps surprisingly, refers to both institutions. A regular curriculum was introduced in the High School only around 1882, prior to that time pupils attending only such classes as they chose. In Scottish universities, too, as reported by a royal commission in 1830, 'All persons may attend any of the classes, in whatever order or manner may suit their different views and prospects'. The subjects taught then were meant to provide a broad liberal education.

It was only in the 1850s that the concept of universities as solely teaching institutions was seriously challenged, and an Edinburgh lawyer James Lorimer argued that universities 'must be at once a magazine and a laboratory of thought'. This change came about, and,

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largely in consequence, schools took over some of the tasks of providing liberal education and a mix of subjects geared to the needs of the universities.

I mentioned the year 1882 as the beginning of a regular curriculum in the High School. It was also the date of appointment of the first Rector of the High School, with the delightful (to the pupils) name of George Ross Merry. The very same year saw the appointment of the first Principal of University College, Dundee, more soberly named William Peterson.

So, in 1882, we moved together, but in some other dates the University must concede seniority to the High School. A Royal Charter was granted to the School in 1859 but only in 1967 to the University. In other respects, too, I must recognize the claims of the School, for instance, to its possessing one of the most impressive buildings in the city. It is indeed fortunate for Dundee that 'the School formed part of a piece of town planning'; alas, the same cannot be said of the University.

I shall mention one more difference, of a very different kind, and here I have a selfish ulterior motive. The year 1882 brought substantial endowments to both institutions: from Harris to the School and from the Baxters to the University. More recent years continued to treat the School kindly, but less so my own institution. And there is more to it than that. Ex-Provost William Robertson was not only generous to the School with funds but has also been described as a staunch supporter of the School in its struggle for independence against the School Board. The University, like other British universities, is just now struggling for *its* independence and we very much need the support of the munificent and vocal citizens of Dundee.

Still on the subject of benefactions, one little link between us may be of interest. George Reid Donald, Secretary and Treasurer of the Dundee Chamber of Commerce, presented the School with furnishings for the War Memorial Library. A splendid commemorative silver tray presented to him on the occasion of the centenary of the Chamber in 1936 was, in turn, given to the University 'for use by the Principal' by his 'niece', Mrs Christian Tudhope in 1979.

I would like to end by returning to the educational function of our

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institutions. The School prospectus clearly says that 'the vast majority of pupils go on to university or to other forms of further education'. So the time spent at the School is but one phase in a boy's or girl's learning, a preparation for the next phase. The University also prepares, I should now say, a man or a woman for continuing learning, not always formal, in later life. So neither institution is an educational terminal case.

Indeed, in life, there is no educational terminal case until man himself becomes a terminal case. But only man or woman, not the institution.

Floreat academia!

Personal Memories

Dr. Wilfred Taylor, Journalist, Writer and Broadcaster

If people ask me when I was at university I generally answer 'roughly speaking, during the period of the mid Pharaohs.' If that is so then I suppose that I attended the High School in the time of the earlier Pharaohs. In those Egyptian days the classes were distinguished by Roman numerals, running from class I to class X. In most other schools the top class was known as the sixth form and I suppose that this system of identification was adopted by the High School long ago. But I may be wrong. It would be pleasant to know that those Doric — or is it Ionic, or Muscovite? — columns facing Reform Street still protect a class X.

I have always regarded myself as a opsimath, or late learner. I had started diminishing my ignorance at that western phrontistery, the Harris Academy. When I was about 10 or 11 years old my parents decided that it was about time that I matriculated in my father's old, down town school. For some reason or other they also felt that I ought to skip a year during the transition.

At the Harris Academy I had reached what was known as Standard III. At the High School I started off in Class IV. This looked straightforward enough but the truth is that Class IV corresponded with Standard V, colloquially known in the days of the early Pharaohs 'the Qualy,' so called because that was the year in which one sat the Qualifying Examination. What it qualified one for I cannot remember, but it was one of those quasi-eleven-plus hurdles menacing the young of my generation.

I can still recall mounting the steps in front of those classical columns, neatly counterbalancing those endearing 'Pillars' supporting the captivating Adam town house at the other end of Reform Street, on my first day at the High School. The only person in sight was a boy called George Stephenson, who was to be a class-mate. Timorously I asked him where Class IV mustered. Kindly, if a little avuncularly, he directed me to 'Uncle Bob's' room.

'Uncle Bob', otherwise Mr. Mackenzie, was a Highlander from Bonar Bridge, a teacher of handwriting, whose somewhat Prussian

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appearance belied a warm heart. One night I had a dream in which George Stephenson, whose father and mine had been contemporaries at the High School, came into Uncle Bob's classroom wearing a kilt with a distinctive tartan. Next morning he did appear wearing a kilt of that tartan. It is the only prophetic dream which I can remember.

In consequence of jumping a whole year in my studies, I feel that I have never been able to fulfil my potentialities adequately. I was pitted against bright boys like David Stalker, who was later to teach my daughter in Biblical studies at Edinburgh University, and Charles Fox, who was to become a CA, and of whom I have not heard since those days. Both of them, and others, I admired intensely, but I thought that it was grossly unjust that I should be put in competition with them instead of being allowed to find my own level with my coevals, in Class III. I have toyed with the idea of suing the High School for £500,000 or so for gross discrimination in exposing me to unequal opportunity, but have relented, bearing in mind that my father had been able to leave the High School at the age of 15 and proceed to the new University College for a year, before going over to St. Andrews.

Three other points I should like to make. The first is that it took me a long time to realise that I had been to a co-ed school. In fact, it is only now when, as I write, the *Times* is full of letters recording the 'reactions of girls to the boys' schools to which they have recently been admitted, that I realise that long before they were born I had sat in the same classes as girls. The girls in my time were an exceptionally pretty and talented group, but I cannot honestly admit that their presence in any way made me less shy and less ill-at-ease socially.

My one regret is that none of my teachers drew my attention to George Kinloch, the radical laird of Charles Tennant's book, who was the first Dundee Member of Parliament. I must have passed his statue every time I crossed over the street to climb the Russian steppes of the old Reference Library. He could have been an inspiration to us all. I hope that he is not neglected by today's teachers and pupils, and that every year some sweet little girl from the primary department crosses over and places a garland round his neck.

A last thought. There were four teachers of classics in my day. The junior, but not the youngest by any means, was Mr. Stalker, who lived in Monifieth. A gentle man with a soft, Caithness accent, it was

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he who first made Homer real to me. One sleepy, Friday afternoon, when the small Greek class was not conspicuously attentive, he said to me, “Taylor, I’m sure that you have walked on a Spring day from Newport to Tayport and that you have seen away to the north the snowy outline of the Grampians. Well, that’s what Homer means when he sings of ‘the far, shadowy mountains.’ ”

The Chamber of Commerce and D.H.S

Harry Terrell, M.A., Director,
Dundee and Tayside Chamber of Commerce & Industry

It is particularly appropriate that the Chamber of Commerce should contribute to a publication celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the Main Building since the Chamber and its members have been closely associated with the High School for most of the last century and a half.

For the first 50 years or so the links between the Chamber and the school were largely informal. However, their value was recognised formally in the 1882 Act which gave the Dundee Chamber of Commerce the right to nominate three of the School's Directors. This right has been exercised since the first Board Meeting in November 1888 and the importance attached to it is demonstrated by the fact that while the Chamber makes nominations to many organisations only the representatives on the High School Board and Dundee Port Authority are required to submit formal reports to the Chamber's Annual General Meeting.

The Chamber's interest in educational matters, however, has not been confined to the High School. Indeed, to quote from our own Centenary Souvenir Yearbook: 'The Chamber has all along given practical support to every movement for the better education of all engaged in commercial pursuits'.

Commercial Education

Probably the most important expression of this support was the introduction in 1919 of a Commercial Education Scheme which had received the blessing of the Scottish Education Department. Very much a pioneer in this field, the Chamber's experience served as a basis for similar schemes elsewhere and for the Scottish National Certificate launched in the 1930s. Junior and Senior Certificates were granted in respect of passes in a group of five or more subjects. Those subjects which were considered 'to be absolutely necessary for a well-educated businessman in any sphere of commercial subject' were compulsory while the voluntary section permitted students to specialise in subjects 'more pertinent to the particular line of business in which the student is

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engaged'. Despite the sexist connotation of the above quotation, the examinations were open to both young men and women and, indeed, I am the proud possessor of my mother's certificates which were signed by the then Chamber Secretary, George R. Donald.

The academic standards were high. In September 1918, George Bonar, President of the Chamber, argued that "A Faculty of Commerce should be established in Dundee, and the possession of a Senior Commercial Certificate ought to be the equivalent of its preliminary or entrance examination".

Much later, the name of George Bonar was to be linked directly with the High School. His offer of £25,000 to the University of St. Andrews to establish courses leading to a Bachelor of Commerce degree in University College, Dundee was not implemented because the University felt unable to accede to his request that entry to the course should not be restricted to students possessing the conventional 'Certificate of Attestation of Fitness'. However, in 1927 Charles Stewart, Chairman of the Dundee Education Authority, offered to build a school for Mr. Bonar and on 2nd October, 1931 the Dundee School of Economics and Commerce opened in Bell Street, having been erected, equipped and partially endowed by George Bonar.

In the early 1950s the School of Economics was taken over by the Faculty of Social Science of St. Andrews University and the building (under the name of 'Bonar House') continued to be used by the University, and later Dundee University, until it was purchased by the High School in 1978.

Industrial Heritage

Writing in the 1840's, a commentator observed that 'Dundee is remarkable for failure, perseverance and eventual success in attempts at manufacture'. Coarse woollens, bonnets, sewing thread, leather tanning, glass, cotton spinning and buckle-making 'all flourished for a season and, in the end, went ultimately to ruin'. Soap making, sugar refining, linen, motorcars and even shipbuilding have gone the same way since and although engineering and jute have survived and brewing reintroduced they have been largely eclipsed by electronics, light engineering, polypropylene, rubber products and offshore fabrication. Indeed, of the premier industries in 1835 only confectionery and publishing still flourish. Former pupils of the High

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School were involved in these developments — although it is only in the last 25 years or so that the membership of the Chamber has truly reflected the broad range of industries in the city.

Continuing Interest

The Chamber's interest in education is as strong as ever and, indeed, our education & Training Committee still meets regularly. In addition, the 35-place Commercial and Computer Skills Course in Dundee, established by the Chamber in July 1983 under the Youth Training Scheme, was the first in Tayside to be filled. Indeed, while most other schemes have struggled to attract trainees, and some take-up rates have been as low as 15% by the beginning of 1984 the Chamber had replaced eleven of the fourteen trainees who had left (twelve to enter full-time employment) — giving a take-up rate of over 130%.

Education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge. It instils an ability to communicate with others and the confidence to deal with life's many challenges and opportunities. In this the success of the High School has been beyond doubt and it was no surprise that of the eight pupils from secondary schools throughout Tayside whom the Chamber sponsored between 1979 and 1982 at successive London International Youth Science Fortnights, no less than three were boys from the High School, viz, F. Robert Wilson, Philip P. M. Daft and P. Owen Vaughan. Since the pupils were representing Tayside during their stay in London academic achievement was only one of the factors influencing the selectors and candidates were judged also on their personality, maturity, ability to communicate, scientific interest and extra curricular activities.

No single member has demonstrated the Chamber's commitment to education more than Mr George R. Linton, current convener of the Education & Training Committee, and one of the Chamber's elected School Directors since 1969. Apart from his services to the High School, Mr Linton is a Governor of both Dundee College of Commerce and Dundee College of Technology and serves on many national and regional Committees concerned with curriculum matters and schools/industry liaison.

It would be appropriate, therefore, to link a public tribute to Mr Linton's services to the Chamber and to Tayside education with

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warmest congratulations to the High School for having contributed so much to the City of Dundee over the last 150 years and to wish both continued success in the future.

Acknowledgement

I am greatly indebted to all our friends and neighbours who so generously allowed themselves to be prevailed on to pen, at short notice and within tightly prescribed limits, a short article for this commemorative volume.

Without their indulgent participation, we could not have realised so acceptably our whimsical conception, and I wish to express to them my sincere thanks.

R. NIMMO
Rector.

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