

LOOKING BACK

From the Garton Archive at Lincoln Christ's Hospital School

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by

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(Edited by Peter Harrod)

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Editor's Introduction

Regular readers of the Old Christ's Hospital Lincolnians Society annual newsletters have enjoyed many years of Professor Charles Garton's popular 'Looking Back' column. This fascinating series looks back at key events in the history of Lincoln Christ's Hospital School (LCHS) since a school in Lincoln probably began in about 1090. Inevitably the series focuses mainly on the long and rich history of Lincoln School (LS), as it was not until 1893 that Lincoln Christ's Hospital Girls' High School (LHS) was formed, and a school in St Giles was not opened until well into the twentieth century.

For the sake of length it has been necessary to modify the original entries, and to restrict them to the period 1090-1974. Otherwise the document would have been almost twice its present length. I take full responsibility for the selection and editing of the items from Professor Garton's collection. However I am pleased to report that Charles himself has approved the final draft.

In celebrating the history of this great School, let us also celebrate the painstaking research, carried out by Charles over many decades, almost exclusively from primary sources of evidence. I am sure you will agree that his chronological series of events has brought alive the rich history of education in Lincoln within the wider context of English history .

The Origins and early Days of a School in Lincoln

It is tentatively postulated that the first school in Lincoln was formed in 1090 by Remigius, who was commissioned by William the Conqueror to build the first cathedral in the City. He brought with him Albinus of Anjou who was the first known *magister* in Lincoln (editor).

Around 1100 a youth called Henry, from out of town, was studying in Lincoln under Albinus. He learned grammar and literature, with prose and verse composition, and later more philosophical studies. He later became Archdeacon of Huntingdon in succession to his father. Apart from inferences about Remigius, it was Henry who has supplied us with the earliest historical allusion to Lincoln School.

In 1150 the first known Chancellor, Hambro, was in office and, as such, would have been the Head of LS at the time. He was called both *magister* and *doctor*. From the 1220s the School, still under the Chancellor's control, was placed more directly into the hands of a *magister scolae*.

The year 1193 saw the death in Iceland of St Thorlak, who had studied at LS when it was still headed by the Cathedral chancellors. He later became Bishop of Skalholt, having 'got great learning' at LS.

In 1203 Gerald of Wales, who had been studying theology as an adult at the Lincoln *scolae*, vacated the post of Archdeacon of Brecon in favour of his nephew and namesake who was also studying at the *scolae*. But Gerald junior was a scapegrace at the School; 'ill-behaved, inattentive and backward in his Latin'. His uncle wrote later, 'You were truly a boy without discipline, an untameable young rooster'.

The 14th & 15th Centuries

In early autumn 1351 the Mastership of LS was difficult to fill partly because of the Black Death, but also because indefinite tenure could not be guaranteed. No MA could be found, but a young non-graduate called John Muscham was appointed and probably held the post until 1366.

John Bracebridge, a Lincoln man who had been Master of the school at Boston since 1390, was made Master of the 'general Grammar School of Lincoln'. He was also a 'vicar choral', but apparently had some difficulty carrying out both sets of duties.

In 1408 LS was reminded of its duty to promote orthodoxy. Archbishop Arundel gave order that schoolmasters should not teach anything concerning faith or sacraments against what had been determined by the Church.

The Latinist Thomas Farford was nominated in 1453 to the Bible clerkship at Lincoln College, Oxford. He is the earliest known Lincoln boy to have had a chance of going to Oxford.

In about 1493 four 'poor clerks' of the Cathedral played truant from LS and were carpeted for playing 'le tenez', an early form of tennis played by hand.

In 1507 the 'poor clerks', all theoretically attendees at the schools in Close or City, were up before the Chapter accused of bickering, fighting and even frequenting brothels.

On Trinity Sunday in 1547 the Sub-dean announced during the evening service that there was too much truancy at LS, and that a 'poor clerk' might receive up to three warnings before being expelled.

In 1548 the young King Edward VI, or rather his uncle acting for him, underlined the duty of the Dean and Chapter to maintain a grammar school in Lincoln.

On 27th January 1554 Queen Mary issued an ordinance requiring bishops to examine and license school masters to ensure that masters were doctrinally and politically correct.

William Dighton was the Headmaster of LS in 1541, and the only Head known to have been Mayor of the City. In that year he met King Henry VIII, who approached Lincoln with Queen Katherine Howard down Cross O' Cliff Hill. Dighton tendered to the King the great civic sword, the mace and the keys of the city.

Henry VIII issued his Primer in 1545, a kind of elementary forerunner of the Book of Common Prayer. It appears that the schoolhouse in Lincoln was not functioning at the time, and boys had to learn the Primer in the Cathedral Close. The Cathedral library has a copy of the first edition.

In 1592, the first recorded plays (two comedies) were acted at LS. John Hilton, an ex-chorister and alumnus of LS was co-producer, and was paid 30 shillings for his labours. The year 1592 also saw the death of Lord Chief Justice Sir William Wray, whose generous endowments had enabled numerous Lincolnians to go to Cambridge.

Headmaster William Mason was appointed to LS in 1597. During that year the City Council agreed that Mason and the 'usher' should each have a gown cloth. To differentiate the two, Mason's gown was to be of 40-shilling quality and the usher's was to cost 33 shillings and 4 pence.

The 17th & 18th Centuries

The year 1601 saw a change of Headmastership. William Mason MA left to become rector of South Kelsey, and Robert Houghton MA, who had held a fellowship at Emmanuel College, Cambridge was appointed, and remained in post for the next ten years.

The year 1602 provided an early example of a local authority grant to a deserving student. Under Robert Houghton's headmastership a boy called Edward Rockardine was voted an exhibition of twenty shillings a year for three years by the City Council '...if he so long remain a student at the university of Cambridge.'

In 1607, with LS now in Greyfriars, a certain William Walkwood junior was evidently a Lincolnian, and went up to Cambridge in 1608 and was subsequently ordained, becoming curate of St Peter-at-Gowts. He was later appointed usher of LS, apparently following in the footsteps of his father. The School was at Greyfriars from 1584-1900 (editor).

The Civil War was a troubled time for churchmen and schoolmasters, especially in places like Lincoln where political and religious sympathies were divided. Headmaster of LS John Clarke, displaying courage in the face of puritan extremism, preached against the dangerous doctrines of 'sectaries' in 1645, and stood firm for the Church of England as a middle way.

The Headmaster in 1649, Nathaniel Clarke, had great difficulty in drawing his salary because of Cromwell's abolition of the whole cathedral establishment.

A new boy at Greyfriars in about 1653 was Gervase Disney, a member of the distinguished Lincolnshire family of whom at least six attended LS. He had been very frail as a young child, had rickets and could not walk. Before dying at the age of 50 he wrote an account of his own life.

1691 saw the publication of the tenth edition of the highly successful textbook, '*A Treatise of English Particles*' by Lincolnian William Walker, who had dedicated the first edition to Headmaster John Clark. 'Particles' were conjunctions, prepositions and other 'small troublesome parts of speech'.

The year 1695 was a good year for schoolboy graffiti, several of which still survive. Among these, in the left embrasure of the east window at Greyfriars, boys named John Disney and John Garmston both carved their names. Disney became a vicar of an important church in Nottingham, and later donated a suitably inscribed baptismal font to his favourite church St Peter-at-Arches, some three hundred yards from the School at Greyfriars. When the church was demolished in the 1930s and transferred to St Giles, Disney's font was replaced in its new location, and has no doubt been used at the christening of a sizeable number of Lincolnians.

The year 1698 saw the arrival of a new Headmaster, the Revd Anthony Reid MA. He was the second Etonian among Headmasters at LS, the first having been William Temple in Elizabethan times.

In 1699, Daniel Waterland reached the top of LS, and in time became Master of his Cambridge College and Vice-chancellor of the University. Coleridge described him as one of the giant champions of the Catholic faith.

In 1704 John Garmston (see above) took office in his mid-twenties as headmaster of LS. Some of the younger boys would have remembered him as a pupil. In the same year another alumnus, Daniel Waterland, was elected a Fellow of Garmston's own Cambridge College, Magdelene. In 1708 Garmston published his *'Elements of the Greek Language'*, adapted for the use of Lincoln School. There is a copy in the Garton Archive at LCHS, bought on Steep Hill for half a crown many years ago. The only other known copy is in the British Library.

Robert Drewry astutely carved his name on the underside of an old oak table at LS in 1743. The graffiti was discovered in excellent condition some 150 years later when the table fell to pieces.

Thomas Sympson left LS in 1744 to go to Cambridge, and later became a priest-vicar. In 1766 he met Dr Johnson, through whom he was later able to show hospitality to James Boswell on a visit to Lincoln.

Following his nomination for a scholarship at Magdalene College Cambridge, Henry Best later bought honour to LS by coming first in the Mathematical Tripos, and later became a DD, and father of the better known Henry Digby Best, who published an account of his own *'Nine Years at Lincoln School.'*

Greyfriars suffered wear and tear over the years and in August 1751 the City Council passed a motion that repairs be carried out at 'The Free School' (cf Free School Lane).

In 1752 Henry Best, who left LS in 1747, came first in the Mathematical Tripos at Cambridge.

Lincolnian Thomas Pownall crossed the Atlantic in 1753 to take up a government post in the American colonies. He made landfall in New Jersey, and travelled towards New York where the fragrance of lighted cedar chips evoked memories of schooldays at Greyfriars. He was appointed Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1757 by George II.

The year 1776 saw the inception of the celebration known as 'Potation' or 'Speech Day'. After the speeches there was a festive dinner held by alumni and their guests at the Reindeer Inn.

In 1791 Richard Watson, son of a saddler, was admitted to LS. He later became a highly successful Methodist Minister, wrote several books, and was elected President of the Conference, the highest office in Methodism.

A School House for the Headmaster of LS, his family and boarders was purchased for £600 on Broadgate in 1792, standing almost opposite the Greyfriars building, home of LS at the time. It remained in use for several decades.

The opening recitation on Speech Day 1795 at LS was entrusted to a young boy called Charles Tennison, who was probably to become uncle to the Poet Laureate Alfred Tennyson. He recited a poem probably written by Headmaster John Carter, which described the former 'sainted friars' at the historic Greyfriars, and the 'rosy cheeks with dimpling smiles' of the schoolboys studiously engaged in 'classic learning'.

The 19th Century

Around 1801 LS was in good fettle with almost sixty pupils, including 8-10 boarders. A senior boy who left at the time was John Fardell who later became Deputy Lieutenant of Lincolnshire and MP for Lincoln.

On 14th October 1802 the Governors of LS made it official that there should be no school on Saturday afternoons. Certain holidays such as the Easter break were also made official.

Edward James Willson, who left LS in about 1804, was the first Roman Catholic known to have attended LS since Queen Mary's reign. He was to become a noted architect and antiquary as well as Mayor of Lincoln.

George Gordon was promoted from the Deanery of Exeter to that of Lincoln in 1810. He is the only Lincolnian known to have become Dean of Lincoln.

In 1849 the City Council had become so exasperated with Headmaster of LS James Adcock for failing to reform the School and teach modern subjects that they docked part of his salary. He was found a good church living in 1850, and resigned the headship.

In November 1850 the 1584 deed of union was fundamentally revised. Among other historic changes, modern subjects such as English, Mathematics, History, geography and French were mandated. Science did not seem to appear until 1857.

The year 1857 saw the death of LS Headmaster George Foster Simpson, who collapsed while having breakfast and died later in the day. Great Tom was tolled, and the burial was in the new Canwick Road cemetery.

The Head Boy in 1858 was Evelyn Abbott, who later became a classical scholar. Unfortunately he injured his spine in a hurdle race shortly before his Finals, and spent the rest of his life in a bath-chair. However he flourished as a Fellow and Tutor of Balliol College and his tutees included Nugent Hicks, who became Bishop of Lincoln and 'Visitor' of Lincoln School in the 1930s.

In 1860 the Bishop of Lincoln was formally described as 'Visitor' in Headmaster John Fowler's printed records of LS.

In about 1870 William Logsdail, who was later to become a distinguished artist, entered LS. He died in 1944, and fifty years later an exhibition of his work was on view in the Usher Art Gallery. A commemorative plaque has also been placed on the former family house near Exchequergate Arch.

In 1892 an issue of the LS magazine defended its own existence, which was presumably under threat. The magazine continued into the 1970s, and is a major source of evidence for the Garton Archive publications, including this document (editor).

In 1893 LHS began its life in Christ's Hospital Terrace, but moved shortly afterwards to its new site on Lindum Hill. Miss Agnes Body was the first Headmistress (editor).

In 1895, Dean Wickham became Chairman of the Governors of LS. By this time, the sister school LHS had been in existence for two years, and the boys and girls were '...straitly charged to come and go

on opposite sides of Lindum Hill'. In the same year Lincolnian William E Withers joined the staff, and taught shorthand. One of his boys, CF Smith, became the first British winner of the Pitman's Silver Medal for distinction in that skill.

1896 was the last year of a boarder called Montagu Allwood, who wanted a career in horticulture. He was informed by the Headmaster that it would be a pleasant but un-remunerative career. Following more encouraging advice from Vickers, the School gardener, Allwood went on to build up a nursery of 250 acres with his brothers, and developed the famous Allwoodii carnations.

Headmaster Canon WW Fowler urged the need in 1897 for a gymnasium and school of carpentry, offering to raise the necessary funds himself. The same year Fowler was elected President of the Headmasters' Association and was the first Head of LS to be elected a member of the prestigious Headmasters' Conference. Publication of the school magazine was resumed after a break of a few years, and was for the first time called '*The Lincolnian*'.

The year 1898 saw the first issue of the LHS magazine, which continued for most of the life of the school until it closed in 1974.

The 20th Century

In the year 1900 the last connection of LS with Greyfriars ended, as the 'Middle' School came uphill to join the 'Grammar' School. The School was also recognised as a public school, and the triumphant Headship of Canon WW Fowler, shortly to be made an Oxonian DSc, was completed. At LHS Miss CE Ashburner succeeded Miss Agnes Body as Headmistress.

The Old Girls' Association of LHS was inaugurated at a meeting on 7th November 1901. In the same year Frank Harding Chambers, inevitably nicknamed 'Jerry', took over the post of Headmaster, the first layman to be appointed since Elizabethan times. Apparently he was a formidable figure and would stroll down the corridors with a cane under his arm. LHS flourished with 224 girls compared to 134 boys at LS. The Old Girls' Association of LHS was formed, and amalgamated with the Old Lincolnians' Society in 1974 to form the present Old Christ's Hospital Lincolnians Society.

The first part of the present site of LCHS to be brought into use was the First Field, opened for Sports Day in June 1902. In the same year the School's first Cadet Corps came into existence. The number of girls at LCH was 222.

An innovation in December 1903 was a hockey match between LS and LHS, held on the latter's grounds. Apparently the girls had skill on their side, whereas the boys had weight and speed. The teams were so evenly matched that neither side could score. The following year the boys won 9-0.

The Governors of LS made some modest provision for scientific equipment in 1904. About the same time the department of Education recognised the urgent need for new buildings.

On Wednesday 6th June 1906 the tablet above the middle of the cloisters in the new LS building was unveiled by Mr Arthur C Newsum, Mayor of Lincoln and President of the Old Lincolnians.

There were 183 girls at LHS in 1907, compared to only 110 boys at LS.

In 1910 Miss CE Ashburner was appointed Headmistress of LHS and died ten years later in 1910. When Miss Lucie Savill succeeded Miss Ashburner in 1910 there were 240 pupils at LHS.

In 1911 the new wing of LHS, which included the gymnasium, was opened by Miss Wordsworth, Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. Also in that year the Old Girls' Dramatic Group came into being with a production of 'Town and Todgers', adapted from Martin Chuzzlewit.

In 1920 a half-day holiday was declared to mark the 400th pupil at LHS. In the same year the *School Hymn Book* was compiled.

John 'Johnny' Phillips joined the LS staff in 1921 as English master. He had been interviewed and shown around the School by Headmaster Moxon, and served LS for 43 years.

The year 1930 saw the foundation of the LHS Orchestra, which continued for many years under the direction of Mr Mountney.

The war intervened in 1940 and Witham View was closed. A party of LHS VIth form girls worked on the land, supervised by two members of staff. They later recorded their work in scenes on the studio wall.

On July 22nd 1941 Miss Edith Fowle, school mistress at LHS, was killed when Greestone House was destroyed by a disabled Hampden bomber. Two days later your Archive Assistant was born in the Bromhead Nursing Home (editor).

Also in 1941 the Blacklock Prize for music at LHS was endowed, and 'fire-watching' was introduced at LS. Senior boys were on duty at night, sleeping on camp beds, to deal with incendiary bombs. The portly Dr Gordon Slater took charge of music in place of his assistant Clifford Hewis, who had been called up. Headmaster Mr Franklin brought the house down by announcing that, '...a ripe plum has fallen into our laps'!

Four new records at LS were set in 1942; Toyne (14-16 long jump), Phillips (14-16 440 yards), Bailey (high jump 14-16) and Havard (440 yards under 12).

In 1943 the Governors of LS allowed the Home Guard permission to use selected points on the School roof as observation posts during World War 2. A 'Spotters' Club' was formed, and the boys became experts in sighting and identifying both friendly and enemy planes. In the same year Miss IV Cleave was appointed Headmistress of LHS (editor).

The year 1944 saw the demise of 'Inter-school Activities', a programme inaugurated during the previous year to foster social relations between pupils for LS and LHS. Following a trip on the train to Southwell Minster, supervised by a master and a mistress, several pupils from both schools mischievously left the train at Newark without permission to attend Newark Fair. The two teachers were compelled to report the incident to the respective Heads, and social relations ceased!

Among LS school leavers in 1945 was Captain of the School Graham Reedman, who later became Director of Education in Darlington, and Deryck Goodwin, who became a research physicist and consultant on church lighting. Among many other churches he re-lit Lincoln Cathedral.

In 1946, JCH Wright, Captain of School House, broke three LS records; the 5-mile cross-country, the mile open and the 440 open.

Several notable boys left LS in 1947. These included Keith Fordyce (Marriott) and John H d'A Kershaw who followed successful careers in broadcasting. In the same year it was mooted that LS and LHS might be brought together under a joint Board of Governors.

In 1948 the much-loved and respected caretaker Jack Green retired from LS. I seem to recall that he returned during the 1950s to do part-time work (editor).

In 1949 a German girl called Kristin Dorrie spent two terms at LHS, and lived among about 20 other boarders at 14 Minster Yard. She spoke very warmly of the School's '...great efficiency as well as personal atmosphere'.

In September 1950 a service was held in the Cathedral to commemorate Lincolnians who fell in WW2, and a plaque was unveiled at the School. Former Headmaster Charles E Young, who had served in the RAF during both World Wars, gave the address. In November, Headmaster GF Franklin expressed the hope that it might be possible to find a room for the elementary teaching of Biology.

In 1951 Mr EM Williams ('Weary') retired. The GCE was first mentioned in the Governor's Minutes during that year.

February 1952 saw the formation of a joint Dramatic Society between the former pupils of LHS and LS. The first play was '*Treasure Hunt*', and later in 1955 Charmian Corthorn and Nevile Camamile played leading roles in '*The Chiltern Hundreds*'.

In July 1953 LS staged a pageant-play called '*Elizabethan Schooldays*', which was based on the history of the School in the reign of Elizabeth I. It was written and produced by Revd RP 'Bunny' Baker, and all eyes were on the other Classics master Mr JA ('Jab') Baxter who played the part of the doddering usher John Plumtre. In the same year LHS was visited by the famous Mr (later Sir) Nikolaus Pevsner, who gave a talk on architecture. A new girl that year was Mary Whitlam, who became a prolific writer of romances and other stories.

Mr Ivan Sexton joined the staff of LS in 1954 to teach General Science and Biology. Captain of the School was Michael Marshall who later became a bishop.

The new LS gates, paid for by alumni, were dedicated in 1956 by the Sub-dean as a memorial to those who were killed in World War 2.

On 6th July 1957, to mark the School's Diamond Jubilee, the High School's Savill House was opened and dedicated, and converted into flat-lets for the use of alumni and by Old Girls' Housing Association. Present was Miss Savill herself, who was delighted by the choice of name.

Miss IV Cleave retired from her post as Headmistress of LHS in 1964 and was replaced by Miss Maureen Leahy, who assumed the role until 1970 (editor).

In 1971, LS and LHS totalled in excess of 1,000 pupils between them. The Governors, under pressure from the government, and following correspondence with the Department of Education and Science,

resolved to submit proposals and publish notices ‘...for the significant enlargement and change of character of the Lincoln School.’ The winds of change were inevitable.

LHS reached the record total of 595 pupils in 1972. At LS applications flooded in for the vacant post of Headmaster. The emergent victor was Mr H Arthur Behenna, who was appointed expressly to oversee the comprehensive re-organisation and amalgamation of the four schools to form LCHS.

By 1973 ‘comprehensivisation’ was well under way. The Headmistress of LHS, Mrs SM Woods, reported in the magazine that the staff of LS and LHS were becoming more closely linked on a personal and social level.

In 1974 Lincoln School, Lincoln High School, Myle Cross School and St Giles School combined to form Lincoln Christ’s Hospital School (LCHS). Professor Charles Garton speculates that St Hugh might have turned in his grave on learning that girls were to be admitted. However Professor Garton’s painstaking research also informs us that St Hugh, as a young man, was once allegedly tempted by a pretty girl who excited him by touching his arm. It is said that to preserve his purity, St Hugh nicked from his flesh the offending spot once the girl had departed in complete discomfiture. LCHS was officially inaugurated by Sir Francis Hill, a distinguished former Chairman of Governors of both LS and LHS.

About the Author

The Garton Room at LCHS is named after Professor Charles Garton who was a distinguished pupil at Lincoln School from 1937 to 1944. He was a Christ’s Hospital Exhibitioner in 1937, a school prefect and sixth form librarian in 1943-4, and Captain of the School in 1944. After serving in the Royal Navy, where he worked in Intelligence, he entered King’s College, Cambridge on a Scholarship, and graduated in 1949 with a First Class Honours degree in Classics, including a double distinction in Greek and Latin verse composition, and several other scholarship awards. After Cambridge, he pursued postgraduate studies in Greek Tragedy at the Universities of Basle and Rome. He was awarded his MA (Hons) (Cantab) in 1953.

Charles began his teaching career in 1951 as Assistant Lecturer in Classics at the University of Hull, and in 1953 was appointed Lecturer in Classics at the University of Durham Northern Division, which later became the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. In 1965 Charles emigrated to the USA, taking up a post in Classical Studies at the State University of New York at Buffalo, and gaining full Professorship in 1972. He remained in post until his retirement in 1991.

The School owes the very existence of the Garton Archive to the generosity of Professor Garton, and to his collection of books, documents and other items housed in the Archive. We are also indebted to him for his painstaking research over many decades, which offers a fascinating window on the rich history of LCHS.