



This photograph, taken in 1962, features geography master Mr John A Shirley (alias 'Jack' or 'Jim') teaching in the geography room, now Room 201 which is still used for teaching geography. The photograph shows a typical scene in a classroom in the 1950s and 60s. Most masters wore their academic gowns to teach in those days, partly to indicate their status, but also to protect their ubiquitous sports jackets from the ravages of chalk dust! In Mr Shirley's case the chalks were multi-coloured as he was a talented artist known for the colourful maps that he drew on the board.

Mr Shirley was one of the legendary masters at Lincoln School. He graduated from St Catharines College, Cambridge with a BA (Hons) in geography, and was later awarded his MA. He joined the staff in 1948 following a year of teacher-training in Cambridge, and became joint Deputy Head in 1972, two years before Lincoln Christ's Hospital School was formed. He continued to teach at LCHS until his retirement in 1985. He died suddenly in January 2006, and in a moving tribute to his life and work, former colleague Maureen Smith wrote in the OCHLS newsletter in 2006 that he was a man of many parts; academic, artist, raconteur, devoted husband, proud father and loving grandfather. He interrupted his studies at Cambridge during the war to join the Royal Navy, where he was later commissioned in 1944 as a Sub-Lieutenant RNVR, and served aboard HMS Alnwick Castle on the North Russian Convoys.

I remember 'Jim' as a gifted and committed teacher, who was a strict disciplinarian, and who commanded respect from all his pupils. Woe betide anyone who stepped out of line! I recall one occasion when two likely lads were caught playing noughts and crosses in one of his lessons. 'Jim' was not amused, and the two miscreants each received 'three of the best' on the backside! He was also a keen sportsman, and played rugby for the Lindum Rugby Club for many years, although it was for soccer that he won a 'Blue' during his Cambridge days. I came to know 'Jim' much better during the sixth-form. Although I was not an 'A' level geographer, I played for the first eleven at football for two years, and he was the master in charge of the team. Relationships with most masters were a little more relaxed in the sixth-form, and I found him to be a man of great sensitivity, with a caring concern for his pupils, and always ready to give sound advice on any matter. As Maureen Smith wrote in her tribute, 'The pupils he taught and the staff he guided during his long career have cause to thank him and have many fond memories of him.'