

A HISTORY OF MICHAELHOUSE, 1896-1952

by

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## INTRODUCTION

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this thesis is straightforward: to survey the development of a 'private' school over a period of a little more than half a century. In the survey, I hoped to indicate the way in which the school developed as an institution: the main elements in its government and the way it was affected by changing conditions; to describe the main features of its educational programme: curricular and extra-curricular activities; and to attempt an assessment of its achievement and an analysis of its distinguishing characteristics. The period covered is from the foundation of the school in 1896 to the resignation of F.R. Snell in 1952, the latter date being chosen chiefly because the distance proper to a thesis did not seem possible in a survey of this kind for the succeeding period. I have, however, also included a chapter on the precursor of Michaelhouse as relevant background information; and I have taken the story of the Old Boys up to the present, since most of them had been at school before 1952.

Although I have included an assessment of the school's achievements in the list of purposes, it soon became apparent that my aim should be more modest. The interaction of home, school and society is so complex that a proper study of the school's rôle, even in so obvious a matter as academic achievement and particularly in relation to such aims as leadership or religious development, would require a careful sociological analysis which would have made the thesis extremely unwieldy and for which sufficient information, especially on the earlier stages, was in any case not available. My more modest aim was therefore to place the development of the school and the education it provided in perspective.

### ARRANGEMENT OF THE THESIS

Except for the chapter on the Old Boys, the chapters are arranged chronologically and are divided according to the rectors (except that Todd's rectorship is divided into two, to mark the change

from a private school to a public trust and from Pietermaritzburg to Balgowan). This 'dynastic' approach seemed both simplest and most appropriate. It has the advantage of emphasising the key rôle played by the rectors in the school's history, it provides an opportunity to display the pattern of the school's life in successive periods as well as the threads in the pattern and it enables the school's development to be placed in its setting. Within each chapter various aspects are distinguished, but I have not followed a consistent order in treating such matters as staffing, curriculum, sport, finance and so on. The flexibility of the arrangement runs the risk of permitting the perspective to change; but a more rigidly disciplined arrangement would have made it difficult not only to maintain the narrative but also to emphasise those features of the story that I believe require emphasis in order to make explicit the development of the school as a whole.

Without necessarily following this order, the method I have therefore adopted in presentation has been:

- (1) to divide the material according to the rectors' terms of office;
- (2) to indicate important attitudes and developments outside the small world of Michaelhouse;
- (3) to describe the events in the Michaelhouse community, with particular reference to the rôle of the Board of Governors, the rôle of the rector, the staffing situation, the curriculum and academic achievement, the organised extra-curricular activities, the informal activities of the boys, the financial position of the school and the development of the grounds and buildings;
- (4) to offer an assessment of the school's (and more particularly the several rectors') achievements in different fields in relation to standards and attitudes acceptable at the time and in relation to what had been achieved already.

There are, however, some important modifications to this scheme, notably:

(1) I have treated the development of the Board of Governors as an institution in three main parts: its establishment, which falls naturally into the sections dealing with Todd (especially ch.3); and its development, which I have dealt with in the chapters on Bushell (Ch.7) and Snell (Ch.9).

(2) The foundation of Cordwalles specifically as a preparatory school for Michaelhouse was obviously important. For convenience I have attached to the brief account of Cordwalles in the chapter on Brown (ch.5) an even briefer general reference to other preparatory schools which served Michaelhouse before then.

(3) I had intended treating the development of the Old Boys' Club pari passu with the rest of the narrative. It appears, however, to have been a negligible force until the twenties; and throughout the period of this survey it had a life of its own, though its path obviously and gradually more significantly intertwined with that of the school. I have therefore dealt with the development of the Club in a separate chapter. Apart from references to the two World Wars and occasional references elsewhere, I have also confined the treatment of individual Old Boys to this chapter because it might otherwise have seemed that I was attributing too much significance to their presence at Michaelhouse at a particular time. The exploits of Old Boys on battlefields (and playing fields), on the other hand, have a more direct relevance to the life of the school - partly because they are dramatic and partly because the Old Boys are more likely to be near contemporaries of the boys in school.

I am uneasily aware that there is a very large number of footnotes. For the most part, they are simple references to the source of the information and perhaps it would have been legitimate (as well as easier for both writer and reader) to omit many of these, especially references to St Michael's Chronicle; on the other hand, even on some straightforward pieces of information, the authenticity may vary according to whether the source is the school magazine, the minutes of an official committee or the report of a rector, and I

have preferred to err on the side of giving too many sources rather than of giving too few. Some of the footnotes provide additional information or argument to support a statement in the text; and occasionally they have information which is not strictly relevant to the thesis but which may be of interest to a reader. I have placed the footnotes on the page opposite to the relevant text: because there are so many they would have been typographically cumbersome at the bottom of the page and they would have been irritating to the reader at the end of each chapter.

#### METHOD AND SOURCES

The research method I have adopted has been, in general terms, to assemble information, to assess and analyse the authenticity of the information and to present it in the way I have mentioned. It is necessary, however, to refer to the sources more specifically.

1. School records. The school authorities were most co-operative and placed no obstacle in the way of my consulting documents. The main sources have naturally been the official and semi-official records of the school. Of these the most important are:

(a) St Michael's Chronicle. This is the school magazine, begun in 1897 and published twice a year since then, usually winter and summer. Its editor was always a master, though boys sometimes assisted and for a short time wrote the editorials (during the second World War); and most of the reports until the late thirties were written by members of staff. This has been my main source of information for events at the school and about Old Boys.

(b) Minutes of the Board of Governors. These begin in 1900, before the Board was formally constituted. Besides recording the proceedings of the meetings of the Board, the volumes contain, for most of the period from Pascoe's rectorship, the rectors' formal reports to the Board, but for the early period there are no reports available and for part of Snell's rectorship the reports are filed separately. From the twenties the volumes also contain rectors' memoranda on a variety of subjects (generally amplifications of

points made in the report, but sometimes on such matters as long-term planning); and there are also, from time to time, reports of sub-committees of the Board (latterly filed separately) and there are a few letters filed with the minutes, though there are few of these until the late forties. These records have been the main source of information on matters of policy and finance, but they have also provided an additional source of information about events at the school.

(c) Minutes of the Old Boys' Club. These begin in 1903 and record the annual meetings of the Club, including its constitution; and they also record committee meetings from the late forties. But the 'annual' meetings were not regular until the twenties. These minutes have been my main source for the development of the Old Boys' Club; they have also provided some information on individual Old Boys; and they have occasionally given additional information about events at the school.

(d) Hannah's Typescript. Shortly after he retired in 1930, C.W. Hannah wrote a short history of the school, basing it on his intermittent experience on the staff almost from the inception of the school. It was particularly useful for the earliest years.

(e) Miscellaneous records. In the Diocesan Secretary's office there are a number of 'Miscellaneous' files containing documents and correspondence on an assortment of topics and they have occasionally thrown some light on matters of policy; but there are none of these records until the late twenties. At the school, chiefly in the crypt, there are a few 'Letter Books', Mark Books and 'Miscellaneous' files; but, apart from the admission register, I could unfortunately find nothing for Todd's rectorship, and in general these sources did not add much to the information obtained elsewhere. There are also various plaques which served as a check for war casualties, dates of buildings and a few other items.

## 2. Personal Interview and Letters.

(a) Old Boys. In order to taste the flavour of the school at

different periods and in an attempt to assess the boys' views of the school, I spoke to or wrote to a large number of Old Boys and I had most generous responses from at least four from each rectorship, including the boy first registered at Michaelhouse (C.F. Moor). Some of the responses were verbal, some by letter and one was a tape recording: when the response was verbal I usually made a note of the Old Boy and the information but occasionally I unfortunately recorded only the incident mentioned. The information thus obtained was unavoidably selective, much of it was anecdotal and no one's memory is infallible; but much of it was carefully considered. I used this source sparingly for information, but it helped me a great deal to interpret - I hope correctly - the written records.

(b) Staff. Some members of staff from Pascoe's time onwards (the earliest whom I was able to consult was K.M. Pennington) helped to provide a 'staff' point of view, again necessarily selective. I have, however, very rarely referred to a member of staff by name as a source of information or opinion.

(c) The Rectors. The surviving rectors from the period of the thesis are W.F. Bushell, R.F. Currey and F.R. Snell, and I was fortunate indeed to have not only long letters (or, in the case of Snell, a tape recording) from each of them but to be able to see them all. They were all both candid and generous in their comments and I regret that the sort of insight they provided was not available for their predecessors. (I am confident, however, that the interpretation I have given to the story of Michaelhouse, which attaches great significance to developments from Bushell's time, rests on the record, not on the happy chance that he and his successors are still very much alive to tell the tale.)

(d) Others. To obtain biographical information about the early rectors, I approached a number of people. For Todd, it was singularly difficult, for although the Master of Christ's College (Lord Todd) was most helpful about his Cambridge career, other attempts to get information about his pre- and post-Michaelhouse

career - through his sister's publishers, through the parish of his first curacy, through schools he had possibly taught at and through a friend of his Pietermaritzburg days - drew a blank. Fortunately, however, my brother, M. Barrett, visited Todd's grave and the verger by chance mentioned Todd's elder daughter, Mrs Howard, who subsequently in correspondence and then in most cordial meetings provided me with information about his post-Michaelhouse career and some glimpses - but, alas, very fleeting - into his earlier life. For Hugh-Jones, his son (Prof. M. Hugh-Jones) was most helpful and the Librarian of the College of St Mark and St John kindly lent a history of that College. For Brown, his College (Caius) and the schools at which he taught kindly provided information; and his nephew, A.W. Brown, made helpful additions. There remain gaps in the story of Pascoe, but they would have been larger but for the help of his niece, Mrs E. Martin, and of Jesus College, Cambridge, and Uppingham. On other points, J.H.E. Besant (first headmaster of Cordwalles), and W. Whittaker, J.O. Smythe and F.Q. Stubbings (secretaries to the Board of Governors) were particularly consulted.

### 3. Contemporary Records.

(a) For Bishop's College there are no school records. I therefore relied on the contemporary press, the records of the Diocese of Maritzburg and the Natal Blue Books (together with A.F. Hattersley's More Annals of Natal, Shuter and Shooter, 1936, and 'Natalian's' A South African Boy, London, 1897).

(b) For Michaelhouse, to supplement material from the main sources and particularly for the early period, the records of the Diocese of Natal are helpful.

(c) For Natal Education, to provide some perspective for the picture of Michaelhouse, especially but not exclusively for examination results, the Reports of the head of the Department of Education (variously called Superintendent Inspector, Superintendent and Director) of first the Colony and then the Province of Natal have been the main source, supplemented by occasional references to

the contemporary press.

4. Secondary sources. The list of these is in the Bibliography. Some of these were used to obtain particular information (e.g. Crockford's for biographical information on Todd, Hugh-Jones and the principals of Bishop's College); others were used for the general and educational background (e.g. Malherbe's rather old but still standard history of education in South Africa and the very recent A History of Natal by Brookes and Webb). But the most important for providing some points of comparison are the histories of certain schools: they include two diocesan schools (Bishop's in Cape Town and St Andrew's in Grahamstown) and two Natal schools (the independent Hilton College and the provincial high school, Maritzburg College). (Another Natal provincial school, Durban High School, published its history when the work on this thesis was well advanced and I have not used it for detailed comparison.) Though these histories were valuable, and R.F. Currey's history of St Andrew's is particularly urbane and comprehensive, there are naturally many points on which it was impossible to make comparisons; and a similar qualification holds for my use of Kalton's study of English public schools (with this difference, that Kalton's study is of schools in a different country at a different time). They have nevertheless provided some important points of reference.

#### CAVEAT

I have detailed - perhaps too minutely sometimes - most aspects of life at Michaelhouse. There is, however, very little on the 'domestic' life with which matrons, housekeepers and nurses are concerned, although this is obviously not unimportant in a boarding school; but the evidence is so uneven that I thought it better to exclude this aspect as a topic except where it clearly affected the general development of the school. For the same reason, the rôle of the African and Indian staff is excluded.

I should make it plain that, although I have attempted to maintain a standard of detachment, I am an Old Boy of the school



and my happy involvement in teaching for ten years in another school may not have eradicated the tendency of Old Boys to look for achievements rather than disasters. Moreover, I was at the school from 1938 to 1942 and therefore reached a position of seniority under Snell; and my respectful admiration for him may have coloured my approach to what happens to have been, in some respects, a controversial period. But I believe I have selected the evidence for presentation fairly and I have not knowingly allowed the fact that I am an Old Boy to distort such judgments as I make.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The extent of my debt to others will be plain from the section above on the Sources, but I am particularly grateful for the encouragement and co-operation I received from those associated with the school: the Board of Governors and the Old Boys' Club, the present Rector and the Bursar (who is also Secretary of the Old Boys' Club), the three retired rectors and a number of members of staff. I am grateful, too, for the help of the staff of the library of the University of Natal, the Natal Society Public Library and the Natal Archives. I especially appreciate the generosity of Mr. K.M. Pennington in placing his unrivalled knowledge of the school at my disposal. And finally I must thank my supervisor, Professor R.G. MacMillan, whose patience, though probably sorely tried, provided constant, helpful and critical encouragement.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in: S.J. Curtis: History of Education in Great Britain;  
University Tutorial Press; 1957 edition, p.250.

<sup>2</sup> Curtis: op.cit., p.155.

<sup>3</sup> Curtis: op.cit., p.152.

## CHAPTER 1

### A PRECURSOR OF MICHAELHOUSE

#### MID-VICTORIAN EDUCATION

'The two years at th' academy 'ud ha' done well enough, if I'd meant to make a miller and farmer of him, but he's had a fine sight more schoolin' nor I ever got... But I should like Tom to be a bit of a scholar, so as he might be up to the tricks o' these fellows as talk fine and write with a flourish.' And so Tom Tulliver was sent to be educated by a clergyman with the magic formula "M.A.Oxon" after his name.

When 'The Mill on the Floss' was published (1860) there were many respectable millers and farmers in England who would have shared Mr Tulliver's opinion: schooling was not something accepted as part of the natural order of things but a possibility to be debated (if it was considered at all) in a serious family conclave. In the very next year, the Newcastle Commission reported on the state of education in England. It indicated that large numbers did not attend school at all and that most attended for no more than four years. Of a total of just over two-and-a-half million pupils, only thirty-five thousand were reckoned to be in public and endowed grammar schools<sup>1</sup>; and, as a subsequent report showed (The Taunton Commission, 1863), many of these offered little more than an elementary education<sup>2</sup>. Education was nevertheless a lively issue. Elementary education was provided for the bulk of the children, chiefly by the Anglican 'National' schools, and the famous Act of 1870 provided for local boards to make education compulsory. Moreover, efforts were being made to broaden the curriculum, both in elementary schools - where the three Rs predominated and the fourth (Religion) aroused controversy - and in grammar and public schools. The Clarendon Commission<sup>3</sup> drew attention to the narrowly interpreted classical education which meant that 'much (time) is absolutely thrown away' and boys left at the age of 19 unable to write correct English; and public schools - those not receiving state aid or being run for private profit - were not only being reformed through the influence of men like Arnold of Rugby and Thring of Uppingham but were also

- <sup>4</sup> For the general picture of education in South Africa, see E.G. Malherbe: Education in South Africa (1652-1922); Juta & Co.; 1925; Ch.VI, especially pp.92-97 and Ch.IX, especially pp.184-186.
- <sup>5</sup> The Natal Witness advertisements, especially January numbers from 1872.
- <sup>6</sup> D. McIntyre: The Diocesan College, Rondebosch, South Africa: A Century of 'Bishops'; Juta & Co.; 1950; pp.8-9 and 23. (Hereafter, the book is referred to as A Century of 'Bishops'.)  
R.F. Currey: St.Andrew's College, Grahamstown, 1855-1955; Basil Blackwell; 1955; pp.11-12, 14, and 35. (Hereafter, the book is referred to as St.Andrew's College.)
- <sup>7</sup> Natal Blue Book 1871, Return of Population p.34. Unless otherwise stated, all other references to Blue Books are to the reports on Education.

proliferating to cater for the needs of the rising middle class.

#### SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION

In South Africa, the situation was not very different, except that whereas in England elementary schools were nearly all denominational, here they were generally the responsibility of local committees, aided, as in England, by government grants<sup>4</sup>. The main effort was to provide elementary education, and though the country districts were much less well catered for than the towns, the numbers in school were steadily increasing, and important laws were passed by both the colonies and both the republics in the period 1865-1875 to regularise the relations between Government and the schools. As in England, many children were educated in private establishments, often claiming the grandiose title of 'academy' and run, like one in Harrismith, by a clergyman<sup>5</sup>. With the exception of Natal, schools which provided secondary education were invariably denominational or trust establishments. In the Cape there were, among others, the two Anglican 'Colleges', the Diocesan College, Rondebosch, and St Andrew's, Grahamstown, founded in 1849 and 1856 respectively and both, from 1875, enjoying, by virtue of their collegiate status, a special subsidy from public funds for 'higher education'<sup>6</sup>. Natal was exceptional in that there were already two government high schools by 1870: that in Pietermaritzburg founded in 1863 and subsequently known as Maritzburg College; and that in Durban founded in 1866. This difference may have had a bearing on the fortunes of the first Diocesan College for boys founded in Pietermaritzburg in 1871. Yet in some respects the time was favourable.

#### NATAL ABOUT 1870

The European population was small, just over 14,000<sup>7</sup>, but the economy was beginning to pick up as a result of the 'overberg' trade to the diamond fields. Pietermaritzburg was, moreover, not only the seat of Government, with a relatively high proportion of civil servants likely to appreciate the advantages of a 'grammar school

- <sup>8</sup> E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb: A History of Natal; University of Natal; 1965; p.106.
- <sup>9</sup> A.F. Hattersley: More Annals of Natal; Shuter and Shooter; 1936; p.222. See also E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb: op.cit., p.78.
- <sup>10</sup> E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb: op.cit., p.111.
- <sup>11</sup> Natal Dio. Maritzburg Synodical I 1869-1909: The First Report of the Work of the Church...1869; p.7.
- <sup>12</sup> Acts of the Diocesan Synod at its second session holden in S.Saviour's Church Maritzburg (29th June - 7th July 1870).

education'; it was also a garrison town, like Grahamstown, and regiments were good for trade and education as well as security.

There was, however, a major obstacle to the successful launching of a Church school in Natal which the brother schools in the Cape had not had to overcome, at least when they were struggling for recognition. Bishop Colenso regarded his missionary work among the Zulus as 'his most important duty'<sup>8</sup> and his achievements in African education were of incalculable value; but, although he inspired the foundation of 'Dean Green's Grammar School', he did not take the same measure of interest in it as Gray in Cape Town and Armstrong in Grahamstown did in their foundations, and the Colenso controversy proved too much for the school<sup>9</sup>. When Bishop W.K. Macrorie was consecrated Bishop of Maritzburg in 1869, therefore, he had a seriously weakened Church to support his educational plans. Court decisions had awarded the temporalities of the Anglican Church in Natal to Colenso as Bishop, so that Macrorie's diocese, which was coterminous with Colenso's, was now 'divided largely into clergy without churches and churches without clergy'<sup>10</sup>. Macrorie nevertheless felt that an urgent necessity was the provision of denominational education for the young colonists 'especially for the upper and middle classes, who must be thought of as the most influential element either for or against the Church'<sup>11</sup>, and two schools were soon founded: St Mary's at Richmond, for girls, which subsequently became St Anne's; and Bishop's College, which was the precursor of Michaelhouse although its life was short.

#### A DIOCESAN COLLEGE

The details of the story are somewhat obscure, but there was clearly enthusiasm in the Diocesan Synod of 1870 about the prospects of having a grammar school 'under the supervision of the Church'. A resolution welcomed all proposals suggested, but the Synod 'would specially urge the great need for a grammar school', and it hoped that it would have provision for boarders<sup>12</sup>. It seemed then that the school was about to start, for a Graduate of the University of

- 13 Ibid; Resolution 5.
- 14 Natal Blue Book 1872; p.19.
- 15 Crockford's Clerical Directory 1898.
- 16 Deed 219/1873.
- 17 "Natalian": A South African Boy; passim. (London 1897). (The author, born in 1857, reminisces about the Government School, Pietermaritzburg; Hermansburg School; the High School, Pietermaritzburg (subsequently Maritzburg College); and Hilton College.



Cambridge was expected shortly from England<sup>13</sup>; but there is no record of the school's functioning until 1872, when the Superintendent of Education reported that the numbers at Maritzburg College had risen from 29 to 40 in spite of 'two new boarding schools of the secondary class, viz., the Rev. W.O. Newbom's school at Hilton, and the Rev. C.C. Pritchard's in Pietermaritzburg'<sup>14</sup>.

Charles Collwyn Pritchard had won an exhibition to Brasenose, Oxford, where he graduated in 1869. After two years as curate in Rugby, he was appointed Chaplain to the Bishop of Maritzburg and Warden of Bishop's College<sup>15</sup>. The school was well placed, opposite the Bishop's residence in Loop Street and at the fashionable end of the town near the garrison at Fort Napier. The property was presumably rented for the first year or two, but in 1873 W. Lloyd sold it to the trustees of the College, P.C. Sutherland, D.B. Scott and C.F. Dickinson, the deed stipulating somewhat optimistically, if not naively, that the College was 'to consist of a body of Students under the care of a Warden in Priests Orders the said Students to profess ex animo the Catholic Faith and to live religiously together studying Theology, the Latin Tongue, Mathematics and all else appertaining to sound learning and for the carrying out and fuller explication of such objects' as the statutes of the Diocesan Synod laid down<sup>16</sup>.

How 'religiously' they studied together may be doubted. If 'Natalian', writing in 1897 about this period, is to be believed, boys took even less naturally to schooling than their descendants: the sjambok and - less effectively - prizes were almost the only incentives to attend to lessons, and masters were liable to a variety of ignominious pranks, among which a bucket resting on a door ready to pour its contents on a master was a relatively mild diversion<sup>17</sup>. It is likely, too, that attempts to establish grammar school academic standards were frustrated by the inadequate grounding which pupils had received - as late as 1890, Mr Gardner, an inspector from England, reported of the government high schools

- 18 Natal Government Departmental Reports, 1890-1; p.G4.
- 19 Natal Blue Book 1873; p.T3.
- 20 Crockford's Clerical Directory 1898. A.F. Hattersley, in Hilton Portrait; Shuter & Shooter; 1945; p.35, records that Prichard died in 1873. This may have arisen from a remark by F.S. Tatham in 1925 that Bishop's had had four heads in six years, one of whom died and another of whom was ill.
- 21 A letter in The Natal Witness, 23rd September, 1880. A letter in the issue of 22nd September mentioned that 'sickness and death' had removed two wardens and 'others had abandoned the work'. I can find no trace of wardens other than those named. It is possible that the Cambridge graduate referred to in the Diocesan Synod records was one of the 'extras', although Prichard is always referred to as the first warden; or there may have been another warden for a very brief spell between Moore and Bowditch.
- 22 Crockford's Clerical Directory 1898.
- 23 A letter in the supplement to The Natal Witness, 9th September, 1880.
- 24 Ibid.
- 25 Natal Blue Book 1877; p.W3.
- 26 Natal Blue Books 1873-1877.
- 27 Natal Blue Book 1878; p.4.

that 'nearly all the work is elementary in character and nine-tenths of their pupils never begin higher education'<sup>18</sup>. Bishop's nevertheless met a demand for denominational 'grammar' schooling, for in 1873 there were 43 boys enrolled (Maritzburg College had 53 and Hilton had 73)<sup>19</sup>, and it received a government grant of £50 which rose the following year to £100.

The first Warden did not, however, stay the pace of colonial schoolmastering long: in 1874 he returned to parochial work in England<sup>20</sup>, and was replaced by 'Mr George', who was, like some others of his time 'found wanting', and gave up almost immediately<sup>21</sup>. The Rev. Herbert Danial Moore was his successor, under whom numbers remained static, although those at both Maritzburg College (34) and Hilton (56) dropped considerably. But Moore lasted no longer than Prichard and in August 1877, perhaps after an interregnum, William Lamprey Bowditch, 28th wrangler of Clare, Cambridge, came from parochial work in London<sup>22</sup> - at 'the urgent request of the Bishop'<sup>23</sup>, he later asserted - to be Bishop's Chaplain and Warden of the College.

When Bowditch explained the closing of Bishop's College, he asserted that there were only ten dayboys and ten boarders when he took over<sup>24</sup>; but the Blue Book of 1877 gives 42 as the number on the role and 27 as the average attendance for the year and certainly the grant (which was based on numbers) remained at £100<sup>25</sup>. At all events, 1877 was a crucial year for the College. The fees and private contributions recorded in the Blue Books, having been comfortably over £1,000 hitherto, now were only about £600<sup>26</sup>, and Bowditch had to draw two years of his salary as Theological Tutor (£75 p.a.) to buy the necessary furniture for the school. The government grant was, moreover, withdrawn from private secondary schools at the end of 1877 because they were 'supported by the well-to-do classes' and it was government policy to establish its own high schools firmly<sup>27</sup> - in the competition among high schools, Maritzburg College numbers had gone down to 25. It is impossible

- 28 The Natal Witness, 18th September, 1880.
- 29 A letter in The Natal Witness, 14th October, 1880.
- 30 Sale notice in The Natal Witness, 20th July, 1880; and news item in the issue of 7th August.
- 31 The Natal Witness, 18th September, 1880.

in the absence of records to do more than guess at the numbers at Bishop's in its last few years, but as about sixty 'lads' were present at the supper to mark its closure in 1880<sup>28</sup>, one may suppose that the numbers at the school remained over twenty and were perhaps as many as forty (the 'lads' presumably included old boys of the College). If, then, boys were still attending, why did the school close?

#### REASONS FOR CLOSURE

Financial difficulties were undoubtedly the immediate cause. There were bond charges, salaries for a part-time and a full-time assistant, wages and - most important - boys to be fed. The Zulu War of 1879 pushed up prices, particularly in the garrison town. And so, by 1880, Bowditch found the institution £700 in debt. 'Found' is probably the right word, for Bowditch claimed with disingenuous candour in the subsequent controversy that he was 'so utterly without business capacity of any sort' that he had 'steadily refused to be in any way responsible financially'<sup>29</sup>. In July 1880, the Trustees put the property up for auction, in the hope of making money out of the increased value of land consequent on the development of the railway towards Pietermaritzburg. But the upset price of £3,000 was not achieved, and the sale was withdrawn<sup>30</sup>. Although the school re-opened for the new term, it struggled for only a month longer and on 16th September a supper, attended by the Bishop, Dean Green, Canon Deedes (who was also an assistant master) and Dr Sutherland, formally marked the closure of the institution<sup>31</sup>. Although it was the end of the institution, the Diocesan records continue to refer to the 'Warden of Bishop's College' for several years, even after the land belonging to the Trust was sold in 1882 to Eliza Jane Usherwood for £2,500. (She, in turn, donated it to St Anne's so that its link with diocesan education continued.)

Financial difficulties alone, however, are not sufficient to account for the closing of the school. St Andrew's, Grahamstown, was facing similar difficulties at almost exactly the same time: their (much more generous) government grant was withdrawn in 1880, a controversy led to a heavy drop in numbers from 91 to 17 and the

- 32 R.F. Currey: St.Andrew's College; Ch.V.
- 33 The Times of Natal, 13th September, 1880.
- 34 The Natal Witness, 20th September, 1880.
- 35 Natal Blue Book 1883; and letter by Bowdith in The Natal Witness, 9th September, 1880.
- 36 The Natal Witness, 29th May, 1880 and 1st June, 1880.
- 37 The Natal Witness, 17th June, 1880:
- 38 The Natal Witness, 12th February, 1880.
- 39 The Natal Witness, August issues, 1880.
- 40 The Natal Witness, 26th August, 1880.
- 41 The Natal Witness, 5th August, 1880.

following year the headmaster resigned; but, in spite of the withdrawal of the garrison from Grahamstown in 1830, St Andrew's survived. St Andrew's had the advantage of a genuine 'college' section, preparing students for survey and F.A. examinations, and this helped to carry the 'school' section, especially when the government grant was renewed in 1882<sup>32</sup>. But it seems, too, that St Andrew's enjoyed a wider measure of public and clerical support than Bishop's College did.

The Times of Natal paid tribute to the zeal of Canon Bowditch for education<sup>33</sup> and the Natal Witness commented affectionately on the 'touching' ceremony when the Old Boys presented Bowditch with a farewell gift inscribed 'to our friend and teacher'<sup>34</sup>. Certainly Bowditch was an active man, participating fully in the life of the town, and he subsequently became, for a short time, an assistant at Maritzburg College under R.D. Clark, at a salary of £250 - more than three times as much as his salary had been as Theological Tutor<sup>35</sup>. Relations with Hilton and Maritzburg College seem to have been / amicable enough too. A football match was arranged between Hilton and Bishop's on the Oval in May 1880 - the Natal Witness thought it remarkable that Hilton should have won with seven touch downs in spite of the handicap of a 'strange ball' and strange rules, but a correspondent disputed both the number of touch downs and the reasoning<sup>36</sup>. The headmasters were obviously unaffected by the dispute, for soon afterwards Bowditch was one of the speakers at the Hilton Speech Day<sup>37</sup>. Earlier in the year R.D. Clark had been one of the guests of honour at the Bishop's prize giving<sup>38</sup>.

Bowditch was nevertheless a controversialist. Shortly before the College closed, he wrote a series of articles for The Natal Witness on the topical subject, 'Responsible Government'<sup>39</sup>, which, though ostensibly informative, made clear where his sympathies lay, and he spoke in favour of responsible government at a public meeting (in which he argued, incidentally, that responsible government would improve the lot of the natives)<sup>40</sup>. He aroused at least one lady's ire, too, by his publicly-expressed opinion that women should retiringly confine themselves to work about the house<sup>41</sup>. These

42 E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb: op.cit., p.111.

43 The Natal Witness, 1st October, 1880.

44 A.F. Hattersley: Hilton Portrait.

45 Crockford's Clerical Directory, 1898.

46 The Natal Witness, 11th November, 1880.



issues would hardly have affected support for a diocesan school, but they indicate the tone he was likely to adopt on a much more relevant issue: the schism in the Church occasioned by the Colenso dispute.

It is no doubt true that 'by 1873 it was clear that Colenso had already lost the battle. He was decreasing and the Church of the Province of South Africa was increasing<sup>42</sup>.' But the issue seems to have become transformed into a clash between 'high-church' and 'low-church' factions, and on this issue, Bowditch's attitude was unequivocal. In defending himself against the charge of 'ultra-ritualism' he wrote, after Bishop's College had closed, 'Within her pale (i.e. the Church of England), Protestantism is intellectually contemptible, morally impotent and spiritually dead<sup>43</sup>.' Since he felt that part of the reason for the collapse of Bishop's College was lack of support from the clergy, it seems likely that he attempted to make the College reflect the view of the Church that he believed the clergy ought to have. Arguments on vestments and ornaments, sacerdotalism and tractarianism now seem unreal; but in the 1870s they aroused strong passions. When there was little enough support for secondary education anyway, especially if it was based on the classical curriculum, a diocesan college was unlikely to be able to withstand the additional strain of sectional dissension over the type of religious education provided in the school. Although Hilton College was also under a clergyman, Newnham carefully tried to avoid unequivocal commitment to a particular party within the Church, and his successor in 1878 was not in orders<sup>44</sup>.

#### LINKS WITH THE FUTURE

The attempt to establish a diocesan school for European boys in Natal therefore came to an end after only nine years. Bowditch, who was Dean Green's son-in-law, remained in Pietermaritzburg for a few years and then migrated to Melbourne, where he taught in a Church of England Grammar School<sup>45</sup>. The buildings became for a time the home of the Victoria Club<sup>46</sup> before reverting to diocesan use as St Anne's. And the brave attempt was almost forgotten. Yet it is



possible that the experiment affected the fortunes of the future Michaelhouse.

It is possible, for instance - although there is no direct evidence on the subject - that one reason why the diocese was at first reluctant to make Todd's foundation a diocesan venture was the failure of the first attempt: Todd had proved that, among other things, a school associated with the Church of the Province of South Africa would attract pupils. Once this was established, moreover, the supporters of a diocesan link learned from their previous experience that financial responsibility must be more clearly defined.

It is, moreover, significant that three of the most prominent figures in early Michaelhouse history had been to school at Bishop's College: F.S. Tatham and Sir George Leuchars, generous benefactors and governors, and W. Whittaker, secretary to the board of governors for many years<sup>47</sup>.

- <sup>1</sup> E.A. Walker: A History of South Africa. Longmans, Green and Co. 2nd Edn., 1940, p.447.
- <sup>2</sup> Colony of Natal: Statistical Year Book, 1893 (pp.T2-3 and 1896 pp.J3-4). The borough of Durban and Umlazi are grouped together and the City of Pietermaritzburg and Umgeni.
- <sup>3</sup> Colony of Natal: Statistical Year Book, 1896, p.J4. The classification of professions of Europeans is: Merchants and Bankers 263; Legal 124; Medical 66; Clergy 173; Farmers 2434; Government 837.

## CHAPTER 2

TODD: MICHAELHOUSE A PRIVATE VENTURE OR A DIOCESAN SCHOOLLATE VICTORIAN BACKGROUND

By the mid-nineties, much had changed. Victorian imperialism was enjoying the task of bearing the White Man's burden further into the continent of Africa and was, for a brief spell, more assertively reluctant to share the burden with others; and the Public School seemed almost expressly designed to make the burden-carriers (or at least their directors) capable, just and assured. Rhodes was Prime Minister at the Cape and a permanently red swathe from the Cape to Cairo seemed not impossible. On the other hand, Kaiser Wilhelm was beginning to be jealous of British sea power; Japan was rapidly over-running Korea with disconcertingly modern equipment; the U.S.A. was making protective - or possessive - noises over the American continent; and, in a small republic, a determined Kruger, no less self-assured than the best Estonian, was coming to grips with the gold-mining interests. It was the decade in which the Jungle Books and Barrack Room Ballads were published and the author of Tom Brown's Schooldays died; but it was also the decade in which Shaw's first plays were published and Wilfred Owen was born.

In Natal, too, although the colony was probably more clearly conscious of its Victorian characteristics, the decade saw important changes. Natal continued to be protected by Imperial troops and Pietermaritzburg remained a garrison town with the fashionable area centred on Government House; but Responsible Government was introduced in 1893, with Sir John Robinson as Prime Minister, and the ministry supported Rhodes's idea of an economic union<sup>1</sup>. Pietermaritzburg still had the largest population at the beginning of the decade but was overtaken by Durban in 1896<sup>2</sup>. General agriculture was the mainstay of the colony's economy, farmers numbering nearly four times the merchants, bankers, legal and medical men<sup>3</sup>; but trade

- 4 Cecil Lewis and G.E. Edwards: Historical Records of the Church of the Province of South Africa. London, S.P.C.K. 1934, p.353.
- 5 Letter to me from Lord Todd, Master of Christ's College, quoting from the Biographical Register of Christ's College.
- 6 A letter to me from William Blackwood & Sons Ltd., indicates that Mona Maclean, published in 1892, sold 50,000 copies. See also Who Was Who, 1916-1928, under Travers.
- 7 Letter from Mrs. Gladys Robinson. Mrs. Robinson is the daughter of the late Mr. W. Pitcher, with whom Todd was closely associated. Mr. Pitcher's youngest son was Todd's godson.
- 8 Letter from Lord Todd.
- 9 C.W. Hannah believed he had been at Loretto, but there is apparently no record of this at the school.

with the goldfields was becoming vital, the coalfields of the north were beginning to be significant and sugar was now an important commodity. An outward sign of the more flourishing conditions was the City Hall in Pietermaritzburg, erected, burned down and re-erected in the nineties. It was, moreover, the decade in which the unhappy division in the Anglican Church in Natal was healed. Bishop Macrorie resigned in 1892 and on Michaelmas Day, 1893, the Rev. Arthur Hamilton Baynes was consecrated Bishop of Natal by the Archbishop of Canterbury<sup>4</sup>. By 1899 he succeeded in getting nearly all the parishes to join the Church of the Province of South Africa and, having accomplished what he regarded as his main task, resigned the following year. His successor was Frederick Samuel Baines, whom he had brought out from England in 1893, together with James Cameron Todd. Without Todd, Michaelhouse would never have been born; without Baines, the school would probably have died in infancy.

#### JAMES CAMERON TODD

Unfortunately very little is known about the personal life of the founder of Michaelhouse before he came to Natal, but there is enough to suggest that when he arrived in Natal at the age of 30 he already had a varied and in some respects very distinguished career behind him. He was born on 20th June 1863 in Rangoon<sup>5</sup> and he had two sisters, of whom one became a medical doctor and a best-seller novelist, writing under the name of 'Graham Travers' towards the end of the century<sup>6</sup>. His mother seems to have had a strong personality and distinguished bearing - at least one person remembers how her appearance in St Saviour's Cathedral caused the Pietermaritzburg ladies to reconsider seriously their view of a fashionable wardrobe<sup>7</sup>. Todd himself was educated at the Royal High School, Edinburgh, and at Glasgow University, where he took a B.Sc. degree<sup>8</sup> before teaching for a while, perhaps at Loretto, a Scottish Public School then beginning to establish a reputation<sup>9</sup>. For a reason which remains tantalisingly obscure, he then came out to the Northern Cape and Bechuanaland, where Rhodes's Company had begun to take an interest, where diamond

- 10 Crockford's Clerical Directory, 1901.
- 11 Diocese of Kimberley and Kuruman, Golden Jubilee 1911-1961, p.36.
- 12 Crockford's Clerical Directory, 1901.
- 13 Crockford's Clerical Directory, 1901 and Lord Todd's letter. From the latter it is clear that Canon Todd was elected scholar as a result of his success in the examinations in 1891.
- 14 Crockford's Clerical Directory, 1901.
- 15 Cecil Lewis and G.E. Edwards: op.cit., p.349.
- 16 Ibid, p.352.
- 17 A.T. Wirgman: Life of James Green; Longmans, Green & Co.; 1909; Vol.II, p.188.
- 18 Colony of Natal: Report of Superintendent of Education for 1898, pp.3-4. Previously his title was Superintendent Inspector of Schools.
- 19 Colony of Natal: Statistical Year Book, 1896, pp.J3-4. The figures are: 1885: 3922 Europeans, 3783 Natives, 1480 Indians; 1895/6: 7608 Europeans, 7049 Natives, 2862 Indians.
- 20 The Statistical Year Book for 1896, pp.J1-2, shows a total of 11,255 European children between 5 and 14 (inclusive). In his Report of the Superintendent Inspector of Schools for that year (p.6), Russell records 8,180 pupils in schools under government inspection and 'estimates' 1,600 in private schools. As the 'estimate' remains the same for several years, its accuracy must be doubted. The age of the pupils in the schools, moreover, does not correspond exactly with the categories given in the population figures. Any estimate of the proportion at school must therefore be very rough.



miners were somewhat restless and where the boundaries of Transvaal and British jurisdiction were imprecise. It was here that he was ordained deacon in 1887, serving as curate in Vryburg<sup>10</sup> - a pioneer task, for the parish did not have a rector till thirteen years later<sup>11</sup>. The same year he moved to Kimberley, remaining as curate for about a year<sup>12</sup>. These years seem to have been crucial, for he now returned to England to read theology at Christ's College, Cambridge, where he won the Carus Greek Testament Prize in 1890, took his degree with first class honours the following year and was elected Scholar of the College<sup>13</sup>. He was ordained priest in 1892 in London, where he was attached to St John, Hammersmith<sup>14</sup>. When, as Chaplain to Bishop Baynes, he came to join the small group of clergy in Natal - there were only 37 priests and deacons in the diocese belonging to both the Colenso and Macrorie groups in 1890<sup>15</sup> - there was probably little thought of starting a diocesan school. But Todd was well equipped to take the lead if one should appear desirable; Bishop Baynes had been domestic chaplain to Archbishop Benson<sup>16</sup>, a former and very distinguished headmaster of Wellington College; and Archdeacon Baines was deeply interested in education. Moreover Todd made a favourable impression on the public of Pietermaritzburg when, very shortly after his arrival, he preached a sermon at a special service to mark the opening of the first Responsible Parliament<sup>17</sup>.

#### NATAL EDUCATION

When Robert Russell, Superintendent of Education, surveyed Natal in the nineties, he looked back<sup>18</sup> with justifiable pride over a period of great development in Natal education, for in the ten years prior to the founding of Michaelhouse in 1896, the numbers of pupils in schools inspected by the government doubled in each race group<sup>19</sup>. But the provision of education was still imperfect in many respects. Probably between 10 and 20 per cent of European children did not go to school at all<sup>20</sup>. The proportion receiving any secondary education - what an English report of the time called a 'liberal

- 21 Report of a conference in 1897 presided over by Sir George Kekewick, Head of the English Education Department, summarised in the Report of the Superintendent of Education, 1898, p.5. .
- 22 Reports of the Superintendent Inspector of Schools for 1895, 1896 and 1897.
- 23 Inspectors' reports in the Report of the Superintendent Inspector of Schools for 1896, p.31.
- 24 B.B. Burnett: Anglicans in Natal. Published by the Churchwardens of St. Paul's, Durban. No. date, p.135.
- 25 C.W. Hannah: Typescript reminiscences of Michaelhouse. This is a brief history of the school, written after Hannah's retirement in 1930. It is henceforth referred to as Hannah's Typescript.
- 26 Times of Natal, 1896, particularly January and August issues.

education', to be distinguished from elementary education which had 'immediate utility' as its aim - was very small<sup>21</sup>: of the schools catering for boys and supported or aided by public funds, only Maritzburg College and Durban High School went higher than Standard VII; and, apart from Hilton College, private schools for boys did not regularly have successes in the matriculation examinations<sup>22</sup>. And whereas science had by now been accepted - sometimes grudgingly - as part of the school curriculum in England, it was still a peripheral subject in Natal, catered for in a separate 'School of Art, Science and Technical Instruction' to which boys from Maritzburg College, for instance, had to go for instruction in chemistry<sup>23</sup>. Moreover - and this was the most important deficiency in Todd's eyes - the existing boys' high schools did not provide religious instruction of which an Anglican clergyman could then approve. It is therefore not surprising that, when Todd contemplated founding a school, he received considerable encouragement from many different sources. But, particularly in view of the unhappy experience of Bishop's College, it was to be expected that the leaders of the Diocese of Natal would be chary of offering official support for such a venture.

#### THE BEGINNING

Until April 1896, Todd - now a Canon - was attached to St Peter's Church<sup>24</sup>, but he had private pupils and seems then to have devoted himself to canvassing support for a school from among farmers in particular. He intended to begin the school in town, with day scholars as well as boarders in order to attract numbers; but - according to C.W. Hannah - he planned to move to the country as soon as possible, away from the distractions of town life<sup>25</sup>. (Among the 1896 'distractions' in Pietermaritzburg were Charley's Aunt, A Woman of No Importance, The Wages of Sin - a 'great domestic drama' - a circus - in which a representation of Dick Turpin's ride and a lion tamer were the chief attractions - and a promenade concert in the Market Hall<sup>26</sup>).

- 27 B.B. Burnett: op.cit., p.135.
- 28 Notes by A.T. Tatham.
- 29 Hannah's Typescript records Moor as the first boy entered: the school list of boarders for the first few years is missing. The exact day of the school's opening is not recorded in the Chronicles or in Hannah's Typescript, but the school was advertised to open on 5th August at 384 Loop Street (Natal Witness, Monday, 3rd August, 1896), and the list of day boys in the Minute Book of Entries is headed by three who arrived on 5th August (W.G.S. Forder, C.F. Forder and H.N.H. White); two more came the next day (A. Hulley and L. Sullivan), the following entries being for February 1897. Todd's first report in St. Michael's Chronicle, Michaelmas 1897 records opening with 15 boys.
- 30 St. Michael's Chronicle, Michaelmas 1897. (Hereafter the school magazine is referred to as S.M.C.)
- 31 S.M.C., Oct., 1899.
- 32 C.E.R. Button in conversation with me. He entered the school in 1897.
- 33 S.M.C., May, 1897.
- 34 S.M.C., Michaelmas 1897.

Encouraged by the Bishop and assisted in his business arrangements by Gerard Bailey<sup>27</sup>, F.S. Tatham<sup>28</sup> and others, Todd obtained a lease on two houses at 384 Loop Street with vacant lots behind them which could be used for playing fields and cadet drill. Later, another house, at the corner of Relief Street, was rented for additional dormitory accommodation. At first, however, Todd must have been very doubtful about the success of his venture, for there was only one name - C.F. Moor - on his books until shortly before the day he proposed to open, 5th August<sup>29</sup>. Of the small group of fifteen originals, ten were boarders, and Todd had engaged two masters: Spencer Tryon, from London University, and H.C. Dobrée, B.A., a Channel Islander from Jesus College, Cambridge<sup>30</sup>. In terms of numbers their task was enviable; in terms of the variety of their work, one can only admire the determination and zeal of all three men. Tryon, who had been teaching elsewhere in Natal, was the senior master (sometimes called headmaster) and struggled to teach several subjects, not seriously hindered in his discipline by an impediment in his speech, which earned him the name 'Shleggy'; and he successfully held the fort for Todd when the Rector went to England in 1899<sup>31</sup>. Dobrée, a thick-set man, was indefatigable, not only teaching and taking some P.T. with a sergeant-major, but encouraging singing, conducting the Recreation Committee, lecturing on various aspects of Greek life and organising cadets. Todd owed a great deal to the enthusiasm of Dobrée for the school, for he also contributed financially in the uncertain early days<sup>32</sup> and long after he had left the school he took an active interest in its progress.

#### THE AIM

But the inspiration and the determination behind the venture were essentially Todd's; and he had a clear idea of what he wanted the school to be. A man's 'tone, moral and spiritual as well as intellectual, is largely determined for life by his school', he wrote for the first issue of St. Michael's Chronicle<sup>33</sup>. At the first prize-giving, on Michaelmas eve, 1897, he enlarged on this<sup>34</sup>.

35 Ibid.

36 S.M.C., May, 1897.

On religion, he was unequivocal in his assertion that the boarders should receive religious instruction - 'I can no more forfeit my right to teach the faith to those who (as boarders) are members of my household than a parent could alienate his rights and duties towards his children' - and even for dayboys he reserved 'the right to explain religious aspects of any question in any subject', though he would not insist on their learning the Catechism and attending Scripture classes. For this reason he laid down as a principle (later embodied in the first Trust Deed) that the Rector must be a man in Holy Orders. And his conviction that secular and religious teaching go hand in hand perhaps influenced his choice of a title, although Scottish traditions no doubt also made 'Rector' seem appropriate.

#### THE CURRICULUM AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

He was equally convinced that the most essential features of a curriculum were the classics and mathematics, whose disciplinary virtues he praised. Those subjects which enable a boy to take a more intelligent interest in civic or practical life (like history and geography) were also valuable. These would help to make 'men of understanding, thought and culture', whereas the 'novel' subjects (shorthand, bookkeeping and so on), though admitted as extras, were educationally almost valueless. So strongly attached was he to the classical tradition that he would not enter boys for the Oxford Local Examinations unless they included Latin and Mathematics - 'by cutting out Shakespeare from our list of subjects, we have perhaps lessened our results, but we have increased their value'<sup>35</sup>. In this, and in his ignoring experimental science, he was reflecting an earlier and, as we can see now, outdated view; but his insistence on the value of scholarship was as relevant then as it is today.

Not that he regarded scholarship and religious instruction as the only functions of the school. He was an enthusiastic supporter of rugby and the first addition to the staff was a Cambridge 'blue', J.C.A. Rigby<sup>36</sup>. One does not know whether Todd agreed with the first editor (Dobrée), writing in the Chronicle, that 'brain power

- 37 Ibid.
- 38 S.M.C., Michaelmas 1897.
- 39 S.M.C., May, 1897.
- 40 S.M.C., Michaelmas 1897.
- 41 S.M.C., Oct., 1898.



has to be exercised.... now that science exerts so great an influence' and that, by setting the blood freely in motion, rugby especially was beneficial to the brain<sup>37</sup>. But he played rugby with the boys (it was not uncommon then for staff to be members of school teams) and the coincidental arrival of A.S. Langley at Maritzburg College in 1896 and Todd's foundation of Michaelhouse ensured the future of rugby in Natal schools, most of which then played association football. At the end of the first season of rugby in 1897, indeed, the Chronicle records, not very happily, that 'the game has been thoroughly ground into every Michaelhouse boy'<sup>38</sup>, in spite of the first season's being rather unsuccessful. Cricket, of course, also played a prominent part and the first match recorded ended auspiciously in an excitingly close win for Michaelhouse, who scored 106 for 9 wickets just on time, against a Maritzburg College score of 105 for 4 wickets, declared<sup>39</sup>.

One may doubt whether Todd was entirely successful in establishing the academic standards he desired for, though he certainly encouraged some boys in sound learning and it was not long before the first Old Boy (A. Findley) was settling in comfortably at Cambridge, he found, like Clark and others of the time, that the boys lacked a background of traditional knowledge. To remedy this, he organised a series of lectures, chiefly on the classics and classical mythology, which breathe the spirit of classicism and academic learning, though one wonders how well the boys appreciated them<sup>40</sup>.

On the whole, however, the boys' lives were very little organised in their spare time. Sport, it is true, was compulsory, but practices were somewhat irregular and rugby 'nines' - a modified form of the game, with teams of nine - provided much of the enjoyable exercise in the winter<sup>41</sup>. There was also an active choral society and a less active debating society. But it was a long time before there was very much specific provision for extra-curricular activities. The boys were, however, brought effectively into the running of the

- <sup>42</sup> S.M.C., May, 1898 mentions a boy as sub-editor of the Chronicle; a librarian is mentioned from S.M.C., May, 1898 onwards; the choral society and debates are mentioned from S.M.C., May, 1898; and prefects from S.M.C., May, 1897. The first senior prefect was Still. The verse is in S.M.C., Oct., 1898.
- <sup>43</sup> For these and other impressions of Todd, I am indebted to a number of old boys, particularly C.F. Moor, C.E.S. Button, J.H. Hammon and the late A.T. Tatham and M. Forder; and to Mrs. Robinson. See also Reminiscences of an Old Boy in S.M.C., May, 1915.
- <sup>44</sup> S.M.C., Dec., 1930.

school, helping with the Chronicle and running the embryonic library in particular; and, of course, prefects were an integral part of the disciplinary arrangements, as these editorial lines indicate:

Be loyal, Michaelhusians all,  
Happy in Michaelhouse to be;  
But doubly loyal Prefects call,  
Blest with responsibility.<sup>42</sup>

#### TODD, THE RECTOR

And though the quarters were cramped and facilities rudimentary, Todd was able to evoke the loyalty of the boys. He maintained a dignified aloofness so that even the senior boys regarded him with awe and respect rather than affection; and he was sometimes scathing in his comments on the manners of 'colonial boys'<sup>43</sup>. He was not, however, unbending: although some of the public thought it somewhat undignified for the Rector, however young he was, he played rugby regularly with the boys and cricket occasionally; and the story is told that when some boys, somewhat surprisingly, April Fooled him in a mild way, he retaliated by holding them in suspense in his study until noon, when he dismissed them with the remark that he had fooled them and opportunities for fooling were now over. He was, moreover, able to inspire young men with enthusiasm for the task of schoolmastering. His most remarkable success was with C.W. Hannah, who, having been in Natal for a short time for his health, was about to leave when Todd spoke to him about his vision of Michaelhouse and induced Hannah to remain in Natal on the staff of Michaelhouse; and, although Hannah's membership of the staff was intermittent, his interest in the school and the boys was abiding and in his 'Farewell Sermon' in 1930 the inspiration and vision of Todd comes out clearly<sup>44</sup>.

#### SYMBOLS: THE NAME AND ARMS

In that sermon, Hannah links the name 'Michaelhouse' with Todd's conviction that religion and education go hand in hand (Michael representing religion and House symbolising education). Michaelhouse

- 45 Letter from Lord Todd. Bishop Fisher, then Master of Michaelhouse, was closely associated with Lady Margaret, founder of Christ's, but this as far as the association goes.
- 46 S.M.C., May, 1897 mentions that the arms are like those of the original Michaelhouse, and this was confirmed, at the time when the school proposed to register its arms, by the College of Heralds (see Miscellaneous File letter from the Secretary of the Board of Governors to the Secretary of the Old Boys' Club, dated 9/9/37). A letter from C.W. Hannah is quoted by the Secretary of the Old Boys' Club saying that Todd had selected the arms and motto for prizes and honours (Miscellaneous File, August 1937). The Old Boys' Club claimed in 1937 that the arms were copied from the original Michaelhouse. The evidence on this point is inconclusive for the arms are also like one of the badges of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (Miscellaneous File letter from the Secretary of the Board, 9/9/37). A figure of St. Michael subduing a dragon is such an obvious choice that the point would be unimportant were it not for the subsequent controversy. (See also Ch.8 note 151.)
- 47 S.M.C., Michaelmas 1897, Oct., 1898, Oct., 1899 and Oct., 1900.
- 48 S.M.C., Oct., 1898.
- 49 S.M.C., May, 1898.
- 50 Hannah's Typescript.

was one of the foundations out of which Henry VIII created Trinity College, Cambridge, and it is possible that Todd had this in mind when founding his school. Since Todd was not himself a member of Trinity College but of Christ's and there was no direct connection between the original Michaelhouse and Todd's own college<sup>45</sup>, one cannot be certain, but it is a sufficiently unusual name to make the explanation plausible. Perhaps, too, it was a compliment to Bishop Baynes, who had been consecrated on Michaelmas Day. Todd possibly selected the colours with St John's College, Cambridge, in mind: at all events, the Eton suits were the school uniform for many years, worn even on 'free bounds' at Belgawan: the school cap had a pair of scales; and a scarlet and white band adorned the straw baskers. The coat of arms (St Michael triumphant over the dragon) was similar to that of the original Michaelhouse<sup>46</sup>, and it and the motto (Quis ut Deus) were a natural selection to emphasise the association with St Michael, but the arms were not used except for honours. From the first year, Michaelmas was appropriately kept as the main festival of the year, the celebrations usually extending over two days and including, as a rule, a free day which boys used either to cycle in the country or to prepare for the impromptu concert, a cricket match (and a rugby match as well on one occasion), the prize-giving ceremony, evensong at the cathedral on Michaelmas eve and celebration of the Eucharist on Michaelmas morning<sup>47</sup>.

Within two years of its foundation, the reputation of Michaelhouse was sufficiently established for numbers to have risen almost to 50<sup>48</sup>, including boys from the Orange Free State and the Transvaal<sup>49</sup>, which were, of course, independent republics. Yet the financial foundations were still insecure. Todd pressed in 1898 for the school to be adopted by the diocese so that it could expand, but the Bishop's absence delayed negotiations and in the meantime Todd had difficulty in retaining the lease on the Loop Street properties<sup>50</sup>. There was even talk of Todd's replacing Clark as headmaster of Maritzburg College when Clark was leaving one of his periodic

- 51 S.M.C., April, 1916. Article by H.C.D (Dobrée).
- 52 Hannah's Typescript.
- 53 See the Committee Minutes for 1900 and Natal Dio. Maritzburg II 1883-1909 'New Lessons and Opportunities', pp.7-8. The Committee Minutes, which begin in 1900, do not record Archdeacon Baines as a member until he became Bishop, but Hannah's Typescript includes his name among the initiators. In his charge to Synod in 1900, Bishop Baynes said that he had appointed the Committee in 1899. (See also p.23 below).
- 54 S.M.C., May, 1917. Reminiscences by Dobrée.
- 55 Ibid.
- 56 Typescript by C.W. Hannah.
- 57 Letter from Mrs. G. Robinson.

differences with the Education Department<sup>51</sup>. But the religious issue and Clark's withdrawal of his resignation prevented this eventuality; and the bank was persuaded to allow the school to continue in its temporary home. And so Todd was able to assure the staff, who had been given provisional notice, that the school would be able to continue in 1899<sup>52</sup>. Nevertheless, as long as the school remained a 'private venture', its very existence was bound to be precarious and the possibility of establishing a permanent home was remote.

#### A PERMANENT HOME

Leading Anglicans recognised this and a committee was established with the double purpose of negotiating to transform Michaelhouse into a 'public' school governed by a permanent trust deed and of finding a suitable site and enough capital to provide a suitable home. The Bishop was an active member, the others being F.S. Tatham, C.F. Tatham, E.M. Greene, John Freeman, Henriques Shepstone and Todd himself, all of whom contributed to a fund to buy land<sup>53</sup>. Archdeacon Baines was also a supporter of the scheme, though not initially mentioned among committee members. Several sites were investigated, mostly in the country but also on Town Hill and at Mountain Rise on the outskirts of Pietermaritzburg. The most promising one was at Camperdown, where they were offered the hotel at a reasonable price; but when a water diviner could report only fairly optimistically in spite of an excellent lunch, they decided to continue their search<sup>54</sup>. And then, when Todd was feeling frustrated by what seemed endless delays, everything began to fall into place in January 1899. E.M. Greene worked out a scheme to purchase land from Walter Jaffray at Belgovan<sup>55</sup> and Hannah<sup>56</sup> and W. Pitcher (a great friend of Todd's and a lawyer)<sup>57</sup> inspected the site. Though the hills were mostly bare, Hannah was particularly enthusiastic, regarding it as a propitious omen that the place had been named, by a tenant of his grandfather, after

- 58 Hannah's Typescript. The price of the land is given in the Trust Deed. (Misc. 16/1902.)
- 59 S.M.C., Oct., 1899.
- 60 Hannah's Typescript.
- 61 A. Hamilton Baynes D.D.: My Diocese During the War; Bele; 1900; pp.163-4. The incident is quoted and interpreted in a note by the late A.T. Tatham. The message was either a specific request connected with increased costs, (though £1,000 would be high for this), or a general reminder of obligations (in which case the total involved was £1,500 not £1,000). Bp Baynes mentioned that 'we were very badly off in a building operation for want of £1,000 which he had, along with others, made himself responsible for.' The bishop did not receive an answer.
- 62 For this and the following description see S.M.C., May, 1901, with some elucidation from the late A.T. Tatham.



his family's Perthshire estate. Todd was equally impressed, for the site had all the openness he wanted, water seemed unlimited and there was a railway on the boundary. Mr and Mrs Jaffray donated 20 acres and the school bought 50 acres of the farm Anandale for £100. Messrs Kent and Price were employed as architects and work began on the foundations<sup>58</sup>. Todd felt sufficiently confident of the future to leave for England, for although the Trust was not yet legally established, the school's foundations, literally and figuratively, seemed secure.

But this was 1899, and in October the country was plunged into war. To those at Michaelhouse it seemed an invigorating experience: the October Chronicle opens with the lines:

Sound the clarions, fill the pipe,  
To all the sensual world proclaim,  
One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name.<sup>59</sup>

But - quite apart from the bitterness and misery it caused in South Africa - the war seriously delayed the developments at Belgovan. When the contractors felt that deeper foundations were required than had been planned, it demanded some ingenuity to get approval for the additional expenditure, for the Rector and Archdeacon Baines were in England and three of the committee were isolated in Ladysmith<sup>60</sup>. Undaunted, Bishop Baynes had a message heliographed to E.H. Greene reminding him and the others of their obligations to the school<sup>61</sup> and though he received no answer, the building went ahead, somewhat hampered by delays on the railways. By the beginning of 1901 the building was ready<sup>62</sup>.

Although modest by present standards, the school stood commandingly in the bare veld, looking four-square at the hills opposite and flaunting a square battlement over the entrance as if to underline the fighting spirit of St Michael. The approach to the school was along farm tracks from the Curry's Post road (the road parallel to the railway was a much later development), past the

63 S.M.C., May, 1899.

64 S.M.C., May, 1901.

65 W.F. Bushell: School Memories; Philip Son and Nephew; 1962; p.41.

station and, with a sweeping curve, entering the school grounds on the slope from what is now Vlei. Although Todd envisaged a complete quadrangle, at this stage there was only the north front and part of the east wing. Here there were to the right of the entrance, rooms for the matron and housekeeper and a dining hall, lofty and palatial compared with the low-ceilinged Loop Street rooms, which was intended to become a gymnasium but became successively a laboratory and a library. To the left of the entrance was the main staff accommodation: a common room, the Rector's house (in which three members of staff also lived); and then a classroom and bursar's office. The east wing - which was joined to the north front by an ugly but very necessary galvanised iron screen - contained three classrooms and a small dormitory on the ground floor and, on the upper floor, two large dormitories and two bedrooms and a sitting room for masters. The temporary chapel was appropriately in the centre above the entrance, with another classroom above it.

In all this, the faith of Todd and the Bishop's committee in the future of the school was abundantly clear: it was a permanent institution, capable of expansion and dedicated to the ideal of Christian gentlemen, as the Bishop asserted<sup>63</sup>, with the emphasis especially on zeal and strength rather than on gentleness and sensitivity (the dormitories were named 'Spear', 'Helm' and 'Shield', reiterating the symbol of St Michael<sup>64</sup>). Nor was there any doubt about priorities: physical comfort was low on the list. The kitchen was in a wood and iron building abutting the dining room and forming a temporary west wing. The bathroom contained a large iron tank capable of holding 24 bathers and 'a species of shower bath' - a perforated pipe running round the room; hot water could only be obtained in cans from the kitchen wing. (At Charterhouse, even this would have been regarded as luxury, for when Buskell, subsequently Rector of Michaelhouse, was at school at the turn of the century neither baths nor buckets were provided for washing<sup>65</sup>.)

- 66 S.M.C., May, 1901.
- 67 Hannah's Typescript.
- 68 S.M.C., Oct., 1900 and May, 1901.
- 69 S.M.C., Oct., 1900 and Natal Blue Book, Report of the Superintendent of Education for the year 1900, pp.65-7. Of 40 successful matriculants in two exams in 1900, 6 were from Michaelhouse. There were two exams in 1900, apparently to facilitate a change from June to December examining.
- 70 S.M.C., May, 1900 gives the names of those at universities and in regiments. S.M.C., June, 1902 gives complete numbers for the war. The other occupations are taken from a list of Old Boys, mentioned in S.M.C., Nov., 1906, taking account of when they were at the school.
- 71 S.M.C., Oct., 1900.
- 72 A Century of 'Bishops', Chps.5 and 7.

There was, however, a day room and prefects' room in a temporary building south of the east wing<sup>66</sup>.

#### LAST YEAR IN PIETERMARITZBURG

Although the last year in the Loop Street premises was cramped and frustrating and marred by the tragic death of Harold Green, grandson of Dean Green, in a shooting accident while he was participating in a sham cadet fight<sup>67</sup>, it was nevertheless a propitious preparation for the move to Balgovan. Extra-curricular activities, though not lavish, were more diverse than they had been: for the mind there were a Literary Society and a Debating Society; for the body there was, besides rugby and cricket (the cricket team enjoying a highly successful year and being promoted to the senior league), swimming, the classes being taken by a new master, Durand, a relation of Dobrée; and, in a category which defies definition, there were also dancing classes<sup>68</sup>. Scholastically, the school was improving and won its first success in the Cape Intermediate Examination (an exam beyond the Matriculation level and the first step towards a degree), when C.E.R. Button was one of ten successful Natal candidates<sup>69</sup>. Although it was too early for Old Boys to be making a notable contribution, their activities were varied: three were at universities in the United Kingdom; thirteen served in the war, of whom one was killed; and several entered the legal profession or civil service and others farming<sup>70</sup>. At Michaelhouse, indeed, the Rector suggested that it was time to form an Old Boys' Association<sup>71</sup>. Most important, however, was the formal establishment of a Board of Governors.

#### A PERMANENT TRUST

Some other private schools had already made a similar change to a public trust. In the Cape, at 'Bishops' the creation of a governing board in 1885 and the generosity of Archbishop West Jones enabled the school to survive financial difficulties in the nineties and to step firmly into the twentieth century<sup>72</sup>; and St Andrew's,

- 73 St. Andrew's College; p.73.
- 74 A.F. Hattersley: Hilton Portrait; pp.67-8.
- 75 The Minute Book, Michaelhouse, 2nd April, 1900 - 24th October, 1923 (hereafter referred to as B.M.) records an instruction by the Committee (11th April, 1900) that the Secretary should write for copies of the Trust Deeds of 'Bishops' and St. Andrew's. Though there is no record whether they were in fact received, it seems probable that the lawyers did make use of South African precedents.
- 76 B.M., 2/4/00.
- 77 B.M., 23/4/00.
- 78 B.M., 2/4/00.
- 79 Though most of the meetings of the committee in 1900 and 1901 concerned almost exclusively finance and buildings, several meetings determined matters of principle for the Deed of Trust.
- 80 B.M., 23/5/01.
- 81 Deeds Office Misc. 7/1901. The committee changed the name of the school to 'St. Michael's Diocesan College' at a meeting on 5th February, 1901.
- 82 The original Trust Deed was reconsidered at a meeting on 7th November 1901, when 'on the lines of the Public Schools of the Church of England' was changed to 'with religious instruction in accordance with the principles of the Church of England'; it also stated that the Rector was not to be a member of the Board and that all members of the Board were to be members of the Church of England and the Bishop ex officio chairman. On 9th November, the Rector's qualifications were altered to allow him to be an M.A. of any university within the United Kingdom instead of only Oxford or Cambridge. In January 1902 (23rd), the amended deed was signed. It was not registered until 13th June 1902. (Misc. 16/1902.)

incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 1887 which vested control in a Council, had expanded by 1900 to nearly three hundred students and boys<sup>73</sup>. Hilton College was still a 'private venture' under Ellis, but the Hiltonian Society had been formed in 1892, and this prepared the way for a more permanent system<sup>74</sup>. Apart from Todd's own enthusiasm, therefore, there was sound precedent for Michaelhouse to make the change<sup>75</sup>.

There was already a group of people, headed by the Bishop, concerned with the future of Michaelhouse when negotiations began for a new site, and they approached various people for contributions to a foundation fund. By April 1900, £3,650 had been collected or promised (£3,000 from Miss Usherwood) towards the £9,400 required for the land and buildings at Belgovan<sup>76</sup>. The first formal meeting recorded, however, was a small one with Todd in the chair, Freeman, Shepstone and F.S. Tatham as committee members and J. Crook as secretary; and a meeting later the same month (April) had to consider leaving the roofs of the planned buildings unpainted in order to save money<sup>77</sup>. Although the formal Trust Deed was not drawn up for some time, the committee called itself the 'Committee of the Natal Diocesan College, Belgovan', declared Todd, J. Freeman and H.C. Shepstone the trustees, and was responsible for the negotiations with the contractors<sup>78</sup>. Its membership was not clearly defined and the chair was taken variously by Todd, the Bishop and E.M. Greene, but its members gradually worked towards a clearer statement of the aims of the school and the function of the governors<sup>79</sup>.

It was not until May 1901 that the draft Trust Deed was approved<sup>80</sup>. It was registered the following month<sup>81</sup>, but was amended a year later<sup>82</sup>. The Trust (for 'Saint Michael's Diocesan College, Belgovan') declared the objects to be inter alia 'to provide under the auspices of the Church of the Province of South Africa, an educational institution for boys, commonly known as "Michaelhouse" which shall provide a liberal education with religious

- 83 B.M., 23/5/01.
- 84 B.M., 22/10/01. The Finance Board had advanced £67-2-4 for boring for water and deducted this from the £250 - against Todd's wishes.
- 85 B.M., 11/6/11. The Provincial Council of Education lent £1,000 and the Anglican Church Trust Board lent £4,000.
- 86 B.M., 31/7/07 and subsequent records. The S.P.G. gave £500; the S.P.C.K. gave £1,500.
- 87 The original Deed's reference to 'the Public Schools of the Church of England' indicates this. In 1903 Bishop Baines, in answer to a question at Synod, defined a diocesan institution as one which has the official sanction of the Bishop of the diocese and he expressed the opinion that the term rightly applied to Michaelhouse, St. Anne's and St. Alban's (Native) College. He went on to say, however, that Synod had 'no real or effective control' over Michaelhouse, though it might perhaps have some control over St. Anne's and St. Alban's because the property was vested in the Diocesan Trustees. Even for these institutions Synod did not have any right over management. (Natal Dio. Maritzburg II Synodical 1883-1909; Acts and Resolutions...1903, p.29.)



instruction in accordance with the principles of the Church of England'. The Rector was to be a priest and an M.A. of a university of the United Kingdom (by the first Deed he was to be an M.A. of Oxford or Cambridge); the governors were to be members of the 'English Church'; and the Bishop was to be ex officio Chairman of the Board of Governors.

Although the Trust Deed and the full title of the school make clear the intention to associate the school closely with the Church in Natal, the direct participation of the diocese in the school's affairs was restricted. The Board certainly considered whether one of the Church properties granted for educational purposes should be handed over to the school, but nothing came of the proposal<sup>83</sup>. On the other hand, Synod made a grant of £250 towards the school building fund<sup>84</sup> and some years later the authorities of the Church assisted with substantial loans<sup>85</sup>. Nor could the chapel have been built by Todd's successor without donations from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (S.P.G.) and the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge (S.P.C.K.)<sup>86</sup>. The school, in other words, benefitted materially from its connection with the Church but was not subject to its control, except in so far as the Bishop should happen to interpret his dual position as head of the Church in Natal and Chairman of the Board of Governors. The original committee, indeed, certainly thought of Michaelhouse in terms of the public schools of England, whose relations with the established church there were traditional but not restrictive, rather than of the 'voluntary' schools, for which the Church of England was directly responsible and which were not socially selective<sup>87</sup>.

The negotiations which led to the establishment of Michaelhouse as a 'public school' - 'public' in the sense that the trustees had an obligation to the public through the registered Deed of Trust and that the school was not run for private profit - had taken a long time, and it must have been with a sense of great relief and

88 B.M., 1/7/01.

89 B.M., 8/11/01.

90 B.M., 23/1/02.

achievement that Todd learned of the registration of the Deed in June 1901. At their first meeting after the registration, the Board agreed formally to the appointment of Todd as 'Rector and Head Master'<sup>88</sup>. He had, however, undertaken to give his services free until the end of the year and, though the Board warmly thanked him for those services in November<sup>89</sup>, it was not until late January 1902 that they were able to name a stipend for him - £300 a year<sup>90</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Hannah's Typescript. Other details in the paragraph are also based on this source, confirmed in some instances by the late M. Forder and other old boys.

<sup>2</sup> Hannah's Typescript.

<sup>3</sup> S.M.C., May, 1901.

CHAPTER 3TODD: MIGRATION AND DEPARTUREPIONEERING CCNDITIONS

By the time Todd was paid a salary, the school had had a year to settle into its new surroundings and the move seemed by then to be entirely satisfactory. But the move had been an adventure in itself. Because the single railway line was heavily committed to the army in January 1901, Todd had to charter four ox wagons to transport the old furniture from Pietermaritzburg. He regretted, indeed, that he did not do the same for the new furniture coming from Durban, for delays on the railways caused the school to open without much of its equipment: the dining tables arrived a few hours before the evening meal on the first day, but only two classrooms had desks and the Rector, perhaps congenially remembering Archimedes, was reduced to illustrating Euclid by drawing in the dust of the 'playroom' floor<sup>1</sup>. Moreover, though the dam and storage tanks for water were completed, it was three weeks before the pipes arrived, so that boys took their baths in a pool of the stream and improvised water carts for the kitchen. Shortly before the school opened, a devastating hail storm had broken four hundred panes, and though they were repaired in time, misfortunes seemed to crowd in. Not the least of the initial alarms was an outbreak of mumps on the second day - an eventuality for which the school was ill-equipped (there was no sick bay) but which the stalwart and devoted matron, Mrs Jackson, coped with in her stride.

Although the school lost some boys who had been day boys in Pietermaritzburg, numbers were up to 77 - and since the buildings were designed to take only 70, the additional boys were accommodated with the Jaffrays<sup>2</sup>. Fortunately, besides an increased staff, Todd had the help of some seasoned prefects who had been with him from the beginning, including Moor<sup>3</sup>, and in spite of the pioneering conditions the school was soon functioning smoothly. Moreover,

- 4 S.M.C., May, 1901.
- 5 S.M.C., May, 1901 and Hannah's Typescript.
- 6 Hannah's Typescript.
- 7 Notes by A.T. Tatham.
- 8 S.M.C., May, 1901.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Notes by A.T. Tatham.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Conversation with J.P. Moor and notes by A.T. Tatham.

Hannah had been active during the Christmas holidays clearing cricket pitches in the veld north west of the school<sup>4</sup> so that cricket could start immediately, and the school had the pleasure of winning its first match (against Lion's River) on the new ground and of seeing a notable bowling record established by Forder, who took a hundred wickets in the season<sup>5</sup>. The oval - also Hannah's inspiration and largely his work - was not ready till 1904, but it was already measured and planted with trees, each of which Hannah ensured had a bucket of water drawn from the stream near the railway<sup>6</sup>. The fields then and until the 'thirties were dusty and uneven - except for the oval, they were little more than cropped veld, and even on the oval grass was frustratingly reluctant to grow; but there was ample space.

#### EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND THE CURRICULUM

The spatial freedom of the country was, indeed the major advantage of the move. There was room behind the play room for boys to add to the jumble of temporary buildings their own huts and 'fires' (sod shelters with a fireplace) in which like-minded spirits could congregate and surreptitiously cook the occasional pigeon filched from the Rector<sup>7</sup>. Further afield was Hutchinson's pool and waterfall where the boys frequently swam and where - if the Chronicle is to be believed - they caught eels which a kindly housekeeper added to their breakfast or tea<sup>8</sup>. Most of the farmers allowed the boys to roam freely on their land<sup>9</sup>, an opportunity which they did not allow the compulsory wearing of Eton suits to cramp<sup>10</sup>. They were nevertheless generally at the station on Sundays to watch the mail train arrive and the passengers buying tea, which Mrs Jaffray dispensed (the trains did not then have diners)<sup>11</sup>. The wide open spaces were, however, no more effective in keeping them out of mischief than any other device known to schoolmasters. The fowls at the brickfield near the station were a constant temptation and enjoyed relative peace only after Todd had confiscated a formidable pile of catapults and lead pellets (which the boys had made from tea packets)<sup>12</sup>.

During the week, rugby, cricket or cadets occupied most of the

- 13 A.T. Tatham recalled that he had once fallen unconscious in a practice. A master nearby refused to take responsibility because he was not the master of the week and so another boy took Tatham to the school, where Tatham put himself to bed. To add insult to injury, the master of the week was angry that Tatham and not asked him for permission to go to bed.
- 14 S.M.C., in each year, 1901-03.
- 15 S.M.C., June, 1902 and J.P. Moor.
- 16 S.M.C., June, 1902.
- 17 S.M.C., Aug., 1901.
- 18 S.M.C., Aug., 1903. Michaelhouse came top out of 14 Natal schools in the Public Schools Shooting competition, 49th in the Empire out of 68. The Chronicle claims that Natal schools were handicapped by using Martini-Metford rifles, whereas the others used the Lee Enfield.
- 19 S.M.C., Nov., 1901 and notes by A.T. Tatham. One of the runs was to Nottingham Road (S.M.C., Aug., 1903).
- 20 S.M.C., Nov., 1901.
- 21 S.M.C., June, 1902. Cricket was voted £85-15s; Rugby £12; the Library £24; Athletics £12; the Camera Club £24; Magazine £12; 'Kaffir Servants' £12. An additional £12 was in an unappropriated account. Cricket spent more than the sum voted and rugby spent less. The Amalgamated Club Committee contained staff and boys.
- 22 See especially S.M.C., Dec., 1902.
- 23 S.M.C., June, 1902 and Aug., 1903. Dobrée raised £80. A sum of £40 was credited to the Enlargement Building Fund (B.M. 27/7/03).
- 24 S.M.C., Dec., 1902.
- 25 Notes by A.T. Tatham.



afternoons, as in Pietermaritzburg. Supervision by masters seems to have been somewhat erratic<sup>13</sup> and the organisation of practices was left largely to the boys themselves, but the teams did well. Most of the matches were against club teams, but Maritzburg College were regular rivals and there were occasional matches against other schools, but not Hilton until Todd's last year<sup>14</sup>. The cadet corps usually had an army sergeant in charge, but for a time one of the senior boys, Gibson<sup>15</sup>, who had won a medal while on service in the war<sup>16</sup>, had to take charge even of this activity. The corps was nevertheless able to participate in the Royal Visit to Pietermaritzburg in 1901<sup>17</sup> and in a miserably wet, cold and windy camp in 1903 and to acquit themselves well in the shooting competitions<sup>18</sup>. In addition to these three activities, there were also occasional cross-country runs, either to the Beacon (opposite the school) or to Mons Tumba (behind it), and it was often Todd's practice to put up a notice informing the boys that he was going for a run and inviting them to join him<sup>19</sup>. By 1902 a tennis court had been built, but it seems to have been used chiefly by the staff, for tennis was not regarded as adequate for robust boys<sup>20</sup>.

Physical vigour was certainly highly rated - cricket was voted over three times as much from the 'amalgamated fund' as the library<sup>21</sup>; but other activities were encouraged. There were regular lectures to the Literary and Debating Society on topics ranging from Ancient and Modern Drama to Umpiring<sup>22</sup>; and Dobrée, while on leave in England, raised enough money by lectures there to buy the school an 'excellent lantern' with an acetylene gas illuminator for lantern lectures, then a popular form of entertainment<sup>23</sup>. A camera club was started and enjoyed fluctuating support. And the Chronicle records that the Music society raised the standard of chapel singing appreciably<sup>24</sup>. Since the eighty-or-so boys ranged in age from under 12 to over nineteen<sup>25</sup>, even a concerted effort to provide extra-curricular activities for all could hardly have been successful and a changing staff made a concerted effort impossible.

Academically the school was nevertheless able to offer a fair

- 26 S.M.C., Nov., 1901. The prize list mentions the following forms: II, Lower III and Upper III in the lower school; IV (Classical), IV (Modern) and V in the upper school. It also mentions Class IV in the upper school and Classes I, II and III in the lower school. The prize list in S.M.C., Dec., 1902 mentions Class I, Class III, Form III, Lower III and Upper III in the lower school, each apparently separate, for there are Divinity and Latin prizes in each of the forms III, lower III and upper III; and there are class IV and class V in the upper school with additional 'prizemen' for Classics, Divinity and Mathematics, none of the winners appearing in the class prize lists, which also contain prizes for Classics. In S.M.C., Aug., 1903, the prize list mentions Class I, Lower III, Upper III, Form IV, Form V and Form VI. Old boys have not, understandably, been able to illuminate the hierarchy for me.
- 27 See Ch.2, p.16. E.J. Smith, for instance, came to Michaelhouse in 1902 from Umzinto government school, and the Forders came from Bulwer. St. David's preparatory school in Greytown, which was founded at this time, had a link with Michaelhouse. (See Ch.5.)
- 28 S.M.C., Nov., 1901: the prize list includes all the subjects mentioned except German and with the addition of Arithmetic. In the upper school, 'Classics' included Greek (A.T. Tatham's notes refer to being plunged straight into the Anabasis); in the lower school Latin appears in place of Classics. In S.M.C., Dec., 1902, German appears, but not Natural Sciences. In S.M.C., Aug., 1903 there are mostly form prizes, but Science is coupled with Mathematics for one prize. S.M.C., Oct., 1898 refers to the Dutch class. The use of the Chemistry room for photography is referred to in S.M.C., June, 1902.
- 29 Colony of Natal: Reports on Government and Government aided Secondary Schools for 1902-3, pp.7-8. The Inspector, Dr. Lyster Jameson, commended Maritzburg College, but commented that at Durban High School there was 'spoonfeeding' and hardly any real experimental science, especially in Chemistry. Following the retirement of Russell as Superintendent, the inspections in 1902-3 under the new Superintendent, Barnett, seem to have been particularly thorough.
- 30 S.M.C., Nov., 1901.
- 31 Notes by A.T. Tatham.

range of subjects to the six or more forms in the school<sup>26</sup>. The 'classes' apparently did work which Todd (and other high school headmasters) felt should really have been done before the boys came to Michaelhouse, but which some of the boys at least had not done because they had either been at village schools or received tuition at home<sup>27</sup>, where there was no grounding in mathematics or the classics. Judging from the prize lists, mathematics (for which the Rector, himself a mathematician, offered the chief prize), classics and divinity enjoyed pride of place; but there was also room for English, French, German, Science and even shorthand (a concession no doubt to the demands of some parents for something 'practical', for Todd regarded it as educationally valueless). Dutch had been taught in Pietermaritzburg by a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, but did not feature at Balgowan for a time, presumably because of the difficulty of obtaining a qualified teacher. Science had to contend with an improvised shed which did duty also as a room for the camera club and it seems to have had an insecure position in the curriculum<sup>28</sup>. It should, however, be added that Michaelhouse was not alone in paying little attention to science: of the government and government aided schools only Maritzburg College and Durban High School taught 'experimental science' and the inspector was not complimentary about the standards in the latter<sup>29</sup>.

It is almost impossible to assess the standard of scholarship achieved at Michaelhouse under Todd. At the Michaelmas celebrations held in the year of 'migration', the Bishop asserted confidently that it was now no longer necessary for parents to send their sons overseas to complete their schooling<sup>30</sup>, but whether the firm establishment of Michaelhouse in fact had this effect is difficult to say. A son of a leading governor was, indeed, sent overseas to complete his schooling and his recollections were that the standard of Latin teaching was better under Todd than at Marlborough<sup>31</sup>. The boys were prepared for numerous public examinations - Junior and Senior Oxford Locals, the Cape School Higher, and the Matriculation and the Intermediate of

- 32 Letter from Mrs. Robinson and S.M.C., Dec., 1902, when Todd maintained that the Cape examinations 'were too closely modelled on London and even then were not so good, though recent regulations had made them better.'
- 33 Colony of Natal: Report of the Superintendent of Education for the year ended 30th June 1904, p.4.
- 34 Colony of Natal: Interim Report of the Superintendent of Education for the year ending 30th June 1903, p.3.
- 35 Colony of Natal: Report of the Superintendent of Education for the year 1902, pp.10-12. In the 'School Higher', of 9 first class passes, only 3 were boys; there were 39 seconds, 32 thirds, Michaelhouse achieving 2 seconds and 1 third out of 7 entrants. Durban High School had 7 successes out of 25 entrants, Maritzburg College 8 out of 20. In the Matriculation there were no firsts in Natal; Michaelhouse had one of the 6 seconds (there was only one other boy in this class) and one of the 13 thirds. Michaelhouse entered 4 and had 2 passes; Durban High School entered 13 and had 4 passes; Maritzburg College entered 9 and had 2 passes; Hilton entered 8 and had 2 passes.
- 36 S.M.C., Aug., 1903. Mortimer is recorded as first in the second class of the Law Tripos, fourth in the list. He was subsequently bracketed first in his final Law Exam (S.M.C., Oct., 1905) but it is not clear whether this was at Cambridge or a bar exam in England.
- 37 S.M.C., Feb., 1904.
- 38 S.M.C., Oct., 1904.
- 39 The Superintendent of Education regarded 'very few Natal youths as fit for the work' of teaching, because other prospects were more alluring. (His Report for the year ended 30th June 1904, p.7); and in the Report on Government and Government Aided Schools for 1902-3, he remarks on the lack of intellectual stimulation in homes.
- 40 S.M.C., June, 1902.
- 41 Conversation with the late M. Forder and his son, G. Forder: M. Forder sometimes rode from Bulwer to Balgowan and he mentioned others riding to school.
- 42 Notes by A.T. Tatham.

the University of the Cape of Good Hope - although Todd had no great faith in them<sup>32</sup>. This scepticism was shared, incidentally, with the new Superintendent of Education, P.A. Barnett, who asserted that the existing examinations tended to 'perpetuate a mediocre aim and a delusive object'<sup>33</sup> and complained that 'Natal, with South Africa generally, is positively hag-ridden by examinations'<sup>34</sup>. In these examinations, Michaelhouse achieved no great distinctions in the early days and the failure rate was high by today's standards - only three out of seven passed the 'School Higher' in 1902 and two out of four the Matriculation examination. But even in this, Michaelhouse was not exceptional among boys' schools in Natal - at Maritzburg College, Durban High School and Hilton a quarter or less of the entrants passed the Matriculation in the same year<sup>35</sup>. But the best examinations are only a partial test of intellectual achievement and at least one of Todd's pupils, H.C. Mortimer, did very well in Law at Cambridge<sup>36</sup>, another, J.J. Bisset, came fourth in the Cape Law Certificate examinations<sup>37</sup> and J.J. Sisson, after graduating from the University of the Cape of Good Hope, was awarded the first Rhodes Scholarship to go to a Michaelhouse boy<sup>38</sup>.

#### PIONEERING: BOYS AND STAFF

It is nevertheless true that few among 'colonial boys' hankered after intellectual achievement or elegant living: in what was still in many respects a pioneer colony, it would have been surprising if it had been otherwise<sup>39</sup>. With companions who had joined the British forces in the holidays during the war (Gibson had, indeed, won a medal)<sup>40</sup>, the classroom was unlikely to seem very relevant to life unless the master were remarkably good. Even the journey to school tended to emphasise the importance of strength and perseverance to tame nature: a cart- or horse-ride over rough tracks or open country was frequently necessary to get to a railhead, and some boys rode forty miles or more to school, the horse going back with an African servant<sup>41</sup>. . . Moreover then and for long afterwards the regular way of settling arguments was to arrange a fight, in the manner of Tom Brown's Schooldays<sup>42</sup>; and

- 43 Notes by A.T. Tatham. The master, Schmidt, was assaulted in his room with pillow cases filled with boots. Other Old Boys have confirmed the story.
- 44 Notes by A.T. Tatham, confirmed by conversation with J.H. Hammon.
- 45 Staff notes in the S.M.C., from 1897 to 1903 and notes by A.T. A.T. Tatham. Dobrée was married in 1901 or 1900 (S.M.C., Oct., 1901). It is not clear whether the music mistress lived permanently at Michaelhouse.
- 46 S.M.C., May, 1901 and notes by A.T. Tatham.
- 47 See Appendix 1 for a list of the staff under Todd.
- 48 S.M.C., May and Oct., 1899; Oct., 1901; June and Dec., 1902.

on one occasion, boys who had had a difference of opinion with the foreign languages master, physically assaulted even him<sup>43</sup>. It would be wrong, however, to give the impression that the boys were uncontrolled hooligans: they accepted firm discipline whether it was enforced simply by a dressing down (a method Todd used most effectively), or by screeds of lines, or by a physical task like levelling the clay quadrangle, or by the cane - and though a cane was prominent in every classroom, it was not the chief extension of the arm of the law it is sometimes supposed to have been<sup>44</sup>.

The somewhat raw and isolated position of the school, advantageous as it was in some respects, nevertheless incurred a serious danger. Only those dedicated to the school were likely to find the loneliness supportable and even they ran the risk of turning in upon themselves. The fact that it was an almost exclusively male community doubtless made the setting all the more raw, for only Dobrée was married and the only other women were the housekeeper, Mrs Jackson, and the music mistress<sup>45</sup>. Moreover, the staff quarters were cramped: the Rector shared his 'house' with others and the common room did double duty as common sitting room and common study<sup>46</sup>. Even if there were no other handicaps, this combination of isolation and lack of real privacy would be enough to explain the frequent changes in staff. At Michaelmas, 1902, the Rector, remarking on the departure of the last of the original boys, noted that only he, Dobrée and Mrs Jackson were left of the foundation members of Michaelhouse. Except for these and Tryon, none of the staff remained longer than two years and most of those who joined after the 'migration' stayed (voluntarily or involuntarily) only a year or less, though some of them at least remained in schoolmastering, like Carpenter, who left for Durban High School and subsequently Maritzburg College, and Leggett, who went to Bishop's in Cape Town<sup>47</sup>. Even Hannah was not altogether an exception, for he went to England on three occasions before Todd resigned<sup>48</sup>. In the circumstances, a tremendous burden rested on Todd to ensure some continuity of policy and some cohesion

- 49 The episode recorded in note 13 is evidence of this, and the fact that boys mostly organised their own games is further evidence. At least two of those who remained only a short time became important figures in their next school: Carpenter was at Durban High School for 20-odd years and subsequently became vice-principal of Maritzburg College. It should be remarked that R.W. Kent records that 'Few (staff) stayed long' at Maritzburg College under R.D. Clark; but Clark was headmaster from 1879-1902. See R.W.Kent: College 1863-1963; Shuter and Shooter; 1963; p.27.
- 50 S.M.C. Dec. 1902 and Aug. 1903. At the end of 1902 and in the first half of 1903, 23 boys left; in the first half of 1903, 26 boys arrived.
- 51 B.M. 12/8/02. These say the building was to be for a bursar, a master and about 10 boys. C.W. Hannah's typescript says the building was for a bursar, boys and a sick room. There is no suggestion of a sick room in the B.M. until 27/7/03, but it is possible that the room earmarked for a master was in fact used as a sick room. The building was taken down in 1927 and re-erected as masters' quarters behind the chapel. (Hannah's Typescript.)
- 52 In his Typescript, C.W. Hannah asserted that Todd left the school paying its way. This is a very imperfect description of the situation.
- 53 The B.Ms frequently refer to the 'urgent need' for additional accommodation e.g. 10/11/01 and 13/6/02.
- 54 B.M. 1/7/01. The third mortgage was for £2,000.
- 55 B.M. 1/7/01.
- 56 B.M. 13/6/02 and 30/7/02. The sum was £500. Acutt was the first Durban man on the Board.
- 57 B.M. 22/1/03. R. Tatham, like Acutt, became automatically a member of the Board by virtue of his donation, but could not, of course attend.
- 58 B.M. 22/1/03. Another donation of £400 was received from Mrs. Pelly, but this was for a bursary for the sons of clergy and did not therefore affect the financial position of the school.
- 59 Precise figures are not available, but in 1901 Todd estimated that out of the total income, £700 ought to be available to pay interest (B.M. 1/2/01). There were subsequently more donations, but there were also additional loans, and the attitude of the governors to expenditure at the school is only explicable if there was difficulty in meeting the interest charges.
- 60 The rise was suggested in 1901 (B.M. 23/5/01); it was agreed to raise them with effect from August 1902 at a meeting on 11/11/01, an agreement which was slightly modified on 23/1/02. But the Rector failed to supply the secretary of the Board with a list of the names of parents to be notified and the rise did not in fact take place until the beginning of 1903. (B.M. 13/6/02.)



in the staff so that the aims of the school were in fact carried out. He did not altogether succeed in welding a team out of his staff<sup>49</sup>, but he was sufficiently successful for the school to continue to enjoy the confidence of parents, and numbers were maintained<sup>50</sup> at the maximum capacity of the buildings, a wood and iron dormitory and master's room having to be added in 1902<sup>51</sup>.

#### FINANCE AND FRICTION

The school was nevertheless in serious financial difficulties<sup>52</sup> and this not only prevented an expansion of accommodation, which Todd and the governors wanted, but contributed to difficulties in the adjustment from a private school to a school governed by a Board to whom the Rector was responsible.

The individual members of the board were extremely generous in their donations to the school, each promising £500; and they used their good offices to obtain loans. But it was difficult to raise enough capital: the governors had to resort to a third bond on the property with a collateral notarial bond on the furniture of the school<sup>54</sup>, and, instead of paying their donations over five years as they had promised, the governors agreed to pay immediately when there was no other way of meeting the bills for the building<sup>55</sup>. F.S. Tatham was particularly active in trying to obtain additional funds and persuaded E.L. Acutt<sup>56</sup> of Durban to contribute, which he did handsomely, and his brother, R.H. Tatham in England, who promised £1000 spread over eight years<sup>57</sup>. In spite of these additions and a donation of £500 from the S.P.G.<sup>58</sup>, the interest charges on the school were heavy<sup>59</sup> and in 1902 the governors reluctantly decided that the fees must be raised from 60 to 70 guineas a year<sup>60</sup>.

The weak capital position of the school made the Board minutely critical of the financial management of the ordinary running of the school, and from the beginning of 1902 the Board minutes reflect increasing irritation with the way Todd handled the finances.

Todd does not seem to have been altogether businesslike - he failed to supply the secretary to the governors with a list of parents

- 61 B.M. 13/6/02.
- 62 B.M. 12/8/02. The salary offered was £200 and 52 applications were received! The first incumbent, A. Goodfellow left suddenly after about a month. (B.M. 11/9/02.)
- 63 B.M. 30/7/02, 15/12/02, and 20/3/03. In December 1902 H.C.Shepstone was deputed to investigate the finances on the spot. The record of his report refers only to his agreeing with Todd that an extra store room was necessary.
- 64 B.M. 22/1/03. Only the Bishop and F.S. Tatham were present besides the secretary.
- 65 B.M. 15/12/02.
- 66 B.M. 23/1/02. It added that any permanent furniture was to be referred to the 'Trustees'.
- 67 B.M. 10/2/03.
- 68 B.M. 13/3/03. Although the minutes are naturally impersonal and reflect decisions rather than arguments, I believe there is no possibility of doubting that the governors were thoroughly annoyed, not so much by the purchase itself as by the fact that Todd had not referred the matter to them.
- 69 B.M. 20/4/03. There was another meeting on 20th March, after the piano episode but before Todd's resignation. The meeting on 20th March re-iterated the Board's dissatisfaction with the accounts but said they had 'every hope' that the accounts would be better by the end of the half year.
- 70 Conversation with the late M. Forder. The fact that Todd had to explain a drop in fees in 1902 tends to support this statement. (B.M. 13/3/03.)

to be notified of the rise in fees and incurred the governors' displeasure for this<sup>61</sup>; and Todd pressed for the appointment of a bursar, to which the Board agreed<sup>62</sup>. This did not, however, solve the problem, partly perhaps because the respective duties of the bursar and the Rector were not clearly defined: at all events, the governors continued to consider the 'financial workings' unsatisfactory<sup>63</sup>. On the other hand, Todd must have felt the governors to be somewhat parsimonious: they refused to allow him to accept Mrs Jackson's son at reduced fees<sup>64</sup> and were angry about his arrangement for Mrs Dobrée to receive her board at the school<sup>65</sup>. The Board had laid down that the Rector was only to incur 'small accounts like breakages' without the consent of the governors<sup>66</sup>. When, therefore, the Board learned that Todd had ordered a piano, it immediately instructed the secretary to send a wire to Todd to cancel the order<sup>67</sup>, and when it was discovered that it was too late, the Board somewhat petulantly gave instructions for payment to be made by the bursar out of current school funds<sup>68</sup>. The episode seems trivial, but it was only three weeks after the Board had given instructions to pay and had taken the opportunity to re-iterate forcefully its embargo on all expenditure except 'small accounts' that Todd wrote his letter of resignation, on 4th April, 1903<sup>69</sup>.

After such promising beginnings, what had happened? There was clearly a steady deterioration in the relations between the Board and the Rector, at least so far as the business side of the school was concerned; and the fact that proud - and perhaps head-strong - men were involved did not make for easy compromise: Todd was primarily concerned with the boys under him at the time and was prepared even to accept oxen in lieu of fees<sup>70</sup> if it would help parents to keep the boys at school; the governors were primarily concerned with the heavy financial commitments and - perhaps because they had themselves been so generous to the school - could not tolerate the school's being financially generous to individuals. Perhaps there were other reasons, too, for the collapse of confidence

- 71 B.M. 20/4/03. The proposal to accept the resignation was made by F.S. Tatham, seconded by the Rev. T.G. Vyvyan; it is recorded as having been 'carried'. Others present were the Bishop, E.M. Greene, and the secretary. It is said that one of the governors found Todd drunk and that this precipitated the resignation. There is, however, no contemporary evidence of this and I cannot be sure that the memories of old boys are accurate in this respect; moreover of five whom I asked, only one said he was vaguely aware of Todd's drinking while he was a boy at school. At a meeting of old boys in London, Todd is reported to have given a 'full explanation' of his resignation, but the explanation is tantalisingly omitted from the record. (S.M.C. May 1905.)
- 72 B.M. 30/4/03. W. Beaumont suggested this. The minutes do not record whether the suggestion was accepted. With the possible exception of G.F. Tatham, none of the governors subscribed to a presentation to Todd made by the school. G.F. Tatham is mentioned among the old boys subscribing, but if the initials are correct, he was a governor not the governor's son, G.E. Tatham. All or nearly all the boys at school seem to have subscribed, including F.S.Tatham's son, A.T. Tatham. (S.M.C. Feb. 1904.)
- 73 The editor of the S.M.C. Aug. 1903 (Dobrée - admittedly a partial commentator) records that the resignation was to the 'universal regret of everyone'.
- 74 The inscription read: Conditori Nostro ac Primo Rectori Iacobo Cameron Todd Nos, per Septuennium Elus Socii Laboris, Atque Alumni Praesentes Praeteritique Hoc Indicium Studii Amoris Reverentiae Valedicentes Donamus. Apud aedem S. Michaelis Archangeli, Natal. a d xii kal Iul. MDCCCIII. (S.M.C. Aug. 1903.)
- 75 The farewell is briefly but feelingly described in S.M.C. Aug. 1903.
- 76 At an old boys' dinner in London in November 1905, when he referred 'with satisfaction' to the 'new system of teaching which Mr. Hugh Jones was introducing.' S.M.C. May 1906.
- 77 For most of the information in this paragraph I am indebted to Mrs. Jean Howard, daughter of Todd, who not only provided information herself but kindly lent letters written by her mother to a friend while she was in Canada.

(Todd's health was not good): at all events, the Board simply accepted Todd's resignation<sup>71</sup> and only as an afterthought at the following meeting was it suggested that the Board express their appreciation to Todd 'for the work he has done in starting the College'<sup>72</sup>.

At school, on the other hand, the news of his resignation was heard with genuine regret<sup>73</sup>. On the last day of the term, supported by the Rev. G.E. Pennington (the first recorded association of the name with Michaelhouse) and Dobrée, the Rector presented the prizes and Dobrée made a farewell address and a presentation of two photographs of the silver tray and tea and coffee service, subscribed for by the staff, old boys and boys, which would await his arrival in England.<sup>74</sup> When he rose to reply, he was greeted by 'a storm of cheering' but though he spoke with considerable feeling about what he had set out to achieve, there was no sense of bitterness<sup>75</sup>.

#### TODD'S LATER CAREER

Although he presided at the occasional reunions of old boys in England for a time, he wisely did not maintain a close association with the school after his departure: any close association would have made his successor's task intolerable - and Todd showed on at least one occasion a sympathetic understanding of changes which his successor introduced<sup>76</sup>. In any event, he had his own activities with which to concern himself, and the story of them is one of success and failure, joy and pathos.

Soon after he returned to England, Canon Todd opened a preparatory school, Netherfield, at Crouch End<sup>77</sup>. There on the staff was a Froebel-trained kindergärten teacher, Miss Aileen Mary Gallaher, god-daughter of William O'Brien, the Irish Nationalist; and the Irish lass and the Canon fell deeply in love. For some time the love affair was kept secret from Miss Gallaher's aunt, who had become her guardian; but it was discovered and the aunt intervened. Perhaps the discrepancy in age had something to do with it - he was 41 and she 22; or it may have been that a marriage between a Canon of the Church of England and a Roman Catholic seemed impossible to contemplate; or there is a family

- 78 Mrs. Howard assures me that it was for three years, but letters from her mother strongly suggest that it was two years.
- 79 Letter from Miss Gallaher dated 2nd Oct. 1910 and quoting a letter from Todd.
- 80 Letter from Miss Gallaher dated 29th Aug. 1910.
- 81 Letter from Miss Gallaher dated 20th Nov. 1910.
- 82 Letter from Miss Gallaher dated 21st May 1911, anticipating the wedding.
- 83 Jean Barbara (Mrs. Howard) and Aileen Margaret (Mrs. Champion).
- 84 Obituary in Harrow Gazette, dated 10 Sept. 1915, kindly supplied by Mrs. Howard.
- 85 S.M.C. Oct. 1915.
- 86 Letter from M.M. Barrett. The stone also records the death of his mother, Jean Todd, in 1919. Todd's widow died July 1966.

tradition that Canon Todd had taken vows of celibacy and the aunt believed it would be sinful to break them. At all events, Miss Gallaher was packed off to Canada and they undertook not to write or see each other for two or three years<sup>78</sup>. Miss Gallaher tried to lose herself in the activities of Ontario - teaching, fishing, riding on the cow-catcher of a train, dancing unwillingly in the newly fashionable 'Moonlight Waltz' (when the lights were turned down and - she wrote sadly to a friend - men took ungallant advantage of the dim romantic light): but 'Cameron' was constantly in her mind. Todd, meanwhile, kept his word to the aunt, but faced one difficulty after another: he had eight operations for 'blood-poisoning' in 1909 and the following year suffered from appendicitis; and the school was a failure<sup>79</sup>. At last he broke his silence, to the infinite joy of Miss Gallaher<sup>80</sup>. After a period of uncertainty, occasioned by his fear that he lacked the means to support his wife - for Miss Gallaher had cut herself off from her aunt and therefore had little to supplement Todd's income<sup>81</sup> - Todd proposed by letter and in the summer of 1911 went over to Canada to marry her<sup>82</sup>. They returned to London to start another preparatory school at Kelvin House, Ruislip, a school from which his widow retired as headmistress only in 1935. Besides running the school and rearing a family - there were two daughters<sup>83</sup>, one of whom became a writer and the other an economist before they were married - Todd was in great demand as a preacher and, as a supporter of what was then an unpopular cause, preached at the funeral of one of the most remarkable of the suffragettes, Emily Davidson<sup>84</sup>, who had thrown herself under a horse at the Derby. His health, however, was indifferent and he died on 30th August, 1915<sup>85</sup>, the news of his death reaching the school on Michaelmas eve. He was buried at St. Martin's, Ruislip, where his headstone records that he was 'Founder of Michaelhouse, Natal, S. Africa'<sup>86</sup>.

#### THE ACHIEVEMENT

Although Todd left Michaelhouse unexpectedly and perhaps with the sense of a task only half completed, it is right that his name

- 87 The Reports of the Superintendent of Education indicate a sound scholastic record at these schools, measured by examination results.
- 88 S.M.C. Aug. 1903.
- 89 E.M. Greene and F.S. Tatham were opponents in many things. The two once came to blows on the steps of the Supreme Court building, according to family tradition in both families. (Conversations with E. Tatham and J. Lovell Greene.)
- 90 S.M.C. Aug. 1903. Dobrée actually put the stress the other way round: 'Michaelhouse, while doing creditably at work, had proved...'
- 91 See the obituary by an old boy in S.M.C. Oct. 1915. Other old boys confirm this impression and perhaps the contretemps with the governors over Mrs. Dobrée's board and Mrs. Jackson's son illustrate his concern for individuals.
- 92 S.M.C. Aug. 1903.



should be kept before the school even though to most it means no more than 'our Founder, James Cameron Todd'. That he founded a school was not particularly remarkable: there were several other similar schools founded in Natal about the same time, of which perhaps Weenen County College and the Berea Academy in Durban were the most noteworthy<sup>87</sup>. But Todd insisted from the first that he wanted a school which was not dependent on him alone: it was to be a school with a long future in which to develop and perhaps when he said in his farewell address that 'Providence had caused him to resign'<sup>88</sup> he felt that his duty had been essentially a pioneering one and that others should consolidate and develop his work. He pioneered the physical outline of the school: the first buildings clearly awaited companions to complete the quadrangle. He pioneered the constitution which shielded the school in financial and other crises; and to inspire men like E.M. Greene and F.S. Tatham, who saw eye to eye on little else, to make the constitution a functional reality was in itself a considerable achievement<sup>89</sup>. In what he strove to do in the school itself he was hardly unique in aiming at the full development of the boys, physically, intellectually and morally - there can be few headmasters in the British tradition who do not claim this aim; but associating the school with the Church directly in this task was much less widely accepted. It would be sentimental to suppose that he achieved his aim of providing a full education, informed by religion: even in his valedictory address to Todd, Dobrée claimed no more than that Michaelhouse had done 'creditably at work' although she 'had proved herself the champion school at athletics'<sup>90</sup>; but there can be little doubt that his absolutely firm justice and his sympathetic generosity to those - whether adult or youth - who seemed to need it, impressed themselves upon the boys who were under him<sup>91</sup>. It is significant that his farewell gift was inscribed '... Indicium Studii Amicis Reverentiae' (a symbol of their devotion, love and respect)<sup>92</sup>.

- 1 St. Andrew's College; pp.77-78.
- 2 Letter from Bishop Baines to Hugh-Jones, 2nd May, 1903, filed with B.M. 30/4/03
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid. The fact that the Bishop wrote to Hugh-Jones only two days after the Board had appointed a Selection Committee in England suggests that he had written to the Bishop of Grahamstown almost immediately after learning of Todd's resignation and that he was acting almost independently of the Board.
- 5 Ibid. The Bishop wrote: 'The educational successes of the school hitherto have not been great, and the Governors are very anxious to see evidence of more educational progress.'
- 6 Letter from Prof. E.M. Hugh-Jones, son of the Rector.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Memorial 'From the Bursary', Jesus College, Oxford. The details of his undergraduate career are taken from this source, which is undated.

CHAPTER 4HUGH-JONES: PROMISE AND CRISISHUGH-JONES

It happened that not long before Todd's resignation, St Andrew's had had to fill a similar vacancy and only a small majority of their Board had given preference to Macgowan over Hugh-Jones<sup>1</sup>. When, therefore, the Bishop asked for suggestions for the Michaelhouse rectorship, the Bishop of Grahamstown warmly recommended Hugh-Jones for the post<sup>2</sup>. He was, moreover, known to others in Natal, including the Superintendent of Education<sup>3</sup>. The original plan to advertise the post was consequently dropped and, on the initiative of the Bishop and to expedite the appointment, E.B. Hugh-Jones was invited to become Rector<sup>4</sup>. From the candid letter which the Bishop wrote to Hugh-Jones it is clear that he - and perhaps the governors as a whole - wanted a man who would raise the academic standards of the school<sup>5</sup>, and Hugh-Jones was eminently qualified to set about the task.

With his names, it is almost superfluous to say that Edward Bertram Hugh Jones (the hyphen was added in his undergraduate days<sup>6</sup>) was born into a Welsh family: his grandfather was a Methodist minister<sup>7</sup>, his father had a distinguished career in the Anglican Church in Wales, becoming a Canon and Archdeacon of St Asaph, and his mother was a daughter of the Dean of St Asaph<sup>8</sup>. He went with a scholarship from Marlborough and the Powis scholarship to Jesus College, Oxford, where his father had been before him - a college long associated with Welshmen - and read Classical Moderations and 'Greats' there, taking a second class in both. His interests were wide, including music (as one should expect) and various athletic activities - he was elected captain of the College Boat Club; and there is perhaps a hint of his future interest in South Africa in his subscriptions to a number of missionary societies. Moreover

- <sup>9</sup> Crockford's Clerical Directory 1901. He was ordained deacon 1893, priest (at Worcester) 1894.
- <sup>10</sup> Letter to me from Prof. E.M. Hugh-Jones.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid, and Crockford's Clerical Directory 1901.
- <sup>12</sup> Crockford's Clerical Directory 1901.
- <sup>13</sup> Thomas Adkins: The History of St. John's College Battersea, The Story of a notable experiment. National Society's Depository, 1906. See especially the Foreword and Chapter V. Previously there were only 'classes' for training teachers.
- <sup>14</sup> Letter from The Librarian, College of S.Mark and S.John.
- <sup>15</sup> Letter from Prof. E.M. Hugh-Jones.
- <sup>16</sup> B.M. 27/7/03 and 8/9/03.
- <sup>17</sup> S.M.C. Aug. 1903, notes Hannah's departure, the resignation of Woodcock and the arrival of Wells, Perry and Oxland. Hannah was back before the end of the year (S.M.C. Feb. 1904). Schmidt left in 1904 (S.M.C. Oct. 1904). The Matron (Mrs. Jackson) remained and so did the music teacher, Miss le Maistre.
- <sup>18</sup> B.M. 29/9/03.
- <sup>19</sup> B.M. 29/7/03.
- <sup>20</sup> Conversation with K.M. Pennington. There were pit closets until Brown's time.

the meticulous care with which he kept his accounts as an undergraduate with limited means is an indication of a quality which the Governors of Michaelhouse had every reason to value highly.

Although he was ordained in 1893<sup>9</sup>, his career was spent in teaching - first in a preparatory school in Bournemouth<sup>10</sup> and then at King Edward's School, Brossgrove, under the distinguished headmaster, Routh<sup>11</sup>. From this post he was appointed to be vice-principal of St John's College, Battersea in 1897<sup>12</sup>, which had been the first residential training college in England, founded in 1840 by Dr (later Sir) James Kay-Shuttleworth<sup>13</sup>, a man who decisively shaped English education in the nineteenth century. (The College was amalgamated with St Mark's College, Chelsea, in 1923<sup>14</sup>.) When, therefore, Hugh-Jones came out to Natal in 1903 with his wife (a highly trained nurse who had worked with Koch in Berlin) and a six-month old baby (who was subsequently a Fellow of Keble and then Professor of Economics at Keele)<sup>15</sup>, he had had a varied experience in teaching and some experience of administration.

#### THE SETTING

The task he faced was a formidable one even in 1903, when South Africa - led or goaded by Milner - was still enjoying a confident prosperity after the war. Of the staff, only Dobrée (who acted as head until Hugh-Jones's arrival early in September<sup>16</sup>) had been at the school any length of time; Hannah went on six months recuperative leave to England and of the rest, only Schmidt had not arrived during the course of the year<sup>17</sup>. Equipment was poor - though there were some books available, there was no library; and the new Rector's first plea to the governors was on the 'urgent necessity of a laboratory'<sup>18</sup>. The austerity of the buildings was no doubt stimulating rather than daunting to a man of Hugh-Jones's temperament, but there were hazards which neither he nor his wife were likely to view with equanimity: following on a disastrous fire at Eton, the windows had recently been altered to enable boys to escape<sup>19</sup>, but sewage arrangements were primitive<sup>20</sup> and, with slow communication

- 21 Letter from Prof. E.M. Hugh-Jones. See also a letter from the Bursar, No.711, in Letter Book 1903-04.
- 22 In January 1903 the Board gave authority for the accommodation of Indians (B.M. 22/1/03) but their arrival from Madras is not recorded until October 1904 (S.M.C. Oct. 1904). Hugh-Jones warned a prospective matron that servants were 'uncertain'. (Letter Book 1903-1904, No.782 and 793).
- 23 Letter from Prof. E.M. Hugh-Jones.
- 24 Hugh-Jones attended at least part of the Board Meetings regularly (Todd's attendance had been irregular) and there is no sign of serious friction in the Minutes. The terms of the resolution passed on the occasion of his resignation show the warmth of the Governors' appreciation of him (B.M. 7/7/10).
- 25 The appointment was probably not made by Hugh-Jones, since it is recorded in the August 1903 S.M.C., but science teaching had hitherto been very much on the fringe. A letter by Dobrée in 1903 mentions that only a few matric boys took science (Letter Book 1903-1904 No. 321 dated 30/7/03); but the Mark Book for Sept. 1903 mentions no science (Mark Book 1903-1908).
- 26 Hannah's Typescript.
- 27 B.M. 10/3/22. The direct interference of a governor was recognised as irregular.
- 28 R.W. Kent: College 1863-1963; p.32.
- 29 An inspection of Bishop's in 1906 commented unfavourably on the fact that there was still 'no science' taught there. A Century of 'Bishops', p.46.
- 30 See the prize lists for the period in the St. Michael's Chronicles.

and no refrigeration, the problem of keeping food fresh was serious<sup>21</sup>. Nor were the school servants yet settled into the community: African servants were virtually nomadic and indentured Indian labour - the foundation of the present stalwart Indian staff - had not yet been imported<sup>22</sup>. Moreover, if the school were to function smoothly, the Rector had not only to supervise carefully but to perform a hundred and one tasks himself: it was about a quarter of a century before there was secretarial assistance or even a typewriter, and Professor Hugh-Jones recalls that as a small boy he helped his father make ink for the school from water and a curiously-smelling powder<sup>23</sup>.

Hugh-Jones nevertheless threw himself into the task with firm determination, with the confidence of the Board of Governors, and especially the Bishop, to support him<sup>24</sup>.

#### THE CURRICULUM

He was concerned particularly at the narrowness of the curriculum, and one of his first achievements was to establish science firmly in the school, with A.H. Adair, of Trinity College, Dublin, in charge<sup>25</sup>. It was Adair - an invaluable factotum who gave over twenty years of devoted service to the school - who built and fitted out the laboratory whose necessity Hugh-Jones had urged on the governors: a wood and iron building near the site of the present War Memorial hall<sup>26</sup>. Twenty years later he was still trying to teach in the same building only slightly enlarged, and Pascoe defended him against criticism by one of the governors by drawing attention to the fact that the building, designed for 12 boys, had, in 1922, 2 classes of 25 squeezed into it<sup>27</sup>. In 1903, however, the public would not have been particularly concerned about science results and it required men like Hugh-Jones (Barns at Maritzburg College was another<sup>28</sup>) to establish the subject as an integral part of the curriculum<sup>29</sup>.

There was a change, too, in the arrangement of the classes to provide for a more regular and clear-cut progress through the school, the forms running straight-forwardly from Form II to Form V, with two years required in Form V for Matriculation<sup>30</sup>; and the school ceased

- 31 S.M.C. Oct. 1904.
- 32 S.M.C. Oct. 1904.
- 33 S.M.C. Oct. 1904 and Oct. 1905.
- 34 Letter from C.J. Chaplin.
- 35 S.M.C. Oct. 1905.
- 36 A.B. Young M.A. (Cantab) Ph.D. (Heidelberg and Freiburg). S.M.C.  
May 1905.
- 37 S.M.C. June 1909 refers to the ex-French master's deafness and  
the boys' capitalising on this. His departure from Michaelhouse  
is not recorded, but was probably 1907 or 1908.
- 38 S.M.C. May 1908. He was from Victoria College, Stellenbosch and  
U.C.T.
- 39 S.M.C. May 1908.
- 40 S.M.C. Oct. 1905.
- 41 S.M.C. Oct. 1908 records bookkeeping among subjects for prizes.
- 42 S.M.C. Oct. 1905.
- 43 Ibid.



to enter boys for the Cape School certificate<sup>31</sup>. In 1904 'outside opinion' was called in to comment on the school, first by the Colonial Education Department and then by a lecturer at Birmingham University. The former was apparently sufficiently favourable to permit bursaries to continue to be held at Michaelhouse but not favourable enough to warrant publication<sup>32</sup>. Partly as a result of these inspections, there was a revision of Mathematics (which had come in for particular criticism) in order to bring the teaching more into line with the methods approved by the Mathematical Association<sup>33</sup>. The mind-searching among mathematicians was on this occasion particularly concerned with a modification of the hitherto rigid adherence to Euclidean geometry in particular and at Michaelhouse the chief change was the introduction of 'geometrical drawing'<sup>34</sup> to supplement the ritual learning of theorems. Other subjects, too, were reviewed. In French there was an attempt to introduce more oral work<sup>35</sup>, but as the master who replaced Schmidt for foreign languages<sup>36</sup> suffered from deafness which the boys took full advantage of<sup>37</sup>, one may doubt whether this reform had the results which were intended. Not long afterwards, however, Dutch was introduced in 1903 as the main foreign language, with the first South African graduate at Michaelhouse, van Eyssen, in charge<sup>38</sup>: a change which the Rector regarded as particularly important because of the prospect of 'some sort of federation' and which was a popular alternative among the boys<sup>39</sup>. Less popular was the abolition of shorthand<sup>40</sup>, though bookkeeping remained in the curriculum<sup>41</sup>.

In one respect at least the review of the curriculum led to comments that sound remarkably modern; the staff felt that the standard of English was dismal and urged that more time should be spent on it<sup>42</sup>. This led Hugh-Jones to comment, like Todd before him, on the lack of preparation which boys received before coming to Michaelhouse and on the 'lamentable fact that boys are sent to a public school at the age of 10, or even at 13 and 14, barely able to read!<sup>43</sup>. To correct this, the Rector developed the library,

- 44 100 additions are recorded in 1905 (S.M.C. May 1905). See also S.M.C. Dec 1907. In 1910 Sir Mathew Nathan donated 50 volumes in Everyman's Library (S.M.C. June 1910).
- 45 S.M.C. June 1909.
- 46 The description of Hugh-Jones is partly surmise, but is based on comments by J. Price Moor, J.C. Bennett, C.J. Chaplin and Prof. E.M. Hugh-Jones. Hannah, who was not apparently very favourably impressed by him, acknowledges his assiduous devotion to work.
- 47 The reorganisation of the curriculum, the reference to staff concern about English and the occasional references to particular members of staff being 'in charge of' an activity seem evidence of this.
- 48 Comment by J. Price Moor and others.
- 49 S.M.C. May 1906 refers to him as Housemaster at Cedara; S.M.C. June 1907 refers to him as first headmaster. He then farmed land belonging to the father of the Moors (conversation with J. Price Moor and C. Moor) and returned temporarily to Michaelhouse shortly before Hugh-Jones's resignation (S.M.C. June 1910).
- 50 S.M.C. May 1906.
- 51 For list of staff under Hugh-Jones, see Appendix 2.
- 52 Information by E. Halm, Esq.
- 53 Letter from H.W. Taylor.

mostly from donations and reflecting a catholic taste not too sophisticated for schoolboys - Thackeray and Scott rubbed shoulders with Henty, Orczy and Marryat, and one of the latest authors represented was W.C. Churchill<sup>44</sup>. Moreover, the culmination of his most significant contribution - the dedication of a new chapel in 1909 - enabled him to house the books properly in the room above the main entrance<sup>45</sup>.

#### ORGANISATION AND STAFFING

Without an adequate and stable staff, the attempt to raise the standard of scholarship was bound to fail; and in his relations with the staff, Hugh-Jones's approach was quite different from Todd's. Whereas the commanding personality of Todd called forth the devoted personal loyalty of at least some of his colleagues as well as of the boys, Hugh-Jones, though tall, was physically frail - even unprepossessing - and emotionally restrained<sup>46</sup>. But one gets the impression that he did not regard education as solely a matter of personal contact between masters and boys: it involved planning in the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities and it depended on the staff working together to execute the plan<sup>47</sup>.

He was not entirely successful - some of the masters were very poor<sup>48</sup> - but the staff was more stable than it had been under Todd. It is true that both Hannah and Dobrée left in 1905, the former to become 'headmaster' of Cedara Agricultural College for a while before taking up farming himself<sup>49</sup>, the latter to become vicar of Alfred County<sup>50</sup>. On the other hand, nearly all those who joined the staff after Hugh-Jones's arrival remained at least two years<sup>51</sup> - depressingly short, it is true, but twice as long as most remained in the first years at Belgowan; and some would have been an asset at any school - J.H. Lawlor, for instance, was brought out from Trinity College, Dublin, and, after three years at Michaelhouse, joined the Education Department, where he rose to be second in command<sup>52</sup>; and J. E. Ferrar eventually began his own successful preparatory school<sup>53</sup>. The stalwarts, however, were A.H. Adair,

- 54 S.M.C. Aug. 1903 (Adair joined in September 1903).
- 55 S.M.C. June 1907.
- 56 B.M. 31/1/05 and Letter Book 1903-08: letter No.34 5/1/04 refers to the need to raise salaries; letter No.119 28/5/04 gives the usual salary.
- 57 B.M. 20/4/03 and letter of the Bishop to Hugh-Jones 2/5/03.
- 58 The Bishop indicated in his letter that the capitation fee was likely to make the additional sum £200. In fact numbers were generally in the sixties - from 1906-9 the average was 65 (S.M.C. June 1909). When A.W.S. Brown was appointed, he was offered £500 p.a. for three years and then £300 plus £2.10s capitation (B.M. 21/11/10).
- 59 Colony of Natal: Statistical Report 1904. Salaries for headmasters of high schools (of which there were two) are given as £1360 voted, £1421 expended. They had a house and enjoyed the profits on the boarding establishment.
- 60 St. Andrew's College; p.76.
- 61 Letter from C.J. Chaplin.
- 62 J. Price Moor in conversation.
- 63 K.M. Pennington in conversation.

another of the recruits from Dublin, who was willing to turn his hand to almost anything and who acted as rector on several occasions, even coming back from retirement to fill the gap left by Pascoe's death<sup>54</sup>; and Eldred Pascoe himself, who arrived in 1907 from Uppingham and remained almost till his death<sup>55</sup>.

What is remarkable is not so much that the staff was constantly changing but that any good men regarded Michaelhouse as more than a temporary shelter before proceeding to posts more materially rewarding. The Rector pleaded for higher salaries for the staff, but the Board of Governors felt they could afford a rise only for the senior mathematics master - to £180 a year<sup>56</sup> - and the rector himself had a salary of only £300 and a capitation fee of £2 10s<sup>57</sup>, which made his income not much more than £450<sup>58</sup>. At the government high schools, on the other hand, the headmasters received about £600 a year<sup>59</sup>; and at St Andrew's even the £700 offered in 1901 had attracted few candidates for the headship<sup>60</sup>.

Moreover, quite apart from the special difficulties which isolation and the necessity for stringent economy in the provision of equipment and comforts brought, teaching itself called for a toughness of spirit at almost any South African school of the time. Not only were many boys ill-prepared for high school work - it seems literally true that some were almost incomprehensible in English though they were fluent in Zulu<sup>61</sup>; opposition to ineffectual teaching was candid and sometimes even cruel - an escape from French verbs through the trapdoor in the tower class-room was a relatively harmless response<sup>62</sup>; and the pressure of schoolboy public opinion was exerted powerfully against anything like 'swotting'<sup>63</sup>.

#### ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Yet a few years after Hugh-Jones's arrival, the standard of scholarship had improved markedly. The years 1906 and 1907 were in many respects the most encouraging of the school's short existence and a wonderful augury for its second decade; but for the Rector, the improvement in examination results must have been the most

- 64 See report of the Rector in S.M.C. June 1907.
- 65 Government Notice No.98 1904 (Monthly Report of the Education Department February 1904).
- 66 Government Notice No.98 1906 (Monthly Report of the Education Department February 1904).
- 67 Selected results in Matriculation Exam, 1906:

	Candidates	Passed (inc. 2nd Class)	2nd Class
D.M.S.	14	7	1
College	8	2	1
Weenen	6	1	-
Hilton	3	1	-
Michaelhouse	8	7	1

Source: Govt.Notice No.89, 1907.

Michaelhouse results in Matriculation 1906-1910:

	<u>Candidates</u>	<u>Passed</u>	
1905	11	1	
1906	8	7	
1907	2	2	
1908	14	1	(Total in Natal: 83 candidates; 43 passed)
1909	5	2	( " " " : 72 " ; 25 " )
1910	4	1	( " " " : 93 " ; 38 " )

Sources: Govt.Notices No.98,1906; No.89, 1907; No.89, 1908; No.89, 1909; No.88, 1910; No.26, 1911.

- 68 S.M.C. June 1907.
- 69 Letter from C.J. Chaplin.
- 70 S.M.C. June 1907.
- 71 Conversation with the late A.T. Tatham.
- 72 S.M.C. Oct. 1904.
- 73 S.M.C. Nov. 1906 refers to the good effects of 'private training' and 'unofficial scrumming practices'.
- 74 Letter from H.W. Taylor.
- 75 S.M.C. June 1909.
- 76 S.M.C. Oct. 1904.
- 77 S.M.C. May 1905.
- 78 S.M.C. for the period. H.W. Taylor left in 1907 and the Chronicle for May 1908 regarded the start of 1908 as bad.
- 79 S.M.C. June 1907 refers to the part played by Taylor and Jenkinson. The comments on cricket are signed A.H.C.(Childe).

heartening sign that the school was realizing its 'hope and ambition'<sup>64</sup>. Whereas none of the five entrants for the Cape Matric in 1903 passed<sup>65</sup> **and** only one out of eleven succeeded in 1905<sup>66</sup>, Michaelhouse had easily the best results in Natal for 1906, with seven out of eight passing<sup>67</sup> (one being J.W. Hutchinson<sup>68</sup>, after whom the Hutchinson memorial prize is named). The award in 1907 of the Natal Rhodes Scholarship to C.G. Roach, who had just left school, was a confirmation of the success which the school could achieve, for Roach had arrived almost unlettered<sup>69</sup> and with barely six months schooling behind him, but had passed his Cape Intermediate after six years at Michaelhouse<sup>70</sup>.

#### SPORTING SUCCESS

But success in games was then - perhaps even more than now - taken as the most accurate barometer of a fine school. Here there was at first a feeling that Hugh-Jones was opposed to team games or - even worse - that he proposed introducing association football in place of rugby<sup>71</sup>. In fact he defended Michaelhouse against the charge of spending too much time on athletics<sup>72</sup> and, although much of the practising was still left to the boys<sup>73</sup>, the organisation of matches and practices became more regular. Stewart, the bursar, for instance, coached cricket<sup>74</sup> and later Hart-Davis visited the school weekly<sup>75</sup>. It was now that the friendly rivalry with Hilton began. In 1904 Hilton beat an otherwise undefeated side in rugby<sup>76</sup>; but in the first cricket match between the schools, though the result was a draw, Michaelhouse had some claim to a moral victory: Hilton took over three hours to score 100 runs and, after a downpour and a change of wickets, Michaelhouse ran up 67 in 65 minutes for the loss of three wickets<sup>77</sup>. Since this was the age of H.W. Taylor (later South African cricket captain), the cricket successes are not surprising, but even after his departure, the school's record remained good, except for 1908<sup>78</sup>, perhaps because both he and Jenkinson (the captain), together with A.H. Childe (a master) encouraged younger players<sup>79</sup>.

- 80 The details of the 1906 season are in S.M.C. Nov. 1906.
- 81 Ibid.
- 82 Letter from C.J. Chaplin. The age of entry to Michaelhouse was anything from 10 to 14 or even 15 and to Matriculate normally took five years or more.
- 83 S.M.C. Oct. 1905.
- 84 B.M. 15/8/05; 14/2/07; 11/8/10; 21/11/11; 10/8/11; 23/1/12. A new rifle range was built in 1911 (S.M.C. June 1911).
- 85 S.M.C. Oct. 1907.
- 86 S.M.C. June 1907.
- 87 S.M.C. Dec. 1907.
- 88 S.M.C. Oct. 1904.
- 89 S.M.C. Oct. 1905.
- 90 S.M.C. Oct. 1905.



The vintage year for rugby was 1906 when, in seven school matches, the unbeaten Michaelhouse side under Roach scored 132 to their opponents' 11 and in three matches against Durban and Pietermaritzburg clubs scored 35 against nothing. The team - or part of it, bolstered by three masters - even acquitted themselves honourably and earned compliments from The Natal Mercury in a soccer match against Durban High School which ended in a draw. The star of the fifteen was J. Price Moor, who was invited to play in the Currie Cup for Natal as three-quarter but was unable to accept<sup>80</sup>. Since between a fifth and a quarter of the boys inevitably played in the first team, a great deal depended on outstanding individuals, but there was some advantage in the fact that a few played several seasons - Roach won his colours four years in succession<sup>81</sup> - and some at least were men of nineteen or twenty when they left school<sup>82</sup>.

The other major physical activity was centred on the cadet corps, which earned high (and apparently genuine) praise from Genl. Leader for its drilling<sup>83</sup>. But it was shooting which aroused particular enthusiasm, and there were long and not always friendly negotiations with Mr Jaffray about the lease of land for a range<sup>84</sup>, which the boys themselves built<sup>85</sup>. The chief shooting contests were for the Imperial Challenge Shield, but there were matches against other schools and clubs, the most outstanding successes being achieved in 1907 when the school won 62 out of 80 prizes at the Transvaal Cadet Bizley, R.P. Norton, (while still at school) represented Natal<sup>86</sup>, and there were two boys in the Natal cadet team<sup>87</sup>.

These activities - cadets and cricket or rugby - continued, of course, throughout the year, and there were occasional runs, though not as often as in Todd's day<sup>88</sup>. An innovation was the organisation of athletic sports, held on the oval which Hannah, Adair and Lawrence had helped to prepare. Times were not spectacular - in 1906 the 100yds was won in  $11\frac{1}{4}$  sec<sup>89</sup> - but the preparations and the meeting itself involved most of the school and in one event at least (throwing the cricket ball) Moor's record (118yds) was never beaten<sup>90</sup>. The

- 91 S.M.C. Nov. 1908.
- 92 S.M.C. Oct. 1914.
- 93 S.M.C. Oct. 1905.
- 94 S.M.C. Oct. 1905, May 1906 and Nov. 1906.
- 95 Letter from C.J. Chaplin.
- 96 S.M.C. Oct. 1905.
- 97 Letter from C.J. Chaplin.
- 98 Letter from J. Price Moor.
- 99 Letter from Prof. Hugh-Jones.
- 100 Letter from C.J. Chaplin.

poor times were no doubt partly the result of the unevenness of the ground: there were many attempts to find a suitable grass but weeds generally won, in spite of 'voluntary' weeding parties<sup>91</sup>; and in Brown's time the bareness of the oval was regarded as at least a predictably even surface, preferable to the former 'tufted sparseness'<sup>92</sup>.

#### EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

It was inevitable that organised sport should play a prominent part in the school for, apart from anything else, there were few facilities for other activities. There was, it is true, music and there were occasional concerts including on one occasion a performance of the Toy Symphony when the Rector played the trumpet (the Chronicle is discretely silent about the quality of the performance<sup>93</sup>); and Pascoe was active in encouraging the choir<sup>94</sup>. The carpentry which Hugh-Jones introduced<sup>94</sup> (in spite of some raised eyebrows at the thought of menial arts<sup>95</sup>) was an attempt to provide a constructive outlet for schoolboy energy<sup>96</sup> which proved popular. But, on the whole, boys were left very much to their own devices, which, for a few might be something as constructive as bird nesting or snake collecting, but for most was nothing in particular - a situation which lent itself to bullying, though it seems to have been more controlled than in the earlier days, when a refined form of sadism was to place bees on the bare stomachs of small boys and rub the stings in<sup>97</sup>. On Sundays some of the boys ranged widely over the hills - no longer hampered by Eton suits<sup>98</sup>.

Hugh-Jones was very conscious of the need to provide something constructive for them and his broadmindedness is illustrated by the story that, when he was forbidden by the Governors to permit games on Sundays, he threatened to preach against the rule - and won the skirmish<sup>99</sup>. Nevertheless the contrast between the excitements of the Bambata rebellion in 1906 and the tameness of school life were too much for some of the boys, who jumped a train to join a regiment and were returned only some time later<sup>100</sup>.

- 101 Ibid.
- 102 Ibid and letter from J. Price Moor.
- 103 A plan was approved and tenders called, but the plan was subsequently rejected. B.M. 23/2/06 and 15/8/06.
- 104 B.M. 14/2/07.
- 105 B.M. 12/12/05.
- 106 B.M. 19/10/04.
- 107 Hannah's Typescript and B.M. 18/10/05.
- 108 B.M. 19/10/04.
- 109 Hannah's Typescript.
- 110 Letter from C.J. Chaplin.

CONTROL

The lack of facilities no doubt developed self-reliance in those who survived, but it was a cause of anxiety for those in authority in the school, and much depended on the prefects. The prefectorial system is always open to abuse, but, while relying heavily on the senior boys, Hugh-Jones kept their powers within bounds by instituting a 'black book' in which they were required to record punishments administered<sup>101</sup>. He himself did not regard corporal punishment as the chief method of control: his almost cold but morally persuasive addresses, whether to the school as a whole or to individuals, were usually a sufficient deterrent to repeating the cock-fighting or whatever the misdemeanour was<sup>102</sup>.

FINANCE: SUCCESS AND FAILURE

In the first few years of his rectorship, indeed, everything pointed to the steady implementation of many of the most valuable ideals which Todd had had in founding the school but which Todd had not - through lack of time or lack of organising ability - been able to impose on the school as a whole, in spite of the remarkable effect he had on the boys as individuals. Even financially, the school seemed more stable. Major building plans had to be turned down by the Board - a plan to extend the South East wing<sup>103</sup> and another to build a house for the rector<sup>104</sup>. Nevertheless the governors no longer had reason to complain about the running expenses of the school and, soon after the resignation of Stewart, willingly agreed to Hugh-Jones's offer to act as bursar as well as rector<sup>105</sup>. He was, indeed, chief fund-raiser as well - a general joint appeal with St Anne's in 1903 had met with little success, so that even small additions like the cricket pavilion<sup>106</sup> and the carpentry shop<sup>107</sup> had to come from income or specially-solicited donations and the profits on the tuck shop were expected to pay for the carpentry-instructor's wages<sup>108</sup>. In his efforts to keep the school solvent, Hugh-Jones had the full and careful support of his wife<sup>109</sup>, whose concern nevertheless earned her the reputation of being a busybody<sup>110</sup>;

- 111 Colony of Natal: Statistical Year Book 1908: summary of imports and exports for 1902-1908, pp.4-5. Although the figures given here do not coincide with those given in the Year Book of 1904, the trend is clear.
- 112 Ibid. Exports dropped less spectacularly and actually exceeded imports 1906-9. (Year Book 1908-9).
- 113 Colony of Natal: Statistical Year Books 1904 (p.3); 1907 (p.3), and 1908 (p.3). The figures given are 97,109, 92,485 and 91,443 respectively. Though the accuracy of the figures after the census of 1904 is in doubt, the trend seems clear.
- 114 The Natal Witness, 10th January, 1906.
- 115 Colony of Natal: Statistical Year Books 1905 (p.228), 1906 (pp.250-251), 1907 (pp.260-261), 1908 (pp.264-265) and 1909 (pp.292-293). The numbers were 466, 396, 414, 414, 393.
- 116 B.M. 18/10/05 and 12/12/05.
- 117 S.M.C. June 1907 (Governor's speech).
- 118 St. Andrew's College; pp.95-96.
- 119 B.M. 17/3/08 and 17/5/05.

but, although the situation was somewhat better than it had been, the credit balance was extremely precarious, and the slightest breath of cold economic winds was likely to upset it disastrously. It was Hugh-Jones's great misfortune that the whole of South Africa faced an economic blizzard in the years immediately preceding Union.

In the year or two after the South African War, Natal enjoyed a boom with imports and exports at the record level of £16.6m and £12.2m respectively in 1903<sup>111</sup>, and when they dropped the following year, it was generally assumed that it was a healthy return to normality. As there was a slight rise in 1905 there was some justification for this view, but the breeze became bracing in 1906 and really cold in the next two years - in 1908 imports were only half what they had been in 1904<sup>112</sup>. Even the European population was dropping - from just over 97,000 in 1904 to nearly 92,500 in 1907 and a thousand less the following year<sup>113</sup>. The slump was reflected in education. As early as 1906 there was retrenchment of some officers in the education department<sup>114</sup> and the number of pupils in the high schools, having risen to 466 in 1905, dropped to about 400 over the next four years<sup>115</sup>.

In its frail financial framework, Michaelhouse suffered in many ways. The governors had already been most generous as individuals and the funds benefitted from a bequest of £500 by John Freeman, who died as a result of an accident in England<sup>116</sup>. But, although the church urged support of the school, the public was in general unable and perhaps unwilling to subscribe sufficiently to enable the governors to reduce the heavy £10,000 debt<sup>117</sup> on the school and therefore the heavy interest charges; and there were no benevolent organisations in Natal to compare with De Beers, the Beit Trust and Cullinan, who gave £5,000 to St Andrew's at this time<sup>118</sup>. Moreover the prospect of renewing the bonds became gloomier: the governors experienced the greatest difficulty in renewing them and then usually at an increased rate of interest<sup>119</sup>. Meanwhile, parents were finding it increasingly difficult to pay the fees. The record of outstanding fees and the

- 120 B.M. 10/5/04, 19/10/04, 15/8/06, 14/2/07, 26/2/09 and 11/8/10.  
The total for 1910 seems to exclude the amount owed by Mr. Jaffray (£95) which was set against rent for the shooting range.
- 121 The exact fee income is not known. Fees were ordinarily 70 gns, but there were considerable reductions for sons of clergy and for others.
- 122 S.M.C. Nov. 1906.
- 123 The Rector began planning for the chapel in 1906 (B.M. 21/9/06). S.M.C. May 1908 refers to a plan to seat 120; it was in fact built to seat 150 (S.M.C. June 1909).
- 124 Hannah's Typescript says numbers dropped to 50. There is some reason to doubt this, partly because Hannah was not at the school in the years 1908-9. The Rector, addressing a meeting of old boys in January 1909 said the 'average' over the last three years had been 65 and that the school would open in 1909 with 60. The lists of new boys and leavers given in the Chronicles from 1904-1908 show a balance in favour of entrants except for 1907, when the leavers numbered 20 and the entrants 19. For 1909 and 1910 the leavers are not given, but the number of entrants at the beginning of the year 1909 was slightly higher than in 1908. The Account Book - 'Day Book' shows 66 boys in 1908; 55 at the beginning of 1909 and 63 at the end; and 58 at the beginning of 1910 rising to 60 and then dropping in the third quarter to 57.
- 125 St. Andrew's College; p.73. There was also a drop at Bishop's College (A Century of 'Bishops'; p.47). Hilton, on the other hand, went up from 70 in 1906, when Falcon became head, to 100 in 1909 (Hattersley: Hilton Portrait; pp.86-87).
- 126 B.M. 26/2/09.
- 127 S.M.C. June 1909.
- 128 Letter from C.J. Chaplin. The sermon preached in St. Saviour's Cathedral on his death referred to financial 'and other' difficulties. It is impossible to be sure what the 'other' difficulties were, but health was probably one and some, including C.W. Hannah, regarded Mrs. Hugh-Jones as a busybody. I am inclined to believe that Mrs. Hugh-Jones's concern for the school, and especially for the health of the boys and the economic running of the housekeeping, was misconstrued by a few who were unaccustomed to having a woman in the establishment in any other capacity than matron or music mistress.
- 129 S.M.C. June 1909.



various devices used to try to recover them - from persuasion to threats of court proceedings - make dismal reading throughout the period, but the most distressing note is the resolution to appoint a special sub-committee to consider the amount of £753-2-10 due to the governors by 1910<sup>120</sup> - a sum equivalent to about a fifth of the school's expected fee income<sup>121</sup>.

The most alarming feature, however, was the decline in numbers, especially distressing because they had risen steadily to 73 in 1906<sup>122</sup> and the Rector and governors confidently expected the school to reach 120 before very long<sup>123</sup>. The drop was small in numbers - to between 50 and 60<sup>124</sup> - and proportionately far less than at St Andrew's where, from 300 in 1900, there were only 123 in 1909, partly because of the establishment of Rhodes University College<sup>125</sup>. It was nevertheless sufficiently serious to warrant the governors' asking Pascoe and Adair to engage in the unedifying task of recruiting boys for the school during the winter of 1909<sup>126</sup>. (Hugh-Jones was due to go on leave to England<sup>127</sup>.) The picture of Pascoe, especially, assuming the combined role of travelling salesman and recruiting sergeant assaults the imagination: one can only wonder at the amazing versatility expected of schoolmasters.

Hugh-Jones was never physically robust - it is possible, indeed, that the knowledge that he suffered from tuberculosis discouraged some parents from sending boys to the school<sup>128</sup>. The strain of maintaining the school in difficult times became almost intolerable, but he and the governors hoped that his few months' leave in 1909 would help to restore his health, especially as he had seen the culmination of his most cherished plan for the school at the beginning of the year - the consecration of the chapel by the Bishop in February<sup>129</sup>.

#### THE CHAPEL

If it were not for the building of the chapel, one's impression of Hugh-Jones would be of a meticulous administrator, carefully husbanding limited resources and conscientiously planning a suitable

- 130 Letter from Prof. Hugh-Jones and B.M. 21/9/06, which record the first letter on the subject from the Archbishop of Canterbury's South Africa Education Committee as having been sent to the rector. The Rector wrote to the Dean of Westminster about the possibility of providing funds. Letter Book 1903-1908 No.18, dated 25/9/06 (but the year may be a slip for '05).
- 131 Letters (lent to me by the late A.T. Tatham) from Bishop Baines to F.S. Tatham 4th December 1907 and 11th December 1907 indicate his enthusiasm and part of his contribution.
- 132 See note 130 above.
- 133 B.M. 3/10/07 and 31/7/07.
- 134 B.M. 3/10/07.
- 135 Letter of Bishop Baines 4th December 1907.
- 136 B.M. 3/10/07.
- 137 Deed of Transfer 584/1908 dated 9/5/1908. The description is Sub A of B of the Farm Wilde Als Spruit, No.1085. The portion may not be mortgaged.
- 138 S.M.C. June 1909.
- 139 B.M. 23/12/07.
- 140 Conversation with R.F. Currey.
- 141 B.M. 12/2/08 and 17/3/08.

curriculum for the school. That he contemplated a building whose immediate utility many might question and took the initiative<sup>130</sup> in approaching the leading architect of the day - Baker - to undertake its design, indicate a sense of purpose and a faith comparable to Todd's when he planned the original school buildings at Belgowan. Moreover, he gained the support, not only of the Bishop - whose help was invaluable<sup>131</sup> - but of the lay members of the board of governors. The major problem was, of course, financial; but Michaelhouse was fortunate to get - apparently as a result of a request from Hugh-Jones<sup>132</sup> - a grant of £500 from the S.P.G. and an offer of £1,000 from the S.P.C.K., both obtained on the recommendation of the Archbishop of Canterbury's South African Education Committee<sup>133</sup>. The S.P.C.K. offer was, however, conditional on the land being free of bonds, and, in spite of a plea by the Bishop to waive this<sup>134</sup>, the Society felt it could not make exceptions. By this time, Baker had been invited to draw up plans and the Board was determined to find a way round the difficulty. An ingenious solution was suggested by F.S. Tatham and E. Greene<sup>135</sup> and accepted by the Society - the bond-holders were asked to release the land to be occupied by the chapel and the land was thereupon transferred to the Diocesan Trustees in 'Special Trust for a Chapel for Michaelhouse'<sup>136</sup>, and to them it belongs to this day<sup>137</sup>. The chapel was expected to cost £2,000, and most of the balance came from 'official' donations (from the governors), the Natal public subscribing only a little over £125, in spite of a handsome brochure produced by Hugh-Jones to appeal for funds<sup>138</sup>.

The architect, Herbert (later Sir Herbert) Baker, was then busy on designs for the future Union Buildings in Pretoria, but he found time to discuss the Michaelhouse chapel fully with the governors<sup>139</sup> and although he is said to have complained that 'they want me to build it for 4/6'<sup>140</sup>, he proved most co-operative about economical changes which the governors proposed - he substituted brick for stone in the sanctuary, for instance<sup>141</sup>. In spite of the limited

- 142 B.M. 17/7/08.
- 143 S.M.C. June 1909.
- 144 The acceptance of Barrow's tender was authorised in July 1908 (B.M. 17/7/08); the chapel was consecrated in February 1909 (S.M.C. June 1909).
- 145 S.M.C. June 1909.
- 146 Ibid.
- 147 Ibid.
- 148 Ibid.
- 149 Ibid.
- 150 No meetings were recorded between 26th February 1909 and 7th July 1910, when the Board met to receive Hugh-Jones's resignation.
- 151 B.M. 7/7/10. He said farewell to the school on 21st August 1910 (S.M.C. Nov. 1910).
- 152 S.M.C. Nov. 1910.

funds available, he and the contractors (John Barrow of Johannesburg)<sup>142</sup> managed to erect with local brick and stone<sup>143</sup> a building in six months<sup>144</sup> which, though austere, had such fine proportions that it gave the impression of a generous loftiness of purpose based on warm and solid foundations - an impression which the only part remaining - the apse - partly retains. The teak altar was appropriately the gift of the Bishop and the pulpit (also in teak) was given in memory of John Freeman<sup>145</sup>. An incidental consequence of the presence of Italian stone-cutters at the school was the unexpectedly gentle statue of St Michael placed above the main entrance to the school, the gift of Old Boys<sup>146</sup>.

The chapel was the outward sign of the religious foundation on which the school was built and both the Bishop and Hugh-Jones hoped that it would strengthen the religious education provided in the school<sup>147</sup>. Perhaps the establishment of a branch of the S.C.A. in 1908 and its strengthening in 1909 was a sign that the promise was being fulfilled<sup>148</sup>. The quality of religious education is at all times difficult to assess; but since Michaelhouse had no permanent chaplain for many years and the successors of Hugh-Jones were not themselves priests, the chapel was the only prominent and permanent reminder of the fact that Michaelhouse was established as a church school.

In reading the old school records one has the feeling that the consecration of the chapel - itself an impressive ceremony which filled the chapel with 150 clergy, members of the Board and boys<sup>149</sup> - was recognised as the culmination of Hugh-Jones's achievement; the Chronicles record no major events thereafter and the Board did not meet for eighteen months<sup>150</sup>; and even the establishment of Union goes unremarked. Indeed, Hugh-Jones's health could not stand the pace at which he had been working. His leave (when Adair acted in his place) refreshed him a little, but in July 1910 he felt obliged to tender his resignation<sup>151</sup>. He left Natal in August and died at sea on 11th September, a few days after leaving Cape Town<sup>152</sup>.

- 153 The tone of the resolution passed at the Board Meeting on 7th July 1910 is not that of a formal eulogy, though the resolution passed after his death is more formal.
- 154 S.M.C. Nov. 1910.
- 155 Letter from Prof. Hugh-Jones.
- 156 Notes by A.T. Tatham.
- 157 Extract from a sermon preached in St. Saviour's Cathedral in October 1910: 'he was perhaps not so well known to the general public as some of our leading clergy'. S.M.C. Nov. 1910.
- 158 Hannah's Typescript.
- 159 Colony of Natal: Report of the Education Commission, 1909, (Natal Archives Miscellaneous 5/3) (passim) displays a concern for intellectual values.
- 160 Natal Archives Miscellaneous Reports and Papers 1904-1914; 5/3; First Draft 1908 (for an act establishing the Natal University College).
- 161 Act No.18 of 1909. Natal Archives File 5/3, Miscellaneous Reports and Papers 1904-1914. The Council was to consist of 16 members, seven representing particular institutions, viz.: The Natal Law Society, Girls' Collegiate School, Ladies' College, Huguenot High School, Hilton College, St. Charles and Michaelhouse. Hugh-Jones was the Michaelhouse representative until his resignation, when the Bishop replaced him.
- 162 Letter Book 1903-1908, dated 4/3/04.
- 163 Letters from H.W. Taylor and J.C. Bennett.

### HIS ACHIEVEMENT

There is no doubt that the governors felt his resignation keenly and personally<sup>153</sup>; at Balgowan, Eldred Pascoe, the Senior Master while Adair was away on leave, expressed the affection and esteem of the school and presented Canon and Mrs. Hugh-Jones with two silver vases and a rose bowl<sup>154</sup> (which is now an inter-collegiate fencing trophy at Oxford)<sup>155</sup>. He led the school at a time when nearly all private schools were experiencing great difficulties and numbers dropped so seriously in his last years that there was some doubt whether the school would be able to continue<sup>156</sup>. This has tended to obscure the contribution which he made to Michaelhouse.

He was not a man whose personality attracted attention from a distance - he was little known outside the Michaelhouse circle<sup>157</sup> - and this was a disadvantage when competition for public support was severe among schools. His emphasis on intellectual achievement led Hannah to suppose that he had little sympathy for 'colonial boys'<sup>158</sup>: an opinion which his remarks about boys entering the school ill-prepared seemed to confirm. But neither he nor the governors were alone in believing that as Natal emerged from a pioneering society, intellectual values required emphasis<sup>159</sup>. Moreover the school's reputation stood high in the estimation of those responsible for the shaping of Natal's education policy: the report which preceded the establishment of the Natal University College expressed the hope that 'such excellent institutions as Hilton College and Michaelhouse and others equally good' would co-operate by sending post-matriculants to the University College<sup>160</sup>; and Michaelhouse was one of only three boys' private schools which earned representation on the Council of the Natal University College in 1909 (the others were Hilton College and St Charles)<sup>161</sup>.

Nor was he really unsympathetic to 'colonial boys' and their needs<sup>162</sup>. He did not take an obvious interest in their primary concerns - he rarely watched matches, for instance<sup>163</sup>, and boys construe this as a strange sense of values. But it was nevertheless

- 164 S.M.C. Nov. 1908. They were T.H.Y. Worthington, A.H. Winter, C.W. Janion, J.C. Otto, H.W. Taylor, E.L. Baylis, F. Brunskill.
- 165 S.M.C. Nov. 1910. They were D. Taylor (Capt.), H.W. Taylor, C.G.L. Baylis, E.L. Baylis and T.H.Y. Worthington.
- 166 S.M.C. June 1910. T. Campbell played wicket keeper in four tests but was not able to play in the fifth. H.W. Taylor was selected to play in a 'practice' match before the third test but was not selected for the test team.
- 167 The early practices are recalled by H.W. Taylor in his letter.
- 168 Minute Book, untitled, containing notes of the school. In a letter to the Oxford Appointments Board, Hugh-Jones said he wanted the excellent standard of games 'kept up'. (Letter Book 1903-09; No.119.)
- 169 Letters from C.J. Chaplin and J.C. Bennett.
- 170 S.M.C. June 1909.
- 171 Selborne to Duncan, 30th November 1907. Quoted in L.M. Thompson: The Unification of South Africa 1902-1910; O.U.P. 1960; p.47.
- 172 L.M. Thompson, op.cit., pp.41-49.
- 173 Ibid. See especially p.48.



a golden age of sport both at the school and among old boys: in 1908 seven old boys played in the Natal XV<sup>164</sup> and in 1910 five did so<sup>165</sup>, while in cricket both Dan and Herby Taylor later distinguished themselves for Natal and the latter was almost chosen for South Africa in 1910 for the team in which Michaelhouse had its first Springbok, Tom Campbell, a pre-migration boy<sup>166</sup>. Although these successes cannot be credited to Hugh-Jones directly even when they received nearly all their preliminary coaching during his regime, a lack of sympathy on the Rector's part would almost certainly have made such successes impossible: and if he had been hostile to athletic activities he would not have taken the trouble to defend the school against the charge of spending too much time on sport of one sort or another and would have checked the enthusiasts who practised in the early morning before important matches<sup>167</sup>. In selecting staff he was, indeed, concerned to recruit men interested in sport<sup>168</sup>.

Moreover, although his nickname ('Scabby') was unflattering and his persistent cough repelled some boys, his prefects in particular learned to understand and respect his quiet determination to make the school a place in which fully responsible citizens of South Africa could be nurtured<sup>169</sup>, a determination which he voiced on the occasion of the consecration of the chapel when he envisaged South Africa as 'a great province of the British Empire'<sup>170</sup>.

Natal sorely needed men prepared to take an enlightened and responsible part in the Union which was effected shortly before Hugh-Jones's resignation, for her policies were held in low esteem by the British Government, both the Natal governors of the time (McCollum and Nathan), the High Commissioner (Lord Selborne) (who described Natal in 1907 as 'bankrupt in policy and in finance'<sup>171</sup>), and all the leaders of the other colonies in South Africa<sup>172</sup>; and the inadequacy of Natal's leaders showed at the conventions preceding Union, for, with the partial exception of Greene, the Natal delegates seem to have had little understanding of what a political union meant<sup>173</sup>. Hugh-Jones seems to have seen the need to stimulate the

174 S.M.C. July 1912.

175 S.M.C. Dec. 1912.

minds and broaden the interests of the boys so that they would be better equipped to play an active and not a complacent part in the country's life.

He did not have the physical strength and lacked the dynamic presence which would have enabled him to enthuse many boys with his ideas; moreover his energy was almost fully absorbed in saving the school from drowning financially. He has therefore remained a somewhat shadowy figure in the traditions of Michaelhouse, remembered, if at all, by the dauntingly full-face, bearded portrait in the hall. His real memorial is in fact in the chapel, as appropriate a place for it as the centre of the main quad is for Todd's: soon after his death, a teak lectern was commissioned in his memory, designed and executed by Harry Hems of Exeter<sup>174</sup> and dedicated by the Bishop in October 1912<sup>175</sup>. The elaborate figure of St Michael delicately but evidently effectively trampling on the dragon and precisely thrusting his spear through its throat now faces the boys dramatically on the wall as they leave the chapel, the ample proportions of the new chapel having overwhelmed the detailed craftsmanship so long as it remained as a lectern. Hugh-Jones's defence of the school in very difficult times enabled it to survive not only the pre-Union slump but the six months' uncertain interregnum which followed his resignation: his precision was perhaps not endearing, but it was effective.

- <sup>1</sup> A.F. Hattersley: Merchiston, A South African School 1892-1953. Balkema 1953. See especially p.9 and p.12.
- <sup>2</sup> C. Moor in conversation.
- <sup>3</sup> S.M.C. Oct. 1904 and A.F. Hattersley: Merchiston... Hattersley mentions that by 1909 Merchiston 'had already achieved a Rhodes scholarship' (p.25) but does not mention Sisson by name. The list of honours, including Rhodes Scholarships, given on p.60 is certainly incomplete, omitting any Rhodes Scholarships before 1931 and omitting at least one Elsie Ballot Scholarship (myself). However, Hattersley mentions Sisson and Mortimer (another entrant to Michaelhouse) acting in scenes from Shakespeare (p.14), so that Sisson must be the scholar to whom he refers on p.25.
- <sup>4</sup> Hattersley: Merchiston... p.51.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.21.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.22, quoting from their final report.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp.25-26.

A PREPARATORY AND FEEDER SCHOOL

Of the problems which beset both Todd and Hugh-Jones, one was not far from being solved when Hugh-Jones resigned: the lack of scholastic preparation for so many of the boys entering the school, a deficiency which the independent spirit of the boys and the relatively poor quality of the teaching staff accentuated. There were, of course, elementary schools in various parts of Natal, either established or aided by the government; but, although some of them gave a grounding sufficiently thorough for high schools to build on, elementary education was thought of as something with a quite different purpose from secondary education and not as a preparation for high school work. There were, too, some private preparatory schools, especially in Pietermaritzburg and Durban, which provided a different curriculum from the elementary schools and ostensibly prepared their pupils for high school work; but most of these - like Blenheim (which for a time took all ages) in Pietermaritzburg and Talana near Dundee - were ephemeral and their standards varied considerably.

A notable exception was Merchiston in Pietermaritzburg, started with eighteen boys in 1892 by two remarkable women, Miss Allan and Miss Rove<sup>1</sup>, and sufficiently well established by 1896 to supply Michaelhouse with a number of boys, including the first entrant (Moor)<sup>2</sup> and the first Michaelhouse Rhodes Scholar (Sisson)<sup>3</sup>, and much later (1913), a boy (W.R. Evans) who was to become Merchiston's first Natal-born headmaster<sup>4</sup>. Merchiston was not, however, directly linked with Michaelhouse but rather provided Maritzburg College with a regular entry<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, although it was the aim of the founders to foster in the boys 'Fear of God and love of man'<sup>6</sup> and F.S. Tatham was one of the most vehement supporters of the school<sup>7</sup>, there were many who felt that a preparatory school should also be associated

- 8 S.M.C., Dec. 1902.
- 9 K.M. Pennington in conversation and S.M.C. Aug.1903.
- 10 S.M.C. Dec. 1902.
- 11 The exact date is uncertain. Owen is referred to in the S.M.C. May 1905 as 'still' headmaster.
- 12 S.M.C. Aug. 1903.
- 13 C.W. Hannah's Typescript, asserts that Todd 'and others' founded it, but I have been unable to confirm this. One would have expected a direct reference to this in the S.M.C., which records the foundation of the school.
- 14 S.M.C. Aug. 1903.
- 15 K.M. Pennington in conversation. St David's boys were prepared for the Oxford or Cambridge locals.
- 16 The Board Minutes do not refer to St David's. Hannah's Typescript gives the impression that expansion of St David's was considered but rejected. A.T. Tatham recalled that there was opposition to the founding of Cordwalles from Leuchars, Pennington and C. Tatham, who were all associated with St David's, so that Hannah's impression is probably correct.

with the Anglican Church.

To some extent, St David's House in Greytown provided this association. This was started in 1902<sup>8</sup> as a result of the determination of some of the local people, and especially Col. (later Sir) George Leuchars and the Rev. (later Archdeacon) Pennington, to provide suitable schooling for their sons<sup>9</sup> to prepare them for public schools in Natal or England<sup>10</sup>. A few prominent men formed a committee and Williams became the first headmaster of the school, to be followed not long afterwards by Owen<sup>11</sup>. In their large stone and brick house, the boys were well prepared by Owen and one or two assistants, and St David's fed a small but regular stream into Michaelhouse, for there was a close association between the two schools: a year after the foundation of St David's, the Chronicle referred to it as an 'off-shoot' of Michaelhouse<sup>12</sup>, and it is probable that Todd was associated with the enterprise<sup>13</sup>. The school even took pride in the fact that it had a plunge bath similar to that at Balgowan<sup>14</sup>. Nevertheless, although it earned a reputation for soundness by its good examination results<sup>15</sup> and by the quality of the entrants to Michaelhouse (several of whom were to win Rhodes Scholarships, K.M. Pennington being the first), the school was never large. When, therefore, the governors of Michaelhouse discussed the question of a preparatory school they did not support the idea of expanding St David's, no doubt because it was out of the way<sup>16</sup>. The first world war seriously affected the school and girls were subsequently admitted; but the school continued its effective work for the local community until the 'thirties. Meanwhile, Cordwalles had become indisputably a preparatory school for Michaelhouse.

Towards the end of Hugh-Jones's rectorship, the question of preparatory schools had become a prominent issue not only for Michaelhouse but for Natal as a whole. In 1909 a commission, under the redoubtable ex-headmaster of Maritzburg College, R.D. Clark, recommended the establishment of preparatory schools for College and Durban High School, preferably annexed to the respective

- 17 Colony of Natal: 1909 Report of the Education Commission pp.8 and 9.  
(Natal Archives Miscellaneous 5/3).
- 18 Hattersley: Merchiston... p.25. There had been 125 at the close  
of the South African War.
- 19 Ibid., p.26.
- 20 B.M. 7/7/10.
- 21 B.M. 11/8/10.
- 22 B.M. 21/3/11. This was the first meeting after Brown's arrival  
and Brown was present himself.
- 23 B.M. 9/6/11.
- 24 B.M. 10/8/11.



schools, as was the practice at Hilton. The preparatory school, they asserted, 'is in reality the crux of the educational situation in the Colony'<sup>17</sup>. The publication of the report coincided with a crisis in the history of Merchiston, for Miss Allan and Miss Rowe were suffering financial anxiety, numbers had dropped to eighty-eight and they were contemplating selling the school<sup>18</sup>. The Natal Government thereupon decided to take over the school, in spite of the eloquent protests of F.S. Tatham that such a move would destroy a valuable institution<sup>19</sup>. His gloomy prophecy was fortunately not fulfilled, but the change impressed upon the governors of Michaelhouse the need to consider whether a preparatory school was not also the crux of Michaelhouse's problems.

At a meeting of the Board in July 1910, the Bishop and F.S. Tatham were appointed a committee to consider the establishment of a preparatory school<sup>20</sup> and at the next meeting a month later, after 'considerable discussion in which the various pressing necessities of the School were earnestly considered' the Board resolved that 'it is desirable that a School preparatory to Michaelhouse be established at the earliest possible date'<sup>21</sup>. Perhaps the sense of urgency was tempered by a feeling that it would be wise to await the arrival of a new Rector; at all events one of the earliest requests to Brown was to prepare a report on a preparatory school<sup>22</sup> and by June 1911 the Board was discussing the merits of various places, including Inchanga, Estcourt and Town Hill<sup>23</sup>.

Thereafter the scheme developed apace, thanks largely to the enthusiasm and generosity of the Bishop. The Bishop bought the property 'Blenheim' on Town Hill, offered to fit it out as a school and offered it free of rent to the governors for three years<sup>24</sup>. A committee, including the Bishop, F.S. Tatham and A.W.S. Brown among others and with Tatham's son, A.T. Tatham, as secretary, was appointed; and various conditions were approved, notably that religious instruction should be on the lines of the Church of England and that there should be an age limit for entry to

- 25 B.M. 10/8/11.
- 26 B.M. 5/9/11.
- 27 The appointment was apparently made by the Committee, not the Board, for the Bishop simply reported it to the Board (B.M. 23/1/12) and it was already known by the time the December 1911 S.M.C. went to press.
- 28 S.M.C. Dec. 1911.
- 29 B.M. 12/1/12. The meeting dealt with no other business.
- 30 C.W. Hannah's Typescript.
- 31 S.M.C. Dec. 1912.
- 32 S.M.C. Dec. 1911.
- 33 Ibid.,
- 34 S.M.C. June 1913.
- 35 S.M.C. April 1914.
- 36 Acts and Resolutions of the Diocesan Synod 1915, p.56. There were 78 boys at Michaelhouse in 1915 (Acts and Resolutions of the Diocesan Synod 1916, p.46).
- 37 Besant retired in 1947.

Michaelhouse (12½) and for leaving the preparatory school (13½)<sup>25</sup>. The Board, determined to open the school in February 1912, offered the headship to Pascoe<sup>26</sup>. When he declined, the school was most fortunate to obtain J.H.E. Besant<sup>27</sup>, who had graduated from Brasenose and taught at the well-known Oxfordshire preparatory school, Summer Fields<sup>28</sup>. Before the school was fully launched, a slight hitch was discovered; the Michaelhouse Deed of Trust did not permit the governors of Michaelhouse to use its funds (and therefore the Bishop's gift) for a preparatory school. The gift was therefore cancelled and it was made over instead to the governors of Cordwalles<sup>29</sup>, who henceforth constituted a separate Board, not simply a committee of the Michaelhouse Board.

And so Cordwalles, named after the school at which the Bishop's nephew had been educated<sup>30</sup>, began its task with fifteen boys<sup>31</sup>, the first of the 'steady stream of well-drilled recruits', as the Chronicle not very happily phrased it<sup>32</sup>. Today one may doubt the wisdom of moulding the curriculum of a preparatory school precisely to fit that of a high school, as it was accepted that Cordwalles should do<sup>33</sup>, but the idea that any curriculum should be adapted to the capacities of children was then wildly heretical. In any event, Besant soon gained the confidence of parents: in just over a year the school was 'full', with 45 boys<sup>34</sup>, and by 1914 there were over 50.<sup>35</sup> Very soon Brown was able to report that about a quarter of the boys at Michaelhouse had had the advantage of passing through 'our' preparatory school<sup>36</sup>. The enthusiasm of the governors and of Brown himself in launching the enterprise was fully vindicated, and with Besant as the pilot for nearly forty years<sup>37</sup> Cordwalles became a school valued not only for its connection with Michaelhouse but for its own academic achievement.

#### CRISIS

But this is to run ahead of the story, for while the governors were considering the establishment of a preparatory school, there was some doubt whether there would be a school to take the 'prepared'

- 38 This account of the crisis is based on notes by A.T. Tatham and on conversations with him. A.T. Tatham placed the crisis 'towards the end of 1910' and implied that it was in November. Since the constitution was altered to enable a layman to be appointed rector on 21st November and Brown was appointed the following day (B.M. 21st and 22nd Nov. 1910), negotiations with Brown must have begun some time earlier, at least in October. I can find no contemporary evidence on the crisis - and A.T. Tatham had unfortunately died before I discovered that the crisis was not reflected in Board minutes. The closest reference in the Minutes is to the appointment in August of a sub-committee to consider outstanding fees of £753 " 2 " 10 (B.M. 11/8/10). The Bishop and Tatham (father of A.T. Tatham) were the members and this might explain why the discussion of the future was confined to them. According to A.T. Tatham, his father agreed to the continuation of Michaelhouse only with a lay headmaster.
- 39 The Account Book - Day Book.
- 40 B.M. 9/7/11 record a total indebtedness of £10,750, £3,000 of which was at 5%, the rest at 6%. This was almost certainly the position in 1910, too.
- 41 The Board did not meet between August and November.
- 42 A.T. Tatham's Notes. The motion eventually presented to the Board to alter the constitution was proposed by the Bishop and seconded by L.W. Christopher, although F.S. Tatham was present at the meeting. This does not, however, seem sufficient evidence to reject A.T. Tatham's account, especially as A.T. Tatham had been at Marlborough under Fletcher.

boys. F.S. Tatham told his son<sup>38</sup> that he and the Bishop spent many hours in earnest discussion about the future of the school. One may imagine the agonising appraisal the two men were forced to make: both had been personally committed to Michaelhouse since it became a diocesan school; both had been wonderfully generous; and both had had such high hopes of the service the school would do in providing leaders for Natal. But numbers were low - there were only 57 in the Michaelmas term<sup>39</sup> - and interest charges were high<sup>40</sup>. If the public of Natal did not support the school, would the buildings not be better used in some other way? For the Bishop, the alternative was to convert the school into a Theological College for training Africans; for F.S. Tatham there was no alternative: the school must be continued. Late in the evening Tatham had still failed to convince Bishop Brines and they parted, the Bishop undertaking to reconsider the situation, and Tatham knew that this meant a night of prayerful meditation. Early the following morning he received a telephone call from the Bishop and heard the simple but resolute decision: 'We go full steam ahead.' The whole discussion had been confined to these two men<sup>41</sup>, but if either of them had withdrawn his support, Michaelhouse could hardly have survived. On the other hand, having made the decision to go ahead, they both planned energetically for the future.

#### A LAYMAN: BROWN

The first task was to set about appointing a new Rector. Tatham, impressed by Frank Fletcher, the first lay head of Marlborough and one of the early laymen to lead any 'public school' was convinced that the governors should be enabled to appoint a layman to Michaelhouse - indeed his support for the continuation of Michaelhouse seems to have been conditional on this<sup>42</sup> - and he gained the Bishop's support for this idea. By the time the Governors met again, negotiations for the appointment were well advanced and on 21st November the Board unanimously agreed to the necessary change in the constitution: 'some person other than a clergyman' may be

- 43 B.M. 21/11/11.
- 44 Ibid.
- 45 B.M. 22/11/10.
- 46 The motion to appoint Brown was proposed by the Bishop. The Governors had not formally appointed a committee to make the appointment, though the 'carrying out of the details during the interregnum' was left to the Bishop (B.M. 7/7/10). The choice had clearly already been made by the time the Board met in November.
- 47 Brown turned thirty two days after the Board formally appointed him, so that he was actually thirty by the time he arrived. Brown was born 24th November, 1880. (Letter from the Keeper of Records, Caius College.)
- 48 The obituary in S.M.C. Oct. 1916 states that he won an open scholarship to Caius from Uppingham. According to the records at Caius, he entered the college in 1900 and won the scholarship in 1901. (Letter from the Keeper of Records, Caius Collage.)
- 49 Letter from the Warden, Trinity College, Glenalmond, quoting, presumably, the school magazine.
- 50 Ibid.
- 51 Ibid and Letter from W.F. Bushell.
- 52 S.M.C. Oct. 1916. The date of his departure from Glenalmond is given in the Warden's letter. The Caius record gives the date as 1908, presumably wrongly. An S.M.C. kindly sent by Brown's nephew, Mr. A.W. Brown, contains marginal corrections to the obituary: inter alia, 'secretary' is changed to 'house tutor and librarian'; and there is a note that he was 'there' (Uppingham) for three years.
- 53 S.M.C. June 1913.
- 54 Several letters from Old Boys remark on his temper and the way he controlled it in the classroom, (by biting his forefinger).

appointed provided two-thirds of the governors present agree<sup>43</sup>. (At the same time the post was opened to graduates of universities of the British Empire instead of being confined to those from the United Kingdom<sup>44</sup> - a minor consequence, perhaps, of the establishment of the Natal University College that year). The following day, Anthony William Scudamore Brown was formally appointed<sup>45</sup>.

As if to ensure a long and energetic leadership, the governors - or, rather, the Bishop<sup>46</sup> - had appointed a man in the full vigour of his youth, a day or two short of thirty when the appointment was made<sup>47</sup>. He had been at school at Uppingham, becoming captain of the school before winning an open classical scholarship at Caius College, Cambridge; there he justified the award by gaining a first class in the Tripos of 1903<sup>48</sup>. It was his scholarship and teaching ability which especially impressed his colleagues in his first appointment<sup>49</sup>. This was at Trinity College, Glenalmond, the only Episcopalian 'public school' in Scotland, where the Warden was A.F.R. Hyslop<sup>50</sup>, and which was a school with several Michaelhouse associations: C.W. Hannah's grandfather had been an early Warden; Hyslop's second wife was the sister of W.F. Bushell, the future Rector; and, some years after Hyslop's death, she married Hannah after his retirement from Michaelhouse<sup>51</sup>. But Brown was not only a scholar: he was an enthusiastic sportsman and leader in the Officers' Training Corps. After four years at Glenalmond, he returned to his old school in 1907 as an assistant master and headmaster's house tutor, a position which must have given him a valuable insight into the administrative side of a school's life<sup>52</sup>.

Young and relatively inexperienced though he was, Brown was a happy choice. His physical vigour and his direct expression of the aims of the school - he 'unhesitatingly put character before intellect'<sup>53</sup> - were likely to appeal to wavering supporters; his interest and participation in sport appealed to boys, even though - or perhaps especially because - his temper exploded from time to time in the scrum<sup>54</sup>; and his generosity, grasp of detail and

- 55 B.M. 21/11/10, 21/3/11 and 9/6/11.
- 56 B.M. 9/6/11. The second and third mortgages, amounting to £5,000 were wiped out; only the first mortgage, for £5,750, remained, part of the latter at a reduced rate of interest.
- 57 B.M. 10/8/11. At the end of 1912, although £200 was still outstanding, this was just over a quarter of what had been owing near the end of Hugh-Jones's time. (B.M. 12/2/13.)
- 58 B.M. 2/3/11. They were for £30 p.a. The Governors were F.S. Tatham and L.W. Christopher.
- 59 B.M. 9/6/11. The men were G. Leuchars and H.M. Smith (who was not a Governor).
- 60 B.M. 23/1/12. The school became responsible for this when he joined up. (B.M. 18/8/15.)
- 61 B.M. 8/3/12. The amount was £50.
- 62 B.M. 12/2/14. He had apparently been paying £30 p.a. The arithmetic of the minutes is, however, shaky: the Board agreed that the school should pay the bursar £120 'instead of £80 as formerly,' the 'balance of £30' having been paid by the Rector.
- 63 The details of the appeal are in B.M. 11/12/13, 12/2/14, 11/6/14, 13/8/14 and in S.M.C. Oct. 1914.
- 64 In his report to Synod, the Rector attributed the failure to the outbreak of war (Acts and Resolutions of the Diocesan Synod 1914). The Board, however, concluded that the appeal was 'not successful' before war broke out (B.M. 11/6/14).
- 65 The following guaranteed sums for 10 years: Christopher (£10), the Rector (£50) (B.M. 11/12/13); the Bishop (£50), Leuchars (£20), F.S. Tatham (£20) (B.M. 12/2/14). In addition to his £1,000 contribution, H. Butcher offered to lend any sum required over £4,000 at 4%. (B.M. 13/8/14.)
- 66 B.M. 8/3/12.
- 67 B.M. 14/8/13. See also S.M.C. June and Oct. 1913.



enthusiasm were appreciated by the governors.

#### FINANCE

In one important respect, Brown's burden was lighter than Hugh-Jones's had been. Before he arrived, the Governors had been offered £1,000 free of interest by the Church's Provincial Council of Education from the Pan-Anglican Thankoffering Fund and soon afterwards the Anglican Trust Board agreed to lend £4,000, also free of interest and repayable over forty years<sup>55</sup>. These loans enabled the Board almost to halve the mortgage indebtedness on the school<sup>56</sup> and therefore to plan ahead with greater certainty, especially as fees were more regularly paid<sup>57</sup>. The generosity of the Church was matched by the generosity of the governors themselves: in response to a proposal by the Rector, two offered scholarships which were to be awarded on the results of an examination<sup>58</sup> and two men offered money for scholarships or bursaries<sup>59</sup>. Brown himself gave a bursary for post-matriculation work<sup>60</sup>, advanced money for some minor alterations and, for several years<sup>61</sup> unknown to the governors, subsidised the bursar's salary<sup>62</sup>.

By the end of 1913, the governors were feeling sufficiently confident to contemplate major additions to the school, and they proposed to launch a general appeal for funds<sup>63</sup>. Though the response was poor - no doubt partly because of the uncertainty preceding the outbreak of war<sup>64</sup> (and without a £1,000 donation by H. Butcher, recently elected to the Board, it would have been pitiable) - the 'interest fund', established at the same time to guarantee the interest on any loans needed for the new buildings, was more successful, thanks to the generosity of individual governors and the Rector<sup>65</sup>. Both the governors and the Rector had to husband their resources carefully: the board was unable to pay its secretary, W.L. Whittaker, who thereupon offered his services free<sup>66</sup>; and when tenders proved too high for a sanatorium, Adair agreed to design and supervise the building, together with the Drill and Carpentry Instructor, Sgt. Campbell<sup>67</sup>. Nevertheless, it was

68 B.M. 21/11/10.

69 For the personal reactions of Brown and of boys to him, I have relied on Hannah's Typescript and letters from and conversations with Old Boys.

70 S.M.C. Dec. 1911.

71 S.M.C. June 1911.

72 S.M.C. June 1913 records the gift of some books of poetry and S.M.C. Oct. 1914 mentions that nine books had been added, one of them bought. In 1915/16, 60 books were added, mostly bought (S.M.C. Oct. 1916).

73 The change is not specifically recorded in the Chronicle but seems to have taken place at the beginning of 1914, for the October issue of S.M.C. is the first to mention a 'Remove' among the boys who left.

74 S.M.C. June 1911.

not necessary for Brown to skrimp as his predecessor had done during the years of depression, and he was able to devote most of his pent-up energy to the general well-being of the school.

#### CURRICULUM AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Brown took over a school which had been ruled by a sick man and had then suffered the inevitable uncertainties of an interregnum of almost six months, when first Pascoe for a brief spell and then Adair, after his return from England, were successively acting rectors<sup>68</sup>. He liked the active manliness of the boys, but he soon showed that he felt that these qualities were not incompatible with scholarly habits<sup>69</sup>. He discovered that learning was not only frowned upon but actively suppressed by bullying on the part of some of the boys, and one of the early signs of his determination was a forceful threat to expel anyone thwarting the purpose of the school. At the same time, like Hugh-Jones before him, he made a drive to encourage general reading, the absence of which the Chronicle at the end of 1911 described as 'deplorable'<sup>70</sup>. He introduced literature prizes, added a lamp to the library, experimented with leaving the library shelves open and made a general appeal for books for the library, especially books of poetry, which was then represented only by Wordsworth and van Beeck<sup>71</sup> (an old boy). The drive was not an unqualified success - not many books were added to the library<sup>72</sup> and most boys preferred to be physically active about anything rather than read; but at least enthusiasts knew that reading enjoyed authoritative protection.

Within the school curriculum, an important change was the introduction of a 'remove' form to avoid clogging the lower school with veterans who were not fitted for campaigning in the upper school class rooms<sup>73</sup>. There was also an interesting prelude to the system of 'setting': Brown found the standard of mathematics again weak and sought to remedy this by dividing both the upper and the lower schools into more or less homogeneous sets<sup>74</sup>. Judged by examination successes, these changes did not achieve spectacular

75 The following table gives such figures as I have been able to obtain:

Matriculation results, for Natal and selected schools.

	Natal		Hilton		College		D.H.S.		Michaelhouse	
	Ent-rants	Pass-es	Ent-rants	Pass-es	Ent-rants	Pass-es	Ent-rants	Pass-es	Ent-rants	Pass-es
1911	92	51	10	8	19	8	11	6	4	2
1912	117	56	13	6	21	11	12	8	8	4
1913	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	12	4
1914	44	30	?	?	18	15	21	14	5	4
1915	69	48	?	?	14	11	17	14	?	2
1916	78	59	?	?	18	13	27	20	12	11

Sources: Natal Provincial Gazettes, Notices: No.15, 1912; 47, 1913; 36, 1915; 29,1916; 33, 1917. Also (for Michaelhouse) S.M.C. June 1913, May 1915, April 1916, May 1917.

- Note: a. The Natal figures for 1914 to 1916 include only government and government-aided schools.  
 b. The 1914 Gazettes contain no matriculation results.  
 c. Michaelhouse also wrote the Cambridge Locals whereas government schools wrote the Junior Certificate.

76 S.M.C. May 1915.

77 Letter from T.C. Lloyd and conversations with other Old Boys. S.M.C. July 1912 records the institution of 'swimming tests', but they must have been short-lived: there is no further reference to them and none of the Old Boys to whom I have spoken can remember them.

78 S.M.C. June 1913.

79 S.M.C. Oct. 1913.

80 Ibid.

results, though Michaelhouse managed, with about 50% of its matriculation entrants passing, to hold its own with other boys' schools<sup>75</sup>; and in 1914, when an epidemic of scarlet fever forced the school to close early and matriculants wrote the examination at Hannah's farm, K.M. Pennington achieved the rare distinction of a first class in the Intermediate examination<sup>76</sup>.

If the school was no more than moderately successful at preparing intellectual leaders, there was much at Balgowan that forced the boys to become self-reliant and the countryside was - as it still is - an open invitation to the adventurous. Apart from the cross-country runs towards the Beacon on rainy afternoons and the supervised swimming expeditions after cadets, which involved a hot walk to the waterfall pool<sup>77</sup>, theoretically there were free bounds only on Sundays after mattins. Then, with sandwiches from the school supplemented by other food bought from the redoubtable Mrs. Campbell, groups scattered about the valley and the hills, from Nottingham Road to Lidgetton and from Beacon to Night Bush and occasionally beyond, sometimes simply walking, mostly exploring the natural bush or the streams or - what became almost a craze for a time - digging caves.

Canon Pennington urged the establishment of a Natural History Society to take advantage of the school's situation<sup>78</sup>, and a few months later M. Robertson, newly arrived from Winchester to replace Pascoe while he was on leave<sup>79</sup> and astonished at the opportunities offering with no organisation to make use of them, persuaded the canon's son to establish a society. Though the foundation was no more permanent than its predecessors had been, Robertson's enthusiasm confirmed K.M. Pennington's interest in natural history, which was to make him a lepidopterist with an international reputation; and it introduced a long-lived interest in egg-collecting<sup>80</sup> for which free bounds offered excellent opportunities.

There were other activities for which only the night was suitable. Raids on the orchards - either near the school or,

- 81 Letter from O.L. Nel. Others have mentioned the man, but not his name.
- 82 The incident is mentioned by T.C. Lloyd who, however, implies that it was after the sinking of the Lusitania which was in 1915. Others have also described it, including K.M. Pennington, who left the school at the end of 1914.
- 83 The emotionalism in South Africa is referred to in J.C. Smuts: Jan Christian Smuts; Cassell; 1952; p.159.
- 84 Several Old Boys have noted these activities.
- 85 Capt. McQueen's visit is noted in S.M.C. Oct. 1914.
- 86 It is referred to only in S.M.C. June 1911.
- 87 S.M.C. June 1911.
- 88 S.M.C. July 1912.

preferably, near Caversham - already almost had the sanction of schoolboy tradition behind them. A novel escapade was to visit a remarkable station foreman, Lewis, who welcomed company on his lonely night-shift and regaled errant boys with yarns and with feats of strength with his teeth<sup>81</sup>. Perhaps it was he who, early in the war, informed boys that a trainload of German prisoners was due to pass through Balgowan. Anti-German feelings were running high and this was reflected in the attitude of the boys: all but a few lined the fence as the train went by and pelted it with sods and stones<sup>82</sup>. It was a foolish, inhuman demonstration of chauvinism, as Brown very soon made the boys feel, but it was characteristic of many people's response to the war, especially after the sinking of the Lusitania a year later<sup>83</sup>.

There were, however, more peaceful activities and some pleasantly homely touches to smooth the rough outline of the environment. There were, for instance, the evenings when Adair would entertain the boys in the dormitories with stories, the days when boys played soft-ball cricket in the quad during the break or rushed to the site of the present Punch Bowl to play soccer; and for some there was the comfort of tending pets of one sort or another in an area behind the chapel<sup>84</sup>. On Saturday evenings, there was regularly some activity in the hall, which all boys had to attend: sometimes it was dancing - without girls, however, - sometimes there was a lecture, either by a member of staff or other friend of the school or, more excitingly, by a man like Capt. McQueen who spoke about the still almost legendary fascination of Central Africa<sup>85</sup>. Though the school 'Choral and Dramatic Society' had a brief life as a formal group<sup>86</sup>, concerts and plays featured more or less regularly. The first recorded dramatic performance was of the assassination scene from Julius Caesar in 1911<sup>87</sup>, but after the trial scene from The Merchant of Venice the following year<sup>88</sup> tastes changed: 'Nuncky' Bishop, a swaggering, zestful character with a passion for double acrostics and Victorian melodrama, began a long series of burlesques, farces and melodramas

- 89 S.M.C. Oct. 1914.
- 90 Ibid.
- 91 Ibid. The words are those of the editor but apparently express the Rector's view.
- 92 These practices are referred to by many Old Boys, including A.T. Tatham, writing of Todd's day.
- 93 S.M.C. June 1911.
- 94 S.M.C. Oct. 1914 and April 1916.
- 95 The only reference I can find to numbers of staff is in B.M. 10/2/16, when the Acting Rector (Adair) reported that there had been in December 1913: six masters, a visiting drawing master, two visiting music mistresses, a carpentry instructor, a matron, an assistant matron, a bursar and a housekeeper. The Chronicles of the period record the arrival and departure of members of staff, but one cannot be sure precisely when the moves took place and therefore which men overlapped at the school. One man leaving at the end of 1914 or early 1915 (Ellis) and another (Macdonald) leaving towards the end of 1915 do not seem to have been replaced, unless Briggs's appointment was a replacement for Ellis.
- 96 S.M.C. July 1912 and Oct. 1913.



with The Bitter Bit in 1914<sup>89</sup>, and Shakespeare was confined to play readings arranged for occasional Saturdays by the Rector<sup>90</sup>. Another art which found official sanction on Saturdays was boxing, which Brown encouraged 'to enable every boy to use his fists in a just quarrel'<sup>91</sup>, but the official boxing evenings did not supplant the unofficial but prefectorially supervised duels of honour behind the day room or the long-established practice of initiating newcomers by pitting them against physically superior pugilists<sup>92</sup>.

With the numbers still small for most of Brown's rectorship, it was possible - and perhaps inevitable - for the activities to be arranged in such a way that all the school participated in practically everything. Occasionally societies were formed to cater for more specialised interests - the Natural History Society has already been mentioned, and both the debating society<sup>93</sup> and the photographic society<sup>94</sup> were temporarily revived during Brown's rectorship. But they never survived for long the departure of their founders, partly, no doubt, because the schoolboy population was too small to have many devotees of a particular cult, and partly because, among the small teaching staff of six or seven<sup>95</sup>, there were always one or two birds of passage and a lame duck or two, so that the masters could not provide continuity of leadership in a multitude of activities.

#### STAFF

The hard core of the staff were all appointments of Hugh-Jones: Adair, Pascoe and Ferrar, to whom should be added (although he did not count as one of the teaching staff) Sgt Campbell, who, with his wife, contributed substantially to the gastronomic and muscular toughness of the boys for five years by running a tuck shop. Hannah was at hand in emergencies and returned several times for periods long enough to replant the oval and to create a new cricket ground<sup>96</sup>, but it was only later that he became a really permanent member of the staff. Among the new appointments, F.S. Bishop, with his dogmatically efficient teaching but sometimes wayward habits, was

- 97 For list of staff, see Appendix 3.
- 98 B.M. 21/3/11.
- 99 Conversations with several Old Boys.
- 100 The Glenalmond comment includes a reference to his shyness, the obituary in S.M.C. Oct. 1916 does the same, and several Old Boys remarked on it.
- 101 B.M. 8/3/12. The Rector's brief memorandum is attached to the minutes. The fees had been £73.10s plus £3.8s for stationery, medicine, chemicals and mending. The reduced fee was inclusive, but the amount payable to the 'Amalgamation Fund' from the fee was reduced from £2 to £1.5s. There were reduced fees for boys under 13 and for sons of clergy. Brown estimated an additional profit of £250 p.a.

to be the most permanent. Of the rest, most remained about two years and a few contributed energetically to the general life of the school, like de Villiers, van der Horst and Robertson, who were enthusiasts in cricket, rugby and natural history respectively. For the religious side of the school's work, Michaelhouse had to rely on occasional visits by kindly vicars to supplement the variable contribution of the teaching staff, until the Rev C.E. Briggs was appointed visiting chaplain in 1913 and then to the permanent staff two years later. For the management of the school's business, on the other hand, Brown was able to appoint a full time bursar in 1912, when, with Dan Taylor, there was the first appointment of an old boy to the school. (His successor when he joined up in 1916 for the second time was also an old boy, J. Rethman)<sup>97</sup>.

Though the quality of the staff varied and the war made it more difficult to find replacements, the staff-pupil ratio was statistically generous and even extravagant, especially when the contribution of the bursar to the sporting activities of the school is taken into account. This was one of many reasons why the Rector and the governors were anxious to attract more boys to the school.

#### NUMBERS

Not long after Brown's arrival, the Board recommended a 'fuller advertising' of the school<sup>98</sup> and Brown visited farmers especially, to persuade them of the virtues of Michaelhouse<sup>99</sup>, a task which he cannot have relished since he was, by all accounts, a shy man among men<sup>100</sup>. More congenial to him were his own proposals for scholarships and bursaries. Once he had been in the school long enough to grasp the business details, he suggested to the Board that the total fees should be reduced by about £10 a year to £67, in the expectation that, with fifteen extra boys (there were 60 at the end of 1911), the school would be financially better off<sup>101</sup>. The governors readily agreed.

- 102 S.M.C. Oct. 1913.
- 103 Minute Book of entrants from August 1906-1914. In 1911 there had been 23 new boys; in 1912 18. The 1914 list is incomplete.
- 104 S.M.C. April 1904.
- 105 B.M. 10/2/16. The Acting Rector's report.
- 106 S.M.C. Oct. 1916. At the beginning of 1916 there were 86. (S.M.C. April 1916.)
- 107 S.M.C. June 1911.
- 108 The building is referred to in S.M.C. July 1912. No Old Boy of the time whom I have addressed can remember a car at Michaelhouse; it seems that the building later housed the electricity plant.
- 109 S.M.C. June 1913 and Oct. 1913.
- 110 B.M. 14/8/13.
- 111 B.M. 30/10/13.
- 112 The Board placed a limit of £3,500 on tenders for the building (B.M. 12/2/14), but the lowest tender was £5,207.10s. The Board approved reductions to bring the cost to £4,170 or, when the septic system was included, £5,000 (B.M. 11/6/14). S.M.C. Oct. 1914 records the foundation stone as having been laid by the Bishop in July 1914; in fact it was laid at Michaelmas - as the stone records and the B.M. 13/8/14 intimate; but the building had been started some time before Michaelmas.

These measures, together with the growth of confidence in the school and the improved economic position of the country, had quite spectacular results: by Michaelmas 1913, numbers rose to the record figure of 85<sup>102</sup>, with 43 new boys during the year<sup>103</sup>, and to 92 early the following year<sup>104</sup>. Thereafter there was a somewhat unhealthy fluctuation in numbers, with 80 on the roll when Brown left on active service in the middle of 1915<sup>105</sup> and 75 a year later<sup>106</sup>, but even this figure fulfilled Brown's prophecies.

#### MATERIAL ADDITIONS AND DIFFICULTIES

The prospect of increased numbers forced the governors to contemplate improvements to the school buildings and equipment and the reduction of the mortgage dues enabled them to plan more ambitiously than they had been able to for many years. The enthusiasm for building seemed to be infectious, for the prefects built their own fireplace<sup>107</sup> and someone on the staff - perhaps the Rector - had a private garage built which never, however, housed a car<sup>108</sup>. (For a time the only conveyance for the staff at the school was a horse, shared by Adair, Pascoe and Ferrar.) More substantial additions were the sanatorium and two music rooms, built in 1913<sup>109</sup>.

At the same time the Board considered proposals of their special building committee to complete the quadrangle and, though they rejected the total £13,000 scheme on the ground of expense<sup>110</sup>, they readily agreed before the end of 1913 that additional accommodation was an 'urgent necessity' and optimistically hoped that the east wing would be completed by July 1914<sup>111</sup>. The necessity to make financial arrangements and, especially, the need to review the scheme and cut out 'inessentials' - including a hot water system - when the lowest tender was over half as much again as the governors had budgeted for, delayed the start of building operations until the eve of the outbreak of war<sup>112</sup>. The buildings were at last completed, at a cost of £5,000, in time for the 1915 school year. Designed by Fleming (of Baker and Fleming), the buildings were austere but not

- 113 S.M.C. Oct. 1914.
- 114 B.M. 19/3/15, 10/2/16 and 15/1/17 all refer to the troubles the system gave. The problem was solved by not leading the kitchen waste into the system.
- 115 B.M. Building Committee Report 25/9/14, and Hannah's Typescript.
- 116 B.M. 21/11/10. K.M. Pennington mentioned its location.
- 117 Letter of O.L. Nel, confirmed by other old boys. There is, however, some doubt whether seniors had favourable treatment: some assert that they did not, others that they did, and it may be that there is a confusion here between what the school officially supplied and the 'tuck' which the kitchen was prepared to cook for boys.
- 118 Hannah's Typescript.
- 119 K.M. Pennington. I cannot find a reference to this in the contemporary records; there is, however, a reference to granting 'Mr. Campbell' a lease (at 1/- a year) on the land 'occupied by him' in B.M. 9/6/11.

unattractive, at least when viewed from the quadrangle; and they incidentally fixed the size of the quad for the future, for they not only completed the east wing but turned the south-east corner. It was a comprehensive addition, containing not only a classroom, dormitories (furnished to Adair's design), a new plunge bath and drying room and a housemaster's accommodation, but also a septic system for the lavatories<sup>113</sup> - a system which gave trouble for several years<sup>114</sup>, but which was nevertheless an essential improvement over the previous insanitary arrangements. An additional safeguard to the health of the school was the duplication of the water supply which was undertaken at the same time<sup>115</sup>.

There was still much that was awkward and incomplete about the school - was there ever a school free from temporary make-shifts? A gas plant had been installed in the space between the chapel and the east wing shortly before Brown arrived<sup>116</sup>, reducing the need to use smelly and troublesome paraffin lamps, but the classrooms were unlit and the boys went to bed with candles (evening functions were held in the dining hall, which had gas lights). The kitchen was still the temporary wood and iron structure of Todd's day and, if schoolboy memories are to be relied on, limited itself to the production of one reasonable meal at midday, porridge for breakfast and a hot but indescribable dish for seniors in the evening; for the others, appetites had to be satisfied with bread and jam or butter or dripping, supplemented by whatever tuck parental goodwill would provide<sup>117</sup>. There were other 'temporary' buildings which continued to clutter the area behind the quad for years, some of them until after the second world war, shifting their function from carpentry shop to day room or tuck room according to the pressing needs of the time<sup>118</sup>. A deficiency which affected staffing was the lack of accommodation for married men: Ferrar had to erect his own house when he married and was only allowed to do so on the understanding that he removed it if he left, so that when he later founded a preparatory school at the coast he took his house, snail-like, with him<sup>119</sup>.

- 120 S.M.C. June 1911.
- 121 S.M.C. Oct. 1914.
- 122 Ibid.
- 123 S.M.C. May 1915.
- 124 B.M. 6/3/18. Report of the Rector (Pascoe) attached to the minutes. (Hereafter a Report of the Rector will be referred to as Rector's Report B.M.1... until 1936 when the Reports are filed separately.)
- 125 Letter from T.C. Lloyd, supported by accounts by other Old Boys.
- 126 S.M.C. April 1916.
- 127 S.M.C. Oct. 1914. Two were in British regiments, two in the R.A.M.C., two in the R.N.V.R., one in the R.N. and there were no details for three.
- 128 S.M.C. April 1924 lists 194 names, including A.W.S. Brown, which were inscribed on panels in the Memorial Hall. The list does not include members of staff, except for Brown. At least four members of staff served besides Brown and D. Taylor (who was also an Old Boy): Dr. Rigby, who was mentioned in despatches (S.M.C. Nov. 1918), H.V. Mills (killed in action) (S.M.C. May 1919); M. Macdonald (S.M.C. 1917); and Corp. J.A. Keith, drill instructor, (killed in action) (S.M.C. Nov. 1918).



Nevertheless, the scheme completed in 1915 provided the school with enough room to breathe and with the minimum equipment - both preventive and curative - necessary to give the Rector some peace of mind when he considered the health of the boys. It was fortunate that the scheme had been well launched by the time war broke out.

#### WAR

Ironically, the first society meeting after Brown's arrival was a debate on the motion that 'War is an Evil', which was carried by a small majority, though the opposition claimed a moral victory on the ground that two of their supporters had voted in the wrong lobby<sup>120</sup>. Just over three years later, the editor of the Chronicle was contrasting the peace of Balgowan with the agony of Europe and was calling on old boys to 'give their manhood in their country's behalf, without bluster, without flag-wagging, but with cool heads, quiet tongues and nerves of steel'; and he had to record the name (R.G. Hindson) of the first old boy to die on active service<sup>121</sup>.

The daily routine of the school was at first not seriously disrupted, though the additional burden on the railways contributed to delays in completing the new buildings<sup>122</sup> and the cadet corps later suffered inconvenience through the temporary lack of an instructor<sup>123</sup> and the shortage of ammunition<sup>124</sup>. The tensions of the war were nevertheless very much in evidence: senior boys were restless to be away and all were avid to learn the latest news from the front, scrambling to read the newspapers as soon as they arrived about midday<sup>125</sup>; and in 1915 some of the enthusiasm began to be channelled into the making of crutches for wounded men<sup>126</sup>.

News of old boys on active service arrived thickly: by October 1914 there were reports of forty-five serving in various ways, mostly in South African regiments<sup>127</sup>. By the end of the war, some two hundred old boys had served<sup>128</sup>, strong in the belief that they were fighting not simply for the British Empire but especially in defence of a small nation and to uphold the justice and sanctity of international treaties. Some of them fought in the South

- 129 S.M.C. May 1917. Fl.Sub.Ltd. A.F. Brandon R.N.A.S.
- 130 S.M.C. Oct. 1919. K.M. Pennington, ex-R.A.F. The account was written somewhat earlier.
- 131 S.M.C. May 1917. 2nd Lt. B.W. Goodwin.
- 132 The full list seems to be:  
 D.S.O. : Lt. G.W. Janion (E.Surrey); Lt. G.B. Russell (Wiltshire);  
 M.C. and Bar: Capt. E.J. Greene (Suffolk Yeomanry).  
 M.C. : Lt. G.M. Brown (12th Lancers); Maj. G. Tatham (Royal  
 Field Artillery); 2nd Lt. W. Lister (R.F.A.);  
 F./Com. C.C. Tayler (R.F.C.); Lt. H.W. Taylor (Royal  
 Field Artillery).  
 D.S.C. : Fl./Lt. A.F. Brandon (R.N.A.S.).  
 A.F.C. : Fl./Lt. K.M. Pennington (R.A.F.).  
 Croix de Guerre avec Palme : 2nd Lt. B.W. Goodwin (S.A. Contingent).  
 Goodwin was twice mentioned in despatches. The only record of a  
 mention in despatches is for Dr. J.C. Rigby (R.A.M.C.), a former  
 master. See S.M.C. Oct. 1916, May 1917, May 1918 and Nov. 1918.  
 The Rector's Report of Pascoe in 1918 referred to three D.S.O.'s  
 six M.C.'s and one D.S.C. I cannot trace the extra D.S.O unless  
 it is a reference to F.S. Tatham's. (B.M. 18/8/18.)
- 133 S.M.C. May 1918.
- 134 S.M.C. May 1923. The injunction 'Quit ye like men', inscribed  
 over the entrance to the Hall is from I Chronicles 16 v 13.
- 135 Ibid.
- 136 The list is in S.M.C. April 1924. The total list of 43 includes  
 the Rector, but other members of staff are not included. See  
 note 128. The number of South African casualties was 12,452, of  
 whom 8,551 were European, 1,568 of them in Imperial units. (Union  
 Govt.: The Union of South Africa and The Great War 1914-1918.  
Official History; U.G. 1924; pp.229-230.)

African Rebellion or South West Africa, others in East Africa or the Middle East, most of them on the Western Front.

The few personal contemporary records there are sparkle with a sense of adventure, far from the spirit of Wilfred Owen. There is the letter from a Flight Sub-Lieutenant describing his first air fight over the Mediterranean, his subsequent bombing 'stunts' and the 'topping sport' of night flying<sup>129</sup>; or the account by another airman of his forced landing behind the Turkish lines, his scrambling, with two others, down dongas and over the Kurdistan mountains, the tension of listening for village dogs and the hair's breadth escapes from Turkish patrols, until at last, after seven days, the exhausted trio reached the British lines<sup>130</sup>; or the brief note about a raid on the German trenches by a platoon with blackened faces and 'speaking kafir', whose strange disguise enabled them to creep near enough to 'bomb' the enemy successfully<sup>131</sup>.

Among these young men - there can have been few Old Boys over thirty when the war broke out - the school was proud to honour a number whose gallantry was recognised by the award of the newly-instituted Military Cross and other distinctions. There were two who won the D.S.O. - Lieuts. C.W. Janion and G.B. Russell; an M.C. and Bar (Capt. E.J. Greene); five with the M.C.; a D.S.C.; an A.F.C.; and a Croix de Guerre avec Palme<sup>132</sup>. The D.F.C. went to A.F. Brandon who, in (or 'on', as he put it) a 'Camel', attacked an enemy bomber formation single-handed and had the distinction of being the first airman to bring down a 'Gotha' on English soil<sup>133</sup>. As F.S. Tatham, adapting St Paul, expressed it at the laying of the foundation stone of the Memorial Hall, these men, and others like them, had 'quitted themselves like men - men of honour, men of courage, men of faith'<sup>134</sup>.

But 'War is destruction', Mr Justice Tatham also said<sup>135</sup>; and who should know better than he, who had lost two sons in the war? From 1916, the news of losses came with sickening emphasis. The number of Old Boys on the roll of honour was forty-two<sup>136</sup>; it was

- 137 S.M.C. May 1919.
- 138 S.M.C. Nov. 1918. There is no consolidated list of members of staff who served or were killed. See note 128.
- 139 The account is based on the address given by the Bishop at the dedication of the Anthony Brown Memorial Brass. (S.M.C. April 1924.) The Bishop does not name the three 'arbitrators'.
- 140 The Bishop gave him leave and the Board was informed subsequently, consenting that the leave should be on half pay for six months. (B.M. 18/8/15.)
- 141 S.M.C. Oct. 1915.
- 142 S.M.C. April 1924. The Bishop's address.
- 143 Notes by A.T. Tatham.
- 144 S.M.C. Oct. 1916. Obituary by E.P. (Pascoe).
- 145 S.M.C. Oct. 1916. Memorial address by Bishop Roach.

as if for two or three years of its short life, Michaelhouse had had no entrants. In addition, at least two men who had been on the staff were killed: H.V. Mills, a master for two years under Hugh-Jones<sup>137</sup> and J.A. Keith, who had been drill instructor for a time<sup>138</sup>. It was, however, the death in action of the Rector which made the most noticeable single gap in Michaelhouse.

#### BROWN: DEATH AND CONTRIBUTION

When the war broke out, many believed that it would be over before long; but by the beginning of 1915 it was apparent that it would draw in more and more men, and those who were young and held positions of responsibility were faced with a cruel choice in determining where their duty lay. Brown had such a choice to make: he felt the cry for men to strengthen the wavering western front was an imperative call; yet he was aware that he had played a major rôle in committing Michaelhouse to a policy of expansion. He urged on the Bishop<sup>139</sup> the pressing need for officers; and, when the Bishop remained unconvinced, they submitted the question to three men whose judgment they both respected. The answer was still 'no'. But Brown was restless, impatient to go, able to carry on his work only 'by rushing, as it were, from one bit of work to another' as the Bishop later said; and at the end of the term, after a few days of quiet, he sought the Bishop out in Durban to say he must go.

He was given leave of absence<sup>140</sup> and set sail for Europe at the beginning of August 1915<sup>141</sup>. He soon gained a commission in the Rifle Brigade, but his absence still seemed only temporary; when the Bishop saw him while on a visit to England, the talk was almost wholly about Michaelhouse<sup>142</sup>; and a few weeks later he wrote from the front to F.S. Tatham: 'I am glad to be here; but confess that I long to be back at my work at Michaelhouse.'<sup>143</sup> On the 18th August 1916 he was coolly sitting on the parapet of a front-line trench near Guillemont, directing improvements, when a sniper shot him and he was killed instantly<sup>144</sup>. It was the Bishop, still in England, who cabled the news to the school<sup>145</sup>. Eight years later,

- 146 S.M.C. April 1924 and Oct. 1924.
- 147 E.P. (Pascoe) wrote, 'it was almost a relief to his friends when he applied for.....leave of absence.' S.M.C. Oct. 1916.
- 148 In cricket, Michaelhouse won, in 1911/12, 9 out of 16 matches; in 1912/13, 4 out of 6 school matches; in 1913/14, 10 out of 14; in 1914/15, 3 out of 8; in 1915/16, 6 out of 9.  
In rugby, Michaelhouse won, in 1912, 7 out of 11; 1913, 6 out of 11; 1914, 6 out of 8; 1915, 1 out of 7. (See S.M.C. for the period.) There were no school rugby matches in 1911 because of epidemics. For examinations, see note 75.
- 149 S.M.C. June 1911.
- 150 Those to whom I have spoken who were under both men assert that there were no major changes. On the other hand, some who were only under Brown believed that he introduced a better tone in the school. Only two illustrations of the improvement have been given to me: the attitude of boys to reading and learning and the temptation to senior boys which the presence of a nursemaid to Hugh-Jones's children presented. The former has already been referred to; since Brown was not married and therefore had no nursemaid, the comparison in the latter respect is not wholly fair, even if the stories were more than seniors' braggadocio.
- 151 Notes by A.T. Tatham.

his name was inscribed at the head of the list of Old Boys whose death in the war is commemorated on the Stone of Memory: his individual memorials were a brass tablet in the Chapel and a clock which all in the quadrangle could see and which was thought to be particularly appropriate because the vagaries of the hall clock had been a constant source of irritation to him<sup>146</sup>.

Anthony Brown had been Rector for only four and a half years when he was given leave to join the forces: too short a period to enable one to judge how he would have led the school had he not been killed, especially since his mind was distracted by the conflict of loyalties for the year before he left<sup>147</sup>. There were, indeed, no major changes in policy apparent during this time: the 'public' record in games and examinations was neither spectacularly good nor abysmally bad<sup>148</sup>; the curriculum remained unchanged, except that bookkeeping apparently became more popular at the expense of the 'dead languages', as the Chronicle put it<sup>149</sup>; and the life of the school followed, with minor variations, the pattern already established. At least to some of the boys who were under both Hugh-Jones and Brown, the changes were imperceptible, though others who knew only Brown felt that his energy and determination wrought a noticeable improvement in the tone of the school<sup>150</sup>. Certainly Brown took over a school gravely weakened by the depression but within a few years gained the confidence of governors and parents sufficiently to embark on additions to the school; and his professional advice to the governors helped considerably in the successful launching of a preparatory school in close association with Michaelhouse. These were tangible and important contributions. His self-sacrifice in the war had intangible effects, for the tragedy of his death in action reflected a glory on Michaelhouse<sup>151</sup> which the school would gladly have foregone but which helped to lighten the way during another interregnum and in the last days of the war. In these circumstances, to question whether he had the tenacity or the vision to build on his undoubted initial success became irrelevant and unanswerable.

<sup>1</sup> S.M.C. Nov. 1918.

<sup>2</sup> S.M.C. May 1922.

<sup>3</sup> S.M.C. Oct. 1922.



CHAPTER 6PASCOE : CONSOLIDATIONCALM ISOLATION

For the four years of the war Michaelhouse had been made stirringly and often painfully aware of the world outside the midlands of Natal. The armistice was celebrated with a service in chapel, a smoky bonfire (the November rains came) and the sounding of bugles and bells<sup>1</sup>. At Michaelhouse, as elsewhere, it seemed to mark the resumption of the course so rudely interrupted by the events of 1914.

In large measure the hope was fulfilled. There is no inkling in the records, for instance, of a consciousness of the newer concept of Empire which the representation of South Africa at Versailles symbolised; apart from the surprising inclusion among a gift of books to the school of The Russian Revolution by L. Trotzky (sic)<sup>2</sup>, the Communist Revolution goes unremarked; and neither Einstein nor T.S. Eliot is mentioned. One of the few peeps into the outside world of change is an editorial in 1922 referring to educational methods being in the melting pot and expressing the fear that theorists had 'overstepped the limit', for the Dalton and other plans ignored that 'drudgery is an inescapable part of education'<sup>3</sup>.

There were, nevertheless, some changes which touched life at Michaelhouse. The most dramatic and memorable occurred before the end of the war, when the first aeroplane to be seen in South Africa landed at Balgovan. The school had been warned beforehand and prepared to greet it with full military honours. The school paraded on a paddock north of the railway line and waited wonderingly for the novel contraption: nothing appeared. Later, they were drawn up again, and at last a speck appeared over the hills 'at a great height', circled above them, landed and drew up next to the Rector (Pascoe). For everyone it was an excitement to be able to inspect

- 4 S.M.C. May 1918, supplemented by conversations with Old Boys, especially R.B. Archibald.
- 5 S.M.C. April 1926.
- 6 B.M. 6/3/18.
- 7 S.M.C. May 1921.
- 8 B.M. 24/8/21, Rector's Report.
- 9 B.M. 25/9/19, Rector's Report.
- 10 Pascoe referred to staffing difficulties in his first report to the Governors, associating them with low salaries (B.M. 5/7/17, Rector's Report), and again referred to the problem in 1918 (B.M. 29/8/18, Rector's Report).

the evidence of man's conquest of the air, but for one boy in particular (Archibald) it was especially thrilling, for the pilot, Major Miller, handed him the first (and no doubt the only) letter ever carried by air from Park Rynie to Balgovan<sup>4</sup>. For ordinary mortals, however, the chief communication with the school was by rail, gradually being affected by the age of electricity - by the end of Pascoe's term of office, the line was electrified, which reduced the danger of fires in the playing fields and left the country tranquillity less disturbed by noise and smoke<sup>5</sup>. Before the end of the war, the school itself contemplated changing over to electricity from gas<sup>6</sup>, and in 1920 a Delco plant was installed<sup>7</sup>, which enabled all the classrooms to be lit and had the additional advantage of allowing the Rector to substitute late afternoon classes instead of the normal pre-breakfast ones during a particularly cold spell the following year<sup>8</sup>. Meanwhile the school had been linked more effectively with the outside world when, in 1919, a telephone was installed, which Pascoe told the Governors was an 'immense boon'<sup>9</sup>.

But Michaelhouse was still a somewhat isolated community, physically and culturally. Hannah's old Ford, Eliza, or its successor, Yellow Jane, was one of the rare cars to brave the roads. And it was the essence of Pascoe's rectorship that he concentrated on building on the pre-war traditions rather than on breaking new ground, on developing a spirit in the community founded on traditional values rather than on linking the education overtly with current events and ideas. Though the standing of Michaelhouse had improved during Brown's rectorship and especially after the firm establishment of Cordwalles, the slight decline in numbers before Brown went on active service, the uncertainty occasioned by the interregnum of Adair and the difficulties of staffing during the war<sup>10</sup>, indicated that, at least initially, a policy of caution and consolidation would be wise; and Pascoe was, of course, well known to the Governors when they appointed him Rector.

- 11 Letter from The Keeper of the Records, Jesus College.
- 12 Ibid.
- 13 Hugh-Jones graduated in 1884 (Pamphlet: From the Bursary, Jesus College, Oxford); Brown graduated in 1903 (Letter from The Keeper of the Records, Caius College).
- 14 Hannah's Typescript.
- 15 Letter from J.C. Royds, headmaster of Uppingham School. Since the Lower School was independent of the 'public school' of the same name, Uppingham merely has a record of the fact that he was there.
- 16 Hannah's Typescript.
- 17 S.M.C. June 1907.
- 18 I have not traced the exact date of his birth, but he matriculated in the Michaelmas term, 1891 at 19 and died in November 1927 at 55 (Letter from The Keeper of the Records, Jesus College). He was therefore either nearly 35 or already 35 when he arrived at Michaelhouse in February 1907.

PASCOE

Eldred Pascoe was in important respects a pre-war figure, having more in common with Hugh-Jones than with Brown. He was the son of a clergyman, (like Hugh-Jones), born in Truro and educated at Blundells<sup>11</sup> in the west country, which one associates with sturdy self-sufficiency as well as adventurousness. His graduation from Jesus College, Cambridge, in 1894<sup>12</sup> was almost half way between Hugh-Jones's and Brown's<sup>13</sup> and, like Hugh-Jones and many others who came out to South Africa, he suffered from consumption<sup>14</sup>. There is no record of what he did immediately after going down from Cambridge, but he was appointed a master in the Lower School Uppingham (a preparatory school) in 1898 and gained six years' experience there<sup>15</sup> which was no doubt a useful memory when he came to hold a position on the Board of Governors of Cordwalles. There followed two years of travel in search of a climate suited to his indifferent health<sup>16</sup>, before Hugh-Jones appointed him as junior classics master at Michaelhouse in 1907<sup>17</sup>, when he was already in his middle-thirties<sup>18</sup>.

Whether it was because he was a product of the late Victorian and early Edwardian period, or not, he was noted at Michaelhouse, even as an assistant master, for his adherence to principles and for a somewhat remote dignity which were to contribute substantially to the steady development of Michaelhouse after the war. It seems probable, too, that the fact that he arrived in 1907 helped to shape his attitude to the way in which Michaelhouse should develop, for in that year and the next the school reached the peak of its pre-war achievements: years full of promise which were followed by two years of disappointment and severe strain for Hugh-Jones, struggling to maintain the school with inadequate resources. With this experience behind him, the fluctuation in the school's numbers at the end of Brown's term of office and during the interregnum which followed could reasonably be interpreted as a warning that whatever developments took place should have deep and secure foundations.

The strength of his convictions and the quality of his

- 19 B.M. 28/11/16.
- 20 B.M. 13/7/17.
- 21 S.M.C. May 1917.
- 22 B.M. 6/3/18, Rector's Report.
- 23 B.M. 29/8/18, Rector's Report.
- 24 There were 126 at the beginning of 1920 (B.M. 12/2/20) and apparently 127 shortly afterwards (S.M.C. May 1920).
- 25 B.M. 10/3/22, Rector's Report.
- 26 S.M.C. April 1926.
- 27 St. Andrew's College; p.122.
- 28 A Century of 'Bishops', Ch.IX, especially p.56. A chapel was planned to seat 675, but the enrolment is not recorded by McIntyre.
- 29 A.F. Hattersley: Hilton Portrait; pp.93-94. Numbers dropped from 270 to 155.
- 30 Province of Natal. Report of the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1918, p.91. The peak year was 1921, when Maritzburg College had 326 boys and Durban High School 577. (Report . . . 1921; p.63.)
- 31 Province of Natal. Report of the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1926, p.69.
- 32 Ibid, p.8. Of 395 places in Boarding Establishments, 78 were vacant, and most of these were at the two boys' high schools.
- 33 See Superintendent's Reports for the period 1917-1926.

leadership were perhaps not fully known to the governors when they appointed him Acting Rector from the beginning of 1917, for they deliberately did not make a permanent appointment, hoping for a time when they would have a wider field of choice<sup>19</sup>; but after six months, their decision was unanimous that he should be appointed Rector, and in fact Pascoe had longer to imprint his personality on the school than any other holder of the office except Snell.

#### PRESSURE OF NUMBERS

When Pascoe assumed duty as Acting Rector, the numbers at the school were at the record figure of 94<sup>21</sup>; a year later he was able to report the 'truly astonishing' fact that there were now 112<sup>22</sup> and soon afterwards he warned that parents should apply eighteen months in advance to ensure the entrance of their sons to the school<sup>23</sup>. By 1920 there were over twice as many boys as there had been at the beginning of Brown's rectorship less than ten years earlier<sup>24</sup> and - apart from a drop to 116 at the beginning of 1922 occasioned by the trade depression<sup>25</sup> - numbers remained above 120, the largest number being 126 in Pascoe's last year<sup>26</sup>.

The enrolment at other diocesan schools indicated growing support too - St Andrew's, for instance, was full with over 250 boys soon after the war and endured a period of cramped accommodation<sup>27</sup>; and Bishop's entered a period of vigorous expansion under Birt<sup>28</sup>. It would therefore be tempting to attribute the waiting lists at Michaelhouse simply to a general increase in secondary education. But growth was by no means uniform during this period: Hilton suffered a serious set-back in the twenties, largely as a result of a severe epidemic<sup>29</sup>; and in the Natal government schools most closely resembling Michaelhouse, whereas there were 259 at Maritzburg College and 504 at Durban High School in 1918<sup>30</sup>, there were only 190 and 404 respectively in 1926<sup>31</sup> and there were many vacancies in the Boarding Establishments of these schools<sup>32</sup>. It is true that secondary classes were being developed in the country schools<sup>33</sup> but, as the Superintendent of Education noted in 1924, this did not

- 34 Province of Natal: Report of the Superintendent of Education for the Year 1924. Admission certificates were also required for entry to secondary classes, but the Superintendent considered that the decline was due, at least in part, to a loss of confidence in the schools. R.W. Kent: College 1963-1963 attributes the drop at Maritzburg College 'partly' to the removal of Forms I and II, but he also remarks that too much authority was given to prefects and other seniors (pp.36-37).
- 35 B.M. 12/2/20, Rector's Report.
- 36 B.M. 18/1/22, Rector's Report. He had heard a rumour that Mr. Nurden was thinking of selling.
- 37 B.M. 10/3/22, Rector's Report.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 B.M. 11/11/26: Rector's contribution to a discussion about increasing numbers.
- 40 Confidential Memorandum from the Rector on the Development of the School, dated 28th December 1925 and filed with B.M. 18/12/23.



wholly explain the 'startling' decline in numbers at the schools in the two cities<sup>34</sup>, and the development was, in any case, an additional challenge to Michaelhouse.

Pascoe himself must therefore be given generous credit for the increase by a third in the school's enrolment and for the steady maintenance of the numbers over ten years. His problem, indeed, was quite different from that of his predecessors: it was to ensure that the increase in numbers did not outstrip the resources of the school, for he was under considerable pressure to admit more boys.

Pascoe was initially not opposed in principle to a much larger school - as early as 1920 he averred that the school could reach 200 if the accommodation were available<sup>35</sup> and two years later he urged the Governors to buy Nurden's adjoining property if it came on the market<sup>36</sup>. But the condition - 'if accommodation were available' - was of the utmost importance to him: as he put it to the Governors in 1922, the school should not be enlarged until it had been 'brought to a high degree of efficiency'<sup>37</sup>! He went on to list a multitude of requirements, from new science buildings, a gymnasium and an enlarged chapel to a larger laundry and 'some apparatus for warming the school baths and the colder classrooms'<sup>38</sup>. Only a month before his resignation, Pascoe continued to argue that 'the time was not opportune' to increase numbers and he pointed to additional needs of the school<sup>39</sup>. Perhaps the sad deterioration in his health made Pascoe unconsciously shrink from the responsibilities of a large school so that, although he could envisage a school of two hundred and forty or fifty as the maximum at which 'the tone and quality of this school can be satisfactorily maintained'<sup>40</sup>, the reasons for containing the numbers seemed more cogent than those for expanding them. And the needs were in truth legion, of which the most substantial was a new hall.

#### BUILDING ADDITIONS

Before the end of the war, the Board discussed what form the memorial to those Old Boys who had fallen should take, and the

41 B.M. 6/3/18.

42 B.M. 5/7/17. Hannah: Typescript, suggests cautiously that £500 from the estate of George Brown was the foundation of the Memorial Fund. The first record of donations received is headed by 'Estate Brown: £500' (B.M. 24/1/19), but this was 18 months after Charles Tatham's offer and there were other donations noted at the same time. Hannah's interpretation may be technically correct. It has been said that T.W.B. Davis offered to pay for the Hall, provided it was called after his son, Howard, an Old Boy killed in the war; when Pascoe refused the condition, the money was diverted to N.U.C. for Howard College. The information was given me as a rumour by A.T. Tatham, and I have not been able to confirm it.

43 B.M. 24/1/19.

44 B.M. 12/2/20.

45 The first reference to a Kitchen Block is to record a gift of £3,000 from the Rhodes Trustees for the purpose (B.M. 24/2/21).

46 B.M. 25/5/21.

47 B.M. 26/4/22. The lowest tender was J. Barrow's for £16,261; the school had £7,566 in the Hall Fund, £3,521 in the Kitchen Block Fund.

48 B.M. 12/2/20 records the gift of £1,000 to the Hall Fund; B.M. 24/2/21 records the gift of £3,000 for the Kitchen Block.

49 B.M. 26/4/22.

50 Ibid.

51 B.M. 31/7/22 and 27/2/23.

52 B.M. 15/6/23. They had, however, wavered about the merits of iron and tiles (B.M. 27/2/23).

53 B.M. 24/10/23.

54 S.M.C. April 1924.

Governors accepted Pascoe's suggestion that it should be a hall<sup>41</sup>. Charles Tatham had already indicated that he wished the estate of his son, Iron Mordaunt Tatham, to be used to erect a memorial<sup>42</sup>; soon after the war the school received £500 from the estate of another Old Boy who had been killed, George Brown; and, with £1,000 from F.S. Tatham and donations from other Governors and friends of the school<sup>43</sup>, the Memorial Fund was generously launched. Fleming was asked to design a hall for 200 and all seemed set to go ahead when he submitted plans at the beginning of 1920<sup>44</sup>.

The Governors, however, were still short of funds; the plans became more ambitious when the Board decided to build a new kitchen block at the same time<sup>45</sup> to replace the gim-crack structure which had caused increasing irritation in its twenty years of life: and the Board hopefully (though not unanimously) agreed to a proposal of F.S. Tatham that they should wait in the expectation of a drop in prices<sup>46</sup>. Even to the last there were doubts whether the school could go ahead, for when tenders were called in 1922, the lowest for the complete building was some £5,000 more than the funds available<sup>47</sup>, in spite of two donations totalling £4,000 from the Rhodes Trustees - the first donation from a Trust not associated with the Church<sup>48</sup> - and the Bishop doubted the wisdom of adding to the school's debt<sup>49</sup>. The kitchen block was so clearly an urgent requirement that they decided to go ahead with it first<sup>50</sup> and shortly afterwards it was agreed to sign a contract with J. Barrow for the entire building, shorn of some of its adornments (including the teak panneling in the body of the hall)<sup>51</sup>. Fortunately on some aesthetic issues the Governors decided against short-term economies (notably the use of tiles for the roof and the delightful flèche with St Michael and the dragon)<sup>52</sup>; and the teak panneling was eventually included through the generosity of individual donors, though it was some years before the whole hall was panelled<sup>53</sup>.

The dedication of the Memorial Hall in March 1924 was a solemn occasion, with the Bishop, General Tanner and Mr Justice Tatham<sup>54</sup>

55 Ibid.

56 See also Ch.5, p.69 above.

57 S.M.C. April 1924.

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

60 B.M. 12/2/25, Rector's Report.

61 S.M.C. April 1924.

62 S.M.C. April 1926. The stairway is not mentioned, but is a vivid memory to the writer. As long as classes did not move from room to room for lessons, the congestion was no doubt an unimportant handicap.

representing three pillars of society. Over a hundred Old Boys were present and there was the quite unprecedented concourse of fifty or so cars which managed to struggle through the mud to their destination<sup>55</sup>. They not only heard Tatham's moving anatomy of war<sup>56</sup>; it was also in a sense an occasion for the re-dedication of the whole school, for the opening of the original Balgowan buildings had never been marked by a formal act because of the South African War. The omission was now repaired by the dedication of 'the Founder's Stone' at the main entrance to the school buildings<sup>57</sup>. Moreover, with Brown's parents present at the dedication of a plaque to commemorate their son in the chapel<sup>58</sup> which was Hugh-Jones's inspiration, it was as if the school's growth to maturity in twenty-eight years were being dramatised in the day's ceremonies; and the association with Maritzburg College, which had been a notable feature of the early days in Pietermaritzburg, was happily symbolised in the presence of their enthusiastic bandmaster, Goldstone, and a boy with a cornet<sup>59</sup>.

The new buildings added dignity to the appearance of the school by balancing the chapel on the east with the Hall's front commemorating the fallen and challenging those who approached the school, and by providing an almost complete west wing. They also eased the accommodation crisis with which Pascoe had wrestled for so long. The old hall could now be used as a science laboratory<sup>60</sup>; the kitchen block not only simplified the cook's unenviable task but provided rooms for the housekeeper and assistant matron and two spare rooms for guests (with improvements in transport, this had become an important consideration); and, to complete the ground floor of the west wing there were two more classrooms, with foundations to take a second storey, teak floors and 'the most modern desks and blackboards'<sup>61</sup>. (The second floor of classrooms was completed two years later<sup>62</sup>, with a wretched stairway designed, it seemed, to cause the maximum of congestion.)

- 63 His spiritual qualities are referred to especially by C.M. Melville, but others have given the same impression, and his concern for the chapel, his remarks on the appointment of Briggs as chaplain (B.M. 10/3/22, Rector's Report) and the tone of his Memorandum (B.M. 18/12/25) confirm these opinions.
- 64 B.M. 29/8/18, Rector's Report.
- 65 S.M.C. May 1922.
- 66 S.M.C. Nov. 1922 and B.M. 27/2/23, Rector's Report.
- 67 S.M.C. April 1924, Oct. 1924, May 1925. (He arrived in 1924 and resigned at Easter 1925.)
- 68 S.M.C. Oct. 1925 and B.M. 5/8/25, Rector's Report.
- 69 B.M. 5/8/25, Rector's Report.
- 70 S.M.C. Oct. 1921, Oct. 1922 and Oct. 1924.
- 71 B.M. 20/2/24 and 21/8/24.
- 72 S.M.C. Oct. 1925 and Oct. 1926.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Like Hugh-Jones, Pascoe was concerned to make the chapel a worthy centre of the school, both in its fabric and in the leadership which a chaplain could provide. He was sadly frustrated in his efforts to secure a permanent chaplain and for most of his rectorship the school had to rely on visiting clergy, especially from Karkloof, and his own (very considerable) qualities as a spiritual leader<sup>63</sup>. After Harrington Johnson left in 1918 for parochial work<sup>64</sup>, for instance, it was nearly four years before his post was filled - by C.E. Briggs<sup>65</sup>, who had been chaplain for a time under Brown; and Briggs met a tragic death at the end of 1922 when he was struck in the abdomen with a cricket ball and died of peritonitis, a loss which Pascoe felt very keenly<sup>66</sup>. After another hiatus of over a year, the brother of the Lady Warden of St Anne's was appointed, but his sojourn proved to be short<sup>67</sup>, and, after a few months, he was succeeded by the Rev W. Vonberg, a science graduate from Manchester<sup>68</sup>.

In spite of these difficulties, Pascoe was able to report proudly in 1925 that the number of communicants was increasing<sup>69</sup> - and the fact that he reported this is an indication of the importance for the life of the school which he attached to corporate acts of worship.

Moreover, the chapel itself was considerably improved, first by a series of windows, designed by Miss Rope of Fulham and donated in memory of four Old Boys killed in the war (Strapp and three Tathams), the wife of the bursar (Stewart) and Hannah's brother, killed in the South African War<sup>70</sup> - a series whose colours lack the richness of the windows of the new chapel but whose design has a delicate charm. More important were extensions to the chapel for which Pascoe began to press as soon as the Hall project was well launched<sup>71</sup>; and before he was compelled to resign he had the happiness of seeing the enlargements completed and the roof converted from iron to tiles<sup>72</sup>. (One of the minor curiosities

- 73 B.M. 10/8/26.
- 74 The desirability of having a pipe organ is mentioned in B.M. 20/2/24, Rector's Report and B.M. 18/12/25, Rector's Report.
- 75 B.M. 11/2/26.
- 76 S.M.C. May 1918.
- 77 B.M. 25/9/19, Rector's Report.
- 78 B.M. 6/3/18, Rector's Report and 24/2/21. The rondavels are described as nearly complete, B.M. 24/8/21, presumably additions to the existing rondavels.
- 79 S.M.C. Oct. 1926 and B.M. 2/6/26.
- 80 K.M. Pennington in conversation.
- 81 B.M. 5/7/17, Rector's Report.
- 82 B.M. 6/3/18.
- 83 B.M. 24/1/19. From £200 to £350.



of the extension is that the chapel itself was on land owned by the Diocesan Trustees, while the vestry was not<sup>73</sup>, the chapel building being for the first time connected with the east wing.) One other improvement to the chapel services he was not destined to enjoy. With the increase in numbers, Pascoe's musical ear and respect for orderliness were increasingly discomfited by the inability of the small harmonium to control the lusty but not always musical or rhythmic voices of a hundred and twenty or more boys<sup>74</sup>, and when he went on leave in 1926 he was asked by the Governors to look for a suitable pipe organ<sup>75</sup>. This he did, but the organ arrived only after he had resigned.

#### STAFF

Of many other additions to the school's amenities, including another music room, which relieved the Rector of the painful necessity of listening to boys practising in his drawing-room<sup>76</sup>, the most important concerned staff accommodation, especially for married men. So long as there were no houses for married members of the teaching staff, the Rector was seriously restricted in his field of choice for appointments and in any case he regarded it as an unhealthy situation to have only single men<sup>77</sup>. The first married master after Ferrar was Briggs, who was able to use the rondavels built by the bursar, Rethman, and bought by the school when he left<sup>78</sup> and subsequently occupied by K.M. Pennington. The purchase of Nurden's property on the eve of Pascoe's departure on leave in 1926 provided another house which Vonberg was the first to use<sup>79</sup>; but married couples were so uncommon that when Mrs Pennington was expecting a baby, K.M. Pennington was obliged to take her for a constitutional after dark<sup>80</sup>.

Staffing the school adequately was made the more difficult by the fact that Michaelhouse was unable to offer 'sufficiently liberal salaries', as Pascoe put it as early as 1917<sup>81</sup>. Though salaries were raised before the end of the war (the scale went from £150 to £250 a year)<sup>82</sup> and again in 1919<sup>83</sup>, men showed an

- 84 B.M. 24/2/21, Acting Rector's Report (Adair). Salaries were raised, the scales running from £250 to £450 p.a.
- 85 B.M. 12/2/25, Rector's Report.
- 86 B.M. 5/8/25. The need for a pension scheme is a constantly recurring theme from this time on. Archdeacon Pennington is sometimes accused of harping monotonously on this theme, but the issue was apparently first raised by Pascoe, and in any case deserved constant attention.
- 87 B.M. 24/2/21.
- 88 B.M. 24/2/21, 25/5/21 and 24/8/21. F.S. Tatham did not approve of this method (which almost became an auction) but made a contribution.
- 89 S.M.C. May 1923, April 1924 and Oct. 1924.
- 90 B.M. 2/6/26: Memorandum: Suggestions for Use at Michaelhouse. The standard of mathematics is described as 'surprisingly low', the algebra book being reputedly the same as that used at the foundation of the school. He ascribed the poor standards partly to the syllabuses.
- 91 S.M.C. Oct. 1922 and May 1923.
- 92 S.M.C. Oct. 1921.
- 93 S.M.C. May 1923 and B.M. 27/2/23.

interest in coming to the school only until they learned the salary<sup>84</sup>; and, in spite of yet another rise, the salaries compared unfavourably with those in the government service<sup>85</sup>, especially as there was no pension scheme<sup>86</sup>. The governors were well aware of the difficulties, and an offer by Sir George Leuchars to contribute himself to improved salaries forced the issue and led to an increase in fees in 1921 from £80 to £110 a year. This enabled Sir George to convert his offer to a gift to reduce the school's indebtedness and encouraged generous donations from other governors, so that the school's debt was reduced by £2,000, half the sum coming from H.J. Butcher<sup>88</sup>.

Pascoe had therefore frequently to be content with appointments which he knew were to be temporary, like Leif Egeland and E.L.G. Schnell, both of whom left for Oxford after a short time, the former as a Rhodes Scholar<sup>89</sup>. The picture was not, however, one of unrelieved gloom. Adair was still there and so was Bishop, and though their subjects (chemistry and mathematics) came in for severe criticism in a report which W.F. Bushell was asked to write when Pascoe was on leave<sup>90</sup>, they both contributed a great deal outside the classroom. Moreover, when one of the men who had been temporarily on the staff learned of the dire need of the school, he gave up his position as a lawyer (and incidentally as Secretary to the Board of Governors) to return to the school: having been the first Old Boy on the teaching staff in 1922<sup>91</sup> K.M. Pennington returned in 1925<sup>92</sup> and served the school devotedly - one hesitates to say for 33 years, for his service has continued since his retirement in 1958.

Pascoe was able to make three other appointments which were as nearly permanent as such things can be. In 1921, J.C. Byrne came as carpentry instructor<sup>92</sup> and was soon an invaluable clerk of works, structural adviser, general handyman and, with his wife, supplier of chickens and other delicacies to the boys. Two years later T.A. Strickland<sup>93</sup> came from damp Ireland to an even damper Balgowan

94 S.M.C. Dec. 1946.

95 S.M.C. April 1927.

96 S.M.C. June 1951.

97 See Ch.4, p.3. Much of the rest of this paragraph is based on his obituary, written by K.M.P. in S.M.C. 1956, supplemented by information from Old Boys.

- he asserted that the rains marooned him for his first six weeks - where he reformed rugby and the science laboratories, stung boys into remarkable activity and created a tradition for Foundation East before his sadly crippled frame precipitated his retirement in 1946<sup>94</sup>. And in 1927, the first Afrikaans-speaking master to remain more than a few years arrived, P.D. Barnard<sup>95</sup>, whose voice was soon familiar on the parade ground and remained unmistakable on the touch line until he moved over to government service in 1951<sup>96</sup>. If Pascoe had achieved nothing else, the appointment of these men would have been a considerable bequest to his successors: each very different, each with his own idiosyncracies and each contributing to the development of the school during its most marked period of growth: there had never been such a permanent nucleus before in Michaelhouse's history.

The only man whose teaching could challenge these in length of service was Alfred Henry (Billy) Adair, who arrived in 1903 to establish science in the school<sup>97</sup>, so that his wood and iron laboratory was the precursor of the present elaborate science block. No one would claim that his teaching there or in the classroom was inspiring - he followed the not uncommon practice of getting boys to learn the text book by heart on pain of many extra hours of copying pages for the good of their souls if not their scientific comprehension. Nevertheless a good deal was no doubt learned incidentally in the course of mild practical jokes which he tolerated, provided they were not serious or dangerous. It is, however, for his work outside the classroom that he is most affectionately remembered. There were his visits to the dormitories, carrying his hurricane lamp (till electricity made this superfluous) and ready for a cosy chat or a story; there was his almost too meticulous refereeing of home matches for fifteen years; and there was his coaching of the first bulgers and drummers - a feat which those sympathetic to school cadet bands would regard as particularly remarkable, since Adair was quite unmusical himself. The cadet corps, indeed, became his especial interest when there ceased to

- 98 B.M. 3/2/27.
- 99 See Appendix 4 for staff list.
- 100 R.B. Archibald in conversation.
- 101 B.M. 31/7/22, Rector's Report.
- 102 S.M.C. May 1925.
- 103 S.M.C. Oct. 1922.
- 104 B.M. 5/7/17, Rector's Report.

be a resident Drill Instructor, and for years he conducted the parades regularly twice a week. In between these extra-curricular yet conventional schoolmasterly activities, he found time to advise on, design and supervise various additions to the fabric of the school and to repair its furniture - including the faithful old harmonium. But perhaps his regard for the school is demonstrated most clearly in the way he returned to act as Rector when the Governors could find no one else to fill the gap between Pascoe's retirement and the arrival of Bushell<sup>98</sup>, and it was fitting that when he died at the ripe age of 83 in 1956, he was buried in the school cemetery, just a few months after his successor as senior science master, Strickland, who was, like him, an Irishman.

#### ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Adair, Bishop, Strickland and Crawford were the only assistants who served under Pascoe for more than three years at a stretch, to whom should be added Hannah, in spite of his frequent departures for health or family reasons<sup>99</sup>. The paucity of men who saw a generation of boys through the school did not, however, prevent Pascoe from trying to improve the scholastic standards. One of his first acts was to institute Saturday evening prep (partly to keep the boys out of mischief) and though the boys walked out en masse to the fields as a protest, when someone wondered aloud 'What'll Pascoe do?', they had second thoughts about his determination and returned to the old Hall, where they were quietly but stingingly rebuked by Pascoe<sup>100</sup>. No major changes were made in the curriculum, apart from the introduction of Afrikaans in place of Dutch in 1922<sup>101</sup> and the abandonment of Cambridge Locals in favour of the Cape Junior Certificate three years later<sup>102</sup>; and the school forms continued to run from the second to the upper fifth (who wrote the matriculation examination)<sup>103</sup>. In 1917, six boys returned for a sixth form, but Pascoe felt his staffing difficulties did not enable him to provide an adequate course for them<sup>104</sup> and the initiation of a real Sixth Form had to await his successor's drive. Even the number entered for the

- 105 The numbers fluctuated considerably, the lowest number being in 1920, when there were eight. There were 15 in 1926 and 17 in both 1924 and 1925. See S.M.C. May 1917, and Rector's Reports attached to B.M. 6/3/18, 25/9/19, 12/2/20, 24/2/21, 10/3/22, 27/2/23, 20/2/24, 12/2/25, 18/12/25 (which should be attached to 11/2/26) and 3/2/27.
- 106 The results over the years were as follows, the figures representing in succession: entries, first, seconds, thirds:  
1917: 9,0,2,3;      1918: 13,0,0,4;      1919: 12,0,1,4;  
1920: 8,0,0,2;      1921: 11,0,3,3;      1922: 16,0,5,6;  
1923: 13,0,0,4;      1924: 17,1,6,4;      1925: 17,0,6,3;  
1926: 15,1,7,4.  
The figures exclude successes in the supplementary examinations.  
See references in note 105.
- 107 See Suggestions for Use at Michaelhouse, B.M. 2/6/26.
- 108 Bushell made this observation himself in his report and recalled this impression in letters to the author.



matriculation examination did not increase spectacularly<sup>105</sup> - from twelve in 1916 to about seventeen ten years later; and the examination results fluctuated considerably, with 1924 and 1926 the vintage years, each providing one first class pass<sup>106</sup>. Bushell, indeed, was unimpressed by the standard at Michaelhouse when he acted as Rector during Pascoe's final leave<sup>107</sup>.

He attributed the poor standard chiefly to the circumscribing effect of the matriculation regulations - he regarded it as a 'real misfortune' that boys were confined to only six subjects - and to the outmoded syllabuses, especially in mathematics and science (which included no electricity). But he drew attention, too, to weaknesses in the organisation, methods and equipment at Michaelhouse: he thought each subject should be placed under a specialist master personally responsible for its organisation and that mathematics especially suffered from having six masters teach it, without any apparent guidance about the syllabus or methods to be used; the methods of teaching the languages (French and Afrikaans) required revision; he was astonished to find geography taught without wall maps and felt that the library was 'gravely defective' - the boys, he was confident, were 'just as keen as English boys' to read and required only well-stocked, open shelves to encourage them to do so.

It is rarely that a school is reported on by anyone who is not only independent in the way that Bushell was when he made his comments, but who has also become thoroughly involved in the school's activities. It is therefore not possible to compare Michaelhouse with other South African schools, though many seem to have felt, like Bushell, that the matriculation regulations were unnecessarily restricting<sup>108</sup>. Nevertheless, some of his observations were sufficiently precise to lend weight to Pascoe's own argument that the school was ill-equipped to take larger numbers: both men felt that the standards should be better, but, whereas Bushell believed that this could be achieved only by having larger numbers and therefore a larger staff, Pascoe believed that numbers should not be

- 109 Old Boys, especially C.M. Melville.
- 110 Letter from C.M. Melville.
- 111 S.M.C. May 1923.
- 112 S.M.C. May 1922 refers to the poor supervision by captains and S.M.C. May 1923 refers apologetically to the lack of attention to junior games 'for various reasons'.
- 113 The reminiscences of V.S. (Shaw) in S.M.C. Dec. 1946, Jubilee Supplement, refer to Stewart assisting Hannah. - S.M.C. April 1924 refers to Stewart as 'the coach'. Hannah's interest in Michaelhouse cricket was, however, permanent, whether he was on the staff or not.
- 114 S.M.C. May 1925.
- 115 S.M.C. May 1922, May 1923, and April 1924. Other details of these seasons are taken chiefly from the same sources. See also the reminiscences of V.S. referred to in note 114.

increased until the staff, equipment and facilities for extramural activities were sufficiently improved to make a sound education possible. Of one thing, Pascoe himself left boys in no doubt: that excellence was the aim of the school; and his own example was an inspiration to many<sup>109</sup>.

#### EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Outside the classroom, rugby and cricket still enjoyed pride of place, with shooting not far behind: athletics, never very strongly supported, languished from the early twenties; tennis was not, on the whole, considered sufficiently manly and was a rare privilege for a few senior boys<sup>110</sup>, and squash was unknown at the school until Bushell's arrival. Since the main purpose of sport was considered to be neither amusement nor physical development but 'a lesson in subordinating personal interest'<sup>111</sup>, it is not surprising that team games (or cadets) monopolised the afternoons. It was, however, chiefly to the first teams that the staff devoted attention, the organisation of practices for the junior games being left largely to the team captains, with varying success<sup>112</sup>.

The first XI was the most active team, playing over twenty matches each season and enjoying a tour every year from the 1919-1920 season. With Hannah and Stewart (the bursar) sharing or alternating the coaching duties<sup>113</sup>, the first eleven was consistently successful, though, at the time, the 1924-25 season was considered unsuccessful when, out of 25 matches played, the team won only 13 and lost three<sup>114</sup>. It no doubt seemed unsuccessful because it came after three years of quite remarkable achievements, in two of which (1921-22 and 1923-24) the team lost no school matches<sup>115</sup>. The team in 1921 was captained by A.P. Woods, who was later to contribute so much to Michaelhouse (and Natal) cricket as a master, and among many sound players he had outstanding strength in Lawrence Trotter who succeeded him as captain. It was this team which, faced with the necessity of getting 120 in ninety minutes against Hilton, succeeded spectacularly with ten minutes to spare; and, while on

- 116 S.M.C. May 1922 and May 1927.
- 117 S.M.C. April 1927. Forder's feat was still a record - 132 wickets, Melville having 106.
- 118 S.M.C. Oct. 1921 and Oct. 1922 and reminiscences by V.S. referred to in note 114.
- 119 S.M.C. Oct. 1923.
- 120 Reminiscences of V.S. referred to in note 114, and other Old Boys.

tour, they beat a Bloemfontein team containing five Currie Cup players. The next season's team was hardly less successful, though they had the misfortune to lose by four runs to H. Wade's Hilton team. Perhaps the fact that an Old Boy, Herby Taylor, was not only Natal and South African captain but reaching the peak of his form<sup>116</sup> - in the Test series against the M.C.C. in 1926-27 he scored three centuries - helped to inspire the boys. And among the younger boys in the school team was one, Allan Melville, who was to follow in Herby Taylor's footsteps and who, encouraged by Hannah, was already distinguished, having in 1926 taken ten wickets in a match against Crockett's XI, repeated Forder's 1903 achievement of a century of wickets for the season, and scored 820 runs<sup>117</sup>.

The vintage years in rugby were 1921 and 1922, rivalling the 1906 season<sup>118</sup>. Organised by Hannah and captained by Jack Elliot, the 1921 team scored 284 points against their opponents' 68 and had the distinction not only of gaining seven places in the Natal Schools team (with Elliot as captain) but of having Elliot chosen for the Natal team and Miles Young as reserve. The following year, with first Trotter and then McKenzie as captain, and coached by Adair, K.M. Pennington and sometimes K. Mowat, the team won all but one school match (a draw with Hilton). Tours were not the regular feature which Hannah made them for cricket, but there was a memorable visit to the Eastern Province in 1923 under Strickland, distinguished by the first game against another diocesan school (St Andrew's) and a taxi journey from Port Elizabeth to Grahamstown periodically halted by half-a-dozen punctures<sup>119</sup> - a remarkable total even for those days of high-pressure tyres and poor roads. The next years were not so successful, but to be a member of the fifteen was still to be numbered among the demi-gods, to whom due respect must be shown, particularly by watching first game practices<sup>120</sup>, a duty which remained obligatory until Bushell's time.

Though sport was treated with seriousness, there were Saturday evenings of almost unalloyed lightness. Dressed suitably for an

- 121 Reminiscences by C.M.M. (Melville) in S.M.C. Dec. 1946, Jubilee Supplement.
- 122 S.M.C. May 1922 and Oct. 1922.
- 123 S.M.C. April 1926.
- 124 See especially S.M.C. Nov. 1918, Oct. 1922, Oct. 1924 and Oct. 1925, and reminiscences by V.S. referred to in note 114.
- 125 S.M.C. Oct. 1923.
- 126 Ibid.
- 127 S.M.C. May 1925.

'occasion' in blue suits, stiff collars and white socks<sup>121</sup>, the boys were periodically entertained by the indefatigable F.S. Bishop and any others he persuaded to join him in a series of farces. The Dramatic Society, including Douglass Pennington, who was later to stimulate a generation of Michaelhouse boys to unvented histrionic achievements, was revived as a group in 1922 and with a wonderful catholicity of taste presented in succession Ikona Mali, The Grace of Allah (a musical supported by an orchestra of Mrs Bynoe and four boys) and scenes from The Rivals and Twelfth Night<sup>122</sup>. Four years later, E. Strangman produced an abridged version of The Merchant of Venice<sup>123</sup>, but the Society had an uncertain life and concerts were more common than plays.

The concerts were nearly all lively affairs of the whole community, including as occasion (or F.S. Bishop) demanded the matron (Mrs Roberts), T.A. Strickland and other members of the staff as well as an assortment of boys; and the purpose was clearly entertainment, not 'improvement', noisy community singing alternating with delicate instrumental solos and nostalgic Victorian ballads contrasting with the freshly primitive jazz of the band led by Gerald Pennington<sup>124</sup>.

Formal lectures, such as had characterised Saturday evenings in Hugh-Jones's time, and were re-introduced by Bushell, were rare, but a visit by the Rev. Erp Jones, pioneer of the Missions to Seamen in Durban, was a notable exception, especially because he gave a 'bioscope exhibition', the first (and for a long time the only) use of the infant medium at the school<sup>125</sup>.

Though little was organised for the boys in their spare time, initiative was encouraged or at least tolerated. There was only a mild protest at the playing of 'gramophones and ukeleles' until ten at night<sup>126</sup>, and there was positive pride in the enthusiasm for wireless which found expression in the construction by a group of boys of a 'Three Valve Dual'<sup>127</sup> - a great improvement on the more common crystal set. The return of K.M. Pennington to the

- 128 S.M.C. Oct. 1925.
- 129 S.M.C. Oct. 1926.
- 130 The practice is noted in the reminiscences of C.M.M. referred to in note 122.
- 131 Suggestions for Use at Michaelhouse, B.M. 2/6/26.
- 132 S.M.C. April 1924, Rector's speech.
- 133 The fire is described in B.M. 25/9/19, Rector's Report, and most Old Boys of the period include a reference to it in their reminiscences.
- 134 See especially S.M.C. Oct. 1922 and reminiscences of N.R. (Robinson) in S.M.C. Dec. 1946, Jubilee Supplement.



permanent staff infused new life into the Natural History Society<sup>128</sup> and he and Bushell energetically resurrected the Debating Society with five Tuesday afternoon debates in the winter of 1926<sup>129</sup>; but there was little else. Perhaps the absence of organised activities stimulated a sturdy self-reliance and a healthy suspicion of organising authority in many boys; but the absence no doubt also contributed to the survival of the practice of ducking juniors in the plunge bath till they gasped if they were so unwise as to be still there when seniors returned from their games ready for additional entertainment<sup>130</sup>. It was no doubt partly for this reason that Bushell regarded the provision of more occupations to improve the 'social life' of the school as 'the most important of all (the suggestions) I have had the honour of making'<sup>131</sup>, and Pascoe's great fear was that the school might be enlarged before it was equipped to ensure that 'every boy should have the opportunity of discovering what his own contribution to the world can be'<sup>132</sup>.

There were, it is true, occasional excitements to vary the regular school routine, some of them quite fortuitous. Soon after the war, for instance, boys woke up in the middle of the night to the acrid smell of smoke coming from the bootroom<sup>133</sup>: their paraffin tins, used normally to collect hot water from the laundry, made an adequate substitute for a fire hose and the boys were soon organised in a chain stretching from the plunge to the fire, so that by the time Pascoe was aroused and on the scene (with a shaving mug of water according to one story; with a candle according to other, probably more reliable, witnesses) the fire was almost out. (The cause was never firmly established, but it seems likely that the debris of ages in a much-used lantern caught alight when the candle - which should have been extinguished - burned down to the bottom.)

A more acceptable diversion was the organisation of a picnic from time to time, either for the choir or for the whole school, when Hannah's 'Yellow Jane' or ox-wagons were laden with food for the outing<sup>134</sup>. Or there was the cadet parade in 1925 for the

- 135 S.M.C. Oct. 1925.
- 136 S.M.C. April 1924 and reminiscences of H.R. referred to in note 134.
- 137 Reminiscences of V.S. referred to in note 114.
- 138 S.M.C. May 1923.
- 139 K.M. Pennington said in conversation that, as an Old Boy member of the staff, he drew Pascoe's attention to some of the practices; but, though they were perhaps milder than in earlier years (as V.S. suggests), they continued.
- 140 B.M. 31/7/22, Rector's Report.

Prince of Wales<sup>135</sup>, when Michaelhouse, in a uniform of white shirt, blue shorts, forage cap with a white cover and red band (introduced only the previous year to replace the oppressively hot jersey and knickers and designed largely by Adair<sup>136</sup>), joined the other detachments in Pietermaritzburg. This was an occasion memorable especially because the Prince granted an extra week's holiday to all the schools in honour of Hilton's winning the Governor-General's cup for the third year in succession.

On the whole, however, life at Balgowan was tranquil and secure. There was a steady succession of lessons in the mornings, cricket or rugby or cadets in the afternoons, and prep in the evenings; daily chapel services (with senior boys as lectors an innovation by Pascoe<sup>137</sup>) and mattins and evensong on Sundays, a Choral Eucharist replacing mattins on occasion<sup>138</sup>; and 'free bounds' after mattins. After thirty years, indeed, the pattern was not substantially different from that established by Todd.

#### PASCOE'S ACHIEVEMENT

Pascoe had sought to etch that pattern more clearly in the life of Michaelhouse, to elaborate here and there, but not to impose a new design. He dedicated himself to the task, and his dignified, unhurried presence earned him the respect of boys, staff and governors. It is probable that he was not fully aware of some of the barbaric bullying practices which had become entrenched in school tradition<sup>139</sup>; and he was so convinced of the virtue of a small school that he did not fully appreciate the severe limitations which small numbers placed on developing precisely those facilities which he so much desired.

Pascoe was nevertheless able to claim in 1922 that he had 'never known the school life marked by a healthier spirit of manly conduct, clean sportsmanship and loyalty'<sup>140</sup>, a claim which the steady support for the school substantiated. His selflessness was almost proverbial - even when his illness forced him to resign, his chief concern was that he had caused an emergency for the

- 141 Letter of Pascoe, reported in B.M. 4/1/27.
- 142 He implied this in his reference to the appointment of Briggs in 1922 (we look 'for the strengthening of the doctrinal life') - B.M. 10/3/22; and he referred to the need to make religion 'an integral part of the school' in 1924 - S.M.C. April 1924.
- 143 Bishop's letter to the Governors on the resignation of Pascoe, dated 28/12/26. B.M. 4/1/27.

school and the governors by not being able to give them a year's notice<sup>141</sup>; and he was impelled by the strong conviction that religion ought to be at the heart of the school<sup>142</sup>. There is no question that the Bishop was reflecting the opinion of those closely associated with Pascoe's work when he wrote: 'The loss will be great. It is impossible to exaggerate what we owe to Mr Pascoe for the position which the school now occupies.'<sup>143</sup>

The school was to be inspired with new vigour by his successor, but its sinews were already sufficiently tough to be able to respond to the new demands made upon the body politic of Michaelhouse.

- <sup>1</sup> W.F. Bushell: School Memories. Philip Son & Nephew 1962, p.27.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid., p.26.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p.24.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp.43-52.
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.57.
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid., p.60.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp.62-86.
- <sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp.57-8.
- <sup>9</sup> Bushell's Memorandum, B.M. 2/6/26 and Rector's Report July 1928, B.M. 30/8/28.
- <sup>10</sup> S.M.C. May 1928.
- <sup>11</sup> School Memories, p.86 and 89.
- <sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.105.
- <sup>13</sup> Ibid., p.104.

CHAPTER 7BUSHELL : VITALITY AND CHANGEBUSHELL

When W.F. Bushell was appointed Rector of Michaelhouse, he had had a wider experience in schoolmastering than any other Rector has had. Indeed he was, it might be said, born into the task, for his father was a housemaster at Harrow<sup>1</sup> and was there as master or chaplain for fifty years<sup>2</sup>, and he became proudly conscious of the vigorous traditions of the public school which owed their vitality to Arnold and others<sup>3</sup>.

Bushell himself went to Charterhouse, where housemasters were still remote from their boys and relied too much on their monitor, and where the curriculum still hardly allowed for science or mathematics (Bushell was one of the few allowed to specialise in Euclidean mathematics)<sup>4</sup>. From Charterhouse he went on to read mathematics for three years at King's, Cambridge<sup>5</sup>, and won the distinction of a place among the Wranglers (those in the first class)<sup>6</sup> when the course was still essentially traditional but reverence for Euclid and the form of Newton's propositions was beginning to be effectively questioned<sup>7</sup>. Bushell elected to stay on for a fourth year to take three subjects in the Natural Science Tripos<sup>8</sup>. That he was later to press for better laboratories at Michaelhouse<sup>9</sup> and for a reform of the matriculation mathematics syllabus<sup>10</sup> is not, therefore, surprising.

Perhaps his first appointment also coloured his attitude to the pace of expansion of Michaelhouse, for he went to Gresham's School which had grown under a new headmaster and in new buildings from 50 boys in 1900 to about 200, when Bushell joined the staff<sup>11</sup>, and it was a school in which the 'fresh breeze' of new ideas was blowing<sup>12</sup>. From Norfolk he moved in 1912 on promotion to the Victorian foundation of Rossall in Lancashire<sup>13</sup>, where the headmaster hoped

- 14 Ibid., p.108.
- 15 Ibid., p.115.
- 16 Ibid., pp.115-116.
- 17 Ibid., pp.119-120.
- 18 Ibid., pp.129-130 and 134-135.
- 19 Ibid., p.133.
- 20 Ibid., pp.140-141.
- 21 Ibid., p.135 and 160-161.
- 22 Ibid., pp.146-147.
- 23 Ibid., p.149.
- 24 Ibid., p.149.
- 25 B.M. 18/2/25.
- 26 School Memories, p.149.
- 27 B.M. 4/1/27. Pascoe's letter of resignation was dated New Year's day, but the Bishop knew of the decision on 28th December.
- 28 School Memories, p.138 and 150.
- 29 Ibid., p.150.
- 30 See Ch.6, p. .



in general that Bushell would raise its intellectual standards<sup>14</sup> but sometimes required forceful persuasion to agree to particular changes<sup>15</sup>. Bushell was soon appointed senior housemaster, a post which gave him 'seven of the happiest years' of his life<sup>16</sup>, interrupted by what he looked back on as the broadening experience of service with the Herefordshire Regiment in Palestine and at Ypres<sup>17</sup>.

Bushell's first headship was in 1921 at Solihull, an ancient grammar school foundation, receiving a subsidy from the county authorities but not yet adjusted, financially or otherwise, to the changing post-war conditions<sup>18</sup>. Under Bushell the school grew from about 200 boys to 300<sup>19</sup>, and, in spite of some opposition, nearly forty acres were added to the school property<sup>20</sup>. A house system was introduced, with Bushell himself as a matter of principle being one of the housemasters<sup>21</sup>, the scope of the extra-curricular activities was widened<sup>22</sup> and school runs were introduced<sup>23</sup>.

He was in the middle of this expansion when the Bishop of Natal asked him to take over Michaelhouse temporarily while Pascoe went on leave in 1926<sup>24</sup>. The bishop had to be persuasive<sup>25</sup>, but the Solihull governors were co-operative and granted Bushell leave<sup>26</sup>. Since it was a temporary post, there was no real possibility of great changes being carried out, but in the few months that he was at Michaelhouse Bushell displayed his characteristic enthusiasm and energy so effectively that when Pascoe was forced to resign through ill health at the end of 1926, the Governors immediately resolved to invite Bushell to succeed him, and cabled him accordingly<sup>27</sup>. Bushell was not enthusiastic: he was beginning to see the fruits of his work at Solihull, where he was happy<sup>28</sup>; he hoped to become headmaster of a larger school in England in the fairly near future<sup>29</sup>, and Michaelhouse was not only smaller but would take him out of range of useful contacts. Moreover, he was aware of the deficiencies in the equipment and of the somewhat raw society at Michaelhouse<sup>30</sup>. But he was nevertheless a man who welcomed a challenge and he valued the opportunity to forge links between Britain and a member of the

- 31 School Memories, p.150.
- 32 B.M. 3/2/27, which gives the text of a second cable sent to Bushell.
- 33 Bushell's Memorandum, B.M. 2/6/26.
- 34 Ibid., and School Memories, p.156.
- 35 Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28. See also Rector's Report, B.M. 26/2/29 and School Memories, pp.159-160.
- 36 School Memories, p.157.

empire<sup>31</sup> so that, when he was assured that certain conditions would be met - the most important being the promise of a separate house for the Rector and the acceptance of a policy of expansion<sup>32</sup> - he accepted the invitation at a salary of £1250.

If one includes the period when he was acting rector, Bushell was at Michaelhouse less than three years - he left in December 1929 - but it was a crucial rectorship which dragged the school out of a basically pre-war framework (in general tone as well as in classroom activities)<sup>33</sup> and established some of the conditions necessary for healthy growth. Like Hugh-Jones, Bushell was convinced that many of the activities of a school have to be deliberately organised if the school as a whole is to serve its educational purposes, but he had a robust vigour which Hugh-Jones lacked and he had, moreover, the advantage of firm traditions to work from. There was hardly a field of Michaelhouse's activities which was not turned over and sown with new ideas in the space of three springs.

#### ACADEMIC INTERESTS

Bushell found the work at the school frustratingly cramped by the requirements of the matriculation examination which virtually restricted the curriculum to six subjects<sup>34</sup>. Moreover, like his predecessors, he found staffing a matter of 'exceptional difficulty'<sup>35</sup>; there was nothing in South Africa comparable to the University Appointments Boards and the scholastic agencies in England; salaries were uninviting; and there was the additional problem of a lack of married quarters. About the matriculation conditions he could do nothing, though he may have interested a few individuals - including his brother-in-law, Professor Roseveare - in some ideas for syllabus reform<sup>36</sup>.

Of the staff, two who had been stalwarts but somewhat mixed blessings (Adair and Bishop) left on the eve of Bushell's arrival; but Hannah was firmly established, K.M. Pennington had already begun to make his distinctive contribution, Strickland was trying to improve the science and Barnard had joined the staff after Pascoe's

37 See Appendix 5 for staff list.

38 Rector's Report, B.M. 26/2/29.

39 Bushell's Memorandum, B.M. 2/6/26.

40 See especially S.M.C. May 1928.

41 Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28.

42 B.M. 17/8/27. £600 was given for this and the library.

43 Quoted in School Memories, pp.131-132.

resignation but before Bushell arrived<sup>37</sup>. He managed to keep the staff full, partly by making use of English connections, sometimes by making appointments that he knew were temporary; and some of the men had had a distinguished background, like Mattingh (a Rhodes scholar, whose life ended in confusion and tragedy). But with one exception (Colin Melville) none of the thirteen who came in Bushell's time were to remain at the school for long. Bushell hoped to create greater stability by appointing more South Africans, but he found it 'surprisingly difficult'<sup>38</sup>.

Bushell was nevertheless able to introduce some changes which made more effective use of the staff - one of which was to rename the forms 'blocks': A (matriculants), B, C and D (third form), each of which could be divided into sets<sup>39</sup>. He added to the curriculum what amounted to a general knowledge period: a regular series of Saturday evening lectures supported by lantern slides, the lecturers being either Bushell himself or a visitor and the subjects ranging from Oberamagau to Mount Everest. The most distinguished of the lecturers was the Rt. Hon. V.S.S. Sastri, whose 'pungent logic, restraint and sincerity' on the education of Indians clearly impressed itself on the school<sup>40</sup>. Besides his own subject, mathematics, he strove most energetically to improve the standard of science which he felt was bound to remain 'quite remarkably low' as long as physics and chemistry were required to use the same laboratory (the present library, which had been in use as a laboratory only since the Memorial Hall was built); and he persuaded the governors to allow the basement of the Hall to be converted to a physics laboratory<sup>41</sup>, to which the Abe Bailey Trust contributed<sup>42</sup>.

There were, however, two changes of a more fundamental nature. The first reflected his support for Johnson's thesis: 'Have as many books about you as you can; let a boy first read any English book which helps to engage his attention because you have done a great deal when you have brought him to have entertainment from a book.'<sup>43</sup> Almost his first achievement was a reorganisation which provided the

- 44 S.M.C. Oct. 1926 and May 1928.
- 45 S.M.C. June 1929 and Dec. 1929; and Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28.
- 46 Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28.
- 47 Ibid.
- 48 Bushell's Memorandum, B.M. 2/6/26.
- 49 Acting Rector's Report, B.M. 17/3/30. (He appears to have been the only one entered for university examinations.)
- 50 St. Andrew's College; pp.122-3.
- 51 A Century of 'Bishops', p.58.
- 52 School Memories, p.158.
- 53 See also Ch.8, p.119.

juniors with a reading room above the library (at the top of the tower)<sup>44</sup>; he enlisted the support of parents and of the Bailey Trust to build up the stock of books; and the books were no longer locked up so that free borrowing was allowed<sup>46</sup>.

The other change was to resume a sixth form, which Pascoe had felt the school not sufficiently equipped to provide. Bushell started a post matric class with five boys in 1928<sup>47</sup> for he felt that without such a class the intellectual life of the school was bound to suffer<sup>48</sup>. There were twelve at the beginning of the following year and one of them (Oscroft) passed all four subjects in the first year B.Sc. examinations<sup>49</sup>. It was a notable experiment for Natal, though not the first in South Africa: apart from the early practice of including university classes in the schools before a teaching university was established, St Andrew's, under Kettlewell, introduced what was called a 'university class' in 1919<sup>50</sup>, and Bishop's - in spite of some serious opposition because of an undertaking not to introduce university classes - introduced a post matriculation class in 1920 under Birt<sup>51</sup>. (It is an interesting comment on the lack of real contact between the diocesan schools at the time that Bushell was considered a pioneer<sup>52</sup>). The sixth form has never enjoyed a prestige in South Africa comparable to that of the English sixth form, and for some time support for the form at Michaelhouse was uncertain, but there is no doubt Bushell's determined provision of a post matriculation course introduced a new and distinctive element into the Michaelhouse society<sup>53</sup>.

#### HOUSE SYSTEM

That society was changed even more significantly by the establishment of the house system and by the rapid increase in numbers. As long as the school was small it was perhaps not necessary for the Rector to delegate the general care of the boys in a specific way, but as the school grew, the need to have men who could exert direct and personal influence on a manageable group of boys became more obvious, in the interests both of the boys

54 Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28.

55 Hannah's Typescript.

56 School Memories, p.109.

57 Bushell's Memorandum, B.M. 2/6/26; Report of a Committee of the  
Governors, B.M. 22/3/28; and B.M. 22/3/28.

58 B.M. 22/3/28.

59 School Memories, p.161.

60 S.M.C. May 1928 and Oct. 1928; and Hannah's Typescript.



themselves and of the tone of the school as a whole.

Michaelhouse had not been planned with a full house system in mind, with housemasters' accommodation an integral part of the house, separate feeding arrangements, prep rooms and common rooms; but Bushell was convinced that it was worth adapting the system to the situation and therefore established four houses in 1928<sup>54</sup>. The purchase of Gibbs's house across the stream enabled Bushell to establish Hannah there with some sixteen boys and he hoped that this would be the start of a detached house system<sup>55</sup> - the system he had experienced as a boy at Charterhouse and as a master at Gresham's and which he preferred to the 'hostel' system which Rossall operated<sup>56</sup>; and he pressed the governors hard to build a separate house for the Rector which would also house boys<sup>57</sup>. The desirability of completing the quad and the governors' preference for the 'hostel' system<sup>58</sup>, however, ensured that the original form in which the houses were established became the permanent pattern - including, even, the awkward practice of splitting a new house between dormitories in the main building and a house in the grounds.

Initially it was Fairfield House that was thus schizophrenically divided - its name derived from the name given to Gibbs's cottage, because it was in the 'far field'. Two of the other houses were named, with an extraordinary determination to be neutral, after the points of the compass (Bushell felt that the names of governors-general were overworked in South African schools and no other names seemed to meet general approval<sup>59</sup>): Foundation East was established in the south-east corner of the quad, under Strickland, and Foundation West was established in the new buildings at the west end of the south block of the quad, under K.M. Pennington. The fourth house, Rector's - subsequently Foundation North and still later Founder's - was at the north end of the eastern block and was under Bushell himself<sup>60</sup>.

The house system is now such an integral part of Michaelhouse that it is difficult to realise that in the twenties it was not a

- 61 S.M.C. May 1928 and Oct. 1928. The differences between the houses are substantiated by numerous Old Boys of the 'thirties'.
- 62 Hannah reported to the Governors that the appointment was made 'after consultation with Mr. Currey' (Acting Rector's Report, B.M. 17/3/30), but in a private communication to me, Currey indicates that the initiative had passed from his hands by the time he was consulted. The appointment to housemasterships was then not limited to a term of years. The proper procedure for Hannah would have been to make a temporary appointment for what had been Bushell's house.
- 63 Comments by some of the housemasters involved.

system in universal operation; and one of the remarkable features of its introduction at Michaelhouse is that the Chronicle makes hardly a reference to its significance: there is a reference to inter-house matches being organised, to the appointment of house prefects and to the appointment of housemasters, but no philosophising about the potential value of what must have seemed to many simply a tidy administrative device. Yet before very long the significance of the change could be dramatised in the distinctive tone of the two houses which retained their original housemasters: a Spartan rigour seemed to characterise East as against the Roman urbanity of West<sup>61</sup>.

Much was to depend on the quality of the housemasters in the future and on the relationship between them and the Rector, probably more than was realised by any at the time except Bushell, for during the interregnum between Bushell and Currey, Hannah took the extraordinary step of making a permanent appointment to a housemastership, which could have been a source of friction had tact not been a characteristic of the in-coming Rector and a cheerful good nature a characteristic of P.D. Barnard, the already installed housemaster<sup>62</sup>. The fact that the houses at Michaelhouse were organised on the 'hostel' system meant that the dangers of an imperium in imperio were avoided, but it meant that the balance of the Rector's authority against the housemasters' freedom had to be finely adjusted if friction were to be avoided; and there were times of friction - especially under the stress of difficulties during and immediately after the second World War<sup>63</sup> - but since it was a society of vigorous individuals and not a machine which was thus organised, it could hardly have been otherwise. Certainly, the housemasters were in a better position to keep the Rector informed about and to exercise directly a civilising influence on the ordinary - or extraordinary - conduct of the boys than had been possible when these had been the responsibilities of everyone and no one. Without some delegation of function, indeed, the school could hardly have adjusted satisfactorily to the rapid expansion in numbers.

- 64 B.M. 11/11/26.
- 65 Rector's Report, B.M. 3/2/27.
- 66 Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28.
- 67 S.M.C. June 1929 and Oct. 1929. Bushell reported that there would be 'about 192' in February, including 78 new boys, but this report was written before the term opened (Rector's Report, B.M. 26/2/29).
- 68 There were 1212 European boys in Stds VII to X in November 1927; 1393 in November 1928; and 1530 in November 1929. (Province of Natal: Reports of the Superintendent of Education for the Years 1927, 1928 and 1929.)
- 69 In his report of January 1929 (Rector's Report, B.M. 26/2/29), Bushell listed the ages of boys from various schools and areas. The number of entrants referred to is 52, so that the details are presumably for entrants in 1928. There were 14 from Cordwalles, nine from Highbury, five from Cedric, six from the Transvaal.
- 70 School Memories, p.156 and a Letter from Bushell.
- 71 B.M. 21/10/27.
- 72 Balance Sheet, B.M. 29/8/29. The loan was for £1,000.
- 73 Authorisation to have plans drawn was given in June (B.M. 8/6/27).
- 74 S.M.C. Oct. 1927.
- 75 S.M.C. May 1928.
- 76 Rector's Report and B.M. 30/8/28.
- 77 S.M.C. Oct. 1928.
- 78 In a conversation, Bushell mentioned that Hannah told him that the plan was basically that envisaged by Todd.
- 79 Though he remained a Trustee until 1930 (B.M. 17/3/30), his last official act at Michaelhouse was the laying of the foundation stone of the new building.

EXPANSION

Shortly before he resigned, Pascoe reported to the governors that it was his considered opinion that the time was not yet ripe to increase the numbers<sup>64</sup>, then standing at 136<sup>65</sup>. By the beginning of 1928 there were 157<sup>66</sup>; and the following year there were 195, including 76 new boys<sup>67</sup> (nearly half the school), an increase of over forty per cent in just over two years. (In Natal government and government-aided schools the number of boys in secondary classes rose, too, between 1927 and 1929, but by only 26%<sup>68</sup>). Most of the entrants still came from Natal, with Cordwalles, of course, supplying the largest single contingent<sup>69</sup>; but Bushell was able to strengthen links with the Transvaal through his acquaintance with an old Harrovian<sup>70</sup> prep school headmaster and in 1928 there were five boys from Cedric School in Rhodesia. The expansion was partly the result of a deliberate policy to draw on a wider catchment area, and the introduction of entrance scholarships in August 1927 fitted into this plan - the first awards went to A.H. Bayne and A.A. Lloyd from Maritzburg College and J.T. Albers from Estcourt<sup>71</sup>.

The expansion was made possible partly by the purchase of Gibbs's property, which was made with the help of a loan from Bushell<sup>72</sup>, but chiefly by the completion of the quad buildings. Preliminary negotiations for the latter began before Bushell's arrival<sup>73</sup> (no doubt in response to Bushell's insistence that numbers should be increased); the contract was given to a Pietermaritzburg firm (Henry Pratt)<sup>74</sup>; the foundation stone was laid by the bishop in February 1928<sup>75</sup>; and the building was sufficiently near completion for boys to be moved into it in August - just over a year after the initial decision had been reached<sup>76</sup>. Besides dormitory accommodation for 52 boys, the buildings provided a 'bath house' for the whole school, rooms for a tuck shop, a bursar's office and a dark room and quarters for two single masters<sup>77</sup>. Thus was Todd's vision of the buildings completed<sup>78</sup> and a fitting climax provided for the association of Bishop Baines with Michaelhouse<sup>79</sup>. The link was emphasised by the

- 80 B.M. 9/2/28 and S.M.C. Oct. 1928.
- 81 S.M.C. Oct. 1928. A tree was planted in each corner, representing seven governors (S.W.), seven old boys (S.E.), seven staff (N.E.) and seven present boys (N.W.). Four central trees were planted by the Acting Chairman (Pennington), the architect (Fleming), the Administrator and Mr. Hunt Holley (who presented the trees). Four others were planted by Dr. Loram (for the Natal Education Department), Mr. Falcon (Hilton), Lady Leuchars and Maj. Richards.
- 82 B.M. 11/11/26 and B.M. 3/2/27 and S.M.C. Oct. 1927.
- 83 S.M.C. Oct. 1928.
- 84 S.M.C. Oct. 1927.
- 85 S.M.C. Oct. 1928.
- 86 S.M.C. June 1929 and B.M. 29/8/29.
- 87 S.M.C. June 1929.
- 88 S.M.C. Dec. 1929.
- 89 S.M.C. May 1928 and Oct. 1928.
- 90 S.M.C. Dec. 1929. House matches were also played.

fact that the quadrangle was paved at the same time and a fountain, a gift of the Old Boys, was set in the middle and dedicated to the memory of Todd at a ceremony at Michaelmas marking the completion of the project<sup>80</sup>.

The starkness of Todd's bastion was rapidly being softened into something resembling a chateau. The quad was not only complete and its alternately muddy and dusty uneven surface transformed by paving, but its lines were softened by trees planted to associate staff and governors, old boys and the present generation, the Natal Education Department and Hilton<sup>81</sup>. The grounds were also becoming transformed, thanks to Archdeacon Pennington, who prepared the initial plans before Bushell's arrival and took a great interest in their execution<sup>82</sup>, and to Mr Hunt Holley, who provided expert knowledge and help for the newly appointed and energetic Estates Manager, J. Aitken<sup>83</sup>. In front of the school the gardens began to take shape<sup>84</sup>; the road from the station was transformed into Warriors' Avenue by the planting of cypresses on Armistice Day 1927<sup>85</sup>, which, however, had a struggle against the clay soil and were eventually replaced by pin oaks; and poplars were planted as a grand avenue on the south side of the hockey fields and as a future source of revenue near the old clay pits<sup>86</sup>. The entrance was further improved and the sports facilities increased substantially by the creation of three new hockey fields (subsequently called Meadows and Tarpeys), and four house practice pitches<sup>87</sup>; and at the other end of the grounds, another - and, as it turned out, successful - attempt was made to grass the oval<sup>88</sup>.

#### SPORT

Bushell was concerned to diversify the sporting activities at Michaelhouse and the policy, of course, required changes in the grounds. Hockey was introduced in 1928<sup>89</sup> and the following year the first XI was bold enough to play three matches<sup>90</sup>. Athletics enjoyed a revival, centred on Meadows, and Michaelhouse won the inter-schools match for the first time in 1929 with a narrow win

- 91 S.M.C. Dec. 1929. It is noted in the report that athletics had 'new grounds', which were Meadows.
- 92 School Memories, p.167. He mentions that he 'introduced' the runs.
- 93 Rector's Report, B.M. 26/2/29.
- 94 S.M.C. Oct. 1928.
- 95 S.M.C. Dec. 1929.
- 96 A note from Bushell attached to B.M. 3/10/29 mentions a 'private donor' for one court and 'the shop' as the donor of the other. Hannah's report (Acting Rector's Report), B.M. 17/3/30 mentions Bushell as donor.
- 97 S.M.C. May 1928.
- 98 S.M.C. Oct. 1929.
- 99 S.M.C. Oct. 1927.
- 100 Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28.
- 101 S.M.C. Dec. 1929: C.J. Crowe, R.G. Armstrong, N. McKenzie, C. Hallows and W. Elliott.
- 102 The school won 2 out of 12 matches in 1927 (S.M.C. Oct. 1927); 10 out of 14 (7 out of 9 school matches) in 1928 (S.M.C. Oct. 1928); and 7 out of 15 (5 out of 8 school matches) in 1929 (S.M.C. Dec. 1929).
- 103 The report is quoted in S.M.C. Oct. 1928.
- 104 Melville was captain 1939 and 1947-51; Harvey was a Springbok in 1936; and Payn was a Springbok in 1947.
- 105 S.M.C. June 1929. Harvey scored 1279 and Melville 1031.



over Durban High School, S.M. Hallows contributing substantially by winning both the mile and the half mile in record times (4min 35.4sec and 2min 1.2sec respectively)<sup>91</sup>. Bushell also re-introduced cross-country runs, occasionally joining in himself, like Todd before him, and he gave them the name 'Rampart Run'<sup>92</sup>. Tuition in boxing was provided for a time, but the difficulty of obtaining a suitable instructor to come up to the school proved too great for the continuation of the experiment<sup>93</sup>. Tennis, on the other hand, with four courts now, gained in popularity<sup>94</sup> and in 1929 the school won a match against St Andrew's<sup>95</sup>. One sport - squash - owes a double debt to Bushell for he not only encouraged it but provided the funds for one of the two courts, the other being provided by funds from the tuck shop<sup>96</sup> which he had recently started<sup>97</sup>. Cadets too, with Barnard in charge, became a little less stereotyped, with a field day each quarter and a camp with Maritzburg College<sup>98</sup> in 1929; and an improved rifle range was constructed which provided for a moving target<sup>99</sup>; but drill (now changed to infantry drill) was still the staple diet<sup>100</sup>, as it seems fated to remain in South African schools.

In spite of the innovations, rugby and cricket remained the central sporting activities. In rugby, although Old Boys were doing well in provincial contests, with five playing for Natal in 1929<sup>101</sup>, the school's record was unspectacular<sup>102</sup>. The 1928 team could, however, apparently claim to be pioneers in a sense, for a reporter of the Natal Mercury, commenting on the match between Durban High School and Michaelhouse, disapproved strongly of the system of packing 3-4-1 used by Michaelhouse, although he had the grace to comment favourably on the low packing of the two teams<sup>103</sup>.

For cricket, it was a golden age, with Herby Taylor still leading the Springboks and with a future Springbok captain - Alan Melville - leading the school team<sup>104</sup>. Indeed, the 1928-29 team contained three future Springboks: Melville, Bob Harvey and Les Payn, and in that year both Harvey and Melville scored over 1,000 runs in the season<sup>105</sup> and Melville was chosen to play for Natal in

- 106 S.M.C. June 1929.
- 107 S.M.C. April 1927.
- 108 S.M.C. May 1928.
- 109 S.M.C. June 1929.
- 110 S.M.C. Dec. 1929.
- 111 As against 15 matches played by the 1st XV in 1929, the 2nd played 9, the 3rd played 6 and Bunnies played 6 (S.M.C. Dec. 1929). As against 23 matches played by the 1st XI in 1928/9, the 2nd played 8, the 3rd played 3 and the Bunnies played 6 (S.M.C. June 1929).
- 112 S.M.C. Oct. 1927 and May 1928; and Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28.
- 113 S.M.C. May 1928 and Dec. 1929; and Rector's note attached to B.M. 3/10/29.
- 114 S.M.C. June 1929; Rector's note attached to B.M. 3/10/29 and Hannah's Typescript. The donation was anonymous in Bushell's note, but Hannah gives the credit to Miss Bushell.
- 115 S.M.C. May 1928.
- 116 Ibid.
- 117 S.M.C. Dec. 1929.
- 118 S.M.C. May 1928.

a team which contained two Old Boys: L. Trotter and A.F. Borland<sup>106</sup>. Melville's record was altogether remarkable: in 1926/7 he took over a hundred wickets and topped the batting averages<sup>107</sup>; in the next season he scored over 1,000 runs<sup>108</sup>; and in his final year he scored over 1,000 runs, nearly repeated his 1926/7 bowling achievement, taking 90 wickets, and was selected for Natal<sup>109</sup>; in addition, he was senior prefect, captain of cricket, tennis and hockey and sergeant-major in the cadets<sup>110</sup>.

The members of the first fifteen and first eleven were no doubt the heroes of Michaelhouse society and their exploits continued to enjoy the lion's share of the Chronicle, but the organisation for lesser mortals' contests was becoming more elaborate: second, third and 'Bunnies' teams feature each year instead of spasmodically, though none of them had regular weekly matches against other schools; and house matches provided an element of keen competition for a large number of boys<sup>111</sup>.

#### EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Other recognised activities remained minimal but enjoyed increasing support. The Natural History Society, stimulated by K.M. Pennington and with a more firmly established museum, made particular use of a substantial collection of lepidoptera<sup>112</sup>. And Bushell's sister, Miss Bushell, gave enthusiastic and practical support to the cause of music, not only organising concerts with the help of a school orchestra of a dozen boys<sup>113</sup> but donating a new music room<sup>114</sup>. Meanwhile, in spite of the departure of Bishop, theatricals continued to provide entertainment, the boys rising to Pinero's The Magistrate on one occasion<sup>115</sup> and being suitably impressed by a visit of Sybil Thorndyke<sup>116</sup>, though most of the productions were one act plays (Thread o' Scarlet made one of its many appearances at Michaelhouse in 1929<sup>117</sup>) and variety shows.

#### THE CONTRAST

Indeed, with the exception of 'an ingenious bioscope exhibition'<sup>118</sup> and some addition to the variety of sport, the

- 119 In his report for July 1928 (Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28), Bushell drew a distinction between 'outward discipline', which he regarded as satisfactory, and 'inward discipline', which he regarded as 'far from ideal'. He had, moreover, worked in a school, Gresham's, where there had been no written rules (School Memories, p.93). A wide variety of opinions is expressed by Old Boys on Bushell's effectiveness.
- 120 Natal Diocesan College Letter Book 18/12/1928 - 18/9/1932. A letter dated 28/6/29 gives the terms of the resolution instructing the Rector 'to dispense with the services of Miss Chase'. A letter from the Secretary of the Board dated 16/9/29 refers to Bushell's letter of resignation dated 30/6/29. B.M. 29/8/29 reports the acceptance of the resignation.
- 121 B.M. 26/2/29 and B.M. 20/6/29; Natal Diocesan College Letter Book, letter 28/6/29. Bushell proposed that the school should have a resident doctor.
- 122 Two special Board Meetings were held (B.M. 22/3/28 and B.M. 14/5/28). Neither gives the exact cause of the dispute, but the first records a Committee report on the interpretation of the contract and the second refers to correspondence between F.S. Tatham and Bushell and to 'imputations' which were withdrawn.

entertainments and activities of the boys were, on the surface, not very different from those of the first years of the century, and it is easy to understand that the boys themselves felt that the school was much the same as it had ever been.

The same: except, perhaps, for the eccentricities of a Rector whose attitude to discipline seemed out of tune with Michaelhouse's tradition. The contrast was great between Pascoe's dignified aloofness and Bushell's enthusiastic involvement, between a tradition that expected discipline to develop from obedience to set rules and a leader who averred that 'inward discipline' is shown in 'obeying to the maximum because (the boy) wants to, not in obeying to the minimum because he has to'<sup>119</sup>. It was a contrast which no doubt diminished the prestige of Bushell in the eyes of some senior boys; but it was also symptomatic of the changes which were making it possible for Michaelhouse to adapt to changing conditions and to reflect some moderately advanced views on education. But Bushell did not see the adaptation itself take place, for he wrote a letter of resignation in June 1929 and it was accepted by the Bishop<sup>120</sup>.

#### RESIGNATION

The immediate issue was a difference between Bushell and the governors over the supervision of the sanatorium, which was then the responsibility of the matron, who was not a qualified nurse. Proposals and counter-proposals were made about the care of the boys' health and eventually the governors instructed the Rector 'to dispense with the services' of the matron, an instruction which Bushell interpreted as improper interference in his sphere of authority<sup>121</sup>.

The previous year there had been a serious difference of opinion between Bushell and at least some members of the Board of Governors about the interpretation of the Rector's contract, including such matters as the extent of the proposed expansion of the school and the promise to provide a proper Rector's house; but, although feelings ran high, the dispute was satisfactorily settled<sup>122</sup>. Indeed, in general, the governors responded generously

- 123 The Board Minutes and the Rector's Reports for the period as a whole reflect these attitudes and so does a letter from Bushell to me. An illustration of Bushell's impetuosity was a request to use one of the master's houses for extra boys (Rector's Report, B.M. 3/10/29) not long after he had complained that lack of married quarters contributed to staff difficulties (Rector's Report, B.M. 26/2/29). The warmth of the letter of thanks from the Governors to Bushell is an indication of the appreciation of his contribution (Natal Diocesan College Letter Book, letter 18/12/29; and they were unanimous in generously allowing him to leave Michaelhouse early to enable him to be present in England for interviews for a new appointment (B.H. 13/12/29).
- 124 Hannah remarks on Bushell's loneliness (Hannah's Typescript); Bushell's active participation in activities outside the school both before and after his Michaelhouse rectorship, his continued activity after retirement and the observations of several people in Birkenhead who knew him, are indications of his need to fulfil himself in activities additional to those of a headmaster.
- 125 School Memories, pp.171-194, especially pp.172-173.
- 126 These are personal impressions.
- 127 B.M. 9/2/28.
- 128 S.M.C. Dec. 1930.
- 129 Natal Diocesan College Letter Book, letter 9/1/31.

to Bushell's plans and appreciated the energy and vision which sometimes led him to impulsive proposals or impatient reactions; and Bushell, for his part, recognised that much of the conservatism of the governors was a reflection of their deep concern for the school and of their anxiety over finances<sup>123</sup>.

On the other hand, Bushell was a sociable man and possessed a spirit for which school administration alone was not sufficient; and, although communication was easier than it had been, Michaelhouse was a somewhat lonely place for him, much as he enjoyed the rugged beauty of the country<sup>124</sup>. One cannot help feeling, too, that he had made his major contribution to the school: that it was for someone else more familiar with the South African ethos to make the most of the opportunities he had done so much to create and to cope with the difficulties which some of his decisions were bound to lead to (a serious overweighting of the lower school, for instance).

At all events he left in December 1929 and was shortly afterwards appointed to be headmaster of Birkenhead, where he remained for sixteen years until he retired in 1946, a period in which the school developed from a rather small independent one, chiefly of day boys, to a well-established direct grant school<sup>125</sup>. Twenty years later, in an expansive house set in a grandly wild garden, Bushell's active mind is still concerned about education and skips from the present to the past and back again, illustrating a point here and there by reference to one of the innumerable mementoes of half a century of schoolmastering, in which his Michaelhouse rectorship was but one of many responsibilities<sup>126</sup>.

#### THE BOARD : BAINES AND TATHAM

For Michaelhouse, however, his rectorship was crucial not only because of his own policies but because it almost exactly coincided with the last direct associations with the foundation of the school: in 1928 Bishop Baines retired<sup>129</sup>; after six months as acting rector, Hannah resigned in 1930; and in 1931 F.S. Tatham ceased to be an active member of the Board of Governors<sup>129</sup>.

- 130 B.M. 2/4/00. J. Freeman was killed in an accident in 1904 (B.M. 18/10/05). H.C. Shepstone resigned in 1910 (B.M. 7/7/10).
- 131 B.M. 13/3/03, B.M. 18/1/22 and B.M. 27/2/23. Beaumont acted as chairman on two occasions in the absence of Bishop Baines (B.M. 31/1/05 and B.M. 9/5/16).
- 132 E.H. Brookes and C.de B. Webb: A History of Natal, p.267.
- 133 B.M. 7/7/10 and B.M. 20/2/24.
- 134 B.M. 14/8/13. In 1931, Butcher was asked to be Deputy Chairman, but decline (B.M. 28/6/31).
- 135 B.M. 13/8/23.
- 136 Pennington was appointed a member in 1925 (B.M. 12/2/25) and acted as chairman once in 1928 (B.M. 30/8/23).
- 137 Greene was chairman of most meetings in 1901 (6 out of 11, Todd chairing the first two and Bishop Baines the last three) and acted as chairman twice in Bishop Baines's absence in 1904 and 1905o(B.M. 5/2/01 to 11/11/01 and B.M. 19/8/04 and B.M. 17/5/05). He did not formally resign until 1919 (B.M. 24/1/19) but, although he formally assented to the change in the Trust Deed in 1910 (B.M. 21/11/10 and B.M. 22/11/10), the last meeting which he attended was in 1908 (B.M. 17/7/08).
- 138 See Ch.5, p.58.
- 139 The opinions expressed here are based on conversations with some who knew one or both men, notably the late A.T. Tatham, W.F. Bushell, R.F. Currey, and K.M. Pennington; also on Hannah's Typescript and a brief note from W. Whittaker, Secretary to the Board of Governors in Pascoe's time.
- 140 Bishop Baines attended 96 out of 105 meetings from the time he sat as Chairman in 1901; and F.S. Tatham attended 89 out of 113 held between the end of 1901 and his nomination of his son as his representative thirty years later, and eight of his absences were in 1916/17, when he was on active service. See Board Minutes for the period.



In the period to 1930 there had been many men who devoted considerable energy to shaping the traditions of Michaelhouse through membership of the Board of Governors: J. Freeman and H.C. Shepstone, who, with F.S. Tatham, sat under Todd at the first recorded committee meeting and thus helped to establish the school as a permanent institution<sup>130</sup>; Sir William Beaumont (a judge) and Archdeacon Vyvyan, the first appointments to the Board (in 1903) from outside the original group of supporters and who remained members for twenty and nineteen years respectively<sup>131</sup>; Sir George Leuchars, for a time a member of Botha's cabinet<sup>132</sup>, who was a generous and vigorous governor from 1910 until his death in 1924<sup>133</sup>; H.J. Butcher, a generous businessman, elected in 1913 and one of the most influential members of the Board by 1930<sup>134</sup>; J.J.L. Sisson, the first Old Boy to be appointed (in 1923)<sup>135</sup>; Archdeacon Pennington who, as Vicar-General acted as chairman between the retirement of Bishop Baines and the installation of Bishop Fisher<sup>136</sup>; and others, whose support was no less valuable for being unspectacular. But Bishop Baines, F.S. Tatham and E.M. Greene (until his withdrawal after 1909) were undoubtedly the central figures<sup>137</sup>.

That Bishop Baines and F.S. Tatham, either individually or together, took the initiative in crucial decisions has already been indicated, most notably when the fate of the school was doubtful after the resignation of Hugh-Jones<sup>138</sup>. Their personalities were complementary: the Bishop was diplomatic, friendly and discreet; Tatham was sometimes impulsive in his expression of opinions, but warm in his relations with colleagues and - for all that he became a judge - no great stickler for legal niceties<sup>139</sup>. It is difficult to determine how far decisions of the Board reflected the ideas of these two men, but they were both assiduous in their attendance at meetings<sup>140</sup> and both were bound to enjoy considerable influence by virtue of their long service to the school. In addition, the Bishop had the prestige of his episcopal office and the responsibilities of the chairmanship to add weight to his opinions; and a number of the

- 141 C. Tatham was a brother, L.M. Christopher and Sir George Leuchars were relations by marriage.
- 142 The difficulties rarely became so formal as to be reflected in the Minutes of the Board, but there is evidence from each of the rectorships except Brown's; the issue of the piano in Todd's time (Ch. 3 pp. . . . and notes 66-69); the question of sport on Sundays in Hugh-Jones's time (Ch.5 note 99); the suggestion by a member of the Board that Pascoe should discharge Adair (Ch.4 p.39 and note 26); and the question of the matron's position under Bushell (Ch.7 p.102 and note 120). In addition, Bushell in a note to m mentions opposition from some governors to his allowing bicycles to be brought to school.
- 143 They would clearly have liked Pascoe to expand more rapidly; they became somewhat alarmed at Bushell's proposals (B.M. 26/2/29).

members of the Board were relations or kinsmen of F.S. Tatham<sup>141</sup>. But above all they both were deeply committed to the welfare of Michaelhouse and would almost have been justified in regarding it as in a sense theirs.

The personal interest of the governors was something to which the school was greatly indebted, but the very depth of this interest, coupled with the perpetual financial responsibilities, meant that there were sometimes difficulties of adjustment to make between the Rector and the Board<sup>142</sup>. The responsibility to determine the size of the school was also clear, though a difference between them and the Rector on this was likely to be a source of tension<sup>143</sup>. But the rectors clearly considered that what went on in the school and whether particular members of staff should be appointed or retained should be left to their own final decision, though they no doubt valued the interest and advice of the Board as a whole or of individual governors.

With Bushell's rectorship, however, there were likely to be additional difficulties in accommodating the attitudes of the two 'authorities'. Michaelhouse had developed a distinctive ethos and had gained a recognisable prestige which the governors not unnaturally greatly valued, especially if they had been members long enough to have participated in the early vicissitudes of the school. Bushell, on the other hand, was determined to try and provide valuable characteristics which - in spite of its merits in other respects - he felt Michaelhouse lacked. To some of the governors, an innovation (like permission to bring bicycles to the school) or a difference of policy (on the rate of growth or the supervision of the sanatorium) could appear as a serious threat to the hard-won stability of the school, and the fact that some had substantial reasons for regarding the school as 'theirs' made Bushell's task especially difficult.

What, perhaps, was happening, was that Michaelhouse was making a second adjustment to being a 'public school': having become 'public'

144 B.M. 17/3/30.

145 Ch.2 p.17.

146 In this and the subsequent paragraphs, I have drawn substantially on the comments of Bushell and C.M. Melville, both of whom were not uncritical admirers of Hannah and both of whom had particularly close associations with him: Hannah was not only a loyal supporter of Bushell as Rector, but subsequently married his widowed sister, Mrs. Hyslop; and Hannah was a generous helper of Melville's brother, Alan. But many Old Boys and members of staff - notably P.D. Barnard in the latter group - refer in varying terms to his affection for the school.

under a board of governors subject to a Trust Deed, the Board, especially at the end of the 'twenties and the beginning of the 'thirties, was becoming much less a group of men linked by individual ties to the school and much more a group whose links with the school were general rather than particularised; or, to put it another way, the school having already become an 'institution', the Board was in the process of becoming one. Bishop Baines (who resigned as a Trustee of the school only at the beginning of 1930, the responsibility in future being vested in the Bishop of Natal and his successors<sup>144</sup>), and F.S. Tatham were the two men whose retirement from the Board most clearly reflected the change, but the process was, of course, a gradual one.

C.W.HANNAH

The resignation of Charles Walton Hannah from the staff after six months as acting rector had a different significance, for, although he had been associated with the school almost from the beginning<sup>145</sup>, he had not been responsible for major policy decisions. To be precise about his significance in the school's history is extraordinarily difficult, partly because the myth of early Michaelhouse (the interpretation of its essential qualities) is largely his creation. This is not to say that he deliberately distorted the history of Michaelhouse in his typescript reminiscences or in his conversations with boys and Old Boys; still less that he inflated his own share in the development of Michaelhouse (his typescript is notably modest). But he was proud of being one of Todd's early recruits and retained an idealism about Michaelhouse which Todd had inspired in him; and there was no interest which absorbed him so much as the welfare of Michaelhouse. When he spoke of Michaelhouse, therefore, he could not speak with detachment but only in terms of ideals which he felt the school had achieved or should achieve; and to create a myth in this way is to contribute substantially to the growth of an institution's roots<sup>146</sup>.

Hannah achieved this in spite of the fact that his direct

- 147 Bushell, in conversation. Hannah was 53 on retirement (Letter from Hannah in Miscellaneous File, dated 12/11/30.)
- 148 Letter from T.C. Lloyd.

service to Michaelhouse as a master was intermittent. He had won a scholarship to Eton, but a breakdown in health prevented his spending more than a few days there and he obtained his degree at Oxford by keeping terms periodically, in the manner of Rhodes; his own education had therefore been somewhat unconventional for the late nineteenth century. He sought better health in the colonies, sheep-farming for a time in New Zealand before coming to Natal. Apparently because he was running short of money, the Bishop (Baynes) put him in touch with Todd and as a result he joined the staff of Michaelhouse in 1898 at the age of twenty-one<sup>147</sup>. Although he returned to England several times on account of his health during Todd's rectorship, he remained a member of the staff until 1905, when he left, chiefly, it seems, because he felt unable to work under Hugh-Jones, and, after a period at Cedara Agricultural College, went farming himself. He returned again shortly before Brown's arrival and, though he does not seem to have been a permanent member of the staff until 1924, he served for at least part of most years, the largest gap being 1914-16. He seems to have taught the staple subjects: Latin to junior forms, Arithmetic and Literature; but on at least one occasion he lectured in philology to a post-matric class in the first World War<sup>148</sup>.

He is remembered most, however, for his interest in cricket, for the influence he exerted on individual boys and for the hospitality which he offered to Old Boys in his retirement in Sussex, in a house which had belonged to his father, the Dean of Chichester. Though he did not always coach cricket, even when he was a member of the staff, and was not a distinguished practitioner of the art - apart from an effective but curious bowling action - nevertheless he valued cricket highly for the quality of sportsmanship he believed it engendered, and he encouraged the boys to view it thus. Moreover it was he who usually organised the often elaborate tours of the first team; and the oval was largely his creation. The easy relationship he was able to establish with cricketers extended

- 149 I. Fraser, a Maritzburg College boy of the period about the first World War has mentioned this.
- 150 The tone of his appreciation of both Pascoe and Bushell is one indication of this. (Hannah's Typescript.)
- 151 B.M. 11/11/26 and B.M. 3/2/27. The suggestion (for central heating) was made by a governor, Christopher, and the general idea was supported by Pascoe.
- 152 B.M. 13/12/29.
- 153 Ibid. Among the other applicants was K.M. Pennington.
- 154 S.M.C. May 1930.
- 155 B.M. 17/3/30.



beyond Michaelhouse boys<sup>149</sup> and at least sometimes extended to boys who were not distinguished for their sporting ability: and he certainly did not regard sporting success as the main criterion for a school or an individual<sup>150</sup>. Nor was he, in spite of his long association with the school, a rigid conservative: Bushell, indeed, found him the easiest and most co-operative of his colleagues in the changes he introduced, whether it was to allow fires in the classrooms (a suggestion, incidentally, which Pascoe supported<sup>151</sup>, but which some of Bushell's colleagues regarded as an erosion of the tough spirit in the school) or the establishment of the house system. On the other hand, even those who admired him most found his incessant talking a trying background in the commonroom, however much they valued the qualities epitomised in the phrase (significant because it comes from an Afrikaner colleague): 'a grand English gentleman'.

When Bushell's resignation was accepted, Hannah was asked if he would accept appointment as Acting Rector, pending the appointment of Bushell's successor<sup>152</sup>. He was, not unexpectedly, one of the applicants for the permanent appointment, but, out of a field of thirteen (the largest number the Governors had had to choose from), R.F. Currey was chosen 'without dissent'<sup>153</sup>. Since Currey was not able to take up the rectorship until July 1930, Hannah continued to act for six months, making some important appointments but otherwise not, of course, in a position to initiate policy. (However, he introduced the helpful initiation practice of having each new boy attached to a 'mentor' - a second year boy responsible for showing him the ropes and taking responsibility for him<sup>154</sup>.)

But in the meantime, he tendered his resignation from the staff<sup>155</sup>, and no doubt it was a wise though sad decision for him to make: his own explanation was that 'I was firmly convinced that it was to the interest of the school that I should do so, in order that the new Rector should have a fair field to work in, unhampered by one, who had perhaps already been too long connected with the

- 156 Letter from Hannah dated 12/11/30, attached to B.M. 27/2/31.
- 157 B.M. 14/8/30.
- 158 S.M.C. 1946.
- 159 Rector's Report, Nov. 1938.
- 160 S.M.C. June 1929.
- 161 B.M. 27/8/32. There is a strong probability that the suggestion of honouring Hannah in some way sprang from Currey. for in B.M. 14/8/30 there is a reference to a recommendation from the Rector (Currey) concerning Hannah, discussion then being deferred.

school.<sup>156</sup> The Governors passed a lengthy resolution in appreciation of his services and directed that a copy should be 'engrossed and sent to Mr Hannah'<sup>157</sup>. That his interest in the school was real and continued was exemplified in the moving terms in which he preached the sermon at the jubilee celebrations of Michaelhouse sixteen years later<sup>158</sup> and by the fact that Currey took the trouble to introduce Snell to him when the latter was appointed Rector<sup>159</sup>. It is very doubtful, however, whether he could have disengaged himself sufficiently from his very personal identification with Michaelhouse to make the most of the opportunities which Bushell's brief rectorship helped to create.

In 1932 a new honour was instituted at Michaelhouse - Bushell had already initiated the ceremony of 'Ad Portas', adapting a Winchester custom<sup>160</sup>. The Governors now resolved that they 'may from time to time elect as Associate Fellows of Michaelhouse men who in the past have rendered special and distinguished service and have severed their active connection with the school'. Bishop Frederick Samuel Baines, the Hon. Frederic Spence Tatham and Charles Walton Hannah were at the same meeting elected the first three Associate Fellows<sup>161</sup>. The resolutions formally marked the end of an era.



CHAPTER 8CURREY : PLANNED DEVELOPMENTCONTRASTS IN EXPERIENCE

In the world outside Michaelhouse, the nineteen thirties witnessed a shaking of the foundations of civilization's comfortable security. Economic depression flustered the self-assurance of the well to do and degraded the poor, so that many demanded a more active participation by the state in the lives of its citizens - either to protect them against arbitrary inequalities and the devastating helplessness of enforced unemployment or to protect the traditional stratification of society. The League of Nations became steadily less capable of shoring up the international framework erected by the Peace of Versailles: Japan and Manchuria; Italy and Abyssinia; Germany and the Sudetenland - all these aroused passions and resentment and, eventually, a growing and general disillusionment. Meanwhile the agony of Spain's Civil War and the mounting ambition and crude racialism of Hitler threw fundamental moral issues into relief. Among writers, the poets especially - like Auden and Lewis - seemed to reflect most sensitively the involvement of all in the shaking of one wing of society's superstructure.

Against this background, the history of Michaelhouse is, astonishingly, one of almost straightforward development. A glance at the increase in numbers, at the development of buildings, at the unruffled minutes of the Board of Governors or at the growing diversification of activities reflected in the Chronicle, would suggest that Michaelhouse was untouched by all these great changes. But it would be only a superficial glance which would suggest this: it is part of the truth, for Michaelhouse did, indeed, go from strength to strength during the period; but it is only a part, for Michaelhouse was aware of the world beyond Balgowan. And for both parts of the truth a great deal of the credit must inevitably go to

1 B.M., 16/2/33.

2 St. Andrew's College; p.122, 129-131, 138, 142. There were 254 after the first World War; in 1933 there were 184 boarders.

3a There was a rise in the number of boys in government and government-aided schools in Stds VII-X from 1930(1,598) to 1933 (2,097); then a drop in 1934 (1,999) and again a rise to 2,308 in 1938.

b Boarding Establishments were (and are) more expensive than Hostels, and it appears that the boys' schools had most vacancies, for there was pressure to provide more accommodation at the Boarding Establishment at Girls' High School, Pietermaritzburg.

c That numbers were much the same in 1938 as in 1930 at Durban High School (584 and 609 respectively) and at Maritzburg College (333 and 321 respectively) would be unremarkable except for the fact that the numbers rose considerably early in this period - to 679 at D.H.S. and to 366 at College in 1932 - which suggests that the schools could have accommodated more if there had been pressure for them to do so in the later years, when Michaelhouse was expanding rapidly.

d See Province of Natal, Reports of the Superintendent of Education for the relevant years, 1938 and 1939 being published together. For numbers in schools: 1930 p.69; 1931 p.55; 1932 p.75; 1933 p.76; 1934 p.4 and p.83; 1935 p.93; 1936 p.81; 1937 p.94; 1938 and 1939 p.4 and p.105. For numbers in Boarding Establishments: 1930 pp.7-8; 1931 p.8; 1932 p.4 and p.59 (and 1933 Report, p.4, which points out an error); 1933 p.61; 1934 p.69; 1935 p.79; 1936 p.67; 1937 p.4 and p.79; 1938 p.89. For numbers at D.H.S. and College: 1930 p.76; 1931 p.62; 1932 p.62; 1933 p.64; 1935 p.82; 1936 p.70; 1937 p.82; 1938 and 1939 p.92.

4 Who's Who 1966; and a letter from R.F. Currey.

5 St. Andrew's College; p.164 (the Postscript, which is not written by Currey).

6 Ibid., pp.164-5.

the Rector, who not only made full use of the expansive atmosphere made possible by his predecessor but substantially added to the academic foundations and material superstructure of Michaelhouse.

Some other South African schools, by contrast, felt the cold economic winds keenly: Hilton felt constrained to reduce the fees in 1933<sup>1</sup>; at St Andrew's, hit particularly by the drop in the price of wool, numbers dropped seriously and, in spite of a temporary recovery, were almost exactly the same (at 256) in 1939 as they had been immediately after the first World War<sup>2</sup>; and at government and government aided schools, although there was a 44% increase in the number of boys enrolled in post-primary classes over the period 1930-1938, there was throughout the period a number of vacancies in the Boarding Establishments, which called for special comment in 1930 and 1932; and numbers at Durban High School and College were almost the same in 1938 as they had been in 1930<sup>3</sup>.

#### CURREY

The appointment of Ronald Fairbridge Currey was a notable departure from Michaelhouse tradition, for he was a South African, steeped in the Cape tradition: one who brought to Michaelhouse experience which made a critical appraisal of South Africa's educational needs the more valuable and traditions which could enrich those of a school essentially Natalian in spirit. Through both sides of his family he was linked with the political development of the Cape and the pioneering development of Southern Africa, his father being Private Secretary to Rhodes for many years and his mother's family (Fairbridge) being noted pioneers in Rhodesia<sup>4</sup>. He was educated at St Andrew's (where he matriculated in 1910, coming second in South Africa to Dr Basil Schonland) and at Rhodes University College<sup>5</sup>. Thence he went to Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship, though his course was interrupted by service in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders and in the Black Watch, in whose company he won the Military Cross and a Bar to the Military Cross<sup>6</sup>. His Oxford period was remarkable not only because he was awarded

- 7 Ibid., p.165 and A. Paton: Hofmeyr; O.U.P.; 1964; p.32 and 42.
- 8 St. Andrew's College; p.164 and Currey's Manuscript, which gives the name of his partner.
- 9 Currey's Manuscript.
- 10 Currey did not see an advertisement, but the number of candidates (13) considered by the Board indicates that there was one. B.M. 13/12/29.
- 11 Currey's Manuscript.
- 12 B.M. 14/8/30. These are the numbers for February 1930; they had dropped to 195 by July.
- 13 Acting Rector's Report, B.M. 14/8/30.
- 14 Currey's Manuscript.
- 15 Natal Diocesan College Letter Book 18/12/28 - 28/1/32, letter 31/3/31.



his degree (in 'Greates') 'with distinction', but because it overlapped with the career of J.H. Hofmeyr<sup>7</sup>. Thereafter he taught for a time at Rugby, then for five years at St Andrew's before starting, with G. Nicolson, the Ridge Preparatory School in Johannesburg<sup>8</sup>.

He had hardly started on the venture when the Governors sent Hannah to ask him to be acting rector during the period between Pascoe's retirement and Bushell's arrival in 1927, an invitation which he had to decline<sup>9</sup>. By the time Bushell resigned, however, 'The Ridge' was firmly established and his partner was about to marry, so that Currey was able to respond to an 'unofficial feeler', as a result of which he was selected as Rector<sup>10</sup>. A short visit in December convinced him that the school's foundations were sound and in July 1930, he took up office with time to get his bearings during the school holidays<sup>11</sup>.

#### GROUNDS AND BUILDINGS IN 1930

It was still a small school of 202 boys<sup>12</sup>, housed for the most part compactly in a single quad, but with a miscellany of wood-and-iron scattered round about serving various purposes from music rooms to single quarters for staff. At the western edge of the school property, the Oval had just been grassed, but the other fields were either levelled red earth (for cricket) or plain sloping veld (for rugby); and, apart from a few deodahs and the poplars and the struggling Warriors' Avenue, such trees as there were were gums or wattles. The quarters for Indians and for Africans were the subject of severe criticism in Hannah's last report<sup>13</sup> - the latter, indeed, were the hovels used by the builders thirty years earlier<sup>14</sup>. And the few houses for married men were, with the exception of K.M. Pennington's, dispersed about the eastern half of the property, one of them (Byrne's) encroaching on Jaffray's land at the back of the school - as it was discovered when a contour plan was drawn early in 1931<sup>15</sup>.

Especially in a time of expansion, the satisfaction of urgent

- 16 Both Currey and Snell paid tribute to his work in conversation with me.
- 17 Miscellaneous File Letter 7/10/30. Authority to level the grounds had already been given (B.M. 14/8/30). The amount granted was £500 (Rector's Report, B.M. 27/2/31).
- 18 S.M.C. May 1931.
- 19 Currey's Manuscript.
- 20 The fields were first named in 1933 (S.M.C. May 1933).
- 21 S.M.C. May 1931.
- 22 S.M.C. May 1934.
- 23 S.M.C. Dec. 1930 and Dec. 1932 refer to grassing the fields and draining the track; S.M.C. Dec. 1934 refers to a new cinder track, but this did not last long, and the improved 'grass track' is described in S.M.C. May 1937. The events won by Bennett were: 100 yds, 220 yds hurdles, cricket ball, shot and discus.
- 24 S.M.C. June 1935 refers to the colts playing on Punchbowl because the old ground was being levelled; S.M.C. May 1937 refers to the second game using the new Hannah's. Rector's Memorandum, attached to B.M. 23/5/36 refers to the number of turf wickets and summarises the condition of the fields.
- 25 S.M.C. Dec. 1930 and Dec. 1934.
- 26 B.M. 30/8/37 and S.M.C. May 1938.
- 27 S.M.C. Dec. 1937.

needs and the improvement of existing facilities would require careful planning if the site was to become a place of beauty. The future graciousness of the grounds and the intimacy of the central core of buildings was made possible largely by the happy co-operation of the Governors, the Rector and the school's architect, Fleming, during the thirties.

For the first few years it was impossible to contemplate heavy expenditure which would involve additions to the school's debt, but a great deal was nevertheless achieved under the supervision of Aitken, the assiduous estate manager, and Byrne, the woodwork instructor and ever-obliging clerk of works<sup>16</sup>; and though much was paid for out of school or tuck shop profits, the major items were made possible by timely donations.

#### IMPROVEMENTS TO GROUNDS

Very soon after his arrival, Currey approached the Bailey Education Trust for assistance in levelling and grassing the main rugby fields<sup>17</sup> and, with one of the governors (Hunt Holley) as adviser<sup>18</sup> and the novel spectacle of a tractor doing the donkey-work<sup>19</sup>, Bailey's and Aitken's became fine fields<sup>20</sup> - but not before the drought of 1931 had forced the school to use some fields across the railway line while the grass struggled to grow<sup>21</sup>. Another rugby field (Tarpey's) was later levelled and grassed<sup>22</sup> and meanwhile the hockey fields on Meadows were being improved and a 440 yds track was laid out round them. (E. Hudson Bennet distinguished himself at the opening of the latter in 1937 by winning five events, coming second in another and third in yet another<sup>23</sup>.) With the levelling and grassing of the old 'colts' ground, appropriately renamed Hannah's, cricketers now had four turf wickets and all the playing fields had been transformed<sup>24</sup>. Facilities for squash and tennis were also improved: two more squash courts were built through donations from Old Boys in 1930 and 1934<sup>25</sup> and roofing the courts began in 1937<sup>26</sup>; and two more tennis courts were added at about the same time<sup>27</sup>.

These were all improvements rather than innovations, but there

- 28 Currey suggested the appointment of a full time P.T. instructor in 1931 (Rector's Report, B.M. 26/8/31), but the Board required further persuasion and agreed at their next meeting (B.M. 25/2/32). The first appointment was made towards the end of 1932 (S.M.C. Dec. 1932) and the next Chronicle made the comment about the 'innovation' (S.M.C. May 1933). The authorised cost of the gymnasium (£450) is given in B.M. 16/2/33 but Currey assures me that the actual cost was £220. It is worth noting that in 1897 the school had a gym instructor (part-time) as well as a drill instructor. S.M.C. May 1897.
- 29 S.M.C. Dec. 1932 and B.M. 27/8/32 and B.M. 11/5/33. The Rector reported a donation of £314 from the Old Boys' Club (Rector's Report, B.M. 26/8/31), but some doubt was expressed about the validity of the donation and there is another reference to a donation of £381 in B.M. 25/3/33 which the Club was not willing to have diverted to assisting the water supply. The bath was planned in 1931 (S.M.C. Dec. 1931 and B.M. 26/8/31).
- 30 B.M. 31/8/33, B.M. 22/11/33, B.M. 21/2/34 and B.M. 21/8/34; and Miscellaneous File for the negotiations and counsel's opinion. The grant from the Bailey Education Trust was for the Swimming Bath and the water supply (B.M. 11/5/33 and S.M.C. Dec. 1933).
- 31 S.M.C. Dec. 1931 and B.M. 27/8/32 for Fleming's responsibility; S.M.C. Dec. 1931, May 1932 and May 1933 and Rector's Report, B.M. 26/8/33 for the steps taken.
- 32 C.M.M. (Melville) in a valedictory notice in S.M.C. Dec. 1938.
- 33 Ibid.
- 34 The oaks are mentioned in Currey's Manuscript.
- 35 B.M. 28/8/35.
- 36 S.M.C. May 1936.
- 37 S.M.C. May 1933.

were two important additions to the sporting facilities. The first was the erection, by Byrne, of a wood-and-iron gymnasium for £220 for Currey introduced Physical Training as part of the curriculum in 1932, which, according to the Chronicle, 'struck one forcibly as an innovation' but was soon accepted as a valuable element in the school's life<sup>28</sup>. At almost the same time, a swimming bath was built, thanks largely to generous donations of £500 each from Hugh Brown (a Governor and Old Boy) and the Bailey Education Trust<sup>29</sup> but, although this was an almost essential addition, it seriously taxed the school's water supply and precipitated a successful application to the Water Court for additional water rights on a neighbouring farm<sup>30</sup>.

Meanwhile the graciousness of the approach to the school was being ensured by a systematic execution of Fleming's landscape plan<sup>31</sup>, and through the enthusiasm of Mrs Currey<sup>32</sup> and the profits of the tuck shop the terraces in front of the school soon became a source of pride - and though the enjoyment of them was at first restricted to seniors as part of a school boy tradition, they were opened to the whole school before Currey's departure<sup>33</sup>. Elsewhere a variety of trees was planted: an avenue between the school and the oval, for instance; a group of flowering cherries, which became a spectacular show-piece, in the open court created by the addition of a new wing to the main building; and a copse of oaks between the present Rector's Lodge and the swimming bath, sprung from acorns planted in 1931<sup>34</sup>. By 1935, when the 'new' national road past the school was opened<sup>35</sup>, the school looked more invitingly settled and less dauntingly Spartan than perhaps even Todd could have imagined possible, and in the following year the present drive became the main approach to the school<sup>36</sup>, replacing the tortuous link with the Curry's Post road which had run through the station yard, past the 'Arab' store (as it was called) and over the stream by what was formally named Fairfield Bridge<sup>37</sup>.

#### BUILDING ADDITIONS

For the first few years, the school buildings remained substantially the same, though a number of improvements indicated

- 38 Natal Diocesan College Letter Book, letter 14/7/30; and B.M. 14/8/30.
- 39 Rector's Report, B.M. 27/2/31.
- 40 S.M.C. May 1931.
- 41 B.M. 16/2/33; S.M.C. May 1933, May 1934 and Dec. 1934.
- 42 Rector's Report, May 1937.
- 43 At first the addition of a room to the Rector's Lodge was considered in isolation from the rest of the building, and another architect was to be asked to submit plans (B.M. 27/2/31); but when it was realised that it would make a difference to the facade of the school, the decision was made to plan an integrated facade and to employ Fleming for this. (B.M. 26/8/31.)
- 44 B.M. 27/2/31 and S.M.C. May 1932.
- 45 S.M.C. Dec. 1933. The roof was tiled at the same time.
- 46 B.M. 16/2/33 and Rector's Report, B.M. 31/8/33.
- 47 S.M.C. Dec. 1936 and Dec. 1937.
- 48 Rector's Report, Sept. 1936 and S.M.C. May 1936. See also Rector's Report, B.M. 21/2/34.
- 49 S.M.C. May 1934.

that a modicum of comfort was not regarded as incompatible with good learning. It comes as something of a shock to read that hot water (at the cost of £10) was not installed in the Rector's lodge until 1930 - Bushell and his predecessors had had to be content with buckets being carried across the quad from the kitchen<sup>38</sup>; and the boys in Foundation North had this luxury added the following year<sup>39</sup>. The dignity of the hall was enhanced by a donation of two sets of teak tables and benches from H.J. Butcher<sup>40</sup> and by the completion of the teak panelling in 1935, the money for this coming from tuck shop profits<sup>41</sup>. (Another consequence of the boys' healthy appetites and the tuck shop's sound business practices was the improvement of Todd's fountain with the statue of a Boy with a Fish, executed by the Bromsgrove Guild<sup>42</sup>).

A more striking improvement to the appearance of the school was the alteration to the facade, carried out in two stages but planned to be aesthetically complementary<sup>43</sup>. The addition of a room to the Rector's lodge next to the tower<sup>44</sup> gave a uniform line to the eastern facade; and the nearly blind wall of the chemistry laboratory on the west was enlivened by the addition of an oriel window<sup>45</sup> (it had had slits of windows high up suitable for the gymnasium the room was originally intended to be but which defied attempts at cleaning and obstructed ventilation and light)<sup>46</sup>. The oriel window was no doubt unusual for a laboratory, but it was already planned to turn the laboratory into a library, a change which was effected in 1936 and proved the value of having an inviting place for boys to browse<sup>47</sup>.

A spacious library was made possible by the creation of a new chemistry laboratory and lecture theatre which lacked 'adornments' but were essentially practical and replaced temporary dormitories behind the main school<sup>48</sup>, where there was already a geography room, built two years earlier<sup>49</sup> and a miscellany of other buildings. These 'hindquarters' have been swept away in recent years, but they were an integral part of the process of consolidation and were provided at minimum cost: indeed, none of the improvements mentioned thus far

- 50 Rector's Memorandum 'General Development', B.M. 16/2/33.
- 51 B.M. 16/2/33 and B.M. 11/5/33.
- 52 There were 227 at the beginning of the year (Rector's Report, B.M. 31/8/33).
- 53 Rector's Interim Memorandum and B.M. 11/5/33.
- 54 Letter from Fleming attached to B.M. 22/5/36.
- 55 B.M. 21/8/34. Currey was on leave at the time, but the Governors cabled him and were willing to reconsider their decision if he disapproved.
- 56 S.M.C. June 1935.



involved the school in additional debts.

But even with these improvements, the school could not accommodate comfortably many more than 200 boys; and in 1933 - while the depression was still serious - Currey took the wise step of presenting a memorandum on 'General Development', in which he urged a careful determination of policy in respect of the size of the school<sup>50</sup>. Such confidence had he inspired in the Board that they accepted the principle of expansion and at the following meeting of the Board they considered the architect's report on preparing for a school of 350<sup>51</sup> - at the time there were under 230 in the school<sup>52</sup>.

It would have been possible at this stage to plan an entirely separate building, using space lavishly in a not uncommon South African tradition; but in fact the plans seriously discussed assumed an integrated complex of buildings and this principle - which provides the material framework for an integrated but not inflexible society - has been retained in subsequent additions. Fleming initially suggested a westward extension for two houses, preferring to leave the south side for future laboratories; and there was a tentative suggestion for a new hall to form the northern side of the new quad. At the same time, he indicated that, although it would be difficult, the only possible extension of the chapel was eastwards, and he suggested that the Rector's house should be built in front of the old rifle range (i.e. on the western side of the school)<sup>53</sup>. Three years later, Fleming modified his suggestions, preferring to leave the north side of the new quad open and suggesting the addition of another house extending from the south-east corner of the old quad<sup>54</sup>; but the first plan was in fact the blue print for future development, except for the siting of the Rector's house.

The year after the decision in principle to expand, the governors agreed to build a west wing, and a tender for £7,355 was accepted<sup>55</sup>. The wing was completed by Easter 1935<sup>56</sup>, but for the first part of the year there had to be a hasty juggling of accommodation to house the 275 boys, classrooms being used as dormitories, a prefect's room

- 57 Rector's Report, 14/3/35.
- 58 S.M.C. June 1935 and Rector's Report, B.M. 4/6/35.
- 59 The decision to add to the west wing was taken at the end of 1934 (B.M. 9/11/34); the physics laboratory was in use at the beginning of 1936 (Rector's Report 21/2/36) and Farfield were settled shortly afterwards (S.M.C. May 1936).
- 60 Rector's Report, Feb. 1938.
- 61 Rector's Report, Feb. 1938.
- 62 Rector's Report, B.M. 27/2/31; Rector's Report, B.M. 26/8/31 and Rector's Report, B.M. 27/8/32.
- 63 Rector's Report, B.M. 27/8/32 and Currey's Manuscript.
- 64 Rector's Report, B.M. 21/2/34.
- 65 Rector's Report, 24/2/37.
- 66 Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28. Bushell felt that he had only nominal control over the Bursar (who was shortly to retire) and that this accounted for the financial weakness.
- 67 B.M. 29/8/29.

as a classroom and the Rector's lodge and the ladies' wing (then near the kitchen) squeezing in some of the staff<sup>57</sup>. For the first time there was proper provision for a house prefects' room and a house common room; and K.M. Pennington's house, West, moved into the new block, leaving their seven-year old home for the newly created Tatham house<sup>58</sup>. Farfield were still accommodated in scattered quarters, but even before the completion of West, the third side of the new quad was rising and in 1936 the complex was complete and both Farfield and physics were adequately housed - the latter having been cooped in the cellar under the Memorial Hall until then<sup>59</sup>. By 1938, the school was able to accommodate in five houses all but three of the 332 boys (the three exceptions being literally farmed out to Anandale<sup>60</sup>): 120 more than there had been in 1930 and just over twice the 1928 number<sup>61</sup>.

A building programme was made desirable, of course, because of the continued and increasing demand for places. Although the Rector warned the Board in 1931 and 1932 to be on guard against a drop in numbers<sup>62</sup>, there was a steady increase each year, thanks particularly to the Transvaal connection already established before Currey's time and now considerably strengthened<sup>63</sup> - the Rand was more resilient than most areas during the depression. The Rector had, indeed, to refuse 27 applications in 1934<sup>64</sup> and three years later Currey instituted an entrance examination for the 1938 recruits<sup>65</sup>. But only finance could ensure that desire did not far outrun performance.

#### FINANCE

In 1928 Bushell had had to report to the Board that there was a large number of unpaid bills because there was no cash in the bank<sup>66</sup> and the following year the Governors decided to raise the fees by £10 to £120 a year, with effect from 1930<sup>67</sup>. Thanks partly to this and the effect of the depression on prices, but also to careful deployment and supervision of resources by the Rector with the minimum of administrative assistance, the school's finances were transformed - as late as 1937 he had only a secretary (Miss Runciman), a bookkeeper (Miss Deles) a part time typist and the Estate Manager (John Aitken)

- 68 Rector's Memorandum, May 1937. (Filed with Rector's Reports.)
- 69 Houses were built for P.D. Barnard and a workman (B.M. 14/8/30); for the P.T. Instructor (Rector's Memorandum, B.M. 3/8/33) for the Chaplain (S.M.C. Dec. 1934); and Farfield was converted for Melville (B.M. 16/2/33). The heavy capital expenditure involved in the West-Farfield extension delayed further building (B.M. 14/3/35) but three new houses were authorised in 1938 (B.M. 8/6/38).
- 70 B.M. 26/8/31 and B.M. 22/11/33.
- 71 Profits were about £4,000 a year to 1934 and thereafter dropped, though it is not clear by how much. See B.M. for the period.
- 72 B.M. 12/2/20, 24/2/21, 25/5/21 and 26/4/22.
- 73 Natal Diocesan College Letter Book, letter 19/7/30 acknowledges the remission of the debt of £600. See also B.M. 14/8/30.
- 74 For the donation of £500 to the swimming bath, see B.M. 27/8/32 and S.M.C. Dec. 1932. Brown bequeathed £2,500 to the school but crossed the sum out, substituting £500 and indicating that the remainder was to go to St. Anne's. Although the original instruction was legally valid, the Michaelhouse Board of Governors got the Court's permission to donate £2,000 to St. Anne's and planned to use the remaining £500 for improving the library as a memorial to Brown. For some reason this did not happen and eventually the entrance gates to the school were erected to his memory. See B.M. 8/11/35; the legal opinion and the Rector's Report correspondence, B.M. 5/12/35, B.M. 3/2/36 and B.M. 22/5/36; B.M. 1/11/38; and Miscellaneous File ('Brown's Will').
- 75 Miscellaneous File, letter from Bishop Fisher dated 8/7/38 mentions that the dormitories were given by C. James. I have found no other reference to this.
- 76 B.M. 14/3/35 and B.M. 8/11/35.
- 77 B.M. 22/5/36. This and the donations from Mining Companies were in response to personal letters from Currey.
- 78 B.M. 22/5/36. The donations were: Central Mining Finance £250; New Gold Fields £150; Johannesburg Consolidated Investment Corporation £150; Anglo-American £105; Mrs. Dunning £75. At St. Andrew's, a donation of £1,000 from African Explosives Corporation was a more substantial indication of a similar interest (St. Andrew's College; pp.136-7).
- 79 St. Andrew's College; p.139.
- 80 Currey's report on speech day 1937, mentioned three bursaries of £50 each for sixth formers intending to qualify as mining engineers and £150 p.a. for laboratories (S.M.C. Dec. 1937). In his St. Andrew's College, Currey gives the figure as £250, (p.139).

to assist him<sup>68</sup>. Not only were many of the improvements already mentioned paid for out of the current account but the school was at last able to provide more accommodation for married staff<sup>69</sup> and - not before time - to erect better quarters for the Indian and African staff<sup>70</sup>; and the school was still able to show a comfortable profit<sup>71</sup> which enabled the Board to launch the major building programme with the minimum of discussion and taking the tide at the flood. How different from the long delays and justifiable nervousness attendant on the building of the Memorial Hall<sup>72</sup>!

But even the school profits - about £4,000 at their peak in 1934 - would not have been sufficient to sustain an ambitious programme without generous assistance from outside. There were notable individual contributions - the long-standing debt to W.J. Butcher was remitted at the time of Currey's arrival<sup>73</sup>, Hugh Brown contributed generously to the swimming bath and bequeathed a further sum to the school<sup>74</sup>, C. James helped to make the building of Farfield possible<sup>75</sup>, and the Tatham family created a Bursary Trust of £1,000 after the death of F.S. Tatham<sup>76</sup>. The contributions of the Bailey Education Trust to the grounds and buildings have already been mentioned; and the Rhodes Trustees also contributed £1,000 to the building scheme in 1936<sup>77</sup>. What was new, however, was a group of donations from mining and finance companies<sup>78</sup>, which were individually not large but which were significant as an indication of the practical interest which financiers and industrialists were taking in education, particularly that provided by independent schools. It is, moreover, from this period that the interest of the Chamber of Mines in post-matriculation work dates. In his history of St Andrew's, Currey gives to the Rev. C.B. Armstrong (then headmaster of St Andrew's) the credit of enlisting the support of this powerful organisation<sup>79</sup>; at all events, five schools, including Michaelhouse, benefitted from an annual subsidy for sixth form science work and three mining scholarships were established<sup>80</sup>. Meanwhile, the school's responsibility for interest on bonds was eased by one of its oldest supporters: the Anglican

- 81 B.M. 11/5/33. The rate was 5½% instead of the 6½% charged by the Building Society. When a proposal to float a debenture scheme came to nought, the Anglican Trust Board was again helpful (B.M. 11/11/34).
- 82 Wotton: On His Mistress, the Queen of Bohemia.
- 83 This was said especially of Alan Melville, (notes from C.M. Melville), but I have often heard it said in more recent years.
- 84 S.M.C. May 1933. In 1930 there were several first year passes (S.M.C. May 1931); and in 1931 two gained passes (one in three subjects) (S.M.C. May 1932). In 1933 the Rector announced that it was school policy not to enter boys for university examinations except in special circumstances (S.M.C. Dec. 1933).
- 85 S.M.C. May 1933, Dec. 1933, and June 1935.
- 86 I have relied particularly on Currey's Manuscript and on memories of Old Boys for these observations. The 'Rector's Lectures' (chiefly civics) were an important part of the course for all members of the form; if boys were not prefects they were usually given a variety of general responsibilities (in the library, for instance); and although they remained members of their house, they were provided with a sixth form room (S.M.C. May 1932) - a modest sign of their separate status.

Church Trust Board took over a substantial proportion of the bonds at a reduced rate of interest<sup>81</sup>.

The number of buildings, the number of boys, the number of pounds in the bank, the number (and range) of donors tempt one to quote Sir Henry Wotton:

You meaner beauties of the night  
That poorly satisfy our eyes,  
More by your number, than your light....<sup>82</sup>

But these numbers were in fact both the generators and the reflectors of the stronger light that Michaelhouse was shedding.

#### CURRICULUM

A characteristic of Michaelhouse which distinguished it from the other Natal schools was the presence of a sixth form doing post-matriculation work. Its organisation presents especial difficulties in South Africa, where it is not a part of the normal educational pattern and there have always been those who assert that its chief function is to provide an extra year for leaders in sport<sup>83</sup>. Bushell had entered several sixth-formers for first year university examinations and the practice continued for a time under Currey, but it was not an entirely satisfactory arrangement and the last to enter for university examinations before the war was N.N. Franklin, who passed five B.A. subjects in 1932<sup>84</sup>. Boys were instead entered for other public examinations - the Taalbond or one of the English universities' examinations<sup>85</sup>, but it remained a flexible arrangement and not all were provided with a specific goal.

What was perhaps more important was that, from its beginnings under Bushell, the sixth form developed into a permanent institution, not large in its membership (there were usually about a dozen) but distinctive in the opportunities it offered, especially for encouraging a critical awareness of South African and world issues, and with its members beginning to enjoy a differentiated status, whether they were prefects or not<sup>86</sup>.

Currey himself was convinced of its value, and the fact that all

- 87 Currey drew the attention of the Board to the connection in Rector's Report, B.M. 8/11/35 and Rector's Report, 13/11/36.
- 88 The sources are: S.M.C. May 1932 (Fisher); S.M.C. Dec. 1934 (Stubblings and E. Hindson); S.M.C. June 1935 (Franklin and B.Hindson); S.M.C. Dec. 1935 (Lydall); S.M.C. Dec. 1936 (Thompson); S.M.C. May 1937 (Burchell), and S.M.C. Dec. 1940 (Henwood). E. Hindson had to relinquish his award (Rector's Report, B.M. 14/6/35); and D. Henwood, who had been at school 1932-36, went on active service. All except Fisher had spent a year in the sixth form.
- 89 S.M.C. Dec. 1935.
- 90 S.M.C. May 1937, reporting the Rector's speech for 1936.
- 91 S.M.C. Dec. 1934. The subjects in the curriculum were: English, Divinity, Mathematics, Special Science, Geography, Modern History, a Modern Language, Music and Physical Training. Currey refers to it in his Manuscript as 'of real help'.



the Old Boys who were awarded Rhodes or Elsie Ballot Scholarships from 1931 to 1940 had been members of the sixth form was at least supporting though not conclusive evidence in its favour<sup>87</sup>. There was, indeed, an impressive list of scholarship awards to old boys: Rhodes Scholarships were awarded to W.S. Fisher (who had matriculated in 1929), B.J.J. Stubbings, E.E.W.M. Mindson, H.F. Lydall, L.M. Thompson and D. Henwood; Elsie Ballot Scholarships were awarded to N.N. Franklin and E.E.M. Burchell; and three of these awards came in one year (1934/5) - those to Stubbings, Mindson and Franklin - and coincided with another notable award - the Captain Scott Memorial Medal for the best student of geology in the University of South Africa - B. Mindson<sup>88</sup>.

For the bulk of the school, Currey made a determined effort to improve the general standard of scholarship and at the same time to provide for those boys for whom the terms 'academic', 'non-practical' and 'useless' are almost synonymous. That the classroom took precedence over the playing fields, at least in the eyes of authority was made clear by the decision in 1935 to abandon all 3rd, 4th and 'Ware' inter-school matches because the fixture list had become so heavy as to interfere with school work<sup>89</sup>. (Before the school acquired its own transport, teams had to travel by train and this involved missing classes on Saturday.) Moreover, in 1936 parents were told that a 'superannuation' policy was to operate in future; if boys were too old for their form and were considered unsuitable for promotion, they would be asked to leave<sup>90</sup>.

It was not, however, a ruthless policy to enforce standards determined by the somewhat rigid Junior Certificate and Matriculation requirements, for Currey had already introduced a 'Modern Form' with a specially planned curriculum which included, for instance, agricultural chemistry and biology within a special science course<sup>91</sup>. This was more than ten years before the English education system seriously attempted to provide for differentiated but genuinely secondary education for adolescents, and nearly thirty years before

92 Under Pascoe there were, from 1917 to 1926, 131 entrants, 2 first class passes, 30 second class passes and 37 third class passes - a pass rate of just under 53% (see Ch.6 notes 105 and 106). For Bushell, the number of entrants is not available for 1928, and there is a slight discrepancy between the figures given in the Rector's Report to the Governors and those in the Chronicle for 1927 results; but the proportion of passes appears to be considerably better - 16 passes out of 20 in 1927 and 17 out of 25 in 1929; and the numbers in each class for the three years were: five firsts, 22 seconds, 23 thirds (S.M.C. May 1928, Oct. 1928; Rector's Report, B.M. 30/8/28 and Acting Rector's Report, B.M. 17/3/30).

93 See Province of Natal: Reports of the Superintendent of Education for the relevant years, 1938 and 1939 being published in one volume. It is not clear from the tables whether all Natal schools are included or only government and government-aided schools: the latter seems the more likely interpretation. The details for the period are as follows, with page references to the relevant Report in brackets:

Natal: % of Entrants for the Matriculation who passed:

1930: 66.4% (p.7)	1931: 56.4% (p.7)	1932: 60.7% (p.60)
1933: 69.2% (p.62)	1934: 66.7% (p.70)	1935: 66.9% (p.80)
1936: 78.3% (p.68)	1937: 76.9% (p.80)	1938: 79.1% (p.90)

The percentage for each of the years 1936, 1937 and 1938 includes candidates who obtained a School Leaving Certificate but did not matriculate, and in each year the number so included represented between 11% and 12% of the total number of entrants.

94 20 out of 40 passed in 1930 (Rector's Report, B.M. 27/2/31); and in 1931 23 passed, representing a failure rate of 47.7% (Rector's Report, B.M. 25/2/32 and S.M.C. May 1932). In each case there were additional passes in February - four from 1930 (S.M.C. May 1931) and five from 1931 (S.M.C. May 1932).

95 Rector's Report, B.M. 27/2/31.

96 Michaelhouse: No. of Matriculants.

	Entrants	Matriculants	
1932	?	27	
1933	?	33	
1934	48	32	
1935	?	39	
1936	55	29	(+ 11 School Leaving Cert.)
1937	?	51	(+ 6 School Leaving Cert.)
1938	60	54	

Neither the number of entrants nor the exact percentage passes is given for 1932, 1935 and 1937.

Sources: Rector's Reports, B.M. 16/2/33, 21/2/34, 14/3/35, 21/2/36, 24/2/37, Feb. 1938; and S.M.C. May 1934, June 1935 and May 1939.

97 S.M.C. May 1932 gives the number in each class. Currey in a conversation mentioned the outstanding achievement of the top in this year and gave the names of the young four: Adnams, Lydall, N. Robinson and Thompson.

98 Rector's Reports attached to the following Board Minutes: B.M. 27/2/31, B.M. 25/2/32, B.M. 16/2/33, B.M. 21/2/34, B.M. 14/3/35, B.M. 21/2/36; Rector's Reports 24/2/37 and Feb. 1938. There are some discrepancies between the figures given in these Reports and the relevant Chronicles, and the relevant Chronicles mention supplementary passes in addition. The following figures are taken from the

(See Over)

Natal provincial schools attempted to do so.

The examination results suggest that the general level of achievement in the school was improving. With relatively small numbers entered for the matriculation examination in the 'twenties, it was natural that standards should have varied considerably from year to year, but a first class pass was a great distinction and there was generally a preponderance of third class passes<sup>92</sup>. In Natal as a whole the proportion of matriculation candidates who passed was about two-thirds between 1930 and 1933, with the exception of 1931 and 1932 when the proportion of successes dropped to 56.4% and 60.7% respectively<sup>93</sup>. At Michaelhouse, on the other hand, the proportion who passed in 1930 and 1931 was just over a half<sup>94</sup> and even allowing for the fact that Michaelhouse probably promoted boys more readily through the forms than many other schools and may have had a different policy in respect of entering all boys who were in the matriculation class, the failure rate was, as Currey observed in a report to the Governors, 'disturbing'<sup>95</sup>.

A few years later, the picture was very much healthier, with about two-thirds of the entrants matriculating except in 1936; and in 1938 90% of a group of 60 entrants were successful<sup>96</sup>. What was even more noteworthy was the much higher proportion of first and second class passes: even in 1931 there were 9 firsts, including four boys who were under sixteen<sup>97</sup>, and this was more than there had been in the whole period between the end of the war and 1929. From that year onwards, the number of firsts and seconds comfortably exceeded the number of third class passes and both in 1937 and 1938 there were 19 first class and 14 second class passes<sup>98</sup>.

In the Junior Certificate examinations there was a dramatic statistical improvement: whereas 30% was the failure rate for Natal as a whole in 1930<sup>99</sup>, Michaelhouse had a failure rate of 49% - attributed to the large entry in 1928 and a number of staff changes<sup>100</sup>; two years later, when Natal's results were exceptionally poor with a 38% failure<sup>101</sup>, Michaelhouse had only 24% failing<sup>102</sup>.

Rector's Reports:

Michaelhouse: Passes in Matriculation Examination by classes:

Year	1st Class	2nd Class	3rd Class
1930	4	6	10
1931	9	9	5
1932	7	9	11
1933	11	14	8
1934	9	14	9
1935	13	12	14
1936	9	13	7
1937	19	14	18
1938	19	14	21

- 99 Province of Natal: Report of the Superintendent of Education for the year 1930, p.7. 70.4% passed.
- 100 Rector's Report, B.M. 27/2/31 and Rector's Report, B.M. 25/2/32.
- 101 Province of Natal: Report of the Superintendent of Education for the year 1932, p.60. 61.9% passed.
- 102 Rector's Report, B.M. 16/2/33. Neither the failure rate nor the number of entrants is given after this, but S.M.C. May 1934 records that the school was 'proud' of the 1933 results. The following table gives figures extracted from Rector's Reports attached to B.M. 27/2/31, B.M. 25/2/32 and B.M. 16/1/33; and from S.M.C. May 1934, June 1935 and May 1936:
- Michaelhouse: Passes in Matriculation Examination by classes:
- | Year | 1st Class | 2nd Class | 3rd Class |
|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1930 | 3         | 11        | 16        |
| 1931 | 9         | 12        | 9         |
| 1932 | 6         | 18        | 17        |
| 1933 | 11        | 12        | 15        |
| 1934 | 7         | 12        | 21        |
| 1935 | 21        | 21        | 11        |
- The relatively poor figures for 1934 are the precursor of the poor matriculation year in 1936.
- 103 S.M.C. Dec. 1935.
- 104 A Century of 'Bishops', p.59, refers to the abandonment of J.C. by Birt at Bishops, but the date is not given and, as Birt was headmaster from 1919 to 1943, I cannot be sure which school took the step first.
- 105 B.M. 14/3/35 and B.M. 8/11/35.
- 106 The Junior Certificate comprised seven subjects, Mathematics and Arithmetic being treated separate. At Michaelhouse it was possible to offer general science, including biology in the third form (D. Block) and to combine (in a not very happy marriage, admittedly) history and geography. For this and the remark which follows in the text, I rely on my own memory of Michaelhouse in 1938, the comments of several masters including some in recent years who had served in Provincial schools, and the impressions of a number of Old Boys.
- 107 S.M.C. May 1933.
- 108 R.W. Kent: College: 1863-1963, p.56. The building was in fact hardly ever used as a gymnasium.
- 109 S.M.C. May 1933. See note 28 above.
- 110 I cannot find a reference in the records, but Currey mentions the abandonment in his Manuscript. It was possible to take the subject as an 'extra'.
- 111 S.M.C. Dec. 1936.

This chronicle of statistical success may suggest that after having a strenuous opponent of the South African examination system, the school's policy was now directed by one for whom the system was a satisfactory guide. That Currey accepted the public examinations as a measure of the school's achievement, there is no reason to doubt; but he spoke forcefully against the 'tyranny' of the matriculation examination and its 'dolorous effects'<sup>103</sup>. Indeed, in at least one important sphere, he relaxed the 'tyranny' of the system: he was one of the first in the country to abandon the Junior Certificate examination<sup>104</sup>, which was a sort of military policeman for the Matriculation examination, ensuring that, from recruits upwards, secondary pupils should attend to the manoeuvres necessary to capture a certificate. Currey made the suggestion to abandon the Junior Certificate at the beginning of 1935, but there was opposition on the Board and it was only after a 'full discussion' at the end of the year that the Board agreed to the change<sup>105</sup>. It was now possible for Michaelhouse to offer a curriculum which was not confined to six 'examination subjects' from beginning to end<sup>106</sup> and to be freer than many schools from the excessive pressure of examinations.

There were four other significant though less dramatic modifications in the school curriculum. One has already been referred to - the introduction of Physical Training under Sgt Bultitude, formerly of the Norfolk Regiment<sup>107</sup>. It is a curious comment on the fluctuation of ideas that although at the turn of the century it was planned to give P.T. the most prominent room in the building (the present library) and not long afterwards Maritzburg College had an elaborate and substantial gymnasium built<sup>108</sup>, the activity lost its prestige and it was widely assumed that sport was an adequate substitute, so that its re-introduction was regarded as a curiosity<sup>109</sup>. By contrast, the other modifications hardly aroused comment: bookkeeping no longer formed a part of the ordinary curriculum<sup>110</sup>; from 1936 Zulu became part of the regular classes, taught to Matric by a Zulu<sup>111</sup>; and biology was gradually introduced, though not yet as

- 112 It was part of the Special Science course as early as 1934 (S.M.C. Dec. 1934). In 1938 the Board agreed that special biology equipment was necessary (B.M. 14/3/38, adjourned from 4/3/38).
- 113 S.M.C. Dec. 1933 and Rector's Report, B.M. 16/2/33.
- 114 Currey's Manuscript.
- 115 The standard history of education in South Africa by E.G. Malherbe, published in 1925 (Education in South Africa, 1652-1922; Juta), makes no mention of Michaelhouse by name, though it does mention Hilton in a section on private schools (p.212). (Other schools mentioned are St. Anne's, St. John's, Epworth, Wykeham and Uplands.) P.D. Barnard knew nothing of the school before he came to Natal (he mentions this in a letter to me); and Bushell asserted (in a conversation) that, so far as Michaelhouse was known at all in academic circles in the twenties, its reputation was low.
- 116 Province of Natal: Reports of the Superintendent of Education for the years 1933 (p.6), 1935 (p.8), 1936 (p.8) and 1937 (p.8). The proportion of graduate teachers in government schools rose from 22.1% in 1930 to 29.2% in 1937 (figures are not given for 1938).
- 117 See the appendices for lists of members of staff. Lawrence only just qualifies: from Sept 1903 to 1907; two others were at Michaelhouse for four years, but the service was broken: R.G. Macdonald (1913-15 and 1919-20); and A. van der Horst (1913-14, 1916 and 1920). Other men who stayed four years or more were: the bursar, A. Stewart (1905-6 and 1921-8); the carpentry instructors, P. Goodwin (1915-19) and J. Byrne (1921-56); and the drill instructor, Sgt. Campbell (1908-14). Sgt. Barden (drill, 1916-21) and H. Lister (drawing, 1907 or 1911 to 1936) were not in residence.
- 118 Nearly all the 'temporary' men listed in Appendix 6 were leave replacements. The exceptions are Fourie (who filled the gap left by Hattingh's death); Noble (who came for the last part of the year when Osler left to study medicine); Ellison (who came when Simon's arrival was awaited). Evans is simply recorded as temporary; and either Griffith or Tisdall or both were temporary replacements when D. Pennington had study leave. R.C. Wood was at first 'honorary' member of staff. Jansen began as a leave replacement. Only nine of those who left during the period were therefore on the permanent teaching establishment. (See B.M. and S.M.C. for the period.)

a full subject<sup>112</sup>.

#### STAFFING

It would not have been possible to strengthen the academic work of the school - and particularly to abandon the Junior Certificate - if the Rector had not felt secure in his staff. For the first time in the history of the school, staffing was not a major problem for the Rector: whereas his predecessors had had to rely on personal influence or chance to find men willing to fill vacancies or to stay long, Currey had the great advantage of being able to select from a number of good applicants to fill posts<sup>114</sup>. This was partly because the school, standing on the shoulders of the past, was better known both inside South Africa and in England<sup>115</sup>. But it was also a consequence of the depression that teaching was an attractive profession: indeed, the Superintendent of Education in Natal seemed to be somewhat embarrassed by the growing proportion of graduates in Natal schools, because he felt that the secondary schools could not accommodate them all<sup>116</sup>.

By 1930 there had been about a dozen men on the academic staff who had seen a generation or more of boys go through the school: Tryon, Dobree and Hannah among Todd's appointments; Adair, Lawrence, Pascoe and Ferrar from Hugh-Jones's time; Bishop from Brown's time (to whom Briggs may be added, if his part-time chaplaincy is included); Crawford, Strongman, K.M. Pennington and Strickland from Pascoe's time; and Barnard, who arrived when Adair was acting Rector<sup>117</sup>. But now, partly because the staff was larger, the number of men who remained long enough to influence the school, and not just the individuals on whom they happened to make an impression, makes the task of distinguishing individual masters' contributions almost impossible. A sign of the stability of the staff was the Rector's unprecedented announcement at the end of 1932 that there had been no staff changes in the previous twelve months, but throughout the period nearly all the changes were additions to the staff or temporary leave replacements<sup>118</sup>.

- 119 S.M.C. May 1930. The fifth, R.A.P. Moore, left at the end of the year. There were also two temporary appointments. See Appendix 6 for a list of staff under Currey.
- 120 The decision to reduce the initial salary is not recorded, but a discussion on the reduction of salaries took place in 1932 (B.M. 27/8/32) and in 1934 the Rector's Report (B.M. 9/11/34), which gives the scales, refers to the 'recent' reduction of the starting salary. The report also mentions that the initial salary is above the English (public school) figure, the final salary 'much below it'. The maximum was subsequently raised to £500 (B.M. 19/11/37). In 1937, the salary scale in the Natal Education Department went from £225 x 15 to £500 and at St. Andrew's from £250 x 15 to £450 (Rector's Report, Aug. 1937). It was characteristic of Currey that he issued an instruction forbidding a reduction in the salaries of 'Natives and Indians in regular employ until European salaries are reduced', though the wages were higher than the local level (Rector's Report, B.M. 27/8/32).
- 121 B.M. 16/2/33, B.M. 11/5/33 (and Memorandum of Sub-Committee on Pensions) and B.M. 31/8/33.
- 122 The Board seems to have agreed readily to building houses for Barnard and a workman (B.M. 14/8/30); but it was by a bare 7-6 vote that approval was given to building a house for Melville without waiting for finances (B.M. 25/2/32) - and in fact a new house was not built but Farfield cottage was altered for him (B.M. 16/2/33). In 1935 they refused permission to build houses for Woods and Traill because of the heavy capital expenditure (B.M. 14/3/35) and, when Currey was able to provide quarters for them (Rector's Report, B.M. 4/6/35), the Board declined to pay a marriage allowance (B.M. 4/6/35).
- 123 B.M. 4/3/38 and B.M. 8/6/38.



The foundations of this stability were already laid when Currey took over, for there were now on the staff, besides the three 'old hands' (K.M. Pennington, Strickland and Barnard) who were already housemasters, four (Melville, Woods, Pridmore and D. Pennington) who were to serve at least until the end of the war; and there were two others who were to serve until 1935 (Theron and Osler), and one (Cazalet) who was chaplain from 1930 to 1937. Add to these the first three permanent appointments by Currey himself - van Heijst, Traill and Lyon - and there was the core of the Michaelhouse staff for the next fifteen years or more.<sup>119</sup>

There were now four Old Boys on the staff (the two Penningtons, Melville and Woods); and of those who were to remain on the staff until after the war, three in addition to the Old Boys were South Africans (van Heijst, Traill and Barnard). Michaelhouse, while continuing to draw on the products of United Kingdom universities, was no longer so reliant on expatriates and could hold good men once they had been attracted to the school.

In many fields there was a reduction in salaries during the depression, but at Michaelhouse the Governors decided to maintain existing salaries, though the initial salary for newcomers was dropped from £300 to £250, which rose to a maximum (excluding allowances for housemasters, married men and quarters) of £450<sup>120</sup>. At about the same time, the desultory discussions about a pension or provident scheme were brought to finality and a provident fund scheme was approved, with effect from 1933<sup>121</sup>.

There nevertheless remained an awkward obstacle to retaining staff: matrimony might force the men to look elsewhere. Each romance brought a crisis, for the Governors were cautious about additional capital expenditure and commitment to the £100 marriage allowance<sup>122</sup>. Currey was nevertheless able to juggle with the buildings available and so retain valuable men and welcome their wives, until at last in 1938 authority was given for three more houses to be built<sup>123</sup> - the first on what has come to be called the Berea. Meanwhile it was

- 124 B.M. 19/11/37 and Rector's Report Aug. 1937. The marriage allowance ranged from £50 p.a. for the first 5 years to £150 p.a. for 16 years or more.
- 125 S.M.C. Dec. 1933.
- 126 S.M.C. in Dec. each year, with brief references also in S.M.C. May 1931, June 1935, May 1936 and May 1937.
- 127 S.M.C. June 1935, Dec. 1935 and May 1936.
- 128 Rector's Report, B.M. 31/8/33.

laid down that no assistant master was to marry without the Rector's permission (to be confirmed by the Board) and that permission would not be granted unless the man had spent at least seven years at Michaelhouse, if he were to be entitled to a house and the married allowance<sup>124</sup> - but that was before the war altered the average age for marriage, as it altered much else.

#### EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The strength and stability of the staff and the increase in the number of boys contributed substantially to what the editor of the Chronicle described in 1933 as 'a changing tendency.... namely, in the development of the less official activities of the school'<sup>125</sup>.

In one of these activities at least, there is a reflection of the events which stirred passions at the time. The Debating Society, which had an enthusiastic guide in Osler, flourished with between forty and sixty members<sup>126</sup>. Natal's politics of the early thirties are reflected in a debate on secession in 1932 and another on devolution the following year (when a future politician, L'Estrange, is reported to have delivered a 'brilliant speech'). It discussed the colour problem and socialism. The house sympathised with Abyssinia in her struggle with Italy in 1935 and twice opposed Hitler and dictatorships (the first occasion, in 1934, was in the first debate conducted against a Hilton team, Michaelhouse being on the side of the angels). The Society twice debated the Oxford Union motion - This House will not fight for King and Country - and defeated it; but in 1936, they were sadly optimistic and overwhelmingly defeated a motion that war was inevitable within five years.

The Natural History Society, on the other hand, literally dug into the past: a Smithfield industry was discovered on a neighbouring farm in 1935, which generated considerable excitement and led to a visit by Dr van Riet Lowe and the donation of some 200 artefacts of pre-historic man to the national collection<sup>127</sup>. Interest in the Society fluctuated, but the erection of a new museum in 1933<sup>128</sup> and the arrival of R.C. Wood ('Archer') the following year acted as a

- 129 S.M.C. May 1934. Other reports of the Society are in the December Chronicles each year and in May, 1933, June 1935 and May 1936.
- 130 S.M.C. May 1928. For the Currey period, it is recorded in each of the Chronicles, except those of 1932.
- 131 S.M.C. May 1932. It is reported in each of the Chronicles thereafter.
- 132 S.M.C. Dec. 1936, May 1937, Dec. 1937 and May 1938.
- 133 S.M.C. Dec. 1937.
- 134 S.M.C. Dec. 1931. S.M.C. May 1933 mentions, erroneously, that it started in 1932. For musical activities, see S.M.C. for the period. I am also indebted to I. Lloyd, M.P., an Old Boy of the period and a keen musician, for his observations.

timely stimulant<sup>129</sup> and, with the continued help of K.M. Pennington, there were opportunities for enthusiasts to pursue small mammals or to make a record of local birds (egg collecting was prohibited by a vote of a general meeting); and two boys - Fehrsen and Currie - set to work on a scheme to house local insects.

Both these societies had had a long, though somewhat uncertain history. There had also been a photographic club in the early Balgowan days, which was revived in 1928<sup>130</sup>; and, stimulated by Cazalet and, later, by the completion of a new dark room and the interest of Chapman, it became a permanent institution in the school, C. Barry being a notable participant in the years immediately before the war. Cazalet was also responsible for starting a more select group<sup>131</sup>, the Literary Society, generally restricted to fifteen members, who met weekly or fortnightly to read chiefly Barrie or Galsworthy, to hear papers read by members or to encourage original writing - a Literary Supplement to the Chronicle appeared on occasion and in 1936 the group planned a scenario for a film. The same year, a Stamp Club was started and was strong enough to mount an exhibition on speech day in 1937, though it was not a highly institutionalised activity<sup>132</sup>. The conversion of the old laboratory into a comfortable library encouraged an interest in chess, though it remained unorganised for the time being<sup>133</sup>.

The activity which gave the clearest evidence of official encouragement was music. With some misgivings, Currey introduced in 1931 an inter-house music competition, for which Mrs Currey presented a trophy<sup>134</sup>. There were choral and individual sections in the competition, and the boys were helped by wives of members of staff (especially Mrs Currey, Mrs Bernard and Mrs von Heijst) as well as masters. That the standard fluctuated wildly from year to year and from house to house mattered less than that some were introduced to choral singing who would not otherwise have discovered the pleasure apart from hymn singing. (There was, of course, a chapel choir, and in 1931 a weekly congregational practice was introduced.) The

- 135 Plays, sketches or variety concerts are mentioned in each S.M.C. for the period.
- 136 S.M.C. Dec. 1934 describes it as 'shortened' and 'the first full-length Shakespeare'; but S.M.C. April 1926 records a production of an 'abridged Merchant of Venice'.
- 137 S.M.C. Dec. 1936.

establishment of music as part of the curriculum, with a resident Director of Music, was a further aid to enthusiasts and, shortly after South's arrival, a Gramophone Society with a growing library of records, was formed and, a little later, a Choral Society. It would be idle to pretend that serious music enjoyed widespread popularity or prestige in the school, but when the risk was taken of making attendance at chamber concerts voluntary, the response was 'gratifying', and there was some justification for the comment by the Director of Music for the Natal Education Department (C. Wright) that Michaelhouse was leading the way in musical education.

Meanwhile the dramatic tradition of the school was greatly strengthened<sup>135</sup>. Various members of staff - and Mrs van Heijst - produced plays at different times, of which two are particularly noteworthy. In 1934 A Midsummer Night's Dream was produced by Cozalet, with a future Dean (Cross) and Bishop (Burnett) of Bloemfontein playing respectively Bottom and Flute - it was a shortened version, like the only previous production which had presented more than extracts from Shakespeare<sup>136</sup>. Two years later the first Afrikaans play - a one-act - was produced by Bernard. The chief director of the school's dramatic activities was, however, D. Pennington, who was convinced that boys were bound to mangle Shakespeare but who devoted hours of labour and sardonic humour to building up the stage equipment - including a proscenium arch for the dais - and to producing numerous one-act, three-act, boys and staff plays.

#### SPORT

Among physical activities there was the first appearance of a Gym Club in 1936 and a brief appearance of fencing<sup>137</sup>, but the most interesting development was the growth in the popularity of the 'minor' sports. A census taken in 1935 showed that most boys enjoyed playing rugby and a comfortable majority enjoyed playing cricket; but, in answer to the question, 'Which would you choose to play if you were given a free choice?' tennis had the edge on

- 138 S.M.C. Dec. 1935. The numbers given are as follows:  
154 enjoyed cricket, 114 did not enjoy it;  
231 enjoyed rugby, 37 did not enjoy it.  
161 preferred rugby to cricket, 82 preferred cricket, 25 liked both.  
The votes for the summer sports were: tennis 112; cricket 107;  
squash 45. For the winter, the votes were: rugby 173; hockey 35;  
tennis 34; squash 23.
- 139 S.M.C. Dec. 1938. See also other December Chronicles for the  
period.
- 140 S.M.C. Dec. 1938.
- 141 S.M.C. Dec. 1935.
- 142 S.M.C. May 1931. For other cricket references, see the May  
Chronicles of the period and (for Payn's bowling achievement)  
S.M.C. Dec. 1933. The results of the first team matches from  
1930/1 to 1937/8 were (with school matches in brackets): played:  
213 (82); won 116 (46); lost 55 (21); drew 36 (15).



cricket as a summer sport, and, although rugby was easily the favourite for winter, over a third of the boys would have chosen hockey, squash or tennis.<sup>138</sup> No other Natal boys' school had organised hockey, so that such matches as were played (and they became more frequent) were against club or university teams, and it is therefore not surprising that the 1938 team, captained by a future Springbok (P.A. Dobson), lost all but one of its six matches<sup>139</sup>. Apart from a tennis match against St Anne's<sup>140</sup> and the inauguration of annual athletic contests against Hilton<sup>141</sup>, inter-school rivalry continued to be confined to rugby and cricket.

In cricket, the 1930-31 season was described as a 'slump' after the departure of Parry, A. Melville and Harvey, but the team nevertheless managed to defeat Hilton twice, and there was already in the team a future Springbok, L.V. Payn<sup>142</sup>. Two years later he took 100 wickets in the season, repeating the achievements of C. Forder, M. Forder and A. Melville. The fortunes of the first team fluctuated from year to year, with a peak from 1932 to 1934, but with coxing, cajoling and coaching from A.P. Woods and an increasing confidence on turf wickets, even in a poor year like 1935-36 there were seldom severe defeats. An exception was in 1937 when the Hilton bowler, Ellis, took six wickets for seventeen runs in seven overs. Later that year the team (which included the future Springbok 'Tufty' Henn) distinguished itself by getting St Andrew's out for 24 on Kingsmead. Meanwhile, the cricket tours continued regularly each year - or nearly regularly: in the same season as the disastrous Hilton match, a mistake in the estimated time of arrival at Kroonstadt led to some discomfiture until Dr Donges (who subsequently made 4 runs and took 3 wickets) rescued them; and at the tail end of the tour, a storm flooded a spruit and caused the team to miss the train at Bergville, so that they had to sleep on the benches.

At the beginning of the thirties, the rugby team was conspicuous by its lack of success, though in 1932 Michelhouse gained their

- 143 S.M.C. Dec. 1932 and Dec. 1933. For other rugby references, see the December Chronicles of the period.
- 144 In 1937, the team won eight out of 12 school matches and in 1938, five out of 10, drawing one (6-6) against Hilton in front of the Governor General.
- 145 Old Boys' memories are somewhat hazy and conflicting on the precise involvement and the records are silent on the point. Shooting practice was sometimes an obligatory activity.
- 146 B.M. 22/11/33, when authority to affiliate was 'held over'; and S.M.C. Dec. 1938.
- 147 S.M.C. Dec. 1932 and the valedictory notice by C.H.M. (Melville) in S.M.C. Dec. 1938.
- 148 S.M.C. Dec. 1937.
- 149 School Memories, p.145 and Currey's Manuscript.
- 150 B.M. 8/11/35.

first and somewhat lucky win over Hilton since 1925 and repeated the success the following year<sup>143</sup>. In 1934, however, there was a spectacular climb to fortune, when the team won all its school matches and gained seven places in the Natal Schools team. Two years later the record was almost equalled - the team drew one school match - but the season was distinguished particularly for two thrilling wins over a strong Maritzburg College team (15-14 and 16-11). The period before the war is sometimes thought of as one of unrivalled glory in Michaelhouse rugby and these two years' successes no doubt contributed to the impression, but they were quite outstanding years<sup>144</sup>.

Organised sport generally involved boys on three afternoons a week (one of them being hockey, which was not, however, a regular demand)<sup>145</sup>; and Friday afternoon continued to be devoted to the cadet detachment (which became affiliated to the D.L.I. in 1934)<sup>146</sup>. Nevertheless, with a reversion in 1930 to the practice of having no afternoon school, organised games and cadets were over by four o'clock and the rest of the afternoon was the boys' own. Moreover, Currey granted 'free bounds' on Wednesday afternoon<sup>147</sup>. Though much was organised in the school, therefore, there remained opportunities for boys to learn to use or misuse their spare time, and even if it meant no more than the following anonymous verse from a 1937 Chronicle<sup>148</sup>, there is W.L. Davies' authority for the value of doing nothing:

Beside the wandering stream he lay,  
A stompie in his hand;  
His shirt was off, his naked frame  
Lay bare in Jaffray's land.

As the verse indicates, freedom to wear what one pleased was one of the pleasures of 'free bounds'. For the classroom, however, there was now a school uniform, which Bushell had introduced<sup>149</sup>: blue blazer and grey flannel trousers for weekdays, blue suits (and stiff collars) for Sundays. Currey decided that it would be wise to register the colours<sup>150</sup>. This was an innocuous suggestion which

- 151 B.M. 21/2/36, B.M. 22/5/36, B.M. 19/11/37 and B.M. 30/8/37; Rector's Report, Sept. 1936; Old Boys' Club Minutes 21/5/36, 6/5/37 and 26/5/38; Miscellaneous File, letter from the Secretary of the Club to the Secretary of the Board (Aug.1937); letter from the Secretary of the Board to the Secretary of the Club (9/9/37); letter from Currey to the Secretary of the Board (16/10/37), attached to which is a copy of a letter written to A.R. Wagner, an official of the College of Arms, and the reply of the latter. See also Ch.2 note 35. All these references seem to turn on the prominence to be given to St. Michael (who was used only as an honours badge). The badge used for ordinary purposes, and by the Old Boys' Club at least since 1924 (Old Boys' Club Minutes 19/5/24), was the pair of scales, which had been used in the early days on the school cap (S.M.C. May 1897); Hannah's Typescript describes it as the scales of good and evil. It seems possible that, although it was not the apparent cause of the controversy, there may have been a feeling that the scales would be replaced by the cross of St. Michael for ordinary school uniforms (as eventually happened); for none of the proposals mentioned in the files suggested excluding 'St. Michael subduing the dragon' from the coat of arms. The full heraldic description of the coat of arms registered is on display in the school library.
- 152 Pascoe had not held annual speech days. The boys' speeches were introduced in 1935 (S.M.C. Dec. 1935), Zulu and Xhosa being added in 1936 (S.M.C. Dec. 1936).
- 153 S.M.C. Dec. 1930, Dec. 1937, Dec. 1932, Dec. 1935, Dec. 1938 and May 1933.
- 154 His nicknames seem to confirm the general impression of Old Boys of the period - Josh (probably a corruption of Jehoshophat), Jehu or Jehovah. For Jehoshophat see especially II Chronicles 17 and 19. For Jehu see II Kings 9.2 and II Chronicles 19.2.

led to unexpected complications and an unpleasant brush with the Old Boys' Club, which was not resolved until the eve of Currey's departure<sup>151</sup>. The cause of the difficulty was that the original, somewhat imprecisely described, coat of arms required some modification for registration; the Old Boys' Club, on the other hand, did not want a change in the old coat of arms. The coat of arms eventually accepted and registered featured St Michael, prominently in the centre, subduing a dragon and surrounded by small St Michael's crosses and surmounted by a crest containing the scales of justice. It was the crest which was used for ordinary school uniform, each house having it embroidered in a different colour, the figure of St Michael being reserved for the honours badge.

The granting of a coat of arms presupposes a sense of permanence and a sense of dignity if it is not to be laughably incongruous. Pascoe's rectorship contributed especially to the sense of permanence; formal dignity was a development particularly of Currey's rectorship. To this, not only the improvement of the buildings and grounds contributed: there was also a greater formality about the annual speech days, re-introduced by Bushell and now including formal speeches by boys in Latin, French, Zulu, English and Afrikaans<sup>152</sup>; and the more formal organisation of extra-curricular activities helped to make Michaelhouse a more sophisticated society; and the fact that national figures were among the guests of honour invited to school functions during the period signified that Currey wanted the school to be a South African institution and that the guests were willing to recognise this - Smuts in 1930, Hofmeyr in 1937 and Governors-General in 1932, 1935 and 1938, to whom should be added the Agent-General for India in 1933 (the Kunwar Singh)<sup>153</sup>. Moreover, an authoritative, calm dignity was in the eyes of the boys perhaps the most prominent characteristic of Currey himself<sup>154</sup>.

#### EVOLUTION AND ORGANISATION

The outward signs of formal dignity were an indication that the simple structures of Michaelhouse society were being altered. It

- 155 Bushell's Memorandum attached to B.M. 2/6/26.
- 156 This was a committee predominantly of boys. It was the Games Committee which decided to abolish the Victor Ludorum for the athletic contest and to make it an interhouse affair (S.M.C. Dec. 1931). There was an Amalgamated Club Committee in Todd's day.
- 157 S.M.C. Dec. 1937.
- 158 In 1933 the President of the Natural History Society was a boy for the first time (S.M.C. May 1933); the Debating Society Chairman was always a boy in this period. For other societies, the exact leadership is not clear.
- 159 S.M.C. May 1934.
- 160 S.M.C. May 1933.
- 161 Currey taught about half a full time table (Rector's Report, 27/8/32). There is no reference in the contemporary records to the reading period conducted by the Rector, but it was certainly in existence in 1938 and Snell mentioned it in conversation. The valedictory notice in S.M.C. Dec. 1938 mentions his 'accessibility'.

was possible in a small school to rely on a prefectorial system and a fairly straightforward division between masters in authority and pupils under an obligation of obedience for the maintenance of order; and it was not unreasonable to feel that the personal influence of the staff - and especially the Rector - was sufficient to educate the boys in a sense of responsibility. Even in a small school it was questionable whether these assumptions were sound - Buskell suggested when he was Acting Rector that more responsibility should be given to senior boys and particularly prefects<sup>155</sup>. In a school of 300 it would have been possible to maintain order by strengthening the distinction between staff and boys, but it would have been difficult to maintain that more than a small group of boys was being educated in the responsibilities of leadership.

In the thirties, membership of the committees of the various societies provided an opportunity for the exercise of responsibility; membership of the Games Committee was another such opportunity<sup>156</sup>; and in 1937 a School Council was established as a 'consultative body'<sup>157</sup>. Moreover, since members of staff also served on the committees, sometimes, but not always, in positions of overt leadership<sup>158</sup>, the distinction between authority and the boys was blurred. The hierarchies in the society were further modified by the strengthening of the house system, which made the house more clearly the unit than the form: classrooms became attached to a master or a house instead of to a form<sup>159</sup>; and house prayers were held twice a week instead of once<sup>160</sup>.

The Rector remained unmistakably the leader in the society and retained his direct contacts with the boys partly through teaching, partly through the practice (which he introduced) of having a 'Rector's reading period', when he read to a group of new boys, and partly through the occasional, formal and informal, encounters which most headmasters are able to utilise<sup>161</sup>. There was nevertheless a considerable devolution of authority which enabled the more complex

- 162 S.M.C. Dec. 1938.
- 163 St. Andrew's College; p.141 footnote.
- 164 Ibid, and pp.165-6 (which is part of the 'Postscript', not written by Currey himself); and B.M. 6/5/38.
- 165 B.M. 6/5/38.
- 166 Some Notes on the Future of South African Church Schools by R.F. Currey; Nov. 1942. (Privately published and circulated.)
- 167 St. Andrew's College; p.166, and Currey's Manuscript.
- 168 Rector's Report, Nov. 1938.
- 169 Rector's Memorandum 'General Development', B.M. 16/2/33; letter from Fleming attached to B.M. 11/5/33; B.M. 31/8/33, B.M. 21/2/34; and S.M.C. June 1935.



society to function with a reasonable degree of flexibility.

That Michaelhouse in a time of rapid expansion was able to avoid the dangers of a fragmented, impersonal society, was due to many factors - most notably the foundations laid by his predecessors and the quality of the staff he was able to engage and keep - but what the valedictory notice in the Chronicle calls Currey's 'genius for organisation' had much to do with it<sup>162</sup>. The wise and sympathetic support of Leonard Noel Fisher, Bishop and Chairman of the Board of Governors, was also a great source of strength for the school<sup>163</sup>. But perhaps Currey's resignation is an indication of an even deeper source, for it symbolised both his sense of duty and his concept of the rôle of independent schools in South Africa.

When the headmaster of St Andrew's was about to retire, the Council informally approached Currey to take his place, but Currey had felt bound to refuse the offer, for he had been at Michaelhouse less than four years and the Rev C.B. Armstrong had been appointed<sup>163</sup>. When Armstrong announced his resignation in 1938, the Council again approached Currey, this time more urgently, for it was an 'anxious and unhappy' time for the school, with numbers falling and finances uncertain<sup>164</sup>. On this occasion he accepted, because, as he explained to a special meeting of the Board of Governors<sup>165</sup> and was later to argue cogently in a pamphlet<sup>166</sup>, he felt that independent schools have a distinct contribution to make to South African life and that they cannot make the contribution unless they are mutually helpful. He was also, of course, an Old Andrian. But the decision involved a reduction in salary<sup>167</sup> and sacrificing the prospect of enjoying his achievement at Michaelhouse. The last official function of his rectorship was, fittingly, the ceremony to lay the foundation stone of the new chapel<sup>168</sup>, a project towards which he had been working for several years<sup>169</sup>. Michaelhouse was, however, to continue to benefit from his sense of purpose, for it was as a result of a pamphlet written by him and privately published in 1942, that a

170 Currey's Manuscript.

171 A. Paton: Hofmeyr; pp.164, 174, 294 and 319. Currey took the initiative in planning Coming of Age in 1930-31 and was a director of Forum when it was founded in 1938.

Commission was appointed by the Archbishop and 'The Standing Committee of (Anglican) Church Schools' was established<sup>170</sup>.

Meanwhile he had not only led Michaelhouse in an orderly expansion but had made it more clearly a South African school. The use he made of formal occasions, the increasing support for the school from the Transvaal, the important core of South Africans on the staff and the fact that he was himself a South African, all helped to achieve this. But in particular Currey was one of a small but distinguished group of men (J.H. Hofmeyr, O. Schreiner and E.H. Brookes were among the others), who discussed and published critical appraisals of policy in the thirties.<sup>171</sup> Currey did not involve either himself or the school in party politics, but he was concerned about the body politic of South Africa and his attitude influenced at least some boys to appraise their country's affairs with a wider vision. Michaelhouse was a school set in the Natal countryside and modelled on a peculiarly English institution, but Currey demonstrated more clearly than any of his predecessors that these were not antiquated moats but sources of strength for a South African institution.

- <sup>1</sup> The 'joint' Senior Masters were T.A. Strickland (44) and K.M. Pennington (41); P.D. Barnard (the next senior) was 38. See B.M. 15/8/47 and 22/8/52 and S.M.C. Oct. 1967 respectively. The other housemasters were younger (C. Melville and F. van Heijst) and of the other members of staff only R.T. Frost was older.
- <sup>2</sup> R.F. Currey: Some Notes on The Future of South African Church Schools; Published Privately; Nov. 1942.
- <sup>3</sup> The choice was made 'after full discussion', J.B. Channon of Rugby being second choice. (B.M. 23/8/38.) Biographical notes are taken chiefly from S.M.C. Dec. 1938, supplemented by conversation with F.R. Snell in 1966. Impressions of his personality are coloured by my own memories and I cannot pretend to complete impartiality though I have not knowingly distorted the picture and my memories are substantiated by those who have worked with him, and not least by R.F. Currey. On his vigour there is, I believe, unanimity; on his other personal qualities (e.g. his relations with colleagues), opinion is divided; and on some matters of policy there were and are divisions of opinion.

CHAPTER 9SNELL : CREATIVE VIGOUR AMID WAR'S DISRUPTION

By 1938, Michaelhouse evinced an unmistakable air of maturity, Not only were the grounds and buildings a growing source of pride (provided one did not look at some of the ramshackle structures behind the school); standards of scholarship were sound and several additions to the normally somewhat narrow school curriculum were securely established. Although the staff were young - the most senior men were under 45<sup>1</sup> - there was a strong and stable core; and for the boys there was an expanding variety of organised activities. Not many Old Boys had achieved positions of leadership in society - partly because there can have been few as old as fifty. The standing of the school was nevertheless more secure than it had ever been and its reputation more widespread: that it featured in a series of articles in the Illustrated London News was a sign that it had become 'established'. The choice of Currey's successor showed nevertheless the governors were not complacent about the school's progress and recognised the truth of Currey's observation - made a few years later - that 'Independence is not a thing of value per se; what makes it valuable is the spiritual vitality and vigour which spring from it.'<sup>2</sup> Their choice rested on a man who was not only young - 35 - and therefore had many years of service to give but looked so much younger than his age that he could have been mistaken for a prefect; and he was, withal, possessed of quite exceptional vitality<sup>3</sup>.

SNELL

Frederick Rowlandson Snell was senior science master at Eastbourne College when he was appointed Rector, and he had previously lectured in Agra. He was a scholar of Winchester - a school noted both for its scholarship and for the sensitive social conscience of many Wykehamists - and a scholar of Oriel College, Oxford, where he

[Faint, illegible text, likely bleed-through from the reverse side of the page]

<sup>4</sup> S.M.C. Dec. 1938, quoting an article written for The South African Church Weekly Newspaper.

gained a first class in chemistry and won a research exhibition which led to the B.Sc. degree. That he possessed both the qualities for which Wykehamists were noted is demonstrated by his scholarship successes, by his choosing as his first appointment a post in Agra and by the fact that in Eastbourne he was deeply involved in one of the pressing social problems of the time, for he was vice chairman of the Eastbourne Unemployment Council and on the council of the Distressed Areas Association. He was, moreover, deeply committed to the Christian faith as a rational theology and as a foundation for moral behaviour. Before he took up his post at Michaelhouse, he expressed his conviction that 'the most important function a school has to perform is to give its sons knowledge and faith; knowledge such as may fit them to seek and recognise in life the good and true and beautiful as well as enable them to earn their living, and a faith which will be to them at once a compass and an anchor in these times of swiftly moving change.'<sup>4</sup>

By the time this was written, the forlorn attempt to stave off war by the meeting at Munich was past and before the end of Snell's first year of office, the second World War began. Although Snell held office for longer (fourteen years) than any other Rector, the war and its aftermath made him in some respects a more circumscribed agent than any of his predecessors. In common with other headmasters he had to contend with staffing difficulties and an almost total ban on buildings during the war and with rapidly rising prices, strict government control of building and the problem of resettling the staff for many years after the war. Because of the nature of the war itself, but also because the school was a much more complex institution, Michaelhouse was much more deeply affected by the Second World War than by the First.

#### WAR : OLD BOYS

It was Old Boys rather than the school that the war affected immediately, of course; and, since South Africa was not yet fully mobilised, it was those in British forces who were the first directly

- 5 S.M.C. Dec. 1939.
- 6 S.M.C. May 1940.
- 7 S.M.C. Dec. 1940.
- 8 S.M.C. Dec. 1940.
- 9 S.M.C. June 1945 gives the figure 'about 1205'; S.M.C. Dec. 1945 says 125 were killed, '10% of those serving'.
- 10 The Rector reported in 1943 that about 50% of all Old Boys were serving. (S.M.C. Dec. 1943.)
- 11 S.M.C. June 1945 gives a summary of senior ranks attained.
- 12 S.M.C. June 1945 gives a summary of the awards (57). Adding to ~~these~~ the decorations recorded in subsequent Chronicles to Dec. 1947, the list is: D.S.O.: 6; M.C.: 13; D.F.C.: 20 (two with bars); D.S.C.: 1; A.F.C.: 1; D.S.M.: 1; M.M.: 6; D.C.M.: 1, B.E.M.: 2; King's Medal for Bravery: 1; C.M.G.: 1; C.B.E.: 2; C.B.: 1; C.B.E.: 9; M.B.E.: 7; American Silver Star: 2; American Bronze Star: 2; American Legion of Honour: 1. Total: 77.



involved. Before September 1939 was out, P/O Selley of the R.A.F. had been presented to the King in recognition of his sinking a submarine and his contemporary, D. Neaton Nicholls, was soon afterwards shot down and captured in a raid on the Kiel canal - the first of a long list of prisoners of war<sup>5</sup>. Early the following year, the first two decorations to go to Old Boys were bestowed on Squadron Leader G.C. Tomlinson for his skill, courage and determination in patrols, raids and interceptions and on Selley for his courage in the evacuation of Dunkirk<sup>6</sup>.

These were all men of the Royal Air Force: indeed, at the end of 1939, fifteen of the twenty Old Boys recorded as in the forces were in the R.A.F. By the end of 1940, however, the proportion had changed altogether, for out of just over 330 reported on active service, only 22 were in the British Forces<sup>7</sup>. In contrast to the practice in the First World War, indeed, Old Boys in the Second World War nearly always joined a South African unit, although many - especially in the navy - were subsequently seconded to a British unit.

The numbers involved rapidly rose: by the end of 1941 there were nearly 600 on active service<sup>8</sup> and by the end of the war twice this number had served full time in the forces<sup>9</sup>. Probably more than half the total number of Old Boys from 1896 to 1945 served full time<sup>10</sup> and very many others were, of course, contributing directly or indirectly to the war effort in civilian life: for, even in a country where there was no conscription, it was of the nature of this 'total' war that few could escape involvement.

In their responsibilities, they represented ranks from Major General downwards (the Major General was R.W.D. Leslie, R.A.M.C., one of the Todd generation<sup>11</sup>); their service in bravery and organisation was marked by 77 decorations, including 6 D.S.O.s, 13 M.C.s, 20 D.F.C.s, and a C.M.G.<sup>12</sup>; and their exploits, which ranged the world, recall events which in the total strategy were both grand and trivial but which meant everything at the time to those involved.

- 13 S.M.C. Dec. 1940.
- 14 S.M.C. Dec. 1941.
- 15 S.M.C. Sept. 1942 and Dec. 1942.
- 16 S.M.C. June 1943.
- 17 S.M.C. Dec. 1944.
- 18 S.M.C. June 1945.
- 19 S.M.C. Dec. 1944.

During the Battle of Britain in 1940, Pilot Officer (subsequently Wing Commander) E.J. Morris wrote of 'the great fun floating down' when he was forced to bale out after a collision with a German bomber - and qualified his enthusiasm with the observation that 'war is truly long periods of boredom interspersed with short periods of acute fear'<sup>13</sup>. The ceaseless battle to keep the Mediterranean open is recalled by the first naval award to an Old Boy - the D.S.C. to Sub-Lieut. C. Watson of the South African minesweeper (a converted whaler) Southern Maid<sup>14</sup>. The disaster of Tobruk is reflected in the sudden increase from 23 to 91 prisoners of war at the end of 1942<sup>15</sup>, some of whom managed to organise a Hilton-Michaelhouse baseball match in Camp 47<sup>16</sup>. There is the advance of the 6th Division through Italy and the citation for Lt. F.G. Chennels's M.C., recounting how he climbed out of his own tank to rescue the crew of another which was on fire and fought off the enemy to do so<sup>17</sup>. Among the Royal Engineers who landed in Normandy to clear a path ahead of the infantry was Lt. I.C. Dickinson, who wrote, with some understatement, that 'soon it was like Oxford Street in a traffic jam'<sup>18</sup>, and who was awarded an M.C. for his part in getting the traffic flowing into Europe<sup>19</sup>.

The grim story of disaster and victory in the east is epitomised in the endurance of R. May: escaping from Singapore on the day of the capitulation in 1942, by river, lorry, train and, eventually, the relative security of a warship; sunk within less than a day of the haven of Australia and picked up by the Japanese after 17½ hours in the water; eight months in a viciously punitive camp in Macassar before being removed to Nagasaki, where a sadistic sergeant-major offered the prisoners cigarettes and, having lit them, called the guard to beat them for disobeying orders against smoking; the increasing hope, fed by news gleaned from newspapers which a Chinese boy translated for them; the transfer to a coal mine twenty miles from Nagasaki in June 1945 and the rise in temperature when Nagasaki was bombed; and, finally, the news on August 15th that the war was

<sup>20</sup> S.M.C. Dec. 1945 and June 1947.

<sup>21</sup> A brief announcement of the events is in S.M.C. Dec. 1942, which gives the original number as fifty; the letter home (dated 25/10/42) is quoted in S.M.C. June 1943 and is the main source of the account given here.

over<sup>20</sup>.

The accounts, not unnaturally, do not describe overtly the 'short periods of acute fear', still less do they record the 'long periods of boredom'; for they are not diaries but, for the most part, official citations or letters written to K.M. Pennington, secretary of the Old Boys' Club, whose labour of pride it was to maintain contact with hundreds and to record their fate. But one account is rather different, for it is a copy of a letter written to his parents by a youth not long out of school, in which are charted, by implication at least, the shoals of utter desolation and the sea of enduring, faithful courage which are prominent features of the map of war.

A/B A.V. Large was sunk in H.M.S. Cornwall, endured 36 hours in the Atlantic and was at last rescued. Not long afterwards the rescuing ship was sunk and he and fifty others<sup>21</sup> found themselves in a rudderless, mastless, sailless boat 700 miles from land with three gallons of fresh water, some biscuits and chocolate. Making do with a raincoat-lining and a dozen shirts for a sail (rigged on the oar), they managed to keep going and eked out their rations by sucking fish caught on a bent nail. But the strain began to tell and by the seventeenth night there were only thirty left. Then they sighted a merchant ship 400 yards away: it passed by; and 'people just gave up after that so that four days later there were only nine of us left'. They were too dry to eat anything but chocolate and it took them an hour to get down a piece 1" x  $\frac{1}{2}$ " x  $\frac{1}{4}$ ". At last rain fell - 'not a tantalising drizzle, but a gorgeous tropical downpour' - from which four of them had strength enough to suck survival. This was about the twenty-first day and thereafter the four survivors established a sort of daily routine: bailing at dawn if it had rained, a longing look for a ship, a slow breakfast and a talk until the sun drove them to shelter; congregating about four to talk, to derive strength from the New Testament (the property of an R.A.F. sergeant who had died) and an 'odd and unorthodox' service conducted by Tony Large. At last there were signs of land: the sound of a plane; two

- 22 S.M.C. Dec. 1944. Only the initials are given.
- 23 S.M.C. Dec. 1945, June 1946 and Dec. 1947; and the tablets at the entrance to the Memorial Chapel (which have 128 names). Of those killed, 53 were in the S.A.A.F., 27 in the R.A.F., 9 in the S.A.A. and 7 in the R.N.C. Other regiments had 2 or 1, except the R.D.L.I., which had 3. The main areas were: 32 killed in North Africa; 29 in Italy (including a P.O.W.); 14 in the Union; 8 (including a P.O.W.) in Germany; and 7 in the Mediterranean. For South African casualties as a whole, Italy and the Middle East were the chief theatres (over half the total of European (i.e. White) casualties); but whereas the Air Forces took nearly two thirds of Michaelhouse casualties, less than a third of the South African (European) casualties were in the S.A.A.F. See Union Govt.: Roll of Honour World War 1939-1945; printed for the Dept. of Defence in 1952. (The statistical summary is loosely placed with the Roll and is not paginated. The Roll does not include South Africans who served in British or other allied units unless seconded.)
- 24 There were 12,080 Union casualties (killed or died), of whom 8,772 were European. (These figures do not include South Africans who served in British or other allied units unless seconded, for whom I cannot find a record.) Union Govt.: Roll of Honour World War 1939-1945; statistical summary. (The number of casualties in the First World War was almost exactly the same: 12,452, of whom 8,551 were Europeans, 1,568 of them in Imperial units. Union Govt.: The Union of South Africa and the Great War 1914-1918. Official History; U.G.; 1924; pp.229-230.)
- 25 S.M.C. May 1940.
- 26 S.M.C. Dec. 1949.
- 27 S.M.C. June 1952. That the memorial should take the form of a new chapel was decided only after considerable discussion.

days later, the sight of a plane and some birds; a Sunderland flying boat the next day; a black spot in a dark layer of cloud, whose nature the gloom of early morning tantalisingly obscured. And then, after 39 days in the boat, they were taken to the hospital in Freetown.

For many who served and survived or served and were killed, there are no details. A poem in memory of R.S.(Selley) and comrades, written by a master who served in the Natal Carbineers, N.A. St J. Davis, must stand for them:

No details known. Only imagination roams  
 The clouds, the storms, the often uneventful path  
 About the hazards of impenetrable night.  
 ... You fought in vain with fearful Mars  
 And died with his last laughter in your deadened ears -  
 His hoze of smoke and vapours all your pyre, until  
 Once more the wefts of broken myths are woven new,  
 And tranquil untapped wells of Peace are plumbed; and pride  
 With sorrow sings 'Northward you did not climb in vain.'<sup>22</sup>

There are 128 on the Roll of Honour<sup>23</sup>, nearly two-thirds of them in the S.A.A.F. or R.A.F.; and over a half were killed in North Africa, the Mediterranean or Italy. It was a high toll and represented about one in every hundred Union fatal casualties<sup>24</sup>. Their memorial at the school is the chapel, whose crypt was first used in the dark days of 1940<sup>25</sup>, but whose completion had to await a building permit, granted at last at the end of 1949<sup>26</sup>. It was dedicated on Ascension Eve 1952, the last year of Snell's office and the first year of Bishop Inman's episcopate, in the presence of a congregation of 800. The memorial tablets were dedicated the following day, when Currey gave the address to the Old Boys who had come to remember their fellows and the cause for which they had fought<sup>27</sup>.

#### WAR : SCHOOL BOYS

For the boys at school the war was a swirling mist, sometimes clearing so that it was hardly noticeable, occasionally so enveloping as to halt them in their tracks, mostly evident as a bank ahead, beyond which lay university or careers and the questions of a new

- 28 S.M.C. May 1941. Editorial by A.R.R.C-C. (Crosse-Crosse) and K.G.W. (Witthaus). See also editorial in S.M.C. Sept. 1942 by J.M.P. (Pennington) and K.G.W. In 1944 the Rector commented that the 'uncertainty of wartime prospects are increasingly affecting the senior boys', but warned against exaggerating this. (Rector's Report, 1944.)
- 29 Rector's Reports, Feb. 1940 and Nov. 1941.
- 30 See particularly Rector's Reports, May 1942 and Feb. 1945.
- 31 Personal knowledge of 1942, substantiated by information from Old Boys and Rector's Speech, S.M.C. Dec. 1942.
- 32 S.M.C. Dec. 1939.
- 33 Personal memory and that of Old Boys and Masters.
- 34 I cannot find a reference to this in the Chronicles or other documents, but boys certainly helped at some time between 1940 and 1942.
- 35 S.M.C. Dec. 1940, Dec. 1941 and Dec. 1943.
- 36 S.M.C. Dec. 1943. The birth and the defeat of D.H.S. were on 4th September; the capitulation on 3rd September.



order and peace. Editorials in the Chronicle, written by boys, expressed this view: youth must prepare for this 'war more terrible than any in the world's history' and must prepare now, for if we delay 'these problems of the future will not be for us to determine'<sup>28</sup>. Many did not wait. Numbers in the sixth form went up in the early part of the war, from 28 in 1940 to 34 in 1942<sup>29</sup>, but for several it was no more than a delaying action on the part of parents, since they left to join up at any time from Easter to Michaelmas<sup>30</sup>; and the age of the leaders in the school was often only sixteen or just seventeen at the beginning of the year<sup>31</sup>.

For them and the others still at school, there were solemn reminders of the war - if reminders were needed - in the special intercessions in the chapel (with voluntary attendance) after the final period on Wednesdays<sup>32</sup> and the growing roll of honour read with the school prayers at evensong on Sundays<sup>33</sup>. And there were opportunities for practical contributions through helping to convert a house in Howick for use as a T.O.C. hostel<sup>34</sup> and through war fêtes which were held for a few years until transport difficulties led the School Council to determine to hold no more in 1943<sup>35</sup>. There were lighter moments, however, and 1943 was the year in which the school happily celebrated with a half holiday the almost simultaneous occurrence of three events any one of which might have been responsible for the Rector's magnanimity: the birth of a son to the Rector, the defeat of the fancied Durban High School XV and the capitulation of Italy<sup>36</sup>. There were still twenty months to V.E. Day, however, and nearly two years to go before the capitulation of Japan. It was the former that evoked the most spontaneously joyful response, as if all cares had suddenly vanished - with the news of the impending armistice streamers appeared from nowhere, a battle with fire hoses drenched the quad and a long-suffering old Chevrolet truck drove a load of boys noisily about the estate. The officially sanctioned celebrations included a bonfire and the declaration of a whole holiday.

37 S.M.C. June 1945. The capitulation of Japan was celebrated with a whole holiday and a bonfire on 'Beacon', a hill opposite the school, S.M.C. Dec. 1945.

38 S.M.C. Dec. 1945.

39 B.M. 23/2/39: Memorandum on Planning and Development.

40 S.M.C. Dec. 1939.

41 S.M.C. Dec. 1939 and personal memory.

The real significance of the war and of victory was marked by services of thanksgiving at which the Rector reminded the boys (and visitors) of the obligations demanded of peace<sup>37</sup>; and later in the year, the Chronicle's editorial - written by N.C. Lyon shortly before his sudden death - called for a return to 'normal' standards, strained by six years of makeshift, but for a rejection of the 'normal' which had meant poverty for millions<sup>38</sup>.

In two spheres in particular, the makeshifts forced on Michelhouse, as on other schools, were very apparent: buildings and staffing. It is in fact remarkable that so much constructive work - indeed pioneering work in the South African context - was done both during the war and for several years afterwards, when it was still necessary to resort to makeshifts.

#### BUILDING : PLANS AND DELAYS

Snell had hardly taken up the reins when at the beginning of 1939 he presented the Governors with a memorandum on 'Planning and General Development'<sup>39</sup>. After a period of rapid development, the school then had 314 boys. Snell recommended planning for 330 divided into six houses (there were then five). For these a new chapel (already begun) was needed; a block, to accommodate geography, biology, art and a new house, should replace the ramshackle buildings behind the school; the music rooms should be rebuilt and placed further from the school; a permanent gymnasium and carpentry shop were required; an assembly hall should be built; and the eastern cloisters should be refurbished to conform with the rest of the quad.

During the course of the year, various alterations improved the specialist facilities for biology and chemistry<sup>40</sup>, provided music and art with a more distant 'school' in Vectis and made it possible to accommodate a new house, Pascoe's, partly in Fairfield Cottage, partly over the main entrance to the school and partly - at least as to cleanliness - in the old music rooms, now turned into a wash house overlooking the foundations of the new crypt.<sup>41</sup> Early the following

- 42 B.M. 31/8/45: Rector's Memorandum, 31/5/45.
- 43 Rector's Report, 13/11/47.
- 44 Rector's Report, 18/5/48.
- 45 S.M.C. June 1950.
- 46 Rector's Report, Aug. 1940. The housemasters were F. van Heijst and C. Melville; the other senior men were J. Pridmore and P.J. Hall (who was in England); and the others were P. Simon, N.A. St.J. Davis and J.F. Garland.
- 47 S.M.C. Dec. 1940 and May 1941. (J.B. Chutter and R.G.H. Green.)
- 48 J. Pridmore in 1941 (S.M.C. May 1941), C. Melville (who was wounded) in 1942 (S.M.C. June 1943) and F. van Heijst in 1944 (S.M.C. June 1944).
- 49 B.M. 23/5/40 and Rector's Report, May 1942.
- 50 S.M.C. Dec. 1940. Of six new academic staff, four were from retirement. The others were C.M.B. Thomas and Miss M.K. Ball.

year, four staff houses were completed, but the grand plans of the Memorandum had to wait for ten years before government building restrictions were relaxed sufficiently for major operations to be put into effect; and in the meantime another memorandum, while reiterating most of the recommendations of the first, suggested rather different priorities and added some new proposals<sup>42</sup>. It was not until the end of 1947 that a permit was received for the relatively minor alterations to East<sup>43</sup>, but it was a sign that restrictions were being eased and six months later the Board was authorised to proceed with an additional dining hall and new buildings for Pascoe's<sup>44</sup>, which they occupied in 1950<sup>45</sup>. This marked a resumption of the tempo of the building development which had been a feature of the pre-war period.

#### WAR TIME AND POST-WAR STAFFING

In staffing, the exceptional advantages of the immediately pre-war situation could not be recovered. Initially the problem was simply one of attempting to fill the gaps left by men going on active service, but the size of even this problem may be gauged from the fact that, by the middle of 1940, seven men had been released, two of them housemasters and two of them other senior men<sup>46</sup>. Two more joined up in the next twelve months, one a housemaster, and at the end of 1941 the Rector reported that more than a third of those who had been on the staff at the beginning of 1940 were on active service. Three of these men were able to return to the staff before the end of the war<sup>48</sup>; but even excluding these, there was a high proportion of posts for which permanent appointments could not be made, because the Board had, rightly - and in contrast to the practice in the First World War - guaranteed reinstatement to those who joined up<sup>49</sup>. This naturally added to the difficulties of recruiting staff and of retaining them.

In the emergency of 1940 the majority of the recruits were retired men<sup>50</sup> returning valiantly to campaign in the classrooms and

51 S.M.C. Dec. 1940, Sept. 1942, June 1947, and taped comments by F.R. Snell.

52 For list of staff see Appendix 7.

53 S.M.C. Dec. 1942 and Rector's Report, Aug. 1942.

54 S.M.C. Dec. 1945.

55 S.M.C. Dec. 1946.

one of them could undoubtedly claim a victory: F.S. Bishop returned at the age of 72, still with the attributes of a chief petty officer, still taking a cold plunge, still an enthusiast for the stage and still thorough in his mathematical instruction<sup>51</sup> so that although his veteran's campaign was short - he retired again in 1942 - his mark was clear. Most of the other war-time appointments were of young men, however, and although only one of them (J.J.A. van Schaik) was still on the staff in 1946, they helped to keep the school not only functioning but vigorous. And to them must be added the women - Miss Ball, Miss Hills (who married J.L. Robinson and therefore is still an invaluable reserve on the estate), Mrs Symes, Miss Snell (in a part time capacity) and, for a time when biology would otherwise have been impossible to retain, Mrs Snell: as a group the quality of their teaching could match that of the recruits of the 1930's and they helped to sustain and strengthen a number of extramural activities as well<sup>52</sup>.

The staffing problem during the war, indeed, was rather one of stability than of quality: though some of the stop-gaps were ineffective, the most notable fact is that from 1940 to the end of 1945 there were thirty-four new members of staff (excluding Miss Snell, Mrs Snell and the Rector's father-in-law, The Rev Sidebottom, none of whom had full-time teaching duties), and only five of these remained at the school for more than three years (C.M.B. Thomas, Miss Ball, J.J.A. van Schaik, N.M. Benkenstein and Mrs G. Symes).

Peace did not, however, bring an end to the instability. Indeed, in 1942 there was already an omen, for when C. Melville was released after being seriously wounded, he returned to Michaelhouse for only a short time before joining in a partnership in the preparatory school, Pridwin<sup>53</sup>. Immediately after the war, another senior man, J. Pridmore, left for a preparatory school in the Cape<sup>54</sup>; a year later, C.E. Birks, chaplain and housemaster, left for a Kenya prep. school<sup>55</sup>; and in 1949 two housemasters - F. van Heijst and D. Pennington - went off to Rhodesia to become joint heads of a

- 56 S.M.C. June 1949.
- 57 R.H. Green and A.R. Walshaw, S.M.C. 1946; J.C. Traill, S.M.C. 1947; P.J. Hall, S.M.C. June 1948. Another important departure was that of J.J.A. van Schaik who was a war-time appointment and who had built up the Art department (S.M.C. Dec. 1947).
- 58 Snell attributed the changes largely to the after-effects of the war, and the fact that the Natal Education Department suffered seriously from staff shortages offers considerable support for this thesis. See Note 73.
- 59 See Appendix 7.
- 60 Rector's Report, Feb. 1945.
- 61 B.M. 23/8/46 describes the circumstances of his resignation, which Snell had felt it necessary to ask for. B.M. 15/8/47 gives his age. He suffered from arthritis.
- 62 Letter from R.F. Currey.
- 63 S.M.C. Dec. 1946.



preparatory school there<sup>56</sup>. Meanwhile others who had been on the staff at the outbreak of war left to farm, to go into business or to teach in other countries, or elsewhere in South Africa<sup>58</sup>.

The reasons were individual and complex, but war experiences and responsibilities made it difficult for many to resume life at Balgowan, perhaps especially because that life was shot through with the vigour and drive of Snell himself<sup>58</sup>. It is possible, moreover, that the war, while necessitating a number of temporary appointments, acted as a brake on changes among the permanent staff and that when the war ended, the brake was released; for it must be remembered that until the thirties it had been rare for men to outlast a generation of boys, let alone remain for ten years or more<sup>59</sup>. Yet all except one of the men who had been appointed before the war and resigned during it or in the next few years had been on the permanent staff for at least ten years and in most cases for fifteen, and the exception (P.F. Simon) did not return to South Africa after being demobilised<sup>60</sup>. Whatever the reasons, the resignation of so many senior men within a few years was serious.

Misfortune and tragedy, moreover, aggravated the situation. T.A. Strickland's health had begun to deteriorate some time before his fifteen years as housemaster of East expired in 1944; its continuing deterioration forced his resignation from teaching less than two years later, when he was still in his early fifties<sup>61</sup>. He had been nominally joint senior master with K.M. Pennington - a curious appointment which had been wished on Currey as a result of Hannah's acting rectorship<sup>62</sup> and which was bound to cause difficulties - and he had taught every subject in the curriculum except, so it was claimed, Afrikaans and Greek<sup>63</sup>, though Chemistry was his chief subject. Meticulous in his work and in his expectations from boys and dapper in his dress, his arthritis exacerbated a naturally irascible temper so that small boys, especially, went in fear of his wrath; but the boys in his house developed a respect and a love for him and even those not in East occasionally saw him unbend in light-

64 Comments of Old Boys and personal experience.

65 S.M.C. Dec. 1945 and comments of Old Boys. See also S.M.C. June 1944.

66 S.M.C. Dec. 1950, comments of Old Boys and staff and especially comments of F.R. Snell in conversation. See also B.M. 24/2/45 and 17/11/50.

hearted plays and variety concerts<sup>64</sup>. The other two senior men whom the school lost during Snell's rectorship were younger men.

N.G. Lyon had come from England in 1931 after a brief spell in business and in the next fifteen years he made a strong contribution to the life of the school: he enriched its cultural life, partly through his humanistic approach to the classics and partly through his support of such activities as the Literary Society; but he was active, too, in rugby and shooting. Before being appointed housemaster of Pascoe's, he was made the first careers master at the school - a field which was then untilled in government schools and not widely accepted elsewhere as the proper task of schools. He died suddenly of a heart attack when he was less than forty in 1945.<sup>65</sup>

The third tragic loss was of one with a closer association with Michaelhouse than any of the other staff except K.M. Pennington. A.P. Woods had been at Michaelhouse at the end of the first World War and immediately afterwards and both there and at Rhodes he was distinguished by his sporting ability. Indeed, he is most widely remembered for his achievements in cricket especially - he played for both the Eastern Province and Natal and he was one of the initiators of a Natal Schools cricket week and among its staunchest supporters. His jovial sportsmanship was, however, only one sign of his deep Christian commitment (he had been Secretary of the Students' Christian Association at Rhodes), his remarkable capacity for making and keeping friends, and his generous humour which released tensions: these are invaluable qualities anywhere, but especially in a tightly knit community such as Michaelhouse. He took over the housemastership of West during the war and was acting Senior Master while K.M. Pennington was away in 1949, and there was every possibility that he would have been appointed permanently to the post; but he had a heart attack at the beginning of 1950 and though he was able to return to his task of 'acting like a shelter to nestless young birds' (as the Compound lament put it), he did not fully recover and he died before the end of the year<sup>66</sup>.

- 67 See Appendix 7.
- 68 Rector's Reports, Feb. 1945 and May 1945.
- 69 B.M. 17/11/46; Finance Committee Report.
- 70 New salaries were proposed, B.M. 16/5/47 and further improved B.M. 15/8/47 to £340 x 20 - 540 (the staff had asked for £350-£650). Favourable staff reaction is reported in Rector's Report, 13/11/47 and in a letter from the staff reported in B.M. 21/11/47. The provincial scale for professionally qualified graduates was £425-£800. All these scales exclude cost of living allowances and the Michaelhouse scales exclude provisions in kind.
- 71 B.M. 2/3/57 and Salaries and Fees ad hoc Committee Report, 19/1/51. They were raised to £350 x 20 - £600.
- 72 Rector's Memorandum on Salaries and Fees 18/8/52, attached to B.M. 22/8/52. Provincial scales were £615-£1220; the others were reckoned as follows: Hilton £660-£1255; St. Andrew's £636-£1304; Kearsney £675-£1270 (the last two having been recently adjusted).

With his death there were only six of the pre-war staff left: P.D. Barnard, who was to resign early in 1951; A.R. Chapman, who was then in England for his daughter's health but was to return for a short time in 1951; J.R. Chutter, who was later to become Director of the Michaelhouse Trust; M.A. St J. Davis, whose health deteriorated until he had to resign but who later joined Snell in Rhodesia; J.L. Robinson, who is the only one still on the staff; and, of course, K.M. Pennington<sup>67</sup>.

In spite of the resignations and deaths, there remained a small nucleus of senior men. It was nevertheless difficult to fill the gaps satisfactorily. Shortly before the end of the war, Snell reported that staffing, especially in Science and Mathematics, caused him much anxiety and he had therefore taken on additional science teaching himself<sup>68</sup>.

After the war it was possible, but difficult, to recruit men from England, for delays occasioned by demobilisation and by men having to resume or commence their training were followed by the South African elections of 1948 which made the country less attractive to English immigrants. In South Africa, too, there were naturally similar, though probably not such serious, delays in training men, and the initial salary (of £250) compared unfavourably with starting salaries in the government service and at Milton. With the various allowances, married men were on the whole better off at Michaelhouse, but it was exceptionally difficult to recruit suitable single men<sup>69</sup> and there simply was not enough married accommodation - even if it had been desirable - to have an overwhelmingly married staff. In 1947 the salary scales were improved after considerable discussion and eventually to the satisfaction of the staff<sup>70</sup>. In 1951 there were further improvements<sup>71</sup> so that, together with allowances (including allowances in kind), the Michaelhouse salaries were reckoned as being from £635 to £1250, rather better than the provincial scales and not quite as good as Milton, St Andrew's or Kearsney<sup>72</sup>.

- 73 See Appendix 7. There were 22 in 1945 (Rector's Report, May 1945); 25 in 1947 (B.M. 21/2/47; 26 in a list given in S.M.C. Dec. 1949 which does not, however, appear to be complete (J.L. Robinson is omitted).
- 74 There are 31 appointments from South Africa, 28 from the United Kingdom and three (Pratt, Mackenzie and Birrell) whose origins I have not been able to determine. Among the South Africans is R.G. Kingdon (B.A. Cant.), who had been in Provincial service a very long time. Among the United Kingdom group are three (Norwood, Roseveare and Goldie Scott) appointed from other schools in South Africa and two (Burnett and Currey) who were South Africans - indeed, Old Boys; I have included the two music specialists, (Brett and Hodgson), in this group though on uncertain evidence and I have included Rev. H.L. Way (a Baptist Minister) on personal knowledge.
- 75 Acting Rector's Report, 26/11/48.

Improvements in the salaries did not, however, materially affect the turnover of the staff: although relatively few staff had to be replaced in 1948, none of those appointed in 1948 saw through a generation of boys; and there were as many changes in 1952 as there had been in each of the previous three years. Over the period 1946 to 1952 there were over sixty appointments to the teaching staff, a few of them temporary leave replacements, but even allowing for them, a very high number for a staff of about 25<sup>73</sup>. Among them were sixteen who remained for more than four years - about half of them appointments of United Kingdom graduates; which was slightly higher than the proportion of United Kingdom appointments in relation to the total<sup>74</sup>. The consolation was that in this group of post-war appointments were some whose contribution was to be at least as distinctive as that of the pre-war appointments; for among them was E.T.S. Norwood, whose appointment in 1949 direct to a housemastership from Kingswood school created a precedent and who subsequently became Senior Master and Rector<sup>75</sup>; another was R.C. Brooks who, having contributed especially to the dramatic tradition of the school, was appointed to the headmastership of Cordwalles; a third was the first Old Boy to be a chaplain, B.B. Burnett, who subsequently was consecrated Bishop of Bloemfontein; and there were three whose length of service alone could challenge that of their predecessors: R.L. Ibbotson, J.P. Lowe and R.G. Hennessey.

This lengthy analysis has been necessary in order to make explicit both the difficulties of staffing, which are frequently referred to in the Board Minutes, and the impossibility of attributing the difficulties to any one cause or even set of causes. It is probable that some were simply incompatible with Snell and some would have preferred him to take a less direct part in the day-to-day affairs of the school or, as they put it, to delegate more responsibilities. Yet it was his policy to work through the housemasters in particular, arranging to this end to have his family

76 Snell's taped comments and conversation. My own experience and recollections of Old Boys attest to Snell's involvement. Some members of staff have expressed varying degrees of criticism but examples have been lacking.

77 This is an interpretation for which I alone must admit responsibility. It is based on comments by those most directly involved but is almost certainly only a partial explanation.



fanned out regularly so that he could meet the housemasters over dinner and into the night to discuss matters of common concern<sup>76</sup>.

On the other hand he was thoroughly involved in the school's life so that he did not appear to the boys as a figurehead or director and, while this was admired by some, it appeared as trespassing to others.

In any school, the relationship between the headmaster and the staff is likely to be affected by the senior master's intermediary position, and with a headmaster of Snell's temperament, this was perhaps particularly significant. But Snell, like Currey before him, had inherited a structure which could hardly have worked entirely satisfactorily whatever the personalities involved, for there were two men who shared the status and allowance for Senior Master: T.A. Strickland and K.M. Pennington, until the former's retirement in 1947. In fact K.M. Pennington was the effective senior master and deputised for the Rector (whether Currey or Snell) in his absence. This worked admirably in respect of the hierarchy from Rector to boys, but the anomalous structure was bound to make the task difficult in respect of the hierarchy from Rector to staff: the clear responsibility of a Senior Master to be an intermediary and chief adviser was blurred, to the common disadvantage of the rectors, the senior masters and the staff, and the retirement of Strickland could not overnight bring the situation into focus<sup>77</sup>.

But whether a different, more orthodox structure and a different, more remote rectorial strategy would have contributed materially to a more stable staff in the late forties may be doubted. For each individual who left there was a sufficient number of possible reasons: the aftermath of war and politics, salaries and a consideration that children had to be boarded for schooling, the use of Michaelhouse as a school of English or as a stepping stone to university lecturing, an urge for more responsibility in a school of one's own or a consideration of matrimony. These were among the factors involved. Moreover, Michaelhouse was not alone in its difficulties. At St Andrew's, staffing continued to be a serious problem well into the

78 R.F. Currey: St. Andrew's, p.170 (the Postscript); and Province of Natal: Reports of the Director of Education for 1945 and 1946 (p.6); 1947 (pp.6-8); 1948 (p.5); 1949 (p.4); 1950 (pp.2-4); 1951 (p.2 and Annexure A, pp.34-42); 1952 (p.1); and 1953 (p.4). 1948 was exceptional because of a recruiting drive in Great Britain. The shortage in government schools was of both men and women. For additional references to Michaelhouse staffing, see Rector's Reports, Aug. 1945 and Nov. 1945; and B.M. 21/2/47, 20/5/49 and 16/11/51.

79 The terms were last used in 1939. (S.M.C. Dec. 1939.)

80 S.M.C. Dec. 1941.

81 S.M.C. June 1945.

82 S.M.C. Sept. 1942.

fifties; and every year from 1945 to 1953, the Natal Director of Education drew attention to the pressing problem of staffing, with a nett loss to the permanent establishment every year except 1948, so that eventually a Committee was appointed to investigate the reasons for the shortage<sup>78</sup>.

#### CURRICULUM CHANGES

Snell had described the function of a church school to 'give its sons knowledge and faith' and, in spite of the difficulties described, he was able to continue the development of the curriculum in a way that displayed a broad conception of 'knowledge'.

In the first place, the curriculum became more flexible: the distinction between a 'classical' and a 'modern' side, already blurred, was dropped<sup>79</sup> and 'setting' (already widespread) became the rule in each subject right through the school. These changes were reflected in the now regular use of the terms A, B, C and D Block to replace Upper V, Lower V, IV and III Form, numerals being used to designate the particular set - D1 English was the top English set in D Block, A2 Afrikaans the second Afrikaans set in A Block (the matriculation form). Moreover, when regulations permitted seven subjects to be written for matriculation, the whole school worked to a seven-subject time-table from 1941<sup>80</sup> and it became possible to take a wide variety of subjects. Taking Greek, for instance; had hitherto meant dropping science from the C Block (Form IV), whereas it was now possible for the very few Greek scholars to do both; with biology fairly firmly established, there were four sciences to choose from - chemistry, physics, physical science and biology; and, from 1945, it became possible to take both Afrikaans and French<sup>81</sup>. The examination curriculum was, however, strictly in the academic tradition, with no 'searching for soft options' permitted, as Snell put it<sup>82</sup> - bookkeeping was already on its way out in 1939 and was not re-admitted, and the only exceptions to the rule (at least in the sense that they were not traditional examination subjects) were Zulu,

- 83 Rector's Report, 22/2/50, Schedule on Matric Results; and S.M.C. Sept. 1942.
- 84 S.M.C. May 1939.
- 85 S.M.C. June 1945. See also S.M.C. Dec. 1943 and S.M.C. Dec. 1944.
- 86 Benkenstein, who conducted the experiment, left at the end of 1945 (S.M.C. June 1946).
- 87 S.M.C. June 1945.
- 88 Rector's Report, 24/8/50. P.D. Barnard resigned in consequence, but was allowed to withdraw his resignation (B.M. 17/11/50). He resigned finally in 1951, having obtained a post in the Natal Education Department.
- 89 S.M.C. May 1941.
- 90 S.M.C. Dec. 1939.
- 91 S.M.C. Dec. 1941.

Art and, occasionally, Music<sup>83</sup>.

The offering of a wider range of subjects within the academic tradition was largely a development of tendencies apparent since Bushell's day. There were, however, two notable experiments.

In his last speech as Rector, Currey had insisted: 'We are South Africans, not scattered exiles'<sup>84</sup>; and Snell was equally insistent on this theme. He was consequently deeply concerned about the standing of Afrikaans in the school and in an effort to improve the bilinguality of the boys, Geography was taught through the medium of Afrikaans in certain sets in C and B blocks. The experiment was reported to have run successfully for two years<sup>85</sup>, but seems then to have petered out, presumably through lack of suitable staff<sup>86</sup>. At about the same time (1945), it was made obligatory for all Union Nationals to learn Afrikaans<sup>87</sup> - some had hitherto taken French as an alternative. The standard of Afrikaans remained poor, however, - of 59 matriculation candidates who wrote Afrikaans in 1949, 20 obtained an 'F', 20 an 'E', 16 a 'D' and 3 a 'C' - and the following year Snell 'imported' a new head of the Afrikaans department, C. van den Berg<sup>88</sup>.

The other experiment was unequivocally successful. Art had been in the curriculum for some time, taught to the junior forms, but the fact that it was labelled 'Drawing' was an indication of its status, and it was not in the hands of a specialist. In 1940, however, the first step was taken towards the establishment of an Art School when Miss Clarence was appointed specifically for art<sup>89</sup>. The following year J.J. van Schaik took over and the combination of his skill and imagination and Snell's enthusiasm led to a remarkably rapid and significant development. Sharing the old bungalow, 'Vectis', with Music<sup>90</sup>, the Art School became the centre for a range of activities which would be remarkable even now in South Africa. Besides painting, line cuts and carving, there was architectural drawing, a potter's wheel and kiln and a printing press<sup>91</sup> - the latter initially a 'home designed and home built

- 92 Rector's Report, Nov. 1941.
- 93 S.M.C. June 1943 and 1947.
- 94 Rector's Report, 13/11/51.
- 95 Natal Provincial Administration: Report of the Director of Education for 1950, p.24.
- 96 The first reference to the possibility of a properly equipped workshop is in B.M. 20/5/49; in S.M.C. June 1951 the Engineering Society is referred to as having started 'a few years ago'. I cannot get confirmation of a more precise date.
- 97 S.M.C. June 1950.
- 98 B.M. 20/5/49 and 19/8/49. £750 was granted.
- 99 S.M.C. June 1950.
- 100 B.M. 23/2/39 and Rector's Memorandum on Music, 9/2/39.
- 101 S.M.C. Sept. 1942.
- 102 S.M.C. May 1939.

machine'<sup>92</sup> which was replaced by an electrical one off which rolled items from programmes to literary supplements. It was clearly an experiment which not only provided creative opportunities for the boys in and out of school time but which caught the imagination of others as well, for the Durban Art Gallery staged two exhibitions of the work of the Art School and the Rector was invited to broadcast on the rôle of the School<sup>93</sup>. Although it did not retain its full vigour after the departure of van Schoik in 1947<sup>94</sup>, art remained a permanent and significant part of the school's activities; whereas it was only in the 1950's that it began to find its way into the high schools of the Natal Education Department<sup>95</sup>.

Two other creative fields were developed or explored in the forties, one of them somewhat peripheral and for that reason, perhaps, less secure. In about 1949 an Engineering Society began in the basement of Darfield<sup>96</sup>, stimulated by one of the masters, Milford<sup>97</sup>. Snell took advantage of the enthusiasm to apply for a grant from the de Jooste Trust for a properly equipped workshop<sup>98</sup> and, when Milford left, appointed a retired doctor and enthusiastic mechanic, Dr Lourie, to take charge<sup>99</sup>. Although it never attracted so much attention or so many boys as the Art School, it provided an alternative extra-curricular activity for a nucleus of enthusiasts.

More significant in the school's life was music, if only because of its place in chapel services. Currey had appointed the first full-time master in charge of music and Snell, himself an enthusiastic organist, tried hard to develop this side of the school. At his first Board Meeting he obtained permission to increase the responsibilities of the Director of Music, as the master in charge was to be called; and at the same time he got support for a scheme to develop a school orchestra and to try to ensure that 'talent did not go unnoticed'<sup>100</sup>. Soon, with J. Lea-Morgan as Director, there was indeed a modest orchestra, and it managed to survive even when the wind instrument instructor 'joined up'<sup>101</sup>. There was also a Music Society (a development of the old Grandpaine Society)<sup>102</sup>, a

- 103 S.M.C. Dec. 1939.
- 104 S.M.C. May 1940.
- 105 S.M.C. June 1946.
- 106 See June Chronicles 1948-51.
- 107 S.M.C. Dec. 1951 and June 1952; and Snell's taped comments.
- 108 S.M.C. Dec. 1940.
- 109 S.M.C. Dec. 1943.
- 110 S.M.C. Dec. 1943 and Dec. 1944.



Choral Society for the boys and a Madrigal Society for the staff<sup>103</sup>; and the chapel choir became both more ambitious and more competent<sup>104</sup>. The early promise was not fully maintained, however, and the orchestra suffered still further when, after the war, there were no longer teachers for the strings<sup>105</sup>. Nevertheless, under E. Brett and then J. Hodgson, work became more ambitious and involved more of the school and there was a series of choral performances in conjunction with other schools<sup>106</sup>. At the time of his departure from Michaelhouse, Snell had the satisfaction of knowing that in quality and enthusiasm music was well established under Hodgson, who pioneered a Summer School to which boys and girls from various parts of Natal were invited<sup>107</sup>.

There were also developments in the sixth form curriculum. It had previously offered specialisation in the ordinary subjects of the matriculation examination, with the addition of a course of 'Rector's Lectures' geared to citizenship responsibilities. In 1940 a course of Bantu Studies was offered for the first time<sup>108</sup> and a few years later Economics was included<sup>109</sup>. These were, however, options and for the majority the curriculum continued to be an extension of the matriculation curriculum. In 1944 Snell reorganised the course so that, although there was still some specialisation, a series of integrated lectures was introduced to emphasise man in relation to his environment: a study of the history of scientific, philosophical and religious thought in relation to man's social and political environment; a survey of the political thought and culture of the period 1919 to 1939; a study of the Union constitution, the colour bar and other matters directly affecting the citizen as voter; and a number of studies, conducted in small groups, covering a wide range of topics, from biology and psychology to the poor whites - the topics apparently being selected in relation to staff interests and knowledge<sup>110</sup>. There were considerable modifications in the course subsequently as staff changed, but it was from this tradition (itself a development from

- 111 The number of matriculants was in the seventies, except 1939 (66), 1941 (87) and 1948 (86); numbers in the sixth form were in the twenties and occasionally in the thirties.
- 112 Comparisons are subject to reservations since
- the figures for 1942, 1943 and 1952 are incomplete (at Michaelhouse there were 51 matriculants in 1942 and 45 in 1943);
  - the Departmental figures include supplementary passes and it is not always possible to distinguish supplementaries from main results in Michaelhouse figures. Except for 1947 and 1948, I have worked proportions on figures which either definitely or probably exclude supplementaries. Judging from figures where supplementaries and main results are clearly distinguished, supplementaries add about 1% to 6% of the total proportion of passes at Michaelhouse.
  - the figures for 1939-42 do not distinguish matriculation exemption from school leaving certificate passes.

% Failures and Matriculants, Natal Education Dept.  
Schools and Michaelhouse, 1939-1952

	<u>Michaelhouse</u>		<u>N.E.D.</u>	
	<u>% Failures</u>	<u>% Matriculants</u>	<u>% Failures</u>	<u>% Matriculants</u>
1939	15.1	80.4	20.5	?
1940	19.3	73.7	25.6	?
1941	25.3	68.9	18.5	?
1942	?	?	25.0	?
1943	?	?	?	?
1944	24.2	69.7	19.8	57.4
1945	19.5	62.3	19.4	55.1
1946	25.7	57.1	17.9	55.9
1947	19.2	64.1	18.0	59.1
1948	28.0	52.3	14.7	55.4
1949	33.8	45.9	20.3	52.6
1950	25.0	54.1	17.5	56.3
1951	20.0	56.3	15.8	53.0
1952	21.1	56.3	?	?

Sources: Michaelhouse: Rector's Reports and S.M.C. of the period.  
N.E.D.: Province of Natal: Annual Reports of the Directors of Education.

No matriculation results are given for 1943 or 1952.

- 113 Rector's Report 22/2/50
- 114 S.M.C. June 1946 and Dec. 1948.
- 115 S.M.C. June 1948.
- 116 S.M.C. June 1951.
- 117 Rector's Report, 22/5/50.

the thirties) that the marked growth under Morgan was able to take place: a tradition in which the emphasis was placed on a liberal education with some specialisation but in which specific preparation for first year university examinations was deliberately discouraged.

For some the absence of an external examination was perhaps an invitation to loaf or to indulge in diletantism, but a course tailored to first year university requirements would have limited the general educational value of the sixth form year and duplicated work for which the university is specifically designed; and the fact that between a third and a quarter of matriculants continued to return for a post matriculation year was an indication that the policy was a success<sup>111</sup>.

#### ACADEMIC RESULTS

Measured by matriculation results, the school's fortunes fluctuated. Once the staff changes occasioned by the war began to take effect, the percentage of failures was generally higher - and in 1948 and 1949 considerably higher - than the average for schools under the Natal Education Department: in 1949, a third of the Michaelhouse candidates failed.<sup>112</sup> The proportion who matriculated, on the other hand, was usually better at Michaelhouse, though 1949 was a particularly bad year in this respect also<sup>113</sup>; and there were two occasions when the proportion of first class passes was outstandingly good - in 1945 43% of the candidates obtained a first class pass and in 1947 40% did so<sup>114</sup>.

That the results were not, however, really satisfactory was highlighted by the fact that even in the 'good' 1947 year, two of the boys who failed to matriculate but obtained School Leaving Certificates gained distinctions in History, Geography and Chemistry and another gained distinctions in Mathematics and Geography without matriculating<sup>115</sup>. As remedial measures, Snell introduced afternoon periods on three days a week and brought additional pressure to bear on the heads of departments to supervise their juniors<sup>117</sup> and these devices and, more particularly, the steadier staffing situation

- 118 B.M. 16/11/51: copy of circular letter to parents dated 23/11/51.
- 119 At least by 1951 (when 10 took six subjects and one took five).  
See Schedule on Exams, R.R. 18/2/52 for 1951 and B.M. 21/11/52  
for 1952. See Schedule on Exams, Rector's Report 18/2/52 and  
B.M. 21/11/52.
- 120 B.M. 16/11/51.
- 121 I have not investigated the policy of other independent schools.

contributed to the improved results of Snell's last three years.

Apart from staffing, the most serious obstacle was probably the difficulty of providing suitable courses for the boys of below average ability. In the early days of the school it had been quite acceptable for a number of boys to leave without attempting the equivalent of the matriculation examination but by the forties it was assumed that all boys coming to Michaelhouse were aiming at the possession of a certificate; and, whether it was to be a School Leaving Certificate or a Matriculation Exemption Certificate, the syllabuses were the same. At Michaelhouse the high fees, quite apart from educational considerations, made retardation a policy to be avoided if possible, and although the possibility of superannuation (if a boy was eighteen months older than the average for his block) existed as a threat, this, too, was naturally implemented very cautiously<sup>118</sup>.

One possibility of differentiating in order to improve statistics was to allow some boys to write six instead of seven subjects. Snell was clearly reluctant to do this, partly because the matriculation requirements made it a slightly uncertain advantage but chiefly because he believed that six subjects was educationally restricting; but eventually about ten or eleven per cent were allowed to write fewer than seven subjects<sup>119</sup>. In 1951, moreover, Snell announced that he would introduce an additional form after C Block and before B block to give the 'weaker brothers' a 'better deal'. This was just before Snell's departure and it did not remain a permanent feature of the school, so that its value cannot be assessed, but the initial notification upset a considerable number of parents<sup>120</sup>. Certainly the problem of catering for the 'weaker brothers' in a fee-paying school which is properly geared to high academic achievement and within the somewhat inflexible South African examination system is one which has not yet been satisfactorily overcome at Michaelhouse<sup>121</sup>.

- 122 S.M.C. Dec. 1944.
- 123 December Chronicles for the period.
- 124 S.M.C. Dec. 1939 and Dec. 1951.
- 125 S.M.C. June 1950.
- 126 S.M.C. Dec. 1939, Dec. 1945, June 1944 and June 1949.
- 127 This does not appear to be recorded, but was introduced about 1941. (Personal memory and recollections of other Old Boys.)
- 128 S.M.C. May 1941
- 129 S.M.C. June 1944.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES : ATHLETIC

Among activities outside the class- or work-room, sport continued to develop along lines already laid down, with more boys participating regularly in 'minor' sports and with fortunes fluctuating in cricket and rugby.

Squash and tennis remained essentially voluntary recreational activities with few boys involved in team matches. During the war, indeed, matches were confined to inter-house competitions or to pitting staff against boys, except for an occasional tennis match against St Anne's or a military team<sup>122</sup>. And even after the war inter-school matches were irregular, with Wykeham, St John's (Pietermaritzburg), St Anne's and Hilton as the main opponents until in 1951 Glenwood and St Charles were added to the list<sup>123</sup>. (This was the year in which a match in honour of P.D. Barnard, who had been in charge of tennis since 1939, was held and from which he and K.M. Pennington were the two members of staff to emerge undefeated.<sup>124</sup>.) Since squash was still rarely played elsewhere, matches were possible only occasionally, either against an Old Boys' team from Durban, where, it was reported<sup>125</sup>, enthusiasm was growing, or a university team; but the standard at school was improving, partly, no doubt because the courts were improved by the addition of more lights and of wooden floors (the latter put in partly by the boys)<sup>126</sup>.

Swimming, too, was largely recreational and Snell hoped to encourage a healthier matter-of-factness about the human body (and a reduction in the number of lost costumes) by insisting on nude bathing, for which purpose the hedge round the baths was grown high<sup>127</sup>. Water-polo was introduced for enthusiasts by A.R. Walshaw in 1941<sup>128</sup> but the attention of swimmers was focused on the annual Inter-schools Gala in Pietermaritzburg and the Hilton match. The annus mirabilis was 1944, when Michaelhouse wrested the championship from Maritzburg College, who had held the cup for twelve years<sup>129</sup> (and in most subsequent years).

Attention to athletics was concentrated on preparation for the

- 130 S.M.C. Dec. 1942.
- 131 S.M.C. Sept. 1942.
- 132 S.M.C. June 1943.
- 133 S.M.C. Dec. 1945.
- 134 S.M.C. Dec. 1947.
- 135 S.M.C. Dec. 1947 and Dec. 1950.
- 136 S.M.C. Dec. 1945.
- 137 S.M.C. March 1951.
- 138 S.M.C. June 1951.
- 139 S.M.C. May 1940.
- 140 S.M.C. Dec. 1940.
- 141 See especially S.M.C. May 1940 and June 1951.
- 142 See December Chronicles for the period from 1942.



inter-house meeting and a match against Hilton, except for the cross-country 'ramparts' which continued to be held when weather made other sport impossible - the course behind the school, last used in 1930 was resumed in 1942<sup>130</sup>. In that year, of six records broken in the athletic sports, five were by J. Rymer in the under sixteen group<sup>131</sup>. (As the result of an injury to a knee, he was unable to challenge the open records the following year<sup>132</sup>.) In 1945 Michaelhouse entered for the first time in the invitation mile at Estcourt school, when, in an exciting finish, Skinner of Michaelhouse won in the record time of 4' 41" from the Glenwood representative, Johnson, who had been third in the South African junior championship<sup>133</sup>. Two years later, D.J. Clark won the same event<sup>134</sup>.

For P.T. enthusiasts, there was a Gym Club, which flourished under Walshaw (the P.T. instructor), petered out on his departure and was revived again<sup>135</sup>; and boxing was revived in 1945<sup>136</sup>. Although the standard and enthusiasm fluctuated in the latter, Michaelhouse representatives did well in the first Natal Midlands Championship contests in 1950, winning the light-heavyweight and heavyweight titles and the best loser's cup<sup>137</sup>.

Whether enthusiastic or not, all boys were involved in cadets (until 1951, when there was a major re-organisation under Norwood and the D Block was excluded)<sup>138</sup>. In the early years, drill - at first in fours and then, from 1940, in threes<sup>139</sup> - was the main activity, carried out with dummy rifles from 1940, when the Defence Department took away the old rifles<sup>140</sup>. Field work, however, began to play some part in the training - in addition to the annual 'field day'; and in 1951 the traditional annual inspection was replaced by a house competition and display which included 'wet bridging' over the swimming bath<sup>141</sup>. Meanwhile, the signals corps progressed and the band, in spite of a lack of instructors, managed respectably at the inter-school competitions<sup>142</sup>.

Among the team games, hockey continued to be a junior partner,

- 143 S.M.C. Dec. 1949.
- 144 S.M.C. Dec. 1943.
- 145 S.M.C. Dec. 1939.
- 146 S.M.C. Dec. 1943.
- 147 S.M.C. Dec. 1946 and Rector's Report, Aug. 1946.
- 148 Ibid.
- 149 S.M.C. Dec. 1949.
- 150 S.M.C. Dec. 1950.
- 151 S.M.C. Dec. 1951.
- 152 Rector's Report, 9/8/51 attached to B.M. 17/8/51.
- 153 S.M.C. Dec. 1951.

but the number involved increased and by 1949 the school even fielded a third team, the first playing nine matches in that year, against club teams except for one against Hilton<sup>143</sup>. The enthusiasm for the game was illustrated by the fact that when a voluntary Sunday league was started in 1942, there were a hundred applicants<sup>144</sup>.

In spite of this enthusiasm, rugby continued to be regarded as the most important winter game. From a rather poor year in 1939, when only just over half the matches were won by the first fifteen<sup>145</sup>, the teams enjoyed a respectable reputation without gaining sensational successes until the giant-killing defeat (under J.A. Youngelson) of Durban High School in 1943, which aroused such enthusiasm at the school<sup>146</sup>. The following season, with M. Price Moor (son of the Moor who had achieved so much in Hugh-Jones's time) as captain, was the most successful since 1936 and included two thrilling matches against Hilton, won 9-2 and 8-7. The next few years were almost equally successful and, with the return of peace, tours, including a most successful one to Rhodesia, became a possibility<sup>147</sup>. In the Jubilee year, 1946, the first beat Hilton at Hilton 13-12 in the last few minutes, but in the Jubilee match itself at Michaelhouse, the tables were turned, 3-4. Three years later, however, the record slumped<sup>149</sup> and, although the 1950 team (under H. Currey, the former Rector's son) was described as 'courageous' and defeated the hitherto unbeaten Maritzburg College side comfortably, they lost considerably more matches than they won (12 against 3)<sup>150</sup>.

It is indicative of the importance attached to rugby - which the rugby notes of 1951 described as providing 'a training in courage and self-control and the best sort of toughness'<sup>151</sup> - that the first fifteen's defeats caused serious adverse comment among Old Boys and others which the Rector felt obliged to comment on in one of his reports to the governors<sup>152</sup>; and the rugby notes for 1951 attributed part of the blame to the enthusiasm for hockey which, it was said, contributed to the falling enthusiasm for rugby<sup>153</sup>. Since hockey

- 154 S.M.C. June 1949.
- 155 Rector's Report, 14/11/49.
- 156 Snell's taped comments; also Rector's Report, Feb. 1951.
- 157 Rector's Report, 18/2/52.
- 158 S.M.C. June 1945.
- 159 S.M.C. Dec. 1946, Jubilee Supplement.

had enjoyed enthusiastic support for a considerable period, including a period of sound achievement, this cannot be taken very seriously; and it may be argued that participation in hockey is as valuable for individual development as rugby.

The concern over the defects illustrates, however, that the success of the first fifteen is taken as a more or less accurate indication of the tone of a school. In point of fact, 1949 was probably not a good year at the school, for it was the year of the exceptionally bad examination results; the cricket team (1948/49) is described as having had a good record but poor teamwork<sup>154</sup>; and bullying and 'dirt' (as the Rector's report to the Board put it) were sufficiently serious to demand action on the part of Snell<sup>155</sup>. In the following years, however, the tone improved without any corresponding improvement in the first fifteen's results<sup>156</sup>. There is no doubt that the concern over the team's performances was real, but it was probably not widespread: at all events, there was no reduction in the pressure of entrants on the school, for numbers rose from 355 in 1949 to 388 in 1952 and for 1953 there were 130 candidates in the entrance examination for about 90 places.<sup>157</sup>

The rugby and cricket records, indeed, illustrate neatly the danger of making generalisations from first team successes and the truth that fortunes as well as coaches fluctuate; for the cricket slump came in 1944/5, when rugby was booming. Even in that season, however, there were sparkling performances - as in the two-day match against Milton at Kingsmead, when the team, faced with 130 to get in 133 minutes, made the runs with seven minutes to spare<sup>158</sup>; and in the consistently secure wicket-keeping of Price Moor, who was described as perhaps the best wicket keeper at the school since Tom Campbell (the first Michaelhouse Springbok). (Another feat of the season deserves to be recorded as a remarkable curiosity: in the house matches, C. Henderson took all the Founders wickets for 4 runs, seven of them in successive balls.<sup>159</sup>) The poorest season was the following one, when the first won 6 matches, lost 3 and

160 S.M.C. June 1946.

161 S.M.C. June 1948.

162 S.M.C. June 1950.

163 S.M.C. June 1943.

164 S.M.C. June 1945 and Old Boys' reminiscences.

165 See especially S.M.C. Dec. 1946 and June 1948 for the extremes in numbers. For other details see Chronicles of the period, especially Dec. 1942, Dec. 1943, June 1944, June 1945, Dec. 1946 and Dec. 1948.

drew 1, and was described as lacking the will to win<sup>160</sup>. Two years later, when Natal schools included McClew at Haritzburg College, Waite and Maclean at Milton and A. Hayfield and Goddard at Durban High School, the Michaelhouse team, under Brazier, emerged with the highly creditable record of winning 12 school matches and losing only three and of beating Crockett's XI (which included two internationals) for the second time in the history of the series, the first occasion having been in 1926<sup>161</sup>. The following years were equally good and in 1949/50, the captain, R.M. Greene, was selected for the South African Schools XI<sup>162</sup>.

Although A.P. Woods nominally gave up coaching the first eleven when he became a housemaster in 1943 (his place being taken by Mr de Gersigny, a neighbouring farmer and father of a distinguished cricketer then at Michaelhouse)<sup>163</sup>, he was in fact constantly at hand to help Michaelhouse cricket and was the principal coach in several seasons and in other seasons helped with the coaching<sup>164</sup>: his was a considerable contribution over two decades.

#### OTHER EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The organisation of non-athletic extra-mural activities continued to develop, much along lines already established and reflecting staff and boys' enthusiasm.

The old-established Debating Society generally enjoyed a membership of about fifty, though it sometimes dropped to about thirty or rose to about seventy<sup>165</sup>: the establishment of a Junior Debating Society, tentatively in 1939 and more securely under D.S. Foster in 1941, does not seem to have affected the quality or quantity of the speakers in the senior society, though it provided an activity for boys in the lower school.

It would be tempting to assess schoolboy opinion from the votes, but there does not seem to be any clear trend, except that the majority tended to reflect a conservative attitude on matters of contemporary significance. In 1942, for instance, there was an overwhelming 'personal opinion' vote asserting that the Indians

- 166 I have been unable to obtain copies of the early editions but the Asp was definitely a 'literary supplement' (S.M.C. June 1943). The The Balgowan Review was started some time before 1950 (S.M.C. June 1950).
- 167 S.M.C. June 1943.
- 168 S.M.C. Dec. 1941.
- 169 S.M.C. Dec. 1946 and R.R. 7/8/47. Rector's Report, 7/8/47.
- 170 S.M.C. Dec. 1947.
- 171 S.M.C. Dec. 1948.



were not fit to rule themselves (on the merit of the speeches, the voting was reversed); but in the following year a motion supporting the government's Non-European policy was narrowly lost and there was a more comfortable defeat of a proposition that Indians should be repatriated (no 'personal opinion' votes are recorded); and when communism was discussed, both during and after the war, a comfortable majority recorded their hostility to its doctrines or to Russian policy. The alternative avenues of expressing opinions - the Asp (a Literary Supplement, printed by the Art School Press) and the Balgowan Review seem to have been used largely for lyrical poetry, stories or articles of a non-contentious nature, though the Balgowan Review became more political in its comments<sup>166</sup>.

The other old-established group, the Dramatic Society, staged a variety of plays and concerts, including an exclusively Afrikaans concert in 1943<sup>167</sup>, but they continued during the war to be chiefly one act plays or thrillers (Galsworthy's Escape was a more ambitious exception)<sup>168</sup>. Snell himself was keen that a Shakespearean production should be attempted and when the open air theatre - constructed largely by the boys over several years - was at last completed in 1946, it invited a production outside the traditional Michaelhouse run, and Mrs Symes tackled The Taming of the Shrew. It was a great success, with J. Stranack as Petruchio and P.W. Friedman as Kate; and a special train brought pupils from Pietermaritzburg schools<sup>169</sup>. The following year, St Joan was produced with the same principals<sup>170</sup> and Stranack was still at school to play Shylock in 1948, when R.C. Brooks was the producer<sup>171</sup>. The dramatic tradition, firmly established by D. Pennington, had been greatly enriched and an annual Shakespearean production came to be expected. Moreover they not only provided an opportunity for schoolchildren from Pietermaritzburg in particular to see Shakespeare acted - there were few other opportunities - but helped to stimulate other schools to put on their own productions: the Director's report for 1950 asserted that not enough attention was being paid to speech and drama (among

- 172 Province of Natal: Report of the Director of Education for 1950, p.20. There were, of course, other reasons for the development besides the example of Michaelhouse.
- 173 Chronicles for the period.
- 174 S.M.C. Dec. 1941 and Sept. 1942.
- 175 See especially S.M.C. May 1941, June 1950 and Dec. 1951.
- 176 See especially S.M.C. May 1940, Dec. 1943 and Dec. 1951.
- 177 See especially S.M.C. Dec. 1946, June 1947 and Dec. 1948.
- 178 See especially S.M.C. June 1946 and Dec. 1951.
- 179 S.M.C. Dec. 1939 and Dec. 1940.

other cultural activities) in Natal schools<sup>172</sup>, and it was not until about the middle of the fifties that school productions became at all common.

The other existing societies - the Literary Society, the Photographic Society and the Natural History Society - continued to attract varying numbers of boys, the last two suffering during the war from the difficulty of obtaining speakers who could travel to the school and (in the case of photography) from a shortage of equipment<sup>173</sup>. A Zoological Society had a brief existence separate from the Natural History Society and was formed to stock a 'zoo' - which seems to have been confined to tortoises and a crow and was reminiscent of the pets' corner established informally in the early days of the school<sup>174</sup>. Other new societies had a longer life: an Agricultural Society was formed in 1941 with A.P. Woods as the enthusiastic staff organiser and, though it petered out for a time, it was revived and was reported as flourishing in 1951 (its activities included talks, visits to farms and at least a little experimental work in pasturage)<sup>175</sup>; and a Scientific Society, established in 1940 by J.L. Robinson and A.R. Chapman, enjoyed fairly consistent support and mounted several very good exhibitions<sup>176</sup>. Besides the musical societies, the Engineering Society and the Gyna Club, already mentioned, there were two other societies, which catered for specific hobbies rather than fields of interest: the Philatelic Society, reorganised by Mrs Snell and enjoying varying but on the whole growing support<sup>177</sup>; and the Chess Club, formed in 1946 and playing a few matches five years later<sup>178</sup>.

Another organised activity of a different sort was Scouting, which was established by M.E. Hardecastle in 1939 while he was on exchange, and by the end of 1940 there were nearly fifty scouts<sup>179</sup>. For younger boys in particular it was a most valuable institution for it provided opportunities for constructive and adventurous activities in groups and for the exercise of some leadership. Scouting was launched with such enthusiasm that it survived the

- 180 S.M.C. May 1941 and June 1943.
- 181 S.M.C. May 1939 and Dec. 1943 and reminiscences of Old Boys.  
The practice continued until about 1954, when Adams College  
was affected by the Bantu Education Act.
- 182 S.M.C. Dec. 1947 and Dec. 1948; and B.M. 3/12/48.
- 183 S.H.C. Sept. 1942.
- 184 S.M.C. Dec. 1942.
- 185 S.M.C. Dec. 1948.
- 186 S.M.C. June 1951.

departure of Hardcastle for England and his two younger helpers (Simon and Gaylard) for active service, very largely through the determination of one of the boys, David R. Lee; but the lack of an experienced Scoutmaster eventually forced the 'suspension' of the troop, and there has been nothing similar to replace it until recently with the establishment of the Venture Club<sup>180</sup>.

### SERVICE

There were other activities which, while not being organised in formal societies, were given some direction by Snell or other members of the staff. In particular, Snell was deeply concerned to encourage a sense of service, partly through developing an awareness of the characteristics of South African society, partly through labour on behalf of the school or others. It was in the sixth form that the first approach was most noticeable, and especially through the development of the custom, established by Currey, of exchanging visits with students from Adams College - the African High School and Training College near Amanzimtoti. From two to four boys spent a few days at Adams College and Michaelhouse was in turn the host to three or four students, who became temporarily attached to the sixth form and to the school prefects' room<sup>181</sup>. The Bantu Studies group of the sixth form, moreover, helped to build a church for the Africans on the estate, under the guidance of D. Pennington and J. Zama (the Zulu teacher)<sup>182</sup>.

The idea of service was not, however, confined to the sixth form. Boys in the Art Department were encouraged to make articles for the school chapel<sup>183</sup> and the open air theatre was largely the fruit of voluntary labour by boys of all ages<sup>184</sup>. Moreover, at least one boy (K.M.Y. Browne) gave individual service, as a Sunday School teacher, to the Indian community on the estate<sup>185</sup>. Beyond the school's boundaries, a group of boys planted fencing posts at the P.O. settlement at Botha's Hill during the Easter vacation of 1951<sup>186</sup>. In order to recognise and to indicate the importance of these and other services (including service in the chapel, to sport

187 S.M.C. June 1943.

188 S.M.C. Dec. 1950.

189 Most Old Boys to whom I have spoken, and my own experience, support this view; none have questioned that Snell was concerned with service, though a few have reservations about the form it sometimes took. One of the head boys of this period (1942) was P.M. Brown, but he may not be quoted because he is, alas, a banned person.

190 A. Paton: Hofmeyr; p.319. Among others in the group were Smuts, Hofmeyr and Brookes.

and other more formal school activities) the practice of awarding credits and distinctions for class work was extended, the boys having some say in the choice of awards by making recommendations through the School Council<sup>187</sup>.

But more important than these outward signs was the conviction which Snell carried about him not only that 'a boy must learn to sink himself and to serve the common weal'<sup>188</sup>, but that this was the mark of his own full life. It was most apparent to senior boys who came into closest contact with him, but it was visible to others as well: his active encouragement of service enterprises was but an indication that his concern extended well beyond the formalities of an injunction to be good citizens. It is impossible to generalise about the permanent effects of such an attitude, but at least one important pioneer attributes his concern for others in the South African Society partly to the influence of Snell<sup>189</sup>.

#### RELIGION

Inseparable from his determination to educate the boys in good citizenship was Snell's deep concern for the religious side of the school. This is, of course, what would be expected of the rector of a school with an overt connection with the church; and there are reminders for all but Brown that each of Snell's predecessors was concerned in different ways: Todd established the school as a Church of England foundation and secured the association with the diocese; Hugh-Jones built the first chapel; Pascoe worked hard to obtain a full-time chaplain and considered religion significant enough to warrant being reported on to the governors; Bushell has compiled a booklet of sermons he delivered, some of them at Michaelhouse; and Currey was not only the prime mover for the building of a new chapel and deeply committed to the idea of church schools, but also in 1939 associated himself publicly with a group which urged the need for spiritual renewal<sup>190</sup>. Even for Brown, the lack of evidence may not be significant, though his religious interests do not seem to have impressed themselves on boys of the

- 191 This is implied rather than stated in E.H. Brookes and C. de B. Webb: A History of Natal; p.163.
- 192 Rector's Report, 12/11/52.
- 193 S.M.C. Dec. 1945.
- 194 Personal memories and memories of Old Boys; and see the addresses on the deaths of N.G. Lyon (S.M.C. Dec. 1945) and A.P. Woods (S.M.C. Dec. 1950).
- 195 Letter dated 13/2/51, attached to Rector's Report and B.M. 17/5/51.
- 196 S.M.C. Dec. 1945.



boys of the time.

There were, however, important differences between Snell's time and the early part of the century at least, and perhaps even as late as 1939. Though the Anglican Church in Natal had not been 'established' - either legally or in status - as it was in England, it was the most widely-spread denomination in the colony<sup>191</sup> and regular attendance at church was not only taken as sufficient evidence of commitment to Christianity but was almost taken for granted as the mark of a gentleman. Moreover the Christian theology was not seriously challenged by most citizens, so that instruction in the catechism, attendance at chapel and sermons which were moral rather than theological could be taken as the essential characteristics of a religious education, together with some instruction in the Bible, usually of an historical nature. For Snell, the chapel was still the centre of the school's religious life and should be the centre of the school's life<sup>192</sup>, and for this reason, among others, he pressed for the completion of the chapel as a War Memorial.

But Snell encouraged developments which would have been regarded as undesirable or unnecessary forty or fifty years earlier and by which he hoped to encourage a belief in the 'Christian Faith as true, not merely (in) Christian morals as praiseworthy'<sup>193</sup>. His own sermons not only illustrated his faith but were instructive in Christian doctrine<sup>194</sup>. Moreover in 1951, prompted by the depressing results of a simple test of religious knowledge administered to new boys, he wrote an 'open letter' to parents urging co-operation in the school's task, reminding them of the baptismal vows, asserting that a spiritual vacuum is impossible and that 'the question of a boy's religious development is ultimately the most important of all' and offering suggestions for help in the joint responsibility of ensuring this development<sup>195</sup>. A Pioneer Society was founded by Tyrrell in 1948 and met regularly to discuss matters related to religion<sup>196</sup>. Meanwhile, more responsibility was being given to the

- 197 S.M.C. May 1939.
- 198 S.M.C. Dec. 1944 and Dec. 1949.
- 199 S.M.C. Dec. 1942, June 1943, Dec. 1947, June 1948, and several Old Boys.
- 200 S.M.C. Dec. 1949.
- 201 S.M.C. June 1952.
- 202 Rector's Report, 12/11/52.
- 203 S.M.C. June 1952.

boys to determine the extent of their commitment. Evensong on weekdays was made voluntary in 1939<sup>197</sup>; in 1944 the Communion Service and a shortened mattins on Sunday were made alternatives and five years later the Communion Service was made entirely voluntary<sup>198</sup>.

The effect of these changes is difficult to assess, but one cannot help believing that they helped to counteract the attitude that chapel attendance is simply a matter of routine, imposed by authority (or, at home, by convention). Nor can one judge the impact of the variety of preachers, though one stands out in the memory of many old boys: the Rev H.P. Junod, chaplain to the Central Prison in Pretoria, who frequently preached or conducted Holy Week services from 1942 and whose burning sincerity and dedication still glows in the mind even if his hearers have forgotten his words<sup>199</sup>. Clearly, however, there was no direct relation between the arrangement of chapel services and the tone of the school, for the factors contributing to the latter are necessarily extremely complex: indeed, in the year in which the tone was by all accounts poor (1949), it is reported that a series of week-day services on the theme of missionary work regularly filled the chapel<sup>200</sup>.

Nevertheless, in the last two years of Snell's rectorship, the happy coincidence of several events contributed to the chapel's being able to provide a clearer focus of the school's life: the development of the chapel's music, which was signified by the affiliation of the choir to the Royal School of Church Music in 1952<sup>201</sup>; the appointment of B. Burnett as chaplain - not only the first Old Boy to hold the position, but one in whom the Rector had complete trust<sup>202</sup>; and the completion of the Memorial Chapel.

Reference has already been made to the fact that the chapel was dedicated as a War Memorial in 1952. It is notable also as the last work of F.L.H. Fleming<sup>203</sup>, who had been a partner in the firm of Sir Herbert Baker, designer of the first chapel, and who had been the architect of most of the school's expansion since the First World War. Traditional in design, with small, high windows

- 204 The rose window was held inadequately, as it later appeared. Morgan discovered that the stonework was shifting and endangering the glass. Through the kind offices of Mr. Wilson, expensive machinery and a skilled driller effected repairs which saved the window. B.M. 20/3/59, 27/11/59, 27/5/60 and 26/8/60.
- 205 B.M. 24/8/50.
- 206 B.M. 2/3/51.
- 206 Dagmar Hayes: Ervin Bossanyi: The Splendour of Stained Glass; Friends of Canterbury Cathedral; 1965, p.7 and p.17.
- 208 Ibid., p.6.
- 209 Ibid., pp.5-7.
- 210 B.M. 22/2/52.

like its predecessor, its proportions suggest a broad foundation bound firmly to the earth by the arches, pillars and roof and confined by the hard bricks to that corner of the school; but it made it possible for the whole school to worship together in dignity and without a distracting crush for the first time in twenty-five years. Moreover, in its stained glass windows, it holds<sup>204</sup> gems of which any school would be proud and which are rare indeed in South Africa.

Snell himself was convinced that the windows should be works of art and craftsmanship and an inspiration to future generations of boys, and the Board of Governors wisely appointed in 1950 a sub-committee of Archdeacon Inman, the Rev V. Shaw (an Old Boy) and Snell to consider both the placing and nature of the windows<sup>205</sup>. Early the following year, they obtained estimates for windows to be made in South Africa, but they felt that they were unsatisfactory<sup>206</sup>. Other inquiries followed, but the sub-committee began to despair until, in response to a letter from Snell, Archdeacon Wood of Cape Town recommended Ervin Bossanyi, whose work had been brought to his notice by the Dean of York<sup>207</sup>.

It was, in a way, a slender recommendation, for, although Bossanyi had lived in England since 1934 (having fled from Nazi Germany) his main commissions in England had hitherto been almost confined to heraldic work and he was little known<sup>208</sup>. Born in Hungary in 1891, he had trained in Budapest and won a travelling scholarship but was interned in France during the First World War. Although he produced works of art in various media (including stained glass) for public buildings in Germany where he lived after the war, most of his work was destroyed either by the Nazis or by bombing during the Second World War, so that, in spite of his age, there was little by which critics could judge his ability, the chief one being a window in the Tate Gallery<sup>209</sup>. He was nevertheless commissioned to create the Rose Window and the Apse windows, and though his first design for the Apse windows was modified at the request of the committee<sup>210</sup> - they were able to view full-size

211 D. Hayes: Op.cit., pp.17-18.

212 B.M. 21/11/52. The importation of the window was delayed by the necessity to obtain an import permit (B.M. 16/5/52) so that it was not in place for the dedication of the chapel.

213 D. Hayes: Op.cit., pp.17-18.

214 Ibid., p.25.

215 B.M. 21/11/52. The others were paid for out of the Tuck Shop Fund.

transparent cartoons in position<sup>211</sup> - the installation of the Rose window at the end of 1952<sup>212</sup> was a vindication of the committee's faith and proof of Bossanyi's inspiration. The Dean and Chapter of Canterbury Cathedral had meanwhile decided to place stained glass in the windows of the south quire transept and an exhibition of the Michaelhouse Apse windows led to the commission's being given to Bossanyi<sup>213</sup>. Also as a result of the exhibition, came a commission from the Dean of Washington Cathedral (grandson of Woodrow Wilson) for the windows in the Woodrow Wilson Bay of the cathedral; and these were installed in 1961<sup>214</sup>, just ten years after Michaelhouse had made the inspired choice.

The Michaelhouse Rose Window was not publicly exhibited before its installation, but its richly glowing pattern of colours, the simplicity of its symbolism and the compassion and strength of Christ's head make it the most directly appealing of the Chapel windows. It is, moreover, the most explicitly South African in its details: concentrated in the central glass is Christ blessing and holding a black and a white bird, nestling together as creatures of equal concern and equally protected by Him; surrounding the central panel, the flashing colours of birds of Natal brilliantly fill the small - and technically difficult - trefoils as symbols of Nature; and the whole recalls in miniature the glories of the Medieval craftsmen. In the lancet windows of the Apse (three of which were donated by Hilton College, the Tatham family and the Methley family<sup>215</sup>) Christ is flanked by angels, whose eyes and gestures have an oriental quality which, together with the iridescent colours, convey elements of the Christian tradition with power and joy. The windows of the chapel - in their figures, their colours and the techniques of their craftsmanship - represent the depth of the tradition on which Michaelhouse draws; now in the crypt, furnished in memory of Snell's successor, Morgan, there are windows glowing no less in the medieval tradition, but designed in South Africa in a contemporary, more abstract idiom; in the two groups of windows, more than anywhere

- 216 B.M. 22/8/52: Auditor's Report, 4/8/52. The cost (excluding the crypt) was £31,350 of which £28,447 had been paid.
- 217 B.M. 2/3/51 and S.M.C. June 1952. See also B.M. 19/8/49 and 18/11/49.
- 218 S.M.C. June 1952.
- 219 B.M. 1/3/46: Finance Committee Report. These did not necessarily take account of parents' means. Sons of clergy were admitted on reduced fees. There were also bursaries paid for by A.S. Hersov which are not enumerated in the list. (See B.M. 29/5/45.)
- 220 Memorandum on the New Chapel, Feb. 1940; Bursar's Report, 17/8/42; B.M. 15/8/45 (a favourable one); B.M. 1/3/46; Finance Committee Report; B.M. 23/8/46; Rector's Report, Aug. 1946; B.M. 22/11/46; Finance Committee Report; B.M. 16/5/47; B.M. 15/8/47; B.M. 20/2/48 (favourable); B.M. 19/8/49; B.M. 2/3/51; B.M. 22/8/52; Auditor's Report.
- 221 B.M. 15/9/44: Finance Committee Report. (The rise was from 2.6sh to 3.19sh a day.)
- 222 B.M. 23/8/46; Rector's Report, Aug. 1946.
- 223 Summary Profit and Loss Account, attached to Memorandum of Salaries and Fees, 12/8/52.



else, there are symbolised the significance of Michaelhouse's foundation as a Church School.

#### FINANCE

The chapel, which cost just under £32,000, was financed largely by the War Memorial Fund<sup>216</sup> and major donations were given for such special features as the organ (from Mr and Mrs C. Barlow<sup>217</sup>), the bells (in memory of H.J. Butcher), the windows and several fine pieces of altar plate<sup>218</sup>. It did not, therefore, materially add to the school's financial commitments. Other additions and rising costs, however, made the school's finances a source of recurring anxiety and forced the Governors to be cautious in at least some matters of policy. At the same time they had to face seriously the problem of rising fees and the danger of Michaelhouse's becoming simply a rich man's school, for as late as 1946 there were only six endowed scholarships<sup>219</sup>.

Shortly after the outbreak of war the rising costs began to make a noticeable inroad into the school's profits and almost every year, except 1945 and 1943, the tale was repeated to the Governors<sup>220</sup>. During the war, the increase was partly due to having staff on active service but particularly to rising housekeeping costs - they rose by nearly 20% in the twelve months June 1943 to June 1944<sup>221</sup>. The Bursar (Traill) had to face criticism on this account, but a report by the Secretary of the Durban Country Club substantially exonerated him, asserting, inter alia, that the food was as good as could be supplied at the cost<sup>222</sup>; and this was in spite of the fact that the Bursar was also a part time teacher. After the war, 'housekeeping' costs continued to rise, and to these were added increases in salaries and (with building developments) a marked rise in interest charges - the cost of the latter per boy rose more than three-fold in the years 1948 to 1952<sup>223</sup>.

It was, indeed, a serious handicap to development that, without endowments major expansion could not (and never had) taken place without adding to the school's debt. In 1943, this debt stood at

- 224 B.M. 26/8/43.
- 225 B.M. 22/11/46, B.M. 15/8/47 and B.M. 21/5/48.
- 226 S.M.C. Dec. 1949.
- 227 S.M.C. Dec. 1950. A further loan for £10,000 was negotiated in 1952 (B.M. 22/2/52).
- 228 Building Sub-Committee Report 31/8/45; Rector's Memorandum 20/9/45; B.M. 26/9/45; and B.M. 30/11/45. A survey for the village is first reported in S.M.C. June 1948.
- 229 B.M. 17/6/46 and Miscellaneous File: Jaffray's land.
- 230 B.M. 12/2/42; B.M. 21/2/47, Report of a Meeting with Hilton dated 4/12/46; B.M. 15/8/47; B.M. 17/5/51; B.M. 22/8/52, Rector's Memorandum on Salaries and Fees dated 12/8/52.

£40,000, on which interest at 4½% was paid<sup>224</sup>. Shortly after the war, a special appeal was made to Old Boys to reduce the interest burden by lending the school money at 3%, and eventually, particularly as a result of a visit by the Rector to Johannesburg, £13,000 was received, including £5,000 from the Rhodes Trustees<sup>225</sup>. It was, however, only a temporary relief, for such minor works as the new estate manager's offices<sup>226</sup> and the major extension of Pascoe's wing soon brought the school's debts up to £100,000<sup>227</sup>. These buildings could not have been erected earlier even if the school had been wealthy, for there were governmental restrictions on building; but there were others, such as a new gymnasium, a science block and a rector's house, which could not be seriously contemplated even when building controls were relaxed.

The lack of financial resources made the Board cautious about buying additional land, which Snell insisted was an urgent necessity to rehouse the African servants of the school. Snell went so far as to obtain, with the support of a sub-committee, an option to purchase a part of Lower Lynedoch, but the Board would authorise only a lease for the time being; and, although the land (which was a few miles from the school and on the other side of the main road) was purchased a few years later, the planning of a new 'Native Village' was delayed<sup>228</sup>. From the school's point of view, a more satisfactory expansion would have been south-east of the school, but long negotiations were on the point of finality when Miss M. Jaffray died and her successor was unwilling to sell the land<sup>229</sup>.

The most obvious consequence of rising costs was a steady increase in fees, on each occasion the increase being made after consultations with Hilton College, until in 1952 the fees stood at £200 per annum and the Rector recommended that they should be raised a further £10<sup>230</sup>.

When the Board decided to raise the fees in 1942, they decided that part of the increase should be devoted to awarding bursaries, and fifteen 'school bursaries' were soon awarded, to the total value

- 231 B.M. 12/2/42 and B.M. 27/3/42.
- 232 B.M. 1/3/46, Finance Committee Report.
- 233 R.F. Currey draws attention to this difficulty in his letter to me.
- 234 Letter from Bishop Fisher dated 16/6/42, attached to B.M. 28/5/42.
- 235 B.M. 9/6/44 and B.M. 15/9/44.
- 236 B.M. 29/5/45.
- 237 S.M.C. June 1951. There were 332 at the beginning of the year, 319 at the end.
- 238 Finance Committee Report, B.M. 1/3/46.
- 239 G. Kalton: The Public Schools: A Factual Survey of Headmasters' Conference Schools in England and Wales; Longmans; 1966. See Tables 3.12, 3.14, 3.15 and 3.16 and pp.38-42 for information on bursaries and scholarships; and Table 8.2(a) and p.131 for information on fees. 9% of boys received school scholarships and 13% received school bursaries.

of £610<sup>231</sup>. Four years later there were 44 school bursaries<sup>232</sup> and the principle of using part of the school's ordinary income for this purpose was clearly established and subsidised parents who in the depression years might have been able to afford the fees but who could not do so in a period of inflation<sup>233</sup>. This initial decision was not reached without serious misgivings about the propriety of making some parents subsidise others and one of the most generous and staunch supporters of Michaelhouse, H.J. Butcher, resigned from the Board on the principle<sup>234</sup>, though his generosity continued and he was subsequently made a Trustee<sup>235</sup>.

The Board's decision and a gift of £200 a year from A.S. Hersey from 1945<sup>236</sup> enabled a high proportion of parents to be helped, in spite of the lack of endowments. In 1946 when there were about 325 boys in the school<sup>237</sup>, a total of 82 awards were reported, of which 44 were school bursaries, 30 were scholarships or exhibitions and 8 were for sons of clergy or of staff in 'Conference' schools. The value of the individual awards is not given, but many of them were probably small, since the total value was £2,035<sup>238</sup>, but it is interesting to compare Michaelhouse policy with that in Independent Public Schools in England nearly twenty years later. G. Kalton gives figures which indicate that in 1964 among the Independent boarding schools of his survey, as at Michaelhouse in 1946, there were roughly one-and-a-half times as many bursary awards as there were school scholarship awards; that the proportion of boys receiving some assistance was about a quarter, as at Michaelhouse, but that about 4% were assisted by local education authority awards; and that, although the average fees were £454 (the Michaelhouse fees in 1946 were £168), 62% of the bursary awards were for £50 or less<sup>239</sup>. Michaelhouse policy, which was subsequently greatly strengthened by the establishment of a Trust Fund, therefore represented a generous and serious attempt to make its opportunities available to the sons of parents of moderate means and to ensure that the school should not become a place for the financially privileged alone.

- 240 B.M. 28/5/42.
- 241 B.M. 27/8/42.
- 242 B.M. 30/11/45, B.M. 5/4/46, B.M. 17/6/46 and B.M. 26/5/50.
- 243 B.M. 17/6/46. The Rev. V. Shaw, R. Armstrong, G.W. Boyes and E. Greene.
- 244 B.M. 20/8/48. A. Melville, L. Trotter, Dr. N. Steere.
- 245 B.M. 24/2/50 and B.M. 26/5/50. The nominees were the Ven. T.G.V. Inman, A. Milne, A. Doull and D. Turner, the last two being Old Boys.
- 246 An instance was his sounding the governorns on the admission of the Indian Agent-General's son.

THE BOARD

The Governors were in the last resort responsible for decisions of this nature, and until after the war the Board remained substantially as it had been in the thirties. The most important exception was H.J. Butcher, whose resignation has already been noted. In 1942, however, the Rector reported that the Old Boys Association wished for a closer connection between the Board and the Old Boys<sup>240</sup>. The Board deferred a decision until after the war<sup>241</sup> and although there was no formal recognition of Old Boys' representation in the constitution, even when it was amended in 1946 and 1950<sup>242</sup>, at the first election after the war, all four vacancies were filled by Old Boys<sup>243</sup>, and three more were elected in 1948<sup>244</sup>. This was a marked change from the representation at the outbreak of war, when only J.J. Sisson (who resigned early in 1940) and A.T. Tatham (whose schooling had been completed in England and who had represented his father before being elected in his own right) had been Old Boys. In 1950, when three of the long-service governors resigned (Smythe, Holley and Heywood-Harris) and a fourth vacancy occurred, a nominations sub-committee was especially appointed and two of the replacements were not Old Boys<sup>245</sup>. It was perhaps a deliberate recognition of the danger of inbreeding.

It appears to me as one of the great strengths of the machinery for policy-making at Michaelhouse that the Board has rarely intruded on the Rector's precincts even when important governors, like F.S. Tatham, were personally involved in the school's welfare. During the period of Currey's rectorship especially, the tradition of the Rector's independence had been strengthened, partly through the tact of Currey himself<sup>246</sup> and partly because the governors were disinterested policy-makers, untouched by the sentimentality about the 'good old days' which is liable to afflict Old Boys and not likely to regard changes in policy as an affront to their own past judgments. The election of so many Old Boys after the war was satisfactory to the Old Boys' Association - an important branch of

247 A. Melville was a senior under Bushell.

248 B.M. 29/5/45, B.M. 30/11/45, B.M. 5/4/46 and B.M. 17/6/46.



the whole 'school community' - and ensured that the school's progress would be followed with a lively personal interest by the Board; but it brought with it the danger of a too conservative attitude and an interest which could slip into interference, especially as most of the new members were from a single period of the school's life, the rectorship of Pascoe<sup>247</sup>. That the danger was avoided is partly a tribute to the calibre of the men elected, but also to the fact that a healthy relationship between Board and Rector was already established.

The Board changed in other respects as a result of constitutional amendments which had the effect of making the membership more flexible. Prompted by the need to clarify an ambiguity about the number of members on the Board, the Deed of Trust was fully discussed in 1945-1946, as a result of which several changes were made<sup>248</sup>. References to the Church of England were altered to communicant members of the Church of the Province of South Africa - simply a reflection of existing practice, since, properly speaking, the Church of England in the South African context referred to the so-called Colenso Church; and the responsibility for administering the school's finances was clearly given to the Bursar, but under the Rector - a clarification of existing practice. The other changes affected the membership of the Board. The clause providing for donor members was deleted - a symbol of the old personal link between some of the governors and the school. The term of office of the fifteen individual members (the Bishop was additional to these) was in future to be five years and, although retiring members were eligible for re-election, this made the Board far more flexible in its membership. These were all non-contentious issues; but on one point there was 'lengthy' discussion: whether non-Anglicans should be admitted to the Board. It was eventually agreed that two members could be non-Anglican, a small concession, but significant of the very great changes which had overtaken religious attitudes since 1900, when it was assumed that an Anglican foundation could be

249 Natal Dio. Maritzburg II Synodical, 1883-1909; p.29. See  
Ch.2 Note 87.

250 B.M. 26/5/50.

protected only by Anglicans on the Board and an Anglican clergyman as Rector.

The relationship between Michaelhouse and the diocese had never been as clear as the title 'Diocesan College' implied. Bishop Baines had declared that, in spite of the fact that the Rector gave an annual report for Synod, Synod had no authority to intervene in the school's affairs<sup>249</sup>. The only formal link with the diocese, indeed, was the fact that the Bishop himself was ex officio a member of the Board and its Chairman; and, as a governor, he was simply primus inter pares, with no authority to enforce Church policy in general or diocesan policy in particular on his fellow-governors.

In this respect, Michaelhouse has not been different from other 'diocesan' schools in South Africa and until after the war the arrangement seems to have occasioned no serious conflicts of loyalty or embarrassment. Particularly with the sharper focus on questions of colour after the war, however, it was far more likely that contrasts between church teaching and school practice would become obtrusive.

It was probably with this in mind that, as Bishop Fisher approached retirement, the Board reconsidered the link between the diocese and the school and amended the Deed of Trust in such a way that the formality was retained but the Board was made more clearly independent. In 1950 an amendment was approved by which the Bishop ceased to be a member of the Board ex officio, although he might attend meetings and could be co-opted to the Board<sup>250</sup>. He was, however, to be Visitor to the school: the Rector was to be responsible to him for 'chapel services, the spiritual welfare and the religious teaching of the school'; the Rector and Governors were to 'receive with serious attention any representations which the Visitor may make with a view to the efficiency of the school as a place of liberal and religious education'; and he was to be a member of any selection committee for the appointment of a Rector and his consent was necessary for such an appointment.

- 251 B.M. 17/5/51; also letter from R.F. Currey and conversation with F.R. Snell.
- 252 B.M. 16/11/51 and attached letter from Bishop Inman, dated 16/12/51.
- 253 Taken from the amendment made in 1946. B.M. 5/4/46.
- 254 B.M. 26/9/45 and B.M. 30/11/45 and Miscellaneous and Correspondence File: Butters' Land.

My interpretation of this is that, if the Bishop is elected to the Board, he becomes a member in his own right but not as a representative of the diocese; and if, as Visitor, he makes representations to the Board, the Board nevertheless has the right to take an independent line. Unless 'spiritual welfare' is widely interpreted, therefore, the Bishop qua Bishop (and therefore the church as an institution) cannot be held accountable for the general policy of the school, with the important exception of the appointment of the Rector.

The change was the last important contribution which Bishop Fisher made to Michaelhouse, for his health deteriorated shortly afterwards and, after over twenty years of kindly and cool leadership, which both Currey and Snell greatly valued, he retired in 1951<sup>251</sup>. The new constitution was due to come into force shortly afterwards, but the Board invited Fisher's successor, Bishop Inman, to be its chairman under the amended clause. He accepted, but only after 'prolonged and careful consideration'<sup>252</sup>.

What was said earlier may have suggested that the spheres of responsibility of the Board and the Rector respectively were so clearly demarcated that there was no possibility of tension in the relationship between the two authorities. This was, of course, not the case: some tension is inescapable so long as the Board has a lively interest in the welfare of the school as well as a clear responsibility for such matters of policy as expansion and finance, and so long as the Rector has a concern for future developments as well as a direct responsibility for the 'internal organisation, management and discipline' of the school<sup>253</sup>. The acquisition of part of Lower Lynedoch, for instance, was the result rather of the Board somewhat reluctantly following Snell than authorising him to proceed<sup>254</sup>. On the other hand, a few years later, the Board expressed misgivings about Snell's appointment of an Acting Senior Master and urged him to try to regain F. van Heijst, in this matter clearly recognising the appointment as in the Rector's sphere but

- 255 B.M. 17/11/50 and B.M. 2/3/51.
- 256 B.M. 1/3/46, 5/4/46 and 17/6/46. He was asked to withdraw his resignation but stood by it.
- 257 Old Boys' Club Minutes, 30/5/46.
- 258 Letter from Bishop Fisher attached to B.M. 17/6/46. The matter is not minuted.
- 259 B.M. 21/2/47.
- 260 Correspondence and Miscellaneous File: Non-European Entrants.
- 261 Comments of Old Boys and my observations as a master at Maritzburg College from 1951.

exerting pressure to influence his decision<sup>255</sup>.

A matter of principle with wider implications arose from the admission of a Chinese boy to the school. Snell had accepted his application in the ordinary way and admitted him in 1946 without prior consultation with the Board. As a consequence, one of the Governors (A.T. Tatham) resigned<sup>256</sup> and the Pietermaritzburg Branch of the Old Boys' Association proposed a resolution at the Annual General Meeting of the Association condemning the admission. After considerable discussion, the motion was lost by a large majority<sup>257</sup> and the Governors refrained from passing a resolution on the particular case, but the Bishop was requested to inform Snell that the Board felt that the matter should have been referred to them and instructing him to refer similar cases in the future<sup>258</sup>. When Snell reported a similar application the following year, the Board agreed to the admission<sup>259</sup>. Currey had found senior boys in the thirties responding favourably to the possibility (which never materialised) of the sons of the Indian Agent General attending Michaelhouse<sup>260</sup>; and there were no difficulties about the acceptance of the Chinese boys now, either at Michaelhouse or when terms of which they happened to be members visited other schools<sup>261</sup>.

The episode is significant as illustrating the sensitivity of an institution like Michaelhouse to prevailing opinion rather than as a challenge to customary colour policy. In the first place, the boys were not members of one of the major racial groups of South Africa - still less of Natal - and could therefore be regarded as 'special cases'. Secondly, the first admission was before the 1948 elections and there was therefore no doubt about its legality. Nevertheless, that a governor resigned, that the Old Boys' Club branch of which he was a member brought forward a condemnatory motion and that the Board instructed the Rector to refer future cases to it, all indicated that the admission of boys even on the edge of the colour line (as it was later to be defined by the Nationalist Government, with Chinese on one side and Japanese on

262 B.M. 6/4/41.

263 Memorandum attached to Rector's Report, 20/8/41.

264 Ibid., and B.M. 28/8/41.

265 Ordinance No. 23 of 1942; Cl.25-28.



the other), could not be taken for granted, although on this occasion Snell's decision was accepted. Indeed, the episode is also an example of the way in which the Board gave loyal support to Snell even when there were some misgivings about his method of arriving at a decision.

#### STATE AID ?

Michaelhouse might be sensitive to established custom, but it was not subject to official directives on admissions or educational practice. One of the matters which the Board discussed on several occasions was whether Michaelhouse should apply to be an aided school and if so whether this would involve an intolerable restriction on the school's independence.

In 1941, concerned particularly about the additional expense involved in salaries for those on active service, one of the governors (Smythe) suggested that the school should apply for the provincial grant<sup>262</sup>. Snell drew up a memorandum which, while stating arguments both for and against government aid, recommended that the application should be made, chiefly on financial grounds but also to have a 'bridge' to the state system<sup>263</sup>. Major Lewis Byron, a recently elected governor and a member of the Provincial Council, submitted a letter opposing the application and drawing attention to the fact that, whatever the degree of control exercised at the time, taxpayers consistently demand a greater control over institutions which they support financially; and by a 'large majority' the Board rejected the idea of becoming aided<sup>264</sup>. The following year the Natal Provincial Council passed an Education Ordinance which, among other important provisions, brought a small measure of control over 'private' schools for the first time: henceforward they were required to be registered<sup>265</sup>. This was hardly more than a sensible protection for the public against charlatans, but it was also part of the tendency for government to exercise more and more control over independent institutions; and perhaps it reinforced the attitude of the Board to aid. At all events, when the matter was

266 B.M. 23/8/46, B.M. 27/11/46 and B.M. 15/8/47.

267 S.M.C. Dec. 1945.

268 Memorandum dated 27/10/52 attached to B.M. 21/11/52. See also B.M. 28/8/52 and B.M. 21/11/52.

again discussed shortly after the war, but still before the aims of Christian National Education were widely known, the proposal to apply for aid was again lost<sup>266</sup>; and by this time Snell himself was fearful of state control, pointing to a draft ordinance in the Transvaal which extended control over all schools<sup>267</sup>.

Smythe had been the chief protagonist of government aid on the Board, but his retirement in 1950 did not end the discussions and in Snell's last year there was another full debate on a memorandum drawn up by J.D. Robinson<sup>268</sup>. After an interview with the Natal Director of Education, Dr McConkey, he felt reasonably assured that aided schools retained their essential independence in spite of being subject to inspection: although the provincial authorities laid down certain conditions (e.g. the number of days schooling a year), subjected aided schools to inspection and could withdraw the grant if the work, equipment or general conduct of the school were unsatisfactory, they did not prescribe texts or teaching methods or interfere with the school's discretion to admit and expel pupils. With the existing staff and their qualifications, he estimated that the grant would bring the school just over £5,000 a year, but this could be used only for salaries, not for capital or other equipment. Although the proposal was not taken to a vote at the Board meeting, the majority seemed averse to making the application and the matter was dropped - for the time being.

The issue really lay between certain but limited financial advantages and uncertain but possibly unlimited restrictions on the school's independence. Although the grant could be used only for the salaries of 'recognised' teachers, it would have freed some of the school's income for other purposes and it would have enabled the Board to avoid raising the fees for the time being. On the other hand it was most unlikely that, even if the rate of grant were subsequently adjusted, the subsidy would keep pace with rising costs and increased expectations of what a school should provide. Moreover, it would be easy, as the Rector put it in a memorandum

269 Memorandum dated 17/12/47.

270 Act No. 39 of 1967; Cl.1(xi).

271 History is about to become compulsory to Std. VIII in Natal provincial schools, as it already is in the Technical and Commercial schools (which come under the central government) and in other provinces. It is worth noting that in post-war Berlin, history was the one subject on which the occupying authorities could not agree and therefore excluded it from the curriculum.

on the Building Fund Appeal in 1947, to slip into dependence on the grant<sup>269</sup> so that the threat of its withdrawal would make it very difficult for the school to withstand official pressure. It is true that legislation could be enacted to control 'independent' schools whether they were in receipt of public subsidies or not, but such control is much less defensible if taxpayers' money is not involved. It is probably true, too, that up to the present the degree of independence enjoyed by aided schools is, for practical purposes, much the same as that enjoyed by the fully independent schools: within the limitations of the examination structure, they are as free to shape their own curricular and methods, to appoint teachers and (subject to a number of laws like the Group Areas Act) to control the admission of pupils. The most recent (1967) Act affecting schools, however, emphasises that there is a real distinction between aided and non-aided schools: for certain purposes a 'school' is defined as a school which is in receipt of public funds and such schools are inter alia liable to inspection by or on behalf of the central government<sup>270</sup>. How precisely this inspection and other provisions of the Act are likely to affect aided schools (or provincial schools for that matter) is uncertain, but it seems at least highly probable that schools could be affected in three ways: pressure, if not direction, to make the schools' curricula conform to a pre-conceived notion of what is right for South Africans, including especially history as a compulsory subject to a particular stage of the secondary school and including a set proportion of South African history<sup>271</sup>; and pressure to ensure a 'South African' tone in the school - to curtail the expression of opinion by staff and pupils if the opinion were hostile to accepted policy, to avoid visits by contentious figures, to avoid involvement in social conditions which might embarrass those in authority and perhaps even to influence the sort of relationship between staff and pupils; and direction that only English-speaking (and perhaps only Anglican English-speaking) pupils should be admitted to a school

- 272 Stipulations have been made about Bantu Roman Catholic schools.
- 273 Rector's Comments on The Report of the Archbishop's Commission, 31/8/45.
- 274 R.F. Currey: Some Notes on The Future of South African Church Schools; Privately Published; Nov. 1962.
- 275 Ibid.
- 276 Notice of Meeting, dated 24/5/44 and filed with B.M. 10/11/44.

with an Anglican foundation<sup>272</sup>. Moreover, it is possible that schools may not be allowed to employ 'unqualified' teachers: in South Africa this means teachers who have not been professionally trained, and this in itself would affect independent schools particularly; with legislation impending to control teacher training, the implications of this become even more serious.

In 1952, these restrictions on the freedom of independent schools were possible but not certain; and even now they are probable rather than certain. The decision to forego the financial advantages of a grant then nevertheless seems to me to have been a wise one in view of the trend of legislation since that date.

Although the Governors were determined to retain the independence of Michaelhouse from government control, it is clear that it was not part of an isolationist policy. Snell, indeed, was particularly anxious that interchanges of staff between government schools and Michaelhouse should be facilitated by, for instance, a mutual recognition of service for pension purposes<sup>273</sup>. He did not succeed in his purpose but there was a significant move during this period towards greater solidarity among the independent schools, and particularly the schools associated with the Church of the Province of South Africa.

The independent schools had been loosely associated through the Conference of Headmasters and Headmistresses, which had been held for the first time in 1929<sup>274</sup>. At the end of 1942, however, Currey urged the case for a unitary system which would place the ultimate financial control of Church schools under a Foundation Council and which would make members of staff servants of the Council<sup>275</sup>. He argued particularly that the schools needed individually and collectively a much greater measure of financial security; that there was a danger of in-breeding because no master could change his post without resigning. As a result of his Memorandum, the Archbishop appointed a Commission (under Mr Justice Feetham) which met at the end of 1944<sup>276</sup>. The Commission did not favour the

- 277 Report on Item 1 of Agenda of Archbishop's Commission, filed with B.M. 27/2/45.
- 278 Fourth Annual Report of the Standing Committee of the Associated Church Schools, filed with B.M. 24/2/50.



unitary system which Currey had argued but recommended that the six boys' schools established on a Church foundation should be associated 'for consultation and joint action on matters of common interest', and that they should form a Standing Committee and that they should report to the Archbishop annually<sup>277</sup>. (The six schools were: St Andrew's, Grahamstown; St Andrew's, Bloemfontein; The Diocesan College, Cape Town; St George's, Cape Town; St John's, Johannesburg; and Michaelhouse.) The Commission also recommended that there should be a common policy in respect of staff conditions of service and exchange of members of staff; that there should be satisfactory provision of bursaries and encouragement given to boys from government primary schools to enter the church schools; and that Afrikaans should be compulsory.

Although the schools were 'associated' and not united, the regular meetings gradually strengthened the authority of the association, thanks particularly to the leadership and acumen of Mr Justice Feetham, the enthusiasm of Currey and the support of Snell. In 1949, for example, the Standing Committee appointed a deputation to see the Chairman of the Federal Council of Teachers ( a body representing the Teachers' Societies of South Africa) about possible amendments to the Draft Teachers' Bill, and the deputation had some success in gaining the support of the Federal Council<sup>278</sup>. (The Bill was not proceeded with.) And the Standing Committee held a watching brief for seventeen schools concerned particularly about the dangers of Christian National Education. On matters of staffing and finance - the main arguments in Currey's memorandum - the Association had not by 1952 made notable advances, but even in these matters the foundations were laid for greater co-operation.

#### SNELL'S RECTORSHIP

National and international events alone would have made Snell's rectorship particularly significant and uncommonly eventful. The exploits of Old Boys in the war added to the school's traditions; and their return signalled a more direct participation by Old Boys

279 Michaelhouse Chapel: Notes on the Symbolism of the Stained Glass Windows; September 1956; p.2. The pamphlet does not mention the author, who was Mrs. Morgan, wife of Snell's successor.

in shaping the future of the school through the Board of Governors. The traditions themselves were challenged by new ideas - new ideas of commitment to society and new ideas of freedom as well as new ideas of national conformity (or perhaps one should say that the challenge came rather from a sharper focus on old ideas which made the conflicts often clearer). And the restlessness and uncertainty were reflected in the movement of the staff and the expressions of anxiety in some years about the tone of the school. But there was no uncertainty about the direction in which Snell believed that Michaelhouse should develop: for him it was first and foremost a church school, committed to Christianity, however uncomfortable the commitment might be from time to time; and the school should provide opportunities for the boys to become committed (not simply to be committed) to Christian responsibilities, intellectually, socially and morally.

In spite of the restlessness (and sometimes because of it) and in spite of the fluctuations in the school's fortunes scholastically and on the playing fields, the overwhelming impression of the period from 1939 to 1952 is therefore one of lively growth, both independently in the sense of developing opportunities in the school and inter-dependently in the sense of a consistent leadership in matters concerning the South African society. It was a controversial period, for some (Old Boys especially) confused concern for South African society with party political concern; and even Snell's nickname ('Bok' - Goat), used by parents as well as boys, had a rich variety of overtones - alertness, vigour, obstinacy, cheekiness, leadership, inquisitiveness - depending on one's point of view. But the windows of the chapel, and particularly the rose window, seem to me a just memorial of his rectorship. Mrs Morgan described their symbolism thus: 'These windows are likely to startle those who anticipate conventional designs and a gentle message, for they are full of purpose and passion, at once a challenge to the wavering and a firm promise to the faithful' 279.

<sup>1</sup> S.M.C. Oct. 1900.

<sup>2</sup> Michaelhouse Old Boys Club: Minutes 1/6/03 and S.M.C. Aug. 1903.  
Henceforward these Minutes will be referred to as C.E.H.

CHAPTER 1CTHE OLD BOYS

Under Snell's successor, C. Morgan, the Michaelhouse Trust was established, chiefly to provide an endowment for the school, but also to link the members of the 'Michaelhouse community': the school (including boys, staff and governors); the parents; and the Old Boys. This chronicle has so far been concerned with the development of the school but, as the reference to the changing composition of the Board will have suggested, the Old Boys' Club had become a significant institution. Moreover, in spite of Dewey, school is commonly thought of as 'a preparation for' life and ready-made judgments about a particular school are meted out according to the careers of its Old Boys (and its examination and sporting achievements). This chapter will therefore be concerned with Old Boys as an institution and with Old Boys as individuals; and since I believe that there is an element of truth in regarding them as at least influenced by, if not a product of, their schooling, it will be necessary to take this account beyond Snell's last year.

THE OLD BOYS' CLUBFIRST PERIOD

As with the school, so with the Old Boys' Club, Todd was the initiator. At the customary Michaelhouse gathering in Pietermaritzburg in 1900, just four years after the school's foundation, the Rector urged that it was time to form an Old Boys' Association<sup>1</sup>. Three years later, on 1st June (it was Whit Monday) a formal meeting was held and accepted Todd's motion that a Club be formed<sup>2</sup>. No doubt the meeting had been called because Todd was determined to have the Club launched before his departure, but the

- 3 Ibid.
- 4 O.B.M. 11/6/04. The Rector was made ex-officio President at the first meeting.
- 5 O.B.M. 11/6/04.
- 6 O.B.M. 24/5/11 and 30/6/20; and S.M.C. Dec. 1948. Apparently few became life members initially, for S.M.C. June 1913 refers to the 'institution' of life membership.
- 7 O.B.M. 12/6/05 and 30/6/20.
- 8 S.M.C. Aug. 1903 and Feb. 1904; C.B.M. 28/9/03 and 12/6/05.
- 9 O.B.M. 29/5/24.
- 10 O.B.M. 31/5/29 and (the special meeting) 30/9/29.

business of piloting it initially fell to Clifford E.R. Button, who had replied to Todd's after-dinner speech three years earlier and was now rewarded by being elected the first Chairman of the Club. Indeed, Button, though hardly out of school, had a double task, for, although a Secretary had been appointed (A.R.C. Cooper)<sup>3</sup>, the latter seems to have dropped out and at the meeting a year later, Button appears as Secretary, the Rector (as President) taking the chair<sup>4</sup>.

The 1903 meeting laid down the conditions of membership in general terms and on Ascension Eve the following year the rules were formally adopted<sup>5</sup>, which remained substantially the provisions for the Club thereafter. Membership was open to those who had been at the school for at least two years, members of the staff might be invited to be members, and the subscription was to be 7/6 a year or 5gns for life. (The life subscription was changed at the beginning of Brown's rectorship to 30/-, raised soon after the first World War to 3gns and returned to the original figure only in 1948<sup>6</sup>.) The purposes of the Club were declared to be to promote friendly intercourse among Old Boys, to organise them for sport, to help Old Boys in pecuniary distress and to further the interests of Michaelhouse. (The provision of pecuniary help was deleted in 1905 - perhaps because it was an unrealistic aim in the circumstances - but was re-instated in 1920<sup>7</sup>.) The one regulation which occasioned frequent discussion concerned the Club colours. In the first few years there were three suggestions: a blue ribbon with white scales, a blue ribbon with red scales on a white shield and the school colours with a band of white in the centre of the red<sup>8</sup>. In the twenties, when the Club was re-invigorated, the topic was revived and it was established in 1924 that the colours would 'remain' as a dark blue blazer with a silver crest and blue tie with the school colours in narrow bands<sup>9</sup>. Five years later, however, the blue blazer was too dull for some Old Boys and, after a special meeting lasting two hours, a striped blazer (similar to the tie) was permitted as an alternative<sup>10</sup>; but the alternative lasted only ten

- 11 O.B.M. 18/5/39.
- 12 O.B.M. 5/5/32.
- 13 102 in 1906. S.M.C. Nov. 1906.
- 14 O.B.M. 30/1/09 and S.M.C. June 1909.
- 15 S.M.C. Nov. 1909.
- 16 S.M.C. June 1911, July 1912, June 1913 and Oct. 1914.
- 17 S.M.C. May 1905.
- 18 S.M.C. Dec. 1912.
- 19 S.M.C. Oct. 1919 and Oct. 1921; O.B.M. 30/6/20 and 7/10/21.
- 20 O.B.M. 29/5/24 and S.M.C. Oct. 1924.
- 21 O.B.M. 3/10/24 and 29/5/24.
- 22 O.B.M. 26/5/27, when he resigned and A.T. Tatham was elected.



years<sup>11</sup> and, except for providing a silk crest instead of a wire one<sup>12</sup>, the 1924 decision was able to gain the sanctity of tradition.

So long as there was no permanent secretary, the promotion of the Club depended very much on the enthusiasm of a few Old Boys and, particularly, the Rector; yet membership was soon over a hundred<sup>13</sup>. Until the war intervened, a surprisingly high proportion managed to gather for 'friendly intercourse'. The first annual dinner was held under Hugh-Jones at the Natal Creamery in Pietermaritzburg with twenty present<sup>14</sup> and at Michaelmas there was a reunion at the school, the Old Boys being housed in a classroom and ladies joining them by train for a dance<sup>15</sup>. The importance of the Rector's initiative for these meetings is emphasised by the fact that in 1910, when Hugh-Jones was seriously ill and then resigned, there was no meeting at all; but Brown resumed the practice of inviting the Old Boys to the school and it became customary to meet on Ascension Day or Empire Day<sup>16</sup>. Meanwhile, there was an occasional dinner in London - the first in 1904 and attended by Todd and Hannah<sup>17</sup>; and the first branch of the Club was established after a reunion dinner in Durban in 1912<sup>18</sup>.

War, however, made meetings impossible and afterwards the meetings, whether at school or in Pietermaritzburg, were poorly attended<sup>19</sup> and it was not until 1924, the year in which the War Memorial was dedicated, that the Club began to revive and thirty attended on Ascension Day<sup>20</sup>.

#### UNDER K.M.P.

This was an important year for the Club for two reasons. At the first meeting of the year, K.M. Pennington was elected Honorary Secretary; and at the Ascension meeting Pascoe suggested that an Old Boy should take the chair, as a result of which J.J.L. Sisson was elected President and the Rector was in future to be Patron<sup>21</sup>. Sisson was unable to devote much time to the Club's affairs, particularly because May was a busy month for court work<sup>22</sup>; the responsibility of the secretary was consequently greater, and the

23 O.B.M. 7/5/59.

24 S.M.C. Oct. 1925.

25 O.B.M. for the period. The position of the branches was constitutionally regularised in 1934.

26 S.M.C. Oct. 1925.

27 O.B.M. 21/5/36.

28 O.B.M. 24/2/55. (A committee meeting.)

Club was remarkably fortunate that K.M. Pennington became virtually permanent - he retired only in 1959<sup>23</sup> - and, as a member of the staff, was well placed to link the school with the Old Boys.

Moreover, since the Rector was no longer the leader, the Club was freer to develop as a separate, critically appreciative institution, able to formulate its own view of what constituted the welfare of Michaelhouse.

That was in fact the re-creation of the Club by K.M. Pennington was marked by vigorous activity. In a year, membership increased by nearly a half to 263<sup>24</sup> and thereafter it became almost automatic to become a member on leaving school, K.M. Pennington never ceasing meanwhile to bring 'old' Old Boys into his net.

Branches were soon being formed or re-formed: Johannesburg in 1923, Durban and Estcourt in 1929, Pietermaritzburg and others from 1934 and especially after the war and at the time the Michaelhouse Trust was established<sup>25</sup>. The activities of branches varied from time to time and from place to place - sometimes no more than an Annual General Meeting, usually the arrangement of at least one social gathering, sometimes the organisation of a fund-raising activity and occasionally the sponsoring of regular sporting contests with other clubs. (For a long time the most ambitious undertaking was the annual dance, organised in the Pietermaritzburg city hall jointly with Wilton Old Boys and first held in 1925)<sup>26</sup>. In 1936, W. Hudson Bennett (then President) presented a golf trophy to encourage inter-branch activity<sup>27</sup> and the contest has been an annual attraction to golfers (and others) since then (except for the war years). The branches have been a useful point of contact with the local community of Old Boys, though the Club's committee has sometimes felt frustrated by their inactivity - as when they responded poorly to an appeal for a pavilion fund<sup>28</sup>. In no case, however, have they established club houses or sporting organisations associated exclusively with Michaelhouse Old Boys: the Old Boys' link with the school has been through the Secretary rather than

- 29 O.B.M. for the period. In 1946 the main Jubilee Celebrations were held in August, with 380 attending.
- 30 O.B.M. 27/9/49. (A committee meeting.)
- 31 S.M.C. Dec. 1935.
- 32 The phrase, privately communicated to me, was coined by a woman during Snell's rectorship.
- 33 O.B.M. 21/5/25, 13/5/26 and 31/5/29.
- 34 O.B.M. 29/9/30. The funds for Todd's memorial, erected shortly before this, seem to have been raised by Hannah rather than by the Club.
- 35 O.B.M. 1/6/31 and 5/5/32. See also Ch.8 note 29.
- 36 O.B.M. 30/5/35.
- 37 O.B.M. 10/5/56 and 15/5/58. The fund was still open and another £1,000 had been handed over by 1965. (O.B.M. 27/5/65.)

through the branches.

Largely through K.M. Pennington, the Annual General Meeting of the Club at Michaelhouse has become the main function to gather Old Boys together. From 1924, the attendance at these meetings steadily rose to 98 in 1932, then - thanks to improved roads - jumped to 144 the following year, dropped during the war and rose again to about 150 to 200, except in the special years 1946 and 1956, when there were 253 and 234 respectively<sup>29</sup>. To exercise the athletic and to entertain the lame and lazy - or simply old - there were rugby matches against the boys; and, in response to a suggestion from the Durban branch, other games were added from 1950<sup>30</sup>. In 1935 a Memorial service was held to dedicate a tablet in memory of an Old Boy, Dr. Bob Gibson, who had given great service to medicine in Johannesburg, and the service thereafter became an annual one to commemorate all Old Boys<sup>31</sup>. Ascension Day became an opportunity to revive memories, renew friendships, decide policy, pit Old Boys against their successors, to criticise and to admire. There was just tribute as well as a slight barb in the definition coined by a sharp outsider: 'the Feast of St Kenneth and All Old Boys'<sup>32</sup>.

'Friendly intercourse' was not, however, the only purpose of the Club and from 1925 it began to raise money for the school<sup>33</sup>. The first scheme, emanating from a suggestion by E.A. Goodwin, was for a general building fund, but it met with little success and thereafter the appeals became more specific. The first substantial sum handed over to the Governors was over £500 in 1930 from the Pascoe Memorial Fund<sup>34</sup>. In the next few years the Club, through Hudson Bennett in particular, raised money for the swimming bath<sup>35</sup> and presented the school with a squash court<sup>36</sup>; and in 1935 K.M. Pennington initiated the Jubilee Insurance Scheme, whereby Old Boys took out an insurance which they covenanted to the school and which resulted in £5,500 being handed over to the school in 1958, the fund being used for bursaries<sup>37</sup>. Meanwhile a scheme to build a cricket pavilion was discussed in 1940 and the Secretary's suggestion that

- <sup>38</sup> O.B.M. 2/5/40 and 15/5/41. See also O.B.M. 3/6/43 and 10/5/45 and Ch.9 note 27.
- <sup>39</sup> Because the response did not come up to expectations, the work was done by the school instead of by an outside contractor and the Club had to withdraw a proportion of its 3% loan of £1,500 to the school. O.B.M. 24/2/55, 19/5/55, 3/11/56 and 6/3/57.
- <sup>40</sup> O.B.M. of the period, notably 9/3/63, 4/2/64 and 7/5/64 for Hannah (the visible memorial for whom is a bench). A notable 'honorarium' was for a master incapacitated by polio, though the initiative in this case came from a particular Old Boy rather than from the Club.
- <sup>41</sup> O.B.M. 31/5/29 and conversation with Bushell.
- <sup>42</sup> See Ch.8 note 151; and O.B.M. 6/5/37 and 26/5/38. (There is, however, some doubt about the correctness of the Minutes of 6/5/37.)

it should be the War Memorial was supported the following year<sup>38</sup>. In the event (and I think it would now be generally agreed, more appropriately) the Memorial was the new chapel<sup>38</sup> but the Club pursued the pavilion project, delaying its general appeal for funds until after the completion of the chapel, and it was built in 1956<sup>39</sup>. Since then, the establishment of the Michaelhouse Trust has made it undesirable for the Club to make appeals for large projects and its fund-raising has been confined to memorials - the most notable being for Hannah, which established scholarships for the sons of Old Boys - or to special honoraria to retiring staff<sup>40</sup>.

The selection of projects which the Club sponsored indicates that it had established itself firmly as an independent member of the school community, for the pavilion project in particular was viewed with some misgiving by the Governors because its appeal might cut across other needs of the school. The contributions were nevertheless welcome additions, chiefly to the school's scholarship provision and to the amenities for sport. (The pavilion in addition made an admirable sort of club-house, suitably distant from the main school for Old Boys parties.)

The Club also from time to time became a vehicle - and perhaps a safety valve - for expressing concern about the progress of the school. The first clear occasion of this was not a well-considered one: the Annual General Meeting discussed (heatedly, it seems) the standard of rugby, then coached by Strickland, and tried to bring pressure to bear on Bushell to change the coach, which was not unnaturally resented<sup>41</sup>. Thereafter, whatever individuals might think of the sport from time to time, the Club avoided any official expression of opinion. But the Club stepped in twice when the school's colours were being reviewed: when Currey proposed registering the Coat of Arms, the Club feared this would involve a serious change in the badge and put up a strong resistance, and a settlement of the issue was eventually reached<sup>42</sup>. Soon after the war, Snell proposed altering the badge ordinarily worn by the boys

<sup>43</sup> O.B.M. 16/3/48 and 6/5/48.

<sup>44</sup> O.B.M. 30/5/46 and 27/9/49. See also Ch.9, notes 257-260.

<sup>45</sup> O.B.M. 30/5/46.

<sup>46</sup> See, for example, O.B.M. 18/5/39 (when they asked for a tablet and portrait in memory of Pascoe) and 26/5/49 (when the committee supported the Rector's stand against a new war cry!).



from the scales (whose colour varied according to the houses) to a uniform red St Michael's cross on a white background surmounted by small scales. To news of this the Club Committee responded with a resolution that 'no change should be made... without consulting with our committee' and the matter was discussed at the Annual General Meeting two months later<sup>43</sup>; but the change was effected.

Deeper matters of principle were involved in the Club's discussion of the admission of Chinese boys to the school, but in this case the Club rejected the Pietermaritzburg Branch resolution, which criticised the admission, and the Committee subsequently agreed unanimously that the boys should be treated like others for admission to the Club<sup>44</sup>. The episode nevertheless illustrated both the merits and the dangers in the practice of discussing school policy. It offered an opportunity for those naturally deeply interested in the school's welfare - often as parents as well as Old Boys - to discuss frankly matters which they felt impinged on the school's traditions (and therefore future development), and in this way the chance of mere gossip adversely affecting the school was reduced. On the other hand, if, especially on a serious matter of policy, the Old Boys' Club had voiced an opinion clearly different from that of the Rector or the Governors, it would have involved a dangerous rift in the Michaelhouse community, the more perilous precisely because the Annual General Meeting was an important source of facts and opinions about the school which the Old Boys could disseminate among their acquaintances. It was partly to ensure that Old Boys would be adequately informed that the Governors, in 1946, authorised the Rector to make a financial report in the course of his annual address to the Club<sup>45</sup>; and in fact the Club has generally been a sympathetic supporter, sometimes an interested remembrancer and only occasionally a sharp critic of school affairs<sup>46</sup>.

For the shaping of the Club's policy, K.H. Pennington was no doubt particularly influential, by virtue of his long, direct association with the school and of his office, but the decisions

47 S.M.C. for the period.

48 O.B.M. 10/5/56.

were, of course, the Club's, not his. The organisation of the Club was, however, his creation: it was only from his assumption of office that the Ascension Day meetings at school became regular; it was through him that the membership was built up; it was often at his instigation that individuals started branches; and the clerical work was his. But perhaps most important was the prodigious task of keeping abreast of Old Boys' activities - through meetings, correspondence, hearing news from other Old Boys and in general gleaning information from any likely source. From the first issue of the Chronicle there is some mention of Old Boys, but it is only from October 1924 that the Old Boys Notes become regular and full<sup>47</sup>. During the war there were generally about 250 entries in each issue and even afterwards there were commonly 150 or more. It was an important method of establishing and preserving the Old Boy mystique and incidentally - because the notes appeared in the school magazine - encouraged interested Old Boys to note the school's progress.

In the Diamond Jubilee year of the school (1956), the Club elected K.M. Pennington its President<sup>48</sup>; and though the honour might well have been a tribute to an outstanding schoolmaster, it was more especially a recognition of the fact that without him the Club would have been a much less significant institution.

#### OLD BOYS IN SOCIETY

It is natural for a school to speak proudly about the 'achievements' of its Old Boys as evidence of the school's success in performing its social function. For a school like Michaelhouse, founded on the lines of an English public school, whose special characteristic was thought (at least until very recently) to be the production of leaders in society, Old Boys' successes are likely to be especially significant. And yet any reference to these successes as 'products' of the school must be subject to a number of qualifications.

Obviously the record of Old Boys' achievements presents a very

- 49 Yet a serious journal recently contained an article (by a schoolmaster) in which it is asserted that 'it is difficult for a boy who has been educated at a private school to integrate socially with his University or commercial colleagues on leaving school ... (he is not prepared) for the "rat race" ... the private school pupil is often sexually shy.' (P. Holman: 'Private Schools in Perspective' in New Nation Nov. 1967. Pretoria.)
- 50 In 1963 (fifteen years after the National Party came into power), of the 44 senior civil servants of the central government listed in Who's Who of Southern Africa, 12 had been to Afrikaans high schools, 4 to English speaking high schools, 2 to Grey College (a bilingual school) and 2 to schools which were either bilingual or English. Biographies of 24 are not given, but 18 of these have Afrikaans names (so far as it is possible to judge). Of the judges listed, on the other hand, of 26 whose biographies are given, 15 were at English-speaking high schools, though 7 of them have Afrikaans names. Of those (31) whose biographies are not given, the majority are Afrikaans names (19). One without a biographical note is N. James, the only judge from Michaelhouse at that time, and he is included among the four mentioned in the text. Natal Afrikaans-speaking or parallel-medium schools are not represented.
- 51 Names alone are not a sufficient guide for home language, but O.L. Nel (1911-13) was from an Afrikaans-speaking home and mentions in a letter that there were others; and there have been Afrikaners since then.

limited view of the lives of Old Boys. It not only excludes social failures but it rarely presents a picture of the personal development of individuals<sup>49</sup>. Moreover it seldom reflects the extent of Old Boys' involvement in the local community, though the involvement may nevertheless represent a real contribution to the welfare of society. Certainly the evidence on these points is too flimsy to sustain valid generalisations.

Even at the national level, the degree of Old Boys' involvement is as much a function of the social milieu as of individual schools' success: it is a moot point whether Etonians predominated in British cabinets because they had been at Eton or because families patronising Eton were in any case likely to produce more than their fair share of ministers. In South Africa, social and political developments have on the whole operated against Old Boys of English-speaking schools achieving positions of political leadership or even leadership in the public service, at least since Michaelhouse Old Boys have been old enough to aspire to such positions. Perhaps in this respect Natalians were - or put themselves - at a particular disadvantage, for, of the judges and senior civil servants in South Africa in 1963, only four (all judges) had definitely been to a high school in Natal<sup>50</sup>.

Finally, the influence of and the opportunities offered by the home are obviously of prime importance. Not only does this background influence the boys' careers but, particularly if the parents are homogeneous in their background, it contributes substantially to the tone of the school. It is not possible to say more about the background, however, than that the parents have been predominantly, though not exclusively, English-speaking<sup>51</sup>; that the majority have come from Natal, with an increasing proportion from the Transvaal from about 1930 and a substantial number from Rhodesia from about 1935 to 1955; and that most have had to be able to afford relatively high fees.

A school may nevertheless claim at least that it has not prevented specific achievements; and it goes against common sense to

52 S.M.C. Nov. 1909 and List of entries.

53 For sporting achievements in general, see the Chronicles of the period. The description of Taylor's school cricket is taken from S.M.C. May 1905.

54 The list of Springbok cricketers is:

T. Campbell 1909-12	H.W. Taylor 1911-14;
D. Taylor 1913	1922-36 (capt.)
A. Melville 1938-39; 1947-51 (capt.)	R. Harvey 1936
L. Payn 1947	O. Dawson 1947-49
C. Burger 1958	H.B.F. Mann 1947-51
M. Seymour 1963	K. Elgie 1962
	D. Varnals 1965

The umpires were:

J.V. Hart-Davis; J.G. Draper

Besides H. Taylor and A. Melville, who captained the Transvaal, M. Pennington (1930) and R. Harvey (1938-40, 1946) captained Natal.

All those mentioned in this note had entered the school before 1952.

55 The Scottish internationals were:  
C. Henderson (1953-54) and K. Elgie (1954) - the latter the only double international.

Other provincial captains of rugby have been: D. Taylor (1910) and R. Standing (1951), both for Natal.

56 The Springbok hockey players were:

P. Dobson 1948-51 R. Howden 1951  
N. Smith 1958-63 A. Roberts 1958-63

J. Kumleben 1961

J. Roberts 1963- (capt.) (at school 1954-57).

R.L. Kirkcaldie played for Scotland 1935-38 and was captain in 1938.

The following were provincial captains:

G. Pennington (1932-34, Natal); R. Howden (1951, Natal); P. Dobson (1952-55, Natal); D.R. Lee (1947-48, Western Province).

57 P. Nash was at school 1961-64.

suppose that a school, especially a boarding school, does not influence its pupils considerably. Moreover, it is worth exploring the achievement of Old Boys to try to see whether there are clear patterns in their achievements or notable omissions in the list.

#### SPORT

Sporting achievements are not only the easiest to list but, if they are in games which the school practised, they are most closely associated with the school. The first international cap was awarded to T. Campbell, Springbok wicket-keeper in 1909, who had been a day boy at Michaelhouse in 1897<sup>52</sup>. He was joined a few years later (1912) by H.W. Taylor, who was described at school as being 'a good bat' who 'drives hard to the off'; and who was to captain South African teams for the record period from 1913/14 to 1936, breaking several batting records at the same time<sup>53</sup>. His distinguished career was matched, at least in batting achievement, by A. Melville, whose school cricket has already been mentioned and who captained the Springboks immediately before the second World War and until 1951. Immediately after the war, there were, indeed, four Springboks from Michaelhouse (one of whom, N.B.F. Mann, had incidentally also been a golf blue); and, apart from a gap of a few years after 1951, Michaelhouse has been represented in nearly all the Springbok cricket sides since 1909 and has provided two test umpires<sup>54</sup>. In rugby, by contrast, there have been no Springbok awards, though P. Taylor came very close, having captained Natal for six years and the Junior Springboks, and there have been two Scottish Internationals from Michaelhouse<sup>55</sup>. In school hockey, Michaelhouse can claim to have been a pioneer, and has been well represented in South African teams since their initiation after the war, P. Dobson being in the first team, followed by five others since then, one of them (J. Roberts) as captain. (One Old Boy, Kirkcaldie, captained Scotland before the war<sup>56</sup>.)

Honours in athletics have also come since the war, to D. Clark in 1950 and P. Nash in 1965<sup>57</sup>, and the only shooting cap thus far

- 58 H. Brown was the chief pioneer and captained the first Springbok team in 1933. He was tragically killed while playing. J.W. Chaplin was captain in 1952. W.I. Mackenzie was captain of the Natal team in 1937.
- 59 B. Hersov was in the reserve boat, but did not participate in the Olympics.
- 60 I can find a record of only five since 1945, and although this is probably not the full score, Natal (which had the bulk of the 46 recorded before 1939) has certainly had few players from Michaelhouse. An explanation - sociological, athletic or scholastic - would be hazardous in the extreme.



was also recent (A. Greaves in 1957).

These were all sports for which the school provided, but Old Boys have distinguished themselves in other fields, too. The most notable has been polo, in which there have not only been two Springbok captains (H. Brown and J.W. Chaplin) and two other Springboks, but in which Michaelhouse Old Boys were the pioneers and chief supporters<sup>58</sup>. In another somewhat expensive sport, yachting, Michaelhouse has once been represented in the Olympic Games - by R. Standing in 1961 - and B. Hersov was in the final eliminating contests for Great Britain in 1948<sup>59</sup>. In Boxing, the only international is J. Parker, who was the Scottish amateur heavy-weight in 1929, while he was studying medicine.

The list, especially if one adds provincial representation in tennis, squash, baseball and golf, reflects a decent catholicity of taste among Old Boy sportsmen. And there have been Old Boys in some provincial or national team practically every year since 1902 (when J.J. Bisset was in the Natal rugby team). The one remarkable feature about the representation is the sudden drop in the number of Old Boys in provincial rugby sides after the second World War - from not far short of fifty up to 1939 to a handful since then<sup>60</sup>.

#### SCHOLARSHIPS AND RESEARCH

The function for which a school is especially equipped is to train the intellect; and, although many boys - particularly in the earlier days - have never intended to proceed with their studies, the success of Old Boys in university and similar scholarships is an indication of the way the school has been able to stimulate the more promising boys.

Among these scholarships, the Rhodes and (from the thirties) the Elsie Ballot have been particularly prized: because they are awarded for character as well as scholarship, they are more subjective than traditional scholarships, but they carry considerable prestige and the reward is to study at Oxford or (for the Elsie Ballot) Cambridge. The first award of a Natal Rhodes scholarship went, in

61 From Maritzburg College, there were 10 Rhodes Scholars before 1930, two 1930-40 and three 1946-62. There were five Elsie Ballot scholars up to 1962, all after the war. (R.W. Kent: College 1863-1963; p.209.)

The Michaelhouse list is:

Rhodes

1904-30:	J.J.L. Sisson	C.G. Roach	K.M. Pennington
	A.E.W. Lister	C.M. Melville	
1930-40:	H.S. Fisher	E.E. Hindson	B.J. Stubbings
	H.F. Lydall	L.M. Thompson	D. Henwood
1946-66:	R.F. Pennington	D. Standish-White	B.R. Fieldsend
	R.J. Acheson	A.S.K. Pitman	R. Bromley
	A. Ardington	D. Woods	A. Evans
	D. Bostock	H. Nichols.	

(The last five were at school after 1952.)

Elsie Ballot

1935-40:	N. Franklin	E.M. Burchell	
1946-66:	S.M. Roberts	D.G. Shaw	A.M. Barrett
	H.F. Junod	E.S.W. Simpson	R.F.M. Holliday
	P. Lissaman	J.M. Daniel	

62 Teaching: C.G. Roach, K.M. Pennington, C.M. Melville, R.F. Pennington, B.R. Fieldsend.  
Lecturing: H.F. Lydall, L.M. Thompson, E.M. Burchell, A.M. Barrett, E.S.W. Simpson, J.M. Daniel. (Barrett and Daniel taught in schools first.)  
Law: J.J.L. Sisson, A.E.W. Lister, S.M. Roberts, D.G. Shaw, H.F. Junod.  
(In addition, K. Pennington, E. Burchell - who *has* a chair in Law - and B. Stubbings are qualified in Law.)  
(I have excluded the seven most recent Rhodes scholars.)

63 S.M.C. Dec. 1911 and Dec. 1912.

64 S.M.C. June 1944.

65 S.M.C. Dec. 1948 and Who's Who of Southern Africa 1963. (Le May's distinction is also recorded in a Chronicle.)

1904, to a Michaelhouse boy, J.J. Sisson, and this was soon afterwards followed by an award to C.G. Roach<sup>61</sup>. There were three more by 1930, the five altogether representing one from each of the first four rectorships, with an additional one from Brown's. Then followed a remarkable succession of five in the early thirties and another at the outbreak of war, all of them having been at school under either Bushell or Currey or both. Add to the last group two Elsie Ballot scholars (Franklin and Burchell) from about the same time at school, and the record is a proud one. Since the war, there have been another nineteen awards, a slight majority being Rhodes scholars. (Nearly half of those scholars who have settled into careers have chosen teaching or lecturing, and the next biggest group chose law<sup>62</sup>.)

As an indication of the variety of other awards, one may mention the distinction and commendation which H.E. Allanson won in medicine at Manchester in 1911 and the award to H.H. Curson of the only first class pass the following year at the Royal Veterinary College. Between the wars, T.C. Lloyd had the distinction of being the first Old Boy to be appointed a university lecturer, and that at Yale; and during the war, P. Large was a gold medallist and prizeman for clinical surgery at Guys<sup>64</sup>. Shortly after the war, J.V. du Plessis won the University Post Graduate Scholarship for the best student in any faculty at Wits (his faculty was Engineering) and G.H. le May was Gladstone Memorial Prizeman at Oxford<sup>65</sup>. This group is selective, but it redresses the balance which might have appeared (from the Rhodes and Elsie Ballot Scholarships list) to be overwhelmingly weighted on the side of the humanities.

Indeed there have been notable scientists among Michaelhouse Old Boys, though some of them were introduced to science by methods which even then were regarded as poor. R.A. Dyer, for instance, who was at school during the first World War, was awarded a D.Sc. shortly before the second World War for his analysis of the vegetation of part of the Eastern Province and won the Senior Capt. Scott Medal of the South African Biological Society. (He subsequently became chief of

- 66 S.M.C. May 1937 and June 1944.
- 67 S.M.C. Dec. 1958. So far as I can ascertain the only other Old Boy to hold a chair in pure science is also in Geology: S. Maske, at Stellenbosch.
- 68 Personal knowledge, S.M.C. Dec. 1962, Sept. 1965 and Oct. 1967.
- 69 S.M.C. Dec. 1938.
- 70 S.M.C. June 1953. The youngest was at school 1942-45.
- 71 O.B.M. 15/5/58, 18/5/50, 19/5/55 and 27/5/65; S.M.C. Dec. 1958 and Oct. 1967. S. Fleischer was at school 1905-08.
- 72 S.M.C. Dec. 1948 and Dec. 1953. Both were at school before 1924. The list is possibly incomplete.

division of Plant Pathology in the Union<sup>66</sup>.) The first appointment to a chair in a science, however, came only in 1958, when E. Simpson was made Professor of Geology at Cape Town<sup>67</sup>. There have been several since the war who have contributed significantly to the advancement of medicine, notably G.D. Campbell in the field of diabetes in Durban, J. Thorpe in heart diseases, W.H. Lawrance, Bronze Medallist in South Africa, and M. McGregor as head of the Faculty of Medicine at McGill University<sup>68</sup>.

#### PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS LEADERSHIP

Just as in academic and research work Old Boys have become more prominent since the war, so most of those who have become leaders in their profession have done so since 1945. Before the war several had been elected to positions of responsibility at the provincial level - in the Institute of Land Surveyors and the Law Society, for instance, and J.J. Sisson had been appointed a Q.C.; but the election of N.W. Hosking to be vice president (and subsequently president) of the Association of Pharmaceutical Societies in 1938 registered the first high national office to be held by an Old Boy<sup>69</sup>. (He was one of the 'migration' boys.)

Since the war, there have been a number becoming leaders at the national level, nearly all of them having been at school after the first World War and most of them at school from the late twenties onwards. In fact, in 1953, when D. Visick was Chairman of the Central Council of Land Surveyors, the Natal Council had a heavy Michaelhouse representation (including Visick), all five of them having been at school after 1924<sup>70</sup>. The Johannesburg Stock Exchange (C. Wiley), the Chamber of Mines (S. Fleischer) and the Motor Traders' Association (R. Eriksen); the Institute of Architects (E. Hudson Bennett), the Law Society (L. Lister) and the Bar Council (D. Shaw) have since then had Old Boys as presidents<sup>71</sup>.

Associated with agriculture, D.B. Evans, was elected president of the South African Stud Book Association; and R. Armstrong was made Chairman of the South African Sugar Association<sup>72</sup>.

73 S.M.C. Dec. 1957 and June 1963. Both were post-1924 boys.

74 O.B.M. 26/5/60.

75 S.M.C. June 1952 and personal knowledge.

76 S.M.C. June 1951 and O.B.M. 31/5/62 (for Evans).

77 A list of Old Boys is given in S.M.C. Nov. 1906.. Of 47 whose subsequent careers are known; 18 went into farming and 11 into government service (chiefly into magistrates' offices initially); 5 went into each of commerce and medicine; 3 went into each of law and industry; and 1 each into journalism and a bank.

78 S.M.C. Nov. 1948, Dec. 1950 and Dec. 1958; and (for Stubbings) personal knowledge.

An appointment to the bench is universally recognised as a mark of distinction, and here again the first Michaelhouse appointment (as a judge in the Natal branch of the Supreme Court) was after the war: N. James in 1957; and the next was of J. Fieldsend to the bench in Southern Rhodesia<sup>73</sup>.

It is otherwise difficult to know what criterion to use to indicate some of the non-elective distinctions of Old Boys. A number have become prominent in financial and industrial corporations, of whom the most notable is W.D. Wilson, managing director of the Anglo-American Corporation (and also, incidentally, Chairman of the Standing Committee of Associated Church Schools)<sup>74</sup>. One of Natal's most important industries - sugar - has included several Old Boys among its leaders, among them A.A. Lloyd, who was director of the Sugar Association and has regularly represented the industry in international conferences<sup>75</sup>. In agriculture, R. Evans has won distinction for his model farming in the Orange Free State, J.W. Cross was honoured with an M.B.E. for his pioneer farming in Northern Rhodesia and, as a technical adviser, S. Roach was similarly honoured for his service to agriculture in Sierra Leone<sup>76</sup>.

A considerable proportion of the early Old Boys entered the public service - particularly as magistrates<sup>77</sup> - and a number of Old Boys later served in the colonies. Soon after the war J. Cottrell had the prodigious task of directing African Education in Northern Rhodesia and N. Reed became the Director of Veterinary Services in Tanganyika; and at least two Old Boys, J. Elliot in Basutoland and B. Stubbings in Tanganyika, have received recognition in New Years Honours lists for their contribution to colonial government<sup>78</sup>.

With two great wars claiming the lives of some two hundred Old Boys and enlisting fifteen hundred or more, the military service of Old Boys has already largely been covered, for not many seem to have made the armed services their career. Among those who did, however, were two foundation boys, the Leslie brothers, who served in the R.A.M.C., one of them (R.W.D.) had a career of particular distinction,

- 79 O.B.M. 10/5/39 and S.M.C. May 1900.
- 80 S.M.C. June 1963. B. Young is now (1968) Vice Marshall.
- 81 O.B.M. 19/5/55 and Who's Who of Southern Africa 1963.
- 82 S.M.C. Dec. 1932 and Dec. 1955 and O.B.M. 14/5/53.
- 83 S.M.C. Dec. 1907, May 1908 and Nov. 1908.
- 84 S.M.C. June 1944. A master, J.B. Chutter, published a best-seller: Captivity Captive on life in prisoner of war camps.
- 85 S.M.C. June 1959.
- 86 Ibid.



rising to the rank of Major-General on the eve of the second World War and being an honorary physician to the King<sup>79</sup>. In the thirties a number of Old Boys joined the R.A.F. and after the war two of these rose steadily to high rank: E.J. Morris to be Vice Marshall and B. Young to be Air Commodore<sup>80</sup>. The permanent force in South Africa appears not to have been attractive, but two Natal regiments have been commanded by Old Boys: the N.F.A. by A.T. Tatham and by his son, F. St.G. Tatham, and the R.N.C. by P.C.A. Francis<sup>81</sup>. In commotions apart from the great wars, T.R. Waller was awarded an M.C. in Burma in 1932; and after the war Old Boys were among civilians distinguished for their bravery in the harrowing time of the Mau Mau in Kenya (P. Nicholas and J.A. MacNab) and in riots in Bechuanaland<sup>82</sup>.

There have been few Old Boys deeply committed to the creative arts of peace. J. van Beek, a dayboy in 1900, published a volume of poems which gained a moderately favourable review in the Spectator and wrote a play which was performed before the High Commissioner, Lord Selbourne<sup>83</sup>; but after that there is a great silence. The second World War stimulated three volumes of poetry (by G. Tolmer, H.G. Barnby and an anonymous Old Boy) and two controversial books on war conditions (by V. Humphries and N. Robinson)<sup>84</sup>. H.G. Barnby has continued his writing since the war and he has been joined as a novelist by A. Fleischer<sup>85</sup>; but it is a short list, even if one adds two works which are standard references in their respective fields: H.H. Curson's Regimental Devices in South Africa<sup>86</sup> and L.M. Thompson's scholarly and important reinterpretation of the events leading to Union.

One creative artist from Michaelhouse had a marked, though short-lived, influence on a wider circle. Frank Graham Bell was the intellectual leader in a group of painters (the 'Euston Road School'), among whom was Victor Pasmore, and they were held together by an enthusiasm to revive impressionism and an ardently critical social conscience. The exigencies of war precipitated the dissolution of the group and impressionism was not revived; but one of Bell's

- 87 The chief source is: R. Ironside: Painting Since 1939;  
British Council, 1947; pp.33-35. See also S.M.C. June 1944  
and Dec. 1947.
- 88 S.M.C. Oct. 1921, June 1954 and Dec. 1954 and other Chronicles  
of the period.
- 89 S.M.C. Dec. 1933, May 1938 and June 1949.
- 90 S.M.C. Dec. 1936.
- 91 S.M.C. May 1940, Dec. 1943, Dec. 1948 and Dec. 1953. Mrs.  
Suzman was his successor and, when she became a member of the  
Progressive Party, the seat became a hotly contested one.
- 92 S.M.C. Dec. 1953.
- 93 S.M.C. June 1959.

paintings - Picture of a Lady - was bought by the Tate Gallery in 1944<sup>87</sup>. Whether he would have enhanced his reputation must remain uncertain, for he was killed while serving with the R.A.F.

#### POLITICAL

When people talk about a school 'producing leaders', they commonly think especially of elected leaders. At the local level, there has been a respectable number of Old Boys, from F. Greaves, the youngest mayor of Newcastle when he was first elected in 1921, to G. Forder, who was the youngest president of the Natal Municipal Association (he was Mayor of Estcourt), and including a mayor of Durban (R. Carte)<sup>88</sup>.

At the provincial or national level, there have been few; but it has not been altogether for want of trying. The first aspiring politician was a rugged individualist in his practice if not in his theory: H. Dold helped to organise the Grey Shirt campaign in 1933 and stood as an Independent Industrialist for a Durban seat; and on the eve of the war and again after the war he stood successively as an Independent and as a Nationalist, but without success<sup>89</sup>. Under more expected banners, A.W. Lister and T.C. Lloyd contested provincial seats for the Dominion Party in 1936, also without success<sup>90</sup>.

It was not until the war that the school gained its first political representative, when E. Bell was elected to parliament unopposed for the Johannesburg constituency of Orange Grove (subsequently Houghton), which he continued to represent until he retired in 1953<sup>91</sup>. His only successor thus far in the South African parliament was R. Butcher, who represented the Berea in Durban from 1953 until 1961, first for the United Party and then for the Progressives<sup>92</sup>. On the other hand, at the level of national leadership, P.M. Brown was elected Chairman of the Liberal Party in 1959, a position he retained until he suffered under a banning order<sup>93</sup>.

At the provincial level, however, there have been four

- 94 For the provincial representatives, see: S.M.C. June 1949, Dec. 1953 and June 1959 (Hall); O.B.M. 19/5/55, S.M.C. June 1958 and O.B.M. 27/5/65 (Archibald); S.M.C. June 1959 and O.B.M. 27/5/65 (L'Estrange); and O.B.M. 27/5/65 (Stainbank). There have been a number of unsuccessful candidates, mostly in Natal.
- 95 Only Archibald of this group was at school before 1927. Bell and Butcher were at school 1913-16 and 1917-22 respectively. Brown was at school 1938-42 and is the most recent of them all.
- 96 S.M.C. May 1937 and Dec. 1950. I am not sure exactly when Goodman and Bayldon held office. Bayldon was at school 1924-27, the others earlier.
- 97 S.M.C. 27/5/54, C.B.M. 27/5/65 and interview with Lloyd. He was at school 1935-38.

successful candidates since the war, all in Natal. L. Hall was elected in the first post-war elections (1948) and ten years later was chosen as Chairman of the Provincial Council<sup>94</sup>. R.B. Archibald was elected the representative for Umzimkulu and is now a Member of the Executive Committee; and K. L'Estrange and D. Stainbank are Provincial Councillors. All initially stood for the United Party, but L. Hall joined the Progressive Party and subsequently lost his seat<sup>95</sup>.

Outside South Africa, one of the pre-migration boys, L.W.G. Eccles, was nominated to the Executive Council of Northern Rhodesia before the war; B. Goodman was subsequently a member of Northern Rhodesia's Legislative Council; and I. Bayldon was a member of the Tanganyika Legislative Council after the war<sup>96</sup>. A remarkable recent achievement has been the election of I. Lloyd as a British M.P.: he had previously had the distinction of being the first South African to be elected President of the Cambridge Union, in 1954 became a member of the South African Board of Trade, subsequently emigrated to England and in 1965 was elected as a Conservative member for a Portsmouth constituency<sup>97</sup>.

From such a short list of participants it would be rash to draw firm conclusions. It is clear, however, that there have been none dedicated from an early age to a political career as many English public school leaders have been; but this has been characteristic of English-speaking South Africans. Partly for this reason, it was unlikely that there would be any political aspirants from among Old Boys until the thirties; and thereafter, the war and the 1948 election seriously reduced opportunities - if not incentives - for English-speaking politicians: where they have remained substantial - Natal - Old Boys have begun to play a larger part. The other point worth noting is that, although all the successful candidates have been elected as members of the United Party (two of them subsequently joining the Progressives), aspirant candidates have represented all the major South African political parties since 1930 except the

98 My record is not careful enough to give exact references, but the Chronicles record a number of instances and I believe the first reference to a political affiliation was to an Old Boy in the 1920's holding office as a local chairman of the Nationalist Party.

99 S.M.C. Aug. 1903.

100 S.M.C. July 1912 and Dec. 1918.

Labour Party - and there have been others who have held local office in all these parties<sup>98</sup>. In other words, it would be wrong to deduce from the successful candidates that the school's interpretation of leadership in the community has been sectional.

#### THE CHURCH

It was an explicit aim of the founders of the old Bishop's College in Pietermaritzburg and it has been implicit in the relationship of Michaelhouse to the diocese that the school should help to inspire boys to go into orders. In England, most of the clergy came from public schools: could an Anglican foundation in Natal not serve the same purpose? In Natal, however, (and probably in South Africa as a whole) the obstacles were considerable. The diocese had had to rely on expatriates from England and even after education had developed sufficiently for some self-help to be possible, the tradition of reliance remained, reinforced perhaps, by a feeling that the church was not quite manly enough for members of what was still a pioneer society. It is said, indeed, that when Archdeacon Johnson abandoned farming to go into the church about fifty years ago, he was regarded as rather mad by his friends and acquaintances; and it has been only in the last ten years or so that the diocese has been able to rely on South Africans to fill most vacancies in predominantly European parishes. To what extent have Old Boys from Michaelhouse contributed to the change?

The first Old Boy (and one of the first Natalians) to be ordained was H.J.B. Green, grandson of Dean Green, who, while a schoolboy under Todd, had been awarded the Royal Humane Society's medal for saving two ladies from drowning<sup>99</sup>. He was ordained in England in 1912 and later came to a parish in Cape Town, but died of 'flu' at the end of the first World War<sup>100</sup>. He was followed in the priesthood by E.F. Pennington, son of Archdeacon Pennington, who was ordained in 1922, was soon afterwards the first Old Boy to preach in the chapel and, after many years in Natal (he was the first Natal born priest in the diocese) became sub-dean and a canon of the

- 101 S.M.C. May 1923, Oct. 1925 and personal knowledge.
- 102 S.M.C. May 1931; Dec. 1939 and June 1946; and Dec. 1941 and Dec. 1958.
- 103 S.M.C. June 1947 and The Vineyard (journal of the diocese of Natal) Oct. 1967. K.B. Hallowes had determined on ordination in 1935, when he was in Kenya. (S.M.C. May 1935.)
- 104 The list is: P. Harker, F. Alexander, H. Stevenson, M. Johnstone, R. Martin, A.C. Parry, D. Williams, R.L. Wood and V. Lund. S.M.C. Dec. 1951, June 1952, June 1956, Dec. 1958, June 1960 and Dec. 1961. D. Williams, who has a parish in Canada, R. Wood and V. Lund (both in Natal) do not seem to be recorded, and it is possible that there are others. All the priests except Green and Pennington were at school after 1924 and Shaw was there 1921-26. Parry was at school 1951-54 and Lund 1956-57.
- 105 Hallowes, Harris, Shaw, Parry, Wood and Lund. There are 50-55 European Anglican clergy in Natal who are not in retirement. (See The Vineyard, Oct. 1967.)
- 106 I can find no record of Old Boys being called to ministries other than Anglican, though there is a reference to one - R. Porrill - entering the Nazarene Bible College at Potchefstroom.
- 107 Twelve out of about 100 European church- or chapelwardens in the diocese of Natal are Old Boys. (From the lists in The Vineyard, Oct. 1967.)



cathedral<sup>101</sup>. Three more were ordained before the end of the war: V. Shaw in 1931, who has served most of his priesthood in Natal; H. Harker in 1939, who became chaplain at St Andrew's after the war; and A. Cross in 1941, who served in Natal and England before becoming Dean of Bloemfontein in 1958<sup>102</sup>. After the war, 1946 was particularly memorable, for three Old Boys were ordained on the same day: K.B. Hallows and T. Heywood Harris, who were both to serve in Natal, the former becoming a canon and the latter an archdeacon; and B.B. Burnett, who was to be the first Old Boy chaplain, later Bishop of Bloemfontein and subsequently General Secretary of the Christian Council of South Africa<sup>103</sup>. Nine more have been ordained since then, including one, P. Harker, who has been made an archdeacon in the diocese of Zululand<sup>104</sup>. Six - just over a tenth - of the European clergy serving in Natal are now Old Boys<sup>105</sup>. It is a tiny proportion of the total number of Old Boys, but it is a not dishonourable record, which the school cannot claim for itself but to which it may have contributed a little<sup>106</sup>.

There have been many Old Boys engaged actively in the work of their church as laymen - as elders, councillors or churchwardens<sup>107</sup>; as technical advisers in one field or another; or simply as committed Christians. One layman particularly committed to evangelisation is M. Cassidy, a leader of the Africa Enterprise group, a movement characteristic of recent attempts to reinvigorate the Church by involving all its members.

#### GENERAL

The cumulative effect of lists of Old Boys' achievements is inevitably over-sweet. Three more general references may make this chapter more palatable, though hardly spiced (they lead to no surprising conclusion). The first concerns the 'achievements'; the other two concern the 'ordinary' Old Boys. None of them can be profound or certain, bearing in mind the nature of this thesis and the information available.

The achievements of Michaelhouse Old Boys have not been such as

108 This paragraph relies chiefly on Old Boys' 'Notes' in Chronicles of the period. For Stiebel, Brown and Barker, see respectively S.M.C. May 1935, June 1951 and June 1952.

109 The nearest I can approach to indicating the proportions in various fields is to analyse the Old Boys' 'Notes' in a number of Chronicles and such Old Boys in the list provided in S.M.C. Nov. 1906 whose careers are known. I chose the first long list of 'Notes' (S.M.C. Oct. 1924), the list on the eve of Currey's arrival (S.M.C. May 1930) and of his departure (S.M.C. Dec. 1938), the longer list in Snell's last year (S.M.C. 1952) and the longer list in 1967 (S.M.C. March 1967). The following is the analysis:

	<u>1906</u>	<u>1924</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1938</u>	<u>1952</u>	<u>1967</u>
Agriculture	18	57	23	12	17	18
Commerce and Industry	9	9	33	23	25	43
Government	11	4	15	12	10	10
Law	3	11	8	4	3	2
Medicine	5	4	1	2	8	6
Teaching	-	5	11	7	8	10
Church	-	1	2	-	1	3
Accountancy	-	-	4	7	8	1
Other	1	2	-	6	9	9
Training	-	<u>15</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>23</u>
Total	<u>47</u>	<u>118</u>	<u>121</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>119</u>	<u>125</u>

Note: (a) The table has only a very little value in suggesting major differences, for the figures represent only Old Boys of whom the Secretary knew and whose jobs happen to be indicated in the notes. A 'geographical' analysis of the same lists shows a much lower proportion in the Transvaal from 1930 than does the table in Note 110: this table therefore probably under-represents the proportion in commerce and industry from 1930.

(b) The classification conceals great differences within categories e.g. Agriculture means farmers for the most part, but includes some agricultural technologists; I found it impossible to separate Commerce and Industry consistently on the information available and the group includes clerks and salesmen as well as financiers and engineers; Government includes those in municipal service and the armed forces (eight of the 12 in 1938 were in the armed forces), but it excludes teachers; and Teaching includes lecturing.

(c) In 1924 only four were clearly in industry; in 1967 19 were.

to make the men's names known to educated people internationally - except in the fields of sport and dress designing - although some have earned an international reputation among specialists in their field. The achievements as a whole rather indicate the very wide field in which Old Boys have been influential, particularly in South Africa but also in other African countries and even overseas. Their influence was, however, hardly felt until the thirties and became marked only after the second World War. Moreover, except for those concerned with agriculture, most of the Old Boys whose achievements have gained notice were at school after the mid-twenties. This is partly, of course, because there have been more Old Boys since then; but this does not, I think, wholly explain the difference. It is probable, too, that after the second World War there were more opportunities for younger men to achieve positions of responsibility and that those who had left school relatively recently were therefore accelerated in their careers; whereas for many older men the war itself had been a barrier to progress. And it is just possible that the marked expansion of the school at the end of the twenties made the school environment more stimulating.

As reflected in the 'Personal Notes' on Old Boys in the Chronicles, the occupations of Old Boys in general have ranged from running a trading store to controlling a financial empire, from dress designing (Victor Stiebel) to designing freeways; they have included headmasters (and sometimes founders) of prep. schools and inspectors of schools, magistrates and legislators, at least one labour recruiter and several peace time military, naval and air force officers; their adventures include an overland expedition across the Sahara (P.M. Brown) and a record-breaking glider success (S. Barker); one has had butterflies named after him (K.M. Pennington) and another (I. Garland) established a nature reserve in memory of K.M. Pennington's son (Mick Pennington)<sup>108</sup>. A more significant feature of their occupations, though hardly less surprising, is that over the years they have reflected changes in the South African economy<sup>109</sup>. Initially a

110 A sample (approximately two-thirds) of the Members Roll, 1961, shows the following geographical distribution of Old Boys from the various rectorships:

	1896 - 03	1904 - 10	1911 - 16	1917 - 27	1927 - 29	1930 - 38	1939 - 52	1953 - 60
Natal	16	13	35	76	46	119	213	101
Transvaal	4	5	4	16	12	76	152	94
O.F.S.	-	-	1	3	5	5	8	8
Cape	-	2	5	2	6	11	26	10
Rhodesia	1	3	3	13	2	25	71	33
Protectorates	-	1	-	4	1	3	10	4
Other African Colonies	-	-	1	4	-	4	23	3
U.K.	1	1	-	1	2	11	28	10
N. America	-	-	-	1	2	1	5	-
Others	-	-	-	1	1	-	10	1
Unknown	<u>16</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>102</u>	<u>17</u>
Total	<u>38</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>144</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>290</u>	<u>648</u>	<u>281</u>

Note: (a) The years are divided according to rectorships, the date of entry to Michaelhouse being used.

(b) Those whose addresses are 'unknown' are most likely to live outside Natal.

(c) I have included East Griqualand in Natal; Northern and Southern Rhodesia are grouped together; the Protectorates are Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland; 'Other African Colonies' are Kenya, Tanganyika, Nyasaland, Uganda and (for one in 1939-52) Nigeria.

(d) The U.K. figure for 1953-60 probably includes some students.

111 Note for applicants for the rectorship, 1967.

large proportion of Old Boys seems to have gone in for agriculture, particularly farming, but, although it is, apparently still second on the list of occupations, the proportion has dropped markedly, probably from before 1930. The proportion going into government and municipal service has probably also dropped, though not by very much, (and if teaching is included perhaps not dropped at all). The biggest increase has been in those going into commerce and industry - particularly the latter - which has replaced agriculture at the top of the list. An interesting detail is that accountancy - unrepresented in the early days - rapidly became popular in about the early thirties - a reflection of the growth of a virtually new profession.

Initially most Old Boys settled in Natal or East Griqualand, but with a significant number in the Transvaal<sup>110</sup>. The attraction of the Transvaal increased markedly, however, from about 1930 so that Natal only just held the lead in 1960, though among entrants, Natalians still represent a substantial majority<sup>111</sup>. The direction of the change is to be expected and corresponds, both in time and force, with the apparently greater attraction of commerce and industry. There has also been a remarkable increase in the proportion of Old Boys settling not only in other provinces in South Africa but in other African territories. About an eighth of the boys who entered Michaelhouse between 1930 and 1952 were living in Rhodesia in 1960 and nearly five per cent were in other British colonies or protectorates in Africa: many of them were no doubt from these territories originally, but others were emigrants. There was also a notable increase in the number living overseas, some of them no doubt boys who, but for the war, would have gone to school in England - sons of war-time sojourners and others.

Men from Michaelhouse, though concentrated in Natal and the Transvaal, are widely scattered. Few, however, have anywhere been widely recognised as leaders in the accepted sense: where they have gained recognition it has rather tended to be as men influential in

their chosen occupation or in a fairly localised community or, occasionally, as leaders or potential leaders of a minority. This is hardly a fulfilment of Todd's vision of the school's rôle in society. But it can be said that the number of Old Boys holding various positions of responsibility in South Africa has increased since 1946, in the professions, industry and commerce, in the church and even in politics.

<sup>1</sup> By lowering the fees and offering scholarships. Moreover numbers fluctuated in 1916.

<sup>2</sup> The fluctuation in numbers at Durban High School, Maritzburg College and Hilton have to be set against the development of secondary classes in government 'country' schools in the early 'twenties.

CHAPTER 11CONCLUSION

This concluding chapter will attempt to trace the pattern in the chronicle of Michaelhouse in three ways: to indicate a pattern in the history of the school simply as an institution; to survey the features which distinguish Michaelhouse from government schools - that it is independent, a boarding school and a school associated with the diocese of Natal; and to assess the Michaelhouse pattern in the context of South Africa.

THE GROWTH OF MICHAELHOUSE

Michaelhouse was founded when there were only two government high schools for boys in Natal and a number of independent schools which provided secondary classes, all of them private ventures except for the Marist Brothers school in Pietermaritzburg. Now, nearly all European boys attend a high school as a matter of course and all the independent high schools are public trusts of one sort or another, most of them receiving public subsidies. Michaelhouse has therefore gained from the increasing demand for secondary education but at the same time has had to compete with the increasing public assumption of responsibility for secondary education of a generally sound quality.

Nevertheless, in the first twenty years of Michaelhouse, the demand for secondary education was neither insistent nor consistent and the school might easily have followed the course of its precursor (Bishop's in Pietermaritzburg): the crisis after Hugh-Jones's resignation showed this and even under Brown the school had deliberately to attract more pupils<sup>1</sup>. When the demand increased after the first World War it was still somewhat selective<sup>2</sup>; but Michaelhouse had at least survived to take advantage of it and had moreover a commendable record of Rhodes Scholarships, an honourable record of Old Boys who served in the war, a good sporting record and



<sup>3</sup> I am tempted to say 'most'. Of 34 independent boarding schools in Kalton's survey, 16 had 201-400 boys, 12 had 401-600, 4 had 601-800, 1 had 801-1000 and 1 had 1001-1500. (G. Kalton: The Public Schools, a factual survey; Longman's 1956; Table 2.3.) The Michaelhouse figure (not hitherto given in this thesis) is in R.R. 18/12/52.

<sup>4</sup> The government schools (and few independent schools in South Africa) did not offer Greek; and, at least after the War, Latin was for a minority even at Durban High School and Maritzburg College.

examination results which were comparable with those of other schools. Under Pascoe, the school responded conservatively - even hesitantly - to the demand so that the school remained essentially a small one, much better equipped than it had ever been (and therefore better placed to expand later) but incapable of offering a range of courses or a variety of organised activities.

It was Bushell who, at the risk of disrupting the school's harmony, seized the opportunities and set the school on the path of expansion, and under Currey the school was able to continue on the path, in spite of the depression, because he re-established an equilibrium. In its first twenty years, the school had had accommodation for about ninety boys; in the next ten years numbers rose by about a third; in the dozen years before the second World War they rose by two and a half times to well over three hundred; and in 1952 there were 388 - not a large school, but the size of a large number of independent boarding schools in England<sup>3</sup>. It was fortunate as well as a tribute to Currey that at the critical period of rapid expansion, the school kept and attracted a good and stable staff so that it was not simply a larger school than before but a more notable one: from a small school set in the Natal countryside it became a school firmly set in the South African context.

Expansion made possible - and sometimes necessitated - changes within the school. Conditioned by the examination system, the curriculum had hardly differed from that offered in government schools: initially, perhaps, there was a greater reluctance to admit such subjects as bookkeeping, but numbers precluded the offering of a variety of courses. Under Currey and Snell the Michaelhouse curriculum became distinctive: in a sense it became more committed to the classical curriculum - bookkeeping was dropped altogether, Latin was greatly encouraged and boys still took Greek at Michaelhouse<sup>4</sup>; but at the same time the examination courses became more varied and flexible (thanks partly to the system of setting, partly to abandoning the Junior Certificate examination) and the non-examination

<sup>5</sup> The remarkable increase in the number of first class passes in matric from about 1930 and the drop in the proportion of failures support this view but are not conclusive because there seems to have been a general (though not so marked) improvement in Natal results about this time: standards may have changed. The development of the library, the absence of references to boys being prevented from reading (from about Pascoe's time, perhaps late Brown), the institution of superannuation as a policy and the comments of a number of boys who were at school in the mid-'thirties indicate a marked difference of tone between the school on the eve of the first World War (and possibly later) and the tone on the eve of the second World War.

<sup>6</sup> S.M.C. June 1948 and June 1949. The boys were J.D. Macleod (head boy), W.E. Kramer, M.N. Harvey and M. Simmons, together with Mr. Bill Barnes. The first climbers up the east face were two university students - P. Malherbe and R. Waddington.

subjects assumed greater importance. The most distinctive curriculum development was the firm establishment of a post matric class or sixth form: not simply for a few select boys, as it had been in the early days of the school, but an integral part of the school's organisation. Almost certainly, too, the academic standard reached by the boys was raised<sup>5</sup>, partly stemming from traditions of work and reading which Pascoe had succeeded in encouraging, partly because society had emerged from the pioneer stage into an industrial and commercial complex, and, especially, because in the thirties the quality of the staff was unquestionably good.

The increase in size affected the intimate relationship which existed among all the members of the Michaelhouse community, but the organisation of the houses provided an alternative focus for loyalties and there remained powerful instruments to unify the school - organised games and school societies, dining in hall and chapel services and, especially, the directing influence and active involvement of vigorous rectors. Perhaps the greater sophistication of the school's organisation smothered some valuable characteristics - the sort of sturdy self-reliance that develops a healthy common-sense; but I believe the change in this respect can easily be exaggerated. Boys continued to assist and sometimes to direct many of the formal activities; and some - was it ever more than a minority? - showed initiative in their free activities; there were a number of climbing expeditions in Snell's time, for instance, one of them of four boys with Snell himself who were the second group to climb the east face of Giant's Castle<sup>6</sup>.

Nevertheless, from Bushell onwards, the lives of the boys were more fully and deliberately organised to achieve the school's purpose: the curriculum was reviewed and extra-curricular activities increased; school uniform became obligatory and speech days and other functions were used to enhance the prestige and the solidarity of the school; and the staff became more fully involved in the general life of the

7. B.M. 26/2/09.

8 The substantial Old Boys' contributions for the Memorial Hall were, however, from the estates of men killed in the war. The first substantial gift by an Old Boy was from H. Brown.

school through membership of societies or as housemasters and house tutors. The changes were related to the increased number at the school and to the 'educational' vision of the three rectors (none of whom, incidentally, was professionally trained).

#### AN INDEPENDENT, DIOCESAN, BOARDING SCHOOL

The two most important characteristics of an independent school are the absence of any financial support from public funds and the freedom of the school to determine its own policies.

Throughout the period under review, Michaelhouse suffered from a shortage of capital to provide buildings and equipment when the need arose and the consequent necessity to borrow money placed a strain - sometimes severe - on the revenue of the school. The governors nevertheless steadfastly though seldom unanimously rejected the idea of applying for a subsidy from provincial funds. In the early, most difficult, years, moreover, Old Boys were hardly able to make substantial contributions to the school, and, though F.S. Tatham suggested as early as 1909 that they should be approached<sup>7</sup>, the first significant help came for the Memorial Hall and then in the thirties<sup>8</sup>. The school therefore had to rely on the generosity of men otherwise associated with the school, particularly the governors, and pre-eminent among the benefactors were F.S. Tatham and H. Butcher, without whom the school would not have survived or developed. The contribution of the church was no less important - through the donations of the S.P.C.K. and S.P.G. and through taking over loans at a low rate of interest. It was not, however, until after the first World War that money became available from South African funds: then the Rhodes Trustees and subsequently the Bailey trust made donations for specific purposes; and from the thirties the mining industry showed a practical interest. The expansion of the school, coinciding with the depression, eased the financial position temporarily, but capital development continued to present problems after the war and it was not until the establishment of the Michaelhouse Trust in 1958 that long-term planning really became

- <sup>9</sup> See Ch.9 for a fuller discussion.
- <sup>10</sup> S.M.C., June 1913.
- <sup>11</sup> The striking examples were Currey's recommendations about abandoning the Junior Certificate (when the Board delayed a decision) and the Board's acceptance of Pascoe's attitude to the expansion of the school.
- <sup>12</sup> P. Holman: 'Private Schools in Perspective' in New Nation, Nov. 1967. (Pretoria.)
- <sup>13</sup> From enquiries about St. John's College, Johannesburg; Diocesan College, Rondebosch; Hilton and Kearsney in Natal. The only careful South African study of post matriculation classes I know is that by E.G. Malherbe and P.A.W. Cook in Ch.VII of The Relationship of Entrance Age of University Students to their Academic Success (S.A. Council for Educational and Social Research, 1938). They do not favour the development of post matriculation classes, though their evidence shows post matriculants at a slight advantage at university. But the study is inconclusive, partly because of the small numbers involved, partly because 'sixth forms' were not then well developed.

feasible. Nevertheless, although government aid would have provided some relief by releasing some of the money paid on staff salaries, dependence on it might well have circumscribed the real independence of the school by inhibiting the execution of policies which a department or electorate might question<sup>9</sup>.

The power of the school to shape its own policies is shared between the Board of Governors and the Rector and subject to the terms of the Trust Deed. Although there have been occasions when the Governors have concerned themselves directly with the running of the school, they have in general exercised their power only in matters of finance and general development, leaving the rectors to determine matters of educational policy. As Brown expressed it, the school 'stands for the liberty of the skilled worker - that is, the absolute freedom allowed by the governors of this school to myself and my staff to work out our ideals in education in the way we think best...'<sup>10</sup> The freedom has never in fact been 'absolute' partly because rectors have naturally been sensitive to advice from the governors (as governors have been sensitive to the advice of rectors)<sup>11</sup>, partly because the South African examinations structure has imposed limitations on all headmasters' freedom. It is nevertheless relevant to ask whether the considerable independence issued in any notable educational experiments or whether, as a recent article has asserted, the private school 'is probably the most conservative of educational bodies in South Africa'<sup>12</sup>.

Todd showed a degree of independence (albeit conservative) in his evaluation of 'new' subjects like English literature and Hugh-Jones seems to have been more serious in his support of science than other Natal headmasters of the time; but it was not until Bushell introduced the sixth form that Michaelhouse made a clear contribution to educational practice. Even now, government schools have no post matric. classes and in many independent schools the classes have a tenuous hold - indeed it is probable that Michaelhouse has the biggest proportion of sixth formers of any South African school<sup>13</sup>; it is



<sup>14</sup> The organisation of extra-curricular activities (or the lack of organisation) has, perhaps, a greater general significance in South Africa than in England, for a considerable proportion of those in government schools in South Africa are boarders.

<sup>15</sup> R.W. Kent: College 1863-1963; p.43.

nevertheless an experiment which deserves recognition. The abandonment of the Junior Certificate is another example of what was then a bold decision to release the hold of examinations on the schools; and the practice of setting (ability grouping in each subject), the separation of the physical sciences into two subjects, the addition of biology, the introduction of some flexibility in the courses offered and in general the enrichment of the curriculum are all steps which Michaelhouse took ahead of other Natal schools at least. In the attention paid to art and music, in careers guidance and in the organisation and expansion of extra-curricular activities Michaelhouse was also a pioneer. It may be doubted whether Michaelhouse practice directly affected other schools but the achievements of Snell in particular in expanding the opportunities for boys are an indication of the value of independence to a school, both for the boys themselves and for others if they choose to observe the example<sup>14</sup>.

The fact that Michaelhouse became a school for boarders only made the need to develop extra-curricular activities more urgent; and a boarding school obviously has a greater responsibility for its pupils than does a day school. The broader questions of the respective merits of boarding and day schools is, however, beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, the fact that Todd and his supporters were convinced of the value of boarding - as, indeed, was Clark, the headmaster of Maritzburg College<sup>15</sup> - helped to determine that the school's permanent home would be in the country. Michaelhouse thus became a school for boarders alone, like Hilton College but unlike the other diocesan schools up to that time.

The siting of the school at Balgowan was a momentous decision. It had some clear advantages: water was available, it was on the railway (very much more important then than a road), the climate is bracing and the setting beautiful; and the fact that it was far from a town's distractions was a strong recommendation to the founders. But there were serious disadvantages, especially connected with

- 16 The part time drawing master, Lister, lived a few miles away; but the music teachers and the bookkeeping master (F.O. Stubbings, who was also Secretary to the Board) had to come from Pietermaritzburg.
- 17 There is insufficient evidence on the earlier period.
- 18 At Michaelhouse there was an annual dance (for seniors) and boys might attend one or two other school dances, and there were tennis matches against girls' schools and an occasional joint choral work and inter-school debate. Kalton reports as typical responses to his question: (a) two dances a year, joint debates, joint tennis; (b) one school dance and six house dances, dances at girls' schools, joint choral work.  
(G. Kalton: The Public Schools, a factual survey; p.122.)
- 19 Most English public schools reported social service activities, particularly for the elderly. (G. Kalton: op.cit., p.120.)

staffing. In the early days especially, when there were few adults on the estate and a journey to town was a major expedition, the strain of living in a closed community must have been a considerable deterrent to remaining long and perhaps discouraged some from joining the staff. More certainly, the lack of houses meant that few married men could be recruited and that marriage rendered a man liable to become redundant; and the capital expenditure involved discouraged the Governors from building many houses until the eve of the second World War. It was, moreover, more difficult to find part time teachers<sup>16</sup> and to fill casual vacancies. Most of these difficulties were considerably reduced as the size of the Michaelhouse community grew and as road transport improved, and it is a remarkable fact, to which many members of staff have testified, that the community, at least from the thirties<sup>17</sup>, was a happy and coherent one; but the site added to the burdens of establishing the school firmly.

For the boys, on the other hand, the site presented some advantages. By the time it was thought at all desirable for them to patronise Pietermaritzburg's 'distractions' - concerts or plays, for instance - improved roads and the co-operation of masters with cars made it feasible, though difficult. Meanwhile, the boys could be allowed a greater degree of freedom than would have been thought wise in a town, and the opportunities for meeting girls were by 1952 about the same as those reported as typical of English public schools ten years later<sup>18</sup>. On the other hand, opportunities for active social work are less - or at least more difficult to organise - in a rural setting, and for the most part the service work encouraged by Snell took place on the school estate or during the holidays<sup>19</sup>.

There is a world of difference between the graceful charm of Michaelhouse today (or in 1952) and the stark independence of its battlements when Todd moved to Balgowan, and it is a vindication of Todd's choice that Snell sited Peterhouse in the country (though not far from a small town). But it required great fortitude on the part of successive rectors to recruit and preserve a healthy community in

the setting.

Unlike Bishop's in Pietermaritzburg, which had had the explicit backing of Synod, and unlike Bishop's in Cape Town and St Andrew's in Grahamstown, which were founded by the respective Bishops, Michaelhouse was founded by a man who happened to be a clergyman and the establishment of the diocesan connection coincided with the establishment of a governing board which included laymen. Michaelhouse also differed from the others in changing over to a lay headmaster much sooner. Yet it is unlikely that these differences were more than superficial: all the schools are called diocesan, but the nature of the diocesan connection is most difficult to define.

The instruments of the connection are clear. The Trust declares that the religious education should be in accordance with the tenets of the Church of the Province of South Africa and insists that the Rector should be an Anglican. Since the migration, the school has had a chapel, at first a make-shift, then a more substantial one and then one which was clearly the most significant part of the buildings architecturally; and chapel services have throughout been an important means of achieving a school spirit. Though the staff have not been obliged to be Anglicans, they were expected to be able to work happily in a school with a religious purpose; the majority of the boys have come from nominally Anglican homes; and the Board of Governors was at first exclusively and then predominantly Anglican. And the school has benefitted financially from the connection. One can say further that all the rectors have consciously striven to use the instruments to promote the religious life of the school, and that the successive bishops have been active, not nominal chairmen of the Board. I believe that these factors contributed a sense of confidence in the religious education provided by the school commonly lacking in the government schools, and though involvement in a parish might well be a better means of promoting Christian commitment, many parishes were not (and are not) equipped



to involve adolescents and very many boys would not have made use of parish facilities anyway, as Snell's survey suggests. But what proportion of the boys have been introduced to church life through the school, it is impossible to say.

I believe, too, that the story of Michaelhouse illustrates that Christian education and liberal education (the other declared aim of the school) are not incompatible. It is true that chapel attendance was obligatory, whatever the denomination of the boy, and 'divinity' was in the curriculum for everyone. On the other hand, the consistent aim of classroom teaching has been to encourage enquiring minds - doubtless not achieved consistently, but not confined by doctrinal or other religious considerations; and the debating subjects from the thirties are an indication of the variety of views tolerated among staff and boys.

#### MICHAELHOUSE IN SOUTH AFRICA

It is sometimes said that Michaelhouse and schools like it are un-South African because they stem from an essentially English institution and draw their inspiration (and their staff) from England. The example of English schools - particularly public schools - was important in the foundation of Michaelhouse and in its organisation, but there was no other tradition to draw on, and the government schools owed much to the same source - Maritzburg College had already introduced the prefectorial system by the time Michaelhouse was founded<sup>20</sup>. And even in staffing, Michaelhouse was not initially exceptional in having to rely on graduates of British universities and although South Africans had begun to play an important part in Natal schools by 1930, Currey was the first South African headmaster of an important boys' high school in Natal. From about the end of the twenties about a third of the staff were British, about a third were South African graduates and about a third were South Africans with British degrees - though the proportion fluctuated considerably. Some of the staff - both English and South African - irritated their colleagues by referring to 'our' team when they meant the M.C.C., but

21 Letter from P.D. Barnard.

22 Four if Baynes is included as well as Baines.



the majority, even of the expatriates, were 'English-speaking' rather than 'English'<sup>21</sup>. The school, indeed, became progressively more South African in its outlook, partly in conformity with the rest of Natal but also as a result of school policy, particularly, though not exclusively, under Currey and Snell.

It is true that the prestige of Afrikaans was insecure, but this was because of the difficulty of obtaining or retaining suitable staff, and it was made obligatory for South African nationals to take it (the majority had taken it - or Dutch - from early in the school's history). Michaelhouse, moreover, offered an African language long before most schools seriously considered such a move. In spite of the predominantly English-speaking nature of the school (in which it did not differ markedly from other English medium schools) and the presence of a significant proportion of men from overseas, the civic education of the boys was centred on South Africa and if the presence of non-South Africans helped to place the problems in perspective and to present a greater variety of views, this can only have enhanced the value of the education.

From a handful of boys in a house on a dusty street of a small town, Michaelhouse developed under seven rectors and three bishops<sup>22</sup>, through at least two serious depressions and two world wars, into a community of some five hundred people, in some ways set apart from but essentially a part of a rapidly developing sub-continent. Occasionally it was almost smothered by circumstances; more notably it has responded to both the demands and the opportunities of a changing society. Few of its Old Boys have become national figures and some of its experiments were short-lived. But in two respects at least the vision and faith of the founders have been justified: the education the school was able to provide became markedly and more genuinely liberal - in the sense that it assumed that man's intellect is what contributes most to his freedom and in the sense that there is more than one way to train the intellect; and the rectors have consistently upheld the view that Christian witness

should be a distinguishing feature of the school. Though Michaelhouse has not been alone in proclaiming these principles, the example is invaluable in the South African context.

APPENDIX 1STAFF UNDER TODD

The list is compiled from staff notes in Chronicles of the period. The notes usually seem to record degrees where applicable and these are given here, although there may be some who should be credited as graduates. (C.W. Hannah was initially not a graduate but kept terms in the manner of Rhodes.) The dates are approximate since the Chronicles generally do not record whether a man arrived towards the end of a year or at the beginning of the following year.

J.C. Todd, B.Sc. (Glasgow), M.A. (Cantab.) : 1896-1903. Rector.

S. Tryon, (London) : 1896-1901. Senior Master; acted as Rector in Todd's absence.

H.C. Dobrée, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1896-1904. Acted as Rector after Todd's departure until Hugh-Jones's arrival. (M.A. in 1898; ordained in England 1901.)

J.C.A. Rigby, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1897-98.

W.S. Bigby, B.A., LL.B. (Cantab.) : 1897. Temporary.

C.W. Hannah, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1898-1905, 1910-11, parts of 1912 and 1913, 1917, 1918-19, 1921-22, 1923, 1924-1930.

W.N. Willson : ?-1899. 'Helped' in 1897. Possibly not a full time member of staff.

P. Cook, (Manchester) : 1899. Vice Hannah.

W. Stoney, B.A. : 1899.

R.A. Durand : 1900-02.

H.R. Evans, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1901-?.

J.N. Woodcock, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1901 - July 1903.

? Findlay, LL.B. (Cantab.) : 1902.

E. Schmidt, (Heidelberg) : 1902-04.

? Legott, (Oxon.) : 1902

C. Carpenter, (T.C. Dublin) : 1902. Bursar and master.

? Williams : 1902. Vice Hannah.

A. Goodfellow : 1902. Bursar.

A.C. Stewart : 1902-05, 1921-8. Bursar.

E. Wells : 1903 (February to about September).  
 G.F.A. Perry : 1903. Temporary.  
 W.C. Oxland : July - Dec. 1903.

In addition, the following (besides Willson, mentioned above)  
 'helped' in Pietermaritzburg:

J.H. Craigie : 1896.  
 Archdeacon Baines : 1898.  
 Mr. Watson : 1898.  
 Rev. W.L. Rousseau : 1898.  
 Sgt. Maj. Bowen (N.C.) : 1897-? (Drill)  
 Sgt. Maj. Gidden (9th Lancers) : 1897-? (Drill)

The following taught music:

Baron Himmelstjerna : 1898.  
 Miss Brodie : ?-1901.  
 Miss Griffiths : 1901-02.  
 Miss le Maitre : 1902 - Aug. 1903.

Note: The December 1902 Chronicle mentions that the school  
 had had 22 masters; the list I have compiled has 19  
 full-time masters and four who 'helped' to 1902.  
 The discrepancy may be accounted for by omitting  
 either Todd or Goodfellow (who left after a month).

APPENDIX 2STAFF UNDER HUGH-JONES

This list is taken from staff notes in Chronicles of the period and gives approximate dates and degrees only when they are recorded.

- E.B. Hugh-Jones, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1903-1910. Rector.
- C.W. Hannah, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1898-1905, 'temporarily' back 1910.  
See Appendix 1.
- E. Schmidt, (Heidelberg) : 1902-1904.
- H.C. Dobrée, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1896-1904. See Appendix 1.
- E. Wells. : 1903. (February to about September.)
- G.F.A. Perry : 1903. Temporary.
- W.C. Oxland : July - Dec. 1903.
- Rev. F.J. Tozer : 1903. Temporary.
- A.H. Adair, M.A. (T.C.D.) : 1903 (Sept.) - 24; Actg. Rector 1909, 1910, 1927.
- C.H. Lawrence, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1903 (Sept.) - 07.
- J.S. Kane : 1904-05.
- A.B. Young, M.A. (Cantab), Ph.D. (Heidelberg and Freiburg) : 1905-07 or 08.
- A.J. Buckley : 1905.
- E. Martindell : 1905-?
- A.H. Childs, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1905-06.
- J.H. Lawlor : 1905-08.
- A.C. Stewart : 1902-05, 1921-28. Bursar.
- A.S. Kirby : 1905. Bursar.
- ? Bury, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1906.
- E. Pascoe, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1907-26. Rector 1917-26.
- F. Rendall : ?-07.
- H.S. Lister : Possibly 1907-36. Part time Drawing Instructor.

H.V. Mills, (Scholar C.C.C. Oxford) : 1908-09.

J.E. Ferrar : 1908-19.

L.M. van Eyssen : 1908.

Corp. Keith, (U.K.R.) : 1905-08. Drill Instructor.

Corp. B. Campbell (N.C.) : 1908-14. Drill Instructor.  
Later Sgt.

? Brewin, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1909-12.

S. Hart-Davis : about 1908. Weekly cricket coach.

? Hoar : 1909-10.

The following taught music:

Miss S. Day : 1904.

Miss Webster : 1905-08.

Miss (?) G. Galtrey : 1908-09.

Miss Middleton : 1909-11.

Note: The first reference to H.S. Lister is in 1911, but in B.M.

3/2/27 there is a reference to a letter from him claiming

that he had taught at Michaelhouse for twenty years.

APPENDIX 3STAFF UNDER BROWN

This list is taken from Chronicles of the period (and for, Briggs and Harrington Johnson, B.M. 10/2/16 and 28/11/16). It gives approximate dates and degrees only where recorded.

- A.W.S. Brown, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1911-16. Rector. Killed o.a.s.  
 A.H. Adair : 1903-24. Actg. Rector 1916, 1927.  
 C.W. Hannah, B.A. (Oxon.) : left, first part 1911; present part of 1912 and part of 1913. See also Appendix 1.  
 E. Pascoe, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1907-26. Actg. Rector 1917; Rector 1917-26.  
 J.E. Ferrar : 1908-19.  
 ? Brewin, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1909-12.  
 W.M. de Villiers, B.A. (S.A.C.S.) : 1911-12.  
 W.C. Porteous, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1912-13.  
 A. van der Horst, (Vic.Coll, Stell.) : 1913-14; 1916; 1920.  
 F.S. Bishop, B.A. (Lond.) : 1913-27; 1940-42.  
 M. Robertson : 1913-14. Vice Pascoe (on leave).  
 R.G. Macdonald, B.A. (C.T.) : 1913-15, 1919-20.  
 Rev. C.E. Briggs : 1913-15 (visiting); 1915-16, 1921-22 (full time), Chaplain.  
 B.J. Ellis, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1914 - late 1914 or early 1915.  
 P.A.M. Malherbe, (Vic.Coll., Stell.) : 1915.  
 Rev. R. Harrington Johnson : 1917 (appointed 1916). Chaplain and Science.

Bursar:

- D. Taylor : 1912-14; 1915 (Aug.) - 16.

Carpentry Instructor:

- A.P. Goodwin : 1915-19.

Music:

- Miss Middleton : 1909-11.

Miss Owen : 1911-23.  
 Mrs. Ferrar : 1912-19(?).  
 Miss Miller : 1912-15.  
 Miss Jaffray : 1916-20.

Drawing:

H.S. Lister : 1907-36. Part time. See  
 Appendix 2, note.

Corps Instructor:

Sgt. B. Campbell : 1908-14.  
 Staff Sgt. Barden : 1916-21.

Matrons:

Sr. Farrer : 1911-13.  
 Mrs. Hancock : 1914.  
 Miss Reuter : 1915.  
 Miss Lewis : 1916. Died at school.



APPENDIX 4STAFF UNDER PASCOE

This list is compiled from Chronicles and Board Minutes of the period. It gives approximate dates and degrees only where recorded.

E. Pascoe, M.A. (Cantab.)	: 1907-26. Actg. Rector Jan-July 1917; Rector 1917-26.
A.H. Adair	: 1903-24. Actg. Rector part of 1916, 1920, 1927.
J.E. Ferrar	: 1908-19.
Rev. C.E. Briggs, B.A. (Cantab.)	: 1913-15 (visiting), 1915-16, 1921-22. Chaplain. Died at school.
F.S. Bishop	: 1913-27; 1940-42.
Rev. R. Harrington-Johnson	: 1917-18.
C.W. Hannah	: 1917, 1918 (Oct.) - 19 (Dec.), 1921 (Aug.) - 22 (Aug.), part of 1923, 1924-30. See also Appendix 1.
P.J.H. Coetsee	: 1917-18.
A.P. Hall	: 1917-21.
E.W. Mole, B.A.	: 1918-19.
T.S. Mills, B.A.	: 1918-20.
O.G. de Jongh	: 1919.
R.G. Macdonald	: 1913-15, 1919-20.
A. van der Horst	: 1913-14, 1916, 1920.
H.S. Cotterill, B.A. (Rhodes)	: 1920.
J.M. Singh, M.A.	: 1920.
? Conradie	: 1921.
G.L. Crawford, B.A. (N.U.C.)	: 1920-27.
G.R. Owst, B.A. (Cantab.)	: 1920-21.
P.V. Forbes	: 1920.
? Romer	: 1921-22.

- K.M. Pennington, B.A., B.C.L. (Oxon.), A.F.C. : 1922, 1925-58.  
 T.A. Strickland, B.A. (T.C.D.) : 1923-47.  
 L.E. Egeland, M.A. (N.U.C.) : 1923-24.  
 L.L.G. Schnell : 1923-24.  
 E.H. Halley, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1922.  
 Rev. C.O. Andrews, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1924-25.  
 R.E. Burnside, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1924-27.  
 A.C. Radford, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1925-27.  
 E.E. Strangman, M.A. (U.C.T.) : 1925-30.  
 Rev. W.M.R. Vonberg, M.Sc. (Manch.) : 1925-27.  
 W.F. Bushell, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1926 (Actg. Rector); 1927-29  
 Rector.  
 P.D. Barnard, B.A. (Stell.) : 1927-51.

Bursars:

- J.F. Rethman : 1917, 1918-20.  
 J. Laughton : 1917.  
 A. Stewart : 1902-05, 1921-28.

Carpentry Instructors:

- A.P. Goodwin : 1915-19.  
 ? Franklin : 1920-21.  
 J.C. Byrne : 1921-56.

Music:

- Miss Owen : 1911-23.  
 Miss Jaffray : 1916-20.  
 Miss Garbutt : ?-1917, 1927.  
 Miss Hallam : 1917-?  
 Mrs. Bynoe : 1921-25.  
 Miss Niesewand : 1923-25.  
 Miss Steere : 1925-32.  
 Miss Hallett : 1926.

Drill Instructors:

- Staff Sgt. Barden : 1916-21.

S.M. Instr. Boshoff : 1922.

Sgt. Instr. Slier : 1923.

Drawing Instructor:

H.S. Lister : 1907-36. See Appendix 2, note.

Matrons' Staff:

Mrs. Brown : 1917-20

Mrs. Roberts : 1920-22, 1924-26.

Miss Saunders : 1927.

Miss Bostock : 1922-24.

Miss Fletcher : ?-1921 (assistant).

Miss Walker : 1922-? ( " ).

Mrs. Powell : 1917-23 (housekeeper).

Mrs. Davidson : 1924 ( " ).

Mrs. Cowley : 1925-28 ( " ).

APPENDIX 5STAFF UNDER BUSHELL

This list is compiled from Chronicles and Board Minutes of the period. It gives approximate dates and degrees only where recorded.

- W.F. Bushell : 1926 Actg. Rector; 1927 (July) - 29. Rector.
- A.H. Adair : 1927 (to July) Actg. Rector. See also Appendix 4.
- C.W. Hannah : 1924-30. Actg. Rector 1930 (to July). See also Appendix 1.
- G.C. Crawford, B.A. (H.U.C.) : 1920-27.
- K.M. Pennington, B.A. B.C.L. (Oxon.), A.F.C. : 1922, 1925-58. Senior Master.
- J.A. Strickland, B.A. (T.C.D.) : 1923-47. Senior Master.
- R.E.W. Burnside, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1924-27.
- E.E. Strangman, M.A. (U.C.T.) : 1925-30.
- M. Hall, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1927.
- P.D. Barnard, B.A. (Stell.) : 1927-51.
- A. Hart, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1927- .
- A.C. Radford, B.A. : 1925-27.
- Rev. G. Pentreath : 1928-30.
- T.C. Grice, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1928.
- G. Hattingh, M.A. (Oxon.), LL.B. (Cape) : 1928-30.
- A. Ireland, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1928.
- D. Roper, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1928-9.
- C.D. Hope : 1928.
- A.C. Cander, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1929.
- T.E. Warner, B.A. (T.C.D.) : 1929.
- P. Theron, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1929-35.
- L. Carter, B.Sc. (S.A.) : 1929.

? Bayer, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1929.  
 C. Melville, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1929-43.  
 L.C. Osler, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1929-35.  
 J. Pridmore, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1930-45.  
 R.A.P. Moore, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1930.  
 Rev. P. Cazalet, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1930-37.  
 A.P. Woods, B.Sc. (S.A.) : 1930-50.  
 E. Evans, M.Sc. (Wales) : 1930.

Carpentry Instructor:

J.C. Byrne : 1921-56.

Music:

Miss Steere : 1925-32.  
 Miss Hallett : 1926-27.  
 Miss Garbutt : 1927.  
 Mrs. Else : 1928-?

Drawing Instructor:

H.S. Lister : 1907-36. See Appendix 2, note.

Matron, Housekeeping and Sanatorium:

Miss Chase : 1927-30. Matron.  
 Miss Colley : 1928-48.  
 Mrs. Cowley : 1925-28.  
 Sr. King : 1929-30.

Office and Estate:

A.C. Stewart : 1902-05, 1921-28. Bursar.  
 Miss Runciman : 1927-41. Rector's Secretary.  
 J. Aitken : 1928-41. Estate Manager.

APPENDIX 6STAFF UNDER CURREY

This list is compiled from Chronicles and Board Minutes of the period. It gives approximate dates and degrees only where recorded.

- R.F. Currey, M.A. (Oxon.), M.C. : 1930 (July) - 38. Rector.
- C.W. Hannah, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1930. Actg. Rector. Technically on leave from Currey's arrival to the end of 1930. See Appendix 1.
- K.M. Pennington, M.A. B.C.L. (Oxon.), A.F.C. : 1922, 1925-58.
- T.A. Strickland, B.A. (T.C.D.) : 1923-47.
- E.E. Strangman, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1925-30.
- P.D. Barnard, B.A. (Stell.) : 1927-51.
- T.P. Theron, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1929-35.
- L.D. Osler, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1929-35.
- C.M. Melville, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1929-43.
- Rev. P.C. Cazalet, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1930-37.
- J. Pridmore, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1930-45.
- A.P. Woods, B.Sc. (S.A.) : 1930-50.
- R.A.P. Moore, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1930.
- D. de C. Pennington, B.A. (S.A.) : 1930-49.
- E. Evans : 1930. Temporary.
- E.C. Randell, B.Sc. : 1930. "
- A.L. Fourie : 1930. "
- Rev. C.H.S. Runge, (C.R.) : 1930. Honorary, prior to taking up appointment as headmaster, St. John's.
- F. van Heijst, B.Sc. (S.A.) : 1931-49; 1958- . Actg. Rector 1961.
- J.C. Traill, B.A. (S.A.) : 1931-47. Bursar 1942-47.
- N.G. Lyon, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1931-45.
- C.D. Hope : 1931. Temporary.

- G.E. Hosketh : 1931. Temporary.
- W.G. Chadwick : 1932. On exchange from St. John's,  
vice C.M. Melville.
- H.D. Griffith, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1933-34.
- Sgt. V. Bultitude : 1933-37. P.T.
- H. Lister Wood : 1933-34. Music.
- R.M.N. Tisdall, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1933. Temporary.
- R.C. Wood : 1934-35. Part time.
- G. Scott : 1934. Temporary.
- Rev. C.E. Birks, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1935-37. Chaplain.
- R.A. Brown, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1935-38.
- H.J. Gildenhuys, B.A. (Stell.) : 1935-36.
- W. Salter, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1935.
- R.H.S. South : 1935-37. Music.
- D.J.M. Barton, B.A. (S.A.) : 1935. Temporary.
- R.D. Noble : 1935. "
- A.R. Chapman, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1936-49; 1951.
- J.L. Robinson, B.Sc. (S.A.) : 1936-
- R.T. Frost, B.A. : 1936-43.
- T. Lewis : 1936. Temporary.
- P.J. Hall, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1936-48. See Appendix 7.
- G.J. Beukes, B.A. (Stell.) : 1937-39.
- Dr. F.G. van der Riet : 1937. Temporary.
- Sgt. A. Walshaw : 1937-46. P.T.
- N.A. St.J. Davis, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1937; 1939-52.
- Rev. J.B. Chutter, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1937-61.
- J.L. Senior : 1938. Music.
- R.A. Jansen, M.A. (Stell.) : 1938-40.
- J.M. Ellison : 1938. Temporary.
- P.H. Simon, B.A. (Edin.) : 1938-44.
- J. Byrne : 1921-56. Carpentry.

Part Time:

H.S. Lister	:	1907-36.	See Appendix 2, note.
Miss Steere	:	1925-32.	
F.Q. Stubbings	:	?-40.	Bookkeeping.

Matrons, Housekeeping and Sanatorium:

Miss Chase	:	1927-30.	Matron.
Mrs. Hole	:	1930-34.	Matron.
Miss Colley	:	1928-48.	Assistant Matron.
Miss Anstey	:	1934-43.	Matron.
Mrs. Hall	:	? - 1937.	Housekeeper.
Miss Block	:	1937-39.	Housekeeper.
Sr. King	:	1929-45.	Sanatorium.
Nurse Pickering	:	1938-44.	Sanatorium.

Office and Estate:

Miss Runciman	:	1927-41.	Rector's Secretary and Bursar.
Miss Dales	:	?-44.	Bookkeeper
J. Aitken	:	1928-41.	Estates.



APPENDIX 7STAFF UNDER SNELL

This list is compiled from Chronicles, Board Minutes and Rector's Reports of the period and checked against a list at Michaelhouse compiled by F. van Heijst. It gives approximate dates and degrees only where recorded. O.a.s. signifies full time active service.

- F.R. Snell, M.A., B.Sc. (Oxon.) : 1939-52. Rector.
- K.M. Pennington, M.A. B.C.L. (Oxon.), A.F.C. : 1922, 1925-58.  
Senior Master.
- T.A. Strickland, B.A. (T.C.D.) : 1923-47. Senior Master.
- P.D. Barnard, B.A. (Stell.) : 1927-51.
- C.M. Melville, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1929-43. O.a.s. 1940-43.
- A.P. Woods, B.Sc. (S.A.) : 1930-50. Acting Senior Master  
1949; 1950. Died.
- J. Pridmore, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1930-45. C.a.s. 1940-41.
- D. Pennington, B.A. (S.A.) : 1930-49.
- F. van Heijst, B.Sc. (S.A.) : 1931-49, 1958- . C.a.s. 1940-44.  
Actg. Rector 1961.
- J.C. Traill, B.A. (S.A.) : 1931-47. Bursar 1942-47.
- N.G. Lyon, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1931-45. Died.
- B.A. Brown, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1935-38.
- Rev. C.E. Birks, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1935-46. Chaplain.
- J.L. Robinson, B.Sc. (S.A.) : 1936- Second Master 1960-64.
- R.T. Frost, B.A. : 1936-43.
- A.R. Chapman, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1936-49 and 1951-58.
- P.J. Hall, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1936-48. On exchange at Clifton  
1939-40; o.a.s. 1940-45.
- G.J. Beukes, B.A. (Stell.) : 1937-39.
- A.R. Walshaw : 1937-46. P.T.
- P.H. Simon, B.A. (Edin.) : 1938-45. C.a.s. 1940-45.

- R.A. Jansen, M.A. (Stell.) : 1940-41.
- Rev. J.B. Chutter, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1938-61. O.a.s. 1940-45.  
Actg. Senior Master 1950.
- J. Senior : 1938- Music.
- M.E. Hardcastle, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1939-40. On exchange from  
Clifton.
- J.B. Pauw, B.A. (Stell.) : 1939-41.
- R.G.H. Green, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1939-45. C.a.s. 1941-45.
- N.A. St.J. Davis, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1937, 1939-52.
- J. Lea Morgan, M.A. Mus.Bac. (Oxon.) : 1939-43, 1945-46. Music.
- J.F. Gaylard, B.Sc. (Rhodes) : 1939-45. O.a.s. 1940-45.
- F.S. Bishop, B.A. (Lond.) : 1940-42 (also 1913-27).
- F.F.P. Williams : 1940-41.
- B. Chard, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1940.
- F.S. Pardoe, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1940-41.
- C.M.B. Thomas, M.A. (Bristol) : 1940-43.
- Miss M.K. Ball, M.A. (Oxon.) : 1940-44.
- Miss M. Snell : 1940-42. Part time.
- Mrs. M. Snell : Occasional part time.
- H.J. Truter, M.A. (Stell.) : 1940.
- Miss E. Clarence : 1940. Art.
- I.J. Roux, B.A., B.Ed. (Stell.) : 1941.
- Rev. R.A. Sidebottom, M.A. : 1941-45. Part time Chaplain.
- T.F.J. Dreyer, B.A. (Rhodes) : 1941-43.
- D.S. Foster, B.A. (Stell.) : 1941-44.
- J. Zama : 1941-?. Part time Zulu.
- C.F. Ferguson : 1941-42.
- J.J.A. van Schaik, N.A.T.C. : 1941-47. Art.
- A.G. Sutcliffe : 1942.
- E. le Roux, B.Sc., B.Ed. (Stell.) : 1942.
- F.M. Botha, B.A. (Rhodes) : 1942-43.
- N.M. Benkenstein, B.A. (Rhodes) : 1942-45.
- H.D. Hebblethwaite, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1942-43.

- Miss A. Hills, B.Sc. Hons. (Lond.) : 1942-43. (Subsequently Mrs. Robinson, and frequent part time.)
- Mrs. G. Symes, B.Sc. Hons. (Lond.) : 1942-45 and 1946.
- Dr. W.K. Spencer, D.Sc. (Oxon.), F.R.S., F.G.S. : 1942.
- C. Lombard, (Stell.) : 1943-45.
- G.C. Dickerson, (Rhodes) : 1943-45.
- L. le Butt : 1943-45. Music.
- A.J. Hurst, (Camb.) : 1943-44.
- S. Organe : 1943.
- D.L. van den Berg, B.A. (Stell.) : 1944-45.
- P.W. Jordaan : 1945.
- S.M. Geldenhuys (Rhodes) : 1945.
- H.J. van Zyl, (Stell.) : 1945 and 1950-51.
- N.S. Freeman, (Birm.) : 1945.
- Rev. H.W. Palmer, (Oxf.) : 1945-46. Full time Chaplain.
- T.C. Carter, B.A. (N.U.C.) : 1946-50.
- R.A. Macnab, B.A. (N.U.C.) : 1946-50.
- S.D. Naude : 1946.
- I.J. Viljoen : 1946-47.
- T.F.W. Harris, B.A., M.Sc. (Cantab.) : 1946-51.
- H.W. Truter, (Stell.) : 1946.
- R.L. Ibbotson, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1946-
- V.C. Harries, (Wales) : 1946-48.
- Rev. J.C. Tyrrell, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1946-50. Chaplain.
- N.E. Brett, L.R.A.M., A.R.C.O. : 1946-50. Music.
- W. Macnae, (Glasgow) : 1946.
- M.T. Kriel, B.A. (Stell.) : 1947.
- C.J. Vermaak : 1947-48.
- P. Hardy, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1947.
- R.C. Brooks, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1947-56.
- H.F.G. Carey, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1947-56.
- K. Mackenzie : 1948.

- P.J. Retief : 1948-49.
- V.G. Haupt, (Stell.) : 1948.
- J.C. Theron, (Rhodes) : 1948.
- W.F. Lumb, B.A. (Bristol) : 1948-50.
- G.P. Ward, M.A. (Cantab.) : 1948-49.
- R.T.S. Norwood : 1949- Senior Master 1952;  
Rector 1960.
- Miss S.M. Coetser, B.A.Hons. (F.A.) (U.C.T. and Rhodes) : 1949.  
Art.
- C.A. Bischoff, B.A. (Pret.) : 1949-50.
- P.S. Gouws, B.A. (Stell.) : 1949-53.
- J.P. Lowe, (N.U.) : 1949-
- K.M. Senior, B.A. (Leeds) : 1949-50.
- F. Morris : 1949.
- T.N.E. Skinner, B.Sc. (N.U.) : 1949-50.
- T. du Toit : 1950. Art.
- A. Bartholomew, B.Sc. (N.U.) : 1950.
- R. Ferguson, M.Sc. (Rhodes) : 1950.
- L.W. Hibbins, M.A. (Cantab.), L.R.C.M. : 1950-52.
- I.R. van den Berg, B.A. (Rhodes) : 1950-55.
- Dr. R.D. Laurie, C.B.E. : 1950.
- Rev. B.B. Burnett, M.A., L.Th. : 1950-54. Chaplain.
- G.P. Hett, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1950-51. Killed.
- J. Hodgson, L.R.A.M., L.T.C.L. : 1950-57. Music.
- C.J. Staude, B.A. (Rhodes) : 1951-53.
- Rev. H.L. Way : 1951-53.
- C. van den Berg : 1951-52.
- C. Page, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1951-54.
- J. Coetzee : 1951-55 and 1962.
- ? Steyn : 1951.
- G.H. Attwell, B.Sc. (N.U.) : 1951.
- G. Hammond, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1951.
- C.P. Currey, B.A. (Oxon.) : 1951.

R.A. Roseveare, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1952-62.  
 H.B. Kruger, B.A. (Potch.) : 1952-53.  
 I.P. Coetzer : 1952-53. P.T.  
 M.O.E. Sutton, (Rhodes) : 1952.  
 R.G. Kingdon, B.A. (Cantab.) : 1952.  
 R.G. Hennessey : 1952-  
 P.J. Goldie Scott : 1952.  
 F.H. Pratt : 1952-55.  
 T.G.L. Hickson : 1952.  
 J. Byrne : 1921-56 (died). Carpentry.

Matrons and Housekeeping (possibly incomplete:

Miss Colley : 1928-48.  
 Miss Anstey : 1934-43.  
 Miss Block : 1937-39.  
 Mrs. Dold : 1939.  
 Mrs. Ranner : 1939.  
 Mrs. Bateson : 1939-41.  
 Mrs. Mull : 1939.  
 Miss Nel : 1939.  
 Mrs. Byrne : 1939-45, 1947-48.  
 Mrs. Michaelis : 1941.  
 Miss Gilmour : ?  
 Mrs. Nordaunt : 1944-?.  
 Miss Liefeldt : 1945.  
 Mrs. Sim : ?-1946.  
 Mrs. Savage : 1947.  
 Mrs. Walshaw : 1947.  
 Mrs. Booth : 1948-50.  
 Mrs. Tabler : 1948-50.  
 Mrs. Laughton : 1948-49.  
 Miss Minton : 1949.  
 Mrs. Walters : 1949.

Miss Dixon	:	1950-?
Miss Horsley	:	1950-?
Mrs. Henderson	:	1950-?
<u>Sanatorium:</u>		
Sr. King	:	1928-45.
Nurse Pickering	:	1938-44.
Miss D. Green	:	1944.
Mrs. H. Norton	:	1944-45.
Sr. Johnson	:	1945.
Sr. Evans	:	1945-46.
Sr. Malony	:	1947.
Sr. A. Wills	:	1947-48.
Mrs. Macleod	:	1948-49.
Sr. Hojem	:	1949-55.
Mrs. H. Davies	:	1949-?
<u>Office:</u>		
Miss H. Barnes	:	1939. (Subsequently Mrs. Chapman.)
Miss G. Green	:	1939.
Miss Runciman	:	1927-41.
Miss K.M. Jeffries	:	1941-42.
Mrs. I.B. Byrne	:	1942-43.
Mrs. Henry	:	1943.
Mrs. Bennett	:	1943.
Miss Bloomer	:	1943-?
Miss Dickie	:	1944.
Miss Stead	:	1944.
Mrs. Edwards	:	1944.
Miss Dales	:	-1944.
Miss Edwards	:	1944.
Miss Dodge	:	1944.
Mrs. Chutter	:	1944.

Miss Craggs	:	1945-46.
Mrs. Barker	:	1946.
Mrs. Smart	:	1946.
Mrs. D. Campbell	:	1946-
Miss Brown	:	1947.
J. Rethman	:	1947.
Miss V. Jeudwine	:	1947-48.
T.A. O'Sullivan, M.A.	:	1947.
J. Kenny	:	1947-50.
Miss Davis	:	1948.
Miss Thorpe	:	1948.
Miss Munton	:	1948.
Mrs. J. Atrobus	:	1949.
Mrs. L. Knight	:	1949-
Mrs. N. Davis	:	1949-52.
Brig. Marindin, D.S.O.	:	1950-53.
<u>Estate:</u> (probably incomplete)		
J. Aitken	:	1928-41.
T.G.H. Smith	:	1942.
H.B. Davis, M.C.	:	1944-47. Died.
D. Rouillard	:	1947.
L. Knight	:	1948- (Subsequently (1953) Bursar.)
? Macleod	:	1948-49.
? Minton	:	1949.
F. Bryant	:	1950.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Note: Comments on the more important sources are included in the Introduction.

## 1. PRIMARY SOURCES

1.1 Written Records of Michaelhouse (kept at the school or in the office of the Diocesan Secretary).

St. Michael's Chronicle for the period 1897-1967. (The school magazine, published twice a year.)

Natal Diocesan College, Michaelhouse: Minute Books for the period 1900-67. (Minutes of Meetings of the Board of Governors, together with Reports and Minutes of sub-committees of the Board, Annual Reports of the Standing Committee of Associated Church Schools and Reports of the Rectors.)

Michaelhouse Old Boys' Club: Minute Books for the period 1903-1967.

Michaelhouse Old Boys' Club: Members Roll, 1961.

Letter Books: 1903-08. (From the school.)

Letter Books: 1928-34. (From the Secretary of the Board of Governors.)

Mark Books: 1903-08, 1914-17.

Minute Books: (List of Boarders in Pietermaritzburg.)

Boys' Petty Cash Book, 1899. (Records only donations to Chapel Fund.)

Ledger, 1898-1900.

Minute Book: (Entrants to 1914.)

Account Book - Day Book, 1908-13.

Natal Diocesan College, Michaelhouse: Miscellaneous Files for the period from 1928 onwards.

Michaelhouse 1927-1930: (Scrap Book assembled by W.F. Bushell.)

C.W. Hannah: History of Michaelhouse 1896-1930. Unpublished typescript; 25 pages.

Michaelhouse Chapel: Notes on the Symbolism of the Stained Glass Windows; Sept. 1956. (The author was Mrs. C. Morgan.)

1.2 Records of the Registrar of Deeds.

Transfer Deeds: 219/1873; 315/1882; 504/1908.

Trust Deeds: Misc. 7/1901; Misc. 16/1902.

1.3 Records of the Diocese of Natal: (formerly Diocese of Maritzburg)

Natal Dio.: Maritzburg Synodical I 1869-1909.

Natal Dio.: Maritzburg Synodical II 1883-1909.

Acts and Resolutions of the Diocesan Synod for each of the years 1914 to 1917.



#### 1.4 Government Reports, Acts and Ordinances:

- Colony of Natal: Blue Books 1871-1892.
- Colony of Natal: Departmental Reports 1890-1910. (Reports of the Superintendent Inspector for Schools to 1897; of the Superintendent of Education 1898-1910; and Report on Government and Government Aided Secondary Schools 1902-C3.
- Colony of Natal: Statistical Year Books, 1893, 1896 and 1904-09.
- Colony of Natal: Monthly Notices of the Education Department. (Published in Government Notices.)
- Colony of Natal: Miscellaneous Papers and Reports 1904-13. (File 5/3.) For Draft Report on a University College for Natal, May 1908; and 'The Curricula of Our Schools' - an undated monograph, (printed probably 1912-13).
- Colony of Natal: Report of the Education Commission, 1909.
- Colony of Natal: Act No.23 of 1909. (Natal University College Act.)
- Province of Natal: Reports of the Superintendent of Education, 1911-1928.
- Province of Natal: Reports of the Director of Education, 1929-53.
- Province of Natal: Ordinance No.23 of 1942. (Natal Education Ordinance.)
- Province of Natal: Report of the Provincial Education Commission, 1946. (The Wilks Report.)
- Republic of South Africa: Act No.39 of 1967. (National Education Policy Act.)
- Great Britain, Board of Education: The Public Schools and the General Educational System. Report of the Committee on Public Schools. H.M.S.O. 1943. (The Fleming Report.)

#### 1.5 The Contemporary Press:

- The Natal Witness: 1871, 1872, 1880, 1898, 1901, 1903.
- The Times of Natal: 1880, 1896.

#### 1.6 Additional Primary Sources:

By correspondence, interviews and conversation, I approached previous rectors, a large number of Old Boys, masters, institutions and individuals for information about the school and about the first four rectors. Some preferred to remain anonymous but where it has been possible and appropriate, the names of informants are given in the footnotes. For the most part these sources fall into the following groups:

- a. information based on written records not available to me which institutions or individuals associated with the first four rectors kindly supplied;
- b. comments by the three rectors from 1927 to 1952 on their own terms of office;
- c. reminiscences by Old Boys, Staff, Secretaries to the Board of Governors and others associated with the school or, through kinship or friendship, with the first four rectors.

## 2. SECONDARY SOURCES

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