

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

On 22nd January 1920, Spalding High School opened its doors to the first scholars. A number of girls were to continue attendance at the Grammar School until the following September.

At the time of opening there were only five classrooms, but alterations were to be made in the Summer so that one hundred and fifty girls could be accommodated. A science room and gymnasium were provided; and it was hoped to introduce domestic science, drawing, painting and music to the school curriculum, which was, at first, almost entirely consisting of academic subjects.

THE AIM OF THE SCHOOL

“To provide a Sound, Liberal Education. Great stress is laid upon Building up of Character and the Formation of Good Habits, with a view to Training the pupils for their future responsibilities in the Home, and the Professions open to Women”.

THE HEADMISTRESS AND THE STAFF

The first Headmistress was Miss E. S. Henry of Putney. She was chosen from eighteen candidates, four of whom were selected for interview. The salary offered was £400. When the school opened there were only four members of staff, Miss Underwood, Miss Graham, Mademoiselle Boels and Miss Johnson for the Kindergarten. At the same time there were three private governors, Mr. Howard, Mr. Atton and Miss Maples, who from time to time would visit the school.

Other members of Staff appointed later were:— Miss Pickford — Gymnastics; Miss Rennunt-Jones — English; Miss Sheppard; Miss Beckinsale; Miss “Latin” Jones; Miss Bailey; Miss Longford and Miss Ashmein — Needlework (part time).

Miss Johnson and Miss Blaiklock taught the Kindergarten of girls and boys up to eight years of age, when the boys left for the Grammar School, and the girls moved into the Preparatory Department of the High School. The Kindergarten was “conducted on Froebel methods”.

EXAMINATIONS FOR FREE PLACES

These examinations were open to any girl between the ages of ten and twelve years. For parents who wished to pay for their child, the fee was £2. 10s. per term, which included books, stationery and games equipment. The fee paying girls far outnumbered those who had been awarded free places.

The Headmistress was at home to parents on Tuesday from 1.30 p.m., or, at other times, by appointment. The first term ended on 1st April, and the next began on 27th April. Twelve girls were selected by examination, out of fifty candidates, for free places from September.

EXTENSIONS IN THE SUMMER

In June 1920 Miss Henry reported that the rooms at Welland Hall were full to overflowing with the 124 children in the school.

However, later in the month an extension scheme was announced. This scheme was necessary, because the school was originally intended for 70 to 80 children, but when the other girls were transferred from the Grammar School there were 180 girls. The new plans enabled the school to house 180 to 200 girls. In September the Fifth and Sixth Forms were transferred from the Grammar School. Because of the lack of space it was decided not to carry on with the kindergarten, and only to admit girls at eight years or over.

It is interesting to note that we have the names of twelve boys in the School register, some of whom are well known Spalding citizens today.

When these alterations had been completed there was enough room to house all of the girls. If this had not been the case the Holland Education Committee said that they would consider building a new school. Little did they realise that this would be postponed for nearly forty years!

The Local Education Authority agreed to pay the Grammar School governors £5,000 as purchase price of the building, and to make extensions costing £5,000. Thus, the cost of £10,000 was considered to be a great saving, as the expense of building a new school would have been three times as much.

The approximate upkeep of the school was estimated to be £1,000 per year.

THE FIRST GOVERNORS

The Board of Governors numbered fourteen. Seven were to be appointed by the Education Authority, including two women. Two others were to be members of the Spalding Urban District Council, one other a member of the Long Sutton Urban District Council, and one more from the Holbeach Urban District Council. Of the remaining three, one was to be elected from the Grammar School Governors, and two were to be co-opted members.

On Midsummer Day, the first seven were named, having been proposed by Mr. J. W. Gleed. They were Mrs. J. W. Gleed, Miss Maples, Alderman F. Howard, Rev. J. Oakley, Mr. G. Massey, Rev. A. H. Morris and Mr. J. W. Banks.

It is interesting to note that, on the following day the first twelve governors of the new Bourne Grammar School were appointed, and the headmaster Mr. C. Pask Matthews was chosen soon afterwards. Many people in Bourne thought that the example set in Holland, by providing new High Schools at Boston and Spalding, furthered the cause of Grammar School education in their town.

THE LAST SHARED SPEECH DAY

On 13th December, the boys of the Grammar School and the girls of the High School assembled together for prize giving. The Bishop of Grantham presented the prizes.

Mr. L. J. Driver, the newly appointed Headmaster in succession to Dr. E. C. Chappell, observed that the departure of the girls would have left them broken hearted if it had not been for the fact that forty three new boys had taken their places, making the largest total they had ever had of one hundred and thirty six boys.

Miss Henry, also, spoke stressing the need for neatness and self discipline in a girl's education.

The girls sang "Heroes" and "See amid the winter snow". The boys sang "The Elves", and all joined together in the school song, "Forty Years On."

THE COST OF EDUCATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES

The White Paper Estimates for 1920-21 compared the expenditure expected in the year ahead, with that of the last war year and first year of peace.

1920-21	£45,755,567	estimated
1919-20	£32,772,473	
1918-19	£19,334,705	

£17,382,802 was spent on grants to elementary education, and £2,925,000 went to educate demobilised officers in the year 1918-19.

The huge increase was explained by the rise in the cost of living and the fall in value of money and, of course, by increased teachers' salaries.

A comparison with pre war salaries is as follows :

1913-14	Total cost	£16,416,000	— Average Salary	£99. 4s.
1920-21	Total cost	£39,110,000	— Average Salary	£200.

The annual cost per child had risen from the pre war figure of £4. 16s. 4d. to £10. 11s. 4d. in 1920.

In 1920-21 the average attendance was 5,300,000 pupils.

The increased spending on education and social services is reflected in the rates for Spalding.

1919	Poor Rate	5s. 1d.	U.D.C. Rates	3s. 6d.	Total	8s. 7d.
1920	Poor Rate	9s. 0d.	U.D.C. Rates	6s. 4d.	Total	15s. 4d.

This was an increase of 80%

In 1920 the Boston Rates were 21s. 6d. in the pound.

PIONEERS



Miss E. S. Henry
in her study.

Miss M. Pennant Jones
1920 (Sept.) - 1923

Miss D. M. Harris
1920 (April) - 1924



Miss L. A. Jones
1920 (Sept.) - 1924



Miss Henry with a group of staff and girls



This group
includes
Miss S. M. Lund
1923-1925

Miss L. Osborne
1924-1950

Miss J. F. Bevis
1923-1931





The First Hockey XI 1922-23.

Left to Right

Backrow- W. Reynolds, M. Hancock, M. Bennett, K. Hatton, H. Carter.

Middle- D. Parsons, H. Rowbottom, Miss Pickford, J. Bratley, E. Green.

Front- W. Smith, W. Loweth.



A group of spectators. 1922-23.



This hockey team includes
Miss C. M. Cannon 1925-1932 as well as Miss Osborne.



Second from the right is
Miss R. Hoyle 1929-1934.



At Camp. Miss M. F. Braitch
1925-1932 with Mair Elsom,
Margaret Kingston and Mary White.



Miss M. Chambers
Headmistress
Jan. 1926-July 1931.
washing up
at Camp.



Younger Girls from Ayscoughfee School used to come over
to the High School for their lunch. This photo was probably
taken in 1925 and shows Miss Black with a Netball team.

Miss Chambers and a group of
girls Noreen Epton is to be
found on the back row.



"NOBODY'S CHILDREN"

Mrs. Kate Chambers (nee Plowright) was transferred from the Grammar School and so has the distinction of being one of the very first of "the High School girls". She writes, "After starting at the Grammar School it was found that, with both girls and boys, the building was overcrowded. So it was decided to take over Welland Hall. Whilst it was being decorated, it was decided that my form, which was called "Remove" was to be the first one to cross the threshold.

We started in the little room next to the Headmistress's Room at the top of the small staircase on the second floor above the main hall. For a time we seemed nobody's children. First we were at Welland Hall then across the games field to the Grammar School for the lessons with staff which could not be had at Welland Hall, and so on for nearly two terms.

It was finally finished, decorated, furnished and staffed. Then it was opened as "Spalding High School" with Miss Henry as Headmistress.

As there were only about six girls and boys, altogether, going from Deeping to Spalding Grammar and High Schools we had to leave home at half past six, cycle three miles to the station to catch the seven o'clock train for Spalding, which caused us to get to school at quarter to eight. Three days a week we did not leave Spalding until the six o'clock train for Peterborough, which meant we did not get home until close on seven o'clock in the evening. It was alright in the summer but in the winter it was very dark, both mornings and nights, and we often had very bad and slippery roads to ride on. Also, we only had the little paraffin lamps on our cycles, which would often have the light blown out by the wind; if it did not keep alight we had to walk. Then it was late dinner, homework to be done, if not done between the hours of finishing school and waiting for the train, and then to bed. On Tuesday and Wednesday we got home on the market trains from Spalding and Boston. We had to leave school early, about quarter to three, to catch them at three o'clock.

When Miss Henry found we had to leave home so early in the morning she ordered a cup of tea and a piece of bread and butter to be provided for us by the wardens, who were then Mr. and Mrs. Wright, who lived on the other side of the river against the railway gates.

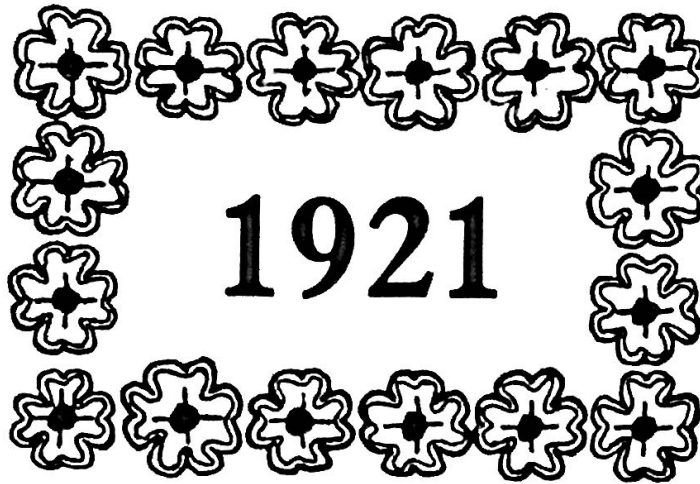
The teaching staff then was Miss Underwood (History), Miss Jones (Latin), Miss Jones (English), Miss Beckinsale (Geography and Needlework), Miss Shepherd (Botany), Miss Pickford (Games), Mademoiselle Boels (French) and Miss Johnson (Art).

For games such as hockey and cricket we had to share the Grammar School field. Tennis was played on the large lawn at the back of the school; netball on the lawn at the side. As time went on, a games field down Lovers' Lane was purchased for us, so all games were played there.

Then a gym hall was needed, so a wooden one was built on the lawn we used as a tennis court.

For our first Speech Day we had it in the Drill Hall in Haverfield Road, and did a gym display. The next one we had in the Corn Exchange. We provided and sold teas at a moderate price, with entertainment, on the stage, of gym exercises afterwards.

For the ones who could not get home to dinner, and dinners had not started being cooked at school, we sat at the long table in the main entrance hall. After a year we had a change in the French teacher to Miss Longford and in the Games mistress to Miss Martin. The rooms above the kitchen were converted into toilets and a staffroom. Also, the bedrooms on the third floor were made into science rooms. Then a large cloak room was built on the ground floor. The large room facing the net ball court was used as our Art Room."



As the school entered its second year the pupils and staff were just getting used to working with each other and a lot of thought was given to the choice of a school motto and arranging the first magazine and bazaar.

THE SCHOOL MOTTO

After many suggestions and discussion concerning the school motto it was decided that it should be "Lampada Vitae Tradimus". It was taken from the poem "Vitae Lampada" by Sir Henry Newbolt.

*"This is the word that year by year,
While in her place the school is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.
That they all with a joyful mind
Bear through life, like a torch in flame,
And falling, fling to the host behind –
Play up! Play up! and play the game".*

THE FIRST MAGAZINE

The first issue of the High School magazine was published at the close of the first year of life of the new school. The magazine committee consisted of pupils, with the addition of one member of staff.

In the first issue Miss Henry wrote an introductory letter to the School giving them courage and inspiration in their new life and work. Besides original poetry and prose there were school games notes and summaries of each form. This has been the general pattern of the succeeding issues.

THE FIRST BAZAAR

The first Christmas fair the School organised was held at the Corn Exchange. The profits came to a total of £100, and were used for building a pavilion, on the playing fields. Some of the money was used for furnishing the prep school at Ayscoughfee.

Miss Henry gave a speech explaining that it was now impracticable to use the Grammar School field and that the High School had obtained a field of their own at Low Roads, which was about ten minutes walking distance away.

The Christmas fair in 1968 raised about £200, again to help pay for the cost of a pavilion, but this time at Stonegate.

THE SCHOOL UNIFORM

While the girls were at the Grammar School their uniform was light blue and dark blue and they had boaters with a navy blue, and dark blue band. On the front of these they pinned a metal badge.

When the girls moved to the High School the uniform was changed. The girls had gym slips, white blouses, black stockings and "indoor" shoes for wearing in lessons. For outside wear they had navy blue coats, navy blue hats with red bands, and the motto in black and white on the front. Their woollen scarves were red and blue.

They all had shoe bags for the storage of indoor and outdoor footwear.

EURHYTHMICS

At the Corn Exchange, early in June, Miss Ann Driver sat at the piano, while, on stage, "barelegged little High School girls and Grammar School boys performed strange movements with their legs and arms". To a bewildered audience, Miss Driver explained that the Dalcroze method of music and movement would, probably, "help to reduce the number of accomplished young ladies who unfortunately can execute classical compositions on the piano with admirable technique, but without any more feeling than they would exhibit in knitting a jumper". This new method of making musicians was to help children to interpret sound into terms of movement. The girls had to be barelegged, it was explained, to allow them the freedom of gesture so essential to a proper performance of the various movements.

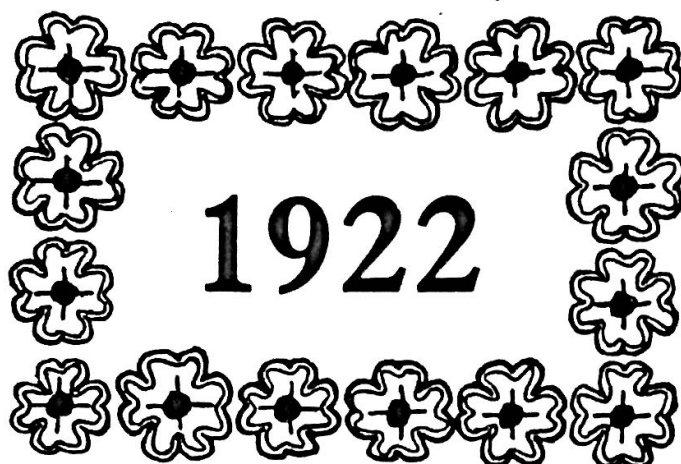
HONK!

It may be because she still has a guilty conscience, even though she left school in 1925, Edith prefers not to give her surname. Hardly surprising, when you hear how she and the other girls in the form were always looking for, and finding trouble.

"On one occasion Miss Longford, who was teaching French, entered the room, as always, carrying her cushion. She placed it on her chair, and turned round to pick up a book. While her back was turned someone placed a car hooter underneath it. She sat down to musical accompaniment."

Edith's sister and others broke the rule which was intended to keep the girls and boys apart. They climbed on the dividing fence which collapsed to roars of laughter, and so attracted attention and retribution.

(Reporter: Anne Molson.)



During 1921 the economic state of the country had caused concern for the Government, and a committee on National Expenditure was set up under the chairmanship of Sir Eric Geddes.

The "Geddes Axe" stopped any educational development. The report produced by the committee stated that children should not start state-aided schools until they were six years old, that free secondary education should only be given to those whose mental calibre justified it and whose parents could not afford to pay. The report also stated that the cost of teaching must be reduced by the local authorities and that teachers must contribute towards their own pensions.

Under the "Geddes Axe" it was stated that teachers' salaries would not be reduced, but they would be expected to contribute 5% of their salaries to their pension fund.

The Local Education Authority decided that it would be better not to accept any teachers from training colleges.

To economise on their education costs the Holland Committee recommended that ten teachers from various schools be given a month's notice, and that nine other vacancies caused by resignation or transference of teachers should not be filled.

There had been 150% increase on pre-war salaries, before the war they were £104, but in 1922 they were £250 p.a. for assistant teachers.

In 1913 the education costs in Holland had been £30,000, but in 1922 the total was £100,000. That was £9. per child.

WE MAKE A PROFIT

When the Education Committee came to audit accounts for Spalding High School they found that a profit had been made and so the school needed no assistance from the county.

The Local Authority and Board of Education paid half of the grants given to the Grammar and other state aided schools, and it was proposed to cancel the deficiency grants for our school.

The grant amounted to about £7 per child, and the Local Education Authorities also paid another grant to schools for books.

RAISING THE ROOF

At a meeting in October 1922, the Governors discussed the best way in which the outstanding balances of loans, which had been raised for school extensions, could be used.

A total of £4,400 was raised for the extension purposes, but after the work had been carried out, it was done much more cheaply than was estimated. The sum of £720 was still in hand, and the Governors decided to recommend to the Board of Education that this money should be used for carrying out future alterations.

It was proposed that the roof should be raised so that the top floor classrooms would get more light. A science laboratory was urgently needed and was to be accommodated on the top floor.

Since 1967 the dismantled "lab" has been occupied by the Holland Music Centre, where the occupants sound at times to be trying to raise the roof even higher.

TEACHERS AND THE ELECTION

In the November of this year, the General Election drew near and so Spalding, Holbeach and Long Sutton Teachers' Association submitted to the candidates a series of questions, in answer to which the three candidates agreed that they would do their best to prevent,

1. Any further withdrawal of the Board of Education grants.
2. Any further attempt to exclude from school, children under the age of six.
3. Any action reducing a proper provision of school meals.
4. Any further limitation in number of free places in secondary schools.
5. Any withdrawal of grants for teachers' salaries.

Disillusionment, over their impending "voluntary" patriotic gesture of a five per cent cut in salaries, was beginning to intensify as the teachers realised that not only they, but the children also, were to be the victims of the post war economic crisis. Too many times since, have we experienced a repetition of similar circumstances of government parsimony to the educational system.

PRIZE GIVING DAY

The programme was opened by a recitation and then the play 'The Fairies' Quarrel' was performed by the Junior School.

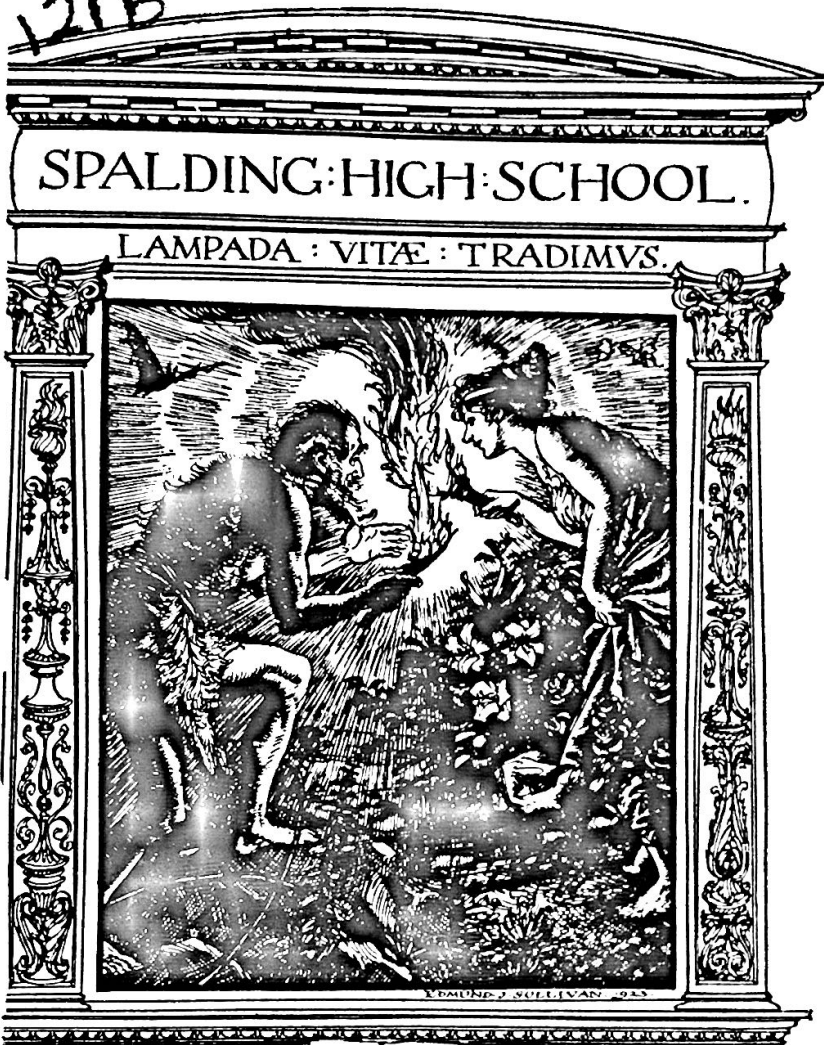
In her Speech, Miss Henry said that during the last year the school had been "fitting in". She then asked the parents present to see that their daughters were early to bed, to prevent them from being tired the next day at School. Miss Henry said that the girls were kept out late by concerts and dances during the week, and these also affected their homework.

Miss Henry then asked the parents to see that the 70 or 80 girls who brought packed lunches to school were getting the correct sort of food.

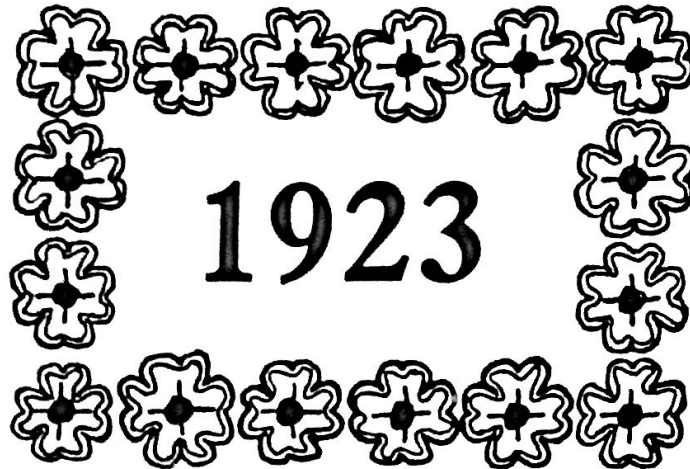
She then concluded with the new School motto — *Lampada Vitae Tradimus* — "We are handing on the torch of life".

Soon afterwards this quaint pictorial interpretation of the motto was glued on to the inside of the library books, and printed inside the magazines.

1215



Spald History Library



DEDUCTION

Early in the year the 5% contribution from teachers' salaries was deducted. Salaries in the London region were to be reduced until 1st April 1923 and salaries in the rest of the country until 1st April 1925.

STILL MAKING A PROFIT

The Holland County Council had to provide a grant of £1,300 for the Grammar School, but the High School was still making a profit, and the committee commented that the money was being well spent. The total cost of secondary education in Holland was less than that of Lindsey and Kesteven.

ANOTHER ECONOMY

In the July of this year there was a meeting of the Holland Education Committee and the committee decided that they would not pay all the Scholarship grant unless parents could not afford to maintain their child at school. If a child whose parents could afford to keep her at School, won a scholarship, the committee would pay for the school fees but not for transport or other items.

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL BAZAAR

This year's bazaar was held with the object of supplying the School with many things that were badly needed.

A magic lantern was required for the purpose of illustrating lessons and lectures. A gramophone was necessary for the teaching of dancing, and many books were needed for the library. The School gave a subscription to Dr. Barnardo's Homes, and a Christmas gift to the Johnson Hospital from the proceeds.

"TRAIN AND TOWN"

Miss Christina MacLeod, who was a pupil from 1920–1927, gives a most revealing description of those early days.

"Spalding High School opened its doors officially in February 1920 with the remnant of Miss Page's pupils from Welland Hall, as the building had been named in earlier days, and the younger girls from the Grammar School. In the following September, the senior girls joined them, together with a new intake from other schools in the area. I became a pupil at this time, but already knew quite a bit about life in the new school as my sister had been one of those transferred from the Grammar School in the previous February. Here are some of my recollections of those earlier years.

The first one to come to mind as I am writing this "forty years on" when many of those first pupils may have become "rheumatic of shoulder" is the adoption of the Harrow School Song, "Forty Years On", as our school song. Nobody thought it strange that girls should sing it just as lustily, no doubt, as their counterparts in the more famous establishment. For some years it was the custom to sing this song at the school's birthday party, which was duly celebrated each Spring term. There was a large birthday cake which Miss Henry cut with due solemnity, and we filed up to the stage in pairs to receive our portions, each retaining her piece until all had been served and the last chorus of the song finished. Then we ate the cake together.

On looking back over this long period of years, I realise that, in its first year, the school must have been quite small, for the original London Road building, without the huts which were later added, sufficed for everything, and we were not overcrowded. The main lack was a suitable room for gym. There was a tiny room in the grounds which served as a gym in Miss Page's day, but until Holland Education Committee acquired two ex-army huts in 1922, the Hall, which later became the Music Room, and still later, the Art Room, served for Assembly, for Gym and for any social events. The acquisition of the army huts certainly gave the school more space for Gym, Assembly and an extra classroom. I remember the year that classroom was our formroom. It was heated, in those days, by a hideous coke burning stove. Being, at that time, at an obnoxious age, we soon discovered that tiny particles of india rubber placed on this monster gave off an extremely disagreeable smell, and this discovery we used to torment the mistresses whose subjects we most disliked. They, poor souls, could never find out what caused this unpleasantness, and we, of course, enjoyed it.

During my years at school the timetable had to be geared to the demands of the railways, for there were no buses then, and we were divided simply into "Train" and "Town" girls. Girls came from the same areas as they do now, with the exception of the Surfleet – Gosberton line, which brought in pupils from as far afield as Kirton. In those days trains reached Spalding about eight o'clock, and left in the afternoon at quarter to three. Any trains later than this left about six o'clock. Consequently, the School day had to begin early and finish early. The first arrivals, about quarter past seven were from Cowbit and Crowland, and the others flocked in between eight and halfpast. The first bell went at twenty to nine, and we had a long morning session until quarter to one. The afternoon was short, with two periods only, of which, the second was always for the Town girls alone, and consisted of Games or "Prep". Tribute should be paid to those early travellers for many of them had lengthy walks or cycle rides to their village stations in addition to the train journey. They, also, had the disadvantage of more "prep" to be done at home, as they missed the last afternoon period in order to catch their trains.

This arrangement made difficult the selecting of teams for various matches, as Town girls always had their games in the second half of the afternoon, and it was not easy to get the sections playing together. Nevertheless, the school always had a good record for games, for the Grammar School contingent brought with them a working tradition in both hockey and cricket. The first field we had was in Halmer Gate, and it was more than a sports field, for the farmer, from whom the authorities rented it, used to keep cows there during weekends and holidays. No hockey pitch was sacred to cows and I remember, on more than one occasion, an unfortunate player was liberally splashed from balls which landed in cow dung. As there was no means of washing it off at the field, the victim had, perforce, to go home thus adorned. Needless to say, the mothers who had to cope with blouses and tunics in this state, were definitely not amused.

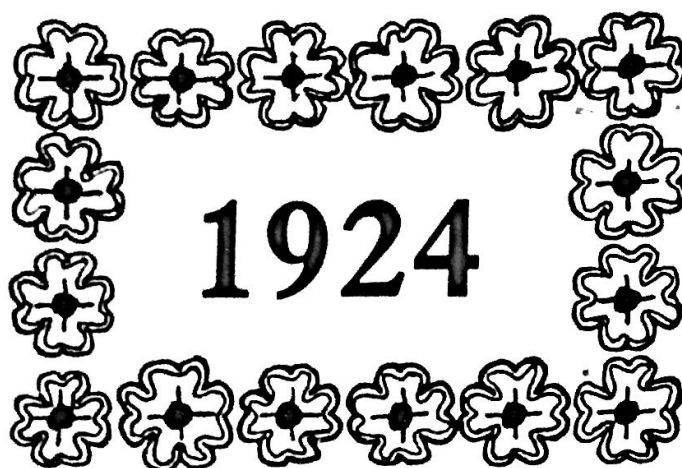
At London Road, at this period, the grounds were attractive, for, apart from the netball pitch at the side of the building, and, later, the asphalt court at the rear, the rest was pleasant garden with paths and shrubberies, which made excellent places for "Hide and Seek" for the juniors. There were also two apple trees, whose fruit we reckoned as our perquisites, and some small gardens which we industriously cultivated under the guidance of Miss Beckinsale.

School meals at this time were comparatively strict, and, when one considers the enormous task facing Miss Henry and her colleagues, this is not surprising. They had to weld together a somewhat motley crowd of people, those in the Grammar School tradition, those with Welland Hall's tradition and the new girls. Surprisingly, in those days, having taken the girls from the Grammar School, it was decreed that from that moment the twain should never meet again. There was a stiff penalty for any girl found talking to a boy at the school fence, but it was not an easy rule to enforce at first, when boys and girls had shared the same classrooms. There were, too, a few strict rules about uniform, particularly in the summer, when we were required to wear white gloves on our journeys to and from school. This rule was later relaxed, as it was too difficult, especially for the Train girls, to keep those gloves white. It was decided, in the first year, to keep the Grammar School metal badge for the hats, but to adopt the red hat band of Welland Hall: Thus, the School colours came into being. At first, we had red and black striped blazers, later on, navy ones edged with red, and finally, the plain ones similar to those worn today. We also had to have a pair of indoor shoes in addition to the gym shoes, and one great achievement was to avoid changing into indoor shoes and escaping undetected.

Gradually, other changes were made, and a tradition evolved, which, by the time I left in 1927, was becoming well established, notably a tradition for scholarship and good physical education. Although the girls of this generation did not enjoy many of the privileges of their successors, they were fortunate in some ways. Those of us who stayed on after we had passed School Certificate or "Matric", as it then was, found ourselves receiving almost individual tuition to provide us with the necessary qualifications to enter Universities or Colleges. The Sixth Form was small, never more than six or seven in the final year, and I remember being the only one studying History in my final year, while there were two of us sharing the English Mistress, and three for French. In this way, we received much personal attention which is not possible when classes are larger.

I, vividly, remember the coming to the school of two ladies who did much to create these two traditions, Miss Osborne and Miss Hopp, who both came in 1924. After the first gym lesson our form had with Miss Osborne we felt as if a bomb had hit us. We must have returned to our classroom for the next lesson in a somewhat dazed condition, but nevertheless, we soon learned that speed and "being on your toes" were important lessons in life, and we moved accordingly. For the coming of Miss Hopp, Miss Henry had prepared us by saying that every girl was to know every irregular French verb on a certain page in our French grammar. There must have been about a hundred of them, and many of us spent a few uncomfortable hours in the preceding Christmas holidays learning the wretched things. Miss Hopp felt the cold Fenland winters, and her first order, on entering any class room, was, "Shut those windows". Those were two great teachers among many, at that time, and when Miss Osborne had help later from Miss Cannon, who was a County Hockey player, no school could rival Spalding on the field.

One other incident is outstanding in these years, the visit to the great Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924. Modern schoolgirls, who can now take part in wonderful educational cruises to many lands, would probably think little of this, yet, for their predecessors, it was a major expedition. Most of us had been to London on various occasions, but this was the first real school journey, and was to last four whole days. There were many solemn lectures to the party, with countless instructions from Miss Henry on what to do, and what not to do, with the result that many of us wondered whether we should ever return safely from the hot bed of vice that London appeared to be. In fact, the trip was a great success. We stayed in an enormous camp arranged for schools, in conditions which were not the most comfortable, but no one cared. The Exhibition was wonderful, and taught us more geography than we had hitherto acquired from text books about the famous empire "on which the sun never sets". The final day's trip on the river was, too, an event not to be forgotten."



THE BOARD OF EDUCATION REPORT ON THE FIRST INSPECTION

During the last term of 1923, five Board of Education Inspectors visited the School. This was the first inspection that the School had and the report was published in the late December. The contents of the report reflected credit to all concerned. The attention of the parents was specially drawn to two points. :-

1. "It is greatly to the student's advantage to commence at the proper age, between ten and twelve years. Of the thirty one new pupils admitted in September 1923 fourteen were over twelve years of age at the beginning of the school year."
2. "This Summer special lessons are to be given on the development, history and geography of the British Empire. The Headmistress (Miss E. S. Henry) proposes to take tours of pupils to the Wembley Exhibition. This should prove an attractive feature and parents are asked to facilitate pupils being allowed to go."

SCHOOL MEALS

The report, in referring to the general activities of the School, mentioned the difficulties of the train services "Though railways converge towards Spalding from six directions, the train service is, by no means, convenient for pupils attending secondary schools in the town. Some girls arrive on the premises before eight o'clock and more than sixty at about quarter past".

"Because of the train service special arrangements have to be made and the midday meal is very important. For the school dinner the girls were charged four shillings a week. The meal was served in the Art Room and any girls who brought their own lunch, ate it at tables which were placed in the central corridor. These girls could have any eggs or other food that they brought, boiled or heated for a charge of half-a-crown per term. This covered the cost of fuel, and the extra work involved for the caretaker and domestic staff, Mr. and Mrs. Wright."

For the girls who arrived at School on the early train a full breakfast was provided for sixpence, this consisted of porridge and egg or ham and egg. A "half-breakfast" was also available which consisted of tea with bread and butter.

When the School finished not all of the girls could go straight home, because they had to wait for their trains to arrive. As some of these girls would have to cycle home when they got off the train, Mr. and Mrs. Wright provided a tea for them. A small charge was made for this or the girls could have just a cup of tea without any payment:

The report said "The Inspectors were much impressed with the care shown for the comfort of the girls."

OTHER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The Inspectors reported that there were altogether eight classrooms, of which all but one were rather small for a full sized form. There was also a laboratory, and an Art room which was used for Assembly, Physical Exercises and singing.

The Inspectors said in their report that needlework was the only branch of house-craft being taught. The syllabus was carefully planned to provide practice in the cutting out and making up of the garments, and in the repairing of worn material by various methods. Knitting was also taught in each form.

The School also had a magazine, a Natural History Society and for the Senior half of the School there was a Literary and Debating Society. There was also an Old Girls' Society which at the time of the report was flourishing and it also admitted to membership former pupils of the Grammar School who left before the opening of the High School.

Games were organised by the gym mistress with the assistance of the Form Captains.

The report then stated that there was no specific system of punishments but the Headmistress dealt with any cases of disobedience.

The Inspectors regretted that there was no regular medical inspection, but Mr. Frost said that he would take this point up with the Governors.

This was the first Inspectors' Report on the School, and it was satisfactory and creditable.

THE EMPLOYMENT OF MARRIED WOMEN TEACHERS

The Sub-committee recommended to the Education Committee that they "will not in future sanction the appointment of married women, unless special circumstances warrant the appointment."

The committee decided that, when they asked the women to leave, they would fill their places with student teachers from training colleges who wished to be employed in this area.

THE AGE OF ENTRY

It was announced in April 1924 that after the Summer term no girl over the age of thirteen on 1st August of the year of entry, would be accepted into the School, unless she could pass a satisfactory standard in secondary school subjects.

HAVE THE SCHOOLS FAILED?

Alderman E. J. Sainsbury, O.B.E. said that he thought that children were leaving school far too early in life. He said that children were allowed to leave school as soon as they were fourteen and then they never came under any educational scheme again.

Alderman Sainsbury said that it was not possible to develop the material or spiritual in a child when there were classes of fifty or sixty children. He suggested that a House system could be adopted to help the children who intended to leave School, establish responsibilities and fit them into Civil life.

FOUR TERMS A YEAR

At a meeting of the Holland Education Committee permission was sought to increase the number of terms from three to four.

The Board of Education replied that they could not see their way to sanction any rearrangement of terms and that the school terms should coincide with the periods of school work.

The committee stated that if there were four terms then a holiday could be arranged at the end of September.

Regarding the question of school leaving age, the committee said that parents could still ask for their child to leave as soon as she was fourteen years old.

HEATING THE SCHOOL

There was a meeting in July of the Holland Education Committee to discuss the alterations to the schools in Spalding. Because of the economic difficulties in the country the grant had been cut from £12,000 to £9,000.

The board considered the installation of heating apparatus at the High School, and they took the view that they should not bring children out of elementary schools where they were warm and then freeze them. The cost of the heating would be £500.

Our School also needed a Net Ball court and the front drive asphaltting and these would cost about £100.

The committee were pleased that the standard in scholarships at the school were higher than they had previously been.

A MOCK ELECTION

The General Election of November 1924 was the inspiration for a School ballot to find out the political persuasions of the girls.

The "candidates" were, Miss Lund, Liberal and Miss Osborne, Conservative. Canvassing started on Monday when there were several meetings, and each girl wore either blue or red ribbons.

Polling Day was the following Wednesday, 29th November and at break there was a rush to the ballot boxes in the Hall.

Results were declared the next morning,

Conservative	100 votes
Liberals	49 votes

It was a much closer result at the real election of that week.

A. W. Dean (Con)	12,907
H. Dalton (Lab)	12,101
P. Winfrey (Lib)	7,596

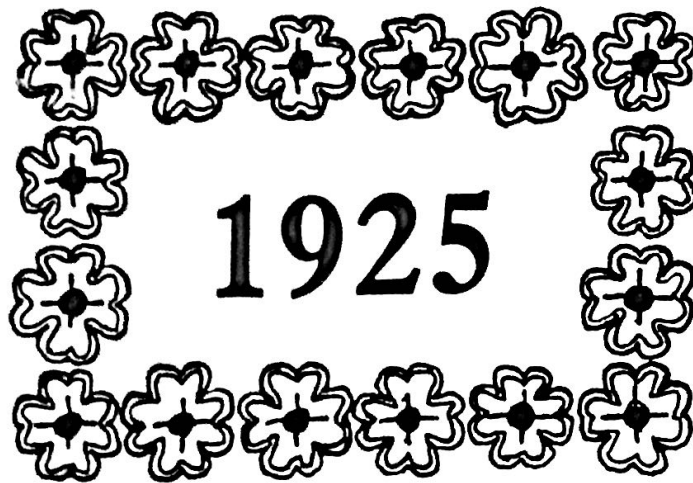
PRIZE GIVING DAY

The Prize Giving was held in the Corn Exchange on 11th December. Miss B. A. Clough, formerly Principal of Newnham College, distributed the prizes, and the chair was taken by Alderman Fitzalan Howard, J.P.

In her speech, Miss Henry said that progress had been continuous and satisfactory. There were now two hundred and six students, and the examination results were satisfactory.

Miss Henry then said that, during the last year, too many children left at the early age of fourteen or fifteen, and at fourteen they were undeveloped. The value of a year or two in the top form as a prefect, with training in leadership and organisation, was incalculable.

Miss Henry also appealed to parents not to allow young children to spend too long over their homework. Parents could help if they took a young girl's books away from her after the allotted time.



SHOULD THE SCHOOLS BE CLOSED DURING AN EPIDEMIC?

The Holland Education Committee registered a protest against the revised regulations of the Board of Education concerning the closure of schools during periods of epidemics.

Formerly the schools had been closed during local epidemics. The new regulations provided that, although infected children were to be excluded, a school must be kept in session during an epidemic, whatever the attendance might be, unless the school Medical Officer authorised the closure of a school purely on medical grounds.

"On previous occasions, the closure of schools during epidemics had been of value and had resulted in a substantial restoration of the normal average attendance on the re-opening", claimed the Committee.

A Board of Education circular advised head teachers that when the attendance fell below 60% because of epidemics they should ignore these figures in calculating the average for the term. Many schools were jealous of their attendance records, and most schools boasted over 90%.

P.E. FOR TEACHERS.

At the High School instruction in physical education for elementary school teachers was being given by Miss L. Osborne.

Classes were being held because the Chief Education Officer had suggested that these classes would help elementary school teachers in the latest methods and syllabuses.

MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

As the Inspectorate had earlier suggested, a scheme for medical examinations of pupils in secondary schools was presented to the Holland Education Committee. The scheme was adopted from the beginning of the Autumn Term.

A complete examination was to be made of every scholar at entry and, again at fifteen years. At each year other than those specified, the medical officer would interview each scholar personally with the medical record card, examine any children whose condition raised any doubt as to their physical fitness, and re-examine those who were previously found defective, and any others about whom the Headmistress required

an opinion. It was hoped that, whenever possible, the Head or a parent would be present at all inspections.

The mother's presence would be extremely valuable, as it provided a convenient opportunity of discussing any points of personal hygiene upon which it would be difficult to write formal letters.

If the mother was present, then the medical officer would be able to bring to her notice any defects which would call for further attention. However, if the mother was not able to attend the inspection, then the necessary communication would be made direct to the parents by the Medical Officer.

By such a system of medical examinations the Medical Officer was able to advise parents with regard to personal hygiene, medical treatment for gross defects, suitability of children as to playing strenuous games, and also whether or not the children would benefit from remedial exercises.

DINNERS AT SCHOOL

Food that was given by parents to their children at school was criticised by the Medical Officer of Health.

"The number of children who showed evidence of malnutrition in Holland was sixty", he wrote "I have on many occasions watched children taking their midday meal at school and from my observations can readily understand why the physique of many of them is poor. A typical 'dinner' consists of white bread and jam, or white bread and margarine, with perhaps a slice of cake, and with tea or water to drink; a meal in which vitamins are conspicuous by their absence. On enquiry one finds that the breakfast was of a similar nature. It is impossible for children brought up on such dietary as this to develop into A.I. citizens."

The Medical Officer then said that the fault did not lie so much in the quantity of the food as in the quality, and he said that a well-balanced diet rich in vitamins could be provided by the parents for practically the same expenditure.

A diet which contained whole-meal bread, butter, milk, cocoa made with milk and sweetened, good soups and fresh fruit and vegetables would adequately nourish the children and allow variation in their meals.

Much food was wasted at the midday meal and the Medical Officer believed that this was because of the monotony of the diet and its unappetising appearance.

The continued use of more detergent foods would have a most beneficial effect upon the teeth of the children.

The Medical Officer suggested that elementary dietetics should be introduced into the curriculum.

THE FIRST BURNHAM AWARD

The arbitration award by Lord Burnham on teachers' salaries was published early in the year. Although there was a slight reduction in the general scale, it represented practically what the teachers would have accepted before it went to arbitration.

The important point was that no teacher would have his or her present salary reduced by the award, and if the existing salary was higher, then it remained so until the new scale became effective.

The maximum for certificated head teachers in Grade I Schools was
£360 for men
£288 for women

Grade 2 Schools £393 for men
 £315 for women

Grade 3 Schools £426 for men
 £342 for women

There was no reference to certificated teachers who were not college trained, the awards were headed "Two years college trained".

"The first year of school service shall be called a probationary year and the first increment will accrue after two years of service".

In the case of women certificated teachers, salaries were three quarters of those for men, and, calculated on a 44 year service basis, the women would receive 82% of total amount of a male teacher.

In 44 years a man would have got £13,065

Under the new scale he received £13,182

In 44 years a woman would have got £10,839

Under the new Scale she received £10,542

DENTAL TREATMENT

At a meeting of the Holland Education Committee a scheme was put forward for supplying Dental treatment for the county schools. The services of a full time dentist would be needed if it was decided to establish a scheme of dental treatment for pupils.

Dr. Jennings, the Medical Officer of Health said that it was essential that a dental clinic was set up in connection with each school. He said that two alternatives were possible :-

1. A portable outfit which would necessitate the hiring of a car.
2. A car with specially constructed body for use as a clinic, when adequately furnished.

The Medical Officer then stated that 60% of school children had defective teeth, and in some schools it was as high as 75%.

HOUSE COMPETITION AT SPORTS DAY

There were record high and long jumps at the sports at the Low Road field. A new feature of this year's sports was the competition between the houses. Newton won with 39½ points and Burghley were second with 37½ points.

MISS HENRY LEFT FOR A WORLD TOUR.

Miss E. S. Henry the first Headmistress of the School resigned her position so that she could leave the School in December.

Miss Henry decided that she would go on a world tour to study educational methods in as many countries as possible.

HOW MUCH SHOULD THE NEW HEADMISTRESS BE PAID?

The Holland Education Committee held a lengthy meeting to discuss the initial salary to be offered in connection with the appointment of the new Headmistress.

It was recommended that the governors should offer a salary in accordance with the scale, but less 5%.

If the resolution was confirmed the Governors would have to advertise for a new Headmistress at less 5% of the Burnham minimum award of £500 per annum. The Governors felt that this would lessen the field of applicants and therefore they wished to advertise for a mistress at the £500 net salary and that the words "less 5%" be deleted.

THE CHRISTMAS FAIR, AND FAREWELL TO MISS HENRY.

The annual Christmas fair this year lasted for two days. The School was attractively decorated and some of the pupils were dressed in fancy costumes.

Miss Henry was presented with a gold watch in appreciation of her five years service to the School.

The money raised at the fair was used to buy a new playing field. The proceeds were also to contribute to the school library because books were badly needed.

Mrs. Frost said that she was sorry to lose Miss Henry. She had been a splendid acquisition to the School and a splendid influence, as was shown by the girls who had left the school and gone out into the world.

Alderman Fitzalan Howard said that on behalf of the Governors he had pleasure in presenting the watch to Miss Henry, as a small token of respect and esteem for the work that she had done as the Head of the High School, and which the Governors appreciated.

"REVEALED IN OUR FLEECY LINED"

Mrs. Winifred Keeble (nee Herd) was at the school from 1921 to 1927 along with her two sisters. Her connections with our school have reached down through the years. Her daughter, daughter in law and niece were all educated here. She has a selection of anecdotes in which she tells of her friend, Catherine Baldwin, taking snaps and selling them at threepence a copy.

The snapshot of Miss Henry in the section of pictures "Pioneers", is one of these. Mrs. Keeble comments, "Although Miss Henry looks rather severe, she had a very nice sense of humour, and a really hearty laugh."

The Baldwin girls were daughters of the Vicar of Weston, and all six, (Catherine, Barbara, Nora, Helen, Sybil and Patricia), attended the High School. "I wonder if this record has ever been broken," asks Mrs. Keeble, and then goes on to other matters.

"Miss Bailey was the romantic type and read aloud to us Rupert Brooke's poems with tears streaming down her face. Rupert Brooke and Miss Bailey will always go hand in hand" (In some corner of a foreign field?)

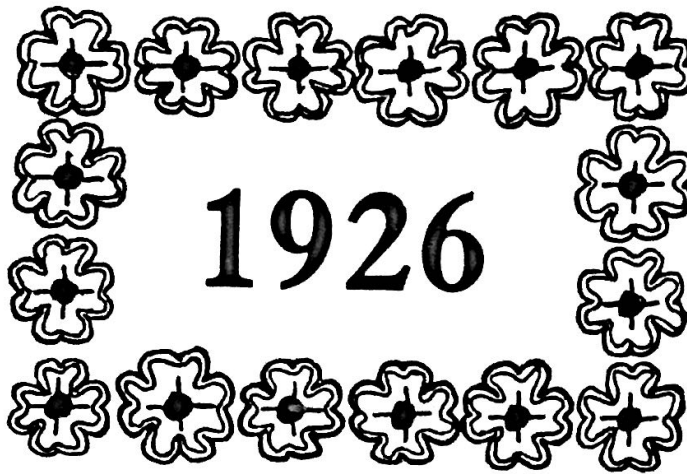
"When the Train girls had to stay late at school, Mrs. Wright supplied us with tea which we ate in the kitchen. This consisted of a poached egg, bread and butter and jam, two pieces of iced cake and two cups of tea, costing sixpence.

When Miss Osborne joined the school staff as Games' and P.T. teacher we were rather unprepared for her somewhat military methods of teaching. One day we were practising high jump on the netball pitch, which was between the Grammar School fence and the Assembly Hall. In those days we drilled, jumped and played games in our gym tunics, and we were all trying to clear our three-foot-nothing as usual. Suddenly, Miss Osborne shouted, "You must do better than that. Off with your gym tunics." Without question, we started to obey, and there we were revealed in our "fleecy-lined". Regulations stated that navy blue knickers must be worn, but on that first unveiling greyish-black, washed-out blue, faded mauve and mottled purple were all exposed to view. One girl flatly refused to take off her gym dress, and that was the only time I saw a girl defy Miss Osborne, but it is something I shall never forget."

Note. The brackets contain the comments of Mrs. M. Gunton on reading this letter.

Miss L. M. Ford (1920-25) was transferred from the Grammar School. Among her memories, like so many girls, are the journeys by train to reach Spalding at ten past seven in the morning, after a two mile cycle ride to the station. When she returned in winter she collected her carbide cycle lamp from the station house, but if the roads were bad then she would walk along the line for two miles.

(Reporter: D. Mason.)



GRANTS FOR EDUCATION

The Board of Education sent a circular to the Local Education Authorities, whereby they revised the scheme of grants to the Local Authorities.

The circular prescribed that for the next three years the Authorities should receive, in place of 50% or more of their expenditure, which they may have expected under the existing grant regulations, a flat rate grant based on what they had spent during the year 1924-25, less, approximately, one per cent.

It was hoped that this sum would enable the Local Education Authorities to undertake some urgent developments.

THE FIRST FULL MEDICAL INSPECTION IN HOLLAND

It was announced in February that the Authorities had purchased a van for the use of dental treatment at the county schools.

In March 1926 there were approximately 11,130 children on the registers of the Schools in the Holland area.

The results of the School Medical Inspection showed that 1,384 children were found to be unclean, either in head, in body or in both; 733 notices were sent to parents by the school nurses asking them to attend to the cleanliness of their children, and 895 home visits were paid in connection with pediculosis examinations. The Medical Officer pointed out that the problem of keeping children clean is a difficult one in this area. Many of the children's mothers work on the land, and consequently sufficient attention was not paid to the physical well being of the children. This was especially so where the mother was the bread winner and the younger children were left in the care of an elder sister.

The result of the Medical Inspection also showed that 96 children showed evidence of malnutrition. The report stated, "There are several factors which contribute to the lowered vitality of many children attending rural schools other than defective and unhygienic school premises. One of the most important of these is the home life of the children. Many of them sleep in badly ventilated, overcrowded bedrooms; are sent to bed late and are improperly fed. The midday meal taken at school is often wasted because it is unappetising and frequently does not contain sufficient vitamins to nourish adequately."

In some schools of the county, as a result of the consideration of the Head teachers, arrangements were made for the drying of wet clothes and footwear and for the heating of meals brought by the children, as was done at the High School. The

report said that much more could be done in this direction so that the children may have at least part of the midday meal hot.

Enlargement of tonsils was found in 73 children, but 47 (64%) of these were not sufficiently serious to require treatment. Adenoid growths were found present in 45 children, of which 37 were in need of immediate treatment. Commenting on this the report states :— "Many of the cases of 'enlarged' tonsils consist of inflammatory conditions, but they are a certain number which are due for definite hypertrophy, and for which operative treatment is necessary".

If such a scheme were working in the area, arrangements should be made for all children to be detained in hospital for one night, in order to prevent any unfortunate effects arising after their operations. The provision of treatment for these defects would be of great benefit and should be considered as soon as financial circumstances permit.

Three children in the area were found to be suffering from pneumonary tuberculosis, while thirty one were thought to be suffering from the pulmonary form of the disease and were referred to the Tuberculosis Officer.

Defective vision was found to be present in 145 children and 82% of these were referred for treatment. Squint was found in twelve children and eight of these were referred for treatment. The remainder, who were wearing glasses were kept under observation. Forty three children were found to have defective hearing and there were 312 dental defects.

Because this was the first Medical Examination, it was thought advisable to examine all of the pupils.

The examinations showed that, on the whole, boys were physically fitter than the girls.

The girls showed degrees of deformity, such as spinal curvature (9%) and flat feet (30%).

It was hoped that the instructions given to both parents and gym mistresses would do much to remedy the state of affairs.

IF ONLY THEY HAD BEEN AT WESTMINSTER

The attitudes of informed local public opinion to educational problems of the day are best seen in the draught of a Bill drawn up by a mock parliament at Long Sutton.

The terms of the Bill were as follows,

1. "If a child who is attending a public elementary school attains any year of age during the school term, the child shall be deemed to have attained that year of age on his or her birthday.
2. To ensure of higher standards of education, and greater individual attention, no class under the instruction of one teacher shall exceed thirty in number.
3. When the scholars of any school are drawn from a wide area the place on the timetable allotted to physical drill, must be preceded by at least one sedentary period.
4. The attendance at religious instruction shall be compulsory, except where parents make a statutory declaration before a Commissioner of Oaths on the grounds of conscientious objection.
5. Where any child is found to be unvaccinated, vaccination must take place, unless the parents object on conscientious grounds.
6. That a bicycle shall be provided for children who live more than three miles from school. The cycles are to be the property of the Authority, but the parents are to be responsible for their upkeep.

7. Organised games must form part of the curriculum of every school, and the Local Authorities must make the necessary arrangements for securing suitable playing fields.
8. There shall be a systematic and continuous method of grading throughout the school to ensure that each child shall be able to take advantage of the fullest possible education."

NEW SPORTS FIELD

The Sports were held for the first time at Clay Lake instead, as previously, at Low Fields.

THE COST PER PUPIL.

It was estimated that the cost of education for each child was £8. 17s. 3d. The costs for Holland and the Isle of Ely were the lowest in the country.

MISS HENRY'S RETURN VISIT.

In the December of 1926 Miss Henry returned to the School after her world tour. Her return coincided with an Old Girls' Association gathering, at which a hockey match was played at Clay Lake.

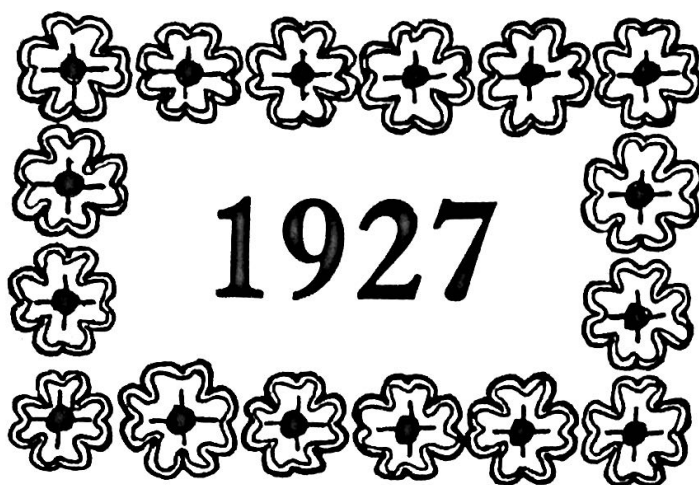
Miss Henry had a wonderful time, and related her adventures to an interested audience.

"WHEELING MY CYCLE BESIDE ME"

Miss Maud Braitch, who was on the staff in the mid-twenties, remembers the General Strike.

"You will realize that it was even more difficult for girls from outlying parts to reach school in those days than now, so a number camped at School sleeping on straw palliasses spread round the hall at night. Lucy Osborne was there every night with them, and other members of the staff took it in turns to help. Everybody thoroughly enjoyed the experience, and there were some regrets when life returned to normal. Mr. and Mrs. Wright fed them marvellously well and some parents expressed their wonder at such good catering for eighteen pence a day.

Mr. and Mrs. Wright and Kathy played such a large part in making the school such a happy one. I do hope special mention will be made of them. They were unfailingly kind and helpful always, and went out of their way to help if anybody was ill or in difficulties. On one occasion, I had a piano delivered from London and the Railway would not take it into the house, but left it outside, and neither of the music shops would help so Mr. Wright got friends and moved it into the house for me.



BEFORE THE ELEVEN PLUS

In 1927 this advertisement appeared in the "Free Press".

Spalding High School

The entrance examination for fee paying pupils who wish to enter the above named school in September 1927 will be held on the afternoon of Thursday 12th May from 2—4 o'clock at the School. Applications for entry should be made to the Headmistress who can see parents any Thursday afternoon between 1.30 and 4 o'clock.

Signed by,

J. M. McKnight,

Clerk to the Governors.

This was the usual procedure for entering the School over forty years ago.

TRAVELLING TO SCHOOL

Today a large percentage of girls attending the School, travel to and from Spalding by bus and take it for granted, but some of the first girls to attend the school had seen very few buses. Some came by pony and cart. A large number of girls arrived at school by the 8.10 a.m. train from Sutton Bridge, and many came from Deeping by train, after cycling several miles in all weathers to the nearest station.

In 1927, the school started at 8.30 a.m. and ended at 3.30 p.m. Some of the girls used to arrive at school at twenty past seven. This meant that they had usually caught a train about half past six, and these girls used to have a hot breakfast at school which Mrs. Wright cooked for them. Many mornings in the winter the girls would arrive soaking wet and blue with cold. They took off their wet clothes and it was a common sight to see long rows of uniforms drying in what is now known as "the old kitchen", but which was at this time Mrs. Wright's kitchen where she did all the cooking. On very cold mornings they were given soup from a huge stockpot, and they usually had a taste before starting school.

If a girl felt ill, there was no "ambulance room", but she was allowed to go into the kitchen, and sit by the range and keep warm there.

Travel to and from school was always difficult, but in 1926 it came to a total halt, the train services were paralysed by the Great Rail Strike, which seriously affected the school. The strike continued for three months, a whole school term, and during this time the girls who travelled to school by train had to sleep in school on mattresses which were put down on the floor in the music room, and anywhere possible. The girls slept in from Monday to Friday and then their parents came by various means of transport to take them home. Pony and cart were the usual means, although a few of the parents did have cars.

While the strike was on, Mrs. Wright catered for all the girls who were stranded. She prepared and cooked a sixpenny or a threepenny tea for them, the girls had to pay for these themselves. A sixpenny tea consisted of bread and butter an egg and a cake. A threepenny tea consisted of bread and butter and a cake.

It is difficult to imagine travelling by train to school, and even more difficult to imagine what it would be like to sleep at school for a whole term.

GAY SCENES AT THE SPORTS

Sports days and speech days were great social occasions. It gave an opportunity for proud Mothers to display the latest fashions of the "Roaring Twenties". Cloche hats were really in the mode and below knee length skirts were usually in crepe. They had short curled hair or "bobbed" hair.

In 1927, the Sports Day was held on 21st June on the School Playing Field which was then at Clay Lake. The event was favoured by ideal weather.

Almost every parent attended and, with girls and members of the staff, numbered about four to five hundred. Teas and seating accommodation were provided for everyone.

The equipment required for the afternoon was taken by horse and cart from the school to the playing field. Transport was provided first by Mr. Crust, and later by Mr. Smith. Usually it took a whole morning and sometimes longer to move the chairs.

The refreshments took two days to prepare. A huge sponge cake was made and iced, by Mrs. Wright. Jam tarts cakes, potted meat and ham sandwiches all had to be made and carted to the playing field. Washing up bowls, cutlery and crockery all had to be taken down to the field, and, like the seating accommodation, had to be brought back the same day. Hot water for washing up was obtained from the pavilion, and the girls helped with the washing-up afterwards.

SPEECH DAYS AT THE CORN EXCHANGE

Speech day, which was held for several years in the Corn Exchange, was the other big annual event. Again, everything that was needed for the occasion had to be taken there, and refreshments were provided for everyone who attended.

It is difficult to imagine these occasions running so smoothly. At least, we haven't been told of any really dreadful mishaps. After having to face all these difficulties, Mrs. Wright admits that she was exhausted. Imagine catering for four hundred without any modern aid. In later years the school was able to hire a lorry which made transport easier than by the old horse and cart.

MISS CHAMBERS'S FIRST PRIZE GIVING

Alderman Fitzalan Howard presided, and Miss L. K. Barrie, Headmistress of King Edward's High School for girls in Birmingham, distributed the prizes.

Miss Chambers said, "It is two years since I first came to Spalding. These two years have been for me years of very great pleasure derived from working with a staff who give unstintingly of their time, their energy and their interest in promoting the welfare of the school and individual girls. The pleasure, too, has been derived from working with girls who are always friendly and polite, and more than ready to co-operate.

Dorothy Summers has won entrance into Westfield College, London in competitive examination, and has been awarded a State Scholarship and a Holland Senior Scholarship as the result of her work in the Higher School Certificate. This is the first time a State Scholarship has been awarded to either a girl or boy in the Holland Schools, and we are naturally proud of the distinction. Helen Wright has been awarded an Exhibition in Mathematics at the Royal Holloway College. Chrissie MacLeod has been awarded a Holland County Exhibition and is now at Edinburgh University. Last year we sent two girls, Kate Halton and Winifred Reynolds to Oxford University.

We have nineteen girls in the Sixth Form. We have been fortunate in having girls and parents who appreciate education, and who have allowed their daughters to stay at school until eighteen or nineteen years of age.

I would like to give you some estimate of the value of the education we are providing, and the aims which underlie our work.

The first, to teach the girls to see and appreciate and desire beauty and truth, whether of intellect, or of colour and form, or of character. I cannot define for you beauty or truth, and an aim such as this means very little beyond that we are trying to teach them to follow the highest path we know, that of truth.

Secondly, we are trying to teach them to express themselves, that is to attain such freedom in any sphere of action that their work is the result of the use of their whole personality. It is only by using all their latent powers that they will grow, and so self-expression means development of personality and the attaining of freedom from inhibitions which deter growth. Some girls express themselves through games, others through handwork or music, others through their intellectual work, others through practical service.

Then, thirdly, we are trying to give them a purpose in life. The education we give them aims at developing the mind, personality and character of a girl, and so, incidentally, makes her of more value in the labour market, but it is, primarily, to fit her to face life and not to obtain a living. And we must, I think, beware of undervaluing education, because even the girls who have been through school find posts difficult to get.

We are trying very hard to improve something in school in which I think we fall distinctly below even the average secondary school standard, and that is the speech of the girls. While we may be proud of the county of our origin it is not helpful in obtaining posts to show it by our speech, and while our flat county has many charms, it seems to be productive of harsh voices and unmelodious vowel sounds, in contrast to the mountainous districts of Western England. We have, this term, arranged for private elocution lessons to be given in school, and this involves an extra fee. One of the questions I have to answer for girls applying for admission to a Training College is, "Has she a clear and pleasant speaking voice without local accent?" And it is a question asked, too, by prospective employers."

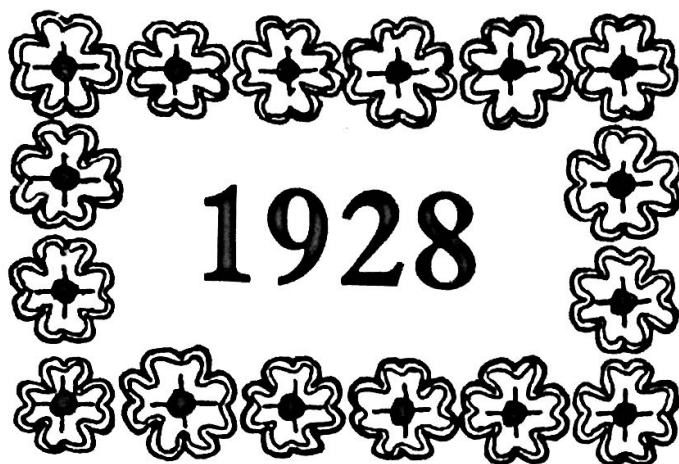
SLEEPING ON STRAW

Mrs. Kathie Edgson (nee Herd), sister of Mrs. Keeble, begins with an oft quoted remark, which applies to most of us.

"I was not among the bright scholars, but words of the late Miss Chambers still stick in my head. During a Geography lesson she would bring her fist down on the desk and say, "Think, child, think!"

One day in 1928 I was leaving school with several friends when, on reaching the main gates, I saw an ancient lorry chassis waiting outside making terrific noise and smoke. I saw the driver and co-driver were my brothers who had come to fetch me. There was no seat for me other than a box, and I was helped on this watched by my friends. As we moved noisily away amidst blue fumes, I shouted to the girls sending me off, "It only cost five shillings!"

During the rail strike I was among quite a few Train girls to camp at school each night in the main Hall, under Miss Osborne's expert supervision. We all slept soundly at nights on mattresses which we had filled ourselves from a supply of straw stored in the old gym. Unfortunately, we had to surface just as early as we did for our train. We had our chores to do before school, such as cooking the breakfast, washing up and tidying up the hall for Assembly and Morning Prayers. We were always pleased to see the friendly caretakers, Mr. and Mrs. Wright arrive, to take over their kitchen for the rest of the day."



SMALLPOX SCARE

In March a tramp was discharged from the Sleaford casual ward and made his way to Spalding suffering from smallpox. He was taken to the Spalding Isolation Hospital which was immediately closed for all other patients.

Everyone in the school had to be vaccinated, and Miss Chambers remarked "doubtless the old maxim "prevention is better than cure", still has some influence". Children who had been vaccinated wore coloured armlets.

Twelve cases eventually developed in the district. The last being admitted to hospital on 25th May.

"BORIS". THE ORIGINS OF A LEGEND.

New arrivals at school are soon acquainted with the latest revised rumours of Boris the school ghost. There are several versions which vary as the years go by.

Once upon a time Boris is supposed to have lived in Welland House where he is alleged to have killed his wife in one of the small rooms on the top floor, and then to have jumped from the window and killed himself. Another story tells how Boris loved one of the serving maids in the house, and when his wife discovered this liaison, she murdered him in a room on the top floor. His favourite haunt is in and around the Drama Cupboard and the Lawn Room. He prowls around the school at night.

When Miss Henry was headmistress she often stayed late in school, sometimes until about ten o'clock. One evening she was in the Lawn Room where she had her study, she felt sure she heard someone, or something, in the hall. Picking up a cushion and a poker she went to investigate. She could find nothing, but the strange noise persisted. In terror, she fled and raced out into the street.

Early next morning Mr. Wright, on his way to open up the School, found the front door wide open and a poker and cushion lying on the path outside. It was noticed that Miss Henry afterwards managed to finish her work in daylight.

During the second World War, when Mr. and Mrs. Wright were doing firewatching, they slept in the Lawn Room. Mr. Wright says he woke up and saw somebody standing over him. Was it Boris? He couldn't be sure. The figure disappeared mysteriously.

One evening, Mrs. Buck, who is now laboratory assistant at the school and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wright, went up to the stationery cupboard, which was then on the second floor, to get some brown paper and string. It was very, very dark in that part of the school, and spidery too. She went into the cupboard and when she turned round she felt a presence close to her. She did not stay to find out what it might be. She flew down the stairs and into the safety of the old kitchen.

At the Christmas parties given by the Sixth Form for the First Year girls, the most exciting game, which is now traditional, is hunting for Boris through the darkened building, with the Sixth Formers hiding in nooks and corners draped in white sheets. Wails and eerie noises echo through the corridors mixed with squeals of fear and excitement, shrill enough, surely, to exorcise the most stubborn of ghosts.

AN ENTERPRISING FORM

Miss May Chamberlain described the time she was in the middle school.

"The year I remember most vividly is 1927-28. For three years our form were squatters. Our official form room for my first two years was the annexe to the hall, which also did duty as an art and handicraft room. When other forms had art or handiwork we humped our overflowing satchels to the vacant form rooms. This meant miles of walking (we were never allowed to run indoors) up and downstairs changing rooms for every lesson. Often we moved from top floor left to ground floor right and back to first floor or hall, carrying with us text and notebooks for every lesson.

We were delighted when promised a change of form room for our third year, and looked forward to living in the main building. But, horrors! our new home was the top floor corridor outside the lab. Another year of tramping, with occasional trips to our desks to replenish our satchels, before hurrying to the far corner of the school for Miss Hopp's lesson, and a reproof for being late and overheated.

Miss Hopp, wrapped in an enormous woollen shawl, and seated on a radiator, always stressed that, in order to work well, girls must never appear in class 'overheated with faces like beetroots'.

Unfortunately, our timetable decreed that French lessons followed lunchtime netball practices coached by "Os", and our faces were always like beetroots when Miss Hopp entered the room.

Towards the end of our third year, a small group approached Miss Chambers with a request for a permanent form room for the following term. We explained how weary we were of tramping, and how much we would enjoy making our room attractive and tidy. This inspired Miss Chambers to award, termly, a trophy for form room tidiness. It was a beautiful picture painted by a famous Dutch artist.

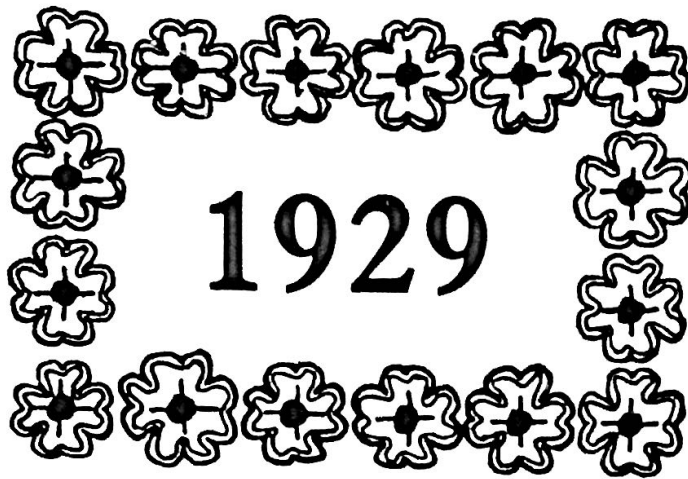
In her kindness, Miss Chambers, allocated the room next to her study, as our first real home. But oh! in less than three weeks how much she regretted it. We were determined to be the first winners of that trophy. Every afternoon, the town girls remained behind to rearrange the furniture. We dragged desks, knocked over tables, fell off chairs, bumped against the wall, shouted suggestions to each other, and ran up and downstairs with armsful of greenery until our room was completely transformed. Yet we were not satisfied. Everyday came more and more improvements. It was even suggested that the walls should be papered and painted.

Before this could be achieved we received an ultimatum from our neighbour, whose proximity, in our enthusiasm, we had completely forgotten. As the door flew open. Miss Chambers commanded us to find another place to live and move into it within an hour. In no uncertain manner she let us know that her patience was completely exhausted.

Every room in the school was occupied. There was just nowhere to go. For inspiration, we sat in the library to discuss our problem. Suddenly we had the solution. Up to top floor at top speed for "Operation Removal". As quietly as possible, lest we sank deeper into disgrace, we carried, down three flights of stairs, the entire contents of our form room, parking them temporarily in the entrance hall. Very wearily, we carried the contents of the library up the stairs, arranged them as attractively as possible, and quietly closed the door.

What a delightful room we now had. How we enjoyed living in it! Envious pupils of other forms enquired what we had done to merit such promotion. Benignly, Miss Chambers announced her preference for having the library nearby for reference, and made no mention of the stormy encounter the previous day.

Where did that trophy first have a place of honour? In Upper IVA form room, of course, where it remained for four successive terms."



NO COAL, NO CAKE

During the Coal Miners' Strike of 1929, the girls decided to hold the school birthday party on 24th January without the usual iced cake. Instead of contributing to the cost of its ingredients they gave towards a fund to help the children of the miners who were suffering because of the long drawn out dispute.

"UP, UP AND AWAY"

On 17th May two parties from school had their first flight in a "Moth" aeroplane called "The Youth of Britain" which was piloted by Sir Alan Cobham. A field at Wykeham Abbey was chosen for the "aerodrome".

At break a whisper went rapidly through the school that it might be possible for some girls to go up.

The girls fortunate to be chosen, set out at 3 o'clock by bus to Wykeham. Great excitement must have been caused even by the ride in the bus to get there. After a slow, rather frightening journey along a crowded narrow lane, they reached the field at half past three. Photographs were taken, and the second party studied apprehensively the faces of the first party as they left the plane.

A circuit of the town had shown them a new perspective of Spalding and their school building, and given them an experience they would never forget.

"FOILED!"

Mrs. Mary Baker (nee George) began school in 1926 and recalls the ritual of fire drill. For her form it meant going out of the top of the school to get down the fire escape into the courtyard where a roll call was taken. Her form was determined to be exemplary in their drill and looked forward to performing right from the top downwards. When the alarm did sound they were at lessons on the ground floor in the Art Room. It may have been a noisy lesson that caused them to miss the bell, and much to their chagrin they had to be sent for after everyone else had reached "safety" in the yard.

(Reporter: Angela Davis.)