

The Granite Review.

Nascitur exiguus, vires acquirit eundo.

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THE OLD GRANTITE CLUB
CONGRATULATE THE HOUSE
ON THE CENTENARY
ISSUE OF THE
GRANTITE REVIEW
FLOREAT!

THE GRANTITE REVIEW

ELECTION TERM 1984

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EDITORIAL 1884

It may seem presumptuous to attempt the publication of a paper on so small a basis, and even impertinent to expect success; yet are we not safe from either impeachment if we entrench ourselves behind these defences? Firstly, that it is only for amusement among ourselves and subscribers that we are commencing this paper, and consequently we demand no extraneous criticisms. Secondly, that although there is one paper in the school, yet are we not by our present act fulfilling the old saying, 'The more the merrier'? And lastly, if we do not succeed none will lose by the transaction but ourselves, while we may fairly ask for praise in that having done our best with small materials. Let us hope, moreover, that the flame of patriotism, which for some time past we fear has been dying away, may, by the united efforts of one and all, be rekindled, and that we may hold our House's welfare as one of the dearest objects of our school life. With this short introduction we beg to present to our readers our first number, hoping at the same time that *very shortly* we may be able to say of our paper 'Nascitur exiguus, vires acquirit eundo'.

EDITORIAL 1984

'Let us hope, moreover, that the flame of patriotism, which for some time past we fear has been dying away, may, by the united efforts of one and all, be rekindled, and that we may hold our House's welfare as one of the dearest objects of our school life' preached the Editor of the first issue of the Grantite Review in 1884.

'... but we can all work hard and work steadily, set an example to our fellows and by a spirit of emulation bring out the best that is in all of us', urged the Editor of the Play 1918 issue.

These extracts are evidence of a different attitude existing seventy, one hundred years ago, in Grant's, a contrast to the disinterested, and laid back outlook of the present collection of Grantites towards House spirit, and a sense of positivity. Although such an outlook has been developing over a period of decades, and is not entirely surprising, taking into account the changing social attitudes, one of which is the adoption of increasingly heavy cynicism, Grantites have reached an extreme state of lethargy in their collective status as a house community. This condition manifests itself in the response to the Editor's pleas for contributions from within the House. Those articles that were immediately forthcoming were a piece on sexual perversion, and two essays, one listing the disadvantages of Grants, the other ridiculing the Review, which

suggests that those Grantites who are motivated lack necessary degrees of seriousness and contentedness (two of the compositions were denied entry into the Review by the censor—next year's editor may argue for Freedom of the Press in his editorial). Eventually, through the Editor's and Housemaster's frequent requests for material, the articles, most of which had been written some time ago for various purposes other than that of publication in the Grantite Review, began to trickle in reluctantly.

The pathos of the performance from the House is emphasized when placed alongside the response from Old Grantites; the Editor wrote to several old boys, all of whom replied with submissions concerning their impressions of Grants. All, one must stress without exception, expressed a pleasure in their positions as Old Grantites, and projected a sense of having benefited and learned from their few years in this House. Two or three indulged in open praise of the establishment.

Today's Grantites lack that 'Flame of Patriotism'.

On a more cheerful note, we are proud to announce that the Grantite Review has reached its Centenary issue.

C. Torchia

Business Managers Report

As the reader will no doubt notice, there have been few additions to the honoured ranks of those who advertise in the Review. The response from companies was not very encouraging, and the few parents who were asked to contribute, either in the form of advertising or by direct donation, did not do so. This is most disheartening, as the support of parents is just as valuable to the maintenance of the house spirit as that of the present Grantites. Perhaps there should be a programme involving parents more in the house. Any views on this matter would be gratefully appreciated, letters should be addressed either to the Editor or Business manager of the Grantite Review. I should like to express my thanks to all those who have advertised in the review, as well as to Mr Mills, Mr Morell and others making donations.

Adrian Kendall

LET'S BE FRANK

Arriving at Westminster half a day late was like diving head-first into a cold swimming pool. I was assaulted by sensations previously unknown and unexpected. There were the black-clad students (appropriate dress for young people I thought cynically), the teachers who managed to remain aloof and still have the respect of pupils, and cleaning ladies who asked cheerfully, day after day, if they could take my rubbish. I was also called 'sir' by an underclassman who obviously mistook my late arrival as a sign of some prestige (it was actually a sign of storms over JFK airport).

More surprises were in store for me up Grant's. I was horrified by the sight of pre-lunch jousting for position, and subsequent loud orders for everyone to shut up. Is this really a nice place? I asked myself, and the answer to that was not helped by the restless rowdiness of my housemates at night who, like me, were domiciled in their cubicles.

But of course, students will be students etc., and I did find much to admire in Grant's and Westminster. I was taken aback by the grandeur of the Abbey and couldn't keep from staring straight up despite a strange tremble in my knees. I was edified weekly by the John Locke Society, always interesting, sometimes controversial, and found that lunch right after was a welcome formality; in contrast to

the paper sack formality of my former school, this was organised food following organised thought and discussion. Not necessary, of course, but rather nice. I also found that my peers were articulate and witty, despite rumours of a deadening British reserve from cautionary friends back home; it was a relief to know that I could stay up at night just talking with friends, if the opportunity presented itself. In fact some of these friends like to rather a lot and I'm content to sit back and become engrossed in the English idiom (unless, of course, I'm with one of the growing number of Americans in Grant's).

What I should mention is that London is about as much a part of my year abroad as is Westminster School. It's been an unforgettable experience seeing the city (not the City) change with the seasons; the temperate autumn was a welcome relief from the typical New England cold of the same time and I admired the nonchalant Londoners walking in their tweed jackets or shirtsleeves. The winter was a more depressing time, with mid-afternoon darkness and the resulting urge to hibernate, but I still walked and watched the bare trees. This spring is a revelation: people in London are noticeably more cheerful, and the greenery is testimony to the skill of English gardeners. At this point I have to disassociate myself from another arrival of spring, the invasionary American tourists. I think I've

earned the right to laugh as they congregate around Westminster Abbey, asking if it's Westminster Abbey, and trying to keep their patience as their kids chase after pigeons. I can't fault them for choosing to visit London; nonetheless, I try to look as British as possible when I'm around them (a skill that takes years of practice, apparently).

There's a lot more to be said here, of course, such as *How I Spent My Holidays*, the contrast between English and American

education, why I'm here now and who made it all possible; in particular I've mentioned none of the many people who have helped on both sides of the Atlantic. But I won't go on. I'm satisfied just to say that I am now accustomed to life at this public school boarding house. This alone will shock friends back home who feared for my sanity and survival when they learned that I would spend a year over here.

Frank Singer

?

Last week the roof garden was opened and that fine figure of a man A. Wertheim proved yet again what an efficient, reliable chap he is. By the first day of term the flowers were blooming on that sun-drenched terrace of SW1 and hard working Grantites (and others attracted by the sun, much to Lil's annoyance) were out there slaving away for the most important sixth-form exam of their lives—they will decide our future. Every evening Wertheim, the House Gardener, can be seen fussing over his plants, watering them and making sure they do not get walked on as people lean over the wall into Great College Street. Wertheim has shown his capability as a responsible member of the house—contributing much to the community; he was Head of House Snooker and installed really useful things with the money we'd give him like a notice with all the rules on which is normally to be found face down on the floor underneath the table with foot-prints on it.

I was going to say something about the new food arrangements but I think that paragon of responsibility J.P.G. Horne (Head of House Food) has been issued with that task so I will leave that to him. I will simply say that it is quite successful, especially in the mornings because it means that when you wake up at about twenty five past eight you can leisurely saunter down to Hall rather than scramble to get your clothes on and sprint through the pouring rain and freezing cold to College Hall only to find that all the food has been eaten.

A.C. King

80 YEARS ON— SIR JOHN GIELGUD

I went up Grant's in the last years of the First Great War and was there on the day Armistice was signed. My Housemaster, Mr Tanner, was known as The Buck—very affable and easy to get on with and addicted to fancy waistcoats and buff-coloured spats. His son Laurence, took history classes, and was also an official in the Abbey. He took me round the monuments, and showed me the waxworks which were then displayed upstairs in the Islip Chapel. I tried to draw in pencil and charcoal and achieved a sketch in pastel of Henry VIII's Chapel of which I was rather proud. One of the vergers became friendly and salvaged for me a card in my great aunt Ellen Terry's hand-writing, which she had placed on Henry Irving's gravestone on the anniversary of his death. When the Unknown Warrior was buried we boys in our OTC uniforms lined the path leading from the gate to the main door of the Abbey, not daring to look up from our reversed arms positions while the great ones walked by in procession. We were also present at the wedding of Princess Mary to the Earl of Lascelles, and saw Queen Mary, statuesque and impressive, walking with the Dowager Queen Alexandra, still slim and elegant in black and purple, with a thick spotted veil and pencil slim umbrella.

I managed to win a non-resident King's scholarship in my last years as a schoolboy and went back to live at my home in South Kensington commuting by underground everyday when people would stare and giggle at my rubbed top hat and jam-pot collar. One of my Jewish friends had his hat knocked off with snowballs by some enemies in Dean's Yard, revealing a packet of Kosher sandwiches which he had concealed inside it.

While I was still a boarder we were made to do fire drill, sliding down long canvas tubes from the upper bedrooms of Grants into the Yard below which was rather terrifying. During the Zeppelin raids we would be roused from bed to be shepherded in dressing gowns to the Norman Undercroft from which we would occasionally steal out to watch the search lights playing high above the Cloisters.

The Headmaster, Mr Gois, was blind and was led about, tapping with his white stick. He was shortly succeeded by Mr Costley-White, who seemed very affable and accessible, but most of the other masters were tired and old with eccentric mannerisms which were easy to caricature. One of them wielded a huge red pencil with which he sometimes whacked us over the head. Another had a silver windpipe which caused him to speak in a strangely disembodied tone. About 15 years ago, when I was first elected to the Garrick Club, I found myself

being introduced to a very old gentleman, leaning heavily on two sticks. He turned out to be none other than Mr Lord, my last Housemaster in the Sixth at Westminster, and I was much embarrassed when he heard my name and suddenly burst into tears. I think it must have been his last outing, for he died a few days later. I only hope our meeting did not hasten his demise.

I played games as seldom as I possibly could, as well as making drawing classes an excuse for getting out of them. I used often to sneak off with Arnold Haskell (later to become an eminent ballet critic) to the Gallery of the London Coliseum, when the Diaghaleff Company was appearing as part of a variety programme. We ignored

the chuckles of the people around us (we were still in our top hats and school uniforms) and revelled in our first introduction to the colour and pageantry of the theatre; to which I was becoming an ardent addict.

After the Second War, in 1945 I found a small Queen Anne House in Cowley Street, which I took and lived in for the next 30 years. It was strangely familiar to be so close to the old school and walk so often through Dean's Yard and the streets behind it. Outwardly, at least, I found it little changed, still a comforting oasis in the sadly changed London which I used to know and love so well.

John Gielgud
February 1984



The Average Grantite Volume VI

Well, yet again the time of year has come around for the Grantite Review to rear its ugly head, and with it the inevitable Character Sketch of the Average Grantite returns to plague you like some unwanted relative at Christmas: boring, pseudo-satirical, but unfortunately necessary.

This year, the dubious pleasure of writing it has fallen squarely, somewhat painfully, upon my own delicate shoulders. In this role, there are various conclusions that tradition demands, the most essential of which is that there is no such thing as the Average Grantite, or if there were it would have been cleaned up off the floor long ago.

Of course, there are some things that are common to most Grantites, especially in a time when the smell of hair gel is as common as that of body odour, or any of its companion biological functions. However, this particular social disease has spread throughout the rest of the school, and so is useless as a means of identification. There is, naturally, the ever present impersonation of our illustrious housemaster,

which, while subject to regional dialects, appears to be a 'national' trait. It is generally held as a greeting call, to be carried out when entering other people's studies, especially during prep.

As a sweeping generalisation the 'advanced' (or 'retarded' depending upon whether you are looking at mental or chronological age) Grantite prides himself upon being 'strange', 'odd' or in some way physically, mentally or sexually deformed. Some develop this characteristic at an early age, and have this art form honed to a fine edge by the Upper School, specialising on their own particular hang-up. They become obsessed with such lovelies as fascism, communism, death, dictators through the ages, silly clothes, themselves (a more common ailment), or having an all-consuming hatred of some nameless master. In essence, this is designed to ward off a small amount of the boredom.

Well, it is getting late and my word quota is almost complete, so I must conclude this time-honoured ceremony with these words: 'There are no "Average Grantites"; indeed if most Grantites had their way, there would be no Grantites at all'.

Boris Mills

THE MYSTERIES OF SEX JEREMY NOAKES

I suppose the most striking change since my time is in the admission of girls. Their mere presence alone must help to modify if not reduce the pressure cooker atmosphere of sexual tension. This was made worse in my day by the fact that there were far more full boarders then than now, of whom I was one. On Sunday evenings we were obliged to listen enviously to—no doubt exaggerated—tales of exciting frolics in Hampstead or Highgate from the weekly boarders. But I have happy memories of weekends up Grant's. There was the great treat of lying in late. Then, after struggling into a stiff collar fastened with a stud like a garotte, I went into Abbey and sat in the comfortable choir stalls listening enthralled to anthems by Byrd or Tallis and to a sermon which with luck would be given by Canon Carpenter, one of my heroes. Then, in the afternoon one could explore London—Soho, perhaps, less seedy then than now. There was no chance of a capuccino in the '2 Is', or 'Heaven and Hell', while listening to the latest Rock and Roll record on the Juke Box. That would have to wait for a weekday. But one might experience a frisson of excitement tinged with fear by being accosted by one of the bored tarts who lined the streets before the Street Offences Act removed them upstairs and out of sight. 'Do you want a nice time, dearie?' 'No thanks!' One was sometimes tempted. But it did cost £5 (or so one heard) and there were dangers apart from being made to look a fool. In the absence of girls the only female presence, apart from Matron and the housemaster's wife, were the German au pair girls who lived above the kitchen where they worked. They initiated a few into the mysteries of sex, but remained for most unattainable objects of frustrated desire.

I see that sex has dominated this article, although it was not one of the topics suggested as suitable for treatment by the editor. However, I make no apologies, since I am sure I was not unique in having it as a major preoccupation and I suspect that in this, at least, Grantites have not changed!

Jeremy Noakes

THE GREAZE

Displaying his revolting transvestite tendencies in high heeled shoes, black fishnet stockings, a flowery frock, a tasteless frilled hat, and a powdered nose, a Grantite, Boris Mills, won the Greaze.

Greaze Ed.

UP GRANTS
BY HIS HONOUR JUDGE ARGYLE M.C., Q.C., M.A.
(G. 1929–1933)

THEN
1900

My father, Harold Argyle, was up Grant's at the turn of the century. As his eldest son I was the first of four boys to follow him, the youngest being my half-brother Adrian Argyle who was post Second World War.

Although by 1929 to outward appearances Grant's had hardly changed since Victorian times—dress, customs, traditions and so on were outwardly the same—in fact we lived in a different world from my father's time. The War of 1914–18 had skimmed off most of the cream of the men of that generation, but one third of the world's surface was our responsibility in the form of the old Empire and Commonwealth, and as the leading power we expected to be at least consulted about anything of importance which happened anywhere in the world. Thus in the 1930s there was no shortage of job prospects for public school-boys, although there was much misery and unemployment amongst the working classes.

Westminster School—and therefore Grant's—were much smaller 50 years ago and there were only two ways of getting in—by scholarship for the very few, and by payment by parents, grandparents or some other wellwisher for the rest. After school, faced with the need to justify such a fortunate start in

THEN
1929

life, the professions, the Civil or Imperial service, politics, science, religion, sport, or the services beckoned—to serve in some capacity or other in the greatest territorial Empire the world has ever seen.

In the 1930s, in a bad winter the Thames would overflow, flooding the mean streets between Little Dean's Yard and Vincent Square and sometimes drowning their denizens; and dense fog frequently blanketed the whole of London, lending an indescribable melancholy to the chimes of Big Ben, as they rang out over the greatest port in the world and boomed into the ears of the homesick boarders who were stuck in house for the weekends, and dreamed of home. From these spartan quarters, we set forth on our journeys into the great world. Anthony Eden said to me in 1946, after a second fearful blood-letting in the Hitler war: 'For every man of my age, there should be 4 more—but their bones litter the beds of the oceans of the world, or lie in Flanders Fields'. He should have known—he got an M.C. in the Warwickshire Regiment in the First World War.

Perhaps the greatest contrast between school then and now—80 years from my father's time and 50 years from mine—

NOW
1984

lies in the quality of the staff. Schools, after all, are about teaching and learning. Father and I, both in our time, had excellent teachers, to whom we have remained devoted. But the present Headmaster has assembled round him unquestionably the finest teaching staff in the country and the results are

plain for all to see. Long after this writer has, with his brothers, crossed the Styx to rejoin his beloved parents, Grant's will continue to provide for all who seek them, opportunities second to none in fin-de-siècle England and in the opening decades of the third millenium.



A Tale

(Three characters in a room—God, Sad and Man)

God: Well, man, what have you got to say for yourself?

Sad: Man cannot speak.

Man: You're wrong, I can speak.

Sad: (turns to Man) Shut up, I'm operating in your best interests. (turns to God) Man cannot speak.

God: In that case I shall pass judgement on you without a defence.

Sad: You can't.

God: I can, I'm omnipotent.
(pauses) Man will go to hell.

Man: That makes me really happy.

God: No, it doesn't, Really Happy's already there.

God then hops about the stage, in fits of intense thought.

God: (having finished dancing) In fact, I condemn you to a worse punishment . . .
You will be Sad for evermore.

Sad: You can't, I'm Sad.

God: I can, I'm omnipotent.

God then zaps Sad in flash of spectacular colour, and a chorus of 40,000 angels dressed in the dreamcoat (can be found in a Hollywood gash-bin) enter, singing a jazz-funk rendition of Billy Graham's 'Praise the Lord for Wonderful things'.

And so it was that Man became sad.

J. Raynes

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PLAY 1906: GHOSTS

First and foremost of our Westminster ghosts is 'our foundress, Queen Elizabeth', who dressed 'like the picture in the Head-Master's house', walks in College Dormitory at the end of this term in order to superintend the arrangements for the Play, the performance of which was first laid down in her ordinances. Second only to Elizabeth in importance is 'The Racquet Court Ghost'. The tradition is, that a Junior King's Scholar, who for some unknown offence was being chased by the Seniors, found his way on to the roof of College, and, missing his footing, fell on to the Racquet Court and was killed. He is nearly always identified with the ghost of a King's Scholar who plays a solitary game of Racquets either on the Dress Rehearsal or Second Play Night. In the quiet which follows after the Play is over, the hollow thud of his ball on the Racquet Court has been distinctly heard, though he does not seem to have appeared of late years. There is a tradition that a King's Scholar was once starved to death in College, and now consoles himself by playing a Jews-harp, of which the strains dying away in the distance, so I have been assured by those who have heard it, have a very weird and beautiful effect. Mention should also be made of a Westminster boy who, in the early part of the 19th century, fell out of an upper window of the centre house in Great Dean's Yard

('Mother Pack's'), and whose ghost is said to haunt the scene of his untimely destruction. These are a few of our Westminster ghosts.

Two other ghosts remain to be mentioned, the first seen by Robert Southey when at Westminster, and the second by Reynolds, the dramatist. Southey's ghost was of a most ferocious kind. He describes it as appearing at 'a very late hour and throwing itself upon his bed and rolling on him'. Realising that this was hardly the usual procedure of ghosts, and certain it was flesh and blood, he seized the apparition by the throat, and made 'enough noise to bring up the Usher of the House (Both' Hayes), at whose appearance the ghost was discovered to be a boy in the house.' The appearance of the ghost Reynolds describes was even more dramatic: 'Scarcely, however, had the deep tones of the Abbey bell, tolling the awful hours of midnight, awakened me, when I was alarmed by the loud screams of several of the younger boys. Starting up in a paroxysm of terror, I saw at the foot of the bed a horrid spectre bearing a large cross, on which was written in flaming characters, "Think on tomorrow". I gazed till, stupefied by fear, I mechanically closed my eyes, and hid myself under the bed-clothes. But, the spectre drawing them aside, and pointing to the burning letters, thrice shook its solemn head, and then vanished; leaving me in a *doidrum* of terror, which slowly,

but gradually subsiding, restored me at length both my mental and corporal faculties.

'The first I amply employed in reflections on the awful warning that so plainly prophesied the moment of my first entrance into the School would prove that of my departure from the world; and the latter, at the instigation of the former, in sobs and kicks till dawn.' When, a few days after, the spectre again appeared, George Colman, the actor, into whose room Reynolds had been moved, 'gave it,' as Reynolds puts it, '*so substantial a drubbing, that it gave up the ghost for ever.*'

'T'

THE INHERENT MISERIES OF GRANT'S

Bishop Short, of Adelaide, who was up Grants in 1810, spoke of the excessive fagging, and once remarked that in his whole Colonial life he never suffered such miseries as he endured in 'the lower fag-room' [Hall] of 'Grant's'!

Another Grantite, Lord Albemarle, who was admitted in 1808 and boarded at 'Mother Grant's', as had done generations of Keppels before him, has left us a more detailed account of his fagging experiences, which may be quoted at length: 'I rose,' he writes, 'as the day broke, hurried on my clothes, brushed those of my master, cleaned several pairs of his shoes, went to the pump in Great

Dean's Yard for hard water for his teeth and to the cistern at Mother Grant's for soft water for his hands and face, passed the rest of the time till eight in my own hasty ablutions, or in conning over my morning school lesson. Eight to nine—In school. Nine to ten—Out for my breakfast, or rather for my master's breakfast. I had to bring up his tea things, to make his toast, &c.; my own meal was a very hasty affair. Ten to twelve—In school. Twelve to one—In the Usher's correcting room preparing for afternoon lessons. One to two—Dinner in the Hall, a sort of roll-call, absence a punishable offence, the food execrable. Two to five—Evening school. Five to six—Buying bread, butter, milk and eggs for the great man's tea and preparing that meal. Six to the following morning—Locked up at 'Mother Grant's' till bedtime; fagging of a miscellaneous character.' Such was fagging 'Up-Grant's' a hundred years ago—a 'hard life', as Lord John Russell called it, but it was splendid training; a fact which was proved in the Peninsular War, causing the Duke of Wellington to exclaim that 'whenever he gave an order to an Old Westminster he was sure of its being well carried out.'

Play, 1908

Laurie Tanner





BEWALD

DOING TIME UP GRANT'S

Looking back on my time up Grant's (1955–60), I can see that it coincided with the end of a social era—the end of the supposedly staid and unquestioning post-war period and just before the 'permissive' revolution of the early Sixties.

School photographs indicate that hair is today routinely worn at a length that in my time would have meant an instant summons to the housemaster, the stern but fair John Wilson, and orders to get a short back and sides.

Friday afternoons, in those days, were still given over to the activities of the school corps, which drilled in Little Dean's Yard, preparing OWs for the rigours of National Service which, in fact, most of my generation were spared as it ended at about the same time we left school. As an alternative to the corps, there was the 'soft option' of the school scout troop, which I gratefully seized.

Latin and Greek, now no longer compulsory attainments for Oxbridge entry, still had huge prestige. The Classical Seventh was the school's acknowledged intellectual mecca, with the History Seventh close behind. The sciences were very much poor relations.

My own subject, modern languages, was looked on as rather new-fangled, though the teaching was good, if exaggeratedly academic and literary in emphasis. An ability to speak

foreign languages with any fluency did not have a high priority. There was certainly nothing so vulgar as a language laboratory. Is there one now?

Such exotica as girls did not, of course, exist, but Westminster, because of the high number of day boys and its position in London, into which boarders were allowed out at the weekends, was never as monastic or medieval as some of the great rural public schools.

A good decade before my time, caning by monitors had been abolished, and was seldom practised by masters, and the flogging rituals to which newboys were subjected were mild by comparison with custom elsewhere. I cannot recall anything more humiliating than having to make toast for one of the monitors at breakfast.

Mild homosexual experimentation was fairly common, and one or two of the masters were known to have proclivities in that direction, but the more modern social problems, such as drug-taking and theft, were virtually unknown.

Most Westminsters, then as, I suspect, now, made a bit of a fetish of not cultivating the traditional public school virtues. Trying too hard at anything was frowned on and it was considered poor form to take games too seriously. We were certainly never in much danger of winning any matches.

The approved attitude was a sort of agnostic, world-weary 'ennui'. The other side of this

rather tiresome attitude was a genuine spirit of intellectual inquiry and reluctance to accept conventional wisdom, for which I remain grateful.

Michael Hornsby 1955–60

HOUSE RULE

In the 1960s the 'firm but fair' Naval regime of Mr Brock gave way to David Hepburne-Scott, and it was clear that the student liberalism of the '60s could not be completely ignored. He arrived with a 'spit and polish' reputation, almost Thatcherite in his rigid view of acceptable conduct. Hair and shoes were his two benchmarks of social acceptability.

Since these were also the symbols of adolescent 'Swinging London' a war of attrition was inevitable. It was a lengthy and often absurd battle, 'Rights' and 'Orders' being the two opposing slogans.

It is ironic, however, that it was David Hepburne-Scott, mellowing with experience and finding unexpected allies among the monitors in the first couple of years in the '70s, who presided over Grants' reluctant shuffle into the post-Beatle world.

Monitors' meetings were quite capable of going on half the night. We argued over the system of punishments, fagging, whether the right to watch television should be extended, and just about every other detail of house life. The left was led by

Bruce Jenks (now with the UN in New York), the right by Paul Hooper and Robin Shute. James Robbins (a familiar sight on the BBC TV News these days) kept the peace as Head of House.

I, as the monitor in the San Annexe and separated from the main building by a courtyard, ran a quietly independent regime out of the main Fray.

Sixteen years ago the power of the house monitor was totalitarian. Unless they had emigrated to South America or joined the Army, monitors were unlikely ever to enjoy such privilege again. That changed in the early '70s under Mr Hepburne-Scott. Amongst the other houses Grant's was always seen as over-sporty, unintellectual and unwelcomingly strict. I think and hope that, in Mr Baxter's hands, the developments which rubbed away that image continued.

Simon Mundy



OLD FLAMES

Thirteen summers ago, cutting my journalistic teeth as editor of 'The Grantite', I was dimly aware that a blood test would reveal a decent proportion of printers' ink coursing through my veins, and that I was hooked. I don't remember if my raincoat suddenly became shabbier, but certainly Grant's was blessed with plenty of hard news in 1971.

Best of all, there was a fire in Studies Japs. My camera ranged wildly over the scene: five frustrated fire engines able to get no closer to the seat of the blaze than Liddell's arch, hoses running desperately across Yard and through the Housemaster's front door in search of flames. Then, right in the front line, I got the shot which was worth a thousand words: David Hepburne-Scott, with ill-concealed amusement, looking semi-serious in consultation with the bright white helmet of the Chief Fire Officer. They were perfectly framed against a row of baths.

Neither axes nor breathing apparatus had been needed. Someone had been smoking in the roofspace above one of the lavatory cisterns, and acute nostrils could just detect a suggestion of the acrid, choking smoke this reporter had been hoping for.

In 1984, as a BBC reporter based in Belfast, harsher reality has swept away any joy at the sight of a bright red fire engine. My instinctive optimism has been

battered by the especially penetrating Irish rain at a procession of funerals. It has also been strengthened through living in a community of uncommon friendliness. The welcome here is a great lesson to an Englishman, and a Londoner, more used to the suspicious, wordless stares of fellow-travellers on the Underground.

'Grant's for your children?' asks the Editor in his letter requesting this article. If Gillian and I are blessed with them, and if that is what we all choose, then the rest is up to you: hand on heart, dear reader, the TV licence fee really is too low, isn't it? ...

James Robbins

A French Visitor Up Grant's

Figure me, my friend, at ze school of Vestminsterre. My *conducteur* take me to ze 'ous vich they name 'Grant'. I go down some steps and through a passage to ze right. I am suddenly struck (Vot you call it?) 'all of a 'eap'; ze strength of ze atmosphere is terrifique, 'owevoire ze francais nevaire despair, so I enterre vith ze *mouchoir* to my *organes nasales*. I stomble over boots, boys' benches, and *habits*: 'owevoire I recovaire and pass through a dingie passage. On ze left I perceive a poor man in a 'ole zat would not disgrace ze black 'ole of Calcutta. I scale some steps and am shown ze vashing accoutrements of ze boys named

ze 'cheese-veekites'. My *compagnon* 'e try ze 'ot vater tap, but zere is none—only ze cold: 'e try annozzer vere ze 'ot indeed do come, but ze noise, *Mon Dieu!* it is like ze lost spirits in ze nether region. Soddently from all sides entere vot I think ze dusky *habitants* of those regions, complaining about the noise, but zey vere only ze *habitants* of ze 'ouse of 'Grant'. Meanvile my *conducteur* 'e vipe 'is *mains* on vot they name a towel, but vich I think a dish-clout; for it only makes ze *mains* more vet and more dirtie. I then vent into ze 'cheese-veeks';

mais milles tonnerres! ze smoke is *dégoutant*, and it pour from ze fire and choke me, so that my mouchoir was *en evidence* again, and I flee for ze fresh air. Then I am led to ze 'All. I am then shown (vot you call?) *en anglais* ze mantel shelf . . . *Sacré bleu!* ze barbarositie of ze 'abit, ze new boy are made to walk across there!! This (vot you call?) finished me, and I seize mon chapeau and rosh from ze 'ouse in 'orror.

From The Grantite Review of 1905.



'The rise and fall of Duncan the lad'

Chapter I

Ever since Duncan was a sprawling infant his parents knew that the job which awaited him was inevitable. For Duncan's job was one which any parent of Bethnal Green could hope for, for Duncan was to be a lad.

He found out at an early age the joys of the obsolete rattle. Instead of vibrating it sluggishly back and forth in his council flat, it made considerably more noise if abruptly rapped on the head of his dumpling sister. He found out the joy of cigarettes when only six and like a terminal cancer they grew on him. His face was a rugged, bullet topped mug with a vivid, chafed scar as a mouth. His sour lemon complexion seethed hatefully at his loving parents, his Doctor Martin's boots clumped down on many a wounded toddler; Duncan undeniably was to be a lad.

When seven and a half he was shot out of his old school, Bickenham Social, and dumped in Pimlico comprehensive, the Westminster of Bethnal Green. His sturdy, lethargic body lounged around the drab new surroundings. The peeled plaster, decrepit, dilapidated, shrub devoured pit became Duncan's social base. Every desk in the school had Duncan's name paganly carved with 'Dunc woz ere but won't be for long'.

Duncan was the Che Guevara of Pimlico. He joined forces with the notorious ethnic

gang under the leadership of 'Kevin, THE DOG, Thompson'. The gang despised everything and life itself. They lived for death, they thrived like parasites on the swots of the community. With his sixteen-inch compass, from Tachbrook Tropicals, he penetrated perspiration, painted faces. Duncan was ineffably a lad.

At school he bunked and he flunked. If you couldn't smoke it, drink it or punch it he wasn't interested.

Chapter II 'The Remand Centre'

His malodorous stench throbbed and pulsated through every alley way of Bethnal Green. Old ladies cringed in his path, cats flung themselves under cars rather than be clumped on by the merciless Doctor Martin's boots. Duncan prayed nightly for the promise of the disease trouble. He ruled the streets like an old, stray dog. His tongue lolled and frothed with vengeance, vengeance for everything.

His mum and dad slowly watched their son's brain die slowly. The vegetablising process was tedious and saddening. Duncan after pissing himself at the pub with the minor lads was feeling more sociable than usual. So sociable that he actually greeted an old man before mugging him. Blood and DM's, that was Duncan's life.

The Remand centre was a dump of social rejects. Outcasts of society. There was Wally the Psycho, who used to gut cats and tie their spewed out entrails to

post vans. He was a good bloke really, thought Duncan, but a bit soft. Everyday the men in white coats came in to take urine samples and nail clippings; they were all mad in this dump. Soon they had him down to 70 fags a day and 3 OAPs—the progress was heart rending but then it all went wrong.

When Duncan crawled out of bed the following morning he felt good. He felt that old laddish instinct throbbing through the white-washed walls. He liked Dr. Ramsey really, but the scalding cup of coffee was too much of a temptation. Ramsey screeched with rage as he fell double on the floor and, as fate would have it, Duncan's eyes rested on the letter knife. Doctors gasping, white-coats and red, splattered walls. But Duncan wasn't to be deterred; he was like some feral animal not capable of stopping. Then the State in retaliation committed a grave obscenity, the worst punishment they could offer, Duncan was made a policeman.

Chapter III 'Duncan on the Beat'

It was a change not to wear DMs but Duncan, being a lad, could just about cope with it. Brixton was a good area for a lad, but when you were on the wrong side of the fence it wasn't fun. Most of the other lads had died of drug addiction or general harassment from the Pigs. But Duncan could cope. His whole time on duty was spent on petty racial hatred and discrimination.

Shit-stirring the black community was a good wheeze of Duncan's; he got three years for it. Duncan enjoyed the skirmishes, he liked beating the shit out of Pakis. His progress was so astounding that he was promoted to sergeant.

Chapter IV 'Duncan Inside'

As a fish to sea, Duncan was to jail. To Duncan being locked up was part of the laddish phase, if you like, a kind of semi-crucifixion. Anyhow, Duncan knew he was safe at Parkhurst, he was acquainted with the prison commissioner after raping his daughter. Duncan didn't quite dig why the cell he was in was padded but he guessed it must be for V.I.P.s. He didn't like the jacket they made him wear, which restricted his movements. Must be something to entertain him during his stay, and he couldn't for the life of him work out why there were so many men in white-coats. Sharing the cell with him was his good friend, Wally, but why was he strapped to the wall? Wally got in here apparently, Duncan heard, because he graduated from cats to postal van drivers. The only real hassle about this prison place was that the cell didn't catch alight, and it definitely lacked foreigners for Duncan's pleasure pursuits. But, as I said, no prison could hold him and the Che Guevara of Pimlico is now free and well.

Daniel Jeffreys

LIFE IS GOOD IN GRANTS

In the late 1930s boys did not have to be clever to get into Westminster. If they had I should never have got in. I entered the Modern Fourth, a form so low that it has long since been abolished. I stayed in the form for five terms. This, together with the fact that I was small for my age, meant that I continued to have to wear Etons. The reason why at the age of 60 I can and do get up swiftly in the morning is because I had to do that as a boy if I was ever to get my tie fixed. You try doing it in an Eton collar. People who passed as my friends had the charming habit, just before we were going into Abbey, of upending me in one of the very large wastepaper baskets which we used to have in Hall and leaving me there like some kind of plant. Only by rocking to and fro and spilling all the contents out on to the ground could I get out in time, very often with disastrous effects upon the collar.

William Van Straubenzee

I met God in a cafe

I met God in a Cafe
Under Charing Cross bridge.
Me: on the inside,
Resting from journeys
That have taken the time
From my birth until now.
They: on the outside,
World weary and tired,
Unsnug in thir cardboard
And cast-offs of bedding.
And others, both here
And out there, with their chips
That look much like the sun
Of an evening in Eden.
Which just goes to show
That nothing and all things
Have beauty and ugliness
Inherent within them.
Which you see depends
Where you first see them.

I met God in a cafe
Under Charing cross bridge,
And I knew it was he,
For a wish 'neath a bridge
With a train overhead
Is akin to a prayer
In the most sacred of places.

J. Raynes

*Well all you clever people
People who have glided through school days,
People who have skated through their youth,
People who have sped to middle aged mediocrity without
Having wasted a moment to contemplate failure—
Yes, you despicable creatures, who think you know happiness is success,
And gaze satisfied from your castles at people,
Scrambling for a wisp of your stability—
I'm not jealous. I'm laughing, laughing at your contentedness.*

Dr. Alex M. Comfort

CRICKET REPORT

A.C. King

I have played cricket for the house very little since I have been here (4 years this season); the first year we played one game (against Busby's) and then the whole was washed out due to rain. The second year (1982) we played a game against College which, despite the fact that we had the best team on paper, we lost due to the amazing amount of captains on the pitch—at one stage I counted four individual Grantite captains on the pitch at one time, all with their own theories as to how the game should be played. The result was mayhem—the remaining seven players randomly moved about the pitch as each captain directed him; it was more like a circus than a cricket match with white-suited clowns wandering aimlessly around.

1983 did not even see a competition—everything was washed out and not one side even stepped onto the field. However, now in 1984, Grant's has an extremely powerful side; the best on paper: the 1st eleven players and numerous other skilled sportsmen—shades of 1982—let's hope so—I mean let's hope not.

FIVES REPORT

A.C. King

This season for the first time saw a Fives competition actually finished; previous attempts had always petered out after about the second round as the pairs got bored. The competition gave Grant's a win; the first pair, C.J. Morrell and myself, had a particularly easy time, only having to play one match which lasted just over 20 minutes for a simple 2-0 victory—despite distracting noises from the other courts. The second pair which consisted of the illustrious J.S.B. and Jason Rubens played extremely well throughout the competition but lost in the final.

Finally Griffiths and someone else, whose name I have forgotten, also played and won. As a result we became the first winners of the competition and were suitably rewarded with some bangers and chips in Mr Baxter's home, which was rather nicer than simply getting a cup, which, incidentally, we didn't get, because there isn't one.

Thanks for the space Chris, I hope they're not too long and boring.

HOUSE BASKETBALL

Boris Mills

Well, in my official status as Head of House Basketball (allotted to me because I am taller than most and no-one else would take the job), I can say with authority that absolutely nothing at all has happened to merit this rather pointless article.

WATER

The absence of a major house competition in the period under review makes writing a station report rather difficult—suffice to say that the number of house watermen has fallen to an all time low, with no Grantite in any major crew.

This decline is by no means unique to this house, though Grants probably displays its most advanced stage: we can only hope for better things to come.

M. Leeming

BRINGSTY RELAY

Grants' inherent and unquestionable (?) superiority was, in this year's Bringsty Relay, flouted by the actions of a single member of our formidable opponents, Ashburnham.

The Grant's intermediate team sported notables such as Mark Whittam-Smith, Stephen Thompson, and Ben Edwards, not to mention the superb Jamil Satchu who flew past the finish line to bring his team to victory in their section.

Grants' trouble materialised when a particular Ashburnham runner managed to beat every record in the book and set up an Olympic-standard time for the Grant's boys to beat. It is fair to say that Jim Harrison, Ben Sullivan, Bruce King and our beloved Head of House John Kunzler, did beat the Ashburnham team by a margin that was only offset because their first runner was minutes ahead of anybody else. In order to improve our position in this event, Grant's can but sit and wait for this runner to leave, and for us to take our natural position at the top.

Jim Harrison

FOOTBALL REPORT

Grant's true to the House spirit rose above Westminster shin hacking to some memorable performances. In the House Seniors Ben Sullivan led his team superbly, providing the mid-field strength, he was able to push the ball up to our striker Mark Pennington, and also back up the defensive play of Jim Harrison. James Griffiths played very well throughout the games as did Nick Burton. Karim Suratgar provided solid support at the back, and especially worthy of note was Dan Doulton our under 14 keeper who made some great saves and was reliable even under great pressure.

Ben Sullivan

HOUSE SWIMMING REPORT

We won everything—we did it for **HIM**.

READERS' WRITES

... You may mention my M.B.E. in the New Year's Honours List. It's taken about 25 years to catch up on my brother, Ronald Baron (up Grants in 1944), who got his M.B.E. in 1955 or thereabouts!

I hope you all have a good dinner.

Sincerely, *Michael Baron (G., 1946)*

Michael Baron received his M.B.E. for his work with autistic children. — Ed.

BEN EDWARDS

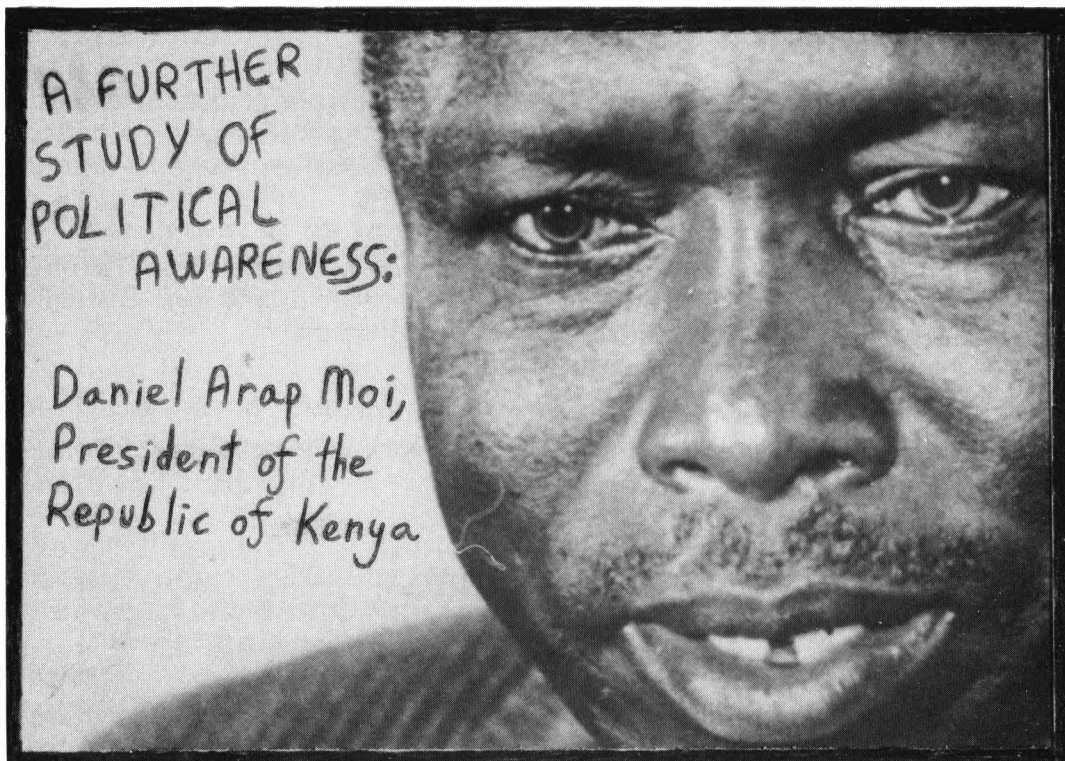
How can the editor of the Grantite Review possibly justify the time and expense that goes towards its publication each year?

When Grantites receive their copy they look through to see if their name is mentioned anywhere. This happens in lunch and so these glossy publications are immediately covered in food, and swim in the shallower film of water which seems to cover most tables. Once lunch finishes, however, the passing interest fades at once, and large numbers of Grantite Reviews are scattered all over the house.

If you bothered reading this, it cost your parents another quid slammed on the bill—has anyone ever refused a copy of the Grantite Review?

Ben Edwards
(Ah! Ha! Indeed, indeed! Ed.)





**GRANTS HOUSE CONCERT
FRIDAY 4TH NOVEMBER
Adrian Boulton Music Centre, 8pm**

The Grant's House Concert of last November opened with a lively, if not too accurate account of Mozart's Drei Leichte Trios, played by the Graham-Maun/Ross/Pattern trio. Among the varied solo items which followed, mention must be made of Ina Dé's performance of a Scarlatti Sonata in D, and Patrick Flood-Page whose sophisticated playing of Bach's French suite 'Allemande' earned him the middle first prize in the inter-house competition, and the real talent shown by Adam Winter (piano) in his jazzy arrangements.

Other items of interest included Michael Sparkes (clarinet), whose excellent performance of the last movement of a Tartini concerto gave us great hope for the future of Grant's music, John Graham-Maw (violin) in a couple of solos by Massenet and Hubay, and Giles Perry (accordion), who delighted the audience with 'Blue Skies'—the piece which had won him the Junior First Prize in the inter-house music competition the week before.

Finally, the infamous Grant's House Choir, singing 'Hallelujah, I'm a Bum!' ended the concert with a flourish.

*J.F. Graham-Maw
U.S.A.*

Best wishes from Lloyds Bank

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