

# The Granite Review '97

## Battle of the Sexes

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**We would like to thank Mr Edwards for this opportunity to produce this year's Granite Review**

### ♂ on ♀ VI form life, and a P license form

The answer to the question posed to me by the editor of this gazette, was only too obvious. It was everywhere; in yard, in college hall, in classrooms, at station, and of course in my room (Ed - Hmm...). The arrival of VI form girls was at first a novelty, which however faded away when the boys started to realise how annoying the opposite sex could be. They get better marks than us, cause arguments, shriek high pitched noises, and nick our lunch.



"They get better marks than us, cause arguments, shriek high pitched noises, and nick our lunch."

The reason for the school accepting girls into the sixth form lies somewhere between extra fees, boosting league table placings, and attempting to stir the now faded and uninterested male population in the sixth form into some kind of academic rejuvenation (although I'm not quite sure how). On a more serious note, I felt sure that the rest of the sixth form Grant's boys will back me up when I say that we are all very glad to have our five sixth form girls who have helped in the recent Grant's House Concert, Grant's Play and the School's Sports Day, and have provided us all with a constant source of...er...amusement.

The sixth form does however provide the means of getting a decent lunch, in the

form of the John Locke Society, which meets every week at noon on Wednesday. The speakers this year included Kevin Maxwell, Lord Archer and Mr. Cogan, all of whom, whilst not being entirely relevant to my field of interests, were informative all the same, and provided a slap-up meal (well-this is far as Westminster knows how to provide a slap up meal).

Other slightly less momentous changes that occurred in the sixth form are things like smaller class sizes, more work, university open days, and being able to drive (if you can work out how to fill in the provisional license form...or maybe that's just me.)

P.Cole (VI)



♀ on ♂ , life and the VI Form



There isn't really very much I can write about Westminster without sounding like I've been paid vast sums of money to do so, or being able to write with avoiding the usual clichés. Okay so maybe what I have to say isn't 100% honest (I could afford to be a bit harder on

the boys) but on the whole it's true, Westminster is a pretty amazing place. On entering the sixth form, the girls found that Westminster was nothing new in terms of the major lack of good looking guys, however there were a major overload of arrogant ones, showing us that we were a totally alien species etc. But we came to realize that we were mistaken in our first impressions: good looks seemed to emerge out of nowhere (whether this was because we just hadn't noticed them or simply because the boys had discovered oxy pads and haircuts I couldn't say), the guys' underlying prattishness and total abnormality also erupted through their cool cocky exteriors. Their classroom debating skills diminished as the girls realized it was just from years of practicing how to waffle convincingly. And the expected tensions between the sexes escalated as the boys began to realize that their female counterparts, who they had figured would be there to impress, were actually overtaking them in every respect. Girls won both the Gumbleton and Phillimore English prizes, girls were coming top in math exams, and girls even won the 100m sprint at athletics day ...the list goes on. It would seem like we've been giving the boys a hard time, but then that's part of our function, the girls are here to raise the boys' standards. But the competition and resentment, although certainly present, are not great, however a friendly, stimulating working environment has gradually developed within the girl community. Outside the classroom the boys continue their pathetic attempts to show off, from seeing who can eat the most school pudding to strutting around yard wearing sunglasses on their heads. The school is both typical and unique at the same time. Where else could you find people doing such mad things, as extreme

**"Outside the classroom the boys continue their pathetic attempts to show off, from seeing who can eat the most school pudding to strutting around yard wearing sunglasses on their heads."**

as rolling a peanut across yard with a toothpick in a two pound bet, or to hear Latin prayers recited in such a morose unharmonious way every Wednesday morning, or similarly the ridiculous school jargon - up school, up house, up matron ... But Westminster is all consuming and you become accustomed to all its ups and even its downs (although I think I'll never quite grow accustomed to the school food, how would it be described in P.C. terms, as edibly challenged)

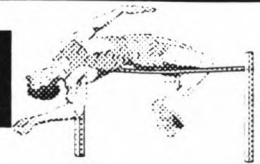
I could go on for pages about the wonders of Westminster, the opportunities: sport, music, drama; the strange habits of some of the teachers and pupils: the amazing surroundings etc. but I don't want to be carried away - because I've got a word limit (Ed-Sure!). But I will conclude with a suitably sentimental comment: An old Westminster (incidentally a girl) told me that I would never meet such unique people or receive such brilliant teaching ever again, and unfortunately I think she is right!

K.Gaw (VI)





# SPORT



## inter-house Athletics 1997

Sports Day is something that is always taken seriously by the pupils of Westminster School as any of them will tell you. Thus it is no surprise that the anticipation leading up to the day itself was great.

It was yet another chance for the sportsmen and women of Grant's house to show their athletic prowess to the rest of the school after victories in House Swimming and House Shooting. The hot summer day provided a beautiful setting for the string of victories that the current Granites were to provide with great results in particular from Edwin Cook and James Schlesinger among others.

For many, it was the first chance to see the girls run and they didn't fail to please, um... as in they did very well. Grant's put up a brilliant fight and held the lead for part of the day, although Hakluyt's were eventually able to overtake, leaving Grant's in third place after a very long day. Still, a great finish attributed to all those who represented the house and I hope next year we'll do even better, probably...

Maybe it's time for a teachers race?...

Nicholas Wong (VI)

**"For many, it was the first chance to see the girls run and they didn't fail to please, um... as in they did very well."**

## Shooting

*"Never in the history of human conflict has so much been owed to so few by so many."*



The motley team hurriedly composed for the House Shooting Competition surprised everyone when they all shot consistently well, winning a vast piece of silverware from the precious holders, Rigauds. Obeying the advice of shooting station vet. Mr. Edwards ("Piss before you shoot") even the novices of the team were up to scratch. All of the Houses had at least one incompetent on their team; ours was better than anyone else's. Having won the competition, the team retired up Grant's and quaffed champagne from the cup. We look forward to defending the trophy next year.

J. St. Clair (VI)

## House Running



## Events

Since I have been at Westminster, it has come to my attention that running events have always been lacking a great talent. And finding people to actually run has always been an arduous task with all the usual excuses supplied, ranging from "Oh, he's so much better than me" to "I just broke my ankle a second ago. Sorry, can't run". However I can happily say that despite this, Granites' reputation for running has been admirable.

### Towpath

When selecting the teams, the juniors are always an unknown factor, never having been seen by the organiser (our very own head of house, Michael Sholem). We believed to have had a quite strong intermediate team with the likes of Rugman and Quark, but the choice for the se-

nior team looked no less than dismal. Five runners were found for the juniors and intermediates, but after several excuses and on-the-day cancellations, found the Grant's senior team at a grand total of two, myself and Michael Sholem. And, in desperation, delved into the depths of our new sixth form girls, yes...a girl...Kendal Gaw. The downfall of the senior team despite not being great runners, was that you need at least four runners. So, despite our valiant attempts at the run, we were disqualified. What a waste of effort! Anyhow the juniors, despite exceptional runs from Berger (1<sup>st</sup> in 17:36) and Sanguinetti (3<sup>rd</sup> in 18:12) came fourth, only narrowly missing out on third, by two points to Hakluyts. The intermediates did even better, coming third overall with good performances from the whole team. None of the five runners came in after 24<sup>th</sup> (out of 40) and Rugman secured himself as 5<sup>th</sup>. Times were hard for the intermediates. Despite an impressive start by myself, attempting to stay with the leaders (bad move), I came in 16<sup>th</sup> in 20:14 with Michael

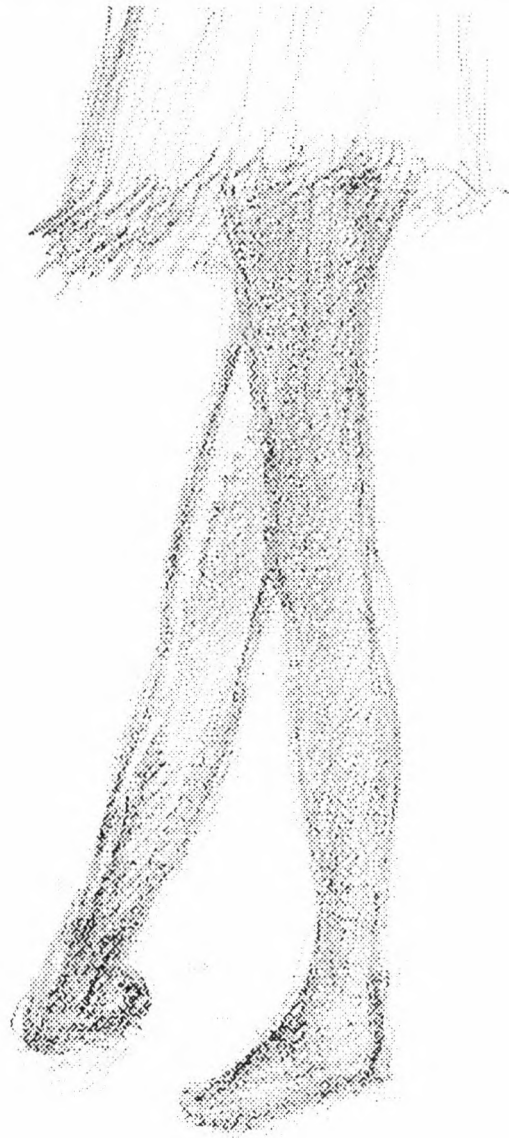
Sholem not far behind at 22<sup>nd</sup> in 21:07s. Kendall Gaw was deceived by the distance, thinking it to be longer than in reality, thus did not do as well as we all know she was capable. Overall, apart from the poor turnout by the seniors, a good performance.

**Bringsty Relay:**

Grant's house managed to summon up a more respectable Bringsty Relay team than it's towpath team, mainly due to the fact that the race only requires eight rather than fifteen runners. For most, the towpath is quite gruelling due to its length. However, the Bringsty is far more physical, with all the slopes to run up and down. Running through the woods and across open plains. It even seemed Mr. Hargreaves had set up an obstacle course in the forest where one had to jump over a log and then duck under a large branch. (which some runner ran into doing damage to himself but fortunately breaking off the branch to aid other runners).

We did not manage to live up to last year's great team led by our former head of house which nearly challenged Busbys title, who for the past years have become invincible. However Grant's showed us once again, their fortitude and determination with Juniors, coming in 4<sup>th</sup>, seniors 1<sup>st</sup>, but overall a respectable 4<sup>th</sup> for Grant's. The fastest Grantite was Rugman (6.07minutes), but all in all a fun filled event.

E.Cook (VI)



**Grant's House Swimming**

The inter-house swimming competition was held on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February at the YMCA pool in Tottenham Court Road.

As you should very well know Grant's House, has on many occasions in the past emerged as the winning house and has always been the favorites to win. But in this particular competition there was indeed stiff competition and strong odds against us winning. This was due to the fact that Liddell's were the favorites to win, as they were fabled to have had the best swimmers on this occasion.

Determined to prove them wrong and once again regain the title, the new team embarked on a frantic training schedule, which we hoped would give us the upper hand. With great consideration and tactical planning, the order of swimmers was finally decided.

Events	Swimmers
50m Frontcrawl	Kendal Gaw
50m Backstroke	Edwin Cook
50m Breaststroke	Edwin Cook
25m Butterfly	Kok-Hoong Hew
4 x 25m Individual medley	Kok-Hoong Hew
4 x 50m Relay	1) Kendal Gaw 1) Omar Jayussi 2) Edwin Cook 3) Kok-Hoong Hew

Against all odds we managed to overcome our opponents and emerged triumphant champions, thus adding another year of victory to the records. We hope to repeat this achievement the next year and to once again defend this title.

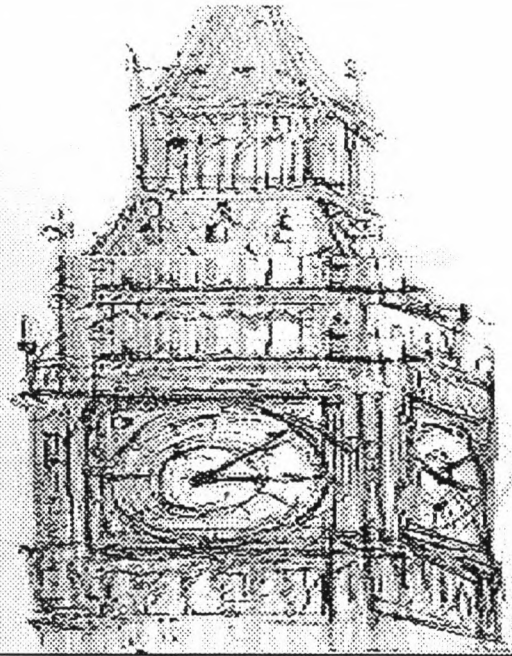
KH Hew (VI)

## Punting & Skiffing

We have had an enjoyable and successful season at punting, a station with a strong Grantite presence. We have held two regattas at Thames Dilton with a good turnout, and fine weather for both. We have, as usual competed at other schools and clubs throughout the summer, with some pleasing victories. We are still much younger and smaller than most competitors, but we have shown that skill can pay off against size.

At the end of last season, we began to try "Skiffing" another sport traditionally associated with punting. This summer we shall be entering our first races in Skiffs under the guidance of our expert coaches, and captain.

T. Gentleman (VI)



## Grant's House Concert

This year's house concert attracted a large, diverse and appreciative audience to what proved to be an evening's entertainment of the highest standards. Grant's this year was extremely fortuotous to have had so many enthusiastic gifted musicians, offering themselves to contribute to this concert. Without a doubt the evening would not have been a success, if it were not for the hard work and dedication from the concert's accomplished and committed musicians. However what showed to be more pleasurable were the players playing with such skill and evident delight, but also the contributions made by performers who are perhaps less often in the public eye.

But the main difference between this year's and last year's concert was the wider and more diverse range of musical styles. Branching from Monti's Czardas to Ben E. King's Stand by me, to name but a few, shows the diversity

and flexibility of Grantite musicians. Furthermore there was an impressive mixture of ensemble and solo pieces, which included once again the Grant's string ensemble, which consisted not only of Grantites but of other students from other houses, showing the school's large allegiance to Grant's. However it is of my opinion that the highlight of the evening was the "Interlude" band which performed three rock songs, including Alanis Morissette's You Oughta Know, which was received extremely well. However in conclusion the concert was extremely entertaining and the organisation of this concert could not have been possible without Mr. Edwards' kind assistance, and of my organising partner, An-

drew Francis. I look forward to next year's concert, to see what new and fresh approaches will be taken to continue Grant's House concert's reputation to be the best in its league.

J.Kow (VI)



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# INTERVIEW WITH THE HEAD OF HOUSE

## How does one become Head of House ?

One gets chosen by one's Housemaster . At the end of the Summer Term last year , Mr. Edwards called me over to Ashburnham and we sat in his office and talked about what sort of things that I would be prepared to do as head of house and what sort of things I wouldn't be prepared to do and I agreed, and he asked me whether I would like to be head of house and we just carried on meeting and talking about it from then.

## And what were the things that you described that you proposed to do for the House?

That I proposed to for the House?

Yes.

Well one of the things that we discussed was the degree to which I would have any power over all the other people in house. like disciplining younger boys, dodgy as that sounds, and I made it clear that I wouldn't feel comfortable telling on different people. And we discussed also the idea of having just a warning if your room is caught filled with smoke once, and then past that, you will be always gated if you're found smoking in your room.

## What are the pros and cons of the position from a socially and academic standpoint?

Socially I don't think it really has that much of an effect because my group of friends don't think much of my position as Head of House. Academically, it hasn't been too much of a strain. it just means that I get a lot of paper from various people like Mr. Clarke who runs the Heads of Houses Committee and from

various teachers who want to find out things but I just shove it in a drawer and look at it when I can. So it hasn't been too much of a pressure and it hasn't really stopped me working.

## What powers are you granted with the position?

Virtually none at all. I suppose technically I could gate people if I found them doing something wrong in the house.

## But you'd have to have a good reason for that?

Yes. and I would have to ask Mr. Edwards first and he would be the one who officially does it. So the only real power I have is to recommend that something is done or not done through the Housemaster so I just...I don't have any power...my power is that of advice...getting on like the king or the

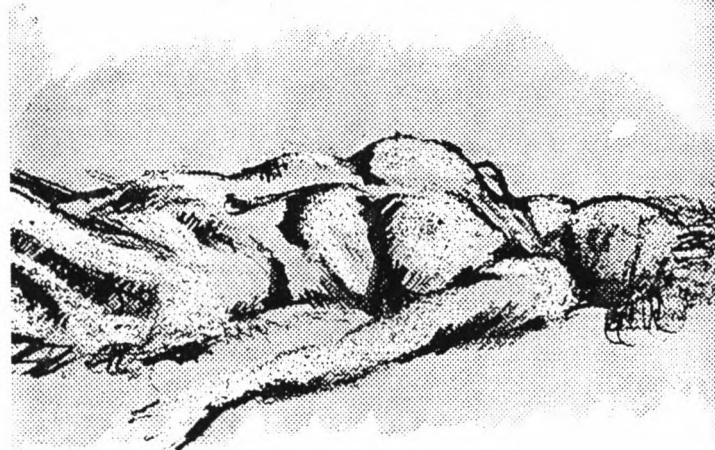
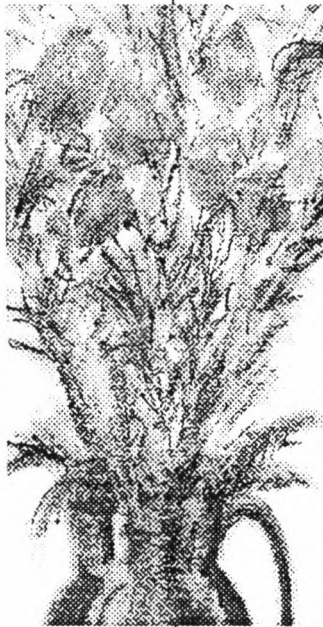
queen I suppose.

**"disciplining younger boys, dodgy as that sounds"**

## What are your viewpoints on the School's problems, which problems have you actually identified as a result of that, and ratified ?

The problems and the way that they are dealt with at School. The main problem is that we talk about it too much. We have meeting after

meeting and memos just float around. In terms of Grant's the main problem this year has been with the construction we've had.



and the disruption which upset people. Understandably the Remove and Upper shell were disrupted from their exams and at one point it was thought that they were going to have to be moved out, but it turned out that, they didn't. The problem that we always complain about in Heads of House is more general to do with the school. It is to do with the quality of the food which has actually improved a bit I think, but we constantly complain about it every single time.

**Have you thought about balancing the budget, to reduce the rowing budget, and put more into the food?**

Yes, well the Heads of Houses and the monitors are either pro rowing or have their differences biases. Whereas I don't think I've got too many, I guess I'm slightly anti-rowing. The other thing that we've dealt with a little bit is the degree to which the Sixth Form and the Remove are helped especially in the first term of the remove to try and fill out their UCAS forms in time and just get it organized properly because we felt that we weren't helped very much. So I hope it's better for you lot. next term.

**That's very good. How do you think Mr. Edwards has fitted in with his new position?**

Uh.....I can see that you're going to write "long pause" (Ed-That's right!) right now. I think he has fitted in very well. It's quite a stressful job. quite a change from being a day Housemaster I think. because you're on call the whole time and people either keep coming up to your flat and asking you something when I'm sure on occasions he'd just like to tell us to go away. But er. no I think his house is undergoing a lot of change. We're going to

be the biggest house next year. I suppose this was always going to be a transitional year in which we had people coming in and out. But,... I think...that there's been a change in the atmosphere of Grant's for the better, although whether that's due to some people leaving last year, is not known.

**You wouldn't want to say who?**

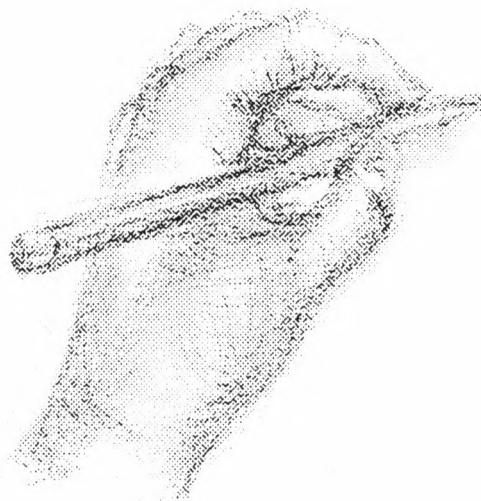
No. Or could it be due to Mr. Edwards, but whatever it is I think that Grant's has still got a fairly nice atmosphere, especially compared to other houses.

**Definitely. How do you think new labour will affect the school?**

The only think that I could think of is er...The only thing that I know of, is the assisted places scheme which I think labour want to get rid of, which I don't think is a very good idea because I think it is based on ideology than being fair to students which is probably the best, and the most important thing in politics is not trying to score points off the conservatives. But I think it is good in terms of the election, that awareness has been raised. But then I'm pro politics anyway as I'm doing in university, so er. no. I can't see how the labour part is going to affect the future of the school.

**How has Mr Edwards fitted in?**

**Uh....I can see that you're going to write "long pause"**



**Now that you're leaving the school, is there anything you want to get off your chest about the school or the teachers, keeping in mind that it will be published?**

I think some of the teaching quality is very good indeed, some of the best teachers I think we could ever have. But then, that's not universal. I think that there are

also some teachers who are kept here because they've been here so long that they can't leave. Of course I'm not going to mention names. But otherwise, I think the teaching is very good, but I think teachers have a problem with being a little too petty about some rules and I'm not talking about specific teachers. Some of them are a little too eager to enforce rules which are really unnecessary in my opinion and that maybe they should be a little more lax on that and maybe stricter on the more serious things like bullying or something like drug taking that is actually damaging people in the school. Whereas I think maybe even smoking outside of school grounds. I think that the rules on that should be relaxed a little, or else teachers turn should a blind eye, but I can't see that happening.

**Maybe you think the school should be less conservative ?**

Yes, in some ways.

**Have you noticed, that as you get older, the younger years have become more arrogant and obnoxious ?**

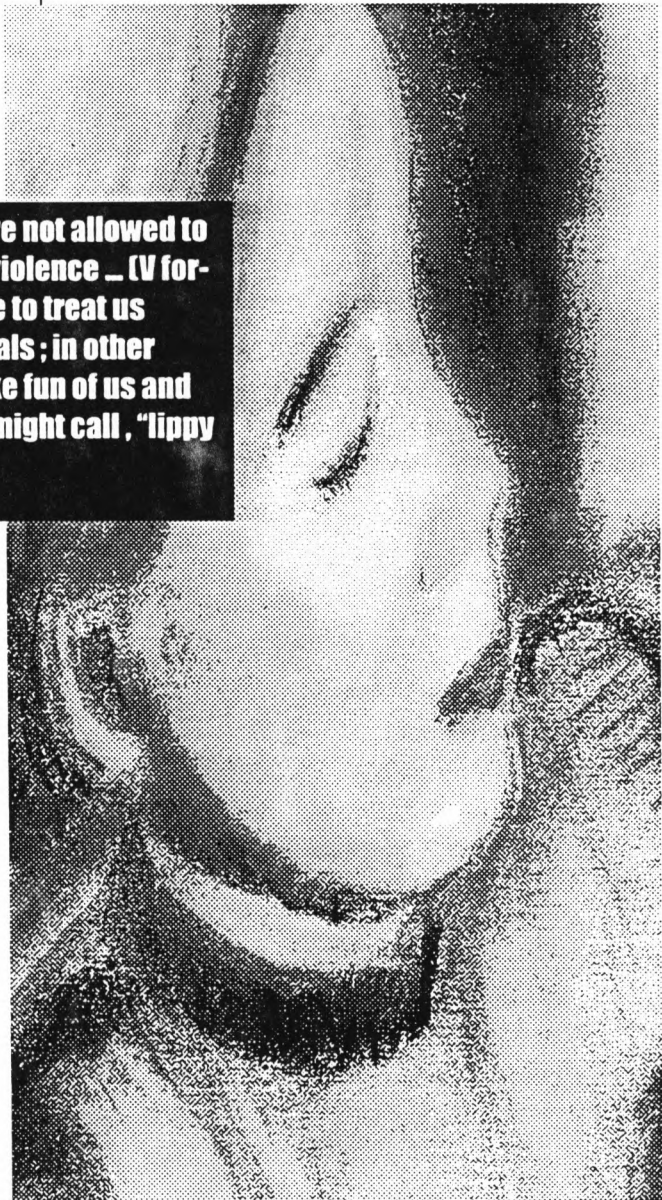
Er well, we have discussed that a lot in the Remove with the teachers I suppose and I think my personal view is that they have and that's a reaction to the fact that we're not allowed to beat them up any more. Because we're not allowed to use physical violence - which is a good thing I think, they are able to treat us more like equals; in other words, to make fun of us and be, what you might call, lippy to us. But I think apparently, the Vth Form is always afraid of the Remove and that we can't really imagine what it is like to be them, to be ordered about by us and that apparently, I don't see any evidence of it whatever, they are not in awe of us but are slightly afraid of us (Ed-Hmm...) But I haven't seen any evidence of that. But I think it's improved a lot as far as I can tell, but the Vth Formers might tell you something different. I don't know.

**In reflection of the five years you've been here, would you like to change anything that you've done, perhaps for the better ?**

I suppose I was really an introvert the first few years I was here, although boarding has changed that a little bit, so I'm still not exactly an extrovert, but it's meant that it's given me the basis to have really good friends within Grant's, which is good. I can't think of anything that I would particularly like to change. I've enjoyed my time here I suppose.

J. Kow & C Woodroffe (VI)

**"Because we're not allowed to use physical violence - (V formers) are able to treat us more like equals; in other words, to make fun of us and be, what you might call, "lippy to us."**





## Changes in Grant's

Grant's has seen many change over the past year, we now have a new housemaster, matron and several new tutors. Also there are new structural changes the building itself.

Following Mr. Clarke's promotion to Head Tutor, Mr. Edwards was appointed the new housemaster when before he occupied the same position in Ashburnham. We have also had to say farewell to Belinda, Mrs. Allwood, Mrs. Saint Jonson and Mr. Mylne. Subsequently we have a host of new tutors some new to the job and others transferred from other houses: Mr. Davies, Mr. Strong, Mr. White and Mr. Hopkins, as well as the senior matron, Mrs. Balding from Busby's. All these changes around the school have had a knock on affect and consequently there have been many post changes and promotions.

As everybody will probably have noticed there has been a lot of construction work going on in and around Grant's at the moment. Work started in the Easter holidays and has been going on since; the sanatorium and laundry room area at the back of Grant's is being renovated. After this, another floor will be added to the study block possibly incorporating a teacher's residence as well as more studies. Meanwhile, Hall (following a scheme to turn it into self-service cafeteria in its own right rather than a satellite of College Hall) is also being renovated, with glass conservatory-like extensions being added, extending out the wall of Dr. Katz's garden in one direction and into the Rigaud's portacabin area in the other.

There have also been changes outside the Grant's itself with the setting up of the W.S.B.O. (Westminster School Box Office) with a Grantite Jason Kow, in control of the operation, while auditing occurs through Mr. Clarke. Over the past year this has shown many blockbusters including: Independence Day, Clueless, Twelve Monkeys, Braveheart and numerous others. Further entertainment developments have been

more evening outings for boarders to the cinema, theatres and other recreational outings apparently attributable to the Head Tutor (Mr. Clarke).

E.Rugman  
(LS)



# With Form Stuff

## The Cutter

A woman stares out over  
the waves,  
Surveying her  
kingdom as  
her shield  
glints in the  
light.  
Her ensigns flutter  
with pennants brave,  
But she is only a figure-  
head.

The fore, mizzen and main  
masts tower above the decks

Receding to tiny specks.  
A complex web of rigging,  
spans the skyline,  
Like a spider's bed.

A fly is caught, the rigging  
tugs the wind,  
And the spanker sail flaps,  
like a disapproving hand.  
The wind dies like a man  
who has sinned.  
The ship goes about, wind  
rolls along the canvas like  
a breeze on dunes of sand.  
The varnished sides seem to  
melt into the sea.

As the sun goes down, it is  
swallowed  
Whole, behind one solitary  
cloud, a picture of defi-  
ance  
Among the deep blue of the  
sky and the sea, followed  
By the last rays, with radi-  
ance.  
The thick blanket of night  
falls to the lee.

D. Sawbridge (5)

## Sense and Sense Ability

What is that sound .  
A piercing scream .  
Head upon a guillotine .  
Or upon a battle ground .  
Listen to that dreadful pause .  
Breaking up polite discourse .  
Such acuteness is profound .

What is that sound .  
Harmonious . strong ,  
Across the valley , nature's song ,  
Long echoes bounding all around .  
Listen to that finite ring ,  
Sweet and crisp as God would sing ,  
In such sound . all shall be drowned .

Listen to the sound of silence .  
Hear the peace and hear the violence ...

Feel the terror .  
Sense the fear .  
Feel the sorrow .  
Cry the tear .

Is it soft .  
Or is it hard .  
Is it smooth .  
Or is it scarred .

Feeling cold :  
A cemetery .  
Feeling warm .  
So feeling merry .

This is anger .  
Spite and hate .  
Obscenely narrow .  
And irate .

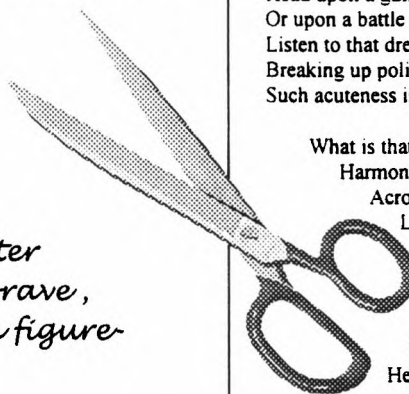
This is blessed .  
Full of love .  
Blithe . elated :  
Graceful dove .

Feel the terror .  
Sense the fear .  
Feel the sorrow .  
Cry the tear ...

Beauty . a beholder .  
Observer of this enclosed infinity :  
Shear blood . and scarlet pain .  
Twinkling mystery . and garish delight .  
Severe . concentrated . limitless observation .  
The primary . common sense .  
The primeval . simple sense .  
On which to rely and depend .

The truth telling .  
Tear welling .  
Lie shelling .  
Only compelling sense .  
It is sometimes said .

And the awe inspiring .  
Graceless martyrdom of its loss .  
We give brief thought .  
And little comprehend .  
In its dynamic uses .  
Unnoticed .  
Until it fatally and tragically . falters .



Seeing is believing ,  
But does only the believer see ?  
The believer and the beholder ,  
Would then be one and the same ;  
So is it a liar and a distorter ,  
Just as people ?  
Perhaps it merely highlights the beliefs of a beholder ...

Hay sweet ,  
Bog foul .

Mild subtle fragrance ,  
Of light summer breeze .

Corrupted stench ,  
Of dying flesh .

Dogs , garden , cooking ,  
Dulce domum , warmth .

Venegrate or denegrate ,  
These infinite prodigies .

Evocative drama , revulsion and love ,  
Our preference is of our soul .

It flows with our life , our breath , our thoughts , our present ,  
and our past .  
Summoning long summer days , apple boughs , and freshly cut  
grass .

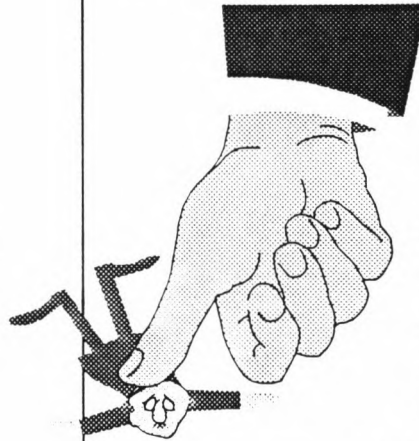
Bitter Winter ,  
Minced , soured , stewed ,  
Ancient Fruits .  
Sharp Spring ,  
Mint sauce , and the first , refreshing ,  
New potatoes of earth .  
Sweetest summer ;  
Softly satisfying strawberries .  
Swimming and soft drinks .  
Mellow Autumn .  
Creamy with Blackberry and Apple .  
Melting as leaves in the growing cold .  
Bitter , Sharp . Sweet . Mellow .  
Salty . Fresh . Green . Soft .  
Flavour flows through the valleys .  
Of life and all senses ...

S. Savage (5)

## Caesar , fit to be Emperor



**As crowds gathered this afternoon to welcome back Caesar to Rome, a shady question has emerged and as yet has not been answered. The question is of course "Is Caesar fit to be Emperor?" This probing question has been brought forward by the public who themselves have been racking their brains for an answer. The question was asked this afternoon after Caesar fell publicly into what can only be described as 'fit'. This fit had followed Caesar modestly declining the crown. The crowd lapped this up. Caesar refused the crown three times and every time the crowd roared louder.**



**Although Caesar will have realised that his collapse will have done his career no good , the general feeling is that Caesar is strong and will bounce back from his public fainting and still go on to fight off any opposition to become Emperor.**

**Also this afternoon , Caesar was confronted by a soothsayer who cried out to Caesar from the crowd. Caesar seemed puzzled by the high shrill voice of the soothsayer and bade the soothsayer before him. The soothsayer then bid Caesar twice to beware the Ides of March. The other senators told him to go , merely discarding him to Caesar as a 'dreamer'. However Caesar seemed to give it more time than his fellow companions and appeared to be dwelling in the soothsayer's words for a while.**

**Yesterday also , two vandals by the names of Flavius and Marullus were vandalising any statues of Caesar by tearing off any wreaths and flowers . This vandalism has not gone unnoticed by the senators but as of the moment , Javius and Marullus have mysteriously not been found .**

J. Coggans (V)

## Woyzeck (Grants House Play 1997)

The Grant's House play of 1997 was originally meant to be a proper representation of one of the greatest tragedies ever written for stage. In other words, it was meant to have been taken seriously by the directors, the cast and the audience. Two words sum up this assumption: Like Hell! What was supposed to be a serious production ended up as an unintentionally funny and entertaining play. I always wondered what Buchner would say if he had seen what we had done to his play, otherwise he may have rolled in his grave.

We had everything we needed for the play: the Drama studio for three nights, adequate lighting, a retractable knife, numerous sound effects, fake blood and a wardrobe full of period costumes, a stuffed cat and lots of other items which were essential for the play. We had a cast of would be thespians: Tom Gentleman was Woyzeck, Sophie Powell as Marie, James St. Clair as the Doctor, Tom Hart George as the Captain and eleven minor characters and extras. We had a two man backstage crew consisting of the likes of Giles Seal and Clifford Woodroffe, as well as two front of house men in the form of Kok-Hoong Hew and Edwin Cook. Two weeks of rehearsals and minor alterations to the original script added to what should have been quite a good production. All we had to do was wait and see what the audience thought.

The first night was to say the least, a disaster. We knew that the first night of any production was doomed to some sort of failure. It seemed to us that everything went wrong: the window where James was meant to come in from Barton Street was stuck, and hence was forced open which caused a lot of noise, drawing the attention of the audience. Giles and Clifford did well in moving the props around and performed their roles as backstage managers with supreme efficiency. However essential props were not present in certain scenes: the mug filled with

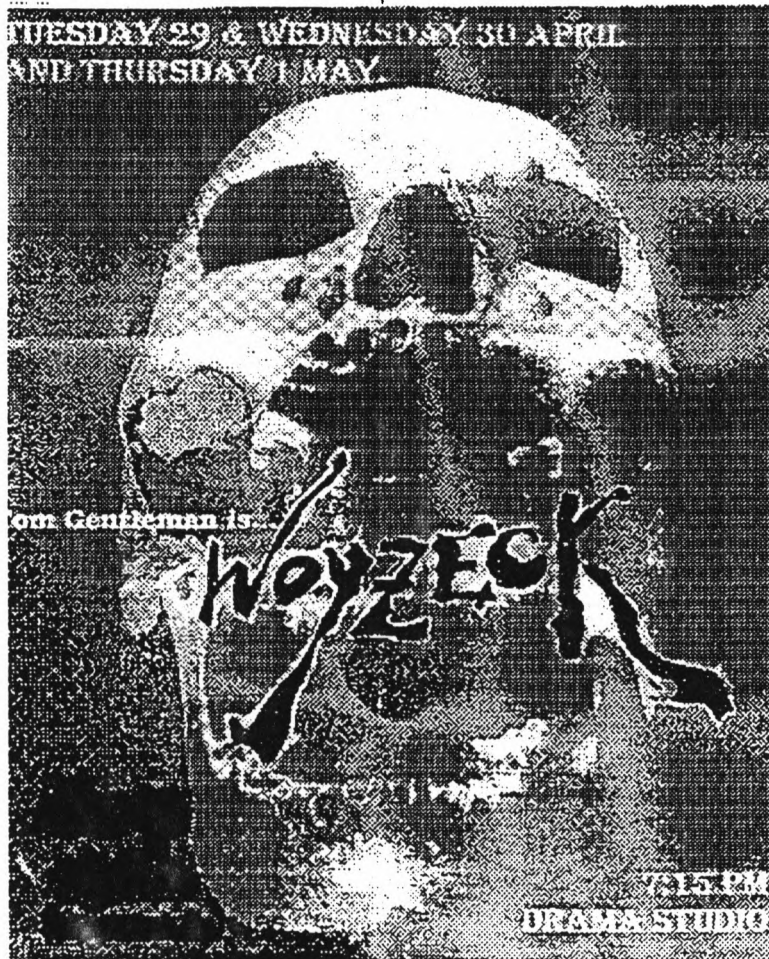
chicken soup to be used as "vomit" was not on the table when the lights came up. The small table to be used by Tom in the same scene was not taken out, hence Tom had to sit on the floor which looked decidedly strange from the audience's point of view. There were only minor hiccups in the flow of the performance. However, what placed the nail in the coffin

was when the two journeymen, Anthony Aiken and Tom Browne came onto stage two scenes early, moving on at the same time as Tom Gentleman and Sophie Powell appeared. They made a hasty exit, however we could not stop the audience from cracking up with laughter. From that point of view, it all fell apart. Tom killed Sophie too far away from the centre stage, hence Dave could not get the fake blood onto Sophie, thus the corpse had to get up in order for Dave to pour some of Jacob Kennedy's fake blood on her, which was quite a laugh from the audience's point of view. The final scene of the play

just fell apart: James began to crack under pressure and the two corpses had permanent smurks on their faces which caused him to laugh and lose composure. He recovered but then Tom Hart-George came onto stage and both Tom and James cracked up with laughter. The final moment as James looked up with agony etched into his face, waiting for the light to fade was a sight for sore eyes and the main cause for the audience to break into mass laughter.

Well Woyzeck was a treat and had a substantial amount of entertainment value. The audiences were variable and our performances were progressively better as the first night became the second night and finally the last night. I could tell you more, but it would mean revealing what happened afterwards, and that could entail punishment.

M. Yoong (VI)



# From our Housemaster

I have been asked by the editor of the "Grantite Review" to write a few words about moving into Grant's and my first impressions of the house: do I like it? What is the difference between being a day housemaster and a boarding housemaster? Or, more particularly, why is Grant's better than Ashburnham? What does my family make of it? etc., etc.

Rather than answer any of these questions directly, I thought I might just give a brief sketch of what has been going on, my early impressions and an update of recent events.

A clear indication that I was subconsciously more anxious about moving to Grant's than I thought, was revealed by my tendency to keep on losing all the house keys before term started. Indeed my first encounter with any Grant's parents was to be spotted climbing in through my study window, having, once, locked myself out. David Hepburn-Scott told me that at the end of his first year in Grant's he was called away from the Election Dinner by his Head of House who was 'a bit concerned': - "I really do think you should come and have a look, Sir" - a competition, involving the whole house, was going on at the back of Grant's to see who could walk the parapet three floors up while drinking a bottle of Scotch (presumably Grant's). I had heard of house monitors running wars running wars of attrition against the housemaster - and winning. At a dinner for Prep School Headmasters early on in my first term I was told benignly: "Don't worry, it'll be all right to begin with - it's the fear of a fire that will eventually get to you." Behind it all were words that I had heard from Dave Brown years ago: "If you come across anything wrong it will always be worse than you could have imagined."

In fact it was "all right" (I think) - Chris Clark had briefed me carefully over house routines and I was helped enormously by monitors, particularly Michael Sholem and Ben Linton, Heads of House and Hall respectively, and by a new team of tutors: Michael Davis, Jonathan White, Jon Strong and Peter Holmes - but it still takes time to get to know over seventy people well. There were also anomalies in that I was still

writing university references for people in Ashburnham while Chris was doing the same for Grant's. There were little things that I hadn't expected: I spent part of the first night of term hanging curtains and putting on lamp shades. For some reason light bulbs in Grant's have an unusually short life span. Things fuse with remarkable regularity, perhaps something is being built in the basement...

The biggest change was clearly living within the house, having been used to locking up at about 6 o'clock and going home. Max my younger son, aged 3, took to it all too easily - he has the bedroom with the round window at the top of the house, and to begin with never went to sleep without saying good night to Big Ben. Alexander, aged 10, found that he had what must be the best back Yard in London to play football in. I found the days much longer, much more demanding but also much more rewarding.

I have now been up Grant's for just over a year and much has happened - I leave comments on concerts, plays and sport to other reviewers in the magazine - but it has been an unusual and unsettling time. I have yet to experience the house operating normally in that the building works have been going on at some level or another for most of the time. Essentially the work has provided the house with a new larger dining hall and kitchen by expanding sideways into, on one side, Grant's passage, and, on the other, into Rigaud's Yard. It has produced a rather attractive light 'greenhouse' effect, which has not only made house lunches more pleasant, but is also a much more versatile space. At the back of the house, a new 'mansard roof' floor has been created which, other than tidying up an architectural mess, provides a flat for a new resident tutor - Nick Maloney - new loos, showers, baths etc., a new kitchen for boarders and a new TV room. Sue Balding, the School's medical matron, has moved in as Grant's matron and the San/ Doctor's surgery has been developed. Grant's has given over the basement rooms to the music department, but Guy Hopkins, the Director of Music, has joined the house as house tutor. The roof over the study

block has been improved and restored, hoping to be more waterproof than its predecessor.

I had anticipated – as had the architects – that we would have to evacuate the study blocks for a certain period of time. In the event, and it says something about the house, none of the boys wanted either to stay at home or move to another house and were prepared to put up with the noise, mess and inconvenience which they did uncomplainingly and with good humour.

I hope as many Old Grantites as possible will come and see the changes – in a way to christen them – on Thursday January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6.15pm (see the Club's Notice), when the Committee has told me the emphasis will not be on the AGM but on the drinks that follow.

Last term Peter Cole took over as Head of House and Edwin Cook as Head of Hall. The House sang, or rather performed, the theme song from 'Shaft' in the House singing competition: it was hilarious, with many of the singers upstaged by their 70s attire and Afro wigs. There was also a terrific house concert (to be reviewed in a later issue). My only sadness is that so many of the star performers are in the Remove and so leave at the end of the year. I am particularly grateful to Edwin for all that he has done in terms of house music.

Towards the end of term my wife, Caroline, suggested that the house ought to try to raise some money for charity. She, and a small committee consisting of Peter, Edwin and Tom Gentleman organised a variety of events to raise money for Whizz-Kidz, a local charity which provides mobility vehicles for disabled children. They set themselves the target of £2,500, which would buy a vehicle. There was a sale of Christmas Cards designed by Will Stevens; a charity dinner in the new dining hall where parents were catered for and waited on by their offspring. In addition there was sponsored Carol singing involving around 50 boys and girls. The target was reached just before the end of term. All concerned are very grateful for the support and contributions given by parents and Old Grantites.

Finally an odd event which I think should be recorded for posterity in 'the Grantite Review', it concerns the part played by the Head of House

in catching a burglar! On the eve of the Carol Service I was alerted by the sonorous bass of the Under Master shouting: "Thief! Stop that man!" Running down I saw that he had indeed been stopped by the Under Master, another housemaster and several boys. I phoned the police but by the time they arrived he had broken free and escaped through to the back of Grant's. While we searched, no one realised that Peter had followed him and was giving chase. The man ran down Great College Street into Millbank and tried to get away on a bus: Peter stopped the bus. The man tried to get in a taxi: Peter stopped the taxi. He then ran along the embankment towards Vauxhall Bridge shadowed by the Head of House. Eventually he tried to board another bus but by this time the police were on the scene and arrested him.

A final postscript – as I write this, Oxford and Cambridge are declaring their offers, and while Oxbridge isn't everything, it is clearly something. The Grant's Tally is: two places awarded to two of last year's leavers; nine offers to students in this year's Remove while one candidate is still in the pool. These are tremendous results and my congratulations to all those concerned – especially as these results are much higher than those achieved by any other house!

*Dr Edwin*

# THE OLD GRANTITE CLUB

*The AGM (of about 12-16 minutes) followed by SHERRY will take place UP GRANTS (by kind invitation of DAVID and CAROLINE EDWARDS)*

*On  
THURSDAY January 22nd 1998  
at 6.15pm*

*This will also enable you to see the very considerable changes to GRANT'S; the SHERRY alleviating any pain therefrom:*

Jonathan CAREY. Treasurer  
Michael TENISON. President

01420 474 263  
01494 762 107

