

THE  
GRANTITE  
REVIEW

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## CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

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HOUSE NEWS

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GRANT'S 1948-1963.....*J. M. Wilson*

HOUSE TUTORMANSHIP.....*E. R. D. French*

THE ANTIQUARY.....*Augustus John*

THE NEW ESTATE.....*Patrick Semple*

THE LOST.....*James Rose*

OF RUSH HOUR.....*K. A. R. MacDonald*

UNCERTAIN GLORY.....*A. T. Cooke*

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SPORTS NEWS—ATHLETICS  
FENCING

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OLD GRANTITE CLUB DINNER

## Editorial

WHEN a certain Grantite, who was well renowned for his conservatism, announced that his father intended to vote Labour at the next General Election, nobody laughed. They had joked before at his "imperialism" but now they were stunned. It was in fact rather surprising that nobody fainted with some cardiac disease.

Westminster is prone to cardiac diseases; it has been well pointed out that under the stress of examinations, films and coffee-bars the modern Westminster boy is not very healthy. When, for example, a pin is jabbed in his behind, he is liable to jump, while other public schoolboys remain stolid and emotionless. However, steps are being taken to counter this malaise. A school dance is being organised so that any who are overweight may twist away their troubles and money. Moreover, for the first time boys will be allowed to stretch their legs during the weeks of the G.C.E. Examinations, when they are not actually taking a paper. Indeed, it is rumoured that there are those who advocate that Westminsters should not sit for G.C.E. at all.

Nonetheless, as things stand Westminsters remain susceptible to shock. The moral integrity of Liddells, for example, was shattered by the Profumo affair. The editors of their new magazine "*Hold It*" spoke most emphatically on the matter. Nor, indeed, were Grantites unmoved. Their emotions were as diverse as passionate. Some were amused, some sarcastic, others infuriated, others amazed. It is, no doubt, lamentable that they were unable to remain so unflappable as the Prime Minister.

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## House News

J. M. Wilson, Housemaster of Grant's for the past fifteen years, is retiring at the end of term.

Major E. R. D. French, House Tutor, is also leaving Grant's to become housemaster of Ashburnham.

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R. C. Beard is Head of House.

The Monitors are M. J. Stancliffe, P. W. Semple, A. T. Cooke, R. T. E. Davies, and A. J. Dugdale.

R. J. Simpson is Head of Chiswicks.

The Chiswickites are N. S. B. Tanner, C. S. B. Cohen, S. F. B. Heaton, N. E. G. Jones, G. S. Gould, C. M. Garnett and C. R. McNeil.

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T. F. Hart is Head of Hall.

The Hall Monitors are R. E. Jones, N. Mcl. Johnson and A. M. Milne.

The following colours have been awarded:—

- Rowing .. *Pinks* to C. M. Garnett and G. B. Chichester.  
*Pink and Whites* to D. Brand and C. H. H. Lawton.  
*Thirds* to S. E. Robertson.  
*Colts* to A. H. C. Vinter, N. McI. Johnson and T. B. Williamson.  
*Junior Colts* to A. H. K. Postan, J. M. K. Lamb and J. Donald.
- Cricket .. *Thirds* to P. D. Craze.  
*House Seniors* to P. D. Craze, P. K. H. Maguire and C. N. Foster.
- Fencing ... *Pinks* to P. W. Semple.

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VALETE:

F. Strickland-Constable, M. O. Gelhorn, R. M. McE. Compton Miller.

SALVETE:

C. R. Bland, D. G. J. Ravenscroft.

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## Grant's 1948-1963

FIFTEEN years may seem a long time to some, in prospect at least, as it did to me when I came up Grants in 1948, but in retrospect it does not appear an eternity, perhaps because of the very considerable changes that have taken place during that time.

In 1948, for example, food rationing was still in existence; only one spoonful of sugar on porridge, butter taken home in jars by week-enders, and so on. The Grant's baths were a byword for the primitive—but how popular they were!—and the coke stove in Hall produced surprisingly few cases of asphyxiation.

The temptation at this stage is to indulge in reminiscences but of course the tragedies and comedies of the years have not necessarily settled into perspective and unwittingly one might be occasioning misunderstanding or even distress, so let me try instead to think about some of the changes that have marked these years.

Of all the changes none has been so revolutionary as the rebuilding of the house in 1953/5. There is no doubt, I think, that the character of the house has undergone a pronounced change since then. The Chiswickites, for example, used to be a body of seniors sharing a single dayroom (the present "Chis" which has unfortunately been used as a school room for some years) and exercising a united influence in the house which was of an almost tangible nature and affected

Grantites at all levels. Their annual "binge" was an orgy of gluttony relieved by intermittent athletic outbursts supposedly to promote digestion.

The inevitable disappearance of this united front in the creation of individual studies seems to me the major single factor in the change of atmosphere in the house. However hard it was for some individuals to adjust to the communal life of Chis they were inevitably carried along by the spirit of the group. With studies such individuals can withdraw from the fray, and while they undoubtedly benefit thereby and studies on the whole greatly outweigh in profit any loss their creation has incidentally produced, there is no doubt that the division between "Studies" and "Hall" is a horizontal cleavage which the geography of the house has made inevitable. The consequences of this are an interesting speculation but I will not develop my ideas here.

Another great unifying factor which has disappeared is "Yard" cricket—or football according to season or fashion. I never knew the traditional "Yard Ties" which form an unailing entry in earlier issues of the *Grantite Review* but the communal vigour, violence, call it what you will, evinced in the wired cage of Yard was matched only by the friendliness which welcomed all and sundry, even the least athletic, the most exalted and the most insignificant, into the prevailing contest, and senior and junior joined together without distinction.

This is not to suggest that the House is any worse or better than it was, only different. And in this difference must be included as perhaps the most notable change the vastly increased pressure on scholastic attainment. A boy's school career has speeded up most dramatically in the last few years with less and less time for creative idleness. It is infinitely harder to be matey over a Latin prose or quadratic equation than in unhurried discussion (though "Step Soc" is gone, thank goodness!) or a stroll round Green. It is almost the case that leisure is bought at the price of guilt, and the greater drain on energy in formal academic pursuits all too easily leads to a passive attitude in recreation, watching or listening rather than doing. Far less use is made of the opportunities that London offers than was once done: outings, it seems to me, are rarely occasions of discovery or research but generally to cinema or snack bar to be at the receiving end of screen or coffee cup.

And the reason for all this? Well, that would take too long to consider here and there is probably no single short answer, nor am I advocating an artificial slowing-up process. Better leave it that the impression of haste and impatience is but a distorted reflection of one's own increasing slowness and laziness. I suppose I must be fifteen years older than when I first came up Grant's.

## House Tutormanship

“AND what exactly are the duties of the House Tutor?” This question was first posed to me many years ago by a parent who, by her searching questions, was quite determined to gain more than just a theoretical knowledge of the workings of Grant’s. This was in my salad days as House Tutor and my reply was, no doubt, utterly unconvincing. Since then the same question has been put many times, and I do not propose to answer it here and now in so many words, but refer readers to my as yet unpublished work, *Parents Parties at Westminster* (Chapter XV), where certain stock methods of parrying parents’ prying questions are laid down.

Having been blackmailed by the Editors of *The Grantite Review* into writing this article, with the threat that if I did not write something about Grant’s, Grant’s would certainly write something about me, I must try to justify my position as House Tutor. It is a difficult assignment as part of the mystique of House Tutormanship is dependent on the fact that his duties should never become so prosaic as to be definable. After all, if he has no definite duties, how can he ever be found guilty of dereliction of duty?

Lest my readers should think that I am prevaricating, I must descend to solid fact. It is true that the House Tutor gets two free meals each week on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, and drinks as much of the housemaster’s sherry as the housemaster is foolish enough to dispense, but no privilege comes without responsibility. The House Tutor must, on those same Tuesday and Thursday evenings, take Prayers, an event not without its hazards to the uninitiated. Why is it that boys will never listen to the numbers of the verses to be left out, so that the Tutor either finds himself singing a solo or trying to sing the correct version louder than 59 other voices all intent on singing that verse about “Matrons and maids” which should have been omitted?

A House Tutor must be above reproach—it is not infrequently that his integrity is called in question. Some people, supposing that the N.C.O.s for the Corps have to come from somewhere, have seen fit to read into certain events a sinister connection between the Contingent Commander and the House Tutor, remarking that the same person has appeared in this dual role for the past decade. Let anybody who is foolish enough to suspect any bias walk past the blanco room on any Thursday evening during the weekly lustrations of webbing and boots, and all suspicions will quickly be dispelled.

On second thoughts, this is perhaps unwise, for conversation in the blanco room is a little limited and is hardly so esoteric as that which follows the weekly gatherings of Lit. Soc. in the winter terms. Here indeed lies an onerous duty for the House Tutor who is expected to put on a weekly performance in such diverse roles as Sweeny Todd, the Demon Barber, one week, and Hjalmar Ekdal the next. Junior House Soc., another of the Tutor’s problem children, also has its pitfalls. A visit to Watney’s Stag Brewery, alas no longer with us, nearly ended

in disaster when some of the younger members of the society took a little too literally the invitation to help themselves, and at least one small Grantite, on a visit to Beckton Gas Works, was nearly incinerated in a retort house.

Whether the retiring House Tutor was sent to live over the Science Labs and opposite Grant's bath-room by accident or by design is uncertain. Residence in this place is seemingly a form of mental torture—either the bath-room noises are so great that the monks use it as a useful form of mortification, or the whispers are just inaudible so that only the sketchiest details of the latest scandal can be assimilated. Finally, the most difficult duty of the House Tutor is the reading of the scripts of the *Grantite Review* or those for the Play Supper. How often has he been embarrassed by some risqué reminiscence in the former, or some unpardonable reference to elephants in the latter.

But life has had its compensations. How pleasant it is to sit for that annual photographic masterpiece, the House photo, and to hear parents, on examining the result exclaim to their sons, "And who is that nice looking boy sitting next to the House-master?" pointing not, of course, at the Head of House but at the House Tutor. At least that is what parents used to say, ten years ago . . .

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## The Antiquary

LONGER than Life is Memorie's tenuous Cord,  
And not the Tomb Oblivion can afford.  
Dead Lovers' Dreams once vanished with the Dawn,  
Like Jewels stol'n by Night and put to Pawn  
Before the dark Detectives of the Soul,  
With failing Lanterns imitate the Mole.

The Token may be lost, the Booty hidden,  
Thrown to the Styne or buried in the Midden;  
But Pearls evade the Fury of the Swine  
And in the End the Midden proves a Mine  
To those who last assemble and await  
The slow dessicatory Powers of Fate.

Then Like the Echo of a distant Bell  
Or Rumour of the Ocean in a Shell,  
The wise Antiquary may disengage  
The Secret written on a soiled Page,  
And hear again the Speech of those who lay  
Together in a Cabinet of Clay.

AUGUSTUS JOHN

This poem, hitherto unpublished, is printed here by the kind permission of Mrs. Augustus John.

## The New Estate

**I**T didn't take long to build  
And it wouldn't take long to fall  
The New Estate.  
Eighty houses perhaps  
Rectangular, triangular, square  
No curves.

Behind the glass, behind lace curtains or blinds  
The Estate is female  
Not feminine.  
Outside it is neuter, neutral, neuter.  
These wives (they are married no doubt) are shadows,  
Shadows bent over their plush new automatic machines.  
They are young: have pity: for God's sake have pity.

Behind the glass, behind lace curtains or blinds  
Their progeny play.  
"Bang, bang, you're dead Mum."  
(She might as well count twenty and then live,  
But that would be impossible here).

Some houses are named, some numbered  
"San Sebastian" "Vijala" "19" "20"  
There are heretics too: "Tall Trees" "Mountain View."  
Trees or mountains there are none; just bricks and plastic.  
What need of a name?

And the men, the husbands, the commuters . . .  
Mere human frames jammed between bowler, shoes and suit  
They return seven o'clock sharp  
The final revolution in the automatic process.  
Their wives, served all day with plastic, now gorge flesh:  
Automatically.  
It's only natural after all.  
"A little fun tonight my dear, remember San Sebastian . . ."  
Lust, the one outlet.

Storm, so blue, and wind, so blind  
Vent your wrath on this outrage  
Expose the sand beneath  
And then the rock below.  
Knock down and sweep aside  
Kill the material and reveal the spirit.



## The Lost

FROM Tiphris in Hecania  
The great Bizephrus came  
To foreign lands with silken sands  
With bronze and tin and clay.

This trader brought cloth of a sort,  
With stripes of various hues,  
To many ill-clad rugged backwoodsmen,  
Exchanged for tools and news.

Around his ship, where'er it beached,  
There grew a chattering crowd  
To buy, to sell and dance as well  
To tunes both soft and loud.

In spring and summer oft he came,  
To make a people glad  
With stories, songs and monkey tame,  
Dressed in gorgeous plaid.

He does not come, the sailor famed.  
His sail is seen no more.  
His wife awaits in town unnamed  
The settlers on the shore.

So summer comes and weather fair  
No sign of sail or clue.  
Gone from here nor returned yet there,  
Lost in an ocean blue.

The death of man, the last of a band;  
And silent is the shore.  
The death of man, the last of a band,  
The trade routes close once more.

## Of Rush-Hour

**H**ITHER, thither, where we go  
No one but our feet can show;  
Feet on pavement, feet on road,  
Feet that every morn have showed  
The way to work, the office job  
In city large,  
That man and smoke alike discharge,  
To country fair when evening comes.

Shoes on men, with watches fob,  
Shoes on boys, heads full of sums,  
Lady shoes with heels extended,  
Old men's shoes, too often mended.

Feet on bridges, feet on stone,  
Feet that shuffle wearied home.

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## “The uncertain glory of an April day”

*Shakespeare.*

**T**HE street was deserted; the dust dry and brown in the early morning sun. Two small figures appeared at the bottom of the hill. The taller dragged a cart. Expectantly they made their way gradually up the road past the sleeping houses, past the junction with Paul's Avenue round the gently winding bend. It was about half past six when they reached the top. They turned the cart round and the smaller of the two, Geoff, jumped on it before his brother could move.

He did not take long to gain momentum and soon he was hurtling towards the bend. The cart lurched dangerously over a bump on the road. Geoff jammed out his right leg and he careered round the corner. The last bit of the hill was straight and steep, but the cart took it excellently. It rattled down to the bend at the bottom. Here again Geoff jammed out his right leg and again careered round the bend but this time to come to a halt as the road flattened out twenty yards or so in front of a dead end. Battered and bruised the boy raised himself from his vehicle with a sense of wonderful exhilaration. He then started the long re-climb to the top where his brother, Tony, waited impatiently. On the top he sank to the pavement and watched Tony launch himself on his descent. Tony was faster than Geoff; he delayed his turns to the last possible moment and was heavier.

An hour later the cart was still jolting down the hill. But people were beginning to emerge from the houses. It was Geoff who knocked over Henry Bond, the

porter, as he shambled over the road. He gave him no chance to take revenge, leaping again on to the cart and reaching the bottom of the hill before the poor man came to his senses. It was Tony who smashed the woodwork on the left wing to smithereens as he struggled desperately to avoid the builder. But at eight-fifteen the cart and the boys still survived, battered but defiant.

Then it began to rain in large, soaking drops. The dust on the road turned black. The boys agreed to have two more goes each. So intent were they on obtaining maximum satisfaction from their last runs they did not hear the huge hulking dustman's lorry halt at the bottom of the hill. It was Geoff's turn. It was a perfectly judged run; he managed to achieve almost maximum speed by fractionally delaying his corners. The end was, therefore, even more inevitable. Hurling round the final bend he caught one glimpse of the lorry. His reactions were instantaneous after two hours sharpening. He rolled out over the shattered woodwork of the left wing of the cart and landed flat on his back. The cart careered onwards.

From the top of the hill Tony heard the crash. He ran downwards at full pelt, his feet stinging on the pavement. Rounding the second bend he saw the remains of the cart and a dustman picking up his brother. Amazingly Geoff was unhurt; his face was white, his body shaken and his wind gone but no bones were broken and his only cut was on his left knee.

Their hands in their pockets, the two boys made their way disconsolately in the rain to the Secondary Modern School.

"I'm sorry."

"It's no good being sorry."

"All right then I'm not sorry."

But he was.

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## Athletics

GRANT'S this year met with considerable success in Athletics in spite of bad weather conditions, which allowed only one day of standards to be held. The season started well when N. Harling won the Junior Long Distance race after a very fine piece of running. Grant's also achieved the highest number of points for the team placing. A week or so later, a good team from Grant's led by F. Strickland-Constable won the Bringsty relay.

Though not very successful in the one day of standards, Grant's had many competitors who reached the finals of the heats. In the senior events R. C. Beard won the High Jump for the second year in succession, A. D. R. Abdela won the Weight and Grant's also took the 100 Yards and the Mile.

In the junior events N. Harling won the under-sixteen Quarter-mile, Half-mile and Long Jump, and A. B. S. Medawar won the under-fourteen and a half

Weight. There were also quite a number of seconds and thirds in both senior and junior events.

As a result of these wins, Grant's won the Athletic Challenge Cup and in addition the Relay Cup on the last day of term. Altogether, it was a very good season and it is to be hoped that Grant's may fare equally well next year.

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## **Fencing: Election '63**

**G**RANT'S needs more fencers. Over the past few years the house has increased in numbers, while those Grantites fencing have remained about five. In spite of this handicap it seems more than likely that we will come second to Liddell's in the house competition.

P. W. Semple won the Foil without serious opposition, while J. P. Hardman and J. D. R. Rose each contributed to our total by reaching the finals. After this initial broadside we began to lose ground to Liddells, in part because we have only two épéeists, and in part because we have no sabreurs. Our two juniors M. E. Lonsdale and A. S. Cousens are particularly promising. At the time of going to press the sabre final has not been fought but in the épée J. P. Hardman came third. Prospects for the future are bright, but they could be brighter still if more enthusiastic, young, fencers could be recruited for the house.

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## **Old Grantite Club Dinner**

**T**HE Annual Dinner for 1963 took place in the House of Lords on Friday, May 17th. Lord Adrian presided and a large gathering of members of the club supported him. Among the guests were Mr. E. R. D. French to whom the President paid a warm tribute on his appointment as Housemaster of Ashburnham, and the Head of House, R. Beard.

However, the principal object of the Dinner was to present to Mr. J. M. Wilson some tangible expressions of the very real feelings of regard which members of the Club have for him after his fifteen years as Housemaster. The President first called on Mr. R. D. Creed, who had himself been a Head of House under Mr. Wilson, and who paid particular tribute to his work for the House during those years. He added that although he knew there was going to be a formal presentation to follow, he felt that something smaller and more personal would make a fitting addition to these, and so he gave Mr. Wilson a Dunhill pipe. The President then made a very warm reference to the Housemaster's work for the Old Grantite

Club and remarked that probably no other Housemaster had done more than he had to make Old Grantites feel welcome in the House and to make it possible for the Club to meet there. He then presented to Mr. Wilson on behalf of the Club an Eighteenth Century London Scene painted by George Barratt who, as he remarked, was himself appropriately after the School of John Wilson. On the back of the painting this inscription had been put:

“ This picture, chosen by himself, was presented to John Morton Wilson, Esq., by Old Grantites on his retirement from the Housemastership of Grant's House, Westminster School in July 1963.

They wished to show by this token of friendship their appreciation and gratitude for all that he had done for Grant's and Grantites, old and young, during the fifteen years from 1948 to 1963.”

The President added that the Housemaster was moving at the end of Term into his new house in Cowley Street which, being smaller than 2 Little Dean's Yard, meant that Mr. Wilson needed a smaller desk. The Club was therefore ordering one to his own design which would be delivered when he moved into the new house.

In responding, Mr. Wilson spoke feelingly of his fifteen years work with the House and of his particular pleasure in the fact that it was to Mr. D. S. Brock to whom he was handing over. He thanked the members of the Club, both those present and those unable to be there most warmly for three presents which he would always treasure as reminders of fifteen exceedingly happy years.

Those attending the Dinner were: Mr. I. J. Abrahams, Mr. A. L. Adler, Mr. J. H. M. Anderson, Mr. N. M. W. Anderson, Mr. N. P. Andrews, Mr. M. V. Argyle, Q.C., Mr. R. V. Aston, Mr. P. J. S. Bevan, Mr. R. O. I. Borradaile, Mr. M. I. Bowley, Mr. J. W. P. Bradley, Mr. D. Brand Inglis, Mr. J. Brostoff, Mr. M. B. McC. Brown, Mr. C. M. Cahn, Dr. E. S. Chesser, Mr. A. G. Cheyne, Mr. G. I. Chick, Mr. R. D. Creed, Mr. D. F. Cunliffe, Mr. R. R. Davies, Mr. M. G. Drake, Mr. F. H. M. Dullely, Mr. E. R. Espenhahn, Mr. P. I. Espenhahn, Mr. M. D. Fairbairn, Mr. M. C. M. Frances, Mr. C. D. Gale, Mr. P. M. Godfrey, Mr. A. R. Hadden, Mr. V. G. H. Hallett, Mr. N. Halsted, Mr. J. P. Hart, Mr. E. T. Holmes, Mr. M. G. Hornsby, Mr. R. M. Jones, Mr. A. S. H. Kemp, Mr. K. J. M. Kemp, Mr. J. K. Ledlie, Wing Commander A. W. H. Le Hardy, Mr. J. Levison, Dr. V. B. Levison, Mr. R. N. Mackay, Mr. M. S. Makower, Mr. J. D. Noakes, Mr. E. V. Notcutt, Mr. J. C. Overstall, Mr. A. Pain, Mr. R. Pain, Mr. M. L. Patterson, Mr. H. H. L. Phillips, Mr. F. G. Pitt-Lewis, Mr. R. Plummer, Mr. M. H. Prance, Mr. P. N. Ray, Major W. J. Reed, Mr. A. M. Rentoul, Mr. J. S. Rivaz, Mr. J. U. Salvi, Mr. H. J. Salwey, Mr. J. D. Seddon, Mr. G. G. Skellington, Mr. G. P. Stevens, M.P., Mr. A. J. Stranger-Jones, Major V. T. M. R. Tenison, Mr. W. R. van Straubenzee, M.P., Mr. L. A. Wilson, Mr. J. W. Winckworth, Mr. J. S. Woodford, Mr. J. T. Wylde.