

THOMAS LINACRE
TECHNICAL SCHOOL
1953-1963

**Thomas Linacre Technical
School
1953 – 1963**



Ron Hunt and Stephen Craig Smith



WILLIAM S. BRACE, Esq., M.A., B.Sc.
Headmaster, 1953—1962

Authors' Foreword

Almost everyone who lived in Wigan during the 1950s and '60s knew of the Thomas Linacre Technical School even if they did not know anyone who actually studied there. The school was housed in a stylish ultra-modern building on Parson's Walk opposite Wigan Grammar School and was a bold post war innovation in secondary technical education. The school enjoyed an excellent reputation, albeit that post-war changes in educational philosophy forced its merger with the Grammar School in 1963 after a mere ten-year existence.

Ron Hunt and Stephen Craig Smith happened to discuss the school via email towards the end of 2017 whilst working on another local history project. It was during these email exchanges that we both realised 2018 would mark the 65th Anniversary of the opening of Thomas Linacre School and more sadly the 55th Anniversary of its closing. Discussion drifted to the fact that no School History had been written, even though half a century had elapsed since the School's demise.

Ron, viewed by many old boys as the school's unofficial custodian of all Thomas Linacre memorabilia, school magazines, news paper cuttings, scrap books and the rest, suggested that the two of us should address this omission and write a history ourselves.

Thanks to Ron's vast collection of local historical material it has been possible to write this history, much of it based on his collection of annual School Magazines, a vast array of local newspaper cuttings, various brochures, and other miscellaneous documents. Additional help provided by Wigan History Shop staff and discussion with some 'Old Boys' now in their 60s and 70s, has made it possible for us to write a history of this deserving school whilst much of its existence remains within living memory.

Ron Hunt, Wigan and
Stephen Craig Smith, Australia

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Thomas Linacre Technical School, Wigan 1953–1963

Chapter 1 Origin to Opening

Secondary Technical Schools were first proposed in the Butler Education Act (1944). They were to parallel traditional Grammar Schools and Secondary Modern Schools in the immediate post war era. The concept of Secondary Technical Schools was good in theory, but their cost of construction and difficulties in staff recruitment seriously limited the number of such schools established across the nation. Wigan, with an economy heavily based on mining and industry, immediately saw the advantages of establishing a secondary technical school and with some prior experience of technical education was one of the first local education authorities to build one.

How Secondary Technical Schools came about

As stated above, Secondary Technical Schools came about as a result of the 1944 Butler Education Act which totally reorganised English secondary education. This Act superseded all previous education law, replaced the then existing Board of Education with a Ministry of Education and decreed that henceforth all state maintained schooling would be free. This Act was heavily based on the findings of the Norwood Report, commissioned in 1941 and published in 1943 (Norwood Report, 1943). The Norwood report was influenced by observed skill shortages encountered during the early years of the war and advocated an increased focus on technical skills which found expression within the 1944 Act.

Henceforth, post war secondary education was to be organised on a tripartite basis comprising a combination of Secondary Grammar Schools, Secondary Technical Schools and Secondary Modern Schools with Local Education Authorities having some freedom on how they would implement this proposed system.

Across the country the Grammar School stream, with limited entry access based on proven academic ability, posed few difficulties. Grammar Schools had been in existence for hundreds of years. There had been a Grammar School in Wigan for instance since 1597!

The proposed Secondary Modern School stream, although with some differences from earlier elementary schools, was also accepted nationally without much fuss.

The Secondary Technical School stream, also with limited entry access on proven academic ability, caused the greatest stir. This was effectively an entirely new stream of secondary education and not a mere amendment to existing long established schools, teaching staff or curriculum.

It was for this reason that relatively few Secondary Technical Schools were ever established nationally. By 1963 only 204 Secondary Technical Schools had been established in the entire country with 40 per cent of local education authorities having established no technical school within their jurisdiction. For every six pupils in the Grammar School stream there was only one pupil in the Technical School stream.

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Although one of the oldest boroughs in Lancashire, Wigan only grew in size and economic importance with the coming of the Industrial Revolution when it became dominated by mining, engineering and textile manufacture. Education, focused on scientific and engineering skills to serve industry and science, made sound common sense and Wigan was 'ahead of the game' by establishing the Thomas Linacre Secondary Technical School in 1953.

Secondary Technical Education in Wigan before the Thomas Linacre School

Wigan had a long tradition of offering technical education in the town. A Mining and Technical College was established in 1857 although it was not until 1903 that the college enjoyed a permanent home (Smith, S. 1965). The College Building on Library Street was Officially Opened on Monday, 12th January 1903 and the enlarged accommodation, afforded by the newly completed building, temporarily relaxed student pressure on class rooms, lecture theatres and laboratories.

A Junior Technical School was first introduced by the college on Monday, 17th September 1906, some 38 years before the 1944 Education Act. This marked the beginning of a successful college department which was to run for the next 47 years.

Immediately before the Great War however, the Junior Technical School was in a poor financial condition because of a lack of scholarships and financial support, but by 1915 the school was substantially improved. A new 3 year course of instruction was established and it received a comprehensive scheme of scholarships and financial aid from Wigan Education Committee, the Trustees of Willis and Diggles Charity and Wigan Consolidated Charities. The School was officially recognised by the Board of Education as a Junior Technical School in 1915 and from 68 pupils in 1915 it expanded to 105 pupils in 1916.

A Junior Commercial School, to parallel the Junior Technical School, was established in 1917. This (and a Senior Commercial School) were established after representation by the Wigan County Borough Education Committee. The two junior schools - technical and commercial - catered for pupils aged between 13 to 15 plus (Smith, S. 1965).

By 1923 116 pupils residing within the borough of Wigan and 38 from outside the borough were enrolled in the two junior Schools (Wigan Technical College, 1923). A school uniform including caps, blazers and ties was introduced with great success in these Junior Schools in 1931 and throughout this period about ten times more children desired places than could be accommodated.

A full Board of Education Inspection was made of both Junior Schools on 28th, 29th and 30th September 1933. The report arising from this inspection proved favourable but the need for a gymnasium and a suitable playground was stressed. During the 1936-37 session, admission to the two junior schools was staggered with one intake at Easter and another in September. The reason for this decision was to distribute pupil graduation more widely during the year to suit both employers and the pupils by avoiding a large surplus of pupils seeking employment in the summer.

On 1st April 1945 both junior schools became legally known under the 1944 Education Act as Secondary Schools and in November 1946 the two schools were merged into one. The term 'Junior' was replaced by the term 'Secondary' thereby creating the 'College Secondary School'.

Birth of the Thomas Linacre School

Although it was the Technical College which first introduced this type and level of technical education in Wigan back in 1906, by mid century the college was severely short of accommodation and wanted to focus more on tertiary education. By the late 1940s Wigan Education Authority decided to take over responsibility for the technical side of the 'College Secondary School' in accordance with the 1944 Education Act and create an entirely new Secondary Technical School elsewhere in the town.

As a preliminary to this future transfer, college staff devoting half or more of their teaching time to the 'College Secondary School' were re-timetabled during the 1947-48 session and separated from those college staff focused on tertiary education. All new staff appointed after this date worked either entirely for the secondary school or entirely for the college tertiary section. Public announcements were made by Wigan Education Authority in November 1949 stating that the technical section of the College Secondary School would be transferred to a new secondary technical school.

Unfortunately, no arrangements were made by either Wigan Borough Council or Lancashire County Council to accommodate the commercial side of the college's Secondary School. As it was not considered advisable to retain one half of the secondary school and lose the other half, the college reluctantly decided to phase out the commercial side from Easter 1950. The commercial side of the school therefore terminated in 1953 when the technical side was transferred *en bloc* to the new Thomas Linacre School.

So, although the Thomas Linacre Technical School only came into being in 1953 it was continuing the town's tradition of offering secondary technical education. The link between old and new was recognised at the formal opening of the new school in 1953 with the following words,

"The Governors of the Thomas Linacre School wish to record their appreciation of the most generous action of the donors of the original cups and shields to the former College Secondary School in the Wigan and District Mining and Technical College and to the Governors of the College in agreeing to the transfer of these cups and shields to the Thomas Linacre School." Official Thomas Linacre Opening Brochure (1953) - Page 30

Planning the new school

Building a new school in the early 1950s at a time of financial stringency and post war building shortages was, however, no easy task.

Fortunately, the town already owned a suitable site for the new school, so costs of land acquisition were not an issue. In 1937 Wigan Council had purchased a large block of church owned land immediately adjacent to the Market Square, with a grant of £5,400 from the Carnegie Trust. This land had been purchased with a view to establishing an Institute of Leisure, a building which would have accommodated the headquarters of numerous local voluntary organisations and a Youth Employment Bureau. The institute was never built so the land remained vacant for some years. After consideration of many claims for its use, the Council finally decided to allocate the site for 'educational purposes' in 1948.

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By 1950 the Council was busy developing its overall Education Plan for the town and the development of a secondary technical school was high on its the agenda. At first the council pondered the idea of making Wigan Grammar School a bi-lateral school providing both grammar and technical education within the same organisation, but this was finally rejected in favour of building an entirely new technical school. Also, at this time there was recognition that the Technical College housed in the Library Street building was desperately short of accommodation and a new college building was also required. Why not construct a new Technical College building and a new Technical School building adjacent to each other on land already owned by the council?

The new secondary technical school required much forethought. Pupils attending the 'College Secondary School' had come from both the town and adjacent county area so the new school would require agreement between both Wigan and Lancashire Education Authorities. The proposed technical school was to be funded on the basis of an annual three form intake, two forms of Wigan students and one form of county students. In recognition of this, the proportion of school governors was arranged on the basis of two to one with Wigan appointing 10 school governors and the county appointing 5 school governors.

It was soon realised however, that during the early years of this new three form intake funded school there was another factor to consider. Wigan Borough was financed by the Central Government to provide an annual four form intake of specialist students into secondary education. It was assumed that once the new technical school came on line, a two form intake of students would be allocated to the grammar school and a two form intake to the technical school.

However, two forms of annual student intake from Lancashire County had been attending the 'College Secondary School' for many years and this was anticipated to continue into the future. With a two form annual intake of Wigan students and a two form annual intake of County students this would result in a four form annual intake to the technical school - but central government funding would not be available in the immediate future to fund a four form school intake. What should be done?

This dilemma was solved in the following way. As there was to be a new Technical College building located adjacent to the proposed technical school, an arrangement was made whereby a number of class rooms within the new college building would be made available to the new technical school for the foreseeable future.

Preliminary plans for the school, unfortunately, were affected by the Ministry of Education when it imposed certain national economies regarding the nature and amount of steel which could be made available for all new school building projects. This necessitated a considerable amount of revision to the initial plans to accommodate the type and quantity of steel nationally available and this influenced the nature and style of the new buildings.

Building Contracts Signed

A contract was signed in 1950 with architect Howard V. Lobb, C.B.E. F.R.I.B.A. of London to design both the new Secondary Technical School and the new College Extension which were to be sited adjacent to each other on the same block of land. Mr Lobb was a well known architect who specialised in modern clean cut building designs. He worked closely with G. Grenfell-Baines and Hargreaves, A.A.R.I.B.A. of Preston.

Origin to Opening

The firm of Leonard Fairclough Ltd. was appointed contractors for the two adjacent buildings. Leonard Fairclough Ltd started in the village of Adlington but was later based in London. Leonard Fairclough's son Leonard Miller Fairclough was head of the firm at the time of the technical school contract.

Felix J Samuely B.Sc. of London was appointed structural engineer. Felix Samuely was born in Vienna in 1902 and migrated to Britain in 1933. He was famous for 'mullion wall' construction and was involved with a number of projects associated with the 1951 Festival of Britain.

The new technical school, designed to cater for 570 students at a cost of £232,000, was finally approved in 1951 and construction work could finally begin.

Construction Begins

Although the site chosen for the Technical School and new college building was conveniently central to the town, it presented certain construction difficulties. A geological survey together with trial borings of the sub-soil indicated that the site would not be capable of taking a heavy building load without subsidence risk. It was therefore necessary to pile the entire site for both the technical school and the college extension, which in later building phases was projected to rise to six floors in height.

By early March 1951 construction proper began. A perimeter fence was erected around the entire site on March 5th and foundation piling began on March 10th. Piling was undertaken by the Franki Compressed Pile Co and a total of 286 piles were driven into the ground to a depth of up to 11 metres. Building of the superstructure began on 28th March 1952.

Laying Ceremony of the Foundation Stone 12th May 1951

A significant milestone in the construction of the school was marked by a Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony which took place on Saturday, 12th May 1951.



Foundation Stone laid 12th May 1951

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Mr C. R. Thorpe, who later became the first music teacher at the school, was invited to attend the Foundation Stone Laying Ceremony in May 1951 some two years before the school was 'open for business' and he recorded his memories of this occasion in the final edition of the School Magazine published in 1963.

"IT WAS MAY 12TH, 1951, THE DAY WHEN THE SCHOOL'S FOUNDATION STONE LAYING CEREMONY WAS HELD. TO CELEBRATE THE OCCASION A FUNCTION WAS HELD IN THE EVENING IN THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL (AN OMEN TO COME!). WE DINED AND WINED AND THERE WERE SOME GOOD SPEECHES. A GRAMMAR SCHOOL BOY PLAYED VERY WELL SOME INCIDENTAL MUSIC ON THE PIANO DURING THE DINNER, AND BETWEEN THE SPEECHES A WELL-KNOWN SOPRANO COMMANDED THE ATTENTION OF THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY WITH HER BEAUTIFUL SINGING OF SONGS WHICH I HAD TO ACCOMPANY WITH THE PIANO. THAT WAS HOW I GOT IN ON THE FUNCTION! I AM RATHER PROUD OF THAT SOMEWHAT REMOTE FIRST CONTACT WITH THE SCHOOL BEFORE IT WAS BUILT."

TLS MAGAZINE 1963 P10 C. R. THORPE MUSIC MASTER

The Completed Building

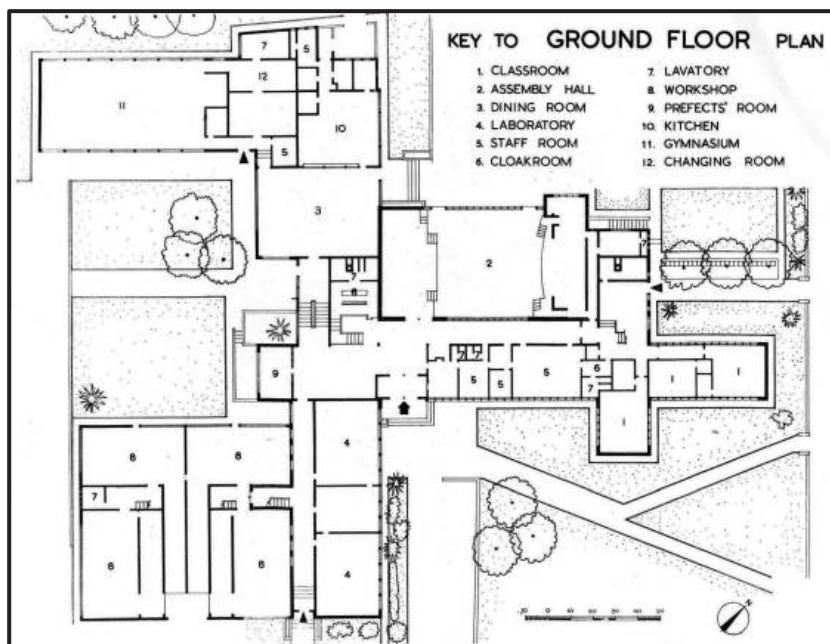


Thomas Linacre School as seen from Parson's Walk, Wigan

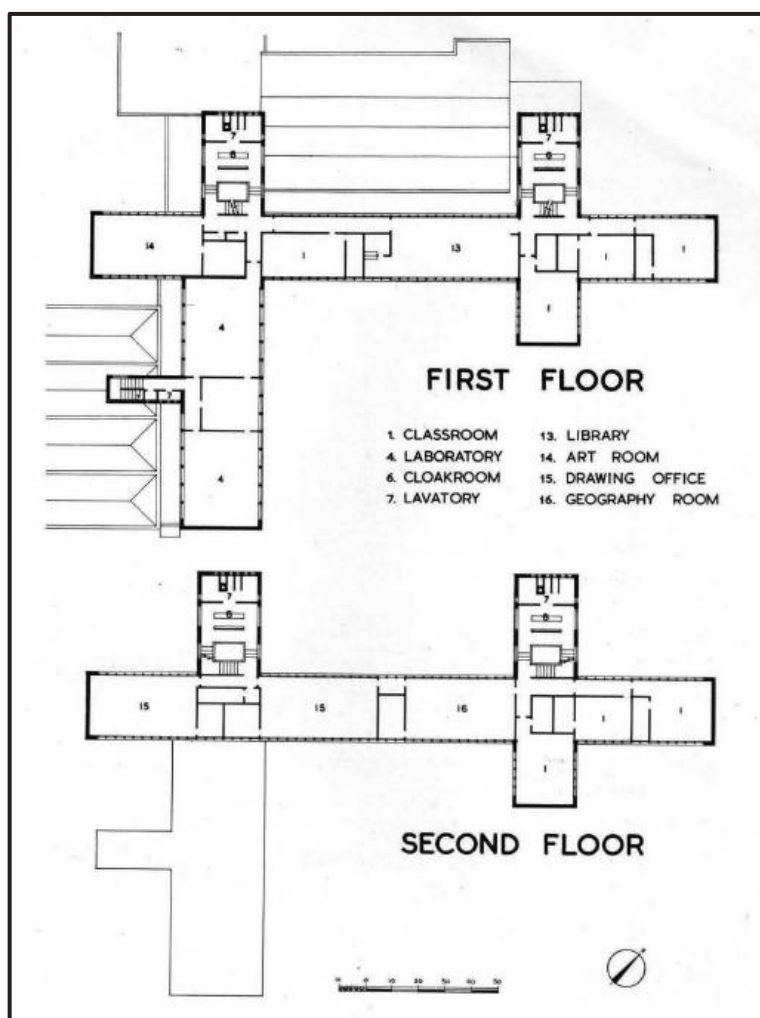
Both buildings, but focus here is only on the Technical School, are severe in design with flat roofs, exposed rustic brick facia walls and steel windows sandwiched between exposed concrete mullions (vertical structures which separate adjacent windows) as seen in the above photograph.

The overriding building concept and design consideration had to keep costs within the 'building cost per pupil place' dictated by the Ministry of Education. The school design was influenced by the building's use, and was clean, sharp, modern and relatively economical to construct. Although there has been some subsequent modification to internal elements of the building, the external structure today looks very much as it did over 60 years ago. The three floor school was finally on its way to reality - see the following floor plans.

Origin to Opening

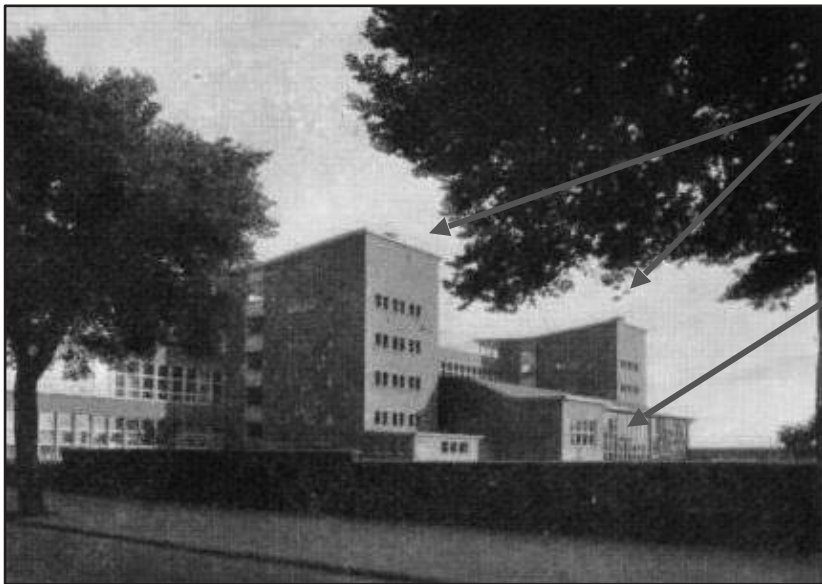


Plan of the Ground Floor of Thomas Linacre School



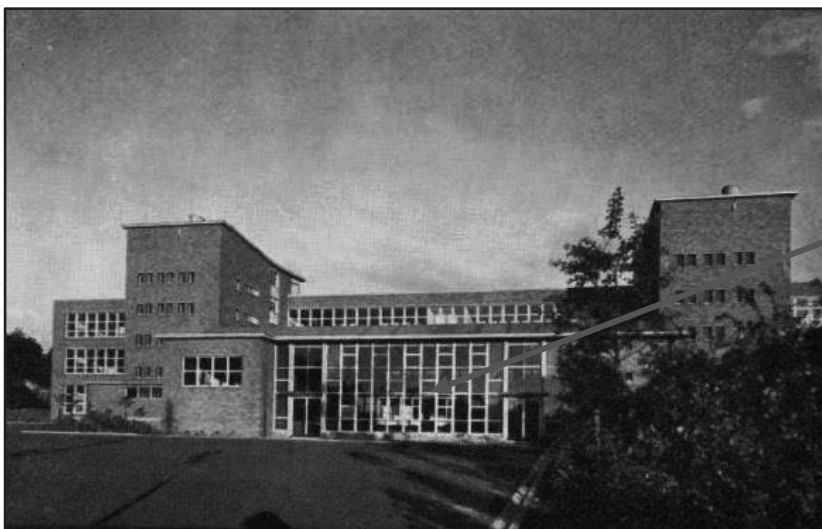
Plan of the First and Second Floors of Thomas Linacre School

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The two staircase blocks can clearly be seen on this photograph with the intervening Assembly Hall and glass wall protruding forwards between the two.

Here is the south west courtyard with the Gymnasium on the left and the workshops on the right. The clock tower of the Grammar School can be seen on the skyline to the left of the photograph emphasising the proximity of the two schools



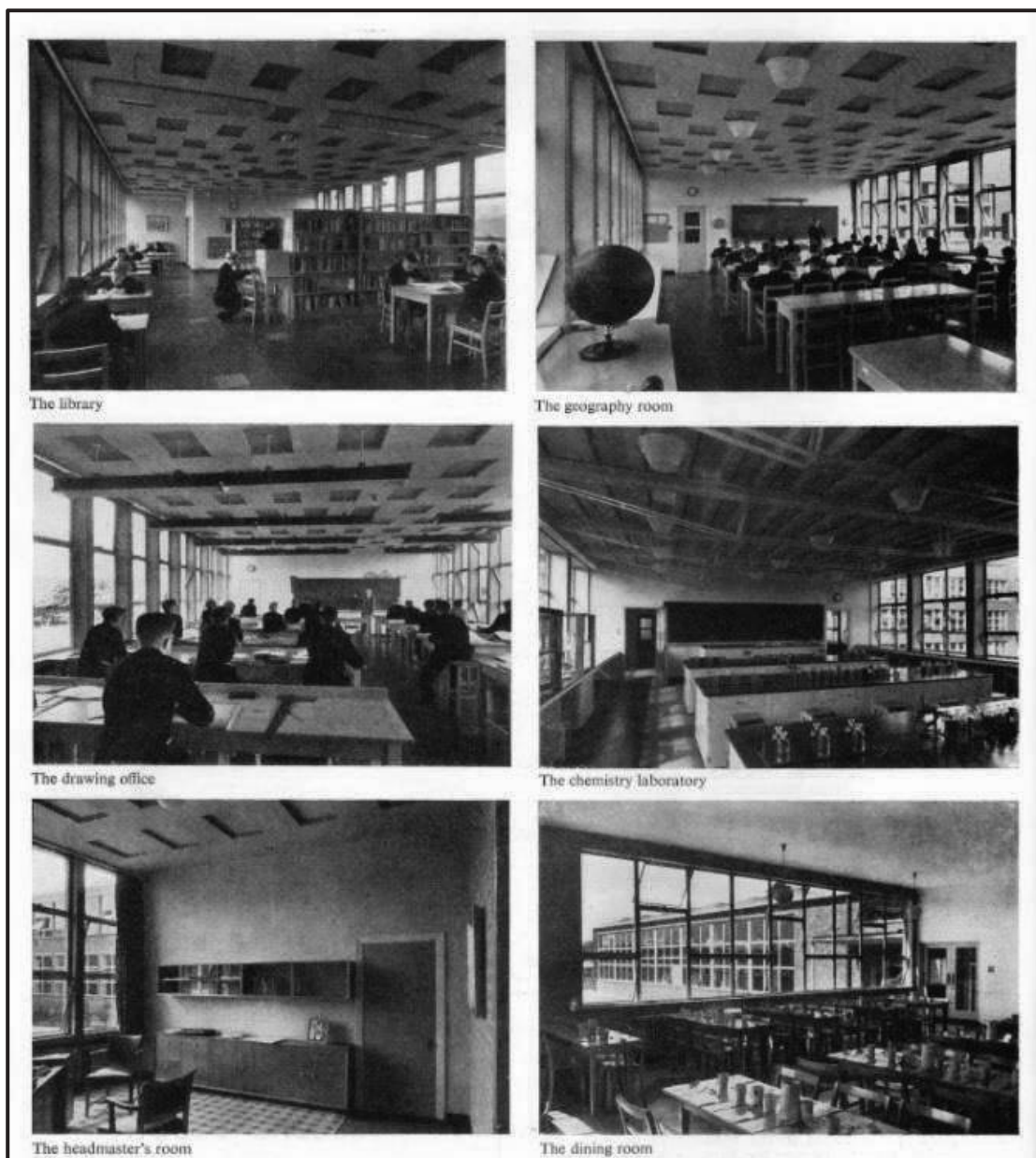
Here is a closer shot of the windowed wall of the Assembly Hall in front of the main teaching block and sandwiched between the two staircase towers.

Although this striking new building was jokingly referred to in its very early days as 'a space station, a jam factory or a light

Origin to Opening

engineering works' (Brace, 1956) it was a school structure well ahead of its time: its exterior appearance however was secondary to its internal configuration and appealing learning environment.

Below is a selection of internal photographs, taken shortly after the school opened, to illustrate the light and airy nature of its internal structure featuring the library, the geography class room, the drawing office, the chemistry laboratory, the headmaster's study and the school dining room.



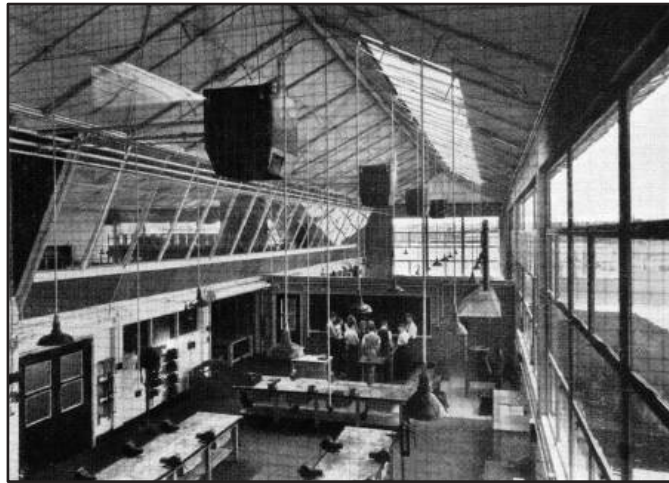
Shortly after the school opened, the head master noticed the effect of such a bright and clean leaning environment on pupil morale. He said that although the 'boys had not turned into angles', within a short time the standard and pattern of behaviour was very good - the lightness, brightness and cleanness encouraged student self-discipline.

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The Assembly Hall

Whilst most of the facilities pictured above could be found in any secondary school the workshop facilities pictured below were unique to a school focused on technical education.



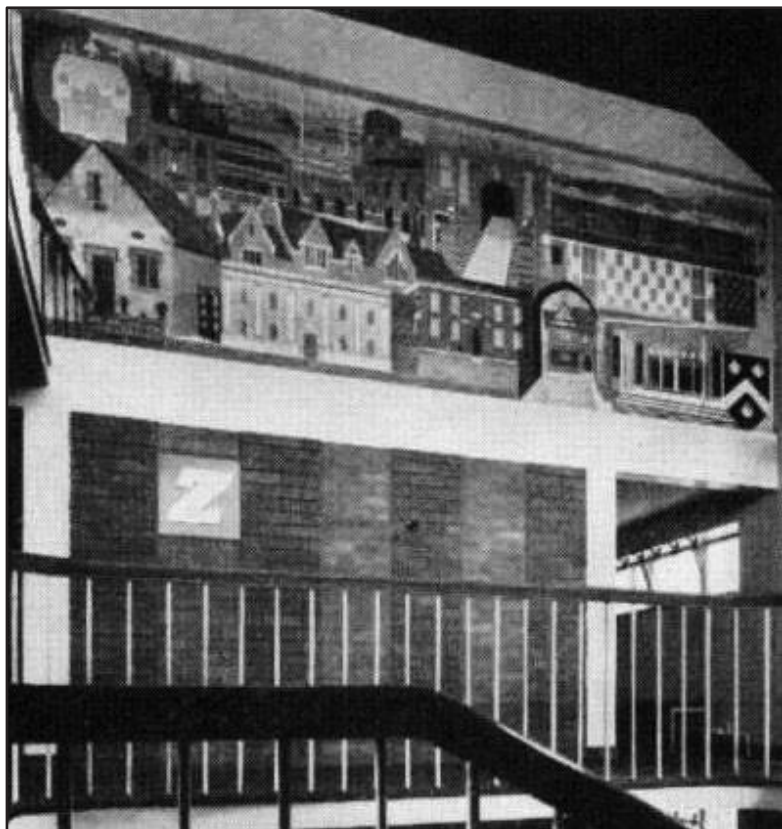
The School Metal Workshop and Viewing Gallery



The School Machine Shop

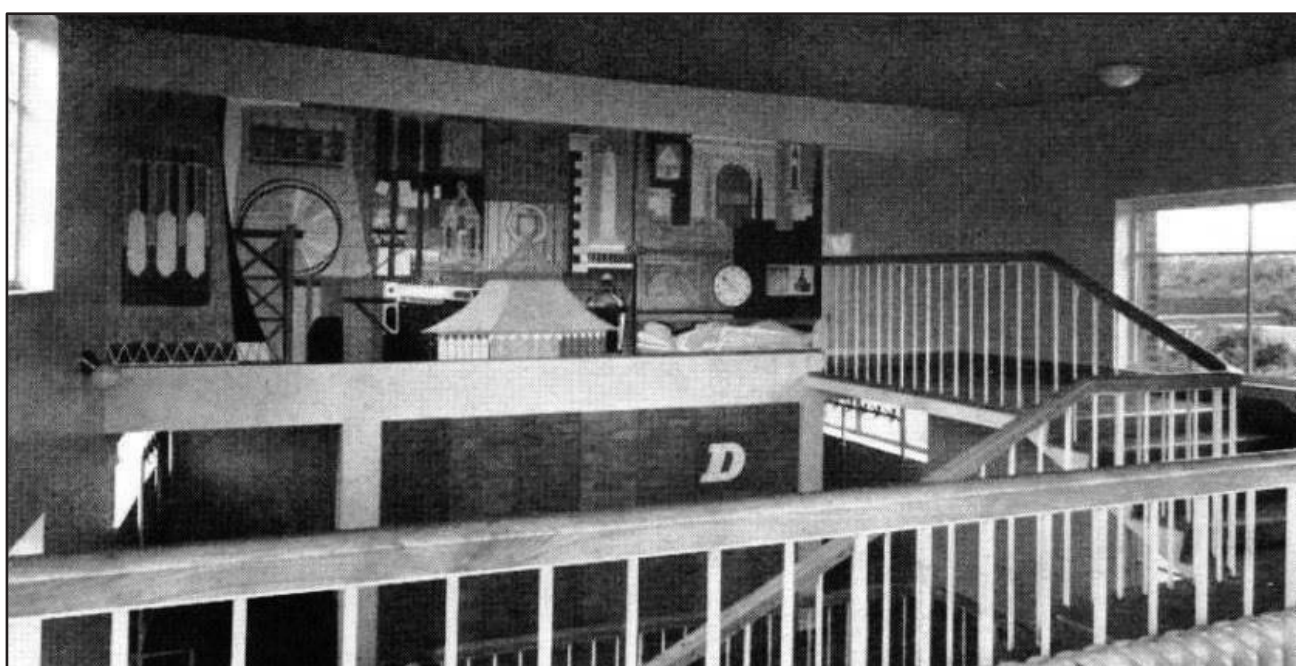
Origin to Opening

Both cost considerations and design principles precluded any significant decoration to the building, both inside and out. The one exception to this was the commissioning of Colin Giffard A.R.I.B.A. of the Bath Academy of Art to paint two large murals, one at the top of each of the two staircases. Tragically neither of these murals is any longer in existence so they are described here in some detail below.



The mural in the north west tower had a theme of the development of secondary education in Wigan and included the first National and Blue Coat School - one of the earliest schools in Wigan: an early Wigan Grammar School, the Georgian building which replaced it and the new Grammar School which stands today. There is the front entrance of the Wigan and District Mining and Technical College which for many years housed the College Secondary School. The front entrance to the Rectory, once associated with the land upon with the new building was constructed, can be seen at the bottom right next to the school's main entrance and its School Badge. See the photograph to the immediate left.

The second mural in the north east tower had both an industrial and historic them. History is focused on the right hand side and Industry on the left -see photograph below.



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A colliery winding wheel and cotton bobbins are clearly visible to the left of the mural, as is the town War Memorial in the centre, and the Parish Church clock and the thirteenth century Mab's Cross to the far right.

Given the possibility that this building may be radically altered, or even demolished at some time in the future, the original building is briefly described here. The description below is of the building as it was intended for its original use as a technical school and does not necessarily fully reflect its current use as part of Wigan and Leigh College today.

The main teaching block enjoys a south facing aspect and the main hall, laboratories, workshops, dining room and gymnasium are grouped around an entrance hall. Two flights of stairs, one at each end of the school building were designed to allow access to the upper floors with ease. At the top of the stairs a student could turn left into one class room, go straight ahead to access a second class room or turn right to access a third class room. Because nearly all class rooms were readily accessible from the two main staircases it was possible to keep corridor space to a minimum.

Eighty percent of the school's teaching space was provided in a three storey teaching block serviced by two stair wells, one at each end. Toilet and cloakroom accommodation was housed on mezzanine floors in both stair wells.

A two storey laboratory block, located at right angles to the main teaching block, housed four large laboratories with associated storage and preparation rooms. To the west of the laboratories were four workshops contained in a large square building at the rear of the school. The school was provided with two play grounds, one to the side of the school and another at the rear.

The School Name

Given that technical schools were a new innovation and had to compete with traditional grammar schools for successful 11 plus scholar entrants, finding an appropriate name for the new school was of considerable importance - further compounded in the case of Wigan where the new technical school was located immediately opposite the 356 year old grammar school. It would have been all too easy, simply to name the school 'Wigan Technical School' but this would hardly have made a national statement or stirred the interest of potential applicants.

Wigan was both eminently sensible and extremely lucky in being able to give the school a unique and prestigious name with considerable *gravitas*. The school was constructed on former church owned land, and from 1520 until his death in 1524 Thomas Linacre had held the position of Rector of Wigan. Thomas Linacre (whose biography can be found in a later section of this history) was a great educationalist of his age - holding a degree of Doctor of Medicine, having links with both Oxford and Cambridge universities, being a physician to King Henry VII and later King Henry VIII and becoming the first President of the Royal College of Physicians.

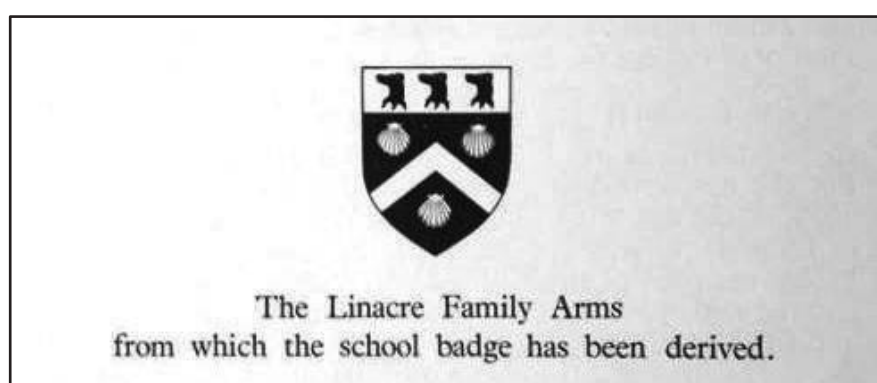
In reality, Thomas Linacre never visited Wigan, let alone lived in the town. The granting of Rectorships to important people was quite common in the sixteenth century, the receiver of the Rectorship benefiting from Glebe land income but never actually partaking of local religious life. In spite of this minor technicality, naming the school 'The Thomas Linacre School' was a master stroke of genius - a great name for a great school.

The Headmaster

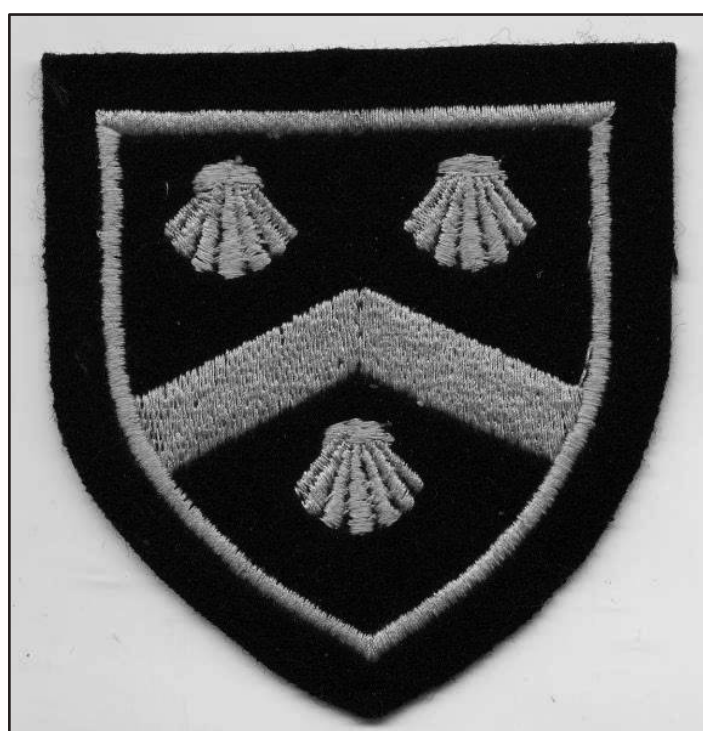
After the building and naming of a school, there comes the need to find a suitable headmaster because a school can be made or broken by the calibre of its leader. As history has subsequently shown, a good decision was made by the appointment of Mr William Sydney Brace as inaugural headmaster. Mr Brace, generally known as Bill Brace, graduated with a B.Sc. (1st Class Hons.) (London University) followed by an M.A. (Oxford University) and went on to become a school teacher. A biography of Mr Brace can be seen in a later section of this history.

The School Badge

Every good school has to have a school badge, so when Wigan Education Committee agreed to name the new technical school the 'Thomas Linacre School' it was decided that a school badge should be based on the Linacre Family Coat of Arms - See below.



A photograph of one of the original School Badges, still in its pristine condition - gold embalms on a black background - is shown below.



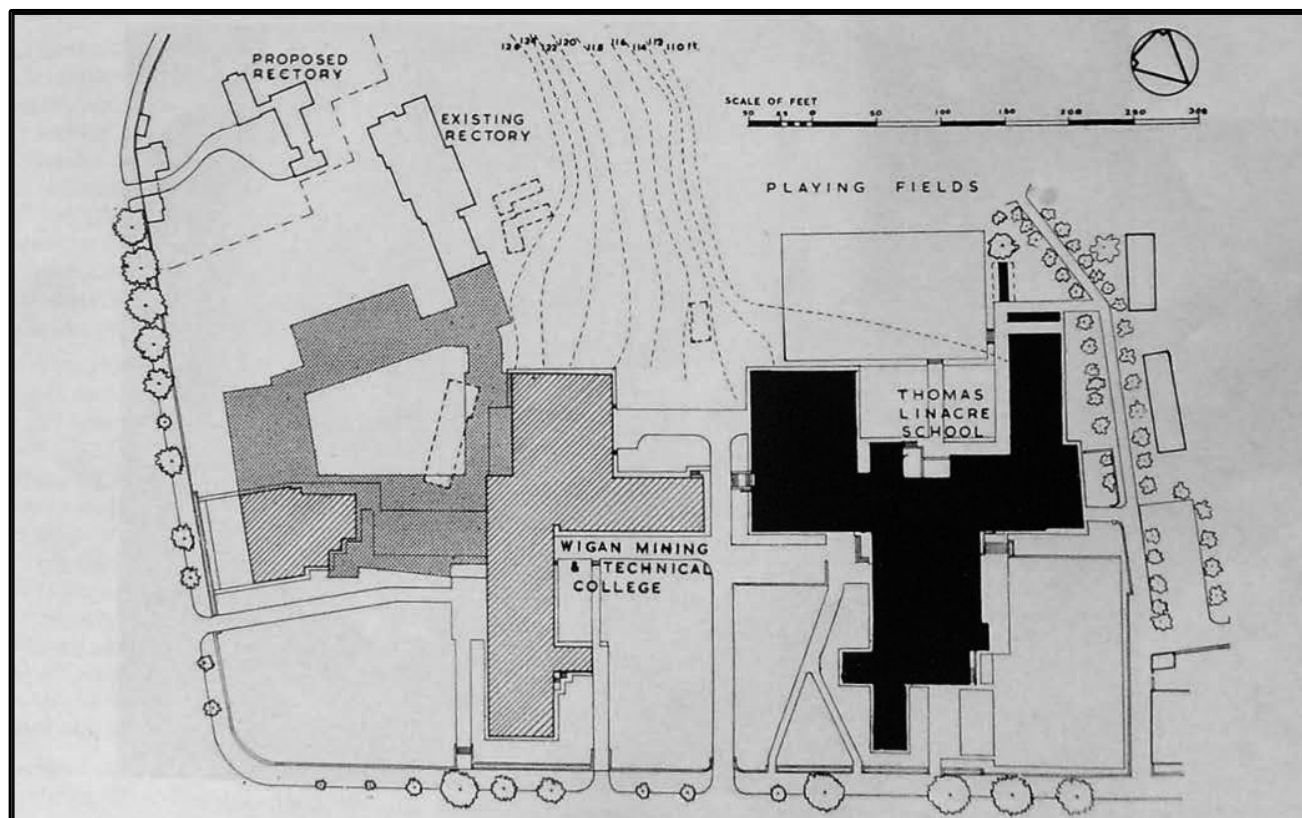
School Motto

The school adopted the Latin word '*Progrediamur*' – 'may we advance' – as its motto. In the first edition of the School Magazine published in the summer of 1954 the Headmaster had this to say about the School Motto.

HISTORICALLY THERE ARE TWO IDEAS OF EDUCATION – A LIBERAL EDUCATION AND A CRAFTSMAN'S EDUCATION; DEVELOPING THE MIND, AND TRAINING TO DO A JOB. SOMETIMES THE TWO IDEAS HAVE BEEN FUSED INTO A SINGLE SCHOOL, BUT IN THIS COUNTRY, FOR MANY YEARS THEY HAVE BEEN SEPARATED WIDELY. WE ARE TRYING (HERE) TO FUSE THEM ONCE MORE

TLS MAGAZINE 1954 P7 W. S. BRACE, HEADMASTER

With the building complete – well almost – a headmaster and staff appointed, a school name given, and a school motto accepted it was time to open its doors to its first cohort of pupils. The Official Opening and the early life of the school are presented in the following chapter.



Site Plan of Thomas Linacre School and the Technical College

Thomas Linacre Technical School, Wigan

Chapter 2

‘Invention, Innovation and Implementation 1953-54 to 1955-56’

After three years of planning, preparation, construction and staff appointments, the school was ready to open its doors to the first cohort of pupils. Headmaster Mr Brace was keen to extoll the virtues of secondary technical education, establish appropriate school rules and operational procedures and ensure the school would earn support and respect from parents and the wider community. He was insistent that although Thomas Linacre School was a technical school its curriculum would embrace a broad liberal education including such pursuits as art and music. Sports Days and school plays would all be part of the mix. During its first three years the school focused on its curriculum, planned expansion, and the development of pupil focused clubs and societies.

School begins - the First Day

The first day Thomas Linacre School opened its doors to pupils was Monday, 21st September 1953 when 409 out of a roll of 411 boys arrived at 9-05am. This was three weeks later than initially planned because of minor delays to the completion of the building. According to the Headmaster the first boy to arrive at the school was W. Bull.

The first pupil cohort comprised those boys entering secondary education for the first time plus additional pupils transferred in from the Secondary School of the Wigan and District Mining and Technical College and other secondary schools in and around Wigan.

The first pupil intake was made up of four forms at 11+ (2 forms of Wigan based pupils and two forms of county based pupils); three forms at 12+ (selected from secondary modern schools in Wigan and Lancashire); five forms at 13+ (one boy choosing to transfer from the grammar school, two of boys selected for transfer from secondary modern schools, and two boys from the secondary school of the Wigan and District Mining and Technical College); two forms at 14+ and a small group at 15+ all from Wigan Technical College Secondary School. The opening of the school was a significant town event and was covered in the Liverpool Daily Post of Friday 18th September 1953 as follows;

“THE NEW THOMAS LINACRE SECONDARY TECHNICAL SCHOOL IN PARSONS WALK, WIGAN WILL BE OPENED ON MONDAY, 21ST SEPTEMBER.....IN THREE YEARS’ TIME IT WILL ACCOMMODATE 600 BOYS, BUT THE INITIAL INTAKE WILL BE OF 400 BOYS AGED FROM ELEVEN TO SIXTEEN.....A NUMBER WILL BE TRANSFERRED FROM THE SECONDARY SCHOOL OF WIGAN AND DISTRICT MINING AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE WHICH IS BEING CLOSED DOWN AND INCORPORATED INTO THE NEW SCHOOL.....AND MANY PUPILS WILL BE TRANSFERRED FROM COUNTY SCHOOLS”

LIVERPOOL DAILY POST 18TH SEPTEMBER 1953

Even with this delayed start, four workshops, two laboratories and the Assembly Hall were at the time still unfinished. The Physics Laboratory was only ready by Monday, 28th September and the Mechanics Laboratory was brought into use on Tuesday 29th September, but the workshops were not

completed until much later. The Assembly Hall was only ready in time for the Official Opening on Tuesday, 24th November 1953. Many years later the Headmaster Mr Brace recorded his memories of the school's very first day.

FIVE MONTHS OF STEADY WORK HAD COME TO AN END. STAFF HAD BEEN APPOINTED; TEXT BOOKS, EXERCISE BOOKS, STATIONERY AND EQUIPMENT OF EVERY SORT HAD BEEN CHOSEN. TIMETABLES AND SCHEMES OF WORK HAD BEEN PREPARED. THREE WEEKS OF UNEXPECTED WAITING HAD COME TO AN END. AT LAST THE BUILDERS HAD VACATED MOST OF THE PREMISES. THE DAY HAD ARRIVED.

THERE HAD BEEN A DRESS REHEARSAL WITH THE STAFF AND A DOZEN HAND PICKED BOYS. NO ASSEMBLY HALL; NO LABORATORIES; NO WORK-SHOPS – BUT 409 BOYS. 409 BOYS WHO ROSE AS THE HEADMASTER WALKED INTO THE DINING ROOM. NOW PLANNING WOULD BE PUT TO THE TEST. NOW PRECEDENTS WOULD BE SET WHICH WOULD LAST FOR YEARS. WOULD THE SIMPLE FRAMEWORK OF RULES WORK? WOULD THE AIM OF CULTIVATING RESPONSIBILITY BY GIVING RESPONSIBILITY PROVE REALISTIC? WOULD THE NEW VENTURE SUCCEED?

PHOTOGRAPHS ABOUNDED. IT POURED WITH RAIN. STILL EVERYTHING WENT WITH ALMOST UNBELIEVABLE SMOOTHNESS.

TLS MAGAZINE 1963 W. S. BRACE HEADMASTER

The Official Opening Tuesday, 24th November 1953

The Official Opening of the school took place on Tuesday, 24th November. A most informative Commemorate Brochure was printed for this occasion and much of this account is based on information contained therein.

Chairman of the Governors - Alderman E. Maloney, Vice-Chairman - Councillor S. Taylor, the Mayor - Alderman J. Aspinall, the Ex-Mayor - Councillor T. R. Lythgoe, and Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Council and Councillor H. R. Hancock took centre stage and were joined by 34 other invited guests - the father of one of the authors of this history included.

The ceremony began with a short service of dedication conducted by the Rector of Wigan Canon F. L. M. Bennett, M.A. and ended with inaugural speeches.

The **Captain of the School** (the title Captain of the School was changed the following year to Head Boy), **H. D. Turner** presented a copy of the school's Coat of Arms to Alderman Smith, and Mr Leonard Fairclough (chief contractor for the building of the school) made a presentation to Mrs. Smith.

The Headmaster inaugurated the **Friends of Thomas Linacre School** – persons who had rendered service to the school in an outstanding way – and a distinctive tie was presented to each of the nine members. The persons who had rendered service to the school in an outstanding way were Alderman Edward Maloney J.P. Chairman, Abraham Guest J.P., Howard V Lobb C.B.E., F.R.I.B.A., G. Grenfell Baines A.R.I.B.A., Leonard Fairclough J.P., John Wilkinson A.R.I.B.A., John Ind, Reese Edwards and John Dean.

After the Opening Ceremony in the Assembly Hall a Commemorative Dinner was given in the Hall of the Grammar School. This was attended by over two hundred guests.



Thomas Linacre School Opening Ceremony 24th November 1953

The above photograph shows a packed School Assembly Hall of officials, invited guests, staff and parents on the occasion of the Official Opening on Tuesday 24th November 1953 which received a good write up in the Evening Chronicle published on 25th November.

"MAGNIFICENT AND SUPERB WERE THE ADJECTIVES USED BY THE SPEAKERS LAST NIGHT TO DESCRIBE WIGAN'S PIONEERING VENTURE IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION, THE £240,000 THOMAS LINACRE SECONDARY TECHNICAL SCHOOL.

THEY FOUND INSPIRATION, AT THE OPENING PROPER BY ALDERMAN ANDREW SMITH, CHAIRMAN OF LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL, IN THE CONTEMPORARY DESIGN AND FURNISHING OF THE ASSEMBLY HALL.

ALDERMAN EDWARD MALONEY, CHAIRMAN OF THE WIGAN BOROUGH EDUCATION COMMITTEE AND FIRST CHAIRMAN OF THE SCHOOL GOVERNORS, RESPONDING TO THE TOAST 'THE SCHOOL, ITS ARCHITECTS AND BUILDERS': SAID

"I CONSIDER THIS SCHOOL TO BE A PRODUCT OF THE AGE IN WHICH WE LIVE; WE LIVE IN A TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC AGE IN WHICH THIS COUNTRY IS FACED WITH PROBLEMS. THIS SCHOOL WILL GIVE TO THIS AREA AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEAL WITH SOME OF THE PROBLEMS."

"IF THIS COUNTRY IS TO SURVIVE AS A GREAT NATION WE SHALL NEED TO APPLY ALL THE AVAILABLE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE - AND WE SHALL NEED TRAINED PERSONNEL FOR THAT TASK. THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL IS NOT A RIVAL TO THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL - IT IS ITS PARTNER."

"I FEEL THAT A TRANSFER OF STUDENTS FROM ONE SCHOOL TO ANOTHER AT ANY STAGE IN THEIR SCHOOL CAREER IS A MUCH BETTER ARRANGEMENT THAN A HUGE SOULLESS COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL."

"WITHIN 25 YEARS WE SHALL HAVE ATOMIC ENERGY USED FOR POWER, AND INDUSTRY WILL CEASE TO DEPEND ON GEOGRAPHICAL FACTORS. A SECONDARY TECHNICAL SCHOOL AND COLLEGE OF FURTHER EDUCATION WILL HELP EQUIP US FOR THIS FUTURE"

EVENING CHRONICLE 25TH NOVEMBER 1953

Headmaster Mr William Sydney Brace

The inaugural Headmaster Mr. Brace was a most accomplished teacher. To broaden his teaching experience, he spent one year at a school in Denver, Colorado in 1950-51 before returning to the UK where he took up the position of Head of the Mathematics Department at Mexborough Grammar School. He was appointed Headmaster of Thomas Linacre School in 1953 with a view to establishing a suitable curriculum and running a school which could make its mark in secondary technical education.

Student comments on Mr Brace, remembered many decades after they had left the school, are posted on the www.wiganworld.co.uk website and make interesting reading. As one might expect from past students, their memorable impressions of their Headmaster are heavily influenced by how well behaved, or how unruly they were, during their school years.

"You didn't mess with this man. Feared and admired by everyone who attended the school. It's only in later life that you appreciate people who played a major part in your formative years."
Anonymous

"As a headmaster he was as good as it gets. I can still see him gliding into assembly, gown flowing behind him and over 500 boys falling silent. We were privileged to have him" David M.....

"This man was brilliant. He was running a Technical School yet once a week he sat down with the whole school for a (usually live) music recital. This introduction was a major influence on the development of my subsequent lifelong interest in orchestral music and subsequently opera. In addition, Bill Brace was very innovative in devising the weekly career talks for the whole school. After 5 to 7 years at TLS no pupil could say they didn't know what sort of jobs were out there for them." Graham F....

"I have painful memories of his use of the cane. We used to wait outside his office awaiting our sentence and would count the whacks applied to the unfortunate that was inside. Mr Bullock put me in detention three times in one week - this must be a record - and the result was inevitable and painful." Michael H.....

"I too have good memories of Thomas Linacre School and Bill Brace. For me the highlight was when he personally went around the entire school forcing boys to attend a school play 'A Street Car named Desire'. He came into our metalwork/engineering class and asked everyone individually what their excuse was for not buying a ticket - all excuses he scoffed at and insisted they should all attend. When he got to me and asked 'why aren't you going' I replied 'I saw it on TV a few weeks ago and thought it was junk, so if professional actors can't please me what hope do school kids have? His reply was 'you are excused for your honesty'. I had been into his office a few times, and for the most part I had a great deal of respect for him. I never had a detention all through school, probably by not breaking the 11th Commandment -Thou shalt not get caught." David S.....

"I always had the highest regard for Bill Brace. The rules at Linacre were not rocket science. Stick to the simple rules and life was good. Thanks for your personal words that I have never forgotten Mr Brace." David M.....

School Staff list for School Year 1953-54

The initial complement of teaching staff was listed in the Official Opening Brochure and this is replicated below to give an idea of the number, calibre and expertise of the initial school staff complement.

<i>THE STAFF OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL</i>		
<i>Headmaster : WILLIAM S. BRACE, M.A.(Oxon), B.Sc.(Lond.)</i>		
AUSTIN, D. E. ...	B.A., Leeds, Teacher's Diploma.	Second English Master
BROWN, I. G. ...	B.A., Manchester.	English and Geography
CHARNOCK, J. E.	Teacher's Certificate, C.G.L.I. & U.L.C.I. Certificates.	Metalwork
CLARKE, R. B. ...	B.A., Cambridge.	Senior Maths. Master
FRODSHAM, J. ...	B.Sc., London, Teacher's Certificate.	Second Maths. Master
GELLING, E. R. ...	B.A., Birmingham, Teacher's Diploma.	Senior Modern Languages Master
HILTON, H. ...	Secondary School Art Teacher's Certificate.	Art Master
INGAMELLS, P. J.	B.A., Durham, Teacher's Diploma.	Second Modern Languages Master
JAMES, H. E. ...	B.A., London, B.Sc.(Econ.), London, Diploma in Public Administration.	Senior Geography Master
JONES, H.G. ...	Handicraft Teacher's Certificate.	Woodwork Master
JONES, L. ...	Teacher's Certificate.	Maths. & Mech. Drawing
LIVESEY, G. ...	B.Sc., Liverpool, Teacher's Diploma.	Senior Chemistry Master
LOWE, J. F. G. ...	B.A., Liverpool, Teacher's Diploma.	Senior History Master
MELLING, H. J. ...	Handicraft Teacher's Certificate.	Metalwork Master
MCALLISTER, W.	Teacher's Certificate.	General Science (Temporary Appointment)
PENNINGTON, L. W. J.	B.Sc., Liverpool.	Technical Drawing (Temporary Appointment)
POTTS, A. E. ...	B.A. (Theology), Manchester, Teacher's Certificate.	Religious Instruction
RHODES, P. F. W.	Teacher's Certificate.	General Science. (Appoint- ment commences 1/1/54).
ROBINSON, R. ...	Diploma in Physical Education, Loughborough.	Physical Education Master
SHAW, E. O. ...	M.A., Sheffield, Diploma in Education.	Senior English Master
SMITH, L. W. ...	B.Sc., London, Teacher's Diploma.	Senior Physics Master
THORPE, C. R. ...	L.R.A.M., A.T.C.L.	Music Master (Part-time)
WILLINGTON, H. E.	Diploma in Woodwork & Metalwork, Loughborough.	Head of Workshops Dept.

Staff expertise covered a wide range of both traditional and technical subjects including English, Geography, History, Modern Languages, Art, Music, Religious Instruction, and Physical Education together with Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, General Science, Technical and Mechanical Drawing, Metal Work and Wood Work.

School Houses

The house system is a traditional feature of English schools; the system originating in boarding schools where students actually ate, drank and slept in individual houses. A school is divided into subunits called 'houses' and each student is allocated to one house at the time of enrolment. Houses compete with one another at sports and sometimes in other ways, thus providing a focus for group loyalty.

At its inception Thomas Linacre School was initially divided into eight houses;

Brunel, Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806 - 1859) English mechanical and civil engineer

Dalton, John Dalton (1766 - 1844) English chemist, physicist and meteorologist

Faraday, Michael Faraday (1791 - 1867) English scientist who worked on electromagnetism

Harvey, William Harvey (1578 - 1657) English physician in anatomy and physiology

Newton, Isaac Newton (1643 - 1727) English astronomer, physicist and mathematician

Rutherford, Ernest Rutherford (1871 - 1937) English physicist and father of nuclear physics

Stephenson, George Stephenson (1781 - 1848) English engineer and father of railways

Wren, Christopher Wren (1632 - 1723) English anatomist, astronomer, and physicist

As would be expected in a technical school, all the houses were named after famous scientists or engineers. These eight school houses were amalgamated into four houses at the beginning of School Year 1961-62, but these are described later in this history.

School Philosophy

The philosophy of the new school was spelt out by the headmaster many times during the first year of operation; at the time of its Official Opening in November 1953, when the School Magazine was launched in the Summer Term of the 1953-54 School Year and on the occasion of the first Speech Night held in October 1954.

Mr Brace had made it very clear at its Official Opening that Thomas Linacre School was going to be a most interesting experiment. His view was that as society was becoming more and more dependent on the applied sciences and technology for its survival, there was an urgent need for education to focus on the needs of industry. This school would provide a much needed technically trained workforce for industry and its practical applications would be an incentive for many young school boys to learn.

His view of the school was that it should offer a combined blend of liberal education permeated and inspired by twentieth century technology – training for life and training for a livelihood.

The school was to be open to all boys who had passed the 11 plus examination and had attained the age of 11, living in Wigan or its adjoining county areas. The school would offer a full seven year education program but pupils could leave after completing five years and taking the General Certificate of Education at Ordinary Level. During this five year period all pupils would follow a common program with minor variations according to their individual aptitudes, abilities and vocational interests.

The headmaster accepted that the foundations of secondary education in England comprised English, Mathematics and Science – especially the Physical Sciences. He considered English as necessary for everyone to be able to communicate their ideas clearly and concisely and to appreciate ideas

belonging to others. Mathematics and Science were seen as fundamental because they were the real bases of national technology.

Other subjects to be included within the curriculum were to be a second language with German seen as the most useful second language for science and technology; Geography being the study of the physical world, raw materials and natural phenomena; History for its analysis of interrelationships of people over time; and the Arts - Music, Drawing, Painting, Modelling and Literature so the human spirit could be inspired. Crafts and Technical Drawing were seen as necessary so that basic techniques for the manipulation of tools could be acquired and understood. Physical Education and Religious Instruction were also considered necessary attributes of the overall curriculum.

The school was equipped with laboratories, workshops and specialist rooms so pupils could continue for a full seven years and exit the school with the General Certificate of Education at Advanced Level thereby enabling pupils to go on to undertake tertiary study at university or college. Those taking the full seven year program, but not wishing to continue with university study, could become apprentices and follow courses for which their school studies would give them some advanced credit enabling them to seek membership of the Institutes of Mechanical or Electrical Engineers.

All this study was to be undertaken in a school environment where a considerable measure of reliance was to be placed on the boys themselves – there were to be no elaborate pseud-democratic arrangements and senior boys would be given opportunities to supervise and direct junior pupils. As will be seen in this history, this philosophy was the guiding principle of the school throughout its ten year existence.

The link between Education and Future Careers

As potential employment prospects were seen as central to the overall school curriculum it was deemed that ‘no boy should leave the school without having at least some idea of the kinds of job which would be open to him if he obtained the necessary qualifications’. Every week the entire school would be subject to a series of career talks from invited guests who would discuss the nature of the job and the skills required to obtain that position. During the year aeronautical experts from the English Electric Co., officials from the North West Gas Board, representatives of the National Coal Board, building contractors, and a director of education gave some of the weekly talks. In the headmaster’s first annual report he stated, “not all the talks have been entertaining but they have all been informative’.

A Careers Bureau was set up in the school and a wide selection of career booklets were located in the library, and all boys were encouraged to have close contact with the local Youth Employment Officer. School visits to various industrial facilities were also an essential part of school life; visits during the year included Irlam Steel Works and the local gas works in Wigan.

Gifts to the School

Early in the school year the school was presented with a Lectern and Bible by well wisher Mr. W. A. Atherton, which he and his wife had bought specially for the new school. The photograph on the next page shows Mr. Atherton (centre of photograph) accompanied by Headmaster Mr. Brace (left of the photograph) and Mr. Reese Edwards, Director of Education for Wigan (right of photograph) at the official presentation.



Presentation of a **lectern and bible** to the school by well wisher Mr. W. A. Atherton.

Another gift to the school of a different kind was the Timken Showcase and Portable Multiflex Flexible Drive Tool. The **Timken Showcase** was presented to the school by the manufacturers along with a range of Timken parallel roller bearings, illustrated books and diagrams on how and where these bearings are used.

The firm considered a portable Multiflex Flexible Drive Tool and a full range of tools to fit was an appropriate gift to a newly founded technical school. This machine could be taken to the job and fitted with a variety of files, grinding wheels, polishing wheels and wire brushes.

The Annual School Play

Emphasising the importance of a liberal education the school encouraged extra curricular activities from its first year of operation. A school Dramatic Group was established and performed its first play John Deighton's '**The Happiest Days of your Life**' from the 1st to 3rd April 1954. This was a school event strongly supported by the headmaster and the annual play was recorded in every headmaster's annual report for the entire life of the school.



This was a topical and hilarious farce which demanded unselfish team work by cast, stage hands, and assistance in the auditorium. According to some comments in the school magazine the intellectual content of the play was not very high but the choice of a suitable play for a boy's school with no pupils over 16 was severely limited. With an 'all boys' cast of actors the more capable actors performed the female roles. According to the local paper which published the above photograph the play amused, and the players enjoyed themselves. Congratulations to Mr Austin and all his many helpers.

Clubs and Societies

The sign of a good school is one which encourages and supports pupil centred clubs and societies. This requires interested and proactive boys and staff members willing and able to help run them. As one might expect with any first year of operation, it takes time for boys to settle in, create friends and

1953-54 to 1955-56

find common areas of interest. The Dramatic Society has been described above, a Ship Adoption Society was formed together with a school choir and a small orchestra. The only recorded club known to have run during the first year was the Fencing Club.

THE FENCING CLUB REALLY STARTED WHEN MR. INGAMELLS CAME INTO A CLASSROOM AND FOUND SOME BOYS 'FENCING' WITH RULERS. HE THEN ASKED US IF WE WERE INTERESTED IN LEARNING HOW TO FENCE PROPERLY. NATURALLY WE SAID 'YES' SO A FENCING CLUB WAS FOUNDED.

TLS MAGAZINE 1954 P17

The first Sports Day

As with any 'boys school' sport was taken very seriously and there was strong rivalry between Thomas Linacre School and the Grammar School. The annual sports were held on Mesnes Playing Field adjacent to the school on the opposite side of Parsons Walk.



The culmination of the year's sporting activities was the Annual Sports Day – the first Sports Day being held on 29th June 1954 when Mrs. E. Maloney – wife of Alderman E. Maloney (Chairman of the Governors), presented the annual trophies. The **Overall House Champion** at the first sports day was Harvey House.

The photograph on the left shows Mrs Maloney accompanied by the headmaster presenting prizes at the first sports day held in June 1954. Seen receiving the junior championship cup was master Miton who lived in Beech Hill.

Sport roundup

In football the school **under-fifteen XI** team did extremely well winning the league championship and the Area and Daily Dispatch Shield for the best football team in Lancashire. The school **first XI** team also did well considering they had only recently played together as a school team. Five of the eleven won Wigan Boys' colours. In cricket the team had played as a team for an even shorter time and put up a good performance against Chorley Grammar School.

The School Magazine

Thomas Linacre School started producing an annual School Magazine from its year of inception; the first magazine appearing in the Summer Term of 1954. It was very clear from the day of opening, that the Headmaster wanted the school magazine to provide a detailed record of the progress and activities of the school year by year. This was good thinking because these magazines have proved an invaluable historical source for the writing of this history.

Chapter 2

This is what the Headmaster had to say about the School Magazine in his opening remarks contained within in the first issue.

THE PRIMARY FUNCTION OF A SCHOOL MAGAZINE IS OF COURSE THAT IT SHALL BE A RECORD OF THE SCHOOL'S LIFE. ALL ITS MAJOR AIMS, ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS MUST BE PUT DOWN. THIS IS A NEW SCHOOL, AND ITS AIMS ARE TO A LARGE EXTENT ORIGINAL; ITS ACTIVITIES ARE NOT AS YET AS EXTENSIVE AS THOSE OF LONG-ESTABLISHED SCHOOLS BUT PROMISE TO BE MORE DIVERSE; AND ITS ACHIEVEMENTS ARE YET TO COME.

IN ADDITION, WE WANT THIS MAGAZINE TO DO ITS PART IN PRODUCING TECHNICIANS WHO HAVE WIDE INTERESTS OUTSIDE THE LABORATORY AND WORKSHOP – MEN IN WHOSE LIVES THERE IS ROOM FOR LITERATURE AS WELL AS LATHES, WHOSE INTERESTS EXTEND TO POETRY AND PAINTING AS WELL AS PLUMB-LINES AND POTENTIOMETERS.

TLS MAGAZINE 1954 P6 W. S. BRACE

1st Speech Night, 4th November 1954

The Thomas Linacre Annual School Speech Night was in some ways the single most important event in the school calendar, but every one of them (barring that of school year 1962-63) was held in the October or November following the close of the school year in July. This time lag allowed for the preparation of the Headmaster's annual report, the collection of all prizes and the processing of all prize recipients.

In this history, Speech Nights are discussed in the school year **to which they relate** and not in the school year **in which they took place**. The first Speech Night took place within School Year 1954-55 but is described here as the culmination of School Year 1953-54.

For the first Speech Night of Thomas Linacre School, Professor Alistar C. Hardy F.R.S., M.A., D.Sc., Linacre Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy, Oxford University was invited as Guest Speaker; the reason Professor Hardy was invited requiring no explanation. Because of accommodation requirements speech nights were always held in the Queens Hall, Wigan.



The photograph to the left shows G. Wilkinson (Head Boy in 1954-5 and later again in 1956-7) receiving a prize from Professor Alistar C. Hardy, at the first Annual Speech and Prize night held in the Queens Hall, Wigan.

Professor Hardy delivered a speech congratulating the school on a successful first year of operation. He went on

to say, "A school of this kind which is combining a technical training with a liberal education can do so much service in bringing back that wideness of view which marked the period of the

Renaissance". Professor Hardy ended his talk by suggesting the school should have a holiday (which was duly granted on the following day, 5th November.)

The headmaster's annual address focused on the following. The school's first year of operation had been an experimental one with a few disappointments, and he also stated that the following years would continue to be experimental. He reemphasised the objectives of the school and warned of the danger of specialisation too early in a boy's education. The school curriculum was being kept deliberately free of specialisation in its early years to ensure that no boy had any openings closed because he had opted to attend a technical school.

He pointed out that the technical school was not a trade school which focused on narrow specialised pre-apprenticeship training. The Thomas Linacre School offered a deliberately broad curriculum which in some ways differed little from a science focused stream of a grammar school but at the Thomas Linacre School there was a more definite purpose in the studies with links to a wide range of industrial and professional applications. A technical school is permeated by an atmosphere of reality.

He considered School Sport as important. The under fifteen football team headed the Wigan schools league. The under thirteen football team became the joint holders of the Lythgoe Cup and at the Wigan Schools Sports they won a shield and two cups and tied with the Grammar School.

Of the 409 pupils, just five were old enough to form a General Certificate form. All five progressed well enough to enter the GCE O' level and out of 30 entries 22 of them were successful - 73 per cent. One boy received a Ministry of Supply Engineering Apprenticeship.

School Year 1954 - 55

In September 1954 the school entered its second year of operation with increased confidence, more pupils and additional staff. School clubs and societies proliferated, school trips and outings were arranged, increasing use was made of the magnificent Assembly Hall, and its first Open Day took place in June 1955. G. F. Wilkinson was appointed Head Boy for the year.

The school was planned to ultimately accommodate around 600 boys when all school years came into operation; in its opening year approximately 400 boys were enrolled ranging from year one to year five. Pupil numbers now increased with a 1954 first year intake and the advancement of the 1953 pupil intake by one year; the school thereby extending from year one to the lower sixth. This naturally required a larger complement of teaching staff. To accommodate the extra staff, boys and classes, in November the school took over four classrooms in the John McCurdy Hall – the adjacent new technical college building.

Staff changes

One member of the school teaching staff Mr. T. Jones (Technical Drawing) left at the end of the first year to go to Widnes Technical College but six new staff joined the team,

Mr. F. Bould (Technical Drawing and Engineering)

Mr. D. W. Bulloch (Engineering)

Mr. W. D. Martindale (Mathematics and Physics)

Mr. L. C. Parry (Physical Training)

Mr. D. Pegg (German)

Mr. T. Pay (English)

The School Song

Early in the school year, it was suddenly realised that the first Speech Night (already described in the previous section) was due within a few months and no School Song had been written. Action was hastily required. The words of the song were written by the English Master Mr. D. E. Austin and the accompanying music was composed by the Music Master Mr. C. R. Thorpe.

Linacre, whose name we proudly bear,
Whose coat of arms we wear,
Beckons to us to follow in his steps
His life, fulfilled, shall light the way
We try to tread from day to day.
May we advance in strength and skill
To harness hands' and minds' united powers
And make his purpose ours.

When workshop and laboratory engage our lives at last,
In craft and trade may all our works express
A harmony of grace and usefulness.
May we perceive the germ of true success:
Our duty to the future is a debt owed to the past.

Linacre, whose name we proudly bear,
Whose coat of arms we wear,
Beckons to us to follow in his steps
In science's service we shall strive
His heritage to keep alive.
May we advance in strength and skill
To harness hands' and minds' united powers
And make his purpose ours.

The birth of the School Song was described by the Music Master many years later in the 1963 (and final) Edition of the School Magazine.

“WE NEARLY FORGOT THAT A SCHOOL SONG WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR SPEECH DAY. WITH SEVEN WEEKS TO GO, MR. AUSTIN, AN ENGLISH MASTER AT THAT TIME, TOOK IT UPON HIMSELF THE TASK OF WRITING THE WORDS AND LEFT ME WITH ABOUT FIVE WEEKS IN WHICH TO COMPOSE THE MUSIC AND TEACH THE SONG TO THE WHOLE SCHOOL. ITS FIRST PUBLIC RENDERING WAS RECEIVED WITH MIXED FEELINGS.

COMMENTS RANGED WIDELY – “TOO LONG” “TOO DIFFICULT” “AT LEAST IT’S NOT SLOPPY” EVEN “GOOD”. I KNOW THAT MR. BRACE HAD MIXED FEELINGS ABOUT IT, BUT AFTER SEVERAL HEARINGS, WHEN HE GOT TO KNOW IT BETTER AND COULD JOIN IN THE SINGING, HE TOLD ME HE WAS LIKING IT MORE AND MORE.”

TLS MAGAZINE 1963 P11 MR. C. R. THORPE MUSIC MASTER

Careers

The weekly Wednesday Morning invited Careers Talks to the entire school were continued with talks presented during the year by representatives from such organisations as the N.W. Electricity Board, Imperial Chemical Industries, British Railways and the Atomic Energy Authority. Newspaper advertisements were displayed around the school, showing those boys who were interested, a wealth of information on conditions of work and qualifications required. For boys leaving at the end of the year, a Careers Room was made available for interviews and visits were arranged for the local Youth Employment Officer to regularly attend the school.

The School Magazine

Although the school magazine was not published until the end of the school year the headmaster was keen to encourage all boys to contribute articles as the year progressed. Quite understandably the first edition of the school magazine contained numerous articles on the planning, opening and philosophy of the school curriculum which could only be written by him but from now on he wanted contributions from the boys themselves. Fewer contributions were presented than he would have liked, and he wrote this at the beginning of the 1955 School Magazine.

IF THE MAGAZINE IS TO BE A FULL RECORD OF THE SCHOOL'S ACTIVITIES, WE MUST HAVE FULL REPORTS FROM ALL HOUSES, CLUBS AND SOCIETIES. ONLY THREE HOUSES HAVE SUPPLIED ACCOUNTS OF THEIR DOINGS; POSTERITY WILL WRONGLY CONCLUDE THAT THE OTHER FIVE HAVE BEEN IDLE. WE DO BESEECH ALL SEPARATE BODIES TO EMPLOY A SECRETARY TO KEEP TRACK OF THEIR ACTIVITIES AND BE ABLE TO GIVE A CONCISE SUMMARY TO THE MAGAZINE WHEN ASKED FOR.

TLS MAGAZINE 1955 P4 W.S. BRACE

Given that much of this school history has been based on material contained within the 10 Thomas Linacre School Magazines produced by the school he was most perceptive man!

House News

Although the headmaster claimed only three of the eight School Houses presented an end of year report there were in fact four submissions.

Harvey House with Housemaster Mr. J. Lowe and House Captain H. D. Turner (1953-54 Head Boy of the school although called School Captain at the time) submitted an annual report stating how pleased the House was having been overall House Champion at the first school Sports Day and were hoping to be as equally successful in 1954-55.

Newton House with Housemaster Mr. R. B. Clarke and House Captain M. Lang planned and conducted a trip to Liverpool Docks which proved very interesting and enjoyable.

Rutherford House with Housemaster Mr. L. Smith and House Captain E. Winstanley commented that its Junior Team had been more successful than the Senior Team at sports but hoped things would improve.

Wren House with Housemaster Mr. H. G. Jones and House Captain B. A. Brooks reported that the house had been very successful at swimming.

Clubs and Societies

The number of school Clubs and Societies proliferated during its second year of operation.

Fencing Club

The fencing Club was one of the first to be established and started with the help of Mr Ingamells and Mr Robinson in the school's first year – as discussed in a previous section of this history. Six new members joined the club in 1954 and, because of the nature of the sport, membership was limited to boys in their third year or above.

Linacre Society

The Linacre Society was founded early in the year with Headmaster Mr. Brace as President and Head Boy G. F. Wilkinson as Secretary and met on Monday Evenings. It was decided that this would be a scientific society with several specialist sections – Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, and Radio. The **Astronomy Section** had Mr. James as Chairman and R. Hodge as Secretary and the group held various talks on the planets and a trip was made to Hesketh Park, Southport to inspect how to use a telescope. The **Biology Section** had S. J. Brown as Chairman and I. E. Raynor as Secretary and numerous sessions focused on pond water and life therein followed by earth worm dissection under the supervision of Mr. Rhodes. No report of the activities pertaining to the Chemistry Section were recorded but the **Radio Section** had Mr. Smith as Chairman with assistance from Mr. Martindale and P. A. Turner as Secretary. This section was lucky to have received a donation of many pieces of equipment from Mr. Rothwell who was a student teacher at the school for a time. Much time was given to dismantling and cataloguing the donated equipment.

Debating Society

The Debating Society was formed in February of this year with Mr. T. Pey as its Chairman and H. D. Turner as its Secretary. A debating society was encouraged by the school because it was considered important in facilitating expression, confidence, new interests and widened vision. The two topics debated during the year were both topical at the time. The first debate was 'That England's Colonies should be granted self-government' where the motion was carried, and the second debate was 'That the Discovery of Atomic Energy is to be regretted' where the motion was defeated.

Judo Club

The Judo Club was set up with Mr. Martindale as President and D. Lloyd as Secretary and they met on Friday evenings after 4pm. The reason and method of formation is best summed up in the TLS Magazine entry below. The highlight of this year was a trip to Manchester to see a 'black belt' in action at a Judo exhibition.

ON LEARNING THAT MR MARTINDALE HAD SOME KNOWLEDGE OF JUDO, SEVERAL OF US ASKED HIM IF HE WOULD TEACH US. MR. MARTINDALE, PERHAPS THINKING THAT TWO OR THREE LESSONS WOULD SATISFY A PASSING ENTHUSIASM (OR KNOCK OUT FOR US), AGREED TO GIVE A FEW DEMONSTRATIONS ASSISTED BY MR. PEGG. SEVERAL OF US KEPT UP OUR ENTHUSIASM BEYOND THE INITIAL DIFFICULTIES AND A JUDO CLUB WAS FORMED DURING THE LATTER PART OF THE CHRISTMAS TERM.

TLS MAGAZINE 1955 P13

Music Club

A music club was formed at the beginning of the year and met every Wednesday after school in the Assembly Hall. The Secretary of this club was J. K. Quinlan, but no name is given for its President. A malfunctioning school radiogram limited listening to, and then discussion of, various pieces of music but Mr. Pegg stepped in, and over a series of meetings discussed the evolution of piano music from the 16th Century to the present day.

Members of the club discussed the possibility of visiting Liverpool and Manchester to hear the Liverpool Philharmonic and Halle Concerts and Mr Pegg made enquiries about hiring a coach. Unfortunately, if the visits had gone ahead they would have returned to the school too late for the boys to get home by public transport and the idea went no further.

Swimming Club

The school wanted to form a swimming club in its first year and held a school Swimming Gala on 2nd July 1954 when Wren House were the swimming champions. The reason no club could be formed in the first year was due to a lack of suitable time slots at the local swimming baths for regular swimming practise. The problem was resolved by September 1954 when the Headmaster held discussions with the Wigan Baths Superintendent and a training time slot was secured for school swimming practise on Monday evenings between 6-30 and 7-30.

As a result of these negotiations a swimming club was formed in September 1954 at the beginning of the school year. At the first practise session, over 70 boys turned up – too many to be practical, but after some preliminary swimming trials numbers were reduced to a more manageable 30 to 40 boys. Tests for Certificates awarded by Wigan Education Committee were held and 9 boys were awarded certificates at Advanced Standard, 12 at Intermediate Standard and 16 at Elementary Standard.

School Scout Group

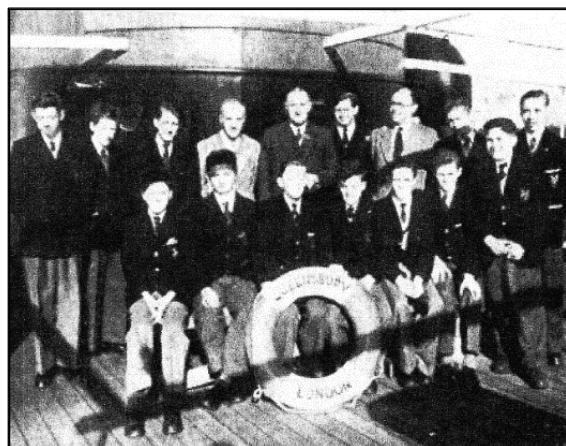
This was actually formed in June 1954 at the close of the first school year and meetings were held every Monday during the long Summer Vacation. Mr. Hilton was in charge assisted by Mr. Potts and Mr. Parry. Four Scout Patrols – Hawkes, Owls, Peewits and Seagulls were created. Membership was limited to boys who were 13 years and 6 months, so 18 months of service could be accomplished before becoming Seniors. During the year, six scouts obtained the Linguists Badge and preparations were well under way for selected scouts to obtain the Weatherman's Badge.

School Visits

Geography Expedition to Ingleton

The school was keen for boys to be taken on visits, when and where appropriate to support their studies and widen their life experiences. A successful geography expedition to the Ingleborough district of Yorkshire was led by Mr. James one very wet Friday. The coach first stopped to pick up Mr. Robinson at Chorley *en route* to the Ingleton waterfalls.

Visit to M. V. 'Queensbury'



On June 26th a small school party was invited by the owners of the 'school-adopted ship Queensbury' to visit it and her commander Captain Laidler, while in S. W. No 3 Dock at Liverpool. Mr. James and Mr. Brace accompanied the party travelling by train to Liverpool and then by the overhead electric railway to the docks. After a conducted tour of the ship, the boys were treated to a hearty shipborne meal. Back row centre Mr. H. E. Jones, Captain Laidler and Mr. W. S. Brace in the photograph to the left.

Chapter 2

The following are here identified as being the more important School events during the year

The Annual School Play

The annual school play chosen for the school's second year of operation was '**She Stoops to Conquer**' a comedy of sorts written by Oliver Goldsmith in 1773. By all accounts the English Master Mr. Austin was more enthusiastic about this play than most of its potential actors.

TO FIND ONESELF PLUNGED INTO THE STICKY BUSINESS OF A SCHOOL PLAY FOR THE FIRST TIME IS NO LIGHT MATTER. APPARENTLY, THE VOLUNTEER CORPS DID NOT SUFFICE, FOR MR AUSTIN'S METHOD OF SECURING ACTORS PENETRATED THE PREFECTS' STRONGHOLD AND UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER ENSUED. THE INHABITANTS, PROTESTING THAT MR AUSTIN HAD STOOPED TO CONQUER, FOUND THEMSELVES DOOMED TO LATE TEAS AND EARLY LINE LEARNING.

T.L.S. MAGAZINE 1955 P18 H. D. TURNER



Diligent line learning paid off and the play went well in spite of the actors being plunged into darkness by some fault of the spotlights. H. D. Turner, Head Boy the previous year wrote "On the whole the school has a right to be proud of a production which

was performed by novice actors, and proud of the hard work and efforts of all concerned, especially the stage staff and Mr Austin. The play was performed on the 9th 10th and 11th December 1954. The above photographs show both make up and performance of 'She Stoops to Conquer'.



Head Boy Addresses Wigan Rotary Club

There was much interest by the Wigan community in the technical school and in February 1955 the Head Boy G. F. Wilkinson was invited to address Wigan Rotary Club on 'My School'.

HE SAID THE PUPILS CAME FROM WIDE DISTRICTS AS FAR AWAY AS ORMSKIRK IN ONE DIRECTION, AND THE BORDERS OF ST. HELENS AND RAINFORD IN ANOTHER. THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL HE SAID WAS ONE OF THE FIRST SCHOOLS TO PROVIDE TECHNOLOGICAL TRAINING FOR BOYS OF ELEVEN YEARS AND UPWARDS. BEING A NEW VENTURE SAID THE SPEAKER, THE SCHOOL HAD NO TRADITIONS BEHIND IT, SO A HIGH STANDARD HAD TO BE SET FOR ALL FUTURE STAFF AND SCHOLARS TO CONTINUE.

WIGAN OBSERVER 25th FEBRUARY 1955

Swimming Gala 18th May 1955

With the opportunity to have weekly training sessions during the year, thanks to the agreement between the Headmaster and the local Baths Superintendent, swimming standards were very high, and the gala enjoyed a keen following. The previous House winners Wren put up a good performance, but Harvey proved to be the Overall House Champion.

The 2nd Sports Day 2nd June 1955

The second school Sports Day was held on Mesnes Sports Field on 2nd June. The outstanding event of this sports day was the running achievement of 15 year old Trevor Simms of Harvey House. He ran 100 yards in 10.5 seconds – only one-tenth of a second outside the England intermediate record for that distance. His performance was the highlight of the day and he also won the 220 yards and high jump and gained the **intermediate championship**.



Mrs Edwards, (wife of Reese Edwards the Borough Director of Education), presented the trophies accompanied by the headmaster. Needless to say, Harvey House was the **Overall House Champion**.



Photograph to the left R. R. Swift receiving a trophy and photograph to the right Trophy Winners H. Clarke, T. Simms, R. R. Swift and R. Carroll (left to right) at the second Sports Day.

First Open Day 2nd June 1955

After almost two years operation the school was now in a position to host a School Open Day where the work of the school could be viewed by the general public. This event was hosted on the night of the Sports Day and was opened by Mr. G. H. Sheldon, Managing Director of Walker Bros Ltd. of Pagefield Iron Works, Wigan and Councillor A. J. Lowe J.P. who laid the School Foundation Stone in March 1951.

This was designed to show members of the general public what went on in the school and what the boys could achieve. Various school societies and clubs each played their own part – the School Scout Troops performed on the front lawn, and the Judo and Fencing clubs put on displays in the school gymnasium.

The 2nd Speech Night

The second speech night rounded off the second school year, but as with the previous Speech Night, it was actually held early in the first term of the following school year. It was held in the Queens Hall on 26th November 1955 when the invited Guest Speaker was Lieut. Col. R. L. Willott, D.S.O., O.B.E., T.D., B.Sc., Chief Engineer of John Summers and Sons Ltd.



The rather poor picture to the left shows Headmaster Mr. Brace talking to Lieut. Col. Willmott before the proceedings. Lieut. Col. Willmott presented the prizes and addressed the gathered assembly stating his views on the need for parents to have a close interest in their children's education, and a need for boys to show preparedness for hard work and to accept responsibility once in the workforce.

Mr. Brace also addressed the audience giving a current account of the workings of the school. He was pleased to say that as of the beginning of the third year of operation, the school was now full having reached its 600-boy quota.

He was pleased to announce that the magnificent School Hall was now being used by more and more

local outside bodies including **Wigan Philharmonic Orchestra** under their conductor Clarence R Thorpe - the School's music master, and the **Wigan Youth Committee** which held their Amateur Drama Festival in the hall.

Regarding the school's curriculum and the General Certificate of Education they were flexible enough to allow boys, prepared to make the effort, to progress along numerous and diverse educational paths.

One problem the school was facing however, was the varying rates of progress made by any boy in different subjects. To resolve this issue the school planned to use the flexibility of the General Certificate of Education to allow a boy to start his Advanced Level work in some subjects a year before he completed his Ordinary Level work in others. This arrangement would be of greatest benefit to boys who stayed on at school for the full course – until they were eighteen.

He concluded his talk by suggesting that every boy should ask himself the following question, 'Am I using the opportunities which are mine for the few years that I am at the Thomas Linacre School?'

School Year 1955 - 56

In this, the third year of the school, a full complement of 600 boys had been achieved and the school was now offering all year levels up to the Upper Sixth. This required additional teaching staff and further recruitment was necessary. Innovations in earlier years were now becoming cemented into the school's yearly regime, an annual school play, an annual swimming gala, an annual sports day, an annual open day and an annual speech night. The reputation of the school was growing, and as a consequence was receiving visits from other local authorities seriously thinking of establishing technical schools in their areas along the lines of Thomas Linacre School.

The Head Boy appointed for this year was H. D. Turner who had been the head boy in the first year of the school. The head boy in the second year of the school G. F. Wilkinson was also appointed head boy in of the school in 1956 but after that no boy was appointed head boy twice.

Staff Changes

According to the School Magazine two members of staff left during this school year; Mr. J. Frodsham (joined the school on its opening as a mathematics master) left in January and Mr. D. W. Bulloch (who joined the school the previous year to teach Engineering) left at Easter. Seven new staff were appointed

Mr. J. Berry (General Science)

Mr. J. J. Dickinson B.A. (English)

Mr. J. Dolphin B.A. (Modern Languages)

Mr. T. Fawcett M.A. (Religious Instruction)

Mr. L. D. Green (Woodwork and Drawing)

Mr. E. G. McAvoy M.A. (Mathematics)

Mr. G. Riding B.Sc. (Mathematics)

Official Visits to the School

Even in the school's third year of operation its reputation was such that numerous local education authorities wanted to visit the school at first hand. An article which appeared in the local newspaper recording such visits is presented below.

THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL MAKING ITS MARK

EDUCATIONALISTS IN THE NORTH-WEST ARE BEGINNING TO TAKE NOTICE OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL, WIGAN'S HANSOM TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL IN PARSON'S WALK. LAST WEEK THE GOVERNORS OF ROCHDALE TECHNICAL SCHOOL VISITED THE SCHOOL. WITH THEM CAME THE MAYOR OF ROCHDALE.

THIS WEEK THE HEAD MASTER AND CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE TEACHING STAFF OF THE STOKE-ON-TRENT TECHNICAL SCHOOL PAID A VISIT TO THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL. APPLICATIONS FOR PERMISSION TO VISIT AND INSPECT THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL ARE BEING NOW RECEIVED FROM EDUCATIONALISTS FROM ALL OVER THE NORTH-WEST.

THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL IS ONE OF THE FEW TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS WHICH HAVE BEEN BUILT IN THIS COUNTRY SINCE THE WAR. THE SCHOOL HAS PLACES FOR BOYS OF 11 PLUS, THAT IS FOR BOYS UP TO THE AGE OF 17 OR 18.

THE WIGAN OBSERVER 10TH MARCH 1956

The Annual School Play



This year the school performed two plays end on, starting with Anton Tchekoff's one act play **The Proposal** consisting of a fast-paced play of dialogue-based action and situational humour. This was offered as a *lever du Rideau* (curtain opener).

The Proposal was mainly the work of form 3A and was an adult play performed by 13 year old boys.

Chapter 2

The school felt that greater effort could have been put into the rehearsal, but on the whole -in the words of one of the players - the play managed 'to come off'. This was followed by George Bernard Shaw's play '**Androcles and the Lion**' and the two plays were performed in the evenings of the 9th, 10th and 11th December 1955. The photograph of the main play -reproduced above - appeared in the Wigan Observer following the first night of its performance.

The settings for Androcles and the Lion were devised and then revised into an effective simplicity by Mr. Austin and Mr. Brown. As stated in the School Magazine "The production was lively enough, and such defects as it had, owing mainly to lack of experience of some of the actors, were mitigated by the enthusiasm of the large number of staff and students involved".

School Visits

School visits had been undertaken by the school from its opening year, but these early visits were local in nature and of one day duration. By the third year the school was offering more ambitious trips over an extended period of time.

Scotland Cycling Tour Summer 1955

A party of 13 boys led by Mr. James undertook a cycling holiday in North West Scotland departing Wigan by train for Fort William on 5th July. Cycling, exploring and climbing were part of the mix, some cycling round Loch Leven, some walking in Glen Coe and others climbing Ben Nevis, Britain's highest mountain with Mr. James in charge. After a few days in Fort William the party cycled to Loch Duich under blazing sun and through hosts of biting midges. Later still the party visited the Isle of Skye and the Cullin Hills. On departure the group left Fort William early morning and arrived home in the late evening after a very enjoyable holiday.

Visit to West Germany Easter 1956

An even more ambitious school trip was arranged to visit Bonn in West Germany over the Easter period 1956. Forty three boys under the supervision of Mr. Frodsham, Mr. Pegg, and Mr. Ingamells had a wonderful and informative tour around the Bonn area of Germany providing a chance for many of the boys to experience a country other than England.



Packed and ready for Germany

Club and Societies

Linacre Society

The Linacre Society had to report that it had not been as successful this year as it had in the previous year and a couple of its sections had to close through lack of student enthusiasm. The Headmaster thought this lack of interest in a scientific society somewhat surprising considering the nature of the school.

Debating Society

The Debating Society prospered well. The first debate of the year 'That England needs a Dictator' was perhaps not surprising defeated *nem con*, (unanimously). A second debate 'That the press should have absolute freedom' was also passionately debated with much wrangling over the escape of Burgess and Maclean to Russia and the embarrassing amount of publicity given to Princess Margaret and Group-Captain Peter Townsend. The voting on this issue being equal - Mr. T. Pey placed a casting vote to the proposers of the motion. In the second term the junior debate 'That Teddy Boys are a social menace and that legal action should be taken against them by the Government' was defeated by 11 votes to 9. A debate 'That corporal punishment in school should be discontinued' was carried *nem con*.

Judo Club

The Judo Club reported a year of steady progress. The initial enthusiasm of many aspirant boys hoping to toss an objectionable prefect over their shoulder with a casual flick of the wrist after just a couple of lessons was soon shattered! In the Spring Term the club visited a school in Sale whose club was coached by a 'Black Belt' and in the Summer Term a few club members visited the North-West Judo Headquarters in Manchester. The Club acknowledged the Parent-Teacher Association with thanks for a gift of £5 to be used to buy some necessary equipment.

Music Club

The Music Club reported a year of steady progress with meetings held on Wednesday afternoons and some unofficial meetings during the lunch break. Mr. D. Pegg gave some piano recitals and much discussion was devoted to the study of piano music.

Engineering Club

Some of the boys in this club spent many hours building a 3.5-inch gauge line steam model locomotive they called 'Maisie'. Although far from complete, the project was providing valuable experience in working to fine limits from blue prints.

Radio Club

The Radio Club felt that many boys were unaware that club membership was open to all boys in the school and hoped for more recruits. Regular Wednesday meetings were held at 4pm and hosted talks on such topics as 'How a Simple Radio Valve works'.

Sailing Club

The club launched a school made boat for the first time on Saturday 5th May on Pennington Flash and six members took it in turn to crew the boat with Mr. Willington at the helm. The boat was called 'Mollusc' and was the first of a proposed school fleet, the second boat off the production line to be called 'Crustacean' was due for completion and launching after Easter the following year. The boat was made in the school workshops by the boys themselves under the supervision of Mr. Jones. Mr. Sheldon, Managing Director of Walker Bros. presented sails and Mr McKnight presented some inner tubes for buoyance.

Swimming Club

The Swimming Club held meetings every Monday night from September to April at the Wigan Baths. As in the previous year, more boys wanted to join the club than was practicable to manage so membership numbers were controlled by swimming ability. Outside the September to April swimming season the club made occasional visits to Southport Baths during holidays led by Mr. Brown and Mr. Pegg.

School Scout Group



The Group held a number of camps; the first of the year being a Training Camp for Patrol Leaders. Following this was a Whit Camp and almost every week a patrol Camp. The first Summer Camp was held at Bispham Hall which included a trip to Southport Baths attended by 12 scouts and the Scout Master. During weekends and holidays there were many activities including a trip to Humphrey Head, Thurstaston Hall and Southport Sandhills. The Group entered for the Baden Powell Trophy and won it. The photograph above shows the Headmaster presenting the Baden Powell Trophy to Patrol Leader J. K Taylor.

Swimming Gala 6th June 1956



The annual school Swimming Gala was held on Wednesday 6th June at the town swimming baths. The **Overall House Champion** was Harvey House, **Senior Champion** was B. Reece, **Intermediate Champions** were A. Davies and J. R. Carroll and **Junior Champions** were A. Greenwood and G. Hindley.

Sports Day 20th June 1956

The third Annual Sports Day was held on Mesnes Playing Field on Wednesday, 20th June and Mrs. D. McConnell (wife of Mr. D. M. McConnell, General Manager of De Haveland Propellers Ltd.) was invited to present the sport trophies. The **Overall House Champion** on this Sports Day was Harvey.

2nd Open Day and Exhibition of Work 20th June 1956

Following the success of the first Open Day in 1955 a second Open Day was arranged for 1956 with the husband of Mrs. McConnell, Mr. D. M. McConnell of De Haveland Propellers Ltd. launching the Open Day and making an address.



After officially opening the Exhibition of pupils' work Mr. D. McConnell spoke about employment prospects for boys in industry and emphasised the importance of proficiency on the job and the need to enjoy what one was doing. The Exhibition attracted many people including many who had no direct connection with the school, such as was the interest in the school and the work that went on in it.

One up for the Boys

Another developing school tradition was an annual cricket match between the boys and the staff. If they 'played their cards right' this was one occasion in the year where the boys could have one over their teachers with no threat of insubordination. At the Staff versus Boys cricket match in 1956 the



boys were the winners.

Winners above and losers to the right but only as far as the cricket match is concerned.



Third Annual Speech Night 31st October 1956

The school's third Annual Speech Night was held in the Queens Hall, Wigan on 31st October 1956, some months into the following school year, but is described here as the Speech Night is seen as bringing official closure to the school year concerned.



The Guest of Honour for this Speech Night was Dr. B. V. Bowden M.A., Ph.D., M.I.E.E. Principal of Manchester College of Technology who presented the prizes and addressed the audience of boys, parents and teachers on the importance of engineers and scientists. The photograph left is of some of the boys waiting to receive prizes from Dr. Bowden.

Dr Bowden talked about the fact that science and technology were growing faster than ever before but that there was a growing shortage of technologists in

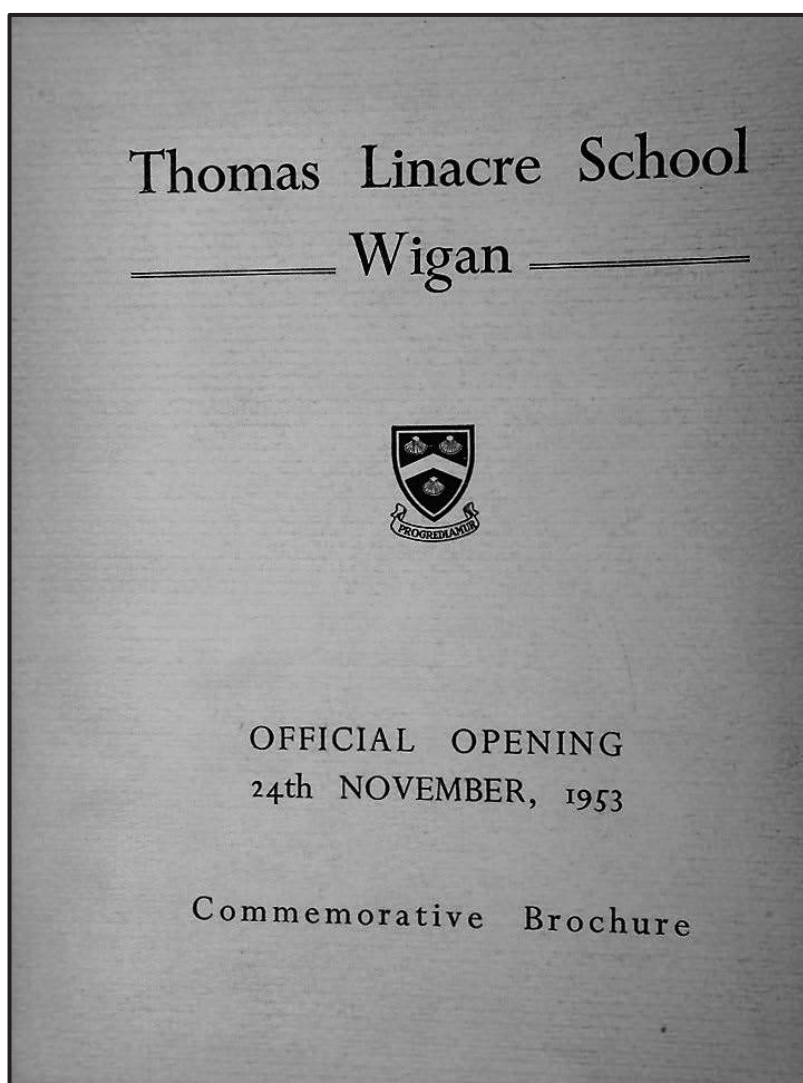
Chapter 2

the country. He stressed that boys wishing to become engineers, scientists or technologists needed to stay on at school to complete their A 'level examinations and go on to university.

In three short years Thomas Linacre School had grown from a 'plan' to a 'reality' and was already viewed as belonging to a group of top ranking schools in the district. It was attracting national attention and viewed as a leader in its field.

From an enrolment of around 400 boys and only five year levels, it had grown within three years to an enrolment of around 600 boys across seven year levels and offering a wide range of subjects at both Ordinary and Advanced level. Boys could leave the school with O'level qualifications aged 15 or 16 or with A'level qualifications at 17 or 18 and go on to higher education at either college of university.

The number and range of student clubs and societies were second to none. Most, if not all, of these extracurricular activities took place outside school hours and/or term times yet they were attended by boys and supported by their teachers – signs of a good school.



Cover of the original Official Opening Brochure

24th November 1953

Thomas Linacre Technical School, Wigan

Chapter 3

‘Consolidation and Continuation 1956-57 to 1959-60’

As the school entered its fourth year of operation it had already established a number of school ‘customs’ – an annual school play, an annual sports day, an annual swimming gala, an annual open day albeit it held in the evening of the sports day, and an annual speech night held in the early months of the following school year. These customs were to become school traditions as the school advanced, as befitted a selective entry school joining the ranks of Wigan Grammar School and Wigan Girls High School. During these years the school grew to its full complement of around 600 boys and became an icon for secondary technical education attracting numerous visits from other local education authorities keen to follow Thomas Linacre’s progress.

School Year 1956 - 57

In all schools, some members of the teaching staff leave, and others take their place from one year to next – a small but regular turnover of teaching staff helps maintain a keen and dynamic work force. The school welcomed Mr. P. F. Collins (Head of Workshops), Mr. E. S. Gale (Physical Education), Mr. G. Unsworth B.A. (English and History) and Mr. A. W. Walls A.M.I.E.D. (Engineering and Metalwork) and best wishes were given to recently departed or soon to depart staff members, Mr. D. E. Austin, Mr. J. E. Charnock, Mr. R. B. Clarke, Mr. L. C. Parry and Mr H. E. Willington.

The **Head Boy** this year was G. F. Wilkinson who had been Head Boy two years earlier in School Year 1954-55. This was the last year when a boy was chosen as Head Boy for more than one year.

Career Talks and Industry Visits

As in the opening years of the school, future career options for the boys were accorded a high priority and career talks from invited industry and technical experts remained an important weekly fixture. Whilst not all these talks were necessarily the most dynamic, others most certainly were such as the one discussed below.

THE PAIR BROUGHT WITH THEM TWO OF THEIR FIRM’S PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS LOADED ON A LORRY – TWO FORK LIFT HYDRAULICALLY OPERATED TRUCKS. AND WHEN THEY LET SOME OF THE SCHOOL’S 600 PUPILS TAKE IT IN TURNS DRIVING AND OPERATING THEM THEY BECAME TWO OF THE MOST WELCOME VISITORS THE SCHOOL BOYS HAVE HAD.

THE THOMAS LINACRE BOYS WERE CHUGGING AROUND THE SCHOOL YARD GIVING ‘FREE LIFTS’ AS THOUGH THEY WERE VETERAN TRUCK DRIVERS. THE FIRM ELECTRO HYDRAULICS (A MEMBER OF THE BIG RUBERY OWEN COMBINE) SPECIALISES IN APPRENTICE TRAINING SCHEMES AND WERE ONE OF THE FORERUNNERS IN THIS SPHERE OF ENGINEERING.

LANCASHIRE EVENING POST 16TH MAY 1957

The **School Magazine** for this year carried the following important reminder. The Headmaster emphasised the need for boys who had reached the fifth form to have a good idea of the kind of job they wanted, although surprisingly this was not always the case. He mentioned the importance of the Wednesday Morning Career Talks by invited guests and pointed out that some boys on several occasions had been allowed to visit the factory or office of certain speakers to find out more for themselves in the actual work situation. This was possible but only if the boy concerned had sought the Headmaster's permission first!

The magazine also reminded the boys that every year just before Easter the local Youth Employment Officer visited the school for a whole week. During this time every fifth form boy is interviewed about his future career options and his parents are invited to attend with him. The importance of interview technique, protocols and manners was also emphasised.

House Reports were submitted to the School Magazine with some key points reported below.

1 Brunel - House Master Mr. James

The key comment was that sporting enthusiasm by House members had declined throughout the year.

2 Dalton - House Master Mr. Livesey

The House had experienced its most successful year to date.

3 Faraday - House Master Mr. Melling

Sport wise this had been its most successful year to date in spite of failing in the Annual Swimming Gala.

4 Harvey - House Master Mr. Lowe

The House success in all fields of events was largely due to the spirit of always striving for a high standard.

5 Newton - House Master Mr. Clarke

The House had no outstanding sport successes during the year and only football appeared a popular sport. Mr. Clarke's departure at Easter had not helped.

6 Rutherford - House Master Mr. Smith

The main sporting success for this house was winning the football competition.

7 Stephenson - House Master Mr. Brown

The comment here was that the House had had a year of general failure.

8 Wren - House Master Mr. Jones

The House had enjoyed a moderate success in soccer and greater success in basketball.

Sports News in general

The school was enjoying great success and carried off every one of the four athletics trophies in the annual Wigan Schools Sports. In the Lancashire Schools' Championships 18 boys from the school were in the Wigan Team and in the All England Championships in Plymouth, Trevor Simms of the Lower 6th was runner-up in the 100 yards with a time of 10.3 seconds.

Student Club and Society Reports

Engineering Club

This club suffered when Mr. Willington left the school, and no further work was possible on the model steam engine called 'Maisie' but some progress was made on designing some drilling machines.

Judo Club

The Judo Club had another good year with a Judo Demonstration performed on Open Day. As in previous years, many new First Form members showed an interest, but most dropped out after a short while realising the sport was not as easy as it looked. Mr Martindale was thanked for his hard work and support.

Metalwork Club

This club was brought into existence during the year by Mr. Charnock on a request from boys in Forms 4A and 4B. The club started with many enthusiastic members, but numbers dropped off during the year. The most popular activity was making hand beaten copper ashtrays.

Modelling Club

This Club met every Wednesday evening after school. Their main interest was in modelling boats, but a modern crossbow was made by one member and the club helped Mr. Austin in the construction of a scale model of the school stage. Effort was being placed on construction of a School sailing dinghy, but this major project was nowhere near finished.

Swimming Club

The President and coach was Mr. Pegg. This was the best season since the club started in 1954 and its greatest memory of the year was of 'one swimming practise which had to be made in unheated water!' Outside the swimming season various trips were made to the Derby Baths in Blackpool and the Sea Bathing Lake at Southport.

Astronomical Society

This society was reformed at the beginning of the year by Mr. Dolphin who provided lectures at meetings held on Thursday evenings. The society split into four groups of around 4 or 5 boys, each focusing on 'Minor Planets' such as Mars, 'Major Planets' such as Neptune, 'the Earth and Moon system', and 'Stars and related phenomena'. Unfortunately, little practical work could be undertaken due to bad weather and a lack of equipment.

Debating Society

The Debating Society held three debates during the year all on topical issues. The first debate 'That Television is a Dope for Dopes' had its motion defeated. The second debate 'That Sir Anthony Eden's Action was Justified' had its motion carried but only by the chairman's casting vote. The third debate of the year 'That Co-Education is a Thing to be Encouraged' had its motion carried.

School Scout Group

Although neither a club nor a society, the School Scout Group was a significant school extracurricular activity. It held a Summer Camp in July 1956 located in Ross on Wye near Symon's Yat in Monmouthshire. In spite of mixed weather all participants had a great time. The Scout Group were also recipients of the Baden-Powell Trophy.

School Play

This year the annual School Play was a '**Busman's Honeymoon**' by Dorothy L. Sayers and M. St. Clare Byrne; a 3 Act detective comedy directed as usual by Mr. Austin.

Classroom Blaze

It's hot in the class room! – one incident to attract the attention of the local press during this school year was a fire which started in a school laboratory during the Spring Term. Fortunately, it did not develop into a serious fire and it was quickly extinguished by the teacher.

A CLASS OF BOYS WAS EVACUATED FROM A LABORATORY AT THE THOMAS LINACRE TECHNICAL SCHOOL, PARSON'S WALK, WIGAN TODAY WHEN A QUANTITY OF PHOSPHOROUS BLAZED UP DURING AN EXPERIMENT AND STARTED A FIRE. WHEN THE BOYS HAD LEFT THE CLASSROOM A MASTER FLUNG SAND ON THE FLAMES UNTIL THE FIRE WAS EXTINGUISHED

LANCASHIRE EVENING POST 1ST MARCH 1957

Sports Day 29th May 1957

The School's fourth Annual Sports Day was held on Mesnes Playing Fields on Wednesday, 29th May 1957 when the Invited Guest to present the Sports Trophies was Mrs. W. Somers (Mayoress of Wigan) Photograph below left.



S. Hatton won the senior high jump with 5ft. 1in. clearance – Photograph above right, - and 17 year old Trevor Simms set a scorching pace for the open 100 yards and broke one-fifth of a second off his previous best, achieving the 100 yards in 10.3 seconds. This record was set in spite of developing cartilage trouble just one month earlier. The **Overall House Champion** was Harvey House.

3rd School Open Day 29th May 1957

The third School Open Day was Officially Opened by Councillor O. Somers J.P., Mayor of Wigan. The Open Day was very successful with 2000 people going through the school during the evening. The Judo Club put on a Judo Demonstration and numerous works, made or undertaken by the boys, were on display.

School Swimming Gala 5th June 1957



The school held its annual Swimming Gala at Wigan Public Baths on Wednesday 5th June 1957 and the photograph to the left shows some of the lucky winners.

The **Overall House Champion** was Harvey House, the **Senior Champion** was Faraday House, the **Intermediate Champion** was Rutherford House and the **Junior Champion** was Newton House.

4th Annual Speech Night, 31st October 1957

The School's fourth Annual Speech Night took place at the Queens Hall on Thursday 31st October which, as was customary, took place some months into the following school year. The invited Guest of Honour for this Speech Night was Mr. John McDonald, M.A. Staff Director, North West Divisional Board of the National Coal Board.



The Photograph to the left shows the Mayor of Wigan (Oliver Somers) seated, chatting with principal speaker of the evening Mr John McDonald (left), Alderman Maloney (second left) Mr Brace Headmaster (right) and Deputy Town Clerk Mr Craik (second right),

The guest speaker at this Annual Speech night should have been Sir Leonard Owen, the Managing Director of the Industrial Group of the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority. Unfortunately, he had to cancel the engagement because of his involvement in the Windscale Atomic Energy Plant Accident Investigation - hence Mr. John McDonald of the National Coal Board presided instead.

Mr. McDonald told his audience that coal was very important to Britain and would remain so for many years to come. He went on to say that Britain was a long way behind in the battle to produce more technicians. In 1954 2,800 university graduates entered one vital branch of industry – engineering – but in America that figure was 22,000 and in Russia that figure was 60,000. He ended his speech by commending the work of the School.

'THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL IS GOING FROM STRENGTH TO STRENGTH IN THIS DIRECTION' SAID MR, McDONALD. BUT THE WHOLE OUTLOOK ON TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN THIS COUNTRY WILL HAVE TO CHANGE BEFORE THE CHALLENGE OF THE LARGER COUNTRIES CAN BE MET. IT WOULD BE A VERY GOOD THING IF MORE TOWNS IN BRITAIN SHOWED THE SAME ATTITUDE TO THE PROBLEM AS DOES WIGAN.
WIGAN OBSERVER 25TH OCTOBER 1957

The Headmaster presented his annual address and stated that the school, in conjunction with Wigan and District Mining and Technical College, had devised a special course to give a flying start to boys who were to take up engineering apprenticeships, a unique scheme which would mean a real alternative to a full-time university degree course.

School Year 1957 – 58

The following staff were welcomed by the Headmaster in the opening section of the School Magazine for this year; Mr. E Bibby A.M.I. Mech. E. (Drawing), Mr. E. C. Colley M.A. (Oxen) (History), Mr. W. R. Day M.Sc. (Mathematics), Mr. N. Fleming (Woodwork), Mr. T. S. Hall B.Sc. (Mathematics), Mr. J. W. Holt (Metalwork), Mr. R. R. Lang B.A. (English) and Mr G. Leigh M.A. (German).

Best wishes were also given to recently departed staff members; Mr. F. Bould (Technical Drawing and Engineering), Mr. J. Dolphin (Modern Languages), Mr E. S. Gale (Physical Education), Mr. L. D. Green (Woodwork and Drawing), Mr H. Jones (Woodwork), Mr. J. F. G. Lowe (History) and Mr. G. Riding (Mathematics). This was an almost equal balance of losses and gains as one might expect at this stage of the school's development.

The **Head Boy** for this school year was D. G. Mulligan.

Music Recitals

A new development for the school in this year was the introduction of weekly Music Recitals. Mr Brace the Headmaster suggested to Mr. Thorpe the Music Master that there should be weekly music recitals, and these proved very successful. In spite of a heavy schedule the Headmaster always tried to attend these sessions whenever time permitted.

Outside Recognition for the School

The Headmaster was appointed a member of the Technical Subjects Panel of the Secondary Schools Examinations Council during this year, further reinforcing the good standing and reputation of the school and Mr. Hilton was congratulated for being appointed Wigan and District Scoutmaster.

Some Past Boys' Successes

Now in its fifth year of operation, an increasing number of its senior boys were leaving for university places. The following boys were mentioned in the School Magazine, B. Braddock (Manchester College of Technology), S. Brown (Liverpool University – School of Medicine), C. Harding and R. Heaton (Hull University College - Mathematics Department), I. Moss (Durham University – School of Architecture), and J. Parkinson (Liverpool University – Chemistry Department).

Other boys perusing a different post school pathway were; R. Harrison, D. Lloyd and G. Wilkinson (Student Apprentices, at English Electric), N. M. Lowe (Student Apprentice at Central Electricity Authority), and N. Roughley (Student Apprentice at Turner Bros., Ltd.).

Another old boy, J. A. Clough was named Apprentice of the Year at the Vulcan Foundry.

School Magazine editorial comments

During this school year the Headmaster spent time looking over recent School developments. Whilst he was pleased with its academic progress and sporting success, and the number of extracurricular clubs and societies which had proliferated in the opening years, he accepted that not all initiatives had proved successful. For instance, towards the end of this year he had to admit that the Aero-modelling Club, the Fencing Club, the Metalwork Club, and the Modelling Club, together with the Debating Society, the Music Society and the Linacre Society had come and gone (albeit that some of these were reborn in later years). Some waxing and waning of school clubs is always inevitable given that different cohorts of pupils have different passions and interests and teachers leave and have to be replaced by others but the demise of so many was a disappointment.

LOOKING THROUGH PAST MAGAZINES AND COMPARING THEM WITH THIS EDITION, IT SEEMS DIFFICULT TO FIND A CONTINUOUS PATTERN IN SOME OF OUR ACTIVITIES. ACADEMICALLY, A PATTERN IN BEING SET; IN SPORT WE ARE CONTINUALLY ACTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL; A NUMBER OF SOCIETIES ARE CLEARLY ESTABLISHED, AND SOME ARE VERY SUCCESSFUL. BUT WE HAVE SEEN THE BIRTH AND QUICK DEATH OF THE MODELLING CLUB, THE LINACRE SOCIETY, THE DEBATING SOCIETY, THE MUSIC SOCIETY, THE FENCING CLUB, THE METALWORK CLUB AND THE AERO-MODELLING CLUB. NOR IS THERE IN THIS EDITION, A REPORT FROM EITHER THE SAILING CLUB OR THE ASTRONOMICAL CLUB. WE ALSO NOTE WITH REGRET THE DISBANDING OF THE SCHOOL SCOUT TROOP, WHOSE RECORD WAS VERY GOOD. SOME OF THESE CLUBS HAVE LAPSED FROM LACK OF INTEREST, OTHERS FROM CHANGE OF STAFF.

SCHOOL MAGAZINE, THE EDITOR 1957

National Discussion

The Headmaster also pointed out that secondary education was in the news with national debate on the merits or otherwise of Comprehensive schools, Multilateral schools, Bilateral schools, and Tripartite schools; all having their eager supporters and active detractors. Much of this debate focused on the merits or otherwise of national 11 plus examinations - "To select or not to select; that is the question". Little change was in the air, but these were early days! stated the Headmaster.

Death of a pupil

History covers good as well as bad news. Roy Crookall, a pupil of Thomas Linacre School from October 1954 died during this school year and his death was duly reported in the School Magazine.

ROY CROOKALL CAME TO THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL IN OCTOBER 1954, AND SINCE 1955 HE HAD SUFFERED LONG PERIODS OF ILLNESS, WHICH HE BORE PATIENTLY. IN SPITE OF HIS FREQUENT AND LONG ABSENCES, HIS STANDARD OF WORK AND WILL TO SUCCEED NEVER DIMINISHED WHEN HE RETURNED TO US.

HE WAS A QUIET, STUDIOUS BOY WHO COULD ONLY HAVE BROUGHT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF AND HIS SCHOOL, AND HIS CALM COURAGE AND DETERMINATION WERE AN EXAMPLE TO ALL WHO KNEW HIM. TO HIS PARENTS AND FAMILY, WE EXTEND OUR MOST SINCERE SYMPATHY IN THEIR SAD LOSS.

SCHOOL MAGAZINE 1957

House Reports were submitted to the School Magazine with some key points reported below.

1 Brunel - House Master Mr. Smith

This was classed as not a particularly successful year for the house.

2 Dalton - House Master Mr. Livesey

The house had a most successful year with the only disappointing event being the Annual Swimming Gala.

3 Faraday - House Master Mr. McAvoy

This had been their most successful year as they gained first, second, third and fourth places in various sports.

4 Harvey - House Master Mr. Rhodes

Thanks was conveyed to the previous House Master Mr. J. F. G. Lowe who was House Master since the beginning of the school. In sport this was one of their most successful years.

5 Newton - House Master Mr. Day

In Senior Football the House had no success, but the Junior Football team was much more successful. Overall it was a disappointing year following the loss of its best athletes.

6 Rutherford - House Master Mr. James

The House gained very little honour this year owing to a general lack of interest.

7 Stephenson - House Master Mr. Brown

This was one of the of the most memorable years in the history of the House with members having shown enthusiasm and ability in athletics and football.

8 Wren - House Master Mr Jones (who left the school later in the year)

The House lost three very capable sport minded boys Lloyd, Braddock and Heaton.

Student Club and Society Reports

Reports were submitted to the School Magazine from the following clubs and societies.

Chess Club

Great interest was shown in the Chess Club under the captaincy of Leonard Dissado. The Club had no problem creating a good team of seniors capable of matching rival chess clubs belonging to local grammar schools in the area.

Engineering Club

The Engineering Club met for about two hours on Tuesday evenings under the supervision of Mr. P. F. Collins. All members of this Club were referred to 'a famous book by a well-known author' which of course was written by Mr. P. F. Collins himself. The first of the club-built steam engines was not expected to be ready until the end of the summer term.

Judo Club

The Judo Club had around 12 members of whom four had been accepted into the Amateur Judo Association. In April club members paid a visit to Pilkington's Judo Club in St. Helens.

Radio Club

The Radio Club experienced an increase in its activities during the year, and although not large, enjoyed a keen and capable membership. The Club met every Wednesday in the Physics Laboratory under the helpful guidance of Mr. Smith. Earlier in the year members of this club were responsible for setting up and operating the amplifier system on Sports Day which lent a professional air to the proceedings. Many wirelesses were made by its members.

Swimming Club

The Headmaster was a strong supporter of swimming and was the Club President. The 1957-58 season was the most successful in the history of the Swimming Gala to that date. During the summer months the club members made visits to the Derby Baths in Blackpool and the Open-air Pool at Southport.

The Socratic Society Christmas Social

This proved most successful. There were a few complaints from the invited girls present because they somewhat outnumbered the boys, but a good time was had by almost all. Dancing music was provided by Mr. Hilton and a few of his friends and Mr. Talbot's skiffle group proved most popular. Mr. Day kindly provided and organised the necessary catering. Thanks was conveyed to Mr. Brace and Mr Fawcett, and Mr Leonard for replacing the chairs and cleaning and the Assembly Hall after the function.

Scout Notes

Unfortunately, the School Scout Troop officially ceased to exist on 31st March 1958 after a short but lively and distinguished existence of four years. Various circumstances and technical difficulties had made running the School Scout Troop increasingly difficult. New recruits were lacking, and existing scouts were preferring to choose Scout Troops located nearer their homes. In spite of the School Scout Troop's demise, scouting activity continued and general courses were still run for badges and general training.

Annual School Play

The Annual School Play for this year was '**The Government Inspector**' by Nikolai V Gogol and was performed on 11th, 12th and 13th December 1957.



This is a satirical play written in 1836 based upon an anecdote allegedly recounted to Gogol by Pushkin and is a comedy of errors satirizing human greed, stupidity, and the extensive political corruption of Imperial Russia.

It was performed by a cast of 22 boys under the capable direction of Mr. Brown. A comment in the School Magazine stated 'this was some school production involving not only 22 school boy players but assistance from 12 staff; Mr. Robinson, Mr. Lowe, Mr. Smith, Mr. Pey, Mr. Hilton, Mr. Jones, Mr. Colley, Mr.

Walls, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Pegg, Mr. Unsworth, and Mr. McAvoy!

Newspaper Statement by the Headmaster in December 1957

The Headmaster was always quick to defend the school and publicise its qualities – as can be seen from this statement below he wrote in December 1957.

THIS SCHOOL OPENED AS A TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 1953 IN A COMPLETELY NEW BUILDING ENTIRELY SEPARATE FROM A TECHNICAL COLLEGE. IT IS TREATED BY THE LOCAL AUTHORITY IN EVERY WAY ON EQUALITY WITH WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND WIGAN GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL. WE NOW HAVE A SIXTH FORM OF OVER FIFTY. LAST YEAR WE PRESENTED FIFTEEN BOYS FOR G.C.E. A LEVEL AND THESE BOYS BETWEEN THEM SECURED 32 PASSES IN EIGHT DIFFERENT SUBJECTS. EIGHTEEN SUBJECTS WERE TAKEN AT O LEVEL.

OF THE 15 WHO TOOK G.C.E. A LEVEL LAST SUMMER SIX HAVE NOW PROCEEDED TO UNIVERSITIES, FIVE HAVE PROFESSIONAL APPRENTICESHIPS, THREE AWAIT ENTRY TO TRAINING COLLEGES AND ONE HAS RETURNED FOR A THIRD YEAR IN THE SIXTH FORM.

FROM THESE FIGURES GIVEN IT WILL BE CLEAR THAT THOUGH THIS SCHOOL WAS A NEW SCHOOL WHEN OPENED IN 1953, ITS INITIAL INTAKE INCLUDED A LARGE NUMBER OF BOYS DRAWN FROM VARIOUS SOURCES AND ABOVE THE NORMAL AGE OF ENTRY, WHICH IS OF COURSE 11 PLUS. THE WAY IN WHICH MANY OF THESE BOYS HAVE MADE GOOD AND PROFITED FROM COURSES WITH SOME TECHNICAL BIAS WHICH WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO OFFER INDICATES THE VALUE OF THE NEW TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOLS IN ASSISTING THE BETTER DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION'S TALENT.

TECHNOLOGY DECEMBER 1957

Extra-terrestrial Hoax hits the School in Inter-National Geophysical Year

A newspaper article of a different nature in the local press followed a spectacular student prank orchestrated by some Thomas Linacre boys in Inter-National Geophysical Year 1957-58.

YOUNG BOFFINS AT WIGAN'S THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL HAVE ASKED WIGAN POLICE "PLEASE MAY WE HAVE OUR HOAX BACK?"

THEY'D LIKE THE RETURN OF A PASTEL COLOURED BALLOON, A TIN CAN, PING PONG BALLS, A PROPELLER AND - A MUSICAL BOX – WHICH TOOK IN EVERYONE WHO SAW IT. SAID INSPECTOR SHARPLES "WE'VE DESTROYED IT, BUT WE APPRECIATED THE JOKE.

IT WAS A GREAT MOMENT FOR 18 YEAR OLD PREFECT JOHN ELAND AND HIS ASSOCIATES WHEN A JUNIOR FOUND THE CAREFULLY PLANTED 'SPACE VISITOR' ON THE LAWN OUTSIDE THE ENGINEERING WORKSHOPS.

GRAHAM LOWTON (14) OF RED ROCK TOOK IT TO THE HEADMASTER MR. W. S. BRACE. HE SAID TODAY; "IT WAS A LARGE BALLOON WITH A CANISTER ATTACHED AND OTHER FITMENTS. ON THE CANISTER WAS A LABEL WHICH SAID; 'INTERNATIONAL GEOPHYSICAL YEAR – PLEASE TAKE TO THE NEAREST POLICE STATION'. I TOLD THE BOY WHO FOUND IT TO TAKE IT.

GRAHAM SAID; "I TOOK IT TO THE POLICE STATION. THEY WERE VERY INTERESTED. THEY TOOK MY NAME AND ADDRESS AND EXAMINED IT".

THE POLICE CONTINUED TO BE IMPRESSED – UNTIL THEY OPENED THE CANISTER. AND WHEN THE SPUTNIK PLAYED A TUNE THEY REALISED THEY'D BEEN HAD.

EVENING CHRONICLE 6TH MARCH 1958

School Visits

During the year two local visits were made, one to Wigan Magistrates Court and one to the Police Headquarters accompanied by Mr Fawcett. These were recorded in the School magazine. Local trips were interesting but the **School Trip to Switzerland over Easter 1958** was the highlight of the year.



Mr. Brown and Mr. Pegg accompanied 32 boys on a journey of a life time departing Wigan on 31st March at 10pm and returning to the school on 11th April around midnight.

An indication of how the participating boys felt about their school trip experience was expressed in the School Magazine.

IT IS OFTEN IN RETROSPECT THAT WE REALLY BEGIN TO APPRECIATE HOW MUCH WE HAVE SEEN AND ACCOMPLISHED. THE SWISS TRIP FOR ME, AND I FEEL I CAN SPEAK ON BEHALF OF US ALL, WAS A RICH AND HAPPY EXPERIENCE WHICH HAS WHETTED MY APPETITE FOR FURTHER CONTINENTAL TRAVEL. WE ARE ALL MOST GRATEFUL TO MR. BROWN AND MR. PEGG FOR PROVIDING SUCH A MEMORABLE AND HAPPY HOLIDAY EXPERIENCE.
DAVID E. HASELDEN, 4A SCHOOL MAGAZINE 1958 P35

School Swimming Gala 4th June 1958

The Swimming Gala for 1958 was held at Wigan Swimming Baths on 4th June. The **Overall House Champion** was Newton, the **Senior winner** was Faraday, the **Intermediate winner** was Newton and the **Junior winner** was Dalton.

School Sports Day 11th June 1958

As in previous years, the annual Sports Day was held on Mesnes Playing Fields but on this occasion the Headmaster, rather than an invited guest, presented the Trophies to the various winners. The **Overall Champion** was Dalton House, the **Open Class** was won by Stephenson House, **Class A** was won by Dalton House, and **Class B** was won by Stephenson House.

Annual Open Day 11th June 1958

The Annual Open Day was opened this year by Mr O. C. Lace and, as in previous years, the evening was most successful. Displays of student work and student demonstrations were viewed and appreciated by the many visitors who attended – parents, friends and members of the general public.

Fifth Annual Speech Night 2nd October 1958

The fifth Annual Speech Night was held in the Queens Hall on 2nd October, the invited Guest of Honour being Sir Leonard Owen C.B.E., M.I.C.E., M.I.Mech.E., M.I.Chem.E., Managing Director United Kingdom Atomic Energy Group. Sir Leonard should have been the guest speaker the year



before but for the Windscale Atomic Energy Plant nuclear accident.

Sir Leonard Own made a speech focusing on the challenges facing modern society and pointing out that science was only just starting to prove the real mysteries of nature. This was an exciting time and young people should be prepared to play their part.

In his address, Headmaster Mr Brace said Thomas Linacre School was one of the new schools intended to help bridge the gap between scientific theory and practise. He also said in his opening address, with a wry smile, that he had received an anonymous message earlier in the day pleading that he be brief and to the point.

THERE WAS A RED FACED BOY AT THE ANNUAL SPEECH NIGHT. SOMEONE IN THE SECOND FORM BLUSHED AS THE HEAD SPOKE – MR. W. S. BRACE – SPOKE ABOUT A MESSAGE HE HAD RECEIVED. THE HEAD DIDN'T GIVE THE NAME – BUT HE SAID – “I RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM ONE OF THE SECOND FORMERS ASKING THAT MY REMARKS SHOULD BE BRIEF TO DAY.”

EVENING CHRONICLE 23RD OCTOBER 1958

On a more serious note he also pointed out that the country was currently in a transition period with many plans afoot for the reorganisation of Secondary Education. A Royal Commission was trying to determine the form in which secondary education should take for pupils between the ages of 13 and 18 during the next decade.

“Many plans for reorganising the pattern of secondary education were being tried and more are being advance: Comprehensive Schools, Bilateral Schools of various types, Multilateral schools, a common Secondary school to 14 followed by a High School open to all.”
(A portent of things to come?)

School Year 1958 - 59

Boys who joined the school in 1953 and systematically proceeded to the Upper Sixth left at the end of this year. This was not the first cohort of Upper Sixth boys to leave because some older boys had entered the school in years higher than Form One, but this was nevertheless another school milestone. This year saw the small beginnings of an Old Boys Association.

The **Head Boy** for this school year was J. A. Coote.

Some of the boys who joined the school in more senior years than Form One had completed the Upper Sixth and moved on. The School Magazine made note of the following boys who had

successfully moved on to university studies; B. Leather and D. G. Milligan to study History at Leeds University, B. Reese to study Engineering at Manchester College of Technology and P. A. Turner to study Mechanical Engineering at Imperial College of Technology, London University.

The following staff were welcomed by the Headmaster in the opening section of the School Magazine for this year; Mr. D. W. Gapes M.A. (Geography), Mr. F. Harrison B.Sc. (Mathematics), Mr. J. A. McNamee (Metalwork), Mr. E. McPherson (Metalwork), Mr. W. Riding (Drawing), Mr. J. Sutcliffe (Mathematics), and Mr. T. A. Turner B.A. (English).

Best wishes were also given to recently departed staff members; Mr. E. Bibby (Drawing), Mr. J. J. Dickinson (English), Mr. J. S. Hall (Mathematics), Mr. Holt J. W. (Metalwork), Mr. H. E. James (Geography), Mr. E. G. McAvoy (Mathematics) and Mr. A. W. Walls (Engineering and Metalwork).

Music Recitals

This was the second year of weekly School Music Recitals with 27 reported in the School Magazine. These recitals varied from week to week with the following illustrating their nature and substance;

- Piano playing Hungarian Rhapsody No. 14 by Liszt
- Viola, Clarinet and Piano played by Mr. Holt, Mr. Hilton and Mr. Thorpe – ‘Trio in E flat’ by Mozart
- The School Band playing ‘Washington March’ by Sousa, and
- Dramatic Reading of ‘The Holiday’ by Dylan Thomas spoken by Mr. Brown.

House Reports were submitted to the School Magazine with some key points reported below.

1 Brunel House Master Mr. Gapes

The House did not do well in sport this year.

2 Dalton House Master Mr. Livesey

A year of outstanding success due undoubtedly to the fine team spirit that existed in the House.

3 Faraday House Master Mr. Ingamells

The House had concern that many capable boys had left for university or to enter industry.

4 Harvey House Master Mr. Rhodes

It was noted that despite the loss of their best all-round athletes, the House was able to give a reasonable account of themselves over the year.

5 Newton House Master Mr. Day

Much of the success the House enjoyed during the year was because of the enthusiasm of the junior members.

6 Rutherford House Master Mr. Smith

The House regrets to say it had experienced yet another disappointing year at sport.

7 Stephenson House Master Mr. Brown

This House was delighted to have won the championship in football and come second to Dalton in athletics.

Wren House Master Mr. Gelling

The House reported that it did not have a very successful year, mainly due to a lack of enthusiasm by boys in the middle school.

Student Club and Society Reports

Reports were submitted to the School Magazine from the following clubs and societies.

Badminton Club

Badminton had been played at the school since 1956 and interest in the sport steadily grew. This year Badminton Colours were awarded for the first time and thanks was given to Mr Robinson and Mr. Smith for their help and encouragement of the Badminton Club.

Chess Club

The Chess Club flourished throughout the year under the leadership of Mr. Leigh, and thanks to his excellent coaching abilities some most promising players had been produced. School Chess was now developing to a point where Chess Competitions could become regular school events, with even the juniors playing well.

Cross Country Club

The Cross Country Club was formed at the beginning of the year under the supervision of Mr Gapes and was still very much in its embryo stage. Runs took place on alternate Saturday mornings and circuit training took place every Tuesday in the school gym at 4pm. Mr. Gapes was thanked for giving up much of his time in order to supervise runs and training sessions.

Judo Club

The Judo Club gave another impressive demonstration at the School Open Day; such demonstrations now becoming an annual event. This club always attracted new members, but many did not stay long when they realised the level of skill, effort and practise required. The Club made a visit, organised by Mr. Martindale, to Manchester Free Trade Hall in September to see a Judo Exhibition where many Black Belts were present.

Radio Club

The Radio Club effectively went into abeyance during this year. The departure of some senior boys resulted in limited assistance being given to the junior boys and the cost of equipment was a constant problem. Another issue was that many of the boys lived out of town and had to leave shortly after school finished to get home on public transport.

Sailing Club

The feeling of despondency, felt by the Sailing Club when Mr. Willington - Head of Workshops left the previous year, lifted during this year when Mr. Robinson took over. This resulted in greater enthusiasm and attracted new members. The Club benefited by securing facilities at Leigh Sailing Club, which proved adequate for Club purposes.

Swimming Club

President Mr W. Brace was pleased to report that this was a most successful year. The Club was most fortunate in having Wigan Swimming Baths at its disposal on Monday evenings. So many boys were interested in swimming, numbers had to be limited on swimming ability to avoid over crowding. The Swimming Team won all matches by a large margin of points.

Woodwork Club

The Woodwork Club started in 1958 and was run by Mr. Fleming. Meetings were held at school every Wednesday after school until 5-30pm. During the year models were made of aeroplanes, cars and boats and even a small radio set cabinet. The only specific rule of this Club was 'that no boy could work on his classwork when attending the club'.

Astronomical Society

The Astronomical Society was revived during this year after temporarily abeyance following the departure of Mr. Dolphin the previous year. Under the new Society President Mr. Leigh, the Club started constructing two reflecting telescopes.

Photographic Society

The Photographic Society was formed at a meeting on Tuesday 5th May 1959 under the leadership of Mr. Sutcliffe. Meetings were held fortnightly after school on Mondays with additional meetings as and when required.

School Band

This started as a small recorder group under the leadership of Mr. Fawcett. Although the Recorder Group was reasonably successful, the group decided it should be expanded and build up to a military band. The photograph below shows The School Military Band comprising boys from the first to sixth form and four of the teaching staff



Annual School Play January 1959

The annual School Play this year was '**Playboy of the Western World**' by J. M. Singe and was performed on 28th, 29th and 30th January. This was not an easy play to perform.

THIS ROBUST COMEDY OF AN AMIABLE IRISH GOOD-FOR-NOTHING, EAGER FOR ADMIRATION, EVEN WITH LIES TO GLOSS HIS BLARNEY, IS NO EASY PLAY TO TACKLE. THE ACCENT IS DIFFICULT FOR A START; THE HIGH FLOWN IDIOM OF LANGUAGE IS POETIC IN PLACES; AND TO EVOKE THE MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE OF A BACKWARD CROFT IN COUNTY MAYO IS PERHAPS HARDEST OF ALL.

SCHOOL MAGAZINE 1959 P38



Annual Play – ‘**Playboy of the Western World**’
Performed in January 1959.

To whom the ‘D. Austin Award for Best Performance’ should be awarded was a most difficult decision this year. After much deliberation it was eventually decided it should go to A. Berkley for his performance as the Widow Quin.

School Trips

A geography Day Trip to the **Lake District** took place on the last day of the Whitsun holiday by 24 boys and Mr. Gapes, Mr. Brown and Mr. Martindale. The party went by coach on the newly constructed Preston Bypass Motorway to the Lake District where glacial features were examined before taking an 8 mile walk through Borrowdale.

Trips during this year associated with regular industry site visits included Irlam Steel Works and Clarington Forge.

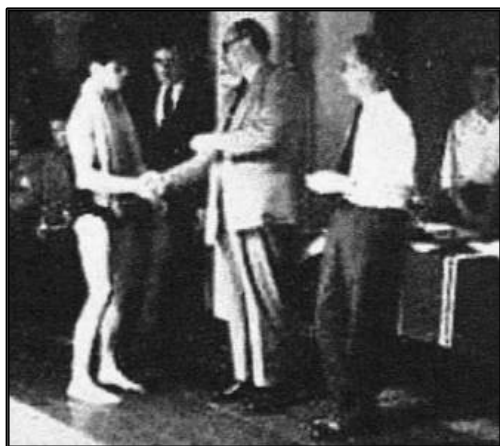
The major School Trip this year was to **Switzerland** over the **Easter Break, 1959**. The group departed Wigan by train leaving at 3am! After crossing London, they went by train to Folkestone and then crossed the English Channel to Calais and from there went by train to Basle. The group visited the capital Berne, enjoyed many coach trips, enjoyed much sightseeing and did some climbing stating on return “The Swiss trip for us, and we think we can speak on behalf of all, was a worth while investment and we all owe our thanks and appreciation to Mr. Brown and Mr. Unsworth for organising such an opportunity”.

Sport News

The School’s representatives in the Northern Schools Athletic Association Championships at White City, Manchester on 6th June 1959 were; left to right K. Unsworth, A. Walker, R. Carroll, and L. Birchall.



Swimming Gala 3rd June 1959



The **Overall House Champion** at the Annual Swimming Gala this year was Harvey House. The **Senior Winners** were Harvey House, the **Intermediate Winners** were Newton House and the **Junior Winners** were Rutherford House.

Photograph to the left shows D.E. Haselden receiving a medal for winning the Senior Backstroke breaking the existing school record by 13 seconds.

School Sports Day 5th June 1959

The Annual Sports Day was held on Mesnes Playing Fields on Friday 5th June. The Trophies this year were presented by Councillor S. Burgess Mayor of Wigan.

The **Overall House Champion** was Faraday House. The **Senior Winner** was Stephenson House, the **Intermediate Winner** was Dalton House and the **Junior Winner** was Faraday House.

Photograph right shows The Mayor Councillor S. Burgess presenting the Cup for the Senior House Champions to Lew Birchall.



School Open Day

The School Open Day took place in the evening of the Annual Sports Day, and once more attracted a large crowd of parents and the general public interested in the work of the school.



The photograph to the left shows pupils R. Tyson, A. Birchall, D. Parr and W. Birchall of the school add final touches to a school made dinghy which was on display at the 1959 School Open Day.

Thomas Linacre Old Boys Association

With an increasing number of boys completing school and going on to further education or joining the work force, the school established an Old Boys Association to keep in touch with its alumni. The President of the Association was Mr. W. S. Brace (Headmaster) and the Vice-President was Mr. L. W. Smith. A committee was established comprising B. Braddock (Secretary), D. Bimson (Treasurer), D. Mulligan, L. Massey, G. F. Wilkinson, R. W. Harrison, B. A. Brookes, and D. Lloyd.

The Association held its first Meeting on Friday 5th September 1958 when around fifty old boys attended and 24 joined up and paid their annual subscription to the association of 7/6d. It was decided to hold several sporting and social activities during the year. As many of the more prominent members of the association were away at university it only proved possible to hold certain sporting activities.

Next Annual Meeting was scheduled for 4th September 1959.

Sixth Speech Night 18th November 1959

The sixth Annual Speech Night was held in the Queens Hall on Wednesday 18th November 1959 and the Invited Guest was Dr. C. Whitworth, M.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.I.C., F. Inst. F. Principal, Royal Technical College, Salford.



Dr. Whitworth talked of the great advances in technical education which had taken place since the war and that the Government recognised the need for increased technical education. There was an urgent need for men who could apply knowledge through research. He felt the boys of the school would produce men who could do just that. The photograph above shows boys listening to

Dr. Whitworth before receiving prizes.

The Headmaster in his annual address announced that two significant modifications were to be made to the school curriculum; one was to make it possible for boys who wished to study Geography and History together at G.C.E O'level to do so, and the other was to introduce an additional foreign language – Russian which would be available to boys in the Sixth Form. During the 1950s the Russians were seen as serious competitors to the West in both science and technology.

RUSSIAN TAUGHT IN WIGAN SCHOOL

THE PROPOSAL BY MR. W. S. BRACE HEADMASTER OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL AT WIGAN FOR RUSSIAN TO BE TAUGHT AT THE SCHOOL HAS BEEN APPROVED 'AS AN EXPERIMENT' BY WIGAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

THE CHRONICLE 26 APRIL

1956-57 to 1959-60

Of the many school achievements over the preceding year the Headmaster highlighted two. L. Dissado had won a prestigious 'State Scholarship' to university– the first boy to do so at this school, and in sport L. Birchall won both the Long Jump and the Hop, Step and Jump at the Northern School Sports Association Championships held at White City, Manchester in May.

School Year 1959-60

The seventh year of the school took the institution into the opening months of the 1960s. The school was running smoothly, and daily life had settled into an excellent, well thought out and efficient regime

The **Head Boy** for this school year was P. Hulme.

The following staff were welcomed by the Headmaster in the opening section of the School Magazine; Mr. S. Chapman M.A., B.Sc. (Econ.) (Economics and History), Mr. T. Hall B.Sc. (Mathematics), Mr. D. Horrocks B.A. (German and Russian) and Mr. R. Oldham (Metalwork and Auto-engineering).

Best wishes were also given to recently departed staff members; Mr. J. A. McNamee (Mathematics), Mr. D. Pegg (German), Mr. T. Pey (English) and Mr. G. Unsworth (English and History).

School Magazine

By 1959 the annual School Magazine had developed into a highly informative and professionally presented document but sadly, production cost implications now precluded the inclusion of photographs.

Music Recitals

The third year of music recitals included such events as

- Mr. Riding singing 'The Sentry's Song' and 'When Britain Rules the Waves',
- Mr Topping playing gramophone records including 'Overture to Midsummer Night's Dream' by Mendelson, and
- the School Band playing 'The Lonely Mill' and 'Wings Over the Navy'.

School House Reports were submitted to the School Magazine with some key points reported below.

1 Brunel House Captain Mr. Gapes

This was the most memorable year for the House with genuine enthusiasm all round.

2 Dalton House Master Mr. Livesey

Because of the departure of some of its senior boys the House had not enjoyed quite as much success as in previous years.

3 Faraday House Master Mr. Ingamells

This had been a very disappointing year for the House due mainly to student apathy.

4 Harvey House Master Mr. Coley

The House had enjoyed success in all sporting activities during the year.

5 Newton House Master Mr. Collins

This School year had proved to be a more successful year than most for this House.

6 Rutherford House Master Mr. Smith

This year had seen a considerable improvement in the results of the inter-house competitions over previous years.

7 Stephenson House Master Mr. Brown

During this year the House had met with mixed fortunes, but the most notable victory was in the School Sports.

8 Wren House Master Mr. Gelling

This year on the whole had been successful for the House being the Champions in Football by a comfortable margin.

Student Club and Society Reports

Chess Club

The Chess Club continued to flourish with a very keen junior section receiving regular coaching by some of the senior players. The senior section met every Thursday after school, learning from demonstrations given by Mr. Leigh. Photograph below - the Chess Club in 1959.



Judo Club

When Barry Taylor left school at the end of the year, the Judo Club lost the last of its founder members. When Barry joined the Club six year earlier 'a draught of wind would have blown him over; when he left there was no one in the school who could withstand his devastating side body throw'. This club had flourished for longer than any other club in the school.

Record Club

The Record Club had Mr. Sutcliffe as its President and formed in May 1960. It held regular fortnightly meetings on Mondays after school listening to Classical, Jazz and Pop records and then discussing them.

Climbing and Hiking Club



The Climbing Club started during the year when 11 members of the Lower 6th decided to establish one. The Club held meetings twice a week during the Easter Term and during the Easter Holidays spent a week camping in the Lake District. See photograph to the left. Thanks was expressed to Mr. Turner for his never failing help to the Club during the year.

Woodwork Club

This was the second year for the Woodwork Club and was run by Mr. Flemming. Meetings ran every Wednesday after school until around 5-30pm. Articles made by the Club during the year included a go-cart, a tea trolley, a frame for a school photograph, and model aircraft, boats and cars.

Astronomical Society

The Astronomical Society started the year with a number of discussions on the universe and Society President Mr. Leigh began by giving a series of lectures on the Solar System. Junior members of the society were a great help in maintaining the school's 8 inch diameter reflecting telescope.

Photographic Society

The Photographic Society enjoyed another successful year with many new members joining as the year progressed. During the latter part of the Christmas Term the society took it upon itself to produce 300 school calendars.

Socratic Society

The Socratic Society with Mr. Fawcett as President ran the Christmas Social. This was up to its normal high standard graced by the School Jazz and Dance Bands and over 200 attendees although there was some disappointment that there could have been more teachers present. Later in the year an Easter Supper Dance was planned but, because of an unfortunate apathy by the Lower 6th boys, this had to be cancelled.

School Military Band

Now in its second year of existence the School Military Band was supervised most capably by Mr. Fawcett, Mr. Hilton, Mr. McPherson and Mr. Thorpe. During the year much money was spent on the purchase of new instruments, repairs and music. The band played at the Christmas end of term Concert and on Open Day. The Parent Teacher Association was thanked for its financial assistance towards the purchase of new instruments.

Annual School Play January 1960

The annual School Play this year was **'Enemy of the People'** by Henrick Ibsen and was performed on 28th, 29th and 30th January 1960. The Photograph below shows the cast in action.



The photograph above shows pupils at Thomas Linacre Technical School, Wigan making a final check of the script before their dress rehearsal for Ibsen's 'Enemy of the People' which they are performing this week in the school hall.

Evening Chronicle Wednesday 27th January 1960

School Concert March 1960

The School Military Band together with the more recent Jazz Band and Danced Band performed a Public Concert in the Assembly Hall of the school on 16th March. Below is a local newspaper photograph of some of the Jazz Band practicing just before the event.



From the left (front) L. Birchall, Mr. H. Hilton, D. Martland, W. Hodson, R. J. Richards (back), C. Livesey, piano, and D. Roscoe, drums.

Gift to the School in the Easter Term



During the Easter Term in February, Commander R. B. Chandler, R.N. presented books on behalf of the Admiralty to the Headmaster to mark school boy D. M. Morgan's achievement as the 'Best Mechanical Engineering Recruit' while under training in H.M.S. Raleigh.

School Visits

The major School Trip was to Germany led by Mr. Ingamells and Mr. Pey and among the various site visits to industrial facilities was one to John Summers Steel Works at Shotton near Queensferry.

Sports Day 25th May 1960

The 1960 School Sports Day was held on Mesnes Playing Fields on Wednesday, 25th May and the Invited Guest to present the trophies was Mr. H. E. Cragg of Leigh Sailing Club. The **Overall House Winner** this year was Stephenson House, The **Junior Champion** was Brunel House, the **Intermediate Champion** was Newton House and the **Senior Champion** was Dalton House.

Annual Swimming Gala 1st June 1960

The 1960 Annual Swimming Gala was held at Wigan Public Baths on Wednesday, 1st June. The **Overall House Winner** this year was Newton House, the **Junior House Champion** was Wren House, the **Intermediate House Champion** Newton House and the **Senior House Champion** was Brunel House.

Seventh Speech Night 26th October 1960

The annual Speech Night was held on Wednesday, 26th October and, as with all previous speech nights was held in the Queens Hall. The Guest Speaker on this occasion was Prof. J. H. Horlock, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.I.C.S., F. Inst. F. - Harrison Professor of Mechanical Engineering, at Liverpool University.

Prof Horlock addressed the audience with a talk on Space Exploration where he emphasised that England could not afford to stay out of the International Space Race. He concluded by saying that in the present age there was a great future for technologists and scientists.

Chapter 3

In his reply the headmaster spoke of the part played by the 6th Form in the school. There was currently a pressing national interest in two recently published reports on sixth form studies. In the current 6th Form there were 70 boys who had the opportunity of many options and outlets on the arts side of life because the school was not just focused on science and technology.

Thomas Linacre Old Boys Association

This was the second year of the Thomas Linacre Old Boys Association with Mr. W. S. Brace M.A., B.Sc. as President and Mr. L. W. Smith B.Sc. as Vice-President. The Chairman was B. A. Brookes and the Secretary was R. W. Harrison.

The year was opened with the first Annual Dinner held at the Victoria Hotel on the evening of Wednesday 6th January 1960. This was attended by Mr. Brace and about 25 Old Boys.

At the previous Annual General Meeting a new committee was appointed with Mr. Brookes as Chairman. During the year the committee had organised two social occasions and numerous sporting activities.

Just after Easter the Old Boys held a Reunion in the School Hall with around 50 Old Boys and their girl friends in attendance.

Following the initial three years of experimentation and development, the next four years saw the school develop a routine and perfect its best qualities. In addition to a carefully thought out curriculum, its pupils enjoyed the benefits of a wide variety of clubs and societies, numerous sporting opportunities, an excellent career guidance procedure and exciting overseas adventures.

Had anyone conducted an 'Opinion Poll' at the school gate in 1960 asking the boys, the boys' parents, the teachers, or the general public what they saw as the future for the school the answer would almost certainly have been one of an optimistic future with numerous options and possibilities.

A few grey clouds were appearing on the horizon - regarding secondary education at the national level – and these had been hinted by the Headmaster when delivering his 1959 Speech Night address but there was little sign even in 1960 of the momentous events to come.



**Medal awarded to the winners on Sports Days
This was awarded to Tony Bennett for probably the 100 yards
The background colour was the House Colour**

Thomas Linacre Technical School, Wigan

Chapter 4

‘Meritocracy to Merger 1960-61 to 1962-63’

As the school entered its eighth year of operation, it had established an excellent reputation for its broad and well-planned curriculum, its dedicated and hardworking teachers, its numerous extracurricular activities and its interesting school trips. By 1960, Thomas Linacre Technical School, armed with this well earned reputation, was expecting to run for many decades to come. Broad changes in thinking however, on how English secondary education should progress in the future, did not help the secondary technical schools. Through no fault of its own, and in spite of significant local protest, the school was forced to merge with the Grammar School after only a ten year life span. Almost immediately following the forced merger all traces of Thomas Linacre culture were subsumed within that of the grammar school.

School Year 1960 - 61

School Year 1960-61 can in many ways be considered the most successful year of the school. With seven years of development experience, experimentation and learning from past mistakes, the school was well organised, well respected, and a leading light in secondary technical education. There was no reason to believe that this year would not be one of many more to come.

As with any year there was the usual annual turnover of teaching staff. The School Magazine expressed a warm welcome to the recently appointed staff members, Mr. S. M. Appleton B.A. (Scripture), Mr. N. Barlow B.A. (German) and Mr. P. J. Booth B.A. (English) and gave a fond farewell to Mr. R. R. Lang (English), Mr. G. Leigh (German) and Mr. Fawcett (Religious Instruction) who had left at the end of the previous year for other appointments. This was a small change over, and an equal balance between departures and arrivals.

The **Head Boy** this school year was J. R. Richards.

Editorial Comments in the School Magazine

The Headmaster’s opening remarks in the School Magazine for this year focused on two points. He was particularly proud of the number of boys holding swimming awards. Forty six boys held either a Bronze Medallion, a Bronze Cross or an Award of Merit issued by the Royal Life-Saving Society. Although this only represented about one in ten boys in the school, it was a higher proportion than in most schools and is something of which the school could be proud.

The second point emphasised by the Headmaster was that effort is always rewarded, and all boys should put effort into everything they try to do. One ex-pupil and former Patrol Leader of the School Scout Troop was spending a year with the Overseas Voluntary Service in the British Camerons – “He is giving but he will certainly find that what he gives will be returned many times over” capsulised the Headmaster’s message.

Death of a Pupil

Whilst the School Magazine liked to focus on the fortunes of the school it had a duty to record less happy issues.

ON WEDNESDAY 21ST JUNE 1961, ON HIS WAY TO SCHOOL ANDREW BOARDMAN WAS INVOLVED IN AN ACCIDENT WITH A BUS. HE DIED A FEW HOURS LATER.

A POPULAR MEMBER OF FORM 2B AND FARADAY HOUSE, BOARDMAN WAS ALREADY SHOWING PROMISE AS A CROSS-COUNTRY RUNNER.

OUR SYMPATHIES GO OUT TO HIS PARENTS AND SISTER IN THEIR SAD BEREAVEMENT
SCHOOL MAGAZINE 1961 P2

Music Recitals

These were viewed as an important part of 'Linacre School Life' and continued to run smoothly on a weekly basis. Chosen at random, the following present a picture of the nature and type of weekly recitals performed during the year.

Harold Forshaw of Up Holland Grammar School played 'Nocturne in F minor' and 'Prelude in C minor' by Chopin,

Miss B. Moore, Contralto sang 'Softly Awakes My Heart,' by Saint-Saens; Largo by Handel and La Danza by Rossini, and

Connelly of 2B played a gramophone record of two Sousa marches 'Washington Post March' and 'Sempre Fidelis March' both by Sousa.

House Reports submitted to the Magazine with key points of relevance are reported below.

1 Brunel - House Master Mr. Gapes

The year had been quite successful, for the first time Brunel won the Football Championship and the junior team did extremely well.

2 Dalton - House Master Mr. Livesey

Although the House had not been outstanding in any particular field, neither had it ever disgraced itself.

3 Faraday - House Master Mr. Ingamells

During the year the House had enjoyed a moderate degree of success although the junior football team lost every game.

4 Harvey - House Master Mr. Colley

This year had been a very successful one with team spirit and enthusiasm bringing the success promised during the preceding year.

5 Newton - House Master Mr. Collins

This year had by no means been one of the best and the only solution to the current mediocracy is to give the house and team captains greater support.

6 Rutherford - House Master Mr. Smith

This year had been without doubt the most memorable year in the history of the House. Rutherford reached the final in the Chess Competition for the third year in succession.

7 Stephenson - House Master Mr. Brown

This year the House was pleased to say that the boys of Stephenson had shown great enthusiasm towards their efforts in house sports.

8 Wren - House Master Mr. Gelling

This year could be regarded as the 'just missed' year coming second in two competitions and played against the eventual finalists in the first rounds of another three competitions.

School Club and Society Reports

Camping and Hiking Club

Members of this club took a holiday near Oban in Scotland and enjoyed some memorable walks with spectacular views to the Isle of Mull. The Club thanked Mr Hilton for his help and support.

Judo Club

The Judo Club provided its usual Judo Demonstration at the Open Day and received many new commers from the lower forms, and to the club's surprise - three sixth formers! During the year Mr. Martindale discretely imparted from his own extensive repertoire of tactics, various techniques of self-defence. The Club was proud of officially being recognised by the British Judo Association as one of the recommended clubs in A. P. Harrison's book 'Every Boy's Judo'.

Photographic Club



The Photographic Club was supervised by Mr. Sutcliffe and ran regular weekly after school sessions. The boys were taught to develop colour negatives (Kodak Ektachrome) - fairly advanced at the time. Although no Club report was provided to the magazine for this year, a good photograph of 'Mr. Sutcliffe putting two of his members in the picture with one of the photographic processes' appeared in the local newspaper - see left.

Radio Club

This was another successful year for the club with some boys working on transistor sets which were then a completely new venture. Some of the senior boys made some simple valve sets and a seven valve short-wave receiver. The assistance of Mr Smith was appreciated.

Sailing Club

This year was one of the most successful years the Club had experienced. D. R. Dale won the Northern Enterprise Championship, A. T. Birchall won the Leigh Sailing Club Single-handed Trophy and W. J. Birchall won the crew's prize in the Hijinx Enterprise Trophy.

Experimental Society

This Society met weekly in the Physics Laboratory on Friday afternoons after school. Two boys in the society constructed a Tesla Coil which was displayed on Open Day. As with the Radio Club, the assistance of Mr. Smith was acknowledged and thanked.

Socratic Society

Early in the school year the Socratic Society held dancing lessons on several evenings in conjunction with the Girls High School. This proved most popular and the Society held an annual dance for the Upper School in December.

School Military Band

Although the band lost some extremely talented players before the beginning of the year, it still had a most successful season with many juniors 'stepping up to the plate.' Mr. McPherson and Mr. Hilton were behind all the Band's hard work and progress. The Band enjoyed a financially good year and managed to purchase some new instruments including a tenor horn, a baritone euphonium and several trumpets and clarinets.

School Choir

The School Choir performed well on School Speech Night in October and was invited to Norley Hall Old Peoples' Home in December where the Band and Choir gave a very well received concert.



Special Treat for pensioners at Norley Hall Old Peoples Home by the School Choir

A Mild Winter and Good Fortune for the School!

Winter snow ball fights between Thomas Linacre boys and Grammar School boys were well known annual events in Wigan. Fortunately, the winter this year was reasonably mild with little snow thus enabling the headmaster to state that "the Gods were merciful to our many windows".

School Trips

The school was proud of both the number of trips on offer to the boys and to the destinations chosen. In February 1961 a school trip was made to the **House of Commons**. Mr. Chapman took a party of 14 boys to the House of Commons where they were entertained by the M.P.s for Wigan and Rochdale. The boys saw the House in session and had tea on the premises. The party returned with many memories and had their photographs in the local papers. See photograph on the following page.



School visit to the Houses of Parliament at Westminster – Mr. Alan Fitch M.P. for Wigan pointing out a feature of interest. Next to him is Mr. Jack McCann M.P. for Rochdale. The boys had lunch in the House and then toured the Palace of Westminster after an hour in the Strangers' Gallery. Mr. S. D. Chapman the Economics Teacher was in charge.

Less exciting was a site visit made by 40 boys to **Leyland Motors** in March 1961.

A **History Outing to Yorkshire** took place on the last Tuesday of the summer term when forty boys left the school in a coach for Yorkshire to visit Fountains Abbey, and after lunch they took a conducted walking tour around York.



A holiday trip to **Switzerland** during Wakes Week with Mr. Brown and Mr. Rhodes in charge. The photograph left, shows the boys on their way to visit various tourist centres around the country and a day at Lucerne for the Swiss National Festival.

Special Lecture on 'Fission and Fusion'

In late March a **Special Lecture** was delivered at the School by Prof. J. M. Cassells F.R.S. of Liverpool University when the school played host to hundreds of pupils from local schools.



The above photograph shows Prof. Cassells (centre) informally talking to some of the pupils with Mr. M. G. Adams (Lancashire Assistant Education Officer) and Mr. Brace (Headmaster).

The School's Second Public Concert

A most enjoyable second **School Concert** was held in March when the School Band gave a fine performance which included a wide range of musical pieces from 'South Pacific' to a Grand Finale uniting band and choir in Wagner's 'Hail Noble Hall' from Tannhauser. The photograph below shows pupils and staff rehearsing for the Public Concert they presented in the school hall later that evening.



THE BAND, PLUS THE CHOIR, MADE THE EVENING A MEMORABLE ONE, WITH BOTH OF THEM JOINING TOGETHER AT THE END TO GIVE A ROUSING FINALE ENTITLED 'HAIL NOBLE HALL'. ALSO, IN THE CONCERT WERE MR. FLEMMING AND MR. RIDING, BOTH OF WHOM SANG SOLOS AND THEN BLENDED EACH OTHER'S TALENTS IN A DUET.

SCHOOL MAGAZINE SUMMER 1961 P28

Student Magazine

On the day of the Public Concert '**Kogweel**' made its first appearance. Unlike the School Magazine, '**Kogweel**' was a magazine run and organised entirely by the boys under the initial editorship of Cyril Wilkinson and his 'staff' drawn from the Sixth Form. From initial idea to the first publication took only ten days, when 150 copies were produced at 3d per copy. The boys' efforts received a favourable comment in the local newspaper and a further 500 copies were run off a few days later.



Art classes out of doors

Maybe surprising but true – art was also viewed as an important component of the total Technical School curriculum. Boys were encouraged to go out of school and into Mesnes Park, under the guidance of Mr. Hilton. The photograph to the left shows art master Mr. Harry Hilton holding an art class in Mesnes Park.

Summer Term Sport

A significant sporting success during this term was the Under 15 Football Team winning the Wigan Schools' Greenhouse Cup for yet another year.

Eighth Sports day

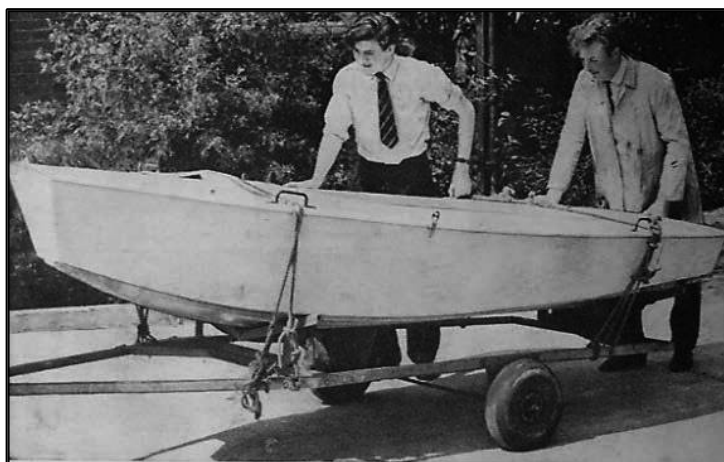
The Annual Sports Day for this year was held at Mesnes Playing Fields on Wednesday, 17th May 1961 when Mr. A. S. Grenville of the Vulcan Foundry presented the sports trophies. The photograph below shows Mr A. S. Grenville presenting the House Championship Shield to John Baxter, Captain of Brunel House with the Headmaster Mr Brace looking on.



On this sports day L. Birchall showed the qualities which qualified him for selection for the A.A.A. Team by winning the School Senior 100 yards, 220yds, the Long Jump, the Hop Step and Jump and by taking part in the triumphal Stephenson Relay Team. The **Overall House Champion** was Brunel, the **Junior House Champion** was Brunel, the **Intermediate House Champion** was Harvey and the **Senior House Champion** was Stephenson.

Open Day 1961

The School's annual Public Open Day generally took place in the evening of the Annual Sports Day. As usual, a Judo Demonstration was given by members of the Judo Club and various projects



undertaken by boys of the school were on display. To the left is a photograph of one of the schools sailing dinghies being wheeled out for display.

The dismembering and rebuilding of an old Austin and an old Rover engine (both gifts to the school) under the supervision of Mr Oldham were also on display, as was the School Mascot, a skeleton called George in the biology lab.



Perhaps 'pride of place' (maybe even outshining Skeleton George) in the 1961 Open Day Exhibition was an 8-inch telescope made entirely within the school workshops for use by the School's Astronomical Society. This was a complicated instrument to make and was keenly supported by the Headmaster Mr. Brace.

INTRODUCING SKELETON GEORGE

HE'S THE CLASS 'MASCOT'. EVERYTHING FROM ABSTRACT ART TO A SKELETON WAS ON VIEW LAST NIGHT FOR THE HUNDREDS WHO TOURED THROUGH WIGAN'S THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL, WHEN IT WAS THROWN OPEN FOR AN EXHIBITION OF WORK.

PARENTS SAW PUPILS AT WORK AND A HOST OF OTHER ACTIVITIES. THERE WAS EVEN A MINIATURE GARAGE LAID OUT. THE SCHOOL 'MASCOT' GEORGE* THE SKELETON WAS ONE OF THE ATTRACTIONS IN THE BIOLOGY CLASS. THE TELESCOPE SET UP IN THE SCHOOL GROUNDS, ON WHICH BOYS HAVE SPENT MANY PATIENT HOURS GRINDING THE GLASS, ALSO ATTRACTED MUCH ATTENTION.

DURING THE EVENING THE MAYOR ALD. T. COBLEY AND MRS. COBLEY TOURED THE SCHOOL ACCOMPANIED BY THE HEADMASTER MR. W. S. BRACE.

LANCASHIRE EVENING POST 6TH JULY 1961

*Skeleton George

One famous school prank occurred when some Thomas Linacre lads dressed Skeleton George in school uniform and took him to Lowes cafeteria for afternoon tea! Who knows – perhaps the cafeteria that day was running on a skeleton staff!!!!!!

Eighth Speech Night 1st November 1961

The culmination of School Year 1960-61 was the eighth annual Speech Night held some months into the following school year. It was held on Wednesday 1st November in the Queens Hall where the Guest Speaker was Mr. L. S. Newton, Group Education Officer of Pilkington Bros. Ltd. The gist of Mr Newton's address to the boys, staff and parents was that a school is more than a place of learning - it is also a place of education; it is not only a place for study, but it is also a place for experience, and it is not only a place to prove one's ability but also a place to develop one's potential.

A YOUNG PERSON NEEDS THREE REQUIREMENTS – EDUCATION, EXPERIENCE AND POTENTIAL – IF HE IS TO MAKE A SUCCESSFUL CAREER FOR HIMSELF.

SPEAKING ON WHEN A BOY SHOULD LEAVE SCHOOL MR. NEWTON COMMENTED: "IT IS RIGHT FOR A BOY WHO IS GETTING BORED AT THE AGE OF FIFTEEN TO LEAVE SCHOOL BUT WITH THE NEW PATTERN OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION IT IS BETTER FOR A PUPIL WHO INTENDS TO BE A CRAFTSMAN TO TAKE HIS G.C.E. AT O LEVEL, AT LEAST BEFORE HE LEAVES, AND IT IS A BIG MISTAKE WHEN PARENTS WITHDRAW SUCH A BOY FROM SCHOOL BEFORE HE HAS HAD THAT OPPORTUNITY".

WIGAN OBSERVER 3RD NOVEMBER, 1961

1960-61 to 1962-63



The headmaster emphasised the following in his annual address. He pointed out that the development of many technical schools had been handicapped by a lack of suitable syllabuses and examinations within the framework of the General Certificate of Education; in particular, these deficiencies were evident in Applied Sciences, Technology and Design. He also made comment on the Crowther Report into Secondary Education, Volume One published in 1959 and the Second Volume published in 1960. Here was perhaps a hint that **changes to secondary education** 'were in the air' although exactly what change, was then still uncertain.

Photograph above shows Guest Speaker Mr Newton (left) and right Mayor Ald. T. Copley, Ald. A. Walker and Mr Brace.

IT WAS VERY MUCH REGRETTED THAT THE CHIEF EXAMINERS OF THE RELEVANT EXAMINING BOARDS WILL NOT PREPARE SYLLABUSES, ETC. FOR THIS NEW FIELD SAID MR BRACE. THIS MAY NOT BE A SERIOUS MATTER WHEN CONVENTIONAL SYLLABUSES AND TEACHING METHODS ARE CONCERNED, BUT WHEN ONE WISHES TO DEVELOP A FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT APPROACH TO LEARNING AND TRANSFORM THE TECHNIQUES OF TEACHING AND EXAMINING THE GULF BETWEEN THOSE WHO TEACH AND THOSE WHO EXAMINE IS A GREAT OBSTACLE.

WIGAN OBSERVER 3RD NOVEMBER 1961

Thomas Linacre Old Boys Association

President Mr. W. S. Brace, Vice-President Mr. L. W. Smith, Chairman B. A. Brookes and Secretary R. W. Harrison.

This was the third year of Association's existence, but it was a quiet year for the Old Boys Association. This was due to the limited time committee members could devote to organising events. New members were slow in joining, possibly because many ex-pupils said they did not know of the Association's existence!

School Year 1961-62

In marked contrast to the preceding year, which at the time was considered the most successful in the life of the school, School Year 1961-62 was one of serious concern ending with almost certain amalgamation with the Grammar School.

The first public announcements of a **possible merger** appeared in the local papers around March 1962, but rumours had been spreading some time earlier. Given that the Headmaster Mr. Brace resigned to accept an appointment elsewhere at Easter 1962, strongly suggests that this possible eventuality was known by some people long before Easter. Below is an extract from the opening page of the 1961-62 School Magazine where the possibility of a merger was aired but no final decision had been made.

THIS YEAR HAS BROUGHT ANXIETY ABOUT THE SCHOOL'S FUTURE. ADMINISTRATIVE BOUNDARIES, POPULATION DECLINE, NEW ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND THE INSISTENCE ON STANDARDS AT ELEVEN PLUS ARE THE FACTORS JEOPARDISING OUR SURVIVAL AS A SEPARATE SCHOOL.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT OUR GOVERNORS, HEADMASTER, STAFF AND PUPILS ARE UNANIMOUS IN HOPING THAT THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL WILL SURVIVE IN ITS OWN RIGHT.

IT WOULD BE FIDDLING WHILST ROME BURNS TO DISREGARD THE SITUATION FACING THE SCHOOL. NEVERTHELESS, ARTICLES IN PRINT ARE STATIC, WHEREAS CIRCUMSTANCES ARE FLUID. OUR WORLD MAY NOT BE IN A 'STATE OF CHASSIS' BUT WE ARE CERTAINLY UNDERGOING THE TRIALS OF EVOLUTION, AND WE ARE NOT SURE WHETHER IT WILL BE THE FITTEST OR THE FATTEST OF SCHOOL WHICH SURVIVES.

SCHOOL MAGAZINE 1962 P5 L.W. SMITH ACTING HEADMASTER

Shortly after publication of the 1962 School Magazine a Public Notice was issued to the effect that the school **would be merged** with the Grammar School at the end of School Year 1962-63.

So how did this threat come about?

Across England during the 1950s, Secondary Technical Education had in general been reasonably successful, even though it was starved of government attention the received limited resources. The curriculum was well shaped for dealing with real world employment and had a solid practical edge, but as the table below clearly shows, Secondary Technical Schools were always a minority. See table below (House of Commons Standard Note SN/SG/4252) p.16

Public secondary schools by type: England and Wales						
	Modern	Grammar	Technical	Comprehensive	Other	Total
<i>Schools</i>						
1955	3,550	1,180	302	16	96	5,144
1960	3,837	1,268	251	130	315	5,801
1965	3,727	1,285	172	262	417	5,863
1970	2,691	1,038	82	1,145	324	5,280
1975	1,216	566	29	2,596	155	4,562
1980	445	224	17	3,297	60	4,120
1985	284	173	4	3,479	42	4,028
<i>Pupils (thousands)</i>						
1955	1,234	528	87	16	49	1,914
1960	1,638	673	102	129	182	2,724
1965	1,555	719	85	240	221	2,820
1970	1,227	605	44	937	197	3,010
1975	698	344	18	2,460	100	3,620
1980	235	135	10	3,398	35	3,813
1985	166	114	3	3,205	26	3,513

Other than a simple lack of resources, two reasons have been proposed for the failure of the technical school concept at the national level. One reason was the difficulty of obtaining teachers who had the necessary skills in the relevant areas and the second was that such schools were generally perceived by many parents as having a lower status than grammar schools and therefore second best to them. They were used in many cases for borderline pass/fail results in the 11-plus (Edwards R. 1960). These issues are further examined in the following chapter.

The Thomas Linacre School could not be accused of any of these faults, but an individual school stands little chance when up against public national perception and politics.

Not surprisingly given the situation facing the school during this uncertain year, many staff members sought positions elsewhere. The School Magazine devoted half a page to staff changes. Mr. T. Hall, Mr. F. Harrison, Mr. P. Ingamells and Mr. G. Livsey had already left at the end of the previous year, and Mr. P. Booth left at the end of the Christmas term. Mr. W.S. Brace (Headmaster and ‘father of the school’) reluctantly left at the end of the Easter Term as did Mr. T. A. Turner. The Magazine then went on to point out that Mr. N. Barlow, Mr. I. G. Brown (a member of the staff since the school opened), Mr. S. D. Chapman, Mr. E. C. Colley, Mr. W. R. Day, Mr. H. Hilton (also a member of the staff since the school opened), Mr. D. Horrocks and Mr. Jones would leave at the end of the current School Year. The four staff members who left at the end of the previous year would represent normal annual turnover, the eleven staff who left during this year was unprecedented.

A warm welcome was extended to the three people who joined the school, Mr. E. Wallbank B.Sc. (Chemistry), Mr. W. D. Jones B.Sc. (Physics and Chemistry) and Mr. C. Coates B.A. (English).

The **Head Boy** this year was C. M. Wilkinson.

School Houses and Reports

One of the greatest changes to occur within the school during this year was a drastic reorganisation of the School House system. Whether these changes were a coincidence, or a consequence of the impending merger is unstated, but probably most likely a coincidence given a change in house structure would almost certainly have been planned during the previous year well before the merger threat.

Since the school’s foundation in 1953 there had been eight School Houses; Brunel (house colour brown), Dalton (house colour dark green), Faraday (house colour dark blue), Harvey (house colour maroon), Newton (house colour light blue), Rutherford (house colour red), Stephenson (house colour light green), and Wren (house colour yellow).

At the beginning of this school year the eight original school houses were merged into four;

Arkwright (house colour green) formed by the amalgamation of Stephenson House and Dalton House,

Bridgewater (house colour yellow) formed by the amalgamation of Brunel House and Wren House,

Compton (house colour blue) formed by the amalgamation of Faraday House and Newton House, and

Peel (house colour red) formed by the amalgamation of Harvey House and Rutherford House.

No explanation is given in the School Magazine as to why this action occurred but there are several possible reasons. Eight houses in a school of around 600 boys averages around only 75 pupils per house which is not that many given there were so many inter house competitions requiring suitably able and capable boys for the house sports teams.

Eight houses required eight staff members to perform house duties and fewer houses required less teacher supervision and a greater pool of boys for team sport selection. This may not however have been a universally good idea. Arkwright House thought low morale among its members was partly attributable to these new arrangements – ‘Blame may be placed in part on the change of the House system. Despite the difficulty of assembling all members on time, the old system of a weekly house

assembly at least afforded a check on the progress of the House, and the diversity of activities could be impressed upon less dynamic members’.

1 Arkwright - House Captains Mr. Brown, Mr. Appleton, Mr. Jones and Mr. Martindale.

This house met every Wednesday morning when Mr. Brown read the lesson and Mr. Appleton led the prayers. The Wednesday morning meeting enabled all boys to see the success and work of the more active members of the House.

2 Bridgewater - House Captains Mr. Gapes, Mr. Barlow, Mr. Chapman and Mr. Thorpe.

No mention is made of how this House operated, but in Athletics the house was Overall House Champion of the year, and in the newly introduced sport of Cross-Country Running the house was overall runner up.

3 Crompton - House Captains Mr. Day and certainly others

There was no annual report for Crompton House in the 1961-62 School Magazine, so little is known about its first year of operation.

4 Peel - House Captains Mr. Colley, Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Hilton, and Mr Horrocks.

This House report stated that the new house system had been successful for Peel (in marked contrast to Arkwright’s thinking). This house won both the Swimming Gala and the Chess Championship. Comment was made on three newly introduced events in the school, Cross-Country Running, Reading Competitions, and Four Aside Soccer.



The above photograph shows boys under Starters Orders on the school’s first Cross-Country Race at Christopher Park in March 1962.

Student Club and Society Reports

Automobile Club

Little progress had been made this year on the Rover 14 and Austin chassis even though much work had been expended on both. More progress however, had been achieved on an A.J.S. motorcycle. Mr. Oldham was thanked for his support throughout the year.

Basketball Club

The Basketball team did extremely well this year, having an outstanding set of players who worked together in a closely knit team. Unfortunately, so few local schools had basketball teams only a few school competition fixtures were possible. As was often the case Mr. Robinson was thanked for his excellent coaching and advice.

Chess Club

Although many experienced senior boys left the school at the end of the previous year many younger boys showed an interest in joining up. For the first time in the Club's history Junior Chess matches were arranged and juniors and intermediates played alongside the senior boys.

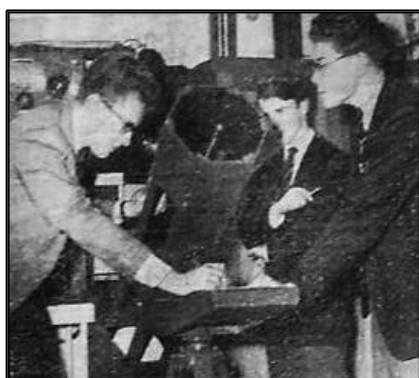
Judo Club

The Judo Club continued with the usual crop of new boys anxious to join, and at one time there were not enough Judo outfits for everyone. Mr. Martindale was thanked for yet another year of encouragement and support.

Woodwork Club

This Club continued to increase its membership and projects this year included electric guitars, folding tables and bunk beds. Mr. Flemming was thanked for his constant help and advice.

Astronomical Society



This Society recorded its deep indebtedness to Mr Brace who enabled the boys to complete the 8 inch diameter Newtonian Reflector Telescope which enabled club members to view most of the Solar System.

The photograph to the left shows the School's 8 inch telescope being used by members of the Astronomical Society.

Socratic Society

This year saw a considerable widening of the Society's program due to the enthusiasm of its President Mr. Colley supported by G. Banks (Chairman), N. Skelton (Secretary), R. Bullough (Treasurer), A. Birchall, I. Hunter, A. Jones, G. Timmins and C. M. Wilkinson. The Christmas Social was well organised and proved most successful, no doubt helped by dancing classes held on Friday evenings with girls invited from the High School. Mrs. Brinkman and Miss Grundy chaperoned the girls and Mr. Robinson the boys.

The Society also organised a series of discussions on philosophical, scientific and religious topics with several members of the staff helping where required. Only about a quarter of the Sixth Form pupils attended, but those who did had an enjoyable time.

Two visits were made to Wigan Little Theatre, a few boys saw the Old Vic's 'Merchant of Venice' performed in Manchester, and Mr Sutcliffe hired a minibus to take some boys to see 'West Side Story' performed in Liverpool.

'Kogweel'

At the end of this year the students' magazine 'Kogweel' was one year old. It started purely as a venture within the school but as the year progressed its scope was extended to include the Girls High School, Wigan Grammar School, and the Notre Dame Convent School and the plan was to include more schools in the future. Some of the Thomas Linacre boys felt that this broadening of scope to include other schools should not have occurred, but the editorial team pointed out that the magazine

would only survive if more material was submitted stating “not enough ‘Linacarians’ were willing to contribute regular articles.”

The School Band



As with all school bands there is the perennial problem of experienced older boys leaving and having to be replaced by younger boys yet to learn. A plea was made for more boys to learn to play a brass instrument. The departure of Mr. Hilton at the end of this school year was viewed with deep regret. Mr. McPherson arranged for the School Band to play at the annual School Sports Day this year rather than the usual playing of gramophone records. The photograph to the left shows members of the school’s Jazz and Military Band rehearsing both Mozart and Top of the Pops for a

concert to be given to the Wigan and District Music Society.

School Trips

The **Easter Trip** this year went to Devon accompanied by Mr. Gapes and Mr. Robinson.

During this year five **industry visits** were made for boys studying Workshop Subjects and four visits for boys studying Economics. The workshop focused visits included (1) Park Gate Iron and Steel Company in Rotherham, (2) the Steel Corporation Works in Sheffield, (3) Walmsleys Foundry Ltd near Bolton, (4) the British Aluminium Co. Ltd. at Warrington and (5) Roger Bolton’s Foundry in Wigan.

The Economics focused visits included (1) Leyland Motors Ltd near Leyland, (2) the Vulcan Foundry Locomotive Works at Newton-le-Willows, (3) Eckersley’s Cotton Mills in Wigan, and (4) British Railways Modernisation Scheme at the Diesel-Electric Depot at Atherton.

Annual School Play ‘Operation Morning Departure’ by Kenneth Woollard



The Annual School Play ‘**Operation Morning Departure**’ was performed in the School Hall in March 1962. The play was produced by Mr. Barlow and assisted by Mr. T. A. Turner and, according to the boys was admirably attuned to their needs and was a great success because of good acting and loyal team work behind the stage.

The photograph left shows the pupils in a dress rehearsal of the play.

1960-61 to 1962-63

The extract below shows what appeared in the Evening Chronicle in March 1962 around Easter Time. It presents the reasons as to why the Wigan Education Committee was thinking of merging the Thomas Linacre Technical School with Wigan Grammar School - a bomb shell indeed.

MERGER FOR TWO WIGAN SCHOOLS

A CASE FOR THE AMALGAMATION OF WIGAN'S TWO MAJOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IS LIKELY TO BE MADE OUT AT NEXT MONDAY'S MEETING OF WIGAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE.

GOVERNORS OF THE TOWN'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND THE THOMAS LINACRE SECONDARY TECHNICAL SCHOOL, WHICH ARE ACROSS THE ROAD FROM EACH OTHER IN PARSONS WALK MET LAST NIGHT.

MEMORANDUMS HAVE ALREADY BEEN SUBMITTED BY HEADMASTERS AND STAFFS OF THE TWO SCHOOLS. THE FINAL DECISION MAY EVENTUALLY TURN ON WHETHER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION WILL FAVOUR WIGAN'S PROPOSAL TO LINK UP WITH 10 SURROUNDING COUNTY DISTRICTS INTO ONE COUNTY BOROUGH.

TWO YEARS

NO DECISION WILL BE IMPLEMENTED FOR TWO YEARS – ABOUT THE TIME THE COMMISSION'S FINDINGS ARE EXPECTED. IF THE COMMISSION FINDS FOR WIGAN'S PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD BOOST THE TOWN'S POPULATION NEARLY THREEFOLD, AMALGAMATION MAY NEVER TAKE PLACE. BUT IF THE COMMISSION ONLY AGREES TO A MERGER WITH SOME OF THE COUNTY DISTRICTS, THE AMALGAMATION IS MORE THAN LIKELY TO TAKE PLACE.

STAFFS OF THE TWO SCHOOLS WILL PROBABLY MEET SOON TO CONSIDER THE STAFFING SITUATION INCLUDING QUESTIONS OF SENIORITY. FEELINGS ARE NOT UNANIMOUS ON THE SUBJECT.

THE MAIN PLANK OF THOSE FAVOURING AMALGAMATING THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL, WHOSE ROOTS REACH BACK TO 1597 WITH THE THOMAS LINACRE WHICH OPENED IN 1953, IS THE DECLINING POPULATION OF THE BOROUGH. IT HAS DROPPED FROM AROUND 84,000 TO AROUND 78,000 IN THE LAST TEN YEARS, AND NOW THAT THE POST-WAR BULGE IS EASING ITS WAY THROUGH THE TOWN'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS THE NUMBER OF PUPILS IS DECLINING.

AT THE SAME TIME THE POPULATION OF THE SURROUNDING COUNTY DISTRICTS HAVE RISEN CORRESPONDINGLY. THE ANNUAL INTAKE TO WIGAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS HAS DROPPED FROM A PEAK OF AROUND 1,500 TO AROUND 1,000 PUPILS.

TWO OTHER FACTORS MAY HAVE HASTENED THE AMALGAMATION PROPOSALS. THOMAS LINACRE'S HEADMASTER MR. W. S. BRACE IS LEAVING THE SCHOOL WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS TO TAKE UP A SIMILAR POST AT GATESHEAD. AND THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC AXE HAS COME DOWN ON FOUR OF WIGAN'S SCHOOL-BUILDING PROJECTS SCHEDULED FOR 1963-4.

OPPONENTS OF AMALGAMATION HAVE MORE THAN SENTIMENT ON THEIR SIDE. SAID ONE GOVERNOR "IF THE BOROUGH'S PLANS ARE FAVOURED BY THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION MORE COULD BE DONE TO PERMUTATE THE EXTRA ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE AND PROBABLY FILL THE THOMAS LINACRE IN ITS OWN RIGHT.

EVENING CHRONICAL 21TH MARCH 1962

The above notice was shortly followed a week later by the statement shown below. This went far further than saying 'the school **may** amalgamate' to the position 'they **almost certainly will** amalgamate' but retain their separate identifies for at least two years.

SCHOOL MERGER RESTS ON BOUNDARY DECISION

WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL AND THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL – WHICH ARE ACROSS THE ROAD FROM EACH OTHER IN PARSONS WALK – ARE TO BE COMBINED TO FORM A GRAMMAR TECHNICAL SCHOOL SIMILAR TO THE NEW GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL.

IN TAKING THIS DECISION LAST NIGHT HOWEVER, WIGAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE ADDED THAT AS FAR AS CIRCUMSTANCES ALLOWED EACH SCHOOL SHOULD BE PERMITTED TO PRESERVE ITS PARTICULAR IDENTITY FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS – UNTIL THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION REGARDING THE WIGAN AREA ARE KNOWN.

COUNCILLOR S. TAYLOR, CHAIRMAN OF THE SECONDARY AND FURTHER EDUCATION SUB-COMMITTEE, SAID THAT THE GOVERNING BODIES OF THE TWO SCHOOLS HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER AND HAD NO COMMENT TO OFFER.

ALDERMAN E. MALONEY, CHAIRMAN OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE, SAID THAT ONE OF THE REASONS FOR THE STEP WAS THAT IT HAD BEEN ESTIMATED THAT TO BRING THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL UP TO MODERN REQUIREMENTS WOULD COST £180,000 WITHOUT THE ADDED EXPENSE OF EQUIPMENT. ALDERMAN MALONEY SAID HE HAD HAD A NUMBER OF LETTERS FROM PARENTS ON THE SUBJECT OF THE PROPOSED MERGER.

PROCEDURE. HE POINTED OUT HOWEVER, TO THE PARENTS WHO WERE PROTESTING, THAT BEFORE THE MERGER COULD BECOME FACT THERE WAS A CERTAIN LEGAL PROCEDURE TO BE GONE THROUGH.

THE PROPOSAL WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND EVERYONE WHO OBJECTED TO IT WOULD HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF PUTTING THEIR OBJECTION TO THE MINISTER, WITH WHOM THE FINAL DECISION RESTED.

EVENING CHRONICLE 30TH MARCH 1962

Resignation of the Headmaster Mr. W.S Brace



The resignation of Headmaster Mr. W. S. Brace was announced to take effect at the end of the Easter Term. This must have been a highly disappointing time for a man who lived for, and built up, what he saw as the ideal Secondary Technical School providing a strong focus on technical education whilst at the same time ensuring that a liberal education was possible in the same school.

As this was a mid-year departure, the long serving Senior Master – and Head Teacher of the College Technical School before it was moved into the Thomas Linacre School in 1953 – Mr. L. W. Smith was appointed Acting Headmaster in the interim.

Sports Day in May 1962

The Annual School Sports Day was held as usual on Mesnes Playing Fields. The invited Guest to present the sport trophies at this sports day was Councillor T. Monks, Mayor of Wigan, overseen by Mr. L. W. Smith the acting Headmaster. Once again numerous school records were broken. The photograph below, taken from the Wigan Observer, shows 'Boys taking part in the School's Annual Sports Day on Mesnes Playing Fields with Mayor and Mayoress Councillor and Mrs. T. Monks and Acting Principal Mr. L. W. Smith.



Open Day Exhibition of Work



Little was recorded on the Open Day and Exhibition of Work for this year in the School Magazine, but a photograph was published in the local paper showing boys demonstrating their skills on the metalwork shop at the annual Open Day

Sports News

The school was proud of its sporting record when it came to the Greenhouse Cup and this was reported when the Greenhouse Cup was won again in 1962.

OUR FIRST ROUND, WHICH WAS AT HOME, WAS PLAYED AGAINST WHELLEY S. S. WE WON 8 - 0. THE NEXT MATCH, PLAYED AWAY, WAS WITH SHEVINGTON S. S. WHERE WE WERE PRESSED TO LEAD AT THE FINISH. THE SEMI-FINAL WAS AGAINST ASHTON S. S. ON THEIR GROUND AND THE FINAL SCORE WAS 3 - 1 IN OUR FAVOUR. THE FINAL WAS AGAINST ABRAHAM GUEST SECONDARY SCHOOL WHERE WE WON 2-1.

J. FAZAKERLEY 4S SCHOOL MAGAZINE SUMMER 1962 P14

Potential Merger Stage 3

The announcement published on the **21st March** announcing the **possibility** of a merger - but only in two years time, and then updated with a second announcement published on the **30th March** stating that a merger **almost certainly** would take place but both schools would retain their separate identity for two years was followed by a third announcement published on **30th June** indicating that the proposed merger **would** go ahead as soon as possible. See statement below.

SPEED-UP OF SCHOOL MERGER PROPOSED

A SPEED -UP IN THE PROPOSED MERGER OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL AND WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL IS INDICATED IN A LETTER SENT OUT BY THE WIGAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE TO PARENTS OF THOMAS LINACRE PUPILS.

THE LETTER REVIEWS THE PREVIOUS STAGES IN THE NOW MONTHS-OLD DELIBERATIONS ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL. AT RECENT MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE THERE HAVE BEEN DISCUSSIONS CONCERNING AMALGAMATION PROPOSALS.

THE LETTER STATES THAT A NEW SITUATION HAS ARISEN WHICH MEANS THAT THE ORIGINAL PLAN TO PRESERVE THE SEPARATE IDENTITIES OF EACH SCHOOL FOR AROUND TWO YEARS LOOKS LIKE HAVING TO BE SCRAPPED AND AMALGAMATION MADE AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE.

THE LETTER STATES 'IN MARCH THIS YEAR THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE REVIEWED THE FUTURE OF THE THOMAS LINACRE AND WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOLS AND DECIDED TO COMBINE THE TWO SCHOOLS AS OPPORTUNITY OFFERED IN THE NEAR FUTURE, BUT TO ENDEAVOUR TO PRESERVE THE SEPARATE IDENTITY OF EACH SCHOOL FOR A PERIOD OF APPROXIMATELY TWO YEARS. THAT IS UNTIL THE RECOMMENDATION OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION REGARDING THE WIGAN AREA BECOMES KNOWN.

THE LETTER POINTS OUT HOWEVER, THAT SINCE THAT TIME NOT ONLY HAVE 'AN APPRECIABLE NUMBER OF THE STAFF OF THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL OBTAINED POSTS ELSEWHERE BUT ALSO THE HEADMASTER OF WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL HAS SECURED ANOTHER APPOINTMENT'.

THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, MR. REESE EDWARDS, POINTS OUT THAT 'TAKING ALL THESE THINGS INTO CONSIDERATION AND IN VIEW OF THE ANXIETY EXPRESSED NOT ONLY BY THE PARENTS OF PUPILS AT THESE TWO SCHOOLS BUT ALSO BY THE SCHOOLS' STAFFS, IT HAS BEEN DECIDED TO PROCEED WITH THE PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF THE SCHOOLS AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE DATE IF THE PROPOSAL IS APPROVED BY THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.'

AND THE LETTER FURTHER STATES THAT ON JUNE 18TH THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE DECIDED TO ISSUE FORMAL NOTICE OF ITS INTENTION TO **CLOSE** THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL AND TO AMALGAMATE THE SCHOOL ORGANISATION WITH THAT OF WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL. A PROPOSAL TO THIS EFFECT IS BEING SUBMITTED TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

OBJECTIONS

PUBLIC NOTICE HAS TO BE GIVEN OF SUCH A PROPOSAL. THIS WILL APPEAR IN LOCAL NEWSPAPERS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

LANCASHIRE EVENING POST 20TH JUNE 1962

1960-61 to 1962-63

This third announcement informing the general public of a speed up of the merger proposal prompted a series of objections. L. A. Dissado - one ex-pupil and one time Captain of the School Chess Club - wrote the following 'Open Letter of Objection' which has been transcribed in part below.

SCHOOL MERGER PROTEST LETTER

'LESS CHANCE FOR THE INDIVIDUAL PUPIL'

SIR, I WISH TO EXPRESS THE DISAPPROVAL OF MYSELF AND OTHER EX-STUDENTS OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL CONCERNING THE AMALGAMATION OF THAT SCHOOL WITH THE WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL. THE REASON GIVEN FOR THE AMALGAMATION IS THAT THE POPULATION OF WIGAN IS DECLINING, AND IT CAN NO LONGER SUPPORT TWO SCHOOLS.

IT WAS ORIGINALLY PROPOSED TO WAIT FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION WHICH IS EXPECTED TO INCREASE THE SIZE OF THE BOROUGH OF WIGAN AND THUS COMPLETELY FILL BOTH SCHOOLS AGAIN.

BUT THE LOSS OF BOTH HEADMASTERS AND THE DECLARED INTENTIONS OF SEVERAL DEPARTMENTAL HEADS OF LEAVING AT THE END OF THIS TERM CAUSED WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE PANICKY MEASURE OF AMALGAMATION.

THIS MAY INDEED PROVE TO BE A RATHER RASH MEASURE FOR, WITH THE INCREASE IN CHILDREN AVAILABLE FOR GRAMMAR SCHOOL EDUCATION AND THE SO CALLED BIRTH RATE BULGE AND THE POSSIBLE INCREASE OF THE SIZE OF THE BOROUGH THE AMALGAMATED SCHOOL MAY BE CALLED UPON TO TAKE MORE PUPILS THAN IS POSSIBLE, WHEREAS TWO SEPARATE SCHOOLS MAY BE ABLE TO TAKE A LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THAT INCREASE.

THE REASON FOR THIS INABILITY TO TAKE EXTRA PUPILS IS THAT THE AMALGAMATED SCHOOL WILL CONTAIN LESS STAFF AND FEWER FACILITIES, I.E. LABORATORY EQUIPMENT, ROOMS, ETC. THESE MEASURES WILL HAVE BEEN TAKEN BECAUSE THE NEW SCHOOL IS FOR ECONOMY AND THERE IS NO ECONOMY IN SETTING UP A NEW SCHOOL FROM TWO SEPARATE SCHOOLS, WHILE RETAINING THE FULL STAFF AND EQUIPMENT OF BOTH SCHOOLS.

AT PRESENT THE TWO SCHOOLS OPERATE SUCCESSFULLY TO GIVE TWO DISTINCT TYPES OF EDUCATION. THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL SERVES MAINLY THE ACADEMIC WORLD, BUT THE TECHNICAL SCHOOL IS DESIGNED TO GIVE THOSE BOYS WITH SUFFICIENT INTELLIGENCE A CHANCE TO GAIN SUCH QUALIFICATIONS AS LEAD TO AN ENGINEERING DEGREE, OR A STUDENT APPRENTICESHIP; THE MEANS OF PRODUCING MUCH NEEDED TECHNOLOGISTS.

IT ALSO GIVES THOSE BOYS WHO CONCENTRATE ON ACADEMIC STUDIES A PRACTICAL SKILL IN THE WORKSHOPS OR ON THE DRAWING BOARD, ACQUIRED THROUGHOUT FIVE YEARS OF SCHOOL LIFE AS WELL AS A THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE INDUSTRIAL PROCESSES.

I WOULD LIKE TO BRING TO THE NOTICE OF THE PEOPLE OF WIGAN THE FACT THAT THE REMEDY LIES IN THEIR HANDS. IT REQUIRES ONLY A PETITION OF 10 WIGAN RATE PAYERS TO THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION TO CAUSE AN INVESTIGATION TO BE SET UP.

YOURS ETC. L. A. DISSADO, 1A, STANLEY CRESCENT, PRESCOT.

ABSTRACT OF PETITION LETTER IN LANCASHIRE EVENING POST 29TH JUNE 1962

Thomas Linacre Old Boys Association

This was the fourth year of the Thomas Linacre Old Boys Association and a meeting was held on Thursday 5th July at 7-30pm with the aim of enlivening the group. A plea was made for all boys leaving school at the end of the year to join the Association by writing to Mr Brian A. Brooks of 4, Deefords Avenue, Chester.

School Year 1962-63

This unfortunately, was the last year of Thomas Linacre Technical School and its future remained uncertain – how would the merger work out and how would Thomas Linacre fare after the amalgamation? This last year was entirely under the leadership of Acting Headmaster Mr. L. W. Smith. The last ever edition of the School Magazine gave due respect to this long serving and dedicated staff member.

MR. L. W. SMITH B.SC., ACTING HEADMASTER, 1962-3

MR. L. W. SMITH HAS TAUGHT IN WIGAN FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS. TOWARDS ITS CLOSE, HE WAS IN CHARGE OF THE JUNIOR TECHNICAL SCHOOL. HE HAS BEEN OUR SENIOR MASTER SINCE THE SCHOOL OPENED AND, WHEN MR. BRACE MOVED TO GATESHEAD, MR. SMITH BECAME OUR ACTING HEADMASTER.

WHAT WAS INEVITABLY IN MANY WAYS A THANKLESS AND BURDENSOME TASK HE HAS CARRIED OUT WITH SINCERE DILIGENCE AND PERSISTENT IDEALISM. AS YOUR EDITOR, I HAVE BEEN REQUESTED TO RECORD THIS TRIBUTE.

S. M. APPLETON SCHOOL MAGAZINE, 1963 P3.

Following the loss of so many staff the previous year, the school greatly welcomed newcomers Mrs. B. C. Hinde as Art Teacher and Mrs. E. Saddler and Mrs. D. M. Small both of whom assisted in German and Russian during the autumn term. It is interesting to note this is the first indication of ladies teaching in the school. Mr. H. I. Hutchings B.A. arrived in January 1963 to teach Russian. Good wishes were also granted to Mr. E. McPherson, the school's assiduous Band Master, who announced he would be leaving at the end of the year to take up a position at Urmston Grammar School.

The **Head Boy** for this final school year was I. Wilcock.

In spite of all the difficulties and uncertainties facing the school, life went on as normal as possible.

House Reports

1 Arkwright House Masters Mr. Martindale, Mr. Oldham, and Mr. Appleton.

According to the house report it failed to distinguish itself during this last year. A few notable boys had done well but most 'had failed to raise themselves from the tomb of lethargy'. Blame, according to the House lay in part, on the change to the house system at the beginning of the previous school year. 'Despite the difficulty of assembling all members on time, the old system of a weekly House Assembly at least afforded a check on the progress of the house, and the diversity of activities could be impressed on less dynamic boys'. The one bright spot this year was gaining First Position in the Senior Championship on average points in the Cross Country Running Competition.

2 Bridgewater House Masters Mr. Gapes, Mr. Thorpe, and Mr. Coates

The House report stated it did well in Athletics at the annual Sports Day emerging as Overall Champions and special thanks was given to the Intermediates and Seniors who were champions in their respective sections. In Basketball the house captured the Basketball Championship in the face of strong competition, but the house had no success in the Chess Competitions. In Swimming the house came third, but the junior members became the Junior Champions.

3 Crompton House Masters Mr. Riding, Mr. Sutcliffe and Mr. McPherson

At the end of the previous year this House suffered a great loss with the departure of Mr. Day who had been the driving force behind Crompton, and before that Newton House in the school's earlier years. On Sports Day the house came overall second largely through the efforts of the Senior boys. In Chess the house did exceedingly well and won the Chess Championship.

Peel House Masters Mr. Rhodes, Mr. Wallbank and Mr. McTeague

Mr. McTeague joined the House during the year as one of the three house masters. This year the house won the **Swimming Championship** and took first place in the Intermediate and Senior sections of these sports and came second in the Chess Competition.

The last issue of the School Magazine, House Club and Society news was interspersed with various messages of thanks and good will from town officials. Alderman T. Maloney, Chairman of Wigan Education Committee had the following to say to the school community as his contribution to the magazine.

ALDERMAN E. MALONEY, J.P. CHAIRMAN OF WIGAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

I WOULD LIKE ON THIS OCCASION OF THE LAST ISSUE OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL MAGAZINE, LIKE TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION OF THE ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND EXCEEDINGLY CREDITABLE RECORD OF THE SCHOOL SINCE IT OPENED.

FOR SOME REASON I HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO ASCERTAIN, THE SCHOOL HAS BEEN FAR MORE POPULAR WITH PARENTS OUT OF THE COUNTY BOROUGH OF WIGAN THAN THOSE WITHIN THE BOROUGH. THIS MAY BE DUE TO THE FACT THAT THE SCHOOL HAD TO COMPETE FOR ENTRANTS WITH WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL, A WELL-KNOWN SCHOOL WITH A LONG TRADITION BEHIND IT, AND THE FACT THERE HAS BEEN A SHORTAGE OF SCHOOLS OF THE SECONDARY TECHNICAL TYPE WITHIN THE LANCASHIRE AREA.

THERE IS NO DOUBT HOWEVER, THAT IN WIGAN THERE HAS BEEN AN OVERWHELMING PREFERENCE AND DEMAND FOR PLACES AT THE WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

ALD. E. MALONEY SCHOOL MAGAZINE 1963 P4

Student Club and Society Reports

Chess Club

The First Team won only half their games but, for the first time the Club could mount a Second Team. In the House Chess Competition Crompton House won the same number of matches as Peel House but won more games and were therefore the Chess Champions. Club members were involved in the Merseyside Chess Congress, the Wigan Chess Club and the Methodist Association of Youth Clubs Congress in Wigan.

Woodwork Club

The Woodwork Club met on Wednesday evenings and had around 20 active members. This year the Club ranks were swollen with first and second year boys who worked 'with zest' and made a variety of items including some really high grade electric guitars. Two first year boys made some fine model yachts.

Socratic Society

This was probably the most successful year for the Socratic Society due to some extent to the keen interest shown by the boys of the Lower Sixth. This year's Christmas Dance 'excelled everything before it'.

ON BEHALF OF THE SOCIETY I WOULD LIKE TO THANK ALL THOSE WHO HELPED MAKE IT THE BEST DANCE WE EVER HAD. MRS. HINDE GAVE US EVERY ASSISTANCE POSSIBLE AS REGARDS DÉCOR. MRS. SADDLER AND MRS. AITKEN ADDED THE ESSENTIAL FEMININE TOUCH TO THE REFRESHMENTS, AND MR. COLLINS COMPERED PROCEEDINGS WITH SUPERB VERVE AND ABANDON, EVEN RISKING HIS OWN REPUTATION WITH RESPECT TO SARTORIAL PROPRIETY IN OTHERS, FOR A CERTAIN NOVELTY DANCE THAT PROVED SOMEWHAT REVEALING.

IN FACT, THE STANDARD ACHIEVED WAS SUCH THAT WE WERE URGED TO HAVE ANOTHER DANCE AT EASTER. UNABLE TO RESIST THE REQUEST OF 'RATHER ATTRACTIVE PLAINTIFFS', WE RECEIVED PERMISSION TO HOLD OUR EASTER DANCE – THE LAST DANCE OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL.

SCHOOL MAGAZINE 1963 R, BULLOUGH P54

Apart from organising dances the main function of the Socratic Society was to encourage Sixth Formers' interest in the fields of theatre and music. In these areas the society had been less active, but it did manage to organise a debate and a trip was made to a Beethoven concert.

No other clubs or societies submitted a report to the last School Magazine.

School Swimming Gala took place in October 1962



A school Swimming Gala was arranged in October 1962 when three new school swimming records were established. Peel House became the **Overall House Champion**.

The photograph to the left shows Acting Headmaster Mr. L. Smith presenting the school Swimming Trophy to Frank Lyon captain of Peel House, the overall winners, whilst winners of swimming medals look on.

Thomas Linacre's Last Annual Speech Night 27th March 1963

For all previous school years, the end of year Annual Speech Night has concluded the yearly report, but as this was the very last School Speech Night it has been included in the school year in which it was held and not in the school year to which it relates.

1960-61 to 1962-63

The last Annual School Speech Night was held in the Queens Hall on Wednesday, 27th March 1963, almost nine months after the end of the preceding school year. The Honoured Guest Speaker for this occasion was the former Headmaster Mr. W. S. Brace who needed no introduction to most of the boys and parents present. Below is a photograph of Mr. Brace talking with the Mayor of Wigan at a reception held in his honour before the Prize Giving Ceremony.



Pictured at a reception at the Town Hall before the Thomas Linacre School Speech Night are left to right Mr. L. W. Smith (Acting Headmaster), Mr. W. S. Brace (the Guest of Honour), Mr. J. H. Craik (Deputy Town Clerk), Councillor. T. Monks (the Mayor), County Alderman. L. Ball (Vice-Chairman of the Governors), and Mr. Reese Edwards (Director of Education).

At the Prize Giving Ceremony, the Chairman of the school's Governing Body, Ald. A. Walker told the audience that "This is the last Speech Night that the school, as a separate establishment, will have – for **at the stroke of midnight on Saturday, 31st August 1963 the school ceases to have any legal existence.** He then went on to say however, that the school would not close but will remain as an educational building and part of an educational establishment.

He then went on to commend the sterling work achieved by Thomas Linacre School since it opened in 1953 and hoped that the name Thomas Linacre would be retained in some form or other - perhaps in a title 'Thomas Linacre Hall'. He also admitted that he knew the change was disturbing to many people.

There then followed 'some soothing spin' to the effect that this was a 'fusion' of two equal parts and that some good would come to the benefit of all concerned by this move! He concluded his speech by saying "There should be no sadness at the parting of the ways, neither should any parent have doubts on their minds about the future of their boys because the opportunities and standards will be maintained."

Mr. L. W. Smith Acting Headmaster of the school then addressed the audience. He told the guests and parents that this year (1962-63) boys were being entered for Engineering Science at O'Level in the JUJMB and that this would allow the school to continue a course which Durham University is concluding. He was also pleased to announce that the results of last year's initial entries were even more encouraging than had been expected.

Mr. W. S. Brace (Guest Speaker and former Headmaster) and now Headmaster of Elgin Secondary Technical School, Gateshead then delivered his speech. He said the closing of the school was a

'progressive act' and that all the boys would benefit from it. He said the school's one weakness had been its arts side and when the amalgamation took place this would soon be rectified. Given the effort, dynamism, thought, and passion Mr. Brace gave to the school over almost a decade, one cannot help but admire his politeness.

Thomas Linacre's Last Sports Day 24th May 1963

Thomas Linacre's last Sports Day was held in the then comparatively new Woodhouse Municipal Stadium whereas all earlier Sports Days had been held on Mesnes Playing Fields. The Guest of Honour to present the sports trophies was Councillor J. Johnson, Mayor of Wigan. The Mayoress Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Merryman (wife of the incoming Headmaster) were also present on the day. For more information on the new headmaster see the next chapter.

On this Sports Day the School Band did not perform but arrangements were made for amplified music to be played instead. Bridgewater House won the **Overall House Championship** with Arkwright House coming in second. Peel House won the **Junior Section Championship** and Bridgewater House the **Intermediate Section Championship**.



The photograph above left shows Peter Banks, winner of the Junior long jump and hop step and jump receiving his prize from the Mayor of Wigan, Councillor J. Johnson, and the photograph above right is one of the last photographs of a Thomas Linacre Sports group taken at the Municipal Stadium where they performed a fantastic feat of winning every single trophy open to them at the Wigan Inter-Schools Athletics Meeting. Pictured are Mr. Robinson and his team in May 1963.

Loyal Caretaker moves on

Mr. A. Naylor of Warrington Lane, Wigan left to take up the position of Senior Caretaker at the New Girls' High School. Mr. Naylor was the caretaker at Thomas Linacre School for 10 years existence and had worked for Wigan Corporation for 18 years.



Thomas Linacre Old Boys Association

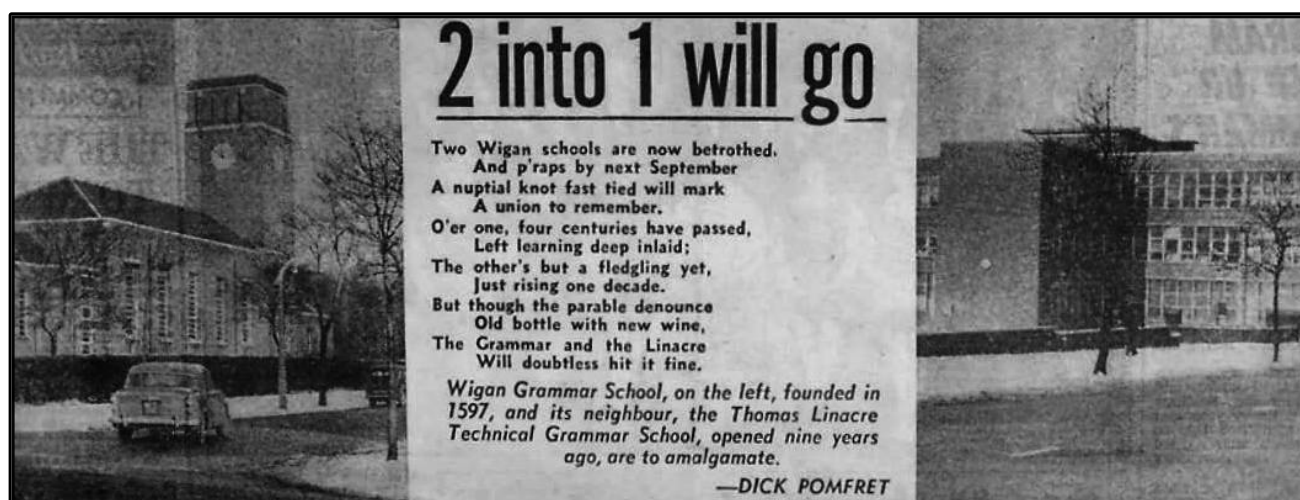
President Mr. L. W. Smith, and Vice-President P. J. Richards. Secretary J. M. Atherton and Treasurer J. Appleton.

During this, the fifth, year of the Old Boys Association, the association was revived and held a number of meetings throughout the year. At Christmas 1962 a Christmas Dinner was held at the Victoria Hotel, Wigan and this was a great success. The School Magazine stated that the association hoped to repeat this the following year.

Towards the end of the Easter Term the Old Boys' soccer team played the School Eleven and greatly surprised themselves by winning 6 to 4. It was hoped the Old Boys could play the School Cricket team before the end of the Summer Term.

Membership unfortunately, was still low and this restricted the number of activities the association could hold. It was lamented that, with more members the Association could embark on more ambitious projects and even hold a Dance the following Christmas.

A plea was made to all Thomas Linacre boys who were leaving the school at the end of the year to attend the Old Boys Association next meeting.



Evening Chronicle – Friday 8th February 1963

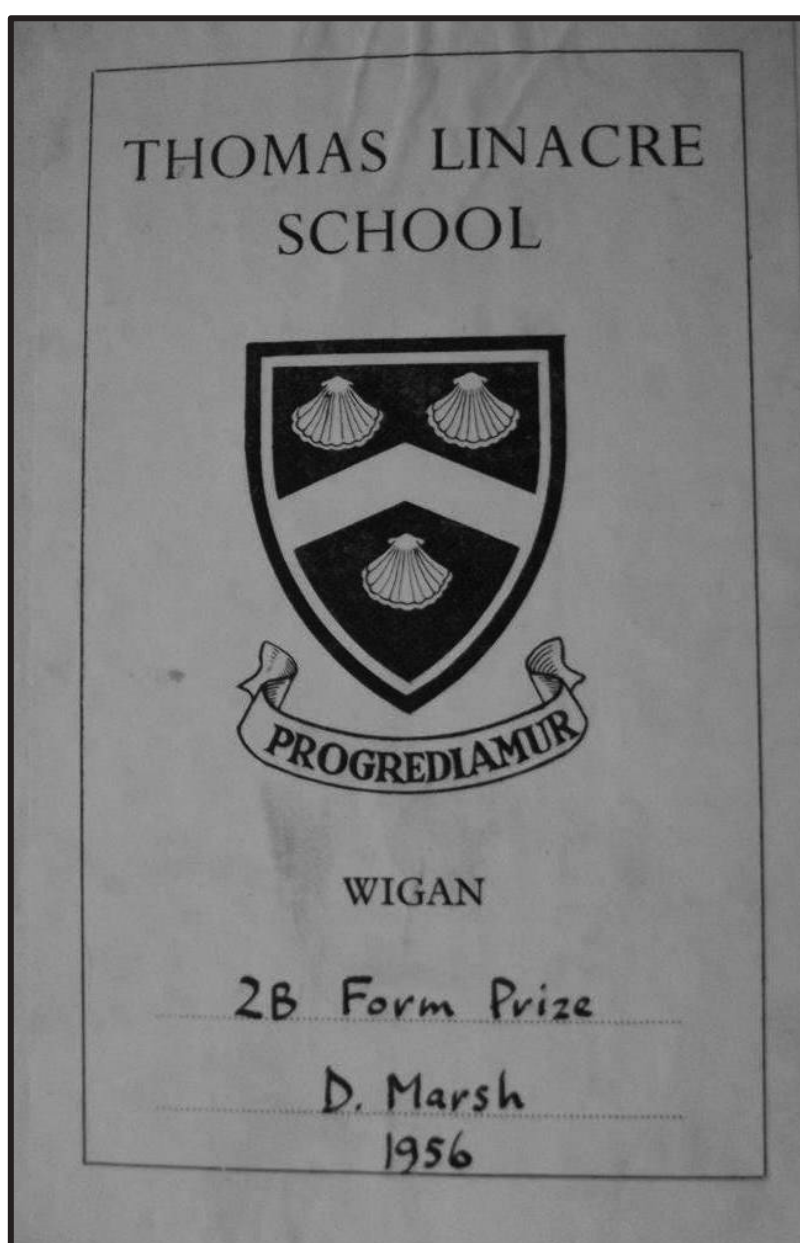
And so, at the end of the summer term, Thomas Linacre School was forced to close its doors just a couple of months before it ceased to be a legal entity at the stroke of midnight on Saturday, 31st August 1963. It had just ten years of life.

During that time the school had earned an excellent national reputation and received numerous delegations anxious to follow the Wigan example. It was housed in a new and exciting building, developed an excellent curriculum providing a broad sweep of disciplines from science and technology to language, music and the arts and offered numerous pupil focused and pupil run clubs and societies.

Chapter 4

The headmaster worked tirelessly to ensure the school ran efficiently and the teaching staff went 'well beyond the call of duty' helping supervise after hours clubs and societies, organise sporting activities and even holiday adventures. Not many people in Wigan had the opportunity to visit Switzerland or Germany in the 1950s and '60s.

Anyone associated with the school can rest assured that the end came not as a result of their own actions, viewpoints, values or performance but as collateral damage caused by a lack of central government commitment, vision, funding and drive for technical schools in the British post World War 2 era. Whilst Grammar Schools continued with a philosophy, objectives and values some had enjoyed for hundreds of years and Secondary Modern Schools continued the path Elementary Schools had established many years earlier - the Technical Schools had to build new school structures, recruit a new type of staff and develop a new type of curriculum – no easy task.



A Thomas Linacre Form Prize

Thomas Linacre Technical School, Wigan

Chapter 5 'Retrospective Reflection'

Although Thomas Linacre School ceased as a legal entity at the end of August 1963 the staff and boys continued, but now as an integral part of Wigan Grammar School. Under the newly appointed Headmaster Mr. W. G. Merriman, the enlarged Grammar School adopted the Thomas Linacre buildings as its Junior campus. The Thomas Linacre boys were now allocated to Grammar School Houses and the Thomas Linacre staff continued as part of the Grammar School staff complement. Some concern was expressed about the safety of having one school situated on two campuses; one either side of a busy road leading to the town centre. Consideration was given to constructing a connector bridge across Parson's Walk, but no bridge was ever built. By 1972 the 'winds of change' affecting Post World War II secondary education had gathered storm proportions and the Grammar School closed on 7th July after a life of 375 years. The Grammar School transformed into Mesnes High School - a co-ed and none selective entry school. If this was not enough, Mesnes High School closed on 31st August 1988 25 years to the day after Thomas Linacre closed.

After the Merger

After the closure of Thomas Linacre School at midnight Saturday, 31st August 1963 existing staff and pupils continued as part of Wigan Grammar School and the Thomas Linacre Buildings became the junior campus of the Grammar School. Although sold to the community as a merger of the two schools, it was in effect a total takeover with Thomas Linacre school houses and traditions being subsumed within the Grammar School organisation, philosophy and ethos.

Pupil Anthony Bennett entered Thomas Linacre School in 1957 and experienced the 'merger' of TLS and Wigan Grammar School 'first hand' and has vivid memories of the takeover and the first year of the amalgamated schools to this day. Both authors of this history are indebted to Anthony for the following comments and observations: a pupil who actually experienced the merger.

"Problems began to occur more than a year before the final merger took place. Mr. Brace the headmaster could 'see the writing on the wall' and resigned at the end of the Easter Term 1962 to take another headship position in Northumberland. Ironically the same situation arose – and for the same reason - at Wigan Grammar School, with Dr. Ashley Smith resigning well before the actual merger took effect."

"Many senior teachers also saw their futures as extremely uncertain. There can only be one head of a department and only one master in charge of teaching each A'level subject, so many teachers - like the two headmasters - also left. In such uncertain times finding suitable replacement staff was a problem. Many short-term appointments had to be made at both schools but, unfortunately TLS was the most affected by this problem."

"Mr. Len Smith, TLS Senior Master since the school was established in 1953, was appointed Acting Head for the last four terms. The efforts of Len Smith in the last year cannot be praised more highly; as well as Acting Head he continued to teach A'level physics because there were no other suitable

teachers to do so. He gave education priority to the examination classes. Prefects were called upon to sit-in to supervise classes when teachers were absent on many occasions.”

“During my final year at TLS I was the football fixture secretary, confirming upcoming matches and arranging the following year’s fixtures. Very early on in the year I was told not to arrange any fixtures for the future as it had been decided to follow the WGS fixtures. Unknown to me at the time, this was the beginning of a total closedown of TLS, its school records, and its achievements!”

“I shall never forget the final TLS Assembly - the atmosphere was electric. One key on the School piano was wired to a bell (an old prank) and while the assembly was underway, two master’s cars, (one being Robbo Robinson’s) were jacked up and their axles placed on house bricks. Acting Headmaster, Len Smith, gave a wonderful speech recalling the wonderful and proud school records and achievements and Half and Full Colours were presented to the outstanding boys for Football, Cricket, and Athletics. The Assembly ended with the singing of the School Song. It had never been sung so loudly or with as much passion which was fitting as it would never be sung again.”

“Prior to the ‘merger’ a new headmaster Mr. Merriman, was appointed and the ‘merger’ process got underway. The best way to describe this ‘merger’ is to call it a total ‘takeover’ where TLS was closed down and its pupils and staff totally integrated into WGS - nothing of TLS was carried forward.”

“The timetable was the traditional WGS timetable, the houses were WGS Houses, the school Sports Fixtures were the traditional WGS fixtures and the school uniform was the traditional WGS style with the school prefects wearing the traditional WGS half gowns. Initial logistics allowed ex TLS pupils to continue wearing their TLS uniforms until replacement was needed, but then WGS uniform was compulsory.”

“Following the ‘merger’, the TLS building housed the 4th and 5th Year form rooms, the Scientific 6th Year and the Senior Assembly under the charge of Mr. Merriman in the Linacre Assembly Hall and the WGS building housed the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Year form rooms, the Classics 6th Year and their Assembly under the charge of Mr. Nutt the Deputy Head in the Grammar School Hall.”

“Following the merger there was still a teacher shortage and the decision was made that the third year 6th form pupils would not be given any lessons in their specialised subjects. This affected about 20 pupils who had taken O’levels in their 4th year and skipped the 5th year. They were waiting to be admitted to university and historically were educated to S’level GCE or University Scholarship level during this third year in the 6th form!”

“In my year at WGS my timetable consisted of one period of Religious Education, one period of Gym and one afternoon of games per week!”

“The only concession to it being a ‘merger’ of the two schools was in the appointment of Head Boy, Deputy Head Boy and school prefects. George Worthington was an outstanding scholar who had won a Cambridge Scholarship and was the 1st XI Captain and was rightly chosen as Head Boy the year after the merger. I was chosen as Deputy Head Boy and as a consequence of this, became House Captain of WGS Bridgeman House. Outside school I played rugby and was Captain of Orrell Colts and as a result was made WGS 1st XV Captain.”

Retrospective Reflection

“To my knowledge no other ex TLS pupil, in the ‘merged school’ was given any sports captain role in any school or house team, although historically the sporting achievements of TLS teams were far greater than those of WGS teams.”

“The WGS magazine came out around New Year 1964 and in it, there was no reference to any TLS individual or TLS team attainments. When this was queried I was told all TLS information had disappeared!”.

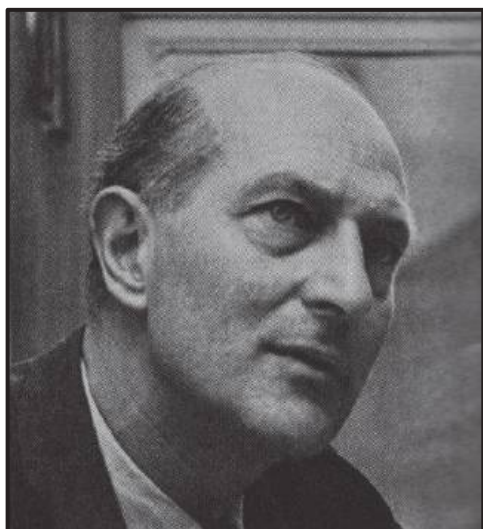
“In late February, all third year 6th Form pupils (about 20) were assembled to be informed by Mr. Merriman that they had been entered to re-sit all their A’levels again at the end of the school year and any pupil who failed to sit would have to reimburse the cost. As it happened nearly all the students had by then obtained a University Place based on their current A’level results. The 20 pupils saw this as an attempt to raise the overall School A’level results in the first year of the merger to try and show that the merger was a success.”

“By the Easter Break however, the majority of these 20 pupils started job hunting and at the start of the Summer Term four gave notice to leave, as they had independently obtained work positions, one of whom was the Head Boy, and another was myself. More were to follow. The following week a new Head Boy and Deputy were appointed, both WGS pupils.”

“Was the long term aim of the amalgamation I ask myself, to eventually eliminate the 11 plus examination in Wigan? If this was so, it would have meant shutting three selective entry schools (TLS, WGS and Wigan Girls High School) - a tall order. By merging TLS with WGS into one school only two schools would be affected (WGS and WGHS) and this would be easier to achieve. Comprehensive Schools were the new saviors for Education in the late 1960’s. One never knows.....”

Mr. W. G. Merriman B.Sc., M.A., M.I.E.E.

Although Mr. Merriman was never employed by Thomas Linacre School he had significant influence on the immediate post school merger



From September 1963 Mr. Merriman was the Headmaster of the combined schools. He had a B.Sc. 1st Class Hons. in Mathematics from London University, an M.A. from Cambridge University and was a Graduate Member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers.

During the war he became an Experimental Officer involved in Radar Research Trials. From 1952 until 1963 he was Headmaster of Chorlton Grammar School. He was well qualified in scientific and technical matters and was considered by Wigan Education Committee to be an ideal choice for the position as Headmaster of the merged schools.

Chapter 5

Shortly after Mr. Merriman's appointment as the new headmaster of the combined schools he was invited to make a submission to the final edition of the Thomas Linacre School Magazine.

THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL IS WELL-KNOWN AS ONE OF THE FIRST SCHOOLS IN THE COUNTRY TO BE SPECIALLY DESIGNED AS A SECONDARY TECHNICAL SCHOOL AND I HAVE FREQUENTLY MET YOUR HEADMASTER, MR. BRACE, AT CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS OF HEADMASTERS OF OUR ASSOCIATION. NONE WHO KNEW HIM WOULD DOUBT THAT HIS WOULD BE A FINE SCHOOL AND IT MUST GIVE MANY A FEELING OF SADNESS TO THINK THAT THIS IS THE LAST EDITION OF THE MAGAZINE OF A SCHOOL THAT HAS LAUNCHED SO MANY WIGAN BOYS INTO INTERESTING AND SATISFYING CAREERS.

WHAT A GLORIOUS OPPORTUNITY THERE IS IN THE AMALGAMATION OF YOUR SCHOOL WITH THE WIGAN GRAMMAR SCHOOL, TO BUILD A FINE NEW SCHOOL OF WHICH WIGAN CAN BE JUSTLY PROUD - ONE WHICH, BY PROVIDING A GREATER VARIETY OF COURSES AND ACTIVITIES, WILL FIRST DISCOVER AND THEN DEVELOP THE PARTICULAR TALENTS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL BOY MORE FULLY THAN CAN EITHER OF THE PRESENT SCHOOLS.

THOSE WITH A SENSE OF HISTORY WILL HAVE DISCOVERED THAT, THROUGH THE YEARS, EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS HAS BEEN DIRECTED TOWARDS THIS VERY END AND, WHILE WE MAY LOOK BACK WISTFULLY AND WITH GRATITUDE AT PAST ACHIEVEMENTS, WE MUST MARCH FORWARD IN HIGH HOPE AND WITH A DETERMINATION TO TRANSFORM ROSY HOPES INTO PRACTICAL REALITIES.

W. G. MERRIMAN SCHOOL MAGAZINE 1963 P6

A Bridge too Far?

Following the announcement of the school merger a not unreasonable question was asked of the Borough. How safe would pupils be crossing busy Parson's Walk between classes, assemblies and sporting fixtures? This issue was raised in the Evening Chronicle on 25th June 1953.

A DIFFICULT QUESTION, WHICH HAS ARISEN IN CONNECTION WITH THE AMALGAMATION IS THAT OF PUPILS CROSSING PARK ROAD FROM ONE BUILDING TO ANOTHER DURING THE CHANGE OF LESSONS.

AS AN INTERIM MEASURE IT HAS BEEN RECOMMENDED THAT A MAN BE APPOINTED TO SUPERVISE PUPILS WHILE THEY ARE CROSSING BUT A DECISION WILL HAVE TO BE MADE AT AN EARLY DATE WHETHER A BRIDGE OR A SUBWAY IS TO BE PROVIDED TO LINK THE TWO SCHOOLS

ALDERMAN EDWARD MALONEY

As it turned out neither a foot bridge nor a subway was ever built.

One question the historian must ask half a century on is **“Was the merger with the Grammar School inevitable?”** A question easier asked than answered.

As already stated in Chapter 4 the merger occurred through no fault of the school. Thomas Linacre Secondary Technical School performed an excellent job over the ten years of its existence with well qualified and experienced staff housed in excellent buildings and supported by new and outstanding facilities. It was a combination of public attitudes and misunderstanding together with limited government support for technical schools in general which finally saw not just the demise of Thomas Linacre School but technical schools collectively across the country.

The concept of having a tripartite Post War Secondary Education System, as advocated in the 1944 Education Act, was never more than half-heartedly implemented as the following figures illustrate. In 1955 there were a total of 3,550 Secondary Modern Schools across the country, this figure stood at 3,837 in 1960, and 3,727 in 1965. In 1955 there were a total of 1,180 Grammar Schools across the country, this figure stood at 1,268 in 1960 and 1,285 in 1965. In 1955 there were 302 Secondary Technical Schools, this figure stood at 251 in 1960 and just 172 in 1965. Not only were Technical Schools very much in the minority, their numbers were declining from around 300 in the mid 1950s to 172 in the mid 1960s.

National figures and trends are interesting and almost conclusively suggest that, had Thomas Linacre Technical School survived the 1963 merger, it would not have survived indefinitely: but what were the actual driving factors which led to the merger?

Thomas Linacre School was established in 1953 when the town population stood at around 84,000 but by 1963 the town's population had decreased to around 78,000, due significantly to the rehousing of inner town residents in new housing developments on surrounding green field sites coupled with an outward migration of residents to surrounding villages made possible by increasing private car ownership. Compounding this problem was the fact that the peak of the Post War Baby Boom had passed and demand for secondary school places was softening. In 1953 around 1,500 pupils entered the town's secondary education sector but this had declined to around 1,000 pupils by 1963.

Having two all-boy selective entry schools, not just in the one town, but adjacent to each other on either side of the same stretch of road did not help. Although Alderman E. Maloney, Chairman of the Borough Education Committee stated in his address on the first Thomas Linaker Speech Night that "the school has been placed on a level with Wigan Grammar School, not as a competitor, but in co-operation with it" was either naive or disingenuous. Both schools were secondary schools, both schools were boys only schools, both schools were competing for those boys who had successfully completed the 11 plus examination, and both schools were in exactly the same geographical location – how could they not have been competing for the same regional cohort of 11-year-old boys!

Because Secondary Technical Schools were so few in number and recent in formation there was a widespread lack of understanding as to what such schools stood for and what they could offer. The father of a friend of one of the writers of this history was heard to say – "I went to the grammar school and if my boy passes his 11 plus he is going to go to the same school – it was good enough for me and it will be good enough for him" and the father of another friend had the view that "the grammar school has been around for over 300 years – this new school has not been running for ten years yet". Whilst anyone who knew the school, or better still attended it, knows how ill-informed these views were, the existence of these views in the community cannot be denied. As Alderman E. Maloney stated in the last issue of the Thomas Linacre Magazine (1963 p4) "there is no doubt that in Wigan there has been an overwhelming preference and demand for places at the Wigan Grammar School."

A further factor was the state of educational finances in the early years of the 1960s. Because of a declining school population, the borough was facing central government funding cuts together with the need to urgently upgrade the now aging Grammar School campus. To quote Alderman E. Maloney again, he made it clear that "the cost of upgrading the Grammar School campus would be upwards of £180,000 plus extra for necessary equipment".

Merging the two schools could be an easy fix. The rest is history. As already stated many times it was no fault of the school that the merger took place – it was a combination of outside factors beyond the school's control. Furthermore, in the years ahead Thomas Linacre Technical School was not the only school in Wigan to close as will be seen later in this chapter.

Miscellaneous Reflections half a century on

No School history is complete without a human angle and what better human angle is there than pupil views on their teachers. Below follows a collection of boyhood reminiscences conveyed to the authors of this history. Collectively the boys' overall impression was good, but 'boys being boys' there were many mishaps, pranks, and deliberate breaking of the rules which led to inevitable consequences. Names have been deliberately omitted relating to each statement.

Views on staff members

“Len Smith (Physics) Deputy Head always looked aloof as if he had a bad smell under his nose but he was a good and dedicated teacher and not at all stuffy. He did ‘the make-up’ for most of the school plays. I believe he moved to the school from the technical college and moved to London on the School's amalgamation with the Grammar School.”

“Gerry Livesey (Chemistry) was a great teacher and character. He was a dead shot with a piece of chalk and occasionally, a blackboard duster. He also wielded a length of rubber Bunsen burner tubing to great effect. I recall him being totally devastated when the lab was vandalised during a break-in by a group of boys who were subsequently expelled.”

“Dacre Brown was heavily involved with the school plays and was a leading light in the Wigan Little Theatre. I particularly remember his ‘Captain Bluntschli’ in Shaw's ‘Arms and the Man’ and I believe there may be a plaque to his memory in Wigan Parish Church.”

“Dennis Pegg (German) was my form master in my third year. He had been in the RAF and was involved in the Berlin Airlift during the Soviet Blockade. He was also an accomplished pianist and gave numerous recitals on the grand piano in the assembly hall. One of my enduring memories is of him going along the aisle during a German GCE exam, whirling his arm above his head to denote a helicopter. The German word for helicopter ‘*hubschreuber*’ was in the text to be translated but was a word we had not previously encountered.”

“Donald Austin (English) was a slightly louche-looking individual and it was a source of great fascination to us young boys when, for a period of time, he was collected from school by a very glamorous young lady driving a Triumph Roadster. He was a fantastic teacher and would make lessons interesting and relevant by incorporating things such as tape recordings of the radio show ‘Take it from here’ to illustrate good use of language.”

“D. W. Bulloch (Technical Drawing) if my memory is correct, owned a Morgan 3-wheeler and found it at the top of the steps to the main School Entrance at the end of one term. I will never divulge who did that.”

After Mr. Brace left Thomas Linacre School at Easter 1962, he took up the position of Headmaster at Elgin Technical School until his retirement in 1974. One pupil at that school had the following to say. “As a Jehovah's Witness, Mr. Brace turned up at my house selling the Watchtower Magazine

and talking about Jehovah. I remember this well, because my mother was in deep shock seeing the Headmaster standing on her door step, causing her to think that I was in some serious trouble at school. She even bought a copy of the Watchtower”.

Views on school discipline

“Wide and varied punishments dished out by staff are still vivid - keys or board dusters were regularly thrown at the back of your head if you were caught talking to the person behind you in class.”

“If you missed being hit by flying objects you might feel the ruler across your knuckles, or a gym pump across your backside. More serious misdemeanours would result in detention and the ultimate was ‘Three of the Best’ from headmaster Bill Brace. I can’t remember if he ever gave six of the best. Fortunately, I only heard of and received once, three strokes of the cane. Looking back the Headmaster was a man both feared and admired by the pupils. He was fair but strict which I suppose was necessary when running a school of 500 boys!”

“Tommy Fawcett the religious education teacher would grab the hair just above your ears and lift you from your desk and bring you to the front of the class. Here he would make you kneel on the floor, he called this ‘the Penitence Rack!’ I can tell you now, kneeling for half-an-hour on a hard wooden floor doesn’t half hurt.”

“He would also dish out essays on obscure Russian writers - Pushkin, Tolstoy, Chekov, Dostoyevsky etc. This involved a trip to the school library to look up the necessary information in the Encyclopedias which made the task of copying out all the information long and tedious.”

“Jasper Melling the Metalwork teacher would give you a sharp knock (it wasn’t a punch) on the chin with his knuckles.”

“Every Friday in morning assembly, the Detention Book was read out and the named miscreants had to report to the Headmaster’s study at break time to learn their fate, usually a 4 or 6 page essay. The essay was invariably on Good Manners.”

“Being in Detention was a regular occurrence for me. I knew the script off by heart and could write 4 pages in 15 minutes. This was usually done during class time, thereby leaving the hour of detention after school on a Friday, to start my weekend’s homework.”

“On one occasion when I was in detention, I walked into the Headmaster’s office for my usual 4 to 6 page essay when Mr. Brace said to me *‘how much pocket money do you get a week?’* My immediate thought turned to wondering what had been written in the Detention Book to elicit this remark. I said, *‘half a crown a week Sir’.*”

“Mr. Brace lived in a big Victorian house with a lawned garden to the side and back, about a quarter mile from where I lived. He was a Jehovah’s Witness and regularly visited a house of Jehovah’s witnesses who lived near our house, so he knew where I lived and had seen me numerous times. He said to me *‘I am prepared to pay you 10/- a fortnight to come and cut my lawn at the weekend. Think about it’.* He then gave me my punishment and off I went.”

“I was sorely tempted as 10/- was a King’s Ransom to me in those days but thinking about it, my life wouldn’t have been worth living if the other boys had found out I was cutting the headmaster’s lawn! I didn’t take up the offer.”

“Detention was a regular punishment which could be imposed by both masters and prefects. If you were lucky some masters would threaten to put you in detention but then forget. You never knew until Friday morning assembly, if your name was in the Detention Book. It was like the ‘Sword of Damocles’ hanging over your head all week.”

“I eventually discovered (I’m sure I didn’t really discover it) that by tying two pencils together with elastic bands you could write two lines at a time. I did try three pencils, but it was difficult to keep them all in a straight line, so I settled on two as the optimum number. I always used unlined paper which made it more difficult for the recipient to count the lines.”

“If you were put into detention twice in one week, one of the detentions was carried over to the following week. If you were put into detention three times in one week, then this was the ultimate - one detention at the end of the week, one detention carried over to the following week, and three strokes of the cane. I only had the cane once and that was because of the three-detention rule.”

“When a boy’s name was read out three times everyone was eager to stand in the small alcove outside the headmaster’s study to listen to the punishment being administered and then witness the recipient leaving the room rubbing his backside. A caning was a recognized ‘Badge of Courage in those days.’”

After Thomas Linacre

The Grammar School, victor of the 1963 merger and with 366 years of history behind it, continued as a selective entry boys school, but only for a further nine years. Some of the changing values within society which affected the Thomas Linacre School continued to bear on the Grammar School. The ethics and wisdom of selective entry, based on a one-off examination when a child was only 11 years old, became increasingly questioned as did the concept of single sex schools. On top of this was a growing expectation within society of equal opportunity for all and Wigan Education Committee closed the Grammar School; thus, at midnight on Friday, 7th July 1972 the 375 year old Grammar School ceased to be a legal entity.

Was the closure of Wigan Grammar School inevitable? Another valid question to ask and again a question difficult to answer. Once more it was a change in ‘society values and expectations’ which forced Secondary Education change – welcomed by some and detested by others. Selective entry schools undoubtedly offered pupils greater choice and potentially more career options than Secondary Modern Schools which effectively occupied a child’s time until the school leaving age which at that time was 15. A child who went through a Grammar School might or might not go on to university or other form of tertiary higher education, but such options were rarely available to the child who went to a Secondary Modern School.

A secondary school catering for all pupils, albeit with numerous streams based on academic ability within the one school became increasingly common throughout the second half of the twentieth century. In 1955 there were but just 16 so called Comprehensive Schools, in 1960 there were 130, in 1965 there were 262, in 1970 there were 1,145. In 1975 the number had risen to 2,596, in 1980 there were 3,297 and in 1985 there were 3,479. The figure of 3,479 compares with 284 Secondary Modern Schools, 173 Grammar Schools and 4 Technical Schools! Wigan opted for Comprehensive Schools with no selective entry criteria and Mesnes High School rose from the ashes of the Grammar School.

Mesnes High School, a co-educational non-selective entry comprehensive school took the place of the boys Grammar School in the autumn term of 1972. Just as many Thomas Linacre staff continued in the employ of the Grammar School so many of the staff of the Grammar School continued in the employ of Mesnes High School. Roy Robinson for instance was employed by Thomas Linacre School, then by the Grammar School and finally by Mesnes High School - see his biography in this history. Mesnes High School finally closed at midnight on Wednesday, 31st August 1988 exactly 25 years to the day after Thomas Linacre closed its doors. The reasons for the closure of Mesnes School and what followed is beyond the purview of this history.

After-use of the school buildings

The **Thomas Linacre campus** has undergone relatively little change since the closure of the school in 1963. Between 1963 and 1972 the campus was the junior campus of the merged Wigan Grammar School, and from 1972 until 1988 it was a campus of Mesnes High School. Following the closure of Mesnes High School, the campus became a part of the Wigan and Leigh College – the present-day equivalent of the former Wigan and District Mining and Technical College. As the school campus is adjacent to the college campus this made sound common sense and continues its education function to this day.

The Grammar School campus became the senior campus of the merged school in 1963 and then became a campus of Mesnes High School in 1972. When Mesnes High School closed in 1988 it was used for some years by Wigan and Leigh College. The campus then closed for a while. The complex of buildings was granted Listed Building Status Grade II on Thursday, 4th September 1997 and was subsequently taken over by the Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh NHS Trust for use as a medical Outpatient Center. The decision to name this center after Thomas Linacre was made after much consultation with staff at the Trust in May 2002.

Much work has been done to preserve the aesthetics of the buildings and £7 million has been invested in transforming the buildings to their new use. The campus has retained its famous clock tower and new windows and doors have been made in the traditional style. The brickwork has also been renovated. In contrast, the inside is state of the art with diagnostic suites and tasteful décor.

Thomas Linacre Old Boys

Although now in their 60s and 70s many former Thomas Linacre Old Boys live around Wigan and around the World. To mark the 25th Anniversary of the closure of the school in 1963 one of the authors of this history (Ron Hunt) arranged a reunion of Old Boys in the Market Hotel on Mesnes Street. Ron is sitting on the left of the photograph (following page) wearing a jumper.



Thomas Linacre Old Boys Reunion 1988

Some of the pupils were in Ron's year and most left in 1963. Unfortunately, a couple of the people on this photograph are no longer with us. R.I.P Alan Ramsdale and Alan Parkinson.

Left to Right - Back row. Ken Harvey, Lincoln Banks, Dave Whitehill, John Lilley, Vic Speak, Vic Stuart, Alan Holbrook, Norman Crippin, Alan Ramsdale, Richard Dakin, Brian Belshaw, ? , Mick Lundy, and Alan Parkinson.

Left to Right - Front row. Ron Hunt, Billy Hall, Rod Charnock, Martin Richards, Alan Austin, Graham Moss, Tony Bennett, and Jim Seddon.

What can be said with confidence is

Thomas Linacre – The School

Made a greater contribution to the town of Wigan than

Thomas Linacre – The Man

As a part of this history, contact was made with as many people as possible who had an interest in, or involvement with Thomas Linacre School. Unfortunately, no teaching staff could be located but a number of their relatives provided useful and interesting information. Greater success was achieved in tracing Old Boys and some agreed to be included in a collection of brief biographies.

There follows a short collection of biographies starting with a biography of Thomas Linacre after whom the school was named, followed by a biography of the Headmaster Mr. Brace and sports master Mr. Robinson. Following Mr. Robinson are nine former pupils of the school in alphabetical order of family name.

Retrospective Reflection

Thomas Linacre

(Born 1460 – Died 1524)



Thomas Linacre, after whom the school was named, had only vague Wigan connections. He never lived in Wigan and is unlikely to have ever visited Wigan, but he was one-time Rector of Wigan. This was sufficient for the Borough to name the new Technical School after him in the belief that such a distinguished and famous name would give instant *gravitas* to the new school.

Thomas Linacre was born into a well known Derbyshire family in or around Canterbury in 1460. Thomas attended a school which had been established by the Monastery of Christ Church, Canterbury, and his first tutor was William Tilly, a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.

In 1480 he went up to Oxford and learnt sufficiently rapidly to be elected a Fellow of All Souls College in 1484. It was here that he learnt Greek. As a tutor at the College he was entrusted to teach Thomas More, the son of John More Justice of the Kings Bench.

Thomas Linacre visited Italy to further his studies of Latin and Greek and in the process met many eminent European scholars whilst at Bologna, Florence, Rome, Venice and Padua. It was at the University of Padua that Linacre took his Degree of Doctor of Medicine, passing with such distinction that he was offered a University Professorship. Oxford University recognised the qualifications gained at certain other universities and Linacre was conferred a similar degree at Oxford, and a short while later also at Cambridge University.

Arthur, Prince of Wales went up to Oxford in 1501 and Linacre was placed in charge of looking after the health and education of the Prince. Although the Prince died very soon after his studies commenced, Linacre was then asked to be domestic physician to the King. Following the death of Henry VII in 1509 Linacre was appointed physician to the new king, Henry VIII and moved from Oxford to London.

In 1510 Linacre devoted himself to the study of Theology and focused on the New Testament at the age of 50. In 1510 he became Rector of Mersham, Kent but resigned from that post shortly after. In 1510 he was appointed to a post in Wells Cathedral and to the Rectorship of Hawkeshurst in Kent which he held until 1524. Over the next few years he was given numerous church positions, including Rectorship of Wigan in 1520 – a position he held until his death in 1524.

Linacre published many learned works during the course of his lifetime. In 1517 he published a Latin translation of Galen's work and dedicated it to his patron Henry VIII. Galen was a Greek physician, surgeon and philosopher.

He founded three separate Lectures – two at Oxford and one at Cambridge and was closely involved with the establishment of the Royal College of Physicians. Linacre died on 20th October 1524 at the age of 64 and was buried in Old St Pauls Cathedral.

**William Sydney BRACE – Headmaster
TLS 1953 – 1962**

(Born 1911 – Died 1997)



William Sydney Brace, popularly known as Bill Brace, was appointed Head Master of Thomas Linacre School when it was established in 1953 and remained at the school until he resigned at the end of the Easter Term of 1962.

William was the first of two children born to Sydney Brace and his wife Mina Gugolz. His father Sydney Brace was born on 24th October 1883 in Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire and his mother Mina was born somewhere in Switzerland around 1882. Sydney and Mina married in Nynehead Parish Church, Nynehead, Somerset on 4th December 1907 - Sydney was a domestic chauffeur and his wife had no stated occupation.

William Sydney Brace was born on 4th October 1911 in East Langton, near Market Harbour, Leicestershire and his younger brother Edward Charles Brace was born in the same village on 18th March 1913. William's father, Sydney Brace joined the Mechanical Transport Corps when he enlisted for war service in 1915.

Little is known of William's early life, but he must have done well in his schooling because in later life he graduated with a B.Sc. from London University followed by an M.A. from Oxford University and went on to become a school master.

William Sydney Brace married Dorothy Retter in Wandsworth, Surrey in the September Qtr. of 1935, Vol 1d, page 1788: William was 24 and his wife Dorothy was 25. (William's father - Sydney Brace died in Wandsworth in the December Qtr. of 1968 aged 85).

In 1950 William and his wife went to Denver, Colorado for a year teaching in a Denver school. No record has been found of his outward journey, but he and his wife Dorothy are on the ship manifest of the 'Ascarnia' of the Cunard White Star Line departing Montreal, Canada and arriving in Liverpool on 23rd August 1951. William was recorded as a school master aged 39 and Dorothy was a housewife aged 40. Their intended address in England was 38, Rowfant Road, London S.W. 17.

William and Dorothy had a son called John W. A. Brace in the December Qtr. of 1951 in the Registration District of Thanet, Kent Vol. 5b page 937. His mother's maiden name is given as Retter. (It is somewhat unusual for a couple, marrying in 1935 but having their only known child John W. A. Brace, in 1951 when Dorothy would have been around 40 years old.) She must have been expecting their child on their homeward journey to England).

Retrospective Reflection

William accepted the position of Head of the Mathematics Department of Mexborough Grammar School in Yorkshire soon after the birth of their son John, and by mid-1953 William left Mexborough Grammar School to accept the position of Headmaster of Thomas Linacre Technical School in 1953.

When it was clear that the Thomas Linacre School was to be merged with the Grammar School Mr Brace resigned some months before the actual merger took place along with many other staff. Mr Brace accepted the headship of Elgin Technical School, Gosforth, Northumberland in 1962 and remained at that school until his retirement in 1976.

William died in the County of Tyne and Wear at the age of 86 in the December Qtr. of 1997 (Registration District of Newcastle Upon Tyne, December Qtr. 1997 Vol 0531E, Entry 262).

A reflection on the Headmaster around the time of his resignation in early 1962 was published in the 1962 School Magazine by S. M. A. - Mr. Austin (S for Second, M for Master and A for Austin.)

WILLIAM S. BRACE, M.A., B.Sc.

IT IS NOT EASY NOWADAYS TO HOLD AND WIELD AUTHORITY AND YET AVOID PERSONAL STRAIN. ONE OF THE FIRST FACETS WHICH IMPRESSED ME IN MR. BRACE - OUR HEADMASTER FROM THE OPENING OF THE THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL IN 1953 UNTIL EASTER, 1962 - WAS HIS LACK OF TENSION. IN HIS STUDY, GRACED BY A SURREALIST PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF (A MEMENTO OF ESTEEM, PAINTED BY A FORMER COLLEAGUE) AND EXAMPLES OF HIGH GRADE WORK FROM HIS BELOVED SCHOOL WORKSHOPS, HE WAS ALWAYS APPROACHABLE, AND HE MADE HIMSELF UNHURRIED AND CALM IN CONSULTATION.

AMONGST HIS MANY ASSETS STANDS OUT A DISTINCTIVE BLEND OF IDEALISTIC DETERMINATION AND STRICTLY IMPERSONAL POLITENESS TO ALL.

MR BRACE'S PATIENCE WITH BOYS' PROBLEMS AND PROBLEM BOYS WAS PHENOMENAL. THESE WERE NOT DELEGATED TO OTHERS. ONE OF THE FINEST TRIBUTES PAID AT THE TIME OF HIS DEPARTURE WAS A LETTER IN WHICH A FATHER THANKED HIM FOR MAKING A TROUBLESOME ADOLESCENT INTO A FINE AND RESPONSIBLE YOUNG MAN, NOW ON HIS WAY TO PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS.

PERHAPS MR. BRACE'S PROWESS AS A SWIMMER, WHICH EXCELLENT SKILL HE SO ENTHUSIASTICALLY FOSTERED IN MANY OF OUR BOYS, ENABLED HIM TO KEEP AFLOAT WITH SUCH APPARENT ECONOMY OF EFFORT, IN THE WELTER OF AFFAIRS SURROUNDING A HEADMASTER. HIS LEAVING US IS THE RESULT OF AN IRRESISTIBLE TIDE AND, THOUGH IT IS DIFFICULT TO AVOID ANY "SADNESS OF FAREWELL", WE SEND HIM EVERY GOOD WISH FOR HAPPINESS IN HIS NEW APPOINTMENT.

HE WAS ABOVE ALL, A MAN WHO DID THINGS HIMSELF, AS WHEN HE RE-DESIGNED AND ENSURED THE COMPLETION OF THE SCHOOL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY'S TELESCOPE. I HAVE SEEN HIM HELP SMALL BOYS TO REPAIR THEIR LOCKER DOORS!

HIS DETERMINATION MASKED AN ESSENTIAL HUMILITY, PERHAPS ARISING FROM THE FACT THAT "FIRST HE WROUGHT AND AFTERWARD HE TAUGHT."

THE SCHOOL THAT HE CREATED HERE IS HIS TESTIMONIAL.

S. M. A.

Mr Brace wrote the following about his own memories of the school in a piece titled "I Remember, I Remember....."

I REMEMBER, I REMEMBER.....

NINE YEARS IS QUITE A LONG TIME TO SPEND IN ONE PLACE. IN FACT, IT IS THE LONGEST TIME I HAVE EVER SPENT IN ONE PLACE IN MY LIFE. WHAT DO I REMEMBER OF THE NINE YEARS I SPENT IN THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL?

ONE OF THE THINGS I REMEMBER WITH GREATEST PLEASURE IS THE SCHOOL SONG. A VERY UNUSUAL SCHOOL SONG IT IS, BOTH IN WORDS AND MUSIC. AS I THINK OF THE SONG I REMEMBER BOTH MR. AUSTIN WHO WROTE THE WORDS AND MR THORPE, WHO COMPOSED THE MUSIC.

BUT WHAT I REMEMBER MOST IS THE SCHOOL SINGING THE SCHOOL SONG ON SPEECH DAY.

EVERY YEAR ON SPEECH DAY I WONDERED AT THE QUALITY OF THE SINGING OF THE SCHOOL CHOIR - SELDOM ANYWHERE AT ANY TIME HAVE I HEARD SCHOOL SINGING TO MATCH IT..... WITH THE CHOIR I THINK OF THE SCHOOL BAND - A GREAT ACHIEVEMENT. THESE TWO IN A TECHNICAL SCHOOL WHERE MANY PEOPLE THINK THAT BEAUTY AND THE ARTS ARE IGNORED.

THEN THERE WAS THE SCHOOL PRODUCTION OF "ANDROCLES AND THE LION" WITH THE SPONTANEOUS APPLAUSE EACH NIGHT AS THE CURTAIN ROSE.....

NEXT TO THESE ISOLATED INCIDENTS I REMEMBER SOMETHING SIMPLE WHICH HAPPENS DAY BY DAY - THE GATHERING OF THE SCHOOL FOR MORNING ASSEMBLY. THIS GATHERING EACH DAY OF HUNDREDS OF NEATLY DRESSED BOYS ...UNSUPERVISED YET WITH ALMOST PERFECT ORDER.....AND I THINK THIS DAILY ASSEMBLY IS A WONDERFUL TRIBUTE TO THE MORALE AND SPIRIT OF THE SCHOOL.

IN THE CLASS ROOM THE MOST MEMORABLE ACHIEVEMENT TO ME IS THE ONE BASED ON OUR LINK WITH THE WIGAN TECHNICAL COLLEGE. THE SCHOOL'S ADVANCED ENGINEERING COURSE IS SOMETHING WHICH IS ALMOST, IF NOT COMPLETELY UNIQUE IN THIS COUNTRY. I HAVE HEARD OF ONLY THREE SCHOOLS WHICH HAVE ANYTHING COMPARABLE - BUT EVEN IN THOSE SCHOOLS THERE ARE EXTENSIVE DIFFERENCES. I KNOW THAT WHAT THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL IS DOING WILL BE WIDELY COPIED. NOT ONLY IN ENGLAND, BUT ALL OVER THE WORLD, THE ATTEMPT TO UNITE "WORKSHOP AND LABORATORY" IS SEEN AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF TWENTIETH CENTURY EDUCATION.

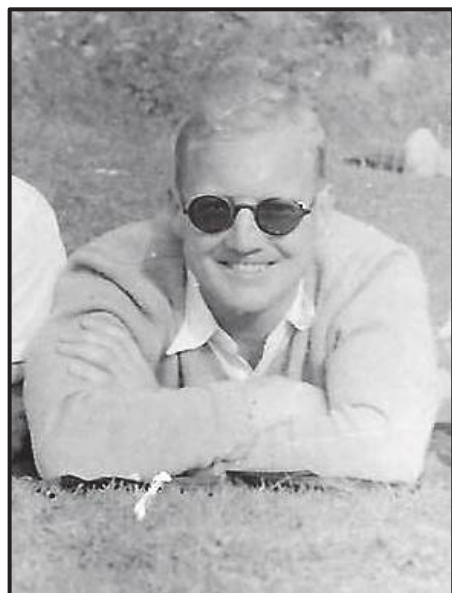
I COULD GO ON - ...THE WONDERFUL ORGANISATION AND ACHIEVEMENTS ON SPORTS DAY, THE MANY BOYS WHO CO-OPERATED IN THE EXCELLENT DISPLAYS IN THE ANNUAL EXHIBITIONS OF WORK, THE ASTONISHINGLY GOOD GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION RESULTS, SEEING THE CRATERS ON THE MOON THROUGH THE TELESCOPE MADE IN THE SCHOOL THERE IS NO END.

BUT BEST OF ALL I REMEMBER THE LIVING SCHOOL - THE BOYS, AS FINE AND LOYAL A GROUP AS ANYONE COULD HOPE TO FIND, AND THE STAFF, AS UNSELFISH AND UNTIRING A BODY OF DEVOTED TEACHERS AS EXIST ANYWHERE. YES, I HAVE MUCH TO REMEMBER OF THOMAS LINACRE SCHOOL. ONLY ONE THING I CAN HARDLY BEAR TO REMEMBER - MY LAST DAY THERE.

WILLIAM S BRACE

**Roy 'Robbo' Robinson - Physical Education Master
TLS 1953 – 1963**

(Born 1927 – Died 1988)



Teachers at TLS came with a wide range of academic disciplines and industrial experience. Most of them are remembered by ex-pupils more for their character than their teaching ability although they had plenty of that - chaps like 'Noddy' Leigh, 'Jasper' Melling, 'Wink' Martindale, 'Herman' Gelling, and 'Tricky' Hilton to name but a few.

One teacher who got mixed reviews from former pupils was physical education master Roy 'Robbo' Robinson; he's the stand-out teacher when they're asked for a memory or highlight of their time at Parsons Walk. Many pupils have fond memories of 'Robbo' who helped develop their sporting prowess whether that was on the athletics track, in the swimming pool or on the football field.

Others however, just remember the imprint of his size 12 gym shoe on their backsides! He was a strict teacher with a capital 'S'. It was only years later, after his retirement, that 'Robbo' confided to a friend that he wished he hadn't been quite so strict with his pupils. In fact, his daughter has confirmed he detested using the slipper, but it was part of the expectation of a senior teacher at that time. When he had to use 'the hated slipper' it affected him greatly and he was always extremely quiet at home in the evening.

So, who was this man we thought we knew - but didn't? What made this teacher an enigma in the 10-year life of the School?

Recently spending time talking with Roy's widow Isabel, has helped former student Malcolm Ryding paint this fuller picture of the farmer's boy who, after a grammar school education won a scholarship to Loughborough College School of Athletics, did National Service, spent two more years at Loughborough Training College, had a happy marriage and enjoyed a 32-year successful teaching career - but died at the age of 60 whilst on a holiday in the United States.

Roy was born at Denton's Farm, Blackrod in June 1927, joining an older brother and an older sister and was in turn followed by a younger brother. He was brought up on Denton's Farm, mid-way between Wigan and Chorley. His father was the village coalman cum milkman in addition to being a fulltime farmer. Roy's secondary education started at Chorley Grammar School where he won a scholarship at the age of 16 - one of only two such scholarships awarded worldwide each year to continue his studies at Loughborough College - School of Athletics.

His widow, Isabel (also a former pupil of Chorley Grammar School) explained: "One day he was at Chorley Grammar School and then the next day he wasn't - it was all quite mysterious". The mystery was only solved years later when in 1950, Isabel who by then had been teaching a few years herself, bumped into Roy at the Woolworths store in Chorley. "Roy had missed his bus home and

had popped into Woolworths merely to kill some time. We chatted. He missed the next bus and then the next. We just kept on chatting and he told me all about going to Loughborough."

Roy's three years at Loughborough had seen him excel in a range of sports and sporting qualifications resulting in him completing his Scholarship with a 1st class Honours Diploma in July 1946. Between 1943 - 46 he had represented English Universities and Northern England in the pole vault, gained college half-colours in athletics; full colours in hockey; was captain of the second XI football team; played basketball and squash and fenced for the college 1st team. He also gained Refereeing Certificates in football and rugby union, plus an instructor's Certificate in Life Saving.

Three months later he was called up for National Service in the Royal Air Force. It was in the RAF as a Physical Training Instructor (PTI) that he became a corporal and excelled by winning the RAF novices Foil Competition plus pole vaulting for the Technical Training Command. He also excelled in sea bathing, yachting and cycling. At the end of his National Service he had worked in a rehabilitation centre teaching remedial gymnastics; much of this work being completed 'under canvas'. The highlight of his service career was as a member of the RAF gymnastics display team at the 1947 Royal Tournament, an annual event staged in London each summer. When he was demobbed on 16th September 1948 his testimonial praised him for his "tact and enthusiasm, his keenness on sport and good personal performance". This served him well in civilian life."

After completing his National Service, Roy returned to Loughborough College to gain his teaching qualification. While there he again excelled in sport, principally in basketball and hockey. His RAF experience created another opportunity to perform his gymnastic ability, this time on the international stage at the Stockholm Lingiad in 1949.

Roy began his teaching career at 'Wade Deacon Grammar School' in Widnes - named after the famed industrialist Sir Henry Wade Deacon - where he taught for three years between 1950-53. Coronation Year (1953) proved to be an eventful one. Roy and Isabel were married at St George's Church in Chorley and Roy left Wade Deacon Grammar School to take up his position at TLS in Wigan.

Roy was a stickler for punctuality and presentation. Gym kit had to be in tip-top condition, no doubt a spill-over from his National Service days. Thomas Linacre School had standards and he wanted to maintain them. "He loved going to school. He would sometimes meet up with the boys from Adlington when snow had forced the cancellation of train services and they'd walk through snowdrifts to school. Once they walked there only to find on their arrival that the school was closed!" Alongside his PE duties, Roy also helped with school plays and planned school trips and holidays, some of them abroad. Few of them passed without incident.

"On a trip to Blackpool Zoo someone 'took' a penguin, while in Switzerland a boy managed to 'acquire' a cow bell. A more serious event took place on a holiday in Switzerland when a boy drank an entire bottle of whisky and it was touch and go whether he would make it," recalls Isabel.

Roy continued as PE master when the school merged with Wigan Grammar School and later still, under the comprehensive system, when the Grammar School became Mesnes High School. He once commented that when the school became Mesnes High School those standards dropped. He was grateful then if the pupils even bothered to attend his classes! "Staff and pupils didn't have the same high standards as Thomas Linacre" reflected Isabel.

Retrospective Reflection

Although outwardly appearing a super-fit athlete (he'd played hockey for Wigan Hockey Club and was a keen fell walker - along with Isabel) chest pains forced Roy's GP to send him for medical tests at Wythenshawe Hospital, a Centre of Excellence for treating heart conditions. These showed Roy suffered from a heart complaint. "Everyone was so amazed, that someone as fit as Roy could have heart problems. Because of his condition several members of staff went for precautionary health checks". "Roy's investigations resulted in heart by-pass surgery on three blocked arteries. Roy took early retirement in 1982 from his position as Head of Year at Mesnes High School – a position he had held for six and a half years.

In retirement, Roy and Isabel - both keen caravaners - travelled the world but their travels came to a tragic end on Tuesday, 17th May 1988. On a day- trip to see the mighty Mississippi River, while visiting friends in the United States, the car they were travelling in was involved in a crash with an 18-wheel truck in the State of Wisconsin many miles from anywhere. Roy was sat in the back seat busy taking photographs. He was thrown out of the car and died instantly at the scene with a broken neck. Isabel was trapped in the front passenger seat and had to be cut free by the emergency services. Roy was just 60.

His teaching career and sporting achievements with the 500 boys who attended TLS are his legacy. The boys he taught and encouraged gained 19 First Places at the Lancashire County Athletics Sports and three First Places in the All England Sports. The TLS team took Second Place in both the 1959 and 1960 Northern Schools Sports Association Athletics Championships. TLS won the Daily Dispatch Football Trophy and several players won county caps at football.

Roy's contribution to TLS can be summed up in this testimonial from headmaster William S Brace in January 1962: "I think it is true to say that Mr Robinson's outstanding quality is his enthusiasm. While he accepts the fact that in a school of our type Physical Education cannot take precedence over academic work and must accept a somewhat smaller time allocation than would be ideal, he has made it his business to see that his department has a fair allocation of time and that activities have been wide enough in scope to draw the interest of the vast majority of boys."

"Next to his enthusiasm I would put his organising ability. School games run very efficiently, and he has secured the cooperation of many colleagues in caring for, or supervising teams. Our annual athletic sports - controlled completely by him - run like clockwork and are a model of efficiency. Personally, he is a very pleasant and likeable young man."

One anonymous memory of Mr Robinson's use of the pump.

I WAS ONLY ONCE IN DETENTION THREE TIMES IN ONE WEEK AND I CAME WELL PREPARED. TWO PAIRS OF UNDERPANTS, SHIRT LAP TUCKED BETWEEN MY LEGS AND MY THICKEST GREY PANTS. I THINK I GOT THREE STROKES OF THE CANE AND I NEVER FELT A THING

NOW, WHEN I REGULARLY GOT THE GYM PUMP OFF ROBINSON! NOW THAT DID HURT, NO PROTECTION, ONLY A THIN PAIR OF GYM SHORTS. I STILL HAVE THE WORD POLNUD TATTOOED ON MY ARSE.

Anthony Bennett

TLS 1957 - 1963
WGS – 1963 -1964



I joined Thomas Linacre School in 1957 and studied there for seven years so I experienced the 1963 ‘merger’ of TLS and Wigan Grammar School first hand which took place during my second Sixth Form Year when I was studying for my A levels. Many of my experiences are recorded within the opening section of Chapter 5 of this school history.

Whilst at TLS I was made a School Prefect and Captain of Crompton House. Outside school I played rugby and was Captain of the Orrell Colts and as a result was made Captain of the School 1st XV.

I always liked sport and enjoyed many sporting opportunities whilst at TLS. By helping the Sports Master Robbo Robinson with 5th Form Games on a Friday afternoon I was excused attending General Studies lessons.

On the merger I was made Deputy Head Boy of the merged school and I was also appointed House Captain of the Grammar School House of Bridgeman.

For the record I would like to record that I was presented with full colours in Football, Cricket, and Athletics at the final TLS Assembly but all I am on record of receiving in the WGS Magazine is full colours in Rugby!

Post school, all my working life was spent in industry, initially at Turner Bros, Reed Corrugated Cases, and for the final 30 years as a director of a specialised industrial packaging company in Manchester. During the last 16 years I was Managing Director.

I retired nearly 13 years ago. Upon retirement I became a Management Consultant but after some ill health had to fully retire after two years in this type of work.

Retrospective Reflection

Lew Birchall

TLS 1953 - 1961



I was most fortunate to gain a place at Thomas Linacre School when it first opened its doors in 1953. I started in Class 1D with Mr. P. Ingamells as my form tutor. The school was great for me because it was very enthusiastic about sport and possessed a very good P.E. Department under P.E. Master Mr. Roy Robinson. I was also greatly influenced by Mr. Cedric Parry who was a very able 'Triple Jumper' and an excellent Mathematics teacher.



Because of the encouragement I received at the school I was able to develop my athletic ability to the point where I won the AAA Junior Long Jump Championship in 1959 and then the English Schools' Senior Long Jump with a leap of 23ft 8 1/2 in. which beat the previous record by 1ft. 2in.

Prior to that performance I had achieved an unofficial leap of over 25ft at an athletics meeting in Bolton which was unfortunately a marginal 'No Jump' - had it been legal it would have been a qualifying distance for the Rome Olympics. Still, you can't win them all.

Unfortunately, just after that event I tore my right hamstring rather badly and could never seem to reach my previous standards of performance.

Through athletics I developed an interest in teaching and coaching and after leaving the school I went to Loughborough College to study P.E. and English.

After completing a teaching qualification, I started my teaching career at Burnley Grammar School and 3 years later became Head of the P.E. Department at Nelson Grammar School. I continued teaching at Nelson Grammar School when it ceased being a Grammar School and converted to a Comprehensive School called Walton High School in 1972. It was at this school that I spent the rest of my teaching career, first as Head of the P.E. Department and later as Head of Upper School.

I did however, take a year's secondment to attend Birmingham University in 1974 to complete a B.Phil. in English.

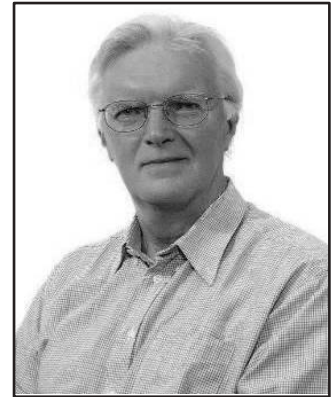
This may not appear very adventurous in comparison with other ex-pupils, but I have had a really happy and fruitful career and I owe a great deal to the foundation laid by TLS.

Thomas William Davies

TLS 1955 - 1961



I was born near Blackburn, the son of “Admiral” Charlie Davies, a canal boatman based in Wigan who spent all his life carrying coal from various pits to various mills and later to the coal-fired power station in Wigan. When attending TLS I lived in Adlington (by the canal) and I commuted to school by steam train which arrived in



Wallgate Station. If I missed the train, then I cycled along the canal bank. Who could ever forget the smell of Uncle Joe’s Mint Balls when walking to school, even in those dreadful pea soup smogs?

Two of us from the National School in Adlington passed the 11+ exam and I was offered a place at TLS.

I will be forever grateful for the education I received at TLS and the encouragement of all the staff with whom I came into contact. I was lucky to be placed in Form 1A and stayed in the A stream taking early O’levels in the 4th Form at the tender age of 15 and I remember enjoying stiff competition from my classmates. It had been expected that I would leave school and start work aged 16 but I got a job collecting rent for Radio Rentals in the evenings which allowed me to stay on at school for A’level study (at that point I was earning more than my father!). I was persuaded by Mr Brace to stay on for a third ‘scholarship’ year in the 6th Form but needed more cash (motorbike etc), so after the first term I left and got a job analysing colliery spoil heap waste to determine if there was still enough coal content to justify reprocessing. (Some will remember the Lancashire landscape of endless spoil tips smouldering, smelling and glowing). Where are they now? Mostly reprocessed and under the M6.

During this brief spell with Hargreaves I was persuaded to apply for a university place by the chief chemist and was subsequently offered a place in the Department of Fuel Technology and Chemical Engineering at Sheffield, which at that time was the world leader in coal combustion research. An annual grant of £274 pa from the Lancashire Education Committee more or less paid all my expenses for 3 years.

After leaving TLS I obtained a 1st Class honours degree in Fuel Technology and Chemical Engineering followed by a Ph.D. on ‘The aerodynamics of the annular jet’ at the University of Sheffield. My career has been focused on university lecturing and research, first as lecturer and then Senior Lecturer in Chemical Engineering followed by Reader in Transport Processes and then Professor of Thermofluids Engineering at the University of Exeter. As a Visiting Scientist and Visiting Professor I have visited universities all over the world. I am now a Professor Emeritus and Honorary Research Fellow of the University of Exeter.

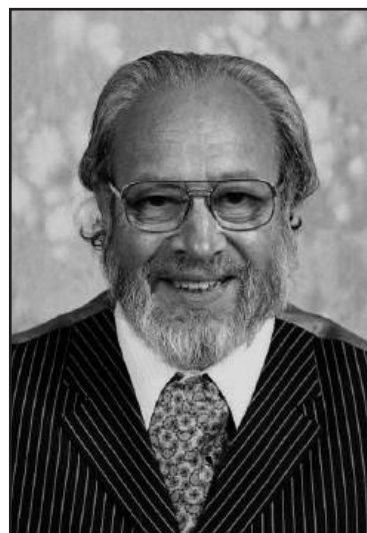
These wonderful career opportunities were made possible thanks to the six vital years I spent at TLS.

Leonard A Dissado

TLS 1953 - 1960



My home town was Prescott, Lancashire and I attended the Thomas Linacre School from 1953 to 1960 as part of the county intake used to fill the school on its foundation. After obtaining a State Scholarship in 1959 I studied Chemistry at University College London on the recommendation of Mr. Livesey my chemistry teacher who pointed out how high the quality of the teaching staff was there. My ulterior reason for going to London was to be able to go to the theatre and concerts.



I obtained a 1st class degree in Chemistry 1963 and a PhD in Quantum Chemistry in 1966. My supervisor was Australian and was due to go to Canberra as an inaugural professor in the Research School of Chemistry at the A.N.U. He asked me to go with him and I arrived in Canberra in 1967 as a Research Fellow working on similar topics to those of my PhD. In 1970 I returned to the UK to work at the Atomic Energy Authority, Harwell as a Research Fellow for three years.

In 1973 I returned to Australia and became a Senior Research Fellow in the Research School of Chemistry in 1974. In 1977 I returned to the UK to a post-doctoral position in which I worked on successive short-term contracts first at Chelsea College, London and later following an amalgamation, at Kings College, London. It was during this period that I moved into the area of dielectric materials and started consultancy with STL, which later became STC, and eventually ASN. I co-authored a book on dielectric breakdown published in 1992 that is still in print. I received the Doctor of Science degree in

1990 and moved to the University of Leicester in 1995, where I became Professor in 1998, and am now retired as Emeritus Professor.

During this time, I became a Fellow of IEEE and was awarded the two prestigious lectures of the IEEE Dielectrics and Electrical Insulation Society. I received a Degree Honoris Causa from Paul Sabatier University in Toulouse in 2007, the title of Honorary Professor by Xi'an Jiaotong University in China in 2008 and I received the IEEE Dakin Award in 2018. I am still an Associate Editor for an IEEE Journal and am a member of a number of international committees for conferences.

Carl Fairclough

TLS 1959 – 1963



I failed my 11+ in 1958 and went to All Saints Secondary Modern School where I had a very enjoyable and successful year.

I passed my 12+ in 1959 and a letter sent to my parents said that all the Wigan Grammar School places had been allocated to 11+ pupils but a place had been allocated for me at Thomas Linacre School.



I started in Form 1A and Mr J Berry was our form master. Mr W S Brace was our headmaster and he signed my school reports up to April 1962, and from the Summer 1962 term they were signed by Mr L W Smith until I left in the Summer of 1963.

I think the majority of us enjoyed, and greatly benefitted from, life at TLS. As in all schools we had some teachers who were very strict and some who had difficulty in controlling the class. Various methods of keeping order were used by the teachers, some sent board dusters flying across the room, - most of us ended up with quick reactions - others would get hold of your sideburns and haul you to the front of the classroom. The more serious offences were dealt with by Mr Brace and his cane. This is not very PC now, but I sometimes wonder if this is in some measure reflected in the decline of discipline and respect of some people in today's society.

One of my more enjoyable subjects was Physical Education, I used to like middle and long distance running. We sometimes had to run from school to Christopher Park at Standish Lower Ground and back. Some of the less active lads used to catch the bus and some would stop and have a smoke.

I think my worst subject was German with Mr E R Gelling. I remember getting 26% in my mock GCE exam and I and my parents went to 'Parents Evening' where Herr Gelling said it would be a waste of ratepayers' money if I was entered for the GCE 'O' level exam. What seems ironic is that I have recently researched my family tree and my maternal great, great grandparents were German.

I got 5 GCE 'O' levels and left school in 1963 and started work as an apprentice with the North Western Gas Board. I remember whilst working with the Gas Fitters in Wigan that I worked with Bill Sayer who was a hooker for Wigan Rugby League Club and for Great Britain. It seems a world away from our modern sports men and women of today. I stayed in the gas industry until I took voluntary redundancy 23 days before my 50th birthday when I became eligible to collect my company pension.

I have been married for 46 years and am enjoying a happy retirement and I am very grateful for my time at TLS.

Retrospective Reflection

Thomas Linares School,
Parson's Walk,
W I G A N.

Dear Parent,

First let me congratulate Carl R. Fairclough on gaining a place at Thomas Linares School. Perhaps the congratulations should be coupled with a warning that he is now embarking on a course which will entail a number of years hard work.

PLAN OF SCHOOL

As Thomas Linares School is a new school, you will be interested in its aims and organisation. The School is designed for pupils of well above average ability, and almost all its boys enter at the age of 11 years. These capable boys are offered a broad liberal education drawing its strength and purpose from the principal industries of the region. The boys will be guided and helped along roads which they should follow with their first steps towards posts of responsibility in the professions and industries of the country. Every effort will be made, especially after their first two years to help boys to follow their special interests and develop their individual talents. The minimum school course will terminate with a General Certificate of Education Examination, taken by most boys when they are sixteen, but to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded boys should follow a more extended course, lasting until they are eighteen. They may then proceed to higher education at college or university or take up posts in industry which recognise their potential as those upon whom the direction of industries of the nation must depend.

This course will entail much hard work for the boys, and they will complete it successfully only with the help and encouragement of their parents. Regular and punctual attendance is essential. Homework will be set and needs to be done. In the first year the amount will be small - 1 hour a night - but as the boy moves up the school this will increase to 2½ hours or 3 hours. However, the successful boy will at no stage deal with his homework in a niggardly spirit - it is HIS work, for HIS benefit; time spent is for HIS advantage. The parents' share will be to ensure that he does this work and that he has reasonable conditions in which to do it - quiet, freedom from disturbance, adequate light, and so on.

The School accommodation includes four workshops (for engineering, metalwork and woodwork), four laboratories, gymnasium, library, and other special rooms. The school playing fields, in addition to space adjoining the school, are at Christopher Park.

SCHOOL STAFF

Senior Master: Mr. L.W. Smith, B. Sc.

<u>English</u>	Mr. E. O. Shaw, M.A. Mr. T. Pey, B.A. Mr. R.R. Lang, B.A.	<u>Languages</u>	Mr. E.R. Gelling, B.A. Mr. P.J. Ingham, B.A. Mr. G. Leigh, M.A.
<u>Mathematics</u>	Mr. W.R. Day, M.Sc. Mr. F. Harrison, B. Sc. Mr. T.S. Hall, B. Sc. Mr. J. Sutcliffe.	<u>Geography</u>	Mr. D.W. Gapes, M.A. Mr. I.G. Brown, B.A.
<u>Science</u>	Mr. G. Livesey, B. Sc. Mr. L.W. Smith, B.Sc. Mr. J. Berry, B.Sc. Mr. W.D. Martindale, B.Sc. Mr. P.F. Rhodes.	<u>History</u>	Mr. E.G. Colley, B.A.
<u>Workshops</u>	Mr. P. Collins, M.Col.H. Mr. N. Flemming. Mr. H.J. Molling Mr. J.A. McNamee Mr. E. McPherson.	<u>Art</u>	Mr. H. Hilton, A.T.G.
		<u>Physical Education</u>	Mr. R. Robinson
		<u>Religious Instruction</u>	Mr. T. Fawcett, B.A.
		<u>Music</u>	Mr. G.R. Thorpe, L.R.A.M.
		<u>Technical Drawing</u>	Mr. W. Riding, H.N.C. (Mech. Eng.)

ABSENCE

For the protection of other pupils it is essential that any pupil who has been absent for a period, however brief, or who has been in contact with any infectious disease, should report to the Headmaster before mixing with other pupils. A note from parents and, when appropriate, a medical certificate will be required.

Carl's Letter of Acceptance from the School (1)

SCHOOL TIMETABLE

The first day of the school year will be Tuesday, 1st. September 1959 and the school day is from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The lunch hour is staggered; for some boys 12.10 to 1.10, for others 12.50 to 1.50.

A dinner cooked in the school is available for all boys on the usual conditions. At present the standard charge is 1/- per day, but the Education Authority can reduce or waive this charge in appropriate cases.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The School colours are black and gold and each boy will be required to wear a black cap with the school badge and a black and gold tie of approved pattern. The School uniform is a black blazer, the pocket openings edged with gold braid, and bearing on the breast pocket the school badge. Other articles of clothing should be neat and in keeping.

For your information, it is possible to obtain these items from Messrs. Pondlebury, Standishgate, Wigan; Messrs. Jackson & Smith, Wallgate, Wigan; Messrs. Bradley, Market Street, Wigan; Wigan & District Industrial & Co-operative Society, Standishgate, Wigan.

Approximate prices: Cap badges.....	1/6d.	Blazer badges.....	4/-
School ties.....	4/6 & 5/6	Caps.....	8/6d.
Blazers from.....	55/9d.		

Other outfitters in Wigan are considering making arrangements to supply the school uniform and parents are, of course, free to purchase the uniform where they will. Other articles in school colours are available at the Scotch Wool Shop, Wallgate, Wigan.

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Other equipment which the boys will need includes drawing instruments, gym shoes, football boots, a shirt and shorts for physical training and games. I suggest that purchase of these items be deferred until the school staff have explained exactly what is needed. For example, many sets of drawing instruments in the shops are quite unsatisfactory for the purpose for which they are needed. The staff will indicate the essential minimum of equipment.

OUT OF SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

There are many clubs and societies in school. Each boy should share in these. To finance them each boy is asked to contribute 2/- during the first week of each term. This contribution also covers the cost of the School Magazine.

PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

Co-operation between parents and teachers is essential for the education of the boy to proceed happily and successfully. To foster this co-operation, a Parent-Teacher Association has been formed, and all parents are earnestly requested to share in its activities. The school will do much for the boys; the parents can do much for the school. Announcements of meetings will be made in due course.

INTERVIEWS WITH HEADMASTER

I shall always be glad to see parents and discuss matters affecting the progress of their sons with them. However, to avoid unnecessary waiting, whenever possible, parents should make an appointment through Miss Higham, the School Secretary.

There will be a meeting in school for parents of new boys early in September. I hope you will be able to come.

Trusting that our relations will be happy, enduring and profitable.

Yours sincerely,

W. S. Bruce,

Headmaster.

John Fazakerley

TLS 1958 - 1964



I started at TLS in September 1958, as part of the intake from parts of Lancashire outside the Wigan borough boundary. Travelling to school for me meant a rail journey of up to three quarters of an hour in each direction. In the 4th Form I took my GCE O' Levels and then went straight into the Lower 6th.

At the start of the Upper 6th, we "amalgamated" with Wigan Grammar School and TLS lost most of the school's character. In June 1964, I took my GCE 'A' Levels in Maths, Physics, and Engineering Drawing.

Throughout my school years I was involved in team sports (cricket, football) and all sorts of athletics (discus, pole vault, running) plus the Judo Club and Swimming Club. Saturdays in summer were particularly busy, playing cricket for the school in the morning and for my village club (Brinscall) in the afternoon.

I then started a Civil Engineering Sandwich Diploma Course at Wigan & District Mining and Technical College, together with Steve Bland, from the same class at TLS. This was a 3.5 year course involving study from September to April and work in industry from April to

September. This gave exemption from Part 1 of the Institution of Civil Engineer's examinations (as did a university degree).

I started work in the wider world in April 1968 at Lancashire County Council in the County Surveyor & Bridgmaster's Department (Bridges Section) just at the time of the motorway boom in the north of England, particularly Lancashire. For 6 years I worked on the design and construction of bridges; particularly on the M57, then referred to as the Liverpool Outer Ring Road.

I became a Chartered Engineer in 1973 with the Institution of Civil Engineers and subsequently became a Reviewer, then Senior Reviewer of aspiring candidates for Chartership. I am also a Member of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation, for which I also act as a Senior Reviewer.

I then moved on to more general civil engineering with local authorities in Lancashire. Whilst there I studied at night school for GCE 'A' Level Geology which I passed in July 1976. My final years before retirement were spent in Liverpool, carrying out engineering design work with a company working on behalf of Liverpool City Council.

I still keep physically active and continue in my roles connected to my two engineering institutions.

Ron Hunt

TLS 1957 - 1962



I passed my 11+ and went to the TLS from 1957 to 1962. Looking back on my school report books I was always in the top dozen in my form although Football at that time was more important. I haven't done badly out of life with a natural ability to do the jobs I did. It just goes to show that although qualifications initially get you an interview its good interview technique that ultimately gets you the job. My main objective in interviews was 'tell them what they want to hear'. I've worked with people holding University degrees who couldn't do the job. They may have been good at the subjects they studied, but as far as general knowledge and adaptability goes they had no idea.

Most of my working life I worked for Plessey Telecommunications. For seven years I worked at their Wallgate factory in Wigan as a Test Engineer and later in equipment layout design. Seven years later I moved to their main works on Edge Lane, Liverpool when the Wigan factory closed. My job title was 'X Bar Shelf Design Engineer' which sounds better than the job actually was. After sticking it out for 12 months at the Edge Lane works I moved to the brand new Plessey factory in Huyton, where they were starting to manufacture a new Electronic Telephone System called TXE4. I worked there as Principal Industrial Engineer from 1974 to 1985. It was the Best Job I ever had.

I was more or less my own boss and travelled around the country visiting various suppliers whenever I wanted. I always made a point of visiting a supplier near to where Wigan Athletic were playing in a midweek game. My expenses enhanced my wages. In saying all this I probably saved the company many times my wages in the new equipment I bought, and the different and cheaper ways of implementing printed circuit board assembly which I came up with. It was a job I felt suited me down to the ground, as I have a very analytical way of thinking and I'm always looking for better ways of doing things. Talking about it now, it seems like only a couple of years ago.

Computers and Printers opened new horizons for me. I've written a number of articles; one I wrote was about a First Date and one about how I became involved in the Wigan Little Theatre. In my spare time I have helped build sets for the theatre productions. This suited my capabilities as I came up with new ideas on set building. Every year they produce a magazine and they ask new members to write a few words on how they became involved with the theatre. When I got started I couldn't stop and when I submitted my effort the editor rang me to say they only wanted a few lines but having read it decided to print all three pages. I then got the writing bug and wrote about the ramifications of a day when the Latics had no game and I ended up going to Southport with my wife instead. Everything I have written is probably 90 percent true with just a bit added. This history of my old school however is as factual as has been possible on the data available. In recent years I have collected all sorts of TLS paraphernalia and held numerous Old Boy Reunions (middle photograph).

Retrospective Reflection

Frank Richards

TLS 1957 -1962



It's not every school that can boast a Mr. Universe as one of its pupils. Frank Richards attended the school between 1957 and 1962 where he excelled at Athletics, competing in both the County and All England School Championships but his greatest interest was in bodybuilding which he first took up at the age of 14.



In 1964 he attended a local weight training gym and, after a year of working out, moved to another gym which he felt suited him better. It was whilst training at this second gym that

Frank started on a path that ultimately led to him coming First in the 1969 IFBB Mr. World Competition (Belgium), and First in the Mr. Universe NABBA Mr Universe (London) Competition.

Frank sees his amazing career as a bodybuilder falling into two distinct periods, the first between 1964 and 1974. It was during this period that Frank got to know Arnold Schwarzenegger and it was because of Frank that Arnold Schwarzenegger actually visited Wigan! Frank was so good at bodybuilding he was invited to train in many parts of the world. He lived in America for a few years before returning home.

In May 1974 Frank suffered an horrendous work accident, when he fell from an overhead gantry onto the rail track below, whilst working as a supervisor with the overhead lines department of British Railways. He was within inches of losing his life, having severed a foot, broken a leg, smashed three ribs, punctured his lung and broke some vertebrae in his neck! He was in hospital for 6 months and in a cast for thirteen. Frank was off the bodybuilding circuit for almost 10 years.

Amazingly, in 1985 he was back in the body building business for a second time. It was during this period that he was given the name 'Richards the Lionheart'. He came 5th in the 1985 Mr. Olympia competition and was therefore, automatically entered in the 1986 Mr Olympia Completion at the age of 40.

Three weeks before his next Mr. Olympia competition however, disaster struck again. Frank was dining at a restaurant with his wife and some friends when a drugs gang decided to wreck the restaurant for some unpaid drugs bills and Frank innocently suffered collateral damage trying to protect his wife. With a serious knife wound and a broken jaw he was back in hospital requiring 147 stitches! Undaunted, he was back in the gym after 11 weeks and back in competitions once more 11 months later.

By 1990 Frank decided it was time to give to others rather than focus on competitions, and now regularly gives seminars and makes appearances all over the world. In 2007 he suffered some heart problems, so he has at last decided to take things a little easier. It is thanks to Frank that Wigan can boast of Arnold Schwarzenegger's visit.

Malcolm Ryding

TLS 1958 – 1963



I started at TLS in 1958. I moved from the historic Standish Grammar School (which was really Standish Boys Primary School) and remained at TLS until Christmas 1963. At TLS I excelled at the high jump and also at

singing and was reserve soloist for 'O for the wings of a dove' at my first Speech Night - just in case the chosen one didn't arrive in time on the bus from Leyland!



My preferred career path would have been to join the police force, but good fortune opened up an exciting path into newspapers. When I left TLS I went to Byrom Secretarial College in Wigan. Following an eight week intensive Pitman Shorthand Tuition course, I spent the next 46 years of my life from Easter Monday 1964 until my retirement in July 2010 working variously as a reporter, a sub-editor, a sports editor, a chief sub-editor, an assistant editor and then editor for numerous local weeklies including the Wigan Observer, the Leigh Journal, the Salford and West Manchester Journal, evening papers including the Bolton Evening News, the Wigan Evening Post/Lancashire Evening Post and national papers including the Daily Mirror, and the Daily Telegraph.

During the 1970s I compiled three John Player Rugby League Yearbooks and was voted top Rugby League Writer by the Rugby League Writers' Association.

For 25 years I have been a lay minister (Licensed Reader) in the Church of England and am now based at St Thomas and St John Church, Lostock, Bolton.

In retirement I am a volunteer charity collector for the Royal National Institute for Blind People (RNIB) which involves travelling to sites around Lancashire and West Yorkshire. My other interests, which I enjoy jointly with my wife Barbara, include researching family history, caravanning and taking holidays in Lanzarote (visiting family based there).

Three children and seven grandchildren very much keep us on our toes!

*Top right photograph is of me enjoying a pint of Standish brewed beer at the Bent and Bongs Beer Festival.

Thomas Linacre Technical School, Wigan

Appendices

The following data are presented in Appendix form

- *Staff of the School 1953-54 to 1962-63 inclusive*
- *Head Boys of the School 1953-54 to 1962-63 inclusive*
- *School Houses*
- *School Clubs and Societies*
- *School Plays*
- *School Open Days*
- *School Sports days*
- *School Swimming Galas*
- *School Speech Nights*

Appendix 1

School Staff 1953-54 to 1962-63

The authors of this history have been unable to locate any complete or definitive schedule of staff appointments to the school, so the list below has been compiled in the following manner. The Official Opening Brochure of the school, published in the school's first term of operation contained a list of all staff of the school at that time. This data source has been used. Each successive School Magazine contains the names of staff who left the school and names of staff who joined the school during the preceding 12 months: these have also been used. In addition to these two sources, a number of past students of the school have been approached for further information.

The list below should only be viewed as indicative of staff numbers and their areas of expertise and not be taken as a definitive ledger of all staff involved with the school throughout the life of the school. The first date following the person's name is the earliest school year in which his or her name appears, and the second date is the last school year in which his or her name appears. Any long periods of absence for any reason, or any internal promotion or change of teaching focus, are not included.

Any uncertainty regarding dates or a person's initial are marked with a '?'

Aitkin Mrs. (School Secretary)	1961-62 – 1962-63
Appleton S. M. (Religious Instruction and English)	1960-61 – 1962-63
Austin D. E. (English)	1953-54 – 1955-56
Barlow N. (German)	1960-61 – 1961-62
Berry J. (General Science)	1955-56 -died 1961-62
Bibby E. (Drawing)	1957-58 – 1957-58
Booth P. J. (English)	1960-61 – 1961-62
Bould F. (Technical Drawing and Engineering)	1954-55 – 1956-57
Brace W. S. (Headmaster)	1953-54 – 1961-62
Brown I. G. (English and Geography)	1953-54 – 1961-62
Bulloch D. W. (Engineering)	1954-55 – 1955-66
Chapman S. D. (Economics and History)	1959-60 – 1961-62
Charnock J. E. (Metalwork)	1953-54 – 1955-56
Clarke R. B. (Mathematics)	1953-54 – 1955-56
Coates C. (English)	1961-62 – 1962-63
Colley E. C. (History)	1957-58 – 1961-62
Collins P. F. (Engineering)	1956-57 – 1962-63
Day W. R. (Mathematics)	1957-58 – 1961-62
Dickinson J. J. (English)	1955-56 – 1957-58
Dolphin J. (Modern Languages)	1955-66 – 1956-57
Fawcett T. (Religious Instruction)	1955-56 – 1959-60
Flemming N. (Woodwork)	1957-58 – 1957-58
Frodsham J. (Mathematics)	1953-54 – 1955-56
Gale E. S. (Physical Education)	1956-57 – 1956-57
Gapes D. W. (Geography)	1958-59 – 1962-63
Gelling E. R. (Modern Languages)	1953-54 – 1962-63
Green L. D. (Woodwork and Drawing)	1955-56 – 1956-57

Hall T. S. (Mathematics)	1957-58 – 1960-61
Harrison F. (Mathematics)	1958-59 – 1960-61
Higham A. Miss (School Secretary)	1953-54 – 1961-62
Hilton H. (Art)	1953-54 – 1961-62
Hinde B. C. Mrs. (Art)	1962-63 – 1962-63
Holt J. W. (Metalwork)	1957-58 – 1957-58
Horrocks D. (German and Russian)	1959-60 – 1961-62
Hutchings H. I. (Russian)	1962-63 – 1962-63
Ingamells P. J. (Modern Languages)	1953-54 – 1960-61
James H. E. (Geography)	1953-54 – 1957-58
Jones H. (Woodwork)	1953-54 – 1956-57
Jones T. (Technical Drawing)	1953-54 – 1953-54
Jones W. D. (Physics and Chemistry)	1961-62 – 1962-63
Lang R. R. (English)	1957-58 – 1959-60
Leigh G. (German)	1957-58 – 1959-60
Livesey G. (Chemistry)	1953-54 – 1960-61
Lowe J. F. G. (History)	1953-54 – 1956-57
Martindale W. D. (Mathematics and Physics)	1954-55 – 1962-63
Melling H. J. (Metalwork)	1953-54 – 1962-63
McAllister W. (General Science)	1953-54 – 1962-63
McAvoy E. G. (Maths)	1955-56 – 1957-58
McNamee J. A. (Metalwork)	1958-59 – 1958-59
McPherson E. (Metalwork)	1958-59 – 1962-63
McTeague ?. (Mathematics)	????-?? – 1962-63
Naylor A (Caretaker)	1953-54 – 1962-63
Oldham R. (Metalwork and Auto-engineering)	1959-60 – 1962-63
Parry L. C. (Physical Training)	1954-55 – 1955-56
Pegg G. (German)	1954-55 – 1958-59
Pennington L. W. J. (Technical Drawing)	1953-54 – 1953-54
Pey T. (English)	1954-55 – 1958-59
Potts A. E. (Religious Instruction)	1953-54 – ???-??
Rhodes P. F. W. (General Science and Biology)	1953-54 – 1962-63
Riding G. (Engineering Theory and Practise)	1955-56 – 1956-57
Riding W. (Drawing)	1958-59 – 1962-63
Robinson R. (Physical Education)	1953-54 – 1962-63
Sadler E. Mrs (Art)	1962-63 – 1962-63
Shaw E. O. (English)	1953-54 – 1962-63
Small D. M. Mrs (German and Russian)	1962-63 – 1962-63
Smith L. W. (Physics) later Acting Headmaster	1953-54 – 1962-63
Sutcliffe J. (Mathematics)	1958-59 – 1962-63
Thorpe C. R. (Music)	1953-54 – 1962-63
Turner T. A. (English)	1958-59 – 1961-62
Unsworth G. (English and History)	1956-57 – 1958-59
Walls A. W. (Engineering and Metalwork)	1956-57 – 1957-58
Wallbank E. (Chemistry)	1961-62 – 1962-63
Willington H. E. (Head of Workshops)	1953-54 – 1955-56

Appendix 2

School Head Boys 1953-54 to 1962-63

The name 'School Captain' was used during the first year of the school's existence but this name was changed to 'Head Boy' the following year.

The School Captain Alias Head Boy (H. D. Turner) was Head Boy in School Year 1953-54 and again in School Year 1955-56 and Head Boy (G. F. Wilkinson) was Head Boy in School Year 1954-55 were again in School Year 1956-57. Once the School reached its full complement of boys covering all years from Level 1 to the Upper 6th the Head Boy was chosen from the final year and no boy was Head Boy more than once.

1953-54 School Year

H. D. Turner (Known as School Captain in this initial year)

1954-55 School Year

G. F. Wilkinson

1955-56 School Year

H. D. Turner

1956-57 School Year

G. F. Wilkinson

1957-58 School Year

D. G. Mulligan

1958-59 School Year

J. A. Coote

1959-60 School Year

P. Hulme

1960-61 School Year

J. R. Richards

1961-62 School Year

C. M. Wilkinson

1962-63 School Year

I. Wilcock

Appendix 3

School Houses

Thomas Linacre School was initially divided into eight houses;

Brunel House, Isambard Kingdom Brunel (1806 - 1859) House Colour Brown
English mechanical and civil engineer

Dalton House, John Dalton (1766 - 1844) House Colour Dark Green
English chemist, physicist and meteorologist

Faraday House, Michael Faraday (1791 - 1867) House Colour Dark Blue
English scientist who worked on electromagnetism

Harvey House, William Harvey (1578 - 1657) House Colour Maroon
English physician in anatomy and physiology

Newton House, Isaac Newton (1643 - 1727) House Colour Light Blue
English astronomer, physicist and mathematician

Rutherford House, Ernest Rutherford (1871 - 1937) House Colour Red
English physicist and father of nuclear physics

Stephenson House, George Stephenson (1781 - 1848) House Colour Light Green
English engineer and father of railways

Wren House, Christopher Wren (1632 - 1723) House Colour Yellow
English anatomist, astronomer, and physicist

As would be expected in a technical school, all the houses were named after famous scientists or engineers.

These eight school houses were reduced to four by amalgamation at the beginning of School Year 1961-62.

School Houses starting School Year 1961-62 were

Arkwright House formed as an amalgamation of Stephenson and Dalton houses
Richard Arkwright (1732-1792) English Inventor and entrepreneur
House Colour Green

Bridgewater House formed as an amalgamation of Brunel and Wren houses
Francis Egerton 3rd Duke of Bridgewater (1736-1803) Founder of British inland navigation
House Colour Yellow

Crompton House formed as an amalgamation of Faraday and Newton houses
Samuel Crompton (1753-1827) English inventor and pioneer of the spinning industry
House Colour Blue

Peel House formed as an amalgamation of Harvey and Rutherford houses
Sir Robert Peel (1788-1850) Father of British policing
House Colour Red

Appendix 4

School Clubs and Societies

A sign of a progressive school is the existence of extracurricular clubs and societies. Because these generally operate outside school hours, it is only when there are a sufficient number of interested and engaged students and staff willing to give of their time, that such clubs and societies exist. Thomas Linacre School was well endowed with extracurricular activities.

From its very beginning Thomas Linacre School encouraged its students to form and participate in clubs and societies, and staff members to help support them. In the absence of any definitive list of such clubs and societies the following table has been constructed from data provided in the school magazines and helpful comments by past students. Unfortunately, not all clubs or societies provided an annual report to go in the School Magazine, so this list of names and dates should be viewed more as a guide than a gospel.

The list below shows the name of the club or society and the known date of establishment and likely date of its closure. Some clubs existed for only a year whereas others lasted for almost the entire time the school existed.

Automobile Club	1961-62 – 1962-63
Badminton Club	1958-59 – 1961-62
Camping and Hiking Club	1955-56 – 1960-61
Chess Club	1955-56 – 1962-63
Cross Country Club	1958-59 – 1962-63
Engineering Club	1955-56 – 1955-56
Fencing Club	1953-54 – 1957-58
Judo Club	1954-55 – 1962-63
Metalwork Club	1956-57 – 1956-57
Modelling Club	1956-57 – 1956-57
Music Club	1954-55 – 1956-57
Radio Club	1955-56 – 1960-61
Record Club	1959-60 – 1959-60
Sailing Club	1955-56 – 1960-61
Swimming Club	1954-55 – 1958-59
Woodwork Club	1957-58 – 1962-63
Astronomical Society	1956-57 – 1961-62
Debating Society	1954-55 – 1956-57
Linacre Society	1954-55 – 1956-57
Photographic Society	1958-59 – 1959-60
Socratic Society	1956-57 – 1962-63
School Military Band	1958-59 – 1960-61
School Scout Group	1954-55 – 1965-57
Old Boys' Association	1958-59 – 1962-63

Appendix 5

School Plays

Great importance was attached the Annual School Play by the Headmaster who valued culture and the arts very highly even in a technical school. The following plays all feature in the School Magazines but there are probably some that don't.

1953-54 School Year

The Happiest Days of your Life by John Deighton

Thursday, Friday and Saturday 1st, 2nd and 3rd April 1954

A topical and hilarious farce

1954-55 School Year

She Stoops to Conquer by Oliver Goldsmith

9th, 10th and 11th December 1954

A comedy of sorts

1955-56 School Year

Androcles and the Lion by George Bernard Shaw

15th, 16th and 17th December 1955

The play exemplifies several themes on both modern and supposed early Christianity

1956-57 School Year

Busman's Honeymoon by Dorothy L. Sayers and M. St Clare Byrne

A 3-act detective comedy

1957-58 School Year

The Government Inspector by Nikolai V. Gogol

11th, 12th and 13th December 1957

A satirical play by Russian and Ukrainian dramatist and novelist written in 1836

1958-59 School Year

The Playboy of the Western World by J. M. Synge

28th, 29th and 30th January 1959

1959-60 School Year

An Enemy of the People by Henrik Ibsen

28th, 29th and 30th January 1960

1960-61 School Year

Operation Morning Departure by Kenneth Woollard

9th, 10th and 11th March 1961

No mention of a play appears in the School Magazine beyond that performed in 1960-61.

Appendix 6

School Open Days

The School's first Open Day took place in the evening of the 1955 School Sports Day and the second took place in the evening of the School Sports Day in 1956. Coverage of later Open Days is somewhat patchy within the School Magazines but local newspapers make reference to later Open Days in May 1957, June 1958, June 1959, July 1960 and an Exhibition of Work in July 1961. No mention has been found of an Open Day in 1962.

1st Open Day, 2nd June 1955

Opened by Mr. G. H. Sheldon, Managing Director, Walker Bros. Ltd.

Exhibition of students work planned to coincide with a Parent Teacher's Association meeting

2nd Open Day, 20th June 1956

Opened by Mr. D. M. McConnell, General Manager, De Havilland Propellers, Ltd.

Well attended and by many people with no link to the school

3rd Open Day 29th May 1957

Opened by Mr. W. Somers, Mayor of Wigan.

No mention in the School Magazine regarding visitor numbers.

4th known Open Day, 11th June 1958

Opened by Mr. O. C. Lace, local industrialist

Presumably well attended but no mention of numbers in the School Magazine

5th known Open Day, 30th June 1959

No mention of an Open Day in the relevant School Magazine but it is mentioned in the Evening Chronicle where a dinghy made by the students would be on display.

6th known Open Day, 6th July 1960

No mention of an Open Day in the relevant School Magazine but a newspaper article in the Lancashire Post states the chassis of an Austin 7 will be displayed at Wednesday's Open Day suggesting an Open Day was held in 1960.

7th known Open Day, July 1961

Exhibition of Work, where school pupils demonstrated their skills in the metalwork shop, was mentioned in a local newspaper.

1962

No mention of an Open Day in the relevant School Magazine

1963

No mention of an Open Day in the relevant School Magazine and as this was the last year of the school before it merged with the Grammar School an Open Day would be most unlikely.

Appendix 7

School Sports Days

1st Sports Day, 29th June 1954

Guest Trophy Presenter – Mrs. E. Maloney (Wife of Alderman E. Maloney)

Overall House Champion – Harvey House

2nd Sports Day, 2nd June 1955

Guest Trophy Presenter – Mrs. R. Edwards (Wife of Reese Edwards, Wigan Director of Education)

Overall House Champion – Harvey House

3rd Sports Day, 20th June 1956

Guest Trophy Presenter – Mrs. D. McConnell (Wife of D. McConnell, M.D. of De Havilland Propellers Ltd)

Overall House Champion – Harvey House

4th Sports Day, 29th May 1957

Guest Trophy Presenter – Mrs. W. Somers (Mayoress of Wigan)

Overall House Champion – Harvey House

5th Sports Day, 11th June 1958

Guest Trophy Presenter – Mr. W. S. Brace (Headmaster)

Overall House Champion – Dalton House

6th Sports Day, 5th June 1959

Guest Trophy Presenter – Councillor S. Burgess (Mayor of Wigan)

Overall House Champion – Faraday House

7th Sports Day, 25th May 1960

Guest Trophy Presenter – Mr. H. E. Cragg (Leigh Sailing Club)

Overall House Champion – Stephenson House

8th Sports Day, May 1961

Guest Trophy Presenter – Mr. A. R. Grenville (Vulcan Foundry)

Overall House Champion – Brunel House

9th Sports Day, May 1962

Guest Trophy Presenter – Councillor T. Monks (Mayor)

Overall House Champion – Bridgewater House*

10th Sports Day, 24th May 1963

Guest Trophy Presenter – Councillor J. Johnson J.P. (Mayor)

Overall House Champion – Bridgewater House*

*School Houses were reduced from eight to four in 1962

Appendix 8

School Swimming Galas

1953-54 School Year

2nd July 1954

Overall House Champion - Wren

1954-55 School Year

18th May 1955

Overall House Champion - Harvey

1955-56 School Year

6th June 1956

Overall House Champion - Harvey

1956-57 School Year

5th June 1957

Overall House Champion - Harvey

1957-58 School Year

4th June 1958

Overall House Champion - Newton

1958-59 School Year

3rd June 1959

Overall House Champion - Harvey

1959-60 School Year

1st June 1960

Overall House Champion - Newton

1960-61 School Year

31st May 1961

Overall House Champion - Brunel

1961-62 School Year

May 1962

Overall House Champion – Peel

1962-63 School Year

May 1963

Overall House Champion – Peel

Appendix 9

School Speech Nights

1st Speech Night, 4th November 1954

Guest Speaker – Prof. Alistar C. Hardy F.R.S., M.A., D.Sc.

Linacre Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy, Oxford University

2nd Speech Night, 26th November 1955

Guest Speaker - Lieut. Col. R. L. Willott, D.S.O., O.B.E., T.D., B.Sc.,

Chief Engineer of John Summers and Sons.

3rd Speech Night, 31st October 1956

Guest Speaker - Dr. Vivian Bowden, B.A., M.A., M.Sc., Ph.D.

Dean of Faculty of Technology, Manchester University

4th Speech Night, 31st October 1957

Guest Speaker – Mr. John McDonald, M.A.

Staff Director, North West Divisional Board of the National Coal Board

5th Speech Night, 22nd October 1958

Guest Speaker - Sir Leonard Owen, C.B.E., M.I.C.E., M.I.Mech.E., M.I. Chem.E.

Managing Director, Industrial Group, United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority

6th Speech Night, 18th November 1959

Guest Speaker – Dr. Clifford Whitworth, M.Sc., Ph.D.

Principal Royal Technical College, Salford

7th Speech Night, 26th October 1960

Guest Speaker – Prof. J. H. Horlock, M.A., Ph.D., F.R.I.C.S., F.Inst. F.

Harrison Professor of Mechanical Engineering, Liverpool University

8th Speech Night, 1st November 1961

Guest Speaker – Mr. L. S. Newton,

Group Education Officer, Pilkington Bros. Ltd.

9th and Last Speech Night, 27th March 1963

Guest Speaker – Mr. W. S. Brace, B.Sc. M.A.

Former Head of Thomas Linacre School and Present Head of Elgin Technical School, Gateshead.

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Thomas Linacre School Magazine No. 4 (Summer Term 1957)

Thomas Linacre School Magazine No. 5 (Summer Term 1958)

Thomas Linacre School Magazine No 6 (Summer Term 1959)

Thomas Linacre School Magazine No. 7 (Summer Term 1960)

Thomas Linacre School Magazine No. 8 (Summer Term 1961)

Thomas Linacre School Magazine No. 9 (Summer Term 1962)

Thomas Linacre School Magazine No 10 (Summer Term 1963)

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Ron Hunt

Ron lives in Wigan and attended Thomas Linacre School from 1957 to 1962 and has been an avid collector of all things Thomas Linacre School related since he left. He holds a vast collection of papers, documents, photographs, books and magazines on both the school and the local community and has arranged a number of Old Boy Reunions.



Stephen Craig Smith

Stephen was brought up in Wigan but attended Wigan Technical College to take his O' and A' Level examinations between 1961 and 1965 before going on to university. He now lives in Australia where he was Head of a large university department prior to recent retirement. He is still interested in all things related to Wigan and visits the town whenever he can.

**© Ron Hunt and Stephen Craig Smith
September 2018**

SUPPLEMENT

EXTRACT

FROM

THE BUILDER

MAGAZINE

OCTOBER 22nd

1954



View from south-east. The plaque denotes that the building was erected in Coronation year.

The Thomas Linacre Secondary Technical School, Wigan

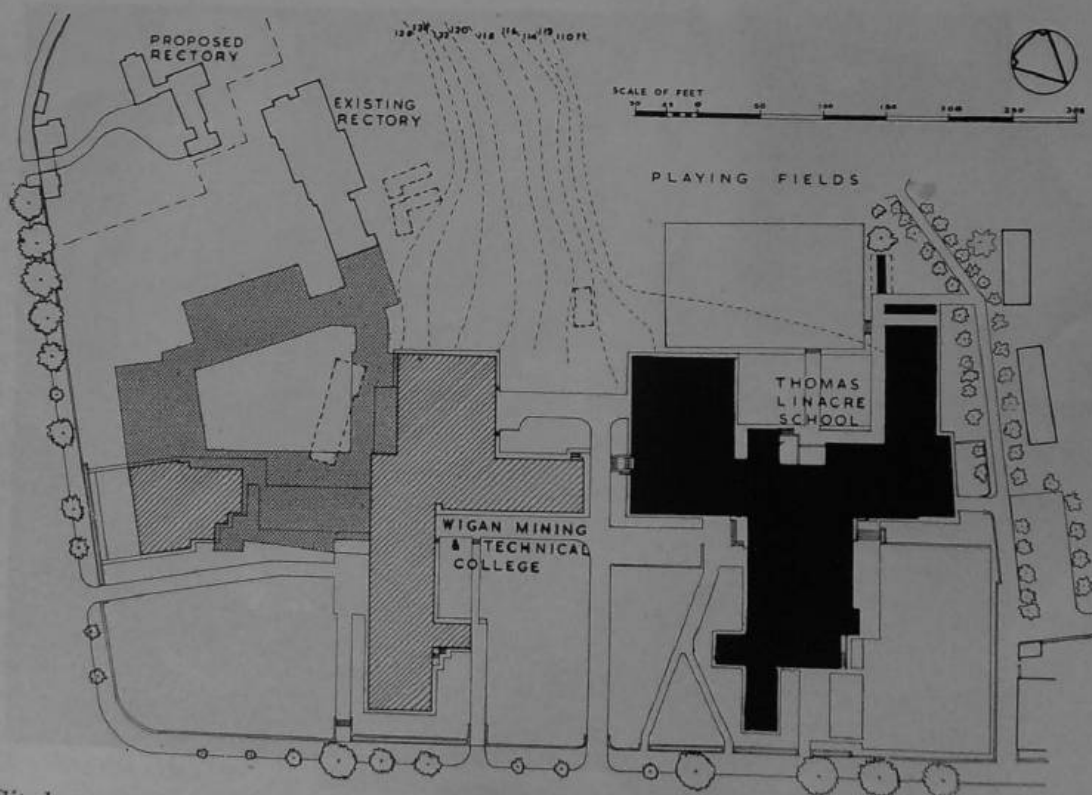
Associated Architects

HOWARD V. LOBB, CBE, FRIBA, and G. GRENFELL BAINES & HARGREAVES, AA.RIBA

Senior Assistant Architect
JOHN WILKINSON, ARIBA

Consulting Structural Engineer
FELIX J. SAMUELY, BSc.(Eng.)

Builders : LEONARD FAIRCLOUGH, LTD.



Site layout. The hatched portion represents the Mining and Technical College so far completed. Future extensions are shown stippled.



Main entrance hall, looking towards doors. The illuminated display case for school trophies can be seen.

THE project for the secondary technical school illustrated is part of a larger layout which includes the adjoining Wigan Mining and Technical College opened yesterday (October 21) by Her Majesty the Queen. Mr. Howard V. Lobb, CBE, FRIBA, was appointed architect in 1950 for the whole

scheme and has worked throughout in collaboration with Messrs. G. Grenfell Baines and Hargreaves, AA.RIBA. The school, one of the first of its kind in the country, accommodates 570 pupils in three streams. The cost approved in 1951 was £232,275.

The building is severe in outline. Its design, how-



Stairs down to north playground and dining-room.

ever, is evolved from its fundamental purpose and the appearance of the school building has had to be secondary to the internal planning and working of the school. The overriding factor has been the necessity to keep within the cost per place fixed by the Ministry of Education. This has prevented any decorative elaboration on the exterior, even if this had been considered desirable.

The main teaching block faces south, whilst the main hall, laboratories, workshops, dining-room and gymnasium are grouped around the entrance hall from which they are all readily accessible. Corridors have been cut down to a minimum.

The basic design of the classroom block can be regarded as a duplicate clover leaf pattern. Pupils ascending a staircase, turn left for one classroom or go forward for another, or turn right to another. This design is duplicated at each end of the building. In this way, circulation is both vertical and horizontal and nearly all rooms are readily accessible from the two main staircases.

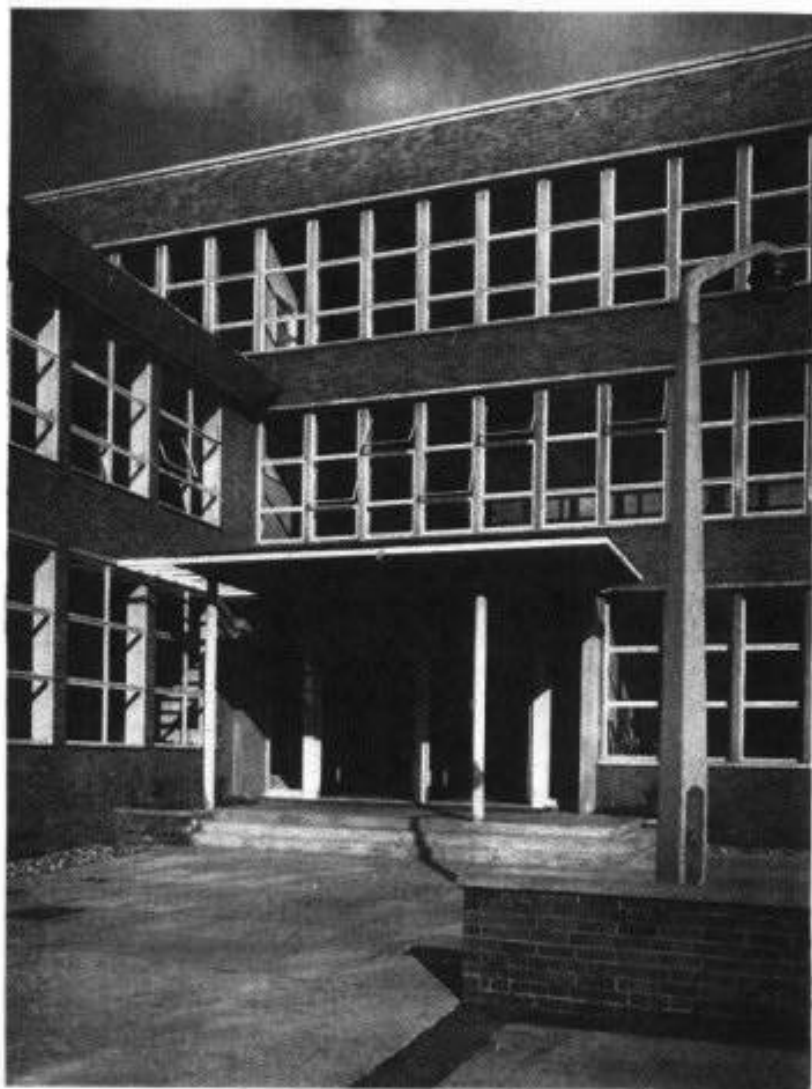
The present school building is a good example of contemporary school design and, when the Mining and Technical College is completed, the quadrangle effect which the architects have planned for the combined sites of the school and the college will be appreciated.

Dominating the school building and forming a long high backbone is the three-storey classroom block 234 ft. long and 38 ft. high, containing 80 per cent. of the formal teaching space. This block runs in an east to west direction giving a southerly orientation to the main classrooms.

Access to the upper floors is made by two staircases, so positioned in the main block that only a small area of corridor space on the upper floors is needed to provide access to all the classrooms there. Two staircase towers contain the toilets and cloakroom accommodation arranged in mezzanine floors, each floor providing the cloakroom space and toilets for two forms.

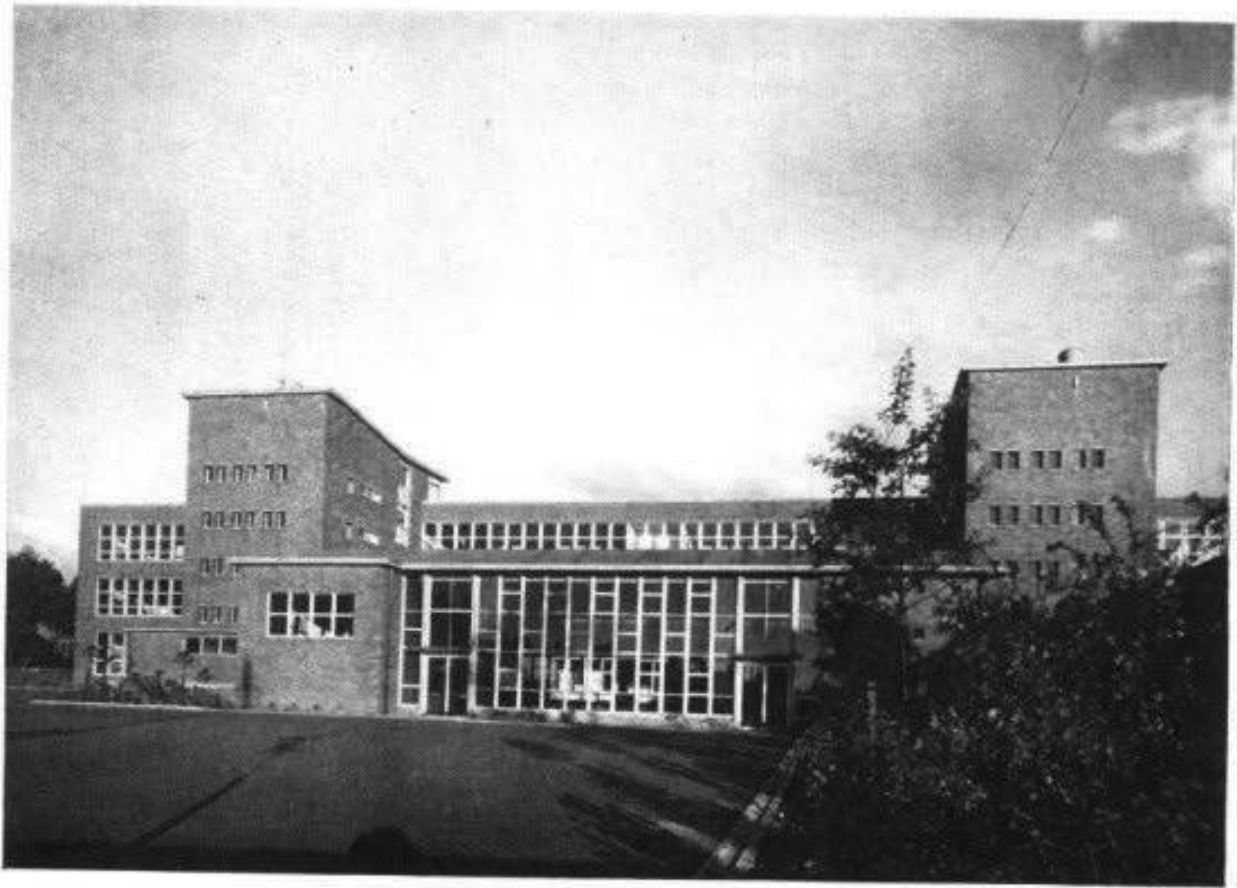
At right angles to the main classroom block, and forming a complete wing to the south, is the two-storey laboratory block. This wing is 94 ft. long and 23 ft. high and contains four large laboratories together with storage and preparation rooms. To the west of the laboratories lie four workshops, contained in a large square building at the rear of the school, accessible both from the ground and first floors. One playground is at the side of the school and one at the rear.

The school is heated by gas-fired boilers, the boiler houses, two in



Front entrance. Below: Night view of main entrance.





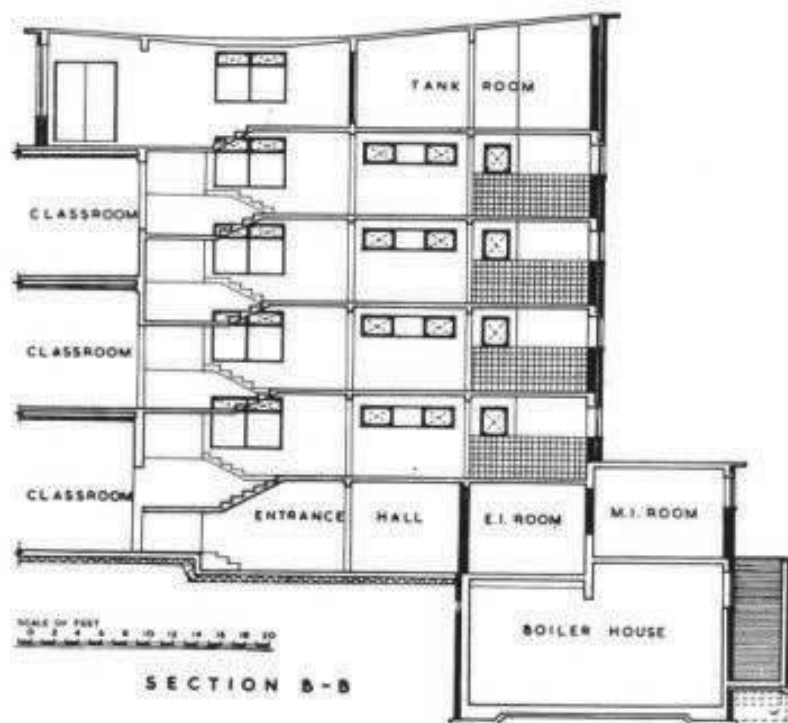
View from west, showing main window of assembly hall.

number, being located under the base of the main staircases.

Construction of Main Classroom Block.—The structure comprises reinforced concrete frame units each containing two 7 in. by 5 in. columns, a head member and

a sill member. The columns are at 3 ft. 4½ in. centres and the frames were erected from one end of the building. All three floors were placed in position as the work proceeded. Spanning between the frames are the prestressed concrete

floor units with a span of 22 ft. 7¼ in. The method of connection of the various components was by means of steel plates and bolts so that the whole process was as "dry" as possible. The only *in situ* portion of the erection was the structural



Section through NE lavatory tower and staircase.

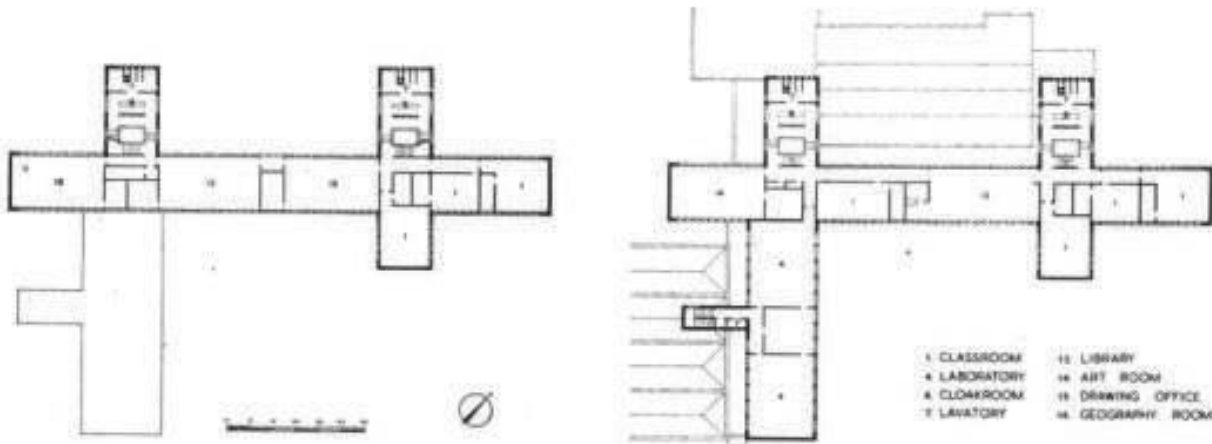
floor screeds which span between the prestressed beams, supported on permanent corrugated metal shuttering.

At the rear of the columns and formed in concrete with the column are 3 in. by 3 in. service ducts, in which have been placed the heating pipes to each floor. The 3 in. by 1 in. thick sides to these vertical ducts have been used to support the radiators. The flow and return pipes pass through holes in the vertical ducts, and there is a "blanked off" supporting pipe. This method of concealing the service pipe has enhanced the interior of the various rooms since all pipe work is out of sight.

The external cladding of the structural system is composed of rustic facing brick. The metal windows fit neatly between the 7 in. by 5 in. columns which form the window surround. The two lava-



The headmaster's room.



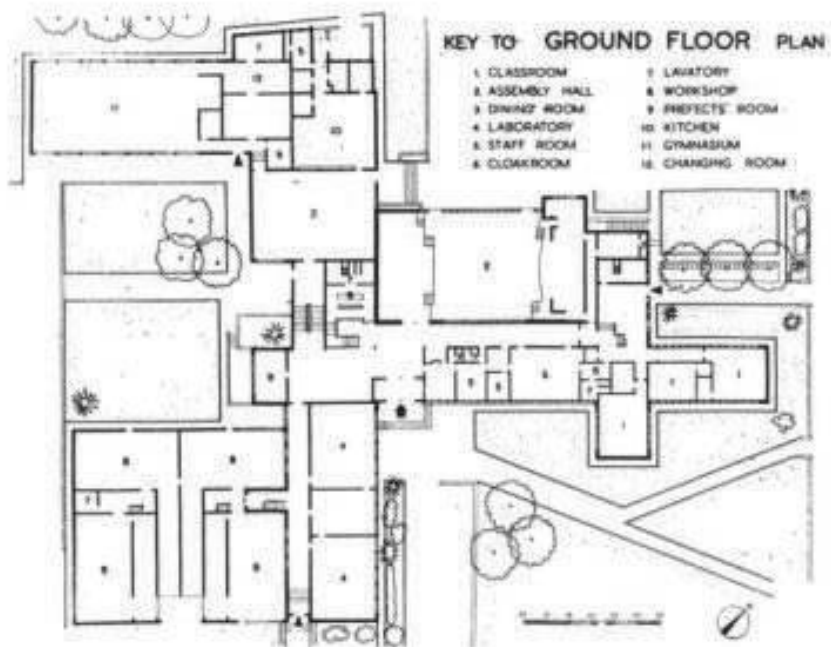
Second-floor plan.

First-floor plan.

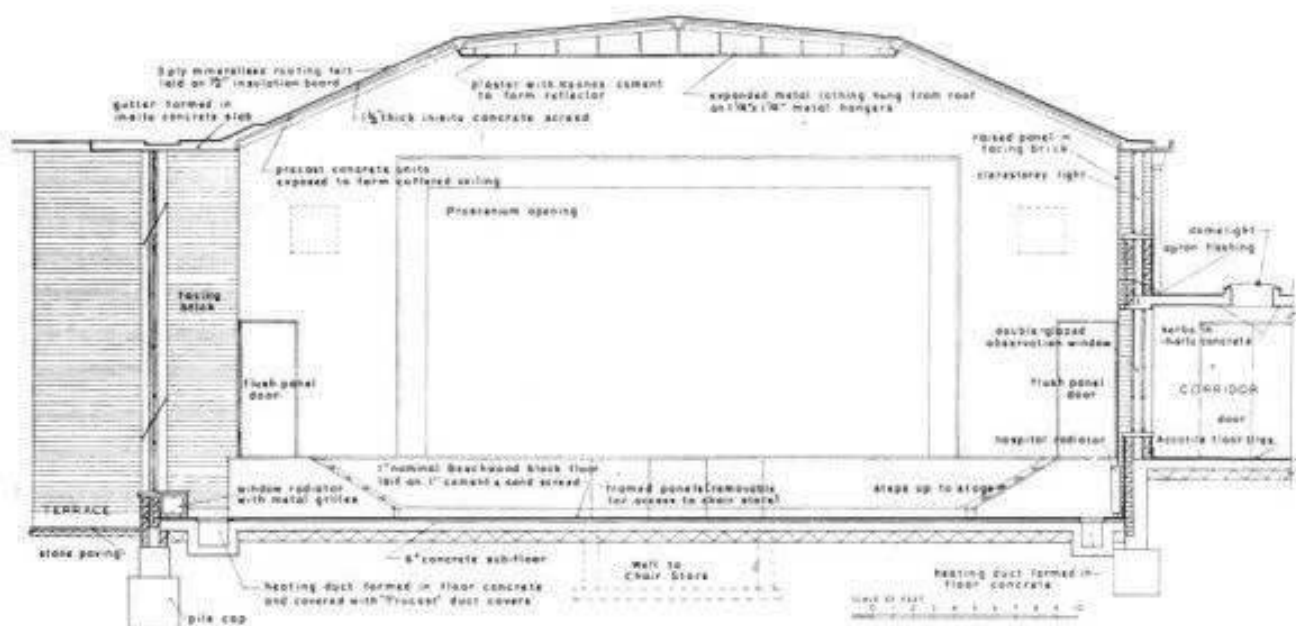
tory and cloakroom towers are constructed in *in situ* concrete, as are the flights of stairs contained therein. These towers also have a brick cladding which is pointed in a different manner to emphasise their rôle as large buttresses for the light glazed main classroom block.

Laboratory Block.—This is based on a structural grid of 6 ft. 9 in. with 10 in. by 9 in. columns of reinforced concrete. Spanning between these columns, which are 27 ft. 10½ in. apart, is a light steel tie beam truss, which supports precast concrete trough units spanning in the opposite direction, i.e., between trusses.

Workshops and Gymnasium.—The workshop block is a steel-framed structure, with the roof designed as a space frame. This method enabled an area 81 ft. by 90 ft. 6 in. to be covered without the use of a single internal supporting column. A similar method has been adopted



Ground-floor plan.



Cross-section through assembly hall.

for the roof and structure of the gymnasium although here the span is only 40 ft. and the length 70 ft.

Dining-Room and Kitchen.—The dining-room roof is of interest as it consists of a prestressed concrete beam construction with a span of

39 ft. 2 1/2 in. A similar method of construction has been adopted for the kitchen whilst the kitchen stores are constructed of precast concrete trough units on *in situ* concrete columns and beams.

The locker and changing room

areas are formed structurally of *in situ* columns and flat roofs.

Assembly Hall.—The design of the assembly hall roof is perhaps the most revolutionary in the building. It consists of a shell-type roof but with the shape of the roof in four



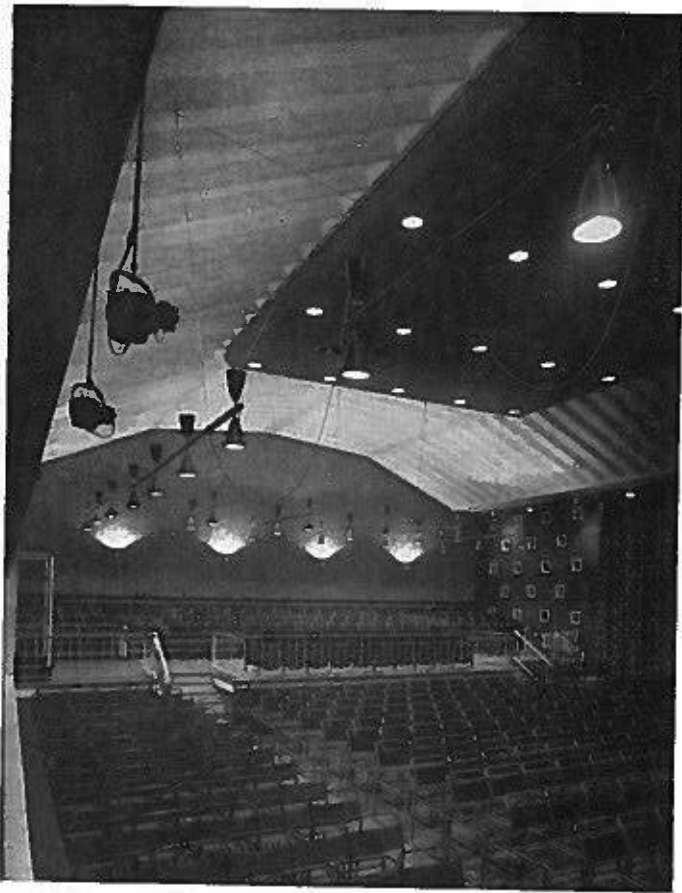
Assembly hall, looking towards stage. The table, lectern and platform chairs are the gift of the architects. Exterior bricks were used on the jambs. The proscenium is in two tones of grey and the curtain midnight blue. The acoustic "saddle" is in dark Pompeian red. The three blocks of chairs are in three complementary colours.

planes at differing inclines on the cross section. The underside of the roof is of precast concrete trough units which form the permanent shuttering to the *in situ* reinforced structural screed above. This screed varies in thickness from 2½ in. maximum to 1½ in. minimum above the top surface of the precast units, and is heavily reinforced. The main body of the hall covered by this roof measures 75 ft. by 47 ft. 6 in. and the roof spans in the long direction between two deep 10 in. wide reinforced concrete *in situ* beams, one at the rear of the hall, the other above the proscenium opening. The roof also cantilevers beyond the main body of the hall a further 25 ft.

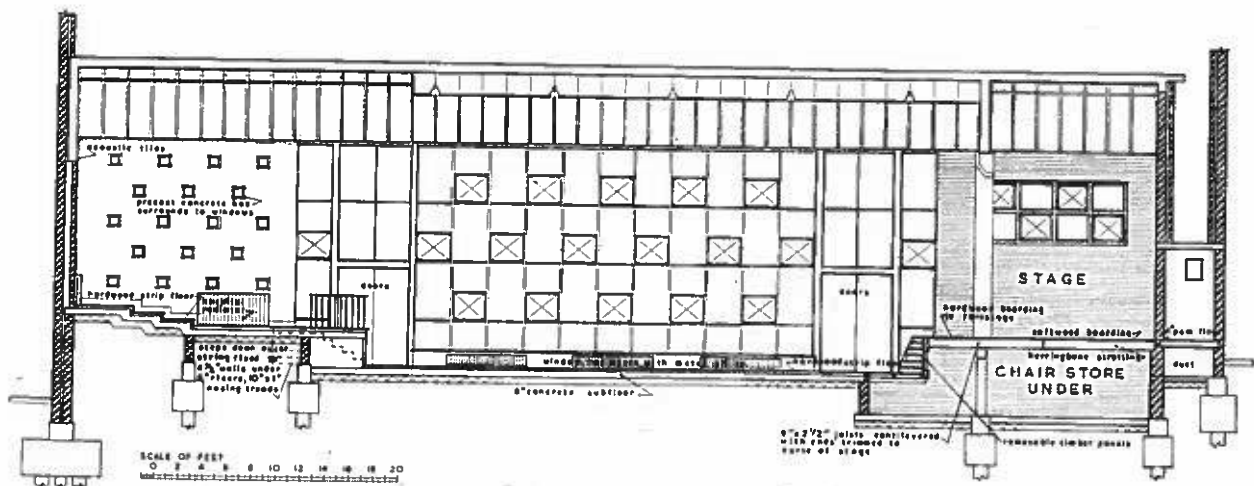
By spanning the roof in this way, the necessity for a deep cove beam normally required for a shell-type roof is eliminated. The cove beams which are required are in fact horizontal and not vertical. This enables the assembly hall windows to be taken right up the soffit of the lower edge of the main roof.

The architects received much help in the early stages with the lighting of the classrooms and hall from Messrs. W. A. Allen and J. B. Bickerdike of the Building Research Station.

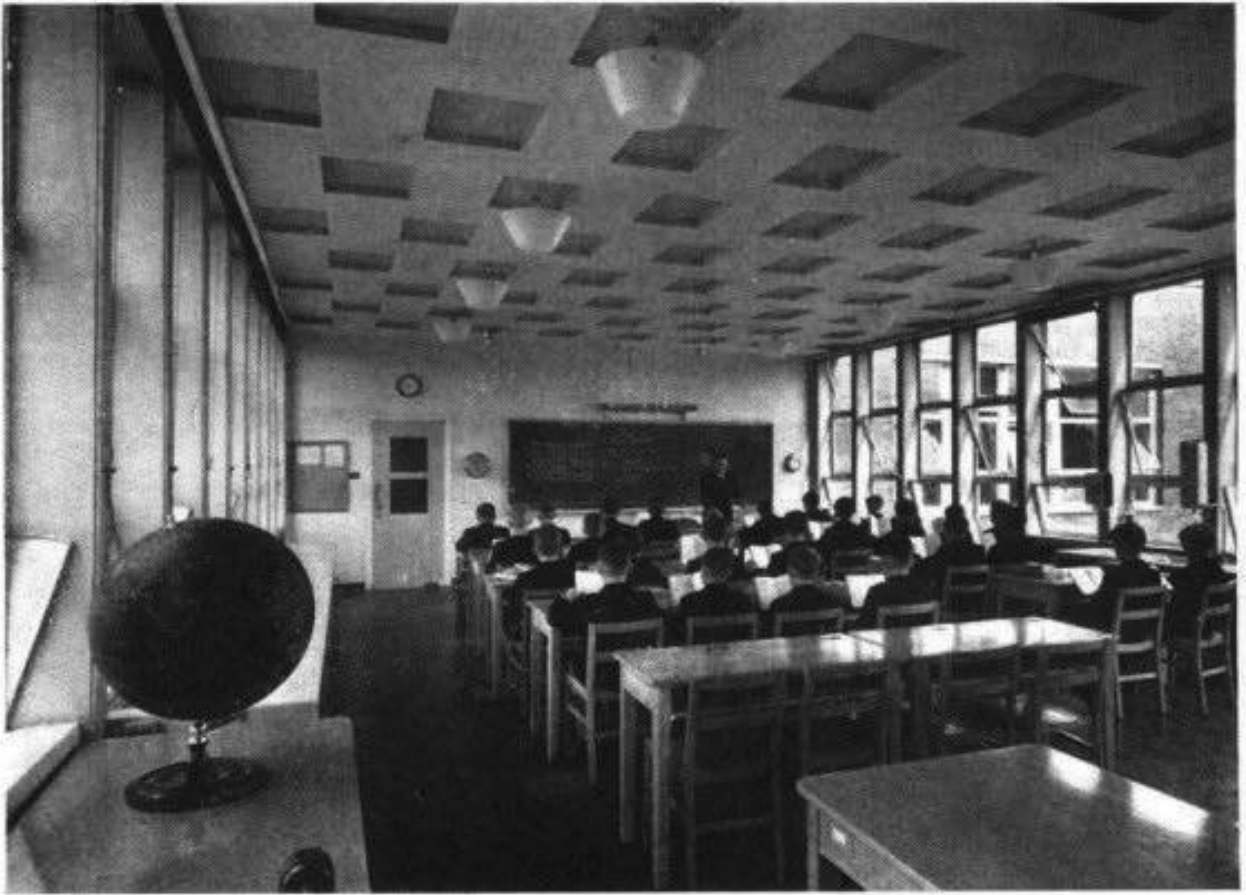
The playing fields for the school will be at Bull Hey and at Christopher Park, where the Governors of the Wigan and District Mining and Technical College have offered an area of some six acres for use by the Thomas Linacre School. Negotiations are at present proceeding for the acquisition of the Bull Hey site by the education committee and it is hoped that this playing field, which is immediately adjacent to the school, will be available for cricket. The Mesnes playing field will also be available for use by the Secondary Technical School as well as by the Grammar School.



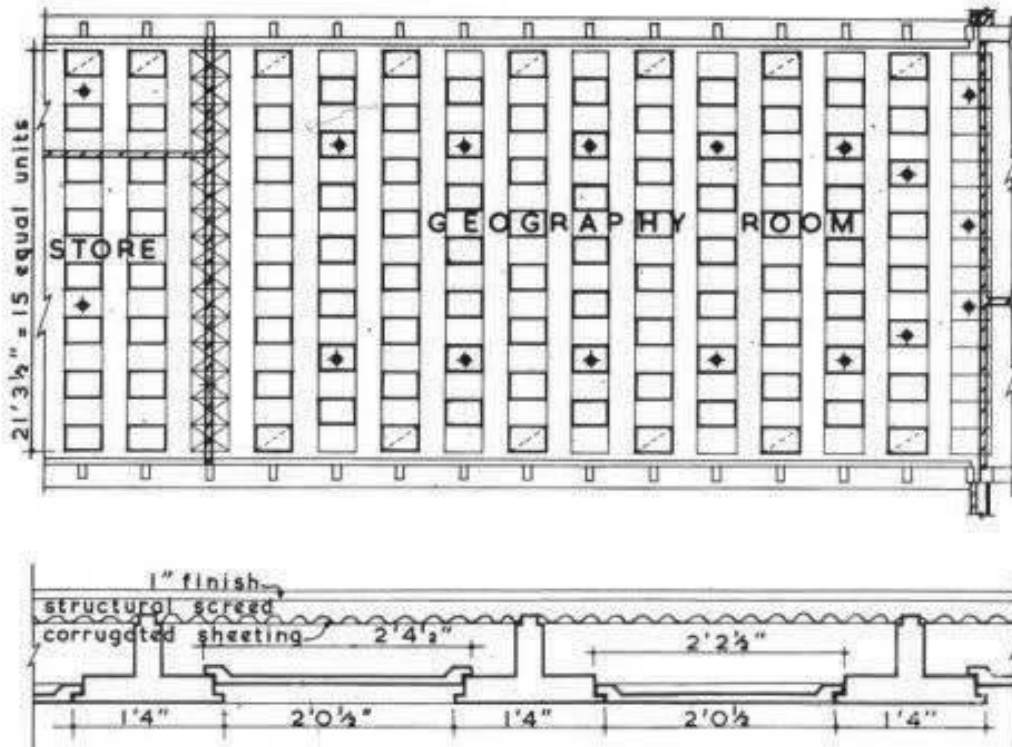
View of assembly hall from platform. The end wall is papered.



Longitudinal section through assembly hall.



The geography room.



Above : Reflected plan of ceiling to geography room. Below : Typical cross-section of T-beams and panels.



A tower staircase. The mural on the top floor is by Colin Giffard, BA, ARIBA.

Following is a list of the sub-contractors and suppliers:—

Sub-contractors:—Joinery, Stanley Porter, Ltd., Bolton; plumber, John Turton and Sons, Ltd., All Saints, Manchester, 15; plasterer and wall tiling, R. H. Catterall and Co., Ltd., Preston; painter, Clarke and Son (Wigan), Ltd.; glazier, L. Keizer and Co., Ltd., Liverpool, 3; heating, Rosser and Russell, Ltd.

Specialists:—Metal windows, Mellows and Co., Ltd., Sheffield, 3; piling, Franki Compressed Pile Co., Ltd.; electrical, North-Western

Electricity Board, Bolton; tiled floors, Neuchatel Asphalt Co., Ltd., Salford, 5; roofing, Vulcanite, Ltd., Wigan; wood block and strip floors, R. W. Brooke and Co., Ltd., Liverpool; roller shutters, Roller Shutters, Ltd., Birmingham, 7; industrial flooring, Robinson, Heys and Co., Ltd., Blackburn; asphalt tanking, Highways Construction, Ltd., Manchester; metalwork, Quiggin Bros., Ltd., Liverpool; patent glazing, Hills (West Bromwich), Ltd.; cloakroom fittings and special ironmongery, Parker, Winder and Achurch, Ltd., Birmingham.

Cork flooring and notice boards, Mundet Cork Products, Ltd., Croydon; tiled floors, John Stubbs (Marble and Quarzite), Ltd., Liverpool, 7; window control gear, Arens Controls, Ltd., East Croydon; stage lighting, Strand Electric and Engineering Co., Ltd., Manchester, 10; stage equipment, Watts and Corry, Ltd., Manchester, 10; blinds, H. Mears (Furnishers), Ltd., Preston; steel gates, Bamber Bridge Steel Co., Ltd., Preston; false ceiling, W. H. Colt (London), Ltd., Surbiton, Surrey; door furniture and metalwork, Dryad Metal Works, Ltd., Leicester; glazed faience tiles, Shaws Glazed Brick Co., Ltd., Watford, Herts; acoustic tiling, Tentest Fibre Board Co., Ltd., Hadley Wood, Barnet, Herts.

Suppliers:—Precast concrete, Liverpool Artificial Stone Co., Ltd., Wavertree, Liverpool, 15; prestressed concrete, David Chaston, Ltd., Hoddesdon, Herts; sanitary fittings, Shanks and Co., Ltd., Manchester, 3; light fittings, Troughton and Young, Ltd., and Hartley Electromotives, Ltd., Monksmoor, Shrewsbury; metal floor duct covers, Broads Manufacturing Co., Ltd.; slate cills, The Bow Slate and Enamel Co., Ltd.; hose reels, Fire Equipment, Ltd., Salford, 5.

Firms supplying school furnishings—Furniture:—Educational Supply Association, Ltd., Stevenage, Herts; Mann Egerton and Co., Ltd., Norwich; Kingfisher, Ltd., West Bromwich; Cox and Co. (Watford), Ltd.; R. Foster and Son, Ltd., Wigan; D. Matthews and Son, Ltd., Liverpool.

Gymnasium equipment:—Niels Larsen and Son, Ltd., Leeds, 9.
Machine tools and equipment:—Robert Kelly and Sons, Ltd., Manchester; Lace and Co., Wigan; George Makinson, Ltd., Wigan; Thomas Tyldesley and Son, Wigan; Portass Lathe and Machine Tool Co., Ltd., Sheffield; Buck and Hickman, Ltd., Manchester, 1.

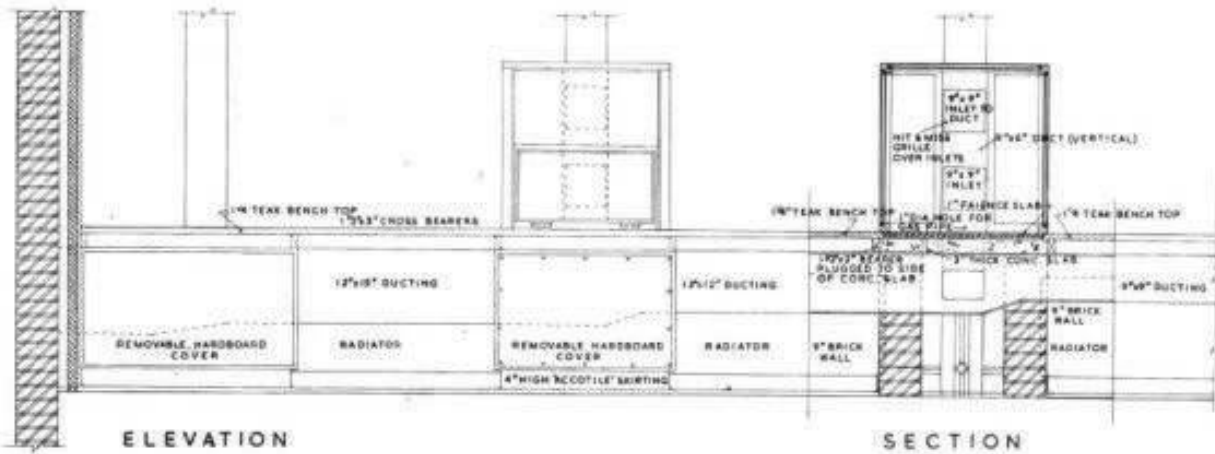
Laboratory equipment:—Philip Harris, Ltd., Birmingham; W. and J. George and Becker, Ltd., Birmingham; Griffin and Tatlock, Ltd., Manchester; C. Baker of Holborn, Ltd.; James Woolley, Sons and Co., Ltd., Manchester; A. Gallenkamp and Co., Ltd.; Crompton Parkinson, Ltd., Leeds.

Drawing equipment:—Drawing Equipment Productions, Ltd., Bromley, Kent.

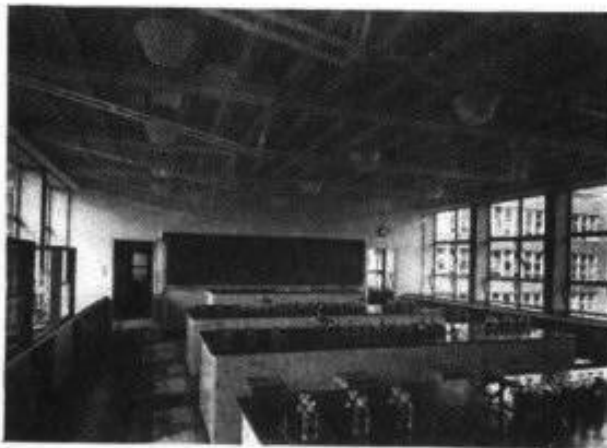
Platform Furniture:—Robin Nance, St. Ives, Cornwall.



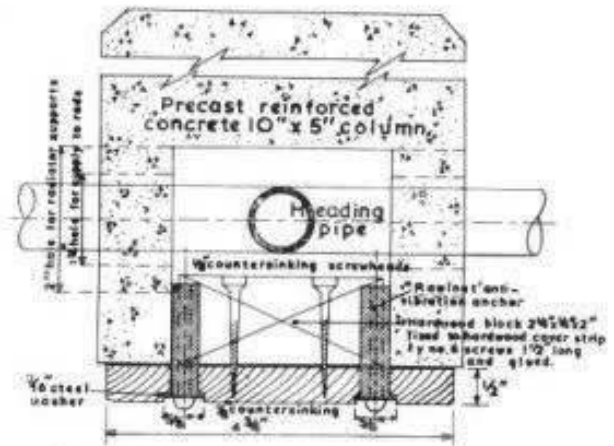
The library.



Extract ducting to fume cupboard; this connects to fan in end hall.



A chemistry laboratory.



Sectional plan through 3 in by 3 in. service duct, showing cover strip.



The gymnasium. The cleanness of the space frames used for the roof should be noted. Colours used have been selected to give good background for ball games.

The Thomas Linacre School

"THE CLIENT'S" VIEWPOINT

By William S. Brace, M.A., B.Sc.

THE building which houses Thomas Linacre School could, I suppose, be described as "functional." Whatever that term may mean to the architect or builder, to the layman it conveys the idea that the building is deliberately designed to facilitate, reinforce and reflect the activities which go on in it. Those responsible for the "functional" form can rarely be those whose activities are thus channelled. This article attempts to set out the reactions of the subjects of a particular architectural essay.

First, we should consider which activities proper to a school could be affected by its design. A school must be more than a mere teaching machine. Though a large part of its activity must be concerned with actual instruction in different subjects and activities, academic and practical, this instruction must never be thought of as the sole or even the chief purpose of the school.

Up to and including the secondary level, subjects are taught less for the actual use which will be made of their content and techniques than for the attitudes of mind which it is hoped to develop. While many boys and girls may use the French, geography, mathematics, metalwork, technical drawing, etc., which they learn at school, far more will find habits of industry, attention to detail, precision and reliability to be most valuable assets.

TWO GROUPS

The functions of a school, therefore, fall into two distinct groups—those concerned with specific instruction, and those concerned with the intangibles of character formation.

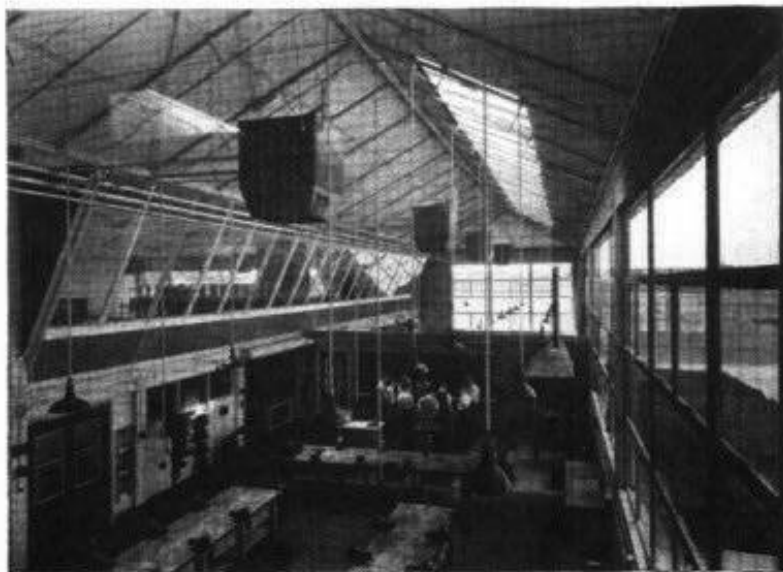
Let there be no doubt—this school is most effective as a teaching machine. We have never been so well provided for in our lives—so warm, so well lit, so well equipped. In the face of such startling perfection minor defects which, to a teacher, seem easily avoidable, stand out starkly.

The facilities provided compel the school to function in a particular way. There are four workshops, four laboratories, two drawing offices, a geography room, an art room, a gymnasium and a library—14 specialist rooms which must be visited in turn by the various classes. In addition the mathematics and history teachers have a good deal of equipment which is not easily moved from room to room, and there must be a place for music. There remains but three full-size classrooms and three division rooms. It follows that the school must operate on the principle that teachers remain fixed while classes move—and it is difficult to see how any other system could operate in a building furnishing economically a full range of facilities.

Circulation in the school is based on two tower staircases with open wells 35 feet deep. Communication between the staircases (other than through classrooms) is possible only on the ground floor or across the flat roof of the school. Movement from room to room on one stair-



View showing roof over stores, giving access to workshops; this space is also used as an exhibition area.



View of metal workshops, taken through corridor window.

case is easy and rapid, but class movements cannot be confined to one staircase. It must be admitted that, in working out class programmes, no attempt has been made to do this, but it is most unlikely that more than very minor improvements could be effected.

A GOOD COMPROMISE

The three-storey design with two staircases is a good compromise between the need for easy circulation and the needs of light, sound insulation and so on. It is certainly far better for circulation than a sprawling, single-level arrangement, but noises coming downward through ceilings are occasionally troublesome and I have sometimes found sounds conveyed very freely through vertical service ducts—to the discomfiture of certain boys! Horizontal sound insulation is completely satisfactory, thanks to strategically placed storerooms.

When boys reach their places they find themselves in large well-lit rooms, attractively decorated with that simplicity which is conducive to work. The large windows can be a problem. Some provide a first rate view twice a day of the Royal Scot at speed. That is not serious. More serious is the problem of securing a satisfactory blackout when needed for certain kinds of visual aids. Blackout blinds have been promised for some rooms, but the only blinds so far installed are quite inadequate.

The laboratory block is very successful, with four laboratories fitted with all the services that could be desired, and outlets located at the points where they are needed. Two large preparation rooms—one between each pair of laboratories—are the answer to a science teacher's dream.

The workshops are imaginatively laid out and magnificently equipped. Storage accommodation is really ample and there is an enormous display area which has already been put to good use for scientific and technical exhibitions. We much appreciate the use made of variations in the level of the site to provide an inspection balcony for the four workshops.

SOUND INSULATION

There have, however, been two problems. One has been to do with sound insulation. The workshops are effectively in pairs, with no sound barrier between members of a pair. In the worst case a marked improvement could have been effected by the simple expedient of carrying a wall up to the ceiling.

The floors have also caused difficulties. So that they shall be less tiring to stand on they are finished with a layer of a bituminous compound. Unfortunately the compound is adversely affected by oil and by heat. Oil drips from machines are almost unavoidable and in school workshops hot objects from forge, brazing hearth or electric furnace can be expected to find their way on to the floor from time to time. Measures planned to counter these difficulties are not entirely satisfactory.

The design and layout of the school has presented two other problems. It is not feasible to have locker desks in certain specialist rooms, yet these rooms must be used as form bases—that is as bases or

homes from which forms move to other rooms as required. This means that such forms must have lockers in which they can keep their books, but in planning the school this was apparently overlooked.

In two cases the only possible sites for blocks of lockers are a considerable distance from the form bases. This appears to be a case in which the actual function of the rooms in question was not fully appreciated by the architects. A possible solution might have been to enlarge slightly the excellent conception of two-form cloakrooms (of which there are eight) and include in each cloakroom a book locker for each boy. The additional cost of these book lockers could have been recovered in part by replacing the locker desks by simple desks throughout the school.

The other problem relates to the playgrounds—there are two, and the only way from one to the other without leaving the school grounds is through the whole length of the school. Furthermore, the nearest toilets are in the school on the first mezzanine floor. This makes it difficult to prevent boys loitering in the school when they might be enjoying our English summer!

I repeat, these are minor defects and detract little from our joy in the school.

THE SCHOOL THEME

More interesting than the success of the school as a teaching machine is its effect on the larger educational objectives, the intangibles of character. We have taken as the theme of our school life, "Be reasonable; be respectful; be responsible." The density of traffic up and down potentially dangerous staircases demands self-control by the boys. We have deliberately avoided regimentation and close control by staff and prefects, preferring to rely on and develop powers of self-discipline. We have been well pleased with the results.

The decoration of the school in pastel shades and the light modern furniture quickly show the effects of misuse, or even of thoughtless normal use. The colour schemes, with frequent changes of colour, attract attention to walls and doors. In quite a short time the boys (with some encouragement) showed interest in preserving the brightness and freshness of the school.

In these two respects, at least, the design of the school has contributed to education in social conduct.

The honesty of the building, too, has had its effect. Almost everywhere the structural principles and methods are clearly to be seen. Beams and inter-locking slabs do not masquerade as monoliths; the graceful cantilever stairs show clearly where they are supported; light steel roof trusses in workshops and gymnasium can be seen for what they are; concrete and steel do not imitate stone or wood. This absence of pretence quietly teaches its lesson day by day and reinforces the moral training given in the school.

As evidence of its effect, the school library, with over five thousand volumes, is run on a simple open access system which could easily be abused. During the first year we have lost only six volumes, and we believe that at least half of these are simply misplaced.

LOYALTY AND UNITY

A particular problem has been the development in the school of loyalty and a sense of unity. The magnificent building, bright and spacious, giving everywhere the impression that every conceivable facility has been provided, the clean and orderly workshops with many shining machines capturing the imaginations of the boys, the demands of industry for men able to apply science and technology to its daily problems together set a clear goal for the school—but it is an individual goal for each boy. The building and its equipment have been a focus of public interest over a wide area; many of the boys travel long distances to attend, as much as 40 miles a day.

Our very fine assembly hall is a wonderful setting for gatherings of the whole school, but religious differences keep one fifth of the boys out of morning assemblies. In spite of these difficulties we feel that real progress is being made. For example, for our first school play our 400 boys managed to find audiences totalling 1,300. A large part of the credit must go to the architects.

The solution to every problem in design is necessarily a compromise and so variations in the solution can always be suggested. It is easier to suggest the variations than to foresee their full consequences. We believe that some improvements might have resulted if it had been possible to consult at an earlier stage those who will use the school. But we are sure that Thomas Linacre School is a very successful effort to apply the principles of functional school design within the limitations of the site in Wigan and the standards of cost laid down by the Ministry of Education.

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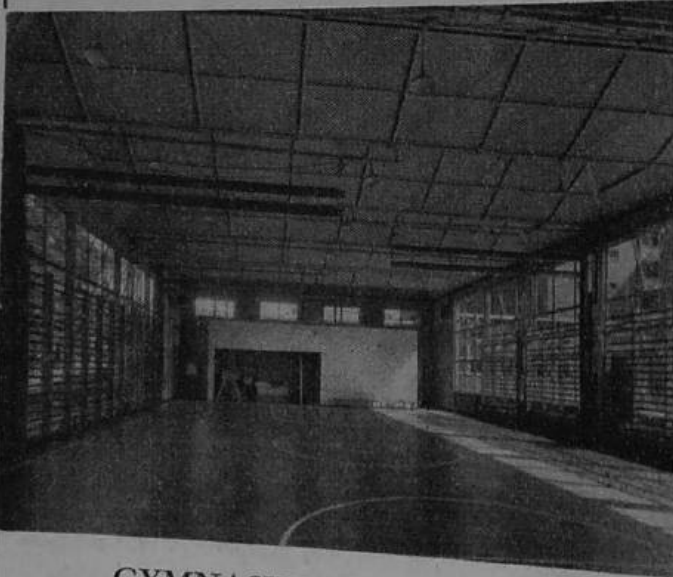
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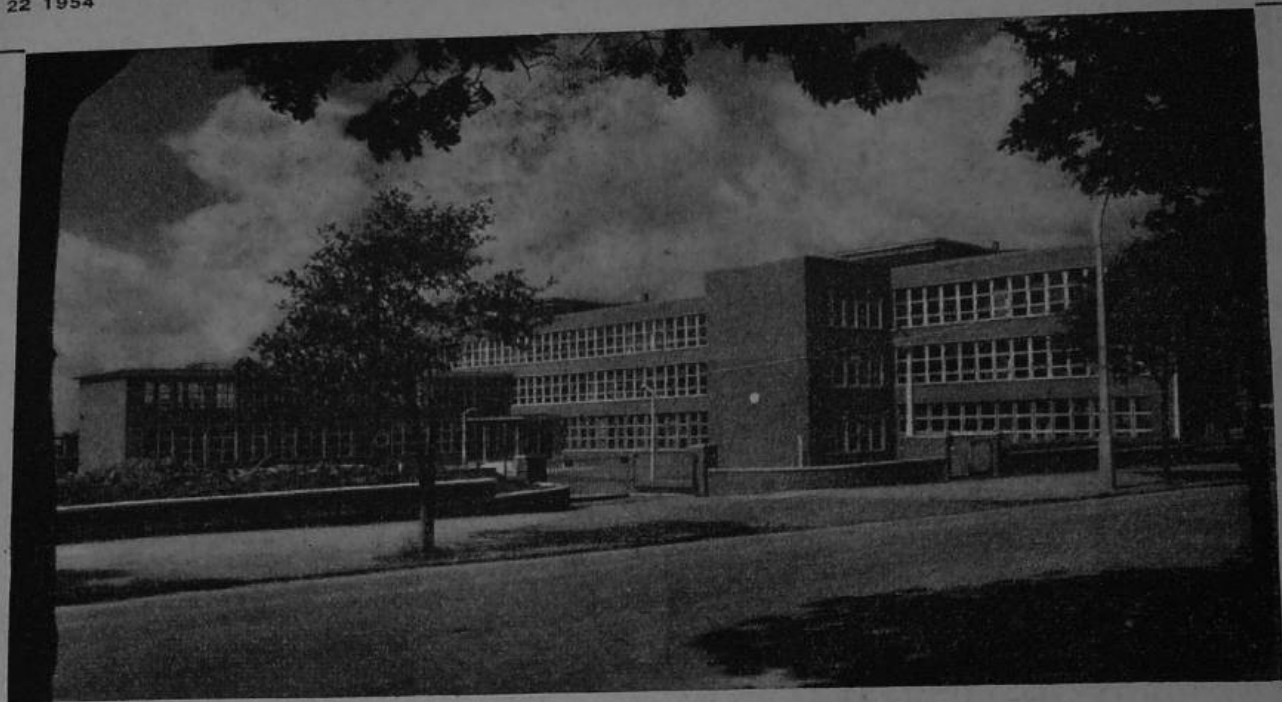
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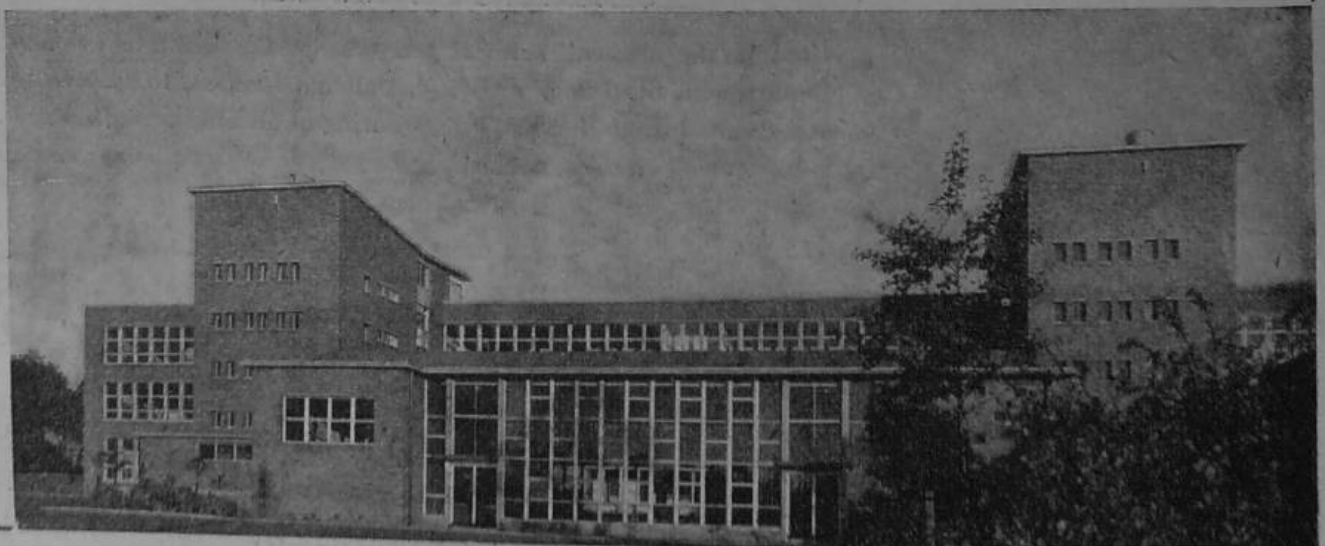
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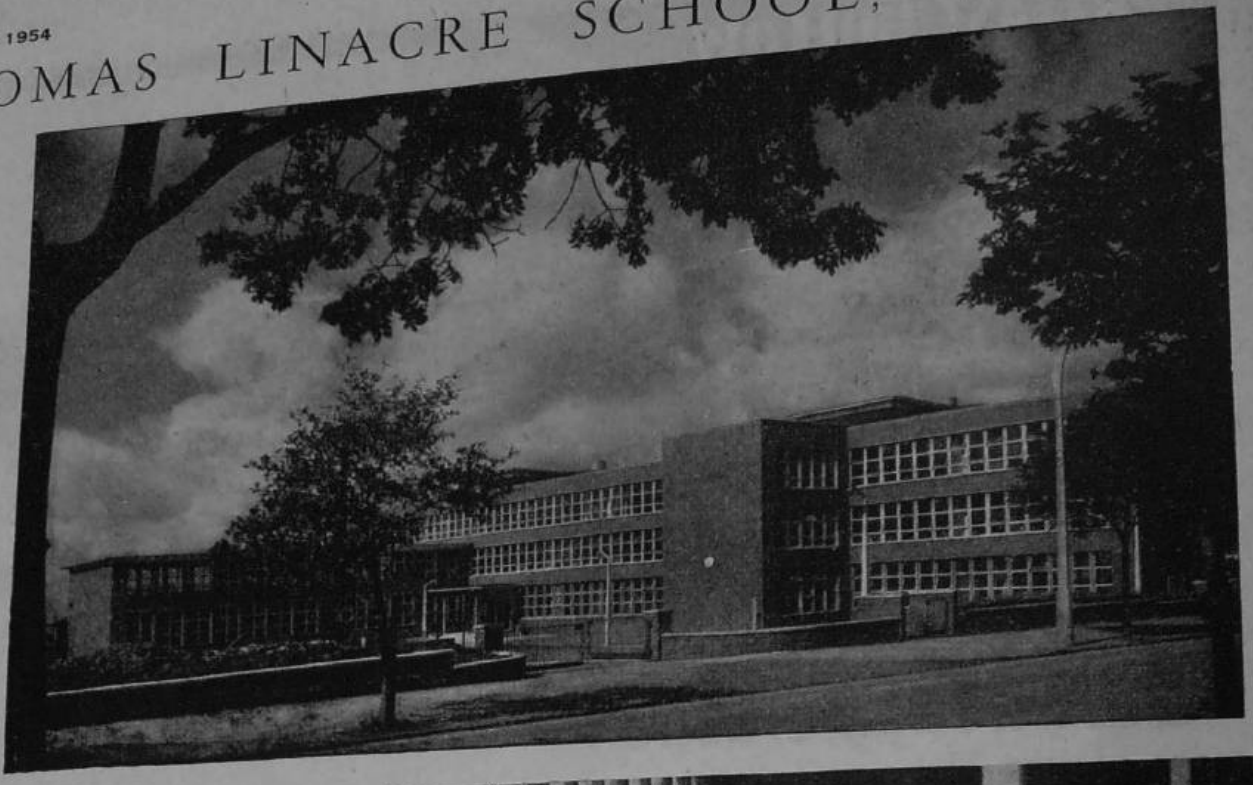
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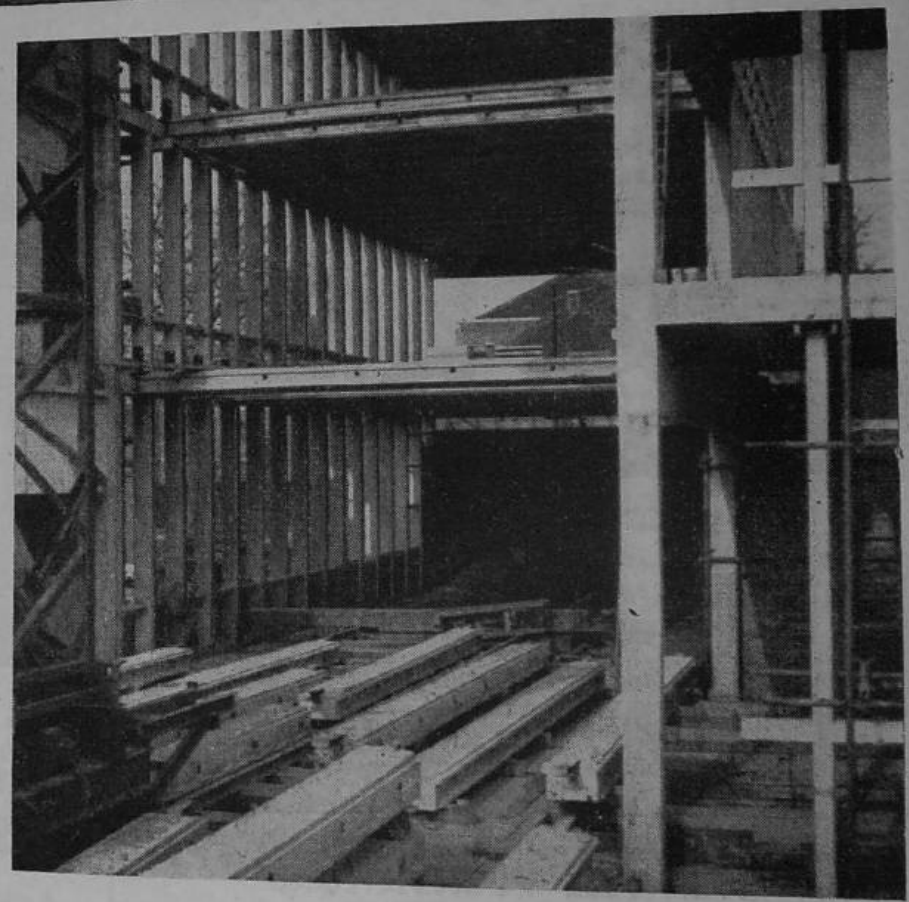
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Thomas Linacre School on a very wet day

Photograph probably taken by 'Bert' Sutcliffe, the Mathematics Teacher

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