

# SCHOOL PERSONALITIES

## The Revd C H Hughes (1876-1956)

Since the Jubilee edition in 1948 the Kilburn Grammar School has lost another link with the past. It was on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 1956, when the Revd Cyril Henry Hughes (known to hundreds of OBs as “Bobby”) died.

Born in West Bromwich, he first came to Kilburn at an early age. He was educated at King’s College, Cambridge, and Keble College, Oxford. He took Holy Orders and was appointed to St Saviour’s, Cardiff, then St Stephen’s, Shepherds Bush. In 1907 he returned to Willesden, first as Curate at St Andrew’s, Willesden Green, and then as Priest-in-Charge of the new church of St Francis, Dollis Hill. He came to KGS in 1917 and was in charge of religious instruction and music.

During his stay at Kilburn his enthusiasm and energy knew no bounds. At his instigation a KGS Memorial Bed was endowed and maintained at Willesden General Hospital. Having established the House Music Competition, he later donated a plaque of Beethoven (his favourite composer) for the best individual item.

At the age of 64 he climbed a mountain in Wales (where he seemed to have a cousin around every corner) hoping to get to the top before the boys on the “tortoise and hare” principle. No one who knew him will forget his stalwart figure in our corridors, always loaded down with books, or the remarkable “concertos for male voice and small string orchestra” which so often resounded from the rafters of the Hall.

He retired in 1937 and, after some brave attempts, passed his driving test. He was given the living of South Pickenham, near Swaffham, on the edge of the wind-swept “Brecklands”, and he later moved to Cockley Cley. While there he became Rural Dean of Swaffham and Governor of Hammond’s School (which numbered among its boys Howard Carter, the Egyptologist).

Many of our OBs visited him in this remote part of Norfolk and he was always glad to have news of Kilburn. He was also glad to help them even in small things like Christmas trees. On a visit to him in

1954 I was sorry to find that he could only walk with difficulty and supported by two sticks, but the winter afternoon which was spent in his vast study in the huge rambling vicarage will always be a pleasant memory.

Partly as an outcome of this visit and the considerable persuasion of **Mr W H Williams**, he came to KGS and judged the House Music Competition in March 1955. On this occasion he obviously enjoyed himself and for a change no one questioned his verdicts, although most of the audience only knew him by name.

He died almost exactly a year after this at the age of 80. I am sure he would not have wished a different farewell from the school, where for twenty years he taught boys to love the Bible and Beethoven.

Written by **Mr Robert Whitmore** in *Kilburnian* 142, Diamond Jubilee edition, 1958