

SCHOOL JOURNEY 1955

CONCARNEAU

Memories of a School Journey to Concarneau 1955

An introduction by **Alan Bull**

From distant memories, the 1955 school journey to Concarneau in Brittany was for many a first trip abroad with their first passport. Mr Scrase and Mr Mathew were the leaders of the 15 to 20 strong group of KGS schoolboys taking the train from Waterloo to Portsmouth for an overnight sea crossing (sleeping on the lounge floor) to St Malo and a rail journey to Quimper in Brittany with, memory says, a bus to Concarneau.

Accommodation for the group for the two week stay was in the dormitory of the Lycée Pierre Guegin with food provided in the school dining hall – French food an “eye opener” for some (I well remember their delicious, amazing mass-produced omelettes). At the time, Concarneau was very much a working fishing port with an old intriguing walled old town, not much appreciated at the time. The short walk to the beach from the school provided the major attraction. At the time, I could not swim and I have fond memories of Mr Scrase teaching me to float on my back and have confidence in the water.

Various trips around Brittany were organised – a trip by boat across the bay to what was considered the luxury resort of Beg Meil, a trip to the Chateau Keriolet and a trip to the Western most point of Brittany, Pointe de Raz. Mostly we used local buses and this led to a notable incident with one of the locals. This was a time when Poujade was a well-known controversial figure in French politics and one of our party, who shall remain nameless, insisted on shouting out Poujade’s name on the bus home annoying a man on the bus who decided he would like to “admonish” in no uncertain terms this English boy taking the name of Poujade in vain. A potentially tricky situation was calmed by the intervention of Mr Mathew who, with impressive French to us schoolboys, persuaded the man to ignore someone who he said was clearly an immature youngster.

In summary a great new experience meeting new people, practising schoolboy French and seeing what then was another world.

In August 2000 my wife and I took a touring holiday around Brittany and the Marais Poitevin region. We took the opportunity to visit again Concarneau and La Rochelle. Concarneau is now a well developed holiday resort and the intriguing old town is now a mecca for tourists. The Lycée Pierre Guegin is still there, but the buildings have been much improved from the 1955/56 standard. La Rochelle was always a tourist destination and not much appears to have changed. Even in 1956 the Collège Eugène Fromentin buildings and facilities were of a high standard and in 2000 the concierge let us in when we explained we were on a reminiscing journey. From the central courtyard we were able to see that the only change had been to expand the school by adding an extra storey to the School block.



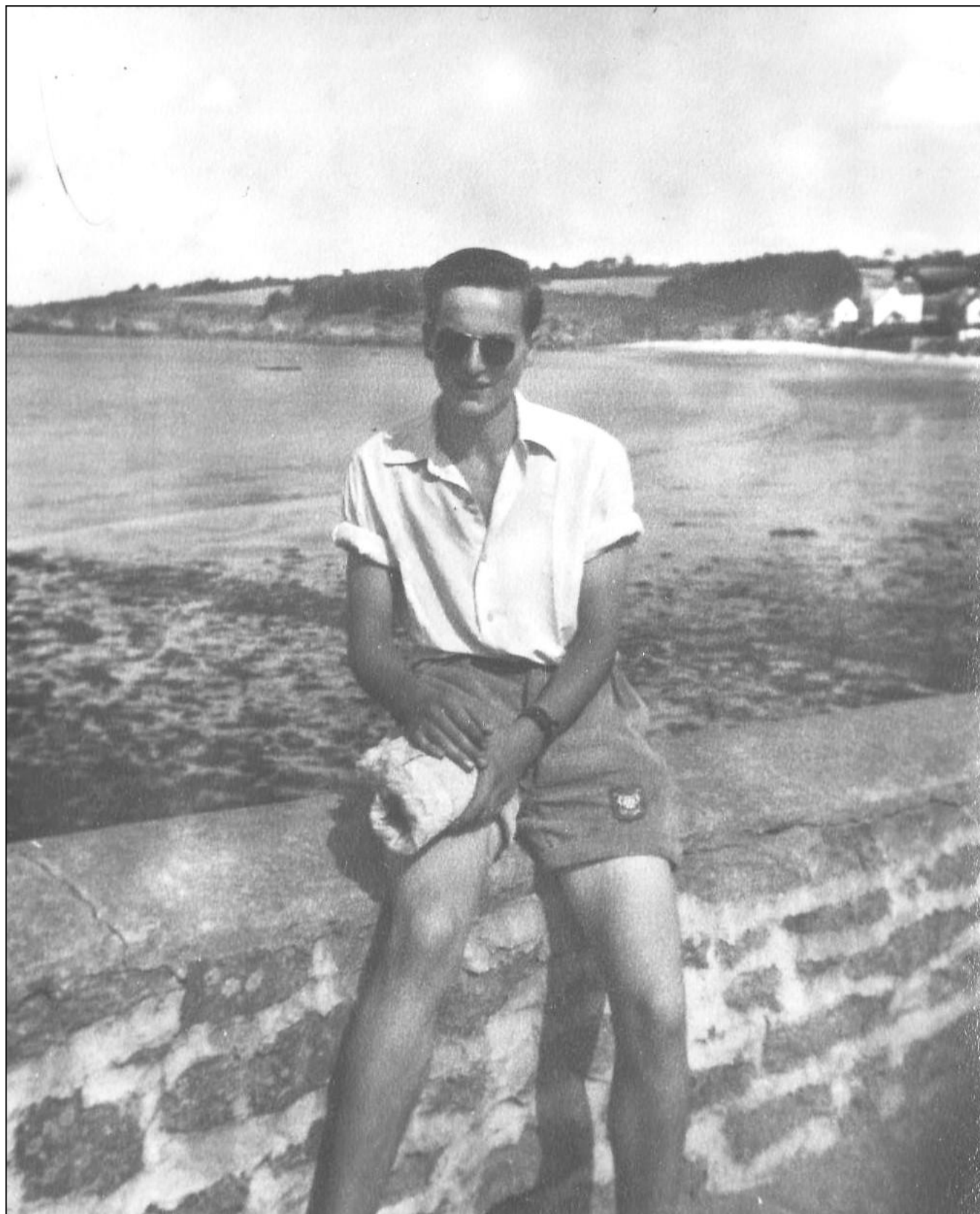
SCHOOLYARD 1955



SCHOOLYARD 1955



A DORMITORY 1955



ALAN BULL AT THE BEACH 1955



CONCARNEAU BEACH 1955



CONCARNEAU BEACH 1955



CONCARNEAU OLD TOWN 1955



A PAINTER BY THE OLD BRIDGE 1955



CONCARNEAU HARBOUR JETTY 1955



CONCARNEAU HARBOUR 1955



POINTE DE RAZ 1955



POINTE DE RAZ



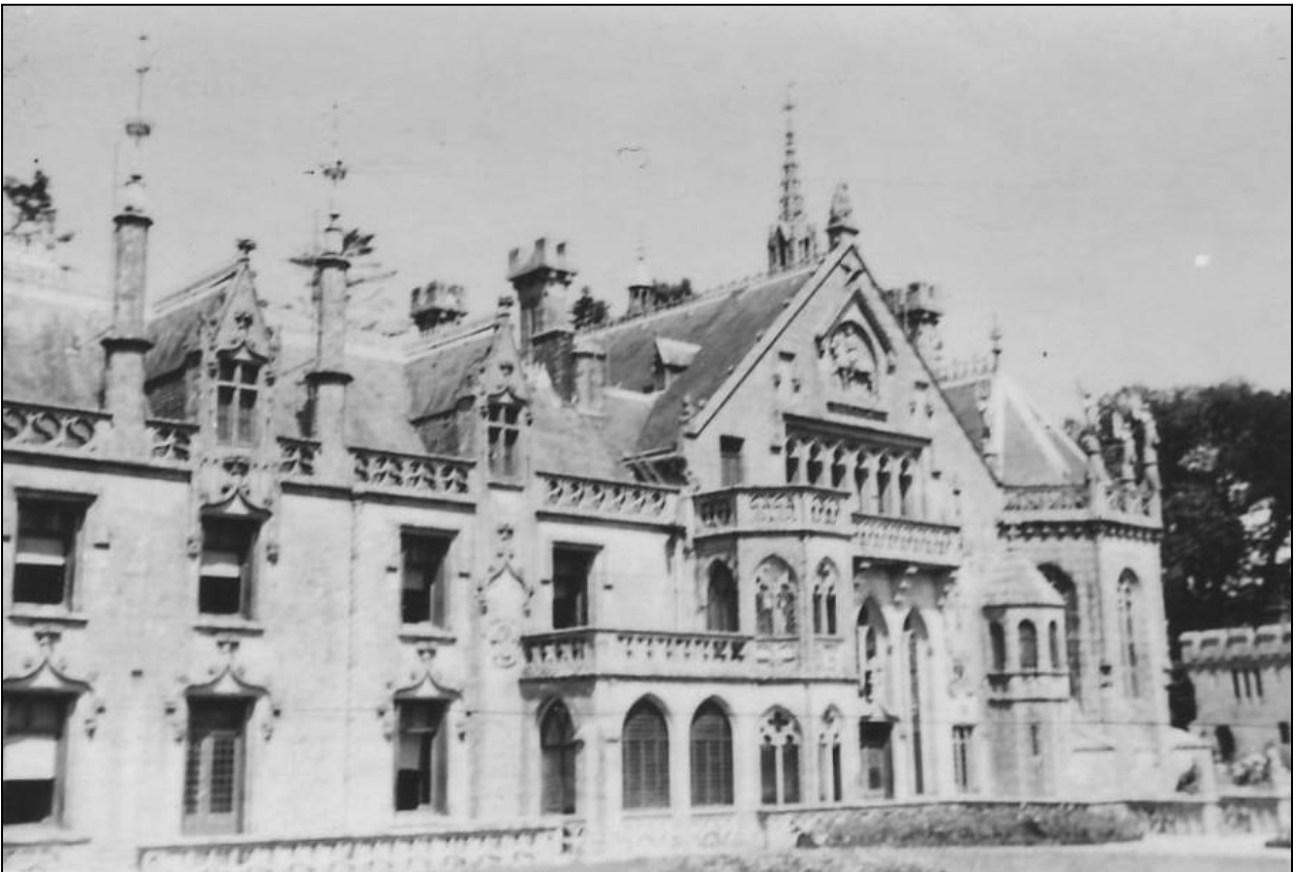
POINTE DE RAZ



VIEW FROM BENODET LIGHTHOUSE 1955



BENODET CHAIN FERRY 1955



CHATEAU KERIOLET 1955



CHATEAU KERIOLET 1956



SCHOOL HOUSE 2000



DORMITORY 2000



SCHOOLYARD 2000



CONCARNEAU OLD TOWN 2000



CONCARNEAU OLD TOWN SQUARE 2000



CONCARNEAU OLD TOWN COURTYARD 2000



CONCARNEAU OLD TOWN WALL 2000



CONCARNEAU JETTY 2000



CONCARNEAU BEACH 2000