

Obituary: T M Yarwood

From Kilburnian 156, Autumn Term 1963

In 1927, when **Mr C B Thurston** gained a well-merited headship, the Science Sixth felt some dismay on losing their well-beloved Physics master halfway through their course.

They need not have worried, for, from the first moment that Mr Yarwood appeared in the Physics Lab, with his quiet voice, his shy but almost infectious smile, with eyes that really did twinkle, and his magnificent head of hair always so beautifully groomed, they felt they had a very worthy and adequate replacement.

In spite of his diffident apology that his physics might be "a bit rusty", no rust was ever detected - far from it. His grasp of his subject and his skill as a schoolmaster very soon impressed themselves fortunate enough to be taught by him. His fluid handwriting upon a blackboard certainly proved a lasting inspiration to at least one, now elderly, schoolmaster.



Rumour soon spread that Mr Yarwood had a voice and, for once, rumour did not lie. For many happy years that voice charmed generations of Kilburnians. He gave unstintingly of his great talent at many a school concert, in the staff operettas, at many of those most enjoyable Old Creightonian Smoking Concerts which marked the early and middle thirties. But, possibly one of the most lasting influences of that voice came through the Kilburn Grammar School Glee Club. That Club, founded jointly with the Reverend "Bobby" Hughes (both now, alas, of blessed memory, gave to many Kilburnians the chance to use what little voice they might have to the best advantage in singing for the sheer joy of singing.

When, in World War II, Kilburn was banished to Northamptonshire, the task of holding the school together was shared by Mr Yarwood, whose sense of humour must have helped much to combat the manifold

frustrations of those difficult times. He cheerfully took up a commission as a Officer in the School Flight of the ATC.

After the war, when the school was once again reassembled at Kilburn and had survived devastation by fire and bomb, he gave himself wholeheartedly to rebuilding the Physics Department. Much apparatus, slowly gathered together between the wars when allocations were nothing like so generous as they are today, had been lost, broken, or simply worn-out. Even if the money had been available, new physics apparatus was at that time unobtainable. Difficulties were great – great enough to daunt many a lesser man, but Mr Yarwood saw to it that acute shortage of material aids did not in any way detract from the efficiency and effectiveness of his teaching – a fact clearly shown by the record of examination results achieved by his pupils during those troubled years.

In 1950, when the time came for him to retire, the whole school united in wishing him many years of happy retirement. We knew then that he had no intention of retiring to a life of idleness, for he had acquired in the years before the war the subtle ability to write textbooks which were at one and the same time instructive and readable. His first *School Physics* justly became a 'best seller' among Middle School Physics texts. Since his retirement several more books, all of them valuable in their varying fields, have come from his able pen.

Though it had been known for some time that his health was not so good as it had been, it was with a sense of shock that, on returning to school this term, we learnt of his passing. To our great regret at this sad news was added the additional regret that, because the school was scattered at the time, nobody from the school had been able to be present to pay on behalf of the school its corporate respects to one who had served it so ably and for so long. Our loss serves to remind us how greatly Mrs Yarwood must feel for the loss of one who took such care of her. She must surely have the very real sympathy of all Kilburnians and Old Creightonians.