NONCONFORMIST SCHOOL: LLANDAFF HOUSE ACADEMY, REGENT STREET, 1799-1893

Nonconformist school! The words sound strange in the modern context of free and universal education, but one hundred and ninety years ago, about which time our story begins, opportunities for education--particularly for dissenters--were very limited indeed.

As you doubtless know, churchmen and dissenters were, at one time, deeply divided, not only on religious issues, but in politics as well. Dissenters laboured under severe disabilities. They were banned from the universities, denied the right of public office, and treated in many ways as second-class citizens. These matters were of particular importance in a town like Cambridge, where existed a large and growing body of people disaffected with the government, the Established Church and that privileged class of young men who came up to study at the University.

The French Revolution brought turmoil into the local community. Many dissenters sympathised with the Revolution in its early stages. The dissenting meeting-house in Downing Place (erected in 1790) was attacked by an Anti-Jacobin mob in December 1792 and had all its windows broken; a booklet written by Robert Robinson (minister of the Baptist meeting in St Andrew's Street) setting out the principles of nonconformity was roundly condemned by Edmund Burke in the House of Commons--full of the most audacious libels on the national establishment, he fumed--; and Benjamin Flower, another Cambridge dissenter, found himself in Newgate prison for six months for saying unkind things ~~--breach of privilege his attackers said--~~ about Dr Richard Watson, Bishop of Llandaff.*

About the same time, the Rev. Robert Hall, who had recently succeeded Robinson at St Andrew's Street, preached two sermons, Christianity consistent with a love of freedom (1791) and An apology for the freedom of the Press and for general liberty (1793)--both printed and widely distributed--which brought the whole issue of personal liberty forcefully before the public at large. As a member of Hall's congregation wrote: "The dissenters were, at this period, very unpopular from their decided attachment to the great

* Flower had referred to the Bishop in an editorial as 'the Right Reverend time-server and apostate'

principles of religious and civil liberty and their opposition to the Pitt administration, and to the French war. There was the University on the one side, with Mr Pitt for its representative; and a corrupt corporation on the other, with the Duke of Rutland at the head, both of which were leagued together to put down the principles of liberty, and to support corruption and war, while the dissenters were contending for peace and reform. The contest was so unequal, that it seemed, at one time, almost impossible that we should keep our ground, much less that we should finally triumph. We were assailed from every quarter with accusations of disloyalty, and of being enemies of 'church and state'. This was carried so far as to insult us when we walked the streets. Though a small band, we were, however, firm and united: there was not a single individual in the whole congregation who did not warmly espouse the 'good old cause'. This, with such a powerful leader as Mr Hall, insured for us the victory..."

It was against this background of political unrest that a young man of 22 came up to Cambridge in 1796 to seek his fortune. His name was Olinthus Gregory, ~~and his birthplace was~~ As a child he had been brought up in the small village of Yaxley near Peterborough. Gregory had been a precocious boy and, at an early age, had shown a marked predilection for mathematics. In this he had been encouraged by his schoolmaster and, by the time he was nineteen—this was in 1793—he had published his first book under the title, Lessons, astronomical and philosophical, for the amusement and instruction of British youth.

The book, which had been well received, brought Gregory to the notice of some students in Cambridge (among them John Cropley, afterwards MP for the University) who tried to persuade him to enter the University and take Anglican orders. However, as a dissenter, he felt bound to say 'No'. None the less, the prospect of working in Cambridge must have had its attractions. He hoped, no doubt, to meet members of the University and, at the same time, to follow up his particular interests in mathematics and astronomy.

Gregory's first ~~post~~ job was to act as sub-editor of The Cambridge Intelligence a weekly newspaper run by Benjamin Flower, the dissenter I have already mentioned. This newspaper was more than a local 'rag'. It was radical in its views, opposing the Napoleonic War, and was 'read, admired and hated', as one person has put it, 'from the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed to the Land's

End in Cornwall'. (If you want to know more about this newspaper, read Michael Murphy's Cambridge newspapers and opinion, 1780-1850.)

Flower was a member of the Baptist meeting. It was his custom to read out the verses of the hymns from the front of the meeting-house---a necessary procedure in these days when so many people could not read for themselves. It is not unnatural, therefore, to find Gregory attending St Andrew's Street as his place of worship and making acquaintance with Robert Hall. He himself records this meeting as taking place in January 1797. Hall immediately took to the young man and, before long, we may suppose, was asking him round to his lodgings at the east end of Petty Cury. An early conversation of theirs is preserved in a memoir written by Gregory following Hall's death in 1831.

Hall. What do you think of Cambridge, sir?
Gregory. It is a very interesting place.
Hall. Yes, the place where Bacon, and Barrow, and Newton studied, and where Jeremy Taylor was born, cannot but be interesting. But that is not what I mean; what do you say to the scenery, sir?
Gregory. Some of the public buildings are very striking, and the college walks very pleasing; but-- (hesitating).
Hall. But there is nothing else to be said. What do you think of the surrounding country, sir? Does not it strike you as very insipid?
Gregory. No, not precisely so.
Hall. Ay, ay; I had forgotten; you come from a flat country. Yet you must love hills: there are no hills here.
Gregory. Yes, there are; there are Madingley Hill, and the Castle Hill, and Gogmagog Hill.
Hall (amused). Why, as to Madingley, there is something in that; it reminds you of the Cottons, and the Cottonian Library; but that is not because Madingley is a high hill, but because Robert Cotton was a great man; and even he was not born there. Then, as to your second example, do you know that the Castle Hill is the place of the public executions? That is no very pleasant association, sir. And as to your last example, Gogmagog Hill is five miles off; and many who go there are puzzled to say whether it is

natural or artificial. 'Tis a dismally flat country, sir; dismally flat... Before I came to Cambridge, I had read in the prize poems, and in some other works of fancy, of 'the banks of the Cam', of 'the sweetly flowing stream', and so on; but when I arrived here I was sadly disappointed. When I first saw the river as I passed over King's College Bridge, I could not help exclaiming, Why, the stream is standing still to see people drown themselves! and that, I am sorry to say, is a permanent feeling with me.

The conversation carries on in similar vein with Hall extolling the delights of the Severn at Bristol and the Don at Aberdeen (where he had ~~taken his degree~~ studied as a young man) compared with what he calls 'the sleeping river'.

These meetings led to a warm friendship and, throughout that year, Hall and Gregory dined together most days--probably in one of the eating houses in Petty Cury. Also that year, Gregory was baptised and received into membership of the church.

Towards the end of 1797, a quarrel developed between Hall and Flower over doctrinal matters as a result of which the latter resigned his membership. The breach must have put Gregory in an embarrassing position. He owed loyalty to his employer; nevertheless his sympathies lay entirely with Hall. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that shortly afterwards he gave up his position on the paper and opened a bookshop in Sidney Street not far from Holy Trinity Church.

Hall enjoyed the company of his young friend (he was ten years older than Gregory) and now suggested that, for their mutual improvement, the two get together on alternate mornings during the week; Gregory to instruct Hall in higher mathematics, while Hall took up with Gregory the subjects of metaphysics and philosophy. This arrangement lasted about a year.

In March 1799, Gregory decided to improve his business prospects by moving to the Market Place. About the same time, he started a day and evening school for boys in a room not far from the market itself. The school quickly became popular, attracting more pupils than he could manage on his own. In the July following, he announced in the local Press that he was engaging an assistant. These events mark the beginning of the establishment that was

later to become Llandaff House School.

Gregory's assistant was a man named Newton Bosworth. We know little about him at this stage. He was 23 years of age, well educated (having probably attended a seminary in London) and, like Gregory, held Baptist views. The arrangement seems to have been that Bosworth took charge of the younger boys, while Gregory concentrated on tutorial work, especially the teaching of mathematics. Finding teaching more profitable than bookselling, Gregory soon gave up the bookshop altogether.

I have already mentioned that Gregory was author of a book. A second edition was called for that year, that is in 1799, and he now began work on another book to be entitled A treatise on astronomy. This was completed in 1801, but not published until the following year. On the title-page (a copy of which can be seen on the table) he grandly describes himself 'Teacher of mathematics, Cambridge'. The preface to this book carries a note saying 'the treatise was composed during the intervals of leisure which could be snatched from the employment of a large school, an employment which requires the author's persevering attention for more than eight hours a day'. But this was not all. Gregory, Bosworth and another man, whose name we do not know, embarked on an ambitious plan to produce a new encyclopaedia. Unfortunately, this ran into difficulties. Their collaborator withdrew and had to be replaced. Bosworth also, whose task it had been to supply articles in the alphabet of chemistry, suffered a period of ill-health and was forced to give up. However, another collaborator was found and, from 1808 onwards, the work began to appear in serial form. It was completed in 1813 in twelve volumes. Its title, Pantologia, comes from a word meaning 'universal knowlege'. (A copy of the title-page can be seen on the table.)

Throughout these years--busy as they were--Gregory maintained close relations with Robert Hall, visiting him, he says, several times a week. Bosworth also was admitted to the circle of Hall's friends. It must have been a shock, therefore, when Gregory announced that he had obtained a post at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and would be leaving Cambridge for good early in 1803. From this time onwards, he drops out of our story. Time does not permit me to go into details of Gregory's subsequent career.

Suffice it to say he became eventually Professor of Mathematics at the Woolwich Academy and one of the country's leading mathematicians. He was oncof the projectors in later years of London University--the third university to be established in this country after Oxford and Cambridge.

Following, Gregory's departure, Bosworth took over the running of the school. This was located at that time in a building overlooking All Saints churchyard.

Boswarth was a man of outstanding charm and personality. A contemporary has described him as 'learned, accomplished and amiable'. He possessed also a keen sense of service to the community. There was much poverty in Cambridge in these days and, in 1801, a group of friends belonging to various churches got together to form a Benevolent Society for the relief of the sick and aged poor. Funds, it was agreed, should be raised by means of subscriptions and donations and from a collection taken at a sermon preached annually in one or other of the local churches, Anglican or nonconformist. The prime mover was Mrs Eliza Flower (wife of Benjamin Flower, already mentioned) who became its first secretary. Robert Hall wrote the prospectus for the Society and Bosworth was evidently one of its keen supporters. When the Flowers left Cambridge in 1804, Bosworth became the new secretary--an office he held for many years. His wife, Catherine, became served as one of the visitors for the Society.

In March, 1807, Bosworth announced in the Cambridge Chronicle that he would shortly be opening a boarding school for young gentlemen in what he called 'a commodious house and in a pleasant and airy situation'. This house, now in the possession of St John's College, was called Merton Hall. It stands adjacent to the famous School of Pythagorus in Northampton Street. It may be of interest to quote from the advertisement:

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> "Board and education in the English, Latin and Greek languages, writing, arithmetic, and mathematics, with their application to book-keeping, surveying, geography, globes, etc., or such of these as may be deemed most suitable for the pupil, THIRTY GUINEAS per annum. Entrance, one guinea.
>
> Tea in the afternoon, when desired, half-a-guinea per quarter additional...

Washing and mending may be conveniently done in the town, and will be regularly attended to by Mrs Bosworth.
Music, drawing, French, etc., by the best masters.
The health, morals and religious instruction of the pupils will be objects of constant attention."

Bosworth made provision also for day scholars, who were charged one guinea per quarter, or one and a half guineas to include the teaching of Latin and Greek.

Later that year, Mr and Mrs Bosworth joined with others in starting an undenominational Sunday School on a site in Sidney Street now occupied by Messrs Woolworth's store. This school, which was supported by both Anglicans and nonconformists, attracted about 40 children. It began at 9 a.m. and, at the close of lessons, the children were marched through the streets to their respective churches or chapels to attend morning service. The school re-assembled in the afternoon. In 1810, the school broke up to form separate Sunday Schools at the churches or chapels concerned. One of the scholars to attend this early Sunday School was John Pink, father of John Pink, the first Borough Librarian, whose portrait may be seen hanging in the room occupied by the Cambridgeshire Collection in the City Library.

By 1811, Bosworth's school, or academy as it was now called, had so increased in numbers that a full-time assistant became necessary. The young man to be engaged was William Johnson, aged 18. William was a native of Ramsey in Huntingdonshire, where his father had been the village baker. As a boy he was employed carrying round bread to his father's customers. A clergyman in the village, seeing William as a promising lad, offered to give him lessons in Latin, and he used to carry a Latin grammar round with him in his bread-basket and learn bits out of it as he walked.

One day in 1809, William was asked by a gentleman--a Mr Pennington--to hold his horse in the road. This little act of usefulness led to a conversation as a result of which William was invited to become groom at Mr Pennington's establishment in Cambridge. William accepted the offer, but knowing little of horses, soon found the work did not suit him. However, when Mr Pennington learnt that he knew Latin, he offered him the post of

tutor to his young son instead.

William grasped the opportunity with eagerness and, during the next year or two, made every effort to improve himself and to further his knowledge of the Classics. His post as assistant to Mr Bosworth offered also considerable advantages. He was now keen to take up teaching as a career, and, in 1814, he returned to Ramsey and opened a school of his own which included in its curriculum the study of Greek and Latin. About 1816, he married Miss Eliza Barker, a schoolmistress some years older than himself. But more of this couple anon.

Returning to Bosworth. In October 1811, a serious fire occurred at Emmanuel College and Bosworth felt prompted to give a series of talks to his boys on accidents and what they might do to help in an emergency. In this he was assisted by two members of the University: the Rev. James Plumtre--famed in his day as a dramatist--and Dr Frederick Thackeray, a close friend. The talks aroused so much interest that Bosworth was urged to put them into print. Thus appeared, in 1813, The accidents of human life, the first book to be published in this country on first aid. The work sold quickly and an edition was soon called for in the States. A second edition appeared in 1834.

In the Spring of 1817, Bosworth obtained offer of a property in Regent Street called Llandaff House. The older part of this house (which dated from the year 1710) had been, at one time, a tavern bearing the sign "Bishop Blaise". In 1784, Dr Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, had acquired this property, enlarged it with an annexe and additional rooms at the back, and turned the whole into his private residence. You may ask what the Bishop of Llandaff was doing in Cambridge. The truth is that, after the manner of other ecclesiastics in his day, he was a pluralist. Not only was he Bishop of Llandaff, but Regius Professor of Divinity in the University as well, besides holding two benefices in other parts of the country. What must have annoyed his contemporaries even more was the fact that, for many years, he employed a deputy to undertake his professorial duties while he spent the greater part of his time on his handsome estate at Calgarth Park in Westmorland. Although a very able man, and in some ways an enlightened one, he was not a popular figure. An epigram circulating at the time ran thus:

"Two of a trade can ne'er agree,
No proverb can be juster;
They've ta'en Bishop Blaize, you see,
And put up Bishop Bluster."

Llandaff House was commodious and eminently suitable for use as a school. Besides that , it was near Parker's Piece--good for team games--and close to the Baptist meeting of which Bosworth had been a deacon now for six years. At the back were fields--part of Downing College grounds--and a rented garden, known as 'the Grove', where the younger boys could play. Features of the older part of the building were the pillared porch jutting out over the pavement and, inside, a beautiful oak staircase and gallery, as well as panelled rooms.

Bosworth carried on this school--now dignified by the name "Llandaff House Academy"--for six years. By 1823, the responsibility seems to have become too much for him. His family had grown to four--three boys and a girl--and his wife was fully occupied. The boarders, therefore, were given up and the Academy reverted to a day school instead. Early that Summer, he announced to the public that he would shortly be removing to London and that the school was being taken over by his former assistant, Mr William Johnson.

Bosworth's subsequent career is a story in itself. Briefly, after making a name for himself amongst London Baptists--where he served on numerous committees of one kind or another--he and his family emigrated in 1834 to Canada. Here he entered the Baptist ministry, helped to found the first Baptist theological college in Canada, in Montreal, and finally became a missionary in connection with the Canada Baptist Missionary Society. He died at Paris, Ontario, in 1848. He is probably best remembered to-day for his history of Montreal (published in 1839)--a work much sought after for its attractive engravings.

But to return to William Johnson. The premises now taken over remained in the hands of the Johnson family for close on 80 years. Johnson, like his predecessor, was earnest and hard-working. An advertisement in the local paper, in 1829, reads:

"Any gentleman working to prepare for the university will find in this establishment every requisite to assist him in the prosecution of his studies, as well as every domestic arrangement calculated to promote his comfort."

The boarding-school was re-established and, by the 1830s, we have evidence to show that the number of pupils had risen to about fifty. In 1830, Johnson delivered a lecture to friends and supporters of his academy, including, we are told, the University Professors of Greek, Arabic, and Natural Philosophy, explaining his system of education. The part of the building in which this took place, known to the family as 'the parlour', can be seen in a photograph on the table. Copies of the lecture were issued in the form of a pamphlet entitled Thoughts on education (title-page on table). This pamphlet contains an advert. showing that the basic cost of board and tuition was still 30 guineas per annum. However, this figure was doubled for 'parlour boarders', i.e. pupils living with the family, whilst the charge for private pupils, including a separate study and bedroom, was 80 guineas per annum.

Up to 1832, Mr and Mrs Johnson, although regular attend[illegible] at the Baptist chapel, were not actually members. Their admission is recorded in the Church Book in October that year. The couple had four children--three boys and a girl--all of whom were brought up in the Academy. The eldest son, James Barker Johnson, was about to enter University when he died suddenly in 1841. His mother died the following year. A headstone to the memory of these two members of the family stands in the small cemetery attached to the church.

Of the other children, the only one to concern us is the second son, William Henry Farthing Johnson (or WHF as I shall call him) born at Llandaff House in 1825. WHF went, in 1841, as assistant master to a school in Brixton He was only sixteen, but it was, of course, usual in those days for boys to commence their careers at an early age. The work was strenuous, as, owing to the indolent disposition of the head, WHF was left practically in charge of the school, and the elder boys (who were about his own age) naturally tried to defy his authority, and drove him to the use of his fists. Fortunately, he was big and strong, as well as determined, and soon succeeded

in reducing them to order. But he had also a boyish sympathy for boys, and though only there for six months, established the most friendly relations with them. They nicknamed him "Mr Elephant" and after he left sent him affectionate letters of a quite unconventional type.

On return to Cambridge, WHF taught for a while in his father's school. In 1843, he entered Corpus Christi College as an undergraduate. The College had been willing to accept him, but, on completion of his studies and having passed the examinations, he was precluded from taking a degree because of the University Tests. He had in fact joined the Baptist church in 1845 and could not in conscience subscribe to something in which he did not believe.

Upon leaving college, WHF returned to his father's school as assistant master. Four years later, in 1851, he married Harriet Brimley, a young woman belonging to one of the church families. William Johnson now relinquished the headship and his son became master instead.

Before proceeding further, I want to say something about Harriet and the family into which WHF married. Practically all Harriet's family were members of the church and there seems little doubt that the congregation regarded the union as an important event. Harriet was one of four surviving children of Augustine Brimley, a prosperous grocer on Market Hill. (Some of you may remember the shop, Brimley, Whibley & Sons, which closed down in 1934 and whose site is now occupied by the Midland Bank.) Brimley himself was deeply involved in civic affairs. He became town councillor in 1835, alderman in 1850, and Mayor of the Borough in 1853-54. He was also a deacon of the church. You may have heard of his brush--a good natured one--with the youthful Charles Haddon Spurgeon (the famous preacher) who was at one time a member at St Andrew's Street and had oversight for two years of the Baptist congregation at Waterbeach. Spurgeon relates the incident himself in his Autobiography:

> "One day, a gentleman, who was then Mayor of Cambridge, and who had more than once tried to correct my youthful mistakes, asked me if I really had told my congregation that, if a thief got into Heaven, he would begin picking the angels' pockets. 'Yes, sir' I replied, 'I told them that, if it were possible for an ungodly

man to go to Heaven without having his nature changed, he would be none the better for being there; and then, by way of illustration, I said that, were a thief to get in among the glorified, he would remain a thief still, and he would go round the place picking the angels' pockets!' 'But my dear young friend', asked Mr Brimley, very seriously, 'don't you know the angels havn't any pockets?' 'No, sir,' I replied, with equal gravity, 'I did not know that; but I am glad to be assured of the fact by a gentleman who does know. I will take care to put it right the first opportunity I get."

The following Monday morning, I walked into Mr Brimley's shop, and said to him, 'I set that matter right yesterday, sir'. 'What matter', he enquired. 'Why about the angels' pockets!' 'What did you say?' he asked, in a tone almost of despair at what he might hear next. 'Oh, sir, I just told the people I was sorry to say that I had made a mistake the last time I preached to them; but that I had met a gentleman—the Mayor of Cambridge—who had assured me that the angels had no pockets, so I must correct what I had said, as I did not want anybody to go away with a false notion of Heaven. I would ~~my~~ therefore say that if a thief got among the angels without having his nature changed, he would try to steal the feathers out of their wings'. 'Surely, you did not say that?', said Mr Brimley. 'I did though', I replied. 'Then', he exclaimed, 'I'll never try to set you right again', which was just exactly what I wanted him to say."

There is a memorial to Augustine Brimley and his son, George (who died at the early age of 37) in the church graveyard.

Harriet's two sisters married local businessmen: Caroline, the elder, became wife of Alexander Macmillan, one of the founders of the famous publishing firm, Macmillan & Co; while Fanny, the younger, became wife of Robert Bowes, proprietor of the well-known bookshop, Bowes & Bowes.

Harriet herself was a gifted woman. One of her daughters writes of her thus:

"She was a great lover of poetry and a beautiful reader. Men of letters were her chief heroes... In the severe frugality of her married household, new books rarely entered the house except as birthday or Christmas presents, but our father generally managed to give her each new volume of Tennyson as it came out. Next to Tennyson she loved Wordsworth and named her eldest daughter after his 'Lucy'." Harriet plunged into the work of her schoolmaster husband with ~~zeal and tenacity~~ enthusiasm. For long she acted as matron and at first taught regularly in the school till forced to give up by the cares of housekeeping and a growing family (she had eight children) which had to be brought up on very limited means. She continued, however, for many years to take occasional pupils in German and Latin.

Like most women, she enjoyed the occasional gossip with a member of her own sex, and she hadn't to go far. Next door, ~~there was~~ lay a boarding school for young ladies run by a Miss Maria Sutton. This school, which occupied the older part of Llandaff House and was quite separate from the boys' school, had been started, in the 1820s, by Miss Sutton's aunt, a somewhat eccentric person who went around wearing a turban and a green plaid gown. Her chief functions, it would appear, had been to teach deportment and the use of the globes. (There is a reference to this school in the Chater diaries, published by Miss Porter in her Victorian Cambridge.)

Miss Maria (as she was known) was a racy character, full of kindness and humour, much given to the unqualified practice of medicine, which she administered according to the 'new' methods of homeopathy. Whenever one or other of Harriet's children was ailing--which happened pretty frequently--'Dr Maria' would be sent for in order that he or she might be suitably dosed.

Mrs ~~Pyh~~ Florence Keynes (who sent her boys, Maynard and Geoffrey to the Johnson school at a later date) relates in her book, Gathering up the threads, an amusing anecdote about Miss Maria. One of Harriet's daughters, Fanny, was sent to Miss Sutton's school as a boarder, although her home was next door. She was a clever little person and early discovered that she herself knew a good deal more on some subjects than Miss Maria, who was the main instructress. When naughty Fanny asked a bright question which Miss Maria could not

answer, the latter would say, "I think you have a headache, my dear, and had better go for a walk in the garden."

Miss Maria joined the Baptist church in 1860. Two letters written by her to Mr Johnson may be seen on the table. You will note that the address given is 'Llandaff House, Cambridge', which was the same as that of the boys' school next door. The proximity of the two establishments led, we are told, to much confusion and not a few amusing incidents.

Let us return now to the boys' school. The census returns of 1851 (which can be consulted in the County Record Office) show that the school took in at that time 25 boarders. There were probably at least as many day boys, although, of course, their names are not recorded. Most of the boarders--about two thirds--came from towns and villages in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire, especially in the area of the Fens. Others were drawn from adjacent counties, Hertfordshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and even as far afield as Buckinghamshire and Kent. A list of old boys ('Old Johnsonians' as they called themselves) drawn up in 1903, shows on investigation a great variety of backgrounds and occupations. Farmers and small businessmen seem to predominate , but there is also a fair sprinkling of professional men--clergymen (both Anglican and nonconformist), doctors, barristers, solicitors, schoolmasters, and even a handful of Cambridge dons, such as Leonard Whibley, lecturer in classics (1899-1910), W.E.Johnson, Sidgwick lecturer in moral sciences(1902-31) and Ernest Worman, assistant librarian at the University Library and a notable Hebrew scholar in his day. Other names to occur are those of Frederick and Maurice Macmillan, sons of Daniel Macmillan, the latter Maurice being father to Harold Macmillan, our former Prime Minister.

WHF had the distinction of being one of the first two nonconformists to be granted a Cambridge B.A.degree. This took place in October 1856, following an Act of Parliament passed earlier that year. To obtain his M.A.degree, he was obliged to migrate to Trinity in 1861, which apparently was more liberal in its attitude to nonconformists than Corpus. These degrees, in fact, were only titular degrees, and it was not until 1871 that University Tests were abolished and nonconformists were allowed to take their place in the Senate and to compete for University offices and posts on more or less equal terms.

WHF served as headmaster of Llandaff House School for 42 years. He was no cold academic. Tall and well-built, he entered fully into the lives of his pupils, sharing their games and pastimes and playing cricket with them when opportunity occurred. He was active in young people's work of all kinds. One of the founders of the Cambridge Y.M.C.A., he served as its first President in 1852. Again, in later years, he became the first President of the Cambridgeshire Sunday School Union. Another special interest of his was the Cambridge Bible Society Auxiliary, of which he was secretary for over 30 years. He was also deacon (subsequently senior deacon) of the nearby Baptist church. In public affairs, he served as a Justice of the Peace.

At the age of 70 (this was in 1893) WHF felt it time to retire. The boys' school was given up and his eldest daughter, Harriet, with the help of her cousin, Janet Bowes, opened instead a mixed preparatory school for younger children. It was this school that Maynard and Geoffrey Keynes (mentioned earlier) attended as youngsters in the 1890s. Their mother recalls the feuding that went on with certain errand boys in their journeys to and fro across Parker's Piece. WHF was on friendly terms with their father, Neville Keynes, and there was nothing he liked better than joining with the latter in a game of chess in the parlour at Llandaff House.

In July 1901, the old man--now 78 years of age--died. The reporter who wrote his obituary in the local paper says 'quite a number of well-known public men in the town and county passed through his hands, and the influence of such a personality has repeatedly shown its effect in their lives; a large percentage of the yeoman class in the county will lament the loss of their old master'.

It was about this time that the Baptist chapel of which WHF had been a member was declared unsafe. A fund was started to build a new one, which was eventually erected in 1903. A number of former pupils of Llandaff House School got together to raise a memorial to their old master. This took the form of the fine pulpit which now adorns the building and from which so many well-known men (including our Billy Graham) have preached over the years.

In 1903, Llandaff House was sold to Herbert Robinson (father of David

Robinson, the multi-millionaire), who converted part of it to his cycle business. Llandaff Chambers, the older part, which had been let off some years previous for use as offices, was retained as it was. In 1932-33, the entire property was demolished and replaced; on the one side by Robinson's garage and showrooms; on the other by a new 'Llandaff Chambers' bearing above its entrance the initials 'HR' in the form of a monogram. (The latter can still be seen if you look.)

Shortly before demolition took place, surviving pupils from the former Llandaff House School met in the old schoolroom for a re-union. A photograph lies on the table. Among those to appear are a number of well-known business men: Harry Church, the chemist and local philanthropist; Joseph Winship, the auctioneer; John D.Eland, the architect; Dr G.Roper, the surgeon; Robert W.Sabberton, the tailor; John Johnson (of Harry Johnson & nephew), the bookseller & stationer; H.G.Whibley, the Market Hill grocer; Smith Nutter, the coal merchant; and Arthur Deck, another chemist.

Following the break-up of the family home in 1902, Harriet Johnson (later wife of Mr Arthur Berry, Vice-Provost of King's College), removed her school to a temporary situation in Grange Road. From thence, it was transferred to a newly-built schoolhouse in Millington Road. In 1925, she retired and Miss Mary Tilley, a former pupil and a graduate of Newnham, took charge. At the time of the demolition in Regent Street, the school was re-named 'Llandaff School'. Miss Tilley left Cambridge in 1941 and the school came under new management, but it is interesting to note that it still exists under the title of the 'Millington Road Nursery School'.

Three of Mr Johnson's family---Mr W.E.Johnson and the Misses Alice and Fanny Johnson---lived for many years in a house on Barton Road at the corner of Millington Road. Aptly, this was named "Ramsey House" after their grandfather's birth-place, and so it still remains.

K.A.C.P.