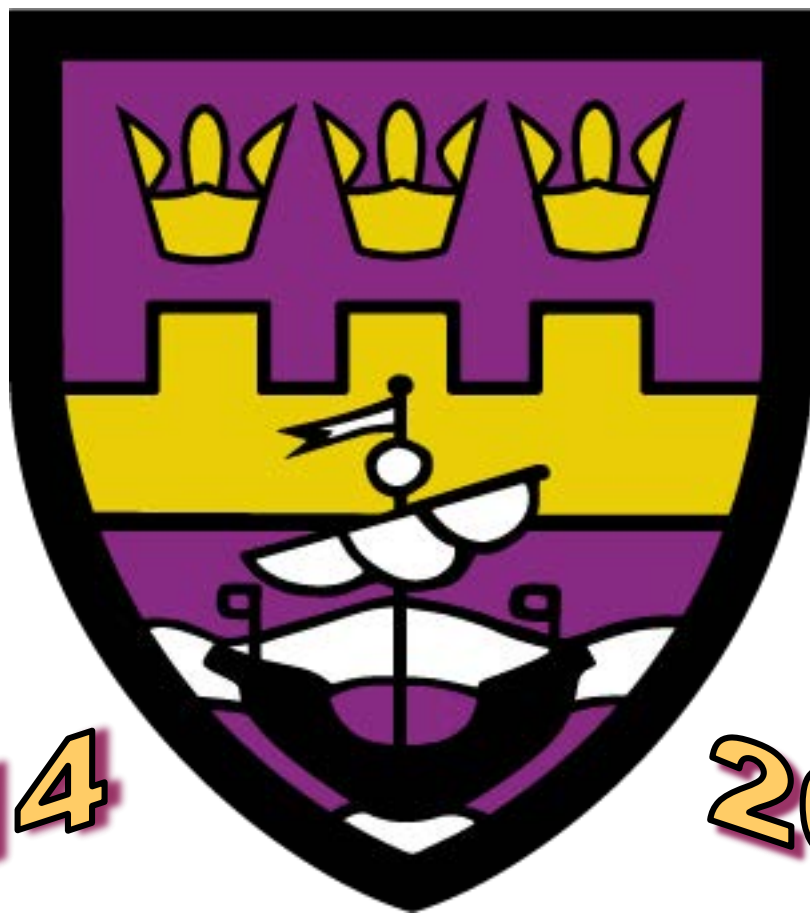


# MARDEN BRIDGE MIDDLE SCHOOL



1914

2014

100<sup>th</sup>  
*Anniversary*

September 2014 marks the centenary of the Marden Bridge building as a school.

The school has had a proud and varied history reflecting the growth of Whitley Bay as a town and the national trend as our educational system has altered and changed to respond to new challenges.

This booklet aims to help its readers appreciate the rich heritage of Marden Bridge Middle School and gain an understanding of the thousands of scholars who undertook their learning here.

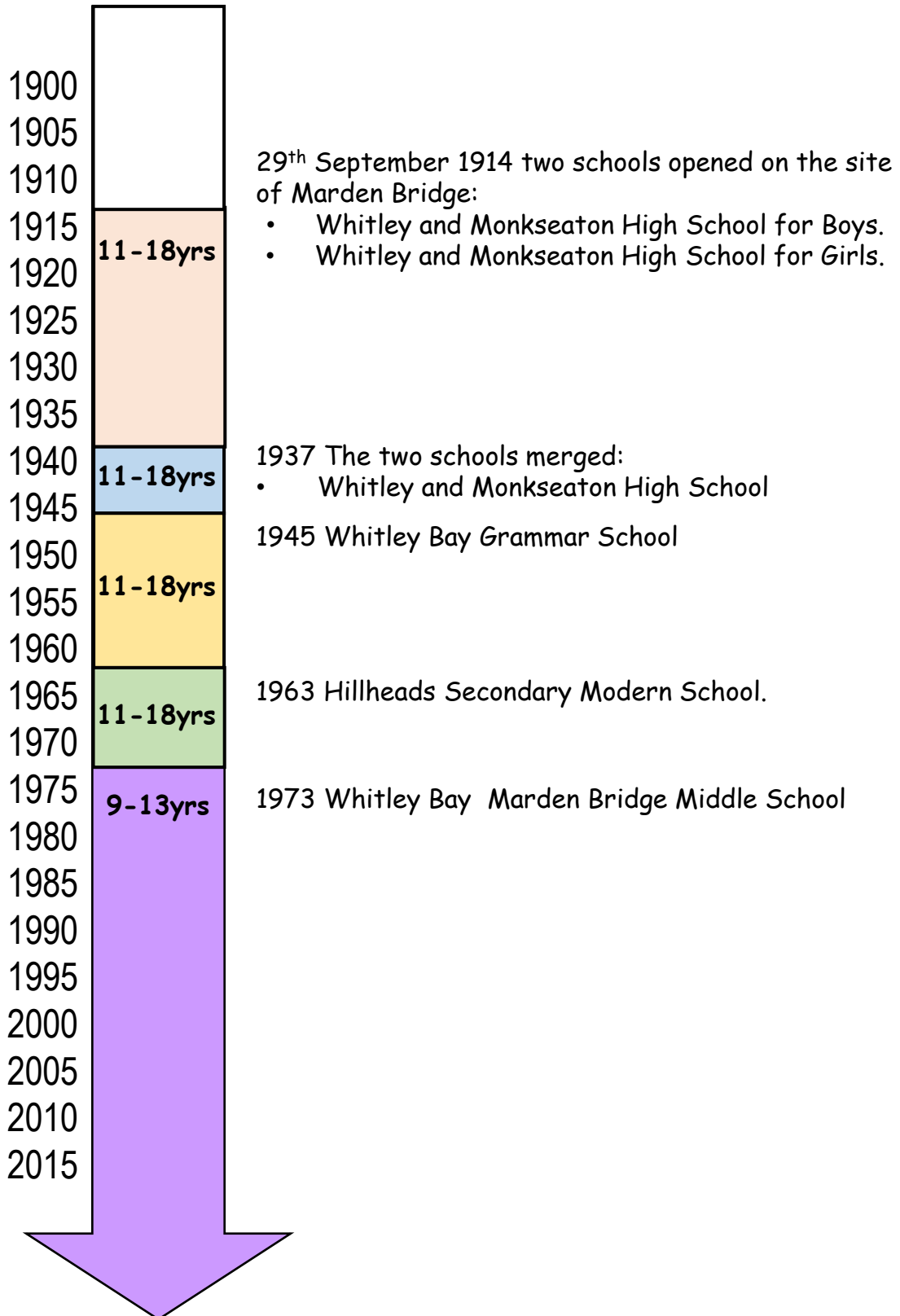


This booklet could not have been produced without the hard work of our predecessors and so our thanks go to:

- Mr Philip Henderson, Head of Related Studies at MBMS, 1989 who produced the original booklet and very kindly donated resources to our school.
- Alan Rickaby, Norman Aplin and Eric Tapsell for their illustrations in the original booklet which we have shamelessly re used.
- Wendy Harris for her secretarial assistance on the original booklet which provided us with so much valuable information.

# OUR SCHOOL

## TIMELINE 1914-2014

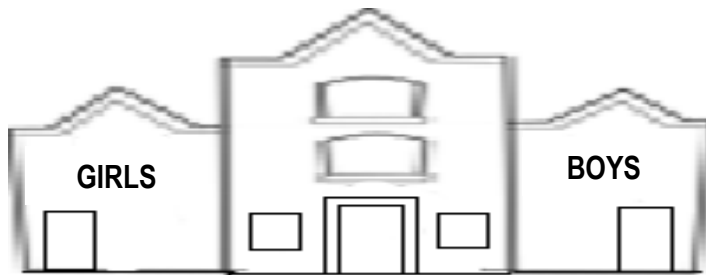


## Why did our school change?

Our building began as two schools:

- ***Whitley and Monkseaton High School for Boys.***
- ***Whitley and Monkseaton High School for Girls.***

The boys entrance was where the boys toilets now are and the girls entrance where the girls toilets are.



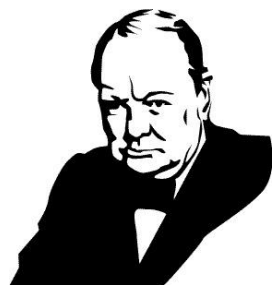
Only children whose parents could afford to pay fees went to High School. Some children were awarded scholarships to study there.

When the headmistress of the girls' school died in 1937, it was decided to merge the two schools to create ***Whitley and Monkseaton High School.*** This was done gradually, beginning with the new starters until all the classes were 'co-educational' and had a mixture of boys and girls.

During the Second World War many people began to think that our schools were not providing the best opportunity for all pupils. They thought there were two types of pupil - those that were clever with their hands and those that were clever with their heads.

Winston Churchill's government passed the Butler Education Act of 1944. It created two types of schools:

- Grammar Schools
- Secondary Modern Schools



Children would sit an 11+ examination. All those who passed would be given a free place in the grammar school. Those who failed were to go to the secondary modern school.

In 1945 our building became ***Whitley Bay Grammar School.***

## Why did our school change?

At **Whitley Bay Grammar School** children were expected to take examinations at 16 and 18 years old before continuing their studies at college or university. Secondary Modern pupils were expected to leave school at 15 years old and start work.



As the population of Whitley Bay and Monkseaton increased the school became overcrowded.

A new, purpose built Grammar School was designed. It was situated in Deneholm and was opened in 1963. All Grammar school pupils transferred to the new building. It is now known as Whitley Bay High School.

The Marden Bridge site now became **Hillheads Secondary Modern School**.

Over the years many people began to find fault with the system. They agreed that all schooling should be free but they did not like the 11+ examination system. They thought it was unfair to test children at 11 years of age and then split them into different schools based on the results of the exam. Instead they believed there should be one type of school for all children - a comprehensive school.

In 1972 The Local Education Authority decided to change the age at which children moved between schools. The building became **Marden Bridge Middle School**, a comprehensive style school for pupils aged 9-13 years old.

# THE OPENING OF OUR SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 1914

On 29<sup>th</sup> September 1914, just after the outbreak of World War 1 two schools opened on the site of Marden Bridge:

- *Whitley and Monkseaton High School for Boys.*
- *Whitley and Monkseaton High School for Girls.*

## PROBLEMS:

When the building opened there was a great shortage of materials. The headmistress of the Girls' School explained this in the school magazine:

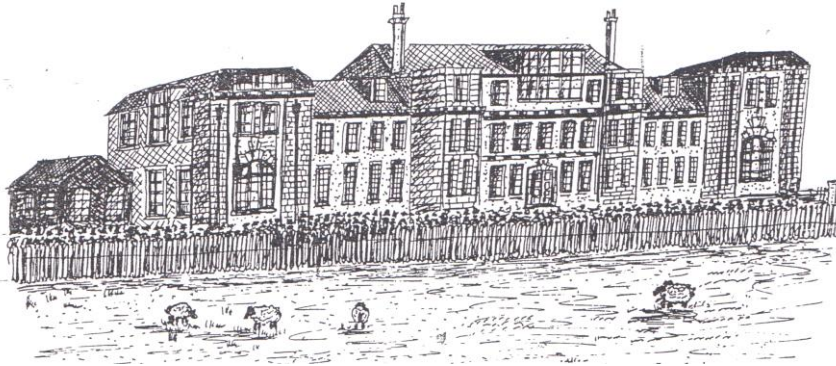
*“The school authorities had done their utmost to get the building ready for September 29<sup>th</sup>, but when we assembled on the first day, the floor of the hall was not down, the staircase was not completed, many of the windows were not in, and the only rooms really usable were the six classrooms. Needless to say, there was the greatest difficulty in getting books and equipment.”*

*School Magazine 1923*

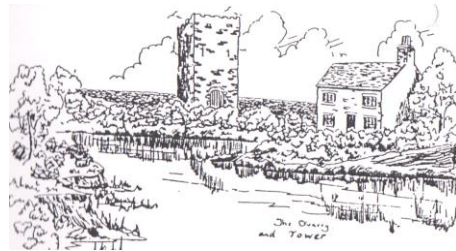
# THE OPENING OF OUR SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 1914

When the Whitley and Monkseaton High Schools opened in 1914 the area was very different. The school was surrounded by fields, not houses.



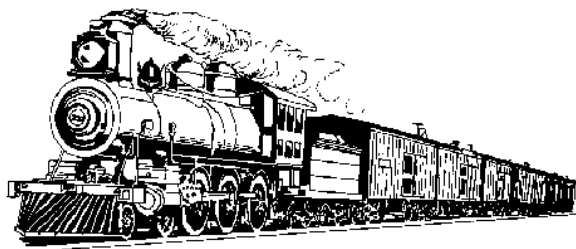
Grazing land was precious during the war years so sheep were kept on the school field. A long wooden and wire fence prevented the sheep wandering into the classrooms.



There was no Percy Gardens, Felton Avenue, Grosvenor Drive or Lovaine Avenue. The houses had not yet been built. The only buildings nearby were Marden Farm, the Quarry Tower, the colliery cottages of Whitley New Row and a row of houses by the Railway Inn called Hillheads.



A railway line ran along what is now Lovaine Avenue!



# THE OPENING OF OUR SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 1914

When the Whitley and Monkseaton High Schools opened in 1914 the school was designed symmetrically so that one half could be used for boys and the other half for girls. Outside the school was a flagpole that flew the Union Flag.

The children were taught by masters (male teachers) and mistresses (female teachers). Boys and girls were not allowed to meet and so, to prevent chance encounters, the girls school started and finished fifteen minutes before the boys school. At lunchtimes prefects patrolled the grounds to make sure boys and girls did not meet. Trespassing on the other school was strictly forbidden and detention given if the rule was broken. This did not stop the problem and rumour has it that illicit meetings were held behind the bushes and trees which bordered the school field.

Each school had five classrooms and classes had 25 pupils. The school was lit by gas lamps. The windows were covered with dark paper to stop any light escaping - this was due to the wartime blackout. Most pupils went home for their dinner break which lasted  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours. It was not until 1945 that schools were required by law to provide a hot dinner. Pupils were caned for serious misbehaviour.

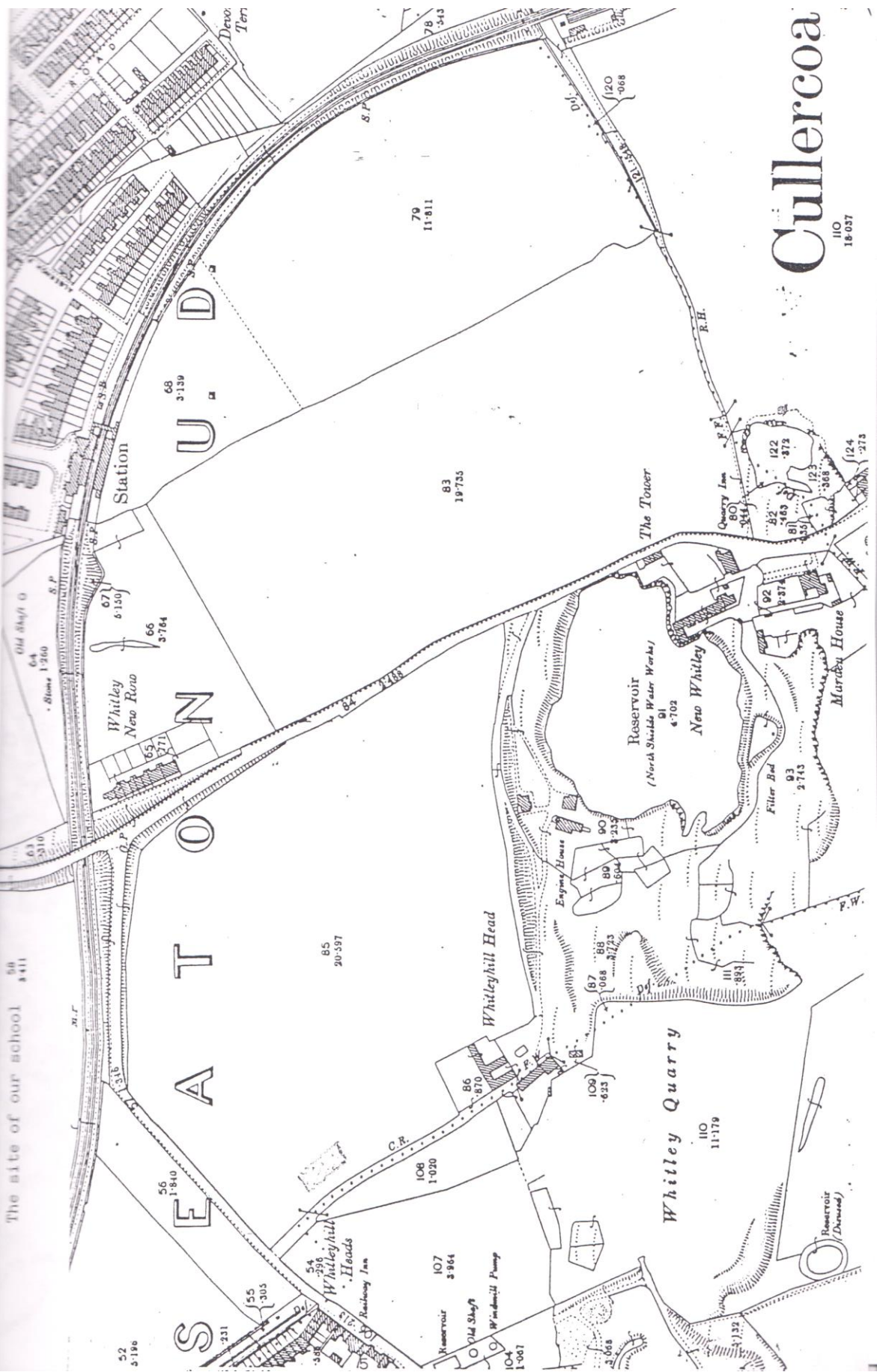
On the first floor were glass doors with a curtain separating the boys' school from the girls' school. The staffroom was also divided in two - one half for the masters who taught the boys and the other for the mistresses who taught the girls. The Girl's school headmistress was Miss Highton. The headmaster of the Boys' School was Mr Widdows.

Children could start at the age of 10 but had to satisfy the headteacher that they were clever enough. All pupils had to pass an Entrance Exam before they could attend. Parents paid school fees of three guineas per term. A guinea was 21 shillings. In today's money the fees would be roughly £136 a term.

(Figures calculated from National Archives  
Currency Converter.)







# Cullerco

110  
18-037

The site of our school 64  
3-111

## S E A T O N

## U D

Devon Ten

Station

Whitley New Road

85  
20-597

79  
11-811

83  
19-755

Whitley Hill Head

Reservoir  
(North Shields Water Works)

New Whitley  
4-709

The Tower

Query Inn  
60  
3-544

122  
3-73

61  
3-551

52  
3-568

123  
3-688

92  
3-374

124  
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125  
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93  
3-743

Filter Bed

93  
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Whitley Quarry

110  
11-179

Reservoir  
(Darned)

109  
6-33

87  
88  
1068  
3-723

90  
2-35

89  
2-35

Engine House

104  
1-061

Old Shaft  
107  
3-964

Reservoir  
106  
1-020

Whitley Hill Head  
86  
870

Whitley Hill Head  
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1-840

Whitley Hill Head  
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## OUR SCHOOL & THE 1<sup>st</sup> WORLD WAR

Very soon after the outbreak of war, all the men teachers from the Boys' School, with the exception of the headmaster, were called up to serve their country in one of the armed forces.



Mr Gates (Science teacher) and Mr Young (Music teacher) both enlisted in the Tyne Electrical Engineers. Mr Gates was made a corporal in charge of searchlights. Mr Young was a corporal instructing new recruits in the use of electrical apparatus.

Mr Worsley (French teacher) became an interpreter attached to the French Military Police at Le Havre.

Mr Willott (Maths teacher) became a petty officer in the Royal Naval Reserve.

None of the boys attending school were old enough to serve in the armed forces although it was common for young men to try and enlist underage to fight for their country. One ex-pupil did try to enlist in the Royal Flying Corps whilst underage but was discovered and his application turned down.

Sadly, one of the Boys' School teachers, Mr G. Highfield, was killed in action in the trenches of Flanders.

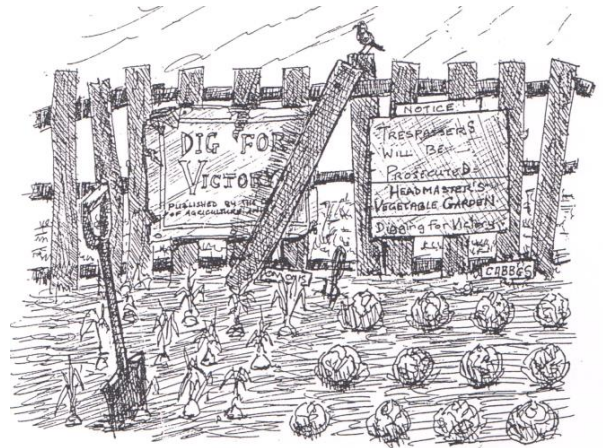
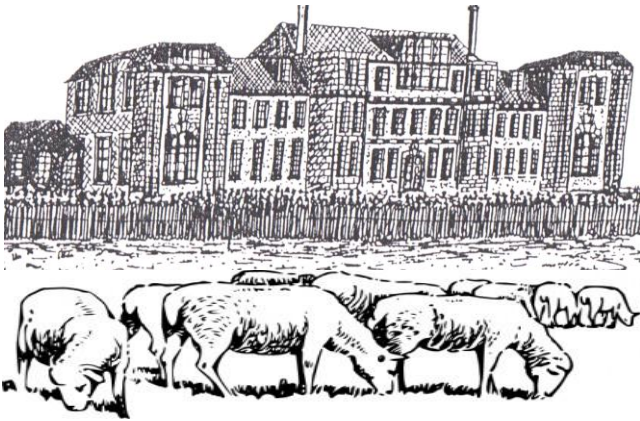
Another, Mr Hall was shot in the knee and discharged from the army as unfit.





## OUR SCHOOL & THE WORLD WARS

Although the school could only provide a few men to fight in the war, it helped in many other ways.



Gardens were turned into vegetable plots to ease food rationing and playing field was turned over to grazing sheep.

By the time the Second World War broke out 20 years later there were many ex-pupils who were old enough to serve in the Armed Forces. The school is very proud to remember and honour the former pupils who gave their lives in the service of their country. Two 'old boys' who survived the war received medals for their bravery.



Jarvis Hunter and Dennis Briggs were awarded the Distinguished Service Order for Gallantry.

Sadly, many others were killed. The Roll of Honour list detailing those who sacrificed their lives for King and Country was placed on a memorial plaque and displayed at Whitley Bay High School.



## WE REMEMBER

We remember those from this school who fought and died in the wars so that we might live in freedom today.

### World war 1:

*Mr. G Highfield (Teacher)*

### World war 2:

*T. R. Armstrong*

*K. Arnott*

*J. E. Arthur*

*D. Adam*

*N. Allen*

*J. A. Aylwin*

*D.A. Briggs*

*J.A. Browne*

*H.H. Bailey*

*W.R. Burns*

*C.R. Besley*

*J.P. Cusworth*

*G.N. Davison*

*K. Dixon*

*J.E. Emery*

*D.M. Ewbank*

*D.J. Faires*

*D.H. Fielder-Smith*

*S.M. Girvin*

*A.J. Green*

*E. Hare*

*B.W. Hammerton*

*W. Harley*

*B. Nicholls*

*R. Nicholls*

*J.K. Nairn*

*B. O'Flanagan*

*H.L. Pallister*

*J.C. Parkin*

*H.K. Pickard*

*T.M. Reid*

*N.B. Ross*

*A.D. Smith*

*H.F. Sparks*

*W.E. Snaith*

*A. Storey (12 yrs)*

*A.F. Tinn*

*R.V. Wood*

*R.L. White*

*N.R. Yorke*



# OUR SCHOOL & THE WORLD WARS

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT SOME OF OUR FORMER PUPILS

Basil Hammerton	MN	Torpedoed and drowned
George Liddell,		Killed in New York (fall)
James K. Nairn	RE	Killed in action
N Rumney Yorke	Sgt RAF	Washed overboard, India
H.M. (Mack) McGuinety	1943 POW	Italy - survived
J Patterson	POW	Greece - survived
H.E. Stamper	1933 L/Sgt RAF	
	POW	Italy
Donald J. Ward	Sgt RAMC POW	Italy
Roy Winter	Sgt RAMC POW	Italy - survived
Dennis A. Briggs	Fleet Air Arm	Awarded DSC
G. Davison	PO RNVR	Mentioned in Despatches
Matthew Jarvie Hunter	Lt RNVR	Awarded DSC
B. Morgan	1942 WRNS	School Secretary
Betty Cooch	1940 L/C ATS	
Eileen McBride	1936 L/C ATS	
Patricia Oliver	WRNS	
Marcia Rutherford	1939 WRNS	
Leslie Pallister	RNVR	Killed when the 'Rawalpindi' sank.

















### ABBREVIATIONS USED:

MN	Merchant Navy
RE	Royal Engineers
RAF	Royal Air Force
POW	Prisoner of War
L/C	Lance Corporal
L/Sgt	Lance Sergeant
RAMC	Royal Air Medical Corps
RNRV	Royal Naval Voluntary Reserve
WRNS	Women's Royal Naval Service
ATS	Auxilliary Territorial Service
DSC	Distinguished Service Cross.



# OUR SCHOOL & THE WORLD WARS

## BRITISH ARMY RANKINGS

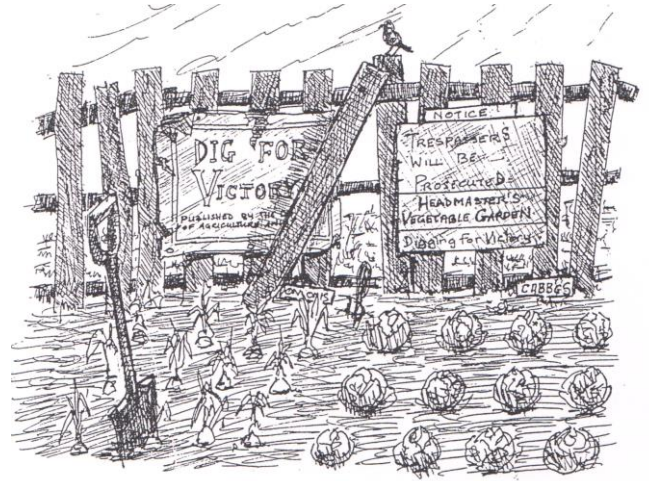
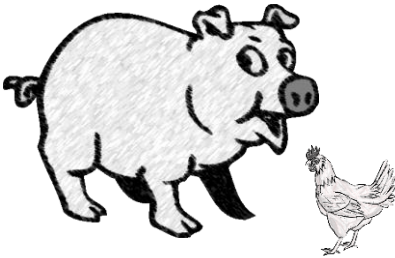
	Field Marshall
	General
	Lieutenant General
	Major General
	Brigadier
	Colonel
	Lieutenant Colonel
	Major
	Captain
	Lieutenant
	Second Lieutenant
	Sergeant Major
	Sergeant
	Corporal
	Lance Corporal
	Private





## OUR SCHOOL & THE 2<sup>nd</sup> WORLD WAR

As in the First World War, the school helped the war effort in many ways. Again, there was a shortage of many materials and food was rationed.



The field and gardens were again turned into vegetable plots and a piggery and poultry farm was set up, tended by pupils. They also collected waste paper to be recycled and old bones to be turned into glycerine, glue and bonemeal. Scrap metal, including the school railings, was also collected and used in the making of weapons and bombs.

The girls spent many hours knitting woollen gloves, hats and scarves known as "comforts" for the British Armed Forces serving on the front line.

Pupils were also good at fundraising, a tradition that continues today. The school's target for 'Warship Week' (to contribute towards the building of a new battle ship) was £750. The fundraising included film shows, dances, folk singing and concerts and raised the grand total of £2,123! In today's figures that would be at least **£60,972.56**

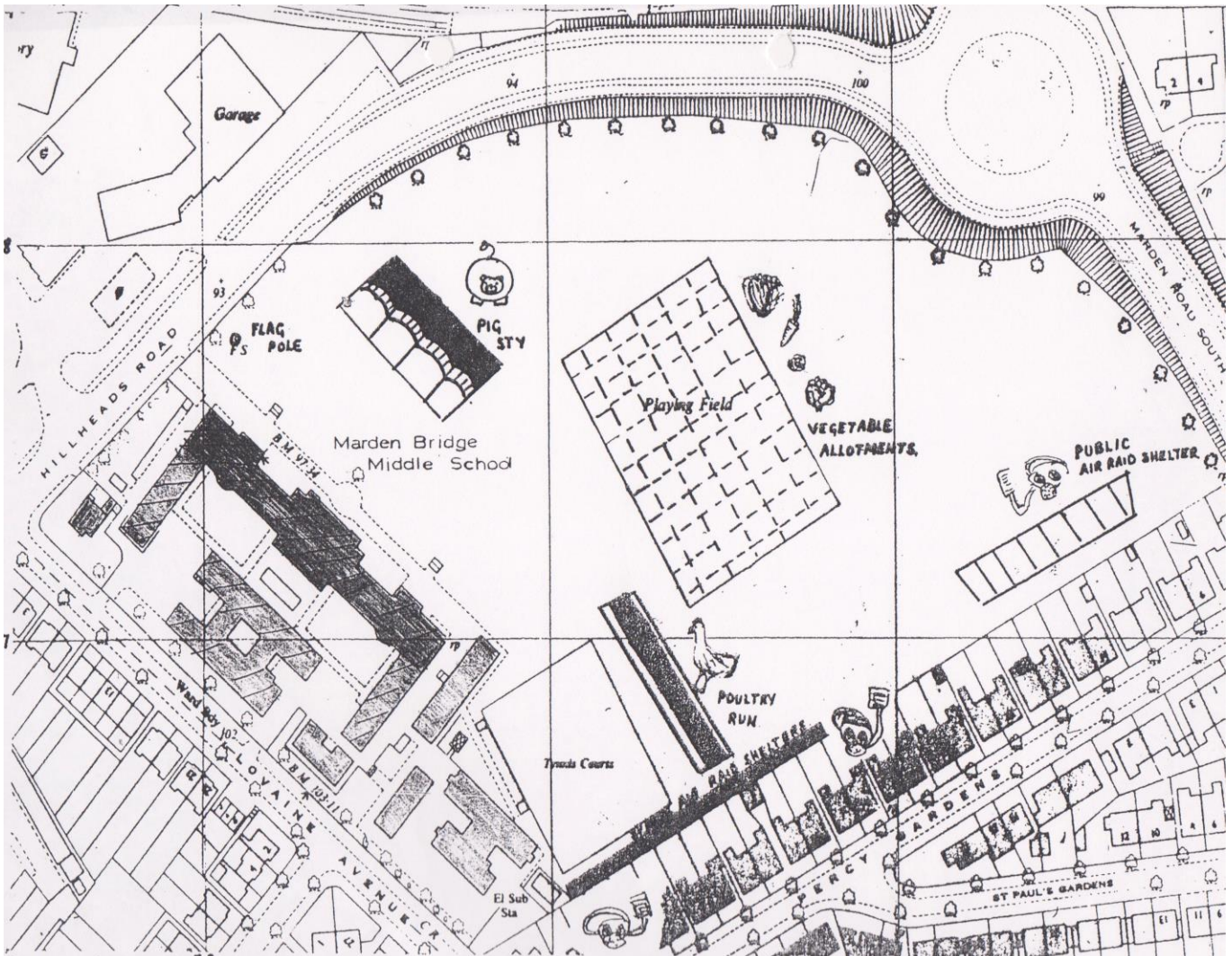
(Figures taken from National Archive Currency converter)



# OUR SCHOOL & THE WORLD WARS

In 1980 this map was made to show our school with the approximate location of various additions to help the war effort. Can you see:

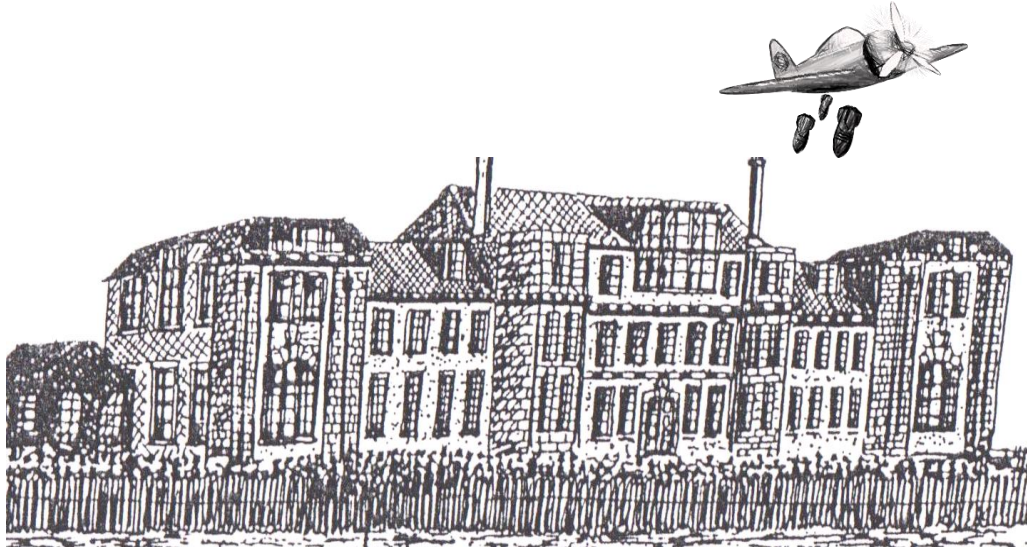
- The vegetable allotments.
- The pig sty.
- The poultry run for chickens.
- The air raid shelter.





# OUR SCHOOL & THE 2<sup>nd</sup> WORLD WAR

## THE NIGHT THE SCHOOL WAS BOMBED!



As in the First World War, the school had to be blacked out and the windows were covered with dark paper. The paper was often glued to stop the glass from shattering. Air raid shelters were built along the side of the field near St. Paul's gardens. You can see them on the map. Air raid and gas mask drills interrupted many a lesson! But on the night of June 20<sup>th</sup> 1941 it actually happened -


A bomb was dropped on the school!

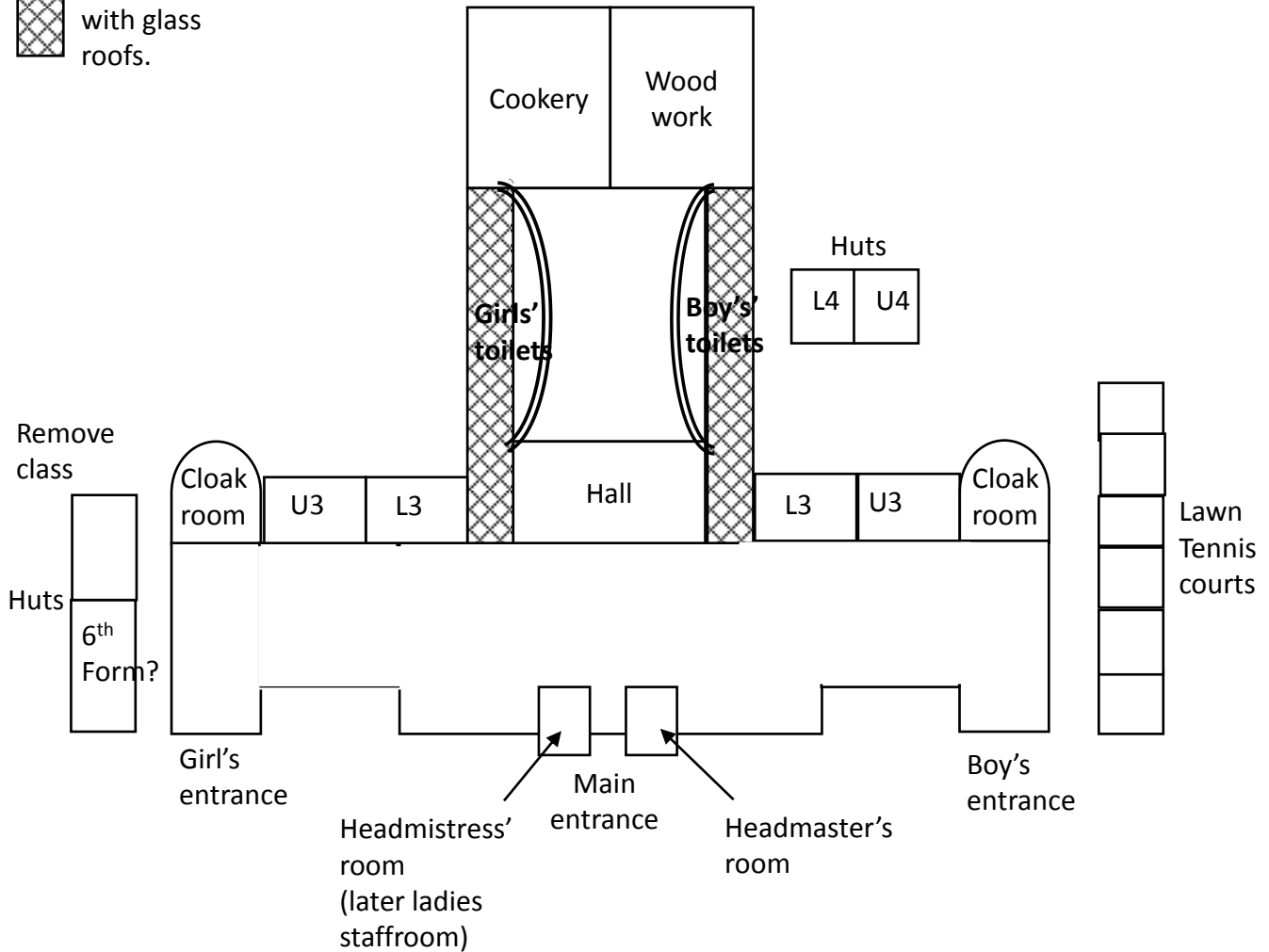
The bomb damaged room 1, (then a Physics lab), the Woodwork room and the Caretaker's house. An incendiary bomb also hit the roof above the library. Fortunately the school was the local headquarters of the Air Warden Corps and the fire was quickly extinguished by the wardens.



# OUR SCHOOL THEN & NOW

## GROUND FLOOR 1914-1932

 Enclosed walkways with glass roofs.



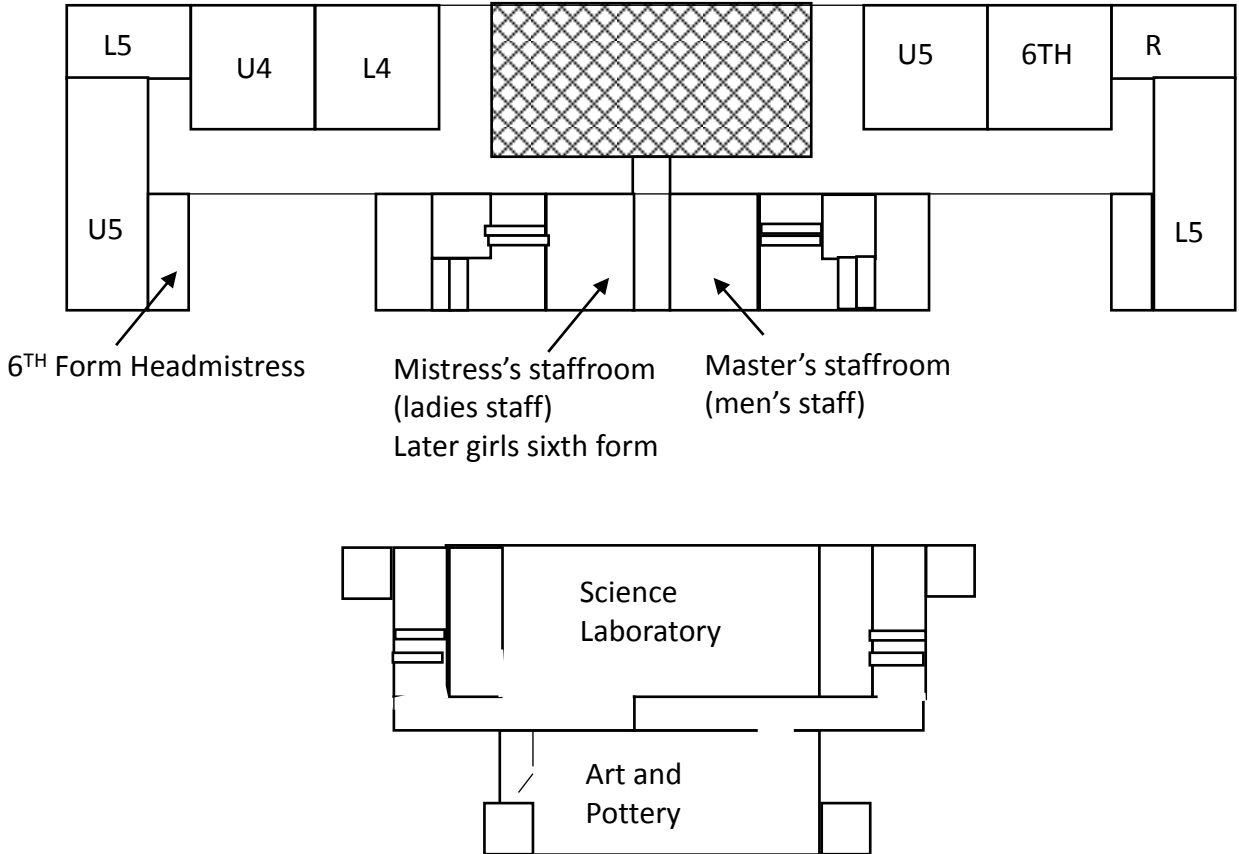
THEN	NOW	THEN	NOW
Remove and 6 <sup>th</sup> form	Science Labs	Lower 3	Room 6 Maths/General room
Cloak room	Room 9 English (CB)	Upper 3	Room 5 Reprographics room
Upper 3	Room 8 English resource room	Cloak room	Room 4 Religious Education
Lower 3	Room 7 English (MC)	Boy's entrance	Boy's toilets
Hall	Hall	Headmaster's room	Bursar and office
Girls entrance	Girls toilets	Cookery	Library
Headmistress' room	Main office	woodwork	Room 16 (PBC)

# OUR SCHOOL THEN & NOW



Enclosed walkways

## FIRST FLOOR 1914-1932



THEN	NOW
6 <sup>th</sup> form Headmistress	SENCO (VL)
U5	Room 25 Rented by council group
L5	Room 24 Remove room
U4	Room 23 Pupil Support
L4	Rm 22 Computer Suite
Mistress' staffroom	Staffroom
Master's staffroom	Staffroom

THEN	NOW
U5	Room 21 Maths
6 <sup>th</sup>	Room 20 Maths
R	Room 19 Maths resources room
L5	Maths room
Science Lab	LRC
Art & Pottery	ICT lab (JT)

# OUR SCHOOL 1914 - 1920

## THE STAFF

Below is a list of the staff at our school around 1920, the subjects they taught and the nicknames pupils had for them.



## THE BOYS' SCHOOL

<b>ROOM</b>	<b>FORM</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>NICKNAME</b>
5	Upper III	Mr G Worsley	French	'Geordie'
6	Lower III	Mr Young	Woodwork/ Orchestra	'Bungo'
Hut	Upper IV	Mr S Holmes	Geography/ History/ Maths	'Sammy'
Hut	Lower IV	Miss Hardy	French/English	'Tich'
18	Lower V	Mr E C Jones	English/Latin	'Taffy'
20	VI	Mr F Willott	Maths/Chemistr y/Physics	Too respected for a nickname
19	Special Studies	Mr H B Widdows	Latin/Ancient History	'Daddy Widdows' or 'Herb'
21	Upper V	Mr W Haythorn- thwaite	History/ Geography	'Prickles' or 'Plebs'
		Mr Gates	Science	

Despite having a damaged leg and having his foot supported by a spring from the knee to the shoe, Mr Morgan Hall still managed to teach PE, Art and Singing and also ran the 3<sup>rd</sup> Whitley Bay Scout Group. He was nicknamed 'Morgan the Mighty'.

Definitions: Lower 3 = y6  
Upper 4 = y9  
VI = 6<sup>th</sup> form

Upper 3 = y7  
Lower 5 = y10

Lower 4 = Y8  
Upper 5 = Y11

# OUR SCHOOL 1914 - 1920

## THE STAFF



Below is a list of the staff at our school around 1920, the subjects they taught and the nicknames pupils had for them.

### THE GIRLS' SCHOOL

ROOM	FORM	NAME	SUBJECT	NICKNAME
	Headmistress	Miss E C Highton	Maths	
7	Upper III	Miss Fairbairn	French	'Fairy'
8	Lower III	Miss Drummond	English	
23	Upper IV	Miss Thompson	Maths/ Science	
22	Lower IV	Miss O'Nions (replaced by Miss Evans)	Music	
24	Lower V	Miss Verney	Geography	'Titch'
Drama Store or Staffroom Huts	VI Remove	Miss Iremonger Miss Warner (replaced by Miss Smith)	Latin RE	
25	Upper V	Miss Tinsley	Art	'Tin Liz'

Peripatetic teacher

Needlework/Cookery

Definitions: Lower 3 = y6  
Upper 4 = y9  
VI = 6<sup>th</sup> form

Upper 3 = y7  
Lower 5 = y10

Lower 4 = Y8  
Upper 5 = Y11

# OUR SCHOOL 1914 - 1920

## uniform

The school has always had a uniform and pupils have worn it with pride. Parents tried very hard to comply with uniform but a shortage of materials during the war years meant that regulations had to be relaxed. Below is the uniform expected in around 1920.



## GIRLS

- FOOTWEAR:** Black or brown flat shoes or lace up boots worn for hockey. Indoors all pupils changed into black 'plimsolls' or sandshoes.
- STOCKINGS:** Black, thick, full length 'Kashmir' woollen stockings with navy blue woven 'knickers' worn over the stockings.
- TUNIC:** Navy blue 'gym' tunic made of serge material. Length - to the knee, not above nor below the kneeline. This was to ensure the tunic did not touch the floor during kneeling exercises in gym class.
- A sash or 'girdle' was worn around the waist. A red, blue or gold band (school colours) was stitched to the sash to denote membership of a school house. In the 1920s, as the school expanded, a fourth colour green was added to the house system.
- SHIRT:** A plain white blouse with a round collar and a red jumper worn over. Ties for girls did not appear to have been introduced until the 1930s
- BLAZER:** A navy blue blazer bearing the school badge on the 'ticket' breast pocket. The blazer was edged with a cord or braid of the school colours which also highlighted the pockets and cuffs.
- HEADWEAR:** In winter, a woollen 'storm' hat with a red and gold turn over. An alternative to the 'storm' hat was a black velour brimmed hat with a school band. In summer, a straw 'Panama' hat with a red and gold band. Hair always had to be tied back with a black bow or worn in plaits.
- GAMES:** Girls did not change for PE except for footwear. In running competitions, sashes were worn across the shoulder in a criss-cross fashion.

Later girls were given the freedom to fun in shirt and 'knickers'. These 'knickers' were not brief panties but large baggy elasticated underwear.

# OUR SCHOOL 1914 - 1920

## uniform

The school has always had a uniform and pupils have worn it with pride. Below is the uniform expected of boys in around 1920.



## BOYS

**FOOTWEAR:** Black lace shoes..

**STOCKINGS:** Grey woollen long socks worn to just below the knee.

**TROUSERS:** Grey trousers, short trousers were economical and practical. Only the older boys and prefects tended to wear long trousers.

**SHIRT:** A plain white shirt. Originally the tie was of wide horizontal bands in the school colours blue, scarlet and gold. Later a blue tie with thin diagonals of gold and scarlet was introduced.

**BLAZER:** Navy blue blazer in the same style as the girl' school with cord edging and brass buttons.

**HEADWEAR:** A royal blue cap with the school badge above the peak. Prefects were allowed to wear a red cap to mark their rank.

**GAMES:** Unlike the girls, the boys did change for games. A soccer shirt was worn which later was in school colours, a blue shirt with a red collar. White football shorts, knee length. Alternative red and blue rings.

For athletics, white shorts and white short sleeved vests were worn. A coloured ribbon attached to the sleeve denoted the house a competitor represented.

An all white kit for cricket - for many boys it was the only opportunity to wear long 'flannel' trousers.

# OUR SCHOOL BADGES