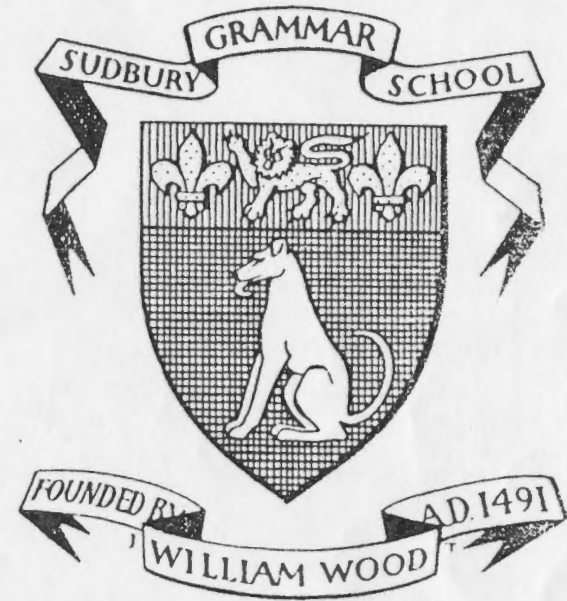


THE STORY
of
SUDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL
1491 - 1972



by S.A. KAY M.A.
Second Master

Reprinted 1991
from 'The Talbot' (1974)
by
Sudbury Grammar School
Old Boys' Association
on the occasion of
the 500th Anniversary of
the founding of the School

THE STORY OF SUDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

In the latter half of the Will of William Wood, Warden of Sudbury College, dated 6th April, 1491, and proved 28 July 1493, provision was made for the foundation of a Grammar School.

His feoffees "William ffelton, gentleman, John Wayte, Chaplain; William Warer otherwise named Baker, grocer and John Brooke of Sudbury" were given a messuage with croft lands formerly belonging to John Hilles, "situated along a lane leading from the house of the preaching friars as far as the Church of St. Gregory, between the tenements of John Robert, senior, the tenement of Robert Maldon, the tenement of John Chapman on the north side and the lane called Wylewerlelane on the south side . . . and the garden of John Bukke on the east side".

These feoffees were to enfeoff sixteen other persons nominated by the Warden of the College, and these were to see that the Master of the College should "hire and nominate an honest and honourable man to dwell in the said messuage and teach grammar and in the same continuously and daily to educate boys and others able to profit at the said school for ever". The said Master of Grammar was to receive the yearly outgoings and profits of the messuage and garden, but was to pay ten shillings a year to the Warden of the College to be used for the repair and maintenance of the property.

There is no reason to doubt that the sketch is that of the original "messuage" granted by William Wood and used as the school until the mid-nineteenth century. It was a two-storeyed half-timbered house, with clustered chimney-stacks and gothic doorway. In this building a good proportion of the boys of Sudbury have received their education, sons of the flourishing clothiers, of the lesser nobility, and the more prosperous farmers, sitting together on the same bench. Religious instruction; Latin and Grammar were the main subjects at first, with some time spent in Rhetoric and perhaps the newly-popular Greek. Probably the scholars had to attend St. Gregory's Church, and the close connection between the two institutions originating in the foundation, was maintained for many years. It will be realised that when Thomas Paston bought the Collegiate grounds at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, he also became patron of the living of St. Gregory's and of the School. It was during this period that the rent of a farm of fifty-five acres at Little Maplestead in Essex was paid to the schoolmaster. Possibly this was the gift of one of the Pastons, or the Edens who had property there. The earliest reference to this farm is an entry in the Borough Chaniberlain's accounts for 1569 which is worded thus: "Ressayvid ye 11 day of April 1569 of Thomas Gosslynge, Farmer. of the Lande calyed Fireburnes in Parva Mapysted the which do belonge unto the Scholle Hows in Sudbury, and is for ye halfe yeres rente of he sayd lande dewe at ye ladye daye laste paste by me in money ye

sum of VI. I saye in money five pounds. The 17 day of Aprill 1569 I payd to Richard Masson Schoolmaster this V 1 in money as is above received and he contentyd to do repressions upon ye same Skolle hows in Sudbury the sum of XXI s of the-said money”.

There is an interesting reference to the School in 1641 in the diary of Sir Simon D’Eves, the Puritan Member of Parliament for the Borough, when he tells of a letter that he had just received from Mr. Smyth, a minister of Suthburie in Suffolk. The letter complained that the new patrons, the brothers Andrews, were underpaying the curates of St. Gregory’s and St. Peter’s, and were grossly neglecting the Churches, the Hospital and the free-school. The townspeople had taken sides and during the rioting the School was damaged. The description “free-school” is perhaps misleading for it is unlikely that all the boys were educated free of charge.

A terrier of Church lands of 1723 tells us “We have in this parish a Grammar School founded by William Wood, Master of the College, about the year 1491, endowed with a dwelling house, croft of land (about three quarters of an acre) with an orchard and garden in the same parish, and an estate at Maplestead in Essex, commonly known by the name of The School Farm, rent £29 per annum, the present master, Humphrey Burrough, Clerk”.

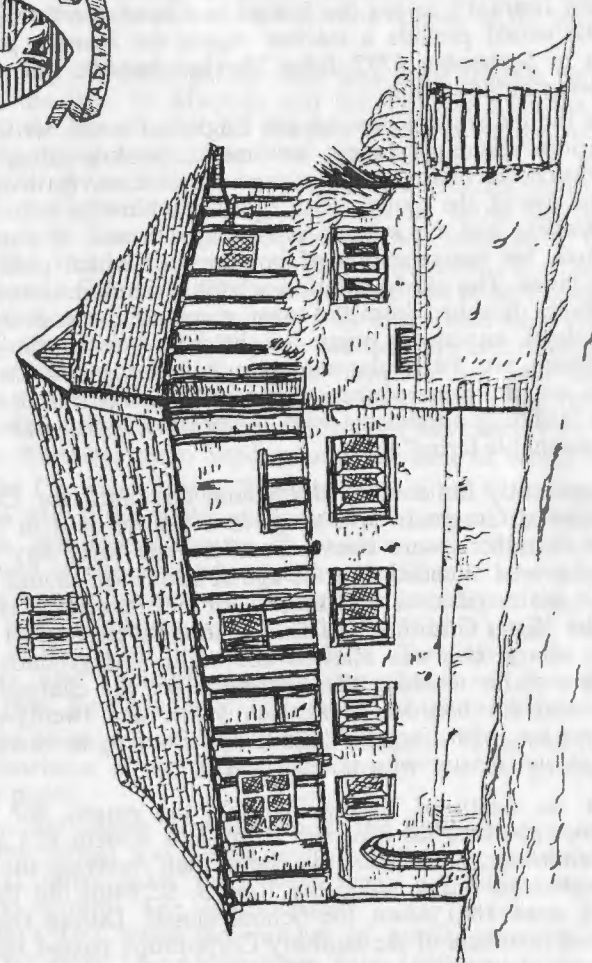
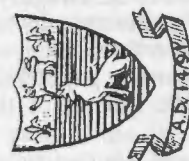
During part of his stay in Sudbury, the Rev. Humphrey Burrough was Curate-in-charge of St. Gregory’s, probably went on to Middleton and Borley Churches, and possibly from 1714 to 1755 remained master of the School. In the late 1730’s the son of Humphrey’s sister, Thomas Gainsborough, attended the School, and according to tradition his youthful genius was directed mainly towards caricatures, sketches and carvings of his contemporaries. Many were the hours that young Thomas spent sketching and painting in the country round Sudbury—hours that rightly should have been spent at his uncle’s school. Fulcher tells us that on one occasion he forged his father’s handwriting in order to gain a holiday. On discovering the deception, his father, righteously angered, declared, “Tom will one day be hanged”. Later however, when he saw the fruits of his son’s truancy, in the shape of sketches of woodland scenery, he changed his mind and said, “Tom will be a genius”.

Fulcher, a Sudbury poet of early Victorian times, wrote of him:

The bench on which he sat, while deep employed
Though mangled, hacked and hewed, yet not destroyed,
The wall on which he tried his graving skill,
The very name he carved, existing still.

Unfortunately nothing now remains of desks, walls or carvings.

Two years after the departure of Humphrey Burrough there was trouble, for in 1757 certain inhabitants took possession of the School House and Croft. In 1760 Robert Upcher, a Sudbury



surgeon, left in his will to his nephew Peter Upcher, the right to nominate the parson to St. Gregory's and St. Peter's and the master to the Grammar School, with the School Farm at Maplestead, in order that six free scholars might be taught yearly as was done formerly by Humphrey Burrough.

The Rev. William Malcham, Perpetual Curate of St. Gregory's in 1771 appealed to the people, through an advertisement in the "Ipswich Journal", to put the School in a condition fit to teach in, when he would provide a teacher. Again the Ipswich paper tells us that in September 1777 John Thurlow became Master of the School—to quote in full:

"where the classes are now taught English, French, writing in all the various hands, drawing, arithmetic, book-keeping, algebra, mensuration, surveying in theory and practice, navigation, geography, the use of the globes, with every other useful branch of the mathematics; and he intends providing a house, if possible, by Christmas, for the reception of boarders, of which public notice will be given. The old foundation school is a spacious airy building entirely detached from the town, commodious in every respect for a school, having an organ for the use of those who chuse to learn music, etc. Particular attention will be paid to the morals, address, and religious education of young gentlemen, all of which will be faithfully administered with the greatest lenity and upon the most reasonable terms".

Apparently for a while the School flourished for Carlisle in his Endowed Grammar Schools gives a picture of it in 1818. He tells us that there were twenty boarders and forty day scholars, and that it was intended that the age of admission should be seven years. It is described as an "English or Commercial School" still using the "Eton Grammar" of Lily. The Headmaster, Mr. Young, had no salary, but was allowed the house and grounds in consideration of his teaching the Free Scholars. He charged twenty-five guineas for boarders under ten years, and twenty-eight for boys over ten, with French, Classics and Dancing as extras. There was a second master who taught classics.

On the death of Young in 1827, the patron, Sir Lachlan Maclean, appointed his own son Hippias, a student at Caius College, Cambridge, as Master, the young man receiving the rents of the Maplestead Farm, while the Rev. S. R. Mills did the actual teaching until 1841 when the School closed. During this period influential members of the Sudbury Corporation passed resolutions in favour of re-opening the School, the closure of which was caused by Maclean insisting that the Farm belonged to him as patron, rather than to the School. A long law-suit to decide this had started in 1830 and was ended in 1856 when the estate was assured to the School, and permission received to raise a loan on it for the erection of new school buildings.

THE SUDBURY GRAMMAR SCHOOL MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS, with its first entry for 18 August 1856, is still in existence, a large volume beautifully bound in green leather with red facings. In it can be read all the details of the demolition of the old half-timbered school, and the erection of the new school-room and house. The architect was Mr. Pope, and the contract for building given to Charles Fordham of Long Melford for the sum of approximately £2,300. By a resolution of the governors four coats of arms were carved on the stone corbels of the main school room.

During this early period there was some trouble between the patron, the Rev. H. Maclean and the Trustees over the appointment of the Headmaster, for the time being the patron successfully claiming this privilege. The Rev. John Cooke was the first to be appointed. A resolution recorded in the Minutes states that no master should hold a living, although he could do occasional Church duty. Thus the early custom of the Curate of St. Gregory's being the Headmaster was no longer possible. The School reopened on 1 February 1858, the hours at first being 7 to 8.30 a.m.; 10 to 12 noon; 2 to 4 p.m., but very soon these were changed to 9 to 12 noon and 2 to 4.30 p.m.; Wednesdays and Saturday afternoons were to be holidays. The boys had to wear the "usual college cap in going to and from School" this being the mortar-board which was worn about the end of the century by all boys and by the boarders on Sundays until the time of World War I.

The Chairman of the Trustees responsible for the new building was Mr. William Wood Humphry, who gave the School £300 Consols, the annual income of which was to constitute a prize-fund, and whose son, educated at the School, later became the famous Cambridge surgeon. Among the foundation boys admitted to the new building in 1862 was Arthur Hibble Higgs, who on his death in 1915 left the School £100. Two boys, the Jameson brothers, also attended, one of them almost certainly being the Right Hon. Sir Leander Starr Jameson of South African fame.

The 400th anniversary of the foundation 1891, was celebrated by a luncheon at the "Rose and Crown" for the governors and former pupils.

By the scheme provided under the Endowed Schools Act of 1878, the School was placed under a governing body, but during the next thirty years there were many difficulties mainly of a financial nature. The Headmaster's salary averaged £200, the Assistant's £50, while the number of pupils generally increased from day boys 18 and boarders 9 in 1888 under the Rev. A. Colborne, to 38 and 24 respectively in 1895 under Mr. W. G. Normandale. During the early years of the 20th century, periodic grants of approximately £50 were given by the West Suffolk County Council, and after three years of consultation the governors transferred the School to the County Council in 1909. The Cadet

Corps was started in 1911 and a special article in this magazine gives a brief history.

The buildings and equipment were soon improved and the staff increased. It was about this time that the School adopted as its crest part of the Sudbury Borough Arms. The main feature of this was the heraldic hound, known as a Talbot, that had once been part of the coat of arms of Archbishop Simon. A school magazine was published each term from 1925 to 1932 when it lapsed until after the War. In 1947 it was resurrected, supported financially by the Old Boys Association, and took the name of "The Talbot", from the hound on the crest. The number of pupils after World War I was over a hundred, but with the closing of Hadleigh Grammar School in 1923 and the transference of pupils, the number rose to about 150 necessitating the erection of a "temporary" army hut in the school play-ground. The boarding establishment which had been maintained on a small scale, was closed in 1934.

A new wing, comprising classrooms, library, laboratory, assembly room and stage, was completed in 1941, taking up part of the already small playground. At the same time many boys were transferred from Haverhill when the Secondary School there was closed. Since World War II the number of pupils has increased steadily and it was found necessary in 1963 to incorporate the Headmaster's house, giving a fine library and several small classrooms. An extra two-classroomed hut appeared in 1967 and another one was found necessary two years later.

In July, 1972, after 480 years, the Grammar School ceased to exist and the pupils were transferred to the new Upper School in Tudor Road.

S. A. KAY.

HEAD MASTERS

1569	Richard Masson
1578	— White
1652	— Brittain
1664	Andrew Weston
1676	— Newton
1677	Nathaniel Farclough
1678	— Chapman
1697	— Hast
1700	— Mabourn

Between 1714 and 1814 the perpetual curate of St. Gregory's Church usually was Master or appointed a substitute.

1723-55	Humphrey Burrough
1770	William Maleham
1778	John Thurlow
1810	W. Finley
1812	Simon Young
1827	Hippias Maclean (Nominated)

1841	S. R. Mills
1856	John Cooke
1862	Henry Chayton
1865	F. Slater
1880	H. I. Chadwick
1883	A. Colborne
1888	W. G. Normandale
1911	R. S. Smylie
1916	R. L. Gillingham
1950	W. H. Martin
1954	J. McLellan
1959	E. J. Angelbeck (Acting H.M.)
1960	A. J. Strahan

IN MEMORIAM

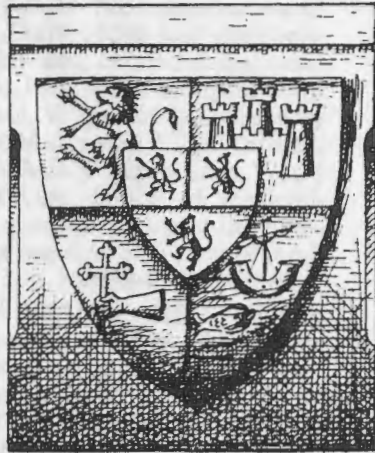
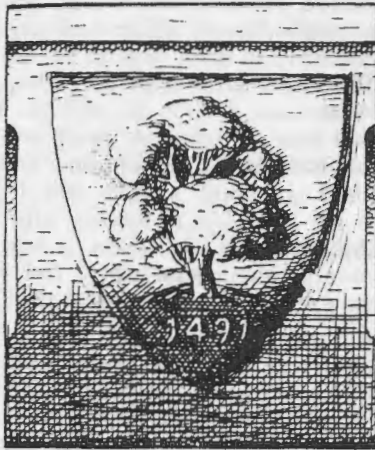
1914-1918

E. R. BRANWHITE
N. W. COE
N. H. COUCH
F. C. GAME
E. J. HILLS
C. N. HUTCHINSON
R. S. JOY
G. C. MAULDON
L. J. NEAVE
A. J. PALMER
J. E. PETTIT
R. S. SMYLIE
J. R. SPRECKLEY
S. J. TILBROOK
S. WADE
B. WARD
A. G. WRIGHT

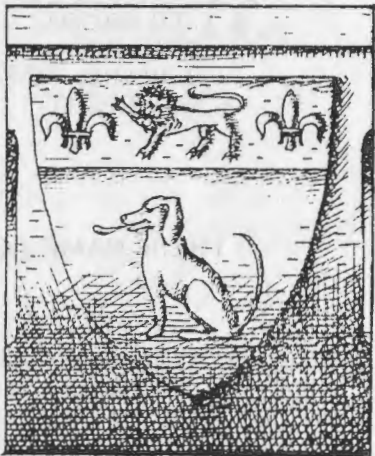
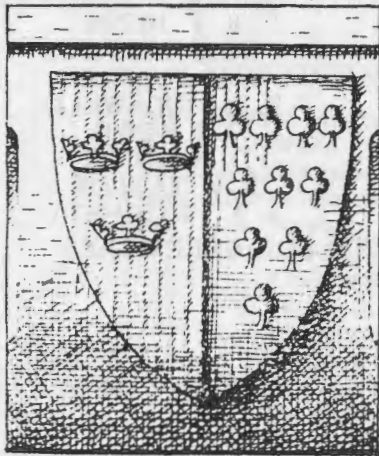
1939-1945

E. R. BOREHAM
C. M. BRIGHTON
A. C. BROWN
J. BROWN
V. J. BROWN
S. C. CLAMPIN
A. K. M. DEAN
B. J. DOVE
J. H. W. DUNN
J. EDWARDS
E. G. FILLMORE, D.F.C.
B. C. C. HARPUR
D. C. KEMP
K. F. NUNN
R. W. PETTIT
J. H. PULMAN
K. J. RIDGEWELL
J. S. ROWE
D. H. STOCK
P. R. TAYLOR
A. J. TWITCHETT

THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE



The Four Stone Armorial Corbels
in the School Dining Hall



The Shields are those of the Founder (William Wood),
the County of Suffolk, the Maclean Family (Patrons)
and the Borough of Sudbury