

Phillip & Roger Jefferis

personal profiles / memories

Roger & I were at Harlow College Summer 1941 to 1942 (part of evacuation process from Woodford Green in Essex) being at Simon's Farm in Potter Street during school holidays. We moved back home in '42 as bombing there had been far less than expected. (In '42 I was 12 and Roger was 9).

Roger has class lists for Summer '41 (me 5th in class 3 and him 1st in class 1). There were two Simons brothers at the school - I remember they were in the football team. There is mention of a Nita Simons, their sister, being in Class 2.

Various memories (some a little bit vague now!):

- 1) We were both in Keyes House.
- 2) Shoes were identified by numbers - marked out underneath just ahead of the heel with small brass nails (Mine was 30?)
- 3) We had tuck-boxes in the basement where, it being wartime we (all?) slept. Despite absolute trust (!) it was prudent to keep them locked.
- 4) In the playground, part of the fives 'corner' was a large wall marked up every so often with different coloured bricks. Throwing a ball up to each section was known as 'up the wall' twice in that section, three times in the next and so on. (a bit like shove ha'penny).

5) Sometimes some of us received an egg (from doting parents no doubt). The thing to do was to (very wastefully) keep them 'til they were bad then quietly take them to a building (the gym) at the end of the playground and throw them high against an inside wall. (Mess and pong, etc.)

6) There was a tuck shop (permanently or sometimes?) in the playground. A good buy was a white bread roll (1/2 penny). One placed it on a working radiator (in the sports changing room?) and after 1 or 2 Form periods collected it nicely warmed.

7) I had 3 Holiday Annuals (Greyfriars School, Frank Richards) which I foolishly lent to someone at the end of one term and never got them back.

8) The name of Barham stands out to me from 1941. I remember our parents taking my brother and me to a teashop in Old Harlow one Saturday (they somehow managed to come to see us). Barham was on his own at another table looking a bit lonely and he was asked to join us. He said he would look after us - and did from time to time. I remember him showing me once how shredded cabbage was just as good as lettuce (in short supply) for a salad. It is right to say that at no time at the School was there any impropriety from him or anyone else. I say this because there is so much totally unjustified 'nudge, nudge, wink, wink' around about boarding schools these days. (I recently heard that Barham has sadly died - overseas?)

9) I do recall one bully. Prep was in a room with seats all round the walls with an overseer on a stool in the middle (could be the artroom shown in one of the website photos). The overseers were prefects and one of them (who we all

did our best to avoid at all times) would make up some misdemeanour and subject the unfortunate victim to a hard run-up kick to the bottom.

10) We were well fed at the School - though the bread sometimes appeared to be a bit damp (making stale last longer?) and vegetables were nearly always swedes - I still don't really like them.

11) Instead of, or as well as lines as a punishment, one could be sent to the lawn outside Mr Dames study to pull out 'twitch' (couch grass) - often 50 of them at a time - which sometimes sullied that hallowed ground.

I wasn't at Harlow very long but I often wear the Old Boys tie.

With many Blessings

Philip Jefferis.

(now a Rev - Congregational (Free Church) - still like me ale though!)

You can email me at Phillip Jefferis