



THORNTONIAN DAYS

Newsletter of The Old Thorntonians Association (Clapham)

"Education is the leading of human souls to what is best, and making what is best out of them." John Ruskin (1819-1900)

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Obituary

Jimmy (James William Thomas) Hill, OBE (1939-45)



HTS FIRST X1 FOOTBALL: 1943-4

L-R, back row: Challons, Brown, ?, Mr Frank Hughes (Sports Master)

Middle row: Mr W D Evans (Head Master), ?, ?, Matthews

Front row: ?, ?, Hill, Tuttle

(Keith Weston, 1938-43, believes the player between Brown and Mr Hughes may be Desmond Cory)

As members will know, Jimmy died on 19 December 2015, aged 87. He had been suffering from Alzheimer's disease, diagnosed in 2008.

Jeff Green, Association Chairman, wrote to his wife, offering condolences on behalf of members and OTs generally. The text of his message is given below.

"Dear Bryony,

On behalf of the Old Thorntonians Association in general and of the Vice-President Michael Caplan QC and the Committee in particular, I would like to convey to you our heartfelt condolences on your sad loss.

Jimmy was unanimously elected as our President in 2006 and even with so many calls on his time in other spheres in public life he fulfilled that role in an active and enthusiastic manner for many years until, as you know, illness rendered his attendance impossible.

His achievements during his long life are manifold and well documented and having such a successful and charismatic leader of our Association promoted our aims and ideals beyond our expectations. It is not surprising therefore that Jimmy was held in great regard and with much affection by all the members of the Association, and his passing will be deeply felt.

I would also wish to express the gratitude of the Association Committee and in particular that of Ted Hayward for the effort you yourself made on our behalf to keep Jim informed of our progress when he became unable to attend. I am also aware that your wise but gentle intervention in recent years prevented Jimmy from making what could very well have been a hazardous journey to Clapham and back.

Please be assured that you are in our thoughts at this difficult time.

Kind regards
Jeff Green, Chairman”

Born in Balham in 1928, Jimmy won a scholarship to HTS, and was evacuated to Chichester with other pupils at the outbreak of war in 1939. He was not, however, happy there, as he explains in this extract from his piece, entitled *From an Old Thorntonian*, which appeared in the Autumn 1961 issue of *The Thorntonian* and was reproduced in full in newsletter no 2, May 2007:

“My first term at Thornton’s was to have started in September 1939, but Hitler planned a war and my mother and father schemed my evacuation to Chichester without my knowledge. I was marooned with boys from Chichester High School, but six months later, as soon as South-West London Emergency Secondary School opened, I was able, by subtle argument and more effective tearful demonstration, to force my way back to London.” “

The magazine was not published between 1940 and 1942, but the Editor has been able to trace the following references to him in other copies relating to his attendance years:

“Hill. – In his third year in the team [First XI] the inside-left is the star of his side; his skilful ball control, his two-footed marksmanship allied to his more recently acquired thrustful style result in most of the school’s goals” (Autumn 1943)

“The gym team [Stephen House], comprising Challons, Briggs, Twist, Hill, Scott, will develop into a strong combination, providing training is maintained at its present high standard” (Autumn 1944).

“...I would like to thank all the Captains of my House who have given me such whole-hearted support during this School year. Boys like Hill (Iva), Walker (IIIb), Burnett (IIb) and Last (Ia) have earned our gratitude” (From Stephen House notes submitted by M J Challons, House prefect, Summer 1945)

Keith Weston writes: “I have fond memories of Jimmy Hill who was with me at the South-West London School during the war. On at least one occasion I played with him in the same football team as right-half, with Jimmy as an inside-left. As a Fulham supporter I saw him play at Craven Cottage on many occasions.”

An innovative and inspirational figure who was one of football’s most recognisable figures in the 1970s and 1980s, Jimmy helped to transform the game, making his mark as a player (Brentford, and later Fulham); union leader (Chairman, PFA);

manager (Coventry City); assistant referee (acted as emergency stand-in linesman at 1970 Arsenal v Liverpool match at Highbury); and broadcaster (head of sport at London Weekend TV, and later presenter, BBC's Match of the Day, before finally moving to Sky Sports).

A public memorial service will be held at Coventry Cathedral on Friday 12 February, starting at 5.30pm. Further details, including the procedure for ticket applications, are given on the *Coventry Telegraph* website.

2016 Reunion and Tenth Anniversary Lunch

At its meeting on 20 January the Committee agreed that this joint function should be held at The Windmill (Blue Room) on **Tuesday 8 November**, from 12 noon until 4pm. A two-course menu will be offered at an expected total cost of £30 per head, excluding wine; more information to follow once the arrangements have been confirmed.

Lambeth College - Henry Thornton Building

As a follow-up to the opening ceremony held on 20 November 2015, members of the Management Committee toured the new building, by invitation, after their meeting on 20 January. In addition to a sports hall, the accommodation comprises a College nursery, staff room, and various subject classrooms, such as Health and Social Care. Selected photos will be added to the relevant page of the website.

From the Pages of *The Thorntonian*

March 1929

The Thorntonian

We herewith present to our readers the first number of the "Thorntonian," the magazine will be a record of the social life of the School – a journal of the activities taking place not only within the School itself, but also of inter-School activities. It should also serve as a memorial to those distinguished fellows whose educational attainments render their names illustrious; and if the traditions of the Battersea County School are maintained, much space will be needed.

But the object is not to make the magazine just a mere account of "last term's activities." We want to encourage literary effort in the School. The "Thorntonian" is, perhaps, unique among the magazines of Secondary Schools in that it is run by the boys of the School, and it is hoped that literary effort will thus be encouraged. Surely, there can be no greater delight for an Old Boy to turn over the pages of his old School magazine and see his name at the bottom of *that* article, or *these* verses!

With this end in view, we are sure that fellows will do their best, and we can look forward some really good articles in the next number of the "Thorntonian." We want our magazine to be a fine example of a fine School, and we are sure that its success will be complete.

From the Pages of *The Bat*

The following article appeared in the issue dated July 7 1927, recording the death of Mr Arnold Smith, MA, Head Master of the Battersea School from 1907 until that year, and Mr W D Evans' predecessor.



In Memoriam

Since our last issue the School has sustained an incalculable loss in the death of our Headmaster, Mr. Arnold Smith. Throughout last year, he had been in indifferent health and

had been away from School for some part of each term. Towards the end of Autumn Term he became decidedly worse and underwent severe medical treatment in November, after which he recovered sufficiently to venture on a visit to Corsica. It was fervently hoped that the six weeks' stay he had planned would work his cure, but unfortunately he became so seriously ill that he returned to England after a fortnight. After a short stay at Buxton, he entered a Nursing home at Streatham, where he died on April 6th last. The funeral took place at the Norwood Crematorium on April 11th: among those present were the Prefects, who represented the School, the whole of the Staff, several Old Boys, Miss Fawcett representing the Education Officer of the London County Council, and Miss Spicer representing the School Governors. Wreaths were sent by Members of the Governing Body, the Staff, the Prefects, the Boys, the Old Boys' Association, and the Conference of Headmasters and Headmistresses of County Secondary Schools.

Mr. Arnold Smith was born in 1879, and was educated at King Edward VI Grammar School, Birmingham, and at the University of Birmingham. In 1900 he graduated B.A. at the University of London, and in 1903 took his M.A. degree in English (honours examination). After holding temporary appointments in Birmingham and Sheffield he was for two years Lecturer in English Language and Literature at the University College, Cardiff, and in September, 1907, when only 28 years old, he was appointed to the Headmastership of this School [ie, Battersea County], which was then the Battersea Polytechnic Secondary School.

At the end of this term, Mr. Arnold would have completed twenty years' service. Throughout this period, he was wholly devoted to the interests of the School. His industry and unflagging enthusiasm were remarkable, especially when we realise that for over twenty years he was a victim of insomnia. This chronic illness severely handicapped him and caused him to neglect some of the social duties of his position (educational conferences and the like he avoided), but he was a man of remarkable mental energy, and his educational interests were extensive. He was very much alive to modern educational developments, had made a study of educational psychology and of the various problems connected with boyhood and adolescence. And was constantly originating or encouraging some educational scheme or method.

He was a highly gifted teacher, and as an English Specialist he did some important pioneer work, especially in developing the dramatic method of teaching. In 1913 he published what is perhaps his most fascinating work, "Aims and Methods in the Teaching of English", in which are described the reforms in teaching and method which he initiated or promoted. His "Art and Practice of English" (1922) and "Grammar and the Use of Words" (1923) were the fruits of his long experience as a teacher of English, and reveal his freshness and originality. He was fertile in ideas and succeeded wonderfully in stimulating the invention and imagination of his pupils. Above all, he was an inspiring teacher of English Literature and a long line of past and present pupils will remember his Literature lessons with gratitude and respect.

He was a writer of distinction on literature as well as on educational topics. "The Main Tendencies of Victorian Literature" was a work of genuine scholarship, which was very favourably reviewed by the critics, including Mr G.K. Chesterton. In more recent years he has issued two volumes of poems, has edited Carlyle's Essay on Scott, and compiled an excellent anthology of prose and verse called "The World of Man".

Mr. Arnold Smith was a man of culture and distinction, and a schoolmaster of vision who achieved much in peculiarly difficult circumstances. His premature death is a great loss to the School and to London education.

The Editor welcomes contributions for future issues. Please post or email them to:
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