Alexander Tod and the Charterhouse War List

In 1872 Charterhouse School moved from the site of its original foundation in 1611, the London Charterhouse close by Smithfield Market and St. Bartholomew's Hospital [and, now, The Barbican] to Godalming in Surrey. The chief instigator and driving force of that move was Dr. William Haig Brown, Headmaster 1863-1897, one of the great Victorian headmasters, a man of talent, vision and energy.

The new site in Godalming, high on a healthy hilltop overlooking the Wey valley, was and is a location to die for: infinitely preferable to the smoke and squalor of mid-19th century London, however venerable the School's City traditions. One welcome result of the move was that numbers rapidly increased, from 150 boys and 10 masters in 1872 to 500 boys and 28 masters in 1876, at which point they steadied for the time being; but there was a continuing upward trend and by 1900 there were around 560 boys with 35 masters.

As a less welcome side-effect, the new School Chapel, consecrated in 1874 two years after the move, soon began to strain at the seams. The Chapel had perforce to be large enough to contain the whole School; a compulsory service was held there every weekday morning, with two, or even three, on Sundays.

This was already a smaller building than had originally been designed by the School's architect, Philip Hardwick; the move had cost dear and the Governors were anxious to economise. Not for the last time, their timidity had far-reaching ill-effects. Nonetheless, Chapel became the well-loved centre of the School's life, with its furnishing and fitting-out, albeit stylistically somewhat disharmonious, a reflection of the generosity of Carthusians old and new.

For the sake of some internal modifications it kept pace with the School's growth until the turn of the century, but by then the Governors felt constrained seriously to consider building afresh. There were those who argued strongly against this, on sentimental grounds; for some the existing building, albeit scarcely 30 years old, had already become sacrosanct. In 1900 a correspondent in the *Carthusian*, the School magazine, argued that it was not the Chapel that had become too small, it was the School that had grown too large: 'Do we wish to become another Eton?'

Early in the new century, a cloister was added to commemorate those who had fallen in the South African War, also a new vestry and a transept adding 80-100 seats, but all of this provided only temporary relief. Even at the time, July 1901, the *Carthusian* was less than wholly enthusiastic, pointing out that: 'the unfortunate occupants of the new seats will hear the service only very indistinctly and will be unable to see the altar at all' and that the cloister, built along the Chapel's south wall, could only increase the difficulties inherent in any eventual enlargement. 'We fear that the cloister scheme has been adopted in default of any other more deserving of support.' But there matters rested for the next 10 years.

In 1911 the School appointed a new Headmaster, Frank Fletcher. Fletcher was quick to recognise, and to point out in his first report to the Governors in 1912, that: 'the School's most obvious need is in connection with the Chapel', which he went on to criticise in

almost every aspect. He appears to have been pushing at an open door because in 1913 the Governors commissioned an architect, Basil Champneys, to advise on the possibility of extending the existing Chapel or of rebuilding it altogether on the same site, leaving the Memorial Cloister untouched.

Plans for an entirely new building were subsequently drawn up and provisionally approved but the project was shelved in November 1914, 3 months after the outbreak of war: 'in consequence of the crisis through which we are passing'. In 1915 it was finally killed off altogether; Champneys was paid for his work to date and that was the end of it. It was an expensive failure; despite apparent goodwill on both sides, the fee eventually negotiated was £600 [around £39,000 at 2005 values using the Retail Price Index as comparator but £202,000 using average earnings]. And the Chapel problem remained unresolved.

In the October 1914 edition of *The Carthusian*, the first to be published after the outbreak of War that August, there appeared the following notice, under the heading *Old Carthusian Notes*: 'A list is being compiled of Old Carthusians serving in the War. All so serving, or their friends, are requested to send names, ranks and corps, to A.H. Tod, Esq., Verites, Charterhouse, Godalming.'

Whether Tod, then House Master of Verites, or anyone else involved with him in this, appreciated the enormity of the task they were setting themselves must be doubtful. There were those in government, notable Herbert Lord Kitchener, who quickly saw that the War must last some years and entail a massive increase in the size of the Army with casualties to match, but public understanding of that was slower to dawn.

In the event, successive lists were published over the course of the War. The final edition 'August 1914 - November 1918 and including the subsequent Russian campaigns against the Bolsheviks' was published towards the end of 1919; it comprises 41 closely printed pages. In a summary the total number of Old Carthusians serving is stated as 3,536, of whom 667 have died of wounds or sickness and 697 have been wounded. A handful more deaths came to light over the following years.

How the List was put together is one of the great mysteries. If any documentary evidence survives it is not in the School Archives. The labour would have been immense. The War Office notified next of kin of those who died: the dreaded telegram. Casualty lists were published in the newspapers. But of course schools were not notified, nor were the published lists broken down by school; the information was not held, it was of no official consequence. Friends and family must often have contacted other friends and masters informally, the School was a close-knit community, doubtless much information was received and passed around by this means, but it was scarcely a means to rely on.

The great majority of Old Carthusians who saw military service during the Great War held officers' commissions in the Armies of Great Britain or her Dominions [*ie*. Canada, Australia, New Zealand and India] including the Royal Flying Corps [which was part of the Army until it was combined with the Royal Naval Air Service to form the Royal Air Force on 1st April 1918]. Some of these were career officers in the old Regular Army, a few of whom had risen to senior rank. A significant minority had served as young men in the South African War, returned to civilian life at the end of that War but rejoined the colours in 1914. However by far the greatest number volunteered for military service after the

outbreak of hostilities, gaining commissions on the strength of their OTC experience. Of these many were commissioned as 2nd Lieutenants straight from School during the War years. Very few boys who left during those years and who were physically fit to serve did *not* join up.

Of the remainder, a few enlisted as private soldiers, of whom some were commissioned later. A few served in the Royal Navy and a few more in the armed forces of other allied nations; the final list names 7 in the Belgian forces, 10 in the French, 1 in the Rumanian and 4 in those of the USA. It has emerged recently that 1 probably served in the German army, and died; investigations are continuing.

Of 947,000 deaths in British and Dominion forces over the course of the War, 43,000 were of officers. Given that almost all serving Old Carthusians were British officers, so that the remainder could be more or less excluded from the equation, those statistics suggest that somewhere between 1:60 and 1:70 officers' names published would belong to the School.

Beyond reasonable doubt, someone must have gone methodically through the published casualty lists picking out OCs, whether by a considerable feat of memory or by meticulous cross-checking against the School Lists, or by a combination. At busy times, when the great battles such as the Battle of the Somme were at their height, sometimes with total deaths running into thousands *per* day, [notoriously, almost 20,000 deaths on the first day of the Somme: 4th July 1916] *ie*. some hundreds of officer deaths, cross-checking just one day's casualties without the benefit of a retentive memory would have taken dozens of man-hours.

My impression and strong suspicion, although well short of certainty, is that it was A.H. Tod himself who checked the lists, perhaps with a very small band of assistants, and that he did indeed rely heavily on his memory. This need not have been an altogether exceptional achievement; Charterhouse was in his blood. He had been a boy at the School, he returned as an Assistant Master in 1880 and he continued there for 40 years, until his eventual retirement from teaching in 1920.

He may have been one of those schoolmasters who remembers almost every boy he has ever taught, but looking back from 1914-18 it would not have required an altogether exceptional memory span to recall most of the casualties. By far the greater number of OCs who served, and who died, left the School after the turn of the century and over a third of those who died left after 1909; junior field officers were at particularly high risk. Moreover Tod was Captain of the Cadet Corps 1881 - 1904, so that he must have come to know particularly well those of that more distant cohort who went on to join the Army.

Of course the problem was not unique to Charterhouse. Every public school, almost every school of any description, along with almost every town, village, business and government department was also keeping a casualty list, and in almost every case too the final list of the Fallen at the close of hostilities eventually took the form of a War memorial, if only a panel in the school hall or at the back of the church.

There was some pressure on Public Schools, although from what direction is unclear, to publish or to permit the publication of their lists beyond their School and old boy communities. On 10th December 1915 Frank Fletcher had a letter published in *The Times*

deprecating this: ‘ - a great many [headmasters] strongly dislike the publication of such lists, which seem to suggest competition and comparisons inappropriate to a matter in which, like other sections of the community, all schools are loyally doing their utmost. - Our losses we remember among ourselves and especially in our school chapels; but we do not care to advertise them. - Schools differ from one another in numbers and antiquity, in endowments, in athletic and intellectual success; and in respect of these they may be fittingly contrasted and compared. But in loyalty and patriotism and willingness to serve there is no competition.’

Surprisingly perhaps, this excited a brisk exchange in the letters columns. One correspondent, an OC, declared that publication of ‘Honour Lists’ would excite a proper ‘spirit of emulation’, encouraging others to follow the ‘fine example’ of the ‘grand old schools of Britain’. Another, signing himself merely ‘Carthusian’, took Fletcher’s remarks as a slight on those ‘who have spent very many hours on the compilation of these lists - these poor folk are told their efforts are unauthorised and inadvisable.’. This was entirely to misunderstand Fletcher’s point of criticism but at least the writer understood the effort entailed. Could this perhaps have been one of the School’s compilers? Could it even have been A.H. Tod himself? That seems unlikely; he was entirely loyal, also he would probably have agreed with his headmaster’s stance.

The last word went to a fellow-headmaster: ‘I suppose every school will have its Roll of Honour - but the combined list, proposed but now withdrawn, is open to grave objections. Apart from those already named, it would be superfluous, falling, in the case of officers, little short of the official record, and premature, because alas ! incomplete.’

The succession of Carthusian lists 1915 - 1919, growing ever longer, makes that last point very well.

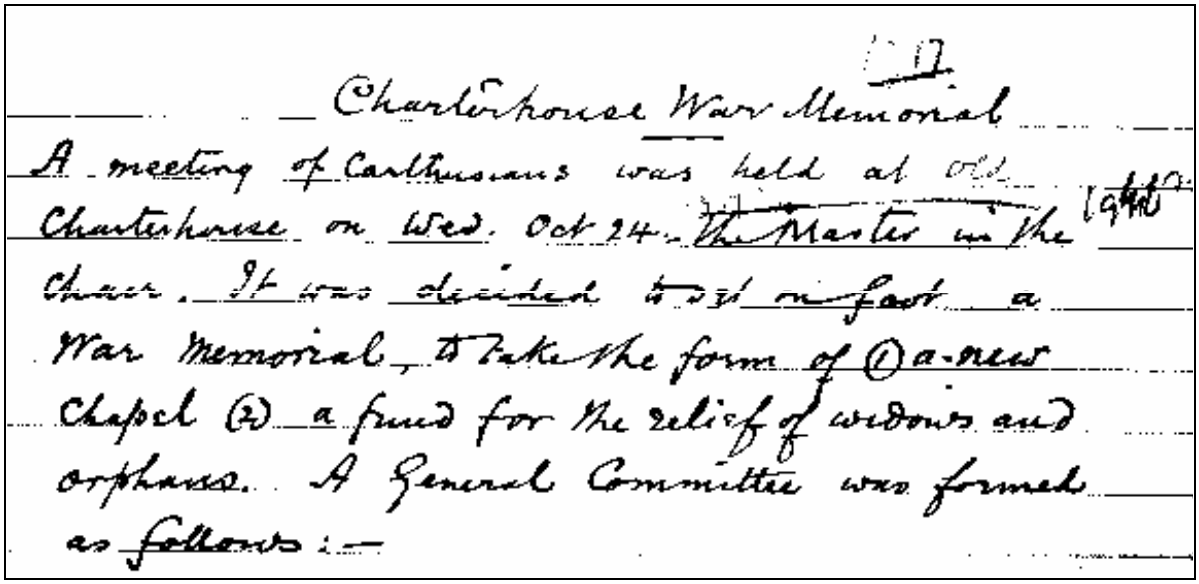
As the War ground on and the casualty toll mounted, the creation of a List of the Fallen became part of a far larger project. A War Memorial Committee was formed, headed by the Master of Charterhouse and the Headmaster, following on with Lord Baden-Powell and a long list of other Carthusian luminaries, and including A.H. Tod. The Committee’s minutes have survived, scrawled in two exercise books. The inaugural entry bears the date ‘Wed Oct 24’ with no year. Various guesses have been pencilled in later, but given the day and the month date, calendrical calculation easily establishes that it was 1917. For the convenience of the wider membership, this and most of the later full meetings were held at the London Charterhouse.

From the outset, the Committee was clear in its aims: to build a new School Chapel to the Memory of the Fallen, and to found scholarships for those of their sons for whom a Charterhouse education might otherwise be unaffordable. Initially it worked to investigate possibilities, to win key support and to seek out donations privately.

Eventually in 1917 the Committee went public, although by then its existence and intentions cannot have been any secret. In July that year, at the end of the Summer Quarter, a formal notice was published in *The Carthusian* and a matching letter circulated to all Old Carthusians, seeking contributions. Further notices and letters were issued from time to time.

Alexander Tod and the Charterhouse War List

Although he had strong support from many quarters, Fletcher was certainly the driving force behind the Memorial Chapel project, and as it progressed the chief point of contact and liaison between the School itself, Old Carthusians as actual or potential donors, the Governors, and the architect Giles Gilbert Scott[1]. [Later Sir Giles; he was knighted in 1924.] Finance was a perennial source of anxiety. Nonetheless, learning perhaps from past errors over the old Chapel, the short-term thinking at the time of the move from London through which it had been built too small, the further failure to take a long view at the close of the South African War, Fletcher pushed hard.



Charterhouse War Memorial

A meeting of Carthusians was held at old Charterhouse on Wed. Oct 24. 1917 The Master in the chair. It was decided to set on foot a War Memorial, to take the form of (1) a new Chapel (2) a fund for the relief of widows and orphans. A General Committee was formed as follows :—

from The War Memorial Committee Minute Book

Building was commenced and the foundation stone laid, on 17th June 1922, long before funds for completion were in hand. In late 1924 or early 1925, Sir Seymour King[2], the Memorial Fund Committee's financial advisor, who eventually donated the Chapel's east window and much else besides, warned that as matters then stood, the shell of the building could not be completed before 1st November 1929 and that a further sum of £5,000 - £10,000 would still be required for its fitting out. He recommended delay, but the Committee proceeded nonetheless. The original proposed height of the building was reduced a little and after extended negotiations between Giles Gilbert Scott and the Horton Quarries failed to set an acceptable price for the stone originally specified for the interior, something cheaper was agreed, but no other important economies were

[1] Sir Giles Gilbert Scott [1880 - 1960] At that date he was perhaps still chiefly famous for Liverpool Anglican Cathedral but he already had many other highly praised buildings to his credit, both ecclesiastical and secular. He later went on to design such disparate structures as the standard telephone kiosk, Bankside power station: now Tate Modern, and the rebuilt House of Commons following the World War II. Charterhouse chapel is described by his DNB biographer as 'perhaps his finest chapel for an educational institution'.

[2] Sir Seymour King [1852 - 1933] Businessman and banker; Politician; Mayor of Kensington.

accepted. By July 1926, with the Chapel due its consecration the following June, there was a looming shortfall of over £12,000: approaching £½M at 2005 values [RPI].

At the next meeting of the Memorial Fund committee, on 29th September 1926, with Fletcher in the chair, and with Sir Giles Gilbert Scott in attendance, there was a 'general discussion' of the financial position and a decision was reached to open the Chapel the following summer, no matter what, even if it was still incomplete. Fletcher was deputed 'Nem. Con.' to approach the Governing Body 'explaining to its members the desire - to proceed as quickly as possible and further to point out - that whilst the Committee is confident of securing eventually from Old Carthusians all the money required, it doubts its ability to do this by the time the Chapel is completed. The Committee asks the Headmaster to request the Governing Body to guarantee the temporary deficit.' The optimistic wording of the original typescript memo serves only to accentuate the Committee's obvious nervousness. Fletcher's own feelings on being thus deputed to step into the lions' den can only be guessed.

The School's total indebtedness had increased post-war and was now running around £90,000 [about £3.5M at 2005 values, using the RPI]. The Governors' consternation, faced with a sudden request to guarantee a further debt of £12,000+, can be imagined; the more so when the alternative was to see a prestige building project stall. Charterhouse Memorial Chapel was, a great deal more than 'just' a school chapel. It was a building of some national importance, in significant measure reflecting the sacrifice of all the public schools in the Great War. Formally, the building project was no direct part of the Governors' responsibilities, but if it fell into disarray this would certainly reflect badly on the School. Even such a highly regarded headmaster as Fletcher was unlikely to be popular when he presented the bombshell, the more so as he had himself been so actively involved in lighting the fuse. He needed more than a soft voice to turn away wrath.

The means he found, doubtless after some very hard and anxious thought that autumn, was to offer to hand over to the Governors £10,000 of his own savings, [equivalent to about £390,000 in 2005 using the RPI, but over £1.7M using average earnings] in return for an annuity of £425 *per annum* for himself and his wife during the lives of either of them, so as to provide the final tranche of capital required.

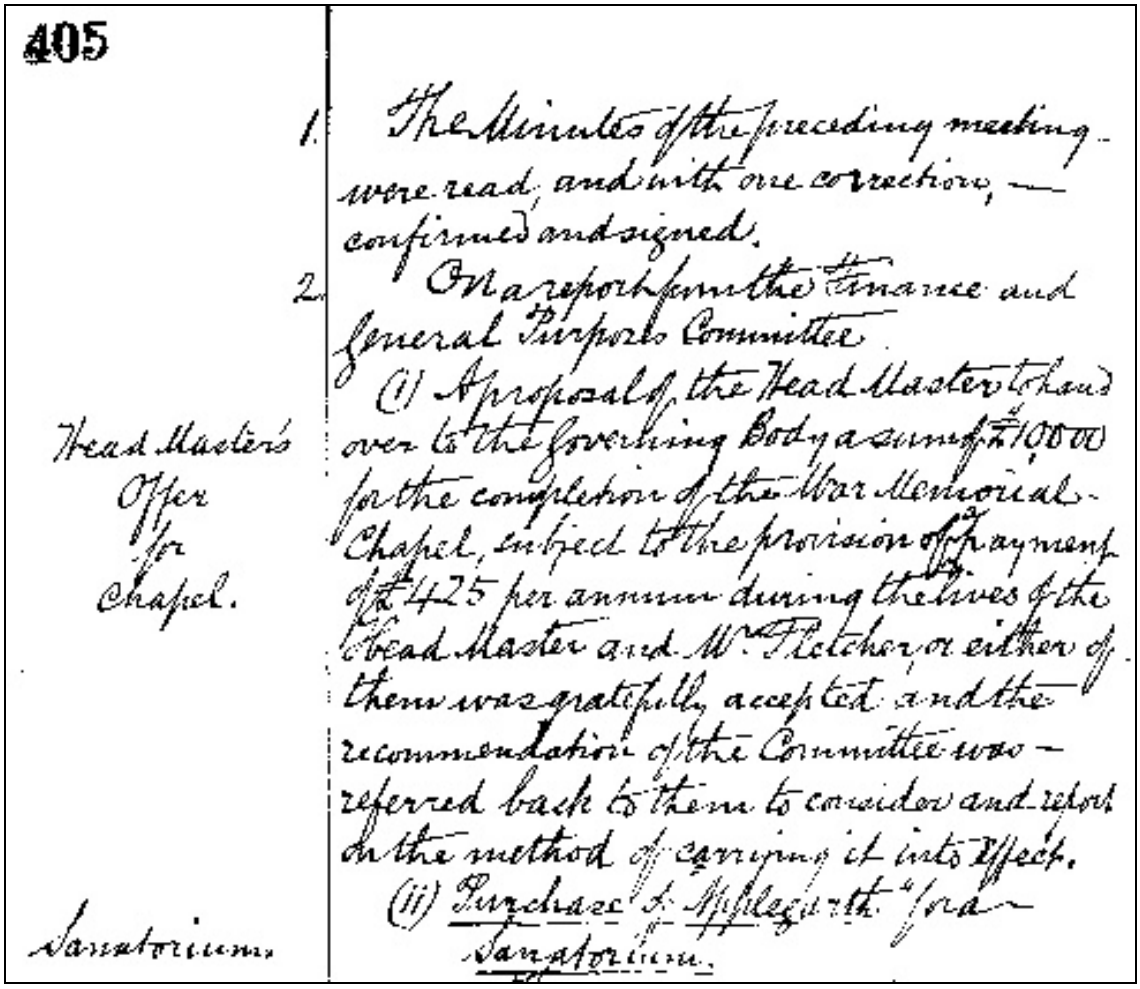
That offer was first scouted through the School's Finance & General Purposes Committee. Its grateful acceptance was minuted at the Governors' meeting on 1st November 1926; the FGPC was to consider means of putting it into effect and to report back. At the next FGPC meeting, on 20th December 1926, the recommendation was that £3,000 should be paid to the War Memorial Fund and £7,000 invested, and £75 charged to the Governing Body's account [by implication *per annum* although this is not spelled out] to make up the difference between the investment income and the £425 payable to the Fletchers.

The offer received no further formal consideration until a meeting of the FGPC on 27th June 1927, 9 days after the Chapel's dedication on 18th June, when it was 'postponed for future consideration'. There is nothing more. The Memorial Fund minutes suggest that by then, thanks to a late run of generous donations, the Fund's earlier financial crisis was largely over. The assumption must be that eventually there was no need to go further. The School's contemporary account books would put the matter beyond doubt, both as to the

receipt, or otherwise, of Fletcher's lump sum and the subsequent payment of the annuity until Dorothy Fletcher's death, but unhappily these have not been preserved.

Aside from Fletcher's pressing need to offer the Governors a *quid pro quo*, perhaps there was also an element of self-interest. Although he eventually received a pension on his retirement, this was in the Governors' gift; it was by no means guaranteed. On the other hand if an annuity was his only aim he could equally well have purchased one independently. Whether he would have been offered the same terms on the open market, or better, or worse, is now almost impossible to judge. No matter what, to lay his life savings on the line certainly demonstrated an extraordinarily high level of personal commitment to his School and its interests.

Earlier, as building progressed, it came time to complete arrangements for the commemoration of the Fallen. On 18th November 1925 Sir Giles Gilbert Scott wrote to A.H. Tod, by then retired to Clifton, requesting the list of Names: 'I should like these to be given in the order which is to be adopted and also to show any grouping or other special



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1. The Minutes of the preceding meeting were read, and with one correction, confirmed and signed.

2. On a report from the Finance and General Purposes Committee

(i) A proposal of the Head Master to hand over to the Governing Body a sum of £10,000 for the completion of the War Memorial Chapel, subject to the provision of payment of £425 per annum during the lives of the Head Master and Mrs. Fletcher, or either of them was gratefully accepted and the recommendation of the Committee was referred back to them to consider and report on the method of carrying it into effect.

Head Master's Offer for Chapel.

(ii) Purchase of Hillegarth for a Sanatorium.

Sanatorium.

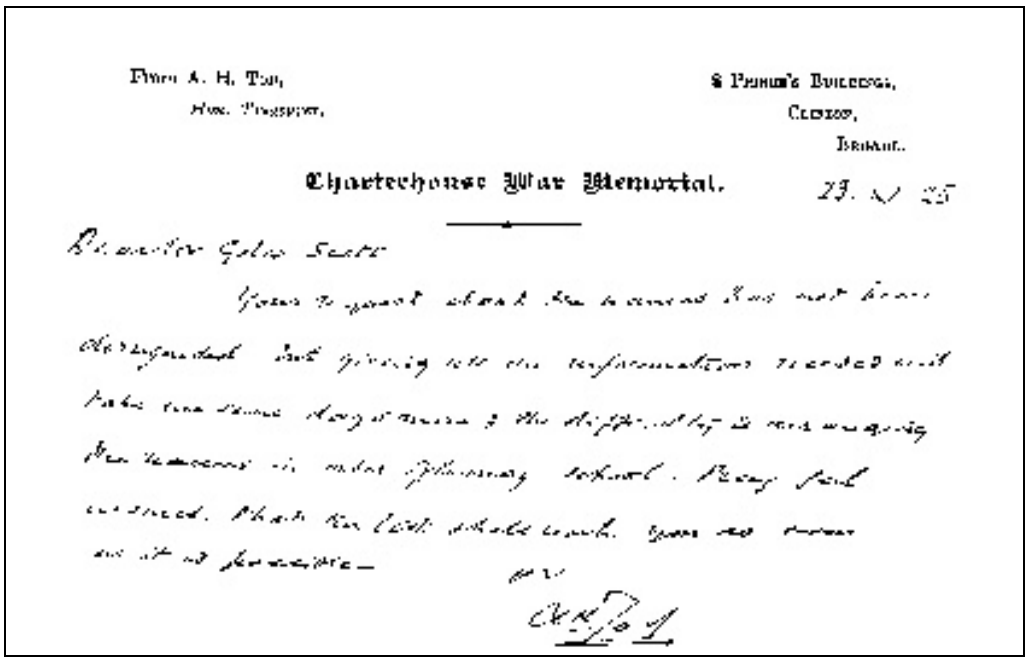
from The Charterhouse Governors' Minute Book

arrangement which may be desired. I require these particulars in order to design the panels on which the names will be carved.'

To which on 23rd November 1925 Tod responded by postcard that: 'Your request about the names has not been disregarded, but giving all the information needed will take me some days more - the difficulty is in arranging the names in order of leaving school.' [The original published list includes entry and leaving dates, but it is arranged in alphabetical order of surnames.] A typed-up list of names in the Chapel archives attests that Tod was soon as good as his word.

Alexander Tod

Alexander Hay Tod [25/03/1857 - 22/01/1942] was the 2nd son of Captain Alexander George Tod of the 1st Madras Cavalry. He was born at sea on the transport ship *Trafalgar*, homeward bound from Madras. He was a Carthusian's Carthusian, both as a boy and later as a master. He entered Verites in L.Q. 1869, went to Gownboys on becoming a prize scholar 2 years later but returned to Verites when the School moved from London to Godalming in June 1872: a translation which must have seemed magical, or at least extraordinary. At School he was a notable classicist, with a string of School prizes to his name by the time he left, and a leaving exhibition in classics. He won a scholarship to


Charterhouse War Memorial.

from Charterhouse Memorial Chapel Archives

Trinity College Oxford, took a First Class degree in classics in 1880 and returned to Charterhouse as an Assistant Master that same year. He never married.

If Robert Graves [Gownboys O.Q. 1909 - S.Q. 1914] is to be believed, writing of the School a generation later, there was a long Charterhouse tradition of division, not to say enmity, between the 'bloods', the sportsmen, hearty, healthy but none too bright, and the VIth,

the intellectuals, elite but effete. Whether or not, Tod acknowledged no such distinction. Not only was he a formidable scholar, he was also no mean sportsman; despite his small stature, and according to one source a glass eye[1], he was a member of the Shooting VIII for 3 years 1874 - 1876, of the Football First XI 1874-75 and 1875-76; and of the Old Carthusian XI which won the FA cup in 1881. A fellow-member of the School XI in 1875-76 and a life-long friend was Robert Baden-Powell, later the defender of Mafeking and the founder of the Boy Scouts[2]. They were also in the School Rifle Corps together, the forerunner of the OTC.

As a master he taught for 8 years in the under school, which he is said to have found hard going. He then transferred to the Classical Vth and later to the Under VIth where he was more in his element. In those early years he impressed one of his pupils as, 'short, spare, wiry and keen. His monosyllabic name suited him so well that he never required or acquired a nickname.' He was Captain of the Rifle Corps 1881 - 1905; under his command the Corps, which was then voluntary, increased in popularity and enjoyed a memorable run of success in the Ashburton Shield rifle shooting competition. Over a similar period he was regularly a referee in School football matches. He was however, according to an appreciation published in *The Carthusian* in October 1920 on his retirement, a 'favourable umpire'. 'A 'Tod goal' was a term invented by a disgruntled opponent of the School team on one occasion.'

One of his obituarists later wrote: 'In those far-off days there was a great gulf fixed between masters and boys. - Of course there were bridges here and there - but they were few and far between. The biggest and best was the one built by Tod with the Corps as its foundation. Thanks to it he probably knew more boys than any other Master, Housemasters not excepted.'

In 1900 George Bell & Sons published A.H. Tod's *Charterhouse*, in their series of Handbooks to the Great Public Schools. [Other titles included, unsurprisingly, *Rugby*, *Eton*, *Harrow*, etc. 'profusely illustrated, price 3s. 6d. net each'.] It deals briefly with the School's history prior to the move to Godalming in 1872 and at length with developments since. It is essentially an extended prospectus; in his preface Tod writes: 'It is hoped that present Carthusians may find this slight account of a momentous period in the history of Charterhouse not devoid of interest, and that parents who are choosing a school for their sons may gather from the following chapters a little more guidance about the life of the school than can be furnished by its printed regulations.'

As a guide for parents, and written by a son and loyal servant of the foundation, the 'slight account', in fact admirably detailed, is sometimes surprisingly candid, critical even, albeit only ever of customs and arrangements and never of individuals. Whether this was really Charterhouse 1900, warts and all, is another matter but at least any parents who sent a

[1] There is a reference to A.H. Tod's 'glass eye' in Witheridge J's. biography of Frank Fletcher [See Book List.] but without further details. Nor is any source stated for this information, for which I have found no written confirmation. However close scrutiny of two archive photographs of Tod in his middle years do seem to demonstrate an asymmetry between the eyes, with grounds for suspicion of a problem on the right.

[2] Robert Stephenson Smyth Baden-Powell [1857 - 1941] He entered Gownboys in London in O.Q. 1870, transferred to Girdlestoneites after the move to Godalming in 1872 and left in L.Q. 1876.

son to the School on the basis of Tod's account and were disappointed, were left small room to complain that they had been sold a pig in a poke. What is perhaps most remarkable is how little chapter space, just 7 pages out of 241, is devoted to 'Work' *ie*. school work, 'Hash' in Carthusian *patois*. 'Games etc.' takes up 73!

To judge from *The Carthusian*'s editorial in June 1900, the book was well-received within the School: 'Of - general interest to Carthusians past and present is the appearance of Mr. Tod's long promised book - Mr. Tod has spared no pains to collect every scrap of information about Charterhouse that is interesting - it is written in a very bright and readable form.'

In 2006, as I started in earnest on my researches into OCs who died in the Great War, I purchased a second-hand copy of *Charterhouse* through AbeBooks. On the flyleaf there is a dedication: 'M.E. Casley, from Hugh' and further in there is a pencilled amendment in the same hand. Even Homer occasionally nods.

Combining information from the Charterhouse Register and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Hugh de Chastelai Casley was the only son of Wilbrahim J.B. & Mrs. E. Casley of Redcar. He entered Gownboys in L.Q. 1900 and left in L.Q. 1904. He was later commissioned into the 6th Yorkshire Regiment as a Lieutenant, served in the Great War and was killed in action in the Dardanelles, on 7th August 1915; he was 28 years old. He is commemorated on the Helles Memorial. His father pre-deceased him.

Was M.E. Casley an uncle, thinking of sending a cousin to the School? There are no other Casleys in the Register.

From 1906 until his retirement Tod was Housemaster of Verites, his own old House. In March 1918 the House caught fire, a disaster which he surmounted with complete, and habitual, equanimity, save only that at the height of the crisis, standing on the Terrace with his camera, as usual, on his back, with his boys throwing his furniture and personal effects out of the windows to save them from the flames and the firemen pouring on water, he was heard to complain, an unlit cigarette between his lips: 'My house is on fire and I can't get a light for my fag!' Asked later how his boys had behaved, he replied: 'They enjoyed it immensely!'.

He was also joint editor of the Charterhouse Register and for 32 years treasurer and secretary of the Old Carthusian Club. According to another obituarist, 'He was continually recording anything to do with Old Carthusians, and if he did not know every one of them personally, they all knew him.' Latterly he was a key member of the Memorial Fund Committee.

'He was a voracious reader and a fine photographer, also a good art critic. If he was sometimes a torment to his form, he was an entertainment to his colleagues; his unexpected sayings, ejaculated with a studiously articulated asperity and pungent sarcasm, proceeded from a hatred of all false sentiment, vainglory and hypocrisy. - But all this was but a mask that partly concealed a real generosity of heart and a love of all that is honest and true.'

He retired from teaching in CQ 1920 and moved to Bristol, where he lived for many years at 2 Prince's Buildings, Clifton, overlooking the River Avon. He said of the view that 'like all tidal rivers, the tide is never up'. After his retirement he maintained his links with the School and he continued as an active member of the Memorial Fund Committee until it was wound up in 1932. It is thanks to his thoughtfulness for the future when he was turning out its papers then that we still have them, along with his covering note to the librarian of the day.

He built up a fine collection of horse brasses, harness decorations commonly seen on draught horses before the dawn of the internal combustion engine; he made these the subject of an illustrated article in *The Greyfriar*, the School's literary and artistic journal, in 1916. Aside from a photograph of his own, most of the illustrations are drawings by boys, of commendable quality as with all the artwork in *The Greyfriar*.

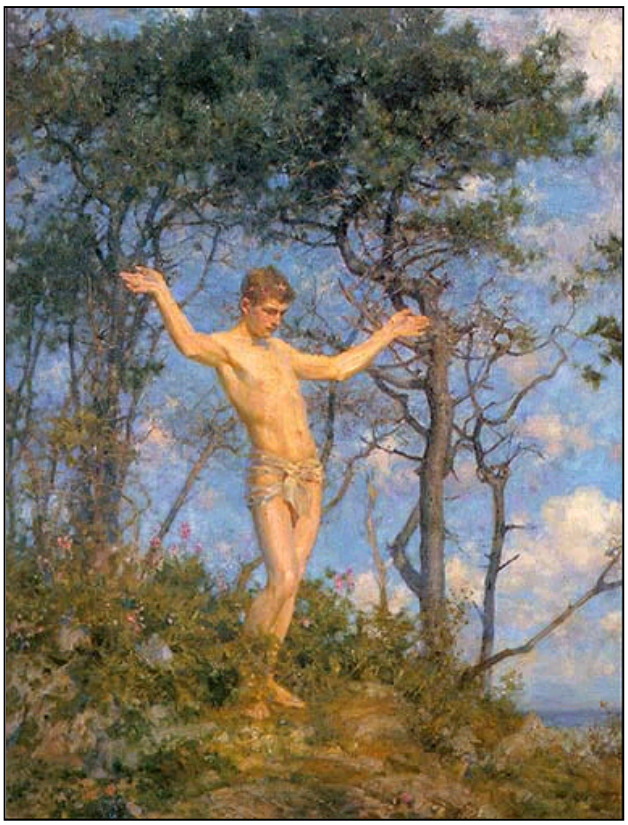
Alongside a wealth of erudite but concise information he comments: 'A collection of these brasses is a very desirable thing. Two or three hundred mounted on dark oak, and kept as bright as gold - with 'Bluebell' or other polish, make a brave show. - It would be ungenerous not to let others know that they may still, without exorbitant cost, form collections of objects beautiful in themselves, which are all the better for battering and banging about, which the maid cannot break, nor moth and rust corrupt, and which must eventually disappear before the gollywog mascot of the motorist.' He maintained this interest into his retirement. In 1935, aged 78 and still living in Clifton, he had a letter on brasses published in *The Times*.

His obituary, or rather obituaries for his death triggered many tributes, appeared in *The Carthusian* in March 1942. Much was made of his long and dedicated service to the School and of the link he represented with the long ago days of the old London Charterhouse. '*De mortuis nil nisi bunkum*', but he had been 20 years retired by then and few old boys, or ex-masters, have been afforded such a fulsome posthumous expression of gratitude. He had clearly been highly regarded, both as a schoolmaster and as a man, if indeed the two were separable. Eventually he had become, for his time, a Carthusian icon.

But there was more to A.H. Tod than emerges from his book *Charterhouse* or from the Charterhouse archives, or appears in any published history of the School. In his biography of Lord Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of the Boy Scouts [See Book List.] Tim Jeal records that while on a visit to Charterhouse in November 1919, Baden-Powell stayed with Tod, as an old friend.

As Jeal tells us, Tod had taken large numbers of nude photographs of boys as part of a photographic record of school life. Baden-Powell's private diary entry about his visit reads: 'Stayed with Tod. Tod's photos of naked boys and trees. Excellent.' In a subsequent letter to Tod regarding the setting up of a Scout troop at the school, Baden-Powell mentions his impending return visit, adding: 'Possibly I might get a further look at those wonderful photographs of yours.'

Whether Tod had in fact taken the photographs, or all of them, himself cannot be entirely certain but there is sufficient other evidence of his photographic interests to indicate that he almost certainly had. Most of the many photographs in *Charterhouse* were taken by another master Leonard Marshall [an Assistant Master from 1874 and House Master of



Henry Tuke *The Sun Worshipper*, oil on canvas,1904

Daviesites from 1890; he left the School in 1904] none were by Tod himself, but of course over the years since, he may have developed a greater interest in photography and/or greater skill. It is open to speculation whether perhaps the interest was encouraged by Marshall, and whether Marshall himself had anything to do with the nudes.

The 'figure studies', as Tod himself termed them, comprised only one out of a number of photograph albums which he eventually handed over to the School Librarian in October 1923, after his retirement, as a permanent gift. All of these are still in the School Archives, save only the figure studies; as Jeal records, these were destroyed in the late 1960s, reportedly so as to protect Tod's reputation, and 'out of deference to the feelings of the sons and grandsons of the boys depicted'.

As quoted by Jeal, according to E.E. Harrison, [Housemaster of Saunderites in the 1960's and later Master of the London Charterhouse] the studies were: 'contrived and artificial as regards poses'. Jeal thinks it likely that they followed the contemporary tradition in male art, as example the paintings of naked or near-naked boys by Henry Scott Tuke [1858 - 1929] which were popular at the time. [In the first volume of the journal *Studio*, edited by a friend of Tuke's and published in 1890, an illustrated article appeared on 'The Male Nude in Photography'.] He believes they were probably both unexceptional and unexceptionable and describes their destruction as 'an appalling act'; the thoughtful historian might well agree. He goes on to describe the remaining albums as: 'the finest single photographic record in existence of public school life in the late 19th and early 20th centuries'.

That must be more arguable; there can be no telling what riches other public schools have squirreled away. In fact the albums run from no earlier than about 1910. The best of the surviving photographs are of high quality, although the standard is not uniformly high. Doubtless even the 'duds' appeared more striking in their day but Tod evidently suffered from the common amateur photographer's problem: that he was insufficiently rigorous in discarding second-rate work. He appears in one shot himself, with his camera: probably a quarter plate model and certainly, to judge from his results, with a good lens and a fast maximum shutter speed. Some of his sporting shots freeze the action very effectively and he makes good use of differential focussing.

Whether he did his own processing and/or printing there is no indication, but most if not all of the photographs appear to be contact prints with no enlargements nor selective framing, suggesting an amateur effort at this stage, although that does not rule out commercial processing of the original plates, nor other, more skilled, reproduction. Unhappily the plates themselves have not survived, and a sad proportion of the prints too have now degenerated beyond restoration, probably through inadequate fixing or final washing.

They do indeed cover a wide spectrum of school life, but the greater number are of boys or of small groups of boys informally posed, most of whom are identified by name in Tod's spidery handwriting. A strikingly high proportion have been taken at the School swimming baths or at the old bathing place on the River Wey, with their subjects wearing brief swimming trunks accordingly, or draped in towels. There are page upon page of these.

Inevitably, almost all the identified subjects served in the armed forces in the Great War, and not a few died. That knowledge makes their informal boyhood portraits a handful of years earlier almost unbearably poignant. The sight of a young athlete leaping a bar who within a decade held the rank of Brigadier, with a Military Cross to his name and a long string of Mentions in Despatches, is happier, but equally thought provoking.

A smile is still a smile with a gap-tooth, but the more handsome the face, the more galling the might-have-been. It would be good to think that whoever was charged to cast the figure studies album into the School furnace might have had the wit to play Sir Bedivere, but in that case it must surely have come to light again by now. And in the legend, King Arthur detects Sir Bedivere in his deception.

Jeal's predictable conclusion is that both Tod and Baden-Powell were repressed homosexuals; one might question whether an æsthetic fascination, in a man, for the male form, or indeed a wider intellectual appreciation of the male, is necessarily synonymous with homosexuality, whilst conceding the likelihood of overlap. But he does not find any reason to suspect that Tod's, or Baden-Powell's, relations with boys were anything but chaste.

Nor does it seem likely that anything unchaste would long have gone unreported, or unpunished. In his account of his time at Charterhouse in *Goodbye to All That* Robert Graves[1] confirms that the atmosphere was heavy with sentimental same-sex attraction, as indeed it still was in my own experience 50 years later. He also comments on G.H. Rendall's assertion [Headmaster 1897 - 1911] that his boys were 'amorous, but seldom erotic', that physical relationships between boys were commoner than Rendall supposed. But there is every difference between calf-love in a 'world cut off from reality, lit by 40 watt bulbs', in Graves' description, and magistral pæderasty.

At the same time Graves also describes an incident where he furiously confronted a master whom he accused of kissing his own paramour, a younger boy whom he names 'Dick'. When Dick confirmed the accusation the master 'collapsed', as well he might, undertaking to

[1] Graves himself appears, fully clad, in a short series of Tod's photographs taken in 1912, posed in a classroom before a map of Ancient Greece.

resign at the end of term on grounds of ill-health. 'That was in the summer of 1914; he went into the army and was killed the next year.'

Three Charterhouse masters resigned to take up army commissions over the summer of 1914, including Frank Fletcher's cousin P.C. Fletcher, who survived the War. Of the other two, one died in 1917, the other in 1918. The curious can easily discover their identities but it would be invidious to name them here. It is typical of Graves that he insouciantly provides sufficient identification himself in a book published only 15 years after the alleged event, thus besmirching the memories of two brave men while those memories were still fresh, at least one unjustly. He was by no means scrupulously honest in his writings, there may be more to the discrepancy of date than simple error. One suspects poetic licence: even perhaps that if any such incident occurred at all it involved another master who did not die.

Jeal remarks on the irony that the album's destruction took place during the permissive 1960s: ironic certainly, but as a 1960s vintage Carthusian myself [Saunderites O.Q. 1964 - O.Q. 1968] it does not surprise me. With the benefit of hindsight, it is clear that the more thoughtful among our masters at that time were engaged in a degree of anxious re-evaluation, against a background of reaction from the old guard; there is always an old guard. No doubt this was salutary and necessary, almost all of the traditional certainties which had underpinned public school, and national, life for the past century and more were giving way. It was time to think afresh. But it sometimes made for an uneasy atmosphere, although few of us as boys can have had the maturity fully to appreciate what was going on. It must have been all the worse for those with a responsibility to steer the ship.

The particular difficulty was that meanwhile the School's sexual custom and practice remained very much as Robert Graves had found them 50 years earlier. It was bound to be so. As Alec Waugh commented in his preface to the 1954 reprint of *The Loom of Youth*, his 1917 *succes de scandal*, 'I do not think that in essentials the life of the Public School boy has greatly changed - youth has the same basic problems, is fired by the same ambitions, beset by the same doubts.' Jonathan King OC[1] was as emblematic of 1960s Charterhouse as any of the School's more worthy sons. That was never going to change, short of full co-education, which would doubtless bring new problems all its own. Thrust the uneasy candle of newly awakened 60s sensibilities into the duskier recesses of an earlier age, before it had been comfortably consigned to history, and it is easy to understand a degree of panic at the shadows that leapt up.

[1] Notorious in his time, albeit an eminently forgettable character in the longer run: a 'pop' singer and entrepreneur with a predilection for very young men which was already spoken of during his schooldays. He eventually came to grief, serving a prison sentence for a collection of such misdemeanours committed long before, amidst the pædophile hysteria of the 1990s.

Alexander Tod and the Charterhouse War List

Suddenly the War List takes on a new aspect; the tragedy of it becomes particular and personal. One imagines Tod working alone in Verites, late into the night perhaps, by gaslight with the House asleep, poring over the day's *Times*, noting down the names of the boys who had died, needing to go on, to know the worst, dreading what he would find as he ran his finger down the columns; remembering their faces, their doings, their triumphs and disasters, and some of them as his models; turning perhaps to his albums to remind himself once more, of young men with fine bodies, now lying dead and broken in the mud of Flanders, or wherever their fate had led them.

"Ηρωες, καλῶς οἳ καπτέσετ' ἐν προμάχοισι
καπτέσεθ' ἡμετέρης εἵνεκ' ἐλευθερίης,
πῶς ὑμᾶς ἐπεέσσιν ἐϋπρεπέσιν κελαδήσω
ὑμᾶς, οἳ θαλερὴν ὠλέσαθ' ἡλικίην,
οἳ μὲν ἐνὶ γαίῃ, μετά τ' ἀνδράσι δυσμενέεσσιν
τήλοθεν, οἳ δ' ἐν ἁλὸς κύμασι πλαζόμενοι.
πολλὸν ἀριστεύσαντες ἀνὰ στονόεσσαν ἀϋτην,
ἠλύθετ' εἰς 'Αΐδαν ἀνδράσι χάρμα φίλον·
Υἷέας, ὦ πατρίς, κρατερὸν ὀλοφύρεο σεῖο,
κείνους, οἷς οὐδὲν πλὴν τὰ δέοντ' ἔμελεν.

'Epigram on Old Carthusians Killed in Action'
Published in the *Carthusian* December 1915
Author unknown

[1]

There is too the other side of this: the influence of Tod's nude photographic sessions on the boys who modelled for him, and on the climate in his House and in the School as a whole. His interests cannot have remained a secret and he himself appears to have seen no reason why they should; his eventual donation of all his albums to the School makes that clear.

[1] The epigram has been loosely translated for me as follows:

Heroes who have fallen honourably in battle,
Who have fallen for our freedom.
How may I fittingly hymn your praises?
You who were destroyed in the bloom of life,
In a faraway land by men of evil will.
You who were lost on the billowing sea.
Gloriously you ascend from great sorrow,
Into heaven, the joy and friend of men.
Oh fathers, greatly you lament and grieve,
Yet needlessly, for sons who desired only to do their duty.

Alexander Tod and the Charterhouse War List

He was totally committed to Charterhouse. It is impossible to believe that he would willingly or knowingly have done anything to its detriment, or to the detriment of the boys in his charge. But we have the testimony of Robert Graves, and of Alec Waugh describing Sherborne School under a transparent fictional pseudonym at the same period. In *The Public School Phenomenon* Jonathan Gathorne-Hardy provides extensive further, retrospective evidence. Adolescence in the pressure cooker of a same-sex boarding school and under the key influence of masters [or mistresses in the girls' schools] who throve in that environment was a surpassingly strange experience. It could have profound and lasting effects. In that light, something of the later life of one OC of that era seems worth recounting.

Theodore Butler [1894 - 1976] was a boy in Verites, A.H. Tod's house, from S.Q. 1907 through S.Q. 1913. As appears, he was no great sportsman but he was certainly a fine classicist; so that he would also have had Tod as a beak, and he must have been a star pupil. There are two straightforward portrait photographs of him in the albums. He was a Senior Foundation Scholar, he twice won the Talbot Prize in Classics, in 1912 & 1913, and 3 times the Monahan Prize in Divinity, in 1911, 1912 & 1913; his 3 year monopoly on the Monahan was exceptional.

He went up to University College Oxford where he took a first in Classical Mods., then a first-class degree in Jurisprudence in 1917. He became a successful barrister and later a judge, and won considerable distinction.

As a judge, he is said in an obituary to have been: 'in his element, always firmly in control and impartial, without ever abusing his position' but 'he was inclined to be unexpectedly severe when sentencing male sexual offenders'.

He married 'at a rather more advanced age than most', as his *Times* obituarist puts it: only in his 50s.

Does any of that reflect on his School experiences? It is all too easy to fall into the trap of bending slim circumstantial evidence to fit: something which Butler himself as a judge would doubtless strongly have deprecated.

There can be no telling. *Autre temps, autre mores.*

Eric Webb OC
October 2006

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I am most grateful to Charterhouse for access to the School archives, including some very precious original documents and A.H. Tod's surviving photograph albums, and to Ann Wheeler the School's Archivist for her time and effort spent in seeking these out and generally in helping me find my way around.

I am grateful also to my son Christopher Webb for the Greek translation. He comments that although there are one or two grammatical errors and a clash of styles 'it makes impressive use of elegiac couplets'; also that 'most impressive of all is the original type-setting, perfect throughout'.

The School's printer of the day earned an obituary in the *Carthusian* in February 1940:

'We regret to record the death at the end of last quarter of Mr. A. Lindsey who had been connected with the printing of the *Carthusian* for more than 60 years. In default of an appreciation from an abler pen of one who has been described as "the best proof-reader in the United Kingdom" we can, at least, say that there have been few school printers who, like Lindsey, could be depended upon to print a Greek Unseen Paper without the necessity for a proof. He learnt Greek during his apprenticeship and was at one time offered a post with the Oxford University Press.'

To add to one's sense of wonderment, Lindsey would of course have been setting his Greek type 'backwards', in mirror-image.

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