THE OLD WANDSWORTHIANS.

SPEECHES AT THE ANNUAL DINNER - 2nd DECEMBER 1927.

DR. H. WAITE, M.A., D.Sc., before proposing the toast of "The Old Wandsworthians" called upon the Company to stand in silence in memory of the Old Boys who had fallen.

He then said: There was one peculiarity about this toast - were were going to drink to our own healths. He was delighted to see such a large gathering, but would like to see it larger still. There were some pleasant points about it - they had with them one who was in the School in its first year - Mr Randell - and one who was in the School this term and he thought there was not a year in between 1895 and 1927 which was not represented. He was pleased to see so many of the "older Old Boys" and to have his own two sons with him.

He could not say very much about the Old Wandsworthians which they did not already know. He had had many opportunities of speaking to them and he expected that some of the things he had said had perhaps been remembered but that many had been forgotten (Laughter). As usual he had two or three notices to give out (renewed laughter).

Referring to the football match against the School the following day, he remarked that the match should have been today or else the dinner should have been tomorrow, as the dinner was not the best preparation for a football match (Laughter and hear hear). At the same time, when a man went from one side to the other it doubled the difference (laughter) and he thought a considerable number of the School's strongest of last year had gone over to the old boys (applause). He was in favour of both sides and thought that a draw would be best. They might find the present team rather weaker than last year's team, but they would put up a good fight.

Referring to the Official Opening of the School, he remarked that one of the topics of our meetings had been lost. They no longer had the new Building to look forward to, so

he could not talk about that (laughter). They had actually got it, and the Opening would take place the following Thursday at 6 p.m., by the Chairman of the Education Committee.

He was not going to say anything more about the new School because if he enlarged upon it then he might have to tell the same take over again.

A School Play was provisionally fixed for Saturday, December 17th. They had various things at the School which they never hoped togget, at the old, - amongst other things special fixtures for the Stage. He hoped they would have a very creditable performance of "The Merchant of Venice". For other announcements he referred the Company to the back of the Menu, and mentioned that sometimes they wanted telling things twice over (laughter).

He wished to congratulate their Secretaries and Officers for their work during the last year. Their strength now was 160 which was a record and, he thought, a splendid result. He backed up their efforts and asked everyone present to try and persuade some other Old Boy to join the Old Wandsworthians.

Then with regard to one of the most important things - The War Memorial. He did not think the idea was new to any of them. Somewhere about Easter we got the Appeal launched. A copy was sent to everybody who was likely to be interested in this War Memorial. The response at first was encouraging during the summer term and after the holidays it lagged a little and he was afraid they had not been able to push it this term but when the Opening was over he wanted them to push it again for all they were worth. The amount so far received was about £184. They would agree that no memorial could be worthy of those old boys, but it was up to them to do, not what is worthy of them, but the best they could. After a very long discussion the decision they came to was that they would have a Memorial Tablet placed in the new Hall which would contain the names of the fallen. That would be solely a memorial to the fallen, and in order

to give some benefit to present and future boys it was decided to build a Sports Pavilion in the Field. They were not even at the present time committed to the Pavilion and of course unless funds were sufficient they would not be able to do it, but he hoped they would do it. There were no two opinions about the Tablet. There had been differences of opinion as to what form the other part should take, but at the present time the Pavilion held the field, and without stressing the matter more he wanted to ask them not only to do what they could but also to get other old boys or others interested in the School to lend a hand and do what they could to help.

He thought he would now sit down (No, No) he had read the last line on page three of the menu first (Laughter) and was able to fall back on it and sit down. First of all he must ask them to drink to the Toast of "The Old Wandsworthians" and he coupled with that the name of their Secretary, Mr. Hunt, and the "Oldest Old Wandsworthian" Mr. Randell.

The toast was received with acclamation.

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MR. F. H. HUNT said that this was not the first time he had had the honour of speaking at the Dinners, but first he wanted to read letters which he had received from three of the Patrons, regretting their inability to be present at this Dinner. Letters from Sir Henry Jackson, Mr. D.N.Griffiths and Revd. W.E.R.Morrow having been read, Mr. Hunt proceeded:
The President had told them all that he (the speaker) was going to tell them. As regards the football match the following day, there need be no fear as to the result. Our team had learned a lesson and they would "have their own back". It was certainly to be regretted that they were having the dinner that night instead of the following night, but if anything can spur a man on, it is a good drink (hear hear).

With regard to the New School, he supposed that most had seen it, and he could not help thinking there is still some regard for the old "tin sheds". They had had some enjoyable times there, in Dr. Waite's room and outside (Laughter). The school was a very fine building, and he felt sure it was worthy of the traditions of the old Wandsworth Technical Institute. He hoped the Opening of the school would be well attended by all the Old Boys who could get there and thought it was something which would appeal to the Old Boys because they could judge (especially Mr Randell) the growth of the school up to the present time. It must be gratifying to those who have worked so hard to have such a fine Building.

Dr Waite had congratulated them on the Membership - at present 160 - and he would say this - that the members they had elected to the Committee had worked hard during the last twelve months - and it really was hard work. He felt sure they would realise this. When they contemplated getting up a function they had to look at the question of finance, and with regard to Football, for the first year they had made arrangements for three teams. That in itself means a lot of work, and he thought Mr Spells had done well in that respect. The only thing he could not do was to win the matches for us (laughter). But every member in the teams did his best, and there had not been a game which had not been thoroughly enjoyed, in spite of the fact that occasionally fellows had to go home without trousers (loud laughter).

The question of the War Memorial was known to all and nothing from him could add to what had already been said on this subject.

He was glad to say that the Old Boys Association itself was in a very sound position. Four years ago he could not have said the same thing - and it was only through the work of the Committee and their efforts, believing in the Association, combined with the efforts of Mr Phillimore (hear hear) who worked behind the scenes, getting in members when they came

to the School etc. No such visitor comes out without leaving his 2/6d. Only the Committee and the Super-treasurer (laughter) see that. He had never had to see Dick Coombes home yet, and if ever there was a man fit to be in charge of our funds, he was the man. He had the interests of the Association at heart. After mentioning the proposal to form an Old Boys' Swimming Section, he referred to the Annual General Meeting fixed for February 27th. He wanted them all to be at that meeting - a very important meeting - and elect their officers.

He felt proud that our membership went right back to 1895. Mr Randell, sitting beside him, was an antique (laughter). It was gratifying to know that we had a member who first attended the school and that we had members who had just left the school. Boys would see the advantage of joining and keeping up those friendships they formed at school. He felt sure that spirit must be in the minds of most fellows.

They had recently been able to arrange for a meeting place - this also with the assistance of our antique - Mr. Randell was Captain of the Wimbledon Park Rifle Club and they were able to have the use of the pavilion of that Club one evening per week with its many advantages.(applause). - at an inclusive fee of 1/- per annum per member. He thought their thanks were due to Mr Randell for arranging this. He hoped they would take advantage of this - it showed what the Committee were trying to do for the Old Wandsworthians. They were anxious to put this Association on a level with some of the older Associations. They were a young association and they had not yet got on their feet - but they were almost walking.

He was very pleased to see so many there - last year there were only 35 - next year he hoped to see more than 100.

He was very pleased to welcome Dr Waite and his two sone (hear hear) He must not say too much about the Doctor, because "the antique" was going to say more about him later.
After referring to the prospect of Cricket in the following season and the difficulties of obtaining the use of a ground

he concluded by thanking them for their attendance that evening and for supporting him and the Committee, and appealed for their further support by bringing in more new members.

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MR. A. E. RANDELL proposing the toast of "Our Chairman" said: It was his privilege to propose "Our President". He supposed he must feel that the honour had been thrust upon him because of his "antiquity". He did not mind that a bit (hear hear) He was proud to be in the position to propose that toast. He believed he was actually older in the School than the President. He did not think there was any occasion for him to lavish words of praise on the President - they all knew him and had an affection for him (hear hear) and they were proud to have him there that night. He hoped that for many years to come Dr Waite would continue to fill our Presidential Chair (hear hear). The President had a regard for the Old Wandsworthians, and it seemed to the speaker that the best compliment they could pay Dr Waite was to make the association "go".

The toast of "Our President" was received with Musical Honours.

DR. WAITE, thanking the Company for their reception of the toast said they had affection for him and he also had for them and he was sure he was right in saying they all had a warm corner in their hearts for the "old tin sheds" and the old place. He could not help reminding them that "the building" was not "the school". The School was the people and the associations and the friendships. He hoped that any of them, whenever they could, would pay a visit to the new building - they had not a new school but a new building. He wished to thank Mr Randell especially for his kind words. He was on the scene before the speaker, but not very long. He was

one of the first boys in the school. At the beginning of the second yegar girls were admitted (laughter) and they would be interested to know that it was because of the admission of girls that he (Dr Waite) came on the scene (laughter). The girls had gone, but he was still there (hear hear).

Referring to the use of the school ground for cricket, he regretted that he had not the power to let it to anybody, and if he had, he would not be able to, because of the present boys who must come first. He hoped however to be able to arrange odd matches, and added that if any other team at all were let in, it would be theirs. He thought they would believe him when he said he was anxious to do all he could for the Old Wandsworthians, and he would do so, but of course there were limits.

MR. E. C. SPELLS proposing "The School" referred to the excellent examination results achieved by the boys as evidence of the progress of the school, which said a lot for Dr Waite and the Staff. He felt more at home on the sports side, which was always associated with the name of Mr Powell (hear hear). He remembered that 17 or 18 years ago Mr Powell was always bowling. Last year Mr Powell was still bowling (laughter and hear hear). In football as well, Mr Powell says he is getting beyond umpiring but he can still do it. He paid a warm tribute to the sporting spirit with which the school games were always played, and hoped the Old Boys would give the school a good licking in their match the following day.

"The Link" was undoubtedly a link between the School, the present boys and the past boys. He would like to see more than that. Boys leaving should automatically become members of the Association. He was proud of being an Old Wandsworthian. He counted school days as some of the happiest days of his life. The "Old Tech" is a grand old School, and he asked them to drink to the toast of "The School".

MR. POWELL, responding, said that he did not like their Secretary (laughter). He came there for a nice little evening and then found his name on the Toast List. As the Doctor said, they had changed their building but had carried over the old spirit, and the boys still played the same game (hear hear). Mr Spells had not mentioned the name of Mr Beale. The speaker had often suggested that he should take over, but he would not. The boys who were in the team remembered the advice he gave them, and they were now feeling Mr Beale's loss. As a result of voting by the boys of the Upper School, they were going over to Rugger at Christmas, and he would be glad if any of the old boys would come forward as referees. They would not find the school team very strong the next day. Some were crocked. The boys were prepared to give them a good game and were glad that the Dinner was being held that night (laughter). They were going to keep up the tradition and the same spirit going right to the end (applause).

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