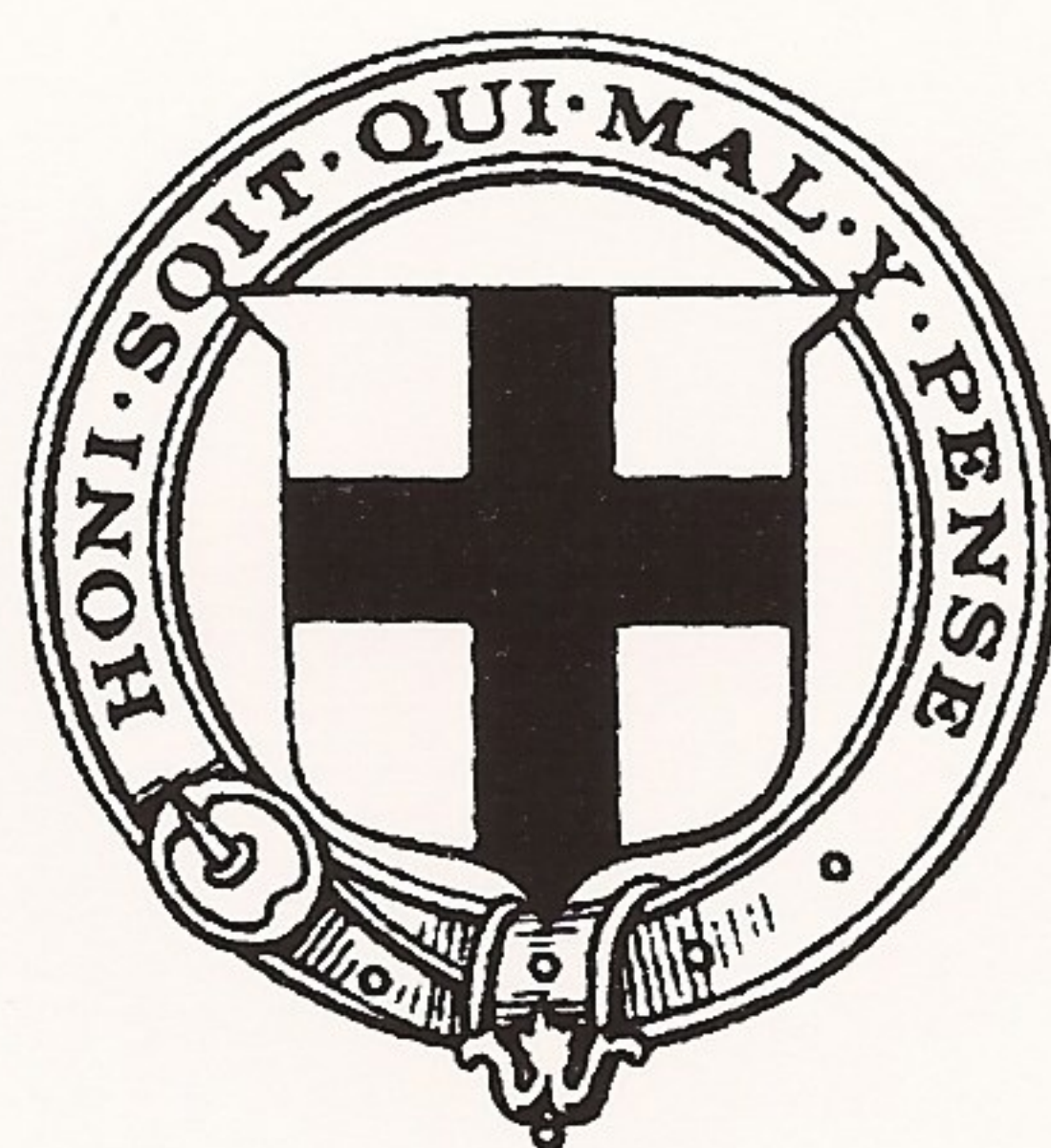


# St. George's School

WINDSOR CASTLE

ASSOCIATION



CHRONICLE

2002

HGL came up to London every Wednesday to teach at the RCM. He kept TNT's lesson until the end of the day, so that they could walk across the park to Paddington for his train to Eton. HGL was a railway enthusiast and one afternoon announced that they were going to King's Cross for a change, as he wanted to check if the Coronation Scot arrived there on the tick of 8pm. *"And it was so!.... (Would that it were today – Ed). I remember the two of us eating sausage rolls on the platform at King's Cross, as we awaited the legendary Coronation Scot's arrival."*

### **Alexander (Sandy) Wingate Waddell (1928-32)**

It is with great sadness that we report the sudden death, on May 6<sup>th</sup> 2001, of one of our oldest members, Sandy Waddell. By his regular and frequent support of the School and Association he was well known to generations of members and staff and was President of the Old Boys Club (as it then was) on more than one occasion – most recently from 1988 to 1990.

His widow, Joan, kindly provided this memoir of Sandy taken from the address that his son, James, gave at his funeral.

*"Alexander Wingate Waddell was born on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1919 of Scottish parents living in the Midlands. The third of five children, he was known as Sandy from an early age. At the age of 8 he was found to have a singing voice, and followed his brother, Robin, to St. George's Choir School, Windsor. Here, under the exacting but benevolent tutelage of Sir Henry Walford Davies, then the Master of the King's Music, his love of sacred music was implanted. The strict regime of the school and choir was the foundation of a life of self-discipline and reliability.*

*Walford Davies continued to take an interest in Sandy's musical progress, and one summer organised an opportunity for him to sing two bass arias in St. David's Cathedral during a recital by Dr. Soar, the organist. This was during one of the holidays he spent in Pembrokeshire as a guest of Walford Davies and his wife, Lady Margaret.*

*He went on to study at Magdalen College School, Oxford, where in his free time he secretly constructed a small boat, which was later stolen. On leaving school, the family having moved to London, he became an engineering College Apprentice. At the outbreak of war he volunteered for the First Militia and, rising to the rank of Major, served with the Royal Engineers in the Middle East and in Italy where he was mentioned in despatches. The experience of blowing up and rebuilding bridges may well have founded his passion for the pioneering days of engineering.*

*After demobilisation he went to East Africa to serve as an engineer for a Trading Company, which involved a good deal of travelling into the interior.*

*While on leave in 1951, he married Helen Hoather and later their son, James, was born in Dar es Salaam. Sandy's continuing passion for singing meant that audiences and congregations could enjoy his voice in the church choir, classical concerts, Gilbert & Sullivan and pantomime, where he excelled as the Dame.*

The family returned to England in the mid-fifties when Sandy joined Hamworthy Engineering, first in the Midlands and then at Poole in Dorset. He soon became involved in community activities, where his public conscience, practical skills, affability and ability to organise became invaluable. The parish Church in Corfe Mullen benefited particularly from his services. Among other interests were rifle shooting and genealogy, and helping other people.

Sadly his wife died in 1980. A gentle, kind-hearted humorous man, he continued a life of service to the community, active to the end, although not in the best of health. He died on May 6<sup>th</sup> 2001 and is survived by his son, two grandsons and his second wife, Joan."

His public school also asked for an obituary of Sandy. Joan comments that she used to hear far fewer stories of his time there than that at St. George's!

Shortly before he died, he wrote to RHER having been reminded, when reading Soaring Vault, of another incident relating to perfect pitch. He wrote:-

"In 1930 or 1931 His Majesty King George V was a considerable invalid, and after a short rehearsal in the Private Chapel during the call-back at Easter, the heat and humidity were considerably increased. For the sake of comfort, we boys were allowed to reduce clothing to the minimum under our cassocks; even then it was uncomfortable. For whatever reason Sir Walford Davies chose me to sing a lengthy unaccompanied solo in the middle of an anthem (composed, I believe, by Wise?).

My entry came and I launched into the first of three pages of manuscript impeccably penned by Mr. Simpkins, the alto. Applying all that I had been taught of breathing and phrasing, I progressed to the close of the last page with a controlled crescendo as the organ and the modest number of the Choir joined fortissimo in full support. I even had time to note that the veins on the forehead of Mr. Key the tenor stood out with the verve of his contribution.

On retiring to the vestry, word was passed that I should go to the organ loft, presumably for commendation. There was a long wait as Sir Walford completed an extended voluntary, reset the stops and placed his hands on his knees in silence. Then quite out of character he addressed me as "Boy". I had apparently drifted upwards perhaps by a whole tone for which he had perforce to accommodate. Silence on my part was followed by, "What am I to say when I dine with the King tonight?"

There were many sleepless nights with fears of the heavy hand of a Warder of the Tower or Yeomen of the Guard until, many years later, I learned His Majesty to have been tone deaf."

We extend the Association's deep sympathy to Joan and his family in their loss.

**Russell Walker (1971-76)** started as a consultant orthopaedic and trauma surgeon in Abergavenny in July 2001. His first child, a son, was born in June 2001 (unnamed at the time of writing).

**John Wilkinson (1948-53)** was re-elected as Member of Parliament for Ruislip-

x R.A.E. Russell -  
erstwhile HM of St George School, a now Archivist.