

THE GORDON SCHOOLS

A. D. 1859



1958

ABERDEENSHIRE EDUCATION AUTHORITY

SOUVENIR

of the occasion of the opening of the extension to

THE GORDON SCHOOLS

Rector—*GEORGE TRAPP, Esq.*, M.A., B.Sc., B.Com., Ph.D., F.R.S. (Edin.), F.L.S., F.R.G.S.

On THURSDAY, 8th MAY 1958, at 2-30 p.m.

By ALEXANDER LUMSDEN, Esq., of Detroit, U.S.A.

Chairman—Sir Ian Forbes-Leith, Bart., Convener of the County

ARCHITECT — ALEXANDER GILL, Esq., F.R.I.B.A., *County Architect*

ASSISTANT ARCHITECT IN CHARGE—WILLIAM C. J. IRVINE, Esq., A.R.I.B.A.

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION—ALEXANDER L. YOUNG, Esq., M.A., B.Sc., Ed.B., F.E.I.S.

CHAIRMAN OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE—MAITLAND MACKIE, Jnr., Esq., B.Sc.

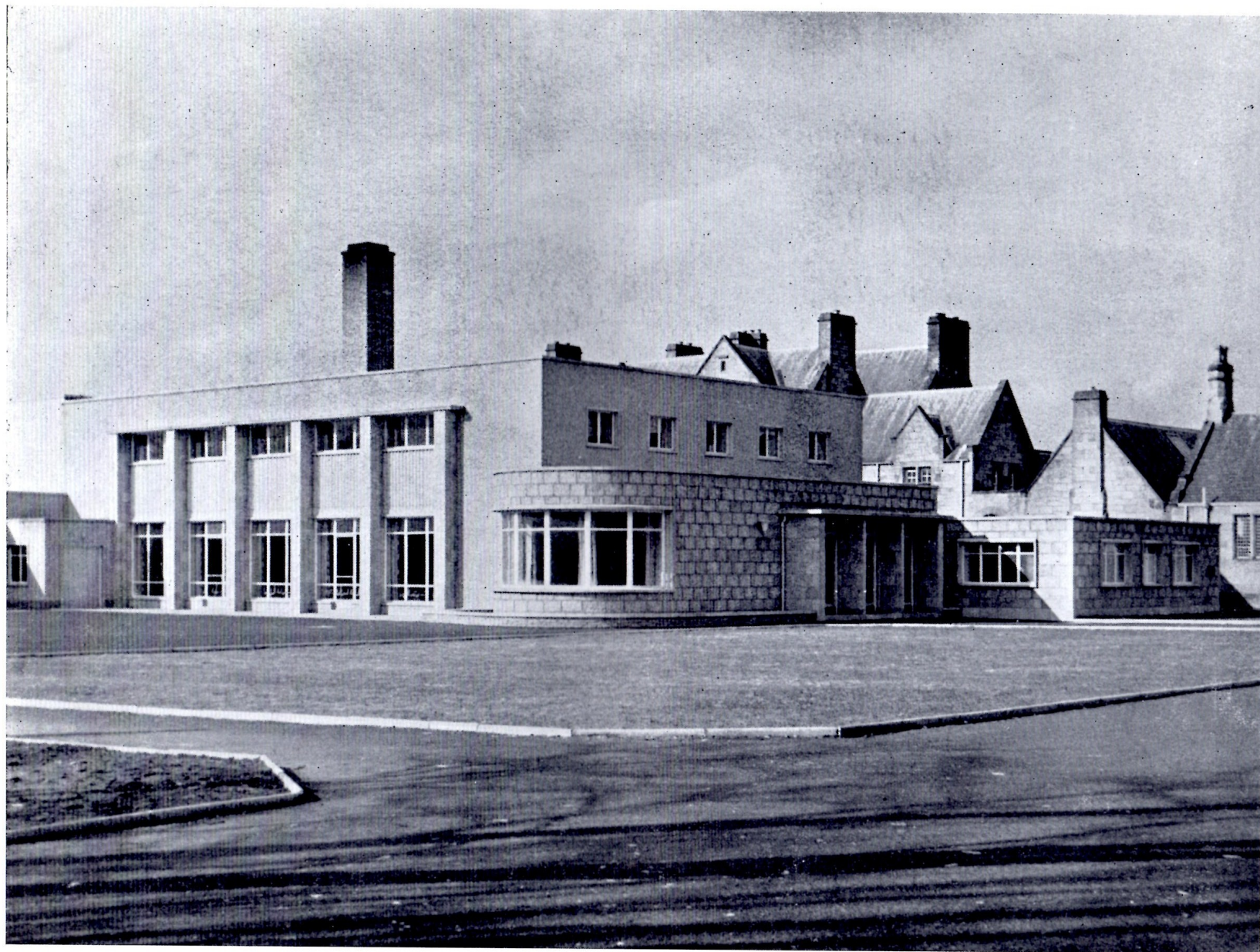
CHAIRMAN OF THE HUNTLY EDUCATION AREA SUB-COMMITTEE—GEORGE W. MITCHELL, Esq., J.P.



THE GORDON SCHOOLS' extension now opened by Mr Alexander Lumsden is the first major addition to the school accommodation since 1912 and covers an area greater than all the previously existing buildings of the school: the cost of the extension is in the region of £250,000.

The foundation stone of the Gordon Schools (which superseded the old Parish School of Huntly, the building of which—of the one storey butt and ben type—still stands, used as a store, in the east section of Littlejohn Street near its junction with George Street) was laid by the founder, Elizabeth, Duchess of Gordon on 27th February, 1839: the original building with tower, archway and south wings was completed and opened in 1841 and accommodated four schools, viz: an Established Church School for Boys (ground floor, west side), a Free Church School for Boys (first floor, west side), an Infants School (ground floor, east side), and an Industrial School for Girls (first floor, east side); although subsequent legislation has conferred an unfortunate connotation on the last named it should be noted that it was one of the earliest, and probably the first, girls' school in this country where the subject now designated "Homecraft" formed the central or characteristic subject of the instructional group.

After the death of the founder in 1864 the schools were administered by trustees till the setting up of the Huntly School Board under the 1872 Education Act which led to the amalgamation of the four schools as one educational establishment.



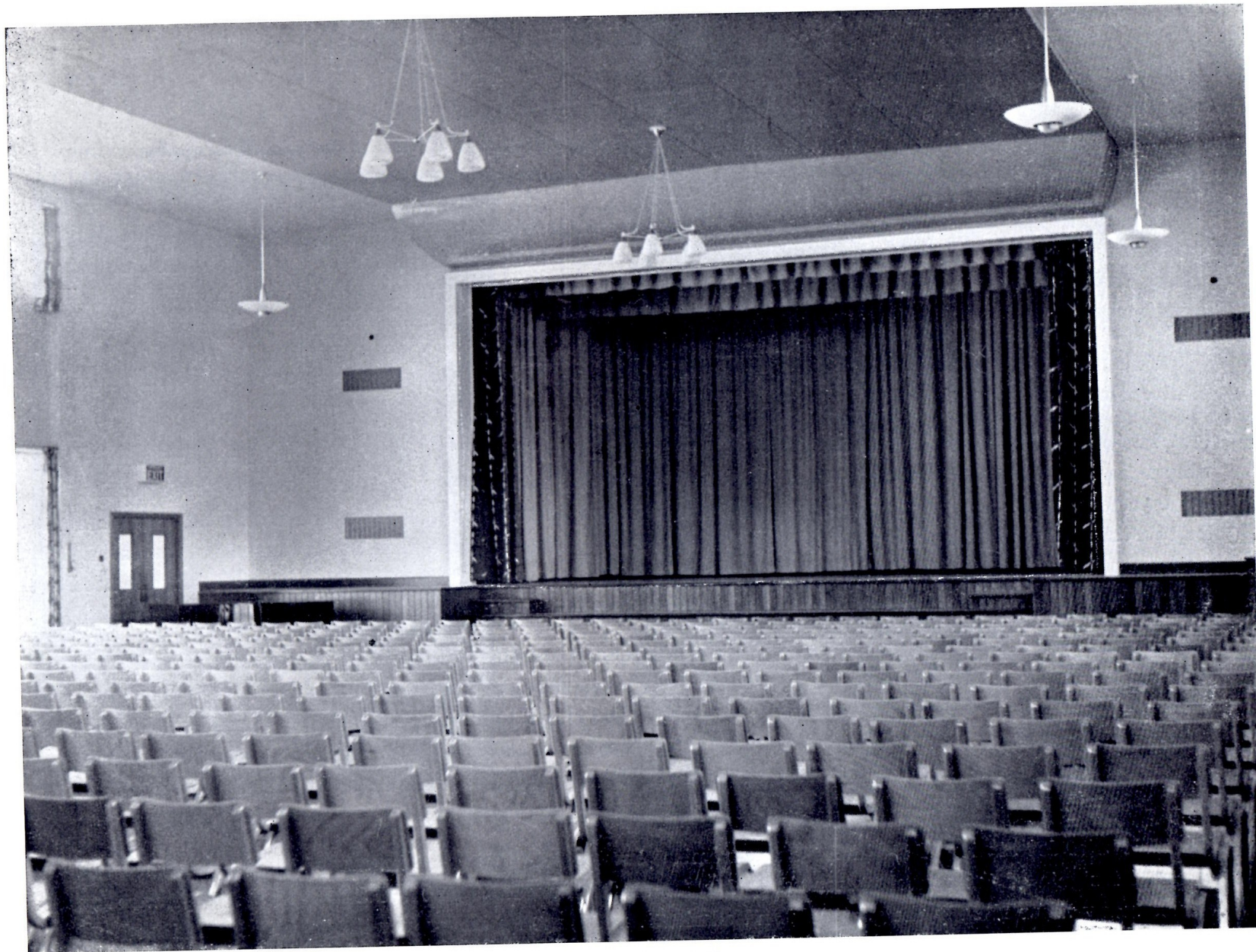
Main Entrance and Assembly Hall

The School Board added the north wings to the original building in 1888, constructed a separate Higher Grade Department building to the south-west of the original building in 1896, erected a primary school building to the south-east of the original building in 1906 and finally made the two storey addition to the secondary, or old Higher Grade, building which was opened by the Duke of Richmond and Gordon in September 1912.

Prior to the completion of the present extension the school had accommodation officially for 1,055 pupils: now the school will have 1,160 pupil places. With the addition of a further four classrooms, technical drawing room and two gymnasia, with stores, showers, changing rooms and games equipment stores opening on to the playing fields, which is now at the planning stage and due for completion in 1961 the school will have official accommodation for 1,320 pupils.

The School now provides Scottish Leaving Certificate Courses in English, French, German, Latin, Greek, History, Geography, Mathematics (including the additional mathematical subjects Geometry, Elementary Analysis and Dynamics), Science (four branches—Physics, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology), Art, Music, Home-craft, Technical Subjects and Commercial Subjects and Post Leaving Certificate or Sixth Form Courses in English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Science (Physics, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology), French, German, Latin, Greek and Music.

The roll of the school at the beginning of Session 1957-1958 was 1,056, with 597 pupils in the primary school and 459 in the secondary school of whom 112 were in the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Forms. The teaching staff of the school at present numbers 49 of whom 4 are visiting teachers: there are 12 Principal Teachers in charge of the various departments of the secondary school and 4 Special Assistants in these departments.



Assembly Hall

THE ASSEMBLY HALL

The Assembly Hall, as the natural focus of the corporate life and activities of the school, is appropriately also the central and most conspicuous structure in the new buildings.

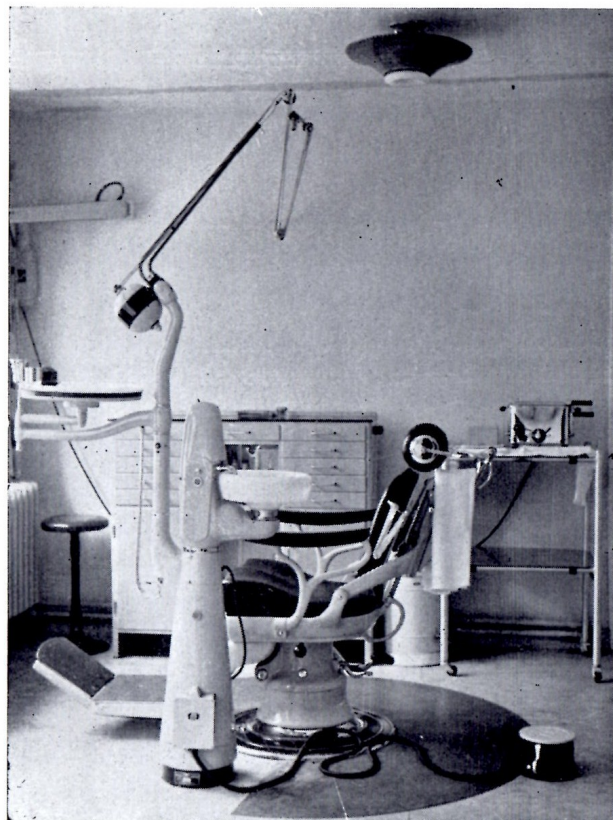
In design and material it forms, with its granite frontage and impressive proportions, a harmonious transition from the traditional stone buildings of the secondary block to the modern lines of the tall windowed dining halls and the extended south-facing Infants' block which bounds the opposite side of the Infants' quadrangle.

This motif is continued internally from the triple main entrances to the school which front the Assembly Hall and lead into a spacious foyer-cum-exhibition area.

The auditorium measuring 50 feet by 70 feet and at present seated for 600 accommodates very comfortably at assembly either the whole primary school or the whole secondary school. The flooring is of polished articulated wood floor panels of teak, whilst the decoration is a skilfully blended assortment of pleasingly fresh but gently subdued pastel shades. The carefully planned use of acoustic tiling enables normal sound volume to be practically of equal audibility in all parts of the hall without, in ordinary circumstances, the need for any artificial amplification—a most commendable achievement by the architect and his consultant advisers.

The stage is ample in width and depth with a proscenium opening of 30 feet and the cyclorama 20 feet behind that whilst the tiered construction of the apron stage enables choir and orchestra performances to be given outside the curtaining of the stage. The front curtains of the stage, like those of the auditorium are of appropriate contemporary pattern to blend with the general decorative scheme. The other stage curtaining (mid-traverse, flies, legs and back drapes) and the battens of dimmer lights, controlled from panels on an above-stage platform, enable the most ambitious stage productions to be undertaken.

This brief description of the Hall must not omit the magnificent platform furniture bearing the carved and coloured insignia of the school presented by Mr Alexander Lumsden, Detroit, U.S.A., a former pupil who has earned many times already the gratitude and admiration of his Alma Mater, nor the beautifully designed and



Medical Suite—Dental Room



Entrance Foyer



Main West Corridor

executed Lectern Bible engraved with the school crest gifted a short time before his death, by that illustrious son of the school, Mr William Will—an act of generosity and affection typical of his life-long interest in the affairs and welfare of his old school.

The Bechstein Grand Piano provided partly from school endowments and partly by assistance from the Education Authority completes the present equipment of the Hall.

THE INFANT SCHOOL

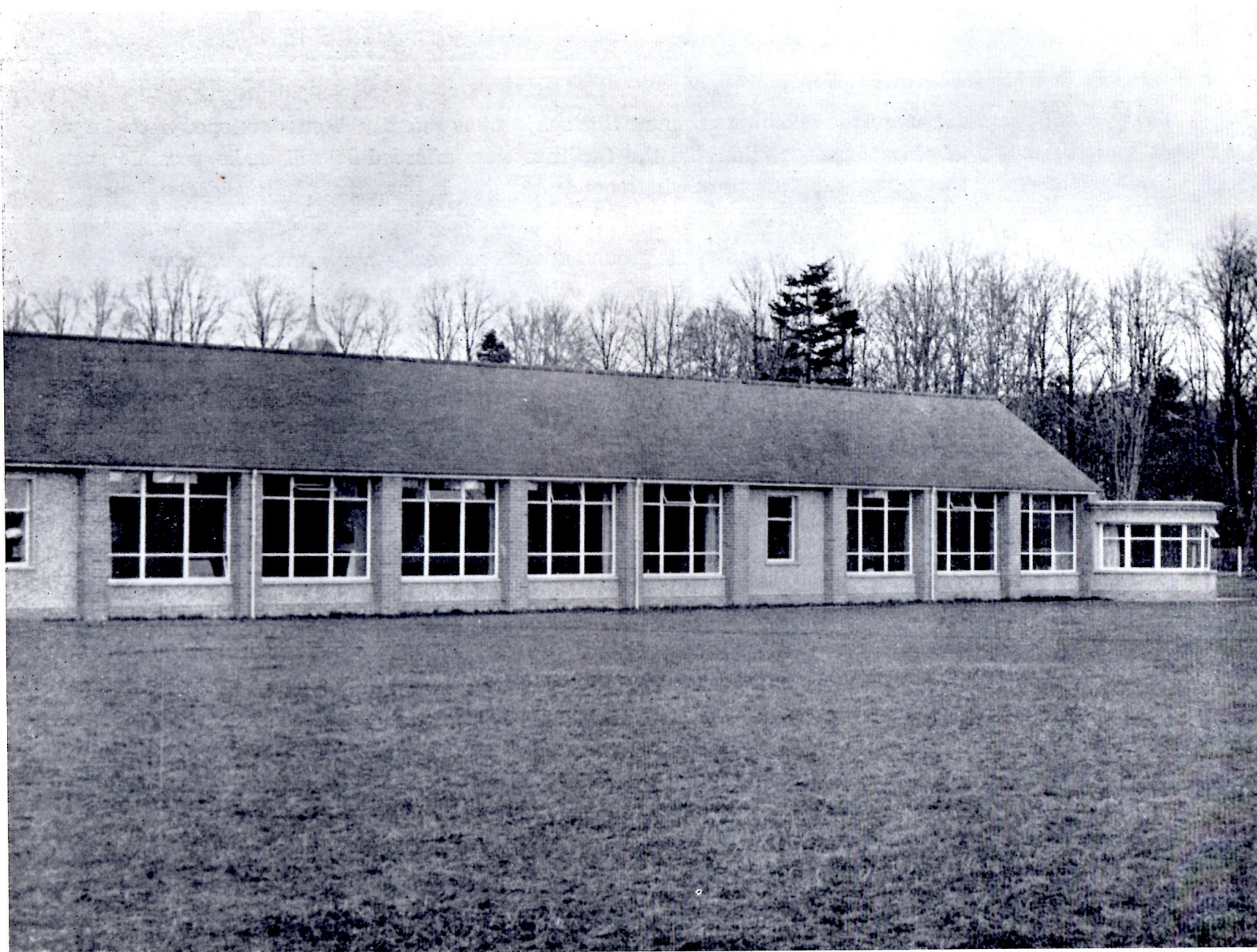
Although in a sense perfectly self contained the Infant School is at its north-west corner connected to the Dining Halls and, through them, to the Assembly Hall and generally to all the facilities of the school as occasion may require.

The accommodation consists of five classrooms, with individual drawing surfaces, cupboards, etc., appropriate to the size of the occupants, and a general purposes room equipped for singing, dancing, games and physical education. The ancillary accommodation of cloak areas, etc., lies to the north and east of the classrooms and provides commodious facilities for both pupils and staff.

To the north of the block lies a tarmacadamised play area sheltered by buildings on three sides and bordered on the fourth by a large lawn from which the view extends over the school and public avenues: on the south side is a playing field of about two acres where games and other outdoor activities are taken when ground and weather conditions are suitable.

COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS

The Commercial Subjects room in the upper corridor has a western exposure and very adequate lighting, both natural and artificial, for the type of work conducted there. The furniture of modern design, the typewriters of different makes in the most up-to-date models, revolving blackboards with rulings for all kinds of account, electric rotary and other types of duplicator and office equipment give the physical conditions under which Fourth Year intensive and Scottish Leaving Certificate Courses can be undertaken with greatest advantage.



Infants' School

TECHNICAL SUBJECTS

Always an important part of the school programme this subject has recently been developed into large scale Scottish Leaving Certificate presentation and the facilities now afforded it will make possible even greater developments, especially as a technical drawingroom is included in that part of the additional accommodation due for completion in 1961.

Both the woodwork and metalwork rooms on the ground floor of the north-west wing are well designed for their purpose and fitted with the necessary flooring and benching and lighting and variety of lathes, drilling, grinding, shearing, hearth and anvil, etc., equipment: in the store and preparation rooms attached to the instructional rooms there is also direct access to the approach from the west so that vehicles can make easy delivery of lengthy or bulky stores and equipment.

Further accommodation for the storage of articles in course of construction is to be provided in the final instalment of the extension of the school buildings.

SCIENCE

The science laboratories are specifically organised and equipped for the teaching of special branches of science but are adaptable, also, for use with junior forms to which general science is being taught.

In the Physics laboratory instruction is carried out at square, plane-topped benches accommodating four pupils each and wired with low tension electricity to the bench terminals. The unbroken south wall is reinforced to carry steel beams for use in connection with the demonstration of various kinds of machine.

In the two laboratories particularly designed for chemistry the instructional benches are extended and at right angles to the teacher's demonstration bench to simplify supervision and control of pupils' experimental work: the water sinks are inset at suitable intervals along the benches which also have low voltage electricity fittings: fume cupboard and cooling slab space here is more extensive than in the other laboratories.

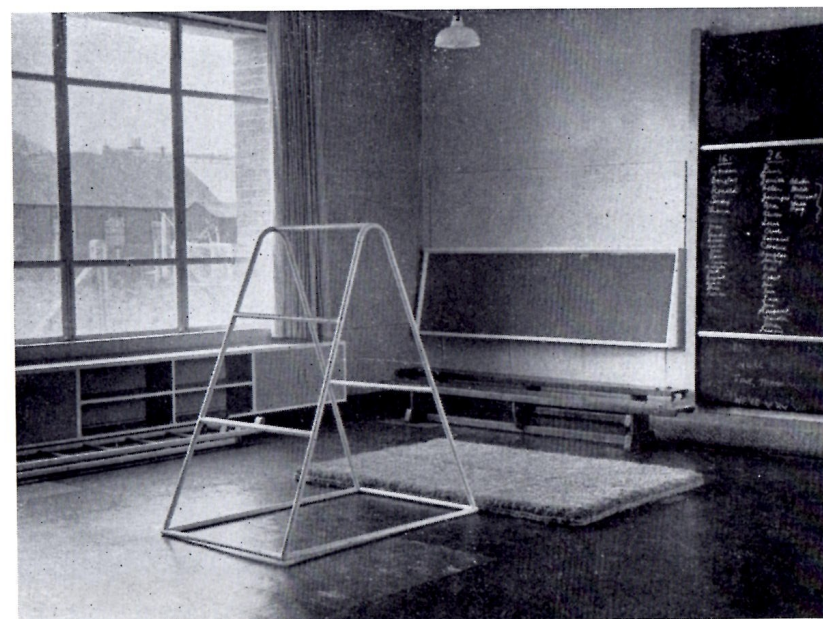
The Biology laboratory has north light with the microscope benches fitted also with the necessary individual electric lighting points. Adjoining the laboratory and facing south is a growth chamber for experimental and vivarium purposes, accessible both from the laboratory and directly from the south corridor.



Main Corridor, Infants' School



Infants' Classroom



Infants' General Purposes Room

All the laboratories have large preparation rooms which inter-connect with adjacent laboratories to facilitate supervision and the transfer of apparatus: the preparation rooms can also be used for instructional purposes, particularly in the case of advanced Sixth form work, since they are adequately fitted with bench, cupboard, water, gas and electricity facilities.

ADMINISTRATION

The medical suite and other administrative and control rooms are situated along the north side of the Assembly Hall corridor and look on to the lawn of the enclosed quadrangle.

The medical accommodation contains waiting, recovery and dental rooms and provides facilities for all the associated services, such as speech therapy, ophthalmology, audiometry and orthodontics, as well as routine medical care by general inspections and group inoculations against the major specific infective diseases.

CIRCULATION

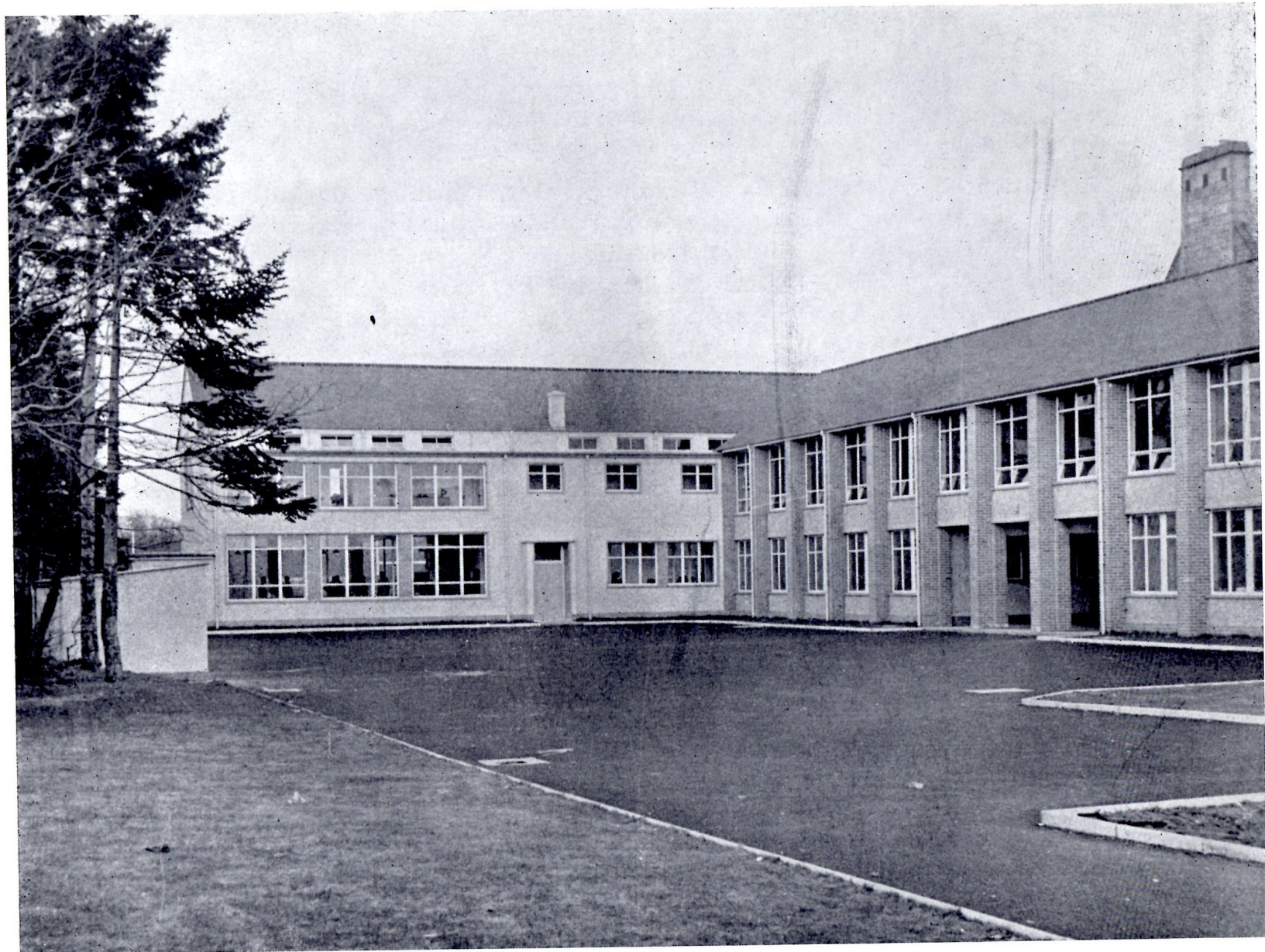
With the exception of the Assembly Hall, technical rooms and kitchen which are appropriately floored in cement and/or wood panels, all rooms, corridors and circulating spaces in the extension are floored in coloured thermoplastic tiles with which varied and pleasing patterns have been employed to tone in with surrounding decoration.

The cloak areas for secondary boys and girls occupy the north and south ends respectively of the west side of the wide, main, ground floor corridor while those for the infants are similarly situated to the north of their main, east-west corridor.

Off the ground floor secondary corridors also, individual locker space for all pupils in Forms IV., V. and VI. has been provided in the senior boys' and girls' locker rooms adjoining their respective cloak and lavatory accommodation.

SCHOOL MEALS DEPARTMENT

In a school which draws so many of its pupils from widely dispersed areas the provision of school lunches is essential for the health and convenience of these pupils.



Secondary School Entrance from West

This function has been most adequately catered for by the new school meals premises which consist of two dining halls and kitchen situated between the Infants block and the Assembly Hall/Administrative portion of the new secondary buildings.

The dining halls enable a maximum of 400 pupils to be served at each sitting. The kitchen, which is all electric, is geared to prepare up to 1,000 lunches per day. Four serving hatches, two to each dining hall, are situated on the east side of the servery which has facilities for the storage and heating of food and crockery: on the west side of the servery is the kitchen with boilers, vegetable preparation machines and stores and staff accommodation to the south and steamers, ovens, friers, office and dry and perishable (refrigerated) stores to the north. The access for the delivery of supplies to the kitchen is from Seton Drive.

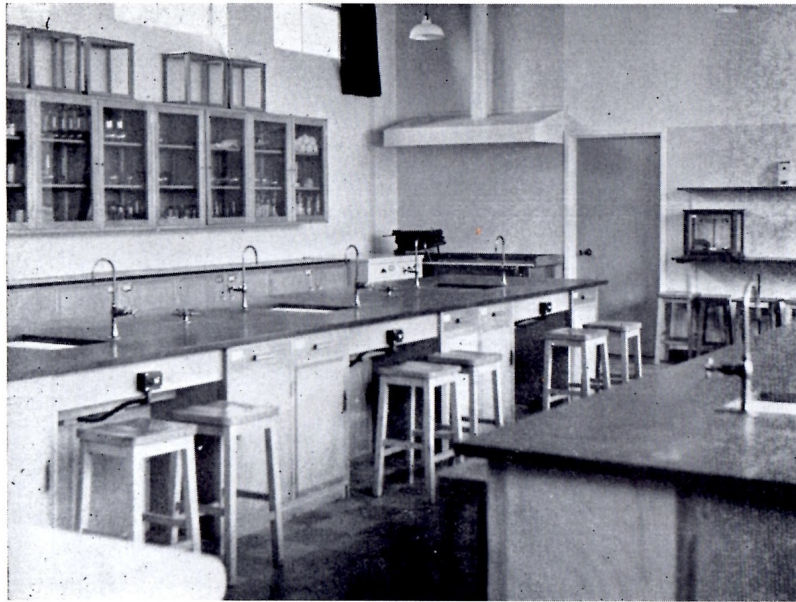
HEATING SYSTEM

Space heating (and domestic hot water) is provided by three automatically stoked solid fuel boilers and low pressure circulation: to the north boiler is fitted the calorifiers which provide hot water for the school meals kitchen, for practical rooms, staff rooms, etc., and, after passing through controlling mixing valves, for wash-hand basins in pupils' lavatories.

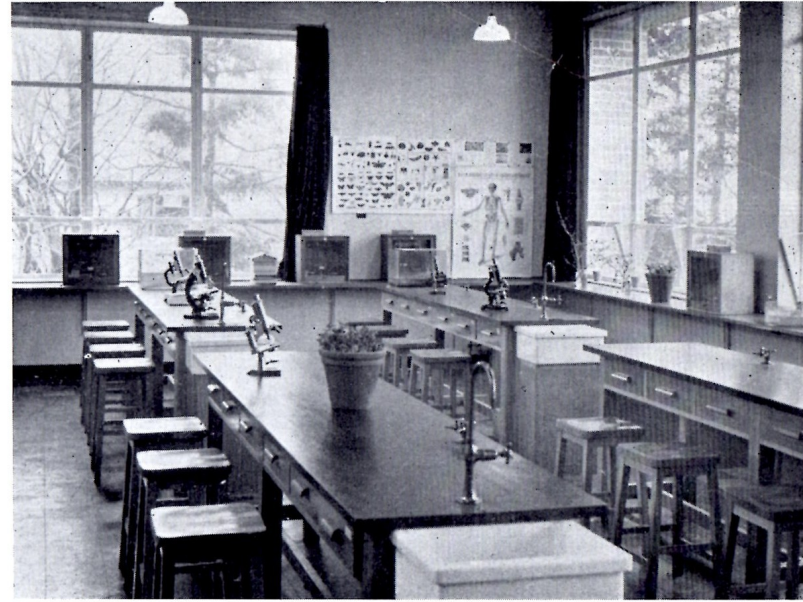
The heating chamber has been so constructed as to be capable of supplying up to 375,000 British Thermal Units per hour which will enable the final instalment of the extension yet to be constructed to be heated from the existing system which now supplies heat to all the the school buildings, new and old, except those of the primary school.

The main flow header is sectionalised so that any of the main blocks can be heated individually by closing the valves on the sections serving the others.

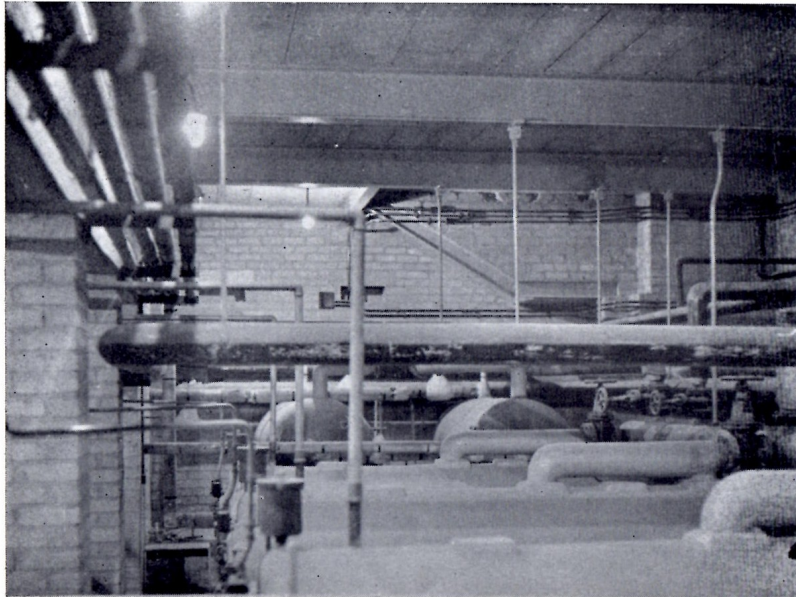
The heating of the new classrooms is thermostatically controlled in heating cabinets through which the room air is forced and heated as long as required to maintain the desired set temperature of the room which depends on its use, e.g. the temperature in the Infant block is higher by several degrees than that in the Secondary classrooms which, in turn, is higher than that in practical rooms where considerable physical activity on the part of the pupils occurs.



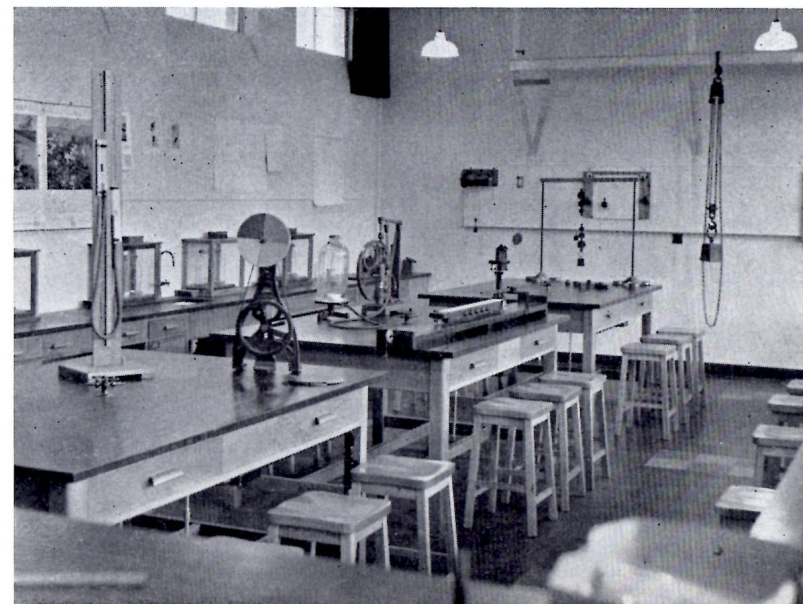
Chemistry Laboratory



Biology Laboratory



Heating Chamber



Physics Laboratory

RECONSTRUCTION

Accommodation in the old secondary and central buildings has been completely re-organised and reconstructed to give facilities not hitherto enjoyed, such as, in the Central Building, a Homecraft suite of dining-room-cum-lounge, kitchen, bedroom, entrance hall and bathroom, a projection-lecture room, an additional music room, and a needlework-dressmaking room with fitting room off: the cookery and laundry rooms have been modernised and supplied with the latest equipment, in gas and electricity, for cooking and washing, the hot water supply to the homecraft rooms being electrically heated and thermostatically controlled.

In the old Secondary building, the Art department has been enlarged by the conversion of two former science laboratories into a large Art/Craft room while the old hall and an English classroom have been designated for use as a senior pupils' reading room and school library respectively, once the final instalment of the extension is completed and occupied.

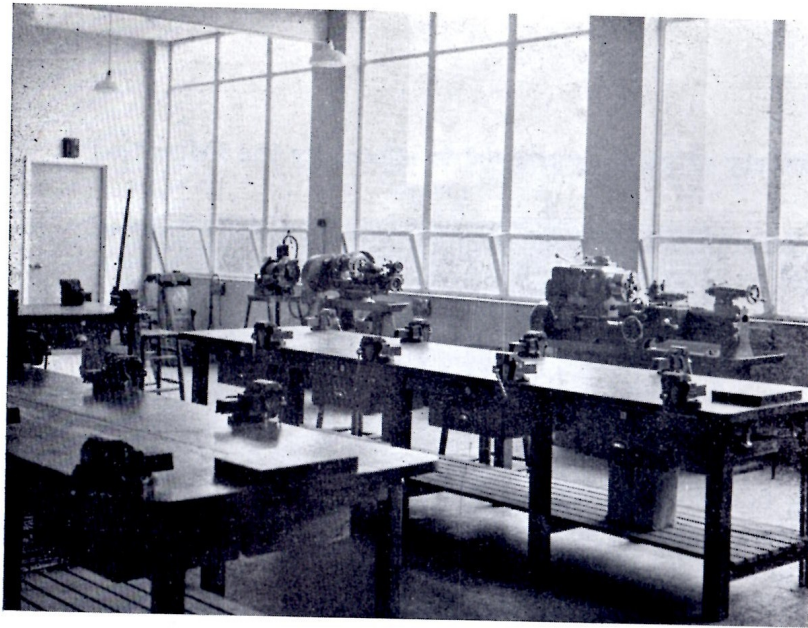
Staff, storage and administrative accommodation has also been immensely improved in all the old buildings.

In the old Primary building arrangements have been made to accommodate all ten classes of Primary III. to VII. there by the formation of an extra classroom from a third of the Gymnasium in that building. The addition of lavatory accommodation to the north and south sides of this building, to the east of the girls' and boys' doorways respectively, has permitted the enlargement of the cloak areas adjoining these entrances.

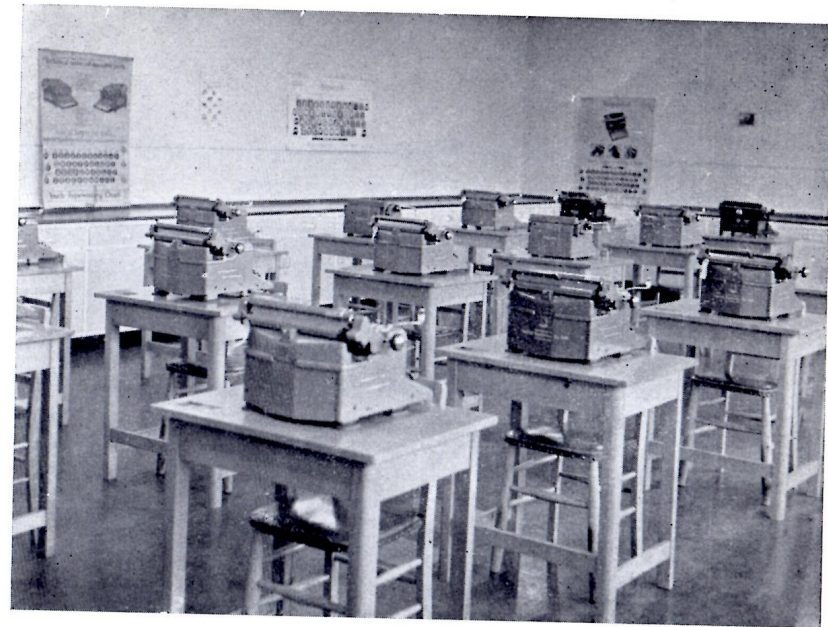
PLAY AREAS

The extension of the school buildings has been accompanied by great increases in, and re-organisation of, playgrounds and playing fields.

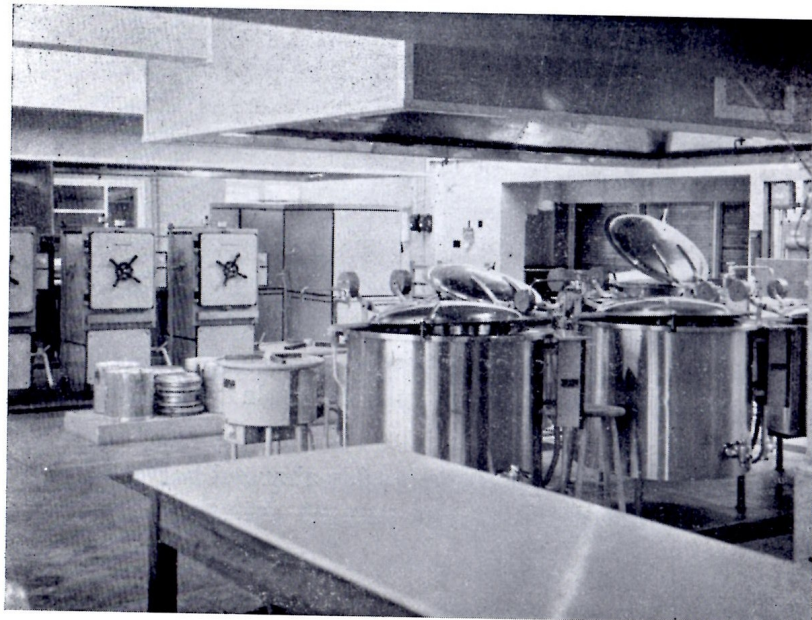
The new playground for secondary girls, with entrance gate at Seton Drive, lies between the Seton Terrace boundary and the west side of the new secondary block where a shelter area is situated in front of the girls' doorways. The secondary boys' quadrangle on the east side of the new buildings has been enlarged by the incorporation of the area formerly set aside for secondary girls and will be still further enlarged with the demolition of the hutted classroom on completion of the final building instalment in 1961: the removal of the old dining hall from the site in this playground adjoining the central avenue will permit the construction of a new car



Metal Work Room



Commercial Subjects Room



School Kitchen



A Dining Hall

park and bus stance for the setting down and uplifting in safety of pupils conveyed to school by the Education Authority in contract buses and cars.

In all playgrounds, save that of the infants, new bicycle shelters have been erected giving adequate accommodation for the bicycles of all pupils who require to travel by bicycle on account of the distances of their homes from school.

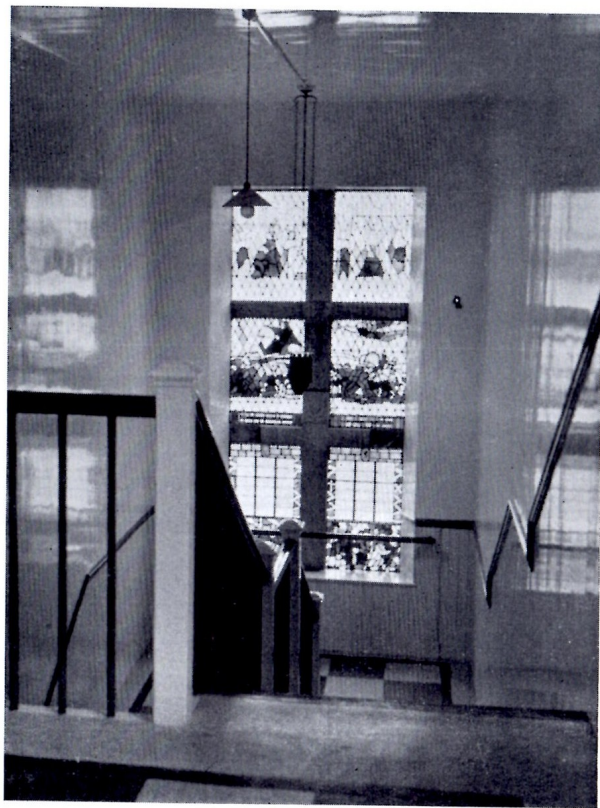
The playing fields have been extended by the incorporation of all the school ground stretching to the Castle at the north side and by the culverting of the Meadow burn to make continuous, areas previously linked only by the connecting bridges: when fully developed this will give a playing field area of approximately 5 acres adjoining the gymnasias to be built in the final instalment and of approximately 12 acres below the Meadow terrace. With the two acres, or thereby, of playing field for infants and the Feu Charter rights of the school pupils to recreational facilities in the Castle Park adjoining the Primary school it will be realised that the school is exceptionally fortunate in the commodiousness of its site and games curtilage.

RADIO AND PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM

All the school buildings are served with a radio broadcasting and public address system provided by school funds and endowments. This enables B.B.C. broadcasts for schools or general broadcasts, e.g. on special or important national occasions to be transmitted to, and volume controlled in, each classroom. The public address system powered from the same amplifier racks as the radio transmission and operating through the same classroom speakers enables the Rector to make intimations or convey instructions to the whole school, dispersed throughout the buildings: by the use of the group selector attached to the microphone, one section only of the school may be addressed at a time, e.g. infants, primary, central or secondary blocks or any combination of these may be connected up on the system simultaneously. The microphone point on the platform of the Assembly Hall enables the system to be used for the relaying of the proceedings at ceremonies or performances in the Hall to the schoolrooms or any desired group thereof.

The electric clocks throughout the school are controlled by a master clock, situated in a control room, which also operates a programme changer, settable to five minute intervals, which, in turn, controls the ringing of the period bells for the change-over of classes.

The system of fire alarm hooters covering the school is powered from the same trickle-charged batteries as operate the electric clock system so that these systems are not interrupted by any current failure in the mains supply: the period bells are mains operated.



War Memorial Window—Secondary Building



Central Corridor—Secondary Building

Photographs by John M. Joyce, Huntly.



The 1839 Building

CONTRACTORS

Mason and Brick Work: Mr A. D. Walker, Banff.

Carpenter and Joiner Work: Mr Charles Brown, Huntly.

Slater and Roughcast Work: Mr John R. Swan, Edinburgh, 9.

Plumber Work: Mr George MacDonald, Huntly.

Structural Steelwork: Messrs Fleming Brothers (Structural Engineers), Ltd., Glasgow.

Precast Concrete Floors and Roofs: Messrs Girlings Ferro-Concrete Ltd., Kirkintilloch.

Flat Roof Coverings and Roof Decking: Messrs William Briggs & Sons, Ltd., Aberdeen.

Heating Installation: Messrs Taylor & Fraser, Glasgow.

Electrical Work: Messrs Murray Mackie, Ltd., Peterhead.

Metal Windows: Messrs Metal Casements Ltd., Walsall—New Buildings.

Messrs Maclean & Co. (Metal Windows), Ltd., Hamilton—Old Buildings.

Plaster Work: Messrs Bremner Brothers, Aberdeen.

Patent Glazed Wall Finishes: Messrs John Ellis, Leicester.

Floor Tiler Work: Messrs Marley Tile Co., Ltd., Cadder, Bishopbriggs.

Wood Block Flooring: Messrs A. M. MacDougall & Son, Ltd., Glasgow.

Linoleum Floor Coverings in Old Buildings: Mr Alexander Anderson, Kintore.

Painter Work: Mr John A. Cheyne, Turriff.

Glazier Work: Messrs Hugh Dow, Ltd., Aberdeen.

Acoustic Treatment in Assembly Hall: Messrs William Beardmore & Co., Ltd., Glasgow.

Laboratory Furnishings: Messrs James D. Bennet, Ltd., Glasgow.

Stage and Window Curtains: Messrs James L. Archibald & Sons, Ltd., Aberdeen.

Layout of Playgrounds and Roads: Aberdeen County Road Surveyors Department.

Entrance Gates: Mr D. J. P. Milne, Oldmeldrum.

Fire Precaution Equipment: Liverpool and Glasgow Fire Appliance Co., Ltd., Glasgow.

Fire Alarm Installation: Messrs Gents' (of Leicester), Ltd., Faraday Works, Leicester.

Internal Communications: Messrs Communication Systems, Ltd., Aberdeen.