

CHAPTER THREE

"Sweetness and Light"

For more than a decade, between January 1941 and January, 1954, there was at least one "Watson boy" at Kingston College. Don (Jan., 1941 - December, 1947), Barry (Jan., 1943 - Dec. 1949), Leighton (Jan. 1947 - June, 1948), Melvin (Jan. 1947 - Dec. 1951), and myself, Edward (Jan. 1947 - Jan. 1954) were the only five brothers to have ever attended the College at the same time over the school's ^{then} sixty-year history. Many brothers have passed through that venerable institution and, in their own inimitable ways, have helped shape the character and style of their *alma mater*. There were, for example, four Halls, four Hays, and three of Woodstocks, Hewetts, Beckfords, and Taylors, as well as two of the Belnavises, Hannas, Arises, McMorrises, Alexanders, and Careys, among numerous others. All of these families ensured the continuity of the school's traditions which began so humbly.

Kingston College was founded in 1925 by Dr. G.F.C. de Carteret, Bishop of Jamaica from 1916 to 1931. Under the auspices of the Church of England and given intellectual direction by the Rev. Percival W. Gibson, the school's first head-master, K.C. opened its doors, in ceremony, on the 16th of April, 1925, at the old All Saints' Rectory, 114 3/4 East Street. A.D. Scott, Engineer, entrepreneur, hotelier, art collector and some-time artist, recalls that he was the first boy to enter the school. On that memorable day in April, the 17th to be exact, "Priest" rode up to the Rectory and, in response to Scott's "Is this the new school, Sir?" announced that Kingston College was now open.

I was in attendance when K.C. celebrated its Silver Jubilee in 1950 and I remember the many ceremonies well. I also remember how fortunate we were to be able to attend a Secondary school of the Church of England because of my father's devotion to the high ceremony and panoply of the church. However, I must go back in order to go forward.

When our family first came to live in Kingston, Papa had already determined that each of us would be enrolled at West Branch, ~~or~~ All Saints' Elementary school in the city's west end. This decision was obviously made because of our parents' long-standing friendship with the then Principal, Mr. A.A. McPherson, a man of impeccable character and stern demeanour and who was at the same time a smiling bow-tied disciplinarian. "Mackie's" wife, Flo, was then the Head Mistress of the Allman Town Senior school; so, together, the McPhersons represented a formidable team in the city's educational system, helping to shape the minds of many a young Jamaican. Interestingly, Don, Barry, Leighton, and Melvin attended All Saints'; I did not. I can only surmise why I was spared the anguish of attending that, to me, dreaded institution.

Kingston's West End has always been regarded as an area where violence, poverty, anancyism and chicanery abounded and where people were quick to anger, irreligious, and early school-leavers. This densely populated area stood in stark contrast to a community such as Rollington Town, for example, where the people were extremely religious and showed some signs of optimism towards their future, despite the seeming dullness of their lives. But in the Matthew's Lane-West Street-North Street vortex, dim-eyed despair was the citizen's steady companion and the All Saints' School and Church stood as a reminder that decent lives could still be enjoyed in spite of the choking poverty, and that education was still the key to unlocking many of the problems of modern city living. The school was a stark and foreboding place, despite the presence of "Mackie" and the well-intentioned dedication of the teachers there.

Don attended with Barry between 1939 and 1940, if I recall correctly, and was there when Leighton and Melvin left Morris Knibb to "go to school with their bigger brothers under the eye of Mr. McPherson." My memory of the school is not very clear, because I must have made only two or three visits there during my brothers' various attendance through 1946. I see vaguely now a high wooden fence with a door cut in a huge gate to permit access to the bare and dusty school-yard which was bordered on two sides by a two-storeyed building of many

windows. I can see a stone wall bordering the church to the south and in that wall an iron gate which leads from the school-yard to the small church-yard. There was nothing picturesque about the church-yard or the church, nothing that would have filled the imagination like the cathedral at Spanish Town, where, beneath the pews, there were graven memorials to unknown men and women who had died as long ago as during the eighteenth century. Nothing like that at all. The school itself formed the boundaries to the west and north and to the east was the high wooden fence. Yet, in spite of its location in the heart of the west end, amid the narrow lanes and smelly gutters, all Saints', along with Central Branch, was perhaps the most populous and most educationally demanding elementary school in Kingston.

The children studied from *The New Royal Readers* and *Blackie's Tropical Readers* a variety of subjects which were edited and presented for colonial education in India, Canada, and the West Indies. The multi-volumed *New Royal Readers* were the more interesting books and were used in the upper classes. These volumes contained poems and excerpts from poems, plays and stories by the great English writers, including Joseph Addison, Sir Walter Scott, Robert Browning, Charles Dickens, Alfred Tennyson and, of course, William Shakespeare. In a separate section of the text were "selections for recitation" and an extensive vocabulary of "words contained in this book." This English-oriented reading sterilized our blackness and made of us Anglo-Blacksons who spoke of hedge-rows and daffodils, palisades and burghers. Yet, we were being exposed daily to the beauties and nuances of our English language and, by that very virtue, were harnessing a power which would one day help to set us free, not so much from colonial influence, but from the stigma of not having a language of our own. For to the King's English we added our special stamp of pronunciation, our special accentual rhythms and our special nuances and, indeed, while we all wrote the language of Westminster, we spoke our island tongue. Every Jamaican speaks patois, or Jamaican English;

not every Jamaican, however, can speak proper English. Some modern-day educators may well ask what *is* "proper" English. Answer: If you need to ask....

In addition to the Royal Readers, there were the Tropical Readers which educated the children to Natural Life, Plant Life, Agriculture, Health, and Government. The Publishers' Note to Books I and II reads as follows:

"The 'Tropical Readers' are designed to interest school children in the familiar objects of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, and to foster habits of observation and reflection. They seek to convey, in a pleasant form, useful information about plant-life, the cultivation of the soil, and the special treatment under which some of the important vegetable products of the tropics are obtained.

"In dealing with the animal kingdom, **types** of the principal orders or classes are described in the First Book, preliminary to the elementary study of the **classification** of animals, which appears in the more advanced book.

"The Second Book includes, in addition to the subjects enumerated [sic] above, a section on "Health," dealing with foods, digestion, clothing, ventilation, and other conditions of healthy living; and a section on 'Government'.

"The language and diction are simple. As far as possible difficult words have been avoided, especially in the first book, in order that the children may be free to fix attention on the facts brought under notice. Many of the chapters are written in dialogue -- an attractive form for young children, and the one most helpful in securing a natural and expressive tone in reading."

Also included in the Second Book is a summary of the text in taxonomical form and a list of the more difficult words and phrases.

Some of these subjects were necessarily repeated in the Secondary schools, especially in the lower forms, and contributed to the young student's early exposure to literature and rudimentary science. In addition, the elementary curriculum included arithmetic, general

knowledge, spelling, geography, and readings from the scriptures. While my brothers studied these subjects at All Saints', I enjoyed the privilege of attending a small private school, of no more than twenty-five students, at Torrington Bridge, between Slipe Road and West Race Course. Mrs. Shirley's, not "Mrs. Shirley's School," was both the name of the principal and the school and I, along with Clifton Jones (now a British actor), Clive Thompson (now a New York dancer) and Kemp Skeffrey, among others, struggled through our first years of formal education.

Mrs. Shirley must have been a lady in her late forties when I first attended her school. She knew my father well and perhaps suggested that I study with her in her new school which was only a few hundred yards away from our house on Slipe Road. She was a dark, slightly bent, bow-legged woman of greying hair. She was always dressed in dark colours, blues and greys and blacks, and she wore pumps, the kind that middle-aged ladies wore, with the wide heels and laced up front with gleaming eyelets, along with cotton stockings rolled into a knot above her knees. Mrs. Shirley (I never found out if she had been married and was widowed, or if she were called "Mrs." as characteristically British misses were mistress!) was a wise and generous lady and she drilled us in spelling, arithmetic, general knowledge and penmanship and, always, in the early post-luncheon period, she would close her eyes and sleep a restive sleep for many minutes. And we would nudge each other, Enid Chai and Vincent Sims and Yvonne Best, and I, and smile, for we knew then that when she awoke, unembarrassed and with a smile, she'd say, "Let's sing." And we'd stand and click the heels of our shoes together, knee knocking knee in childhood propriety, and sing: "Now the day is over,/ Night is drawing nigh,/ Shadows of the evening,/ Steal across the sky." Sometimes it was hardly three o'clock!

But those were the good hours and the good times and the good days, for me, for my brothers had to walk several miles to and from All Saints' in the heat and rind and mess of Slipe Pen Road, passing Calabar High School and the Poor House and the uninteresting boundaries

of Jones Pen twice daily, morning and afternoon, Monday through Friday, except for those cherished six weeks during the summer. Looking back, I can think now of the far-reaching consequences of chance, how, for instance, Slipe Pen Road never took on a special or positive character, what with its Poor House and the TB Sanitarium, called "Black Fence" because of the high boarded fence, painted black, which enclosed it. And this black took on more than an ominous symbolism for it meant that death lived beyond that fence and those who entered that single gate had abandoned all hope. That's how we regarded tuberculosis in the nineteen forties, at a time when men were devastating large cities with the instruments of war and the fruits of scientific research. Slipe Pen Road never became special, perhaps because of those two institutions, perhaps because it ran parallel with Slipe Road and Orange Street where the yellow tram-cars were always seen and where all the colours of the rainbow were in evidence as if in defiance of the black across the way.

So my brothers attended All Saints' school and they walked to and from Matthew's Lane in their shoe-maker made boots, kicking at stones and cans and posts to destroy those ugly, painful reminders of our father's determination to strengthen our ankles. And when it rained and the gutters filled up with the peels and rind of fruit, with paper and discarded cartons from the stores along the way, mixed in with the wrappers from cigarette boxes and the goats' pellets and horse dung, and the air was filled with the dank and odiferous haze of the busy streets, my brothers swore openly against the West End with its West Branch close upon the Kingston Public Hospital at North Street which always smelled like *that* and looked like *that*.

And soon, Don was gone, just like that, gone to Kingston College, the school at the other end of North Street, near South Camp Road, only two or three hundred yards from that other Secondary school, St. George's College. "St. G.C. good and true," the boys of the white and blue, our Headmaster's *alma mater* and sworn rivals in sports to this very day. The time was January, 1941.

After Don, Barry followed later in 1943; then came Leighton, Melvin and I, four years later, and we were all there, in 1947, dressed in khaki uniforms with our purple and white ties done up in Windsor knots, and we answered to such soubriquets as Nuts, Bull's-Eye, Boots, Object and Sweet Head. My father was a proud man and prouder still when we walked down the aisle of St. Matthew's church on a Sunday, and after the service he would speak of the boys going to K.C. when Mr. Swaby, the pastor, asked after us. Don and Papa were members of the choir and I would come after, when I was eleven or twelve, and my voice was angelic, sweet and unspoiled, or so I thought.

✓ We never found out how or why Papa and Ba-Dear ^{my mother} chose Kingston College for us after All Saints', Mrs. Shirley, Morris Knibb, and Merle Grove, which Leighton attended for one year in 1946, the year of experiment, for I was trucked off to Mrs. McPherson's school in Allman town that same year. After the easy-paced camaraderie of learning at Mrs. Shirley, the Allman Town school was a shock for me, and for the first time in my young life I hated school and the teachers. Even the walk home across Race Course, my daily play-ground, was anathema to me, and the usually bright and precocious ten year-old became a dullard. Nevertheless, it seems that my father's belief in the protestantism of Protestantism (my mother was Roman Catholic), our attendance at St. Matthew's (followed by the Half-Way-Tree Parish Church, then St. Luke's in Cross Roads) and the recent memory of our celebrating the rituals of the Church of England at St. George's Church when we first arrived in Kingston, contributed to the selection of Kingston College whose Headmaster, The Rt. Rev. Percival W. Gibson, was, in an earlier time, the Curate of St. George's. This diocesan network of Protestant clergymen confirmed Papa's belief in the future of Kingston College which had by then graduated such men as Leslie Henriques, A. D. Scott, A. F. Brown, J. A. Prescod, and O. U. Murray.

Kingston College is an institution about which many histories will undoubtedly be written. I choose to avoid that premature endeavour here because I wish to speak of the essence of the

place insofar as it affected my life between my eleventh and eighteenth birthdays. By 1950, when the school was twenty-five years old, and past and present students, teachers and parents celebrated this anniversary in prayers, marches and song, Kingston College had firmly established its identity and its role as one of the island's foremost educational institutions. Now boasting a student body of over five hundred, K.C. became one of the largest boys' schools in the West Indies. Boys from every social background and whose parents represented every imaginable facet of Jamaican society, every business, craft, and profession, studied and played in an atmosphere of convivial competition which became identifiable with a truly Jamaican stamp or character. The school was, after all, *Kingston* College, a place almost synonymous with the island's capital city, despite the long-standing existence of Wolmer's, Jamaica College, Munro College, and Rusea's. K.C. was equally an idea synonymous with egalitarianism and a new kind of philosophical radicalism. It was a radicalism not of political or religious doctrine so much as a social and economic latitudinarianism where wealth was never ostentatious and poverty inconspicuous. Against the older Trust, Denominational and Government schools, Kingston College's remarkable march towards full maturity after twenty-five years was, indeed, one of the marvels of secondary education in Jamaica.

When my brother, Don, arrived at Kingston College, he did so in the company of young Jamaican scholars and sportsmen whose names are still being recalled where Old Boys meet and athletic feats are performed. N. G. Francis, R. A. Ffrench, H. St. A. Hay, P. V. March, E. A. Morris, J. T. A. Manley, E. D. McCulloch, N. F. F. Rae, J. A. G. Smith, M. T. Swaby, S. B. Williams, and Emile Zacca were just a few of the boys who descended upon North Street during that Term. And a few years later, when Barry arrived, others, like S. I. "Foggy" Burrowes, C. E. Comrey, D. K. Clerk, R. Richardson, C. L. Tinglin, O. G. Wells, E. D. Wong, K. L. Young, K. G. Palmer, H. C. Moss-Solomon and F. V. Llewelyn were his comrades and classmates. And when I, along with Leighton and Melvin, arrived in the January of 1947, we saw the "big boys" perform

on the fields of sport and heard of their remarkable academic records. H. R. Aris, K. St. C. Atterbury, L. L. Douglas, Don and Des Depass, R. J. Gauntlett, Eddie Knight, C. A. Lashley, A. L. "Micky" Murdock, H. E. Neita, O. G. "Collie" Smith, George Thompson, J. K. Walters, O. G. White and A. R. Taylor, among others, stood in awe of our elders and were thought blessed to walk those corridors where E. L. Matalon, J. K. Holt, S. G. Kirkaldy, and K. E. G. Taylor had walked. In 1947, the Clovelly Park site of the institution was only fourteen years old and, by then, the College had scored resounding victories in the Sunlight competition (1941, '42, '46 and '47) and the Wilson Cup in football competition in the years 1940 and '41. The *annus mirabilis* of 1949 was still to come, but the school had already had liens on the Inter-Scholastic Championships in 1937 and 1942.

And just as we were impressed with the achievements of the O. U. Murrays and the Ken Douglasses of the early forties, so were we even more enthralled with the scholastic accomplishments of our first Rhodes Scholar, L. L. Murad, in 1936; the first Centenary Scholar, Herbert Walker, in 1943, and the second, Probyn V. Marsh, in 1947; the Medical Scholars, L. L. Williams and A. F. Brown (1943), Robert Milner (1944), John Hall (1945), and other Imperial Government Scholarship winners in the Sciences, Agriculture, and Engineering. Names like Sydney Scott, John Manley, Evan Morris, and Ross Murray made us swell with pride for simply being members, however young, of the same fraternity.] 98 to 1.50 93

[My brothers and I were always keenly aware of the value of athletic competition and we developed our skills in endless hours of practise in the back yard on Slipe Road where we alternated between cricket and football from dawn 'til dusk. I remember clearly the day we received our first full-sized football, a No. 5, in Kingston, when Papa bounced it to us from the top of the steps at the back of the house, and we pounced upon it, feet and arms flying in a wild melee. Within minutes, someone sent the ball flying in a fierce half volley and shattered the dining-room windows which overlooked the yard. We were always mindful after that to keep our

heads down and the ball slightly in front and in line as we rocketed shots through the make-shift goal posts of broom handles and stones. And we played on sides of one against four, two against three, and, sometimes, two against two, with the sulking youngest boy sitting in abject woe on an out-of-the-way step or in a defiant sprawl in the middle of the all-purpose pitch. The game went on, the bruises accumulated, the techniques developed and we ranged freely from fence to fence popping and shifting, weaving and darting in the sprinkled down dirt, loser and victor showering joyfully, and not-so joyfully, after.

Equally enthusiastic at cricket time, we swept and rolled and patched the pitch, junior engineers all in the design and construction of our Sabina Park where no grass grew. Before the Jim Lily Whites and Len Huttons, cricket bats used by true masters of the game, we made ours from fences and trees and in lieu of a ball of leather, we wrapped old socks over stone and knitted cord, fold upon fold, in a tight and hard circle without seams. We played the usual games of exuberant cricketing youth, "bowl for bat," "bat up and catch," "ketchi shubi," "two overs" and one against one until we were prepared for the Test match, and I would play "both sides," batting and bowling last always, the "mango" in this uncharacteristically frenetic game of hooks, square cuts, on-drives and glides. We played happily then and confidently, until the speed bowler visitors like Joe Dixon, who lived over on Devon Avenue and whose black mango tree seemed to bear a million blackies per season, wreaked fear in our hearts with in-swingers and out-swingers chasing the dust away in eight-ball overs of interminable length. But that was, usually, only temporary; for when we, even I, caught the line of the ball, the runs would flow as we battered the fence and the walls in an exotic array of stroke play. It was not unusual for us to have centurions each day: two for the post, four for the back fence, four for the middle of the side fence, six and out over the fence, and singles came in dozens on a one-wicket pitch of twelve or fourteen strides. Don was the steady, cautious bat; Barry, the architect, wicket-deeper, batsman; Leighton, the elegant, flowing stylist of off and on; Melvin, the pacer and

ambidextrous stroke-player; and I, well, I had no heart for the game's ingratitude in the heat and the dust and the long waits for my turn at bat, though my mind swam with visions of Denis Compton's sweeps and Hutton's flowing cover drives. But that was before. Worrell, Weekes, and Walcott, Christiani, Trestrail and Stollmyer! So, for us, it was cricket and football, football and cricket, throughout the day into the dusty, dying, dog-tired twilight.

Those fraternal battles were like apprenticeship for us, for later we represented the purple and white on the playing fields of Clovelly Park, Sabina Park, Wolmer's, J. C., Calabar, Munro, and St. George's College. Don, a long-jump champion in track and field, played outside right for the college in 1947; Barry, a goal-keeper that year, played inside right in 1948 and 1949 and kept the wicket for the Sunlight team in 1949; Leighton, who left before the Summer of 1948, played forward for the second XI football team, and Melvin, who also played on the history-making football team of 1949, continued into 1950 and '51, opened the bowling for the Sunlight and Minor Cup cricket teams of '51 and '52, and recorded many victories on the Championship teams over the one hundred and two hundred yards and the 4 x 100 relay teams, both under and over nineteen, in the successive years of 1949, '50, '51, and '52. Between 1952 and 1953, I represented the school in track, football and tennis.

✓ In 1947, when I arrived at Kingston College and was placed in the junior school, Don was already preparing for his Cambridge School's Certificate. The unique situation which existed involved five brothers being enrolled in the same institution: Barry was, by now, a fourth form student, Leighton in form III-B, and Melvin in II-B. Given the cost of secondary education and the extraordinary demand which our attendance at K. C. made upon our father's economic resources, Papa visited the school early that year to meet with Mr. Gibson to discuss some means whereby one of us would be permitted to attend the college free of charge. Accordingly, arrangements were made, I suppose with the approval of the Board of Trustees, and it was agreed upon that from thenceforward families with more than four boys in attendance at the

same time would be spared the expense of paying fees for the fifth (or sixth) sibling. I do not know if this guarantee was ever documented, since the situation of five brothers being at the school at the same time never came about again. Papa's slight triumph was short-lived, however, for he did not reap the benefits of the concession: Don left K. C. during that year and, in September, only four of us were now enrolled. The following year Leighton departed the college, followed by Barry in 1949.

Kingston College was a "grammar" school in the traditional British sense, and while the classic *trivium* and *quadrivium* were not strictly observed, they served as models for the school's curriculum. The boys were instructed in Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, as well as Mathematics (Geometry, Algebra, and Arithmetic); English language and Literature; Latin (Grammar and Literature); French (Grammar and Literature); History (British); Geography (Regional and Physical); Religious Knowledge (New Testament, Life of Christ and the Acts of the Apostles); Health and Hygiene; Art (Still Life, Figure and Composition), and Wood Work. Ironically, our extra curricular activities included Music Appreciation (thanks to the school's omnipresent Second Master, Mr. D. W. Forrest, French teacher, Choir master and Tennis instructor), Choir, Oratory, the Drama Society, Alliance Francaise and Gymnastics. Inter scholastic activities included football, cricket, tennis, track and field, and swimming.

Nothing about Jewish

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I was never able to understand either the philosophy or the psychology for determining the qualifications for the placement of boys in the lower forms or the complements and class sizes for boys in the fifth forms prior to their sitting for the Cambridge examinations. In 1953, when I sat for the School's Certificate, it was clear that the increased (and bursting) enrollment determined the placement in the three (!) fifth forms. Prior to 1947, the forms in existence were: VI (A & B), V (A & B), IV (A & B), III (A & B), II (A & B), Ist, and Preparatory. With the increasing enrollment, C forms were added at all levels from the Second through the fifth. Traditionally, Fifth formers were eligible to take their exams, except in the case of VC, in and around 1952.

By then, VA had to be divided into VA1, VA2, and VA3, the third A comprising boys from the preceding year's VC. Clearly, C Formers were being penalized throughout the system.

It seems evident now that the boys who were placed in C forms were considered average students by some perverse pedagogue's thinking; B formers were above average to good, according to the same philosophy, and A formers were stream-lined from the second through the fifth as excellent. It was always the case, however, that some boys from C were promoted to B and, sometimes A, and boys from B promoted to A. I cannot recall boys being demoted, but being "left back" was always a threatening and distressing possibility. As a consequence of this otherwise reasonable organization into forms, many boys, I am sure, were denied the benefit of being challenged by more demanding work and many, especially those in C forms, were discouraged by being considered marginal scholars, at best. There is no simple way of ascertaining who will become the scholars of the future, or who will indeed achieve excellence from one year to the next. And since secondary education entails much more than academic prowess, and since inter-scholastic competition is so vital a part of the *social* life of the *country*, it seemed unwise then, as it does to me now, to classify students strictly in terms of their academic achievements. Indeed, other factors ought to have been taken into consideration when some students were being considered for promotion into any of the streams. Any right-minded pedagogue or administrator should recognize, for example, the superior significance of the Rhodes Scholarship above all other scholarships.

✓ As with all other secondary institutions, Kingston College had its "brains" and "swatters," plodders and easy-going middling students, as well as a few lazy boys who neither cared nor grieved. However, the House system, which was introduced in 1932, mitigated against any one boy simply "hitting the books" at all times and at all costs. Some boys did not participate in extra-curricular activities, but they were few. And there were boys whose innate abilities enabled them to excel in and out of the class-room, and they were many; but the standard,

unwritten philosophy of the student body seemed to have been, "the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong ..." while the written philosophy, *fortis cadere cedere non potest*, was our battle cry; our school's motto, coined by Bishop deCarteret at the founding of the school. The significance of the sitting dog beneath an open book and the *pineapples* on the school's crest was never explained to me. The symbolism clearly implies hospitality, learning, and some kind of under-dog, but we, at Kingston College, never regarded ourselves as under-dogs, at least, not openly, and never against St. George's. Perhaps, in 1925, the good Bishop regarded KC as the Little dog, or *Canis Minor*, of the educational firmament. The fact, to me, simply stated, was that brains was not enough!

In any event, all the boys seemed bent on achieving certain goals, whether it meant being successful at the School's Certificate or the Higher School's Certificate. At times, the end meant being promoted from one form to another; at other times it meant simply competing on Sports Day or representing the school at athletic events. Sometimes it was a matter of running that futile leg in the House relays when the Teddy Hewetts, the Keith Youngs and the George Thompsons had sped to unsurpassable leads in the swift and clock-timed moments of juvenile competition. And it was always a glorious time for those who heard their names being announced in the Assembly Hall, or in St. Augustine's Chapel, when, on some solemn morning, Priest would say: "The following boys are asked to represent ..." or, "will be representing," or "will represent ... the school in...." The singular honour of it all!

The achievement of these goals was as varied as the day had hours, but it was all one: the strength and untiring tenacity of "Collie" Smith playing centre-half or sending bowlers over the fence at Blake road; the calm determination of "Bull" McMorris punishing loose balls through the covers; the grace and special rhythm of Teddy Hewett rounding the last corner and flashing by the spectators in the Grand stand at Sabina Park; the natural and frivolous talent of Neville Bolton executing cross-court shots in tennis behind the wood-work building; the almost

disdainful and natural insouciance of the multifaceted D. P. Beckford, and, always, the crowning paeon of multiple voices, led by a Delvaille or a Stafford Demarcado, rising in an incredible crescendo for all to hear: "*Fortis - Cadere - Cedere - Non - Potest ...!*" But it was not only for the glory of the school or for broken bones that young men dug deeply within themselves in the heat of competition. It would be naive to believe so. We batted and bowled, kicked and tackled, hopped, skipped and jumped, sometimes to improve upon a preceding performance, as well as for our class-mates in the forms in which we studied, the Houses to which we belonged, our families which gave us succour, and the communities in which we lived:

The time you won your town the race

We chaired you through the market-place....

And, perhaps, at bottom, I speak for all of us when I say: there is a bitter sweet remembrance in all of this, for memory awakens memory. S. I. "Foggy" Burrowes, D. P. Beckford, John McLeod, J. K. Walters, O'Neil Gordon Smith. Pain. Sometimes affliction. Death.

Yet because of human nature and the nature of things, it is impossible for me to disregard here some of the still undefined and vague symbolic acts which, no doubt, impressed themselves on some of our lives during those trying decades. We were, as I have said, an egalitarian institution where both wealth and poverty were equally inconspicuous. But we were living in a time in Jamaica where the colour of one's skin helped to determine the way others saw us and how we saw others. The fact of our multi-racial heritage did not go far enough to define our uniqueness as Jamaicans or discourage the ready identification of pigmentation with class. Our sensibilities were still being conditioned by a colonial mind-set which had political consequences and which propagated the pyramidal notion of social mobility based upon colour. What is now a completely racially integrated society was, in the forties and fifties, at bottom a racially fragmented society. Chinese, Indians, and Syrians, for example, did not then marry Black Jamaicans, and as far as our political leaders are concerned, we need but look at the

complexion of each of the Prime Ministers and government leaders to see pervasive biases of colour. Thus it was that even at Kingston College there appeared to be a tacit though observable reflection of this bias in the hierarchy of the *official* representation of the student body. I am referring, of course, to the appointment of Head boys in the school.

I do not believe that any Kingston College boy ever entertained or exhibited bigoted behaviour during my stay at that institution, and I do not believe that any boy, white, brown, or black, consciously attempted to vaunt race or class over another. After all, we were a microcosm made up of a number of racial mixes and ethnic groups, including Chinese, Jews, Lebanese and East Indians. However, a cursory examination of the school's records indicates that of the Head Boys chosen between 1925 and 1950, a number of eighteen all told, twelve could be considered "light skinned" Jamaicans, or fair, or white. The yearly appointment of the Head Boy was always of interest to every boy in the school, and with each announcement there were always those who approved or disapproved of the Head Master's choice. Needless to say, the selection had far-reaching implications, especially in terms of the discipline of the attendant boys. Of the eighteen Head Boys appointed during the first twenty-five years of the school's existence, eight served in that capacity for more than one year; of those eight boys, one served for almost four years, one for three, and the others for periods of two years each.

I mention this phenomenon here because it went unquestioned, for the most part, and because the motivational orbit in which we studied was based largely upon an European, albeit English, religious, economic and social system of values. Our Head Master, the Rt. Rev. Percival W. Gibson, who became Suffragan Bishop of Kingston in 1947 (and Later, Bishop of Jamaica) was influenced, consciously and unconsciously, by his undying devotion to the Church of England and its Apostles to Jamaica. The Rt. Rev. G. F. C. de Carteret, Founder of the College, the Most Rev. W. G. Hardie, Archbishop of Jamaica, along with Bishop Nuttall, and Basil Dale, later, were all English men devoted to the Cloth and to the propagation of the

Protestant faith. It seems obvious that Bishop Gibson had to walk the dangerous path of conciliation when, as both a clergyman and an educator seeing the relatively new school through the complex stages of its youth and adolescence, he had to steer an apolitical but democratic course at one and the same time. However, the Bishop's religious beliefs and his social consciousness were not, in my estimation, consistent with the undefined politics of decolonialization which ought to have been in evidence immediately after the War. It seemed that he simply acceded to the unwritten racial philosophy of the preceding decades. It appeared, still, that white was synonymous with leadership, responsibility and achievement. Though unacceptable now, it was not unusual that the situation that I have just sketched would actually represent a fact of life. After all, this catering to race was equally true of Munro, Wolmer's and Jamaica College, despite what we would wish to believe. It was inevitable, I believe, that a student body so conscious of its equally unstated egalitarian charter, as well as the *signs* of an unacceptable social philosophy, would one day resent that inequity.

Again, school records will show (though I have relied mainly upon my memory and the accounts of some of those who were present) that in the year 1946, Kingston college "did not enter [Manning] competition" in the corporate area. Yet, I distinctly remember seeing a football match between K. C. and Wolmer's at Wolmer's *on a Saturday morning!* How could this have been? Disregarding for the moment the fact that I was only ten years old and that I was not a student at the college, and that all one needed to do was use the foot-bridge to cross the gully at the end of Devon Avenue to be in the Wolmer's compound, Kingston College did, in fact, play several matches that Christmas term. The results were of no significance, since the games were all "friendly," an exercise at the time in both futility and sportsmanship. The story which follows will account for the school's exclusion from competition that year.

In 1946, Rev. Gibson announced that from that time forward the school's Head Boy would be a member of each of the college's first eleven teams. George Scott, an affable, soft-

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spoken, witty young man with a ready smile and a kind and generous heart (those of us he taught will never forget him) became Head Boy in the year 1945/46. Scott, who had passed the Junior School's Certificate in 1943, was thus given the opportunity to play on the Manning team after he had led the Sunlight cricket team to victory in the spring and summer of 1946. Among Scott's team-mates were J. A. G. Smith, S. I. Burrowes, E. D. McCulloch, G. Fitz G. "Boogles" Palmer, and Evan Morris, who succeeded him as Head Boy in 1947. It was the thinking of the prospective members of the Manning team, however, that Scott, Head Boy, cricket captain and successful Higher School's Certificate candidate, could not make that team on any competitive basis. They resented the Head Master's directive and openly rebelled against Scott's inclusion on the team. The 1946 team was subsequently withdrawn from competition, John Gooden replacing Scott as captain, and no good was served by the inequity of Rev. Gibson's authority. Scott, a light skinned, some would say white, Jamaican, did not deserve to reap the wrath of his school mates. In fact, Scott was well liked and, in spite of the unnecessary asterisk which appears in the school's records for 1946, remains, in my estimation, an outstanding Kingston College graduate. Clearly, the Head Master's decisions, on both counts, were unwise.

I remember George Scott well, and I have recalled this episode with a certain amount of fear and loathing, not so much because of what others might say, but because he was one of the many Kingston College "Old Boys" who returned to the institution of his youth to teach gladly where he had eagerly learned. It amazes me now to think of all the men who taught me in the class-rooms where they themselves had studied History, French, English and Mathematics. Among those memorable men, I include, Sydney Scott, "Foggy" Burrowes, Probyn Marsh, Ross Murray, Clem Mullings, Barry Record, Aubyn Hay, Keith Taylor, Aggrey Johnson, Eugene Chen, John Burrow and Evan Morris.

Evan Morris was the school's Head Boy when I arrived at K. C. in 1947 and he served in that capacity through 1948. He became the school's second Rhodes' Scholar in 1950. He

played violin in the school's orchestra and was a member of the Sunlight Cup cricket championship teams of 1946 and 1947. A calm, quiet, scholarly, efficient gentleman, Evan exuded all the charm and confidence of unassuming brilliance. He revered the English language and dotted his speech with the precise and colourful locutions of a Latinate syntax. And when I myself became a student of Literature in universities abroad, Dickens and Keats were already familiar wordsmiths to me, for Mr. Morris had divulged all, his brow knitted, his magnificent speech entralling us in sentence after sentence of noble cause. He taught us that year and I fell in love with the literature of the world. Then he left us. Some say he studied History at Oxford and became a teacher; others say that he went on to Sandhurst and then pursued a military career; still others say that he worked in British Intelligence and lived a life of painful desperation because he failed to make the right choices. I do not know the truth of Evan Morris' life after he left Kingston College. I know that the Rt. Rev. Percival W. Gibson was his god-father, that he had a mother who was a teacher, that he had two brothers, "J Ruf" and Mervyn, and that he had many many cousins who loved and admired him. No matter. Evan touched my life and the sweet scar remains. One day, [not long ago] during polite conversation, I was told that Evan had died, in England, in January of 1986. May his soul rest in peace.

I will hazard the opinion here that the employment of past students for short periods, before they pursue higher degrees in tertiary institutions at home and abroad, has an overwhelmingly positive academic, psychological, and social effect upon the students of that institution. What may at first appear to be merely a self-serving end is, in fact, both a practical and an imaginative solution to motivating young scholars and creating hope where, perhaps, none had existed before. Whenever and wherever this system is practised, a number of positive results have been realized. Students regard with admiration those past students who return to teach because they find ready and suitable models from whom they can fashion their lives. They are made aware of the fact that the "master" has been given the respect by his elders and

former teachers and that the profession of teaching is an honourable one. Further, the practice ensures continuity between the past and the present, even between generations, thereby perpetuating the school's spirit which is so vital to the consolidating of traditions. Again, along with the traditions of the school, there are family and social networks of intimacy which extend beyond the class-room and the school to include the delicate memories of the past which are indelibly recorded in the unexplored and inexplicable vaults of our minds.

The indiscipline, lack of school spirit, and lack of pride which have manifested themselves in the island's secondary schools ^{after Independence.} over the past two decades are rooted, it seems to me, in this lack of continuity between the past and the present. Where brothers attend different schools, for example, as a result of the arbitrariness of the government's school-placing policy, the very foundation of family unity, as well as school-spirit, is being effectively eroded at significant costs to the Jamaican society. Also, today, young men and young women who venture overseas to study are not encouraged economically, socially, or psychologically to return to teach at an institution in which they only had a vague and passing interest. This fact is true not only as it pertains to the academic aspect of life at school but to athletics as well.

During the mid forties when Kingston College was entering its third decade, the school had, by then, produced outstanding athletes in track and field, football and cricket. A. F. Brown, K. C. Douglas, J. L. Prescod, L. L. Williams, J. K. Holt, I. C. Lawrence, O. U. Murray, and W. W. Roberts are just a few of the young men who achieved some amount of fame during their student days at K. C. In the early forties, the football teams had shown, repeatedly, that it was simply a matter of time before the school would be known as a football "power" in the corporate area. Having been coached for years by the English man, H. "Harry" R. Paxton, K. C., in 1948, fielded a team that was to be the nucleus of the historic championship winning team of 1949. In 1948, Mr. Paxton, along with Dudley Smith, who later became the all-Jamaica captain and perennial mid-field stalwart, J. K. Holt, George Prescod, and "Foggy" Burrowes, styled and

groomed a squad at Clovelly Park that showed every sign of being near perfect. Alas, that was not to be the year of crowning victory.

My brother, Barry, who had kept goal for the school in 1947, "played out" in 1948 upon the recommendation of Mr. Forrest. "Freddie" Greene captained the team that year and again in 1949. Along with Greene and Watson, two names that have now become synonymous with inside-forward tacticians in schools' football, there were D. P. Beckford, M. "Buddy" Josephs, R. English, Dennis Hinds, and Roy McLean, all hold-overs into the 1949 season.

The '49 season began auspiciously enough with a nil-all draw against St. George's at Clovelly Park. The game was a historic one, first because the "Light Blues" fielded one of their strongest teams ever, was blanked by the diminutive fifteen year-old goal-deeper, Lawson Douglas, and the single goal scored that day was adjudged an off-side much to the anger of the K. C. partisans. Second, and perhaps more importantly, the game subsequently necessitated the use of Sabina Park for secondary school football competition for the first time because of the Kingston Cricket Club's experience with crowd control. On that memorable day at Clovelly Park, the over-flowing partisan crowd, equally divided between the two schools, was kept from invading the playing field only by a single strand of rope which Francis, the Kingston College groundsman, had always used, successfully, to keep the spectators from the pitch. The intensity of the game, the rivalry, the huge crowd, and the "violence" perpetrated by the "followers" of both schools all contributed to the near-eruption of the game into a pitched battle. The O - O draw meant that the return match would be a matter of Titan versus Titan with the Manning Cup being the prize. The Kingston College team for that day read: Goal: L. Douglas; Backs: R. English and D. Hinds; Halves: R. McLean (R), D. P. Beckford (C), and N. Miller (L); Forwards: M. Josephs, W. Greene (Capt.), L. Bailey, B. Watson, and H. Davis. But for the addition of M. Watson, G. Thompson, J. K. Walters, and F. V. Llewelyn, at various times, that fifteen-man squad remained intact. The defence went through the season unchanged, while the

positions at outside right, centre forward and outside left were juggled for maximum effect. Llewelyn and Josephs vied for the right wing position, Walters and Bailey for striker, and M. Watson and "Munchy" Davis alternated at the left wing. George Thompson spelled both McLean and Miller and played inspired football when he was given the nod.

Although they all played well, the real "stars" of the team were Greene, Watson, and Beckford. The inside forwards and the roving centre half were the team's architects and they spear-headed wave after wave of attack in exciting and tenacious football. Working the W-formation for its triple defense and over-lapping counter-attacks, the team swung into full precision by the third game of the season and the city, always football crazy, buzzed with glowing reports of the boys in purple and white. English and Hinds were strong-legged, bruising tacklers and manned the last wall of defense with crunching authority. Miller and McLean consistently controlled the mid field with heady, oftentimes classic clairvoyance and sent the wingers on their way with precision passes of definitive intent. Bailey, meanwhile, courted the unmarked spaces in the opponents' defense created by Greene's and Watson's long and evasive runs in and out of threadbare zones. And when it wasn't one, it was the other: control, pass, open space; control, pass, open space, until the pass was redundant or too obvious. They would attack in waves, until the inevitable, followed by the throat-clearing roar of the spectators and the attackers turned once more to centre field to defend the advantage which they had so skilfully gained.

omit [And after each victory, throngs of boys would march up South Camp Road cheering as they went along, "Are we in it? Well, I guess!" over and over again, past Issa Park and Arnold Road and the cotton tree at the gates at Up Park Camp. They were silent as they passed Nuttall Memorial Hospital, then found their voices again, in the centre of Cross Roads where the traffic cop would have been standing earlier in the day and, in one voice, repeated the "Fortis" for all to hear.

Their destination was either Dairy Farmers or Dairy Products, refreshment parlours separated by only a few hundred yards on the Half-Way-Tree Road. And if the victory was at Hope, where the team would have played J. C., the boys would cheer at Matilda's Corner and Cross Roads before they descended upon the two establishments. This was always the case after victorious football matches and track and field Championships, but never after cricket. In fact, no one cheered at cricket matches. But football, that was another matter.]

The return engagement with St. George's, at Sabina Park, was an anti-climax. K. C. won the contest 3 -0 (or 3 - 1, I do not recall) with Davis playing perhaps the greatest game of his short career. The team simply out-manoevred and out-scored the Light Blues, and even the following morning, before Chapel, the boys sent up a few more cheers. And so it was that Kingston College won the Manning Cup after nineteen years of competing for the coveted trophy. The team went through the season undefeated, giving up a lone goal for the effort. They then took the Olivier Shield from Munro later that Fall to achieve the sweep. That year, 1949-50, Kingston College teams won the Sunlight Cup in the Summer, the Manning Cup and Olivier Shield in the Fall and the Inter-Scholastic Championships in the Easter term of 1950. Josephs, Miller, Greene, Beckford, Bailey, Douglas, McLean, and Watson also played on the cricket team; Walters, Thompson, and M. Watson, the reserves from the football team, joined Beckford, Greene and McLean (the only triple representatives) on the track team. The year of miracles was a fitting Prologue to the celebration of the school's twenty-fifth birthday.

In 1949 and 1950, "Greenie" and Barry were called upon to represent Jamaica, first against Haiti and Antoine Tassy, and later against the Caribbean All Stars. Barry celebrated his international debut with a hat-trick against the Haitians and was the toast of Kingston for weeks. The All Stars demolished the Jamaicans, partly as a result of the devastating accuracy of the Surinam striker Michael Kruin, and partly as a result of poor coaching and outmoded tactics. The Jamaican side included Lindy Delepenha and Gil Heron who were playing professional

football in the U. K. and were invited to play for their country. Along with Lester "Fairy Boots" Alcock, Viv Coy and Barry, the two pros filled out the forward line. The complete eleven read as follows: Goal: R. Cooper; Backs: ^{Danny Sepaerres} G. A. Prescod and R. Hamilton; Halves: Harry "Brains" Walters, Henry "Becka" Miller, and Karl Largie; Forwards: Heron, Alcock, Watson, Delepenha and Coy. Coach: Major Allen, ret. *Dad Smith was Capt. @ C. Half.*

Smith
I have not seen a Jamaican national team play for over a quarter of a century and cannot therefore remark on the quality and character of football on the island in ^{now} 1996. Many excellent "ballers" played in Jamaica during the forties and fifties and made the national teams as a result of their school-boy successes. Even a partial list of these heroes is an impressive one: O. U. Murray, J. K. Holt, A. Dujohn, Dudley Smith, Claude McMorris, Alvin McLean, George Prescod, Barry Watson, Freddie Greene, Ron Cooper, Teddy Saunders, Noel Tappin, Henry Miller, and Anthony Hill, among others. Even now, after so many years, I firmly believe that the W-formation is one of the most, if not the most, effective offensive formation if played correctly. Despite the Brazilians (4-4-2 and 4-2-4), the Italians (3-4-3) and the French (4-4-2), the W-formation, with its over-lapping defense of 3-4-3 and 3-5-2, as well as its flex offence of 3-4-3 and 2-3-5, is the most effective scoring system ever. International coaches would do well to reconsider the merits of this system which England discarded after Matthews, Compton, Manion, Ramsay, and Wright had contributed to so many resounding national victories at Wembley.]

Bravely, no matter how foolishly, we marched through those times, with Caesar, Cromwell, and Rodney, with surplice and Hymnal, singing "Rule Britannia" and "There'll always be an England" the way our fathers did, the way our grandfathers did. It might not have been our culture, and it might not have been the will of God, but it was, in the long run, our youthful pursuit of sweetness and light. The class-room, the playing field, the Chapel, each served to instil in us the need to go on, to test here and taste there the wisdom of the larger world. And it

was always a God-blessed day for me when we stood as boys in St. Augustine's chapel to sing "Now Thank We All Our God" on the morning of the last day of school, and our voices were always as lusty-then as the voices that cheered the Manning team and the Track team the season before. After the prayers, the admonitions, the cautions and the well-wishes, we would march out into the sun-drenched morning chanting "No more Latin, no more French; no more sitting on the damn hard bench." And years later, we would remember the hymns of Wesley and Newman while we stood in St. Paul's or Notre Dame, and even a slight "Fortis" would bring tears to our eyes, and we knew that, no matter what, we would always remember Priest as he stood by the door of the chapel and shook our hands, boy after boy, that final day.