

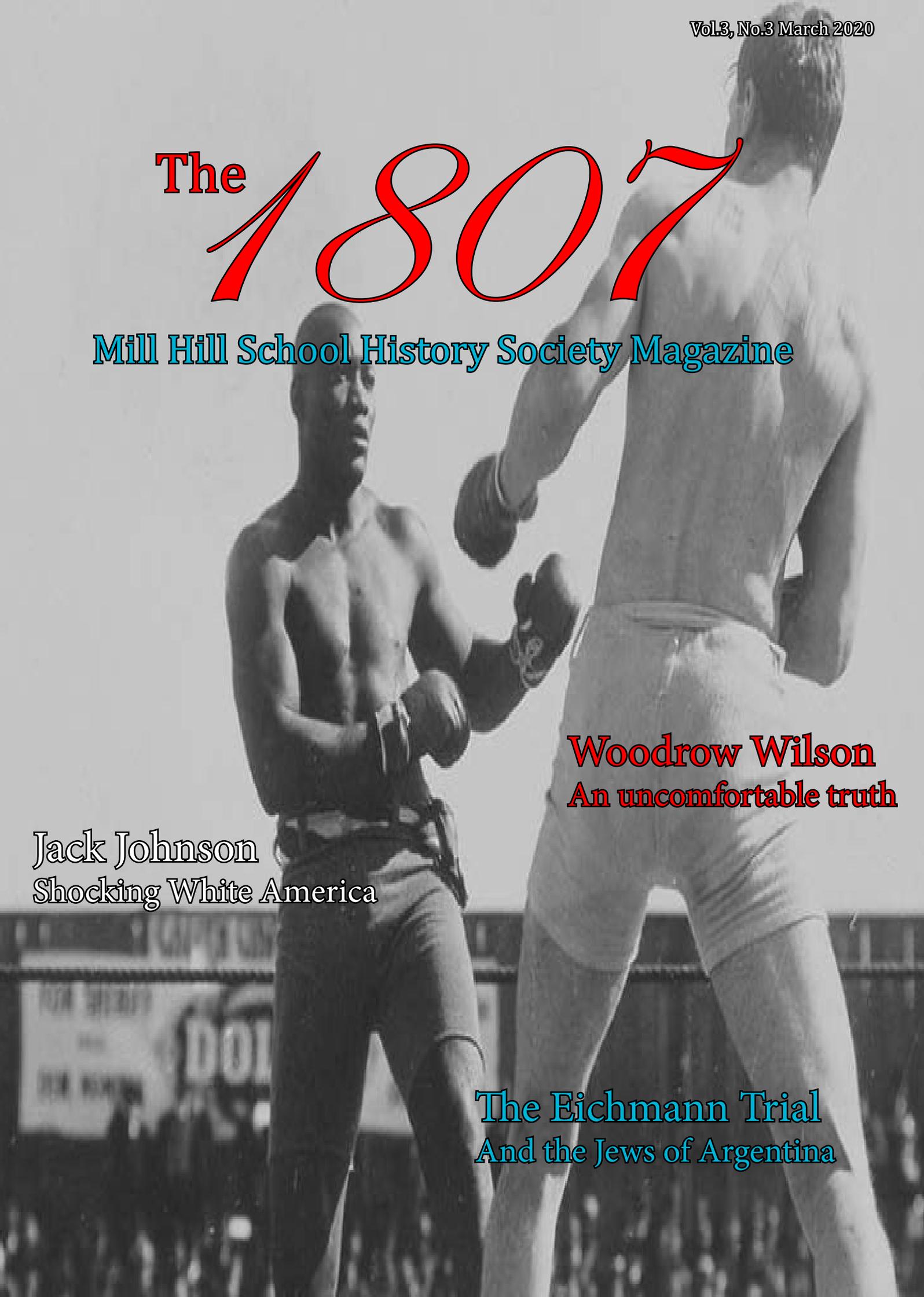
# The 1807

Mill Hill School History Society Magazine

Jack Johnson  
Shocking White America

Woodrow Wilson  
An uncomfortable truth

The Eichmann Trial  
And the Jews of Argentina



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Herbert Ward - Grief.

# A Note from the Editors

This edition was ready for publication in the weeks just before lockdown in early 2020, and it has been a great frustration not to be able to share it with you before now, not least because the curator and main editor Daniel Francis-Warren put a great deal of effort into compiling and editing it. We wish him well in his History undergraduate studies.

Although, most of the contributors to this magazine have now left the school we have kept their names and year groups as they were at the time of writing.

A great deal has happened since we mothballed this edition; the world seems a very different place eight months on. One of our longstanding and original contributors, Alex Wallace, tried to emulate Pepys and keep a diary of the events which we have included in this edition, thus making the delayed production more worthwhile.

It seems fitting that our lead article in this edition was about Jack Johnson and his brave stance against racism. Little were we to know at that time that the killing of George Floyd would resonate with such power around the world. A recurring motif in the 1807 has been a focus on racism, intolerance and those that challenge it.

As we adjust to the new challenges of communal activity, learning, and remote communication, we on the 1807 are working out ways to keep this publication alive and healthy. It does provide a platform for budding historians to showcase their eclectic interests and also practice a different type of writing skill, which accommodates both the lay-reader and historians, whilst keeping articles concise and lively.

Many of our past contributors are now studying history or have finished their degrees and they look back fondly on the collaboration and fun we have had in putting this magazine together over the years.

We hope that you enjoy the articles and we would very much like to be in a position to produce a new volume this academic year.

**M Dickinson**



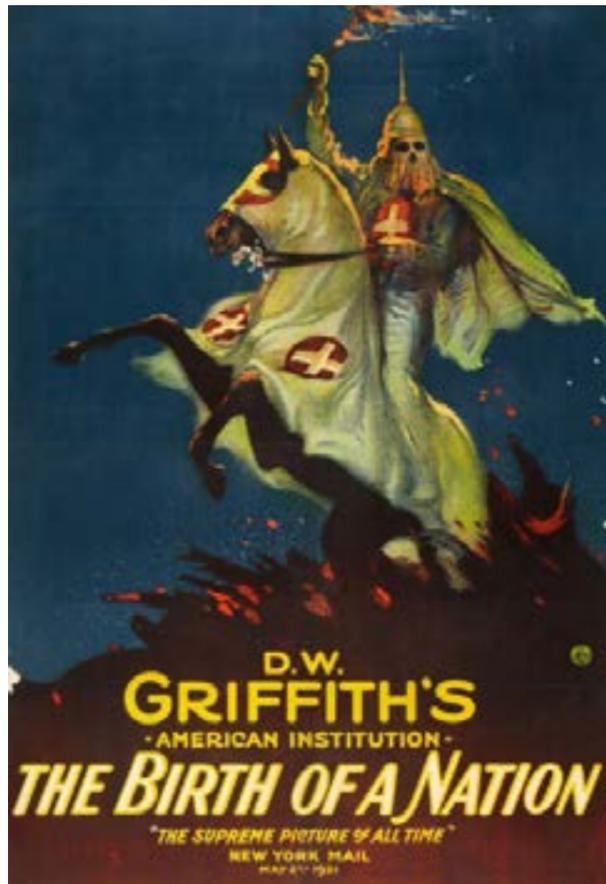


# Woodrow Wilson

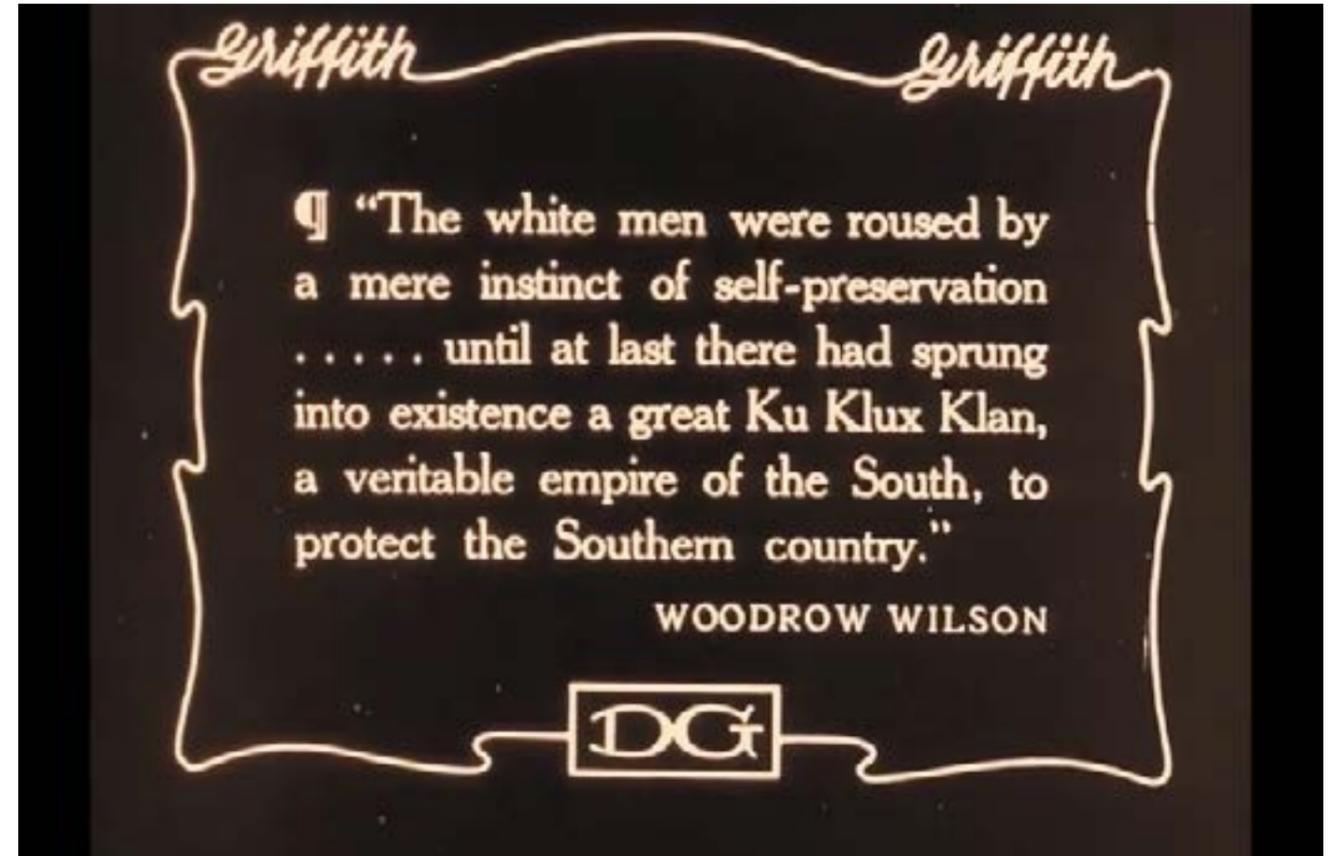
## An uncomfortable truth

**H**istory provides us with an outlook on how we view figures from the past. However, through modern day events and the power of hindsight, we view people differently. Just because history remembers someone in one way it does not mean we have to rely on this. Thomas Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States, served in office from 1913 to 1921 and led America through the First World War. Woodrow Wilson is often ranked by historians as one of the United States greatest presidents. He was a well known advocate for peace and democracy and even won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1919 for his help in establishing the League of Nations. Woodrow Wilson is a prime example of how history has influenced the way we look at people, Woodrow Wilson is remembered by most as a hero who fought for peace in his time; however, what most do not often recognise is that he also had an unforgivable trait: a dismal record on race relations.

Woodrow Wilson is largely regarded as a hugely successful and progressive President who left a legacy of sweeping reforms for the middle class, voting rights for women and guidelines for world peace. He was also famously against violence and war and tried to keep America out of the first World War for as long as possi-



Following the war, Woodrow Wilson heavily



involved himself in the construction of the Treaty of Versailles, with the aim to promote his '14 Points', ideas he believed needed to be adopted for world peace. The most interesting of these points is point 10, in which Woodrow Wilson expresses the opinion that all people should be entitled to the right of self determination and allowed to choose what political body they serve under. This is incredibly interesting as we see Woodrow Wilson is a man with double standards, he would fight for the rights of people in other countries, but when it came to the US he was perfectly fine with a society dominated by whites and was happy to limit the rights of blacks. This is why Woodrow Wilson is such a controversial character, he is seen by many as a hero for his actions after the war but at the same time as this he is President of a country in which there is a complete imbalance of racial power.

However, not all of Woodrow Wilson's domestic policy was so poor, he actually made progressive decisions that benefited those in the US a lot. Entering the White House at a time when the women's suffrage movement was beginning to gain a lot of traction, Woodrow Wilson had to quickly decide what stance to take on women's right to vote. Although he started with what can be regarded as a fairly 'lukewarm' view towards women's suffrage, his views did evolve and he soon began to support the cause. He publicly endorsed women's right to vote in a speech before the Senate in 1918. It seems contradic-

tory to support equal rights for gender but at the same time to be so against equal rights for African Americans. It was not like Woodrow Wilson hated all other races as well, he nominated the first ever Jewish man, Louis Brandeis, to sit on the US Supreme Court. Clearly Woodrow Wilson was a progressive President who believed in equality amongst all, however, unfortunately, this equality was not shared when it came to civil rights.

Woodrow Wilson was the descendant of Confederate Soldiers and had a very traditional Southern mindset when it came to race and believed heavily in white supremacy, this is very clearly echoed in his actions as President. He re-segregated the federal government and in the process fired 15 of the 17 black supervisors in the federal service and replaced them all with white men, most of which were white supremacist Southern Democrats. In many departments, including the Navy, Treasury and Postal Service, Jim Crow laws were reintroduced and segregated toilets, cafeterias and buildings were instituted. The most extreme example of this is one black clerk, who needed to be in the same building as white men because of the nature of his work, so to continue the enforcement of segregation a cage was built around the man. Woodrow Wilson's obscene racism was a core part of his political identity and he was not afraid to

show it, speaking openly he once said to civil rights leader William Monroe Trotter, "Segregation is not a humiliation but a benefit, and ought to be so regarded by you gentlemen." Woodrow Wilson believed there was nothing wrong with segregation and that it was completely acceptable. Whilst he did live in a time when such racism was seen as acceptable and normal by those in the South, this was still a period of improvement for civil rights and considering he was so progressive in other areas, you would expect his policies on civil rights to be just as progressive.

The most infamous example of Woodrow Wilson's racist attitude is on the evening of the 21st of March 1915 when he screened the film "Birth of a Nation" in the White House. The film is set in the South and presents a portrayal of a South where blacks dominate Southern whites during the period of Reconstruction and where black men sexually force themselves on vulnerable white women. In the film, the Ku Klux Klan are presented as the saviour for the South, who are trying to save the white Southerners from the supposed tyranny of the blacks. In reality, during Reconstruction it was the white Southern men who assaulted vulnerable black women and the KKK were a terrorist organisation responsible for the murders of hundreds of coloured people. Woodrow Wilson openly supported the views of the KKK by screening the film at the White House. Many historians credit "Birth of a Nation" as the reason behind the resurgence of the KKK, which launched a reinvigorated reign of terror and led to many more lynchings of African Americans.



Birth of a Nation

Woodrow Wilson is seen by many as great President, however it is clear that he had double standards, he believed in self determination for all people yet refused to treat black people as equals and reintroduced segregation in the federal government. Many will defend Woodrow Wilson and say that he was

no more racist than others at the time, yet many of his policies are far more racist than Presidents before him and, as he was so progressive in other views, you would expect him to also be progressive in equal rights for black people. He never tried to hide his clearly white supremacist views and was happy to support racist policies and groups such as the Ku Klux Klan, who he believed were a "veritable empire of the South" whose job it was to "protect the Southern country". Woodrow Wilson may have been a great President to many, but he had one major overlying flaw, he had a horrible attitude towards equality in civil rights.



KKK enact mob violence, scene from Birth of a nation

The purpose of this article is not to expose Woodrow Wilson for the racist he really was, despite how unforgivable what he did is. Thomas Woodrow Wilson is just one of many examples of how History sometimes chooses to ignore aspects of someone's character and remember them only for the good they did. The purpose instead is to encourage people to not always believe what they are told about people at face value and to always look closer and form your own opinions, we do not always need to accept the judgements of others. Mark Twain once said "The very ink with which history is written is merely fluid prejudice", I think this is incredibly true in the case of Woodrow Wilson, of course contemporary white historians will try and remember him for the good he did as President rather than the awful discriminatory attitude he had.

Oliver Clements, L6



## The Eichmann Trial and its impact on the Jews of Argentina

The story of Adolf Eichmann is one many will know. The man was the key architect of the 'Final Solution to the Jewish Question.' He managed facilitating and the logistics involved in the mass deportation of Jews to ghettos and extermination camps in Nazi-occupied Eastern Europe. After the war, Eichmann escaped to Buenos Aires, Argentina in order to set up a new life in a new country. Post WW2, the Mossad conducted a risky operation in Argentina and succeeded in capturing him and bringing him back to Israel to face trial. His sentence: death – the only trial which has brought the death penalty in Israel's history. A story not as well known in contrast is the shocking effect Eichmann's trial had on the everyday lives of Argentinian Jews. Their suffering has been disregarded and their story remains far too neglected. My article will shed light on the brutal consequences Eichmann's capture had on the 420,000 Argentinian-Jews living in Argentina.

Many of you will expect the Israeli government and Prime Minister David Ben Gurion to be blamed for violating another countries sovereignty and showing a complete disregard for international law in Argentina. Under pressure from the Argentinian public, President Frondizi declared the Israeli ambassador to Argentina. 'persona non grata.' Previously strong Israeli-Argentinian relations were thrown into jeopardy literally overnight with Argentina furiously demanding Eichmann's return to the Argentinian embassy in Israel and raised the issue with the UN security council. The result of this emergency debate in reality, however, brought the swift start of the healing process needed to repair Israeli-Argentinian relations. The UN passed two significant resolutions. The first condemned Israel for violating international sovereignty, the other expressed a firm hope that 'traditionally friendly relations between Israel and Argentina will be advanced.' This hope occurred; President Frondizi was determined to smoothen relationships with Israel as he saw this as the key for

a stronger relationship with the USA, so Israeli-Argentinian relations were not harmed. But Jews in Argentina were subject to verbal and physical assaults and made the scapegoat for ordinary Argentinians' anger at Israel.

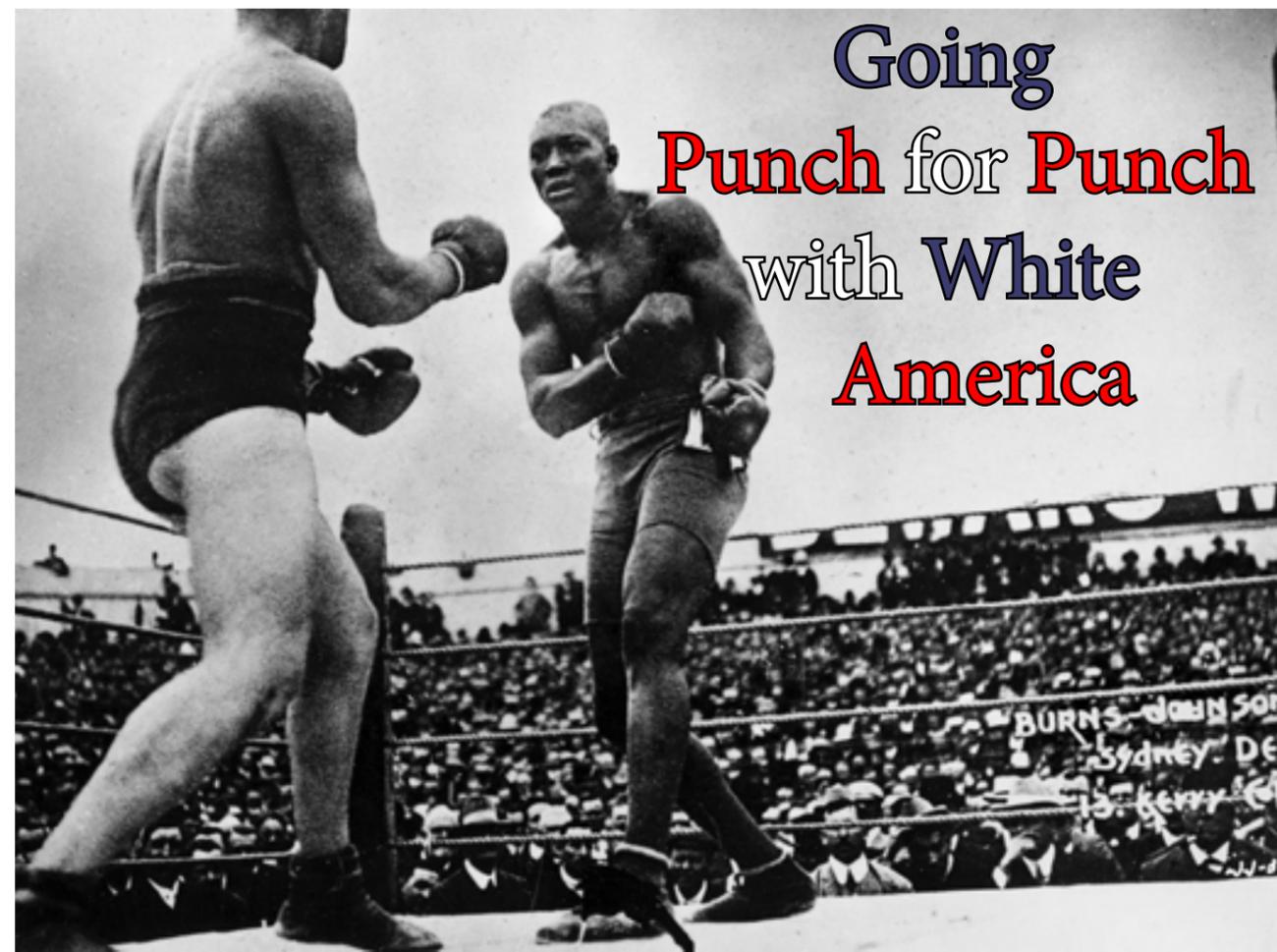
The Argentinian Jewish community was celebrating its 100th year of existence and strong relations with the Argentinian state when the kidnapping occurred. Even without the physical attacks on Argentinian-Jews, they came under increased emotional pressures. In a time when Jews' national pride in Argentina was skyrocketing, many were divided in whether to be loyal to the newly formed and only Jewish state of Israel or to Argentina, which had served as their home throughout or after WW2. After all, their sovereignty had been violated. Whilst some Jews were proud about how their fellow Jewish people back in Israel had showed such power and influence, which 20 years ago, they would not have even dreamed about possessing. Others felt angry as the Israeli government's actions meant they would feel like outcasts for many years to come. They believed the Israeli government had disregarded them by not accounting for their immediate safety. History proves this was indeed the case.

The campaign against Jews was spearheaded by the extreme right-wing Argentinian group Tacura Nationalists Movement. Initially founded in 1957 to campaign to establish fully Catholic universities it had attacked left-wing Jewish students and was institutionally anti-Semitic. The group despised elections, parliamentary systems and what they called 'liberal democracy,' and idolized Hitler and Mussolini. Contacts with the police as well as with some former Nazi bureaucrats exiled in Argentina helped them gain easy access to weapons. This gave them a key advantage which put them apart from similar fascist organizations. The group made its money through racketeering and by demanding a 'revolutionary tax,' from many Jewish shops in neighbourhoods of Buenos Aires. The movement was led by Alberto Ezcurra who famously in a press conference refused to admit he was 'anti-Semitic,' and instead declared himself 'enemies of the Jewry,' who had apparently been 'servants of the Israeli imperialism who violated our traditional sovereignty when they arrested Eichmann.' Under the leadership of Ezcurra; the organisation developed strong contacts with known anti-Semites, Neo-Nazis and Holocaust deniers such as Hussein Triki. Ezcurra's support peaked after the kidnapping of Eichmann. He used the event to portray the Jewish people as puppets for the Israeli government and persuaded many to join his group.

As a result, during a ceremony in honour of national hero General Jose de San Martin Argentinian-Jewish students were abused and one 15-year-old student was shot and seriously wounded with several seriously injured and suffering life changing injuries by Tacura far-right activists. From then on, the Tacura Nationalists Movement committed acts of terrorism against the Jewish community. This included bombing synagogues and other Jewish institutions and vandalizing ordinary buildings with antisemitic graffiti. Following Eichmann's execution in 1962, the MNT launched 30 horrific antisemitic attacks. The most serious was on 21 st June 1962. They kidnapped a 19-year-old Jewish girl who was waiting for a bus called Graciela Sirota. Three members of the Tacura Nationalists Movement proceeded to torture her and scarred her with Swastika signs all over her chest. The kidnapers labelled it 'revenge for Eichmann.' Although the three kidnappers were identified and one of them even boasted about their crime, the federal police chief, Horacio Enrique Green raised the possibility that the attack had been nothing other than an act of provocation by leftist Jews trying to undermine the social order in Argentina. The Jewish community was horrified by the police's indifference to normal attacks vs attacks on the Jewish people. Anti-Semitism in Argentina became such an issue, that government was under lots of pressure to act. The Guido government finally took measure to curb this blatant anti-Semitism and from late 1962 the frequency of anti-Semitic attacks dropped significantly.

This is a shocking attack on the Jewish people yet again. Nevertheless, it is often overshadowed by greater tragedies, but nonetheless cannot be forgotten as otherwise we risk these terrible tragedies happening today. Even today, being Jewish and living in Argentina is far from really being accepted. Many nationalist groups still use the Eichmann kidnapping to portray the Jews as being disloyal to Argentina. As a result of the anti-Semitism following the kidnapping, a whooping 45,000 Jews migrated from Argentina to Israel. It is pivotal each and every one of us remember the events of the past so to prevent them happening in the future.

Max Lipton, L6



Jack Johnson known as the "Galveston Giant", had been the heavyweight boxing champion since 1908. Johnson was a man at the top of his game but also, as had long been the case, at the height of controversy.

Jack Johnson was the first black heavyweight boxing champion of the world. Today when one thinks of the sport of boxing and the heavyweight division, one thinks of the contribution of those great African American athletes whose talent and dedication helped the sport rise to such prominence. Legendary sporting names such as Joe Lewis, Mohammed Ali, "Smoking" Joe Frazer, "Big" George Foreman and of course the infamous "Iron Mike Tyson." However, Johnson was the man who paved the way to the black boxing world domination by forcing a hostile, white dominated society of America during the height of the Jim Crow era to give him a shot at being champion of the world.

Johnson was born in Galveston, Texas in 1878, the year in which the Reconstruction era began to falter. He was the son of a poor labourer and his mother was a domestic worker. Her name "Tiny" was rather ironic considering her son's hulking 6-foot 200-pound frame. Around the time that Johnson began to rise up through the ranks there were plenty of noteworthy black fighters,

including the great "Jersey" Joe Walcott who was welterweight champion from 1901-1904. However black men were forbidden from fighting for the most prestigious title of heavyweight champion, as was the case in many other sports in the early nineteen-hundreds. By the turn of the 20th century, institutionalised racism had barred black people from baseball. In addition, they were forced out of jockeying for the same reason and, indeed, from virtually all sports. Yet this was not something that weakened the resolve of the resolute Johnson.

He moved to California and rose quickly through the prize fighting ranks. In 1903 he became unofficial "negro" champion of the world but he was not satisfied, as his eyes were fixed on a world title which seemed out of reach. The current champion of the world James Jeffries refused to fight Johnson despite a confrontation between the two in a saloon owned by Jeffries in San Francisco in which Johnson challenged Jeffries to defend his title. Jeffries refused, stating "I won't meet you in the ring because you've got no name and we won't draw flies. But I'll go downstairs to the cellar with you and lock the door from the inside. And the one who comes out will be champ." This taunt came to nothing.

It must be remembered that Johnson was rising in the age of racial segregation in America. Even though the 1896 Supreme Court decision, *Plessy v. Ferguson* declared that Jim Crow laws and state-sponsored racial segregation were not unconstitutional, it was almost unheard of for a mixed-race fight to take place. When they did take place, the black boxers were expected to lose or else the fight would be ruled a non-decision. As such, instead of facing Johnson, after Johnson declared that he had defeated “all logical challengers,” Jeffries announced that he would retire to his alfalfa farm. Leaving the title up for grabs for any white fighter to claim.

Five years would pass before Johnson finally found an opening to fight a white world champion, though in Australia rather than America. His name was Tommy Burns, who had the nickname “The Little Giant of Hanover” for his relatively small stature of 5 foot 7 and volcanic temper. Burns was not particularly keen, but pressure from prominent sports newspapers such as the police gazette and the promise of \$30,000 to take the fight enticed Burns to overcome the criticism he faced from his fellow heavyweights. Despite the height difference Burns felt assured of victory.



On December 26th, 1908 in Sydney, Australia Johnson battered him for 14 rounds, until police jumped in to help a practically unconscious Burns out of the ring. Johnson became the first black heavyweight champion of the world, an unprecedented achievement that defied ideas of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority. Perhaps unsurprisingly his achievement was not appreciated by his white contemporaries. White commentators started to call for a “great white hope” that could take back the title from this overzealous “negro.”

By this point his controversy had reached fever pitch

and news of his victory and exploits increasingly became front page news. It was almost unheard of for black people during the 20th century to be the subject of the news in the white press unless they had been found guilty of a crime or had been lynched. This is what made the character of Jack Johnson so different. He was not only a subject in black papers but following his title victory over Burns in 1908, he often appeared on the front page of white papers. As his career continued to develop, he became a subject of greater scrutiny from the white press.

Johnson’s notoriety grew because of his flamboyant lifestyle, which broke the conventions of how an African American should act. He conducted open affairs with white women and his confidence and willingness to taunt his white opponents caused a stir with many in America at the time, prompting comments such as “the white man must be rescued.” He owned a night club, acted on stage, had gold teeth and was even said to walk his pet leopard whilst drinking champagne. One famous incident describes Johnson being pulled up for speeding for which the penalty was \$50. He promptly turned around and handed the police officer \$100 as he planned to come back at the exact same speed. This behaviour was not just criticized by whites but also prominent members of the African American community, including civil rights leader Booker T Washington who criticised Johnson’s overindulgence stating “it is unfortunate that a man with money should use it in a way to injure his own people, in the eyes of those seeking to uplift his race and improve conditions.”

On 4 July 1910 Jeffries and Johnson were finally scheduled to fight in Reno, Nevada for what was coined as the “fight of the century”. Once again money was the main motive, with a huge prize of a \$101,000 in a 60/40 split in favour of the victor. The huge attendance required the construction of a purpose built arena which which would generate a queue of 15,760 people. In Chicago, some 10,000 people, mostly white, gathered outside the tribune building to listen to the bulletins on a megaphone. And in Times Square 30,000 people gathered in anticipation of the news.

In the 15th round Jeffries, after being knocked down for the first time in his career and having to be helped up back into the ring by the white ring-side reporters, his face puffy and bloody, threw in

the towel. Jeffries later stated that “I could never have whipped Johnson at my best.” I couldn’t have hit him. No, I couldn’t have reached him in 1000 years.”

The result was more monumental than the build-up, causing pandemonium, with reports of violence across the country. In New Orleans a black man who shouted “Hurrah for Johnson” was severely beaten by whites before being saved by police. In Houston a man had his throat cut for cheering for Johnson on a streetcar. A white mob of 200 ran black people off the street in Washington. In Cincinnati a man was chased by a mob of several hundred for what they called an offensive comment. In West Virginia a posse of 1000 white men was formed in anger at the cheers of the black people, who were soon run off the street and one man was led around with a rope around his neck. These scenes were repeated in major cities across the country.

The headlines made a sobering read the following morning; the Chicago daily tribune counted at least 11 dead around the country with many more injured. The New York Times reported similar numbers with 10 dead. The promoters’ plan following the fight was to show the film in theatres but the fact that the black man had won made this contentious. There were campaigns from various Christian groups to have screenings banned which was soon backed by the mayors of Cincinnati, Atlanta and Boston. Congress passed legislation in 1912 that banned the interstate transport of fight films, though this was later repealed in 1939.



Jack Johnson before the Jim Jeffries fight



Jack Johnson knocks out Jeffries

Following his victory Johnson continued to live his unapologetic lifestyle outside the ring. However, in the same year of his victory new legislation meant that authorities had a reason to exploit his fast lifestyle. The Mann Act aimed at preventing prostitution, but it was used to criminalize interracial relationships. Johnson became the object of an investigation into a potential violation of the Mann Act. After the suicide of his first wife, the white Etta Duryea in September 1912, Johnson swiftly remarried Lucille Cameron three months later. The fact that he had been said to be having an affair with Cameron during his marriage to Duryea fuelled an already incensed white public. He was arrested after the protests of Cameron’s mother that she had been kidnapped. Cameron refused to testify but he was not off the hook for long.

Soon investigators uncovered a relationship between Johnson and a white prostitute called Belle Schreiber. She testified against Johnson, and he was swiftly brought to Chicago federal court. In only two hours an all-white jury convicted him to a year in prison in 1913, for this relatively minor offence. Johnson was not willing to go to jail and skipped bail fleeing abroad to Europe and then South America, not returning until 1920.

While abroad, Johnson continued to fight to make money to live on. However, people began to lose interest in an out of shape and aging boxer. He lost his title in April 1915 to the “Potawatomi Giant”, Jess Willard in Havana. Finally, the man the white race viewed as a “boogie man” had been put back in line. There would not be another black heavyweight champion of the world for 22 years until Joe Lewis in 1937. Johnson died in a car crash in North Carolina in 1946, at the age of 68. A tragic end for a man who lived his life constantly in the fast lane, always look-

ing in his rear view mirror at racist critics and many of his black and white competitors.



Jack Johnson fighting Jess Willard 1915

Years later, the greatest heavyweight boxer and icon Mohammed Ali said of Johnson “I was bad but he was crazy.” Like Johnson Ali also had a fraught relationship with white people and the authorities, especially after his famous conscientious objection on religious grounds to fighting in the Vietnam War. Ali being a Muslim convert and a member of the Nation of Islam believed the war was against his beliefs. Like Johnson, Ali was convicted but instead of leaving the country Ali remained, albeit banned from his profession for three years.

Johnson drifted into obscurity except for boxing fans, certainly relative to the huge fame he commanded in his prime. However, in recent years many people have begun to see the importance of his achievements and the injustice of his imprisonment. In 2018, after consistent campaigning by his great niece, who had failed to secure a pardon for Johnson during the Obama administration. Donald Trump, a man who is no stranger to controversy himself, granted a rare posthumous pardon to the Johnson after what Trump said many feels was a racially motivated injustice. “It’s my honour to do it. It’s about time,” Trump said during an Oval Office ceremony, where he was fittingly joined by former heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis, previous WBC heavyweight title-holder Deontay Wilder and Sylvester Stallone, who drew significant awareness to Johnson’s cause.

During his Life Johnson was a figure who transcended the sport of boxing. Sports writer Ken Burns stated “for more than thirteen years, Jack Johnson was the most famous and the most notorious African-American on Earth.” But he was not simply a boxer. He

became a symbol for what was possible for African Americans during a period of great racial oppression. He stood up to and even taunted those who subjugated African American people, which included horrific beatings from the police and a plague of lynchings. He laughed in the face of segregation, marrying not one but three white women, not counting his multiple affairs. Whether his morals were correct or not, his fame and achievements were considerable and more so given the racial obstacles of the time and so 106 years later his memory lives on through those fighters who followed the example of his legacy to become not only heavyweight champions but also influential figures in their own right. Johnson was an imperfect person but he was also a ground breaker in the history of race relations.

Theo Hart, L6

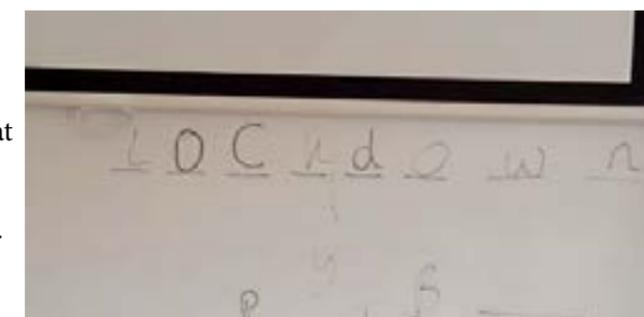


## Alex Wallace, our very own Pepys

March 19th 2020

### Lockdown is announced:

The hour of trial is upon us— that is, the days, weeks, and months that we will face in isolation. Last night, at 17:21GMT, it was confirmed by Prime Minister Boris Johnson (who had undergone a remarkable transformation from the pantomime Union Flag-clad zipliner we were familiar with to his own personal interpretation of a stoical wartime prime minister) that the vast majority of schools (excluding those providing for the children of “key workers”) would be closed indefinitely, the last in a series of public infrastructures to show symptoms of the global lockdown in response to the Pandemic.



March 20th 2020

### The News Spreads:

As the cases developed alongside our regular routines it was not a single moment where everything changed, but instead a period of about two weeks, from the end of February to the beginning of March, after the spring half-term, just as Italy began getting their first cases in the north. The first sign was through word of mouth— soon you could not go a day without discussing the virus: the number of infections; the fatalities; how vulnerable we were— there was some complacency in this regard over the fact that the elderly were more likely to be in mortal danger, if infected. The more prophetic of my classmates, with some vindictiveness, began declaring the effectiveness of their predictions of the virus' spread.



how far the stories of panic buying have been true in my local area. Upon entering, I immediately saw the stocks of fruit, vegetables and other staples effectively annihilated. Moving forward down the aisles, bread and baked goods were non-existent. Milk supplies had been wounded and it seemed that consumers have a sweet tooth in times of crisis, as chocolate bars were out. I cannot comment on the most bemusing product shortage, that of toilet paper, but I would not be surprised if that had disappeared as well.

*March 20th 2020*

**Effect of the News on the School:**

Amongst all this, the reaction of students at Mill Hill School has been turbulent. Whilst the closure of schools has been anticipated, the emotional impact of it was still perturbing. The most hit are of course the exam years who now face significant uncertainty over the nature of their GCSE and A Level qualifications. The upper Sixth Form now face the cruel circumstance of their final weeks at Mill Hill School, usually filled with hectic celebration, being irrevocably cut short. There is a great sense of finality to the whole affair. Judging from what I know now, I cannot determine how long the closures are going to last. This does mean that tomorrow could be the last time we see each other in person. As such, the school is in somewhat of a languor as things begin to shut down. Students have reacted in numerous ways, a kind of Rorschach test for how they react to crisis. Some have cried; some are exasperated; some have cooler heads; one student parked their car in front of a “NO PARKING” area in the school’s car park for her leavers’ photo, which was subsequently uploaded to social media along with an email ordering her to remove the car; but most, including I, have an aggravated sense of fear, especially those with underlying health conditions. Heart-warmingly though, the general reaction as a group has been to come together rather than to split apart. It appears that despite what may seem to be a total arrest of normal life in the UK, Mill Hill still remains Mill Hill in spirit.

*April 26th 2020*

**Comments on Death Rate and Economic Woes:**

I heard the astounding news today that in the United States of America around 3.3 million people have been forced out of their jobs as a result of the Pandemic. 3.3. million people, many with children, who have had their lives caved in with financial devastation— in only one nation of many.

*March 20th 2020*

**Effect on London:**

Then, the most prevalent symbol of the pandemic, the face mask began appearing in greater and greater frequency. In an average London Underground carriage, for example, by mid-February, it would be only a handful of the passengers, but by March it would be a significant proportion of them. The pervasive feeling of emptiness has manifested itself in an ethereal fashion throughout my daily routine. The London Underground carriages of the Victoria line have gone from a crushing stampede at rush hour to crowded. I have seen the images of London monuments devoid of people. They are not deserted in the sense of a post-apocalyptic landscape with detritus strewn about the place and obvious signs of degradation, but clean and eerily quiet. This is in contrast to the large number of individuals who still cram into the London Underground carriages, not out of their own volition (which considering the manner in which the virus spreads would be high self-destruction ) but due to the fact that several employers still regard their employees as “critical workers” in such a time of crisis

*March 20th 2020*

**The Supermarket Shelves and Panic Buying:**

However, what I have noticed most is the effect on supplies in supermarkets and other retailers. A visit I made this evening to one of these partly to buy food for our final English lesson before schools close and out of a morbid sense of curiosity to see for myself

*April 28th*

**School During Lockdown:**

The challenges of lockdown have provoked charitable instincts. The school kitchens have been abuzz with volunteers working to produce meals for NHS and other “key workers” (as the Government likes to label them), and the DT department producing personal protective equipment using the 3D printers. There have been charity collections of food and other items in the School reception, which have then been dropped off to where they were needed the most. However, this is mainly focused on the human side of things: my attempt to appeal to pupils and parents to try and donate animal food to aid the animals at Trent Park Animal Centre got no response with an Adobe-made poster was to no avail.

Indeed, generally we have gotten used to the technology required to navigate the current situation we find ourselves in. The “Dystopian Feel” I mentioned earlier has insidiously abated from my mind out of the increase of Google Meets I am required to attend by the new timetable. The continuous movement between my bedroom and my drawing room, adorn with a mantelpiece, fireplace and geometric, Ottoman style carpets and armchairs making for an aesthetic background for classmates to look at, has become a routine thing. Of course, technology is not entirely infallible. As the remote learning period drew on, we found a practical joker within our midst. This was not so much the exploitation of a fault in the Google Meet system, but the generally poor password practices of students at Mill Hill School. Someone was able to log in to other students’ Google accounts as a kind of disguise, and this led to much hilarity, or frustration depending on whose side you are on.



Work continues in the kitchens at Mill Hill School to feed key workers.

*2nd June*

**Comments on Race Riots in US and Protest Movements Globally:**

I can only try to describe with my language the sight of the pure black sky (not shrouded by air pollution due to the lockdown), littered with disparate stars probably not seen by the inhabitants for a long time, gored by crimson-orange flames from the skeletons of broken buildings. It is strangely beautiful. We have been sharing links to donate funds for advocacy organisations and Floyd’s family, petitions to sign, protests to attend. The latter however, is controversial: undoubtedly the large gatherings required will not reduce the chances of a second wave. Over the past few days, protests of thousands upon thousands have been held in London, Berlin, Sydney, Toronto, Paris, Copenhagen, Milan, Rio De Janeiro, Mexico City, Dublin, Auckland, Christchurch, Krakow, Perth and others. Even in war torn Syria, murals were made on rubble of George Floyd in his memory.



An example of a socially distanced classroom

*15th June*

**Return to school:**

Whilst we have returned to Mill Hill, it is nowhere near what it was before lockdown. The atmosphere is somewhere between the end-of-year joie de vivre and the existentially empty unease that initially began lockdown. On the outside, it appears very little has changed. Aside from a few areas of red tape denoting where students stay during their ten minute breaks from lessons, painted lines on the floors indicating designated routes, and signs pointing out those lines, externally the school looks much the same. However, on the inside, it’s as if all the warmth has been stripped from the environment. Signs, sofas, any “soft items” have been removed and replaced with dispensation stations of hand sanitizer. All classroom displays are gone. In one case, one of my classmates was able to talk with someone in a different group through the phone whilst waving at him from a distance.

Alex Wallace, L6



## Harlem Renaissance - A Cultural Awakening

The Harlem Renaissance was a cultural movement that spanned throughout the 1920s that saw the growth and development of a neighbourhood in Northern Manhattan. Harlem's nightclubs, music halls, and jazz joints became the centre of New York nightlife, and became home to many African-American professionals, including authors, poets, artists and musicians. Throughout the Renaissance there was a growing sense of racial pride and a desire for social and political equality, expressed through their various talents. Many of these works were based on past experiences of blacks in America, and how Harlem was the new home for Black America.

Throughout the 1910's Harlem became the centre for African American aspirations with black businessmen purchasing the real estate of Northern Manhattan. And when huge movement of African Americans occurred during the 1920's during "The Great Migration", purchasing priorities for properties in Harlem went to Af-

frican Americans and would lead to "America's First Great Black Metropolis". Harlem was unlike many other areas during the 1920's with many African American's holding high positions of authority and consequently were able to have large influences on the law and their community. Harlem allowed African American's to build and develop their own society, and express their own cultural heritage, as well as working towards building a better future for themselves.

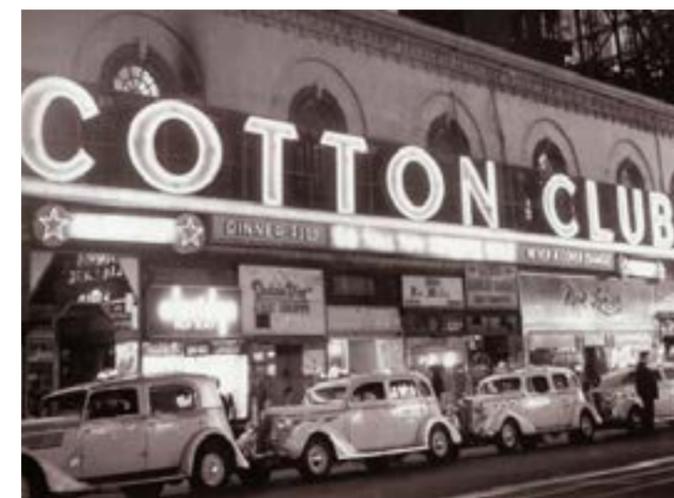
Music was at the heart of the Harlem Renaissance, allowing African American's to echo their past of slavery, yet also act as a mouthpiece for which they could display their racial pride. New York City and Harlem contributed to the richness of Jazz. The first piano style to be incorporated into jazz was the "Harlem Stride" which was created during the Harlem Renaissance and helped to "blur the lines between the poor Negroes and socially elite

Negroes". The traditional jazz band was composed primarily of bass instrument and was considered a symbol of the South and many African Americans' past, yet the piano was considered an instrument of the wealthy and with its use, wealthy blacks felt that jazz music was more acceptable.



Louis Armstrong playing with the Toledo jazz orchestra

The musical talents of the African American musicians were often on display at various jazz clubs which were attended by the New York elite. It became viewed as a sophisticated art form and was popular among the wealthy. Perhaps the most famous of these clubs was the Cotton Club. Various stars performed at the Club included Cab Calloway, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong and Ethel Waters among many others. It became a regular meeting spot for the rich with regular Celebrity Nights that would attract many stars including Jack Johnson, George Gershwin and even the New York City Mayor Jimmy Walker.



The Cotton Club in Harlem

Clubs such as Cotton personified the excitement of

Harlem nightlife with elaborate floorshows, dancing waiters and integrated audiences. Some of the most popular songs of the era included "Take the A Train" by Duke Ellington. It was a song which celebrated as well as explained African American's migration to cities such as Harlem from the south. "Sugar Hill" is mentioned throughout the song which was a historic district in Harlem and home to many prominent figures in the Civil Rights movement including W.E.B DuBois, Langston Hughes and Duke Ellington himself.

"Strange Fruit", Billie Holliday. It was originally a poem written by a white Jewish male schoolteacher but later famously performed by Billie Holliday in protest of lynchings. She often performed it in front of white audiences, bringing awareness to the subject matter. Throughout the song, there is a haunting metaphor of African Americans being compared to the fruit of trees.

Some of the first coast-to-coast broadcasts came from Harlem Broadcasts with Duke Ellington's Orchestra being heard in living rooms across America. This brought far greater attention to the talents of various African American musicians and helped develop appreciation for their abilities and open up pathways for new opportunities. As well as through music, the Harlem Renaissance celebrated African American culture through literature and art. The cultural movement marked the first time in American history that the white population took notice of the literature of African Americans.

Literature offered new ways of saying and understanding what it meant to be black during a crucial time in their history. The Crisis, the official magazine for the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP), and Marcus Garvey's Negro World would open up masses of opportunities for African Americans to publish poetry, short stories and essays, encouraging the black community to do more, such as write, and make all forms of art. This would have a large felt impact with up to 100,000 readers of the Crisis at its peak giving many young writers the exposure to have their works read by a large number.

A key poet during the Harlem Renaissance was Alain Locke, who published works throughout the Harlem Renaissance. He is most commonly known for his book in 1925 which targets White Amer-

icans, “The New Negro”. This was a compilation of poetic works, fiction pieces and dissertations about the African American community throughout the Harlem Renaissance. The book was compiled into three distinct sections, “The Negro Renaissance”, “The New Negro in a New World” and a final section which was a bibliography of various African American works. It was aimed at white Americans in order to show the ways in which the black community was shedding old stereotypes and striving towards achieving the image of the “New Negro”. Locke’s works were seen as hugely influential and he is heralded as the father of the Harlem Renaissance.

The Harlem Renaissance was widely known for the literary and performing arts, but many sculptors, photographers and painters played a vital role in the cultural movement.

Painter Aaron Douglas who was known as the “father of African American art” arrived in Harlem in 1925. He quickly became immersed in Harlem’s cultural life and contributed to magazines such as the NAACP magazine, “The Crisis”. Douglas created powerful images of African-American life and struggles, and consequently won many awards for these publications. Douglas had a unique artistic style which fused his interests in modernism and African art and used bold colours making personal connections in his art to West African countries such as Benin, Congo and Senegal, which many viewed as a link to their heritage. Alongside his artwork, Douglas helped found the Harlem Artists Guild of which he was the first president. The guild aimed to support and promote young African-American artists and improve public understanding of issues faced by their community. In addition to this they worked alongside other organisations to improve the opportunities given towards African-American artists.

James Van Der Zee also played a key role in the Renaissance. He was a photographer and became the unofficial chronicler of African American life in Harlem. Through his photos he would depict life of middle-class African Americans. He would take thousands of pictures, and labelled each with a signature and date, which would be important for future documentation.

The Harlem Renaissance has had a great impact on the lives of African Americans opening doors for today’s African American writers, artists and musicians. In

1925, African American author James Weldon Johnson stated that, “I believe that the (African American’s) advantages and opportunities are greater in Harlem than in any other place in the country, and that Harlem will become the intellectual, the cultural and the financial centre for Negroes of the United States. Harlem was the breeding ground for the creative endeavours for all these talented minds and allowing an explosion in creativity. The Renaissance has had a major long term impact by opening the doors for many aspiring African American minds. The Harlem Renaissance produced novelists, poets, artists and musicians who today are considered as some of the finest talents that America had ever produced, regardless of race.

Miles McIntosh, L6

## Dresden: ‘The Holocaust



## of Bombs’?

It is the image of the ruined skyline of Dresden, a city representative of the ornate Baroque heritage of Europe in all aspects of architecture, art, history and literature, the place that was once “a refuge for Trollope’s maidens”, as put by historian Max Hastings, now left a visceral smouldering wreck by the total destruction of total war from the air that inspires so much ethical unease in the modern historian when reviewing the cause of the late war Allies, in those final winter and early spring months of the Second World War in 1945. This disquiet is not limited to a post war historiographical perspective, as reaction to British Pathé newsreel footage of “Dresden Bombed to Atoms” spread amongst the British public. Contrary to the “all-in” war spirit of the Blitz, the methods of bombing were heavily scrutinized in newspaper editorials, one Associated Press reporter Howard Cowan filing a comment that the Allies had resorted to terror bombing. Questions were asked in Parliament by long time opponent of strategic bombing Richard Stokes, MP- the anxiety over the morality of Dresden penetrated not only the public consciousness but also those in power.

Churchill himself, who ultimately had control and responsibility over the Air Staff despite not ordering the specific raid directly himself, wrote to General Ismay,

Chief of the Air Staff, that he felt the need “for more precise concentration upon military objectives... rather than on mere acts of terror and wanton destruction” after the event. It is no doubt then, that even to the contemporary observer, Dresden was symbolic of Allied excess and vindictiveness exerted on innocent victims. However, with the 75th anniversary of this controversial action approaching and new data on its destructive impact, perhaps it is time the ethicality of Dresden is reviewed, in the context of a military action against a determined enemy in mortal defensive combat.



The initial purpose of the Dresden air raid, whether it was a genuine strategic effort to bring the war's end closer, a sanguine act of revenge or an intimidation tactic against increasingly ulterior Soviet motives, is ambiguous. There would appear to a certain case that the latter was seen as a benefit. A memorandum published for distribution by RAF command to airmen on the night of the attack not only described the necessity of the raid as due to Dresden being "an industrial city of first class importance", but also "incidentally to show the Russians when they arrive what Bomber Command can do". There is a context for this intriguing motive of what can be described, perhaps, as disguised intimidation, aside from a competitive motivation of the airmen. Two days before the night of the 13th, the night of the air raid, the Yalta Conference had come to a close. Here, the "Big Three" - Great Britain, The USA and the Soviet Union had set forth the framework for the post war future of Europe- in particular the division of Germany in separate occupation zones and a potential dismemberment of the nation discussed by committee. The allies now met with hidden tension, Churchill of the UK and a frail Franklin Roosevelt of the USA having shared concerns over Soviet influence in the new Europe- particularly with the concession of Stalin being allowed supervision of the liberated eastern European states, under a dubious promise of democratic elections (which would not eventuate).



Antifacist banners in Dresden

It was in this climate that Churchill, the most staunchly anti-Soviet of the allied leaders, having had experience advocating intervention against the Bolsheviks in the Russian Civil War of 1917-1923 may have experienced a heightened anxiety. Some claims have been made that there was Soviet pressure for a raid on the city by Chief of Soviet General Staff Aleksei Antonov and Stalin himself, asking Churchill why he had not bombed the

city yet. This claim made by a British interpreter after the fact is not entirely trustworthy in provenance, considering the immediate start of the Cold War, and the potential motivation to blame the destruction of now occupied city on the vindictive advice of a former ally instead of oneself. There was however, discussion on harassment of German reinforcements and industry by air in support of upcoming Soviet offences in the Spring. Therefore whilst there was a consensus on aerial bombardment of cities in eastern Germany, there was no pressure specifically for the extent of incendiary bombardment of Dresden specifically. However the specific raid on Dresden was not ordered by him at this time, as he was on en-route to Yalta.



Dresden Strike Target Map

In fact, Churchill's involvement, and that of his deputies, was relatively removed from the execution of the operation, his role only of supervision, the planning and nature of the attack was determined by the air chiefs. Churchill's support of a focus on air raids on east Germany to support the Soviet offences was inspired by a report earlier that year, for Churchill's eyes only, entitled German Strategy and Capacity to Resist, published by the Joint Intelligence Subcommittee. It gave the impression that Germany could collapse by mid-April if the Soviets immediately overran her eastern Defences, but could hold out until November should she hold them. It therefore suggested any kind of support to the Soviets on the eastern front to shorten the war's end. It was then suggested amongst the RAF by the director of bomber operations, Air Commodore Bufton, Deputy Chief of the Air Staff Bottomley, that the coordinated air attack by the RAF to support the Soviets could

damage German civilian morale and to this end cause an earlier collapse.

This idea was given support by the same committee that published the original report. It was then that Arthur "Bomber" Harris, Bomber Command chief, gave plans for attacks on Dresden, Leipzig and Chemnitz in concurrence with the idea suggested by Bufton. At this point, Churchill, on the 26th of January, intervened querying what plans had been drawn up for the proposals. Chief of Air Staff Charles Portal responded: "We should use available effort in one big attack on Berlin and attacks on Dresden, Leipzig, and Chemnitz... where a severe blitz will not only cause confusion in the evacuation from the East, but will also hamper the movement of troops from the West." Portal stressed that there should be no diversion of aircraft from the current raids on military and industrial facilities. Churchill pressed further, inquiring whether "large cities in east Germany, should not now be considered especially attractive targets". It appears at this point the air raids on Eastern German cities were considered, amongst the Air Staff and Churchill to be primarily strategic in purpose.



However there is an underlying motive of disrupting civilian evacuation from territories in Eastern Germany such as Ostpreussen, where they were facing imminent Soviet invasion, indicating a civilian target, whilst not a primary objective, existed. However, by the 1st of February the civilian element becomes increased, with Bottomley stating the operation "will cause great confusion in civilian evacuation from the east", whilst a memorandum to the Chief of Staffs Committee by a certain Sir Douglas Evill highlighted that the disruption of mass civilian movement was now a major factor in the decision that had been taken to bomb the most populated area of the city, with the most concentrated area of both industry and historical relics, the city

centre.

Whilst the motivation of civilian disruption by the Chiefs of Air Staff increased prior to the night of the raid, the strategic motivation still remained. It is still debated whether Dresden was a military city, and in this aspect, despite the high culture of the city, contemporary evidence suggests there was a buildup. A US Air Force Historical Division report written in response to international concern over the raid, kept classified until 1978 (suggesting it was for the reassurance of those in command, not to sway public opinion) stated that in Dresden there were 110 factories and 500,000 workers supporting the war effort, including aircraft components, a poison gas factory, as well as barracks and munitions storage. Also mentioned is the city's two traffic routes- south to Czechoslovakia and east in the European uplands, indicating these were used for transportation of troops.

The testimony of Colonel Harold E. Cook, held as a US POW in Dresden the night before the attack, stated that he saw with his own eyes "that Dresden was an armed camp: thousands of German troops, tanks and artillery and miles of freight cars loaded with supplies supporting and transporting German logistics towards the east to meet the Russians". The city had a specifically military borough, the Altstadt. Whilst within the area of expected destruction, it did not face nearly as much destruction as the city centre. This does then suggest that the post-war view of Dresden being bombed as an entirely peaceful city is not necessarily true- there was a clear military buildup that, in timing with the Soviet preparations for an offensive, was seen as a strongpoint by German strategic command for the final defence of Germany.

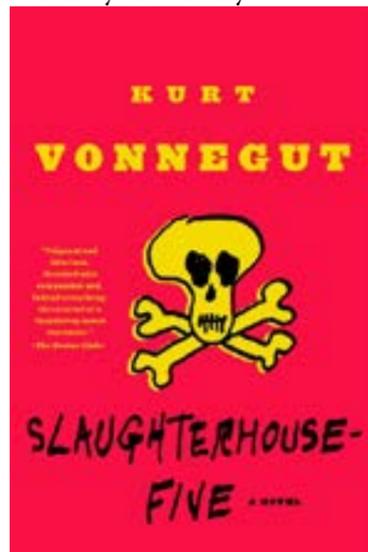
Post war, the effect of Dresden remains ingrained in the public consciousness, particularly the civilian death toll, which has for the most part has been seen in its size as evidence of the disproportionate scale of the attack and its vindictiveness on an innocent civilian population. However, recent evidence undertaken by independent historians has uncovered that the infamous death toll may not have been as widespread as thought, and that the loss of life may be more proportionate to the military action, even if the civilian deaths are still brutal, tragic and on a scale hard to imagine occurring in one event in our modern society of peace. The most common figure circulating in public is around 200,000 fatalities. However the origins of this number are now of un-

certain provenance.



(A collection of dead bodies after the bombings)

The initial response of the German high command was to propose using the Dresden attack as a case for the abandonment of the Geneva protocol on the Western Front. According to Austrian commentator Viktor Reimann Goebells wept with rage and attack Hermann Göring, claiming “If [he] had the power [he] would drag this cowardly good-for-nothing, this Reich marshal, before a court. ... How much guilt does this parasite not bear for all this, which we owe to his indolence and love of his own comforts.” However, it was decided that Dresden would be used as a propaganda device to convince the populace to continue resistance for fear of brutal destruction by the enemy.



The cover of K. Vonnegut's Slaughter House 5

Initially, a leaflet was published on the 16th February stating Dresden was purely a city of culture by the Reich Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda. However on the 25th of February, a leaflet entitled “Dresden- Massacre of Refugees” was published, likely

with Goebbels influence, claiming a 200,000 figure. There was no official record at this time, and the number was speculative, without evidence. Another, more long lasting publication has used a figure of similar dubious sources. Kurt Vonnegut's renowned 1969 science fiction anti-war novel, Slaughterhouse Five, which features a character that is an allied prisoner of war in Dresden, claims 135,000 were killed.

This figure was gathered from the novel, Destruction of Dresden, 1963, by David Irving, a prominent holocaust negationist who denies the methods in which victims were exterminated and the widespread complicity of senior officials, including denying the knowledge of the Führer Adolf Hitler, many of his theories having been proved inaccurate and of falsified origin by historian Deborah Lipstadt, who won a failed libel case launched by Irving. Irving himself was forced to correct these figures in letters to the Times in 1966, lowering it to 25,000, which at the time was in agreement with scholar consensus.



A pile of bodies awaiting cremation

As such, the commonly cited death toll is not based off fact, but pro or at least apologetic National Socialist historical revisionism. Analysis of contemporary German reports, a Tagesbefehl (order of the day) on the 22nd of March indicated the number of dead recovered by then was 20,204, including 6,865 cremated. The report cited an expected number of 25,000. A further 1,858 bodies were discovered during the Post-War reconstruction. Since 1989, no new bodies have been found. Only 100 cases were found where the remains were so terribly dismembered by burning that it was impossible to determine if there were multiple victims, as the majority of deaths were

by suffocation.

However, this evidence has been ignored by far-right groups, (Dresden recently declaring a state of emergency in relation to this as of writing) who have sought a historically revisionist agenda to promote a German history more suitable to their cause and more condemnatory of the Western allies- calling it the “Holocaust of Bombs” as said by the leader of the far right NPD in Germany, Jürgen Gansel. They continue to use the previous figures in the hundreds of thousands. Despite this, German anti-fascists have supported the lower figures, and even the bombing campaign itself with slogans such as “German perpetrators are no victims!” and “Bomber-Harris Superstar – Thanks from the red Antifa.” However, despite this fierce conflict, an Independent Historian's Commission authorized by the Dresden Council to investigate an ultimate death toll, partly in response to the far right misuse of statistics. Upon analysis of death certificates and various other sources, it was found that the minimum death toll was 22,700 and a maximum of 25,000.

The case of Dresden and the attempts of the proceeding generations to reconcile the trauma of her destruction is a remarkable case study of how one views such sanguine acts in history- how is one impartial and justly reviewing such a thing? Perhaps it is impossible. However, one can certainly conclude that the case of historical revisionists to revise such an event for an agenda is untenable. Responsibility and condemnation for certain ethically dubious conduct, such as the increased focus on targeting civilian evacuation by the RAF Air Staff can be assigned, but to assign a grand overarching villain behind it is not plausible- in a global total war, morality is not a binary concept, becoming more associated with human nature than any one singular figure.

Alex Wallace, L6



## The Chinese Paradox: How China combined communism and capitalism to create a world superpower

In today's world China is a major superpower and is the last communist superpower in the world. However, China isn't completely Communist as their government in the 1980s implemented economic reforms that made the country capitalist economically. To see how China became such a powerhouse in the world we have to go back to the 1920s, which is where it all started.

The outbreak of Leninism and the Russian Revolution in 1917 led to the birth of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921. The CPC waged war against the Nationalist Party, which ruled China in 1927 as they felt the Nationalists weren't governing the country to their best capability. The war reigned for 22 years and ended when the Nationalist party admitted defeat, thus allowing the CPC to completely take over and form the People's Republic of China in 1949.

Mao Zedong is arguably the most famous and influential Chinese leader in the country's history. He was one of the founding members of the CPC and was the leader of the party. After winning the Chinese civil war in 1947, he became Chairman Mao as he now found himself running not only the Communist Party, but the whole of China. He would rule over China from 1949 until his death in 1976.

While in power Mao was considered a dictator by the Western World. He was seen as a tyrant as many of his reforms led to the deaths of millions of Chinese citizens. Campaigns such as "The Great Leap Forward" is an example as Mao tried to rapidly transform China's economy from agrarian to industrial. This led to the deadliest Famine in history as between 20-45 million people died from 1958 till 1962.

Even though he was a controversial figure, Mao Zedong has been credited for modernising the nation

and building it into the world power it is today. He did this by promoting women's status in the country, improving education and healthcare while also increasing the life expectancy of the average Chinese person as China's population nearly doubled under his leadership. After having multiple heart attacks Mao Zedong died in 1976 and with his death radical change was headed in China's direction.

In post-Mao China there were many rapid economic and social changes. The government implemented these changes because the economy had entered a period of stagnation during the 1970s. This period led to the reforms of the 80s, which created a nascent market economy. The changes benefited some people, but seriously disaffected others. The idea of having a one party state was questioned by the people as the government was accused of being corrupt. The fact that the party was Communist meant that the citizens had a lack of political participation and this infuriated the people. These frustrations led to the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989.

The Tiananmen Square protests were student-led demonstrations in Beijing. The students called for greater accountability, democracy and freedom of speech. The protests went from April 15-June 4 and at the height of the protests, about 1 million people gathered in the Square. Deng Xiaoping, who was the supreme leader of China in 1989, and other Communist Party senior figures viewed the protests as political threats and used force to exterminate the demonstration. The government mobilized 300,000 troops to Beijing and on June 4th the troops advanced into Tiananmen Square to start mercilessly killing the demonstrators. It is said that during the infamous early morning hours of the massacre more than 1000 Chinese protestors were killed by the hands of their own army.

Locally and internationally people were outraged by the atrocities the government committed. This is because their barbaric tactics led to many of their own citizens lives being lost on that eventful day. The CPC realised that they had to offer a solution to the problems that had become more prominent in the country over the years. The party couldn't offer political reform because they would then lose their power over the country. So, to maintain their power and appease their people simultaneously the government offered greater economic reform. Their own brand of market-economy socialism was accelerated so that they could show the people of the country that they could lead a good

life under CPC control through economic satisfaction. By satisfying the people through wealth the government believed that a call for political reform would become less significant since the people would be happy with their living standards. By doing this, China went through an economic boom, which led to China becoming the second largest economy in the world today. This is because the accelerated reforms saw the country developing economically at a substantial speed. At the time of the Tiananmen Square protests China's GDP per capita did not even compare to Gambia's, but the economic reforms implemented have now caused China to reach new heights that the country has never seen before as by 2030 it's predicted that their economy will overtake the US.

By executing the reforms China essentially combined the economic ideas of capitalism with their own political ideology of communism to create the new modern day China. The demonstrations at Tiananmen Square are to thank for the changes as without them China would've continued to be a poor communist state. The protests forced the CPC to act on how to improve their country and because of this the country developed at such a high rate that they've referred to China's situation as an "economic miracle". China is now a world superpower and with a population of over one billion people and a booming economy, China has become one of the most influential countries in the world today. Their success didn't just come over night, but was in fact a long process over many years. Nevertheless, the issue of democracy still remains prevalent in Modern day China.

After the Tiananmen Square incident the West still believed that one day the idea of democracy would come back to existence. It is predicted that at a certain point the rising economy will falter and the government will not be able to appease the people with riches anymore. This could possibly awaken the people's desire for political reform and if these desires do awaken, the Chinese Government will not be able to deal with it the same way they did in 1989. In 2019 we've already seen revolts against the CPC's rule. In Hong Kong protests started over a bill that was passed by the Hong Kong government that said that criminals wanted in mainland China could be detained by Hong Kong officials and extradited back to China. Many people were against this as they felt that China's jurisdiction and legal system was undermining Hong Kong's autonomy, which they gained after breaking free from British rule and becoming independent in 1997. Nonetheless, the Chinese gov-

ernment still have control over Hong Kong as Britain relinquished their powers to China. This is significant because the protests are creating a power struggle as the people of Hong Kong are revolting against the idea of their democracy being taken away by China while China is trying to maintain their order and dominance in the country.

The fact that the people of Hong Kong are calling for political reform could influence many people in mainland China as their democratic rights have been oppressed for decades. This could be worrying for the government as protests could lead to them losing control over the country while permanently removing communism in China all together.

By combining capitalism and communism, China has become a world superpower in today's day and age. By limiting political reform and maximising economic reform the country has soared to great heights of success. However, the call for political reform will never end as people will always want to have a voice in the place that they call home and will continue to push for this until they accomplish their goal. The question now isn't "Will China be able to become an economic powerhouse?", but is instead "Will China be able to remain a communist country?" The next few years for China will be complicated, but what will unfold will definitely affect the nation forever.

[Temi Fashina, L6](#)



The story of my grandmother, Simone Swieca is no ordinary journey. It's a story of survival. In the most difficult of times which no person should ever have to experience.

The story begins in Paris in an apartment in the Quartier du Marais where Simone and her family lived a comfortable life, surrounded by parents Marie and Joseph, older sisters Suzanne and Rosette, younger sister Monique and older brother Georges. Joseph had a millinery factory which was later taken by the Germans. In 1940, the Germans seized control of France, and in 1942, the Nazis declared that all Jews were to be arrested as part of the Final Solution. Jews were ordered to wear the Star of David so they could be identified. This was to be the beginning of life under the Nazi regime of Hitler. A life of fear and tension for Jewish people. Marie did not believe she would be arrested with five children, so she sent Joseph into hiding with non-Jewish friends. But the rest of the Swiecas were soon arrested and taken to the Velodrome d'Hiver, a sports stadium where thousands of people had been assembled.

They slept inside the stadium and were given water to drink. After a few days, families were called by name and taken into buses. These were to be taken outside Paris to Drancy. This was a camp which was to be used to keep people before being taken to Germany

to labour camps. As the letter 'S' was approaching, Marie thought how she could save her children. She had heard a whisper that if a woman was pregnant, the child would be perceived as German and would be saved. She told the eldest children Suzanne and Georges to keep the three sisters together. Marie screamed and said that she was haemorrhaging. She was taken by stretcher, surrounded by the five children. She kept asking for her kids. They were taken to the centre of the stadium where there was a makeshift infirmary. Marie said that she was pregnant. The doctor wanted to examine her, but she hit his hand with such force that he could not continue the examination. The doctor said the magic words 'take her to l'hospital Rothschild' by ambulance. They were taken away from the Velodrome. The doctor at the hospital told her that she was not pregnant. She argued with him incessantly, telling the doctor that she was having a miscarriage and even though the doctor did not believe her, she created the illusion that she always carried small babies. Finally, she received a certificate to say she was three months pregnant. The children were taken to a home where children were waiting to be collected by a parent. They waited for Marie to collect them. After a few days, she came, and they walked back to their apartment only to find it padlocked. They went to their grandparents. Soon after arriving at their grandpar-

ents, one night there was a visit from the police to the neighbours. Marie, fearing that the Germans would arrest them again, acted quickly. She threw pillows down into the courtyard of the building next door and tied sheets together. She went out the window first and Georges and Suzanne handed the three younger sisters down to her, then they followed.

The grandparents hid in the cellar so the police would not find anyone there. Marie decided the family must go into hiding in the countryside. She chose a tiny village outside Paris, Arville, where they stayed until 1944. They mayor knew they were Jewish but took pity on Marie, gave her false papers and helped her and the children. They lived in a small house that Marie had found vacant. Georges, 14 became the head of the household and went from village to village by bicycle to collect food. The Allies were bombing trains near the village, so they were always worried about the whereabouts and safety of Georges. Marie often returned to Paris to finalise business that she had with friends.



Jewish Deportees being held at the Velodrome before transportation to Auschwitz

As she had to wear the Star of David, she took either Monique or my grandma Simone and carried them by her breast so that the star was not seen. Marie escaped being caught many times. As she saw Nazi police arresting people ahead, she would cross the road and take a side street to avoid them. When Marie realised that the Nazis had headquarters in the same village, she decided that they had to move to another village. She organized for one of the locals to take them in his horse drawn cart at dusk so they could travel in the night and go into hiding off the main road. Suzanne and Georges had to collect water from a well and pick mushrooms from the fields. One day when they were in hiding in a remote farmhouse away from the village, Marie said 'I have had a strange dream. I dreamt

that I had fallen into a large hole. My parents lifted me out and said that my time has not come yet!' She later learned that her parents had been murdered in the Warsaw Ghetto.



Post War demonstration outside the Velodrome

In the meantime, Suzanne was sent to the village with a metal tin to get milk from a farm and she was scared. She saw the Nazi tanks going away in the distance and they were looking at her. A few hours later, some locals came running to Marie and said 'the Americans are coming'. Marie took my grandmother's hand and her siblings and walked into the village. The Americans were driving their trucks into the village throwing sweets into the crowd of villagers. Everybody was kissing and crying. There was tremendous excitement in the village.

The liberation had come. A few weeks later, the Americans drove the family in a truck back to Paris. Joseph returned and then a year later, a sixth child named Francine was born. Life started again. Marie and Joseph lost everything but the one thing that was never lost was hope. They had survived the Holocaust.

Gus Hylander, L6



# Paths of Glory



Stanley Kubrick had made only a few documentaries when MGM (Metro Goldwyn Mayer) expressed an interest in him and his producer James Harris. Looking for a project, the 28-year-old Kubrick remembered a book he had read called Paths of Glory. The book was based on the real story of the execution of five French soldiers for cowardice in 1915. It was turned into a stylised stage play that ran very briefly on Broadway before being forgotten. Kubrick commissioned a script by Jim Thompson, who made one of the minor characters in the book, Colonel Dax, into the central figure of the film. But MGM wanted nothing to do with the project. "We just did 'The Red Badge of Courage'" said one MGM-exec. "Enough with war films. They're death at the box office". Kubrick could find no other studio to show any interest in this strange project about a war that, in any case, did not rate significantly for most Americans.

Hollywood star Kirk Douglas read the script and fell in love with it. He took it to United Artists and persuaded them to back the project if he starred in it. Douglas's agent wanted a fee of almost one third of the entire budget and demanded that his client's production company, Bryna Films, make the film. Kubrick and Harris had no option but to accept the deal. Filming began in March 1957. Kubrick at the grand Schleissheim Palace

near Munich and close by open fields, converted into no-mans-land. Shooting lasted for 64 days and completed on schedule and inside the budget of \$950,000. The Munich police provided 600 extras who dressed up as French poilus. The film opened in October 1957 and received moderate success however it stands today as a great war film.

The film begins with a brief narration of the war up to 1916. An American audience, unfamiliar with the story of the First World War, would have needed this. In the opening sequence, the camera tracks Generals Broulard (played by Adolphe Menjou) and General Mireau (played by George MacReady) as they walk through the magnificent halls of Mireau's chateau headquarters, giving an impression of how elegantly the high command lived, well behind the front line. Broulard tells Mireau that his troops must take the enemy strong point 'ant hill'. Initially Mireau is reluctant, but Broulard tells him there a promotion available he enthusiastically takes on the task.

The next scene switches to the trenches, a tracking shot along the trenches following General Mireau inspecting the men of the 701st infantry regiment. Mireau's pristine uniform juxtaposes the soldiers who stand by him in their mud worn kits. He stops

by a soldier and asks him “are you ready to kill more Germans?” The soldier stumbles and does not reply, while a neighbouring soldier tells Mireau he suffers from shell shock. Mireau blurts out in anger “there is no such thing as shell shock, get a grip of yourself” and ridicules him for cowardice. The shot then moves on to Colonel Dax (played by Kirk Douglas) in the regimental commander dugout, to where the him and Mireau discuss the taking of the ant hill, at the opposite side of no-man’s land. Mireau tells Dax with the cold and callous logic of a First World War commander that he will probably lose 5% of his men in the barrage 10% in no man’s land, 20% through the enemy wire and 25% in attacking anthill. But, he still should have enough to capture and hold the enemy stronghold. This was the pitiless but relentless logic of a war of attrition. ‘I’m depending on you colonel,’ Mireau tells Dax, ‘The whole of France is depending on you.’

The attack scene is one of the great set pieces of the film. After 15 minute barrage, dax walks through the trench in a reverse track towards the camera. At zero hour he blows his whistle and leads his men over the top and into the shell holed nightmare of no man’s land Kubrick shot the assault with five tracking cameras that moved at the same speed as the advancing soldiers, giving the perspective from someone in the assault. He operated a sixth hand-held camera himself and followed Kirk Douglas, as Dax, leading the assault and scrambling from one shell-hole to another.

Well behind the lines Mireau observes the battle from his periscope. With the attack failing, he notices that one of the companies has not advanced from their trenches. Enraged, he orders their artillery guns to fire upon the French troops not going forward. The battery commander refuses to fire upon their own men as there is no written order. Meanwhile the men below are stuck in their trenches as they know aiming towards the heavy machine gun fire from anthill would be suicide. The attack collapses in failure. Like so many assaults in the first world, nothing has been achieved, and hundreds of lives have been lost.

After the failed attack, Mireau acknowledges his promotion is long gone, and demands a court martial of the 701st for cowardice. Initially Mireau orders 10 men from each company to be punished for cowardice, which was the penalty of death. It is then reduced to three, one from each company of the first wave to be randomly selected by the company commander. What follows is a court marshal carried out by a kangaroo court. Dax, a lawyer before the war defends his men to his best ability. The court sees men’s defence

insufficient to explaining why they failed to achieve their objective, and are found guilty and ordered to be shot at dawn. The injustice against men who have shown their utmost bravery throughout the war, until the attack on ant hill is monstrous. Instead of sympathy, they received a death sentence.

Later that night, Dax meets with General Broulard at the chateaux to plead him to cancel the executions. He tell Broulard that Mireau had ordered to fire the artillery upon his own men. Broulard is shocked, and fears a scandal that will engulf general staff so its dismissed. At the crack of dawn, the men are lined up in a line as the shot follows the treacherous walk to the wood stakes. Kubrik’s change to the unhappy ending of the film, follows the cruel logic the film which further exacerbates the impact of this morose scene. The men are tied up, and with their final opportunity to talk to a priest are ready to die. In this absurd scene, the firing squad are given the orders “Aim! Fire!” the men are shot with the camera head on with no where else for the viewer to look.

The final sequence shows the men of the 701st in a tavern when the owner brings in a captured German girl in to sing. Against a torrent of whistling and cat calls, the terrified girl nervously starts to sing ‘Der Treuer Husar’ - The Faithful Soldier. The men slowly fall silent. They listen enchanted to this song about love and home. Tears build up in the soldiers’ eyes. Despite the barbarity of war, their sense of humanity survives. Shortly after, the men are ordered back to the front line.

In Paths of Glory, you never see the enemy, no glimpse of a German soldier. The soldiers live in the mud and gore of the trenches while the generals live luxuriously into the grand chateaux and sip cognac. The film is divided not in no man’s land between the soldiers and their ‘enemy’ but the vast gap between the leaders and the led. Paths of Glory is displayed as an anti-war film, except it’s not particularly, rather it’s anti patriotic as France treats their courageous soldiers as villainous cowards. Kubrik displays to the late 1950 audiences the three of the 1400 punishments by death for cowardice that occurred in the First World War, which the world had been oblivious to. France, in particular, was notorious for their commanders shooting their own men in the trenches for acts of cowardice. After all, Paths of Glory was banned in French cinemas upon its release. It’s a powerful reminder of the chilling injustice of war.

Jasper Brown, L6



## Franklin’s Lost Expedition

On the morning of May 19th 1845, two ships and 134 bomb vessels, originally designed to carry and fire large mortars, and as such, were immensely tough and durable. On the morning of May 19th 1845, two ships and 134 men departed from England, setting sail for the frigid waters of the Canadian Arctic. Their mission was to traverse and chart the fabled Northwest Passage, one of the last great unknowns of polar exploration.

For over 400 years explorers had searched for a shortcut to Asia, and believed it existed, hidden in a constantly shifting maze of ice and snow. Under the command of Sir John Franklin, two of the most technologically advanced ships of the day – HMS Erebus and HMS Terror – were dispatched to the arctic with high confidence and optimism, and an expectation of success. However, upon entering Lancaster Sound at the opening of the passage in July 1845, the two ships disappeared. Together with their crews, supplies and equipment they vanished into the ice and were never seen again.

It took 150 years of further expeditions to piece together the fate of the expedition, and how such a well-prepared voyage ended in tragedy and the worst disaster in the history of British polar exploration. When the expedition departed England in 1845, it was the largest and most advanced polar voyage of its day. Erebus and Terror were both former Hecla-class

It was thought these traits would make them ideal for navigating the jagged ice-mazes of the polar seas and withstanding the enormous pressure from the pack-ice. In addition, both were fitted with reinforced hulls and metal sheeting at the bow and waterline; sealed compartments to prevent flooding and boilers to provide an innovative central heating system. Before the expedition they were further improved with large steam engines that would drive a propeller, allowing each ship to move when the wind died down. The ships even carried primitive diving suits that would be used to mend the propellers and hull.

The Admiralty were also keen to provide for their men during those long polar winters, so much attention was given over to the crew’s wellbeing. The ships were equipped with libraries, theatres, costumes and sports equipment that would all help to maintain high morale and mental health. Most significant however was the three years’ worth of canned provisions. Canning was a new technology that allowed fruits, vegetables and meats to be preserved and kept fresh for the entire

voyage and it was hoped that the preserved food would help reduce risk of disease and malnourishment.

These preparations made it clear that the Admiralty had wanted to use the latest and most advanced technology available, and were taking the expedition extremely seriously, leaving nothing to chance. However, in spite of everything, Franklin was a reluctant appointment by the Admiralty. He was 59, embarking on his fourth final arctic expedition, his third in search of the passage; this voyage was to be his swansong before he retired. Many thought him to be the right man for the job. Franklin had experience in the Arctic, a passion for science and exploration and was well-liked by his crew. Many saw him as a kind and noble leader with an infectious enthusiasm and good-natured personality.



But Franklin's professional reputation was not as flattering. He was known for being hot-headed, impulsive and for rushing into dangerous situations unprepared. In 1819 he led a poorly-planned expedition to Canada that led to the deaths of 11 men and forced Franklin and his crew to survive eating scraps of leather from their boots. Dubbed thereafter as "The Man Who Ate his Own Shoes", Franklin's reputation suffered greatly and the incident remained a source of potent embarrassment. As such, his superiors had no intention of appointing him until their first five candidates had declined or been passed over. And so, 'The Man Who Ate his own Shoes' found himself at the helm of the largest and most scientifically and politically significant polar voyage of the age.

One could almost say that the expedition was destined to fail. Even the name of Franklin's flagship, Erebus, is from Greek mythology, symbolising the darkness to the entrance of hell. The expedition spent a month crossing the Atlantic, before in June 1845, they arrived in Arctic waters. Stopping briefly in Disko Bay on the

west coast of Greenland, the ships took on their final supplies and wrote their last letters home. In their letters, the crew described moral on board as high with reasonable confidence in the success of the mission. This would be the expedition's last experience of civilisation before venturing into the unknown.

The expedition was last seen by Europeans in late July 1845 when two whaling ships came across Erebus and Terror anchored in Baffin Bay, waiting for favourable conditions to enter Lancaster Sound in search of the passage. And then, they were gone. After almost two years had passed since the last word from the expedition, concern began to grow.

Sir John's wife, Lady Franklin was particularly worried, as she knew full well that the ships would run out of food by 1848. Frustrated with the Admiralty's belligerence, she turned to the public and her personal friends - who included renowned author Charles Dickens - to pressure the Admiralty into sending a rescue party. In spite of their stance of supreme confidence in Franklin and his men, the Admiralty conceded, and agreed to send rescue missions to the Arctic. The first was dispatched in 1848 followed by several more, but they found nothing until summer 1850, when a joint American and British party discovered three graves on a remote corner of Beechey Island. Scattered around was the remains of a winter camp but no other messages or information.



It would seem that the expedition had overwintered on Beechey Island, with both ships stuck in the frozen waters. From the headstones we can determine that Franklin and his men spent at least four months on the island, with two being dated January 1846 and the other dated April of the same year. As soon as the seas opened up again, the crew likely left in a hurry, keen to leave before the ice closed in again and left their camp abandoned on the Island. From there they continued south, seeking an opening to the passage.



Throughout the 1850s, numerous rescue parties searched the polar wilderness for signs of the expedition. At first, no evidence was found, although disturbing rumors from the local Inuit were common. The explorer John Rae encountered Inuit in 1854, who spoke of a large party of white men who had died of starvation in Northern Canada and showed him objects that seemed to have come from the ships. Others had claimed to see the sailors moving south across the wastes or had found the remains of their camps, littered with frozen corpses. And then, in April 1859, a cairn was discovered on the northern shores of King William Island. Inside were preserved two messages from the Franklin expedition.

The first was dated 28th May 1847; it stated that the ships had wintered off King William Island, "Sir John Franklin commanding the Expedition. All well." However scribbled in the margins was a second message. Dated April 1848, it reported Erebus and Terror had been trapped for a year and a half, Franklin had died along with 23 of his men, and the survivors had abandoned the ships. The remaining crew had then began a 250 mile march south to the Black River, which could return them to civilisation.

Since then modern scientific expeditions have revealed the ultimate fate of the expedition and the reasons behind its catastrophic failure. Exhumations of the corpses on Beechey Island in 1984 revealed that the men had died from tuberculosis and pneumonia; not uncommon for the time. But something else about the corpses really caught the scientists' attention: all three men had suffered acute lead poisoning. And the lead in their bodies matched the solder which had been used to seal their canned provisions, suggesting that the food onboard the ships was giving them lead poisoning.

The symptoms of lead poisoning include headaches and muscle spasms, but high doses can trigger mental deterioration; hallucinations; amnesia and confusion. One can only imagine what this might have done to that group of men; starving, terrified and isolated in a frozen hellscape. Another side-effect of lead is a greatly weakened immune system, which could have led to outbreaks of tuberculosis and pneumonia onboard. It also opened the door to every sailor's worst nightmare: scurvy. Bones found from the expedition reveal distinct traces of Vitamin C deficiency, a sure sign the sailors had suffered from the horrific symptoms: bleeding gums; loose teeth; bruising of the skin and internal bleeding from the nose and eyes. The improperly sealed cans had led to the degradation of their vitamin C supplies, allowing the disease to run rampant. Then men also ran the risk of contracting botulism from the spoiled food; a deadly toxin that causes seizures, paralysis of the muscles, fever and vomiting.



It is truly horrifying to think of what those men went through on their long trek south. All of their supplies were loaded into lifeboats on sledges that the men pulled by harness. The sledges were brutally heavy, hard to maneuver and would have proved difficult for even a healthy group. But this group were anything but healthy. The pain in their muscles and joints would have been unbearable. Their sweat would freeze on their skin which would have exhausted them even further. And coupled with their deteriorating mental state would have rendered the journey as hell on earth. Men that kneeled over from pain or exhaustion were often abandoned in tents, to die slowly in the cold. The true fate of the expedition is still unknown, but some have speculated on what happened. The Inuit that John Rae encountered told a chilling story of a campsite filled with thirty frozen corpses, scattered in the tents and on the ground, and

in their cooking pots, human remains were discovered.

It seems during their final, stricken days, these men resorted to cannibalism. When the news broke back home it caused an uproar - the thought that anyone could do the unthinkable and eat their fellow man caused outrage among the Admiralty. To the public, these men were astronauts, national heroes revered for their nobility and courage; the suggestion that they could do such a thing was insulting. Rae's report and the stories of the Inuit were discredited and denounced. Dickens himself wrote a piece condemning the Inuit as "uncivilised people, with a domesticity of blood and blubber" and denouncing them as untrustworthy.

For years after the Inuit were treated with mistrust and hostility by the British; though today we know that everything they said was true. A 1993 study of the described campsite revealed slashed bones, skull fragments and skeletons missing their heads, hands and feet, suggesting that Franklin's men were deliberately removing the most human features of their dead friends.

In spite of everything, it can still be argued that the expedition achieved its goal in finding the Northwest Passage, as on their desperate march southward, then men would have glimpsed the passage's entrance from the coast of King William Island. The following rescue expeditions would carry on where Franklin left off, and they were finally able to chart the final great unknown on the map. On Franklin's memorial in London, beneath the names of the deceased, is written: "They forged the last link with their lives."

By, [Kit Nyman McKnight L6](#)

# Letters from the Far East



**A** short while ago I was handed an old wooden box by my Grandma. At first glance it appeared quite regular, but when I opened it, I discovered the relatively unknown life of my Great Uncle Norman Cohen through a series of letters that he had written. Before reading his letters. All I knew was that he was a British soldier in the Far East who died at the hands of the Japanese in a POW camp. What I would find about him would bring him to life on paper, through his sense of humour, interests and hobbies.

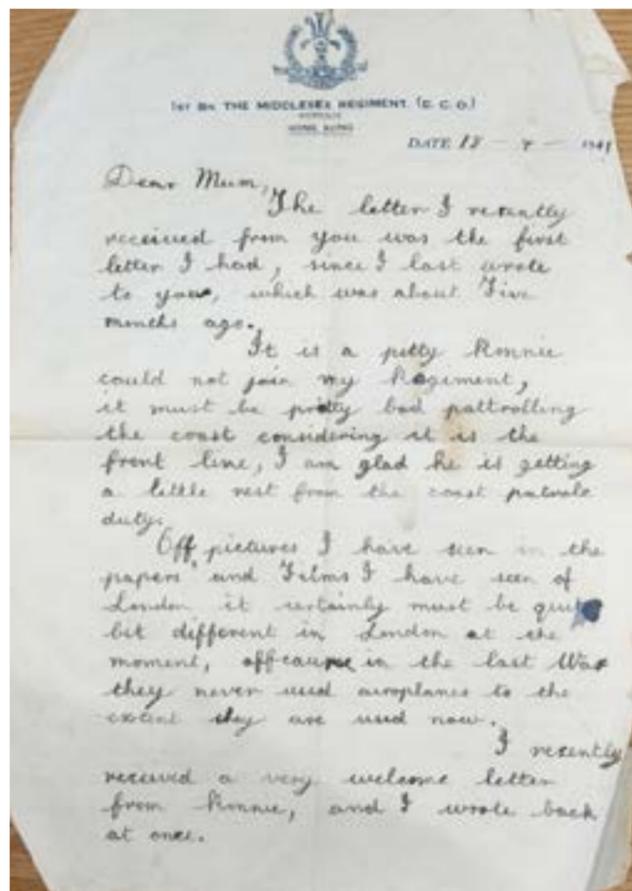
Norman Cohen was born in Poland in 1918, and was very young when he moved to the United Kingdom, growing up at 69 Wellington Avenue, South Tottenham. At the time it was a predominately Jewish and also very poor area. He was my Grandpa's oldest brother with a 14-year age difference between the two of them. He had a younger brother called Ronald "Ronnie" Cohen, who was two years younger. One of his account books survived and inside was a record of how much money was put in and out. Most of the money he earned came from working in various shops, and while it was not much, it was largely stable. Which led me onto the question of why he signed up to fight.

The first letter is dated 14th June 1938 in which he describes, in great detail, the town of Gosport near Portsmouth where he trained for several months. It is not entirely clear why he signed up but I believe that it was a mixture of thirst for adventure and also the lure of stable pay and accommodation with the Army. According to Norman, Gosport had no lack of beer but only had very old films which he did not much care for. It is important to note that at this time, films were much more important than they are today both for news and entertainment. In the same letter, he enclosed a sixpence for my grandfather. This really

[Private N. Cohen](#)



shows his affection for his family, as a sixpence was a significant portion of his wage.



Middlesex Regiment letter

After taking leave in August, he was dispatched to Hong Kong aboard the HMT Lancashire. He wrote a letter from the ship in which he mentions the calm weather and beautiful ocean. After a stop off in Gibraltar, Norman arrived in Hong Kong by December. This is when the letters began to grow in length as it is clear that Hong Kong is a world away from his home back in South Tottenham. He was billeted in the Nanking barracks, where his daily routine involved waking at 4 am, working by 6 am, and finishing at 10 am.

In the same letter, he enclosed some gifts as the goods in Hong Kong were cheap and coming from a poor family meant that cheap goods were always welcome. The barracks were clean and very orderly. One of Hong Kong's attractions was the early release of films before they had been seen in cinemas in London. There are also multiple references to the influx of Chinese refugees presumably from the Japanese invasion of China. He also experienced coming under direct shellfire whilst manning an outpost. 1938 would be his first Christmas stationed abroad. He sent home presents and wishes for a happy New

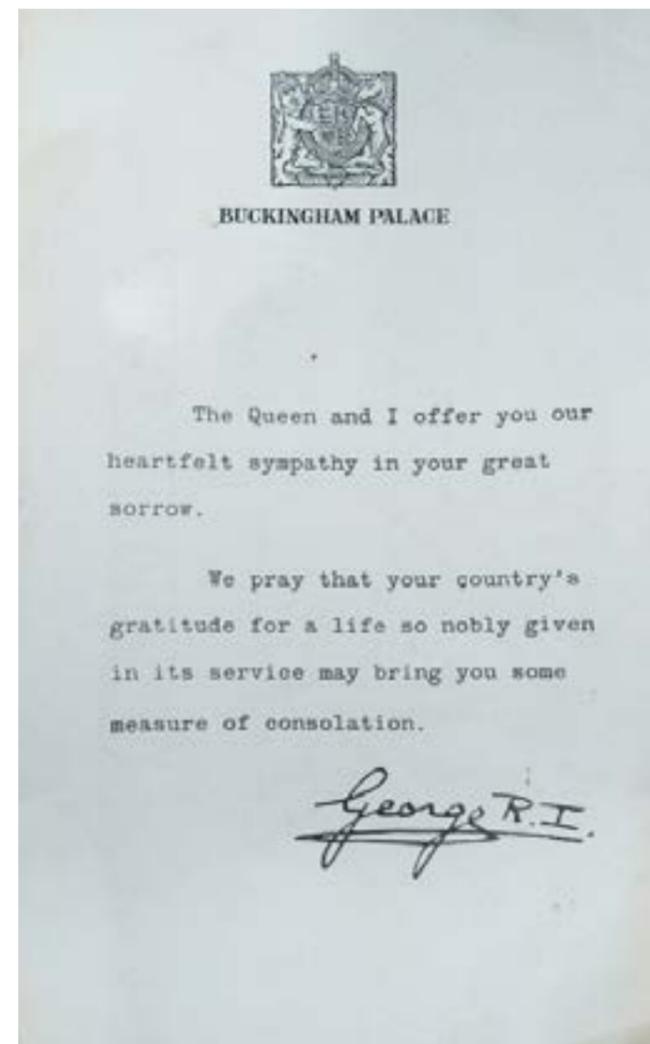
Year. His letters home were always accompanied by presents while he was stationed in Honk Kong,

1939 was the year Norman saw active combat, which meant fewer letters written but more focus on actual fighting. Specifically, he mentions the city of Tianjin where his unit was deployed. He also discovered that his younger brother Ronald was due to be called up the following year due to conscription. In one letter Norman requested John Bull magazines which were very popular with soldiers at the time. These would contain entertaining features and news. A letter addressed to his younger brother Ronnie at this time makes clear their strong fraternal relationship. It appears that Ronnie was a stamp collector as Norman took the effort to send him stamps from Hong Kong. Norman in return requested British books as he was tiring of a diet of American books. A lack of letters in this period indicate that the fighting had become quite intense and in a letter around Christmas time he does mention that he was stationed around the border facing the advancing Japanese army. In a letter dated March 1940, Norman describes taking part in an inter-house boxing competition in which he 'only' fractured his jaw and also a six-week training camp in which he became 'very fit'. He also mentions the purchase of a new wireless radio for company.

The final letter is dated March 1941. This is possibly his last letter before he was captured in the siege of Hong Kong by the Japanese. His brother Ronnie did not end up joining his battalion via conscription and ended up patrolling the coast of England. Although Ronnie would go on to serve in Italy later in the war, Norman mentioned in this final letter how he saw photos of London in a newspaper and hoped his family were safe.

The last significant thing I discovered about Norman was that he had survived the sinking of the Lisbon Maru, a Japanese troop ship full of Japanese POWs which was torpedoed by a US submarine. Norman was one of the approximately 700 that survived. He wound up as a POW in a POW camp at Osaka where he died of bacillary dysentery at age 24 on the 31st October 1942.

It was a sad ending to Norman's life. He was clearly a loving brother and son who deeply cared about his family. Indeed his family would never forget him or his death.



Condolence Letter from King George VI

Many years later, a letter arrived from the Chief Priest of the Juganji temple in Osaka in which he explains that Norman's ashes had been kept after cremation by the temple in order that they could be given a proper burial. This last letter is what I think of as the conclusion to Norman's story.

Sam Conroy, 5th Form



Private N. Cohen



## The Minden Boys

Every year the 1st of August is celebrated nationally as Minden Day, where regiments who fought in the Battle of Minden in 1759 commemorate the participation, which makes this year's celebration the 260th anniversary of the Battle. Many regiments celebrate this day every year as a regimental day, one whose name may sound familiar to many in our school: the 20th Regiment of Foot, or as it is known now, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

Many people in this school will wholeheartedly say that they love the CCF, however we rarely reflect on one of its major features. We wear our fusilier berets but many are unaware of our connection to a wider community which is the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers. To those unfamiliar with the CCF, the Army Section at our school is affiliated with the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers from which we derive much of our culture.

A main component of the culture of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers is that it is an amalgamation of four historic fusilier regiments which combined in 1968 to form a single large regiment. Due to this, the traditions of all four regiments were combined to form the rich culture of our regiment today.

One of the most distinctive emblems of a Fusilier which we often take for granted is our red and white hackles. If you look at a sea of regiments the Fusilier hackle draws attention above all others. Many regiments do not wear hackles and out of those who do, only the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers wears red over white. As with many of our traditions, we gain it from one of the four fusilier regiments. The hackle is worn as a battle honour awarded to the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers who took the plumes from the headdress of the defeated French troops in St Lucia.



The Cap Badge of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, the cap badge worn by Mill Hill School CCF

They decided to wear white hackles on their berets from then on. It was not until 1829 when King George IV, to maintain the distinction of the Regiment, made the hackle half red and half white to fit with the story where the white hackles were stained by the blood of their foes.

Another piece of our history concerns the cap badge. Each Infantry Regiment has a distinctive cap badge. The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers upon its formation had to pay homage to its constituent regiments. The cap badge was therefore designed to be a combination of three of the original regimental cap badges. The common backing is a flaming grenade however, distinct features include a laurel wreath from the Lancashire Fusiliers, a crown from the above the grenade from the Royal Fusiliers, and the emblem of St. George and the Dragon from the Royal Northumberland Fusiliers.

A major part of Fusilier culture are the regimental days, on two of which we wear coloured roses on our headdress to mark the occasion. On St. George's Day we wear red and white roses to celebrate the patron saint of England who sits on our cap badge. The other important day, previously mentioned, is Minden Day. On Minden Day all the participants from the battle celebrate and wear red and yellow roses on their headdress. Story goes that the soldiers, on advancing the enemy, picked wild red and yellow roses and wore them in battle.

So far, this insight into the culture of the regiment hasn't moved away from the headdress proving there is a lot to know about the regiment's rich history. To many this plays a major part of our school careers.



Beret of the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers with Red and White Roses, to mark the occasion of St. George's Day

Omre Urmani, L6



# Medieval Crime and Punishment



The first thing that comes into the minds of people when thinking about crime and punishment in Medieval England is usually inhumane torturing techniques and brutal and heartless legal trials. This is what we can see in hindsight, but was there method behind the madness? What were the ideas behind the harsh and brutal punishments that people received in Medieval times?

Firstly, was there method behind the madness? It is clear to see that inhumane tools, methods and techniques were used to bring people to 'justice' but was this a case of justice or of deterrence in order to scare people into abiding by the overly strict laws of the land? Deterrence was most likely one of the main reasons for such brutal punishments as anyone who watched one of the public executions or tortures were usually too scared of the consequences to even think about committing a crime. Since most executions were shown open to the public it is likely that this was to deter other potential criminals by making them afraid of the consequences.

Most towns had what they called a Gibbet, this is where criminals who had been executed were placed

for all to see. This was a way to make sure that the people living in these small villages and towns knew what the consequences of their actions would be and the humiliation that they would have to go through before, during and after their death.

It was very difficult to be a law-abiding citizen in Medieval England as laws (which were punishable by anything from a prison sentence to death) included: playing football, dying in Parliament (still a law today), stealing a dead whale, eating mince pies on Christmas day and not washing the Lord's sheep, among many others. In one case, recorded in 'The Book of Strange and Curious Legal Oddities' an entire village was punished for failing to wash the Lord's sheep. Crime in Medieval times usually occurred out of desperation, whether this be from poverty, the great famine which occurred from 1315-17 as a result of the Black Death of the 1340's. Crime was in most cases the only way people could prevent themselves from starving. This is why according to court records from 1300 to 1348 showed that 73.5% of all crimes committed were theft.

Brutal and inhumane torturing techniques and ritu-

als are usually what is associated with the medieval era: It is true that there were many extremely ruthless techniques in which 'justice' was upheld and these included.



Torture device A: Heretic's fork

This torture device was used as an interrogation method and (as above) a two sided sharp fork was tied around the neck of the 'criminal'. Sleep and talking were out of the question otherwise, the fork would pierce through the chest and throat of the victim. Confessions were usually very common when this tool was used and on each fork the words "I repent" were engraved. By the end of the torture most criminals had repented.



Torture device B: The rack

The rack was a torture method in which the victims wrists and ankles were tied to the rollers on the top and bottom of the rack. The interrogator would then pull a handle, and the ropes would become taught and the victim would be stretched and ankles, wrists and shoulders usually ended up becoming dislocated and often broken. This method almost always ended up in the victim confessing to their crimes. This extremely brutal torture method was extremely common and effective, although

the validity of the confessions could be questioned.

Overall, these extremely violent torture methods were in place in order to deter others from becoming criminals themselves, but can these inhumane treatments of criminals ever be justified? Or were the people who upheld the law in these times simply heartless torturers?

Joel Green, L6



Mill Hill