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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE PERCEPTIONS PHYSICAL EDUCATION
TEACHERS HAVE OF THEIR WORKING LIVES IN THE
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS OF A NORTH-EAST COUNTY BOROUGH

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Volume 3: Teachers' Accounts 20 - 39

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CONTENTS

The accounts (transcripts of interviews) 20 - 39 appear in numerical order of each teacher's code number. Male and female teachers are distinguished by the prefix M or F. The page number follows the code. Thus, F25/9 refers to female-teacher twenty-five, page nine. When a teacher was interviewed twice the 1975 account precedes the 1979 account.

....it was one of the colleges which was more like a Boarding School. Being very naive at 18...I mean I was one of the short socks brigade. I went to interview in short socks. Now looking back that is incredible isn't it. It wasn't just one off..... everybody was like that at the time. We had a two day interview. When I went to college I accepted the conditions particularly well and I think that this is why I have a particular attitude to P.E. We worked at 9 in the morning until 6.20 in the evening...and there wasn't a break. Lectures were 50 minutes with a 10 minute change over allowed...eight lectures it was only in the second and third years that we got anything called a free period. You worked hard and you played hard. I accepted that...I think it was correct. I loved every minute of it....

You speak with enormous enthusiasm of your college days.

....I thought it was great. Other people went to college and thought it was dreadful...no free time...but I accepted it you see. I accept the things that people lay down and work within the framework. I find it difficult to rebel I just sort of get on with it. I find that I am a little bit old fashioned that way, unfortunately. (apologetically). In 1956 I took up appointment at Yarmond High School, worked there until 1958....travelled from Hucklebrough to Yarmond for the time Father was a school caretaker. He thought it was a bit silly when he had to dig me out of the snow in the morning to try and get me away to get to Yarmond....when there was a perfectly good school opening here in 58....and I didn't want to leave it...In that I was in a Grammar School I didn't particularly want to come to a Secondary Modern School. Not because of any social thing. It was just that it was a Very good Grammar School. There was a lot going for us. It was a super school, it really was. I was number three in a department that ran very well and I learnt a terrific amount...from the two above me. Mrs. F. had been there for years...she finished off my education in Scottish Dancing/Eng. C.D. which is looked on as old hat now. In those days it was very active...we did a lot of competitions...in that work. We did a very sound course in Athletics. We did hockey....netball... tennis. We played matches every Saturday. A very strong and well run school on all sides. We didn't do any Mod. Dance. I did a little bit of Dance there....we had a resident pianist. It was a very good school



and I really did not want to leave it. The discipline was excellent. It was great. So when I came here...I didn't really want to come. It was a fantastic contrast. The playing fields weren't finished. The gym wasn't finished, and I had one room at the end of the corridor there...one room to teach in, the recreation playing fields where there were no changing facilities. I started with hockey. But to get there...by the time you got them changed from here and walked across there and 20 minutes in the field...I scrapped that...forgot all about hockey...until we got our own fields. I concentrated on Netball, whenever it was fine outside..and indoor that's where my Country Dancing came in beautifully....because in a classroom there was nothing else that I could teach.

Do you regret that passing of Country Dancing?

I do....a sense of rhythm....working with others...timing. Nothing has replaced it. I don't think so. I can tell from the children that I have taught. I run a Scottish Dancing team here in the school. We do it in break times, and dinner times...we do demonstrations. We had at one time a very flourishing team. But it is very difficult trying to keep up with everything. It is problematic because I can't fit everything in really. To go back to my coming here. I built it up....I was responsible for it and I came without a P.S.R. They said that they might award one depending on how I did....well after a year I got my P.S.R. and went on to stay here and had two or three people under me over the years...I stayed until '62. And then the top school opened....The Technical High....which is now our lower school. I went up to there and was there until 1966... I got married whilst I was there. I left to have a child...and left completely from teaching....I intended going back teaching when the child was grown up. Well in those days they were crying out for P.E. people...so I left in the September....I had a wonderful three months... then I had the baby....another wonderful three months 'til march... and then they absolutely begged me to go back for two half days to another school....that I had got to know through fixtures and personal contact. It was then St. Theresa's School. I went for two half days. Well it was ridiculous...I got there at 1.30. They had four classes in an afternoon and they finished at 3.50. So by the time I got the children out and onto the field and came back...I really didn't think

that I had justified the pay...and I said that I am not teaching... I am amusing the children...going out but there's no way I am teaching. Athletics in $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. On the Tuesday and Thursday I stayed there and ran clubs...to try and get them off the ground. But it was ridiculous... so I said if I was going back at all I was going back for one day. Tuesday one day Thursday. It was only a small school...there were eight classes. It was a fabulous school....I took four on a Tuesday and four on a Thursday. And I had a double period with them all. I was able to take two lunch time practices....I stayed there at lunch time...and I had two evening practices. I felt that I was doing something...and I loved it...and I did that for two years.... by that time Paul was 3 years old Then they wanted somebody full time. And I didn't want to go Full time at that stage....I didn't want to leave him at that stage. I had to move to Callaly....I did four mornings. I then got Paul into Nursery School for the mornings...So I popped him in and then went to school...then we had the afternoons together. That was fine. Next year St. Theresa's had a full time post going again, and they asked me particularly to go back...The Sister (head) said "Look if you come back, don't worry we will let you off at 3.20 to go and pick Paul up..." So I did seven periods a day. And she let me have the last session off every afternoon....Well I couldn't turn that down. It was a very very friendly school. Just like a family atmosphere; it was "Good morning Mrs. A..." It was "Good morning V". Sister encouraged use of names...they were extremely polite. Politeness and the discipline were the most important things in the school, and the worship. I am a non-Catholic. I mean where else would the Head make you a cup of tea if you stayed at a night time for practices?...it was wonderful. I couldn't believe it when they walked in with this tray. Doylies...silver tea pot for my cup of tea because I was staying at night to teach their children. Imagine that atmosphere. I loved it... I spent a lot of time in the evenings there. I took Paul back with me and I could, any of the little girls there to look after him. I was able to do the dinner time practices and the evening practices..just the same. Paul then went to full-time nursery school...which led him on to full-time school really. Then we hit the comprehensive system. Now being a non-catholic I didn't feel that in all conscience they could possibly offer me a post (three Catholic schools amalgamating) because they had enough to cope with...getting their own people involved.

All this time...I had started doing the County Netball...when I was pregnant with Paul and I kept it up for six years. And it had increased from when we took over from three matches in the year to six in the whole season and about four practices...to practicing every week and having a match every week...We would be in Coventry one week South Shields the next. Durham the next. So I never saw Paul on a Saturday. So I felt that when he was six I was going to lose a lot of his time...and it suddenly struck me that I wasn't going to have another child...Time's passing and I had to do something about it. So I decided that I would pack in the netball. When I packed it in I felt no regret. But if I had packed it in any sooner than that, I'd have always felt that I had missed out. Because we had left the teams at a good standard. We had built it up...We had a proper committee...we had two full teams going. There was an enthusiasm in the County...So I left it at that point. So I dropped the County netball..and I put in for a post at this school...I thought I will come out and not have quite so much responsibility on the P.E. side...but I still felt that I had to run netball teams ...enter leagues...had to do the Athletics... I did Scottish Dancing with St. Theresa's and we had teams running. We ran all sorts...demonstrations for Old People's Clubs....Towns' Womens Guilds and things...the Sister made the white frocks and we had the tartans...we had the lot. So I was very sorry to have to leave it all. So I came back here...into the state system...I applied back to the school...I like Aidens and I knew a lot of the members of staff. And I knew I.B. who was here...who I respect tremendously. And if there was anyone I was going to work under, it was going to be him. You see by that time I had something like 15 years experience. I'd run a department on my own. I wasn't going to work under anybody else. I can't remember whether I put in for Senior Tutor...anyway I didn't get the Grade that I was expecting. I got the next one down. I wasn't bothered particularly...I didn't really go for a specialist post. I really wanted a pastoral post. So I took the Pastoral. A Deputy Year Tutor...and after one year I got the Year Tutor Post. And I am still a year tutor now. So you are right up to date.

Which year is it?

Well we rotate. You pick them up in third year and we go through fourth and fifth. I came with a fifth year and then I went through the rotation system...And I am now back to the third year coming in. From the Pastoral point of view I have found the job very depressing. Coping always with truancy...and the bad children and the children who are causing a lot of trouble in the school. And I felt that the children who were really good...didn't cause any trouble, not particularly good...who just came along and did their work at school...just what you expect them to do...never got anything. I was very very depressed. So I thought well I will take a positive approach and I will spend less time with the truants and try to do more for the children who want to do things. So since then we try to do more things for them. I run a trip to London every year. We have joined the Y.H.A. because my son is now 13 years old and is able to go. And again I did Youth Hostelling at my last school (St. Theresa's). As soon as he was seven, I started taking the children...And then my husband changed his job and went into teaching and that principally was why I never had another youngster... because I had to support him for a year. Coming back to the children... we do Youth Hostelling with them...I try to run a Theatre Club and take them to the theatre...say a couple of times..giving the opportunity to people who want to go. I felt that Disco's are a bad thing. I can't really get to....I feel that Disco's are not of any educational value at all. So with my last year's fifth we started doing barn dancing in the fourth year..And for the Christmas party I did run a Disco for those who wanted to...But for those who wanted to learn to dance we ran Barn dancing...and I got 60 children...30 boys and 30 girls... and we had a mixed barn dance for the Christmas and the Easter, and we had one last year. And it was great. They thoroughly enjoyed it... properly laid out meal...They all came in dressed in their suits... I'm old fashioned you see. Candles on the table just what I think that it should be. I thought it was great. I have a third year and I would like to do that sort of thing but they are too young yet. They wouldn't accept it now but I am hoping to do it in the fourth year. So I wish more was done on this side of the school...I wish we had more time in P.E. lessons to do this sort of thing. I think there is a need to do some social dancing...with boys and girls. They see nothing else but this Disco dancing. They never get used to doing a disciplined form of dancing and don't know how to behave. And old scholars who meet me

in the street later come up and tell me "I'm glad you taught us to do that dancing...." The lads used to come...and I'd drill them in it. And they used to come and say how much they'd enjoyed it. I also joined Keep Fit and I have now done 22 years...and I was able to teach Keep Fit without an actual course as they do now because I had a P.E. qualification. But I didn't really know all that much about it. So I joined the Keep Fit Association. N.E. It is very strong. And then I started teaching a class here... and in the evening and since then I've taught for ages and then I went on to do the trainer award. And I have taught nationally... at the National Summer Schools and I am very interested in that... I teach Keep Fit in school on a Friday afternoon to the fifth year. I do it with adults as well. I do it once a week and have done for...I do it for two or three years. I take a Monday night class and I started in 1957....so it is the 22nd year. I can go out of school feeling very tired...why on earth do I do this? But at the moment I hit that hall...the moment I start teaching, it clicks.. I come back if its gone well I enjoy the night...and I enjoy teaching adults...I really do.

How do you wind down...because dancing gets into your whole system
So you come in at 10 how do you stop?

I drink about 5 cups of tea...and watch the T.V. And when I hit the pillow....'out'....I never have sleepless nights.

Coming back to the conflict in your Pastoral work...It is like those
J.P's who for the first time meet and only meet that 5% of the feckless
and the criminal and the layabouts.... so they become depressed because
they think the whole of society is like that...You appear to have
adapted to that by emphasising the positive aspects of your work.

If I hadn't I would have given up teaching. And I needed the job and I was going to sell the house because it would get a great deal of money now and we could have sold it and bought a house and we could live on his wage I couldn't face coming back...And I thought "I'm coming this year...and I am going to enjoy it.....I am going to enjoy it..."

Because if you are coming in...as I was on a Monday morning, and looking forward to Friday night...that's no way...I couldn't stand that. I mean I am 45 I have another 10 years to do I must, we couldn't manage without my salary you see. To pay for the house...It's not the most important thing..I am not materialistic... but I do love it...I am very thrilled with the house that we have built but...if necessary...and I hate the job I will be out. It is not fair to stay in.

I can't imagine you not enjoying teaching? You appear to have so much vibrancy and bouyancy....I can't even imagine a problem getting on top of you?

I find it difficult to keep up with the modern trends. I am old fashioned. I feel that Gillian has a terrific background...I can't put into words like I could. I feel a lot for a thing but I can't put into words possibly what Gillian could, about the feeling of all that P.E. does. I can't put that into words. I would say that my background academically and verbally in being able to express what I think about P.E.....I find difficult...but I could show it by just doing it. I feel that there is a problem... it strikes me forcably that because of this problem when they brought it in that you've got a terrific grading system in teaching, it's become the thought that "well he gets paid for it let him do it." And unless they are getting paid for this job they are not prepared to give that amount of time. And I know that it happened here. And I know that Ian was very disappointed about getting his now it really did...It has affected me this year you see. He has a strong and positive way when he is speaking...You think "Oh yes he is right.." and he said that he didn't want us to feel that we should have to do practices..it was up to us...but I went back home and I sat and thought and thought...."this is ridiculous...there's no way I can stand on that principle."

That was to pull out of all your commitments?

Yes, and he walked in...and it was me that all the say in front of the Head about all what are you going to do and look at the periods you have dropped down...and all this you see...and I was being like Ian's mouth piece....at least I felt I was..and when I got home I

broke my heart. It was totally against my nature. Totally aniken to my thought because whatever happens I think it is the kids that are most important...The children - this is what we are here to teach. I can't strike and do this sort of thing... And I felt that I had turned against what I had really thought. And I went to see the Head. And he went to apologise. "I really am very sorry....." He was super about it...because I was so upset I couldn't have gone to bed that night. I was terrible. I've never been so upset before. It wasn't that I was frightened of greasing round the head or anything like that. I just thought, the impression he got of me was just alien to my character because I just didn't feel that at all. And I thought no matter what anyone else is getting...I'm getting a scaled post and I feel that I have to justify it and there's no way if anyone feels that strongly about their job they should get out. And I can't come into this school and accept a scale three as I've got and not to justify its existence by doing what we must do in the P.E. field which is I think to these out of school activities...because you get more satisfaction out of them that you sometimes do in teaching a class.

I felt that I could do more in one weeks camp or Y.H.A. expedition than a whole year of some class teaching.

Yes, tremendous yes. I took the children away on an Outdoor Activity course to Y.M.C.A. It was a cottage...and it was only £2.50 a day... all in...all your food, all the equipment and all the activities. You had to cook your own food. And I got in touch with the Authority... they said I could...they said I could go because I was taking my husband, my little boy and his friend...and I wasn't taking like a mixture from school because the facilities were funny. Only one toilet...and one shower. For everybody and there were 15 so you can imagine. It was a scruffy place when we got there. But a beautiful spot to be in. And we had a tremendous week. When they saw the inside of the cottage, I could see the look of disappointment by the look in their eyes...Because it was scruffy. But after one hour... they never looked back. I took 11 children from the school..and we had a fabulous week and I really felt I knew them by the end. There was a fantastic atmosphere at night because they all came into the lounge...

and could do anything they liked. They played all the old fashioned family games we didn't have to organise them. Party games..that sort of thing...'murder' 'spin the plate' and that sort of thing. And we had a super party on the last night. We had ghost stories round a log fire....Then we had to leave the lights on all night because they couldn't get to sleep. That's the side I love to do with them. I find a lot of satisfaction in taking the children away. I took three different lots of children away in the mini buses last year with my deputy.....He's tremendous. He'll go with me...even if P. or B. don't want to go then (Deputy) will go. We introduce children to Youth Hostelling...because their parents may not let them go on their own. But if they go with us they they are allowed to. And then there is the follow-up, two lots of boys followed up and they did one on their own...and I helped the girls to plan another one, this summer and they went off on their own..Now that gives me satisfaction. They come here and say "We are going to plan....." "and what do we do?" I know that it is only 12 children, out of my yearand there are 300 in the year...but I don't care, twelve have got the message.

Can I come back to the confrontation that there has been? This has come through very clearly. People have been very trusting about this one...I don't really understand it. When I spoke to I.B. four years ago...clearly I got the impression that the place was booming. There was so much that was going on. Children were coming into school very early on a morning. Saturday and Sunday....It was rolling so hard and fast. And clearly I was impressed by Ian B. himself. We had an hours conversation. He knew precicely where he was going...and I haven't heard a murmer against him. Universally respected....Now there has been this collision...and I don't understand what the collision was about? You still have, in the school a fair amount of time to P.E. with certain exceptions...there are two doubles throughout the school. (some correction given at this point) So there is more to it than loss of curriculum?

It was the loss of the Scale. He was promised a Scale 5 by the Head in the old days where it was 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. He was appointed here on a 4...and he was hoping to get to 5. Now I don't honestly feel that

they were able to give him one. I think this is genuine. I really do feel that the Head was in a spot. Mind you I think that Ian probably deserved a 5....beyond any other person in the town.... because of what he was able to do. I think he put terrific pressure on everybody. I mean you felt guilty if you had a dinner time or break off really. A dinner time or an evening off...He was after one of these full one days sports...now this was a school where they weren't even used to having matches and socialising afterwards, and entertaining afterwards...We just played matches. I was quite used to the idea of having six or seven teams as we did on Saturday mornings and each team taking their opposite number in and have sandwiches and tea or orange juice or whatever. And I thought he should have built it up in that way....we had a day and it was O.K. but the children weren't ready for it... It would have been a fantastic idea...But I think that he should have started gradually. He wanted a full day of sport....had three or four netball teams, a rugby team from another school a football team and a swimming team and a badminton team...and they all came over and they all played, And then there was going to be like a disco. In the hall, a disco in the Youth Club afterwards and a swim and that sort of thing. I think it is still a very good idea...but I felt that there was a terrific pressure. And I honestly began to wonder whether we were pressurising for the school or whether it was for Ian.

I can share this with you but at the time I wondered if it wasn't all self aggrandisement. But there was no doubt in my own mind that it was paying off for the children.....

It was fantastic...they had a terrific standard. Now how he will justify dropping out I will never know. Now Liza came, there's a lot of personal things as well, I knew Liza when she first came out of college. And she shared a flat with another girl. And she happened to be on the County Netball team. That's why I got to know her friend, R. and they had trouble over the flat and through N. they came over and stayed with me. And then it became very mutual respect for each other because they were tremendous to me; Liza and D. looked after P. My husband went contracting on these three years....so he was away for a fortnight at a time. Therefore for me to do County Netball I relied on people like that to look after Paul. She looked after Paul a terrific

F.20/11

amount. I got on ever so well with her...and with Ian as well. I have great respect for them both. And I was really thrilled when they got together. Then I came to work with them. Then it changed. I knew both sides. I taught Ian's wife before it happened. I knew L. and I knew her husband...it was quite difficult. Never did I tell tales or anything...just kept on the outside. We are not very socially conscious at home, we have our friends....we don't socialise a lot...and money doesn't mean a fantastic amount so long as I've got my home and my family its....We are the sort of people who other people go and come back to...I'm one of the people who is always there...we don't go away. I like the town. I enjoy my friends. I have a circle of friends here. I would move but I am quite happy here. (background of family links past and present). When Liza and Ian got established... they got a social...then we didn't become one of their friends...and it was difficult. And then we got like P. and D...you know they got a little clique..they are very nice with me...but I feel that I'm on another plane really. I feel a bit old fashioned..I'm not with it. I feel out of it because I'm older.

I've got the feeling that your enthusiasm has taken the place of his co-ercion. That might be both unfair to him because there is a sense in which if there were a young probationer coming I think that they would steamrollered by the dynamism of this particular personality. I'm not so sure that's a good thing. You have to allow people to spread their own wings. It must be a marvellous school to come into in your first year but also quite frightening...As I've got it now, he said, "I'm finishing....and he gave his staff freedom to please themselves whether they continued with out of school.....I take it that some of his colleagues just pulled out at that point. This would be about two years ago? It must be three years ago I suppose. So he stopped pretty well....So the whole department which was rolling so fast, just disintegrated.... because the leadership was missing. Now it seems as though his co-ercion has been replaced by your enthusiasm. Now then, comparing the P.E. as it was rolling then with what it is now...it really is a most important piece of the school's history...where is it now compared to where it was?

I'd say that the standard generally is lower...It went down.

I've got the impression that you can't keep these people down.....

No, I think it is on the way up now.

.....and it won't be long before it will be very healthy again....

Yes...I don't think that it will reach the peak. I think that it is going up again fairly quickly. Peggy is doing..you see Peggy came over and got very enthusiastic in her basketball...and she has worked very hard. She has a very nice manner with children and she is building that side up. I've kept on with the netball because I felt that I should and I run as many teams as I feel able to. But I'm involved this time with The Fiddler...we are putting a musical on and I am doing the dance for that...well unfortunately I feel a little stretched at the moment because I'm doing....Monday lunch time I'm doing Fiddler practice, Monday night I do Fiddler practice, Tuesday lunch time I take netball, Tuesday night netball matches, Wednesday night I take netball, Wednesday night I do a badminton and table tennis club for my own year, Thursday night I do a badminton and table tennis club for my own year, Thursday night Fiddler, Friday lunch time Fiddler, Friday night Fiddler, followed by a swimming class staff and children.....so I feel a bit pulled..I feel that I'm not able to do my Year job as well as I should...My year is not being looked after as it should....I feel that I am not on the P.E. much as I should....and I feel that I am not on the Fiddler as much as I should.....It is just a case of wait til Christmas then I'll take a deep breath...and I'll concentrate on P.E. and the Year. I'm stretched too much at the moment... It's just this few weeks.... We've got six weeks to put this production on...and it will get faster and faster....We'll be in on Sunday nights....Sunday afternoons.. We'll be in from 6 - 8 you know...to put it on. The production will be great when it is on. We did My Fair Lady last year and it was tremendous. And I enjoy being part of that...because you see another batch of children you see....You see children I never met in the P.E. world... missing all that talent on their singing side. So it is terrific. So I love this side. And I've been stretched a bit doing this dancing. I haven't choreographed it...I've looked at a film and taken bits from

it....made up other bits and pieces myself but I've had to work quite hard at times in order to get it ready for the children coming in. So I feel a bit pushed. But I feel that it is my duty to do as many clubs and as many things as I can with the children...and to try and fix in pastorally...try to do the year. I do a lot with the year that I've got. So this year I'm doing 3rd year netball... 3rd year badminton....table tennis you see...That sort of thing....

You are in a classical conflict situation. It doesn't mean that you are necessarily under stress but it does mean that are uneasy about where you give your limited time....to P.E. or Pastoral or any other competing 'duty'.....Is the P.E. counter productive as far as the Pastoral work is involved?

No. I think that it fits in very well. You get to know the children. It will be the 3rd year that I take Youth Hostelling. It will be the 3rd year that I do a Theatre Club with.....the 3rd year that I do rambles with...a few more and a few more, I get to know the bad ones and I get to know the interested ones and I get to know more and more. There are 275 children in our year. Ian is very good because he tries to give me my year..makes sure that I get quite a lot with the year. We have assembly to do and the other work to do in with your P.E. work.

(explained Diary)

You are very much locked into Hucklebrough. I have the feeling that you are devoted to Hucklebrough. It is not just that you like Hucklebrough you feel very.....

It's the people....It's the people I like. It's the people I've met. Yes, I like the people. I've got a lot of good friends. I talk to other people...they say...I don't like to go into town and meet anyone. I mean if I feel fed up I need only to go up to town and I meet so many people...I come back and feel on top of the world. And I like to go into a shop where they say "hello.." and I know the people...I know the butcher very well. I know the people at the bread shop...I've gone so many years.

At the Grocery they have known me since I was four...They have seen me grow up and I saw them going into...they were heroes to me they were all in the Army and things I was 7...8 when I first knew them...they were going in the army...I lived through the war...I was seven when the war started. So the war had a big impact on me...my own father and brother went away and there was only Mum and I...left at home. And we were at the Art school then. So I had the influence of an Art influence and I did Music, which I find helpful in P.E. later on...I did a lot of Scottish dancing and English dancing before I went to college. I played County Hockey and Netball and did keep fit a bit. I played for my P.E. mistress to do her Keep Fit classes...that was when I was first introduced to Keep Fit. I go on courses regularly I try always to go on courses. That's why I feel I've failed a little in the last few years. I try to keep up to date...you know I went on a lot of netball courses. I went to learn how to do trampoline. I didn't do any trampoline at college. I've taken a badminton award...just recently...I had a real patch where I thought it is about time I pushed my badminton up...I went into a badminton course...I went into a table tennis course. I failed the club coaching award..only in tactics..you see I haven't played badminton to any level myself. So I passed all the little bits...(examples given)...but when it came to tactics I failed. I passed the E.S.B.A. Teacher's Award for that and it was no problem...Table tennis I am not really any good at. I did a course on it...and I can teach more basic stuff. Trampoline I am a bit worried about. I can coach it up to Forward Somersault Backward Somersault...but I can't take children beyond that...I get quite worried and I feel that now that is a problem. I feel that I should be able to do it...Now in swimming I went and got my A.S.A. teacher's before I went to college. I probably should have taken that again...but I do feel that I know sufficient about swimming to cope with the swimming. Netball I'm O.K. on. Basketball I've had to sort of pick up. I did a basketball course years ago with Colbeck here. And I was teaching three nights and going to something on the fourth night. Keep fit on Monday, Netball on Tuesday and

Ballroom dancing for my sins on a Wednesday...and I went to basketball on the Thursday and Scottish Dancing on the Friday. Those were the days when you were keen. That's why I find it difficult when the youngsters come out...you know I can't get over the fact that there is not so much done now. And there isn't in the P.E. world outside. You don't get the people going in for tournaments and things outside. I know because I'm not going in for it. We haven't entered a tournament on a Saturday...I've entered a tournament for the first time for two years. We did until two years ago...and I thought "Why should I be flogging on to taking them on to Saturdays"..but then my conscience got hold of me...I had the 3rd years and I thought, "Oh I can't not put them in the tournament so we went on Saturday....but Gillian went with me which was terrific. We run our Keep Fit and I love Summer School. Now I have done a lot of training in Keep Fit. I've learnt a lot of background to Movement through the Keep Fit because J.B. is tremendous...at Wearport Poly. Fantastic. So she did the training course you see. When I've been at National I've always kept my mouth closed and my ears open and I learned a lot. I feel a jack of all trades and I'm master of absolutely none. I'm probably the most highly qualified in Keep Fit on anything yet it is the least suitable for school...there were 70 there. I find Keep Fit hard in school because you haven't got this enthusiasm...the kids haven't got this enthusiasm. When you are teaching adults...they have paid to come.I would like to have gone back to teach in a college early on ...and I applied for a post at (college named) I didn't get short listed. I mean it was a cheek...I had only been teaching three years. And then through Keep Fit I got involved with somebody from the Art of Movement Studio. She said "You should have gone". I would never never get in there. I thought you had to be fantastic to get in there. I always felt that I should have gone. But when I got down there I didn't really know whether it was **really quite** my scene.

I am sure that you would have done them a lot of good

.....I can't imagine me getting all 'movy...and getting all intense and dramatic. So I don't think...I had a fantastic confidence at the time. But I always say...always do what you want to do. Let's be honest. If I had really wanted to go, nothing would have stopped me. So I knew

that I wasn't 100% sure. I was only 90%. If it had been the year before I would have gone.

End of Recording

Teacher's response to transcript letter (Appendix 6)

1. What I believe is worth fighting for.
 1. To establish the status of P.E. as a necessary part of the development of the student.
 2. To ensure that the students have a realistic amount of P.E. on their timetable.
 3. To ensure a wide range of activities are available and to have both the staff and the facilities and equipment to do them.
 4. To create an involvement of both staff and students in Outdoor Pursuits.
 5. To utilise all the staff's abilities, skills and strengths to foster the interests of the students.
 6. To keep the teaching group to a reasonable size for the activity so that individual coaching is more possible.
 7. To make P.E. an enjoyable activity! Try to ensure that all students have an interest in one aspect of leisure pursuits.

2. What are the major obstructions which prevent or restrain you from achieving your professional objectives.
 1. Attitudes of Heads of School and Faculty Heads to the status of P.E.
 2. Difficulty in having sufficient lessons on T/T. Many students take languages and so need to drop other subjects to fit into T/T. P.E. is usually the chosen one, to drop.
 3. Often it is felt that P.E. staff can cope with large numbers - have to fight to ensure small groups.
 4. The increasing trend for senior students to have outside jobs during the evenings and on Saturdays hinder the choosing of the 'best' team.
 5. The influence of Television and Youth Clubs often makes the students spectators rather than active participants

3. Difficulties as a P.E. teacher.

1. Difficult to maintain constant drain on energy!!
(sign of old age) in giving up after school time and week ends.
2. Maintenance of good 'kit' standards
3. Maintenance of reliable attendance after school hours -
often parents do not give encouragement - sometimes prefer children to concentrate on academic studies.
4. Continual necessity of maintaining equipment and checking on numbers etc. - Must never forget to count amount of balls used etc.
5. To make correct decision on children from taking part in lesson.
6. To keep a continual up to date account of children's ailments so that you have a sound knowledge of problem of individual.
7. Communication problem in reaching children quickly for messages and meetings.

4. Advantages of the Grammar/Technical/Modern School

1. Smaller groups in each year - only 500-700 in whole school.
2. Able to know all children within the school.
3. More individuality
4. Whole school would hear results of competition etc. much more pride in representing the school. Older children knew younger pupils.
5. As a teacher, it was rewarding to teach the children throughout the school and see development
6. Less Truancy
7. Less time spent in checking registers etc. as staff knew class groups.
8. Because of full school assemblies, everyone knew what was happening in the school and were aware of activities taking place.
9. Less discipline problems

5. Disadvantages

1. Facilities sometimes poorer. No sportshall/swimming pool.
2. Grammar School tended to have stronger teams - but in the latter year this proved untrue.

3. Unable to give such a variety of activities.

6. Advantages of Comprehensive System

1. More facilities, equipment.
2. Layer Department giving better range of skills. Staff able to concentrate on stronger subjects - children have the benefit of achieving a higher standard in a wider range of sports.
3. Should be a wider range of out of school activities.
4. Should be a stimulus to work hard and pull together with a large department.
5. Sportshall excellent for older pupils - great to have such a large indoor area.

7. Disadvantages

1. Large numbers
2. Large site, travelling between schools less discipline - opportunity for children to simply walk away from school.
3. Double lessons - long time for swimming in particular.
I seem to think a little more often is better
4. Harder to get to know children and where they belong as you so often teach groups from varying forms - I concentrate on the name and find the form difficult to learn.
5. Communication problem. Much more difficult to get notes around especially if there is an emergency e.g. match cancellation.

Really in many ways it is a pity that you had your injury because it would have been better starting this with the comprehensive set up. In other words starting it two years ago because the programme educationally has changed so much over the last two years since this word comprehensive became common usage especially in Hucklebrough that there have been quite dramatic changes from then. I don't think there will be quite the dramatic changes over the next few years in that the settling in period is over and people are finding out which dog bites which other dog and what the hierarchy is.

Has the bitterness of re-organisation died down or still felt deeply by the people who got hurt?

Yes. I suppose there are the odd one or two people who feel really sensitive....there are one or two cases but I would have thought in the majority of cases everybody came out of it better. e.g. David Oakes at Callaly, Howard Brady at Gargrave.....these lads only had three or four years and now they are on scale 4 head of dept. It just so happened that because of re-organisation people like W.H. who was Department Head of a Grammar School, T.D. who was head of Callaly, they decided that because it was going comprehensive, now was the time to get out of P.E. and think of something else whilst the jobs were going....So they did which left a lot of gaps in the P.E. for these young lads to come in and a lot of people did very well out of this sort of thing. This new word "Pastoral" came into being.....take a chap like Peter here. Now Peter didn't want to leave the school but I think he probably realised at the bottom of him that because I had more experience and had done the job in both schools that I was likely to get the job as Head of Dept. had I applied for it. So Peter had to think whether to apply for another Head of Dept. at another Comprehensive or come into this sort of set up. And he had obviously had words with the headmaster, and this new word "Pastoral" had come into being and headmasters saw it in different ways and Peter

ended up as Head of Year. Now as it happens he is doing a very good job with it, but at the time...pastoral...they didn't even know what it was....it is a scale 4 job. There are 4 people there on scale 4 who would never have got a Head of Dept.

In the P.E. world in Hucklebrough what are the scalings like?

Poor. I feel a bit hard done by because I see people who have similar sort of experience in scale 5. What happened in Hucklebrough was that the Heads designate got together and decided that they would not make the Dutch Auction for P.E. men in the town they would all advertise Heads of Depts. on Scale 4 and those scale 4's would never be improved under any circumstances. There is a story here concerned with Alan Bates Head of Aiden. A. is Head of Dept. there and before we went comprehensive A. was promised a 5 by his Headmaster and then the comprehensive set up came and the heads agreed this so his Headmaster couldn't go against the other headmasters and so he didn't get it and then he was promised a Head of Department plus....was a dog by any other name on a file which the Authority wouldn't allow through with the result that A. is now getting out of P.E. as soon as he can find another alternative job because he realises he is not going to get any further. One of the things I'm starting to kick against...well my attitude is..not at the moment...but could be...I am on a scale 4 and not going to go any higher. There are no prospects and very few scale 5 jobs elsewhere in the country. I may as well sit back and do nothing... it is a hard thing to resist in many ways when you know you are not going to get on....you think....this year we raised £750 on a sponsored swim...I wanted a sailing dingy and we wanted a mini bus and in the middle of it all which was a hell of a lot of extra work I had a bit of trouble with some kids and I sat down and reckoned up and I had given goodness knows how many lunch hours and evenings and it worked out to be 8 hours the actual amount of time I had given up over that week....I said to the kids..

"Go home and ask your father if he would go to work for one day for no pay and see what he says. He would laugh at you." I said, "That's what I'm doing over a week here and when you look at it like that I think I must be crackers because I'm not going to get any further". Nobody is going to think any better of me....the headmaster just said "Right, just....."

All the incentive has gone as far as your career is concerned hasn't it?

Well, money is not everything...it is a very nice incentive. But I don't know I am in the process of thinking this one out and wondering what to do. My attitude as far as out of school activities has always been the same...I don't know whether you recall this from my City days but I reckon that out of school activities is the cream on the cake...it is not as many people in this school seem to think, part of the P.E. job....you know a lot of people think that if I am not running out of school activities I am not doing my job. I say that's a load of rubbish....I do them because....I do rugby particularly because someone did it for me. And I got a lot out of rugby and I would like to put something back. But not because I have to....not because it is part of my job. I say "You are not interested in games are you"?...."You don't run a Chess Club and you are a maths teacher...you don't run a glider club or a science club"...and they say "But that's not the job" so I say "But I don't have to do this". It is very difficult for people to realise this and accept it but they are accepting it in this school, because I have probably made my mark go far too much and been a bit forceful, but that is my attitude to it and I am in the process of thinking where my future lies in this sort of job. It is in P.E. there is no doubt about that but as far as progress salarywise "do I say well I'll never go beyond scale 4 or do I think of combining P.E. with some sort of pastoral work.

When you are arguing and discussing with colleagues where does this resistance come from?

It is not a particular resistance, it is a personality resistance in many ways, who, generally from the old school, see education as being academic and P.E. as being an out of school activity for teams. P.E. is not an education, you don't actually teach P.E. you just run teams. I am having a particular problem at the moment with the 5th year....over the last two years of comprehensive school we have had difficulty with 5th year kids and I think everybody has....moreso with P.E. because you ask them to bring something in order to teach them. If they don't bring that equipment then you can't teach them...you are in difficulty. I have always assumed and we were always told by you and Max at college that 99% of the kids like P.E. but this is not so now this is what I find. I would say that 75-80% of the kids like P.E. but there is a good % who don't like it...when I say don't like it, they don't like being given a general education in P.E....they might like particular things like playing table tennis or badminton...but when you are taking a whole form and you try to teach them soccer or rugby they just forget the kit and that's it...You can punish them for ever and a day and it doesn't make much difference. So I have to accept in many ways that there is quite a large % especially in the 5th year who have an aversion to P.E. and this next years 5th will be an option. I will get a group who say as far as I am concerned I want to do 4 periods P.E. every week.....one afternoon's P.E. I don't think an afternoon is a good idea, having 4 lessons is far too long. But that is the only way they can fit it into the system so now we are getting to the stage where kids are opting for P.E. Are we going to take it lower down the school? Are we eventually going to get a system where it is completely optional?

Would that worry you?

No. Not at all. I would sooner, and I would say this about education generally....say to the kids, "Come to school if you want"and you would have very few problems, because they would say initially, "Oh great not being at school" and then they would get the message and would be fighting to get in. I think there are one or two kids who you have lost long ago because of parental influence. Say in the swimming...we have a lovely swimming bath there and when we were at school we would have killed each other to get into that pool but we have kids who regularly forget their kit who don't want to swim so you spend an awful lot of time cajoling them, caning them, doing what you will to try and get them to swim. Girls particularly.....unfortunately we have mixed swimming although I don't see any reason why we shouldn't, but some of the girls get a little bit embarrassed in the 3rd year about being bigger but they still wear bikini so I don't accept this argument...it's just a good excuse as far as I am concerned....but you get the system of the 3rd year girls where they have more periods in a month than anyone else and this sort of thing...well it's just a good excuse...but I think there is something to be said for saying, "It's free and you come if you want or you option for it" then we would have very few problems.

I shall be interested to see what the results are next year once it becomes optional. I have always taken the line that sport is there to be opted into not there because you are obliged to do it. It seems to me that this is an honest response to a real situation. What is going to happen to those who opt out?

It involves the school system of Year Heads. Every year has a male head of year and a female second in command and they deal with any problems in their year. As it happens Peter is head of 3rd year. The 5th year were a problem last year and the next 5th year head said "we can't go on with the present system we will devise a system where they can opt for various things and we can deal with the different types of pupil." Unfortunately he antagonised me because his system was mainly a P.E. system and I said that within

M.21/6

my P.E. scheme I cater for all those things as best we can. In other words you are trying to tell me...he was trespassing on to P.E. territory. So eventually we came to some sort of compromise where the 5th year will now have a special place to go...huts across the yard and they will be given a number of activities to do and staff to do them with....digging old folks gardens...car maintenance etc. They also see it as part of an activities afternoon where we take them out on visits...it may be if we can get the groups small enough they will go for an afternoon rock climbing, the army youth people will come in and take them away to do various things. This is more towards the non-academic. We still have what you might term the remains of the grammar school people down at Breakwater who will continue with a more academic.....

I got the impression from the others that although it is called a comprehensive school, there is still a division, that except for the younger end there is still a fairly selective group.... academic down at the old Grammar school and the non-academic tends to be in this and Drakes Field.

This has to be so. Because when we went comprehensive those children who were already in a grammar school had been given an undertaking by the authority that they would be given a grammar school education. When we went comprehensive you couldn't say to those children, "You are not getting a grammar school education" so we are now working those children out of the school so that the 1st 2nd and 3rd year forms in the school are the truly comprehensive forms. It so happened that the Grammar School was down there and the grammar school types stayed down there so we have three forms there which are grammar school forms and two which were the Drake's Field Sec. Mod. forms and the rest up here, so we have got this quite large division of children in the selected groups.

This 'Year Head' structure, does it run through every school in Hucklebrough?

M.21/7

No, the system varies. At the moment I don't think anyone uses the vertical system. I think all of them are horizontal systems because many of the comprehensives are not on the same site.

How do you imagine the present 4th year that is going into this system will react? How many will opt into P.E. and how many will opt out?

It will be a voluntary thing in that there will only be two members of staff available to take the groups. So naturally they are restricted to about 20 boys and 20 girls...That is a very small proportion of a 5th year...in actual fact it does not work out like that because they have two afternoons and half of the 5th year have P.E. activities on one afternoon and half on another. It will work out that about 80 partake. We are not saying that it must be exactly 20 it could be up to 30...we don't really know. However I imagine with the present 4th year who are not a very good year that we will have about 75% opting for P.E.

I would be happy with that, will you?

It depends on the reasons for opting for P.E. If it is used as the least of all the evils then I wouldn't be happy with it... this is something you have to determine. There are some who are going in because they are soccer players and nothing else...they don't want to do anything else...I wouldn't be happy...in other words I wouldn't want them doing 5 a side football for a whole year. It has to be a teaching commitment. So I don't see it as an easy option where they come and somebody sits in the gym and they play 5 a side....I want them taught. The other scheme was simply a look after scheme as I call it....the chap who was running it thought "well if the swimming pool is empty we will send a few in if they fancy a dip" and "if the sports hall is empty they can play 5 a side.

Baby minding?

M.21/8

Baby minding if you like! I said, "no" - "if we are going to have a group for P.E. we want them every week we want the same ground over the whole year and we'll find a balanced programme for them." In fact we have got that, and they will be taught.

I shall be interested to see that!

This works out for the whole school. We have 3 terms. We assume the autumn term will be 15 weeks, the spring term 12 and the summer term 12. The first term of the first year will be 3 weeks soccer, 3 weeks rugby, 3 weeks soccer 3 weeks rugby then 3 weeks dance then they also have a whole year swimming and a movement period continued over the whole year...I do a movement theme e.g. flight, and an apparatus theme so it's quite simple. By the time they get to the 3rd year we use a block and option system where we have a block of activities and more exotic ones like badminton, trampolining, roller hockey, volleyball..they are taught the basics of those so by the time they come to the 4th year, that block then becomes an option, so you have the same things with options. So for three weeks we say to them "Out of these activities, which would you like to do?" And then we improve on them and then we get another block system coming with more exotic sports sub-aqua, circuit training, weight training, and so on. So by the time they reach the 6th form it is all options.

Do you have the staff to do it?

It depends...unfortunately we are being a little bit stymied now with the likes of P.E.A. saying, "You need paper qualifications" Now do you need paper qualifications to teach the basics.....I wonder...I can teach the basics of trampolining quite safely. He is the adviser for the B.A.O.L.P.E. on safety. And he is absolutely daft on it. He produces circulars without number, on safety, which you have more or less to conform to. I had that year at Carnegie and I came out and I had various things.....he sent a circular

M.21/9

round about trampolining. And I said "As far as I am concerned I have been to one of the best colleges in the country for P.E. and have taught P.E. for a number of years surely I must be regarded as a safe P.E. teacher in various activities...I don't need certificates to say," I may as well have gone to the national bodies and got certificates as do that....He said "Unless you have certificates...a piece of paper....or unless I come to see you and give you the O.K. then you are not covered." I objected to that. I didn't want P.E.A.'s certificate. I had a certificate from Carnegie which is bloody hard to get, there was a lot of friction there. And there still is. And I still won't go and get a certificate from him. You can't teach swimming unless you have a Bronze Life Saving Certificate. You can't teach trampolining unless you have got a National Body or P.E.A.'s certificate....and so it goes on....well where do you stop? You can't do golf...you can't do modern educational gymnastics unless you were trained in them....Sailing, another one. You have to have a special certificate for sailing...out of school activities, away from the school environment I can see the special difficulties on perhaps mountains that you are not used to and this sort of thing.

It creates particular difficulties doesn't it?

I have to ask people coming in if they have special qualifications in swimming before I dare put them on swimming.

So, a probationer coming along can't help you in swimming unless she has got bronze?

No, and you couldn't leave her on her own in the baths because if there was an accident you are in trouble. I can see the point, of qualifications for such things as sailing, canoeing, rock-climbing, fell-walking, where you are away from the school environment. But anything within the school environment, surely you can do it... Athletics is another one, throwing events...you are not allowed to do any throwing events. We got a very strong one about throwing events and we ended up last year not doing any throwing events

because I daren't let people loose. Now this year I have had to take all of the first years myself and say

(Recording at this point lost)

I teach the basics to kids. I put a tennis racket in their hands and say "Did you like that?" I put them in a boat and take them for a sail round and say "Do you like it?" and they say "Yes" so I tell them that the next stage is to join a club or come back next year and we'll go round at a higher level next year, but you reach a stage where I can't teach you beyond the basics and you have got to go to a club. We have a kid now in the school who is a National Athletics champion. She is a sprinter...Now she hasn't done it with me...we have two lads who are County champions at golf...they haven't done it with me....They come into my lessons and have a knock about, but they go to the clubs and they become National champions. The same with swimming...we have one lad.....

And you are happy with that arrangement as it stands now?

Very happy. My job is to give these kids an introduction to as many activities as I can in a shortest time that I can and then hand them out to the experts. I am not an expert in anything... I am a jack of all trades...I know a little bit more about rugby than perhaps most but I am quite content to know a little bit about everything and pass that little bit on to the kids...and say to the kids, "I am not an expert, I can only take you so far.... if you enjoy it go to the clubs." The school provide the facilities...archery, fencing, we get some equipment and let them have a go, providing we can do it safely, and then go on. How many kids are going to buy a fencing set and say "I don't like this" and throw it away. This is how I see the job and when I get something like that from an Adviser who is supposed to be on my side I am very perturbed indeed. When you look down this list here the mind boggles. What annoyed me a little bit on top of that was that I went back to my tutor at Carnegie who is in

of the supplementary course with (named tutor) but unfortunately the Principal just won't back you up on this. He just says if they haven't got the certificate, that's it. He won't have a course that is designed towards certificates and yet he won't back you up and say this man is trained to do P.E. no matter what. The supplementary course was a waste of time as far as I was concerned in many ways....it didn't turn out like that because I met D.S. and learned a hell of a lot in many ways about P.E....How to teach P.E....How you deal with people and kids....to me that was worth it. But when I come out faced with this sort of problem then I say if I had gone to the National Bodies and done two or three months at each one and got various certificates...bits of paper....I wouldn't have been half as well off as regards knowledge but I would have been better off as regards jobs to be able to say....I have an A.S.A. certificate, a ski certificate..... That's what is happening with you at college.

We don't go for many National certificates. We do swimming, A.S.A. R.L.S.S. we do Badminton, tennis, trampolining in some cases.

This is one of P.E.A's certificates with his own name on for services rendered to trampolining. What makes me query it is his qualification to judge anybody else. In other words he is now saying that if you teach trampolining you will have no cover from the L.E.A. I simply say my union will cover me and in any case my college will back me up as being a competent teacher of P.E. I can produce a certificate to say I am a competent teacher of P.E. But apparently that is not enough. The crux of the matter is whether you are for approved practice..... if you can prove that you have followed approved practice...in other words if you have taught the leading up stages and pointed out the safety elements, you have no problem if you have an accident. But if you ever got to the stage where you haven't followed approved practice then the L.E.A. would say he has no certificate to say he can do it, he hasn't followed approved practice, we can't back him up and you end up in a law suit....I can't afford £250,000, I have a wife and family...there's

M.21/12

a football lads...5 a side...This is what does tend to happen. I wonder if it is worth going on with throwing events.....wondering like hell if anything will happen and hoping that there is not one stupid enough to.....even though you follow the approved practice. I say to the staff, "Don't do throwing events, do a bit of running round the track, where they can't hurt themselves", which is wrong. Surely this is a problem at college. You are training people to come out to face this problem and as you say you give them very few certificates...they come out without a swimming certificate and the first thing.....They may be the best swimming teacher in the world, but because they haven't got a bit of paper...it is a terrible situation really...it is getting P.E. done away with and it is pushing it more towards the clubs who are prepared to take the risks or have different cover because the kids don't have to go.

This is a critical time for P.E. - It is being re-defined.

This has happened over the last two years. I did my supplementary year prior to comprehensive schools and I came out thinking I was very well qualified in P.E. I'd had the experience of a few years in P.E. both as a head of dept. in a Secondary School and a Grammar and I felt reasonably confident...I'd tried lots of activities which I'd the basic knowledge of...I'd gone to Carnegie which was the best gymnastic college in the country....Fortunately I got a very good report off D.S. I got the Supplementary Student of the Year Carnegie prize, which I felt very pleased about...Well, I'm not the greatest but there is nobody better qualified than I am at the present time and I feel that I can go ahead and do the job, but I now wonder if it is worth doing. Is it worth setting myself up. And when you say to the rest of the staff, "Now look I've got this circular and I'm afraid we can't take trampolining and we can't do swimming, avoid golf, all throwing events in athletics... don't take any kids camping just in case there's an accident.."
It's very difficult.

In Boys P.E. we have relied on willing amateurs...to run football teams, to go camping and so on. Is that going to be out? With these restrictions?

A very good example is in the school at the present time. The R.E. man...and he is having a little bit of difficulty...he is one of these mature students but having a little bit of difficulty teaching, but he is a very good rock climber. He's been in the Cairngorms, done winter climbing..he's very good. He's taken students to Ponteland College...But he has nothing on paper. And I say to him "I'm sorry Ken, you can't take them out....you have nothing on paper. Until you get the approval of the P.E. Adviser or Education Officer I'm sorry" This lad's mad keen. And I know for a fact that the moment he takes kids out they will respect him....he will have no more class problems. Now fortunately he got the Principal of the college, of this Newcastle College to write a note to say that he was a competent person and would the authority accept this....And eventually they did. So now he can take them out... But, I mean that lad has gone through a lot of trouble....over a year to get some form of qualification to take them out. And many a person would say, "well fair enough I can go out climbing myself, stuff the authority!..." But this lad was mad keen to take the kids out.

Are the other Heads of P.E. Departments feeling the restrictions in the same way as yourself?

Well I am surprised....I mean I kicked at the time. Here is an example of the letter, which shows the sort of fuss I made at the time. But a lot of the others simply went on the course and got qualified which to me was the easy way out. I think that this is the thin edge of the wedge. Now the P.E. Adviser to me, had got the best motives in the world. He is trying to do the best for P.E. Unfortunately, in my opinion I think he needs a P.R. man...you know he and I don't really hit it off...I'm not frightened of him. You know at one stage I might have been, but having been

M.21/14

to Carnegie and decided that he is no better qualified than me. I've been around nearly as long as he has. In fact I said to him the other day, "Look you have been out of teaching too long" He said, "Oh I teach every week....." I said "Look the last time you were in a school was '57!" In fact he came to City and gave us a lecture just after he had got the job in Hucklebrough. I remember him coming. But one lesson a week is no substitute. It's when you are here all the time...that's what it's about. You know he doesn't like this being said to him. Well unfortunately it is that way. I mean you are in the same boat. And you can't help it. I mean you can't do two jobs. Alright I cannot tell you what to do in training teachers.

The permanency in the school, I agree, is crucial!

If you do two good lessons a day I reckon you are doing pretty well. Many a day, you know, I've gone through the day and.... "well hell"..you know....I've just padded along there. I've just kept on going - you know unprepared, and done things which on reflection I shouldn't have done. Next day I've gone in and Oh...I've got all 1st year for swimming today. Right I really organise and got them going and at the end of the day 'cor...that was a splendid job. And you know sometimes two lessons of the day come off and you are lucky. Sometimes none of them come off. So if you are teaching everyday and only two a day come off....where would he be? I think that this is something he doesn't realise. He thinks that everyone is going to be marvellous....no problem...But when I say the P.E.A. is doing his best for P.E....a case in point, 'Pirates'. Now we have all done Pirates..thank goodness, and got away with it. I would be the first to admit that I enjoyed Pirates when I was a kid. But I don't do it now. I'm on a hiding to nothing doing it. But I have done it and I am the first to admit it. I got away with it....I've been lucky. And sending a circular out about that has done a lot of good. And I appreciate that. It's made me realise that there are difficulties to the job and that we ought not to leave any stone unturned.

Did he send a circular out about Pirates?

He did, yes. Here we are (He produced many documents relating to the discussion of safety restrictions) documents on Safety in Athletics, trampoline, golf, outdoor pursuits, pirates etc. from the P.E. Organiser. Mr. D. considered that he was the only teacher in Hucklebrough who 'stood up to' the Local Authority Adviser. He then went on to describe what he considered was a 'thorn in the flesh' namely the Youth Clubs. The system in Hucklebrough is that we have 7 comprehensive schools. Now each one of these comprehensive schools has a swimming pool, a Youth Centre and a Sportshall as well as the normal P.E. facilities. Now also attached to each of the schools is a part-time teacher who is Youth Tutor. Now he is responsible for a couple of sessions of teaching in the week, depending on his subject, then a certain number of evening sessions with assistants below him. Now after 6.30 p.m. they have prior use of the sports hall, swimming pool, playing fields and Youth Centre. So that if we want to do any activities after 6.30 we would have to consult them. This is Dual use facilities. Now I had experience of dual use facilities prior to going comprehensive. We had a system whereby I said "that's yours....that's mine" in separate cupboards locked so that I do not arrive in the morning to find all my badminton rackets smashed to bits. When I came in next morning...now unfortunately on my particular site we have two youth centres. No other school has two youth centres and two sports halls. Now one I get on with very well, in that he is a trained teacher and he realises the problems and keeps pretty fair control and we get along very well, we share the plant but keep the apparatus separate. Now the other one who is a trained Youth Leader...he is just a bleeding nuisance. He's a youth warden. He does more with the old folk - and in my opinion gets all the yobboes in his youth centre. Lets the kids in to smoke at lunch time...which can cause a lot of problems. So he and I don't hit it off very well. We have problems with the keys. Who will use what when... causes problems on Saturdays...what markings in the hall will be.

M.21/16

It all creates a lot of friction between the school staff and those who use the centre and the P.E. facilities which must be shared by the school. You will find at Fleetwith that there is real friction between the Headmaster and the Youth Centre. They had a problem with drugs and they called the headmaster out in the middle of one night...and they have had problems with the swimming pool....there was a lot of friction there.

The interview concluded with an emphasis on the friction that exists between the Youth Tutor.

It might be as well if you took me very briefly over the organisation of P.E. in the school.

It varies from year to year depending on what the Academic Panel decide. I had a terrible fight with them to try and be consistent in that all children, regardless of academic ability, should get the same amount of P.E. time. We haven't won with this one because the band one in the 3rd.yr. get three periods, 2 and 1 against 2+1+1 of the others. Now for that single period rather than Movement I insist on swimming. What I'm aiming at is swimming right across the year for three years at least: then an option swimming in the fourth year. We are finding some difficulty with the fourth year girls who are opting out a little bit....dropped from 4th yr. opting out to 3rd yr. they seem to be maturing a little bit earlier.(1)

You mean opting out of the swimming bit?

They are bringing notes because they are having to swim with boys. We have mixed swimming. I discount this excuse because they have to grow up with boys....in the school atmosphere...I'd much rather pressure them into accepting the idea. Generally speaking you will find that we have a double games a single movement lesson, for want of a better word, and swimming for three years. Then in the fourth year we have a variety of choice. The academic side (of the 4th year) get 2 periods and perhaps 2(because we have an option scheme) the rest of them get 4 periods. Fifth year is somewhat similar to the fourth but it does vary from year to year depending on the demands of the academic subjects.

This academic band in the fourth year, they will get a double period and they might be able to get a further double if they so choose from their options?

Yes, providing we think that they are acceptable (2).

What are the things that they can opt in or out from?

The options schemes varies again from year to year. It is a very very complicated Options scheme. When I was drawn into it, I said O.K. I'm not happy about an options scheme. What you are saying is opt for

P.E. against an academic subject and if it were my child I would say go and do the academic subject and do your P.E. out of school. You virtually eliminate the brighter child from P.E. and you end up with a bunch of jobboes who don't want to opt for an academic subject. I had a terrible fight....

Did it work out that way?

No. What happened, we..for want of a better word, we've got a Human Movement course. There is no examination. We are not doing Mode Three C.S.E. But it is a Human Movement course based on academic performance as well as practical performance. And this goes in an options scheme. It means that the brighter child does not have to make this awful choice of English or Maths against P.E. It is partnered with one of the minor things like photography and the like.(3) But it really is a very complicated options scheme to work out....and it is not very satisfactory. It is one that I wouldn't have. But, inevitably it is the only thing that school can do because it depends on numbers; it depends on staff available....rooms available, there are so many external factors other than P.E. Fortunately P.E. is given quite a lot of preference through a hell of a lot of pressure over 5 year from me. I've complained...bickered and shouted...they finally recognised that what I am saying is to some extent true. And they now do give us some prior consideration. But I think if it had been a younger H. of D. somebody or, say 5 - 6 yr. experience they would have swept that by the board and said 'right you get what we give you.....'

They would not have been able to sustain that fight like you have?

Yes.

Since I came here four years ago there have been some massive changes in the school. You were then operating on five different sites. You were full up to here. I felt that you had no choice but to leave...I felt that you would get so angry about the situation then...or you would sour...But that hasn't happened. I don't think so.

Or have I made a wrong assumption? Yet you have just said that you have continued the fight over five years....You must get weary of the fight?

I think that my attitude is perhaps different from a lot of people. When I first came into teaching, I had a hell of a struggle to get in. I was a little bit disgruntled about that. Having got in, I thought well, my attitude is that I'm here to teach....I had fought hard to get a teaching post....and I am here to teach...So my work is 9.0 to 4.0 Now any out of school activities is a bonus. It's very nice for me to take out of school activities, because you get the children who are better children, who want to do it...who present no problems. On the other hand if I spend all my time doing O.S. activities, then by the time I'm 30 I'm going to be looking for another job, out of P.E. which is what a lot of people do. They spend a lot of time being trained to do P.E. They get in and get to a Head of Department and look to get out. And to some extent I can understand they are frightened that their physical performance will not match and they lose interest and all the rest of it. And I decided very early on that I wasn't going to blow it. I was going to do my job during the day as best I could and curtail the O.S.A's on one school team. And when we went Comprehensive this came to a head. Suddenly we had a large school and we can 6 or 7 soccer sides, we had 3 or 4 rugby sides. Basketball, Cross-country, athletics... you name it...it was all to do and it was all on me. We also had a lot of equipment. Out of school equipment...Shirts, O.A. gear etc. which again was my responsibility. Now over the years, I have shelved a lot of that, I'm not responsible for O.S.A's. I will help...In fact there is nobody responsible. It's been moved to various people, not necessarily within the P.E. department. Not that I think that is a good thing. But there are only certain people who will accept that responsibility. So I haven't got that pressure from O.S.A's. That enables me to get on with my job as H. of D. Also I feel that I can go on; I don't wish to get out of P.E. I hope to stay in it. I don't think that practical performance is necessarily a criterion to be able

to teach P.E. The main thing as far as I am concerned is being keen about it. You mustn't lose your keenness. So this is what I have done. And this is how I have remained sane. But also there are also various over-riding factors, which come directly from the Grammar School....I had a certain amount of respect from those who have senior posts within the school. The Deputy Head, for example, who goes skiing with us...and I have quite a good relationship there. Anything I have to say to him, he listens to and considers it from my point of view. My Faculty Head is the same. We are very friendly. And if I say that is not right, he'll listen and decide in his own mind whether it is right or wrong...and if necessary will argue with me about it. So as far as P.E. is concerned we have a good voice. I can get people in authority to listen. The same with the Head. I was at the Sec. Mod. when he came into teaching... he knows me and I know him and we get on....at least he listens... and generally accepts what I say. And then he balances it out over the school. Like the options scheme....it doesn't suit us but you have to have a bit of give and take...and say "right, if this is best for the whole school then I will accept it...but we are not going to become the dregs." We have to give all our children the same chance in P.E. even though we are not taking an external examination at the end of it...they've all got to be given the same opportunity of choice. This is what I have fought for over the years. After talking with other teachers from the other schools, I think we have a pretty good system going here. I may be blowing my own trumpet...but I think we have.

Refresh my mind about leaving City.

I spent one year at Q.H. school. After failing my exams again I went into Industry for a year. Then passed my teaching exams and came back into teaching....70 to 71 I did the year at Carnegie (Secondment) That was a gap of 9 years from '62 at the Grammar School, Eltermere. I had decided that if I was going to become a H. of D. in the comprehensive I would need to be as well qualified as I possibly could. Also I would need to be up to date. I could see that I would have younger staff....

with modern ideas...

Was it a good time for a refresher?

To some extent...on reflection I sometimes wonder whether it has been worthwhile. Maybe a year getting National body Awards might have been better spent than getting the Carnegie Certificate. I sometimes wonder if the Certificate itself is worth anything. The year spent doing the work was worth it...I enjoyed the year and I think I learned a hell of a lot.

Are you the most experienced P.E. teacher in H?

Yes, I think I am. I don't think any of the others have had Sec. Mod.and Grammer School and Industry....you see when we went Comprehensive the people who were already in the Grammar School.... a chap called H.W. he left to get out on the Pastoral side. Maths and Pastoral side. And one or two of the others got out of P.E. and left it for the younger people. M.31 for example, was one of the lucky ones to get a job....as H. of D. M.39 and ,.6 were established in the Tech. School and the Mod. School. So they were alright. Now M.39 is getting out of course. M.6 is about the next one I think.

What's your personal morale like now?

Four years ago I would have got out and done a labouring job. Not particularly because of P.E. At the time we went Comprehensive we had the Raising of the School Leaving Age. We had these children who didn't want to stay on. We also went into County. There were three things you see...so that if you asked County anything, nobody knew what the answer was. They were frightened of treading on someone elses toes. And everybody was stabbing everybody in the back (comprehensive reorganisation)...establishing a pecking order. 'Modern' staff were frightened that the Grammar School staff were going to take over and become academic. The Academic were afraid of the Modern School children. Never having taught them. So there was this huge turmoil. Intermingled with all this were these 5th.

Form jobboes...who didn't want to know....who were just going taunting Grammar School pupils. So that there were a few of us left who could cope. I'd had the experience of Modern School pupils and I'd had the experience of Grammar School pupils...I wasn't academic...so that meant that I was in the middle. There were a few in the middle who had to try and sort it all out. You know we had to say "you lot stay there and you lot stay there and we'd get together..." and it was hell...terrible. It was dreadful and it wasn't our own making. The site situation obviously didn't help. (Working on 5 sites).

I thought everybody was worth double just for working on this particular split site.

I think they were. But having said that I think, now, that we have learned a tremendous amount from that. The other (Bamburgh) ex-Grammar school in the town is now beginning to suffer. I play golf with N.W. who is the Deputy Head across there....so he and I compare notes. I played rugby with him as well so I know him very well. I think a lot of the things that have happened here, for example the academic staff coming from the Grammar School....are either retired or eliminated....in some way....and we are left with academic staff who are prepared to get mixed in. At Bamburgh at the moment they have academic staff who are saying "I'm not being timetabled with that lot!!"they are jobboes..." "I won't take them..." So they have this problem with academic staff. Now they are finding that their 6th form numbers are dropping. And they are going to have to get rid of some of their academic staff because there aren't enough lessons for them. Either they have to take the lower ability ones or get out. That is one of the problems that they are going to have to face. Which has been resolved earlier here. Organisation things... like having a News Letter once a week....putting everybody in the picture as to what is happening the next week or what had happened in the last week. The timetabling arrangements are better now. Everybody to some extent gets a say.....through H. of D. and the Academic Panel. As there were fewer sites then it got easier all the

way. Less movement of kids...the numbers have decreased slightly. I think that we have something round the 1250 region. We were up 1370 at one stage. We won't decrease very much because we have a new private estate being built further up the road, which is our catchment area and can't be changed because it is too far away from the others. We may lose some of the lower middle class housing to another catchment area, Callaly for example, later on. Cottingham is growing all the time just up the road. Younger families are moving in there...I think there have been 200 homes built there over the last two years. Our numbers are unlikely to drop.

I am interested in you as a person because of your long association with the town. You went to school here...you came back to teach here... you've played rugby here....so you are an important member of H. You are locked into the town community. Do you love H?

Yes. You have to understand the history of H. to some extent. The 'H' Heough as it was called....If you lived on there you were a 'crofter'. And that was a fishing community. West View here is an extension of that community....but you are not really a Huckleton unless you were born on the other side of what was Stone Bridge.

Were you born there?

Yes. So really it's a village community.....your a 'Monkey Hanger' N.W. the chap I play golf with, now he's a 'West Docker'. You see it was Hucklebrough and Hucklebrough Hill and we had to amalgamate and this feeling about H. remains. This is the Heough school now. Eltermere was the school on the 'H' site....But now there are no Secondary Schools on that site. So this is the community school for 'H'. So really we feel that we are not even part of H. Hill. And when you are pushed in with County 1 when you are nearer County 2...really we are more C.2 than C.1.

Many people have commented on that. There is a lot of resentment about this....

Tremendous.

Is the resentment justified? I can't see that it makes much difference in for example Eltermere?

When they reorganised the County Boundaries H. just missed out. We needed something like 120,000 to become an individual County Unit. H. was in the region of 98 - 100,000 so we were nearly big enough to become our own unit. We had been our own unit...and suddenly we were thrown in with C1. And everything now happens in Darton. The development is in Darton. The offices are in Darton. Everything is on the other side of I.C.I. So if ever you want to go to Darton for any kind of communication...it's a hell of a journey going through I.C.I. and back again. It is far easier to go to City. The remoteness is troubling. This side of the river is and always will be County 2.

No teacher has said that they thought it was a good thing. But coming back to yourself you are deeply rooted in Hucklebrough. I have a great respect for H. But you have a lot of things going for you. You are rooted into the rugby world....have you roots elsewhere? Golf Club for example?

Yes, it is the H.G.C. just over the road....quite near the school. But it is through the rugby....you are inevitably rooted in everything in H. Whether I like it or not most people know me whether or not I know them. If I go into a pub or club....it doesn't matter whether I am a rugby player or a hockey player or what....I'm A.J. and I played for England and "...come in..." you know. So it is not a particular section of the community that I am in. It just so happens that I'm in everything in H. I suppose I have also taught so many of the children. I am now getting children of parents I taught. "Please sir, you taught my dad". I suppose in some way in most of the households in H. I have some connection with...either through school....rugby or golf....

M.21/9

Have you ever got involved in the politics of E.?

No. I have never been a political person. I have political views like everyone has.....

Right or Left?

Conservative I think. Yes, I would say definitely Conservative.

Does that have a conflict for you. I say that because I regard Eltermere as a very working class school. It's catchment area would not be to the right of the political spectrum?

None whatsoever. And I think it stems from working in within the Steel Works. I worked as personnel....a year there and I was pleased to get out. Because I saw the damage that the Union could do to working class people. You could talk to them as individuals and they would express entirely different views as to what the Union people were saying. At that time I had to deal with a chap called Bill Sirs who is now the leader of the steel unions. Not a very pleasant character.. I think that he thought that he was doing his best for the people within the works, but...that's certainly coloured my thinking about Unions....politics...

There is an interesting biography in you because you are now interested in Teacher politics. You are right in the middle of the N.A.S. thing. Tell me more about this love - hate relationship with the Unions that you clearly have.

As regards the N.A.S....again going back, I used to be a member of the N.U.T. principally because they gave us the best dinner at college. They called a one day strike and a lot of the part-time teachers didn't bother....and I decided there and then if my job was a professional job then we had to have some professional say. I wouldn't say that I was a Union man. I don't like strikes. I don't like any kind of Industrial Action. I'd much sooner do things by negotiation. But having been in

C.I and having spent a year in Industry, I've learned that if you want your own way you've got to have some sort of Industrial muscle otherwise people just tread over you.

So over the years you have got a good deal more militant?

Yes. Well...I don't know that I have got a good deal more militant... I'm very schizophrenic really....It is very difficult to explain. I don't like being trodden on. I have my own views about things...and if I think something is right...in all conscience I think it is right, I would fight for it. At the moment I think teachers are being treated as cattle. Having spent all the time to get qualified...and I know all about that...and that colours my thinking, because I fought like hell to get qualified. Having decided that something is right then it is right as far as I am concerned....it is something deep inside me...not something that you can explain.

Are you locked into the church community?

No, I don't go to church. When I was younger I was in the B.B. and I eventually ended up by getting my Queen's Badge. I was in the choir as well...I still have a love of the church.

Do you send your child to church?

He's in the B.B. I don't send him; he goes because he likes the B.B.

The B.B. is quite something in H. I gather. They have their own Rugby Club for instance?

Oh yes. They are very very strong. Tremendous tradition of B.B. lads. They have camped at Castle Howard for 75 years now. I mean my father went and his father before him...so there is a fourth generation.

How many children have you got?

Two...a boy and a girl...15 and 13.

M.21/11

Do they go to school in H?

They go to Fleetwith. I used to live in the Fleetwith catchment area and they started there and we simply left them there rather than... I felt a little bit unhappy about having the children in the same school that I was going to teach. I didn't think that it was a good thing. So we left them there. I didn't go across there to get them into Fleetwith school particularly. There just happened to be a house across there. I'm back to Rath Station which is again Hucklebrough you see....I'm a Huckleton back in Rath Station. It is not the super de luxe area that Best Park was. People aim to get into Best Park I aim to get out of it...get back to H! I have a lovely house which I quite enjoy but they are more my own people....A good example of this is I suppose....I could have had a job at Bishop Stortford..at a place called the College. I went down there and I decided that they all talked with marbles in their mouths and I would never fit into that society. I just couldn't see me speaking correctly...being 'ever so an ever so' and drinking sherry. I can do it. I have done it. But it isn't part of my life. I'm Huckleton, I understand them and I hope that they understand me...I'm a bit rough and ready perhaps but I can cope with most children and parents in H. This is one of the reasons I stay. Because I know the parents....If I am having trouble with certain children then I have only to say that I am going to see their dad....'I know your parents very well....' and I have done just that. Many a time I have done it. They recognise me on the doorstep.

That gives you a big advantage.

Well discipline problems. When I first came here....I got out of my car and I was walking across the playground and one kid said to another, 'Hey A.J. is coming here....' big rough and ready rugby player...and they didn't bother me. And I have never had to have discipline problems that other people may have had.

Many young teachers actually are physically frightened of discipline issues. I can imagine that some young teachers in the early days here would have had very anxious moments.

(doubting pause)..Some of the younger teachers make very little effort. They give up very quickly. Discipline is something you establish....Alright I was lucky to some extent, they thought I was rough and ready....and because I was a rugby player and an International I was going to sort them all out so they didn't try anything. A lot of other people have had to establish discipline. They go around the school....they never give the cane... they go around the school, whenever the children see them they get out of the way and keep quiet. Now that needs working at. A lot of young teachers come in and think that it just happens. It doesn't. They don't work for it. Now, for instance, I have one of the rougher forms in the 2nd year. I have gone right through to the fifth year with my form now I drop back down again...so they have given me the rough ones....Muggins again....'J. will sort it out'. To try and sort them out I've been keeping children in detention for coming in late. 2 minutes late and I will stay in every night and keep them in then. They don't come in late now. This is after 7 or 8 weeks. Well that needs working at. I had to keep them in detention every night for the first three or four weeks...till they eventually realise that I mean what I say. It doesn't just happen. So some of the younger teachers just don't work at it hard enough. How you help them I don't know. They say how do you establish discipline? It is a personal thing, people have different ways of doing it. Some can do it by choice of words...others can do it by persistence, keeping at them...nagging away at them...others do it by threatening. There's all sorts of different ways. You use your own combination.

Is corporal punishment administered much in this school?

We have a punishment book and all punishments are entered into the book. It has been quite drastically reduced. But I wouldn't like to see it

M.21/13

eliminated. I think that there are a lot of children in this world who have it in their blood.....no matter how much you are good and kind to them, they only respond to one thing for a short time...and that is physical violence. By physical violence you can keep them quiet for a week or so and you have to respond to it again. And it is the only sort of thing that they will ever understand. They don't understand reasoning...or 'for the good of the community'.... or 'for the good of the class'...or anything else. It is just an act of God if you like that it is in their mind and they can't help themselves to some extent..they are not deliberately trying to be disruptive...they are just made like that. And I think violence in that case towards them is justified and you are keeping them in check for the benefit of the others. One of the things about the comprehensive schools is that we cater for the less academic. We use a lot of staff resources for the less academic child....for very little reward...Often to the detriment of the academic child who would give you far greater reward. If we had the swing the other way we would have children going to Oxford and Cambridge. If we did it on a one to one basis or a one to two basis with Vith form, vast use of staff...but that would mean that at the other end there would be a lot of yobboes running around...which would eventually disrupt the school.

Do you think the balance is right now, or does it worry you?

It still worried me. The best children are not pushed hard enough. One headmaster once said that 'he liked to have his more able children together because they tended to rub sparks off each other.' I think this is very true. Unfortunately with the comprehensive... 'equal opportunity for everybody'.....it's not.

You think that the energy of the staff is taken up by these others.... that they sap a lot of the energy?

The ones at the bottom are being over loaded whereas the ones at the top are under worked...according to their ability. There should be an express stream (4).

M.21/14

I get the impression from all the comprehensive schools that they have gone through a period of enormous disruption....but now that things are settling down.....everybody is as you say getting better at administering them.....They are now on the up; all improving little by little. Do you feel that about H. in general? Has it benefitted H. as a town?

No. Not for H.

You would prefer the old system?

I would go back to the Grammar School system on reduced money. It was certainly a much easier life as regards teaching and it was much more rewarding. You see in the Grammar School we used to draw children from a very much larger catchment area, from Shelton to the North and Chillingham in the South. Now from a large catchment area like that you have a lot of very bright children and very few problem children. The problem children you did get were a pain in the **backside** because they were intelligent....with it. In many respects they were a bigger problem than the children who were a problem in the Secondary Modern School but you only got them occasionally. So the life itself was very much nicer. The kids were much more pleasant. They'd wanted to be at that school....and they knew if they didn't do their best they would be moved. Now at that time we had a multilateral unit; we had close links with the Secondary Modern School here, the Drake's field Secondary Mod. and if it was decided that any children were not progressing at their normal rate...or, for some reason might be happier in another set up, then they had this ability to move them round. In actual fact some of the children who came from the Sec. Mod.....who were late developers.....one ended up as Head Girl at Eltermere. They did very well once they came up. But that failed to some extent because the Heads were reluctant to lose their better children...and get a couple of bad ones back. So that didn't work as it was meant to. You see when Queen Hilda's was built in 1959 and opened in '59, one of the Craft men at City came here and he and a chap called J.H. another

City man set about and organised this area. Now make no mistake about it this area was wild...to say the least. I mean when the Circus came to town they had an unrideable mule which was conquered within a couple of hours. They set fire to the Marquee... and three days later the Circus was off. The lions were cowering in the corner of their cages...and this sort of thing. That's how the children were. J.H. and B.M. and people who opened the school set about it and to some extent conquered Best Field and did a very good job. Within that small unit they had a very good system going. Now that Drake's Field was a little bit worse off. They had a poorer type of child there. But again they had teachers in there who knew how to deal with that type of child. They were pretty successful with them. Grammar school we were luckier because we had the brighter child, but against that we had the more academic staff who were pushing them to a very high standard. And I thought that system, for the Heough community worked well.

You speak with great respect for both sets of staff.

Oh yes. No doubt about it.

Do you have the same respect for your colleagues now?

To some extent a lot of them are the same. In fact the people who are holding the school together are the ones who I am speaking of... you see these are the ones who know what it's all about. They understand the type of child they have been dealing with. A lot of the people who are coming in now just sink.

That is one of the things that worries me. I don't know whether you can train this particular characteristic? I don't think you can. But what you can say is 'if you teach in H. you must identify with the community.....'

Yes, I think if you understand the community...and you know that it is a lower-middle class type of area...and some of the families are a little bit rough, basically they are not rough because they

dislike you they are rough because that is the type of the community they are in. If you understand that the father goes out and has a few drinks over the odds and then the kids are left... then you look at that child in a different light. Just as you would the child of a single parent. Because the child has problems. If he is coming into school in the morning yawning...they're....there may be some problems.....(5)

But going back to College this aggravated me about going to City. I felt that when I left College, I could teach. I came into the school and I organised the P.E. right from the word go. Now College said 'no you are not good enough at English and H.E....' 'You can't write it down in examinations....' Alright, I do understand that they were trying to maintain high academic standards....but I felt that I could teach. I could cope with this type of child. Now I stayed in the Secondary Modern for quite a while. I never even thought that I should apply to a Grammar School. The Head of the Grammar School came along and said, "Why haven't you applied for the job?" I said that I'm not the type to be in a Grammar School. He said that I should apply. Then I applied and got the job. But that College situation really left a chip on my shoulder. I don't go to reunions because of that. In my own heart I felt that I could control kids and I had something to give to kids. Alright, I may not have been able to put it down on paper. I may not have been the brightest sort of person City's had, but in my own heart of heartsI know that I can teach very well. Is there any justice in that? I really felt aggrieved about that...It was one of the biggest disappointments of my life that was. I failed and I knew that I could teach.

But you must feel that it is to your credit, that you had the guts... the determination to go on?

Well that was G.N.S. (member of staff at City College).

Can I come back to your department. I can see that you have a period of instability coming up now. I'm impressed that you have quite a good little team at the moment....

M.21/16

Smashing!

...I have talked to them...but I don't know their teaching quality.
As you know you can sometimes talk well about teaching but they can't
get in there and do a good job. Where are the strengths?

If we take Peter, he followed me into the Sec. Mod....some time after me, some two or three years after. Now when we applied for the Comprehensive jobs, Peter didn't apply for the H. of P.E. because he felt that as the Head of the Grammar School department I was likely to get it. But Peter didn't particularly want to get out of the school, he had this community feeling within the school....ex Eltermere lad again. And he applied for the pastoral side. He got the Head of Year. Now that post was less than the P.E. post....it was his second choice. Now the Heads of Pastoral go to a Scale 4 and I can only go to a Scale 3. Another little bone of contention. But getting back to Peter. He is a very good lad. A very good teacher....a good disciplinarian. Knows what he is talking about. Pretty keen about the subject. I don't think that he has any weak spots really. He is very keen on Outdoor Activities...He is always taking a team...this helps with his pastoral side. He is a rugby man. He goes down to coach Wanderers 2nd team...very keen on rugby. He is locked into the community almost like me but he is what we call a 'yakker' a colliery lad....He came from a large catchment area to Eltermere and went to teach in Queen Hilda's Sec. Mod. So again he was pretty well in tune with the community. Very reliable. We occasionally differ on various things but in the main we seem to get along fairly well. Jillian and Joan both arrived together five years ago from P.E. College. And their confidential reports...Jillian needed a very sympathetic H. of D. which we rather scoffed at, because she wasn't going to get that. Joan was more of a disciplinarian and a better teacher of English than P.E. So we viewed them with a little bit of suspicion, because the appointments at that time were done by C. And by the Advisers and not by the school. So they were appointed by C.I. And they have both turned out smashing. Whenever we get new people I explain, 'Look, I regard O.S.A's as a bonus. If you want to do it, fine. But don't regard it as part of your job. Because I don't consider it part of your job and if anybody

says other than that tell me and I will argue about it....' On that understanding they came in and got the Netball organised and got going...Now Joan, in my eye, is more a pastoral type of teacher, she is more concerned with the welfare of children and more prepared to run around after children...make sure their discipline is right and so on. So I would say that she is more inclined to the pastoral side than the nitty gritty teaching side. But her discipline is very good. And she seems to get on well with most children. Jillian, on the other hand is a little bit..not so much under A's influence as she used to be, because Peter had been talking.....as you may well imagine.....But she is very keen to do well. And the kids seem to understand her a little better than Joan. She's more the motherly type to the kids than what Joan is, and a fairly strict disciplinarian. So really we've been pretty lucky with those two.

How did you get on with Pam?

Pam, very well. A very quiet girl....I didn't think that I was going to. I was in luck because when I was appointed H. of D. Pam hadn't been here whilst I was here. She arrived with Peter, afterwards. Being quiet she would accept most of the things I said. Not everything...by no means. She accepted the fact that I was H. of D. P.E. which was an important point to start off with. Peter could not accept that he wasn't 2nd in command. Pam was 2nd in command. This was a difficult one we had to get over. I insisted that Pam was 2nd in command....to give some sort of status. But as regards P.E. I'm in charge of P.E. Boys and Girls. All the ordering of stock....all organisation.

I get the impression that in other schools the P.E. department is in fact two departments not one.

I won't have that at all. I'm in charge of P.E. Anything that goes wrong is my responsibility. I'll work from there. So the girls are my responsibility.....Although I would say to Pam 'could you deal with it...? If you can't then I will.' I've done that on a couple

M.21/18

of occasions in the past when we have had a loud mouthed girl who I could shut down better than Pam. And this seemed to suit her. I would take all the responsibility yet still she retained the authority over the girls to some extent. And it worked quite nicely. Now we've got this set up. Now I understand from some of the other schools, some of the ladies...are a little bit mouthy, for want of a better word. They think they ought to run their P.E. I think the H. of D. is particularly suffering this at Bamburgh. Having taken over from A.F. who was H. of D. I think one or two of the other schools are suffering a bit. Aiden - no, Fleetwith - no.

There are tensions in all departments

I'm very pleased with our set up. I think that I have mellowed a little bit, I have learned to accept that everything doesn't run smoothly to my line of thought. I have learned to temper my convictions feeling that the school is bigger than the P.E. Department...perhaps they are not always treating the P.E. department as dogs...perhaps they are now thinking in terms of what is best for the school. I'm quite happy with the situation... but it has not been an easy battle...the department has got some standing which I am pleased about. People talk about the P.E. department on par with academic departments. It is not somewhere for the 'yobboes' where they just fool around and run about the gym. for entertainment. They are taught. This is one of the things that I have always insisted on....9.0 - 4.0 we do teach and particularly swimming. Swimming is so important that if you do nothing else but get kids in the water...to be safe in the water we have achieved a hell of a lot. You know "little Willie who is frightened of the water, if we can get him in and be safe in the water and enjoy the water then we are willing."

Yes, swimming is for life. I sometimes look at the last year of a pupil's school life and wonder just what has been achieved in 11 years of schooling? What are we doing for the pupil?

M.21/19

I think that P.W. is changing an awful lot. To some extent we are starting to entertain rather than teach. Especially now that we have got these 5th years who have had to stay on...If you try to do gymnastics with them, they can't do it. They are so unco-ordinated... so uninterested. You are banging your head against a brick wall. So you have got to think of something that is enjoyable. Badminton is a game that has taken on in our schools. Particularly because so many of them do not like the contact sports. You can play one against one, so you don't need a whole class. The skill level develops. You don't need 29 others and the full kit.

If you've got some promising lads...rugby players...here there's an easy way to get them involved with adult clubs, because you know the rugby world....But what happens for the Netball or any other sports... I want to know what happens to these kids who are introduced to a lot of exciting things at school...After they leave school, where do they play their newly discovered sports?.....In the town?

We have a County Schools' Sports Council...that is divided up into four Districts, one of which is Hucklebrough. Within Hucklebrough schools we have a various number of sections, which deal with things ranging from Junior Soccer, Senior Soccer, Junior Netball, Senior Netball...Hockey, Basketball, Rugby and so on....Now it depends on what staff we have in the town as to what sections are running.... Somebody comes in and says I'm mad keen on Mountaineering...and starts a Mountaineering section. Fine. Then the schools will shuttle any mountaineers to that section. This is dependent on staff coming in. Because of Comprehensives we are having a very much reduced commitment from staff. I've wanted to resign my job as secretary of the School Sports AssociationI can't. Nobody will take it on. Meetings have been less and less well attended. People are so involved in the large comprehensive set ups, they haven't time to do these other things. We are fortunate in the town in that the rugby is very strong... the soccer is very strong the netball and hockey leagues are very strong....A.T.C. level badminton and table tennis are quite strong....

L.21/20

There is a good organisation within the C. set up. So what we do there is to send individuals from school up to the C. set up. So if a kid wants to represent H. at Badminton he possibly couldn't because we haven't got a section.....He'd have to go to C.

End of Recording .

Follow-up Comments

- (1) The "opting out" (notes and various other excuses) appears now in the 3rd year - it was always a 4th year problem.
- (2) P.E. Department choice ∴ not pupils with no interest.
- (3) This was the original intention but this has subtly changed over 2 years to include more academic type subjects. This is because of timetabling difficulties - or so I am told! All part of the political battle to squeeze P.E. but they will not get away with it.
- (4) Very well qualified staff in various subjects have gained appointments into the Pastoral systems - they become Social Workers, parents, executioners, organisers etc. - their college training to some extent is wasted - but to some extent they are necessary.
- (5) What I mean here is that lower middle class communities have similar problems i.e. drink, bingo, social graces, discipline and other behavioural patterns.

Of the schools that you have taught in Hucklebrough....you have taught in four..if you had a free choice which would you choose?

I think that I prefer this one...if I were on the permanent staff. Based on what I have seen up to now.

Why?

I think that the children are more responsive in this school. I don't know whether it is because I have been teaching for two years now....maybe at the beginning I wasn't too happy. Maybe if I went back to them again...I might choose differently. But at the moment this suits me alright.

Would you recommend a student...probationer to do supply rather than permanent posts?

It was alright for me. I am quite glad that I did supply. As it happened I got to know somebody in all the schools so as soon as there was a P.E. job vacant they called me up. And it has been quite an advantage to have experienced each of the schools because each school is different. There is always good and bad. One aspect will be good in one school and bad in another but all have their good and bad points. But to have the four to compare is quite good really.

What are the things in Eltermere that you like particularly?

What are the things that are exciting you about your job at the moment?

(long pause) Well, I think it is some of the children really. Some of the girls are really responsive...to what I am doing with them. I enjoy doing hockey...and I am doing quite a bit of hockey with them, and they really appear to be enjoying it. And if they enjoy it...then I get a kick out of it. But in the other schools that I went to they weren't as responsive to my liking.

I have the idea that sharing hockey with these pupils is tops for you...what comes next? Can you put other aspects in any rank order?

I think that I enjoy athletics as well. But that takes up so much time. It needs a lot longer than you have. And I enjoy taking the swimming.

Swimming is a strong point here. Do you think that is a good policy?

Yes! I think it is a good thing. I don't get bored by it. If you are taking the ones that can't swim..it is rewarding if you get them to swim. So you are working at it all the time.

I imagine that by the end of the first year here most of the pupils will be 'swimmers'...then they have another full year of swimming... Is there any chance that I would get bored if I taught here...especially in the third year?

Well, you are doing something different all the time. The way that it is worked in this school, you do six weeks stroke development, improving technique...then you do some survival work, which is going for their own personal limits...and then may be go on to some Life Saving in the third year. All the time it is different.

Are you never sitting back and feeling that you are just keeping the children amused?

I think sometimes in your stroke improvement lessons, you've got very little hope of changing the way they are going to swim. and sometimes you think that they are never going to change...they are never going to improve it. That's because they can see that they can swim, and that is all that they want to do. None of them want to be top swimmers.....which is fair enough, but I think sometimes we need to give more enjoyment in swimming rather than just going

backwards and forwards...."well that's wrong and you have to do this with your legs better...." The non-swimmers..they should keep going. When it gets to the third year, I don't think there is anyone who can't swim.

Have you been asked to teach something at which you felt inadequate.. or ill-equipped to do?

No, not really.

So you have been happy with tennis, athletics, swimming, hockey, netball...What do you do in the gymnasium?

Well the way that the timetable is structured now, you've got a whole band which is three classes...two teachers...we do gymnastics mainly but its...that's if the gym's free. We don't do dance...and I don't enjoy doing dance....

If I argued that I thought that gymnastics was a waste of time, would you take issue with me?

Erm...not really because in some places it is a waste of time. The children just don't get anything out of it. There is never long enough spent on it. I think that it is an 'iffy' and 'butty' thing..you know. You see one week they might do one thing and the next week something different. I think that you have to ensure continuity in gymnastics.....to get anything from it.

Although you have only been here since May, do you get the impression that P.E. is doing much for the kids? I sometimes go into a school and I look at the products at 16 and genuinely ask "What has P.E. done for them"? After 11 years of schooling...from 5 years old...what has P.E. done for them?

I think that it does quite a few people a good job.

In reality? What is it that is really happening?

I think quite a number of the girls get something out of their P.E. whether it is being on teams or learning to swim or just getting used to being with other people...that is one of the main factors really. Learning to co-operate....

Yes. I can identify with the value of swimming once you have learned to swim it is for life...no-one can take that away from you....But what about things like Netball? I am not so sure how many girls go on to play netball afterwards? What do you feel about the argument that girls do go on to play after school?

It is a very small number that do go on afterwards. But the people who are keen enough to do it...they do go on to teams after school. I think that if they are shown the openings that are available to them....if they are told when they are at school that there is this team or that team or that they can go and play here and there...

But nobody tells them?

I think people do tell them. If the girls show an interest themselves. If a girl says when she is leaving that she would like to join a team...."where can I go?" she will be told.

Well you have taken a great deal of interest in the development of hockey....where would the girls play in H?

There are two teams that are running from H. There is one just up here where quite a few of our girls go to...very local. There is one that I play for over the other side.

Would they (the girls) be welcome? At these two teams?

Oh yes, I would say so.

You don't hesitate about that. Even if I were a rough girl? With

very little equipment and an even rougher tongue? I get the feeling that most hockey clubs are full of rather nice ladies... mostly teachers.

Yes....I would agree with that.

Wouldn't you be rather embarrassed if one of your not very likeable girls came along to your club.....

That could be embarrassing, yes, it could. If she were that bad I think that she would have been told in school and not try to encourage it in the teams....She should have realised herself that...what she is like herself...and when you are playing other school teams you try to keep a low profile with some of the girls. I think by the time she is leaving what she is like and what she should be expected to do.

You belong to the town. How devoted are you to the town?

Yes I do....I feel devoted to it. I feel that a lot of people don't understand what is going on...it is just a name to some people.

What other things lock you into the community besides school and your hockey? Are you a member of a church or a political party or anything like that?

Just a member of sports teams really. I do a Youth Club. It is attached to Callaly school. I do the girls sporting side....some swimming.. it is just recreational....

What sort of people go to the Youth Club then?

It is the rough and ready ones that go to the Youth Clubs. It seems to attract the ones that would normally be on the streets..which is the whole idea of the Youth Club movement....which is a good thing.

It does help to keep them off the streets I think. It is just a matter of working with them and talking to them..and doing something that they are interested in. I do enjoy it. It is just a matter of getting them in. From what is said in general conversation it is always said that these people say that there's nowhere to go and there's nothing to do..and you suggest going to the Y.C. but some of them don't bother. They'd rather not. And you can't offer things when there isn't the people to take them up. There's numerous activities going on but if there isn't the people to support them.....

I know that activities ebb and flow...over time. But what is going on at Callaly Y.C. at the moment?

I go two evenings a week. On Tuesday evening...we are trying to get a netball team out for the Y.C. But then it is a matter of getting the girls in who want to do it. Some times they will come and they want to do it. Other times they would rather just sit and drink coffee. You can't force them to do it. There is swimming if they want to do swimming. All the school facilities are open to them. So they can go into the sportshall or go into the gym. The girls are less inclined to do things than the boys.

Why is that?

When the boys go in they do 5-a-side football. I think boys are more inclined to go in and knock a football about than girls are to throw a netball about. I think it is just something thats... born in them from the toddler stage. Boys are always seen to be knocking a ball about.....Sometimes girls would just prefer to sit and talk among themselves.....

Are you paid for this work?

Yes. I am paid by the evening...a 2½ hour stint 7.30 till 10.00. I get just over £5 for the night.

Do any of the pupils from here go to that Y.C. or are they not allowed to?

Yes they are allowed to. They just have to join a club you see. They can be in one school's catchment area but they can join any club of their choosing. There are pupils who go to Callaly school but live in S. So they join the S. club.

If I had a girl friend who was a member of Aiden Y.C. then I could go along and join that club even if I lived in another part of town?

There would be absolutely no objections to that.

Does that happen often? I have a feeling that there are some pretty substantial boundaries in the town...and you don't cross those easily.

They are mainly people from that area who go. But on a Wednesday night they have a Disco...and there's quite a few people from up here too But they mainly go to their own areas.

Have you had a really bad day here yet?

I try not to let it get that bad.

You never cry about your job?

I think that sometimes I have gone home and had a moan.

What was your last big moan about?

Just if something doesn't go right in a lesson...or some girls are having a rotten day...they are against everybody. Yes. That's it really. It seems to happen...I think if one thing goes wrong early in the morning...it puts me wrong for the rest of the day really.

Do they listen at home? Are they good listeners?

Oh yes.

Are your parents in the profession?

No...

How would you describe your home?

Working Class.

Do you identify with working class children? Your professional life is very much concerned with W.C. people....school, Y.C. not the easiest of situations...

I am not sure how to answer that...(hesitation...reflective)
Whilst we were brought up working class we went to a middle class school. I went to the grammar school and my brother he went to the grammar school...so we mixed with what would be regarded as middle class people...I think it is just a matter of mixing with everybody. I don't really think I do identify with any particular class.

Are you a political animal?

No...

Did you use your vote at the last election?

No. I didn't. No.

If you had to describe yourself as left or right of centre, where would you place yourself right now?

(long pause) I don't think that I would at the moment.

I just don't know.

Do you avoid talking about politics?

Yes....I just don't know enough about it to say anything about it. And rather than make a fool of myself...I don't say anything. There are so many arguments that are set up by people who don't know...well...enough of what they are saying..enough background. I'd rather them stay quiet about it.

If there were a political discussion in the staff room would you retreat from it?

Yes. I listen but I wouldn't partake in it.

Are you locked into a church community at all?

No. We were brought up to go to Sunday School and that sort of thing. But that's as far as it has gone.

There must be some other things about you then that determined why and how you teach? What is the big pay-off for you personally?

(long pause) I enjoy being with the children...with the girls. Some days I wish I didn't know them...other days...It is something I have always wanted to do.

Does it ever occur to you that by working in this school you are working for working class children?

.....What do you mean?

That in Eltermore school 80% or more of the children will be working class, from working class homes...and you will be involved in any presenting a better educational opportunity, very much like you had. Does this ever go through your mind?

No, it doesn't really. It doesn't. I think in the schools they have just tried to mix them all...I just go in and do my job... as I see it...what it entails.

What have been the particular difficulties that you have had to identify in the schools that you have taught in? Things that you have had to identify and come to terms with?

Within the school do you mean? Or with the children?

I can imagine that if I came here I would probably have difficulty coming to terms with particular pupils here...there will be some... Have you had any difficult encounters?

I think...well when I was at college, you need to be told that there are some people who don't want to do what you want them to do. You were taught at college to plan your lesson...if its planned out well it will go superbly...Well that's what we got drilled into us...Then on T.P. you were given the good classes so that you could go through your planned lesson. But when I went to Aiden which was my first school.... I came across some rotten classes...And you have to modify your ways, you have to go down to their level...which is not a very nice thing to say but...you've got to tone everything down...and try and occupy them rather than teach.

What kind of practice schools did you have then?

My first practice was a Junior practice...7 and 8's, so...The next practice was in a girls private school...which didn't prepare me for Aiden. The next practice was in a comprehensive school. And that was quite good. There were some awkward classes and I did get some awkward classes to take then...But you still went back to college and were told to prepare your lesson then it will be alright. So you had to go on preparation rather than anything else you see. But when you come out of college I think its...you've got to do your discipline before you do your lesson.

What did you find that worked for you? You were at Aiden long enough to be tested by the pupils....and yet you must have survived. So something must have worked.

(long pause)

Shouting at the pupils....rebuking the pupils or did you try different strategies and approaches?

I think you have to try a bit of everything. Some classes respond to plain shouting at...sitting them down....and doing as they are told all the time. Some classes respond to jolly along. And others respond to playing with them.....letting them have a long rope sort of thing, but knowing where to finish off. I think it is just a matter of which children and how old they are.

I take the line that in the first few years of teaching teachers are searching for their professional identity. Do you experiment very much?

In the remedial groups you have to try a bit of everything. Some of them respond to doing a lot of work. Others don't enjoy doing a lot of pure work. So you have to be prepared to change your ideas all the time. And another thing that I couldn't come to terms with to start with was the ways some girls don't get on with others...and they openly show it...and you have to keep one side away from the other side and keeping the calm...keeping them apart.

Have you ever had girls go at each other's throats or fight?

No....not in my lesson anyway. I've heard threats and...I suppose it will happen eventually. And there's always threats....and with girls it is nasty. There is a tendency to needle each other and a girl will go home in tears sometimes.

Have you experienced particularly good relationships with a class.. such that you look forward to meeting them and you and they know it?

Well up to now I think I have a good relationship with practically all the classes really....It seems to scratch from first up to fifth.....so....well I think I have...whether I really have well...

I am interested in the way that you think that you have.

That is more than half the game I'm sure.

Up to now it seems to be going alright.

Is there a bad day of the week at the moment?

Oh yes, Thursday is my bad day.

What is it about Thursday that causes this attitude?

It is just the classes.....the first lesson is good....I have a third year...and they are nice kids...yes..Then I have a fifth year remedial group, which are not very nice. And then I have a fourth year remedial group...which are younger and are not very nice.

Let's look at the fifth year that is not very nice. How many pupils are there?

There's not many in the group 15....no 12...It is just a matter of getting them in with their kit to do the lesson, which not many want to do. And when they do come to the lesson it is a matter of finding something that they all want to do....that they will all enjoy doing. Two might want to do this...and two might want to do something else... and they won't compromise and do what anybody else wants to do. And they won't really.....They seem to think of themselves as old enough... you see, they do an options system...and when they get to fourth and fifth they should be able to choose, within limits...what they would like to do. But they can't compromise and say that we'll do this this week...because you want to do it..and that next week because this group want to do it. It's got to be what they want to do when they want to do it....now or nothing.



So there isn't a predetermined programme...so many weeks of one thing?

Yes, there is. You do....(long pause) you do your winter games your hockey and netball...basketball and things. But you are limited if there is only four girls going to come and bring their kit, you can't do a hockey lesson. You can't really do a netball lesson. So you are stuck really...It's alright when you have got the girls ready to do something, but then you have girls sitting out not doing it and they tend not to....

It is at this point that I say is it worth making them do P.E. at all? They don't want to do it. They can by one means or another block progress...voting with their feet...So what is the point in putting it on? Somebody has to convince me at the moment that with a class like that it is worth while. Do you think that it is worthwhile persevering with?

Well...personally...this particular group of girls I don't think that if somebody was sympathetic and patient with them for ever you would never get them all doing it. You wouldn't get them all co-operating with each other. I don't honestly think that.....

It must be very very wearing taking these classes and I sometimes question whether at the end of it...people have coerced them cajolled them...try to reward them make them feel big...had kid gloves to them...and at the end of the year they have got nothing out of it.

Another thing...the other fifth year groups have got one games lesson per week. But this fifth year group have got two...games lessons per week. And it is a matter that the other subjects don't want them 'cos they're banging their heads against a brick wall...and I don't know whether somebody up in the heavens thinks that all remedial kids like P.E.....because they don't.

If it is the kind of fifth year that you describe, you can offer them everything and they may not want any of it...If it is associated with school they don't want to know.

That's it! It is not because it is a P.E. lesson or an English lesson I think it is 'school'.

If you could determine your next five or ten years...How would you like it to go?....From the point of view of your professional career?

I would like to get this permanent job...to stay here to start with. I would like to stay here. Then eventually go to Head of P.E...well girls' P.E. department, I think. I think that I would like to stay in H. I think that will take me the next five years.

You will be very happy to stay here?

Yes.

Are you happy with your colleagues? Because it seems to me that where you have a group of people that are working so close together, there will be tensions....In what way are you different from your colleagues?

I think that I haven't been hardened to it because I have only been teaching two years...and other people have sorted out what works.. this works and this doesn't work. I am still trying things out.

Does that worry you?

It doesn't worry me. It just annoys me, because perhaps somebody will say, "Oh, don't bother with them, they won't...nothing will come of it." Whereas I would rather try and then well...then see that it is not going to work...and find out for myself, rather than be told that it is not going to work...without trying it out...I want to know for myself.

It is almost certain that if I stayed here for a few weeks I would have different values...different from you or different from your other colleagues...have you come across anything like that...where

you think, "I don't like it that way I would prefer my own way".

Well at the moment with me being 'off' and 'on'...being temporary

I can't really make my view felt...at the moment. But I would rather see them all...all the children being allowed to do a variety of things, rather than being limited to a particular game or for a girls or particular game for a boy. I think that they should be allowed to try a variety of games...and then perhaps choose to specialise....

How would you organise that?

Well the first year classes at the moment get a double games and a single P.E. With the single P.E. you can't really do much. But you could give them a small taste of gymnastics...some dance skills perhaps. But the games lessons..especially in this winter term we could do a selection of games from hockey, netball, perhaps a little bit of basketball..a taste of a few things. In the first year they do give them a little variety but as they go further on they tend to go for one game in particular and I think that they should keep going with all of them. As the girls themselves find out which one they want...then they could go on with that in the fourth, fifth and sixth...their choice...There should be more selection of things to offer. But then it might have been tried and it has been found that this way is the best way. And rather than upset the system.....

Are you generally a secure or an insecure person?

Basically a secure person as far as I know...

Have you taken any teachers' courses since leaving college?

No.

Have County invited new teachers to any sort of conference or convention a general gathering in P.E. for instance?

H. have a "new teachers" meeting..for teachers fresh out of college, so I went to that...in my first year of teaching. That was just for H. teachers. All types of teachers...not just P.E.

Was it a good gathering...was it worth while?

Well...it was in the teachers' centre so it was to promote the uses of the centre..and things like that. And it introduced you to the Education Officer...but it wasn't of any great value.

Have you been back to the teachers' centre since?

No (chuckle). I haven't been on any recognised courses as such either. I've been on a netball course...for refereeing...That was held in Darton in a school in Darton. It was 5 or 6 weeks on a night time...thursday night..it was quite helpful...I've been on a basketball course, a refereeing course again. That was just a weekend thing. That was run by the basketball association. The netball was run by the P.E. Adviser.

Have you thought of doing any extra courses?

Yes, it is just a matter of fitting them in, with your other commitments.

Could you take me very quickly through your weekly commitments?

Monday I don't do any extra teams. Because I go and play basketball myself. Thursday dinnertime I help with a boys basketball. Tuesday night I have a third year hockey. Wednesday night I have got the senior hockey. Thursday dinner time is second year boys basketball. Thursda night I've got third year boys' basketball. And Friday is free.

Boys basketball is very interesting. Are you enjoying it?

Yes I do enjoy it very much. You see the girls don't do basketball.. and I quite enjoy it. And Michael he does all the B.b....and I just go along..so he has given me the third year team to do....

and I am helping with the second year as well.

Why don't the girls do it?

(pause) because...

I've hit a tender point?

No not really....You see its a new game for girls for schools in this town at least. There aren't any schools around who do basketball... It is a strong netball town, and a lot of people in this school and in other schools think that the basketball will interfere with their netball..which with some people it will....with others if done successfully in other places you see, so it isn't done with the girls in this school. That's as far as it goes.

Would your other two colleagues be very worried if you started doing basketball with the girls?

Well I wouldn't be able to do it. I don't think. You see you get some girls who can do everything and you are going to have an overlap... there will be some girls who play netball for the school who you would want on the basketball team. And I don't really think that they would be pleased if that happened. Because they would rather have their loyalties to the netball. With the two being very similar games, it is understandable. But it is annoying that they can't be allowed to try.

I can see that you would find that a little frustrating...do you play much basketball yourself?

I play for Ladybirds (chuckle)..It used to be based in County (2) but it is now based in H. We play a match every week. It is a regular team...part of a league. There is now a lot of ladies basketball played up in the N.E. It is a quickly growing sport. When we get to the fifth year when it is an option they can try some basketball...obviously by that time they are too old to start

showing their skills...to become any good...because you lose them at the end of fifth year anyway.

Do the girls do any Volley Ball?

Yes.

So there isn't the same objection to the Volleyball?

Well it's classed as different really. The main bone of contention between the netball and basketball is the 'travelling' (rule of) viz. in one you dribble - the other you don't - footwork).

I might go further and contend that basketball is much more fun than netball to most youngsters.

Well, yes. I think it is...actually.

The keen netball teachers would be afraid of losing their netball loyalties to basketball?

I don't know about that. I think that girls who play on the teams are very loyal. I think that they will play all the time and I think they will play and enjoy it as well...whether it is netball, basketball, tiddly winks, or whatever. I think they will play and enjoy it. Because the other school that do do basketball and the girls are on both teams...I think they do enjoy both games equally. I am sure that basketball lets them show their aggression a bit more...and lets them show their own skills a bit more...I have nothing against netball, it is a very good game.

Since you have been teaching have you felt that your mind has not been stretched enough? That your intellect is not growing?

Hm (affirming)

Have you ever thought about doing anything about it? Open University courses or going to extra mural courses etc?

F.22/19

I should like to do a B.Ed. or an O.U. course...But it is being able to fit it in again. I think that you do become a little bit static.

Do you miss the intellectual work or were you just glad to be rid of it?

I quite enjoyed it really. The way our college was structured you did a bit of everything. But my second teaching subject was maths which I enjoyed doing that. And in Aiden when I first started there, I did English and maths as well as the P.E. So I was in touch with other subjects.

Did you enjoy that mixture?

Yes, I did enjoy it. But I enjoy doing all P.E. better.

Do you?

Yes, I'd rather do all P.E.

You are not doing another subject at the moment are you?

But I do think that you stagnate a bit if you don't get some books out yourself and do something.

When did you last read anything about P.E.?.....or Education.... probably when you were at D.

Oh, no. I read some P.E. books now and again. (chuckle). But you don't seem to...I don't really know...you seem to leave college and you say "that's it".....and you go by what you have been told at college. I think you've got to keep in touch all the time.. with what's coming out new. So you've got to read all the books and things...papers that come out.

And have you read any?

A few (chuckle) Well those things that you are interested in.
Others you are not all that bothered...But you should read.
But you don't.

To be truthful I believe that P.E. students leave college and
hardly ever read critically again....Don't consider, for instance
why they are teaching any aspect of P.E.....Don't know where they
are going. They will go to basketball courses or swimming courses...
badminton, trampoline courses to get more techniques....that is right
too...but they are not inclined to look at the problematic side of P.E.

Thank you for giving me so much of your time. If this conversation
has been a stimulus to other ideas I would be enormously grateful
if you would bring them to my notice. You haven't pin pointed any
real problems in your daily work...and I don't for one moment think
that you haven't got any....that might have thrown you off balance.
If you do think of any then I would love to hear about them...if you
are prepared to discuss them.

It's not a problem, but I think you've got to work on learning
to be accepted by the rest of the department..and the girls that
you teach, as well. Because you are somebody new, and until the
rest of the department find out what you are like you are under
constant surveillance. I think that it can be a little bit of...
well not a strain, but it is a bit of extra pressure, especially
if you have just come out of college somebody is always watching
you and asking you....prompting different things at you, just to...
just really to find out if you are doing alright...really it is for
your own good. It is an extra strain.

That is a very real strain. I thought that you might have expanded
on that earlier.

You feel out of it sometimes. You feel as though you've got to
prove that you are worth having a job...you've been interviewed...
and if you take extra things on which I suppose is a way of proving

certain things, then you have to make a success of them...If it doesn't work out - then you feel as though something has gone wrong....because people are always watching you and asking you....Is this going alright? Is that going alright? You feel as though you've got to prove yourself. But you shouldn't have to prove yourself. Not to that extent really.

This is a hard dimension. I am glad that you are prepared to talk about it for a little while. If I can give you an example in my own colleagues at Battle Cross that was. There were some that had been to 'specialist colleges', Dartford, Bedford, I.M.M. But others went to Coventry and another went to Darlington. Now you tell me what that would lead to.

Well there's four P.E. colleges and one isn't a P.E. college and the P.E. colleges will think that they are more superior.... than non-P.E. colleges.

Yes. You've got it.

I don't feel that personally....But I do think there is a lot of that about.

End of Recording

No Follow-up Comments

Discussing the issue of additional qualifications ('Sporting bodies') M.23 elaborated on reasons for pursuing courses such as A.G.A. - F.A. A.A.A.

It is principally just to get in depth one, because one of the problems are not necessarily a problem but one of the developments of recent years is the fact that the advisers, and what have you, think that your college course, the basic college course, suggests that you are capable of teaching but the more impressed if you have got the recognised national bodies' certificates.

I can remember when I was just finishing last time. The town was alive because P.E. Adviser had just sent around a pretty strongly worded edict on safety.

That's right.

This had really upset the apple cart. There was a lot of instability and unhappiness at that time. That seems to have settled down now?

Well, I think that has settled down because P.E. Adviser has settled down. That's right, he was personally trying to make his mark within the County, a useful bloke, I have no criticism about him as far as that goes. He always was available until 6 o'clock, at Hucklebrough. That was not always the case. This is one of the main problems we find is that I have been now 3 days to try and contact the man over a problem. Where once upon a time within 5 or 10 minutes you could get on the 'phone to the office. Now he is in charge, principally one of his main roles is still safety and I think in the beginning he was just getting to grips with it.

Yes.

He is very good on safety you know. He knows the ins and outs and upside downs but I think he has settled down.

I was going to say he is very keen on the legalities.

But as I say he does not seem to be as active now he seems to have settled down.

I am not so sure that the Physical Education Organiser has an awful lot of impact in the schools. Do you know what the situation is in Hucklebrough?

Well, I find with this P.E. Adviser he does have an impact

Does he?

Oh, most certainly, I know the standard of physical education with the old Hucklebrough Authority we found or appeared to be very high particularly when we went out to other schools and saw the things that were going on there. He would not have tolerated it. He really would not have tolerated and I think.....

And he would really have taken some action about it?

Oh yes, Oh yes, when he comes round our school at the present he's quite prepared to give criticism, and a bit tactless too. At times he comes out with some silly things probably because he has been out of the classroom for so long but by and large the man knows his job and people sometimes sit up and listen.

What has happened since you went into Cleveland because there has been a feeling been registered that there is a sort of alienation, involved; suspicion that everything is going off across the river and Hucklebrough felt a bit isolated as a result of the County take-over.

Yes, we tend to stand still instead of progressing. We felt that we were ahead of County generally, in facilities and most things and we felt that since we have gone into County we have had to stand still.

For instance, you know we've got a swimming pool. All comprehensives in Hucklebrough have swimming pools and when we first came I thought this was an excellent opportunity to get the feeder schools to use the pool if we were not using it. Principally for the youngsters to get an idea of what secondary school, the size, the physical size of a secondary school is like and we had plans and I've been round the various heads and contacted them and I know most of them personally. Great idea! They thought it was excellent for the....
less travelling.

Lots of enthusiasm.

Oh, there was loads of enthusiasm but the principal thing was, you see that for instance High Park School up there. They could come down have a half an hour swimming session. All in all it only took out of their timetable two lessons where as they were bussing everywhere and it was taking sometimes all morning and the same length of swimming. An excellent idea. We contacted County. County's answer was that the schools in Hucklebrough, as far as swimming is concerned, have got bread and butter, why give them jam? When the schools at the other side of the river have not even got their bread and butter, and that was the reaction. Nine months later when money started getting a little bit tight they wanted to cut down on bussing. They came back and said, "Do you think it's a good idea if?" and we turned round and said, "And there you have the plans that we submitted to you nine months ago." And that was the sort of reaction; and we felt that the schools down that side were pushing ahead to catch up and we were stagnating.

That's good evidence I think.

Particularly at the moment we are short on, really on P.E. facilities. We only have the sports hall and the swimming pool and the shared drama hall which is not very conducive to gymnastics which is basically what we use this for and yet it's going to be 1985/90 before they consider a gymnasium. And yet I know schools on that side who have got better basic facilities than we have and who are getting new gyms built.

It seems as if that side is having to catch up at our expense. We are not getting a fair crack of the whip so they are holding things tight here to let the others catch up and it seems to be the trend. Oh we feel bitter on this one because we felt that we are being held back instead of allowing us to progress.

Coming back to Fleetwith itself. What do you think of the facilities you have got? Are they adequate for the job that you are doing? I think that most P.E. teachers do the job they are able to as well as they can. Certain things block them. One of the things could be facilities but I get the impression that facilities in Hucklebrough are exceedingly good. But once in them they may not be as good as they look to be.

By and large I would agree with you as far as six schools are concerned. This is a purpose built (comprehensive school). We have got the worst facilities, indoor facilities. We have got one sports hall, a shared drama hall and swimming pool. All of the comprehensives have got a sports hall, a swimming pool and at least one gymnasium.

That's right.

Most of them have got two, I mean Aiden have got three, Aiden have got three, that's right! Gargrave have got two, Callaly have got two and Dovedale have got two, Bamburgh have got two, Eltermere, they have two so really they all have got what we've got plus two.

So you have a pool, a gym, a shared drama hall and a sports hall?

No, we haven't got a gym. We've got a sports hall, shared drama hall. Now the one difficulty which we find, again we get the volume of youngsters down, and fair enough we have a good staff ratio. We do well when I say we have a good staff ratio. We never have groups of more than thirty. By and large we seem to have groups of less than twenty. Occasionally we get a few more than that. So as far as pupil ratio is concerned it is reasonably good. For instance if it's a particularly wet day and we need indoor facilities we have

the sports hall and then perhaps the dance/drama hall.

It's a nice sports hall too.

It's a good sports hall, its a big one but it's reduced in it's size because we have no storage facilities. All the stuff has to be stored around, hence the risk to accidents, as a matter of fact but the plain fact. I would prefer if I had the choice initially and saying what I would rather have had. I would have had two gymnasiums rather than one sports hall. To me it would be far better. The changing rooms are shockingly inadequate, you know we just cannot change. For instance on a Thursday afternoon we get 215 down. That's half boys and half girls, it's a lot of bodies to get changed in particularly because they are Vth year.

And that was the changing room that I went into just now?

Now we have to change somewhere in the region of about 100, 150 lads in here, it's not adequate, you've got nine showers in all and one toilet. Especially if they are all older pupils so facility wise this is our main problem. We did have some problem with staff but after grafting, and working and cajoling and impressing on the head this year we were successful in getting one on each side (male/female). But it's been hard work, you know. He's got to see that we are successful, we have been producing the goods and because we have been doing that he's been pretty keen.

Last time I spoke to you, okay he was one of the Heads I thought who was, well you could almost anticipate you've got a long battle on, not very interested in physical education, Not very much feedback, Not much encouragement coming towards you or the department. Has that changed at all? 4 years, it could have changed a lot. If you would tell me a little about your battle it might be a help.

In a little bit he has changed. Initially from the fact that it wasn't so much his antagonism towards P.E. as the Senior Mistress

who was Head Mistress at the girls school that came here. She was very antagonistic towards P.E. She didn't think much of the lassie before that, Judy C. Many a time didn't get any requisition allowance for the whole year, you know, for new equipment. So she pushed and pushed and he saw this was going on in her straight because she had a pretty strong character and he was just.....And since she has gone he does not interfere as much, you know. If you just sort of keep, if he's not interested just back out and let us carry on, but he tends to put a few obstacles in the way. But he has learnt from bitter experience. I know there was, I know we get a reasonable reputation school producing professional footballers. There was one occasion where he signed a form for a lad, schoolboy forms for Newcastle and I had to bail him out because he had signed the form, the lad was under age. He had never gone into it and at the finish I had to go and sort the problem out. Since then he now comes along and it's what I say....

He consults more than he used to.

Well, he has to, you know, because he now realises there are certain parts of physical education which unless you are involved in on a day to day basis you just don't know. I now have control over the ground staff. You know he doesn't worry about the ground staff. I look after the ground staff, the pool superintendent; liaison with the caretakers, you know, he's now delegated instead of trying to rule the whole roost himself...Initially...which I think was his problem. He still from time to time makes a faux pas but not as often as he used to.

Does he ever talk any length of time with you about what you are doing in curricular or extra-curricular? Is he interested in sharing ideas with you?

No not at all, no I get absolutely no conversation with him unless I go along specifically with either a problem, and it has to be a real problem for me to go along, you know. You wouldn't normally go and

say, "Look, I am thinking about something." Just thinking aloud with him, you'd never go along with him for that sort of informal policy chat. There is never that, never comes up because not as I say there is something which I specifically want to go along. In the seven years the school has been opened the only time he has been on the scene to see the school compete is on two occasions. This happened to be when his son was competing, and that was the only reason he went along.

He never sort of sent for you, look show me around, show me, give me an hour. What's going on in the pool? Or what's going on in the sports hall or what?

No, never, he never, he keeps coming on occasions to show his face and only to ask a question.

How would you react if he did? Would you be suspicious or would it be an advantage? I often feel that working in a climate, it's the climate, that I'm worrying about. Where there is no interest, it's dead. I like, it's a hard battle, some praise just like you like some praise, like everybody else does. Now if he doesn't know what the hell's going on he's not interested is he?

No, we have a situation where we've had schools' soccer. We often have a reasonable reputation for soccer where we've had schools coming up from Manchester and they brought along their headmaster and Uncle Tom Cobley and all. I know I've found that as being myself and various members of the P.E. Dept. have been there. He knows about it but he's developed a headache or something cropped up.

So he's pretty apathetic

If he was to come down I think I might be stood there. I might be a bit suspicious because it's, it would be unusual for him.

But if he were there, sort of "well show me a bit of what's going on," I would have thought that were an indication that he's taking an interest. But for him, I take the point that it would be so well so exceptional for him you would be bound to be suspicious in that way.

Well it's not just in our particular department. I mean it's every department. You know there just doesn't seem to be any liaison, any interest coming through. Perhaps a little bit in English department because he's an English specialist.

Yes.

Perhaps a little bit towards music because he likes music. But beyond that, he isn't showing any active interest.

What do you think of the status of the subject in the school generally?

It's becoming very well accepted as being integral part of the school's curriculum. One of the ways, I think, again it's been through a hard process of getting staff involved you know, when he first came very few staff assisted in teams. So I said, "right every Friday evening and lunch-time the sports hall and swimming pool are open to staff and families". And started coming down.

A deliberate attempt to make people welcome, to make the staff welcome.

They come down and now, I mean to say, this lunchtime you probably could, or most of the times you can go into the sports hall and find staff and kids in there with the staff looking after. I have now every year group covered for on the boys side for soccer and rugby. We have a lot of participation of the staff. But it's been a slog, it's been a deliberate thing.

You've got male colleagues now helping with football teams although.....
yes, we couldn't cope unless we had them. I couldn't have done a physical education programme at the last school. I was actually in the hot seat without staff....no way. The girls tend to struggle a little bit.

Have they got any? Because, usually the story between male and female is so different because they can't get any female teachers. It sounds as though like gradually getting up you might be getting one or two.

Well I think there's one or two phasing in towards that, but the few who would perhaps help more unfortunately live quite well away. I think this is something which is coming into teaching now. Once upon a time teachers tended to live within the easy travelling distance of the school. Now of course teachers tend to be coming in from all over, you know jobs are hard so to get they are prepared to travel thirty, forty, fifty miles.

Which doesn't help.

Well at 4 o'clock you can't blame them. They get into their cars and go home. I think this tends to be more with the women than the men. The women seem to go where the man's got his job and the woman's got to travel.

I get the impression coming into this school that the pupils come from a very pleasant catchment area. There may be one or two problems but I wouldn't have thought they were big pupil problems. In coming back to this climate I wouldn't think that you have big pupil problems here.

Oh we've got none. It's a fallacy actually. People get the wrong impression of the catchment area. Even locally they think Fleetwith behind the park, good catchment area, but we get the majority of our youngsters from rent paying families. You know they see all these private houses round here and they think "Oh great". You know, but it's not true most of our youngsters come from rent paying families whereas Gargrave school, at the other end, most of their youngsters come from private houses. Yet they've got worse problems, terrible problems, at times. I think basically, this is my philosophy on it, when we came and joined together we had two selective schools, therefore the academic standard was up there and the behaviour standard was

already up there. And so new youngsters coming in rose to that standard and therefore it has been an ongoing thing. We maintain our high standard where a lot of schools, which were Secondary Modern schools, their standards tend to be down there, so a new intake only goes to the high standard of that school which was a lot lower. This is my philosophy that's been going on. We have a very, very strong head of lower school. So the first three years are really kept, you know, with their heads down and it proves dividends in the long run. We've got no discipline problems, vandalism is almost non-existent, we have got the lowest vandal rate of any school in County and that includes primary schools. So we are quite pleased with that. If you saw the changing facilities as you came through there is no graffiti.

I was going to say the graffitis just missing. Well, I suppose if you wanted to find it you would have to look for it but it isn't there staring at you.

The only graffiti you'll see are on the outside doors, twenty yards away from this place. That's it. This on a night is the place which causes the problems but the atmosphere is as I say at the school is very, very good. We get excellent academic results, right the way through the school, in depth as well, not just a shallow skim off the top.

Where are your devils then? Where are the devils in your job, that have to be overcome? That cause you problems that make you despair and make you angry? I can't believe there are none.

It's very difficult finding any, quite frankly. If you have any problems it's often by the ineptness of the headmaster at times. He tends to be a little bit frustrating because he decides to plan something. For instance at half term the lads had planned a soccer tour of Belgium, got all the go ahead and then were told yesterday "we don't have holiday then and it has to be scrapped." After about.....

M.23/11

The lads had got it organised.

200 quids worth of deposits have gone in non-returnable. You see because the head had decided he was going to have a couple of occasional days but of course you can't apply for those until next term. County have only got the official 3 days so it means the lads being off school.

That's serious.

It happened last year with the skiing. You know this is the sort of thing if there are any problems it tends to develop round organisation problems from the hierarchy as we call them "The Magnificent Seven". This is where the main problems are. As we had initial problems when we first came in vis-a-vis of the boys and girls and use of facilities. But these were only teething problems. Once we got into the swing we find that there are no problems at all, you know. When the girls are on swim and gymnastics, the boys on their games and have a sports hall and vice-versa but again its something which initially were teething problems but through the last three or four years those problems have been sorted out. So basically, from my point of view, I could be looking through rose-coloured spectacles at my department and say that it would appear to be running pretty smoothly.

It seems so from what you say. Now since I came here last time, that you looking back, reflecting back, must have seen a steady improvement, a steady consolidation. You must be quite pleased about that?

I am, I am pretty pleased.

But there's nobody coming in and saying so. That would help wouldn't it?

Well yes and no. I can sit back and be self-satisfied to some degree. Although you're never totally satisfied. You always feel there's scope for improvement. Perhaps it's just my character. I don't

really need people to come and say, "You know that's good," because in your own mind you know yourself from your own experiences, in your mind, you can sit back and you know it's good. But within a department I like to go along and praise when praise is required and I don't give it lightly and I think the rest of the department know I don't give it lightly. So when I do show pleasure they know it's sincere. I never come the heavy hand, well that's not true, I don't appear to come the heavy hand with them. This is something I am not always happy with but I will discuss it with them and they know that I will not be too happy with them but as I say....

What kind of leadership, what kind of Leader do you think you are, democratic, consultative or do you lead from the front....?

I like to lead a little bit by example, I like to be the first one out. You know, I make sure I'm not the second and the third out. I like to be the first one out. But before we decide on something it's a consultation. You see we all have coffee together that's where we have a good chin wag.

You don't then have to call formal meetings?

That's right, that's right, the head likes formal departmental meetings. We have one twice a day.

That's right.

Rather than say, one every three or four weeks we have one every day. If there are any problems, it's sorted out there and then, you know over coffee. And there's one or two of the people who help out with various sports come down as well.

From your point of view when you have a team of human beings there are bound to be tensions arise. Different philosophies certainly between men and women. It happens in my job, it always has and

presumably it always will be. What are the tensions in your particular department? I mean, I get the impression of a cohesive group, a very friendly group, getting on obviously, enjoying the job I would think most of the time but nonetheless there will be areas where there is disagreement. I don't mean savage but there will be differences of outlook.

On the boys side, obviously closely connected there, I can honestly say that in 4 years we've never had any disagreement on policy. I think basically because we're always together, we tend to drink together, we tend to socialise to a certain degree together. We talk about things outside of school. Give and take arguments and therefore the policy, or the philosophies have developed on a less official basis and when it does come down to any policy decision and that, I know the feeling from the rest of them. They know my feeling and we've already hit some happy medium. Everybody's adapted to each other's shape really. Right, which you've got to. When you've got six bodies in a department you can't afford to impose your attitude absolutely on them, you know you've got to be able to give and take.

And the way that you run it is you've got your men working as a team and they've got to know each others idiosyncrasies and what their pet hates, what their likes are. You've got a working team. You let the women do much the same, I take it?

Yes, there's a little bit of a problem there actually because this (the tape) is not going to be thrown out, is it? (Re-assurance given - "No").

This is one of the areas which obviously is off the record. I mean the lassie who is in charge of the P.E. She's got a little bit of a personality problem in that she can be a little bit moody. There are occasions when she lets things get on top of her. I recognise this and try and help her through it.

Yes.

M.23/14

V.B. is excellent. She was exactly the same. But it gets to a point sometimes where there is a little bit of friction. This happened about five or six, no less than that, 4 weeks ago.

Yes

Just weren't speaking to each other, you know. An occasion arose where one arranged something, another arranged something and they clashed!

Yes

One was adamant that hers was the thing, and the other was adamant and I had to sit down and say, "right, you've got to sort this problem out. If you were speaking it would not have happened so you had better get your problem sorted out, get speaking and let's get things going again."

Yes

And now...

It's rolling again?

Oh yes, yes but it's a pity I had to take the lead, you know.

Well you had to in that case because when women get to this stage....

It needs an arbitrator to come in...which you did.

And I had to be quite strong in that, you know. Otherwise it could poison the whole department.

Right, right. While I tend to sit back from the girls side I still take in, you still watch and you still know what's going on. I let the girls, head of girls P.E. sort their timetable out. Who takes what.

But still look at it in case I see any imbalance, which I did see. An imbalance in this years, V.B. was really a bit more pushed. So we worked on from there.....There was a little bit of imbalance there, yes, so I got that one solved, you know, otherwise again, it could have caused a little bit of unrest. But it's going again. I think by and large, it's like I say, is that you've got to sit back and watch and watch carefully.

Moving onto the programme now. That you've obviously worked out, refined over the years. What would you say were the Fleetwith strengths? That you would say, "Look, I care about that and I think we've got it right." I am not going for the weaknesses but strengths.

Coming on just to the programme, if we can. When we first started off, you know, new comprehensive, loads of facilities, loads of equipment we offered a broad area of teaching right across, you know, trampolining across to fencing. You know it was a full spectrum of activity. And then we sat back after about eighteen months and examined it. And we didn't like what we saw. We felt that the youngsters were getting a spattering of little bits but they had nothing in depth. So we looked and said, "Right in the first three years we've got to stick. We've got to stick in the first three years. In the winter we're going to have soccer, rugby and cross country, swimming and gymnastics and the like." Not necessarily educational gymnastics, a happy medium between education and olympics and we found particularly with gymnastics there is a hell of a carry over into all the activities, body awareness, strength, the lot, you know. Having, now, looked back again after four years we think we did the right thing by narrowing it down. We get the youngsters now who've got depth in the subject. At the end of the third year we progress onto a 'choice'. A limited choice in the 4th year where they can do table tennis, do badminton, do trampolining, you know, the various activities. But it's a limited choice. Still having the basic hardcore subjects as well. In the 5th year when it becomes 'guided choice'. We expand a little bit more with the 5th year but also you have the 6th form where we do let them have free choice. That's how our programme's

developed, and we think that the programme's right. Our particular strengths....we're pretty successful as a soccer school. We're highly successful rugby school. If one, you know when you talk about success, if you talk about trophies, if you want to talk about trophies then we're highly successful in soccer, we are highly successful in rugby, we're highly successful in swimming, we're highly successful in athletics, we're highly successful in badminton. Now we're highly successful right across the board. If you want to talk of success as to the depth the youngsters have got then I would say that they've got depth, again right across the board because we have youngsters who are now going beyond the school, into clubs, joining clubs and therefore from that point of view by the fact that the, we now are looking on, or now the kids are looking on P.E. as something that is developing them for something after school. Not just for school clubs. But for the adult clubs. Then I think we're pretty successful and have strengths in a canny depth.

The thing that prompts this, I'm becoming a bit disenchanted with all the claims. I get a bit weary of all the claims that are made for education and so on, and think we are over-ambitious in what can be done and what can't be done. "Well what have I done for these kids?" Do you ever do that? What the hell am I doing for most of them?" Do you ever think in these terms?

Yes. We try to think about this actually not at the ends of the 5th year. We try to think about this all the way through the school. You know, when you first come into teaching I think a lot of young teachers when they first come into the profession think that success is measured in the number of pots in the trophy cabinet.

That's right.

I probably fell into this trap like everybody else..."Pot hunters". Then you look after and say, "Pots are not everything." It means that eleven kids have done well, you've got another 120. You know what do the other 120 achieve. We try to measure some success by

not just necessarily successful teams; Even though I think successful teams, you know, are a necessary thing at school. I look at the fact that on a Sunday morning I go down to Beavers Rugby Club and I can find 20, 30, 40 youngsters from this school are down at Beavers Rugby Club training with Beavers Rugby Club. Or I can find I can go across to any number of half a dozen Badminton clubs on a Saturday morning or a Sunday morning and find youngsters from this school are involved in that. I can read the local paper on a Saturday night, the local paper and find out he went to our school, he went to our school and know that a lot of youngsters, a hell of a lot of youngsters are in fact involved in sport after school. You know the teams, and it's a considerable number you know.

I would find that very consoling. I find that very rewarding.

Well, this is where I find the reward.

You see my thinking is coming down to a simpler level and I'd say, right in your position, at the end of five years if I could say every kid in the school could swim that is something tangible - universally worthwhile. If I can just raise one controversial area, a lot of schools spend loads of time on athletics....a tremendous amount of time on athletics. How many go on to sustain athletics? In Hucklebrough it's not worth it.

No, quite.

I mean, it's a duff club, the town club. I say I wonder what I would do if I were here, whether I would pursue the athletics because there's not a cat in hell's chance that after spending all that time, all the equipment, not 1 in 1,000 will continue with athletics. It's enjoyable once you've got it but what's the chance of it carrying on into adult life?

You see, this is one of my bitterest arguments. You hit on one which really is a pet hate of mine at the moment.

Have I upset you?

No. No, actually in Hucklebrough at the moment we have had a meeting just last week, last Wednesday and the pinnacle of the summer term is the inter-school athletics. And I find that there are some schools who do nothing else. Less now, athletics, athletics and consequently when it comes to inter-school athletics they get their just reward, if that's what they want. They get into the trophies. Now, again, years ago I was the same, you know, I fell into that one and then that's when I said, "Blow that." And now what we do in the summer term we still have our gymnastics. We still have our swimming. We still have athletics and we still have cricket, and tennis but every year they all get an equal weighting, when it came to sort of....we do our athletics basically in the first half of the summer term. Obviously a bit of winter work, from Christmas to Easter we do some indoor coaching work with them, but when it comes to say selecting the town team for the County Championships I would say that this school have a good third boys and girls have a good third in the town team so one would assume that when it comes to the Inter-schools at the end of term we would be you know, in with the pots. It does not always follow because once our block of, you know we work our lads on that six weeks so that they come up to a peak for the town championships, you know the top trials for the town team goes. After that, then we phase out of athletics and we move on to cricket or we have tennis. So when it comes to the Inter-schools at the end because our lads perhaps have not spent as much time on athletics, we do not necessarily win, but there again, you know we're always pretty well up. I do find that in fact quite a lot of people spend far too much time on athletics. I really do.

I get the feeling. I go around talking to them both in pubs and in schools a lot of P.E. teachers are afraid to say, "I don't believe in doing that and I'm not going to do it." They are afraid to throw it out, and I am trying to get at that for I felt sure that if they followed their own hunch they'd be right.

We threw basketball out here. We found that the amount of time we necessarily had to devote to basketball was such a small number in the end was really too much out of the time allocation which we got.

M.23/19

Which, again, is not an awful lot. Particularly the bright youngsters do not get as much as we feel they should. And so that was one area which we thought, well, we can do without. You know, we can get a broad development in any case without having to pressure into that one. So that was an area which again we stood back and said, "That's it." We don't want that. So there's.....

You had no hesitation in making that decision

It wasn't just my decision. I sat down with the other two lads and we weighed everything up and we felt that basketball was the one which wasn't contributing an awful lot to the programme. And so we just chucked it out.

That's right.

Yes, we took a decision and we haven't regretted it. You know alright there may be one or two youngsters who would have enjoyed and perhaps been reasonably good at basketball but we felt that for the one or two it wasn't really all for us.

It seems to be that the story that's coming over to me is that you have gone to some pains, to quite a lot of pains where you've started with a great wide curriculum then you've narrowed it down to something that's worthwhile, that you are committed to and you believe in it.

Yes.

You've still preserved what you call balance and that's obviously something that's a strength. I would have thought. You sort of say, "Ah, anybody can come here, and they can look at this and say, look they'll find a reasonable balance so there'll be something there a kid can take something from it." Through the first three years, a kind of foundation or core and then they can branch out a little bit but restricted. I don't know maybe you can tell me. You'll meet as many P.E. men as I do, maybe more and they've got this, how, I don't know they're just doing things because they've been on the timetable.

M.23/20

They've lost any faith in them and I'm wondering why they do it.

I tend to find when P.E. teachers get together they seem very reluctant to discuss what they are doing in their particular schools.

If I can give you an example. There's a school struggling like hell, nice blokes they are, you know, probably more committed than I am, and I think I'm a sucker, but they really, they don't know their stuff in basketball but they're struggling to do a basketball course. I think well if you've, haven't got anybody that's good at it, why bother? Of course, they've got plenty of other strengths going and the kids will get much more out of what they're good at than putting on a half-baked course.

Oh, this is it. What we try to do is as well, is utilise individual strengths.

That's right, I'm sure that's right.

Well, it's....doing athletics, if there's a girl who is working at shot putt we integrate her within a boys group, because there is one of the staff who has got that particular strength and therefore we tend to do this. There's a fair amount of integration, you know goes on in that field. Where for instance, was it last week I was walking through the dance/drama studio. They were trying to do some gymnastics. I just slipped in, "Have you tried this way?". There was no embarrassment on either side, you know. "Well, can you show me?" Straightaway and vice versa. You know, I was out on the athletics track I was working on some aspect of athletics and the head of the girls P.E. came across saying, "Well have you tried this way?" and we tried that way, and the others give and take on both sides. Same in the swimming, you know. It's something which you've got to utilise the strengths, as individual strengths in a dept. If you want to have some success I think.

It seems in your department in this school that if you have an idea or if someone wanted to experiment it would be possible to do it.

I would never stand in anybody's way at trying something as long as at the end you stand back and have a critical look at it. I've had the fortunate chance to select staff members of the team you know. I've been in all the interviews and I've had the opportunity of selection. Again it is something I think is an advantage because being in the job you know what's needed. You know rather than just leaving up to one or two people who are perhaps not totally aware of what's required in the school set up, and we've been very lucky.

What's more, you've been on the job quite, I mean you've been here quite a long time. Could you take me back to your teaching experience, because you were in a school here in Hucklebrough. Having left, once you left Chester.

When I left Chester, I, for convenience, that's all it was in the first year, I taught down in South Lands in the County schools simply because my wife was going down to College there, you know with love and what have you, I went to stay in that area, just to be close, you know, But it was only a convenience one but nevertheless it was valuable experience because I was the only P.E. man in there, they had nobody before so I had to develop P.E. in that school; which was a difficult task. The school had to gain a reputation. At the same time the youngsters were dead keen and you had to graft. Then I was there for 1 year, we got married, came back to the north east and I went to a school in Northborough. A boys school in Northborough. Second in the department. It was already pretty well established. The laddie who was in charge there obviously was going to be there for a lot of years so there was no opportunity for promotion there. But in the meantime, wife's father had died so we wanted to move back close to where her mother lived. So I just came to Hucklebrough, again out of convenience really, to the boys' tech. And very, very fortunate within the term the head of department who was on a years' course left. So I was left as the senior, I had been teaching $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. I'd been teaching $2\frac{1}{2}$ years, the other laddie only been teaching, he was still in his probationary year.

So you did a year at Southlands, a year at Northborough

A year and a term at Northborough.

Ah yes, and then to the Tech.

Yes, virtually the same school really for the last twelve years.

Yes.

And again I was thrust in at the deep end at the boys tech. having to take over a department. A pretty well established department with you know, very good tradition. I found it very difficult the first 3 years because you are always being compared. You know, when J.B. was here, we did this, we.....and so on. And had to get across to them that J.B. is not here any more.

That's right.

So it took 3 or 4 years to establish my traditions and.....

Do you live in Hucklebrough?

Yes, I live in Hucklebrough now, we moved down here and very happy I did because its been.....

I've a great respect for Hucklebrough you know, I suppose, coming here in school practice I've always been very well received. The schools don't make you feel uncomfortable at all, and I think it's a great little place as a matter of fact. Do you feel an important person in Hucklebrough?

You know people comment on this. I walk round Hucklebrough on a week-end if I don't stop to say "Hello" to one person within the first 5 minutes it's very unusual. You know after.....I know a lot of people and it's funny you know, not necessarily people I've taught. Through various things, like taking adult classes. When I first came, when this school was first established I decided with all these facilities why waste them. And on a Saturday morning I started off a Family Forum, where families

within the catchment area, could come in and use the sports facilities. I stayed with them for 5 years to get them all established. They are now totally self-supporting in that they've got their own instructors. If you come along here Saturday morning you'll see about 90-100 families, about 250 bodies are using the facilities on a Saturday morning.

You'll be pretty pleased about that.

Well it's been based on a National Sports magazine, it's a sort.... It's almost unique.

And that's still going and you've been able to withdraw from that.

I've totally withdrawn from it. I still obviously have an interest and like to see what's going on, but it's totally self-sufficient now. They've got their own management committee. And it's success, if it's success can be measured by the number of people on the waiting list there are about 80 families waiting to get in on the waiting list. And they've got to wait somewhere in the region of 18 months - 2 years to get in. So, yes in that sense I'm pleased.

One of the success stories so far is the way Rugby, if you have a good rugby player here there's a nice easy opening for him because you're locked into Beaver's Rugby Club.

That's right.

So it's very easy for a boy to transfer.....he could hardly not go into a Senior Rugby Club.

Well he already is. According to rugby though, I must say this right at the start, my strength is not rugby. I don't take any credit for the quality and standard of Rugby in this school except in the sense that I've made sure there have always been facilities. There's always been adequate balls. We now have 3 rugby fields. We took a soccer field away and gave it to rugby. In that sense, yes, I can perhaps

take some credit for help to promote it. Some schools tend to stick to one code of football. We've sort of let the area dictate to some degree what happens. I've got the other young lad, B.G. who's a very good rugby player himself and he was in Beavers. He plays for Beavers and he's the one who took rugby by the scruff of the neck and really worked on it and has got the standard.

Were you personally more inclined to soccer as a lad?

You see when I was at school at Riverdale there was no rugby at all. It was purely and simply soccer. So I didn't know rugby whatever except from an academic interest. No rugby whatsoever but again from a point of view of developing school programme, a balanced programme, it's as it should be. You've got to develop both codes because you get some youngsters who'll never be a football player.

Are you locked into the Hucklebrough community, the sort of things I'm thinking about clearly you've been involved in adult education so that you've got something else other than being a teacher in a school. You've got roots in adult education.

That's right.

Are you a Church member?

No, I'm not a Church member at all, no.

Political animal?

Not in the least. No, except the fact that I'm the union representative within the school, but apart from that, no. It's purely and simply developed from adult education, from education to the College of F.E. which I did a substantial amount....But, I don't know, it just seems if I seem to get to know a lot of people, you know, and build up friendships quite easily. I'm a member, obviously a member of the Beavers Rugby Club. But also the cricket club.

Do you play any sports yourself?

Yes, I still play cricket and I play badminton. I'm getting a little bit too long in the tooth....I used to play a lot of basketball and used to play a lot of soccer. I had (school) Old Boys and they were all (named) school. We had an old boys association that used to keep that going. But I got a bit too long in the tooth, well it wasn't so much long in the tooth, there was a distasteful element coming into soccer and I just didn't like it. I wasn't going to risk my life and limb....That's why I dropped out...I used to play Northern League football at one time. You know, a reasonable standard. But there are other elements coming in.

Do you care about sportsmanship?

Very much so....I really do care about sportsmanship. Obviously you've got to have some latitude for as gamesmanship is concerned. I think that is going to be an inevitability in any sport, but 'sportsmanship' I think any school that comes to this school will be well catered for, will be well treated. I try and impress on the youngsters on the field that there is just no room for bad play. There is just no excuse for it, in any case the ones, the ones who usually stick by the rules always end up on top but bad sportsmanship, I hate, I really do detest bad sportsmanship. It's creeping into school sport unfortunately.

I'm just wondering, when you talk to individuals informally they all deplore it. But what are they doing about it?

In the school athletics last year, there was a first year from our school and it was sorted out before the race even started that he was tripped up, so I learnt afterwards. In the first 10 yards she ended up on her face. That is a first year. I mentioned it at the athletics meeting last week. I insisted that next year we have a track referee. I'll take on the role of track referee and I'm going to stamp it out. It's just not on, but 'loyalty' is another one of

M.23/'26

my big things. You know I give 100 per cent loyalty to the youngsters, I stand up for them and I'll fight for them but by the same token we expect in return, if a laddie is selected for a school team we expect him to play. He does not have the choice of playing, as far as we are concerned we expect him to play. The thing being as far as we are concerned he's got to learn loyalty then if we can be pretty adamant about it, it will become second nature to him. You know he's going to be loyal to his work'orce because he's expected to. Even to the extent that if a lad says, "No, I'm not." "Well" we say, "Fine, this is the situation, you either play or we just don't want to know." And it's surprising how we stick in and within a matter of weeks we've got a 100 per cent effort from lads. I think it's good character building. We can look back at lads who I think could have turned the wrong way. But because we've been hard on them and expected a lot from them, they've kept on the straight and narrow through sport. They're good lads in academic subjects and outside of school.

How old are your children now?

My youngest little lad is 6 and the little girl is 9.

Will they come here?

I'm going to move into this catchment area you know. It's going to cost me about another £12,000 to buy a house in this catchment area. But we're going to definitely move here.

So that they come here?

Yes, I know that there are people thinking well you shouldn't teach your own kids. But the standard as far as I'm concerned is such within the town that I'm prepared to take that risk. I'm prepared to take it.

You say that with a lot of conviction

Oh I do, I do.

If you are prepared to move house to enable your children to attend here....you mean business.

Well we've just lost one actually. We hoped to move into a house in this catchment area at half-term but it fell through because I couldn't sell my property. I do say that with the utmost conviction.

If this is offensive....then okay, then do say so...I'm interested in your personal convictions. We're talking about you as a person although a lot of the things are implicit about you as a person but from your own background, a miner's son from a mining district. It surprises me you are not a political animal. I fancy there is a bit of... politics about you otherwise you wouldn't be involved in the union. They've chosen you to be union representative that might be because nobody is prepared to do it. That even that in itself is an indication that you are prepared to fight.

Exactly.

There's a bit of militancy about you isn't there?

I like fairness. I like this, it's probably basic, colliery village upbringing if you like. You were brought up more or less black is black and white is white. There are no shades of grey. And perhaps it's because of that, plus when you came from a village and you go to grammar school, you are pretty well alienated. And therefore you have to be a character on your own. You've got to develop a strong character. You know, I remember the times when I had to fight my way to get the bus to school and fight back at night. Probably why I ended up such a good runner, I think. But, well, it's go on I'm a cross country runner, you know and I often kid myself this is probably one of the reasons. But as far as politics is concerned I'm true socialist, you know. The Labour man, again it's probably tradition in the mining village but basically as actual politics, yes, I'll stand up and speak the politics but I don't

get involved in politics locally.

Do you see the education process, the process of teaching being a political thing, a political action.

What do you mean?

Well does it guide? Is this why you're in teaching, do you think or do you never think about it that way at all?

The reason why I'm in teaching - At the time it was considered teaching a good, safe, well paid job with security and also prestige. Further, once I had realised I could make a success of education I wanted to go on to higher education. I was always pretty good at sport so linking the two together it seemed pretty reasonable to get paid for a 'hobby' - hence teaching.

End of Recording

No Follow-up Comments

M.24

7.11.79

I get the impression that there is a feeling that the staff here feel there is a shortage of facilities.....they appear to me to be very attractive....but what do you think of the facilities here?

By comparison with those that I had at school they are a lot better. We have a swimming pool, sportshall which we didn't have. But when you compare them with the other schools in the town....they have two gyms and a swimming pool as well as sports-hall. Callaly have two sportshalls. It is a big problem especially in the winter when it gets wet....the fields get too wet to use.

Do you lose any of your facilities at exam time?

Yes, we lose the dance-drama studio. We use it for gymnastics, Dance, trampolining and table tennis.....

It can make life a bit tiresome though?

You lose it starting shortly for 'mocks' up to Christmas. Then again in February for re-sits....It makes life pretty miserable for us. It quite often means that...not only facilities but numbers of children....like....take a Thursday afternoon, we have roughly 120 boys and there are similar numbers of girls.... at the same time. Now if the outdoor facilities are out of bounds, that leaves us with swimming pool, the sportshall for 200 children which is totally impractical. Even if you do have the dance-drama studio.....

But you can't get many in the swimming pool...How many will it take?

Not very many big ones. First years you can get about 30 in. But you are only allowed 20 per teacher legally. With fifth years I certainly would want more than 20 in. Then again, in that situation a lot of the time you have to do your teaching in widths...you can't

swim lengths. It's improved recently, one aspect of it, we used to have large number like that....with getting extra staff. Last year there was only me and Paul, and another lad who wasn't P.E. qualified...and he came down two half days a week..he couldn't teach gymnastics, or trampolining or swimming..he wasn't qualified. All he could do was to help with games, which made it very difficult.

So staffing was a problem for you last year, though it is somewhat easier this year?

Yes it is. It is acceptable this year.

Do you get enough time with the pupils?

No, quite frankly. We don't get enough time with the more intelligent kids. The kids are streamed....and the odd number tend to be the less bright. The even numbers tend to be the brighter kids.

So you get more of the less able?

We do yes. In the third year when they choose options (outside P.E.) the bright pupils get two lessons a week and the less bright kids get four lessons a week.

You feel bad about that?

I can accept it in an exam year...I think perhaps yes, for that one year. But I think that in the third and fourth year I don't see why they shouldn't get the same amount of P.E. They are certainly more pleasant to teach. That's my personal point of view. It is a lot easier to teach them. You get a lot more done because they pick up things a lot quicker. And they tend to be better sports anyway. Apart from one or two in the lower streams most of your school teams nearly all come from the brighter kids... in games anyway.

How does the school generally regard P.E? Has it got a high status or not?

Is this confidential?

Absolutely, yes.

To me personally....it all stems from the headmaster who has very little interest in P.E. in fact I would go as far as to say that he would quite happily not have sport in his school.

I got that impression four years ago. Has it changed in that time?

No.

How does it affect you.....what do you feel about it?

I feel as though all the extra-curricular activities that I do I get no appreciation for it. The boss wouldn't have a clue what teams I run, what time I put in after school.....He has no idea. He hasn't an idea of what Paul does and Paul goes to see him quite regularly. I have very little contact with him.

Does he know anything about what is going on in P.E?

No (laugh). Quite frankly, no...nothing. He realises that we do have football teams and rugby teams.....

You must feel a little bit hurt about that? You are likely to be doing some work about which you are generally quite pleased, you feel that it is great....and nobody knows?

He doesn't even support us. I will give you an example. Two weeks ago we had three lads to go to the Under 16 County Rugby trials... it was at Ranger School, Markton....starting at 4.30. Well the traffic between here and Ranger is pretty hectic at 4.0....pretty bad. It is a good half hour run in a car and I said that I would

take my own car. I knew that I wouldn't get...half with the kids. And I asked him if we could get out (of school) a few minutes early. And he said, "Well...I don't know...Fifth years..exam year...." and all this. He finally agreed to let us out at 3.55.... which was a waste of time. Curiously, the next week we had a town Under 19 County Trial at Bamburgh school.....and that started at 4.0 simply because most Vith Forms in most schools and colleges and F.E.....Vith Form colleges....have Wednesday afternoon games afternoons, so we are the only school that don't...that's another bone of contention....Vith Form P.E. We asked that we could leave school at 2.45 to get there for 4.0...."No". We had to leave at 4.0. His suggestion was....contact them and tell them to delay the start of the trial.....Who am I to contact the County Rugby Secretary and say, "I've got three lads who can't make it in time."?

It is clear that you feel bad about it...but what I am trying to gauge is how bad do you feel about it. Is it turning sour on you... is it festering?

It comes and goes in waves. There are times that you feel wholly fed up with it. You feel why do....if it weren't for the kids, I wouldn't do it. I feel that the kids would miss out. I am prepared to give my time up....and....if he would even pretend to show an interest...A kid will say, "How did the teams get on on Saturday?".....or "How did so and so do?" You see those lads in the County trials....if he asked us "How did they go on?" There was a lad last year, a lad called (named) he played for England last year, rugby...and the head knew that he was playing and he never came to ask how he did do...He knew that we had gone to watch him play at Twickenham...and he didn't even ask us how he had played or anything! Showed no interest in the lad. I don't think that he realised that a lot of the school's good name depends on the sports teams, I think. A school with good sports teams is away...it is good advertising for the school. Perhaps it is because I am a sports teacher I think "that's a canny school...good sports teams...and polite kids" and things like that. I don't think that

he realises. He doesn't think that...especially extra-curricular activities I don't think he realises that school teams and that do contribute to the school....it's name in the area. As I say it comes and goes in waves. Sometimes you are quite happy with him not sticking his nose in all the time. But there are times when....

It was going through my mind as you were talking that if he did come down and show an interest in your work you would be very suspicious wouldn't you?

Exactly. When he turns up you know that...hello, there's something gone wrong.

Coming to the department itself, when you have six people...and I am not being derogatory or rude about the department, but when you have six people....all different...P.E. people in particular...working together, there are bound to be tensions. Somebody wants one thing, somebody wants another...males want one thing, females another..... What are the tensions that you feel bad about?....or upset about? Or are there no tensions? Is there anything that might be preventing you from doing a better job?

The main thing is....the only time that friction really occurs - to me it doesn't happen very often because I am a pretty amicable sort of bloke....I can get on with anybody. It is the use of facilities. I don't really fall out with fellow members of staff... I realise that the facilities just aren't there. Lunch time activities... if you want a practice on a lunch time or you want the sportshall on a night you can't get in. When it's wet, there is a big decision... who gets the sportshall...who gets which facilities.

How is it resolved?

Well it is timetabled. There are occasions where we have a class together....one girl will be on swimming/gym...either boys or girls and the other in the dance drama studio and swimming pool and the

other group will be on games which means that they are outside on the field but they have the option of the sportshall if it is wet. But there are occasions, particularly with the brighter classes when they only get two lessons a week. There are occasions when you are both on games together. And if it is wet then you've got a clash for the sportshall.

And that's not timetabled in any sort of order....one one week and one another week?

Yes....it is to some extent. But there are occasions when it is very difficult...when we have a swim/gym class and a games class...if you see what I mean...we have two different age groups down at the same time. And when that does occur, whichever group is on swim/gym is O.K. but there are some games groups and they can only be timetabled for games because they haven't....on those occasions it clashes. But I wouldn't say that....

Does that lead to tension among the staff?

It used to (pause). I wouldn't like to speak for the others, but it doesn't between me and any of the others. I can't really think that I have had a stand up argument or any real argument with any other member of the P.E. staff (1)

Do you regard the P.E. staff as a very cohesive team?

Yes, very much. One of the things is that we have our coffee together at break time...and any problems we talk about them there. We do have some contact between the boys side and the girls.

What kind of problems are discussed there?

Whatever might crop up. Well....facilities. Use of facilities. Policy and reactions to the Headmaster. We had a big one yesterday.... he has...well Mark and myself....he had organised a football trip

to go to Belgium on the February half term. And he wanted two days off to travel there before hand on the February half term. And we got the go ahead from the Head. "Yes", we got his permission. When we knew that we had enough kids to make the trip viable...we went ahead and booked it....applied for passports...we payed the deposit which was £10 per head....Yesterday the Head had Mark in and said that he had made a mistake and that we would have to cancel the trip.

Who had made the mistake?

The Head. He had given his permission....but he thought that he would not be able to get permission from County for the two days we needed to travel. So we had a lot of discussion about that. And the policy towards it. Apparently he has thought about it during the day and he thinks that it could be resolved... I thought that he should have found out before he gave us permission to go in the first place. The thing is that not everybody had paid their deposit....and of course we had to pay the deposit...That is typical of his attitude to sporting activities. I don't see why the problems should occur. He can go on an English trip down to Stratford just like that....they can have a day off just like that! They can all go away. I would have thought that a trip abroad was just as educational as that...going to Belgium.... visiting families...playing other nationalities at sport.....

What an opportunity. And you and Mark were going were you?

Yes.

Any other teachers going?

Another teacher who teaches Biology...he is very keen on sport. He runs teams and helps out. When he's free he comes down and helps us out generally.

And how many pupils have you got to go?

29....we have an 'A' and a 'B' team. We paid £290 deposit.

Of course you don't know whether it has fallen through yet or not?

It might just still be on....We don't know. It looked more promising this morning....more hopeful this morning. Mark is organising it. It is his idea.

Are there any other people on the staff that are, in your opinion undermining P.E?

I don't think so. One problem that we have had is VIth Form P.E. We thought that it was important that the VIth form did P.E.... that it was timetabled. This is the first year that it has been timetabled. At the end of last year H. of D. got assurances from the Head....that the VIth Form would be timetabled for P.E. Fair enough when we had a look at the timetable there it was. But when they worked out the VIth Form options we found that there were no more than 8 people...8 boys in the whole of the VIth Form and 3 girls who weren't timetabled for something else, for that lesson. So although they had P.E. there....it was impractical for most of them to do it. The only time that most of them get P.E. is that they either come down and join in with other classes....There was a boy just as we came in asking if he could join in as he wasn't doing anything.....

Yes I noted that.

.....they do come out and join in the game or give a little bit of coaching...Some come down and help with coaching on a lunch time. But I think that it is wrong that we have to do it that way. They should be timetabled for P.E. and they should have the opportunity of doing P.E. because, to me, the VIth Form they should have enough time in the week to do at least two lessons of P.E. I think that it is important.

M.24/9

Would the Vith Formers themselves want it do you think?

Very much so yes. Very much.

Supposing that you had some Vith Formers who said, "No" they just weren't interested?

I think that for most of our Vith Formers we would find something to interest them....if we gave them a range of options that were wide enough. Badminton....going for a swim...most of them would enjoy it. Perhaps not games...not a lot would fancy that... especially during the winter. A lot of them would but....for rugby for example we have 12 playing for the town Under 19 rugby team.

I can see the case for those who want to do it. I suppose in going round so many schools I looked at 'option' programmes and I think that it is just a magic round-a-bout. I don't think that it is P.E. at all. I don't wish to imply that yours is a failure...yours might be something very much better....But I look at options programmes and the P.E. teacher is a 'giver out of toys'....gives out the table tennis equipment or the badminton equipment and that is it! I question that practice under the name of P.E.

No. I see your point. But I think that 'in between' recreation in that sense. That is just pure recreation....I think that they should have that opportunity. I'm not arguing the why's and wherefore's of Vith Form curriculum or P.E. but I think that they should have the opportunity of doing some physical activity. Put it that way. And at the moment they haven't. (In the majority of cases).

So if you wished to improve the present programme in this school.... that is the one place you would improve it?

I wouldn't start there but I would want to look at it.

Can you tell me where you would start?

M.24/10

In the situation as it is in our school...given the same classes and the same facilities and the same numbers and things like that... for a start I would attempt to ensure that there was an equal number of P.E. lessons for everybody...there should be no discrimination between the bright kids and the rest. Because they are equally entitled to it. It is as much part of their education as the less bright. Actually I am quite satisfied with most things the way it goes on. Yes, that's the main thing that I would like to see improved.....apart from the facilities.

Do you think P.E. touches most of the kids here? I sometimes wonder what is actually achieved in schools?

You do go through questioning stages....like that. I think that everybody does.

So what are the pupils getting out of it after five years here?

I think...apart from the physical benefits..most of the pupils become more skilful....certainly. Apart from things like character.... you know these things that are airey fairey....they are shadey areas. They get enjoyment. A lot of them find something..a sport that they enjoy...an interest...it gives them an interest in sporting activities. It is something that they can carry on when they leave school. It gives them a basis for some form of Physical recreation...when you leave school....some interest.

Is that what you care about?

I very much like to see lads when they leave school continue with their sport. I do a lot of rugby here and I like to see them join a club when they leave school. I do see lads when they have left... and I usually ask them if they are doing any sport.....

Does the school do anything about advertising...do they give the pupils a hand-out at the end of the school year? Indicating where all the various activities can be had?

M.24/11

No. The school don't. But if the kids are interested enough or we think that they've got a lot of potential we'll say, "Look if you want to take it further go and see so and so...."

I can see that happening in rugby because there is a definite link between Fleetwith and Beavers.

Not only Beavers but Wanderers as well.

Yes, I think that the rugby is a success story isn't it. If you are a good rugby player or good soccer player here it is almost certain that you will be absorbed into the adult soccer scene or the adult rugby scene.

Yes. Very much so. But there is an awful lot of sport played in Hucklebrough. Three major rugby clubs and many many soccer leagues... a lot of cricket teams.

I think that it is exceptionally rich.

It is there...but what is the link up between school and adult clubs. I think that it is left very much to chance...whether a school leaver is introduced to a club...and I am wondering if we can do anything.

....Could we do anything better...do you think? Could we make the transition from school to society better? Or isn't it our job?

(big sigh) It's hard to...we've a lot on our plate to start with. It depends on how you are going to structure it. I certainly have a lot on my hands just doing my week's teaching and the extra-curricular activities that I run. Without such things as Old Boys' teams and things like that where you could have former pupils playing.. and have a straight feed through from the school...it is very difficult; you need somebody who is sort of...immediate. There are all the teams there in the school and all the out of school activities...It is a difficult.....

(Anecdote of inquiry into availability of information in the town through the Civic Centre...) For a kid who has just left school who is not very confident it is extraordinarily difficult to find entry into very many of the sports that are available. Who's responsibility is it? Is it my fault? I should be doing a lot more about this at college... But maybe I shouldn't, teachers have already got more than enough on... But there is a repair job to be done somewhere.

It needs some form of liaison at the top, Outside of schools that will communicate with the schools and offer invitations and things like that. The one that works really well is the rugby...and we have...the rugby structured..the clubs run their practices on a Sunday morning... so the kids can play for the school on Saturday...and they can go on Sunday morning...either play a game or get some coaching and the coaching is very good in most of these clubs. So the kids are not just playing for school they are members of the club as well and naturally learn to play for them....when they leave school.

Do you still play anything?

I still play rugby occasionally. But I find it very difficult with.....I'm running three rugby teams in the school at the moment so most of my Saturday mornings...well nearly every Saturday morning I've got a match on. And if it's 'away'....I play for Beavers....if they are 'away' in the afternoon....I just can't make the link up...I just can't make it. I also play cricket.

Tell me about the time you give to your extra curricular work?

When the nights are light I give a lot of time to after school activities. At the moment I give three dinner times a week, for practices...and Saturday mornings. Now for rugby....at the moment we are just starting a second year basketball team...that will mean one night....at least. The nights during the week I'm not committed but most of my lunch times and Saturday mornings are definitely taken up with sport for the school.

M.24/13

The school finishes at 12.00 doesn't it?

Yes.

Then what happens? Take me through the next 60 minutes?

At 12.00 I meet the children outside the dining room...get them into first dinners...and while they have their dinners I have my dinner. 12.20...down to the changing rooms...get them changed, out onto the field until 1.05 then you come in and change, shower....

So you have a 20 minute break and then you are involved until the school finishes....Really you are still on duty getting them into lunch. So you are on the go until 4.00 most days, and then you are starting another club after school?

At one time I used to run rugby, basketball, and football....and I used to have one hell of a time. In my first and second year of teaching. Two nights out for basketball one for training, one for a match. Always rugby on a Saturday morning. Every Saturday morning. When the nights were light I'd have rugby training and soccer training...four lunch times a week. Plus a mid-week rugby game or mid-week football match...It was too much though I just wasn't spending enough time with my wife...I was giving up too much time.

There is always conflict between home and school in a P.E. man's life.

Well I came to the conclusion that you just can't do everything. You just don't have the time. You've got to spend some time living your life...I was enjoying it....I was giving up too much time though.

What is the thing which gives you most pleasure out of your job?

Basically seeing children improve. Not necessarily good kids getting better and better, but perhaps a poor kid learning to do something.

Probably one of the greatest satisfaction is getting a kid who can't swim and learning him to start swimming. There's a lad in the Vith Form now he used to wear a spinal collar...he was allowed two hours a day...something like that...to take it off. And the only thing that they allowed him to do was swimming. He was a very thin lad and he couldn't float...he was a sinker. And he had tremendous courage...He would get in...and he wasn't afraid of work. And he would get in...it was the only activity he would do at the time...he is incredible now...and he couldn't swim...and he was the only lad who couldn't do it...and he used to persevere...and he eventually learned to swim and then he came on in leaps and bounds once he got away. That gave me more satisfaction since I have been here. But I enjoy the teams I take. I like to see them improve. I like to see them do well. Individual players getting representative honours...yes. I think it all comes back to the basic thing...watching kids improve. Enjoying their improving as well...Seeing them getting some enjoyment out of it. And also getting the satisfaction from your teams doing well...and you have coached them and you see them improve and you say "I've done a good job".

It is not every teacher who will go all the way to Twickenham to see one of his lads.

We took a bus load of kids as well. I think that it is important.

Do you keep your holidays for you?

I like to. I don't take the kids camping or anything. Last half term we took some kids down to London to see the Russian Gymnastic team. We spent three days down there. We enjoyed that as well as the kids...I think that one of the few perks that teachers have is the length of holidays. The pay is not good...and the hours look good but they aren't...there is a lot of pressure. You are under far more pressure than somebody who might work in an office. You are under pressure an awful lot of the time. You've got to make

decisions an awful lot of the time. And I think "we get good holidays I'm going to get the most out of them."

I am sure that teachers are under pressure constantly...I think teaching is a very complex job. And yet it is very difficult to say what those pressures are. Where do the pressures come from?

They come from all sides at once. It starts with the kids I think. Especially the younger kids, the first years. When you are getting them changed...they are all putting their watches away, money and... "What are we doing today". It's enthusiasm on their part but you've got to think about...a stream of questions that have to be answered all the time. And when you go out on to the field the kids are

(tape distortion)

then you come back...."I've lost this"...or "somebody had pinched that..." somebody in tears there...And you have to concentrate on what you are doing...what you are teaching...and a few very critical points..always vigilant. Then you have to make 'phone calls, confirming fixtures...arranging fixtures and transport...paying bills..and you are thinking about all these things at the same time. Planning things. It is having to do that whole range of other things. It is very difficult to explain, unless you have done it I don't think that you can understand...another teacher couldn't understand. I think the thing is...you're there in front of the class...everybody is waiting for you...the pressure is on you right from the start. You've got to make things happen. There is pressure there. If you just stood there...you can't just stand there and do nothing...you've got to make the decisions...It is constantly making decisions...You've got to make decisions all the time...very small.. very trivial decisions. It would be hard to think of another job where you make so many decisions in such a short time.

It can be a split second statement that you can make to a pupil that destroys him.

A kid asks you a question and you have to give him an immediate answer...and you have to give him the right answer.

M.24/16

Do many kids ask you why they are doing P.E?

No. I don't think they do surprisingly enough. The only time they are likely to ask when they have to do something they don't like.. "Why are we doing cross country?" That is a very hard one to explain actually.

It is?

If they get no enjoyment out of it...you know...you say, "well basically it is good for you....it will strengthen your heart and lungs"....it is a good way of physical development but there are other ways that you can do it.

I am very suspicious of a lot of cross country running in schools .
It is frequently a teacher skive.

Yes...to some extent it is. It is very easy for a teacher to say "off you go...." that reflects on the P.E. teacher. We do do it... the time that we do it is when we are caught by facilities. The fields are very poorly drained...and they get very very wet...and if it is too wet to use them and you haven't got the indoor facilities, we say, "right, we will give them a cross country." And then we go round the outside of the field so we won't cut it up. It is an easy solution to that kind of problem.

That is a fill-gap though isn't it? It is, I grant you, physically stretching....

Kids can either do it or they can't. And if they can't they don't enjoy it.....in no way.

Can I turn to you personally now. I am trying to find out the driving force behind P.E. teachers generally. Why they choose to do the things that they do and why they give up the kind of time to various specialities? Do you enjoy your job most of the time?

Most of the time, yes.

You enjoy the holidays, but you still get a great deal of satisfaction out of it?

But I wouldn't say that it was mostly for the holidays. I think that we are underpaid for a start. Why I spend so much time in P.E.....Basically I think I'm very deeply interested in sport myself...and I have got a lot out of sport in one way and another and I would like to put something back in. I would like to give the kids the same chances that I have had. Why I put such a lot of time in....I consider it part of my job. I know that perhaps it is extra-curricular activities....but I think...they pay teachers to run those extra-curricular activities or whatever.

And you take that seriously don't you?

Very much so, yes. I think that's where you get a lot of your satisfaction....all the kids that you have doing it, want to do it. Whereas a lot of themwell not a lot...but some of them in lessons you've got kids there who would rather be somewhere else. It doesn't matter how good a teacher you are there will always be the kids who don't like P.E. and it just turns them off altogether. I like extra-curricular activities particularly because I get a lot of satisfaction....because the kids there want to do it....they are keen....most of them are good at it, or they wouldn't be on the team....they are quite good...it is a better standard...and it is easy to do. I find teaching good kids very easy....to run teams and to coach them it is easier than teaching...it is a lot easier.

Do you feel committed to some children more than others?

(pause) Yes. (emphatically)...I shouldn't say yes, but I...yes you do.

This is the truth of the matter...it doesn't happen in the fictional way does it? The reality is what I am trying to understand. Which ones are you committed to most?

M.24/18

The kids that are good at sport. You do... you have a natural affinity with those who are good at sport. You are good at sport yourself and you respect those who are also good at it. And you naturally like the kids who are good at sport.

Is sport a religion with you?

I wouldn't say that it was a religion....but it is important with me. It is important to me. I wouldn't like it not to be part of my life....put it that way. If somebody said, "right, sport's finished.....you can't take an interest in or can't participate...." or something like that...would be down...

Are you interested in Politics?

Not particularly.

You are not a member of a political party...not locked into the community that way?

No.

And yet you have come from working class roots? Would you put yourself centre, left of centre, right of centre?

Right of centre.

Does that effect what you do in school do you think?

Hard to say really. If it does I don't think that I am aware of it. I don't think that it does really. I am conservative by nature. I don't like to see things change. I like tradition...I think that tradition is great....you know...

So you like school uniform..you care very much about the rules of the game....obedience to referee and that kind of thing?

M.24/19

Yes. Looking back at school....what I thought was important at school the discipline was quite strict and I think that it was part of the school. I thought it was good the way that you all had to wear a uniform...

Looking at the schools in the town...is there any one of them that you would prefer to be in rather than Fleetwith?

No. No.

If there were a scaled post going at one would you go for it?

Yes, yes.

Which one would you least want to go to?

(no hesitation) Callaly.

Then what comes next...give me a rank order? How do the schools impress you?

There's all sorts of things come into this...they're talking next to this....I wouldn't like to put them in an order because I would probably do a lot of schools injustices...I am very interested in rugby and rugby teams so I would like to go to a school that was interested in rugby. So Dovedale would be out for example..they do nothing but football...I quite like football...I used to coach football. I would want to run rugby teams...put it that way. Bamburgh and Aiden, I would probably choose second, probably Bamburgh....they have a better rugby tradition. Eltermere is still a big school with split sites...getting a bit rough. Callaly. Bottom of the list. It is very rough. Gargrave....I don't think that I would like to teach in the same catchment area that I live in. No, I wouldn't like that...The school that really has problems because it is really rough is Callaly. Possibly the P.E. teaching won't be so difficult as teaching other subjects.....but I don't think that I would like to teach there. I suppose that I would go there for promotion...I have been here five years...and I know the prospects are not good....

How do you think the other P.E. teachers would regard Fleetwith?

What do you think their impression of Fleetwith will be?

Well...a very good catchment area. Being round High Park. Their parents are well off and they care about their kids education... very middle class..the standard of uniform is very good...the best in town.

What about their reliability of bringing their kit for P.E?

No problem generally.

Do you shower the pupils always?

We do shower them...but not religiously every lesson. A lot depends on what you have been doing. Say you are teaching the last two lessons of the day...the kid is going home and can get a bath at home...5 or 10 minutes is better spent on the lesson teaching than going into the shower....When we have been on the fields and they are really muddy....then they shower. If it is very cold outside and they are going to go out of the gym with wet hair....they don't get dried properly....

What do the others think about the strengths of Fleetwith?

Hmm...I couldn't really say. We do have some good rugby teams. I would say that we were one of the strongest rugby schools, in the town. Soccer we have good years...we have bad years. Swimming, sort of average. Athletics we always get a lot in the town team, but we don't do all that well at the town championships surprisingly enough. I think that one thing that we do try to give kids...we don't concentrate on one sport to become good at that sport. There are schools...well to me I think Dovedale. They do very well at swimming. They do very well at athletics. And they also are a very good football school...but they play football, football, football....If a lad is a good footballer he plays nothing but football.

M.24/21

At our school he might be a good footballer but he also plays rugby...he plays both...He is encouraged to play both. We say that he plays both. At the fifth year he would be given the choice. By that time they know which is their particular choice.

When I came four years ago the kids were going off to do some riding at some nearby stables....Does that still go on?

No.

What is the most way out thing that is done these days?

G. does most of the 'odd ball things'. They go skiing. They go to the ski slope at Clattercamp...That is outside of school like. G. does fencing..she does orienteering...golf....in fact they go down to one of the clubs down town....on an afternoon with some of the VIth formers.

It sounds as if the boys and girls are quite independent....the boys do their thing and the girls do their thing? Is it really two departments?

Hmm. I think it is more or less bound to be isn't it? The activities are so diverse aren't they? I mean....There is not a really common sport....Perhaps Badminton....we have mixed Badminton teams...there is coaching goes on between them. Athletics the coaching overlaps a bit...Swimming to some extent...Yes, they are very much two departments.

Many thanks for giving so much time. If any aspects could be expanded to give a more accurate picture of the reality of the P.E. teacher's job I should be pleased if you will make any additional notes.

End of Recording

Follow-up Comments

- (1) Usually the classes are timetabled so the boys are on games, the girls on 'swim and gym' and vice versa, the games group always having the option of the sportshall. There are occasions however, when both groups are on games and use the facilities have to be decided by the individual teachers involved. When it is wet and there are exams in the D/D studio, the sportshall has to be shared.

I take the line that in teaching rarely do things stay on a plateau...they are either going up and improving or going down deteriorating. Since you came to the school do you feel that P.E. has improved or not?

Over the years I have been here the children have become more enthusiastic. For instance the children are dashing into the changing rooms to get changed...they didn't used to. Dying to get on with the lesson. Coming early.

That must please you.

Oh, it does. I find that since we got the extra teacher in the swimming pool the kids are responding to two teachers as we can split them into groups. We no longer have a mixed ability group... instead two different types of children. The beginners and the more advanced. Both groups progress faster. And when one moves from the beginners group to the advanced group that is a great step. And really the swimming in the school since there has been 2 of us in the pool has really improved. So what I should like to see is smaller groups instead of the very big groups that we sometimes have to teach. When we are on options we have something like 35-40 children.

Explain that to me?

There is one third year group this year for instance...they are not doing options yet...last year there were always 40 girls in the one class to take...that class is unusually unruly and really difficult...and it is because of the numbers I think.

That is an organisation difficulty then isn't it?

And what you tend to do in this school when it is options, first of all last year we had a fourth year group coming down, but they mixed them with a 3rd year group...sending 3rd and 4th

years down together...one 3rd year class with about 5th 4th year classes...between three teachers. The 3rd year group was very small and definitely not ready for options, so we had to start the 4th years off with their options and then had to decide what to do with the 3rd year class. And it has happened again this year, but they have mixed 4th and 5th years together. Well 5th year are on the next stage in the options programme, whereas the 4th year are just starting.....just introducing options. We have something like 35 to a group with three teachers...and when you have options it just doesn't work.

Could you describe the options. It means different things in different schools?

I mean options within P.E. They (Head) seem to think well we have the older groups....they are in bands in the 4th year, A, B, C bands...the C band the bright children, the B band, the middle group. The A band is very very small because they are remedials. But they send the B and the C band down together... the two biggest groups...they think "Oh well they can cope they have a big sportshall....just stick them all in there." But they don't really understand what sort of programme we are trying to do. And when we do Badminton, and trampolining and table-tennis... that's what we mean by options, you need to keep your groups fairly small....It is just administrative convenience for them. (1)

So that when these 4th years come to you what sort of options are you offering them?

In the 4th year we introduce them to badminton....we don't let them choose until the 5th year. Because you can't choose anything until you know what you are choosing about. So we teach them Badminton as a class activity.

So if I am a 4th year girl I shall have to do?

Six weeks of Badminton....Now this is just new this year....
I have had to take an Outdoor Activity class...and the reason
for this is that we have nowhere to go....we are short of
facilities...when there is competition for the facilities when
the boys are down at the same time. So I decided to do an
Outdoor Activities group where we can do a bit of orienteering
and do some theory....and we can get well wrapped up and do
some practical work. And there is a swimming group as well.

So I shall get badminton for 6 weeks, I shall get orienteering
AND I shall get swimming.....6 weeks for each? Or is it not as
tidy as that?

No it isn't really. It is in with the games. They have a games
option and there is hockey or netball which is to a more advanced
level, than they did in the....or there is Outdoor Activities. It
is an extra game for those who don't really enjoy games...The
ones who are not so practical who like a bit of theory and don't
mind going out...it's like doing geography in a way.

Have you got it going yet?

Yes but there are too many really. I have this enormous group
of 30+ and I only have six compasses...so there is a lot of
work to prepare....

Orienteering is notorious for its demands on preparation. You must
be quite excited by the idea though?

Oh yes.

Do I have a choice then between hockey, netball and orienteering?

Yes, hockey, netball or outdoor activities. That takes care of up
to Christmas....after that they can do table-tennis or trampolining,
because we can do table-tennis and trampolining in the same room.
They do 6 weeks of that or swimming if they missed it last term.

They do another 6 weeks of games again but it is really only three weeks because we go on to athletics then....some of the things that you can do inside.

So that when I am doing trampoline or table tennis does that mean I am one of 35?

They would rotate within those weeks...probably trampolining four out of the six...with table tennis two weeks...something like that. If they were gaining very much from the trampoline they would not have to do the table-tennis. It is very much geared to the individual kids...You get to know your own group and know what they are going to get most out of.

It will stretch the staff resources? Does this mean that you are teaching trampolining and table tennis at the same time?

Yes, I am afraid so....I know that it's not really ideal but because the groups are so big...we've got four trampolines...that's eight per trampoline...so you think of table tennis a matter of occupying the spare ones...There are also girls who are genuinely frightened of the trampoline...really scared of it...so we let them play table tennis.

Correct me if I am wrong, when I came here 4 years ago I got the impression that the headmaster was not helping one bit....He wasn't interested. He didn't talk to his staff. He did not enquire as to what P.E. was trying to do....To me this was the number one problem. Has it changed?

He is very exam orientated. He worried a lot about his exam results. He sees us as trying to stop him getting these results. He sees us as a block really. For instance if we have matches on a long way away... or if we just require 10 minutes to get out early there's always a good reason. He always seems to go very defensive. "What are they going to do to me now" sort of thing. He just has not time for it. He just thinks

that it is a time filler. It is a way of releasing some sort of pressure....He doesn't see the educational values in it at all.

Could that be the fault of us...P.E. teachers...that we don't go to the trouble to explain?

I think that it must be partly us. There are always two sides to it. I think the problem with P.E. teachers is that when they are at college you learn all this about how to teach and I don't think that we are philosophical enough. I don't think that we talk enough about why we are actually doing it. I am one of the worst. I cannot really explain when we get a lot of ribbing in the staff about not having the marking to do and the like....I'm one of the worst at explaining myself. I know why I am doing it. I know how important it is as much as anything else...but I can never explain myself very well. If we had spent more time at college discussing it and getting things in perspective I might have been a bit better at it. I think as a whole we tend to lack this.

I think that it is a difficult one to explain incidently. I'm not suggesting it is at all easy.

I think at college they should set up a situation and go over with the students what they are going to get when they get out....Bring out some sort of discussion where you might meet a Headmaster...say to see the head to ask for half a day off to go to watch a sport.... or 10 minutes to get to a fixture....

I think that is a splendid idea...asking for extra money or making a case for extra time.

That's another thing, money. Last year we had a problem about mini-buses. We had two mini buses. With last year's very bad winter instead of driving the mini bus in the bad weather we organised coaches. And suddenly he came to us and said we had run out of money. And we had all these fixtures planned...throughout the year. And at one point he was just going to say that "you can't have any more money."

He had plenty in his school fund, but he wasn't going to dig into his school fund because he didn't think that it was important to have all these matches. He said to us "Will you cut your matches down by 50%". He didn't see the educational values of having matches. He just saw it as a way of spending his money.

Is the department short of money or is there plenty of equipment?

Paul does all the ordering of equipment...we have plenty of equipment.

Does he give you a budget?

No he handles everything himself, but I have never been refused anything. Cash is not a problem...it is just this transport I think that the Education Authority give a certain allowance for things like that don't they?

I am concerned that P.E. teachers do not appear to know how much cash is available to them. It appears that you don't know?

I thought that as far as school journies and matches was a separate thing...was given to the school like an allowance. He (the Head) went to London on a theatre visit...it was a VIth Form thing, and he paid the whole of this visit he paid their theatre tickets and their travel down and everything. So that's how he found that he had none left.

The pupils didn't pay anything for that?

No. Well they could have paid for their tickets or their fares. It wasn't as if the kids who go to this school couldn't afford it. He admitted it. He said, "Oh I've treated them to that." Because it was a theatre visit he thought it was more educational...So he came to us and said that he had no more money..."I've spent it all."

If you have a hockey team or a netball team going away to play, do they have to pay something towards it?

Well after this happened he said that everywhere you go somewhere I want the kids to pay 50p. Well as you know your netball players are also your hockey players or are in other sports teams...the same names appear often. So some girls were going to have to pay £1.50 a week. At present they pay 10p if it's in a bus where there is no cost...not the school mini bus because that is used to go just up the road. And if you go out of town it is 30p per head. We refused to ask them for any more. To ask for 50p was unreasonable. You always have one on a team who is a problem.

What happens if you have someone from a genuinely poor home?

Yes, well I said to him, "what happens to a girl who can't afford it?" He said "just discreetly don't expect her to pay."

But how are such girls identified?

Exactly! I don't know. Anyway we said we don't agree with it. What happened was, he called everybody who ran a team into his room. Then we discussed it and he reckoned that we should run disco's and sponsored things to raise money for our particular thing. He doesn't realise that we are working five nights a week and week-ends anyway. We just don't have any time to run these things...we are too busy doing our teams and activities. You see last year we went skiing and we did a disco...and it involved a heck of a lot of work.

And not an awful lot of reward for the effort

Not really...So this is what he wanted us to do. We just put our foot down.

You are quite keen on taking skiing parties and Outdoor pursuits?

Oh yes. They are great fun.

Do you run a ski party every year?

When I was at Aiden I attended two just as an assistant helping out. And then when I came here A. were short of girls and asked me if I could bring six girls and would I like to go...and so I did. Then the following year I thought "Well I think that I will have a go." So I did and last year was the first year that I organised it myself. It went very well. We went to Austria.

I imagine that from this catchment area you will have plenty of takers?

Yes, but we didn't think that we would make it again this year... we thought that we would just go to Scotland...but we asked around and there were enough pupils to go.

How many did you take last year?

We took 45 last year. We took four teachers...that was a big mistake as well. You have to plan these things a year ahead. And we asked them (County) when half term was and he gave us the dates and he passed the journey and everything...and as the time went on County changed the dates and the half term to the week after which meant that we were then going in school time...So County said that we couldn't go which meant that the kids were going to lose £30 each which came to £1,000 and somebody was going to have to find it. The boss said "No, you can't go". So it was pointed out to him about the money and he worked it out through the County. Eventually they had to let it go through. It was supposed to be five teachers but because of the concession they only allowed four to go.

I am surprised that half term gives you long enough to get there and come back?

Well we travel on a Sunday and come back on a Sunday. Seven days skiing...We flew last year but it was going to work out too expensive so we have decided to do it all by coach...and it works out that we get there an hour before we would if we flew. You spend an awful lot of time in the Airport. We've got 42 going at the moment with five staff. We are going down to Catterick for some pre-skiing

before we go. We do that on Friday nights, and Tuesday nights. Last year we had 6 lessons.

Is that part of their fee?

No. It is quite cheap though....It was £7.50 for 6 lessons. That is everything in, minibus as well...But this year we have decided to do only three lessons. We were hampered with the weather last year...and we thought three lessons was enough because all that we want to learn is about the boots and the skis and the basic 'snow plough'. We change the groups...It just starts them off nicely. It paid last year because all of them got their Bronze and about half of them got their silver. It was very good. It is a very good week. And you really get to know the children if you are living with them.

You sound as though you devote the whole of your life to P.E?

Well I enjoy it. I enjoy my lessons but I enjoy my clubs more. The kids really open themselves out to you. They are there because they want to be there and you can see your own sport being extended to what it should be extended to.... I just like the kids to enjoy themselves. In lessons as well I like them to go out there and enjoy learning things...Not to go out and just pass the time away...enjoy the feeling of learning something new.

Is there any particular area where you get more than usual excitement?

I've changed...At the moment I have changed my method of teaching hockey. I am trying something new out in hockey and it is great. I really look forward to all my hockey lessons. Instead of teaching them skills...you know...you get them into lines and you are teaching passing and 'this is the drive' and 'this is the grip', I go out and the first lesson I say "We are all going to be Kevin Kegan and we are all forwards and we set off as the five forwards and all the time I'm relating it to positions. Passing and dribbling..and today we were

'halves'. And "we are going to concentrate on how to tackle today" So we learnt how to tackle through being a position. Rather than say "this is how to tackle". And they've got the idea of positioning which girls never get to begin with. This way they are getting into the game straight away without actually playing a game..and they are moving and they are actually thinking "that's my partner"... "that's my job"...and they know straight away what their job is, instead of "we're doing dribbling today" I hate it! And I did when I was at school. So at the moment I must admit that I am getting more out of my hockey...because I have tried this new idea...I've thought ages about it...how can I do it? And at last I seem to have found it.

Anecdote of a reciprocal way of teaching rugby...identifying with the method of capturing boys' (pupils) interests without caring about 'correctness' of technique.

.....I don't. I don't. These first years when they are tackling and hitting the ball they are using the wrong side of the stick... the only thing that I have gone on about at them is lifting the stick because of safety. I won't stop them from playing...just "now don't use that part of the stick you are not allowed to..." but don't stop the action. "Not the rounded side..." and just get on with the game.

I hope that you continue to enjoy teaching in that way.

...and of course, I love basketball. I play that myself. I play for the League. And this year we have just started our girls together (joining girls from Aiden)...our best basketballers...and they both play in the City League division league two...and we both (colleague at Aiden) coach this junior team as well. And so most of my nights are mostly concerned with the basketball.

So you play in a Senior team yourself and you have got the girls to make another team?

I've got 6 of our girls and 6 of Aiden's girls and put them together....

That I like as well...with me working at Aiden, I know everybody there and (ex-colleague) and I are good friends, and we tend to try and join our kids together. If we have a Cross Country match across at Eastborough we always 'phone each other up and say "do you fancy going...and sharing a bus?" And this particular group of kids get on very well with the Aiden girls...Now I like that... I like the schools to join together rather than bashing against each other...especially in the same town. And we twin together if you like. Just through Peggy and I knowing each other.

Most interesting that

It is, I like it.

When I came to Hucklebrough four years ago I was anxious about the intense rivalry...between schools. I know that you can't run sport without being competitive. But it seemed to me that the inter-schools competition in the town had reached a level which was unreasonable. Is it still the same?

It is. In the netball circles...netball in Hucklebrough is a very high standard within the County. Whenever we go to a tournament it is always Hucklebrough that get into the semi-finals....One year I think it was four Hucklebrough teams that got into the finals... You see I look after all the netball here...this is how I know it. When we play certain schools...I won't mention any names...but when we play a certain school there is this horrible nastiness. And the children here have come from good families and they haven't got that aggression. Sometimes they are too gentle and you try and get them to be more aggressive.

Which schools do you have most trouble with?

Gargrave and Bamburgh. Dovedale, they are alright there's nothing there...we have nice matches with Dovedale. Our biggest problem is with Bamburgh....but I don't blame the children, I blame the staff. I think the staff set the atmosphere. I can never blame the

children....If there was a girl that shouts at the top of her voice I wouldn't let her play....I would say, "I don't want you on the team..." and talk to her and say why. Either she changes or she doesn't play any more. So I blame the staff an awful lot. But there is intense rivalry...in the netball circles. I don't know what the hockey is like.....Val does all the hockey. (3)

Just to summarise so far...it seems as though the problem with the Head is just as big a problem as ever it was. From an organisation point of view you are expected to do impossible things or rather you are expected to do reasonable things with impossible numbers. That is an organisation problem. And I wouldn't have thought that the pupils themselves present problems here.

One of the problems I call to mind...You know how you would never expect pupils to be very quiet when they come into a changing room. Well our changing room is just off the drama hall. Well starting very soon the exams will be in there, and we lose that for gymnastics so we have literally one area that's it. Now when they come through from the yard into the changing room there is just a kind of pulley door that you pull across and the kids are expected to come through there in absolute silence...and then when you get into the changing room you can hear them from the hall...the chatter whilst they are getting changed. But this is natural. I mean in the class room they haven't to sit in absolute silence....so quiet. And after vigorous activity they are excited and when they come down to change they are excited. And we have to stand there on duty and say "you are to get changed in silence," because of the exams. next door. If there is the slightest bit of noise then the headmaster or other staff comes down...."You are disturbing the exams." (4) No thought of giving us an extra classroom to get changed in so that we did not disturb anybody... We just have to impose silence.

Two things bother me about this. One that you should have to lose a shortage facility. You see you haven't got a gym....you only have a sportshall. Is there anywhere else that could be used for exams?

Not really when it is a full exam. They sometimes have over 100 in there. English and Maths, that's when it is full. But the rest of the time they have about 30 children in there. I have known them to have an exam in there when there's two. And you have to go through all that for two people and they could put them in a little room in here....(Youth Centre) (5)

Do you lose it at any other time of the year?

We lose it three times a year. We only use that drama hall for $\frac{1}{3}$ of the year. They also use it for the mocks and the resits and the actual exams. But they also use it for third year term exams...to get them used to the formal exam situation.

But if you have 200 pupils taking a big exam....there must be 200 places around the school....somewhere? Classrooms somewhere and teachers to go with them? Does Paul fight for that?

He does have some battles...And even when we are in the drama hall everybody and I mean everybody comes through there....cleaners...I was once teaching a lesson and I had a beam across my back....and this delivery lorry came. He came straight into the middle of my gymnastics lesson in the drama hall...and they delivered boxes and boxes of stuff stacking it in front of the beam....couldn't get the beam out because he had stacked all this stuff in front. I went after Paul and I was really furious. Paul went into the boss straight away. He just said, "Oh don't let it happen again...." And it happens again and again....people walk in and out of that lesson. Oh I get so fed up. The drama people...I know it is a drama hall...it was promised to them originally. It was their place..and they will go to the boss and say we want the drama hall on a particular time and they don't give us any advanced warning at all. They just turn up and say "Oh you're not in here..." So you can't really plan a syllabus at all, because you are not sure whether you are going to have your facilities or not. So you can't really stick to your syllabus at all. Very often we finish taking just theory lessons you see they have no gym shoes...because they will have brought their leotards. (6)

What are you most proud of? You must be very pleased with some of your developments....since you came here?

That is difficult. I can't think of anything really good really... I don't know. (long pause...reflecting) I think just with the all-round results...we have had a few good results...wins in the town netball. The present fourth year have won twice. The hockey has always been good. The biggest thing I think....and I don't know whether I should say this or not...when I was working at Aiden and there whenever there was a town competition or town swimming or netball or anything like that. You always found the Fleetwith girls' were never entered. And the only thing that they seemed to do was...I don't know whether this was right or not....But they seemed never to be in any town competitions other than netball and hockey...never in swimming or athletics or swimming or Cross Country. Since I came...I don't know whether I've done or whatever... they have an all-round good result...They always win the town Cross Country for instance. We always have several girls in the county. We have three girls on the county squad for athletics. One girl is actually an Olympic prospect. We have some terrific athletes really. I think that I am basically pleased with the overall good general standards. Rather than just being selective. They were too selective before.

I certainly would be pleased with something you said earlier...about the pupils now coming running to their P.E. lessons...

Yes...that's something that I have just noticed...just building up over the years.

(Story told of the difficulty in finding sports clubs in Hucklebrough)
Who should ensure that there is easy access to all the sports that are actually available in Hucklebrough?

I see that as the job of the P.E. teacher....to make sure that when pupils do leave they are going to get somewhere. For instance at the

moment...there is a course on at the College of Further Education and one of our Vith former's sister is coach. She is a County Netball coach...So I have advertised it to all those who are keen on netball. I think there are about 30 of our netballers down there on a Thursday.

By chance you know that those courses are happening?

Yes but I think that's my job....It's my job to find out what is happening there. We are educating them to enter the world outside aren't we? We are starting their life off here. We are not just doing our little bit and becoming so narrow minded that when we leave school "that's it". We are preparing them for out there. Any thing that we can do to introduce them to anything that is going on out there...I think that is part of my job. What we have done. Paul and I are very friendly with one of the top blokes in the town for Badminton. He has been made redundant from the N.C.B. he has a lot of time on his hands...so we get him to come into school. Monday and Friday nights he comes in and he takes...1st years...get them young straight away. "Anyone interested in Badminton go along".....and he takes the second year as well.

So you invite someone who is not a teacher but is a sportsman.... a badminton player coach to take your children? You like that link?

Oh yes. Get them in. The parents are involved with the school as well...this is something more on Paul's side. We have a school of excellence here (gymnastics) and Paul got the parents in of the kids who were going to be gymnasts. The parents come along and help out and become coaches themselves...Get the parents really involved with them I think it's great. Get the specialists in for each thing even if we are Physical Educationists...I see my job as being... being able to teach as much as possible. Not just be able to teach athletics to a high standard and not know much about the rest. I was always much of an all-rounder at school...and very proud of it... although it is very frustrating...you never reach the top of anything.. but you can do a lot of things. But that is what P.E. is all about...

if you are going to be a teacher you need to know a lot rather than too much about too little. If you have a kid who is going to be very very good...unless you really know what you are doing.. you need to be able to call on somebody who is specialised in that area...to take over...We are the stepping stone to that.

We have looked at the school context and the programme and I am now trespassing on your involvement in the community. You are involved in Basketball...are you involved in anything else?

I'm involved in the Diving Club...I'm not a diver myself but I do a lot of trampolining...I've been on a course and I qualified. The diving club is just an extension of the swimming club really. We do that on a Sunday.

Do you do anything outside sport and recreation? Do you paint or are you a member of a Brass Band?

I have no time. No it is all sport (7)

Are you a political animal?

No, I don't understand it.

If there is a political discussion in the staff room do you retreat from it?

No, I never retreat from it. I just stay there. I like to sit and listen to people talking. I like to hear the different ideas. The reason I don't talk a lot I am one of these people who can see both sides of everything and it makes me very confused...Because I do see both sides I never get a definite opinion.

If you had to vote now...right or left, which way would you vote?

I don't know. I want to stay in the middle until I know all the facts. I am not a very argumentative person...I don't like arguing...

The reason I ask is that because underlying all that you have said you have a tremendous vibrancy....sport for you is almost a religion with you.....I don't mean that in any derogatory sense...you care about it so much. You also care a lot about the kids.

Yes. Well the kids come first with me. I like them just to enjoy what we are doing. But it must be enjoying something because they have learned it. Not just the kind of 'playing about' enjoyment...I like them to enjoy learning something new. Sport is becoming very very technical these days and I think if we can still make it enjoyable...learning the important skills then you are all right. I don't want one thing without the other.

Do you think about it a lot?

Yes, I do. I like to go home and reflect....that wasn't very good... How can I make it more interesting? How can I make the kids want to learn? And sometimes I can't find the answer....I am not very good at Educational Gymnastics. I hated it at college, because I like definite things. I like to teach definite things. I am not very imaginative at all. And of course I hated dance because I used to get so embarrassed about it.

Now then as I understand it you don't have a lot of faith in yourself teaching Educational Gymnastics and Dance. But do you teach it?

Yes.

Why?

Well not dance. I won't teach dance. I was on my first teaching practice....we did a term at college and then went straight out on to T.P. and I taught Dance....I thought I'm not going to let it get the better of me...it was terrible. It really was terrible. It put me off. I did another year of Dance and I was so bad at it. I really did try but I used to dread Wednesday mornings. Dance first two and I used to hate it. I never missed a session mind. I always made

myself go to it...it was a real effort. I would never teach it because I never wanted to put the kids in that situation.

Why do you teach Educational Gymnastics now then?

Ah well I teach it formally.....

I am interested to know why P.E. teachers do something even though they do not believe in it? Or aspects of it?

Oh I do have faith in it...I think that E.G. is very good. Because I don't enjoy it, it doesn't mean that I don't think that it is worthwhile. I do. Mind you I don't think that Dance is worthwhile... But Ed. Gymnastics for the poorer kids..they are never going to be able to do a Head Spring they are going to succeed because they are answering your questions...and I do it for their sake. But I really have to think about what I am doing. I have found it difficult because I can't do it myself. I always did formal gymnastics at school. In formal gymnastics I know what we are aiming for. (8)

Would anybody object if you said, "I don't want to teach Ed. Gym... I am going to teach formal gymnastics?"

Yes....but I am not being fair to the kids if I do that. You see 50% of the girls would be able to press on and have a go and the other 50% would never be able to do what I am asking. A hand stand for instance. No matter how long you spend on that.

Thanks for all the time given. Any further thoughts would be most appreciated.

End of Recording

Follow-up Comments

- (1) Main point here being lack of communication and awareness of what P.E. is all about. Our fault?

(2) Options Programme

Winter

4th Year	-	6 weeks	Badminton/ Volleyball	-	6 weeks
			Outdoor Activities/Games	-	6 weeks
			Swimming	-	6 weeks
			Table Tennis/Trampoline	-	3 weeks

Summer

3 weeks	Rounders
3 weeks	Tennis
3 weeks	Athletics
3 weeks	Choice

N.B. Indoor athletics starts 3 weeks before Easter in the games session.

- (3) The rivalry between Bamburgh is perhaps the fact that they are very competitive and good in some cases (refers purely to Netball). However Gargrave, however do a lot of shouting between themselves and teams.
- (4) Perhaps the architecture of the building is the biggest problem here.
- (5) Again the architecture of the building - Phase 2 has never been built.
- (6) Only happens a few times it is written in Bulletin (a week's notice) still upsets the scheme of work.
- (7) I do some house decorating for friends as needs arise.
- (8) Need to go on a course for this and perhaps motivate myself. Think of this as failing on my behalf.

Compulsion

Vith form do not do P.E. They are down on the timetable to do F.E. but I think they are old enough to make up their own minds. We get all the gear out for them and we are there on the job, and if they want to come they can come as far as I am concerned, but if they don't wish to come that is fair enough. They can spend the time doing other useful things. What they do is not really my concern. I think that even in the Vth form I am a bit dubious about whether they should be made to do P.E. I am disillusioned with the way they behave in lessons so that I find you are flogging a dead horse for a whole year. What is the point? I should not be like this but I am. If they want to come they will come and enjoy it. You can put all the options before them but they still won't work, so why should I spend my time flogging a dead horse. I don't think this is something peculiar to this school. I think it is a thing of the times. Our school, it's not like at Aiden which is like a pressure cooker - bang, bang, bang....If they don't attend practices they are scuppered and the like. They've gone beyond....To me P.E. this way is not an enjoyable subject. It should be enjoyable and it has ceased to be. Amongst the older ones it is a battle for kit even. They are only there for a year. How can you expect them to buy shorts and things. They will never wear them again, because the kind of girls that I am talking about will never go and join a badminton club or anything. Those girls who go on - you can count them on one hand. So you know - I'm afraid, that's why I did not get the job - (promotion in the School). This is how it is in schools not what the books say. You can give them all the options possible, of course you can, but they are still not interested. There is nothing in Hucklebrough after school as in Laithes. In the youth club is a billiards table and table tennis and that is the limit.

Is the School used as a Youth Club?

Every school in Hucklebrough has a separate youth centre. They use the Sports Halls but the girls don't have a look in, because most of the youth leaders are men and they play football and basketball so the girls don't get anything sportswise. They might get a swim. There is a pool on the site, but the girls don't like swimming if they can't dry their hair afterwards. There is no hair dryer. 1st and 2nd forms are dead keen. 3rd years are keen as well. The 4th year is a hell of a good year; they will swim for us, run for us play hockey. It will be interesting to see what happens to the present 4th year next year. This group have already had 2 years in the school, so that might be something to do with it.

(Interruption due to 'missing' pupil - in which the subject was involved and, incidentally, responsible for and had not conformed to the Schools normal procedure).

Because of the sheer size of the school, instruments of bureaucracy operate....you can't do your job properly. I feel you are being thwarted on all sides. The geography of the building creates problems. The Drama Hall is where we do our gymnastics and all we have is flat surfaces and it is also used by the drama department and the music department. At lunch time padlocks are put on all doors leading to P.E. block. Practices are held in the 45 minute lunch hour and it takes at least 10 minutes getting the kids in.....and out, opening and locking all doors behind you. It makes you wonder if it is all worth it....you have to be hellish keen to overcome the discouragement of these difficulties. Sheer size and rules and regulations are operating against the fulfilment of the job, especially as far as extra curricula activities are concerned. Here's another thing again. We had to re-organise all our t.t. - we had an established 'practices' t.t. - because the boss said that the kids had to be ready for lunch at a certain time - according to year group - But if you had a practice of a team with combined year group, which is generally the case, you could not have - He's a bit round the twist you know! He hadn't realised this so we couldn't have any practices at all because we couldn't fit

round the dinner thing; so eventually he agreed to let some kids come to Special Practice by very special arrangement. If you want a lunch time practice you collect the children together, collect dinner tickets and lead them into dinner....25 minutes is the maximum time you can get for a practice and for most things they need to have lunch first. The enthusiasm of the P.E. teacher is just absolutely killed. You see the thing is that our head is not a sporty person.....If you bring the trophies in he is all over you, but he is not interested other than that. If we want to be out of school for a tournament he wants to know if it is really necessary. He does not really understand our problems. You see our boss (Head of P.E.) has to go and have rows with him. He's got to fight all the time - to work after school. Why should we?

Facilities.

I come in as a visitor and say what marvellous facilities.

Yes but we haven't got as much as the rest of them in town. Most other schools have two gyms, sportshall and a pool. We have a drama hall which limits the syllabus. What can you do flat-surface-wise. The kids love wall bars and you can do all sorts of things and link up, but in there you can't. The floor is slippery and we have had people in about the floors. We have had P.E.A. in saying it was dangerous. I cut all my lessons when I first came. I said I am not teaching gym in there. But how long can you go on and say I am not going to teach gym in there? What can you do?

If you sacrificed the gym could you do anything else?

Exams are always on in there. Suppose you did dance. It is so difficult because you start the dance in September and then in October you have exams. Then you have the Christmas Drama - Music production, parties etc. we just can't get in. After Christmas there are mock 'O' levels. The sheer administration of that particular room cuts out any continuous work. You can use it as a play room from day to day. At least when you are doing gym there are so many exciting

things you can do. You can shove an odd lesson in, but if you are doing dance you are doing a continual theme and you can't play ball games in there, you can't do anything else.

Is it right to say that the women suffer more than the men in that particular respect?

Yes, because they can swap round a sports hall for a swimming pool, whereas the gym matters more to the girls. When I complain Paul will say "you can do gym in the sports hall". But you can't. You can get two classes in but the sort of gym girls do you need to be with the children to talk to the children, but you can't hear anything. You don't realise until you hear yourself speak how much you do speak in a gym lesson and how much you need to communicate with the children all the time. The other class is at the bottom of the hall practicing basketball but the girls P.E. is so much more intimate. That Drama hall is lovely to teach in, nice curtains, nice floor but we don't get in. At first glance it is lovely but there are some real problems to be overcome.

Satisfactions

You said in the staff room that you were happy in the school. What are the satisfactions?

It's the kids! I enjoy very much their company. When I taught there were so many problems but they were far rougher than these kids. I was there two years before I came here and then I went to Gargrave for a term and I had a rough do there. I got married as well and I was trying to do the 'home' bit and when I came up here I could not believe it. Life is congenial with these kids. It is great. That's one reason why I wouldn't like to go. But facility-wise it is rubbish. Sometimes there are only six people in the gym doing exams.

Why can't they go somewhere else?

It just seems as though you can't get through to the head.

Have you tried?

It's not my place to try. That's still one of the problems because I still feel that although I am a junior member of the P.E. staff that I have four years experience and I have things to say, and I have got problems.

Do you ever talk to the head?

No, he is never about.

So you have never had a fairly long conversation with him about P.E. He has never invited you to sit down, "let's talk about P.E."

No.

He has never invited opinion?

No.

So he is very remote

Oh yes!

Are there any other staff who could be a medium to get to him?

There is only Paul. I am disillusioned because you are flogging a dead horse and there is only the kids who keep you bright.

So your spirit it being broken isn't it?

Yes.

I don't regard you as lacking in enthusiasm, you are still in P.E. and it was the thing that made you tick.

This is the wrong time to speak to me anyway because I didn't get a job that I thought I should have had. The boss led me to believe

that I would get it and kept me here under false pretences.

If you feel that I am probing say so.

Oh no, this isn't just me he has done this to thousands. What happened was that I was separated and I went to the boss in complete confidence and asked, "Do I have to work my contract out because you just want to run away and not see anybody you know." But at the time I was frightened. And I thought people would say that I hadn't tried with my marriage. And I came to see him during the holidays - and I told him. The next thing I knew he was telling someone about me and that annoyed me for a start. I applied for a job at the school where I used to teach and I didn't even get an interview.

Was that at Basley?

Yes, I thought that's funny because I gave them great service. I started a lot of new things - being new out of college and all that. I thought "Hell that's strange!" Anyway at the time Judy had left her husband and she was leaving. The boss said to me, "You don't know you are going to get this job at Eastley. Fill in this application form." (For Senior Woman P.E. teacher at present school) handed me an application form and said, "Why don't you fill this in? I am on your side." he said. "If it comes to the crunch you will get my vote. Obviously I can't give you the job but you will definitely get my vote." When the interviews came I was at camp and I stayed on an extra week because they needed a woman...there were some E.S.N. kids that were there and I missed the interview because I had no address or anything and I just came away. Anyway he said, "You can be interviewed this afternoon" and this was in the morning. I was out teaching and I just had to dash in and have my interview and you know what you are like, and I don't interview well at the best of times. But he should know that, because I've been in this school two years. God I have been at the school two years, and I don't show my best and Paul (H.of D) was there as well at the interview - Well, you can imagine, you can't even tell lies can you. He put me right off my stride.

But I thought at least with him saying that I had his vote.... I thought well at least, you know.....and I know the children, I've worked side by side with Judy.....I haven't been like the junior member. I am sure he must know that. We have shared everything...and he must know that. And I didn't get it!

When was this?

About 31st May or 1st June. And I was told "Oh by the way Mrs. C's job has been combined with a House Organisers job....and it's a Scale 2 job....and consequently we've called Miss J. for interview because she didn't know that".....Well I didn't believe him. Would you?....I mean she'd got the job hadn't she? And I hadn't even been interviewed. So why bother?

Has the head discussed this with you since?

No. He has avoided me since....Never said a word. He said "Oh well I am sorry and all that" mm....Miss R. (P.E.A.'S Woman Colleague), who is very probing - said that she hoped that I could work with this Miss J....."And she's only had the same experience as me, but she looks great on paper because she has a lot of qualifications you see. This was the thing that really hurt me...You see at the interview "Well are you likely to stay Mrs. Baker?" So I said "Why yes of course." He said, "Well we do know that you have had emotional problems"....So I said "Well am I to understand that you all know that I am separated?" And they all knew...Well, you know, so I said, "Well I am perfectly alright now...I am all sorted out now. And I would stay if I got this job." But I am not staying here in this job on a scale one where there is no chance of promotion at all. But honestly wasn't that the limit?

I find this all extraordinary....I should like to know and you have talked about many of the things I wanted to talk about anyway but I should like to keep in touch. How do you remain enthusiastic in this situation? Do you feel drained at this end of the year now? Are you just waiting for the end of next week for the holidays?

No....because I don't want the holidays to come because I haven't got anywhere to go...you see I am living on a knife edge at the moment. You see, I am sleeping on someone's kitchen floor.....I really don't want the six weeks to come because I haven't got anything to do. I mean I've nobody now. I mean I shall go home to my Mum and Dad, and canny as they are...well...it was difficult. Usually by this time I am fed up...ready for a break....but I don't want it to come. I had a rough do, I must admit...and I wasn't really working. I'd go out to them (the pupils) and just look at them and that would be it you know....It would be like a sea. But now...I'm alright now. I'm frightened about next term as well. I don't know whether I will get on well with (colleague elect) or not. You can't say that you are not going to get on with her because people will say that it is sour grapes...So what can you do? She isn't the kind of person I can take to. I can't be on that wave length....I can't be...see what I mean? You see when I went into my interview...I've never been the kind of person who can say "Oh yes well I do this and I do that and these things," because I don't....I teach them....you know what I mean...As far as I know they've enjoyed the lessons or they wouldn't tolerate me. I get on great with the kids. They'll do anything for me. I'll probably never get anywhere....'cos I can't tell anyone that I can do things that I can't do....I can't say to you....or....P.E. to me is this....because I think that's what you want to hear. If it's not that to me, I can't tell you that's what it is. If the interviewers are that shallow that they don't know what its all about and can't see through the deceivers.....well I don't want the job anyway.....It's no use, is it? I mean I am keen as hell...But how can you make people believe that when you tell them what you really do in class. They said to me "What would you do if some of the kids didn't have their kit?" Well if they don't have their kit here we look round and try and find them some...you see.. and what would you do if they don't participate? They wanted me to say well I must make my lessons terrifically enjoyable so that they will, you know, but there's always losers. I mean you're not really trying to make me believe that all these children love P.E., because they don't. But that's what you're supposed to say isn't it?

You see you're different....I know. All our wing when I was at Battle's Cross thought that you knew what it was all about. But, I mean, how can our boss sit there and interview me and he doesn't know anything about it? But he hasn't made it is job to know about P.E. I was hurt that I didn't get the job. I can't say that I wasn't. The deputy Headmistress said to me "have they given you the job then?" While I was sitting out there. She thought that I must have got the job. But I really was hurt 'cos I thought "Look does he realise that I've gone through this traumatic experience and I'm still working?" I've never had a day off or anything....strange....Do carry on and ask me a personal question.

Val do not run away with the idea that what you have been talking about is not pertinent to my interest and job...this is really the kind of thing that I or someone must try to get at...Who knows what the reality of the teacher's job is? Perhaps many of my questions are concerned with the trivia...whereas what you have been talking about is at the core of teacher behaviour. I believe it to be intensely important. I am enormously grateful for your frankness. My endeavour is to probe the realities of teaching and teachers. I'm not concerned so much with the cosmetics!

Background given to present appointment.

.....so they appointed me here (1973)...It was nice, I liked it because I was with J.C. (Previous senior P.E. woman). She was really O.K. to work with. She shared things with me (in contrast to anecdote of experience at Gargrave.

So after G. this was paradise?

It was, yes.

So the only thing that spoilt it at that time was your marriage?

I remember that was a bad time for you.

It was a really bad time. Yes...and of course at the same time, it wasn't just my marriage but it was J's marriage as well. She went through a bad patch...I think that they are getting divorced at the moment....Ours was a much simpler 50-50 they have property they couldn't split theirs very easily. So of course things went wrong. Then I didn't get the job (scaled post following resignation of J.)....which I suppose was understandable. But he (Head) led me to believe that I would get the job. And that was awful because I felt really low. I couldn't do anything about it so that was that. But then I did get promoted. I've got a Pastoral role now. That was two years ago.

Tell me the position now.

Paul with a Scale 3. I've got a Scale 2 and Gemma's got a 2 and the rest are on ones....We are pretty badly off really. You see I think that Ed should be on a 2, because we are going to lose him. He has built up the rugby to such an extent....their teams are superb. Our school is now a 'football' school as well as a rugby school. And Ed built all that up. And his wife wants to have a family...and they can't afford it. So he's going to go...whereas if the boss realised... I think Ed would be worth promoting to keep him in the school.

The one clear message that I am getting is that the boss doesn't care about anything in the P.E. Department.

No, it's shocking! You see, I went in and asked him....I said, "Is there any chance...." it took me a lot to go in and ask because you feel as if you are grovelling...and he said, "No, there isn't." So I said, "Well I will have to apply somewhere else." And he said, "Yes"....and I don't suppose he thought anything more about it. Well I did apply somewhere else. It was for a post in County City. They asked me to go for interview. And he came rushing over the field....And a week before this interview he said, "...there is a Scale 2, Val. Would you like to apply?" And this was ages after....And I said that I would like to because I like it here. I really do. So he said, "Oh we will have to see about it." And he didn't say anything else. Then of course he rushed out on the field one day and said, "Oh God, I haven't done anything about the interviews but they want you to go tomorrow to County City.....(asking me) What can I do?" So he had to ring up and sort out these interviews...and he had to put it on the board. I felt that it was a made job....I felt awful. You see a friend of mine applied as well and I felt awful because... But if he hadn't have given it to me!!! It was still in the back of my mind...because he is such a horrible man! I felt sure that he'd got me to pack up my job in County City and then not give me it. But he did give me it. You see I had just been on a course, and I was right heavily into 'counselling' and all that you know. And this other woman hadn't.

Which course was that?

It's run by County. It's at Rumby....a course in 'personal relationships'.....Paul and I went. It was really good. And that was just at that time so I think that it swung it for me.

How long did the course last?

4 days. But my God. We came back absolutely shattered. You feel as though you have been turned inside out. But it was good. It's helped me a lot. And we still talk about it a lot. I really enjoyed it. So I'm on a '2' but I'm not in the Department on a '2'. So really we haven't got a point still. We still didn't get a point in our department. I think that we should have got one. He (the Head) doesn't care you see. We are all furious. When all the seven schools were constituted all the Heads were allocated a certain number of points....to give out to various people. Well our boss didn't give any out. Not to anybody. You see on the re-organisation a number of people already had posts. But there were these extra points in case anybody missed out on the way, they were able to give them at the Head's discretion. He didn't give any. He took them all away from them. Their money was taken all away. So if he hadn't used them they couldn't get them back. So he didn't give anybody anything. And really before I got this scale = point, I had been in two schools....three really but I don't count G. for one term....and I'd taught for 5 years. And, My God! the work that I'd put in was something else! I mean I don't know what he wants from you. Like the two lads that were in for coffee there...about that trip to Belgium, that is Mark's first job..... He has only been here half a term and already he and L. are going to organise this thing. Well yesterday, the boss said that they couldn't go because two of the days that they needed were going to be over half term. Now he'd made a mistake and hadn't applied for them. This is the way he says it....you've done all this work and...you've got the kids all enthusiastic....collected their deposit....you've done stacks of paper work...and he said yesterday to them, "Oh well we shall just have to tell them that it's off." This is what I mean. He doesn't seem to understand or care.

Have you worked for a Head who did?

No. No.....you know I meet people across at G. R.J. and O. et. al. and they say the same. But at least they can say "Yes but he does come sometimes....." Our boss is the same with everybody, it's not

just sport. We are badly done to, but there are people who he treats in exactly the same way. He wants things to be going on..... because it looks good in his Governor's Meeting Reports. He wants things to go on, but he puts so many things in your way. Life becomes unbearable.

Ah but would you like it if he took an interest in you and started coming down to the sportshall and asked you to show him what was going on?

Do you mean in lessons or do you mean out of school?

Both

(pause)

I mean you would be highly suspicious if he came down now.....but supposing you worked for a Head who really was interested?

Yes, I think I would. When I first taught in County City, eventually I think if I had stayed a little bit longer I think that he (Head) would have come every time (to matches). But I used to go into his office...we used to have this record....we had to give it in... this sort of rubbish. He used to write in the back of your book... and he used to say "thank you for all your support" at the end of each term. Well I used to think "great". Even if he never read it.....at least he said thank you....He was going to make a point and make a comment. And I went in twice to him...."We've got a big tournament...would you like to come?" And whenever I went in and asked him, he would come.

Maybe we are our worst enemies because we don't try to capture the Head's interest?

Yes.....but

What have you done? Would you ever dream of going into him and asking him to talk about P.E?

I find it very difficult to talk to him. I'll tell you all about this and that might help to put in all into perspective. You know what I am like and you know that I'm not a....I'm not 'pushy'... you know I am not. I'm more 'pushy' now 'cos I don't give a d... now about what the boss thinks about me. Anyway before Barbara came, I did all the Hockey. Now I have given her a team 'cos she is keen on hockey. I did it all before. And we had really good teams. I am not just saying this. They were really good. They are good because I put in the time. I go out of the town to play..... you see we only have 7 schools in Hucklebrough. So I go out of town...and we win everything. However, we get coaches for these matches. And last term, after Christmas, Paul came and said, "You will have to cut down your matches, there's no money left." Well I thought...fair enough. And I couldn't find out from Paul why there was no money left. He obviously didn't know. So I thought, "right, to hell with this..." You see Paul's very keen on doing things through him. We all have to do things through him (Paul). But there is a limit to that because you never know exactly what has transpired. You don't know what is going on. So I have stopped trusting to the extent where he is going to do things for me I prefer to do things for myself. I don't need him to that extent. So I went in one morning..and I thought, "I must get this off my chest, I must know, because it was stupid"...all of a sudden all our fixtures...we couldn't play them! So I went in and I said, "...excuse me (Headmaster), could you tell me where we get the money from first of all...." you see I didn't know, "and why has it stopped?" He was smashing you see...He thought "well she hasn't said anything that I need to worry about." "Well" he said, "this money is set aside. It is a special fund; and from that fund we are supposed to buy things like tea for the parents and for matches and for stuff like that." So I said, "Where has it gone?" All the other years it had never gone." Paul said that he had made an arrangement with the boss whereby we had to pay half the cost of the coach. I worked that out to be about 50 pence per kid. I think that is a lot apart from the fact that I don't think that they should have to pay anything at all. So I said, "Well where has the money gone?" So he (Head) said, "...well on various things, Val. For instance we went to Stratford with the VIth Form....

Now six staff went to Stratford on Avon for the week-end...they watched three plays...and he took about 20 With Formers - staff, 20 With Formers. So I said that I knew that they had been to Stratford. He said, "Yes, well there were all the tickets for that." And I said "tickets?"....."for that?"

"Yes, theatre tickets"....And by that time he could see by my face that had shocked me. So I said, "Yes, but I go to Wembley every year. And I take the kids there every year for the week-end. And my kids pay for everything." He realised then...."Well it is educational....." I said, "So is going to Wembley.....to London for the week-end." Things then started to get a bit aggravated then you see, "If that's where the money has gone.... all those people to the theatre 3 times....Now when I go down to Wembley with my kids the cheapest theatre tickets that I can get on a party booking at £3...." Now if he went three times even at the cheapest rate that is £9 per person. Now I think that was a lot of money. I mean they were With Form...I mean...good God every other trip that is organised you have to budget for the kids to pay everything. I was really shocked. And I thought that "if you think that is where you should be spending this money...." and I said to him, "So you mean to say that the money has gone now. And I have to cancel my fixtures now.!....."my girls aren't going to pay." "How do you know?" he asked. "Because I have asked them". I had asked them before hand. And I have twins playing for me... I still have....I mean that is £1.....It is £1 a go! I don't think that they should have to pay this. So he said, "Well Paul thinks that they should." I was past myself by that time and I said, "I don't care what Paul thinks about it..." For a long time he scared me but I was so angry....I really didn't care whether he threw me out of his office or not, because I thought that was awful. The way he just dismissed the explanation without any regard for past traditions. That's where it had gone, nothing more to be said. When I was at school I didn't pay anything. Now I am perfectly prepared for my girls to pay 20 pence...."just to make them understand that money doesn't grow on trees." He then argued that people (teachers) just don't put money back into the school fund. So I said, "Wait a minute....my girls did a sponsored 'dribble' to raise money to buy their own strip." They have also raised extra

money for the school fund. "I raise money for the school fund." Now I don't care what other people do....we know that some people don't do anything at all...but that really wasn't my problem. And then he got really angry with me. In the end I said, "Look I am sorry but running my teams has now stopped being a pleasure to me...if this is what is going on. I don't want to run my teams under these circumstances." I then went on to say, "I really will have to think very carefully about this, because I don't want to run my teams any more." "If you want to do that Val, you please yourself." So I went out and I spoke to Gemma to tell her what I had done and she agreed with me...but she didn't do anything about it, and I spoke to Barbara who had stacks of matches to cancel....Paul said, "Oh yes I think that we should expect them to pay 50 pence for matches" but then he was griping then later on. But I didn't go and ask any other staff who run teams or anything because it was no-one's business what I had done. Anyway the next day I went and I said, "I've thought about it. And I want to stop....." Well he went berserk! And I was standing by the Dining Hall and I thought that he was going to strike me really....I really did. I was so upset I went back and cried. And he said, "How dare you...How dare you stop running your teams.... the girls will never understand...." "I have thought about that", I said, "I think the girls will understand." "No they won't" he said. "I've spoken to the girls...they'll understand and they will back me to the hilt." Because they did. "Not until I get to them first" he said. So I said, "I don't think that I have anything else to say to you...." I thought, God let me get out of here...And I was really upset. And there is a chap who is really Head of our Lower School. He umpires Hockey for me. And I went and told him. And I had a little cry....He said "I think you are right...Don't you give in." There was a lot of pressure....you see Paul had a go at me...and he said, "You are only doing that because..." he's a funny bloke like...."you are only doing that because you want to stop running your teams." Paul said that to me! "It isn't" I said, "you don't understand...it is the principle of the thing. Do you not understand, if this man can go and spend all that money on theatre tickets and then say that we have to stop our matches...." I said,

if it's 50p now that he wants us to pay, he will be wanting us to pay all the costs. He wants the kids to pay for playing for the school." I said, "there's no honour for playing for the school if you have to pay for it." But Paul all the time has said to me, "well I think you should pay"....And nobody supported me. It was terrible. Everybody said that they thought I was right. You see this man, he slated me...He said to me "You've gone right down in my estimation." If he could only understand. I mean I...it made me ill almost because I had all this pressure....and people were saying "Oh I think you're right...." This senior member of staff...he had a senior staff meeting, and it must have come up what I had said. Gemma had said "Well I think she's right." And the Deputy Head had agreed that I was right as well. So the Head came to see me.

It became a major school issue then?

Oh yes. Yes. Mind I haven't told anybody all this. Nobody is supposed to know what goes on at senior staff meetings. I mean A.N. told me this because I was so upset about it. There were five of them and three of us.....S. didn't say anything because he is just a 'yes' man....the others said yes and others feel like Val did.

And would the Head be at that meeting?

Oh yes. He chairs the meeting.

So he would see that you had some backing?

I had some support you see. So the boss came to see me. And I didn't want to speak to him. I didn't want to speak to him at all. He came bounding up to me....when you think of what he had said to me before..."Oh Val, it has come to my attention that you are not the only one who feels like this. But you obviously are putting your head on the block." So I said, "Well I don't care...that's how I feel and I am not interested in anybody else." So he said,

"Well I am thinking of having a meeting of everybody who runs a team, this afternoon. Will you come?" I said, "I don't want to...I don't have anything to say, I have said everything I want to say." He said, "I would like you to come....." So I said, "I will come then." So we were all sitting in his office. And they were mostly fellows...there was only Gemma and I there, besides the men. Now I knew how they all felt. Because they had told me that they did. And when we sat in his office....nobody said a thing. So I just sat there. Just sat there. And I thought "well fair enough". And, of course it made me look stupid. And G., this senior member of staff because the boss had asked him to be there. And it made him look stupid as well. Because he had also put his neck on the block. So I didn't say anything. The boss was saying things like, "you will regret this dear." And things like that. I thought, "well I don't care."

Tell me Val that was one hell of a collision.

It was awful.

Do you regret it now?

No. I would do it again. I would do it again. It doesn't bother me.

Did you stop your teams?

Yes.

For how long?

All the time....You see..

You have finished running your hockey teams?

Oh, no. Wait a minute....I was going to explain. I had three league games to go...three out of town things and two tournaments. And I didn't go to any of those things. Pulled out of everything. That was particularly unfortunate, because I was the secretary....I was.. the secretary of the Hockey you see. And I run the town teams and

everything. And what's more our kids would have won the tournament... hands down. We had won everything until then. And I dropped everything. I'm not sure even whether he would even realise...I'm not sure. But I don't care whether he knows or not. Because if it ever comes up again I will tell him. I really did stop everything from then.

How long ago was this?

Last February ('79) January or February. You see the thing with him was....he went to town on me. Then the next day after they had had this senior staff meeting and he came bounding up to me and I didn't want to talk to him...he said "I agree with you of course that you shouldn't have to pay." And I thought, "well good God, he sat in his office and told me"...and that's the sort of man he is..... However, in the mean time, A.N. he's a really nice bloke...he is actually my boss really. I'm under him, in charge of the girls in the Lower school. When he's off I'm in charge....He said, "Look Val, he's probably forgotten about it all...." "Yes, but A..." I said, "....at least I have made the point and all you lot know about it now. So you know that if it ever happens again, that's what I will do." You see if it had been somebody mouthy, like Paul, for instance.....now he has done this before. "What do you think of the boss doing this..." I think we should all stop our teams...What do you think? And he whips everybody up you see. But I wanted to do it myself. As it was...in the end nobody supports you anyway. So I thought that best thing that I could do was to just stick to my guns. People were saying, "Don't you feel that you are being a bit awful on the kids?" But all the girls...you see...it was awful I had to call them all together, all the kids who play hockey, and explain. And they were saying "Ooo, yes Miss...." then they said, "Well we'll pay. Of course we will pay. But we don't feel as if we should pay." And I felt a bit better about that. But I remember being right 'full-up' about it....being really upset that I would have to get them all together and tell them. And I had a Vith Former, actually she's gone to (named college) to do P.E. just now. She's in her first year... just gone. And she used to run one of the teams for me. And she spoke

to him as well. And understood completely. And they were shocked that he could behave like that. So I felt better; I felt as though I had done the right thing. Now nobody supported me and they all started to pay their 50p and then he stopped that. And they said, "Well what about that then?" So I said, "If you had supported me... and we all had pulled our teams out, he would have had to do something about it." This year of course I feel as though I have made my stand now. I now feel that the kids would suffer if I continued with that. I admit that...I've made my point now and we've got the money.....

Do the kids pay anything today?

They pay their 20p. That's all we are going to do. And I don't care what the boys do...now the boys probably pay more than that. Now if my bus money doesn't come up to half way I don't care...I've told him. Now if he ever says anything I'm just waiting for him....to return one of my bills.....and if he does I will do it again. You see he has stopped frightening me. Because the man is a total lunatic. I have been here all this time...and I wouldn't trust him as far as I could see him. Because he forgets...he has what we call "wobblers"...and he goes wild. He wouldn't support you. I mean if parents questioned staff. You see I'm in a bit of a different position now because I have a post of responsibility which means that I am dealing with parents a lot of the time. And this A.N. over the years he has had many do's with the boss, many clashes. So he knows how to handle him now. You see the other night I had a parent who rang me at home....I shall have to go ex-directory soon...it was over something you know (not declared)

So I rang the boss at home...I thought "Well it is his problem." Really I am....all I'm doing is what he told me to do. And A.N. had said to me now you must say to him that you were only following his instructions. Because I have found, he said, that this is the way....He hates it if his authority is questioned. So I got that over very quickly, on the 'phone....."Of course Val...by all means you are only doing what I asked you to do"....You see if you go about it in a devious way you can often get him to say what you

want him to say. But he said the wrong thing with me about this Stratford thing. You see I had no intention when I went in with having a confrontation with him or anything. I just wanted to know where the money had gone. Because Paul wouldn't tell us you see. I don't know whether he did know. I don't think he did. 'Cos I think the senior staff were concerned when they found out that he had taken the money.....on the Stratford thing. Because he went you see. He is 'English' and he went. And I think that was awful!!!! And you say to me "would you like him to take an interest?" Well, yes I would really because I would like him to appreciate....You see if I didn't want to do it I wouldn't do it. It is only when these kind of things come up you know and he says things to me like "But the girls won't understand...." I don't think that he realises that you build up a relationship which is extra....which stands you in good stead for during the day. You have different relationships with the kids.....because you see them out of school....And he doesn't appreciate that that can help you in your job as well...and it can make you a more effective teacher in many ways. And he just doesn't appreciate that. That's what annoys me. Like that he dreamt for one moment that he would have any pull with those kids...that I wouldn't have. I had already spoken to the kids before I went in and spoke to him. He just wouldn't have any pull with them at all. I mean they don't even know him. They don't want to know him. I mean if I said to the kids "Look Headmaster is coming out to a match tonight...." It would be of no interest to them. Sometimes I think "Yes, I do put a lot of time in...and what am I getting out of it?" But it is only sometimes...isn't it? Or you wouldn't do it would you? I mean the people who run teams at our school and run them half heartedly soon pack them in. If they are doing it because they want promotion, they are wasting their time. They are really, aren't they? But if you are running them because you want to, you don't care whether he is interested or not really. You would like him to be...on the occasions when you think "heck I'm floggin' myself to death." I mean at the beginning of the season I didn't have one Saturday free for four Saturdays.

Why is that P.E. teachers feel so committed?

I know but do you not often wonder why? You see I sometimes say to myself "you don't have to do this".....Do you know though, I felt a real heel though...You know I didn't know what to do with myself. I mean I stopped running my teams and I didn't know what to do. You see nobody at college says to you..."Now when you go out you will be expected to do this...." Nobody says that.

But you are not expected.

I know, I know...but I feel as if in many ways it is not brain washing. But it is like brainwashing. Because you come out (of college) and you think to yourself "Oh well that's part of my job then". When I first started teaching when I went to teach in County City, and I was on my own. God I did everything. I mean I ran everything...It never occurred to me not to. I felt as if I wanted to build things up....Why do you feel like that? I don't know why. I think you just....through the lecturing and everything at college you must get this feeling...you must do or else you wouldn't do it would you? I don't know any P.E. person who does nothing. I don't know anybody. I do...I know two at Aiden. Because they packed them in. For various reasons. They had an axe to grind. Which I did. And it's hard.

Don't you think that they will soon go back to their teams?

I don't know. I don't know...I don't know. I shouldn't think so actually, because one is having a baby at the moment and the other one is H. of D. and he's gone off on a year's secondment... so when he comes back I shouldn't think.....I think it will just slide....I don't think he will do anything. You see he didn't get promoted.

Won't it be interesting?

Yes.

I, like you, don't know a P.E. teacher that doesn't give a great deal of extra curricular time to his subject. There is a sense in which they are victims of their own enthusiasm. It appears that there is an upper limit in this authority. No-one is above Scale 3. If they got together to protest...all sorts of things would happen... if they all did what you did on a big scale....

No it isn't though you see. You get what I call the lunatic fringe in P.E. You get the people who say to you "but what about the children?" "...aren't the children going to suffer?" I call that so short term, I can't believe how people can think like that... It is like when you talk about striking....My God but the children will suffer. What they don't take into account is that they make a course that they will suffer. I mean like the boss said to me...He'd say to me "but who'd suffer?" "Well the children of course" I said.. now they will....But they won't suffer if I continue with this because they won't be paying their 50p. But he couldn't see that. Now lots of people say, "but I do it for the children"....They don't. They don't. Not that sort. They do it for themselves. Some are building little empires...you have that all the time. There are a lot of people who are very much like that. And that's what I call the lunatic fringe.

But there are those who know that they are not doing it for any Scaled post. Yet they devote themselves totally. Lunch hours.... evenings...week-ends, even holidays...?

Yes, I know but do you not think that a lot of them are trying to...I'm talking about the type who have to fill their life with that. And to me, that becomes nothing to do with the children. It becomes them. And I think that there are a lot of people like them about. I don't think that they are doing it because they want to run a team; I think they are doing it because it fills in their time. Do you know what I mean? I'm not saying that there is anything wrong in that.....because the teams are still being run. I mean that is smashing; that's great.

I would still like to understand their motives better though?
Do you know these Jazz Bands that you see in the colliery villages in Durham? They are run by some of the most strange, I should say 'interesting' people...all these little tots marching in the most elaborate uniforms...and the Leaders are revelling in a sort of personal fulfilment.

Yes....quite often that P.E. teacher is getting the same kind of satisfaction....People turn round and say "I'm not going to support if you are going to do that." ...and they say that the kids are going to suffer. But I don't think that that is what it is. Surely, logically, you must always say to yourself, "Well yes if they suffer now, they will suffer now, but surely we are doing it because it will make things better for them in the future." Surely that must be the case?

But you were battling about a principle?

I was fighting for the kids. Yes, but...this is why it made me ill almost, because I was at the end of my tether....I tried to explain to various people...they always quoted 'the kids'... "what about the kids"....But the kids support me. They understand. And I am doing it for them. But the Boss, you see, and Paul, for instance.....The boss didn't pull any punches with me. He more or less told me that I was shocking because I was making the kids suffer. And I didn't think that. That never entered my head. I was doing it for them.

Are you a member of a political party?

No. No.

Don't you think you ought to be?

That's because I was married to D, you see. Because he used to be an International Socialist. He used to be very very militant....to

the point that it used to be coming in at one ear and out of the other. And a lot of his friends were....the conversations to me were just tedious. So I'm not really....No.

Place yourself one side or the other of centre

I don't know.

But you have a crusading spirit...as if you were to the left of centre?

Possibly.

You care very much about what you are doing for others.....You have that spark of militancy.....

Yes, but this is only recently. I should think that it was the shock of the bosses life....that I would in any way, even go into his office and ask him where the money had gone. I feel...probably.. I know what it is....Or I feel as though I know what it is. I feel that I'm not totally responsible to Paul (Head of Department) now. That I have another string to my bow. And I am not beholden to him. You see we used to have many, many rows. And he would always say to me, "Yes, but I'm in charge." So I feel yes he is. But part of my life is the Lower School now. I have another commitment to consider....and he doesn't frighten me any more. It is nothing to do with getting promoted, because I didn't ever think that Paul would, in any way, assist my promotion. I do not feel any more that I have to be beholden to him. I could go into the boss off my own bat....as Mrs. B. and go in and ask him (boss) And you only get to know what he (H.of D.) wants to tell you. That's no good to me. I suppose a lot of the nastiness with Paul was that he was annoyed that I went behind his back. I found him out, exactly. I would never have known that he thought...or had made a deal with the Head....Now I think that stinks...I feel as if what I do with my hockey, I decide. Nobody touches my equipment, you know...Nobody goes on my fields or anything (self conscious chuckle)...It is out

of bounds and all that....They are like Bowling Greens...When I first came, of course, I got the rubbish. Because Paul gave me the two worst fields and they were under water all the time. You could canoe on them. And he gave me the bum stuff you see. Well they have all been drained and they are the best ones they've got now. And I think that gets on his nerves. But I feel as if that's my business. And anything that effects my girls, is mine. I don't care what anybody else thinks...That's why I discussed it with this bloke (colleague) because he comes to matches with me and umpires...and he is keen as well, you see. But I didn't feel as though I wanted to ask Paul what he thought. Fellers in P.E. really are a very strange breed. Although you recognise it, it takes you a long time to know how to handle it. Paul and I are like two sparks. I mean at the moment we are very friendly.

I would have not been able to see that unless you had told me

(Much laughter) No...at the moment we are very friendly. Probably because he now knows that I don't give a damn. And he can say what he likes...and it doesn't hurt me any more. He used to hurt me a lot. He really is a very difficult person. But I can go home and talk to (husband) about it. And H. has taught with him all the time... about 12 years. H. teaches at the annex. They used to teach at the Boys Tech. together. So I can tell H. and get it all off my chest... H. understands. If I went to anybody and told them the things that went on, it would seem trivial...but H. knows what he is like and knows how biting he can be. But we are very friendly at the moment. You see he tried to put pressure on me. To start running my teams again...and I wasn't going to have any. And I think that he has probably thought there is no point in having a go with her any more.....Very difficult. Because I feel very strongly about it. Although I am running my teams now, he only has to stop it once more...he only has to say something silly...and that's it.

In what ways are P.E. fella's different?

I feel as though they are just out to sort of....I don't know how to describe it really. It's all 'me'! I am the greatest! Boys be like me! I'm the figure that you must aim for! I am this super person! you must all be like me! And they are very physical with the boys. Well, put it this way, they are very physical with the younger boys, I feel. By that I mean they strike them and cuff them.....not in a nasty way....but it's there just the same. And I'm not keen on that. And I feel that it's all this thing about throwing your weight about I think with fellers....They have to be good at absolutely everything. I don't know...they are nice fellers at our place. But I have been in three schools and I feel that the fellers are just the same. They are a different breed....not all of them...but most of them are. Whereas I am probably one of these old fashioned people who say "we play because we play"..!"It's a game." Of course we want to win, but we don't want to win at all costs. The fellers are not like that. I mean...God, it's tragedy on a Monday morning if their team lose. Tragedy. Honestly! Not because their kids lose...but "Where have I gone wrong? My team isn't winning. Where have I gone wrong?" To me it's not that important...It is important or I would not make a big thing about it...but it's not that important. I'm not the big coach or anything. I find it hard to explain. I don't mean to run P.E. fellers down. You can appreciate it because you were one. You were a P.E. teacher so you were in the same mould maybe...I don't think you probably were because you are not like that. But the majority are. You only have to go to Mayfields on a sunny afternoon for athletics...and they are the biggest posers out. I mean the women aren't like that. Their gear is incredible. I feel as if the women are just ordinary. You never really notice the women. But the men you do because they pose around....It's like when you go into a rugby club and all the fellers...they are all at the bar and the women are hidden away... I feel that that's what it's like. And we are very down trodden I suppose. We never get the good jobs. Do we? I mean Gemma there, she's only Head of Girls...she will never be full Head of Department.

They never say in the advert....but they never do appoint a woman.... or very rarely.

A.F. was Head of Department?

Oh, yes. She was good wasn't she. But she's had a baby....But Gemma is the type who would need to be Head of Department. Because she hasn't got anything else. She will put in a hell of a lot of time.

It appears to me that she lives and breaths P.E?

It's very waring...very waring...because we come to blows about it, so often. She is one of the ones I call the lunatic fringe. We disagree so violently on so many things, about the kids.

It sounds as if it is an uneasy truce that you are living with Gemma.

Yes.

And with Paul really

No, no, no. You see Paul and I, although we are like two sparks I feel as though I could do anything to him and he can say anything he likes to me. We will argue bargee about it but it will be alright. I've known him too long. I think that his bark is worse than his bite. But with Gemma you can't. We don't disagree, this is the thing. I don't say "I disagree" She couldn't cope with me saying that I disagree. Because she is so upset about her position. If I ever commented or ever said anything it wouldn't go down very well.

What do you mean about her position?

Well she lacks confidence...about her position....I have to be very careful.....I wouldn't want to upset her. But we have our little talks about it...she has her little do's. And we sit down and talk about it....and she gets it off her chest, and everything. She is

very lonely...and she gets very up tight about things.

Does she live alone?

She does. She didn't used to. She lodged with this woman who was really very nice with her.....Gemma takes out her aggression on everybody. And this lady was very nice to her. To say that she is neurotic is a little bit harsh.

Does she go home to an empty flat then?

Yes. And it is awful for her. I know because I have done a bit. She has lots of friends...and she plays basketball and all this sort of thing. I feel sorry for her. I feel that I understand. We talk about it sometimesBut there are times when she doesn't want to talk about it. Then she just closes up. You can't then discuss anything with her. Because she doesn't want to talk to you. It is sad....I do feel sorry for her.

All this comradeship at coffee then is all a bit of a con isn't it?

Well Gemma had only just started coming for coffee. She didn't used to come in. At the beginning of term....we had a do. This was last summer. We always have a do in the summer, because she doesn't want anybody to help her with the athletics. She wants it to be all hers, So, I resent that. Because I feel as though I can help her. And she doesn't want me to help her. So I don't help her. We get very tense as the time goes on you see. Well in September....I came back and I thought, "Well, O.K. bury the hatchett...let's get back to working relations." And she didn't speak to me. She ignored me and this do....And it all came to a head because we had to actually talk to each other, because we had a clash of fixtures. And lots of her netballers play in my hockey team....and I had a fixture which was a week old and she had told them the day before. So we had a blast out.....And she was pretty upset and I was pretty upset because she picked out this one kid who she was going to drop from everything....

because this girl said she didn't want to play for the netball, she wanted to play for me. This is where we disagree you see. I put no pressure on the kids at all. I feel that they don't need me pressurising them as well as all the other competition. And of course they are frightened of her you see. She had said to this girls, "...but you are letting me and the school down." But the girl had told her that she thought that she was letting Mrs. B. down. Which of course was the quandary that the kids were in. And Gemma said that if she played for me she would drop her from everything. So I went to Gemma and told her that that was nasty, and that she shouldn't do that....and that it was our fault that it had happened in the first place. Because it was our fault that we didn't tell each other. So she admitted that it was our fault and that she shouldn't have said that....and that she had deliberately ignored me....Because she can't stand the hassel. When we have a load of people you are skittish and you have to take the stick as well as give out the stick.....don't you, really? You have to take it....But you see she said she can't. I did what I didn't want to do you see. I went home to H. and said that I'm not going to ask her why she was ignoring me. And she did upset me. I said to him that I am sick of it all. You see I have had almost three years of almost counselling the girl and taking her to one side....and being understanding... And I can't....I'm up to here with her.....She can be unkind to me. And I suppose that I am being childish.....But I said I'd had enough....because her manners were appalling....I was really upset.

Thanks for all the time given. Any further thoughts that would help me to arrive at a truer picture of the P.E. teacher's real working life will be enormously appreciated.

End of Recording

No follow-up comments

Having done your final T.P. here then got the job here did you come here with mixed feelings because you would know some of the inside story particularly the tensions that exist?

Well, I always thought you never treat T.P. the same as a job, I don't think. In T.P. some things you might let go, a few discipline things, because inevitably you think, well I'm only here for another week and I don't have to deal with it any more after that, so, you know, easy life. You can do that when you're here for a few days.

Did you think you fix some of your discipline problems that you shelved? Do you think you'll sort of inherit them again or.....?

Well I don't know because it was the end of the summer term when I was on T.P. so the kids would be now 2 years on so the ones that I had in the first year will be in the third year now and most of them will have forgotten all about me anyway. A few of them sort of remembered me.....

Now I'm going into the area of the teaching context, I think a lot of what is written on education generally and P.E. in particular contains a lot of fiction. That may be unfair because it disregards the particular circumstances in which a teacher is teaching. What sounds in abstract a good idea is useless when it comes down on a particular shop floor. So the context of teaching is crucial. What will work for one teacher in one context, perhaps a rural context, the same teacher trying the same thing in an inner city context, it will not work. And it's the context I'm talking about, the kind of pupils that you have, the kind of situation that you're working in, that includes the facilities. You have reached the stage now where you're here longer than a school practice. Can you tell me how this context strikes you?

Well, the type of pupil to start with I would say quite a high percentage of children of middle class parents, you know, if you put a tag on them. You know, professional people who have an interest in what the children are doing, they don't go short of equipment and that sort of thing.

But at the other end of the scale, the ones who don't live at High Park or know that....High Park is like this area of Hucklebrough which is sort of a desirable residential area.

And you get an impression of affluence here.

Oh definitely, yes.

And that's a fairly true reflection. As I come in I say, affluent pupils, the surroundings look affluent, but sometimes that can be not entirely true and you were going to expand, there is another element is there in the school?

Well, there is the sort of less well to do people and I think with some of the kids being so well off and parents giving them everything they want, you get quite a sharp contrast between them. You find at the lessons when you get mixed classes some of them sort of say, "Oh they're the snobs you know, they're the ones who live at High Park."

So there is a little bit of pupil tension?

Yes, I would say so.

And yet I get the impression that most of the professional people in Hucklebrough would choose this school rather than any other. To send their children to.

I think that it's true that Fleetwith is the school they try to send their kids to. Most professional people would choose Fleetwith.

Why is that?

Why? I would say academic record has something to do with it, there's quite a high academic record here. Most of the teachers I think, have got degrees, the facilities are good. It's not a rough school. Also it is a purpose built school.

I don't find it an uplifting school. The buildings I find a bit oppressive. Did it have that impact on you?

Well when I was here on T.P. it seemed big. I seemed lost for the first week or so, I don't like the layout of it, I don't like concrete blocks. But you don't tend to notice it much when you're doing P.E. it's when you're in a classroom and you walk along a corridor and you're in a little box at the end of the corridor sort of thing, that's when you think, you know it could be nicer. The setting is great, the sports fields, well virtually the country really.

It seems to me that your number one problem is the management of the tensions that exist in this particular department. Am I right or wrong?

Em, yes.

How do you see yourself reconciling this because I think automatically you try and solve it don't you? To make life comfortable. Because there are some personality clashes of no mean order and I thought, how does that spill over onto a new person? I would be interested in your story on this.

When I was on T.P. things were O.K. on the surface. Sort of everybody got on. There was the odd niggle etc. When I started at the beginning of the year Gemma and Val were not talking to each other, they didn't speak virtually till half term which put me in an awkward position because individually I get on with each of them well, I get on with Val quite well, I get on with Gemma quite well, and I can see the different sides of their grievances. Sort of what I know about it, I mean they haven't really said anything to me about it, just sort of what I gleaned and what Sandra, the lady who works in the swimming pool has said. It was sort of getting her down as well that they weren't speaking to each other and it was awkward in the sense that you didn't want to side with anybody but you wanted to sort of remain neutral, and you didn't really, sort of coming in.....it was none of your business really from a personal point of view. The only business that it was of yours was if it started affecting the department; and it didn't do so much because they weren't hostile to each other. They just ignored each other.

They just treated each other as though they didn't exist. And it usually happened that I was out for P.E. with either Val or with Gemma and two of us had been in changing and one had been in the swimming pool, so for the first half term I think we were only together, you know, three of us, a handful of times and then it was just as somebody was passing through. Anyway it came to a head the last week of half term - three weeks ago. Because they weren't speaking Val didn't know that Gemma had arranged a Netball match and Gemma didn't know that Val had arranged a hockey match. Well I do the hockey with Val you see, so I was sort of on Val's side of the argument at the time and there was a bit of argey bargey about it and Gemma wanted her netballers to play netball and Val wanted her hockey players to play hockey and some of them played both so this put the kids in the middle of it. I think that sort of made them see sense really, they have to make a compromise because it wasn't fair to the kids, it was no fault of the kids and they were sort of being asked to choose, you know, well look it's either netball or hockey. Anyway Gemma cancelled the netball and things have been sort of O.K. since then but there's still....you can sense the tension.

I'm just wondering how that bothers you, socially your very...I know your skilled....

Well I just try not to let it bother me. Because I haven't really been drawn into it. Because they don't sort of say things about each other to me. It's not that sort of situation where they're telling me so-and-so did this, so-and-so did that. Nothing's said.

So, so long as you're highly discreet. So long as that situation stays then you should remain unaffected but you'll always be a little bit tense about it won't you?

Yes. It makes you sort of think twice about doing something with one of them exclusively and you think, well ought the other to know about it or have I to just go ahead and do it.

Yes. It constrains the confidence about your initiative doesn't it?

Yes, I know what you mean, I sort of.....

You're interesting to me because I'm particularly interested in Battle Cross Students flourishing and growing and maturing professionally because you learn so much on your first two years, you learn at a tremendous rate, it's incredible and I'm just wondering if this particular situation that you're trying to reconcile these two, well there are more than two, clashes actually, but if you're negotiating all these clashes that's got to hold you back. Do you feel that it does?

Yes, it does hold me back.

Give me an example, a for instance, when it has held you back, and you know it.

Well for instance, Gemma does all the netball, Val does all the hockey. If I have my way, if I sort of do what I wanted to do, I wouldn't have anything to do with the netball, to be quite honest, because it doesn't really interest me, but I feel I have to do particularly in this, a little bit of Gemma's to keep the balance. I don't feel I could say to Gemma, "Well look I've got a lot of hockey commitments, is it alright if I duck out of the netball?" You know, that's just one sort of for instance.

Whereas, ideally you would prefer to give more or the whole of your time perhaps to the hockey and not really be interested in the netball. Are you welcome in both the hockey and the netball?

Oh yes, yes.

Gemma welcomes the interest?

Yes, well she feels that I have to give a hand, because really it wouldn't be fair if Val and I did the hockey between us and Gemma had all the netball.

Yes, I'm not sure about that because I don't know the situation well enough. But there is another dimension to this which I would like to pursue just a little bit. I get the impression that you have in Gemma a person who is totally consumed. Now then, is that difficult to live with because they're putting pressure on you and you feel because I'm not using every minute....

Well Gemma does a hell of a lot more than Val with regard to clubs and extra things like that and I think part of the niggle is that Gemma thinks, I'm doing all this and Val's not doing as much. But Val's married and she obviously wants a family life. Gemma lives in Hucklebrough, she lives on her own and P.E. is her only interest really. And because Gemma does so much I feel I ought to do my share.

Is her influence dominant of the two influences? You've got one who says, "Look I want a private life and I'll do so much towards school and that's it." The other one is totally consumed by every minute that's going. Now which is the dominant influence on you?

Well, I'm sort of striking a balance at the moment

So you feel strong enough to be independent and say, "I'll make my mind up for me."

Yes.

You'd have to be strong, wouldn't you? It could easily be that the pressure from the one who is giving so much time almost sucks you in sort of thing.

How much time are you giving? You are happy with the balance you've got at the moment?

I'm giving quite a lot. Mainly at dinner times, I don't mind giving up my dinner times. On Saturday mornings we have matches now which used to be after school but it's too dark. So that's a Saturday morning. Not very often.....

Is it hockey or netball now or is it more likely to be hockey?

F.27/7

It's hockey matches. As it works out my netball matches, I'm just taking the first years for netball, they don't happen till the second half term of next term, so that's worked out quite well really.

And how many lunch hours do you give up?

4 - Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. Friday's lovely.

You must find it tiring?

Yes.

How fatigued do you finish up on Friday night?

Very. Actually I thought I'd be more tired..than I am. I am tired but not as shattered as I thought I would be because you don't have the pressure of a tutor, as you do when you're on T.P. and you don't feel like you're being pulled sort of when you're in the school and that sort of takes a bit of the tension, you know, and strain off. But I do get tired. My week builds up. Then there's an easy day. I only do half a day on Monday but after break on Wednesday till about through till 4 o'clock on Friday, by Friday I'm thinking....

No free periods from Wednesday then?

From Wednesday morning break.

How many free periods do you get in a week?

8 which isn't bad really. That's quite good. 4 of them are on a Monday you see. I have 3 frees first thing on a Monday. In a way it's nice because it means that if I don't do what I was going to do at the weekend I always think, well I can do it on Monday morning.

Coming back to your subjects. You're doing P.E. plus some maths plus some humanities.

No, no just maths.

How much maths?

8 lessons a week. A quarter. Five lessons with the second year middle class three lessons with the top 1st years.

And are you finally beating the maths?

Oh I'm enjoying it. It's extra work.

Right now, if you had the choice, would you get rid of the maths?

No. I'd hang on to it. It's nice having a balance between being in the classroom and being out of the classroom.

Any others in the dept. doing other subjects?

Yes, Mark does some maths. He does some maths. Gemma and Bill do some health education. You see I was surprised to be getting.... this was the big thing at the interview, you see, this health education, and I had done biology at college so I said, "Oh yes, I'd love to take health education, but as my timetable's worked out I'm doing maths, so I'm not doing any health education.

Does Paul do any other subject?

He did do health education. I don't think he's doing it this year. Val did health education last year, but she's not doing it this year. I think they have sort of swapped.

It's supposed to be a shock from college into school. Has there been any shock of that sort with you? Things that you are troubled by?

Getting up in the morning. That is the hardest part, well you get so lazy at college, I mean I was only on for 12 hours a week. That I had to be there. And it's having to work to deadlines all the time, you

know you can't think, I'll leave 4A till tomorrow, I don't feel like it now. That's the hard thing.

Is there a day that you don't look forward to coming in?

Tuesday afternoon I think, ugh. No really my timetable.....I couldn't really have asked for a better timetable.

Have you had any discipline problems yet?

Just with 4A. I mean there is only 8 of them. They are just so changeable. one week they'll be perfectly alright, the next week they'll give you the runaround, they don't want to do anything and they are just basically silly.

What do you take them for?

Well, this is another thing, we started off doing Netball. But netball with 8 is a waste of time really. We did trampolining and they enjoyed that, they are the sort of class, if they are doing what they want then they're fine. If they're not doing what they want they start causing trouble. If you do something new with them they think it's great for two or three weeks then they get bored and they don't want to do it anymore. You know, they're that sort of class. We are doing keep fit at the moment. I sort of feel that I'm on a knife edge with them, you know, things aren't going too bad but I sort of feel that...as if I could be in trouble if they just took it into their heads that they didn't want to do it.

Are you free to manoeuvre with them? To build up a relationship so that if, for instance, the keep fit turned them off and the knife edge went the wrong way, you've got to find something else that will interest them. Are you free to do that?

I'm free to do that, yes. I can do what I like with them.

So, if suddenly you found that keep fit didn't amuse them what are you going to plan for them? What's next?

F.27/10

Well, I don't know. Well it would have to....you see the trouble is we're on outside facilities at the moment for this half term, so theoretically I'm supposed to be doing netball with them. Well a double lesson of netball with 8 girls you know, is just ridiculous really.

So what do you do? You can't do keep fit outside.

We do keep fit in the Youth Centre here.

Are there other kids around like there are this morning?

There's one class of maths. So you know I've told them we only do keep fit in here, so long as they're reasonable because there is another class in.

Where's the other class then?

In just one of the rooms off. You see this keeps them quiet because they know that if they make a noise then there's no more keep fit and they'll be out with the netball and so it's blackmail really.

I get the impression that the options system here is a shambles. Am I right or wrong?

Yes. Well.....

You get so many coming all at once.....

The 4th and 5th year lessons are a nightmare...when there's about 80 or 90 kids for options and there's only 3 of us to take them. We are on outdoor facilities for this half term so really the choice is hockey or netball in theory. We have managed to sort of negotiate so we can use the Youth Centre so one week keep fit is an option. We have some lacrosse sticks, so we're doing lacrosse with one group, you know, as an option which makes a change from netball and hockey. There's only 10 of them you see they're a small group and we have quite a laugh. They are a nice group to take though, they're sporting and they get on quite well. I mean it's something new for them really because they've

F.27/11

done enough with hockey and netball.

I am of the opinion now that the options system should be scrapped entirely.

And replaced by what?

Forget P.E. for that group or structure it properly. Where do you stand on that argument? It really is a waste of the pupil time, all that they're doing is they're given the equipment and say go.

Oh no, I don't do that. I teach them.

What do you teach them?

Well we did Badminton. I thought, "well I'm not just going to stand here for an hour and ten minutes and let them get on with it because they couldn't play properly" so I just.....

But you see if you've got 150 pupils and 3 staff.....

I only had about.....well it was difficult because I had about 28 on four courts, so we had to swap in all the time. But it wasn't too bad. The only difficulty was that some of them have P.E. twice a week, the fourth and fifth years, the lower bands have two doubles a week, some only have one double, so some of them I was getting for Badminton twice a week, others I was getting on a Monday and others I was getting on a Thursday so some had one lesson a week and some had two lessons a week so some did the same thing twice. And some only have half as much as the others, so it was difficult trying to keep them together.

You couldn't, could you?

Not really, no.

I find it very difficult to sustain an argument for that sort...I find that a bit of a shambles.



Well I think the fault lies in so many of them having P.E. at once. Because you can't...you can't offer them things like table tennis because there's too many of them, you can't offer them trampolining because there's too many, you can't offer them swimming because half the time we don't have the swimming pool.

If you've got 28 for badminton it means you've got something like 122... for two other teachers.

Val and I shared the sports hall, she had volleyball in half the sports hall, I had badminton and table tennis. She had a quarter of the sports hall because she had like one volleyball court, I had one badminton court for table tennis and two badminton courts. We sent some of them outside to play tennis on the wall because there was nothing else we could do with them. And Gemma had the rest for swimming.

You see, that's baby-minding.

Well I think it depends how you approach it. It's baby-minding if you just.....if you're content to just sit back and let them get on with it.

But you really think some teaching goes on? For most of the pupils at that time.

Well, not a lot, no. In an options system when you've got a large group only the one's who want to learn anything will learn the rest will just sort of.....

Those that don't turn up you'll say, "Thank Goodness they didn't turn up" rather than chasing them.

Yes. Actually it's amazing at the moment...they're there before the bell goes and they're trying to get in and start getting changed.

What time of day does this options thing take place?

Well one of the options is last two lessons on a Friday.

So there'll be a sort of winding down process.

Yes. One of them's Friday before dinner time, one of them's last two on a Thursday. One of them's first two in the afternoon on a Thursday.

They are not badly timed then are they?

No.

Where are you getting your big kicks from now? Where are you getting the most excitement out of your teaching?

Oh I'm enjoying the maths to be quite honest. Because it's something new, you know, it's still exciting.

Have you got second form maths?

Second and first form maths.

Are you getting much help with that?

None at all.

The maths staff have just left you to get on with it?

Yes.

That's unsatisfactory

Well, sort of the first few weeks I had said, "What do you think I should give them, what do you want me to cover" and from then on it's just been "hello" as we passed in the staffroom. Nobody has asked me how I'm getting on at all.

Have you been given a syllabus or a text?

F.27/14

Well, here's the book, go through it. Well half the maths department is part-timers, 'cos there's me, there's Stewart, and there is another girl who has just started who is a probationer, there's one of the metalwork teachers who does a bit of maths.

I am absolutely flabbergasted by this because it seems to me that maths in 1st and 2nd year is so crucial.....

Well this is it. They have given me the top class in the first year. I mean for all they know, I could be....Well I mean for all I know I could be doing it wrong. I'm just doing what I think is O.K. and it seems to be working alright.

The more part-timers you have the more difficult it is and the more important that the consultative process is strong. It just seems to be non-existent.

In fact the sort of...to be in this school the probationer teacher would.....I mean they've given me a form as well, I mean none of the other probationary teachers have got a form. So the first few weeks I never knew whether I was coming or going. I was having to sort out lockers for the kids, dinner money and nobody told me how to do it, you know, here's your register, get on with it, here's your dinner money book there's been no.....well you just arrived on the Monday morning and that was it. We've not had any sort of.....I was expecting little sessions to see how it was all done you know.

Have you had a session with the Headmaster? To explain what the school is trying to do, it's direction, it's problems and how he sees...?

No. We were given a set of rules - school rules.

Have you spoken to the Head?

"Hello" "Good morning" "How's it going?" "Oh fine" "Thank you"

That's just on passing in a corridor?

Yes.

He's not had you to a cup of tea and welcomed all the probationers or new members of staff?

No. Well we get welcomed in the staff meeting. You know, he just said our names and what we were teaching and welcome to the school. We haven't had a chat session.

There's not been any sort of gathering of his new team together?

No, none at all.

Has the Deputy done that?

No.

Nobody's done it?

Nobody's done anything at all, no.

You've not had a coffee or a tea party where he's sort of said, "well look are you settled in now, this is what I'm wanting, this is in my policy of the school, the things that I value and this is where I'm trying to go with the school," nothing of that sort?

No.

No explanation of the organisation?

No. Well they're streamed, I know that. You work that out for yourself. In fact the 1st year top class is F8 they do it to try and fool the kids and it doesn't fool anybody. It goes 8-6 4-2 7-5 3-1 from top to bottom. The even numbers are bright and the odd numbers are less bright. But S8 I thought was the top class in the second year but apparently in the second year it goes 2-4-6-8 so S8x are the middle class who I understood.....was under the misapprehension that I had the top class for maths for the first month, and I'd got the middle class.

F.27/16

It is confusing, I mean there are things now that I still don't know you just sort of pick them up as you go along.

You're in a sort of state of suspension.

Well you feel like that.

The head hasn't come and said, "You're welcome, this is your job, the maths people have just left you."

Well you see we had in the first week we had departmental meetings, well I had to go into the P.E. departmental meeting so I don't know what happened in the maths meeting.

I would have thought that in a staff of this size there's got to be half a dozen probationers this year.

There's I think there's seven. Seven or eight.

And there will also be, not probationers but new people to the community, part-timers, full-timers.....

I think there's about ten new staff altogether.

But I would have thought it was crucial to have a gathering of that little.....

The only thing we had was a thing organised by County Authority. They welcomed new teachers to County and the Chief Education Officer said a few words and the chairman.....

Where did that take place?

At the Teacher's Centre.

So all the new teachers to Hucklebrough, probationers and newcomers were welcomed by the Director is it?

The Chief Education Officer. Just after school for an hour or so.

Useful?

Not really, no. It was just a courtesey call. A one-off. Just to sort of say, "Hello, welcome to the Authority, I hope you'll enjoy teaching here." The only thing I learned was where the Teachers' Centre was.

Have you been back since?

No.

So, if you came across a maths problem you could go down there and see what's going on in maths. Maths ideas, texts, programmes and so on?

Yes. Well it's just like teaching practice really. We've been thrown in at the deep end.

About the curriculum in P.E. The programme itself. It's very difficult to judge it on a few weeks time but already you have said, "Look if you were in charge of it you would like to make certain improvements on it." Have you met that yet? Have you come across it? Because I regard you as a fairly astute sort of person. You are not slow in saying, "Well that's a bit of rubbish really, it would be better if....."

Yes. At the moment I have what's called swim gym. It's a double lesson, half is swim and half is gym, and my lot have the swimming first, so they have like a lesson in swimming and by the time they get changed for gym there's only about 25 minutes of the lesson. They're cold and they're wet and I never feel that I get an awful lot out of them. It would be better if it was gym swim, but you see while I'm doing swim somebody is doing gym, and it's just the way it works out. Because the facilities are used to the maximum really.

One of the problems is that the facilities are a bit tight and the way that you get these big numbers suddenly descending on you....

Yes, you see I mean you should imagine that the options, when it rains, it's gonna be chaos. Well it's already happened a couple of

F.27/18

times. It's rained and the options there's nothing you can do apart from share the sports hall; the lads go in for one lesson we go in for one lesson and the other lesson they just have to sit in the changing room. Because there's nowhere to put them. We don't get anything done. We just sit them down and give the....for the younger ones you can give them a netball quiz or a hockey quiz but I mean once they've done one....I don't know if you've noticed, the changing rooms are terrible...terrible design because all the kids are divided and if you want to talk to them as a group you've got to sort of shuffle them all into one little area, you can't do any sort of theory with them all sitting about in changing rooms because they can't see you, because they are all sectioned off.

Val was telling me of the problems of the examinations in the hall.

Well I haven't come across that yet.

Where do you change? I'm trying to see the social set-up because the little room that we had coffee in, is that the only women's changing room?

Yes. Well we haven't got a changing room...Well the toilets is the changing room. We use toilets as changing rooms and showers are full of netballs. (chuckle)

There isn't a shower in that little room we had coffee in?

Yes, but the netballs are in the shower so you can't have a shower.

So where do you change?

In the toilet.

In that little room? There's a toilet in there is there?

Yes.

When people have to change, when there's a staff changing room then the mere fact that Val, Gemma and Barbara are changing together there is a

sort of social life. Now then to an outsider coming into that little coffee room the other day, I thought that clearly the tensions must be reduced a bit by that.

Well, yes definitely because before half term Gemma never came down to the P.E. room for her coffee, she always had her coffee in the staffroom, and a couple of times I said, "Are you coming down for coffee"? and she said, "No". So I thought well I'm not going to ask any more. Anyway after they had the bust-up Val said to Gemma, "Well why don't you start coming down for your coffee?" and things have improved because you know we have a laugh and a joke and.....

There is a danger in that little coffee meeting though isn't there?

You section yourself off terribly from the rest of the staff. I don't see the rest of the staff....when I've got my dinner time practices I don't see the rest of the staff, I don't feel that I've got to know any of the staff apart from P.E. staff and the probationers who I've got something in common with. I mean I probably haven't exchanged more than half a dozen words to 50% of the staff but it is a sort of cliquy staff, people are in their little groups and they don't sort of tend to.....

Do these tend to be subject groups?

Em, yes I think so, yes. And the older staff sit together.

So it really isn't a community is it?

I don't think the staff is a community at all. I don't feel the school's a community really.

And yet you're reasonably happy?

Oh yes. Yes I'm happy here.

It seems to me that there should be a number of things that should be helping to make life a little bit easier for you nonetheless. As the

F.27/20

school isn't doing anything to make you welcome to the profession as it were, would it be reasonable for County to do it?

Well yes but I would prefer the school to do it.....because County is..... separate really.

I'm just wondering if County should have a sort of monthly or a fortnightly meeting.

Do you remember A.H? Well she's teaching at Callaly and in her first year they have consultative afternoons and things like all the probationers went to sort of meetings to see how they were getting on and that sort of thing but we don't have anything like that.

Have you been invited and you haven't gone? Could that be the case?

No. I haven't been invited. There's been nothing, just the welcome to County Teaparty. That's the only thing.

They must have thought that the other ones they weren't worth the.....

They must have done, yes. And then I suppose if you're taking time off from school the other staff don't like it because they get.... but the longer it goes on that people haven't sort of asked how you're going on, you don't sort of like to ask yourself. You sort of feel you're imposing by sort of saying, "Look will you go over this with me?"

I would love to come back and talk to you at the end of the year to see how the year's been. Do you feel you are learning very much? Making progress?

Some days I do, some days I don't.

You will get a lot better, I'm sure you will. Are you a political animal? Are you able to put yourself in the centre, left of centre or right of centre?

No.

You're just not interested. You haven't got any political clash with the school?

No. I don't even know what the political stamp of the school is so.....

Over the next few weeks, if you come across a problem and say, "Look nobody ever prepared us for that kind of thing at college," and you think that they ought to, will you let me know?

Oh there's a lot of things that don't get mentioned in college. Your legal position is one thing, as regards accidents and claims against you. Even simple things like joining a union. There's no advice on that at college.

Have you joined a Union?

Yes. But you know you don't get any help in that field. Just simple things like what happens if there is an accident....in the changing rooms and you're not there. Unless you tell them specifically that you're going to be held responsible in this situation or that situation then half the time you just don't think about it until something does happen and then it can be too late. You know, just simple things like that.

What about first aid?

First Aid, yes. Well I have got my first aid certificate.

End of Recording

Follow up Comments

1. Another angle - perhaps the fact that I was here on T.P. accounts for me being left pretty much on my own. I haven't really been given any guidelines as to what is expected of me - in a practical sense or in the way of objectives.
2. Also the problem of who to consult: Val or Gemma.....both or neither?
3. With Maths as well I have been left pretty much on my own

4. Organisation of use of facilities:-

Swim/gym - limited to single lesson of each. Gym is 35 minutes.... is very restricting. Inadequate time for full use of apparatus. Plus the fact that apparatus is in the sports hall - gym lessons O.K. in the drama hall. No ropes or balls in the drama hall - another limiting factor in gym lessons.

5. System whereby girls have indoor facilities are half term; boys have indoor facilities next half term. This means that if the weather is bad, only the drama hall is available - and only providing there are no drama lessons or gym lessons. It is possible to share the sports hall, but not feasible with large groups on 4th and 5th year options.

6. Use of drama hall for exams - means that there can be no gym lessons during exam time. Severely cuts down possibilities, particularly when swimming comes first - can't take the children out immediately after swimming, but there are no indoor facilities. Only solution - theory lesson in the dining room or changing rooms.

7. 4th and 5th year options - very large groups. Thursday Trampolining and Table Tennis in drama hall, Volleyball and Badminton in sports hall, group in swimming pool and group outside playing tennis on the wall.

8. Being a new member of staff obviously restricts what I feel I am able to do. Difficult to break away from the established patterns and try new ideas - which may or may not work. The department as a whole, don't seem to get together on matters of policy - what the dept. feels should be working towards - very little discussion about what we are doing, or should be doing and why. (College ideals take second place to more mundane matters such as what to do if it rains, who has first option on the sports hall, when, whose turn it is to make the coffee!!!)

9. Not enough hours in the day to achieve all I want to! There is a lot of talk about feedback in teaching - letting the kids know how they are doing. In my structure I don't seem to be getting any feedback from other members of staff. I don't really know their opinion of me or (particularly in maths) if they even know how I'm doing. I would appreciate some consultation/advice/discussion/praise or otherwise! It also seems surprising that the P.E. Adviser hasn't been in to see me yet. I'm still not sure what Fleetwith expects of me. At the moment I'm doing what I think is O.K. and as I haven't

F.27/23

heard anything to the contrary, I'm assuming that the powers that be think it's O.K. too!

When did you start with Cathedral Assurance Company?

I think it was the July or August and I finished about Christmas time. From January right through to September when I started College I worked at Outdoor Activity Centre (County E.A.)

Fantastic experience. It wouldn't be very well paid but nevertheless...

Did you survive financially?

Oh yes, yes. I've got very understanding parents but there wasn't much to spend the money on. I got £2 a day or something like that which was virtually pocket money because my board was all in. I got £2 a day in my hand. It was great, fantastic working with kids, working with the teachers, maturing myself, maturing with the kids, getting the experience of outdoor pursuits and responsibility.....

How did you know how to go to County Outdoor Activity Centre? Had you been from school?

Oh yes. I had been about four or five times with school, but actually while I was at school I instructed which was rather strange situation because I'd been in the staffroom and all the rest of it. And then I went back as a pupil in the sixth form, which was quite an experience. I still go back actually now and again when I have the time.

What was your particular strength that got you on to the V.I. role?

Sailing.

Do you sail privately?

No. No.

So the only sailing you have done then is through school and through C.O.A.C.?

Yes, that's right.

You are not a member of any sailing club?

Actually I often thought about it, but I have so many demands on my time I just couldn't possibly follow it through. I couldn't afford it you will appreciate. I mean the real dilemma regarding the sport and outdoor pursuits I'm kind of Jack of all trades and master of none. I sail, I climb, I canoe, I like walking on the fells I also play football for a football team on a Saturday and during the week and a football team on a Sunday and I'm also a member of the Badminton Club. All of these have demands on time and I just found I couldn't follow.....

Are you married?

Well yes, just. I got married 3 weeks ago. So that's another demand on my time now.

This will be a conflict

It has been all the time.

Is your wife a teacher?

Yes she is, she teaches mentally handicapped children in Castleton.

Where are you living now? How far do you have to travel?

I'm living at home which is a little place, about 22-23 miles from here and we've just bought a house in Streetley which we will be moving into within the next couple of weeks. It's about the same distance actually.

So your wife will be travelling one way and you're travelling the other?

Yes.

That is going to take a bit of finance though isn't it?

It does actually. It's very very expensive especially with teachers' salaries. Which is one of my biggest bugbears.

And you are going to be reliant on two salaries. This is going to be a dilemma isn't it?

Well we have got no plans for a family in the foreseeable future any way so thats.....

You said you had some very supportive parents. Are they wealthy?

Well, I would say so now, but initially they weren't. They both came from working class backgrounds. My mother went to the Grammar School actually, she was one of the lucky ones. My father came from a very hard background and has managed to work his way through and now I suppose they could be termed middle class, you know, whatever that means.

Given the inadequacy of the labels, do you relate more to working class than middle class or don't you think about it?

The only time it really comes home to me is in different social settings. I'm very active in a pub in the town which has a disco and er, they do things at Xmas and have staff shows and that and Charity things and that tends to be working class dominated and there's a whole different set of values attached to that. But at the same time a lot of my friends are middle class in orientation and outlook and I find it really interesting the differences in outlook and values and all the rest of it that the two sets have. It's like two different worlds. I would say actually, that working class, for the want of a better expression, friends that I have, by and large, have more money, more purchasing power than middle class. But the middle class friends that I have tend to do more with their money than the working class. A lot of friends have a £110 a week but it just goes. They've got nothing. They've got a car but they haven't got a house, or maybe have a flat whereas the middle class friends

M.28/4

I have seem to have their homes set up and a car and furniture. It's amazing, the different sets of values that each have. It's very interesting. It's good fun.

You're able to stride across the two really.

I am actually. I'm lucky.

You can lock into both at the same time.

It's always been the same though. Even at college I was so close with going to college in City and living in Streetley I used to go home all the time and whenever things used to get me down at college I used to toddle off back home and recharge my batteries or vice-versa, you know.

You took a B.Ed. at City?

Yes.

And was that the four year B.Ed. or three year B.Ed?

Four year. The hard one.

Nonetheless you must feel very pleased going through your background and so on, to have done it.

When I was 16 I didn't think I was capable of doing it to be quite honest. As I said I have very supportive parents who pushed me and pushed me and in the end it's come through. I'll see how things go, I might, depending on whether or not I stay in teaching, I might go over to the Masters.

I see all sorts of problems in Fleetwith one of which is the lack of consultation between the Head and Physical Education, though not exclusively Physical Education. I find it extraordinary for instance, that he hardly talks to his P.E. staff. Now has he spoken to you?

Only when I've spoken to him.

A sort of 'hello' pass on the corridor sort of thing. He hasn't met his probationers I gather, he's not met his new members of staff, he's not had any sort of social gathering to explain organisation of the school, his personal policy, where the school is going, what its dominant role is in Hucklebrough or anything.

Yes, that is a pretty fair account of the situation.

Do you feel angry about that or doesn't it worry you?

It's very difficult for me at the moment because I, personally, am in a dilemma at a personal level whether I want to stay in teaching or not. So at the moment I am not really taking these things to heart. Because I don't know whether I'm going to be in teaching for a long time. Given the situation of economy cuts and all the rest of it. The morale is pretty low and more than anything that's influencing my way of thinking.

When you say the morale is low, is that the morale of the school?

Well, all through college there was a general decline. Talking to teachers from different schools, talking to teachers in the school the morale of all teachers I would say is very very low and it's certainly having an influence on the way I'm thinking.

I would agree with you. All that I was going for ; which was the morale which was infiltrating your own morale as it were and you say it's a general morale from college, general professional morale you met on school practice and so on and it's no different here. there's nothing to give you any encouragement here.

If anything, its heightened here because of the lack of consideration from the Headmaster. It's accentuated so....in a school where the work of the P.E. department is recognised I would probably be a little bit more enthusiastic but in this school there is no recognition. I mean I've found this out in a couple of weeks, there

M.28/6

is no recognition for hard work. And one tends to say to himself, "Why the hell should I bother?" And it just gradually goes on and on until in the end it affects your actual job in school. Never mind all the clubs etc. afterwards, it actually affects the relation- with the kids and how you get on with them and what you do with them in the lessons. You tend to say "Well do this, do that" rather than actually educating them which is what I feel we should be doing.

What other jobs would you think of going into from teaching?

Clearly you'll have a number of escape routes.

Well, actually at the present time I haven't sat down and thought "well I'm going to go for A, B or C." But the general area I would say was selling, personnel management or if I was going to stay in the teaching area, I would tend to specialise in guidance and counselling area. Pastoral roles this time I think. But definitely dealing with people, as opposed to pieces of paper or numbers or whatever. At a personal level, face to face, but if I do leave teaching it'll be in Sales Management or Personnel Management, something of that nature.

It does seem as though there is a particular problem in this school. There is also a problem within the department. For all the little coffee meetings seem so splendid. The appearance of a little coherent group - it's nothing like a coherent group. Does that spill over to you? Do the tensions that exist between the personalities affect you at all? All teams do have tensions.

Well there is one tension that I have noticed, but I wouldn't say it's an overwhelming tension. I find it a very friendly atmosphere and as far as I am concerned there is no animosity between anybody. Certainly not in the men's, you know Bill and Paul and myself..... get on very well, apart from the coffee sessions we never really see the women, they tend to.....

One of the difficulties of the P.E. staff here is that it is isolated from the main stream of the rest of the staff community. Are you doing just P.E?

No, I'm doing mathematics as well.

Has that made life more or less tolerable?

More tolerable. It's a nice break. Actually I have got a very nice timetable. I'm very pleased with it, and the way things have worked out. I've got a first year group for maths. and a second year sort of remedial group, which is a small group, which is just nice and I've also got a nice balance of P.E. It's a little bit of swimming, a little bit of games, now we are moving onto the Badminton area so I'm very very pleased actually. I must thank Paul really because he's really looked after me and made sure everything's alright. It's excellent as far as that's concerned. With going into schools at various times and talking generally with P.E. teachers etc. The Head of Department is the intricate link really, I mean he's the man....the Headmaster doesn't really matter - it's the Head of Department who is the important one, definitely without any shadow of doubt.

And you feel you've hit fairly lucky?

Oh yes, definitely.

What's your personal sport interest then? What's the dominant sport that consumed most of your time?

I would say soccer.

Are you playing yourself in a soccer team?

Yes. It has been Wednesday night and a Saturday and I play on a Sunday morning. I play for Pittingley, they're in the Northern League and a team called Durham Steamers.

Are you playing in the Senior Pittingley side?

Yes.

That must take a fair amount of training.

Two nights training, which I couldn't possibly manage. I've got to cut it down to one.

So that takes up quite a lot of your personal time doesn't it?
Not a lot of time for sailing or anything else.

That's it, you see.

Where are your kicks coming from out of your job then? What satisfaction are you getting? It sounds as though your maths is giving you some feed-back and boosting your morale.

It's just at the right level. Something I can handle, there's that many pressures on you and so far I've been left to my own devices to sort things out with the other members of staff and to organise what we are doing ourselves and the kids are great - no problems at all. I tend actually not to have discipline problems anyway, I don't know why. Perhaps it's just my personality.

I get the impression there won't be many discipline problems here.
Is that right?

Well, I haven't had any. None at all. In fact I have never had any in any school I've been in. I mean kids try it on now and again. I don't know, maybe I'm just very lucky....in that I've got something they respect or they admire or whatever....And self confidence actually, from special analysis of other students when we have to do these analysis of....when you take lessons. I think self-confidence has a fantastic amount to do with your projection to the kids. If you project that you are confident and self-assured and all the rest of it then they pick it up. Whereas if they think you don't know your subject or you're not confident yourself then they pick that up as well and work on it.

What sort of time are you giving up to your ex-curricula activities.
You say that there's a lot of hard work going on and no thanks for it.
Can you tell me a little bit about the hard work that you do?

Well, when I first came it was sometimes 2 nights a week training and afternoon training and now that the dark nights have set in we

M.28/9

have had to pack in in the evening so I have one afternoon training and a match now and again and at the moment we're trying.....(1)

When you say afternoon training what does that involve?

All during the dinner hour I take the kids out on the field.....

That's one dinner hour and of course the match on the Saturday. That's Soccer!

Yes.

Who looks after the Rugby then?

Paul, Bill and I, at the moment, are trying to get the swimming teams organised. The biggest problem actually which is having a big effect on the contribution of the school is the travelling aspect. I didn't realise how much of a bind it would be. It is from Streetley. It is so expensive for me to come alone - I have got a car but it's so expensive for me to come every day by myself that it just wouldn't justify working really. It is so expensive, so we've got a car pool and when you are involved in a car pool then you've got a certain responsibility to the other people. Now when they're driving they want to get home straight away, that means I've got to leave straight away. When I'm driving they want to go home anyway, so I've got to take them home. It means virtually if I've got to do anything after school then I've got to come in by myself and coming in by myself gets very expensive.

How many are in the pool?

There are 4.

What distance do they live away from you?

Well I live the furthest, then there's a lady who lives at City, and then Barbara lives at Littleton and then there's another lady who lives at Shedworth which is on the way to Hucklebrough.

So what happens if Barbara is on then?

I drive as far as Barbara's car then Barbara drives the rest.
It is a real bind.

It is a saving though

Oh yes, I tend to feel a little bit guilty now and again and I do want to contribute more after school but it's just physically impossible I just cannot sort it all out really.

I'm interested in that guilty feeling because there is one member (Gemma) in the team spends a phenomenal amount of time. Now it's like in industry if you've got some bloke that's pushing up the rate all the time it makes the others feel guilty that they should be keeping up with that one so one becomes very unpopular.

I would never feel guilty because someone else was doing more.
I feel guilty personally because I want to contribute more.

Not because of the output of this particular one. Because I think that she's exceptional.

Well, you see as far as I know, I mean I don't really know about Gemma's personal life, but as far as I understand she has no other commitments which leaves you with a lot of time you can fill. And if school can.....that's why I think she's following it through, but honestly I don't know myself. I don't really come into contact with Gemma that much.

One of the things worries me and I think it worries an awful lot of people in teaching and in lecturing is the options programme because generally in secondary schools at the moment the options programme is a shambles - to put not too fine a word on it - that you get numbers of kids come in and teachers give our Badminton equipment, table tennis, this equipment, that equipment and it simply becomes a baby-minding session. I don't think that's very much different here or have I got the wrong opinion?

M.28/11

I think you have slightly, I think it's more than that. In the lessons that I am sort of concerned with where there is options, now, specially that we are indoors I personally try to do some teaching rather than just letting the kids get on with it.

But it's trying isn't it because you're against the odds, if I've got it right, Paul was saying that because of the numbers that.... come to you and three staff I thought well how do you cope with something like 150 kids and 3 staff? Just on a numerical game that's 50 each now it won't work like that because you give them more than 3 choices.

But there is 4 staff actually because Mr. T. comes in and takes a group for football but I think it is something like 3 staff between over a 100 and spread out with the facilities that we've got here it's very demanding of space and facilities. We definitely need a gym without any shadow of doubt, in fact two really. (2)

So that's one of the problems?

Oh definitely. But this brings me on to the real bugbear of mine, that College does not equip you for what you face in reality at school.

Now that story I would like to hear. It would be worth my while coming back and talking about that.

The feelings I've got for it run so deep really it all stems from the fact that I don't think they equip you at practical level. They equip you intellectually and there's plenty of theory and there's plenty of ideas. But in a lot of ways it's the very ideas that they generate within you that are the biggest restrictions. I know that sounds Irish but....the theory is great. Like grouping kids according to size, according to physical ability, according to intellect, mixed ability groups, I mean the list is endless. It's better for P.E. to be striving for - this is great..bringing physically handicapped kids

into P.E. and mixing them with normal classes - it's all great in theory - but when you actually get down to the practical lesson of what you are doing never mind with all the rest of them, with normal kids, they just don't equip you...at all...I really feel strongly about this. I mean take a day like today for example, what do you do with the facilities we've got here. It's impossible to go out even for a cross country, which is the last resort, it's impossible to send the kids out in that. The Sports Hall is being used for Prize Giving, I mean I know it's a one-off thing but there's the girls as well. And you've got say 80 odd kids the girls have got 80 odd kids....What do you do? You come to school and you don't know whether it's going to be raining - well, what do you do? At College the little things that you pick up with experience that you do....I mean you do pick them up with experience... they just don't help you with. What do you do? What games can you play? This type of thing. The theory....I was very very pleased with the theory, the quality of theory on the whole in my college course. But the actual nitty gritty of what you have to do when you're faced with a class on days like today or you're faced with 80, if one of the other members of staff are off. Just take, for example, what do you do with those kids if you've got 100 kids and yourself? I mean what do you do with them? This type of thing they don't help you with.

Presumably on your school practices you came across a situation not unlike today at some stage. I mean it does happen at fairly frequent intervals I would argue. Were you given any sort of help before you met this or was it an item for discussion after you'd met it on a school practice situation?

Well, I would say on the whole, it wasn't an item for discussion - full stop. At either side. No. No you just weren't given any pointers I mean I know it's not the colleges responsibility to say look on a rainy day you can do this, this, this and this. It is the teacher's responsibility to find out....We weren't given any help in that particular line at all. Now I experienced at Carlisle, when I was

M.28/13

up there and I got a lot of help from the members of staff but in a school practice situation you are so mollycoddled really, I mean they look after you so well, you are protected. I mean if the kids can't do it - they say that's it and you can't do it. I don't have to make the decision. But now I am in a decision-making capacity although Paul is the Head of Department and ultimately everything goes through Paul. I still have the decisions to make myself. You can't keep running up to Paul for Paul to make the decisions, eventually you've got to make the decisions yourself and stand by it because Paul needs his free periods as anybody else and he doesn't want a lad running to him every 5 minutes saying, "Paul, do you think we should go out or just do this or that?" I have got to eventually make that decision.

I think it should be discussed. I would hope that with all our students - it is discussed. There are 3 ways in which it might be but that's no help to you at the moment. You convince me that it wasn't discussed at all, I think that's shabby. I don't know whether City College will write to you or invite you to a conference or some sort of convention or other. They used to have a convention for people who had just started teaching. They could go back and say "you didn't tell us about that or that..."

Every year I was there the same points came up. We did have a sort of consultation session and every year the same points came up. We are not being equipped for the practicalities of teaching. I can't really comment on the certificate course because I didn't participate in that, but I would say that our course was totally geared to equipping us with the knowledge - in all our practical sessions everything was available, we had balls, we had raquets, nice numbers and all the rest of it and we did the skills, we learnt how to play tennis or we learnt how to throw the javelin or safety points to note in a class but in the actual situation they just weren't dealt with in enough depth for me, and I'm sure I'm not alone in this attitude it was a common complaint from all.....

On the practical side have you been asked to teach anything yet that you say "No I'm not equipped to do that." Have you had to say to Paul,

"I'm sorry I can't do that." Or have you felt that you really ought to say that to him because you are not prepared for it?

Well, Paul did want me to do a little bit of rugby and I told him that really.....I don't think I would struggle because Bill would give me a lot of help and I've got the manual....but I personally don't feel confident in teaching it because I don't really know that much about the game and I've only played it once or twice myself and I think this would come across to the kids - they would see, you know they sense this type of thing, they know if you know what you are talking about. And if they think you don't know what you are talking about it rubs off and they would probably....I don't think in this school they would be any trouble because the kids aren't like that but I think in a rougher school they would murder you really. Because I don't know the subject. I would say that's the only sport that I don't really know that much about apart from maybe lacrosse or.....

You have not been asked to teach lacrosse?

No.

One of the things that I'm wanting to get through to teachers is that no training schedule, if it were five years long, could prepare you for every eventuality.

Oh, no I realise that.

Therefore, I can't understand why teachers in schools subject themselves to the torture of taking subjects that they have had no course on. It seems to me you should not be expected to teach Rugby if you don't feel confident to teach it. You can take it to a certain point as with any game but then you reach, fairly quickly I would think, a certain point where you say "Now I haven't got enough experience of that" and then a Rugby man should take it from there.

The thing is though, I don't think you can afford that specialisation. I really don't.

Yes. I would argue, you can't afford to subject the kids to duff teaching.

Well I would agree with you.

All teachers to pass must have some strengths. You've got an enormous richness in your soccer. You say so long as I'm teaching soccer the kids are going to gain and I think it would be the truth. Unless there are people competent to do something, you would say, "sorry kids, it would be very nice to give you rugby as well or lacross and hockey as well."

Do you not think you are getting into the situation where you are talking about coaching as opposed to educating? You are talking about specialist coaches rather than educators. I see my role as an educator rather than a coach.

Yes. I am assuming that too. That somebody who has a teaching qualification, I would have thought that however he teaches his sport he is doing it in an educational way. You will have had in your course been analysing the learning process, a coach doesn't necessarily know a lot about learning, a coach knows a lot about the game. Now you've got to by the very process of getting one of the most difficult B.Ed's. in the country. You spent a lot of time talking about learning and this is really the difference between a coach and an educator. So I am assuming that all that you will do, if it isn't, it should be and I am almost certain that it will be biased towards an educational experience that somebody's going to learn something in the best means possible that's available to you.

Yes, the general drift, correct me if I'm wrong, I picked up from when you were discussing there about a teacher taking a group of kids to a certain level then after that saying, "Why look this is the end of my competency, somebody else takes it from there." Do you not think that that is getting towards a coaching specialist situation?

I think there is a sense in which I'm saying, "Let's admit that teachers, educators, in a domain like P.E. which is so wide that we're bound, if

M.28/16

we're going to be good to narrow our base and I think it's about time we admitted that there are limitations to what a teacher can do. You'll have.....I'm going to argue that all teachers in this Dept. will have certain strengths, but there'll be areas where they are vulnerable too and it's a matter of admitting, "look I'm vulnerable in that area." Admit that you're vulnerable and then you are not going to do any damage to the kids.

By the same token they won't....the question really to ask is, is it better to give the kids the experience no matter how rough and ready it is or is it better to say, why look we can't do that, I'm sorry, you can't do it but we can do plenty of this so we are going to chop out what we can't do....you know it's a difficult balance, should we let them experience, in a rough and ready nature, and get by with what we know or should we say, "well look I don't really know enough about this, we are not going to do it?"

I am taking sides definitely because I am highly suspect now of any argument which says, lets play at something, lets play on the fringes of it. If I need surgery I don't want a physician doing it. If I give my body to the health service I am going to assume that that's a professional service and if I need surgery I should go to a surgeon certainly if I need brain surgery I don't go to an ear, nose and throat man. And I feel that the children have no say in this and I think that we are irresponsible if, as I have done, that I would be given a situation the reverse of yours as a matter of fact. In my early days I knew nothing about soccer, and I should never have taken soccer until such times I felt confident to do so. I'm good at rugby, I'm good at a lot of things that will get me by for now until I feel confident. Until I've got to a certain stage of educational understanding then I shouldn't teach swimming, tennis, badminton, wrestling, trampolining, sailing or anything else.....

Do you not think that argument denies the fact that the kids could develop without the help of teachers? I'm sure kids develop and.... gain skills without teacher supervision.

They can do that but once you've got a teacher who is paid to intervene, then he must intervene in something that he is competent in.

Oh yes, yes. I agree with you.

I think most kids learn more out of school than they do in. When they're in with me then I say, "this is what you're going to learn." The options programme is nothing but a playschool, in many schools. Now you argue and say, "Well that's not quite true here," but I'm not in a position to judge. All I can say is that in many schools that I go into the options programme is a complete farce because the teachers have abdicated doing any teaching and that's not what we are paid for in my view. I am going a stage further on the options one because I think that what happens is that we submit ourselves to impossible organisation, and therefore we find ourselves as teachers. I have forgotten what the situation was here, was it Paul that was telling me the timetable was such that you certainly get 150 kids down here and there aren't the facilities or the staff resources to make a job of it we ought to be more militant. There is a sense in which P.Educationalists don't fight for what they believe in, more.

Well, the thing is, though, how far can you take, I mean as I was saying in the last chat we had, I feel there's two reality definers in this school, there's two really important people, that's the Headmaster.....well, there's three really, there's the Headmaster, there's the Deputy Head, because he's the timetable man, and then there's your Head of Department. Now if somewhere along the line you've got somebody there who doesn't realise the value of P.E. then you're batting your head against a brick wall.

That's true as long as we accept that that's the case. Now it is not the case, and again I've got to say, "right, who do you go to if the Headmaster is not satisfactory? Can you appeal? Is there an outside referee that you can appeal to?"

M.28/18

I would assume somebody down in County Education Authority.

Who?

I don't know.

Right, then this is the sort of thing that I think we should be doing. Either in college courses or in in-service courses. If you reckon the consultative procedure we ought to be doing a good deal more organisation looking at the politics of schools. I'm not talking about party politics. Who holds the power? Supposing I, as a Head of Department, had got a situation when I say, "Look I cannot run my subject properly given this organisation," and I go along to him and make an appeal for a different organisation to allow me to get on with the subject. Now I find all my stuff, I shall have a very good case, now providing my case is right, and I go to him and he's not interested in P.E. he will not listen to my argument, that's where P.Educationalists in the past have failed by not saying, "right I must take this further," because there is another man responsible for all the schools and responsible for what goes on in Fleetwith, in fact there is a whole team of them. Now there are two avenues, Governors and Officials. Because this school is controlled democratically, though perhaps ineffectively, but we should help it, but we don't, make it work by a board of governors. But the others responsible is the appointment of Director, Deputy Director, P.E. Adviser.

The thing is though.....

Let me just take this further, supposing I said, "right, I'm sorry Headmaster, I don't think you are giving my subject a fair whack, I must take this further!" Would he dig in?

The Headmaster?

In your opinion would this Headmaster dig in?

I think he'd take a bluey....he'd go beserk. I really do, I think he'd have a war on P.E.

All right, I'll take that on. It's how you deal with that conflict that we ought to be more sophisticated at. And we should say, "right, my department has met, we feel that we must appeal for a better deal." So long as your case is strong, educationally sound, physically educationally sound, then you can go through. Now, how you go past the Headmaster? There are all sorts of ways of doing that, but at least you've got to go behind him. Now then, the moment you do that he's not going to run the risk of him being threatened by Directors, by Chairman of Governors, by Treasurers, by P.E. Organisers, because it just doesn't finish there, it goes to the D.E.S. Parents, Politicians, I suppose that I fear that a lot of P.Educationalists are naive about the power game that goes on so they submit.....to an autocratic paternalistic head. He's not God, he's only another man.

Yes, I know, he has a lot of....he holds the keys if you like. He's the man who decides. At the end of the day it's his school, right? And you are only one department in a number of others. Now you might feel, justifiably feel, that you are the most important department, right? But society at large, right, where in reality that is where the real power lies, society as a collective body, demands that the kids....the two most important subjects in school should be Mathematics and English. Those are the two most important areas, that kids should leave school mathematically capable and capable of writing and speaking English. Now all these other departments have got demands on the headmaster as well. Now if you set yourself up against the headmaster you automatically ostracize yourself from the other Depts. Because they want their own departments to be the number one subject area as well. I would imagine in a lot of cases you're not only fighting the headmaster but you fight your colleagues as well.

Yes, but this is why I said as long as your educational argument is right, at the beginning.....

Yes, but at the end of the day what do you do when the rest of the staff are against you as well and your own colleagues. You couldn't work in a school where you were isolated from the rest of your

colleagues. In P.E. the P.E. staff can only do something which for extra-curricula activities must...but if all the rest of the staff are saying, "look, why is the P.E. dept. getting so much or why is it...I'm not going to run that team, I'm not going to do this, I'm not going to turn up on Saturday, and you are dependent in the P.E. department on the goodwill of other members of staff.

Yes, I would run that risk to see that I weren't exploited. It's not that I'm wanting a bigger slice of the cake, it's that I'm wanting a fair slice of the educational time of children. I'm not wanting any more than that. I want to say, "look don't give me 150 kids with 3 or 4 teachers because it can't work." That's not saying, I want more of the English, I want more Maths, I want more of the language time, I've got just my time but at least you've got to make it workable for me so that I'm not trespassing on other territories at all. And this is where lots of other people would come in to help you. If you were trespassing, taking more than your fair share, then that would be unforgivable and that wouldn't be a sound educational argument.

Yes, I understand.....

What I'm worried about is not that P.Educationalists are so committed, because they are, but they are allowing themselves to be exploited by such Heads as this.

I think it is an absolute crying shame that the upper bands of kids in here, it's automatically academic work that they do, now if there is the slightest conflict between an academic subject and P.E. then P.E. loses out every time. Some lads had the opportunity to represent the county and it meant them missing one lesson and the boss wouldn't let them go.

Now you are not really trespassing, for it's for that child's benefit to open his experience up to get a dignity of self respect, a personal identity, you could bring all the educational arguments and I would take him on that issue and I would win.

Yes, you probably would, but the thing is, for that particular situation he said, "they aren't going"...Now you can't do anything - you can't say, "I want them to go."

No, you can't at that stage: I conclude that, we ought to be looking at how we get change dictatorship kind of Headmasters, 'cos they are a thing of the past and if they're not, they ought to be, by democratic discourse. Now if those Education Committee people knew precisely what was going on in this school, they would move. You look sceptical about this.

Yes, I do because I mean.....at that level of education, the people you have to appeal to, it's a case of the old boys brigade.

Alright, let's....so you're sceptical of local government in that respect.

Oh definitely.

End of Recording.

Follow-up Comments

- (1) Since we last talked I have managed to work this problem out in that I am now working 4 dinner times out of 5 which does not make me feel as guilty. A new situation has developed on the extra curricular activities on Saturday. It now looks as if I won't receive any financial help from the school or County to enable me to travel down on a Saturday, so this could create real difficulties for me!!! What do you do when it becomes financially difficult for you to have extra-curricular activities on a Saturday?.....because of the expense involved in travel?
- (2) The problems of facilities has turned out to be one of the more immediate and real problems at this school. Since we last met the weather has deteriorated and when we split the indoor

facilities on a $\frac{1}{2}$ term basis the problems are only now becoming apparent. The lack of suitable and adequate facilities leads to a real reduction in the type and standard of the Physical Education given. I should like to talk to you again about this one.

- (3) It appears from reading the last few pages that you were doing more talking than I was. Which leads me to conclude that this area of 'being more militant' in trying to achieve your professional goals is one of your main interests?
- (4) I think that another meeting might be beneficial for you or that you may be about to assess how much I have been tarnished since we last met by the school situation.

When did you start here?

September so this is my probationary year.

Are you doing just P.E. or P.E. with some other subject?

I am just doing P.E. for this year.

Is that the way that you want it or would you rather like to have another subject?

Oh I love it, just doing P.E. I wouldn't mind teaching another subject but I'd rather be totally involved in P.E. and give everything to it rather than think, "Oh I've got gym next, oh no I've got Biology after that," and then the gym gets second place because the Biology needs attention because I'm not in to Biology. That's why I didn't like the idea of having a second subject.

Did you have to take a second subject at College?

Oh yes we had to take a second subject, it was compulsory. You must take a second subject or you don't stand much of a chance of getting a job.

Did you do Biology?

I wanted to do Biology but then I had to do Art because they couldn't fit me in on the Biology course. So I am trained to teach Art but I would rather teach Biology because I know more about it. I think sometimes it is a farce in that sense. I mean they fit you in where they can, half the time the lecturers are so boring you don't learn anything because you are not interested. Then, because you have attended so many lectures and you've passed a little bit of theory, on it you can teach it. When I came for my interview I made it quite clear, I was surprised I got the job because it was my first interview and I thought, "well it's experience and all the places I've wanted to teach - not that I didn't want to teach here - I applied for another school in

Hucklebrough and I didn't get an interview and this was my first interview and I came here and I was sat there and there was two girls from I.M. Marsh which is the college, one had been left a year and still hadn't found a job so that was me more depressed and there was two girls, I think one was from Battle Cross, I'm not sure, I couldn't remember her name.

There was a lot for the short-list then?

And there was another girl I think from Durham. I'm not sure, there was the four of them and I was late arriving because I had come from (Town stated).

How many were there for interview then?

There was five of us. Two from I.M. Marsh, one from Battle Cross, one from City College and myself. They were all nattering away and I felt really out of it. The Headmaster walked in and he said, "I don't like P.E. but unfortunately we have to teach it in the school and the only question I am going to ask you is "How would you organise your classroom?" and I sat there and thought, "we have come for P.E. haven't we?"

The present Head said that?

Yes. Well we found out later on he was a right joker.

You wouldn't know that at the time though?

No we didn't. Classrooms - and I thought...then he said, "I know you're here for P.E. but I want to know how you would organise your classroom, so we all sat there thinking of the answers and I thought, "blow it, I've only come here for the experience." I went in, I was the last one in and everybody had been in for about 20 minutes and they all came out... "Oh God that was terrible", "what did you say for classroom one?" She said, "I couldn't think, I didn't know what to say," so I thought, "well I'm just going to ask him what he means"

so I went in there and they asked the questions and I answered and, you know, what aspects of gym would you teach to first years? What would you do with 5th years?

Who was in at the interview?

There was Mrs. Shearer, Miss Stanhope, the Head Mistress, P.E. Adviser (woman) and the Headmaster. And they were throwing questions left, right and centre. You know, how they all spread out to put you off, so you don't know who to look at. And they were asking me and I was just answering, I thought, "No I won't read up because it's no use telling a pack of lies because you usually get found out." It's all right saying give them the educational value of this and that. If you don't believe in it don't say it. Just say what you believe in. So I was sat there, I was completely relaxed because I was only there for the experience. I was answering the questions then the Headmaster, "Right how would you organise your classroom situation?" I said, "Well what do you mean?" "Seating arrangements or actual context?" "Ah good," he said, smiling at me, he said, "both". So then I had another fidget in my seat and then I just came out with.... I can't even remember what I said now. I said the context would be something like P.E. where you do your warm up, then you do your movement training where you try to teach them something and then you gradually get to the aim of the whole lesson and then afterwards for the next lesson any warm up would be revision of what you had done last week to see how much they had actually taken in. "Great", he said, "Fine". So I went back and sat down in the room and I put my bag down and just sat there, talking to the Deputy Headmaster - we were in his room. He had a girl at (town) his daughter. My degree ceremony was on the Saturday and this was the Thursday and he was going down on the Friday for hers, so he was saying, "I'll give you a lift home." Well I wanted to be back that night so I said, "No thank you". Then the Headmaster walked in and he said, "Well it's been very close" - they were half an hour deciding - and I was sat there just looking at the other girls to see which one would get it, and he said, "I would just like to ask Miss Thames to come with me," and I sort of looked at these four girls, and I said, "me" and he said, "yes!" So I grabbed my bag and I

thought funny. You know they are going to tell you one by one that you havn't got the job, being nice about it. So I went into his room again and they all congratulated me and said, "Would you like the job?" I said, "Oh please." I was quite surprised, I phoned back to (town) and they said, "Have you got it?" I said, "Yes." It was a complete surprise, it was the nicest surprise of my life.

At that time, coming into Hucklebrough and Gargrave you wouldn't have chosen Gargrave would you? Of the schools that you knew of.

Well I didn't know any of the schools in Hucklebrough you see. I only know about 2 or 3 in Laithes and half of them by reputation. I didn't know anything about this school. All I knew when we walked round that it had good facilities and I thought, "good," 'cos when you've got good facilities you've got room to expand and build up on poor teams you've got the facilities to make them better and inside yourself you want to make them better so you've got the enthusiasm to do it.

When you say you got to know the Laithes Schools by reputation, do you know the other schools in Hucklebrough by reputation?

Well only now.

Because you've only been here about what...10 weeks is it? But nonetheless you are getting certain messages through, you begin to.....

Oh yes. I mean you hear the kids. If you take the kids to Callaly for a hockey match. Now I applied for a job at Callaly and I didn't get an interview and I thought "it must be a really good school if I didn't get an interview." I was amazed, I stood there and said, "Thank God for that!" I looked around and as soon as I walked in got bad vibes and I didn't like it at all. And the kids said, "Oh they are really rough." Well when I was umpiring a match I had to tell two of Callaly girls to keep their mouths closed otherwise I'd have to send them off because they were really mouthy. My girls just don't do that. I make sure, I say to them "if you want to say something, say it to me," I

don't want anyone saying it in front of any other teacher or any other girl from another school because you'll get yourselves a bad name.

So you've got the impression that Callaly is a pretty rough school by comparison with Gargrave. What impressions have you got of the other schools?

Yes. Well I think I've only been to Bamburgh and that was at the..... so I've not been to the school. That seems on a par and Dovedale seemed on the same par really.

What do you mean by on a par?

Well, level. They don't sort of.....I look upon Gargrave as being quite a good school and the kids, they're not bad, you get the odd one or two but you expect that, and I think the same about Dovedale, not bad, you probably have the same one or two in a class that can be awkward, I think the same with Bamburgh.

I'm trying to understand the relationship...it seems to me that Gargrave is in not an easy district of Hucklebrough, it must have a predominance of.....

It's got a 50-50 catchment area. I only learnt that the other day, I overheard it in the staffroom.

So it has a lower class element and an upper class? It's got a fairly broad spectrum.

Yes 50-50

Does that make teaching difficult for you?

Well no, because most people get the impression because there are kids from a lower class area, they are rough and ready which is wrong, you have more trouble - this is a good point - you have more

trouble with a bright kid than you would do with a lower class kid who is a bit thick.

Is that just your skill or is that true throughout the school?

I have talked to quite a few people who believe that, I mean most people who look at a kid and see he's not very well dressed, they think, "Ah, they're thick," which is wrong. But with most people it's just association and it depends where you have been for your T.P. as to whether you know better or not or what you've been taught at College, and I mean the lecturers haven't got a clue in my sense, what actually goes on in a school, that's why I think it's very good - this idea because I went out to a school in my first year and we had our T.P. straight away, I think I'd only been there for about 5 weeks and we had three weeks T.P. and I went to one of the roughest schools in (town). Now, this is a paradise compared to them, absolutely.

So you've got some way of measuring it?

Oh yes, we went to Queensbury and I was absolutely dreading it - you always do, your first T.P. you're all butterflies, you don't know what to do. You usually have your schemes thrown back at you and say, "look it up. Look it up" which is a load of rubbish. I mean it's all right me....I can get a book, write down my scheme and put every piece of knowledge that's in that book on that piece of paper to get it passed if I wanted to. But that's no good because you don't know it. It's alright giving that to a lecturer and they say, "Oh great, you are doing well." But if it's not in your head it's no good putting it down. And no matter what the lecturers say, it's so easy for someone to just go and read or put it down, and I mean that's what everyone does, I've done it myself. I admit it because if you start thinking, I've got three days to go and I haven't got my scheme passed. I can't do my lesson plans. You read it out of a book. You give it to her and then when you get half way through doing your lesson plans you realise you don't know what you're talking about. And it's wrong and the lecturers have got so many people and they can't give you all the time that you need and they say, "Go and look it up". Which is still wrong because you're no wiser and you go out to a school and you sit

there and your first T.P....you sit and you've got half an hour before the next lesson. You glare at your piece of paper and you're thinking, warm up...and it's hopeless what you have to learn is when you go in there and teach you don't teach what's down on your piece of paper you teach what that class needs to know and so your first lesson is always do the basics with them, find out what they know, what they don't know and then after that you can put down in your observation - which I think is very very important - it's alright me saying, right, observations - I've had swimming all morning, now if I don't make a mental note, which I have learnt to do now. When I was on T.P. I had to sit there, you've got 10 minutes or maybe you've got single lessons one straight after the other - it's hopeless - you sit there and you think, "now half of them can do this, half of them can do that." Well if you've got to run to the next lesson you haven't got time to do that you've got to learn to make a mental note. So I think this morning, first two, they were good, they were alright, they were fine, they need a lot more done on the front crawl stroke improvement. The last lesson, terrible, they haven't a clue. Half of them have got a bias towards dolphin kick half of them have got screw kick breast stroke, for front crawl kick, and I know that now because I'm used to making mental notes.

Are these first years?

Second and first years. You have got to learn to make a mental note, so when I went to Queensbury I sat there, tried to learn that lesson plan inside out. It just wasn't on. I mean you've got a lesson plan. What, if you take single lessons and you've got eight to learn in a day. You're hopeless, no wonder students come back like this and cry after T.P. What they want to do is just go in, assess the situation. It's alright me saying that because I've done it for three years in different blocks. And now I'm doing it as a teacher. But I think if lecturers would only say to them, instead of having to have all this load of garbage down on a piece of paper, they should have it in their heads and then go in and teach it. Not taking lesson plans in sit them on there and teach gym and think, "Ah yes, next we'll do this. I mean you are not a teacher if you have to do that. I understand you have

to do it in your first T.P. until you get used to it. Even on my first T.P. I used to say, "Ah, I've got rounders now, yes we'll do hitting, hitting the ball." Took them out, totally unprofessional, took them out they couldn't hit a ball, they could not watch the ball onto the bat, they had no co-ordination - hand-eye co-ordination, none at all. So I thought, "right, put the bats down" and we started just throwing the ball. They got used to the ball, they got used to the ball, they got their eye on it, picked up the bats and my lesson plan just got thrown out the window. And I said to them, "right, see this ball here, this little ball, you're going to hate that ball, you are going to hit it as hard as you can," so we went out there - swipe - they were still missing it. So I turned round to them and said, "right, think of somebody you don't like," of course they all come out with teachers names including my own, which I took no notice of. I said, "right, you are going to bowl the ball to her and you will shout out whose head it is and you're going to hit it." Do you know, they could hit a ball further than I could after that. And it was totally unprofessional. But at least it got results. Now I sat there in the staffroom and I was panicking in case one of the kids had repeated what I had done with them because it was totally unprofessional. I could walk into the staff room and say to somebody, "Oh, the kids love you." Well you can't do that.

But you have worked out your own little philosophy in a sense now, your own little techniques.

Yes, I think I even had that worked out before I even got into my third year T.P.

Are you enjoying this job?

Oh I love this job.

You are hooked on it?

Yes.

If you were offered a job at any of the other schools you would not want to take it?

No. I'd prefer to stay, no matter which school I got, well of course it depends whether you like it or not, I would have preferred to stay in that school for about five years so that when I do eventually move it would be for a Scale 2 or a 3. You know, not move to another Scale 1 because it's a waste of time, you might as well get settled, gain some points while you're here, and while the kids know you and you know the kids you can do something with them. Because you can't do anything with kids you don't know. I think the sooner you get to know the kids that you've got to take, the better.

The Headmaster must have given you a wrong impression when you first came here that he didn't like P.E. True or False?

Well I didn't know that that impression was false till the other week.

It is a false one then!

Yes. Paula said to me, "Oh the Headmaster loves P.E." I said, "that's not what he told me," she said, "Oh do you believe him?" You know, this was how I got to know that he was a right joker. She said, "Oh we are his favourite department." "Oh are we? Good!"

Do you think that's true?

Well I haven't seen it proved, put it that way, and I haven't seen it.... I have had no reason to say that apart from just repeating it from Paula. I don't really think so, I mean.....

When you first join a team, you have to look at the strengths of other people and see where your own role fits in so you are working as a team member. Are you beginning to build up a sort of role now doing something different from the others?

No because I was brought in as a hockey/games teacher which was what I wanted to do and I'm not fussy on teaching gym, I mean I'm qualified to teach and I know how to teach it and I know how to look at things and.....

Do you have to teach gym here?

Well I prefer to teach gym, simply because I can't sort of say to them, right, I don't want to take gym, I don't want to take dance, I'll leave the movement to you, which the other two prefer movement side. But you see Nicola, the head of Department doesn't like games...Well I'm not saying she prefers to teach gym and dance, but she's got to keep her hand in, it's no good saying, "Oh I don't like them I'll just take this" because in two years or maybe three when you have to take anything, you haven't done it for so long. It was like Nicola, this term, she started taking hockey. She'd not taught it for over a year and she turned round and said to me, "Here, have you got some practices I can do with my kids?" She was actually asking me you know. And I thought, "Well, you have really boosted my confidence." You know for a Head of Department to turn round and ask a person...you know..."can you give me any ideas what I can do with the kids because they've got this problem." And I even turn round and give her my views. And then she'll say, "Oh well, I would have thought it better to do this." I said, "Oh well there you are, you've got the choice of two. Try one, if it doesn't work, try the other." It's the same when you've got disciplinary problems. Now, this takes me back to when I was at college. We had Miss (Named), she was Head of P.E. she had been there...oh we used to say since it had been built, firm beliefs. She was gym, movement and that. You had to walk in like this, stick to the rules, old fashioned....well...not old fashioned...well I suppose it was really for us. She failed all my rounders lesson plans and schemes and whatever, and I used to have to go in and put a scheme down in front of her and it got to the stage where I would be going to a third year to do me a scheme. They'd do me a scheme, and she'd still fail it, and they'd just had theirs passed, you know. She didn't like me, I found out later on and I went back and I gave her the scheme

and she said, "where's the last one?" I said, "In the bin, it's got red ink all over it." "Well how do I know you just haven't copied this one off that one?" I said "Would I be so stupid if you marked that all wrong, I'm not going to put it down again so you mark it wrong again." So we ended up having this big argument - went through me like a dose of salts. In the end I just got up and walked out. Which she didn't like. Well I wasn't going to sit there and take all this abuse from her, when I thought she was in the wrong. She thought I was in the wrong. There was just no way we could see eye to eye. So I thought, I'm not sitting here to get upset so I walked out and nothing was said about it. I wasn't reported or anything like that and I went back the next day, rapped on the door and walked in and she said, "Oh hello Edna" I said "I've brought my scheme." I had my scheme written down and I had brought the one I had taken to her yesterday. And I said, "there's yesterdays," straightened it out and I said, "there's the one that was in the bin." There you are. No problems. After that I had no problem with her and I think it was the fact that I got up and walked out that she respected me more. I wasn't just some other little kid, you know. She realised I was actually a grown up person. And I wasn't going to shout back at her because I looked up to her. It wasn't my place. But there again I wasn't going to sit there and take it. Because I would have said something which I would have regretted. So I thought, the best thing to do is just go. So I went. And I had to go back to her and say, "someone swore at me today what have I to do?" "Someone what?" "Someone swore at me today." One of the children. "What year was she in?" "2nd year". "2nd years, they don't swear, you must have heard it wrong." I said "No Miss (name) I didn't hear it wrong." "Well, what did she say?" So she told me to repeat it. So I did. She told me to F. off. So she said to me, "What's that?" I said, "a very low form of abuse Miss (named)". "It isn't taken very nicely." I said "It's like telling someone to B. Off only it's a bit worse." Do you mind. Well what can you do? I mean you don't say to them you can't shout at them you just draw down to their level so I said, "What do you do?" She hadn't got a clue. So I thought, Oh I'll go and ask someone else. They didn't know what to do. So I thought what am I going to do? Anyway the next day, the same kid and Miss C., another lecturer came into see the lesson, it was the first time someone had come in to see me. I was petrified. I had Tennis and I had 20 odd kids,

no I had 30 odd kids, a large group, I had five tennis courts. I could just manage 6 a court. I had 20 odd balls, so the balls were alright. What had happened, after break we went down, got the kids changed, sent them out with the racquet, went to take a racquet for myself, all broken. Well I didn't have a racquet of my own which we were always taught, take your own equipment in so that when you demonstrate you don't have to take a private child for whatever it is. So I hadn't got one, so I thought, "I'll borrow one not thinking that Miss C. would come in. I went to the equipment room - no balls. I went chasing all round the area, the kids were out by this time sort of wrapping tennis racquets round each others necks while I was rooting for these tennis balls. I found a bucket of tennis balls with about half of them there, went running over, they were building new house blocks I had to go scrambling over the rubble, the bucket of balls fell, I was down on my hands and knees picking this bucket up, by this time I was muttering on and cursing away, picking up these tennis balls and you know when you see these pictures, you see these feet and you go like that, it was just like that, Miss C. she just stood there, I was just getting these balls and I looked at these shoes and I went...." "Good morning Miss C." I grabbed all the balls and by this time I was really petrified. She said, "Uh, a bit late Miss Thames". I said, "I'm sorry I couldn't find....." "Well you are supposed to have it all ready you know." I said someone took them...well you can't argue with a lecturer there's just no way you're right, so I went scooting over blowing my whistle about 500 times to get the kids in, you know if they weren't tangled round the nets they were still thumping each other it was really rough. I started them off on this practice, just observation. Backwards and forwards over the net, if they could, so there was this swearing going on in the background. Absolutely disgusted she was. Never heard anything like it. I said, "I told you they swore at me." "You're just imagining it." Only because it was back on them then to tell me how to cope. They didn't know. So off I went, I was demonstrating. Fortunately I had one girl who was left handed. Quick as a flash, "Any-one left handed?" One girl. I said, "Right, can you stand up", took a racquet, demonstrated forehand, right, dropped the ball, had them up practicing against the net, forehand stroke, they were all practicing that, I went back, took her

by the left hand and that's one thing only practice makes perfect, if you are right handed, you know, you've got to learn to demonstrate correctly on the left hand side. Well fortunately I learned how to play squash with my left hand because I had broken my right wrist. So I thought, swap over. So the kid, fine, she caught on straight away. She was great. Miss C. thought it was great, group teaching, individual teaching all in together girls. So the lesson was going fine, I thought it's made up for my bad start. Half way through turned round, Clonk, right across someone's head. I said, "what did you do that for?" "I don't like her!" "Well just because I don't like you doesn't mean I rattle you round the head with a tennis racquet." "Oh F.off". "I beg your pardon?" She started walking around, "Oh F.Off." And I just lost my temper completely, rammed her up against the tennis net and said, "You say that to me once more" I said, "and you'll be off these premises before your feet can touch the ground and I'll be outside there because I'm not allowed to in here and I'll bray you so hard you'll never forget it." And I turned like this and let go of this kid and she dropped about 2 feet and I thought, "Oh God no". I was so angry. I had lifted her up like that and dropped her two feet. And she was shaking like a leaf. I said "pick that racquet up and play!" Miss C. never said a word. "Superb lesson" she said, "kids well controlled." And that was it. She didn't see or she turned a blind eye on purpose because she didn't know how to cope. It was the same thing when I had a volleyball lesson in gale force winds outside with 20 kids and one volleyball court and four/five volleyballs. It was disastrous. It should never have been done. What happened, my lecturer came in, Miss S. "I want to see you...." I said, "Miss S. it is impossible to go out there in gale force winds with a light ball and teach thirty odd kids in groups of 6 with one volleyball each how to do, you know, just digging, that's all.....no way." She said, "Well I want to see it." She made me go out. It had been raining. The grass was slippery. The markings were all over the place. They had just done a cricket pitch on the far side of the field. The girls insisted on running off as soon as I turned my back playing football on the cricket

pitch with the volleyball. In the end I sat them down for half an hour on wet grass just to control them. Never got to teach them. To control them I had to sit them down in front of me on wet grass because I wasn't allowed to go in. There wasn't enough facilities. My lecturer wanted to see the lesson. Half of them don't know, they don't understand. It's been so long since they've actually taught that they haven't got a clue what goes on in schools now.

You have got a bad opinion of us haven't you?

Well no. I mean lecturers have been very helpful when I've had problems, I always get the impression they don't know what they are talking about. Especially in a school situation because it's been that long since they have been in a school that they still think the kids go around saying, "Yes miss, no miss, three bags full miss." And they never swear, they don't do anything wrong, they always hand their work in on time. It's wrong. Anyway this Miss S. at the end of the lesson I took them in, let them in 10 minutes early, sat them in the changing room as they could get properly dried. I went up to her and I said, "Well, what did you think of my lesson?" "Well, you didn't exactly take a lesson did you?" I said, "And whose fault was that?" "Well", she said, "things were a bit against you weren't they?" I said, "Oh I am really pleased you see it that way, because I feel absolutely deflated. It hasn't done me any good, It hasn't done the kids any good to come and sit out here and make a mockery of the volleyball lesson. When it comes to the next time I teach volleyball we'll remember this and we'll just do it again," so she said to me, "Do you know, before you sat them down I was going to walk off." I said, "Why?" She said, "Because I was scared that you would leave me with them, I thought you were going to get upset and walk off and leave them with me." So I said, "Why would I do that?" She said, "Well I'm just b...y glad you didn't because I wouldn't have been able to cope with them." And she walked off. That summed it up for me. The lecturers can't cope but they expect you to. But they can't tell you how to cope. They don't know. I mean in other subjects they have been very good. And in some, especially in disciplinary matters they just don't know.

In disciplinary matters there are issues that I don't think anybody has got the answers to. It's a matter of survival in a particular situation so that if somebody tells you to F.Off say today, that's a situation you've got to work on in that day, it'll be different with a different set of girls, a different context, it's a different solution and only experience gradually builds that up, but nonetheless I think that it's not even discussed and it's not even swept under the carpet too often. I'm bound to agree with you. What are the alternatives, even if you look at the alternatives.

We were only really talking...don't come down to their level, never swear back at them, that's the only thing we were taught.

Even that may be wrong because it seems to me that the thing that you did to show a human reaction to a situation might have been the right answer in that situation.

Yes, it might not work another time the kid would probably say, "right, go on then, lets go."

And in another situation, you might totally ignore it.

We have got one girl, she shouldn't really be here, so I've been told, she either joins in with the lesson or makes a fuss so you give her attention so I sort of take her aside and say, "just do this for me." And she reacts to me because I show her....But other times I can't be bothered with her, and it's a shame to say it, but you just have so much pressure and so much time and you've got half a dozen kids who'll swear at you before they'll look at you and then you've got Patsy. "Patsy, will you just do as everyone else does please." One Headmaster at my last T.P. school, we all had a discussion half way through and he turned round and said to me, "What would you do if you had an awkward girl in your lesson?" I said, "Awkward in what sense? She won't do it or she likes to do what she wants to do or what?" He said, "Well put it this way, what if something went wrong in your lesson, how would you deal with it?" "In what way?" I said. "Well I can't really give you an actual situation." Because I couldn't think of one. So I said to him, "Well

look, you try one method if that doesn't work you've got to try another method and if that doesn't work you've got to try something else." I think students have got to learn this. You can't turn round and say to one kid, "don't swear, it's not very ladylike." It might work, you come to the next kid, swears at you, "don't swear it's not very ladylike," "I don't care," and that's the reaction you get, so you've got to learn to get under your belt, under your scap, so many different ways of reacting to so many different things, and you don't get that without experience.

That's absolutely true. It's not a bad idea to rehearse some of them is it?

It's not, but I mean you can never sort of say, "right, you're going to say this, you're going to say that because this is what happens." You can't, there are so many variables.

End of Recording

No Follow-up comments

Is your husband a teacher?

No. Thank goodness. He works in a bank. My sisters and my mother are all teachers. I am the only one who is secondary they are all junior.

When you applied for the job here were you pleased to get the job?

Yes, oh yes definitely.

Did you know the school by reputation before you applied?

No I didn't know it existed at all.

It was just a Hucklebrough school somewhere near....

I had no idea where it was. I went to the library to find out where it was. I never knew it existed. Even though I lived in Laithes. We played Eltermere at Hockey so I knew they existed, but none of the others. We had no contact with them.

Now that you've been here a year is that long enough to get to know the various reputations of the schools? Of the seven comprehensive schools. By comparison with the reputations of the others where do you place Gargrave?

I would say sort of second or third from the bottom. But I wouldn't say that is necessarily correct. This is how other people.....

That's right, you are differentiating between what other people think it is and what you know it to be.

I would say it was a couple of places higher.

When you say a couple of places it looks as though you have a rank order.

Well I was thinking of the seven, yes.

What is it that gives them that rank order?

I think its something to do with catchment areas. We have got poor exam results here, but you see I don't teach an exam subject. Well thats a lie I do, I teach Biology as a sort of side line, so perhaps its a bit different but looking P.E. wise, Netball, we've got strong teams but they vary from year to year, Hockey sort of average, Gym I think we've got a good group this year. But it varies.

What are the things that excite you about your job? Is there any part of your job that's exciting?

Well I find if any of the girls whatever they're doing, succeed in doing something they can't do, and that's marvellous. Something that they haven't been able to do previously and if they get enjoyment out of it.

So teaching swimming is satisfactory to you? You can actually see the results.

So is dance if they enjoy it. If I can see that they are enjoying it, that's an important thing for me. I like them to enjoy it.

So for you, the enjoyment is top?

Yes. Followed very closely by ability to do the skills, have some success. Because I think kids need this even though it might be very basic, they learn how to dribble a ball or one girl, the other week, she's a second year, this is her second year of swimming, she just learnt to dive. The other week, she was utterly thrilled with it and I felt that was what I was there for. To give them, some of them specially, need that bit of success and enjoyment I think is very important.

Is your morale high now? Having come into the school and sustained it for a year.

It's higher than it was last year because I had a bad year. Because I

didn't get on with the other probationer who started with me. I used to be quite quiet, not very sure of myself at all and she was exactly the opposite, and she considered whatever she did was right and she was brilliant.

So there were two probationers in this department?

Yes, and then Nicola was head of department. And the other probationer used to say how good she was at everything. The others will probably say this if it comes up. And it got me down. I really began to question whether I could teach at all, even though I got a good report at the end of the year. I mean I knew I could but.....she was just so dominant I just went into myself and then when I found out she was leaving everyone said how I'd changed. Then when she left altogether they were saying how happy I was and lively and now I'm a lot more confident.

It's the emotion isn't it? Rationally you probably knew that you were doing a good job but the emotional effect of this over-dominant person suppressed you and inhibited you.

Yes. Completely.

So that was your number one problem last year - this other person.

A lot of people knew that in the P.E. department.

Could they do anything about it? It seems to me a very important aspect of inter-personal relationships. Did you ever feel, "Christ, I wish somebody knew about it and could somebody help me?" Did you feel that anybody could have helped?

Well they did up to a point. Certain people did have words with her, telling her not necessarily keep away from me but sort of watch your attitude and you know she used to say, "Well I do all the work in this school and you don't do anything and I get the results and you don't"

and they used to sort of turn round and say, "Look cool it, fair enough she could get results. That's how it happens she had two good teams."

A disastrous situation though isn't it?

I would hate to think what it would be like with her as Head of Dept.

The women see themselves very independent of the men. It's not one P.E. dept. its two P.E. depts.

Well yes, simply because we don't have joint lessons. We have a sixth form and I'm not down there neither is Edna. So we virtually don't see each other unless its sort of they've got the basketballs and we need them. But we tend to have our own things.

She is also very self confident.

Edna, not as much. Nothing like. She is but nothing like Debbie. She was.....oh, 90 times worse.

Where has she gone?

To a school in Herts. She is now trying to come back up here and with Nicola leaving there is a head of department going but she won't get it. I don't think I will either but.....

No but the thing that would be if she even came into the school

If she came, I'd go.

Would you have done something that you didn't do or did you do something that you wouldn't have done without her being there or was it just a big shatter? Pinpoint the effect on you 'in action'

I did something that I wanted done without her being there, say like if she said, "Oh, we'll do such and such today", I tended to say yes instead of arguing the point with her, or if we were doing something she would

say, "We'll do it this way" and I'm saying, "Well I didn't..." and she was right so I used to sort of think, "Oh well, I'll keep quiet."

It was a long time - a year, then.

Yes, it wasn't so bad to begin with, it was mostly the second and third terms, second especially. My husband used to complain when I went home and.....

So just right now, half way through this first term, you must be feeling really buoyant?

Well I reckon I'm just about right now. I wouldn't say I was over-confident because it's not me, but I think I know where I am and what I'm capable of and what I'm not capable of. I have never been a really confident person, but I'm quite happy at the moment. And because I've had a years experience I'm sort of over Edna in a way, especially as Nicola's away the first week she was in. So I was Head of Department for that week so Edna always comes and asks me what to do.

What are relationships between you and Mrs. Shearer like?

Actually I hardly see her. She teaches 8 lessons of Child Care. I teach 8 lessons of biology. Then we both have frees and she's got a Head of Year time. So I think it's about 4 lessons a week but we get on very well.

Edna does entirely P.E. but you do about quarter of your timetable and so does Nicola. Of your timetable as it is now would you like changes in it or are you happy with it as it is?

I'd like changes in it. I would do less Biology. I'd like to do some, but not eight lessons a week. I do 4th and 5th year you see, so it's 'O' level, C.S.E., and half my timetable is 4th and 5th years. Well I like the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year, because I feel that you can really teach them something, and yet when I think of the classes I've got I wouldn't

like to swap some of them. So maybe I'd like to get to know the first years so that I can name all first years in the school and I only have two lessons of first years a week which isn't much. I suppose I'd only have three you know it would mean I'd see more of them.

From your point of view and the things that you've had to teach, have the facilities been adequate?

Swimming's fine. Dance is fine, Gym is fine. Sports Hall's smashing. Netball, I think we could do with another court really, it's a bit awkward really, it's on a car park is just next to it and you have to spend half the time shifting cars at the moment - its usually the peripatetic people rather than the staff. But we've got loads of equipment, that's no bother, basketball's no bother, trampolining - we've got loads of trampolines, badminton's no bother.

So the equipment isn't a problem. The equipment favours you. Time that you see the pupils!

Two doubles a week, 2 hours and 20 minutes. 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th years.

You get 4th years - two doubles?

Yes, and the 5th years, they have a double and a single. It would be two doubles but so I see them all quite a lot.

Who lays down what you should teach? If you felt that you were given a particular aspect of P.E. to teach, say gymnastics or dance or netball, any of the whole range of physical activities, and you said, with this Class I, professionally, think that is unsuitable, would you have the autonomy to change it?

Well, I would go to Nicola and see what she said, really.

I take it that somewhere there is a master plan - so many weeks gym, so many weeks dance, and who created that master plan?

I presume Howard and Nicola did a few years ago. It was certainly like that when I came here. There's a scheme of work set out.

So you're given a programme, a sort of.....

I'm given classes.

So you're given classes and you're told that from Sept. to Dec. or something you've to do.....

I'll be doing Netball and then Hockey after that, with such and such a class.

Now, you have seen that operate for a year, are there any changes that you did make? In that first year.

No I just went along with it.

Are there any changes that you've made this year?

No.

What I know of you now, you are a fairly reflective person, therefore you will be looking at it and saying, it could be improved. Where would you make the improvements?

Well, I would give more swimming to the kids because we don't swim in the summer, we've got a swimming pool over there and I think.....

You would sustain the swimming?

Especially for the first and second years so that they build it up. We don't really do tennis, we could do with doing tennis, that's lack of courts again and the equipment is not that hot for tennis. I think we do too much rounders, a double lesson a week on a.....by the time you've done first year to fifth years then you've done double rounders for five years all through the summer. It gets very static and boring.

What would you substitute. I'm wondering why they're doing rounders....
where does the rounders lead them? That's baby-minding.

You see what we do is we give options so they often have a tennis option to do. But rounders is very limiting and we have a double of that....

So they are likely to be playing rounders in 4th year and 5th year are they?

Oh yes. Yes, that's one of their options.

Some choose it then?

Oh yes. Well they don't like athletics.

They are choosing out of something.

Usually, unless they do something like javelin, they just take the easy... but that's what I would change.

Where's that going to lead them when they've left school? Very very few women play rounders for fun do they, after leaving school

Tennis is a different matter, we're limited in tennis, though, we've only got two courts, we've got enough balls but I mean, if you've got a full class from lower down the school, they are going to have to sort of play circle tennis or...and that's it. I don't like tennis personally, but that's me, that's one of the sports I'm not so keen on but I think the rounders is a bit of a waste.

I'm looking for, in the 4th and 5th years, a carry over into adult society.

Which is what we do during the winter. We do badminton, volleyball, which they can carry on, basketball, netball. We do trampolining.

Basketball, netball and badminton are very good to carry over into adult society. Rounders is useless and I think trampoline is pretty useless.
How many of them carry on with trampolining?

Not many. They usually enjoy rounders. So you could say you could justify that because they enjoy it. I presume because of the lack of tennis things that they do it that way. You can't leave the nets up, you see, because it's senior playground.

There are no public courts anywhere near the school?

Not as far as I know, you see that would mean transport and we haven't got a school mini-bus or anything.

What are the options in this optional programme, rounders, athletics....

Tennis, really. Those three if they had tennis, if they can have tennis. It doesn't always work that they can.

That's the optional. What extra-curricula activities are going on at the moment?

Winter, there is netball teams, hockey teams, gym club, dance club, there's a drama production, hockey, rugby, football, swimming, most things.

How much are you involved in?

I do the gym club and this year I've got 2 netball teams.

That takes a lot of your time.

4 dinner times, 4 nights, I go shopping on the fifth night.

You would be here when the NAS strike hit County. Were you affected by it?

No. I continued out of choice.

Tell me your experience. What was going through your mind at that time? Was it a difficult time for you?

No.

You weren't a member of that union?

No. I was NUT and we had the choice. We were told it was up to us what we did and I chose to do.....

NUT members were allowed to follow their conscience, there wasn't a party line? NAS people were not.

They went home early.

Now that must have split the school apart.

No.

It didn't? Because there was a minority of NAS?

I don't know how many there were. It just meant that some of the classes went home early.

What happened in the P.E. Dept. It didn't touch it?

No. Not on our side.

So that particular strike didn't affect you at all?

No. We just carried on.

Were you doing 4 lunch hours and 4 evenings then?

Five. I've cut down now because I decided it was too much, it was getting on top of me. And yet I get satisfaction out of it because I see the kids. You know, they want it and they say, why can't you have a Friday. I'll say I'm having a dinner time off, and they can't appreciate this because they forget that I do gym every day.

Go through your extra-curricula for this week

I've got matches this week. This dinner time I had a netball practice,

with the third years, they've got a match tonight at home.

Each Monday you meet your third years do you?

At Dinner time! No. I've only given them a practice today instead of Wednesday. I've swapped with the others because of this match tonight. Monday dinner time I have second year netball practice, Monday night is gym club, Tuesday dinner time is gym club, Tuesday night is third year netball, Wednesday dinner time is third year netball, Wednesday night is gym club, Thursday dinner time is gym club, Thursday night is second year netball.

You've a lot of gym clubs. Is it the same set of girls?

7 girls.

And how long does your gym club go on for on Monday evening?

Only about three quarters of an hour. Tuesday, that's half an hour, which is fine because you don't need that long....then it's the same Wednesday, Thursday. They have really made a lot of progress, I'm quite pleased with them. It's been worth it, because I've got some kids doing back-flips now and all they could do virtually before was handstands, forward rolls, and they are now doing walkovers, hand-springs, head-springs off the floor, and they've increased the distance in vaulting.

So you feel the extra-curricular gym is in a very healthy state?

Well with those girls yes.

What about the gym in the curricula time?

Well, I enjoy it. Perhaps because I could do it when I was at school. I always seemed to have ideas. I haven't taught any this year yet but last year I felt I got the kids to do a lot of work - and a lot of good work.

When is gymnastics taught?

We do 8 weeks of swimming, 8 weeks of dance, 8 weeks of gym in any order. But if there is 3 of us on then we have to arrange it round. As it happens I've done dance with my 3rd, second, first years and then one lot of swimming, so I now go on to gym and do gym and swimming with.....

Have you been able to realise any of your ideals. I think that most people leave college believing passionately in something. How much of your ideals have changed? I'm exploring your ideology now. What's left to believe in, what do you believe in?

I don't know if I can answer that one. I don't even know that I had any set ideologies. It's very much as I expected it to be. My aim in life from when I was ten was to be a P.E. teacher and I've done that.

Looking last year at how the pupils had finished 11 years of schooling, and therefore 11 years of some kind of P.E., do you ever look and say, "What is it doing for them?"

Oh yes, you've got to. Some of them will get nothing out of it. 1st, 2nd and 3rd years, I think, can because even some of the un-co-ordinated ones in the 3rd year I feel I got somewhere last year. 4th and 5th year I think is a different thing altogether and the girls tend to go off P.E.

If I suggested that they ought to be scrapped, would you be very upset by that?

I think we should do it because I think it's the minority rather than the majority that don't get anything out of it.

What I find distressing is that I go through so many schools and I think of options, now there are all sorts of different interpretations of options and it seems to be a complete and total waste of time in most schools that it is a baby minding function they are given this and it reduces the teacher to a matter of giving out table tennis equipment,

badminton equipment, standing by the trampoline. Is it true of this school generally? You might teach, but at the time that the options are on is it really just a matter of getting the toys out?

No, I don't think it is, not in the girls.

So you think that my view is unfair of Gargrave?

Yes, because I think, I don't really know about Edna, but I know Nicola certainly tries and teaches, I certainly try and teach them something. It gets a bit difficult when you've got a trampoline group and a badminton group but I still try and teach the badminton group a new stroke at least every week while I've still got the trampoline group as well.

I think it's asking the impossible now, I think we can kid ourselves that we can do two, I don't think we can.

No, I don't.

Too many pupils for too few staff in options. They are sort of expecting staff to be dashing here, dashing there. Even on a good day I think it's difficult.

I can just about manage to teach badminton and a trampoline group at the same time because I can set the trampoline on to work and call the Badminton over and get them started.

And do you actually do that?

Yes. Except for the last couple of lessons where I get them into a game, they play circle badminton or they do a game so they're learning the ropes.

How far away from the trampoline are you when you go to your Badminton?

Oh I tend to stay with the trampoline or just at the side of it, I don't like to go away from it.

How can you do your Badminton whilst you've got a trampoline group?

They come up to me. Or, I set them off before the trampolines do theirs. It's difficult, but I do try and set them off and get them sorted out and then start the trampolinists. It also depends on who we've got.

Clearly you are enjoying your gym club enormously aren't you?

I'm getting somewhere with them.

You can see progress. They're enjoying it. They're making progress. The two criteria you picked out its fun, this is the thing that dominates and they are making progress. What other areas are there that may not be giving that sort of pleasure, you say, "Oh, it's Thursday again" or whatever, is there a day that you say, "Oh God!!!!" Could you describe that to me?

It is Thursday. Last lesson. It's a group of 5th years, 30 odd of them. There are two of us down there. But there was only me last year. There's one girl who is not normal and she shouldn't be in this school. She'll knock her head against a wall or jump up and down so you have to watch her permanently. Then there's a handful, and that's all it is, that say "No they're not doing the lesson".....they haven't got any kit. "Why should they do it, they've forgotten their kit", "They're not going to do this". Basically they don't want to do P.E. I had a do with them recently and they're all bringing their kit now. So they're all right. It's all the grotties together. When we have the other group on a Friday it's smashing. We have all the nice ones then. But I find it very trying.

Is it worth the battle? Now you seem to think that it is. Although its very uncomfortable and sort of the low spot of the week, you say it's still worth the struggle. What are they going to get out of it? What's the struggle worth while for? Because this will lead me to your ideology.

I think it's partly learning discipline. I think they should do, sort of do as they are told, virtually so the discipline aspect is coming into it. They shouldn't be allowed to get away with it which is what happens in a lot of cases and it happens in this school now and then. People send the kids on messages whereas I think they should do the lesson even though they don't want to.

What good is it...so I'm being ruled over, I'm being dominated, and I have to do something that I don't really like, whether it be gym, dance, rounders, or whatever. What good is that doing me?

Well, you often find that they enjoy it you know. In the end. They can't be bothered and I think they should be bothered.

There must be children here, young women, because my own experience of secondary school is that there is a certain section you can offer them anything and everything and they just do not want to know. They are tired of school. They are tired of teachers. They are tired of what's been offered. Have you got some of those kids here?

Yes.

Would you say, "Sorry mate, you've got to stay at school", or would you let him go? If you followed your real conviction. They are a trouble to most kids they're a trouble to most teachers that you could offer them any curriculum, the richest curriculum alive and they still reject it because they've gone off school

I'd say stay at school.

So you have such a belief in the educational system itself?

Well, you see I suppose I'm biased because I enjoyed school. I can't understand the kids sometimes when they come to me and say, "I don't want to do any 'O' levels or C.S.E., why should I bother". I say, "Well, it's

for your good", and they say, "Well, I'll get a job in a shop, I don't need them".

Control matters to you, doesn't it? The discipline matters. When you've got a good pupil that's promising at Netball or whatever sport, do you make them play for the school or not?

I don't make them, no.

Do you bring any pressure to bear on them?

A bit, yes. I've had trouble with this third year.....

Most schools are having increasing difficulty in getting pupils to play for their teams

One girl, in the end I just sort of let go, I don't want to know, but the others I said to them, they didn't turn up and they didn't come and see me and explain why so when I say them I said, right I'll see you at the practice and that's that and they turned up. Which I was quite surprised at. But the other girl, I don't want her in my team if she's going to be like that.

Are you an intensely competitive person with your teams?

No.

I find there is a sense in which competition, inter-school competition in Hucklebrough gets a bit intense, and I'm very worried by this

Especially the Netball, that's the main contention. 1st to 5th year leagues. The kids get very nasty, really nasty.

Why don't we pull out?

I've never considered it. If I find any of mine being ~~awful~~ then I'll sort of tell them off.

I bet every other teacher says that though.

They probably do, yes. I think you ~~sh~~ould have competition, perhaps its got to the state where they can't learn how to lose. If they lose, fair enough they lose, but I think some of these kids would be really upset.

I am most grateful for you giving so much time up and for being so perceptive and frank. I hope it's not been an intrusion.

No, no. Everyone knows about Debbie. I say things now and then but last year I just sort of.....I settle in first then start throwing my weight around.

It may not be that everybody will know her character because she sounds like one of these extroverts, and they deceive themselves most of the time. I'm glad you're enjoying it now, you are obviously going to have a go at the scale post.

Oh yes. The deputy head sort of said, "There's an application form". But the Head said he wouldn't consider anyone who hadn't been teaching two years, which is fair enough. Sometimes I think I am capable of doing it, sometimes I have doubts on the discipline side, that's my worry, because I think my discipline could be slightly better.

Don't you think that any good teacher is always a little bit edgy about discipline? Even the best ones in the school now.

Yes, maybe. Maybe if they are bothered about it they are perhaps wondering if they could do something better or different, looking at it another way. I must admit I've learned how to deal with the older ones, whereas I didn't know last year. Being at a Grammar School, you know, you just did as you were told. So I'm learning to deal with the

ones who turn round, virtually and swear at you. Jolly them along rather than shouting at them. And we are starting to get results. Now when Nicola goes there'll probably be Edna and I, so I've got to have the discipline. I reckon, you know, I've got it. It's not that..... there'll be one or two who are awkward. And yet I could have done with learning more in a way. I could have done with seeing other people teach, I wish we had done that at college. Fair enough you do your course but so many people have different ideas, not on how to teach it but different ways of tackling it, different practices, different methods that I can combine together. Dance is my sort of main problem because I reckon 3 years at college were wasted. Because I didn't understand it and I'm now having to go to Nicola and say, "How do I ~~do~~ this?" And because I've had the years I've learn't something this year but I was lost when I came out of college.

Many schools have chucked Dance out. It is still taught in the school.

I enjoy it. Most of the time. But I have learnt a lot that way.

Do you take Dance in each of the years?

1st to 3rd year, then.....they have eight weeks in each year, so they get through somewhere.

So every woman member of staff must teach some dance at some stage?

Oh yes.

There is no way that a member of staff could 'trade' - "Look I don't like dance, I'll do your netball....."

You could do, except I don't think any of us think it now.

Everybody takes their whack of dance or gym or.....

Well, or at least some of it. Last year I swapped one of my Dance lessons but I did the other two, in that way you have to learn, I wanted to do it

because I feel you should be able to do everything and if you don't do it, then it's chickening out of it. I think you should try.

Can I come back to the ideology?

I'll probably get home and realise what I should have said.

I don't think there is anything that you should say, I think it's just a very, very difficult area to probe. The things that might dominate your thinking it could be that...I have suggested to you that I think that it matters in the 4th and 5th years that what is done should be looking to what follows school. That could be an ideological kind of thing but it also might be that I'm related to working class kids so that I'm trying to sort of say, well what am I doing for working class kids rather than just kids. Do you identify things like that, that you care so much about that you are manoeuvring within the school?

No, I don't look at it like that.

Do you ever sort of identify with a particular group of kids in the school?

I find it easier to identify with the top group because that was sort of more my background.

It would almost be a case of.....your gym club, which is very near and dear to your heart, they will be treated differently in the class, those pupils. What kind of pupils come for gym? Are they the "nice" ones?

Yes, they are actually.

Now, what about the nasty ones. What are you doing for them?

Netball. As it happens, I've got half netball.

I'm not saying you do this deliberately at all it's just that there will be certain pupils who will be attracted to you

I suppose Hockey and Netball are more towards the working class kids should we say gym perhaps is more towards the other way I don't really think of them like that. You know, I haven't thought of them like that.

Are you a political animal at all?

No. I'm not sort of

Supposing I said, "There is a centre, and you're either right of centre or left of centre politically....."

I'd sort of go Labour way. Yes I would.

So there is a tendency for you to support State Education rather than Private Education? Therefore, the reason for this is that you're likely to be happier at Gargrave because those that are a long way right will find it very difficult to identify with Gargrave. Are you yourself very much involved with the community? For instance, do you play any sports now, or any games?

I play Netball for Markton Ladies, I do Karate, I used to play a bit squash. I don't live around here. I live at Yarmgate.

But you are involved in the Yarmgate Community are you?

Yes. I do a night school there.

What do you do there?

Well at the moment it's gymnastics but I'm going to make it games for the girls. It's just 6 till 8 on a night. Youth Club.....

Now the Netball team that you play for. How many of them are teachers?

About half of them.

Are there any girls from Woolworths or any girls from the bank or school girls?

They are either school girls or teachers or not people from Woollies and places like that.

Are you involved in the community in other ways than sport? W.I., Church?

No.

It stops there does it, after that you're a home bird?

Yes. My dad was a Minister and I had enough of it, so I went away from the Church, but now it's just sport. And either my husband and I are out every day of the week playing some sort of sport.

He is a sportsman as well is he?

Yes. I do Netball on a Sunday and Monday. Tuesday is Basketball, for him, Wednesday I go disco dancing. Thursday's Karate and I do my night-school, Friday he has a Basketball Match. Saturday either he or we both play squash.

Where do you play Squash, in Markton?

Yes, Markton Sports Centre. They have nice courts now.

Do they play squash at school?

No, the squash court's broken.

Has the school suffered very much from damage and vandalism? Disrepair and what not

Not too badly, no. We had a break-in last year some time

End of Recording

No Follow-up Comments

Did you come straight to Gargrave from college?

No. I wanted to teach in Wearport. All my friends are there. I think when you go to a town, a city or whatever, you probably like to..... you put your roots down there. I had been there for 3 years. I didn't particularly want to go home or move anywhere else so I left it and left it and I think it was the P.E. Adviser in the town at that time was (named). He again was a tremendous chap and he said, "We can't promise you anything, we would like to take every one of you", but very few of us got jobs in Wearport, and I left it and I came back to Hucklebrough and I had an interview with (P.E. Adviser).

That was straight from college wasn't it?

Yes, and I came home and got a job at (named). Not what I wanted but again I didn't know what it was like to teach in a Junior School. It was tremendous, I thoroughly enjoyed it. I had a class, you did everything with them, including P.E., games - and I must admit at the end of the time a job came up here and I thought.....

You weren't sure?

Well, that's what I went to college for. That's what I was interested in. The senior kiddies - so I thought, I must at least give it a chance or I'll be kicking myself ever after. So I came up here. At that time we had a very strict regime, run by (named headmaster). He was the Head. He was moved, let's say, when we went Comprehensive, to another school in the town. At that time, when I came.....

You were here before this building was built weren't you?

This one, no. All this section of it was built. The chap in charge then was (named P.E. teacher). Now then, he works for the C.C.P.R. stationed in City. And we came.....there was a girl in charge of P.E.

then. She has since left, and I was just doing P.E. morning, noon and night, and I'd just been married too and we used to get home at times like 6 o'clock, you know.

How long were you at the Junior School?

1 year. 1970.

So you got married and took the job on at the same time?

Yes.

One of the things that's impressed me in Hucklebrough is the amount of extra-curricula time that's been going on over the past years. It really is incredible.

Yes. When we were married we had a lovely self-contained flat. My wife used to teach next door. And it's strange, she's now sort of packed in, for the moment, I hope. The pupils I now have in the 5th year, she had as reception. When she's come to things like Disco's, she'll say, who was that? (named pupil)? I remember him when he was little. You know, and she used to say things like, "Oh, that's so-and-so. By, he was a bad 'un", and I'll say, "Well, he still is." And even from that age it's come through and they haven't changed character-wise, not really. Anyway, when we came here there was two of us and we didn't have a Head of Boys P.E. at that time when we started, both together. We started in the summer and the Head of Boys P.E. was appointed at the Christmas, so we had 3 months to sort of find ourselves. Under no pressure, not really, because the girl was very good, she sort of left us alone. So we did find ourselves. At that time we didn't have a 5th year course, but we had teams in 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th in soccer, 2 rugby teams, I'm very keen on basketball therefore we had 3 basketball teams at that time, a 2nd, 3rd and 4th year at that time, also we didn't just have leagues in soccer, we had things coming in like cups, like the Pepsi-Cola cup was coming in, this cup was coming in, all different sorts of competitions so we had.....

You're Leagues going, you're knockouts going.....

Oh yes, we had at that time, you could definitely say you would put 5 evenings a week in, from 4 till 6 o'clock, there was no question of that.

Did you enjoy that time?

Oh yes.

You wouldn't have had it any different looking back on it?

No. I thoroughly enjoyed it. To sew all of that up. You take a kiddie, and I can think of a few, but a particular group that comes to mind now in basketball. I had them from the 1st year in gym and I think..... In fact when I came from (named Junior School), the class I had, I had a 4th year class. They put me straight into the 4th year because I had done, I suppose, Teaching Practice in Senior Schools and so forth. And the 4th year class, they came with me here. They said, "I don't want to go to Gargrave, it's got a terrible name for itself", and I'd say, "Oh, you're all right because I'm going to Gargrave as well", you see. And they identified with me straight away you see. Now, I had them from 1st year here - well from 4th year in the Junior School, and that was the 1st year we had a 5th year. When I first came here. And the skills that they learned then were tremendous because you could see them coming through. And there was a time when I would play basketball with them, say in the 2nd year, when they were just learning the game and I think our P.E. teachers.....I'm teaching you this game - by I'm good at it. I think I've lost a lot of that now. But those kiddies - you could grow up with them and all of a sudden round about the 4th and 5th year, they would go with you and check the shot and this sort of thing and when you were trying something on and they would be there and they had this skill element that had developed over 4 years. And that is good. When you see them taking you on, beating you and thinking, well yes, that can't be bad. You must be doing the job. But at that time there was a lot of enjoyment for them and certainly for me. Tremendous.

You mention there the notion that Gargrave had this reputation. Was that really the case?

It was the case.

What's its reputation now?

Now. Gargrave is a good school. There are still people on, say, the private estate here, see we are more or less split in half between the Council Estate on this side and private estate on this side. Now we are the most southern comprehensive school, therefore we take more or less half and half, but this is expanding all the time, the private estate, so unless they decide to build a comprehensive school in the next 10 years on the South side, we will still continue. But when it was just opened the heads sent all their dead wood and it was in a shocking condition. It was terrible, it had a right bad name for itself, and the Headmaster (named) I think came up from Manchester and I believe through all the aggro that he had trying to get people.....He was a really good Head....but what he said went! And he wouldn't budge, you couldn't bend him. He had a stroke. I think he is now retired, he had an early retirement under the County policy, but he eventually got on top of the school. But he also had his finger on the button. I don't know how many Heads have nowadays. But he had. He knew what you were doing and when you were doing it. And if you didn't do it to his satisfaction you were on the carpet and you were nailed to the wall. I had a lot of respect for him. He had a very unfortunate attitude because he didn't consider anything, except when you were in bother he would ball you out there and then, in front of the children as well, which was bad. But everybody knew their place.

Did he appreciate what his team were doing?

No. Not P.E.

Now I feel angry about that

Well, we did. Case in point. I'll tell you a story to show you how. He used to consider.....if you do well academically at your studies during the week you will get P.E. as a reward. Now being a P.E. man, being brought up doing P.E. full-time, that annoyed me....so frustrated....because you couldn't get it across to him. Case in point; someone had written one morning, he had written on the wall out here some bad language about the Head, and he'd come in.....we used to sit round the centre table, you know, all the P.E. staff and he came in and he laced the table and he said, P.E. - Banned. We said, well why? In front of all the staff on a morning - 9 o'clock. You know he just used to burst in, P.E. is banned! He didn't mean that P.E. was banned in the school curriculum - but extra-curricula activities were banned. This happened on numerous occasions. By the break of that morning, the culprit had been found, dealt with, so he came in and he said, "O.K., it's on". Now at the same time, one of the other lads - not a P.E. man, but he helped with the basketball - he phoned up another school and said, "Sorry about this, but we can't play the match tonight because the Head said that we can't." Right, break he phoned him up, he said, "Oh Jim, the match is on." "Right" he said, "I'll expect you about quarter past four." Lunchtime something else had happened; nothing to do with the writing on the wall. Something else had happened and he did exactly the same thing again. No more P.E. This happened 3 times that day, 3 times, and at the end the lad who arranged the match on the phone just told him where to go. He used to ban people for having long hair. I remember I was taking the Senior Football Team at that time and four of them were playing for the Town. They were really good skilful players. They were filling out, they were big lads, they knew about it then. No quarter given, no quarter asked, that was the attitude. They were really good and a couple of them had long hair - well, all right, all you can do is suggest, you can't sort of say, you can suggest. He was looking at it that they were ambassadors of the school, they were representing the school,

therefore they shouldn't be so scruffy as they are. Well, I don't know, but they refused to get their hair cut. They weren't a bad type of lad. They weren't malicious. They didn't cause trouble, they kept themselves to themselves. They worked in the classroom and they worked outside. I instilled into them..... My father used to tell me, you work hard and you play hard. I think that's great. But that's what they do. I mean it's a good thing they are used to doing that. And he banned them. He stopped them for a month. This used to be happening all the time, so, appreciation - there wasn't any.

It's funny that you speak with such respect of him because in a sense he was.....

I think you had to because as far as.....

He was ruling through fear though wasn't he?

Yes. You see I suppose you've got to remember that I was a very, very Junior member of staff at that time, in fact I was warned when I first came here, by my previous Head, you know, watch (named) you know. Be careful what you did, but I have a respect for him because at that time we did lots and lots of courses with the kiddies in school, those kiddies that wanted to be on the mechanics side, say in a garage, we had a course for that, we had a forestry course, we taught them to drive, round the outside of the field we had two old banger cars and they used to pay 10p a go until the Police came and said, "Look, would you mind not teaching them to drive, because they are ripping cars off at night", so we had to stop them. But all these courses worked you know. They used to choose a course at the end of the third year and for 2 years they did it - it might be with a bias towards metalwork or woodwork and then we had the academic children who, of course, did the whole list of academic subjects.

He had a formula really to respond to the drug that he had to inherit.

Oh yes. He didn't just throw them to one side. He devised a method of getting their interest and this was before the raising of the school leaving age.

So he recognised what kind of kids he'd got in the school and got a policy that worked?

Oh yes. But he had an iron will and you had to obey what he said. But the boys P.E. department at that time.....

Now you don't have the same..... That in a sense was a big problem, getting that sort of pupil. There was the cast-offs of all the other schools

Oh yes, mind a lot of that was.....now we'd been going for about 5 or 6 years then, at the time I'm talking about now and the school had been emptied of the dead wood they had had originally.

And now you're working towards this half and half?

Yes, that's right. Of course, this area on the south side of the school has expanded greatly to what it used to be. So I'm not saying that we get all the bad kiddies from the council estate and all the good ones from over there because we don't, no way. People think that a lot of the time but we don't. But the people on the (named) estate, they still.....I've known a couple of parents move to another part of the town so their children didn't have to go to Gargrave.

That's right, I know where that's happening right now. How old are your own children?

My eldest one goes to school at Christmas so he's nearly 5.

Boy or girl?

Boy.

Where do you want him to go to school? In Hucklebrough.

In Hucklebrough? Well it doesn't arise because I don't live in Hucklebrough. I live in Markton, much to the disgust of my parents.

But you wouldn't want them to come here because you are teaching here?

No.

But as a school community you wouldn't mind it?

No.

Because you've declared that you have a faith in what's going on here.

Oh yes. I think at the same time, I am more knowledgeable than a normal parent because I would know what to expect. What a school should give. Whereas I think a lot of them go along with the stream, go along with the tide.

A number of teachers have got their kids at Fleetwith and others have declared that they want to move into the catchment area of Fleetwith to get their kids there

I know a couple of people. A member of staff at Fleetwith, obviously he must have a lot of faith in what they do at Fleetwith. I think you can get this. It must be terrible to work in a school and just totally disagree with what's going on there. Because you can't possibly do your job, to the best of your ability. I don't think so anyway.

Do you see changes go on at Gargrave? You got the stigma of former years really.

Oh yes.

Is that a true assessment on my part?

Yes.

What are the problems that really exist now because in a sense the stigma is a problem, it's an unfair problem but nonetheless it's a problem.

I get very irate when I hear people talking about Gargrave School, and I have, certainly on one occasion, butted into a particular conversation when I didn't know the particular people concerned. And I said, "Excuse me" but not exactly that they are talking out of ignorance, but they are. Or they were. All right it was accepted the way it was meant. They weren't really embarrassed. And neither was I, for butting in. But we now have liaison with the Junior Schools around and I think that's helped. Our Head of Lower School, Head of first year, goes into the Junior Schools and so forth. But we should have things like an open forum where these things can be brought out into the open and discussed. I see a lot of parents in a 5th year job now and it's tremendous because you can open their eyes, yet again have your eyes opened to their attitudes.

Are you sympathetic to the comprehensive idea anyway?

Yes, I think so. I think everybody certainly should get a fair crack of the whip. I'm sympathetic because, although when I was a pupil at (Mod. School) I was for the 2nd year, 3rd year and 4th year right through, I was top of that class, but I never got the chance to take that next leap. And in a certain way I'm quite thankful I didn't get that chance. My wife went to a Grammar School and she always says to me, that she was a little fish in a big pond, I was **exactly** the opposite.

Which must have done a lot for your self respect and your dignity and....

And confidence of course. You helped yourself and I think this is the sort of thing, depending upon your outlook when you were younger. I can now, well I think I can, I hope I can, put myself into the way that they

are thinking. And, you see, the main message is that you've got to help yourself. But I had a lot of support from my parents. When I failed the 11+ at that time, they didn't sort of turn round and say, "Uh....." you know. I was helped. No special way, my father was a Chief Petty Officer in the Navy and he came out, but I was able to just sit down and look at books and things and I was just helped in general. But this is why I can be very sympathetic with what goes on.

The story I'm getting now is that Gargrave had a tough beginning but it's beginning to work now, the comprehensive system is beginning to work here.

I can 'teach', using the experience that I've had, yes.

Your particular job involves mostly P.E. but you've also got the pastoral role of 5th year. It seems to me that pastoral people never get enough time to do the pastoral role. So that creates a problem for you because you've got to reconcile a very demanding subject with a very demanding other role, both of them sucking your time and energy. How do you reconcile that?

Well I find that teaching P.E. and doing a Pastoral job go hand in hand. Because I can identify with them anytime, they know what I am. But there is a lot of.....well you need a lot more time for pastoral work. We have in this school a bit of antagonism, unfortunately, between the pastoral side and the academic side. I think the academic people are frightened that we are standing on their toes or we are vying for power, which we're not.

This exists in most schools...and sometimes the gap is enormous.

How big is the gap here?

Well that gap is big between the pastoral staff on one hand, and just two or three people on the other hand, those two or three people being the Heads of Faculty, they don't think we are necessary. They believe

that until the word 'pastoral' was brought into education, they got along fine. Obviously the need must have been there before. But no-one was appointed to cater for that need. But there again, they, I think, are in their ivory towers, they teach. I think everybody's a pastoral teacher. But some people, they can see a commotion and I've seen it in the corridor, little fights breaking out, and they will walk around it or step over it and go. I'm finished in the classroom - I'm having my coffee now - you know, and then.....that to me is not for the betterment of the school. If they aren't here for the betterment of the school and the betterment of the kids that they teach, they shouldn't be damn well in the job.

Looking back over the time that you've been here, what is the story of the staff cohesion, the staff community now. Is it more cohesive now or was it more cohesive then? All you can do is give a general impression because you can't measure it.

Possibly more then. I think.

Was it smaller then?

Yes, slightly. We are in the fortunate position that when we went comprehensive we didn't have to amalgamate with any other school. Whereas a lot of schools not only amalgamated, but they had to amalgamate sites. In some cases those sites were half a mile or a mile away. For instance the present Bamburgh Comprehensive School in Hucklebrough. There used to be the Grammar School, the Girls High School, so you had a triangle of sites which....and even the kiddies instead of the teachers moving which I would have thought would have been easier, except for things like practical subjects, classes moved and they used to get lost in the Valley, which is like a little park. And they used to have to go looking for them. This went on for a couple of years. Fleetwith was purpose built as a comprehensive. But I think the only other school is us. We didn't have to move around so it was good. There was no change. No-one felt a change. A lot of problems did arise when we went comprehensive because everyone had to apply for his or her job and everyone else's if they wanted to. Then, in this school, certainly

for a couple of months, people lost the urge to teach because anarchy ruled. It was knives out even with friends. I remember that very, very clearly because that was bad. There must have been a better way of doing it, the staff, the kids, the school in general. Because everyone was applying for everyone else's job. If you were on a scale 1, I was going to say you didn't have anything to gain, you did, you could apply for anybody's job. That was a bad couple of months and we all had to go for interviews.

How would the N.A.S. strike affect you?

I am in the N.A.S. but I didn't like what they did as far as the

That would make life even more difficult

We couldn't do anything. We weren't allowed to do anything. Everything came to a halt.

It would tear you apart though, that.

Yes. The first thing was it tore people apart within the staff. Staff-room relationships, you know, there was a lot of arguments, between N.A.S. people and NUT, AMA. But the teaching in the school suffered obviously. Because we used to go at 3 or 2.55, and if you were teaching in a classroom it meant you packed in 5 minutes before that, you had to leave the premises at such and such a time. You couldn't do any extra-curricula activities. You couldn't even stay in a lunch hour because I.....

Is there a big NAS section in the school?

Yes, there are about 25. Nearly half. We said to them, "Look if we went into the Sports Hall and sort of locked the door, and took the kids with us, how would that..... Oh, no, you can't do that because if you were found out.....so we couldn't. So we didn't. But we certainly

suffered, academically, socially, everything suffered. They were talking about doing it again. But I hope they don't because I was seriously considering resignation.....

It takes a long time to recover. It seems to me the effects of that was to reduce, and other things that have been going on in the political area - there was a tremendous commitment to extra-curricula activities. Who am I to say that one ought to be spending that amount of time but nonetheless it was there, but there has been a decline in the amount of extra-curricula work. I think it's beginning to pull up. But whether it will pull up to what it was formerly I don't know.

We here have never talked about extra-curricula activities. Had a lot of help, you are expected. You are a P.E. man. It's your job. You don't have any marking to do. That is your job. You are supposed to spend your nights after school, your Saturday mornings after school.

And so the P.E. staff were left to get on with it by themselves?

Oh yes. When I first came here we had one chap who used to take a rugby team. He had taken it for a number of years. But he had taken it through the school and I think they were 4th years then so he took it the next year. But there again they didn't have League Fixtures. Whereas nowadays we play all the 6th form colleges and we have a Fixture every Saturday morning. We try our best to run 4 teams. The system we have these days is that either Howard is at home with two teams and I am away with two or we swap it round. But when we're at home with two teams we've got to get a referee in. There is another lad in the school who will give his Saturday mornings up. But as far as the coaching is concerned we do it, or Howard does more of it now. But even in those days when we had the Rugby teams, the soccer teams, 3 basketball teams, as well as clubs like....I'm very keen on trampolining. And we had a gym club, trampoline club, table tennis, we did it, no-one helped.

All right, I can see their commitments, maybe their wives on a Saturday morning and their families had them, but we had wives as well but we were considered - it's your job! We weren't looking for sympathy. But at the same time we were looking for recognition I think.

Was the recognition there?

No, not particularly.

Does this Head appreciate what was being done?

Oh yes. Every little success we have had since the present head has taken over, we have been in to lunch with him in his room and this sort of thing, the girls have won things like Netball, County Competitions, or Town Competitions, won a cup, Soccer cup or.....

He knows about it!

Oh yes. He is a very, very good P.R. man. He will have that phone in his hand like that - and he'll phone up the photographer - have a photo in the evening paper.

So that must lift the kids and the staff.

Oh yes, tremendously. If one person in the P.E. Dept. is successful - we are all successful, the glory isn't just put on him or her - we are all there.

He is a better man manager than the other one!

Oh yes. His attitude is totally different. They are both at extremes as far as P.E. is concerned.

I don't think I have ever met him. I've dealt with him on the phone.

He is very nice on the phone.

He will help. He has a very easy going attitude.

He has got a warmth that even goes through a telephone

If he has any extra money and we have said, you know we could do with something and he's said, I'll see what I can do and he's given us it.

The sort of thing that's coming over about you is that you are a terribly vibrant person and I think that whatever job you were doing in teaching you would probably enjoy it. You take on the challenges and so on, and the problems you would sort of recognise and solve them. But at the same time that makes you a very bad subject for me because in a sense you're so interested in what you're doing, you are so enthusiastic about what you're doing. Almost enthusiastic about the problems - it doesn't tell me what you see about the problems because you solve the problems and you forget they were problems.

You see I'm coming to the end of my P.E. career. I think so anyway. Howard and I have been together for about 6 years or 7 years now. I have no complaints whatsoever. I had my scale 2 - it all comes down to money - for quite a few years and I applied for just 2 jobs, because I'm perfectly happy here. I enjoy doing the job and in that 7 years we have never ever had an argument. And he doesn't come the heavy hand. He doesn't turn round and say, "You've got to do this and you're not doing it." We've discussed it, we've shared that P.E. for about 7 years. We mix socially. All the P.E. staff so.

So that can't be a problem

No that's no problem at all. No problem. If any problem arises that he can't deal with, we ask one another. It's been great like that. I couldn't think of a relationship any better than that. So I said to the Head, "I've been unsuccessful at these two jobs. Just because they were near home. Dear me, I'd love to be Head of Department. Because there are certain things that you think about that aren't done in your particular school that you would like to attempt. I said, "Look, I'm

31 now and I would like to ease out of it. The book 'Kes' frightens me silly." The old balding P.E. master in the baggy track suit on a muddy field with the bank and the sun behind him, with all the good team playing all the rubbish. That must be a P.E. man's nightmare. At the present time I think it's a bit of ego maybe. I can keep up with the best, I can take them on at a sprint and play rugby and football and basketball. But the time will come. They might be able to check me or tackle me now, all right certainly I can take that, because certainly with the 5th years they are becoming adults and that time will come and that's the reason. I think everybody should have a second string to his bow so to speak, especially a P.E. man. Unless he was to go on to, say, Management or the C.C.P.R. if there is an opening, or something like that.

Now you are doing P.E. work and pastoral work exclusively, or do you do another subject?

I do physics. I am also doing a degree, O.U., which I thought, well alright, now's the time because you either go home or read a book, you watch the television now and again.

Well, you're in a good position to test my opinion. I've resisted the temptation so far. When I've been talking to some of these energetic P.E. teachers, I've got the greatest respect for them, I thought, Oh my God you would be better not committing yourself so much to P.E. but going and doing just what you're doing now. Right now do you wish that you had done an Open University or got better qualified a bit earlier than you're doing?

Yes. But I didn't have time for it before. I didn't think of it before. It wasn't relevant before. I said before about going to university, possibly I could have got there. I think I could. But this conflict between how well you did there and whether you would get put down a year, that frightened me, I didn't have the confidence to go through with that. I think I could do it now. I am prepared to do it now, but I

don't regret, say, having 9 years teaching P.E. because I can never remember being bored with teaching P.E. I'm not bored now because when...the present timetable I have.....I cannot remember how many lessons I have.....it's sad and I miss them. I miss it down there, at the beginning Howard was saying, "Are you in today Don" and I would say, "No, I haven't got P.E. all day." I mean we've had swimming today. That's unusual. Going round with your collar and tie on all day is..... and, of course, other people notice as well.

Of course you're in this roll change really

Yes. It's totally different now.

Actually it keeps you professionally alive doesn't it? You've something to look forward to, you've got a policy there so it's working out very well for you.

At the moment I have a lot on. Just basically really because I want to do it. We used to teach the evening institute and I did the swimming. I did it for about 6 years.

Earlier you mentioned that you had been interviewed by the P.E. Adviser and that he had commented on your promotion and training. What has been your experience of the P.E. Adviser? - Over the years, has he influenced you?

Right. We'll go on to my friend (P.E.A.) When I first met him I wasn't impressed. Or I probably was impressed - too much. I had heard a lot about him. I hadn't met him before. I was very, very keen on trampolining and I still am. Now at that time in the school there were two trampolines; they had never been used and I was in my second year of teaching - my first year in this school. And he used to exert a lot of pressure. Because he used to give you the feeling that you were not adequate, or you were inadequate. He used to come in with his blazer on, he used to always wear his blazer with his Carnegie badge and his grey flannels, and he used to never be dressed, immaculately dressed,

Look at him you would say, yes he is a P.E. man. He used to come in like that. My teaching in the gym changed. Because he used to come in and if you've been in our gym there is a store about as big as this room, and the gym is there, and I used to stand with my back to this store, I never do now because on numerous occasions when I used to teach that way, although if you are teaching gym and you're wandering about I never ever after that taught with my back towards that store because he used to come in.

You mean he would come in and you wouldn't know he was there?

Yes. He would say, about what you said there...and he used to put you under pressure. Alright he was sort of probing your mind, probing your ability, your motives behind what you were teaching. Which is fair enough. He was the adviser for Hucklebrough then. But he used to do it in such a way, you used to come out and think, "By, it must have been a terrible lesson", I used to get totally disillusioned. One day I had a trampoline, I'll tell you what we were doing; we were doing flight and modern gym, educational gymnastics, although I like olympic gymnastics, for me it's great and as soon as I get through that and put them onto a bit and show them how to do Head Springs and Neck Springs, I enjoy that. Anyway, we got a trampoline out and he'd come in and I had a group working on the beams and a combination of boxes, beams and ropes. And one group on the trampoline. And he went wild. What's that? I said, "It's a trampoline". "Can you use a trampoline?" I said, "Yes I can use a trampoline". "Are you qualified to use a trampoline?" "Yes I'm qualified to use a trampoline. British Trampoline Federation." And he said, "Don't, I don't agree with trampoline." That's what he said. P.E. Organiser. It comes down to he was frightened, he was frightened of the consequences of accidents because I think it was round about that time that the English gym coach had the accident on the ropes, a laddie broke his back. He was very safety conscious. You know how P.E. men play pirates in the gym. If he came in and you were playing pirates in the gym you were ripped to shreds. Anyway, I wrote to the P.E.A. about

M.31/19

him. I did. And looking back I don't know how I dared. But I did. They said that they couldn't help. Unfortunately, he came in one morning and there was a letter lying on the desk in the P.E. room and he picked it up and that was the reply. And he came out and he said, "Mr. Harrison, if you had wished to have spoken to these people I could have taken you with me next week to the conference." I think, looking back, it was probably the wrong thing to do. But I was only looking for advice. Because I was in the P.E.A. then, I used to get the magazine. That was like the confrontation and we had a right ding dong. Well, he had the ding dong, I didn't have much to say and we had a right go.

He took great exception to you doing this did he? And he said so?

Yes. Yes, and he said so. I said, "Look, I can't understand it, you're a P.E. man and we talk about skill and we talk about this, that, we talk about enjoyment, we talk about interest and experiencing different things." Then he said, "It has nothing to do with the lesson". And I said, "Well, it is flight isn't it, in a general sense." Anyway, a month afterwards he said, "It's Youth Week in 2 months time, would you put a trampoline display on?" And I said, "Gladly, yes." It was in the park, open-air, and we did that and ever since then we've got on like a house on fire. Of course, he's in County now and they are general advisers and we very rarely see him here now.

I wonder if you would do it now?

I don't know. I felt very, very strongly about it because it was a 'love'.....it was part of what I would have included in a P.E. programme.

You see I can declare an interest now in that I think there is a sense in which there is a lot of physical educationists allow themselves to be mis-treated. There is a sense in which I think they are getting a raw deal, part of that raw deal is because they are not militant enough. I have found out now that somebody somewhere is stopping the P.E. at

scale 3. There is no way at the moment there is anybody that's going through that scale 3 so somebody is setting an arbitrary barrier there. Now it would seem to me that's monstrously unfair. Why should the top of Physical Education people that be a scale 3. Why aren't there some scale fours, why aren't there some more scale twos? That are working in big teams. That are working in other subjects.

We had a fantastic P.E. department here. It's good now, don't get me wrong. One girl went to Markton to teach, N.S., of course, is here now and between the four of us we had a very, very wide variation of interests, variation of skill, and we put it all together..... we wrote a syllabus out what we would teach, after discussion. We got together and said what we would teach. How we would teach it, apart from words and actions that you wouldn't normally use, which would be different anyway, we would teach the same thing....When we went to that stage we would teach that, we wouldn't say, we will teach it like this, we would say, well, it's up to you how you do it, but that's what we'll do, and it worked great. As I say, we were very close. We are not so close now because we have a couple of younger members of staff who have just come. Oh, it was quite a team. It was strange because Howard's a very good trampolinist, I mean he had come from (specialist college) where (named tutor) - he was a tremendous bloke.....He taught me for a couple of weeks - trampolining.

Do you exchange much, because you are in a particular senior hierarchy, with what the Head sees as the future of the school and the things that the school's got to overcome? Does he discuss policy of that sort with you?

No, as far as I'm concerned on the pastoral side, I don't get.....I'm not that privileged, up there, In fact, to be truthful, trying to find out or trying to see through what he is trying to achieve I don't know.

I wonder who he shares this with, when he tries to work out where is the school going?

He is advised by a couple of people. One of whom is Head of 6th form. I think he does a lot of advising. You see the Senior staff consists of the other two Deputy Heads, the Senior Mistress, the three Heads of Faculty, and the Head of the Pastoral.....but he doesn't say much. But to answer the question, I couldn't answer it. I don't know where he is going, I don't know what he has in mind. You see we had a system once where there were certain people in charge of certain things, pastoral amongst them, and it would seem that he got so uptight, upset.

End of Recording

Follow-up Comments

I had great fun reading through the draft transcription of our recent taped discussion. Howard Brady and I have discussed what we have said on the tape and are both surprised at how it sounds when written down. We did not appreciate just how bad our phrasiology was. As far as question 1 is concerned - What do I really believe is worth fighting for in my school? - The answer must be 'Equality of Education'. By this I mean that not only the 'able' children should be looked after - nurtured - pushed - but also the less gifted. Too often the latter are only 'minded' or watched and not really educated (academic or social or moral). The second question, about obstructions preventing me from achieving my professional objectives - (I) When applying for P.E. posts (Head of Department) I was continually made aware of the fact that I did not come from a recognised P.E. College - Loughborough, Carnegie, Birmingham, etc. In fact, one P.E. Adviser told me that my college went against me (II) In my present post and school the 'point' system is biased towards the academic staff and as the Senior staff of the school are 'academics' and also the policy makers, I cannot see any changes in the near future. Once again, thank you for listening, and I hope everything turns out well.

Mrs. Shearer told me of the experiment next year concerned with compulsion, particularly with the older pupils. Could you tell me about it and how it arose?

We started off originally immediately after reorganisation mixing Vth years together and giving them options. We had half the Vth year 60 boys and 60 girls and we had the swimming pool, the two gymnasia, the sports hall and the playing fields, all on the site. We worked in a half term block each group of children had two one hour lessons each. We operated on a system whereby they could choose two topics, one for each lesson. We offered a whole host of things, you name it, we did it. We mixed the groups. Trampolining, there would be boys and girls, badminton boys and girls swimming, boys and girls and it worked extremely well. To a certain extent it was a novelty and the children liked it but after Christmas Vth years were starting to be off school and things degenerated a little bit. But we described the success at the end of the year as being damned good. I revised my plans a little bit in the light of teaching the previous 4th year. They weren't a particularly co-operative 4th year and so I modified things and made the choice more defined. I said that one lesson would be outdoor games and the choice would be rugby, soccer or hockey and the other choice was an indoor lesson where they could go swimming or in the sports hall or in the gym. We did not mix the boys and girls together any more, except for swimming, badminton and trampolining. This was because from the previous year when the bad weather came the boys did not want to do soccer and would try to sneak in to do badminton, so it made it easier for us to keep check on them.

Did you think it worked better the second time round?

I am still in two minds. It depends on the year group, the present 4th year will work well on the initial system that we tried. I also judge it by the attitude of the year group. If they are the sort of kids who can get on by themselves, you can explain the rules of badminton, give them a bit of coaching and say off you go and they

will get on with it. In that case you can have the mixed system, but if they are the type of kids who have to be got at all the time, as the present Vth year were, then I shall say, "We are going to tell you what to do."

So you have to wait until that happens?

I can tell now. The present 4th year will operate on the initial system. Also limitations of timetable come into it. This present year had the same number of periods as two years ago, but the present 4th year coming up to 5th year only have one double and one single. I can get round this to a certain extent if the teachers are reasonable and co-operative by swapping lessons and having a double once a fortnight to get a worthwhile span of time. Other factors which come into it at the moment are that I am developing rugby throughout the school and we have a 5th year team next year and practices are very difficult to get people to come to when it is a small school and we have so many activities going. I feel it is better if I can do more coaching in the games lesson. They can do their game of rugby and I can do a little bit of coaching, but I feel that if I limit their choice as I did this last year with one lesson of games and one lesson of options limits me from developing the rugby. We had a 'teach in' about going comprehensive and the big thing at the time was options, freedom of choice and this sort of thing. I was in two minds. I tried it and I have gone against it. I am one of the old fashioned school I am afraid. For me it is teach and keep them occupied because my views are that very few children are appreciative of having the freedom of choice. For the vast majority it is a skive. They don't understand what they have to do and how they have to do it. As long as you are on top of them then they are O.K. Fortunately we have a very good standard of discipline here in the P.E. Dept. There are very few children who try to get off so that problem is nullified almost.

I get the impression as a complete outsider that it is a very happy little ship, and a very cohesive department.

I would agree with that. There are other problems but as far as the P.E. Department is concerned we are happy. We have our little niggles against one another, but when you have worked together for so long it is inevitable. We have our own views and we air them from time to time.

Does this present difficulties, reconciling strong views held by a team of six?

We are very flexible in our approach, certainly Margaret and Nicola have their views on how things go, but Don will accept what I say. He is used to authority and discipline. He has his own views but he lets me have my own way rather than speak up I think. We get along and have no problems.

You have mentioned one of the barriers to making the job more effective and that is timetable restrictions. I get the impression that the facilities here are very very good. Is this a true impression?

Overall, along with Aiden, I think we are the best equipped school in town.

Where do your problems stem from?

For us it is boys in the 4th year, the ones who are trying to prove themselves. The girls - the 3rd year tends to be their awkward year and a little bit carried on into 4th year but they find out P.E. is enjoyable and start doing it again. 5th year for the vast majority of children is knocking off time. The better classes are the good attenders the poorer classes the bad attenders and so lessons vary accordingly. The good classes are a pleasure to teach but with the poorer classes you just have to struggle and do the best you can. In the 4th year boys, out of 90 children we get about a dozen who don't bring kit and these are persistent offenders. I have washed my hands of some kids. I have tried all ways of dealing with it. I used to wallop them for not bringing kit, and that did not work. I used to give them lines. I tried reasoning with them. I give them kit more times than enough - kit which is left behind by

pupils in other forms but some lads they just don't want to do it. They don't dislike it. They don't dislike it. They don't enjoy it.

Next year when they go into the Vth form will they be able to opt out?

Yes. Margaret pressed this point mainly for the girls and I said I was going to persevere with the hard line approach of compulsion but I think with the present 4th year....I just say on block you don't do any P.E. at all this year.

Do you have worries about that?

Yes I worried quite a lot about it. Margaret wanted the options for the Vth year girls mainly because there were so many who didn't want to do it and so we are going to have a classroom with those and give them some work and one teacher in turn will sit with them. There is one group of boys who are like this but they vary, if the weather is fine they will bring their kit, but if it isn't they don't bring it. I am a man of extremes, so I shall either say, "you do P.E. all the time or not at all." I see this as a terrible problem, but I don't know the answer. This is one reason why I went back to the method of saying you do games this lesson and so and so this lesson, because the kids were saying, "It's wet outside, can I come inside?" I felt I couldn't turn them out and say, "No you can't do it because you haven't got your kit." You are obliged to teach them and give them something to do. That is why I have gone back to this old choice. It is the only way I can see out of the problem. The main criteria is the attitude of the children, if they are co-operative and keen to do it then I am biased and I say O.K. but to the others you do as you are told and if you don't like it it is tough.

As a general impression, do you have any idea how many kids leave school and do sport or leisure recreation after school? I am thinking particularly of the 16 year olds. Do any stay on until 18 or not?

They can do. We have a 6th form of about 20 which presumably will grow over the years.

Is P.E. compulsory for the 6th form?

At the moment they have freedom of choice, they come into school when they have lessons and go home when they don't have lessons. That is the other extreme from what I would like it. Of the boys, I would say that a lot of them do participate in some sport of other. There are 3 or 4 who play rugby at the same club as I do and some at other clubs in town and we have a lot of boys who play football.

What percentage of lads do you think actually get involved?

I think it will be between 10 or 20%. It is a fair proportion of the school I think who are interested enough to take it up afterwards.

It appears then that in Hucklebrough there are plenty of opportunities?

I don't know about the girls, but certainly speaking about the boys there are Saturday morning and afternoon, Sunday morning and afternoon football leagues. There must be about half a dozen recreation grounds in Hucklebrough and each recreation ground has about 8 football pitches and they are used morning and afternoon Saturday and Sunday.

If a lad wanted to play a game, then there is a place where he could get a game?

Out of a population of 270,000 there are about 30,000 that play some sport or other at the week end in Hucklebrough, which is a fair percentage when you consider that half that population are women and children. To me it is an incredible number of people who do participate.

I would say that looking at that figure of how many actually participate out of a total population were a figure that I as a P.E. teacher ought to be involved in. Would you say that? It seems as though the profession is divided. There are those who say what children do when they leave school is no concern of mine and that my job is to educate them through

some qualitative experience whilst they are at school.

I always take an interest if they do play something after school. I am particularly interested in the boys who leave here or other schools I have taught at and play rugby, because that is my game. Soccerwise I suppose Mr. Harrison would be concerned about those who play soccer. Certainly some of the boys out of my form this year are playing soccer for various people and some of them have had professional training.

Do you keep in touch with them?

When they come to school or when I see them in the street I always have a bit of a chat with them. It is a question of time, I don't think many people can spare the time to take such an interest in out of school activities of old pupils unless they are participating in that particular club themselves.

Do you do anything to introduce them to club secretaries or is there any way whereby you make it easy for them or do you rely on their own interest or initiative?

Rugbywise I push them. I invite them to come and look round. There are coaching sessions they can come to and junior games and we invite some of them to come down and play.

Which Club is that?

Beavers R.C.

Are the youngsters from school made welcome there?

Very very welcome. They have a coaching scheme that starts for the under 5's, under 7's, under 9's and so on. They have a host of teams.

Would this apply to soccer?

Soccer I can't really speak about. The social side of rugby helps a lot in that the children can mix in the club house afterwards and

it is more of a social occasion whereas in soccer they don't have anywhere to change. What helps the kids is the big bath afterwards. It is a huge bath and you all get in and splash around. In football you tend to miss this you get changed by the pitch no matter what the weather and you rarely have somewhere to get a shower afterwards, so the soccer people miss out on that. The soccer clubs are still very strong, particularly in the Catholic areas.

Are the barriers caused by human relationships in any way detrimental to you getting on with your job, developing your ideas and your department?

Since we have gone comprehensive we have been accepted to a greater extent as a responsible and vital department and part of the school than before comprehensive. We have certainly improved a hell of a lot of things. The status of P.E. since we have gone comprehensive has gone up.

Were you at the bottom of the pile before?

I wasn't here before, but judging by people's comments of "You have lifted things up lots here." They tend to judge things by the results of teams.

Do you ever think of your job in these terms?

I am concerned about the attitude of the staff towards us and to that extent we have worked hard in developing this system. One big thing which was put across to me which I went along with as well was a question of standards both teaching and personal standards. It partly rubbed off from Grammar School as well. We had a headmaster there who was called Stewart who was a stickler for standards and this was me all over. A good standard of discipline. This in my view is what is wrong with the vast majority of the teaching profession today, they don't have any standards or any ideas on standards of discipline. Things that I did to help promote the

image of the P.E. staff; I said, "We'll all wear whites for teaching indoors and whites or a track suit in the staff room. Before they used to wear the odd pullover or a singlet, but I said, "None of that, and at all times look presentable."

Were you unpopular by doing this?

I had a probationer last year and he was one of the new breed. To me he had no standards at all. He was a bit awkward at first but I helped him buy his white trousers because he said he was broke. He left and went into the steel works. The women were acceptable anyway. The standard of dress helped a lot. Harrison has matured so much in the last two years it is unbelievable. He used to be hot headed and lose his temper very easily but he has matured a lot and calmed down a lot and so there has obviously been a bit of steadying influence on him, so in that respect things have improved 100%. The previous P.E. staff used to do a lot of carrying on in the staff room. We introduced bridge into the staff room and people thought, "Well that is an intellectual game" and the fact that we could talk to other people and discuss things with them improved our image as well.

You care about that don't you?

Yes at the moment we are a very well respected department.

How does the Head place P.E. in his order of priorities?

Near the top. He is very very sympathetic. For instance we had a gym competition and Mrs. Shearer wanted some leotards and we wanted to borrow some money to buy them and he paid for them out of his own allowance.

Does he appreciate what P.E. is trying to do in the school do you think?

Well.....he's a Catholic you see. For me all Catholics are pot hunters - or they seem to be. I suppose I am a pot hunter myself in one way in that it is nice to win the cups, but I don't see it as winning at

all costs, I see it as the development of P.E. throughout the school and the rising of standards and the fact that from a small school we can say we do this and we don't just specialise in one thing we have a wide spectrum where we play representative games and activities, so in that respect I don't term myself a pot hunter. You have got to have something to aim for and it is the fruits of all the work. I must say the Head likes the pots, but I think we all do. I think he is also appreciative of the efforts we put in. Going back to discipline. We are the only department who are fairly solid on the point of no chewing in class. In the vast majority of classes children chew. Clothing for P.E. we are fairly strict on that. We have a set outdoor activity gear and a set indoor. It is whites indoor, outdoor we have a green rugby shirt, black shorts, green socks and we try to keep it, not as a total uniform because we do understand that if children have two games lessons, one at the beginning of the week and one at the end they can't possibly wear the same gear without being washed. We do understand but we do try to have a fairly standard set of gear. That does help a lot.

At this stage after 2 years you must be well satisfied with what you have done so far.

Yes. I am happy, but there is still room for improvement. The way children develop which goes back to the attitudes.

Where do you hope to see the big improvements?

Basically with the attitude of the children in their approach to P.E. If I can get everybody to do P.E. then I'll be happy.

Have there been any moments of crisis of big battles to have been won?

With regard to representing the school teams, there have been several. One thing that is my big hobby horse is that there is one important thing in school and that is the school itself, the school name.

Again it's old fashioned. Everything that people do inside or out of school reflects on the school. If we are going to have school teams I want the best possible teams. Going comprehensive with all this talk of freedom of choice, I said, "We will give it a try and the people who want to do it they can but the people who want to do rugby they can and the people who want to do soccer can do soccer and so on," it worked for a while in the novelty of rugby, people said "Yes we'll play it" and then they got sick of it, likewise with soccer, even though it was an established game people say "I'm getting sick of soccer, I don't want to play soccer" and they pick and choose and this wasn't working at all and it took no half a term to make my mind up. I then said "if you are picked to play for a school team you play for a school team and if you don't want to play for a school team you don't have to but you don't do anything else in the school...you don't go on any trips, no privileges, you are a marked man in my book" as it were. Any special things going on you can sit and watch whilst the others do. There have only been one or two who have opted out, the vast majority have done it. It may have been under pressure, but it's only been done once or twice and they start enjoying it. It has worked with people from all years. A couple of times and they like it and then they tend to be some of the keener members of the team. I always explain to them that it is for one thing only, the school and team mates. You want to obtain the best possible team...you ask the boys "Do you want a weak team or a strong team?" They answer strong team so I point out that they are the best possible ones to pick.

Did this meet resistance from anyone within the school?

There were one or two. There was conflict with Margaret over this. She disagrees with me in this respect. She feels that children should be given a choice, but I think it is a question of coming to terms with reality. She was at the Girls' High School for eight years and there, there were so many children with a high standard of ability, there were plenty of children to choose from. They played hockey and netball in the winter and athletics and rounders

in the summer. If one girl said, "I don't want to play," she said, "right, go away, there are plenty more." Whereas here with it being a different element altogether you can't really do that. I don't know whether she is coming round to my way of thinking. I think she is slowly. She still tries to operate a choice of freedom but if she was pushed I think she would start asking someone. She doesn't go to the extremes that I do of putting pressure on people. I think I am right in that I am working for the good of the school. I am working for the other children and if people aren't co-operative then I don't see why they should be allowed to do other things.

Do you have difficulty in getting teams out?

The biggest problem I find in getting school teams out is talk amongst the children so and so saying, "I am not going to play" but when the confrontation comes up they turn out. Soccer is the easiest thing in the world to get teams out for, stacks of people like playing soccer. Rugby is a bit more of a physical game and requires a different type of make up.

You are trying to build rugby up here as well aren't you and it is a slow starter isn't it?

No, it is developing.

What about basketball?

Basketball is a standard indoor game.

Where are your difficult teams then?

Cross country. No one likes cross country. The juniors like cross country because it is a novelty and the distance isn't so long that they get physically tired. The upper school are really a wash out as far as cross country goes. We can field a team, not a good team,

and this is the only department where I will say "Do you want to run?" and if they don't want to run I don't make them. I will try and persuade them to run if I am really short but I won't put pressure on them to the extent that I put pressure on rugby, soccer, athletics. Cricket is another one where if they want to play they play. The major ones I put pressure on if they are capable and I want a really strong team. One boy didn't want to run 1500 metres for me and he was very very awkward, tried to stay off school, said he had swimming training, he swims for the county. He said, "Why do you want me to run? Ask so and so he's a good runner." And as it were there were two other good runners in that particular year group. I said "You are the best one I have got. You are 6 seconds faster than him and 10 seconds faster than him which means you are better than those. It is the town championships and we need the points, you are the best one and so you are going to run and that was it." He accepted it and turned up. Concerning the approach to the children. We try to be very very fair with them even though we put pressure on them. This I have got from Don. We have had a bit of two way influence.

This is the fun of working with a team isn't it?

Yes. It was very difficult to adapt at first because I was by myself at (named school) and at the Grammar School and working with other people is difficult because you tend to hog things but as a team we are agreeable. In 1968 I started at The Grammar School (now called Bamburgh) I was there three years, then I went for promotion to (named school) and then I moved here. I had two years at (named school)...that was a savage experience...savage - the difference in attitudes of the boys - it really brought me down to earth. It taught me a lot....It helped me a lot actually in an approach to children. I tried at first the physical approach.....you couldn't talk to the kids...they would not understand.....they would not listen....so I would belt them. And it back fired...to the extent that I was attacked by four youths in the 4th year twice. I learnt my lesson the hard way there. And two years was just right to get out - and coming here I was wiser as a result of that experience - and two years older as well.

Because children naturally respect older teachers more than they do younger teachers. And also from being at (school) there's a lot of Catholic children living up here so I had a reputation coming up here with me as well, for being a 'so and so'. I am obsessed with the idea of standards. You try to get some standards. It back-fired for me at (school)....it wouldn't work at all. Here I just have to say....and it goes.

I should like to keep contact with you....to come back to talk about your philosophy....I get the impression that you are so very keen.

You must come to the Town camp sometime...where we have a Field Study Centre for Hucklebrough children, I go there for orienteering and map courses...but it is more of a social education, introducing them to how to live with one another - co-operation and understanding. It's a good week.

When do you do this?

In November. Can't go this year though because (wife) is expecting. But the week that we are at the camp we stay up until 2.00 and 3.00 every morning talking about the kids....discussing different ones.

Which members of staff go?

It's mainly my team and one outsider. Myself and (named teacher) from the Maths department...he did a little bit of P.E. - looking after the football team. And the first year Mrs. Shearer went with me and another woman, then last year it was Margaret and another woman.

You have staff problems beginning in September haven't you? Because Mr. Dyke is leaving isn't he? Have you got a replacement for him?

It's a chap called Gordon. He went to St. Luke's College of Ed. He has taught a year down South and his wife is from this area

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Mrs. Smith started in September..... Actually, you know, the girls are more problems than the boys discipline wise and being awkward and so on. But I am lucky having Mrs. Shearer and Miss Gill they are really good and Sheila is developing. Fortunately Mrs. Shearer has been here for seven years, Miss Gill has taught for nine years. Mr. Harrison has been here for six years and I am in my seventh year. So we have the experience.

It must be very nice for a probationer coming here into this climate though.

It should be! If they co-operate...that's the only problem. The first probationer we had wasn't very co-operative - he wasn't willing to learn. It was a year long crisis. A year long battle to get him to do...to teach properly for a start and to dress properly for a second thing.

So you could say to me that colleges are not sending out properly prepared teachers.

I agree whole heartedly in that respect. A vast majority well from Battle's we have students here....er....how some of them have passed after they have been failed by school I don't know. Certainly last year - not P.E. students but certainly in Science I think there were three male students and the Head told them that they were going to fail unless they improved. But Battle's still passed them evidently. Which from my point of view is very disappointing in view of the standards being in question. It's very bad for the profession I think. The best P.E. student we have had here was a girl in her first year - small girl, she plays hockey.

End of Recording

No Follow-up Comments

Since I last saw you - 4 years - looking back over the 4 years and as you get wiser and probably mellow, I don't know, looking back at your own programme and your own leadership and so on, how in your estimation, does your programme compare with what it was.....I don't believe that you stay on a plateau, you're either going downhill or you're going uphill

Well, we've had a couple of lows and a couple of highs since then, really. We had a low point, I think it was when you first came out or just after, when Don had his....they had their first child....he became totally disinterested in everything. After school-wise that sort of fell down and as a result of sort of myself trying to do a bit more work and trying to get other people involved and the general apathy which is very prevalent in comprehensive schools now, extremely so here..... I went through a low spot and I think Geoff had just started then I think and we had the friction of the three of us in a changing room and it was too much. You know, he was lowest in the pecking order and I was playing hell with one or two of the students he was passing on. Then we sort of modified our programme after that. We were teaching in whole year groups, with sort of a whole year group down at a time so we had three groups and then to sort of ease that burden I suggested having half a year group down at a time.

I can remember you telling me that you were experimenting because you had had a whole year group and you were offering so many things, as you said, you name it we do it. And you were quite excited by the experiment but you were modifying it the next time round.

That was part of the reason at the time, behind it. So we work in half year groups exclusively now. And just the pair of us being down it eases the burden considerably. Myself and Geoff. Don has gone over to Tech. Drawing and Art. I think he was talked into it but he'd been short-listed three or four times for Heads of Department here and he came a close second every time but never been good enough to get the job.

He must have lost some motivation then?

He lost a lot of motivation. I think with his family coming along as well. And of course I went through that stage, when I couldn't quite spend as much time after school as I wanted to. But we have worked round that now and although there is only the two of us doing activities after school, that's Geoff and myself,

That's the apathy you talked about whereas you probably have other colleagues and so on. Is it possible to describe where that decline came from? Is it possible to put a date on it?

I would say there were.....when we first went comprehensive we were all young and enthusiastic and dead keen in a new school and the chap at the time, B.L., who was a new member in the department, Don and myself, we took the rugby and the soccer. We were running 5 rugby teams and 5 soccer between ourselves and we were running three basketball teams and then Steve's family came about and he couldn't spend as much time, so he dropped the basketball and the soccer, although he would still referee games for me. And then M.L., a history teacher.....he helps out taking teams and he can referee games for me and he took a basketball team. Then he sort of eased off on that a little bit and then we cut down teams drastically. One other consideration which is.....in the last three years which has sort of been the final nail in the coffin regarding help after school from the people who are prepared, was the College of F.E., they do night classes with very, very good pay, sort of £5 -£6 an hour. You know teaching H.N.C. or H.N.D. classes. It's £6 an hour, I was very tempted myself and I thought if I give up then there's nobody to do any teams at all.

It's clear that right now the thing that's very unstable in P.E. is the extra-curricula work. I can remember going through a phase when I said "I'm doing too much", and I cut out a lot. Now I felt bad about it. Looking back on it I think I was wrong to feel bad about it.

Well, I am coming round to that way of thinking myself.

If I do a good job in the terms of the contract as it were, that's what I'm there for. To give every lunch hour, every evening and weekends and holiday periods - that's being over-committed, and you have to pay a hell of a price for it in terms of family, in terms of such things that you might do extra but also in terms of your own staleness.

I have had a period of staleness myself when I have lost a lot of interest and I started coaching at Springers Rugby Club. And I more or less gave up every Saturday for that. That happened last year.

Did that help?

Well, it's made me realise what I'm missing. You see ever since I started I've always been involved with my own, just taking rugby teams after school since first year of teaching, taking children away to childrens camp or taking them abroad on school holidays. I don't think there's a year gone by when I haven't been away from home for at least two weeks in one of these activities. During that last year, when I re-arranged all my fixtures to be in mid-week, I just felt I was missing something so I stopped my Saturday afternoons and started my school teams again on a Saturday morning, and I'm enjoying myself this year much more than I did last year or the year before. But the big factor has been the lack of help from other members of staff.

It's too much to carry!

Last year I was doing 5 teams, Rugby teams, and Geoff was doing 4 soccer teams and it was too much. The kids weren't being helped and they weren't getting good results and I wasn't enjoying myself.

Has there been any pressure either from the Head or your colleagues? Because you are reducing the amount of personal commitment. Is there an undercurrent of expecting you to do it or not?

Nothing. It has been mentioned that the P.E. Dept., as they don't do any marking, need less free time than other members of staff. I've been

asked to do this Head of Year job. One of the background reasons was that I don't have any academic marking and I don't have as much mental strain to deal with this. What they fail to understand is just the simple matters of putting teams up, checking availability of players, confirming fixtures, arranging coaches, getting money in. It takes 3/4 break/lunch times a week to get it sorted out. No, there's been no pressure as such.

Nobody has tried to make you feel guilty because you've come to the point where you are deliberately cutting down this?

There was an instance a while back where I had a disagreement with the Head of Faculty and I remember it was about out-of-school activities. Some parents had been kicking up about why aren't we running as many soccer teams as we used to, basketball teams after school.

Somebody then noticed it.

The reason this springs to mind is that I turned around to the Head of Faculty and I said, I get paid from 9 in the morning to 3.30 at night and what I choose to do after that time is my own business. There's no way you or anybody else can make me do something I don't want to do. If I don't want to do anything I don't have to.....

The Head of Faculty didn't try to pursue it any more so that any confrontation there might have been was silenced very quickly.

Because he claims that many years ago he used to take teams and I said, "Well, why don't you help out", and he said, "I'm very busy, I'm Head of Faculty, I've lots of work to do."

It seems to me that P.E. teachers are in a terrible dilemma. They are alive to the fact that they are trapped by their own commitment and they've put a ring round themselves; they're committed to do all these things and yet they resent that they're giving that amount of time because they're not appreciated. There's no recognition either financially or in career prospects.

People tend to take it that P.E. teachers "surely that's part of your job taking teams after school". Whatever we do after school is our own interest. We had a lot of discussion about it. As such there's been no real pressure brought to bear on us apart from this incident last year, which was.....

Do you feel you have more of a personal life now than you did when you were running 5 rugby teams for example.

We used to work every lunch time and 4 nights a week.

What have you cut it down to now?

I do 2 nights, Tuesday night and Thursday night, and Saturday morning.

And you keep your lunchtimes to yourself.

I've started taking individuals into the gym for 15 minutes, sort of scrum half practice or.....but it's never more than 10-15 minutes, but it's something I want to do with the child anyway. Because when you have a team practice after school we should be off the premises by 4.30 according to the caretaker, he reckons they can't get the place clean in time but I normally finish by about 4.30 outside. What I want to do with the children concerned, I don't have enough time to do what I want to do with the child individually. It's team coaching as opposed to individual stuff. So I take individuals aside and do 10-15 minutes with them at lunchtime. But I wouldn't say that my lunchtime was disturbed for this, it's something I don't mind doing. I finish my lunch and we chat for half an hour and then I'll say to a boy, "Come down at quarter to one and I'll do ten minutes before the bell goes."

So you've not loaded yourself up to any reasonable stage, you've made it within a human.....

Lunchtimes I don't do anything and after school I do two nights and that's with the 2 rugby teams I take.

I should think that that has made life much more acceptable

I would have kept on working probably a little bit longer but (wife) said I want you home, that's when she had the children. I must admit I would stop back for a short half hour practice. When it first happened I wasn't too happy about it but I'm.....

It would be a shame to find your kids had grown up and you weren't there to see what happened.

I can't get home quick enough now. It's something that I'm realising even with Saturday mornings. I'll go back in and (wife) will say, "Guess what (daughter) did this morning?" And I'll have missed it. There's that involved as well.

And in a sense (wife) will understand your dilemma.

She does, yes, she does. She went to one extreme and I was the opposite but we've come to a common centre at the moment.

Are there any of your conditions that you could say, "Look, I've got to work in these particular conditions." Conditions that I'm thinking first of all are the facilities. Now it seems to me, one couldn't make an argument on facilities or could one? The facilities you have appear to be adequate.

They're excellent - two gyms, a sports hall, a swimming pool, the playing fields. The only thing you could complain about the playing fields is that people walk and exercise their dogs on the playing surfaces. That's the only thing you could rebel against there.

The other thing is, do you have plenty of money to buy basketballs, badminton equipment? It's all right having all this, but have you got the toys to put in it as it were?

At the moment we have enough money to spend. I always say we could do with more but there comes a line, how much kit do you actually supply to the children, implements to use, we have sufficient but things like running spikes, running vests, so the children supply their own or do you? Rugby shirts and soccer shirts we supply and we supply thirty vests. Next year they said there'll be a 50% cut in our allowance. I was going to buy two sets of rugby shirts next year, say £300. Now, do I say to the children, "you'll have to supply your own shirt" or does the school supply it?

How would you form a policy to a problem like that. You've got a problem there - how do you get a school policy for that? Do you go and discuss it with the Head or do you just come out with a policy that's a 'H.B.' policy.

It's a 'H.B.' policy. The Head has had a lot of criticism for various things. He'll leave me to do my own job and he'll back me in whatever I do. So as far as I'm concerned I'll back the boss up. Now if he thinks I was doing something wrong, not doing it right, then he'd start suggesting things but as long as I'm doing a good job and he's happy with me then he won't interfere in any way. He is interested in good results and as long as the children are doing a reasonable programme then he's happy. He likes, as all headmasters do, he likes hearing good results and winning cups and so on. We do a little bit of that now and again to keep him happy.

Some P.E. Heads of Dept. are left free because the head doesn't give a damn. He would be happier if there were no P.E. dept., so he doesn't interfere.

Ours is interested in P.E. but he still gives me a free hand.

That's because he respects your management. Has he ever disagreed with any of your policies. Has he said, "I'm a bit unhappy about this"?

Not that I know of - maybe that I'm putting too much pressure on kids and parents have kicked up, but we are the discipline maintainers in the school to a certain extent. We're the ones who keep a check on them and so on. We take a pride in our dept., in that we are the only dept. where we keep a check on standards of behaviour and dress.

Trying to think what the problems of a Head of P.E. are these days, one of them might be that you came out with a Teaching Certificate specialising in P.E. and all the others, newcomers, and you've got two, that have come recently have degrees. Does that exert a pressure? Do you worry about it at all? Is it something you feel bad about?

No.

The three men in the Dept. are all Certificated people. Nicola is a certificated person - your two new women colleagues have degrees, but you don't feel that there's pressure for you to do extra courses or take a year off....or "I'll get qualified...."?

I tried and failed. It was in the first year at Battle Cross when they did the B.Ed. I was with J.C. and D.R. There was a very good Biology teacher at the time - H., he was excellent.

And did you do one year there? That was part-time?

That was part-time. That was my first year of marriage. I didn't see (wife) for the first year because I was travelling Mondays, Wednesdays, every other Thursday and every other Saturday morning. Sociology I failed on. I blamed the lecturer. Not L., he was good, his group all passed. He explained everything and gave notes. Our Lecturer was a chap from Yarmond. We'll not go into details, he simply said, "These are the 6 essays you've got to do this term. You've got to do 2. Let's look at how we'll do this essay" and that was it. We didn't cover the syllabus. And I failed on that section. I really enjoyed the course. I did the Remedial Section through at City College, with the chap there.

Was it a three year course?

It was either 3 year part-time, or one year part-time and one year secondment. A lot of people moaned at the time.....

It was a bad time to do it though wasn't it? First year of marriage. And you were up to here with school work at that time. I just wondered if you'd applied to County for a year off?

I applied to County for secondment but they said that if I passed I could have secondment. As it happened County turned me down before I got the results and I couldn't do another 2 years part-time.

Was the fact that you had the P.E. organiser's wife in your own dept. a problem?

He used to pop into school a great deal. I had a lot of problems in that respect with him, yes..... He has an abrasive nature. Nicola was his blue eyed girl. She was very good at Dance and Movement and he used to come in and watch her lessons and say how good and ask her to do demonstrations. And while he was here he could pop in and see how the boys were doing, and I still think the same way, if people are in a high position I always call them by their title 'mister', no christian names. Even the deputy head here is Mr. L. I don't call him D. He had this sort of one thing over on me from the first five years when I was at Wear Grammar School and I was frightened of him to be honest. He was an adviser and he used to put the fear of God into me. We had an unhappy couple of years. I used to hate seeing him. Then I came to terms with it about two years ago. He was criticising some of the activities we were doing at the time and I told him I was the chap in charge, **that** it was nothing to do with him and that if he didn't like it then lump it. And from then on his attitude changed towards me. Instead of lording it over me he started treating me as an equal. And from then on we've had no problems. He's been to see me twice in two years whereas he was coming in to see me once a month to keep an eye on things. I still have a great deal of respect for the chap because he's good for me in stopping me being lazy. He always gets me to question

the educational side of what we're doing and this is something I try to do with Don and Geoff as well, but something I find in standards - I don't know whether it's me, with going to (Specialist college) and being brought up by S.A., my lecturer. He made you evaluate everything that you did and I don't know whether Geoff and Don are of the same mind. Don is if I keep reminding him. He's a very good teacher when you're on to him but he gets lazy and he'll just go through the motions and just play a game instead of getting a kid to understand what we're trying to do. And Geoff is a little bit on the lazy side still.

That troubles you a bit. Is that your big problem?

That's my big problem at the moment. I don't think Geoff and the two girls are doing their jobs as well as they should be doing.

That's very difficult to put right.

It is. I've tried various ways of talking to them. I've told them straight and I don't quite know how to get round it. The girls are just sort of developing, discipline and dress and standards of that nature are very high on my list and the standards where the girls are concerned are starting to drop a little bit and discipline and so on. Similarly, on the boys side, Geoff wanted to leave a couple of years ago and I tried to get him a job here and there just to get rid of him because he wasn't happy and I wasn't happy with his work. He wasn't pulling his weight.

How long has he been with you?

I think he's been with us 3 - 4 years, but it wasn't a satisfactory situation.

And once you've got somebody like that.....?

It's been easy to a certain extent of late. His interest is rising. He's interested in football and nothing else, but I'll give him his due

his discipline is excellent. I've no quarrels with him other than his enthusiasm for doing the right sort of work. I was talking with (wife) about a week ago about it and we said that as long as the kids were happy then he's teaching them something, why should I be too concerned about his attitude. You see, I like the kids to do gymnastics until the end of 2nd year and then after 2nd year we do basketball, volleyball, circuit training and the odd little lesson of gymnastics but neither Don nor Geoff are too keen on the gymnastics and I used to get myself quite concerned about them. Doing five-a-side football is the easiest thing that they do. They'll do circuit training for the first 5-10 minutes then it's 5-a-side football, which is no good, not from an educational point of view.

It's just baby-minding, that.

Yes. We try to solve it, but it's a question of either I accept it or.....he's only going to do it when I'm not there so it's a question of I have to accept it or not. That's been one of the major problems I've had to overcome. The other one. The girls have started to double up lessons. The boys have never had any problems about going outside because if it's games they go out regardless of the conditions. We've had them out playing rugby or football in snowstorms but they'll go out. My attitude is if it's games, it's games, if its gym, we do gym. Whereas the girls, if they are doing hockey and it's too cold outside then they will go in the gym, and if there's a group of girls doing gym or rounders or netball or whatever, then they'll double the group up. Obviously if the conditions are too bad outside, they can't go out but they are starting to come with the least excuse to double up. I'm going to have to see them tomorrow about this point, doubling up and dress in the lesson time because the discipline has come down.

It's going to be difficult unless you get a strong woman colleague isn't it?

It's ironic in a way. Last year we had two probationers. There was

Paula and a girl called Vera and they were at each others throats all the year. And I had to solve the problems.

Paula told me about this. She felt dominated by this extrovert

Vera's organisation was excellent and Paula is a poor organiser. Discipline, Vera, I would rate as the second best in the school, even though she was a first year teacher. No matter what class she had, including fifth year girls - she had them toeing the line and they loved her. She was as hard as nails and they loved her. Now Paula was wary. She had trouble with third year girls last year. P.E. is really one of the easiest jobs to get discipline. It gets harder as it goes up with kids being awkward. Now Paula would cry to me that so and so wanted her to do this and I thought, this is Vera lording it over her. But then Vera would come to me and she was the aggressive girl and start playing hell about so and so not doing her job and having to be told all the time. And Vera was excellent. She came from down South and wanted to go home because she was unhappy here. But while she's moved down South, she's realised something that we tried to tell her for the last term when she was going to leave, that when you've been away from home for four years the grass grows and you lose all your friends, or your friends drift away, and she's only been down there.... well, at half term she came up and she wants to come back. It's a difficult situation.

She might apply for the Scale 2.

She is.

That's got to be your number one problem

This time last year I would have said to the boss, give it to Vera, no two ways about it. But now she's been away and coming back, I don't know. We disagreed on a lot of things. She was a very aggressive person but she knew what she wanted too, and she knew how to do it, and she got the results. Discipline, dress in lesson and actual

teaching in the lesson itself were of a very high standard.

I'm interested in your involvement outside school. You've been in the Springer's Rugby Club. Are you involved in any other things like that, that has nothing to do with school?

Springers Rugby Club at the moment. It is my third season of coaching there. I started going through on Mondays.....

Did you have any sort of link with Springers' Rugby Club before?

I went to the Grammar School at Westgate and that was a sort of feeder school for Springers' at the time and I started playing there when I was thirteen. I played until I went to College and I played after college. I played when I came back from college for 2 years.

And you did all your secondary school at Westgate?

Yes. I applied to N.Castleton for a trial at the time because I was very fit and strong but I heard nothing. I went back to Springers then I had a back injury. I used to get into Beavers. I was living in a flat in Beavers at the time with one of the teachers from the Grammar School and we met the Doctor from Beavers' club, He is dead now, unfortunately, but he was the chief surgeon at the hospital at the time and he said "Come along" and he fixed my back up. And I started playing for Beavers. Mainly because of the travel aspect because I was down here every Saturday morning for fixtures, and travelling 20 miles through to Springers.

Are you living in Hucklebrough now?

We bought a house in Markton when I first got married in 1973 and we lived there for 2 years before coming to Hucklebrough. I just lived around the corner, five minutes walk. When the children were small it wasn't too bad but as they got older more of the kids came around so it was a little bit unbearable so we bought a house at Easingley, so it was just right. I thought commitment wise I'd only just finished

playing with Beavers and I couldn't afford the time to be with Beavers because their fixtures were such that they go across to Liverpool and down to Leeds and so on, every other Saturday. From a playing point of view, or actually helping out on the management side of things, it was too much away from home, so I went through to Springers because all their fixtures are within the county. I had a low spot with my teams on Saturdays then I got them going again, basically because I've got a first XV of 5th and 6th forms and they're keen to come training on a Tuesday, we play matches on a Saturday. And I don't like being away from home all day Saturday. Plus I'm in the Labour Party and I go to a meeting every now and again. I've just joined the Labour Party. I'm also secretary of the County Schools Rugby Union - it's not recognised as a full county like Durham or Yorkshire because Rugby doesn't recognise the new county boundaries. People got together to organise the thing and I was asked if I would be secretary. It's fairly heavy for two months of the year and then for the rest of the time it's just free wheeling.

Are you interested in your Labour Party work?

I just go along to the meetings and find out what's going on. I'm in the Easingley Branch. My next door neighbour goes out every night of the week drinking and he asked me to go out for a drink, and he introduced me to a chap who'll get some cheap glass and he said, "Do you want to join the Labour Club", and I said, "Yes", and he said, "Well, you may as well join the party while you're on." I said "How much is that", and he said "£1", and I said, "Fair enough then." Then, after that, the chap who moved in on the other side of me, he didn't have a night out so I said, "Are we going to pop out for a drink", so I said, "Well, look, every Sunday night about 10 o'clock for about half an hour around the club. Why don't you come with us?" So three of us go out every Sunday night about 10 o'clock. We all have a bit of chat and so on and that's how I got tied in..... I've been very interested in one or two of the recent meetings, especially about the cuts. What surprised me was the number of very intelligent and respected people who I would never have thought would have been interested. People ridiculed me for joining the Labour Party, one of the 'dustbin' men and so on, and when I got

round there I was very, very surprised at the number of people who I would never have considered to be Labour Party orientated. The problem we are having with our branch is at the grass roots level of what are we fighting for? What are we working for? The left wing is getting so much publicity it's destroying membership in the County, and our branch apparently was one of the biggest branches in the County at one time, and there would regularly be 2 or 300 people there for a meeting. Now we are down to sort of 50. What they are trying to do is, they're talking about getting various dignatories to come and speak. They thought they would invite Wedgewood-Benn and one of the left wingers and one of the right wingers.

Are you involved in professional politics - NAS or NUT?

I'm in the AMA.

How did the NAS battle with County affect you and the school? Did it upset the balance at all?

No because at the time, it was over Christmas time, when I wasn't taking Saturday teams and so it didn't affect me in any way. I didn't have any matches. It was just a case of practices so really I was let off very, very lightly. Some of the schools who had a lot of fixtures had problems, but myself it wasn't too bad. The other teachers who take teams, the vast majority seem to be in the NAS.

End of Recording

No Follow-up comments

The tape of this excellent interview failed - The interviewee proved to be a most sympathetic subject and stated that she really enjoyed the interview as it involved some useful soul searching.

Her function in the school involved Dance and Gymnastics in particular. Did she like it that way? "Oh yes I am especially enthusiastic about dance and the girls really enjoy it. We do many productions for school and outside bodies - Old Age Pensioners. We did 'Moses' last Christmas working with R.K. Department. He writes Script. libretto - cast dances. We now have drama department who overlap a little (grimace)."

Her expression became increasingly relaxed and more and more enthusiastic.

She explained that Dance was included in programme of all pupils in 1st, 2nd and 3rd year once a week for 2 Winter terms - When choices which were offered in 4th year excluded Dance, there was a spontaneous protest - from the girls who demanded a continuation of Dance -

But they can't continue with Dance when they leave...!!

Oh but they can by going to Keep Fit - run by Mrs. Austen at Aiden as an evening institute class. And one girl is to go to Ballet School on a Scholarship. She was keen to get Gymnastic Trophies - About compulsion she described the problems of the present 'extremely difficult' 4th year - who, whilst offered anything, skived out - "I was very worried...thought it was me." But we are to allow the 'dodgers' to opt out next year when they are in Vth year. Choices of activity will be offered - but one teacher will be confined to class room with those who do not opt for a choice.

Organisation - boys and girls are mixed for some activities - like trampoline - On leaving college six years ago she was immediately involved in Youth Work in Hucklebrough in the evenings. She objected to the present vogue to allow Youth just to sit and be passive and got out of Youth Centre when they were allowed to "just sit and use Centre as Coffee Bar. "They can go elsewhere for that". She spoke warmly/respectfully of an assistant warden (Y.C.) at Bamburgh who insists that all Youth Members "do something" -

Table-tennis, dancing, sewing, knitting, anything - Yes he threw them out of the club if they didn't "do something" - "and a couple of nights later....they would be back"....."it seemed to work". I liked that - I think it was the right policy.

Are you worried about the precedent to be set next year?

No I know that the present 3rd year will be keener than the 4th year now. They will want to do something.

She obviously gave much time to voluntary clubs - two evenings dance - for anyone. She also came in on Sundays to coach gymnastics when learning competition - Didn't husband get resentful? - "He did at first but realized that I have to do it whole heartedly - We've been married $2\frac{1}{2}$ years. He is more understanding now! "I really love my work! I don't want to leave - although I got very upset about the 4th year pupils - I tried everything!"

She enjoyed talking about her work and would be happy to be interviewed further.

She considered the Head to be sympathetic - though he had not spoken to her individually about the work.

The department, she indicated, was extremely happy - worked well together - with few disagreements.

Asked if much had changed since 1975.....

I think I wasn't involved in the pastoral work...when I spoke to you last time. If I was then I was very new to it. And I think my increasing involvement with the Pastoral work has made me very largely dissatisfied with my P.E. teaching. I still find that I thoroughly enjoy the creative side of P.E...the gymnastics and the Dance. But I find that I get very **bored** with teaching skills.. hockey, netball and stuff like this. I feel I don't get enough out of it. And I honestly don't feel that a lot of the children do either. It is more of an exercise...It is just a shallow exercise....It is purely and simply improving your own personal skills; and in the limiting circumstances not to a great extent. I still get a tremendous amount of pleasure and satisfaction from teaching Gymnastics and Dance. It could be that I was more interested in that in the first place anyway. And that the games side of the teaching whilst it interested me....I never got the same kind of excitement from it. And it could be this that's made me more bored with it. Plus the fact, since I spoke to you last, I have started to teach 'child-care', which is my first....I didn't do art but it is the first more academic subject that I have ever taught. And I get an enormous amount of satisfaction from that.

Tell me what your role is now.

I am doing half a timetable of P.E. Then the other half.....well a quarter 'child care' and a quarter 'pastoral' which is actually free time, but I use the time for my pastoral work.

Is the time that you are allowed for that sufficient time for the pastoral work....commitments?

No. No. No way.

This is the usual story...Although you are given a $\frac{1}{4}$ of a t.t. Pastoral work is always so demanding.

Yes tremendously so. And I have found that the more I have done it the more there is to do. Probably because I am getting to know the job better....getting to know the children better, and realising just how much help they need. The more involved you get with the children, the more you find what you can do to help them. The more they come to you with problems....And, of course, every problem takes time. And, unless you take the time and make the effort with the children, when they come with problems...then they very quickly stop coming. So you have got to spend the time. It's a vicious circle really, the more you do the more you've got to do. But, again, the more pleasure and satisfaction you get from the job.

The impression you left me with last time...Here was somebody who was bouyant, enthusiastic and optimistic...it was quite fantastic in a sense...and I thought that it was almost an unreal world. Now you still have the same kind of enthusiasm but for different things...

Yes.

Now has your pastoral responsibility and the new Mrs. S. given you insights into the inadequacies of P.E?

Yes, that's definitely so.

So you are now suspect about that former Mrs.S?

Yes. Yes. I know this is probably totally against what any P.E. teacher would ever do...but if I had my way, and could choose what to do in P.E. then I would put far, far less emphasis on games. And far, far more emphasis on the creative things of P.E. I really and truly believe that they get so much more out of it.

But I am looking at what the pay-off is after school. Your creative work won't lock into society after pupils leave school at 16...

No, no, no. I'm really....when I am saying this...In the first three years....then I tend to develop my dance side and the gymnastic side of the work....In fourth and fifth year here we do options..and this I feel is fantastic....I still enjoy doing that...but I tend to

develop the dance along the lines of Keep-Fit type things whereby they are going to be able to find classes in Night Schools...where they can slot into that kind of work. It is something that they can do when they leave school. We also offer them something like Badminton, Volleyball.....we try and give them a really wide basis of sports...most of which can be carried on after school. We've got a lot of netball leagues...stuff like this. Hockey leagues... for the older children who have left school.

Since we have gone on to the 'options' programme, can I ask... truthfully...how much of the options is really worth while?

To stimulate the discussion I am tending to put the worst side of the things I see...I go to so many schools and see the options and think that it's nothing more than baby minding. The toys are given out and they are told to 'play'.

Yes.

....and apart from the 'self' experience....there is a professional abdication....in my view. Now then, some option programmes - depending on who does it and what activity it is, there is some actual teaching done. In others it is a complete waste of public money. Will you speak honestly about this?

Absolutely....I know exactly what you mean. The kind of 'option' teaching that you are talking about now that you disapprove of so much.....I hate. Because I got involved and I am not the kind of person who can stand by and see that happen. But I think the reason it happens is because once you get on to the options system it will not work...never work...unless you've got small numbers...and plenty of space and plenty of facilities. And if you have a lot of people in a little space then it is 'baby-minding'...Because you just can't get round them all. We are very very fortunate here in as much as ...well no...not so much this year...More so last year. This year is more difficult. We have tended to have three teachers on when there has been an option working. Which is super....because you can split your class....

How many pupils?

An absolute maximum of 60. So that's 20 children each.

Now when I offer a Keep Fit option what I often do is bring a load more in....because that is something that you can cope with, a lot of children....in order to give say the badminton squad training or whatever. Small numbers you know I spend hours and hours in the summer holidays....what I do....in the summer I ask the children to choose their options for their next year. And then I spend hours wangling numbers, because that is so important. Numbers...If you have too many children for certain options it is a total and utter waste of time. The children get bored...the teachers get bored and nobody achieves anything.

Tell me how your options work?

They start in the fourth year with....We get two double lessons a week. Now this only works up until Easter. And then in the Summer we do something different. Up to Easter we do a games option...the children choose two sports from Hockey, Netball, Basketball.....there is a teacher for each one of those. It doesn't necessarily mean....there may be two teachers...but they will manage to be able to manage the three....because they will do a term of each or...what we tend to do is if they choose netball, basketball. They'll do first half term netball and the next half term basketball the next half term netball then next half term basketball. We have tried to do it a term at a time. But it keeps the children's interest more if you split it into half term blocks. If you split it too far then they lose interest because there is no continuity. We've tried everything...And I believe that half a term is just about right. In their other lesson we offer them...swimming, badminton and table-tennis in together, because numbers are such that you can't manage to operate them all together. So we offer badminton and table-tennis together so that the children will do a bit of badminton or whatever or a bit of both. Trampolining is an option. Keep-fit is an option. Volleyball is an option and there is something else which I can't

think of at the moment.

So you are able to run all these six?

Yes. They choose three of those...and do eight weeks of each.

So if you are offering eight, do you run eight in any one half term?

No....that's why it is so difficult to arrange....because of your numbers. You see you've got to arrange it...you've got three members of staff...and you are going to offer all these options to all of these children....so it is a real wangle to organise the numbers. And in actual fact some children have got to do something that they don't really want to do. But I think the greatest number of children that have had to do something that they haven't actually opted for was 4....which isn't bad at all really.

Very good.

It makes a terrific lot of work...before hand. It may take anything up to three or four hours to sort out one classes work for one lesson... but it is worth it because the children will end up doing something they want to do. And for the odd ones that didn't opt for something because they didn't know what it was like....tend to be a bit shy about choosing something that they have never done before...and once they have started to do it....."Oh I am really pleased you asked me to do this....That was super. I am enjoying it..." you know that's really good.

I'll bet a £ to a penny that the badminton is messy.

Yes, it is. Well...actually it has not been so bad this year, for the simple reason that I have managed to operate that at a time when I've had a keep-fit going. So I can make my numbers smaller, but a lot of children tend to opt for it. So in actual face it is the children who haven't been able to do what they wanted to do have generally been the children who have opted for badminton - table-tennis...because so many want to do it. And

you've only got the limited space and the limited time. And I try and keep those numbers as small as possible. Now when I've done badminton and table tennis, I've found that really the table-tennis people are just occupying themselves and playing. And the Badminton people have had a lot of coaching a lot of work done with them..... and it has been a case of popping back to the table-tennis every now and then. It is really just a mop up to allow for the numbers and limited facilities. You see what I try and do, I put a maximum into that group. Well we have three badminton courts in the sports hall so we can...again you generally find that you have some children absent, so you can supervise and get everybody on badminton.....so by swapping in everybody does about 10 minutes table tennis which is really purely occupying those children. But it means that we can make it more worthwhile for everybody else really. I don't think that you could ever have it perfect...where you do everything in ideal conditions.....

Surely not!

Certainly not when you are committed to offering choices like this. But I find that option system does work well.

Because you are devoted to the option system and like it and are prepared to make it work by giving so much time to its administration. You have convinced me that you have made it a very worth-while thing.

It is because I have had so many children follow it up after school. You see being a pastoral teacher I get a lot of children coming back in to see me. And I often hear...."I've joined a Night Class for so and so." and then again "...I'm in a badminton club now you know"... this sort of thing. It pays off.

What are the other things that pay off?

A lot of them still swim after school. An amazing number of children actually play netball...and hockey. There is a very good summer league netball in Hucklebrough. And we've got a lot of our members

of rugby clubs...also have a hockey team....So I can persuade talented children who are generally team hockey players to continue with their hockey when they have actually left.

That is a new one on me. You are saying that the girls who play hockey here can go and play hockey for another hockey team belonging to a rugby club?

Yes, yes. Old Boys' Rugby Club....who are (site stated) in Hucklebrough. So that O.B. have a ladies hockey team...and I would think that quite a lot of them are ex-members of here. And whenever they need numbers we can also feed some into Scotsports....since we've got contacts there.

How many honestly?

Last year's hockey team I would think...I bet eight of them are playing hockey...and some of them have come back into the Vith form.

Yet most of the girls that have gone through here will have spent... not 11 years....but four of their secondary years doing a lot of hockey...won't they?

Oh yes.

So there is not a big pay off for that amount of time?

Oh no. No.

Could this be one of the reasons you reflect on the games and question it? Is it worth the time that is spent on it?

Yes. Yes. Plus, as well...I mean they all say when you are at college..."Oh it is a social game...you learn to work together and.."
you don't! (big laugh!)

That is what I call the 'fiction' about P.E. There really is an awful lot of fiction talked about P.E.

There is!

And I know that there are arguments other than the 'carry-over' into adult life kind of argument, and I think that there are some very good arguments...You, for instance, would make a very convincing argument for your creative work.....Dance....Gym...Keep Fit?

Well actually my Keep Fit varies tremendously from class to class. A lot of it is really Dance called 'keep fit'. Because children once they get to fourth and fifth year....sometimes I offer it as a Dance option....not as a Keep Fit option but as a Dance option.... because I adore dance...I love it and Dance is something that you can either teach...and you believe in or you struggle with. And if you struggle with it the kids know you struggle...and truly they don't enjoy it so much. You have got to be so committed to it. This is not in any way to be pig-headed or anything like that, but I can guarantee that if I had a class for dance....they will want to do it next time. But I don't always get them all the way through to fifth year. I have found that if I've had a class from first year through to fifth year and still dancing....all the way. But they so easily lose heart. I think that you need to have so much confidence in what you are doing in dance otherwise the kids lost confidence in you and themselves they are embarrassed and shy and don't get anything like the pleasure out of it. You've got to be able to give yourselves to it completely; really to enjoy it. Otherwise it simply becomes an exercise that means nothing.

The way that you teach it with such conviction and such delight... obviously....you are going to transmit that...what is it actually doing for them do you reckon? Lets get rid of the fiction..what do you think it does for them?

I think that it gives them a lot of confidence in themselves.... a lot more confidence in themselves. I think it improves their carriage, the way they walk about....everything. I think it gives them an amount of just pure pleasure. They start to listen to music instead of hearing it. They actually listen.

Now that's not fiction is it? (teasing - implying some doubt)

No.

You have seen this?

I've seen it happen. You see I think that it is important to get pleasure. I think that is tremendously important. You know... I don't care. All these educational aims and things..it is a whole lot of hooha....well no...it isn't a lot of hooha...but a lot of it is....I think if you can give kids enjoyment of using their bodies physically and getting hot and sweaty...and then having a shower and getting clean again...and just stuff like this. I think that it can relax you so much. You go in there in such a bad mood... and it can bring you out of it. You can just enjoy the pure physical pleasure of listening to the music and having a go.

And you are able to transmit your commitment, your enthusiasm for dance to your junior colleagues?

(pause) I think.....

I am talking about two real people now

Yes.....there are two people in my department...I think they are a little bit over awed by my enthusiasm...and me perhaps...

You've tried then?

They do teach dance. Both of them. You see, lower down the school they do this games thing and we do an eight weeks system of Dance, gym and swim. Now I am seriously considering thinking along the lines...I know its no good now (moving to another post). I would prefer to do half term gym...half Dance and 8 weeks of swim/hockey/netball. You see at the moment we do one double period in a term of netball and a term of hockey done in the half term system that I told you about before from the options. And then eight weeks each of the other things. Now I'm seriously thinking that we would be better off switching our priorities and putting more emphasis on the

gym/dance and giving them a little bit more time. It doesn't make a lot of difference timewise. It would mean 14 weeks instead of eight...to the gym and dance....

Can I go back to this dilemma that I can see in so many schools. Here, there is Mrs. S. who has an enormous talent in the teaching of Dance. Has lost her commitment to hockey but I'll bet a \$ to a penny you have kept the hockey ticking over...What is to stop Mrs. S. from saying that "I think the hockey is of less value...I am going to double up the Dance"....."Just because I think that I can give the pupils so much more. Would there be a price to pay for that? I think that the children could gain from it. By just having the confidence to make that sort of decision.

Yes. I think the problem with the timetabling is that you have to think of all of them in the department. And I don't think that it would be fair to the others. I'll tell you what I have tended to do...not so much now because I've got one probationer and one girl who has only been teaching a year. Now previously...when I was teaching here with (named)...she was a tremendous games player. She had as much belief in games as I've got in Dance. And I will be perfectly frank with you...we used to switch about. She did my hockey. I did her Dance. And that worked fantastically. But I wouldn't dream of doing it with first and second year teachers. I believe that they should try everything. Find out what their strengths and weaknesses are and later when they have the experience... make the choice. Because I think that once you have had the experience and you know that you are better at something...if you possibly can do more of that then I don't think that it's wrong. I don't know... it seems a funny thing to say but.....I mean, I have seen a lot of P.E. teachers while I have been here....and the standards are changing. Lowering if I dare say...I think...I don't want to be awful, but about the staff that are here...they both do try very hard, but somehow they haven't got the same commitment and enthusiasm somehow....that I can remember having, and that I have seen other people with. I really don't like to call them because....they do try but somehow....there is something not there. There's not that real enthusiasm.

They both have degrees.....

Yes, they have.

One is O. and the other is E.

Yes that's right. They seem to know what they are talking about but don't seem to be capable of putting it over to the children. Both of them tend to have problems of discipline, and I am sure that it's because they can't put over this commitment to the children....for their subject somehow. It's so hard to put into words....I think that it seems to be a little bit superficial... you know.

I'll put my cards on the table now. Both of them lack two things. What you are describing is....a sheer excitement of the subject... they are not excited by the magic of the whole field of movement or sport. Also they do not have that empathy...welcoming the children into the gym.....being pleased to see them.

I think this is it.

I'll bet if I were one of your pupils and you would rightly or wrongly but none the less convince me that you were pleased to see me.

Yes. Yes. Yes.

.....I guess they're not

I think that is probably right actually. You are probably very very right....

They have got that to learn. To show interest in the pupils and in the subject.

It is just simple things like tone of voice..it is all monotone
.....there's no sort of "...let's go" sort of thing.

I blame the colleges for this very very much. We are only just attempting to teach them to teach now. We are isolating the skills of teaching now. The skills that you are talking about now....and we say, "that's an important skill and until you have got that skill you will not make a successful teacher....let's rehearse it....just as you would a games skill." Take it out of context and put it back into context and away you go...keep on improving it etc.

I think that so much depends on the teacher's personality and I don't believe there is anywhere near enough stress on this..... when people want to become teachers. I think....you know.... looking around...the standard, to me, is going down in our school. I don't know whether I am getting

As you are leaving now and you are looking back and reflecting where it's high points and where were it's low points to you...of your days here. I take the line that nothing stays on a plateau; it is either it is either going that way (indicating up) or it is going that way (down). Now presumably the truth of the matter is that it waves about a bit...How do you see it?

Well I honestly believe that when we were a Secondary Modern School...we offered the children more than than we do now. Now that we are Comprehensive. It was a very rough secondary school... I have been here nearly eleven years now. So it's going to be a tremendous break to me when I go...

So you have experienced the school half and half (Sec. Mod/Comp).

Yes. The catchment area has changed a lot. When I first came here the kids were a lot rougher. There were many more problem children here. Really problem children...delinquent types... I love kids like that...because...I don't know...they are so grateful when you can help them. Whereas so many children we have got now who come from good homes don't appreciate anything. They just take

everything for granted, and see it as the right of the teacher to teach them.

Are you a socialist?

(pause) No. Well I voted conservative in the last election. But I am very confused politically. I honestly don't know what's the good thing....

Your teaching experience is totally committed to working class children. And you have given all that you've got, you've given by and large, to w.c. children....to try and enrich their lives...

I think probably the reason why I did vote conservative was that I hoped that something might be done about the skivers of this world....those who get so much for nothing...and..oh I have a lot of views about how I think that dole shouldn't just be dished out, but that some community service should be done in order to be able to receive it...this sort of thing. But I really don't know who could do that (chuckle).....

In your pastoral work you are going to meet more and more children who, through no fault of their's, are of the kind that you are describing.....But that's not for me to digress on to this particular area..... On reflection would you have preferred to work in any of the other schools in Hucklebrough?

No.....I have loved it at Gargrave. I have really loved it.

Has there never been a moment when you have wished that you were out of Gargrave? I wish that I were teaching at 'X', 'Y'.

Never. Never. I've gone through the process where I've wondered what I was doing in teaching...was it all worth it? And I have gone through times when I'd given so much and got nothing in return....I've gone through all kinds of depression and things... but I have always come out of them very quickly. I am that sort of person. You think "Oooo. I could scream" I can get more cross

actually with the hierarchy in this school than I do with the kids.

When did you last cry?

Oh I cry often.....

About your job?

About my job....I don't cry...I've never cried about my job except in frustration at other people. I'll tell you something (chuckle) My Head of Faculty used to be one of my Form Tutors and there is this tremendous (emphasis) personality clash between the two of us.

(asked for clarification)

I'm in the P.E. department and he is Head of Creative Arts Faculty... so he academically is my boss...he is my superior. Status-wise... he is on a scale 4 and I am on a '2'. Now then it is a matter of 'years'....and he is one of my form tutors, then I am his superior as it were. But I am not the kind of person to Lord it over anybody....I am not that way inclined. I always say to people "...do you think you could possibly..." and I always go on my knees, because I think that if you ask nicely then people are far more likely to respond....I know if somebody comes to me to say, "I want you to do this immediately". I think "What a cheek.." you know. So I always try to be nice. And he used to downright refuse to do things..he wouldn't do this and he wouldn't do that... He used to be so unkind to me and so rude to me...and I hate people being rude to me....He's the only person who has ever had me in tears over my teaching. And it had never been over any relationship with the kids or anything....any failure on my part to manage with kids. It has always been on the fact that he has said or done something to me. And it has been purely a personality clash between him and myself. And in actual fact he has been taken out of the pastoral system completely now....because at the end of two years he didn't even know the names of the children in his form....He used to give them numbers for the register on a morning

and they just used to shout the numbers out and he used to tick them off. And when it came to writing references and things at the end of fifth year he could never do them. And he is the only person who ever reduced me to tears because of teaching.

Are you dissatisfied with the hierarchy in general?

Generally...this is one of them. It (this discussion) will not go any further will it? (assurance given)

No....You see I have to try and get to the truth of doing one's job

It is the only reason that I am moving from here. I don't need the money. My husband has a very good job. I don't even need to be teaching. But I teach because I adore it. We have no family of our own. My husband is not terribly keen on us having a family....but if I really wanted children, then he wouldn't mind. But I love my work so much....and I feel that I can help so many kids...and do so much...that I would truly hate to have my own kids and have to go and be at home...because if I did have my own kids I would want to be with them. I know it is probably a very selfish thing...but I like my work too much and I don't want to give it up.

But it is this hierarchy that is making you change?

This is the reason that I am leaving. We've got two Deputy Heads.....a Senior Mistress and Headmaster. And we have the Faculty who are on very much reduced timetables and who all do, in my opinion, very little. Most of the discipline.... most of the pastoral care of the kids falls on the Year Heads in this school. And I do truly believe that the Pastoral staff in this school are good....and very very good. Two of us are leaving at Christmas. Which tends to make you wonder....is there something wrong?....a third one is applying for jobs. That is, out of five heads of year three are dissatisfied. So it isn't just me. And what tends to happen....I think that we could quite happily take the burden of work.....that wouldn't

bother us because we care about kids. But what is happening is we are going to one of the Deputy Heads with a problem and he is saying one thing....another Deputy Head says something else. The Head is disagreeing with that...this is happening, that's happening. We tell the children one thing and then we are told "No, you can't do that." So we have to say, "sorry that was a mistake,...." So that until the end you don't know whether you are coming or going you are being unfair to the kids. The staff who work with you don't know whether they are coming or going and it is just so disatisfying. You see I am very very lucky in as much as I have managed to keep all my form teachers with me. I am a great believer in making them feel as if they are part of a team..So wherever I have gone in school they have all come with me. So now all my staff who are fifth years and who like to work with the older kids have had to drop all the way back to third year with me to stay with me because we do work together. As far as that relationship goes then I am quite happy. It's those up at the top that have disatisfied me so much. I am really excited about going now. The school that I am going to is really very similar to this one....very similar type of kids from what I have seen...and the staff seem super, very very nice. The Headmaster there is very much the 'old school'...very firm....very strict...But you know where you are with him. Which is what my head in the Secondary Modern School was like....when he was here. And I prefer that.

Was this one interested in P.E?

Well....no. They didn't want a P.E. teacher. They didn't want anybody to teach Art which is my second subject or child-care.... they wanted a man...when I went to the interview...It didn't fit into their syllabus to have somebody who did all these things. But when I went for the interview, I made an impression, so they employed me regardless of the fact that none of my subjects suited their timetable....They wanted a Geographer and they wanted a man. And they appointed a woman who couldn't do....(laughter)....so I

was really lucky to get the job there in the first place. And I have been along to the school and spoken to the Head and they have actually managed to fit me into P.E....for the next two terms. The Deputy Head is very very interested in the work that I have been doing in Child-care. All being well he wants me to start a child-care department...Starting next September (80). So they are going to be looking to me more on that side of things than on the P.E. But the P.E. Department want me to stay with them...I know P.E. Adviser (woman) went in there and pulled some strings wanting me to do P.E.

You would surely miss your Dance?

Well I wouldn't....because I would do it after school. I have already said this...you know...would it be possible to have some clubs after school? Because initially they thought I would be doing English....so this is why I saw the people in the P.E. Department....while I was in I went for a visit...I went there for half a day....and I said to them, "Would I be treading on anybody's toes.....I do teach P.E. where I am. And if I'm not teaching P.E. here would it be O.K. if I did some after school activities?" Well, of course, if anybody had said that to me I would have said "Yes please....." And they were exactly the same they were only too pleased. So, my ideal really....starting next September will be to have....you see I get a third off for Year work...on the timetable....then it would be to have a third of my timetable Child-care...and a third Dance/gym.... that would be my ideal. I would absolutely adore it...I would love it. I really would.

I gather, not only from you, that the morale of staff here is lower than it was four years ago? Is that true?

Yes. It is true.

Certainly in P.E. it is a different team altogether...now there have been changes but there is a different mood and there is a breakdown.

Yes. I think the P.E. Department is the weakest it has ever been since I started teaching here. I mean I have gone through a lot of different members of staff...but it definitely is weaker. And it worries me to death what it is going to be like in January when I have left.....Funnily enough I had the two girls (new teachers) over to lunch with me yesterday because we never seem to get together very often...with me having so much committment to Child-care and Year work.....I tend to be down with one or the other of them and only very rarely are we together. We just do not seem to see each other very often at all. So I asked them to come over to lunch with me yesterday, because I was so worried about the way that things were going. I had a long chat to them about...discipline...and general attitudes and things like this. You see E. has only been here since September....does hardly any out of school activities. Now when I first started teaching I did five nights and five dinner times....Saturdays, Sundays.....I couldn't get enough of it.

Don't you think that is happening across P.E. generally?
Say over Hucklebrough generally?...a general decline?

Yes. I do....You see I don't do as much as I used to do. Purely and simply because I haven't got the time. I am married now. I have commitments at home. I'm involved in a lot of things out of school anyway. But I still have a commitment. I still do what I can. I only do three nights a week now instead of five.

What do you do in those three nights?

I do Dance, Gymnastics, Netball...

Even now with your pastoral commitments?

Oh, yes. I do gym some lunch times as well.

So you are doing three nights...that is a weekly commitment....
with three different activities. So you've got your Dance.....
Is that a Dance Club?

Yes. But we generally do productions here. The Dance that I do in the club rather than a general Dance Circle which is what it used to be when I had more time...is mainly working towards a Dance Production.

So that must take an hour of your evening each week?

Oh, yes. Now my netball league will finish at Christmas...I have a tournament tomorrow...all day tomorrow. And once that tournament is over that commitment will lessen...so I will do extra dance then. I'll do two nights Dance and one night gymnastics. In gymnastics we enter our first and second years in the **B.A.G.A.** competition... every year. So I do most of the choreography for that. P.S. the other girl does a lot of the actual skills...teaching them the movements and then I come in on the choreography side...because I love that side...it suits me to the ground. Before I used to do it all. Now P. is really keen on gym, so she does the skill side. But she is not very confident on the dance side so I do the choreography....which I thoroughly enjoy.

And you do some lunch hours as well?

Yes. Not so many lunch hours now. Generally I go into the gym with P. Gym is a very individual thing...so I will go in with P. twice a week.....sometimes more.

How much time do they give to that then?

P. gives up four evenings a week. This is her second year here. In actual fact she does more this year than she did last year. She is getting more enthusiastic now....getting to enjoy it better. And I think this is largely because regarding gymnastics.. you see...I did most of it before...I realised then that it was very much her forte, so I pushed her into it....doing more gym...I stopped going to some of the practices so the children will identify as 'her' children.

You see when we did it together the kids always came to me. And P. just stood around like this you know. I used to say "...go and ask Mrs.S...". "Oh no..." they would come to me. So I thought this is no good. So I dropped out of that side a bit and let P. go in and do the skills and I go in say one night whenever P. asks me to go in on a dinner time...I'll go in with her then. I also have some netball practices on a lunch time I must say that my lunch times vary tremendously. One week I'll maybe do four....another week I may not do any... then a week I'll do a couple, yes it does vary. According to what is needed. Now E. does hockey two nights a week. And that's about it. I've asked her to do 1st year netball... then she says, "I'll start next week...." "I'll start next week..." She is also very keen on 5-a-side football....the kids would love to do that. They'd really like it. I took a five-a-side football team last year and I hadn't a clue (chuckle). But the kids wanted to do it...so somebody had to do it so I had to do it....I was hopeless...I used to wonder what I was going to tell them this week.....Oh, dear! And we entered a competition...and we got to the finals....It was incredible....Mind you we got annihilated in the finals, but... you know the kids had a go...and they enjoyed it. Now I have said to them that it would help their discipline tremendously,... because the kids who want to do 5-a-side football tend to be the difficult kids...the rough and ready ones...who will go in and have a bash. And if they could only involve themselves with those sort of kids...I would have thought that it was an ideal opportunity for them to get to know them....and once they win them over...then their discipline problems will be solved. You know they would be gone. Because they are the kids that are causing them trouble....in their lessons.

You see P.E. here as two departments don't you?

I don't know do I? (chuckle) The creative side and the skill side, do you mean?

No. The male and the female

Oh. The male and the female....(pause...) Yes.

Is there any cross consultation?

We have departmental meetings.

Do you? (doubting)

Yes we do. We get on very well with the men really. We don't do many linked activities. We used to do more so. Not now.

There was a time when you were experimenting and you were running co-ed options.....

Athletics options and stuff like this. Timetabling as it is now.....Facilities as it is now....it's availability...it has split us apart.

Mr. B. is low isn't he?

Yes.

Why?

(pause)

Do you get on well with him?

I get on very well with Howard. I get on with them all. We go out to meals every term....the P.E. Department. All the wives and husbands.....

You will go to each others houses...?

We'll go to each others houses for social evenings. And then every term we have an end of term dinner. There is no animosity. None whatsoever. And we do get on very well...I think really the fact

that we don't work so closely together now is probably largely timetabling really....And as well...Howard doesn't get on very well with the other two girls....in my department. You see G.... I didn't used to get on well with G. He managed to keep himself so much aloof from everybody...but he is super now. Changed so much....really involved. A joke and a laugh with him and he is smashing. He really is. Now we get on very very well here.

Did you feel the tension last year with the girl that was here?

Yes...Yes...It worried me tremendously. I did everything I knew to try and alleviate that problem. And, on reflection, looking back and having experience this year...I honestly believe that most of the friction wasn't her fault. I think that it was P. being childish. I honestly do. I would honestly have been happier....looking back on it and the kids would have been better off if it had been P. who had left and not D. D. had got herself very mixed up she was very difficult. She got herself terribly mixed up....she still is and she will never be any different. But she loved those kids and the kids loved her.... And they would do everything for her. They loved her. Now with P. a lot of the kids don't like her. And I thought basically that she was a very nice gentle person....but she is a bit of a Jekyle and Hyde. She can be very selfish when she wants to be...very full of herself when she wants to be.

They are not going to be catalysts for one another once you have left.... Tell me about your outside commitments..you have lots of interests outside. Where do you look into society outside school hours?

Oh...I am a fanatical water ski racer. I still am...Since I spoke to you last I have probably become very involved in...I became Secretary of the British Water Ski Federation.....Racing Committee.. which meant meetings in London...every month. And I did a tremendous amount of travelling. I've had to give that up now because I just

couldn't cope. I was wearing myself to a frazzle. I was also Secretary to the H.Y.C. Water Ski Section....which again I resigned from.

How many Gargrave people are members of that Club?

(three names mentioned)

Why aren't there more kids involved in that?

Kids? Well(Town Yatch Club) is not a place for people who don't have their own equipment.

Is it snobby as well?

Not particularly I don't think. Cliquey to a degree, yes.

But you have to be pretty wealthy to....

You've got to be...to be able to own your own boat....power boat side. And the sailing side is not dinghies it is racing cruisers... the 20+ ft. boat. Our kids tend to go to River Sailing Club. I did teach our kids to water ski.....I started courses on a Wednesday evening and I got permission from County and that was fabulous... that was super. But it was really a wasted effort because most of the kids would never be able to follow on....for all that the kids got an enormous amount of pleasure from it at the time it was a bit futile really.

It is just too costly for most of them.

Yes, they could never have done it..So..I mean we didn't charge them anything really.

Where are your other connections with the community?

I play Badminton...member of (named) team. Most of my personal activities revolve around sport after school. I met my husband

through water skiing, and we are both very involved. I am going back on to the committee after one year...they have asked me to go back on to the committee because they have put in for the British Grand Prix which is an International event. (with some hilarity) and they have asked me back to organise it! Because I have organised the nationals there for years and years.....Oh...and I gave up last year and it was a fiascoe....so they are all worried to death....I resigned from that because I felt that I was being put upon....because I was doing too much work and spending so many hours...and I think that the thing that finished me completely was that they gave somebody a bunch of flowers for making the tea....(huge Laugh).....something like this...And I thought...."I have spent hours and hours and they didn't even say "thank you" to me..... and the end of things speech, you know where they say thank you to the tractor driver, thank you for the safety boats and here's a bunch of flowers for the lady who made the tea.....and muggins who had done all the work didn't even get a thank you or a mention. So I went home and said to my husband, "...that's it! Finished!....I am resigning..." But I think that it is true in any field if you do something well and quietly and get on with it nobody realised that you are doing it....(more laughter) At least it has made them realise that I can do a lot of work because it was a fiascoe this year...so I'll go back and organise them again!!!

Have you done some pastoral courses?

Quite a lot of them...Quite a lot of us from here....all on the pastoral side...They were run by the Teachers' Centre in the town. They were terrific...really good. Disruptive Teenager was one. The supportive services was another.

Who ran these courses?

I can't remember...it was a teacher...Headmaster from a Special School in Laithes....I can't remember his name. But he was... Oh...all airey fairey...and believed that all would be wonderful

and everything without ever giving any pastoral leads.

The discussion amongst the staff would be very worth while. The exchange of views would be the stimulus.....

It was very well worth while. It was quite a long course through about four days. The Supportive Services one was a series of two or three hour courses...when we had people from the different supportive services in...Probation Service and Social Service...

Do you have much to do with them in your role now?

I do. I see people from the Social Services...concerning pupils in my year...I am totally disillusioned with the psychology Service. Educational Psychologists to me is too ready to pass the buck. Blame everything on the school.

Where do you get most help from pastorally? From outside?

The Educational Welfare Officer. He is superb...he really is good. He is in the town. He was one of the Youth Club Wardens...where I first started Youth Work...so I get on with him really well. I worked with him for a lot of years. Before that he was involved in Boys Brigade and other Youth Clubs....And as a consequence has had in his Youth Clubs practically all the parents of the kids in this school....or all the parents of the kids who are going to cause us any trouble.. So he knows them all. He's the kind of bloke that all the mums and dads will gossip to and will say "...EE have you heard about so and so?...." You know... So anything you want to know you just need to see J. And He's terrific.....terrific. I don't think that he is a typical E.W.O. by any means...I think that we are just very very lucky. From what I have heard from other schools in Hucklebrough I think that we are extremely lucky to have him here.

Do you have a bigger proportion of difficulties here?

It did have a reputation.....

Yes it did when we were a Secondary School....but when we went Comprehensive we changed our catchment area as well. We no longer get kids for the area known as The Orient which is the area down West which is very much slummy.

Why is it called The Orient?

Because all the streets are called Bombay Grove....Calcutta Grove. They are all white people all English people but it is just called The Orient because of the street names. And it has a terrible reputation you know. They keep their horses in the front room and don't have beds...four children were burnt to death in a fire...did you see it on the news?....That's the Orient. It is a shocking area. Well we don't get any of these children now.

Where do they go to now?

(explanation given)....in consequence we have a much bigger proportion of private kids here.

So it is getting a bigger social mix? And I can see you that you are uneasy about that?

Yes....well I find that the naughty kids from good homes are far more destructive and disruptive than the naughty kids from poor homes...because they tend to be more intelligent.

You say that you did some Youth Work? How long ago is that?

I did it for a lot of years then I got disillusioned with the Youth Service...Oh I am dreadful aren't I?....disillusioned with the Youth Service....I worked in Y.S. about six years.

That was working in the evenings?

Yes, here.

Do you have one of the annexes?

Yes...this is when I left. We used to have it in the school. I did it for 5 years when we were secondary....and we had the Y.C. in this school. And I used to have eighty kids in the gym. Music on and apparatus out....fabulous....really involved. In fact Mr. S. the Youth Officer couldn't believe his eyes...and didn't believe in it at all...That was terrible that all these kids should be made to do all this stuff...you see they weren't allowed to come in unless they did something. They were not allowed to hang aboutand just mess on... We all did something pretty active for an hour and then we all went together for an hour and had a coffee and a chat...and a dance or whatever you wanted to do. We did Old Time Music Hall productions...Put them on show to the public...We did all sorts, You walked into that door and it was like coming alive. Oh, it was super. I even did one year for the Old Time M.H. a Can-Can with all the lads from the Steel Works. I loved it...it was tremendous...

What went wrong then?

We went into this silly thing over here. We all sat and drank coffee....."This was the role of the Youth Leader....to...talk to the...children...in...an..informal...situation." The kids didn't want to talk to you in an informal situation! They had more chance of talking to you when they were hanging upside down on a bar! All that we had done was frowned on and pushed aside.

What is the state of this Youth Club link up now? With the school?

There is none. Completely ostracised now. It is a home for thugs. Basically. They have so much trouble in there it is not true. The school is absolutely covered with graffiti from the Youth People....Our kids daren't go! There was a boy beaten unconscious there on Tuesday night. So all of the kids from there went over to Bamburgh and beat unconscious there a Youth Leader and half a dozen kids over there. It's dreadful. Dreadful. I wouldn't be involved

with it now. I am totally disillusioned by the Youth Service.

Do you take any night schools at present?

I used to/again. But not now....I just haven't the time.
I used to do a ladies keep fit thing. After I packed up
Youth Work.

You are devoted to the North East?

Yes (unhesitating...then pause for reflection)....Well...I don't
know really....I suppose I have a close family tie up here.
Our family is very close. Funnily enough my husband might be
moving to a job in (named)...in which case I will be going to
live in the deep south. But I do like the N.E. I think that
the people are friendly. They are really nice people. Then I
think that people are friendly everywhere if you are friendly
towards them. I am a great believer in do unto others as you
would be done by.....I think if you go and smile and be chatty
to other people, then they will smile and be chatty with you.
I think I just like people. I like kids. Yes...That's what I
like....kids.

And yet you have had your unhappy moments?

Oh, I have. But I don't think any life is complete. If you
don't have your unhappy moments you don't know how good your
pleasant moments are....do you?

End of Recording

No Follow up Comments.

Has taught at Gargrave for 5 years. One year (77-78) was only year of full-time P.E....previously teaching some History and currently teaching some 3 hr. 10 minutes of Maths....From choice would do P.E.

You would do 100% P.E. would you?

Hm. (pause) I'm looking for a way out of P.E. at the moment. I'm disillusioned with P.E.

Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

(reassurance about use of present tape asked for and given)

No names to be used...But I want to be sure that I am quoting real teachers in real situations. Transcript to be sent to individuals 'confidentially'

.....as I say....various reasons. As I say one is the career prospects...absolutely zero. I did one years teaching in Southern Counties, a new town. A very rough school....a very bad school. This school is better...better P.E. department. Better school. Better kids etc. So I know that this is not the bottom. There are many schools below this one. The career prospects are nil....I'm on a Scale 1 here and I have been told by the powers to be that I've got no chance of getting a Scale 2. It is a waste of time. I'm on £83 per week after six years teaching. My wife's just stopped teaching....my first baby is six weeks old. If I can get a job outside I shall take it for £100 per week. It is as simple as that.

(Anecdotes of classics teacher moving to I.B.M. after 8 years teaching)

I am 28. I am seriously thinking about going into Special Education.... to work with handicapped kids. So I want to leave P.E. on the financial account.....which means I want to leave teaching. And also there is a disillusioned component....I feel we are just getting nowhere at all. We seem to be getting nowhere. There are three of us in the department Don, Howard and me. Don is on his way out....He does about two days a

week P.E. We have less P.E. time now. With the cut-backs etc. P.E. is going to be first to be hit...or subjects like P.E....We are in the Creative Arts Faculty...and all those will be hit...Not only us but Humanities will be hit.

What comes under Creative Arts in this Faculty?

P.E., D.S., Woodwork and Metalwork...Art, Music....not Drama.It is in Humanities....with English....The Head of the Faculty is the Head of Art. He is up in front of the Governors trying to explain why we have Creative Arts subjects....why they are just as...or even more important as the other so called 'academic' subjects.

So he is fighting for the whole faculty?

He is fighting for the whole faculty....not just for the P.E. Dept.

And they all require a fair amount of funding?

Yes...because of the materials...goods.

What are the other faculties then?

Science, Humanities. Teacherwise the teacher ratios are about the same really.

So your morale.....

The lowest it has ever been. I was chatting to H....this wasn't in the conversation at all....I was saying how we are not working ourselves as hard as we were two years ago. It's unprofessional. His morale is disastrously low. Howard is a very young Head of Dept.... did very well to get to his scale 3 so early...working hard. I came in...it was my own fault....I was doing 5 nights a week and Saturday morning. I did it for two years...and I could see all the scale points going elsewhere. And I am down now to about two nights a week...and at

the moment most Saturday mornings...but to be fair come the Summer term I won't do any Saturday mornings....or very few in the summer. Luckily both Howard and I agree. We both have families now and our families come first. The one thing about teaching they do give you 12 weeks holiday every year. Next summer I shall go working in the holidays in the six weeks holiday. It is very depressing.

The extraordinary anomaly about it all is that you will just be coming to the peak of your professional skills. You will be more skilled now...or more professional and more positive than ever in your work...and that is the time that you are just going to get out.

I've got six years teaching behind me now. I have just a few discipline problems now. There's some bad kids in this school. I'll say this.... in the P.E. department we have less trouble with them than any other department. I think that we have got the easier teaching situation... to be honest. We only teach the boys and the women only teach the girls. It works very well. I wonder sometimes about the wisdom of Comprehensives being mixed. I know that you have the social things... but there are other things. I was talking to a Geography teacher the other day. He had a class and for some reason the girls were missing and he was left with 30 lads...bad lads...low stream...and he got through more work with 30 lads than he did with 15 boys and 15 girls. This was in the class room teaching Geography. He said, "You P.E. lads are O.K. just having to deal with....." It is true. As I say it is probably just very low morale at the moment. I think in education generally...but specifically in P.E.

Which College did you go to?

I went to Wearport. I found it a good course.....though I didn't have to work hard to pass.

Where are your origins?

Southern Counties.

What brought you up to the North East?

No reason really. I was on the Clearing House books....I was going to either Borough Road or Madeley College....Madeley promised me a place the year after. Then Wearport came along and said "we can offer you a place now." I was hoping for a transfer. I did my first year....at Wearport. Hoped to get a transfer but they wouldn't give it to me. We will take you now as a first year. But I had already done a year at college....So I did three full years at Wearport. I am doing Open University now...to help my career prospects. I have just finished my first year. But even then it is not going to be financially worth much. It's not just P.E. you know. Chatting the lads and the girls in the staff room....especially the men....we are on £80 - £90 a week....We can't afford it. We are going to get a small rise in January which will put me up to £87 a week or something. But it is a waste of time. I can't afford to stay in teaching. My wife was a teacher as well and she has just stopped working. We are alright for a year financially....but after that... I haven't got a choice. Even if we had more recognition in time and after school etc. even with more pay. I don't think they will pay us enough anyway....they won't pay it to make it worth my while. And I want to be out. If I can get a job that will pay me £100 per week. I would have to work longer hours...over all, but the intensity might not be as much. I can't see any choice. I won't get a scale 3 in P.E. I went to a college that didn't have a great P.E. reputation. That has definitely hit me. I think it held Don back. He thinks so too. If you went to Carnegie or Loughborough..I think that is wrong. I think there are too many elites in education. I'm anti comprehensive as well by the way.

Are you a political animal?

Not particularly. I don't believe in comprehensives....as a system. The cut backs will be an excuse for the failure of the system. I heard a Headmistress on the News At Ten....."I just got things going" she said, "and the cut backs are coming along and all our work is dashed." They are using the cut backs as an excuse...the educationalists. There's no point in my arguing (a note of despair).

Had the salary scales been different...if there had been a career pathway...that was worth while, you would still be quite happy with the job...the job itself?

The job itself is fulfilling. It's hard work....but hard work leads to satisfaction. I enjoy taking the after school activities.

Where do the satisfactions come? You are clearly brassed off with the whole business and yet there is a sense in which you have continued to pour a lot of your personal energy into it? There must have been some satisfactions?

Oh the satisfaction is in taking the teams after school....especially soccer teams....I'm sport crazy...that's why I came into P.E. teaching. I wouldn't have come into teaching except for P.E. If there hadn't been P.E. taught in school I wouldn't be a teacher. That is a fact. I'm not interested in going into the classroom. This is the problem I have got. As well as the financial problems I have the problem of when I come to 40 years of age, what am I going to do? I don't want to go into a classroom....This is one of the reasons that I want to go into Special Education. It is a different type of teaching. I have hope in that sense. I get a great deal of satisfaction from teaching kids who will listen to me. And I am getting across and they are working hard. It is a fantastic sensation....it's great. When you don't have to worry about the...making the kids work...they are doing it because they want to work.

So running football teams is one of your greatest loves? They just want to train and just get on with improving.

I do enjoy that. I also enjoy teaching subjects like gymnastics which I'm not strong at...I enjoy teaching a good gym lesson. Modern gymnastics which I enjoy teaching....I enjoy it with the first two or three years. I get great satisfaction out of all sport.. more out of soccer which I know more about. I hate having to see 30 lads out of 60 lads....some days....in the fifth year not doing P.E. "It's too cold to go outside." That really drags you down. It really depresses you that. A friend of mine who had a P.E. job in a Junior

School....Scale 2, a classroom teacher, non-P.E. He attended a P.E. course run by the P.E. Adviser...it was run in town. And he asked them what the main problem was in the Junior School? They said the safety angle. Because none of them are Main P.E. people. And he then told them all about safety....and they said what a great Course it had been. So I said...."Yes but where do you go from there?" So he said, "Well what is your main problem?" I said, "it is participation". "....full participation by the children". That's our main problem. Full participation by all people at all levels... and abilities....that's the main problem. The satisfaction people... kids...wanting to learn, and actually learning and then you think that you helped them to do it....that is 'the' perk.

I take it that there is little difficulty in the first two possibly three years about full participation. The difficulty is more in the fourth and fifth years?

Fourth years worse than the fifth year. The present fifth year were very bad when they were the fourth year, then they were very bad... As fifth years they have improved. I always think that the fourth years is the hardest year group to take.....

Is it worth it? How would you feel about a 'core' P.E. course for the first three years and then make it 'recreative' for those who wanted to do it thereafter?

The problem is...let's face it we are talking about the lower intellectual people usually....The boys and girls who are sitting at the side avoiding participating in P.E.....they have just as good...as much ability....The ones with little ability but are the higher intellectual ability, they will participate; they can get the satisfaction at their own level. But the kids that sit on the side...you can get up to 15 or even 20, depending on the weather we get...in games lessons especially...they are anti-rugby. These 20 will not participate in anything in the school. You can offer them everything....Art, P.E., Maths....you then start having your sin classes. That is the problem with your suggestion. Those who sit on the side in P.E. don't want to do anything....They would do

nothing. Many schools now have what we call 'sin bins'. You stick 20 kids in with a hard teacher....the old Sergeant Major discipline...and he looks after them. It works....of course it works...for the rest of the school. It takes them away.... they don't contaminate the rest of the school. It is a horrible thing to say. It works because you are segregating them. I agree with the suggestion (core + recreation)...that they shouldn't do P.E. It can make the job a lot easier for me. You are taking my problems away of course...But what do you do with my problem?

If you present alternatives you are more likely to get those who want to do P.E. in preference to other subjects or because they genuinely like the subject...I realise that you would have some pupils that are taking P.E. as they see it as a soft option..... you will never get the perfect system...but you would have a better chance of more educational success with some of the most hostile elements removed to everybody's benefit...I, like most P.E. teachers have, in the past, fought for 4th, 5th and 6th year P.E. and then as I see the disasters of the programme I sometimes wonder what is the point? The compulsion worries me.....why make them do any of the activities that are commonly offered. It will do very little good. Surely I can do more for them in a team....or a club on a week's camp or holiday venture...for those who want to be there. That keeps me enthusiastic for those who want to learn.

Take the educational system.....RoSLA hasn't worked in my eyes. The politicians again either left or right said that it had to be. But to be fair to the politicians....even if it was good for the kids, say next year, teachers find it very hard to say "it is harder to teach a fifth year pupil than a first year". It is harder to keep a fifth year pupil alive and going. Teachers won't admit to the politicians that RoSLA was good. But it just so happens that I honestly don't think RoSLA was any good at all... it was a bad thing. Well you came into the gym last Friday and I was taking those lads just then...9 lads playing football...At that time we had 9 lads to the two of us. Then after break we have 70 lads to the two of us. Ludicrous. Howard gives them about 20 lengths and then follows it with 'sharks and penguins....or something like that...'

They will do that....but you try and give them 'stroke improvement'.... the way you 'should' teach P.E., so the colleges say...so the colleges' say....well, they just wouldn't turn up. And fair enough they are getting some physical activity....just as they would if they were running round the field or running round the yard. But they are not doing an educational thing it is P.T. But they do it now every week....

TAPE INTERRUPTION AT THIS POINT

.....I just wondered whether the boys in college now...with their enthusiasm....do the colleges let the students know what the situations are in the schools...what really happens in the schools? Or do they have to find out when it is too late.

I have to say that I personally think that there is a lot of deception going on....I wouldn't be doing this research unless I was very interested in this very question. I try to avoid the deception....by giving the truth as best as I can understand it... but what is actually going on? There are three questions that I put to incoming recruits.....1. Do you know how much a teacher is paid? You would be surprised at the answers I get. Hardly any candidates, straight from school can conceive what £3,000 or £4,000 means in terms of 'a living wage'. 2. If you finish this course and there are no jobs at the end, what are you going to do? Most schools say 'this is rather a 'nice' little girl...not very scholastic...won't she make a 'nice' teacher.' Advise her to go into teaching and have not even considered the prospect that she may not get a job at the end of it. 3. Then I say to the 'nice' boys and girls...have you ever been at the rough end of an 'adolescents' tongue? At the receiving end of a precocious 14-15 year old? (part of explanation excluded at this point)an attempt is made to present the problems of pupils to the best teachers on earth.....those pupils who don't want to know about you, subjects, school, careers....anything that is presented to them.

It is a pity because...it really is only a small minority. No more than 10%.

It will vary from school to school. May be up to 25% in some schools depending on the way the authority selects the catchment areas.

I am in total sympathy with you. I just hope that you can find an escape route, because it seems as though so many people are trapped; they stay in teaching...the magic has gone, they have probably been very good teachers in their time....you can see that they have been sapped of their energy...They can't be bothered any more against some of the odds.....

I don't want to be like so many people in our staff room. I blame myself number one. I don't blame my school. I don't blame my college. I don't know the right people so I have no career prospects...A lot of people grease. A lot of people get to the top on their ability.... D. is getting the same. He has had a couple of Scale 3 interviews. And then he realises that he wasn't going to....with this authority.

I get the impression that the commitment is now going...and that P.E. is very very unstable.

It is shocking. I think that P.E. may disappear...yes. I think that sporting organisations have taken us for granted. For example, the F.A. do not appreciate the work that schools are doing. I went on a Full Badge course in City a couple of years ago. During the summer holidays. And a lot of professionals were there....footballers. And they were saying "Oh...teachers...all they do is to kick the ball about in an eleven a side..." Well a lot of lads do do that..... but most of us don't. Howard does skills with the kids...we do the scouting. The scouts never come to school matches. They only go to town matches. We do their scouting for them. We go to a coaching course and they think that the whole of the P.E. timetable should be football. You go to an A.S.A. course...more swimming. You go to a Badminton Course....should be doing more Badminton. They don't appreciate that you have two hours a week with these kids. We get a lot of backlash from the Organisations saying that we are not doing enough....of course we are not doing enough because we haven't got enough time. They have no idea of the problems we are under.

(anecdote of F.A. attitudes)

M.34/10

They brought in this Five Star Award thing...like the Sunday Times Gym thing...They have now got this football 'super schools' thing. The way that it is set out...it has never been set out by or for a teacher. The time element is fantastic. I tried to introduce it to my second years soccer lessons with 40 kids....and you can only work 8 kids at a time...And they are saying to me to do with kids of all abilities....for a start the bottom grade is too high.... they just want an England 11 of professional footballers. They are not worried about the bottom 20%.....The bottom grade is far too high for the average kid. The school team lad will get the grade... and the odd kids will get the gold.... The Athletics Award Scheme is quite good....T.M...ex-teacher, ex college lecturer..realised this...and guaranteed that the bottom performer would get a badge. In the football one the kids have got no chance.

We have a lot to learn from the Ski schools in this respect.
Tell me a bit about your Open University....how much of a struggle has that been to you?

This is my first year. I am waiting for the exam results. D. is in it this year as well. Nobody knows about it in the school actually. I have told the Headmaster....I think he has forgotten about it. So if you would keep that between you and me. Even from H. I must admit that I was doing less after school activities because of my O.U. I get more rewards out of it. I have done the Social Science Foundation Course.....Making sense of society. Most of it is very interesting though I found bits very boring. I really enjoyed it. I am doing psychology and something else next year...2nd level...But P.E. misses out. I was doing one night a week....and the essays of course... and the reading. It takes a lot of time. A good 20 hours or more a week. The trouble is that teachers make the best of it of course. There are more teachers than any other occupation. It was my friend that put me on to it. I am just waiting to see what my results are.

I am quite sure that you are right to cut the P.E. E.C.A's down,
although it is your first love, to concentrate on the O.U. Obviously
the next two years are going to be harder.....

M.34/11

If I stay on in teaching I shall definitely complete the O.U.

Do you live in Hucklebrough?

I live in town, yes.

Have they been fair to you financially?

With O.U.....Yes. They have given me a full grant. I got £53 or something. My exam occurred in the half-term. But I knew a lady who was given time off to attend the exam.

Had you heard that I.L.E.A. gave time off for revision?

No.

It appears that there are different systems in different authorities... which seems monstrously unfair.

Well the boss recommended me and I got the grant. My wife was sick at the time of the Summer School so that I was excused that. I wish that I had gone. One of the questions on the exams was done at the Summer school. But the Authority wouldn't have paid for my Summer School...I might have got my Summer School paid...but I wouldn't have got my other grant then.

How much has it cost you out of your own pocket?

Maybe £20. I was given books....by a chap I know...he gave me the books. It would have been another £40 I suppose. It has hardly cost me nothing. It has cost me time. But the P.E. has definitely been hit. I must admit...lets face it, we hark on about these after school activities etc.....and when you decide that you haven't got promotion prospects anyhow you can say "Right I'll knock my classes on the head I'll do this instead." We don't have to do these extras... When I came to this school we had 5 basketball teams, 5 rugby teams, 5 soccer, hockey teams....I now take three soccer and H. takes 4 rugby teams. No basketball at all.

I think that there are only two schools playing basketball in the town at the moment. Who took all those teams that you mentioned just now?

There were the three P.E. teachers. There was another chap who works on the pastoral side...he was a history teacher but very sport inclined. He realised that this after school activity was getting him nowhere... started to concentrate on the pastoral side....He's now got a Scale 4 pastoral job...P.E. just wasn't counted. He took a rugby team...he realises that it was getting him nowhere....

Interruption

...he has now got his Scale 4. So by putting his P.E. aside he has gained....That is a fact. So we have gone from something like 13 teams...14 teams....to about half that number now. That is in three years. Non P.E. staff helped out and kept the teams going. Those people were good....A.F. was a County Rugby Player...B.S. was a 1st team Rugby player....'X' was a hockey player....

That was for boys?

Yes for boys. It has all changed. It is a sad story. My enthusiasm has gone. To his credit the last person to lose his enthusiasm was Howard. He was the last one to lose it. I was the second last.

A very telling story that.

We should be the last one.

But don't you think that P.E. teachers have been treated very badly in this town?

The boss here...it was a Secondary Modern...he panders to his academics.

Do you ever talk to the head about these sort of things? Is he aware of the changes?

M.34/13

I think that he is aware, yes. Sometimes parents who are keen come up and complain.....

Thank you for your time. And I do appreciate that you have been so frank in our discussion....And I do hope that you find a job that you consider worth while.

That's the way it is. As I say....no one pressed me into the job... I went into it. If I could see a three somewhere....I'd do it. And work hard at it. Then I'd be stuck with the problem that Howard's got. I'd have more enthusiasm for a few years....He has got Head of Year now you know...on top of the same post he has now.

Will he be staying in P.E?

Yes. He will be staying and doing Head of Year as well. That will affect the P.E. as well of course.

End of Recording

No Follow-up Comments

The Presidential Student Campaign role that that is going to make.....
put an imposition on you when you get into any sort of Secondary School.....
where they're supposed to be democratic but manifestly are not. Do you
feel that a terrible frustration?

I honestly don't. For the simple reason that when I came, honestly, I knew it would be different and I think from the day I left the President and all the rest of it, I mean I left in the July and at that stage I thought I had burnt my boats because I hadn't got a job. I was very fortunate, I got this job four days after I left college in July (1)

So you weren't on the rack for long?

No, not really, but at the same time when people are starting looking for jobs in May, June and July came round I thought well really they're not interested in a militant student president. At the same time I felt sure that my references were O.K. because I didn't do anything highly controversial at college. I never really went overboard with it.....

Do you regard yourself as militant?

No, not really. Not at all....I could see both sides of the coin, it wasn't a militant union I'm sure it still isn't a militant union.....

Do you see yourself as just a little bit of a rebel?

Oh yes, in a way, but at the same time you can't afford to go overboard, in my position now. Certainly last year I didn't put a foot wrong I don't think. Certainly to do with unions, I'm in the N.U.T. here but I don't consider it sort of....a militant action to join a Union.

When you are on your probationary year you're not in a position to start rocking anybody's boats.

That's right. You're not in a position to say anything. No. I didn't. And I haven't as yet. And I don't really feel the inclination because I think in a lot of ways it's not a game any more. I mean your career depends on it now. I'm not prepared to stick my neck out, at all, at the moment. Perhaps because I don't feel hard done to. I mean I'm happy here.....

You've joined the N.U.T. Are you what they call an active member?
Do you attend all the meetings regularly?

No, I go to the odd meeting now and again. There again the N.U.T. in Hucklebrough - the ones I've been to - it's sort of.....uh, there's this chap, no telling where he's from but he's sort of a loud mouthed forceful - idiot and it annoys me so I don't bother. I let him get on with it really which is a terrible thing to say. (2)

There isn't anything to capture your interest?

No there isn't. Not in that field.

Unexciting?

That's right. So I've just forgotten all about it to be quite honest with you. I've just put it completely at the back of my mind - I'm still in contact with some of the people at college but it no longer interests me to a certain extent. And I've left it behind completely.

I think a very nice study would be to see what's happened to all the College Presidents of Students Unions to see where they've all gone to because some of them are highly articulate and some of them are militant and I think...and for their militancy on the whole that I think there are a lot of things to put right....I suppose it's like doing this research.....

Yes....But there again there are ways of growing up and I think some of the Students Union efforts were a bit pathetic to put it mildly..(3)

Were you born in North?

No. I was born in Midlands actually. But I moved when I was one.

And where have you spent most of your life?

In Yarmond. Until I was 18. Four years in Kingstay and I actually live in Darton now when I work here.

Do you miss Yarmond?

Not really, no. I was up there yesterday. I went home, I don't often go home but I went home on Saturday - my mother's birthday in fact - and I went up the dales, it was very bleak, you know....(4)

It wasn't a very pleasant week-end.

Well it wasn't. I think once the snow comes down its all a different world. You think about sitting in front of an open log fire with the dog here and it can't be very much like that...that's the way we all imagine it.

Did you have problems finding somewhere to live when you came here?

You didn't know Hucklebrough before you came here?

I didn't know it at all. I'd never been here. I wanted somewhere in the North East....in fact I only applied for jobs in the North East and that was another thing that I really felt that I'd mucked up a bit I felt that I shouldn't have been so restricted. At the end, coming up to July I applied for one in Lancashire, one in Midlands but I didn't really want to go to either. I wanted the North East because.....

I wonder why that is. Sometimes it is very difficult to describe why you want to....

That's true, I honestly don't know, I suppose I just thought that this was a nice place to be. I was never ever afraid of making friends or anything; obviously all my friends left really when I stayed on so that.....if it was a hurdle at all it was a hurdle when I stayed on when all my friends were going off earning..... But it didn't bother me going to a new place. I just fancied the North East But I don't know why.

What's your opinion of Hucklebrough?

It's a great joke in Darton - Hucklebrough and I'm sure Darton's a great joke in Hucklebrough. It tends to be. If you talk to people about Hucklebrough, it doesn't matter who you talk with - you know.....it's like Luton you know...you hear people making mock of Luton or Wigan or somewhere like that and they tend to make fun of people in Hucklebrough. I don't know why.

When you hear this what effect does it have on you?

It's just a joke. Like an Irish joke. It's not serious but at the same time I feel that Hucklebrough people are a race apart. But I felt the people in Kingston were the same. I suppose it's because you're cut off. Though Darton is to a certain extent, but you've got to go out of your way to get to Hucklebrough the same as we did to go to Kingston. I mean you had to make a specific effort to get there. Hucklebrough is just out on a limb out here. I find that everybody is related to everybody else it would appear. I mean I'm out of it in a certain respect but people like Judy who'll talk to you, she's from Easingley. She's taught here all her teaching years. Lilian, the swimming instructor, she's in Hucklebrough and whoever they talk about they all tend to know who it is. And if they don't know them they know of them through somebody else.

You feel just a little bit outside the Hucklebrough family as it were?

Em....I don't really want to get in on the family, I don't socialise at all now. I would never want to come and live here. I'm happy to be sort of on the fringe. I'm happy to come in and do whatever and at

half past five go home, go up to Darton and forget all about Hucklebrough. I don't like to go home and think about it. When I've had matches here on a Saturday and you see the kids in the town I don't like it at all. To have to say good-bye once you've done sort of a whack so to speak.

You've seen enough of them by then?

Yes, that's right, I have.

You don't identify with the Hucklebrough problem very much.

Em....I am a bit bigoted in that respect when I feel that a lot of the Hucklebrough problem is self-inflicted - that's me being bigoted and fascist probably - I've known people who have gone to college from Hucklebrough and have come back to Hucklebrough knowing fine well there are no jobs. I can't understand that at all. But at the same time it's difficult to say when you ought to break up your family unit and get off somewhere else to find a job. But from what I've seen and what I've heard people do stay around here and if there's no jobs they accept their lot and that's it, they're very philosophical I think. Are you from Hucklebrough? (5)

I'm not, no. I'm a Yorkshireman originally. I've taught in West Riding. Manchester, South of the Country then I came up here to City 24 years ago, and taught at a men's College in City for nine years before moving to Battle Cross.

As I say, I feel it's a self-inflicted problem.

Coming to the school context now the schools on the whole (if I make an assumption that's wrong you correct me won't you) I find that the schools from a point of view of the plant and facilities and provision are excellent, swimming pool, sports hall and yet I've made errors in making that judgement. How do you feel the facilities are?

Well, you obviously know that Dovedale have a split site basis and the first and second years are down at the old site and that to me is.....

I could not wish for better facilities in the Main site. I would like better allocation to avoid overcrowding on one day - leaving facilities standing idle on another.

I hadn't appreciated that. I thought that had been resolved but it hasn't. So Dovedale is two sites, and there is about a mile difference.

A mile down the road. Well it's just over $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, I'm not sure. Anyway it's down the road and it's a $\frac{1}{4}$ of an hour walk. Down there are the first and second years. Now this is where you start treading on uneasy ground because I think everybody apart from those who are permanently down there criticises the goings on at the lower site. In a certain respect the facilities are abysmal I mean the whole building ought to be blown up as far as I'm concerned.

That's down on the lower side?

Yes, the whole place....it's not just old because old buildings... obviously there is character and all the rest to it but to me it's totally inadequate. They've got a raw deal down there but at the same time the people that are down there don't seem to worry about it. They think it's the best place....on earth...or even if they don't think that they are not prepared to make any great statements as to the way it needs changing. I'm thinking of classrooms, I mean there is a whole pile of pre-fab buildings out there all cold, damp, leaking this, and the desks are in a terrible state the chairs don't go under the desks, all little things but when you put them together they add up to a you know....a pretty poor lot. On the P.E. side down there there's plenty of field - that's great - and, on the whole it's a very sheltered area - it's trees, surrounded by trees so from that point of view they're pretty good fields and they're flat and they're all the rest of it. You couldn't really ask for much more, in the field area. But eh.....

I think I first met Judy down there. When I talked to her it was in the Summer and it was rather nice down there. Take me from there...

As I say plenty fields, that's fine. That's out, the games side on the field - well certainly hockey and from the boys point of view presumably rugby and football. It's fine. Now you get to the Netball, I spent the whole of last year, my first year teaching, there was no Netball Court at all, and I used to spend 20 minutes of the lesson with a bit of chalk running round marking lines down for Netball. It was a problem last year - I thought it was anyway. Obviously Judy and Mary the other female P.E. teachers, they lived with the problem, they had resolved it and all the rest of it - there was a Netball court down there but when the tarmac went down the lines never followed. They have followed now. I don't know who asked them to put the court on a slope but anyway it's on a slope now. Rather than on a flat surface behind the gym.

And there's just one netball court?

One netball court, yes, on a slope.....

First and second year classes will be fairly large classes aren't they?

There'll be 31....32 in some of them. There seem to be a lot more girls than boys.

One Netball Court and 30 girls isn't fun.

No. It's not really. But, as I say, at least there is a court now. But another problem I am finding is - not a problem - we haven't really started netball yet, we've been doing hockey. Now the Court's up it sort of looks out onto this whole row of prefab buildings and obviously one lot distracts the other lot. One would have thought - I haven't yet experienced it - but I would imagine that there would be a lot of distraction with the netballers watching the people doing maths and vice-versa, and I would have felt it would have been better to put the court by the gym....behind the gym where you're sort of isolated and your class is.....

Who decides these sort of things?

I don't know. One minute we hadn't got one and Brian had been phoning up and the next minute it arrived. But it arrived, of course, in the summer about June. When the Netball season was well and truly over. But that's the way it goes. There is a gym down there but there again it's very poor....it's very cold which you might think is O.K. for P.E. It's not. Obviously somebody thinks its O.K. for P.E. - they're running around we don't need heating in there type of thing but it is bitterly cold. First thing in mornings.....

Do you ever complain to anyone about this or are you just sort of getting on with it?

We just get on with it really, I think. I think everybody just gets on with it. Because I've found down the lower side if you make an observation like that to anybody on the lower side who is in charge of the lower side they tend to get....it's a very personal comment, it is sensitive, and the Head, I think he feels a lot of comments are criticisms of him and not of the set-up. So it's unfortunate that....in that respect, anyway that's the lower site, and it's a shambles. I find difficulty anyway. Well, for example, whose going down there this afternoon? Judy will be going down, she's up here now - then in a $\frac{1}{4}$ hour break she has to walk a mile down there to take an all sides games lesson. Now if the weather was bad there'd be nowhere to take them. We've only got one indoor facility so...it's fine today, fine.....she can take them out, but if the snow is on the ground or ice obviously you can't take them out.....

So all first and second year P.E. takes place down there?

Yes, that's right.

And with inferior facilities and if it's...if you run into a batch of snow or anything you've had it?

I believe they used to join up and occupy the kids - boys and girls together, but obviously nobody was learning anything then, they felt.

Well they just box and cox then? Boys in one week and girls in another.

No, they have a double period of games which is outside and a double P.E. period which means that if it's bad weather then they get one double period a week of the indoor.

Then they lose outdoor?

They lose outdoor, yes.

You just fill in with anything to keep them happy?

Well, that's right. In a classroom it's.....

So it seems to me there are real problems with that first and second year. If you think in terms of what you would like....the foundation that you would like to build in physical education with your first years and which seem to be the most promising ones from the curriculum point of view. That's a real constraint isn't it?

If you were to look at the changing facilities down there as well they are abysmal. There are two cubicles (this big) and in here you put 15 kids to get changed and you put 15 kids in the other one - this size. I mean I'm not underestimating or exaggerating - it is this size. I think that if you went to look you'd bear that out. And there are two showers - you know, if you put the showers on the water comes out, so you know....the kids are dying to get into the showers - they think it's a great treat altogether and then you want to hear them when they've got marvellous facilities for showers, they don't want to go in. They've got to that stage where.....

That's right. You're not establishing the sort of traditions down there that you're wanting to carry on up here are you?

Well, in essence they've had two years of going out in bad weather when really, if they could have them in a gym or sports hall it would be fine. The freezing cold and whatever, they're totally sick of the whole set up by the time they get to second year. They come in, they have got to try and get changed in this little area and there's water on the floor and their vests fall down and their socks fall in and you feel embarrassed for them really. I know they don't know any better in a certain respect, I know they haven't seen what's up here to a large extent or if they have they know it's something they're going to get when they grow older. But at the same time, you know, you do feel a bit of an ogre when you put them in these showers and all the rest. So altogether I'm happier when I come up from there. Another point of course is the discipline. If you have cause, not particularly in the P.E. Dept., I know a lot of teachers, if you're up and down like a yo-yo all day you can't say to the kid, "well come and see me at break time" because you've got to be up here and that's not just for discipline, if they want a book that you haven't got and it's in the staffroom or it might be up here you know you can't say, "come and see me."

It disrupts any continuity with the pupils

Well quite. There isn't any 'cos you're up here. And I find myself - my timetable....I'm down on Tuesday that's the first time I go down, Tuesday afternoon. And then Thursdays the next time down there. Thursday morning, first two and Thursday afternoon last two.

You were talking about the 1st and 2nd year - they get a double indoor and a double games. What happens in the 2nd year?

The same

Third Year?

Third year they get the double games lesson, the single swimming lesson, and another indoor lesson for a single period. That's third year. So they still get four periods but split into three different....

Do the first years and second years get any swimming?

No, that's the other sad thing. It's been suggested over and over again, I think B. would love to have.....well there's the difficulty in getting the children up here supervised, plus there's the business of wet weather, or if you're bringing them up for a double lesson or whatever, it would have to be a double lesson, of swimming, perhaps a double lesson's too long and then you send them back down in the cold and the rain and all the rest of it. But B. feels the other way around, even if you've got to bus the kids but you know what that's like in this set-up. Cuts and all the rest of it. They don't get any swimming at all, no. We have a swimming club on a Thursday and they can come up for that and a lot of them do but that's not a lesson, that's just recreation. (6)

In the last two years at school, the 3rd and 4th and whatever the last two years at school, what happens to the P.E. then? Thinking in terms of before they leave at 16.

The 4th and 5th year they all get two single periods inside, and a swimming period, so all get three single periods.

So that's an indoor - could be gym, dance or indoor facilities, swimming?

Last main lesson and another indoor lesson. Three separate. Singles.

I'm suspect of single lessons, do they work? I can see a short session of swimming could work. I'm not so sure about the others. How long is a single period?

Well this is it, it varies. If you happen to be lucky enough to get the single.....

When you see 8 period day, I thought My God they're only $\frac{3}{4}$ off 35 minute lessons.

They're 35 minute lessons, yes.

And therefore by the time you got them into the swimming pool or into certain situations you've got about 10 minutes practical work.

Well that's right. Eh....in some respects you haven't even got that if you're lucky enough to get them in the morning - single lessons - you have got 40 minutes but you've still got to get them changed both ends of the lesson - that lesson they just had now - the bell goes at 20 past 1, and then you have to register - Well you'll notice I didn't get back here until after $\frac{1}{2}$ past, the kids won't get back here until after $\frac{1}{2}$ past, then they've got to get changed, then they've got to get in the pool, then they've got to get out and get changed for 2 o'clock. So in essence that is a 10 minute lesson. Then you haven't got.....

Do they get a double on top of those three singles?

No, only three singles. Last year they only used to have two singles. Now they get three singles. (7)

There is a conflict in the school about physical education in the last two years isn't there?

In a way, yes. B. wanted athe school numbers are dropping, the school roll is dropping and staff is the same basically, so to fill our timetable in they really had to give us more work... There was too much for two teachers but not enough for three teachers in each side. And I don't know how we managed it. Maths wanted an extra period, so they got an extra period of maths.

We used to have a pastoral period for every class and that's been done away with, there's no pastoral period. So somehow they have managed to find....I think they've dropped an Art period as well, and they have now, say, an extra P.E. lesson. (8)

Are you full-time P.E.? You don't take any other subject?

We are all full-time.

Would you prefer it that way?

I think so, yes. There was a time when I felt.....I used to enjoy.... Maths was my second subject. Well, I say second subject, at college we had to do another subject, for a year. We spent one morning a week for the year, the second year, I did maths. No I don't think so, I'm happy just doing what I'm doing. I say just doing...In a sense if you're teaching....to me anyway....if you're teaching kids maths, let's say period 3 then period 4 you've got them up for swimming or something I think there could be a conflict there. It's two different subjects. Why, if I've been annoyed with them in maths for not doing their homework, should that carry through to the swimming. Honestly I think it would.

Whilst I'm interested in trying to see the problems that you're up against which you're doing very nicely it can be very depressing just looking for the problems. Where are the highlights of your job so far? Where have you seen the excitements and said, "I've really enjoyed that".

I will, I wouldn't say how great...you know...the P.E. department have really been to me I mean I have been very happy here. Now Judy is the best thing since sliced bread really, in...in helping me. Not sitting me down you...by example more than anything. She has a great rapport with the kids and you try and pick out the good bits and....I wouldn't say try to copy her but it's nice to think of lots of her little catch phrases, type of thing, or that's a good

way of going about it....but at the same time because I feel that she is so good it's a little bit depressing at times when you think she has been teaching 18 years. But it's difficult to keep reminding myself that that's 18 years work - she's got this because of 18 years experience. So it was a little bit depressing all the way along really, it still is to a certain extent. (9)

Are you in the shadow?

Yes, that's it. She isn't at all, don't get me wrong.

She can't help it!

That's it, she can't help it. And she doesn't.....

Nonetheless, it's real to you.

Yes, that's right. Now M., the other one, M's much older, she'll be retiring in the next five years.

There are problems there aren't there? There are problems that I don't understand. I came in the other day, I think it was Friday and B. said, "Oh you can't talk to her" because the communication's broken down between her and him and there's something very difficult about it.

Well yes, I suppose, putting it a bit mildly. No, ever since I've known her she's had trouble. Her husband died last year, February, and he was very ill with cancer from when I arrived at the school. The day I arrived she arrived in tears. So I've never really known the true M. If you know what I mean. Then she didn't seem to get over the death of her husband, understandably. And then she had a break-in in the house and so it had gone on and on you know, this bad luck business and I think there's been a lot of pressure on all of us I think.

This is really why I raised this. In other words if I trespass unintentionally nonetheless that must have made life a bit difficult for you.

Yes, I'd say so.

When there is a third partner for whatever reason distressed or under par not working as closely as you would want, it must make life a little bit difficult. Or is that not true?

Well I think that if I had my lot of teaching....if I was a little bit disillusioned with it well I could then....or if I wasn't a little bit like Judy who is very philosophical about everything - nothing bothers Judy at all, you know. It's all taken in her stride. But I think if I had been teaching let's say, 10 years on a Scale 1 and was getting a bit sick of the whole lark, I could see it would have been dreadful. But as it is in this side, in the women's side, we all sort of pamper to her in a certain respect and because I'm new and still keen I'm happy to sort of let the water hold me a bit. And Judy's happy because....anything for a peaceful time. But the men aren't happy and you can understand that. I think they're getting a bit sick of the whole situation.

I felt when I came in on Friday, and this is all supposition, that Brian was very very tense, unusually tense. Now whether it was a particular incident or whether it's a build-up in his tension generally just now, but he said he was pretty fed up with life. Does that spread on to you? Does that tension influence you at all?

Not really, no because.....

He was trembling, he wasn't steady. Now had that been a particular incident or is that the state that he's in at the moment?

I think that's probably the state....I mean he's got, if you look

at his situation, I mean I'm probably speaking out of turn here, but I think he's you know....he's head of department and he's got two lads (p.e.Staff) there who have got itchy feet to get out of the school, or get into another scale, understandably I mean.....

They're both on Scale 1?

They're both on Scale 1, there is no chance of a Scale 2 here, unless it's on the pastoral side. So they want to get out. Not only do they want to get out, they're wanting to get out and do anything now that brings in more money. They are up to the back end. At the same time B. can understand that, but he can't understand it when.....they're not as intense as they were. Obviously that annoys him and there's not a lot he can do about it. They've got set in their ways now.They're just happy to drift along until something better comes up. So I suppose he's sick of that, for a start, I know he's sick of that, for a start. Then you come into our side, I suppose he still considers me as somebody who has got to be cherished, you know, I've got to be brought gently along into the way of things. I mean I haven't been here that long I don't think, I am any great problem. At the same time it must still be on his mind. He can't put too much pressure on me.... in case things go wrong which I suppose....Now Judy's the mainstay of the whole set-up.....

What I felt in some of the schools that the newer members of staff didn't know quite who was the boss. Is it Brian or is it Judy? Is Judy a Scale 2?

Yes and so is M.

And so I got the impression that some of the newer members on the women's side didn't know whether to refer to the head of the total department or the head of women's. Is it like that here? Is it a bit difficult?

No. Not really. Mary is definitely the senior female member in terms of how long she's been teaching. But at the same time I would never go to her about anything at all, ever. I would go to Judy initially.

Because you've got a rapport with Judy?

Yes, but at the same time Judy and Brian, I think it would be safe to say, get on like a house on fire. I mean they were at the same school together before the amalgamation here. So they know each other. I'm sure each one of them has their own little bone about the other if the need arises, but at the same time I think they know exactly what's what. So I don't find conflict there at all. I mean if it's something Judy can deal with fair enough, if not then I go to Brian. em....but ultimately Brian is head of department, and everybody recognises that. I think M. sometimes wishes he wasn't but that's been the case....but certainly.....But Brian, he reckoned M. had been on a three day week since last September, you know, and that was annoying him. I think it's annoying everybody really because we're all losing free periods which you don't mind....but I think Brian felt that it would be better if M....well got out, temporarily anyway or sort of till Christmas lets say. Got herself better or whatever and then you could get in a supply and everything would be once more stable. But there was a supply....that was another thing, last year. There was a supply for a long while when M. was off when her husband was very ill and after that when he'd died....I think it was something like eight weeks she was away and there was a supply in, she was primary trained, her main subject was R.E. so obviously she was a very nice girl but at the same time you know.....

She wasn't really with the P.E?

No, that's right. I mean she did her best and she was a very nice person. That wasn't a help either...but...you tend to forget all about that now. (10)

Coming back to your own work. Going back to the question that I asked before. Where are your own sort of high spots? Really enjoying the work?

I wouldn't say that there is any one particular thing that I'm really enjoying. I'm enjoying it a lot better this year on the whole because I know the kids a lot better now. I've ironed out a lot of my early problems. I'm pleased to say if the highlight of my year was when they took away from me the troublesome fourth years I had last year, now I can only assume that was done..... that they observed that and they took them away. Judy's got both of those troubles....what to me were....there was only one troublesome one, I had some bad fifth years last year which I never struck it off with at all and I had one bad fourth year which is now a fifth year and Judy's got them. I can only imagine they took them off me and gave them to Judy so they get back.....

All newcomers, whether they're young teachers or old teachers coming into an already on-going system, the difficult forms are 4th and 5th. You're probably finding the 3rd year is more difficult now, I don't know.

One lot of third years I am. No that's the high spot the fact that I've got rid of.....I would hate to have carried on because I felt that I'd got to a point whereby it was downhill all the way.....Nobody was gaining anything at all. Had it continued this year.....Doesn't bear thinking about.

It seems a sensible move doesn't it?

It does actually. Had I had them again this year then it would have gone from bad to worse, I feel sure.

And do you feel that Brian did this or Judy did this or did you ask for it to be done?

No I didn't ask for it. I mean I don't know whether it was just timetabling, it may have been coincidence, I don't know.

It wouldn't do your confidence any good and it wasn't doing them any good.

No, quite. So I say, Judy's got them now and I don't doubt for one minute she's got them just right. Em...But as I say, I'm getting to know the kids a lot better now. These are high spots really believe it or not, they are. Not expecting as much as I did expect from them. I'd been to school where the discipline was such that you wouldn't have dreamt of doing anything at all you know, untoward, and if you did then you were sort of sat on and that was the end of the matter. And I tended to feel that you could get all kids to do that when in fact you shouldn't expect all kids to do that and I think having got over that now if I've got.....I've got three classes of fourth year ones. A very bright set and the other two are pretty.....you know, dull sets. And rather than expecting them to do in everything, you know, in dress, behaviour, physical performance, I've sort of set the standard for them and that's fine, I'm getting on a lot better now. Not putting...you know...having a conflict with them I think that's it and I've learned that from Judy. The things she demands of one set of kids are totally different from the things she demands from another set. And that's in everything. And because you don't have a conflict you get on with the job. Last year I would have made a big fuss if a kid hadn't got blue shorts on. This year if one of the dull kids comes and she brings green shorts well fair enough, lets get on with the job. She's changed and that's it. So why put yourself in conflict? No rapport at all with the kids or one that is totally destructive rather than anything else. So those are, as I say high spots, that I've learned now that you can't treat all the kids the same. So as I say that's another set up I can't really think of any....I can't pick out instances that were fantastic I don't think. I don't know whether you want me to do that.....

No not at all. I get the impression that you're enjoying the work this year, generally.

A lot more. A lot better than I was last year. Em...the first term last year was obviously all new and I was just getting to find my feet, the second term was very waring and I was beginning to doubt whether I should be here at all.

Did you have lots of tears and lots of unhappy moments?

I didn't actually. I just....I just considered the job 9 - 4 or whatever 9 - 5 and I just did it very grudgingly. I didn't get too depressed with it but it was something apart from me altogether I just used to come and do it and if I lived through the day that was fine. No, it didn't produce tears or anything like that I mean....I wouldn't have wished it to sort of beat me in that respect.

If you were explaining to some of your old colleagues at college by comparison with the schools that you had on school practice, how do the pupils compare? Is this a difficult school for you to work in or is it a sort of...is there a routine or a tradition that makes life reasonably straightforward for you?

I think the discipline in the school is the best I've seen..... says she who has only been on 3 teaching practices but compared with the other, the three practices I had, the discipline here is fantastic. To me, I mean, there's nobody, I don't think there's one kid that anybody's dispaired of. And in the other schools, there seemed to be a great air of dispair about the whole set up, you know. Fred Bloggs is in again. God what are we going to do with him? type of job. And it wasn't just Fred Bloggs it was Fred Bloggs and his hundred friends. In this school.....

So you have your share of difficult children but it's not unbearable?

No, that's right. There is a channel, if you wish to follow that channel whereby...and you tend to find it that the kids you are having difficulty with, other people are as well. And so it's nice to know you're not an isolate and you know there is somebody who

can fettle them if need be. And I've never had cause to sort of call on the big boys as you might say, but if I did I'm sure they would be more than helpful. But there again, that's another thing when you're with somebody like Judy who can manage everything herself completely, you feel a bit of a....defeatest if you give in to it and ask help.

None of the boys or girls has really upset you then and you've had to refer back?

Well I wouldn't have done last year really because of feeling an inadequacy if I had, I would have felt inadequate.

You would have felt a failure because you had to refer somebody back

Yes, that's it.

You want to stand on your own feet.

Yes, that's right, I think that's natural but this year I've only got one bad class and they happen to be third years, and they're terrible people. I have them Monday mornings, I've had them. So the week's over now. Everything's plain sailing from now on. I used to have them on Fridays and I had a dreadful Friday until it was over. But there again the anticipation is always worse than the realisation.

Do you do much practice? How much time do you give in lunch hours and evenings?

Well that again is a point for debate because....you know I say it blandly....Judy and I do everything together. Judy does it all I'm always there. But Judy is so good at everything. She sort of gets on with it. And I'm learning a lot from the practices I have, of my own, first, second years netball. That is the only thing I can do on my own.

First and Second Netball Teams?

Yes, now added to that on Monday lunchtime there's Netball - third and fourth years which I always go to but Judy takes it so to speak. I just do anything that needs to be done, if she delegates anything but often she doesn't. It's just a case of I'm learning, well not from that really, but how to coach well. Obviously she's got it off to a fine art now. Tuesdays, it's the same thing, Netball. Wednesday, there's basketball. Now I don't know an awful lot about basketball, so that's really a learning session for me. There's nothing on Monday night. Tuesday night there's matches. Netball matches. Wednesday night there's trampolining, which again Judy takes and I'm there in support - or there, learning again. I think I'm learning from all these. Thursday lunchtime there's swimming, which Lilian, the swimming teacher, she goes to as well. And they're there for recreation. There is a swimming squad who have a third of a length of the pool. And then there's two thirds and there's beginners at the beginners end and then there's the kids.....

And that's all in a lunch hour is it?

Thursday lunch time, yes. Thursday night again is basketball or if there is a match that has to be played then the match is played on Thursday, usually. Friday lunch time is hockey. I really like hockey. I feel I've got a little more to offer in hockey than any of the others. And that again is a joint session, Judy and myself both do that as well. This is the one thing that I feel.....I wouldn't say I know more than Judy about it because I'm sure I don't.

Do you feel you would like a little more elbow room there?

I would, yes. But there again I'd still be working on a rapport with the kids, I would welcome it but at the same time....I'm frightened of the kids actually. I'm frightened of the kids....taking advantage

in a practice time, and then not being able to....I mean I haven't actually it but I can imagine it could easily happen, I can see that it could happen. And then just because in the Netball team when we put on a netball lesson they think they're Gods gift...you know. Even though I do want elbow room I'm still happy to still learn how to get this break between what's a lesson time and what's a recreation.

Do you resent giving up as much time as you are giving up?

What I do resent is that I haven't got a car. I really resent hanging around after school. I resent nothing until the time when I leave the school gate and then it's a trek down to the train station and / or the bus station and there's a $\frac{1}{2}$ hour wait if you've just missed one bus and you don't get back until $\frac{1}{2}$ seven or 8 o'clock at night. That's what I resent. But I'm working on this car lark so...I think if I don't get a car quickly. I don't begrudge one instant...the time spent with kids.

What about your social life? Are you locked into other activities?

I'm locked into nothing, nothing on the sporting side, nothing at all. Don't ask me why.

Once you get home you'll be tired and so on but I wondered what you do for recreation. Watching T.V?

Yes, watching tele. I go out and meet friends but there again a lot of my friends are from college originally, teaching in Darton. I'm actually living with three girls in the same house, one of the girls owns the house, and we were all at college together in different years, but I know them all.

One of the problems among young teachers, as research has shown, there is widespread loneliness.

No. Not in this situation. I haven't made any new friends in Darton to be truthful, there again I haven't really gone out of my way to make new friends.

You don't go to any art classes or anything?

I don't. No. I go home and watch the tele. and I go out just to the pub or wherever....All the friends I've got are teaching friends. From college basically and acquaintances of theirs. I do feel that I'm missing out on something sometimes. I suppose I'm just lazy, once I get in at night I have my tea and I just want to sit down.

Were you tired in your first year? - Weary?

I was. I was very.....I wouldn't say nervous....but I was very tense the first term. Well, for all the year. The summer term was better but now I sort of just take it in my stride. Day and day after day. I don't lose any sleep over a situation.

Looking back on your course has it prepared you well for the job?

No. That's a sweeping statement obviously. (11)

Have you been asked to teach anything you've felt totally inadequate about?

End of Recording

Follow-up Comments

1. I no longer see the point in fighting battles which are never likely to be won by me. I refuse to allow myself to get "worked up".
2. The N.U.T. in Hucklebrough is a talking shop for loud mouthed militant idealists - I'm not interested!
3. College can be a "jumping off" point for a career in politics and/or a life of seeking the ideal...or, as in my case - an enjoyable isolated incident in ones life.
4. There is little point in harbouring homesickness...if you did, you would miss out on much of interest in your present surroundings.

5. It is totally bigoted and idealistic to imagine that people, who have commitments to Hucklebrough and are, for example, made redundant, should move to a less depressed area. I intended my criticism to be aimed at those who could move - as small a crowd as they may be.
6. The lower site is a problem because of the poor facilities. It is difficult to apportion blame for this because (a) you cannot contact the people who "designed" it and (b) even if you could, where does the money for improvements come from? and (c) the people you tend to blame are the school Heads who, one presumes, are as perturbed with the situation as are you, but who take criticism as a personal insult. The tragedy of the lower site is that it is the framework around which you build the aura of the school, the aspirations of the children and it's an abysmal framework. The kids are already disillusioned by the time they reach "normality", and the main site.
7. Single periods of 35 minutes in which the kids have to get changed, twice in effect, are worse than useless. Lesson P.E. content often suffers to the gain of good discipline or vice versa. When I am writing my "diary" of lesson content it is often difficult to evaluate just what you did with your 15-20 minutes!!
8. When the school reports are compiled - have a guess where P.E. comes in the list of 28 possible subjects!! Have a guess where we come in the line at parent/teacher meetings - that's right - last!! No, there's no conflict we just lie down and take it.
9. I was very evasive because all my highlights appear to be negative ones - for example, the kids don't riot.
10. Life was difficult - it is now improving. Consequently one can say that these problems which lead to a break

down in communication and unpleasantness are only temporary - certainly in our school - but nonetheless they are meaningful at the time and a real problem then.

11. A very sweeping statement!
- (a) College lulled us into a false sense of security. We were led to believe that discipline problems didn't exist, and if they did, they were wantonly self inflicted.
- (b) An assumption, that all kids want to learn
- (c) We were never told about the different abilities within an age group - not physical abilities but intellectual abilities - at least, the problems that can be encountered were never discussed.
- (d) We spent far too little time on Teaching Practice (12 weeks in all at 3 different schools with 1 week preparation added to this for each one).
- (e) We spent far too much time on Gym and Dance, Netball and Hockey and not half enough on Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton etc.
- (f) While much of the education course was of great interest - it was not always relevant - we spent too much time discussing problems in the Primary School.

Did you get married at the end of your College course?

Yes.

Is your wife a teacher?

Yes, she was in her third year when I was in my first so she had been teaching at Northgate for a couple of years by then.

Is that what brought you to the North East?

Yes. I don't particularly like it up here. If you remember in '75 they were closing everything up and it was very difficult to get a job. And our idea was to stay up here for a year and move elsewhere, but the situation is such that we have stayed. Now we have just had our first child six weeks ago and my wife stopped working.

Exciting to have the child but you'll feel the loss of the other salary.

This is it, I mean the only way we are going to be able to manage is in another two or three months put my wife on the dole. Put her name down and it's amazing the amount of people in her position who have got to do it. I think that's terrible. A teacher in a responsible position should have to resort to that to keep their food on the table. That's what it boils down to.

Did you come straight from College to this job?

Yes.

So you've been here four years

Yes, this is my fifth year.

Do you live in Hucklebrough?

No, City.

You're travelling from City so that's another drain on your finances

It's over £10 a week now. A friend of mine has just moved over there so we share; but even so it is still a lot of money.

You still have to find £5 or £6 a week. A pool doesn't always work out well. Is it working out reasonably well?

It is, because the lad I share with.....there are five or six of us come from City, but the reason I haven't been able to share is because there are night practices. Steve does a lot of night practices himself, so he doesn't mind waiting for me if he hasn't got a practice and I don't mind waiting for him. Although, we usually try to get our practices together, so that there is as little inconvenience as possible.

I bet he is either Art, Drama or Music.

No he's Geography. He is an excellent man. He's marvellous sportsman.

What does he spend his evenings doing with the kids then?

Football

You must be feeling that you are reaching your maximum power as a teacher. Do you feel as though you have had elbow room to develop professionally?

Yes. I feel that now there's.....

You have made all your mistakes in the first and second years?

Yes, exactly you can cope with just about every situation and it's annoying as well. I mean I'm looking for a job, I'm not looking for a job in teaching. There's no jobs going. Why should I move

down to Devon or Cornwall, that's if you could get a job down there - or Bristol or Birmingham or Manchester for 200 quid for a Scale 2. You know, What's the reason for that? I feel that if I do go and I do leave the profession, the profession's losing a hell of a lot of money - a lot of money in actually training me and everything that goes together with that, but also it's losing, as far as I'm concerned, a first class teacher. In all modesty.

You enjoy your teaching - it's not as though you have fallen out with the job of teaching for all it might be a bit rough at times. The fact that it is poorly paid without any career prospects - that's the principal cause why you are looking out of the profession for an opportunity. So you are having to go back to your first intention as it were to use teacher education as a means of jumping out of the profession. But otherwise you haven't got any fault with the job. You feel that it is a worthwhile job. You feel that you're probably at your strongest now putting stuff back into the profession.

Yes. Also I'm not saying that I'm pleased with the way teaching is going all 100%. I still think we have our hands tied a hell of a lot and I think it's, to a certain extent, becoming a little easier, I am sure it is going to be relaxed in the next few years because so many people have found fault in the system that has just been introduced in the last 10-15 years. The results are foundering.....and the general attendance and discipline is breaking down all over the place and I'm sure it's due to the lack of discipline provided by....

Do you think that's true of Dovedale?

I'm damn sure it is

Catholic Schools seem to come in two kinds if you'll forgive me for saying so; those that have abandoned the discipline and those that still hold a very tight Catholic Community together - home, school, Church is united. Is this not true?

This is not true of this school

Can you put your finger on this? Reason?

The school's too big to start with. That's the first one - that's the obvious one.

What size is this?

12 or 1300. When I first came here it was nearer 16 or 1700. Therefore the contact between home and school is pretty thin.... and non-existent at times.

Unless you have got some support from home in today's society I think you are up against it so there will be discipline problems. Do you think they're bigger than any other school in Hucklebrough?

Oh no! It's a good school as far as that's concerned. I'm talking about and comparing this with my school and other schools that I've been at teaching practice and around the County where I've visited friends and older members of staff that I used to know - that schools can be run along the traditional lines that they used to be, and run well. But it needs a strong upper echelon. If the head hasn't got the guts to stand up and also to support his teachers then you are bound to find that lack of discipline ensues because if the teachers are not going to get the backup then they're not going to discipline the kids.

Thinking in terms of Dovedale now. What is leadership strength in your view?

The leadership. How do you mean - the Leadership?

The Head. I'm thinking of the leadership: Top man, Deputies etc.

I'll tell you what it is in this school now. There is a complete split right down the middle. The Head, the Head of Discipline, and a couple of people who are hanging on for their pensions are anti-discipline and these are people that up to introduction of comp-

rehensives and the introduction of the new wave of leniency that didn't encourage stronger discipline were very very strong disciplinarians themselves and have got their positions by taking the right line at the right time and now are trying to say, "Look this school is great, discipline problems are totally non-existent." But the reason the discipline problems are totally non-existent is because you've got year tutors, you've also got people like myself, like Steve or like perhaps five or ten teachers who are not willing to stand for kids messing around in their class.....

You're protecting them at the top?

Yes. And are prepared to use a slipper or are prepared to use a cane on them and you shouldn't do. All right, if a parent decided to complain, would not get backed up by the....at the top, but I'm damned sure I'm not making my job hard work. My job primarily is to teach kids and also in a P.E. situation in a safe environment and if the only way I can find I can do that is by strong discipline in the gym then that's the way I'm going to do it. I'm not going to say, "Oh sorry I didn't discipline that lad because he supported wrong. Sorry that the fellow broke his neck but it's the way the school runs." I'm not going to say that to the parent. And I make sure the kids know that before I go there. I don't in the least consider myself a strong discipline kind of fellow - I don't go round thrashing the kids either - I'm not allowed to as I say. And it's only in very severe circumstances where my principles are trodden on that I will resort to that. The kids know where they stand and also in a lot of cases the kids know where they stand with other people and that's why there's no work gets done and that's why you get a hell of a lot of people doing the wrong things.

There's no way you can teach unless you've got order.

Yes. Look at this place. There's a sixth form here and the majority

of them are doing C.S.E. 'O' level. Now you can go back to (previous school), Grammar School when they had 30 in the sixth form doing a minimum of 2 or 3 'A' levels and you've probably got 5 or 6 doing 'A' levels in here.....

It must be a much bigger sixth form

A much bigger intake. We had almost 300 sitting 'O' levels and out of 300 eight passed Maths 'O' level. Now that to me is a disgrace and to me if I was a parent here I'd be taking my little Johnnie down the road because something's gone wrong somewhere.

So you'd be very worried if your child came here?

You can talk to B.W. about that, he's taking his own kids for maths at home, and his kid comes here. But you talk to the Headmaster and it's a wonderful school - all his geese are swans. There is absolutely nothing wrong with this school and you look at the records and you'll find there's a hell of a lot wrong. And the Headmaster stands up at the beginning of a term and says we are getting to a point where we can do away with corporal punishment once and for all. And that is a farce because the only thing that is holding the school together are the few people who will go out their way to punish the kids. I'm not saying corporal punishment is the be all and end all of it but I'm sure there's a place in the school for it and if the kids know that it is there then they're not going to....it's a protection for the teachers who need protection really. If you don't use it they get walked over.

The consultative procedure seem either not to exist or it's a sort of charade here. On Friday when I came to make arrangements with B.W. he was obviously very tense. He was shaking and he just said a few things off the cuff one of which said that he had gone over to the timetable and he'd clearly got more classes in than he had got teachers to look after them for one reason or another and he said, "You know, I've made my case at staff meetings and it has all been agreed at staff meetings that we needed more help in the department and yet,

the staff have agreed, he's won his case, he's made a rational argument and yet the headmaster has not come forward. You can give your time.....

I don't know if you've been to other schools in Hucklebrough. There are a lot worse off than we are. Eltermere have packed in just about altogether. Aiden have found a great deal of trouble and it's getting less and less. This is what I find as well. You get something like a music production put on or a band production put on and your Headmaster's drooling over whoever it is. We never get a by your leave, not a thank you, nothing. What's that. Oh, it's just football in a field.

When did you last talk to your Head for any length of time? When did you exchange a sort of conversation where you would talk about physical education? His view of physical education.

His view of physical education! The last time I talked to him about physical education in a discussion, was at my interview. That was the last time. Pointless - absolutely pointless!

I sometimes wonder if that is his fault or your fault for not going and saying, "I want to talk" or is he not approachable in that way? I think I would feel very frustrated in your position, that he doesn't even recognise that you're putting in this extra time, that there are things going well here. I doubt whether he's ever been down to see what's going on in physical education has he?

No - the only time he comes down is to deliver letters!

That's right. Well say, "Look, its about time you woke up to what's going on in this school."

That's all well and good. On the odd occasion when B. has actually broached the subject I know you get "I do! You're doing a grand job across there!" There's nothing you can do to that. You cannot say, "You're lying through your teeth". You cannot say that.

That's all well and good. On the odd occasion when B. has actually broached the subject I know you get, "I do! You're doing a grand job across there!" There's nothing you can do to that. You cannot say, "You're lying through the back of your teeth." You cannot say that.

It's like punching candy floss! I see the position.

Your job - you are - taken for granted. I went in two years ago and said, "I've been here three years is there any chance of a Scale 2?" He said, "No, the best job is to find another school!" Thank you very much, great!

That puts your heart in your boots straight away

He didn't say it as plainly as that, he said, "There's absolutely no chance." I think in the five years I've been here with almost ninety staff I think there's been three points given away within the school. I'll give you a pointer as to how petty they were. In my first year there was a Head of Geography here who was an excellent Head of Geography who was really top-notch. He was on a Scale 3. He went in and said, "I want a Scale 4." He also taught Economics. And they said, "There's no way we can give you a Scale 4. I'm sorry" and you know Trades Descriptions Act and all this. This was the time of the squeeze and the 3% and then the 5% the Government were paying and he said, "All you've got to do is to change my title. Just give me Head of Geography and Economics." "Oh, I'm sorry. Cannot do that." So he had to leave. He applied to a 6th form college and was wanted by two. They fought over him more or less to get his services. He went to a 6th form college in the middle of the year, got his Scale 4 and his same job was advertised again as a Scale 4. That, to me, shows that they weren't....they were just standing there and saying, "We're not giving you a 4, get yourself out. It's up to you to get yourself another job." And hoping beyond hope that he'd stay. And he went out and got himself a Scale 4 and they knew they wouldn't get a Head of Department on a

Scale 3 so they advertised it on a Scale 4. Now if that's the attitude they're going to take with a Head of Department what the hell are they going to take for a Scale 1.

The morale of the whole staff must have been dropped at a thing like that because that's significant isn't it? What is the morale of the staff like generally?

I don't know. In a large staff, the young ones are very bitter - terribly bitter. Neil who helps a great deal also finds he's getting to the end of his tether.

Neil's more bitter than you?

Neil's not a Catholic and that's one good reason why he's not going to get on in a Catholic School. That's the first reason. But also he put in for the Head of Youth - Youth Tutor. He's been teaching 7 or 8 years now, something like that. He's 30 now....an excellent teacher, gets on with the kids marvellously. Gets on with them a hell of a lot more than I do. He's one of these people you hear about at college that have this aura - this charisma. They teach on that. They can get kids to do it their way without any kind of punishment. He uses punishment within P.E. status or runs or whatever.

But he's one of these gifted people

He is gifted in that sense. He could be capable of doing an excellent job now he's got to such a point at this very moment that he won't do a thing, he won't lift a finger. I don't blame him one iota. He's applied for this Youth Tutor's job. He's been doing Youth Tutor's work for years within the town. A fellow on the staff who happens to teach R.I., who happened to fail those exams that I was telling you were so easy they were easier than 'O' level the first time round! who has been teaching less years than he has; who hasn't the same kind of temperament with the kids that he has; and has absolutely no P.E. qualifications whatsoever and those two going for the job and Neil doesn't get it.

He's got to be sour.

He's got to be absolutely choked up to the top. Not that he particularly wanted the job but it's shown to you there in black and white; "You're not wanted, mate."

There's no wonder the Head of Department is a bit brittle is there? When you've got really good blokes who, through no fault of his own leadership, he's just not going to keep them away and they're just going to get increasingly bitter.

Well, that's true. I can only agree with that. There's nothing I can add to what I've just said. You find you're going down a street that's getting narrower and narrower all the time. And finally you come to a dead end.

Let's talk about yourself, the effect that this had on your own commitment. You say that you do a lot of practices - have you felt now that you ought to do what he's doing. Are you likely to go towards his response or are you likely to stay with the commitment?

It's difficult to do actually. I find that I agree with him when he says he's not going to do a stroke and there are times when it comes to a head and you say, "Right! That's it! Out of the window - nothing." I find it very difficult to do, I find it's a terrible.... it's bribery and corruption really - the kids - you come back to the kids and you find that if I don't do it nobody does it.

This is one of the things I am trying to understand. I think that I understand it. There's a sense in which there are a lot of people in your position throughout the country and yet they go on giving and giving and why is it that they go on giving and giving. It's difficult to explain isn't it?

I don't know. It's just a sense of duty to the kids, to no-one else not to school, not to the Education Authority - it's just to the lads, to the lads themselves who want to turn up and do it.

Do you mind talking about it a bit more because I'm so interested. Could it be that you've got a commitment to them because of your own background, your own working class background where you look back on the things people did for you and you were glad of the help that you got. Do you think that you see yourself feeding back into that because most of the lads here are working class?

At the beginning, I said, "Right, the reason I went into it was I'd always been good at sport. It was just for the letters after my name just so I could go on and branch out to do things elsewhere." But when I sat down and thought about why I really wanted to go in for teaching was, number one, how much pleasure had been given to me through my P.E. teachers and also my teachers who had stayed after school obviously not always P.E. teachers. A lot of people had given a lot of time to me and I'd got a lot out of it. I wanted to give back. I knew I could give that back and secondly, I also knew that at that time there were a lot of teachers that shouldn't be teaching even in that grammar school education in that kind of system. One example - a fellow there from Oxford got a first class degree, he knew everything there was to know about his subject. You could ask him anything, he was marvellous, great with the 6th form but he was treated like dirt even at the grammar school because he didn't have any idea how to teach. He was just teaching the way like.....well if a lecturer had gone on like that you would have been bored just transcribing notes upon notes upon notes and kids got bored and he didn't have any kind of discipline within his class. So I knew even if I was the worst teacher going even if I couldn't put my, even if I didn't know my material, I could teach it better than he could because at least I have some communication with the kids which is a great thing. You've got to have communication with the kids otherwise you don't get anywhere.

You're going to have a particular conflict now having your first child six weeks ago. So you're going to be a bit torn between home and school now aren't you?

I doubt if that will be a factor. I can't see that because even now I'm still doing the same amount.

Tell me about the amount that you're doing

I do 5 dinner times a week and 3 night times. Last year I had to drop my football because I couldn't afford to come here on a Saturday morning. They wouldn't pay me for it. They wouldn't pay my expenses to come in and with the baby on the way there's no way that I could, so my football had to be dropped. I'd taken the same team for four years. I'd taken them in my first year when they were in the first year and they're now in the fifth year. At the time when we should be mentally together - where teaching came secondary to actual knowledge of the kids, the feedback the kids got from me which was so natural at that time through just pure monetary meanness I had to give them up! And we've got a bloke now who is taking them and the kids complain. They come up and say they've had so many practices and hardly ever get a game. I've got to say, "Sorry lads, there's nothing I can do." And now all my time is devoted to basketball. I take two teams for basketball. Only Neil who is capable of teaching basketball apart from one other member of staff, who is a historian and he takes his one team. Neil has more or less dropped out of doing any of his teams and I take two teams. So we've got a second, third and fourth team going. I take the second and third year. And Basketball isn't my game. Neil could do a hell of a lot more for the basketball than I could. But I try and do my bit even though it's not as good as it should be.

You would prefer to be with the football?

Obviously. Now football is my sport - until I had a couple of cartilages out last year. It was my one consuming hobby - apart from cricket, golf.....

Where's the satisfaction coming from the job? Where are the pleasures coming from?

I get less pleasure in teaching classes now because you get the same outlook by the majority of the kids to your P.E. lesson now as you get from the minority of school team players to their training and their

M.36/12

games. There is a disinterest to the same extent in your lesson as there is by the minority of the kids taking the lesson. So now when I'm taking the 2nd years - I've started 2nd year basketball - they're all interested, they all want to learn, they're all turning up. Now I get a hell of a lot more pleasure taking them than I get out of a class of kids where perhaps 10 out of 30 just don't want to know. That I find, a little annoying.

Do you think it is worth persevering with it. There is a stage: the battle you have chasing them reading notes, checking on the ones that have absconded. There seems to be a time when it ought to be voluntary anyway. And I wouldn't be too bothered about that. I don't think it's worth the effort. I'm no ambassador in that sense....

Well I said at the beginning of term I was convinced that once you let a lad get away with it then you'll get 2 lads who want to get away with it and 3, four or five and it's going to be going on and on and on. I said at the beginning of this year, "can we not try in our department to have a detention system whereby if a kid misses he goes into detention?" I said we can share it out - one dinner time or night a week. And no-one wanted that so you get to the stage now that if a kid says, especially 5th form. We've got about 7 or 8 real dregs - the real dregs of it who won't bring in their kit and now I won't even ask them why. I'll take the register, "Are you doing it?" - "no" Right, I'll just put NO Note down there. I won't ask them because I cannot stand the lies. What's the point of me asking them when they are going to lie to me. And if there's nobody there to tell them to bring in a note - they can bring in a note - but if there's no discipline it goes behind....and you say, "Next week you're doing it, or else!"

I think you've got to get the tradition following right through from the top so that you're backed up and then it ticks and you don't have any problems. You've got to cut your losses somewhere and I think your response is about the only sensible one.

You get to the stage where you just want to pack in and if the pupils don't want to participate, nor do I. I couldn't care less.

Really, a lot of the curricula work is less and less satisfactory to you and that the only pleasure is coming from the kids who are wanting to turn up, for the basketball or the football. But you're spending 5 lunch hours on basketball?

No. One lunch hour is spent on swimming and I find that the swimming pool is not used enough therefore I get the first and second years to come up on a Wednesday dinner time for a swimming club.

Ah when I was told this the other day.....first and second years don't get any swimming

Because by the time they get to the fifth year, they don't want to know the swimming pool. When I was at school I used to love the swimming pool.

So, this is one way you can compensate by inviting...because they've got time to come up to the pool and then they've got time to get back. I bet they must be grateful for that.

Well let's not talk about grateful pupils. There are some.

Coming back to your own interests. I take it - you spoke so lovingly of football - you were so totally locked in football yourself as a player until you had your cartilage out?

I got to the stage where I didn't want the commitment to playing so often, so long in poor conditions. I've always been a good footballer and therefore always played in good teams and always had good facilities. When I was down in S.Yorks especially. I left school, I played in the County League and the County Senior League and obviously it's just like professional clubs. And you get paid for it as well, which isn't exactly my cup of tea, but if they are willing to pay me for what I

enjoy doing they can do. When I came up here, I didn't enjoy the football at college because it was just friendly, I wasn't improving therefore I hardly did any at all except.....therefore I didn't improve. When I came up here I was just getting married and I left it for a year without playing and then went down to (Prestigious team in the Northern League). I was coming along very well, very nicely and then we moved to City. So with all the upset of moving there was another two or three months so I just couldn't be bothered starting it up again.

It's very hard coming back after that

I started playing on Sunday mornings and I found that absolutely diabolical because by that time you're getting stupid people trying to kick lumps out of you and as a friend of mine used to say when they used to do it to him, "Hey mate, I'm only here to play football. I've got to go to work tomorrow!" You get more and more people who'll try to be television hatchet men. And to me to turn out on a cold, windswept horrible pitch on a Sunday morning to get my legs kicked from under me is not my idea of enjoying myself. So, by the time I actually did it playing in a staff match here they thought it was cartilage, they took one cartilage out but it wasn't any better, it dislocated at the knee. They took the other cartilage out and then decided it was ligaments. So I'm left with a 'gammy' knee which is neither use nor ornament when it comes to anything like that. But it doesn't bother me because I was getting to the end of my tether with football and I'd also started with cricket and a great deal which is now coming to its own. They don't have a cricket team here. B.W. doesn't like cricket, so, they don't play cricket which is rather annoying. It's also annoying that you've got a big school like this where they've got all the money that's fed into it and they won't even provide a cricket pitch - one of these solid squares that they could get. But, there again who'd run it? Who'd run the cricket team? I took a couple of first and second years for a couple of years but you're fighting a losing battle. You have to play on other people's grounds, borrow gear....

So summer really consists of athletics, no tennis, no cricket!

After about the fifth week of athletics they're getting rather bored. So you're fighting a losing battle again. I started the five star award scheme off two years ago and then I had to drop it in the second year because I was in hospital with my leg and no-one carried it on from there.

How many of the lads from here do you reckon - I mean you've seen four generations through really - who get involved after they leave school?

Oh I couldn't tell you really. Quite a few. Basketball! In Hucklebrough they have got quite a few outlets.

In the factories or wherever they go?

The private teams, the teams that a lot of them are run by P.E. teachers who are interested, like myself and Neil who just started a team this year. Two kids who had left joined us and we've got two 6th formers in and whatever. But they play on a league basis. (basketball).

So you are able to get a little ex-pupil team as it were?

And you can slot them into a league. I think they did this at Callaly.

Yes, they did it at Callaly as well.

Do all the staff play there?

Yes, that's right.

And they got into the City League. And they're able to see some old pupils get into an adult league.

We've done the same. Whether we'll continue or not I don't know but we're trying it.

M.36/16

Because the schools basketball itself has declined in the last four years. Every school was hot on basketball - they did a lot of basketball. Alas there are only two schools that are participating or something like that. Yours must be the only one then.

There are three still doing basketball. We're one, Callaly are the other and Bamburgh are the third. This all came to a head.....

End of Recording

No Follow-up Comments

Looking at the context of your teaching can you contrast very briefly the effect that moving into Comprehensive has had on you. Has it, from your point of view, been a good thing, a bad thing, what are the benefits, what are the losses?

Well the benefits to me really have been able to work with other people more closely in P.E. Because this is really why I went away to Carnegie in the first place because when you're working in a small school, just yourself, the man runs the boys' P.E., you run the girls' P.E. and although you meet other people in the town at netball matches and things like that, you don't really see how other people cope from day to day. And really that was why, after ten years of working on my own, I thought, "well really I need a refresher....I need time to stand back and see whether what I'm doing is worth the effort" and all this sort of thing, you see. Now when we became comprehensive I found it a lot better because I was working with two other people as it happened, one who taught me and another one who is about my age and had gone to college about the same time as me, and I found that lovely, that was one of the big advantages. Nice to have somebody who was doing the same thing as me.

You wouldn't like to go back to the days when you were all by yourself?

I don't know.

I think there are times when working with a team is fantastic, it's great and there's a lot of return. But there are times when you feel boxed in and trapped in a team. And I think that happens to all people in all teams.

Yes. There are advantages obviously of being on your own because you make your own decisions. You live off your own wits if you like. You make your own tradition and nobody's answerable except you. Whereas in the situation here, you do a thing and somebody else might

do the exact opposite and as it happens the way the timetable is I might have one class one lesson and somebody else might have that class another lesson and they are asking entirely different things of the class so you see you can get a little bit of conflict there. I don't mean conflict really, but a difference of emphasis really.

If I use the word 'discontinuity' that's different from conflict in my mind.

Yes, yes.

Supposing we are taking the same class, I take them on a Tuesday, you take them on Thursday, I have different expectations....the children really don't know how to respond.....

That's right, yes. And sometimes you can get as you say, a little bit of discontinuity arising from that. But I enjoy working with people in the dept. I think the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

Going back to your year at Carnegie, I mean ten years. Was it too late or was it just about right?

It was about right. But I wondered afterwards, and actually this came up when I went for the interview...I wondered afterwards whether it was really what I wanted; whether I'd chosen the right course in fact. I did the Diploma with a dissertation and I did Recreation and Administration, you know, that branch of it. And I don't know whether it was too theoretical and not practical enough. I felt as if I wanted to do things like netball coaching you see we missed out such a lot, trampoline and this sort of thing.

So you really took the Advanced Diploma.....

Yes, when I should have taken I think, the supplementary course. At the time I thought that.....

How long ago is it that you went there?

Nearly ten years. But I've thought since and maybe it wasn't the wrong choice, in fact. Because I've become more aware of 'after school' since I did that; of what these kids can expect to do after school in terms of P.E. And maybe this is the right way to move towards recreation and that sort of thing.

I would be very interested to hear your views on this.

Well I think we have to move towards that because...you see what I'm thinking is in P.E., we tend to do things like team games, netball for girls, hockey for girls, football for boys and so on where you need a lot of people, you know. You need a team to play and this sort of thing. Whereas with things like Badminton and Trampolining, to a certain extent Table Tennis, you and somebody else can do it. You and somebody else can have a game of Squash, at a time that is convenient to you two. You don't have to gather a lot of people around you so I think really we should be trying to do things like that in school rather than the set team games, later on you know.....in fourth and fifth.

Maybe you can help explain the women's side to me a bit. There is an awful lot of netball taught. They have been playing netball, often in the primary school, they are still playing it, right through the secondary school. Some of them may well have had 8 years of netball. I thought well there ought to be a pay-off from school linked into society, but it doesn't happen. Though some of the women teachers in Hucklebrough have said, "Oh there is an awful lot of netball going on in Hucklebrough," so I don't doubt that that's true, but it's very difficult to find.

Usually at the Evening Institutes and again the people that you get playing at these places are the ones who were good at school. What about all the others who did netball for 8 years and hated it or did netball and never achieved much in 8 years. Because they may not be team people. I think there are some people who enjoy

playing in teams there are other people who shrink from it. They are not socially that way inclined. But I thought, obviously being on that course it makes you think more, I mean I had never thought about that aspect of P.E. before, but coming away from it afterwards I thought well really it wasn't the course I wanted and then maybe a year later and we're in this situation, I thought, well yes, maybe it was the right one and if we look at P.E. in terms of what facilities are going to be available for these children when they leave school, what can we interest them in now that will stand them in good stead when they leave school? You see boys seem to be alright, they've got football, rugby to take them on somehow, but girls haven't.

I think that it's easy to overstate the boys case.

I agree.

I think that there is a problem. In the last two years of school, I don't know whether they're your fourth years or fifth years - before they leave at 16 - when many of them do leave. What do you think of the programme that you've got now? Could you tell me how do you get a programme? Do you get your heads together as a team?

The women.

So it's really two departments. So the women get together and they get out a programme for the girls. B. gets his team together and they get out a programme for the boys?

Yes. Mind you can't do that in isolation from the boys because facilities come into it.

But nonetheless as far as you can, if you've got the right facilities and so on and you do a bit of trading - outdoor, indoor and that sort of thing. How is your programme in the fourth and fifth year

deliberately looking towards the outside, the leaving time, locking them into society? Do you give a lot of thought to it at the planning stage?

I don't know whether you do consciously. You tend more to look at the facilities position, how we can fit things in and numbers also have a lot to do with this. What we try to do is to give them a variety of activities. Take them up so far. What we do is, in third year we start them off 6 weeks of an activity, whatever it is, maybe trampolining, may be Badminton, and so you get six weeks of this, six weeks of that, a half term in fact. And then in the fourth year we do more or less the same, except they have a little bit of an option. By the time we've done half a term or a term or an activity, for example, trampolining particularly, some girls don't like it, they are frightened of it. So they would keep off that in fourth year and in fifth year. Maybe in 5th year they might have that bit more confidence in themselves and they might come back and try it again. But it's a fairly loose arrangement, as far as activities go. And really by the time they get to the fifth year they say, I go into them in the option group for example and I say to them, "right, with the space we've got and the equipment we've got we can have volleyball, badminton, trampolining, table tennis or we can have five a side netball, maybe indoor hockey," or something like that. And then they decide among themselves really.....what they want to do. In fifth year we don't have any set period to do each activity with them and they don't swap around they virtually go in and choose really what they want to do. Normally they stay on a thing for about half a term.

So if I was a fifth year girl and I come along to your lesson, how much time would I get as a fifth year girl?

Well that depends, if you were ordinary fifth year you would get 3 single lessons, one in the pool and two single lessons other than that.

A single lesson being how long Judy?

35 minutes. If you were part of the option group, they are the ones who have chosen to do extra, you could have a double games lesson as well. Or you could have a double games lesson and a double P.E. lesson as well.

So, the fifth year get quite a lot.

Yes.

All fifth years minimally get three periods, a swimming and two singles, then some could opt for additional P.E. and a double games on top of that so they would get 5, the equivalent of 5 singles, and some could get even more than that.

Yes.

That's unusual I would think. Do you like that system? Do you think it's a good system? What about the girls that actually do.... that's really 7 periods of P.E. in the fifth year, is that too much?

That's why I'm thinking.

Do they tend to be the girls who just don't want to know about the school anyway?

Well now, we have some good ones who have, I think, benefited from more P.E. Obviously good performers and they've gone on and they perform well in most things, good allrounders. Now then when the option groups were first made, the children made the choice. Now looking back on this particular year we've got now, there are one or two that I think have chosen wrongly. They haven't got out of the extra P.E. what I would have thought they would have got.

What are they chosen for?

Well because probably they enjoy P.E.

And it was a soft option to whatever else they could have done?

Yes, well they don't have to do examinations in it or anything like

that, you see. But as they get into the fifth year some of them, they don't like to get changed, the age thing, the temperament thing comes into it. But mind that's only in the case of about I would say, two or three. This is where the difficulty of the comprehensive comes because it could be that these come up and you don't know them. They opt for it and you haven't taught them yet, so they may come to you new, which can be a good thing or it can be a bad thing it all depends. So now we tend to seed the options if you like if they come to us they have to have a paper signed and they say, "Will you sign this for us to do games", and we look at their record, that's the basic thing, if they have taken part in P.E. regularly, have brought their gear in regularly and seem to enjoy P.E. not necessarily very good at it but if they seem to enjoy it and get something out of it we let them opt for it. If they've been troublesome and often not brought their gear or some such thing or their attitude maybe isn't good then we say, "No".

You've got that power?

We have now. But we had to stand out for it. At first we took them regardless. If they chose to do it, we took them.

But they've got to have evidence that they're going to profit from it.

Now, yes. From the first two years I think, we talked about it. Well actually it was me really that was doing the option group so it was me really that said, "I think that we should have more say about who" you see out of all the ones we've got, your limited as well by the fact that you don't really get the very very good ones because they are doing examination subjects.

And they'll be the ones that just do the minimum three periods?

Yes and they can't afford the time to P.E. Actually with 3 people I advised them not to opt for P.E. Because I knew they were examination pupils. I knew they were bright. I knew they would be carrying a lot

of examinations and I advised them, I said, "I think it's too much time to give to one thing". After all it's only one subject and I said, "If I were you I'd have a word with your parents. But don't opt for it, it's too much time to give to one thing." You see they only used to get two and then they got the extra one so I said, "you'll be getting three, and really with the exam work that you're carrying it'll be plenty." So its flexi if you know what I mean.

So if I'm one of the people that are doing exams. I come along, I get my swimming, that goes on through the year? Does that work?

50 odd girls, it's the thing they least like. On the whole. You get the odd few.

So you get lots of notes and moaning.....

And there are so many excuses they can bring in. And you can't check out.

So that if they are determined not to swim you can't win?

Well you can't, no.

So the swimming as a whole...would you change that then?

Well we did last year. I said to Mr. W. the year before last, "can 50 odd girls not swim?" We were only having two lessons then and I said, "I think it's a waste, I think they'd be better off, it's less aggravation for us because we don't have to keep getting onto them about going in the pool." You see and they were alright on P.E. They enjoyed P.E. But it's the hair business, getting their hair wet you know. So we tried it for a year without and as far as the attitude of the 5th year went it was alright. They were quite happy with that. One or two wanted to swim, so what we did was with the option group, as it happened the pool was empty, so Mrs. P. offered, she would sit in if they wanted to swim so really I think we had the best of both worlds. But anyway to use

the pool fully this year he said that he would like 5th year girls to swim again so I said alright.

But it's still a bit of a hassle?

Yes. And not swimming caused me a problem when it came to swimming galas. Because I didn't know who could swim and who couldn't, and I had difficulty getting a fifth year team out. So from that point of view, at least, I've got contact with some who can swim and I'll see whether one outweighs the other. I'm still not convinced that it's the best use of the pool that we can have. I would like the little ones to come up.

I hadn't realised until I spoke to Elaine that the first two years down at the split site they are denied access to the pool which is the best time of all really.

Yes, well I said to him that this is where we fall down. It isn't just getting a swimming team together or the hassle as you can imagine, but then you see we didn't have contact with the fifth year last year through them not swimming. And this year with the first and second years. So the only ones really that I was in touch with were and could work with were thirds and fourths. And I asked him if there was any possibility of getting the little ones up...you see because we are doing in third year what we really should be doing in first year.

That's right.

So we are two years behind all the way so really we're not.....

It's much more difficult I think,

Plus things like the hair and that sort of thing coming in.....so it isn't ideal obviously but I think in the circumstances we.....I think we've made the best use as far as is possible.

I can see the problem with the swimming though. Your fifth year swimming and you spend half your lesson arguing with the girls
You say, it isn't worth it?

It isn't no.

Because you want to get on with your lesson all your inducing them to do is to forge letters, fake periods or whatever.

And you build up a barrier. It's them against you and there's so many ways as I say, of them getting round it it just isn't worth it. And while you are arguing on with them there's others waiting and they are the ones who will have brought their gear, you know.

Which is most beneficial.

Well when we first came everybody squabbled in fifth year, I'm in everything and we had this hassle with about 5 people in the pool and 25 sitting round and this sort of business and so what we did the next year was as the timetable came there were say I had 5th year and Sue had 5th year or Mary and we joined them together and we got maybe 10 swimmers out of.....

Of the two periods P.E. How do you organise that?

Well more or less on the same situation as the option groups have. It's better because there are less of them. There would be about 22.

And for one lesson I would have you and for the other lesson I might have somebody else.

You might have or you might have me as well.

So there's a chance that I could either get you for both periods but I could get another teacher.

You could, yes.

Now how is that structured, how is it organised?

Well that's virtually the same as the option group because of your numbers obviously, normally what happens is they have trampoline and they have a set but most of my fifth years there's a group who like to do trampolining. I'm working on the bronze award with them at the minute so they would work on the trampoline and I would spend at least part of the lesson working on a particular thing with them and then I could leave them to practice.

How many trampolines have you got?

Two. Now depending on how many want to do it we would have one out or two out normally the other thing is badminton that they play. Now we would hope that there would be two games of doubles, we'll say, so that they're learning rules of scoring and team play and this sort of thing. And so you divide your time between whatever.....

Will this be the first time they've been able to put Badminton in their lesson time?

Well not.....well as a game, to play an actual game, yes. Because in third year they just get a taste of it.

So you do introduce Badminton into the programme?

Just for the 6 week period, because you see they opt at the end of third year. So you've got to be able to show them what's on offer during third year so that they know what they are going to be working on in fourth and fifth you see.

So the third year, they have tasters, in 6 weeks so that they get 6 tasters.

That's right.

They get 6 tasters including trampolining, basketball.....?

Volleyball, Badminton, that's about it, four. Because then you've also got to keep the Netball going as well in third year and the hockey. The only thing we miss out a bit on in third year, I think a lot on, we don't do in fact in third year and that's gymnastics but the trampoline really takes over from that.

They don't get any athletics in the third year?

Oh yes, athletics yes. Athletics and rounders in the summer and then in fourth year they do it to a greater degree where you learn we'll say for example in volleyball you learn to play as a team it's not just practices.

But you get your 6 weeks block.

Yes.

So really third and fourth year are very much the same and it's still a taster but taking it to a different level.

Yes, that's right. And then in fifth year they more or less set things up on their own and have a game and really I just go round advising them and helping them if anything arises while they are playing.

Options means a different thing in every school. In some schools it simply means a baby-minding session - a play hour for fourth and fifth. They give them the toys and then they're let loose. Would it be unfair, would you be angry if I said that sounds what yours is?

No I wouldn't be angry. I think to a certain extent that could be true, if you didn't know who you were working with. In a situation like we have here I think you've got to have good control, I'm not saying I have good control, but I think you've got to have control of the situation and you have got to have the children trained to

get equipment out quickly otherwise you waste a lot of time messing on with that. They've got to know exactly what they're doing and why they're doing it. We don't just let them in and get on with it sort of thing. We are there and they know we are there and if need be they're brought back in to the changing room.

Maybe that I'm a fifth year girl and not terribly co-operative or in a silly mood or whatever, now if I have you, I know damn well that here's an experienced teacher who is not going to have any larking or messing about. I can't mess about on the trampoline or badminton or table tennis. But at the same time in your case you're an experienced teacher and you can control me. But my next lesson may be an options system and it may be a less experienced teacher or one who isn't as tight and I'd lark about no end. I'm not learning anything. Nobody teaches me anything about badminton. I just lark about on the trampoline or I spend my time looking as though I'm busy.

Yes that's it and doing nothing. I think that could well happen. I'm not saying that it doesn't happen here. I think we depend a lot on the children's co-operation and I think if they want to lark about as you say, or if they want to look as if they're doing something but they're really doing nothing then I think, yes that can happen as well.

And with the best will in the world I don't think that I could watch two activities well. I think I can keep control of two activities but some are doing three, four and five. There's no hope that in either a single or a double lesson that I can actually structure and see an improvement. So I'm now wondering if the options system is something that we've experimented with now and we ought to re-assess. Is it really beneficial? And if we're honest with ourselves everybody's happy but nobody's learning anything, I think we've got to say is this what school is for?

There again you see, looking on it from this recreation aspect that I have back here I think well in two terms time these kids are going

to be left school and if they're going to do any physical activity at all it's going to be off their own bat and if they can't go out and do it.....because they have an idea how to do it and a bit of interest. Obviously I think you know, if you work on a thing it will improve they will feel a sense of achievement and if we're going to come to that situation where they don't have anybody behind them saying get on with that, I want you to do this, we'll all do that...

I'm sure you are right about that. You almost say this is a period on the timetable when they can opt out. And they can scrounge and that's no bad education experience.

Then the choice is up to them, it literally is an option, it really is a choice, of whether they are going to go on and learn something that will be useful to them or whether they're going to skive around. As you say, depending on how it's controlled you've got in that situation, they'll either get away with it or you think well it's up to them and I think after maybe one or two scroungy times I think they generally get in and get on.

That's right. The ones that are in the grey area they're not sure they'll get fed up scrounging so they'll get stuck into something. There's always the odd one or two you could offer them the whole range, the whole Alladin's cave and they don't want to do anything.

Yes. But you know I'll take your, I'll call it a criticism of it, but I take your point really that yes it is a bit loose and it's a bit sort of.....

But it isn't so loose that you would worry for instance. I mean somebody who has been teaching as long as you have. You would get restless and.....

Yes.

.....And you'd want to change it. I mean that's the proof that you care about this and if it's going to be inefficient to that point

you change it so that at the moment the options system isn't so bad that it ought to be tied up or thrown out and re-thought.

Mind I think I've done as you've suggested might be a good thing. I think that after a bit of experience in this we tend to put down the options offered now. You can't in fact look after all these things which are going on. Because safety obviously is a big factor.

There is no way that you can be far away from the trampoline.

Well no there isn't. What I tend to do is I have the trampolines there and I stay with them until I know they are in a settled mood. Sometimes they come into P.E. and they're all bubbly, even fifth year, well you'll know that obviously, and I stay there until I know they are settled and I'm very strict when they're getting out and when I know they're settled and they've warmed up and I've given them a specific thing to do or they often say, "can we practice such and such for the bronze", I say to the, "Right, that's all right." I watch each one of them on and I'll go.....by that time the volleyball maybe is warmed up and I usually stay at the thing that is next to them and I keep an eye on them. Score for them or some such thing, then you're badminton people are being neglected so you've got to switch them round the next time, but it's easier to just let them get on.

Well I think table tennis is often used, they (teachers) say, "oh yes we do table tennis," but really what table tennis is used for is to mop up, because you can't get any more on the badminton court. You've got as many as you can do with on the trampoline, volleyball can only take so many and so your table tennis is just used as a sponge.....

To soak up the odd few. Yes.

Now that might be a very good idea too and I think you can justify it in all sorts of ways but on the whole those that went 'options mad' expanded too far because they hadn't got enough staff. And it seems to me that we might have to go back say if there's one member of staff there's one activity you can't have it any other way because if you've got say your 22 girls all doing badminton you're going to make progress....if you've got 22 girls doing trampoline even if you had 32 they'll all be improving. One teacher, one activity. Two teachers,

two activities. So you do what you can under the certain conditions to get them locked in to recreational activities afterwards. I think Badminton is a great one actually, a lot of girls and a lot of boys get a tremendous....obviously you would like to do squash but I don't know how you can do it.

It takes up a big big part of the sports hall, to mark the court out.

These are the sort of the things that I think the profession needs to look at again it's not just a matter of giving the toys out and getting on with it. And we ought not to waste kids' time but we've got to give it a ten year period in history, you know you've got to try these things and I don't think it's the teacher's fault. They are trying to respond to advice.

Well we're told you see that people are going to have more leisure time and things like this. And if you can give somebody an interest or hobby or whatever that they can carry on.

One of the things that I found when we were probing this link with adult clubs and so on, is that it's really a hit and miss affair when a boy or girl leaves school and one of the ideas that I'm just throwing out to see how you re-act to it, it would seem to me that in Hucklebrough there are lots of opportunities, I think there are truly. And the boys and girls are not given anything from the school. It wouldn't be a bad idea if every child, I know for a lot of them will be a lot of waste paper, if every child had a sheet with all the clubs with all the things that they could continue with.

That are available in the town?

That's right. So that even if a girl appeared as though she weren't very interested in swimming or volleyball one could say, "if you do get interested in it and you would like to go along this is where you can do it." Now that's lacking isn't it?

Yes. All the wardens come and ask you. I'll tell you what particularly the little ones come and ask you about gymnastics. The big ones will come and ask you the very thing about Badminton, usually they are the

two things that the girls are interested in.

Do you feel as though you can hook up? You can refer them?

Yes and you can say to them.....

.....gymnastics where if a little girl came along....

Well there is a morning club goes on at Fleetwith but I think that's just for the parents and children who go to that school. There is a club through at Laithes at the Fun Palace. Very difficult to get in and there's a long waiting list; but they can get in if they're patient. I know we have a girl in her fifth year at the moment who goes. It took her till she was in third year before she was accepted. So they have got to be keen. Now in the town itself I don't know of any other than the Fleetwith one. Each school has their gym club I think.

There's not an outlet for gymnastics is there? And I think the same goes for trampolining.

Yes, now Youth Clubs usually take this up. But I worry sometimes about this, maybe I shouldn't worry so much.

It looks a nice set up, school, youth club and its a disaster.

It seems to be.

But am I wrong in this case? Maybe this is one of the youth groups that work. Because I've never gone into the youth groups but everybody's saying the link between the school and the youth club because of the way that the youth clubs are led.

Yes. I think you need a good youth leader. You see I tend to think, particularly on trampolining brings this to mind, we get these children say in third year, and we give them a taster of trampolining,

show them how to get it out, the safety aspects and all this. And you'll say to them, "have you trampolined before?" "Yes, Miss at such and such a youth club. Yes Miss at Blackpool" I got yesterday from a third year. "At Blackpool on the sea front", you see and all this. So I said to them, "forget everything you've done on the trampoline. We all start at the same level, we all know nothing, we don't even know how to get them out, now lets begin." Now at fifth year level some of them tend to.....I think I'm a little bit cautious as to how far I push them on, I want them to be really, you know, I want them to be thinking before they start doing things like somersaults and that sort of thing. Now they'll get on here and they'll say, "Miss can we do a somersault?" when I haven't done the lead up with them and I'll say, "no, where did you learn your somersault?" - "Youth Club." "Well who taught you?" "Well I just did it." So again it's a matter of supervision it's what you can offer and what you can supervise.

When can they go to the Youth Club? At what age?

Well here they used to have a Junior Youth Club I think it was first and second year used to go from 6 till 7 and then.....

Because they have access to the sports hall and swimming pool and other things.

Yes. And then the others I think went from 7.30 till 10.00

In fact when well organised, one would have a lot of confidence in it but it's clear that P.E. teachers generally don't have a lot of confidence.....

Although the lad who was the youth leader here was P.E. trained. He was a teacher here and he applied for that job and got it and was very good but part of their work is in the school, they've got to teach in the school and he was doing maths or science or something and the way the timetable came out the fact was that he was in every

morning at 9 o'clock at work and he wasn't leaving until after 10 at night and he just couldn't do it. And in the end he got a Sales Reps. job. But he did the job well, he was a good Youth Leader, and sporting wise, well he had the girls to the basketball nationals and this sort of thing. Well you see he worked with us in our Department, H.O. you might remember him, well he got the youth job over there he used to take the lads to the football, he would take them all over, do sponsored discos, and this that and the other, getting money. Take the girls off to basketball as I say, he entered them in the youth league and all this.....

But it's a shame he's been lost to the profession.

Yes.

This is one of the things of course that I'm finding, the uneasiness and discontentment in departments now and this is no exception that there is an uneasiness and so on. Does that spill over to you?

Me as a person, as a teacher I'm not ambitious, I'm happy here, and people come and people go and so on and I always think that wherever you go you've got to work for a living, right, so I prefer it here. I prefer the catholic school. I prefer to be out of my own village working. I've always worked in the towns. But yes, it makes you a bit uneasy when you see these young men. Obviously they are ambitious, they've got to be, they've got responsibilities. The young teacher, Sue, that left. She left here. Again money comes into it doesn't it, she left, she wouldn't have got on here ambition wise because there was no way. And she left and went down to Birmingham on a Scale 2. She was there till Christmas. And she's head of dept. now. She's been at the right place at the right time.

You're reconciled to the fact that you are quite happy in this area.

Well I've no ties you see, I'm not married. I have family but I've no responsibilities initially really. Financial wise no problems.

And you're on a Scale 2?

I'm on a 2 and I won't get any higher so, you know.

And you'll settle for that?

Oh yes.

Whereas the young people.....

Well obviously they've got to, especially if they're ambitious.

Sue was here how long? I don't remember her.

When we started till Miss I it was, you might remember her.

Oh I remember her, yes.

Well that's her.

So as soon as she got away she got a Scale 2.?

Well she went on a Scale 2 you see. She applied for the job. The only job she applied for and she got it. She was very well qualified of course. She had trampoline awards and all this sort of thing. She played Badminton out of school and taught the thing herself it was very good you know, and she got on. Mind you she didn't go just for that, she went because she was getting married and her husband was working down there and she left for that...she didn't leave.... she liked it here but she wasn't getting on and really at times I think she felt that she could have got on. But she wasn't that bothered because.....

You must be under some stress because of the particular circumstances of your two closest colleagues, Mrs. C. under some stress and now Elaine, just a newcomer as it were just finding her feet. Has that been a strain to you or aren't you the person that feels strain in that sort of way?

I think last year was worse that's when Mrs. C's real trouble was, because, as I said earlier, she used to teach me so I have a certain, I don't know, I think a certain loyalty I think I know her fairly well and really I don't take, I won't say I don't take a great deal of notice of her but I can listen to her and not react and not be too you know.....

You sort of take a dispassionate interest?

Yes. I can listen to her and I can appreciate that she is having problems and so on but I'll get on with my job regardless of that and if she needs any help I'll give her the help sort of thing. Elaine was different, she was new, she was very capable, she seemed to manage alright, obviously didn't.....

It's very difficult teaching new colleagues quite honestly. You've got to, in a sense treat them as equals and I don't think we're very good at this as a profession, how we take on new entrants to the profession it's left very much to the responsibility and often embarrassment of the people that have got a department going and it can be very very difficult.

Yes, I'm saying last year was pretty difficult because of M.C's bother and Elaine was new as you say and I tended, I think, to try and do everything. Out of school activities, dinner time things and netball and all this sort of thing but Elaine came along as well. She came to the practices as well and although she didn't take any part in them as such she was watching and learning. I think it helped her to find out how things went on and what kind of things we did, the way we approached the children I think often at dinner times and after school in activities can make it less....I think you learn a lot about them if you're not teaching them actually in a class situation, you get to know them better. I think it's a better relationship and I don't know whether it helped her or not but she did, she came along and I said to her anything you want to come to you come, if you don't want to come, if you've got other things to do just you know, please yourself.

So you didn't put pressure on her?

I didn't think it was fair to her.

Is she responding and taking her whack?

Oh yes. I think it's hard enough in your first year isn't it? So it's so different from what you say, in training, the actual nitty gritty just the getting from here down to there. It wasn't a strain really, but it was more difficult than it had been though, obviously because with B. and me we used to do things together, we were equal, equal sort of thing you know.

As a stranger coming in you can sort of try and weigh up and say..... you see you can't divorce private lives from professional lives and I think we ought to be honest about this and if somebody's got a husband dying of cancer and is only in half the time as it were that throws a lot of weight on to the others.

Yes, yes it does.

Now you can't of say you know.....that's a problem that you can't shelve. It's there. It exists. It's part of the life and it's part of the burden but nonetheless it doesn't make life any easier, in the department. B. was clearly very very tense when I came in on Friday. He was shaking and I thought well something's taking a toll on him at the moment and maybe that was it or clearly he is under some enormous professional pressure isn't he?

He is.

He might react stronger than you do, he might be a different personality.

He is. I think he is a bit nervous inclined anyway.

It could lead to an edginess in the department.

Yes, and then of course there's bother because he says things on the spur of the moment with maybe a bit of reflection he wouldn't have said. But he was having pressure, it's funny you should say that. He was having pressure because of M.C.'s difficulties. She was having difficulties, various things arose from it and the lads, you know, Neil and Peter were putting pressure on Brian because they were feeling the strain. So he's the pig in the middle sort of thing and although he's head of department and I mean it's cynical to say that's what he gets paid for, at the same time it's not nice to see people fold under when there's no need for it, is there?

This is what we're not good at talking about and saying, "look there are realities in life" and B. probably feels that.....I think he's got problems that he can't solve.

He has and I think he realised that the other day. Actually it was Monday really when things were really bad. But there again, I suppose you can always say that there is somebody above that he can transfer this to but it's how they deal with it as well. Yes there are pressures, you're right, and I think people don't talk about them.

It's easier for me in a sense to come in and talk about them than the people within the department. It seems to me there is a lack of consultation and I would think that I can't help feeling, you tell me if I'm wrong, you said something very early on that when you went back to Carnegie you were all isolated and alone and you wanted to know how other people solved their problems. Now it would seem to me that there would be a benefit in having an almost a sort of Hucklebrough Convention; all P.E. teachers having a day or a series of days in school time. Debating certain professional issues, programmes, timetable and resources, showering, or clothing, I don't mind what it is but none-the-less just a debate about these sort of things at least would be a time for genuine exchange of ideas. It seems to me that there is none of that in Hucklebrough.

No there isn't. The only time you meet other people.....I mean I don't know what goes on over at Bamburgh or what the children at Gargrave are like, or how they handle this problem or that problem at Fleetwith. And they don't know how we handle it.

It's all based on hearsay.

That's it exactly. You hear this and you hear that but you don't really know what goes on. You don't know whether people have the same problems as you, split sites for example at Eltermere for example, this is one of their big problems. And I do think it would be an advantage. When we were going comprehensive we used to have meetings and get together and discussions before we came. With all the schools, with all the teachers in the town and do you know, it was great. It was just everybody there, people you knew, people you never met before and we moved off into discussion groups. It was also the raising of the school leaving age as well, that was a big issue and we had meetings about that and I thought they were worthwhile but they just stopped as soon as you're in the situation that the meetings under discussion stopped. Your own little world takes over.

Where do you get your great satisfactions from in your teaching now?

Well different things I suppose. It's playtime now. Seeing the beginnings of tradition in school; feeling adequate to do the job; helping in establishing a happy sociable atmosphere with both Staff and children; getting on in spite of difficulties over facilities especially at Lower Site and the split-site situation; seeing children succeed at all levels and in a variety of situations e.g. school teams; band; school plays; charitable efforts; exams; jobs.

1. WHAT I BELIEVE IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR IN SCHOOL

- (a) High standards of performance in a happy working atmosphere.
- (b) Improving behaviour and attitudes to each other - Staff, children; other children etc.
- (c) Social graces and basic respect for school traditions.

2. MAJOR OBSTRUCTIONS/RESTRAINTS:-

- (a) Split-site makes intangible things like team spirit and cohesion difficult for things like swimming and athletics squads. It means travelling for one section of the school.
- (b) Timetabling because of the above - makes practices for teams a little more difficult to arrange.
- (c) The time element because with the large numbers of children there is a wide variety of interest and it is impossible to cater for all-the best we can do is give basic skills training then refer children for further work e.g. gym clubs; badminton; squash; table tennis.

End of Recording.

Account M38 was withdrawn at the request of the teacher concerned.

Coming from Yarmond, did you know much about Hucklebrough?

No. I did a lot of swimming and I came here and swam a couple of times and that was all I knew of Hucklebrough.

Do you feel locked into Hucklebrough now? Do you feel identified with it?

No. I feel a bit stagnant at the moment as far as teaching is concerned.

Do you live in Hucklebrough?

I'm in the process of separating from my wife and I'm not in Hucklebrough at the moment. I'm living in City. But at the moment I feel that what jobs there are going, there's too many applicants and now they (employers) can pick and choose.

You feel trapped?

To some extent, yes. At the moment I'm doing a B.Ed. course at Wearport Polytech. C.N.A.A. course and I hope that when I get that it'll give me a bit more in the rat race but it just remains to be seen.

So you get your B.Ed. at the end of next year, what sort of jobs will you apply for? Will you go for P.E. or will you get out of P.E.

It's a good question. I thought actually a couple of years ago about trying to get into the youth service. Because I work on an evening in the youth centre, here in fact, and I have helped to run it, I ran it for two months at one time and I thought of getting into that if I couldn't get anywhere else in P.E. Because the jobs are few and far between.

Are you on a Scale 1 or Scale 2?

Scale 2.

So after 12 years you are on a Scale 2? But you are doing your damndest to get higher qualifications so at least you can move from here?

Yes. I hope so.

Are you still interested in youth or is it just a job?

No no I'm interested, you know, everybody's the same, half way through the summer holidays you think, 'why the hell am I doing teaching' and then when you get back into it....you know I enjoy working with kids. Sometimes I wonder whether P.E. teaching is actually what I want to do. To be quite honest I'm not sure, really.

That would seem about right after twelve years, you cast back, you reflect back on your career and say, God is this right? I'm sure everybody does this at some stage. Well, men I'm thinking of. But I think they're different animals and they've got a different future, haven't they? But the Youth Service might open up to you. You say you are enjoying the teaching at the moment, let's look at the good news first, and say well look, where do your kicks come from, that is the job kicks, the things that you really say, I do get fun out of that?

You know, I just generally enjoy working with kids. Most kids, no matter what ability range. School teams-wise I only do basketball now and I get a lot of kicks out of seeing the kids do well in that. But generally I am just quite happy with kids.

Most of the day you are getting a lot of professional satisfaction?

Oh yes. By ten o'clock I'm not sick, you know, once I get into it and we get going, I quite enjoy it. I know some people can't get on with the lower type of ability kid but I quite enjoy working with them, it's hard work, you've got to think.

If you are working with working class pupils in my opinion it's hard work but I think there are certain people who feel a sympathy for and identify with working class pupils because a lot of the pupils here are working class, aren't they?

Oh yes and a lot are neglected. Well, I think so.

Can you tell me just a bit about the pupils you get, generally.

Well we've got in Hucklebrough, I think neighbourhood schools, and we've got a very mixed area from over where you were, Eden Terrace area, that's a very middle class type area down to Astone Lane, from the main dual carriageway from Markton, it goes down towards Astone Front and there's a lot of council houses. The Orient we call it, it's Calcutta Grove and that sort of.....

So you get quite a lot from there?

We get a big range, we get a lot from there and we get a lot from just outside the school gates which....last year we were being redeveloped, the houses re-done.

It seems Gargrave get some of The Orient as well.

Yes we get half and they get half.

So there is one tremendous range, the local middle class residential type and The Orient kids as well. That must be one of the problems.

Yes. I think the main problem is not necessarily the kids, but obviously they are there so there must be some sort of problem, a lot of the staff we've got are remnants, for the want of a better word, from the High School/Grammar School era and it took them a hell of a long time and some of them still haven't got the ability to teach these kids. It's probably not their own fault, it's the fact that they've been teaching good kids all the time and they just cannot relate to this type of kid. Well especially when you are in your late forties, early fifties, it's probably impossible to do. And I think this is one reason why this type of kid is missing out. It is the middle bands that I think suffer most. Not the bottom. The bottom are alright they've got the remedial sort of work. But I think it's the middle bands that miss out. The half-way between.

So this school, in your opinion, is still locked into those who have got a lot of ability and they've got the right home support?

Well this is where the staff are locked in yes, because we've got very academic staff.

And then there are some staff that are very good with the real lack of ability people, the people that have got no home support, it's the middle man that's vulnerable.

Yes. I think so.

In P.E. and then we will move off the kids because clearly you don't have personally any problems with the pupils, how many of the pupils, say in the 4th and 5th years, the last two years, 14, 15 and 16 year olds, are bringing notes, are scrounging, are skiving away from P.E. and how much of a problem is that?

It depends who takes them.

That seems a truthful answer

Yes. My principle is, each year we get a supply of gym shoes and shorts, and my principle is if the kid, if he's the type of kid, the lower band type of kid, hasn't got any gear, you don't belt him and say "bring your gear next week", you lend him some, and try and encourage him to bring some gear, but if he doesn't, fair enough. Chances are he probably hasn't got any. Some people don't work that way, they demand they bring their kit and won't lend any out. To me, with that sort of kid it's not going to work, you are going to lose him. They may bring their kit but I don't think they'll do what you want them to do. To be quite honest I think Clive has problems this way.

He's locked into the old grammar school ethos?

I think so, yes. I think he is finding it quite difficult to get.....
But you get a few who, let's see, we had bottom band first years
yesterday and there's some from really rough homes, you can tell
and there's about four or five who I am sure haven't got any kit.
I lend them all and I think there was only two yesterday who didn't
do games. But for the older ones, it's difficult because at the
moment there's not many kids come into school. No-one's doing anything
about it.

This is a large scale truancy then?

Oh yes. Fifth years, the bottom six classes there's nine or ten,
we have on a Thursday for games, and there should be about ninety
and we've had no more than 50 at all this year.

That's large scale isn't it? They are not sort of skiving in the
school somewhere, they're off....

Well you see it's not just P.E. they are missing. It's everything,
a lot of lessons they're missing.

Will that be 'O' level people as well as.....

I think they are basically C.S.E's. The 'O' level are a different
group, and I don't know how many of the middle bands are doing 'O'
level, last year there weren't many at all.

Is anybody doing anything about it?

Well I always fill in a register and I send a list in to the Head of
Year and he's usually very good but I saw him about 2 weeks after I
started doing this and he said "don't bother any more because no-one
above me is doing anything about it."

So he's lost heart. There's no point in him wasting his time.

Yes

So that's an abdication really isn't it?

Yes. So as I say it's not just P.E.

The impression I'm getting now is that as far as the teaching is concerned you're still getting a lot of satisfaction, you're not sour, you're reflecting on career prospects and doing something about it. It seems to me that you have a particular facility, an ability, a sympathy with these lower end kids that is maybe lacking in other people in the department. Am I surmising well?

Well yes. I think so, this is only my opinion of course.

Are you left inclined? In politics would you be left rather than right?

No. Straight down the middle. I have no political convictions at all.

And yet you seem to have a facility and an interest, a warmth towards the kids that maybe can't help themselves. That suggests leftist politics, but you don't identify with it?

Oh no, no. I'm just thinking about the kids. That's it, that's what I'm here for. I just don't think there's enough people take enough interest in them. In these type of kids.

If you were suddenly made Head of Department what changes would you like to see made in any respect, that might come nearer to what you think the way...and this is not a naughty question, I take the line that all groups of people, all social groups, because of their very humanity and weaknesses, are inefficient groups, no matter whether they are Town Halls or Schools or Departments or Families, there are certain ways that they can be improved. They are imperfect in other words. You will be aware of the imperfections after 11 years here and you sort of say, "Well I would like to see certain changes. Some of the things you'd say, "Oh I wouldn't want to change that at all." In general.

Well first thing is I don't think we get enough P.E. With the better type of kids, I'm going the opposite way now from what I've been

talking about, the top band kids, some of them get one lesson of P.E. a week.

When you talk about a band in this school there are three bands are there?

Sorry, I'd better get this right. There are three bands, yes, but I'm not talking about a band, the top class, put it like that, they are the class that do Latin, they are the supposedly high fliers.

When are they identified for Latin?

Third year.

So lets talk about a specific group of third year who are obviously destined for an academic kind of programme and they take Latin.

Yes. In the third year they get a double games lesson, that's it. In fact I think in the third year, if I remember rightly, it's only the top three classes who get the double lesson, they don't get a single lesson at all in fact, I think it goes right down to the top three classes.

So if I'm in the third year and I'm sort of above average I shall get double games.

Yes.

If I move into the fourth year in that same group, above average.....

If you are doing Latin, then, this year and last year and the year before they only got a single lesson and that was half of the double games lesson. If it's in the morning it's 45 minutes if it's in the afternoon it's 40.

So the chances are I shall get an afternoon games session, or an afternoon single session of 40 minutes?

Yes.

What would happen to me if I were doing Latin then and in that 4th year and I had this single period?

I'm not on that lesson. They are there for the first half of the lesson then they've got to go for the second half so in fact this year they are going out and doing whatever, rugby or football for that lesson then they are coming in, getting changed and going away. Last year I think, again I wasn't with them, they were, I think, left in the sports hall on their own playing Badminton, while the others were outside doing whatever they were doing.

Would they come down as a big group or just a.....

Oh I think in the past there has been more girls than boys but I think this year it's about a dozen boys. But usually, they are the best in P.E. ability.

So that if I am above average, the penalty I've got to pay for the programme we are going to do, is to miss out on such things as P.E.

Yes.

I might lose out on art or music and woodwork and all the rest of it as well, I don't know.

Yes. Again in the third year and they start this options system and then you pick and choose what you want to do. If you don't want to do art you don't have to do it, kind of thing, you know, but P.E. is supposedly compulsory, so obviously they've got to do it.

So I arrived at the third year and only get a double. I go into the fourth year and get a single, what happens to me in the fifth year?

Exactly the same, a single. Nine times out of ten it happens that way. Obviously they think it's better for them to miss half a games lesson than miss a maths lesson.

Has there been a battle about this at any time in your time?

I don't think so no. When we first started off comprehensive I was in fact Head of the Boys, Clive was doing remedial and there was a lady, a Mrs. Quayle who was Head of P.E. she was Head of P.E. in the High School before. We did then try to get a lot of changes, you know more P.E. and this sort of thing and we were just knocked on the head. If you don't like it leave sort of thing.

It was as blunt as that was it? This was by this particular Head?

Yes.

That seemed an unprofessional approach. No dialogue, no rationality. just.....

It wasn't in that particular context but it was a general thing, you know, we complained because when one of our staff is off we double up, which is fair enough, it's not only the kids that are suffering, and we are losing as well, we were losing free periods, for other people off, we complained about it you see because some of us were only getting one or two free periods a week so we were complaining and the boss said, "well I want to see you all," so we went in and he put us through our moans and he came out with this, "If you don't like it, leave." You know, it was all mixed in together the lack of P.E. and what have you. So what can you do? You can't do anything about it at all. You see P.E. Adviser has tried to do something because he doesn't think the kids are getting enough P.E. or some of them but how far he's got I don't know. I wouldn't have thought anywhere, you know.

Can you tell me a bit about the facilities. Are there sufficient for the numbers in the school?

I don't think so. We have one sports hall, 1 gym, and a swimming pool, we have two lots of playing fields, we have got plenty of playing fields, a lot of the time that's not the problem, it's indoor facilities you really need.

So if it's bad weather that's.....

Well, say on a double games lesson we've got 240 kids altogether or we could have, well we probably won't have as many as that, about 150 altogether, boys and girls.

150 boys and girls. How many teachers?

Usually 6. That isn't so bad in itself. We have a system where, if it's wet, the girls use the gym and the boys if it's wet, use the sports hall.

Is the gym on this site?

No it's down at the other end. It isn't so bad for the juniors because the girls can just stay there, they don't have to walk anywhere. But the boys have to get up here. Even so it's 80 kids in the sports hall. It is a lot and 80 girls in the gym is even more. There is the swimming pool which we don't use much of, the girls use that every games lesson but the boys don't. That's the way Clive works it, he doesn't or hasn't in the past put a lot of pressure on the swimming. I understand that next term he wants to use it for games lessons, in the past he hasn't been bothered. There's always been this tremendous pressure for rugby in this place, and obviously.....

Is that still on?

It's not as pronounced. The Head was crazy about it, why, I don't know because I don't think he was rugby himself but he was in this school for 8 months before we went comprehensive and whether he had it pushed onto him then or whether he sees it as a means of creating an elite or whatever way you want to look at it from that point of view I don't know. But we had a lot of trouble over it and I still maintain that's the reason why I didn't get the Head of P.E. when it came up.

You weren't going to sort of plunge everything into rugby?

Everything into rugby. Yes.

I got the impression after I had been here last time what this is was a sort of the old grammar school preparing boys for rugby for one particular rugby club, it seemed as though there was a direct link between this and was it Wanderers?

Yes. No it was Beavers. But now the top end of the school the rugby has gone down mainly because we haven't got the numbers, that's one of the reasons, I've got other opinions why it goes down and you might want to know those but the Head has lost a little bit of interest. He's not so pushy with everything as he was when you were last here. There was a lot of trouble with this present 5th year, in fact he (Head) had a mass assembly for the second years when they were in the second year and said, "If you don't come to rugby practices, you don't play football (Soccer)."

That's quite recent?

That's when this years 5th years were in the 2nd year. But as I say, the last couple of years it has died down a little bit. Now we don't have a school team at senior level we have....it's a town team. He is still interested but he doesn't seem as pushy, and as I say, I think this is the reason Clive got the job in preference to me. Because Clive was either a 'yes' boy or he was prepared to do the rugby. He is rugby, although I did rugby at school, I didn't do football at school I always did rugby. But rugby isn't the Be all and End all for me in my way of thinking.

You argued for a variety didn't you?

Yes. But still now we have the first year do rugby, that's all they do in games lessons they don't do football. Maybe the last half of next term when the better ones have been sorted out the rest will

then get a game of football. It's only because I've pushed that with Clive. I say it's a waste of time doing rugby any more.

It seems to me that the programme hasn't got any sort of coherence. I shall have to talk to Clive about it but it seems to me that the programme's a bit fragmented.

Well there's no scheme of work, put it like that. It's do as you want.

So there is a sense in which you get your first years and you can do what you like with them.

In single lessons, yes.

There's no sort of so many weeks of this activity and so many weeks of that activity?

Not in single lessons. In games lessons we do. I say the first years do rugby, which I suppose to some extent is fair enough.

So you do that for the whole year?

The first years, well in the summer term they do athletics all the time, maybe the last two or three weeks we might go on to cricket. But it's athletics all the time, which to me again is a bit stupid because after eight or nine weeks of athletics some of them are getting pretty sick. But after the first year we have a three game system, rugby, football and basketball and they do four weeks of each and usually, this year we have started doing on the change-over week, we do a cross country so in that way its getting a bit more varied. (The cross country did not materialise).

What year's that?

M.39/13

That's second, right through. Except fifth year when usually there's not.....

So you can argue that in the 2nd, 3rd and above in the winter games they are getting a taste of.....

Oh yes, they are getting virtually eight weeks of each thing.

Does it work?

I think so. A lot of them don't like rugby, purely because it's physical, they like football even though they can't play it, and they like basketball, at first they liked it because they hated sides but now they like it because it's a game. Because it is a difficult game in any case and some of the older ones are starting to learn how to play a little bit better and they enjoy it as a game itself.

You give time to your basketball, you've reduced the time that you give to.....

I opted out.

Can you tell me a little bit about that story. When did you decide to do that?

Well, we had been here 2 years so that was 1975 I think it was '75 when Jenny left when she was having a baby. As I say Clive got the job.

Which must have been a bitter blow

Yes, it was. Up to then I'd been doing 2 basketball teams and a couple of football teams, I did the swimming I did the athletics as well with being in charge of the boys.

You must have been working every lunch hour and every evening?

Well I was working every lunch hour certainly, yes. That was when I first came, you know it was a new job, I was in charge of the boys and from then, 'cos Clive had done very little, to be quite honest, in fact he wasn't P.E. I think he may have done a rugby team, he helped a little bit with the athletics and that was it. And to be quite honest he does no more now. But from then on I thought, "to hell with it, I flog my guts out for 2 years and got kicked in the teeth, I'm not going to do anything." I enjoyed the basketball because I play a bit myself as well so I thought, "well I'm going to keep on with that" and I did the swimming again, that was one of my big interests but after a year I blew that in as well, after the first year I saw that he was doing b.....all so I thought, "why should I flog my guts out even now." But now I only take one basketball team.

What sort of time does that take up?

Well it would take up more time if I had the facilities. I use two dinner times because that's the only time we can get the sports hall for basketball and one evening, again it's the only time we can get for basketball, I'm a bit limited as well because I'm at Wearport twice a week with this course, so I'm limited in that respect but you know the kids I've got and the kids I had last year were a very good set of lads, they would have come in every day all day to practice. And I would have given the time, willingly but I can't get any more time so.....

Did you feel bad when you did this or were you so passionate and so angry that it didn't worry you?

I did at first. Well with the swimming it wasn't so bad because they had to be coerced a little bit to come and do the actual training, because a lot of them weren't keen, you weren't getting that many and on top of that they were getting a lot of swimming in any case, they were in virtually every week so it didn't matter too much. But the football, other staff took them over so the kids weren't missing out and the basketball, no one as such was

losing out, maybe some who weren't playing were losing out, I didn't drop anybody. I didn't drop anybody in the cart. But I did because I feel this is a big part of P.E. it's an unpaid reward really, I think, team games.

You see it that way do you?

I do yes. I get a lot of pleasure out of it, I always have done but a lot of people think it's part of the job, you should be doing that. It isn't really, because it's all extra.

This is one of the hidden pressures you see. I'm not being critical at all. In fact on the contrary. I'm astonished at the number of people that feel that they've got to do this and I say, "well who says you've got to do it"? It's one of the hidden things that really we say, "well who is making you do it?" There is nothing in the contract that says it. The Headmaster is not saying you've got to do it. So where is the pressure coming from do you reckon? What makes people do it? And you've given me one answer saying that it's a reward that I get.....out of my basketballers.

Well I think it is. It is for me. I think when you come out of college I think a lot of new people feel obliged to do extra work. I think they soon learn though when they get into school. Depending on the school.

I say, "look if you do extra time you do it because you want to not because anybody is making you." I think they could be using their time in better ways now.

There was a time at the first school I was at, I was at the old boys Tech. The Headmaster there was a fantastic bloke and if you did something he would let you know he was pleased about it, if you were doing good work and that he would let you know. In fact I got a promotion there, you know, the old responsibility thing, when I was doing a lot of out of school work. He really appreciated it.

That was the old boys tech. was it before you combined with.....

No no, it was nothing to do with this school. That one became Fleetwith. The boys tech. was in the town centre next to the Town Hall. There were also the girls tech. which was part of Aiden's block. They combined together to make Fleetwith.

But I thought you had come straight from London..

No I went to the tech. and came here when we went comprehensive.

How long were you at the tech. then?

5 years.

So that's very interesting because you said a very important thing here. Because you worked with a headmaster who recognised the amount of time that you gave. That in itself was rewarding, it also lead to a promotion.

Well I reckon he got me this job as well.

So there is a sense in which you have a great respect for him.

Yes.

You have got a contrast here haven't you? Between this bloke who couldn't care less what you're doing it seems to me, he seems to me just no help whatsoever to P.E. it seems to me you are also lead by somebody who also has got no fight in him. Is that fair?

It's either that or he's been told.

He is either a 'yes' man or he is frightened?

Yes. You know you were talking about 'left' before, and I think Clive's very left. He is certainly labour and he's certainly very left I would have thought. In some things, little things, he goes crazy about and gets upset about and important things to the rest of us, they are unimportant to him.

I got the impression of this department that it's fragmented, it isn't a unified department. It's in pieces.

It isn't. No. It was originally, although I don't know whether it was originally. The P.E. staff were originally when we first came, I think we were one unit, although having said that, the rugby, which was this schools P.E. as far as he (the Head) was concerned was nothing to do with the P.E. department. When he gave the jobs out when we went comprehensive, he virtually said you'll be looking after this team, you'll be looking after that team etc. etc. But since Clive took over it's split down the middle, boys and girls. Heather runs the girls completely on her own except for things where she has to share with Clive, they've got their own fund going to get gear and what have you.

So there are two departments. There isn't one cohesive department?

Certain vital things you know they've got to.....She tries to keep out of the way all the time. She'll probably tell you. As well as that division there was the division in the mens side, virtually I went with the women. I even moved into the sports hall, we've got two instructors rooms, mens and womens and I moved into the womens. How moral that might be I don't know. It was just to get away to be quite honest. Of course since then we have had a lot of other P.E. men, we have had about 4 I think since Clive took over, all virtually first year chaps.

Came, Took a look, and shot out!

Well to do other things. One lad went into remedial work, another one just moved elsewhere, he didn't like the area in any case, it was just a job to start with.

I remember interviewing one lad, I can't remember his name.

Harold Nigel was it? Thin lad with a beard.

That's right. You were saying that there was a pupil loss and you've got your own theory about this, the number of pupils that are going. That the numbers are going down.

Oh the standard of rugby. I told the boss one day and he didn't like it very much. He was on about the standard of the rugby you see, he was talking to somebody else and I just happened to go into the room and he carried on talking while I was looking through some papers or something and I thought hell do you or don't you, anyway I butted in, I thought, you've done it in the past so why not do it now. He maintains that we don't do enough in the games lessons you see, because when it was a grammar school they had so many out for games and they did rugby all the time and the standard was great and he thought it was because of the games lessons you see and I said "well really the games lessons have nothing to do with how good your team is, it's how much practice they do." And I gave him my example of my basketball team, they had been unbeaten for 5 years, they train 3 times a week, 4 if they could and they flog their guts out and I said, "if the rugby people did exactly the same you'd have good rugby teams. They don't do any practices, it's as simple as that." This year the second years do a little bit because they have a new lad who has just started, who is very keen and they do quite a bit, the third years come out one dinner time, whoever is taking them comes out about quarter past one and they finish to start lessons at 2 o'clock. The first three quarters of an hour has been missed and half the kids come out and sometimes the teacher doesn't come. When Clive had a rugby team, he hasn't got one this year, (1) they didn't do any practices, you know, the practices they do are negligible. I do more with my basketball team than the rest of the rugby do altogether. And I said to the boss this is the reason they are not doing anything. And he wasn't very happy.

During the games periods that are on the timetable - that's from 9 till 4, is it just run by P.E. people?

No, we've got outsiders in as well. We have 4. Graham who you spoke to when we came in, he is in charge of the Youth Centre, he used to be P.E. Graham Ashley. He was at Callaly originally and he was P.E. When he's on games he usually does basketball because

he's basketball in any case. He'll do anything, but usually he does basketball group and the others go outside. We have got the Head of the first year who is basically I suppose, well he's anything, but he does football, he's a cross country runner, he's.....(2)

Are they a hindrance or a help?

Generally I would say a hindrance. Especially when you come to the summer term. Fair enough they might be fantastic at rugby, you come to the summer, what bloody good are they at athletics? None at all. So you're carrying them. Originally they were put in for the rugby, we had about 5 different ones when we first came and they all happened to run a rugby team, and they all happened to be on the games lesson of that rugby team, which you know wasn't co-incidence. They were probably all right for the rugby but when we wanted to do anything else they were a dead loss. They are necessary here because I am the only man who is full-time P.E. Clive isn't full time P.E. and the other one isn't.

So you're full-time P.E. Clive does P.E. plus what?

Remedial. Remedial English or Maths one or the other. The other lad does the same.

What about the women?

The women are all full-time P.E.

It's out of balance isn't it? I suppose that boss would argue that he's putting these non-specialists in to reinforce.....

When we first started it was exactly the same, I was full-time P.E., Clive was remedial and doing games and some single lessons and..... and the other lad was doing some history at that time, then when Clive took over, no just before then, he went on to full-time P.E. for some reason and then he took over and he was full-time P.E. again and I was full-time P.E. and the other lad was only half and

M.39/20

gradually Clive has gone back into the remedial. Why, I don't know.

You would like to get away from this set up now?

At one time I did. I want to get elsewhere, you know, not just to get away. At one time I just wanted to get away but there weren't any jobs. I applied for two and I think there were 180 applicants and with not having a degree, you could discard all the ones who didn't have a degree straight away I think, unless they were really fantastic and I don't profess to be a fantastic teacher. Now I've learnt over the last two or three years to live with it and I'm starting to get back into it a little bit.

You are at a sort of crossroads as well aren't you as far as your career is concerned?

Yes.

Are you hopeful or are you depressed at the moment?

Oh I'm not depressed. I must have been after the first year for three years I think. I don't think anyone could live with me to be quite honest after Clive got the job because I was just at rock bottom and gradually I've got....well I've just got to face it, it's happened and nothing's going to change it, and you only do yourself harm so I've just tried to live with it and do the best I can.

Has your domestic life situation spilled over onto your professional or has your professional just kept you sane? I think divorce or separation like that is a traumatic experience, you'll be glad when it's over but the process is painful in anybody's terms.

It is, although it is a friendly separation there is nothing nasty in it. It's only been really since July that it started. The longer it goes on the harder it's becoming in some ways. But I don't think there has been any spill-over. One has nothing to do with the other.

That's how to perceive it?

Yes. I don't think either effects the other.

Have you any children?

Yes, this is the worst part you see. I've got three. Everyone seems happier since we split up. It initially was a temporary thing but the more I'm away I think, the happier everyone else has been because my wife and I argued a hell of a lot and now I think it's going to be a permanent thing. It's a pity because really I think it's the children who are possibly going to suffer to some extent. But they seem happy so.....and I see them regularly so I've no complaints there.

How old are they?

nine, ten and the eldest one is fourteen.

Will they be coming to school in Hucklebrough?

The eldest one goes to Gargrave, the girl who is very bright, well they are both going to go to Gargrave I think, but I don't know about Gargrave.

Are you a bit worried about that?

Yes. I would have liked her to come here but under the circumstances I don't think it would be a good idea now. Because no matter what we say about this school, if you are academically bright, you should do well. Because they've got the staff.

Everything's laid out for you?

Yes. You've got the staff and again if you're weak, very weak, you should do better because again there is quite a good remedial side. But Gargrave I don't know about. I think she is bright enough to overcome it in any case, she is very bright.

Do you run an options system with your fourth and fifth year?
There are maybe three teachers and eight activities, and there
is no way that three teachers can.....

No we don't run it to that extent. The games lessons I've told you what we do, single lessons we've got 45 minutes and by the time they have finished b..... about you're left with 30 minutes, what do you do in 30 minutes? Next lesson for example we have 60 odd kids, 60 odd boys in the sports hall for a single lesson.

What are you going to do with them?

There are three staff on and that's a help, we have on group who do basketball, one group who are doing volleyball and the other group have been in the swimming pool but now we've got to find somewhere else for them to go. It's either go outside and do some football skills or inside if it's.....

How do they know what kit to bring?

Well we don't change willy nilly. We usually don't.

So if I'm playing volleyball today.....

You'll know at the end of this lesson that next week you'll either be playing volleyball or you are going in the pool. Usually they are told unless for some unforeseen circumstances they have got to change, like last week we had them attempting to mend the equipment in the sports hall and we had to go outside. An options system can't work in this school because we haven't got the time and we haven't got the staff to work a decent options system.

And there'll be a separation of boys and girls, when you've got
6 staff you have really got 3 men and 3 women. It's rather different
from 6 specialist activities.

M.39/23

Yes it is.

End of Recording

Follow-up Comments

1. He is now taking Year 1.
2. This changed at Christmas. A new Science teacher is now doing games instead.

