

All Things in Jesus I Find:

My Spiritual Journey
1969



Adrian Hall

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*All that I need is in Jesus,
He satisfies, joy He supplies;
Life would be worthless without Him,
All things in Jesus I find.
(Iwerne Chorus No 1)*

1969

First Term at Haileybury

I started at Haileybury in January 1969, after being awarded Top Scholarship in late 1968, my last term at Packwood. I don't remember many of the details – except that it was very cold, and there was a fair amount of bullying and other hardships.

But there was one positive experience that stands out clearly in my memory. One wintry afternoon we queued up for our singing auditions. We were sitting outside Jack H's room in The Bradby, and someone pointed at me and nudged his neighbour and said I was the 'top scholar' (or 'top swot') – which I didn't like very much. But then my turn came, and Jack summoned into his room. Without any ado or apology, he stood at the piano (instead of sitting), scarf round his neck, and asked me to sing "Ding dong merrily on high" (as the Haileybury Christmas Carol Service had taken place just a few weeks previously), while he thumped out the tune! After a just a few bars and less than a minute ("Glo-o-o... ria") he said, "Right! Jolly good! You're in the Chapel Choir...", and sent me on my way! I was overjoyed...

Later that first term, we performed Handel's Messiah, the second 'Lent and Easter' parts, starting with "Behold the Lamb of God...", and focusing on the words of Isaiah 53; "Surely, surely, he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows!", and "All we like sheep have gone astray...", and "He trusted in God that he would deliver him; let him deliver him, if he delight in him..." The choral music, in four parts (SATB) was exquisite and just so wonderful, after the trite English madrigals we had to sing at Packwood the previous term ("Sigh no more, ladies...") – and I feel, looking back, that God was preparing me to hear the Gospel for myself and, for the first time, to take it seriously. 'Messiah' was truly Scripture in Song...

The Chapel at Haileybury was an uplifting, awe-inspiring place, and I remember singing many beautiful anthems Sunday by Sunday, such as "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace..." , the Nunc Dimittis, Stanford in B Flat.

Second Term at Haileybury

But my true life – that is, my spiritual life – began in the early summer of 1969. My paternal grandmother ('Darsie') had recently died, and I suppose I was more than usually sensitized to matters of life and death...

In fact, inside the east door of Haileybury Chapel is a plaque commemorating my grandmother:



It was my second term at Haileybury, and Andrew S had invited me to attend R-J's 'Bible Reading Society' ('R-J's', as it was affectionately called), which took place in Richard and Rachel R-J's flat after morning Chapel each Sunday. On this particular occasion (I did not record the exact date) the guest speaker was the Reverend David F (leader of Iwerne Minster camps). He gave me the impression of being friendly and warm-hearted. During the traditional coffee before the meeting he shook my hand and introduced himself – and in the course of conversation asked me where I lived. When I replied, "Highgate", his face lit up, and he told me that he lived not far from there and often walked his dog around the Highgate ponds. I felt reassured, ready to listen to what he had to say...



Westwind, Fitzroy Park, Highgate N6 (house to the left), 1969 (Dancers End is to the right)



Haileybury, view from Big Side, May 1969

I do not clearly remember the details of his talk – generally it seemed to be an excellent description and explanation of what it meant to become a Christian. Having heard many subsequent talks by David Fletcher on the subject, I imagine that he explained the Cross by reference to Isaiah 53 v 6, “And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all”, using the famous illustration with two hands and a book (“Where has my sin gone? On Jesus. How much of my sin has gone on Jesus? All of it...”).

I am also sure that he introduced me to Revelation 3 v 20: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in...” He must have gently challenged us at that point, suggesting that if any of us had not invited the Lord Jesus into our lives as Saviour and Lord, we could do so in the quietness of the dormitory that night. I know for a fact that on that very night, in Melvill dormitory, I prayed, asking Jesus to come into my life. I realize now that from that moment on I belonged to Him, a child of God (John 1 v 12)...

Fourteenth birthday

I don't remember my fourteenth birthday very clearly, but this picture shows that part of it was spent having a picnic at Gibraltar Point.

Mother and Nick, Gibraltar Point, on my 14th birthday – 7 August 1969



Achiltibuie and Achnahaird, North-West Scotland, September 1969

This summer holiday at Achiltibuie and Achnahaird on the Coigeach Peninsula in north-west Scotland was a golden time – it was one of the very few holidays I had with my parents, and no one else. This particular holiday also took place just a few months after I had asked Jesus into my life (Revelation 3 v 20). Looking back some 50 years later, I realize that what made it special was now that I was ‘in Christ’, “life in all its fullness” lay before me (John 10 v 10) – with Heaven waiting for me in the distance!

I no longer have the diary that I kept at the time, so the story of this holiday will have to be told through the photographs, which I did manage to keep...



Fishing vessel at Ullapool – 1 September 1969



Mum and Dad fishing on Loch Osaig



Views from cliffs on the western headland of Achnahaird Bay



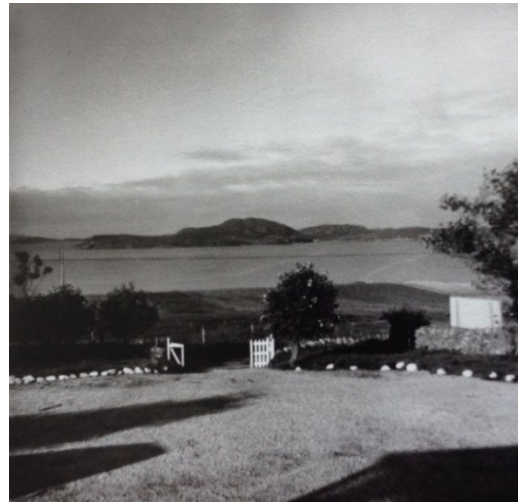
The 'Bluet Gaz' and Nescafe on the shores of Loch Osaig (Dad wearing his Icelandic jersey)



Picnic at Achnahaird Bay (Mum wearing her Icelandic jersey) – 4 September 1969



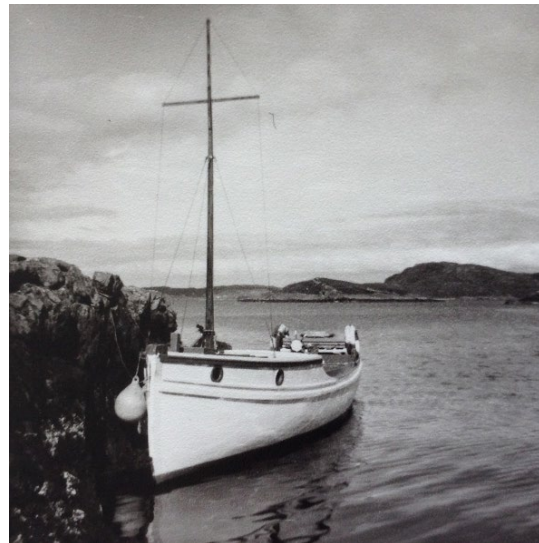
View from Tanera Beag – 6 September 1969



View from the Summer Isles Hotel, Achiltibuie, with Tanera Mor in the background



Picnic on Tanera Beag



Lady Anne, moored at Tanera Beag



Brunton's Turret, Hadrian's Wall, on the way back



Home again, Legbourne – 8 September 1969



Google Images: Loch Scionscaig, with Cul Mhor (left), Cul Beag (centre) and Stac Pollaidh (right)...