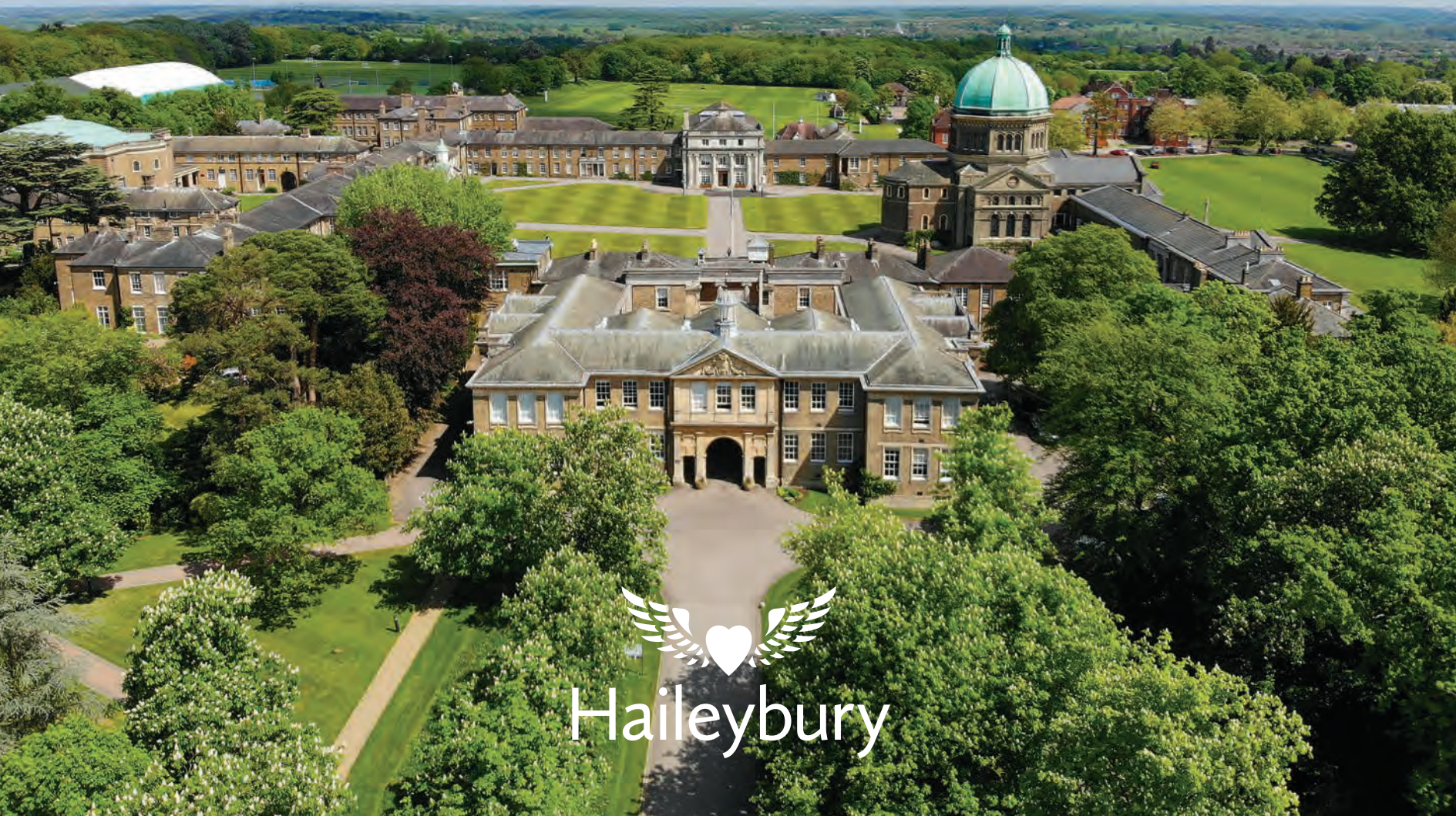


# Haileybury: a short architectural guide



Haileybury





# Haileybury: a short architectural guide

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# Foreword

This short guide to our school's architectural history is one of the many positive outcomes of the Conservation Management Plan which was written by Cambridge Architectural Research Ltd in 2018–19. We commissioned the Plan because we wanted to know as much as possible about the history of our school's buildings. As we plan for the future, we are keen to ensure that we fully understand the past.

As part of the consultation process that preceded the completion of the Conservation Management Plan, we surveyed our pupils to find out how they perceived the school's buildings. In their responses, they expressed their appreciation of the school's beauty, their affection for many of the buildings and their hope that the school will continue to conserve, as well as improve, the built environment for the benefit of future Haileyburians. The Conservation Management Plan gave us all of the information that we needed to do just that.

Generations of Haileyburians have been fortunate enough to live, work, sleep and play in the most aesthetically pleasing environment. The classic grandeur of Wilkins' architecture, the charm of the Blomfield designs and the beauty of Baker's buildings help define our school. So do some of our extraordinary individual buildings including Arthur Blomfield's much loved



Chapel as well as Simpson and Ayrton's magnificent Form Room Block and Big School.

What makes Haileybury so special is, of course, the combination of all of these styles and buildings. Taken together they constitute an architectural jewel that is unique and precious.

Martin Collier  
*The Master*



# Haileybury's origin

*When the East India Company was established in 1600, no one could have predicted its astonishing success over the following two centuries. Yet by 1800, it was staggeringly rich and powerful, governing vast areas of the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia.*

Prodigious power brought problems for the East India Company. As well as a private army of 260,000 (twice the size of the British Army), the Company needed able administrators. Yet the calibre of new recruits was poor. Indeed, a 1787 report noted that it 'did not think Britain could have furnished such a set of wretched objects'. It went on to urge, 'for God's sake lose no time in taking up this business in the most serious manner'.

So the East India College was established to provide education and training in England for 16-18 year olds destined for the Company's civil service overseas. It first opened in 1805 in temporary premises in Hertford.

In October 1805 the Company purchased the Hailey Bury estate near Hertford for the College. There was a large family house, the core of today's Hailey House, together with 60 acres of land providing the site for permanent College buildings.



1 Above: A lithograph from the 1830s showing Hailey House, which had changed very little since being acquired by the East India Company in 1805. The former owner had been a director of the Company. The 1805 sale particulars described 'an excellent freehold Family House in good repair commanding a delightful situation'. A three storey, red brick house with tall sash windows, it survives today, though heavily remodelled and extended later in the 19th Century.

2 Left: The East India Company was the de facto government in large parts of India, and established mints in several cities including Bombay (Mumbai), Madras (Chennai) and Calcutta (Kolkata). This two mohur gold coin, 33mm in diameter, was minted in Calcutta in 1835; it was worth thirty rupees.

# The East India College



*Having bought the Haileybury site in 1805, the East India Company needed an architect. Amazingly, the long-established Company surveyor was rejected in favour of pioneering young upstart, William Wilkins.*

William Wilkins (1778-1839) was still in his twenties and had minimal experience, but he cannily adapted the plan he had prepared a few months earlier for Downing College, Cambridge, and submitted it to the East India Company – and he won both commissions. His design for the East India College was built between 1806 and 1809 (but his design for Downing College was delayed and never completed).

The key to Wilkins' success was the esteem then attached to ancient Greece. He had made a two-year study tour to Italy and Sicily to record Greek architecture. At Haileybury and Downing he took the step of reproducing ancient Greek architecture with perfect precision. Wilkins' East India College has the distinction of being the first completed building of the Greek Revival, which rapidly became the dominant architectural style in Britain until about 1830 – the last word in good taste and refinement. As its originator, Wilkins is undoubtedly an important figure in British architectural history.

Wilkins' plan combined Greek refinement with economy and practicality. Behind the magnificent south-facing stone façade, the professors' houses, lecture rooms and student rooms were simple brick buildings forming a spacious quadrangle. The dignified, rational character of the College buildings was considered perfectly



1. Above: *The Quad in East India College days (1809-58) – reputedly the largest academic quadrangle in Europe. This sketch shows the south side before the current chapel was built. The original library was behind the central portico, with the chapel in the range to the right. Their positions have reversed: the current chapel replaced the original library in the 1870s, and the present library is in the original chapel.*

sued to the training of young men destined for great responsibilities overseas.

Wilkins had a successful architectural career, although critical assessment places him just below the first rank of architects. His major commissions were the National Gallery and University College in London and additions to three Cambridge colleges, King's, Trinity and Corpus Christi. He was said to have had a 'gregarious, amiable, and inoffensively ambitious personality, matched by a commanding stature and bluff good looks.'

When the College buildings were already under construction, Humphry Repton (1752–1818) was asked to improve the landscape setting. Repton was the leading landscape architect of the day whose commissions included the Royal Pavilion at Brighton. It is said that his influence on landscape architecture 'has proved more powerful than his predecessors, rivals or successors.' Repton's legacy at Haileybury is still very much in evidence.



2. Wilkins' beautiful drawing (right) of the central portico on the south front of the East India College expresses the pursuit of purity and perfection in the Greek Revival, which was revolutionary in 1805. The drawing omits the fluting on the columns. The architectural details are precisely copied from the Acropolis in Athens.

3. Below: Wilkins' south front of the East India College (1806-09) is severe and restrained, but achieves architectural drama by its sheer scale, 430 ft (130 m) long. It is faced in white Portland stone with three dramatic Ionic porticoes. Wilkins' design for the East India College was the first completed building of the Greek Revival in Britain.

4. Below right: Thomas Medland's engraving of the East India College (1810) captured the grandeur of Wilkins' south front and Repton's landscape setting. Repton was responsible for the terrace beside Wilkins' south front, the meandering ponds and the new parkland. He also introduced the double avenue of chestnuts to sweep visitors with some ceremony towards the main entrance to the College.



# The foundation of Haileybury College



*The East India College closed in 1858. In 1862 the buildings were acquired for a new public school – Haileybury. The young architect Arthur Blomfield was appointed to convert the ‘inconvenient buildings’ into a functioning school.*

Sir Arthur Blomfield (1829–99) was from a most respectable background – son of the Bishop of London and educated at Rugby School and Trinity College, Cambridge – but he trained as an architect in an era that fizzed with revolutionary Gothic Revival and Pre-Raphaelite spirit. Brimming with youthful zeal, he set about Haileybury’s red brick transformation.

Initially there was little change to the grey brick buildings around Wilkins’ Quad, with study-bedrooms becoming open dormitories ‘for better supervision of the pupils’ (1862–63). Beyond the Quad, Blomfield could build red brick buildings imbued with the Gothic spirit: an extension to Hailey House (1865), the Sanatorium (1867, now Alban’s House), and the original part of Allenby House (1868). Then came Blomfield’s big prize – the new Chapel (1876–78). He allegedly said, ‘You need raising up; the whole place grovels on the ground!’ The new Chapel was confident, bold and ambitious – an extraordinary intrusion into Wilkins’ Greek Revival composition. Over time the unlikely combination of Wilkins and Blomfield has become familiar and comfortable.

Arthur Blomfield became a major establishment architect of the late Victorian era. He was knighted in 1889 and awarded the RIBA Gold Medal in 1891. He ran a large office that, according to the poet and critic John Betjeman, ‘could turn out an impressive church in almost any style’; and almost anywhere it seems, from Cannes, St Moritz and Copenhagen, to the Caribbean and the Falkland Islands. Becoming more cantankerous as he aged, Haileybury caught the best of his youthful dynamism – just as it did with Wilkins.



1. Above: The original Highfield House (1868) was designed in a picturesque Gothic Revival style, with emphasised brick arches, tall chimneys and a steep cascading red-tiled roof – an extreme reaction to the calm symmetry of the Greek Revival. It has been added to numerous times and is now a part of Allenby House.

2. Below: The Sanatorium (1867, now Alban’s House) shows Venetian Gothic influences made popular by the writings of Ruskin. It has decorative polychromatic brickwork and a mosaic over the front door showing Christ healing the sick. The large scale now seems surprising, yet in an age obsessed with hygiene and infectious diseases this would have been reassuring.





3. Right: Shortly after the new Chapel was completed, a fire caused extensive damage. When rebuilt, the interior was festooned with an elaborate decorative scheme of eclectic Renaissance style – a true High Victorian period piece.

4. Below: For the new Chapel (1876–78), Arthur Blomfield did not use red bricks and pointed Gothic arches, as might be expected, but grey bricks and round arches. This may have been out of respect for the neighbouring Wilkins buildings, but the result is hardly sympathetic in scale or character, arches and domes being alien to classical Greek architecture. The Chapel is a powerful expression of Victorian self-confidence. This view also shows Herbert Baker's apse in a warmer brick colour, added in the 1930s.





# Late Victorian era



*By about 1880, the main requirements of a Victorian public school were in place at Haileybury and its architectural development took a lighter turn, in the hands of young Reginald Blomfield, nephew of Arthur Blomfield.*

The charming and lighthearted Cricket Pavilion (1884) was the very first architectural project of Sir Reginald Blomfield (1856-1942). What a contrast to Wilkins' sober Greek and his uncle Arthur Blomfield's earnest Gothic!

Reginald Blomfield was educated at Haileybury (1869-75) and Oxford University, and in 1881 began architectural training in the office of his uncle Arthur, who 'resolutely eschewed the flights of the younger school'. Uncle and nephew did not get on. Reginald left Arthur's office and began independent practice with the Cricket Pavilion at his old school, where he was free to indulge his youthful flights.



1. Left: Fresh from his success with the Cricket Pavilion, Reginald Blomfield designed Bradby Hall (1888). Its many functions – classrooms, museum, laboratory, workshop, gymnasium – were designed as separate elements. The result is remarkably ingenious and characterful, but very complex.

2. Opposite, top left: Red House (1896) was designed by Reginald Blomfield in a prominent location with an impressive exterior, suggesting an important occupant – but it was actually for college servants. Consequently there is no grand front door, no spacious staircase, and only one chimney. Reginald Blomfield's extension to Allenby House (1894) used a similar architectural style.





Reginald was so keen to build that he didn't charge any fees for the Pavilion. The strategy for launching his practice was successful, and he was appointed to design Bradby Hall (1888), another artistic and intricate building. The cost went over budget and Reginald was reprimanded. Perhaps this experience contributed to his rapid move towards more disciplined and orderly designs, like Haileybury's Old Music School (1899).

Reginald became a champion of classical architecture, wrote many books and rose to prominence in the architectural profession. He was Professor of Architecture at the Royal Academy from 1907–11, President of the RIBA from 1912–14, received the RIBA Royal Gold Medal for Architecture in 1913, and was knighted in 1919. In old age he became notoriously dogmatic and irascible and abhorred all forms of modern architecture. He was the model for Captain Pugwash, created by John Ryan who married Reginald's grand-daughter, Priscilla Blomfield.



3. Above right: The Cricket Pavilion (1884) was Reginald Blomfield's first architectural project. He shoehorned as many motifs as possible into a small building. It is an excellent example of the late Victorian aesthetic movement, or 'Queen Anne Style', characterised by red brickwork, white woodwork and fanciful decoration – a complete contrast to the Chapel designed by his uncle Arthur Blomfield only a few years earlier.

4. Left: Reginald Blomfield's Old Music School (1899) is comparable in scale to his earlier Cricket Pavilion but very different in architectural character. Instead of youthful playfulness there is balance and authority. Reginald Blomfield's newly-found respect for the classical rules carried him to great success as an architect, author and teacher.

# Edwardian modernisation

*At the beginning of the 20th Century Haileybury required substantial modernisation. The architects for this phase were Simpson and Ayrton.*

The architectural practice of Sir John Simpson (1858–1933, the businessman) and Maxwell Ayrton (1874–1960, the designer) was commissioned to devise improvements, both practical and aesthetic, to the Wilkins buildings that were then considered impractical and insanitary, and described by the Headmaster as ‘hideous’, and ‘most depressing’.

The first priority was modernising the boarding houses. Three projecting Quad-facing staircases (vestibules) provided direct access to the upper floors of the Wilkins buildings which had been adapted by Arthur Bomfield in the 1860s, and on the opposite side, sanitary annexes were added containing modern bathrooms, drying rooms and boot rooms (1905–06). The sanitary block added to the south of Batten and Kipling Houses had a different character, with a vertical accent capped by a cupola. Next came the need for modern form rooms. This was decisively achieved with a three-sided courtyard just west of the main entrance to the school (the Form Room Block, 1907–08). It was controversial



1. Above: Simpson and Ayrton's use of the classical language of architecture in Big School (1912–14) has the effect of an orchestral crescendo. Like Wilkins they used Ionic columns, but unlike Wilkins the columns are part of a rich composition of rustication, balconies, attics, balustrades, ironwork, shutters – and lion head door handles. It is unquestionably attention-grabbing, but just under control.

to obscure Wilkins' main west entrance, even when his work was unfashionable.

Simpson and Ayrton's grand architectural opportunity came with Big School, a showpiece celebrating Haileybury's golden jubilee in 1912. It returned to classical models, but was more lavish, sophisticated and assertive than Wilkins' austere Greek Revival classicism. Opened in 1914, it exudes the spirit of Edwardian

optimism, soon to be shattered by the catastrophe of the First World War. Simpson and Ayrton are no longer well-known but they were highly rated in their day. After the First World War, they designed the prestigious British Empire Exhibition of 1924 (for which Simpson was knighted;) including the twin-towered Wembley Stadium. Their varied work at Haileybury is of exceptional quality, and highly characteristic of the rich taste of the Edwardian period.





2. Above: Simpson and Ayerton's first idea for a new Form Room Block was to replace the original Wilkins entrance, but instead they built a detached building (1907–08). A central portico faces the Avenue and leads through a vaulted passageway to Scholars' Court and the retained Wilkins entrance (see cover photo). An early Georgian style was used, with many liberties taken, in grey brick to match the Wilkins buildings. The design has artistic touches, and high quality bronze and brass details are a notable feature.

3. Below: The interior of the assembly hall in Big School echoes the façade with its almost-over-the-top decoration. There was originally a more elaborate dias and stage, but it has been boarded over.

4. Right: The vestibules facing the Quad (1905–06) were an ingenious yet elegant solution that provided direct access to the first floors of the boarding house blocks; at the time the ground and first floors were separate houses. These small, practical buildings were designed with great care and attention to detail.



# Inter-war years



*How should Haileybury respond to the trauma of the First World War? It turned to the eminent architect Herbert Baker.*

The career of Sir Herbert Baker (1862–1946) spanned the British Empire. After architectural training in a top London office, he sailed to South Africa in 1892, where he found tremendous opportunities and enjoyed dazzling success. Amongst many projects he designed a house for Cecil Rhodes that became the official residence of the Prime Ministers of South Africa, the cathedrals of Johannesburg and Pretoria, and the magnificent Union Buildings for the South African government in Pretoria (1910–13).

Baker's achievements in South Africa led to even greater opportunities in India. In 1912, he was appointed to design the immense government secretariats and legislature building in the newly established capital at New Delhi. Returning to England, Baker ran a large architectural practice. He rebuilt the Bank of England, a project of national importance (1921–40) – but it was



1. Above: Baker's magnificent Memorial Hall (1930–32) is mix of technical daring (with the engineer Oscar Faber) and architectural good manners. There are numerous inscriptions and symbols, as in all Baker's buildings. Baker designed many domes and believed he could solve their acoustic problems, but the Hall plays some odd acoustic tricks.

a double-edged appointment: the old Bank building, which was itself an architectural masterpiece, had to be demolished. This was viewed as an act of architectural vandalism and dogged his reputation.

Unlike the earlier youthful architects of Haileybury, Baker came in the 1920s as a grandee of the architectural profession. In his memoirs he recalled an earlier visit: 'When at a rather early age I went up to Haileybury I failed the examination and was ruthlessly sent home. I remember only a grim black-bearded headmaster (Dr Bradby). The reason

for my failure was my ignorance of classics, but I was able to retrieve my disgrace, joyfully but silently, when I caused a Greek inscription to be cut in the stone of the war memorial which I designed for the College.'

Baker was knighted and awarded the RIBA Royal Gold Medal in 1927, and elected to the Royal Academy in 1932. His imperial success was coupled with immense pride in his English roots; he gave his family home, Owletts in Kent, to the National Trust to be preserved for posterity.





2. Above: The exterior of Memorial Hall (1930-32) uses beautiful brickwork but is less impressive than the interior. Baker used a different brick for the flanking buildings around Memorial Quad. In contrast to the soaring Chapel dome, the shallow copper dome over Memorial Hall is all but invisible. Splendid though it is, Memorial Hall does not feature as a landmark on the Haileybury site, perhaps deliberately. Baker's Greek inscription is cut into the stone band at the top of the apse.



3. Middle: Baker's Science School (1932) is in red brick like the other buildings to the east of Wilkins' Quad. It is a sober, well-proportioned building in a 'neo-Georgian' style that recalls the 18th century. Today we might think it incongruous to choose a historic style for a science building, but Baker had no interest in modern architecture. When built, its appearance was thought to be appropriate for science teaching.

4. Right: In the inter-war period, the High Victorian Chapel and its decoration was considered devoid of charm. Demolition was inconceivable, so in the mid-1930s Baker was asked what could be done. Internally, he cleverly inserted an inner dome, complete with inscriptions, that transformed the character of the space. Externally, he replaced the original, windowless apse with a larger apse in the same brick as the newly-completed Memorial Hall (see photo on page 7). The apse has the Baker trademark of five small high-level windows.



# War memorials at Haileybury

*Haileybury has a strong connection with the military, reflected in many war memorials.*

The earliest memorial at Haileybury pre-dates the foundation of the school – a plaque in the Chapel Cloisters commemorating alumni of the East India College who fell in the Indian Mutiny or Rebellion of 1857–59.

The prominent Obelisk memorial at the main entrance (1903) was designed by Reginald Blomfield after the South African War (1898–1901). He also designed the memorial plaques in the Chapel Cloister where the names of the fallen were inscribed. Later, Reginald Blomfield became one of the principal architects for the Imperial (now Commonwealth) War Graves Commission and designed many important war cemeteries and memorials, including the Menin Gate in Ypres.

After the First World War, a Cross of Sacrifice was erected (1923, it was a design by Reginald Blomfield), but something more was wanted. Herbert Baker was consulted – he was also a principal architect for the Imperial War Graves Commission. Baker disliked the idea of combining a memorial with a practical function, but this was what happened in his magnificent Memorial Hall (1930–32). The rounded niche or apse on the south

side of the Hall is like a shrine, with four small, high-level windows (see page 12; Baker's apse in the Chapel has five similar windows). The Roll of Honour was placed here in a bronze casket.

There is no separate memorial for the Second World War, but a memorial was added on the South Terrace, opposite the western loggia, to Old Haileyburians who had been awarded the Victoria Cross or George Cross (1953).

In addition to the school memorials, the boarding houses have their own memorial tablets or inscriptions. The cumulative effect of these reminders of the loss of so many young men whose lives were cut short is extremely powerful.

1. Below: Even though the East India College provided training for the civil service, not the military, forty alumni lost their lives in the Indian Mutiny or Rebellion of 1857–59. They are commemorated by a plaque in the Chapel cloisters. It refers to 'Old Haileybury College', the East India College having closed in 1858.





A tall, ornate stone obelisk monument stands on a tiered base, surrounded by a low wall and greenery. The obelisk features decorative carvings and a small plaque near its base. In the background, a red brick building with a gabled roof and a chimney is visible, along with lush green trees.

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NAME	REQUIREMENT	DATE
LEIYT H I A CODILL C C	34	
LEIYT G F J RODSON	34	21.1.72
LEIYT A ADIT F J C FRITH	34	11.1.72
	34	7.7.72
2ND LEIYT E A KASHAN WAR	4	4.7.72
LEIYT H E PAVELISHAW	5	13.10.60
	5	
LEIYT I A PARK	5	17.5.62
3RD LEIYT W CHIRNELL	10	4.5.69
LEIYT R R SYTHOT	10	25.9.60
	10	
HAIGE E R EVANS	10	8.4.61
CAPTAIN E A W LEIYT	10	33.6.65
1ST LEIYT A M BROOKE	10	30.5.66
LEIYT V H VONDS	10	10.9.67

4. Far right: The Cross of Sacrifice at the centre of the South Terrace (1923). It was a 'standard' design by Sir Reginald Blomfield and is seen in many other locations, including War Cemeteries in France. Its solemnity and austerity contrast with Blomfield's more exuberant Obelisk of twenty years earlier. This mirrors society's reaction to the scale and inhumanity of the losses in the First World War.



# 1945 to the present

*After the Second World War, the nation embarked on building a new welfare state, led by Prime Minister Clement Attlee (an Old Haileyburian), and architects' energies were devoted to economical buildings for social purposes.*

The national mood is reflected in Haileybury's post-1945 buildings; they are low-key in terms of siting, scale and design. Grand architectural gestures in historical styles, like those of Reginald Blomfield or Herbert Baker, were unthinkable.

Fortunately Baker's Memorial Quad was completed: the east side was built as a centennial project in 1962 to match the west side of the 1930s. The architects were Porri & Foyle, who permitted themselves some un-Baker-like touches on the east side facing away from Memorial Quad.

Porri & Foyle were also architects for the boldest modern building of the post-War decades – the 'brutalist' Art School (1965). Like many strong designs that are characteristic of their epoch, it was unappealing to the following generation, as also happened to Wilkins' Greek and Arthur Blomfield's Gothic buildings; but the Art School's architectural integrity will surely gain acceptance in the long term.

The most exciting recent addition to Haileybury's architecture has been the fluid cluster of redbrick buildings beside the entrance from London Road, for new girls' boarding houses (Colvin, 1999, and Melvill, 2001). The architect was Studio E. They are engaging and well-situated, exploiting an attractive wooded site.

## The future

Throughout Haileybury's history, its architecture has reflected changing academic and social needs, as well as the changing architectural ideals and enthusiasms that motivated its architects. This process continues. A 15-year Estate Masterplan has been prepared with the aim of conserving and improving the existing estate and its important heritage buildings, while also planning for new buildings.

The first projects include the refurbishment of Simpson and Ayrton's Form Room Block, introducing cutting-edge IT facilities within the original architecture and design; improvement to the audio-visual facilities in the same architects' Big School; and improvement to Baker's Memorial Hall to increase dining capacity for pupils. The Haileybury Estate will continue to develop so as to provide pupils with outstanding facilities in all areas: academic, co-curricular and pastoral.



*Above: The Art School by Porri & Foyle (1965) was a bold break with Haileybury's architectural precedents. It is in the 'brutalist' style of the 1960s. The materials – dark engineering brick and concrete – are tough and are used in an uncompromising, almost aggressive, way. The Art School was, and still is, praised for its practicality.*

*Below: Designed by Studio E architects, the striking Colvin and Melvill Houses (1999–2001) won architectural awards. The variation of materials and forms is restless but imaginative – typical of innovative architecture around the millennium. The buildings project out over Repton's upper pool, a dramatic feature that has been criticised as damaging to the heritage landscape.*





# Acknowledgements

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# Haileybury: a short architectural guide

Everyone who visits Haileybury enjoys its splendid buildings and landscape setting, but few are aware of how it came to be created over more than 200 years. This Short Guide outlines the architectural history of Haileybury, focusing on the architects who made the greatest contribution to the heritage of remarkable buildings that we see today.

Haileybury illustrates a succession of architectural styles that have been popular in Britain in the last two centuries, from Greek Revival, Gothic Revival, 'Queen Anne' and Neo-Georgian, to today's modern architecture.

It is hoped that the information and illustrations in this Short Guide will enhance many people's understanding and enjoyment of Haileybury's architectural heritage.



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