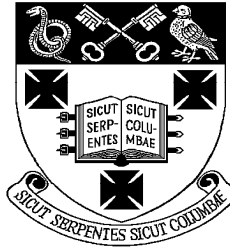


RADLEY COLLEGE
Entrance Scholarships



ENGLISH I

Tuesday 22nd February 2005

Time allowed - 90 minutes

*You should spend at least **15 minutes** reading, thinking and making notes before writing.*

The paper consists of two questions each worth 40 marks.

You will be rewarded for the accuracy of your spelling, punctuation and grammar up to a maximum of 20 marks. Remember to illustrate your answers with quotations taken from the text.

*Concise, clear **well-written** answers will gain the highest marks.*

Section A: Read the following texts and answer the questions below.

Text A: ‘My Grandmother’s Love Letters’ by Hart Crane

My Grandmother’s Love Letters

There are no stars tonight
But those of memory.
Yet how much room for memory there is
In the loose girdle of soft rain.

There is even room enough
For the letters of my mother’s mother,
Elizabeth,
That have been pressed so long
Into a corner of the roof
That they are brown and soft,
And liable to melt as snow.

Over the greatness of such space
Steps must be gentle.
It is all hung by an invisible white hair.
It trembles as birch limbs webbing the air.

And I ask myself:

“Are your fingers long enough to play
Old keys that are but echoes:
Is the silence strong enough
To carry back the music to its source
And back to you again
As though to her?”

Yet I would lead my grandmother by the hand
Through much of what she would not understand;
And so I stumble. And the rain continues on the roof
With such a sound of gently pitying laughter.

Text B: from 'My Grandmother's House', by Fergal Keane

I left Cork and the world of my childhood in 1979 and began a journalistic career that would take me to places my grandparents had barely heard of. As the years went on, I saw less and less of my grandmother. Yet each time I came back to St Declans she seemed to be the strong warm person I had always known. And then, while living in Belfast, I received news that she was suffering from cancer. When I went to see her she seemed frail and suddenly old, and she told me she believed she was dying. 'I'm on the way out Ferg,' she said and then added, 'but we all have to go some time.'

That evening I went up to St Declans and the house felt empty and strange. There were no voices now. Only her photographs on the walls, some of them fading into yellow, spoke of its crowded past. My grandmother was eventually transferred to the Royal Marsden Hospital in London where the doctors seemed more optimistic. At about the same time I was appointed BBC correspondent in South Africa, a job I had wanted from the moment I joined the Corporation. My grandmother was delighted for me and even spoke hopefully of being there to greet me at St Declans when I came home in the summer.

On our way out to South Africa my wife and I stopped off in London to visit her at the Royal Marsden. There, among other old people, in a city she did not know, my grandmother seemed small and vulnerable, a little old lady for whom unseen shadows were lengthening every day. We spoke about the past and about our large group of relatives, and she told me to take care of myself and my wife, Anne. 'Mind that little girl,' she joked.

When I got up to go I noticed that my grandmother had tears in her eyes and we both knew that I would never see her again. She took my hand in hers and whispered into my ear, 'Always remember, love, that I will be watching out for you, wherever you are, always.'

A month later she came home to die. I was given the news early one morning on a long-distance call from Ireland. I walked out into the garden and cried for a long time. And then, with the birds of the highveld singing their hearts out, I went back inside and woke my wife. We sat for hours drinking tea and remembering my grandmother, and I am happy to say that most of the memories involved laughter. After her death my uncle decided to sell St Declans and the rest of the family agreed. There seemed little point in clinging to bricks and mortar when the people we had loved, who had made the place special, had passed on.

Yet each summer when I return to Cork I cannot resist the urge to drive past St Declans. I always stop there for a few moments and lean back into warm invisible arms, imagining that I can hear the sound of opera playing on the radio and children's voices rising above it, and then a woman calling them home for tea. Home as it always will be.

1. Read the opening stanza of the poem.
What tone is created in this stanza? (4 marks)
2. Explain as well as you can the meaning of the following images used by Crane in 'My Grandmother's Love Letters':
 - a) 'It is all hung by an invisible white hair.
It trembles as birch limbs webbing the air.' (ll.14-15) (4 marks)
 - b) 'they are brown and soft,
And liable to melt as snow.' (ll.10-11) (4 marks)
 - c) 'Yet I would lead my grandmother by the hand' (l.23) (4 marks)
3. Read the last two stanzas of the poem.
How does Crane feel about reading the letters? (4 marks)
4. What do we learn in Text B, 'My Grandmother's house', about the importance to the writer of the house known as St Declans? (4 marks)
5. Comment on Keane's use in this passage of
 - a) direct speech (2 marks)
 - b) sentence structure (2 marks)
6. Now compare the two texts.
What differences are there in the way each writer remembers his grandmother? (6 marks)
7. Write a paragraph explaining which of the texts you prefer. (6 marks)

Section B

Imagine that you have decided to bury a time capsule in your garden. Write a message for your grandchildren to read sixty years from today. You may write in the form of a letter or an essay.