

## Canon Derek Chapman (OH 1936-40)



Derek Chapman born in 1922, Farnborough, Kent, went to Blundell's in 1936. During his time there, he excelled at cricket and sports generally, preferring to be outside, rather than inside studying. He often remarked that he was not a scholar and that his teachers thought so too by making him take the Blundell's own tests, rather than the common entrance exams.



Once there, he excelled in sports and represented the school in cricket, rugby, fives and squash. Derek was selected for junior local and national teams, but of course, all that came to an abrupt halt with the events of 1939. He did however, score the winning try (down the right wing) in the final of the National Richmond 7 Aside Tournament in 1938, and was Captain of Blundell's cricket in that year. Another memory Derek had of his time at Blundell's was the excellent food supplied by his housemaster, who owned a farm. So they never went hungry.



From Blundell's, he joined the Indian Army until independence in 1947. During the war and in between cricket, Derek was mainly engaged in running supplies into Russia by the "back door". He again thoroughly enjoyed his time in India, acquiring some very uncivilised, but necessary, habits from his adored Indian troops.....such as eating his food with his fingers. A habit with which he liked to shock "Victorian minded" hosts when he came home after six years. His "Sorry, I forgot", always seemed to restore his social standing. In addition, he learnt to swim with a pack, ride, drive a tank and command troops.



After Independence, Derek returned to Britain to join the British Army and marry his sweetheart, Daphne, who he had first met when he was seventeen. It was during this time as a Captain in the Army, that Derek reconsidered his career options. He decided to become a priest thereby fulfilling the prophecy he made to his old Blundell's Headmaster, Neville Gorton, that he would take Holy Orders.

He trained at Westcott House, Cambridge and in 1952 was made a deacon by that same Neville Gorton, who was now the Bishop of Coventry. Two years later, Derek became a priest and served as a curate in Coventry and then Rugby. In 1958, he moved south to become Vicar of East Malling where he stayed for over twenty years. He was then appointed Rector of Hever with Mark Beech and Four Elms and remained there until his retirement in 1989. During all this time his interest in cricket and the army never left him; he continued to play cricket for the diocese and was appointed as Chaplain to the Kent and County of London Yeomanry. He also provided great service as a hospital Chaplain for many years and also as Chaplain to the High Sheriff of Kent. In 1989, he and his wife spent a wonderful sabbatical year looking after a parish in New Zealand.

Derek is survived by his wife, Daphne; his daughter, Joy; his son, Neville; two grandchildren, James and Lara; and his brother, William, who also went to Blundell's.