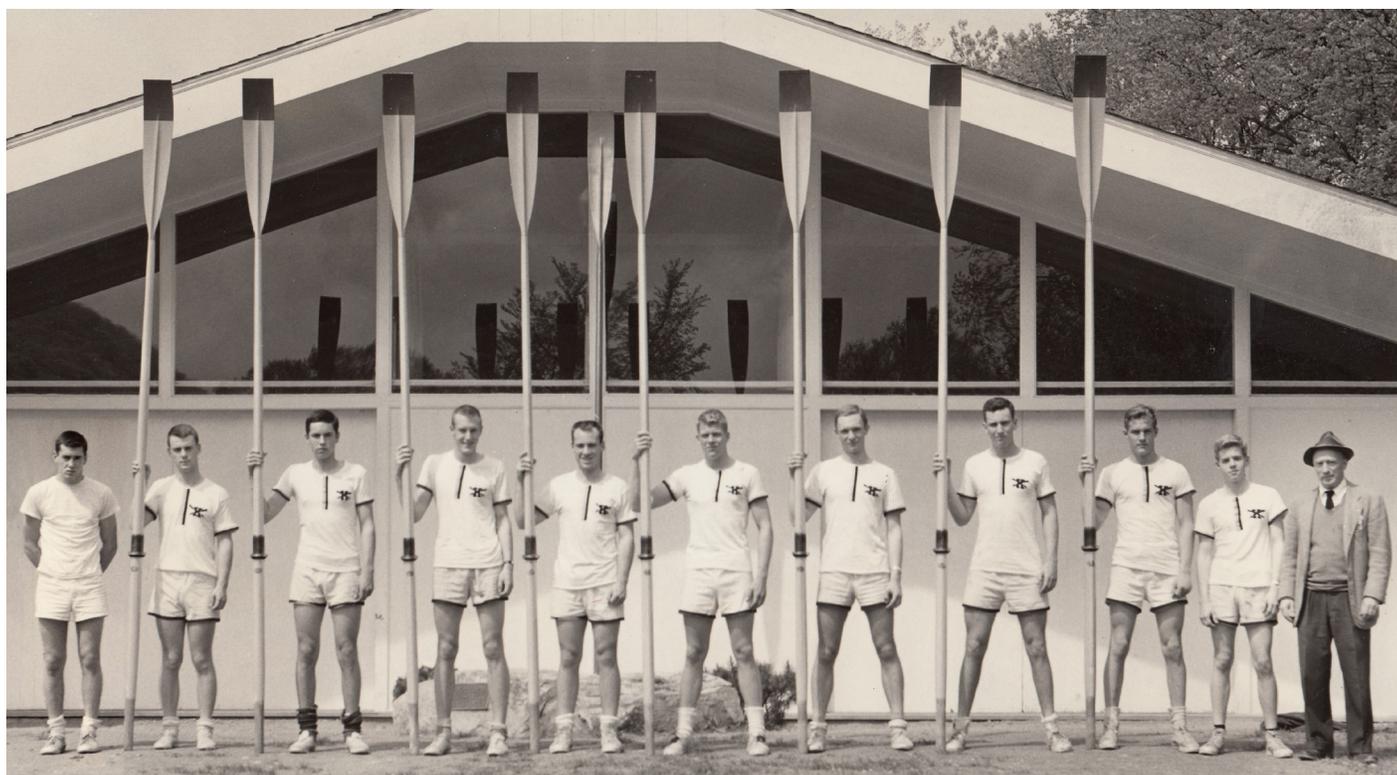


1958

BOYS FIRST BOAT (II-3)

| | | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Bow | Thomas Frederick Dunlap '58 | 11st 7 |
| 2 | William Arthur Stowe '58 | 12st 7 |
| 3 | John Andrews Hodges '58 | 12st 10 |
| 4 | Robert Lordner Van Dervoort Jr. '58 | 13st 0 |
| 5 | Price Gripekoven '58 | 13st 0 |
| 6 | Franz Charles Lippincott '58 | 12st 2 |
| 7 | Thomas Morgan Boyd '58 (Captain) | 12st 5 |
| Stroke | William Bishop Wheeler '58 | 11st 11 |
| Coxswain | David Campbell Haist '58 | 8st 12 |
| Average | | 12st 3¼ = 173¼ lbs. |



First Boat Shell: *Edward T. Gusbée* (Pocock, 1955)

Coach: Thomas Dixon Walker '19

Chairman: David Clifford Westhorp '58

Manager: William Isham Keith "Gillis" Hamilton '58

Assistant Manager: Edward Alan Holroyd '59

Yale 150lb. Varsity 6 feet ahead of Kent

Kent three lengths ahead of Lower Merion High School

Kent one and a half lengths ahead of Phillips Academy Andover

Fathers' Weekend: Yale Second Freshmen 10 feet ahead of Kent

Harvard Second Freshmen ahead of Princeton Second Freshmen

Kent two and a half lengths ahead of Princeton Second Freshmen, Kent classified as third of 4



Kent three lengths ahead of Belleville High School
 Kent three lengths ahead of Shrewsbury High School
 First of 7 in New England Interscholastic Regatta (one and a half lengths ahead of Phillips Academy Andover)

Henley Plate: William Bishop Wheeler '58
 Bishop's Oar: Steffen William Graae '58



The *J. O. P.*, named after Headmaster Father **John Oliver Patterson**, was donated in 1958 and used by the Second Boat, the First Boat preferring the *Edward T. Gushée*. The *J. O. P.* (rhymed with chop) was the third Pocock shell purchased by Kent.

This year marked the first competitions between Kent and **Phillips Academy Andover**, which had only started crew in 1955.

First Boat 5-oar **Price Gripekoven '58**: "In 1956, six Fourth Formers, members of the undefeated Macedonian First Boat, victors over Berkeley College,

Yale, and coached by **Ralph Koenig Ritchie '30** [see 1930], ended up in our '58 Henley boat: myself, Boyd, Lippincott, Stowe, Van Dervoort, and coxswain Haist. Two others—**Peter Frank Schwindt '57**, made the 1957 Second Boat, and **Noel Erskine Hanf '58**, became Captain of the 1958 Second Boat and Henley spare—were a real testament to the development being done in the club program."

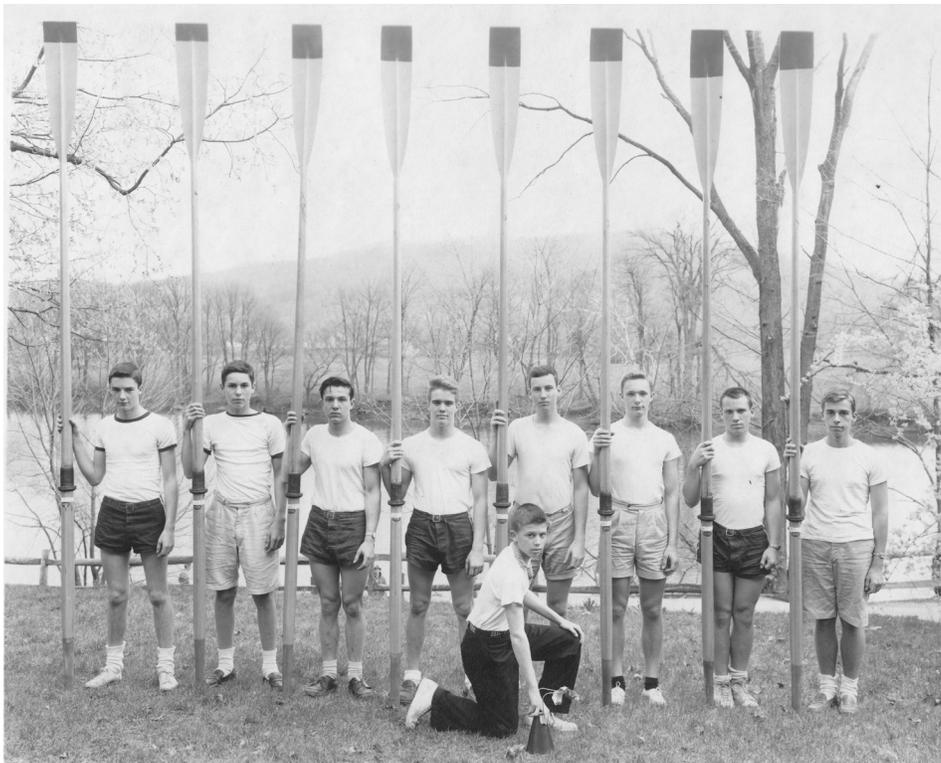
During the season, coxing duties were alternated between **Steffen William Graae '58** and **David Campbell Haist '58**.

After Kent, **Steffen William Graae '58** would cox

the Eastern Sprints-winning 1962 Yale varsity. Later, while pursuing post-graduate studies at Oxford, he would coach the St. Edmund Hall crew. He ended a multifaceted adult career as a judge on the DC Superior Court.

David Campbell Haist '58 would cox and later coach for Dartmouth College. In 2002, Haist started coaching with the Wayland-Weston Rowing Association in Massachusetts, and in 2009, an eight-oared shell was dedicated there in his honor.

In 2006, Price Gripekoven was inducted in the Kent School Athletic Hall of Fame as a member of the 1955 football team.



1956 undefeated First Massies: Bow Hanf, 2 Stowe, 3 Bruce W. McRichie, Jr. '58, 4 Gripekoven, Coxswain Haist, 5 Boyd, 6 Lippincott, 7 Van Dervort, Stroke Schwindt



1958 Henley Royal Regatta: The Thames Challenge Cup

Kent's racing shell, the *Edward T. Gushée*, made its second ocean liner trip (after 1956) suspended from the ceiling of the bar for the ship's crew on the Pig 'n' Whistle Deck. When the shell was unloaded, the squad found chalked on the covering of the shell: "To victory, with Best Wishes, The Crew of the *Queen Mary*."

Eastern Association of Rowing Colleges (EARC) 150lb. crews had been dominating recent Thames Cup fields, winning in eight of the previous ten years. There were twenty-eight entries in the 1958 Thames Challenge Cup, with the Harvard 150lb. Varsity as the strong pre-Regatta favorite.



Kent over First and Third Trinity at the mile

Prior to the racing, among Kent's brushes with crews entered in the Ladies' Plate and the Princess Elizabeth Cup was a 20-stroke start with *VSS Trud Leningrad*, eventual winners of the Grand Challenge Cup. No report of the result survives.

In a downpour on Wednesday, "while fashionable crowds clapped sedately and the strains of the British Life Guards' band drifted across the River Thames," Kent and **First and Third Trinity College Boat Club, Cambridge**, both left the line at 40. Kent found themselves behind by a quarter-length at the quarter-mile, but they bided their time at 32, waiting for Trinity at 38 to tire. Kent slowly moved forward through the course, led by a canvas at Fawley and a length at the mile. Nevertheless, they chose to take up the rating going past the Enclosures, and finished at 40 with two lengths to spare.

Kent then met the **Harvard 150lb. Varsity** on

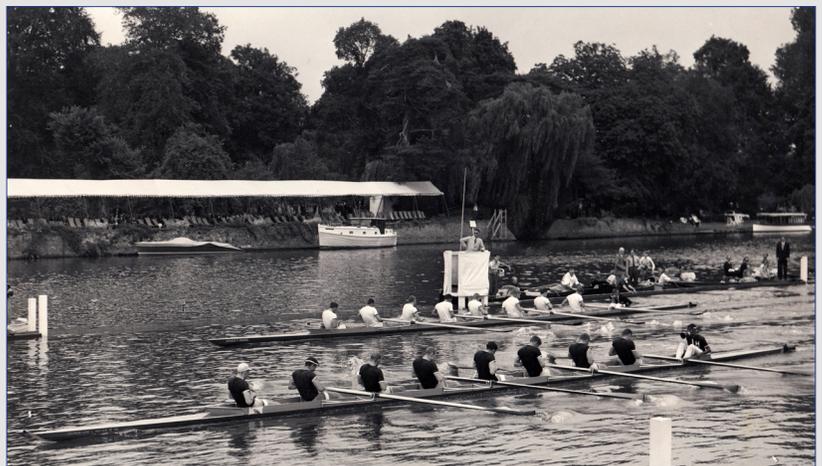
Thursday. Kent started at 41 to Harvard's 36, but trailed by two-thirds of a length at the quarter-mile. With Kent settling to 36 and the low-stroking Harvard crew to 32, the margin stayed the same to the half-mile, but shrunk to 6 feet at the mile. As Harvard then started to pull away, Kent raised their rate to 40 and edged closer, but Harvard responded at 38 and won by a narrow two-thirds of a length. The time was the regatta's second-fastest behind *Trud Leningrad's* performance in beating the University of Washington in their memorable heat for the Grand Challenge Cup.

After a draw that *The Times* of London called "unfortunate," placing many of the favorites, including Kent and the Harvard 150s, in the same bracket, this was the earliest Kent had been put out at Henley since 1934, when they lost on the very first day.

The Times: "One must sympathize that Kent School should have met Harvard so soon in a competition for which they had travelled so far and in which Kent School may prove to be the second fastest crew."

Clearly, Kent was one of the best crews competing. Only **RAF Benson** in the semi-finals came closer to Harvard than Kent did.

The Crimson 150s earned their first-ever Thames Challenge Cup victory in 1958. Indeed, it would be the first of three consecutive wins, a feat not accomplished since the 1870s. The Cantabrigians eventually amassed a total of five victories between 1958 and 1971, the last coming under the coaching of **Steve Gladstone '60**.



Harvard over Kent at the 1 1/2 mile

event at the US Olympic Trials.

Kent 1961 Captain **Peter Conze '61**: “At the Trials in 1964, there were three Kenties in the Yale entry, **Harold Osbourne '62**, **Chris Albert '61**, and myself. Even though we lost, I had the bittersweet honor of surrendering my shirt to Kent grad and Vesper stroke-oar, **Bill Stowe '58**.”

In a postcard to Kent teammate **Price Gripekoven '58** right after the torch-lighting ceremony in Tokyo, Bill wrote: “No time yet for raising hell, but don't worry. I'll manage somehow.”

On the final day of rowing competition, in the early evening with the stars beginning to twinkle,



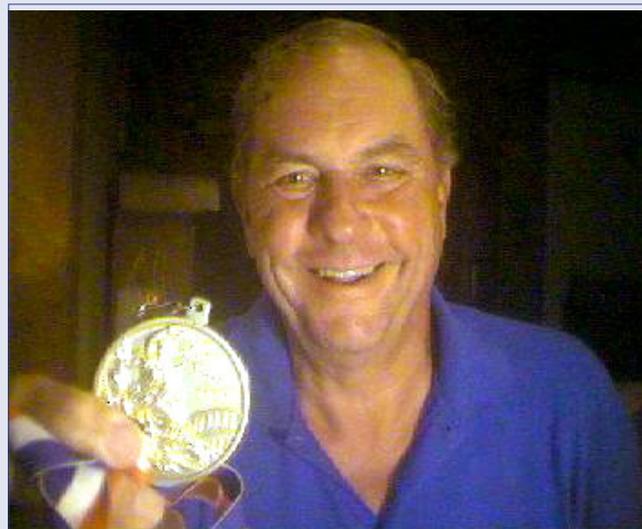
the Vesper Eight won the Gold Medal at the Tokyo Olympics.

Bill Stowe is Kent's only Olympic Champion in any sport.

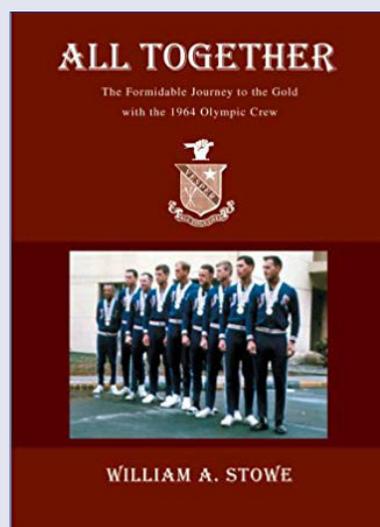
Charlie Whitin '68: “At a Kent reunion, Bill told the story of a drinking escapade after some rowing event in Philadelphia when he left his Olympic Gold Medal at a bar—he might not have had cash, so he left it there as collateral—then forgot where he was and lost the medal for a year until he happened by the same bar, saw it hanging there, and reclaimed it. He then passed his medal around for us to touch, wear, or bite.”



1958 Vesper Boat Club Olympic Champion Eight (Stowe in hat)



Bill later coached at Columbia University and founded the crew program at the US Coast Guard Academy.



Until his passing in 2016, he stayed in touch with his many teammates, always regaling anyone within earshot with ribald stories of his many exploits.

Vesper's Emory Clark, at Bill's memorial service: “It is hard for someone in the 5-seat to say something nice about his stroke, at least in public. But I'm going to try. I'm afraid he might be listening. He is certainly up in Heaven. No one with Bill's blithe spirit, his charitable personality, his *joie de vivre*, could be any place but Heaven.”

For his accomplishments in Crew, 1958 Henley 2-oar **William Arthur Stowe '58** would be inducted into the Kent School Athletic Hall of Fame in 2003.

Interestingly, in addition to Bill Stowe at stroke, rowing bow-oar for Cornell on the right of that *Sports Illustrated* cover was former Kent club rower **Gary Stuart Brayshaw '58** (see 1957).

Gary:

Stowe maintains in his book, All Together, that the fastest crew he ever rowed in was the undefeated 1959 Cornell Freshman. He stroked that boat. Rowing 3-oar was another Kent alum, Gary Brayshaw. Four of the oarsmen on that June 18, 1962, cover of Sports Illustrated taken three years later, including Stowe and Brayshaw, had been in that '59 Freshman Boat.

Cornell's '59 Freshmen were tagged "The Fastest Crew in the Nation" since throughout that season they had beaten all the varsity times on every single race day.

In 2019, Brayshaw published *The Machination Trilogy*, the third volume of which, *Repechage*, contains several rowing scenes.

Brayshaw: "There are stroke by stroke accounts of four races that I rowed in during my four years at Cornell. Bill Stowe was our stroke in three of them."

