

Rendcomb College

Nr. Cirencester, Gloucestershire





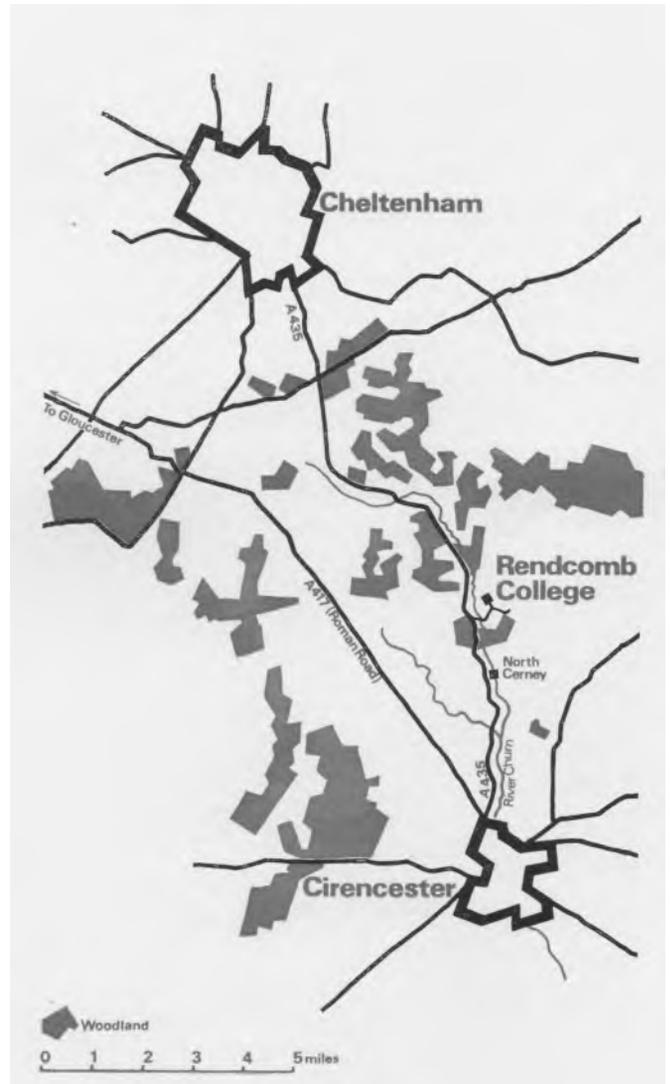
Rendcomb College

Rendcomb College was founded and generously endowed in 1920 by Mr. F. N. H. Wills, of Misarden Park, Stroud, the first Chairman of the Governing Body. It is a member of the Association of Governing Bodies of Public Schools (the G.B.A.), of the Headmasters' Conference, and of the Society of Headmasters of Independent Schools. It is open to boarders only and boys are admitted from the age of eleven years.

Position

The College is ten miles from Cheltenham and five miles from Cirencester and lies half a mile off the main road between the two towns. It is situated on a hillside overlooking the River Churn, at a height of 600 feet above sea level and is surrounded by some of the most interesting and attractive Cotswold country, which the boys are encouraged to appreciate and explore.

The College is reached most easily from London and the South of England by rail to Kemble. Railway communication with the Midlands and North is most convenient through Cheltenham. Rendcomb is connected with both Cheltenham and Cirencester by an hourly bus service.



Buildings and Grounds

The College buildings consist of a large mansion built in 1865, the Stable Block which is the centre of Science teaching in the College, the Old Rectory and the Arts Block. A new wing was added to the main building in 1963 providing studies, study-bedrooms and classrooms, so that senior boys have their own individual rooms. There are houses in the grounds and the village for married members of the staff. The College owns some 200 acres of land including the Park through which the River Churn flows from a lake near the northern boundary. Some 100 feet above the College, at a point from which a magnificent view is obtained, ten acres of the park containing ample cricket and football grounds has been levelled and enclosed. There are several tennis courts close to the house and two hard courts presented to the College by Major David Wills in 1963, and the asphalted forecourt is used for games in wet weather. There is also a fine open air swimming bath next to the College buildings, presented in 1961 by the Dulverton Trust and Major David Wills.



Right: The Stable Block. The School Science Centre.

Far right: Old Rectory. The Junior House.



Junior House

In September, 1966, the Old Rectory was opened as a junior House, after big alterations and additions. It is a self-contained unit where boys in Forms I and II and some boys in Form III live, apart from their meals which they take in the main College Dining Hall.

In September, 1967, a new Arts Block, built in Cotswold stone, was opened. It contains a well-equipped Wood and Metal Workshop, an Art Room, a Craft Room, a Pottery and Kiln, a Music Room, several Music practice rooms as well as some Classrooms and Society rooms.



Curriculum

The first stage of the course of studies ends at, or slightly before, the age of 16, when boys enter for the first public examination (the General Certificate of Education at Ordinary Level). The work of this stage is not, however, exclusively determined by examination requirements and wider educational aims are in no sense sacrificed. The object is to provide a course sufficiently wide to do justice to the humanist, scientific, and creative subjects, and one that will enable a boy to discover whether he has the capacity and interest to make it advisable for him to pursue advanced work in any particular direction. The subjects studied in this stage of the course are English, Scripture, Latin, French, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, History, Geography, Musical Appreciation, Art and Woodwork. In the second stage a boy has the opportunity, without becoming a narrow 'specialist', of devoting the greater part of his time in school hours to the study of some particular group of allied subjects, which shall either be the foundation for future work at the university or other place of further education, or at any rate give him something of the deeper interest and knowledge which springs from the study of any one of the main branches of thought. Full advanced courses for the General Certificate of Education at Advanced or Scholarship level and for open scholarships at the universities are provided in Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Botany, Zoology, History, English, French, Music and Art. Over 90 per cent of the boys go into the Sixth Form and although academic success is by no means the only objective at this stage, for many years satisfactory results have been achieved in the 'A' Level examinations. In recent years 60 per cent of leavers have entered universities; in addition the school has won a considerable number of open scholarships at the universities, particularly at Oxford and Cambridge.

Time Table

There are 32 periods in the school week. Afternoon lessons take place on Monday, Thursday and Friday and games on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons in the winter terms and on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons in the summer. Supervised preparation takes place every evening except for Saturday and Sunday.

Forms

Owing to the high staff-pupil ratio, forms at Rendcomh are considerably smaller than normal. This enables greater attention to be given to the individual boy, both in his work and his other interests. Despite a limited expansion, care of the individual boy will remain a primary consideration. Each boy is personally known to the Headmaster and masters.

Inspection

The College was inspected by the Ministry of Education in 1922, 1933, 1951 and in 1963; and is on the list of Efficient Secondary Schools.

Music

Music is taught throughout the school both in classes and by individual lessons. Singing both in the choir and outside, is encouraged and every opportunity is taken of enabling the boys to hear professional artists. There is a small orchestra.

Health

The domestic side of the College and arrangements for the physical health of the boys are under the supervision of a Catering Officer and Matron. The School doctor's surgery is within half a mile of the College. The buildings stand on limestone, and the situation has proved to be a remarkably healthy one. The school routine is designed to provide the boys with both the food and sleep which the needs of growth demand. Tuck boxes are not per-



mitted. There are no lessons before breakfast which is at 7.35 a.m. There is regular physical training, out of doors or in the gymnasium, and all boys learn the basic athletics of throwing, running, swimming and jumping. All boys must be registered with the school medical officer under the National Health Scheme. No exception can be made to this rule.

General

The College, while providing boys with a good general education endeavours to fit them for the duties of citizenship by developing alike individual initiative and the spirit of social duty, and by teaching them the

value of working together and the conditions under which it can be rendered successful. Some aspects of the out of school life are ordered by the boys themselves who, within the limits decided by the Headmaster, make decisions and elect to some posts of authority. The prefects are appointed by the Headmaster.

No encouragement is given to anything which tends to create habits of luxury or undue dependence upon the work of others. The boys make their own beds, clean their shoes, and serve each other at meals. There is no fagging in the old sense of the word ; but the boys take a share in keeping some of the rooms clean, and do the washing-up at week-



The Arr-

ends. Parents are requested to confine the pocket money with which their sons return to school within the limits recommended by the College.

The school was founded in 1920, with an entry of 12 boys. In 1961 numbers had reached 90; there are now 150 boys in the school and it is not planned to expand further at the moment.

Careers

Old Rendcombians have become doctors, barristers, solicitors, officers in the armed forces, clergymen, university dons, schoolmasters, architects, artists, actors, public librarians, local government officers, engineers, farmers, police officers, Colonial service officers, Merchant Navy officers, chartered accountants, land agents, forestry officers, journalists, pharmacists ; a large number are employed in a wide field of industry and commerce, ranging from computers to hand-made furniture.

Church Service

The College service is held on Sunday morning in the Parish Church of Rendcomb, an attractive late perpendicular building, which stands less than 100 yards from the main school buildings. The boys provide choir and bell-ringers and the lessons are read by the Headmaster and staff. All boys and staff are required to attend this service. Confirmation classes are arranged annually for those who wish to be confirmed. On Sunday evening House Prayers are taken by the Headmaster.

Games and Occupations

The official school games are Rugby Football in the autumn term, Hockey in the spring term and Cricket in the summer term. Lawn Tennis is also played. These games, however, are not regarded as by any means

the only healthy forms of exercise. The district provides exceptionally good facilities for cycling and other out door activities. The boys have regular opportunities of helping in estate work.

Acting is encouraged in its educational and recreative aspects. There is an outdoor as





Above: *The Woodwork Shop.*



well as an indoor theatre, both having been constructed by the boys.

The workshop, art room and laboratories, which include an electronics room are always open, as also are the library, music practice rooms and dark room. There are good facilities for model-making and crafts. Expeditions of various kinds are arranged and parties of boys, especially seniors, attend plays and concerts at such centres as Oxford, Stratford-on-Avon, Bristol and Cheltenham. The district is first-rate from the point of view of the natural historian and the archaeologist.

Entrance

For boys entering as Commoners from Primary Schools and Private Schools at the age of 11 years, the College sets its own examination which is taken here normally in March. Candidates for the examination must complete an entry form and pay a Registration Fee.

Boys coming from Preparatory Schools at 13 years of age normally take the Common Entrance examinations. In exceptional cases an examination can be arranged here. In addition all Common Entrance candidates are interviewed here. There are rarely vacancies except in September.

Scholarships

For over 30 years the Foundation has made provision for the entry of a number of Gloucestershire Foundation Scholars from the County schools. In 1948 rising costs made it impossible for these scholarships to be continued in full. The County Education Authority was, however, most anxious that the awards should not lapse and with the approval of the Ministry of Education an arrangement was made by which the parents of boys elected to Gloucestershire Foundation Scholarships receive grants from the

Education Authority, between whom and the college a cordial relationship exists. In 1955 an arrangement was made by which one similar scholarship in each year is awarded to a boy from the Borough of Cheltenham. In 1954 the Ernest Cook Trust started to award one annual scholarship for boys whose families have certain connections with agriculture.

Since 1920 there has been a small number of Nominated Foundation Scholarships reserved for boys who but for a major financial family crisis (usually associated with the death or permanent disablement of the father) would have had a Preparatory and Public School education.

Since 1961 two Open Scholarships of £145 per annum are offered every year. Compulsory subjects are English, Mathematics, Latin, and French ; optional subjects, which are regarded as of equal importance, are General Science and Music.