

RENDCOMB
COLLEGE
CHRONICLE

Vol. 11, No. 6.

July, 1958

Rendcomb College Chronicle

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July 1958

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HONOURS

M. G. Petter, State Studentship, Magdalen College, Oxford.

COLLEGE DIARY.

Summer Term, 1958.

January

15. —Term begins.
22. —School goes to see “A King In New York ” in Cheltenham.

February

1. —1st XI v. Cheltenham College 1st XI. Away.
2nd XI v. Cheltenham College Colts. Away.
12. —Concert in Saul’s Hall, given by Miss Wadna Keil (violin) and
Dr. Herbert Sumsion (piano).
15. —1st XI v. King Edward’s. Bath, 1st XI. Away.
U. 15 XI v. King Edward’s, Bath, Junior Colts. Away.
19. —1st XI v. Prince Henry’s G. S. 1st XI. Home.
2nd XI v. Prince Henry’s G. S. 1st XI. Home.
- 24-28. —School Examinations.
27. —1st XI v. Monkton Combe 2nd XI. Away.
U. 16 XI v. Monkton Combe Junior Colts. Away.

March

3. —Party goes to see “Aida ” at Oxford.
8. —1st XI v. Exeter College, Oxford, 1st XI. Home.
15. —1st XI v. Bristol G. S. 1st XI. Home.
U. 15 1st XI v. Bristol G. S. Junior Colts. Home.
17. —Party goes to see “Man And Superman” at Bristol.
28. —Term ends.

OBITUARY.

Mrs. J. H. Simpson.

It is with deep regret that we record the death of Mrs. J. H. Simpson towards the end of March 1958, after a long illness. As Miss Evelyn Creaser she originally came to Rendcomb as Matron/Housekeeper in January 1921, became engaged to Mr. Simpson and was married to him in 1923. As a kind and

shy lady she will be remembered in affection by many Old Boys who were at Rendcomb between 1924 and 1931. She gave her time unstintingly to help boys with hobbies and to make things comfortable for the resident staff. She was a beautiful dancer who was invariably welcome on Saturday evenings.

When she and her husband moved from the College to live at the Old Rectory from September 1928 to their departure in June 1932, her drawing room became an oasis for those of us for whom the tremendous vitality of the College in those days became too wearing.

Others will be able to write more fully of her as the Principal's gracious lady at the College of St. Mark and St. John, in Chelsea, to which Mr. Simpson went after leaving Rendcomb. And we remember with sadness the years of her illness and almost complete retirement at Painswick. Our deepest sympathy goes out to Mr. Simpson and to her daughters Mary (Mrs. Drake) and Jennifer.

COLLEGE OFFICERS.

Summer Term, 1958.

Senior Prefect—M. A. B. Forster.

Group Leaders—D. W. Brown, I. A. N. Campbell, C. Handoll,

Prefect—J. E. Gooding.

College Workman—R. D. Comley.

†Public Workman—P. G. S. Airey.

Music Warden—D. W. Brown.

Librarians—I. A. N. Campbell, J. B. Gooch, D. W. Brown, M. van den Driessche.

Manual Foremen—R. D. Comley, M. A. B. Forster, D. R. G. Griffiths, D. R. Poole.

Poultrymen—H. E. Gough, D. M. Tucker, G. S. Bartlett, T. C.

Bass, C. J. Webb, T. J. Tudge, P. K. Dale, J. Mitchison.

†Furniture Committee—M. A. B. Forster, D. R. G. Griffiths, J. Shaw.

Music Librarian—C. Handoll.

Junior Music Librarians—L. de V. Wragg, D. G. Griffiths, A. D. Heppleston.

Stagemen—G. H. G. Herbert, P. G. Auden, P. G. S. Airey, R. F. Stebbing, R. A. Dauncey, N. J. Price, D. M. Tucker.

Pictureman—J. E. Gooding.
Collections and Deck Chairs—M. Whittering.
Lampmen—R. F. Stebbing, M. van den Driessche.
Q. P. Concerts—J. R. Alder.

† General Meeting Elections.

SCHOOL NOTES,

Summer Term, 1958.

We welcome T. Tucker and R. J. Hayes who entered the College in January, and we extend our good wishes to S. R. Merrett and M. L. Board who left at the end of March

Two debates were held this term. The motions were: " That this House regrets the discovery of America " and " That this House would welcome the introduction of co-education into Rendcomb. " Both these motions were rejected by large majorities.

On Monday, March 17th, members of the VIth and Vth Forms travelled to Bristol to see a production of Shaw's " Man And Superman " by the Bristol Old Vic Company, at the Theatre Royal.

On Monday, March 3rd, a large party went to Oxford to see a production of Verdi's " Aida " by the Covent Garden Opera Company, at the New Theatre.

We acknowledge with thanks copies of the following of our contemporaries: " Wycliffe Star, " " The Gresham, " " Decanian, " " Edwardian, " " The Frensham Heights Magazine, " " The Burtonian, " " The Richian. "

Our warm congratulations go to W. Y. Willetts on the publication of his book, " Chinese Art, " and our grateful thanks for his generous gift of this volume to the Library.

It is with regret that we have to record the death of Miss K. Finlayson, who was for many years in charge of the Linen Room. She was here during the worst time of the war clothing shortage and did a splendid job for the College. She died peacefully after a happy retirement in the house of people for whose family she had worked for many years before coming to Rendcomb.

We are grateful to Mrs. J. L. Cole for the gift of a leather-bound and illustrated volume of the complete works of Shakespeare.

Those of our readers who have been sufficiently patient and assiduous to follow the reports on our water supply in recent editions of the " Chronicle, " might perhaps be interested to hear the outcome of the fruitless search last summer for a spring at Southmoor.

The Headmaster knew of a water-diviner, Mr. Percy Jefferies, whose services he had used many years ago. Though by all accounts the man was probably an octogenarian by now, it was thought that he could perhaps help us out of our impasse; accordingly Mr. Lee-Browne, accompanied by Mr. Telling, set off to try to find him. After a diligent search the old diviner was run to earth in Southrop and brought to Southmoor to look at the site. After one look at the considerable length of pipe which had been uncovered, he declared it to be nothing other than a land drainage pipe used to increase the catchment in wet weather, a common practice before the use of semi-surface water was discontinued. The uncovered pipeline had obviously been blocked for many years. This meant, of course, that there had never been any spring. It remains only to say that the filling-in was begun as soon as possible, thus bringing to a close yet another chapter in the history of our water supply!

GENERAL MEETING OFFICERS.

Summer Term, 1958.

- Chairman—D. W. Brown.
- Games Captain—R. D. Comley.
- Secretary—J. R. Windsor.
- Field Secretary—C. Handoll.
- Games Committee—J. R. Alder, R. F. Stebbing.
- Tennis Captain—I. A. N. Campbell.
- Boys' Banker—J. E. Gooding.
- Meeting Banker—G. Harrison.
- Senior Shopman—G. H. G. Herbert.
- House Committee Treasurer—M. D. Naish.
- Games Committee Treasurer—D. A. Hodges.

Record Committee Treasurer—A. N. Hill.
 Finance Committee Treasurer—T. C. Bass.
 Auditors—M. van den Driessche, J. F. W. Beard.
 Entertainments Committee—R. A. Dauncey, J. T. Wood, P. B.
 Heppleston, E. J. Bartlett, J. F. W. Beard.
 Cycle Committee—T. L. H. Benbow, D. R. Poole, R. A. Cockrell.
 Shopmen—T. C. Bass, K. M. Stimson.
 Classical Record Committee—D. R. G. Griffiths, J. E. Gooding, C.
 Handoll.
 Light Record Committee—J. R. Alder, D. W. Brown. Amplifier
 Technicians—S. D. Hicks, I. S. C. Airey.
 Financial Advisory Committee—J. B. Gooch, R. Bolton King,
 R. D. Comley.
 Assistant Cricket Groundsman—G. J. Taylor.
 Junior Cricket Groundsman—N. J. Price.
 Cricket Games Wardens—J. C. Malpass, P. R. Heppleston.
 Tennis Games Warden—L. de V. Wragg, C. C. Richardson.
 Hockey Games Warden—D. A. Cook.
 Finance Committee—G. E. Chapman, R. J. Hayes.
 Drying Room Committee—R. F. Stebbing, C. C. Richardson, P. K. Dale.
 Hockey Secretary, 1959—J. R. Windsor.
 Paperman—R. J. Parnell.
 Magazine Committee, 1958-59—G. Harrison, M. van den Driessche, D. R.
 Poole.
 Junior Tennis Groundsman—K. A. Walker.
 Breakages Man—M. C. Jones.
 Cricket Groundsman—R. Bolton King.
 Tennis Groundsman—R. A. Dauncey.
 Council—D. W. Brown, C. Handoll, R. D. Comley, J. E. Gooding, G. H.
 G. Herbert, M. A. B. Forster, I. A. N. Campbell.
 Selection Committee—D. W. Brown, M. A. B. Forster, D. R. G. Griffiths,
 C. Handoll, J. E. Gooding.
 Nominations Committee—D. W. Brown, J. R. Alder, I. A. N. Campbell,
 P. G. S. Airey, R. Bolton King.
 Rugby Games Warden—P. K. Dale.

Cricket Secretary, 1958—R. A. Cockrell.
Rugby Secretary, 1958—R. Bolton King.
Magazine Committee, 1957-58—D. W. Brown, J. E. Gooding, G.
Harrison.

GENERAL MEETING NOTES.

Spring Term, 1958.

The most fruitful source of discussion in a term which was otherwise fairly quiet proved to be the Nominations Committee. Ever since its creation the Committee seems to have arisen each term as a target for attack.

On this occasion a radical change in the electoral system, such as abolishing the Committee, was not the aim, but rather to make the tasks of the Committee easier. It was proposed that the nominations of Games Captain and Chairman should no longer be within its scope. This suggestion was made on the grounds that embarrassing situations could arise when the Committee had to nominate an obvious choice from their own ranks and also had to put up a “ dummy ” for the sake of conforming to the rules. Some people thought more offices should be considered for withdrawal from the Committee’s selection, including Secretary, Field Secretary, Senior Shopman, and also the Entertainments Committee since keen people often volunteered to serve on it. However, it was said that this policy might lead to the picking off, one by one, of all the interesting offices, thus making the Committee a bore. At the vote the original proposal of the two offices was accepted. The existing Committee seemed in favour of the office and were granted the right to nominate for the offices in a body if they wished.

A separate proposal was passed that the nominations of Games Captain and Chairman should be made in the old way five weeks before the end of term. The second part of the proposal was to reduce confusion with the other elections.

Because Form VIb was already represented on the Nominations Committee and because of the decreased size of the Sixth Form the rule covering the composition of the Committee was altered to permit anyone from the Sixth Form, rather than from VIa and Upper VI only, to be elected.

During the discussions about removing nominations of Chairman and Games Captain from the shoulders of the

Committee it was suggested that it should be able to abstain from nominating. This was introduced as a proposal later in the term but was rejected though without a large majority.

The Classical Record Committee were prompt in their choice and introduced the proposed purchases in the, first meeting of term. The two works, Elgar's First Symphony and Nielson's Violin Concerto, aroused great controversy. The popularity of two such modern pieces was questioned, especially since the Meeting already owned a record of Elgar's Second Symphony. The list was passed but with a warning to future committees to consider the frequency with which their choice is likely to be played.

The decision of the Meeting to purchase a diamond needle for the amplifier L. P. head was notable since it indicated a feeling that people were capable of handling the instrument carefully.

For some time there has been discussion about the Christmas Party. Was it worth the time and energy put into it by the End-of-Term Entertainments Committee? This was brought to a head by the Headmaster, who suggested that the Meeting might discuss it. To this end an Extraordinary Committee of four members was elected, but its report was not delivered by the end of term.

Finally, a reflection on the Shop's prosperous nature over the last few terms was the transference of £40 of the Shop Bank Balance to the Meeting reserve.

CONCERT IN SAUL'S HALL.

One suspects that some concert-goers would welcome a more informal atmosphere in the concert hall. An idea of just how pleasant music can be when the rigid rules of etiquette can be relaxed, may be found at a concert in Clock Hall or Saul's Hall. The fact that the great majority of the performers are well known to many of us makes for a delightfully informal atmosphere.

On February 12th we were privileged to hear a concert given by two very old friends, Miss Wadna Keil and Dr. Herbert Sumsion. Miss Keil played two violin sonatas, one by Bach, in which she was accompanied by Mr. Tooze, and one by Brahms, when Dr. Sumsion was the accompanist. Between these two major items Dr. Sumsion played some piano solos, of which perhaps the most popular was his own composition, "Humoresque," well-known to some of us. Sufficient evidence of its popularity was the insistent demand by the audience for it to be repeated.

We are indeed grateful to Miss Keil and Dr. Sumsion for giving us such a delightful evening. Their virtuosity was enjoyed by all.

HOCKEY REPORT, 1958.

This term the Headmaster gave up coaching first game after doing so for many years. A remarkable number of Old Rendcombians must still remember his firm, at times irascible, yet always encouraging, management of the game. Under his eye the school has produced many teams capable of competing with those of larger schools; yet no one could have been less concerned with the production of gladiators than D. W. L. B. It is with regret that we see him hand over, and we hope that we shall continue for a long time to have the benefit of his skill and experience for junior games.

FIRST XI.

Although the 1st XI was fortunate in being able to play seven of the ten matches arranged, the condition of our own pitches cut down the number of our practice games during the first half of the term to a mere three or four. When the weather permitted we were often able to run four games simultaneously, which meant that the junior part of the school played more frequently than has been possible in previous seasons. First pitch was moved to a position immediately in front of the pavilion, an excellent arrangement.

Fortunately this year there was no shortage of umpires and we are grateful to them. Our thanks also to R. W. Taylor and his team of groundsmen, whose work in the face of such disappointing weather was admirable.

The First XI never settled down to the extent that had been hoped. There was always the need for more co-operation amongst the forwards and a better understanding between them and the halves. Few opportunities arose to correct these points as so many of our practice games were cancelled.

The first two matches were most disappointing. The defence was slow and the forwards were unable to make much ground on the few occasions when they received the ball; this was perhaps partly due to inadequate backing by the halves who were constantly required in our own circle. As the season progressed the defence strengthened considerably and the halves were more at liberty to move up the field with the forwards. That they still tended to stay back explains the brevity of many of our attacking movements; the forwards, however, were always slow in the circle and lacked tenacity when shooting.

D. R. G. Griffiths did a fine job of work in goal. His kicking was safe and hard, and apart from an occasional misjudged

sortie his positioning was excellent. M. A. B. Forster gallantly took his place against Exeter College, Oxford, when Griffiths was away. Forster also played left-back for the first two matches, but he was slow in defence and too frequently cleared towards the centre of the field. These faults were shared by P. G. S. Airey, who played at right-back against Cheltenham College. Airey has a powerful hit and should develop into a valuable defender.

I. A. N. Campbell and R. D. Comley played at left and right back respectively. They soon developed a good working partnership, both having powerful and intelligent hits, strong tackles and good ball control, but they are slow and would be well advised to watch a tendency to dribble too far before passing.

C. Handoll, at centre-half, allowed his natural anxiety over the defence to keep him too far back from his own forwards. His own play, stickwork, timing and passing, was good. As captain he did not always give the team the lead they needed; but it is to his credit that he kept a good spirit going in the team throughout the season in spite of repeated defeat.

R. F. Stebbing, at left-half, was an energetic player with a safe tackle and good ball control; he too was occasionally guilty of dribbling too far. M. van den Driessche, as the other wing-half, had a powerful hit and put many fine passes through to the forwards. Both Stebbing and Driessche failed to keep up behind the forwards during attacking movements; they should also pay more attention to careful marking.

Both wings enjoyed considerable success. On the right, J. F. W. Beard lacked control but generally managed to beat an opponent through sheer speed; although his hitting was rather wild he sent across many hard centres during the season. R. Bolton King, on the left wing, also showed some fine bursts of speed, but frequently hung back too far and failed to reach several passes. Both wings tackled well.

S. R. Merrett played at inside-right. He was very energetic, dribbled well and put across many intelligent passes, but his shooting was poor. In two matches he played at centre-half and combined particularly well with the forwards. R. A. Cockrell played at inside-left for most of the season. His stickwork was good, but he was slow on to the ball in the circle; he must also develop more tenacity in tackling back. If he rectifies these two faults he should make a useful forward. H. E. Gough replaced Cockrell for the last two matches and acquitted himself well. He had good ball control, passed well and was more thrusting in the circle.

J. R. Alder, at centre-forward, was very fast and a tenacious tackler; his shooting was determined but erratic. He has the makings of a fine forward if he will correct a strong inclination to hold the ball when a pass is needed. Against the Old Boys he played at inside-right.

J. M. Webb played at inside-right in one match. He was not speedy, but passed sensibly and showed admirable ball control. When he develops more speed and strength he will make a valuable player. P. G. Auden played on the left wing against Cheltenham College and put up a creditable performance.

SECOND XI.

The Second XI played two out of their three fixtures. Considering their total lack of practice as a team they did very well to lose one 4-6 and to win the other 7-1. Apart from those already mentioned as having played in the First XI, J. Shaw, M. D. Naish and J. B. Gooch showed promise for the future, and two old stagers, J. E. Gooding and G. H. G. Herbert, played a good reliable game.

RESULTS.

First XI.

Saturday, Feb. 1 v. Cheltenham College 1st XI. Away.	Lost 0-7.
15 v. King Edward's, Bath, 1st XI.	Away. Lost 0-6.
Wednesday, Feb. 19 v. Prince Henry's Grammar School 1st XI. ,	Home. Lost 1-4.
Thursday, Feb. 27 v. Monkton Combe 2nd XI.	Away. Lost 1-3.
Saturday, March 8 v. Exeter College, Oxford.	Home. Lost 0-5.
Saturday, March 15 v. Bristol Grammar School 1st XI.	Home. Lost 0-5.
Saturday, March 22 v. Old Rendcombians.	Home. Lost 0-2.

Second XI.

Saturday, Feb. 1 v. Cheltenham College Colts.	Away. Lost 4-6.
Wednesday, Feb. 19 v. Prince Henry's Grammar School 2nd XI.	Home. Won 7-1.

Junior XIs.

Saturday, Feb. 15, Under 15 v. King Edward's, Bath, Junior Colts.	Away. Won 3-2.
Thursday, Feb. 27, Under 16 v. Monkton Coombe Junior Colts.	Away. Lost 2-3.
Saturday, March 15, Under 15 v. Bristol Grammar School Junior Colts.	Home. Lost 0-5.

LIBRARY BOOKS, 1957-58.

A large number of books has entered the Library during the last year. Of the numerous fiction additions, perhaps the most notable have been "Voss," by the Australian author, Patrick White, and Rose Macaulay's latest novel, "The Towers of Trebizond."

"Voss" is indisputably a major work, well meriting its enthusiastic reception by the critics. (Sir Charles Snow compared the author to D. H. Lawrence.) The plot is concerned with the efforts of Voss, a German explorer of the nineteenth century, to cross the Australian Continent for the first time. The stark horrors of the Australian bush are offset by the sub-plot, which is set in a prosperous leisure-loving Sydney suburb. The two major characters, who meet only a few times, are strikingly contrasted: Voss, proud, taciturn, indomitable, almost an epic figure in his struggle of human endurance, and Laura Trevelyan, humble and lovable, the only person who really understands him. The style of writing is almost biblical, and the story moves with an impressive grandeur towards its tragic end.

"The Towers of Trebizond" is Rose Macaulay's first novel since 1950, and has also been received well by the critics. The story concerns a group of people who set out to explore the possibilities of a proposed Anglican mission to Turkey. They have little success, two of the party finally vanishing into the Soviet Union. The plot is a rather unimportant background for a brilliant piece of writing on two levels. One deals with the romance, mystery and struggles of the Christian Church; the other is concerned with the author's own desire to become a true Christian, a desire which is never satisfied. The book ends inconclusively on a question from the dark—the eternal dilemma. Despite the sorrow, grief and tragedy, there is much of the joy of living in the book, together with an odd mixture of well-portrayed, and at times, amusing, characters.

Other notable recent additions have been "Lucky Jim" by that iconoclast of letters, Kingsley Amis, two new books on capital punishment, a massive American work on international politics, and "Chinese Art" by William Willetts, an Old Rendcombian.

NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS.

Classical.

This term the General Meeting bought two new records: Nielsen's Violin Concerto and Symphony Number 1, by Elgar.

The Violin Concerto is played by Yehudi Menuhin and the Danish State Radio Symphony Orchestra under Mogens Woldike. It may well prove a good introduction to him as its style is not difficult to understand and it contains several references to older composers. Menuhin's performance lacks, in places, the necessary cleanliness of execution, but the orchestra play with enthusiasm and encompass all the wide range of tones in the work. The recording also is very fine and is well balanced.

Elgar's First Symphony is played by the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Sir Adrian Boult. This record is a transfer from 78's and thus it is not the same Philharmonic as we are now accustomed to. However, the symphony is very well played and, especially in the more contemplative passages, its interpretation leaves very little to be desired. The recording is very good and the transfer has certainly been satisfactory.

The College bought a recording of Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, the "Eroica," played by the Philharmonic Orchestra under Otto Klemperer. This is an immense performance with tremendous breadth and grandeur. Klemperer's interpretation is possibly the nearest that may be reached to perfection. His tempi are exceedingly impressive, slow enough to reveal all the intricacies and vastness of the symphony's conception. The orchestra responds magnificently and the recording is outstanding. Altogether a tremendously impressive record.

The other records were extracts from Verdi's Aida. This is an excellent performance especially on the part of Renata Tebaldi (soprano) who is accompanied by the Santa Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra under Alberto Erede. The excerpts are a fairly representative selection from all three Acts. The only important drawback is the balance of the recording, which tends to put the orchestra too far back.

Jazz Records.

Humphrey Lyttleton and His Band.

Since Humphrey Lyttleton now plays "mainstream" jazz, one naturally feels rather behind the times in reviewing this record, a product of the years when he played traditional jazz. Yet while it does not represent the summit of his achievements in that style, the record does to a certain extent explain the phenomenal success that this band had in its heyday.

The best number is probably "Beale St. Blues," where each of the front-line instrumentalists (except Turner) takes a solo in

his characteristic style, Lyttleton leading the ensembles with verve.. But “Blues Excursion ”—a blues theme sketched out by Lyttleton which occupies nearly all the second side—affords the best opportunity of assessing the versatility of the players. Each member of the front-line has a long solo—sometimes three choruses long—in which his inventive and technical powers are fully explored. Picard on trombone is the most impressive, actually rousing the somewhat apathetic audience to appreciative applause. Apart from “Slippery Horn, ” the other numbers, while competently played, are, except for odd moments, strangely uninspired. “ One Sweet Letter From You ” is rather disorganised as well as lasting too long: it compares very unfavourably with Bunk Johnson’s 1945 version. “Dallas Blues ” shows the same lack of organisation in the succession of confused choruses at the end.

Lyttleton’s own playing and leadership are impeccable: the crispness of his style and the originality of his improvisations (obviously modelled on Armstrong) make him perhaps the finest jazz trumpeter Britain has ever produced. Wally Fawkes, Bruce Turner and John Picard, comprising the front-line, back him up ably, though Fawkes seems oddly out of touch. An extremely competent rhythm section completes the band, and on the whole good traditional jazz is played, orthodox and sound, if rarely inspired. One can almost feel Lyttleton chafing at the limitations of the traditional style; the introduction of a saxophone into the front-line, and the modern manner in which “Slippery Horn ” is played seem to augur the changes which were so soon to take place.

The Meeting also bought an E. P. consisting of three numbers from the film, “The Benny Goodman Story. ”

NATURAL HISTORY SUPPLEMENT.

July 1958.

Miscellaneous Notes, January 1st to April 30th, 1958.

The autumn invasion of Britain by small birds, noted in the last issue, apparently affected Gloucestershire and the Rendcomb district, for great numbers of Blue Tits were present all through the winter and the population of several other species was also abnormally high. The birds especially affected were, in addition to the Blue Tit, the Great Tit, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Tree Creeper, Jay and Goldcrest.

Three or four Siskins were seen along the Churn in January and Redpolls were recorded occasionally. In March a party of twenty-one Corn Buntings was found feeding on a straw stack near the Whiteway, and a Kingfisher was seen by members of Form II over the river below North Cerney Banks.

A female Buzzard was found dead at Marsden in mid-April and proved to have been illegally shot. It was a bird of exceptionally pale plumage, being mainly white below and greyer than is usual on wings and upper parts. Several other Buzzards have frequented the district, and these birds certainly seem to have been able to adapt themselves to the great reduction in the Rabbit population since 1954.

Rabbits, however, are not so scarce as they were a year ago. They have been seen in small numbers in many parts of this region but there is still little sign of a return to the big warrens which were in use up to the time when myxomatosis spread over the county.

In January there were signs of another early spring on the way. Winter Aconite (*Eranthis hiemalis*), Sweet Violet (*Viola odorata*) and Snowdrops (*Galanthus nivalis*) were early in bloom. February, however, was a month of mixed weather and March was in the main cold so that the advance of spring was severely checked. Some mild days late in March brought a few of the summer migrant birds earlier than was expected, but the return of cold north-east winds in April halted their advance and most species were, if anything, later than average.

Arrival of Summer Resident Birds in the Rendcomb Area, 1958.

Chiff-chaff. —Single birds at Rendcomb on March 28th and 30th.

Very few each day until April 5th; then several daily to about the 10th, following which there was a steady increase and large numbers were present by April 15th.

Swallow. —Two or three were seen at North Cerney on March 29th and remained for about four days. Hardly any seen after that until about April 22nd. A further increase about April 25th and a final influx, which seemed to include most of our local breeding Swallows, took place on April 29th and 30th.

Willow Warbler. —A bird with pale brown legs, and therefore probably a Willow Warbler and not a Chiff-chaff, was seen at Rendcomb on April 7th. Very few were seen before April 17th and the species was still not numerous by the

- 22nd. Steady increase to April 30th when full population may have been reached.
- Blackcap. —Song from this species was not heard until April 19th. A very few were present on the 22nd and the bird was scarce until April 28th. An influx took place then and during the following two days.
- Redstart. —A male was first heard on April 20th near the Cirencester Drive, Rendcomb. One at Aycote on April 25th. At least seven between Rendcomb and Cliffterdine Wood on April 30th.
- Cuckoo. —Although reported earlier elsewhere, Cuckoos seem not to have been heard in this area before April 25th and were not of regular occurrence until May 2nd or later.
- Tree Pipit. —Tree Pipits were plentiful on Leckhampton Hill on April 23rd, or earlier, but were not recorded in the Rendcomb area until April 30th, when several were present (none, apparently, on the 28th).
- Whitethroat. —Not noted near Rendcomb until April 30th, when several were heard and seen. Quite common three days later.
- Common Sandpiper. —Seven between Rendcomb and Rendcomb lake on April 28th and one on the 30th, all feeding by the river.
- Grasshopper Warbler. —One on North Cerney banks, heard by Dr. Gladstone on May 3rd, remained at least a week.
- Lesser Whitethroat. —Not heard in the Rendcomb area until May 3rd, and very few seem to have come this year.
- Spotted Flycatcher. —None present in Rendcomb village on May 5th. Three or four there on the 6th, and numerous on the 8th and 9th.
- House Martin. —Not seen in this area until May 1st, when several were present. Many in Rendcomb on May 4th.
- Swift. —Two over Rendcomb on May 8th; several on the 9th.
- Hobby. —One was seen about five miles from the College on May 7th by Dr. Bruce Campbell, of Oxford.

C. M. Swaine, B. Sc.