

RENDCOMB COLLEGE
MAGAZINE

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June, 1944

Rendcomb College Magazine

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SCHOOL NOTES.

Lent Term, 1944.

“The Times” recently, on its leader page, published an article deploring the curtailment, and in some instances the disappearance of certain school magazines. Scarcity of paper, lack of time and labour, conditions arising from evacuation, bring their difficulties, and it is inevitable that school journalism should suffer from the like. The writer spoke with obvious regret, for it is clear that a school magazine, in war-time, has many useful functions to perform. More than ever news of Old Boys assumes a greater importance. In many cases the magazine is the only link that keeps Old Boys informed of each others’ doings, of their rewards and vicissitudes, and of what is happening at the school that sent them forth. We have tried to print every available scrap of information that reaches us from Old Rendcombians. We wish we had more and we do ask for news from outside—as much of it as we can get. We try to keep the addresses of subscribers up-to-date, and in these days of constant change that is not always easy. We apologise to those who may have missed numbers. Unfortunately it is not always possible to supply copies of former issues since economy precludes the printing of any considerable surplus.

The magazine does constitute a permanent record—the only readily available one—of the School’s activities, and the future chronicler will be indebted to its files whenever any information about the history of the College may be required. We write for posterity, and we think it well to remind present readers of this fact.

One further point. Since the war, we have limited ourselves to reporting. Original contributions have not, as a general rule, been included. In many ways this has been a pity, for there has been less incentive to would-be literary aspirants. It is true that “The Crescent” has occasionally gone some way to make good this deficiency. Talent of this kind comes in waves, and it is possible that at the moment we may be labouring in a trough, but from time to time we should have room to include articles in verse and prose. Certainly we do not wish spontaneity of this kind to become extinct.

Term began on Friday, 14th January. The holidays had been comparatively uneventful, though some of us who were in London had sundry reminders of former blitzes. All, however, returned safe and sound. War seems to' have upset the clerk of the weather. We had practically nothing of snow, very little rain, and there was a spell of surprisingly warm weather in March.

A bogey appeared—first of all in the guise of a mysterious Black Maria glimpsed on the asphalt. Later we learned that we had several cases of scarlet fever of a very mild type. The victims were removed. The outbreak did not spread, and although, technically, we were in quarantine for some weeks, nothing important occurred to interfere with our ordinary routine. Prayers were held in Hall on Sundays, while the village Church was out of bounds. For the rest life proceeded normally,

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An experiment was made of altering the hour of breakfast to 8 o'clock during part of the winter black-out. Classes began twenty minutes later than usual, and the P. T. period was curtailed. It worked without inconvenience, and might well provide a precedent should such circumstances occur again. Possibly it may be tried in the Michaelmas Term as well.

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On Sunday, 30th January, we had a visit from Mr. Shoran Singha. In the afternoon he gave a talk on Indian Architecture, illustrated with a wealth of slides. Those Moslems knew what they were doing. Palaces even more splendid than mosques, and tombs more consummate than the palaces. In the evening he conducted House Prayers in Hall.

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On Saturday, 5th February, after yeoman service, the hot water boiler gave out. Welding proved an unsatisfactory makeshift, but we were very lucky to secure the loan of a temporary boiler, and all things considered, suffered the minimum of inconvenience.

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The Puppet Players presented two shows at Rendcomb House on Wednesday, 1st March. A notice will be found elsewhere.

School Examinations commenced on Monday, 6th March, and lasted for the major portion of the week. The results excited considerable comment—most of it quite salutary in nature—and we repeat, with authority, that the assessments were made on an entirely normal basis.

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“The Thread o’ Scarlet,” by J. J. Bell, was produced on Saturday, 13th March. A separate notice will be found in the acting report.

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On Wednesday, 15th March, Mr. Jansen gave a lecture on Holland. He came to us on the introduction of Mr. Shoran Singha. Like most Dutchmen, he possessed marked linguistic ability, and he had a brand of humour that was peculiarly his own. (Such an attribute can be dangerous. With familiarity it might become redundant). He was well served by his slides, which included some fine examples of modern Dutch engineering and civic architecture. Of his enthusiasm for the Free Dutch cause there can be no question, and as a postscript to his lecture he gave a most lively talk to members of the Upper School in Mrs. Lee-Browne’s room on the following evening.

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On Sunday, 19th March, Mr Wilson gave a talk on Some Landscapes in the National Gallery, illustrated by lantern slides. Few of us now remember the visits we used to enjoy from Mr. Cook, that enthusiast of pictures. Those who did probably regretted the absence of his coloured slides, though thereby hangs a controversy. But Mr. Wilson’s talk did remind us of some good things that war-time conditions make it increasingly difficult to see.

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It is worth recording that on the same afternoon fine weather made possible the first tennis game of the season on the front court.

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On Monday, 20th March, a recital of music was given by Miss Margot Hubert’s String Quartet, assisted by Miss Catherine Powell. A notice appears under a separate heading.

The Lodges Race was run on Friday, 24th March, and on Saturday, 25th, came the production of the Form I play "The Dragon of Puddleville Parva," followed by three sketches entitled "Our British Pastimes."

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On Sunday, 26th March, there was an A. R. P. exercise in the Stable Courtyard, carried out by members of the Cirencester A. R. P. Rescue Party. We witnessed some very competent work. Casualties were lowered from the Clock Tower by means of pulleys and ladders and stretcher-cases were hoisted over walls. Nobody seemed in any great hurry. They took their time over it. Actual conditions are likely to present other difficulties, but these rehearsals are valuable in demonstrating methods and provide a useful object lesson.

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The Staff Discussion Group continued its meetings throughout the Term. Sir George Stapledon was to have spoken on "Ley Farming" on 21st March, but was prevented from coming. Mr A. G. Davies, of Sothbury Farm, kindly took his place at very short notice. The programme was as follows:—

25th January. Mr E. G. Neal, "Nature Photography."

8th February. Miss Elizabeth Parker, "The Factory Act in relation to State and Private Control."

22nd Feb. Rev. Stanley Franklin, "My Job as a Parson."

7th March. Mr Kenneth Ingram, "The Common Wealth Party."

21st March. Mr A. G. Davies, "Ley Farming."

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In a letter from India, B. J. Books very properly corrects us by pointing out that Miss Alway and Mrs Manifold were not the first women members of the teaching staff. That position was held for some years from the foundation of the College in 1920, by Mrs C. H. C. Osborne, who taught French.

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J. C. Waterton and J. Gilchrist entered College this Term, and at the end of Term W. P. Thomas, D. A. C. Smith, N. C. Stone, and R. A. S. Primrose left, taking with them our very good wishes.

HONOUR.

W. P. Thomas: Scholarship in History, Queen's Coll., Cambridge.

THE GENERAL MEETING.

Summer Term, 1944.

Chairman—F. H. Dutton.

Council—J. M. Murry, F. H. Dutton, D. Montgomery, D. H. Hill, N. P. Morris, R. Brain, J. J. North.

Meeting Selection Committee—D. Montgomery, F. H. Dutton, J. M. Murry, R. Brain, N. P. Morris.

House Committee—J. E. Carus-Wilson, D. J. Payne, W. S. Monroe, R. T. Lindsay, J. C. Waterton, R. Margetts.

Games Committee—D. Montgomery, J. W. Sumsion, D. H. Hill, R. Brain, N. P. Morris (Tennis Captain).

Senior Shopman—J. F. Alder.

Shopmen—J. M. Henshaw, C. J. N. Richardson.

Banker—J. M. Trickett.

Breakages Man—I. M. Bryce.

Secretary—D. G. Knight.

Auditors—R. M. Lewis, T. R. Morris.

Apprentice Auditors. —P. W. Sumsion, J. C. Waterton.

Finance Committee—E. A. Jones, J. C. Waterton, R. J. Kendal.

Entertainments Committee—J. M. Henshaw, M. Butler, I. M. Bryce, P. W. Sumsion, E. A. Jones.

Cycle Men—R. E. Hayward, M. C. Harries, T. R. Morris.

Meeting Almoner—J. D. Menzies.

Paperman—D. J. Dodwell.

Amplifier Committee—I. M. Bryce, F. H. Dutton, M. C. Harries, T. T. Walters, N. P. Elson.

Magazine Committee—J. M. Murry, R. T. Wood, G. S. Davis.

Drying Room Committee—R. S. D. Balter, D. J. Dodwell, D. J. Payne.

Record Committee—D. H. Hill, D. M. Grant, F. H. Dutton, I. M. Bryce, J. W. Sumsion.

Salvage Organiser—R. S. D. Balter.

Salvage Committee—W. S. Monroe, R. T. Lindsay.

Mowing Man—J. E. Carus-Wilson.

Assistant Mowing Man—N. P. Elson.

Public Work Man—J. J. North.

Apprentice Banker—C. W. Carus-Wilson.

Games Secretaries—Cricket, B. W. Plenderleith; Football, J. M. Henshaw.

Games Wardens—Cricket, I. S. Menzies, G. H. Bye; Tennis, R. T. Lindsay, J. W. Sumsion; Hockey, G. H. Bye; Indoor, R. W. Smith.

Groundsmen—Cricket, R. Brain; Tennis, G. S. Davis; Golf, D. G. Knight.

OLD BOYS' NOTES.

Distinctions.

Wing-Commander D. D. Haig has been awarded a bar to the D. F. C.

H. W. T. Bates has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

V. D. Page has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

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H. S. Palmer has been given his commission in the Fleet Air Arm.

J. R. Billany, who has been discharged from the R. A. F. and is doing Survey work in the Cirencester area, is an Instructor in Navigation for the Cirencester A. T. C.

Dick Field has had five pictures accepted at a United Nations' Exhibition held in Cairo early this year.

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We had visits during the Term from Captain and Mrs P. K. Wright, and from the following Old Boys: —W. Y. Willetts (who brought his wife with him), M. A. C. Levett, A. S. C. Smith, F. T. Luffman, S. A. Trayhurn, and C. E. H. Tuck.

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T. D. Wright, M. M., is now a Lieutenant in the Royal Marines.

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On going to press we have just learnt that C. D. M. Barnett and P. B. Lane have been given commissions in the Fleet Air Arm.

After our eyes had become accustomed to the Stygian gloom and our ears to the rumble of thunder, we watched and listened with tremulous anticipation to the tragedy that was to chill our blood and raise the hairs upon our scalps — we were not disappointed.

On the whole the cast acquitted themselves well. F. H. Dutton, as the timorous Mr Migsworth, gave the part the life it required, and was ably supported by D. Montgomery's somewhat cosmopolitan Mr Smith.

N. C. Stone, as Butters, the conscience-stricken murderer, tended, perhaps, to over-develop the macabre streak in that gruesome character, and turned him into a rather too harrowing study.

G. S. Davis, as the traveller, was as suave and restrained as we expected him to be, while the off-stage protestations of Breen (D. A. C. Smith) and the landlord (K. E. Banks), added the necessary touch of realism to a play which is, if anything, a little far-fetched.

**“The Dragon at Puddleville Parva, ” by members of Form I.
Produced Saturday, 25th March.**

Puddleville Parva had a right pompous mayor, ready to hobnob and royster with his councillors. Their concept of civic hospitality ran high. “Cakes and lemonade” were in great demand, though in this case the lemonade failed to materialise. But like Hamelin Town, Puddleville Parva had a sore spot, the particular menace in this instance being a dragon. A blown-out policeman enters to announce the bogey, but suddenly collapses in the middle of his message. (He gets brought round by a plentiful administration of plain water.) Clearly some action must be taken, and they decide to call upon the service of Sir Perceval Podge.

The great fight takes place in the Forest of Beechanoak. Not without some amusing episodes. The mayor must be on the scene. He struts about in true mayoral fashion until the dragon appears. A fine surrealist encounter ensues. A horse pistol demonstrated by Councillor Higgins fails to go off, only to -explode inopportunely after the dragon has been decapitated. - The head goes as a trophy to the mayor (One can imagine him dedicating it in the Council Chamber to an appropriate accompaniment of cakes and lemonade). Sir Percival receives a gargantuan medal and all ends happily.

We have given the plot because it is necessary in order to convey an impression of this really diverting little drama. Seldom have we enjoyed such spontaneity. It went with real 'go.' And the dialogue, if rather meagre at times, introduced some fetching catch-words—"After you, Claude," "I brought this for you, sir." The effects were unstudied, but none the less telling for that.

As they were all very young players, and played very well, we shall not single them out for individual comment. We ought, however, to say that M. E. Knight, who had a good deal to do with it all, was absent, having been attacked by a spotted dragon who detained him elsewhere.

The cast was as follows

The Mayor of Puddleville Parva P. G. Cockell.
Councillor Higgins E. F. P. Topps.
A Butler M. J. Morgan.
A Policeman P. J. Ryman.
Sir Percival Podge R. J. Powell.
The Dragon M. J. Morgan.

**"The Good and the Bad," by Philip Johnson. Produced
25th March.**

Like its title, this one-act play was a mixture of good and bad. It was bad in so far as it presupposed a situation that was, to say the least, highly improbable. A mother has two sons, one of whom she worshipped, the other of whom she despised. The body of one is brought in drowned, from a storm at sea. We are asked to believe that it was completely unidentifiable. The mother, frantic to find out which of the two it was, makes no attempt to do so, although the corpse was in the next room.

Once, however, you accept this melodramatic situation, you find excellent character studies, and the opportunity for some really moving acting. This the cast undoubtedly gave us. The production throughout was tense, and succeeded in overcoming any unreality that might so easily have been present.

D. A. C. Smith, as the ghost of the drowned son, Rodd Kentish, gave what must surely have been one of the best of his performances. Standing in the shadow, scarcely moving, making every inflection of the dialogue yield its tragic import, without a single moment of false emphasis, he dominated the scene.

The mother, Mrs. Kentish, a violent, obstinate and unforgiving woman, was admirably portrayed by R. T. Wood. He has been given quite a number of these semi-hysterical parts in recent productions, and we would like to see him in something less harrowing, but there was nothing forced here, and the character came to life.

By comparison, the others had easier roles. D. Montgomery was frank and manly in his part of the favoured son, Jim. Two neighbours, who are the first to bring the bad tidings, Riah Holls, and Abel Gunter, were acted convincingly by F. H. Dutton and R. A. S. Primrose.

Sketches from "Our British Pastimes," by Herbert Farjeon.

Produced Wednesday, March 29th.

These sketches are of the type too rarely attempted on the Rendcomb stage. The transition from the Ambassadors to Big School is apt to be precarious, but in this case the producer, N. C. Stone, managed it with accomplishment and ease. The danger in this type of acting is always of over emphasis, but the cast avoided this pitfall—the word unsaid or the raised eyebrow can convey more than a whole sentence.

In the first sketch we were transported to what T. S. Eliot once called 'the land of lobelias and cricket flannels'—to Saturday afternoon tennis in Surbiton; adenoidal typists and phlegmatic bank clerks wielding their racquets with more enthusiasm than skill. Anyone who can arrange the sets to suit the whole party is worthy to be ranked with the greatest of contemporary European statesmen. This sketch showed the failure of the British genius in compromise. One optimistic lady was overwhelmed by an avalanche of protests and indignant players.

And then the bridge party— a masterpiece of studied understatement. It consisted of a series of agonised silences, intermittently broken by savage interchanges of comment between partners, shin tapping, and the tuneless whistling of the musical repertoire of the party. This, needless to say, consisted of a single song.

The episode of the musical chairs was the funniest thing we have seen on the stage for some time. All the ingredients were there: the children's birthday party, the gramophone, the aimless

peregrination round the dining room chairs; the enfant terrible, complete with dolly and Billingsgate vocabulary. Her lapses were explosive and devastating. C. J. N. Richardson was at his best in this part. This sketch bore the mark of dreadful authenticity.

The whole show was handled with economy and discretion, and none of the force of the rapier-like Farjeon wit was lost.

PUPPET PLAYERS.

On Wednesday, 1st March, the Puppet Players presented a double bill at Rendcomb House.

It began with a piece entitled "The Pig and Whistle," written and devised by the Junior Players. These people have the knack of hitting on something fresh each time. Their shows are breezy. They are just the right length and exploit a particular brand of humour well suited to their craft.

"The Pig and Whistle" on this occasion was the scene of a diverting village night's entertainment. It had an enterprising landlord, ready for practical jokes and determined not to be outwitted by any foreigner. The merry-making, however, took a surprising turn with the advent of a Chinese wizard, and more came out of the barrel, in this instance, than home-brewed ale. Conjuring feats of this kind call for agile manipulation and we were not disappointed. The sets were good, especially the interior of the inn. The speaking was rustic, as the occasion demanded, and it only remains to commend the cast for the zest they brought to their performance. Here they are: —

Landlord	N. M. Wood (Voice, J. H. Shield)
Glum	R. W. Smith
Jolly	R. Margetts
Joe	L. V. Crawford
Chinaman	R. J. Kendal (Voice, J. H. Shield)

The Senior Players chose an admirable contrast. It was an adaptation of R. L. Stevenson's short story, "Markheim."

The setting here was very effective—the interior of an antique dealer's shop. It was a picture composed of many details, selected

and grouped with unerring taste, and it provided the faintly macabre atmosphere demanded by the plot. Markheim, a sinister adventurer, impelled by insatiable rapacity, murders the old dealer, only to find himself confronted by the hour of final reckoning. The Devil appears to him at the moment of consummation. Fear and remorse strike him down and he ends by giving himself up to Justice. It was the tragedy of a climax in a lost soul, and the dialogue well brought out the conflict. The acting and the speaking were of a high order. The masks of the puppets were possibly a little too heavy, but they were meant to portray faces of terror and in this they succeeded. The cast was as follows: —

The Dealer	P. S. W. Beck
Markheim	N. M. Wood
The Devil	C. M. Carus-Wilson

MUSIC.

We had a visit from Miss Margot Hubert's String Quartet on Monday evening, 20th March. There was an appreciative audience of Staff and boys.

Chamber music is very exacting in its demands. It is a form of art that requires a highly polished technique and a complete unanimity in interpretation. On the whole these players surmounted their difficulties. There was plenty of verve.

The programme consisted of the 1st Movement of the D minor Quartet by Schubert, familiarly known as 'Death and the Maiden.' This was followed by a Flute Quartet of Mozart. Here we had a long, flowing melody for the solo instrument, accompanied by pizzicato strings. The somewhat hackneyed "Andante Cantabile" from a string quartet by Tchaikovsky was probably the most popular number. The tone of the muted instruments was good and the phrasing graceful and mellifluous. The recital ended with the Beethoven Quartet in C minor, op. 18, no. 4. This was played with vigour and sense of dramatic contrast and made an effective finale.

We wish to thank our visitors for giving us the only concert this Term.

DISCUSSION GROUP.

The Discussion Group has now survived its first season, and it is to be hoped that it may have a long run. Attendance has been fairly good but it has been very hard to find suitable times for the meetings. The first discussion, on the "Death Sentence, " was interesting, although some of the speaking was not very well thought out. The group came to the conclusion that the death sentence is necessary in this imperfect world, but would be unsatisfactory in a better world.

The second discussion, on "Ghosts, " fared more happily, producing many laughs and amusing anecdotes.

THE BALLAD OF CARRAWAY.

Far over the mountains,
Far over the sea,
Lay a strange kingdom In a strange
country.

The trees were made of ginger,
Of lemonade each stream,
And the snow upon the mountains
Was as sweet as pink ice-cream.

The ruler of this country His name
was Carraway,
In a palace of barley sugar He yawned
the livelong day.

Agricultural labour
Was banned throughout the land,
The population sunbathed Upon the
sugar sand.

And everyone was happy,
As happy as could be,
They lived on spice and sugar-mints
And endless cups of tea.

King Carraway had a daughter
As fair as a summer's day,
Her lips were red as cherries,
Her hands as white as may.

Princes came to woo her
Sailing o'er the sea,
But she would not throw herself away
On Tom or Timothy.

Her heart was set on a soldier,
A gallant of twenty-three,
But the King disapproved of the marriage
And said it must not be.

But she swore she'd have no other
Whatever the king might do,
And Popcorn, her soldier kissed her
And swore he would be true.

Spring drew on into Summer,
The air was a-murmur with bees,
And beautiful almond candy
Bloomed on the spicy trees.

The courtiers played in the meadows,
The king took his afternoon nap,
And everyone was contented
In the kingdom of Gingersnap.

But away in a far-off empire
Lived a king called Bagatelle:
He swore he'd invade the country
Where Carraway did dwell.

He gathered his army together,
Said what he proposed to do,
But the reason for his action
No one ever knew.

On a coconut summer morning
When the lark was sweet in the sky,
They sailed away over the ocean
To the tune of "My love and I."

The fish in the sea saw their flagship,
Swam on ahead with the news,
And Carraway roused from his slumber,
Pulled gum-boots over his shoes.

He summoned his councillors round him
To work out a plan of campaign,
And marzipan fortifications
Soon crested the edible plain.

They flooded the valleys with honey,
They mined all the beaches with plums:
Said Carraway, armed with a liquorice sling
"I am ready, for any that comes."

J. M. M.

HOCKEY.

During the last ten years we have built up a strong hockey tradition throughout the school, with the result that College teams have met with considerable success. But in the long run it is the spirit and interest outside the first game which counts.

In the season of 1944 the weather once again favoured us, and few games were missed because of rain or snow. There was much keenness and ability shown throughout the school despite the fact that nowadays we get less coaching. We are grateful to the Headmaster, Mr Richards and Miss Sumner for their assistance in this respect.

The first XI faced its most ambitious fixture list, the Cheltenham College and St. Paul's College fixtures being new additions. The game with Cheltenham College was by far the best and hardest

of the season. It was greatly enjoyed and it is to be hoped that next year we shall have a side good enough to play the College again.

The standard of play was uniformly high and fast. There were five members of the last season's team available and their experience was a definite asset to the side.

Montgomery was again goalkeeper and he could be relied upon to play a cool and steady game. The two backs were both new to the side. Morris, originally a half, settled down quickly at left back and was a fast and effective player. North, at right back, was inclined to be erratic, sometimes tackling and clearing the ball well, but at other times appearing careless and missing the ball completely. He has, however, the making of a first-rate player. Thomas, at left half, a member of last year's eleven, is an able player, who inclined to delay his passes too long. Banks was a good right half. He combines a sure eye and a strong hit to great advantage. The centre half position was filled by R. Brain. Although at times a little wild and inclined to rush about too much instead of keeping to his place and intercepting passes, he played well and initiated many goal-scoring opportunities for the forward line.

The forward line played well together. Hill at left-wing was a great asset; he has speed and dash coupled with the ability to take the ball on the run. Lindsay was a skilful inside left and many of our goals were scored by his courageous backing-up in the circle. Murry proved an excellent centre forward. He is an experienced player with good stick work, but he might perhaps have passed the ball more. Right wing is not Plenderleith's true position, but he played steadily and well, settling down quickly to become a very useful member of the team. Dutton and Primrose both played in one match, and these two, with Grant, were the reserves. Dutton only needs confidence to become a very useful player. Grant requires "dash" in the circle, and Primrose needs to remember that the main job of an outside is to give passes to the insides. They all played keenly.

D. A. C. Smith, as Captain and inside right, led the side well and showed that at his best he can be very good. He is to be congratulated on the spirit of the 1st game and on an enjoyable season.

First XI Results.

Thursday, Feb. 10th v. St. Paul's Training Coll. (A). Won 6-2.
Sunday, Feb. 27th v. Group 27 R. A. F. (H). Won 5-0.
Wednesday, March 1st v. Dean Close "A" XI (A). Won 4-3.
Sunday, March 12th v. Group 27 R. A. F. (A). Lost 3-2.
Thursday, March 16th v. Cheltenham College (A). Lost 6-2.
Saturday, March 25th v. South Cerney R. A. F. (A). Won 3-1.

Note: (A)—Away, (H)—Home.

RUNNING.

The Senior and Junior Lodges were run on March 24th with the following results: —

Senior Lodges.

1. D. H. Hill. 13 mins. 28 secs.
2. R. T. Lindsay. 14 mins. 19 secs.
3. J. F. Alder. 14 mins. 19. 5 secs.

Junior Lodges.

1. R. Margetts. 16 mins. 17 secs.
2. R. Gready. 17 mins. 14 secs.
3. E. F. P. Topps. 17 mins. 14. 5 secs.