

RENDCOMB
COLLEGE
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March, 1960

Rendcomb College Chronicle

Volume 11, No. 11.

March 1960

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COLLEGE OFFICERS.

Easter Term, 1960.

Senior Prefect—P. G. S. Airey.

Prefect—R. F. Stebbing.

Group Leaders and Prefects—R. A. Cockrell, J. B. Gooch,
M. van den Driessche, J. R. Windsor.

College Workman—M. D. Naish.

†Public Workman—D. R. Poole.

Music Warden—G. Harrison.

Choir Librarians—G. C. Cattermole, P. A. Trier, S. H. Shellswell.

Q. P. Concerts—I. S. C. Airey.

Pictureman—M. C. Jones.

Lamp Men—J. A. T. Goodborn, G. S. Bartlett.

Church Ushers—G. J. Taylor, J. Shaw.

Church Collections and Deck Chairs—P. K. Dale.

†Furniture Committee—S. D. Hicks, K. A. Walker, D. G. Griffiths.

Stagemen—J. Shaw, F. A. G. Ferguson, P. K. Dale, M. A. Gooding,
D. M. Tucker, J. H. Delefortrie.

Librarians—M. van den Driessche, J. R. Windsor, D. R. Poole,
I. S. C. Airey, P. B. Heppleston.

Manual Foremen—H. E. Gough, J. C. Malpass, N. J. Price,
C. C. Richardson, K. H. Stimson, D. A. N. Hogarth.

†General Meeting Elections.

GENERAL MEETING OFFICERS.

Easter Term, 1960.

Chairman—M. van den Driessche.

Secretary—G. J. Taylor.

Games Captain—R. F. Stebbing.

Field Secretary—R. A. Cockrell.

Games Committee—M. van den Driessche, N. J. Price.

Boys' Banker—M. D. Naish.
 Meeting Banker—R. P. S. Harrison.
 Senior Shopman—D. A. Hodges.
 Shopmen—M. J. Bartlett, J. J. Schwarzmantel.
 House Committee Treasurer—J. R. Marshall.
 Games Committee Treasurer—J. T. Wood.
 Record Committee Treasurer—D. J. Thomasson.
 Finance Advisory Committee—R. A. Cockrell, R. A. Dauncey,
 D. R. Poole.
 Finance Committee Treasurer—S. Greenlaw.
 Auditors—I. S. C. Airey, J. Shaw.
 Entertainments Committee—T. L. H. Benbow, D. M. Tucker,
 C. C. Richardson, K. H. Stimson, E. Taylor.
 Cycle Committee—D. R. Poole, C. B. Stillwell, R. S. Lowe.
 Classical Records Committee—M. van den Driessche, G. Harrison,
 P. K. Dale.
 Light Records Committee—M. Whittering, M. C. Jones.
 Amplifier Technicians—P. G. S. Airey, J. R. Windsor.
 Breakages Man—C. J. Webb.
 Paperman—C. B. Stillwell.
 Finance Committee—M. E. Stubbs, S. H. Shellswell.
 Drying Room Committee—K. H. Stimson, P. J. Callaghan,
 A. D. Heppleston.
 Billiards Committee—P. G. S. Airey, J. C. Malpass, R. A. Dauncey.
 Sledge Committee—N. R. Meakin, R. A. D. B. Laws,
 M. F. Ashe-Jones.
 Magazine Committee—M. van den Driessche, J. B. Gooch,
 D. A. Hodges.
 Chairman of Groundsmen—M. Whittering.
 Senior Groundsmen—P. B. Heppleston, T. C. Bass, P. K. Dale.
 Junior Groundsmen—T. Tucker, M. A. Gooding.
 Tennis Groundsman—K. A. Walker.
 Cricket Groundsman—H. E. Gough.
 Hockey Games Wardens—D. A. N. Hogarth, R. C. Jones.
 Cricket Games Warden—D. J. Tovey.
 Tennis Games Warden—T. Tucker.

Rugby Games Warden—R. A. Sewell.
Hockey Secretary—N. J. Price.
Cricket Secretary, 1960—R. P. S. Harrison.
Rugby Secretary, 1960—J. M. Webb.
The Council—J. Shaw, M. D. Naish, G. Harrison, P. G. S. Airey,
J. R. Windsor, R. F. Stebbing, M. van den Driessche.
Selection Committee—P. G. S. Airey, J. R. Windsor, G. Harrison,
M. van den Driessche, S. D. Hicks.
Rule Committee—T. L. H. Benbow, D. R. Poole, D. A. Hodges.
Nominations Committee—R. A. Cockrell, S. D. Hicks, M. D. Naish,
D. R. Poole, D. A. Hodges.

GENERAL MEETING NOTES.

Autumn Term, 1959.

As had been hoped, more members and fresh blood brought new life into the Meeting. The frequency of good debates and quick decisions brightened a great deal of routine business, although proposals were few.

The first of these in the early part of the Term was to change the 4% and 4½% Defence Bonds to the new 5% Bonds. The change was comparatively easy and in view of financial difficulties proved a wise decision.

The new classical records, consisting of Mozart's 41st Symphony and Divertimento No. 2, Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue", Rossini's "Thieving Magpie" overture, and Arnold's "Tam o' Shanter" overture, were valuable additions to the Meeting record cabinet.

Discussion in the second half of the Term was centred predominantly upon finance. This problem has been in the background previously but came to the fore concerning the shop, and then was emphasised further by consideration of outstanding expenses.

A proposal to limit the value of edible stock to £30 was the first measure adopted soon after the discovery that a considerable deficit remained unexplained, and then a committee

was elected to investigate the possibilities of an easier and more reliable way of checking. It soon became clear that the Meeting would have to request further allowances, and the Headmaster was accordingly approached. After certain reforms in "tax collecting" had been made, a committee was elected to draw up a statement of relevant facts.

Coincident with this business it was realised that nearly half the present hockey sticks would have to be replaced, but the problems arising from this were left until the following Term.

SCHOOL NOTES.

Autumn Term, 1959.

We congratulate Mr. J. H. Duffell on his appointment to the staff of Marlborough College and wish him and his wife happiness in their new environment. He will be greatly missed at Rendcomb.

We welcome Mr. J. R. Dennis, who joined the staff in September, to teach Physics and Mathematics. Formerly on the staff of Sir Thomas Rich's School, Gloucester, he later went to Victoria College, Cairo, to work under Mr. A. G. Elliott-Smith when the latter retired from Cheltenham College. Unfortunately Mr. and Mrs. Dennis lost all their possessions at the time of the Suez crisis and returned to England to start life afresh.

We are glad to welcome Mr. G. L. Williams who comes to us from Downside School to teach Latin and to take charge of cricket.

We extend greetings also to Mr. R. C. Elliott, from Loughborough College. He joined the staff in September to take charge of Physical Education and handicrafts.

* * * *

We are happy to offer our very good wishes to the following boys who joined the College in September: J. A. Dow, R. J. Edy, F. R. Glennie, J. F. Harris, D. J. Mabberley.

* * * *

We congratulate Mr. J. B. Fell, M. B. E., on his election to the Fellowship of the Royal Institute of Chemists.

Congratulations are also due to G. Harrison on being awarded a Scholarship in English to Queens' College, Cambridge.

We are very grateful to Mr. J. C. James for the gift of £50 to the Library. The books which this will enable us to acquire will be purchased over a period of about two years.

* * * *

We are grateful once again to Dr. Gladstone for the gift of Blackwood's Magazine, which for so many years has whiled away the hours for tenants of the Rest Room.

We acknowledge with thanks receipt of "The Decanian," "Kingham Hill Magazine" and "The Wycliffe Star."

* * * *

The VIth Form and four members from Form V visited the Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, on October 20th, to see a performance of "King Lear."

* * * *

The summer holiday of 1959 will be remembered for the replacement or renewal of a considerable quantity of furniture and equipment. Big School is now resplendent with a new set of desks and chairs, the former with Formica-type tops. With the new floor, previously reported, the room is now a very attractive one. The old History Room benches have been replaced by new chairs and it is hoped to replace the table tops during the course of the next twelve months, if suitable material can be found. The bases of the tables are so good and convenient and, incidentally, irreplaceable except at enormous cost, that it was felt worthwhile to make the effort to replace the tops.

Remembering how unevenly Big School floor had worn, so that desks were too easily overturned in moving; remembering that for 30 years all the desks had to be moved out each Saturday night for dancing (until we went over to the Music Room) and remembering that the same movement took place for every lecture, film show and play, 40 years' use reflects both the quality of the desks and the care of generations of Furniture Men.

In the Workshop a fine job was done by Mr. Salter and his assistants in putting new tops on the benches before Mr. Elliott took over in September. The new tops are of hardwood and the members of the Sixth Form who did the work after "A" level are to be congratulated on their efforts. A number of the

original wooden planes, no longer capable of repair, have been replaced with Record metal planes, and various other tools worn out with long service have also been replaced. In fact, the equipment has generally been "brought up to scratch." The only outstanding item is the lathe, but this is something that will have to wait for another day.

In the Art Room a number of new easels and drawing boards have been purchased and the clay workers equipped with a kick-wheel and a small kiln.

We are grateful to the Governors for making all these things possible.

In October, before the junior forms returned to the College, Mr. J. R. D. Salter made a good job of decorating the Art Room.

CAROL SERVICE.

Christmas Term, 1959.

With the exception of the well known Christmas hymns such as "Christians, Awake" and "O Come, all ye Faithful," all the items sung by the Choir were first performances at Rendcomb. Except for the final one, all the lessons were read by boys.

From Bach's "Christmas Oratorio" the tenors and bases, singing in unison, gave a musical and stylistic rendering of "Prepart Thyself, Zion." Although the bases perhaps found the higher notes something of a strain, the general effect was precise and pleasing.

"Adam Lay Ybounden" was well sung by trebles only. Their tone was good and their words clearly distinguishable. The words are from an early English song and the music by Peter Warlock.

The trebles, tenors and bases gave a two-part version with organ accompaniment of Baker's beautiful arrangement of an old French tune, the words beginning "Whence is this Goodly Fragrance." "The Holy Son of God Most High" is an old German Lutheran Chorale and was sung in four well balanced parts.

Perhaps the most delightful carol was “Three Kings From Persian Lands Afar” for which the music by Cornelius has been arranged by Sir Ivor Atkins. This beautiful tune has been made popular by the broadcast services from King’s College, Cambridge, and after such example it must have presented a formidable task to Mr. Tooze and the choir. Nevertheless, it was well sung. The story of the three kings is told by solo voice with choral accompaniment. The solo part was shared by R. F. Stebbing and G. Harrison.

The organ was played by Mr. John Sanders, sub-organist at Gloucester Cathedral. We are fortunate in having had the benefit of his experience and musical skill, and gladly record our gratitude.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY, 1959.

The Christmas Party this year was a great success and a most enjoyable evening was had by everyone.

As usual there was no lack of willing hands helping in the decoration of the Halls. The intention was to give the Halls an Eastern atmosphere and this was admirably done. Crepe paper streamers and gaily-coloured balloons, all lit up by the yellow light resulting from special lanterns, produced a gay appearance. The Christmas Tree was placed near the entrance to Big School. The flowers, kindly provided and arranged by Mrs. Lee-Browne and Miss Cox, enhanced the appearance of the Halls, and added admirably to the whole effect.

The party opened at 5:30 when hordes of people in fancy dress streamed in. Dresses were up to a very high standard indeed, and much work and thought had obviously been put into many of them.

Supper more than fulfilled our greatest expectations; our sincere thanks to Miss Babington and her staff.

Competitions this year depended mainly on guesswork and were attractively presented. The entries were numerous and the most popular competitions were “Sensory Perception,” “Nationalities” and “Pairs.”

Dancing was well attended and “jiving” was an innovation this year, which especially pleased the jivers!

Sketches were put on in Big School from 8 until 8. 45 p. m. Songs composed by Mr. Sells and Mr. Tooze seem to get more humorous from year to year. This time “The Man That I Marry,” “Nostalgia Rendcombiensis” and “Grand Dance” were particularly amusing and original. “Crisis” was a song revived from last year, this time it involved audience participation and proved a great success. Three humorous sketches and a number of interludes filled out the programme, which was short and thoroughly enjoyable. A grand evening.

GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION.

“O” Level, December 1959 Examination.

M. J. N. Bryant—History.
 F. A. G. Ferguson—English Literature.
 S. D. Hicks—Latin.
 M. C. Jones—English Language, French.
 R. J. Parnell—Latin.
 D. M. Tucker—Biology, English Language.
 J. M. Webb—English Language.
 M. Whittering—Latin.

“MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL”

by T. S. Eliot.

Cast:

Chorus, Women of Canterbury	David Griffiths, Sebastian Greenlaw, Daniel Thomasson, David Little, Martin Ogilvie
First Priest	Robert Cockrell
Second Priest..	David Poole
Third Priest...	Mark Whittering
Messenger	David Laws
Thomas Becket	Simon Hicks

First Tempter	Peter Callaghan
Second Tempter	Roger Windsor
Third Tempter	David Tucker
Fourth Tempter	John Malpass
Banner Bearers	

David Maberley, Robert Edy, Jeffery Harris

First Knight	Stuart Airey
Second Knight	Jonathan Shaw
Third Knight	Paul Harrison
Fourth Knight	Michael Naish

This is surely the most interesting choice of play that we have seen at Rendcomb for many years. The considerable problems presented by the production of a verse play of this stature, in a school and on a stage as small as ours, make the eminent success of the production all the more remarkable.

The plot, which describes some of the events leading to the death of Thomas Becket, is slight and much of the strength of the play lies in the verse. Eliot says himself "... the plot ... (presents) only one dominant character and what dramatic conflict there is takes place within the mind of that character." Other characters are arranged in groups: the priests, the knights, the tempters and the chorus of poor women of Canterbury. Eliot shows their different attitudes towards Becket's actions and death.

All of these groups have at least some choric function in the play and the way in which the choric passages are spoken is therefore of great importance. The chorus itself spoke with admirable clarity and gave an impression, firstly of tense expectancy and, later, of vivid but unavailing grief. The producer had divided many of the speeches between the members of the chorus. Apart from lessening technical difficulties, this successfully emphasised the fact that Eliot does not intend this to be an anonymous chorus, but to portray the individual feelings of "Almost... the char-women of Canterbury."

With only one fully developed character in the play, the responsibilities of the actor who plays this part are great. S. D. Hicks' performance as the Archbishop was impressive. He succeeded in showing Becket's great strength of will and the deep spiritual and intellectual penetration without which his

actions would be meaningless. He spoke the verse with feeling and precision and, especially in the sermon and the more introspective passages, his acting had an almost terrifying intensity. This was a well considered and sympathetic interpretation.

R. A. Cockrell's performance as the first priest was also fine. His interpretation was assured, beautiful and entirely convincing, portraying movingly the humble sincerity of the priest. D. R. Poole gave a good performance as the second priest with his devotion to Becket and unquenchable optimism. M. Whittering's acting, as the third priest, improved as the play went on and it reached a high standard in the second part. Praise must also be given to the priests for the quality of their choric speeches and for their excellent intonation of the introits in the second part; a very exacting task. In his part of the messenger, R. A. D. B. Laws delivered his lines convincingly and with clarity.

Into the atmosphere of sanctity, so well established by the priests, the four knights burst with startling ferocity. Their forceful and convincing acting before Becket's death emphasised how much their arguments in their own defence were mere rationalisation and self-deception. I. S. C. Airey, as their leader, successfully gave an impression of swaggering self-confidence and his facile speeches after Becket's death contrasted well with his previous animal wrath. R. P. S. Harrison gave a good account of the character of the third knight, de Traci, an old and foolish baron whose short sighted patriotism makes him betray ideals which he still dimly and rather pathetically appreciates. J. Shaw, as de Morville, the second knight, declaimed his insidious arguments with great conviction. There was something quite frightening in the assurance with which he claimed our support. The fourth knight's utterly shallow but horribly reasonable arguments were earnestly proposed by M. D. Naish, who maintained the high standard of clarity of speech set by the other knights.

The tempters fulfilled their function admirably. P. J. Callaghan, as the first, who tempts Becket with the gay, irresponsible life he once led, was suitably hearty and self assured, and J. R. Windsor's portrayal of the sly, subtle court politician, tempting him with temporal power as Chancellor, was also good. D. M. Tucker presented the third temptation, of undermining royal power, in an insidious and ingratiating manner combined with the forcefulness of the country lord. The part of the last

tempter was given to J. C. Malpass. He spoke with vigour and the sight of this slight figure in black and red, hovering round the majestic Archbishop made the fiendish nature of his temptation of spiritual pride very apparent. All the tempters managed to maintain the delicate balance between their status as real characters and their status as projections of Becket's own personality.

The scenery was exceptionally good. The Cathedral set gave a surprising impression of depth and it was difficult to realise how small the stage really is. Those responsible for the costumes had performed their task of making bricks without straw with their usual amazing efficiency. Particularly impressive were the Archbishop's magnificent robes and the black garb of the fourth tempter. A high standard was shown in the making of properties, such as Becket's cross and the Priest's banners, borne with solemn dignity by three boys from Form One. Plain song introits and a final "Te Deum," played in the background, had been recorded by a small group of boys under Mr. Tooze's direction and a breathtakingly beautiful "Dies Irae" was played as an interlude.

This was a memorable production. Both in small details and in larger general effects, the results of much painstaking work, on the part of both the producer, Mr. Sells, and the actors, could be seen. Small touches, such as the raising of the Archbishop's fallen cross after the departure of the knights, added greatly to the impact of the production. Eliot's beautiful choric effects were beautifully executed; the passage spoken by the tempters, priests and chorus before Becket's long soliloquy was particularly impressive in this way. The play was satisfying and moving in its entirety and it must be counted as one of the most successful and adventurous productions that we have seen at Rendcomb.

RUGGER REPORT.

The School First XV enjoyed a successful season, winning all their matches and scoring an average of almost twenty points per game. The fact that there was a small leaving-group last year meant that the framework of the team was apparent at the start of the season and also assisted in producing the excellent spirit which marked the side.

The opening to the season was marred by the prolonged drought; our own field was unusable. However we were fortunate in that Mr. Worster, of Post Office Farm, kindly allowed us the use of one of his river meadows for practice purposes. For this help we were indeed grateful.

Oct. 24th. —1st XV v. Dean Close 2nd XV. Home. Won 11-8.

Both sides were clearly short of practice owing to hard grounds, and within the first five minutes there were three scores from defensive errors, N. J. Price intercepting and running 75 yards for the first try. Rendcomb held this 6-3 lead until halftime, always appearing slightly the better side. The second half brought another score from each team and at the finish Rendcomb were ahead by a deserved three points.

Oct. 31. —1st XV v. Marlborough College 3rd XV. Away. Won 13-11.

Voluntary circuit training and some positional changes seemed to suggest that Rendcomb took the field a fitter and stronger side; and they needed to be. This match produced some fast, hard and lively rugby; with the lead changing hands several times it never lacked excitement. Difficult though it is to mention one individual when a whole side has played particularly well, reference must be made to fine place kicking by R. A. Cockrell, two of his three goals being kicked from the touchline.

Nov. 21. —1st XV v. Cheltenham College 3rd XV. Home.

Won 26-3.

The game was played at a good pace and the first half was fairly even with Rendcomb being 6-0 up at half-time. In the second half Rendcomb asserted their superiority and produced some attractive rugby to run up a further twenty points.

Nov. 25. —1st XV v. Marling G. S. 2nd XV. Away. Won 8-0.

This was a rather uninspiring and unsatisfactory game played under very muddy and difficult conditions. Rendcomb never really settled down and very little constructive play was seen.

Nov. 28. —1st XV v. Kingham Hill 1st XV. Away. Won 29-0.

Rendcomb held the advantage outside the scrum and their backs always looked dangerous when they had the ball. Tries

came at regular intervals and R. A. Cockrell scored the only drop goal of the season.

The Team:

Full-back J. M. Webb: A good positioned player with a very safe pair of hands. Although young and inexperienced for the position, he served the side well and was helped considerably by the effective defence of the three-quarter line, open side wing and number eight.

Wings Three-quarters. —D. M. Tucker: A hard straight runner and very effective tackler. S. D. Hicks: Definitely a trier who has improved his game considerably. N. J. Price: A player of promise, but as yet with insufficient confidence.

Centres. —M. van den Driessche: The mainspring of the attack. An elusive runner with a good defence. G. J. Taylor: An effective defensive player. P. K. Dale: Played in the last match showing definite signs of promise; he has a good idea of when to part with the ball.

Half-backs. —R. A. Cockrell: A player who has improved a great deal and developed into a good outside-half. He has a very deceptive dummy pass. The side's place kicker. H. E. Gough: Made a success of his move to scrum-half. A good coverer.

Front Row Forwards. —M. Whittering: A solid player with an effective tackle. P. G. S. Airey: The side's captain and line out expert. A hard worker and tireless coverer, his efforts have been rewarded by his side's success. T. L. H. Benbow: Hooker for most of the season. A good player in the loose, he guarded the front of the line very effectively. R. P. S. Harrison: Also hooked most effectively, but he was not always so successful in the loose.

Second Row Forwards. —D. R. Poole: A solid lock forward and tireless worker. M. D. Naish: Very noticeable for some excellent breakaways from line-out and loose.

Back Row Forwards. —S. C. Airey: Blind side wing forward and a hard worker, very effective in covering round the scrum. J. B. Gooch: Improved considerably with his move to number eight. A fast coverer with a hard tackle. R. F. Stebbing: He has made a great success of his move to open side wing forward. His marauding and spoiling of opposition back play was invaluable to the side's success. An extremely effective tackler and a strong runner.

THE 1959 DROUGHT.

The summer term and holiday of 1959 will long be remembered for day after day of sunshine. Curiously enough, during July there was no sign of any serious falling off in our water supply and such decrease as then occurred was no more than those in charge would have expected in any dry summer. During the past 30 years there have been occasions when we have had to be careful with water for the first fortnight or three weeks of the Christmas term. The interesting point is that in July 1959 there was no indication that this would later be necessary.

The College water is obtained from two sources. The bulk of what we use comes from our own upper and lower systems of springs at Southmoor. Our auxiliary supply is pumped to us from the Greenmeadow supply in Kennel Bottom. Prior to 1913, when the first sale took place, both these supplies belonged to the Rendcomb Estate, the Greenmeadow source supplying a number of farms and parts of the parishes of Calmsden and Chedworth. Since the final sale of the remainder of the Estate in 1918 (when Mr. Noel Wills bought Rendcomb to found the College) Greenmeadow water has had a number of owners, but for many years has been controlled by the firms who have owned the lime kiln at Fosse Cross.

The Southmoor springs serve two reservoirs, one in the Park and one in the south-western corner of the Wilderness. From these the water passes by a series of overflows and supplies the College, Old Rectory, Rectory, Stable Block, Conigre House, the Village Pump and Estate Garden. Unless the water level in the reservoirs is kept at sufficient height, the overflows do not come into action. In normal times we draw on the auxiliary supply as required.

A week before term was due to start in September, the Headmaster was informed that for the first time in living memory (i. e. about 90 years) Greenmeadow had practically dried up and it would be impossible for us to have any further water. This created an immediate crisis because we have always drawn more water from Greenmeadow in July, September and early October than at other periods of the year. Measuring our resources over the next two or three days showed that the return of the whole school would quickly so lower the levels in the reservoir that the rest of the parish would get no water. It was therefore

decided to have back only the senior part of the school, to ration everyone to the bare minimum and to see how the situation developed. At the end of ten days of term it became clear that things would become worse, not least because there was no sign at all of the longed-for break in the weather.

Although the River Churn was fairly low, it seemed to be holding its level. The public analyst was consulted and ruled that the water would be usable if chlorinated. It was therefore decided to pump from the river into the 9,000 gallon rainwater storage tank under the back lawn—but first this had to be emptied and cleansed by contractors from Oxford. The idea was that chlorinated river water could be pumped out of this tank by the hand pump connected to it and which stands in the angle of the building opposite the back of the workshop and above the slope down to the central heating boilers.

There then ensued a long, anxious and frustrating hunt for a pump and piping suitable for raising the river water upwards of 300ft. to the tank. Many avenues were explored (including the Fire Service) only to find that all pumps were already out on hire and that there was a serious shortage of piping due to the huge purchases made on account of the drought. It may perhaps be as well to remind our readers at this stage that in the 40 years since the College opened, we had never previously been cut off from Greenmeadow. In the end Messrs. Godwins, of Quenington, undertook completely to rebuild for us an old second-hand pump of theirs. If they had not done so, it is difficult to see what would have happened for at that time new pumps of suitable calibre were not to be purchased. In the end we also acquired—but had to buy—the necessary steel piping, high pressure polythene pipe proving unobtainable. A gang consisting of Mr. Telling and the outdoor staff, Mr. Fell, Mr. Sells and some senior boys—with the help of Mr. Waldron, the plumber from Messrs. Toveys—rigged up the pump, fenced it and jointed the piping, and well within the day water was flowing steadily into the tank under the back lawn. As soon as it became clear that this supply could be maintained, the remainder of the College was recalled, though we had to continue with the most stringent rationing.

Term started for Forms VI and V on September 18th, and Forms I, II, III and IV returned a month later, on October 17th.

As the weather still showed no sign of breaking, a further long search was made for a second pump, at last successfully

through the kindness of Mr. H. E. Hill, of Purton. The idea was that if the drought continued, we would pump the water from the back lawn tank into the Park and Wilderness reservoirs and so ensure the efficient working of the overflows to the rest of the village. Fortunately the rain came before it was necessary to put this scheme into action, but it was December 7th before all rationing could be withdrawn.

Various points must go on record—above all Mr. W. Telling's effort, from early morning until late at night, to keep things going. The amount of time he put in was prodigious. We are indeed grateful. The way in which consumption was kept down, and the general co-operation and cheerfulness under really very uncomfortable conditions will for long be a warm memory for all who were in Rendcomb during the period.

With the exception of the month May 2nd to June 2nd, 1920 (which gave us Commemoration Day) when the opening of the College was delayed because the plumbing was incomplete, this was the first occasion in 40 years on which the College has opened late or closed early.

PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY.

The pipes for the public water supply have at last been laid in Rendcomb and it is hoped that the water will arrive before the end of April 1960—dependent upon the delivery and installation of the booster pumps at Perrotts Brook and the completion of the reservoir at Rapsgate. The way is now clear for the gradual modernisation of the cottages in the village. Arrangements about water supply have not yet been completed but it is at least clear that a repetition of the 1959 situation is most unlikely and probably impossible.

THE RENDCOMB ESTATE.

There has been a Rendcomb Estate at any rate since the days of William I, and over the centuries it was owned by a number of distinguished families. At the time of its purchase about 1865 by Sir Francis Goldschmidt the extent was between 8,000 and 9,000 acres, bounded by the Colesbourne Estate on

the one side and the Bathurst property at North Cerney on the other. The estate included the village of Woodmancote, with considerable land beyond it; and also incorporated Marsden, Calmsden and parts of Chedworth parish. After the tragic death of Sir Francis, the property was sold to Mr. and Mrs. Taylor, who ultimately left it to a nephew of hers. He decided to sell it and the major break-up of an estate that had been in existence for over 700 years took place in 1913, just before the First World War. In 1918 there was a further sale, at which our Founder, Mr. Noel Hamilton Wills, bought the mansion, the village, the Park, Conigre Wood and the Kennel Bottom Banks; in all about 500 acres.

From 1920 to 1959 the Governors were given the use of the College and the Stable Block on the most generous terms first by the Founder and then by Mrs. Huntly Sinclair; the property was let for one peppercorn per annum. This has been only one of the ways in which the generosity of the Founder and his family has continued over the 40 years since the school was founded.

It may here be of interest to say that the Old Rectory (Rendcomb House) was bought by the Governors out of income in 1932 and shortly afterwards, also out of income, they built Conigre House as a residence for the senior master. The cottages used by our outdoor staff, together with the Mill House and Kennel Bottom Cottage used by the teaching staff, were rented on a normal basis from the Rendcomb Estate (hereafter referred to as the Misarden Estate, as Rendcomb was controlled from the Founder's own estate office at Misarden). The Games Field was also rented but from 1920 onwards we enjoyed the privilege of using the Lake, the Park and the Wilderness and of taking fallen timber and dead trees for firewood.

In 1956 the idea was mooted that the time had come when it might be a good thing for the Governors to acquire through the College Trustees, such parts of the Estate as had hitherto been used and also such parts as might seem likely to be required in the foreseeable future. The consultations were inevitably protracted—they could not be otherwise where so many people and bodies were involved—Mrs. Sinclair's Trustees, the College Trustees, the Governors, the solicitors to all of these and the many individual people whose advice or opinion was necessary. The laws of trusteeship in this country are well designed to guard the interests of beneficiaries. In a case such

as the division of the Rendcomb Estate deliberate movement was both essential and inevitable; boundaries had to be carefully considered, there were problems of water rights, rights of way, timber, the river and many other matters that needed thought before an area that had been a unit for so long could be divided into parts.

In August 1959 the Governors finally purchased what has now become the College Estate. For those who have known the College from the early years, feelings are inevitably mixed. The new arrangement is obviously a stimulating idea, it is exciting that the Governors and the College will be, from now onwards, working on our own property. Yet we look back with much affection and gratitude upon the years during which so much has been done for us; and also look into the future with quiet confidence because those concerned would scarcely have carried out this important change unless they had confidence in us. We are indeed aware of all the help that has been provided by our governing “parents.”

The College Estate lies mainly to the left of the road as you go up through the village. Starting from Dr. Gladstone’s house, our property begins with the Mill House, includes the cottages above it and continues to the top of the hill. The Old Rectory property was already ours and we now include the Estate Garden and the two pairs of 19th century cottages at the end of the village. We have not purchased either the smithy or the two small stone cottages next to it. The boundary then continues up the village road to the top of the field immediately north of the Estate garden (the College war-time and post-war “vegetable field”); along the hedge of this and along the top of the Old Rectory orchard until it meets the wall of the Wilderness and Park. The wall is the boundary from there, parallel with the Shawswell road, to the end of the field beyond the Games Field. From there the boundary cuts down to the river (including the Wilderness, the Park, Park Cottage, and the Lake), so to the Cheltenham drive and to the Cheltenham lodge. The boundary then runs from the lodge along the Cheltenham road to Dr. Gladstone’s property, i.e. all the ground below the College, the Cheltenham drive, Cowleaze, the half-mile of river between the Mill House and the lake, and the meadow between the river and the Cheltenham road are all part of the College estate.

With the land on the right-hand side of the village road we have no concern, but we now own the Stable Block, Conigre

House as heretofore and four pairs of the 19th century cottages on the right-hand side of the village. In the course of time both Kennel Bottom Cottage and the Cirencester Lodge will be handed back to the Misarden Estate. The College has been granted rights of way over the Slippery Path and between the middle Wilderness gate and the Shawswell road. The boundary at the back of the Stable Block is difficult to describe but for practical purposes it runs from the village street round the Stable Block and down the short length of drive from the south gate to the top of the Slippery Path. In all the Estate is about 220 acres.

OLD BOYS' NOTES.

The following Old Boys visited the College during the Michaelmas Term or the Christmas Holiday: J. A. Richards, J. R. Gosden, R. K. G. Bick, J. D. Painter, W. Powys Thomas.

We congratulate:

F. H. Jones on being appointed Chief Inspector of Schools for the Federation of Malaya.

P. W. Sumsion on his appointment as Second Art Master at Eton.

J. Bolton King on winning the R. A. F. Flying Command Advanced Swimming Competition.

M. D. Rayner on his marriage to Miss Jacqueline Mary Hadcock in September last. He is now at Cambridge reading for his Ph. D.

Geoffrey Bye and his wife on the birth of a daughter in December. Keith Statham and his wife on the birth of a son.

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Our warm thanks go to Martin R. F. Butlin for his generous gift to the library, including a copy of his own recent book, "A Catalogue of Blake Prints."

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The London Dinner and 1959 Annual General Meeting of the Old Rendcombian Society were held on November 21st

at The Cock, Fleet Street. With some protest, D. Dakin agreed to serve as President and A. C. Magor as Secretary, each for another year. M. J. Bedwell remains as Chairman and C. J. Brisley as Vice-Chairman. J. E. Allen was re-elected Auditor, and J. C. Maslin agreed to continue as Registrar. It was felt that no useful purpose would be served by the publishing of a further O. R. Register. Both Dakin and Magor felt strongly that there should be a change of the chief officers in 1960. Magor was given a very warm vote of thanks for the first-rate manner in which he has carried out the secretarial work during the past five years. This was endorsed by the Headmaster on behalf of the College. The company stood in silence in memory of Mr. J. H. Simpson and after the dinner Mr. C. H. C. Osborne made a warm and interesting tribute to his work. Mr. A. C. Collingridge, who attended the dinner as a member of the Memorial Fund Committee and an old friend of Mr. Simpson's, also paid his tribute to J. H. S.

The following were present: J. F. Alder, M. J. Bedwell, R. G. Betterton, W. S. Boardman, C. J. Brisley, B. J. Brooks, A. P. Browning, C. W. Clarke, C. E. Coles, D. Dakin, J. A. Davis, P. M. Gerrard, D. Knight, D. W. Lee-Browne, J. C. Maslin, A. C. Magor, E. J. Miller, G. T. Morgan, J. H. S. Muirhead, J. B. O'Brien, C. H. C. Osborne, J. D. Painter, H. J. Phillips, F. C. Raggatt, A. R. Tenty, D. C. Terrett, M. C. Thompson, R. T. Wood.

The West of England dinner was held at the Wellington Hotel, Gloucester, on Saturday, October 10th, 1959. Austen Magor's arrangements were admirable and the evening was a great success. It was a particular pleasure to see Mr. and Mrs. Osborne (staff 1920-25), who had come all the way from Oxford for the occasion, and also to see Miss Ethel Davies, full of life and fun, who was Matron at the College in the very early years.

The following were present: Mr. and Mrs. J. F. Alder, Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Allen, A. E. A. Brain, C. J. Brisley, Mr. and Mrs. R. F. Butler, Miss E. M. Davies, A. E. Godsell, P. A. T. Griffiths, Mr. and Mrs. M. C. Harries, C. W. Honeybone, Mr. and Mrs. F. D. Humphris, Mr. and Mrs. P. S. Jackson, R. H. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. James, Mr. and Mrs. D. W. Lee-Browne, A. C. Magor, J. C. Maslin, Mr. and Mrs. C. H. C. Osborne, Mr. and Mrs. H. H. Selby, Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Smallwood, P. J. L. Swaite, R. M. Sumsion, J. R. Wheeler.

NATURAL HISTORY SUPPLEMENT.

March 1960.

Miscellaneous Notes, September 1st to December 31st, 1959.

Drought

Signs of a dry summer were evident long before the end of the Summer Term (*vide* Vol. 11, No. 10, p. 19) and a severe drought had developed by early September.

Many plants were showing marked wilting by the middle of the month and some were dead at least in their overground parts. This was true even of some woodland species of which Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*) was a conspicuous example. In early September the local vegetation seemed to be less severely parched than during the drought of 1955, but later in the month the situation deteriorated rapidly and deep-rooted plants like Dock (*Rumex*) and Dandelion (*Taraxacum*) once again began to stand out as green spots against a scorched background of yellow and brown.

Even woody plants were not unaffected. One Mountain Ash (*Sorbus aucuparia*) near the College appeared to be dead and another nearly so, and Maples (*Acer campestris*) in the drier hedgerows were showing marked ill-effects.

A trace of rain fell in the fourth week of September, but dry weather supervened once more until light rain fell on October 10th. Even then the drought did not end suddenly and it was not until December that heavier precipitation eventually brought the river and the deep wells back to their normal winter condition.

Birds

Buzzards have been seen much less frequently this year, but a few are still present in this part of the Cotswolds. One was seen on September 15th to make a long stoop at a Wood Pigeon in a tree in the Old Park. There is now a good deal of evidence to show that Buzzards are killing more of these birds than in pre-myxomatosis days, when rabbits formed the staple diet.

A few Crossbills were seen again round Rendcomb in the early part of the autumn. Redwings were first noted on October 10th, Fieldfares the next day, and from one to five Siskins inhabited the river alder-trees from mid-October to early December. The only report of Brambling is of a single bird in the wood between the Cirencester drive and Potridge Lane on December 2nd. Redpolls, not common on the Cotswolds, were present in small numbers near the College Laboratories in late autumn, the largest number being a flock of twenty-five on December 3rd. Two Hawfinches were watched close to the College on October 10th and two Tree Sparrows on November 16th.

C. M. Swaine, B. Sc.