

Rendcomb College Magazine

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SCHOOL NOTES.

Lent Term, 1945.

The first fortnight of term was marked by a spell of severe weather. We came back on Wednesday, January 17th, with the weather reasonably mild, but by the week-end it had turned extremely cold and during the following days snow fell on several occasions. Unfortunately we were extremely short of fuel in spite of all our efforts to obtain it, and the central heating system could not be kept in full operation. Even though we kept all doors and windows closed, the building became much too cold for comfort. Eventually we decided to abandon the first period of morning school and to devote the time to collecting and sawing wood, and lighting fires. The effectiveness of this action was perhaps questionable—wood fires have comparatively little effect in such large rooms—yet we could have taken no better step; for with that perversity so peculiar to English weather, the cold spell thereupon departed.

The weather provided its compensations, of course. It gave us one of our infrequent opportunities for indulging in winter sports; the whole school seemed to go tobogganing, while a few enthusiasts tried their hand at skiing. Nor was the enjoyment confined to the young and active, for the country was a most beautiful sight on any of the clear frosty days which followed the snow. Yet it must be admitted that we were all extremely thankful when the thaw took place.

* * * *

A short play, "Dear Little Belinda," was produced on Saturday, February 17th. An account will be found in the Acting Report.

On Sunday, February 25th, Forms I, II and III gave an exhibition of their own work in Big School. A report will be found elsewhere.

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Owing to infection we were unable to attend Church for a few weeks in mid-term, and during that time we held our own Sunday morning services in Hall.

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On Friday evening, March 2nd, Mr. H. McGregor Wood, Regional Architect of the Ministry of Health, gave a talk in Big School on "My Job and Post-War Housing." Speaking in an informal manner, he dealt with housing in general, with the very bad conditions prevailing, and the tremendous extent of the problem. After some remarks on the "Portal" type of temporary house he concluded his lecture with a number of lantern slides, which by showing both good and bad types of houses, emphasised the importance of design and form in building.

The Staff Discussion Group continued to meet during the term. The programme was:

Feb. 13. Mr. W. I. Croome—"How the Church looks after its ancient buildings."

Mar. 2. Mr. H. McGregor Wood met the group after giving his lecture to the school.

Mar. 13. Mr. Trevor Gegg. —"Elementary School Education."

* * * *

We welcome Mr. E. G. Ewens who joined the Staff at the beginning of term to take temporary charge of English.

Miss Sumner, who had been with us as Matron since 1941, left at the end of term to marry Mr. D. B. Frowd. We wish them both every happiness.

* * * *

D. J. Harris entered College this term, and at the end of term N. P. Elson left, taking with him our very good wishes.

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HONOUR.

D. M. Grant. Scholarship in Natural Science, Emmanuel College, Cambridge.

THE GENERAL MEETING. Summer Term, 1945.

Chairman—R. Brain.

Council—D. H. Hill, D. M. Grant, B. W. Plenderleith, J. J. North, R. T. Wood, R. E. Hayward.

Meeting Selection Committee—D. H. Hill, B. W. Plenderleith, J. J. North, R. T. Wood, R. Brain.

House Committee—C. M. Carus-Wilson, P. W. Sumsion, R. Margetts, J. H. Shield, J. A. Barclay.

Games Committee—B. W. Plenderleith, M. R. F. Butlin, R. I. G. Hale, C. C. Richardson, N. M. Wood (Tennis Captain).

Senior Shopman—G. S. Davis.

Shopmen—T. R. Morris, R. J. Kendal.

Banker—J. C. Waterton.

Breakages Man—W. S. Monroe.

Secretary—R. M. Lewis.

Auditors—K. J. Hanney, M. B. Shephard.

Apprentice Auditors—L. V. Crawford, R. G. K. Bick,

Finance Committee—R. G. K. Bick, K. M. Shephard, G. J. Chagrin.

Entertainments Committee—R. W. Smith, G. H. Bye, G. J. Chagrin, D. Henshaw, J. D. M. Smith.

Cycle Men—C. B. Lane, H. A. G. Hartley, J. M. Trickett.

Meeting Almoner—J. M. Henshaw.

Paperman—J. D. Menzies.

Amplifier Committee—K. J. Hanney, J. D. Draper, K. E. Banks, T. T. Walters, P. G. Cockell.

Magazine Committee—N. M. Wood, D. G. Knight, G. S. Davis.

Drying Room Committee—C. B. Lane, P. W. Sumsion, J. D. M. Smith.

Record Committee—D. H. Hill, D. M. Grant, J. D. Draper, D. G. Knight, J. W. Sumsion.

Salvage Organiser—M. C. Harries.

Salvage Committee—R. Margetts, M. D. Robinson.

Mowing Man—W. S. Monroe.

Assistant Mowing Man—T. T. Walters.

Public Work Man—R. E. Hayward.

Apprentice Banker—R. J. Kendal.

Games Secretaries—Cricket, G. S. Davis; Football, R. I. G. Hale; Hockey, G. H. Bye.

Games Wardens—Cricket, G. H. Bye, I. S. Menzies; Tennis, M. Butler, C. M. Carus-Wilson; Hockey, J. A. Barclay; Football, J. D. M. Smith; Indoor, E. Davis.

Groundsmen—Cricket, J. W. Sumsion; Tennis, D. J. Payne; Golf, E. A. Jones.

OLD BOYS' NOTES.

Roll of Honour.

We regret to record that Trevor D. Wright was killed in action on the Continent in March, 1945. He was at Rendcomb from November, 1933, to August, 1935, and was awarded an Open Scholarship in Art to Reading University, where the professor had a high opinion of his work. He remained at Reading until his return to South Africa, where he volunteered for the South African Armoured Regiment. He went through the North African campaign, was awarded the Military Medal and was twice wounded. Separated from his own Regiment, he volunteered for the Royal Marine Commandos in which he was later given a Commission. He broke a kneecap during training and had only been back on active service for a few weeks when he was killed.

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Distinctions.

Sgt. P. J. Dyke, R. A., has been awarded the Croix de Guerre (with palms) for gallantry in action in France.

V. D. Page has been awarded a Bar to his D. F. C. and has been promoted to Squadron Leader.

P. G. Forrest obtained a First-Class in the Final B. Sc. (Engineering) Examination of London University. He read Mechanical Engineering and has since been appointed to a post at the National Physical Laboratory.

S. A. Trayhurn is a Lieutenant in the Gloucester Regiment.

P. A. Cutts has been awarded a Commission in the R. E. M. E. He was recently married to Miss Nancy Prior.

* * * *

The following Old Rendcombians have visited the College during the term: R. L. Short, J. H. Muirhead, J. C. Beck, D. C. Uzzell, C. E. H. Tuck, D. A. C. Smith, F. H. Dutton, S. A. Trayhurn.

Rumour appears to have it that domestic and other reasons at the College make the presence of Old Boys difficult or even unwelcome at the present time. We wish to say, most emphatically, that this is not true, and that O. Rs. are always welcome whether it be for a flying visit or for one or two nights. It is very seldom indeed since the war began, that an O. R. has had to be refused—and then only in circumstances of special difficulty. The steady stream of Old Boys who do come down is sufficient evidence that the rumour is unfounded, but we are anxious that it should not receive further belief. Nearly half the total number of O. Rs. have visited the school since September 1940, and many have made two or more visits. The majority of the others are married and naturally wish to spend their leave at home—or have been abroad for most of the war.

A letter, telephone call or wire beforehand is a help to the school, but it is hoped that, during term, any Old Boy who is unable previously to communicate with Mr. or Mrs. Lee-Browne (or his Secretary) will not stay away for that reason.

BIOLOGICAL NOTES: EASTER TERM.

From observations made during the previous term it was assumed that there were probably three mated pairs of badgers in Conigre wood, and that all three would probably have cubs during February or March if it is the case that they breed each year. Our main object, therefore, was to find out as much as possible of their behaviour round about the time of birth of the cubs, and later when the cubs were still being kept below ground. As the cubs are not brought above ground until they are about eight weeks old, the only way was to make a careful diary of behaviour, and as soon as the cubs were seen, to work back eight weeks to see what happened then. In this way we were able to show that the boar is also present in the same set before and after the birth of the cubs and is not banished from home, as some writers have suggested.

During February and March the behaviour of the adults was markedly quiet; they were extremely wary, and the sow especially was supersensitive to sounds and scents. Although both parents left the cubs, the sow was not away from them for long intervals. No cubs were above ground by the end of the term, the first young being observed on April 12th.

One of their favourite drinking places was discovered during the term by putting down smooth wet sand at the suspected place. The next morning badger footprints showed up clearly.

The starlings that had used the laurels as a roosting place during the winter left us during the first week of March. A week or so earlier the numbers had fallen off somewhat, and this coincided with the taking up of nesting territories in the neighbourhood. It is probable that those that left during the early days of March were continental, and migrated back to Europe.

The following first dates for flowering suggest that this spring started rather earlier than last year, but the cold spell evened things up later. . . .

Dog's Mercury, Jan. 6th.
Snowdrop, Jan. 18th.
Winter Aconite, Jan. 18th.
Hazel (female flowers) Feb. 10th.
Lesser Celandine, Feb. 26th.
Wood Anemone, Mar. 8th.
Sallow, Mar. 9th.
Marsh Marigold, Mar. 18th.
Toothwort, Mar. 25th.

The first hibernating butterflies were seen on Feb. 20th, when Brimstones and small Tortoise-shells were noted flying in the warm sunshine.

EXHIBITION.

On Sunday, February 25th, we were presented with an exhibition of arts and craft given by Forms I, II and III in their own classroom. As one entered the room one was struck by the pleasing lay-out and arrangement of the various models and drawings. Such an aspect of any exhibition naturally adds to the enjoyment, to the enjoyment in this case of carefully scrutinizing a fragile model of some ship or aeroplane, or of examining under a microscope a slide of some minute part of a plant or animal. It would be out of place to mention every exhibit, and it is enough to say that the exhibition was very interesting and varied. Perhaps, however, we may be permitted to remark upon D. R. Page's model of a mediaeval village, with its Lilliputian thatched cottages and tree and its cleverly devised water-mill standing on a little stream. But no less worthy of mention were all the other exhibits of those whose work and time made this display.

May we here congratulate all concerned in any way with this admirable exhibition. At a time when the output of our workshop is seriously restricted owing to war-time controls on material, such efforts as these are emphatically worth while

Puppet Plays

Wednesday, March 7th, at 8 pm.
Thursday, March 8th, at 5:30 pm.

“THE MONKEY HOUSE.”

Florrie R. K. G. Bick
Herbert F. D. Humphris
Clarence R. W. Smith
Monkey M. W. Brain
Scene—The Monkey House at the Zoo.

“LI SING.”

Li Sing R. J. Driessche, P. Topps
Madam Sing P. J. Ryman
Ling Fo (a creditor) B. G. H. Levers
Wong (a creditor) K. M. Shepheard
Hung Chow (bandit chief) P. G. Cockell
Robber I B. G. H. Levers
Robber II R. J. Driessche
Robber III K. M. Shepheard

Scene—An Impoverished Farm House in China.

Another Chinese play—this time acted by the Junior Players. There was the usual flowery speech and elaborate politeness between the characters, but somehow this was not as amusing as it has been previously. In fact this type of play is beginning to pall, and we suggest that a change might be advisable if interest is to be maintained. Of course we realise the difficulties involved in getting a play suitable for the puppet stage, but there must be others just as suitable for the dolls to act.

The other play was of a different nature and was a welcome change. It dealt with two lovers who quarrelled in the monkey house at the zoo; and to make up the necessary eternal triangle there was Clarence, a dandified tailor's assistant who was the cause of all the trouble. We must congratulate M. Brain on his clever handling of the monkey; especially when he made it swallow a piece of paper—a tricky manoeuvre which was very effective.

ACTING.

“Dear Little Belinda” or “The Devil Needs Blood.”

CAST.

King Rubicondo M. E. Knight
Belinda (his daughter) J. D. Painter
Singaling (a magician) P. G. Cockell
Asaba (a spirit) P. J. Ryman
Jerry (a newspaper reporter) K. M. Shepheard
P. C. Mopeydope (a policeman) M. J. Morgan
Stage Effects—J. Gilchrist, H. Hartley, T. T. Walters

This was a short and amusing sketch, circling around a king with a passion for chocolate creams, and a villainous minister whose duty was to satiate his master's craving. To this end he wished to invoke the devil's aid; but for this he needed the blood of a newspaper reporter and a policeman. King and minister together sought these necessaries, and having caught them, bound them and prepared to shed their blood. But dear Belinda came in, and light-heartedly pushed the two villains into their own magic circle, from which there was no escape; at the same time setting the unfortunate victims free. The play ended happily with the arrest of the king and minister, and the promotion of the reporter and policeman, plus much applause for Belinda.

We felt that the last two scenes were too short, but otherwise there was little to criticise. The acting was good and showed considerable promise; most of the faults usually noticeable in young actors were absent. Let us have more of these light-hearted and amusing sketches.

A. T. C.

Throughout the Easter Term the section continued its twice weekly parades, and also took part in a Church Parade to Water-moor Parish Church. Parades at Headquarters were not attended as often as in the previous term due to alterations in the training programme at Cirencester.

Four cadets were promoted to Cadets 1st Class, whilst others completed several of the tests required for this standard. During the term the section visited aerodromes and everyone achieved at least one flight, the luckier cadets logging several hours.

One visit was paid to the local aerodrome, where cadets attended a lecture and later were taken to the dispersal points where the intricacies of the Typhoon fighter were explained to them by pilots who had flown this aircraft in action.

The usual instruction in Signals, Navigation and Aircraft Recognition was continued throughout the term and several cadets made arrangements to attend aerodromes and gliding camps during the holidays.

HOCKEY.

Although play was held up by bad weather for the first three weeks of term and the fuel shortage brought more Public Work than is usual in the Easter Term, the spirit and enthusiasm of the school did not suffer. There was a marked keenness and interest in all the games.

The first game was more uniform in its standard of hockey than in 1944, but it never achieved the necessary finish. This lack of finish was also found in the first XI where more care and exactness in placing passes, stopping balls and in other small but vital points would have helped against good opponents. The roughness of our ground provides little encouragement in this respect, but the plain fact remains that, because of the field, more rather than less care is needed.

The first XI played six matches of which four took place in the last fortnight of term. This is undesirable, but in the circumstances was inevitable.

The composition of the team varied throughout the term. Hill and Plenderleith again played on the wings, Hill, on the left, being a great asset. His speed and ability to take the ball while on the run made him the strongest member of the forward line. Plenderleith, after missing a few matches because of illness, settled in to play several good games. The other three forwards, Wood N., Grant and Richardson, were new to the XI. They soon began to play well together, but later in the season were unfortunately broken up by the absence of Grant, whose place at centre forward was taken by Lane.

Banks, at left half, played well and steadily, but he has a tendency to stay back too far. Groves was a promising and useful right half. North, at right back, benefited from his experience last year and developed into a first-rate player. His sureness in tackles and clearances often saved us from severe defeat. Hale started the season at left back and although fast and having a good eye he was somewhat erratic especially in tackling. Later he went into goal with promising success. Davis G. took Hale's place and has the making of a good back. Harries and Hayward both played in goal. The former is as yet rather too wild and needs more confidence in himself; the latter played several good games but would be better with more dash. Lewis took the right wing in Plenderleith's absence and is a promising player.

There was considerable talent in the middle school, and Smith J. D., Bye and Lane, who were reserves for the first XI, are proving a capable forward trio. Hartley showed signs of becoming a good goalkeeper.

There was much disappointment among the members of Mr. Browne's XI on the cancellation of their match against Cirencester Grammar School Girls and we hope another match will be arranged for next season.

R. Brain did a good job as captain. He is an experienced player who handled his team without fuss and took a real interest in the second and third games. His own play still demands more restraint and careful positioning. In an even game halves always have the temptation to tackle and lie too far back, instead of playing in mid-field and forward of it, trusting their backs and goalkeeper, while themselves concentrating on intercepting opponents' passes, thrusting forward and giving carefully directed passes to their own forwards. The fault of lying back in Hockey always needs more watching in a Soccer School than it does in one that plays Rugger in the Christmas term. This year the forwards were better in this respect than they have been for some time.

Taken all round the season was a good one and the general standard was maintained or even improved. We can seldom expect to win matches with Cheltenham College, Dean Close or Cheltenham Town, but we can continue to have most enjoyable games with them. The very marked difference between our ground and theirs will nearly always tend to produce a wider disparity of goals scored than would be the case if pitches were more alike.

First XI Results.

- Feb. 17th—South Cerney R. A. F. (Home). Lost 3—2.
- Mar. 3rd—South Cerney R. A. F. (Home). Won 6—5.
- Mar. 15th—Cheltenham College (Away). Lost 4—1.
- Mar. 17th—R. A. F. 27 Group (Home). Won 5—1.
- Mar. 21st—Dean Close (Away). Lost 3—1.
- Mar. 24th—Cheltenham Town (Away). Lost 5—3.

“Average 15” XI.

- Mar. 8th—Dean Close “Av. 15” XI (Away). Lost 4-1

RUNNING.

Senior Lodges.

This race was postponed until the Summer Term.

Junior Lodges (March 22nd).

- 1st. Miles, 17mm. 33secs.
- 2nd. Topps, 17mm. 58secs.
- 3rd. Dutton, 18min. 30secs.

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