

RENDCOMB COLLEGE MAGAZINE

Vol. 7 No. 6

October 1941

Rendcomb College Magazine

VOL. 7. No. 6.

OCTOBER, 1941.

SCHOOL NOTES.

Summer Term, 1941.

In more propitious times this number would doubtless have been a special edition celebrating our coming-of-age. Twenty-one years have elapsed since the foundation of the College, and Founder's Day would in normal circumstances have had all the appropriate festivities of a twenty-first birthday. We should be chronicling in these notes the pageantry and the speeches that rightly belong to such an occasion.

Even as things are we cannot allow the date to pass without calling to mind the fact that we are now a school that has achieved its majority. We are still young, and in the best sense of that word we hope we shall always remain so, but we can now look back and say that we have outgrown the experimental stage. We are aware of our traditions and our heritage. The ideas that inspired our Founder have been put to the test and have proved their worth. Not only have they been shown to be practicable, but they have stood as principles capable of further extension and growth.

Whatever may be the course of Education in this country after the war, it is quite clear that many things which have been tried out here in Rendcomb will take their place in future developments, all helping, as we believe, to shape the more equitable system that must ultimately come into being.

The Easter Vacation had been marked for the most part by grim grey weather, a late Spring that showed little sign of softening into summer.

But when we came back on 2nd May there were signs of an improvement, and the first week of school which found us at work on the potato field gave us our first real glimpse of sun.

The plan of operations had been well thought-out beforehand. The field—it was the one beyond the orchard, above the estate garden—had been divided into strips, and these were taken over by various groups working in two-hour shifts.

Normal academic work was carried on until eleven each morning. (We think this worth mentioning. Some people fondly imagine that schools can afford to waive their usual studies. Our war activities have always been carried on alongside our scholastic work). Then followed four shifts, the last finishing at 9 p. m.

Diggers, fertilisers, planters, rakers, wheelbarrow men all worked to schedule and there was a healthy spirit of rivalry abroad. In all 18 cwts. of seed potatoes were well and truly laid down. And later in the Term weeding and earthing operations were carried out.

* * * *

A feature of the "grow-more-food campaign" was the breaking out into allotments of the ground beside the tennis courts at the House. These were the property of individual boys working together in partnership.

Lettuce, radishes, mustard and cress, spring onions, beet and carrots were the staple crops, and Hall at suppertime frequently afforded a spectacle that reminded one of an agricultural show.

* * * *

The extra hour added on to Summer Time this year was by no means an unmixed blessing. Designed primarily for the city worker its disadvantages to a community, all of whom rise fairly early and of whom many have an early bedtime, were sufficiently apparent. The mornings were unnecessarily chilly while the junior dormitories found it difficult to go to sleep with the sun still high in the heavens. Possibly next year we shall circumvent this by altering our timetable. But it is quite probable, that this particular wartime expedient will not be repeated. It must have met with a mixed reception in many quarters.

We confess that we were startled one evening to see a strange incursion into the Library of what appeared to be a mobile division of motor car seats mounted on sledge- blocks. Was the scene set for some spectacle of the “dodgem” track? Closer inspection removed our alarm. Further experiment convinced us of their comfort. Quite possibly luxury may have been acquired at the expense of purely aesthetic considerations, though a later ‘ model ’ suggests a more decorous compromise. Clearly these Capuan contrivances have come to stay. Of their popularity there is no doubt. Someone deserves full credit for a brain wave.

* * * *

Commemoration Day fell on Friday, 6th June. The weather was good and most people went off on divers expeditions. The few who stayed behind were treated to a flying display by J. D. Sinclair who cleverly revealed his identity. What a pity he did not choose another day.

* * * *

On the evening of the 18th June, without any warning, a large portion of the ceiling of the outdoor porch of the College crashed down on to the asphalt. No one was underneath at the time and the only casualty was Mr. Lee-Browne’s tricar which suffered from shock and various injuries fortunately superficial.

Curiously enough it happened while the stalwarts who deal with this sort of thing were busy coping with an A. R. P. “outbreak of fire” at the stables. They returned begrimed to find a real job of demolition waiting for them. The fall revealed that the whole ceiling was in a dangerous condition. Armed with tin hats and long poles they set about their task with admirable alacrity and by Founder’s Day all was swept and garnished and ready for the safe passage of our guests.

* * * *

An account of Founder’s Day appears elsewhere in this issue. We were sorry to be deprived at the last minute of the presence of Mrs. Noel Wills, and still more at the cause of her enforced absence—a serious bicycle accident, sustained

by her youngest daughter, at Misarden Park. We are glad that after a period of considerable anxiety we received reassuring news that the danger was over, and we look forward to a visit from Mrs., Wills to make up for what was indeed a real grief to us in more than one sense of the word.

* * * *

The Sunday after Founder's Day saw an unusual spectacle on the lake. It was a sultry afternoon. Everyone was longing for a bathe. And for once—and once only—the turbid waters sported a school turned amphibian. Swimming, floundering, mud-larking—call it what you will—it was very refreshing. But it was NOT a precedent. Sadly, though wisely, we had to accept the fact. The remedy, of course, lies in the acquisition of a swimming pool, but that, like many another excellent project, must be relegated to the horizon of war aims—at least for the present.

* * * *

The rationing of jam brought with it the innovation of individual jam-pots, labelled and numbered. It provided its humours. One person is reputed to have consumed his ration at maximum speed so that he might have his jam-pot to keep tadpoles in. Attempts to press into service pots retrieved from the rubbish dump, and in one instance (*horresco referens*) from the churchyard, did not meet with official approval.

* * * *

We had a visit from Mr. and Mrs. Lyward who once again found themselves welcome guests. In his informal and charming way, Mr. Lyward gave us many interesting points of view. A peripatetic philosopher and friend, it was a familiar sight to see him conducting his Socratic conversations strolling up and down the terraces or in the groves towards the Temple.

* * * *

The Rev. Bryn Thomas preached at the morning Service in Rendcomb Church on the 13th July.

A good job of work was done on the 24th July when squads of Seniors, working in shifts, moved 18 tons of anthracite coal down to the cellars.

* * * *

Work has been started on the construction of a Dash Track for sprinting. The surveying was done by our engineers and the job of levelling and tilling goes on under Mr. Morel's supervision. The plan is to provide a level track laid on a firm and well drained foundation and surfaced with cinders. There will be width for three runners abreast and a length of one hundred yards. When completed it should add greatly to the amenities of our athletic pitches.

A really first-class long jump pit has been finished. Concrete sides have been built with wooden fenders and excellent drainage provided, the whole being filled to an adequate depth with fresh sand.

* * * *

A Prefects' Party took place on the 28th July. Utilising two cars and trailers, they drove in to Cirencester and after supper at Viners went to a film at the Regal Cinema.

* * * *

At the London School Certificate Examination held in July the following passed: — M. J. Bedwell, G. H. W. Bodman, F. H. Dutton, L. H. B. Hatherell, D. A. C. Smith, J. G. Taylor, N. C. Stone, J. L. Russell, M. C. Thompson and J. C. Beck. Of these five obtained Matriculation exemption.

* * * *

L. H. Hyett obtained the Intermediate B. Sc. (Engineering) Examination at London University, and M. A. Bullen, G. W. Ivens, H. S. Palmer and C. E. H. Tuck all passed the Cambridge Higher School Certificate Examination.

* * * *

A number of staff changes took place at the end of Term, and before our usual ' Salvete ' to boys leaving we have to put on record our farewells to Mr. Shimmin, Miss Lister, Mrs. Coleman and Miss Colies. They all will be missed. They all are followed by our good wishes.

Term ended on the 31st July. The following boys left to whom we extend our Salvete: —

A. S. C. Smith, J. W. H. Neads, E. J. Powell, J. H. Quick, P. Binks, H. P. Lecky, J. P. Amsden, L. H. B. Hatherell, D. G. Taylor, J. A. Cunnison, and M. J. Tarrant.

THE GENERAL MEETING.

Officers, Michaelmas Term, 1941.

Chairman—A. W. Morris.

Council—L. H. Hyett, M. A. Bullen, G. W. Ivens, M. A. C.

Levett, H. S. Palmer, C. E. H. Tuck, A. W. Morris.

Meeting Selection Committee—L. H. Hyett, M. A. Bullen, M. A. C. Levett, C. E. H. Tuck, A. W. Morris.

House Committee—W. P. Thomas, -P. B. Lane, J. J. North, R. A. S. Primrose, B. W. Plenderleith, D. G. Knight.

Games Committee—L. H. Hyett, H. S. Palmer, A. R. Margetts.

Tennis Groundsmen—P. G. Forrest, P. B. Lane.

Senior Shopman—C. E. H. Tuck.

Shopmen—N. P. Morris, D. H. Hill.

Banker—M. C. Thompson.

Breakages Man—J. C. Beck.

Secretary—M. J. Bedwell.

Auditors—P. G. Forrest, A. F. Harrison.

Apprentice Auditors—R. T. Wood, M. C. Harries.

Finance Committee—A. F. Harrison, B. W. Plenderleith, J. M. Faulks.

Entertainments Committee—M. J. Bedwell, F. J. Sime, R. Brain, J. J. North, D. H. Hill.

End of Term Entertainments Committee—P. A. Cutts, M. A. C. Levett, D. Montgomery, W. P. Thomas, M. J. Bedwell.

Cycle Men—J. L. Russell, E. J. M., Jefferies, J. J. North.

Meeting Almoner—M. C. Harries.

Paperman—J. C. Beck.

Amplifier Committee—M. A. Bullen, P. A. Cutts, F. H. Dutton, D. A. C. Smith, D. M. Grant.

Magazine Committee—D. Montgomery.

Drying Room Committee—S. A. Trayhurn, M. C. Thompson, F. J. Sime.

Jam Man—P. B. Lane.

Games Secretaries—Football: D. A. C. Smith.
Hockey: D. H. Hill.
Cricket: J. C. Beck.

Games Wardens— Football: J. Owen, D. A. C. Smith. Hockey: R. Brain.
Cricket: P. A. T. Griffiths.
Tennis: N. M. Wood.
Indoor: G. S. Davies, N. P. Elson.

OLD BOYS' NOTES.

Summer Term, 1941.

HONOURS.

Distinguished Flying Cross.

The Distinguished Flying Cross has been awarded to Flight-Lieutenant D. D. Haig, R. A. F.

B. J. Brooks, D. F. M., was promoted to the rank of Flight-Sergeant on the 16th December, 1940, and now is a Warrant Officer.

* * * *

J. Eyles is in the Navy. He is training to be a wireless operator.

* * * *

J. H. R. Thornhill is in the Indian R. A. F.

* * * *

M. C. B. Russell has obtained his Final Degree in the School of Engineering (Electrical) at London University, and has been posted to Government Research Work with the R. A. F.

* * * *

M. H. C. Martin has obtained a post in the Imperial Censorship.

R. M. Winter has been working with the Pioneer Corps in Scotland. He is in fine form and hopes to get a transfer to the R. A. F.

* * * *

Walter Burns is a Sergeant Pilot in the R. A. F. He is now back in this country having completed his training in Malaya and Canada.

‡ * * *

G. M. Wilson has been sent to America to continue his training in the Fleet Air Arm.

* * * *

2nd Lieut. P. K. Wright is now working in the Intelligence Corps.

* * * *

Mr. Young has arrived in America to complete his training for the R. A. F.

* * * *

D. G. Morison has been recommended for a Commission and is now at an O. C. T. U.

* * * *

E. R. S. Gillham has been recommended for a Commission in the Navy and is going on a training course in the near future.

* * * *

D. Dakin is in the R. A. F. in Egypt.

* * * *

J. G. Ash is an engineer Petty Officer in the Navy.

* * * *

H. P. Lecky is in the R. A. F.

* * * *

D. Field is in the R. A. F. abroad and P. Field is now a Corporal Radio Instructor in the R. A. F.

D. H. Jones is in the R. A. F.

* * *

E. J. Powell is working with Parnall's Aircraft Co., and J. W. H. Neads with the Bristol Aeroplane Co.

* * *

J. Willis is doing engineering at Bristol University.

* * *

W. Y. Willetts is Senior Biology Master at Dartington Hall School, Totnes, Devon.

* * *

R. L. Short has been elected President of St. Patrick's Hall at Reading University.

* * *

D. G. Gallop is Librarian, and Secretary for Hockey and Cricket at St. Patrick's Hall, Reading.

* * *

A. P. Browning was married on 16th August, 1941, at St. John's, Edinburgh, to Winifred M. Haselwood.

* * *

N. A. Perkins was married on 4th September, 1941 at Melrose, Roxburghshire, to Miss Gertrude S. Davis.

* * *

D. C. Vaughan, who has a Commission in the Royal Engineers, was married in July, and spent part of his honeymoon at the College. E. D. Boulding, who is in the Royal Artillery, was married in September and spent part of his short honeymoon leave at Rendcomb.

* * *

N. B. —We are preparing volumes of the College Magazine for binding and ask the assistance of any Old Rendcombian who may happen to possess copies of the issues of the following numbers: —

Volume I. No. 2. September 1925.

Volume IV. No. 5. September 1933.

These two numbers are required to complete the series, and we would be very grateful if anyone could send either one or both to Mr. Lee-Browne or the Editor.

We are also anxious to complete a list to date of all Old Boys who are serving in the Forces. Any information would be most welcome, as we feel certain there must be quite a number of names that we have not included. We are always indeed glad to receive any news from Old Boys to report in these Notes.

FOUNDER'S DAY.

21st June, 1941.

This was our second Founder's Day to be held in wartime. Last year we met during those anxious days when France was falling. This year we could look back on a great increase in our strength both at home and overseas. We were having a lull. The placid summer weather seemed to hold no menace. The night skies were devoid of the drumming of the bomber. But in the minds of all was the knowledge that the apparent pause could not last for long, and the very next day brought us news of the invasion of Russia.

Sir Russell Kerr, with characteristic courage, had come to us in the middle of a very profound and personal loss.

Mrs. Wills could not be with us for reasons we have already mentioned.

Canon Sewell grows no younger, but is no less indomitable. It was a family gathering rather than a public occasion.

In his review of the school year, Mr. Lee-Browne could report on one of continued progress. As a School we have been singularly fortunate. Evacuation problems have not arisen. Our work has proceeded without major interruption and we have steadily gone ahead in the task of adapting our plan of living to meet the war situation.

When he had finished his general summary, Mr. Lee-Browne embarked on what was quite frankly a controversial topic. What should be the sane policy of the educationalist in days like these? Should "war-conditioning" as such be part of our scheme? Or should we try to preserve a balance

between the normal and the demands inevitably made by the circumstances of the time?

It was a talk that might well have been thrown open to discussion had there been time. Possibly in the future some form of a parents' meeting might form part of our Founder's Day procedure. Certainly, his carefully weighed words had the *effect* of making us think. And that in itself was the major part of his objective.

Sir Russell Kerr spoke in a way that was all the more moving because he could not in the circumstances avoid the stress of these times. It was an appeal for courage and perseverance, for a readiness to face sacrifice, for the necessity of keeping fundamentals steadily in view.

After the assembly tea was served.

Then followed the Puppet Play and the Laboratory and Workshop exhibitions were open to view. These maintained their usual standards and spoke eloquently of the work that had gone to their preparation.

One advantage of the simplified form of Founder's Day is the fact that people have more time for intimate conversation. Quite a number of parents had come long distances and some spent the week-end in the neighbourhood.

The quietness and informality must have been well to their liking.

THE PUPPETEERS.

"Further Futilities" was the title chosen for a continuation of the adventures of Muffen and Peewit, presented as the Founder's Day show. A modest title that marked the fertility of the inventor, for we were faced with quite a new series of exploits. The settings were good. The action took place in the Music Room, the Stable Yard and the interior of the Clock Tower. We liked the miniature amplifier and the double black-board of the first scene. A crazy motor-car provided most of the fun in the second, while the third added a touch of Grand Guignol macabre with its cobwebs and ladders and air of mystery. Archie, a parrot that did the disappearing trick, provided the link that held the slender plot together.

Escaping from the Music Room, he made his next appearance from under the bonnet of the pop-eyed car. Finally he

dropped down from the recesses of the Clock Tower with a captured enemy carrier pigeon in his bill.

The manipulation called for some expert timing and pretty slick handling. The knockabout performance with the car culminating in a balloon tyre being inflated to bursting point provoked the customary hilarity.

If we have any adverse comment to make, it is that the play as a whole was somewhat too long drawn-out. Cuts in the dialogue would have speeded it up, but doubtless there were technical reasons against these.

Muffen and Peewit gave their usual exhibition of good-natured nonsense and treble-tongued simplicity. Clay was by contrast an excellent character study. He both looked and spoke the part admirably. The Matron (shades of Miss Bland) was alternatively oncoming and coy. Gregg — the Housemaster, was sufficiently unlike any of the staff to lend an air of public school impersonality. And Archie clapped his beak and wings with fitting daemonic possession.

It remains to add the cast: —

Muffen	J. J. North.
Peewit	N. P. Elson.
The Matron	N. M. Wood.
Clay	E. J. M. Jefferies.
Septimus Gregg.....	F. J. Sime.
Archie the Parrot	R. S. D. Balter.

CRICKET REPORT, 1941.

In spite of public work we were still able to play cricket twice a week. The pitch, thanks to the efforts of Mr. James, Bill Smith and the Games Committee, was kept in better condition than during the preceding season. Even the outfield was kept down to a reasonable length. Conditions were, in this respect, the best for two or three seasons.

The First XI played five matches, only one of which it won, but, although at first sight these results do not appear

striking, the team showed definite potentialities, and, had it played more as a team it might have achieved victory more often.

As usual, we were again beaten by North Cerney, but in both matches victory seemed within our grasp. In the first match, after losing eight of their batsmen for 22 runs, North Cerney went on to score 78. In the second, with seven wickets down for 16 runs, a last wicket stand brought the total to 78.

The opening batsmen usually gave the team a good start, but Curry must learn to use a greater variety of strokes, and Smith must be less erratic. Margetts was a greatly improved batsman; he would be better still, however, if he could conquer his tendency to swing across the line of flight. The great weakness in our batting was due to the timid, overcautious tail, whose aggregate of runs rarely amounted to more than ten. However well the first five batsmen played, the tail invariably proved our undoing.

Palmer and Trayhurn ably bore the brunt of the bowling. We suffered from lack of change bowlers; nevertheless, even when bowling for only a few overs the available second-rate bowlers usually captured a few wickets. The fielding was below standard, but improved considerably towards the end of term, and Montgomery ably filled the breach as wicket keeper—for at the beginning of term there was no regular player in that place available.

1st XI Results.

Saturday, May 10th, v Swindon College, Away. Lost.

Rendcomb, 66. D. Smith 14, Curry 10.

Swindon, 73 for 8. Powell 1 for 0, Curry 1 for 1, D. Smith 1 for 2.

Saturday, May 17th, v Dean Close. 2nd XI., Away. Won.

Rendcomb, 59. Curry 12, Lecky n.

Dean Close, 41. Trayhurn 5 for 24, Palmer 2 to 11.

Saturday, June 14th, v North Cerney C. C., Home. Lost.

Rendcomb, 36. Beck 10.

North Cerney, 78. Palmer 6 for 33.

Saturday, June 28th, v Swindon College, Home. Lost.

Rendcomb, 35. Trayhurn 10.

Swindon, 62 for 7. Palmer 4 for 7.

Saturday, July 26th, v North Cerney C. C., Home. Lost.
Rendcomb, 22. Tuck 12.
North Cerney, 72. Trayhurn 6 for 28.

“A” XI.

Saturday, July 5th, v Kingham Hill, Home. Lost.
Rendcomb, 51. Margetts 14, D. Smith 12.
Kingham Hill, 83. Margetts 3 for 16, Owen 2 for 1.

Saturday, July 12th, v Kingham Hill, Away. Won.
Rendcomb, 41. D. Smith 17.
Kingham Hill, 37. D. Smith 4 for 5, Palmer 2 for 4.

“Under 15” XI.

Saturday, 28th June, v Dean Close Colts, Away. Lost.
Rendcomb, 44. Brain 13.
Dean Close, 106. Grant 2 for 2.

RUNNING.

The North Cerney race, postponed at the end of the Easter Term, was run on Tuesday, June 3rd. There was a large field and the running was of a high standard. Five of the runners bettered last year's time of 25mins. 28secs.

Results: —

- 1st. A. W. Morris—23mins. 17secs.
- 2nd. M. A. C. Levett—24mins. 25secs.
- 3rd. P. Binks—24mins. 40secs.