

# RENDCOMB COLLEGE CHRONICLE

**Vol. 10 No. II**

**March, 1956**

# Rendcomb College Chronicle

Volume 10. No. 11.

March, 1956.

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**DIARY—AUTUMN TERM, 1955.**  
**SEPTEMBER.**

21st. — Term begins.

**OCTOBER.**

2nd. — Harvest Festival—St. Peter's Church.

4th. — Rain! (See page —)

6th. — Rugger games begin on Mr. Farsworth's field.

15th. —Dance. Music by College Band.

22nd. —1st XV v. Cheltenham College 3rd XV.

Matched XV v. Cheltenham College Yearlings.

29th. —1st XV v. Marlborough College 3rd XV.

31st. — Extension to Dining Hall first used.

**NOVEMBER.**

6th. — Remembrance Sunday.

9th. — 1st XV v. Dean Close 2nd XV.

2nd XV v. Dean Close 3rd XV.

10th. —Party visits Stratford-on-Avon to see 'Twelfth Night'.

11th-14th. —Half-Term.

24th. —Party visits Town Hall, Cheltenham, for piano recital by Denis Matthews.

**DECEMBER.**

1st, 2nd, 3rd. —'The Rivals', in Big School.

3rd. —1st XV v. Wycliffe College 2nd XV.

2nd XV v. Wycliffe College 3rd XV.

10th. —1st XV v. Kingham Hill 1st XV.

2nd XV v. Kingham Hill 2nd XV.

17th. — Christmas Party.

18th. — Carol Service.

21st. — End of Term.

*COLLEGE OFFICERS.*

**Lent Term, 1956.**

Senior Prefect—R. N. Horne.

Group Leaders—M. V. Harley, R. N. Horne, T. D. A. Semple,  
B. Glastonbury.

Prefect—M. G. Richards.

College Workman—R. W. Alder.

§Public Workman—C. H. Thomason.

Music Warden—T. W. Rowley.

Librarians—J. R. Ellis, S. R. Merrett, J. B. Gooch,  
I. A. N. Campbell.

Manual Foremen—M. G. Richards, J. R. Ellis, D. A. Godfrey,  
B. R. Paish, M. A. B. Forster, R. D. Comley,  
D. R. G. Griffiths.

Poultrymen—G. H. G. Herbert, D. T. Hart, A. T. Brooks,  
P. C. R. Burns, A. K. Bowley.

§Furniture Committee—M. A. B. Forster, I. A. N. Campbell,  
P. C. R. Burns.  
Stagemen—M. A. B. Forster, G. H. G. Herbert, D. T. Hart,  
I. A. N. Campbell, P. G. Auden, P. F. Barter,  
P. G. S. Airey, R. F. Stebbing.  
Music Librarian—R. W. Alder.  
Pictureman—A. Harrison.  
Collections and Deck Chairs—D. T. Hart.  
Lampmen—I. A. N. Campbell, D. R. G. Griffiths.  
Q. P. Concerts—J. R. Alder.  
Notices—G. H. Richards, C. H. Thomason, R. D. White.  
§ General Meeting Elections.

### *MEETING OFFICERS.*

#### **Lent Term, 1956.**

Chairman—M. G. Richards.  
Secretary—A. Harrison.  
Games Captain—R. N. Horne.  
Games Committee—B. Glastonbury, J. M. Astill.  
Field Secretary—D. A. Godfrey  
Boys' Banker—G. H. G. Herbert.  
Meeting Banker—J. R. Ellis.  
Senior Shopman—J. B. R. Browne.  
Games Committee Treasurer—C. Handoll.  
House Committee Treasurer—R. D. Comley.  
Finance Committee Treasurer—J. R. Windsor.  
Auditors—M. G. Richards, M. V. Harley.  
Finance Committee—M. van den Driessche, M. D. Naish.  
Shopmen—R. A. Cockrell, J. G. Scudamore.  
Breakages Man—R. Bolton King.  
Entertainments Committee—J. M. Astill, J. D. R. Paine,  
A. P. Hayes, R. W. Taylor, G. J. Taylor.  
Record Committee—(Classical) B. Glastonbury, M. G. Richards,  
G. H. Richards.  
(Light) M. G. Cooper, J. M. Astill.  
Cycle Committee—M. R. Horton, J. F. W. Beard, A. P. Hayes.  
Amplifier Technicians—R. O. G. Hayter, T. W. Rowley.  
Paperman—A. T. Brooks.  
Drying Room Committee—P. C. R. Burns, D. R. Poole,  
M. van den Driessche.  
Rugby Games Warden—P. G. S. Airey.  
Hockey Games Wardens—P. F. Barter, R. F. Stebbing.  
Hockey Groundsmen—R. J. Lawson, D. T. Hart.  
Junior Hockey Groundsman—M. van den Driessche.  
Rugby Secretary, 1956—J. E. Gooding.  
Record Committee Treasurer—J. B. Gooch.  
Investigation Committee (Finance)—R. N. Horne, R. W. Alder  
R. F. Stimson.

## SCHOOL NOTES.

### Autumn Term, 1955.

21st September—21st December.

We welcome the following new boys who entered the College in September 1955, among whom are the first scholars to come to Rendcomb under the auspices of the Ernest Cook Trust, and also from the Borough of Cheltenham under the new arrangement between the Governors and Cheltenham Education Committee: M. van den Driessche, A. N. Hill, G. S. Bartlett, T. C. Bass, M. L. Board, D. A. Cook, P. K. Dale, H. E. Gough, C. P. Gray, J. R. Marshall, C. C. Richardson, K. H. Stimson, C. J. Webb, J. T. Wood.

We also welcome Mr. R. T. Nebbs who joined the staff in September as Art Master. He was trained at the Slade School of Fine Arts, University College, London.

During the summer holidays, the Reparations-Dreyfus Company carried out repairs to the back stairs, cutting away all the worn stone and replacing with York Stone insertions as was done for the main staircase. Afos Coke Breeze Burners were installed for the main College central heating boilers. The Art Room was redecorated.

We begin the preparation of each edition of this journal with a firm resolution not to mention the weather, but events always prove too strong for us. The School returned in September to find that our water supply had been seriously affected by the fine summer, and water was severely rationed, so baths became rare. Further details of the vicissitudes will be found elsewhere.

We are most grateful to Mr. H. E. Farnsworth for allowing us to use one of his fields for Rugger. Without his kind permission we might well have had to consider abandoning the game for the entire season. As it was, the teams were able to get their practice and to acquit themselves very well in matches.

The Governors of the College have decided, for various reasons, to change the name of Rendcomb House to "The Old Rectory", and as such it is in future officially to be known.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

We are indebted to the Editors of the following of our contemporaries who have kindly sent us copies: *The Decanian*; *The Gresham*.; *The King's School Magazine* (Gloucester); *The Wycliffe Star*.

## “THE RIVALS”

By Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

### CAST.

Fag—S. R. Merrett.  
Thomas—P. Gilbert.  
Lucy—J. R. Windsor.  
Lydia—A. K. Bowley.  
Julia—S. D. Hicks.  
Mrs. Malaprop—T. W. Rowley.  
Sir Anthony Absolute—G. H. G. Herbert.  
Captain Absolute (Jack)—R. N. Horne.  
Faulkland—D. A. Godfrey.  
Acres—H. A. Gough.  
Boy—M. C. Jones.  
Sir Lucius O’Trigger—R. F. Stimson.  
David—D. W. Brown.  
Servants—J. G. Scudamore, J. M. Webb.

There was a certain amount of surprise and even misgiving when the news spread that a five-act play, “The Rivals”, was to be performed by a large cast, of which the majority had no previous acting experience. Cynics voiced the opinion that it would be a “flop”, and others, hearing that the orchestra was to play in the intervals, dismissed it as a concert with dramatic interludes.

There is always something pleasant about proving cynics wrong, and this the cast and orchestra did in the three performances given on Thursday, December 1st, for juniors and parents, on Friday for the village and a party from Cirencester Grammar School, and on Saturday for the school; and each evening the performance improved.

“The Rivals” is in some ways an unsatisfactory play. It depends for much of its humour on contemporary references and situations which it is difficult for a modern audience to appreciate, such as the dialogue about wigs in the opening scene, and the description of Lydia’s books. We find it hard to see the caricature in Lydia’s extreme Romanticism of much of contemporary ‘Society’. The plot is flimsy and the action forced. In spite of these defects, however, it has many virtues, such as the timeless humour of Acres or Mrs. Malaprop.

The play rests largely on the ability of Jack to convince the audience of the warmth of his passion, and of Lydia to convince them of the charm beneath her unattractive romantic façade. R. N. Horne as Jack was excellent, but he seemed ill at ease—more perhaps than his part warranted. He was at his best when dealing with his father or Mrs. Malaprop, rather than with Lydia. A. K. Bowley as Lydia gave a good impression of the ridiculous and shallow nature of her pose.

All the other male characters except Sir Lucius O'Trigger had satisfying parts. Sir Lucius is an unrewarding part for he is obviously a villainous gentleman but without any romantic charm. R. F. Stimson played it well; his attitude of the supercilious yet impoverished man-about-town was excellent. G. H. G. Herbert in portraying Sir Anthony Absolute, Jack's father, suppressed his own personality and seemed hardly to speak with his own voice. His acting was good; he gave a realistic portrayal of a rheumatic, quick-tempered old man, and obviously enjoyed his part. The fop, Faulkland, is not a person likely to become dated like Julia. D. A. Godfrey had obviously a full understanding of Faulkland's character and while his affectation was strong he still managed to convey the sincerity of his love for Julia. H. A. Gough was also well cast as the rough country gentleman, Acres; he managed to remain attractive to the audience while showing his cowardice.

Acres' servant David played by D. W. Brown was another character whose humour was shown to full advantage. The timid nervous nature of this affectionate servant was played in such a way as to make him probably the most amusing character of this production. S. R. Merrett's Fag, Jack's servant, brought out the oily insincere nature of the character but the level tones of his voices tended to undermine his interpretation.

Of the female characters T. W. Rowley's Mrs. Malaprop stands out. His portrayal of the ignorant self-opinionated old harridan of society showed an obvious grasp and enjoyment of his part. He played particularly well the flattered simpering passages and gave the famous "Malapropisms" their full weight. S. D. Hicks played Julia; his speech was halting yet his acting was quite good, and he looked remarkably attractive. J. R. Windsor as Lucy, Lydia's not-so-simple maid, was amusing but rather expressionless.

This was the most ambitious production ever to be staged at Rendcomb, and the cast was larger than in any attempted before. One visitor, who had seen practically every play in Big School during the last twenty years, thought it was the best.

Its success was, in the main, due to the exploitation of the humour but certain serious passages, such as Sir Anthony's angry scene with Jack, were most convincing. The casting was throughout excellent. The action was never allowed to flag and this is a considerable achievement considering the difficulties of the small stage and its effect on scene-changing.

Four other factors contributed a great deal towards the success of the play. The scenery was of an immensely high standard. Three complete back-drops were painted by the stagemen and three helpers, working late into the night to finish them in time. Kings-Mead-Fields, the last scene, was particularly good. The costumes, too, were of a higher standard even than usual. Period costumes

have been hired in the past but this time those not at hand were made in the Linen Room and we would like to congratulate Mrs. Lee-Browne, Mrs. Burchell, Miss Savage and their helpers. Out of a whole group of wonderful costumes those of Lydia, Julia and Jack spring to mind. The make-up also was very good and contributed greatly, with the costumes, to the charming appearance of the girls. Finally the experiment of having the orchestra to play in the intervals was a great success. On a stage where the scene changes are, of necessity, long, something is needed to distract the audience from the drawn curtains and this the orchestra did. Great care was taken over choosing pieces setting the mood of the subsequent scene, and we would like to thank the orchestra for the extra practice, and especially the visiting players for coming, some of them driving many miles in fog, to play.

The players in the orchestra were: —Violins: Miss W. Keil, Miss M. Banks, Mrs. N. Mackworth-Young, Mr. G. F. Graty, M. V. Harley, B. Glastonbury, M. G. Richards, J. F. W. Beard; Violas: Mrs. N. Wilkinson, T. D. A. Semple; Cellos: Mrs. B. E. Bendixson, Mr. G. M. Swaine; Flutes: J. D. R. Paine, D. R. G. Griffiths; Oboe: G. H. Richards; Clarinet: R. J. Lawson.

### **THE CHRISTMAS PARTY.**

Views on the Christmas Party vary enormously from the majority who look forward to it as one of the more pleasant days on the School calendar, to the few who consider it an unwelcome addition to the usual end of term disturbances. Nevertheless, it is impossible to avoid the feverish activity amongst the End of Term Entertainments Committee and the Kitchen Staff. For several days before the Party the Prefects' Study, the Committee H.Q., acted as a storeroom for everything festive, ranging from boxes of pins to dragons' heads, while in odd corners some of the school's intelligentsia could be seen assembling competitions or building balsa-wood lamp shades! In the kitchens stacks of crockery appeared, and the place was filled with trays of homemade sweets. Secret 'happenings' on the ground floor after most people were safely in bed gave little indication of the form the occasion was intended to take, but they did give some idea of the tremendous pace and intensity of work needed.

The majority of boys do not begin their active preparations until the afternoon of the party-day itself. Then, while the junior forms are already parading their gay fancy dresses on the top floor, about thirty senior boys set about assembling the result of the Committee's artistry. The theme this year was King Arthur and his Knights. The setting was a medieval fortress, but not a very



bleak one, for the walls were hung with expertly made heads of monsters, coloured streamers were in their usual abundance, and a wood fire burned in every hearth. The Committee, dressed as noblemen of similar appearance, yet contrasting characters, were nevertheless completely incapable of subduing the enormous monster (which seemed to stretch the full width of Saul's Hall). This subjugation was the task of the gallant King Arthur, a red headed man who might almost have come from Wales.

Before supper it is customary to survey the fancy dresses. On this occasion they were not particularly inspired. Many people wore pyjamas or evening dress, and initiative and creative power were largely directed to more commonplace disguises—pirates, tramps, clowns and cowboys. Perhaps this problem might be overcome by the Committee suggesting a theme each year.

On supper, we must especially congratulate and thank Miss Babbington and the Kitchen Staff.

Had this report kept to strict chronological order, a few comments on the sketches should have preceded those on the refreshments, but the opportunity was missed. We use the word "sketches" because it is sufficiently comprehensive to include everything from short plays to pure Music Hall. The programme on the Big School stage opened with "The Ill Aunt", a playlet depending for its success on the peculiarities of a literal translation from the French. It was perhaps the wrong thing to begin with, for its appeal was subtle rather than boisterous, and the acting seemed to lack confidence and fluency. "The 'Ole in the Road" was played with much more gusto. T. D. A. Semple was obviously very much at home sitting in the middle of the road guarding his livelihood, and he was well supported by a tolerant D. A. Godfrey.

The rest of the programme was devoted to skits on various aspects of Rendcomb life. Many of them were extremely amusing and of a high standard. "Monday Afternoon Activities", "Eating Competition" and "Form Rooms", all showed a sort of dry and sometimes cynical wit. But the high spot of the sketches and possibly of the whole evening was the duet "Jackson and Mullins", superbly crooned by G. H. Richards and H. A. Gough. The lyrics were written by Mr. D. de G. Sells, who obviously has a knack for producing rather pungent doggerel. Its success suggests that a full length revue on the Rendcomb stage might be very well received.

Music throughout the programme was played, and to a considerable extent composed, by Mr. J. "Fats" Tooze. Not one of his lesser skills is being able to improvise on any theme that enters his mind, and thus expertly fill in gaps between scenes. It might be added that he composed the catchy tune for "Jackson and Mullins" in a matter of seconds.

Big School was also the scene of junior games, but your correspondent was not present to report on them. In the Library there

were also games and competitions: people could play darts or billiards, and attempt to identify photographs of cars and of film stars whose pictures were cunningly arranged so that feminine heads appeared on very masculine shoulders, and tough guys tried to look stern in evening gowns.

The organisers, as always, devoted an enormous amount of energy and ingenuity to their allotted task, and the obvious enjoyment of the occasion indicates their well deserved success. Yet the trend at present is rather away from a Christmas Party towards a Christmas Entertainment. A party is something in which everyone shares, and by its very nature it is informal and full of surprises. Its success depends as much on the initiative of those taking part as on the preparations of the host. This can hardly be said of the Rendcomb party, for too much rests on organised dancing. Could we have more competitions and games, and could there perhaps be more variety in the dances themselves?

### ***THE CAROL SERVICE.***

“The Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols upon Christmas Eve” at King’s College, Cambridge, has, through the medium of radio become the prototype (or perhaps ‘inspiration’ is the better word) for hundreds of other services throughout the land. Some people feel that this type of service can become a performance rather than a corporate act of worship in which the congregation, who otherwise becomes an audience, has its own important part to play. This opinion, however, could not be given about our Carol Service last term. The Church was, as usual, filled to overflowing with visitors and parents who, with the boys seem to have caught the Christmas spirit and sang their part with gusto, and a consequently greater warmth of feeling, which made all the difference.

The choir too were more confident than they have sometimes been. There was no nervousness about their opening chorale from Bach’s Christmas Oratorio “Break forth O beautiful Heavenly Light”—surely some of the most wonderful of all Christmas music in its controlled rejoicing. The brightness of “Lord Jesus hath a Garden”, somehow like a “quattrocento” Siennese painting, was echoed by the first performance here of a carol of French origin, “Whence is this Goodly Fragrance?”, charming and simple where the other delighted in an array of detail. Once again, we had the two lullabies one associates with King’s: “O sleep Thou Heaven-born Treasure, Thou” and “Sing Lullaby” and they were sung with a grace and subtlety which preserved that simplicity which is the essential core of the spirit of Christmas. It is this delight in simplicity which is necessary for a full enjoyment of nearly all the best known carols. Yet, each has its individual mood. There is

a whole world between the quietness of “Sing lullaby”, the restrained rejoicing of “Break forth”, the exultation of “Fanfare for Christmas Day” (the setting of the words “Gloria in excelsis Deo” by Martin Shaw, sung after the last lesson) and the ordinary rejoicing of “Adeste Fideles”, but the qualities of polish and unsophistication, of mystery and realisation are united in a way which is peculiar to Christmas alone.

Emphasis has been laid on the communal aspect of the Carol Service. Less than justice would be done, however, if the quality of the choir’s singing as a performance were ignored. To a member of the congregation their singing showed a restraint and a distinction not always found in boys’ choirs today. In the age-old setting of Rendcomb Parish Church, they did justice to the beautiful old songs they sang.

### **OLD BOYS’ NOTES.**

The following Old Boys visited the School during the Term: R. A. Powell, R. T. Wood, R. J. van den Driessche, P. D. de Iongh, A. G. B. Wallace, M. J. Edwards and E. Davis.

R. Dowding is Chief Engineer for Chain Belt (Canada) Ltd., the Canadian branch of a United States Company. It builds contracting equipment for civil engineers and mining—oversize concrete mixers, pumps, elevators and conveyors. He and his wife live at Downsview, Ontario.

R. J. van den Driessche rowed No. 2 in the successful University of Wales four at the 1956 Regatta at Hereford.

C. E. H. Tuck is Assistant Secretary to the Governor of Nigeria.

E. J. Miller went to France during the summer for the unveiling of the Bayeux War Memorial, for which he had done the drawings. He is at present working on the designs for the Dunkirk Memorial.

Douglas Dakin has sent us a copy for the library of his recently published book “British and American Philhellenes during the War of Greek Independence 1821-1833”. We are most grateful to him for the gift. Younger generations may like to know that Dakin is one of the original twelve boys in the College and is at present Registrar and Lecturer in History at Birkbeck College in the University of London. During the war he worked closely with the Greek Air Force and had exciting experience during the Greek Civil War when he found himself in the position of being *persona grata* to both sides.

The West of England Dinner was held on Saturday, 15th October, 1955, at the New Inn, Gloucester. As agreed it was a mixed gathering to which wives and fiancées were invited—and as hoped it was a great success. On all sides people were heard saying how much they approved the idea and the number that wrote afterwards indicated how widely the evening had been enjoyed. It was a great pleasure to see Mr. J. H. Simpson and those present who knew him were grieved to hear that Mrs. Simpson's absence was due to illness. A. C. Magor is very greatly to be congratulated both on his arrangements and on the good gathering; and commiserated with because his wife was unable to be present. The following were present:—Mr. and Mrs. J. E. Allen, Mr. and Mrs. F. J. Batten, R. H. Bettison, A. E. A. Brain, R. F. Butler, Miss M. A. Carnell, Mr. and Mrs. P. A. Cutts, O. S. David, J. B. Fell, Mr. and Mrs. D. Field, Mr. and Mrs. P. Field, Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Godsell, M. C. Harries and fiancée, J. C. James, R. H. Jones, Mr. and Mrs. D. W. Lee-Browne, Miss D. H. Lee-Browne, Mr. and Mrs. R. Margetts, Mr. and Mrs. K. J. Morgan, Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Price, H. H. Selby, J. H. Simpson, N. Slade, Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Smith, R. T. Wood.

The 1955 Dinner and Annual General Meeting of the Old Rendcombian Society was held at the Cock Tavern, Fleet Street, on Saturday, November 19th, 1955. There was a good gathering. The report and accounts of the Society were excellently presented by A. C. Magor, the Secretary, his presentation of the accounts being particularly admired. Warm tributes were paid to him for his work during the year and for his agreement to continue in office. F. J. Batten and D. C. Terrett were re-elected Chairman and Vice-Chairman respectively and A. C. Magor continues in office as Treasurer. R. J. Kendal was re-elected as Assistant Secretary. Speeches were kept to a minimum and the evening came to an end—as Old Boys' dinners always do—too soon. The following were present: —J. F. Alder, H. W. T. Bates, R. K. G. Bick, B. J. Brooks, A. Browning, G. H. Bye, D. Dakin, N. Dalton, P. G. Forrest, D. W. Lee-Browne, P. D. B. Levett, A. C. Magor, A. R. Margetts, J. C. Maslin, E. J. Miller, R. W. Muchamore, J. J. North, J. D. Painter, N. A. Perkins, F. C. Raggett, J. F. Roper, M. B. Shephard, P. W. Sumsion, C. G. V. Taylor, D. C. Terrett, D. C. Vaughan.

#### **“FOR THIS RELIEF MUCH THANKS.”**

For a long time one of the 'features' of the dining room has been the crush during meals. The idea of having an extra table in an annexe built in the gym was welcomed. D. R. G. Griffiths volunteered to make the table and benches and work was started last summer. Delays in the delivery of timber and the size of the

task meant that it was several weeks before the furniture was finished. It was first used on the 31st October.

The design, by Mr. G. F. Graty, is in the traditional refectory style, consisting of three boards rub-jointed together to make the top, which is held flat by the leg construction at each end. Each leg consists of a massive foot and batten, both running across the width of the table, separated by a vertical board, jointed into them at each end. There are two chamfered stretcher rails under the top itself, and one lower down, which keep the legs in position. Diagonal strutting to give greater rigidity against end strains, which are liable to be considerable when a table of this weight is being moved about, is achieved with four shaped pieces inverted between the upper and lower rails, forming a sort of 'fan-vaulting' effect.

Considerable planning of the top became necessary after it had been jointed, due to the warping of the not-quite-dry Japanese Oak, which was the only material available to us in the sizes required. This work, the sand papering and polishing was accomplished by a series of teams during P. W.

The final assembly and finishing details were done in the "cooler", as the annexe soon came to be called, due to lack of space in the workshop and the impossibility of removing such a large piece of furniture from there in one piece. When finished and polished with several coats of beeswax, the table looked most impressive, even in the restricted view afforded by the annexe. The difference in the main hall is immense. The removal of two, and in some cases three, persons from each table makes all the difference between a crush and comfort, and already people can be heard to say "I wonder how we managed without it."

### **"THY NEED IS GREATER**

It is said of certain Bedouin tribesmen that while they never wash themselves from one year's end to another, they keep themselves clean by a liberal application of sand and gravel, and thus reach a ripe old age in the best of health with a minimum use of water. Not only that, it is said, but they are able to go for long distances with a complete absence of liquid sustenance. Knowing this, it is strange that there was no campaign last term to persuade the Headmaster to engage a sheik to instruct us in the gentle arts of water conservation, for Rendcomb was suffering from the longest drought "in living memory".

We returned in September to find that the catchment tanks for the College were at a "dangerously low level", that the Old Rectory had been cut off from the College supply, that "Top" was impossible to play on owing to its concrete-like surface, that the lawns had practically disappeared and that the district was suffering from almost complete desiccation.

As usual, of course, we faced the situation with true British phlegm (see last term's account of this indestructible quality). The Old Rectory was connected with its original water supply—a well used prior to 1930—and the ancient pump in the old scullery there was set to work, at the rate of 600 strokes a day, by teams of courageous youths who were rewarded by an evil smelling fluid somewhat the colour of pale ale and of which about half reached the tank in the roof while the rest flooded the floor.

From the beginning of term no one was allowed to have a bath under any circumstances and all automatic flushes were cut off.

After about a week of strenuous effort the well ran dry. This caused generally mixed feelings, for while most people were glad of the relief afforded to their aching backs, others could be seen surreptitiously investigating the level of the tank and one could hear whispered conversations about the symptoms of death by thirst. The tank was however filled at intervals from the College supply, and the drying of the well gave an opportunity for cleaning it out; an interesting task which revealed what can only be regarded as evidence of a long-forgotten murder: the ancient remains of a carbine were discovered. After a long search however, the body was still unaccounted for.

At the College, investigations were in progress to discover any source of water that might have been somehow mislaid. The situation was hardly helped by the fact that two of our springs had been compulsorily cut off in 1954 by the local Authority, while the Greenmeadow supply from which we can normally augment our resources was itself below level so they were unable to help us. We might as well have been in a desert.

After about three weeks however, the main catchment tank began to fill up a little and baths were allowed in strict moderation. All seemed to be progressing satisfactorily until one day a gallon of chlorine was mixed with the Greenmeadow water instead of the usual quart, a man at the waterworks having slipped. Water for meals was fetched from the first-floor bathroom, which was free of the flavouring and we simply screwed up our faces when we drank our tea and made the best of it. It was all very good for us, no doubt, and we can safely say that another crisis was passed with true Elizabethan fortitude, if not with the gallantry of Sir Philip Sidney.

#### **GRAMOPHONE RECORDS—RECENT ADDITIONS.**

Three major works of different form were bought this term— a symphony, a concerto and an opera.

Dvorak's 5th Symphony (actually the ninth in chronological order) is generally known as "The New World Symphony". The recording bought was Columbia 33SX 1025 played by the Philharmonia

Orchestra under Alceo Galliera. Galliera, a protégé of Arturo Toscanini, was a little known conductor in this country before this recording, and it certainly gives ample reason for his success. He has full control of the orchestra and is obviously quite sure of the way he wants the symphony played, and as obviously has the orchestra's support. The famous Largo is sensitively played without over-sentimentalisation and the third movement Scherzo is lively, crisp and clear. In both extremes of volume we feel a sensitive yet rigid control of the orchestra. There is a wonderful feeling of cleanness and freshness about the whole recording which leaves a pleasant sensation in the listener at the end.

The concerto is Beethoven's 4th Piano Concerto: (soloist Wilhelm Kempff) played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Paul van Kempen (Deutsche Gramophon Gesellschaft DG 16072). This recording is rather disappointing; although fairly free from surface noise and clear it seems a little harsh, and the piano is rather thin in its upper register. Kempff's playing is, on the whole, excellent, but there seems a certain tendency to hum- in places. There is however a much more serious defect and that is the unsuitability of the cadenzas. Although it is permissible in a live concert where it is heard only once to play an unusual cadenza, on a gramophone record, which will be played many times, it is inexcusable, especially when Beethoven wrote two excellent cadenzas himself for this work, yet Kempff disregards them.

The final work was the 3-act opera "Falstaff" by Verdi. (H. M. V. A. L. P. 1229-31). Toscanini, who conducts the N. B. C. Symphony Orchestra for this, was a friend of Verdi and conducted one of the earl's performances of "Falstaff". Guiseppe Valdengo, Teresa Stich-Randall and Nan Merriman, are in the most distinguished cast assembled for this one performance. The recording is rather spoilt by the fact that it is taken from a broadcast, but here is an interpretation with the authority of Toscanini, and all that implies, of one of the finest Italian operas of any period.

Overshadowing everything else for the Jazz fans this term was the outburst of popularity for Sidney Bechet and his soprano saxophone. During the last year a few people had spoken enthusiastically about him, but the majority of us were not brought into closer contact until the General Meeting purchased an Extended Play record of four solos with rhythm accompaniment, from one of the Gene Norman and Frank Bull Dixieland Jubilee Concerts. The disc contains "On the Sunny Side of the Street", which Bechet seems to have recorded more often than anything else (there were three different versions in the College at the time of writing), a superbly played rendering of W. C. Handy's "St. Louis Blues", "Muskrat Ramble", played rather faster than the interpretation of Kid Ory, the composer, and Gershwin's "Summertime". It is

unfortunate that some time is taken up by a few asinine remarks from Frank Bull which lose their charm far sooner than does the music. A recording of two Stomps played by the Mezzrow-Bechet Quintet achieved much less success, for although the disc was cut in 1945, it sound antiquated.

Other records bought this term include "Jenny's Ball", played by Humphrey Lyttleton, which was spoiled by a poor recording, Earl Bostic's version of the Fats Waller tune, "Ain't Misbehavin'", and an E. P. of Chris Barber. This latter was made in 1951, and is one of Chris Barber's very first with his own band, although the line up bears little resemblance to the one he records with now. There are four numbers, including two wonderful Blues, "Misty Morning" and "Camp Meeting Blues", the former showing a close likeness in parts to Jelly Roll Morton's "Dead Man Blues".

This is the first time the General Meeting has bought any 45 r.p.m. Jazz records, and they have obviously been successful, for the Sidney Bechet has been played innumerable times, yet shows hardly any sign of surface wear.

#### **DENIS MATTHEWS,**

Denis Matthews is a young pianist who first became known during the war when he took part in the famous National Gallery concerts. His most notable quality in this recital was restraint: he played with a complete absence of virtuosity for virtuosity's sake and with a lucidity that gave full scope for the emotions inherent in the music itself, while his own enjoyment of it was transmitted with perfect tact.

His opening item, five Preludes and Fugues by Bach, was of course, not the easiest of music to follow, but even those of us without the ability to follow the fugal intricacies for any length of time, gleaned considerable enjoyment from the sensitive playing alone.

Haydn's Variations in F minor which followed, were developed on a minor theme of haunting sadness with a happy sequel in the major key, a mood from which there was no great leap to the grandeur of Beethoven's Pathétique Sonata with its famous Adagio, the alterations of wistfulness and agitation which underlie so much of this work being sensitively expressed by the pianist.

A modern Sonata by Ernest Bloch was included in the programme. It was rather easy for the listener to get lost (not least because there were no divisions between the movements), though it was, none the less, most enjoyable. Its mood was probably less evasive than in much modern music and the listener felt more "in touch with" the music and consequently more able to find something to grasp at, here perhaps, the strongly underlying Jewish



element. The high peak of the evening however, was surely Schubert's Sonata in A, the last work on the programme. Starting with a charming song-like though pianistic theme, the lyricism of the work developed until it reached a sheer dance of joy into which mood the pianist entered with a delightful gaiety. As an encore, he played two of Beethoven's "Bagatelles".

#### **"TWELFTH NIGHT."**

After two attempts Mrs. James was lucky enough to get seats at Stratford for "Twelfth Night". The booking had to be made well in advance owing to the popularity of the two leading actors— Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh.

All our seats were in the Dress Circle, whereas on previous excursions to Stratford we had been in the Gallery. The ease in viewing was the most apparent difference, but the seats were, of course, more comfortable and opera glasses were provided for use of patrons. The auditorium lighting was bright but indirect, giving a pleasantly soft effect, and were it not for the proximity of one's neighbour and a general sense of anticipation it would have been fairly easy to sleep!

The curtain rose on Count Orsino's leisure hour. Judging by his distracted appearance he was in love, and Keith Mitchell portrayed a conventional and unimaginative lover. Vivien Leigh, as Viola, played her part with the confidence of an accomplished actress; but Sir Toby Belch, a fat, red nosed man, was drab and untidy, while his friend, Sir Andrew Aguecheek, was a very much over-powdered fop. Alan Webb, as Sir Toby, was rather disappointing in that he did not live up to expectations and he was overshadowed by Michael Denison as Sir Andrew. Maria was competently portrayed by Angela Baddeley, as a mischievous middle-aged woman with all her wits about her. Edward Atienza, as Feste, proved to be a very versatile actor, able to strum an instrument, sing, and leap around the stage, all with an equal measure of skill. On the whole the production was formal and dramatic, being enlivened only by a few touches of reality and by Sir Laurence Olivier's interpretation of Malvolio. One touch in particular was the plunging of a red hot poker into a jug of punch to heat it up.

Sir Laurence Olivier gave an entertaining rendering of a completely unique Malvolio. Some people thought he was rather too meek, but he was superbly egoistical and preening. This self-centredness was carried rather too far in the letter scene: so interested in his reading was he that apparently he did not notice the watchers running from bush to bush and even across the unprotected front of the stage.

The scenery was magnificent and in particular one remembers the superb high yew hedges for Malvolio's gulling scene. One also has vague memories of a very cunning back-drop—vague because it appeared and disappeared with ethereal silence.

On the whole, although this production provided items to talk about, and points to laugh at, it was considered by many to be rather disappointing in view of the two distinguished actors in the leading roles.

D. A. G., J. B. R. B.

#### *OF THE CHURCH AND VILLAGE.*

##### **St. Peter's Church.**

Recently the Houses of Convocation, the 'parliament' of the Church of England, passed an Act requiring every Church Council in England to appoint a qualified and experienced architect to be in charge of the maintenance of the fabric of all churches and to advise on plans for any alterations and renovations. Accordingly, Rendcomb Church Council has appointed Mr. E. A. Rosier of Cheltenham to do this work for them. He is an expert on ecclesiastical architecture and furnishing. Some of his work can be seen at Stratton and North Cerney and, further afield, at Hereford Cathedral and the parish churches of Ludlow and Ross-on-Wye.

The Act lays down that churches must be inspected every seven years and that incumbents and councils must prepare plans, which unless urgent need not be carried out immediately, to ensure that churches are maintained in good condition. Future generations should not be faced with appeals for thousands of pounds to pay for work which, if it had been attended to when the trouble started, would have cost considerably less.

Mr. Rosier's appointment coincided with the announcement of a very generous offer from Mrs. M. H. Sinclair to contribute furnishings for a chapel at the South East corner of the church where the old organ used to stand; his first task therefore was to make the statutory survey and to advise on the proposed alterations.

The plan, which was announced at a Parish Meeting on the 30th of January 1956, provides for the removal, to their original positions, of the two cenotaphs commemorating members of the Guise family. These positions were to the North and South of the East window of the aisle, a fact which became apparent when the old organ platform was removed. It seems likely that the cenotaphs were moved in the 1860's when extensive alterations were done, including restoration of the roof and the raising of the floor of the East End of the Church—the choir, the chancel and the 'birdcage'.

Mrs. Sinclair's offer will also help to provide for the removal of the present altar and reredos into the proposed chapel, a new High Altar in the Chancel, together with appropriate frontals. Mrs. Sinclair has also given some of the blue and gold hangings which were used in Westminster Abbey for the Coronation, and these will be included in the scheme.

Some short while ago the Rector was turning out an old chest in the Church and he found a piece of material with some embroidery which, at first glance, seemed to have been done by a very inexperienced hand. Three scenes have been worked on the cloth showing the Last Supper, the scene in the Garden of Gethsemane and the Crucifixion and also the words which our Lord used at the institution of what is now known as Holy Communion.

At first glance the lack of perspective in the figures gives the impression that the work might have been done by a very young lady in the nursery, but a second glance brings the word 'primitive' to mind when it is used to describe art. The result of various consultations which Mr. Wheeler had was that it might be eighteenth century embroidery but the fabric to which it was attached was fairly modern. However, to make certain, he decided to send it to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London for an expert opinion. That opinion was decided: there was no doubt that the embroidery was seventeenth century and the material was also of the same date. The experts agreed that the seamstress was not a skilled needlewoman, but it happens that there are very few examples now extant of this kind of work from that particular period, and the sample which Rendcomb Church possesses is therefore unique and valuable. It was photographed by, and registered in the archives of, the Museum and has now been returned to the Church.

Many of our readers will remember that the Church has two fonts: one inside the door and the other at the West end of the nave. This last is of comparatively less historical and artistic importance, but the other has been attracting a lot of attention lately; it dates from Norman times. Mention of it has been made in several books on architecture and the present national interest in Rendcomb Church seems to date from a visit, some three years ago, of an eminent authority on Architecture who, though not identified, is thought to be a gentleman with particular liking for Victorian Architecture. He came primarily to see the font but soon became enthusiastic about the church itself. Later someone else wrote an article about it in an architectural review (the actual publication, unfortunately, has not been traced), and so the interest of the experts was revived.

The culmination of all this was the inclusion in a B. B. C. Television broadcast ("pre-recorded" on film) of some shots of Rendcomb Church and a detailed description of the font shown in

“close-ups”. The film was made by the B. B. C. in collaboration with The Educational, Television and Radio Center of the United States. It will be shown all over the world where the standard of programmes has not been reduced to the level of the Independent Television Authority.

### **Rendcomb Village.**

It has recently been announced that another generous offer has been received from Mrs. Sinclair. This is to buy the Village School and to present it to the parish for use as a Village Hall and to provide a certain sum for alterations and renovations. Her offer was gratefully accepted by a General Parish Meeting on the 20th of February, 1956.

### **RUGGER REPORT, DECEMBER, 1955.**

As now seems customary we can once again complain about the weather, but this time it was not that the weather was too wet or too cold, but that the warm dry spell that was so wonderful all through the summer holidays, continued well into the Autumn term. This meant that there was very little grass on the field and so it was obvious that little or no rugger could be played on it in the first half of the term.

It was indeed good news when Mr. Haywood announced that he had asked Mr. Farnsworth if he would allow us to play on one of his fields and that Mr. Farnsworth had consented. The Headmaster made arrangements for marking out equipment to be taken up on the tractor but the groundsmen this season certainly had a very difficult job, for obviously, the field was far from perfect.

The 1st XV were in the very strong position of having fourteen of the previous year's XV available. The team nevertheless experienced several changes during the season due to fluctuations in form and also injuries. The front row of the scrum, at the beginning of the term, was the same as at the end of the previous season.

R. F. Stimson seldom made full use of his height in the line out, but worked hard in the loose and has improved with another season's experience. In the middle of the front row B. Glastonbury continued to hook well, and he often gained large amounts of ground by intelligent dribbling. D. A. Semple captained the team from the other side of the front row for the first three matches, but was not able to play in the last two owing to injury. He had a very successful season, both as player and captain. He showed considerable vigour, quick-thinking and a fine understanding of most of the arts of forward play. One could be sure that under his leadership the opposition would be harried continuously

from Kick-off to No Side, attacking Rugby being insisted upon at all times. Two small criticisms might be offered. First, the captain too often disregarded the instructions he had just given to the pack, and second, he was guilty of a very occasional high tackle which his weight allowed him to carry off successfully. Not the least of Semple's contributions to the season was the excellence of his off-the-field arrangements which future captains would do well to copy.

H. A. N. Campbell took Semple's place when he was injured and is a very promising forward, his line-out work was above the generally poor standard of the rest of the pack. R. W. Taylor was one of the two real newcomers to the side and fully justified the re-organisation that was necessary. There was a great improvement on his last year's standard and when he develops a little more speed, he will be a very useful forward. On one occasion he was accompanied in the second row by J. M. Astill, but after that M. G. Cooper returned to his old position. The latter proved himself to be very capable in leading the 1st XV pack in the final match. His lack of weight is made up for by courage and determination. Astill played No. 8 for the whole season except in the above mentioned match and he was a tower of strength in defence. His devastating tackling was a fine example to the rest of the team whose tackling was on the whole rather weak. R. N. Horne was moved from his old position in the centre to openside wing forward, where his strong tackling smothered several opposing attacks. When Taylor was brought into the second row R. D. White moved out to blindside wing forward; he was never really "at home" in this position, but nevertheless still played well and did a great deal of work in the open.

C. H. Thomason played at the base of the scrum and although his form was apt to fluctuate a little, his service at its best was fast, long and accurate. His outside partner D. A. Godfrey, whose handling was usually excellent, held together a very inexperienced three-quarter line remarkably well. He needed a little more confidence for finishing off some clever individual attacks. He also captained the side very ably for the last two matches.

There was great difficulty in finding two centres. J. D. R. Paine never found his previous season's form and although he played in three matches, one of them as fly-half when Godfrey was injured, his handling was unreliable. He has nevertheless a very useful turn of speed and will doubtless regain his place when his handling improves. A. P. Hayes and R. J. Lawson, both of whom are really wing-forwards, were the final choices for the centre. Their handling at first was very good but degenerated slightly at the end of the season. They did, in fact, play very well considering how little experience they have had. D.H. Richards on the left wing was again a very powerful runner when he had the ball, but he was inclined to drop too many

of the few passes that he did get and also seemed satisfied with forcing his opposite number into touch instead of tackling him as soon as he got the ball. M. V. Harley on the other wing used the ball intelligently when he got it, often passing back inside to his centre or forwards. He is also a strong tackler. When Harley was absent from the last match owing to examinations, his place was taken by J. A. Richards, who proved capable of very strong running when in possession.

At full-back H. A. Gough's fielding and touch-kicking were of a very high standard and he often showed an ability to open up the game, but was occasionally caught in possession.

### RESULTS.

Sat., Oct. 22nd. v. Cheltenham College 3rd XV. Away.

Won 8 pts. ( 1 goal and 1 try)—3 pts. (1 try).

This proved to be a very even match played in good conditions. G. H. Richards scored a good try after Lawson, playing as blindside wing-forward, had come between the centre and wing, thus leaving 'a man over'. He ran past several covering forwards to touch down between the posts. Semple converted and later barged his way over to score another try near the corner flag.

Sat., Oct. 29th. v. Marlborough College 3rd XV. Away.

Lost 11 pts. ( 1 goal, 2 tries)—12 pts. (1 pen. goal, 3 tries).

This was by far the best display that the 1st XV gave this season. Rendcomb opened the scoring when Cooper dived over for a splendid try after some untidy play near the Marlborough line. Semple missed the conversion. One of our forwards was unfortunately found offside (a relatively rare occurrence) thus giving away an easy penalty to make the score 3—3. Godfrey then broke away on the blind-side, and drawing the winger in towards himself gave G. H. Richards the ball to run 40 yards and make the score 6—3. Gough narrowly missed the conversion. Marlborough replied later with a try. With the score even again Rendcomb dropped out. The forwards gained possession in the loose rush that followed and the ball went across the three-quarters. Hayes at outside centre ran diagonally across, thus drawing the winger as well as his opposite number, Harley ran inside and took a very nice inside pass and then passed it back to the forwards for Semple eventually to touch down and convert. This was a very good try, everybody being in some way connected with it—definitely the best try the 1st XV scored during the entire

season. Rendcomb then became over confident and let Marlborough score an easy try to make the score 11—9. Then from a line-out near the corner Marlborough scored a very quick, neat try on the blind side to end the scoring. The final whistle blew with Rendcomb forwards in possession about five yards short of the Marlborough line. A very clean exciting game.

Wed., Nov. 9th. v. Dean Close 2nd XV. Home.  
Won 32 pts. (1 goal, 8 tries, 1 pen. goal)—0 pts.

This was played with a very wet ball and in a strong wind; Rendcomb were in no way flattered by the score.

Sat., Dec. 3rd. v. Wycliffe College 2nd XV. Home.  
Won 9 pts. (3 pen. goals)—8 pts (1 goal, 1 pen.)

If Rendcomb were unlucky to lose at Marlborough, they were indeed very lucky to win this match. Several members of the team were very tired owing to other school activities and this was readily reflected by the standard of handling and tackling. The backs were unduly worried by the kicking of the opposing fly-half. Gough kicked two penalties and just before the end another penalty was awarded with the score at 8—6. Gough however missed this one, but the ball was knocked on and he was given another chance for an infringement near the scrum that followed. This goal he kicked in the final seconds.

Sat., Dec. 10th. v. Kingham Hill 1st XV. Away.  
Won 5 pts. (1 goal)—3 pts. (1 pen. goal).

This was not a very exciting game although Kingham Hill hit an upright with a penalty kick in the early stages of the game. The 1st XV played better than on the previous Saturday but nothing like so well as they did against Marlborough. G. H. Richards scored the try and Gough converted it.

**The Second XV** had another very successful season, winning all their matches quite handsomely. The pack was very strong again with M. G. Richards using his height well in the line-out. R. D. Comley, P. C. R. Burns and S. R. Merrett were brought up from 2nd game to fill vacancies; they proved to be very promising forwards and stayed in 1st game. R. O. G. Hayter captained the side from the open-side wing-forward, except in the last match when he was injured. He was a very courageous tackler.

The general shortage of backs in the school was felt very much by the 2nd XV. B. R. Paish played at stand-off half and proved to be a very elusive runner but centres found it difficult to follow him. The scrum-half was D. T. Hart for the first match, but his service is rather slow and he later played at wing-forward

J. R. Ellis taking his place. Ellis was combining well with Paish by the end of the season.

A very enjoyable game was played under match conditions on Saturday, November 26th, when the "Non Leavers" were beaten by the "Rest" by 18 pts—12pts.

The second game was seldom able to play with full numbers but nevertheless showed plenty of keenness and also a great deal of talent under the guidance of Mr. D. de G. Sells. R. F. Stebbing, who played in the 2nd XV for their last match, P. G. S. Airey and M. R. Horton are all three very promising players, and A. K. Bowley is also developing into a good kicker. Of the newcomers to the game the names of T. L. H. Benbow and S. D. Hicks readily spring to mind.

#### 2nd XV RESULTS.

Wed., Nov. 9th. v. Dean Close 3rd XV. Home. Won 27—3. Sat., Dec. 3rd v. Wycliffe College 3rd XV. Home Won 29—3. Sat., Dec. 10th. v. Kingham Hill 2nd XV. Away. Won 12—0.

#### MATCHED XV.

Sat., Oct. 22nd. v. Cheltenham College Yearlings. Away.

Won 22—11.

#### ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL.

In spite of small numbers, the younger boys of the College succeeded in fielding quite a strong team which at times showed a surprising degree of toughness and resilience. In this an excellent example was set by H. E. Gough, who played exceptionally well in goal, being at his best in the face of strong attack from our opponents. The full-backs, R. H. Tingle and R. P. S. Harrison, although rather slow, played hard and protected their goal as thoroughly as they could.

Our line of half-backs was lacking in weight, but P. K. Dale and M. J. H. Bryant as wing-halves largely made up for this by energetic play. N. J. Price played with his usual energy at centre-half until late in the term. He then changed places with G. J. Taylor at centre-forward, and this arrangement seemed to suit both players.

G. J. Taylor captained the team throughout the term and played sound football, ably supported by the other forwards. Of these J. M. Webb proved invaluable on the right wing. M. C. Jones and J. Shaw both played consistently well in the left of the forward line, and there was a constant battle between F. A. G. Ferguson and D. A. Cook to occupy the remaining inside forward position. Both tried their hardest and each took his turn in the team.



## NATURAL HISTORY SUPPLEMENT.

MARCH, 1956.

Miscellaneous Notes, September to December, 1955.

### **Birds.**

A Raven was seen over Rendcomb Church by J. R. Alder on October 1st. It was also heard to call characteristically. This is the first record of the Raven in this district, but the species seems to be spreading and other records have been made elsewhere in the Cotswolds in recent years.

A Lesser Redpoll was seen over the village on November 6th and another (or the same bird) on the 7th. Both were calling in flight. These are the first recorded instances of this species in the Rendcomb district and it is a rather scarce bird on the Cotswolds generally.

A Siskin was seen over the lower part of the village on December 8th. This species is a winter visitor most often seen after Christmas. Several Bramblings were present near Rendcomb in the ten days following November 12th., and two Hawfinches were observed near the Lake on that date. The Hawfinch is an elusive bird, often passing undetected in a district where it occurs regularly. Dippers have been actively in song along the Churn during November and December, as they were at the same season last year. This is probably due to the mild autumn.

Swallows and House Martins had all left by October 1st, a relatively early date. Redwings and Fieldfares, on the other hand, were late in arriving. They were seen in the Thames area beyond Cirencester soon after the middle of October, but did not appear round Rendcomb until the end of the month and were scarce until the middle of November.

### **Mammals.**

Two Water Shrews were found in Lower Rendcomb in November. They had been captured by a cat. Yellow-necked Mice were again caught in the Laboratory Block. There have been scattered reports of Rabbits from the district, but there is no real sign of recovery after the spread of Myxomatosis, (see Vol. 10, No. 8).

### **Flowering Plants.**

The severe drought during the summer of 1955 had marked effects on the appearance of the vegetation. Many fields and banks were more brown than green in tint by early September, in some cases so much so that the only obviously green patches present were provided by deep-rooting plants like Dock (*Rumex*). During the autumn very few out-of-season wild flowers were seen. In a mild autumn like that of 1955 a few representatives of a wide variety of plants are usually found with flowers.

J. R. Alder.

### **Cockroaches, Grasshoppers and their allies.**

(R. S. G. refers to a paper on these insects in the 'Proceedings' of the Cotteswold Naturalists' Field Club for 1953, pp. 196-205, by R. S. George, F. R. E. S. ).

The insects with which the following account is concerned are included in three Orders, namely the Dictyoptera (Cockroaches), the Orthoptera (Crickets and Grasshoppers) and the Dermaptera (Earwigs).

A high proportion of the species known to occur in Gloucestershire has been found in the district covered for recording purposes by the College. In spite of this we are still very lacking in a clear understanding of the distribution and habitat preferences of many of the species in our area. A relatively small number of species is involved and useful work is waiting to be done.

The district from which records are accepted is that outlined in Vol. 10, No. 9 (1955), p. 16.

#### **Dictyoptera.**

*Blatta orientalis* L. (Common, or Eastern Cockroach). Quite common in old houses, etc. throughout the district, especially when these are well heated. It is most plentiful in warm cellars, kitchens, etc.

*Periplaneta americana* L. (American Cockroach). Reported from 'the Colesbourne area' (in R. S. G. ). This is the large, winged species commonly used for study in laboratories.

#### **Orthoptera.**

*Meconema thalassinum* Degeer (Oak Bush-Cricket). Colesbourne woods, not plentiful (I. S. Menzies and C. M. Swaine); also near Withington (C. M. S. ). Probably in other places.

*Pholidoptera griseoaptera* Degeer (Dark Bush-Cricket). Occurs in parts of Withington Woods where its short, high-pitched chirps in hot weather indicate its presence in some numbers among the bushes and brambles of the clearings. (C. M. S. ).

*Leptophyes punctatissima* Bose. (Speckled Bush-Cricket). Near Colesbourne, Clifferdine Wood, Withington Woods (C. M. S. ). Marsden (I. S. M. ). Probably quite plentiful locally.

*Acheta domesticus* L. (House Cricket). Reputed to occur at Withington, but requires checking.

*Tetrix subulata* L. (Slender Ground-Hopper). Two taken at Monkham Wood pond near Marsden by I. S. Menzies on 3. 5. 1946, constitute our only record to date.

*Tetrix undulata* Swrb. (Common. Ground-Hopper). Probably quite common in various places on sunny slopes in and near woods. Colesbourne, Withington, North Cerney (C. M. S. ).

*Stenobothrus lineatus* Panz. (Stripe-winged Grasshopper). Wistley Hill, 1955 (C. M. S. ). Colesbourne (in R. S. G. ). This is a grasshopper with a conspicuous white line down each elytron. It is most likely to be found round here on dry downland.

*Omocestus viridulus* L. (Common Green Grasshopper). A very common species throughout the district in downland and grassy fields.

*Chorthippus brunneus* Thunb. (Common Field Grasshopper). Very common throughout the district on downland, roadsides, agricultural land, etc.

*Chorthippus parallelus* Zet. (Meadow Grasshopper). An abundant species in fields, meadows, etc., throughout the district, although it seems to be less plentiful on the high ground.

*Myrmeleotettix maculatus* Thunb. (Mottled Grasshopper). Locally common on dry banks and downland. Cotswold Park area, the Gulf beyond Marsden, near Withington, Chatcombe area (C. M. S. ). A hillside beyond Woodmancote (I. S. M. ).

*Gomphocerippus rufus* L. (Rufous Grasshopper). Colesbourne (in R. S. G. ). This species should be sought on dry ground such as oolitic downland and probably occurs elsewhere in this area.

Dermoptera.

*Labia minor* L. (Lesser Earwig). Two were seen by I. S. Menzies near Rendcomb College cycle shed in 1945, but no other details are given. The species is readily overlooked. Unlike the next, it often flies in sunshine.

*Forficula auricularia* L. (Common Earwig). Abundant over much of the district. Rendcomb, North Cerney, Colesbourne, Cowley, Seven Springs, Withington, Fossbridge, etc.

C. M. Swaine, B. Sc.

#### **Ranunculaceae in the Rendcomb area.**

The Ranunculaceae is the 'Buttercup Family' of flowering plants and includes a considerable number of species both common and scarce.

The Rendcomb district, as designated for the purpose of recording natural history observations, is a large area and it is probable that several species have as yet escaped discovery, leaving this list incomplete. (Area defined in Vol. 10, No. 9, p. 16).

The genus *Ranunculus*, which contains most of the species, is rather complicated especially as regards the aquatic species with white flowers. The classification of these plants has been recently revised and more attention to them is required before an adequate list for the district can be published.

The nomenclature in the following list is taken from the 'Flora of the British Isles', by Clapham, Tutin and Warburg (C. U. P. ), and reference is also made to the 'Flora of Gloucestershire', by Riddelsdell, Hedley and Price.

- Caltha palustris* L. (Marsh Marigold). Common along the Churn; Rendcomb and Colesbourne Lakes, Bagendon Valley, upper Coin, etc.
- Helleborus viridis* L. (Green Hellebore). Quite widely scattered through the district. Localities nearest the College are in Rendcomb Park near the lake, the 'Wilderness', Clifferdine Wood, between Coombe End and Elkstone, Hilcot Wood and Foxcote (near Withington).
- Eranthis hiemalis* (L. ) Salisb. (Winter Aconite). Planted round the College and partially naturalised in places.
- Anemone nemorosa* L. (Wood Anemone, Windflower). Occurs widely throughout the woods of the district, and often locally abundant as in parts of Conigre and Clifferdine Woods. Is occasionally affected by the parasitic Rust-fungus *Puccinia anemones* Pers., which causes distortion and sterility.
- A. pulsatilla* L. (Pasque Flower). One very good locality at no great distance from the College supports several hundred plants. Reported also from Hilcot, Colesbourne and North Cerney Downs, but its status in these places is in doubt.
- Clematis vitalba* L. (Old Man's Beard, Traveller's Joy). Very common in hedges, coppices, etc., throughout most of the district.
- Ranunculus acris* L. (Meadow Buttercup). Quite common in fields, roadsides, etc., but scarce on the high ground.
- R. repens* L. (Creeping Buttercup). Common in damp meadows, roadsides, marshy places, etc.
- R. bulbosus* L. (Bulbous Buttercup). In many places the commonest buttercup, extending on to all but the driest high ground.
- R. arvensis* L. (Corn Crowfoot). Locally common in cereal crops and on grassland: near Marsden, Cotswold Farm, Withington.
- R. sardosus* Crantz (Hairy Buttercup). Formerly recorded at Bagendon (see 'Flora of Gloucestershire') but with some doubt.
- R. parviflorus* L. (Small-flowered Buttercup). Recorded in Cassey Compton cutting in 1954. (C. M. S. ). Probably fairly common locally.
- R. auricomus* L. (Goldilocks). Common in woods, coppices and hedgerows.
- R. lingua* L. (Great Spearwort). Several plants beside the Churn in lower Rendcomb were introduced there some years ago by Dr. F. Gladstone.

- R. flammula* L. (Lesser Spearwort). Occurs locally: Seven Springs, Cobberley, Withington, Cotswold Park.
- R. hederaceus* L. (Ivy-leaved Water Crowfoot). Recorded near Cotswold Farm ('Flora of Gloucestershire').
- R. fluitans* Lam. (Water Crowfoot). Recorded from the Churn at Colesbourne and Withington. ('Flora of Gloucestershire').
- R. trichophyllus* B. and S. (no common name). Recorded in old Flora of the College without date and locality. The 'Flora of Gloucestershire' gives Seven Springs, Withington, Pen Hill, and Foxcote.
- R. aquatilis* L. (Water Crowfoot). This is listed in the 'Flora of the British Isles' as comprising five sub-species which, however, are treated rather differently in the 'Flora of Gloucestershire'.
- ssp. *radians* (Revel). Clapham is recorded from Perrott's Brook and near Withington. ('Flora of Gloucestershire' as *R. heterophyllus* var *radians*.)
- ssp. *peltatus* (Schrank) Syme is recorded from Foss Bridge and Foxcote ('Flora of Gloucestershire' as *R. peltatus* Schrank). Also in an old Flora of the College as occurring near 'garage on Cirencester road'.
- ssp. *pseudofluitans* (Baker et Foggitt) Clapham is recorded near Cassey Compton, Foxcote and near Colesbourne. ('Flora of Gloucestershire' as *R. pseudo-fluitans* (Syme) Newb. ex Bak. et Fogg. ).
- (A further examination of the plants in the Churn near the College is desirable in order to determine whether the common plant there is *R. fluitans* or *R. aquatilis* ssp. *pseudofluitans*).
- R. ficaria* L. (Lesser Celendine). Locally abundant throughout the district.
- Aquilegia vulgaris* L. (Columbine). Recorded in the 'Flora of Gloucestershire' from 'Colesbourne Forest, 1862'; also from Chatcombe and Chedworth Woods. Seen not far from Seven Springs by D. E. Barbour about three years ago.
- Thalictrum flavum* L. (Common Meadow' Rue). Recorded from Colesbourne, Withington and Hilcot.

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