

RENDCOMB COLLEGE CHRONICLE

Vol. 10 No. 10

December, 1955

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Rendcomb College Chronicle

Volume 10, No. 10.

December, 1955.

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COLLEGE DIARY.

Summer Term 1955.

MAY.

4. —Term began.
14. —1st XI v. Cheltenham College 2nd XI (Away).
XI v. Marling Grammar School (Home).
17. —Two inches of snow fell during the afternoon. Electricity supply and telephone failed.
21. —“A” XI v. Kingham Hill 1st XI (Home).
23. —In St. Peter’s Church, Rendcomb, the Reverend V. S. M. Wheeler was instituted as Rector.
24. —A half-peal of Grandsire Doubles was rung in honour of the new Rector at Rendcomb Church by the College Ringers.
- 25.—1st XI v. Sir Thomas Rich’s School (Home).
Under 15 XI v. Sir Thomas Rich’s School Colts (Home).
26. —The General Election.

JUNE.

1. —1st XI v. Cheltenham Town 2nd XI (Away).
2nd XI v. Cotswold School 1st XI (Home).
3. —Commemoration Day (Opening of the College, June 2nd, 1920).
9. —Choir sang at Public Schools’ Festival Evensong,
Gloucester Cathedral.
10. —G. C. E. began with Advanced and Scholarship Level Examinations.
11. —The first game on the re-levelled playing field.
17. —Visit to Bristol to see T. S. Eliot’s “The Confidential Clerk”.
18. —“A” XI v. Dean Close 2nd XI (Home).
25. —1st XI v. Cheltenham Grammar School 1st XI (Home). Under 15 XI v. Cheltenham College Junior Colts (Home).

JULY.

2. —Founder’s Day.
6. —1st XI v. North Cerney C. C. (Home).
9. —2nd XI v. Cotswold School 1st XI (Home).
1st XI v. Cirencester Grammar School 1st XI (Away).
12. —Choir sang at Inaugural Organ Recital at Rendcomb Church.
13. —Tennis match with Wycliffe College 2nd VI.
14. —Party visited Gloucester Cathedral to see a performance of “Murder in the Cathedral” by T. S. Eliot.

- 16.—2nd XI v. King's School, Gloucester, 2nd XI (Home),
 1st XI v. Burford Grammar School 1st XI (Away)
17. —School Concert in Clock Hall.
- 20.—Visit to the Cheltenham Festival of Contemporary British Music.
 The Halle Orchestra conducted by Sir John Barbirolli.
27. —End of term.

COLLEGE OFFICERS.

Christmas Term, 1955.

Senior Prefect—R. N. Horne.

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

Prefect—M. G. Richards.

College Workman—R. W. Alder.

†**P. W. Man**—J. M. Astill.

†**Furniture Committee**—B. R. Paish, D. R. G. Griffiths,
 M. R. Horton.

Music Warden—T. W. Rowley.

Senior Music Librarian—R. W. Alder.

Pictureman—A. Harrison.

Church Collections and Deck Chairs—D. T. Hart.

Stage Men—R. O. G. Hayter, M. A. B. Forster, P. G. Auden, D. T. Hart, G.
 H. G. Herbert, I. A. N. Campbell, P. G. S. Airey.

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

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

Poultry Men—G. H. G. Herbert, D. T. Hart, A. T. Brooks, M. R. Horton, A.
 K. Bowley, P. C. R. Burns.

Choir Librarians—J. Shaw, F. A. G. Ferguson.

Lamp Men—I. A. N. Campbell, D. R. G. Griffiths.

Q. P. Concerts—J. R. Alder.

†Elected by the General Meeting.

MEETING OFFICERS.

Autumn Term, 1955.

Chairman—R. N. Home.

Secretary—J. R. Ellis.

Games Captain—T. D. A. Semple.

Games Committee—J. M. Astill, D. A. Godfrey.

Field Secretary—H. A. Gough.

Investigation Committee (Finance)—B. Glastonbury,
M. G. Richards, R. W. Alder.

Boys' Banker—J. R. Ellis.

Meeting Banker—D. W. Brown.

Senior Shopman—T. W. Rowley.

Games Committee Treasurer—J. E. Gooding.

House Committee Treasurer—M. A. B. Forster.

Finance Committee Treasurer—C. Handoll.

Auditors—R. F. Stimson, R. N. Horne.

Finance Committee—J. R. Windsor, R. A. Cockrell.

Shopmen—I. A. N. Campbell, R. W. Taylor.

Breakages Man—A. T. Brooks.

Entertainments Committee—C. H. Thomason, J. A. Richards,
R. C. Pilkington, J. D. R. Paine, M. D. Naish.

Magazine Committee—B. Glastonbury, J. R. Ellis, A. Harrison.

Record Committee (Classical)—M. G. Richards, R. W. Alder,
G. H. Richards.

Record Committee (Light)—R. N. Horne, M. G. Cooper.

Cycle Committee—A. P. Hayes, J. F. W. Beard, M. R. Horton.

Amplifier Technicians—T. W. Rowley, J. K. Walter.

Paperman—S. R. Merrett.

Drying Room Committee—J. B. R. Browne, G. H. G. Herbert, S. R. Merrett.

Rugby Games Wardens—J. D. R. Paine, I. A. N. Campbell.

Cricket Games Warden—R. D. Comley.

Tennis Games Warden—P. G. Auden.

Cricket Groundsman—C. Handoll.

Tennis Groundsman—R. C. Pilkington.

Senior Rugby Groundsmen—C. H. Thomason, G. H. G. Herbert.

Junior Rugby Groundsman—D. R. G. Griffiths.

Cricket Secretary 1956—D. W. Brown.
Council—R. N. Home, B. Glastonbury, M. G. Richards, R. O. G. Hayter, T. D. A. Semple, G. H. Richards, D. A. Godfrey.
End-of-Term Entertainments Committee—R. O. G. Hayter, T. D. A. Semple, G. H. Richards, D. A. Godfrey, H. A. Gough.
Selection Committee—R. N. Horne, B. Glastonbury, M. G. Richards, T. D. A. Semple, J. M. Astill.
Record Committee Treasurer—R. D. White.
Billiards Committee—J. M. Astill, M. G. Cooper, D. W. Brown.
Rule Committee—B. Glastonbury, M. G. Richards, R. W. Alder.
Sledge Committee—J. B. R. Browne, P. F. Barter, I. A. N. Campbell.

HONOURS.

P. J. Ryman—1st Class Engineering Diploma, Loughborough.
J. J. North—M. Sc. of the University of California.
R. W. Alder—State Scholarship in Science.
J. Gough—State Scholarship in Science.
M. G. Richards—State Scholarship in Science.
B. Glastonbury—County Major Scholarship, Gloucestershire.
J. R. Ellis—County Major Scholarship, Gloucestershire.
M. V. Harley—County Major Scholarship, Gloucestershire.
A. Harrison—County Major Scholarship, Gloucestershire.
R. N. Horne—County Major Scholarship, West Suffolk.

SCHOOL NOTES.

Old Boys from the first six or seven years after the foundation of the College will be interested to know that the North Duty Group was revived experimentally in September, 1954, and at the time of going to press looks as though it will again become a permanent unit.

* * *

During the Easter Holiday a Suxé Coke Breeze Burner was fitted to the main hot water boiler with a view to reducing our fuel bill. It was soon evident that the model fitted was too small and early in June a larger one was installed. This has so far been an unqualified success.

Mr. G. F. Graty with various helpers has been instrumental in casting a number of stiles in concrete. These have been erected at intervals round the Games Field.

* * *

We send good wishes to these boys who left at the end of term: R. A. Powell, J. B. O'Brien, J. Gough, J. Bolton King, D. J. B. Forster, A. G. B. Wallace, P. J. L. Swaite, A. C. Lucker, J. G. A. Dainty, A. D. Thomas, M. L. Ellis, G. E. Page.

* * *

We are grateful to the Reverend L. G. Allum for the gift of three Art books, and we acknowledge with thanks receipt of the following contemporaries: "Wycliffe Star", "Decanian", "Gresham", "Kingham Hill Magazine".

* * *

We welcome Mrs. E. Burchall who has succeeded Mrs. M. A. Baker as Linen Room Matron.

EXAMINATIONS.

The following have passed the General Certificate of Education Examination in one or more subjects at Midsummer, 1955.

At Ordinary Level. —J. R. Alder, P. G. Auden, J. F. W. Beard, D. W. Brown, R. D. Comley, M. A. B. Forster, J. E. Gooding, H. A. Gough, C. Handoll, D. T. Hart, S. R. Merrett, J. D. R. Paine, R. C. Pilkington, G. H. Richards, J. A. Richards, T. D. A. Semple, R. D. White.

At Advanced and Scholarship Levels. —R. W. Alder, J. M. Astill, J. Bolton King, J. R. Ellis, D. J. B. Forster, B. Glastonbury, J. Gough, M. V. Harley, A. Harrison, R. O. G. Hayter, R. N. Horne, J. B. O'Brien, R. A. Powell, M. G. Richards, T. W. Rowley, T. D. A. Semple, P. J. L. Swaite, A. G. B. Wallace.

OLD BOYS' NOTES.

Robert van den Driessche, who is at the Forestry School of the University College of North Wales, Bangor, has been elected Secretary of the Rowing Club for the season 1955-56. In the course of his duties he has to arrange a regatta at Chester.

* * *

H. P. Dainton, who is still with the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, is now Manager of the Board's Tobacco Warehouse at Stanley. This is reputed to be the largest in the world, some £200,000,000 worth of tobacco being stored there. Dainton is also a part-time lecturer at the Liverpool College of Commerce.

During the summer, Powys Thomas toured the continent with a company from the Stratford-on-Avon Theatre. He understudied Sir John Gielgud as “King Lear” and also assisted George Devine with the production.

John Gilchrist played in the Seniors’ Cricket Trial at Cambridge.

R. G. Betterton, the East Midlands Area Liaison Officer of the National Federation of Young Farmers’ Clubs, was one of the speakers at the 1955 Rural Life Conference at Reading University.

In September, 1954, Michael Butler was appointed to a Research Demonstratorship in the Department of Micro-Biology at Reading University.

Our congratulations to Ronald G. Daubeny, who was married to Miss A. R. Haldin at St. George’s, Hanover Square, London, on the 6th of July, 1955.

N. A. Perkins was nominated by the Scottish Chess Association to play in the British Championship at Aberystwyth in August. Earlier in the summer he played in his third county championship final—for Middlesex—and won both his games. He also went to Holland, with a Post Office team, to play at Amsterdam.

Michael J. Morgan has joined a firm of Chartered Accountants in Leeds. R. J. Kendal has taken a post with Messrs. Wiggins Teape and Co. Ltd., the paper makers, of Ivybridge, Devon.

C. M. Carus-Wilson won the 1954 Prior Prize at the University of Cambridge School of Architecture. He has passed the Intermediate examination for the Associateship of the Royal Institute of British Architects, and is working for his Final at the University School of Architecture, Edinburgh.

The following Old Rendcombian accepted invitations to Founder’s Day on July 2nd: —J. F. Alder and Mrs. Alder, G. H. W. Bodman, Squadron-Leader B. J. Brooks and Mrs. Brooks, M. A. Bullen, R. F. Butler, G. H. Bye and Mrs. Bye, J. G. Collett and Mrs. Collett, P. A. Cutts and Mrs. Cutts, N. Dalton, O. S. David, W. N. Durham, F. Dutton, J. M. Faulks and Mrs. Faulks, D. H. Hill, P. Jackson and Mrs. Jackson, E. J. M. Jefferies and Mrs. Jefferies, R. H. Jones, R. M. Lewis, A. C. Magor, R. W. Muchamore, K. E. Payne, N. A. Perkins, F. S. G. Richards, J. M. Rolfe, M. B. Shepherd, R. L. Short and Mrs. Short, E. B. Smith, A. R. Tenty and Mrs. Tenty, E. Webster.

MRS. M. A. BAKER.

Mrs. Baker left at the end of last term after serving for ten years as Linen Room Matron. She will be remembered for her continual friendliness and patience with the boys. Her work was never ending since with so many of us, no sooner were our clothes mended than they were again torn; yet she seldom complained. We wish her much happiness in her retirement.

MR. J. SMEDLEY.

Mr. Smedley left at the end of the Summer Term. He came to Rendcomb four years ago when the Art Department had been without a resident master in charge after the death of Mr. Molyneux. His task therefore was not only to teach in the Junior School but also to re-awaken and revitalize the Appreciation of Art and to help in drawing and painting those who had no art periods in their time-tables; a task which can best be done by a teacher almost always available and willing to help. Mr. Smedley gave much of his time to this part of the work and in particular his Wednesday evening lectures to the Sixth Form were very much appreciated. He also supervised the making and painting of settings for plays. He is at present teaching at a school in Nottinghamshire and we wish him every success in this new post.

OBITUARY.

Mr. J. B. Miller.

Mr. Jack Miller died at his cottage in Rendcomb on the 19th of July 1955, aged 78. For many years he was employed as a carpenter and joiner by Messrs. George Hayward and Son of North Cerney. He was a highly skilled and knowledgeable ringer and one of the band that in 1913 rang the only peal that has been recorded in the tower of Rendcomb Church. Early College ringers, will remember him as the first instructor when College ringing started in the late 1920's. It is interesting to record that at the age of 76 he was able and willing to join a scratch band that was assembled to ring at the Coronation Celebrations of 1953, and only a year ago he made the platform on which the new organ now stands.

The College ringers rang a muffled Quarter Peal of Grandsire Doubles after the funeral.

FOUNDER'S DAY.

Saturday, July the 2nd, 1955.

The Guest of Honour this year was Marshal of the Air Force Viscount Portal of Hungerford. We were particularly glad to welcome Lord Portal for he was in charge of Bomber Command during the Battle of Britain and it was to them and to the Few of Fighter Command that so many of us owed so much.

He spoke about the public school tradition and said how futile it was to think that the wearer of a tie with a certain pattern had advantages over all others in the sense that it was a passport or ticket to all the good jobs. In fact he thought it could in these days be a positive handicap. If the young man who had the right to wear it did not make a good impression at an interview for a post, his interviewer would say that he had not made the best use of his opportunities.

"It is what you make out of it that recommends you or not", Lord Portal continued. "There is no denying that only a tiny portion of the people can have the benefits of such an education." But the public school was a great school of leadership and without leadership this country would perish. He did not assert that all leaders should or did come from public schools, but if the education there was put to proper use, it provided a priceless training for leadership.

There was a great deal of talk now about everybody being equal, and critics seemed to think that because of equality it did not matter about leaders. All had immortal souls, the benefits of the Welfare State and freedom, but there must be dependence on leadership. Success came when people put their backs into their jobs and did not think of promotion at all.

"Be generous in your dealings with other people. Believe the best of everybody and not the worst, and trust people unless you have good reason not to do so".

The Headmaster said that examination results had been on a par with last year's, but added, "I feel that we must not take them for granted, for they will not continue without vigour, nor without work, nor above all without the right attitude to work" He pointed out that there was always a danger of a little complacency, and it did not follow in the least that because one's predecessors did well the present generation would do so.

The Chairman of the Governors, Lt.-Col. J. Godman, in his opening speech of welcome to Lord Portal and our other guests, referred to the continued illness of Lord Dulverton which had prevented his being with us again. Colonel Godman expressed the feelings of us all when he said that he hoped Lord Dulverton would soon be fully recovered.

After the assembly in the gymnasium, as usual, there was tea in a marquee on the lawn, and afterwards Dr. Herbert Sumsion gave two performances of a short recital on the new organ in the church, which had been presented by Lord Dulverton. The choir also sang a group of anthems. There were the usual Workshop and Laboratory Exhibitions.

PUPPETS.

“THE MATCH-BOX”

adapted from a Story by Hans Andersen.

Witch	...	.....			J. Shaw
Sailor.....					J. G. Scudamore
Dog	...	...	...		N. J. Price
Cat...	.....				F. A. G. Ferguson
Wolf					R. A. Cockrell
Princess Gorgeous...		...			M. J. N. Bryant
Herald.....					J. B. Gooch King
	...	.....			S. D. Hicks
Hangman...	...	...	...		D. R. Poole
Sound and lighting effects...					T. L. H. Benbow

The Puppeteers deserved the burst of enthusiastic applause which they received at the final curtain of their Summer Term Production, not only because of the good manipulation and placing of the “actors” but also for the skilful adaptation of Hans Andersen’s story to suit the scenery, costumes and dolls available.

The first scene was a wood by the King’s Highway where the Sailor was taking a stroll. Soon he met the Witch, who told him of immense treasure down in a cave below the forest, which was his for the taking, provided he would fetch for her a special box of matches she knew was down there. So he climbed the branches of a hollow tree whose trunk was the entrance to this cave. Then in the second scene (a Cave) we saw him come down from above with a bump. Here were chests full of coin, one of copper and the other two each of silver and gold, but unfortunately guarded by fierce animals, a dog, a cat and wolf—the dog and the cat much more frightening than those pets who sit by the fire at home. By various wiles the sailor fills his pockets first with copper, then with silver and last of all, having outwitted the wolf, with gold. Having found the matches for which the Witch sent him, he decided the box she wanted was nicer than his own, and on returning from fairy-land to the forest he gave her his own box and kept her’s. He then made his way into the town.

Scene 3 showed him walking in the Courtyard of the King's Castle and because this was a foreign country and he did not know the language and he could not understand the notices saying “keep out”. Feeling a little confused he sat down and decided to have a smoke using the Witch’s matches for the first time. What he did not know and what the older members of the audience had forgotten, was that these were not ordinary matches, nor were the dog, the cat and the wolf ordinary animals. They were the slaves of the matchbox as the genie was of Aladdin’s lamp. So at the first strike the dog appeared, much to his surprise, and asked him what he wanted. The sailor asked the dog, who was now his slave, what he could do to pass the time and he was told that the king had a beautiful daughter, Princess Gorgeous, who was virtually a prisoner, and whom he could rescue. She was incarcerated because it had once been forecast that she would marry a sailor. The hero of this story soon discovered that he was master not only of the dog, but of the cat and wolf as well. Through their efforts he was able to catch a glimpse of the Princess when she was looking through her window admiring the beauty of the sky from the gloom of the miserable room where she had to live. They had a brief conversation before being discovered, but eventually our hero was sentenced to be hanged.

The curtain rose on the final scene showing the gruesome gallows and the Hangman ready to perform his dreadful task. According to a custom maintained to this day, the sailor was given a last wish. He asked for a cigarette not only because he enjoyed a smoke, but also because of the power of his slaves whom he could summon by striking a match. Need we say more?

So—to use a phrase from “Peter and the Wolf”—the audience went away, contentedly, to their various Rendcomb commitments and your correspondent to make notes of this performance which was excellent in spite of one or two of the characters speaking a little too quickly.

MUSIC.

The musicians had a busy term. On the 23rd of May, members of the choir combined with the Village Choir to sing at the Induction of the new Rector. This service with its ceremony and processions, incidentally, showed the new organ to be all that had been hoped. Suitable quiet music could be played to underline the ceremony, while the brilliant tone provided suitable accompaniment for the processions of the Bishop and Clergy and for the singing of the large congregation which filled the church,

On the 9th of June, the choir took part in the Public Schools Festival Evensong in Gloucester Cathedral. The conductor, as usual, was Mr. Leonard Blake, Director of Music at Malvern College, and Dr. Herbert Sumsion was at the organ. The Canticles were sung to Moeran in D, and the three anthems (instead of a sermon) were “Glorious and Powerful God,” Wood; “Thou knowest Lord,” Purcell; “How beauteous are their feet,” Stanford.

Then on Founder’s Day, June the 2nd, the choir sang a group of anthems during the Organ Recital by Dr. Sumsion. The performance on this occasion, we are bound to say, did not reach the high standard they themselves set. However, when they repeated these items at the public Inaugural Organ Recital (as distinct from the Founder’s Day programme) on the 12th of July, 1955, they had completely recovered from whatever malaise had upset them. In particular their singing of Mundy’s “O Lord the Maker of all thing” was more than a pleasure to listen to, it was a moving experience. Their intonation was exact and their interpretation had the élan of a professional cathedral choir accustomed to singing two daily services. In this second recital the soloists were Mr. Eric Suddrick, the deputy Director of Music at Cheltenham College (organ), and Miss Wadna Keil, who played a group of violin solos accompanied by Mr. Suddrick.

* * *

At least one visit to the Cheltenham Festival of Contemporary British Music has become a regularity. This year we went to hear the Halle Orchestra on 20th July.

While it would be shutting one’s eyes to the truth to pretend that some of us would not prefer to hear this magnificent orchestra playing works that we all know, there is always a large number from Rendcomb who go each year to hear a programme of which at least one of the two major works is new. As the wisdom of the organisers of the Festival has decided that the second hall should consist of a classic, it is then that we are able to meet the orchestra on our ground, as it were, and get the most enjoyment from the finesse and precision of this wonderful instrument. When some of our composers flaunt acerbity and gloom, and the astringent sounds that come from their scores are to say the least puzzling, our main attention is divided between trying to make sense of curious noises and keeping our ears above the sound waves. There is not enough time to enjoy the playing: how can we then say anything about interpretation?

The concert we heard contained only one first performance. This was a suite compiled from the orchestral interludes from Lennox Berkeley’s opera “Lord Nelson”. Incidental music must stand on its feet qua music to be sure of a place in the concert

repertoire: this did not. There was certainly a lot of good stuff in it, and one could easily understand how fine it would be taking its proper place in the span of the drama, but in isolation it lacked unity and co-ordination.

The first item was a favourite of students of English Music: Sir Arthur Bliss's "Music for Strings". This is a direct successor to Elgar's "Introduction and Allegro" and its striking influence is not only apparent but acknowledged. Here, as in Elgar's masterpiece, are the contrasting groups, a small number of players against the full strings, and although we are not so used to Bliss's dialect as we are to Elgar's, it received a more favourable reception in the College party than might have been feared.

We confess that having, ourselves, heard the Cesar Franck Symphony more often than we should care to count, we were not particularly excited at the prospect of hearing it again, though it has always been accepted as one of the few classics which makes an immediate appeal that will, if anything can, transform a young listener from a mere concert-goer to a music-lover. But we had reckoned without Sir John Barbirolli: this was a tremendous performance—even some of the critics from the national papers stayed after the interval. Sir John takes the first movement very slowly and because of the "false start" of the first movement (after about three minutes of introduction), a slow tempo might well wreck the design. But this time it added to the grandeur, and Franck's chromaticism rose out of the bathos it can fall into, and took its proper place in expressing the composer's intentions. The symphony, in this performance, grew from a beginning of low, quiet notes, to a blaze of bright harmony and colour at the end of the last movement.

And the moral of our confession? One should never say one is tired of a symphony, rather one should confess to being tired of the performances one has been hearing recently. After all, there is always Barbirolli.

* * *

The Clock Hall is not in most people's estimation, an attractive place architecturally, but none can deny that there is a certain imposing quality about it. This was well shown when as an experiment a School Concert was held there at the foot of the stairs on the 17th of July. Acoustically it is an exciting place (as anyone who has walked through it with heavy shoes will agree) and it certainly gave the orchestra a richness and body that Big School or the Music Room never gave. The velvet richness of the deeper strings, and the clarity of the woodwinds was given its fullest value here, and one was made to realise some of the delights of listening to a small orchestra in imposing surroundings.

Handel's "Arrival of the Queen of Sheba" was a very happy choice for such an occasion, belonging as it does to an age of private music. One could wish it could have been taken a trifle faster perhaps, but for all that it was played with very definite feeling despite a few slight faults from the woodwind. Miss Keil's playing of the Pugnani/Kreisler "Praeludium e Fuga" was to say the very least exciting, as was of course Locillet's "Trio Sonata in B Minor" played by Mrs. Bendixson, Miss Keil and Mr. Tooze; but the most noteworthy thing about the concert was that neither of those polished professional performances made the amateur performances of the whole orchestra seem inadequate. Indeed Haydn's "Clock Symphony" (101) was played with real skill and understanding to complete one of the most successful concerts we have had. We are most grateful to all our friends who so kindly came to play with us.

T. S. ELIOT'S "THE CONFIDENTIAL CLERK" AT THE THEATRE ROYAL BY THE BRISTOL 'OLD VIC' COMPANY.

This was an enjoyable experience, but the play could never have been a real success. Eliot is trying to do too much. He attempts to combine a comedy, almost a farce, with a problem play. "The Confidential Clerk" does not quite succeed as a comedy because there is always the underlying seriousness of the situation, and because the author is still obsessed with the "thousand sordid images". Here it is the unpleasantness of illegitimacy. Neither does it quite succeed as a problem play. The problem is whether or not to accept—

“.....the terms life imposes upon you,

Even to the point of accepting make-believe,” and it is one that is important to everybody; but Eliot poses it to a set of characters in an obscure and artificial situation.

The high standards of acting and production of the Bristol Old Vic Company, made it possible to present all the characters realistically. Sir Claude Mulhammer, a financier with a vocation to be a second-rate potter, is really a very ordinary person and this does not give much scope to the actor. Eggerson demands more acting. His mannerisms and facial expressions were very convincing; but he was at a disadvantage because he seemed to be the only character who was consciously speaking verse. B. Kaghan is a small part, but it was played with complete confidence and obvious enjoyment. Colby Simpkins, as a character is a challenge

to any actor or producer, for at one moment he seems almost a disembodied intellect, and at the next he is a man suffering from acute emotional strain. Mrs. Guzzard is even more enigmatic. She is a sort of adult fairy-godmother, for her not very pleasant information is given by granting wishes. The character could easily become a superior moralist, and the actress had evidently been encouraged to develop this conception. Furthermore, she seemed to enjoy rather than sympathise with the unfortunate predicament of the others.

The two principal ladies were superb. Lady Elizabeth Mulhammer, a charming crank, made her first entrance clothed in the very latest A-line dress and a coolie's hat. Her voice and expressions were ideally suited to a woman who, although a trifle simple-minded herself, thought that everyone else was rather abnormal. Lucasta Angel was played by Rosemary Harris, whose beauty and vivacity had already been seen in "Much Ado About Nothing". Her voice was crisp, clear, and full of expression, and whether she was being witty, passionate, frank or tender, she always seemed to exude charm and vitality.

There was nothing extraordinary about the sets. The plan of Sir Claude's business room was very suitable, for it was sufficiently formal, and fitted in with the theatre furnishings. Colby Simpkin's flat was odd, but it had to be so, because Lady Elizabeth planned the decorations. It was a sort of log cabin with the floor on different levels, and the furniture varied from a grand piano to a tubular chair. Nevertheless, it matched the youthful intellect which occupied it.

It is difficult to draw any conclusions from the Bristol production, because everyone seemed to enjoy it for different reasons. We can only speculate, for as Eliot himself says—"What you find in it depends on what you bring to it."

"MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL."

On Thursday, 14th July, a party from Forms IV, V and VI, went to a performance of T. S. Eliot's "Murder in the Cathedral", in Gloucester Cathedral.

"Murder in the Cathedral" is, of course, no ordinary play. It is perhaps best described as a dramatic examination, written largely in verse, of the personal and political aspects of martyrdom. Consequently one must not expect to find in a production of this kind, things which one should look for in a play. There is none of that gradual unfolding of character which can be expected in most serious modern drama. The characters have a poetically obvious

symbolism which is nearer to that found in a medieval mystery play, than to the underlying symbolism to be found in modern drama. Nevertheless the problems raised in the play must be presented so as to show their personal relevance to the individuals of the audience. Any tendency by the producer to minimise this "personal" aspect of the problems will inevitably give the production an artificiality and irrelevance which it need not have. How far then, did this production secure that balance between stylisation and naturalness that was needed to preserve the dignity that such a work demands?

On the whole it was preserved admirably. The most difficult part of such a production to present convincingly is, of course, the Chorus. It must not be artificially distant like a plain-song chant, nor must it be a confused chatter of cathedral starlings: both extremes minimise its relevance to the dramatic whole of the production, and to the personal experience of the audience. Each extreme was in fact avoided, and a balance was held remarkably well both visually and in the voices of the Women of Canterbury. There was a slight difficulty in hearing at first, owing no doubt to the extraordinary acoustical difficulties of Gloucester Cathedral. Certain types of voices seemed to rock the pillars while others were lost whistling round the clerestory; but by the end of the evening both the audience and the players seemed to have adjusted themselves to the situation and almost every word could be heard.

Thomas Becket himself, played by Martin Browne, the producer, was remarkably easy to listen to and did in fact achieve just that dignity that was wanted. It was perhaps the more intellectual of his lines that were most impressive: the statement of the temptation to do the right things for the wrong reason was given with just that mixture of dignity and a kind of terror that the production needed.

The Tempters and the Knights (played by the same four people) did not quite strike the very difficult balance between the flesh and blood and the ethereal that was demanded of them. They lacked a certain quality of subtle insinuation as tempters; but were far more convincing as knights where they had more scope for satirical studies of those who put forward the convincing arguments of worldly common sense. On the whole their individual personalities tended to obtrude too much.

One tendency of the play as written is a slight overweight of intellectual argument. This was more than adequately compensated for by the fact of its being staged in a cathedral and by a wonderful use of lighting, in particular for the final tableau, where the combination of coloured flood-light and cathedral stone, created an unforgettably lovely finish to the evening.

INDUCTION OF THE NEW RECTOR.

"Reverend Father in God, I present unto you this meet and proper person to be instituted to the Cure of Souls in this Parish." So begins a very majestic and moving ceremony of the Church of England, the service of Institution and Induction. On 23rd May the College Bellringers and a part of the choir joined with villagers, visiting priests and many others, in the induction of the Reverend V.S.M. Wheeler to the combined benefices of Rendcomb and Colesbourne. Rendcomb has been without a regular minister since May, 1953, so, although the Reverend L. G. Allum and the Reverend R. W. Walker did admirable work filling the gap, there was almost a sigh of relief mingled with our pleasure at seeing the freshly decorated rectory once more inhabited.

This is no place to give a detailed account of the service, but rather to pick out a few of the more impressive parts. It was divided into two sections. The first was of a general nature: Mr. Wheeler was instituted to the benefices, and vowed allegiance to Queen and Bishop. The second, the Induction, was more detailed and ceremonious. After leaving the church and regaining admittance by striking three times on the door, the new Rector was presented with the Mandate of Induction. He then chimed a bell as a message to those parishioners not present, and went in procession to the various important parts of the church, the font, prayer desk, pulpit, lectern and altar, promising to put each of them to their intended use. The congregation was exhorted to help and pray for its new priest, and the climax of the service was passed. The Bishop's address was a useful explanation of the preceding ceremony.

After the service the festivities. In this case it consisted of an enormous feast of delicious cakes, biscuits and pastries of all shapes, sizes and colours. We have no knowledge as to who actually supplied them for this crowd of something like four hundred people, including a contingency of Mr. Wheeler's old parishioners from Evenlode and Broadwell, but whoever they were we offer our rather belated but grateful thanks. When almost everyone had left for home a few college boys helped to wash up, a risky business perhaps, but only one cup was broken, and the spirit of goodwill was too predominant for even that to be taken seriously.

COMMEMORATION DAY, JUNE 3rd.

There are certain Rendcomb functions for which the weather is the same almost every year. Thus it has become quite a tradition to have fine weather on Founder's Day, cold weather for the Old Boys' hockey match, and rain for Commemoration Day. This year the tradition was by no means broken and there was a steady downpour all day.

Many plans were naturally cancelled when people looked out of the window on the Friday morning and dejected boys flocked into Cheltenham for a day at the swimming baths or the pictures. The bellringers (see page 21) were not dependent on the weather, nor were the prosaic individuals who went home by car. But certain hardy persons persisted with their plans despite all the rain. Lunch packets were collected, saddle-bags and rucksacks were packed, and after breakfast capes were put on and the more adventurous of us set out. Several long bicycle trips were accomplished. One boy cycled through Swindon, Malmesbury, Chippenham and Bath to Bristol and so home—a distance of 120 miles, in the twelve hours. Two more senior boys, one on an extremely decrepit “bone-shaker”, did a 70-mile tour via Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Evesham, Broadway, and then across country through Snowhill, Stanton, Stanway, Bourton-on-the-Water, and back. On their way they saw, in Ashchurch Parish Church, an original copy of Foxe’s “Book of Martyrs” dated c.1585. Another boy went to the Severn Wild-Fowl trust at Slimbridge. Again another cycled to Oxford to see his brother at Exeter College. A group of four cycled to Northleach, where they (just) caught the Oxford bus after a sprint up the High Street. In Oxford they went to Blackwell’s, failed to get the book they wanted, and then, after taking fifteen minutes to find his rooms, visited an O. R. who is also at Exeter. Here they spent a pleasant hour and, on leaving him, were reduced to the cinema as a means of spending the afternoon. The cricket match in the Parks which they had originally intended to see was washed out.

Despite the rain, which did not stop at any time during the day, most people enjoyed themselves. Commemoration Day provides a very pleasant break just before the “examination season”.

THE WEATHER.

The Anglo-Saxon has always been noted for his composure, his ability to face fantastic odds and his sense of humour. England has always been noted for its meteorological vagaries. That is as it should be. However it was beginning to seem doubtful if such a state of affairs would continue, for Anglo-Saxon reserve has in fact over the past few years shown marked signs of weakening in the face of opposition. It was also hinted in certain quarters that the English sense of humour was flagging for it had been observed that certain native Englishmen were failing to smile at jocular references to the “English summer”. Many well-informed people were beginning to expect emergency Government action on the

matter, and it was in fact believed that but for the General Election this would have been taken.

Matters came to a head half way through May, however, when, after four days of hail and cold rain, it began to snow on the evening of the 17th and the electricity and telephone broke down. People went in terror of the inevitable joke, but surely it was beyond a laughing matter. The tulips were buried under foot-high drifts, trees in full leaf lost so many branches under their weight of snow that the Wilderness looked like a battle-ground. One boy in fact tobogganed on the morning of the 18th. The 22nd May was also worthy of note. There was no rain that day. Commemoration Day was of course unbelievably wet and the rain continued through June almost incessantly. On the 9th and 10th there was a frost. Government action to force us to smile was expected at any minute but the crisis was averted at the last moment just before Founder's Day. On the following Sunday it rained almost heavier than ever. That evening, however, there was an almost perfect sunset. Noah's rainbow could not have been more portentous.

That was the last rain of the summer. A succession of cloudless days lengthened into weeks and finally months with no rain. Rendcomb grass looked like coconut matting wearing thin over grey crazy paving, and most Rendcomb boys looked like Sioux Indians while those fairer ones suffered from loss of face (literally in shreds). Actually nobody quite died of sunstroke, but the cricket crease and boundary marks were still visible on October 20th, and only one game of rugger (November 10th) had been played on Top by the time we went to press (November 20th).

GARAGE DOORS.

After the Advanced Level examinations were finished, boys were given the job of making doors for a tractor garage in the stable-block between Mr. Hull's flat and the garage. The tractor had formerly been placed in the garage with the staff cars but a recent increase in the number of these had necessitated its removal.

The doors are of four sections making two double-hinged doors opening outwards. There is a window in the upper half of the outer sections and the rest is panelled; the arch above the doors is glazed. Fortunately the wood was ordered planed and cut roughly to lengths and a large-scale operation was undertaken in the outer courtyard where a large pile of wood drilled from mortices, several sunburnt backs, and four doors, were produced. Despite the size of the task the doors materialised remarkably

quickly and were finally held up by the non-appearance of the panelling. When this finally appeared, however, the doors were quickly glued and cleaned and taken over to the Stables, where the jambs and lintel had already been fixed, and fitting was begun. Then followed glazing and puttying and finally painting. There was only time to put on one coat of priming before the end of term. These doors completed the process of filling in open cart-sheds at the stable-block. This was begun shortly after the war with the professional construction of the Chemistry Laboratory in the S.E. corner which was followed by the Biology Laboratory made by the boys in the S.W. corner.

“ LAB. DECOR.”

The “non-cricketers” this term, aided by a few others of the School on P.W. afternoons, and by some of the VI Form after their examinations, redecorated the General Laboratory. Generations of dust, ink stains, experiments that blew up, and the natural ageing of distemper, had made this room dingier and dingier. Indeed, high hopes were entertained that, deterred by the awful prospect of the abode of science, young Rendcombians might be persuaded to leave the primrose paths of Physics and Biology for the straiter ways of the Arts.

All that, however, is passed. Distemper the colour of half dried mustard was scraped and washed, loose and cracking plaster was replaced, as, breathing a heady atmosphere of plaster dust, the decorators set to work. In two back-aching afternoons the ceiling was given a new immaculate white-wash and the floor a tasteful polka-dot design (afterwards removed), while, with the help of those who were released from their examinations, the walls were given their new coat of cream distemper. That almost untameable substance, aluminium paint, was applied to the radiators and pipes with (in most cases) an admirably steady hand; the window frames were painted and the woodwork polished. Miraculously the place was finished in time for Founder’s Day.

It now remains to be seen what effect the new “General Lab.” will have on science students.

RETURN TO 1755.

The Cirencester and Tewkesbury constituency held an unusual but not very exciting election, for there was never any real doubt as to who would be returned. It was unusual because the tradition by which the Speaker of the House of Commons is not opposed was broken by an Independent Socialist. Here, in the upper part of the school, the election was equally unexciting, for there were no official candidates and the occupants of the Small Classroom organised the ballot on strictly formal lines. There was some campaigning, but those who knew themselves to be in the majority treated with superior calm anyone who dared to cast doubts on the wisdom of their policy. The Conservatives polled 22 votes to 11 Labour and 9 Liberal.

The junior election was a far more riotous affair; almost Hogarthian in character, for it was fought in the true 18th century tradition. Candidates and voters alike were willing to accept bribes, and there was a noticeable absence of logical reasoning. Walls and desks in Big School were decorated with advertisements for obscure political factions, almost outnumbering the more conventional requests to vote for Tony or for Clem. The Conservative candidate was elected, but rumour has it that he accepted a bribe to change sides at the last moment. When questioned he said he wasn't quite sure which party he was supposed to be supporting, and added that a demonstration of free enterprise by some seniors concerning the sharing out of cream buns, had made him doubt the efficacy of his Conservative principles.

The election took on a more serious aspect on the following day when results were announced from all parts of the country. A considerable amount of confusion was caused by an electricity cut which lasted throughout the morning, but fortunately a crystal set had been constructed in the Cabinet and reports on the state of the parties were regularly circulated.

BELL-RINGING.

As it is now over ten years since the College Bellringers were re-formed after the war, it is time an account was given of how this ancient exercise is practised at Rendcomb. St. Peter's Church has a tower of six bells, three of them dating from before the Reformation, and as it is within two stone-throws of the College perhaps it is not surprising that, as in the past, we should have so many enthusiasts. Indeed for part of last year there were four groups instead of the usual three.

The third group (and a fourth when it arises) learns to ring the bells round in order beginning with the lightest and ending with the heaviest, the tenor. It takes about a year to be able to do this properly. The first lessons begin with the clappers tied and ringers learn to pull the bell up so that it is swinging in a full vertical circle. After passing through several stages of learning to control the bells, they begin to ring rounds still with the clappers tied. When they can do this evenly the bells are untied and the band goes on to learn "changes".

Change-ringing has been practised in England for 350 years and is an art which is virtually unknown on the Continent. In fact it is confined to the British Commonwealth except for certain communities in the United States, in which the Church of England's influence is strong. Change-ringing consists in methodically altering the order in which the bells are rung. To achieve this, a ringer has to follow a different bell each time he rings his own. The way these changes proceed is strictly laid down and there are today some hundreds of different methods, each with its own pattern.

At this stage the ringer enters the second group. Here the change-ringing begins with a method called "grandsire". First, ten changes are acquired, then thirty, then sixty, and finally one hundred and twenty. This is the greatest number of changes that can be rung on six bells when the tenor, the heaviest, is always rung last in each change. Hand-bells are often used in the early stages of learning a method.

The present first group has been ringing changes for three years and "six-score" for nearly two. Once six-scores can be rung accurately and evenly, the only extension possible is to ring these one hundred and twenty changes in a number of different orders. In this way a "whole peal" of five thousand and forty changes may be built up. This is the greatest number that can be rung on eight bells when the tenor is always rung last in each change. The first group have so far rung several half-peals, each lasting about an hour and a half. They are now learning to ring a method of changes called "Stedman". Having mastered the art of rope-sight, a new method is learned much more quickly than "Grandsire" and a six-score may be rung after about a dozen practices.

During the Summer Term the First Group usually pay several visits to other towers. This year they have been on three such expeditions. The most memorable was the one on Commemoration Day when they motored nearly 400 miles. They travelled down to South Devon, over Dartmoor, and rang for about an hour in the now almost legendary church of Widecombe-in-the-Moor, and on to the coast to ring at St. Winwalloe, East Portlemouth. Then they turned homewards; on the way they looked round Exeter Cathedral remembering, somewhat wistfully perhaps, that here

was a famous peal of fourteen bells, the tenor weighing 72 cwt. They arrived back at ten o'clock after a memorable sixteen hours on the road. Their only regret was that the weather was inclement, and the magnificent views of Dartmoor were almost completely obscured.

During the term they also visited Chipping Campden (30 cwt. tenor) and Kempsford. Earlier in the year they rang in the towers of North Cerney and South Cerney and also Northleach.

END OF TERM DANCE—JULY 26th.

The End of Term is a time of happiness and celebration, and it is therefore natural that the dance on the last evening of term should have become popular in recent years. This term, however, it excelled any that had been before. Several ladies were invited from outside, five of them French girls staying at the homes of two College boys, and the rest friends and acquaintances of others. The dance took place in Saul's Hall and there was the efficient amplifying system that we have come to take almost for granted from successive Amplifier Technicians. The Headmaster had kindly given an extension until 10.15, and everything, including the wearing of home-suits, an unusual sight at Rendcomb dances, seemed set to make the evening memorable.

There has always been at Rendcomb a difficulty in getting boys to conquer their diffidence at an occasion such as this, but this time there was no hesitation. From the first dance, almost immediately after School Prayers at half past seven, the ladies were snapped up within seconds. Soon we heard tentative excursions into French and then snatches of conversation varying from the apparently intelligent to "Je ne parle pas beaucoup de Français" or the even plainer "Je ne parle pas Français". Gradually the hubbub, laughter and temperature rose, but still the ladies nobly continued to dance every dance. Unfortunately a quarter past ten came all too soon. Everyone went to bed for the last time that term happy in the knowledge that he had finished the term in the best possible way.

CYCLE TAG.

About six years ago Cycle Tag on the forecourt was an extremely popular summer term activity. Recently it had lapsed into virtual oblivion and was a thing that one talked about when discussing the "good old days"; a thing of which you said that no-one would ever again play it as well.

This year however there was a great increase in the popularity of the game and it soon returned to its old standards of skill. Once

again we heard the squeal of tyres and the occasional sickening crash and the roar of laughter that we had heard before; once more the forecourt was covered with innumerable skid-marks. Exactly the same 'bikes' were seen again—the tiny, low-g geared, highly manoeuvrable “scooters” that are so well suited to the game. Once more we saw the buckled wheel being kicked straight, the mass of broken spokes in a wheel defying all laws of physics by keeping the tyre at (roughly!) the same distance from the hub as the bike moves along. Once more we, the saner, duller members of the community stood by and watched, marvelling, and realised that here we have something that in its way is possibly unique.

CRICKET REPORT—SUMMER, 1955.

For some time now it has been the custom in Games reports to complain of the weather. This term however, no such criticism can possibly be made, for after the usual cold May and a little rain early in June, there was unbroken sunshine up to the end of the term. It was a great pity that the rain early in June cancelled two of our best matches, as these matches could have given us a much more accurate indication of how strong we were.

The 1st XI prospered in the sunshine and were unbeaten. Out of the seven matches played, four were won and three were drawn. Before the season started it was thought that our batsmen would be the strongest part of the team, but they began rather inconsistently. This was because of a failure of the middle batsmen to consolidate sound starts. Later on the batting became more dependable. The bowling was very strong and it was a pity that some capable bowlers had very few opportunities. The fielding showed a great improvement on last year and few catches were dropped. The ground fielding was clean and safe, but the throwing could have been more accurate. Often needless energy was wasted by fielders who ran alongside a ball in the field. Valuable runs can be saved by a fielder who decides where a ball is going and who does not chase it but runs to cut it off. It was surprising how few catches were offered. During the season hardly a single slip catch was given, and only ten catches were caught in the seven matches. Nearly all the wickets we took were Bowled or L.B.W. (75.8 percent.), which perhaps testifies to the accuracy of our bowling. The fact that our opponents scored only an average of 48.8 runs per hour, and that our batsmen managed to put 63.4 into each hour also points in the same direction.

Only two games were run simultaneously this year, even though the new square was used after half-term,

Next year we can look forward to being able to run three games at once. In this respect the idea of training a boy umpire was revived and we are grateful to G. H. G. Herbert for the assistance he gave in games. He soon became a most reliable umpire.

The 1st XI was settled fairly soon and few changes were made. The only alterations were minor changes in the batting order. At the beginning of the season R. W. Alder was tried as an opening bat to partner J. M. Astill, but R. J. Lawson came into that position for the second match and stayed there. Lawson always looked for runs but he did not quite get his foot to the ball playing forward or his body behind it playing back. H. A. Gough was at No. 3 most of the season, but did not have as much success as last year. He had some bad luck on occasions, but is still impetuous, and has a crooked backlift.

D. A. Godfrey at No. 4 scored more runs than anyone else in the side. Over half the runs off the bat were scored by Astill and Godfrey together. He was very aggressive and his off driving and hooking were especially good. He was also one of the very few batsmen who could use a square cut. His bowling was not as hostile as last year as he inclined to pitch short. His fielding at cover was outstanding. R. W. Alder at No. 5, did not quite fulfil his potentialities. He has a beautiful off drive but very often was out when apparently settled. He should score many more runs next year if he can tighten his defence. As a bowler he was the most successful in the side. He bowled a great variety of balls, including balls which turned from the leg at speed. He was very hostile and also economical. Due to the variations which he produced the batsmen rarely knew what was coming next and consequently his bad balls were rarely hit hard. M. G. Richards at No. 6 had few chances to show his abilities but he batted sensibly when he had a chance and was able to push the score along quickly after early batsmen had built a foundation.

The main fault of the batting as a whole was that many batsmen attempted to hook or sweep balls off their wicket. The results of these strokes were invariably disastrous. While it is possible to play hook shots to short bowling on good wickets, it is very risky on most school wickets where the ball comes off at irregular heights. At least three people, who should have known better, were often out in this way, and others were lucky to escape.

None of the other players had much chance to show their abilities as batsmen, but T. D. A. Semple showed that he could hit the ball hard, and B. Glastonbury that he could play up and down the line if necessary. Two newcomers to the team were C. Handoll and R. C. Pilkington. Handoll developed into a very useful opening bowler. He was very accurate and sometimes produced an excellent ball which broke back to trim the bails. He

also delivered the ball from the end of the crease and would benefit by varying his point of delivery. Pilkington had few chances but he was accurate and produced some variations when he did bowl. He might do better if he flighted the ball more. The other member of the team was R. A. Powell, who was very useful in the field.

H. A. Gough kept wicket competently but did not develop quite as much as had been hoped. He should try to get up to the wicket more often to support the medium paced bowlers.

Astill made a good captain. His handling of the team on the field was good in its quiet efficiency and off the field he was most conscientious. He was of course by far the most accomplished cricketer in the side, his batting having a monumental soundness and his bowling generally a relentless accuracy. Two very small criticisms might be made. As a batsman he must not allow his powers of attack to decline too far; and as a captain he must not be afraid of a boldly imaginative field when dealing with purely defensive batting by opponents: but these are small criticisms of a most excellent season.

J. R. Ellis and R. N. Horne played a few games. Ellis was perhaps the most stylish batsman in the school but he failed to hit the ball hard. Horne experimented with leg-breaks and in doing so lost nearly all of his accuracy. He turned into a capable captain of the 2nd XI.

The 2nd XI was fairly strong and won two of its three matches. The main weakness was the fielding which was very poor. There was also a shortage of bowlers. Prominent among the batsmen were J. A. Richards and A. G. B. Wallace, and among the bowlers J. Gough and B. R. Paish. J. Gough also had one excellent innings in an 'A' XI match, where he made 43 in half an hour.

The Junior XI this year was very weak. While there were plenty of people who could bowl, there was hardly a batsman in the side. Four times out of six the team scored less than 30. Among the batsmen only A. K. Bowley tried to hit the ball and he is very promising if he can acquire a defence. There were many bowlers, of whom the most promising were D. R. G. Griffiths, R. F. Stebbing, R. A. Cockrell and A. D. Thomas. R. D. Comley captained this rather weak side adequately.

The prospects for the 1st XI next year are uncommonly bright. Only R. A. Powell has left and there will still be 13 players who have had 1st XI experience, and seven of these have had two or more years in the team.

We should like to thank Mr. James, Mr. Hull and Mr. Haywood for coaching and umpiring, and especially Mr. Hull, who showed seemingly endless patience in coaching the juniors. The keenness of Forms I to IV was due almost entirely to him. We

should also like to thank Mr. Telling and the men for the work they did in connection with the cricket, and all the other people who contributed to a very successful season.

RESULTS.

1st XI.

May 14th. v. Cheltenham College 2nd XI. Away. Drawn.

Rendcomb 115—9 dec. (Godfrey 37, Astill 25).

Cheltenham College 104—6 (Alder 3—28).

A slow start was consolidated by a good innings by Godfrey. We collapsed after tea, losing 5 wickets for 13 runs. Cheltenham had 80 minutes to get the runs but accurate bowling by Alder and excellent fielding kept the runs down.

May 25th. v. Sir Thomas Rich's 1st XI. Home. Won by 8 wkts. Sir

Thomas Rich's 38 (Astill 4—2, Alder 2—3).

Rendcomb 111—6 (Astill 20, Godfrey 20).

Astill and Alder took the last 6 wickets for only 5 runs and we won by 8 wickets. We continued to give our middle batsmen useful practice.

June 1st. v. Cheltenham Town C. C. 2nd XI. Away. Drawn.

Cheltenham 114 (Alder 3—10).

Rendcomb 61—8 (Astill 22 not out).

Cheltenham were 39—6 at one time but recovered well. We hit 20 in the first 15 minutes, but then collapsed till Glastonbury arrived to play out time with Astill.

June 25th. v. Cheltenham G. S. 1st XI. Home. Drawn.

Rendcomb 126—6 dec. (Astill 35, Lawson 26, Richards, M.

G. 21 not out).

Cheltenham 57—7 (Alder 4—17).

This was the first match on our new square. After a good first wicket partnership we batted consistently. Stubborn batting by our opponents prevented a win.

July 6th. v. North Cerney C. C. Home. Won by 38 runs.

Rendcomb 73 (Godfrey 25).

North Cerney 35 (Handoll 4—16, Astill 3—1).

Everyone failed except Godfrey and Alder, who added 45 for the 4th wicket; but the bowlers saved the match.

July 9th. v. Cirencester G. S. 1st XI. Away. Won by 85 runs.

Rendcomb 128—4 dec. (Godfrey 63, Gough H. 37 not out).
Cirencester 43 (Alder 4—9, Godfrey 2—5).

We lost a wicket in the first over but Godfrey batting very well added 40 with Astill and 80 with Gough. Our bowling soon ran through the opposition.

July 16th. v. Burford G. S. 1st XI. Away. Won by 8 wickets. Burford 43

(Alder 5—12, Astill 4—13).

Rendcomb 46—2 (Godfrey 20, Astill 18 not out).

We started late, but Alder and Astill took 8 wickets while only 5 runs were scored. Burford were dismissed soon after tea and the runs easily hit off. Lawson was out in the first over but Astill and Godfrey added 41.

‘A’ XI.

May 21st. v. Kingham Hill 1st XI Home. Drawn.

Rendcomb 103 (Gough, J. 43, Ellis, J., 20).

Kingham 30—6 (Alder 3—7).

June 18th. v. Dean Close 2nd XI. Home. Drawn.

Dean Close 102 (Pilkington 6—24).

Rendcomb 66—8 (Richards, M. G. 30).

2nd XI.

June 1st. v. Cotswold School 1st XI. Home. Won.

Cotswold School 35 (Paish 6—11).

Rendcomb 87 (Semple 37).

July 9th. v. Cotswold School 1st XI Home. Won.

Rendcomb 88 (Wallace, A. 35).

Cotswold School 48 (Gough, J. 6—18).

July 16th. v. Kings School, Gloucester, 1st XI. Home. Lost.

Kings School 139—9 dec. Rendcomb 68.

Junior XI (Under 15).

May 14th. v. Marling G. S. Home. Drawn.

Marling 102 (Cockrell 3—0). Rendcomb 26—5.

May 25th. v. Sir Thomas Rich’s Colts. Home. Lost.

Sir T. Rich’s 161 (Griffiths 3—31). Rendcomb 23.

June 25th. v. Cheltenham College Junior Colts. Home. Lost.
Rendcomb 58 (Barter 21).
Cheltenham College no (Griffiths 3—10, Stebbing 4—22,
Cockrell 2—2).

July 9th. v. Cirencester G. S. U. 15 XI. Away. Won.
Rendcomb 83 (Bowley 20).
Cirencester 64 (Griffiths 4—25, Stebbing 3—16, Cockrell 2—7).

U. 14 XI.

May 21st. v. Kingham Hill U. 14 XI. Home. Lost.
Rendcomb 29. Kingham Hill 96 (Thomas 4—24).

July 16th. v. Kings School U. 14 XI. Home. Lost.
Kings School 133—2 dec. Rendcomb 21.

TENNIS.

English tennis players will never be pleased with the English summer. This year we were at least satisfied since after a bad start in May and early June, we were only once interrupted in our sport.

The tennis flourished with the weather and if figures speak better than words, despite tennis not being an official game, over two hundred and fifty games were played in spare time.

The standard has been encouragingly high throughout the School and good games were to be seen on all courts. We were able to produce a strong first VI, and could, had the need arisen, have played a second VI as well.

In a most enjoyable match against Wycliffe College 2nd VI, we were leading by four matches to two when play was stopped by a very heavy thunderstorm. Our team was: M. G. Richards and D. A. Godfrey, T. M. Astill and B. Glastonbury, T. R. Ellis and R. N. Horne.

NATURAL HISTORY SUPPLEMENT.

DECEMBER, 1955.

A further analysis of Barn-Owl pellets.

Fifty Barn-Owl pellets were brought to the College in June from the same roost as those collected last December, and were dissected so that the contents could be compared with the December collection. (See March, 1955, issue).

The dissected pellets contained the following remains:

	December, 1954	June, 1955
Field-Vole	75	101
Wood-Mouse	50	9
Common Shrew	37	75
Brown Rat	18	0
Bank-Vole	6	5
Small birds	6	0
House-Mouse	3	0
Pygmy Shrew	1	0
Beetles (mostly Carabus)	1	33
Total Vertebrates	196	190

This shows some interesting differences in the species-totals between the two seasons, although the total weight of food is probably much the same in both.

The large increase in the number of beetles taken in the summer is quite easily understood in terms of availability: more beetles are active at this season than in December. The fact that the owl caught fewer Wood-Mice and Brown Rats in the summer is probably largely due to the fact that the foliage covers these species more effectively at this season, whereas the Field-Vole and the Common Shrew prefer more open haunts and thus may fall prey to the owl more easily.

The ground over which this owl hunts consists largely of woodland, grassland and parkland with scattered trees, but there is also some bracken and an area of lake-side marsh.

T. D. A. Semple.

Badger-watching.

Towards the end of the Summer Term a small group of Sixth Form boys was able to spend some time in watching badgers under the guidance of Mr. Swaine.

This year only one pair of badgers is in residence in Conigre Wood and there are two cubs, whereas last year there were no young. An enjoyable evening was spent watching the cubs after the mother had departed on her nightly travels. Perhaps our first

vigil, at sett A, was slightly marred by the persistent attentions of gnats. These were remarkably adept in alighting on one's face just when a badger decided to appear, thus causing acute irritation which demanded considerable self-control!

On another visit the family, this time including the boar, was observed to be living in the second of the two setts A and B, and it is apparent that the animals frequently change their habitation between these two.

A. P. Hayes.

Rendcomb Woodlice.

Woodlice belong to the large Order Isopoda of the Crustacea and are interesting in being terrestrial members of a predominantly aquatic Class.

A start has been made on listing the woodlice of the Rendcomb area. Those species collected were identified by means of B. B. Edney's 'The Woodlice of Great Britain and Ireland' (Proc. Linn. Soc., 1953).

Trichoniscidae.

Trichoniscus pusillus Brandt. About 4 mm long, a little less than half as wide, and a mottled reddish brown in colour. Found in July, 1955, at the bases of grass shoots near the cottages, Conigre Wood. Probably fairly common. There are two sub-species which have not yet been properly worked out around here.

Androniscus dentiger Verhoeff. About 5.5mm long and a little less than half the width. Has a delicate rose-pink colour. Found in October, 1954, in the wilderness amongst the refuse in the tip. Fairly common.

Oniscidae.

Philoscia muscorum (Scopoli). Up to 10mm long; oval, with a smooth and glabrous integument. Light brown in colour, with dark mottlings. First found in November, 1954, under a stone near the Churn. Fairly common.

Platyarthrus hoffmannseggi Brandt. Small and white in colour. It lives in ants' nests and has no eyes. Found in October, 1954, in an ants' nest on North Cerney Downs. Not very common in the immediate vicinity of the College.

Oniscus asellus Linne. Up to 15mm long, about twice as wide and usually a slaty-grey colour. This is one of Britain's commonest and largest woodlice and probably the best known. Very common in this district.

Porcellionidae.

Cylisticus convexus (De Geer). Fairly large and slate grey in colour with irregular markings. When disturbed it may roll into a ball. Found in September, 1954, in the stackyard near the Stable Block. Common in this area, being favoured by the calcareous soil.

Porcellio scaber Latreille. Up to 17 mm long and nearly twice as long as wide. Usually dark slaty grey with irregular lighter marks, but variable in colour. This, with *Oniscus asellus*, is the commonest British woodlouse. Very common in the Rendcomb district.

P. ratzeburgi (Brandt). Dark greyish brown with lighter markings. Fairly large. Found in November, 1954, under stones by the river Churn. It is a rather scarce species in Britain as a whole.

Further work is required on the Genus *Porcellio* which contains other species which are common and doubtless occur here.

Armadillidiidae.

Armadillidium vulgare (Latreille). This is the common 'pill-bug'. Up to 18 mm long and a little less than half as wide. The colour varies from black to light yellow. When disturbed it rolls up into a shiny ball like a tiny Armadillo (hence the name of the Genus). Other species of *Armadillidium* undoubtedly occur round Rendcomb, but this is the only one so far identified. It is common, being favoured by the calcareous nature of the soil.

Although colouring is mentioned above, it is not an important means of identification in most species and pattern is only a little more so. The main taxonomic features are provided by the antennae, abdominal appendages, the shape of the head and the eyes.

H. A. Gough, C. H. Thomason.

Dragonflies (Odonata).

Rendcomb is not situated in a district very rich in members of the insect Order Odonata, which includes all the dragonflies. This is largely due to the scarcity of standing water in the country round the village. Although some dragonflies are associated with flowing water in rivers and streams, the majority of British species favour more or less stagnant ponds, lakes and canals.

The following species have been recorded in the Rendcomb area up to the end of August, 1955. (Classification from Long- field: 'The Dragonflies of the British Isles', Warne, 1949).

Agrionidae.

Agrion virgo (Linnaeus). A common species along streams: occurs on the Churn and on the Coin. Seen at Marsden pond (Monkham Wood) in 1955.

A. splendens (Harris). A few specimens have been seen at Rendcomb Lake and along the Churn. The males are easily distinguished from the much commoner *A. virgo* by the wings having a turquoise band instead of being entirely of this colour.

Coenagriidae.

Pyrhosoma nymphula (Sulzer). A common species at Rendcomb Lake, Eycot and Colesborne Lakes. A small, slender, red species.

Ischnura elegans (Van der Linden). Found at Eycot and at Colesborne Lakes. A small blackish species with a bright blue eighth abdominal segment.

Enallagma cyathigerum (Charpentier). Very common at the lakes and ponds of the district.

Coenagrion puella (Linnaeus). Common at Colesborne Lake and at Monkham Wood pond, Marsden.

Aeshnidae.

Aeshna cyanea (Muller). The commonest of the large species, being dark brown with blue or yellow and green markings. Many nymphs have been caught in the Estate garden tanks and reared in the College laboratories. The final emergence was closely watched last term.

[*A. juncea* (Linnaeus). Reported to have occurred, but evidence not satisfactory.]

Anax imperator Leach. The Emperor dragonfly is rare in Gloucestershire. A nymph of this species was caught in the Estate gardens at Rendcomb in June, 1953, and the adult emerged a year later in the College laboratory.

Libellulidae.

Libellula depressa Linnaeus. This broad-bodied species, powder-blue in the male, is frequent round Rendcomb. The adult has been taken at Colesborne and near Marsden, in Rendcomb village and at Eycot Reservoir. Nymphs were found in the College tortoise-pen in 1952.

Sympetrum striolatum (Charpentier). A common species along the Churn, at Rendcomb and Colesborne Lakes and at Eycot reservoir. The subspecies occurring here is *S. s. striolatum*, *S. s. nigrifemur* being a northern and western form,

Several visits were also made to South Cerney gravel-pits, which, although outside the area normally covered by these reports (see Vol 10, No. 9, p. 16), are nevertheless very interesting from the point of view of the naturalist. All the above species except the two kinds of Agrion and Aeshna juncea have been seen there, and also the following: —

Aeshna grandis (Linnaeus). Now increasing rapidly.

Orthetrum cancellatum (Linnaeus). A local species, abundant in this locality.

Anax imperator has been seen there once (1955, C. M. Swaine), and in July, 1955, three varieties of the female *Ischnura elegans*, in addition to the type, were found. These were var. *violacea* Selys (violet in colour on the light parts), var. *rufescens* Stephens (orange), and var. *infuscans* Campion (dusky).

T. D. A. Semple.

Miscellaneous Notes, January to August, 1955.

Mr. Finch, of Woodlands Farm, told me that one day in the Autumn of 1953 he counted sixty Fallow Deer together near the farm, and added that there were others in the edge of the wood that he could not see properly. Thus it seems that our tentative estimate of numbers (see Vol. 10, No. 6, p.17) should be at least doubled.

At least four cats in the village have been attacked by some animal recently. In each case the cat has been bitten rather severely in the lower back, but has managed to escape. The most probable explanation is that Foxes, deprived of rabbits, are experimenting with less usual prey. Myxomatosis seemed to make a fairly clean sweep of the Gloucestershire rabbit population, but already there are signs of a possible recovery. Rabbits have been seen in several places not far from Rendcomb in the past few months.

The most notable observation on birds was the sighting of a Hobby on two occasions over the village. These were on June 10th and August 21st, and on each occasion the sword-like wings and dashing flight of the little falcon were unmistakable.

A cold spell, and snow on May 17th, had an adverse effect on many breeding birds, particularly the warblers, which had full clutches or young nestlings. A pair of Kingfishers reared young once more by the Churn, and Grey Wagtails were also successful this year. On March 22nd, a flock of Starlings short-circuited the electric cables at Marsden. About thirty birds were killed and the current was not restored for half an hour or more,

A Viper with black marks on a grey ground was seen near Marsden on April 24th. This is a scarce form round here, the only previous case of which record has been kept being in the spring of 1952. An accident nearly occurred when a Third Form boy picked up a Viper thinking it was a Grass-snake. He and his friend then spent some time in catching a (supposed) Viper with a forked stick. This animal was in fact a Grass-snake! Both animals obligingly sloughed their skins in the vivarium and several members of the College were able to watch the process.

The anti-cyclonic conditions over Western Europe in July and August favoured migrant Lepidoptera. Humming-bird Hawk- moths have been plentiful this summer. Red Admiral and Painted Lady butterflies have also occurred in some numbers and both Comma and Clouded Yellow Butterflies have been more numerous than usual. Towards the height of the heat-wave, Large and Small White butterflies—particularly the latter—became so numerous as to endanger the Brassica crops very considerably. In view of the poor seasons these species have had recently, immigration seems a likely cause for their sudden increase so late in the summer.

C. M. Swaine, B. Sc.