

RENDCOMB COLLEGE CHRONICLE

Vol. 10 No. 9

July, 1955

Rendcomb College Chronicle

Volume 10, No. 9.

July, 1955.

**This Number is Dedicated
To the Memory of
PHILIP MEW
1940—1955**

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OBITUARY.

PHILIP MEW

Rendcomb, 1951-1955.

It is with sorrow that we record the tragic death of Philip Mew on Friday the 14th of March, 1955, as the result of an accident in the Park.

Mew came to Rendcomb in September 1951, and from his first term it was apparent that he was a person of wide interests and considerable ability. He played his games keenly and seemed to enjoy them all, though perhaps his best love was cricket.

But his enthusiasm for games did not absorb all his interest. He found time for acting, art and music. He appeared in several stage productions, and was developing a sense of style in his drawing and painting. He never left the choir; when younger he was one of the most reliable trebles we have had for many years, and his musical ability and accurate pitch were equally valuable when he moved to the Alto benches.

We remember him with affection and in doing so underline the messages of sympathy sent, at the time, from us all to his parents and brother.

SCHOOL NOTES. Easter Term, 1955 14th January—30th March.

Not for many years has the school returned in January to find several inches of snow lying on the ground. Special arrangements were made, with the kind co-operation of the local Council officials, to have the Village Hill specially treated with gravel in order that the school bus and cars could get up to the College. One member of the staff, whose train was three hours late, by which time the buses had been taken off, was smug in the thought that he had instructed the taxi driver to use the Cheltenham drive rather than the Village Hill. However, he had forgotten the Triangle at the junction of the two drives and only those who have tried to drive round (or over) it in icy conditions, will believe that over half an hour was spent trying to climb the sharp incline. The driver was only successful after he had also failed to get up through the Stable Yard and in desperation had taken the incline at high speed.

A thaw soon came, but it was quickly followed by a thin coating of snow which remained to interfere seriously with games and hockey matches and to make walking hazardous for nearly six weeks.

* * * *

We acknowledge with appreciation and thanks the following gifts in memory of Philip Mew:

From his parents, money for a drift of daffodils beside the terraces on the West side of the College.

From Mr. and Mrs. Hayward (his aunt and uncle), Natural History books for the Library.

From the Reverend William Sharland, the Vicar of Twyning, the Oxford Companion to English Literature, also for the Library.

We also acknowledge with many thanks the gift of an oboe from Mr. and Mrs. H. Richards of Llanelli.

* * * *

We offer our good wishes to Mr. F. G. S. Bird who left at the end of the Easter Term. Mr. Bird was invited to join the staff not only to teach Latin and English, but to inaugurate Rugger in a school which was proud of its Soccer tradition. The decision to change to Rugger was made both from foresight and immediate need, but understandably was not at first popular with a minority of boys. It is to Mr. Bird's credit that the opposition was soon won over, and the teams in the first four years of Rugger have a record of successes of which they may well feel proud.

* * * *

We also offer our good wishes to M. H. Morton who left at the end of the term.

* * * *

There was a fine collection of work for the College Exhibition which was held on Sunday the 27th of February. The exhibits were excellently displayed in Clock Hall. Perhaps not all the craftsmen who had work on show realised how much thought and effort had been put into this aspect of the Exhibition; a word of congratulation is due to those who arranged it. It was delightful to see so many exhibits from VI.A and the Upper VIth.

There were not many expeditions during term. For one thing, the days of the Birmingham Symphony Concerts at Cheltenham have been changed from Tuesday to Thursday, thus interfering with our games and matches, and, for once, there were no outings to theatres. However, a very large party of eighty-two and three members of the staff went to Cheltenham to see that controversial film, "Martin Luther". It is discussed in the notice on another page.

Mr. C. M. Swaine gave another of his lantern lectures in Big School on the 3rd of March. This time he spoke on matters of local interest in Natural History, with illustrations photographed and processed by himself. An account appears elsewhere.

The last fortnight of term provided two days of special interest to the sportsman. The Senior and Junior Lodges Races were run on the 16th of March, and ten days later, on the 26th, we had our own "local Derby"—the Old Boys' Hockey Match. And on the same day, for those with access to a radio, there were commentaries on the Grand National, the Boat Race and, not an annual occurrence, an Association Football Cup-tie match between teams from the First and Third Divisions: Newcastle United v. York City. With regard to (a) The National or (b) the Boat Race, we refuse to say whether we were (i) out of pocket or (ii) pleased or chagrined by the results.

* * * *

We regret that the last two issues of the Chronicle have been published late. We hope that the steps we have taken will prevent a recurrence of this in future.

COLLEGE OFFICERS.

Summer Term, 1955.

Prefects—R. N. Horne, B. Glastonbury, M. V. Harley,
R. A. Powell, T. D. A. Semple.

College Workman—J. Bolton King.

§P. W. Man—J. Bolton King.

Librarians—J. R. Ellis, S. R. Merrett, J. B. Gooch.

Manual Foreman—J. Gough, M. G. Richards, D. J. B. Forster,
J. R. Ellis, D. A. Godfrey, B. R. Paish.

§Furniture Men—J. R. Ellis, R. D. Comley, M. A. B. Forster.

Poultry men—G. H. G. Herbert, D. T. Hart, A. T. Brooks,
M. R. Horton.

Music Warden—T. W. Rowley.

Music Librarian—R. W. Alder.

Choir Librarians—G. J. Taylor, N. J. Price.

Pictureman—A. Harrison.

Lamp Men—J. K. Walter, J. A. Richards.

In Charge of Notices—G. H. Richards, R. D. White,
C. H. Thomason.

Church Collections and Deck Chairs—M. G. Cooper.

§ General Meeting Elections.

MEETING OFFICERS.

Summer Term, 1955.

Chairman—M. V. Harley.

Secretary—A. G. B. Wallace.

Games Captain—J. M. Astill.

Games Committee—H. A. Gough, B. Glastonbury.

Field Secretary—D. A. Godfrey.

Boys' Banker—R. O. G. Hayter.

Meeting Banker—R. F. Stimson.

Senior Shopman—G. H. G. Herbert.

Games Committee Treasurer—T. W. Rowley.

House Committee Treasurer—D. W. Brown.

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

Auditors—M. V. Harley, R. N. Horne.

Finance Committee—J. G. Scudamore, A. K. Bowley.

Shopmen—R. W. Taylor, S. R. Merrett.

Breakages Man—J. G. A. Dainty.

Entertainments Committee—T. W. Rowley, R. J. Lawson,

J. A. Richards, G. Harrison, J. D. R. Paine.

Magazine Committee—R. D. Comley, S. R. Merrett,

J. E. Gooding.

Tennis Captains—M. G. Richards.

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

G. H. Richards.

Record Committee (Light)—J. M. Astill, M. G. Cooper.

Cycle Committee—A. C. Lucker, J. F. W. Beard, R. W. Taylor.

Amplifier Technicians—M. G. Richards, T. W. Rowley.

Paperman—C. Handoll.

Drying Room Committee—R. D. White, I. A. N. Campbell,

J. R. Windsor.

Hockey Games Warden—C. Handoll.

Tennis Games Wardens—G. H. G. Herbert, P. G. Auden.

Cricket Games Wardens—D. T. Hart, J. R. Alder.

Junior Tennis Groundsman—I. A. N. Campbell.

Hockey Secretary, 1956—D. A. Godfrey.

Record Committee Treasurer—J. E. Gooding.

Junior Cricket Groundsman—P. F. Barter.

HONOURS.

Michael G. Petter and Nicholas H. Walter gained Distinctions in the preliminary examination in Modern History at Oxford.

OLD BOYS' NOTES.

Old Rendcombian Society. A. C. Magor is now Secretary. His address is [REDACTED], Radyr, Glamorganshire.

* * * *

The following Old Rendcombians visited the College during the Easter Term: P. G. Cockell, M. D. Richards, J. W. J. Reed, F. S. G. Richards, C. Baillie-Lane.

The following came for the Old Boys' gathering on March the 26th, and seven of them stayed for the night: P. Baillie-Lane, J. R. Smith, P. D. de Iongh, J. D. Smith, P. Binks, J. Gilchrist, P. G. Cockell, R. H. Jones, P. D. Quick, R. Greedy and R. J. Kendal.

* * * *

Arthur Lowe, who left Rendcomb in July 1934 at the age of 16, to join the staff of Bon Marche at Gloucester, went to the war in 1939 and finished up as the R. S. M. of the Welch Regiment. After the war he went back to the Bon Marche and then had managerships of shops in Leeds and Hull. He is now the General Manager of Harrops, a newly-built 16-department furniture store in Newcastle-on-Tyne.

M. R. F. Butlin has been appointed to the staff of the Tate Gallery as an Assistant Keeper, Class II.

COLLEGE EXHIBITION.

Clock Hall, Sunday, the 27th of February, 1955.

At the beginning of the term, the Headmaster announced that an Exhibition of work by the School would be held in five week's time. This news was received with mixed sentiments, not many of them favourable; yet despite declarations to the contrary, most people set to work to do what they could, and when the time was up (a week's grace was given because of the School Examinations) an astonishing variety of work was forthcoming. Of course the

large woodwork and art contributions were to be expected, but there was also an extensive display of photographs, including some excellent coloured ones.

Great care was taken over the arrangement of the various tables, and this contributed greatly to the enjoyment of the exhibits. The lighting from the various lamps, both table and standard was particularly effective; not only were they exhibited to the best advantage, but at the same time illuminated the surrounding exhibits.

The purpose of the Exhibition was not to show off the best work of the school but to give a general cross-section of the results of creative out-of-school activities, and as such it was remarkably successful, several people achieving results which surprised even themselves.

The general standard was very high, and work on display ranged from a pair of skis to a bottle of home-made elderberry wine. (One hopes the days of prohibition are not approaching!) Most notable among this fairly noteworthy collection were: a wooden lamp, made on the "Anglepoise" plan, which looked so like the original that many people ignored it as being the real thing; a model of a "flapping wing" type of aircraft made so that on turning a handle in front, the extremely flimsy, but beautifully made, wings flapped up and down; and an oil-painting of a fisherman on the rocks by the sea. Perhaps the most original exhibit was a turned lighthouse in stone, unfortunately not finished.

The examples listed above were, in the main, notable for the skill and experience of those who made them, but the younger members of the College showed some excellent work, even when compared to some of the best of their elders. There were puppets, bookshelves, tea trays and of course, model planes. Among the table lamps was one so well designed, in the modern style, and so well made that it would not have been out of place on a Gordon Russell sideboard at Messrs. Heal's Furniture Store in the Tottenham Court Road.

The exhibition was truly representative and extremely encouraging, and the music of Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" provided an appropriate background.

J. R. E.

“X = O: A NIGHT OF THE TROJAN WAR.”

A Tragedy by John Drinkwater.

Produced in Big School on the 26th of March, 1955.

This play, which is written in blank verse, is nevertheless a simple and realistic exposition of the futility of war; and, with its setting so far removed from the complexities of modern civilization, must have thrown a new light on the subject of modern warfare when it was first produced in 1917.

Pronax (R. N. Horne) is a young Athenian who dreams of founding a new and better city but has been sent overseas to fight the Trojans. His friend Salvius (B. Glastonbury), a Sicilian Greek, would like to be at home writing the poetry he loves but has little time in the Grecian camp for such pursuits. It is Pronax's turn that night to go out and climb the wall of Troy to kill any Trojans he might find, while Salvius remains in the tent.

On the Trojan wall Capys (R. A. Powell), a young sculptor who has been forced to leave his work in order to do sentry duty, is talking to his friend Ilus (T. D. A. Semple) who, like Pronax, dreams of an ideal state but has to go prowling round the Greeks' camp at night, killing them. He goes over the wall on a rope which Capys hauls up again. A little later, while Capys has turned away, Pronax appears over the parapet, stabs him, and disappears again.

Ilus meanwhile, reaches the tent where Salvius is still awake reading. He creeps in, kills him, and when the sentry has passed slips out again. Pronax returns, only to discover his friend's death, and when Ilus gets back to the wall there is no one to let down the rope to him.

The production in general was very good and, in fact, could hardly have been bettered on the amateur stage; there were few faults to distract the audience from the action of the play. Glastonbury and Horne were both particularly good, and their performance, including their rendering of the blank verse (always a difficult thing to speak well), was so convincing as to elicit, from me at any rate, no thought of criticism. Horne's words however, were sometimes a little difficult to catch. Powell's performance was good, though he did not seem quite to have got "inside the part". Although Semple's speech was not up to the standard set by the others and, at times, he had difficulty with the verse, his acting was lifelike and convincing.

The scenery, though simple, was quite effective and must have entailed much more work than its finished aspect would have you believe.

The cast was as follows:

Pronax \	B. Glastonbury
Salvius / ^{Greeks}	R. N. Horne
Ilus \	R. A. Powell
Capys / ^{Trojans}	T. D. A. Semple
A Greek Sentry	R. O. G., Hayter
A Greek Servant and also a voice	T. W. Rowley
	J. B. O'B.

“THE CASE OF THE MISSING PLANS.”

The Puppeteers.

Here was another of those pleasant plays, written and produced by the Puppeteers, under the general direction of Mr. C. M. Swaine. These missing plans were atomic, and the professor so absent-minded that when he dropped a sixpence and was asked what it was for, he replied, “To pay my breakages”!

Jonathan Shaw made an excellent character of the Professor and his lines were spoken most convincingly. M. J. Bryant, on the other hand, who worked the Caterpillar had nothing to say, but the movements were deft and amusing. R. A. Cockerell’s character, George, opening the show, spoke rather too fast and a little indistinctly, but he soon settled down and his amusing characterisation could be clearly heard. J. B. Gooch spoke clearly throughout, but perhaps it was a pity that he used the natural tone of the voice rather than *falsestto*, it would have added conviction to his character of the Maid and made it more amusing. D. R. Poole’s Villain had a magnificent foreign accent, and S. D. Hick’s Policeman was very much in character; we thought the entry in Scene II, climbing over a wall, particularly good. N. J. Price’s Policeman’s Dog was, of course, as speechless as the Caterpillar, but his movements were just as convincing.

There were three scenes. In the first, George, the professor’s assistant, is seen looking at the plans for a small atom bomb. This professor was not only absent-minded but also bad-tempered; this was clear when the Maid brought in his tea at an inopportune moment and he threw it out of the window (a slick bit of manipulating this). Then came a tremendous explosion, for which the programme told us we were indebted to T. L. H. Benbow; when the tumult had died away the plans were “found to be missing”. There were many pleasant touches of humour in the second scene while everyone was hunting for those plans. The policeman seemed to think his dog could scent them and followed him over garden walls, and so forth, only to find he was chasing a butterfly!

However, after more fruitless searching in Scene III, it was discovered that The Plans were blown into the waste paper basket by the explosion, and all the thief had was "a formula for fizzy orangeade".

In addition to the cast mentioned above, we enjoyed F. A. G. Ferguson's Cat and the music—manipulated by D. R. Poole.

J. G. A. D.

LECTURE—NATURAL HISTORY OF LOCAL INTEREST.

Given by Mr. C. M. Swaine, in Big School on March the 3rd, 1955.

It is a pretty exacting task for a schoolmaster to give a lecture on his own subject, in his own school, to pupils most of whom are in his own classes. Mr. Swaine's lantern lectures in Big School are always popular, and again on the 3rd of March there was a large attendance.

This time he spoke, in the main, on Plants and Animals of local interest, and used a truly remarkable selection of slides which were outstandingly interesting, not only in reference to the subject of the illustration, but also for the excellent photography, of which the coloured slides gave particular pleasure.

Notable examples were the Barbartelle and the Large Blue Butterfly, both rare visitors to this district. The portrait of a handsome tawny owl was obtained under somewhat hazardous conditions, the subject having proved most uncooperative and pugnacious.

Mr. Swaine pointed out that the slides were some of the illustrations for a lecture as yet incomplete, and there is no doubt that when it is ready, he will receive a cordial invitation to produce it in Big School.

J. B. K.

“MARTIN LUTHER.”

On Thursday, March 3rd, a very large party went to see the controversial film "Martin Luther" at Poole's Coliseum in Cheltenham. Originally this was to have been a Sixth form trip, but it was suggested that the lower forms should be allowed to go.

From the first it must be noted that this film was made, not by an established film company, but by relatively unknown actors and film units. This could be plainly seen in many of the technical

details of lighting and scenery. The film was supposed to be Lutheran propaganda (and this is said with a certain amount of reserve).

As a film of the historical events it was poor. Luther himself had been idealised to appear as a “militant reformer”, rather timid at times, but one who achieved success very quickly; whereas, in fact, he was rather a miserable man, but one who was convinced in his religion.

The most important event of the period, namely the Peasants’ Revolt, had been left out. One must realise that this was Luther’s greatest mistake, and he had to change his policy quickly, and support the princes who were trying to crush the revolt, which did, undoubtedly, get out of hand. So we can see that if the directors had put this in, it would have been contrary to their objects.

The intensely dramatic atmosphere and the heavy American accent of many of the younger characters put the representation into a rather modern medium, and we found it difficult to keep pushing our minds back into early 16th Century in order to see things as they might possibly have been. In fact the supposed educational value of the film was very slight.

G. H. R.

HOCKEY REPORT, 1955.

For the second successive season miserable weather frustrated hockey. The 1st XI was only able to play five of the eleven matches arranged, and had but four practice games; the rest of the school inevitably had even fewer. (It must be mentioned however that the enforced lack of hockey enabled campanology to be pursued with much vigour; much to the regret of the entire population of Rendcomb, a full peal was never attained!).

On the few occasions that weather permitted, three and sometimes four, games were played on Top. It was found that games on the Forecourt were of little use except to keep players in training; conditions are so unlike those on grass that in a season when the field is wet and heavy practice on the Forecourt can be actually harmful to the play of those who find hitting difficult.

Although there was some lack of skill in the school as a whole, the 1st XI was strong, winning four of its matches and drawing the fifth; it was a great pity that matches with Cheltenham College, Dean Close, and Bristol University 2nd XI, which would have been our hardest, were cancelled. We started the

season with seven members of last year's side still with us, but one or two failed to find their form, and the team at the end of this season was very different from that at the beginning.

In goal J. M. Astill was, for a second season, entirely reliable; he was always in position, and seldom misjudged a kick; his sliding tackle of oncoming forwards was particularly effective. With improved stick work he has great promise. Both M. G. Cooper and J. Gough played at left back, but Cooper was the final choice. Gough's form fluctuated; at his best he was forceful and distributed the ball well, but in defence he was unsteady, and often too impetuous in his sorties up field. Although he did not quite find his 1954 form he is undoubtedly a useful player. Cooper's defence was thoroughly sound and his distribution of passes improved; he also showed great coolness, a thing which the defence as a whole lacked. T. D. A. Semple at right back was, in later matches, a tower of strength. Always reliable in defence, his constructive play improved enormously during the season; but he had a tendency to mis-time his hitting—a fault shared by the entire team.

B. Glastonbury, moving from right back to left half, soon settled down in his new position. Sometimes he was not close enough behind the forwards in attack. He worked hard, and his good eye was a great asset when tackling from the left. J. R. Ellis played at right half. He combined well with his forwards and his good positioning showed how this can compensate for comparative lack of speed. As he became sure of himself he developed into a valuable player.

Both R. W. Alder and R. J. Lawson played on the left wing. Alder, having failed to regain last season's form as a half, played some good games on the wing. He was forceful and worked hard, but he was rather slow and encroached far too often on the middle of the field. Lawson also suffered from this latter fault, but he was speedy and got across many good centres. At inside left A. G. B. Wallace was very fast, and he combined well with both wing and centre forward. Inside the circle he was cool but did not possess a really powerful shot. R. A. Powell at centre forward was also very fast and forceful, but he too often kept the ball to himself, and when shooting seemed unable to combine power with accuracy; most of our goals came from well aimed pushes. M. G. Richards played a couple of games at inside right, but he wasted too much time with the ball. He had a powerful shot but still needs too much time to produce it. D. A. Godfrey played here for most of the season, an entirely new position for him, having previously been a half. With so few practice games he found difficulty in adapting himself. However, towards the end of the season he did learn to make straight for goal, and his play suggested that with more practice he will develop into a forceful player

with a powerful shot. He worked very hard though at times at the expense of both position and accuracy. On the right wing H. A. Gough, having learnt the value of keeping in the tram lines, was a fine attacking player. He was not speedy, but he had good ball control, and dribbled and centred well; as a tackler back he seemed utterly tireless. The forward line as a whole was fast and forceful, but part of its effectiveness was annulled by the absence of anyone able to score from the back of the circle. R. N. Horne's job as Captain, difficult anyhow in a weather-shortened season, was made no easier by having to turn himself from an inside forward into the centre half. That he did so successfully betokens both a firm resolve and a flair for the game. Early on his direction of the side inevitably reflected his own unsureness of position; but his confidence grew with each match and at the end of the term he was managing the side well and proving a powerful defender in emergencies.

Our first three matches were played on muddy pitches which called for long passes and no fiddling; except against Exeter College these tactics were never really used. The draw with Prince Henry's Grammar School was a great disappointment; we were potentially better than they as our play for the rest of the season demonstrated, but far too many passes went astray, and those that found their mark were not properly used. The team as a whole was "on edge". Against Exeter College we found our form; holding them for the greater part of the game our superior fitness told at the end, and we won 4—2. Being three up in less than ten minutes at Monkton Combe, the result was never really in doubt, but our opponents improved, and our defence did not show the same form as the attack, so that the game became more even for a middle period. During the last part of the game we again crowded their circle, and two more goals were scored. We met here, for the first time, insides playing deep, which partly accounted for our muddled defence; but it proved a valuable experience, a similar formation caused no trouble at Marlborough. After being one down for more than half the game, we finally won 4—1. We were unable to play the Old Rendcombian on Top owing to a water-logged pitch. Our respective team were divided in half with goal keepers playing twice, and we played on the Forecourt. Here recent experience was of enormous value; one College team won 10—3, and the other 11—4.

Two weather-ruined seasons are enough to damp interest in any middle or lower school. But there are obviously many potential players with some very promising ones among them. If we can have a couple of good hockey terms with pleasant weather the game will rapidly recover.

HOCKEY RESULTS, 1955.

1st XI.

- Feb. 3rd. v. Hanley Castle G. S., Home. Won 3—2.
Feb. 5th. v. Prince Henry's G. S., Evesham. Home. Drawn 1—1
Mar. 5th. v. Exeter College, Oxon. Home. Won 4—2.
Mar. 10th. v. Monkton Combe 2nd XI. Away. Won 5—3.
Mar. 17th. v. Marlborough College. 2nd XL Away. Won 4—1.

2nd XI.

- Feb. 3rd. v. Hanley Castle G. S., Home. Drawn 0—0.
Feb. 5th. v. Prince Henry's G. S., Evesham. Home. Drawn 1—1.
Mar. 17th. v. Marlborough College Colts. Away. Lost 2—6.

Junior XIs.

- Mar. 5th. v. Dean Close Junior Colts. Home. Lost 0—6.
Mar. 10th. v. Monkton Combe Junior Colts. Away. Lost 0—10.
Mar. 17th. v. Marlborough College Junior Colts. Away. Lost 2—3.

THE LODGES RACES.

These were run on Wednesday, March 23rd, in appalling conditions, which made really fast runs out of the question. A considerable gale was blowing, and there were two tree tops, and two other large branches lying at intervals across the course.

Results: —

Senior Lodges—

1. A. G. B. Wallace, 14 mins.
2. R. A. Powell, 14 mins. 1/5th secs.
3. R. N. Horne, 14 mins. 50 secs.

Junior Lodges—

1. N. J. Price, 16 mins. 28 secs.
2. M. D. Naish, 16 mins. 29 secs.
3. G. J. Taylor, 17 mins. 15 secs.

Of late there has been some confusion about records; they are as follows:

Senior Lodges—13 mins. 7 secs., D. C. de Peyer, 1952.

Junior Lodges—14 mins. 21 2/5th secs., A. C. Magor, 1928.

North Cerney— 22 mins. 11 secs., J. C. Maslin, 1931.

**NATURAL HISTORY SUPPLEMENT. July, 1955. Birds, Part 3:
Warblers to Sparrows.**

(Continued from Vol. 10, No. 8.)

- Grasshopper-Warbler. Nested on Wistley Hill in July and August 1952: five young were reared.
- Sedge-Warbler. Occurs infrequently along the Churn on migration, and apparently does not nest even in seemingly suitable places.
- Blackcap. A fairly plentiful breeding species, found in woods and thickets close to the College and through most of the district.
- Garden-Warbler. Less plentiful than the Blackcap, but by no means rare. Both species are best detected by their songs, which require some experience to separate.
- Whitethroat. Fairly numerous and nesting in suitable places.
- Lesser Whitethroat. Rather uncommon, but probably breeds in the district in small numbers in most or all years.
- Willow-Warbler. Rather common as a breeding species, but perhaps less so than might be expected.
- Chiffchaff. Often very numerous on spring passage, but those which remain to breed are much less plentiful. It nests annually, however, in many places.
- Wood-Warbler. Although probably once fairly numerous in this district, the Wood-Warbler is now recorded round Rendcomb at rather infrequent intervals.
- Goldcrest. Present at all seasons and breeds probably in small or moderate numbers in suitable places.
- Spotted Flycatcher. Rather common as a nesting species.
- Pied Flycatchers. Bred near Rendcomb village in 1941, this being a very unusual record for the Cotswolds. (E. G. Neal). A male was seen at Colesborne lake on 27.4.54 (C. M. Swaine). In view of the extraordinary increase in recent years of this bird in the Forest of Dean, a close watch should be kept for it round Rendcomb.
- Hedge-Sparrow. A resident species which breeds in considerable numbers.
- Meadow-Pipit. Breeds locally on the higher ground and occurs more plentifully on migration and in winter.
- Tree-Pipit. Less common as a breeding species than might be though probable. Nests in small numbers over much of the district.

- Pied Wagtail. Breeds in rather small numbers throughout the district in suitable places, and often quite close to the College.
- Grey Wagtail. Breeds by the Churn annually. Two or three pairs are present in most breeding-seasons between Perrot's Brook and Colesborne. Bred in Kennel Bottom in 1952.
- Yellow Wagtail. Apparently of very infrequent occurrence, in spite of the fact that it is plentiful south of Cirencester.
- Starling. Resident species breeding in suitable places. Numbers are increased in late summer by arrivals from elsewhere.
- Hawfinch. A scarce species but it is believed to breed annually, probably in very small numbers. This species is most often seen in early spring.
- Greenfinch. Rather common as a breeding species.
- Goldfinch. Breeds in small or moderate numbers in suitable places. Its numbers are subject to rather marked fluctuations.
- Siskin. An irregular winter visitor appearing in variable numbers usually in January and February. Siskins are most often to be found in alders by the Churn or in larch plantations.
- Linnet. Winter flocks are frequent and the bird also breeds in moderate numbers.
- Bullfinch. A rather scarce but widespread breeding species.
- Crossbill. Recorded by Mr. S. Lane in 1943 near his house at Northmoor.
- Chaffinch. One of the commonest of birds, which breeds inconspicuously in large numbers.
- Brambling. An irregular winter visitor which is usually first seen in November or December. In some years it is fairly numerous, in others scarce or absent.
- Yellow Hammer. Fairly common as a nesting species, and apparently more plentiful in the winter.
- Corn-Bunting. A scarce resident bird occurring in a few places on rather high, open ground, where it breeds sparsely.
- House-Sparrow. A fairly common resident mainly round houses and farms.
- Tree-Sparrow. There are a few records of this species in the district, but its status must be considered as at present uncertain.

Concluded.

The district herein discussed lies within the following arbitrary boundaries: south to a line passing through Perrot's Brook, and including all ground between the Fosse Way (A 429) and the Gloucester Road (A 417); north to the roads A 40 and A 436, from Northleach through Kilkenny to Seven Springs.

C. M. Swaine, B. Sc.

Rendcomb Leeches. (Himndinea).

Leeches are Annelid worms and therefore related to the earthworms. They can be distinguished from earthworms by the presence of two suckers, one at either end of the under-surface of the body; by the much greater flattening of the body, and by the possession of eyes. They live by sucking the blood of other animals such as fish, frogs and snails, or by eating small whole animals. There are about a dozen British species of leech of which five have so far been recorded in the Rendcomb district:

Pisicola geometra. This is long and narrow, greenish or brownish-red in colour, with prominent suckers. It is a very active species which loops its body as it progresses. Although small, it sucks the blood of fishes and the specimens we found were attached to minnows in Rendcomb Lake.

Glossosiphonia complanata. When at rest this leech has the shape of an elongated oval with a narrow head-end, and is dark greenish-brown in colour. It is sluggish in movements and curls up into a ball when roughly handled. It is fairly small and feeds mainly on pond-snails. It is very common and has been found all along the Churn.

Erpobdella octoculata, forma *atomaria*. This leech is pale greenish-brown in colour with a network of black lines all over the surface. This is the form which is not found in water which is strongly polluted by sewage, and which thrives best in water of a high lime content. It is very common and has been collected from the Churn above the lake and at other points. It feeds mainly on small aquatic worms.

Protoclepsia tessellata. This is olive-green or brownish in colour. When full-grown it is larger than the foregoing species. It attacks water-fowl, feeding on blood from the mucous membrane of the nasal chambers. If it occurs in large enough numbers it can cause the death of the host, especially if the bird is young. One specimen was found in the Churn above Rendcomb Lake in May, 1954, and is believed to constitute the first Gloucestershire record.

Haemopsis sanguisuga. The Horse-Leech. This is a large, soft-bodied leech, varying in colour from blackish-green to brown. It is the large, common species found in ponds, canals, etc., over much of Britain, and contrary to common belief it does not suck human blood, but feeds on earthworms, tadpoles, snails and even its own species. We have not found one of recent years, but Mr. E. G. Neal recorded them from Kennel Bottom about 1935 or a little later.

J. Gough.

The Vegetation of Rendcomb Lake.

During the summer of 1951 an investigation was made into the nature of the vegetation of the upper end of Rendcomb Lake by R. van den Driessche and C. D. Whittle. The results were used in 1952 by Driessche to prepare a Field-work paper for the General Certificate at Advanced Level. The following is a simplified abstract of his paper prepared on his behalf owing to his absence abroad. It is thought that members of the College may find it interesting to understand the process by which the lake is filling up. A considerable further encroachment by vegetation has taken place during the past four years, and a good idea of the extent of this can be gained by viewing the lake from the steep slope below and beyond the Temple.

C. M. Swaine, B. Sc.

Rendcomb Lake was made artificially in or around 1860, the floor, according to an older member of the parish, being covered with clay and then having bullocks driven over it to make it watertight.

The lake was originally free water from one end to the other, although at the upstream end it was never very deep. Today (1951), however, there is only a very narrow channel round the upstream end of the island and except for one channel by which water enters, the whole of the upper half of the lake is marsh. The filling-up process has been caused mainly by silt carried in by the river, coupled with the accumulation of the remains of plants which colonised the shallow parts. Over a considerable area plant-remains and silt from flood-water have raised the ground-level above the usual water level of the lake, in places by more than thirty inches.

As the relative height of the water-table altered, so different kinds of plants grew. Starting with open water, a succession took place, and is still occurring, which will theoretically end in a 'climax' which, in this district, is typically beech-wood if the ground is dry enough, but is more likely in this particular case to be alder-willow-wood. A succession of this type is known as a 'hydrosere'. The first stage of this hydrosere, open water, is still much in evidence, and the most advanced stage yet attained is a community of willows, Hairy willowherb and nettles.

In order to determine the nature and course of the hydrosere, various methods were employed. A large-scale map was prepared and analyses made of the vegetation of the marshy part under the willow bushes near the inlet-end of the lake. Transects were taken across transitional areas of vegetation. (A common type of transect shows all the plants touching a line drawn between two points).

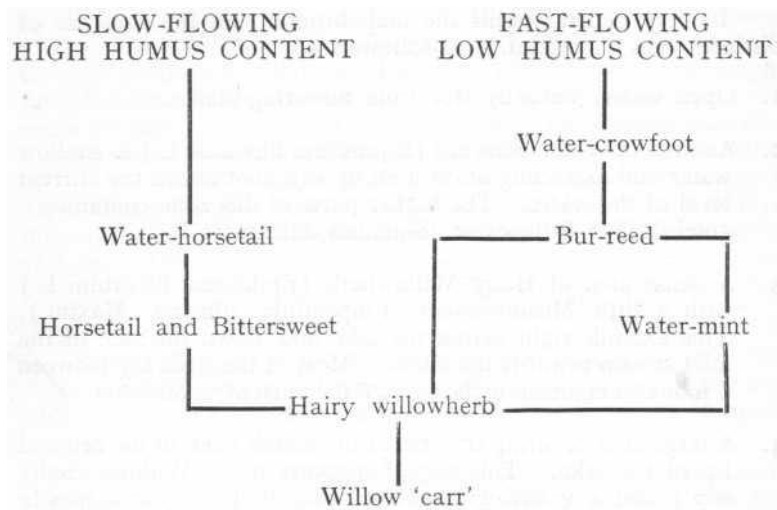
Finally, investigations showed the relations between the chief colonising plants and (1) the height of the water-table; (2) the humus-content of the mud.

In very general terms the map brought out the presence of distinct zones of vegetation as follows: —

1. Open water, virtually free from flowering-plants.
2. An area of Water-horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile* L.) in shallow water and extending on to mud up to a foot above the current level of the water. The higher parts of this zone contained a good deal of Bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara* L.)
3. A dense area of Hairy Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum* L.) with a little Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria* Maxim.). This extends right across the lake and down the side of the inlet-stream towards the island. Most of this area lay between a foot and eighteen inches above the current water-level.
4. A large area covering the rest of the marsh back to the original tip of the lake. This region supports many Willows (*Salix* spp.) and a varied ground-flora consisting of plants mostly typical of damp soils. Eighteen species were listed, the most plentiful being Hairy willowherb, Stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica* L.), Bittersweet and Goose-grass (*Galium aparine* L.). This area lay almost entirely on ground more than two feet above the current water-level. Over most of the area, pits of thirty inches depth failed to show free water.
5. Small areas of Bur-reed (*Sparganium ramosum* Huds.). These were growing almost entirely at the sides of the swift-flowing inlet-channel as far as the island. Bur-reed was found to be growing in much the same depth of water as the Water-horsetail. Associated with the Bur-reed, on slightly higher ground, were patches of Water-mint (*Mentha aquatica* L.). Water crowfoot (*Ranunculus aquatilis* L.) was found in the inlet-channel and caused deposition of silt-banks downstream from its dense patches.

It appears that both Water-horsetail and Bur-reed give place to Hairy willowherb in the succession of plant-growth; i.e., they are alternatives in the hydrosere. This led to the discovery, by soil analysis, that Bur-reed and Water-mint grow in soil considerably poorer in humus than that now occupied by Water-horsetail. This lack of humus is to be expected along the course of the inlet-stream, whose rapid current would tend to diminish the deposition of decaying matter.

Thus, taking into consideration differences in relative height of the water-table and differences in soil-humus, a probable sequence of events in the seral succession was worked out as follows:



(‘Carr’ is marshy woodland on neutral or alkaline soils.) The two possible sequences, both leading to a ‘carr’, are thus originally dependent on speed of water-flow followed by changing level in the water-table. The succession may be expected to continue until the whole lake reaches the ‘carr’ stage at least, unless some form of dredging operations are undertaken.

R. van den Driessche.