

RENDCOMB COLLEGE CHRONICLE

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SCHOOL NOTES.

Summer Term, 1953.

Term began on Friday, May 1st, and ended on Friday, July 24th.

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Founder's Day, of which an account appears on page 6, was celebrated on Saturday the twenty-seventh of June. The Guest of Honour was General the Lord Freyberg, V.C., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., K.B.E., D.S.O.

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During the Summer holidays the front stairs were fitted with new treads through the generosity of Lord Dulverton who made himself responsible for the considerable financial outlay, and to whom we are very grateful. This difficult job was undertaken by the Bristol Branch of Reparations Dreyfus Ltd.

Contrary to general belief, the stairs are not of Bath Stone, but of a rather soft Portland stone, and this presented the considerable problem of not cutting right through the old stairs, which were cut away and new slabs of brown York stone inserted across the entire width of each step.

The mess during this operation was indescribable; it penetrated everywhere in spite of the dust sheets which were hung from floor to ceiling of the first-floor landing.

Many of our readers will know, possibly from painful experience, how difficult it had become to use the stairs without slipping and we looked forward keenly to the renovation. Yet, paradoxically, when the work was finished we found that, over the years, we had acquired "sea-legs" and for a short while we felt rather insecure on the flat new stairs. However, we soon suffered our "sea-change" and recovered our poise.

Also during the holidays, Dormitories I, II and III, and the lobby, were redecorated. The new paint in the lobby incidentally obscures the last of the decorations remaining from the days when the College was a mansion, except for a small area in the dispensary.

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Commemoration Day this year was included in the Coronation holiday which lasted from Saturday the 31st of May to Wednesday the 3rd of June. All boys went home for this period.

There were various expeditions during the term. Members of Forms IV, V and VI went to see a performance of "The Merchant of Venice" at Stratford-on-Avon on May 12th; a large Sixth Form party went there again on July 15th to see an outstanding production of "King Lear"; a party from the Vth and VIth forms attended one of the concerts at the Festival of Contemporary British Music at Cheltenham on Friday, June 12th, when they were privileged to hear a performance of Dr. Vaughan Williams' "Sinfonia Antarctica": and finally the entire school went to the Gaumont Cinema, Cheltenham, on Monday, June 15th, to see the Coronation film, "A Queen is Crowned". Accounts of most of these events will be found elsewhere in this issue.

On Friday, July 3rd, a B.B.C. Recording van visited the College. Records were made of the Choir at practice in the Music Room and interviews with various members of the Choir and with the Choirmaster were recorded., The results of these labours could be appreciated in the programme "Apollo in the West", which was broadcast in the West of England Home Service of the B.B.C. on Thursday, September 17th.

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The Open Air stage was used on Founder's Day for the first time since 1938, when a performance of the "Mock Doctor," a translation by Fielding of Molière's "Le Médecin malgré lui" was presented. During the weeks preceding the performance an enormous amount of work—clearing, levelling and rolling—had to be done on the stage, and this was most efficiently performed by R. W. Muchamore and a gang of devoted non-cricketers.

We are very sorry to have to say good-bye to Miss Dennick, who was unable, through ill-health, to return for the Autumn Term.

We wish all success to the following boys who left at the end of the Summer Term: D. C. de Peyer, K. A. Statham, R. W. Muchamore, P. L. Waite, D. E. Barbour, K. E. Payne, J. M. Rolfe and W. J. Prime.

* * *

We welcome Miss P. Beckh, who is temporarily filling the post of Matron at the College. We also extend a welcome to the following boys who entered College at the beginning of the Autumn Term, 1953: I. A. Campbell, D. R. G. Griffiths, M. R. Horton, J. F. D. Barke, F. A. G. Ferguson, G. Harrison, D. A. Hodges, M. T. Lancashire, J. Shaw, G. J. Taylor and N. R. Wake.

The following passed the General Certificate of Education Examination in one or more subjects at Midsummer, 1953.

At Ordinary Level. —R. W. Alder, J. M. Astill, J. Bolton King, J. B. R. Browne, J. K. Comrie, J. R. Ellis, D. J. B. Forster, T. Gay, B. Glastonbury, D. A. Godfrey, J. R. Gosden, A. Harrison, J. M. Harrison, R. O. G. Hayter, R. N. Horne, P. B. Marwood, G. E. Page, K. E. Payne, W. J. Prime, G. H. Richards, M. G. Richards, J. M. Rolfe, T. W. Rowley, T. D. A. Semple, R. M. Sumsion, A. G. B. Wallace.

At Advanced and Scholarship Levels. —J. K. Comrie, M. J. Edwards, J. R. Gosden, J. M. Harrison, P. B. Marwood, R. W. Muchamore, J. B. O'Brien, P. S. Rose, K. A. Statham, R. M. Sumsion, D. G. Vaisey, P. L. Waite.

HONOURS.

M. D. Rayner—Science Scholarship, Magdalene College, Cambridge.

K. A. Statham—State Scholarship in Arts.

D. G. Vaisey—State Scholarship in Arts.

J. C. Waterton—1st Class, Mechanical Sciences Tripos, Cambridge, and the Rex Moir Prize for Distinction.

OLD BOYS' NOTES.

We congratulate Mr. and Mrs. Freddy Fisher on the birth of a son on July 16th.

* * *

We congratulate J. C. Waterton on his 1st Class and on being head of the list in the Mechanical Sciences Tripos Examination at Cambridge, June, 1953. He also rowed in the Emmanuel College first boat in the Lent and May races.

* * *

A. E. A. Brain is a Civil Engineer with the London Division of the Ministry of Transport, East Surrey Area. Last season he played centre-half for his club against London University, and also played centre-half for the Civil Service Hockey XI against the Army.

* * *

We congratulate Roger Brain on his marriage to Miss Audrey Willis in August. Their address is: Faculty of Agriculture, Shambat, Khartoum, Sudan.

* * *

T. T. Walters is now working in the Electronics Department of the Bristol Aircraft Company.

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Squadron Leader B. J. Brooks, D. F. M., was appointed Command Armament Officer, Headquarters Home Command, Royal Air Force, on the 3rd November, 1952.

R. M. Lewis has completed the Trustee Diploma of the Institute of Bankers.

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The following Old Boys accepted the invitation for Founder's Day:—H. H. Baxter, R. K. G. Bick, P. Binks and wife, G. H. W. Bodman,, C. J. Brisley, W. Burns, G. H. Bye and wife, G. S. Davis, W. N. Durham, J. Eyles and wife, J. M. Faulks and wife, P. L. Field, P. M. Gerrard, A. E. Godsell, R. Gready, M. R. Hancock, C. E. Hartland and wife, E. A. Jones, R. J. Kendal, H. P. Lecky, P. D. B. Levett, B. H. G. Levers, F. Luffman, A. C. Magor, E. J. Miller, M. J. Morgan, F. Nevel and wife, M. G. Petter, R. J. Powell, P. D. Quick, E. B. Smith, P. W. Sumsion, E. Webster and C. D. Whittle.

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The following Old Boys were present at the summer gathering on Saturday, 11th July, 1953:—J. F. Alder, J. R. S. Powell, D. R. Page, P. Binks, A. R. Tenty, R. Brain, C. Baillie Lane, P. Baillie Lane, E. A. Jones.

* * *

The following Old Boys visited the College on other occasions during the Summer Term:—P. Cresswell, M. E. Knight, J. W. J. Reed, P. G. Cockell, J. Kitto, E. R. S. Gillham and G. M. Wilson.

COLLEGE OFFICERS.

September, 1953,

Prefects—D. G. Vaisey, T. Gay, R. M. Sumsion.

Workman—F. S. G. Richards.

Pictures—A. Harrison.

Music Warden—J. M. Harrison.

Senior Music Librarian—H. J. Greenhalf.

Choir Librarians—J. E. Gooding, R. F. Stebbing.

Lampmen—J. B. R. Browne, J. K. Walter.

P. W. Man—J. K. Comrie.

Church Collections and Deck Chairs—T. W. Rowley.

Stagemen—M. D. Richards, R. O. G. Hayter, G. H. Richards,
M. A. B. Forster, P. G. Auden.

Librarians—R. M. Sumsion, D. G. Vaisey, R. A. Powell,
M. V. Harley.

Manual Foremen—T. Gay, J. Gough, M. G. Richards,
D. J. B. Forster, J. R. Ellis, D. A. Godfrey.

Poultrymen—R. A. Powell, C. H. Thomason, H. A. Gough,
G. H. G. Herbert, D. T. Hart, M. D. Naish, S. D. Hicks.

Furniture Committee—D. J. B. Forster, P. G. Auden, R. J. Lawson.

MEETING OFFICERS.

Autumn, 1953.

Chairman—D. G. Vaisey.

Secretary—R. N. Horne.

Games Captain—J. M. Harrison.

Field Secretary—R. A. Powell.

Games Committee—D. G. Vaisey, P. B. Marwood.

Meeting Banker—M. V. Harley.

Bays' Banker—J. Gough.

Senior Shopman—J. Gough.

Shopmen—C. H. Thomason, A. P. Hayes.

Games Committee Treasurer—R. M. Sumsion.

House Committee Treasurer—J. R. Ellis.

Record Committee Treasurer—J. B. O'Brien.

Finance Committee Treasurer—D. J. B. Forster.

Finance Committee—C. Handoll, M. A. B. Forster.

Auditors—B. Glastonbury, J. M. Astill.

Breakages Man—H. A. Gough.

Entertainments Committee—J. R. Gosden, J. K. Comrie,
R. A. Powell, A. Harrison, P. Mew.

Record Committee—P. S. Rose, M. D. Richards, A. G. B. Wallace,
M. J. Edwards, T. Gay.

Cycle Committee—G. H. Richards, J. B. R. Browne, C. H. Thomason.

Inspector of Nuisances—D. T. Hart.

Magazine Committee—R. D. Comley, T. W. Rowley, H. J. Greenhalf.

Drying Room Committee—R. W. Alder, R. O. G. Hayter, A. P. Hayes.

Amplifier Technicians—M. G. Richards, M. V. Harley.

Paperman—J. A. Richards.

Football Games Wardens—T. D. A. Semple, R. J. Lawson.

Cricket Games Warden—T. D. A. Semple.

Tennis Games Warden—G. H. G. Herbert.

Football Groundsmen—G. H. Richards, R. O. G. Hayter.

Junior Football Groundsman—J. D. R. Paine.

Cricket Groundsman—J. R. Ellis.

Tennis Groundsman—B. R. Paish.

Cricket Secretary, 1954—B. Glastonbury.

Hockey Secretary, 1954—R. N. Horne.

Rugby Secretary, 1953—A. G. B. Wallace.

Council—D. G. Vaisey, R. M. Sumsion, M. D. Richards, T. Gay,
R. N. Horne, P. B. Marwood.

Rule Committee—F. S. G. Richards, P. S. Rose, J. R. Gosden.

Selection Committee—D. G. Vaisey, F. S. G. Richards,
R. M. Sumsion, M. D. Richards, T. Gay.

End of Term Entertainments Committee—D. G. Vaisey,
R. M. Sumsion, M. D. Richards, T. Gay, A. G. B. Wallace.

FOUNDER'S DAY, 1953.

Our quixotic climate, which so often insists on prolonging April into June and even July, relented yet again for Founder's Day this year; and just in time, for only a few days before the "intense secondaries" of severe Atlantic disturbances were still humming like bees over the Cotswolds, and alternative plans had to be prepared in case they continued to do so on "the day".

The proceedings as usual were opened by the Chairman of the Governors, Lieut-Colonel John Godman, who referred in his address to the departure from tradition which economic circumstances had recently forced upon the Governors. He reminded his audience of how, some years previously, the Gloucestershire Education Authority had accepted the responsibility, in so far as they were able to do so, for the foundation scholars. "Being an authority under the Ministry of Education", he said, "it was only possible for them to make a grant for foundationers where the parents' income was below a certain level. Because it was the wish of the Founder that all foundationers should receive an entirely free education, the Governors made themselves responsible for the balance. This year, because of rising costs and fixed income, the Governors were unable to continue, and were obliged very reluctantly to ask the parents of foundationers to shoulder the difference between the Education Authority's grant and the full cost. Believe me," added Col. Godman, "the Governors only took that step with very great regret. We have since received from the parents of foundationers a series of letters in which they, almost without exception, recognise the necessity for the step the Governors have taken and agree to it, and pay a wonderful tribute to this school." His only regret, the Chairman concluded, was that the Founder could not have seen these letters, since they constituted so fine a tribute to his foresight and so complete a justification of his work.

The Headmaster, in his annual Report, referred to the deaths during the year of the Rev. H. F. N. Inge, Rector of Rendcomb since 1922, and of Mr. R. N. D. Wilson, who had served on the Staff from 1934 to 1944. Mr. Lee-Browne said that the year had been one of solid achievement, and that the academic record had been excellent. On the sporting side, he mentioned especially the most successful change-over from Association to Rugby football which had taken place in 1952 under the direction of Mr. Bird. In conclusion, the Headmaster thanked parents for the "vote of confidence" contained in the letters to which Colonel Godman had referred.

The Guest of Honour, General Lord Freyberg, V.C., then gave his address. Lord Freyberg spoke of the importance of educating the youth of the Commonwealth in a sensible and practical way. He drew largely on the experience of educational problems which he had gained during his term of office as Governor-General of New Zealand. The object of education, he said, beginning in

youth and carrying on through life, was to develop character and produce the qualities of leadership. He agreed that the importance of the trained mind was rightly stressed, but in order to confront the times of difficulty and even peril with which modern life seemed to be surrounded, steadfastness of mind and robustness of body were needed as well. Lord Freyberg ended by emphasising the importance of the coming Commonwealth tour by the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, which would be an inspiration to the rising generation.

Lord Dulverton, in a felicitous speech, then proposed a vote of thanks to Lord Freyberg, which was carried by acclamation.

Tea was served as soon as the speeches were over, and the visitors were then able to visit the art room and to see some of the articles recently made in the workshop. Later, they adjourned to the Open Air Stage, where a performance of the "Mock Doctor" was given.

"THE MOCK DOCTOR."

On Founder's Day, 1953, the Open Air Theatre came into its own again in triumph. Weeks of evening rehearsals by the cast, and weeks of preparation of the stage, which had suffered greatly from neglect during the war years—both of which the weather seemed determined to thwart—went into staging the "Mock Doctor".

The play, discovered almost by chance by the Producer, is a translation by Henry Fielding of Molière's farce "Le médecin malgré lui", and is admirably suited to outdoor treatment, particularly on a woodland theatre such as ours. Founder's Day itself was hot and sunny, rendering the play yet more pleasing and giving point, other than that of irony, to remarks such as "Pray, sir, be covered, the sun will hurt your complexion" and "this is confounded hot weather".

The acting generally was of a high standard and the play was carried along in a racy and amusing fashion. Some characters were impeccably presented, though in others faults were obvious. The two early "drubbings" lacked reality and the opening scenes tended to be spoken too quickly: but on the whole pace and precision were strikingly good.

D. C. de Peyer as Gregory—the mock doctor himself—once again had a very big part which he played with an amusing verve. Most of the main characters, but especially de Peyer, mastered the small farcical idiosyncrasies of character. Gregory's walk, his voice inflexions, his gestures and facial expressions were all very funny—a phrase which sums up de Peyer's presentation of the character as a whole.

A. P. Hayes as Gregory's wife Dorcas, created a very vigorous and scheming woodcutter's wife. Apart from a tendency to speak

too fast and too jerkily, Hayes acted well—his forthright, lively and mocking manner exactly suiting the part.

T. Gay and R. A. Powell, as the two servants of Sir Jasper—humble in his presence and haughty when not—acted sedately and pleasingly. Gay especially got well inside his part—superciliousness positively emanating from him, particularly in the scene with Davy and Gregory.

In the part of Sir Jasper, F. S. G. Richards created a pompous and confused knight with success. In the last scenes he was particularly good.

M. V. Harley acted well as a dapper little love-lorn Leander. He too used a wealth of facial expressions and “dramatic” motions to great effect, especially in his soliloquy on love.

Charlotte, on whose cure the whole play is centred, was a small part played adequately by R. C. Pilkington. His only chance to act came in the last scene when his tongue was loosened, and he took full and vehement advantage of it.

Talent was shown also in the small parts. P. J. L. Swaite; played Davy as an arthritic old West Countryman with success; and W. J. Prime’s Dr. Hellebor, who was given a nervous irritation of the throat, though another small part, proved to be one of the highlights of the play. C. Handoll as the maid was charming, if a little indistinct.

In addition to the acting three factors went to make this play a success—innovations of the producer, the costume and the scenery. Great and effective use was made of the elaborate bow which one tends to associate with the Age of Elegance, and of “ritual” to the music of Handel. The Louis XIV costumes which were made under the supervision of Mrs. Lee-Browne, gave excellent colour and verisimilitude to the play. Mr. Smedley again did a wonderful job with the set—constructing a huge door with Ionic columns, which was previously erected by Louis XIV artificers in an interval.

We can only say that the revival of the Open Air Theatre was a success—the production impressed us, interested us and delighted us; what more could we ask?

D. G. V.

“Q. P.” CONCERTS.

These concerts have been a regular feature of the Sunday evening “Quiet Period” for many years now, the two-hundredth concert being due this October.

Boys, and occasionally a member of the teaching Staff, volunteer to arrange a concert by signing their names opposite a convenient day on a list put up at the beginning of each term. The programme is restricted to serious music and there is a wide choice of records. Both the College and the Meeting records are readily available, these collections comprising most of the better known

works together with a huge selection of items of less renown. Many private records too are available, so that even the most restricted taste can be catered for.

It is now over a year since the first “Long-playing” records figured in these concerts, and though the Meeting Amplifier is, unfortunately, not designed for playing these labour-saving devices, we have no doubt that the gramophone recitals of the future will make use of them as a matter of course.

Audiences are always large, very nearly half the school attending, but this cannot wholly be ascribed to musical taste—many people finding that music provides a better background for letter-writing than the general chatter in other rooms!

However, these concerts, ranging as they do over the whole field of western music, from Purcell to Stravinsky, are enjoyed by many boys, and they would be sorely missed if, for any reason, they were to lapse.

P. L. W.

EXPEDITIONS.

The Cheltenham Festival of Contemporary British Music.

“Art without tradition is like a flock of sheep without a shepherd”, said Sir Winston Churchill, “and art without invention is like a corpse”. Sir John Barbirolli quoted this in justification (if any was necessary) of the programme of these Festivals in a farewell speech at the end of this concert, which was also the last of this year’s series by the Hallé Orchestra. He went on to express the hope that the Festival would, for many years to come, continue to provide the opportunity for younger composers to hear their works performed.

The “Concert Overture” by John Joubert, provided a lively beginning, and though it contained modern harmony, its simpleness of form facilitated its comprehension. In style, the ways of Sibelius and Walton were evident, yet these never lapsed into cheap derivation, remaining purely as overall influences.

“Sinfonia Antarctica” was the focal point of the evening. As expected, much of the music for “Scott of the Antarctic” remained unchanged, though a great deal has been added, altered and developed. The form of the music was its obstacle, as far as those listeners without programme notes were concerned, and indeed one very notable music critic described it as “jelly-like”. If one could, as it were, keep up with the music as it wended its way through new lands, then the impressions it made were considerable. If not, the wandering mind found itself examining the stately statues of kings which overlook the orchestral platform in Cheltenham Town Hall. However, “Sinfonia Antarctica” made one clear impression: there is an abundance of new orchestral noises which, like the vast unknown regions of the South Pole, are still

to be explored and braved. The usual ethereal and mystical qualities of the "Tallis Fantasia" are here particularly evident; but the gigantic powers of natural forces and man's insignificance compared with the creations of God were the underlying motives of the music. Nevertheless, to get a full impression it was necessary to make a conscious effort to visualise the fearful elements with which Scott and his party contended. Thus, it was not pure music: but whether this is good or bad is a matter for the individual.

Brahms' Second Symphony which followed was like a familiar land to which the explorer returns after his adventures, and its warmth provided a sharp contrast to the icy chords of Vaughan Williams. In this, as indeed throughout, the playing of the Halle Orchestra was completely admirable, and they received a thoroughly deserved ovation at the end of the evening.

K. A. S.

"King Lear."

This is another production that was greatly enhanced by the strong Shakespearian air of Stratford, and it can safely be said that it was thoroughly enjoyed by the large VIth form party that went to see it on July 15th.

The costumes were well chosen and adequately met the requirements of such a varied set of characters. The scenery was colourful and effective, except for one rather weird piece of stonework, strongly reminiscent of our "modern art" sculpture, which was perpetually on the set. It served as anything from a royal throne to a meagre hovel, but mostly as a piece of background furniture which rather detracted from the atmosphere of "graced palaces" and "chalky bourns". However, the general effect was excellent and in places most realistic, especially in the scenes on the heath during the storm.

The acting seemed somewhat reserved in the opening Act, but very soon provided a gripping tension as the plot unfolded. The outstanding performance of Michael Redgrave as Lear deserves high praise, as also does Noel Howlett's stirring characterisation of Gloucester. The pathos of these two characters was excellently portrayed, especially after the climax of Lear's madness and the blinding of Gloucester. Marius Goring as the Fool was well fitted to his part, and his personal touches of clowning were ingenious. The steadying influence of the sober Kent also deserves mention. The rest of the characters were well portrayed and the cold-heartedness of Goneril (Joan Sanderson) and Regan (Rachel Kempson), along with the wild chantings of the "mad" Edgar (Basil Hoskins) were often soul-chilling.

Although the party only saw the second night of "King Lear", everyone thought it was definitely another Stratford success, and one that had a most marked effect on its eager audience.

R. A. P.

“The Merchant of Venice.”

On May 12th, a party from Forms IV, V and VI went to the Stratford Memorial Theatre's production of “The Merchant of Venice”.

The curtain rose on the market place in Venice. As the strains of music died away, and Antonio began his famous speech. . . . “In sooth I know not why I am so sad”, we could see that this was Harry Andrews at his best. In fact all the cast, costumes and scenery kept up the Stratford tradition. In particular Michael Redgrave as Shylock gave a magnificent display of acting, not only by his actions and voice, but also by his facial expressions. This was a different Shylock from the one we have been used to. Michael Redgrave made him, as I am sure Shakespeare meant to make him, more like an animal than a human being. Peggy Ashcroft, as Portia, was charming and lively. Her expressions of relief when Morocco and Arragon chose the wrong caskets were very amusing. As Balthazar, the learned doctor, her “manly” stride and deep voice were quite unique.

An Old Rendcombian, Powys (Willie) Thomas, entertained us very much, by his affected performance as Prince of Arragon.

There were some terrifying moments. The one that sticks in our minds the most, I think, was Shylock's savage charge at Antonio's breast with a large knife. There were also some amusing moments, such as Launcelot Gobbo's antics when pretending to run from his master.

As the final curtain fell, and Shylock and Portia took their special bow, the applause did justice to the liveliness and smoothness with which the play had run.

H. A. G.

SCHOOL CONCERT.

The College's new orchestra made its debut in (Big School on Sunday, the 17th of May. After a lapse during the war, instrumental teaching was revived four years ago when Miss Keil came to teach the violin and the viola; she was joined some months later by Mr. Roberts, who gives lessons on the flute, oboe and clarinet, as well as on brass instruments. Obviously in a school with our numbers a complete orchestra consisting only of boys is almost an impossibility, and on this occasion we were very grateful to several grown-ups who came to play with us.

The programme began with Four Pieces for Strings by Purcell, selected from his music for the theatre. Then the orchestra accompanied Forms I and II together with the trebles from the Choir in Bach's “Sheep may safely graze,” the obligato was played by Miss Keil and Miss Banks on two violins. Then came two unaccompanied part-songs by the Choir: “Full fathom five” by Charles Wood, and Vaughan Williams' arrangement of the sea shanty “Just as the Tide was flowing”.

Miss Keil, accompanied by Mr. Tooze, played two violin solos: the first “Vocalise”, was an arrangement of a wordless song

for soprano and orchestra by Rachmaninoff: it lost little in the transfer of its medium from voice to violin. The second item was an arrangement of a French Folk song, "Danse d'Ariège" by Moffatt, which was immediately acceptable, and the audience was quick to show its approval.

The last two items were by the Orchestra alone: "Rhosy-medre" by Vaughan Williams, and the Slow Movement from Schubert's Symphony No. 9 (The Great) in C, in which the oboe obligato was played by Hywel Richards in good style.

Members of the Orchestra.

First Violins—Miss Keil, Mr. Graty, M. D. Richards, T. D. A. Semple,
T. W. Rowley.

Second Violins—Miss Banks, M. V. Harley, B. Glastonbury, H. A Gough.

Violas—Mrs. Wilkinson, K. A. Statham.

'Cellos—Mr. Swaine, Mr. Cox.

Double Bass—Miss Gosden.

Oboe—G. H. Richards.

CRICKET REPORT, 1953.

This was the second full season to be played on the new field. Compared with the previous year, the wicket was less lively, though this was due to the almost perpetual softness of the ground produced by rain. Yet in spite of this particularly sunless summer, virtually no cricket was lost, though the first hour of the last match was played in continuous rain.

As always, we began the season with a glut of matches of all kinds within the first few weeks, and as always no one was sufficiently in practice, and we lost. Later on, however, the first XI became more of a unit and did well. More than half a dozen of last year's team remained, the last places being filled by J. M. Astill, B. Glastonbury, R. N. Horne and M. G. Richards, though the last place was by no means certain. Both T. Gay and P. S. Rose were technically better batsmen than Richards, but both were handicapped by slowness in the field. Furthermore, the team did not require an extra batsman as such, but a sound fieldsman who was also competent to score a few runs at number seven or eight.

Except for the first two or three matches (when we began badly) the batting was very sound, and after the second match we were able to declare in every innings. There was, however, considerable difficulty in finding a satisfactory batting order. D. G. Vaisey lacked confidence as an opener and could not find the form which he later showed lower in the order. He was also handicapped by a faulty back stroke in which he played across the line of the ball, and by his apparent unwillingness to move his feet to the slow bowlers. Nevertheless he possessed some good-looking shots and should be useful in the batting next year. P. L. Waite fulfilled all the promise he showed last season and batted consistently throughout.

He was essentially an attacking batsman, and indeed some of his defensive shots were unsound. His primary value lay in the fact that whatever the state of the game, he played forcefully and hit the ball hard. D. C. de Peyer, like Vaisey, had no success as an opening batsman, but batted well lower down the order.

Astill was a valuable addition to the side: except for the occasional bad stroke to a ball outside the off stump his batting was both solid and, later, when he had settled down in the team, forceful. Experience should bring him many more runs. D. A. Godfrey was prevented by injury from playing during the latter half of the season. His batting, however, though certainly more correct this year, had lost all the forcefulness it once possessed and was far too negative. In his case, also, experience should tell. K. A. Statham was the best batsman in the side; he was polished and forceful; his square cut was a beautiful stroke but he was often handicapped by a failure to see the ball well or until he had been batting for some time.

J. M. Harrison, who opened for the second half of the season, played several small but useful innings. While inclined to play across the line of flight, he had the cardinal virtue of attacking the bowling.

The rest of the team hardly batted: M. G. Richards played sensibly and while breaking nearly every rule of batting, he managed by keeping calm and collected, to survive where others fell. K. E. Payne did not really do himself justice; the basic fault in his grip on the handle cramped his style considerably, making it difficult for him to make a scoring stroke in front of the wicket. R. A. Powell suddenly discovered at the end of the season that he could hit the ball, and did so. Horne and Glastonbury were rarely called upon to reveal their abilities as batsmen. Both, however, bowled very well, though the latter was only effective for short spells. Horne, the more accurate of the two, lost much of his deceptive flight by bowling rather over his natural pace. For both, this was their first season in the 1st XI and they should improve as their experience increases. Harrison and Waite usually proved more effective than the slower bowlers simply on account of their pace. Waite rarely bowled at his best, probably because of the demands made on him as a batsman. Harrison bowled well, though he often sacrificed accuracy for extra speed. Payne and Godfrey also bowled, though neither for very long or with much success.

The team's fielding was as unpredictable as the weather, varying from moments of sheer brilliance to others which were, to say the least of it, uninspired. Vaisey again kept wicket well.

The team owed a good deal to Statham's intelligent captaincy. There were occasional aberrations, but in general the side was well handled, de Peyer worked hard in the early part of the season to take the burden of organisation off Statham's shoulders.

There was plenty of energy and some skill in the junior games but we were much handicapped by the fact that the newly sown area of the field was out of use so that there was a shortage of pitches. It was unfortunate too that the fixture list did not provide much in the way of second XI matches. This was not due to any failure on the part of Glastonbury, who was a most efficient secretary, but to the difficulty in finding suitable opposition. Many who just fell below 1st XI standard would have enjoyed some second XI cricket. The school owes a good deal to these people, whose hard and unselfish play made possible good practice games. The names of T. Gay, P. B. Marwood, M. J. Edwards, J. K. Comrie, M. D. Richards, J. Gough, P. S. Rose, R. W. Alder and M. V. Harley spring to mind but do not exhaust the list.

The Junior XI had quite a good season, especially when one considers how few there were from whom teams could be picked. J. R. Ellis proved an excellent captain, who also did well both with bat and ball. H. A. Gough was the best batsman in the side and played several innings of outstanding merit. He also kept wicket with great ability. Of the others, J. A. Richards and P. Mew batted and bowled well on occasion, and the fielding of D. T. Hart and R. W. Taylor was always a joy to watch. If only all aspiring cricketers could learn to enjoy their fielding, how much extra pleasure they would derive from a game which can be so very tedious if no pleasure is taken in this department.

As usual the cricket owed much to those members of the Staff who spent long hours umpiring or coaching—Mr. James, Mr. Austin, Mr. Hull and Mr. Hayward. It is perhaps fitting that we should end with a word of thanks to Mr. Telling. Amid a multitude of tasks he struggled to keep the field in reasonable condition and did all in his power to produce playable wickets. No trouble was ever too much for him. We remember too rarely what we owe to him.

FIRST ELEVEN MATCHES.

May 14th. v. Dean Close "A" XI. Lost by 54 runs.

On a good wicket our bowlers bowled well and the fielding was, in the main, good. We lost however both through lack of practice and through irresolute and careless batting.

Dean Close "A" 126 for 8 dec. Rendcomb 72 (Statham 21).

May 16th. v. Cheltenham College 2nd XI. Lost by 3 wickets.

Again irresolute batting lost us the match, which should have been won.

Rendcomb 44. Cheltenham College 2nd XI 87 for 7 (Harrison 4 for 9).

May 23rd. v. Cheltenham Town 2nd XI. Won by 3 wickets.

This was a new fixture. The fielding was brilliant from start to finish of the Cheltenham innings, in which seven catches were held. Later M. G. Richards showed coolness in his first match for

the 1st XI A “spinners” wicket was responsible for the low scores.

Cheltenham Town 2nd XI 49. (Waite 3 for 10, Horne 3 for 10, Harrison 4 for 26).

Rendcomb 56 for 8.

June 13th. v. Sir Thomas Rich’s “A” XI. Won by 45 runs.

On a very lively wicket the opposing batsmen never really recovered from a bad start, for which Harrison and Waite were responsible, and could offer little resistance.

Sir Thomas Rich’s “A” 49 (Glastonbury 3 for 1, Harrison 3 for 12).

Rendcomb 94 (Waite 23).

June 17th v. North Cerney C. C. Won by 81 runs.

North Cerney were without several of their regular players and had little bowling strength. Harrison and Statham put on 56 in half an hour and later batsmen scored freely. In fading light North Cerney were soon dismissed.

Rendcomb 125 for 4 dec. (Statham 40, Astill 36 not out, de Peyer 22 not out).

North Cerney 44 (Waite 2 for 1, Statham 2 for 1, Horne 3 for 17).

July 1st v. Sir Thomas Rich’s “A” XI. Drawn.

Our batsmen were successful again, but we were unable to dismiss our opponents in the two hours which remained. Eight bowlers were used, and an attacking field was set, but in vain. Rendcomb 112 for 3 dec. (Statham 39, Waite 32 not out).

Sir Thomas Rich's “A” XI 95 for 8 (Harrison 4 for 16, Horne 2 for 6).

July 4th. V. Cirencester Grammar School. Won by 59 runs.

After a bad start the middle batsmen played well and we were again able to declare. The wicket deteriorated and Harrison and Waite ran through our opponents.

Rendcomb 106 for 5 dec. (Vaisey 37 not out, de Peyer 24, Astill 21).

Cirencester G. S. 47 (Waite 5 for 19, Harrison 4 for 10).

July 15th. v. Burford Grammar School. Won by 10 wickets.

Harrison and Waite dismissed Burford in ten overs, and our opening batsmen soon hit off the runs. We won in less than fifty minutes. This was fortunate as a party which included most of the team was to go to Stratford that evening, and if the game had lasted long, there was some doubt as to whether they would be able to go. However, having won, we played on until 4:30 and started for Stratford in comfortable time.

Burford G. S. 15 (Harrison 6 for 4, Waite 3 for 9).

Rendcomb 163 for 6 (Powell 39, Statham 36 not out, M. G. Richards 25).

July 18th. v. Lydney Grammar School. Lost by 7 wickets.

This was a most unsatisfactory match; our early batsmen were constantly interrupted by rain and having declared rather too soon, we were unable to get the other side out or prevent them from scoring. Neither Harrison nor Waite were on form and the game left an impression of rain and a side which had not done itself justice.

Rendcomb 87 for 8 dec. (Waite 34). Lydney G.S. 91 for 3.

“A” XI MATCHES.

May 9th. v. Kingham Hill School. Won by 8 wickets.

This was really a victory for our bowlers, particularly Harrison, who left our batsmen a negligible task.

Kingham Hill 28 (Harrison 5 for 5).

Rendcomb 70 for 3 (Astill 35, Gough, H. 20 not out).

May 21st. v. Dean Close 2nd XI. Lost by 5 runs.

We fielded rather a weak side and were narrowly beaten.

Dean Close 69 (Waite 5 for 11). Rendcomb 64 (Waite 32).

JUNIOR AND UNDER 14 XI MATCHES.

May 9th. Under 14 XI v. Kingham Hill Under 14. Won by 7 runs.

Rendcomb 88 for 9 dec. (Barter 28).

Kingham Hill 81 (Merrett 7 for 35).

May 16th. Junior XI v. A Cheltenham College Junior XI. Drawn.

Cheltenham College 120 (Ellis 6 for 40).

Rendcomb 98 for 8 (H. Gough 39).

May 21st. Junior XI v. King's House School 1st XI. Won by 17 runs.

Rendcomb 45. King's House School 28 (Ellis 6 for 17).

June 13th. Junior XI v. Sir Thomas Rich's Junior XI. Lost by 4 wickets.

Rendcomb 32. Sir Thomas Rich's 35 for 6.

June 20th. Junior XI v. King's House School 1st XI. Won by 47 runs.

Rendcomb 92. King's House School 45.

July 1st. Junior XI v. Sir Thomas Rich's Junior XI. Lost by 6 wickets.

Rendcomb 38. Sir Thomas Rich's 40 for 4.

July 4th. Junior XI v. Cirencester G.S. Junior XI. Won by 5 wickets.

Cirencester G.S. (Mew 4 for 9).

Rendcomb 70 (Gough, H. 47).

July 15th. Under 14 XI v. Burford G.S. Under 14 XI. Lost by 73 runs.

Rendcomb 33. Burford G. S. 106.

July 18th. Junior XI v. Lydney G. S. Junior XI. Drawn.

Lydney G.S. 108 for 6 dec. Rendcomb 28 for 5.