

RENDCOMB COLLEGE CHRONICLE

Vol. 10 No. 2

March, 1953

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Rendcomb College Chronicle

Volume 10, No. 2.

March, 1953.

SCHOOL NOTES. Autumn Term, 1952.

Term began on Friday the 19th of September and ended on Friday the 19th of December, 1952. Half-term was from the 7th to the 10th of November.

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Two performances of *Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure* were given in Big School on December the 3rd and 6th. A notice appears on page 6.

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The Carol Service, this year, was given in aid of the Rendcomb Church Organ Fund on Sunday the 14th of December. As usual, the service was held in the morning at Rendcomb; in the evening it was repeated, by invitation of the Vicar and Churchwardens, at Chedworth Church. Further details can be found on page 5.

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The Christmas Party was on Wednesday, 17th December, an account is given on page 8.

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We are most grateful to Mrs. Huntly Sinclair for the addition of a piece of the Park to the College Games Field, so that in course of time we can construct a hard-standing for the coaches or cars of visiting teams. This will be a valuable addition to the amenities on Top.

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We regret that in the last number of the Chronicle the name of J. Gough was omitted from the list of Passes in the Cambridge General Certificate of Education at Ordinary Level. So far as we know this is the only omission of its kind that has ever occurred in the magazine, so that he has achieved something of a distinction.

We are grateful to Dr. Arthur Browne for the gift of an early, edition of Hooker's Flora of the British Islands.

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We offer our good wishes to R. J. Bird, who left us at the end of the Autumn Term.

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We acknowledge with thanks regular copies of *The Buxtonian* and *The Wycliffe Star*.

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During the Festival of Contemporary Literature at Cheltenham, senior members of the school went to hear a lecture by Lord David Cecil on *Shakespeare's Comedies*.

COLLEGE OFFICERS.

Easter Term, 1953.

Prefects.—D. C. de Peyer, M. D. Rayner, K. A. Statham.

Workman—D. G. Vaisey.

Pictureman—J. K. Comrie.

Music Warden—J. M. Harrison.

Senior Music Librarian—H. J. Greenhalf.

Choir Librarians—J. R. Alder, S. D. Hicks.

Lampmen—T. Gay, J. B. R. Browne.

Deck Chairs and Church Collections—J. Bolton King.

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

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

Hetimen—D. E. Barbour, R. A. Powell, K. E. Payne, W. J. Prime,
C. H. Thomason, H. A. Gough, G. H. G. Herbert, S. D. Hicks,
M. D. Naish.

General Meeting Elections:

P. W. Man—D. E. Barbour.

Furniture Committee: —M. G. Richards, G. H. Richards, M. A. B. Forster.

GENERAL MEETING OFFICERS.

Chairman—K. A. Statham.

Secretary—M. J. Edwards.

Games Captain—D. C. de Peyer.

Games Committee—K. A. Statham, D. G. Vaisey.

Field Secretary—M. D. Rayner.

Banker—R. N. Horne.

Games Committee Treasurer—B. Glastonbury.

House Committee Treasurer—M. V. Harley.

Senior Shopman—M. D. Richards.

Shopmen—J. R. Ellis, C. H. Thomason.

Auditors—M. V. Harley, R. M. Sumsion.

Finance Committee Treasurer—T. D. A. Semple.

Finance Committee—J. D. R. Paine, R. F. Stimson.

Breakages Man—D. J. B. Forster.

Entertainments Committee—R. W. Muchamore, D. A. Godfrey,
A. G. B. Wallace, C. Handoll, T. Gay.

Record Committee—M. J. Edwards, T. Gay, K. A. Statham,
M. D. Richards, P. S. Rose.

Cycle Committee—P. L. Waite, J. M. Rolfe, J. K. Walter.

Inspectors of Nuisances—M. G. Cooper, J. R. Ellis.

Magazine Committee—H. J. Greenhalf, G. H. Richards, J. R. Ellis.

Drying Room Committee—D. J. B. Forster, J. K. Walter, J. A. Richards.

Amplifier Technicians—R. W. Muchamore, M. J. Edwards.

Paperman—D. A. Godfrey.

Record Committee Treasurer—R. W. Alder.

Hockey Groundsmen—J. A. Richards, C. H. Thomason,
T. D. A. Semple.

Hockey Gameswardens—R. J. Lawson, D. A. Godfrey.

Rugger Gameswarden—J. M. Rolfe.

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

OLD BOYS' NOTES.

We congratulate R. E. Hayward who was married on December 20th to Miss Gladys Roughton. Their present address is [REDACTED], Southend-on-Sea.

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R. H. Bettison, who is married and has two sons, is engaged in agricultural engineering at Tetbury; his address is: [REDACTED] Tetbury, Gloucestershire.

* * *

The following Old Boys visited the College during the Christmas Term: P. D. de longh, J. Gilchrist, J. W. J. Reed, B. Plenderleith, J. D. Painter, R. H. Jones, M. R. Hancock, M. Boase, M. G. Petter, J. E. Houston, M. E. Knight, J. G. French, S. A. Trayhurn.

* * *

The London Dinner of the Old Rendcombian Society was held at the Cock Tavern, Fleet Street, on Saturday, November 15th. The reception and table arrangements were slightly different on this occasion and were well suited to a comparatively small gathering. Formal speeches were dispensed with and while this procedure is not necessarily to be regarded as a precedent, it undoubtedly gave more time for people to meet each other and talk. There was a short business meeting after the dinner, at which the findings of the previous gathering at Gloucester were accepted and endorsed. The idea was mooted that wives of Old Boys might sometimes be invited to the dinner. While it was pointed out that this would be difficult in the years in which the dinner is also the Annual General business meeting of the Society, the idea appeared to meet with the approval of many members present and it is hoped it will be tried out at some future date. D. Dakin, the President, was in the Chair and the dinner was admirably arranged by J. E. Miller, the retiring Chairman of the Society, and D. C. Vaughan, the Secretary. The Headmaster spoke about the suggestion that the College should arrange to obtain and stock blazer badges and buttons which would be available for Old Boys. These should be ready some time in 1953. The following were present: —

J. F. Alder, M. J. Bedwell, A. P. Browning, G. D. Bye, J. A. Cunnison, D. Dakin, N. Dalton, P. F. Gurdon, R. E. Hayward, D. W. Lee-Browne, F. T. Luffman, J. C. Maslin, J. E. Miller, J. D. Painter, N. A. Perkins, B. W. Plenderleith, M. B. Shepherd, C. G. V. Taylor, D. C. Vaughan, N. McGregor Wood.

* * *

The West of England O. R. Dinner was this year held at the New Inn, Gloucester, on Saturday, October 11th, 1952. The new venue was a great success. We had the use of a delightful oak-

panelled room with a fire and comfortable chairs, both before and after the dinner. As this was the Annual General Meeting, with much business to transact, there were no speeches, and except for the meeting the proceedings were informal.

It was a pleasure to see the Stanley brothers, particularly A. J., who had been out of touch for over 20 years.

A. E. Godsell was congratulated on his arrangements for the occasion.

It is hoped that the new Address List will enable small groups of O.R.s to get into touch with each other in advance and arrange to meet at the dinner.

The following were present: —J. E. Miller (Chairman), P. Baillie-Lane, R. F. Butler, A. E. Godsell, J. Kitto, D. W. Lee-Browne, H. H. Selby, W. F. Smallwood, E. B. Smith, A. J. Stanley, G. E. Stanley.

CAROL SERVICE.

The annual service of lessons and carols was held in Rendcomb Church on Sunday the 14th of December.

This is always an occasion to which many who are not in the Choir look forward as eagerly as do the members of the Choir themselves. To many, indeed, carol-singing is an integral part of Christmas: and this is surely a good thing in an age when the ancient pagan celebration of the winter Solstice seems often to overlay the Christian festival of Christmas.

Of the carols sung this year, we enjoyed especially Rutland Boughton's arrangement of "The Holly and the Ivy", and Martin Shaw's of "A Virgin most Pure". These are old favourites, but we had also a new carol, composed by Keith Statham, "As Joseph was a-walking", which delighted us with its freshness and simplicity.

Once again we heard the chorale "Break forth O beauteous heavenly light" from Bach's Christmas Oratorio, and to this especially the Choir did full justice. Perhaps on some future occasion we may hear also the lovely recitative which precedes this greatest of all Christmas hymns.

The Christmas story was told, as usual, in a sequence of lessons read between the carols.

In the evening, the Choir and their Conductor went over by coach to Chedworth, where, by invitation of the Vicar and Churchwardens, they repeated the service. The conditions must have reminded them, on their journey, of one carol in particular which they did not sing. And it is even rumoured that two of the faithful who had gone to hear and support them, returned, on foot, "through the rude wind's wild lament and the bitter weather".

AMBROSE APPLE JOHN'S ADVENTURE.

"I really can't see", remarked recently some person unknown who happened to be sitting near us at a performance of the last American *musical* but one, "why this show should have had such a long run." Nor, for that matter, could we; but perhaps it is easier to understand why *Ambrose Applejohn's Adventure* should only have been withdrawn from the Criterion Theatre after its 454th performance. This was over thirty years ago, but Ambrose has much in common with Everyman, and Everyman, whatever his guise, has always been a figure to capture the imagination.

The play, of course, has "dated". Here and there we raise our hands in amusement or horror at the quaint turns of phrase our fathers employed, and at this tendency to be "literary" even in farce. But good theatre remains good theatre, and Everyman does not cease to be Everyman because of a few political or scientific or sartorial upheavals. Even Hollywood cannot suppress him; he is indestructible.

The two performances given in Big School on December 3rd and 6th, 1952, were in the main satisfactory, though the production was inclined here and there to ignore fundamentals in favour of special effects. Thus Ambrose's background of comfortable routine was not clearly enough fixed in our minds before he was off on his remarkable series of adventures, and we found it difficult to gasp with surprise when the ancestral Cornish mansion began to fill up with Edgar Wallace characters, for there seemed precious little domestic harmony to shatter. Now and again things came properly to life—notably in the second Act, when there were pirates about—but in the main there was not enough of what W. S. Gilbert called "artistic verisimilitude".

The acting was generally competent, and sometimes more. D. C. de Peyer got well inside his part as Ambrose (and a formidably long part it is) and gave a performance of real distinction. He was perhaps a little stiff in the first Act, but once he had shaken this off he was the undoubted master of events. His piratical mutterings in Act 3 were often extremely funny.

D. S. G. Richards was neither suave nor malevolent enough for Borolsky. His menace was conveyed only by the words he used and there was little suggestion that he might, if thwarted or piqued, translate them into action. But he earned great credit for a remarkable piece of opportunism in the first Act when some of the mechanics of production had shown the fallibility of all mechanics.

M. G. Richards was inclined to be too slow early on in his part of Anna, and some of his gestures were weak. But he used his voice well and made a great success of a difficult part once he had got used to his surroundings.

R. C. Pilkington was often extremely funny as Poppy. His facial expressions were good, but his enunciation was by no means impeccable. This was, however, another performance of real promise.

R. J. Bird was curiously disappointing as Pengard. He kept promising well and then bringing us down to earth with some remark spoken completely out of character. It is fair to add that he came much more into his own as Chinese b'sun in the second Act, in which his fight with Ambrose was a masterpiece of realism.

A. P. Hayes was below his best on the second night, but his first performance showed real promise, and his acting was quite free from stiffness and strain. Here was a character study of great promise.

Of the smaller parts, G. H. Richards put in some good acting as Lush the butler, but his words were not always audible. J. B. O'Brien made an excellent aunt of the statuesque rather than the fluttering kind. He was particularly good in the Third Act, when Mrs. Whatcombe's unexpected entrance is one of those *tours de force* which forestall anticlimax. R. A. Powell, A. G. B. Wallace and P. Gilbert performed their small parts competently enough, and the Pirates in the second Act were as comprehensively villainous and vociferous a crew as anyone could wish.

The sets, designed by Mr. Smedley, were superb, and the lighting effects at the beginning of the second Act were most effective. It gave many of the audience a real thrill to see how great a success the shipbuilders had made of it.

Mr. Tooze's music was so well fitted to the play that we are inclined to suspect a buccaneer or two among his own ancestors. It is pleasant to think that this music has been preserved on a gramophone record.

To sum up, the production contained much good acting and much honest endeavour. We hope that all those who helped feel that their efforts were rewarded. The final production was not outstanding, but a good many people enjoyed themselves quite a lot. And that, after all, is the main thing.

The cast was as follows: —

Lush	G. H. Richards
Poppy Faire	R. C. Pilkington
Agatha Whatcombe	J. B. O'Brien
Ambrose Applejohn	D. C. de Peyer
Anna Valeska	M. G. Richards
Horace Pengard	R. J. Bird
Mrs. Pengard	A. P. Hayes
Ivan Borolsky	F. S. G. Richards
A Maid	P. Gilbert
Dennet	A. G. B. Wallace
Johnny Jason	R. A. Powell

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY.

There is probably no event in the school year that is anticipated with so much pleasure as the Christmas party, and there is a long tradition of successful management which sets the highest of standards for each End of Term Entertainments' Committee.

The 1952 Party offered many attractions to everybody, but we would not be quite honest were we not to record our feeling that this was not, perhaps, quite so successful as some of its predecessors. There was just a shade less zest and, towards the end, a slightly jaded atmosphere which might indeed be attributed to an *embarras de richesses*.

Certainly we ate as well as ever we have: many of us until we could eat no more. Indeed Miss Babington and her helpers always manage miraculously (if alas temporarily) to transport us back to an age when ration books and Food Ministers were equally unknown and unregretted.

After supper, the chief item was a Quiz, followed by sketches produced in Big School. The idea of the Quiz (miming behind an illuminated screen) was a good one, and some of the items in it were very ingenious. But the Quiz itself was rather too long, and the concentration of the audience suffered accordingly. The longest of the sketches, "Horse Nonsense" was very funny in parts, and the horse was a magnificent animal, adept at hiding behind sofas. Some of the smaller sketches, however, suffered from under-rehearsal and gave the impression of having been thought up the night before.

Afterwards, there was the usual dancing, with games and competitions galore for those who wanted them. We thought that it was here especially that all the hard work of the End of Term Entertainments' Committee was most rewarded.

There were some excellent fancy dresses, but in general they were not, perhaps, quite so good as in previous years. Certainly there was more than the usual number of hired costumes.

The Party ended, as usual, with Prize-Giving and the singing of "Auld Lang Syne". And then, stone by stone, the elder among us helped to demolish the fairy castle which is annually erected, with how much care and ingenuity, for this evening of pleasure so long anticipated and so amply rewarding.

SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDIES.

During the Cheltenham Festival of Contemporary Literature a Vith form party went to hear Lord David Cecil, the Goldsmith Professor of English Literature at Oxford, lecturing on Shakespeare's Comedies.

Lord David began by saying that the great comedies could all be called "A Midsummer Night's Dream", as their chief aim was

to amuse rather than satirise. Their humour is achieved by putting the characters in situations where they show the natural ridiculousness inherent in mankind. The plays are glamorous, the characters in a sphere outside the audience's experience, and the plots centre round the romantic and comical aspects of love. He likened the plays to shot-silk, appearing different from every angle; with the intricacies of the plot gradually merging into one another like the colours of the rainbow. The poetry, and especially the songs, captures and crystallises the essence of the comedy. But although these plays have wit, poetry, humour, and convincing characters, their real originality is that they gently satirise not only men's vices but also their virtues.

D. G. V. and M. J. E.

RUGGER REPORT, 1952.

This was our first Rugger season. From the first things went well. There was a good deal of enthusiasm in both first and second games.

We rarely played a 15 a-side game as it was found easier to coach with six forwards. Later in the term when the weather was really cold, we also dispensed with the full-backs, who might otherwise have frozen slowly to death.

Mr. Bird was, to begin with, the only member of the staff coaching, and until Mr. Haywood took over the 2nd Game, he had to take four games a week. It is a measure of the excellence of his coaching that we were able at the end of the term to field a team against Cheltenham College 3rd XV. It should be remembered too that we only play twice a week to many schools' three to five times. As it was, there were many things that there was simply not time to explain and demonstrate. We are extremely grateful to Mr. Bird and to Mr. Haywood for their work throughout the term, almost without missing a day, until snow and frost temporarily put a stop to games.

When the 1st Game was examined at the beginning of the season, it was discovered that it was made up almost exclusively of potential forwards. Experimental positioning went on throughout the term: it was not until quite late that G. H. Richards and D. E. Barbour were removed from the scrum and put on the wings where they later played for the 1st XV. T. Gay, too, was a last-minute discovery at centre-three-quarter.

Various people played at full-back; it was not a popular position as there was generally little for the person concerned to do. K. E. Payne was the final choice. He has a powerful and, when in form, accurate kick with his right foot. He must learn to kick with his left foot.

D. H. Richards, D. E. Barbour, J. Bolton King, R. O. G. Hayter and R. M. Sumsion, all played fairly regularly on the wing.

Richards has a good turn of speed and tackles well, but is rather lacking in swerve, and is too inclined to cut in. Barbour is a very formidable opponent: he is big and fast, and difficult to stop. His most serious fault was a lack of confidence in his own ability which sometimes led him to get rid of the ball unnecessarily.

R. N. Horne and K. A. Statham were the two best centres. Horne, though light, tackles well and has the now all too rare ability to make an opening for his wing; he should be very useful next year. Statham was the spearhead of our attack behind the scrum: unfortunately he was away when we played the match. He is extremely fast, hard to stop, and is also very reliable in defence. These qualities were offset to a slight extent by a tendency to hold the ball too long; nevertheless his presence at Cheltenham College might well have turned an evenly balanced scale. T. Gay and A. D. B. Wallace were our "second string" in the centre. Gay tackles well and is quite fast, but his passing is poor. Wallace is fast and tackles courageously, de Peyer played at fly-half. We had some difficulty in finding a second fly-half for the first game, —finally Godfrey was tried there and proved a success; he passes well, has a good eye for an opening and very rarely allows himself to be tackled in possession; he should be useful next year. Rolfe was the scrum half, playing throughout the term with de Peyer. He has a very strong pass. It was surprising how well both fitted themselves to their exacting positions in this first season; their limitations as an attacking force against fast-breaking forwards were inevitable, but their contribution to the covering defence was excellent. The reserve scrum-half, M. V. Harley, played several useful games.

J. M. Harrison, D. G. Vaisey and R. A. Powell were the breakaway forwards. All three are hard workers in defence and attack. The wing-forwards, Harrison and Powell, in spite of having played in their positions only two or three times, were very quick on the opposing halves, and frequently managed to back up the three-quarters as well as lead several forward rushes. Harrison led the pack, though wing-forward is not the best position for this. Vaisey tackled and covered well in defence and, given room to move in, took a lot of stopping. The second row, T. D. A. Semple and P. B. Marwood, are both hard-working scrummagers with plenty of shove and a certain amount of speed. In the front row Glastonbury acquired the art of hooking remarkably quickly and won practically all his own scrums. P. Rose and R. W. Muchamore were two good "prop" forwards. In particular Rose's dribbling was good, while Muchamore showed a good turn of speed and got through a tremendous amount of hard work. The other forward who deserves mention is M. D. Rayner; he is a very hard-working forward who tackles well, but unfortunately he was rather too light to fit into the pack. On the whole the pack worked hard.

The dribbling was good and during the Cheltenham match there were several forward movements that came within inches of scoring. Their faults were the outcome of insufficient coaching time and were in the circumstances unavoidable. They were, chiefly, slow heeling from loose scrums and, at times, hesitation simply through uncertainty as to what was the correct thing to do.

The one match of the season was played against Cheltenham College 3rd XV at Cheltenham. Conditions were bad: the ground was heavy and the ball slippery but there was quite a lot of open play, particularly by our opponents. The team took a long time to settle down and we were lucky to have only one try scored against us during this period. The pressure was finally relieved by a long run from Barbour, which took us into the opponents half for the first time. At half-time we were pressing hard, and soon afterwards equalised with a try scored by Powell, who got to a loose ball. After this the game swung back into our own half as Cheltenham got the ball more and more from the scrums. Finally, they scored again when a pass went astray between our centres. A quick pickup by one of the Cheltenham centres was just too quick for the defence and he just got over. This try was converted and except for a fine dash down the line by three or four of our own forwards the game was over. The forwards played very well, but the ball too rarely came back sufficiently fast to the halves, especially in the second half. The tackling of the three-quarters was excellent; only two mistakes were made, both unfortunately near our line and therefore fatal.

2nd Game was too frequently a mixture of extremes of size. In spite of this and of the absence of any posts for their game, there was much enthusiasm and several players showed promise, in particular C. H. Thomason, R. J. Lawson and J. D. R. Paine.

We are very grateful to the three voluntary groundsmen who did a good job throughout the term.

de Peyer was enthusiastic and inspiring, and ideally suited to being Rendcomb's first Rugby captain. He set an excellent example by his tackling, which was taken up very quickly by the other players and was perhaps the main feature of the season.

* * *

Rendcomb College 1st XV v. Cheltenham College 3rd XV. Away.

Lost 3—8 (1 try—1 goal and 1 try).

K. E. Payne; G. H. Richards, T. Gay, R. N. Horne, D. E. Barbour; D. C. de Peyer, J. M. Rolfe; J. M. Harrison, D. G. Vaisey, R. A. Powell, P. B. Marwood, T. D. A. Semple, R. W. Muchamore, B. J. Glastonbury, P. Rose.

SOCCER, 1952.

With the advent of Rugger, Association Football was limited in the past season to the boys of the Forms I, II and III.

In spite of this there was promise of some good football and it was most unfortunate that, of several matches planned for after half-term, none could be played because of the heavy snow.

We could have fielded a very useful forward line led by P. Mew in the centre; his tactical ability and footwork are well beyond the average for his age and in this he was well supported by A. T. Brooks and J. Gooding as inside forwards, while our most promising wing-forward was undoubtedly R. F. Stebbing. The defence would have found comfort in the steadiness of C. Handoll and R. D. Comley, while R. W. Taylor and P. G. S. Airey formed a formidable rear line of defence. P. F. Barter, in goal, showed fearlessness and used his hands well.

Space does not permit mention of all the boys, but Form I brought forth some promising football, even in comparison with the other two forms. The tireless energy of R. A. Dauncey, for example, might well be envied by all of us.